Volume XXXVI
Number 2
1994

Anthropologica

FEATURE ARTICLES

BOOK REVIEWS/COMPTES RENDUS

Editorial Policy
Open to contributors from Canada and abroad, *Anthropologica* publishes, in French and English, articles and reviews in all areas of cultural and social anthropology. All manuscripts are refereed anonymously by two reviewers.

Politique éditoriale
La revue *Anthropologica* publie, en français et en anglais, des articles et comptes rendus produits par des chercheurs canadiens et étrangers oeuvrant dans les divers domaines de l'étude académique de l'anthropologie culturelle et sociale. Chaque manuscrit est soumis pour évaluation à deux lecteurs anonymes.

Anthropologica **ISSN 0003-5459**
Published at Wilfrid Laurier University Press, Waterloo, Ontario
Publiée à Wilfrid Laurier University Press, Waterloo, Ontario.
Published with the assistance of Wilfrid Laurier University.
Publiée avec l'aide de l'Université Wilfrid Laurier.

Printed in Canada / Imprimé au Canada.
This journal has been produced from a manuscript supplied in electronic form by the editors. / Cette revue a été produite d'un manuscrit en forme électronique fournit par les rédacteurs.

ANTHROPOLOGICA

Volume XXXVI, No. 2, 1994

CONTENTS / SOMMAIRE

BOOK REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS

A RESISTANCE TO BRITISH CULTURAL HEGEMONY: IRISH-LANGUAGE ACTIVISM IN WEST BELFAST*

Patricia Kachuk
University of British Columbia

Abstract: In this article it is to be argued that not all Irish-language activism in Belfast is revolutionary, but that rather, to use Williams' terminology, it has both alternative and oppositional ideologies as major components. While both alternative and oppositional Irish-language activists have recovered the Irish language and are using it to challenge the legitimacy of British cultural hegemony in Northern Ireland, the difference lies in their ultimate goals.

The reaction of the British State to the challenge of Irish-language activists has varied depending on the form and perceived intent of Irish-language activist groups. While prior to 1980, attempts were made to exclude the Irish language and culture from Northern Ireland, since 1989 the State's approach has been a re-interpretation of the Irish language and culture into the Northern Ireland context. Mixed reaction to the British government's efforts has resulted in an impasse.

Résumé: Dans cet article, l'auteur discute le fait qu'à Belfast l'ensemble de l'activisme en langue irlandaise n'est pas uniquement révolutionnaire, mais plutôt que ses composantes principales contiennent des idéologies à la fois alternatives et d'opposition. Alors que les deux groupes d'activistes, ceux qui prônent l'alternative et ceux qui préfèrent l'opposition, ont récupéré la langue irlandaise et s'en servent pour contester la légitimité de l'hégémonie culturelle britannique en Irlande du nord, la différence dans les idéologies réside dans leurs buts ultimes.

La réaction de l'état britannique au défi posé par les activistes de langue irlandaise a été différente en fonction de la forme et de la perception des intentions des deux groupes d'activistes. Alors qu'avant 1980, il y avait eu des tentatives pour exclure la langue et la culture irlandaise en Irlande du nord, depuis 1989, l'approche de l'Etat a consisté en une réinterprétation de la langue et de la culture irlandaise dans le contexte de l'Irlande du nord. Des réactions mitigées au sujet des efforts fournis par le gouvernement britannique ont abouti à une impasse.

Anthropologica XXXVI (1994) 135-154

Introduction

The general focus of this article is an investigation of Irish-language activism in Belfast, Northern Ireland, and the British State's response to this symbolic challenge to its cultural hegemony. The analysis will address the way in which Belfast cultural groups, Sinn Féin and the British government perceive and construct Irish-language activism.[1] Concentrating on the nature and form of Irish-language activism and how it is perceived and responded to by those in power, and drawing on the work of Raymond Williams (1977, 1980), this ethnographic study will suggest ways in which the multiple meanings of resistance in areas where liberation struggles are being fought, can be delineated and analyzed. The study is based on 15 months of in-depth research conducted in the war-torn environment of Belfast between February 1990 and May 1991.

A. British Cultural Hegemony: The Struggle for Legitimacy

1. The Theoretical Framework: Raymond Williams' Model of Cultural Hegemony and Counter-Hegemony

Elaborating on Gramsci's concept of hegemony, Raymond Williams (1977, 1980) developed a theoretical model in which he analyzed the relationship between power and culture. Williams asserted that "in any society, in any particular period, there is a central system of practices, meanings and values, which we can properly call dominant and effective" (Williams 1980:38). This social process of selection, while being tied to "relations of dominance and subordination," is at the same time "meaningful" to both those in power and the powerless, because it represents "a selection from and interpretation of a people's history . . . [which] touches aspects of the lived reality, or experience of the dominant and dominated alike" (Roseberry 1989:26-27). As Williams (1977:115-116; 1980:39) explains, some of the subordinate culture's meanings and practices are "reinterpreted, diluted, or put into forms which support or at least do not contradict other elements within the effective dominant culture." Hence, cultural hegemony is powerful in that it does allow the "effective self-identification" of the dominated with what is always passed off as "the tradition," and "the significant past" (Williams 1980:39). However, Williams (1977:115-116) continues, other subordinate meanings and practices are neglected, excluded, dismissed or demeaned. It is the latter meanings and practices that are, Williams maintains, "effectively recoverable," and can be used by the subordinate group(s) to challenge the effective dominant culture. Therefore, cultural hegemony is also vulnerable because it leaves room for resistance or counter-hegemony to develop.

One of the sources of this resistance is found in what Williams calls "residual" culture. Residual culture is not, Williams argues, equivalent to "archaic" culture, even though it has "been effectively formed in the past," but instead consists of those subordinate meanings, practices and values that are "still active in the cultural process . . . as an effective element of the present" (Wil-

liams 1977:122). When this residual culture is unsuccessfully incorporated or devalued by the effective dominant culture, the cultural hegemony of the dominant may be challenged. Clarke et al. (1976), Schweitzer (1991) and others argue that this challenge takes the form of "counter-hegemonic" resistance, in which the powerless group seeks to secure a permanent place for those meanings and practices that the effective, dominant culture has rejected, demeaned and/or ignored.

The reaction of those in power to these challenges to their cultural hegemony differs depending on the form and perceived intent. Applying Williams' theory of cultural hegemony, the form and intent of counterhegemonic resistance can be further distinguished as being either alternative or oppositional in nature. Williams (1980:42) describes the alternative resister, using the analogy of "someone who simply finds a different way to live and wishes to be left alone with it." He goes on to depict the oppositional resister as "someone who finds a different way to live and wants to change the society in its light." Williams (1980:42) adds that "this is usually the difference between individual and small-group solutions to social crisis and those solutions which properly belong to political and ultimately revolutionary practice."

2. *British Cultural Hegemony and Irish-Language Resistance: A Definition of Terms*

Theory, Giddens (1984:ix) writes, not only aims to "illuminate, interpret and explain substantive features of human conduct" while "establishing and validating generalizations," but, more importantly for this study, it sensitizes those "conceptual schemes that order and inform processes of inquiry into social life." With this in mind, a theoretical framework will now be proposed, based primarily on Williams' model of cultural hegemony. This framework will be used in the ensuing analysis in an attempt to decipher the contradictory constructions of language activism made by the British State, versus those of the citizens of West Belfast involved in promoting and reviving the Irish language.

The "effective dominant culture" in Northern Ireland is essentially English-speaking and British. The British State, in keeping with the Gramscian definition of state, is that apparatus which, through force plus consent, implements an effective dominant culture in Northern Ireland. The term, "British government," its local arm being the Northern Ireland Office, refers to the actual people and offices that carry out the task of the State. The subordinate culture (in this study, culture as it is embodied in the Irish language) is not just oppressed but possesses neither autonomy nor its own hegemonic position within Northern Ireland. The Irish language, in this study, will be taken to be part of a "residual" not archaic culture, in that despite its 2000-year heritage, its place in the Irish-language activist community in West Belfast is not as a fossil revived from the past but as "an effective element of the present" (Williams 1977:122).

Resistance in the Irish-language activist community, it will be argued in the first section of this article, is—using Williams' concepts—both oppositional and alternative. The resistance of political Irish-language activists is embodied in a declaration by one of the leaders of the 1916 Rebellion, Pádraig Pearse: "Ireland, not free merely but Irish as well, not Irish merely but free as well." The members of Sinn Féin, Republican prisoners and others adhere to this philosophy which is oppositional in that it directly challenges British cultural hegemony. On the other hand, the resistance of cultural Irish-language activists (in the sense that Williams defines it) is mainly alternative. As one Irish-language activist I interviewed stated:

> There are many people within the movement for the restoration and the revival of the Irish language who would not necessarily have any political goals other than the revival of the Irish language. And people who would be happy, for example, to revive the Irish language within a British Commonwealth context or within an independent Northern Ireland context or whatever.

The reaction of the British State to these forms of counter-hegemonic resistance to British cultural hegemony in Northern Ireland has been varied. In the case of oppositional resistance, the State has continued in its cultural suppression of the language and its refusal of the demands of political activists, except in those instances in which the international legal apparatus has forced them to make concessions. (For example, some demands for cultural rights within Northern Irish prisons have been granted in response to legal challenges made by Republican prisoners.) The State's response to alternative resistance during the 1980s reflects what Lears (1985:574) refers to when he describes the permeability of the membrane that separates dominant and subordinate cultures. The State's position on recognizing the Irish language as a part of at least one of the "two traditions" in Northern Ireland, and its decision to make some funding available to the Irish language, appears to be a significant change from its historical position of open hostility and "planned neglect" (see Andrews 1991), in the pre-1980 period. However, I will argue in section D of this article that, rather than actually recognizing the Irish language as reflecting Irish culture, the British State is attempting to re-interpret the Irish language in the Northern Ireland context, thereby incorporating it in forms "which support or at least do not contradict other elements within the effective dominant culture" (Williams 1980:39).

B. Sinn Féin and the Irish-Language Movement: The Irish Language as Part of the Republican Ethos

Current revolutionary ideology of the Irish Republican Movement considers the restoration of the Irish language as an integral part of the struggle for self-determination. This ideology draws its authenticity and legitimacy (see Fish-

man 1989:269-367) from the legacy of the United Irishmen (1798), Thomas Davis (1840), Pádraig Pearse (1916) and other revolutionary heroes who proclaimed that economic and political freedom could only be achieved in a culturally and linguistically distinct Ireland. Therefore, as in the past, Sinn Féin today believes that cultural liberation is inseparable from political and economic freedom. Ó Muilleoir (1986:20-21, 23), a Sinn Féin councillor at Belfast City Hall and head of the Belfast division of Sinn Féin's Cultural Department, articulates the linkage between present Republican cultural thinking and that of their forefathers:

> Republicans have always realised that to be free, the Irish people must have a culture of their own, as distinct from that of the oppressor. Pearse said "chan amháin saor ach Gaelach chomh maith, chan amháin Gaelach ach saor chomh maith," i.e., not free merely but Irish as well, not Irish merely but free as well. Mellows [the leader of the Galway Volunteers in 1916] spoke of the fight to maintain our Irishness as the intellectual part of the Irish revolution when he said: "The revolution going on in Ireland, has a threefold aspect, it is intellectual, it is political, it is economic. Of the intellectual aspect it is sufficient to say that Ireland to be free, must be Irish, must be free from the domination of alien thought as from alien armies."
>
> Sinn Féin accepts both the above statements and understands the necessity for urgent action to redress the neglect of culture and defeat cultural oppression. We realise we are oppressed not only economically and physically but that the oppressor also exercises a cultural and social control over our people. It is only natural then that resistance to the oppressor must take place on all these fronts.
>
> We must replace the ideology of the oppressor with a republican ideology rooted in our own history and experiences. . . .
>
> Imperialism has been described as a situation where, "The centre of gravity of a nation, i.e., its crucial decision making, is no longer in that nation but in some other." It is clear that while the cultural domination of Ireland continues, our "centre of gravity" will not be in our own country.
>
> It is essential therefore that our struggle against economic and political oppression is united with cultural resistance.

Cultural resistance in Republican ideology is based on the belief that to be a sovereign people the Irish must first regain control of their own destiny. The Irish language is seen as an essential element in restoring to the demoralized Nationalist population a sense of this control, and as a step toward re-establishing their self-esteem and self-worth as a people. The belief that the success of the liberation struggle lies in building a stable, self-reliant people is put into practice by encouraging members of the Nationalist community to speak out and demand their civil and human rights. A Sinn Féin spokesperson explained:

> From our point of view, we don't administer to the community. We don't simply provide a service to the community. We don't simply look after the needs of the community. That would be totally counter-productive. We see our role as being a vehicle through which community grievances can be heard. For ex-

> ample, if there is a problem with an individual housing estate, that has to be taken up with the Housing Authority, it's not Sinn Féin's role to go on behalf of the residents to raise that issue. It is Sinn Féin's role to go with the residents to raise the issue . . . if you like it is almost psychological, like training someone to be involved in athletics. If they can look after and stand up for their own rights on any given issue, they will stand up for themselves on every given issue. . . .
>
> We are not the voice of the people, we are a voice with the people. And that's the only way Sinn Féin can go forward.

By assuming a supportive role in the community, Sinn Féin has encouraged the Nationalist people to fight for their rights, to challenge the authorities directly. It is this philosophy that lies at the root of how Sinn Féin perceives its role in the current Irish-language revival.

The significant role the Irish language played during the prison protest period, which was begun in 1976 as a resistance to the British State's attempt to criminalize the struggle of the Republican movement (and culminated in the 1981 hunger strike, which resulted in 10 deaths by starvation), did not go unnoticed by Sinn Féin. As Andrews (1991:100) commented:

> The fact that Irish had helped to sustain republican prisoners through their worst experiences during the years of protest, including hunger strikes, had brought SF [Sinn Féin] to the realisation that the language could be equally meaningful outside the prisons as a distinctive expression of cultural identity and as a form of cultural resistance.

After the hunger strike ended, rather than public support diminishing for the Republican struggle, a significant portion of the Catholic electorate began casting their votes for Sinn Féin candidates in local assembly and Westminster elections (see O'Malley 1990:211-213). What had, prior to the hunger strikes, primarily been an armed struggle, was now a struggle that had been given a strong political voice.

Even before the end of the hunger strike, Sinn Féin was developing a new political platform that would better reflect its elevated political status. Since the platform was to include a dynamic cultural program, the Sinn Féin Cultural Department was established in 1982.

Sinn Féin's Cultural Department has devoted much of its energy to the task of Gaelicizing the Republican Movement's own membership and to campaigning for the cultural and language rights of Republican prisoners. Additionally, the Sinn Féin Cultural Department had, by the mid-1980s, involved itself in setting up almost 30 Irish classes (20 in Belfast alone). Many of these classes were taught by Irish teachers who, while not entirely in agreement with Sinn Féin's policy, were "broadly sympathetic" toward Sinn Féin's position on culture (Ó hAdhmaill 1985:7). Sinn Féin's President, Gerry Adams, called on Republicans of the 1980s to increase their involvement in the Irish language, even if this involvement only entailed the incorporation of a few simple

Irish words and phrases into daily speech: "This [involvement] may take such small forms as deciding never again to say 'cheerio' and always say 'slán,' or it may mean a total involvement in supporting the demands of the language struggle and the demands of the people of the Gaeltachtaí by working actively alongside them" (Adams 1986:147). Moreover, Adams called on Republicans to concentrate on demanding that Irish programming be included in public broadcasting—both radio and television—and he called on all elected Sinn Féin representatives to use their

> ... elected positions in both the 26 and 6 counties to promote Irish culture in such areas as the erection of street signs in Irish, grant aid for feiseanna [festivals], bilingual council stationery and signs, the use of Irish at formal council occasions, and an emphasis on Irish music and dances at council-sponsored social events. (Adams 1986:147)

Individual Irish-speaking Sinn Féin members are encouraged to pursue their cultural interests by joining and working with Irish-language groups and associations, groups which in Williams' definition would be called alternative, but Sinn Féin as an organization shies away from taking a direct, controlling leadership role in any of these groups. By distancing itself from community action groups in general, including alternative Irish-language activist groups, Sinn Féin assumes a supportive role, encouraging the Nationalist population, either individually or in groups, to speak up for themselves and make their demands for civil, human and cultural rights, to which they are legitimately entitled, heard by the State. Sinn Féin's stance of supporting and encouraging individual activists and single issue community groups to act on their own behalf, has become a powerful weapon against the State. This approach has proved to be far more effective than assuming the leadership of a group directly, which is what the State accuses Sinn Féin of doing.

C. Alternative Irish-Language Activism in Belfast

Clearly, the history of British State policy toward the Irish language prior to 1980 was one of suspicion, if not open hostility. Eradication of the language seems to have been a constant theme underlying this policy, dating back to the days of the *Statutes of Kilkenny*, 1367. As a local journalist wrote:

> It is hard to recall an age when the Irish language was not an issue. The right to speak it; the right to use it as a medium of education for children; the right to have the Irish form of a name on State documentation. It would seem that the language has always ... been linked in the public perception to a measure of disrespect for establishment politics. (Macauley 1990:11)

When the Northern Ireland State was formed in 1922, the dominance of British culture, which the Unionist-controlled Parliament wished to establish, was not secure. The Irish Free State was embroiled in a civil war over the issue

of partition, and, although the pro-treaty forces eventually won out, the Unionist population in the North did not trust the South to stay out of its affairs. Thus the new Northern Ireland State was in no mood to permit any religious, political or cultural concessions to its minority Catholic population, deemed by the State to be potentially subversive (see Andrews 1991; Rowthorn and Wayne 1988:26). This distrust is reflected in a series of Education Acts and amendments made by the new Northern Ireland government, beginning in 1923, which eliminated most of the gains that had been made by the Gaelic League[2] prior to partition, and reduced the status of Irish in the schools to an optional, foreign-language subject.

Within the alternative Irish-language activist community in this pre-1980 period, open resistance to government policy toward the Irish language was at a low ebb. One local Irish-language activist described the dispirited attitude of these times by saying that "up until 1981-82 the Irish language revivalist organizations had made no demands on the State. They shrugged their shoulders and accepted that the State would not support what they were doing."

Despite the lack of serious public challenge to the government's hegemony over the Irish-language revivalist community, there were some significant actions by alternative Irish-language activists prior to 1980. A number of Irish-language groups in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, the most prominent being Comhaltus Uladh[3] and the Cluain Ard[4] did set up Irish classes within the "safety of Nationalist areas," to compensate for the dearth of Irish-language instruction in the educational system. These groups also sponsored many Irish-language activities and events. In the 1960s a group of young people who frequented the Cluain Ard, and who were just settling down after marriage, decided to create an Irish-speaking community on Shaws Road in West Belfast. This dream of a Gaeltacht[5] in West Belfast came to fruition in 1971 with the building of Northern Ireland's first Irish-medium primary school.

As the 1970s progressed, the Irish-language activist community became bolder and began to make demands on the State to support the Shaws Road Irish-medium primary school. However, until the early 1980s, these demands were not backed up by a large-scale campaign, did not unduly challenge the cultural hegemony of the State and were thus ignored. While these activities by alternative Irish-language activists in the pre-1980 period did perpetuate the Irish language and culture, their membership was not large, and the groups made no organized demands on the State to support their endeavours. Thus, the British State was content to coexist with language activists who presented neither a burden to its coffers nor a challenge to its cultural hegemony in Northern Ireland.

During the years 1976 to 1981, the prison protests and the corresponding intensification of violence brought a new wave of disruption to the lives of the citizens of West Belfast. Geertz (1973a:104) writes that, in the face of chaos,

individuals, as well as groups, require a cultural system more than ever. They require a system of symbols to provide them with, "not only . . . [the] ability to comprehend the world, but also, [in] comprehending it . . . [to give] a precision to their feeling, a definition to their emotions which enables them, morosely or joyfully, grimly or cavalierly, to endure it" (Geertz 1973a:104). During this period, for many residents of West Belfast, the Irish language had become the symbol, the "vehicle for a conception," through which they could, "render otherwise incomprehensible social situations meaningful" (Geertz 1973b:208n, 220).[6]

During the blanket and dirty protests and the ensuing hunger strikes Republican prisoners endured Draconian conditions, yet they nonetheless taught themselves to become fluent Irish speakers. Television images, newspaper articles and personal stories of these events effected a permanent change in the form taken by Irish-Language activism in Belfast.[7] Whereas prior to 1980, alternative Irish-language activists had made no demands on the State, instead choosing to satisfy their cultural needs within the safe confines of the Nationalist community, after 1980, the State was faced with both a resurgence of oppositional Irish-language activism, in the prisons and from the politically victorious Sinn Féin, as well as much more vocal and organized alternative Irish-language activism which now demanded not only that the State recognize Irish-language rights but that it support and fund the Irish language.

The campaigns for Irish-language rights of the early 1980s employed some of the types of political protest developed by Sinn Féin, those of lobbying and agitation, but they also drew on the well-established Welsh model of civil disobedience (see Khleif 1979, 1985). As these alternative Irish-language activists in the post-1980 period left the confines of the Nationalist areas they began to confront British cultural hegemony in Northern Ireland directly, demanding that Irish-language rights be recognized by the State. Initial campaigns focussed on attempting to de-stigmatize the language and as such were aimed at areas in which cultural discrimination was most blatant, specifically, the 1949 law that prohibited the erection of Irish-language street signs and the media.

Concessions gained[8] in early 1980 campaigns by Irish-language activists paled in comparison with those attained by similar groups in Wales. Yet, for Irish-language activists the gains represented significant progress over the days when the Irish language had been totally ignored by the British State. Thus, the Irish-language movement had been infused with new hope. Alternative Irish-language activists began to devise ways that would channel the momentum of the Irish revival occurring in Belfast into the building of a permanent Irish-language infrastructure, the element they felt had been lacking in all previous language revivals, and one which had doomed them to failure. This infrastructure was to be founded on two key elements: the establishment of a

daily Irish-language newspaper;[9] and the development of an Irish-language education system.[10] The cultivation of a stable infrastructure would, alternative Irish-language activists reasoned, help ensure that future generations of Northern Irish Nationalists would live in a bilingual society. As one Irish-language activist put it:

> We have our own agenda [and that is] getting the infrastructure of the Irish language in place first, then we'll be controversial. Minority languages everywhere require government money. The thing is to get the money and work around the rules to survive. Not only does government money give you an amount of legitimacy but it gives you a certain security that you are going to be able to continue with the work in the future. It starts people thinking about institutions and infrastructure rather than just learning the language. The next big thing is to get an Irish-medium secondary school. Then it will continue on its own momentum. When they come out of secondary school they will have spent most of their formative years in the Irish language and they will be ready to start their own family. [When this happens] the whole focus of the Irish language movement will have to change. There is no use in investing all that time, energy and money into teaching and educating them through Irish if they are going to take the first plane to America or Australia or England or Dublin. You have to keep them here. So you have to create the overall environment that will keep them here. Not just jobs, but everything, houses, jobs, media, everything.

D. The State's Response to Alternative Irish-Language Activism

A State has two choices, according to Williams' model, when the "effective dominant culture" is challenged by "meanings and practices" that have been "recovered" and made "an effective element of the present" by the subordinate culture. One of these choices is to "neglect or exclude" the subordinate culture, and the second is to find some way to incorporate it into the effective dominant culture so as to neutralize its hegemonic challenge. For most of the existence of Northern Ireland, the British State chose to neglect or exclude the Irish language. However, in the mid-1980s, the British State adopted a new strategy toward Irish language and culture. In this new approach, the subordinate Irish culture and language was to receive some State funding. By the late 1980s this strategy had expanded to include a policy of incorporation in which the Irish language and culture would not be considered part of the "Southern tradition," hence foreign and subversive, but as part of one of the cultural traditions of Northern Ireland. Having thus recognized that there were "two traditions" in Northern Ireland, the British State attempted to devise ways that would make the barrier that separates these two cultures "permeable" enough so that they would be able to exist together peacefully.

Whenever the State elects to make available resources necessary for the subordinate culture to propagate its own meanings and practices, motives are suspect, often legitimately so.[11] After the hunger strike the British State chose

to make money available for the promotion and development of the Irish language. At first, the government was very leery about funding anything to do with the Irish language. As one Irish-language activist, who headed an Irish-language group seeking government funding, told me, "It was as if you had an Irish dictionary in one hand and an AK-47 in the other."

In an attempt to overcome the alienation and suspicion between the State and the Irish-language activist community, and to begin the process of incorporating the Irish language into the dominant culture, a Trust was established in September 1989 (becoming operational in February 1990). The purpose of the Trust was to channel government funds into Irish-language projects that were considered to be "safe." Hence, the ULTACH Trust was born, its name being an acronym for "Ulster Language, Traditions and Cultural Heritage" (the name also means "Ulster" in the Irish language).

As its title suggests, ULTACH Trust was established to promote the contribution that "the Irish language makes to Northern Ireland's cultural heritage," by providing funds for "Irish language projects which enhance awareness and appreciation of the language, in the context of promoting greater mutual understanding across the whole [Northern Ireland] community" (NIO spokesperson, quoted in McAdam 1990:6). Hence, the British State's recognition of the Irish language as part of "Northern Ireland's cultural heritage" appears to be a significant departure from its previous view of the language as being foreign and subversive.

The education system was also to become a target of the government's new strategy. In the 1990 *Education Reform Order*, two courses were designed for inclusion in all Northern Ireland schools with the aim of "improving understanding and tolerance between the communities in Northern Ireland" (NIO 1991). These two courses, "Cultural Heritage" and "Education for Mutual Understanding," are thus described by the Northern Ireland Office (1991):

> Two of the compulsory cross-curriculum themes, regarded as essential and to be studied by pupils in the full range from 4-16, are Cultural Heritage, and Education for Mutual Understanding. The former is designed to enable pupils to understand and evaluate both the common experience of their cultural heritage and its distinctive aspects.... Education for Mutual Understanding is meant to teach them self-respect and to understand the other person's point of view; to appreciate how people depend on one another within society; to know about and understand what is shared, as well as what is different in their cultural traditions, and to appreciate the benefits of resolving conflict by non-violent means.

The apparent purpose of these new courses was twofold. In an attempt to neutralize the challenge being made by alternative Irish-language activists to British cultural hegemony, the courses were designed to aid in the "process of incorporation" of the subordinate Irish culture into the Northern Ireland context. In addition, they were intended to act as a resolution mechanism, encour-

aging an attitude change as a way of ending what the British State perceived as a war between "two religious communities" (see Crozier 1989, 1990; Smyth 1989).

1. Irish Language in the Northern Ireland Context: A Hegemonic Nightmare

While the alternative Irish-language activist community was becoming more united in its campaign for official recognition of the Irish language, British cultural hegemony in Northern Ireland was experiencing severe fragmentation. This was expressed in the internal differences which developed within the Protestant majority over the incorporation of the subordinate Irish culture and language into Northern Ireland's dominant culture.

In a sociological survey conducted in 1968 among Northern Ireland's Protestants, it was found that 20 percent thought of themselves as Irish; 39 percent considered themselves British; and 32 percent deemed themselves "Ulsterites" (Fitzgerald 1988:198). While the last 25 years of war have perhaps changed the percentages, these three distinct identities can be discerned in the Belfast Protestant community of today.

There is still a portion of the Protestant community in Northern Ireland which proclaims itself to be Irish and, as do alternative Irish-language activists, views both the Irish language and culture as part of its Irish heritage. For example, when a Belfast Presbyterian was asked why Protestants would consider learning the Irish language, he replied:

> I think there are two strands. The first strand would say that it is simply a love of language. There wouldn't be any particular sense of identity coming through. The other one [strand] that seems to be more authentic, is that Protestants who wanted to learn the Irish language were making a statement that in fact they were not Unionist. That would be a much stronger irony in the sense that it is a double bind that the government sponsored ULTACH Trust will find itself in. That those Protestants who are looking to learn the Irish language and take it on board will have become nationalist in some sense, at least there will be some emerging sense of nationalism. That seems to me the most authentic reason.

When I spoke with a Protestant student taking the six-week intensive course offered by Glór na nGael at Ulster People's College, his reasons for learning Irish confirmed that he was part of the second "strand" mentioned above. While he had been born and raised in Shankill, a strongly Loyalist area of West Belfast, the student no longer considered himself British. He told me that he, like many he knew who had been Unionists at one time, no longer supported the party, and blamed the Unionist inflexibility for causing the Troubles. He said that if the Unionists had been willing to enter into some form of power-sharing agreement, the armed struggle would not have occurred. He continued, explaining that he now felt that his identity was Irish and that eventually, "a long way in the future," he did believe that there would be "some

sort of unification of Ireland." His rejection of Unionism had led him to pursue a degree in Irish studies at Queen's University. Irish, he told me was "part of the other tradition," and as such was not offered in the State schools, nor was it included in the courses he studied at Queen's to get his degree. The program he had taken had concentrated on economics and politics, rather than language and culture. He had decided to take the intensive course in Irish at Ulster People's College, offered by the West Belfast Irish-language group, Glór na nGael, because he felt that that language was part of his culture. Like many alternative Irish-language activists, these Protestants, who identify themselves as Irish, expressed cautious, albeit positive support for the British State's new initiatives.

Counter to this wary support is an outright rejection of any attempt to recognize the Irish language and culture as a tradition of Northern Ireland. This view is held by Protestants of the group who consider themselves as British, and members of this group continue to regard Irish culture as foreign and subversive. One of the more explicit vocalizations of this view occurred in 1987, when a newly elected Sinn Féin councillor attempted to challenge a ban on use of the Irish language, which was in effect at Belfast City Council meetings. Sammy Wilson, an outspoken Democratic Unionist[12] councillor, immediately called for a vote. With echoes of Wilson's comment, "There'll be no leprechaun language here," the vote was carried 20 to 13, not only to continue the Council's unilingual policy, but to bar the challenging councillor from the rest of the meeting (Andersonstown News 1987:15). This incident is representative of the strong negative feelings held by some members of the Protestant community toward the "threat" of Irish. Pritchard (1990:32) has described how similar negative emotions have resulted in threats of violence toward teachers attempting to introduce tolerance toward a cultural tradition other than the British via the two prescribed courses: "Cultural Heritage" and "Education for Mutual Understanding."

Among Protestant members of the Unionist persuasion, the rejection of the Irish language is not universal. In fact some Unionists, while considering themselves politically British, do identify culturally with Ulster. The work of Adamson (1986, 1987) has enabled these people to accept Ulster Irish (a different dialect of Irish than Munster Irish or Galway Irish), as part of their Ulster-Scot identity.

Ian Adamson (1986, 1987), an Irish speaker, a Belfast doctor, an Ulster Unionist[13] councillor on Belfast City Council and a Trustee of the ULTACH Trust, argues that a people closely related to the Scottish Picts, known as the Cruthin, formed a pre-Gaelic population in an area of northeast Ulster approximating that of present-day Northern Ireland. According to Adamson's theory, the Cruthin were driven by the Gaels east to what is now England and north to Scotland, finally settling in the Scottish lowlands, about the seventh century

A.D. Adamson argues that the settlers who were "planted" in Ulster in the 17th century by Elizabeth I, most of whom were lowland Scots, were descendants of the same Cruthin driven out of Ulster a thousand years before by the Gaels. Therefore, the planters were actually the aboriginal or indigenous population of Ulster, returning to reclaim their ancestral home.

The appeal of Adamson's argument for Ulster Protestants, Buckley (1989: 194) claims, is as follows:

> In short, the Cruthin argument addresses directly the rhetorical challenge of Irish nationalist history. It makes the claim that Ulster Protestants, and particularly those who emigrated from Scotland, have at least as much right to live in Ireland as do Irish Catholics. Second, it takes from the nationalist heritage many of its most treasured traits by arguing their Cruthinic rather than Gaelic origins. And finally, the historical linchpin of Irish nationalism, the Plantation of Ireland, is transformed from a conquest by an oppressive people into a reconquest by a people who had formerly been forcefully expelled.

Unlike the majority of Protestants (the 39% from the 1968 survey who consider themselves British), those who accept Adamson's reinterpretation of Ulster history would also accept the incorporation of the Irish language and culture, providing it were presented as being a phenomenon unique to Ulster. This interpretation would not be acceptable to most alternative Irish-language activists, nor to the group of Unionists who take a strong stance in preventing anything Irish from tainting the British identity in Northern Ireland.

This diversity of reaction toward the Irish language by the ruling Protestant majority in Northern Ireland thus reveals that they, like the "Piedmont bourgeoisie" (Gramsci 1971), do not form a homogeneous dominant group, and the attempt by the British State to use the schools and other institutions as "forces of incorporation" has seriously ruptured their fragile unity. As a result of strong oppositional and alternative Irish-language resistance, the British government is in a position in which it can not exclude the Irish language and culture in Northern Ireland. In addition, internal differences of the dominant groups will not allow the neutralization of this Irish-language resistance by a process of incorporation. Hence, what has developed is an impasse, serving to repress any move to alter conditions interpreted by the majority of Northern Ireland citizens as culturally stifling.

Conclusion

Throughout this analysis, I have argued that not all Irish-language activism is motivated by revolutionary ideology. To use Williams' terminology, both alternative and oppositional ideologies are major components of the Irish-language struggle and, as he points out, the demarcation between alternative and oppositional resistance is hazy. This haziness is also evident in the methods used by the opposing groups to achieve their aims, but I have argued that

the two forms of resistance do differ in their adherents' visions of a future for Northern Ireland. Alternative Irish-language activists are seeking a permanent space for the Irish language and culture in Northern Ireland regardless of its future political status. Oppositional Irish-language activists, have incorporated the Irish language into the revolutionary struggle for a "free and Irish," 32-county Republic of Ireland. While the ideology of these two forms of Irish-language activism differs, it could be argued that the strategy alternative Irish-language activists utilize to reach their goals is potentially beneficial to oppositional Irish-language activists. Theoretically, an ethnic minority group that is self-aware of its uniqueness and aware that it is culturally and linguistically different from the effective dominant culture can be defined as a nation group (Connor 1978). Through efforts to unify and mobilize the people of West Belfast to challenge the effective dominant culture that is suppressing "our language" and "our culture" in favour of "their language" and "their culture," alternative Irish-language activists are creating a nation group. This nation group, in which Sinn Féin claims membership, is challenging the legitimacy of a common enemy, the British State, demanding it give recognition and support to the rights of Irish speakers. Therefore, alternative Irish-language activists, inasmuch as they are mobilizing an ethnic group that is necessary to achieve their own goal of creating a permanent Irish-language infrastructure, are also creating a nation group which can be a pool of both latent and actual support for the goals of Sinn Féin. In addition, the cross-cultural efforts of alternative Irish-language activists are of potential benefit to Sinn Féin because they may serve to re-spark Protestant nationalism, thus making Irish-speaking Protestants more receptive to a united Ireland.

It was also argued that, since Sinn Féin's only involvement with single-issue groups, whose demands are refused by the State, constitutes an outsider's support and encouragement, then by all appearances the State discriminates against these minority groups by denying them the civil and human rights to which they are democratically entitled. Because Sinn Féin does not assume an active role in these groups, the government's accusations of "Sinn Féin front" or "paramilitary link" are difficult if not impossible to substantiate, despite being directed toward the portion of the minority population the State wishes to win over. Therefore, Sinn Féin's "passive" method of oppositional activism not only encourages the development of a more ethnically aware Nationalist population that can be mobilized in support of its overall objective, it also exposes the vulnerability and weakens the stance of the effective dominant culture.

In response to these two forms of resistance, the British State first tried to exclude or dismiss the Irish language as inferior, dead and having no place in 20th-century Europe or modern British culture. Finding that it could not ostracize the Irish language from Northern Ireland, the State then attempted to as-

sert the legitimacy of its effective dominant culture by using a different approach. By the providing of funding to what it deemed "safe" Irish-language groups, and by the re-interpretation of the Irish language into a Northern Ireland context, the State hoped to maintain control of—and to placate—increasingly vocal members of the alternative Irish-language community. The State's conditional funding and its recognition of Irish as a traditional language of Northern Ireland, which were seen as a positive move by many alternative Irish-language activists, caused a division within the ranks of the dominant Unionist/Loyalist population. Thus, opposition from sufficiently powerful sources placed the success of the State's new venture in serious peril. The exercise of hegemonic control over a group united by common culture and language is therefore fraught with constant challenges. The situation I have described in Northern Ireland illustrates the potential vulnerability of British cultural hegemony when challenged by alternative and oppositional forms of Irish-language resistance, and emphasizes the importance to the State of the constant review and adjustment of methods of control in order to ensure the continuation of cultural hegemony.

Notes

* I would like to acknowledge the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, which provided funding for my field work in Belfast. Special gratitude must go to Professor Elvi Whittaker for her continuing encouragement and guidance in my pursuit of "other ways" of conducting ethnographic research.

1. The Actors: both the dominant and the subordinate groups in Northern Ireland are neither politically nor religiously homogeneous. The Northern Ireland population of approximately 1.5 million (60% Protestant and 40% Catholic) is broadly labelled as either Unionist/Loyalist or Nationalist/Republican.

   Unionists identify themselves culturally and politically as British. They are mostly monarchists and wish Northern Ireland to remain as part of the United Kingdom. Religiously, Unionists are predominantly, but not exclusively, Protestant.

   Loyalists represent an extreme Unionist view, and believe that there should be no Irish influence, cultural or political, in Northern Ireland. A portion of the Loyalist population is actively involved in one of two major Loyalist paramilitary groups, the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), or the Ulster Defense Association (UDA).

   Nationalists and Republicans identify themselves as culturally and politically Irish, and envision an eventual reunification of Ireland as a necessary element in the solution to the present conflict. The basic difference between them is over the means by which unification should be achieved. These groups are predominantly but not exclusively Catholic.

   The Republican Movement consists of a political base, Sinn Féin, with its military component, the Irish Republican Army (IRA).

   Irish-language speakers and activists make up a growing part, but still a minority, of both the Republican and Nationalist population in Belfast. It is estimated, from the 1991 census, that there were 30 000 people (10%), of Belfast's 300 000 population who knew some Irish—which is up from 7900 (2.3%), in the 1911 census (the date of the previous census in which questions about the Irish language in Northern Ireland were asked).

2. The Gaelic League or Conradh na Gaeilge was formed in 1893. Its goals were to restore Irish as the vernacular in Ireland and to create an Irish literature. By 1922, the Gaelic League had

had a few hard-won successes but they fell far short of its objectives. For further information on the Gaelic League, see Ó Fearaíl, 1975.

3. Comhaltus Uladh: The Ulster Gaelic League.
4. The Cumann Chluain Ard is an Irish-speaking social club, established in 1936 in West Belfast.
5. Gaeltacht: an Irish-speaking district.
6. Ó hAdhmaill (1990:239) found that 40 percent of the 234 Irish learners surveyed in 1985 had first decided to learn the language sometime between 1982 and 1984. When provided with a list of possible reasons for their decision to learn the language, 86 percent selected "to strengthen my Irish identity" (Ó hAdhmaill 1990:239).
7. A researcher from the University of Ulster undertook a survey in 1985 aimed at measuring the extent of the Gaelic revival in West Belfast in the 1980s, and the reasons for the apparent intensified interest in the Irish language there. He concluded that: "Not only has there been an increase in interest in Irish during the 1980s in West Belfast, but much of the reason for the increase appears to be due to political conditions. Although people obviously vary in their reasons for learning Irish, a large portion of the growth in interest appears to stem from the H-block protest and ultimately the hunger strikes of 1981" (Ó hAdhmaill 1985:38).

   On March 1, 1976, a so-called "Normalization Policy" was implemented by the British government in Northern Ireland. As part of this policy, any person charged with a "scheduled offence" (that is an offence relating to the political situation) would, in the future, be classified as an ordinary criminal. This in effect rescinded the special category status and all the privileges and rights, including cultural rights, afforded prisoners charged with similar offences prior to March 1, 1976. In reaction to this policy change, the prisoners refused to wear the prison uniform, thus rejecting this perceived "badge of criminalization." This marked the beginning of the blanket protest (see Coogan 1980) which progressed to the "dirty protest," when prisoners, prevented from slopping out their waste buckets, decorated cell walls with the sordid contents. These actions culminated in 1981 with a hunger strike, which resulted in ten men actually starving themselves to death (see Adams 1986; O'Malley 1990).
8. Hard-won successes of the various campaigns in the early 1980s include: Belfast Community Radio (BCR), operational in 1990, having, as part of its mandate, agreed to broadcast a one-hour bilingual program weekdays between 10:30 and 11:30 p.m. The BBC is still producing fewer than four hours of Irish-language programming on Radio Ulster each week. The phenomenon of the Irish street sign has been an ubiquitous part of city life since 1982. Another campaign by Irish-language activists has resulted in many of the shops, businesses, doctors' and solicitors' offices, as well as community centres, especially in West Belfast, erecting Irish-language signs (see Andersonstown News 1991:9).
9. In 1984, with the the help of some government funding, a decision was made to initiate daily publication of the newspaper, *Preas an Phobail* (established in 1981), and the first daily paper of its kind in any Celtic country was born. This paper was renamed *Lá*, which is Irish for "day," and launched on August 13, 1984. The publication was to become a "cultural movement" in itself, giving "birth to the north's only Irish bookshop, An Ceathrú Póilí, to Belfast's most successful Irish drama company, Aisteoirí Aon Dráma and to a (hibernating) radio station, Raidió Feirste" (Ó Muirí 1991:9).
10. The Bunscoil, Northern Ireland's first Irish-medium primary school, was established in 1971 As of 1991, there were in Belfast alone, nine Irish-medium play groups, a second Irish-medium primary school (est. 1987) and an Irish-medium secondary school (est. 1991). The only school receiving funding in 1991 was the Bunscoil, which had first received it in 1984. Total enrolment in all of these Belfast Irish-medium schools in 1991 was close to 1000 students.
11. This was discovered by the independent Irish-language group, Glór na nGael (West Belfast Committee) in 1990, when, after receiving government funding for five years, it had all money withdrawn and was accused of "improving the standing and furthering the aims of a

paramilitary organisation, whether directly or indirectly" (House of Commons, Written Answers, 1985). After an 18-month battle to clear its name, funding was restored to Glór na nGael, however not before the perceived intent of the government's action was received: if the members of the Irish-language community did not isolate and marginalize Sinn Féin, and stop publicly embarrassing the government over its Irish-language policy, they would find themselves without any sources of financial assistance.

12. The Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) was established in 1971 by the Reverend Ian Paisley, the founder of the Free Presbyterian Church, and by the then-MP and former UUP member, Desmond Boal.
13. The Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) is the largest political party, and the one that provided government in the North from the formation of the Northern Ireland State in 1922 until direct rule in 1972.

References Cited

Adams, Gerry
1986 The Politics of Irish Freedom. Wolfeboro, NH: Brandon.

Adamson, Ian
1986 The Cruthin: A History of the Ulster Land and People. Belfast: Pretani Press.
1987 The Identity of Ulster: The Land, the Language, and the People. Belfast: Pretani Press.

Andersonstown News, The
1987 "Leprechaun Language" Blasted by "City Fathers." Andersonstown News, November 7:15.
1991 Local Business Fillip to Irish Language Praised. Andersonstown News, January 5:9.

Andrews, Liam S.
1991 The Irish Language in the Education System of Northern Ireland: Some Political and Cultural Perspectives. *In* Motivating the Majority: Modern Languages in Northern Ireland, edited by R.M.V. Pritchard, pp. 89-106. London: Coleraine: C.I.L.T./U.U.

Buckley, Anthony D.
1989 "We're Trying to Find Identity": Uses of History among Ulster Protestants. *In* History and Ethnicity, edited by E. Tonkin, M. McDonald and L.M. Chapman, pp. 183-197. London: Routledge.

Clarke, John, S. Hall, T. Jefferson and B. Roberts
1976 Subcultures, Cultures and Class: A Theoretical Overview. *In* Resistance through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post-War Britain, edited by S. Hall and T. Jefferson, pp. 9-74. London: Hutchinson.

Connor, Walker
1978 A Nation Is a Nation, Is a State, Is an Ethnic Group, Is a.... Ethnic and Racial Studies 1(4):377-400.

Coogan, Timothy P.
1980 On the Blanket: The H-Block Story. Dublin: Ward River.

Crozier, Maurna, ed.
1989 Cultural Traditions in Northern Ireland: Varieties of Irishness. Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University.

1990 Cultural Traditions in Northern Ireland: Varieties of Britishness. Belfast: Institute of Irish Studies, Queen's University.

Fishman, Joshua A.
1989 Language and Ethnicity in Minority Sociolinguistic Perspective. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Fitzgerald, Garret
1988 Towards a New Concept of Irishness. *In* Irishness in a Changing Society, edited by C.G. Sandulescu, pp. 196-203. Totowa, NJ: Barnes and Noble.

Geertz, Clifford
1973a Religion as a Cultural System. *In* The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays, by C. Geertz, pp. 87-125. New York: Harper & Row.
1973b Ideology as a Cultural System. *In* The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays, by C. Geertz, pp. 193-233. New York: Harper & Row.

Giddens, Anthony
1984 The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Gramsci, Antonio
1971 Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci. Edited and translated by Quintin Hoare and G.N. Smith. London: Lawrence and Wishart.

House of Commons, Written Answers
1985 [Written parliamentary reply from The Secretary of State, Rt. Hon. Douglas Hurd, MP, to John M. Taylor (Solihull).] June 27. Belfast: Northern Ireland Information Service.

Khleif, Bud B.
1979 Language as Identity: Toward an Ethnography of Welsh Nationalism. Ethnicity 6:346-357.
1985 Issues of Theory and Methodology in the Study of Ethno-Linguistic Movements: The Case of Frisian Nationalism in the Netherlands. *In* New Nationalisms of the Developed West: Toward Explanation, edited by E. Tiryakian and R. Rogowski, pp. 176-199. Boston: Allen and Unwin.

Lears, T.J. Jackson
1985 The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities. American Historical Review 90(3):567-593.

McAdam, Noel
1990 NIO "Backs Irish Language Development." Belfast Telegraph, August 29:6.

Macauley, Conor
1990 Language of the People. Irish News, December 4:11.

Northern Ireland Office, The
1991 Education in Northern Ireland: A New Direction. (Typewritten.)

Ó Fearaíl, Pádriag
1975 The Story of Conradh na Gaeilge: The History of the Gaelic League. Dublin: Clódhanna Teo.

Ó hAdhmaill, Féilim
1985 Report of a Survey Carried Out on the Irish Language in West Belfast in the Winter of 1984-85. Belfast: West Belfast Committee of Glór na nGael.
1990 The Function and Dynamics of the Ghetto: A Study of Nationalist West Belfast. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Ulster.

O'Malley, Padraig
1990 Biting at the Grave: The Irish Hunger Strikes and the Politics of Despair. Boston: Beacon.

Ó Muilleoir, Máirtín
1986 The Necessity for Cultural Liberation. *In* The Role of the Language in Ireland's Cultural Revival, edited by Sinn Féin, pp. 20-23. Belfast: AP/RN.

Ó Muirí, Pól
1991 Another Day, Another LA. Fortnight. April 29:9.

Pritchard, Rosalind
1990 Language Policy in Northern Ireland. Teangeolas (Summer Issue):26-35.

Roseberry, William
1989 Anthropologies and Histories: Essays in Culture, History, and Political Economy. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Rowthorn, Bob, and Naomi Wayne
1988 Northern Ireland: The Political Economy of Conflict. Cambridge, UK: Polity Press.

Schweitzer, David
1991 Marxist Theories of Alienation and Reification: The Response to Capitalism, State Socialism, and the Advent of Postmodernity. International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy 11:27-52.

Smyth, Damian
1989 Cultural Pluralism, or Plain Sectarianism? (Interview with James Hawthorne, Chair, Cultural Traditions Group). Fortnight 278(November): 28-30.

Williams, Raymond
1977 Marxism and Literature. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
1980 Problems in Materialism and Culture. London: Verso.

LE POISSON-AVALEUR

Daniel Clément
Service canadien d'ethnologie

Résumé: Le *Poisson-avaleur* est un épisode d'un mythe amérindien qui a déjà fait l'objet de quelques analyses structurales dans lesquelles il est interprété comme l'histoire d'une naissance humaine, une interprétation infirmée par certains de ses éléments. L'épisode mythique est en fait motivé par deux ordres de phénomènes naturels : un comportement alimentaire du poisson-avaleur et des histoires de poissons géants qui circulent dans au moins une région où ce mythe est raconté. La découverte de ces *étymons* du récit permet, par la suite, de dégager les leçons principales et secondaires de l'épisode. Les résultats de notre analyse du *Poisson-avaleur* mettent en question le principe saussurien de l'arbitraire du signe sur lequel le structuralisme fonde son analyse des mythes. Il met aussi en évidence le principe que dans les mythes la relation entre les unités constitutives (le signifiant) et la réalité (le signifié) n'est pas arbitraire. Notre critique du structuralisme rejoint enfin celle de Giddens (1979) lorsque ce dernier cherche à réintroduire la pratique ou le vécu comme élément fondamental dans l'analyse des phénomènes sociaux.

Abstract: This article deals with the *Poisson-avaleur*, a mythical episode which has already been analyzed by some structuralists and which is interpreted as the birth of a human being, an interpretation which cannot be supported by some of its elements. In fact, this mythical episode is based on two kinds of natural phenomena : a feeding habit of the fishes identified as the *poisson-avaleur* and stories of giant fishes that circulate at least in one area where the myth is told. The discovery of the narrative *etymons* further helps us to unfold the primary and secondary teachings of the episode. The result of this analysis of the *Poisson-avaleur* questions Saussure's doctrine of the arbitrary character of the sign on which is based the structural analysis of myth. It also illuminates the specific nature of myth in which, on the contrary, the relation between the components (signifier) and reality (signified) is not arbitrary. Finally, our critique of structuralism is akin to that of Giddens (1979) who argues that social practice and the actor's knowledge are fundamental for understanding social phenomena.

Anthropologica **XXXVI (1994) 155-180**

Le *Poisson-avaleur* est un épisode mythique qui relève habituellement du cycle d'un jeune héros amérindien dont le nom varie selon le groupe culturel considéré. Étant donné que ce jeune héros apparaît surtout dans les mythologies algonquiennes (Fisher 1946:239-240; Savard 1985:95-99), du moins dans l'état actuel de nos connaissances, nous retiendrons comme nom de référence celui qui est utilisé chez un peuple de cette famille, tel les Ojibwa septentrionaux, qui l'appelle Jakabish. Ce choix n'est pas le fruit du hasard puisqu'une variante de l'épisode mythique recueillie auprès de ces autochtones a déjà fait l'objet d'une analyse (Désveaux 1988:156) qui, comme une autre analyse du même genre (Savard 1985:139-144), n'a pas tenu compte de certains phénomènes naturels essentiels à la compréhension du récit. Par phénomènes naturels, nous entendons ici des faits communs ou extraordinaires qui relèvent de la nature et que, souvent, seules une enquête approfondie auprès des usagers du récit ou une étude des sources documentaires peuvent espérer dévoiler.

En fait, notre étude du *Poisson-avaleur* s'appuie largement sur la science des ethnies d'où proviennent les mythes étudiés et, ainsi, entretient des liens avec l'ethnoscience, une sous-discipline de l'anthropologie. Dans sa définition la plus large, l'ethnoscience s'intéresse aux modes de connaissance humains dont elle étudie la nature, la logique et la portée, en particulier, les savoirs relatifs à l'environnement (représentation des plantes, des animaux; classification des éléments naturels; savoir écologique; etc.). L'utilisation des données ethnoscientifiques dans l'étude des mythes n'est peut-être pas un phénomène récent. Ce qui est nouveau, par contre, c'est s'en servir pour élucider les éléments étranges du récit et, partant, expliquer le fondement de ces récits *sans* recourir à une comparaison avec d'autres éléments mythiques du même récit ou d'autres récits. Depuis Lévi-Strauss, l'étude des mythes a suivi une tangente dont le point d'origine est sans conteste le principe saussurien de l'arbitraire du signe. Or, ce principe linguistique appliqué à la mythologie, qui sépare au départ le signifiant du signifié et qui ensuite assimile le signifiant aux unités constitutives du récit (ou mythèmes) et la fonction signifiante aux relations entre ces unités (Lévi-Strauss 1974[1958]:227-255), peut être mis en question. D'une part, le signe n'est jamais arbitraire pour le sujet parlant et Saussure semble en avoir lui-même convenu (Giddens 1979:11). D'autre part, le mythe n'est pas la langue et pourrait bien échapper au principe de l'arbitraire du signe et de toute étude de type linguistique. En fait, toutes nos recherches (Clément 1991, 1992) indiquent qu'il en est ainsi et que dans les mythes le signifiant est *motivé* par rapport au signifié avec lequel il a «une attache naturelle dans la réalité» (Saussure 1983[1916]:101).

Cela étant, nous tenterons dans l'analyse du mythe qui suit non seulement de montrer ces liens qui unissent le signifiant au signifié mais encore d'expliquer sous quel aspect le signe n'est pas arbitraire pour le sujet parlant, ici les usagers du récit. Cette double preuve empruntera à la science étymologique le

concept d'étymon qui deviendra dans l'analyse du mythe tout élément fondamental qui *motive* le récit (Clément 1992). Toutefois, ce concept ne sera pas restreint au signifiant comme il l'est souvent en étymologie : Saussure (1983 [1916]:259) limite ainsi l'étymologie à l'explication d'un mot (signifiant) par un autre mot (signifiant). Au contraire, un peu à la manière d'une recherche étymologique visant à découvrir également les dérivations de *sens* (par exemple, le terme tibia qui vient d'un terme latin signifiant «flûte» et qui doit établir une ressemblance entre l'os et la forme de cet instrument), il impliquera une recherche active des phénomènes naturels ou faits de connaissance (signifié) d'où proviendraient les motifs mythiques (signifiant) et, une fois établie, aidera à mettre en lumière le ou les messages véhiculés par le mythe.

Dans le cas du *Poisson-avaleur*, les étymons du récit nous ont été révélés lors de deux enquêtes distinctes menées auprès des Montagnais de Mingan et de Natashquan et des Cris de Chisasibi, la première visant à rassembler des données sur les connaissances zoologiques des Montagnais, la seconde portant entre autres sur les rapports entre les Cris et le poisson. Toutes ces données peuvent servir, puisque les Cris et les Montagnais – comme les Ojibwa du Nord d'ailleurs dont la variante du *Poisson-avaleur* nous servira de variante de base – sont très apparentés tant sur les plans linguistique, culturel qu'écologique. Ils habitent tous la zone du subarctique oriental, parlent des langues appartenant à la même famille linguistique, la famille algonquienne, et tous partagent encore un mode de vie traditionnellement orienté vers la chasse, la pêche et la cueillette.

Notre examen du *Poisson-avaleur* comprendra quatre parties. Nous présenterone d'abord la variante de base[1] qui est la variante ojibwa. Cette présentation sera suivie d'un bref exposé des interprétations structurales de l'épisode mythique. Nous procéderons ensuite à notre propre analyse et nous terminerons, en conclusion, par quelques considérations générales sur les résultats atteints.

Le *Poisson-avaleur*, la variante de base (M_a)

Un jour, la soeur de Jakabish lui recommande de ne pas aller à la rivière car elle a aperçu cette énorme créature qui nage dans la rivière. «Ne va jamais nager, lui dit-elle, car le poisson géant t'avalerait!» Jakabish se promenait et tirait à l'arc. Une de ses flèches finit sa course dans la rivière. Il se dévêt et va pour la récupérer et voici qu'arrive cet énorme poisson qui l'avale.

La soeur de Jakabish commence à s'inquiéter pour son frère. Elle part donc à sa recherche. Elle arrive à la rivière et découvre les vêtements de Jakabish. La soeur fabrique un hameçon et le laisse s'enfoncer dans l'eau dans l'espoir d'attraper le poisson qui a avalé son frère. Très tôt, le lendemain matin, Jakabish dit au poisson : «Approchons de la rive, comme ça nous aurons un peu plus chaud.» Alors que le poisson nageait le long de la rive, Jakabish remarqua l'hameçon, mais le poisson n'avait pas envie de mordre car il avait déjà Jakabish dans l'estomac. Le poisson nageait autour de l'hameçon, quand, tout à coup, Jakabish at-

trape l'hameçon lui-même et le plante dans l'estomac du poisson. La soeur vient pour relever sa ligne et, bien entendu, elle a attrapé un énorme *jaobish* (brochet). Elle prend le brochet et s'apprête à en découper les viscères quand elle entend une voix qui dit: «Vas-y doucement, ma soeur, ne me découpe pas en morceaux.» C'était son frère, alors elle éviscéra le poisson très soigneusement et en retira Jakabish. Ensuite elle le nettoya et le baigna car il avait passé toute la nuit à l'intérieur de l'estomac du brochet. Enfin, elle le ramena à la maison. (Désveaux 1988:66)

Interprétations structurales du récit

D'après Désveaux (1988:155-156), qui a consigné cette variante, l'épisode du *Poisson-avaleur* se résumerait à une simple histoire de naissance d'un «Jonas exotique». Cette histoire ferait pendant à un autre épisode du mythe de Jakabish où ce dernier doit renoncer à faire revivre ses parents à la suite d'une faute commise par sa soeur alors qu'il tentait de communiquer, dans l'au-delà, avec ces derniers. Les parents avaient en fait été tués par un ours géant (ou une créature quelconque selon les variantes) et les deux épisodes s'opposeraient comme l'indique le sous-titre (Naissance et mort) utilisé par l'auteur pour en parler.

Savard (1985:139-144), qui a également analysé le mythe de Jakabish (Tshakapesh chez cet auteur), procède de façon similaire, à peu de choses près. Les deux mêmes épisodes sont opposés quoique l'opposition soit située sur un autre plan («De plus l'ours et le poisson renvoient à deux aspects antithétiques de l'environnement: le sec, le solide, etc. [*assi*] et le mouillé, le liquide, etc. [*nipi*]», Savard 1985:139) et l'épisode du poisson, comme celui de l'ours cette fois, est également lié à une naissance («Une idée claire traverse de part en part ces aventures A et B : ce sont les femmes qui donnent naissance aux hommes, non l'inverse», Savard 1985:139). En outre, ce rôle des femmes dans l'accouchement, qui est aussi mis en évidence par Désveaux (1988:157), est encore relié par les deux auteurs à la fonction démiurgique que remplit tout le cycle de Jakabish dans la pensée autochtone : le mythe de Jakabish renvoie en effet à la construction tant économique, sociale que culturelle du mode de vie de ses usagers.

Or, rien n'indique *a priori* que l'épisode du *Poisson-avaleur* doit nécessairement être analysé en le comparant à l'épisode de l'ours ou à tout autre épisode qui relève du mythe de Jakabish. L'épisode du *Poisson-avaleur* est parfois conté seul (Savard 1985:301; Désveaux 1989:67) et il est aussi relaté à l'intérieur d'un autre cycle que celui de Jakabish. Chez les Menomini (Hoffman 1890:247-249) et les Sauk (Skinner 1928:151-152), par exemple, cette aventure est attribuée au personnage du décepteur, un autre héros – à forme animale cette fois – du panthéon amérindien. Cela étant, si l'épisode peut être isolé dans l'esprit des conteurs, cela revient à dire que sa signification n'est pas uniquement fonction de son rapport avec les autres épisodes du mythe

(naissance opposée à mort ou, plus abstraitement, mouillé, liquide opposé à sec, solide). Cela revient également à dire qu'on peut espérer trouver le sens de l'épisode ailleurs que dans le récit, par exemple, comme nous l'avons mentionné, dans les faits de connaissance et d'expérience qui constituent la pratique des usagers du récit. Un critique du structuralisme (Giddens 1979) a d'ailleurs déjà mis en évidence cet aspect négligé dans les études structuralistes. L'analyse qui suit en constitue aussi une démonstration.

L'analyse du récit

Le *Poisson-avaleur* sera examiné sous plusieurs rapports. Dans un premier temps, les espèces qui ont avalé le héros – elles sont différentes selon les variantes – seront examinées et leurs points communs, en particulier leurs activités prédatrices, seront mis en évidence. Dans un deuxième temps, les «histoires de poisson» telles qu'elles nous ont été contées par des Cris de Chisasibi, seront commentées. Ces deux parties, qui constituent en fait une présentation des phénomènes naturels à la base de l'épisode mythique, permettront ainsi de situer le récit dans son contexte zoologique et existentiel initial, ce qui nous autorisera alors à dégager la leçon ou les leçons principales de l'épisode. Cette leçon ou ces leçons seront aussi étayées par quelques autres détails contenus dans le récit. Dans un troisième temps, les leçons complémentaires de l'épisode mythique seront également étudiées.

Qui a avalé le héros?

L'espèce animale qui avale le héros du *Poisson-avaleur* varie. Le tableau 1 présente ces espèces en fonction des groupes d'origine de l'épisode mythique. Le tableau comprend également des références aux ouvrages d'où proviennent les variantes. Nous connaissons actuellement 24 variantes et l'ordre dans lequel elles sont présentées au tableau 1 est fondé essentiellement sur l'inventaire partiel mais considérable que Savard (1985:96-102) a dressé du mythe de Jakabish dans les mythologies nord-américaines. Nous avons simplement suivi cet ordre en y ajoutant au début et à la fin les autres variantes que nous avons trouvées.

Selon le tableau 1, les poissons identifiés comme ayant avalé le héros du *Poisson-avaleur* sont, dans l'ordre, le grand brochet (*Esox lucius*) dans la variante de base, dans une autre variante ojibwa et dans la variante attikamek, l'omble de fontaine (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) dans certaines variantes montagnaises et la truite grise ou touladi (*Salvelinus namaycush*) dans au moins une variante crie. Les poissons non identifiés sont, également dans l'ordre, *ketshemeshukunieut*, *mimitushikasheu* ou *mimikutetsheshwa*, *memikokonew* ou *mimikutshekanu*, *kamiutshiutskoshkwa*, *maamihkuuchishchikishuuch* et *gam-goosch-jhick-shoo*. Pour les autres poissons, nous avons soit des termes descriptifs qui font référence à la dimension du poisson, du moins selon les

traductions françaises du récit («gros poisson», «énorme poisson», «poisson géant», etc.), soit des termes vernaculaires qui posent encore quelques difficultés comme *mastameku* ou *mastamek*^{w} rendu dans Savard (1985:190) ou dans Lefebvre (1974:40) par «baleine», soit d'autres termes vernaculaires dont le sens est reconstituable comme *Ma'-shĕ-no'-mak* et *Mishinomäk'wé* qui viennent respectivement de *ma'-she* – «grand» («*Ma'-she*, great», Hoffman 1890:247), *mishi*-«grand» et *-nomak* qui signifie probablement «poisson».

Tableau 1
Espèces de poissons-avaleurs selon les variantes

Var.	Groupe	Poissons	Documents
M_a	Ojibwa	brochet (*jaobish*)	Désveaux 1988:66-67
M_b	Ojibwa	brochet	Désveaux 1988:67
M_c	Montagnais	omble de fontaine; aussi *ketshemeshukunieut*	Savard 1985:85 Lefebvre 1974:83
M_d	Montagnais	omble de fontaine	Savard 1985:173-174
M_e	Montagnais	*mimitutskikasheu*, *mimikutetsheshwa*	Savard 1985:183-184
M_f	Montagnais	omble de fontaine; aussi *mastameku*	Savard 1985:190-191
M_g	Montagnais	gros poisson	Savard 1985:201-202
M_h	Montagnais	*memikokonew*, *mimikutshekanu*; aussi *mastamek*^{w}	Savard 1985:209-210; voir aussi Lefebvre 1974:40, note 2
M_i	Montagnais	truite	Savard 1985:212-213
M_j	Montagnais	grosse truite, grosse comme une baleine	Savard 1985:227-228
M_k	Montagnais	poisson	Savard 1985:230-231
M_l	Cri	*kamiutshiutskoshkwa*	Savard 1985:259-260
M_m	Cri	gros poisson	Savard 1985:266
M_n	Cri	énorme poisson	Savard 1985:271
M_o	Cri	gros poisson	Savard 1985:279-281
M_p	Cri	énorme poisson	Savard 1985:286-287
M_q	Cri	poisson	Savard 1985:295-296
M_r	Cri	gros poisson	Savard 1985:297-298
M_s	Attikamek	brochet géant	Savard 1985:301-302
M_t	Kutenai	omble	Savard 1985:321-322
M_u	Cri	truite grise géante: *maamihkuuchishchikishuuch*	Scott 1982:15-16
M_v	Cri	poisson géant: *gam-goochsh-jhick-shoo*	Pachano 1987:12-16
M_w	Menomini	poisson géant: *Ma'-shĕ-no-'mak*	Hoffman 1890:247-249
M_x	Sauk	poisson géant: *mishinomäk'wé*	Skinner 1928:151-152

Le poisson qui avale le héros est manifestement énorme quelle que soit l'espèce de poisson évoquée. Toutes les variantes concordent sur ce point et la dimension imaginable d'un poisson assez gros pour avaler un être humain, même s'il ne s'agit que d'un enfant, le confirme amplement. D'ailleurs, la plupart des termes vernaculaires mentionnés au tableau 1 contiennent une allusion à la grandeur démesurée du poisson. C'est le cas notamment de *mastameku* (ou *mastamek*^{w}) utilisé dans deux variantes montagnaises (M_f et M_h) et celui de quelques poissons non identifiés rapportées dans les versions M_e, M_h et M_u du récit. Ces deux cas seront maintenant détaillés.

À prime abord, le terme *mastameku* (ou *mastamek*^{w}) pose certaines difficultés. Le traducteur autochtone des deux variantes où ce terme a été utilisé l'a rendu par «baleine» («*mastameku* : whale», Savard 1985:190, note 111; «On retrouve par ailleurs dans le texte, *mastamek*^{w}, baleine», Lefebvre 1974:40, note 2) et il s'agirait alors d'une espèce aquatique spécifiquement marine et non d'une espèce d'eau douce comme c'est le cas dans la plupart des autres variantes (brochet, omble de fontaine et truite grise)[2]. Or, il y a plusieurs raisons qui portent à croire que le terme a peut-être été mal rendu. Premièrement, le terme *mastameku* (ou *mastamek*^{w}) vient de *masta-* «grand, gros» et de *-meku* (ou *-mek*^{w}) qui signifie «poisson» et même s'il s'agit là d'un terme générique qui regroupe l'ensemble des cétacés connus des Montagnais comme le béluga, le rorqual et l'épaulard ainsi que d'autres grands poissons marins (Clément 1995:454), le mot peut aussi, théoriquement, être utilisé pour désigner n'importe quel gros spécimen d'une espèce donnée. Le mot menomini (*Ma'-shĕ-no'-mak*) et le mot sauk (*Mishinomäk'wé*), tous deux de *ma'-she-*, *mishi-* «grand», sont d'ailleurs formés de façon similaire. Deuxièmement, le contexte même d'utilisation des termes montagnais indique que le poisson[3] est plus une espèce d'eau douce qu'une espèce marine. En effet, dans une variante, le terme montagnais est utilisé parallèlement (presque comme synonyme) à un autre terme qui désigne cette fois un gros spécimen d'une espèce d'eau douce. Ainsi, dans la variante M_f, «grosse truite» (de *matimeku* truite, omble de fontaine, Savard 1985:190, note 11) et *mastameku* sont employés indifféremment pour désigner le même poisson-avaleur[4]. Qui plus est, dans les deux variantes, le poisson-avaleur est pêché à la ligne, une technique qui n'a jamais été utilisée par ces autochtones pour prendre des cétacés. Ces deux raisons, l'étymologie du terme et le contexte technique, semblent donc indiquer dans l'esprit des conteurs une association entre l'espèce qui avale le héros et une espèce d'eau douce, une interprétation qui est d'ailleurs corroborée par plusieurs autres variantes. Cette association est également doublée d'une référence à la dimension extraordinaire du spécimen marquée dans l'étymologie même du terme.

Le cas des variantes M_e, M_h et M_u où apparaissent des termes montagnais et cris non identifiés comportant aussi une allusion à la grandeur du poisson

exige par contre d'autres éclaircissements. Lors d'un récent séjour à Chisasibi, deux de nos informateurs cris identifiaient le poisson-avaleur de la même façon que dans la variante crie (M_u) consignée par Scott (1982:15-16), c'est-à-dire comme un touladi ou truite grise. On lui attribuait alors le nom de *maamihkutihchikishuu* une référence, selon un d'entre eux, aux nageoires très rouges qui caractérisent les plus gros spécimens. Le terme vient en fait de *maamihku-* : «très rouge» (*maa-* : redoublement + *-mihku-* :«rouge») et de *-(u)tihchik-* : «nageoire» (*utihchikin* : nageoires dorsale, adipeuse, pectorale, pelvienne et anale). Les ichtyologistes Scott et Crossman (1974) ne mentionnent pas ce changement de coloration des nageoires en fonction de la taille des spécimens – c'est sans doute un détail sur lequel on ne s'est pas arrêté – mais cette explication d'un Chisabien rend compte de plusieurs appellations du poisson-avaleur qui n'avaient pas encore été élucidées et montre en même temps en quoi ces appellations constituent des références à des spécimens énormes. Le tableau 2 résume les analyses étymologiques des termes non identifiés qui sont formés de morphèmes renvoyant à des nageoires très rouges et/ou très grosses.

Tableau 2
Étymologie de certaines appellations du poisson-avaleur

Var.	Appellation	Étymologie
M_e	*mimitutshikasheu*	de *mi-* : redoublement et *-mitutshik-* : «nageoire»
M_e	*mimikutetsheshwa*	de *mi-* : redoublement et *-miku-* : «rouge» et *-(u)tetshe-* : «nageoire» (en montagnais, *mitîtshîkan* «nageoire» vient de *-tîtshî-* :main)
M_h	*memikokonew*	de *me-* : redoublement et *-miko-* : «rouge»
M_h	*mimikutshekanu*	de *mi-* : redoublement et *-miku-* : «rouge» et *-(u)tshekan-* : peut-être aussi «nageoire»
M_u	*maamihkuuchish-chikishuuch*	de *maa-* : redoublement et *-mihkuu-* : «rouge» et *-(uu)chishchik-* : «nageoire»

La présence d'un redoublement initial associé à un morphème signifiant «rouge» ou «nageoire» ou les deux à la fois confère donc au terme une notion de gigantisme qui vient appuyer nos propos. De plus, la notion de «nageoire rouge» comprise dans les termes des variantes montagnaises pourrait indiquer que le poisson-avaleur est une truite grise, si l'on en croit la même association effectuée par les Cris. Il faudrait toutefois encore enquêter auprès de ces Montagnais pour confirmer cette supposition. Enfin, même si certains termes vernaculaires restent encore non élucidés (*ketshemeshukunieut*, *kamiutshiutskoshkwa* et *gam-goochsh-jhick-shoo*), il se peut fort bien, à la lumière de nos données, que ces termes aient également des significations parallèles à celles que nous avons trouvées dans les autres cas.

En plus de sa dimension considérable et en plus d'être un poisson d'eau douce, le poisson-avaleur tel qu'identifié comme une espèce bien précise (brochet, omble de fontaine et truite grise) montre encore au moins une caractéristique essentielle à la compréhension du récit. Cette caractéristique n'a été prise en considération dans les analyses antérieures que partiellement. Dans son commentaire de la variante ojibwa du poisson-avaleur – celle qui nous sert de variante de base – Désveaux remarque ainsi, à raison, les moeurs carnivores du brochet qui viendraient, entre autres, justifier le choix de ce poisson comme représentant du poisson-avaleur.

> Au-delà de cette première métaphore, le choix du brochet parmi les espèces de poissons familières aux Indiens, n'est pas sans signification. *Jaobish* se distingue des autres poissons sur plusieurs plans. Premièrement, il s'agit de la seule espèce pêchée de façon régulière durant toute l'année. Deuxièmement, le brochet, avec ses mâchoires acérées, affiche un tempérament cannibale ou à tout le moins carnivore, tempérament qu'il partage avec le sandre (XXIII) et qui justifie ici le fait qu'il puisse avaler le héros à renaître. Troisièmement, les brochets peuvent atteindre, à l'instar des esturgeons, des tailles considérables. Tous ces traits, a-périodicité saisonnière, connotation cannibale, extensibilité quasi illimitée de ses propres dimensions, en font un transgresseur naturel des lois de la nature, c'est-à-dire pour les Indiens, des frontières posées entre les domaines par l'ordre des choses. (Désveaux 1988:156)

La troisième raison avancée par Désveaux pour expliquer le choix du brochet comme poisson-avaleur, c'est-à-dire sa taille considérable, a déjà été abordée et bien que d'un point de vue strictement biologique, elle puisse rendre compte du choix du grand brochet (jusqu'à au moins 133 cm de longueur d'après Scott et Crossman 1974:389) et du touladi (jusqu'à 126 cm d'après Scott et Crossman 1974:241) dans certaines variantes, elle ne peut expliquer pourquoi c'est l'omble de fontaine d'une longueur maximale de 80 cm selon Allyn (1967:117) qui joue ce rôle dans au moins trois autres variantes montagnaises. À ce compte, on aurait pu choisir l'omble chevalier (*Salvelinus alpinus*) qui atteint des tailles plus considérables (jusqu'à 96 cm selon Scott et Crossman 1974:22) et qui est pêché dans la même région. En comparant plusieurs variantes de l'épisode mythique du *Poisson-avaleur,* il apparaît donc que la taille réelle de telle ou telle espèce ne peut rendre compte, à elle seule, du choix du poisson-avaleur, même si la taille du poisson-avaleur est importante sur un autre plan comme on le verra ci-dessous. Il faut donc chercher ailleurs les raisons de ces choix.

Désveaux (1988:156) propose aussi comme première raison le fait que le brochet est le seul poisson pêché de façon régulière durant toute l'année, ce qui est inexact. D'après Désveaux (1988:46) lui-même, la truite grise était aussi pêchée anciennement en été comme en hiver, sans compter que chez les Cris, la truite grise choisie comme poisson-avaleur n'est pas pêchée durant toute l'année. De plus, l'action du *Poisson-avaleur* ne se déroule pas en hiver

(le héros se dévêt pour aller à l'eau dans la variante de base) et c'est donc dire que l'espèce identifiée comme poisson-avaleur pourrait être une espèce prise uniquement lorsque les lacs ou les rivières ne sont pas gelés. Dans cet ordre d'idées, nous croyons que l'espèce choisie pour représenter le poisson-avaleur – nos données indiquent une préférence pour l'omble de fontaine chez les Montagnais, le touladi chez les Cris et le brochet chez les Attikamek et les Objibwa – pourrait relever davantage d'une technique de pêche (pêche à la ligne dans l'épisode mythique) associée à une espèce particulière prise à une époque précise (libre de glaces), mais il nous manque encore des données pour statuer sur ce sujet.

Par contre, nous savons pertinemment pourquoi ce sont le brochet, le touladi et l'omble de fontaine qui apparaissent dans les variantes comme poisson-avaleur et non d'autres espèces comme l'esturgeon (*Acipenser fulvescens*) dont la taille peut aussi être très considérable (jusqu'à deux mètres et plus dans certains cas) ou encore le grand corégone (*Coregonus clupeaformis*) qui est une espèce économiquement très importante dans tous ces groupes. Cette raison rejoint le deuxième facteur avancé par Désveaux (1988), soit la nature carnivore, voire cannibale du brochet. Mais elle dépasse toutefois cette première constatation car l'omble de fontaine et le touladi sont aussi connus comme cannibales (Scott et Crossman 1974:229, 243), mais ils ne sont pas les seuls; il y a encore le doré (*Stizostedion vitreum*) (Scott et Crossman 1974:828) et probablement d'autres poissons comme la lotte (*Lota lota*) qui le sont également.

Selon nos informateurs montagnais et cris, le brochet, le touladi et l'omble de fontaine sont ainsi les *seules* espèces dans les régions septentrionales dont l'alimentation comporte à l'occasion de petits mammifères (souris, rats musqués, écureuils et lièvres[5]) et même des canetons. Le fait est également très connu des scientifiques qui notent dans le régime alimentaire du brochet des souris, des rats musqués et des canetons (Scott et Crossman 1974:391), dans celui du touladi des souris et des musaraignes (Scott et Crossman 1974:243) et dans celui de l'omble de fontaine des campagnols et des musaraignes (Scott et Crossman 1974:229). Or, cette réalité ou phénomène naturel suggère fortement un rapprochement entre le héros du *Poisson-avaleur* et un petit être encore couvert de poils ou même en putréfaction qu'une personne peut toujours trouver lorsqu'elle dépèce ce genre de poissons. Le rapprochement est d'ailleurs d'autant plus probant que dans plusieurs variantes du récit, le héros est souillé, et que dans certaines d'entre elles, il est complètement recouvert d'une toison lorsqu'il est libéré du poisson. Notre interprétation convient d'ailleurs à l'ensemble des variantes ce qui n'est pas le cas des interprétations qui associent l'épisode mythique à une naissance humaine.

Une souillure est donc mentionnée dans au moins neuf versions de l'épisode mythique avec quelques variations près: on parle ainsi de souillure luisante en M_b, de mauvaise haleine du poisson dont le héros est imprégné en

M_g et M_h, d'une odeur particulière en M_l, de viscosité en M_o, de bave en M_q et de sécrétions gastriques en M_u, des images qui ne renvoient certainement pas toutes à un accouchement : un nouveau-né ne pue pas et n'est pas imprégné de sucs gastriques, alors qu'une proie en train d'être digérée par un poisson peut l'être. En M_j, on parle même de peau en train de se décomposer, une autre image qui ne convient pas à une naissance humaine mais bien plutôt à un phénomène de digestion. En M_f enfin, le héros «est tout couvert de poils» (Savard 1985:191) et comment alors s'étonner d'un lien entre cet état et celui d'un petit mammifère entier découvert à l'intérieur d'un poisson carnivore? Cette question de toison[6] est d'ailleurs présente implicitement à la fin de quatre des neuf variantes citées plus haut alors que le héros, en train de se laver ou d'être lavé, décide de laisser deux endroits intacts (tête et pubis en M_b et M_o; tête et barbe ou moustache en M_f et M_q) de telle sorte qu'à l'avenir les gens aient «des poils à ces deux endroits» (Désveaux 1988:67).

Nous n'analyserons pas en détail toutes les implications de ce genre de conclusion de l'épisode du *Poisson-avaleur* qu'on retrouve dans au moins quatre variantes. Qu'il nous soit toutefois permis de mentionner que les chutes de récit et des situations narratives particulières sont souvent utilisées pour «expliquer» l'existence de certains phénomènes : par exemple, dans un autre épisode du mythe de Jakabish, le héros est amené à desserrer les mâchoires de sa soeur mais elles ne seront pas écartées démesurément sinon, à l'avenir, «les humains naîtraient munis d'une bouche trop grande» (Savard 1985:177). Qu'il nous soit aussi permis de spécifier que dans leur analyse du *Poisson-avaleur*, certains ont évoqué la scène dans laquelle Jakabish est lavé par sa soeur comme une confirmation de leur interprétation de l'épisode mythique en tant que symbole d'une naissance («Ne le nettoie-t-elle pas ensuite comme on le fait à la suite d'un accouchement?» Désveaux 1988:156). Or, même si dans quatre variantes (M_a, M_b, M_o et M_q), c'est bien elle qui nettoie son frère, il n'en pas va nécessairement de même dans toutes les variantes : ainsi en M_u et en M_f, c'est le héros lui-même qui va se laver. Un argument similaire, à l'effet que la délivrance du héros du poisson-avaleur renvoie nécessairement à un accouchement parce qu'elle est effectuée par une femme, la soeur du héros («Ainsi la délivrance est-elle bien oeuvre féminine», Désveaux 1988:158), apparaît également spécieux. Le motif pourrait tout aussi bien renvoyer *uniquement* au simple découpage des poissons – et même à la pêche dans son ensemble – qui était et est encore aujourd'hui une activité typiquement féminine («[...] mais il semble qu'au total, la pêche ait été davantage une activité féminine», Mailhot et Michaud 1965:43, cité dans Lefebvre 1974:131). Dans une famille de Chisasibi que nous avons connue, c'était également la femme plus que l'homme qui s'occupait de découper le poisson.

En définitive, chaque élément de l'épisode mythique peut être rapporté à un contexte social et écologique bien précis qui a l'avantage de rendre compte de

toutes les variantes, ce que ne peut nous procurer l'interprétation du *Poisson-avaleur* comme le symbole d'une naissance humaine. En particulier, la présence de petits mammifères dans l'alimentation des espèces identifiées comme le poisson-avaleur, qui constitue en fait un des étymons du récit, peut non seulement expliquer le choix du brochet, du touladi et de l'omble de fontaine pour représenter le poisson géant, mais le même phénomène peut aussi rendre compte de plusieurs détails comme la toison que porte le héros, son odeur lors de sa libération ou même le contexte saisonnier du récit puisqu'on ne trouve des mammifères dans l'estomac de ces poissons que durant l'été.

Les histoires de poissons

Nous avons vu jusqu'ici que le mythe repose sur un phénomène naturel, à savoir qu'un petit être vivant peut être avalé par certains poissons. Mais il existe également un second ordre de phénomènes naturels qui sert de fondement au récit, un ordre qui nous a été révélé lors d'un récent séjour à Chisasibi. Il s'agit d'histoires de poissons qui laissent transparaître, sur le plan existentiel, une certaine crainte qu'ont les autochtones à l'égard du poisson. Les phénomènes évoqués dans ces histoires sont «naturels» dans la mesure où les informateurs relatent des faits de la nature qu'aucun d'eux ne semble contester bien que ces faits ne relèvent certainement pas de l'ordinaire. À la lumière de la science occidentale, ces histoires paraîtront certainement dérisoires, mais elles ne doivent pas être considérées comme telles. Il faut comprendre que ces histoires font partie d'un contexte et qu'une fois prises pour acquises, elles peuvent servir à expliquer le mythe en même temps qu'elles aident à mieux situer l'importance de la taille considérable du poisson-avaleur dans le récit.

Les histoires[7] de poisson qui circulent dans le Nord ne sont pas extrêmement nombreuses mais elles sont répandues et semblent connues de tous. À Chisasibi, on parle ainsi d'un poisson si gros qu'il faisait même reculer le hors-bord dans lequel prenaient place plusieurs autochtones se livrant à la pêche. Cette histoire se passait au lac Julian et celui qui l'a raconté (R.H. 25.09.90[8]) participait à cette randonnée. Un second informateur nous a également raconté l'histoire d'un poisson dont la taille devait être considérable puisque ce poisson avait entraîné sous la glace un pêcheur arrogant qui se vantait de pouvoir pêcher un poisson encore plus grand qu'un autre, déjà énorme, qui avait été capturé par un de ses compagnons (R.M. 12.11.90). Ce même informateur nous mentionnait également l'existence d'un squelette géant de grand corégone qu'on a trouvé sur une île du lac Burton et, par géant, il entendait visiblement quelque chose d'aussi grand qu'une baleine (R.M. 12.11.90). Le lac Burton est d'ailleurs réputé pour ses histoires de poissons. À preuve encore, cette croyance locale qui fait état d'un poisson géant habitant le fond de l'eau dans la partie orientale du lac. À partir d'une carte sur laquelle un Chisabien (G.S. 14.01.91) nous avait indiqué avec précision l'espace occupé par la

bête, nous avons évalué la longueur de celle-ci : elle atteindrait facilement les 500 mètres!

D'autres histoires similaires de gigantisme sont rapportées. La dernière que nous citerons est un fait d'expérience qui nous a été raconté par un de nos informateurs (E.R. 26.09.90) et qui évoque, en un sens, ce qui arrive au héros sur le plan du récit. Cet informateur voyageait près d'un des nombreux réservoirs construits à la Baie James par la société Hydro-Québec, lorsqu'il eut l'occasion de voir deux caribous traverser à la nage une portion du bassin. Poursuivant son chemin, il se retourna une seconde fois pour observer les deux cervidés mais ne pu que constater leur disparition. Curieusement, une île située tout près des deux caribous – ou du moins ce qu'il avait cru être une île – avait également disparu. Notre informateur croyait fermement que l'île était en fait une truite grise géante – de la même espèce que celle mentionnée dans le récit – qui avait avalé les deux animaux.

Au pêcheur sportif et au scientifique, cette histoire de poisson grand comme une île ne pourra tout au plus qu'arracher un sourire. Mais pour qui a connu les paysages nordiques qui s'étalent encore à perte de vue et surtout, pour celui qui y a séjourné, cette dernière histoire cadre bien avec toutes les autres histoires qu'on y raconte, que ce soit celles de sirènes ou d'animaux fabuleux qui peuplent ce territoire. En ce sens, toutes ces histoires de poissons gigantesques demeurent vraisemblables pour les habitants de cette région et, par conséquent, peuvent être reliées au récit de Jakabish. La dernière histoire en particulier, la *seule* qui fasse état d'êtres vivants *avalés* par un poisson géant – les autres n'évoquent que la taille des poissons ou la disparition des pêcheurs – est également la *seule* où le poisson dévoreur est identifié comme un touladi, c'est-à-dire la même espèce que celle identifiée comme poisson-avaleur dans les variantes de l'épisode du *Poisson-avaleur* racontées dans cette région.

Nous ignorons, dans ce cas précis, si le récit du *Poisson-avaleur* a eu ou non quelque influence dans l'identification présumée du poisson qui a avalé les deux caribous. Ce cas nous semble, par contre, un exemple saisissant des relations qu'on peut espérer trouver entre le mythe et la réalité, la réalité étant ici entendue au sens large de faits d'expérience rapportés par quelque interlocuteur. Ces faits d'expérience sont importants, car ils permettent de situer l'épisode mythique dans son contexte initial, c'est-à-dire qu'ils montrent clairement que la possibilité d'être avalé par un poisson géant *existe* même dans la réalité, du moins du point de vue des principaux concernés. Une telle possibilité inspirée par toutes ces histoires de poissons, liée à l'image de petits êtres poilus contenus dans l'estomac des espèces identifiées comme étant le poisson-avaleur, nous paraissent alors suffisantes pour expliquer les éléments étranges de l'épisode mythique et permettent maintenant d'aborder la délicate question de la leçon ou des leçons principales du *Poisson-avaleur.*

La leçon ou les leçons principales du Poisson-avaleur

Si nous nous en tenons strictement et littéralement à l'histoire racontée dans le *Poisson-avaleur* et prenons en considération les deux ordres de phénomènes naturels qui semblent à la base du récit – petits êtres poilus avalés et poissons géants – , la leçon immédiate du récit apparaît fort simple : dans toutes les variantes sauf deux (M_w et M_x) sur lesquelles nous reviendrons, il est question d'un enfant, Jakabish, qui est prévenu par sa soeur – sa mère par défaut – de ne pas trop s'aventurer dans l'eau en raison d'un poisson géant qui constitue un danger pour lui. Cette histoire ne peut qu'inspirer de la crainte chez un enfant qui l'entend dans le contexte que nous avons mis en évidence : la réalité de petits êtres poilus vus dans l'estomac de certains poissons et les histoires de poissons géants qui sont véhiculées de génération en génération sont là pour en témoigner. L'identification de l'enfant au héros du *Poisson-avaleur* est par ailleurs d'autant plus vraisemblable qu'il existe d'innombrables points communs entre un enfant qui écoute ce récit et le jeune héros Jakabish : le héros est souvent présenté comme un être de petite taille (dans plusieurs variantes, M_g, M_p, M_s , etc., il utilise même son arc[9] comme canot); dans de très nombreuses variantes (M_c, M_e, M_f, etc.), il est caractérisé comme un chasseur d'écureuils et cet animal est associé aux enfants, du moins comme le rapporte un ethnologue qui a travaillé à Waskaganish, une communauté crie : «La chair des écureuils et des hermines est cuite, à l'occasion, pour les enfants. Parfois, les enfants eux-mêmes s'amusent à faire cuire et à manger ces animaux, ainsi que d'autres morceaux de choix comme les petits oiseaux visibles en hiver» (Kerr 1950:184); et dans la plupart des variantes, le héros désobéit également souvent à sa soeur comme le ferait n'importe quel enfant.

Mais il y a plus, le récit concerne également la soeur de Jakabish, et partant, comprend une leçon qui s'adresse particulièrement aux femmes. Considéré sous cet angle, le récit fait état – et ainsi prévient – les jeunes auditrices des problèmes d'éducation que les enfants peuvent poser aux femmes, ces dernières étant justement confrontées à ce genre de problème, puisqu'elles devaient souvent rester seules avec les enfants aux campements pendant que les hommes partaient chasser, parfois, durant des semaines entières. Comme dans le cas précédent, il existe aussi quelques éléments du récit à partir desquels une jeune fille qui écoute le récit peut s'identifier à l'héroïne. À l'instar de la soeur de Jakabish, les soeurs aînées dans une famille ont souvent l'occasion de vérifier leurs talents d'éducatrice en prenant soin de leurs frères moins âgés; et comme la soeur de Jakabish, ce sont les femmes qui s'occupent davantage de pêche au campement comme nous l'avons déjà remarqué et comme en fait foi un autre ethnologue qui a travaillé cette fois chez les Cris de Nemaska :

> Les travaux qui se rapportent à la consommation sont assurées par la femme exclusivement. C'est elle qui exécute le découpage du poisson, sa cuisson et surveille le fûmage [*sic*] ou le séchage. [. . .] Si la femme du pêcheur est occupée à

> autre chose, ce sont les filles qui feront le travail. Mais de façon plus générale encore, la mère et les filles travaillent en coopération continuelle. (Lebuis 1971: 130)

Enfin, remarquons qu'à un autre niveau, l'épisode mythique constitue un modèle, non pas tant des comportements réels souhaités que des attitudes à prendre face au danger. Les valeurs exprimées concernent alors tous ceux qui écoutent le récit et cela sans distinction de sexe ou d'âge. En ce sens, ce niveau plus profond explique également la leçon principale des deux variantes (M_w et M_x) que nous avons jusqu'ici quelque peu mises de côté et qui rattachent l'épisode mythique du *Poisson-avaleur* au cycle du décepteur et non à celui de Jakabish. Dans ces deux variantes, il n'est pas vraiment question d'un enfant puisque le héros est souvent un animal et il n'est pas question non plus des relations entre un cadet et une soeur aînée – bien que le héros habite avec sa grand-mère et que les relations entre ce type de parents comportent des éléments comparables aux relations qui unissent la soeur de Jakabish à ce dernier, comme la relation d'obéissance, par exemple – et les deux premiers niveaux d'enseignement ne peuvent pas s'appliquer ici. Dans ces deux variantes, il est plutôt question du décepteur et de ses exploits qui sont alors illustrés à l'aide du poisson-avaleur. Le héros est ainsi amené à tuer le poisson géant qui constituait, du moins en M_w, une menace pour les humains («Les gens craignaient un monstre aquatique, ou poisson géant, qui attrapait souvent les pêcheurs, les entraînait dans le lac et les dévorait», Hoffman 1890:247). Le courage exprimé dans une telle relation est évidemment le même que celui qui est illustré dans les variantes de l'épisode mythique qui sont rattachées au cycle de Jakabish. Le jeune héros ne fait-il pas ainsi preuve de beaucoup d'audace en se mesurant à un être définitivement trop grand pour lui? De même, son exploit ne peut-il inspirer autre chose qu'une immense fierté dans un auditoire qui était – force nous est de constater que la vie traditionnelle en forêt a bien changé – constamment confronté à toutes sortes de situations qui exigeaient sûrement de la ténacité et parfois même un peu de témérité?

Considéré sous cet angle, ce troisième niveau d'enseignement de l'épisode mythique du *Poisson-avaleur* rejoint non seulement l'ensemble du cycle auquel il appartient, que ce soit le mythe complet des aventures de Jakabish ou les péripéties légendaires du décepteur, mais encore toute la culture dans laquelle l'épisode mythique s'inscrit. Il y a d'ailleurs dans le *Poisson-avaleur* plusieurs autres détails qui ont une portée culturelle similaire, du moins si l'on s'en tient comme exemples aux 22 variantes qui relèvent des exploits de Jakabish. Ainsi, plusieurs de ces variantes du *Poisson-avaleur* commencent par un rêve prémonitoire de Jakabish (M_c, M_e, M_i, M_j et M_k) sur son futur séjour à l'intérieur du poisson et on sait que le rêve est exploité dans d'autres épisodes du mythe (par exemple, dans une variante de l'épisode de l'ours; Savard 1985:183) et que dans certaines sociétés du subarctique oriental comme chez

les Montagnais, il était impératif de suivre ses rêves («Par conséquent, rêver est important. Nous avons vu comment un homme croit qu'il peut être guidé et dirigé continuellement dans toutes ses affaires, par son âme-esprit, lorsque celle-ci est forte et active», Speck 1977 [1935]:187-188).

De même, l'épisode mythique du *Poisson-avaleur* fait état d'innombrables pouvoirs magiques que possède le jeune héros et qu'il utilise dans d'autres aventures : pouvoir de la pensée qui lui permet de réduire sa taille à volonté en M_m et en M_u par exemple et d'être ainsi avalé par le poisson géant; pouvoir de son couteau magique qui lui permet le même exploit en M_i; la force du voeu qui, en M_e, M_f, M_g et M_j, amène sa soeur à se rendre à la pêche pour prendre le poisson qui l'a avalé; et pouvoir du souffle au moyen duquel, en M_f, le héros réussit à faire grossir la ligne au bout de laquelle s'est pris le poisson géant afin d'éviter que celle-ci ne se brise. Jakabish utilisera également les mêmes pouvoirs dans d'autres épisodes : pouvoir du souffle, par exemple, qui lui servira à faire grandir un arbre dans plusieurs variantes du récit (Savard 1985:91); pouvoir du voeu exprimé dans l'épisode de l'ours afin que ce dernier le projette à proximité de ses armes (Savard 1985:82); pouvoir de réduire et d'augmenter sa taille à volonté ce qui, dans certaines variantes, lui permettra d'affronter la créature géante qui avait dévoré ses parents (Savard 1985:189); etc. Mais ce n'est pas tout, le premier pouvoir, celui qui résume tous les autres, c'est-à-dire le pouvoir de la pensée constituait du moins chez les Montagnais un attribut accessible à tous les chasseurs :

> Une force importante dont l'individu dispose par l'entremise de son Grand Homme est connue sous le nom de matonaltciga'n [...]. Ce terme est un autre terme difficile à traduire. Le meilleur équivalent serait «pouvoir de l'esprit». Une des manifestations de ce pouvoir est le voeu. [...] Le voeu, dont le but est l'accomplissement des désirs, constitue une étape importante de la magie et on entend souvent parler, dans les conversations orales ou dans les mythes, de chasseurs, de jongleurs et de héros légendaires qui atteignent leurs objectifs de cette façon. Une des formes du voeu est la communion silencieuse pendant laquelle l'individu se concentre sur ses désirs et attend que son Grand Homme les réalise pour lui. (Speck 1977 [1935]:191)

Dans un tel contexte, il apparaît évident que l'épisode mythique du *Poisson-avaleur*, comme les autres épisodes de Jakabish ou d'autres mythes, présente un modèle social qui assure la reproduction culturelle dans la société considérée. En écoutant le récit, l'auditeur ne peut alors que s'identifier à ce modèle qui relève, ici, du troisième niveau d'enseignement du mythe.

Les leçons complémentaires du *Poisson-avaleur*

Outre les leçons principales que nous avons dégagées ci-dessus, on peut également tirer du *Poisson-avaleur* quelques leçons complémentaires. Ces leçons

sont d'ordre zoologique et technologique. Une brève description de ces enseignements suit.

Les leçons zoologiques

Les variantes du *Poisson-avaleur* font référence à plusieurs comportements alimentaires et écologiques des poissons. Il s'agit de véritables leçons que les autochtones que nous avons consultés considèrent également comme telles. En effet, un de nos informateurs cris nous faisait remarquer, par exemple, que certaines espèces carnivores comme le touladi avalent leurs proies entières sans les briser et que l'épisode mythique du *Poisson-avaleur* constitue justement une allusion à ce phénomène si ce n'est une méthode pour l'enseigner. Il soulignait également une autre leçon dont nous avons parlé et qui concerne l'obéissance aux aînés :

> Nous discutons également du mythe de Chihkaapaash, en particulier l'épisode où le héros est avalé par un poisson. D'après R.M., cet épisode comprend quelques leçons, et tout d'abord il apporte une connaissance sur le poisson : *kuukimaash* (touladi) avale ses proies sans les mordre car Chihkaapaash demande de ne pas le mordre; selon R.M., c'est depuis ce temps que *kuukimaash* (touladi) avale entièrement ses proies et que, si ce n'était de Chihkaapaash, le touladi mordrait et déchirerait ses proies aujourd'hui. Une autre leçon donnée par cet épisode est d'écouter ses aînés puisque Chihkaapaash agit toujours dans le mythe à l'opposé de ce que lui recommande sa soeur qui, dans ce cas précis, l'avait averti de ne pas s'aventurer sur le lac où il y avait des poissons qui avalaient n'importe quoi. D'ailleurs, un aîné a déjà confié à R.M. que les légendes étaient considérées anciennement comme des enseignements; que les jeunes devaient bien les écouter et qu'ainsi ils comprendraient plus vite; que les légendes étaient comme l'école; etc. (R.M. 21.10.90)

Ce comportement alimentaire du poisson-avaleur auquel notre informateur réfère est mentionné explicitement dans au moins neuf variantes (M_g, M_j, M_l, M_m, M_n, M_p, M_r, M_u et M_v) et il est exprimé implicitement dans toutes les variantes puisque le héros n'est jamais mordu ou déchiqueté. Dans quatre de ces variantes (M_n, M_p, M_u et M_v), on fournit même une interprétation : le poisson-avaleur agirait ainsi, à la demande du héros, soit pour augmenter au maximum son temps de digestion (M_n, M_p et M_u), soit pour vivre plus longtemps (M_v) ce qui pourrait revenir au même si nous connaissions exactement ce que le conteur voulait entendre par là (la version originale de M_v nous fait défaut). Quoi qu'il en soit, Scott résume bien le point de vue amérindien sur le sujet :

> Par observation, les chasseurs savent qu'un plus petit poisson qui engorge l'estomac d'un plus grand poisson est lentement dissous par les sucs digestifs. La question est que le processus serait plus rapide si la proie avait été déchiquetée en morceaux. Il y a un avantage implicite pour le poisson ici : sa nourriture lui durera plus longtemps s'il ne lacère pas *Chakaapaash*. (Scott 1982:164, note 11)

Nous ne connaissons pas dans tous ses détails le discours des ichtyologistes sur les raisons d'un tel comportement, mais l'explication des autochtones ne semble pas extravagante. Il est toutefois connu que les gros poissons carnivores comme le touladi avalent très souvent sinon toujours leurs proies d'un seul morceau («Les carnivores comme les requins, les gros poissons, les serpents, les faucons, les hiboux, les chats et d'autres, engouffrent leur nourriture intacte ou en grosses pièces et la transformation physique de celle-ci est accomplie sous l'action musculaire et chimique de l'estomac», Storer et al. 1979 [1943]:89). En ce sens, le comportement alimentaire du poisson-avaleur tel que décrit dans le mythe peut être considéré comme un élément du savoir autochtone que le discours narratif a pour tâche de transmettre. L'enseignement est d'ailleurs très subtil. Cet élément zoologique n'est-il pas présenté très souvent par une affirmation étrange du héros faite au poisson-avaleur, telle «Ne me mords pas. Avale-moi plutôt tout rond» (M_g), qui pourrait avoir comme effet de susciter immédiatement la curiosité et la recherche d'une solution à une telle question?

D'un autre côté, il y a dans le même épisode mythique plusieurs autres exemples du genre. Du point de vue des comportements alimentaires, notons ainsi les éléments zoologiques suivants : dans la variante de base, on enseigne en outre qu'un poisson ne mordra pas s'il a déjà quelque chose dans l'estomac («Alors que le poisson nageait le long de la rive, Jakabish remarqua l'hameçon, mais le poisson n'avait pas envie de mordre car il avait déjà Jakabish dans l'estomac»); en M_c, M_e et M_n, on apprend encore que certains poissons peuvent avoir un gros ventre («Le premier qu'elle prit avait un gros ventre» [M_c], Savard 1985:85) et la raison nous en est fourni explicitement en M_h («En touchant à l'estomac, elle comprit qu'il y avait quelque chose à l'intérieur»); en M_e, M_f, M_g, M_n et M_o, le récit nous dit également que les poissons sont attirés par des objets blancs ou brillants («*Tshakapesh* aperçut tout à coup quelque chose de brillant. "Voilà de la nourriture, dit-il, attrape-la". C'était l'hameçon de sa soeur aînée. Le poisson y mordit» [M_g], Savard 1985:202), ou encore par d'alléchants morceaux de viande («Certains des poissons que nous y pêchons sont gros, mais je n'en ai pas encore vu un qui pourrait m'avaler comme un poisson de taille raisonnable le fait avec l'hameçon et l'alléchant morceau de viande qui y est accroché» [M_o], Savard 1985:280).

Mais un exemple encore plus éloquent de ce type d'enseignement zoologique est sans aucun doute la référence qui est faite dans l'épisode mythique au comportement écologique du poisson-avaleur. Dans au moins six variantes, le héros incite ainsi le poisson qui l'a avalé à se diriger vers la ligne tendue par sa soeur qui est située à des endroits différents selon les variantes : en M_a et M_s, le poisson est amené à s'approcher de la rive; en M_g, près de la rive également mais en spécifiant «en eau peu profonde» (Savard 1985:202); en M_j, vers une pointe de terre; en M_u, en eau profonde et en M_v, vers une corniche ro-

cheuse. Or, pour les variantes pour lesquelles nous connaissons spécifiquement l'identité du poisson-avaleur, tous ces endroits concordent avec un des habitats majeurs que peut fréquenter l'espèce en question durant la période de l'année qui est libre de glace (partie du printemps, été et début de l'automne). En M_a et M_s, le poisson-avaleur est un brochet et on connaît la prédilection de cette espèce pour les rives inondées au printemps lors du frai. En M_g, l'identité du poisson n'est pas connue mais en M_j, on indique qu'il s'agit d'une grosse truite : les poissons qualifiés ainsi par les autochtones sont souvent des ombles de fontaine ou des touladis et, pour avoir assisté et connu le genre de pêche que pratiquent certains Algonquiens, il nous apparaît très plausible que des lignes puissent être tendues au bout d'une pointe de terre, pour ces espèces, comme on le mentionne dans la variante. En M_u (en M_v, l'espèce n'a pas été identifiée), le poisson-avaleur est un touladi et comme on le sait, cette espèce fréquente en été les eaux profondes, même si d'autre part, elle peut aussi s'approcher des rives au printemps et à l'automne : l'élément de cette variante aurait encore comme référent un comportement réel du poisson[10].

Les leçons technologiques

En plus de ces leçons zoologiques, l'épisode mythique comprend également quelques leçons que nous qualifierons de technologiques. Ces enseignements s'adressent à tous et concernent trois étapes successives associées à la pêche : l'acquisition, la préparation et la consommation. En M_u, certains détails relatifs à l'acquisition du poisson ont ainsi attiré notre attention. Dans cette variante, il est rapporté par exemple que la soeur du héros assène au poisson un coup derrière la tête immédiatement après l'avoir capturé et on sait évidemment qu'il s'agit là d'une technique autochtone utilisée pour calmer les spécimens les plus récalcitrants. Dans la même variante, on insiste également sur les secousses que peut donner un gros spécimen avant d'être capturé à la perche à laquelle est fixée la ligne et l'hameçon : «Le touladi géant s'apprêtait encore à dépasser l'appât et l'hameçon lorsque *Chakaapaash* les saisit et les accrocha à l'intérieur de la bouche du poisson sur le côté. Après avoir fixé l'hameçon, il tira la corde à laquelle il était attaché. Aussitôt, la perche qui retenait la ligne se mit à bouger [. . .]» (Scott 1982:15-16). Mis à part la simplicité de l'élément du savoir qui est transmis dans cette scène (les secousses données à la perche), on doit reconnaître que sa présentation est à tout le moins curieuse : c'est le héros à l'intérieur du poisson et non pas le poisson lui-même qui prend l'hameçon, qui le fixe et qui secoue subséquemment la ligne pour indiquer qu'il est capturé. Plusieurs autres variantes (M_a, M_e, M_g, M_l, M_n, M_p et M_v) contiennent une allusion à ce rôle actif du héros dans la capture du poisson et au moins une d'entre elles comporte ce qui nous semble une explication quoique le détail mériterait d'être soumis à une recherche plus approfondie. Ainsi, dans la variante de base, on dit que «le poisson n'avait pas

envie de mordre car il avait déjà Jakabish dans l'estomac» ce qui pourrait avoir engendré sur le plan du récit une solution à l'impasse qui venait alors d'être créée (il faut bien que le poisson morde pour que Jakabish soit sauvé). La solution vient en effet immédiatement après: «Le poisson nageait autour de l'hameçon, quand, tout à coup, Jakabish attrape l'hameçon lui-même et le plante dans l'estomac» (M_a) (Désveaux 1988:66)[11].

D'un autre côté, la préparation du poisson est également l'objet de quelques leçons. Nous en avons dénombré deux concernant en particulier le découpage du poisson. La première leçon a trait à l'étape initiale de découpage qui consiste à pratiquer une incision tout près de la gorge des poissons. Quelques variantes dont M_g, M_l, M_u et M_v effleurent le phénomène en racontant comment le héros est amené à se réfugier au fond de l'estomac alors que sa soeur entame le poisson. Le geste est tout à fait logique si on considère que le héros est déjà dans la bouche de la bête, comme en M_l et en M_u, et qu'en reculant dans son estomac, il ne cherche qu'à sauver sa peau. En commentant ce récit, Scott (1982:164, note 12) abonde dans le même sens: «*Chakaapaash* se réfugie à l'arrière du ventre sachant que le découpage du poisson commence par une incision près de la gorge». Pour les autres variantes (M_g, M_v), le geste peut également être considéré logique dans la mesure où en se tapissant au *fond* de l'estomac, le héros cherche aussi à échapper au couteau de sa soeur qui pourrait malencontreusement y pénétrer, comme nous le verrons plus bas pour l'ensemble des variantes. En tout état de cause, en M_l et M_u, la scène rappelle à l'auditoire qu'un poisson doit être entamé par la gorge et qu'il doit ensuite être incisé vers l'arrière pour pouvoir l'ouvrir en deux.

Cette phase subséquente du découpage du poisson donne lieu d'autre part à une deuxième leçon relative à la préparation du poisson. La leçon est en fait très répandue. Elle apparaît dans au moins 16 variantes et elle concerne l'art d'ouvrir un poisson sans en briser l'estomac. L'élément est souvent présenté comme un avertissement que le héros fait à sa soeur alors que celle-ci s'apprête à ouvrir le poisson. La variante de base l'exprime ainsi: «Elle prend le brochet et s'apprête à en découper les viscères quand elle entend une voix qui dit: "Vas-y doucement, ma soeur, ne me découpe pas en morceaux". C'était son frère, alors elle éviscéra le poisson très soigneusement et en retira Jakabish» (Désveaux 1988:66). La variante M_g est encore plus précise. Elle nous fournit même une explication: «"Elle va me couper", pensa-t-il. Il se tapit au fond de l'estomac. *Il arrive parfois accidentellement que les femmes brisent l'estomac des poissons en les ouvrant.* Elle coupa donc le ventre et il sauta à l'extérieur» (Savard 1985:202, nos italiques). La leçon est donc très claire: en exploitant cet élément, le mythe insiste sur les précautions à prendre lorsqu'on ouvre un poisson sinon, semble-t-il, il y a risque de souillure.

Le risque de souillure, qui est nettement exprimé par un élément déjà commenté (le héros est bien souillé lorsqu'il sort du poisson), est possiblement

lui-même associé sur le plan du récit à une dernière leçon technologique. Cette leçon, relative cette fois à la consommation, apparaît dans deux variantes seulement. En M_p, on conclut ainsi le récit par une recommandation concernant la non-consommation des entrailles du poisson. La scène suit immédiatement le bain du héros : «Il sortit en sautant. "Oh! Oh!, dit-il à sa soeur, je suis tout couvert de boyaux de poisson". "Mon Dieu, dit-elle, tu veux vraiment tout essayer". Le garçon courut se laver au lac. Il dit plus tard à sa soeur de ne manger que la chair du poisson, pas les entrailles» (Savard 1985:287). En M_l, l'allusion est encore plus vague. La soeur du héros *jette* les intestins du poisson mais on ne précise pas si son geste signifie vraiment qu'ils sont impropres à la consommation : «*Tshahapash* se tenait au fond de l'estomac du poisson, il se réfugia là. Elle jeta les intestins. Alors *Tshahapash* sortit : "Soeur, cette odeur m'a tout imprégné"» (Savard 1985:260).

Pour comprendre cet élément, il faut également éclairer une confusion apparente dans les extraits rapportés ci-dessus. Dans ces variantes, il est en effet question d'estomac, d'intestin et d'entrailles et les limites de définition des termes ne sont pas toujours très précises : par exemple, en M_l, on ne sait pas trop si le héros sort de l'estomac du poisson où il s'est réfugié, ou des intestins que sa soeur vient de jeter, sans compter que l'odeur dont il est imprégné pourrait provenir de son séjour dans l'un ou l'autre de ces organes. Or, chez les Montagnais du moins, le terme pour intestin, *mitatshishî*, est également un terme générique qui peut référer à l'ensemble des entrailles y compris l'estomac. Nous croyons qu'il en est de même chez les Cris d'où les deux variantes rapportées plus haut proviennent, ce qui explique du coup la confusion apparente. En fait, en M_l, la soeur doit jeter toutes les entrailles, ce qui comprend l'estomac d'où le héros jaillit.

D'autre part, des informateurs cris nous ont affirmé qu'anciennement les entrailles de poissons comme le touladi étaient mangées, alors qu'aujourd'hui on se débarrassait des organes (S.R. 10.01.91; E.R. 21.09.90). L'élément mythique pourrait donc constituer une recommandation de non-consommation des entrailles de poisson, mais il pourrait avoir été introduit récemment, reflétant en cela des préoccupations plus contemporaines. Toutefois, pour statuer sur ce cas, il faudrait encore connaître les habitudes alimentaires des familles respectives des conteurs de ces deux variantes.

Conclusion

En prenant comme point de départ que les mythes ne sont pas comme la langue constitués d'images acoustiques (dans Saussure 1983[1916]:99) les images acoustiques équivalent au signifiant) immotivées ou sans lien aucun avec les concepts (le signifié), il a été possible d'élucider les relations entretenus entre les éléments étranges du récit et des faits de connaissance réels. Dans le cas du *Poisson-avaleur*, ces faits se sont révélés des phénomènes na-

turels de deux ordres, le premier renvoyant à un comportement alimentaire du poisson-avaleur (l'ingurgitation de petits êtres poilus) et le second se rapportant à des histoires de poissons géants très vraisemblables pour les principaux concernés. L'existence de ces deux ordres de phénomènes montre que dans le mythe le rapport entre le signifiant et le signifié n'est pas arbitraire puisque d'une part un *fait* de nature motive l'image mythique d'un être vivant avalé par un poisson et que d'autre part un *discours* des usagers du récit motive également l'image mythique d'un poisson assez grand pour avaler un être humain. Ce dernier ordre de phénomènes fait d'ailleures écho aux critiques de Giddens (1979) du structuralisme lorsque cet auteur insiste sur la récupération du vécu du sujet dans toute analyse des phénomènes sociaux.

La découverte de ces deux fondements du récit a ainsi permis d'écarter l'hypothèse à l'effet que cette aventure d'un héros autochtone se résumerait à la simple histoire d'une naissance, une hypothèse que ne pouvait soutenir certains éléments compris dans plusieurs variantes du récit. Ces mêmes éléments peuvent, par contre, être maintenant expliqués par un des deux étymons du récit: nous pensons ici notamment à la toison qui couvre le héros et aux odeurs dont il est imprégné lors de sa libération qui renvoient vraisemblablement à un petit être poilu en voie d'être digéré par un poisson.

La découverte des étymons du récit a aussi orienté notre analyse du *Poisson-avaleur* vers des résultats que que nous n'avions pas envisagés. Le mythe a ainsi dévoilé ses leçons principales qui s'adressent soit aux enfants (force nous a été de constater qu'il existe une véritable crainte des poissons), soit aux femmes (dans l'éducation des jeunes gens, il y a des cas de désobéissance qu'il faut savoir traiter), soit à l'ensemble de la communauté (les exploits du héros entretiennent un modèle de fierté, de ténacité et parfois même de témérité). Par ailleurs, le récit a révélé encore d'autres leçons, cette fois complémentaires, que nous avons qualifiées ici de zoologiques et de technologiques et dont le nombre semble varier en fonction des éléments de toutes les variantes réunies: leçons sur les comportements alimentaires et écologiques des poissons et leçons sur les diverses étapes de l'exploitation des ressources halieutiques (acquisition, préparation et consommation).

Le récit le *Poisson-avaleur*, comme d'autres récits d'ailleurs (Clément 1991, 1992), constitue un bon exemple des liens[12] que peuvent entretenir des éléments narratifs étranges avec des phénomènes naturels. L'analyse de ce récit permet aussi de supposer que les leçons comprises dans les légendes doivent gagner en force lorsqu'elles sont soutenues par la réalité. En ce sens, les mythes apparaîtront sans doute plus véridiques, comme le soutient aussi le point de vue algonquien («[...] l'*atanukan* coule de source sûre [...]», Savard 1985:327) et il n'en tient qu'à nous d'apprendre à les écouter.

Remerciements

Les données montagnaises relatives à notre élucidation du poisson-avaleur ont été recueillies entre 1982 et 1988, à Mingan et à Natashquan (deux communautés situées au Québec), dans le cadre de trois projets distincts. Le premier projet, financé par le ministère de l'Éducation du Québec, visait à élaborer deux manuels de zoologie en langue montagnaise destinés aux élèves du primaire et du secondaire. Le second projet, qui bénéficiait de la participation financière de la Fondation canadienne Donner, du Conseil Attikamek-Montagnais et du Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada, avait comme objectif d'analyser de façon globale l'exploitation et l'aménagement des ressources fauniques par les Montagnais du Québec. Le troisième projet consistait à préparer une thèse de doctorat sur la zoologie des Montagnais et il a été rendu possible grâce à l'aide financière du Conseil de recherches en sciences humaines du Canada (bourses de doctorat). Nous tenons à remercier vivement tous ces organismes ainsi que les principaux responsables de ces projets pour l'aide qu'ils nous ont apportée dans leur réalisation. D'autre part, les quelques données cries utilisées dans cet article ont été recueillies à Chisasibi, à la Baie James dans le nord-ouest du Québec, entre septembre 1990 et janvier 1991, dans le cadre d'une étude sur les effets socio-économiques et culturels de l'exposition des autochtones au méthylmercure. Cette étude, qui comportait plusieurs questions sur l'ichtyologie crie, a été menée par la société Castonguay, Dandenault et ass. inc. pour le compte du Conseil cri de la santé et des services sociaux de la Baie James qui agissait à titre de maître-d'oeuvre pour le Comité de la Baie James sur le mercure. Nous tenons aussi à exprimer notre reconnaissance à l'endroit de ces organismes pour lesquels nous avons travaillé.

Par ailleurs, notre texte comprend quelques citations originalement écrites en anglais dont nous avons nous-même effectué la traduction.

Notes

1. Les variantes du *Poisson-avaleur*, si ce n'est du cycle complet de Jakabish, sont très nombreuses. Savard (1985:101-102) en a recensé 18 et Fisher (1946:239-240) en a dénombré six dont certaines ont été compilées par Savard (1985) mais pas nécessairement toutes (par exemple, celle dans Hoffman (1890:247) qui relève du cycle du décepteur). Les autres variantes utilisées dans cet article sont ojibwa (Désveaux 1988:64-67), cries (Scott 1982:15-16 et Pachano 1987:12-16) et sauk (Skinner 1928:151-152). Les variantes de l'épisode mythique utilisées dans notre étude seront cotées a,b,c,d,e, . . . tel qu'indiquées au tableau 1.
2. L'omble de fontaine peut descendre à la mer dans la partie septentrionale de son aire (Scott et Crossman 1974:228), mais l'espèce est néanmoins considérée essentiellement comme une espèce d'eau douce. Par ailleurs, il existe deux variantes (M_k et M_x) qui situent spécifiquement l'action de l'épisode mythique dans la mer. Toutefois, dans M_k, le poisson-avaleur pourrait être l'omble de fontaine puisque celui-ci est anadrome et qu'on le retrouve dans le golfe du Saint-Laurent à proximité du village, Mingan, d'où nous provient ladite variante. Dans le cas de M_x, la mer à laquelle il est fait référence pourrait être, en réalité, un des grands

lacs (lac Huron) où les Sauk habitaient originalement et le mot «mer» pourrait alors être une erreur de traduction ou d'interprétation. Quoi qu'il en soit, cette dernière exception – si exception il y a – ne remet pas en cause les étymons du récit tels qu'ils sont mis en évidence dans la très grande majorité des variantes de notre corpus.

3. Le mot poisson est employé ici volontairement. Chez les Montagnais, par exemple – et probablement chez les Cris et les Ojibwa septentrionaux – les cétacés et les poissons sont regroupés dans une seule catégorie soit les *nameshat*, les espèces aquatiques. L'emploi du terme poisson peut rendre justice à cette classification.
4. L'autre variante montagnaise M_h n'est pas aussi explicite à ce propos mais les appellations du poisson-avaleur qui y sont utilisées comportent néanmoins des allusions indirectes à une espèce d'eau douce. Comme on pourra le constater plus loin dans le texte, ces appellations font en effet référence à des nageoires très rouges qui sont elles-mêmes associées dans l'esprit de certains autochtones aux nageoires des plus gros spécimens de touladi.
5. Les manuels de zoologie consultés ne font pas état de lièvres dans l'alimentation du brochet, du touladi ou de l'omble de fontaine mais, en raison de la voracité de ces espèces, il apparaît tout à fait vraisemblable qu'un levraut puisse aussi être avalé.
6. Dans certaines variantes du mythe de Jakabish, le thème de la toison et de son épilation est situé dans un épisode différent de celui du *Poisson-avaleur* (Savard 1985:152). Ces variantes mettent en scène le héros en voie d'être ébouillanté après que des êtres malveillants aient coupé la corde d'une balançoire sur laquelle il évoluait et qui surplombait une marmitte pleine d'eau en ébullition. La marmitte est renversée et, selon les variantes, le héros s'épile immédiatement ou a déjà perdu ses poils suite à son séjour dans l'eau. Cette scène nous rappelle immédiatement une technique de cuisson consistant à tremper un gibier d'eau dans l'eau bouillante pour faciliter l'enlèvement de ses plumes, utilisée en particulier pour le huart dont les plumes sont très difficiles à arracher (comm. pers. D.M., Mingan, 06.08.91). S'il s'agit là de l'étymon de cette scène, il entretient avec l'étymon du poisson qui avale Jacabish une grande ressemblance : dans les deux cas, les étymons sont des phénomènes réels, l'un technologique, l'autre naturel, qui n'ont comme but que de rendre plus probante la leçon ou les leçons des épisodes respectifs dont ils relèvent.
7. Les Cris, comme les Montagnais et probablement les Ojibwa septentrionaux, distinguent deux genres narratifs : les histoires ou nouvelles et les mythes ou légendes. Le premier genre concerne plutôt des événements récents tandis que le second, par définition, rappelle une époque lointaine. Les histoires notées ici ont été classées comme telles par nos informateurs.
8. Le système de renvois adopté dans notre texte est le suivant : les initiales sont celles de nos informateurs et la date fait référence aux dates des entrevues que nous avons menées à Chisasibi ou au journal quotidien que nous avons tenu lors de notre séjour dans la même communauté.
9. L'image est d'autant plus saisissante que l'arc et le canot ont une forme similaire. Dans quelques variantes dont M_p et M_s, le héros se sert d'une flèche comme aviron et on remarquera ici également la similitude des formes des deux objets.
10. En commentant le même récit, un informateur cri nous a rapporté que le poisson-avaleur – le touladi – était incité par le héros à se diriger plutôt vers la rive. Ce commentaire, en apparence contradictoire avec la version consignée par Scott (1982:15-16), s'explique lorsqu'on tient compte que le poisson peut fréquenter les deux milieux (les eaux profondes et le bord de l'eau).
11. Il y a un autre détail semblable dans l'épisode mythique qui pose certaines difficultés. Il s'agit d'une position qu'adopte le héros lorsqu'il se retrouve à l'intérieur du poisson-avaleur. Dans la plupart des variantes, on dit que le héros se réfugie dans son estomac mais dans au moins deux variantes (M_l et M_u), on affirme qu'il s'installe dans la bouche du monstre. Plusieurs variantes (M_m, M_n, M_p, M_r et M_v) font par ailleurs allusion au fait que le héros puisse voir par la bouche du poisson alors qu'il est mentionné explicitement ou sous-entendu

qu'il est lui-même logé dans son estomac («De l'estomac où il se trouvait, *Tsika'pis* regardait par la bouche» [M_m], Savard 1985:266) et l'introduction de ce détail, qui est du même ordre que celui concernant le rôle actif du héros dans la capture du poisson, pourrait répondre à des besoins engendrés par la nature des aventures qui sont racontées : il faut bien que le poisson se dirige vers la ligne tendue par la soeur du héros si celui-ci veut être sauvé et qui est mieux placé que le héros pour diriger ses mouvements sous l'eau?

12. Au fur et à mesure de notre analyse des variantes du *Poisson-avaleur*, nous avons pris conscience d'une nette distinction entre les 22 premières variantes relevant du cycle de Jakabish et les deux autres (M_w et M_x) qui sont associées à des aventures du décepteur. Bien que nos conclusions générales sur la signification de l'épisode mythique semblent s'appliquer à ces dernières, celles-ci mériteraient une analyse séparée qui tiendrait compte des caractères particuliers des personnages décrits (le décepteur et sa grand-mère) et de certains événements racontés (le héros a dès le départ l'intention de tuer le poisson géant; en M_w, il trouve dans l'estomac du poisson tous les autres animaux; la scène relative à la pêche du poisson-avaleur est absente; etc.).

Références

Allyn, Rube
1967 A Dictionary of Fishes. St. Petersburg, FL : Great Outdoors Publishing.

Clément, Daniel
1991 L'Homme-caribou. L'analyse ethnoscientifique du mythe. La Revue canadienne des Études Autochtones / The Canadian Journal of Native Studies 11(1):49-93.
1992 Étymons, savoirs et mythèmes : Exemples de récits montagnais. Culture 12(1):9-15.
1995 La zoologie des Montagnais. Ethnosciences n° 10. Paris : Peeters-Selaf.

Désveaux, Emmanuel
1988 Sous le signe de l'ours. Mythes et temporalité chez les Ojibwa septentrionaux. Paris : Éditions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme.

Fisher, Margaret W.
1946 The Mythology of the Northern and Northeastern Algonkians in Reference to Algonkian Mythology as a Whole. *Dans* Man in Northeastern North America, dirigé par Frederic Johnson. Papers of Robert S. Peabody Foundation for Archeology, vol. 3, p. 226-262. Wisconsin : Philips Academy.

Giddens, Anthony
1979 Central Problems in Social Theory : Action, Structure and Contradiction in Social Analysis. Berkeley et Los Angeles : University of California Press.

Hoffman, Walter J.
1890 Mythology of the Menomini Indians. American Anthropologist 3:243-258.

Kerr, A.J.
1950 Subsistence and Social Organization in a Fur Trade Community. Anthropological Report on the Ruperts House Indians. Presented to the National Committee for Community Health Studies, Ottawa.

Lebuis, François
1971 Le complexe culturel de la pêche de subsistance à Némiska au Nouveau-Québec. Mémoire de maîtrise. Montréal : Faculté des sciences sociales, Université de Montréal.
Lefebvre, Madeleine
1974 TSHAKAPESH. Récits montagnais-naskapi. Série Cultures amérindiennes. Ministère des Affaires Culturelles du Québec.
Lévi-Strauss, Claude
1974 Anthropologie structurale [1958]. Paris : Plon.
Mailhot, José et Andrée Michaud
1965 North West River. Étude ethnographique. Collection travaux divers n° 7. Québec : Centre d'études nordiques, Université Laval.
Pachano, Jane, éd.
1987 CHIKABASH. Chisasibi : James Bay Cree Cultural Education Centre.
Saussure, Ferdinand de
1983 Cours de linguistique générale [1916]. Paris : Payot.
Savard, Rémi
1985 La voix des autres. Coll. «Positions anthropologiques». Montréal : L'Hexagone.
Scott, Colin
1982 Cree Stories from Wemindji : People, Nature and Events in Myth and in Tidings. Prepared under contract no. 1630-1-055, Ethnology Division, National Museum of Man, Ottawa.
Scott, W.B. et E.J. Crossman
1974 Poissons d'eau douce du Canada. Bulletin 184. Ottawa : Ministère de l'environnement, service des pêches et des sciences de la mer, office des recherches sur les pêcheries du Canada.
Skinner, Alanson
1928 Sauk Tales. Journal of American Folk-Lore 41:147-171.
Speck, Frank G.
1977 Naskapi : The Savage Hunters of the Labrador Peninsula [1935]. Norman, OK : The University of Oklahoma Press.
Storer, Tracy I. et al.
1979 General Zoology. Sixth Edition [1943]. New York : McGraw-Hill.

"THE INDIANS STATIONARY HERE": CONTINUITY AND CHANGE IN THE ORIGINS OF THE FORT SIMPSON TSIMSHIAN

E Palmer Patterson
University of Waterloo

Abstract: In 1834, the Hudson's Bay Company moved its post, Fort Simpson, to a new site on the Tsimshian peninsula. This essay explores the origins, founding and first decade of the Coast Tsimshian village which formed at the new Fort Simpson. Working primarily from fort records, complemented by oral traditions, a close view is available of a variety of elements, persons and events in the village's first years. These include trading relationships involving different Tsimshian groups, Nisga'a, Tongass, Americans, Russians and others, as well as political rivalries and ceremonials. There is a record of the devastation caused by smallpox. Although the journal inevitably reflects the prejudices of the European traders, it nonetheless provides a valuable picture of the cultures of the Northwest Coast, incidentally revealing the ways in which the Tsimshian utilized the European presence.

Résumé: En 1834, la compagnie Hudson's Bay a transferé son poste, Fort Simpson, à un nouvel emplacement sur la péninsule de Tsimshian. Cet article explore les origines, c'est-à-dire la fondation et les dix premières années du village de la côte Tsimshian qui est devenu le nouveau Fort Simpson. Grâce aux archives du Fort et à la tradition orale, nous pouvons établir une image assez précise de divers éléments, les personnes et les événements qui ont marqué les premières années du village. Ces images expliquent entre autres les relations commerciales entre les différents groupes les Tsimshian, les Nisga'a, les Tongass, les Américains, les Russes et d'autres encore, ainsi que les rivalités politiques et les cérémonies. Il est même fait mention d'une épidémie de variole qui a dévasté le poste. Bien que le journal reflète forcément les préjugés des commerçants européens, il nous donne néanmoins une précieuse image de la culture de la côte du nord-ouest, révélant par la même occasion les différentes façons dont les Tsimshian ont exploité la présence européenne.

***Anthropologica* XXXVI (1994) 181-203**

Introduction

In the summer of 1834, the Hudson's Bay Company removed its post, Fort Simpson, from a location on the north shore of the Nass River estuary to a new and permanent site on the Tsimshian peninsula at McLoughlin Bay, now Port Simpson, British Columbia. Native peoples promptly redirected their voyages to the new fort. This article explores the origins, founding and first decade of the Coast Tsimshian village which formed at the fort's new site. Working primarily from fort records, complemented by oral traditions, a close view is available of a variety of elements, persons and events in the village's first years. The Fort Simpson (later Port Simpson) Coast Tsimshian have been the most studied of the various Tsimshian-speakers—Coast Tsimshian, Southern Tsimshian, Nisga'a and Gitksan. From Franz Boas, Marius Barbeau and Viola Garfield to Clarence Bolt, the villagers have provided information about Tsimshian culture. They were also the parent community from which Metlakatla sprang, and it too has been much written about, from the late 19th century to recent times.

In pre-contact years, the nine tribes of the Tsimshian-speakers later called the Coast Tsimshian or "Tsimshian proper" had lived on the Skeena River. By the early 19th century these tribes had moved to the present site of Metlakatla, evidently responding to the new ship-borne trade opportunities. From there they moved to the second Fort Simpson, where each tribe had previously held "camping sites" in the area where the fort was erected; "each tribe claimed a stretch of beach line." When the Tsimshian moved to Fort Simpson they set up their new village on the tracts of land claimed by the individual tribes. The houses of the chiefs and subchiefs were located in the centre of the row of tribal houses (Garfield 1939:175ff.). Ultimately, elements of all nine tribes settled at Fort Simpson.

The first three years (1834-37) of the new fort saw various patterns of adaptation among the Coast Tsimshian and other people who traded there. These replicated patterns established at the Nass site, based on traditional Native patterns of seasonal movement, trade and intertribal contact. By mid-1837 Coast Tsimshian had begun to settle at the fort, building houses for themselves outside its walls. During the fort's first decade at its new site, 1834-43, Coast Tsimshian people were the main suppliers of furs there, with both Tongass and Tsimshian acting as the fort's provisioners. Certain chiefs, especially Legaic I—who is credited with inviting the Hudson's Bay Company to locate at the site—established trading links with the fort based in part, at least, on family ties. A daughter or niece of this Legaic was married to Dr. John Frederick Kennedy, an officer of the fort. Legaic, the first holder of his title to be recorded by Europeans, rose to be the senior chief of the Coast Tsimshian through his role as intermediary in the fur trade to the upper Skeena peoples—Gitksans and Athapascans.

The second part of the decade, 1837-43, saw intensified economic links between the Tsimshian and the fort. More chiefs were mentioned in the fort's journal. Certain Tsimshian became known as "locals," "home Indians" and "our Indians" to personnel at the fort, and these people formed an important part of the fort's labour force. They contributed to the fort's gardening, the maintenance of its buildings and grounds and the replenishing of its fuel supply (wood). This Tsimshian labour force constituted a third and significant contribution to the fort's existence beyond those of suppliers of furs and provisioners.

The fort journal reflects the founding of the Tsimshian village and gives a picture of the variety of ways in which the new Tsimshian settlers interacted with the fort and fitted it into their own purposes. Told from the perspective of the fort, the account shows how the settlers fitted into the fort's purposes too. The journal thus provides a major source for an understanding of the origins of the Fort Simpson Tsimshian village; a careful reading shows its continuity with traditional culture and the customs of its people.

Although more detailed information is available about the founding some 30 years later of the Christian settlement of Metlakatla (1862) and the Nisga'a village of Kincolith (1867), both of these villages owed their founding in part to the role of European missionaries;[1] Tsimshian initiative was paramount in the creation of the village at Fort Simpson. The land itself was already held and used by tribes of the Coastal Tsimshian (Garfield 1939:177). The fort journal's portrayal of the Native settlers as marginal, beggars and hangers-on reminds one of Thomas King's remark, "This idea of community and family ["as intricate webs of kinship that radiate from a native sense of family"] is not an idea that is often perceived by non-native writers who prefer to imagine their Indians as solitary figures poised on the brink of extinction" (King 1990:xiv). Despite the negative characterizations sprinkled through the journal, the Tsimshian settlers emerge as purposive members of an active and structured society.

The Tsimshian created at the fort an adaptive, dynamic, richly textured community which may be assumed to have replicated the tradition of village creation. At the new fort village, Tsimshian life manifested itself in ceremonies, intertribal trading and feuding, slave trading, alliance and marriage. Despite the company's notion that the primary purpose of the Natives was the satisfaction of the needs of the fort, the evidence indicates that this was not the Tsimshian perspective. The latter, both those residing at the fort and the visitors, engaged with the fort as it fitted Tsimshian purposes and customs.

Many other peoples also came. A variety of Haida visited—Cumshewa, Chatsina, Skidegate, Massett, North Islanders and Kaigani. Tlingit, including Stikine, Tongass, Honega, Cape Fox and Port Stewarts, were regularly at the fort. Nisga'a, Southern Tsimshian (Sebassas) and other Tsimshian (Kitselas,

Kitsumkalem) were traders and sometimes provisioners. Some northern Kwakiutl also came from Kitimat and elsewhere. The fort provided a source of European goods and a new mart for intertribal and intratribal trading. It also supplemented the seaborne trade, including that of whalers, that continued to be strong in the area and irritated the company as the "opposition." Using their trading skills, the various Aboriginal peoples took advantage of the competitive market to the annoyance and disadvantage of the company. Many of these Native traders also traded at other company forts, e.g., Fort McLoughlin at Bella Bella and at Russian forts. The cosmopolitan fort atmosphere, in short, continued traditional Aboriginal interaction. Allaire observes that, "multiethnic situations were a daily experience for the Coast Tsimshian villages, especially since the territory occupied a natural crossroads and was a thoroughfare between all these peoples" (Allaire 1984:87).[2]

The fort provided an additional element of cosmopolitanism by the presence of the personnel introduced by the company. As well as a variety of Europeans—including Scots, Americans, Irish—there were also Iroquois, Hawaiians, Asians and Maoris at one time or another between 1834 and 1843-44.

The fort became incorporated into the Native round of activities. On occasion it was threatened, sometimes its personnel were attacked, and from time to time claims were made to the land on which it was located. Several groups had asserted their prior ownership rights to the vicinity, based on traditional fishing and hunting usage. Despite the firepower of the fort and the repeated threats to shoot people who acted in ways perceived as hostile, the Natives were not cowed and intimidated but acted with discretion and expediency. They were seen as alternatively essential to the fort and an inconvenience to it, dismissively called "scamps," "thieves" and "insolent" when they contravened the fort's interests and etiquette.

From the perspective of the fort, the Natives fulfilled the purpose of its existence (furs) and enhanced the quality of life in a variety of ways, e.g., by providing food and an additional labour supply. To the fort this labour implied marginality, inferiority and dependence on the fort. The Natives were not, however, living off the crumbs that fell from the fort's table, although the journal record is ambivalent on this. Despite repeated pejorative comments in the journals, the Natives are also shown as using the fort as part of a network of forts, ships and Native sources at their disposal, whether as regular or intermittent visitors to the fort or as local residents.

All in all, the "local Tsimshian" used the fort, and the new village they had created there by mid-1837, to continue their traditional trade while expanding it to include the Europeans. Events occurring among themselves were such as might occur at any Native village and trade mart. They saw the fort as a service to themselves, though there were elements about it which might be harmful, such as its role in the spreading of epidemic disease or its receiving of an-

tagonistic tribes. The fort's trade also undoubtedly accelerated the exploitation and depletion of certain natural resources, especially land animals, water animals and timber. This impact extended to Alaska, the Queen Charlotte Islands and the mainland hinterland of the fort. Even so, in the end the village survived the fort and the Native community there survives into the present.

The Early Years: 1834-37

The fort journal provides a window on a variety of aspects of aboriginal culture and records the journal keeper's knowledge of some of the individuals who were engaged in the fur trade at Fort Simpson in the mid-1830s. The Tsimshian appear at first as travellers to the fort, mostly from their homes at Pearl Harbor and the lower Skeena River area, including Port Essington. They also travelled to the Nass River fishery each spring, stopping off at the fort, sometimes for days or weeks, before continuing to the Nass. They travelled as well to Alaska, to Fort McLoughlin, to the Queen Charlotte Islands and elsewhere. At all these places the Tsimshian traded, hunted, fished and feuded. Their linkages with their neighbours, through fort visits and visits away from the fort, are frequently noted.

Marriage with other tribes facilitated close alliances and embodied these intertribal relations. For example, Nislaganoose (Niselhanass), senior chief of the Gitlan tribe of the Tsimshian, one of the early settlers, had a Tongass wife. Fort personnel also had Tsimshian, Nisga'a and Haida family links. Captain William Henry McNeill's Kaigani in-laws (Haida) traded at the fort as did fathers-in-law, brothers-in-law and other members of families formed by marriage between Natives and Hudson Bay Company employees. Employees and their wives and children lived within the fort stockade, while for the most part collateral relatives like McNeill's Kaigani kin camped outside.

We learn more about Native customs and traditions, alliances and feuds, employment and relations with the fort and get more glimpses of marriage and family matters than we would if Tsimshian had not begun to settle at the fort. Something of the activities of individuals emerges from the references to individual chiefs and their families. The chiefs, as heads of the main economic unit, the lineage, were the main traders. Some aspects of the pattern of trade—items traded, seasonal variations and factors aiding and hindering trade—are revealed. Cultural variety was not new to the Tsimshian and they adapted to new influences in continuity with their past, absorbing into their traditions ramifications of the European and Native contacts available at the fort.

The term "fur trade" implied a wide range of involvement by the Natives in the life and work of the fort. The Tongass (the Tlingit group closest to the location of the Nisga'a) immediately assumed the role of the main provisioners. Young Tongass men, regularly hired to provide venison for the tables of the fort personnel, acted as the fort's best hunters in its early months (HBC: No-

vember 14, 1834). Venison and salmon (fresh and dried) formed the chief items of the trade in food. Nearby Tsimshian also traded food, including venison, salmon, halibut, flounder, eulachon, herring and codfish. Tsimshian especially, but others also, traded other foods: eggs, herring roe and oil and fat of whales, fish and deer. Venison and salmon, however, remained the main food provisions traded. Deer, hunted year around; fresh salmon, available in summer and early autumn; geese and eggs traded in the spring; along with eulachon and halibut, traded in early summer, comprised the Native contributions to fort provisions.

These indigenous foods were supplemented by potatoes. The earliest potato traders were Haida; Skidegates brought potatoes in early May 1835, as well as furs. This occurred less than a year after the fort's relocation in the summer of 1834, and was likely a continuation of trade previously established at the Nass fort (HBC: May 4, 1835).[3] The Cumshewas and Massetts followed the Skidegate as potato suppliers. In addition to supplying the fort, potatoes were also traded to Natives including Nisga'a, Tsimshian and others who gathered at the Nass mouth (HBC: May 15, June 4, 1835). The Skidegates and Cumshewas became known at the fort as the "potatoes people" (HBC: November 14, 1835).

In the first decade of the Fort Simpson village, we see in germ the factors leading to the later dominant role of the chiefs who bore the title, Legaic, probably the most-written-about figures of all the Coast Tsimshian. By family ties of marriage, Legaic I, the senior chief of the Gispaxloats, and the first holder of this title known to Europeans, had incorporated a senior fort officer, Dr. Kennedy, into his family and brought Dr. Kennedy's trading obligations into the lineage's economic system.

The premature deaths of two other Tsimshian chiefs, Neshot and Cackas, in the smallpox epidemic of 1836-37 undoubtedly assisted Legaic's rise. However, it is significant that the Gispaxloats' special trading link was with Tsimshian-speakers on the middle Skeena, a rich source of furs accessible to the fort through Legaic, though traders of the Kitselas and Kitsumkalem tribes did sometimes come in person to trade at the fort. Cackas' tribe, the Ginaxangik, and Neshot's tribe, the Gitzaxlahl, had their special ties to the Tlingit in Aboriginal trade; here too, the Tlingit could and did trade directly with the fort. In addition, they traded with the Russians and the visiting "opposition" ships. Aboriginal trading patterns did not assist Cackas and Neshot in their trading position with the fort as the Aboriginal trade relations of the Gispaxloats assisted Legaic.

As has been noted, Legaic alone of the three principal chiefs of the nearby Tsimshian survived the destructive smallpox epidemic of 1836-37. These three had been courted by the company (HBC: March 2, 1836),[4] but Legaic had the closest ties with the fort. His son-in-law (perhaps nephew-in-law),

Dr. Kennedy, was an officer at the fort, and this marriage/alliance had influenced the relocation of the fort from the Nass River to the Tsimshian peninsula. The other two chiefs, Cackas and Neshot, were much less important to the fort's economy, though also regarded as principal chiefs. All three of these men would have been known to the company prior to the fort's relocation, as were other chiefs who traded at Fort Simpson on the Nass River.

In the eyes of the company, all three chiefs were of approximately equal rank and much trade was expected of them. Their comings and goings were regularly reported as were the movements and activities of members of their families; the activities of the sons of all three are reported in the journal. Most of these reports have to do with trade at the fort and travels related to fort business. The chiefs acted as couriers of company mail from Fort Simpson to other forts, e.g., Fort McLoughlin and posts at Stikine and Taku. Even before their settlement (by the mid-1830s) at Fort Simpson, the Tsimshian and Tlingit had become a part of the fort's communication and information network. Tsimshian and Tlingit chiefs regularly acted as couriers for company mail between various forts. By the late 1830s these included Fort McLoughlin (1833-43) at Millbank Sound and Fort Durham (Taku) and Fort Stikine (Wrangel), the latter two among the Tlingits of Alaska.

All three of the chiefs had the distinction of being honoured by the company with special suits (uniforms), indicating their collective status above others and their equality with each other. However, as already indicated, the three did not deliver the same amount of trade. Whether this was due primarily to differences in energy, in skill or in trading ties and alliances is not clear from the fort journal. However, it is clear that only Legaic had family ties with the fort. His family link to the fort, through Kennedy, is likely a key to why he traded more with the company than did Cackas and Neshot. The latter two were also active traders, but their activities continued to move in more traditional channels. Each of these three noblemen bore distinguished titles. The head chief of the Ginaxangik tribe of the Coastal Tsimshian in the early 19th century held the title of Cackas (Txaqaxs) (Garfield 1939:188, 190).[5] Neshot, the senior chief of the Raven crest (Ganhade clan) of the Gitzaxlahl (Gitzarhaehl) tribe of the Coast Tsimshian, had family links to Legaic (Barbeau 1950:765). Legaic, who held the title of the senior chief of the Gispaxloats tribe, was of the Eagle clan and crest.

In the Tsimshian social system, the lineage (*wilp*, *waab*) formed the main economic unit. Kennedy through his marriage would have been associated, if not formally incorporated in the same way, with the lineage. Thus Legaic became, by Tsimshian tradition, integrated into the fort's trade by family links. In a similar way, the fort's journals record other links created by marriage; McNeill's family ties to the Kaigani are regularly noted. Other members of the fort personnel also had family ties to the Nisga'a. These ties undoubtedly en-

hanced the trading links of the Tsimshian, Nisga'a and others. Like the Tsimshian, the Nisga'a too had the lineage as their main economic unit.

Though Cackas and Neshot lacked these links to the fort, this did not adversely affect their ranking in the eyes of the company, though both proved a disappointment from the company point of view. They failed to bring to the fort the quantity of trade expected from friendly chiefs who had been singled out for special consideration by the company (HBC: June 29, 1836).[6] Relations between the two and the fort thus soured and antagonisms sometimes flared. They were seen as contentious, unco-operative and sometimes hostile in their speech and actions. The journal keeper, while aware of the Native family ties of fort personnel, presumably never considered the way such ties or the lack of them might be seen by members of the Native nobility.

By the autumn of 1836, after two years of trading and visiting at Fort Simpson, the reputation of Cackas and Neshot as traders had worsened. Cackas had several quarrels with fort personnel. In one instance he told the company to leave the area because the land occupied by the fort was his (HBC: June 29, 1836). This represents a different view than that often given that the land fell under the jurisdiction of Legaic. Cackas also threatened on an earlier occasion to burn down the fort. He had been forbidden entrance while drunk (HBC: February 3, 1835). For his opposition he was called a "good for nothing villain" who never brought anything for trade, and the journal keeper coolly saw "no cause for regret at his death" of smallpox (HBC: November 2, 1836).

The journal keeper also seemed to take some pleasure in the discomfiture of the successor Cackas, when a major feast given to name the new Cackas, apparently not as "grand" an affair as was intended by the new title holder, ran out of food and drinks while the guests were still there (HBC: June 2, 1838). The new Cackas did not emerge as a challenger to Legaic in the fur trade at Fort Simpson in the late 1830s, but he continued to have a bad reputation. In late June 1840, rumour had it, apparently without subsequent result, that he planned to join hostile Haida in an attack on the fort (HBC: June 29, 1840).

Cackas and Neshot repeatedly appear as trading with the "opposition," that is, the American ships. Apparently the American traders offered them as much goods as they wanted, at prices they wanted. They would have used the fort as a supplement to whatever trading they did with other Tsimshian, Nisga'a, Tlingit and others. The fort for its part sometimes punished those who sold furs to the Americans by denying them other trade (HBC: November 9, 1836). Natives had their own agendas at the fort. They might come with furs but not trade them to the fort itself (HBC: February 24, 1836). The fort location served Natives as a mart for intertribal trade as well as for company trade.

Legaic too sometimes had friction with fort personnel. On one occasion he was warned that his people would be fired on if they persisted in throwing stones at fort employees (HBC: February 7, 1835). On the other hand, his spe-

cial relationship with the fort and his awareness of its uses to him may be indicated by his accepting smallpox inoculation in November 1836, after both of his fellow principal chiefs, Cackas and Neshot, died of smallpox (HBC: November 9, 1836).

The deaths of these two Tsimshian chiefs were followed by the murder of a prominent Tongass (Tlingit) trader, Conguele (Coaguele), who had also traded at the first Fort Simpson on the Nass and had helped to transport fort property to the new location. His murder may have formed another factor, probably of less significance, in the priority achieved by the Legaic lineage. As an old friend of the fort since its Nass days, his murder would have contributed to an alienation of the implicated tribal members, the family and supporters of Neshot, who blamed Conguele and his people for transmitting smallpox to their chief. In revenge for this perceived act, Neshot's son and confederates helped Conguele become intoxicated, and, when he had been rendered unconscious, shot him in the head with a pistol (HBC: October 2, 1836). Neshot's son was expelled from the fort for his part in the murder, but this did not prevent him from returning later to the scene of the crime, in December 1836 (HBC: December 4, 5, 1836). By late January 1837, the same man was alleged to have threatened the life of John Work, fort commander (HBC: January 22, 1837).

In the early years of the new Fort Simpson, from mid-1834 to late 1836, the three chiefs were mentioned about an equal number of times, most frequently as traders and without negative remarks. Legaic had a slight edge over the other two. Unlike the others, he was not seen as lazy or useless. As a family "member" of the fort's leadership his friendship and co-operation were readily noticeable. By contrast with the other two his contribution was underscored. Only he had lived up to expectations. Legaic's inoculation for smallpox indicates his trust in the power and knowledge of his physician son-in-law and of the white man's medicine. The disease had not missed Kennedy's family; Mrs. Kennedy caught it but recovered. One of Legaic's wives died of it as did his son, Looking Glass (HBC: November 14, 1836).

The journal, however, does not see Legaic as paramount or as a ruler or "priest chief" (Robinson 1978:64ff.).[7] To them he was, like all Tsimshian chiefs, "lacking in authority" (HBC: July 1, 1837). His word was not law. He does not appear as the hegemonic Legaic of monopolistic trading power, wealth and political ascendancy described by Robinson, although his prominence in the Skeena River trade is clear. His rise to pre-eminence seems to have followed the relocation of the fort by some years. It may also have been linked to the deaths of Cackas and Neshot in 1836; evidently the creation of a new Cackas in May 1838 did not prevent this rise in the subsequent years (HBC: May 20, 1838).

Does the presence at the fort of Kitselas (June 18, 1838; August 23, 1840; June 6, 1841; March 28, 1842) and Kitsumkalem (August 9, 1840) say anything about Legaic's monopoly and control of the trade on the Skeena River and his role as intermediary to the upper Skeena Tsimshian and Gitksan? Perhaps his control of this trade included some role for other Tsimshian tribes on the Skeena under his hegemony. Perhaps his power and the nature of his control was not so clearly defined as words like "monopoly" and "hegemony" would seem to imply (Meilleur 1980:238-239).

While his peers, Cackas and Neshot, continued to conduct their trade along more customary lines, taking advantage of the company's "opposition," Legaic allowed his family links to the fort to act as a conduit for his trade. The three chiefs were all exploiting aspects of the possibilities for trade offered by the coming of the Europeans, by land or by sea. They did not recognize themselves as "company chiefs," though they accepted the company's suits as badges of their rank and status. Presumably the suit was not more significant for Legaic than for the other two. Family ties (lineage ties?) put Legaic in a unique and advantageous position. His family and his Gispaxloats tribe became well known to the fort's journal keeper (mostly John Work in this period) prior to his emergence as the most important trader of the three chiefs. The number of "his people" was known; see for example the reference to Legaic (Illgaguech) and the "greater part" of "his people" arriving in seven canoes (HBC: December 1, 1835; Allaire 1984:97).[8] Family connections gave all the family a high profile; the doings of Looking Glass and other sons are noted (HBC: November 19, 1834; March 28 and November 14, 1836; October 11, 1839), and the illness and death of Legaic's "old wife" is recorded (HBC: January 21, 1835).

We do not know exactly when Legaic I died. He was reported to be deathly ill on April 27, 1839, but he apparently recovered (HBC: April 27, 1839). It may be that Legaic is the person referred to (but why not named?) in connection with loud wailing heard from the Tsimshian settlement at the fort, in mid-August of 1842. News had reached the village of the death of a "principal man," killed on the interior Skeena River while trading there (HBC: August 14, 1842). Another possibility is that Legaic died in late April or early May 1839 when he was reported to be ill of an unnamed but nearly always fatal disease (HBC: April 27, 1839). Why no further mention would have been made of his illness and death is not clear, but he no longer figures in the journal through to mid-1842. It is more likely that he survived this illness. Work refers to Legaic as an old man and as a principal chief of "weight and standing among the natives" (Dee 1945:71). Although Legaic figures prominently in Work's journal of January to October 1835, he is totally absent from the journal of 1841-44 unless he is the chief referred to in 1844 who was killed on the Skeena "for encroachment" (ibid.). Those killed were some of the best hunt-

ers and their loss would be a drawback to the trade, Work wrote (Public Archives of British Columbia, 1841-44).

The only other chief referred to as a principal chief up to this time was Wass (September 14, 1838), and the above-mentioned murder victim was not he. Wass was of Wolf clan and Gitlan tribe, related to Nislaganoose (HBC: September 26, 1842). Two other prominent Tsimshian chiefs, local residents by this time, were Neaselkameak (Neeskameks, Nishlkumik, The Big Face Man) of the Killer-Whale crest (Gispawuwade clan) of the Gilodzar (Gilutsau) tribe of the Coast Tsimshian, and Nislaganoose (Nishlaranus, Neeashlakahnoos) of the Wolf clan and crest, of the Gitlan tribe of the Coast Tsimshian. He is also referred to as the "Gitlan chief," "the Lame Man" and "the Cripple Man." Persons of this title had close family ties to the Nisga'a chief Klaydach (Hladech, Hlidux, Claytha, Kledak, etc.), a Wolf chief of Ankida village on the lower Nass River. Neither of these men was the murder victim mentioned. In later years another holder of the title Legaic was referred to not as "a principal chief" but more forcefully as "principal chief" of the Coast Tsimshian (HBC: August 11, 1852). In the 1830s and the 1840s the fort journal usage suggests that the Legaic of that time was not yet so dominant a figure.

Tsimshian tradition recalls that a Chief Legaic was killed on the Skeena River while trying to establish his hegemony over the river trade to the Gitksan (Robinson 1978:64). This may be the man known as Legaic I, Kennedy's father-in-law. Another tradition remembers the death of Legaic's (Legaic I?) brother Guhlrax. He was killed by members of the Kitselas tribe (Tsimshian) who attacked Legaic's party while defending their own trade on the Skeena (McDonald and Cove 1987:81-85 [Narrative 22]).

All three of the chiefs, especially honoured (or vilified) by the fort—Cackas, Legaic and Neshot—had occasional friction with the company, but Legaic's close ties and trading advantage gave him a position which could be built upon for his future supremacy among the Coast Tsimshian, as revealed in fort records by the mid-1850s and as embodied in the oral tradition of the Coast Tsimshian. It is interesting to note in this regard that some oral tradition challenges the view of Legaic's supremacy. Two Nisga'a chiefs challenged him. Klaydach invaded the upper Skeena to challenge the trade monopoly Legaic held there, and Kinsadah outdid Legaic in a contest of destroying "coppers." These accounts give a different perspective on the power and wealth of Legaic by the mid-19th century.

The smallpox epidemic of 1836-37 had been very hard on the people who traded at the fort. Deaths and illnesses carried off perhaps a third of the surrounding population, and people were afraid to travel to the fort for fear of catching the disease (HBC: November 19, 1836; May 16, 1837). This is reflected in the journal entries between June 1836 and May 1837. The references to the fur trade use words such as "dull," "very poor," "indifferent" and "no

trader." The epidemic had interrupted travel and trade. Ross's Friend, a major Nisga'a trader since the Nass fort days, was hindered in his role as intermediary in the trade with interior tribes, as smallpox spread through the winter of 1836-37 (HBC: May 15, 1837).[9]

The Tsimshian understood the epidemic to be caused or allowed by the supernatural, because the Sun wanted people sick or dead. This was apparent from the failure of offerings and sacrifices to end the epidemic (HBC: November 15, 1836). The Sun was not a remote or disinterested deity but was involved in the lives of the people and controlled their condition, though sometimes responsive to propitiations from humans. Why the Sun was behaving as it was in this particular case is not explained. Nor is it clear what the sacrifices and offerings were. The Tsimshian were not known to have killed slaves in years recent to 1838 (HBC: June 21, 1838), though slaves were sometimes killed to mark accession to a title or to resolve a dispute (HBC: September 21, 1838).

Tsimshian beliefs and ceremonies in general became more noticeable to the fort as the Tsimshian settlement began to grow. In early February 1839, the death and resurrection of a great local chieftainess and medicine woman was reported to the Europeans at Fort Simpson, though the journal keeper dismissed this event as an example of the superstition of the people (HBC: February 13, 1839). A matching example of Tsimshian response to European custom was their refusal to participate in a census taking; they asserted that they had done so previously and their participation had resulted in a population decline (HBC: February 21, 1842).

The Period of Settlement: 1837-43

The late 1830s begins a new era at the fort for the Coast Tsimshian. By about mid-1837 the nearby Tsimshian from Pearl Harbor had begun to establish a permanent village at the fort. People at first came for a few days to trade and then for a longer period (two months and more) in the spring prior to continuing on to the Nass River eulachon fishery (HBC: January 7, 1837). Sometimes they came and camped for part of the winter. Over a period of several years, short-term camping at the fort extended into permanent settlement. Legaic had a house at the fort in early June, 1837 (HBC: June 12, 1837). Gitlan were living at the fort when Cackas (II) came there to court Nislaganoose's daughter (HBC: June 8, 1838). In April and May, 1837, the Tsimshian were referred to as "encamped here" or "here" repeatedly. By the spring of 1840 houses are referred to as "here" for "some time back" and the journal keeper spoke of the "Indians stationary here" (HBC: April 8, 9 and October 9, 11, 1840). In the meantime the Cannibal's people are reported to have five houses at Fort Simpson (HBC: September 11, 1840). Thus the village of Fort Simpson Tsimshians came into existence.

The relations between the Tsimshians and the fort had entered into a new and more intricate symbiosis which went beyond fur trading as such. Tsimshian settlement at the fort meant that activities previously only reported to the fort now could be witnessed at the fort. In these years of the late 1830s and early 1840s new names appeared in the records describing traders at the fort. Knowledge of their culture and customs was increasingly demonstrated in the journal, and greater awareness of social linkages became evident. Among those named were Wass, Neaselkameak, Nislaganoose, Big Face Man and Pipes; a new Cackas also appeared. Whatever the reason, the new Cackas had poor relations with the fort, as had his predecessor of that title. His personality as seen by the fort was abrasive and trouble-making. He was not a resident at the fort village, but his people clashed with those at the fort, including Big Face Man's people (HBC: September 22, 1841). Big Face Man (Neaselkameak, of the Killer Whale clan of the Gilodzar tribe of the Coast Tsimshian), also clashed with Mr. Hanson's people, another group of settlers (HBC: June 11, 1840). Mr. Hanson was Nesyaranat, of the Gitsis tribe, also of the Coast Tsimshian. From these names it is possible to know some of the tribes or segments of tribes (lineages and clans) of the Coast Tsimshian who were the earliest settlers at the fort, as already noted.

The fort journal by the end of 1842 knew at least the Gispaxloats, Giludsau (Gilodzar), Gitlans, Kitkatla (Sebassas), Ginaxangik, Ginadoiks and Gitzaxlahl tribes of the Coast and Southern Tsimshian. Excepting the Kitkatla, the others were among the nine tribes who were resident at Port Simpson by the 1930s (Garfield 1939:175-176). Halcombe (1874) relates that he was told there were eight tribes at Fort Tsimshian: Kitlahn (Gitlan), Keetseesh (Gitsis), Keetsahelahs (Kitselas), Keetandol (Gitando), Keetwahtawik (Ginadoiks?), Keenakangeak (Ginaxangik), Killotsah (Gilodzar) and Keetwillgeeant (Gitwilgoats). Perhaps the Gispaxloats were omitted because they were at Metlakatla; some Gitlans were there also. The mid-century Nislaganoose had converted and become Simeon Gitlan. He died in 1864 (Halcombe 1874:85-86).

Tsimshians resident at the fort became known as the "Fort Simpsons," "our" Indians, "locals" and "home" Indians as well as "those stationary here." Within a few years of the fort's founding the Tsimshian were a significant part of its labour force. Their role went well beyond that of trading furs and provisions: their work was an integral part of the fort's maintenance and survival. It included a variety of labour performed for the maintenance of the fort, as will be seen below.

This settlement occurred at a time when the smallpox epidemic was beginning to abate. The epidemic had spread southward from the Tlingit, ravaging the Tsimshian and Nisga'a populations for several months. Fur trading was interrupted by fear of contagion. Nisga'a wives of fort personnel returned to their homes only to report the ravages on the Nass. Fear of the disease had led

to the murder of Conguele. Many of the leading traders and their families were visited by this epidemic.

The closer contact with the fort occasioned by permanent settlement intensified and elaborated the impact of European culture on the Tsimshian. Cultural change had extended to the degree that labrets were going out of style. Nevertheless the fort journal reveals that Tsimshian culture remained intact, vigorous and adaptive. Sometimes these adaptations were frustrating and annoying to the purposes of the fort. The intertribal and intratribal relations of the various peoples resident at, and visiting at, the fort were often hostile and many small disputes arose which threatened the fur trade (HBC: January 31, 1838).

Sir George Simpson, governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, visited the fort in 1841. He arrived at Fort Simpson on September 17, and while there he toured the Tsimshian village, visited in the homes of the Tsimshian and concluded that they were "superior" to other native housing he had seen on the coast. He also noted the frequent fights, many resulting from gambling disputes (Simpson 1847[1]:206-208). He estimated that about 14 000 people, of various tribes in the general vicinity, visited Fort Simpson. He also placed the population loss from the smallpox epidemic at about one-third. This would put the population figure at over 20 000 for those using the fort in the mid-1830s. Simpson observed that the village residents showed the effects of the smallpox, including loss of eyesight. The disease had also caused the decline of the wolf population, according to Simpson's Tsimshian informants. Wolves ate corpses of smallpox victims and thus caused their own decline, the local residents told him.

By 1842, the Tsimshian village at the fort had grown to about 800 residents "as home guards under the protection of our guns." Paul Kane visited Vancouver Island in May and early June of 1847. He placed in his book, *Wanderings of an Artist*, published in 1859, a census of the "Indian Tribes inhabiting the Northwest coast of America for the year 1840." The Tsimshian were reported as numbering about 2400, plus 68 slaves. While the figures are given for Coast Tsimshian tribes, it is not indicated that these apply to those resident at Fort Simpson only (Kane 1859:Appendix).

Wood was one of the main products used by the fort besides food, and the settlers, by the late 1830s, were the main hewers of wood. "Bringing home logs" (HBC: August 11, 1840) and "rafting home" timbers (HBC: June 15, 17, 1840), cutting and hauling firewood, carrying and piling pickets, digging up stumps from the proposed garden area, collecting stumps and burning them and clearing the fort grounds, all employed primarily Native labourers, under the direction of one or more of the fort personnel; "Men" and "Indians" were the customary forms of reference for these work parties.

Tsimshian also gathered driftwood and made shingles. They supplied bark, cut the grass and worked the fort's garden. They cleared, planted, weeded and

harvested. Sometimes they stole the garden crops, especially the potatoes. They fed the fort's goat, ground its wheat and dusted and baled its furs. They also made cord for binding the furs. They helped supply the fort with salt and salted fish (HBC: May 16, 1842). They collected straw for the fort kiln and seaweed for garden manure (HBC: January 25, February 3, 22, 1840). They acted as stevedores for company ships (HBC: May 17, July 7, 1842). They carried gravel for the fort grounds. Both men and women were employed, paid mostly in liquor, tobacco and cloth.

Sometimes events elsewhere had their impact on life at the fort's Tsimshian village. The village community functioned in continuity with the affairs of its people at the Nass or in the Queen Charlotte Islands or elsewhere. In addition, conflicts and feuding occurred between the resident Tsimshian and the many visitors. Kidnappings, shootings and stabbings took place under the walls of the fort. Disputes occurring elsewhere were revenged or otherwise ramified at the fort village. These events were consistent with traditional intertribal and intratribal relations of trade and warfare (McDonald and Cove 1987). Indigenous means were available to deal with them and these too were implemented at the new village. The fur trade could be reduced or interrupted as a result of their conflicts; rivalries between Native residents and visitors at the fort village frequently produced tension which affected village-fort relations. Fear of attack by resident Tsimshian might cause other Natives to avoid the fort. In April 1838, Tongass and Port Stewart Tlingit were fighting elsewhere, but the warlike conditions made others reluctant to venture out into a possible battle zone. This antagonism continued for two years (HBC: April 10, 1838). Again, in the spring of 1843, local Tsimshian, i.e., Fort Simpson's, refused to hunt away from their village for fear of being captured by Haida who were believed to be "prowling about" (HBC: April 1, 1843).

People would not come to the fort if danger lurked in its vicinity. Some Haida, at odds with the Tsimshian, were cautious about going to the fort because of lingering grievances between them. The population of the fort village is not clear, but they were enough to overawe a party of 90 to 100 Skidegate in May 1837 (HBC: May 27, 1837). A week later Kaigani (Kygarnie) were timid about travelling to the fort because so many Tsimshian now resided there (HBC: June 3, 1837). Another situation arose in early August 1837; when resident Tsimshians' own numbers were inadequate to dominate a large party (30 canoes) of visiting Massetts, they relied on the fort to protect them. They took advantage of their ties to the fort, including family and economic ties. They expected the fort to act accordingly (HBC: August 2, 1837).

Intertribal tensions arose at the fort when one group learned that another was getting higher prices for furs. The fort paid better prices to Stikines and Haida who had easy access to Russian traders, either at Sitka or from visiting ships. This form of discrimination was not understood or accepted by those

who were paid less (HBC: May 20, 1837). Various peoples, including the fort villagers, took advantage of the competitive sellers' market to get the best price. Massetts could and did sell potatoes for good prices at Sitka (HBC: March 21, 1843). Loyalty to the fort, much to the fort's distress, had its limitations.

The Fort Simpson Tsimshian also resorted to the competition for better bargains. Visiting American ships came right into the waters of the locals. This created tension and bad feelings, on the fort's part, toward their local residents. The fort varied its prices to suit the presence or absence of competition. When the Americans left, the prices paid for furs were reduced. The land-based trade did not end the important part played by the ship-borne trade in the late 1830s. American whalers and other traders seriously challenged the Hudson's Bay Company in the months from spring through early autumn. They were the annoying and disruptive "opposition," syphoning off substantial amounts of furs during their periodic visits to the area, including the Nass fishery during the eulachon season (HBC: April 24, 1838). The company had to meet their prices or lose the furs. The Indians also traded among themselves for better prices or acted as trading agents for each other (HBC: April 17, 1835; February 24, 1836).

Slave trading was a regular element of the village life and provided another reason for coming to the fort, which served as a trade mart for slaves as well as furs. The waters around the fort and the routes to the fort were viewed as possible scenes of slave raiding. Fear of slave raiding sometimes became a cause for the interruption of regular visitations to the fort. Slave trading, as well as other forms of trading and warfare were part of the tradition of intratribal and intertribal relations in pre-contact times. The fort witnessed the continuation of these practices, as the Native cultures functioned in continuity with their past as regards slaving too. The custom created feuds and led to violence—injuries and killings—as rescue and revenge were sought, and ransoms played a role. Much bad feeling was generated.

The fort sometimes became involved. Slaves were worked like dogs, Sir George Simpson had observed. A female slave, the wife of a chief, appealed to Captain W.H. McNeill to assist her to freedom. She was a Newettee (Kwakiutl) captured by Sebassas (HBC: August 11, 1837). Kidnappings, especially of women and children, formed a part of the slaving industry; the victims might be held for ransom or sold to others. Furs were exchanged for slaves (HBC: September 22, 1838).[10] The Coast Tsimshian carried on a share of this trade in humans. Tsimshian sold slaves especially to the Tongass and Stikines (HBC: January 9, 15, 1837). Sebassas (Kitkatlas), who were Southern Tsimshian and closely linked to the Tsimshian at Fort Simpson, were slavers who raided others to make captives (HBC: August 11, 1837). Slaves were generally sold northward through the Tongass and Stikines into Alaska (HBC: June 11, 1837;

September 22, 1838). The local Tsimshian sometimes acted as intermediaries. These activities once again reveal the complexity of linkages, alliances, obligations and diplomacy among the various peoples engaged in the slave trade and kidnapping. The slave trade was part of the larger system of trading, war and rivalry relations that pertained. Ties of family and intertribal alliances might restrain slavery and kidnapping between groups and might facilitate recovery of captives.

When Neeseleanook's (Nislaganoose, The Cripple Man, The Gitlan Chief) two wives were captured, one was released immediately by her Cumshewa captors because she was a Tongass (HBC: August 13, 16, 1842). The other was recaptured later from the Cumshewa by Sebassas. The Sebassas, acting as friends of Neeseleanooks, and undoubtedly in their own interests as well, formed a raiding party and crossed to the Queen Charlotte Islands where they attacked the captor village. They seized the kidnapped wife and pillaged the village's potato crop (HBC: September 6, 8, 15, 1842). They then returned the wife to her husband and sold the looted potatoes at Fort Simpson (HBC: September 19, 1842). In the summer of 1842, one of Big Face Man's "people" (lineage?) was kidnapped by Haida (HBC: July 28, 1842). Later in the summer, Kygarnie (Klaigani) were reported to be "prowling about" to kidnap local Tsimshian (HBC: August 26, 1842).

By 1837 the fort was not only a slave mart but also a refuge for escaped slaves. The fort dealt with the issue of aiding slaves on a case-by-case basis, but for the most part, while they observed the activities of the trade, they did not attempt to stop it in a systematic way (HBC: May 2, 1837, March 22, 1840). In early December 1839, they traded a Skidegate woman from the Tsimshian to prevent her being sold to Stikines (HBC: December 2, 1839). Intertribal peace and the promotion of trade at the fort were likely to be considerations where interventions occurred. Sometimes more personal factors might be operative when the slaves were from families or groups close to fort personnel or to Tsimshian traders important to the fort.

Despite the fact that the settlement was close by and though the Europeans at the fort had some knowledge of the Tsimshian ritual and ceremonial life, the information provided by the journal is often vague in these early years. The custom, common among Northwest Coast peoples, of sprinkling eagle or goose down on each other as a symbol of peace and friendship was noted (HBC: May 28, 1837). Again, several kinds of feasts and celebrations were reported. One of these is described as a celebration of the death of an old chieftainess (HBC: June 4, 1840). Another was a big feast at which Cackas was to "set himself up as a man of great consequence" (HBC: May 31, 1838). He was the successor to the Cackas who died in the 1836 epidemic. The death of the earlier Cackas had been commemorated (June 1837?) by a "grand booze" (HBC: June 9, 1837). A "grand feast" which commemorated the deceased

Cackas accompanied the installation of the new holder of that title. Much preparation went into this event including the purchase of "finery" and liquor by trading furs. As it turned out the event was less grand than anticipated and refreshments ran out before the entire ceremony was completed. This apparently somewhat detracted from the prestige of the new Cackas. This was followed by an unsuccessful attempt by Cackas to woo the daughter of Nislaganoose (HBC: June 2, 8, 1838).

Local Tsimshian travelled to other Tsimshian communities to attend their events as well as inviting others to the Fort Simpson village. These travels indicate close ties with those of the home villages, as well as the Southern Tsimshian ("Sebassas"), Nisga'a, Tongass and others (HBC: December 14, 1837; January 18, 1838; December 13, 1841). Some awareness of the different kinds of feasts and ceremonies is apparent here and some sense of the seasonal nature of certain ceremonies is indicated. Early October was said to be the "feasting" time of the Tsimshian and this was the explanation for a temporary decline in their trading (HBC: October 5, 1834). It was also understood that feasts might be prepared for over a period of months (HBC: December 14, 1837). The Europeans also held their main seasonal feasts in the fall and winter. All Saints Day (November 1), Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve and New Year's Day were also marked by consumption of extra and luxury foods and liquor and they too frequently were accompanied by violence among those celebrating (HBC: December 25, 1837; January 2, 1838; October 31, 1840). All Saints Day was both religious and ethnic since it was seen by the fort officers as a Roman Catholic holiday for the "men," many of whom were French-Canadians (HBC: November 1, 1837). Harvest Home (or Harvest Thanksgiving), the English fall harvest holiday, was also celebrated in October (HBC: October 26, 1838). This was a folk festival which survived into the mid-19th century after which efforts were made to give it a more formal religious meaning through incorporation in the Church of England's religious calendar (Metford 1991:122). Native wives, Tsimshian, Nisga'a and others in the fort would have participated in some or all of these celebrations to some degree.

Conclusion

By the late 1830s certain patterns emerged in the contact among Native traders coming to the fort. The Tsimshian, both those settled at the fort and others, became the largest single source for furs and provisions. In addition they assumed a variety of other kinds of employment for the maintenance of the fort. They also provided information about the activities of other Natives and Europeans in the surrounding area. Through intensified contact with the fort, some information about their culture was transmitted to the fort personnel, and some information about that culture has been preserved. The resident Tsimshian,

and others, integrated the fort and its business into their own affairs. The fort became a new trade centre supplementing traditional centres such as the Nass River fishery, even to the point of including slave trading. As such it also became a new place for intertribal relations both peaceful and violent. The fort journal provides a window on this little world of trade and conflict and their ramifications.

The Nisga'a also played a part in the fort life. They were traders, especially of beaver and marten and to a lesser extent of provisions. They made short visits and their links to the fort were reinforced by the marriage ties that had already been created when the fort was at the Nass River. These were later further strengthened when Captain William Henry McNeill married a leading Nisga'a chief and trader, Neshaki, in the early 1860s (Patterson 1990:13-24). The Nisga'a also acted as intermediaries for peoples of the Upper Nass and the Nass hinterland.

The Tongass had, immediately on the founding of the fort at McLoughlin Harbour (Summer 1834), become the major Native provisioners. Their work as hunters for the fort was the major source of fresh and dried venison. They also supplied fish, especially salmon, fresh and dried. In addition, they traded furs and sometimes slaves.

The Stikine supplied furs from Alaska, acting as intermediaries for more remote peoples. Stikines were regular couriers of mail between the company's Alaskan forts at Taku and Wrangel, and Fort Simpson. They also visited the fort to trade slaves. Their fur trade was important enough to cause the company to give them higher prices for their furs to keep them from going to the Russians.

The Haida were important suppliers of sea otter and other skins; they were also regular provisioners with their trade in potatoes. Though some friction and violence occurred between them and some of the Tsimshian, nevertheless they regularly resorted to the fort from within a few months of its founding. The Kaigani (Kygarnie) Haida were, like the Stikines, given special prices to prevent them from trading to the Russians, who came to them. Kaigani also engaged in kidnapping and slaving. Haida from time to time disrupted trade when they threatened, or were believed to have threatened, the Tsimshian. Haida furs were lost to whalers who visited the Queen Charlotte Islands in 1843 and 1844. The presence of the fort contributed to conditions that caused or contributed to intertribal and sometimes intratribal conflict.

The fort also provided expanded opportunities for all its customers, but in the first decade of its new location it cannot be said to have dominated the life and culture of its visitors or residents. The various peoples visiting the fort were clearly not dependent on its goods for survival, nor desperately in need of them. The trade goods were not so essential to them that considerations of tradition and custom were overruled or set aside. The fort's goods—cloth,

tools, weapons, ammunition, liquor, molasses, tobacco, rice—were incorporated into the traditional life.

The fort journal saw the Native tribes as centred on the fort, especially the local Tsimshian. Tsimshian activity, the journal keeper implied, was or should be geared to the service of the fort and dominated by the interests and concerns of the fort. The journal keeper repeatedly asked why the Natives, particularly those "stationary here" were not doing more for the fort—fur trading, provisioning and various kinds of labour. Condescending and pejorative language was often used to describe them, e.g., "scamps," "thieves," "villains," "insolent."

The evidence suggests that the fort was an addition to Native life, but not an indispensable element. What happened at the fort and in connection with the fort was a continuation of what might happen at other sites traditionally visited—trade, marriage, fights, ceremonies, slaving and so forth. The Natives continued to carry out the ceremonies and rituals which created and symbolized the order and system of their societies. Additionally, they were not at the fort as beggars and mendicants or as marginal people living off the crumbs that fell from the fort's table, though the fort journal sometimes portrayed them in this way. The journal, curiously, vacillates between the view of Natives as nuisances and marginal and that of them as necessary to the fort's survival. There is no indication that these visitors and residents were in a disintegrating or declining condition. Their traditional culture is portrayed as vigorous and active.

In general the fort evidently was not seen as a threat by Native people, though it might at times be regarded as an intruder and usurper of Tsimshian land holdings. The fort might even be seen as their goose of the golden egg. It was a service to them, a refuge, a new marketplace, a place to acquire goods not readily available otherwise. For the Tsimshian to trade elsewhere would have meant travelling at least to Fort McLoughlin, at Millbank Sound among the Bella Bella, and some did so sometimes.

The fort expanded the Natives' economic and material culture, but did not dictate their customs. Through the fort greater knowledge of the European's ways and artifacts could be gained and applied to Tsimshian purposes. The Tsimshian were a cosmopolitan people, not closed to cultural borrowing, as they showed by borrowings from Kwakiutl culture and by population additions from the Tlingit. The creation of a local Tsimshian village at the fort was consistent with their adaptation for advantage. They had previously migrated from the Skeena River area.

Friction at the fort could be settled through traditional mechanisms, though sometimes the company's intervention was helpful. The company weighed its own interests when it stepped into disputes. The fort record does not answer the question of whether population decline and relocation at the fort led to in-

creased competition and rivalry for status, rank and titles. Chiefs were installed and successions occurred. There is enough reference to these events and to rivalries among chiefs to suggest that some of this was going on, that some fights and deaths might constitute an acceleration of conflicts. Two chiefs were killed on the Skeena. Friction occurred at the fort and elsewhere between Tsimshian leaders.

Names of chiefs prominent in the trade did change over time. Through the early 1840s new chiefs became prominent. This may reflect rising trade and wealth and also the gradual settlement at the fort of additional tribes of Coastal Tsimshian. The relationship of fort personnel and Tsimshian traders included incorporation into the obligations and opportunities of the kinship links which had been established between the Native and European sides. These ties facilitated the trade. The resident Tsimshian, and other Native visitors, used Fort Simpson as part of a network of forts and ships to augment the traditional trade sources to which they regularly resorted. Each side of the fort nexus responded to the other in its own cultural terms.

Notes

1. See Usher 1974 and Patterson 1982. For a view of the fort life and the Indians in relation to the fort see also Meilleur 1980.
2. This essay has been influenced by the work of a number of scholars. The writer has noted the continuity of culture and the retention of native initiative, in large measure during the early years of the land-based fur trade at Fort Simpson, British Columbia. See Francis and Morantz 1983 and Thistle 1986.
3. See also oral tradition of Nass River trading site for surrounding tribes both before and after the building of the fort there (McDonald and Cove 1987:194 [Narrative 54]).
4. See Garfield 1939:177. Garfield points out that most of the Tsimshian tribes held land at Port Simpson prior to the creation of the fort (1834), and that when they settled at the fort they did so on land they held there. This may be the basis for Cackas' assertion that the fort occupied land he claimed, though his was the Ginaxangiks tribe and Garfield says the land on which the fort was built was purchased from the Gilodzar tribe. Cackas may have spoken broadly of the land taken for use as well as the actual building area. He may also have referred to some clan privilege through the Gispawudwade (Killer Whale crest).
5. Oral tradition recalls at least one incident in which Txaqaxs (Cackas) outdid Legaic at a feast which included gift-giving (McDonald and Cove 1987:97-98 [Narrative 27]).
6. Traditionally the Ginaxangik main trade links were with the northern Tlingit, e.g., the Stikines. These ties would have facilitated the slave trade (see page 16). The Ginaxangik also had the reputation of being seal and sea otter hunters, more so than any other tribe. The Gitzaklahl also had special trade links with the Tlingit. The Gispaxloats' special links were with the upper Skeena (McDonald and Cove 1987:185).
7. See also Grumet 1975:294-318. Grumet, in this highly speculative article, presumes considerable cultural change in the early 19th-century Coast Tsimshian response to white contact. See also Mitchell 1983:57-64. Mitchell offers a view of Legaic's chieftancy contrary to, and more convincing than, Grumet's.
8. Allaire (1984) finds that by the late 1830s only the Kitselas and Kitsumkalem still resided permanently at their Skeena villages.
9. See also HBC: April 14, 30 1837.

10. See Mitchell 1984. Mitchell's article portrays a situation in the 19th century on the North Pacific coast, from the Tlingit to the Coast Salish, in which slave raiding and slave trading formed a significant element of the wealth of coastal peoples. The sources cited suggest many persons were enslaved in what was an active and widespread slave trade. However, a census of 1840 shows the Tsimshian and Nisga'a for example as holding few slaves. Only two Tsimshian tribes, the Gispaxloats and the Gitlan, with populations totalling 850 persons, held 21 slaves (10 males, 11 females) or a little more than 2 percent of their population. Eight other Tsimshian tribes (1546 persons) held no slaves. Among the Nisga'a one of four tribes held slaves (four males and eight females). The four tribes totalled 1665 persons, including the 12 slaves.

    Slaves would seem to have been of small value in generating wealth, either as a labour source or as trade items, unless it could be shown that all or most of them were persons with substantial ransom value. See Kane 1857:Appendix.

References Cited

Allaire, Louis
1984 A Mental Map of Coast Tsimshian Villages. *In* The Tsimshian, edited by Margaret Seguin, pp. 82-98. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Barbeau, C.M.
1950 Totem Poles. Vol. 2. Ottawa: National Museum of Canada.

British Columbia, Public Archives of
1841-44 A/B/20/S12. Fort Simpson. Outward correspondence, Work to Dodd, August 2, 1844.

Dee, Henry D.
1945 The Journal of John Work, January-October 1835. Victoria, British Columbia: King's Printer.

Francis, Daniel, and Toby Elaine Morantz
1983 Partners in Furs: A History of the Fur Trade in Eastern James Bay, 1600-1870. Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Garfield, Viola E.
1939 Tsimshian Clan and Society. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

Grumet, Robert Steven
1975 Changes in Coast Tsimshian Redistributive Activities in the Fort Simpson Region of British Columbia, 1788-1862. Ethnohistory 22(4):294-318.

Halcombe, J.J.
1874 Stranger than Fiction. London: S.P.C.K.

Hudson Bay Company Fort Journal (cited as HBC in text)
1834-52 Issues dated October 5, November 14, 19, 1834; January 21, February 3, 7, April 17, May 4, 15, June 4, November 14, December 1, 1835; February 24, March 2, 28, June 29, October 2, November 2, 9, 14, 15, 19, December 4, 5 1836; January 7, 9, 15, 22, April 14, 30, May 2, 15, 16, 20, 27, 28, June 3, 9, 11, 12, July 1, August 2, 11, November 1, December 14, 25, 1837; January 2, 18, 31, April 10, 24, May 20, 31, June 2, 8, 21, September 21, 22, October 26, 1838; February 13, April 27, October 11, December 2, 1839; January 25, February 3, 22, March 22, April 8, 9,

June 4, 11, 15, 17, 29, August 11, September 11, October 9, 11, 31, 1840; September 22, December 13, 1841; February 21, May 16, 17, July 7, 28, August 13, 14, 16, 26, September 6, 8, 15, 19, 26, 1842; March 21, April 1, 1843; August 11, 1852.

Kane, Paul
1859 Wanderings of an Artist. London: Longman Brown Green.

King, Thomas, ed.
1990 All My Relations. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.

McDonald, George, and John Cove, eds.
1987 Tsimshian Narratives. Vol. 2: Trade and Warfare. Ottawa: Canadian Museum of Civilization.

Metford, J.C.J.
1991 The Christian Year. London: Thames & Hudson.

Meilleur, Helen
1980 A Pour of Rain. Victoria: Sono Nis Press.

Mitchell, Donald.
1983 Tribes and Chiefdoms of the Northwest Coast: The Tsimshian Case. *In* The Evolution of Maritime Cultures in the Northeast and the Northwest Coasts of America, edited by Ronald J. Nash, pp. 57-64. Burnaby, British Columbia: Simon Fraser University Press.
1984 Predatory Warfare, Social Status, and the North Pacific Slave Trade. Ethnology 23:39-48.

Patterson, E P.
1982 Kincolith, British Columbia: Leadership Continuity in a Native Christian Village, 1867-1887. Canadian Journal of Anthropology 3(1):45-55.
1990 Neshaki: Kinfolk and Trade. Culture 10(2):13-24.

Robinson, Michael
1978 The Sea Otter Chiefs. N.p.: Friendly Cove Press.

Simpson, Sir George
1847 Narrative of a Journey Round the World during the Years 1841-1842. Vol. 1. London: H. Colburn.

Thistle, Paul C.
1986 Indian-European Trade Relations in the Lower Saskatchewan River Region to 1840. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.

Usher, Jean
1974 William Duncan of Metlakatla. Ottawa: National Museum of Man.

EPISTEMOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL FIELD WORK, WITH NOTES FROM NORTHERN ONTARIO[1]

Edward J. Hedican
University of Guelph

Abstract: This article engages in a critical discussion of the epistemological implications—how we know what we know issues—of the interpretive approach in recent social anthropology. Primary among these issues is the role of paradigms, or the lack of them as the postmodernists suggest, in anthropological field work and how these paradigms might be made to be more commensurate with one another. The problems of methodological verification and subjectivity—ethnography from whose point of view?—are related aspects of cross-cultural interpretation. The central point is that the main epistemological issues in anthropology are intrinsically tied to field work. Our field-work activity is the basis of all debate, it is at the centre of the interpretive endeavour and is the final arbiter about methodological issues. Some examples from the author's field work among the Ojibwa (Anishenabe First Nation) of northern Ontario are utilized to illustrate issues raised in the article.

Résumé: Cet article entame une discussion critique des implications épistémologiques – comment nous savons ce que nous savons – de l'approche donnant une interprétation telle qu'elle est utilisée depuis peu en anthropologie sociale. Dans ces questions nous trouvons premièrement le rôle des paradigmes, ou leur absence comme le suggèrent les postmodernistes, dans le cadre du travail anthropologique sur le terrain et comment ces paradigmes peuvent être établis pour être à la mesure l'un de l'autre. Les problèmes de vérification et de subjectivité méthodologique – l'ethnographie, mais de quel point de vue? – sont des aspects similaries de l'interprétation inter-culturelle. Le point central de cette discussion montre que les principales questions épistémologiques en anthropologie sont dans leur essence liées au travail sur le terrain. Notre activité est à la source même de tout le débat, elle est au centre de nos efforts d'interprétation et enfin c'est elle qui est l'ultime arbitre en ce qui concerne les questions de méthodologie. L'auteur utilise quelques exemples

***Anthropologica* XXXVI (1994) 205-224**

de son travail sur le terrain parmi les Ojibwa (Anishenabe First Nation) du nord de l'Ontario pour illustrer les questions posées dans cet article.

Introduction

A cartoon in the *Far Side* series shows several Natives scurrying about inside a grass hut. One clutches a stereo under one arm and a television set under the other looking for a place to hide them, while another looks out the door and exclaims: "Anthropologists! Anthropologists!" At one level the cartoon is humorous because the image of the anthropologist dressed in a pith hat, shorts and safari jacket, accompanied by an entourage of Native carriers, confirms in the public's mind a view of anthropology as esoteric, anachronistic and elitist. For the anthropologists themselves there is a not-so-subtle message that anthropology has a distorted sense of reality such that aboriginal peoples are kept in a permanent state of preservation—a sort of cultural deep-freeze, in which the initial colonial encounter is seen to be kept intact.

There is a ring of truth to all of this, since it is only in recent times that anthropologists have shown any interest in contemporary Native peoples, and the impacts that colonialism, racism and imperialism have had on them. Since anthropologists gather information on their subjects of interest mainly on the basis of first-hand experience through field research, then the interrelationship between field work and the creation of knowledge in anthropology is a matter of some epistemological interest. For, as Ulin (1984:xi) rightly indicates, "Fieldwork or participant observation has led many anthropologists to struggle with epistemological problems related to understanding other cultures as part of a dialectical process of self-understanding." It might have been correctly said for the recent past that anthropologists in their writings have not shown any great interest in the epistemological issues raised by field research, but this is no longer the case today. In fact ethnography, especially its depiction of the point of view of the "Other," is at the centre of discussion in contemporary anthropology.

Anthropologists are currently engaged in a debate of considerable importance to the future of the discipline. The discussions and controversies are multifaceted ones, but at the centre of it all is a call for a distinct break with the past—the postmodern call for the deconstruction of existing paradigms and old-order authorities. It is a matter of what has been called a "crisis of representation," which is to say, "the explicit discourse that reflects on the doing and writing of ethnography" (Marcus and Fischer 1986:16). The challenge is to "all those views of reality in social thought which prematurely overlook or reduce cultural diversity for the sake of the capacity to generalize or to affirm universal values" (ibid.:33). It is issues such as these that we should all be thinking about, and for this reason the purpose of the present article is to engage in a critical discussion of the epistemological implications of the post-

modernist tendency in current anthropology. The central argument of this article is that the postmodernist call for the deconstruction of existing paradigms is not a useful approach to the difficulties of interpretation in anthropology because the centrality of field work is ultimately replaced by an emphasis on literary skills and "constructed truths."

The "Interpretive Quest" of Ethnography

It all began innocently enough with Clifford Geertz's article called "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture" (1973). In its essential form, interpretive anthropology explores the ways human beings assign meaning to their lives. It is this "meaning-seeking" feature which is the distinguishing characteristic of human beings. As Geertz explains later, in his book *Local Knowledge*, "the interpretive theory of culture represents an attempt to come to terms with the diversity of the ways human beings construct their lives in the act of leading them" (1983:16). Thus, to those who adopt this theoretical program, "the aim of anthropology is the enlargement of the universe of human discourse" (Geertz 1973:14).

As Geertz explains it, "our consciousness is shaped at least as much by how things supposedly look to others, somewhere else in the lifeline of the world, as by how they look here, where we are, now to us" (1983:9). Probably it is the theoretical implications of Geertz's interpretive approach which have caused the most concern. Is ethnography to become a matter of deeper and deeper introspection, or will it involve a wide basis of comparison and generalization? "To an ethnographer," Geertz (1983:4) explains, "the shapes of knowledge are always ineluctably local, indivisible from their instruments and encasements." The suggestion for the interpretive theory of culture is rather distinctive, in that it presupposes that "the essential task of theory building . . . [is] not to generalize across cases but to generalize within them" (Geertz 1973:26). Thus, anthropology necessarily becomes "imprisoned in the immediacy of its own detail" (ibid.:24).

It is this point, about the "immediacy of detail" which, I believe, is most responsible for a parting of the way among anthropologists regarding the interpretive approach. It is all about the BIG question for anthropology, which Geertz poses in an incisive manner, to wit: "The great natural variation of cultural forms is, of course, not only anthropology's great (and wasting) resource, but the ground of its deepest theoretical dilemma: how is such variation to be squared with the biological unity of the human species?" (1973:22). The fundamental problematic in anthropology is therefore the simultaneous notion of cultural uniqueness and underlying similarity of *Homo sapiens*.

Geertz "grows uncomfortable," he says, "when I get too far away from the immediacies of social life" (1973:vii). Yet, there are no doubt many anthropologists who feel that this "deepest theoretical dilemma" cannot be resolved

unless we move beyond the immediacy of local detail. It is all probably a matter, as much as anything else, of how one broaches the question, the sorts of training and experiences one has, and whether or not one is predisposed to looking at humanity in a micro- or macro-perspective. As Scholte (1972:438) has suggested, "The ethnographic situation is defined not only by the native society in question but also by the ethnological tradition 'in the head' of the ethnographer."

The sorts of "ethnological traditions" that anthropologists usually have in mind revolve around the question, as phrased in one recent contribution to the discussion, "Is Anthropology Art or Science?" (Carrithers 1990). The essential concern is this: "How are we to represent anthropology as a serious activity to ourselves and to those with whom we are engaged if it is so nebulous" (Carrithers 1990:263). Anthropology could be made less "nebulous," in the view of some, if it became more rigorous in a methodological sense. As Renner (1984:540) explains, "the absence of an empirically convincing theory and methodology has as its consequence the fact that there can be no program for the direction in which research should proceed." It is not a matter of whether or not Geertz's anthropology fails to account for the causes of human thought and behaviour: "Instead, the most significant deficiency . . . is its lack of explicit theoretical and methodological guidelines" (Lett 1987:117).

The problem for many has to do with the belief that the interpretive and scientific approaches are mutually exclusive. This belief prompts the concern, as Shankman (1984:261) suggests, that "the programmatic side of Geertz's work is an attempt to refocus anthropology—indeed all of social science—away from the emulation of the natural sciences and toward a reintegration with the humanities." Similarly, Scholte (1984:542) states that interpretive anthropology "draws its inspiration from the arts and the humanities rather than from the natural sciences." The last word on this matter goes to Geertz himself who clearly has had enough of these repeated attempts to cast the interpretive approach as unscientific. As Geertz explains (1990:274) in his recent comments concerning the article, "Is Anthropology Art or Science?"—"I do not believe that anthropology is not or cannot be a science, that ethnographies are novels, poems, dreams, or visions, that the reliability of anthropological knowledge is of secondary interest, or that the value of anthropological works inhere solely in their persuasiveness."

It is important to point out, though, that numbered among Geertz's supporters are those anthropologists who hold that anthropology should become more explicitly a humanistic discipline. For those who would argue this case, the suggestion is that interpretive anthropology is an admirable alternative to "the reductionism and ethnocentrism of traditional science" (Scholte 1984:542). Ridington (1988) makes a similar suggestion in his study of the Athapaskan (or Dene) phenomenology of knowledge and power. He argues that long-term

field work is a crucial aspect of understanding this phenomenology, since "the careless and uncritical application of ideas from academic traditions to the thoughtworlds of subarctic people may produce bizarre and ethnocentric results" (1988:98). As an example, Ridington points to the "uninformed ethnocentrism" which dominated much of the debate about the causes of the "windigo psychosis" among eastern subarctic Indians.

The next stage in the evolution of the debate about interpretive anthropology concerns the suggestion, by Marcus and Fischer (1986), that anthropology should become a vehicle for cultural critique. The goal here is one of "pushing contemporary interpretive anthropology toward a more politically and historically sensitive critical anthropology" (Marcus and Fischer 1986:xii). It is here that the controversy takes on a more serious tone.

The view of contemporary anthropology becoming "more politically and historically sensitive" would certainly receive a wide basis of support among anthropologists. As Ulin explains, "a thorough historical and political understanding under which epistemology in relation to field work takes place is, therefore, an important part of cross-cultural understanding" (1984:22). Where anthropologists differ has to do with the suggestion that the extreme relativistic stance of the "interpretive-critical" position has precluded attempts to develop these wider political and historical issues. Spencer (1989:145), for example, suggests that "despite its trappings of political and intellectual radicalism, it is in some of its presuppositions a depressingly reactionary document." Another related work of the postmodernist genre, *Writing Culture* (Clifford and Marcus 1986), draws similar criticism about the shallowness of the interpretive approach, such as, "the tendency to read texts with little or no consideration for the social or historical context in which they were written seems an especially barren approach" (Spencer 1989:145).

It is the concept of cultural relativism which provides the basis for the antitheoretical posturing of the interpretive approach. The tacit assumption is that anthropology should have a political mission, such that ethnography would document cultural differences with a view to encouraging a more tolerant Western society. It is for this reason, as Marcus and Fischer (1986:141) explain, that "a major task of the epistemological critique offered by anthropology is to deal directly and in novel ways with the materialist or utilitarian bias of Western thought in explanations of social life."

It is pronouncements such as these that must make the cultural materialists seethe with apoplectic shivers. But beyond this, critics of the new relativism have argued that emancipatory perspectives in anthropology presuppose the existence of some commonality of experience, even if it is only common suffering at the hands of the same economic oppressor, and subservience or resistance against the same economic forces, a presupposition which either subverts or is subverted by arguments of extreme cultural difference. "Marcus

and Fischer seem unaware," Barak (1988: 101) explains, "that the self-determination and emancipation of anthropology's subject peoples is as much (if not more) contingent upon the recognition of their common experiences as of their differences. But this perspective would necessitate a totalizing vision of world history which the authors are loathe to entertain." In fact the organizational efforts of aboriginal peoples, such as the internationally-based "World Council of Indigenous Peoples" comprising Maoris, Samis, North American Native peoples, as well as others, was founded on the commonalities of the colonial experience, as aptly illustrated by one of its founders in *The Fourth World* (Manuel and Poslums 1974).

In summary, the interpretive approach in anthropology has been the subject of considerable discussion and debate in recent years. On the one side are those who are in favour of the relativistic underpinnings of this approach. Their argument is that "traditional science" ignores important cultural differences, and has inherent ethnocentric tendencies. However, in terms of the volume of literature at least, interpretive anthropology has also been the subject of much criticism. Most of this criticism centres about methodological concerns—the approach is too nebulous, it lacks explicit guidelines, and its theoretical implications are not discussed in sufficient depth. But it has been the later manifestations of this approach, in terms of Marcus and Fischer's cultural critique, that has drawn the most severe criticism.

Taken as a whole, what discussion of the interpretive approach has done is to re-open many long-standing issues in anthropology, such as, whether anthropology is to be humanistic or scientific, subjective or objective, paradigmatic or non-paradigmatic, inductive or deductive, etc. The point here is that debate about interpretive anthropology is not simply a recent phenomenon stirred up by Clifford Geertz and his cohorts, but is about a diversity of unresolved epistemological issues in the discipline. Discussion about field work continues to be a central focus in these debates, probably because so much of anthropology's validity depends on the interpretive process of cross-cultural data gathering and analysis. As such it is incumbent on anthropologists to continue these discussions about field work and the basic epistemological foundation of anthropology. Much of this task involves what could be called reflexive understanding, or, in Geertz's terms, "an attempt somehow to understand how it is we understand understandings not our own" (1983:5).

Reflexive Understanding in Field Work: Northern Ontario

There are those anthropologists who might be excused perhaps for feeling that field work does not always leave them full of knowledge, but maybe only a little less ignorant. Field work might be likened to a knock to the side of the head. Our view of the world becomes altered in some fundamental way that is difficult to describe or articulate. We might try to bury our apprehensions

about what we have gone through, but we nonetheless realize that our experiences have left our view of the world a bit off centre. Our vision is now somehow permanently askew, so that we are much less trusting that our previous, comfortably held perceptions should act as a reliable guide. We now tend to look at the world somewhat obliquely, wondering all along whether that particular reality open to us at that particular moment might skip a notch. It is like chasing a ball through the air in the summertime when all of a sudden our eyes make direct contact with the sun's brilliance. Startled and dazed we stumble about, trying to figure out where we are and what has happened.

Field work also has a habit of leaving a permanent record of discontinuous events in our subconscious that keep bubbling to the surface whenever we let our guard down. We could be shaving or driving to work when all of a sudden there is a direct recall of some event or situation which happened years ago that now, for some unknown reason, requires a thorough thinking through. Of course we cannot give it the attention it needs and so, as with a cranky child in the supermarket, we tell it to be quiet for the time being and otherwise try to muddle our way through. A curious thing about these flashbacks or recalls of field-work situations—they do not seem to be the same sort of pressing concerns that we had when we were actually conducting the field work. They are the types of events that we did not pay a whole lot of attention to at the time because they did not seem that important.

Is this the price of field work that anthropologists have to pay in order to make their descriptions and account of other cultures believable? If it is, then it is a heavy burden indeed. We are left as not only the forlorn "strangers in a strange land," but strangers unto ourselves. The selves that we call "me" begin to divide and then dissolve into a large entity. Anthropologists are thought to be the oddballs among social scientists, and at times might even be expected to be so. Some of us even play up to that perception, donned in safari jacket and khaki shorts, but what is more important than these outward appearances is what goes on under the pith hat.

Here is an example of the sort of situation that is encountered by the field worker. The scene is a small log cabin village of Ojibwa Indians in the far reaches of northern Ontario (Hedican 1986). There are no cars or roads or televisions here—just the people and the all-encompassing jack pine forest. My own cabin was a mere 12-feet square but nonetheless comfortable enough. I had a small desk in one corner accompanied by an overturned garbage can with a pillow on top, which served as a seat for my visitors. There was also a bench near the door so that at first people who happened to feel a bit nervous about visiting could keep their distance. Most everyone eventually moved over beside the desk because the candles and coal oil lamp made it hard to see even at 12 feet. The can beside the desk left us "cheek by jowl," and the people

would bend over farther when they thought that they had something important to say.

This cabin was the place where much of the information about village life was gathered, as just about everyone showed up beside the desk at one time or another, often spending long hours recounting their memories, perceptions, frustrations and insights. At times it all seemed a jumble of field work, entertainment and relaxation to fill in the long winter evenings. Late at night the flickering lamp made the shadows and shapes flow back and forth as if they were made of liquid matter. On one occasion a middle-aged man grew serious as he pointed to the corner of the cabin where the wood stove was and asked if I had seen it yet. The bottom of the stove had begun to rot out, and the glowing embers inside cast eerie twinkles of light across the ceiling. "What?" I asked. "You know, the cheebuy (ghost)," he said.

The cheebuy was apparently that of Ed Pidgeon, the one-armed former occupant of the cabin. Now he had made me nervous, because while I had to admit that Ed Pidgeon's apparition had not revealed itself to me, I also realized that through the long winter months I had to spend many hours alone in this cabin, and one never knows what tricks the mind is apt to play as we work our way through the manifestations, real or imagined, of the so-called culture shock experience. This cabin and the people who came and went were part of my life nearly 20 years ago, yet the scene remains with me, sometimes in vivid detail. The cabin itself has long been torn down, the result, it is said, of the drowning of Sogo, a later owner. The cabin had to go because they did not want his ghost wandering about the village. Without the cabin, the reasoning went, Sogo's apparition would not have a place to settle down and would move elsewhere.

It would not be true to say that events such as these have had any sort of permanent impact on my psyche as an anthropologist, but it is the cumulative nature of such happenings that have a subtle moulding effect. They are a touchstone to an alternate reality that is after all these years still only poorly conceived and apprehended on my part. It is as if in the beginning of our field work we are not allowed a true glimpse of the magnitude and scope of the reality enveloping us. In any event we are usually too naïve, young and immature to fully appreciate what is going on, so our mind's eye secretly files various occurrences away for safekeeping as it were, with the possibility that at some later stage of our development we might be in a position to make a more profound sense of these happenings. So these little snippets of time are hauled out on occasion and presented to us for some sort of closer scrutiny and analysis.

The trouble with all of this is that we are now years down the road, and the accuracy of our recollections, even with the aid of written field notes, logic tells us, should be regarded with some degree of scepticism. We have a seemingly clear grasp of the detail of some events, but other aspects have been for-

gotten altogether. What this means is that we are faced with the task of trying to reconstruct the reality of the original field work, and all the other "realities" that have emerged over the years as we reflect on our experiences and what they mean in some wider, objective sense. How merry, we are led to think, must be the life of the logical positivist for whom the content of observation tends to be free of conceptual contamination. It is no wonder that Nietzsche called this "the dogma of immaculate perception."

To give Geertz and his interpretive brand of ethnography its due, there is a considerable problem with the "immediacy of detail" in field work, and the way that anthropologists come to the sorts of understandings and explanations that they do. One facet of the problem is what Barrett has referred to as "the illusion of simplicity," which is to say,

> The interplay between the contradictory nature of social life and the mechanisms that conceal it indicates the vast complexity in the midst of which our lives unfold. . . . But anthropologists . . . spend their lives trying to prove that order exists. This mistake is not restricted to anthropologists or to their analysis of primitive society. It is probably intrinsically related to the attempt to establish a positivistic science of society. (1984:195)

It is no doubt true that many anthropologists perceive of themselves as "doing science." However, science can be thought of in terms of a broad range of scholarly activity. For, as Pelto (1970:30) indicates, "No sharp lines can be drawn to differentiate the so-called hard sciences from other disciplines . . . somewhere in the middle of this conceptual domain is the matter of methodological verification—the sets of rules whereby useful knowledge can be accumulated and pyramided into a more powerful understanding of the universe."

It is this issue of "methodological verification" that has become the focus of controversy concerning the believability of anthropological research and the basis on which anthropologists accept generalizations of human behaviour. There are several well-known examples of theoretical debate about this issue in the anthropological literature. The surprisingly large area of disagreement between Goodenough (1956) and Fischer (1958) concerning the classification of residence patterns on the Island of Truk is one of the more prominent instances. Using census data Fischer concludes that there is a matrilocal tendency; Goodenough derives a somewhat different interpretation from indigenous decision-making models. What is peculiar about this case is that anthropologists thought that they had clear-cut definitions of the various residence patterns, so it would appear to be a rather simple matter of tallying up the number of different cases of each.

The lesson is that even when there exists some degree of consensus among anthropologists concerning problems of definition, the subjective interpretations by the anthropologists about what patterns he or she actually sees in the field is a matter of some variation. The Oscar Lewis-Robert Redfield contro-

versy about life in the Mexican village of Tepoztlan is an even more poignant case of the problem of subjective interpretation. Redfield (1930) had originally studied the community in the 1920s and wrote about a harmonious village life. In a subsequent restudy of the same community, Lewis (1951) reported quite different conclusions, emphasizing "the underlying individuality of Tepoztecan institutions and character, the lack of cooperation, the tensions between villages within the municipio, the schisms within the village, and the pervading quality of fear, envy and distrust" (Lewis 1951:429). However, to the extent that we can regard Redfield's account as documenting the ideal or formal belief system of Tepoztlan, and Lewis as describing the actual system, it is possible for us to view the ideal and actual system of beliefs as complementary, rather than opposing, modes of analysis.

In sum, the construction of ethnography is largely a matter of organizing our "reflexive understandings" of the field-work experience. It is a process fraught with difficulties of interpretation as we attempt to grapple with the accumulation of "realities"—ours and that of the "other"—that have built up over time. The fact that we are able to provide a plausible account of this experience is perhaps a minor miracle in itself. Our success depends pretty much on how we are able to organize our understandings. We group them together in various ways, by discussing issues and problems, and thereby building up larger spheres or facets of the account we seek to portray. Thus, this process of constructive understanding becomes central to the problem of verification in field work. The debate about residence patterns on Truk, or the portrayal of Mexican village life highlights the possibility, even probability, that quite different accounts of the same "reality" can be expected in anthropology. However, it would be a mistake to conclude that ethnographies are by their very nature unreliable documents because of the matter of methodological verification. It is true that Lewis and Redfield provided different accounts of Tepoztlan, but these accounts enlarge our understanding of the whole because they are largely complementary to one another. Complementary understandings raise a central epistemological question in anthropology—the matter of paradigmatic commensurability.

Paradigmatic Commensurability: Fact or Fiction?

One facet of the problem called the "crisis of representation" is a certain postmodern tendency to challenge the authority of all the older paradigms of social science. Marcus and Fischer, for example, are critical of any form of large-scale theorizing for anthropology. Instead, they propose an interpretive anthropology that is critical of "a persistent tendency to drag all discussions back to the classic work of the first generation of modern fieldworkers" (1986:viii). What they advocate could be termed "radical inductivism," which is to say, "the process of reconstructing the edifices of anthropological

theory from the bottom up" (ibid.:ix). In addition, a further facet of this postmodern approach is the claim that "Interpretive social scientists have recently come to view good ethnographies as 'true fictions' " (Clifford and Marcus 1986:6). While there is much hidden in the claim that all truths are constructed, the excesses of the postmodern trend are made evident by the further claim that "all constructed truths are made possible by powerful 'lies' of exclusion and rhetoric" (ibid.:7).

Granted, despite our best intentions and preparations the world has a tendency not to appear as we intend or would like, but at times as a potpourri of incongruous situations and events. We strive in various ways to grasp the threads of understanding that make such situations intelligible. We interview, we participate, we observe and we formulate hypothetical constructs. There is a tendency, the more our comprehension and skill are strained, to delve more into the intricacies of methodology. We begin to think that the big barrier is a methodological one, that if only we had a more appropriate or more sophisticated methodological approach our problems of comprehension would be solved. This is what Kaplan (1964:24) has called the "myth of methodology," which is to say, "the notion that the most serious difficulties which confront behavioral science are 'methodological,' and if only we hit upon the right methodology, progress will be rapid and sure."

As such, the problem for the ethnographer is less a methodological one, that is, in the more narrow sense of various research techniques; rather it is the bigger issue of the sorts of models, paradigms and theoretical orientations that are brought to the interpretation of field-work data. However, one is also struck by the apparent tendency for some anthropologists to avoid the task of articulating their assumptions and underlying analytical constructs. All too often ethnographers are timid about revealing the theoretical perspective which informs their writing, and the reader is left to extract it from the text.

While we might not always admit it, anthropologists probably also do hold their own personal views about the general characteristics of human society, and about the role of human beings in the natural scheme of things. After all, it is impossible to conduct meaningful field work without some sort of guideline or orientation, no matter how dimly recognized or articulated. The problem is that theoretical positions are often presented as polar opposites. We do not feel comfortable with either of the extremes, but nonetheless develop a certain affinity with the main tenets of one side or the other.

If some anthropologists are apt to keep their theoretical perspectives well hidden, there are those who are aggressive in championing one cause or another. In such situations we might feel the pressure to make allies and choose sides. As Manners and Kaplan have aptly noted, in anthropology there is a tendency for theories to "function as ideologies, and the reaction to them is often in terms of their ideological rather than their scientific implications"

(1968:10). In such situations there is also a corresponding tendency, one could add, to avoid the question of paradigmatic commensurability in anthropology. In sum, as Lett (1987:132-33) indicates, "unfortunately, most anthropologists who have participated in the debates have failed to recognize the incommensurability of the paradigms involved."

These are noble sentiments, especially if they are meant to bring about a rapprochement between disputing parties such that harmonious relations might be re-established. But these sentiments are misguided because Lett himself emerges as a champion of Harris's cultural materialism and positivism, and a harsh critic of phenomenology. It is all a matter of "epistemological responsibility." Lett (1987:19) says, "the phenomenological argument is doomed." The conclusion is that phenomenology is not an epistemologically responsible position for anthropologists to hold.

It is a curious matter that the attacks on phenomenological approaches to sociocultural studies have been so virulent, especially given that ethnography could be regarded, in Goldstein's (1968:102) words, as "the model of phenomenological social science." In fact Goldstein's position is worth reconsidering, inasmuch as he finds that "far from opposing one another, the two approaches [phenomenological and naturalistic] are complementary and both of them necessary if we are to have a full account of the phenomena in question. Each does a different job, and there is no reason why we cannot have both" (1968:98). Goldstein articulates the reason for his position further by stating, "even naturalistic social science rests upon the phenomenological standpoint. Our problem, then,... is to sketch the purposes and domains of each and to pay attention to their possible points of contact" (1968:100). In the final analysis we are led to conclude that the naturalistic (positivistic) standpoint cannot be made entirely independent of the phenomenological.

The philosopher of science, Abraham Kaplan, reaches a similar conclusion in reviewing debates among colleagues, and noting, in a general sense, that "both positions have important contributions to make to methodology, and more is to be gained by treating them as supplementing one another than by pushing either to exclusion of the other" (1964:388). After all, what was eventually gained by the often acrimonious debate over the conflict-consensus issue? It just sort of fizzled away over the years under the overwhelming evidence that human societies are characterized, in varying degrees, by states of harmony and conflict. In a similar vein the same can be said to be true of the formalist-substantivist controversy in economic anthropology. In a somewhat exasperated tone, Salisbury noted in the *Annual Review of Anthropology* that "unfortunately, the debate has continued, but materials presented in strictly dialectical terms of substantivist-formalist have yielded little of value.... The two approaches need to be fused—we need total models of economic systems" (1973:85).

When we begin to take stock of the various debates over the years in the anthropological literature, a rather interesting pattern begins to emerge, which lends credence to the idea that there is probably not a multitude of small issues that is the problem, but several large ones. Consider this for a moment. Is not the position of the substantivists quite similar to that of the phenomenologist in that with both there is a tendency to restrict the scope of cross-cultural generalizations? On the other hand, the formalist emphasis in this debate on the universality and rationality of economic decision making across cultural boundaries has a decided positivistic bent to it.

The same might be said about whether one is predisposed to the use of an inductive or deductive model in anthropological field work. Barrett's (1976) work in a wealthy Nigerian village is an interesting test case of the utility of models in anthropological field research. Initially he was convinced that anthropology was in need of more rigorous approaches which suggested that the use of deductive models would have a beneficial effect. This approach, he points out, was originally thought to be more acceptable than the usual practice of carving out empirical generalizations and then comparing the findings rather haphazardly with other similar studies.

The question he began with was why one particular village had advanced economically, when others did not. Various explanations are then discussed, such as the personality of the leaders, the communal social organization and religious reasons. The conclusion, somewhat surprising given his initial assumptions, was that "the theoretical framework adopted prior to fieldwork resulted in a distorted view of reality, and only when this framework was discarded was it possible to solve the major research problems" (1976:161).

As a general rule anthropologists are not in the habit of using a deductive approach in field work. The more commonly utilized inductive procedure, however, has some serious consequences for field work in anthropology, the most important of which is that it tends to encourage the separation of research and theory. Effort is wasted on the collection of a wide range of data, most of which is eventually found to be superfluous to the empirical generalizations that are finally formulated. In addition, adopting an inductive approach means that one's research lacks the sense of direction that a hypothesis testing procedure engenders, and suffers from a lack of an initial "built-in" theoretical significance. In all, Barrett's Nigerian study is particularly enlightening because he is not only aware of the potential benefit of deductive paradigms for field work, but in the final analysis he nonetheless argues for the orthodox procedure characteristic of most social anthropology.

While not all anthropologists would agree with this conclusion (cf. Lett 1987:41-47) the enduring nature of the inductive approach in anthropology probably has less to do with the rejection of "science" than with the realization among anthropologists that long periods of field work in cultural settings

quite different from their own leave open too many relevant possibilities, most of which would be left out in the conventional hypothesis testing procedure. This does not mean of course that anthropologists are able to carry a "clean slate" to the field, or that they do not think about theories even in an implicit sense. What it does mean is that anthropology's unique position with regard to research material is not benefitted by presumption.

The overall problem with the deductive paradigm in anthropology is that an explanatory framework is forced upon the inquiry before the research even begins. The anthropologist is also led into making assumptions on the basis of existing theory and research that could be totally inappropriate for the problems that eventually emerge in the field study. Some would argue that this is not harmful because at least we have a starting point or guideline to begin with, but it is apt to become a major difficulty if the initial assumptions play a role in distorting the study in ways unknown to the researcher.

The sorts of paradigms that are used in anthropology is an issue without a ready solution. It might be suggested that the deductive-inductive debate is a misdirected one because the real problem has to do with the unsophisticated frameworks that are adopted by anthropologists, an uncertain knowledge of what constitutes a model and faulty applications of the deductive procedure. On the other hand, it may be that anthropology will never be so methodologically and theoretically "sophisticated" as to allow for the application of deductive paradigms.

In summation, we can say that the use of one particular paradigm or another in ethnography is probably a result of a multiplicity of factors, such as the researcher's previous training, personal inclinations and the characteristics of the field situation. Whether one subscribes to a phenomenological point of view or not, the researcher is always faced with the problem of how one apprehends the perceived "reality" of this field situation. We all realize that different points of view are possible, even probable, given the diversity of cultural settings in which anthropological research is conducted. Not only must ethnographers deal with the issue of the extent to which their perceptions coincide with the people in other cultures, there is the added facet of the researcher's changing viewpoints as material is evaluated, assessed and analyzed. Thus, what is at stake here is an important epistemological question about subjectivity in field work.

Relativism: From Whose Point of View?

The postmodernist ethnography of interpretive anthropology is characterized by the pursuit of a central goal which is to adequately portray the point of view of other cultures. Geertz (1983:56) articulates this problem of representation in the following way: "The issue is epistemological. If we are going to cling—as, in my opinion, we must—to the injunction to see things from the

native's point of view, where are we when we can no longer claim some unique form of psychological closeness, a sort of transcultural identification, with our subjects?" From Geertz's perspective culture is characterized primarily as a social phenomenon and as a shared system of intersubjective symbols and meanings.

For other writers of this genre, such as Marcus and Fischer, "the contemporary debate is about how an emergent postmodern world is to be represented as an object for social thought in its various disciplinary manifestations" (1986:vii). In a related work, *Writing Culture*, the hermeneutic philosophy of the interpretive approach is even more pronounced, such that "interpreters constantly construct themselves through the others they study" (Clifford and Marcus 1986:10). We are told that anthropology is in an "experimental moment" and, furthermore, that the solution to the problem of representation lies in creating new forms of ethnographic writing. It is all founded on the belief that "writing has emerged as central to what anthropologists do both in the field and thereafter" (Clifford and Marcus 1986:2).

The debate about how important writing is to ethnography takes off on a whole new tangent from here, prompting one critic (Spencer 1989) to refer to Geertz as that "American literary dandy." What is peculiar about the discussions in the literature is that they were initiated by Geertz's quite proper suggestion that we examine the portrayal of the Native's point of view as an epistemological issue. The issue is then recast as a problem of representation, and finally as a matter of literary form, all the while moving further away from Geertz's initial query.

There are several important concerns here. For one, if anthropological knowledge is to be seen as interpretive and hermeneutic, is it necessary to place so much emphasis on the relative spatial and temporal orientation of the author? Is knowledge to be regarded as forever tentative, rather than conclusive? Where are we being led by this "post-positivist" discourse? The suggestion, by Marcus and Fischer (1986:15), that we adopt a "jeweller's-eye view of the world" would appear to be a particularly myopic one when so many interesting epistemological issues are raised by the problem of representation. The issue of the relative importance of the researcher's subjective stance is of course central to the representation problem, suggesting that the focus of discussion return to this most basic of epistemological concerns for anthropology. We have been led astray by the postmodernist discourse. A return to a discussion of the inherent dilemmas of field work is therefore called for, founded on the view that the central problems in anthropology are intrinsically tied to field work. Our field work activity is the basis of all debate, epistemological or otherwise. Field work is at the centre of the anthropological endeavour; the final arbiter about methodological issues.

Field work by its very nature is an ambiguous experience for the anthropologist. Part of the ambiguity stems from the ethnographer's attempt to bridge the gap between objectivity and subjectivity in field work. The general lack of discussion of this problem in field studies has meant that anthropologists have become the subject of criticism on this account, such that "ethnographic accounts are by nature one-sided, although based on dyadic interaction" (Manyoni 1983:227). Whether attempts to reduce or change the "one-sidedness" of field work are possible, or even desirable, is a difficult question to answer. For example, there are those who have been critical of anthropology for not searching for that elusive "objective reality." As a proponent of this stance Lett (1987:19) suggests that "The problem of objective reality is a genuine problem in philosophy, but it is not, as the phenomenologists argue, a necessarily insoluble problem."

It is all a matter of "epistemological responsibility," Lett (1987:18-22) argues, that we reject phenomenology and, by implication, embrace the positivist approach. When the issue is in such terms, as a matter of polar opposites, we are unwittingly, and perhaps wrongly, persuaded by the view that other possibilities do not exist, or are not logically possible. Furthermore, we are led to ask why must an "objective" account—the "real" or "true" one—be provided by only one spectator: can there not exist a number of valid subjective accounts? This is a matter of what Kaplan (1964:128) refers to as "The methodological importance of what is called . . . intersubjectivity. A scientific observation could have been made by any other observer so situated: nature plays no favourites, but exposes herself promiscuously."

Much of the turning point for debate in anthropology centres on the methodological issue of how knowledge is created by the researcher in the field. However, when we discuss participant observation we tend to become apologetic, hoping that no one will seriously challenge what might appear to others to be an unsophisticated, crude and maybe even an inappropriate method of gathering information. When we talk about unstructured interviewing, we realize in our hearts that it requires considerable skill to conduct, and that it is probably our greatest aid in the field, yet we have difficulty in describing what we are doing in a manner that does not appear to be rambling, undisciplined and lacking purpose. Of course at times our methods do have some of these characteristics, which may not always be such a disadvantage, since it could leave open the possibility of serendipitous discovery. After all, Weber (1949: 115) once warned that methodology "can only bring us reflective understanding of the means which have demonstrated their value in practice by raising them to the level of explicit consciousness; it is no more the precondition of fruitful intellectual work than the knowledge of anatomy is the precondition for correct walking." And so it is with the task of anthropology; the cultivation of methodology is neither sufficient nor necessary for a successful anthro-

pological endeavour, since there is much more that goes into the making of a successful field trip than an armful of specific tools for eliciting information.

Indeed, the anthropologist's duty is not to make a fetish or myth out of methodology (see Kaplan 1964:128) but rather to reconsider basic epistemological issues concerning whose point of view, if any, is actually presented in ethnographic interpretations. Certainly one of the main lessons that ethnographic research has for anthropology is that the search for general statements of the structure of knowledge may be precluded by the very facts of cultural variation. There would appear to be few cross-cultural generalizations that could be made concerning such things as proper conduct, morality and, ultimately, truth. There is then an epistemological dilemma or contradiction in the task of anthropology. If our concern is with epistemology as the theory of knowledge, with the pursuit of basic questions concerning the search for truth, then we might have to be prepared for the development of a "culturally embedded" methodology that would be capable of dealing with the sorts of variations in points of view, in accepted traditions and "truths" that anthropologists have to deal with. What this all suggests is that there is some validity to Peter Winch's argument that it is not empirical verification that confirms what is in agreement with reality, but rather it is intersubjective communicative competence that constitutes reality in each social matrix. As he explains, "A man's social relations with his fellows are permeated with his ideas about reality. Indeed, 'permeated' is hardly a strong enough word: social relations are expressions of ideas about reality" (1958:23).

Conclusion

We started this article with Geertz's idea of society as a shared system of intersubjective symbols, and ended with Winch's notion of social relations as inherently communicative, intersubjective events with respect to their form. In the process we have been led back to the essential role of field work, since it conditions the anthropologist's world view in a general sense. What emerges from this view is an appreciation, even an affection, for the diversity of human cultures in the world—Geertz's "great (and wasting) resource." This diversity enters into the anthropological value position which maintains that human cultures are valuable by the mere fact of this diversity.

It is field work that is primarily responsible for the anthropological emphasis on the uniqueness of human cultures, and for the relativistic view that in its own way each human culture has a view of the world in its own terms. It follows then that field work poses certain epistemological problems for anthropology about how knowledge in a general sense is to be studied. It also follows that a central problem for anthropology is that field work tends to induce us into the belief that all knowledge is relative, or even further, that reliable knowledge is not possible.

It is field work which nonetheless poses broad, comparative questions, even when new orthodoxies tell us they are obsolete. It is field work which brings surprises, such as ghosts in a northern Ontario cabin. My field-work encounter with the Ojibwa man in my cabin, and our discussion about whether or not I was aware of Ed Pigeon's ghost near the stove, was a problem because I had not initially come to the community to study ghosts, religion or other such phenomena. My central concern at the time was with politics, leadership and economic development, so I did not pay particular attention to what the man was talking about. It was only later, when I began to reflect on my field-work experiences, that this ghost episode would creep into my consciousness. When it did so, I was belatedly forced to ponder some very fundamental issues concerning my field-work experience, such as: to what extent did our concepts of "ghost" coincide, if at all? what "message" was he actually trying to communicate to me concerning the ghost phenomenon? It was these sorts of questions that also posed problems for me later in my field work when I began to realize that the man was not just posing a rhetorical question about ghosts, as to whether or not I was able to see one, but that he was actually "seeing" it and wanted me to be party in some way to this experience. As the months went by, I began to realize, in ways that were not immediately obvious to me in the initial stages of the field work, that the people took the existence of "ghosts" as pretty much a routine matter, like dogs, trees and so on. For them it was sort of belabouring the obvious to have to point out to the anthropologist the existence of ghosts in my cabin. Over the years this experience academically haunted me—a piece of field-work flotsam that was not part of my research plan. The issues raised were issues of comparative epistemology—the translation of *cheebuy* as "ghost," Ojibwa belief in and experience of cheebuy, the rationality or irrationality of their "knowledge" of such phenomena.

Since the question of evidence is also central to the pursuit of epistemology, we are thus confronted with the challenges that our sources of knowledge brings to us from the field-work experience. All debates and controversies are ultimately reducible to the epistemological question about how do we know what we know? From the anthropological perspective there does not appear to exist any one single interpretation of phenomena that is any more valid or real than any other interpretation. In sum, the relative nature of the human experience means that the existence of an objective reality is a problem without a readily available solution. The postmodernist call for the deconstruction of existing paradigms does not appear to be a useful approach to this difficulty of interpretation, since it simply replaces one orthodoxy with another.

Note

1. A previous version of this article was delivered to the 1991 meeting of the Northeastern Anthropological Association, Waterloo, Ontario. I am grateful to Stan Barrett for his many

thoughtful comments on earlier drafts of this article, although he should not be held responsible for any deficiencies in the arguments contained herein.

References Cited

Barak, Victor
1988 Review: Anthropology as Cultural Critique. Culture 8(2):100-101.

Barrett, Stanley R.
1976 The Use of Models in Anthropological Fieldwork. Journal of Anthropological Research 32:161-181.
1984 The Rebirth of Anthropological Theory. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Carrithers, M.
1990 Is Anthropology Art or Science? Current Anthropology 31(3):263-282.

Clifford, James, and George E. Marcus
1986 Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Fischer, John L.
1958 The Classification of Residence in Censuses. American Anthropologist 60:508-517.

Geertz, Clifford
1973 The Interpretation of Cultures. New York: Basic Books.
1983 Local Knowledge: Further Essays in Interpretive Anthropology. New York: Basic Books.
1990 Comment: Is Anthropology Art or Science? Current Anthropology 31(3):274.

Goldstein, L.J.
1968 The Phenomenological and Naturalistic Approaches to the Social. *In* Theory in Anthropology, edited by R. Manners and D. Kaplan, pp. 97-104. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Goodenough, Ward
1956 Residence Rules. Southwestern Journal of Anthropology 12:22-37.

Hedican, Edward J.
1986 The Ogoki River Guides: Emergent Leadership Among the Northern Ojibwa. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Kaplan, A.
1964 The Conduct of Inquiry. San Francisco: Chandler Publishing.

Lett, J.
1987 The Human Enterprise. Boulder: Westview Press.

Lewis, Oscar
1951 Life in a Mexican Village. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Manners, Robert A., and David Kaplan, eds.
1974 Theory in Anthropology: A Sourcebook. Chicago: Aldine.

Manuel, George, and M. Posluns
1974 The Fourth World: An Indian Reality. Don Mills: Collier-Macmillan.

Marcus, George E.
1988 The Constructive Uses of Deconstruction in the Ethnographic Study of Notable American Families. Anthropological Quarterly 61(1):3-16.
Marcus, George E., and Michael J. Fischer
1986 Anthropology as Cultural Critique. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Manyoni, Joseph R.
1983 Eager Visitor, Reluctant Host: The Anthropologist as Stranger. Anthropologica 25:221-249.
Nader, Laura
1988 Post-Interpretive Anthropology. Anthropological Quarterly 61(4):149-159.
Pelto, Pertti
1970 Anthropological Research. New York: Harper & Row.
Redfield, Robert
1930 Tepoztlan, A Mexican Village. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Renner, E.
1984 On Geertz's Interpretative Theoretical Program. Current Anthropology 25(4):538-540.
Ridington, Robin
1988 Knowledge, Power and the Individual in Subarctic Hunting Societies. American Anthropologist 90(1):98-110.
Salisbury, Richard F.
1973 Economic Anthropology. Annual Review of Anthropology 2:85-94.
Scholte, Bob
1972 Toward a Reflexive and Critical Anthropology. *In* Reinventing Anthropology, edited by D. Hymes, pp. 430-457. New York: Pantheon Books.
1984 On Geertz's Interpretive Theoretical Program. Current Anthropology 25(4):540-542.
Shankman, Paul
1984 The Thick and the Thin: On the Interpretive Theoretical Program of Clifford Geertz. Current Anthropology 25:261-279.
Shore, Bradd
1988 Interpretation under Fire. Anthropological Quarterly 61(4):161-176.
Spencer, Jonathan
1989 Anthropology as a Kind of Writing. Man 24(1):145-164.
Ulin, Robert C.
1984 Understanding Cultures. Austin: University of Texas Press.
Weber, Max
1949 The Methodology of the Social Sciences. Glencoe, Illnois: The Free Press.
Winch, Peter
1958 The Idea of a Social Science and Its Relation to Philosophy. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

BOOK REVIEWS / COMPTES RENDUS

***Tammarniit* (Mistakes): Inuit Relocation in the Eastern Arctic, 1939-63**
Frank James Tester and Peter Kulchyski
Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1994. xv + 421 pp. $45.95 (cloth), $24.95 (paper)

Reviewer: David Damas
McMaster University

Authors Tester and Kulchyski add to the growing body of literature that is critical of government administration of the Canadian Arctic. Their treatment of problems of Inuit relocation differs from most other critiques in its more detailed coverage of archival material and extensive interviewing of former governmental representatives. While reference to these sources includes both supporting and dissenting views of relocation policies, this reviewer finds that the polemical approach comes down too heavily on involved government officials.

It is difficult to argue against accusations of lack of consultation with Inuit in some of the relocation examples, when one takes into account problems of communication, some of which are addressed. There were errors in planning, as in the choice of sites in some cases, and blunders in execution. It is not clear, however, that in all instances viable solutions alternate to relocation could have been enlisted. In the cases of the tragedies in the interior of the Keewatin of 1957-58 and consequent movement of people, the authors suggest that "the government of Canada had not put enough resources into monitoring and caring for Inuit who were its responsibility" (p. 272). As a matter of record, expensive and strenuous efforts were made to monitor the groups in question and were found to be impractical, especially in view of the small numbers of people involved.

Concerning the relocations to the high Arctic, the authors admit that conditions in one of the regions of origin, the east coast of Hudson Bay, were probably no better than those at the relocation sites of Grise Fjord and Resolute. With regard to Grise Fjord, there are more balanced accounts of conditions and adjustments, especially "The Grise Fjord Project" by Milton M.R. Freeman (*Arctic*, Vol. 5: *Handbook of North American Indians*, edited by D. Damas, Smithsonian Institution, 1984, pp. 676-682). Omission of this source is symptomatic of the paucity of anthropological writings cited. There are, for instance, awkward usages of anthropological concepts. In one place Inuit distribution practices are characterized by the now-well-confirmed "elaborate networks of reciprocity" (p. 8). In another, the highly dubious stereotype of "generalized reciprocity" is revived (p. 249). The term "nomadic" is most often used loosely, though in one place (p. 206) the contextually more accurate "semi-nomadic" is employed.

Reference to anthropological sources, as well as to pertinent government records, would have dispelled the notion put forth that the fur-trade era brought on increased starvation as well as disease. Rather, it was enhanced survival through introduced technology that largely balanced deaths through disease.

Examination of Hudson's Bay Company records, together with anthropological writings, would have forestalled the assertion that following the First World War "the

new economy was devoted solely to trapping Arctic fox" (p. 63). In fact, the traders did not discourage hunting in favour of trapping but, rather, sought to co-ordinate the two activities by season. Also in error is the idea that store-bought food largely replaced game in the diet of the Inuit during the fur-trade era.

Readers might gain the impression that government-directed relocation was the chief change in Inuit settlement during the 1950s and 1960s. Such moves were but a side show to the more general shift from small, dispersed all-Native communities to large, centralized settlements of mixed ethnic composition. The important point here is that this in-gathering was largely voluntary.

In spite of these shortcomings of the book, Tester and Kulchyski have made clear that paternalism and ethnocentrism persisted far too long in the ranks of the administration. In the later pages, excerpts from an Eskimo Affairs Committee meeting, where Inuit were finally invited, presage the more active role which they were to play in influencing their destiny. While, as the title indicated, mistakes were made, lessons were also learned, albeit belatedly.

Museums and the Appropriation of Culture
Susan Pearce, ed.
Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press International, 1994. viii + 265 pp., 4 figures, 22 plates. $85.00 (cloth)

Reviewer: Marjorie M. Halpin
University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology

This outrageously priced book is the fourth annual volume in the international series, New Research in Museum Studies, edited by Susan Pearce, Director of the Department of Museum Studies, University of Leicester. Each volume is solicited by a thematic call for papers in the preceding volume, although papers on unrelated topics are also included. Eileen Hoover-Greenhill, of the same department, edits a Reviews section in each issue, for which items are solicited rather than assigned. This is a "referred" [*sic*] publication, in that offered papers are submitted to members of an Editorial Committee in Britain and/or to other people for comment.

While papers in the series are supposed to be of a "high academic standard," and some of them are, they are also "intended to relate directly to matters of immediate museum concern" (p. 246), and therein lies a problem. Until very recently, the museological literature has been of the self-congratulatory, anecedotal and "from the trenches" variety. What the best papers in this series do is to add a critical, theoretical dimension to museological discourse that is sorely needed, especially insofar as non-museum academics (such as James Clifford, Donna Haraway, Mieke Bal and Carol Duncan) are writing devastating critiques of museum practice from outside the field.

The issue of appropriation itself is taken as a given. As Parker B. Potter, Jr. argues, "Museums, birds, and fish face the same choice; they can appropriate culture, fly and swim, or they can give up being museums, birds and fish" (p. 103). The questions for these authors is not whether to appropriate, which is seen as definitional to museums, but how to do it.

Three themes pervade the essays. The first is the shift from a positivistic presentation of "truths" to a recognition that both the past and museum exhibits are socially

constructed, and subject to ongoing discourse and debate. As Potter puts it: "There is no museum more dangerous than one whose writers and speakers—whose voices—have forgotten that they are first persons, communicating from a point of view, about third persons, to second persons" (p. 107). The second is the call for the inclusion of sensitive and co-constructed exhibits about previously marginalized groups in society. Brian Shepherd makes this point dramatically and eloquently in his article about museum representations of children, whose weakness and silence I have never really appreciated before. The third is the recognition that museum representations are about power. As Shepherd clearly explains: "At the heart of what is occurring are issues of power. Museums are no strangers to the power structure of society. Indeed, their history, especially in its most recent interpretations, makes it clear that both private and public museums have been heavily underpinned by value systems reflecting strong interests of dominant groups" (p. 69).

For me, the most enjoyable essay here—and a tour de force of reading an institution's unintended messages—is Mark P. Leone's structural analysis of the new DeWitt Wallace gallery at Colonial Williamsburg. The gallery is largely underground, and is entered through the Public Hospital, a museum in America's first building devoted solely to the treatment of mental illness (1773-1885). Leone's answer to the question of what does a modern decorative-arts museum have to do with an 18th-century mental hospital is brilliant, and I will not give it away here.

Conserving Culture: A New Discourse on Heritage
Mary Hufford, ed.
Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994. 264 pp. $37.50 (cloth), $14.95 (paper)

Reviewer: Carole H. Carpenter
York University

This collection does indeed offer a new discourse representing the multidisciplinary, critical leading edge of heritage work. The volume derives from a 1990 conference, sponsored by the American Folklife Center on "Cultural Conservation: Reconfiguring the Cultural Mission," that convened heritage professionals from many disciplines specifically to rethink the cultural mission, in view of the implications of the concept and practice of cultural conservation, an approach to heritage that emerged in the 1980s and was modelled after environmental-conservation rhetoric and its implementations.

As exemplified by contributors to this book, cultural-conservation discourse eschews the tripartite division of heritage—into nature, the built environment and folklore/culture—that evolved from legislation and its implementation through the 1960s and 1970s. In her introduction, Hufford discusses the challenge that cultural conservation presents (to individuals, involved institutions and agencies, as well as policy makers) to perceive culture as a dynamic interaction of people, their products and their environments, and, in effect, to engage in a proactive process for resource planning that involves "moving from a fragmented approach to heritage protection dominated by elite and professional constituencies to an integrated approach based on grass-roots cultural concerns and guided by ethnographic perspectives" (p. 3). Central to this endeavour is the discovery and appreciation of the full spectrum of resources used in

constructing and sustaining people's cultures. Hence, as clearly documented in the case studies at the core of this volume, sound ethnography forms the foundation of cultural conservation.

Following the editor's concise and cogent introduction to the intellectual and legislative contexts, as well as the practical implications of the cultural-conservation movement, 16 essays explore three of its primary objectives: "Conserving History," "Protecting Biocultural Diversity" and "Encouraging Folklife." An afterword by Archie Green offers the visionary integration of historical incident, cultural symbol and call to action that those in the field have come to associate with this pioneer of public folklore.

All six essays on "Conserving History" raise significant concerns regarding the societal and disciplinary paradigms operative in giving the past a future, while the five pieces on "Protecting Biocultural Diversity" indicate the broad relevance of cultural conservation, even beyond the United States (almost too definitely the focus of the book) and across disciplines. The specific cultural-conservation strategies discussed in the five essays under the theme of "Encouraging Folklife" should offer some guidance to heritage workers everywhere. The many provocative premises presented throughout are grounded in case studies, and the entire text is thoroughly erudite, well written and extensively documented.

This is a truly significant work, a worthy addition to the many eminent volumes published by the American Folklore Society and a just reflection of the vision and inspired leadership of the American Folklife Center in international cultural studies.

To Remember the Faces of the Dead: The Plentitude of Memory in Southwestern New Britain

Thomas Maschio

Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994. x + 245 pp. $48.50 (cloth), $22.95 (paper)

Reviewer: Wayne Fife
University of Massachusetts at Amherst

This book is a fine ethnography of the almost unknown Rauto people of Papua New Guinea. The text is complimented by the reproduction of a number of excellent photographs, as well as several very fine drawings by Coralie Cooper. Written in the tradition of the new psychological anthropology, it would not be inaccurate to refer to it either as an ethnography of emotion or a phenomenology of religion, for it is both of these and more.

Maschio's main aim is to explicate what he refers to as the "plenitude of memory" among the Rauto. This involves an understanding that life is both a series of losses and an attempt to connect oneself to other human beings, objects and places. This insight builds upon Maurice Leenhardt's suggestion that the person, unlike the individual, is capable of superabundance, i.e., a limitless ability to assimilate exterior elements and make them part of his or her plenitude.

Maschio shows us how this occurs among the Rauto, through chapters that deal with their religious, ritual and mythical life. Along the way he discusses images of time, persons, places and the dead. Chapter 4, for example, contains a very valuable discus-

sion of female puberty rituals, and explains why, for the Rauto, "the female puberty ritual conflates male and female realms and thus indicates that the Rauto ideal of humanity is represented by an amalgam of male and female powers" (p. 139). Also particularly good are chapter 6 ("Images of Time, Person and Place") and chapter 7 ("To Remember the Faces of the Dead"). The first concerns Rauto notions of human agency, while the latter is a valuable inquiry into the meaning of death.

As Maschio himself notes in the opening chapter, this book could be considered as part of the "romantic" tradition, as represented by thinkers such as Leenhardt, Jung and Vico (p. 33). As such, it tends to place the Rauto in a sort of timeless existence that ignores history, the nation state and other wider social contexts. It does not seem fair, however, to criticize the book for not including things that the author found irrelevant to the task at hand.

That task is not less than to explain the way that the construction of Rauto religious and emotional life is related to the overall process of individuation. Individuation, like plenitude, concerns becoming a fully adult, fully social person. Maschio demonstrates how expressive culture is connected to this process, suggesting that the creation of culture itself is strongly tied to this primary form of mimesis.

Often, in anthropology, certain concepts become associated with particular authors. Clifford Geertz and "thick description" and Victor Turner and "communitas" are but two small examples of this. It may be that in the future these associations will include Thomas Maschio and "plenitude," for in this book Maschio has amply demonstrated the relevance and rewards of using this concept for the consideration of a people and the construction of an ethnography.

In the Shadow of the Antichrist: The Old Believers of Alberta
David Sheffel
Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 1991. xvii + 252 pp. N.p. (paper)
The Old Believers
Researched by David Sheffel, directed by John Paskiewich, produced by Joe MacDonald and John Paskiewich
National Film Board of Canada, 1989. VHS format. Running time 56:51. $31.00

Reviewer: Richard MacKinnon
University College of Cape Breton

This book and accompanying video provide an ethnographic study of a Russian Eastern Orthodox sect, the Old Believers, who live in isolated areas of Alberta. Based on Sheffel's Ph.D. dissertation at McMaster University, they offer a detailed examination of life in a community whose explicit goal is to be isolated from Canadian society. Instead of accessing the media, Old Believers "learn about their place in the world predominantly through history, and the past serves as the preferred method for reducing the burden of voluntary isolation" (p. 3). Consequently, the author's aim is to "lift the cloak of obscurity to which the Old Believers seem to have been condemned by history and modern scholarship . . . [and to] provide inspiration and perhaps justification for the study of other seemingly insignificant societies and communities" (p. 9). To that end, Sheffel offers thick ethnographic description of the culture of this small commu-

nity, and makes explicit the significance of ritual and adherence to the past, which form the basis for the Old Believers' world view.

A historical synopsis outlines Old Believers' Byzantine and Russian origins; the "Raskol," or schism of the Russian Orthodox church in the mid-17th century; their persecution in the 18th century; and their subsequent migration to China and then to North America. This is followed by five ethnographic chapters on the community, Berezovka, detailing beliefs, community organization, economy, foodways and the symbols of orthodoxy in home and community. The final chapter addresses the relevancy of this ethnography for the study of society and culture, puritanism, tradition and modernity.

Sheffel provides the reader with a sense of the significance of material culture and belief to the Old Believers. Every aspect of their material culture is suffused with spiritual meaning connecting this people to its past. Their icons, their clothing and their food utensils are imbued with meaning. Whenever a meal is prepared and eaten, the food, drink, plates and spoons are sanctified by ritual. Outsiders to the community are not permitted to sit at table and share food, since they are considered pagan and unclean. Old Believers situate their homes close to the source of spiritual purity, the river. Their sacred images are washed in river water, which is returned to the river, charged with the power of the icons. Before drinking, Old Believers make a sign of the cross to drive evil spirits out of the drink and swallow it in one gulp, before the spirits have a chance to slip back into it. As the narrator in the video states, for Old Believers "life is a perpetual act of worship."

Both book and video lead us to a better understanding of the significance of ritual in the transmission of culture. The many rituals of this people function not only as communication devices, but as links between them and their past, providing a "dialogue between past and present Christians," between those who cannot interact directly" (p. 215). Their family and community rituals connect this group with the many Old Believers from Russia who, despite persecution, maintained their orthodox beliefs.

While the book stands on its own as a fine ethnography, the reader will want to view the video to gain a better understanding of the Old Believers. The videography is magnificent, clearly showing the various family and community traditions, and the many rituals that occur throughout the year. The video focusses on the Reutov family, which is preparing a family feast for a son who is getting married. Various details of daily life are captured, including consulting the liturgical calendar each morning to see what foods are appropriate, collecting river water for cleaning icons, butchering a pig, eating the celebratory meal. Archival footage of some persecutions faced by Old Believers is also included, along with oral testimony from members of the Reutov family who discuss their flight from violence and hunger, from Russia, to China, Brazil and then to North America.

One criticism of the book is that it does not adequately address the intrusion of modern Western culture into the lives of Old Believers. Despite their efforts to isolate themselves, Western influences creep into their lives. The house interiors include constant reminders of Old Believer faith, because the "home is considered a place of elevated ritual status" (p. 164). The houses themselves, however, conform to bungalow styles or are prefabricated trailers, like those found throughout North America. Likewise, and more significantly, the children attend school, wear leather jackets along with their traditional embroidered smocks and drive cars. They live both in the traditional world of Old Believers and the world of teenagers growing up in contemporary Western Canada.

But while the book does not adequately address this complex and important issue, the video does explore it at some length, explaining that this intrusion of Western influence is the beginning of a rift between generations. This is most aptly demonstrated when Old Believers are depicted visiting the West Edmonton Mall, observing capitalism at its height. One Old Believer remarks: "When the end of the world comes, it will probably begin here in the West Edmonton Mall."

Despite the criticism, Sheffel's book and video will be indispensable for those teaching in the many cultural fields in Canada. Anthropologists, folklorists and material-culture and religious-studies specialists will find useful materials and ideas in this analysis of the distinctive traditions and rituals of the Old Believers.

Amerindian Rebirth: Reincarnation Belief among North American Indians and Inuit

Antonia Mills and Richard Slobodin, eds.

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994. xxiv + 411 pp. $60.00 (cloth), $19.95 (paper)

Reviewer: R.G. Williamson
University of Saskatchewan

Like all who teach, ever wanting new material, I welcome this initiative by Antonia Mills and Dick Slobodin. It is a most useful compilation, and a genuine addition to the literature. It contains worthwhile inclusions by long-established writers (like the late Paul Radin, Saladin D'Anglure, and Slobodin himself, now Emeritus but, refreshingly, still professionally active) and a goodly number of exceptionally promising members of the rising generation of anthropologists (like Mark Nuttall, James Matlock and Michael Harkin). Altogether, there are 16 essays by 13 authors: Mills and Slobodin each provide two pieces. Mills also offers a well-rounded introduction and, in addition, collaborates very usefully with Matlock on a compendious trait index (including a clearly coded trait list), maps and bibliography. Altogether, the book is thoroughly indexed and referenced. With the imaginative approach taken by the editors, some unevenness is inevitable, but the overall quality of the book is excellent.

The book presents a theoretical foreword by Gananath Obeyesekare, heralding new knowledge in the comparative-study process. It provides a provocative framework for a rebirth of eschatology; some lucid modelling; a useful concept, "ethnicization"; and an expansion of analysis from the small-scale societies that form the substance of this book to the larger, more complex societies of the world. It is an ambitious and laudable contribution. In her introduction, Mills shows how belief in reincarnation is more wide ranging in North American aboriginal society than has been fully appreciated. She documents such ethnographic material as exists and seeks to explain the incompleteness of the record, while also necessarily discussing the nature of evidence.

The articles that follow are sumptuous, though occasionally intriguing in their selection—as in the case of Saladin D'Anglure's "third sex" Inuit piece, which is not really a daring choice, but is slightly idiosyncratic, perhaps, and conceivably tangential to the collection's main thematic focus. It was pleasing to see Lee Guemple's material on the Qiqiqtamuit cyclical manifestation of souls, refreshingly re-analyzed in a lucid review of his data. Guemple properly indicates that many of the concepts involved are found

analogously in other Inuktitut settings, though more recent ethnological work has emphasized the non-kin alliance factors, which he documented and which others saw as unique to the Belchers, though, in fact, not many are.

Perhaps the best contemporary analysis undertaken in the circumpolar context in recent years has been done by the young British social anthropologist, Nuttell, whose recent *Arctic Homeland* is the most insightful writing on the Inuktitut in decades. His essay on the naming system and the Greenlandic notion of the person maintains, in this collection, his remarkable standard of perceptive accuracy. The data and analysis are unpretentiously and trenchantly presented.

There is good work on the contemporary Dene (by Jean-Guy Goulet), the Northwest Coast (by Michael Harkin), the Kwakiutl (by Marie Mauzé), the Tlingit (by Ian Steveson, a psychiatrist), the Gitsan (by Mills), the Inupiat of northern Alaska (by Edith Turner) and, of course, Slobodin writes intimately about Kutchin concepts of reincarnation, observing well a people among whom he has worked over a stretch of 30 years. The concluding essay, also by Slobodin, is both a valuable historical summation and a contemporary perspective on secularized society. It, furthermore, appropriately rounds off the volume by raising critical questions concerning perception evidence as part of identity.

The book is ethnographically rich, though not comprehensive. Some might regret various omissions, while realizing unavoidable editorial limitations, and call for further research and analyses. But the collection yields genuine advances in substantive knowledge and theoretical provender. This useful book does two things that one would expect of such an intellectually fruitful collaboration. It develops fresh areas of knowledge and paves the way for ongoing inquiry by raising searching new questions.

Herds of the Tundra: A Portrait of Saami Reindeer Pastoralism
Robert Paine
Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994. xiv + 242 pp. $59.00 (cloth)

Reviewer: Hugh Beach
Uppsala University

Do not be deceived! This large-formatted, lean-looking volume with striking black-and-white photographs of reindeer and Saami herdsmen on the cover is no coffee-table picture book of Lapland. It is a multidimensional, analytical tour de force by the leading anthropological scholar on Saami reindeer pastoralism. Each year, thousands of reindeer, managed by hundreds of Saami families, move from the interior winter grazing lands of Finnmark to the islands and peninsulas along the Norwegian North Sea coast for the summer—and then move back again. All the while, the pastoralists actively mediate between the reindeer and the land. It is not simply a matter of following the deer on their natural migrations. Herders must, among other things, possess intimate knowledge of reindeer habits (which vary with such things as reindeer age and sex, herd composition and the season); seasonal availability of grazing throughout a wide and shifting range; and the movements and impacts of other herds. They must be able to chart a spatio-temporal course—with alternatives at every fork—satisfying both to their reindeer and to the needs of their households. That this large-scale annual move can be accomplished in a manner that preserves each herder's individual man-

agement autonomy, within a necessarily shifting pattern of partnerships, is nothing less than miraculous. The reader is soon convinced that there could hardly be a more ingenious pastoral management system than that devised over the centuries by the Saami, if the long migrations are to be orchestrated throughout Finnmark, recurrently and without degeneration of herder knowledge, herder recruitment or the natural habitat.

Paine does not pretend to have distilled all of the herders' detailed knowledge into book form (although we are here served the largest portion ever made available to the English-speaking public). Yet, by letting the reader learn with him through his field experience, and by presenting the contrasting strategies of different key herders to whom he was apprenticed in the field, Paine succeeds in the far more important task of making the reader appreciate the Kautokeino Saami pastoral model and its major variations. Paine became competent in the Saami language, and he uses a good deal of Saami terminology to instruct us in Saami pastoralism. Without this Saami vocabulary to express Saami concepts and categories, Paine's task would be incredibly cumbersome. Readers had best learn a core of Saami herding terms and, to help them recall terms introduced in the text, a Saami glossary is provided.

Paine entered the Saami field as a young man, approximately 40 years ago. Since then he has established himself as an authority on Saami matters. However, this book, and the one he has now in preparation, *Saami Camps*, comprise his first, much-anticipated, full and integrated treatment of his fieldwork among the Kautokeino pastoralists. *Herds of the Tundra* recapitulates seminal points about Saami herd management made by Paine in previously published articles, but these points are now embedded in a broader context, and are usually fleshed out with concrete cases, if not presented in a narrative form describing the circumstances by which Paine himself came to be aware of them.

This book goes far beyond being a compendium of vintage Paine or of being merely a delayed publication of important field material. In it he also confronts issues of change and brings us into the present, by discussing various processes of modernization and state-imposed rationalization. A major strength of this work is that it is ever attuned to the political interface between the Saami way of doing things and the policies of the Norwegian nation-state. The book's store of accumulated knowledge and insights about Saami pastoralism is released full force in the current debate that is raging over the Finnmark (and other parts of Lapland) concerning supposed reindeer overpopulation, grazing depletion and the call to increase the efficiency of "the herding industry," through the application of what Paine dubs "desktop pastoralism." Having undertaken, beginning in the early 1970s, work with Saami herders in northern Sweden that dealt with many of the same issues, I am as discouraged as I am fascinated by Paine's account. Sweden has been far more advanced than Norway in the destruction of its Saami pastoral system, and it is a shame to see Norwegian policy makers tread the same path, with many of the same misdirected and insensitive regulations.

Of course, Saami pastoralism has changed much since the 1960s, as presented by Paine's model of "commensurate proportions," which relates proportions of the three basic factors of pastoral production (partners, herd and pasture). These changes are not caused only by externally imposed policies of rationalization. Large-scale herd increases within stressed ecological constraints, radical oscillations in the reindeer-meat market or the advent of a new technological innovation might all alter the balance of the old model, just as will state-induced subsidies and taxation policies. However, state policies might be necessary—in a modern, increasingly market-oriented reindeer economy—to restore some of the old flexibility to the system. This would require state

programs that are conscious of Saami values and open to Saami internal self-determination, rather than policies that are blindly based on profit maximization and programs that are antithetical to the interests expressed by the Saami but promoted "for their own good." Paine's book unavoidably, and to its credit, is also a piece of anthropological advocacy. Would that herding policy makers, as well as anthropologists, read *Herds of the Tundra*. It is nothing short of a masterpiece.

Labrador Winter: The Ethnographic Journals of William Duncan Strong, 1927-1928

Eleanor B. Leacock and Nan A. Rothschild, eds.

Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1994. xxiv + 235 pp. U.S.$45.00 (cloth)

Reviewer: Barnett Richling
Mount Saint Vincent University

The past 30 years have not been kind to the Mushuau Innu (Montagnais-Naskapis) of Davis Inlet, Labrador. Most recently, their struggles with suicide and substance abuse and against government indifference have captured headlines at home and abroad. Regrettably, this has made them seem a defeated people, helpless and pitiable, not a community actively seeking, like many aboriginal communities, to hold on to its identity and culture against great odds. Worse still, the enormity and rapidity of the changes they have faced somehow overwhelm history, leaving us only to imagine the quite different life they led just a generation ago. Given all of that, the appearance of *Labrador Winter* is very timely, its first-hand account of Innu society drawn before the deluge began.

Early in the century, the Innu enjoyed a certain notoriety in anthropological circles; the remoteness of the subarctic Québec-Labrador peninsula was thought to have preserved among them an archaic, static form of Algonkian culture. At the time William Duncan Strong went north to study them, accompanying the Field Museum's second Rawson-MacMillan Expedition of 1927-28, a 1928 anonymous report in the the *American Anthropologist* described these Indians as among "the most primitive of extant peoples" (30[1]:173). Hyperbole aside, Strong did find the Davis Inlet band living as nomadic hunters, their egalitarian social organization still largely intact, their interactions with coast-dwelling Inuit and Settlers and with outsiders—mainly merchants and missionaries—limited and highly selective. But there were also clouds on the horizon, signs that the sheltering isolation of Innu existence in Labrador's vast northern interior was coming undone.

Strong visited the Davis Inlet band once, the first—and until Georg Henriksen's field work 40 years later—and the only anthropologist to live and travel with the band during the harsh winter months. He planned to publish on the experience, but his monograph went unfinished, set aside in favour of Andean and Plains archaeology, the work for which Strong is best known in the profession. The late Eleanor Leacock, Strong's student, eventually agreed to complete the manuscript. Working with 120 drafted pages, the original field journal and the author's notes, she and colleague Nan Rothschild succeeded in cobbling together a text that, in their estimation, is "as faithful to Strong's own record as possible" (p. x).

Organized into 15 chapters (11 written by Strong) and four appendices, and illustrated with 34 photographs, *Labrador Winter* ranges over extensive ground, detailing aspects of traditional technology, social organization and intellectual and spiritual life and examining Davis Inlet band origins and relations with the neighbouring Barren Ground people. Scattered through this customary ethnographic fare are Strong's vivid and unusually candid impressions of his Innu companions, the rigours of their life in an inhospitable environment and his no-less-candid reflections on doing ethnographic field work among them. Stephen Loring's afterword contains a useful bibliographic essay, patching up errors and omissions in the original manuscript and closing with a succinct review of conditions among the Innu after 1930.

Publication of *Labrador Winter* has achieved more than bringing a dusty old manuscript to light. The current plight of the Mushuau Innu has seen to that. Strong's informative ethnography adds an important dimension to our understanding of that troubling situation, pointing to social and cultural continuities between past and present. It deserves to be read as much for what it tells us about the Innu present as about their past.

The Jaguar and the Anteater: Pornography Degree Zero
Bernard Arcand
Translated by Wayne Grady
London: Verso, 1993. 286 pp. $29.92 (cloth)

Reviewer: Thelma McCormack
York University

Whether or not the state belongs in the bedrooms of the nation remains a continuing debate among Canadians. It is an unresolved and unresolvable issue, a choice between two images: the jaguar, who symbolizes predatory power, risk and sexual pleasure; and the anteater, who represents survival, longevity and social and sexual indifference. Arcand uses the symbolism of the two creatures to frame a discussion of pornography as a genre and a political flashpoint. He gives short shrift to contemporary positivist research on pornography, and has little interest in the current debates. Both are epiphenomena reflecting the deeper contradictions and cleavages in modern society that adhere to sex and the representations of sexuality in the media.

To understand pornography in the 20th century, he says, we must understand modernity, with particular reference to privatization and individualism. The key is the way in which modernity has transformed sexuality, so that sexual pleasure and procreation are no longer necessarily connected. The widespread use of effective contraception means that we can have sex without babies; and, thanks to the new reproductive technologies, we can have babies without sex. A liberation to some; for others it engenders a sense of threat to the social order.

Pornography, according to Arcand, is a combination of content and context. Of the two terms, the latter is more problematic, since the context refers to both form and historical setting, while the setting, in turn, encompasses a range of values (modesty, beliefs about masturbation, celibacy, intimacy, etc.). Frontal nudity may be unacceptable at certain times in history, in certain art forms or to particular groups who tolerate other things. What distinguishes contemporary pornography is its separation from art,

science and religious rituals, as well as its (hard-core) excesses and its accessibility through a market system. Ironically, the same conditions make it less and less satisfying.

In the Western mind, sexuality and death are linked, replacing the older connection between human sexuality and life (that is, the fertility of the land). In every encounter with pornography or erotica, we experience the imminence of death. Thanatos more than eros, Arcand says, draws us back to it, no matter how aesthetically debased the particular book, picture, lyric or film may be.

Arcand traces pornography back to early pre-Christian fertility cults, but emphasizes its modern form and the stages of development. In 18th- and 19th-century pornography, seduction was a common theme; in the 20th century, seduction yields to the fast fix. Something is lost, but it fits our lifestyle better than stories of secret trysts, deceptions and a slow, leisurely *glissement* toward consummation.

There is a kind of circularity in Arcand's analysis that often makes it difficult to follow. In addition, there is an equilibrium bias that runs throughout the study; there are too many equivalences. Yet serious scholars will find in his emphasis on modernity a rich theoretical schema for future research. He has brought us through the first stage with great clarity, subtlety, insight and finesse.

Welshness Performed: Welsh Concepts of Person and Society
Carol Trosset
Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1993. x + 183 pp. $35.00 (cloth)

Reviewer: Sharon R. Roseman
University of Massachusetts at Amherst

This excellent monograph focusses on Welsh concepts of personhood and social order. In tackling this complex subject, Trosset incorporates approaches used for the study of ideology, practice theory and ethnopsychology. Furthermore, readers gain an in-depth understanding of ethnic and language politics in Wales. The field research on which the work is based was carried out in many different locales, ranging from small, northern villages to the southern city of Cardiff. Her familiarity with Wales as a whole has allowed Trosset to present an ethnography of a nation rather than of a particular community or communities. Also noteworthy is a methodological approach, inspired by the writings of Georges Devereux and Paul Riesman, whereby the anthropologist uses her or his subjectivity as the key tool in coming to an understanding of the cultural assumptions and experiences of those studied. This approach is made explicit throughout the volume, as personal narratives are interspersed with more objective analyses of Welsh behaviour, values, ideas and styles of interaction.

Key concepts of "what it means to be a person in society" (p. 3) are treated in separate chapters, but each new notion builds upon earlier ones. For instance, in chapter 2, Trossett suggests that society is stratified according to individual's relative participation in "Welsh" activities. The most important component of "Welshness" is to be a Welsh speaker; others include going to non-conformist chapel and being able to sing well. Although they live in dispersed locales throughout the nation, Welsh speakers are said to belong to the community of "Welsh-Wales." In the following chapter she continues to employ this concept of cultural stratification when she analyzes sectarian

thinking, and shows that the Welsh-English distinction is "usually framed, and often experienced, in terms of *internal* divisions within Wales" (p. 56, emphasis in original).

An important emphasis in the book is that ethnicity is both a discourse and a series of experiences. One way in which Welsh individuals' experience of their ethnicity is demonstrated is through a discussion of their participation in a range of performance events. Perhaps the most important of these are the local and national *Eisteddfodau* (festivals where musicians and poets perform competitively). This focus on performance provides a context for the author's exploration of the conflict between opposing cultural self-images. The Welsh devalue the social and class hierarchy that they label "English," and think of themselves as living in an egalitarian society. This image will often be framed in terms of downplaying the competitive and judgmental aspects of performances of Welsh music and poetry, so that people will say "taking part is the important thing" (p. 106). An opposing view and recognition of the significance attached to winning competitions is expressed with the statement "everyone in Wales is an adjudicator" (p. 106).

This study is a significant addition to the ethnography of Western Europe, to anthropological studies of language and ethnic politics and to research on personhood, emotions and performance. It will be of particular interest to those who work in non-state nations where the maintenance of a minority language is a focal point for self-definition and cultural activism.

The Possessed and the Dispossessed: Spirits, Identity and Power in a Madagascar Migrant Town
Lesley A. Sharp
Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993. 345 pp. N.p.

Reviewer: Adeline Masquelier
Tulane University

This stimulating account of spirit possession in Madagascar's Sambirano Valley begins with familiar premises: that individual, social or even cultural identities are never static or monolithic, but rather are fluid, malleable and multilayered; that the body provides a readily accessible medium for dealing with social contradictions; and that, rather than confining itself to sacred practice, ritual is a determinant force in society.

The ostensible object of the book is to describe the role and significance of spirit possession—of which the most important form is *tromba*—in mediating problems associated with Malagasy women's experience of urban life and migrant labour in a plantation economy. This does not mean, however, that participation in *tromba* implies marginality. That much is suggested by the title: the "possessed," who enjoy a legitimate and profitable lifestyle as mediums, are contrasted to the truly "dispossessed," who have opted out of mediumship. Unlike ethnographies that portray female mediumship as providing only temporary or symbolic relief from the pressures of the workplace or the tensions of marital life, Sharp analyzes *tromba* as a crucial component of Sakalava culture that permanently empowers its participants.

The book is divided into three parts. Part 1 provides a social, historical and political-economic backdrop for the analysis of *tromba*. Part 2 discusses how mediumship is implicated in local conceptions of identity, community and history. Part 3 explores

how possession and exorcism shape the boundaries of "selves" that are, by definition, shifting and permeable. Key to Sharp's approach is an effort to go beyond the ceremonial aspect of mediumship and examine how *tromba* actively mediates women's everyday struggles. Some of the most interesting aspects of the book deal with practices that transform *vahiny* (outsiders) into *tera-tany* (insiders), such as post-partum rituals and *tromba* support networks, which operate on kinship-based principles to incorporate non-kin migrant women.

The experience of urban life, capitalist labour and Western education seems to have bred a heightened concern with "tradition" that often drives mediums to undermine development projects or resist economic changes. Sharp offers fascinating hints of how this concern becomes expressed in the disturbing possession of adolescent girls whose pregnant bodies—a sign of precocious and thus problematic fertility—are made to speak of the contradictions of migrant life.

Yet, there is very little on the Malagasy conception of bodiliness and the "bodily" ways in which mediums re-enact history, engage in their culture and act upon the world. This is not to fault Sharp's excellent analysis, but rather to suggest possible paths for further research on how mediumship as a bodily, sensuous and kinesthetic practice is implicated in the making of the Malagasy lived world. Refreshingly free of jargon and alive with tales of women's daily struggles, Sharp's study convincingly illuminates the central role of mediumship in local definitions of power and identity.

Knowledge and Practice in Mayotte: Local Discourses of Islam, Sorcery, and Spirit Possession
Michael Lambek
Anthropological Horizons Series
Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993. xix + 468 pp. $70.00 (cloth), $24.95 (paper)

Reviewer: Lesley A. Sharp
Barnard College

How might anthropologists understand the cultural basis of knowledge? This is Michael Lambek's task in this detailed and often engrossing study from Mayotte, an island of the Comoro archipelago in the Indian Ocean, between East Africa and Madagascar. Based on careful field research spanning approximately 20 years, Lambek argues for an understanding of the interrelatedness of three traditions, each with its own conception of knowledge: Islam, cosmology and spirit possession. These traditions may be viewed, at times, as interlocking or even indistinguishable; at others they compete with or contradict one another. Key issues concern the question of knowledge as power and whether Islam is hegemonic in self-proclaimed Muslim communities. In turn, a unifying theme is: how does one obtain knowledge and who has access to it? Can we speak of a morality of knowledge? Sociologist Alfred Schutz provides a helpful framework: there are varying degrees of knowledge, represented by the expert, the "well-informed citizen" and "the man on the street" (or what Lambek refers to as "the person on the path"). Levels of knowing in Mayotte are best understood in times of crisis (most often sickness), where the "master, scholar, [or] expert" (p. 3) for all three traditions is the *fundi*, whose clients fall into Schutz's two other categories.

In part 1, "Introductions," Lambek explores the historical roots of knowledge on Mayotte, showing how the three traditions were brought by seafarers of many origins. French colonization further complicates the picture; thus Lambek gives a brief-yet-informative recent history of Mayotte, as well as an overview of village social structure. The remainder of the book is divided into three sections, each focussing on one of the traditions. A central theme is whether knowledge is embedded in texts or embodied, and this is reflected in the three respective section headings: "The Social Organization of Textual Knowledge," "Counterpractices: Cosmology and the Ins and Outs of Sorcery" and "Embodied Knowledge and the Practice of Spirit Mediums."

As Lambek explains early in this work, Islamic knowledge is open to all members of Mayotte society, but mastery is another question altogether. Children begin learning to recite the Qur'an at a young age by sounding out Arabic letters (a task that was given to, and frustrated, Lambek early in his field work, when he expressed his desire to *learn* about local culture). Boys and girls who show promise are sent to other villages to study with *fundis* who specialize in *'Ilim fakihi*, knowledge of Islam's sacred texts and rituals. Learning proves difficult, for the inquisitive student is quickly frustrated by the lack of instructional texts or teachers well-versed in Arabic. Here Lambek reveals an important dimension of Islam: words, when uttered, are sacred; but, when translated, they lose their power. Furthermore, being Muslim in Mayotte is a performative experience: it is through such actions as recitation, prayer and fasting that one asserts Muslim identity.

In contrast, knowledge associated with *'Ilim dunia*, the cosmologer's art, hinges on the ability to read (that is, translate) and interpret a host of astrological texts. I found this section to be the most compelling, for the cosmologer is simultaneously a valued healer and a potentially dangerous sorcerer. For example, through this knowledge one can predict auspicious times to hold important rituals, as well as to harm one's adversaries. Thus, cosmology defines a spectrum of healers and sorcerers, whose work may be viewed as good or evil. Much of this knowledge is secretive and is acquired only through apprenticeships with established masters that span decades. The danger associated with the *fundi's* work is expressed through common beliefs that one must kill close kin and/or dance on graves to acquire power. Here Lambek's treatment goes beyond many other anthropological studies of sorcery: rather than simply making note of such beliefs, he interviews self-professed sorcerers. He also explores the morality of power, as well as ethical dilemmas associated with reporting secret knowledge.

In Mayotte, interpretations of knowledge are flexible: Islam, cosmology and spirit possession are not discrete domains. This point is illustrated by reference to two brothers who are both Islamic *fundi* (pp. 170ff.). One rejects the legitimacy of the two other traditions; the other's ambivalence allows him to offer a complex critique of, for example, the social significance of cosmology. Conversation and polyvocality define the dynamics of village-based knowledge, a theme cleverly represented on the book's cover, which shows an Islamic *fundi* and possessed medium deep in conversation.

The final section concerns knowledge of the spirits, *'Ilim ny lulu*, on which Lambek has written extensively. Here, as in previous works, Lambek draws from the lives of two healers, Tumbu and Mohedja. Yet again we witness the blurring of boundaries between traditions. Tumbu, skilled at sorcery extraction, acquires knowledge from a host of teachers: Islamic and cosmologer *fundis*; personal possessing spirits that appear in his dreams; and his wife Mohedja's spirits that speak through her in trance or transmit knowledge through dreams she must interpret. The one weakness here is a need for a

more detailed discussion of the process through which villagers—and anthropologists—interpret such dreams.

The conclusion is brief and to the point. In addition to providing a re-encapsulation of this volume's overall purpose, it also contains an intriguing and amusing episode: a heavily laden granary falls on a respected, wealthy man who is sleeping beneath it. Lambek—guided, of course, by Evans-Pritchard's writings on the Azande—searches in vain for special meanings local villages assign to this event. He finds the sorcerer is irrelevant: the granary fell, the man was hurt. Upon returning to the field, interpretations have changed, but only after the man has experienced tragedies that leave him emotionally and financially weakened. There is an important lesson here: interpretations of knowledge—and associated power—change over time.

Overall, this is a strong and detailed study of three traditions that define the core of community life. There are, perhaps, a bit too many excerpts from Lambek's field notes. Yet among the book's greatest strengths is the care with which Lambek has documented each of the traditions, rooting his examples in everyday events. As noted, Lambek occasionally includes himself as a character in these narratives, carefully straddling what has become thorny territory in anthropology. The push for greater self-reflexivity has far too often produced heavily egocentric texts that attempt to pass as ethnographies. Lambek, in contrast, uses his own experiences—as observer, apprentice and, at times, the confused, young anthropologist—to reveal the manner in which an understanding of knowledge unfolds with experience. This is the work of a gifted field worker, whose new study offers theoretical contributions that extend far beyond the societies of the Indian Ocean. This book will prove useful to anyone interested in the cross-cultural study of Islam, sorcery and/or spirit possession; the dynamics of power is small-scale communities; the relationship between religion and healing; or knowledge as a cultural construct.

Living on the Land: Change among the Inuit of Baffin Island
John S. Matthiasson
Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 1992. 172 pp. N.p. (paper)

Reviewer: Derek G. Smith
Carleton University

Matthiasson reports research, undertaken during a long visit in 1963 and a short one in 1973, that has already been represented in a series of scholarly articles. The present work is intended as a "personalized ethnography," a "reflexive and extended" treatment of "the Tununermiut camp life that disappeared shortly after [Matthiasson] encountered it" (p. 10). It is the work of someone who cares deeply for the people whose lifeways he describes.

It is valuable for its concentration on camp life, for most Northern ethnographic work by the 1960s had an intensive concern with settlement life and its social problems, in part because "contact-traditional" camp life was much attenuated by 1960. The volume deals with social-problem issues, but emphasizes contact-traditional camp life.

The work intentionally shies "away from discussion of anthropological issues of theory and methodology" (p. 158), which permits a fairly pleasing plain-language

style, but which also raises serious issues for professional readers. In his earlier work the author attempted "to keep himself out of the picture," but "always felt a sense of artificiality in doing so" (p. 22). So here he opts for a "reflexive and extended" (p. 10) approach. However, suppressing implicit theory and method is at least as problematic as suppressing the ethnographer's voice.

Matthiasson asserts "that the writings of the anthropologist can never be divorced from the anthropologist him- or herself," because our "thoughts and feelings . . . are the filters through which [our] observations are transformed into data." He argues that "the personal responses of the anthropologist deserve to be more than anecdotes recounted year after year to classes of undergraduates" (p. 22). In my view, this conjunction of personal and theoretical issues *may not* be left implicit. Matthiasson does so at great cost to the work's reflexivity.

The work is profoundly compassionate and personal, indeed it is evocative and touching, but only in a restricted sense is it reflexive. It does not seem to benefit from intense recent debate among ethnographers over "reflexive methods" in theory and critical practice. Ethnographers sorely need to "reflect" on much more than *personal* practices and reactions (a pretty minimalist notion of reflexivity), but must also engage in a comprehensive reflection on the concepts and practices of ethnography as a way of working, and not least on the unquestioned entitlement we claim in going where we go, doing what we do and writing what we write in the ways we do it. Matthiasson touches none of this. These are *very* difficult issues of theory, method and practice, as recent debate has shown, but the work lacks reference to any item in this debate, nor indeed to any item more recent than 1976. This seems striking in context of the author's statement (p. 8) that he has come to understand Foucault, whose work is deeply implicated in the debate.

It is strange and ultimately unacceptable that a "personal and reflective" ethnography aims to make space for the temperament and personality of the ethnographer, but explicitly excludes those of other powerful Eurocanadians (government officials, RCMP officers, traders and missionaries) and to treat these persons neutrally as occupants of roles and statuses (p. 93).

I value Matthiasson's personal and compassionate account and could readily visualize its use in undergraduate teaching, with appropriate discussions of its strengths and weaknesses. Its minimalist reflexiveness is a pity, for I suspect he has more to say on some of the bigger issues I have noted.

CONTRIBUTORS/COLLABORATEURS

Patricia Kachuk

Patricia Kachuk is a lecturer in Anthropology/Sociology and Women's Studies at the University of British Columbia, where she received her Ph.D. in 1993. Her major field work, conducted in Northern Ireland, was an examination of the symbolic expression of Irishness as resistance to British cultural hegemony. She is currently completing a book which will deal with the response of the Irish language movement to this cultural domination.

Daniel Clément

Daniel Clément is Curator of Eastern Subarctic Ethnology at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa. He received his Ph.D. from Laval University. As a professional anthropologist he has specialized in the relationship between people and their environment. He has written two major works on the Montagnais, *L'Ethnobotanique Montagnaise de Mingan* (1990) and *La Zoologie des Montagnais* (1995), as well as several articles on the study of myth.

E Palmer Patterson

E Palmer Patterson was born in New Orleans, Louisiana, and took his Ph.D. in History at the University of Washington in Seattle. He recently retired from his position in the Department of History at the University of Waterloo, where he taught courses on Canadian Indian Ethnohistory and the Expansion of Europe. He has conducted research on the history of the Nishga people of British Columbia, and more recently on the history of the American South. He is the author of *Mission on the Nass: The Evangelization of the Nishga* and *The Canadian Indian: A History since 1500*, as well as other books and articles.

Edward Hedican

Edward Hedican received his Ph.D. from McGill University. He is Associate Professor of Anthropology in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Guelph. He has conducted field research among the Ojibwa in Northwestern Ontario. He is the author of *The Ogoki River Guides: Emergent Leadership among the Northern Ojibwa* (Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986) and *Applied Anthropology in Canada: Understanding Aboriginal Issues* (University of Toronto Press, 1995).

INFORMATION FOR AUTHORS

Anthropologica accepts manuscripts in French or English and requires three copies of all articles for review purposes.

All manuscripts should be typed on one side only of standard 8-1/2 x 11-inch typing or computer paper, or A4 paper. Manuscripts must have adequate margins and should be double-spaced throughout, including quotations, notes, and bibliographic references. Articles must be accompanied by abstracts of not more than 100 words each in both English and French, if possible. In the case of articles accepted for publication, professionally drawn, camera-ready graphs, charts and other illustrations are the responsibility of authors and will be returned upon publication. Only black and white versions of graphs, charts, and other illustrations can be printed. Authors of articles accepted for publication will be asked if they can submit copies of revised articles on computer disks (see below), or if they can transmit revised articles electronically via NETNORTH or BITNET. If this technology is unavailable, then standard, typed manuscripts are completely acceptable. Computer disks will be returned, but all print copies of manuscripts will be destroyed upon publication unless authors make special arrangements. For security, authors should keep at least one printed and electronic copy of all manuscripts, including graphs, charts, and other illustrations.

Anthropologica currently uses an IBM PC computer with DOS 4.0, 3-1/2 inch double-sided, double-density, or high-density diskettes, and "Word Perfect" Version 5.1 or 6.0 word processing. "ASCII" is also acceptable.

Articles accepted for publication must be revised to conform to the editorial standards of the journal, including details specified in *The Canadian Style: A Guide to Writing and Editing.* Footnotes are not normally used and should be incorporated into the text. If deemed absolutely necessary, footnotes must be placed at the end of the text in a section entitled Notes which appears before References Cited. Acknowledgements are placed at the beginning of Notes. All referencing must be meticulous. References in the text are placed in parentheses and include appropriate combinations of the author's last name, the year of publication, and page number(s); as for example: (Smith 1985), (cf. Lewis 1965), (Rouleau 1964:206), (e.g., Scheffler 1975:230), (Roy et al. 1980), or (Marshall, Simon, and Williams 1985:110-115). Plural references in the same year are distinguished by letters, while original dates of publication are distinguished by square brackets; as for example: (Trottier and LeVine 1977a, 1978b:110-115, 1979b:45,323-325) or Kroeber 1952 [1909]). Multiple references are separated by semicolons; as for example: (Desjardins 1975; Desforges 1980, 1985a; Roy 1895:42-44; see also Smith et al. 1980). If an au-

thor is mentioned in the text of an article, it is sufficient to cite the date of publication and page number(s); for example (1966) or (1985:249).

All references cited in the text are placed in a section titled References Cited at the end of an article. There, references are listed alphabetically and chronologically according to the following format:

References Cited

Lévi-Strauss, Claude
1962 La pensée sauvage. Paris: Plon.
1964 Le cru et le cuit. Paris: Plon.
1967 Les structures élémentaires de la parenté. Paris: Mouton. Publication originale en 1949.

Lévy-Bruhl, Lucien
1985 How Natives Think [1910], translated by Lillian A. Clare. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Paine, Robert, ed.
1977 The White Arctic: Anthropological Essays on Tutelage and Ethnicity. Newfoundland Social and Economic Papers Number Seven. St. John's, Newfoundland: Memorial University of Newfoundland Institute of Social and Economic Research.

Radcliffe-Brown, A.R.
1950 Introduction. *In* African Systems of Kinship and Marriage, edited by A.R. Radcliffe-Brown and D. Forde, pp. 1-85. London: Oxford University Press.

Salisbury, Richard F.
1966 Structuring Ignorance: The Genesis of a Myth in New Guinea. Anthropologica 8:315-328.

Soustelle, Jacques
1955 La vie quotidienne au temps des Aztèques. Paris: Hachette.

Turner, David H., and Gavin A. Smith, eds.
1979 Challenging Anthropology: A Critical Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology. Toronto, Ontario: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, Limited.

INFORMATION POUR LES AUTEURS

Anthropologica reçoit les manuscrits en français ou en anglais. Aux fins de recension, on demande trois copies de chaque article. Les manuscrits doivent être dactylographiés soit sur format standard (8 1/2 x 11 po.), soit sur ordinateur, soit sur papier A4. Il faut prévoir des marges suffisantes et une rédaction à double interligne (y compris dans les cas des citations, des notes et des références bibliographiques). Dans la mesure du possible, chaque article doit être accompagné d'un résumé d'un maximum de 100 mots, en anglais et en français. Dans le cas d'articles qu'on a acceptés de publier, l'auteur doit prendre la responsabilité d'obtenir les copies-photos (en noir et en blanc) de tout graphique, dessin et/ou illustration. Ces copies-photos lui seront retournées après publication.

Les auteurs des articles acceptés, s'ils en sont en mesure, pourront soumettre leurs copies d'articles révisés soit sur disquettes (voir infra), soit via les systèmes de communication NETNORTH ou BITNET. Si ces procédés s'avèrent impossible, le manuscrit dactylographié suffira. Les disquettes seront retournées et, à moins d'avis contraire de la part des auteurs, les manuscrits seront détruits après publication. Par mesure de sécurité, il convient que les auteurs conservent une copie (imprimée ou reproduite électroniquement) de leurs manuscrits, y compris les graphiques, les dessins et/ou les autres illustrations.

Anthropologica utilise actuellement l'ordinateur personnel de marque IBM (PC), le système d'exploitation sur disque DOS 4.0, et les disquettes à double côté et double densité ou de haute densité de 3-1/2 pouces. Le logiciel de traitement de texte utilisé est le "Word Perfect," version 5.1 ou 6.0; "ASCII" est tout de même acceptable.

Les articles acceptés doivent être révisés de façon conforme au style de rédaction de la revue *Anthropologica* et des instructions données dans *Guide du rédacteur*. Le système des notes infra-paginales n'est pas utilisé, ces dernières doivent être incorporer au texte. S'il est indispensable d'ajouter des notes, il faut alors les reporter à la fin du texte, dans une section précédée du titre Notes, avant les References. Les *remerciements* adressés aux collaborateurs s'insèrent en début de Notes. Il faut apporter un soin méticuleux à la rédaction des références, les placer entre parenthèses et inclure le nom de famille de l'auteur, l'année de publication, et la pagination; par exemple: (Smith 1985), (cf. Lewis 1965), (Rouleau 1964:206), (e.g., Scheffler 1975:230), (Roy et al. 1980) ou (Marshall, Simon, et Williams 1985:110-115). On distingue la pluralité des références, pour une même année, par des lettres, alors que les dates originales de publication figurent entre crochets; par exemple: (Trottier et LeVine 1977a, 1978b:110-115, 1979b:45, 323-325) ou (Kroeber 1952 [1909]).

Les références multiples sont séparées par des points-virgules; par exemple: (Desjardins 1975; Desforges 1980, 1985a; Roy 1895:42-44; voir aussi Smith et al. 1980). Si le nom d'un auteur paraît dans le corps de l'article, il suffit d'indiquer la date de publication et la pagination; par exemple: (1966) ou (1895:249).

Les références citées dans le texte seront reportées par ordre alphabétique et chronologique à la fin de l'article, dans la section References.

References Cited

Lévi-Strauss, Claude

1962 La pensée sauvage. Paris: Plon.

1964 Le cru et le cuit. Paris: Plon.

1967 Les structures élémentaires de la parenté. Paris: Mouton. Publication originale en 1949.

Lévy-Bruhl, Lucien

1985 How Natives Think [1910], translated by Lillian A. Clare. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Paine, Robert, ed.

1977 The White Arctic: Anthropological Essays on Tutelage and Ethnicity. Newfoundland Social and Economic Papers Number Seven. St. John's, Newfoundland: Memorial University of Newfoundland Institute of Social and Economic Research.

Radcliffe-Brown, A.R.

1950 Introduction. *In* African Systems of Kinship and Marriage, edited by A.R. Radcliffe-Brown and D. Forde, pp. 1-85. London: Oxford University Press.

Salisbury, Richard F.

1966 Structuring Ignorance: The Genesis of a Myth in New Guinea. Anthropologica 8:315-328.

Soustelle, Jacques

1955 La vie quotidienne au temps des Aztèques. Paris: Hachette.

Turner, David H., and Gavin A. Smith, eds.

1979 Challenging Anthropology: A Critical Introduction to Social and Cultural Anthropology. Toronto, Ontario: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, Limited.

ANTHROPOLOGICA

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Anthropologica is published twice a year.
GST #R108208786
GST applies to Canadian residents.

1994 Subscription Rates

Individuals	
Inside Canada (GST included)	$40
Outside Canada	U.S. $40
Students (GST included)	$20
CSAA Members and CASCA Members (GST included)	$20
CSAA Student Members and CASCA Student Members (GST included)	$15
Institutions	
Inside Canada (GST included)	$40
Outside Canada	U.S. $40

Subscriptions and address changes should be sent to WLU Press, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3C5.

Cheques in payment of subscriptions should be made out to Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

ABONNEMENTS

Anthropologica est publiée biannuellement.
TPS #R108208786
TPS pour tous résidents du Canada.

Les tarifs d'abonnement 1994

Individus	
Au Canada (inclus la TPS)	40 $
En dehors du Canada	U.S. 40 $
Étudiants (inclus la TPS)	20 $
Membres de la SCAA et de la CASCA (inclus la TPS)	20 $
Membres étudiants de la SCAA et les membres étudiants de la CASCA (inclus la TPS)	15 $
Institutions	
Au Canada (inclus la TPS)	40 $
En dehors du Canada	U.S. 40 $

Les abonnements et changements d'adresse doivent être envoyés à WLU Press, Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo, Ontario N2L 3C5.

Tout chèque pour frais d'abonnement doit être fait à l'ordre de Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

BACK ISSUES / ANCIENS NUMEROS

In-print back issues can be obtained from *Anthropologica* at the above address. Please write for a list.

Certains anciens numéros de la revue sont encore disponibles. Veuillez vous adresser à *Anthropologica* pour obtenir la liste des numéros disponibles.

Out-of-print back issues can be obtained from: / Les numéros épuisés sont disponibles chez :
Swets and Zeitlinger, P.O. Box 830, 2160 SZ, Lisse, Holland

LEGAL DEPOSIT / DEPOT LEGAL

National Library of Canada / Bibliothèque nationale du Canada

INDEXING / REPERTOIRES

Indexed and/or abstracted in: / Répertoriée dans :

Abstracts in Anthropology
America: History and Life (ABC-Clio Press)
Anthropological Literature: An Index to Periodical Articles and Essays
Biological Abstracts
International Bibliography of Periodical Literature
Psychological Abstracts
Point de Repère (formerly *Radar*)
Sociological Abstracts

0003-5459(1994)36:2;1-6