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# Minorities in Canada

## Intercultural Investigations


Dervila Cooke
William Felepchuk
Marie-Claude Gill-Lacroix
Judit Ágnes Kádár
Krisztina Kodó
Chris Kostov
Denisa Krasna
Victoria McGowan
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Anushray Singh
Eric Smith
Elizabeth Trott
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Edited by: Miklós Vassányi, Judit Nagy, Mátyás Bánhegyi, Dóra Bernhardt, Enikő Sepsi



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**Minorities in Canada. Intercultural investigations**

**Edited by Miklós Vassányi, Judit Nagy, Mátyás Bánhegyi, Dóra Bernhardt and Enikő Sepsi**

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# MINORITIES IN CANADA

L'Harmattan Hongrie

# Collection Károli

*Collection dirigée par Enikő Sepsi*

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# MINORITIES IN CANADA

## Intercultural Investigations

Edited by
Miklós Vassányi – Judit Nagy – Mátyás Bánhegyi –
Dóra Bernhardt – Enikő Sepsi

Károli Gáspár University of the Reformed Church in Hungary
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# EDITORS' FOREWORD

The volume *Minorities in Canada – Intercultural Investigations* contains sixteen papers written by scholars based in Canada, Western and Central Europe (Ireland, Spain, Germany, the Czech Republic, Croatia and Hungary).

The multidisciplinary collection offers reflections on ongoing minority-related discourses in Canada from philosophy to healthcare to anthropology to literary studies. Canadian ethnic communities and Indigenous peoples feature as the two main thematic nodes papers center around, reflecting on various inter- and transcultural issues such as the impact of one community on the other, how policy making has affected a particular community, communal memory, in-betweenness, identity shifts, appropriation, problems and conflicts arising from inter- and transcultural encounters as well as suggestions as to how these can be reconciliated.

Written from an idealist metaphysical perspective, Elizabeth Trott's "Multiculturalism as a Discourse in Disguise: A Possible Canadian Solution" scrutinizes the works of Charles Taylor, Will Kymlika, Colin Mooers, and Darryl Leroux in order to proffer a reconciliation of the discourses of Canada as a culture and its current promotion as a multi-cultured state. This reconciliation is provided through the concept of Canada as a place "where the freedom to choose activities, the safety to associate with others through shared interests, and a rational maturity with respect for endless questions, ambiguities and possible shared understanding, are provided."

The papers which follow zoom in on a particular ethnic community or diaspora – immigrants from Russia, the Balkans, Hungary, South and East Asia. Victoria McGowan's "Eastern People on Western Prairies: How Early Eastern European Immigrants Shaped Alberta's Political Future" discusses how the beliefs and cultural practices early 20th century Russian settlers brought with themselves have continued to impact the attitude of Alberta farmers towards education and government. As a corollary, the reader's attention is called to the potentials of assessing the long-term influence of large diaspora groups. Next, Chris Kostov's "The Shifting Identities of the Bulgarian-Canadian Diaspora, 1900–2015" focuses on the identity shifts the Bulgarian diaspora has gone through since the beginning of the 20th century, and what role the homeland and the hostland have played in the process. Nikola

Tutek's "Cultural Appropriation in Two Short Stories by Alice Munro: 'Five Points' and the 'Albanian Virgin' – Echoes of the Balkans" seeks to assess how cultural information shifts travelling from one culture to another and when it is given a fictional dimension. The paper also examines how the resulting cultural constructs about Croatians and Albanians surface in two stories by Alice Munro. Supported by both Canadian and Hungarian archival evidence, in his paper entitled "'The New Mecca of Immigrants': Hungarian Emigration to Canada and the Role of Immigration Propaganda", Balázs Venkovits juxtaposes the Canadian early 20th century and post-WWI "Last Best West" campaign directed at Eastern and Central European immigrants to settle the Prairies and the Hungarian efforts to prevent emigration as reflected by Sámuel Zágonyi's *Kanada egy európai bevándorló megvilágításában* [Canada in the Light of a European Immigrant] and other contemporary sources.

Moving from Europe to the Asian continent, Mária Palla explores the three female protagonists' loyalties to their homeland and hostland in her paper entitled "The South Asian Canadian Diaspora: A Transnational Community and its Literary Representation in Anita Rau Badami's *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?*" Through the context of Badami's novel, the effects of the Komagata Maru incident of 1914, the Partition of India in 1947, and the bombing of Air India flight 182 in 1985 on the diasporic community are also examined. Adopting Bhabha's notion of 'third space' for the mass media, Anushray Singh's "Third Space: An Intercultural Negotiation of South Asian Diaspora in Canada" investigates 'intercultural belongings' and conflicts resulting from cultural encounters in the context of the biggest visible minority group, the South Asian diaspora in Canada. Last in this block, in the Korean-Canadian context, Judit Nagy reflects on the intercultural aspects of courtship, marriage and romance in her paper "Male-female Relationships Across Cultures in Ann Y. K. Choi's *Kay's Lucky Coin Variety* (2016)". In her analysis of Ann Y. K. Choi's novel, she applies Min-sun Kim's cultural communication theory to account for the behaviour of Choi's protagonists.

The next two papers focus on issues related to Quebec. In particular, Dervila Cooke's "Growing Together or Apart? Minorities in Québec Documentary on Immigration and School" focuses on the issue of immigrant schoolchildren in Québec as reflected in Claude Godbout's documentary, *La Génération 101* and other similar cinematographic examples such as Aloisio's *Les Enfants de la Loi 101*, Groulx's *La Classe de Madame Lise*, or Bertucelli's *La Cour de Babel.* The paper is illustrative of the differing perspectives immigrants have on Québec society and its values. In "*Maîtres chez qui?* The Parti Québécois' Cultural Geography and its Impact on the Idea of Indigenous Territorial Sovereignty Following the Quiet Revolution", Marie-Claude Gill-Lacroix highlights how the cultural geography created by the Quiet Revolution impacted the self-determination of Québec's Indigenous inbabitants.

In fact, Gill-Lacroix's paper introduces the reader to the second thematic node of the book: the one dwelling on Native Peoples. Miklós Vassányi's "Second Contact: Patterns of 'Second Encounters' with the Inuit in Early Modernity. An Anthropological Analysis of the Cases of Henry Hudson and William Baffin" provides an anthropological lens to discuss 17th century European second contact with the Greenland and Hudson Bay Inuit. Using sources on Henry Hudson's voyage of 1610-11 and William Baffin's voyage of 1612, this paper is a quest to better understand the nature of the conflicts such encounters entailed. Applying post-colonial theory and drawing on the work of necrogeographical scholars Laqueur and Francaviglia, through case studies from interior BC (Cheslatta Carrier Nation), Southwestern and Southern Ontario (Black communities), William Felepchuk's paper, "Unearthing Racial Necrogeographies: Burial Places and the Dispossession of Minorities in Canada" stresses the importance of minorities' "successfully reconsecrat[ing] spaces of acknowledgement, remembrance, and peace through tending to burial places," in the face of the challenges this endeavour may entail. Eric Smith's "Safely Embracing Culture: The Adequacy of the Cultural Safety Paradigm in Canadian and American Indigenous Healthcare" investigates how health care services for indigenous people could be improved through providers' better knowledge and understanding of indigenous culture(s) beyond the current practice of cultural safety. The last paper in this block is Denisa Krasna's "Jay Treaty: Indigenous Rights of Free Cross-Border Passage between Canada and the USA", which examines how the implementation of the Canada-US border has affected indigenous communities residing in the area, and how Jay Treaty (1794) and the rights granted by it may be interpreted in multiple and interculturally conflicting ways. Importantly, the paper also presents several examples of indigenous cross-border cooperation.

The volume closes with two papers featuring literary reflections on the inter- and transcultural influences affecting Indigenous identity. Written by Krisztina Kodó, "Indigenous Humor and Transcultural Identity Shifts and Mix-ups within the Timeframe of Past, Present and Future in Drew Hayden Taylor's Dramatic Writing" considers four plays, *The Bootlegger Blues* (1991), *The Baby Blues* (1999), *Education is our Right* (1990) and *Toronto at Dreamer's Rock* (1990) and looks into their characters' identity shifts realizing between the dominant and the minority culture. The paper highlights the role humour and Gothic features play in the process in Taylor's works. Finally, mixed ethno-cultural identity construction and indigenous interracial relations lie at the heart of Judit Ágnes Kádár's "The Shifting Sites of Identity Negotiation in Boyden's *Three Day Road*". Her paper analyzes the journeys paved by rituals and ceremonies of transformation, Boyden's protagonists Xavier and Elijah take.

From the above, it shows how the sixteen papers included in the volume realize various aspects of the theme "minorities in Canada - intercultural investigations". It was also the aim of the editors to include a range of academic fields and offer a variety of perspectives on the subject thereby catering for academics and students in Canadian Studies and Cultural Studies alike.

The Editors

# MULTICULTURALISM AS A DISCOURSE OF DISGUISE: A POSSIBLE CANADIAN SOLUTION

Elizabeth Trott[1]

## Abstract

*The idea of Canada has been associated with three different origins: Indigenous, French and British culture. Today the idea of Canada's culture is constitutionally confirmed as multicultural. This paper will argue that the many cultures need an idea of a whole for them to function. The context of this investigation is idealist metaphysics. A brief explanation of dialectical reasoning establishes the meanings of the key terms 'culture' and 'multi-cultures'. The main concerns are the agendas promoted and disguised by the discourses associated with multiculturalism. Four authors will be considered: Charles Taylor, Will Kymlika, Colin Mooers, Darryl Leroux. The argument intends to establish a synthesis between the concept of Canada as a single culture and the current promotion of that concept as a multi-cultured state. A synthesis that resists the exploitation of meanings associated with multiculturalism is the concept of place.*

## Introduction

'Multiculturalism' is a term that has risen to prominence in a shrinking world. When faced with multiple communities, some at odds with each other in terms of first principles, no simple declaration, "we are multicultural," serves as a synthesis for oppositions struggling for self-expression – the presumed manifestation of a functioning, multicultural state. In a CNN interview on 29 September 2019, the former British Prime Minister, David Cameron, referred to Britain and its "cultural uncertainties".[2] Are we promoting myths, ones that disguise a continuing separation of cultures rather than supporting a collaborative community of communities?

[1] Ryerson University.

[2] Elizabeth Trott, Early Canadian Political Culture: Hegelian Adaptations in John Watson in Susan M. Dodd – Neil G. Robertson (eds.), *Hegel and Canada, A Unity of Opposites*, Toronto, University of Toronto, 2018, 163–197.

The *context* of the following paper is idealist metaphysics. The *key terms* are self and other (individual and community), culture and multi-cultures. The term multiculturalism can result in distortions of meaning. My *argument* intends to establish a dialectical synthesis of Canada as a single culture and Canada as multi-cultural.

Canadian culture has three different origins: Indigenous, French and British.[3] Yet today, Canada is understood as multi-cultural. Do the many cultures need an idea of a whole for them to function? Consider the analogy of a vehicle. In the assembly plant, it is a collection of independent objects. It only becomes a functioning invention, with energy and direction. For 'multiculturalism' to function, we need a concept of Canada, a synthesis of multiple cultures and their oppositions that provides energy and gives direction.

## Part 1: The Context of the Argument

Different philosophical first principles are the basis for different metaphysical theories. Examples of theories are idealism, materialism, realism, foundationalism, constructivism, nihilism, etc. Other approaches to first principles are teleology, ontology, phenomenology, theology. Some philosophers simply declare a single phenomenon, such as language, or perception, god, spirit, forces of good and evil as the ground of all further claims about existence, while others promote a single method for establishing truths about what exists, such as analytic, speculative, historical, or logical. With a selected set of first principles in place, philosophers can develop a theory, perhaps about morality, art, or political entities, such as the state. With such a vast range of procedures and options, it is necessary to begin with a first principle.[4]

I will begin with the idealist context: *a commitment to the principle of consciousness, an operating force through which meaningful experience and development of change is generated.*

Within this context, what do the terms culture and multi-culturalism mean? If both terms have no clear meaning, are they susceptible to uses within political, or self- serving agendas?

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See also Elizabeth Trott, Multiculturalism, Charles Taylor, and the Idea of Canada, in Allen Seager – Leonard Evenden – Rowland Lorimer – Robin Mathews (eds.), *Alternative Frontiers*, Montreal, Quebec, Association for Canadian Studies, 1997, 35.

[3] Douglas Verney, *Three Civilizations, Two Cultures, One State,* Durham, NC, Duke University, 1986.

[4] There are disagreements within the academy about what counts as philosophy. Thirty years ago, Plato's *Republic* was required reading in most undergraduate programs. Today, you can do a doctorate in philosophy without ever having read the *Republic*. In some philosophy departments, the *Republic* is regarded as a history book.

## Part 2: Defining the Key Terms: Selves and Others, Culture and Multiculturalism

The fundamental concept that reveals differences between cultures is that of 'self' (or ultimately, the individual). All conscious human beings develop a sense of self. So how do different conceptions of 'self' develop?

### The Self and Conscious Cultural Constructions

Many idealist philosophers consider the concept of the self as an "empty and unreal abstraction." It is "society which fashions us" […] "The true self is a social self."[5] Hegel in *The Phenomenology of Mind* tracks the self as a logical concept from its emergence in the synthesis of the dialectical relation between consciousness and others.[6] Consciousness becomes 'self-aware' through the recognition of its capacities to contemplate self (one's self) as an object of thought. "Consciousness, however, qua essential reality is the whole of this process of passing out of itself qua simple category into individuality and the object, and of viewing this process in the object, cancelling it as distinct, appropriating it as its own, and declaring itself as this certainty of being all reality, of being both itself and its object."[7]

Hegel's logical self gradually transitions into an individual within a community. By individual, he means a being freely able to individuate itself from others. Others are necessary for each self to know itself *as a functioning self* and who it is becoming. The self is realized (actualized) in communal life. "Since the state is mind objectified, it is only as one of its members that the individual himself has objectivity, genuine individuality and an ethical life."[8]

### Others

The Hegelian dialectic of *self* (a logical tool) and *other* suggests that selves are beings who can individuate themselves from other beings. Selves can *know who they are not*. A self becomes an individual as its particular set of properties becomes a package recognizable by others. "The other" as human being is a formal concept to which all developing individuals are dialectically connected through self-reflection and the possibility of self-change.

[5] William J. Mander, Idealism and the True Self, in William Mander – Stamatoula Panagakou (eds.), *British Idealism and the Concept of the Self*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, 289.

[6] J.B. Baillie, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, trans. G.W.F. Hegel, London, George Allen and Unwin, 1966.

[7] Baillie, Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, 278–279.

[8] T.M. Knox, (trans. with notes), *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1962, 156.

Characteristics of individuation within the concept of humanity have changed over time. One only need track the concepts of slave, child, or female human being. What matters is that the dialectic of self and other selves sustains differences without negating similarities. For example, we all need water, though we all do not, by definition, like or respect each other.

Thus, we can be individuated within a context of other conscious human beings. The concept of 'other' needs further clarification for it can extend to infinite possibilities.

## Others as community

'Infinite possibilities' is a conceptual description that unites us, and one used by Leslie Armour in his article, "Economic Rights and Philosophical Anthropology."[9] Armour's research followed the Saumur collective living in the French town Saumur in the 1600s – a collective of Protestant, Catholic, and agnostic academics working together to find common ground. The emerging consensus was that human beings, in recognizing the infinite capacities of God, though presumably beyond our grasp, must have infinite capacities themselves, such as infinite ways of creating orders and structuring the 'other.' Some new concepts for stabilizing social orders beyond the accepted dictates of religious declarations needed promoting. In fearing the economic chaos that could result should religious wars prove pointless, principles of order recognizable beyond a community's beliefs and shared by infinite minds needed to be fostered. For Armour, the claim to economic rights is the basis for humans to develop their infinite possibilities, while recognizing similarities with others emerged from sharing a common need to survive.

Armour's exposition demonstrates that it is possible to recognize our capacity to generate new orders of the human community. To suppress and deny that conceptual possibility would be to deny one's infinite creative problem solving possibilities.

The dialectic of individual and community does not determine the characteristics that comprise a cultural group within the human collective. However, it does suggest that whatever the conceptual orderings of a culture may be, they are not beyond comprehension and alteration. If we can rethink the relations between individuals and God, we can rethink human relations to all discernible experiences in innumerable ways. That means we can recognize the possibility of understanding the cultural orders of other communities.

[9] Leslie Armour, Economic Rights and Philosophical Anthropology, in William Sweet (ed.), *Philosophical Theory and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,* Ottawa, University of Ottawa, 2003, 53–66.

## Culture

Roger Scruton, in *An Intelligent Person's Guide to Modern Culture,*[10] explains that a shared religious figure (e.g. God), shared stories and rituals mark out ways in which cultures are differentiated from one another. This explanation is not one I intend to pursue. It presumes that the world is understood only through the histories and beliefs that we pass from one to another and that realities which are marked out by them are somehow established facts about the world we experience. But we do not share the same world. Consciousness shared by individuals in communities creates multiple worlds and multiple meanings.

I will adopt the definition of culture from *Faces of Reason, Philosophy and Culture in English Speaking Canada 1850–1950*: "As a rule one knows there are two cultures when there are two groups of people who, characteristically and repeatedly, assign different meanings to the same act or event."[11] Consider the following example: The Queen of England arrives by boat in Quebec City and disembarks. What this event means to the separatists and to the royalists living in Quebec will be very different, and their responses will reveal different cultural values. Royalists may welcome the Queen as a symbol of their values and traditions. The Separatists will likely see her as an intruder, possibly denying their freedom to self-determine their future social developments:

> To welcome the Queen in Quebec is to know that others will not welcome her. It is to stand beside dissenters and not push them off the dock when her boat arrives [...] After all, the protesters have made the same effort to participate in the same freedoms, thereby confirming the same unifying worldview – disagreements can co-exist without confrontation and without an adversarial insistence that someone must be right and someone wrong.[12]

Both cultures (royalists and separatists) would agree that a female human being got off a boat. Though they inhabit the same world, different meanings prompting different reactions to that event will occur.

## The concepts that structure meanings

When many people do share the same reactions, their doing so reflects a culture – a set of conceptual tools for determining meanings – with which they identify.

[10] Roger Scruton, *An Intelligent Person's Guide to Modern Culture*, South Bend Indiana, St Augustine's, 2000, 1–3.

[11] Leslie Armour – Elizabeth Trott, *The Faces of Reason, An Essay on Philosophy and Culture in English-Speaking Canada, 1850–1950*, Waterloo, Wilfred Laurier University, 1981, xxiii–xxiv.

[12] Elizabeth Trott, Western Mindscapes: A Philosophical Challenge, *The American Review of Canadian Studies* (Winter 2001), 643.

Although the phenomenon of multiple cultures has existed in the world for thousands of years, the 'self' or 'individual' as concepts for interpreting experience have not always been part of common vocabulary. For the majority today, the 'other' (who we are not) is dictated to us by religion, class structures or economic ideologies. Although the events listed by Scruton can be experienced as shared, their significance is frequently imposed. Often, conscious individual interpretation is limited by threats of punishment by particular culture. Members of a culture can be denied exposure to multiple conceptual worlds.

In some cultures, the 'collective' corresponds to the 'self' and 'others' are the greater mass of human beings. 'Others' are understood as abstract beings, not as a particular culture. The cultural 'collective' as 'self' may regard other human beings, who are not part of the collective 'self', to be unnecessary to the collective 'self's' survival. That these others are human beings – who the collective 'self" is not – may be acknowledged, but, according to this worldview, mere human existence confers no basic rights and therefore violence and indifference are possible 'collective self' responses to non-members.

Often the 'other' is understood as a power, or a goal, a purpose to be followed though never perfectly achieved, a God or religious orthodoxy, a supreme leader, etc. The possibilities of human conscious development are suppressed by fear, promises of an afterlife, beliefs that cannot be challenged or habits that do not encourage questions. Many centuries of narratives and stories associated with a specific culture (a group self) reinforce the characteristics attributed to others. Rational debates or education as the means for developing pluralism do not dominate some cultures' conceptual constructs.

## Adaptive Culture

In its original Latin sense, the word 'culture' means to cultivate (crops). What is needed in our understanding of culture is a provision for change and growth. A culture that does not have the provisions to adapt to change will increasingly impose its constructs on its members, denying them the freedom to learn other possibilities and explore their creative potential for problem solving.

In his *Logic*, Hegel recognizes the need to accommodate change and so he proposes the synthesis of logical binaries, universality and particularity (his principles of affirmation and negation with self and other being examples). The synthesis is the individual, meaning the self with a set of characteristics (particularities).[13]

[13] William Wallace (trans.), *The Logic of Hegel*, Oxford, Oxford University, 1963, originally published 1873. Hegel discusses the formal concepts, Paragraph 164, 294–295. For a more contemporary translation see Jacob Loewenberg (ed.), *Hegel Selections,* New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1957, 125.

What characteristics define a culture that encourages individuation, debate and endless questions?

I propose that the basic concepts of the self's structuring tool kit (to become an individual) are: *freedom* (to pursue interests and possibilities); s*afety*, including a place to learn from mistakes (e.g. the discoveries of scientific medicinal cures may be more effective at saving lives than praying to God); *rational maturity* so as to help others survive. Does the word 'multicultural' really amalgamate these ideas in one coherent policy? We need to explore what meanings can be associated with the word multicultural.

## Culture and Multi-cultures

Cultures are differentiated by the constructs that determine the meaning of events. Class systems with concepts of higher, lower and popular culture are easy to identify.[14] Beyond this, cultures and their conceptual structures are differentiated by clothing styles, types of political rule, economic systems, dietary habits, forms of artistic expression, modes of habitat, communications systems, the significance of science and/or education, religious beliefs, family structure, entertainment, race, languages, and the treatment of other living species. While the above list has the appearance of scholarly clarity, many terms are ambiguous.

Consider the term 'clothing'. There are multiple words used to denote body coverings that protect us from the elements and express the individuated self we want others to recognize: uniforms, sports-wear, costumes are just a few. Are there agreed-upon norms that determine their appropriate use? Suppose I interpret everything as costuming.[15]

Religious clothing in a religious culture can be costumes from the perspective of an atheist culture. Why can't everyone choose the categories of coverings for bodies? Why can't all clothing be recognized as costume? If one culture recognizes the Pope's gowns as sacred symbols, why should that recognition, in a multi-cultural society take priority over another who sees expensive costumes? If the response is one needs to show respect, then equally one needs to respect those who regard all clothing as decorative costuming. Describing the Pope as a man wearing a fancy dress costume is neither criticism nor false. In a multicultural country, this description should be quite acceptable without reprimand or fear of offence.

If we celebrate the freedom to learn and acquire knowledge about ideas, such as costume and clothing, the freedom to share interpretations should exist

[14] Scruton, *Modern Culture*, Chapter 1.

[15] William Shakespeare, in *As You Like It*, wrote: "All the world's a stage and all the men and women merely players." Act II, Scene vii, Line 138.

in every culture. Discussions about far more complicated ideas, such as the existence of God, are possible for every conscious mind. A multicultural nation/state should expect and encourage such discussions not market separations.

Followers of a spiritual leader, adherents to decades of story-telling in multiple forms also contribute to the possibility of multiple interpretations of, for example, what being human means. Judgements about human value and worth will reflect a particular culture's treatment of others. Yet, despite our sharing common ground as conscious minds, differences of meanings for the same event continue to divide us. Even the impact of technological communications, which has moved everyone into closer contact and enabled new multicultural groups with shared interests (e.g. music) to emerge, has not resulted in major changes in historical and religious divisions.

## Part 3: Multicultural Roots of Development and the Canadian Nation State

With different meanings for events, different stories to support belief systems, different value judgements about human beings, can it possibly make sense that such differences can survive as a collective, a culture that is multicultural?

That is exactly what happened in early Canada. A collection of multiple cultures began to gather, each with a clear sense of the other, including attitudes of distrust, hate, ridicule, with each community having its own shared sense of self.

Such arrivals bring with them histories and traditions, but there is no guarantee that this new place will enable them to rely on knowledge from the past to survive in the present. In the early years, the 'other' shifted from the logical category of human beings to the category of powerful natural forces. What individual communities shared was the need to survive in a world with forces of nature with which they had no experience. The 'not self' was unpredictable Nature and survival often meant setting aside cultural differences about whose God was right, and begrudgingly joining others to help everyone involved to survive. Help you could give one day was also help you might need the next day.

Philosophers arriving in Canada at the new universities (some consisting of only a single building for many years) realized the standard interpretations of rational logic, of self and other and the concept of God needed adaptation and adjustment. In their adaptations, we find the roots of Canadian culture. There are many examples. We shall consider one, philosopher John Watson, author of 8 books, over two hundred articles, and Canada's first Gifford Lecturer, 1908.[16]

[16] The second being Charles Taylor, one hundred years later. Armour – Trott, *The Faces of Reason*. See Chapters 7, 8.

## John Watson and Rational Adaptations

John Watson arrived from Scotland at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario in 1872. He was a follower of Kant and Hegel, and a student of Edward Caird. Watson extended the concept of other, from referencing other human beings, to include a complex collection of determinant beings, such as objects, selves and systems. Watson argued that each 'self' is a self in a community (not in opposition to a set of others) and comes to know 'others' as selves in communities. The dialectic of self and other became that of community and communities. When survival is the goal, sharing ideas with communities whom one has been taught to reject, can be necessary, even if one hates having to ask for help. What was even more difficult was the perpetual change of life in early Canada. The increase and interaction of multiple communities was ongoing. If one is adapting, one has to continue to change old habits and learn new ways.

The clashing together of multiple interpretations of reality inspired the philosophers to rethink their educational inheritances. Idealist theorizing served them well.

Watson began to modify the Hegelian dialectic of rational argument to include interpretation, imagination, creativity and speculation. Watson found Hegelian logic too limiting for Canadian settings. When facing a disagreement with multiple and disconnected communities, perhaps one about whose religion should be in schools, or where to build a school, negotiating through rational logic as if opponents would recognize a deductive conclusion, would not always work. In short, improvisation (a somewhat exaggerated version of Hegelian synthesis) was the mental skill required. For example, with full awareness of ongoing religious disputes, Watson did not try to defend Christianity. He set out arguments to reinterpret the concept of God in ways that multiple religious communities could accept.[17] Watson proposed 'rational religion' sustained by an 'invisible church'. Nature, the powerful opposition to all selves in communities could be understood. If God is present in all things, then "the self does not stand opposed to nature, because nature is recognized to be a mode in which reason, as the essence of the self, is expressed."[18]

Watson's students not only travelled to Ottawa to help set up the nation-state and the civil service, they also travelled to remote communities where one building served as the gathering location for multiple religions on the weekend,

[17] E. Trott, F.H. Bradley and the Canadian Connection, in James Bradley (ed.), *Philosophy After F.H. Bradley,* Bristol, Thoemmes, 1996. This article explores Watson on religion, 57–72.

[18] John Watson, *The Interpretation of Religious Experience*, the Gifford Lectures, 1910–12, Part Second Constructive, Glasgow, Maclehose, Vol. 2, 1912, 128.

and as the local school the rest of the week.[19] His Queen's graduates, before specific locations of worship were built, had to imagine ways to talk about God and find words to comfort many different religious followers sitting together.

The young teachers/preachers and political servants persisted, knowing that "Increasingly, a rich system of possible solutions would enable us to overcome the most obstinate disagreements."[20] Their job was not easy, and required creative endeavours, not memory work or logic.

## Multi-cultures: Can they be a United Community of Communities?

What happens to the uneasy coalition of cultures should a national focus emerge as the 'other' against which one can differentiate oneself? Resistance to a central political focus stems from the negative impacts a locus of power and control can have. Certainly, there have been multiple books (and more are being written) about the repressive forces of early Canadian political identity and cultural classes, for example, the frightful English landlords and the Scottish iron grip on banks, universities and transportation systems. The treatment of the Indigenous communities stands as a permanent stain on Canada's reputation as a collection of nice people. Canadians have been as nasty as many others.[21] But Canada has also emerged with a national culture that supports the common good, the needs of survival (health care), and sustains the apologetic politeness that comedians worldwide find funny. What happens to a focus on the idea of Canada in a multicultural state?

[19] Stephen Leacock, Canadian comedic writer, Professor of political science, and an acquaintance of Canadian philosopher John Clark Murray at McGill University wrote, the Rival Churches of St. Asaph and St Osoph, in a collection of his stories *Arcadian Adventures with the Idle Rich*, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1989, first published 1914. The preacher of one church who was also a philosophy professor, concocted "a mixture of St Paul, with Hegel, three parts to one for his Sunday sermon, and one part to three for his Monday lecture", 137.

[20] Trott, Early Canadian Political Culture, in *Hegel and Canada*, 177.

[21] Our first Prime Minister, John Macdonald, a Scot was creative, but not nice. An alcoholic and a visionary, his mission was to build the CPR to unite the country, and he took down anything in his way. He imported 17,000 Chinese labourers to help build it in very harsh conditions with very little pay. Over 600 deaths were documented. No doubt there were plenty of others. Using cheap Chinese labour was considered normal ("*The Ties That Bind*," Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 2010, https://www.mhso.ca/tiesthatbind/ChineseRailWorkers.php [accessed 17 July 2020]). Canadians imported over a thousand more Chinese during the First World War to clean trenches. See also, Dan Black, *Harry Livingstone's Forgotten Men: Canadians and the Chinese Labour Corp. in the First World War*, Toronto, James Lorimer Ltd., 2019.

## The Conflicts that Derailed a Good Thing

Until the late 1960's, Canadians lived their lives, fought in the wars involving the British Empire, and followed hockey on CBC radio. There was no need to declare a Canadian identity. There were multiple and disparate individuals and groups managing to work things out, arguing, complaining and grumpily resolving issues. The discourse of the late-nineteen sixties, the Vietnam War with participants and resistors, the student rebellions in Britain, Europe, and North America, and the publicity surrounding the *individual* in the USA, began to have journalists and others in Canada asking who we really were.[22]

Of course, immigrants had been coming to Canada since the late-fifteen hundreds, but the social tensions of the sixties escalated the rising awareness that a world was out there. The *idea* of Canada began to receive publicity. (Canada finally had a national flag by 1965.) By the mid-sixties we were a country that valued questions, rational debate, *freedom* to express differences. The existence of secure places – *safety* – to make mistakes, and learn from them, such as schools, universities, libraries, academic conferences, etc., the escalating discourses – *rational maturity* – about the differences between Canada and the USA inspired some academics to more clearly address the concept of Canada as a cultural determiner of decisions and progress. In the academy, philosophers weighed in, though poets, novelists and journalists had been more vocal in reflecting on Canada and the character of its diverse peoples for previous decades.[23] The field of concern for some philosophers was the early theories written in Canada that would give insight to the claim that there was a Canadian identity reflected in the scholarly writings of early academics. In 1952, Professor John Irving, Victoria College, University of Toronto, was the first to note philosophical traditions in Canada.[24]

After the sixties, other philosophers began to look into the question of identity. A. B. McKillop, an intellectual historian, published *A Disciplined Intelligence: Critical Inquiry and Canadian Thought in the Victorian Era,* 1979, the first major book about the philosophical/religious roots of nineteenth century theorizing in Canada.[25] *The Faces of Reason*, published in 1981, was followed by the *Idea of Canada* by Leslie Armour in 1981. Douglas Verney,

[22] Ayn Rand published *The Fountainhead*, Indianapolis – New York, Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1943. The book hit a powerful trajectory in the 60's with identity movements and the American celebration of the individual. Although the press is no longer operative, *The Fountainhead* remains a cult classic for supporters of individualism.

[23] See the stories of Stephen Leacock and the poetry of Robert Service.

[24] John Irving, *Philosophy In Canada: A Symposium*, Toronto, University of Toronto, 1952; The Development of Philosophy in Central Canada from 1850 to 1900, *Canadian Historical Review*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (Sept. 1950).

[25] A. B. McKillop, *A Disciplined Intelligence: Critical Inquiry and Canadian Thought in the Victorian Era*, Montreal, McGill Queen's University, 1979.

political theorist, tracked the emergence of Canadian political identity in *Three Civilizations, Two Cultures, One State*, 1986. The 'other' for Verney, when identifying Canadian political culture, is not Britain but America. "On the other hand, to note Canada's culture is to become aware of the differences between Canadians and Americans."[26] The philosophical roots of Canadian culture inspired others in different disciplines to make their own inquires. A few are noted: R. Murray Schafer, composer, *On Canadian Music* 1984; Robin Mathews, literature and Canadian Studies, *Canadian Identity* 1988; Bruce Elder, film and culture studies, *Image and Identity: Reflections on Canadian Film and Culture* 1989; *Canadian Music, Issues of Hegemony and Identity*, edited Beverly Diamond and Robert Witmer 1994.[27]

Present in all of the above is the idea that a national cultural identity has to surpass particular differences and progress towards some common ground. Members of particular cultures have to recognize the 'other' which defies their experiences. Murray Schafer writes of his music, which he identifies as Canadian music, as being shaped not by the traditions of the great composers but by the land, by nature and the power of the seasonal change. These are unifying 'others,' forces greater than individuals. Surviving is never a simple exercise of individual power in the face of "the trees and lakes and the snows of Canada."[28]

The sixties also saw an influx of Americans teaching at Canadian universities. Douglas Verney explains: "The peak of American cultural penetration occurred in the 1960s when the universities were expanding and paying particular attention to the social sciences. American books, journals, research methods, students and professors flooded into Canada."[29] The curriculum changed to reflect trends in America. The idea that there might be reasons to pursue Canadian identity was foreign to the Americans, they had their own philosophical culture to establish in Canada. Books and articles by scholars, curious about Canada and its cultural identity, were ignored.[30] In 1971, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau declared Canada a multicultural state, and the declaration was embedded in sec. 27 of the Constitutional Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982. By the 1990s, interest in Canadian identity was drowned out.

[26] Verney, *Three Civilizations,* 11.

[27] See Bibliography.

[28] R. Murray Schafer, *On Canadian Music*, Bancroft, ON, Arcana editions, The Porcupine Quill, 1984, 93.

[29] Verney, *Three Civilizations*, 7.

[30] During the course of doing several years' research in the nineteen seventies for *the Faces of Reason*, I was able to view past curricula in philosophy offered by many universities in Canada. The presence of former Canadian philosophers included in a curriculum, even as recent as the mid twentieth century, over four to five years simply vanished.

## Culture and Multiculturalism in the Academy

The academy, including philosophers, began to seriously ask about the multicultural identity of Canada. We shall consider four different responses to issues raised by the Constitutional declaration that we are multicultural: Charles Taylor, Will Kymlika, Colin Mooers, Darryl Le Roux.[31] In their writings we find some possible roots of deception and disguise in the idea of multiculturalism.

Charles Taylor published his book, *Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition* in 1992.[32] It was the first major response to the multicultural discourse that was gripping newspapers, political speeches, and future curriculum foci. Taylor used Hegel's principle of recognition[33] to support a policy to deal with increasing complications North America was facing with escalating arrivals.

Taylor identified two different ways the concept of 'multiculturalism' can play out: one, as a collective of multiple cultures, and two, as a single concept supporting multiple cultures. Taylor supports the former interpretation of 'multiculturalism', arguing that with good will we can find a way to get along. He acknowledges that cultures have historical longevity and have provided multiple interpretations of what is of worth or of value over centuries.[34] He urges a "fusion of horizons" – with reference to Hans-Georg Gadamer –, in order to find broader contexts within which to understand cultural difference when referring to what is good.[35] Taylor thinks that all cultures will have something we can admire and respect even though there could be much

[31] These are selected to illustrate different kinds of disguise that multiculturalism began to foster. They are in no way exhaustive of the considerable literature on the topic as Amazon books will confirm.

[32] Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism and the Politics of Recognition,* Princeton, Princeton University, 1992.

[33] Taylor cites Chapter four of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*, A.V. Millar (trans.) Oxford, Oxford University, 1977. Recognition through the 'master – slave' analogy, frequently understood to refer to two separate selves, can be misleading. The earliest translation by J.B Baillie, *The Phenomenology of Mind*, London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1931, uses 'lordship – bondage' and interprets Hegel as explaining how the self comes to know itself. Hegel does not address other selves until he has established reason as the source of active engagement with things. Recognition of other selves occurs much later in the book with the recognition of the power of conscious activity. Other selves come into being for consciousness, in communities. Baillie, section C *Reason*, 373–382.

[34] Ibid., 70.

[35] Ibid., 71.

we abhor. Should one assume that everything in a culture could be rejected, he calls such an assumption one "of supreme arrogance."[36] Still, there is a weakness in Taylor's extended paper.[37]

Taylor does not lay out criteria for what is to be admired. When encountering clitoral circumcision and stoning rabbits to death, how much do we need to know about a culture's theories and world views to appreciate that such practices might not be worthy of moral approval? Taylor wants to defend the canons of Western democracy, but assumes they are self-evident. How do we convey that they are obvious truths? An endless conversation amongst cultures will probably lead nowhere unless the principles of rational discussion and the possibility of modifying conceptual interpretations can be accepted by the discussants.[38]

The recognition of difference will not create paths to problem-solving. Should the promotion of constructs for debate be mandatory in any classroom, such as freedom of expression, logical coherence, shared methods of problem solving, i.e. objective criteria in determining good arguments independently of seniority? Could one specific culture from the multi-cultures – all assumed to have equal status – judge the above curriculum criteria to be the products of arrogance, intolerance, and worthy of condemnation?

Taylor shuts down his exploration with the naïve position that we will find ways to get along, once we recognize each other as having a distinct culture. But recognition, as in saying hello, does not guarantee that one culture will not strive to overcome another.

Taylor's book is an example of sophisticated wishful thinking.

### Will Kymlika: The Disparaging International Response

Will Kymlika, philosopher at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario took up the challenge in 1995 with the publication of *Multiculturalism Citizenship.*[39] His books on multiculturalism, which have been translated into numerous languages, provide arguments that we can accommodate the gathering of cultures within the confines of liberal democracy in Canada. Kymlika established an international reputation as a desired theorist with government consultations. He was convinced that multiculturalism would be recognized as a welcome re-conception of issues developing from increased movements of cultures in the world. His more recent book on multiculturalism *Multicultural Odysseys* (2007) reviews the combined efforts of international

[36] Ibid., 72–73.
[37] Trott, Multiculturalism, Charles Taylor, and the Idea of Canada, *Alternative Frontiers,* 35–50.
[38] All of Canada's early philosophers promoted these skills.
[39] Will Kymlika, *Multicultural Citizenship*, Oxford, Clarendon, 1995.

agencies to establish universal rights. The belief that we need a discourse of concepts such as rights, equality and justice, freedom, self-determination and autonomy has led to the creation of innumerable agencies proposing to level the cultural playing field a little bit more.

But Kymlika also acknowledges that we have not made much progress. No one has a shared understanding of what an indigenous or minority group is. They do not share a similar understanding of multicultural, nor do people have shared criteria for identifying minorities. The discourse of multiculturalism has had to navigate, "diversity politics, liberal pluralism, pluralist constitutionalism, plural-culturalism and more."[40] Where people seem to exhibit a motive to be part of developing missions that would direct change, resistance to change is considerable. Cultures with power fear losing it. Cultures with massive support from members do not want competition. The trade-off between justice and security undermines whatever fancy words philosophers invent.

Kymlika also acknowledges that the categories of multiculturalism, with words such as minorities and rights, provide no suggestions for penetrating entrenched political orders. "There has been no serious attempt to codify cultural rights for immigrants at the international level."[41]

In short, the multicultural movement will only have universal relevance and generate change if we recognize "generic minority rights as the floor of a larger framework of liberal multiculturalism that relies on a complex set of targets and conditions."[42] Kymlika concludes: "… that the long term prognosis for the global diffusion of liberal multiculturalism is poor indeed."[43] One can only conclude that Canada's international public persona, which is being flaunted energetically at home, is not regarded by other nations as a model to follow. Few believe that such a policy can become an inspiring idea for others in the changing world.

### Colin Mooers: Disguising the Controls of Capital Success

Perhaps marketing a multicultural persona opens the door for other aspirations associated with liberal societies, i.e., a participation in market economies. According to Colin Mooers, the culture of those seeking profits – the market culture – have found opportunities by exploiting the slogans and promises of multicultural discourse.

In "Multiculturalism and the Fetishism of Difference", Colin Mooers observed: "There were very few voices in the immigrant communities that called on the government to initiate a policy of multiculturalism. Their main concerns

[40] Will Kymlika, *Multicultural Odysseys*, Oxford, Oxford University, 2007, 17–18.
[41] Ibid., 123.
[42] Ibid., 315.
[43] Ibid., 316.

had to do with racism, low paying jobs, affordable housing and other problems associated with settlement in a new country."[44] The nation state needed to pay more attention not to cultural differences, but to the roots of growth and development regardless of one's background. Efforts under way to develop and promote the idea of Canada were overridden by the marketing ploys at work. The topic for promotion was 'multiculturalism' and the market took note.

Capitalism purportedly offers a clean slate beyond the biases and cultural specifics of multiculturalism. Surely an economic system should be able to level the playing field. Race, gender, culture and whatever god you believe in should not be factors in the markets. Labour and produce work according to simple rules, supply and demand should offer equal chances of success to those who participate. Only merit in performance should distinguish participants. Or so we are led to believe. Colin Mooers argues otherwise.

An intense focus on multicultural difference objectifies difference in a way that disguises racism and other social inequalities. As long as difference is the focus, it masks the underlying reality of the individual's life and culture. Cultural activities, products, and indeed any marketable contributions, perhaps playing on a team, or writing for a newspaper, become a focal point of attention – a fetish, Mooers claims, of marketability. In short, marketing 'multiculturalism' as a visible and necessary component of a healthy capitalist society condemns a person to difference by celebrating the appearance, and that celebration is considered to be sufficient recognition and status.

The reality is that members of cultures, now regarded as stereotyped commodities, are denied the opportunity to seek similarities with those they live with, but are reminded endlessly of their difference. Freedom of choice regarding who to be and not to be is denied by the perpetual ploys of the discourse of multiculturalism. Should one decide to see oneself as a Canadian, the hype surrounding difference makes that wish extremely forlorn. Should one sense that the marketed form of multiculturalism is disguising racism one is even less able to make a case:

> Multiculturalism thus claims to have resolved the problem of 'difference' while, like the neurotic, it represses its own terrible secret – that beneath the veil of multicultural equality lies more systemic forms of racialization. The fetishism of multiculturalism, as with that of the commodity, involves a forgetting of origins; meanings are detached from their sources and hypostasized. Subjects are invited to invest in and define themselves in terms of these reified forms. As such, multiculturalism is an ideology of denial. It asks the oppressed to make an affective investment in the reified ethnicities it establishes and to forget those bodily memories of racism which rear up from everyday life but which now find no

[44] Colin Mooers, Multiculturalism and the Fetishism of Difference, *Socialist Studies,* Vol. 1, No. 2 (2005), 96.

> place in the official transcript of the public sphere. To those oppressed by racism it says, in effect, 'your difference is now acknowledged; you are part of the colourful tapestry of the nation'; and, implicitly, 'stop whining about racism'.[45]

Mooers continues:

> Thus, on the one hand, multiculturalism represents a kind of 'spectacular' consciousness in the thrall of some reified forms of ethnicity, culture and representations of the self which arise from its fetishistic form; yet it also contains intimations of its opposite, a different kind of social understanding on the part of the oppressed, which signals that everything is not quite right with the world.[46]

These are extreme conclusions to suggest that the policy has been co-opted by capitalism and that the differences between cultures are fetishized because they are visual and able to become marketing flags of social acceptability. However, not every culture is differentiated visually. The Doukhobors and the Mennonites are defined by creeds and lifestyle habits. The former group has, in the past, marched naked to make protests; the latter has often insisted on slowing traffic by driving horses and buggies on main roads. Both have been subject to oppression and profiling. The market does not seem to have found commodity potential to disguise this oppression. Its purported indifference to the particularities of cultures may disguise bigotry.

There is one other obvious omission amongst the multi-cultures that generate fetishisms about 'difference'. For all the efforts made to accommodate race, religions, visual rituals and costumes, no recognition of atheists has inspired market commodification. In fact, atheists receive little attention from anyone. Children who do not have a particular religion in their family are expected to learn about many religions, their festivals and customs. Yet, who pays attention to their concerns? Can one worry about plants and animals, family and friends and not believe in a god? To assume that every child arriving in a classroom comes from a particular culture with a religion neglects and undermines acceptance of those children who may come from atheist homes.

Mooers' capitalist transfigurations of multicultural differences into commodified disguises of oppression seem too focused on racial differences. He does alert us to the complexity of meanings now being generated. The danger of the market is that it will determine what a culture appears to be, leaving little room for members of a culture to seek alternate cultural connections or to be a developing individual and move away from their culture towards change. Market control assumes you want to remain who you are. The slogans about multiculturalism now have resulted in it being perfectly

[45] Ibid., 48.
[46] Ibid., 49.

acceptable to wear each other's culturally specific clothing and enjoy each other's celebrations and parades.[47] The publicity surrounding the appearance of successful shared worlds can cover up the real difficulties of worlds with different constructs for their concepts of interpretation.

## Cultures and Historical Descent

Understanding the nation of Canada as of one of multi-cultures faces a further complication, the misrepresentation of the Indigenous peoples. Although the term Indigenous seems to suggest that all groups prior to the arrival of the Europeans (the English and the French) can be regarded as one cultural identity or race, Indigenous people living on the continent had (and still have) many different racial origins, customs, skills of survival, rituals, symbols and spiritual guidance. Multiple languages exist among the different Indigenous cultures. Not all groups co-existed easily; lifestyles and skills marked out turf that required defending. Some were nomadic, such as the people of the foremost Artic regions, who moved as seasons and food supplies changed. Others remained in permanent locations. Some original cultures survived on the land in the northeast corners of Labrador and others farmed south-western parts of Ontario.[48]

Amalgamating the various collectives under one label, Indigenous, masks their differences and detracts from the fact that both violence and efforts to learn and change were part of the history of original multi-cultures in Canada.[49] Why are the various Indigenous communities not considered

[47] A former student of mine at Ryerson University, Riley Kucheran, with Indigenous cultural roots is currently creating a successful fashion line of clothing in Toronto with references to his own background.

[48] In 1952, the Canadian Government in order to increase populations in the artic areas of Canada moved indigenous people living in Labrador to locations in the North West Territories. The government mistakenly assumed that various groups in the north had the same survival skills. Arctic cultures were different and many of those who were moved died that winter as they had not the skills to build shelters nor hunt on the open sea. See Sarah Bonesteel, *Canada's Relationship with the Inuit: A History of Policy and Programme Development,* Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, Canada, 2008. This book is no longer in print but is available online. *The Trail of the Black Walnut*, McClelland and Stewart, 1957, was written by G. Elmore Reaman, a former professor at Waterloo Lutheran College and the University of Waterloo, Ontario. He tracked the arrival of various cultures, in particular the Pennsylvanians, into the southwestern parts of Ontario in the late 1700s and years following. The immigrants encountered cultures already living there that were farming, developing maple syrup, and using available natural resources to build permanent lodges and shelters, 158. These Indigenous cultural groups were quite willing to share knowledge, and learn about new farming tools from the immigrants arriving from Pennsylvania. Mutual support was shared frequently without fear or violence. 49, 79–81.

[49] Not all agree with a recognition of different Indigenous cultures. In her CBC Massey Lectures, *All Our Relations, Finding the Way Forward*, Tanya Talaga, strongly supports addressing Indigenous issues collectively. The lectures are available online and in print, Toronto, House of Anansi, 2018.

independent cultures in Canada?[50] By grouping them together (as members of one Indigenous culture) we assume that affirming that category will be sufficient cultural recognition. That portrayal can disguise particular cultural differences and become a focal point for others to exploit.

## Darryl Leroux: Multiculturalism and the potential for exploitation

Darryl Leroux gives us an example of the decline of multicultural protections that Charles Taylor thought good will would ensure. Leroux, in *Distorted Descent, White Claims to Indigenous Identity*, documents the evolution of race shifting in various parts of Canada, meaning the movement of many white persons towards the adoption of Indigenous identity. The reasons include a desire to belong, to have something that separates them from others who, like themselves, are poor, not well- educated and who struggle to survive. Among some race shifters "kinship aspirations are at the forefront of a strategic self-making process".[51] Leroux documents over 100,000 persons in the Maritimes and surrounding areas of Quebec who have researched and paid others to help find roots so that they can claim Indigenous identity. Such individuals will enjoy benefits from the increasing support the Canadian government provides for Indigenous groups. Not only is there comfort to be found in having and knowing particular roots, race shifting also can disguise hidden agendas. "In three large regions of Quebec, the logic of lineal descent has emboldened individuals to claim an Indigenous identity as a strategy to oppose Indigenous land claims."[52]

Now the policy of multiculturalism, which encourages recognition of cultural differences and claims to overturn historical injustices, has enabled cultural identity to be a weapon in denying such agendas to others. If the Indigenous peoples are not united in their claims for recognition, they stand on weaker ground. Grouping them as Indigenous has weakened their claims to cultural identity that multiculturalism is supposed to ensure.

Multiculturalism is a policy that disguises an arena of excuses for those seeking advantage. If cultures, even adopted ones, are only looking to further self-interest, and not looking to promote a greater good for all, then the original

[50] A conference I attended in 2017 on Indigenous education revealed that there was striking differences across Canada as to what these early cultures expected from the educational systems. No single plan would reach the needs and expectations of all Indigenous peoples. Some groups in remote communities were asking for on-site language instruction. Others had already developed apps for students to access on i-phones to help learn their languages. *The World's Indigenous Peoples Conference on Education*, Metro Convention Centre, Toronto, 24–28 July 2017.

[51] Darryl Leroux, *Distorted Descent, White Claims to Indigenous Identity*, Winnipeg, University of Manitoba, 2019, 198.

[52] Ibid., 215.

conception of peaceful co-existence has been eroded. If multiculturalism is based on commitments to equality and rights for all cultures, we still need to be sure that all cultures recognize the words 'equality' and 'equal rights' as relevant to their vocabularies. Not all cultures do. Equality could apply to men in a culture where women do not have the same status as individuals but are viewed more as part of a collective self. By assuming that equality has a clear meaning, such as being treated in the same way before the law, we may be interfering with a culture's right to freely express its different interpretations of equality.[53] Perhaps the greatest hurdle for multicultural policy will be the multiple meanings generated by selves and others, or individuals and communities.

## Part 4: Towards a Conclusion

### Reflection on Being Canadian

This paper began with a commitment to idealist metaphysical theory as a source of multiple meanings that can be associated with shared recognitions of events. The proposed context of analysis was the dialectical logical structure of 'self and other'. Once this logical ground of experience is transformed into particular dialectical relations of different cultures, differences in conceptual sources of meanings can be detected. Examples of different interpretations for fundamental concepts assumed to be self- evident were given (e.g. equality) and the difficulty of establishing agreement between cultures became evident.

Philosophers played a major role in working out the dialectical structure of Canada, a country of multiple cultures, but with a sense of unity.[54] A challenge to the idea of Canada as a unity was the declaration that Canada is a multicultural country. Four different responses were examined, all of which together revealed weaknesses in the concept of a country's identity as multicultural.

The dialectic of particulars and a conceivable whole requires a synthesis that can support disparate cultural meanings and sustain the 'other' – the idea of Canada.

[53] Even the concept of law has multiple meanings throughout the world. See Adda B. Bozeman, *The Future of Law in a Multicultural World,* Princeton, Princeton University, 1971. "… Cultures are different because they are associated with different modes of thought. In fact, it even appears that the very word 'thinking' is likely to vary from one cultural tradition to the next." 14. Bozeman urges "a comparison of the different tables of enduring culturally preferred values, words and meanings and then to the formulation of an internationally shared vocabulary capable of assuring clarity in discourse." 33.

[54] John Watson was the example of such efforts.

On its own, 'multiculturalism' has no principle of operation that keeps the collective of cultures in a multicultural state together, or prevents multiple cultures from being exploited. Some have recognized this deficiency.[55]

*20 years of Multiculturalism, Successes and Failures*,[56] has several articles declaring there is no idea around which people in Canada can rally. Allan Smith, "Defining Canada in the Postmodern Age" writes, "there is no idea, no orthodoxy, no universalizing discourse in terms of which an *imperium* of language, ethnicity, culture discourse or race can be imposed." He claims that "the open, the accommodative and essentially indefinable" is at the heart of a way of seeing the world in Canada.[57] How does the 'essentially indefinable' promote an inter-cultural sharing of meanings? Locking cultures into their original identities, with their own meanings for terms never open to modification or sharing, can land one in communication difficulties. Encouraging them to identify with a hyphenated culture such a Jamaican-Canadian or, East Indian-Canadian narrows their 'horizons of meaning' in terms of growth and development. Hyphenated identities encourage separation between cultures. Rather than gradually finding out what we all share in common, cultures live with a discourse of difference and are rewarded for remaining distinct.

Richard Ogmundson opposes this interpretation of Canadian multiculturalism. He identifies the rejection felt by those who do identify with being Canadian, in "On the Right to be a Canadian."[58] Not everyone understands their identity to be hyphenated. For some, that characteristic would require a considerable list.[59] Ogmundson points out that by not having a hyphenated identity one can be regarded as "chauvinist, reactionary, racist and bigoted." A sense of betrayal by the government can follow. He asks: "Where can you go and what do you do if you just want to be a Canadian?"[60]

Neil Bissoondath echoes his concerns in his book *Selling Illusions*: "Multiculturalism on the face of it, insists on diversity – and yet a case can be made that it is a diversity that depends on vigorous conformity. Trading in the exotic, it views the individual not as a member of society at large but as a unit of a

[55] An article, "Why I have had it with Multiculturalism," appeared in the *Globe and Mail*, 5 October 1994.

[56] Stella Hryniuk (ed.), *20 Years of Multiculturalism: Successes and Failures,* Winnipeg, University of Manitoba, St John's College, 1992.

[57] Allan Smith, Defining Canada in the Postmodern Age, in Hryniuk (ed.), *20 Years*, 252.

[58] Richard Ogmundson, On the Right to be a Canadian, in Hryniuk (ed.), *20 Years,* 45–55.

[59] The author of this present article would require four different cultural identities.

[60] Ogmundson, On the Right, 47. When my son was in public school in the 1980s, a day of multi-cultures celebration happened in the gym. I requested, and was denied, space for Canadian culture. I arrived anyway, set my card table in a corner with a sign, objects, poetry, quotes, and pictures, and drew the largest crowds.

smaller group ethnically, racially or culturally defined."[61] Access to familiar foods and music is, he says, an "insidious trade-off." … "It is the trade-off of the market place, an assurance of creature comforts in exchange for playing the ethnic game,"[62] one which produces divided loyalties and disguises measures to ensure that separation, segregation, racism, can continue.

Bissoondath writes that culture is knowledge. A body of knowledge, learned through stories and study, requires no particular location, no costumes, nor conformist demands. Knowledge can be established beyond mental models: "…it can be carried safely through space and time in the capricious pocket of the mind… the body of knowledge, then, that no one can even steal or play with or manipulate into the service of social engineering. Personal knowledge and sensitivities are media for growth. They are not the basis for public policy."[63]

Among immigrants, there is no common ground behind their reasons for seeking admission to Canada. Some may immigrate to find a location in which to remain the same (in a sense, refuse even hyphenation), with no thought of recognizing the cultural mosaic of which they have become a part.[64] As long as there is no strong promotion of options for change, lest teachers and politicians offend someone, and with market forces reminding them of who they are, new arrivals may be being pressured to remain as they are.

Others may immigrate to find the freedom to abandon their historical narratives and recreate themselves in new ways. All newcomers need to know that they can change their understanding of what culture means upon arrival in Canada. Culture can be understood as 'a body of knowledge.' Questions, discussion, and change are possible; no one will deny them or their children the freedom to ask questions. That is what the right to free expression means. Free expression concerns knowledge – understood to be a developing public good not a market commodity, in Canada. Once the concept of culture is understood, not as a set of inherited mandates, but as knowledge, able to be shared with others, adaptations are possible.[65] Culture as knowledge that can be learned is available to all for debate. Everyone has the right to

[61] Neil Bissoondath, *Selling Illusions, the Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada,* Toronto, Penguin Books, 1994, 214.

[62] Ibid., 214.

[63] Ibid., 214.

[64] In 13–16 November 2019, The American Canadian Studies Association held their biennial conference in Montreal. A presentation, by Janet Mancini Billson, Group Dimensions International, was titled "The Kurdish in Canada: Struggling for Identity, Peace and Freedom". Kurdish immigrants wanted to keep their customs, treat women and children as they always have, but in freedom and peace. There was no acknowledgement of multi-cultures or of being in a new country.

[65] Not even scientific discourse is beyond interpretation. Roger S. Jones, *Physics as Metaphor*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota, 1982, explores the number of everyday scientific concepts that we rely on, and how much they are a reflection of metaphoric interpretations.

ask questions, to expect a safe environment for doing so, and to acquire knowledge about differences, similarities and change. Asking whether God exists is a legitimate question in school, in the playground, on the street or on a canoe trip.

### Is There an Idea of Canada, A Canadian Identity?

Leslie Armour wrote *the Idea of Canada* in 1981, just before the multicultural declaration of Pierre Trudeau and the challenges to the idea of Canada were underway. Armour concludes: "We also need to make sure that the Canadian traditions – in music, in literature, in philosophy, in the social sciences – are seriously pursued in every institution."[66] This has not happened as a dominant policy.[67] Can an idea of Canada and Canadian identity find expression?

If we return to the logic of Hegel, a 'self' and a 'not-self,' that which enables us to know our own distinctions, we will be locked down in a dialectical opposition. Hegel also developed the concept of a synthesis, 'being and not-being' required 'becoming.' 'Self and other' required community.

We need a synthesis between concepts of multicultural differences and Canadian identity that can accommodate different meanings while providing for conceptual stability and change. We need to adapt the idea of Canadian identity to accommodate differences, to rethink its traditional references, perhaps to abandon the idea of 'self and other,' and consider identity through concepts of possibilities, not descriptions.

Identity can suggest personal characteristics, such as developing a character with predictable responses. In the American identity, the individual reigns supreme. Identity can be associated with events (e.g., singing in a choir), and with activities (e.g., playing the guitar or making sushi). Identity can be fostered by careers, (e.g., being a physicist, or an actor), or with a type of product (e.g., craft beer made in Canada). A common bond is felt with those who share agendas and interests. Canadian craft beer lovers are just as much "at home" in small town

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Luciara Nardon, *Working in a Multicultural World*, Toronto, University of Toronto, 2017, 86–89, focuses on intercultural connections in business and the challenge of multiple meanings.

66 Leslie Armour, *The Idea of Canada, and the Crisis of Community,* Ottawa, Steel Rail Publishing, 1981, 140–142.

67 During my final three or four years of teaching at Ryerson I often asked my students questions about Canada. They were not uniformly newcomers, many were second and third generation of their particular culture, and had come though the Ontario education system. The results were disheartening. Not a single student could name a former Prime Minister, a major river, a town north of Barrie, Ontario. They did not know how big Canada was. They could not identify a muskox, or name a Canadian author, musician or musical group, poet, painter, dancer or dance group. They could not identify John A. Macdonald, a loon or fiddlehead, nor could they name the provinces and territories. Well, enough, though I could go on.

British Columbia as they are in downtown Toronto. Understanding identity in these ways crosses boundaries of race and religion, cultural hyphenations and animosities that some cultures continue to promote.

Sharing similar experiences, not focusing on differences, can begin to generate common grounds for some meanings when participating in the same event, such as hiking in Canada's national parks, or discussing how to make pierogies. Exposed to subtle adaptations in meanings, we learn more options for understanding activities and events. When identity can be connected to freely chosen activities, a synthesis for uniting multiple different activities is required, and that would be a sense of place.

## Conclusion – the Metaphysical Concept of Place

To understand the concept of place, idealist metaphysics is once again helpful. "By place, I mean a construct of ideas that marks out a sense of self, and opportunity for personal agency. We identify places visually, teleologically and through stories… the location of a significant mental, emotional, physical, or spiritual event (usually some combination of the above) occurs."[68]

The event contributes to our sense of identity and its location becomes a place. Think of the number of expressions regarding place: to know one's place, to take a place, find a place, feel out of place, etc.

Place has played a role in multiple inquiries and cultures.[69] *The Dance of Person and Place, One Interpretation of American Indigenous Philosophy* explores the role of place in many indigenous cultures.[70] Places are defined by performative dance and recitations. To a person not knowing these cultural places they might only see some trees or a rock. Lack of knowledge has caused serious harm to some cultural groups.

Some places come into existence with our activities, perhaps the hockey rink when the first goal was scored; other places acquire significance as we learn more about them, perhaps discovering that one's grandfather helped design and build the Ontario hydro system.[71]

Places can be identified in moments and monuments of significance in the lives of individuals, cultures and nation-states. The Vimy Ridge monument in

[68] Trott, Western Mindscapes, 645.

[69] Tony Hiss, *The Experience of Place*, New York, Vintage Book, Random House, 1990. Hiss explores 'place' through the perspectives of those both living in and designing urban spaces.

[70] Thomas M. Norton Smith, *The Dance of Person and Place, One Interpretation of American Indigenous Philosophy,* New York, SUNY, 2010.

[71] One of my grandfathers worked on that project.

France to the unknowing visitor is simply carved stone. Vimy Ridge becomes a place – where thousands of Canadians died during WW1 – through the knowledge, memories and the stories that each visitor brings to it.

## Canada as a Place

We are now in the conceptual arena required for understanding the identity of 'self' in relation to an 'other'. 'Self' can be an individual culture. The 'other' is a concept of Canada, imposed and in possible opposition to many cultures. The concept of Canada as a place is a synthesis arising from the dialectic of the above oppositions. Canada is a place where the freedom to choose activities, the safety to associate with others through shared interests, and a rational maturity with respect for endless questions, ambiguities and possible shared understanding, are provided. As a house, gradually through years of events, becomes a home, so the place called Canada over time can become a home as immigrants begin to take on new challenges and acquire the body of knowledge that informs Canadian culture.[72] Yes, cultures bring different meanings to the same event, but once those meanings are transfigured into recognized knowledge, newcomers can access a better understanding of the possible changes in their lives new meanings might offer. Canada as a unique place enables a sense of belonging slowly, in conjunction with multiple other cultures, and yet, each individual can develop their own idea of their new home.

The synthesis of place provides protection (the freedom to learn and adapt) from the exploitations and dissent that multiculturalism can foster and disguise. When locked into historical rooted identities, when 'difference' is the only celebrated idea of Canadian culture, one is not encouraged to learn about others, and the different meanings they bring to events. Without a unifying idea, we remain a fragile collective with no identity.

No matter what costumes one wears (kilts or jeans, leather boots or tennis shoes), or which beer one chooses, or who one prays to, Canada is a place where asking questions and sharing answers can create bridges across differences. All different cultures, both longstanding and recent arrivals, need to receive and respect that message. Errors have been made with regard to cultures in Canada, thus questions and discussion are needed. Immigrants need to be encouraged to focus on the potential for adaptations and change. They need not shelter their children from self-determining their own future or creating new places for themselves.

[72] See Witold Rybczynski, *Home, A Short History of an Idea*, New York, Penguin Books, 1987. *Home* is an informative and engaging analysis of the transition from the concept of house or dwelling to the idea of home.

Today, multiculturalism is more often a policy directive. Previously we gradually learned to put up with each other.[73] Now we are being told to work harder to make sure everyone remains distinct. This is a long way from Canada's past, where cooperation was needed so that everyone remained the same, that is, alive.

Northrop Frye, a Canadian philosophical and literary critic, wrote, "The Canadian genius is the ability to work out strange hybrids."[74]

Canada is a unique place, one developed through the genius of determined minds overcoming seemingly insurmountable contradictions.[75]

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[73] Mistakes are made; apologizing is the most efficient way to avoid confrontation.

[74] John Robert Colombo, *The Northrop Frye Quote Book*, Toronto, Dundurn, 2014, 20.

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# EASTERN PEOPLE ON WESTERN PRAIRIES: HOW EARLY EASTERN EUROPEAN IMMIGRANTS SHAPED ALBERTA'S FUTURE

Victoria McGowan[1]

Abstract

*The early twentieth century was a time of significant upheaval in the former Russian Empire. However, little research has looked at the ramifications of this upheaval in regard to changes in domestic politics in the international community. Huge numbers of migrants fleeing the revolution ended up in Alberta, Canada in the early 20th century, drawn by the promise of cheap farmland and community. These migrants brought many beliefs and cultural practices which helped shape and continue to impact the province today. In particular, rural Alberta's tendency to have lower education levels and higher distrust of government involvement in farming stems largely from the early Eastern European diaspora that settled there. This paper uses photographs and letters from this wave of immigrants in addition to archival sources to show the long-reaching impact on Alberta, and will argue that this demonstrates a need to re-examine the long term influence of large migrant diasporas.*

The Russian Revolution (also called the October Revolution) began 7 November 1917, after more than a decade of unrest. When the revolutionary government failed to be recognized by all parties, the brutal struggle of the Russian Civil War lasted from 1917 until the creation of the Soviet Union in 1922. A great deal of study has gone into the October Revolution, the ensuing civil war, and the impact of these events on Russia (then the Soviet Union) and its surrounding satellite states, and how these events helped shape the former Russian Empire in the twentieth century. While this is a somewhat broader understanding than many revolutions have been graced with, it is still limited to the geographical area of its occurrence. However, by examining the flow of refugees carrying specific cultural and social learnings and traits to North America, we can see how the Russian Revolution created significant and lasting changes in other, unrelated cultures. Many of the peasants fleeing the revolution (including ethnic Russians, Ukrainians, Belorussians, Rumanians,

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Bessarabians, and others) ended up in rural Alberta between 1905 (after the first failed revolution) and 1930, where they created communities marked by distinct traits, such as lower education levels, close kinship circles, language, and a strong sense of group versus "others." These traits, though not quite so obvious now as they were decades ago, created a unique social and political culture in Alberta that continues to impact Alberta and Canada today, and by extension, continues to make the distant echoes of the Russian Revolution felt in modern global society.

To understand how the October Revolution and its predecessor, the failed Russian Revolution of 1905, created a new political culture halfway around the world, we must first examine the following: who these revolutions affected, how they affected people, and why only specific groups of these people came to Alberta between 1905 and 1930. In order to understand these changes, we must first look at pre-revolutionary Russian society, which established the behaviours of future refugees. Prior to the revolutions, and indeed after both revolutions, the vast majority of Russian citizens were semi-illiterate, uneducated peasants, usually working in unfavorable relationships with landholders or landholding groups, and with little chance to move out of poverty or into a better life. For the purposes of this paper, we will define "peasant" as an impoverished agrarian worker involved in subsistence farming with low education and low social status. While there were many poor urban workers as well who had a significant role to play in both revolutions, they were not primarily the people who made up the outward flow of refugees from Russia to Canada. The second definition required for this paper will understand the term "Russia" to mean the geographical area of the pre-revolutionary Russian Empire, and "Russian citizen" to mean the peoples within who were under the authority of the government of the Russian Empire, which included ethnic Poles, Ukrainians, Germans, Bessarabians, Rumanians, and many others.

Serfdom in Russia began as early as the eleventh and twelfth centuries, as it did in many other European states. However, in many Western European states, serfdom, which was essentially slightly less restrictive slavery, had begun to wane centuries prior to the Russian Revolution. In England, serfdom ended during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, and in France, serfdom had de facto ended by the mid-fourteenth century, though it was not formally abolished until the French Revolution. In Russia however, serfdom existed until its formal abolishment in 1861, though it essentially continued unhindered, albeit with somewhat different legal contexts.[2] In 1857, sixty years prior to the October Revolution and only four years before the abolishment of serfdom, the official census listed peasants as making up more than 79% of

[2] Evsey D. Domar – Mark J. Machina, On the Profitability of Russian Serfdom, *The Journal of Economic History,* Vol. 44, No. 4 (Dec. 1984), 919.

the total Russian population; of these peasants, just under half (approximately 46% of the total) were considered to be privately owned serfs, while the rest were owned by the state.[3] Peasants and serfs were a considerable part of the Russian consciousness. For example, one of the first Russian novels, *Dead Souls*, published in 1842 by Nikolai Gogol, revolved around a tax scheme made possible by the legal status of serfs. At the time, taxes were based on property (including serfs). Censuses were rarely performed, so most estates paid taxes on at least one or two serfs or "souls" who had actually died since the last tax evaluation. The novel features a man attempting to buy these so called "dead souls" and though it discusses serfdom at length, it does not critique it or see a problem with the continued use of serfs, nor are the serfs given the status of individual characters; the society it seeks to critique is the small middle class of semi-urbanized townspeople and the lowest class of noble landowners.[4] The individual serfs themselves were too low to be considered, beyond their legal qualifiers as taxable property. Following the official end of serfdom, former serfs made up much of the vast peasant majority that continued to dominate the makeup of citizens of the Russian Empire. While peasants could no longer be considered property, and were not legally bound to the land as such, they remained attached to the land via debts to landowners, the difficulty in travelling through the vast, often harsh, northern, rural, European climate, and family, village, and kinship ties.

With only sixty years between the end of serfdom and the outbreak of the October Revolution, Russian society remained largely rural and uneducated, with little time for advancement socially, economically, or politically. In order to avoid accidentally developing a teleological approach which suggests that modern society inherently arises following the cessation of serfdom, two things should be noted here. Firstly, if Russia was following the teleological progression sometimes derived from the Western European experience, it managed to cover advancements that took other countries several centuries between the abolishment of serfdom in 1861 and the beginning of the Russian Industrial Revolution experience that occurred around 1870.[5] Secondly, due in part to its vast size and northern climate, it was far more difficult for peasants to travel to urban centres in an attempt to improve their station in life, greatly reducing relative levels of urbanization. Unlike France and Germany, countries 27 and 48 times smaller than Russia respectively, Russia had under a hundred major industrial production centres.[6] Russia did,

[3] David Moon, *The Russian Peasantry 1600–1930: The World the Peasants Made,* London, Longman, 1999, 204–205.

[4] Nikolai Gogol, *Dead Souls,* trans. D. J. Hogarth, Standard ebooks edition, 2017.

[5] Ian Inkster, Lessons of the Past? Technology Transfer and Russian Industrialization in Comparative Perspective, *Science, Technology & Society,* Vol. 3, No. 2 (1998), 309.

[6] Ibid., 311.

however, maintain a massive agrarian rate of production, and financially supported itself largely with grain sales to other countries, indicating it was participating in the global industrialized economy.[7]

Since most public primary education occurred in urban centres and towns in Europe and the Americas at this time, it follows that, in large part due to Russia's exceptionally low rate of urbanization, peasants in Russia remained largely uneducated compared to those in areas such as Britain or Canada. It is worth noting that public schools were well established at this time in Alberta (or the Northwest Territories as it was known at the time, since it was not made a full province until 1905), and that the biggest question was not whether children would be educated, but rather if two school boards (Protestant and Catholic), both of which had already existed for decades in the Northwest Territories, would be legally maintained in the new province. During the debates, Henry Bourassa, a prominent Catholic member of Parliament, summed it up nicely that not only was education assured in any district with sufficient children, but that those "who went to settle" in Alberta "would have the liberty of education" in accordance with their religious beliefs.[8] Thus, when refugees fleeing the Russian Revolution began to arrive in Alberta, they found themselves largely undereducated relative to existing settlers, who at the time were predominately British, Scottish, Irish, and, to a lesser extent, Quebecois/French settlers. This helped isolate former Russian citizens into kinship groups, which became foundational in Albertan society, as they often failed to possess the necessary education or skills to move successfully into urbanized areas.

The final key contextual piece for understanding the Russian peasant experience in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is the ethnic makeup of the Russian Empire. Many of the countries which exist today in eastern Europe and northern Asia, most notably Ukraine, but also Belarus (formerly Belorussia), Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Uzbekistan amongst others, were a part of the Russian Empire, and though several briefly had independence in the post-World War One order, the vast majority of them and their ethnic groups remained a part of the Soviet Union. In the only completed census before the revolutions, undertaken in 1897, ethnic Russians ("Great Russians" in the census) made up the largest single group of the population; however, at just over 44%, ethnic Russians did not even constitute the majority of the population.[9] Ukrainians (called "Little Russians" by the census) made up just under 18% of the population.[10] Combined, the two ethnic groups, which

[7] Ibid., 311.

[8] House of Commons, *Hansard,* 28 March 1905, 10th Canadian Parliament, 1st Session, Government of Canada, 3260.

[9] *Documents of the First General Census of the Population of the Russian Empire in the Ukrainian Archives*, 1897, trans. Hannah Devereux.

[10] Ibid.

the census grouped together and listed as "true Russians," made up about two thirds of the total population in the pre-revolution Russian Empire. The remaining third was composed of no less than nineteen ethnic groups – this number was probably higher however, as ethnicity was determined by language spoken in the census, and multiple ethnic groups sometimes shared one language.[11] Most of these ethnic groups had a lower social status than true ethnic Russians, and thus already had a structure of living in small villages of the same shared ethnicity. In Bessarabia (now part of Ukraine) for example, groups of German, Russian, and Ukrainian speakers lived separately, and only rarely, if at all, needed to communicate with each other. This established culture of living in small culturally similar groups and communicating only within those groups – or other groups of the same nature when there were shared kinship ties – was transported to Alberta.

The Russian Revolution of 1905 was an attempt to create mass political and societal change within Russia. Though the revolution failed to install new governments, it led to the creation of the State Duma, a multi-party system, and a constitution in 1906. These changes however were made mostly disingenuously, and did not markedly change daily or political life for most Russian citizens. This was especially true for peasants and minority ethnic groups, who often lacked the education to actively partake in political life. Though of course there were many causes of this first failed revolution, as with any revolution, there are two particularly relevant here. The first was the dissatisfaction with agrarian reforms that had been enacted following the abolishment of serfdom. Peasants could technically now own land, but only as a village, and a peasant could neither mortgage nor sell their own land, effectively tying them as permanently to the land as they had been as serfs.[12] Strangely, under the provisions of the Emancipation Act that had liberated peasants from serfdom, peasants actually had access to less land than they had worked when they were serfs despite laws allowing peasants to purchase land from nobles, drastically decreasing agricultural output and rendering growing enough food even for their own family difficult.[13] They also had the added burden of paying communally into the village coffers for village mortgages, even if they could not make use of said land or had not approved of the village purchase. In addition, wages were often too low to make these required payments and purchase food, farming equipment, and supplies, causing extreme unrest amongst rural peasant groups.[14] This unrest translated into riots, protests, and reduced agricultural output as peasants chose to seek work rather than farm, in order to

[11] Ibid.
[12] Sidney Harcave, *The Russian Revolution,* London, Collier Books, 1970, 19.
[13] Maureen Perrie, The Russian Peasant Movement of 1905–1907: Its Social Composition and Revolutionary Significance, *Past & Present,* Vol. 57 (Nov. 1972), 123.
[14] Harcave, *The Russian Revolution,* 20.

prevent going hungry.[15] As early as 1902, demonstrations protesting low wages and high rents caused agricultural strikes and other problems. Demonstrations continued sporadically until Bloody Sunday in 1905, considered by many to be the official beginning of the failed revolution.[16]

The second primary cause of the failed revolution was the issue of nationality and ethnic background. Legal and cultural oppression for non-ethnic Russian citizens living within the Russian Empire was widespread, despite problems in the legal code with the precise classification of these groups.[17] It should be recalled that it was not abnormal for European countries, both east and west, as well as the Americas, to have strict cultural and religious hierarchies. Most people familiar with United States history can recall such discrimination as "Irish need not apply" or the protracted history of preventing Catholics from holding government positions due to religious biases, to say nothing of race relations. However, due to the extremely multi-ethnic nature of the Russian Empire, this discrimination was felt by a much greater portion of the population, particularly once the idea of "Russification" (forcing others to adopt Russian practices and cultural traits, such as attempts to force Lithuanians to use the cyrillic alphabet) came to be in the mid-nineteenth century.[18] Clear examples of such a policy can be seen in the administrative rules dictating that Russian must be used as the language of all levels of government throughout the empire, even in areas where there were few or no native Russian speakers, and in the prevention of ethnic Poles and Catholics from taking administrative positions.[19] Ultimately, though information on peasants in this period is difficult to gather, it seems to be the case that peasants "identif[ied] far more strongly" with villages, kin groups, and, at its upper limits, certain regions rather than the nation or nation state as a whole.[20]

The problems of agricultural and ethnic unrest were not unrelated. The highest percentage of peasant unrest causing serious damage (typically arson or the destruction of an estate in some other manner in order to seize the surrounding land) occurred in the Central Black Earth and Southwest regions, and what is now Ukraine and Belarus.[21] Minority ethnic groups made up the majority of the peasantry in these regions – most of them have since become independent countries in the wave of reorganization that took place following the fall of the Soviet Union. Even within these regions, the peasantry had developed ethnic hierarchies; families that were the same ethnicity but from

[15] Richard Pipes, *A Concise History of the Russian Revolution,* New York, Vintage Books, 1996, 8.
[16] Perrie, The Russian Peasant Movement, 126.
[17] Theodore R. Weeks, Russification: Word and Practice 1863–1914, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society,* Vol. 148, No. 4 (Dec. 2004), 471.
[18] Ibid., 473.
[19] Ibid., 474.
[20] Ibid., 474.
[21] Perrie, The Russian Peasant Movement, 128.

an area affected by the "retarding influence" of the Mongol invasions centuries earlier were considered lesser in the hierarchy, even if they had moved several generations ago.[22] Other major issues of the 1905 Revolution included labour movements and the rise of an educated class. However, at least half of the primary issues were peasant issues, and these issues were little resolved in the 1905 and 1906 reforms. Peasants remained the majority of the population, and they remained tied to agriculture and small kin groups.

Coming towards the end of the First World War, the October Revolution in 1917 and the ensuing civil war seemed to be, for many outsiders, important globally only in the sense that it had pulled a member of the Entente forces out of the war against Germany. Though almost totally determined by 1920 due to several decisive Red Army victories, the war lasted until 1923 officially, and armed resistance continued as late as the mid-1930s. The human cost of the war was devastating, and greatly contributed to the influx of Eastern European refugees into North America. Total military fatalities alone can be conservatively estimated at some 800,000 men, and are sometimes believed to be as high as 1.2 million.[23] Coming hot on the heels of the fatalities on the Eastern Front of WWI, almost an entire generation of young men had been lost in under a decade. These totals do not include civilians or civilian sympathizers who were executed or died from starvation and other causes. Millions died as a direct result of the famines of 1920–1922, in addition to rampant disease caused by a lack of clean water, medical services, and government oversights.[24] Such desperate conditions created a mass wave of emigration. As Western Europe was recovering from the devastation of the First World War – and many countries therein looked unfavourably upon Russian citizens, as Russia had withdrawn early and made a separate peace with Germany – many of these emigrants made for the Americas, and particularly the United States and Canada. This was often a difficult and dangerous process. One rural peasant who was relocated to Canada as a child recalled his father (who had been pressed into service for the Red Army) sending money to his mother, with "the clear instruction it be buried" in the root cellar, in order to save enough to book passage on a boat via a British port.[25] This took several years, and the family ran the risk of being accused of hoarding or other crimes, which could have resulted in hard labor, forced transport to Siberia, or execution. When the family made their escape, the money was sewn into the lining of the father's coat in order to avoid detection.[26]

[22] Yanni Kotsonis, Arkhangel'sk, 1918: Regionalism and Populism in the Russian Civil War, *The Russian Review,* Vol. 51, No. 4 (Oct. 1992), 529.

[23] Evan Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War,* Crows Nest, Australia, Allen and Unwin, 1987. Kindle ebook edition by Brilinn Ltd, 2011, 534–546.

[24] Ibid., 536.

[25] Wolodimer Banko, letter to Ida Jess, 16 February 1939.

[26] Ibid.

The civil war proved to be an extremely negative experience for the peasantry, particularly for two reasons. Firstly, the Red Army, operating in support of the Bolshevik government, took up to 10% of the total resources of the state by 1920.[27] This figure of course does not reflect White Army resource usage, but we can safely say that more total state resources were dedicated to the civil war than to World War One. Many of these resources, and particularly food resources, were requisitioned from peasants, resulting in even further food shortages in an agrarian system that was already plagued with problems. Though Russia had not exported food since the beginning of World War One, at the peak of the civil war food shortages, adults survived on under 1,600 calories a day, an over 50% reduction in available food per head than in 1915.[28] The greatest strain of these food shortages fell on the peasantry, many of whom were, by this time, so far removed from central Russian administration that they did not necessarily even understand the goals of the civil war. Up to 5 million died of famine between 1920 and 1922, largely due to the requisitioning of food and resources, and the conscription of farm labor by the army.[29] This was the second major problem for the peasantry. Still reeling from the immense losses of the First World War, the Red Army found itself quickly running up against a manpower shortage. As a result, it turned to conscription, frequently performed in an ad hoc and extremely violent manner as Red Army forces passed through peasant communities. In a letter to his sister after the civil war, Natanial Banko recalled that the Red Army men "asked who wanted to join the army" after rounding up all the young men physically fit enough to fight in the middle of a farming town in Bessarabia (now Ukraine).[30] When one man declined, "they shot him and asked again: who wanted to join the army."[31] Banko then noted that all the remaining young men, himself included, signed up for the Red Army; he also observed this pattern was repeated as they marched. These two experiences, food shortages and conscription, disproportionally affected the peasantry, ultimately resulting in several waves of peasant refugees fleeing the hunger and violence that followed the Russian Revolution.

We shift our focus now from Russia to the prairie provinces of Canada just prior to the influx of refugees caused by the October Revolution. In a fortunate turn of historical events, an exceptionally thorough census was conducted of the prairie provinces (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta) on 1 June 1916, a little over a year before the tumultuous events in the Russian Empire. The

[27] Andrei Markevich and Mark Harrison, Great War, Civil War, and Recovery: Russia's National Income, 1913 to 1928, *The Journal of Economic History,* Vol. 71, No. 3 (Sept. 2011), 685.
[28] Ibid., 686.
[29] Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War*, 538.
[30] Natanial Banko, letter to Sophia Banko, 27 July 1929.
[31] Ibid.

census was so thorough it even included the instruction that "the decisive hour of reckoning" be considered precisely the midnight between 31 May and 1 June, "so that everyone born before that hour and dying after it are to be counted."[32] As censuses are often conducted over a series of days, particularly in large rural areas, such an instruction provides a clear and precise measure of reference for the populations being counted. This is especially important considering that the actual timeframe for taking the census was the entire month of June – a great many immigrants, births, and deaths can happen in a month, so having a firm date helps eliminate such potential variables in any given region.[33] The census counted 495,351 persons in Alberta, the lowest amongst the prairie provinces.[34] There is of course variation in the place of birth in the census records, but there are five that are by far the most common at this time: Alberta and England roughly tie for first in terms of most listed place of birth, followed by the United States, Scotland, and Ireland.[35] Though there are other birth places listed, such as three members of a Swedish family living in Hanna, there are exceptionally few from Russia and other Eastern European countries.[36] Where such families do exist, they were generally living already in established groups on nearby farms or in small towns, demonstrating the close ethnic language tie that we have already observed in Russian censuses before the period of the October Revolution. One interesting difference between the Canadian and Russian censuses on this point however, is the treatment of language as an ethnic identifier. Many ethnic groups were subsumed in the Russian census into a larger heterogeneous group under the umbrella of shared language – all whose first language was German, for example, were listed as German, even though there were ethnic German, ethnic Rumanian, and ethnic Bessarabian groups that all spoke German. Instructions in the 1916 census of the prairies, however, explicitly attempted to avoid this. Instruction 81 on the document given to census takers is written out in bold letters as "Language not evidence of birthplace."[37] The instruction further points out that this should be considered especially true for German speakers, as "over one-third of Austrians[38] and nearly three-fourths of the Swiss speak German" in addition to Germans, Bessarabians, and others.[39] We can be somewhat more certain in the prairie census that when there is a cluster of ethnic groups,

[32] *Instruction to Commissioners and Enumerators,* Census and Statistics Office, 24 March 1916, Textual Records, R233-47-9-E, Volume 7180260, Library and Archives Canada (LAC), 3.

[33] Ibid., 3.

[34] *Census of the Prairie Provinces,* Census and Statistics Office, 1916, Textual Records, R233-47-9-E, Volume 3800575, Microfilm Reels T-21948 to T-21954, LAC.

[35] Ibid., 1906.

[36] Ibid., Reel T-21948: 897.

[37] *Instructions to Commissioners and Enumerators,* Census and Statistics Office, 27.

[38] That is, individuals originating from the Austrio-Hungarian Empire, which was not officially dissolved until two years after the census.

[39] Ibid., 27.

such as Russians or Ukrainians, in any one rural area or township, they have clustered together on the basis not only of shared language ties, but also shared social and cultural ties.

Records that existed regarding death and emigration figures during the period of the Russian Civil War can be considered spotty at best, but plausible estimates indicated between 2 and 3.5 million civilians fled the former Russian Empire seeking a better life.[40] A great many of the refugees who fled came from the peasant background, which meant they had experience in agriculture. As a result, rather than moving to urban, industrialized centres such as Vancouver or Toronto, or more broadly eastern Canada, many of these refugees ended up in the rural agricultural regions of the prairies. The Russian Revolution had a marked impact on the makeup of those who were immigrating to Canada. Immigration from Western Europe, and particularly the British Isles, had been preferred for decades, and made up the largest portion of non-native Canadians, as shown in the 1916 census. Even those who were born Canadian could often trace their ancestry to these regions in as little as one to two generations previously.[41] By 1921, first generation immigrants made up 22% of the Canadian population.[42] Eastern Europeans were far less desirable as immigrants, and until the mass emigration following the Russian Revolution, had made up very little of this 22%. These racial prejudices against Eastern Europeans did not go away after the influx of Russian, Ukrainian, Belorussian, and other related refugees. If anything, they increased. Both rural and urban groups of such immigrants, often lumped in together under the umbrella of "Ukrainian," were subject to discrimination. One report from 1937 stated that such people "in general, do not enjoy a reputation as law-abiding citizens."[43] In addition to these general prejudices, anyone who was easily identified as foreign, whether due to appearance, poor English language skills, or heavy accents, was on the receiving end of far more scrutiny from law officials and other administrative persons.[44] In many ways, this replicated the strict ethnic hierarchies and communities that had existed in the Russian Empire. These ethnic groups were not encouraged to mingle with the existing, largely British-based population, and thus had yet more reason to remain in specific ethnic and language similar kin groups, and often faced official or unofficial challenges when they attempted to move outside those groups.

[40] Mawdsley, *The Russian Civil War*, 537.

[41] Monica Boyd – Michael Vickers, 100 Years of Immigration in Canada, *Canadian Social Catalogue*, Vol. 11, No. 8 (Autumn 2000), 4.

[42] Ibid., 6.

[43] Gregory Robinson, Rougher Than Any Other Nationality? Ukrainian Canadians and Crime in Alberta, 1915–1929, *Journal of Ukrainian Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 1–2 (Summer-Winter 1991), 147.

[44] Ibid., 150.

This paper does not mean to suggest that there were not behavioural differences between Russian Empire refugees and Anglo-Canadians. Certainly, behavioural differences existed – and many of these served to contribute to the continued lack of intermixing between rural groups of Eastern Europeans and rural and urban Anglo-Canadian groups. Interpersonal violence, often with improvised weapons and at the apparent drop of a hat, plagued Eastern European settlements, and helped to contribute to the distrust towards such settler groups in Alberta.[45] Not only do official records show an increased rate of violent assault in such groups, but personal recollections help to reflect the surprisingly cavalier attitude many Russian refugees had towards violence as a solution. Descriptions of cavalier violence at public events were also common. Weddings in these communities in the 1920s were "the most notorious crime scene."[46] Descriptions of such events included statements like "[the Ukrainians] usually murder somebody or stab somebody before they get through with [the wedding]."[47] It is interesting to note that almost exactly the same kind of violence was used in the pop culture hit Game of Thrones nearly a century later to get across the image of a foreign group of people as barbaric and uncultured. Much of this culture of interpersonal violence was a direct transport from the role of peasants in the Russian Empire. During the era of serfdom, serfs were legal property and physical disciplining was common. When these groups came to Canada, they carried with them hundreds of years of socially acceptable physical violence, and this translated into the above discussed trends.

In the 1920s, after the first influx of refugees from the Russian Revolution, over 90% ended up in the northern portion of Alberta, and particularly the rural west-central area.[48] By 1921, five years after the official census of the prairies, the population of Alberta had grown to 588,454, almost 120% of what it had been in 1916.[49] Only Saskatchewan had a similar population increase during that time – though other provinces grew, it was at a much slower pace. While cities and towns were still dominated in this census by Anglo-Scots-Irish-Canadians, the same was no longer true of Alberta as a whole. Southern Albertan demographics, particularly in Calgary and the surrounding areas, also remained largely dominated by people of relatively recent Western European descent. The rural populations of central Alberta however, and particularly the area between Red Deer and Edmonton, saw a marked increase in immigrants from the former Russian Empire, and

[45] Ibid., 153–157.
[46] Ibid., 157.
[47] Ibid., 157.
[48] Ibid., 150.
[49] *Census of Canada, 1921,* Statistics Canada, Textual Records, RG31, Volume 81709, LAC.

particularly ethnic Russians and Ukrainians.[50] Most of these former peasants listed their occupation as farming.[51] The agricultural development of Alberta was still underway at the time, and many former Russian citizens found it easier to settle in Alberta and neighbouring Saskatchewan in a familiar industry than in urbanized areas where higher paying skilled jobs were found. Though many of them remained poor, sometimes coming with only the clothes they were wearing and the few possessions they could carry, there were more opportunities for advancement in the Alberta farming industry than in Russia. With a distinct lack of government grain procurement, rural Albertans had very little danger of true famine, though there were still lean winters. This meant that even unskilled and uneducated refugees could find themselves relatively prosperous. A photo taken in 1928 of a Bessarabian farmer with a horse tells the story in its label: in poorly handwritten German, it reads "First family horse. Plowing season made much easier."[52] Such widespread opportunity meant that such refugees did not have to develop many skills beyond the obvious few (sufficient English, selling grain to grain elevators rather than government operatives, etc.), allowing them to settle in rural Alberta and remain largely satisfied with their position in the country, meaning they did not need to leave rural areas to pursue trades or education and could remain in kinship communities. As early as the mid-1920s, these groups had been identified as "more likely to stay on the land" than immigrants from other nations, even those who came from similar economic backgrounds and landed with similar skills.[53]

Political culture has often been inextricably linked to immigration, and to refugee immigration in particular. Canadian newspapers associated with members of the Conservative party in the early twentieth century ran articles raising concerns about Eastern European "immigrant lawlessness."[54] Many of the perceived issues with Eastern European immigration, and to a greater extent Southeast Asian immigration, were at this time also tied to the rising feminist movement. Many female social reformers in the 1920s argued that Canada was a "nation teetering on the threshold," and could develop into an enlightened and productive society by accepting only the "best" (i.e. primarily British) immigrants, or could become a land of "misfits" if it accepted quantity over quality (meaning primarily former Russian Empire and Austro-Hungarian Empire refugees, in addition to Chinese and Japanese immigrants).[55] For the "moral" protection of the country, these women

[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Natanial Banko, enclosure in partial letter dated March 1930.
[53] Rebecca Mancuso, For Purity or Prosperity: Competing Nationalist Visions and Canadian Immigration Policy, 1919–1930, *British Journal of Canadian Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (2010), 10.
[54] Robinson, Rougher Than Any Other Nationality? 151.
[55] Mancuso, For Purity or Prosperity, 2.

advocated stricter checks on incoming immigrants; moral here mostly meant behaving in accordance with Anglo-Canadian norms before being considered for immigration, thus eliminating many "misfits."[56] The labor, agricultural, and manufacturing sectors, which were all on the rise after the First World War and required as many men as possible to continue increasing outputs, were often the only supporters of such immigrants.[57] It took over a decade before the need for male labor won out against these openly racist claims.

These three combined factors – isolating racism, existing behavioural differences, and increased agricultural success in Alberta without needing to change attitudes towards education and skilled labour training – helped to create a unique culture in Alberta as time went by. Alberta still has a higher proportion of self-employed farmers and agricultural workers than any other province in Canada but Saskatchewan, and many of these farmers continue to work land originally owned by their immigrant ancestors two to three generations ago.[58] The general level of education has also increased in Alberta, as it has everywhere in Canada, using the baseline of high school completion rates. However, education remains less important to Albertans than to other provinces, as it did during the period of post-Russian Revolution refugees. The rate of high school completion in Alberta is the lowest of the provinces save Manitoba (the territories also have a lower high school completion rate than Alberta).[59] Specifically, Alberta has the highest rate of self-employed farmers with no high school education. Both of these trends began to appear following the arrival of former Russian Empire immigrants, and both have remained in the province until present, albeit in a subtler way. Interestingly, in Alberta, more people also report learning Russian and Ukrainian than French, despite there being several strong French communities in the northern portion of the province, and the status of French as an official language of Canada.[60]

The political culture of modern Alberta also reflects the values that these refugees brought with them. Consider the political responses to the NDP government's Bill 6, legislation designed to improve the safety of farm workers that was passed in 2016. The bill affected only farms with paid employees, going so far as to specifically exclude family members working on the farm and neighbours volunteering to help with chores. Farms with paid non-family employees were required to follow OHS employer standards, have Workers'

[56] Ibid., 6.

[57] Ibid., 6.

[58] *Census Profile, 2016 Census,* Statistics Canada, 2017, Textual Records, no. 98-316-X2016001, LAC. Last Modified 29 November 2017, https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E (accessed 16 August 2020).

[59] *Educational Profile of Canada, 2006 Census,* Statistics Canada, 2008, Textual Records, no. 97-560, LAC. Last Modified 28 September 2016, https://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/82-229-x/2009001/envir/hsg-eng.htm (accessed 16 August 2020).

[60] *Census Profile, 2016 Census,* Statistics Canada, 2017.

Compensation Board insurance, and allow OHS investigation in the event of serious injury or fatality.[61] A year after Bill 6's passing and implementation, the Calgary Herald reported that "many producers… remain unhappy about being forced" to follow such rules, as a farm was a family business, and therefore should not involve the government.[62] This focus on rural farming as the business of families independent of government influence extends back to the first influx of Eastern European immigrants. During this time, many of these immigrants were promised farming land, free of any such intrusions they may have experienced in the pre- and post-revolutionary Russian state. In the hundred years since that first wave of refugees, rural Albertan farmers have frequently resisted what they see as the imposition of unnecessary regulations; many of the initial Eastern European refugees could clearly recall government grain seizures and the resulting famines, and therefore remained wary of any interference. Such understandings about the role of farmers in relation to the government has clearly continued to the present day.

The Russian Revolution and the ensuing Russian Civil War were times of mass upheaval for peasants in the former Russian Empire. While hundreds of scholarly works have been written on the Revolution and its aftermath within the confines of Russian territory, far fewer have been written on its impact outside of Eastern Europe. Of these, all but a handful discuss the foreign ramifications of the Revolution in terms of the impact on Western politics as a result of the rise of a nominally successful communist state. The subtler global implications of the Revolution – and indeed, of revolutions generally – has not been examined in any kind of meaningful way. However, by examining the twentieth century history of Alberta, we can see that such inattention by historians is an oversight, as the Revolution subtly but profoundly affected the cultural and political direction of that province. Refugees fleeing the Russian Revolution settled in large numbers in rural Alberta, creating groups around shared languages and shared cultural values and practices. These cultural values and practices often marked them as "others" in the Anglo-Canadian community, and they largely remained in homogenous language and culture groups for some time. There were very real differences in behaviour between Eastern European and Western European/American immigrants, but in many cases, these differences were over-exaggerated in support of racist perspectives, further contributing to isolation of these groups. However, despite this initial isolation, refugees from the former Russian Empire were able to succeed in

[61] Government of Alberta, Farm and Ranch Workplace Legislation, Government of Alberta, Last Modified 12 May 2017, https://www.alberta.ca/farm-and-ranch.aspx (accessed 16 August 2020).

[62] James Wood, "A year after Bill 6, farm workers WCB claims more than double," 5 January 2017, *Calgary Herald*. Last Modified 5 January 2017, http://calgaryherald.com/news/politics/a-year-after-bill-6-farmworkers-wcb-claims-more-than-double (accessed 16 August 2020).

Alberta. In large part, this success was a result of perspective – while many such immigrants remained mostly poor, they were noticeably better off than they had been under the Russian government, and as such, saw no reason to fully merge with the existing Anglo-Canadian ideals, particularly those about improving one's station with education and skills training. Over time, the two distinct cultural groups blended; we no longer have distinct Russian, German, or Ukrainian farming communities within Alberta (though there are still communities with strong heritages of such). However, it was not a case of pure assimilation, but rather a mutual development of a unique rural Albertan culture which continues to show elements of these initial cultural values and beliefs. Such results suggest that it may perhaps be worth revisiting an examination of revolutions and their effects on global society. Certainly, scholars may find that many cultural processes did not develop in isolation, but are rather the result of a continuously developing global situation. Such an understanding could drastically affect how politicians and others in the modern day choose to address current and future crises, and enable them to make decisions which most benefit those impacted by revolutionary processes.

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# THE SHIFTING IDENTITIES OF THE BULGARIAN-CANADIAN DIASPORA, 1900–2015

Chris Kostov[1]

Abstract

*The Bulgarian-Canadian diaspora in Canada is concentrated primarily in Toronto and Montreal, even though smaller numbers of Bulgarian immigrants could be found in Ottawa, Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg and Newfoundland. This paper argues that over a period of almost 100 years, the Bulgarian-Canadian diaspora was transformed by a number of identity shifts, which were strongly influenced by complex political processes in both the Balkan Peninsula and Canada. Also, due to the 45-year communist regime between 1945–1990, the Bulgarian immigration to Canada as well as the interaction between the Bulgarian diaspora and the mother country almost ceased to exist.*

The economic situation in the Balkans was critical during the nineteenth century. Many families lost their small patches of land, and men of working age left their farms to go to big cities on the Balkan Peninsula and in Central Europe in search of work. Perfectly aware of the conditions in the region, Canadian steamship companies launched promotion campaigns for immigration to Canada and they offered fares for the trans-Atlantic journey for about twenty dollars at the beginning of the twentieth century.[2] Canadian immigration officials welcomed contract labor as a way of ensuring that immigrants would not rely on charity, but would help populate Canada's vast western reaches. Dincho Ralley, a Bulgarian immigrant, whose family migrated to Toronto in 1907 from the Aegean Macedonian village of Zagorichane, recalled an English-speaking labor agent in the Geeek city of Florina who arranged for several men from Ralley's village to emigrate. Within a few years, most of them had railroad or factory jobs near Toronto's heavily-industrial Eastern Avenue.[3]

[1] Schiller International University, Madrid.

[2] Peter Vasiliadis, *Whose Are You?: Identity and Ethnicity Among the Toronto Macedonians*, New York, AMS Press Inc., 1989, 154–156. We need to bear in mind as well that twenty dollars in 1910 would be equivalent in purchasing power to at least 500 dollars in 2020.

[3] Dincho Ralley, interviewed by Irene Markoff, 26 May 1977, MHSO Bulgarian collection.

The Ilinden-Preobrazhenie Uprising of 1903, brutally crushed by the Turks, added serious political reasons for migration. In fact, Dincho Ralley also noted during his interview with Irene Markoff that his father's reason for migrating from the Balkans to Canada was a flight from oppression.[4]

The data provided by the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism indicated that there were only seven Bulgarians in Canada in 1900–1901. A decade later, this number rose to 6,638. In 1913, however, the number of Bulgarians dropped to 1,270, most probably due to the Balkan wars.[5] Kostadin Gurdev estimated that at least 500 Bulgarian immigrants from Bulgaria proper and geographic Macedonia left Toronto to volunteer in the Bulgarian army during the Balkan wars (1912–1913).[6] It is difficult to estimate the exact number of Bulgarian Canadian volunteers who joined the Bulgarian Army, but census data suggest a much larger number than 500. These immigrant soldiers were exclusively Macedono-Bulgarians.[7] Both church records and historians recognized the fact that 80 to 90 per cent of the first Bulgarian immigrants to Canada came predominantly from the region of Macedonia in the first half of the twentieth century.[8]

The first Macedono-Bulgarians came to Canada from the Aegean part of Macedonia, (present-day northern Greece), from villages around the cities of Kostur (Kastoria) and Lerin (Florina). Foto Tomev, who immigrated to Toronto in 1915, was able to find the names of the first migrants from the village of Zhelevo in 1903, and these included Elia Tanasov, Dimitar and Vasil Sidorov, Petko Andonov, and Trayko Florov.[9] Foto Tomev aimed at reconstructing the history of the immigrants from his native village Zhelevo by gathering information and original documents from the descendants of these immigrants in Toronto. These first temporary migrants came to Canada as guest workers to earn money and returned to their home villages as soon as possible. Over half of them were from the Castoria (Kostur) area of Aegean Macedonia with the vast majority of the rest coming from Florina, Prespa, Ohrid, and Bitola.[10] They concentrated largely in Toronto.

4 Ibid.

5 Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, *The Cultural Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups-Book IV*, Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1969, 238–245.

6 Kostadin Gurdev, *Bulgarskata emigraciya v Kanada* [The Bulgarian Emigration to Canada], Sofia, Marin Drinov Academic, 1994, 44.

7 Bulgarians from Macedonia.

8 Lillian Petroff, 'Macedonians,' in Paul Robert Magocsi (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Canada's Peoples*, Toronto: University of Toronto, 1999, 289; Gurdev, *Bulgarskata emigraciya*, 21–40; Lilian Petroff, *Fiftieth Anniversary Sts. Cyril and Methody Macedono-Bulgarian Orthodox Cathedral: (1910–1960) Fiftieth Anniversary Jubilee Almanac*, Toronto, Sts. Cyril and Methody Macedono-Bulgarian Orthodox Cathedral, 1960, 30–5.

9 F. S. Tomev, *Short History of Zhelevo Village, Macedonia*, Toronto, Zhelevo Brotherhood in the City of Toronto, 1971, 75.

10 F.S. Tomev, *Fiftieth Anniversary Sts. Cyril and Methody*, 35.

The Macedono-Bulgarians initially lived at the East end of Toronto, around King Street East, Eastern Avenue and Keele Street, finding jobs, such as meat-packing or on the railways. They lived in crammed houses sharing their living expenses.[11] Bulgarian migrants kept spending to a minimum while away from home. A two-year stay in Toronto, for instance, if spent in a thrifty manner, yielded roughly 400 dollars in savings, a vast sum when compared to rates of savings in the Balkans, where they would not be able to save even half of this money.[12] In order to illustrate the purchasing power of this money, we should note that a house in a major Bulgarian city would cost 500 dollars in 1910 and a semi-detached house near Woodbine Beach in Toronto was worth 3,450 dollars in 1915, whereas a loaf of bread was about 7 cents.[13]

According to the internal community census, there were only eight Macedono-Bulgarians with their families in Toronto in 1910. Such people were usually political immigrants, former *Ilindenci* (participants in the Ilinden Uprising of 1903) or *chetniks* (guerilla fighters), who fought in the Ilinden Uprising against the Ottomans. By 1915, however, there were forty-three families and forty-nine children. The political situation in Macedonia,[14] and the economic opportunities in Toronto persuaded increasing numbers of Bulgarians to settle permanently.[15]

During WWI some Bulgarians were treated as enemy aliens in Canada and were interned, due to their Bulgarian or Ottoman passports and active participation in ethnic Bulgarian immigrant associations. But some of these early immigrants, who did not participate in any ethnic associations were not discriminated and even served in the Canadian army during World War I. Bulgarians were once again able to immigrate to Canada and to bring over their families in the 1920s, when Canadian restrictions on immigration started to be liberalized towards people from European origin. Many new immigrants even wanted to live among English Canadians, not in boarding houses, and to study English.[16] Such immigrants faced the hostility of their older compatriots, who thought that this way, young people would be

[11] Vasiliadis, *Whose Are You?*, 170–171.

[12] Lillian Petroff, *Sojourners and Settlers: The Macedonian Community in Toronto to 1940*, Toronto, University of Toronto, 1995, 15.

[13] Mary Mackinnon. "New Evidence on Canadian Wage Rates, 1900–1930." *The Canadian Journal of Economics / Revue Canadienne D'Economique,* Vol. 29, No. 1 (1996), 114–131.

[14] In 1913, the geographic region of Macedonia was divided among Serbia, Greece and Bulgaria. By 1915, both Serbia and Greece pressured the ethnic Bulgarians to abandon the Bulgarian language, traditions and even names and surnames. Moreover, WWI had already started and this would mean even more bloodshed after the two Balkan Wars which ended merely two years earlier, in 1913. Hence, many ethnic Bulgarians in Vardar and Aegean Macedonia were ready to leave the region and settle in Bulgaria or across the Atlantic, in Canada or the USA.

[15] Petroff, *Sojourners and Settlers*, 10, 68.

[16] John Grudeff, interviewed by Irene Markoff, 9 February 1977, MHSO Bulgarian collection.

alienated from Bulgarian culture. A concerned immigrant, for instance, burned the English books of his brother to keep him safe from Anglo-Saxon influence.[17]

From the 1920s on, the Bulgarians started to shift their primary loyalty from their home village to a larger Bulgarian common identity and community. People from different villages started to cluster on the same streets and the community as a whole began to move north of Queen Street and east of the Don River, as they wanted to avoid prejudice against them and residential mixing with other ethnic groups.[18] Bulgarian immigrants did not want to be viewed as clannish and anti-Canadian, especially because Bulgaria had fought on the side of the Triple Alliance in WWI. The anti-Greek riots in Toronto of August 1918 also indicated that there was some hostility against Balkan immigrants. In the aftermath of the Great Depression, few Bulgarian immigrants could enter Canada after 1929. However, the settlers who were already in Toronto managed to organize a number of charity organizations, churches, political organizations, newspapers, Saturday schools and cultural events, which facilitated the development of an active community life.[19]

During the period 1900–1940, most Slavic immigrants from Macedonia had a Bulgarian ethnic identity, but there were also some ethnic Bulgarians from Aegean Macedonia, who also came to Toronto and joined the Greek community in the city. It is not quite clear how many of these immigrants were ethnic Greeks and how many were ethnic Bulgarians from Aegean Macedonia, who identified themselves as Greeks (*grkomani*). Kostadin Gurdev estimated that at least a few hundred *grkomani* were active in the Greek community and participated in the founding of the first Greek Orthodox parish in Toronto – St. George in 1909.[20]

As the statistics in Figure 1 indicate, Bulgarian immigration, even at its height, never approached the magnitude of immigration by other comparable Southern or Eastern European nationalities, and it occurred later – only after 1900 – than it did in the case of other nations in the region and by 1941, there were only 3,260 Bulgarian Canadians. As a comparison, in 1914, there were already 8,301 Romanians in Canada and by 1931, they were 29,000. In the period 1891–1914, 150,000 Ukrainians settled in Canada and approximately 150,000 Italian immigrants entered Canada in 1901–1940.[21] Thus, Bulgarian immigrants were practically invisible to the Canadian public and government, except during the periods of the two World Wars, when Bulgaria was a German ally.

[17] Petroff, *Sojourners and Settlers*, 69–71.

[18] Gurdev, *Bulgarskata emigraciya*, 40–55; Dincho Ralley, interviewed by Irene Markoff, 26 May 1977, MHSO Bulgarian collection.

[19] Gurdev, *Bulgarskata emigraciya*, 58.

[20] Gurdev, *Bulgarskata emigraciya*, 125.

[21] Bruno Ramirez, *The Italians*, Ottawa, Canadian Historical Society, 1989, 7.

Figure 1 below takes into consideration only the statistics on Greek and Bulgarian immigration to Canada in the period 1900–1940.

| Year | Bulgarians | Greeks |
|---|---|---|
| 1900 | 7 | 81 |
| 1901 | 2 | 161 |
| 1902 | N/A | 193 |
| 1903 | N/A | 191 |
| 1904 | N/A | 98 |
| 1905 | 18 | 254 |
| 1906 | 92 | 545 |
| 1907 | 1884 | 1053 |
| 1908 | 63 | 174 |
| 1909 | 495 | 461 |
| 1910 | 985 | 784 |
| 1911 | 1664 | 584 |
| 1912 | 6338 | 1523 |
| 1913 | 1270 | 898 |
| 1914 | 4512 | 1506 |
| 1915 | 1 | 124 |
| 1916 | 0 | 274 |
| 1917 | 0 | 59 |
| 1918 | 0 | 5 |
| 1919 | 1 | 31 |

| Year | Bulgarians | Greeks |
|---|---|---|
| 1920 | 4 | 297 |
| 1921 | 26 | 195 |
| 1922 | 15 | 187 |
| 1923 | 163 | 294 |
| 1924 | 170 | 215 |
| 1925 | N/A | 214 |
| 1926 | 87 | 274 |
| 1927 | 240 | 557 |
| 1928 | 265 | 685 |
| 1929 | 301 | 684 |
| 1930 | 353 | 530 |
| 1931 | 14 | 23 |
| 1932 | 12 | 34 |
| 1933 | 12 | 29 |
| 1934 | 5 | 39 |
| 1935 | 12 | 49 |
| 1936 | 21 | 73 |
| 1937 | 31 | 97 |
| 1938 | 25 | 121 |
| 1939 | 23 | 128 |
| 1940 | 7 | 49 |

*Figure 1: Bulgarian and Greek Immigrants in Canada, 1900–1940*[22]

Regardless of their relatively small number, Bulgarians maintained their ethnic identity through their churches, cultural and political organizations and ethnic press, including the Sts. Cyril and Methody Macedono-Bulgarian Cathedral, Macedonian Political Organization (MPO), Banitza Benevolent Society, Oshchima Benefit Society, Zhelevo Benevolent Society, Zagorichane Mutual Benefit Society, St. Elijah Mutual Benefit Society, Napredak [Advancement] Mutual Benefit Society, Bulgarian Economic Mutual Benefit

[22] Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, *The Cultural Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups-Book IV,* Ottawa, Queen's Printer, 1969, 238–242.

Society Tarsie, Bitola Bulgarian Mutual Benefit Society, Macedono-Bulgrian Progressive Club Christo Botev, *Balkan Star* and *Makedonska Tribuna* [Macedonian Tribune] newspapers.

As many as 90 per cent of the first Bulgarian immigrants were peasants and they worked as laborers or as small business owners, primarily in meatpacking and small shops.[23] Most of them had a very strong village identity and associating with others from the same village or region was common among them. Hence, soon after their arrival in Canada, Bulgarians started to organize benevolent associations and mutual benefit societies named after their villages, such as Banitza, Oschima, Zhelevo, Zagorichane, Tarsie, e.g. Banitza Benevolent Society, Oshchima Benefit Society, Zhelevo Benevolent Society, Zagorichane Mutual Benefit Society, and Bulgarian Economic Mutual Benefit Society Tarsie. This fulfilled their need for a social safety net in the new land. The mutual benefit societies were also a focal point of informal communication, as well as for community campaigns to raise money for a cause or to plan social events like dances, banquets, and picnics. All charity organization founding documents and other organizational documents were written in standard Bulgarian as late as the 1960s but the Bulgarian language was gradually replaced by English in all organizational documents after the 1960s.[24]

Some immigrants, such as Nasto Jigeroff and Toma Petroff, who came from small Macedonian villages could not boast a university education, were, nevertheless, very active in organizing the Bulgarian ethnic community. Nasto Jigeroff was born in the village of Oshchima, near Kastoria, Aegean Macedonia in 1879. He participated in the Ilinden-Preobrazhenie Uprising of 1903 and settled in Toronto in 1912. Jigeroff was among the founders of both pre-WWII Macedono-Bulgarian Orthodox churches in Toronto (Sts. Cyril and Methody and St. George) and an active participant and co-founder of the Macedonian Political Organization (MPO) Chapter 'Lyuben Dimitrov' in Toronto. He died in 1975, at the age ninety-six. Toma Petroff, another Ilinden rebel from Aegean Macedonia, was one of the founders of the Bulgarian Mutual Benefit Society Homeland in 1935.[25] In fact, as Peter Vassiliadis acknowledged, the devastating outcome of the Balkan wars for Bulgaria prompted an increasing number of Macedono-Bulgarians to settle permanently in Toronto and to preserve an even 'greater loyalty to Bulgarian institutions.'[26]

Once they settled permanently, Bulgarian Canadians also needed well-educated intellectuals, who could publish books and newspapers and organize Bulgarian schools and churches in order to preserve their Bulgarian culture and ethnic identity. Such highly educated leaders of the Bulgarian Canadian

[23] Gurdev, *Bulgarskata emigraciya*, 58.
[24] Ibid., 117–144.
[25] Ibid., 77–78.
[26] Vasiliadis, *Whose Are You?,* 196.

community were Archimandrite Theofilact, also known as Dr Dimitar G. Mallin (Malincheff) and John Grudeff. Dr Malincheff (Theofilact) was born in the village of Vrachesh, near the Bulgarian town of Botevgrad (Orhanie), whereas John Grudeff was born in the village of Gramatikovo in 1894, near the Black sea coast.[27]

Archimandrite Theofilact was sent to North America in 1908 by the Bulgarian Holy Synod. During his mandate he initiated the creation of four Bulgarian orthodox churches in North America, among which was the first Bulgarian church in Toronto in 1911 – the Macedono-Bulgarian Orthodox Cathedral of Sts. Cyril and Methody. In 1913, Theofilact published *The First Bulgarian-English Pocket Dictionary* with 18,000 words,[28] which became very popular among the Bulgarian communities in both Canada and USA, as it contained not only words, but also a great number of useful common phrases for various situations, related to accommodation, job search, physical well-being, and travelling between Canada and the United States.[29] Archimandrite Theofilact left the priesthood and in 1921 graduated from the Medical Faculty of the University of Toronto to become the first Bulgarian physician in Canada and to open the first Bulgarian pharmacy in Toronto in 1922.[30]

John Grudeff left his native village of Gramatikovo to study at the American School in Salonica. Grudeff came to Canada in 1910, when he was only sixteen years old. Initially, he worked at the railway construction and in a sugar factory. He was determined, however, to continue his education. He graduated from the University of Toronto with a BA in Literature and Fine Arts in 1922 and from the Faculty of Law in 1926, becoming the first Bulgarian-Canadian lawyer. John Grudeff was a good friend of Dr. Malincheff (Archimandrite Theofilact) and he founded one of the first Bulgarian benevolent societies in Toronto – the William Gladstone Benevolent Society.[31] This charity organization provided sick and funeral benefits for its members, translation services, accommodation and employment information. The members also organized ethnic holiday celebrations to preserve their Bulgarian cultural traditions. Dr Malincheff edited the first Bulgarian weekly newspaper in Toronto, *Balkanska Zvezda* [Balkan Star], published in the period 1912–1913 in Bulgarian.

The Bulgarian settlers did not believe that they could lose their Bulgarian ethnic identity even if they had to face the discrimination of mainstream society. They often feared, however, that their children would lose interest in Bulgaria and its culture and language and they would completely assimilate

[27] Gurdev, *Bulgarskata emigraciya*, 218.
[28] Dimitar D. Malincheff, *The First Bulgarian-English Pocket Dictionary,* Toronto, n.p., 1913, MHSO Macedonian Collection (Microfilm).
[29] Ibid.
[30] Gurdev, *Bulgarskata emigraciya*, 218.
[31] Ibid.

into North American culture. Thus, until the 1920s, Bulgarian parents were suspicious, if not hostile, to the younger generation's desire to get an English-language education. They believed that education in North American schools would alienate their children from their parents' native Bulgarian language and culture. In order to preserve their language, the Bulgarian immigrants in Toronto opened their Bulgarian-language school in 1915 in collaboration with the existing Macedono-Bulgarian Orthodox parish of Sts. Cyril and Methody. They appointed Kuzo Temelcoff, a teacher from Aegean Macedonia, as the school's first instructor.[32] The Bulgarian community fulfilled its need for a cultural life with a community theatre that held performances in the Parish Hall of the Macedono-Bulgarian Orthodox Cathedral of Sts. Cyril and Methody. Bulgarian women also actively participated in the church and community cultural and educational life. Lillian Petroff pointed out that, women instructed "young ladies in the Bulgarian language school."[33]

Founded in 1922 in Fort Wayne, Indiana, the Macedonian Political Organization (MPO) and its newspaper *Makedonska Tribuna* [Macedonian Tribune] became the pillar of Bulgarian ethnic identity in North America throughout the twentieth century. It has been published in Bulgarian and English since 1927. MPO was the North American arm of the Internal Macedonian Revolutionary Organization (IMRO), i.e. a Bulgarian nationalist organization, very conservative and a natural right-wing ally of the Bulgarian Orthodox church. In Toronto, as in the other cities of North America, the local MPO chapter Pravda [Justice] worked closely with the Macedono-Bulgarian Orthodox parish of Sts Cyril and Methody and almost all parishioners became MPO members.[34]

By the 1930s, Bulgarians had developed a strong loyalty and attachment, not only to Bulgaria, but also to Canada. In a speech to the parishioners of Sts. Cyril and Methody Church in 1927, Dr Malincheff reminded his compatriots that they should not forget their homeland and yet, they should be also 'worthy citizens of Canada.'[35] Lillian Petroff called this development a 'double loyalty,' which 'no priest fresh from Bulgaria or MPO ideologue dared to do other than encourage.'[36] The emergence of this double national identity was a natural process. Initially, when Bulgarians were sojourners, their hearts and thoughts were attached only to the Old World and Canada was merely a land of opportunity for a temporary stay. However, once they decided to settle permanently in Toronto after the Balkan wars and particularly in

[32] *Fiftieth Anniversary Sts. Cyril and Methody*, 42.
[33] Lillian Petroff, 'Women and Ethnicity,' *Polyphony*, Vol. 8, No. 1–2 (1986), 26.
[34] Rev. Vasil Mihailoff, interviewed by Irene Markoff, 7 February 1977, MHSO Bulgarian collection; MPO, *Macedonians in North America,* 7–10.
[35] Petroff, *Sojourners and Settlers*, 173.
[36] Ibid.

the inter-war period, their attachment to Canada grew. The future of the Bulgarian language in the community was also doomed, especially among the second generation and due to the fact that all interaction and business with the mainstream society had to be in English. The First World War also led to pressure on the Bulgarian Canadians to abandon their native language. On 25 September 1918, an Order-in-Council banned all printed materials in fourteen different 'enemy languages,' which included Bulgarian, because Bulgaria was a German ally during the war. The newly founded newspaper *Zora* [Dawn], published in Bulgarian by Dr Dimitar Malincheff, had to stop serving the Bulgarian community.[37]

During the Second World War, the most influential institutions among the Bulgarians continued to be the Macedonian Political Organization (MPO) and its Toronto branch Justice, as well as the two Orthodox Churches – Sts. Cyril and Methody and St. George. The enthusiastic support by the MPO of the Bulgarian army, which occupied Greek Aegean Macedonia and the Yugoslav Vardar Macedonia again revealed the Bulgarian nationalist orientation of the MPO members. The MPO position, however, prompted the RCMP and the Canadian Government to consider the MPO members as enemy aliens. In order to prevent persecutions during the war, on 14 April 1942 the MPO Justice Chapter in Toronto arranged an agreement among its members, the youth organization and the ladies' auxiliary, to discontinue their political activities until the end of the war.[38] Thus, unfavorable political conditions suppressed any open expression of a Bulgarian national identity during the war.

After 1945, the Cold War initiated a new period among Bulgarian immigrants to Canada. During this period (1945–1989), Bulgarian immigration to Canada was almost non-existent. Due to the well-guarded frontiers behind the Iron Curtain, in the period 1945–1965, only 1,207 Bulgarians managed to reach Canada.[39] In fact, even the few Bulgarians who dared to apply for immigration to Canada from within communist Bulgaria were not allowed to leave the country. In a letter to the Canadian Minister of External Affairs, the British Legation in Sofia stated that as of 14 July 1956 eleven Bulgarians were approved for immigration to Canada who had been waiting for Bulgarian passports from two months to two years.[40] The Canadian authorities were also very concerned that the Bulgarian Penal Law amendments of March 1953 introduced severe measures against Bulgarian immigrants and their families. According to the new law, Bulgarian citizens who left their country without permission

[37] Duncan McLaren, *Ontario Ethno-Cultural Newspapers, 1835–1972*, Toronto, University of Toronto, 1973, 124.

[38] Peter Vasiliadis, *Whose Are You,* 240.

[39] Gurdev, *Bulgarskata emigraciya*, 87.

[40] *'Immigration from Bulgaria (1954–1963),'* Library and Archives Canada (LAC), RG25, Vol. 6332, File 232-BE-40, Pt. 1.

would be considered traitors and sentenced to death unless they returned to Bulgaria within six months. Their relatives in Bulgaria would also be deprived of civil rights and a part or whole of their property would be confiscated. In a confidential letter of 9 June 1953, the RCMP Commissioner in Ottawa informed the Under-Secretary of State for External Affairs A.M. Ireland that a number of Bulgarian Canadians in Toronto received letters from their relatives in Bulgaria asking them to return home because they were afraid of government reprisals against them.[41] Punitive measures could include, firing relatives of immigrants, resettlement in the remote Bulgarian countryside, or not allowing them to receive university education. Nevertheless, Bulgarian Canadians preferred to stay in Canada and yet, these brutal measures of the Bulgarian government diminished the number of Bulgarian immigrants significantly. The small numbers of Bulgarian immigrants, as well as the process of assimilation of the second and third generations kept the number of Canadian citizens of Bulgarian origin virtually the same for the duration of the Cold War. In the 1941 Census of Canada, 1,157 Ontarians declared Bulgarian as their mother tongue.[42] In 1976, the number of Ontario residents declaring Bulgarian as their mother tongue dropped slightly to 1,125.[43] According to the 1986 Canadian Census, which could be considered the last Census for the Cold War period, the number of Bulgarians by birth was 1,130 in Ontario.[44] Kostadin Gurdev also noted that during the Cold War most second and third generation Bulgarian immigrants in Canada did not speak Bulgarian well and oftentimes declared simply a Canadian national identity.[45] Another reason for the voluntary assimilation of the Bulgarian Canadians and their unwillingness to declare a Bulgarian identity was the repressive communist regime in Bulgaria. Most of them opposed it, because they were usually political dissidents. The Bulgarian citizens who reached Canada during the Cold War were considered refugees and not immigrants by Canadian law. Most of them had to leave Bulgaria illegally. The only people who managed to reach Canada were political refugees, usually men. Thus, it is not surprising that, out of 1,615 Bulgarians by birth in Ontario in 1991, 990 were men.[46] Some of these immigrants had experienced repressions and prison terms in Bulgarian Gulags and thus, they associated Bulgaria with communism. A number of them severed all connections with

[41] *'Threats against Bulgarian Residents in Canada and their Relatives in Bulgaria by the Government of Bulgaria,'* Library and Archives Canada (LAC), RG25, G2, Vol. 4392, File 11786-40, Pt. 1.

[42] *Census of Canada, 1941*, Ottawa, Dominion Bureau of Statistics 1943, 750–751.

[43] *Census of Canada, 1976, Population: Demographic Characteristics,* Vol. 2, Ottawa, Statistics Canada, 1979, 21.

[44] *Census of Canada, 1986, Language: Part I,* Ottawa, Statistics Canada, 1987, 7.

[45] Gurdev, *Bulgarskata emigraciya,* 95.

[46] *Census of Canada, 1991, The Nation: Immigration and Citizenship,* Ottawa, Statistics Canada, 1992, 18.

Bulgaria and were hesitant to declare a Bulgarian identity. Even the fervent Bulgarian nationalist Pando Mladenov, opposed the presence of a Bulgarian national flag in his parish of St. George Macedono-Bulgarian Orthodox Church during the Cold War.[47] For him, the Bulgarian national flag with its communist coat of arms and a red star was not a symbol of Bulgaria, but rather a symbol of the brutal communist regime in the country.[48] Dr Ivan Gadjev, illustrated this love-hate relationship of the Bulgarian immigrants with Bulgaria and referred to Bulgaria in the period 1944–1989 as 'Bulgaria-our stepmother.'[49]

It should also be noted that during this period, particularly after the 1960s, many Bulgarian Canadians achieved professional success since many of them were already fluent in English and received their education in Canada. After they earned university degrees they became doctors, lawyers, engineers, teachers, managers and even MPs in the Canadian Parliament.[50]

After 1989, when the Berlin Wall fell and the Bulgarian borders were finally opened, there were two waves of immigration from Bulgaria to Canada. The first (1990–1995) consisted primarily of bogus refugees, who were economic migrants using flights from Sofia to Havana to land in Newfoundland, where the airplanes had stopped to refuel. The scheme was simple. When the airplane landed in Newfoundland to refuel and the passengers had to wait in the transit hall of the airport, some Bulgarians contacted the airport staff to declare that they would like to stay and apply for a refugee status. These Bulgarians had various levels of education and many of them had no knowledge of English or French. Most of them claimed to be persecuted by the Bulgarian authorities due to their allegedly anti-communist views, religious affiliation or sexual orientation. Many of them managed to persuade Canadian authorities to grant them Permanent Resident Status in Canada. After they legalized their status in Canada, most of these quasi-refugees moved to Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa and other Canadian cities. Once in Toronto, a number of them approached Sts. Cyril and Methody Macedono-Bulgarian Orthodox Church for help, but later, when they learned English and found jobs, they became very passive and did not get involved in the religious and cultural life of the Bulgarian community.[51] The apathy of these new immigrants to the local Bulgarian churches and

47 Pando Mladenov, interviewed by the author, 16 May 2007.

48 Ibid.

49 Ivan Gadjev, *Istoriya na bulgarskata emigraciya v Severna Amerika: Bulgaria, Mashteha nasha (1944–1989),* Vol. II [History of the Bulgarian Emigration to North America: Bulgaria: Our Stepmother (1944–1989), Vol. 2], Goce Delchev: Institute for the History of the Bulgarian Emigration to North America 'Iliya Todorov Gadjev', 2006.

50 Gurdev, *Bulgarskata emigraciya*, 83–100. Ken Boshcoff was the latest Bulgarian Canadian MP in 2004–2008 and a former mayor of Thunder Bay, ON.

51 Rev. Valeri Shumarov, interviewed by the author, 15 May 2007.

organizations, their lack of interest in the traditional historical debates over Macedonia and the political future of Bulgaria, which preoccupied the minds of the old immigrants, led to a rift with the old generation.[52]

After 1995, Canadian immigration officers applied stricter rules on applicants for refugee status from Bulgaria and other former communist countries in Eastern Europe. Even though some Bulgarians continued to seek refugee status, their number decreased. After 1996, a new wave of immigrants started to come from Bulgaria to Canada. This wave primarily included workers, who were selected under the Canadian points' system as highly skilled professionals, as well as some people who came under the family category.[53] These professionals included IT and mechanical engineers, medical doctors, university professors, economists, scientists, lawyers, etc. They were primarily economic immigrants because in 1996–97 Bulgaria was hit by its worst inflation rates since the end of the Cold War. In January 1997, the US dollar reached 2,000 leva and the minimum wage was 5,500 leva/hour, i.e. less than three US dollars. Hence, leaving the country was, for many Bulgarians, not a whim but a matter of survival.

These new post-Cold War waves of Bulgarians added to the number of Bulgarians in Ontario. If the number of Bulgarian Canadians in Ontario was merely 1,615 in 1991,[54] it peaked at 6,665 in the 1996 Canadian Census.[55] Even though half of them settled in Toronto, the rest of the 12,390 Bulgarian immigrants in Canada in 1996 lived across the land, including a few in Newfoundland and in Montreal, Ottawa, Calgary and Vancouver.[56]

Figure 2 also indicates that the Bulgarian immigration to Canada reached its peak in 2004, when 1,945 Bulgarians landed as Permanent Residents and their number started to drop rapidly especially after 2007, when Bulgaria joined the EU. In 2015, only 371 Bulgarian immigrants came to Canada. Romanian immigration follows the same trend. Thus, Bulgarian and Romanian economic immigrants started to choose a faster and easier way to leave their countries, by moving to Western Europe, taking advantage of the EU Free Market. The number of Italians and Greeks immigrating to Canada is also insignificant, especially considering the large waves of Italian and Greek immigrants to Canada in earlier periods. As Figure 2 indicates, only Ukraine, which is not an EU member, still sends a steady flow of immigrants to Canada.

[52] George Mladenov, interviewed by the author, 2 May 2007.

[53] Nadezhda Hristova, *Imigraciya v Kanada* [Immigration to Canada], Sofiya: Vazov Publishing, 2000, 8–11.

[54] *Census of Canada, 1991, The Nation*, 18.

[55] *Census of Canada, 1996, Census Profile of Federal Electoral Districts (1996 Representation): Age, Sex, Marital Status, Common-Law unions, Family Characteristics, Type of Dwelling and Household size, Immigration and Citizenship, and Languages*, Ottawa, Statistics Canada, 1998, 137.

[56] Ibid.

| Year | Bulgarians | Romanians | Greeks | Italians | Ukrainians |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1996 | 827 | 3,945 | 221 | 476 | 2,684 |
| 1997 | 665 | 3,916 | 190 | 491 | 2,518 |
| 1998 | 759 | 2,976 | 141 | 399 | 2,702 |
| 1999 | 757 | 3,468 | 149 | 410 | 2,836 |
| 2000 | 1,097 | 4,431 | 150 | 383 | 3,345 |
| 2001 | 1,188 | 5,589 | 135 | 410 | 3,513 |
| 2002 | 1,474 | 5,668 | 107 | 374 | 3,515 |
| 2003 | 1,424 | 5,466 | 117 | 321 | 2,757 |
| 2004 | 1,945 | 5,658 | 120 | 334 | 2,431 |
| 2005 | 1,685 | 4,964 | 100 | 344 | 2,269 |
| 2006 | 1,419 | 4,468 | 74 | 325 | 1,970 |
| 2007 | 1,172 | 3,834 | 110 | 316 | 2,218 |
| 2008 | 994 | 2,836 | 106 | 370 | 1,935 |
| 2009 | 784 | 2,076 | 118 | 429 | 2,364 |
| 2010 | 556 | 1,922 | 101 | 434 | 3,159 |
| 2011 | 365 | 1,776 | 102 | 374 | 2,516 |
| 2012 | 451 | 1,588 | 146 | 438 | 2,263 |
| 2013 | 512 | 1,512 | 299 | 545 | 2,484 |
| 2014 | 451 | 1,553 | 373 | 652 | 2,539 |
| 2015 | 371 | 1,183 | 477 | 832 | 2,378 |

*Figure 2: Bulgarian, Romanian, Greek, Italian, and Ukrainian Immigration to Canada, 1996–2015*[57]

There are various reasons for the declining interest of Bulgarians in Canada. The EU membership made labor migration from Bulgaria to Western Europe quite easy with minimum bureaucratic formalities and the low-cost airfares allowed Bulgarians to reach the wealthier EU member countries almost for free. In comparison, legal immigration to Canada has always been a long and expensive process and in recent years, the Canadian authorities have tightened the rules even further with new requirements for official language test results, job offers, etc. The misleading promotion of Canada is another factor. Immigration applicants often believe that by receiving the necessary points to immigrate to Canada, their education and qualifications would automatically be recognized by Canadian employers, whereas the real picture

[57] *Citizenship and Immigration Canada, Facts and Figures: Immigration Overview – Permanent and Temporary Residents,* Ottawa, Government of Canada, 2005, 44 and *Facts & Figures 2015: Immigration Overview – Permanent Residents – Annual IRCC Updates,* Ottawa, IRCC, 2015.

is quite different: Canadian experience, regulated professions requiring additional qualifications and exams in Canada, etc. The Canadian climate is also underestimated by many immigrants until they face their first real Canadian winter. It must also be observed that Canadian authorities do not seem to be interested in attracting more Bulgarian immigrants because Canada has enough immigration applications from other countries and regions, especially from Asia. As a result, most probably, the number of Bulgarian immigrants reaching Canada will continue to be low in the next decades, in the range 300-500 and the EU countries will remain the preferred place for relocation for the majority of Bulgarian immigrants.

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John Grudeff, interviewed by Irene Markoff, 9 February 1977 (MHSO Bulgarian collection).

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Rev. Valeri Shumarov, interviewed by the author, 15 May 2007.

Rev. Vasil Mihailoff, interviewed by Irene Markoff, 7 February 1977 (MHSO Bulgarian collection).

# CULTURAL APPROPRIATION IN TWO SHORT STORIES BY ALICE MUNRO: "FIVE POINTS" AND "THE ALBANIAN VIRGIN" – ECHOES OF THE BALKANS

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"That was a lie in one way and in another way true."
Alice Munro, "Five Points"

Abstract

*In this paper I will analyze the literary presentation of characters of Croatian and Albanian origin in two short stories by Alice Munro, "Five Points" and "The Albanian Virgin". The analyses will be conducted mainly from the point of view of Cultural Appropriation, and based on three main points: 1. The inevitable shift in meanings of all cultural information that crosses the Atlantic and the reflection of that shift in literature; 2. How the reinterpreted (semantically shifted) features of Balkan cultures/mentalities form preconceptions which become the basis for identifying and understanding certain national groups/minorities overseas, and how these constructed notions about Croats and Albanians were used by Alice Munro in creating narration and characters; 3. Scrutinizing every detectable instance of cultural appropriation and reinterpretation in these two short stories with regard to Balkans. As a conclusion, I will provide an overview of possible strengths and weaknesses of literary production which are partially or entirely based on the elements of the reinterpreted features of distant cultures in the two short stories.*

## Cultural Appropriation, Artistic Re-interpretation of Culture, and Benign Cultural Romanticism

### Cultural Appropriation

The definition of cultural appropriation accepted by the Writer's Union of Canada, approved June 1992 and cited in an essay by Bruce Ziff and Pratima V. Rao, states that cultural appropriation is "the taking – from a culture that is not one's own – of intellectual property, cultural expressions or artifacts,

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history and ways of knowledge."[2] In the same essay, the authors provide several examples of possible cultural appropriation, two of which are important for the analysis in this paper. The first is "[a] white writer published stories learned from members of West Coast Native Band. According to the customs and traditions of that band, the stories can be retold only by select elders". The second is the following: "W. P. Kinsella published a series of stories set on the Hobbema Reserve in Alberta. The stories are all fictional, as are the characters, though some of those characters are given names of people living on the reserve.[3] These two particular examples are very interesting for the analyses in this paper because both Croatian and Albanian cultures suppose a certain level of cultural taboo, which can be, and usually is, discussed (or retold) only by people in specific positions in the social hierarchy. Furthermore, both analyzed stories feature Munro's interesting and suggestive choice of personal names, a choice which is open to lot of discussion.

Ziff and Rao in their essay argue that the definition of cultural appropriation is a difficult task, and they go so far as to claim that it is practically impossible "to set clear limits as to where the concept of cultural appropriation begins and ends."[4] In that sense, almost every product of intercultural interaction could be regarded as some form of cultural appropriation. Not only is the term ambiguous, but, according to Ziff and Rao, even the two elements of the term *cultural* and *appropriation* are difficult to identify and define as concise scientific terms.

Firstly, we should consider what *culture* means, and, more importantly, how we define cultural groups. The entire history of humankind is about constant interaction of cultural circles. Furthermore, interaction means transmission of knowledge and experience, borrowing of ideas and concepts, all the way to the simple theft of cultural objects. In other words, most of our history was and is generated through some form of cultural appropriation (if the term is considered in its wider sense). With the development of science, modern ways of communication, and travel, this process of appropriation has inevitably and unstoppably accelerated. The first important question arises: *To which culture do we belong?*

And what are cultural practices? Ziff and Rao assert the following: "Just as defining the parameters of a cultural group is difficult, so, too, is establishing a theoretical basis for connecting a particular cultural practice to the group. If cultural practices develop from an amalgam of influences, it becomes difficult to assign these to one group over another."[5] Further in the text they

[2] Bruce Ziff – Pratima V. Rao (eds.), *Borrowed Power: essays on Cultural Appropriation*, New Brunswick, New Jersey, Rutgers University, 1997, 1.
[3] Ibid., 2.
[4] Ibid., 3.
[5] Ibid., 3.

emphasize that, considering the history of humankind, "cultural appropriation is a persuasive phenomenon."[6] In that sense, the authors point out that the Latin alphabet now used by a large portion of the world could be considered a "cultural artifact belonging to the ancient Phoenicians."[7] Not only have we appropriated the alphabet, but we also gave it a partially erroneous name – the Latin alphabet. In that sense, even Christianity could be seen as cultural appropriation from Phoenicians and related ancient peoples. The second important question emerges: *What belongs to our culture?*

Secondly, what is *appropriation*? Cultural appropriation always suggests *taking*. What is *taking*? And is cultural *taking*, or better put, taking intellectual property of a certain culture automatically a theft? Ziff and Rao rightly observe that: "the taking of [intellectual property] does not lead to the corresponding deprivation of the appropriated groups in the same way as it would if tangible objects were involved."[8]A clear demarcation between the taking (adapting, re-interpretation, etc.) of intellectual property and the crude theft of a cultural artefact is made. It is not the same to write about a distant culture, even if the author's only contact with that culture was through a travel book, and to cut out a part of an ancient Middle Eastern shrine and transport it to a large western museum, for example. It is the difference between a literary description of fox hunting by somebody who has, perhaps, never visited England, and actually participating in an illegal fox hunt in England. The intellectual content of civilization is common property. Even the parts of that content which are in some way protected by authorial rights, can be borrowed and re-interpreted in accordance with the laws and civilized behavior.

There is yet another issue to be observed, and that is cultural gain from some processes that could be described as cultural appropriation. This is closely connected to what Ziff and Rao call *in-ness* and *out-ness*. There is no need to emphasize how potentially dangerous these two terms are, how easily they could be misused, and how inapplicable they are to the theory of literature. A great example of this is the personal and artistic voyage of Michael Ondaatje, especially his romance diary "Running in the Family". Ondaatje, born a Burgher,[9] Sri Lanka, defied strict cultural classification from the very beginning of his life. Although of minority descent, in Sri Lanka he belonged to the circle of *in-ness* while always partially remaining in *out-ness*, which is wonderfully described in his romance diary. After moving to England, where he spent an important part of his life, Ondaatje found himself in *out-ness* and was probably subjected to a certain level of assimilation. Finally, at the age of

[6] Ibid., 4.
[7] Ibid., 4.
[8] Ibid., 4.
[9] People of mixed Dutch, Portuguese and various Sri Lankan origin born in Sri Lanka and typically using English as their first language.

19, Ondaatje moved to Montreal, Quebec, and become a Canadian. He wrote *Running in the Family* from the point of view of a Canadian who became an outsider in his country of birth and is trying to reconstruct his childhood, while simultaneously admitting that any form of objective reconstruction is impossible. Ondaatje's value to Canadian culture is obvious; besides being an internationally recognized Canadian author, Ondaatje has also opened the door to other cultures which would likely otherwise have remained closed for most Canadian readers. We could claim that Ondaatje is both an outsider and insider in both Sri Lanka and Canada and, finally, why would we? Not to mention questioning Ondaatje's right to appropriate elements of any culture he used in his writing. Ondaatje's life and his work include many examples of both cultural appropriation and assimilation, and, as such, they disclose the relativity of both terms.

Secondly, sometimes a view from *out-ness* is regarded as the most precious for the observed culture. In connected to this, Oszkár Roginer's seminal work *Jugoszláviai Magyar irodalom terei* analyzes the work of Hungarian minority authors from ex-Yugoslavia who wrote about typically Yugoslav themes and places, for example, verses on Tito's greatness, and poems about places like Sarajevo and Montenegro. All these themes were largely, if not entirely unknown to authors in Hungary. Here we can detect a certain degree of cultural assimilation; the ethnic Hungarian writers in question were Yugoslav citizens, but wrote about other cultures in their own minority language. How do we even define the idea of *in-ness* or *out-ness* in this case? Kálmán Dudás wrote about the Croatian city of Split in Hungarian: "… a végső csend; alattalám,/ százados ataraxiából/nem lázad Dioklécián…/de mintha zene rémlene –/ Meštrović csarnokából?"[10] Is this cultural appropriation followed by cultural assimilation? In my opinion, this and similar examples only prove how vague and ephemeral the idea of cultural appropriation in literature really is, and how cultural appropriation can enrich a culture without hurting another one.

Thirdly, Ziff and Rao note another important feature of cultural appropriation: "[cultural appropriation] can be viewed as a multidirectional phenomenon." They continue: "cultural appropriation can be constructed to have a complementary opposite: cultural assimilation."[11] This will be of great importance in the analyses of both short stories, and especially in understanding

[10] Oszkár Roginer, *Jugoszláviai Magyar irodalom terei*, Zenta, VMMI, 2019, 190.
In my translation from Hungarian: …the ultimate silence; alas, under it/Diocletian does not revolt/from centuries old ataraxy…/but as if music could be heard –/reaching out from Meštrović's hall?" Dudás's verses contain all the usual elements which are susceptible of cultural appropriation: a language not spoken by the majority in a depicted place, (possibly over-) usage of local names, and verbalized emotional involvement. While Dudás was a Yugoslav citizen, this example points towards cultural assimilation rather than appropriation, but it simultaneously defies both.

[11] Ziff – Rao (eds.), *Borrowed Power,* 5.

Munro's depiction of the character of Gjurdhi in "The Albanian Virgin", a character who is assimilating to Canadian culture but never really tries or succeeds in controlling the intrinsic impulses of his original culture.

Finally, Ziff and Rao elaborate on yet another very important issue in understanding cultural appropriation, and that is politics, or, rather the power games behind it. In that sense, authors claim that the main issues of cultural appropriation today are "about minority groups and subjects (the disempowered, colonized, peripheral, or subordinate) who are seeking to claim and protect the right to a cultural heritage."[12] This claim is interesting in regard to the analysis of the Croatian and Albanian characters in the two Alice Munro stories. Firstly, because both Croatian and Albanian culture feature specific national and cultural struggles, which, although different thematically, actually function within (both Croatian and Albanian, respectively) shared mentalities in very similar ways. In relation to this, Alice Munro has touched upon the two important issues of politics and power in both societies: Catholic faith in "Five Points" (religious people being the group which is in constant need of reconfirmation ever since the beginning of the 1990s), and peripherality and even exoticism in "The Albanian Virgin" (the idea of isolation and unrecognizability being one of the main frustrations of modern Albanian society). Secondly, the term of cultural appropriation seems to bear one very important and intellectually progressive practical feature – its role is also to protect minorities from false interpretation and unfair assimilation. Canada is a country of immigrants, and Albanian and Croatian are relatively small minorities. It is reasonable to assume that they could be seen as the more 'exotic' ones in Canada. Croatians and Albanians in Canada definitely fall into the group of peripheral and probably not overexposed minorities, who could even be sensitive to literary depictions of their cultures (this sensitivity being probably the only solid argument in favour of cultural appropriation in literature).

In my analyses of Munro's two short stories, I will identify and explain instances of cultural approximation at the level of meanings, plots and characters, and explore the effects of that literary device on the overall integrity of the texts. My method is comparative and interdisciplinary due to the important input from cultural studies (and partially history).

## Artistic Re-interpretation of Culture

The basic question behind the phenomenon of cultural appropriation in literature, in my opinion, is not the issue of defining and identifying cultural appropriation but rather the question of ethics and morality. Ziff and Rao

[12] Ibid., 8.

point out in their essay that cultural appropriation is largely preconditioned by politics, history and power games of all sorts. Under such conditions, this term is going through a constant process of redefinition and readjustment in a process that Ziff and Rao refer to as "moral algebra."[13] In this instance, we are referring to the morals of the writer, which is in itself a very questionable way of conducting literary research. In his crucial work *The World as Will and Idea*, A. Schopenhauer explains that "we should not require a moral philosopher to be exceptionally moral."[14] And indeed, this claim is correct, if nothing else, from the sheer practical point of view of the creation of cultural material. So, why should we assume a moral parallel between writers of fiction and their work? It is only stories, after all, good or bad stories.

Basic questions behind cultural appropriation (such as taking, cultural practices, belonging, morality, etc.) remain far out of the reach of the theory of literature in the narrow sense. If a certain text contains elements that are openly offensive to one cultural group, and is classified as hate speech (or rather hate writing) by the informed majority belonging to all cultural groups, then that text is automatically discredited as either bad literature or not literature at all. If authors of certain texts appropriate elements of other cultures, and the resulting text might be seen as offensive to only one cultural group, then this can produce two results: bad or good literature, with very little space left for ethical or moral considerations. This simply means that the theory of literature already possesses innate mechanisms which determine what should be practiced and what should be avoided in the production of literary texts of quality and integrity. Artistic freedom, poetic license, the freedom of creation, on the other hand, have to be preserved at any cost.

Furthermore, even if the study of Ethics could provide a precise definition of cultural appropriation, I have my doubts about the restrictive application of that definition within the theory of art. In the words of James O. Young, "cultural appropriation is important to the flourishing of the arts in the contemporary world."[15] Every work of art is basically the re-interpretation of something, be it physical or emotional reality or other art, making the re-interpretation in the arts synonymous with cultural appropriation in the arts. As far as literature is concerned, this can be clearly seen in the adaptation of literary works (re-interpretation being the basis for every adaptation). Pascal Nicklas and Oliver Lindner note in their introductory essay to *Adaptation and Cultural Appropriation: Literature, Film and the Arts* that Julie Sanders sees adaptation and cultural appropriation as "siblings, if not non-identical

[13] Ziff – Rao (eds.), *Borrowed*, 5.
[14] Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Idea*, London, Everyman, 1997, xviii.
[15] James O. Young, *Cultural Appropriation and the Arts*, Wiley-Blackwell, 2010, 28.

twins."[16] Nicklas and Lindner continue: "Particularly cultural appropriation implies a move towards the new version rather than a move away from the 'original'. The process of adaptation as appropriation, thus, tends to be characterized in this context as the creation of new cultural capital."[17] This statement is also valid for the adaptation of literary characters.

None of the characters in the two Munro's short stories are firmly anchored in any fixed cultural circle; they are all characters in a constant state of change. Munro has provided each character with basic features acquired through cultural appropriation and then exposed them to continuous assimilation, thus creating a newly derived cultural reality. This can clearly be seen in the fact that Maria in "Five Points" assimilates to Canadian culture at a much faster pace than her parents, but she largely remains governed by their traditionalist laws, and in the fact that Charlotte in "The Albanian Virgin" becomes assimilated into Albanian society but never entirely denounces her Canadianess, while her husband Gjurdhi becomes assimilated to the Canadian culture but never entirely denounces his Albanian identity which means that all three characters become representatives of a new and hybrid 'culture in between'.

Hence, cultural appropriation in literature is largely a matter of quality writing, common sense and good taste. Furthermore, appropriation in literature mostly means re-interpretation, which is very important for literature and especially so for modern literature, and, finally, it is closely related to literary adaptation and, as such, indivisible from most of literary practice.

## Benign Cultural Romanticism

In a similar way to Ziff and Rao, James O. Young differentiates between cultural appropriation in the arts as theft (of usually physical objects of culture), and cultural appropriation as a profoundly offensive conduct of the artist or the offensive nature of an artistic product. He continues by stating that "other [than theft] acts of cultural appropriation are morally benign. Some works of art are aesthetic failures precisely because an artist has appropriated content in a clumsy and ineffective manner."[18] This claim verbalizes one of the starting points of my analyses. While Munro's cultural appropriation in the two analyzed short stories is surely a product of a benign artistic process, the effectiveness of her cultural re-interpretation is certainly open to discussion.

[16] Pascal Nicklas – Oliver Lindner, *Adaptation and Cultural Appropriation: Literature, Film and the Arts*, Berlin/Boston, De Gruyter, 2012, 4.
[17] Ibid., 6.
[18] Young, *Cultural Appropriation,* 28.

Cultural romanticism in modern literature can, in my opinion, in some instances, be compared to positive discrimination in social studies. Hence, cultural romanticism is often based on positive (benevolent) prejudice. Such romanticism, which overemphasizes various features of greatness in a certain culture, strongly affects the quality of literary work while leaving the described, that is, appropriated culture distant and intact. These claims can find fertile ground especially in the analysis of "The Albanian Virgin".

In his literary works, Lord Byron glorified Greek culture and people and his biased description of the idyllic Greek society escapes scientific scrutiny simply because it was written in times when this was a sort of a stylistic standard. What Munro offers in "The Albanian Virgin" is close to idealization; many of the idyllic scenes of village life in the story are written in a "neo-Byronic" style. Interestingly, Lord Byron is mentioned in "The Albanian Virgin" in a humorous depiction of the narrator's attempt to write a thesis. This might be seen as Munro's attempt at (self-)irony (regarding Charlotte's re-interpretation of the story) or as an expression of parallelism in the narrator's destiny: unable to write a thesis on Mary Shelley and related themes from the period of Romanticism, the narrator gets a chance to witness a romantic Byronic story in her real life.

## "Five Points": Enforcing the Common Denominator

Alice Munro's "Five Points" was published in the collection of short prose *Friend of my Youth* in 1990, four years before the publication of "The Albanian Virgin", with which it shares many similarities. Just like parts of "The Albanian Virgin", the plot of "Five Points" is set in Victoria, British Columbia. Both stories feature intertwined sections of the main and the auxiliary narrations, and both stories end with a revelation from the auxiliary narration, which is crucial for understanding the main narration. Furthermore, in both stories, the auxiliary narration is retold by one of the characters in the main narration. Finally, both stories contain elements of cultural re-interpretation.

The main narration of the story is about Brenda, a married family woman who is having an affair with Neil. Only the auxiliary narration, retold by Neil, contains elements of literary cultural re-interpretation. Neil remembers his childhood and the candy store run by a Croatian family. The Croatian family had a daughter, a thirteen-year-old girl, who was not blessed with good looks but was assertive enough to pay young boys to have sex with her. Maria's addiction to sex finally leads to the bankruptcy of the store, and the family leaving the town. At the core of both narrations is Munro's delicate examination of the power games in male-female relationships.

My analysis of the short story "Five Points" will be short because I will focus on only two points of discussion: 1. Literary deployment of passive elements of culture; 2. Cultural approximation in literature. This analysis will serve as a prelude to my analysis of "The Albanian Virgin".

**Literary deployment of passive elements of culture**

By *passive* elements of culture, I mean all the instances when a cultural feature is mentioned in a literary text unexplained and undescribed. A feature of a culture is used as a passive leitmotif, which is important for the development of the narration and the characters.

"Five Points" provides an illustrative example of such cultural re-interpretation. When Neil remembers Maria's family taking over the candy shop, he is not certain about the family's origin. Neil says: "After she died, some new people, Europeans, not Poles or Czechs but from some smaller country – Croatia; is that a country? – took over the candy store and changed it."[19] This example shows Munro's masterful use of dialogues in constructing literary characters. The sentence hints at at least two important aspects of Neil's character. Firstly, he seems to be quite a superficial or at least a careless person who does not care much about details. It is a bit surprising that Neil actually knows that both Poland and the Czech Republic are bigger countries than Croatia. Secondly, and more importantly, this example shows that Neil feels he is in the position of power. When Neil asks "is Croatia a country?" that only emphasizes his power to distance himself from all of the facts that do not directly influence his life (and this is the attitude he partially has towards Brenda). Neil's feeling of power and, perhaps, supremacy, is only reconfirmed when he states: "… she would call for her husband in Croatian, or whatever – let's say it was Croatian – in such a startled way you'd think you'd broken into her house…"[20] In this way, besides explaining Neil's mentality, Munro also sets a semantic binary opposition between the two working classes in Canada: the Canadian working class (illusion of power) and the immigrant working class in Canada (mostly shut out from or unaware of power). Besides that, Neil's statement shows that the man in the Croatian family was regarded by his wife as *the one who solves problems*, and that provides yet another layer of cultural commentry.

Neil mentions Croatians two more times in the story. "Croatians", without any explanation or description, is how he refers to Maria and her family. He is using this term purely mechanically, deploringly denying members of Maria's family any personal or cultural identity; Neil is simply saying "Croatians kept

[19] Alice Munro, *Friend of My Youth*, London, Vintage, 1996, 25.
[20] Ibid., 26.

the old name for it"[21] and "old pressed-tin ceiling, which the Croatians had painted white."[22] By saying *Croatians did this or that*, Neil emphasizes that his description of Maria and her family is free of any personal or emotional engagement and this attitude, perhaps, implies a tone which could be understood as degrading.

The description of Maria's parents is also very interesting. Her father is described as a "little bald guy, polite and nervous, a chain-smoker, and she was a big, heavy woman…"[23], a description that follows all the usual clichés about southern European or Mediterranean married couples in general. Furthermore, the husband is described as a man in charge, the one who did the hard job and spoke decent English, while the wife, who did not speak English at all, seems to be his subordinate. Neil does not fail to observe that their children, Maria and Linda, "spoke English just like Canadians"[24] signalling their full assimilation into Canadian society.

In that respect, only the fully assimilated members of the family, Maria and Lisa, have names that Neil remembers. Both Lisa (Cro. *Liza* or *Elizabeta*) and Maria (Cro. *Marija*) are typical female Croatian first names that strongly imply a Catholic background. Furthermore, Neil discovers that both girls went to a convent school, which confirms that the family, at least to the outside observer, lived according to Catholic traditions. While in no way communicated in the story, it is common knowledge that some countries in Eastern Europe, especially Croatia, have deep cultural roots in Catholicism.[25]

The important question for us is why did the Croatian family (except for Lisa) leave the town after the candy shop closed? By saying that "[a]t least they believed they couldn't [run the candy shop]. Maybe they simply had not the heart to go on"[26] Neil implies that the family business might have been saved, and that the family left because they wanted to, and not because they had to leave. Maria's deviant behaviour surely had a devastating impact on a traditional family such as hers. Neil implies that the reason the family left could be *shame*, and that again provides cultural commentary confirming ingrained generalized stereotypes of Balkan mentalities.[27]

[21] Ibid., 29.
[22] Ibid., 30.
[23] Ibid., 26.
[24] Ibid., 26.
[25] There is, in my opinion, an interesting ironic comment on religion hidden in the story "Five Points". The candy store is a place of Maria's sexual misconduct, and, as the name *candy store* might insinuate, a place of sin. When the family business was closed, according to Neil, it was reopened as a laundromat. Laundromat, a place where people come to wash their laundry, can be perceived a place of atonement of sin.
[26] Alice Munro, *Friend of My Youth*, 37.
[27] The mentalities of the Balkans are usually perceived as traditional and collectivist, hence, highly dependent on 'the opinion of others'.

Introducing unexpected reversals in the narration to deconstruct the reality established by a story is one of Munro's typical writing techniques that has brought her a lot of acclaim. A set of switches is feature in "Five Points" as well, the most important being Neil's confession to Brenda that he too was among the boys who were paid for sex by Maria. This switch redefines the basic balance of power in the story; suddenly Maria is, in a way, seen as a dominant character, and Neil as someone submissive, leading to a deep change in how Brenda perceives Neil. Yet another example of a Munrovian switch is more important from the point of cultural re-interpretation; namely that of Maria's mother. Although described as "meek", passive and subdued to her husband, it is actually the mother who decides to sue Maria in court. We can assume that the mother's legal proceedings against her daughter made the family's misfortune even more public. In spite of her cultural predetermination and her shame, Maria's mother decided to go to court rather than to cover up the incident and silently withdraw. These two Munrovian switches assign a certain female power to both Maria and her mother, which, again, goes along with the notion of a *tragic strong woman from the shadows*, so prominent in the southeastern European cultural circle.[28]

The last issue I would like to address in this section is: Why Croatia? Modern Croatia came into being in the early 1990s, with its independence being recognized in 1991. Because of that, and, even more so, because of the war that followed, Croatia suddenly found itself in the spotlight due to the media, scholarly discourse, and public attention in the west. A similar phenomenon happened to Greece with Lord Byron and the Greek War of Independence in the early 19th century, and Albania with the first popular reports on the country and its culture in the late 19th century and after independence in the early 20th century. I would not want to presume that this exposure of Croatia through the media really influenced Munro's literary choice, but it surely might have done so.

## Cultural approximation in "Five Points"

Recalling Maria's mother, Neil mentions twice that she was making pierogi (and poppy-seed loaf is mentioned once). While pastry covered with poppy-seed is indeed featured in the Croatian cuisine, pierogi is certainly not. Pierogi are filled dumplings of Central and Eastern European origin[29], spelled as

[28] The idea of the tragic (strong) woman is present in the tradition of the Balkans since the Illyrian times and the story of Queen Teuta (and various legends of the *walled-in woman*), in classical Greek literature (for example Antigone), to more modern times (for example, the myth of Karolina Belinić who risked her life to save the city of Rijeka during Napoleonic Wars and later died forgotten and denied). A tragic strong woman from the shadow is also prominent in a lot of Munro's writing, regardless of the cultural background of the characters.

[29] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierogi (accessed April 2020).

*pierogi* or *pirogi* in Polish and *пироги* in Russian. It is interesting that Polish Wikipedia states China as the origin of pierogi, while Russian Wikipedia describes pierogi as a traditional Polish meal.[30] There are similar meals in Croatian cuisine, the closest ones probably being *knedle* (German *Knödel*) and ravioli (Italian *ravioli* or *tortellini*) while pierogi translates into Croatian as *piroge*, *pierogi* or *okruglice*, *piroške*.[31]

There can be three explanations for this culinary issue. Perhaps Munro was imprecise in her cultural description of Croatian cuisine, and perhaps it is Neil's mistake. It is possible that Neil encountered pierogi in other ethnic Slavonic restaurants and then falsely identified Maria's mother's pastry as pierogi. The third possibility is cultural approximation. During my time in Budapest, I noticed that many restaurants that use the word *Turkish* in their names were actually run by the Kurds, Hungarians, Armenians or even Greeks. When asked why they chose to open Turkish restaurants, I was told that *Turkish* implied a certain established cultural notion that brought the restaurants advantage on the market. Everybody knows what *Turkish* means in food: delicious and easily available in most of the large western cities. Opening, for example, a Kurdish restaurant might imply much more operational risk. This is what I call cultural approximation. Pierogi is quite a popular meal in North America, thanks to numerous immigrants of various Slavonic origins. Croatians, speakers of a Slavonic language, hence, recognized as Slavs by the people in the west, were quite exotic and unrecognized in many parts of Canada when pierogi was already established. It is possible that Maria's family played safe; they decided to adopt and serve a popular meal that would bring them profit, although it had very little to do with their own culture except the general classification as 'being Slavonic'. This example of cultural approximation enforces a common denominator on all Slavs the same way as Neil's mentioning of Maria's family enforces a common denominator on all Croatians.

Croatian culture in "Five Points" is not described, it is merely mentioned, and that makes Neil an entirely different cultural narrator than Charlotte in "The Albanian Virgin". Neil's emotional distance as a narrator, as opposed to Charlotte's deep emotional engagement, leaves the reader to detect and interpret, in an entirely independent and personal way, numerous and complex cultural connotations provided by the story. Cultural re-interpretation featured or, more precisely, hinted at in "Five Points", has two main results: it significantly contributes to the artistic value of the story, and, consequently, makes Neil a more reliable narrator than Charlotte.

[30] https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pierogi and the Russian version of the page (accessed April 2020).

[31] I think both *okruglice* and *piroške* are erroneous translations. *Okruglice* implies a round shape (Croatian *krug* means *circle*) making this meal different than pierogi and similar to *knedle*. *Piroška* in Croatian language usually depicts an entirely different type of pastry of Hungarian origin (Hungarian *piros* means *red*) which is baked, and not cooked like pierogi.

## "The Albanian Virgin": Assimilation Before Appropriation Before Assimilation

The short story "The Albanian Virgin" by Alice Munro was published in the collection *Open Secrets* (1994). The story features two very different yet entirely intertwined plots. The first is a story of a Canadian woman stranded in Albania during 1920s. She is taken to a village in the northern region of Albania, known for its mountains and adherence to the traditional way of life. In the village, she is given the name Lottar and is largely culturally assimilated. When the otherwise Catholic village decides to marry Lottar to a Muslim, Lottar is made a sworn virgin[32] by the Franciscan priest in order to prevent the marriage. Lottar then flees, and is helped by the Franciscan priest. Lottar and, presumably the priest, return/emigrate to Canada.

The second story is told by an unnamed female narrator in the first person, a member of a typical Canadian urban and liberal society. The narrator's life story is a stark contrast to that of Lottar in terms of personal freedom (that is, the freedom to decide), and this is just one of the binary semantic oppositions in the story. When she was young, the narrator married Donald, who she had met at the University. However, she is having an affair with a neighbor, Nelson, and that leads to her ending up alone, moving away and opening a small bookstore. In the bookstore, she meets an unusual older couple, Charlotte and Gjurdhi, and starts to bond with them. When Charlotte falls ill, the narrator visits her in the hospital. During these visits, Charlotte tells the story of Lottar. There are many hints in the story that point towards the fact that Charlotte is actually Lottar, that Gjurdhi is the Franciscan priest, and that the story Charlotte is telling from the hospital bed is actually the story of her life.

[32] A *sworn virgin* (Alb. *burrnesha*, *vajzë e betuar*, *virgjineshë*; Slavonic languages *virdžina*, *ostajnica*, *tobelija*) is an Albanian tradition, especially in the northern mountainous region, which was also recorded in Montenegro, parts of Bosnia, Serbia, Northern Macedonia, and Dalmatia in Croatia. When traditional patriarchal families were left without a male head or heir, or when the family was struck by other specific types of misfortune in the traditional system of values, or when an unwanted marriage was to be avoided, woman of any age was sworn to take on a male role in the family, usually without her consent. That meant that the woman would dress and behave as a man and could not start a family of her own. The woman could also carry a gun, smoke and spend time in the company of men, all of which was forbidden to other women. In Albania, the tradition of sworn virgins originates from a crucial legal document from the 15th century, the *Kanuni i Lekë Dukagjinit*, and the sworn virgins exist to this very day. Interestingly enough, similar practices were documented between the indigenous people of the Americans. Knowledge about Albanian sworn virgins was brought to the west by missionaries, travelers and anthropologists in the 19th and early 20th centuries. The idea and the exoticism of the sworn virgins was (over)exploited in the western cultures ever since. (Partially based on Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Albanian_sworn_virgins [accessed April 2020]).

There are three typically Munrovian switches in the story that are important for this analysis: 1. Lottar becomes a sworn virgin, basically taking on all the social functions of a male (gender switch), 2. the story of Lottar is a story within a story, it is retold by Charlotte (switch in narration), and, 3. the story strongly suggests that Lottar and the Franciscan priest are actually Charlotte and Gjurdhi (a typical Munrovian switch in the plot and also another semantic binary opposition between Charlotte and Gjurdhi in Albania and Canada). It is important to understand that this is a story of constant change and re-definition of characters and situations (like so many other stories by Munro). And because the story of Lottar was retold by an older woman in a hospital, making her a fairly unreliable narrator (who claims that her story was a fictional idea for a movie), a certain distance from reality is achieved. In that sense, Charlotte's visions and depictions of Albania cannot and should not be seen as (only) factual and credible.

"The Albanian Virgin" is especially interesting from the point of view of cultural appropriation or cultural re-interpretation. This is so for at least these four main reasons: 1. It is one of the rare stories by Alice Munro which is partially not set in Canada, 2. It features a wide range of depictions of a foreign land and people, from geography to cultural rituals, 3. The plot is based on one specific cultural ritual of gender-swapping, which is also in the title of the story, and, 4. It features two main characters who are exposed to both processes of cultural appropriation and cultural assimilation. I will proceed by establishing a set of focal points of discussion important for the analysis and provide examples from the text for each point.

The focal points of discussion in this analysis will be 1. Appropriation and re-interpretation of traditions (customs, clothes, women), names (personal names and toponyms), and factual cultural data (language, economy, geography, religion), 2. Descriptions of assimilation, and 3. Binary oppositions used in depictions of a culture. I will provide sources of knowledge possibly used by Alice Munro for her literary descriptions explained by these three points.

## Appropriation and re-interpretation of traditions, names, and factual cultural data

As featured in the title "The Albanian Virgin", the pivotal idea for understanding the story is that of the sworn virgin. But let us first see how Alice Munro came into contact with this ethnographic knowledge. During the 20th century, Balkan *exoticism* was often the theme of numerous scholarly and popular publications in the West. It is worth mentioning the work of Edith Durham, a British traveler and author of many works on the Balkans, and especially Albania. In 1910, Durham took a trip "down the coast of Dalmatia, traveling from Trieste to Kotor and then overland to Cetinje, the capital of

Montenegro".[33] This mainly coincides with Munro's description of Charlotte's voyage in the story, which also started in Trieste down the Dalmatian coast. Charlotte then stopped in the port of Bar, but "she would never take the road over the mountains to Cetinge[34], Montenegro's capital city" (because she was attacked on the way and taken to Northern Albania). Besides the possible influence of Durham's writing, the descriptions of Montenegro also bear some features of tourist guidebooks. The narrator of the story is a bookstore owner, just like Alice Munro was (there seem to be a few autobiographic or semi-autobiographic elements in the story), and she had various travel books at her disposal. The narrator even mentions several of these books: *A Trek Through the Black Peaks*, *High Albania*, and *Secret Lands of Southern Europe*. I could not find *A Trek Through the Black Peaks* and *Secret Lands of Southern Europe* online (these might be pseudo titles, maybe connected to the books on Mediterranean cruises that the narrator mentions at one point), but *High Albania* is one of the central pieces by Edith Durham in which she writes precisely about the northern part of Albania which is featured in "The Albanian Virgin". I believe it is quite possible that Alice Munro gave away her principal sources of the knowledge on Albania and its culture, and these are the works by Edith Durham and travel books. The influence of Durham's writing can be seen in Munro's idyllic descriptions of Albanian cultural practices, while the influence of travel books is even more obvious in Munro's use of multiple names for places, in her simplified explanations of some features of the land and its people, and in the somewhat forced introduction of various bits of factual data, which are used to make the story credible. However, this often has the opposite effect. For example, in her description of Lottar's life after becoming a sworn virgin, Munro lists all the features of sworn virgins' lives that can be found in popular descriptions (mainly travel books): Lottar belongs to the village, she has to move into a separate house, she cannot spend time with women any more, she spends time with the men, she can smoke and carry a gun (Munro even specifies which type of gun). In one whole passage, the Franciscan priest gives his own definition of the sworn virgin, and he lists all of these features more in the manner of a tourist guide than someone deeply immersed in the described culture.[35]

[33] Edith Durham was a great Serbophile that turned Albanophile. In her later works she praised the Albanians and did not hide her despise for the Serbs. Her legacy is still highly regarded in Albania and Kosovo. Durham herself was a subject of great controversy and it would be extremely interesting to analyze her work from the point of view of cultural appropriation. (Partially based on Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edith_Durham#Collections [accessed April 2020].)

[34] This is an erroneous spelling of the Italian name for Cetinje used in the story; the right form would be Cettigne.

[35] Although the idea of the sworn virgin was introduced earlier in the story when Lottar sees a sworn virgin, does not recognize him as *her*, and is subsequently laughed at by the village women.

There is also a possible error in Munro's description of the cultural phenomenon of sworn virgins. Lottar is *made a sworn virgin* by the Franciscan after the priest discovers the village's plan to marry Lottar to a Muslim. It is quite unlikely, if not impossible, that an unrelated religious person could perform that. Sworn virgins were made by the village, that is, village leaders, by the families of the women, and, very rarely, by the women themselves. Munro's decision to retell the story of Lottar through an unreliable narrator comes in quite handy here.

The other cultural practice that Munro engages with is that of blood feud.[36] Again, Munro first introduces the idea through the voice of the Franciscan who explans the two most popular notions connected to blood feud: *blood* and *honour*. There is quite a problematic passage in the text connected to blood feud as well, this time verbalized by Charlotte. When describing a man's preparation for what Munro calls *expedition of punishment* (for which I could not find a corresponding term in the Albanian tradition of *gjakmarrja*), a young man's execution of the first killing, the author describes an idyllic scene, almost a festivity of sorts, where the man is adorned with his best clothes and has a haircut by the women who are joyously trying to encourage the young men before the killing. This seems to be a bit of an exaggeration. Traditional killings according to the laws of the blood revenge were typically regarded as a matter of duty. As such, men who performed the killings needed no encouragement to do so nor did they feel any joy in doing it. The families of those involved in the blood feud, both the killers and victims, lived in constant anxiety and silent mourning. Munro goes even further to claim that those who failed in their first killing could not find a wife because the women were ashamed to marry someone who did not kill. This also seems as an exaggeration; those who failed to execute a killing waited for another chance (even till the end of their lives when the obligation was passed on to someone else), and women generally had no say in who they could marry and who they could not.

The following tradition described in the story is that of popular superstitions among the Albanian people. Superstitions of all sorts, especially stories of demonic and supernatural creatures (for example, the tradition of *vampires* originates from Serbia) are very typical of the Balkans, hence, these stories

[36] In Albanian *gjakmarrja* (compesation in blood) or *hakmarrja* (revenge), a tradition with origins also traceable to Dukagjini's *Kanuni*. At the core of the tradition is honor, that is, its preservation and defense. According to the blood feud, each crime or dishonourable behavior was sanctioned by a corresponding punishment which often included killing. The blood feud was hereditary and was often inherited by the younger generations which were in no way connected to the original crime. Because of the universal law that no one could be harmed over the threshold of their home, some of the people sentenced to death by the pledge of the blood feud, the so called *besa*, would hide in high towers (Alb. *kullë* or *kulla*) or they would erect high walls around their houses. The blood feud existed in most of the Balkans, from the south all the way to central Croatia. In the Slavonic speaking countries, it was known as *krvna osveta* (blood revenge), and it was practiced well into the 20th century.

became an important part of the cultural image of the Balkans constructed by outsiders. Charlotte talks about two types of supernatural creatures, *Striga*[37] and *ora*. Both *striga* and *ora* do feature in Albanian folk tradition and both are, not surprisingly, featured in Edith Durham's book. It seems that in this instance, Munro is dangerously playing with the popular images of the region, which can easily be seen as clichés, especially amassed in this manner in a literary work.

There is yet another questionable usage of a cultural feature in the story. When the Franciscan talks about his return from Italy to Albania, he says that a hairless face in the northern part of Albania is a disgrace, and that coming there without a moustache would be met with the disapproval and scorn of the locals. This might be a bit of an exaggeration. While most of the men really did grow moustaches in the past as a sign of maturity, there were those who did not, especially among the younger men. On the other hand, moustaches were regarded as a sign of masculinity not only in northern Albania but in most of Europe at the time.

Probably the most questionable passage in the story from the point of cultural appropriation is surely Munro's idyllic description of Albanian men and women running through the woods in the summer, and she writes, "it seemed that this was a custom of theirs." I could not find any confirmation of this being an Albanian custom but this is the lesser problem. From the point of view of literature, the problem is more in the neo-Byronic writing style that, in my opinion greatly affects the credibility and the critical appreciation of the story. This is only further emphasized with the following description of Albanians sitting on the banks of a stream, smoking and talking. The entire passage could easily have been an ekphrastic description of a romanticist painting, glorifying the idyllic purity of a certain cultural group.

The description of clothes features prominently in Alice Munro's writing, and "The Albanian Virgin" is no exception. One long passage of the text is dedicated to the detailed description of both male and female Albanian folk costumes. Munro does not stop at simply describing the clothes but she also describes their production. When the villagers dress Lottar up for the marriage, Munro provides yet another description of national costume, this time a traditional female wedding dress. In the second half of the story, which is more concentrated on the Canadian setting, Munro uses descriptions of clothes to express Charlotte's and Gjurdhi's alienation from the dominant Canadian culture.

[37] The term is derived from the Italian word *strega*, which simply means *witch*. The word was adopted in the Croatian language as well as *štriga*, with the same meaning. Pronounced in the same way as štriga, the Albanian version is *shtriga* (spelt erroneously in Munro's story). The Albanian shtriga is also a vampire, a blood-sucking woman that can take a form of a moth. This directly corresponds to the south Serbian myth of *leptirica* (meaning *moth*), a blood-sucking woman that can turn into a moth as well. The myth was the theme of the first Yugoslav horror movie *Leptirica* (1973).

Descriptions of women in "The Albanian Virgin" follow the usual patterns set in descriptions of patriarchal societies. Women are described as absolutely subservient to men, separated from them physically and practically. Albanian women in Munro's descriptions are simply servants, important for the functioning of society, but deprived even of the right to decide their own marriage choices. It is interesting that Munro seemingly makes no comment on the position of women in traditional Albanian society but a comment is rather achieved by contrasting the life of Lottar and the liberal lifestyle of the narrator. However, after reading the story, I was under the impression that the women from traditional Albanian society found more happiness in life than the narrator.

Names in "The Albanian Virgin" are extremely important for the analysis of cultural re-interpretation. First of all, if we accept the idea that Charlotte and Lottar are one and the same person, then we have to assume that the name Lottar is, as noted in the story, how the locals heard and interpreted the name *Charlotte*. There are two possible problems with this. Firstly, the name Charlotte exists in the Albanian language, and there it is used as Sharlota or possibly an Italianised version Karlota (Carlota). There is no reason why the villagers in Albania, especially in a Catholic village, would have any problem adopting the name Charlotte. It is possible that, because of the English pronunciation, the villagers heard only the ending of the name (as it often happens in communication), which sounded like *'lot'*, and then it became Lottar. There is a problem with that, too. In the Albanian language, the sound /l/ is written with double *ll* (even at the beginning of words), while one *l* connotes the soft /ʎ/ sound (palatal lateral approximant; which is not really present English). Hence, the spelling of the name should be Llottar. Of course, it is possible that Lottar is short for the already Albanized form of Sharlota. However, the ending with *-r* still remains a bit odd as most of the Albanian given female names follow the (predominant phonetic Indo-European languages') pattern of *-a/-e/-ë* endings. If it was Munro's intention to name her character Lottar (with the soft /ʎ/ sound in the beginning), there is a possible semantic parallel to the Albanian word with the root *lot-* (*lot*, pl. *lotët*), meaning *teardrop* or the word *luftëtar* meaning *fighter.* This surely is a bold observation but, I believe, an interesting one, taking into consideration Munro's inclination to literary characterization through the use of given names.

Similar to Lottar, both Tima and Gjurdhi seem to be invented names not attested to in the Albanian language. In that respect, the name Gjurdhi is very interesting because it contains two typically Albanian graphemes *gj* and *dh*. The Albanian word *gjunjëzuar* (from *gju(r)-*) depicts the adjective *kneeling*, and that could be brought into direct connection with Gjurdhi's previous life of Franciscan priest. Furthermore, the word *dhi* depicts a *goat*. In that sense, the name Gjurdhi could easily be explained as 'the kneeling goat.' This

re-interpretation of elements of a culture speaks for itself in the sense of cultural appropriation (especially if we draw a parallel between the name of *Gjurdhi* and the similar naming practices among the indigenous people of the Americas).

At the very beginning of the story, Munro provides a questionable translation of Crna Gora as *Black Rock* or Montenegro. The right translation is *Black Mountain*, just as the Italianised term of Montenegro implies. The story is set in the region known in Albanian language as Malësi e Madhe (meaning *Great Mountains*), and right at the beginning Munro states that the region is known in the language of the Ghegs[38] as *Maltsia e madhe*, which is correct, phonetically at least. Munro continues with her explanations of toponyms by giving multiple versions of place names, such as Scutari/Sckhoder/Skodra[39] and Bar/Antivari. This, and Munro's constant reference to *the language of the Ghegs*, shows Munro's intention to provide a wider, almost encyclopaedic knowledge of the land and culture. However, amassed in a short story, the provided knowledge only identifies the author as an outsider to the described cultural group. It is interesting to note that Munro mentions the city of Vuthaj as the residence of the person chosen to marry Lottar but does not provide the Montenegrin name for the city Gusinje (the city was a part of Montenegro during the period described in the story).

Munro also provides a lot of cultural input on what I roughly classify as the information on language, economy, geography and religion. Examples of the usage of Albanian words and sentences in the story are numerous. The first Albanian term that appears in the story is *kula*. While the description of the term is mostly correct (a higher tower attached to a family house), the Slavonic spelling of the word is used (the term was taken over by both Slavonic and Albanian languages from the Turkish term *kule* meaning *tower*) instead of Albanian *kullë/kulla*. This is similar to the usage of the term *giaour* to mean non-Muslim (infidel). In Albanian (and surrounding Slavonic languages), this term exists, depicting a Christian under the Ottoman rule, and is spelled as *kaur*. Furthermore, at the end of the story Lottar shouts *xoti!* which, Munro explains, means "leader" or "master" in the language of the Ghegs. The standard Albanian word for *mister* or *sir* is *zoti*, and I could not find proof that a distinctive Ghegs spelling or pronunciation of that word exists. The only Albanian term that Munro seems to have gotten right, both semantically and linguistically, is the word *sofra* for the low dining table which enabled people to eat while sitting on the floor.

[38] Gheg dialect, or sometimes referred to as language, is the northern dialect of Albanian language. Gheg dialect shows significant differences compared to the southern dialect of Tosk (on which the standard Albanian language is based) from which it is divided by the River Shkumbin.

[39] Scutari and Scodra are the most prominent historical names for what is today referred to as Shkodër or Shkodra.

Finally, the story contains a whole Albanian sentence, "Per quri e per kruch"[40] pronounced and then explained by the Franciscan as "By the stone and by the Cross". The standard Albanian sentence is "Përguri(n) dhe për Kryqi(n)" (For the stone and for the Cross), which used to be a vow in the Albanian language, where stone symbolizes home and the cross faith. In spoken Albanian, *dhe* could be changed for *e*, but *quri* for stone (stone is *guri; quri,* pronounced 'churi' actually meant *turkey* in old use) is a clear misspelling, while *kruch* seems to be an anglicized version of the exiting word *kryq*, and the word *per* simply ignores the existence of the Albanian semivowel *ë* (*për*). I believe all this points to the usage of partially incorrect and anglicized Albanian words and expressions, and together confirm that Munro used tourist books and Durham's writing as her sources.

"The Albanian Virgin" provides a correct description of the most important economic activities in the region, these being tobacco crop harvesting, production of wool and clothing, cattle breeding, and production of cheese.[41] Northern Albania is famous for all of these activities, especially tobacco and cheese production. This is a common knowledge, and it is available in all tourist guidebooks and traditional depictions of the region, and that again has an effect (positive or not) on the credibility of storytelling. Munro is famous for the passages on the geography of her literary settings in many of her short stories. "The Albanian Virgin" is no exception; Munro describes mountains and mountainous roads, hills, woods and streams. But more importantly, she provides a passage on Canadian geography, which is used to contrast the two worlds (and that will be discussed in further passages).

There is an interesting issue regarding faith, raised by the Franciscan priest in "The Albanian Virgin". When the Franciscan realizes that the otherwise Catholic village was planning to marry Lottar to a Muslim Albanian from Vuthaj, he is outraged and he refers to that man as "a pig of a Muslim". Further in the text, the Franciscan refers twice to the Muslim man as *infidel*. While it is correct that Christian Albanians regard their religious affiliation highly, especially in northern Albania and Kosovo, Albanians are also well

[40] Calvert Watkins writes the following in his book *How to Kill a Dragon: Aspects of Indo-European Poetics*: "… a passage in Durham [first published 1909]: 103 relating to the customs of the North Albanians at the beginning of this century: 'Priest of Rechi… told us of oaths which, if very solemn ones, are always sworn in Rechi and among all the Pulati tribes on a stone as well on a cross: "Per guri e per kruch" (By the stone and the cross)'. Read perhaps in modern orthography për guri e për kryqi." 163. Alice Munro has taken the idea of this oath directly from Edith Durham and perhaps misspelled *guri* as *quri* (or this is just a matter of the version I had the chance to read).

[41] Possibly interesting for Hungarian readers is the *A Földgömb* Magazine, 2008, No. 3, a thematic issue subtitled *Balkán* (The Balkans). On pages 52–58, there is the article titled "Alban-Alpok: Bjeskët e Namuna – az elátkozott hegyvidék" by Attila Kovács. The article brings up many of the common place knowledge about the region, construction of kullas and the production cheese being just some of them.

known for their unusually high religious tolerance, especially among the members of their own national/cultural group. While intermarrying between different faiths was rare but sometimes tolerated, I find it hard to believe that the Franciscan would react so indecently towards a possible Muslim groom. Besides, such conduct of the Franciscan would be seen as a breach of contract and honour. On the other hand, it is obvious from the story that the Franciscan was in love with Lottar, and the positive cultural re-interpretation was perhaps sacrificed for the needs of the plot. In the end, the Franciscan himself is a bit of a cultural outsider, a person who grew up in Italy and was later assimilated in the world of the Ghegs.

## Descriptions of Assimilation

The short story "The Albanian Virgin" features an intertwined plethora of described and hinted at processes of assimilation; actually, the complex interrelations of cultural dominance and melding of cultural identities. First of all, there is Lottar (Charlotte), a young Canadian heiress, brought to a highlander village in Albania, which Charlotte describes as very primitive. Lottar is a new name given to her, as the first mark of assimilation, and then she slowly but surely becomes a part of the Gheg cultural circle. Lottar becomes fairly proficient in the language of the Ghegs, she takes part in everyday life of the village and all the local customs allowed for women. She accepts the position of a woman in the patriarchal society. In other words, she becomes one of the Albanians. This is subtly inserted by Munro's remark that Lottar now liked making yoghurt and dipping bread in it, just like the locals do. Finally, Lottar becomes a sworn virgin.

The Franciscan spent his youth with his Albanian parents in Italy, and he returned to Albania as a young man. The description of the Franciscan sitting in the room in Shkodra waiting for his moustache to grow back only shows that he had to assimilate back to the Albanian society. There are instances in the story that prove that he partially remained an outsider in the culture of the highlands.

After their escape to Canada, Lottar and the Franciscan are assimilated again. Lottar is subdued to a process of reverse assimilation in which she regained her Canadian identity becoming Charlotte again, while the Franciscan becomes Gjurdhi. Both Charlotte and Gjurdhi largely remain outsiders in Canadian society. Their strangeness is expressed both by their appearance and behaviour. They are also subjects of superstition, for example, they are suspected of shoplifting and are sometimes considered to be peddlers, and Gjurdhi comes across as a superficial person to the Notary Public. Charlotte is called *the Duchess* and Gjurdhi *the Algerian* by the notary public, of course, with a high degree of irony. Not only is Gjurdhi's cultural identification as an

Algerian erroneous, but the notary public[42] goes even further expressing his doubt that Gjurdhi is a retired terrorist. These false notions about Charlotte and Gjurdhi pretty much summarize the usual prejudice that westerners express towards immigrants from the east.

Besides the false notions on Charlotte and Gjurdhi, Munro provides a complex set of hints that partially point towards that part of Charlotte's, and especially Gjurdhi's real attitude, which is opposed to total assimilation. For example, in several instances Gjurdhi is described as a bit of a nervous, energetic yet withdrawn old man with strong gesticulations and facial expressions, clearly pointing towards a southern European mentality. The most important, in that sense, is the instance when the narrator is invited for a dinner by Charlotte, and the couple which live, not by accident, on Pandora Street. Charlotte and Gjurdhi prepared a dinner typical of Albania, which they ate with their fingers. Furthermore, Gjurdhi sat on the floor and scooped the rice up with bread. Once more, Munro used clothing and food to point out some crucial features of her literary characters. In the end, Gjurdhi's attempt to haggle with the narrator over the price of a book comes as the final, and somehwhat blunt proof of his cultural otherness.

However, there is yet another example of assimilation in the story, namely that of the narrator. The narrator moved to Victoria, British Columbia just to be far away from Ontario, where the end of both her marriage and her love affair took place. In a way, the narrator was also assimilated in the new city, the new part of the country, a new job and lifestyle. Finally, the narrator was significantly influenced in her perception of culture by Charlotte's story, adding to the complex mesh of cultural assimilation and appropriation presented in Munro's story.

## Binary oppositions used in depictions of a culture

By binary oppositions I consider couples of opposed semantic bundles referring to characters, places and culture created by Alice Munro to express differences in literary worlds and emotional gains/losses, which come as a result of the direct decisions of the characters or are part of their unavoidable destiny. This type of parallelism is typical of Munro's writing, and is connected to what Löschnigg calls the deceitful "surface solidity"[43] in the sense that almost every Munrovian plot provides several versions of itself, none of them presented or confirmed as the definite truth. Such binary oppositions in "The Albanian

[42] Interestingly enough, the Notary Public gets attacked and beaten up but not robbed, as if from an act of revenge, by an unknown perpetrator. This leaves space for the readers to practice their own cultural prejudice and cast doubt on Gjurdhi.

[43] Maria Löschnigg, *The Contemporary Canadian Short Story in English. Continuity and Change*, Trier, Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2014, 23.

Virgin" are indeed numerous and they are almost all established through the literary use of elements of culture. I will provide only a short overview of the ones more important from the point of view of cultural reinterpretations.

First of all, there is the opposition between Lottar and the Franciscan and Charlotte and Gjurdhi. How do we know that they are the same people? Munro provides at least nine proofs of that: 1. Gjurdhi wears a large wooden crucifix over his coat, the same one mentioned in relation to the Franciscan, 2. Gjurdhi is wearing a cap with a tassel and his clothes are reminiscent of an elderly clergyman, 3. He eats Albanian food and drinks sherbet and "desperately strong coffee". 4. Gjurdhi's eating style and numerous elements of mentality point towards a person from the Balkans, 5. From the story it is evident that the Franciscan is in love with Lottar, and it is clearly stated in the last sentence of the story that the Franciscan waited for Lottar in Trieste, 6. There is a joke about a wizard in the story, which is, in my opinion, one of the less successful passages in the story, which ended with the protagonists' escape to America on a steamer, 7. The name Lottar reminds us of the name Charlotte, 8. Charlotte was an heiress, and that could explain how she and Gjurdhi gained money in the end, and, finally, 9. If Charlotte and Gjurdhi immigrated to Canada in the late 1920', they would be exactly the age ascribed to them in the story by 1964 (the year marked by the narrator as the time when she opened her bookstore). The only question is if the whole story was true or if it all, together with the cultural re-interpretation and assimilation (of ideas), took place only in the head of the aging, sick, and bored Charlotte.[44]

Munro's mastery of geography enabled her to construct binary oppositions between cultures typical of certain regions. First, it is the opposition between Albania and Canada, that is, Lottar's/the Franciscan and Charlotte's/Gjurdhi's lives. Charlotte and Gjurdhi seemed to be outsiders in both places, as previously stated, and their existence mostly revolved around survival; in Albania that meant survival according to traditional laws, while in Canada it meant survival in a state of poverty. The second opposition is between Albania and Italy, clearly stated by the Franciscan's cultural input. Finally, Munro provides the opposition between Albania and Malësi e Madhe (the Gheg land), the Gheg land being the rougher, wilder and more original part of the land, where a given word still means something.

Another interesting point connected to the opposition between Albania and Canada is that Munro often uses the information and style typical of tourist guidebooks in her descriptions of the traditional Albanian life, which

[44] There is an instance in the story that might point to that direction when Charlotte claims that she and Gjurdhi would have been something if they lived in a different country, revealing a streak of escapism in Charlotte's mind. Then again, this could be another proof that they actually came together from a different country, namely Albania.

is undoubtedly depicted as original, sincere, honourable and truthful. On the other hand, when the narrator describes her new home in British Columbia, she states: "Pockets of fakery for tourists".

Further binary opposition are the lives of the narrator and Lottar. An Albanian village for Lottar is exactly what the bookstore is for the narrator; a shelter and a safe port. Binary oppositions based on cultural input are sometimes very subtle, as, for example in the names of the streets in Canada; Charlotte and Gjurdhi live on Pandora Street, while the narrator lives on Dardanelles street (with a strong cultural reference to the Balkans). Gjurdhi, with his roughness and determination, is opposed to the civilised meekness of Donald and Nelson. Finally, there is an interesting binary opposition regarding cultural prejudice, more specifically, theft. During Lottar's life as a sworn virgin, she is sometimes given food by little girls. Once, the girls bring Lottar a sheep's head, and she wonders if they had stolen it. This is very much the view of an outsider because the girls had no reason to steal the head, nor would they dare to steal in the strict society in which they lived. Similar to that, the Canadian assumed that Charlotte and Gjurdhi were stealing books just because they looked different and, most of all, poor.

To conclude, if one wished to read an atypical Munro story but one containing all the usual Munrovian writing techniques (switches, parallelisms, ambiguity, unreliable narration, multiple endings, etc.), "The Albanian Virgin" could be her or his first choice. Examples of Munro's literary cultural re-interpretation range from very refined and elaborated cultural comments to much less successful examples which have quite a significant effect on the perception and the critical acclaim of the story. The weakness of these examples is partially redeemed by the fact that the Albanian part of the story was told by an unreliable narrator, and then re-told by another narrator, who might be equally unreliable. What is certain is that the short story "The Albanian Virgin" provides deep insight into how a culture can be re-interpreted in a literary work and the impact of this narrative technique on its artistic reach.

## Conclusion

In "Five Points" and "The Albanian Virgin", Alice Munro has shown two diametrically opposed approaches to cultural appropriation. However, her literary employment of elements of other cultures in the two stories share some similarities. The table below summarizes literary techniques, semantic layers, and functions in the development of plot of Munro's employment of cultural appropriation (reinterpretation) in two stories:

| **Argument→** | **Story retold** | **Status of the narrator** | **Narrator's reliability** | **Foreign culture described or mentioned** | **Factuality of cultural re-interpretation** | **Idealisation of culture** | **Importance of cultural re-interpretation for the plot and characters** | **Artistic effect** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **"Five Points"** | by Neil | emotionally distant | relatively reliable (in spite of Neil's insincerity) | only mentioned; focus on individual destinies | except for *pierogi*, factual; traces of cultural clichés | not featured | crucial in development of Neil's character; important for the final switch in the main narration | positive |
| **"The Albanian Virgin"** | by Charlotte | deeply emotionally involved | relatively unreliable | described, sometimes in details; focus partially on the collectivity | often questionable; influenced by common places and cultural clichés | many instances of cultural idealisation; neo-Byronic writing | crucial for the development of all characters and understanding the story as a whole | often relatively questionable |

Canadian literature in general shows a high level of awareness of other, even distant cultures. However, there is an inevitable shift in meanings of all cultural information that crosses the Atlantic and can be detected in both analyzed stories; illustrative examples are the usage of the term *pierogi* in "Five Points" and the usage of anglicized and partially incorrect Albanian words and expressions in "The Albanian Virgin". Furthermore, re-interpreted features of Balkan cultures/mentalities inevitably follow already existing cultural preconceptions about these cultures and simultaneously form new preconceptions which become the basis for identifying and understanding certain national groups/minorities overseas. After reading the two analyzed stories by Alice Munro, one can reconfirm or construct notions of both Croatians and Albanians as *traditional*, *religious*, *hard working*, and, finally, *exotic*. However, it is never that simple with Alice Munro. A more careful reader will notice the plethora of re-interpreted cultural elements of both appropriated and dominant cultures, which are masterfully intertwined in the narrations and their semantic connotations.

The essential issue regarding cultural appropriation/re-interpretation in literature is a question of critical acclaim. While cultural re-interpretation in literature mostly remains beyond the scope of moral and even factual scrutiny, it can have a deep effect on the quality of literary works. "Five Points" is better known and more discussed than "The Albanian Virgin", and I believe, based on my research, that this is partially so due to the more successful cultural re-interpretation in "Five Points". It is exactly Munro's different approach to literary re-interpretation of elements of distant cultures that makes "The Albanian Virgin" interesting, and "Five Points" outstanding literature. [45]

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# "THE NEW MECCA OF IMMIGRANTS": HUNGARIAN EMIGRATION TO CANADA AND THE ROLE OF IMMIGRATION PROPAGANDA

Balázs Venkovits[1]

Abstract

*This paper investigates Hungarian immigration to Canada in the inter-American and transatlantic context, focusing on key waves of Hungarian immigration to the country, especially in the 1920s. During this period, the United States, which had been the preferred destination of Hungarians, effectively closed its gates to East-Central Europeans by introducing a quota system. At the same time, Canada provided new opportunities for these people; in fact, as one of the contemporary publications claimed, Canada became the "New Mecca of immigrants."*

*After providing an overview of changes in immigration/emigration policies in North America and Hungary and presenting the main shifts in Hungarian migration patterns, this paper explains how Canadian authorities and companies tried to attract East-Central European/Hungarian immigrants to the West (using advertising, pamphlets, posters, etc.) and how the Hungarian government tried to block such attempts. This paper also presents a case study of Sámuel Zágonyi, who attempted to discourage Hungarian emigration to Canada by publishing a book, a series of newspaper articles and organizing a lecture tour in the most affected regions of Hungary. The images of Canada he propagated were in direct opposition to the image circulated by immigration agents about the "Last Best West", resulting in the emergence of a special discourse between propaganda for and against migration. Based on archival research in Hungary and Canada, this paper also uses the tools of microhistory to show how the story of a Hungarian emigrant family underlies the general trends.*

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## Introduction

In the 1920s, a young man called András Takács set out from Novajidrány, a small village in the north-eastern part of Hungary and emigrated to Canada, where he hoped he would be able to provide a better future for his family. His two eldest daughters soon followed him, while the rest of the family stayed behind, waiting for the father to return or for a more suitable time to follow the head of the family. While the eldest daughters, Terike (Theresa) and Erzsike (Elisabeth), got married and settled down in Canada, András returned to his wife and other children in his native Hungary and used his hard-earned money to start a new life there. András' immigration story is one of thousands from a time when Canada represented a major destination for Hungarian emigrants looking for better opportunities after the devastation of the Great War and its consequences for Hungary: emigrating from Hungary with an agricultural background, leaving (parts of) the family behind with the ultimate goal of earning money and returning home. Just a few years before, he would have likely joined the tens of thousands of Hungarians who immigrated into the United States at the height of the New Immigration. However, by the 1920s the "Nation of Immigrants" had effectively closed its gates to East-Central European immigrants, while Canada was opening up. Thus, for a few years Canada became one of the primary destinations for Hungarian immigrants; indeed, as a result of the opportunities in Canada, immigration propaganda, and the activities of immigration agents, the country became the "New Mecca of Immigrants".

*Figure 1: András Takács standing between his daughter Borbála and son Béla in 1934 in Novajidrány after returning from Canada. Photo courtesy of Shawn Danko.*

*Figure 2: András Takács with daughters Theresa and Elizabeth in Montréal in 1934. Elizabeth is seated in front of her husband and holding their son Alex. Photo courtesy of Shawn Danko.*

The story of the Takács family is one of the several million emigrant accounts, reminding us that behind the statistics, there are always individual stories, hard personal decisions, complicated family histories that may also contribute to the better understanding of historical events. The aim of this chapter is to investigate this peculiar aspect of Hungarian-Canadian relations in the inter-American context, focusing on the main waves of Hungarian immigration, keeping in mind the interconnectedness of international events and microhistory. The process outlined was influenced by a variety of factors and developments, including the First World War, the Treaty of Trianon, economic problems and emigration regulation in the home country, as well as nativism and immigration restrictions in the receiving ones.

## Hungarian Immigrants: at the Crossroads of Transatlantic Migration Policies

The turn of the 19th and 20th centuries witnessed one of the largest waves of immigration to the Americas, a period of mass migration whereby approximately 40 million people left Europe and emigrated to the West, many

of them from Eastern, Central, and Southern Europe, including Hungary. Between the 1870s and the First World War, more specifically the numerous restrictions and the quota system introduced in the aftermath of the Great War, the United States attracted the large majority of these immigrants. Between 1881 and 1920, approximately 24 million people settled in the United States. However, after the US government introduced various forms of restriction that initially applied to non-European groups but were subsequently broadened to include other people as well, migrants looked for better opportunities in alternative destinations, and among them were countries that happened to implement policies aimed at attracting immigrants.

Canada became more attractive because "from the mid-1890s until World War I, favorable government policies, eastern industrialization, and the opening of the western provinces to agriculture brought 300,000 to 400,000 immigrants each year, most from the British Isles and central and southern Europe."[2] Changes in Canadian policies during the 1920s enabled the immigration of thousands of Eastern Europeans until the process was cut short by the Great Depression.

Hungarian emigration patterns largely fit into the general trends described above. The key destination was the United States and alternatives like Canada became more attractive only in the 1920s. By the beginning of the 20th century, Hungarian emigration reached unprecedented heights, and trans-Atlantic migration was perceived by Hungarian officials "as the newest, most modern movement, most significant with regard to its character, and most dangerous concerning its effects."[3] Between 1899 and 1913, 85 percent of people leaving Hungary emigrated to the United States.[4] However, it is difficult to calculate the exact number of Hungarians who left the homeland. According to Gusztáv Thirring, the number of people who left (who were not necessarily all of Hungarian ethnicity) between 1881 and 1900 was close to 500,000. By the first decade of the 20th century, however, the number reached almost 1.5 million. Julianna Puskás claimed that "the actual number of immigrants to the United States for the examined period [1871–1913] can be estimated to be 1,200,000."[5]

Various push factors forced Hungarians (especially young men) to look for better opportunities abroad, even on the other side of the Atlantic. Hungarian emigration was primarily driven by overpopulation (population growth exceeding food production), economic hardship, limited opportunities for

[2] John Powell, *Encyclopedia of North American Immigration,* New York, Facts on File, 2005, 46.
[3] Gusztáv Thirring, *A magyarországi kivándorlás és a külföldi magyarság*, Budapest, Fritz Armin, 1904, 12.
[4] Julianna Puskás, *From Hungary to the United States (1880–1914),* Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, 1982, 21.
[5] Ibid., 18–19.

work in the industrial and service sectors, and most importantly, the chronic problems of Hungarian agriculture.[6] These issues were further complicated after the First World War, when many Hungarians emigrated because of the impact of the Treaty of Trianon and resulting ethnic conflicts with neighboring countries. Simultaneously, American countries, employers, and immigration agents looked to Eastern and Southern Europe as a possible source of immigrants. The attraction of countries like the United States and Canada stemmed from major industrial development (a second industrial revolution resulting in a need for a larger labor force) and the availability of land in the west, and it was further reinforced by news of prospects disseminated both by former emigrants via letters and a range of literature that promoted emigration to villagers. Thus the combination of push and pull factors set in motion one of the largest waves of emigration in Hungarian history, with the key destinations of Hungarians in North America being the United States and later on Canada.

Trends in Hungarian emigration were shaped by the migration policies of both the country of origin and the receiving nations. As emigration represented a key (economic, social, and even military) issue and challenge in Hungarian politics, the Hungarian government also attempted to regulate emigration at various points. Due to the significant role of immigration agents in this process in the Kingdom of Hungary, the first government measures were targeted against their activities, as in Act XXXVIII of 1881.[7] A more complex regulation of emigration soon followed as the topic became a focal point of Hungarian politics at the time, thus addressing issues like border control and passport regulations. As former acts and regulations could not properly deal with the complex issue of emigration, a new Act was needed. One of the main principles behind the legislation was that emigration itself could not be prevented and people could not be forced to stay in the home country: thus the primary objective was to somehow control, manage and restrict the amount of emigration. Thus Act IV of 1903 on Emigration was enacted, which prevented some groups of people from leaving the country, the use of passports was made compulsory and the activities of agents and shipping companies were controlled more strictly, etc.[8]

[6] For more information see: Puskás, *Hungary to the United States;* Thirring, *Magyarországi kivándorlás;* Carmela Patria, *The Hungarians in Canada*, Ottawa, The Canadian Historical Association, 1999.

[7] The overview is based on: János Sallai, A ki és bevándorlás magyar szabályozása a 20. század elején, in József Szalma (ed.), *A magyar tudomány napja a délvidéken*, Budapest, Dialóg Campus, 2016, 359–373.

[8] Preamble to Act IV of 1903 on Emigration, available at: https://net.jogtar.hu/ezer-ev-torveny?docid=90300004.TVI&searchUrl=/ezer-ev-torvenyei%3Fpagenum%3D45 (accessed 10 May 2020).

Despite this, emigration from the Kingdom of Hungary did not stop after the enactment of the Emigration Act; on the contrary, it continued to increase, with more than 200,000 people arriving in the United States in the peak year of 1907 alone. Since the existing restrictions had proved ineffective, a new Act was adopted, which took the form of Act II of 1909 on Emigration, which specified the definition of emigrants more precisely, introduced tighter restrictions and limitations for various groups to reduce emigration in different ways.[9] This Act remained in force until 1961.[10] However, despite the concerted efforts of the Hungarian government, it was not these regulations, but the changes in American immigration policies and the First World War that ended the largest wave of emigration and shaped the 1920s. In reaction to the First World War, Hungary introduced measures (prohibiting the migration of people who had to start their military service), but the decisive restrictions came in 1917 (and the entry of the US into the Great War) from the other side of the Atlantic. 1924 marks a major borderline in Hungarian emigration with the final form of the US quota system introduced, ending mass emigration to the country. Hungarians started looking for alternative destinations, primarily in France, Belgium, Argentina, Brazil, and most importantly, from our perspective, Canada.[11]

As has already been noted, the United States witnessed one of the largest waves of immigration to the country at the turn of the century, with approximately 24 million people arriving between 1881 and the 1920s. During this period of New Immigration, the composition of immigrants (in terms of ethnicity, race, and religion) differed significantly from those arriving decades before and already living in the country. A large proportion of these people came from Eastern and Southern Europe, mostly peasants from the less-developed regions of Europe, and mainly from villages and small towns.[12] By and large, Hungarian immigration was typical of migration from Eastern European at the time: most of the immigrants were young and male, had no industrial skills, and took "dirty, industrial jobs at wages that were low for America but high for Hungary."[13] Their primary aim was to save as much money as possible, and send or take the money back with them. Thus although the country needed a large number of immigrants for its development, due to the different ethnic

[9] Preamble to Act II of 1909 on Emigration, available at: https://net.jogtar.hu/ezer-ev-torveny?docid=90900002.TVI&searchUrl=/ezer-ev-torvenyei%3Fpagenum%3D46 (accessed 10 May 2020).

[10] Péter Bencsik, Útiokmányok, utazási lehetőségek és határforgalom a 20. századi Magyarországon, *Regio,* Vol. 13, No. 2 (2002), 32.

[11] Balázs Pálvölgyi, A magyar migrációs politika átalakulása a 20. század első negyedében, *Magyar közigazgatás,* Vol. 1 (2018), 204–222.

[12] Roger Daniels, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, New York, Perennial, 2002.

[13] Ibid., 233.

(non-WASP) and religious (mostly Catholic) composition of the immigrants, their social and economic status, as well as their unwillingness to assimilate into American society, anti-immigrant and nativist sentiment gradually appeared and became more and more widespread, culminating in calls for general restriction of immigration (especially form East and Central Europe).[14]

Anti-immigrant sentiment was already present in the United States in the 1850s, taking the form of anti-Catholic and anti-Chinese activity. The latter culminated in the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, which was "the hinge on which Emma Lazarus's 'golden door' swung almost completely shut."[15] The nativist prejudice that newly arriving immigrants would destroy the country was held against Eastern Europeans, including Hungarians. From the 1880s onwards more and more restrictions were introduced, ending the former free immigration policy of the country and barring more and more groups from entering the US. The anti-Catholic American Protective Association was formed in 1887, while the Immigration Restriction League was established in 1894. The latter advocated the introduction of a literacy test to improve the "quality of incoming immigrants" and close out "undesirables." World War I gave a boost to American restrictions (especially the fear of enemy aliens in the country), and in 1917, the year the US entered the Great War, the Literacy Act came into force, representing the "first significant general restriction of immigration ever passed; in the future all adult immigrants would have to be literate..."[16]

Although it reduced the number of immigrants, the literacy test did not stop another major wave after the war, thus more and more people demanded the introduction of quotas. The principle behind this was to limit the total number of people admitted per year and also restrict particular nationalities to a percentage of their population. The first such act (the Emergency Quota Act) was passed in 1921 and it set the maximum number of immigrants allowed per year at 356,995 and specified the national quota as 3% of the population from a given country based on the 1910 census. This was made even stricter in the 1924 Johnson-Reed Act, which effectively ended New Immigration to the country from Hungary. The total quota was set at 153,700 and the baseline census was moved back to 1890 (clearly showing that the target of restrictions was East-Central European migration), and reduced the quotas from 3 to 2%. The quota meant a significant cut in the number of immigrants arriving in large numbers only after 1890 and did not apply to immigrants from the Western Hemisphere. The measures hit East and Central Europeans hard but also excluded Chinese (and Asian) immigration.

[14] For an overview see the chapter titled "The Triumph of Nativism" in Daniels, *Coming to America*, 265.
[15] Ibid., 271.
[16] Ibid., 278.

While more than 200,000 Hungarians arrived in the country in 1907 alone, after 1924 the maximum number who could immigrate legally was capped at 473. The push factors of emigration, however, did not cease, thus Hungarians began to look for alternatives and Canada was one of the most promising.

## Canada Opens its Gates: Hungarians in Canada until the 1920s

Canada was already a destination for emigrants at the turn of the century. However, it was seen as a compromised destination: it was attractive due to the benefits offered by the Canadian government, however the difficulties with settlement were also often emphasized, especially in comparison with the United States. In fact, at the beginning of the period of New Immigration, more people left Canada (for the US) than immigrated there.[17] This happened despite the belief in Canada also that immigrants would play a key role in the development of the western provinces. The first immigration act was passed in 1869 and was amended gradually, excluding the entry of criminals or other non-preferred people. Based on the Dominion Lands Act of 1872 any male head of family of at least 21 years of age could obtain 160 acres of pubic homestead for a USD 10 registration fee and six months' residence for the for first three years of the claim.[18] The program itself failed as only a few people took this opportunity, but other measures targeted at specific immigration groups proved to be more successful. The government also began to build up the infrastructure needed to make sure that the immigrants reached the eventual place of settlement in the West cheaply and safely.[19] The Canadian Pacific Railway was completed in 1886, a network of immigration halls was established, and the great plains of the US became more or less full, thus emigrants were looking for possible new destinations. This coincided with the policies of Minister of the Interior Clifford Sifton, which were aimed at populating the western prairies, popularized through the image of the "Last Best West." This also involved the use of immigration propaganda to attract more people into the country.

Canada primarily preferred immigrants from Great Britain, the United States, and Northern Europe (especially those with capital and agricultural skills).[20] However, Sifton also encouraged immigration from Central and Eastern Europe.[21] To attract more people, immigration agents were employed

[17] Powell, *Encyclopedia*, 45.
[18] Ibid., 46.
[19] Robert Vineberg, *Responding to Immigrants' Settlement Needs: The Canadian Experience,* Dordrecht, Springer, 2012, 8.
[20] Valeria Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540–2006.* Toronto, Dundurn, 2007, 69.
[21] Vineberg, *Settlement Needs*, 11 and also N.F. Dreisziger, et al., *Struggle and Hope: The Hungarian-Canadian Experience,* Toronto, McClelland, 1982, 62.

to recruit settlers both from Europe and the United States. To continue the arrival of a large number of settlers, improvements in conditions were needed, primarily in terms of travel opportunities. The above-mentioned railway brought about such improvement, and the railway companies continued to play a central role in the settlement of the western provinces with immigrants. Yet, despite such developments and the activities of the agents described below, no large-scale settlement took place, in part due to an economic crisis between 1873 and 1896 and the fact that Canada could not compete successfully with the United States.[22]

This was also the context for the arrival of the first Hungarian settlers. Hungarian "migration to Canada began as an off-shoot of mass migration to the United States", as previously noted, with the first settlers to the Canadian west arriving from Pennsylvania.[23] Paul Esterházy, employed by the Canadian government, played a key role in bringing the first settlers to the region (see his activities below). The first colony, Huns Valley was established in Manitoba in 1885, however, it proved to be short lived. Eszterház, established in 1886, was more successful with its status consolidated by the turn of the century and was followed by several other Hungarian settlements (including Otthon and Békevár). By this time, new settlers had come directly from the native country.[24] In his study, Martin Louis Kovács even refers to this area prior to 1914 as "little Hungary."[25] By the time of World War I there were half a dozen Hungarian colonies in Western Canada, the majority of which were in Saskatchewan, and Hungarians had also settled in ethnically mixed areas.[26] It is difficult to say (due to the lack of accurate census data) how many Hungarians lived in Canada when the Great War started and immigration stopped, but the 1920 census gives us an idea of the size of this group: according to the documents, there were 13,181 Hungarians in Canada, most of whom were rural inhabitants in the prairie provinces.[27] More than twice this many people arrived in just 5 years in the 1920s.

Between 1896 and 1914, 3 million people settled in Canada and between 1901 and 1911 the population increased by 43 percent.[28] Such a transformation did not happen without conflicts and this affected Hungarians as well. With the increasing number of immigrants arriving in the country, voices emphasizing the need for stricter immigration control became stronger,

[22] Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates*, 82.
[23] Patrias, *Hungarians in Canada*, 4–5.
[24] Nándor Dreisziger, Rose-Gardens on Ice-Floes: A Century of the Hungarian Diaspora in Canada, *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies,* Vol. 6, No. 2 (2000), 239–258, 241.
[25] Dreisziger, *Struggle and Hope*, 61.
[26] Patrias, *Hungarians in Canada*, 6.
[27] Ibid., 6.
[28] This paragraph is based on Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates*, 107–124.

similar to the situation in the United States. Moreover, while Sifton had preferred the "stalwart peasants in sheepskin coats" from Eastern and Central Europe, his successor Frank Oliver supported mostly British and American immigration, and members of the East-Central European group were often considered undesirable. The Immigration Act of 1906 barred a broad spectrum of individuals (prostitutes, "mentally retarded" people or those afflicted with a contagious disease), introduced stricter control of the Canada-US border, specified the amount of "landing money" immigrants had to have in their possession, regulated the deportation of prohibited immigrants, etc. The Immigration Act of 1910 brought even more restrictions and gave the government unlimited discretionary powers to regulate the volume, ethnic origin, and occupational composition of immigration, and it provided the necessary machinery to encourage some immigrants and virtually exclude others. Meanwhile, other measures were aimed at limiting the number of immigrants from Eastern and Central Europe, which reflected a dislike of people coming from this region. The measures curbed Asian immigration successfully, but the wave from Eastern and Central Europe continued until the First World War.

The First World War halted immigration to Canada as well. In 1915 only 36,665 people arrived (the lowest number in the era) and even three-quarters of these people came from the United States.[29] Similar fears and restrictions about enemy aliens and nativist sentiment had emerged, as in the United States; this affected non-naturalized Hungarians as well, some of whom were even placed in internment camps, while those arriving after 1902 were disenfranchised in 1917.[30] "The opposition to immigration from central and eastern Europe was promoted by leading educators, journalists, and politicians, who took the view that immigrants from that part of Europe resisted assimilation into mainstream Canadian society and that encouraging their immigration only led to the 'balkanization' of Canada."[31] The initial reactions of the two North American countries were similar, however, after the war the United States completely ended East-Central European emigration with the quota system, while Canada opened its gates and offered new opportunities for people from previously non-preferred countries.

The quotas introduced in the United States impacted Canadian immigration in different ways. As noted above, they did not apply to people born in Canada, thus many traveled south, which in itself had a negative impact on the Canadian labor market. At this point some (including Clifford Sifton) began to argue again that "stalwart peasants" were required in Western Canada, and they should be brought immediately from "Central Europe, particularly from

[29] Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates*, 127.
[30] Patrias, *Hungarians in Canada,* 8.
[31] Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates,* 136.

Hungary and Galicia."[32] Such a shift in attitude, brought about the reversal of former measures barring immigration: in 1923 the regulation restricting the entry of immigrants from Germany and her wartime allies was repealed, in 1925 the Canadian Pacific Railway and Canadian National Railways were authorized to recruit European agriculturalists, even from previously non-preferred countries. Thus the status of Hungary changed and it was treated in the same way as countries in Western Europe.[33]

In line with these measures, a major wave of Hungarian immigration to Canada at the very time the United States effectively closed its gates with the introduction of quotas. After 1923, the only Hungarians who could enter were those who had enough money to buy land and agricultural workers who already had a guarantee of employment. They also had to be in a good physical and mental condition, be literate, to have a valid passport and possess a train ticket to their final destination (to prevent them ending up in bigger cities). Some Hungarians sold all their property to emigrate to Canada in the hope of a better future. Dreisziger argues that it is difficult to state the precise number of Hungarians arriving at this time as people also came from countries that were no longer part of Hungary, as well as from the United States, and those coming from Hungary were not always of Magyar ethnicity.[34] We have no precise data either about the number of people who returned to Hungary or moved to the United States (either legally or illegally). Based on data from the Department of Immigration and Colonization quoted by Dreisziger, we may estimate the number of Hungarians who immigrated to the country at around 30,000. This is, of course, low compared to the peak period of immigration to the United States, but it is high relative to Hungarian immigration to Canada in the previous decades. In addition, the new wave of immigrants also provided a boost to the cultural and social life of Canadian Hungarian communities.

The increase, however, was short lived and large-scale immigration to the country could not continue in the 1930s due to the Great Depression. The economic crisis itself, and the strict measures taken in the wake of it, practically ended mass immigration: while between 1921 and 1931 1,166,000 people immigrated to the country, between 1931 and 1941 this number dropped to a mere 140,000, with only a few Hungarians among them. The story of András Takács and his family fits nicely into this historical context. András was a young agriculturalist from a village in one of the poorer regions of the mother country who decided to leave Hungary after the devastation of the Great War in search of better opportunities. Although far from official political life, the decisions in Washington and Ottawa greatly influenced his migration trajectory since the quotas prevented him from emigrating to the United States. He decided

[32] Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates,* 141.
[33] Ibid., 141.
[34] This paragraph is based on: Dreisziger, *Struggle and Hope*, 97–103.

(perhaps due to the influence of various publications discussed below) to start a new life in Canada. His attitude and life also follows the pattern of many other immigrants: he went to North America to earn money to be able to buy land and property back home when he returned. The migration of his family also fits into the pattern described by Puskás: siblings in large families migrated separately, often several years apart, and married men most often returned to their families in Hungary.[35] András' original plan might have been to bring the whole family to Canada once migration was possible for the younger members. According to the passenger list, which included a rubric for the address of the contact person, by the time his eldest daughter migrated in 1930, András was already living in Montreal, His second daughter Theresa also followed her father; both of the daughters married, settled down in Canada, and never returned to Hungary. András did return to the rest of the family, his wife and younger children (Béla, Piroska, and Borbála), invested his money earned in Canada into land and a small grocery store, only to be swept away by nationalization during Communist times.

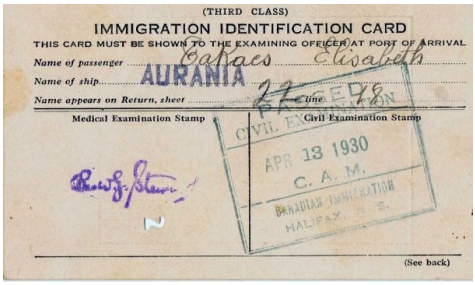
(THIRD CLASS)
IMMIGRATION IDENTIFICATION CARD
THIS CARD MUST BE SHOWN TO THE EXAMINING OFFICER AT PORT OF ARRIVAL
Name of passenger Takacs Elisabeth
Name of ship AURANIA
Name appears on Return, sheet 22 line 28
Medical Examination Stamp
Civil Examination Stamp
APR 13 1930
C. A. M.
CANADIAN IMMIGRATION
HALIFAX, N.S.
(See back)

*Figure 3: Elizabeth Takács's immigration identification card issued in 1930. Photo courtesy of Shawn Danko.*

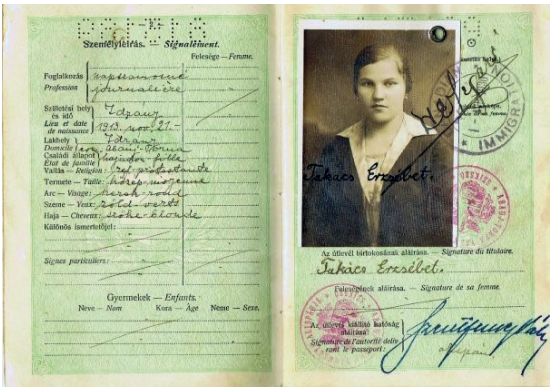
Személyleírás. — Signalement.
Takacs Erzsébet.
Takacs Erzsébet.

*Figure 4: Passport of Elizabeth Takács. Photo courtesy of Shawn Danko.*

[35] Daniels, *Coming to America*, 234–235.

## The Role of Immigration Booster Literature and Anti-Emigration Responses

As already noted, early Hungarian government measures concerning emigration targeted the activities of immigration agents largely because these played a major role in the propagation of migration in various parts of Hungary. The diverse propaganda materials, booklets, pamphlets, posters, etc. presented both the United States and Canada as attractive destinations for emigrants, with "news of prospects in America spread[ing] rapidly even to the most remote villages in Hungary. Literature promoting emigration was widely disseminated and dozens of agents representing competing companies travelled through the countryside to recruit immigrants."[36] The positive images propagated in these publications were often reinforced by the letters (and money) sent by migrants to the home country, in which they often reported on high wages and great opportunities, while they tended to remain silent on possible hardships and failures. The Hungarian government tried to counteract these (often overtly positive) accounts by informing would-be immigrants of the risks they would be taking and the dangers they might face. This meant drawing attention to challenges related to the trans-Atlantic voyage itself, harsh and often abusive treatment, the lowly status designated to immigrants, dangerous jobs, and a sense of loneliness and homesickness, among other issues. However, as Tibor Glant argues, people tended "to disbelieve their government, although it was telling the truth, and accepted at face value what their relatives and fellow villagers told them about the New World, although these accounts were blatantly one-sided."[37]

Such propaganda activities and immigration agents also played a key role in the case of Canada and Hungarians. We can find immigration booster materials already in connection with the first Hungarian settlements created under the supervision of Esterházy, Canada advertised the Western provinces all over Europe as the "Last Best West" at the turn of the century, while during the 1920s agents of the Canadian railway companies tried to lure Hungarians to the country in various ways. In the following, I provide an overview of these activities, mostly in relation to Hungarians, providing key examples, and analyzing in more detail an attempt from the 1920s to counter such pro-immigration activities. Immigration agents and their materials often remained silent on real challenges related to the Canadian climate and difficulties due to the lack of speaking English or resulting from the huge

[36] Patrias, *Hungarians in Canada*, 3.

[37] Tibor Glant, Travel Writing as a Substitute for American Studies in Hungary, *Hungarian Journal of English and American Studies,* Vol. 16, No. 1-2 (2010), 176.

distances, etc.[38] In their publications they tried to draw specific attention to these issues, and this gave rise to a discursive conflict between Hungarian anti-emigration propaganda and Canadian immigration-booster literature.

## The First Hungarian Settlements and Immigration Propaganda

In his seminal study of Hungarian emigration in 1904, Gusztáv Thirring already called attention to the difficulties Hungarian emigrants could experience in Canada:

Although the Canadian government offers such benefits to emigrants that no other state does, as it gives a homestead of 160 acres, while hay, wood, pasture, fishing and hunting are also available for free, Hungarians have a miserable fate there. Our emigrants who are not familiar with the local conditions, traditions, and language, after a long sea voyage and train journey arrive in Quebec half looted by the agents of different shipping companies, are transported by the employees of railway companies lurking for and living from emigrants to Winnipeg to some 2,500 kilometers from there, as free land is now available only in the western and northern states of British North America; the uninformed and ignorant peasant, whose language no one understands, fully depends on the agents of the railway companies and falls short of the opportunity for free land choice, thus they face a dilemma: they either accept the bad-quality land forced upon them by the railway companies or they buy the land owned by the companies for a loan. Hungarian emigrants are thus stuck in a no-win situation, they either settle down in an area the climate of which they cannot stand and where the land is of poor quality or they are doomed to fail because of an expensive land purchase.[39]

Thirring also noted that "[m]any people from the Alföld [Hungarian Great Plains] emigrated to these places [i.e., new Hungarian settlements] due to the enticing pamphlets that flooded the villages of counties by Canadian-Hungarian knights of industry."[40] As it was presented above as well, the Canadian government started a program to encourage the immigration of farmers and agricultural laborers, and although these primarily targeted Britain and the United States, during the Sifton years the settlement of East-Central European immigrants was also believed to be advantageous (due to their vast experience as farmers and the belief that their poverty would

[38] For more information, see: M.L. Kovács, The Saskatchewan Era, 1885–1891, in Dreisziger, *Struggle and Hope,* 66–83.

[39] Thirring, *A magyarországi kivándorlás,* 87. Translation mine.

[40] Ibid., 88.

prevent them from expecting too much from the prairies).[41] This meant that, besides the primary target groups, at the turn of the century many people also arrived from the territory of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

A person of Hungarian origin also participated in the production and dissemination of immigration booster literature to attract Hungarians into the Canadian West. Paul Oscar Esterházy became "one of the most effective promoters of Hungarian immigration to the United States and Canada."[42] He hoped to create a "New Hungary" on the Canadian Prairies.[43] Although such a plan was never realized, he was instrumental in creating a positive image of the region and country, and in recruiting settlers to the area, primarily by circulating pamphlets about the success stories of former settlers.[44]

One of Esterházy's main publications was a 1902 pamphlet available in both English and Hungarian. *The Hungarian Colony of Esterhaz, Assiniboia, North-West Territories, Canada* was disseminated in thousands of copies in the United States and Hungary.[45] The image of Canada depicted in this pamphlet was the exact opposite of that described by Thirring above. While Thirring claimed that pamphlets like that of Esterházy kept the true dangers of emigration secret, Esterházy claimed that his pamphlet was written to fight the malicious "fake-news" spread about the area by others. Thus a discursive conflict started in which both sides presented their (one-sided) arguments, while criticizing the other for spreading false information. The short publication itself introduces the history of the settlement of Esterház and depicts a truly positive image of Canadian immigration, including the description of rich arable land, opportunities for cultivation, etc. According to the author, in a country with so much beauty and fertile agriculture, people's endeavors are richly rewarded.[46] The description of the opportunities and the process of starting a new life in Canada is often overly positive. Even the cold climate during the winter is presented favorably, by claiming that the winter weather provides joy and health for body and soul alike.[47] According to his pamphlet, the area could receive thousands of families and it included an outline of future plans, statistics, photos of buildings and crops to support this.

[41] Laura A. Detre, Canada's Campaign for Immigrants and the Images, In Canada West Magazine, *Great Plains Quarterly,* Spring (2004), 113–129.

[42] Dreisziger, *Struggle and Hope*, 61.

[43] Quoted, Ibid., 63.

[44] For more information on Esterházy, see for example: Győző Dojcsák, *A kanadai Esterházy története,* Budapest, Magvető, 1981.

[45] *Magyar colonia, Éjszak-nyugati Tartományok Kanada: levelek a telepesektöl s fényképfelvételek, melyeket a helyszínen vettek fel 1902, július havában,* Ottawa, Kormányzósági nyomda, 1902. Full English text available here: http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/bibliography/2621.html (accessed 10 May 2020).

[46] *Esterházy, Magyar Colonia*, 8.

[47] Ibid., 8.

Rev. Woodcutter F. argues in a separate chapter of the same pamphlet that the negative news is simply lies and nobody wants to return to Hungary as there is enough land in Canada; there is a good climate (stories about people freezing are plain false), and the construction of railways will bring even more opportunities. The pamphlet also provides practical advice and data for would-be immigrants, and the most interesting part is the section with a series of testimonials of successful settlers illustrated by photographs.

IDŐSB PILCSÁK ISTVÁN.

Homestead: N. E. ¼ 3, 19, 1, W. 2d Mer.

Esterház Colony,
Posta: Kaposvár, Assiniboia, Kanada.

Idősb Pilcsák István Szabolcsmegye Ormező községéből az 1888-ik esztendőben kiköltöztem családommal együtt Kanada Esterház nevü magyar telepére. Ide érkeztem 22 dollárral.

Jelenleg van 160 acre földem, melyből fel van törve 140 acre. Mult évben volt termésem: 1800 bushel buza, 600 bushel zab, 80 bushel gabona és háztartásomhoz bőven elegendő burgonyám és zöldségem.

Van két hámos lovam és két csikóm; mivel fiamat és nagy léányomat kiházasítva csak fiatal gyermekeim maradva mellettem, a nagyobbani gazdálkodást terhesnek tartva, lovaimból és szarvas marháimból 360 dollár vagy is 900 forint értéküt eladtam; de még maradt szarvas marhám is 6 darab, 20 darab sertésem, és körül-belől 100, szárnyas aprólékom. És körül-belől 900 dollár vagy 2,250 forint értékű gazdasági gépezet és szerszámon. Uj házam és minden gazdasági épületem jó állapotban van.

Kaposvár 1902 Julius 20-án.

Pilcsák István.

Pilcsák István ur tanyája (farm). N.E. ¼ 3, 19, 1, W. 2nd Mer.

*Figure 5: A testimonial from Esterházy's pamphlet.*

Esterházy's was not the only publication that tried to lure Hungarians to Canada and against which Thirring raised his voice. Others were partly disguised as advice and guidance attempting to support emigrants. The Canadian Pacific Railway, for example, published a Hungarian-English Dictionary with words that an emigrant needs to know when living on a farm in Canada.[48] While the Cunard Steamship Company informed Hungarians about how to travel to Canada in an immigrant handbook containing practical advice on immigration, settlement, and the voyage itself.[49] All these pamphlets and publications were in line with the program promoting the Canadian Prairies as the "Last Best West" in which promotional publications were made by the "Canadian government and distributed to potential settlers in Europe and the United States. Designed to dispel negative climatic and cultural preconceptions and extol the virtues of the Canadian Prairie for agricultural settlement, these pamphlets played a significant role in the aggressive immigrant-recruiting campaign staged by Clifford Sifton, minister of the interior from 1896 to 1905."[50] In the process of disseminating such information, rail and other transportation companies played a major role and although the main wave of immigration and immigration promotion took place prior to the First World War, a similar trend was visible in the case of the 1920s as well.

## The 1920s: Sámuel Zágonyi's Attempts to Counter Immigration Propaganda

As previously noted, in the 1920s, immigration started again and also included previously non-preferred countries. Like before, immigration propaganda played a key role in disseminating information about Canada and immigration opportunities, with the railway companies assuming a major role. The "Railway Agreement" introduced above "authorized the two railways to recruit and select 'agriculturalists, agricultural workers and domestic workers' and settle them in Canada with the assistance of the Department of Immigration and Colonization. Therefore, the two railway companies *de facto*

[48] Canadian Pacific Railway, *Angol (Hungarian-English) (a helyes angol kiejtés pontos feltüntetésével): amit egy tanyán tudnia kell: a Telepítési és Fejlesztési Osztály által előterjesztve*, Budapest, Királyi Magyar Egyetemi Nyomda, 1900?. Full English text available here: http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/bibliography/2490.html (accessed 10 May 2020).

[49] Cunard Steamship Company, *Kanada: hogy utazzunk a Cunard Line vöröskéményes gyors-hajóival közvetlenül Kanadába,* Budapest, Magyarországi Főiroda, 1910?. Full English text available here: http://peel.library.ualberta.ca/bibliography/3406.html (accessed 10 May 2020).

[50] David J. Wishart, "Last Best West" in *Encyclopedia of the Great Plains.* Available at: http://plainshumanities.unl.edu/encyclopedia/doc/egp.ii.038 (accessed 10 May 2020).

ran Canada's immigration selection system, particularly on the European Continent."[51] The agents of these companies also appeared in Hungary and promoted immigration to Canada in various forms.

Several newspaper articles from the time bear witness to this. *Békésmegyei Közlöny*, for example, already warned in 1924 in an article titled "Beware of the emigration agents" that in several villages agents of shipping companies had appeared "and unscrupulous people are tempting the poorest to emigrate to Canada" (and also South America) with the old tale of getting land for free:

> Canada today authorizes landing only in case there is an affidavit (a statement by a relative or acquaintance already living there that they would support them) and every agricultural emigrant also has to have 1,600 dollars to prove that they can and want to buy a farm. This is what the 'free land' of shipping companies has become, with which the heartless agents working for their own profit try to recruit passengers for their company, not caring that they may as well set the ignorant, uninformed peasants on the path to starvation or deportation.[52]

In 1923 the Hungarian Minister of the Interior also sent a letter with the subject "Advertisements tempting people to emigrate" to all Hungarian counties, warning them that shipping companies show advertisements in movie theaters that may be used to entice people to emigrate and reminds them that according to Act II of 1909 such action was considered illegal.[53] Although it is not specified, the advertisements most probably concern Canada or South American countries as this was already past the first introduction of US quotas. The new wave of emigration was also a hot political topic: the dangers associated with emigration to Canada (and South America) were highlighted in speeches. On 21 January 1925, for example, when discussing the permits granted to shipping companies carrying Hungarian emigrants to the Americas in the National Assembly, politicians called attention to the hazards of emigration to Canada (both for individuals and also post-Trianon Hungary in general) and the negative impact of immigration propaganda. It was argued that people deciding to emigrate had no idea

> [w]hat awaited them in the cursed earthly hell called Brazil, Mexico or Canada, from where there is no turning back and where these unfortunate people (lured away by despicable persuasion) will recite only when it is too late that 'Only when

[51] Vineberg, *Settlement Needs*, 14.

[52] "Vigyázzunk a kivándorlási ügynökökre!" *Békésmegyei Közlöny*, 28 June 1924. Available at: https://library.hungaricana.hu/en/view/BekesmegyeiKozlony_1924_2/?pg=0&layout=s (accessed 10 May 2020). Translation is mine.

[53] Magyar királyi belügyminiszter, *Kivándorlásra csábító hirdetmények*, Hajdú-Bihar County Archives, IV.B 406/b. 2480.

> we enter the crowd do we notice our mournful mistake'. We do demand vigorous and swift action to stop those tempting people to emigrate, we demand that the people be thoroughly and conscientiously informed as soon as possible about the terrible danger and almost entirely hopeless situation that awaits emigrants there, in that far-away foreign land [...][54]

One of the key publications practically addressing such a call for "thorough and conscientious information" came from Sámuel Zágonyi, who published a book in 1926 and also went on a country-wide tour trying to persuade people not to emigrate to Canada.[55] Zágonyi was a retired lieutenant colonel who was commissioned by the Hungarian government to travel to Canada and spent several weeks there as an immigrant worker. He published his experience and warnings after his return home, with the clearly stated intention of discouraging people from emigrating to the country. After his return home, he contacted the leaders of Hungarian counties, offered his book for distribution, and started on a nationwide tour (focusing especially on the regions most affected by emigration). The image depicted by Zágonyi, in line with the intentions of the publication, was the exact opposite of the features advertised by the immigration agents.

Parts of the book are similar to immigrant handbooks, introducing Canada in detail (its history and geography), providing information about immigration principles, acts, even offering translations of necessary documents and practical tips (on proper clothing or taxation issues). The overall and key message of the book, however, is to offer a stance against Hungarian emigration to Canada and it attempts to discourage Hungarian people from going to the country. Besides these admonitions, Zágonyi shares the experience of three emigrants (called A, B, and C), introducing their journey from the home country to the New World.

The image of Canada in the book is clearly negative. The "current Mecca of immigrants", as Zágonyi refers to it, is presented as being much less attractive than the United States before.[56] According to the author, choosing Canada as a new home is clearly a bad decision: "Canada is not the country that provides easy and fast ways for Hungarians to earn money" and "none should feed

[54] Records of the National Assembly, Vol XXVIII, 12 December 1924 – 29 January 1925. Available at: https://library.hungaricana.hu/hu/view/OGYK_KN-1922_28/?pg=0&layout=s (accessed 10 May 2020). Translation is mine.

[55] A much shorter, Hungarian version of this introduction to Zágonyi's book was published in AETAS: Balázs Venkovits, Záródó kapuk, új lehetőségek: magyar kivándorlás Észak-Amerikába a 20. század elején. *Aetas Történettudományi Folyóirat*, Vol. 33, No. 1 (2018), 131–143.

[56] Sámuel Zágonyi, *Kanada egy európai bevándorló megvilágításában*. Budapest: own publication, 1926, 10. Translations are mine.

upon the false hopes that they would be the exception to the general rule."[57] Zágonyi also highlights that there was a clear link between US restrictions and Canadian emigration: "The majority of those wishing to go to America cannot get a permit to enter the United States due to immigration restriction. However, as they have already decided to emigrate, and many have supposedly received favorable news already, their self-confidence and the opportunity for immigration lead them to Canada."[58] What is more, he devotes a separate section to the topic of illegal attempts of entering the United States from Canada, and highlights that American restrictions are taken seriously, and illegal border crossing is a difficulty not worth the risk.

The former soldier constantly focuses on hardship including the threat posed by agents, the climate, the lack of language skills, etc., and warns Hungarians: "Despite the dark shadow of poverty and destitution at home, everyone should think twice before deciding to emigrate to Canada under the current circumstances. Emigration makes the head of family a homeless wanderer and tears apart even the most intimate ties with family members and friends for a long time if not forever."[59] Zágonyi's activities aimed at stopping Hungarian emigration to Canada were not limited to the publication of his book. In a letter written in January 1927, he contacted the heads of Hungarian counties, presented his book as a "warning sign on the path of our people wishing to leave behind the homeland."[60] He argues that the book itself has also been approved as a schoolbook, it is suitable to fight the misconceptions about Canadian emigration, and may be used successfully by public authorities as well. He also announces his tour of the country "to possibly reduce the emigration fever by way of sharing my experience before the start of this year's emigration campaign."[61] He intended to use the income from his book to fund such a nationwide tour.[62]

The detailed schedule of the lecture tour was also sent to the counties, according to which between March and May 1927 Zágonyi visited several counties most affected by emigration and newspapers across the country also reported about the free lectures. In February 1927, *Zemplén* also called the attention of its readers to the lectures:

> Sámuel Zágonyi retired lieutenant colonel delivers six lectures in Zemplén County about the conditions in Canada. The most knowledgeable expert of the Canadian question […] in his nationwide propaganda tour (during which he pulls the veil

[57] Ibid., 71–72.
[58] Ibid., 70–71.
[59] Ibid., 75.
[60] Hajdú-Bihar County Archives, IV.B. 406/B, 15647/1929. Translation is mine.
[61] Ibid.
[62] According to the county records, Bihar County, for example, bought 70 copies from the book.

> off the story of the Canadian Eldorado based on his abundant experience, and presents the terrible situation in which our fellow Hungarian emigrants suffer in its true form) on March 17, 18, and 19. [...] last year altogether 388 able, strong, healthy Hungarians in their prime emigrated to Canada from Zemplén County and decided to carry the terrible cross on their shoulders that is represented by living in a foreign land fighting a withering and aimless fight. This is a terrible loss of blood that is caused to our County by Canadian emigration, and the most purposeful, most believable propaganda is needed to finally forestall the human trafficking by Canadian land agents.[63]

In October 1927 Zágonyi, in another letter sent to the counties, reported that he had altogether delivered 102 lectures in 21 counties and claimed that he had received several letters acknowledging the beneficial impact of his activities (although he also writes about financial difficulties and enemies made in the process). Zágonyi continued his anti-immigration activities for several years, in 1929 he sent yet another letter to the counties, again calling attention to the quickly spreading immigration propaganda luring Hungarians to "dangerous" Canada and he even enclosed a letter written by a friend living in that country, detailing the true and harsh conditions Hungarians had to live under in their new home. As noted above, however, the end to this wave of migration came not as a result of Zágonyi's or the government's attempts, but the stock market crash and the ensuing Great Depression.

## Conclusion

It is possible that András Takács even attended a lecture by Zágonyi or encountered government information that painted a dangerous and negative image of Canada. Such information, however, was not enough to deter András from emigrating. In this sense he followed in the footsteps of thousands of other Hungarians who decided to take the risk for the betterment of their family. We cannot be sure what role immigration propaganda played in his decisions but looking at the newspaper and political coverage, and the archives of counties in Hungary, we can be rather certain that it played a key role in influencing the routes of Hungarian emigration in general. Although coming from a small village in the northeastern part of Hungary, András' choices were influenced by a complex web of international events. The push factor of economic hardship made him look for better opportunities abroad. With his decision to emigrate, he acted against the wishes of the Hungarian

[63] "Ismertető előadások Kanadáról", *Zemplén,* 13 February 1927. Available at: https://library.hungaricana.hu/en/view/SatoraljaujhelyiLeveltar_Zemplen_1927_1 (accessed 10 May 2020). Translation is mine.

government, but the efforts and regulations of the mother country could not stop him from leaving his native land. The introduction of the quota system is the United States, however, closed one of the main destinations in front of him and thus he had to look for alternatives.

Canada presented one such alternative and the overtly positive image of the country disseminated via pamphlets, posters, and personal meetings with agents, coupled with stories of fellow villagers, finally persuaded him that the long voyage across the Atlantic would be worth the risk. The stages of history (depression, another world war and communism), however, stopped him from completing his original plan and his family was never fully reunited again. Although the father returned to the home country, the siblings in Canada and Hungary remained separated for the rest of their lives. Statistics, policy overviews and ship manifests tell us the key moments of major waves of migration between Hungary and Canada; the true force of the migration process, however, may be best revealed when retelling individual stories that expose the personal and often tragic side of migration.

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# THE SOUTH ASIAN CANADIAN DIASPORA: A TRANSNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND ITS LITERARY REPRESENTATION IN ANITA RAU BADAMI'S *CAN YOU HEAR THE NIGHTBIRD CALL?*

Mária Palla[1]

## Abstract

*This paper concentrates on how transnational connections and identities are formed and negotiated across borders both on the level of the South Asian diaspora as such in Canada and the individuals presented in Badami's novel. The interstitial space transmigrants occupy is a site where ethnic and national categorization becomes ambivalent and the in-betweenness of these people offers opportunities to address issues pertaining to both the local and the global.*

*In her novel Anita Rau Badami, an Indo-Canadian like her characters, follows the intertwining stories of three female protagonists and their family members. All of them are attached to their homeland in India in various ways, while some of them are linked to Canada, too, as the latter becomes their adopted home. Badami also revisits traumatic and violent events related to the Komagata Maru incident of 1914, the Partition of India in 1947, and the bombing of Air India flight 182 in 1985 to explore their lasting effects on the South Asian diaspora. Thus, the investigation of her narrative moving between the personal and the political reveals the ambiguous outcomes resulting from the transnational interconnectedness of historical events as well as individual lives.*

## Introduction

In this paper, the South Asian Canadian diaspora is examined as a community of transnational migrants. After a brief survey of South Asian immigration to Canada and the growing influence of this complex group of people, their literary representation is exemplified by Anita Rau Badami's *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?*, the author's third novel, published in 2006. Like a number of her characters in the book, including two of the female protagonists, the author is a first-generation immigrant from India. In the discussion of the

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narrative to follow, I foreground the question of ethical responsibility Badami couples with the idea of transnational interconnectedness apparent in the lives of her characters and the lands they inhabit.

## The Emergence and Increasing Impact of the South Asian Diaspora in Canada

In North America, the designation South Asian came into use in the wake of the Second World War, when the "academic and policy elites [of the United States] sought to map the world in terms of a series of contiguous regions."[2] Afterwards, terms like this were adopted by institutions of higher education when area studies was introduced as an interdisciplinary field. Then the sending region's political elites adopted it, and the term "became a category of self-definition,"[3] and was subsequently employed by the diasporas of South Asian origin in the West, too, thereby completing its transnational migration across borders on different continents. According to Giri and Kumar, the last leg of the journey of the term illustrates how members of a diaspora have embraced a broader identity as South Asians and have created "solidarity, neighborliness, and hospitality with others from the region" by emphasizing their common roots.[4] Thus, what appeared first as an etic, that is, externally attached, use of the term became also the emic, or self-applied, designation.

Yet some critics contest the use of South Asian as the designation of the diaspora in question, since it does not refer to any shared historical, religious or linguistic traditions or national-political orientations of its members. In geo-political terms, South Asia includes five or more nation-states, depending on the definitions provided by different political institutions or academic departments. The five countries unanimously included are India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Nepal. South Asia is also the home of at least five world religions: Hinduism, Islam, Sikhism, Buddhism and Christianity. Due to this heterogeneity, Pnina Werbner categorizes the South Asian diaspora as a "complex or segmented" one.[5]

Yet, it is exactly because of its expansiveness that the designation South Asian can be successfully applied as an umbrella term to diasporans of different religions and ethnicities, sometimes from one and the same country, as well as migrants sharing the same mother tongue but not the same

[2] B.P. Giri – Priya Kumar, On South Asian Diasporas, *South Asian Review,* Vol. 32, No. 3 (2011), 13.
[3] Ibid., 13.
[4] Ibid., 13.
[5] Pnina Werbner, Complex Diasporas, in K. Knott – S. McLoughlin (eds.), *Diasporas: Concepts, Intersections, Identities*, London, Zed Books, 2010, 76.

nationality, all coming from the same region of the world. In spite of such divisions in the diaspora, Werbner convincingly argues that its members share the same cultural region of consumption because they enjoy "similar cultural preoccupations, tastes, cuisines, music, sport, poetry, fashion and popular cinema."[6] Obviously, they are in contrast with the archetypal Jewish diaspora in that their religious and cultural orientations do not necessarily coincide with the bounded territories of their homeland, the Sikhs and the Parsis serving as prominent examples. However, by having a common culture of consumption, members of the South Asian diaspora create "public arenas and economic channels for cooperation and communal enjoyment, which *cut across the national origins or religious beliefs of performers and participants*."[7]

Studying the history of the South Asian diaspora in a North American context, Joel Kuortti distinguishes "three specific periods, or immigration waves, during which there was a more substantial number of immigrants coming in."[8] As Vogt-William also notes, "[a]lthough massive migrations of people from the subcontinent have become more apparent in the latter half of the last century, South Asian diasporic communities have existed in England, the USA, and Canada since the nineteenth century."[9]

By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, there were about five thousand South Asians in British Columbia, ninety percent of whom were of a Sikh farming background, mainly men from the Punjab area in northern India; they were attracted to Canada by employment opportunities.[10] "After 1909 the immigration rules were tightened in Canada,"[11] so the second wave of immigration brought larger numbers of South Asians, lured again by higher wages, to Canada only after the Second World War. The third and largest immigration wave occurred in the 1960s in the wake of "the legislative reforms in 1962 and 1967."[12] These South Asians belonged to a different demographic group, that of the middle-class, for whom the prospect of a better education in Canada was the main attraction. The new immigration laws of the 1960s eliminated overt racial discrimination and introduced a

6 Ibid., 76.
7 Ibid., 76.
8 Joel Kuortti, *Writing Imagined Diasporas: South Asian Women Reshaping North American Identity*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007, 9.
9 Christine F. Vogt-William, *Bridges, Borders and Bodies: Transgressive Transculturality in Contemporary South Asian Diasporic Women's Novels*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014, 4.
10 Norman Buchignani, South Asian Canadians, *The Canadian Encyclopaedia*, (2010, 2015), https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/south-asians (accessed 15 November 2016).
11 Kuortti, *Writing Imagined Diasporas*, 10.
12 Ibid., 10.

point system, which rationalized the admission procedures.[13] These laws allowed more non-European immigrants, mainly from South Asia and the Caribbean, to Canada, which resulted in a demographic shift in Canadian society making South Asians its largest visible minority group comprising 1.9 million people in 2016, according to Statistics Canada.[14] However, as already mentioned above, the South Asian diaspora is extremely varied; in the Metro Toronto area alone, "over 20 distinct ethnic groups can be identified within the larger (more than 850,000) South Asian population."[15]

The significance of the similarly multifarious literature produced by this loose ethnic group has gradually increased since the 1980s. South Asian Canadians brought out their first joint English-language publication as an ethnic community in 1985. As Arun Mukherjee notes, it was a collection of essays called *A Meeting of Streams* that represented the diaspora on its own in a single volume.[16] This was to be followed by *The Geography of Voice*, a literary anthology, in 1992, *Shakti's Words: South Asian Canadian Women's Poetry* a year later (1993), and several other volumes including *The Whistling Thorn: South Asian Canadian Fiction* (1994), *Sons Must Die and Other Plays* (1998), as well as *Her Mother's Ashes*, the third book in a series of writings by South Asian women in Canada and the United States (2009).

If works by individual authors in South Asian languages such as Punjabi and Urdu are also taken into account, the beginnings of South Asian diasporic literature in Canada can be traced back to the time when South Asians arrived in Vancouver in significant numbers in the early years of the twentieth century.[17] As these writings "are rarely translated and circulate almost exclusively within specific linguistic groups,"[18] they are understandably lesser known than their English language counterparts that started appearing in Canada after the Second World War. South Asian poetry in English published in journals has a history dating back to the late 1950s. Short-story collections followed in the 1960s to be succeeded by the first South Asian novels published in English in Canada in the 1970s, including works by such authors as Bharati Mukherjee and Harold Sonny Ladoo. However, it was with the emergence of writers such as Michael Ondaatje, Shauna Singh Baldwin, Rohinton

[13] Lindsey Van Dyk, *Canadian Immigration Acts and Legislation,* Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, https://pier21.ca/research/immigration-history/canadian-immigration-acts-and-legislation (accessed 16 August 2018).

[14] *Census Profile, 2016 Census,* Statistics Canada, www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=PR&Code1=01&Geo2=&Code2=&Data=Count&SearchText=Canada&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=All&TABID=1 (accessed 5 August 2018).

[15] Buchignani, South Asian Canadians.

[16] Arun Mukherjee, *Postcolonialism: My Living*, Toronto, TSAR, 1998, 24.

[17] Ch. Chakraborty – R. E. Field, Moving Ahead, Looking Back: New Directions in South Asian Canadian Literature and Culture, *South Asian Review,* Vol. 37, No. 1 (2016), 14.

[18] Ibid., 14.

Mistry, as well as Anita Rau Badami, that South Asian Canadian literature received the attention of readers and critics of mainstream Canada too. As Mariam Pirbhai observes, "South Asian Canadian literature, as a category of study, came into being in the 1980s, becoming the object of vigorous critical attention until the late 1990s."[19]

As for South Asians participating in Canadian politics, this had to wait until 1947 when adult members of the community were finally given the vote. However, it was only in the 1980s that the first South Asian was elected to a legislature in Canada, increasing the political influence of the diaspora as well.[20] It was not by coincidence that the 1980s turned out to be the decade when the South Asian and other ethnic minorities gained opportunities in the cultural and political life of Canada never seen before. In 1988 the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, aiming to support cultural pluralism, among other things, was passed after Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau announced multiculturalism as official policy in Parliament in 1971. In the following years, South Asians were chosen to be members of provincial parliaments and eventually there were some who also entered the federal Parliament in Ottawa or became ministers in Justin Trudeau's cabinet in the 2010s. Another great success achieved in Canadian politics by a South Asian, who happens to be a turbaned Sikh, occurred in 2018 when the lawyer Jagmeet Singh was elected leader of a federal party, the New Democratic Party. This was the first time in Canadian politics that someone from a visible minority group became the leader of a federal party on a permanent basis.

As Buchignani observes, it is the Sikhs who form the largest South Asian ethnic group in the whole of Canada today.[21] They are also a particular diasporic community because of the position of their homeland. In general terms, any diasporan is located in the interstitial space between the ancestral home left behind and the newly adopted hostland. A determining feature of the diaspora experience is the desire to return home even if not to its physical location but in the diasporan's imagination. As Robin Cohen states, such a return movement to the homeland "gains collective approbation even if many in the group are satisfied with only a vicarious relationship or intermittent visits to the homeland."[22] However, the Sikhs have never had their independent homeland, which gave rise to a Sikh separatist movement

[19] Mariam Pirbhai, Introduction South Asian Canadian Literature: A Centennial Journey, *Studies in Canadian Literature – Études en Litterature Canadienne,* Vol. 40, No. 1 (2015), 8.

[20] A Timeline of South Asian Canadian History, *South Asian Generation Next*, www.sagennext.com/2013/06/27/a-timeline-of-south-asian-canadian-history (accessed 2 November 2017).

[21] Norman Buchignani, Sikhism in Canada, *The Canadian Encyclopaedia* (2008, 2014), www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/Sikhism (accessed 30 October 2018).

[22] Robin Cohen, *Global Diasporas*, 2nd ed., Abingdon, Routledge, 2008, 17.

becoming prominent in the 1950s and 1960s. Since then several violent, even terrorist events have taken place with the purpose of creating Khalistan, the Sikh nation-state, as a response to Indian oppression.

Yet, as Cohen further argues, "contemporary demands for statehood are essentially anachronistic."[23] He also adds the following: "Given that there are no 'empty lands' left in the world, can statehood for one people ever be achieved without perpetrating injustice to other ethnicities, thus bringing into being new victim diasporas with new grievances."[24] Similar thoughts are expressed by Stuart Hall when he discusses forms of cultural identity. He asserts that "[c]ultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything, which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialized past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture, and power."[25] He unequivocally distances himself from "the old, the imperializing, the hegemonizing, form of 'ethnicity'" that privileges return to the homeland at all costs, "even if it means pushing other people into the sea."[26] For Hall, cultural identity is not a fixed essence with a fixed origin firmly rooted in a homeland; it goes through transformations and evolves in new forms all the time as people migrate and enter contact zones where they encounter other cultures. Therefore, identity is variously "constructed through memory, fantasy, narrative, and myth. Not an essence but a *positioning*."[27] He argues for "a conception of 'identity' which lives with and through, not despite, difference; by *hybridity*."[28] In his view, it is especially true for diaspora identities because they exist in a fluid space across borders "constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew, through transformation and difference."[29] Cohen's and Hall's observations illustrate the complex forces at play in a diaspora when its members negotiate their position in a multilocational, cross-border existence.

## Interconnected Histories

For her novel *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?*, Anita Rau Badami selected four traumatic historical occurrences from the communal memory of the South Asian diaspora to effectively describe their lasting transnational influence on the socio-political environment as well as the private lives of the individual

[23] Ibid., 119.
[24] Ibid., 119
[25] Stuart Hall, Cultural Identity and Diaspora, 1993, in J. E. Braziel – A. Mannur (eds.), *Theorizing Diaspora: A Reader*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2003, 236.
[26] Ibid., 244.
[27] Ibid., 236.
[28] Ibid., 244.
[29] Ibid., 244.

characters, a complex of influences highlighting how little significance borders retain in our globalized world. The earliest event thus represented is the Komagata Maru incident of 1914, which occurred in a liminal space as passengers from the Indian subcontinent on board the ship *Komagata Maru* were denied entry into Canada off the coast of Vancouver. The second such event is the Partition of the Indian subcontinent into the independent states of India and Pakistan on an ethno-religious basis after the British colonizers left in 1947. It was followed by chaos erupting in the region, mainly in the Punjab, due to mass migration: around ten million people changed places between the two countries fearing for their lives, not without reason, amidst hightened tensions between Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims. In the riots, raids and the horror of the massacres, "[t]he loss of life was immense, with estimates ranging from several hundred thousand up to a million."[30]

The third event is the violent attack carried out by the Indian army on the Golden Temple, the holiest of Sikh shrines, in Amritsar on the order of Indira Gandhi to evict armed extremists fighting for Sikh separatism in the summer of 1984. "The temple is not only the highest seat of religious and temporal authority for the Sikhs (analogous to the significance of St Peter's for Catholics) it also was the symbolic centre of a world without boundaries."[31] Obviously the attack enraged the Sikhs and also led to the Prime Minister's assassination by her Sikh bodyguards later in the same year. The assassination, in turn, provoked anti-Sikh riots in India, during which Sikhs were hunted down all over the country. "Some 2,000 Sikhs were killed in communal riots and Sikhs responded by terrorism and violence, adding several thousand more to the casualties."[32] The final, related event also involving violence, terror and exclusion is the bombing of Air India flight 182 by Sikh terrorists from Canada in1985, killing all of its 329 passengers, 280 of whom were Canadian citizens, mostly of South Asian descent. This last tragedy occurred in mid-air off the coast of Ireland and was transnationally linked to both India and Canada. Yet, fordecades, neither country took upon itself the responsibility of investigating the incident, each claiming that the task belonged to the other.

It is the first and the last of these four events that have ramifications in the hostland of the South Asian diaspora in contemporary Canada to this day and reveal problems in multicultural tolerance and acceptance when these ideals are not only proclaimed but tested in practice. The Komagata Maru incident of 1914 and the bombing of Air India flight 182 in 1985 are regarded as instances of exclusion often deliberately omitted from the official narrative of Canadian history. Due to their lasting influence and incomplete

[30] Barbara D. Metcalf – Thomas R. Metcalf, *The Concise History of Modern India*, 2nd ed., Cambridge, Cambridge University, 2006, 221.
[31] Cohen, *Global Diasporas*, 117.
[32] Ibid., 117.

resolution, they present the relationship between South Asians and the dominant society as highly problematic even today. According to Mariam Pirbhai, the Komagata Maru incident functions significantly as "a diasporic metanarrative [articulating] the struggles, hopes, and aspirations common to multigenerational communities of South Asian Canadians."[33]

The *Komagata Maru* was a Japanese steamship that transported 376 passengers of South Asian origin aiming to immigrate to Canada. As they had the status of British subjects coming from the Raj, as a matter of course they should have been granted entry to Canada, still a Dominion at the time. However, the Canadian government had introduced the Continuous Journey Regulation, and because an uninterrupted voyage from India to Canada was almost impossible in the early twentieth century this regulation effectively imposed requirements these passengers were unable to comply with. So the ship was detained off the shores of Vancouver for two months, during which time "the passengers aboard the ship were threatened at gunpoint and forced to leave Canadian shores."[34] In the end, all the passengers except 21 were denied their rights and freedom and had no choice but to return to India. The Continuous Journey Regulation of 1908 made it possible to keep Canada white by allowing "the government to restrict both Indian and Japanese immigration without specifying exclusion on the basis of race, nationality or ethnic origins."[35] Historian Peter Ward recalls the figure of H.H. Stevens, a Conservative Member of Parliament and a leading anti-Oriental spokesman, who "voiced the central concern of west coast nativists, the belief that unassimilable Asian immigrants threatened [British Columbia's] cultural homogeneity."[36]

Another traumatic and shocking example of racial injustice followed the terrorist attack on Air India flight 182. Not surprisingly, the inverstigation was viewed by South Asian Canadians as a "symbol of betrayal by the state,"[37] since the Canadian government stalled it for a long time claiming it was not a Canadian issue. The Canadian authorities involved simply ignored the fact that the flight had departed from Toronto carrying mainly Canadian passengers, and that the attack was carried out by Sikh extremists living in British Columbia. Responsibility for the investigation was handed over to

[33] Pirbhai, Introduction, 7.

[34] Alia Somani, What Is Remembered and What Is Forgotten? South Asian Diasporic Histories and the Shifting National Imaginary, *Studies in Canadian Literature - Études en Litterature Canadienne*, Vol. 40, No. 1 (2015), 79.

[35] Continuous Journey Regulation, 1908, *Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21*, https://pier21.ca/research/immigration-history/continuous-journey-regulation-1908 (accessed 2 November 2018).

[36] Peter Ward qtd. in Somani, What Is Remembered and What Is Forgotten?, 88.

[37] Pirbhai, Introduction, 17.

India on the grounds that the bomb explosion happened on an Indian flight and was related to the rising Sikh separatist movement, which was also behind the assassination of Indira Gandhi earlier.

Since then, official apologies have been made by Canada for both discriminatory acts; however, instead of providing closure, Stephen Harper's 2008 apology "opened up a space for minorities to demand more adequate statements, for compensation, and ultimately for a nation that remembers."[38] As Sikhs were the majority among the victims in both cases, these two tragic incidents play an especially crucial role in how Sikhs situate themselves in their relationship to their land of settlement. Alia Somani notes that there has been a proliferation of texts about these tragedies in recent years, due to which they are in the public consciousness now and also "seep into the national imaginary."[39] She also argues that "a conscious and deliberate remembering of the nation's forgotten past can serve strategically to alter the composition and text of the Canadian nation, to re-member [sic] it, and in so doing ultimately to transform it into a more heterogeneous space."[40]

## History Meets Fiction

The above mentioned four historical-political events play a significant narrative role while also raising ethical questions in Badami's intricately structured novel where the focus keeps shifting from character to character and from location to location as the chapters follow one another. In spite of the symbolic weight carried by these incidents in the novel, Badami does not aim to analyze the details of the global and national concerns in the background of the historical events or the political masterminds behind them. Her interests do not lie in histories on a large scale; what she writes is the *petites histoires* of the ordinary people of South Asia.

The first three parts of *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?* introduce Bibi-ji, Leela, and Nimmo, the three female protagonists of the novel, one by one. Bibi-ji, born as Sharanjeet Kaur, is one of the two daughters of a poor Sikh farming couple in the Punjab region of the Indian subcontinent during the British Raj in the 1920s. After marrying a Sikh young man from Vancouver, later known as Pa-ji, she immigrates to Canada where, due to their hard work and business sense, they prosper and become the proud owners of a restaurant they call The Delhi Junction. It is one of their customers here to whom they rent out their old apartment when his wife Leela arrives in Canada with their children to reunite with him. As it turns subsequently out Leela happened to

[38] Somani, What Is Remembered and What Is Forgotten?, 83.
[39] Ibid., 75.
[40] Ibid., 76.

be driven to the airport in Delhi on her journey to Vancouver by the husband of Bibi-ji's niece, Nimmo, whose whereabouts were unknown to Bibi-ji due to the upheaval caused by the partition of the subcontinent. After Bibi-ji and Nimmo meet, Bibi-ji and her husband become the guardians of Jasbeer, Nimmo's eldest child, and take him to Canada in order to ease the financial difficulties Nimmo struggles with. Jasbeer, however, suffers under the burden of his liminal existence and eventually finds a way out of it by joining the fight for an independent Khalistan and returns to India. All three families become entangled in the historical events of the 1980s outlined above with tragic consequences.

By revealing how the personal lives of these characters intersect with national, regional and global politics, Badami has ample opportunity to present facts of reality that numerous readers were craving for as a counterbalance to the postmodern experimentation of authors like Salman Rushdie in the postmillennial era. Instead of offering versions of what may have happened and expressing epistemological dilemmas by having characters question them, she employs a strong narrative drive to depict what she knows to be verifiable facts. To do so, she combines the voice of a third person narrator with the points of view of various focalizers. The explanations she thus provides may be incomplete but are never contradictory because the same events are never presented from varying angles. What Badami thus achieves is a strong emphasis on the South Asian community in their ancestral home and abroad while occupying a strong moral stance against all atrocities and giving vocal expression to the need for social responsibility.

One of the focalizers in *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?*, the oldest of the three women protagonists, is called Bibi-ji throughout the larger part of the plot, although this is not the name given to her at birth. Badami offers an etymology of this hybrid linguistic creation, which appears to be a version of the endearing word "Baby" that the woman's husband uses as an affectionate nickname for her "like the characters in the romantic Hollywood movies he loved to watch, but his Punjabi accent interfered and messed up his English."[41] As a result of the mixing of English and Punjabi, the word becomes "Bebby". But "[p]eople in their small Punjabi community [in Vancouver], who weren't sure what the word meant, tagged on their own marker of respect and called her Bebby-ji."[42] Due to frequent use, "it was turned by the constant touch of many tongues to Bibi-ji"[43] meaning "Wife, and that was what she was: the respected wife of a respected man."[44] The woman's contentedness with her

[41] Anita Rau Badami, *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?*, 2006, Toronto, Vintage Canada, 2007, 39–40.
[42] Ibid., 40.
[43] Ibid., 40.
[44] Ibid., 40.

hybrid name expressed in the quote cited above characterizes her overall favorable attitude to the position she occupies in the interstitial space of different cultures in Canada.

Bibi-ji is a Sikh woman originally from the Punjab region in the north-western part of the Indian subcontinent, who emigrates to Canada to escape the poverty of her family. As a matter of fact, she realizes the dream of her father, who was among the passengers of the *Komagata Maru* and was forced to return to the Punjab in humiliation after his failure to enter Canada. His daughter does succeed in economic terms but her family life is utterly shattered by the end of the novel as her husband becomes one of the victims of the attack on the Golden Temple when they pay a visit to the sacral location on their pilgrimage. There is a sense of foreboding in the whole novel from its very beginning due to the inclusion of the nightbird in its title. The nightbird is a four-winged creature "that made those who heard its song go mad. Only those people who were about to die could hear this deadly bird"[45] explains Nimmo, Bibi-ji's niece, who herself goes insane after losing two of her children and her husband killed during the outbreak of racist violence directed against the Sikhs in India in late 1984.

Bibi-ji's and her husband's financial prosperity in Canada is due to the success of their restaurant, which they established with hard-earned money they managed to save up over the years. The Delhi Junction, as the establishment is called, becomes a hub of the South Asian community in Vancouver. The name is borrowed from the railway station in Delhi, India, as the couple wishes to attract crowds of customers like the railway station attracts passengers. The food, the smells and the diversity of the visitors replicate those of the subcontinent, their ancestral land, which is thus transplanted onto the soil of their adopted home in North America in an attempt to overcome their sense of displacement and to claim the place as their own. They also wish to make the unfamiliar environment familiar and combat the unhomely, a desire also expressed in the choice of the restaurant's name. With this desire they continue the tradition established and handed down by preceding generations of immigrants, those European settlers of North America centuries earlier who named their new homes in the alien environment after European cities such as London, Windsor or Stratford, to list a few old-new place names as examples from Canada. This visible minority group thus mimics the past acts of the white majority. But the naming of the restaurant in Canada after a location in India can also be regarded as an example of "colonizing in reverse"[46]: the Sikh couple from the East takes possession of the West in the manner their Western colonizers did in their land in the East.

[45] Ibid., 298.

[46] C.L. Innes, *The Cambridge Introduction to Postcolonial Literatures in English*, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2007, 177.

The regulars of The Delhi Junction include a large variety of people: Hafeez Ali, the Urdu-speaking Pakistani Muslim man, "Dr. Majumdar, a tall, suave Bengali with a sardonic face; portly, balding Menon, who spoke English with a heavy Malayali accent; the Gujarati doctor Harish Shah, also rotund and balding; and the new arrival from South India who had shortened his complicated name […] to the more manageable Balu Bhat."[47] Together with the Sikh owners of the restaurant, they embody the diversity of the South Asian diaspora, which, in turn, recreates the multiplicity of ethnicities, religions, and languages of the subcontinent itself. Nevertheless, these guests from such a heterogeneous diaspora all enjoy the same food. Thus, they provide a perfect illustration of what the social anthropologist Pnina Werbner categorizes as a "complex or segmented" diaspora as explained above.

Their ties to the distant homeland are not only manifest in the imported culture, though, but also in the continuous influence the homeland politics has on them: "In 1965, when war broke out between India and Pakistan, the battle came to The Delhi Junction as well. […] As the war across the world went on and casualties mounted on both sides, conversation between the two factions at The Junction ceased altogether."[48] But as time goes by, the restaurant's South Asian patrons begin to realize their transformation in the diaspora space where they simultaneously become more alienated from their homeland and acculturated to their hostland. That is what one of the Sikh guests refers to when he says during a heated discussion of the emergency declared by Indira Gandhi: "What does it matter whether we agree or do not agree? […] We are not Indians anymore, are we? We can only sit here and drink Pa-ji's chai and go jhabbar-jhabbar, that's all."[49] The theme of belonging in a transnational world, the involvement of the diasporans in their homeland's politics and the question of who is responsible for the diasporans are crucial issues that arise from Badami's narrative as it develops.

However, Badami adds one more dimension to the multiplicity represented by the people of South Asian descent listed above when she introduces "Colonel Samuel Hunt, ex-British India army,"[50] turning the restaurant into a truly transnational space. Sam Hunt frequents the place out of postcolonial nostalgia because it is here that he can satisfy his acquired appetite for curries after serving the British Empire in India for twenty-five years. Apparently, colonization has had a lasting impact not only on the colonized, but also on the colonizer, whose culture itself has changed in the encounter with those in the colonies whom he was to "civilize," obeying colonial ideology. Interestingly, in Canada, where he is as much of an immigrant as the natives of the land

[47] Badami, *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?*, 65.
[48] Ibid., 67.
[49] Ibid., 266–267.
[50] Ibid., 57.

where he was employed on his colonizing mission, Samuel Hunt "was doing the splits between two cultures, just like the desis were," notes the narrator. Desi is a word of Hindi origin used to refer to people from India or South Asia as opposed to the goras, which is a non-derogatory Indian designation the narrator employs to identify white people.

The cultural mixing shared by South Asian as well as white immigrants in Canada is also conspicuous in the choice of pictures that decorate the walls of The Junction. The portraits of people from the East and the West include those of Nehru, Gandhi, Bhagat Singh, Marylin Monroe, Meena Kumari, Clark Gable and Dev Anand,[51] making the restaurant a hybrid space where borders become meaningless and cultures turn fluid intersecting with each other easily.

Fluidity does not only characterize the culture of Bibi-ji's business enterprise but also her attempts to enter other people's lives, which she does with ease. She frequently travels back and forth between her two homes, her birthplace in the subcontinent and her place of residence in Canada, as if physical borders did not exist. She returns to India for the first time to meet her niece thought to have disappeared together with her whole family amidst the violence that followed the Partition, effectively dividing the Punjab region, the historic homeland of the Sikhs. After discovering that her niece is married with two children and pregnant with a third while living in dire conditions in Delhi, she offers to take the elder child, Jasbeer with her to Canada where, she believes, he can take advantage of the opportunities provided by the education system there.

Jasbeer is the character in the novel for whom the question of belonging becomes the most acute and the most painful. He does not immigrate to Canada out of choice but is uprooted from his home. He feels betrayed by his biological family and shuns them, but at the same time he is also unwilling to adapt to the new environment. His sense of identity is also strongly influenced by the Sikh lore Bibi-ji's husband introduces him to and gets him into trouble at school, for example, when he takes a kitchen knife with him as the best substitute for the short, curved sword called *kirpan*, one of the traditional articles of faith Sikh men must wear. Gradually, in an attempt to find a purpose in life and a community where he belongs, Jasbeer drifts towards Sikh fundamentalism under the influence of one of the family's Sikh house guests from Britain who has no doubts about where the allegiance of the Sikhs in the diaspora should lie, and who strongly urges the Sikhs in Canada to join in the fight for an independent Khalistan as their duty. Jasbeer becomes a member of the organization called Young Sikhs for a Free Punjab,

[51] Ibid., 60.

and then decides to return to India to study at a religious school there. His whereabouts are rather uncertain from this point onwards as no one can tell in which country he might be.

Eventually, Jasbeer renounces his separatist ideas and the enforced fight for a sovereign Sikh homeland, realizing how much harm he caused while collecting "donations" for the cause in the Punjab: "Every single time I saw a frightened face putting the last of their savings (…) into my bag, I felt more wretched and unsure. These people were giving me their last pennies because they were terrified of me. All they wanted was to be left alone to live their lives. And all I wanted was to go home. I was sick of the violence and the killing."[52] He finally understands his foster father Pa-ji, who advocated not bowing "to the wave of fundamentalism"[53] in spite of the scorn of numerous fellow Sikhs in Vancouver. Jasbeer embraces Pa-ji's humanist pacifist views that he disregarded in his youth: "As a Sikh, I am interested in putting money into *building* things – like schools and hospitals – not for breaking up countries!" Ironically, peace-loving, generous and affectionate Pa-ji dies a violent death during the government soldiers' attack on the extremists hiding in the Golden Temple in Amritsar.

In a letter to Bibi-ji, Jasbeer announces that he will be home soon. Bibi-ji's comments, however, are rather doubtful: "*Home?* She thinks. Her heart flutters with hope for a moment. *But which one?*"[54] The novel ends with the same ambiguity in the last sentence as Jasbeer approaches the home in Delhi where he grew up. "He is nearly home"[55] is the final line of the novel, which implies that the reader can never be sure if the character will ever arrive at a place he truly belongs to any more. It is not only because of his realization of his misplaced faith and the arising doubts about his rootedness in any location he inhabited during his transnational life but also because his old home in Delhi will never be the same with his father, brother and sister killed in the anti-Sikh riots driving his mother to insanity.

Jasbeer's case is only one of several others in the novel illustrating the burden of occupying an interstitial space between different races and cultures. After Bibi-ji and Nimmo, it is Leela, the third woman-protagonist in Badami's book whose story reads as a direct comment on the issue of interstitiality and hybridity involved in transnationalism. She is the "Half-and-Half" in the title of Chapter 5, the daughter of a Hindu father and a German mother. Her Indian grandmother keeps ostracizing Leela, the "half-breed,"[56] because she considers miscegenation intolerable. After all, Leela finds happiness in her

[52] Ibid., 398.
[53] Ibid., 283.
[54] Ibid., 395.
[55] Ibid., 402.
[56] Ibid., 82.

marriage to Balu Bhat, who comes from a highly regarded family in Bangalore. Now she can fully and happily identify with her Indian subjecthood, which she insists on even after immigrating to Canada. Yet, she becomes a half-and-half again floating between cultures and countries in her death. She is one of the 329 passengers who became the victims of the bombing of Air India flight 182 by Sikh terrorists from Canada in1985. "Even in death, neither country claimed her [...] as its own"[57] since neither India, nor Canada would investigate the terrorist act for years to come.

A chance of a happy outcome resulting from racial and cultural mixing is briefly offered, however, when Leela's son Arjun, a South Asian immigrant, is engaged to Fern, a white girl from Canada. After finding out about the engagement, Leela envisions a bright future for their children in Canada "where change and movement and hybridity were commonplace."[58] In spite of all the misfortunes, it is the younger generation in Canada that holds out some hope for a racially tolerant world. Yet, nothing can be taken for granted since everything is interconnected with everything else, as the novel illustrates. This interconnectedness is expressed explicitly in terms of a Hindu/Buddhist metaphor, namely Indra's Net, or Indra's Jewel Net, mentioned by Leela at the end of Chapter 6 of the novel. The metaphor expresses the interdependence and interpenetration of all phenomena because whatever affects one jewel in the net, affects them all. It is Leela's daughter Preethi who is actually reminded of Indra's Net first when she sees the brightly lit border between India and Pakistan as they fly over it on their way to Canada. Ironically, while the metaphorical net emphasizes connections, this net of lights is meant to ensure the separation of the two countries. The irony undermines any certainties, which effect is echoed by Leela's thoughts on their journey: "And their movement, their migration from one world to another, had set [Indra's Net] in motion, causing a series of tremors. How it would all end, she did not know."[59]

## Conclusion

The linked historical events recounted in *Can You Hear the Nightbird Call?* and the interconnected life stories of its characters illustrate the workings of Indra's Net, which may also be translated as transnational connections. No matter whether the Hindu/Buddhist metaphor or the Western concept of transnationalism is applied, the final outcome is always unpredictable in Badami's novel. In other words, this paper has investigated sustained cross-border relationships in the context of the transnational migration of South

[57] Ibid., 397.
[58] Ibid., 307.
[59] Ibid., 106.

Asians, that is, "linkages between people, places and institutions crossing nation-state borders and spanning the world,"[60] which is Steven Vertovec's introductory definition of transnationalism.

As Anita Rau Badami's novel proves, large-scale events such as the partition of the subcontinent transnationally affect people's lives for generations. This is most obvious in the case of Nimmo and Bibi-ji, who are torn apart as a consequence, or of Jasbeer, who drifts between homes and struggles with his divided loyalties. Transnationalism has its dangers, which means that its ethical implications must always be taken into account. Pa-ji also emphasizes the ethical responsibility of members of the diaspora for their influence in the homeland. However, the narrator's critical comments on Leela's death in the terrorist explosion underscore the obligations of governments too. Since the effects of cross-border relationships can be felt in multiple locations, in quite unexpected ways sometimes, as it has been demonstrated by Badami's novel, they need to be treated with great responsibility by each individual, community, and political organization involved and should be the focus of further academic research as well.

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[60] Steven Vertovec, *Transnationalism*, London, Routledge, 2009, 1.

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# THIRD SPACE: AN INTERCULTURAL NEGOTIATION OF SOUTH ASIAN DIASPORA IN CANADA

Anushray Singh[1]

## Abstract

*Intercultural encounters are processes rooted in "ambivalence," – cross-communication between/amongst cultures/people with dissimilarities in languages, religions, and social structures. In the Canadian multicultural "mosaic," encounters between its native/mainstream culture and the ones of its immigrants paradoxically create intercultural belongings as well as conflicts. The paper studies these encounters through South Asian diaspora, the biggest "visible minority" group in Canada. The artistic, cultural, linguistic, political, religious, social performance of its members is a process rooted in categories of spaces – observed and modelled over post-colonial cosmopolitan and national identities of the South Asian diaspora: 1. First Space: co-ethnic migrant networks facilitating South Asian minority discourses through interpersonal transnational social capital; 2. Second Space: outside the latter space, governed by discourses of mainstream Canadian culture; 3. Third Space: temporal, created, facilitated and inhabited by actors relating to discourses of both (1) and (2). I posit occupation and facilitation of the last one, as an effective mode of intercultural communication, creativity and practices relating to race, gender, colour, class, sexuality, religious and social performativity: an expression of South Asia and Canada; minorities and its host society; an ambiguous suggestive for a robust "multicultural" Canadian mass-media culture facilitating the hybridization of mainstream/minority cultures to produce hyphenated cross-cultural identities and "third cultures."*

## The Canadian Mosaic

Minorities are constantly involved in a state of becoming, rooted in alienation, cosmopolitanism, displacement, exile, globalization, nostalgia, transnationalism and hybridity.[2] Canada is one of the world's major

[1] University of Windsor.

[2] Maria Magdalena, *The Third Space: Cultural Identity Today*, Amherst College, https://www.amherst.edu/museums/mead/exhibitions/2008/thirdspace (accessed 10 April 2020).

immigrant-receiving societies and the Official Multicultural Act in 1971 was introduced to better accommodate the growing Canadian diversity. By the early-21st Century, most of the the country's population was of non-British and French origin. The Multicultural Act was followed by an appointment of a multicultural minister and a council in the next two years respectively. It reinforced the idea of Canadian society as a mosaic: a national unity founded in the coexistence of different cultures, ethnicities and religions.[3] Arguably it is an abstract notion rather than a cultural/political/social prescription for a fixed Canadian national identity.

In contrast, the American "melting pot" is defined by the American Dream: a national ethos transcending identity category of class, culture, race, gender and nationality towards a more capitalistic social upward mobility which is based on ideals of liberty, democracy and freedom. It is often argued that a melting point encourages immigrants and their descendants to give up the old ties for "an American way of life," while the "mosaic" encourages ethnocultural profiles without a national identity based on some sort of "Canadian way of life": a "transitional" identity for its "visible minority," where the immigrants and their descendants traverse two different worlds. In the South Asian diasporic context, they are the discourses of the "homeland" in South Asia and the "hostland" in Canada.

There is no clear data to suggest the dynamic of melting pot/mosaic proves any difference between American and Canadian immigrants in terms of "assimilation," "integration," and "acculturation."[4] But, there is an observed intercultural communication "lapse" amongst/between South Asian minorities and the majoritarian culture of their Western host societies, and this paper attempts to study "ambivalent" and "ambiguous" cross-cultural South Asian – Canadian processes that facilitate and alleviate this. Through the postcolonial theorist, Homi K. Bhabha's theory of Third Space, I develop my postulations using analogies made by sociologist Ray Oldenburg and urbanist Edward Soja to study "third cultures," performed/embodied through "hybridity" and "transnationalism." I see these as critical cross/multi/inter-cultural processes in constructing postcolonial and cosmopolitan identities, which challenge: 1. Social constructions of ethnic minorities – relayed in Western mass-media cultures through stereotypes and generalizations; 2. Social constructions of patriarchy and heteronormativity – relayed in South Asian mass-media cultures.

[3] Michael Dewing, Canadian Multiculturalism, *Library of Parliament Legal and Social Affairs Division,* Parliamentary Information and Research Service, 20 E (2009), 4.

[4] Dan Gardner, We're often more like Americans than we're like other Canadians, *Ottawa Citizen*, http://www.ottawacitizen.com/often+more+like+americans+than+like+other+canadians/824878/story.html (accessed 20 March 2020).

## South Asian Diasporic Communities in Canada

As of 2016, 1,963,330 Canadians have South Asian geographical origins, constituting 5.6% of the Canadian population.[5] Additionally, a large influx of South Asian immigrants is joining the growing number of temporary resident categories (holding valid study and work permits) and is bolstering the economic, social, cultural and political standing of the diaspora. The term "South Asia" is commonly used in North American media, politics and academia to refer to ethnic groups of people with originations from the nation-states of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Pakistan and Sri-Lanka.[6] But this term often overlooks the multidimensionality of the identities of its diasporas across the globe – oversimplifying the national, cultural and linguistic belongings of its members to one dominated by discourses of the Indian diaspora. Such domination often leads to homogenization of diverse identities prevalent within the pan South Asian diaspora. Nation-states in South Asia share borders, culture, traditions, sensibilities owing to regional politics, colonial history and physical similarities, and a postcolonial imagination of "national spaces" and "homeland"[7] that have roots in century-old cultural encounters which constitutes a pan-ethnic diasporic identity.

Most of the South Asian diaspora in Canada follow religions such as Sikhism, Hinduism and Islam. They speak different South Asian languages – but Hindi, Punjabi and English are observed to be the most common ones. This diaspora, especially the Indian one, has provincial identities that go beyond their national ones, e.g. Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi, Malayali, Punjabi, Tamil, and Telugu, and these provincial identities are based on different languages and cultural practices particular to their regions. Indian identity and knowledge of Hindi and English often blur these differences. The Pakistani diaspora, which primarily speaks Urdu, is easily able to communicate with Hindi/Punjabi speakers due to vocational similarity in languages. The Bangladeshi and the Sri-Lankan diasporas have their own unique cultural identities, but their postcolonial identities inextricably link them with a larger South Asian one.

The Canadian Sikh community is one of the biggest sub-diasporas within the larger Indian and even broader South Asian one – they can be traced back as the first South Asian migrants to come to Canada – as early as 1897.[8] Often South Asian minority narrative in Canada is spearheaded by this

[5] *National Household Survey,* Statistics Canada, 2011.

[6] Anouck Carsignol, The Construction, Mobilization and Limits of South Asianism in North America, *South Asia Multidisciplinary Academic Journal,* Vol. 10 (2014), https://journals.openedition.org/samaj/3766 (accessed 2 March 2020).

[7] Monisha Gupta et al., Rethinking South Asian Diaspora Studies, *Cultural Dynamics*, Vol. 19, No. 2–3, 125–140, 2007.

[8] Arrivals and Departures, *The Colonies and India,* 5 June 1897, https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/35686721/ (accessed 10 March 2020).

sub-diaspora, helping construct hyphenated narratives of Sikh/Indian/South Asian-Canadian citizenship as a pivotal part of contemporary Canadian belonging and identity. Cultural and socio-political differences (pervasive in the region) are transcended for a collective diasporic conscience: this is the mobilization of South Asian identities as communities coming together to empathize with each other's experiences of racism, stereotyping and discrimination in their Western host societies.

## Transnational "Desi" Identity

In their new "hostlands", South Asian immigrants experience an in-between existence: simultaneously "here" – involved in the mainstream/native socio-political-cultural discourses of their host societies (the ones they migrated into) – and "there," which refers to similar discourses of the native/ancestral societies from which they migrated (home or motherlands). This hereness and thereness – an embodiment of immigrant and minority belonging – is a cultural misfit,[9] people not finding their place in the mainstream identity of their host and home societies, but belonging rather in-between, or transnationally.

Some cultural referential points such as popular Hindi cinema, Punjabi music and Cricket often serve as pivotal strands building a co-ethnic cohort in Canada. The term "Desi" uses a universal approach transcending postcolonial identities by blurring national divisions amongst the South Asian diaspora in the West and other parts of the world. It often invokes the commonality of immigrant experiences and cultural similarities. This is often echoed in South Asian diasporic cinema, music, television shows and other cultural products. "Desi" is often used as a slang term in Hindi but its co-optation and eventual cultural appeal make it almost poetic in its construct, enunciating tales of diasporic members born away from their "homeland," disconnected from cultural roots different from their Western ways of knowing. Another reason for solidarity is a shared British colonial past: the reason for modern postcolonial identities that arguably struggle to reconcile various Eurocentric and South Asian nationalistic rhetoric, for example, contestation between English and South Asian languages or beauty standards based on light and dark skin tone. The South Asian decolonization efforts find grounds in dismantling insecurity about non-fair or brown skin colour; it's about finding intellectual vigour and education even in one's native South Asian mother tongue. The transnational South Asian-Canadian identity can be better understand through First, Second and Third Space – an observation rooted

[9] Homi K. Bhabha, Diaspora and Home: An Interview with Homi K. Bhabha, Interview by Klaus Stierstorfer, *Degruyter.com,* 7 December 2017.

in postmodern, postcolonial and urban sociology, the intercultural minority/native cultural conflicts and the varying degree of cultural "hybridization" that occurs in these spaces.

## Spaces

In this paper, I use the following categories: (1) First Space: Comprising of people hailing from South Asia (2) Second Spaces: Anglophone Western countries like the United States, Canada, Britain, Australia and New Zealand serving as host societies for the diasporic populace; (3) Third, inter-cultural spaces: A result of hybridization/intersection of (1) and (2) sees the creation of culturally hybrid transnational citizens – who in their host societies have a unique cultural position which allows them to access disparate cultural spaces of both the diaspora and the host society. Through their adequate understanding of cultural nuances of these two spaces, they serve as authentic interpreters of the diasporic culture to their hosts and vice-versa. This is culturally enunciated through the popular: (1) Indian and South Asian diasporic cinema; (2) The artistic expression of urban resident and non-resident South Asian transnational citizens.

According to Ray Oldenburg's classification, the First Space is often seen as "home", and the Second Space as "work"[10] and the Third Space is an in-between/liminal/interstitial area formed of "ambiguity" and "ambivalence"[11] – where actors/hybrids/interlocutors can create, a form of "social capital" that moves beyond interpersonal cultural and socio-economic networks restricted within South Asian "First Space" and Canadian mainstream "Second Space." I see the construction of my arguments as a consequence of the South Asian minority perspective in the Western host nation of Canada, who have an anglophone-desi belonging (and will be considered non-francophone Canadian cultures).

### First Space

The First Space is where iterations of culture, identity and discourses are grounded in one's home, that is, related to native and ethnic discourses. They can be seen as neighbourhoods facilitating cultural, commercial and religious organizations/communities often referring to the discourses of the South Asian "homeland," and they can also be seen as "ethnic enclaves." In Canada, the provinces of Ontario and British Columbia have a significant South Asian

[10] Pete Myers, *Going Home: Essays, Articles and Stories in Honour of the Andersons,* Oak Hill College, 2012.

[11] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, London, Routledge, 1994.

population. Brampton, ON and Surrey, BC are two cities which can be taken as examples when we talk about First Space in the context of South Asia and minority studies: about 44% and 32.8% of their population have South Asian origination. Observing the discourses in these two cities – we see its cultures, economics, politics and social structures make major reference to South Asian cultures. These cities have a tangible migrant network (a home away from home for many of its South Asian residents) which enable people with similar cultural and linguistic backgrounds to find each other and share necessary knowledge and resources.[12] They are often the initial cultural points for many first-generation immigrants from South Asia and inevitably attract businesses, services and socio-cultural organizations catering for this demographic.

Thriving First Space(s) around the Anglophone West pose a problem for migrant integration. Some arguments suggest Canadian "multiculturalism," is an encouragement for minority and majority communities to co-exist alongside rather than with each other. On the other hand, they are seen as an important process in minority mobilization, helping build social capital, invariably boosting transnational South Asian and Canadian economies. The prosperity of First Space creates economic mobility for new migrants, it also creates alternative labour markets: a development of the co-ethnic network, where learning the language, culture and social skills of their host country isn't necessary.[13] South Asian immigrants in Canada (first-generation often seclude within their co-ethnic communities) maintain an "economic" relationship with the mainstream host society. They rely on "transnational" networks of mass-media for its cultural propagation over an integrative network with the mainstream Canadian host culture. These mass-media networks are often maintained imports from the Mumbai based Hindi film industry and, in the Canadian context, these are also from the Punjab based music industry, reflecting transnational Indian-Canadian identities: a mainstream pastiche of "Non-resident Indians" who find economic prosperity in "Videsh" (Canada) but are unable to culturally integrate, thus maintaining a long-distance national identity resonating with one's "Desh" (South Asian homeland).

## Second Space

This place is seen through Oldenburg's classification of Work. It is a place where you travel away from home to engage in activities of commerce and economics. In this context, through the eyes of the South Asian diasporic

[12] Douglas S. Massey, Why Does Immigration Occur? A Theoretical Synthesis, in Charles Hirschman – Philip Kasinitz – Josh DeWind (eds.), *The Handbook of International Migration: The American Experience*, New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 1999.

[13] Alejandro Portes, and Jensen Leif, Disproving the Enclave Hypothesis: Reply, *American Sociological Review,* Vol. 57, No. 3 (1992), 418–420.

member, the spaces outside his/her/their "home" (diasporic communities), rooted in the mainstream discourses of their host society is the Second Space. These discourses are seen in the Canadian context, as cultures relating to art, cuisine, literature, humour, politics, religion, history and social influences grounded in European traditions, especially British and French[14] with a mass-media highly influenced by imports from America. Such influence arguably contributes further to a North American identity over a Canadian one.

In the South Asian diaspora's movement away from their "First Space" to the "Second Space", the diasporic member often feels lost, homesick and isolated. They choose to enter these spaces to participate in the exchange of services, labour and commercial activities. However, there is an insecurity in accessing cultural and social spheres. Psychological studies see these insecurities as a contributing factor to "cultural bereavement."[15] The bereavement of first-generation immigrants is often difficulties expressing their corresponding South Asian socio-linguistic and cultural identities. Observably leading to a cautionary cognitive behaviour when accessing mainstream cultural spaces of their Western host societies. Contributing reasons are language and cultural barriers on both spectra. This makes up the "home-work" relationship between ethnic minorities and their Western host societies – the duality "First Space" and "Second Space" in the study of minority-mainstream cultures. This host-hostee dynamic is often echoed in ethnic and diasporic media and other forms of expressions seen as "third media." Apart from aid in the cost associated with initial immigration and other financial support, the social capital of the South Asian minority is a kinship network: comprising of friends and family, filling in emotional and socio-psychological needs.[16] The absence of this kinship network in the Second Space of their host societies for many first-generation immigrants means seclusion within the First Space. This can lead to an integration process that doesn't require active social, cultural and English/French language learning. Arguably, the lack of non-essential intercultural encounters in both cultural and social terms also restricts the actors in the Second Space from being aware of multidimensional South Asian minority identities. This becomes a crucial factor in intercultural communication lapses due to the lack of meaningful cultural exchange between ethnic minorities and mainstream identities.

[14] Sana Loue – Martha Sajatovic (eds.), *Encyclopedia of Immigrant Health,* New York, Springer, 2011, 337.

[15] Dinesh Bhugra et al., Cultural Bereavement, Culture Shock and Culture Conflict: Adjustments and Reactions, in: Dinesh Bhugra – Susham Gupta (eds.), *Migration and Mental Health,* Cambridge, Cambridge University, 2010, 139–148.

[16] Cecilia Menjivar, Immigrant Kinship Networks and the Impact of the Receiving Context: Salvadorans in San Francisco in the Early 1990s, *Social Problems*, Vol. 44, No. 1 (1997), 104–123.

## Third Spaces

Third Space Theory explains the uniqueness, peculiarity and fluidity of each person, actor or context as "hybrid."[17] Similarly, Edward Soja observes that Third Space "breaks the First Space-Second Space dualism and comprises such related concepts as place, location, locality, landscape, environment, home, city, region, territory and geography."[18] Homi K. Bhabha sees this space in comparison to Soja's definition as spaces which act as an ambiguous area developing when two or more individuals/cultures interact, and we analyse them through cultural hybridity and intercultural encounters. The second-generation immigrants, as well as the prospering middle classes of South Asia, experience cultural hybridity to varying degrees. Unlike the first-generation immigrants or non-urban resident South Asians, their cultural hybridity allows them to access and move freely between both First and the Second spaces, and hence dissolve the distinction generally seen by the diasporic. This cultural hybridity is a result of fluency in cultures and languages of both their diaspora and the host. The intersection of the diaspora with that of the Western host society leads to the construction of Third Spaces. We may postulate that "hybrids" (the performers of South Asian-Western identities are "authentic" interlocutors and interpreters of both the First and Second space) are well versed in the cultural subtleties of their diaspora and the host society.

This postulation is supported by South Asian cultural participation in popular Western culture. Many prominent filmmakers, artists and performers of South Asian descent often use their "cultural nuance" to relay realities of the immigrant experiences (the most common trope is growing up "brown" in the West) between their immigrant and host cultures. These cultural nuances implore both race and identity. Similarly, culturally hybrid citizens of any diasporic community have enough "agency" to invite disparate characters in our defined First and Second spaces to come together without prejudice. This coming together is an involvement in a more robust discourse surrounding identity, race, gender, culture, representation and art. I situate my work within these diasporic expressions as legitimate forms to develop discourses that see the diasporic as the authors of their own stories, experiences and cultural identities. These forms are observed in Third Space, the sites of construction for a South Asian diasporic identity where, "the categorization process has a dual, performative influence on the production of identity."[19] I see them as an effective framework to enunciate South Asian-Western identities and South Asian cosmopolitan ones, which are often used by

[17] Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, London, Routledge, 1994, 55.
[18] Sanghamitra Dalal, "Book Reviews: Communicating in the Third Space." *Transnational Literature*, 2010, 3.
[19] Carsignol, "The Constuction, Mobilization and Limits", par. 55.

diasporic filmmakers and artists to challenge the culture that creates a public perception that views South Asia through what I see as "inauthentic modes/channels" of information: the lack of representation or if-then conjecture through stereotypes and an outlook that finds historical roots in the colonial perception of non-Western cultures. In my earlier work,[20] I observed this outlook reminiscent of American films where South Asian identities have been infamously explored through few general tropes. Such tropes are based on the exotic nature of South Asia depicted by the Bollywood song and dance routine and the third world poverty. Other stereotypes are the relegation to few handful career options for South Asians (engineers, doctors, cabbies and store clerk.) The problem with such tropes is that they explore South Asian identity only through the one-dimensionality of postcolonial "others,"[21] creating non-Western "oriental" identities. Such identity constructions in popular culture contradict lived experiences of the South Asian diaspora.

## Canadian Mass-Media

In the separation of First and Second Space, often known as "home" and "away" to minorities, from the mainstream Canadian perspective, First Space includes marginal ethnic areas and its inhabitants, a part of the landscape that doesn't have the agency to be subsumed in Canadian cultural narratives. The Canadian mainstream culture facilitated in the Second Space is about finding identity in its exports to the collective global culture, or involved in cultural imports from America, to be part of a mainstream North American culture. Mass media in Canadian society resonates with a lack of collective identity: a reference to the cultural dualism in which only some of the population responds to English mass-media, while a significant portion remains uninfluenced by it. The process of creation of the Canadian community and its inability to form a distinct mass-media culture resonating with its multicultural ethos can be seen to be due to its proximity to the United States, and thus influenced by its economic and cultural imperialism.[22]

Multicultural media, often ethnic or third media are seen as pivotal strands in the Canadian mediascape for the dissemination of media to populace either in English or French. Languages associate with diasporic cultures and the

[20] Anushray Singh, "South Asian and The West: Identity, Multidimensionality and Public Gaze", in *Intersections Cros-Sections 2019*, 48–55, Toronto, Joint Graduate Program in Communication & Culture at York University and Ryerson University, https://iscs-conference.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/ISCS_2019ConferenceProceedings.pdf (accessed 20 March 2020).

[21] Jean Francois Staszak, Other/Otherness, *International Encyclopaedia of Human Geography*, 2008, 1–3.

[22] John A. Irving, *Mass Media in Canada,* The Ryerson, 1969, 225.

promotion of multicultural media began in the 1980s to foster ethnic cohesion to ultimately help diaspora bridge into the larger Canadian community.[23] Though it is observable that, in the mass-media culture of the mainstream, exclusion of minorities is often found, Canadian multicultural policies are aimed towards alleviating that. South Asian ethnic media in Canada is often a fringe of the mainstream, for example, the Hindi-Urdu-Punjabi programs of OMNI TV (a private subsidiary of Rogers Communications), and other media like radio, newspaper and magazines in various South Asian languages. South Asian ethnic media is not able to coalesce into the mainstream Canadian media landscape. Similarly, in the Second Space, the Canadian mainstream media culture is observably a subset of the transnational North American one and is dictated by the American mediascape. The South Asian diasporic culture in the First space is a subset of the transnational South Asian one and is dictated by Indian economic and cultural products.

The biggest problem with Canadian mass-media products compared to other Anglophone Western industries it the lack of distinct identity. Canadian cultural products are often indistinguishable from those of the USA. In comparison, the American mediascape has been evolving: its South Asian minorities are contributing significantly to the construction of a heterogeneous and multidimensional Mediascape. Similarly, the mass-media cultural products from Australia, the UK and New Zealand also have their unique identities. In terms of mainstream and minority culture, Canadian identity has not evolved and lacks coherent representation of both its indigenous and immigrant identities. Mass-media communication is often a reflective and a dialectic[24] process amongst different communities in a region and the lack of common identity can lead to fragmented cultural belonging and disparate mass-media channeling: French Quebecois, English Canadian American and Immigrant-transnational identities. In a survey, many Canadians believed that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC, a federal government corporation) should provide "high-quality Canadian programming"[25] with strong regional content throughout Canada. This means including South Asian and other minority identities in the Canadian context. The mass-media culture (especially the one spearheaded by the Canadian federal government) fits into the "multicultural" ethos of the mosaic, which can help build an integrated common cultural landscape, helping foster various ethnic identities of Canada, and I see the Third Space as an important enunciative framework

[23] Robin Mansell, The Handbook of Global Media and Communication Policy, John Wiley and Sons, 2011.

[24] Irving, *Mass Media,* 223.

[25] The CBC, Canadian Culture, and Media Concentration, *Ipsos.com*, 29 August 2002, https://www.ipsos.com/en-ca/cbc-canadian-culture-and-media-concentration (accessed 20 March 2020).

to negotiate such a cross-cultural representation through "third cultures," which I see as "authentic" modes of representation channels, relaying nuances of minority belonging in Canada.

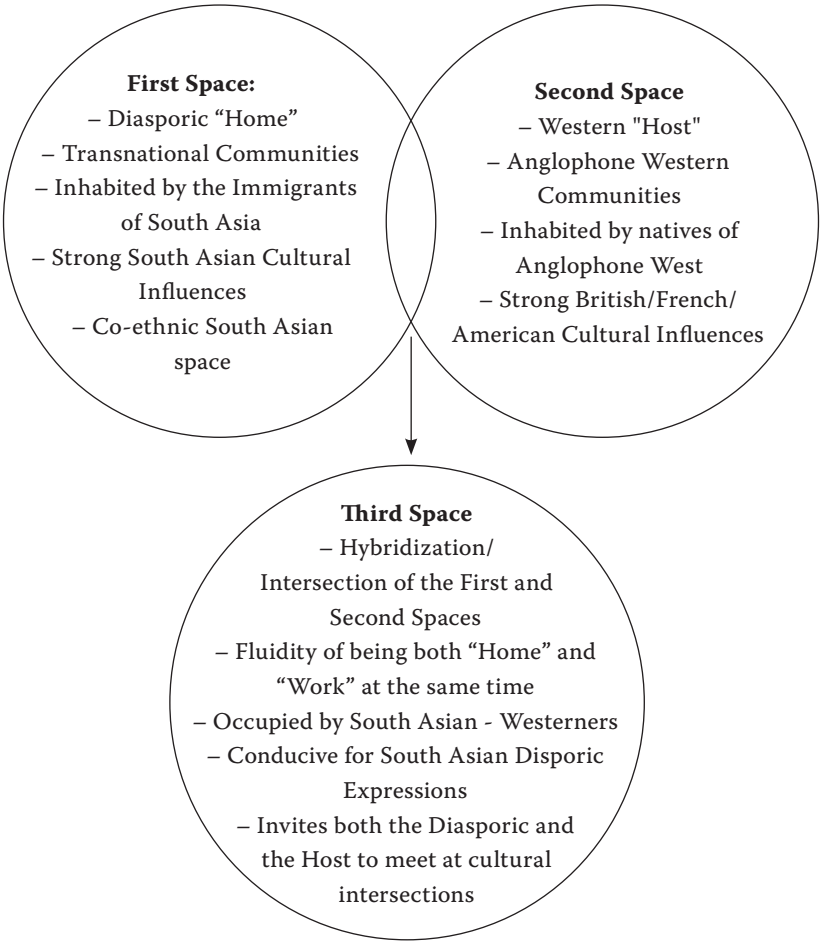


*Figure 1: Representation of the "Postcolonial-Postmodern-Urban" South Asian-Western Third Space.*

## Third Culture

It is the collision of South Asian culture with the mainstream Canadian Anglophone or French one which gives rise to the Third Space, an in-between condition forming liminalities and identities that can very well be Indian/ Pakistani/Bangladeshi-Canadian. The "transient" nature of South Asian immigrant identity in the Canadian landscape is a multi- and cross-cultural

belonging, a "hybridization" of different cultures and social practices, always in a constant state of flux.[26] It is the negotiation of belonging to one's ethnic as well as host societies – often resulting in the failure to associate robustly with either. These can be seen as "third culture",[27] which give rise to new ways of being, negotiating, representation and nationalism. Such cultures are a product of multicultural belonging that paves the way for intercultural encounters instead of conforming to one form of cultural Canadian identity. They give rise to many ways of being; a kaleidoscope over a fixed mosaic, which embraces temporality over permanence; a global condition of interconnected economies, cultures and migration. Mass-media in multicultural landscapes facilitates a "hybridization/fusion" of different cultures to produce something "anew." Arguably such hybridization can create new ways of being and belonging that can bolster ethos of the Canadian multiculturalism.

This third culture is embodied by the second-generation immigrants who are born in Canada, relating strongly and robustly to its Western cultures and traditions in comparison with older first-generation immigrants (generally their parents.) They observably assimilate, integrate and acculturate better. Then, there is the cosmopolitan South Asian populace, who embody global identities reinforced in post-colonial nation-states, in which socio-economic structures are based on one's English-language education; and the division goes further in one's consumption of mainstream cultures disseminated globally through the hegemony of American culture over regional mass-media. A lack of cultural and linguistic barriers sees cosmopolitan South Asian identities observably integrate better in their Anglophone Canadian culture compared to diasporic ones relating to non-cosmopolitan backgrounds.

South Asian writers, comedians, filmmakers, musicians and artists who often embody these cosmopolitan diasporic South Asian/Western identities can involve themselves in the discourse of "Desh" (motherland) and "Videsh" (hostland) and pinpoint problematics in both their own diasporic and Western cultures. This unique cultural position makes artists imbibe an authentic voice with agencies: in postcolonial speak, rejecting a colonial subaltern position[28] and speaking for the marginalized groups both within and outside their diaspora: women, LGBTQ+, lower social classes etc. The postulation I made is that this "third culture" is performed/embodied/facilitated in the Third Space, an intersectional ambiguous area, between First and Second Spaces.

Their involvement in shaping mass-media culture in Canada helps form communities where a culture of identifiable characteristics is built through media communication between two large groups. This merges ethnic diasporic identities with the mainstream host to foster a sense of Canadian

[26] Bhabha, *Location of Culture.*
[27] Ibid.
[28] T. Das Gupta, *Race and Racialization: Essential Readings*, Toronto, Canadian Scholars, 2007.

membership and collective identity.[29] The "third culture", which is formed at intersections, can seep into mainstream consciousness and evoke questions crucial to understand the Canadian mosaic: What does it mean to be a Canadian? What does it mean to be bilingual or multilingual? What does it mean to be multigenerational, multi-ethnical and multicultural?

The exploration of the cultural production of diasporic cinema, media and other artistic expression is often the construction of postcolonial cultural hybridity and Third Space. Cultural productions of the diasporic are often seen through a "narrative pattern," which Bhabha envisages as "part of a process of choice and judgment."[30] And that sense of choice and judgment is lost very often with generalized terms like cosmopolitan, planetary or nomadism."[31] Authenticity for minority representation in Western mass-media culture is especially perpetuated by the American negation of cultural knowledge produced in Third Space. The intercultural communication between ethnic minorities and majoritarian Western cultures as discussed above is a process rooted in "ambiguity" and "ambivalence." In his theory of Orientalism, Edward Said saw "ambivalence" relating to a colonial framework that has historically perceived non-Western cultures through "exoticism." The making of "Others" – people hailing from the Eastern world of Asia, North Africa and the Middle East – as inferior to rational and patriarchal Western societies. When applied by post-colonial cultural studies in studying contemporary Western societies, this framework helps us understand popular culture and mediascape that often perpetuat "Eurocentric" ideals. In the South Asian postcolonial context, it's the basis of socio-economic and intellectual classes, for example, one's adoption and usage of English over native South Asian tongue is often encouraged. Or, it's the favouring of light and fair skin over a dark/dusky complexion. Mimicking Anglophone culture and physical beauty standards is deeply woven in the fabric of modern South Asian postcolonial societies and is fervently displayed in mass-media culture in films, TV shows, and advertisements. I see personal poetics as a profound decolonization philosophy of South Asian belonging in cosmopolitans of South Asia as well as the Anglophone West.

[29] Irving, *Mass Media*, 223.

[30] Homi K. Bhabha, Diaspora and Home: An Interview with Homi K. Bhabha, Interview by Klaus Stierstorfer, *Degruyter.com,* 7 December 2017.

[31] Bhabha, *Diaspora and Home*, 2017.

## Personal Poetics

I encountered the term "personal poetics" in Sukhmani Kohorana's paper on *Crossover Cinema* in which she frames South Asian and Western cross-cultural affinities as "not merely political but also personal/poetic."[32] As an Indian citizen residing in Canada, I often see my work as an extension of my personal poetics: a postmodern/postcolonial performativity, challenging stereotypes and perceptions about my South Asian identity. I reflect this in my writing, films and media art; similarly, South Asian artists in Canada and the broader Western world resonate what it means to be "brown" in their host society. Similarly, through expressions rooted in mass-media products often disseminated over the internet through social media platforms, many South Asian artists in Canada express various notions attached to being an ethnic immigrant in Canada. These enunciative practices help connect various modes in a broader transnational network of South Asian diaspora dispersed across the globe – often interrupting mainstream host cultures through their hybridity – subsuming and performing identities through ambiguity in Third Space.

Indian-Punjabi origin Canadian actress Sareena Parmar often struggles to negotiate her in-between identity, often perceived to "perform" her culture through "bhangra dance" or "speaking Punjabi." This raises a pertinent question: Is cultural performativity of an immigrant based on the aspects of culture one partakes in? Is it defined by what it means to be Indian or Canadian? What if someone does not associate with stereotypical South Asian or Canadian cultural aspects? Similarly, theatre director, Rohit Chokhani questions "authenticity" and feels Canadians are searching for their identity, especially immigrants like him, whose home is both India and Canada. Both for Parmar and Chokhani, authenticity is reflected in the representation of South Asians in various facets of cultures, it is not driven by tokenism but through stories that make sense.[33] This bolsters authentic representations – a multifaceted one with nuance – creating audiences both is the South Asian diaspora and mainstream Canada to engage in a multicultural dialogue.

*Desh Pardesh*, a multidisciplinary arts festival that used to be organized in Toronto annually (1982–2001) can be seen as the intersection of diasporic transnationalism with the host cultures. It was a platform for personal artistic expression of diasporic identities such as racialized minorities creating LGBTQ+ positive space with anti-imperial, anti-colonial and anti-classist/

[32] Sukhmani Khoranna, *Crossover Cinema: Cross-Cultural Film from Production to Reception*, New York, Routledge, 2013, 3–15.

[33] Tamara Baluja, I struggle with what to do with my Indian background: Actress cast in Shakespeare set in South Asia, *CBC.ca*, 21 July 2020, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/i-struggle-with-what-to-do-with-my-indian-background-actress-cast-in-shakespeare-play-set-in-south-asia-1.5218789 (accessed 1 April 2020).

casteist rhetorics. The festival explored temporalities of the diaspora (being home abroad) intersections of gender, sexuality and South Asianness. Artists accessing such space, often define various belongings (interruptive hybridity and intersections) in a Third Space, with focus on both anti-heteronormative and anti-sexist ideas within South Asian patriarchy as well as an anti-racist stance in Western host societies.

Like many South Asian diasporic artists and filmmakers, I firmly believe that our location in the vast swath of Western, South Asian and the global mediascape can be found, relayed and understood through the occupation, creation and invitation in the postcolonial-postmodern-urban Third Spaces where "arts-based methods" can be employed to create inquires and seen as important "identity works," which can reach wider audiences.[34] Similarly, my performance of South Asian belonging in a Western cultural landscape is an artistic exercise which can be effectively seen as a part of growing South Asian diasporic cinema, media art and experimental processes. Such processes both celebrate and critique discourses, identities and performances relating to interculturality and hybridity. I am of the opinion that Canadian media landscape shouldn't just act as an orifice in intercultural dissemination but an outlet of multicultural flows. It should provide intersections of minority and mainstreams, divulge differences and bring together East and West in such a way that immigrants and hosts ask themselves and each other in "authentic" modes: What does it truly mean to be a Canadian?

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[34] Estelle Barrett Introduction, in E. Barrett – B. Bolt (eds.), *Practice as research: Approaches* to creative arts enquiry, London, I. B. Tauris, 2010, 1–13.

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# MALE-FEMALE RELATIONSHIPS ACROSS CULTURES IN ANN Y. K. CHOI'S *KAY'S LUCKY COIN VARIETY* (2016)

Judit Nagy[1]

## Abstract

*Y. K. Choi's recent novel, Kay's Lucky Coin Variety (2016) contains ample references to the differences between Western and Eastern ways of courtship, romance and marriage. Applying Min-sun Kim's cultural communication theory to the analysis as described in her book entitled Non-Western Perspectives on Human Communication (2002), the paper will explore how the diasporic Korean-Canadian female protagonist, Yu-Rhee/ Mary's ideas and experience of male-female relationships are affected by her Korean cultural heritage and the Canadian environment in which she grows up.*

## Introduction

Set in the Toronto of 1980s and featuring the family of a Korean-Canadian corner store owner, Ann Y. K. Choi's recent novel, *Kay's Lucky Coin Variety (2016)* contains a cornucopia of references to the differences between Western and Eastern ways of courtship, romance and marriage. Its main protagonist, Mary/ Yu-Rhee is the embodiment of those young immigrant women who "felt torn between the demands of their parents and the desire to be a 'typical' Canadian teenager,"[2] proposes Sue Carter, the editor of *Quill & Quire* in her review of Choi's book. As such, Mary/Yu-Rhee's coming-of-age narrative provides solid and abundant evidence of the inner tension she experiences as a diasporic Korean-Canadian in all areas of life, including male-female relationships.

Through an application of Min-sun Kim's cultural communication theory as described in her book *Non-Western Perspectives on Human Communication* (2002)[3], the paper will explore how Mary/Yu-Rhee's ideas and experience of male-female relationships are influenced by her Korean cultural heritage and the Canadian environment in which she grows up.

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[2] Carter, Sue Ann, Choi preserves a way of life in Kay's Lucky Coin Variety, *The Star*, https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/books/2016/05/07/ann-choi-preserves-a-way-of-life-in-kays-lucky-coin-variety.html (accessed 7 May 2016).

[3] Min-sun, Kim, *Non-Western Perspectives on Human Communication*, Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications, 2002.

## Self-construals

Min-sun Kim's concept of *independent and interdependent self-construals* (2002) is an attempt at grasping cultural differences between Koreans and North Americans. This approach perceives the self as "a mediating variable between culture and individual behavior."[4] Forming "the most general and overarching self-schemata in an individual's self-system,"[5] self-construals pertain to "how people define themselves and their relationships with other people,"[6] and they exert a marked influence on cognition, emotion and motivation.[7] According to this theory, the main difference between the independent (Western) and the interdependent (Eastern) types of personality is in how the self is related to others. It is important to point out that independent and interdependent self-construals are not mutually exclusive. In one aspect, a person can be one kind, in another, another kind, the two may also apply together (biculturality), or neither can apply (marginality) along the high and low degree of the two variables, independence and interdependence.[8] This is exactly why the concept of the two types of self-construal is conducive to the analysis of characters of mixed cultural background.

In six points, I will sum up the most important differences between the two construal types, focusing on the features which will be used in my analysis of Ann K. Choi's novel that will follow.

### Self-disclosure

To start with the features relating to self-disclosure, *independent self-construal* stresses individual achievement, uniqueness and individuated preferences (i.e. making one's own choices),[9] draws fixed boundaries between the *self* and the *other*[10], regards dependence and unassertiveness as a weakness,[11] and understands Eastern self-criticism as self-deprecation.[12] Due to the "higher priority on maintaining independence and asserting individual needs and goals, […] communicative actions tend to be more self-focused and self-expressive."[13] On the other hand, *interdependent self-construal* focuses on relationality (i.e.

4 Triandis, H.C., The self and social behavior in differing cultural contexts, *Psychological Review,* 96 (1989), 507.
5 Kim, *Non-Western Perspectives on Human Communication*, 16.
6 Ibid., 26.
7 Ibid., 16.
8 Ibid., 170.
9 Ibid., 121–129.
10 This separation is based on Cartesian philosophy: the goal of existence is to objectify the self, to separate the individual from his/her context.
11 Kim, *Non-Western Perspectives on Human Communication*, 103.
12 Ibid., 129.
13 Ibid., 63.

a principal component of the self is its relationships to others), which entails the importance of family and group achievement,[14] the lack of fixed boundaries between the *self* and the *other*[15] and the ultimate goal of maintaining harmony and appropriateness in relationships,[16] where the approval of the others comes across as a highly influential factor, and the Western positive image of the self is interpreted as bragging.[17]

### Cognitive consistency versus context contingency

Second, and in accordance with the above, I would like to mention cognitive consistency and context contingency as a feature of independent and interdependent self-construal, respectively. In this context, *cognitive consistency* refers to the individual saying what he/she feels straight from the heart and his/her behavior resulting from internal attributes and processes with the aim of self-expression. Regarding interdependent self-construal, *context contingency* implies that being responsive to others is the preferred and therefore most highly valued form of behavior, even at the expense of consistency: "Eastern cultures may tolerate cognitive dissonance as normal/natural as the interdependent self has a flexible/variable structure. [...] This happens in order to attend to the needs and desires of the significant others with whom [people] are interacting."[18]

### Dispositionism vs. situationism

The next difference between the two construal types lies in their tendencies of dispositionism (context independence) versus situationism (context dependence).[19] The independent construal is characterized by consistency and stability in communication behavior across situations and over time, which means the same behavior will be exhibited by the same person in all situations: "Western people have a unique and articulated set of internal attributes that remain stable across situations."[20] At the same time, in the case of the interdependent self-construal, behavior of the same person will vary from situation to situation, and from one time to another: "interdependent selves do not prescribe

[14] Ibid., 138.
[15] Ibid., 73.
[16] This principle is based on Buddhist tradition: to submerge the self and gain freedom from the self.
[17] Kim, *Non-Western Perspectives on Human Communication*, 121–129.
[18] Ibid., 73.
[19] In predicting behavior, Westerners focus on the individual (dispositionism) whereas Eastern people focus on the social situation (situationism/contextualism), situational, external and relational causes (Kim 83–87).
[20] Kim, *Non-Western Perspectives on Human Communication*, 73.

or require consistency between one's internal attributes and one's actions. In fact, such consistency may reflect lack of flexibility or can be considered immature."[21] This entails restraint of the inner sense and susceptibility to social influence out of tactfulness and social sensitivity rather than conformism.

### Conflict management

Following closely from the previous three points, the fourth notable difference between the two types of construal lies in their *management of conflict*. Independent self-construal is characterized by the individual's tendency to confront the problem or the person causing it, which, in terms of male-female relationships may involve the open discussion of intimate issues with partners. However, in the case of the interdependent self-construal, Kim enumerates the following strategies of dealing with conflict: 1) anticipatory management/prevention, 2) non-communication (ignorance/silence) as a means of expressing anger or frustration, 3) pretending harmony in front of others (situational code-switching), 4) using a go-between to help settle the conflict (triadic management), 5) self-aggression/intro-punitive behavior.[22] Regarding male-female relationships specifically, Kim also adds that "collectivists tend to use the 'flight' or 'exit' approach to manage relational issues in romantic conflict situations [… and… ] to control revealing their own feelings and voicing their own opinions to their partners."[23]

### Deceptive communication

The *motives behind deceptive communication* constitute the fifth difference between the two construal types relevant to our analysis. In the case of interdependent self-construal, prevarication serves the purpose of either helping the person reach their goals and/or keeping an issue private – sometimes even at the expense of self-expression – whereas, in the case of the interdependent self-construal, it is often a service to the community helping others to save face and thereby preserve harmony.

[21] Ibid., 80.

[22] Ibid., 63–64.

[23] Integrative conflict communication style, avoidance of conflict, passive compliance, "discreet and moderate communication modes in managing intimate issues" (Kim 63) and being able to read the other person's mind to know what he/she is thinking/feeling are also mentioned by Kim as characteristic of the interdependent self-construal. Such behavior may also have some benefits such as "the greater understanding of shared perspectives, expectations and intimacy" (62) even though at other times it may be "interpersonally embarrassing, distressing, with the potential of humiliation and loss of face" (63). Moreover, Galvin and Brommel (1986) state that "most conflict that is avoided leaves nagging tensions unresolved, creates a climate ripe for future overt destructive conflict, and fosters separation among family members" (qtd in Kim 2002, 61).

### Silence

Finally, the two self-construal types also differ in their *concept of silence*. In the context of independent construal, silence is associated with a sense of failure: being taciturn and reserved, detached and cold, or passive. It can equally trigger suspicion and menace, make one feel insecure, embarrassed, awkward or inferior.[24] In contrast, for interdependent construal, which is affected by Confucianism and Zen, silence is the embodiment of sensitivity, intuition, communicating mind-to-mind, empathy, tact, maturity, a means of preserving harmony and understanding meanings which "can be sensed but not phrased."[25]

## Analysis

In order to capture the inner tension Mary/Yu-Rhee, the main protagonist of Ann K. Choi's novel *Kay's Lucky Coin Variety*,[26] experiences as a diasporic Korean-Canadian, the following analysis will investigate how the aforementioned six factors are manifest in her behavior, and how these are indicative of independent or interdependent self-construal. For the sake of brevity, only a limited number of examples will be presented, but which will nevertheless demonstrate Mary/Yu-Rhee's cultural confusion and the resulting problems in the context of male-female relationships.

### Self-disclosure

Like her Canadian peers, Mary/Yu-Rhee believes in women's free will to adopt a lifestyle of their own preference and choose their partner accordingly: "The three of us [Mary/Yu-Rhee, Rubina and Linda] swore we'd never allow our parents to decide how we'd live our lives and, above all, whom we would marry."[27] When Mary/Yu-Rhee's parents express their partiality towards Joon-Ho, a young student from Korea, whom they already envision as her fiancé, she becomes suspicious and perceives this act as her parents' intention to make the choice for her: "the more my parents praised him, the less attractive he became – which was too bad because I had been thinking more and more about him."[28]

When, towards the end of the novel Mary/Yu-Rhee's mother dies in the fire at the convenience store, she blames herself, and believes that if she had not spurned Joon-Ho, her spouse-to-be in an arranged marriage, the incident

[24] Kim, *Non-Western Perspectives on Human Communication*, 132.
[25] Ibid., 135–137.
[26] Ann Y. K. Choi, *Kay's Lucky Coin Variety*, Toronto, Simon and Schuster Canada, 2016.
[27] Choi, *Kay's Lucky Coin Variety*, 24.
[28] Choi, *Kay's Lucky Coin Variety*, 107.

would not have occurred: "Was I selfish to want to live by my standards? To strive to be happy and fulfilled? After all, wasn't that the Canadian way?"[29] The rhetorical questions she poses are indicative of her independent-interdependent dilemma: her aspirations at independent self-disclosure come with a sense of guilt.

At the same time, responding in the interdependent manner, she does acknowledge the sense in her mother's advice whenever she brings up the issue of marrying a Korean man: "Although I was always silent, I hated when she talked this way because part of me knew she was right."[30]

What is more, when Mary/Yu-Rhee explains to her high school teacher and chosen date, Mr. Allen that she will study at the University of Toronto due to her job at the family store, he responds, "It's your life, Mary,"[31] But instead of taking his advice, Mary/Yu-Rhee defends her family:

> What a typical white comment to make. He had no idea. If it were anybody else, I wouldn't feel the need to explain.
>
> "You have no idea how hard my parents work. I owe them everything. Unless you own a store, you can't imagine what a burden it is." My defensiveness surprised me, yet I was too embarrassed to share what sometimes happened at the store.[32]

Again, when Mary/Yu-Rhee Canadian friend Erin's criticises Arabic and Asian girls for not acting on individual preferences regarding issues of marriage, Mary/Yu-Rhee becomes defensive:

> Erin: "You're like trained animals. Even with your cages unlocked, you refuse to escape."
>
> Mary/Yu-Rhee: "I knew it would be impossible for her to understand the chains that kept immigrant girls, especially Asian ones, in place, but I was still irritated."[33]

Mary/Yu-Rhee's irritation results from her recognition of her 'in-between' position regarding self-disclosure: she does not feel fully comfortable either with free choice or with conformism, as represented by Erin's cultural context and her own cultural traditions, respectively.

[29] Ibid., 248.
[30] Ibid., 23.
[31] Ibid., 86.
[32] Ibid., 87.
[33] Ibid, 135.

## Cognitive consistency versus context contingency

As for cognitive consistency versus context contingency, Mary/Yu-Rhee's interaction with Mr. Allen/Will demonstrates how she acquires cognitive consistency in her love life.

At the beginning of her relationship with Mr. Allen/ Will, context contingency dominates in her behavior, for which I will provide two examples.

One example is her comment on his writing: "His last story – one I'd proofread and told him was brilliant even if it wasn't […] – had been trashed during a creative-writing workshop."[34] Contrary to Mr. Allen's girlfriend, Yuki, Mary/Yu-Rhee encourages him to engage in the activity, which he believes enables his self-realization in spite of the fact that she is conscious of the inferior quality of a recent piece he has produced. In her effort to encourage him, she conceals her real opinion of his writing from him.

Also, when Mary/Yu-Rhee is travelling with Mr. Allen/Will, she overhears the waitresses at the roadside restaurant asking: "Why's a handsome guy like him wasting his time with a skinny little Oriental?"[35] Even though she is greatly hurt, she keeps quiet about what has happened: "I couldn't shake the comments the waitresses had made. I'd snatched back the tip Will had left though I'd done it behind his back."[36] She does not want Will to feel uncomfortable so she decides to settle the issue on her own.

However, as their relationship advances, the Western influence manifesting in cognitive consistent behavior becomes observable in Mary/Yu-Rhee. A revealing incident is when she decides to break up with him: "'Cut your own damn cake,' I blurted out. […] 'Did it ever dawn on you that I have problems of my own?'"[37]

Furthermore, after this incident, Mary/Yu-Rhee becomes aware of the change in her: "My initial shock was replaced with disappointment, and a realization. […] The old me would have said I was sorry, because that was my default response to everything, but now, as I stood in the doorway, what came to me was a sweet relief."[38]

[34] Ibid., 158.
[35] Ibid., 186.
[36] Ibid., 187.
[37] Ibid., 251.
[38] Ibid., 253.

## Dispositionism vs. situationism

One striking example of Mary/Yu-Rhee's situationism is how she is dating both Joon-Ho and Mr. Allen/Will at the same time: "I spent Saturday nights with Joon-ho, Sunday afternoons with Will."[39] Her endeavors to please both men result from a quest to find real love rather than some carnal desire to fool around with them. Mr. Allen/Will, her good-looking Canadian high school teacher appreciates her talent for writing and serves as an intellectual companion. On the other hand, Joon-Ho features as "a boy who'd given me my first kiss, who's whispered my lost name. I remembered the origami swan he'd made me, and his comments about swans mating for life."[40]

The following sentences provide evidence for Mary/Yu-Rhee's situational drive to please Mr. Allen/Will and Joon-Ho, respectively. Moreover, the last sentence in the second quotation also furnishes evidence of Mary/Yu-Rhee's perception of the conflicting situational and dispositional stance.[41]

(1) "I felt conspirational. It was only a matter of time before he realized what I had already known that I could make him happy in a way Ms Nakamura never could. Unlike her, with her grand plans to control his life through marriage and babies, I simply wanted him to be who he wanted to be – a writer, like me."[42]
(2) "I'd agreed to play his game by sleeping with him and fighting for him to stay at the university. It was easy now to pass judgement upon myself, but did I need to feel bad for making choices I thought were right at the time?"[43]

At the same time, when it comes to the dinner for the marriage arrangement between Mary/Yu-Rhee and Joon-Ho, first she tries to adhere to the situationally appropriate behavior but then – inspired by a song – she decides to act according to her own principles, bearing testimony to dispositionism:

> In [Joon-Ho's mother's] eyes, I was a Canadian bride being trained as a Korean wife. My mother had warned me to be agreeable. Did I know that Joon-Ho ate only Korean food? Did I know that Joon-Ho ate only Korean food? Did I know how to cook Korean food? Was I a good cook? Better than his own mother? I nodded and kept nodding. Yes, I would bear a grandson. Two. Three. Family – his – would

[39] Ibid., 143.
[40] Ibid., 193.
[41] In the case of the interdependent self-construal, behavior of the same person will vary from situation to situation, and from one time to another.
[42] Choi, *Kay's Lucky Coin Variety*, 142–143.
[43] Ibid., 248.

> always come first. My own life, last. In my imagination, a woman's head, severed from the rest of her body – a result of excessive nodding – flew high into the air against a backdrop of blue sky, and landed in a tree, hidden from view.[44]

It is the song Kap-doli, Kap-suni (about a boy and a girl who are secretly in love with each other) which induces Mary/Yu-Rhee to stand up and announce that she cannot marry Joon-Ho as she is in love with someone else? Then, she turns to her own mother: "You have lied to me. […] This was a set-up. You've gone and planned a marriage without me",[45] before she leaves the restaurant.

**Conflict management**

With regard to conflict management, both the interdependent flight approach and the independent confront/fight approach are observable in Mary/Yu-Rhee's behavior towards Mr. Allen/Will and Joon-Ho.

When she finds her relationship with Mr. Allen/Will confining, she decides to exit it instead of fully exploring the problems with him which have led to the tension between them:

"'I couldn't go without you,' Will said from the kitchen. I sat on his sofa wishing he were going to France so that we'd be forced to say goodbye. I had planned to tell him he was better off without me, but the truth was I was better off without him. […] This once had been my happy refuge. Now the place felt confining, a cell from which I needed to break free."[46] Yet, and quite paradoxically, her, "Did it ever dawn on you that I have problems of my own?"[47] discussed in point 2 provides evidence that breaking free in this case is realized through open confrontation with Mr. Allen/Will.

Similarly, Mary/Yu-Rhee wants to exit her relationship with Joon-Ho, when, motivated by his impending expulsion from university, he tries to force Mary/Yu-Rhee into marrying him. After an incident of attempted rape, bruised and abused, she openly confronts him and threatens to share his secret with his and her family, the ultimate punishment in his culture. She also furnishes an explanation as to why she has not done so before: "I feared the dark side of him, but knew it came from being born Korean, an only child and a boy, raised to believe he was destined for greatness (and therefore allowed to exercise authority over women)."[48]

[44] Ibid., 150.
[45] Ibid., 156.
[46] Ibid., 249.
[47] Ibid., 251.
[48] Ibid., 193.

Figure 1 provides further examples of interdependent conflict management regarding Mary/Yu-Rhee's male-female relationships but due to space limitations, these will not be discussed here.

| |
|---|
| 1.) anticipatory management/ prevention → exiting relationships |
| 2.) non-communication (ignorance/ silence) as a means of expressing anger or frustration → Mary/Yu-Rhee not wanting to meet Joon-Ho again after the arranged marriage attempt |
| 3.) putting on a good face in front of others (situational code-switching) → trying to help Joon-Ho at the meeting from which he runs away, not telling the landlady about the exact nature of their relationship when the problems occur |
| 4.) Mary/Yu-Rhee is angry when she learns that Joon-Ho is using a go-between to help settle the conflict (triadic management); telling her brother, a good friend of Joon-Ho's, about the problem with Joon-Ho |
| 5.) self-aggression and intro-punitive behavior are not observable |

*Figure 1: Examples of interdependent conflict management: Ann Y. K. Choi's* Kay's Lucky Coin Variety

**Deceptive communication**

As some of the previously discussed examples also show, when Mary/Yu-Rhee makes use of deceptive communication, it always has the purpose of saving others' face and of protecting others' feelings (e.g. not telling Mr. Allen/ Will that his writing style is bad, keeping quiet about Joon-Ho's problems at university before the attempted rape and then revealing it partly to rebuke the self-conceited aunt who mistreats her mother, partly to prevent Joon-Ho from committing suicide).

In addition to these examples, when a local youngster named Leon attempts to rape Mary/Yu-Rhee, she conspires with her family to keep quiet about the incident and consequently avoids questions regarding her injury, or responds with the story of her falling off the stairs. Therefore, in this respect, Mary/ Yu-Rhee converges fully to the interdependent self-construal.

**Silence**

The other aspect in which interdependent self-construal dominates is Mary/ Yu-Rhee's concept of silence. When, for example, she and Mr. Allen/Will fight on his birthday and she communicates her criticism towards him, "Will froze, and then, in his usual way of attempting to defuse any uncomfortable moment,

he kept talking as if he hadn't heard me."[49] This sentence is informative of Mary/Yu-Rhee's irritation with his 'Gerede' or idle talk he deploys to cover his embarrassment.

## Conclusion

As has been demonstrated, Mary/Yu-Rhee's behavior reveals patterns pertaining both to the independent and the interdependent self-construal in the context of male-female relationships. The fact that she chooses to terminate her relationship with Mr. Allen/Will (representing the independent self-construal) and Joon-Ho (representing the dependent self-construal) also serves as evidence for her in-betweenness, which makes it difficult for her to navigate the challenges of finding a partner she feels comfortable with. As she herself puts it at one point in the novel: "Maybe I should give up on men and get a dog."[50]

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[49] Ibid., 250.
[50] Ibid., 205.

# GROWING TOGETHER OR APART? MINORITIES IN QUÉBEC DOCUMENTARY ON IMMIGRATION AND SCHOOL

Dervila Cooke[1]

## Abstract

*This paper focuses on Claude Godbout's 2008 documentary about immigrant schoolchildren in Québec, La Génération 101 and some comparable films (Aloisio's Les Enfants de la Loi 101, 2007; Groulx's La Classe de Madame Lise, 2006; Bertucelli's La Cour de Babel, 2014). Godbout's film showcases current and former high school students in Québec of immigrant status or extraction who attend or attended multicultural schools (with few if any Québécois classmates). I argue that the film both highlights and questions the notion of integration of immigrants. Solidarity with Québec is shown by some students of immigrant extraction who have become socially engaged (and perfectly Francophone) adults, having come to understand Québec's marginal position in North America because of their own transition through cultural and linguistic marginality. Other, more recent, students are vocal about their wish to understand Québec too, yet others have a more ambivalent or instrumentalist attitude to French and "integration" into Québécois culture. I look at the dynamic Godbout sets up between solidarity with the Québecois and the more distanced attitude described above, while also analyzing differing perceptions of Québec "values".*

## Introduction

This article focuses on Claude Godbout's 2008 documentary about immigrant schoolchildren in Québec, *La Génération 101* and some other comparable films (mainly Anita Aloisio's *Les Enfants de la Loi 101*, 2007, with reference also to Sylvie Groulx's *La Classe de Madame Lise*, 2006, and the French director Julie Bertucelli's *La Cour de Babel*, 2014).[2] Godbout's film looks

[1] Dublin City University.

[2] Anita Aloisio, *Les Enfants de la Loi 101*, Montreal, Virage, 2007; Julie Bertucelli, *La Cour de Babel*, Paris, Les Films du poisson, 2017; Claude Godbout, *La Génération 101*, Montreal, Les Films du 3 mars, 2008; Sylvie Groulx, *La Classe de Madame Lise,* Montreal, Les Films du 3 mars, 2005.

at current or former high school students in Québec (Montreal), who are either immigrants or of immigrant extraction and who attend or attended multicultural schools with few if any Québécois classmates. He gives a key place in the film to four thirty-something figures who have negotiated the system and become politically or socially engaged adults. Solidarity with Québec as a culturally vulnerable minority emerges as a point of discussion, as does the question of Québec "values", to which there is both responsiveness and resistance. Some of the former students of immigrant origin or extraction have come to understand Québec's marginal position in North America because of their own transition through cultural and linguistic marginality. Others have a more ambivalent or instrumentalist attitude to French and "integration" into Québécois culture. This ambivalence is echoed by some of the current students in the Godbout film, although several others are very vocal about their wish to understand Québec. This article explores a range of such attitudes, reflecting on the dynamics of interconnection but also sometimes of segregation in Québec between the Francophone majority and people of immigrant origin or descent. I argue that the film both highlights and questions the notion of integration of immigrants in Québec society. It is important to note the film's strong focus on the multicultural districts of Montreal's Côte-des-neiges and Notre-Dame-de-Grâce and the lack of Québécois students from the majority population attending the schools of those districts, which sometimes engenders a mindset of "them and us".

## Minorities, vulnerabilities, and reciprocal empathy

Québec is of course a minority within Canada and perceives itself as culturally and linguistically vulnerable. Francophone Quebecers experienced two centuries of political and economic domination by Anglophone Canada, including in their own province, and now they fear the diminishment of their language and heritage through cultural colonization from the modern Anglophone world, often understandably so. Marie McAndrew, a leading sociologist of education in Québec, has analysed Québec's socio-cultural context as that of a "fragile majority", in her 2010 monograph of the same name.[3] Her term is well chosen, if we consider the province's status as a largely but not exclusively French-speaking enclave located between Anglophone Canada and the USA, as well as the phenomenon of globalization in English and the diverse immigrant population in the province. Concerns about the encroachment of English in Québec are sometimes valid. For

[3] Marie McAndrew, *Les Minorités fragiles et l'éducation: Belgique, Catalogne, Irlande du nord, Québec*, Montreal, Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2010.

example, despite attempts to promote French in business in the province, many of the jobs available in Montreal require a high level of English (and sometimes more English than French), so that those who only speak French are at a manifest disadvantage in that market. This broad context nonetheless needs to be set alongside the real (and very pressing) vulnerabilities of many recent immigrants at school in Québec, and Godbout's film has the merit of recognizing this.

In considering the Québec context of interaction with the vulnerable cultural other, I reflect on remarks by the literary critic Marianne Hirsch, in her important recent essay "Vulnerable Times", such as her concept of interconnection, which she considers vital to a recognition of shared human vulnerability.[4] I remain conscious of what Katie Oliviero has recently termed "vulnerability politics" in her 2018 book of that title and of the ease with which the concept of vulnerability can be used by anyone to his or her own advantage.[5] Québec may be culturally vulnerable in terms of the North American Anglophone context, but immigrant minorities face their own challenges. Some of these challenges relate to difficult material and emotional circumstances, while the question of how to belong – especially if one is segregated from the majority population – can also create problematic zones of uncertainty.Some critics, like the writer and literary critic Marco Micone, have argued that at times Québec has focused on its own linguistic and cultural vulnerability at the expense of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the ethnic minorities in the province. Micone, who was born in Italy in 1945, is an example of an immigrant author writing in French who consistently makes the case for solidarity between cultural groups. While wholly sympathetic to the Québécois need to preserve their language and distinct culture, and of their previous exploitation by a dominant group, he often shifts the emphasis towards the difficult economic circumstances and exploitation of immigrants, whose talents he also sees as not being fully recognized or utilized in Québec society. These issues are clear for example in "Les Geignards", the play at the end of his important set of autobiographical and political fragments in *Le Figuier enchanté*, or in "Speak What", his riposte to the famous nationalist Québécois poem "Speak White". These works by Micone argue for a *reciprocal* empathy between recent immigrants and the established Francophone population.[6]

[4] Marianne Hirsch, Vulnerable Times, in J. Butler – Z. Gambetti – L. Sabsay (eds.), *Vulnerability and Resistance*, Durham, Duke University, 2019, 76–96 (80, 81).

[5] Katie Oliviero, *Vulnerability Politics: The Uses and Abuses of Precarity in Political Debate*, New York, NYU Press, 2018.

[6] Marco Micone, *Le Figuier enchanté*, Montreal, Boréal, 2008; Marco Micone, *Speak What, Suivi d'une analyse par Lise Gauvin*, Montreal, VLB Editeur, 2001.

We should also note that the film focuses on Québec's immigrant minorities and not on its other, Aboriginal, minorities. In their analysis of Godbout's film, Leigh Oakes and Jane Warren make the point that the struggle for survival and recognition of heritage is much more "urgent" for the Aboriginal communities in Québec than it is for the Québécois population.[7] Interestingly (although Oakes and Warren do not note this), Godbout includes a statue of an Aboriginal warrior or hunter in the second sequence of the film. In this montage set to instrumental music, a series of statues evokes a sense of Québec history. The camera lingers on statues of French colonizers, of a mother with young children, an oriental figure, an ice hockey player and the angel or goddess of liberty atop the Georges-Etienne Cartier monument in Montreal. While the Aboriginal hunter-warrior is only a fleeting reference in the film, it is an important one, as it comes first in the series of statues. The camera angle and frame composition emphasize the intent expression of the man's face. This serves to remind the viewer that while Francophone Quebecers are a minority in North America, other minorities need to be heard too.

Godbout is quoted in a 2008 newspaper article by journalist Annabelle Nicoud as saying that he preferred to "donner la parole aux immigrants" [give immigrants their voice in this film], deciding against including analysis or commentary by Quebecers of old-stock European settler heritage, or indeed by historians.[8] Given this commitment to privileging the voices of people from non-majority groups, Godbout's inclusion of the statue of the Aboriginal hunter is a reminder that there are many types of cultural minorities in the province. At the time of release of his film, indigenous peoples were starting to make themselves heard again across Canada, in the run up to the 2015 report on Truth and Conciliation in "Indian" residential schools.

Godbout's film also seems to suggest, as with Micone in *Le Figuier enchanté,* that it is not enough to merely speak French in an instrumentalist or utilitarian manner, but that a feeling of connection between immigrants and Francophones is also necessary. Initially, via the voiceover at the start of the film, Godbout's approach seems one-directional, as he focuses on feelings of connection with established Francophones that he would like to see emanating from the immigrant population. As the narrator, Godbout calls this a sense of "integration", noting that the hundreds of thousands of young people of immigrant extraction are often far from being integrated.

[7] Leigh Oakes – Jane Warren, Language Policy and Unity in Québec: French as a Force for Unity in a Diverse Society? in Catrin Norrby – John Hajek (eds.), *Uniformity and Diversity in Language Policy: Global Perspectives*, Bristol – Buffalo – Toronto, Multilingual Matters, 2011, 7–21 (20).

[8] Anabelle Nicoud, Claude Godbout: touche-à-tous heureux, *La Presse*, 20 September 2008, https://www.lapresse.ca/cinema/nouvelles/201207/17/01-4552912-claude-godbout-touche-a-tous-heureux.php (accessed 15 December 2019).

(Although he does not question the term, the word "integration" is often negatively charged among people of immigrant extraction, due to its closeness to the concept of assimilation. In a 2020 interview with me, fellow filmmaker Aloisio why she does not like the term and why she prefers the notion of multiple belongings.)[9] However, despite Godbout's apparent focus on the outdated term "integration", the material he shows us indicates that Hirsch's concept of interconnection may in fact be closer to what he has in mind. He provides us with keys to understanding other individuals and communities through contact and reflection, and focuses on the notions of discussion and exchange.

I should note here that the concepts of interconnection and interaction should naturally include Québec's Anglophone population, although the scope of this article does not allow me to dwell on this glaring gap. The province's "old-stock Anglophones" do not figure in Godbout's film, nor indeed in those by Groulx or Aloisio, which is perhaps unsurprising, given the focus of those films. However, in Aloisio's film, the Italo-Quebecer Mauro is more comfortable in English than in French, and may indeed be more Anglophone than he is Italophone. This highlights the importance of English as a lingua franca for many in Montreal. It also calls into focus the narrow linguistic categories into which people are often placed in Québec. Many in fact have several home languages or languages in which they are completely fluent, and should not therefore be pigeonholed as Francophone, Anglophone or Allophone.

## Ways of being Québécois: passing between identities

The four main thirty-something figures showcased in the film were termed "*des passeurs*" by Nicoud at the time of the film's release.[10] This well-chosen epithet suggests that these figures "pass on" their experiences, as well as acting as models for younger generations. Importantly, the term also expresses the "in-between" and mobile nature of their identities. Two are politicians: Ruba Ghazal, who was born in Palestine and Farouk Karim who was born in Madagascar. One is an educational commissioner, Akos Verboczy, originally from Hungary and author of the provocative 2017 autobiographical work *Rhapsodie Québécoise*, which is about his own immigration to Québec and

[9] Dervila Cooke, "Let me explain: this is who I am", Interview with Anita Aloisio, with introduction, in R. Mielusel – S. Pruteanu (eds.), *Citizenship and Belonging in North America: Multicultural Perspectives on Political, Cultural and Artistic Representations of Immigration*, New York, Palgrave MacMillan, 2020, 151–168.

[10] Nicoud, Claude Godbout touche-à-tous.

school experience.[11] Part of his work is to encourage young people, including immigrants, to vote in Québécois elections. The fourth is Daniel Russo-Garrido, a rapper with Latin American heritage. All speak perfect French in a Québécois accent and all have mixed with the majority population through politics, music or educational governance. The first three in particular seem very far from the attitude of the adolescent students in the film, many of whom do not empathize with accepted Québec concerns, whether about nationalism, male-female egalitarianism, or even participation in politics. Farouk feels solidarity with nationalist Québec and actually campaigns for the sovereignist *Parti Québécois* (PQ). Akos works for the French-language Montreal School board, and recalls his sadness at an incident when a group of Québécois folkdancers giving a display were booed in his multi-ethnic school, the Ecole Saint-Luc in the multicultural district of Notre-Dame-de-Grâces. Ruba, who is culturally Palestinian but born in Lebanon, has overcome the gendered vulnerability of her Middle Eastern upbringing (mainly in the United Arab Emirates, it appears) and has embraced the freedom that is available to women in Québec, becoming a politician for the *Québec solidaire* party. The latter three figures are poster children for the néo-Québécois ideal: politically engaged in the province's future, secular, French-speaking, and open to mixing with other ethnicities. The society they identify with is envisaged as a modern, secular state that is ethnically inclusive, egalitarian to males and females, and experienced mainly through French in the public domain. It is the legacy of 1960's Québec's "*Révolution tranquille*", its Quiet Revolution which famously heralded the political and cultural blossoming of the majority Francophone group and helped to make Québec's self-image more tolerant, equal, feminist and secular.

Of the four, Daniel (the rapper who says he can sometimes pass for a relatively dark-skinned Québécois but at another point says he looks Latino) seems the most mobile in terms of identity. He is the least involved in the Québécois body politic of the four main figures. He also seems the least interested in safeguarding Francophone culture, as is evident in a newspaper article from the time of the film's release.[12] The images in his music videos root him strongly in a present Latin American culture, while his Spanish-language lyrics speak of how his ancestors travelled from city to city and country to country in search of work or a better life, and perhaps to escape persecution. What we hear of his songs and words encourages reflection on a sense of shared humanity, and on the vulnerabilities of uprooted individuals

[11] Akos Verboczy, *Rhapsodie québécoise. Itinéraire d'un enfant de la loi 101*, Montreal, Boréal, 2017.

[12] Clairandreé Cauchy, La Loi 101 à l'heure des bilans, *Le Devoir*, 18 September 2008, https://www.ledevoir.com/non-classe/206194/la-loi-101-a-l-heure-des-bilans (accessed 15 December 2019).

or groups. While his attachment to his own cultural legacy could in theory allow him to understand the Québec need to protect a sense of identity, he does not appear to be much interested in Québec heritage, or at least he privileges a sense of mixed identity. If Daniel is a *passeur*, it is more in the sense of passing on his Latin American heritage through song and video image, and of personally passing through the constantly shifting grounds between Québec identity and the legacy of his family's past. It is a credit to Godbout that he gives positive and substantial film space to this figure, who does not fit as clearly as the other three into the Franco-Québécois mould.

Traditional Québécois identity is also shaken up at the very start of the film. The first scene shows part of a conversation between Akos and Farouk, where Akos notes that he learned of the Accord du Lac Meech – the 1987 agreement, which was an attempt to enshrine Québec as a "distinct society" within Canada – from Farouk's immigrant father, and not, as one might expect, from a Québécois from the majority population. Having emigrated with his family from Madagascar to Québec, Farouk's father understood the struggle of the Québécois, despite not being a sovereignist. This opening reference to the father's solidarity with the Québécois cause is directly followed by a sequence showing the infamous speech by Jacques Parizeau in 1995 after the narrowly-lost referendum on Québec sovereignty. There, the PQ politician attributed the loss of the referendum to "*l'argent et des votes ethniques*" [money and ethnic votes]. Godbout's montage of immediately subsequent shots contrasts with Parizeau's drastic statement (his speech has often been misreported as containing the phrase "*le vote ethnique*" [the ethnic vote], however, the phrase "*des votes ethniques*" is almost as damning). We see tears in the eyes of a young black woman in the crowd listening to Parizeau, who wears the "OUI" [Yes to sovereignty for Québec] badge on her hat, a clear statement of allegiance to Québécois independence. There are shots of distraught individuals of apparently immigrant extraction, who seem to react with disbelief that Parizeau has uttered such dismissive and inaccurate comments about them, amid applause from much of the crowd. This sequence seems to appeal for more dialogue and discussion with others, in order to better understand them. It suggests that a narrow and totalizing approach that brands groups as "them" versus "us" risks creating a restricted outlook full of festering misunderstandings. The film works against misunderstandings and preconceptions in many ways, not only by showing the commitment to sovereignty of several of the immigrants, but also in smaller details such as when Ruba, who does not wear a veil, tells a potential voter that she is Muslim. There are clearly many ways of being a Muslim, just as there are many ways of being Québécois.

## Bill 101, Classes d'accueil, and threshold moments

Québec's *classes d'accueil* language support system was set up in 1969 and came into widespread use after the introduction of Bill 101, *la Charte de la langue française* (or *la loi 101)*, in 1977. Godbout's film was produced, symbolically, thirty years after the adoption of Bill 101. This law aimed to protect the French language in the domains of work, signage and education, and, initially, also legislation. In the domain of education, one significant effect has been that children of immigrant extraction or from the majority Francophone population (but not Anglophones) are obliged to attend French school (if educated in the state system) with Montreal receiving the bulk of the immigrant students. Immigrant children and teenagers usually spend at least a year and a half in the *classes d'accueil* system before passing into mainstream classes once their level of French warrants it, although sometimes they start attending some classes in the standard stream early on, such as mathematics. France has a similar system with the same name.[13] In some "French schools", such as the *Ecole Saint-Luc in Notre-Dame-de-Grâce*, all the students are immigrants, while other schools have a variable mix of immigrant students and those from the majority Francophone population.

The presence or absence of majority population students can have a major impact on students' experience of school and on their feelings of belonging to Québec. In separate studies, Dawn Allen and Marilyn Steinbach have analyzed some of the problems that can arise when established Québecers are divided from language-learning newcomers at school.[14] Allen notes that French, and the *classes d'accueil* themselves, can come to be seen as an obstacle by immigrant students, for example holding them back for up to two years from subjects such as science until their French is adequate. Steinbach looks at discrimination between majority population students and newcomers, highlighting the problem of the physical exclusion of the language learners from the mainstream group. In Godbout's film, we see moments of teaching

[13] Annick Brabant's 2018 précis on the Ville de Montréal website gives an outline of the system in Québec, while Jean-Philippe Proulx's 2015 graduate dissertation provides some more in-depth considerations and a series of portraits of youngsters who have been through the system. Annick Brabant, Immigrer et s'intégrer à l'école: l'histoire des classes d'accueil, *Ville. Montreal.qc.ca,* 24 October 2018, https://ville.montreal.qc.ca/memoiresdesmontrealais/immigrer-et-sintegrer-lecole-lhistoire-des-classes-daccueil (accessed 15 December 2019); Jean-Philippe Proulx, *De la classe d'accueil à la classe ordinaire: Portrait du passage selon les acteurs du monde scolaire au primaire*, Masters thesis, Université de Québec à Montréal, 2015.

[14] Dawn Allen, Who's in and Who's out: Language and the Integration of New Immigrant Youth in Quebec, *International Journal of Inclusive Education,* Vol. 10, No. 2 (2006), 251–263; Marilyn Steinbach, Quand je sors d'accueil: Linguistic Integration of Immigrant Adolescents in Quebec Secondary Schools, *Language, Culture and Curriculum,* Vol. 23, No. 2 (2010), 95–107.

and learning in *classes d'accueil* for students who have just arrived, and also in classes for more established students. However, no students from the majority population are present. As such, the young students of immigrant extraction appear cut off from the Francophone or indeed the established Anglophone populations. Indeed, the schools are almost entirely made up of immigrants. When asked how "integrated" into Québec culture he feels, one of the boys makes the point that there are no Québécois of his age to interact with in his immediate environment. For viewers, including those of non-immigrant extraction, Godbout's film gives a chance to reflect on this segregation. As a type of exclusion, it may explain the resistance of some of the students to considering themselves Québécois.

Another point made by Godbout's film about the *classes d'accueil* system is the need for heightened sensitivities in the teacher-child relationship. We see, for example, the vulnerability of teenagers who arrived in Québec in the early years of the millennium into Québec's *classes d'accueil*. We get a glimpse of their journey of learning French, which is clearly sometimes a struggle for them. Early in the film, a young Libyan boy, who has been in class for only four weeks, makes a great effort to respond but hangs his head sadly when he cannot understand what he is being asked by his *classe d'accueil* teacher (*Quel est ton pays d'origine? D'où viens-tu?* [What is your country of origin? Where are you from?]. His inability to respond is of course partly due to his new arrival in Québec. However, the idea of belonging to a war-torn country, or painful memories of his experiences there – or indeed the pain of exile – may also have blocked his response. Many of the teachers in this school are of immigration extraction and the teacher in this instance is an immigrant who came from France via Bulgaria, with a degree in French. We learn that she herself experienced linguistic confusion when she arrived in France to spend five years at the lycée Molière. By including this scene early on, albeit only as a fleetingly, Godbout seems to be calling for a better appreciation of the vulnerabilities of others. Yet as Hirsch reminds us in "Vulnerable Times", this should not be a commonplace empathy but rather an understanding that bears in mind one's own context and privileges, and the fact that the experiences of the other person are unique to that person: the other is "decidedly not me".[15]

In "Vulnerable Times", Hirsch speaks of the "threshold moment" of arriving at a school with a new language in America, having left behind Romania and the German-speaking community where she grew up.[16] Everything was alien, down to her very name. She became Mary Ann (which she could not pronounce) instead of Marianne. Early in Godbout's film, Akos

[15] Hirsch, Vulnerable Times, 84.
[16] Ibid, 79.

mentions the comfort provided on his first day of school by a kind teacher, Nicholaï Nicolevitch, of Romanian origin, who makes a point of welcoming all new students by name and of saying a few words to them in their own language. Twenty years later, Akos is still struck by the fact that Nicolevitch pronounced his name correctly. Akos reflects on the difficulty of exile, of having to leave his friends behind and receiving no special dispensation from his mother due to having immigrated (he left Hungary on a Friday and started school in Montreal the following Monday). Expecting to be in a normal class, "*une classe normale*", he was in fact placed in language support. Like Marco Micone's Nino in the abovementioned autobiographical hybrid work *Le Figuier enchanté*, he is a bright student who suddenly finds himself unable to communicate. The blockage remains painful in Akos's memory. Teachers like "Monsieur Nicolas", who he clearly remembers with great affection, softened the transition, and no doubt allowed him to feel a connection between his homeland and school.

## Becoming Québécois and the question of values: Godbout and Aloisio

As previously shown, Farouk, Ruba, and Akos place greater emphasis on their adopted "Québécois" culture, whereas Daniel emphasizes his Latin American legacy. This question of prior culture comes into sharp focus in Aloisio's film, which has several key points in common with Godbout's production. One of the aims of Aloisio's film is to show that painful situations have arisen due to lack of adequate attention by the Québec government to the prior culture, or in some cases the home culture, of children of immigrant extraction, both in the past and, to some extent, still today. Aloisio highlights the vulnerability of children who were among the very first to experience compulsory schooling in French, such as Tihana, who, as a Croatian-speaking child, was expected to function with no support in mainstream French class as a small child in Québec city, in the early years of Bill 101. Likewise, Courtney, who is of Anglophone Jamaican origin, experienced trauma by being thrust into a strict and highly monitored French-speaking school environment as a very young child, with little or no acknowledgement of his difference or cultural heritage. He went on to find it very difficult to reconcile the Jamaican and Québécois elements of his identity as a child in late 1970s and early 1980s Québec.

In Aloisio's film, Guerina (who, like Aloisio, is of Italian heritage) is a strong counter example to Courtney, as she is more comfortable in French than in her heritage language, and has been committed since her teenage years to the Québécois cause of self-determination. We see impassioned interactions between Guerina and her parents, who are opposed to the imposition of

French in schools in Québec. They believe in choice ("*la scelta*"), having come to Canada from a country with a fascist past. These parents are vocally opposed to Québec's linguistic law, although they are forced to comply with the system. Guerina recounts her resistance to them on this point during a time of adolescent self-assertion and rebellion. Her parents, for their part, have managed to learn very functional French, but their relationship with their daughter is endangered by their staunchly maintained and frequently vocalized belief in the need to remain loyal to the Italian language and cultural heritage and their wish to see their grandchildren learn good English. The tension between daughter and parents translates as an argument for moderation on both sides, where Guerina might learn (or be allowed to) embrace her Italianness as well as her Québec identity, and where the parents might be encouraged to see themselves as Québécois as well as Italian.

Like Aloisio's film, Godbout's film also questions what it is to be Québécois, and whether it is indeed necessary to feel that one fits that label, in order to live successfully in Québec. (In Aloisio's film, Courtney feels that the label of Québécois is slightly ill-fitting, yet his far-reaching social work and passionate feelings of belonging to Montreal make it clear that he is a very positive part of Québec society). To Akos, Farouk, and Ruba, as with Guerina in Aloisio's film, the Québécois label seems important, whether this involves solidarity with Québec's wish to retain its culture, or, as in Ruba's case, a concern to help others achieve the freedoms and prosperity they have acquired. For Daniel, however, being Québécois is of less importance, as he has a stronger belief in the importance of being a citizen of the world. The question of Québécois values is raised several times in both films. In Aloisio's film, Guerina tells her parents that she (unlike them) understands the values of Québec. Her mother nearly chokes in anger on hearing this, assuming that by this she means she has rejected Italian values. In Godbout's film the question of "values" is first discussed via Ruba's emphasis on the value laid in Québec on freedoms for women. Later, the notion of values becomes more complex. In one of the *classes d'accueil*, a boy states his attachment to his authoritarian family culture, specifically citing obedience to his father as a "value" to which he adheres, partly because it helps him work hard at school. In the same class, a Black girl says that while she has a lot of respect for "their culture" ("*leur culture*", by which she means Québécois culture), in her family it is just not possible to feel integrated (*"ce n'est pas une question de vouloir"* [It's not a case of not wanting to]). In any case, it was not her choice to come to Québec, but that of her parents, she states. It is admirable that these students have a space in the class to voice their opinions, and that others have the right of response.

The above comments stem from a key sequence in the film where a group of about 20 sixteen–seventeen-year olds participate in a philosophy and ethics class led by Québécoise teacher Sylvie Tardif. The class is split by the question

she initially asks them to consider: *"Croyez-vous être complètement intégrés dans la culture québécoise?"* ["Do you feel you are completely integrated into Québec culture?"]. Initially only about one third of the class moves to the side of the room designated for those who answer "Yes", but eventually almost two thirds do, once Tardif rephrases without *"complètement"* in her question. After an impassioned discussion, the students eventually resort to following dictionary definition from *Le Petit Larousse*: *"Intégration: opération qui consiste à assembler les différentes parties d'un système et à assurer leur compatibilité ainsi que le bon fonctionnement du système complet"* [Integration: an operation consisting of assembling the different parts of a system while ensuring they are compatible and that the system will function well as a whole].

Several students remain on the "No" side, in terms of any integration, including the black boy who wants to remember the country in Africa he left at the age of five but who cannot; the girl who feels a strong attachment to Hong Kong, and who feels "integrating" means she must lessen that attachment; and the black girl who doesn't feel she can integrate, even if she wanted to. Another student of South Asian extraction speaks of her parents as "obstacles" to her integration, because they insist on retaining their way of doing things. A reflective and articulate boy (apparently from South East Asia) is one of the most vocal in the class. He becomes frustrated with those who insist that they are being expected to give up their attachment to their memories and home cultures if they "integrate". He declares that he wishes to learn as much about Québec as he can (even soap operas: *"les téléromans"*), and speaks of the importance of being willing to adapt (*"s'adapter"*), without necessarily losing what one has. It is tempting to view this boy as a spokesperson for Godbout's own views, but divergent voices are aired also, following Godbout's aforementioned wish to *"donner la parole aux immigrants"*.

## Trauma, resilience, and vulnerability: Godbout, Groulx and Bertucelli

In one of the *classes d'accueil* filmed in Godbout's film, a teacher of Italian heritage says that he admires the children he teaches, praising their level of maturity and their hard work and ability to acquire French relatively speedily. He feels this is particularly praiseworthy in a context where many students have been separated from parents or important family members in their migration, or have experienced the traumas of war. It is a commonplace of child education to hear that "children are resilient". However, this is true only up to a point. Whereas Québec society may previously have assumed that all children are resilient, to the detriment of people like Tihana and Courtney

in Aloisio's film, there is now a greater awareness of the vulnerability of immigrant children. In this context, the teachers in Godbout's film deserve to be applauded, not only Nicholaï Nikolevitch and the teacher of Italian origin who reflect on the vulnerabilities of children in their class, but also the Québécoise teacher who allows them space for reflection and discussion in order to build their self-confidence, and therefore their emotional resilience. The child who cannot remember life in Africa (whether because the shock of arrival to Québec erased his memories or for some other reason) should not be berated for not feeling able to "integrate", as long as the memories he has lost remain a more burning issue for him.

The potential vulnerabilities of schoolchildren are also evident in *La Classe de Madame Lise*, Groulx's documentary film about six and seven year old primary children in Québec, despite the somewhat "cutesy" quality of the adorable and often outspoken kids. As in Godbout's film, the children all come from the non-majority population, with the *Québécois de souche* only represented by some teachers. In this case, the context is the socially disadvantaged district of Parc-Extension in Montreal. The principal of the school describes this area as bounded by barriers constituted by trainlines and motorways that disconnect it from the heart of the city, in a parallel with the last scene of the recent French film *La Vie scolaire* by Grand Corps Malade and Mehdi Idir.[17] The latter film ends with an image of one of the main characters, of Arab descent, staring out from a tall school building at Paris beyond the ring road of the *périphérique*, in a clear image of the corralling of most of the poorer classes and immigrants outside the city walls. The city of Paris, *intramuros*, represents the success that seems unattainable to the Arab boy. Social ghettoization is not dwelt on in Groulx's film, however, and nor are the problems many of the children must have had in adapting to life in French in school in the years prior to entering Madame Lise's class. Madame Lise's class is not technically a *classe d'accueil* and it is in fact assumed that her pupils are now in mainstream education, having experienced their adaptation period to French in earlier years. The challenges that potentially face them, for example, integrating into mainstream Québec society, are often more implied than explicit. We see this for example in the scenes near the start of the film, where the children are being dropped off from school by parents from almost exclusively recent immigrant backgrounds, many of whom will have challenges relating to linguistic and cultural acquisition.

Despite the lack of explicit commentary, it is nonetheless clear in Groulx's film that some of the children are in need of special intervention. One of these is a physically small and quiet boy, who is intelligent and who could succeed

[17] Grand Corps Malade – Idhir, Mehdi, *La Vie Scolaire*, Paris, Mandarin Production and Kallouche Cinéma, 2019.

well at school if given the chance. He grows in self-confidence and the ability to vocalize his thoughts in French with the help of the committed teacher, the eponymous Québécoise, Madame Lise. His progress is at risk of being hampered by the decision of his parents to take him to their country for extended periods during the school year. A different case is the little Black girl who is highly gifted academically, but who gets bored easily and is therefore vulnerable to not achieving her potential (and perhaps dropping out at some point, particularly if her giftedness is not recognized and encouraged in her home environment). As with *La Génération 101*, and like Philippe Falardeau's 2011 film, Monsieur Lazhar, this Québec documentary from almost the same date emphasizes the enormous impact of good teachers on children's lives in noting their needs, building their self-confidence and drawing out their potential.[18]

A stellar teacher is also in focus in *La Cour de Babel* by French director Bertuccelli. As in Godbout's film, it focuses on a *classe d'accueil*, in this case in the tenth district in Paris, and their committed teacher Brigitte Servoni, of whom the *Nouvel Observateur* made a striking written portrait in 2014.[19] Some of the children and teenagers it focuses on are slightly younger than those in Godbout's film, aged between 11 and 15. Servoni makes a strong effort to make the children feel included, and to encourage them to bring their cultural and linguistic heritage into the classroom (and onto the blackboard), along with their individual talents, for example singing or playing an instrument. The children seem at ease and validated, and are willing to attempt to express themselves and to endorse each other's abilities. Servoni must nonetheless attempt to negotiate a multitude of vulnerabilities the children have, without allowing these difficulties to dominate the class. A clever girl who dreams of being a doctor must move from the school and leave behind the excellent support she is being given there, as her parents' social and economic circumstances mean they must move to an apartment far away. Generous living spaces in the home country have been traded for cramped accommodation and inadequate homework facilities in small apartments in Paris. As with Godbout's film, contexts of war, familial separation and political persecution are also part of some of the children's backgrounds. We also see the vulnerabilities of the parents, some of whom cannot speak French and who rely on their children as mediators and translators in parent-teacher discussion. The *classes d'accueil* sequences of Godbout's film need to be considered in this light too, as similar circumstances are present in the Québec immigrant classroom.

[18] Philippe Falardeau, *Monsieur Lazhar*, Montreal, Les films Séville, 2011.

[19] Marie-Elisabeth Rouchy, La Cour de Babel: l'enseignante sans laquelle le documentaire n'aurait pas été possible, *Le Nouvel Observateur*, 23 October 2014, https://www.nouvelobs.com/cinema/20140312.CIN0630/la-cour-de-babel-l-enseignante-sans-laquelle-le-documentaire-n-aurait-pas-ete-possible.html (accessed 22 April 2020).

## Conclusion

This paper has reflected on how Godbout's film highlights the complex question of integration of children of immigrant heritage into Québec society and values. It has done so through a focus on examples from the first generation of Bill 101 children and snippets of comparisons with the young people of today, some of whom seem less interested in being Québécois than the representatives of the earlier generation. Godbout's initial statement that many immigrants are "far from integrated" develops as the film progresses into a more nuanced approach. In privileging discussion and exchange among people of very different values, the very question of what integration means or should mean is thrown into question. One of the most useful political points to emerge from the film is the segregation between immigrants and the majority population in certain districts of Montreal. Arguably, this has become exacerbated on a moral level in the ideology of "them and us" in the *Charte des valeurs*, which led to the 2019 *Charte de la laïcité*, banning the display of ostensible symbols of religious affiliation by people in positions of authority in the workplace, including teachers. While the films by Godbout and Aloisio do not focus on religion, the comments by Guerina and her mother on "values" resonate with this debate (the Hérouxville declaration and the Bouchard Taylor Commission were roughly contemporary with both films). As the boy from the authoritarian family in Madame Tardif's class puts it: *"Qu'est-ce qu'on fait de leurs valeurs?"*, by which he seems to mean "How can Québécois values fit with those I've grown up in, and will I be forced to lose my own values of obedience to my father and mother if I integrate?"

In terms of the values debate, Akos notes that he has seen many instances of parents allying with their children against teachers in the Québec system, while Ruba notes with real admiration the respect that Québec schoolchildren are afforded by their teachers. It is difficult to see how the boy from the authoritarian family, certainly at this moment in his adolescence, might engage with prevailing Québécois political thought on the need for a shared culture of egalitarianism, since that egalitarianism extends to the relationship between parents and their children. Yet the film has the merit of giving him a voice, as does his teacher's democratic and egalitarian approach in the classroom. Part of the thrust of the film is to advocate for the egalitarian participation of young people of immigrant extraction in Québec politics and society, and of immigrants in general. There is much footage devoted to the political campaigns of both Farouk and Ruba. Akos is shown as an activist, encouraging young people, whether immigrants or not, to play a part in Québec democracy by voting and by following politics. Clearly, the need to give a voice to immigrants is important to Godbout, not just in his film but in the wider political domain.

Ironically, given the rhetoric of accommodation of beliefs and practices from the non-majority population in recent years in Québec, Akos describes some immigrants' view of French as *"la langue pour accommoder les Canadiens-français"* [a language to placate French-Canadians].[20] Yet in the same article Farouk is quoted as saying that French is a language for all. He declares that *"la défense de la langue française, ce n'est pas juste le lot des Canadiens-français indépendantistes, descendants du chanoine Groulx"*. [The defense of the French language is not only the remit of sovereignist French Canadians who see themselves as descendants of the nationalist Catholic priest and historian Lionel Groulx].[21] If an individual only uses French in in a utilitarian way, or indeed rejects the language, it would seem difficult for that individual to function as part of the body politic and of democratic society through French. Godbout's film suggests that full participation necessitates a sense of being part of Québec and of interaction with the different elements of the population on a regular and egalitarian basis.

Godbout might call this "integration", but I prefer interaction, or Hirsch's term of interconnection. Commenting early on in the film that the hundreds of thousands of young people of immigrant extraction in Québec "often" do not share the culture of the Francophone population, Godbout ends by noting Québec's "politically uncertain" future and that a day may come where the *"Génération 101"* may be called on to define the "new identity" of "the Québec nation". He seems rather pessimistic, as the importance of a shared "language", "culture" and "history" is not perceived by all in Québec society. However, with teachers such as those depicted in his documentary, and helped by socio-politically minded "*passeurs*" such as those given a platform by Godbout, immigrants and immigrant students are off to a good start.

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[20] Cauchy, La Loi 101.
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# *MAÎTRES CHEZ QUI?* THE PARTI QUÉBÉCOIS' CULTURAL GEOGRAPHY AND ITS IMPACT ON THE IDEA OF INDIGENOUS TERRITORIAL SOVEREIGNTY FOLLOWING THE QUIET REVOLUTION

Marie-Claude Gill-Lacroix[1]

## Abstract

*René Lévesque and his Parti Québécois (PQ) fervently believed that the province of Québec met the requirements for territorial sovereignty – so much so in fact that a referendum meant to ascertain the people of Québec's willingness to separate from the rest of Canada was organized by the PQ in 1980. As evidenced by the raids endured by Mi'kmaq people of the Listuguj community during the summer of 1981, Lévesque's beliefs regarding territorial sovereignty did not extend to Québec's Indigenous populations, however. Why is that? The answer lies in the 'new' cultural geography wrought by the Quiet Revolution (1960–1980). In helping shape Québécois identity during the 1960s and 1970s, Lévesque and the PQ created a cultural geography which diverged from notions of Indigenous territorial sovereignty in the 1980s. These findings exhibit how the cultural development of French-Québécois emerged to the detriment of Indigenous self-determination.*

## Introduction

In *Incident at Restigouche* (1984), Indigenous documentarian Alanis Obomsawin recounts raids endured by the Mi'kmaq people of Québec's Listuguj community during the summer of 1981.[2] Provincial police forcibly seized fishing equipment from the Mi'kmaq in an attempt to limit their access to salmon in the Restigouche River – salmon which the community's inhabitants relied upon for both food and income.[3] The then Minister of Fisheries for the

[1] Ludwig-Maximilians Universität.

[2] Alanis Obomsawin, Incident at Restigouche, *National Film Board of Canada* (1984), https://www.nfb.ca/film/incident_at_restigouche/ (accessed 8 April 2020). It is important to note is that the Listuguj community was previously called the Restigouche Reserve after the area's eponymous river. Thus, Obomsawin's film is titled *Incident at Restigouche* rather than *Incident at Listuguj.*

[3] The raids are described from 10:23 to 18:03 in Obomsawin, Incident at Restigouche.

Parti Québécois (PQ), Lucien Lessard, traveled to Listuguj in order to hold talks with the community's band council.[4] An encounter between Lessard and a Listuguj Chief has gained particular infamy since the documentary's release:

> *Listuguj Chief*: You French-Canadians are asking for sovereignty here in Québec. You are saying it's your country and you want to be independent in your country. We're surprised that you don't understand us Indian people and our sovereignty on our land. *Lucien Lessard*: You cannot ask for sovereignty because to have sovereignty one must have one's own culture, language, and land.[5]

Obomsawin has described Lessard's comments as "dreadful."[6] As accurate as her description may be, this paper is not interested in deriding Lessard's beliefs. Obomsawin does a fine job of explaining Indigenous peoples' own cultural, linguistic, and territorial claims in *Incident at Restigouche.* Rather, this paper will seek to understand why a member of the PQ would be so obtuse regarding the idea of Indigenous territorial sovereignty within Québec.

It was PQ founder, René Lévesque, who stated in 1977 that nationhood is characterized by "a clearly defined territory, […] history, [and a] common language and culture."[7] Lévesque fervently believed Québec met all of the above requirements.[8] So much so in fact that he and his party orchestrated a referendum meant to ascertain the people of Québec's willingness to separate from the rest of Canada in May 1980.[9] As evidenced by the events in Listuguj, Lévesque and the PQ did not extend beliefs of sovereignty to the Indigenous communities located within the province's borders.[10] Why was that? More precisely, why were the PQ and its supporters so unwilling to accept Indigenous peoples' possible territorial sovereignty in the 1980s? In order to answer this question, this paper will examine the effects of Québec's Quiet Revolution on the province's 'cultural geography.'[11] Jackson and Cosgrove's particular concept of cultural geography will be instrumentalized to better understand

4 This section of the film is from 29:30 to 33:13 in Obomsawin, Incident at Restigouche.

5 This encounter is described from 30:48 to 31:25 in Obomsawin, Incident at Restigouche.

6 The term is used from 30:48 to 30:57 in Obomsawin, Incident at Restigouche.

7 René Lévesque, Quebec: A Good Neighbour in Transition, *Vital Speeches of the Day,* Vol. 43, No. 9 (1977), 283–284.

8 Ibid.

9 See David H. Kaplan, Maîtres Chez Nous: The Evolution of French Canadian Spatial Identity, *American Review of Canadian Studies,* Vol. 19, No. 4 (1989), 421; Louis Balthazar, Les nombreux visages du nationalisme québécois, in Alain-G. Gagnon (ed.), *Québec: État et Société Tome I,* Montréal, Les Éditions Québec – Amérique, 23–40, especially the section titled 'Les traits du Nationalisme Québécois Majoritaire.'

10 Lessard sanctioned the raids in accordance with the wishes of Lévesque (see 29:40:00-30:25:00 in Obomsawin, Incident at Restigouche).

11 Cultural geography is a relatively new field dedicated to studying how culture affects geography and vice versa. For more information: Denis Cosgrove – Peter Jackson, New Directions in Cultural Geography, *Area,* Vol. 19, No. 2 (June 1987), 95–101.

how the PQ shaped the geography born out of the Quiet Revolution. Special attention will be paid to the works, thoughts, and speeches of René Lévesque. It will be argued that by framing French-Québécois as colonized and consistently ignoring the province's Indigenous inhabitants, Lévesque and the PQ effectively created a cultural geography able to thwart the mere idea of Indigenous territorial sovereignty.[12]

In order to demonstrate the above argument, the following pages will be divided into four sections. The first section will provide a brief overview of cultural geography as the theoretical framework for the current paper. Jackson and Cosgrove's 'new' approach to cultural geography will be outlined here. Section two will employ primary sources to demonstrate the manner in which the PQ, in particular its leader, framed French-Québécois as colonized. Primary sources will also be used in the third section to demonstrate how Lévesque often ignored the province's Indigenous peoples during the Quiet Revolution. Section four will consider how these discourses may have affected Québec's cultural geography. Together, these sections will reveal the reasons as to why the PQ of the 1980s could not foresee a future where Québec's French and Indigenous populations could simultaneously be *maîtres chez eux*.[13]

## Cultural Geography: Broadly and in Québec

Following the teachings of Carl O. Sauer,[14] the field of cultural geography began in earnest around the year 1925.[15] Sauer's understanding of cultural geography led him and his followers to become known as adherents of the 'Berkeley School,'[16] which concerned itself with culture's material aspects.[17] In particular, the Berkeley School studied the manner in which humans could impress their

[12] "Territorial sovereignty" is used here and in the remainder of this paper as a shorthand for Stephen D. Krasner's own definition of "sovereignty": "the assertion of final authority within a given territory." Said "assertion of final authority" is said by Krasner to be the "the core element in any definition of sovereignty." (Stephen D. Krasner, Sovereignty: An Institutional Perspective, *Comparative Political Studies,* Vol. 21, No. 1 (April 1988), 86).

[13] *Maîtres chez eux*, meaning masters in *their* own home, is a play on words based on the slogan *maîtres chez nous,* meaning masters in *our* own home. The latter was oft-used by Québécois with aspirations of sovereignty. The slogan was extracted from the work of historian Lionel Groulx in 1937. It gained particular prominence in the 1960s among Québécois "frustrated by conditions of English economic domination in a province where most citizens were French" (Kaplan, Maîtres Chez Nous, 416–417).

[14] Cosgrove–Jackson, New Directions, 95–96.

[15] Marie Price and Martin Lewis, The Reinvention of Cultural Geography, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers,* Vol. 83, No. 1 (March 1993), 3.

[16] Ibid., 95–96.

[17] Ibid., 95.

own culture on particular geographical areas.[18] As such, Sauer and his followers spent much of their time mapping material left behind by cultural groups which once resided in certain regions.[19] Physical artifacts like fences and cabins were used by the Berkeley School to classify cultural traditions geographically.[20] By virtue of these practices, Sauer claimed: "culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape is the result."[21]

Although embraced by scholars well into the 1990s, the Berkeley School is now widely regarded as outdated.[22] Sauer and his followers. have been accused of maintaining an "object fetish", detrimental in that it can only study past sedentary agricultural societies.[23] Research based on the teachings of the Berkeley School has therefore come to be described as relying an 'old' cultural geography.[24] Conversely, 'new' cultural geographers avoid basing their scholarship on tangible material and discernible landscapes.[25] Instead, these scholars tend to understand geography as a "sophisticated cultural construction."[26] The "symbolic qualities of landscape" (i.e. the qualities capable of molding social meanings attached to geography) have consequently become the main source of research for those espousing newer forms of cultural geography.[27] Cosgrove and Jackson, for instance, use cultural geography in order to "[give] meaning to an external world whose history has to be understood in relation to the material appropriation of land."[28] Jackson is especially interested in understanding culture as a "domain in which social relations of dominance and subordination are negotiated and resisted, where meanings are not just imposed, but contested."[29] As such, cultural geography has been found to serve scholars interested in postcolonial studies.[30] Both fields are said to have "intersected" in the past and will continue to do so in the context of this paper.[31]

'New' cultural geographers' interest in the implicit meanings which underlie geography stand in stark contrast to the explicit artifacts studied by

[18] Peter Jackson, *Maps of Meaning: An Introduction to Cultural Geography,* New York, Routledge, 2003, 13.
[19] Cosgrove–Jackson, New Directions, 96.
[20] Ibid.
[21] Sauer quote extracted from: Mario Bédard, La géographie culturelle québécoise: Rôle et objet depuis la Révolution tranquille, *Érudit,* Vol. 51, No. 143 (September 2007), 222.
[22] Price–Lewis, The Reinvention, 1–17; Cosgrove–Jackson, New Directions, 95–101.
[23] Price–Lewis, The Reinvention, 3; Cosgrove–Jackson, New Directions, 96.
[24] Price–Lewis, The Reinvention, 1–17.
[25] Ibid.; Cosgrove–Jackson, New Directions, 95–101.
[26] Cosgrove and Jackson, New Directions, 96.
[27] Ibid.
[28] Ibid., 95–96.
[29] Jackson, *Maps of Meaning,* xi.
[30] Catherine Nash, Cultural Geography: postcolonial cultural geographies, *Progress in Human Geography,* Vol. 26, No. 2 (2002), 219–230.
[31] Ibid., 219.

the Berkeley School.[32] Their research methodologies also differ.[33] According to Cosgrove and Jackson, a vast array of sources can be used to study geography when the latter is understood as a "cultural construction."[34] In fact, "methodologies which are more interpretive than strictly morphological" are said to be necessary to correctly apply cultural geography's more recent framework:

> If landscape is regarded as a cultural […] way of representing or symbolizing human surroundings, then landscapes may be studied across a variety of media and surfaces: in paint on canvas, writing on paper, images on film as well as in earth, stone, water and vegetation on the ground […] each or any of these allows us to disclose the meanings that human groups attach to areas and places and to relate those meanings to other aspects and conditions of human existence.[35]

In accordance with the above, this paper will rely on books, speeches, articles, and opinion pieces to better understand the meanings Lévesque and the PQ attached to Québec during the Quiet Revolution and how said meanings excluded notions of Indigenous territorial sovereignty within *La belle province*.

It would be a mistake to assume that this paper's application of cultural geography to Québec is at all novel. Since the province functions as a site of "dominance and subordination" between varied cultural groups (Canadians of French descent, Canadians of British descent, Indigenous persons, recent ethnic and cultural immigrants, religious communities, etc.), Québec's landscape has proven to be fertile ground for cultural geographers.[36] The Quiet Revolution was especially conducive to research rooted in the 'new' cultural geography mentioned above.[37] As Mario Bédard explains in "La géographie culturelle québécoise," this is because the previous decades did not permit Québec to develop nor to study its own cultural geography.[38] The "Great Darkness" brought about by Maurice Duplessis' conservative policies left the province burdened by financial and religious responsibilities too heavy to permit cultural self-identification – let alone the study of self-identification.[39] This all changed in the 1960s when the halls of Québec's universities began filling with students interested in studying the province's "human experience […] known to

[32] Price–Lewis, The Reinvention, 1–17; Cosgrove–Jackson, New Directions, 95–101.
[33] Price–Lewis, The Reinvention, 3–4.
[34] Cosgrove–Jackson, New Directions, 96.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Jackson, *Maps of Meaning,* xi; Bédard, La géographie culturelle québécoise, 219–242; Pierre Anctil, René Lévesque et les communautés culturelles, in: René Lévesque: *Mythes et réalités,* ed. Alexandre Stefanescu, Montréal, VLB éditeur, 2008, 178–201.
[37] Bédard, La géographie culturelle québécoise, 219–242.
[38] Ibid., 220–222.
[39] Ibid., 220–221.

be the result of culture."[40] What subsequently occurred, according to Bédard, was a "cultural mutation" that led to the "complexification of Québec's socio-territorial reality."[41] This "complexification" would culminate in a healthy amount of research dedicated to Québec's particular cultural geography.[42] Bédard's overview finds that nineteen articles directly addressing Québec's 'new' cultural geography were published throughout the Quiet Revolution.[43]

Only two of the works surveyed by Bédard are said to have considered "relations" between Québec's Indigenous communities and the province's cultural geography during the Quiet Revolution.[44] Authored by Louis-Edmond Hamelin, both partly focused on the lack of Indigenous participation in decision-making processes, planning, and development in the north.[45] Though the themes broached by Hamelin are ostensibly similar to those tackled in this paper, they do not consider the effects Lévesqe and the PQ had in forming Québec's 'new' cultural geography during the Quiet Revolution. As both works were published in the 1970s, they lacked the foresight required to understand the effects Lévesque and the PQ would have on the province's cultural geography as well as the hindsight necessary to understand the impact of the Quiet Revolution as a whole on the province. As such, this paper will not use Hamelin's work as its point of departure. Rather, it will seek to understand how Lévesque and the PQ may have affected Québec's 'new' cultural geography throughout the 1960s and 1970s. It will also aim to assess the effect of cultural geography on Indigenous populations residing in Québec, with a special focus on Indigenous territorial sovereignty.

[40] Original text: "Or, à la suite de la Révolution tranquille, la géographie québécoise a rapidement délaissé ce seul effet de lieu et s'est plutôt intéressée à l'expérience humaine, renouant par le fait même avec la *chôra*, également dit contenu culturel ou effet de culture." (Bédard, La géographie culturelle québécoise, 223).

[41] Original text: "Autant de pierres d'achoppement, avec les autres précédemment notées, de la mutation culturelle qui a eu cours lors des années 1960 afin que les Québécois redeviennent, selon la formule consacrée, « maîtres chez eux ». Autant de facteurs provoqués par un changement de valeurs ou qui ont suscité ce dernier et donc une complexification de la réalité socioterritoriale québécoise qui, en retour, a facilité la spécialisation d'une géographie universitaire et l'émergence d'une géographie culturelle." (Bédard, La géographie culturelle québécoise, 224).

[42] Bédard, La géographie culturelle québécoise, 219–242.

[43] Ibid., 227–228.

[44] Ibid.

[45] These articles were: Louis-Edmond Hamelin, Nord et Développement, *Cahiers de Géographie de Québec*, Vol. 21, No. 52 (April 1977), 53–64; Louis-Edmond Hamelin, *Nordicité Canadienne*, Montréal, Hurtubise, 1979; Bédard, La géographie culturelle québécoise, 227–228.

## Colonization in Québec as Presented by Lévesque and the PQ

The Quiet Revolution can broadly be described as the moment French-Québécois entered modernity.[46] It saw political and economic reforms instigated by Liberal Premier, Jean Lesage, take power away from the Catholic clergy and place it in the hands of the province's elected officials.[47] Alan Wong describes the period as having taken a "life of its own in Québec's national mythology" since it was then that "much of the Québécois populace was gripped by neo-nationalist fervor."[48] Although Wong's work tends to be overly critical of Québec, his assessment regarding the Quiet Revolution's "neo-nationalist fervor" rings true. David Meren has stated that the works of "neo-nationalist historians" helped trigger the revolution.[49] Guy Frégault, Michel Brunet, and Maurice Séguin based much of their research on "Third World movements dedicated to anti-imperial and anti-colonial resistance."[50] By building on people of color's experiences, they attempted to give plausibility to the idea that Québec's French-Canadians were "the victims of […] colonial authority" enacted by English-Canadians.[51] The above-mentioned historians were not the first to present French-Québécois as colonized by English-speakers and they were certainly not the last,[52] however, their ideas came to be promoted at a time when the ill-effects of colonialism were being disseminated globally thanks to the growing influence of mass media.[53] In Québec, the newspaper *Le Devoir* and the international affairs program *Point de mire* extensively covered the Algerian War during the 1950s.[54] *Point de mire*, which (appropriately enough) was hosted by René Lévesque, gained special prominence as it premiered with a one-hour special on Algeria on the eve of the Suez Crisis.[55] Meren's work argues that growing resistance to colonialism as well as the emergence of scholarship emphasizing French-speakers' own

[46] Alan Wong, The Disquieting Revolution: A Genealogy of Reason and Racism in the Québec Press, *Global Media Journal – Canadian Edition,* Vol. 4, No. 1 (2011), 146.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] David Meren, An Atmosphere of Libération: The Role of Decolonization in the France-Quebec Rapprochement of the 1960s, *The Canadian Historical Review,* Vol. 92, No. 2 (June 2011), 273.
[50] Ibid., 264, 273.
[51] Ibid., 273.
[52] Lionel Groulx claimed that Québécois were "serfs" (Kaplan, Maîtres Chez Nous, 416–417). Pierre Vallières termed the province's French-speakers "*Nègres blancs d'Amérique*" (Pierre Vallières, *Nègres blancs d'Amérique*, Paris, Cahiers Libres, 1968).
[53] Meren, An Atmosphere of Libération, 272.
[54] Ibid., 272.
[55] Ibid., 272.

colonization shaped the coming decades for Québec.[56] It situated its French population "in a global movement of resistance and revolution."[57] Lévesque would become a key revolutionary player.[58]

Once the Parti Québécois was officially formed in the late 1960s, Lévesque did not shy away from adopting talking points reminiscent of Frégault, Brunet, and Séguin's scholarship. During a heated Q&A at Scarborough College in 1968, the leader of the PQ compared Québec's sovereigntist aspirations to the strife experienced by African-Americans south of the border:

> The fact is that [French-Québécois] are a minority […] The negro happens to be a sort of minority inside the melting pot [of the United States] with a hell of a lot of problems […] this all means this: […] federal or quasi-federal or any kind of political set-up which has been organized to get people of different cultures inside one house […] are not necessarily the best possible set-up.[59]

Feeling as though a separate Québec would be the optimal "set-up" for the province's French-Canadian inhabitants, Lévesque and the PQ's ministers would continue to present the province's French-speakers as victims of colonization throughout the late 1960s and the early-to-mid-1970s. In an op-ed scribed for *La Presse* in 1969, Lévesque claimed that Québécois, "whether they like it or not, are part of a colony within Canada."[60] 1970's *La Solution* which outlined the PQ's political program, began with a short blurb asserting that the goal of nationalism in Québec was to "create a modern nation within

[56] Ibid., 275.

[57] Ibid., 278.

[58] Following an illustrious career as a journalist for Radio-Canada, René Lévesque would enter the political arena in 1960. He joined Jean Lesage's Liberal cabinet as Minister of Water Resources and was soon promoted to Minister of Natural Resources in 1961. Lévesque spent much of his time ensuring the provincial government enacted control over the province's land and waterways. He was crucial in orchestrating the nationalization of Québec's hydro energy through the creation of Hydro-Québec. Lévesque ultimately left the Liberal Party in 1966 in order to form his own party – one which would aim to see Québec gain independence from Canada (Richard Foot – Daniel Latouche, René Lévesque, *The Canadian Encyclopedia* (2015), https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/rene-levesque [accessed 8 April 2020]).

[59] See 16:30–19:00 in Lévesque, René, René Lévesque speaks with students of Scarborough College (25 March 1968), University of Toronto Archives (13 July 2016), https://youtu.be/ga-T1WT7qmE (accessed 8 April 2020).

[60] Original text: "À ce point de vue, l'indépendantisme, lui aussi, est relié à un phénomène universel: le Québec arrive à la queue de la grande vague de décolonisation qui a suivi la Deuxième Guerre mondiale. On est à la veille d'arriver trop tard si on ne se dépêche pas. On est, qu'on le veuille ou non, une colonie intérieure dans le Canada." Extracted from: Nicolas Toupin, La politique identitaire de René Lévesque: portrait d'un paradoxe, *Le Québec des Années 1950,* Vol. 24, No. 1 (Fall 2015), 106.

a territory still prey to the constraints of colonial domination."[61] The term "colonial domination" was outlined in the article "For an Independent Québec" written by Lévesque for the *Foreign Affairs* journal in 1975: "[to understand Québec one needs to understand] the British conquest of an obscure French colony some 15 years before American independence, and then run right through the stubborn survival of those 70,000 settlers and their descendants during the following two centuries."[62] Especially interesting in the above quote is Lévesque's admission that French-Canadians were "settlers" in a "colony." Such an admission certainly adds nuance to the notion that Québec's French-speakers were themselves victims of a colonial conquest. This nuance – as it relates to *those* the French colonized – does not appear to have been actively addressed by Lévesque or his party, however. In fact, the next section will demonstrate that populations which were unquestionably colonized by Québec's French settlers were often ignored by the PQ and its leader.

## Lévesque and the PQ Ignore Québec's Indigenous Populations

Allegations of English-on-French colonial rule demonstrates a certain level of mendacity emanating from the PQ between the 1960s–1970s. Awareness should have been accorded to the province's Indigenous inhabitants, themselves the victims of colonization enacted by French and British descendants prior and following the Confederation.[63] Rather than acknowledging this reality, however, Lévesque and the PQ often obfuscated concepts of indigeneity so as to present French-Québécois as the province's earliest inhabitants. *Option Québec,* a political manifesto published by the PQ in 1968, affirmed that Québécois were "the heirs of this fantastic adventure known as America, which was first almost entirely French."[64] Another op-ed written by Lévesque

[61] Original text: "Le nationalisme québécois, celui qui sert d'inspiration au programme du Parti Québécois, possède une fonctionnalité profonde qui est de restituer aux Québécois le sens d'une patrie, de leur ouvrir toutes les occasions possibles de s'affirmer sur le plan national et international, de faire une nation moderne d'un territoire encore en proie aux contraintes d'une domination coloniale. " in: René Lévesque – Jacques Parizeau, *La Solution: Le Programme du Parti Québécois présenté par René Lévesque*, Montréal, Les Éditions du Jour, 1970, 5, http://classiques.uqac.ca/collection_documents/parti_quebecois/la_solution/la_solution.pdf (accessed 14 April 2020).

[62] René Lévesque, For an Independent Quebec, *Foreign Affairs,* Vol. 54, No. 4 (July 1976), 734.

[63] See: Timeline: Colonization, *The Canadian Encyclopedia* (2016), https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/timeline/colonization-and-immigration (accessed 26 July 2020); Jennifer Henderson – Pauline Wakeham, Colonial Reckoning, National Reconciliation?: Aboriginal People and the Culture of Redress in Canada, *ESC,* Vol. 35, No. 1 (March 2009), 8–15.

[64] Original text: "Nous sommes aussi les héritiers de cette fantastique aventure que fut l'Amérique d'abord presque entièrement française et, plus encore, de l'obstination collective qui a permis d'en conserver vivante cette partie qu'on appelle le Québec." Extracted from: Toupin, La politique identitaire, 104.

for *Le Journal de Québec* in 1970, stated that the province's francophones were plunged in a context which made them an "*Indigenous* [emphasis mine] majority stuck at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder."[65] The PQ's choice to implicitly and explicitly present French-speakers as indigenous to Québec is both confusing and intriguing. At best, it demonstrates a lack of historical acuity from Lévesque and his party. At worst, it points to a political strategy dependent on the disregarding one primordial fact: Québec's territory did not originally belong to French-speakers (acknowledging this fact would naturally mean diminishing aspirations of Québécois sovereignty from Canada).[66]

The PQ became Québec's governing party in 1976.[67], While addressing a crowd of supporters following his party's election, René Lévesque emphasized his hope to give Québécois "the country of Québec" through a democratic referendum.[68] Nicholas Toupin's "Politique identitaire de René Lévesque: portrait d'un paradoxe" makes clear that Lévesque's aspirations to achieve a sovereign Québec led him to soften his rhetoric following his party's election. Lévesque began to forgo representations of English-on-French colonization and instead emphasized Québécois' distinct identity within Canada.[69] In 1977, for instance, Lévesque told the Economic Club of New York that Québécois have "a collective will to live together and maintain a national identity."[70] This "collective will" stood in stark contrast to Lévesque's previous colonial obsessions which pinned French-speakers against English-speakers. In fact, this new "collective will"

[65] Original text: "Urbanisés, nantis pour la plupart d'un gagne-pain de prolétaires à col bleu ou blanc, plongés dans un contexte de majorité indigène au bas de l'échelle socio-économique, atomisés sur tous les plans, nous sommes menacés de perdre jusqu'au souvenir de ce minimum vital de cohésion qui est l'âme d'un peuple." Extracted from: Toupin, La politique identitaire, 106.

[66] Determining exactly *why* the PQ presented French-speakers as indigenous to Québec falls outside of this paper's limited scope. However, considering the PQ's political ascension during the mid-1970s, it could be argued that it was in fact a political strategy – a winning one at that.

[67] Foot–Latouche, René Lévesque.

[68] Original portion of speech related to a democratic referendum: "Je voudrais dire aussi que je pense que mes collègues ici comme moi on est conscient du poids énorme aussi que la confiance des Québécois vient de placer sur nos épaules. Il n'y a personne qui n'est pas conscient du fait qu'il n'y a pas un homme, pas un groupe, qui peut porter ça sans jamais faire d'erreurs. Tout ce que je peux vous promettre […] du fond du coeur c'est qu'on va vous le porter ce poids-là avec tout l'énergie, toute l'honnêteté, puis avec tout l'enthousiasme qu'on va pouvoir y mettre. On va le faire […] en tenant de notre mieux tous et chacun des engagements que nous avons pris […] et on n'en oubliera pas un seul. Et je répète en particulier cet engagement central […] on espère en amitié avec nos concitoyens du Canada arriver à nous donner le pays qu'est le Québec. Ce pays du Québec viendra uniquement quand une société adulte, confiante en elle-même, l'aura approuvé par une majorité claire et démocratique dans un référendum" (see 7:10–10:15 in René Lévesque, Le 15 novembre 1976, le Parti québécois remporte les élections provinciales du Québec, *ArchivesRC* (23 March 2020), https://youtu.be/zzLLnVbF2o4 [accessed 8 April 2020]).

[69] See upcoming footnotes.

[70] Lévesque, Québec, 283–284.

may as well have included all of Québec's inhabitants, French or otherwise.[71] As Toupin's article implies, the newly elected Premiere wanted to create a more open version of *La belle province* so as not to alienate the anglophones and immigrants present within Québec's society.[72] Lévesque's *projet de construction nationale* would naturally require these groups' approval and participation.[73] Whereas Lévesque lamented English and immigrant minorities' ability to "increase their rights at the expense of [Québec's] French majority" in 1968, the elected Lévesque came to accept these minorities and their diversifying effect on the province.[74] "A Québécois is anyone who lives in Québec" wrote Lévesque in a 1977 op-ed for the *Globe and Mail*.[75] *Oui,* a book published by the PQ in 1980 in order to advocate for a sovereign Québec, affirmed that "Québécois' self-assurance is doubled by their openness to others."[76]

The claims made by Lévesque between 1976–1980, especially when contrasted to those made before the PQ's ascension to power, indicate a clear discursive shift. Whilst the PQ of the 1960s and early 1970s presented Québec's francophones as battling colonial injustices, a newly governing PQ accepted and seemingly celebrated the internal diversity brought about by Québec's anglophone and immigrant communities. Despite the PQ's obvious change in strategy, insensitivity toward Québec's Indigenous population appears to have remained: they were continuously disregarded, even when diversity was brought to the forefront by the PQ. Indeed, studies have shown that, even as the party's referendum approached during the spring of 1980, the province's Indigenous inhabitants never became a salient talking-point.[77] As such, when seeking to create a new nation state, Lévesque and the PQ perpetuated notions of Indigenous non-existence just as they had done prior to 1976. As will be argued below, these perpetuations may be responsible for creating a cultural geography estranged from the concept of Indigenous territorial sovereignty.

[71] Toupin, La politique identitaire, 106.

[72] Toupin's text emphasizes that Lévesque generally understood Québec as having a *caractère français* above all. The politician did, however (and by Toupin's own admission), present an openness to the various collectivities which inhabited Québec. As per Toupin, Lévesque's deeply rooted democratic ideals made sovereignty a tender offered to all those who inhabited the province's territory (Toupin, La politique identitaire, 106–108).

[73] Toupin, La politique identitaire, 106–108.

[74] Original text: "D'un autre côté, est-ce qu'on doit leur [les anglophones] laisser le droit de continuer indéfiniment, par assimilation, à augmenter leurs forces aux dépens de la société majoritaire que nous [les francophones] sommes?" Extracted from: Toupin, La politique identitaire, 101.

[75] Extracted from: Anctil, René Lévesque, 178–201.

[76] Original text: "À mesure que les Québécois sont devenus plus sûrs d'eux-mêmes, la continuité interne s'est doublée d'une volonté d'ouverture aux autres, plus apparente aujourd'hui que jamais dans le passé." Extracted from: Toupin, La politique identitaire, 107.

[77] André H. Caron – Chantal Mayrand – David E. Payne, L'imagerie politique à la télévision: les derniers jours de la campagne référendaire, *Canadian Journal of Political Science,* 16 (3) (1983), 483.

## Québec's Cultural Geography Following the Quiet Revolution

'New' cultural geographers like Cosgrove and Jackson understand geography as a "construction" able to mold the meanings individuals attach to certain locations.[78] Considering the manner in which the Quiet Revolution has come to be, as Wong describes, "mythologized" in Québec, it is not far fetched to claim that the discourses promoted by Lévesque and his party may have constructed a particular vision of Québec as a territory.[79] Furthermore, as Lévesque was recognized as one of the Quiet Revolution's "folk heroes," it is likely that this vision was widely embraced by the province's French-speakers, especially in the 1980s.[80] Indeed, it was in 1981 – following a failed referendum – that Lévesque and the PQ won their bid for re-election, effectively demonstrating the continued popularity of his ideas.[81] These ideas, as described in the above sections, portrayed French-Québécois as colonized and Indigenous peoples as nonexistent, would naturally come to construct a cultural geography unable to reconcile the idea of territorial sovereignty for people who did not exist and – in this discourse – were not colonized. It should therefore come as no surprise that individuals like Lucien Lessard,[82] who supported the PQ's endeavors, would perceive Québec's Indigenous communities as undeserving of sovereignty within Québec's own territory.

The interpretive flexibility of cultural geography makes it difficult, if not impossible, to prove the above claims. However, research performed by others can be used to substantiate the notion that the PQ and its leader shaped Québec's cultural geography. For example, Amaris Rose and Anne Gilbert's 2005 review of cultural geography in Québec and Canada makes it clear that many of the province's French-speakers directly correlate their "heritage" with the territory on which they reside.[83] This is because territory is typically associated with the cultural "permanence" of those who occupy it.[84] The territory of Québec has therefore come to be understood as the space where "a certain way of life is articulated [and] where a precious heritage is protected."[85] Though Rose

[78] Cosgrove – Jackson, New Directions, 96.
[79] Wong, The Disquieting Revolution, 146.
[80] The Encyclopedia Britannica describes René Lévesque as a "folk hero for his spirited defense of [Québec] nationalism" ("René Lévesque: Premier of Quebec," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 28 October 2019, https://www.britannica.com/biography/Rene-Levesque [accessed 8 April 2020)].
[81] René Lévesque, *Encyclopedia Britannica*.
[82] Lucien Lessard was the PQ's Minister of Fisheries during the Listuguj raids described in this paper's introduction. His comments regarding Indigenous sovereignty are what spurred the preceding pages.
[83] Damaris Rose and Anne Gilbert, Glimpses of social and cultural geography in Canada and Québec at the turn of the millennium, *Social and Cultural Geography,* Vol. 6, No. 2 (2005), 274.
[84] Ibid., 273.
[85] Ibid., 274.

and Gilbert make no mention of Lévesque or the PQ, it is evident that the "heritage" they speak of emerged during the Quiet Revolution. As mentioned in the section on cultural geography, it was in the 1960s that historians and geographers began actively studying French-Canadian culture and its "socio-territorial reality."[86] It would be naive to think that the discourses employed by Lévesque and the PQ had no effect on the manner in which these scholars, and Québec's French-speakers more generally, came to understand their territory and the heritage it entailed. Accordingly, supporters of the PQ were likely unable to come to terms with the idea that Indigenous communities could demand territorial sovereignty in a space which signified French-Québécois' heritage. This, in essence, could explain why the events depicted in *Incident at Restigouche* unfolded the way they did.

These findings are likely to invite criticism. Jacques-Yvan Morin, the PQ's Vice Prime Minister of Québec between 1976 and 1984, would vehemently disagree with this paper's findings.[87] According to a 1992 essay penned by Morin, it was during the "fertile years of the Quiet Revolution" that René Lévesque began understanding the importance of according Indigenous persons certain rights. Morin's essay supports this claim by highlighting how, once in power, Lévesque never attempted to diminish the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement (JBANQA). The latter, which gave the Cree and Inuit of Northern Québec special governing rights over their resources and communities in response to the creation of hydro dams, was initiated by the PQ's preceding Liberal government in 1975.[88] As per Morin, Lévesque's statesmanship led him not only to respect the agreement, but also to create the *Secrétariat des activités gouvernementales en milieu amérindien et inuit*. The secretariat would ultimately be instrumentalized to ensure the implementation of JBANQA. To Morin, these ostensible acts of goodwill prove that Lévesque strove to create a "climate of trust and of mutual respect" between French-speaking sovereigntists and Indigenous communities. If these claims were true, they would indeed undermine the arguments presented in the last twelve pages. However, Morin's biases are evident and serve to

[86] Bédard, La géographie culturelle québécoise, 224.

[87] The entirety of the information in this paragraph (unless otherwise specified) has been taken from: Jacques-Yvan Morin, René Lévesque et les droits fondamentaux des Autochtones du Québec, *Fondation René Lévesque*, 1992, https://fondationrene-levesque.org/rene-levesque/ecrits-sur-rene-levesque/jacques-yvan-morin-rene-levesque-et-les-droits-fondamentaux-des-autochtones-du-quebec/ (accessed 8 April 2020).

[88] Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement and the Northeastern Quebec Agreement, Report QS-Q036-009-BB-A1, Ottawa, 2009, 5, https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ/STAGING/texte-text/jb0507_1100100030831_eng.pdf (accessed 8 April 2020).

emphasize the manner in which the cultural geography conveyed by Lévesque during the Quiet Revolution disenfranchised Indigenous populations from their territorial sovereignty.

Missing in Morin's assessment is the admission that the JBANQA led (if not forced) the Cree and Inuit of Northern Québec to give up their territorial interests for other rights.[89] These communities received large sums of money in order to ensure they would surrender authority over swaths of the province's northern territory.[90] In "A Watershed of Words," Hans M. Carlson explains that these agreements served to transform the cultural geography of the region's Cree and Inuit by "alter[ing] their ability to define the cultural/environmental context that had made sense of their unique relationship with [the area] for thousands of years."[91] Whereas these communities were once able to "define that land exclusively within their own language and [...] culture," the JBANQA integrated the region within French-speakers' own cultural geography.[92] Indeed, as Carlson explains, the JBANQA meant only white French-Québécois could subsequently "understand the land, in a specifically scientific way, in order to make [hydro] dams possible."[93] As such, the JBANQA served to reaffirm French-Québécois' complete ownership of the province's territory – a territory which, as Rose and Gilbert note, French-speakers perceive as representative of their particular heritage.[94] Not only does this disprove Morin's "mutual respect" thesis, it also lends credence to this paper's findings.[95] Lévesque's upholding of the JBANQA implies that he definitely had a hand in constructing the manner in which Québec's territory was understood following the Quiet Revolution: a space belonging to French-Québécois. It is no wonder the mere idea of Indigenous territorial sovereignty was deemed unreasonable by the PQ in the 1980s. It was an idea which was simply not congruent with the French-centric cultural geography molded by Lévesque and his party during the Quiet Revolution.

## Conclusion

Why, in the context of the Québec of the 1980s, was the idea of Indigenous territorial sovereignty so hard for sovereigntists to swallow? Because the cultural geography shaped by Lévesque and the PQ during the Quiet Revolution

89 See: Hans M. Carlson, A Watershed of Words: Litigating and Negotiating Nature in Eastern James Bay, 1971–1975, *The Canadian Historical Review,* Vol. 85, No. 1 (March 2004), 63–84.
90 Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, James Bay, 5.
91 Ibid., 63–64.
92 Ibid., 64.
93 Ibid., 68.
94 Rose and Gilbert, Glimpses, 274.
95 Morin, René Lévesque.

could not allow non-French-Québécois to display acts of sovereignty on a territory which – according to the messages conveyed by the PQ – did not belong to them.

The above conclusion is rich in implications. Most prominently, it indicates that while Québécois' cultural identity crystalized during the Quiet Revolution, any semblance of Indigenous sovereignty was inversely quashed at the hands of the province's policy makers. Of course, it would be disingenuous to maintain that these circumstances were shaped solely by the PQ and its leader. Previous governments also had a hand in divesting territorial sovereignty from Québec's Indigenous population during the Quiet Revolution. School manuals sanctioned by the government of Québec during the mid-1960s, for instance, propagated the view that Indigenous populations were undeserving of the province's territory due to the former's misuse of the latter.[96] Evidently, the *territorialité Québécoise* resulting from the Quiet Revolution was not solely shaped by Lévesque and the PQ. It should be emphasized, however, that, even if dreadfully colonialist, the above-described school manuals at the very least recognized the existence of distinct Indigenous communities within the province of Québec. Once formed, the PQ appears to have largely forsaken such recognitions, instead focusing on French-Québécois' inextricable link to a territory supposedly unmarked by pre-French indigeneity. As it happens, the discourses used to promote this ideology were diametrically opposed to Indigenous self-determination.[97] As stated by Daniel Salée in "Identities in Conflict," self-determination requires an "adequate territorial base" able to supplement institutional autonomy.[98] The cultural geography which resulted from the Quiet Revolution could not permit such a development for Indigenous communities in the 1980s. To carve Québec's territory would have been tantamount, in the words of Salée, to "carving up the identity of Quebecers [themselves]" since it would have served to deconstruct the "generous, proud, self-assured and virtuous picture" Québec's French-speakers had built for themselves over the years.[99] This indicates that the cultural achievements of the1960s and 1970s, as positive as they may have been for Québec's French population, occurred to

[96] Research conducted by Sylvie Vincent and Bernard Anctil found that the above-mentioned manuals forwarded the view that "comme les Amérindiens faisaient de la terre du Québec un usage qui s'accorde mal avec les nouveaux idéaux du développement économique, il fallait leur prendre cette terre pour en faire quelque chose de valable et les reléguer à l'arrière-plan, où ils deviennent les figurants de notre histoire" (Sylvie Vincent – Bernard Arcand, *L'image de l'Amérindien dans les manuels scolaires du Québec ou Comment le Québécois ne sont pas des sauvages*, Montréal, Hurtubise, 1979, 379).

[97] Daniel Salée, Identities in Conflict: The Aboriginal Question and the politics of recognition in Quebec, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (1995), 277–314.

[98] Ibid., 279.

[99] Ibid., 282, 295.

the detriment of its Indigenous population. The Quiet Revolution thus bore a cultural geography marked by the continuation of an inequality present since French settlers first laid claim to North American soil.[100]

Although the arguments outlined in this paper may appear self-evident, no research connecting Lévesque, the cultural geography of the Quiet Revolution, and Indigenous territorial sovereignty in Québec has been published to date. As such, this paper's findings may serve as a steppingstone for further work on this connection. It would be especially intriguing to examine if these themes are applicable to other instances of territorial self-determination among Indigenous communities located in Québec. The Oka Crisis, for instance, would make a good subject of examination if this paper's findings were to cover the context of the 1990s. It is also worth investigating whether the cultural geography created during the Quiet Revolution was employed by members of the PQ and the Bloc Québécois in their bid to achieve sovereignty in 1995. Moreover, with regard to the referenda, it is possible that the province's cultural geography has morphed into something new, mirrored by Québécois' decreasing interest in separating from Canada.[101] Determining how, why, and the effects this change has had on the idea of Indigenous territorial sovereignty would be worthwhile. Performing this type of research is important because it deepens our understanding of the relationship between colonized and colonizer.[102] Indeed, cultural geography can give us clues as to the manner in which groups subordinate and/or are subordinated in ways both explicit and implicit.[103] As the milieu in which Québec's Indigenous communities reside is especially convoluted (they are a historically colonized minority living in a French-majority province ensconced in an English-majority country), pursuing research based on the tenets of cultural geography may prove to be especially informative.

Because Alanis Obomsawin's *Incident at Restigouche* introduced the research question which launched the preceding pages, giving this documentary filmmaker the last word is only fittting. In a 2018 interview held as part of

[100] Although this paper has been solely focused on Québec during the Quiet Revolution, it would be a mistake to assume that this particular province harbors more intolerance towards Indigenous populations than the rest of Canada. In the words of Salée: "Quebecers are neither better nor worse than most other non-Aboriginal majorities across Canada" (Salée, Identities in Conflict, 303–304). What is particularly interesting about Québec (and, in fact, what has prompted this paper's research) is the manner in which minority founding peoples interact in their attempts to self-actualize within Canada.

[101] Les Perreux of *The Globe and Mail* reported in 2018 that, for the first time in close to forty years, sovereignty was "off the table" for Quebec's politicians – including members of the PQ. The province's economy appeared to be at the top of the agenda, with "sovereignty on the back-burner" (Les Perreux, After 40 Years, Sovereignty is off the Table in Quebec Election, *The Globe and Mail* (20 August 2018), https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-independence-not-a-major-defining-issue-in-quebec-election-campaign/ [accessed 8 April 2020]).

[102] Cosgrove–Jackson, New Directions, 95–96; Jackson, *Maps of Meaning*, xi; Nash, Cultural Geography, 219.

[103] Ibid.

the Toronto International Film Festival, Obomsawin was asked to relate her experience interviewing PQ minister Lucien Lessard following his comments on Indigenous sovereignty.[104] She explained that despite the pushback Lessard received from her, the minister told Obomsawin's film crew that he understood her conviction as she was "defending her people."[105] This empathy led Obomsawin to subsequently "like him."[106] She recounted: "I started thinking [of myself] in his role and I could almost understand what he was talking about […] he is [also] honest to what he believes [so] I kind of respected him."[107] The mutual sympathy between Obomsawin and Lessard is encouraging in that it demonstrates that Québec's French and Indigenous inhabitants can respect each other even at times of disagreement. Whether or not Indigenous Peoples' territorial sovereignty can be handled in a similar manner remains to be seen. What is certain, however, is that the relationship between French-Québécois and the province's Indigenous communities is a subtle one, but one which has and will continue to evolve – hopefully for the better.

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[104] The quotes listed below have been taken from the following interview: Alanis Obomsawin – Jesse Wente, In Conversation With Indigenous Icon Alanis Obomsawin, TIFF 2018, *TIFF Talks* (17 January 2018), https://youtu.be/cUBmX9KDzuo (accessed 8 April 2020).

[105] See 40:40-41:20 in Obomsawin – Wente, In Conversation With.

[106] Ibid.

[107] See 40:50–42:10 in Obomsawin – Wente, In Conversation With.

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# SECOND CONTACT: PATTERNS OF "SECOND ENCOUNTERS" WITH THE INUIT IN EARLY MODERNITY

## An Anthropological Analysis of the Cases of Henry Hudson and William Baffin

Miklós Vassányi[1]

Abstract

*On the basis of case studies concerning Henry Hudson and William Baffin, this paper tries to find some general rationale for events that used to take place during second encounters between Canadian Aboriginals and European explorers in the early 17th century. Our attention will focus on the barter-and-massacre case reported by a survivor of Henry Hudson's fourth voyage (1610–11) and on the kidnapping-and-murder case partially witnessed by William Baffin on his first voyage (1612) to today's Baffin Bay. Putting ourselves into the shoes of Second Nations, we shall attempt to find out what they might experience upon the intrusion of newcomers into Aboriginal lands and what might cause the aggressive behaviour of both parties in these conflicts, as we endeavour to reconstruct the broader moral and anthropological context of the tragical events that often happened between explorers and the Inuit who had already met alien races before.*

On the basis of two case studies concerning Henry Hudson (*cca* 1565–1611), and William Baffin (*cca* 1584–1622), respectively, this paper looks into the moral and rational motivation behind tragical events that more often than not took place during "second encounters" between Greenland and Hudson Bay Inuit on the one hand, and European explorers on the other, in the early 17th century. By applying a term "second encounter" or "second contact" I am suggesting that there may be a difference between how a group of Aboriginal people experience an encounter with a race they have never seen before – in this case, European explorers – and how they meet such companies afterwards, when on the basis of previous experience they may already know what to expect and may form plans to fend off an essentially incalculable

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situation. This is also to say that my interest here goes first and foremost to the anthropological rather than the historical facet of such incidents as I aim to better understand why sheer violence so frequently erupted, often with clear indications of a set-up, or preliminary planning on one side or the other. We shall focus on the barter-and-massacre case reported by a survivor of Captain Henry Hudson's fourth voyage (1610–1611) and on the kidnapping-and-murder case partially witnessed by young man William Baffin, on his first voyage to the West-Greenlandic coasts of Baffin Bay (1612), when he served captain James Hall as a navigator. Putting ourselves into the shoes of the *Kalaallit* and the *Inuktitut*, we shall attempt to find out what they may have experienced upon the intrusion of European newcomers into Aboriginal lands, and what may have triggered the aggressive behaviour of both parties in these conflicts. Finally, we are going to analyze the happenings in order to see what hidden agendas of habitat protection or, respectively, imperial geopolitical strategies predestined the involved peoples to violence.

## The Loss of the Greenland Sailing Routes for the Danes in the 15th and 16th Centuries

The historical context of the events we are looking into has been extensively reconstructed, especially by Finn Gad,[2] Samuel E. Morison,[3] and Wendell H. Oswalt.[4] However, in order to see the religious, political and economic commitments and motivations behind the voyages Baffin's captain, James Hall, undertook in Danish service to West Greenland towards the close of the 16th and in the early 17th centuries, we must go back to the beginning of the 15th century when regular communication by sea with the Greenland Normann colony first stalled before – according to written evidence – it ceased completely around 1406 or 1410 at the latest, with the consequence that the memory of the sailing routes from Norway to Greenland gradually sank into oblivion. As the distinguished historian of Greenland, F. Gad. put it, "it is evident in the source material on the Greenland navigation towards the end of the fourteenth century and well into the fifteenth century that no single ship intentionally sailed for Greenland. We are only told of ships that were blown off different courses before reaching Greenland."[5] This

[2] Finn Gad, *The History of Greenland. Earliest Times to 1700*, trans. Ernst Dupont, London, C. Hurst and Co., 1970. Original Danish edition: *Grønlands Historie I: Indtil 1700*, København, Nyt Nordisk Forlag, 1967.

[3] Samuel Eliot Morison, *The European Discovery of America. The Northern Voyages AD 500–1600*, Vol. 1, New York, Oxford University, 1971.

[4] Wendell H. Oswalt, *Eskimos and Explorers*, Lincoln and London, University of Nebraska, 1999, First edition: Novato (CA), Chandler and Sharp Publishers, 1979.

[5] Gad, *History of Greenland*, 151.

information may be culled from several historical documents, with two independent authoritative source groups standing out: first, the Old Icelandic Annals (*Islandske annaler*), especially the *Lögmanns-annáll*;[6] second, curial writings, especially the papal breve issued by Alexander VI, in 1492, on the occasion of vesting a Martin Knudssøn ("Mathias Gadensis") with the Greenland bishopric of Garðar in the area of present-day Nuuk.

It has been known for centuries that the Icelandic Annals kept records of the maritime trade between Iceland, Norway, Greenland and even, occasionally, Markland (that is, the Labrador coastline) and Vínland (Newfoundland). As historical evidence, the ten annals we know are surprisingly exact in terms of dating. In this regard, they are doubly oriented insofar as they rely on both political and ecclesiastic history for frames of chronological reference. As far as Greenland is concerned, the kind of information that most frequently recurs in them concerns the nomination, departure, return, death, etc. of the actual Garðar bishop but we can also find some facts and figures related to trade and shipping here. To believe the *Annales regii* (conserved in Det Kongelige Bibliotek, Copenhagen), regular exchange of goods and people between Iceland and Greenland continued until 1315; the *Skálholts-Annaler* (Árni Magnússon Institute, Reykjavík) state 1353, the fragmentary *Annalbrudstykke fra Skálholt* 1369 (Á. Magnússon Institute), while the *Lögmanns-annáll* (Á. Magnússon Institute) indicates 1406 or 1410 as a *terminus ante quem*. This time period of continued contact with Greenland constituted later, in the time of the Kalmar Union and Norway's ensuing union with the Kingdom of Denmark, the legal basis grounding the Danish-Norwegian crown's claim to Greenland – a claim that has never been seriously questioned.

Since most Icelandic yearbooks were not kept after the turn of the 14th–15th centuries or stopped long before that (the one great exception being the *Gottskalks Annaler*, which carried on until 1578),[7] the insight we have gained so far is still inadequate and further evidence is necessary to confirm that Denmark lost all communication with Greenland in the early 15th century. At this point, we may want to turn to the often-cited papal deed of donation published by Louis Bobé as the first document of the *Diplomatarium Groenlandicum*. In this Latin breve, dated 1492, Pope Alexander VI appoints Martin Knudssøn (Mathias Gadensis OSB) to the Garðar episcopal see in Greenland.[8] The introduction of the letter provides interesting insight into

[6] Gustav Storm (ed.): *Islandske Annaler indtil 1578*, Christiania, Grondahl & Sons, 1888.

[7] The annals were no longer kept after the following respective dates: *Oddveria Annall*: 1427; *Flatøbogens Annaler*: 1394; *Lögmanns-annáll*: 1430; *Skálholts-Annaler*: 1356; *Annales regii*: 1341; *Annales vetustissimi*: 1314; *Henrik Høyers Annaler*: 1310; *Annales Reseniani*: 1295.

[8] Knudssøn never left Germany for Greenland and it appears that ultimately, he converted to Lutheranism ("dessen Vorfahr aber Mathias Gadensis selbst Evangelisch geworden war," *Caspar Abels Stiffts- Stadt- und Landchronick Des jetzigen Fuerstenthums Halberstadt*, Bernburg, Ch. G. Coerner, 1754, 460). His Catholic titles – *episcopus Gadensis, Archiepiscopi*

how Greenland was perceived from the papal court and Italy in general at the close of the 15th century. As the text states, the Garðar church "is situated at the end of the world, in Greenland" ("in fine mundi sita in terra Gronlandie"), where people go almost starving "because of the lack of bread, wine and oil" ("ob defectum panis, vini et olei"). For us, however, the chief point is the statement that "since navigation has become extremely rare to that land on account of the thorough congelation of the waters, it is believed that no ship has made landfall there in the past eighty years" ("propter rarissimas navigationes ad dictam terram, causantibus intentissimis aquarum congelationibus, fieri solitas, navis aliqua ab octuaginta annis non creditur applicuisse").[9] This statement suggests 1410 as the year in which Greenland navigation was believed to have ceased, and even if this dating derives from "hearsay and rumour" on the part of the curia (as F. Gad suggests),[10] it is in concord with what can be extracted from the Old Icelandic Annals.

As regards later times, then, a number of Danish royal documents point to the fact that throughout the 16th century, the Danish-Norwegian government made repeated and strenuous efforts to identify the Greenland sailing routes, and to sail them, chiefly for religious, economic, and political reasons. The letter King Frederic II sent to *lensmand* (provincial governor) Christopher Walkenborg in November 1579 is one of a series of texts substantiating this claim. Here, the sovereign asks his regional representative to rig out two ships for English navigator Jacob Alday who had just returned from a semi-successful journey on which "he approached Greenland and sighted it but could not make landfall because of the ice" ("hand berether att haffue weritt wnder landitt och siett thett, och dog for isz icke haffuer kund kommitt paa landit").[11] The fact that this missive was sent to the provincial governor in Bergen implies that this city was still regarded as a convenient springboard for early modern cruising routes to Greenland. The letter further specifies that Captain Alday has been royally commissioned to sail to Greenland early

*Magdeburgensis Vicarius* – are enumerated at the head of a letter of dedication published by Valentin Ernst Löscher (*Unschuldige Nachrichten von Alten und Neuen Theologischen Sachen, Buechern, Uhrkunden, Controversien, Veraenderungen, Anmerckungen, Vorschlaegen, u. d. g. … Auff das Jahr 1712,* Leipzig, Johann Friedrich Braun, 740–742). His name also appears in an inscription on a chalice in the treasury of the Halberstadt Cathedral: "frater mathias / indignus episcopus gadensis / Anno domini 1501." http://www.inschriften.net/halberstadt-dom/inschrift/nr/di075-0157.html#content, Knudssøn's later career is described in detail by Gad, *History of Greenland*, 180–181.

[9] All citations from Louis Bobé (ed.): *Diplomatarium Groenlandicum 1492–1814. Aktstykker og breve til oplysning om Grønlands besejling, kolonisation og missionering*, København, C.A. Reitzels Forlag, 1936, 3.

[10] "No written or verbal source for the facts stated in the letter is revealed, and no notes or letters have come to light to account for the curia's knowledge.We must assume an oral source, based on hearsay and rumour." (Gad, *History of Greenland*, 181.)

[11] Bobé (ed.), *Diplomatarium Groenlandicum*, 8–9, document № 10.

the next year with God's help in two ships under Danish flag.[12] Several other documents (№ 2-3, 5-9, 11-12, 14-16) of Bobé's *Diplomatarium Gronlandicum* support the claim that during the 16th century, Greenland was thought of by the Danes as a forlorn land to be coveted because, first and foremost, it probably still harboured the descendants of early Norwegian expatriates who were potential Danish subjects; but also on account of its riches (think especially of whales and fish). Once their own, Greenland has now become inaccessible by any means, despite tenaciously reiterated vigorous efforts of the Danish rulers, especially Frederic II. In a Latin missive directed to Elizabeth I, Queen of England in August 1582, Frederic even begged permission to hire the renowned Captain Martin Frobisher, English subject and experienced sailor to Northeast America, for one or two years, clearly with a view to employing him in re-discovering Greenland.[13]

## British Advances in the Northwest Atlantic in the 16th Century

The Danish quest ran parallel with the major advances, especially those made by the English in the North Atlantic in the last quarter of the 16th century. Greenland in itself, however, was tangential to English interests in this region, which were more oriented towards the exploration of a northwest passage to Cathay (China) and to the exploitation by fishing, and colonization, of Newfoundland, under Queen Elizabeth I. Nevertheless, the earliest English explorer here, Martin Frobisher had already sailed, in 1576, into what later would be called Baffin Bay, after coasting southern Greenland.[14] By virtue of Frobisher's (1577–1578) and John Davis's (1585–1587) ensuing journeys, and by the marked English interest in a Northwest Passage and presence in Newfoundland – as attested by authors like Sir Humphrey Gilbert (*A discourse of a discoverie for a new passage to Cataia,* 1576),[15] Sir Anthony Parkhurst (*A letter to M. Richard Hakluyt of the Middle Temple,* 1578),[16] Edward Hayes (*A report of the voyage and successe thereof, attempted in the yeere of*

[12] Ibid. As F. Gad points out, Captain Alday's second Greenland sailing came to nought (Gad, *History of Greenland*, 195).

[13] Bobé (ed.), *Diplomatarium Groenlandicum*, 11, document № 13, dated 15 August 1582.

[14] Vilhjalmur Stefánsson (ed.), *The Three Voyages of Martin Frobisher in Search of a Passage to Cathay and India by the North-west, A.D. 1576–8*, 2 vols., London, The Argonaut, 1938; Oswalt, *Eskimos and Explorers*, 26.

[15] David Beers Quinn, *The Voyages and Colonising Enterprises of Sir Humphrey Gilbert*, Vol. 1, London, Printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1940, 129–164.

[16] A letter to M. Richard Hakluyt of the Middle Temple, conteining a report of the true state and comodities of Newfoundland, by M. Anthonie Parkhurst Gentleman, in Richard Hakluyt (ed.), *The Principal Navigations, Voyages, Traffiques, and Discoveries of the English Nation*, Vol. 12 (America: Part I), Edinburgh, E. & G. Goldsmid, 1889, 299–305.

*our Lord 1583 by sir Humfrey Gilbert knight*, 1586),[17] Captain John Mason (*A briefe discourse of the New-Found-Land with the situation, temperature, and commodities thereof,* 1620)[18] and Sir Richard Whitbourne (*A discourse and discovery of Newfoundland,* 1620)[19] – it was becoming apparent that the English would soon gain the upper hand in the Greenland navigation as well.

Davis, who had also been to Newfoundland before, went on a Northwest-Atlantic expedition two years after Sir Humphrey Gilbert, and hit the Greenland coast before exploring Cumberland Sound at Baffin Island and then turning back home. In 1578, on his third journey to these areas, he sailed through Davis Strait, entered what is today known as Baffin Bay, coasted along western Greenland to reach what was probably Disko Island and made landfall at present-day Nuuk, meeting several Eskimos, decades before the Danes arrived at the south coast of Greenland.[20] Gilbert's *Discourse* is one sustained chain of reasoning for the existence of a Northwest Passage, and for the several advantages of sailing it, and though it includes common misconceptions about the geographical position of Greenland, it nevertheless reveals an overwhelming interest in pushing forward as far into the northwest as is possible. Parkhurst's *Letter to Richard Hakluyt* first exhibits sweeping religious zeal for the redemption of the Newfoundland settlers but soon turns to the charms of the country whose main economic interest lies with fishing. As a busy explorer of the recesses of the island, Parkhurst gives a vivid description of the large-scale international fishing industry that is carried out by the Spaniards, French, British and Portuguese off coast, while whale is hunted for the oil by the "Biscayans" or Basques. The bottom line is that he clearly recommends the settling and fortification of the country for its riches and even the reconnaissance of the St Lawrence river. Hayes's graphic account, entitled *A report of the voyage and successe thereof* of Humphrey Gilbert's miscarried Newfoundland expedition also makes it crystal clear that the island was as good as inhabited by European seasonal fishermen by 1583,[21]

[17] Edward Hayes, A report of the voyage and successe thereof, attempted in the yeere of our Lord 1583 by sir Humfrey Gilbert knight, in Quinn (ed.), *Voyages of Gilbert*, Vol. 2, 385–423.

[18] John Mason, *A briefe discourse of the Nevv-found-land with the situation, temperature, and commodities thereof, inciting our nation to goe forward in that hopefull plantation begunne*, Edinburgh: Printed by Andro Hart, 1620.

[19] Captaine Richard Whitbourne of Exmouth, *A Discovrse and Discovery of Nevv-fovnd-land: with many reasons to prooue how worthy and beneficiall a Plantation may there be made, after a far better manner than now it is*, London, Felix Kyngston for William Barret, 1622.

[20] Albert Hastings Markham (ed.), *The Voyages and Works of John Davis the Navigator*, London, The Hakluyt Society, 1880; Oswalt, *Eskimos and Explorers*, 37–41; Gad, *History of Greenland*, 199–201; Morison, *European Discovery of America*, 583–616.

[21] "Before we come to Newfound land about 50 leagues on this side, we passe the banke, which are high grounds rising within the sea and under water, yet deepe enough and without danger, being commonly not lesse than 25 and 30 fadome water upon them… The Portugals, and French chiefly, have a notable trade of fishing upon this banke, where are sometimes an hundred or more sailes of ships: who commonly beginne the fishing in Apriell, and have

while a few "savages" would be seen only in the northern parts of it.[22] Mason's *Briefe discourse of the New-Found-Land* supports this claim, and confirms Parkhurst's thesis about the perfect suitability of the soil for growing wheat, rye, oats and herbs etc. "But of all," he adds ingenuously, "the most admirable is the Sea, so diuersified with seuerall sorts of Fishes abounding therein, the consideration whereof is readie to swallow vp and drowne my senses not being able to comprehend or expresse the riches therof."[23] Whitbourne, in his relatively late *Discourse and discovery of Newfoundland*,[24] insists on the "naturall fruitfulness of the earth," and while he enlarges on the "superstitious ignorance" of the Aboriginals he still appreciates "their ingenuous and subtile dispositions."[25] In the main, however, he further presses on the urgent need to "plant seuerall Colonies of his Maiesties subiects in that Country,"[26] before "some other Prince will step in, and vndertake the same."[27]

Piecing together the ideas these authors broached, it is safe to say that the urgency with which they spurred the actual monarch to take possession was due to their perception that in the North-Atlantic geopolitical chess game, time was just ripe for setting foot in a territory they considered a *terra nullius*. In this assessment, Aboriginals were perceived as no more than a faceless, marginal phenomenon, not even viewed as enemies or a significant obstacle to colonization but often thought of as a not yet fully human crowd that had to be educated by the colonizers. It strikes the reader how the timber, cod, penguins, and even bears of Newfoundland receive a disproportionately larger amount of attention than its human inhabitants in the above-cited descriptions. Which invites the remark that this island – and much of North America – was seen as a manless place waiting to be humanized. But that the Indigenous peoples were just as human and just as discerning as the new arrivals was proved by, among other things, what happened to Hudson's crew.

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ended by July. That fish is large, alwayes wet, having no land neere to dry, and is called Corre fish. During the time of fishing, a man shall know without sounding when he is upon the banke, by the incredible multitude of sea foule hovering over the same, to prey upon the offalles and garbish of fish throwen out by fishermen, and floting upon the sea." (Hayes, A report of the voyage, in Quinn [ed.], *Voyages of Gilbert*, Vol. 2, 397–398.)

22 "In the South parts we found no inhabitants, which by all likelihood have abandoned those coastes, the same being so much frequented by Christians: but in the north are savages altogether harmelesse." (Ibid., 406.)

23 Unnumbered page towards the middle of the text.

24 In the title and the text alike, "discovery" may also mean literally "revelation" or "true description."

25 Whitbourne, *Discourse and Discovery*, first text part, 4–5 (pagination starts afresh in all three text parts of the book).

26 Ibid., second text part, entitled "A Discovrse Containing a Loving Invitation," 2. Whitbourne adds on page 14 of the first text part that "it doth plainly appeare, that it is a Country not only habitable and lying open, ready to receiue the first commers; but also for the goodnesse thereof, worthy to be embraced, and made the habitation of Christians."

27 Ibid., first text part, 17.

## Setting a Snare for Henry Hudson's Mutinous Crew

The narrative of Captain Hudson's fourth journey (April 1610 – June 1611), which cost him his life because of a mutiny of the crew, is historically well known but an anthropological analysis of the Inuit attack the mutinous crew eventually suffered may still be missing.[28] This, however, may be based only on the one surviving document produced by an eyewitness, the self-justifying diary of "a most mysterious individual […], bearing the unlikely name of Abacuck Prickett, who was the sponsors' representative and who was also a man of singular parts."[29] If we believe this diary, the crew went hungry, because of the insufficiency of the provisions, already in November 1610, when their ship froze in in Hudson Bay. At this point, as Prickett points out, "the only hope they had to bring them home" was a return, come spring, "to the capes where the fowl bred," to resupply.[30] When the ice began to break, they were already eating up whatever was found edible in the bleak land and "had any shew of substance in them," including the moss of the ground and the frogs.

About this time an Inuk approached the ship and engaged in barter trade with the Captain.[31] The ease with which this happened indicates that this practice was common in the Labrador Inuit culture. As the Inuk never returned, the Captain now set out to reconnoitre and come into contact with "the people" in order to barter for meat. However, as an ill omen, the Inuit whose presence was conspicuous in the area backed off and eschewed trading.[32] In the wake of the Captain's foundered mission, tension was building up between opinion leaders

[28] G.M. Asher (ed.), *Henry Hudson the Navigator*. The Original Documents in which his Career is Recorded, Collected, Partly Translated, and Annotated, with an Introduction, London, Printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1809; Oswalt, *Eskimos and Explorers*, 52–54.

[29] Farley Mowat, *Ordeal by Ice: The Search for the Northwest Passage*, Toronto, McClelland & Stewart, 1973, 79. (Vol. 1 of the *Top of the World* trilogy.)

[30] A Larger Discourse of the Same Voyage, Written by Abacuck Prickett, in Asher (ed.), *Henry Hudson*, 110–111.

[31] "About this time, when the Ice began to breake out of the Bayes, there came a Sauage to our Ship, as it were to see and to bee seene, being the first that we had seene in all this time: whom our Master intreated well, and made much of him… To this Sauage our Master gaue a Knife, a Looking-glasse, and Buttons, who receiued them thankefully, and made signes that after hee had slept hee would come againe, which hee did. When hee came, hee brought with him a Sled, which hee drew after him, and vpon it two Deeres skinnes, and two Beauer skinnes. Hee had a scrip vnder his arme, out of which hee drew those things which the Master had giuen him. Hee tooke the Knife and laid it vpon one of the Beauer skinnes, and his Glasses and Buttons vpon the other, and so gaue them to the Master, who receiued them; and the Sauage tooke those things which the Master had giuen him, and put them vp into his scrip againe. Then the Master shewed him an Hatchet, for which hee would haue giuen the Master one of his Deere skinnes, but our Master would haue them both, and so hee had, although not willingly. After many signes of people to the North, and to the South, and that after so many sleepes he would come againe, he went his way, but neuer came more." (Ibid., 114–115.)

[32] "For he could by no meanes meete with the people, although they were neere them, yet they would set the woods on fire in his sight." (Ibid., 115.)

of the crew and Hudson, who was, in the event, unable to come to terms with them. As a last resort, in June 1611, he was bundled into a shallop together with his young son and the "sicke men" and set adrift in James Bay by the mutineers, who were now facing the tremendous challenge of having to survive and find the way home without the Captain (and upon return home, stand trial for mutiny). While Hudson and those around him were not heard of anymore and certainly died of hunger in distress, the rest of the crew, a company starved almost to death, also seemed doomed. With stocks running out, they were reduced to eating chiefly seaweed ("cockle grasse") and some wild fowl, and it was at this point, towards the end of July, that the Nunavik Inuit entered the picture again, as the coxless ship laid anchor off the Saaqqayaaq-Qikirtasiit (Digges Islands) at the northwestern tip of Ungava Peninsula.

This time, in what clearly seems a preconceived plan, the Inuit approach the English and first gain their confidence, offering help in locating the edible birds. Visiting the breeding place together, the two groups exchange hostages[33] – a practice that is also known, for instance, from John Smith's contemporary *True Relation of Virginia* (1608).[34] During this encounter, the crew even ask for and receive instruction in the technology by which the Aboriginals hunt the fowl down.[35] Some barter trade is also made, accompanied by overdone signs of joy like dancing and singing – a practice applied *bona fide* by John Davis in West Greenland in 1585, as well as by the Labrador Coast Inuit who hosted Louis

[33] "The eighth and twentieth day <of July 1611> the boat went to Digges his Cape for fowl and made directly for the place where the fowle bred, and being neere, they saw seven boates come about he eastern point towards them. When the savages saw our boate they drew themselves together, and drew their lesser boates into their bigger: and when they had done, they came rowing to our boat, and made signs to the west, but they made ready for all assayes. The savages came to them, and by signes grew familiar with one another, so as our men tooke one of theirs into our boate, and they tooke one of ours into their boate. Then they carried our man to a cove where their tents stood towards the west of the place, where the fowle bred: so they carried him into their tents, where he remayned till our men returned with theirs." (Ibid., 127–128)

[34] "That night we returned to Powhatan: the next day (being Whitsunday <of 1607> after dinner) we returned to the fals, leaving a mariner in pawn with the Indians for a guide of theirs; hee that they honoured for King followed us by the river." (John Smith, *A True Relation of such occurrences and accidents of noate as hath hapned in Virginia since the first planting of that Collony, which is now resident in the South part thereof, till the last returne from thence*, London, Printed for John Tappe, 1608, 34.)

[35] "Our boat went to the place where the fowle bred, and were desirous to know how the savages killed their fowle: he shewed them the manner how, which was thus: they take a long pole with a snare at the end, which they put about the fowles necke, and so plucke them downe. […] To be short, our boat returned to their cove for our man and to deliver theirs. When they came they made great joy, with dancing, and leaping, and stroking of their breasts: they offered divers things to our men, but they only tooke some morses teeth, which they gave them for a knife and two glasse buttons: and so receiving our man they came aboard, much rejoicing at this chance, as if they had met with the most simple and kind people of the world." (Prickett, *Larger Discourse*, in Asher [ed.], *Henry Hudson*, 128.)

Jolliet in 1694.[36] For Hudson's crew, however, this was no more than a snare, similar to the one used by Appalachee Indians to entrap the Spaniard Juan Ortiz, a survivor of the 1528 Narvaez expedition (later found in 1539 by the Hernando de Soto-expedition in the area of present day Tampa, Florida).[37] By the time of the next meeting the following day, the English have grown confident in the Nunavimmiut or Nunavik Inuit and as they go ashore esssentially unarmed for gathering sorrel and trading, they are surrounded by the Aboriginals, who stage a surprise attack, butchering several of the English.[38]

Behind the brute facts, on the face of it, there is no immediately manifest motivation on the part of the Nunavimmiut for this attack. They were, apparently, a relatively, though not completely, uncontacted group living in a degree of isolation at Digges Sound along the Eastern coast of the

[36] Markham (ed.), *Voyages of Davis*, 2 and 6; Louis Jolliet, Journal de L. Joliett allant a la descouverte de Labrador, in *Rapport de l'Archiviste de la province de Québec pour 1943–1944*, Québec, Rédempti Paradis, Imprimeur de Sa Majesté le Roi, 1944, 168–206, see especially 194–195.

[37] "…chegando ao porto a vista do pouo, virã em terra hũa cana chãtada no chão & êcima fendida & metida hũa carta & creram que ho gouernador a auia deixado pera dar nouas de si quando detriminou entrar a terra dentro, & a quatro ou cinco indios que pela praya andauã a pedirã & elles por aceno lhe disserã que fossem eles a terra por ella: ho que cõtra võta de dos outros Joã Ortiz & outro fizeram: & tanto que forã em terra, das casas do pouo sahiram muitos indios que os cercaram & tomaram em parte que nam podiam fugir: & a outro que se quiz defender logo alli ho matarã & a Joã Ortiz tomaram as mãos & leuaram no a Ucita seu senhor…" (Gentleman of Elvas, *Relaçam verdadeira dos trabalhos que ho gouernador don Fernando de Souto y certos fidalgos portugueses passarom no descobrimento da prouincia da Frolida*!. *Agora nouamente feita per hun fidalgo Deluas*, Euora, 1557, Chapter 9, 24 recto.)

[38] "Now when we came, they made signes to their dogges […], and pointed to their mountaine and to the sunne, clapping their hands. Then Henry Greene, John Thomas, and William Wilson stood hard by the boate head, Michael Perse and Andrew Moter were got up upon the rock a gathering of sorrell; not one of them had any weapon about him, not so much as a sticke, save Henry Greene only, who had a piece of a pike in his hand: nor saw I any thing that they had wherewith to hurt us. Henry Greene and William Wilson had looking-glasses, and Jewes trumps, and bels, which they were shewing the people. The savages standing round about them, one of them came into the boats head to me to shew me a bottle: I made signes to him to get him ashoare, but he made as though he had not understood me, whereupon I stood up and pointed him ashoare. In the meane-time another stole behind me to the sterne of the boat, and when I saw him ashoare that was in the head of the boat I sate downe againe, but suddenly I saw the legge and foote of a man by mee. Wherefore I cast up my head, and saw the savage with his knife in his hand, who strooke at my breast over my head: I cast up my right arme to save my brest, he wounded my arme, and strooke me into the bodie under my right pappe. […] Whiles I was thus assaulted in the boat, our men were set upon on the shoare. John Thomas and William Wilson had their bowels cut, and Michael Perse and Henry Greene, being mortally wounded, came tumbling into the boat together. When Andrew Motor saw this medley, hee came running downe the rockes, and leaped into the sea, and so swamme to the boat, hanging on the sterne thereof, till Michael Perse took him in, who manfully made good the head of the boat against the savages, that pressed sore upon us. Now Michael Perse had got an hatchet, wherewith I saw him strike one of them, that he lay sprawling in the sea. […] The savages betooke them to their bowes and arrows, which they sent amongst us, wherewith Henry Greene was slaine outright, and Michael Perse received many wounds, and so did the rest." (Prickett, *Larger Discourse*, in Asher [ed.], *Henry Hudson*, 130–131.)

Labrador (by and large, the area where in the early 1920's, Robert J. Flaherty shot the documentary titled *Nanook of the North*). Since, then, there is no evident motive for the violence, we shall have to look for indications in the circumstantial evidence by examining the chain of events leading up to the massacre. A lonely Inuk made the first contact with the crew, after which the Nunavimmiut withdrew, setting "the woods on fire" in the Captain's sight. This arson is implicitly viewed by Prickett as a harbinger of bad events to come – "the people" clearly did not want to see or help the English, which is in itself a neutral kind of behaviour. But as the mutinous crew sails north to approach the breeding places at the outfall of Hudson Strait, immediately the Nunavimmiut – quite probably another group – reemerge. This could very well be a sign that this group dwelt closely around the nestling area, very likely in order to have food at hand but perhaps also in order to protect the place as a food reserve. Digges Sound is, parenthetically, an Important Bird Area site even today. At this juncture, one is inclined to think that the reason for the set-up may lie with the capital question of food resources. The birds, as it comes clear from Prickett's text, were also a food staple for the Aboriginals. This fact might loom larger if we consider that with the advent of summer (these events took place at the end of July) ice hunting for big sea mammals on Hudson Bay had become difficult. The intrusion of newcomers into ancient Inuit habitat, and their hunt for the edible animals certainly posed an imminent threat to vital food supplies. While it is true that the intruders disposed of a number of metallic weapons and instruments that were effective and desirable tools in the eyes of the Nunavimmiut, it is also true that they could procure many of those things by bartering, had they wanted to – but they did not, which suggests that the mainspring for their violence was simply protection of habitat and food.

## The Danish Recovery of Greenland in 1605

In order to frame William Baffin's experience of James Hall's death at the hand of a Greenland Inuk, we need to go back to 1605, when the Danish King Christian IV issued a Latin journey form (or royal pass) for Admiral Godske Lindenov and associates, among them Hall as a pilot under the command of Captain John Cunningham, to sail to Greenland, in order that the Christian religion and the Danish jurisdiction might be restored there.[39] In the introductory part of the document, the King also pointed out that the sailing routes to Greenland had become obsolete and uncertain because

[39] "Nostri vero muneris inprimis esse arbitremur ut statum istius nostrae ditionis exploremus, quo eidem et de religione et administratione iuris et iustitiae, si quae necessaria essent, in posterum prospiciamus." (Bobé [ed.], *Diplomatarium Groenlandicum*, 13.)

Danish sailors had not frequented them for a long time.[40] It is clear also from earlier royal documents that the Kingdom of Denmark-Norway, as we have seen above, was eager to secure Greenland for itself, to reincorporate this once Normann-settled territory into the empire before some other political power would do so. This incorporation was here represented as a re-integration into the political order which Greenland had originally belonged to: Greenland had always been part of the Danish crown.[41]

By August the same year, the ship commanded by Admiral Lindenov had successfully visited Greenland, and returned to Copenhagen, carrying with it several kidnapped Aboriginals, while Hall's ship arrived separately in the same month, also carrying three abducted Kalaallit.[42] Kidnapping on voyages of exploration in early modern times was common practice throughout the Americas, generally with a threefold aim: 1. to obtain slave-guides in unknown territories (see for example Hernando de Soto's above-mentioned expedition to Florida and further in 1539–1541);[43] 2. to train basic-level interpreters (see for instance Jacques Cartier's voyages to Canada, of 1533 and 1535[44] or Francisco Pizarro's second voyage to Perú[45]); 3. to demonstrate, after re-entry at the home port, the reality of the discoveries made. A letter by King Christian IV, then, dated in Copenhagen, 11 August 1605, and addressed to the caretaker of Dragsholm Castle reveals that the King ordered the instruction in Danish,

[40] "Cum navigatio ultro citroque ad terram nostram Grvnlandiam inde iam extet obscurior et incertior, quod a nostris hominibus, longo temporis spatio, non sit frequentata." (Ibid.)

[41] Vivian Etting, The Rediscovery of Greenland during the Reign of Christian IV, *Journal of the North Atlantic*, Special Volume 2, Norse Greenland – Selected Papers from the Hvalsey Conference 2008 (2009), 151–160.

[42] "…in the time of our absence, the People (= the Kalaallit) did very much villanie to them in the ship, so that the Captaine (= John Cunningham) tooke three of them; other of them also he slew; but the three which he tooke, he vsed with all kindnesse, giving them Mandillions (= a loose garment without sleeves) and Breeches of very good cloth, also Hose, Shoes, and Shirts of his own backe." (A report to King Christian IV of Denmark on the Danish Expedition to Greenland, under the Command of captain John Cunningham, in 1605, by James Hall, Chief Pilot, Appendix to the report, entitled A Topographicall Description of the Land as I did discouer the same, in Christian Carl August Gosch [ed.], *Danish Arctic Expeditions, 1605 to 1620*, 2 vols., London, The Hakluyt Society, 1897, Vol. 1, 1–16 [Report] and 43–53 [Appendix], citation from page 48.)

[43] "Estando neste pouo de Ucita os indios que naquella costa Joam Danhusco auia tomado & ho gouernador trazia pera guia & lingoa por mao recado d' dous homês que os guardauã hũa noite fugirã: o que ho gouernador & todos muito sentiram, porque se auiam ja feito algũas entradas & nam se podiã tomar indios por ser a terra dalagadiços & em muitas partes de muy alto & espesso aruoredo." (Gentleman of Elvas, *Relaçam verdadeira*, Chapter 7, 21 recto–verso.)

[44] Jacques Cartier: *Brief recit, & succincte narration, de la nauigation faicte es ysles de Canada, Hochelaga & Saguenay & autres, auec particulieres meurs, langaige, & cerimonies des habitans d'icelles: fort delectable à veoir*, Paris, Ponce Roffet, 1545, 8 verso and 41 verso (Cartier is willing to take to France "deux ou trois petis enfans pour apprendre le langaige").

[45] See relevant documents in G. Lohmann Villena (ed.): *Francisco Pizarro. Testimonio: documentos oficiales, cartas y escritos varios*, Madrid, Consejo superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1986.

of one of the kidnapped Kalaallit so there should be an interpreter for the next Greenland voyage. The text of the missive pegs the abducted individual, without more ado, as "our subject." This evinces an unambiguous identification of Greenland as an hereditary land of the Danish crown while the action of isolating an Aboriginal for language learning is a token of forethought and planning as to the continuation of the just begun re-integration.[46]

As an echo of this expedition, the papal legate to Brussels sent a report to the curia, Pope Paul V, in December 1605, concerning what he named "the Danish re-discovery of Greenland." Importantly, this message also enlarges upon the kidnapping of several Kalaallit: "presero alcuni degli habitanti e senza far altro se ne sono ritornati."[47] By virtue of this letter, we also get a brief glimpse of the physical appearance and the apparel of the Greenlanders.[48] A much later, prominent account from 1765, titled *Historie von Grönland*, by Herrnhut Pietist and Greenland missionary David Cranz, describes the kidnapping and accidentally misinforms on the later fate of these captives as the author asserts that they staged several flights by kayak on the North Sea to no avail, after which they just died away one by one "for sorrow" in Denmark. As Cranz remarks that "it was impossible to learn their language, so they could not be baptized," he is also suggesting that the King's efforts to teach Danish to them, and thereby to Christianize them, came to naught[49] – but Hall's account of his subsequent, 1606 voyage contradicts this narrative.

[46] "...en af woris undersaather, som wij nyligen haffuer bekommet fra wortt land Gronland ... fra de andre bliffuer affsondritt, kunde lere woris danske tungemaal ... till samme woris sprock att lere och forstaa." (Ibid., 14.)

[47] Ibid., 14–15, document № 20.

[48] "Li Groelandesi sono huomini piccoli, grossi e nericci, ma si robusti che non solo al remo o ad altro lavoro è di forza eguale a quattro de' nostri. Sono furiosi come bestie selvatiche; hanno coltelli, freccie, dardi, ma armati di osso in cambio di ferro. Si servono di certe piccole barche di pelle di cane marino." (Ibid., 14.)

[49] "Endlich bemächtigten sie sich auch vier wilder Männer, davon sie einen umbringen mußten, um den andren, die gar unhändig waren, eine Furcht einzujagen. Diese Wilden sollen mit denen, die von der Ostküste mitgebracht worden, keine Aehnlichkeit weder in Sprache, noch Kleidung, noch Sitten gehabt haben. [...] Von dem betrübten Schicksal der sechs Groenlaender, die man auf der ersten Reise nach Dännemark gebracht, hat man angemerkt, daß sie ... endlich in ihren Kayaken die Flucht ergriffen haben, aber durch einen starken Wind an das Ufer von Schonen geworfen und nach Copenhagen zuruekgebracht worden, worauf zween von Betruebnis gestorben sind. [...] ...man konte nicht mit ihnen sprechen; daher man sie auch nicht zur Taufe praepariren konte." (David Cranz, *Historie von Grönland enthaltend Die Beschreibung des Landes und der Einwohner und insbesondere die Geschichte der dortigen Mission der Evangelischen Brüder zu Neu-Herrnhut und Lichtenfels*, Barby, H.D. Ebers – Leipzig, Weidmanns Erben und Reich, 1765, 354–355. Contemporary English translation: David Crantz, *The History of Greenland: Containing a Description of the Country, and its Inhabitants...*, 2 vols., London, Brethren's Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel among the Heathens, 1767.) See also René Bonnerjea's meticulous reconstruction of the fate of the kidnapped in his *Eskimos in Europe. How they got there and what happened to them afterwards*, London–Budapest, Biró Family Nyomdaipari Kft, 2004, Chapters 3–4, 84–105.

For Pilot James Hall returned, this time, under the direct command of Admiral Lindenov, to Greenland the following year, in 1606,[50] in order to exploit silver ore located on the previous voyage.[51] Contrary to what Cranz suggests, the fleet was also carrying surviving Kalaallit back to their homeland though two of them died soon after departure while we do not learn anything about the fate of any other of them.[52] The fact that (at least some of) the Greenlanders abducted the year before were travelling with the expedition may mean that they were to be used as guides and interpreters or, a less likely option, that they were to be made free. (Cartier, for instance, at the end of his second journey, recaptured his First Nations interpreters whom he kidnapped during his first journey, and took them back with him again to France.)[53] Our Danish-English explorers, then, had a first peaceful meeting with Greenland natives towards the end of July when barter trade was made at length, with a larger group of Kalaallit, to mutual content.[54] A couple of days later, in early August, the Admiral went ashore and inspected an apparently deserted Kalaallit settlement and the appertaining cemetery.[55] On the same day, however, Hall and his crew seized five Aboriginal men together with their kayaks. He relates the event in very plain words, as follows:

> About noone, our men came aboord againe; and, after Dinner, some of the people came vnto vs, of whom we caught fiue, with their Boates, and stowed them in our ships, to bring them into Denmarke, to enforme our selues better, by their meenes, of the state of their Countrie of Groineland, which, in their owne language, they call *Secanunga*, and say that, vp within the Land, they haue a great King, which is carried vpon mens shoulders.[56]

[50] Our chief historical source is An Account of the Danish Expedition to Greenland, under the Command of Captain Godske Lindenov, in 1606, by James Hall, Chief Pilot, in Gosch (ed.), *Danish Arctic Expeditions*, Vol. 1, 54–81. Further, Captain Leyell's and Captain Bruun's respective logbooks were published by C. Pingel in his *De vigtigste reiser, som i nyere tid ere foretagne fra Danmark og Norge, for igjen at opsöge det tabte Grönland og at undersöge det gjenfundne*, Kjöbenhavn, S.L. Möllers Bogtrykkeri, 1845, 55–62 and 68–72, respectively.

[51] Oswalt, *Eskimos and Explorers*, 45; Gad, *History of Greenland*, 220.

[52] "This afternoon <= June 4, 1606> dyed one of our Groinlanders called Oxo. […] This night <= June 10>, at midnight, dyed the Groenlander which we had aboord us named Omeg." (Hall, An Account of the Danish Expedition to Greenland, in 1606, in Gosch (ed.), *Danish Arctic Expeditions*, Vol. 1, 56–57.)

[53] Cartier, *Brief recit*, 12 verso and 42 verso–44 verso.

[54] Hall, An Account of the Danish Expedition to Greenland, 67.

[55] "The ninth, in the morning, Our Captaine, with the Captaine of the Urin, went with their Boates vp the Riuer, where they did come to see their winter houses, which were builded with Whales bones, the Balkes being of Whale's ribbes, and the toppes were couered with earth, and they had certaine Vaults or Sellers vnder the earth foure square, about two yards deepe in the ground. These houses were in number about some fortie. They found also certaine Graues made of stones ouer the dead bodies of their people, the carkasses being wrapped in Seales skins, and the stones laid inmanner of a Coffin ouer them." (Ibid., 70.)

[56] Ibid., 70–71.

This account explicitly informs us that the objective of the kidnap was to obtain as it were intel on Greenland in general, after transporting the maltreated party to Denmark. Again, it strikes us how casually the Pilot imparts his message unto the reader: in his discourse, there is no sign of a consideration for the victims' humanity, no consciousness or understanding of them being like unto us with, more than likely, families to sustain, no insight into this incident being, in all probability, a fatality for an entire community, not a slight indication of remorse either, and, conversely, no anticipation of a potential kickback. Clearly, Hall talks about something we today consider a capital crime as a matter of course, as a routine event of the day. To be sure, however, this just *was* a routine event on such journeys in his time. Yet the lack of recognition that the Greenlanders were humans in their own right, with sound moral concepts and principles of their own kind, this neglect of the full humanity of other humans would have a fatal backlash on Hall six years later.[57]

## William Baffin's Account of Hall's Last Voyage

After a failed endeavor to reach Greenland in 1607, James Hall, now in the quality of captain, set sail for the Western coast of Greenland in 1612, under a British flag, with two ships, employing William Baffin, on the latter's first Arctic voyage, as navigator. We have two sources at our disposal for this inauspicious journey: Baffin's diary, which is an almost day-by-day account of what happened,[58] and Quartermaster John Gatonbe's detailed *Account of the English Expedition to Greenland, under the Command of Captain James Hall, in 1612*.[59] Both narratives abound in descriptions of meet-ups with Greenlanders, friendly and hostile alike; and both are sensitive to Aboriginal presence, characterizing Kalaallit behaviour and lifestyle comprehensively. In this respect, they are very different than the bulk of the early English accounts of Newfoundland. Baffin even proffers a precious summary of "the state and manner of the people of Groenland" at the close of his text, which includes engrossing reflections on Aboriginal religion ("generally they worship the Sunne, as chief author of their felicitie"),[60] burial practices, diet, and travel.

[57] Captain Hans Bruun's curt logbook specifies that one of the five captured Greenlanders committed suicide by springing overbord while sailing home: "den 16 <of August 1606> spraank en aff min grönlender offuer borde" (Pingel, *De vigtigste reiser*, 71).

[58] Another Account of the Latter Part of the English Expedition to Greenland under the Command of Captain James Hall, in 1612, in Gosch (ed.), *Danish Arctic Expeditions*, Vol. 1, 120–137. See the same text under the heading William Baffin, The Fourth Voyage of James Hall to Groenland, wherein he was set forth by English Adventurers, Anno 1612, and slaine by a Greenlander, in Clements R. Markham (ed.), *The Voyages of William Baffin*, London, Printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1891, 20–37.

[59] Gosch (ed.), *Danish Arctic Expeditions*, Vol. 1, 82–119.

[60] Ibid., 136.

However, our attention will focus on their respective accounts of Captain Hall's violent and mysterious death. This is better described by Baffin, who was actually present and an eyewitness, while Gatonbe's account is of second hand. Baffin words his story as follows:

> Wednesday, the two and twentieth day <of July 1612,> about nine or ten of the clocke, the Sauages came to barter with vs, being about fortie of them, and continued about an houre and an halfe; at which time, our master, Iames Hall, being in the boat, a sauage with his dart strooke him a deadly wound vpon the right side, which our surgean did thinke did pierce his liver. We all mused that he should strike and offer no harme to any of the rest, vnlesse it were that they knew him since he was there with the Danes; for, out of that riuer, they carried away fiue of the people, whereof neuer any returned againe; and, in the next riuer, they killed a great number. And it should seeme that he which killed him was either brother or some neere kinsman, to some of them that were carried away; for he did it very resolutely, and came within four yards of him. And, for ought we could see, the people are very kind one to another, and ready to reuenge any wrong offred to them.[61]

It appears from Gatonbe's account that the Kalaallit showed up in very large numbers, clearly outnumbering the English, who were also unprepared for defending themselves – but no general attack ensued, albeit the unarmed Europeans in the ship's two boats could have been overwhelmed easily.[62] Yet the murder was the personal affair of one indidivual with no accessories, though perhaps not unbeknownst beforehand to the rest of the Aboriginals, and potentially with their general consent. On the other hand, Baffin's text makes us believe that perhaps all participants in the bartering transaction preceding the murder stayed afloat in their respective boats, possibly out of precaution, without anybody going ashore (communicating from a boat, with the other party remaining ashore, or also seated in a boat, was not unusual practice on such journeys – see for instance Davis's or Jolliet's respective voyages). However this may have been, such circumstances could not prevent the Kalaallik from inflicting a deadly wound to the Captain. The perceptive Baffin then suggests that the perpetrator had had a premeditated plan

[61] Ibid., 124.

[62] "…Captain James Hall being in the ship's boat, and his man William Huntriff, and two more, one of the salvages offer'd to sell him a dart, he taking up a piece of iron, in the mean time he threw his dart at him, and struck him through his clothes into his body, 4 inches upon his right side, which gave his death's wound. Mr. Barker and 20 more men were in the great pinnace, on the other side of the ship; the which, if the salvages would, they might have killed all of them in the pinnace, there being about them more than a 150 boats of them, our men having no muskets ready, nor any other provision to prevent them from hurting them; for our men did think they had come in a friendly manner to bargain with them; yet it proved otherwise, to the danger of them all and the loss of our general." (Ibid., 107.)

specifically vis-à-vis Hall. The murderer must have simply harboured revenge on account of previous year's kidnap, and when he spotted the only person among the English he remembered, he struck "resolutely." In all likelihood, Baffin's conjecture is right, since no other person was attacked than the one and only returning visitor, despite the threatening eventuality of a sweeping general onslaught. The explanation that a kidnap was retaliated by a murder as a personal vendetta hence seems a satisfactory one.

## Conclusion: The Hidden Strategies of Habitat Protection and Land Acquisition

On reading the sources, we may be inclined to think that the Inuit's tendency to protect their habitat and food resources, and the great European empires' desire to acquire unknown lands are strivings standing very far apart from one another. This is true but my point is that they are opposite sides of the same coin. In a very general sense, in both cases, smaller or bigger groups of humans try to secure means of survival. Humans are beings with past, present, and future, and hence, with foresight and afterthought, providence and memory, emotional motivations, morals and rational considerations. All of which yields the possibility of planning, of having an agenda that is, in cases like the above, more often than not hidden. Even though an encounter between Inuit and Europeans frequently resulted in simple barter trade, a win-win situation, historical reality demonstrates that perhaps just as often, hidden strategies took over and shunted human behaviour. These agendas were mutually hidden though *ad intra* well known, and as far as the competing European powers were concerned, generally public among them. In the case of a political formation like the Danish Kingdom or Great Britain, this agenda, completely hidden from the Inuit, implied an imperial strategy of land acquisition, of territorial expansion because of a *horror vacui*; a part played in a geopolitical game, with lots of power, wealth, and human lives at stake. In this game, an Aboriginal individual was seldom thought of as a human person but was considered an unimportant factor or, at most, as an accessory to something material or politically rewarding for an empire: as a potential subject, to be converted, as manpower, a trade partner. Most of the time, Aboriginals in these early phases of European expansion in the North were not even viewed as obstacles in the way of reaching, for instance, the Northwest Passage or a particular silver ore, let alone as the owners of their land. Land had to be taken not from the Aboriginals but from rivalling political powers. But Baffin's testimony of a personal revenge case just proves the humanity of – an Aboriginal murderer who retaliated a murder or kidnap committed by a European explorer. A moral concept, revenge is irreducibly human. For on the other hand, even

Aboriginals had their hidden agendas and set traps which Europeans often fatally fell into and died – because on a smaller scale, a nomadic nation or tribe also has its geopolitical objectives, even if these do not have to do with more power or wealth but with simple survival. Setting a snare for an intruder menacing to destroy your vital food supplies is an act that, at the lower, defensive extreme of the same gamut, bears comparison with kidnapping for territorial expansion or economic advantage. It is a human reaction to a tragic challenge that seems impossible to thwart, as opposed to an active and offensive intrusion into what was perceived, in European terms, and by a fatal neglection of "the people," as no man's land. Since these challenges emerged in thoroughly incalculable situations, when both parties, meeting up, were faced with the utterly unknown, conflict and violence – and the operation of hidden agendas in general – were hardly evitable. At the end of the day, this invites the question whether it was possible at all to have peaceful first and second encounters with less gore and mayhem. I for one am skeptical.

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# UNEARTHING RACIAL NECROGEOGRAPHIES: BURIAL PLACES AND THE DISPOSSESSION OF MINORITIES IN CANADA

William Felepchuk[1]

## Abstract

*This paper explores how burial places have been affected by colonial and racial dispossession in Canada, and their historical, cultural, and sociopolitical importance to minority communities. Burial places are often the only remaining vestiges of a dispossessed minority community that has been forced to relocate elsewhere. These burial places are left vulnerable to desecration and destruction by the surrounding white majority. This paper takes as its case studies two communities and regions in which the burial places of the marginalized have been threatened: the historic black community burial places in Essex and Simcoe counties in Ontario, and the burial places of the Cheslatta Carrier First Nation of the B.C. interior. Both these case studies are representative of wider patterns of the racialized destruction of burial places. I focus on several of the eighteen or more black cemeteries across Essex County,[2] as well as the Bethel Union Cemetery in Simcoe. The 19th century and early 20th century cemeteries of the Simcoe region are largely populated with bodies (or the bodies of descendants) of individuals and families who fled enslavement or racial hostility in the United States.[3] The Cheslatta Carrier Nation were forced to leave behind its three burial places when much of their community grounds was flooded by a hydroelectric development in 1952, leaving behind ancestors who were very much remembered by the living as kin and close relatives.[4]*

1 Carleton University.

2 Meg Roberts, The Hidden Cemeteries of Essex County, YouTube Video, 5:44, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHfUzQOlIAM&t=19s (accessed 4 March 2018).

3 Though it should be noted that such traditions were complex, and that enslavement existed in Canada, and in many instances, enslaved Black people from Canada would also flee to the USA to obtain freedom. See Afua Cooper, Acts of Resistance: Black Men and Women Engage Slavery in Upper Canada, 1793–1803, *Ontario History,* 99.1 (2007), 5–17. Furthermore, as we will see throughout this paper, Canada was by no means an idyllic destination for these individuals and the communities they built.

4 Betsy Trumpener, Homes burned, cemetery flooded: 67 years later, First Nation wins redress, *CBC News*, 18 April 2019.

I am informed by Indigenous and Black scholarship/writing that theorizes a geographical dimension to the racialized destruction inflicted upon Indigenous and Black communities by white people – specifically by what Sylvia Wynter terms *Man* (the white and western male as human), and I extend this theorization to also include communities of the dead. Wynter maps how the constitution of current racial orders is shaped by the "ongoing imperative of securing the well-being of our present ethnoclass (i.e., Western bourgeois) conception of the human, Man, which overrepresents itself as if it were the human itself".[5] This equivalence of the white with human in racial discourse lends itself to the creation of "social-spatial regimes of second- and third-class citizenship", zones in which destruction and dispossession is justified through the dehumanization of racialized communities.[6] While drawing on these theorizations to understand the geographical dimensions of racial desecration, I also draw on the work of necrogeographical scholars (those who study landscapes and places of the dead) such as Thomas Laqueur and Richard Francaviglia, who theorize the importance of spaces of burial to meaning-making and the work of memory in human communities, but whose work can also be applied to how the dominant cultural community in Canada – Anglophone white Protestants of British heritage – views death rituals and burial, and the strategic inclusion and exclusion of the "forgotten and despised"[7] from these rituals. I argue that the vulnerability of the dead and longstanding traditions in the Anglophone cultural sphere of dehumanizing the dead have contributed to the desecration of the burial places of racialized and marginalized communities in Canada. If, in the context of British history and common law, those excluded from personhood in life were similarly excluded in death, then it follows than in contexts of colonial or racial domination, those communities excluded from full personhood would have their dead suffer similar fates.

Having laid the groundwork for this paper, I will first chronicle how the burial places of the Cheslatta Carrier First Nation have been erased and desecrated, before doing the same for the historic black community burial places in Essex and Simcoe counties in Ontario. In my second section, I engage in a theoretical discussion of the dehumanizing logics behind these desecrations committed by white communities in Canada, and the differential

[5] Wynter, Sylvia. "Unsettling the Coloniality of Being/Power/Truth/Freedom: Towards the Human, After Man, its Overrepresentation – An Argument." *CR: The New Centennial Review*, Vol. 3, No. 3 (2003), 260.

[6] Clyde Woods, Life After Death, *The Professional Geographer,* Vol. 54, No. 1 (2002), 63.

[7] Thomas Laqueur, *The Work of the Dead: A Cultural History of Mortal Remains*, Princeton, Princeton University, 2015, 32.

protections afforded them. Finally, I will offer some examples of what Laqueur calls "the work of memory"[8], the tending to and reclamation of still-present buried ancestors by communities struggling against erasure.

## "Deplorable": Erasure and Desecration

In the present section I will provide a brief overview of the erasure and desecration of the burial places of two marginalized communities in Canada. The Cheslatta Carrier Nation in BC and the Black communities of Southern Ontario have experienced this erasure and desecration in very different ways. However, both have had the places inhabited by their communities' dead destroyed by the dominant white communities surrounding them.

Many of the burial places of the Cheslatta Carrier Nation in the interior of what is now known as BC have been destroyed since the construction by Alcan in 1952 of the Kenney Dam across the Nechako River, creating a reservoir in the Skins Lake spillway, as part of the Kemano Hydro Project. In 1957, the company released water into the Cheslatta River from the dam, flooding approximately 30 graves. According to members of the Cheslatta, "Coffins and grave houses were found floating in the water [...] bones, crosses and debris washed up on the shore for years following the incident". Alcan's reservoir system was built to fuel, and continues to fuel, its aluminum smelting operations. As a result of the construction of the Kenney Dam, the Cheslatta were forced to move, leaving behind their homes, places of worship, and countless ancestral graves lost to floodwaters. Only 87 of the original graves remain intact, in three different sites.[9] As mentioned in the third part of this essay, even these remaining graves continue to be threatened by Alcan's activities.[10]

Cheslatta leaders have long spoken against the destruction of their cemeteries; in 1957, Robert Skin, a Cheslatta delegate to Native Brotherhood, lamented that: "We have seen for ourselves the graveyard that used to be at Cheslatta No. 9 Reserve. It's all gone and we don't know where the dead have gone... All the dead have floated away and gone ashore somewhere".[11] Marvin Charlie, chief of the Cheslatta, remarked in 1992, "It is against the law. [...] The Criminal Code and the Cemetery Act is very specific about graveyard desecration. [...] They send people to jail for such offences."[12] He continued

[8] Ibid., 267.

[9] Cooper Langford, Cheslatta grave flooding continues, *Windspeaker Publication,* Vol. 10, No. 9 (1992).

[10] Mark Hume, Native Band rushes to save grave markets from floodwaters, *The Globe and Mail,* 5 October 2011.

[11] Cooper Langford, *Cheslatta grave flooding continues.*

[12] Ibid.

by asserting that: "People ask us why we are making a fuss now. […] This desecration has been occurring for 35 years. […] They don't know how long we have been fighting this." Cheslatta leader, Mike Robertson, expressed the community's frustrations in 1992, emphasizing that: "We are really pissed off. […] If they don't come back to the table soon, we are going back to court".[13] And in 2019, Mike Robertson Mike Robertson, Cheslatta's senior policy adviser, put the impact of the flooding in more chilling and immediate terms: "There's the cost of […] finding the leg of your grandmother or your uncle or your cousin. These aren't ancient graves. These are graves as late as 1953. […] People are still alive that are directly related."[14]

The destruction of burial places is connected to wider dispossession of Cheslatta territory, including the fact that Cheslatta people were compensated less than whites living in the area who were forced to move. The dispossession has had devastating effects on the community; Cheslatta Chief Corrina Leween noted that young people still live with "the generational impacts. […] We are resilient, but there have been adverse impacts from the flooding and relocation. There has been poverty, a high death rate, alcoholism, addiction, and violence."[15] The ecological effects have also been grave, including frequent flooding, which erodes riverbanks and creates an outpouring of silt into Cheslatta Lake, affecting fish stocks on which the Cheslatta rely as a food source.[16]

In Southern Ontario, the historic cemeteries of Black communities have met with destructive neglect and dehumanizing treatment at the hands of local white communities. Windsor area historian of Black communities Elise Harding Davis has "watched farmers plough over cemeteries, seen headstones hanging in peoples' living rooms and even fought for the town of Essex to quit using a cemetery site as overflow parking for the annual Harrow Fair."[17] Glen Cook, a representative of the Lakeshore Black Heritage Committee, noted that the Black community cemetery at Lakeshore had been "built over and neglected, ignored".[18] Holding the dead of the historic Black community of Elmstead, the cemetery was destroyed in the mid-20th century by the construction of two houses atop the graves. Another cemetery, St. Marks, has partially met the fate of many Black community cemeteries in Ontario. Though part of the St. Marks burial place is in a small piece of open land, this open area is surrounded by a field of crops, under which historians have determined Black ancestors are buried beneath the ploughed land.[19] Harding

[13] Cooper Langford, *Cheslatta grave flooding continues.*
[14] Trumpener, Homes burned, cemetery flooded.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Hume, Native Band rushes.
[17] CBC, Hidden cemeteries of Essex County hold Underground Railroad history, *CBC News*, 1 February 2018.
[18] CBC, Black cemetery in Lakeshore 'built over and neglected', *CBC News*, 27 February 2015.
[19] CBC, Hidden cemeteries of Essex County.

Davis summarized the condition of the Black community cemeteries of Essex County in one word: 'Deplorable'.[20] In Simcoe County too, Black graves were not spared destruction: the Bethel Union Cemetery containing the graves of hundreds of members of the Black community, was bulldozed in 1961 and many of the remains were jumbled into a single mound.[21]

Black communities' sites have often been obscured by what Black community members related today as being a necessary anonymity. Oral histories point to Black families who "often purposefully didn't mark their graves and buried them under trees so that tree roots would overgrow them to protect them from being unearthed by bounty hunters."[22] A descendant, Janie Cooper-Wilson, notes: "slave catchers could take back the bones and get half the bounty."[23] In her short film, Harding-Davis touches the tombstone of a Black community member interred there and says, "thank you much."[24] This moment takes place in the film directly after we learn that the black settlers placed their settlement behind a hill in order to be less conspicuous to bounty hunters. Such communal histories point to the historic and contemporary feeling and reality of vulnerability of the burial places of racialized communities.

## "Inequity and the Dead": Dehumanizing Logics and Uneven Protections

As mentioned above, Marvin Charlie, chief of the Cheslatta in 1992, asserted that the destruction of Chesletta cemeteries "is against the law. […] The Criminal Code and the Cemetery Act is very specific about graveyard desecration. […] They send people to jail for such offences". Charlie's assertion of the illegality of cemetery destruction is correct; cemeteries, and the dead inhabiting them, have longstanding protections established in British and Anglo-Canadian common law. How, then, have the burial places of marginalized communities faced such clearly differential treatment? I attempt to outline here a twofold answer: first, longstanding traditions of the dehumanized or rejected dead from the norms of humane treatment, and secondly, differential legal protections in North American contexts related to the dead of marginalized communities.

[20] Ibid.
[21] Barrie Examiner, Clearview cemetery gains historic designation thanks to work of one woman, Barrie Examiner, 14 May 2016.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Roberts, The Hidden Cemeteries of Essex County, 3:56.

Thomas Laqueur argues that historically, for people of British extraction, lack of a proper burial represented "a posthumous exclusion from the cultural and political order, an obliteration of personhood, after death."[25] I argue that this dehumanizing exclusion – this denial of personhood after death – is enacted in racialized forms on the collective sites of Indigenous and Black communities in Canada. In English speaking Canada, (which has been profoundly shaped by loyalism, Protestantism and Orangeism), the worldview and traditions of British necrocultural practices shaped the social order.

In England, those who did not belong in *life* were further condemned in death. Lacqueur notes that "the bodies of outlaws – criminals and traders – were statutorily forfeit to the King who could order that they be hung from gibbets or burnt or, increasingly after the 1720s sent from the gallows to the anatomy theatre, where surgeons cut them before a large public audience."[26] In North America such posthumous barbarism was often reserved for the dead of Black communities: in the USA, it was common for Black community cemeteries, which were often municipal sites without the protections of more privileged private cemeteries, to be pillaged for bodies to be used in medical colleges.[27] This scientific desecration finds its parallel in the disinterment of Indigenous remains throughout North America, with many Indigenous bodies being held in the collections of museums. Many Black community members who escaped slavery and racial dehumanization in the South by fleeing to Canada, met a fate, which, as chronicled below, was equally one of posthumous dehumanization.

Protestant settlers from the British Isles belonged to a long tradition of shaming the dead geographically and rejecting bodies that were "profoundly out of place"[28] in the eyes of the community. For bodies to be out of place, there needed to be a normative place to which bodies belonged. Indeed, English common law recognized "an immemorial right to be buried somewhere."[29] Somewhere, as we will note in section three of this paper, was intimately tied to ones church community. English law recognized the maxim "ubi decims persolvevat vivens, sepeliatur mortuus – where pays the tithe while alive, let

[25] Laqueur, *The Work of the Dead,* 148.

[26] Ibid.

[27] See Rich Griset, Chasing Down a Body Snatcher: VCU Professor Documents Story of 'Inside Man' Who Stole Cadavers from Black Cemeteries for the Local Medical College in 19th Century, Diverse Issues in Higher Education 27.18 (2010), 9, and Edward C. Halperin, The Poor, the Black, and the Marginalized as the Source of Cadavers in United States Anatomical Education, *Clinical Anatomy,* Vol. 20, No. 5 (2007), 489–495. For mention of this grim phenomenon in a Canadian context, see Naomi Norquay, 'If we don't try, then shame on us!': An Interview with Janie Cooper-Wilson, *Northern Terminus: The African Canadian History Journal*, Vol. 13 (2016), 10.

[28] Laqueur, *The Work of the Dead,* 148.

[29] Ibid., 151.

him be buried there."[30] There was thus a "foundational localism"[31] to English burial practice and into the 19th Century dead bodies "still more or less belonged to a place" according to tradition.[32]

The geographical dimension of this posthumous dehumanization often took the form of the dreaded burial at the crossroads[33] frequently reserved for "felons of the self"[34] those who had committed suicide. Protestants and Catholics often reinforced their enmity by refusing to bury the other communities dead in their own cemeteries[35] and the parish priest could "allocate unfavoured corpses to the obscure north corner [of a churchyard] in what was taken to be an unconsecrated shameful place."[36] These traditions parallel the geographic situation of Indigenous and Black communities whose settlements, and thus cemeteries, were (and are) often placed at the margins of society and of social acceptance, and thus left vulnerable to destruction. The status of the dead of racialized communities is underlined by Janie Cooper-Wilson, who notes that "if someone feel out of grace – many illegitimate children, or someone who ran amok of the law for whatever reason – in those days, they were often buried on the side of the road, beyond sanctified group. And in most Caucasian (white) cemeteries at the time, Blacks and Aboriginals were not considered proper enough to be buried within sanctified ground. We were heathens."[37]

In the context of the law, Ellen Stroud observes that:

> [t]his is the central puzzle of the law of the dead: The human corpse is a thing, a material object – a messy, maybe dangerous, perhaps valuable, often useful, and always tangible thing – and the law has much to say about such things. But the dead human body is also something very different: It is also my father, and my friend, perhaps my child, and some day, me. For even the most secular among us, a dead human body is at the least a very peculiar and particular kind of thing.[38]

Stroud further argues that "often, the dead bodies of the poor or disempowered are the easiest to treat as things [...] the corpses of the most vulnerable will always be the ones treated most like things. The treatment of dead bodies [...] reflects the treatment of the living."[39] Mary L. Clark has enumerated

30 Ibid., 151.
31 Ibid., 152.
32 Ibid., 155.
33 Ibid., 149.
34 Ibid., 150.
35 Ibid., 161–162.
36 Ibid., 163.
37 Naomi Norquay, 'If we don't try, then shame on us!', 10.
38 Ellen Stroud, "Law and the Dead Body: Is a Corpse a Person Or a Thing?", *Annual Review of Law and Social Science,* Vol. 14, No. 1 (2018), 117.
39 Ibid., 122.

the iniquities facing both Black and Indigenous burial places and the legal protections, or lack thereof, afforded to them in the US context. Her study seeks to understand "the ready inclusion of white death and burial sites into the commons and the hesitant or refused recognition of non-white death and burial sites reveals and reflects the extent to which these lives are differently valued as a matter of both law and culture."[40]

The creation, maintenance, and destruction of spaces of burial in North America is very much determined by legal regimes governing the ambiguous and intermediary status of the dead in the common law. This ambiguous status of the interred dead body has been variously defined by scholars as "both a person and a thing,"[41] as "*nullius in bonis* [...] no person's property,"[42] or as being affected by the "quasi-property"[43] rights of living relatives. Rights related to the individual dead are generally invested in the living rather than the dead themselves. Furthermore, these rights tend to belong to surviving spouses and next-of-kin[44] rather than to collectives or communities. These rights are not property rights, but they retain many aspects of property rights. These rights flow from a proven connection to the deceased; less direct connections that are articulated through collective belonging tend to be, but are not always, greeted with dismissiveness.[45]

The integrity of whole cemeteries is generally protected by law in both Canadian and US contexts regardless of whether next-of-kin with a quasi-property interest survive. This protection extends both to "live cemeteries"[46] as well as "old or abandoned cemeteries."[47] According to Arthur Street's classic text on US cemetery law, "Graves must be regarded as sacred and be left undisturbed except for good cause. The mere fact that a grave appears to have been abandoned by surviving relatives will not justify its ruthless invasion."[48] According to Percival Jackson's 1937 text on *The Law of Cadavers and of Burial and Burial Places,* places of burial are generally and universally protected from disinterment: "Disinterment is generally abhorred. Though

[40] Mary L. Clark, "Treading on Hallowed Ground: Implications for Property Law and Critical Theory of Land Associated with Human Death and Burial, *Kentucky Law Journal*, Vol. 94 (2005), 488.

[41] Stroud, Law and the Dead Body, 115.

[42] Alison Dundes Renteln, "The Rights of the Dead: Autopsies and Corpse Mismanagement in Multicultural Societies.", *South Atlantic Quarterly,* Vol. 100, No. 4 (2001), 1006.

[43] Percival E. Jackson, *The Law of Cadavers and of Burial and Burial Places*, New York, Prentice-Hall, 1950, 133.

[44] Renteln, The Rights of the Dead, 1006.

[45] For example, see Mai-Linh K. Hong, "'Get Your Asphalt Off My Ancestors!': Reclaiming Richmond's African Burial Ground", *Law, Culture and the Humanities*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (2017), 81–103.

[46] Arthur L. H. Street, *American Cemetery Law: A Digest of the Cemetery Laws of all the States and Important Court Decisions*, (Madison, Wisconsin: Park and Cemetery, 1922), 5.

[47] Street, *American Cemetery Law*, 5.

[48] Ibid., 51.

savage practices varied with existing superstitions and while some savage tribes disinterred the bodies of their dead, generally – and particularly in enlightened eras – it has been the practice to perpetuate the right of burial by protecting the grave from subsequent violation."[49] It is particularly interesting that Jackson's text was written at a time when Anglo-Americans and Anglo-Canadians were engaging in widespread and well-known disinterment of Black people for dissection, and Indigenous people for pseudoscientific and phrenological study.

In Canada, provincial governments have, according to section 92 (13) of the Constitution Act, 1867, jurisdiction over "Property and Civil Rights in the Province", which includes cemeteries.[50] Section 101.1 (7) of Ontario's Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, for example, delegates to municipalities (or the Crown in areas where there is no municipality) the responsibility to protect and maintain cemeteries considered abandoned.[51] For re-discovered burial sites, Section 94 of the Act prohibits any person to "disturb or order the disturbance of a burial site or artifacts associated with the human remains." The area of Aboriginal law (or American Indian law in US contexts) provides a unique dimension to the issue of legal protections of spaces of burial. While the US federal government passed the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) in 1990 after bitter struggles by American Indian tribal governments, in Canada "there is no overarching federal legislation governing the rights and issues of an Aboriginal heritage and burial site,"[52] the federal government having constitutional responsibility "for 'Indians, and Lands reserved for Indians' under section 91(24) of the Constitution Act, 1867."[53] The widespread desecration of Black community cemeteries suggests an egregious failure on the part of municipalities in Ontario to extend their protective responsibilities over them. And the federal government's failure to protect Cheslatta cemeteries and other Indigenous sites likely constitutes a violation of its constitutional fiduciary duties towards status Indians and their lands. The uneven application of protections points to what scholars have termed a pattern of "inequity and the dead"[54] that is distinguishable along racial lines.

[49] Jackson, *The Law of Cadavers*, 101.
[50] Anishinabek Nation, *A Toolkit for Understanding Aboriginal Heritage & Burial Rights & Issues*, North Bay, ON, Union of Ontario Indians, 2015, 10.
[51] Funeral, Burial and Cremation Services Act, 2002. S.O. 2002, Chapter 33, Section 101.1 (7).
[52] Anishinaabek Nation, *A Toolkit*, 9.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Stroud, Law and the Dead Body, 122.

## "Grim Ritual": The Work of Memory Amongst the Marginalized

In this section, I will trace how communities of the dead "forgotten and despised" by the majority are granted "a return to life by the living as they seek to redeem the past."[55] I argue that this work of memory is made all the more significant by the communal nature of the sites. This is in sharp contrast to rural amd predominantly white Canadian cemeteries, whose significance is usually attributed to individual familial attachment. This difference is rooted in a historical shift in the necrogeography of English communities. In the context of the old English churchyard, which was the predominant necrogeographical type prior to the 19th century, Laqueur notes that the churchyard "was and looked to be a place for remembering *a bounded community of the dead* who belonged there rather than a place for individual commemoration and mourning."[56] This tradition of communitarian burial left the dead largely undifferentiated and unmarked, but no less significant for the lack of names and epitaphs. As Laqueur notes, for most of British history, a community of believers would be buried together to await resurrection. This collective emphasis has today been replaced by the ethos of the modern cemetery wherein individual burial plots are tended by close family and these plots decay in both physical form and significance as time wears on and loved ones forget or pass away.

However, in the case of the places of burial of Indigenous, Black, and other marginalized communities, the survival of the *bounded community of the dead* is connected to the historic and contemporary presence of the living. DeMond Shondell Miller and Jason David Rivera point out that, in New Orleans, distinctive above ground tombs are called "homes of the dead";[57] they argue that in Louisiana "the relationship that the living have with the cemeteries makes its culture unique. The cemeteries create a sense of place that facilitates the communion of the living and the dead through religious and cultural activities."[58] This underscores "the social emphasis New Orleans' society places on the 'places of the dead' in the minds of the living."[59] These "places of the dead" also served a central role in the collective resilience of Black New Orleans communities in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina's devastation. Like the Black communities of New Orleans, in both southern Ontario and in the Cheslatta territory, burial places have a *collective* importance to the living.

[55] Laqueur, *The Work of the Dead*, 32.
[56] Ibid., 138. (My emphasis.)
[57] DeMond Shondell Miller – Jason David Rivera, *Hallowed Ground, Place and Culture: The Cemetery and the Creation of Place, Space and Culture,* London, Sage Publications, 2006, 338.
[58] Miller and Rivera, *Hallowed Ground*, 340.
[59] Ibid., 349.

Even in places where no tombstones remain, the community of the copresent dead is of tremendous social and spiritual significance. Like the churchyard, what often remains of such places is the "undulations of the earth marking a community of bodies."[60] In Lakeshore, cemetery advocates note that the "gravestones are not visible."[61] In another example, Harding Davis, in a short online film, makes a sweeping gesture with her hand over the New Canaan Cemetery, pointing to the shape of the land, suggesting the presence of ancestors in the earth.[62] The fact that this community lived in this space and continues to inhabit the ground makes it important regardless of any built features that might remain. In this sense, mainstream heritage designations and other markers of historical significance often do not encompass the burial places of the marginalized, perceiving them as gone when the stones are destroyed or removed. Cemeteries are recognizable to proponents of white heritage because of the individuation and the physical architecture of the graves.[63] In the case of the Cheslatta Carrier Nation, "floodwaters have exposed coffins in the past, and in 1952 bodies washed into the lake and were never recovered. The lake was later consecrated as a graveyard itself".[64] The graves lost have been so numerous, and the *graveless* remains so ubiquitous, that an entire unmarked expanse of water has been consecrated a resting place for the Cheslatta.

The work of memory of marginalized communities such as Cheslatta takes on several forms, including the grim consecration of a lake as a gravesite. More than a half century since the original flooding of the cemeteries by the Kemano project, the Cheslatta people continue to tend to the remaining graves, which are covered in small structures known as spirit houses. Sitting atop the interred remains of relatives and ancestors, these wooden houses are home to their spirits. When flooding periodically takes place in the Kemano system, the Cheslatta must return to their cemeteries "for a grim ritual, the evacuation of 'spirit houses' from a graveyard".[65] Cheslatta community members come together to raise the spirit houses out of the reach of the floodwaters (today doing so with logistical support from Alcan). In 2011, Robertson noted that it is "all we can do, short of digging up graves".[66] He continued: "it was an emotional time. […] You never get used to seeing your ancestors moved. […] It's pretty hard on people. That's your grandfather

[60] Laqueur, *The Work of the Dead,* 141.
[61] CBC, Black cemetery in Lakeshore.
[62] Roberts, The Hidden Cemeteries of Essex County, 1:50-2:03.
[63] See Richard V. Francaviglia, The Cemetery as an Evolving Cultural Landscape, *Annals of the Association of American Geographers,* Vol. 61, No. 3 (2010), 501–509.
[64] Hume, Native Band rushes to save grave markets from flood waters.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid.

or great uncle. I know the people there that day were quite angry […] it is also troubling having in the back of your head that it could happen again anytime, even though there are solutions to this problem".[67]

Another way that the Cheslatta have undertaken the work of memory in order to redeem the past is through devising solutions to the ongoing problem of flooding. They have repeatedly suggested to Alcan that the company could route the water through a different waterway that would not further flood their remaining cemetery sites. In the words of Robertson: "we want some comfort that man-made water flows that are ripping through our valley won't continue".[68] Another attempt to redeem the past has been made by the Cheslatta via efforts to obtain redress on behalf of the community. In 2019, these efforts were successful, leading to the BC government to agree to provide restitution to the Cheslatta, including funds for "environmental restoration, as well as land transfers and support for cultural and language programs".[69] However, such important work is connected to the grimmest work of memory: the continuing return of kin from the lake-grave to which they were relegated by the requirements of aluminum smelting. According to Chief Corrina Leween, "We still find bones along the lake. We collect them and bring them back to our community".[70]

Like the consecrated lake in Cheslatta territory, the Bethel Union Cemetery contains an undifferentiated space of consecration. The mound of bones and remains, bulldozed in the mid-20th century, is today covered with periwinkles and wild violets, plants typical of the necrobotany of burial places. The mound has remained untouched in restoration efforts, consecrated as a collective resting place. The work of memory at Bethel Union Cemetery has involved much collective commemoration including the emancipation star, which is "dedicated to the unknown African-Canadians who made their way to freedom or died trying", and frequent mention of "unmarked and mass graves."[71]

Black communities throughout Southern Ontario have sought to reclaim and restore cemetery sites and thereby reconnect to an element of Canadian history that is threatened with erasure. As Glen Cook notes, "I just want some *acknowledgment* that this is an old cemetery site."[72] Lloyd Dean, Windsor judge and great grandson of Delos Rogest Davis, the first black lawyer in Canada buried in New Canaan Cemetery, observed that "[y]ou feel there is something significant

67 Hume, Native Band Rushes to save grave markets from floodwaters.

68 Ibid.

69 Trumpener, Homes burned, cemetery flooded.

70 Ibid.

71 Forsyth, Bruce, Cemetery honours the early multi-racial pioneers of Sunnidale Township, July 2018, https://militarybruce.com/cemetery-honours-the-early-multi-racial-pioneers-of-sunnidale-township/ (accessed 8 April 2020).

72 My emphasis. CBC, Black cemetery in Lakeshore 'built over and neglected', *CBC News*, 27 February 2015.

here [...] it's something that is very meaningful to me."[73] Charles Nolan, another descendant whose great-grandfather is buried in New Canaan Cemetery, noted that "I feel the peace and, it sounds corny, but I feel the spirit".[74]

For Harding-Davis, a real connection between the community of the dead and the living motivates restoration efforts: "It's not just a spot where there's a marker. It's a person that is buried there."[75] The collective work of memory is a source of joy and connection, and she remarks that: "When I come into these cemeteries, it gladdens my heart to be able to honor my people."[76] Here Harding-Davis is placing emphasis not on individual relatives or kin, but rather the collective noun *people,* referring to her work preserving cemeteries across the Windsor region. Harding-Davis emphasized that "they were real people and lived a life, some of them of absolute agony [...] they risked their lives to become free. In order to have families who could live like everyone else, equal participation in the world. In order for them to do that today these cemeteries have to exist".[77] The continuum here between the historic community and the contemporary reality is yet further evidence of the essential nature of such sites to marginalized communities. And this continuum includes the work of interring and honouring the dead themselves: "[r]efugees 'specifically chose to have (their) own cemeteries [...] when we came here we made it our goal, first to build churches because they could act as places of worship and schools and to have our own cemeteries...So we could lovingly bury our loved ones and take care of them after they died."[78]

The work of the loving burial and continuing care continues into the present with the work of memory, restoring those "forgotten and despised"[79] by the dominant majority and restoring them to their original place in a community of remembrance and belonging.

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In this paper I have not had space to enumerate the many countless Indigenous places of burial that have undergone destruction and desecration across Canada, including those flooded by hydroelectric projects. Similarly, I have been limited in my focus on Black community burial places in the Simcoe and Windsor-areas. Elsewhere I have focused on other sites of Indigenous and Black burial place

[73] CBC, Hidden cemeteries of Essex County hold Underground Railroad history, *CBC News*, 1 February 2018.
[74] "The Hidden Cemeteries of Essex County". YouTube.
[75] CBC, Black cemetery in Lakeshore 'built over and neglected', *CBC News*, 27 February 2015.
[76] CBC, Hidden cemeteries of Essex County.
[77] "The Hidden Cemeteries of Essex County". YouTube.
[78] CBC, Hidden cemeteries of Essex County.
[79] Laqueur, *The Work of the Dead*, 32.

destruction;[80] however, a more thorough and expansive survey of the destruction is needed to fully understand both its scale and its impact on Indigenous and Black communities. Furthermore, preliminary research indicates that other communities have also experienced racialized necrogeographical destruction, including the interned Japanese on the British Columbia coast in the World War II period.[81] Finally, future interviews with descendants and community leaders (such as Mike Robertson, Chief Corrina Leween, Elise Harding-Davis, and Janie Cooper-Wilson) will offer further insight into the impact of the destruction of burial places from the perspective of those who tend them.

The fate of the dead mirrors that of the living, and my research indicates that in Canada, dehumanization of racialized people is not limited to the living – the dead have faced widespread and consistent desecration, of which Cheslatta and the Black community cemeteries of southern Ontario are but examples. Both the burial places of the Cheslatta Carrier Nation and those of the Black communities of the Simcoe and Windsor areas have been made vulnerable to destruction by the poverty, dispossession, and racial exclusion imposed on their living communities. Often, the conditions of racialization have forced adjacent communities away from their sites, further compounding the potential for destruction by removing those who might protect them.

Despite the scale of the destruction, the continued existence of these sites, and of people who tend to them, is seen by many descendants and community members as a symbol of the strength of past and present communities. As Cooper-Wilson states, speaking of her forbears disguising their graves to avoid body snatchers: "You've got to give it to African Canadians. Would we have the wits and the tenacity to survive what they went through?".[82] In the words of Chief Leween of the Cheslatta Carrier Nation, in the context of damages won by her community from the provincial government of British Columbia: "We're in an era right now where we can actually take and make a success of tragedy […] this will allow us to do that, to rebuild our community".[83] Indigenous and Black communities have successfully reconsecrated spaces of acknowledgement, remembrance, and peace through tending to burial places long threatened with the erasure wrought by colonial and racial dehumanization.

[80] See, for example, William Felepchuk, Racial Necrogeographies and the Making of White Space: The Life and Death of Nineteenth-Century Indigenous and Black Burial Places in Rural Ontario, *American Indian Culture and Research Journal*, 43.2 (May 2019), 73–87.

[81] See Vancouver Island University, VIU anthropology students and professor probe cemetery mystery, 16 December 2010, https://news.viu.ca/viu-anthropology-students-and-professor-probe-cemetery-mystery (accessed 8 April 2020), and The Old Cemeteries Society of Victoria, Obelisk – Virtual Tour of Ross Bay Cemetery, https://oldcem.bc.ca/cem/cem_rb/em_rb_tour/obelisk/ (accessed 8 April 2020).

[82] Naomi Norquay, 'If we don't try, then shame on us!', 10.

[83] Trumpener, Homes burned, cemetery flooded.

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# SAFELY EMBRACING CULTURE: THE ADEQUACY OF THE CULTURAL SAFETY PARADIGM IN CANADIAN AND AMERICAN INDIGENOUS HEALTHCARE

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## Abstract

*The Canadian and American healthcare systems have long histories of providing inequitable and ineffective care for Indigenous persons. This ineffectiveness is largely attributable to the confluence of socio-political inequities and a lack of understanding of Indigenous culture amongst healthcare providers. In an attempt to rectify this lack of understanding, a group of Māori nurses developed the cultural safety paradigm. Building off of the failures of its predecessors, this paradigm encourages healthcare providers to understand health holistically and socio-historically, in and through systems of value (i.e., cultures). The conceptual promise of the paradigm has led to its adoption into Canadian and American healthcare, but has been appropriated in a way that perpetuates the very problems it aims to rectify. Although cultural safety is a step towards more equitable healthcare, a new precedent of cultural understanding is needed for truly effective care for Indigenous persons.*

## Introduction

The Canadian and American healthcare systems have long histories of providing inequitable and ineffective care for Indigenous persons.[2] Although Canadian healthcare has long been touted for its "universal care" and American healthcare has similarly been recognized for its innovativeness, the umbrellas of universality and innovation have rarely covered the Indigenous groups of North America. Since first contact, both Canadian and American settlers have justified this lack of coverage using the language of the "Indian problem", an erroneous

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[2] Piotr Wilk – Alana Maltby – Joel Phillips, Unmet Healthcare Needs among Indigenous Peoples in Canada: Findings from the 2006 and 2012 Aboriginal Peoples Surveys, *Journal of Public Health*, Vol. 26, No. 4 (2018), 481–483. Based on indigenous identity, gender, age, geographic region and urban/rural area. Additionally, frequency distributions were produced for reasons for UHN and types of care needed. Standard errors and confidence intervals were calculated and took into account bootstrap weights. Results: In 2006, 11.65% (CI: 11.04, 12.26)

presupposition that Indigenous persons are somehow less civilized and/or worthy of rights than any other group. Often times, this attribution of worth was linked to the high prevalence of pathogens such as tuberculosis in Indigenous populations (many of which were exacerbated, not necessarily introduced[3], by settler impositions such as residential schools[4]), leading Indigenous persons to be seen as "a threat to the nation[s] as a whole".[5] In contemporary medicine, this mentality of lesser and/or differential worth persists in much less explicit forms, but the pervasiveness of the "problem" has not waned. Indigenous populations now experience higher rates of acute physiological illness, suicide, and illicit substance use than almost every other group in Canada[6] or the U.S.[7] Moreover, North American Indigenous peoples have a life expectancy between 5 and 15 years less than the Canadian and American national averages.[8, 9] This disproportionate burden of illness is neither coincidence nor a manifestation of "the natural order." Rather, these health disparities are made possible through an enduring colonial culture. In healthcare, finding appropriate and effective ways to navigate these culture-health ties is paramount.

To be culturally appropriate and effective when working in healthcare, one first needs to have an understanding of culture. Importantly, the term "culture" here refers to a wide range of social, historical, and economic factors that are shared amongst groups of people. Culture encompasses all of the non-biological facets of the world that determine how someone lives their life (although biology can also be influenced by these facets[10]). As such, the more knowledgeable a healthcare provider is regarding their patients' culture, the more they know about how to appropriately and effectively care for these patients. This may seem like a self-evident statement, but the influence of culture on the uptake of a patient's care plan, especially for minority groups,[11] is often overlooked.

[3] James Daschuk, *Clearing the Plains*, Regina, University of Regina, 2013, 30.

[4] Maureen K. Lux, *Seperate Beds - A History of Indian Hospitals in Canada, 1920s-1980s*, Toronto, University of Toronto, 2016, 26, 42, 127.

[5] Maureen K. Lux, *Medicine That Walks - Disease, Medicine, and Canadian Plains Native People, 1880–1940*, 3rd edition, Toronto, University of Toronto, 2012, 221.

[6] Charlotte Reading – Fred Wien, Health Inequalities and the Social Determinants of Aboriginal Peoples' Health, *National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health Centre De Collaboration Nationale De La Santé Autochtone*, 2009, 10–24.

[7] Indian Health Services, *Disparities* (2018), https://www.ihs.gov/newsroom/factsheets/disparities/ (accessed 23 July 2019).

[8] Ibid., 1.

[9] *Life Expectancy* Statistics Canada, 2015, https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/89-645-x/2010001/life-expectancy-esperance-vie-eng.htm (accessed 22 July 2019).

[10] Jonathan Michael Kaplan, When Socially Determined Categories Make Biological Realities: Understanding Black/White Health Disparities in the U.S., *The Monist*, Vol. 93, No. 2 (2010), 281–97.

[11] Reading and Wien, 'Health Inequalities', 10–24.

Current healthcare provider training regimen are extremely superficial when it comes to cultural understanding. This is particularly pronounced in the realms of socio-cultural and historical underpinnings of Indigenous health.[12, 13] A care program that seems doable for a (more often than not) White physician of the upper-middle class may be burdensome or outright ineffective for an Indigenous patient (due to a myriad of social, cultural, historical, or economic factors that disadvantage them), but healthcare providers continue to be baffled when some of their patients have trouble adhering to treatment plans. Healthcare providers simply do not understand enough about their Indigenous patients to provide effective care. Thankfully, North American healthcare systems (particularly in Canada[14]) have been made aware of this knowledge gap and have been attempting to address it for decades.[15] However, as evidenced by the decades of attempts, this gap has yet to actually be reduced in any meaningful sense.

Although understanding Indigenous culture is a seemingly innocuous and attainable goal, the means by which a colonial healthcare system achieves this understanding tend to be ethically concerning, if not outright pernicious. Indeed, ventures for learning about "other" (i.e., minority) cultures, more often than not, result in the epistemic oppression and subjugation of Indigenous peoples.[16] For example, in 1933, a series of trials seeking to understand why "Indians are far more susceptible to tuberculosis that are the White races of mankind"[17] were undertaken at the Qu'Appelle Sanatorium in Saskatchewan under the auspices of a proselytizing Canadian government. The subjects of the trials, Indigenous infants with tuberculosis, were used to test the potency of the bacillus Calmette-Guerin (BCG) vaccine (the effectiveness of which was questionable[18]), despite the existing knowledge that poor housing and nutrition were the primary culprits of the poor health amongst Indigenous groups. The vaccine proved to be effective, but its protective effects hardly made a dent in the staggering discrepancy between Indigenous infant

[12] Allana S.W. Beavis et al., What All Students in Healthcare Training Programs Should Learn to Increase Health Equity: Perspectives on Postcolonialism and the Health of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada', *BMC Medical Education*, Vol. 15, No. 1 (2015), 155, https://doi.org/10.1186/s12909-015-0442-y (accessed 5 December 2020).

[13] Lloy Wylie and Stephanie McConkey, Insiders' Insight: Discrimination against Indigenous Peoples through the Eyes of Health Care Professionals, *Journal of Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities*, 7 May 2018, 1–9, https://doi.org/10.1007/s40615-018-0495-9 (accessed 5 December 2020).

[14] Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Calls to Action, 2015, 20.

[15] Mary Jane Logan McCallum and Adele Perry, *Structures of Indifference - An Indigenous Life and Death in a Canadian City*, Winnipeg, MB, University of Manitoba, 2018, 137–8.

[16] Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, 2nd edition, London, Zed Books Ltd., 2012, 8–24.

[17] National Research Council, *Dominion of Canada*, 1928, 44.

[18] M. Lux, Perfect Subjects: Race, Tuberculosis, and the Qu'Appelle BCG Vaccine Trial, *Canadian Bulletin of Medical History*, Vol. 15, No. 2 (1998), 281.

mortality rates and the mortality rates of their White counterparts, thereby doing nothing more than revealing what was already known, "that poverty, not tuberculosis, was the greatest threat to Native infants."[19] Misguided attempts at understanding Indigenous culture like this are not limited to the distant past. While the exact form of the oppression/subjugation changes by circumstance, treating Indigenous groups as things to be studied, rather than people to be understood and helped, has been consistent throughout history. As Kim Tallbear (2013) puts it, "Native American [and/or Indigenous] bodies, both dead and living, have been sources of bone, and more recently of blood, spit, and hair, used to constitute knowledge of human biological and cultural history."[20] Bodies, not people, are given epistemological primacy. An understanding of Indigenous culture is needed in North American healthcare, but this understanding must be sought out in ways that do not perpetuate these colonial ideals.

As previously mentioned, the Canadian and American healthcare systems have long been attempting to avoid perpetuating their misguided ignorance, with little success. However, some of these attempts have been much more successful than others. One of the most celebrated of these (relatively) successful ventures into cultural understanding is known as the cultural safety paradigm. The paradigm, originally developed by a small group of Māori nursing students, is intended to act as means of modifying the ideologies of healthcare to promote values of holistic, humble, and responsive care provision. In essence, the paradigm blankets all of the principles of healthcare (e.g., respect for persons, beneficence, non-maleficence, etc.), and encourages a distancing from their implicit colonial inclinations towards epistemic and praxiological oppression. The paradigm appeared to demonstrate positive outcomes in its first years of implementation in New Zealand and, as such, many healthcare theorists and policy makers in Canada and the U.S. began to adopt and adapt the cultural safety paradigm. Thirty years later, I find myself hard-pressed to find healthcare programing that does not hold cultural safety as the gold standard of appropriate and effective Indigenous care. At the same time, I have also grown increasingly aware that many healthcare providers pride themselves on their culturally safe practice without fully knowing what it is they are proud of or how being "culturally safe" may not be as desirable as we think.[21, 22]

[19] Ibid., 289–290.

[20] Kim Tallbear, *Native American DNA: Tribal Belonging and the False Promise of Genetic Science*, 1st edition, Minneapolis, University Of Minnesota, 2013, 2.

[21] Elaine Papps – Irihapeti Ramsden, Cultural Safety in Nursing: The New Zealand Experience, *International Journal for Quality in Health Care*, Vol. 8, No. 5 (1996), 491–97, https://doi.org/10.1093/intqhc/8.5.491 (accessed 5 December 2020).

[22] Alison J. Gerlach, A Critical Reflection on the Concept of Cultural Safety, *Canadian Journal of Occupational Therapy*, Vol. 79, No. 3 (2012), 151–58, https://doi.org/10.2182/cjot.2012.79.3.4 (accessed 5 December 2020).

This paper explores the ethical considerations of the cultural safety paradigm in a Canadian and American context. Specifically, I critique the ways in which the paradigm succeeds and fails to provide for the needs of Indigenous persons by way of striving for cultural understanding. Through my analysis, I demonstrate that, although the paradigm improves on its predecessors, it enforces the same colonial ideals it aims to avoid. As such, I suggest that we revise and reconsider how healthcare should frame a pursuit of Indigenous cultural understanding.

## Cultural Safety

### The Paradigm

The term "cultural safety" originates from the work of a small group of Māori (New Zealand Indigenous) nursing students in 1992.[23] While attending nursing school, this group of students grew increasingly concerned about their social and intellectual safety amongst their peers. The vast majority of these peers were descendants of British colonists, and the culture they exhibited and embodied was oppressively settler-focused. In other words, these Māori students not only felt that their voices fell on deaf ears, but also that the foundations of their nursing education relied on principles that were established with the colonial oppression of Indigenous persons in mind. At the same time, New Zealand was experiencing a rapid influx of Māori individuals into urban centres,[24] many of whom did not trust formal healthcare services to adequately care for their needs for the very same reasons that the Māori students felt unsafe.[25] This confluence of factors generated a great deal of tension between Māori individuals and New Zealand's formal healthcare services. However, the groups found themselves at an impasse. On one hand, it was clear that New Zealand's healthcare system needed to address its inadequate treatment of Māori individuals for the sake of their patient's health and safety. On the other, the core operational principles of their healthcare provision (e.g., respect for persons, beneficence, non-maleficence, etc.: the very same principles used in North American healthcare) are, despite their implicit tendencies towards colonial ideals, good principles that should not be completely thrown out. To appeal to both hands, the aforementioned nursing students got to work

[23] Carrie Bourassa – Eric Oleson – Janet McElhaney, *Cultural Safety*, 2016, [in press].

[24] Marcie Snyder – Kathi Wilson, Urban Aboriginal Mobility in Canada: Examining the Association with Health Care Utilization, *Social Science and Medicine*, Vol. 75, No. 12 (2012), 2420.

[25] Thomas Harding, Cultural Safety: A Vital Element for Nursing Ethics., *Nursing Praxis in New Zealand*, Vol. 29, No. 1 (2013), 4–11.

designing a paradigm that would blanket and seek to modify only the implicit oppressive influences of healthcare. As such, the cultural safety paradigm was designed to reframe, rather than rebuild, healthcare provision in a manner more holistically receptive to Indigenous culture.

To accomplish this reframing, the cultural safety paradigm encourages values of holistic, humble, and responsive care for Indigenous persons. These three values are quite vague and can refer to a number of different behaviours in an infinite number of circumstances. This is by design. Given the innumerable ways in which oppression can manifest and the equally innumerable permutations of values that patients and providers may hold, a paradigm that can reframe all possible idiosyncrasies must be vague enough to apply in all of these possible cases. Moreover, in an attempt to fight fire with fire, the cultural safety paradigm is designed to instil implicitly understood ideals through vague manners of encompassing influence, much in the same way colonial ideals instil their oppressive ideals.

That being said, there are specific aspects to these three values. In terms of holistic care, the paradigm encourages healthcare providers to understand the health of their patients in a more inclusive sense. That is, taking into account the emotional, spiritual, and physical health of individuals as well as the socio-historical roots of illness in the populations to which they belong. In terms of humility and responsiveness, cultural safety encourages healthcare providers to view culture as a system of values, carrying normative weight. That is, being humble enough to appreciate that cultural influences are not distant factors of life outside of the biomedical sphere, but are very much a part of both patient and provider behaviour. Moreover, this humility deals with acknowledging that patients are more knowledgeable than providers of the influences of their culture on their health, whilst providers are responsible for responding promptly and appropriately to this knowledge. The combined effect of holistic, humble, and responsive care opens the door for understanding patients on a cultural level, which helps to decolonize healthcare methodologies[26] and reduce the risk of implicit colonial bias in patient-provider interactions.[27] If done correctly, this cultural understanding increases positive cared-based relationships, which builds rapport and patterns of beneficence between healthcare systems and Indigenous communities.

Since the relationships and interactions between patients and providers are the ultimate gatekeepers of colonial influence (without them, there would be no manifested oppression or space for reframing), it is worth further clarifying the type of "positive relationships" that cultural safety aims to

[26] Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, 8–24.

[27] J. R. Betancourt – A. W. Maina, The Institute of Medicine Report Unequal Treatment: Implications for Academic Health Centers, *Mount Sinai Journal of Medicine*, Vol. 71, No. 5 (2004), 314–321. PMID: 15543432.

create. During the development of the cultural safety paradigm, Ezekiel and Linda Emanuel were publishing their seminal article, *Four Models of the Physician-patient Relationship.*[28] Although this article was not a direct influence on the development of the cultural safety paradigm, it provides a very clear depiction of the type of relationship the paradigm is hoping to frame. Emanuel and Emanuel argue that the traditional model of the patient-provider relationship is unbalanced, granting too much praxiological and epistemic power to the provider. That is, healthcare providers and the culture of healthcare (e.g., non-pluralistic biomedicine) are given authority over patients, when the authority over health should be shared. Put wonderfully by Maureen Lux:[29]

> Past medical therapeutics [i.e., healthcare] are most often judged by modern assessments and their effectiveness: Did they work according to our understanding of science and medicine? Therapeutics that are considered effective are retained; the rest are ignored as quaintly outdated or offered as evidence of medical progress. But therapeutics are much more than chemical formulae and responses. Therapeutics imply a relationship between healer and patient – a relationship that must be viewed within a particular cultural context… That therapies may be judged ineffective in another time or place does not limit their significance. For instance, today's cancer patients share their physician's faith in science to such a degree that they willingly undergo near fatal doses of chemotherapy that are for a time much worse than the disease. Therapeutics are culturally relative and must be studied within the framework of explanations, relationships, and worldview.

To rectify the more authoritarian form of healthcare traditionally seen in "therapeutics" illustrated in this quote, Emanuel and Emanuel emphasize a form of patient-provider relationship that is embedded in cultural relativity and a shared responsibility for health. Specifically, they suggest what they refer to as the "deliberative model", wherein the relationship between a patient and provider aims to achieve a mean between the extremes of autonomy and paternalism. In doing so, trust and a common frame of reference can be established between the patient and the provider. This requires mutual engagement of and humble reflection upon patient and provider values. Recognizing that neither patients nor provider are value neutral (nor should they be), this allows for an effective integration of health ideals that ultimately improve the quality of care. It is these sorts of patient-provider relationships that cultural safety hopes to encourage.

[28] Ezekiel Emmanuel – Linda Emanuel, Four Models of the Physician-patient Relationship, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Vol. 267 (1992), 2251–2256.

[29] Maureen K. Lux, *Medicine That Walks*, 72.

Although cultural safety has arguably been the most successful attempt at modifying implicit colonial ideals,[30] its relative success and influence has not come out of nowhere. There were many other ideology-modifying paradigms before cultural safety, each of which gradually improved on its predecessors.[31] In this sense, cultural safety is part of a continuum of cultural effectiveness paradigms (Figure 1), which will hopefully continue to grow in the future. Understanding this continuum and the foci within it help demonstrate why, despite a lack of empirical tenability attributable to its vague nature, cultural safety has been so popular over the last thirty years.

At the least effective end of the continuum sits cultural awareness. To be culturally aware, healthcare providers are simply expected to recognize the fact that Indigenous patients have "different" cultural circumstances through which they live their lives. In this, there is no requirement for reframing power imbalances or humble consideration of patient's cultural knowledge and its effect on health outcomes. This paradigm is the least onerous on healthcare providers, allowing for significant colonial barriers to patients. Cultural sensitivity and competency, which improve on cultural awareness, include expectations of equitable inter-personal engagements with individuals belonging to diverse value systems (much like the deliberative patient-provider model). Cultural sensitivity dwells more on being inoffensive, while cultural competency focuses more on creating open discourse. However, neither of these paradigms says anything about systemic equity. This is a large reason why cultural safety is so appealing. It is the first paradigm of its kind to acknowledge systemic health inequities and aim to understand these inequities from the point of view of disadvantaged cultural groups (i.e., Indigenous persons). In this, healthcare providers are encouraged to understand Indigenous cultures not only in terms of lived experience, but also as a way of viewing healthcare cultures and their shortcomings (i.e., as systems of value). However, this does not mean that cultural safety is the best we can do. Indeed, a great deal of its success is likely attributable to the small steps advanced by each of its predecessors, each of which made the ideals of cultural safety easier to accept. As Figure 1 illustrates, each paradigm is a step towards creating truly effective (i.e., decolonized) healthcare for Indigenous persons, but no paradigm is the final destination.

[30] Harding, Cultural Safety: Nursing Ethics, 4–11.

[31] Simon Brascoupé – Catherine Waters, Cultural Safety: Exploring the Applicability of the Concept of Cultural Safety to Aboriginal Health and Community Wellness, *Journal of Aboriginal Health*, Vol. 5, No. 6–8 (2009), 10.

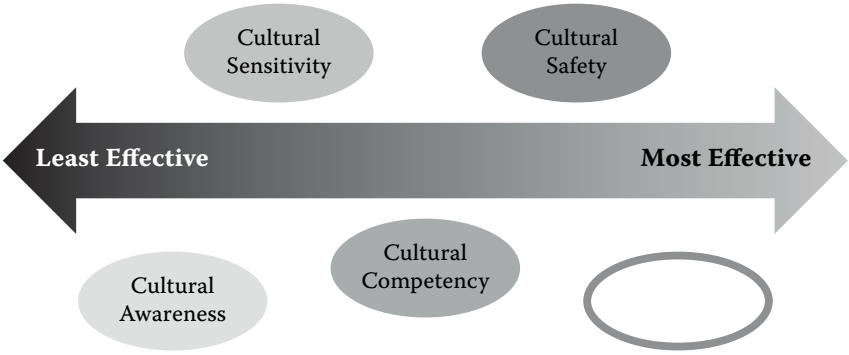


*Figure 1: The continuum of cultural effectiveness paradigms in healthcare*

## Paradigmatic Appropriation in Canada and the United States

Ever since it's creation, the cultural safety paradigm has been misinterpreted and used in ways in which it was not intended. These difficulties are often attributed to the paradigm's vague nature.[32, 33] Since the paradigm's goals and values are nearly impossible to quantify in a globally consistent manner, commensurable data on its impacts is nearly non-existent. Moreover, there are many ways in which one could interpret values of "holistic care" and "decolonization". These phrases come in matters of degrees and manifest themselves in a myriad of ways. Indeed, the degree to which a healthcare system is holistic and decolonizing seems more like a general sense than it does an empirical fact. This being said, the paradigm appears to be at least marginally beneficial in New Zealand nursing pedagogy when applied as intended.[34] Unfortunately, this "intention" along with the cultural relativity of the paradigm itself does not always transfer when appropriating cultural safety in Canada and the U.S.

At first glance, appropriating the cultural safety paradigm for North America seems like a sensible decision. The Indigenous populations of Canada, New Zealand, and the U.S. were all colonized by the British, are largely subjected to Western medical systems that prioritize non-pluralistic biomedical structures, and are minorities in their native territories. Moreover, Canada and the U.S. have also been experiencing a significant increase of Indigenous persons living in urban spaces,[35] which was part of the social impetus for the creation of the paradigm in New Zealand. However, this is where the similarities end.

[32] Papps – Ramsden, Cultural Safety in Nursing, 491–497.
[33] Gerlach, Critical Reflection, 151–158.
[34] Harding, Cultural Safety: Nursing Ethics, 4–11.
[35] Snyder – Wilson, Urban Aboriginal Mobility, 2420.

There are considerable differences between the Māori, for which the cultural safety paradigm was designed, and Canadian and U.S. Indigenous populations. Since New Zealand is a much smaller country than Canada or the U.S., land claim agreements between the Māori and the New Zealand government are much more well-defined than they are with Indigenous Canadians or Americans.[36] This makes delineations of political sovereignty much easier to establish. Moreover, the Māori people, while not completely homogenous, share a common language and culture that is protected by federal law (e.g., the Treaty of Waitangi), while Canadian and American Indigenous people are incredibly diverse in both language and culture that is legally protected to varying degrees.[37] [38] Therefore, while understanding "the" Māori culture is not easier per se, it is at least possible. Understanding "the" Canadian or American Indigenous culture is a pointless endeavour; the actual political and cultural complexities of these Indigenous populations do not reflect such unanimity.

It should also be noted that the differences in healthcare structure and provision in Canada and the U.S. are not insignificant. Canada and the U.S. differ in many ways, each of which will alter the ways in which an ideology-modifying paradigm implicates its stakeholders; the most obvious difference being the public versus private approaches to healthcare funding. However, there are more direct differences regarding each country's address of Indigenous persons. For example, it has been argued that the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) is currently encouraging more collaboration with Indigenous groups than its American counterparts.[39] However, the primary concern of this paper is to recognize the limits of appropriating cultural safety, regardless of circumstance. In healthcare systems as antagonistic to pluralistic healthcare (which involves more than strict adherence to biomedicine) as Canada and the U.S.,[40] these limits are sure to lead to undesirable outcomes irrespective of some structural differences. Cultural safety may also be limited by its design as a pedagogical tool for nurses.[41] Extending the paradigm to healthcare more generally (which Canada and the U.S. have done) assumes some form of transferability that may not actually exist. It seems intuitive that nursing education and general healthcare, regardless of cultural context, are distinct in a number of relevant ways. Educational aids (which could include ideology-modifying paradigms)

[36] Maggie Cywink, Why the Indigenous in New Zealand Have Fared Better than Those in Canada, *The Conversation*, 15 October 2017, 1.
[37] Cywink, Why the Indigenous, 1.
[38] Daschuk, *Clearing the Plains*.
[39] Tallbear, *Native American DNA*, 186–189.
[40] Maureen K. Lux, *Seperate Beds*, 5.
[41] Rose McEldowney – Margaret J. Connor, Cultural Safety as an Ethic of Care: A Praxiological Process, *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*, Vol. 22, No. 4 (2011), 342–349.

may help learning, but are not guaranteed to improve practice. As such, the cultural safety paradigm, despite being vague, may have design characteristics that lose their power outside of a nursing or educational context.

Despite all of the aforementioned possible concerns, cultural safety has been argued to be efficacious in both Canada[42] [43] and the U.S. healthcare systems.[44] However, this efficacy must be taken with a grain of salt. As with any measure of success, the efficacy of the cultural safety paradigm must be measured relative to some metric set out by its users (after all, the paradigm lacks an accountability framework to measure itself by). In Canada and the U.S., this metric is the amount of knowledge on Indigenous cultures the paradigm garners. Put differently, the appropriated form of cultural safety prioritizes ethnographic knowledge, which is not the same as cultural understanding. Indeed, an ethnographic focus is very reminiscent of the historically proven ineffective primacy of Indigenous bodies, rather than Indigenous persons.[45]

There are a myriad of examples of this ethnographic overreliance, which include, but are not limited to: a proclivity of medical research to conduct descriptive studies on Indigenous populations, rather than measurement or intervention-based studies.[46] [47] Indigenous specific adverse childhood experience diagnostics,[48] selectively screening for intergenerational trauma in physician encounters,[49] and inadequately engaging target individuals in community-based participatory research projects.[50] These sorts of knowledge pursuits are not completely devoid of usefulness, but they lead us to conceptualize "understanding" in a problematically narrow way. It is here where the appropriated form of cultural safety moves from possible to very real concerns.

[42] Lynden Lindsay Crowshoe et al., Exploring Canadian Physicians' Experiences with Type 2 Diabetes Care for Adult Indigenous Patients, *Canadian Journal of Diabetes*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (2018), 281–288.

[43] Rachelle D. Hole et al., Visibility and Voice: Aboriginal People Experience Culturally Safe and Unsafe Health Care, *Qualitative Health Research*, Vol. 25, No. 12 (2015), 1662–1674.

[44] Dawn Doutrich et al, Cultural Safety in New Zealand and the United States: Looking at a Way Forward Together, *Journal of Transcultural Nursing*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (2012), 143–150.

[45] Maureen K. Lux, *Seperate Beds*, 29.

[46] Alika Lafontaine, Indigenous Health Disparities: A Challenge and an Opportunity, *Canadian Journal of Surgery*, Vol. 61, No. 5 (2018), 300–301.

[47] Robert Sanson-Fisher et al., Indigenous Health Research : A Critical Review of Outputs over Time, *The Medical Journal of Australia*, Vol. 184, No. 10 (2006), 502–505.

[48] David Finkelhor et al, A Revised Inventory of Adverse Childhood Experiences, *Child Abuse & Neglect*, Vol. 48 (2015), 13–21.

[49] Amy Bombay – Kimberly Matheson – Hymie Anisman, The Intergenerational Effects of Indian Residential Schools: Implications for the Concept of Historical Trauma, *Transcultural Psychiatry*, Vol. 51, No. 3 (2014), 320–338, https://doi.org/10.1177/1363461513503380 (accessed 5 December 2020).

[50] Eileen Pittaway – Linda Bartolomei – Richard Hugman, Stop Stealing Our Stories: The Ethics of Research with Vulnerable Groups, *Journal of Human Rights Practice*, Vol. 2, No. 2 (2010), 229–251.

## Ethical Ramifications

Measuring efficacy by way of ethnographic productivity creates a heuristic for empirically tracking a paradigm that is inherently difficult to track. Healthcare systems are then led to erroneously correlate an enumeration of ethnographic knowledge with a degree of understanding. Supposedly, the more knowledge on Indigenous people a healthcare system has, the greater capacity the system has to integrate this knowledge, creating "understanding". However, while knowledge is certainly required for understanding, knowledge and understanding are not the same thing. I can know the first 100 digits of the number pi and recite them to anyone who asks, but this does not mean that I actually understand the important function of this number in something like calculating the area of a circle. Indeed, my "understanding" of pi would be very limited, considering my removed perspective from what the number actually represents in practice. Likewise, utilizing cultural safety in this way has led to healthcare developing a removed concept of Indigenous understanding that only serves to perpetuate epistemic oppression and problematic ideals of race-based medicine.

The means by which Canada and the U.S. are applying cultural safety are not entirely problematic. There are a limited number of good reasons for using race-based medicine, most of which have to do with the etiology of illness.[51] Certain illnesses disproportionately or differently impact different groups (e.g., sex-linked chromosomal illnesses). In these cases, there is good reason to purposefully seek out knowledge that separates those who are susceptible and those who are not. There is also reason to think that the ethnographic primacy of cultural safety is an expeditious route to achieving an understanding of Indigenous persons. After all, ethnographic study does not (usually) require time or resources dedicated to building mutually beneficial relationships with target community members. Observation creates data; data create knowledge bases; knowledge bases create foundations for understanding and mutual benefit. However, these benefits could result from the application of any knowledge-promoting paradigm. It is also dangerously optimistic to think that unidirectional and externally directed ethnography (i.e., healthcare observing the community, but not themselves) is able to "render simply transparent representations of what is culturally 'out there'".[52] The ethical risks of this sort of racially fuelled ethnography only stand to instantiate the erroneous divides between groups of people.[53]

[51] Jonathan M. Kaplan, When Socially Determined Categories Make Biological Realities: Understanding Black/White Health Disparities in the U.S., *The Monist*, Vol. 93, No. 2 (2010), 282.

[52] Tallbear, *Native American DNA*, 14–15.

[53] Kaplan, Socially Determined Categories, 282–283.

## Linguistic Difficulties

Linguistically, "cultural safety" implicitly permits a host of oppressive behaviours. A physician who receives a bulletin about their hospital adopting culturally safe care programs is probably not going to be well versed in the definition or history of the paradigm. Indeed, they are likely only going to engage with the paradigm insofar as they adhere to the expectations laid out by their workplace. It is possible that these expectations may be incredibly close to the intentions of the paradigm's ideal form, but (at least in Canada and the U.S.) this is unlikely. Even so, there are many things that "cultural safety" insinuates that may lead to unethical behaviour in an uninitiated individual.

The term "cultural" is not inherently problematic, but can become concerning when interpreted in the wrong way. When used appropriately (as intended by the ideal form of the paradigm), "cultural" means belonging to a group of people within a system of shared values. In this, the idea of culture applies equally to both Indigenous cultures and medical culture, invoking an understanding and reflection on both. When used inappropriately, the term "culture" insinuates an othering wherein "'culture' is defined in anthropological terms most consistently by its proximal relationship to difference".[54] That is, using the term "culture" to refer to anything that is not part of the sphere in which it is being invoked (i.e., Indigeneity and medical dogma). This creates a sense in which Indigenous culture contributes to the body of knowledge that is medicine, but medicine does not reciprocate nor should it be expected to. This oppresses Indigenous cultural understanding to an epistemic status unworthy of the same consideration of dogmatic medical understanding.

The term "safety" is much more concerning. "Safety" implies that a certain group is vulnerable and another authority/purveyor group is responsible for making the vulnerable group safe. Although identifying and caring for vulnerable persons is important, it inherently divides and inequitably establishes power relationships. In the case of medicine, these power relationships already exist, and are a large reason why the rapport between medicine and Indigenous individuals is so poor. Indigenous people do not need to be protected or saved, they need to be respected and understood. Assuming otherwise only serves to perpetuate colonial ideals like "saving the savages".

[54] Audra Simpson, On Ethnographic Refusal: Indigeneity, "Voice" and Colonial Citizenship, *Junctures: The Journal for Thematic Dialogue*, Vol. 0, No. 9 (2007), 70.

## Respect for Persons

There is also concern that the appropriation of the cultural safety paradigm leads to a dehumanization of Indigenous persons. There are two ways in which this concern may play out, both of which come down to an erasure of personhood. The first has to do with a loss of humanity through becoming complicit to colonial ideals. Indeed, many Indigenous people have been "trained" to believe they are lesser than, or destined to be the victims of an inalienable oppression.[55] If we continue to simply gather knowledge about Indigenous cultures as something outside of the culture of medicine, we only serve to continue this training. This sort of oppression can be seen in something I refer to as deficit lensing, wherein already oppressed cultures are viewed only by the deficiencies they have or the hardships they face, rather than their personhood. Collecting Indigenous knowledge is likely to reveal nothing more than the fact that Indigenous people are worse off than non-Indigenous people. This explicitly plays into deficit lensing and enforces ideas of Indigenous persons being less than non-Indigenous persons. Consequently, there is a sort of manifest destiny that occurs in which some Indigenous persons are lead to believe that they are subhuman and deserve the inequitable treatment they receive. But this is in no way a necessary state of affairs. Just because someone has lost their personhood does not mean we are not morally responsible for this loss or should not make efforts to restore the person.

The second concern is that of the lab rat phenomenon. Do Indigenous individuals accessing healthcare know that they are being used as a litmus test of their culture? Some may infer it, but I doubt it is ever explicitly stated. Should Indigenous patients know they are being assessed using diagnostic tools designed specifically for them? Absolutely. If Indigenous people are not already being deficit lensed, they are being treated solely as research subjects. Cultural safety's appropriated form makes this perfectly permissible.

## Justice

The main concerns of justice in the application of the cultural safety paradigm have to do with misrepresenting Indigenous people. If we are using the cultural safety paradigm as a means of gathering knowledge and corroborating this knowledge into "understanding", then we are left with finding a framework for informing this corroboration. More likely than not, this framework will

[55] Shandra Spears, Strong Spirit, Fractured Identity: An Ojibway Adoptee's Journey to Wholeness, in Martin J. Cannon – Lina Sunseri (eds.), *Racism, Colonialism, and Indigeneity in Canada*, 2nd edition, 2018, 105–110.

be the medical culture. As such, healthcare systems synthesize knowledge in a way that conforms to systemic ideals, which appropriates and misrepresents Indigenous cultures. In this, even the appropriated form of cultural safety perpetuates the very thing it was working against, ignorance of the actual nature of Indigeneity. While this may seem needlessly speculative, it does not seem too far-fetched, considering that the paradigm itself has been appropriated and misused from its original design to suit the Canadian and American context.

Another important concern of justice has to do with who controls the knowledge of Indigenous cultures and lived experience created by the appropriated paradigm. If the medical community are the sole owners of this knowledge, then Indigenous communities lose any ability to control the way in which healthcare providers perceive them. If the Indigenous community are the sole owners of this knowledge, then the medical community loses the ability to understand Indigenous cultures and create more effective care. This is why understanding is so important. It necessarily requires value exchange and engagement from both parties involved, meaning that both parties own the understanding created. Some systemic preventative measures such as the Canadian First Nations principles of Ownership, Control, Access, and Possession (OCAP) for Indigenous research have been put in place to try to enforce this sort of co-ownership, but they are rarely meaningfully followed.[56]

## Stepping Forward from Cultural Safety

It is here that one may suggest that cultural safety is not really problematic. Supposing we avoid the appropriative mistakes currently being committed and adhere to the true goals of the paradigm we should be able to at least somewhat improve our current healthcare. However, this suggestion misunderstands what the concerns of the paradigm are. It is the very fact that it has been and continues to be appropriated in ineffective ways that it is so dangerous. If the paradigm were as excellent as advertised, surely these mistakes would not be occurring. Cultural safety should not purport itself to be the end of effective inter-cultural understanding and engagement in healthcare. It is a step towards the positive end of the continuum, but not the end of progress. In an excellent address on the current state of affairs, Mary Jane Logan McCallum & Adele Perry state the following:

[56] Kathi Wilson – Nicolette Cardwell, Urban Aboriginal Health: Examining Inequalities between Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Populations in Canada, *The Canadian Geographer*, Vol. 56, No. 1 (2012), 107–116.

> Indigenous health research has a tendency to invoke history in narrow and instrumentalist ways and to inadvertently depict Indigenous health, health care, and research as distinct from and as successors to, rather than products of settler colonial history. Work that identifies racism in health care tends to recommend generalized implicit bias and cultural safety training – primarily for health professionals, and most commonly physicians. While training programs are an important step, they tend to focus on Indigenous "culture" and not racism, and in so doing they implicitly re-centre and privilege whiteness as the normative perspective while failing to address the myriad of ways that racism deprives people of opportunities and structures their lives.[57]

Cultural safety is not intentionally detrimental to Indigenous health, but it does leave the door open to focusing on what is "culture" in the outside world rather than how culture influences and is influenced by the "normative" medical infrastructure in North America. Avoiding this open door is the key to progress in culturally appropriate and effective care for Indigenous persons. Therefore, we should consider new ways of encouraging healthcare that safely embraces culture, rather than being content with cultural safety.

One reasonable way to approach the concerns of cultural safety is to first allow healthcare to be content with points of "ethnographic refusal".[58] Anthropological study of Indigenous cultures, and the ways in which this study has informed healthcare provision, can only go so far. There are aspects of Indigenous culture that cannot be understood without truly engaging as equals, rather than imbalanced parties with imbalanced interests. Ethnography is an excellent interlocutor in a single direction, but does little to accomplish actual dialogue between institutions and the Indigenous groups it is often fascinated by. Inevitably, the knowledge, not understanding, of an individual's culture boils down to a sense of, "I am me, I am what you think I am and I am who this person to the right of me thinks I am and you are all full of shit and then maybe I will tell you to your face".[59] Cyclical barriers of knowledge production like this are extraordinarily enlightening. They tell us the points at which our anthropological overhead assessments will make no further ground. It is at these points, the point of the Qu'Appelle BCG trial, the point at which we currently stand, the culturally safe point, that we must come to move beyond with the aid of those who can reframe the questions we are asking. Therefore, refusing to allow ethnography to be the sole criterion of culturally effective healthcare allows us to frame healthcare in a way that puts people first.

[57] McCallum and Perry, 23.
[58] Simpson, On Ethnographic Refusal, 67–80.
[59] Simpson, On Ethnographic Refusal, 74.

Sentiments like ethnographic refusal and a call for greater respect for persons and justice in Indigenous-centered healthcare are not merely speculative. Several scholars have called for an adoption of Indigenous-based tenants for research and healthcare practice,[60] [61] most of which centre on a humble and critical perspective of healthcare that allows for reflexive and dynamic responsiveness to needs identified by and for Indigenous persons.

Willie Ermine, a Cree scholar, argues that there are more explicit ways in which Indigenous understanding can be approached and created within Westernized systems. Specifically, Ermine (2007) suggests the notion of "ethical space", which describes a "simultaneously philosophical, psychological, and physical space"[62] wherein two parties from different value systems (i.e., cultures) create the opportunity for meaningful exchange. Ethical space helps to reach the deliberative model of patient-provider relationships sought out by cultural safety, but does not suffer the same linguistic or applicative issues. In this way, this paradigm is as much about understanding what is said as it what is not said (i.e., ethnographic refusal). Ethical space eliminates presuppositions of power imbalances between Indigenous and non-Indigenous parties. It explicitly encourages healthcare providers to meet their patients in a space that allows for both parties to display their values and understand each other. Promoting practices of this nature leads to "ethically sustainable caring cultures" in healthcare[63] that "combine the pragmatic advantages of tribal and indigenous regulation with efforts to transform our philosophical and ethical landscapes"[64].

## Conclusion

We need not depart from the cultural efficacy continuum to allow ourselves to safely embrace culture through ideas like ethnographic refusal and ethical space. Much like cultural awareness, sensitivity, and competency's evolution to cultural safety, there is the possibility of further progress up the continuum.

[60] Kevin C. Snow et al., Guiding Principles for Indigenous Research Practices, *Action Research*, 14.4 (2016), 357–75.

[61] Beavis et al., What All Students, 155.

[62] Sarah E. Nelson – Kathi Wilson, Understanding Barriers to Health Care Access through Cultural Safety and Ethical Space: Indigenous People's Experiences in Prince George, Canada, *Social Science and Medicine*, Vol. 218 (2018), 25, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2018.09.017 (accessed 5 December 2020).

[63] Susanne Salmela – Camilla Koskinen – Katie Eriksson, Nurse Leaders as Managers of Ethically Sustainable Caring Cultures, *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, Vol. 73, No. 4 (2017), 871–882, https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.13184 (accessed 5 December 2020).

[64] Tallbear, *Native American DNA*, 181.

Structural competency,[65] a potential "next step" on the cultural efficacy continuum is a paradigm that is centred on reorienting the direction of cultural understanding. Specifically, structural competency encourages healthcare systems to view their lack of Indigenous cultural understanding as an internal problem, rather than a lack of external knowledge. In this way, healthcare systems come to understand cultures from the inside out rather than the outside in. By starting with an understanding of medical culture (the inside), we come to recognize the structural flaws and gaps to be filled by Indigenous cultures (the outside). Cultural safety views this relationship the other way around (by understanding Indigenous cultures, we add to the lexicon of knowledge in medical culture). Therefore, structural competency seems to allow for a more respectful, humble, and effective engagement with Indigenous culture while still striving to understand and better serve patients.

Canadian and American Indigenous healthcare should strive to promote the values of paradigms like ethical space and/or structural competency. Both of these paradigms are still in their infancy and, although theoretically promising, have some practical problems of their own.[66] Most glaringly, these paradigms still grapple with issues of an "us versus them" mentality in their inside/outside framing. Despite these sorts of flaws that will inevitably present themselves over time, these paradigms make vast improvements on the shortcomings of cultural safety. By shifting our standards of culturally effective healthcare towards these paradigms, whilst employing them in ways that allow us to edit and adapt our ideologies of care, we will be able to improve treatment of Indigenous people as people.

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[65] Jonathan M. Metzl – Helena Hansen, Structural Competency: Theorizing a New Medical Engagement with Stigma and Inequality, *Social Science & Medicine (1982)*, Vol. 103 (2014), 126–133, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2013.06.032 (accessed 5 December 2020).

[66] Billy Bromage et al., Understanding Health Disparities through the Eyes of Community Members: A Structural Competency Education Intervention, *Academic Psychiatry*, Vol. 43, No. 2 (2019), 244–247.

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# JAY TREATY: INDIGENOUS RIGHTS OF FREE CROSS-BORDER PASSAGE BETWEEN CANADA AND USA

Denisa Krasna[1]

## Abstract

*Dislocation, loss of access to traditional lands, suspension of contact and land intrusion are some of the issues the Indigenous tribes residing on or near the boundary between Canada and the USA have faced after the borders' implementation. The Jay Treaty of 1794 signed by the British and the Americans had guaranteed Indigenous peoples the right of free passage and this right was reaffirmed by the Treaty of Ghent in 1815. However, as this article shows, both countries vary in their respective interpretations of these treaties and by misconstruing their contents they further perpetuate systemic racism against Indigenous peoples of North America who are subject to border discrimination as their rights are often obscured. The article further explains why a passport requirement breaches Indigenous treaty rights, contradicts fundamental Indigenous cultural beliefs, and questions Indigenous sovereignty. Lastly, it discusses Canada's progress towards guaranteeing First Nations people Jay Treaty rights.*

> "Long before the white man came over to our country, we passed freely over this land. Now since the coming of the Europeans, a border has been set up separating Canadians and Americans, but we never believed it was meant to separate Indians. Our people are one."
>
> Clinton Rickard, Tuscarora Nation[2]

## Introduction

Most present-day international borders are artificial political constructs that were established by governing powers without much consideration of the impacts their decision would have on the people inhabiting the new borderlands. Boundary, understood as "something that indicates or fixes a limit

[1] Masaryk University.

[2] Quoted in Rachel R. Starks – Jen McCormack – Stephen Cornell, *Native Nations and U.S. Borders,* University of Arizona, Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy, 2011, 19.

or extent,"[3] existed in North America prior to the European arrival, nevertheless, most pre-colonial boundaries were not meant to be final, exclusive, and irretrievably fixed in space and time. On the contrary, boundaries that separated tribes, nations and even clans or sacred places were fluid, natural, and established by those who were directly divided and affected by them.[4] European colonizers imported a diametrically different conception of borders that rendered them permanent and impassable. This paper will show that borders gradually became a tool of further colonization and oppression of Indigenous peoples. While pre-colonial boundaries served mainly a practical organizational purpose and were rarely enforced, European borders have always acted as a barrier marking difference that is often emphasized and consolidated by an actual physical barrier – be it a fence, a wall, or a patrol agency.

In 1783, Great Britain and the newly formed United States signed the Treaty of Paris that established what is now the US-Canadian border. As neither party consulted any of the Indigenous nations whose lands were cut in half, Indigenous peoples raised their voices to protest this "infringement on their sovereign rights."[5] In response, the Jay Treaty of 1794 guaranteed the right of free passage Indigenous peoples of the US and Canada and this right was later reaffirmed by the Treaty of Ghent in 1815. To survey the new border, the Jay Treaty also authorized a special Boundary Commission, whose task was complicated and eventually made impossible by the natural terrain, leading to a compromise in 1818 that set the unexplored western part of the boundary along the 49$^{th}$ parallel. Yet again, another historical decision was made remotely without the knowledge of the peoples inhabiting the artificial borderlands. Similarly, the 1500-mile border between Alaska and Canada was negotiated without the consent of Indigenous nations whose territories straddle directly across the boundary.

While the free cross-border passage rights granted by the Jay Treaty were respected at first, intensified border security and discriminatory policies of the last two centuries have made their assertion substantially harder for Indigenous peoples of both countries. Moreover, US and Canada vary in their respective interpretations of these treaties and by misconstruing their contents further perpetuate systemic racism against Indigenous peoples who are often subjected to border discrimination involving heavy scrutiny, physical searches by disrespectful border patrol agents, desanctification of religious regalia, and other interventions. Passport requirement also further breaches Indigenous treaty rights, contradicts fundamental Indigenous cultural beliefs,

[3] "Boundary," *Merriam Webster Dictionary,* https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/boundary (accessed 4 April 2020).

[4] Starks – McCormack – Cornell, *Native Nations,* 19.

[5] Greg Boos – Greg McLawsen – Heather Fathali, Canadian Indians, Inuit, Metis, and Metis: An Exploration of the Unparalleled Rights Enjoyed by American Indians Born in Canada to Freely Access the United States, *Seattle Journal of Environmental Law,* Vol. 4, No. 1 (2014), 346.

and undermines Indigenous sovereignty. The formalities of the border crossing have made it difficult for many nations to maintain cultural and family ties as well as land relationships that carry significant spiritual and cultural meaning in most Indigenous cultures.[6] This paper will compare some of the differences in border crossing policies and jurisdictions in the US and Canada to show how the boundary created different histories for Indigenous peoples residing on opposite sides so close and yet so far from one another.

Several Indigenous nations are situated directly on the boundary and have to deal with its impacts on a daily basis. These include the Gwitch'in, the Passamaquoddy, the White River First Nation, Blackfeet/Bloods, Red Lake Band of Chippewa, Aroostook Band of Micmac, Houlton Band Maliseet, and the Mohawks of Akwesasne.[7] The case of the Akwesasne is particularly complex, as the residents have to navigate several bureaucratic systems as their nation lies in Ontario, Quebec, and New York State. Not only do they have to negotiate with the US and Canadian federal governments but also with all the state and provincial governments.[8] Basic social services such as healthcare are especially affected by this bureaucratic maze. Akwesasne patients receive distinct care depending on where exactly their permanent residence is and Akwesasne health-care workers are only allowed to work in clinics located in the province or state where they were certified.[9] Border-crossing is also complicated for Akwesasne members who have to travel extra miles to a single entry point located in Cornwall to get to other parts of the reserve. Some residents need to pass through the border patrol agency several times per day in order to go to work, school, social events, the doctor, or even buy groceries.[10]

The right to free cross-border passage guaranteed by the Jay Treaty is essential for Akwesasne residents and many other Indigenous nations residing on or near the US-Canada border who still remain "marginally involved in decisions, centrally involved in effects."[11] Even though Indigenous people do not recognize the US-Canadian border, it has shaped their lives for generations and, as this paper will show, marked different paths for tribal members residing on the Canadian and US side of the border, especially during the assimilationist policies of the late-19th and 20th centuries. Having survived residential schools, Indigenous tribes are now reuniting with their relatives across the border to

6 Starks – McCormack – Cornell, *Native Nations,* 11.

7 Sara Singleton, Not our borders: Indigenous People and the Struggle to Maintain Shared Lives and Cultures in Post-9/11 North America, *Border Policy Research Institute Publications,* Vol. 106 (2009), 7.

8 Ibid., 8.

9 Starks – McCormack – Cornell, *Native Nations*, 15.

10 Fred Caron, Report on First Nation Border Crossing Issues, *Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada* (2017), https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1506622719017/1506622893512 (accessed 2 April 2020).

11 Starks – McCormack – Cornell, *Native Nations*, 5.

renew traditional contacts, revive their culture as well as unite in environmental action to safeguard their traditional lands. The first part of this paper outlines the differences in the treatment of Indigenous cross-border rights in the US and Canada and the related border discrimination issues. The second part focuses on Indigenous cross-border cultural and environmental coalitions in the Arctic and Pacific Northwest to showcase the resilience and resourcefulness of the people facing the direct effects of the imposed border.

This paper is largely informed by research conducted during an internship in the Cascadia-Cross Border Law, a US-Canadian law firm specializing in the Jay Treaty with offices in Bellingham (WA), Vancouver (BC), and Anchorage (AK). It draws legal information from an article written by Greg Boos, Heather Fathali and Greg McLawsen, lawyers from Cascadia. Furthermore, it integrates studies by Rachel Rose Starks et al., Leti Volpp, David Stirrup and Jan Clark, Sara Singleton, and Michael Marker whose research informs my own on many levels. It is the aim of this paper to provide an updated overview of Indigenous border-crossing rights and issues in US and Canada. To differentiate from previously published studies and enrich the existing scholarship, more attention is paid to Canada's willingness, or the lack thereof, to reconcile and cooperate with First Nations. Furthermore, the paper provides a closer examination of selected cross-border environmental and cultural initiatives that illuminates the many subtle strategies Indigenous tribes adopt in overcoming the challenges generated by the international border.

## Jay Treaty: Free Cross-Border Passage in Canada and US

The Jay Treaty, officially known as the Treaty of Amity, Commerce, and Navigation, was signed in 1794 by the recently formed United States and Great Britain and ratified in 1795.[12] As its official title indicates, the treaty was contracted to settle issues arising after the US independence between the two nation-states, primarily regarding international trade. The Jay Treaty also reaffirmed the 49th parallel as the official border between the US and Canada. In response to concerns raised by the tribes residing on or near the recently established borders, Article III of the Treaty was negotiated to guarantee Indigenous people the right of cross-border passage and trade (Article III, Jay Treaty). Even though the War of 1812 temporarily suspended Jay Treaty rights, the Treaty of Ghent renewed them in 1814. Additionally, it was agreed prior to the war that Article III of the Treaty could not be modified by any future treaty and the right of free cross-border passage for Indigenous people of the two countries should therefore remain inviolable.[13]

[12] Ibid., 21.

[13] Boos – McLawsen – Fathali, Canadian Indians, Inuit, Metis, and Metis, 347.

Even though Indigenous people were not part of the negotiation process, they did not simply accept decisions taken by the colonial powers that directly affected them. The adoption of Article III further shows that they were active players on the continent and as such deserving of respect and consideration. The Haudenosaunee (also commonly referred to by the colonial denomination as the "Iroquois"), whose territory stretches east from the Great Lakes, were crucial in these negotiations. As Starks et al. write, both economic and political factors had to be taken into account as the Haudenosaunee were very powerful both militarily and economically due to their strong base, effective organization and essential role in the fur trade.[14] While the Haudenosaunee are rightfully given most credit for the rights protected by Article III, it is important to note that other tribes residing further west were unaware of the new boundary line and were therefore completely removed from the whole process, without the opportunity to protest or get involved.[15]

More than a century later, Article III of the Jay Treaty was modified by the US, effectively breaching one of the fundamental parts of the treaty. The Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) of 1952 established a bloodline requirement for Indigenous people crossing the border, which states that "only individuals with *greater* than 50% Indian blood are entitled to the benefits [of the Jay Treaty]."[16] This shift is significant for several reasons. Blood quantum politics is highly controversial as it is ultimately a colonial construct used to control Indigenous populations and diminish their sovereignty. Historically, it has been employed in a highly destructive way as a tool to assimilate and reduce Indigenous populations and to substantially weaken their rights.[17] As Schmidt contends, "Europeans not only expropriated land and resources, but also Indian identity" that, prior to European colonization, used to be defined not by race but by socio-cultural and territorial aspects.[18] Unlike other minorities, American Indians are the only group whose identity is measured by blood quantity. Gallagher and Lippard explain that while African American identity, for example, is defined by "the one drop rule," American Indians need a significantly higher percentage of blood to be permitted to identify

[14] Starks – McCormack – Cornell, *Native Nations*, 52.

[15] Ibid., 22.

[16] Boos – McLawsen – Fathali, Canadian Indians, Inuit, Metis, and Metis, 353. (original emphasis).

[17] Pauline T. Strong – Barrik V. Winkle, "Indian Blood": Reflections on the Reckoning and Refiguring of Native North American Identity, *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 11, No. 4 (1996), 553, http://digitalcommons.law.seattleu.edu/sjel/vol4/iss1/12 (accessed 1 April 2020). See further Charles A. Gallagher – Cameron D. Lippard, *Race and Racism in the United States: An Encyclopedia of the American Mosaic,* Santa Barbara, Greenwood, 2014, 177. See also Ryan W. Schmidt, American Indian Identity and Blood Quantum in the 21st Century: A Critical Review, *Journal of Anthropology* (2012), https://www.hindawi.com/journals/janthro/2011/549521/ (accessed 4 April 2020).

[18] Schmidt, American Indian Identity, n.p.n.

as Indigenous.[19] As many critics of the blood quantum politics have argued, this differential treatment is an effective strategy to reduce the numbers of Indigenous people towards whom the government holds obligations.[20]

Undoubtedly, the imposed bloodline restriction significantly limited the number of Indigenous people able to qualify for a free cross-border passage. Nevertheless there were also some who benefited from this requirement. As tribal affiliation stopped being relevant in determining one's eligibility for the Jay Treaty rights, therefore any First Nation, Métis, métis, and Inuit person with more than 50% Indigenous blood could now "freely enter the United States by right for the purposes of employment, study, retirement, investing, and/or immigration."[21] Similarly, First Nation women who lost their status with the imposition of the patriarchal Indian Act of 1876 and who proved the required blood quantum could now not only freely cross the border to the US but, perhaps even more importantly, become officially recognized as Indigenous on the other side of the border. Strong and Winkle apply Spivak's theory of "useful yet semimournful position of the unavoidable usefulness of something that is dangerous" to describe this reversal of what is essentially "a discourse of conquest."[22] Still, the imposition of the blood quantum politics is emblematic of the unequal relationship between the federal government and Indigenous tribes that are not treated with the same respect as other sovereign nations.[23]

Unlike the US, Canada does not recognize the validity of the Jay Treaty even though Boos et al. uphold that, unlike the United Kingdom, which considers the Treaty "null," Canada maintains the somewhat ambiguous position that it has been "partially terminated" by the War of 1812.[24] In practical terms, however, this interpretation has not allowed American Indians to freely cross the border to Canada. As a consequence, a recent report shows that the vast majority of First Nations agree that the treatment by US Border patrol agents is generally more amicable than that of their Canadian counterparts who tend to treat non-status Indians as immigrants, a label that has taken on many negative connotations over the last century.[25] Furthermore, the US has shown more willingness to cooperate and abide by the Jay Treaty by generally interpreting it in a way that favors Indigenous people as opposed to Canada that has made

[19] Gallagher – Lippard, *Race and Racism in the United States*, 177.
[20] Ibid., 178.
[21] Lillian Dyck – Dennis G. Patterson, Border Crossing Issues and the Jay Treaty, *Senate of Canada*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (2016), 8–9, http://caid.ca/JayTreatyRepSSCAP2016.pdf (accessed 2 April 2020).
[22] Strong – Winkle, "Indian Blood", 565.
[23] Leti Volpp, The Indigenous As Alien, *UC Irvine Law Review*, Vol. 5, No. 289 (2015), 313, https://www.law.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Volpp.Indigenous-as-Alien.pdf (accessed 3 April 2020).
[24] Boos – McLawsen – Fathali, Canadian Indians, Inuit, Metis and Metis, 349.
[25] Caron, Report, n.p.n.

little effort to solve border issues faced by First Nations.[26] Theoretically, Canada acknowledges the "*aboriginal* right to freely pass the border," however, recognition of this inherent right has been highly inconsistent.[27]

Canada's stance towards Indigenous border crossing rights contradicts the claim that Canada and the US share the "longest undefended border in the world." Even before it became more militarized following the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the border had been nowhere near "invisible."[28] Stirrup and Clarke suggest that Canada's frail identity plays a role in the heavier scrutiny on the border. While the US has historically treated its northern border as a meeting point rather than a defense barrier, the boundary has a much greater significance for Canada as it functions as a metaphorical fence inhibiting the US political and cultural imperialism from penetrating its northern neighbor.[29] However, one of the defining aspects of Canadian national identity, as it is presented to the world, is its adoption of "liberal" values of acceptance and the nation's recognition of its multiple cultural minorities. However, the truth is that preventing Indigenous people from exercising their Jay Treaty rights is constitutive of Canadian identity. Drawing on the first-hand experiences of Indigenous people from both US and Canada, the following section details some of the most recurrent injustices they face when crossing the border.

## Border Discrimination: Scrutiny and Humiliation

> "I try not to be nervous, but I can't help it – I am carrying those eagle spikes and although I have a right to carry them and I have my band enrollment card, I hate the questioning, the scrutiny, the suspicious nature of the border guards."
>
> *Books and Islands in Ojibwe Country* (2003) by Louise Erdrich[30]

Louise Erdrich devotes a whole chapter of her memoir to border discrimination. Her personal account is representative of the unjust treatment Indigenous people are often subjected to when crossing the border. Questioning, scrutiny and profiling are among the most common manifestations of this discrimination and the reason for Erdrich's professed nervousness.

[26] Starks – McCormack – Cornell, *Native Nations*, 55.
[27] Boos – McLawsen – Fathali, Canadian Indians, Inuit, Metis, and Metis, 371 (original emphasis).
[28] David Stirrup – Jan Clarke, Straddling Boundaries: Culture and the Canada-US Border, *Comparative American Studies: An International Journal,* Vol. 13, No. 1–2 (2015), 6.
[29] Ibid., 2.
[30] Louise Erdrich, The Border Crossing, *Books and Islands in Ojibwe Country,* Washington, D.C., National Geographic, 2003, Kindle, n.p.n.

In his paper from 2017, the Canadian Minister's Special Representative Fred Caron documents a vast array of issues that need to be resolved, along with some possible solutions that Indigenous tribes have proposed.[31] From humiliating questioning to confiscation of cultural objects to family separation, the border complicates many lives on a daily basis. Caron affirms that negative profiling is widespread along the border with Indigenous people facing more scrutiny, physical searches, and even blatantly racist comments and questions. Even with proper documentation, Indigenous people often have to convince border patrol agents of their heritage, especially if they have lighter skin color or do not conform to the stereotype of a "true Indian." Looking too Indian or not Indian enough seem to be similarly problematic for Indigenous border-crossers.

Additional problems arise when Indigenous people are asked to pay customs duties for their personal goods or trade items. No matter what country they wish to enter, Indigenous people want to exercise what they view as their fundamental right. Imposition of duties on all goods and a complete ban of some items inhibits traditional cultural practices and, in the case of entry to the US, also breaches the Jay Treaty, which declares that "[n]o duty of entry shall ever be levied by either party on peltries brought by land, or inland navigation into the said territories respectively, nor shall the Indians passing or repassing with their own proper goods and effects of whatever nature, pay for the same any import or duty whatever" (Article III). As Boos et al. confirm, the US does not acknowledge this part of the Jay Treaty,[32] yet again effectively breaking a historic contract and denying tribes their sovereign status.

A customs search becomes especially problematic in the case of medicine or spiritual men and respected elders. As Richard Dyar of Aroostook Band of Micmacs explains, "[s]piritual people have supplies with them, which may look like contraband and officials rifle through them and this is hard to watch – it's a sacrilege."[33] Improper handling of religious regalia is one of the gravest obstacles to cross-border cultural and spiritual gatherings. For instance, Coast Salish Spirit Dancers transport masks and other regalia that should only be handled by the dancers themselves. Closer information about the objects or Spirit Dancing itself cannot be revealed to border guards who often insist on acquiring detailed description.[34] Traditional medicines are also hard to transport across the border as their effectiveness is often questioned and a scientific explanation difficult to provide. Many types of plants and animals essential for traditional cultural practices are banned from import or export altogether.[35]

[31] Fred Caron, Report on First Nation border crossing issues, *Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada* (2017), https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1506622719017/1506622893512 (accessed 2 April 2020).

[32] Boos – McLawsen – Fathali, Canadian Indians, Inuit, Metis, and Metis, 378.

[33] Starks – McCormack – Cornell, *Native Nations*, 55.

[34] Bruce Miller, qtd. in Starks – McCormack – Cornell, *Native Nations,* 60–61.

[35] Caron, Report, n.p.n.

In some cases, the border has also acted as a means for family separation. Louise Erdrich's account provides an apt description of what role exactly the border officers play in removing children from their parents. Erdrich recounts how she found herself in the middle of an interrogation about the maternity of her newborn baby as she was unable to provide any official documentation required by the patrol agent. As she was directed to enter the interrogation room, she wondered if she was "going to be required to nurse [her] baby in front of some border-crossing guard" to prove she was her mother. Even though Erdrich was eventually cleared by a female guard (she and her baby "[ha]ve passed some mother/daughter test") she admits to have been properly shaken. Such experiences can leave behind traces of trauma and understandably discourage from subsequent cross-border trips.[36]

Dealing with authorities is not only humiliating but also traumatic for those who still vividly remember assimilationist policies such as residential schools, where physical and sexual abuse was institutionalized, or removal of children from reservations to white foster families. As stories from the border describing heavy scrutiny are not sporadic, many Indigenous people choose to avoid crossing the border even if it means cutting ties with their families and not participating in cultural events. As a result, traditional contacts are either weakened or lost, which threatens cultural preservation and can negatively reflect on shared identities. For some, crossing the border is an everyday necessity. Major complications arise when permanent residence or entry is denied, for example to American Indian women who are not recognized as status Indians in Canada and cannot thus take up residence there even if they are married to a First Nation spouse.[37] The lamentable situation of some of these nations will be discussed in more detail in the second part of this paper.

## Identity Documents: Tribal Cards and Passports

Ultimately, border discrimination and disregard of Indigenous nations' sovereignty is most evident in the failure to recognize the validity of tribal passports or enrollment cards. To be able to identify as a member of an Indigenous nation is an important aspect of one's identity that also contributes to cultural preservation. Most Indigenous nations issue tribal cards for their members and some also produce their own international passports. Joe Kennedy, a member of the Western Shoshone Nation, describes the pride and empowerment he feels when traveling internationally with his tribal passport: "I feel good and I feel honored that the Guatemalan authorities welcomed

[36] Erdrich, The Border Crossing, n.p.n. (Kindle).
[37] Caron, Report, n.p.n.

me into their country, recognizing me as a Western Shoshone national."[38] Likewise, in his short story "Patriot Act" (2008), the Onondaga writer and artist Eric Gansworth reflects on the great symbolism tribal cards carry. The story's narrator recounts that his wife who is a member of the Tuscarora Nation "stared at the card that had meant so much to her. All of her family members carried them, and admired one another's, like strange baseball cards, in ways that I never see people showing passports off. Sometimes, they told each other stories about stopping border guards cold with their treaty rights."[39] Identity documents are clearly a highly important identity marker in the 21st century.

There is great inconsistency among nations around the world regarding the recognition of tribal passports, which causes problems for Indigenous travelers. In the 1920s, as an act of resistance, Chief Deskaheh crossed the Atlantic with his Haudenosaunee passport but was not admitted back to Canada and died in the US. Almost a century later in 2010, the Iroquois National Lacrosse Team was refused entry to a tournament in the UK with their Haudenosaunee passports despite having used them without problems at other times. Volpp points out the irony of the whole affair by reminding us that the Iroquois' government is one of the oldest democratic governments in the world and lacrosse is an American Indian invention.[40] In the same year, the Kahnawà:ke Mohawk delegation was also unable to use their Haudenosaunee passports on their return to Canada from a conference in Bolivia.[41] This inconsistency is a grave offence and yet again demonstrates how Indigenous sovereign status is constantly questioned.

The Indigenous protagonist in Gansworth's short story faces a similar situation on the US-Canadian border when she tries to assert her Jay Treaty rights but is silenced by the border agent who declares that, "You might think this little red card from your purse means something, […] but it really doesn't," shattering her Indigenous identity and denying her nation's sovereignty.[42] While many Indigenous people today possess both tribal as well as Canadian or American IDs, some tribal members residing in remote northern areas lack these official documents. The Gwich'in tribe whose territory extends over what is known as Alaska, Yukon, and Northwest Territories repeatedly runs into problems when organizing larger gatherings and meetings on the Canadian side of the border where elders without US passports are denied access. As Boos et al. assert, US-born Gwich'in members

[38] Quoted in Starks – McCormack – Cornell, *Native Nations*, 55.

[39] Eric Gansworth, Patriot Act, *Eric Gansworth,* Vol. 14 (2018), https://d2d80fee-b640-4c18-b979-5cae56385a28.filesusr.com/ugd/8e6c16_263e0f26f3954c6fa8fa6861a210626d.pdf (accessed 3 April 2020).

[40] Volpp, The Indigenous As Alien, 314.

[41] Stirrup – Clarke, Straddling Boundaries, 6.

[42] Gansworth, Patriot Act, 13–14.

should still be permitted to enter Canada on their tribal cards due to the country's recognition of "*aboriginal* right to freely pass the border," however, recognition of this inherent right has also been highly inconsistent.[43]

Starks et al. assert that the issues surrounding identification documents remain unresolved despite repeated official acknowledgments of the high reliability of tribal identification systems that demand a thorough proof of lineage for enrollment.[44] In response to increased concerns after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) tightened documentation requirements for crossing the US-Canadian border which had an effect on Indigenous people's ability to cross the border with their enrollment cards. Even though several tribes promptly found a solution in the form of an enhanced tribal card that complies with the WHTI requirements, the Canadian government has been reluctant to accept it. Akwesasne Grand Chief Abram Benedict shares his experience: "Canada has not been responsive to our attempts to find solutions; instead, they seem to find reasons for them not to work. Ironically, the US Customs and Border Protection supports the creation of a Mohawk secure ID card."[45] While it may truly seem ironic that the US is more willing to cooperate with Indigenous peoples than Canada, looking back at what has been already exposed in this paper it becomes less surprising as Canada seems to be simply following an established pattern.

## Cross-border Environmental Coalitions in the Arctic

> "My people have lived in this place for thousands of years, and the hearts of the Gwich'in Nation and the Porcupine caribou herd have been linked since time immemorial. Our creation story tells that the Gwich'in will always keep a part of the caribou heart, and the caribou will always keep a part of the Gwich'in heart. The future of the Gwich'in and the future of the caribou are the same. "What befalls the caribou, befalls the Gwich'in."
>
> *(Bernadette Demientieff, Executive Director, Gwich'in Steering Committee)*

The Indigenous writer, activist, and scholar Melissa K. Nelson explains that most Indigenous worldviews evoke the concept of interconnectedness that encompasses the belief that the world revolves around reciprocal relationships, including human interactions "with the more-than-human world: the local

[43] Boos – McLawsen – Fathali, Canadian Indians, Inuit, Metis, and Metis, 371.
[44] Starks – McCormack – Cornell, *Native Nations*, 57.
[45] Quoted in Dyck – Patterson, Border Crossing Issues, 11.

plants, animals, and elements that give us life, the sun, moon, wind, fire, soil."[46] Respect for the environment and all its elements that are protected as relatives is thus an intrinsic behavior for many Indigenous people. Glen Coulthard, a Yellowknives Dene scholar, calls this attitude a "place-based ethics of reciprocity" and explains that the word "land" in his language (Yellowknives Dene dialect of Dogrib) includes all that is in relation to "land" (in its Western meaning), i.e. animals, plants, lakes, rocks, people, etc.[47] Land is therefore not treated as a material estate to be exploited but as an elemental part of other life forms, including humans who are obliged to treat it with respect.

Nowadays, Indigenous people in North America form coalitions to protect the land from an ever-growing capitalist expansion that comes primarily in the form of extraction industries. The imposed US-Canadian border acts as a literal and administrative barrier to many of these endeavors. The following paragraphs provide some examples of cross-border Indigenous-led initiatives that showcase the determination and resourcefulness of Indigenous tribes in overcoming the challenges created by the imposed border.

In the far north region of North America Indigenous people have become increasingly active in addressing problems of environmental nature that affect their everyday lives and pose a threat to their cultures. Along the Alaska-Canadian border, the Gwich'in tribe and the White River First Nation guide environmental action and organize events that unite members separated by the boundary. The Yukon River Inter-Tribal Watershed Council is an outstanding example of powerful cross-border Indigenous organizing. The Council was formed by Alaska Native villages and First Nations living within the Yukon River watershed with the aim of protecting the river that had always been their source of drinking water. In recent decades, however, the river has been polluted as a result of "mining operations, military installations, inadequate sewer systems in riverine settlements, diesel and chemical runoff from the Alaska-Canada Highway, recreational activity, and so forth."[48] Some of the Council's major activities include monitoring of the river's water quality; providing support and technical assistance training to tribes lacking drinking water; facilitating education and awareness programs; evaluation of the risks of mining activities in the area; backhauling solid waste material; and encouraging and enabling redevelopment of brownfields.[49] The Council, which now comprises 73 First

[46] Melissa K. Nelson, Education for the Eighth Fire, in E. Assadourian – L. Mastny (eds.), *EarthEd: Rethinking Education on a Changing Planet,* Washington D.C., Island, 2017, 53.

[47] Glen Coulthard, Place Against Empire: Understanding Indigenous Anti-Colonialism, *Affinities: A Journal of Radical Theory, Culture and Action,* Vol. 4, No. 2 (2010), 80, http://pages.ucsd.edu/~rfrank/class_web/ES-114A/Week%203/Coulthard-Affinities%204-2.pdf (accessed 3 April 2020).

[48] Starks – McCormack – Cornell, *Native Nations*, 82.

[49] Yukon Intertribal Watershed Council, One People, One River, https://www.yritwc.org (accessed 4 April 2020).

Nations and Indigenous tribes from Alaska, has influenced environmental policies in both US and Canada despite facing bureaucratic difficulties caused by the border. In addition to serving its primary function, the Council also strengthens the Indigenous nations' sovereignty.

Indigenous peoples also emphasize that extraction industries endanger both human and other-than-human animals, including the Porcupine caribou, that play an important role in the life of the Gwich'in people who are at the forefront of caribou protection efforts. The Porcupine caribou are migratory animals whose traditional behavior is disrupted by the resource extraction activities in the area. Furthermore, oil drilling has severe impacts on the herd's calving activity and the caribou population is quickly diminishing. The Gwich'in Steering Committee was established in 1988 with the aim of preventing oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge where the Porcupine caribou have their calving grounds. The Gwich'in have been in charge of the caribou's protection via effective cross-border management. Similarly to other international cooperation efforts, the Gwich'in also face major challenges, including the inability of some members to cross the border to attend the biennial Gwich'in Gathering.[50] Their efforts have been further complicated in the last few years due to the Trump administration allowing oil and gas drilling in the protected Arctic Refuge, thus effectively endangering both the caribou and Indigenous people living in the area. Polar bears, wolves, and musk oxen are also endangered by this policy.[51] The latest substantial measure implemented by the Committee has been the creation of a Youth Board consisting of four young advocates as it is primarily their generation's future that is in question.[52]

Last, the Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) and the Arctic Council have to be mentioned as exemplary cross-border initiatives that contest the established borders by uniting Inuit from Canada, Alaska, Greenland, and Chukotka in the ICC and peoples from Canada, Alaska, Siberia, Iceland, Denmark and northern Finland, Sweden, and Norway in the Arctic Council. The ICC was founded in 1977 with the aim of "address[ing] increasing attacks on the Inuit way of life, environment, and human rights that were initiated by industry, states, and others with interests in the Arctic."[53] The Arctic

[50] Starks – McCormack – Cornell, *Native Nations*, 72–75.

[51] Steven Mufson – Juliet Eilperin, Trump administration opens huge reserve in Alaska to drilling, *The Washington Post* (2019), https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/trump-administration-chooses-most-expansive-approach-to-oil-gas-exploration-in-alaska-wildlife-refuge/2019/09/12/cfac63cc-d597-11e9-9610-fb56c5522e1c_story.html (accessed 4 April 2020).

[52] Gwich'in Steering Committee, Protecting "The Sacred Place Where Life Begins," http://ourarcticrefuge.org (accessed 4 April 2020).

[53] ICC, Inuit United Voice of the Arctic, https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com (accessed 4 April 2020).

Council was formed in 1996 "with the purpose of advancing circumpolar cooperation" in order to protect the arctic environment.[54] Both ICC and the Arctic Council have been at the forefront of many significant international environmental initiatives, monitoring changes in the Arctic caused by climate change. Indigenous peoples inhabiting the Arctic region face environmental challenges that threaten their way of life and that are destroying their homes. Trans-national cooperation and united action are crucial in their efforts to slow down and reduce the impacts of climate change. The nation-state borders complicate these efforts and stand as a barrier not only to the traditional way of life of the Arctic peoples whose contacts have been severely limited but also to potential solutions to the environmental crisis that is increasingly impacting the whole world. While the ICC and the Arctic Council have found ways to transcend it, the border still constitutes an unnecessary obstacle.

## Coast Salish Cross-border Cooperation

> "We depend on the Salish Sea, and our cultural teachings compel us to protect it."[55]

In the Pacific Northwest, the Coast Salish peoples who comprise dozens of tribes and bands residing in British Columbia and Western Washington are re-establishing their contacts and gaining momentum in their trans-border environmental protest actions. They also organize regular cultural gatherings that are renewing and strengthening their traditional ties that were weakened during the residential school era. In his comprehensive study, Michael Marker showcases the cultural resilience of Coast Salish peoples by outlining how they resisted assimilationist policies of residential schools. Nevertheless, as he explains, the different development of these policies in Canada and the US had a significant impact on traditional ties in the borderlands region and contributed to the creation of slightly divergent identities on each side of the border. Distinct "colonizing conditions" also called for different forms of resistance and strategies for cultural preservation and renewal.[56]

While the assimilationist educational policies of the 19th and 20th centuries started off with the same aims in both US and Canada, some of the enforced

[54] Boos – McLawsen – Fathali, Canadian Indians, Inuit, Metis, and Metis, 366.

[55] Brian Cladoosby – Leonard Forsman – Teri Gobin – Jay Julius, The Trans Mountain pipeline is a disaster – but Trudeau can make it right, *The Guardian* (2019), https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/jun/14/trans-mountain-pipeline-expansion-trudeau-indigenous-communities (accessed 3 April 2020).

[56] Michael Marker, Indigenous resistance and racist schooling on the borders of empires: Coast Salish cultural survival, *International Journal of the History of Education,* Vol. 4, No. 6 (2009), 762, https://doi.org/10.1080/00309230903335678 (accessed 2 April 2020).

methods differed in each country. The major difference lay in the schools' administration. Whereas most of the US boarding schools were largely secular and run only or primarily by the state, the residential schools in Canada were chiefly operated by the Church until the 1950s when First Nation leaders finally succeeded in diminishing the church's control. Without downplaying the horrendous practices and intergenerational impacts the government-operated US boarding schools had on their Indigenous attendees, Marker contends that Canadian church-run residential schools "were more brutal tools of empire than the secular boarding schools because they tended to be more militant about categorizations of Indigenous identity and inferiority."[57] Moreover, residential schools in Canada lasted considerably longer than in the US. In the 1970s, when Coast Salish children in British Columbia were still experiencing physical, sexual, and cultural abuse in residential schools, their relatives in Washington were reclaiming the boarding schools and reappropriating them as tools for cultural renewal.[58]

In the 1960s, Coast Salish children in Washington were integrated into public schools, where they experienced harsh institutional racism, and which was invigorated by continuing hostilities between white and Indigenous fishermen over treaty rights. The return to Indian-only boarding schools in the 1970s was thus an initiative that came directly from Indigenous communities. This time, however, government-run boarding schools were seen as a "possible safe haven," free of oppression and blatant racism where Indigenous culture could thrive. Hence, the history diverges for Coast Salish people on each side of the border by a whole generation. Bands in Canada were subject to forced assimilation for almost 20 more years than their US counterparts who initiated their cultural revitalization efforts considerably sooner. Cross-border cultural gatherings and co-operation is thus vital for Coast Salish whose ties were cut for many years and where the border is the reason "Coast Salish communities in British Columbia tell different kinds of stories than their relatives on the Washington State side of the border."[59] Current intensified cross-border cultural revitalization efforts help to mitigate this gap and restore the shared Coast Salish identity.

Organized events include festivals, healing ceremonies, economic activities, pow-wows, potlaches, naming ceremonies, religious ceremonies, canoe journeys, and so forth. Notably, the Lummi Nation organized a week-long event called "Paddle-to-Lummi" in 2007 that was also the first held potlatch since 1937. Hundreds of people arrived in 73 canoes, some of whom had paddled for hundreds of miles. Many others traveled by land and the total number of participants reached 12000. Despite this seemingly high number of attendees, many Coast Salish peoples were still unable to participate due to the

[57] Ibid., 768.
[58] Ibid., 766.
[59] Ibid., 767.

border crossing. Even though the organizers negotiated a special group permit for the canoes, crossing by land was still difficult for those lacking identity documents or crossing with regalia or cultural objects.[60] Potlatch, one of the most important traditions in the Pacific Northwest, requires transportation of many objects, which is, again, complicated by the border. On one occasion, a man traveling to a relative's potlatch was detained by the US patrol officers for "smuggling […] two hundred blankets across the border."[61] Spirit dancers and medicine men often run into similar problems at the border. Refusing to share information about the transported objects due to cultural protocols further criminalizes them in the eyes of border agents. Despite the many challenges, Coast Salish people persist in their cultural restoration efforts as they believe cultural traditions can help heal their communities of intergenerational traumas caused by colonization and assimilationist policies.

Apart from cultural events, Coast Salish people from both sides of the border also organize themselves to address environmental problems that threaten their ecosystems, communities, relatives, and traditional way of life. Their cross-border co-operative actions, which also receive help from local governments and non-native allies, have already achieved many victories, that were termed the "thin green line" by the media as they have significantly limited the export of fossil fuels to Asia. Among others, these achievements include blocking the Otter Creek coal strip mine and the Gateway Pacific coal terminal.[62] Now, Coast Salish peoples are primarily concerned with the proposed construction of the Trans Mountain pipeline, which threatens the ecosystems and communities on both sides of the border as well as "the Salish Sea and our people, salmon and killer whale relatives."[63] The Trans Mountain pipeline is a project proposed in 2013 by Kinder Morgan that would ship oil from Alberta tar sands fields to the coast of British Columbia. The amount of transported oil is projected to triple, which would lead to an instant rise of greenhouse gas emissions and a significant increase in oil tanker traffic in the Salish Sea. As a result, endangered marine species, such as the orcas and salmon that Coast Salish peoples consider their relatives, would face even greater risks. A potential oil spill, that is very likely to happen, could even lead to the resident orca's extinction as they would not survive in the already-contaminated Salish Sea.[64] Like Inuit in the Arctic, Coast Salish peoples from both US and Canada are finding ways to transcend the borders to lead protest actions to safeguard their environment and culture.

[60] Singleton, Not our borders, 9.
[61] Miller, quoted in Starks – McCormack – Cornell, *Native Nations*, 61.
[62] Cladoosby – Forsman – Gobin – Julius, The Trans Mountain pipeline, n.p.n.
[63] Ibid., n.p.n.
[64] Ibid., n.p.n.

## Conclusion

> "I am a member of the Tuscarora Nation, and by the Jay Treaty, you have no right to detain me" … "You can have your yearly treaty parades, but since September Eleventh, we live in a world full of evil-doers. Your days of crossing unobstructed are over. Do you understand?" … "You're just lucky we didn't have tracking devices for dangerous characters when your sorry asses arrived from Europe. Evil-doers got here long before September Eleventh."
>
> Eric Gansworth's "Patriot Act"[65]

In Eric Gansworth's "Patriot Act," Indigenous character Virginia unsuccessfully tries to assert her Jay Treaty rights in the aftermath of the intensified border militarization following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. While the US-Canadian boundary was commonly referred to as the "longest undefended border in the world" prior to the attacks and believed to have a merely symbolic purpose, this paper has shown that the border has always been a very real obstruction for Indigenous peoples. Even though the Jay Treaty of 1794 officially declared the border non-existent for Indigenous people and guaranteed them unobstructed passage, both Canada and the US have modified, reinterpreted, and ignored the treaty rights as they pleased. The divergent colonizing conditions in each country, as manifested here on the example of the Coast Salish peoples' differing schooling experiences, have left their mark and caused division between the same peoples on opposite sides of the border. As histories of whole generations differ and some Indigenous nations have been renamed to manifest the growing differences between their divided peoples (Blackfeet to Bloods in Canada), effects of the supposedly invisible boundary remain very visible.

Needless to say, this divisiveness is caused not only by different discriminatory policies but also by the current discrepancies between the rights guaranteed to Indigenous peoples in each country. The ongoing incongruity is a constant reminder of Indigenous peoples' inferior status in the nation-states that fail to recognize Indigenous nations' sovereignty and inherent rights as the first peoples of the continent. Most First Nations in Canada thus view the recognition of the free cross-border passage rights as stated in the Jay Treaty as an essential next step to reconciliation, a notion confirmed in the Minister's Special Representative Fred Caron's report. Caron concludes that although "it is not considered the source of their inherent rights, the Jay Treaty has nonetheless become a powerful symbol of

[65] Gansworth, Patriot Act, 13–15.

the recognition of these rights for many First Nations."[66] Conversely, Canada's reluctance to grant these rights is symptomatic of the country's relationship with First Nations to whom it fails to show proper respect.

EagleWoman asserts that some Indigenous people call the current methods and strategies of the nation-states' governments "a policy of 'divide and conquer,' a modern day game of 'cowboys and Indians.'"[67] It is in border discrimination where modern-day colonization and continuation of assimilationist policies of the past decades are painfully evident. The US-Canadian border was conceived without an input from Indigenous nations and present-day border policy negotiations still exclude Indigenous peoples who continue to be the most affected by this boundary. Leti Volpp suggests that the pervasive stereotype of Indigenous people as the "vanishing race" contributes to their dismissal by the nation-states' authorities. If Indigenous people are considered people of the past, they cannot be involved in matters concerning the present and the future.[68] This stereotype thus functions as a convenient excuse and is constantly perpetuated in education, popular culture and mainstream media.

But Indigenous peoples are ever more visible in countering the stereotype as this paper has demonstrated. They are increasingly active in their attempts to assert their inherent border-crossing rights to protect their culture and the environment. Some of the most effective strategies are cooperation and education. During my internship in Cascadia Cross-Border Law, I helped with some preparations for a conference on the Jay Treaty that was co-organized by the Northwest Indian College located at the Lummi Nation and Cascadia. The conference was held in order to spread awareness about the different rights the Jay Treaty guarantees for Canadian-born First Nations and American Indians, and to motivate Indigenous people to further collective action. Greg Boos from Cascadia notes that Indigenous people "should be prepared for self-advocacy at the time of entry to the US" as border patrol agents are often unaware of the border-crossing rights granted by the Jay Treaty.[69] The need to self-advocate to assert inherent rights is yet another form of border discrimination that should be addressed by the nation-states. Boos et al. therefore recommend the creation of a non-expiring Jay Treaty card that would "document the holder's legal rights and status under the Jay Treaty, including the right to work" to prevent conflict.[70]

[66] Caron, Report, n.p.n.

[67] Angelique EagleWoman, Fencing Off the Eagle and the Condor, Border Politics, and Indigenous Peoples, *Natural Resources & Environment*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (2008), 33, http://www.jstor.org/stable/40924995 (accessed 2 April 2020).

[68] Volpp, The Indigenous As Alien, 297.

[69] Boos – McLawsen – Fathali, Canadian Indians, Inuit, Metis, and Metis, 386.

[70] Ibid., 395.

Misinformation is widespread and alarming as it can lead to incidents such as the one in 2003 when US Armed Forces came to Canadian reserves to recruit First Nations falsely assuming they were "dual citizens" and could be thus enlisted to fight in US wars in the Middle East.[71] Similar incidents only highlight the urgency to facilitate proper training for border patrol officers. A few initiatives have already been taken that can serve as examples for other similar future actions. At the border crossing in Cornwall in the Akwesasne nation where its residents cross daily, border patrol officers now undergo cultural awareness training and are educated about the Akwesasne nation. Moreover, an Indigenous liaison officer is employed to facilitate communication with the Akwesasne residents.[72] Similarly, The Ktunaxa Nation Council in British Columbia provides cultural training for border agents especially regarding the handling of sacred objects. During special ceremonies, border agents are cautioned and prepared to speed the crossings of Ktunaxa citizens.[73] In his report, Fred Caron also proposes that more informal meetings between First Nations and patrol officers are arranged to increase awareness and education of border agents. He also urges for increased hiring of First Nations as border agents and proposes other viable solutions such as separate lanes for Indigenous travelers at border crossings.[74]

Fred Caron's report is the result of the commitment of the Government of Canada made in 2016 "to gain a better understanding of the unique perspectives of First Nations in border communities and to explore possible solutions to the challenges that they face."[75] Caron admits that while First Nation representatives were willing to offer their perspectives and viable thought-out solutions they were skeptical about the report's utility and effectiveness in implementing the proposed solutions. Three years have passed since the report's release and the border-crossing challenges faced by First Nations are yet to be addressed. In the meantime, Indigenous peoples continue to strengthen ties with their relatives across the border.

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[71] Ibid., 375.
[72] Dyck – Patterson, Border Crossing Issues, 10.
[73] Starks – McCormack – Cornell, *Native Nations*, 9.
[74] Caron, Report, n.p.n.
[75] Ibid., n.p.n.

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# INDIGENOUS HUMOR AND TRANSCULTURAL IDENTITY SHIFTS AND MIX-UPS WITHIN THE TIMEFRAME OF PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE IN DREW HAYDEN TAYLOR'S DRAMATIC WRITING

Krisztina Kodó[1]

## Abstract

*The article examines Indigenous dramatic writing in which the multifaceted aspects of transcultural identity are presented in mostly everyday situations, with humor and irony being the common discursive strategies. The article considers four plays by D. H. Taylor: The Bootlegger Blues (1991), The Baby Blues (1999), Education is our Right (1990) and Toronto at Dreamer's Rock (1990).*

*The concept of identity is a fluid term which outlines specific human features and historical associations. Transcultural identity, however, is not only an in-depth exploration of cultural roots and heritage, but looks at the way in which identities develop, move and shift between dominant and minority cultures.*

*All four plays are set in the present time; however, Taylor intricately links the past, present and the future through symbolism that draws upon native spirituality, humor, colonialism and the gothic. Taylor's humor and overall optimistic outlook provides an alternative solution for the main character(s). These ensure the evolution of a brighter future for the main character and the Native Peoples in general.*

## Introduction

"Culture" is a complex term that denotes a wide range of meanings. The term raises many questions as to which attributes should be included when trying to formulate some form of definition. In most cases, culture is viewed as a form of entertainment, in other words, an activity that people seek in their free time such as music, dance, theater, movies, books, handicrafts, sports games, and so on. Culture is also associated with what is currently fashionable or trendy, like high culture and low culture, which means culture is continuously changing. "Culture is made and remade, like a vast city (always under construction) in which artists and others renovate the buildings and

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avenues already there, as well as creating entirely new ones."[2] Our globalized world reflects our culture, and in turn culture reflects our globalized world. Therefore, "culture is a dynamic way of interpreting and interacting with the people, things and ideas surrounding a society, and […] representing the way that society experiences them."[3] Culture, however, is not an arbitrary construct, but relies on the evolution of a nation's social makeup, which is most profoundly affected by its history and heritage.

Our globalized world is characterized by international migration, which increasingly affects cross-cultural relationships and marriages. One of the focal points of the present article is an examination of how cultural groups and individuals who have been subjected to multiple cultural experiences fuse these into their personal identities. In previous decades, social psychology has mainly focused on biculturalism, which is concerned with specific understandings and competences in two cultures, for example, the ability to speak two languages fluently and accommodate the behavioral attitudes in two different cultural settings.[4] Transculturalism is an extension of biculturalism, which investigates individual identities with multicultural experiences.[5] This explores the manner in which people can acquire an understanding of a culture that "transcends," or in other words, goes beyond cultures and blends elements of more than one culture. This intercultural exchange involves the interaction and communication of different cultural backgrounds, which is a major phenomenon of globalization.

Regarding transcultural identity, we speak of "not so much a social, but a personal identity based on multiple intercultural contact experiences that can have a long-lasting effect on a person's values and worldview."[6] This becomes a personal identity that transcultural individuals choose freely and consciously in relation to the cultural factors they want to incorporate into their selves. These personal identities are not fixed, but are open to new intercultural experiences, which allows for a "dynamic or so-called fluid form of identity."[7] Therefore, the dynamic nature of transcultural identity results in a self-definition that consists of personal beliefs, norms and values. Whether the physical markers of social identity, such as group identification and belonging, may be considered an integral element of an individual's personal identity raises further questions.

[2] Len Kuffert, A Commentary on Some Aspects of Canadian Culture, in Kenneth G. Pryke – Walter C. Soderlund (eds.), *Profiles of Canada,* Toronto, Canadian Scholars' Press Inc., 2003, 97.

[3] Kuffert, Commentary on Some Aspects, 97.

[4] Melanie Vauclair – Justine Klecha – Cristina Milagre – Bárbara Duque, *Transcultural identity: The future self in a globalized world*. Revista Transcultural. Vol. 6 (2014), 15, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/274718644_Transcultural_identity_The_future_self_in_a_globalized_world (accessed 10 March 2020).

[5] Vauclair, *Transcultural identity*, 15.

[6] Ibid., 16.

[7] Ibid., 16.

As the present article considers specific aspects of Canadian minorities, the focus will be on Canadian Indigenous identities and the concept of transculturalism. The interconnectedness and continuous movement between cultures reflects the multicultural mosaic-like patterns in which each mosaic represents cultural elements. "Hence, what is common in transcultural individuals is that their identity is a 'patchwork' of different cultural elements."[8]

To what extent this is true and how this relates to the Indigenous Peoples of North America, specifically Canada, is one perspective that the article proposes to investigate through the concept of Native humor, a complex theme that contradicts the stereotypical images still existing today within the non-Native consciousness. Humor and its representation in Native literature is best played-out in the dramatic writing of Native playwrights like Tomson Highway, Monique Mojica, Drew Hayden Taylor, Daniel David Moses, etc. In order to understand the underlying humor portrayed within these works it is relevant to circumscribe their meaning and highlight the stereotypical concepts that have long prevailed in our common understanding.

## Native Humor and its Problematics

Generally, when we consider the Native Peoples of North America it is the silent, grave and stoic Indian as a stereotypical figure that pops into one's mind. Why? This is due to the historical image that has come down to us in which the Indian never laughs. This is the image that Stephen Leacock, the foremost literary humorist of the early twentieth century, reinforces when he mentions the Indians in his book on humor:

> Here on the spot was the Indian, probably the least humorous character recorded in history. He took his pleasure seriously with a tomahawk. Scientists tell us that humor and laughter had their beginnings in the dawn of history in the exultation of the savage over his fallen foe. The North American Indian apparently never got beyond the start. To crack his enemies' skull with a hatchet was about the limit of the sense of fun of a Seneca or a Pottawottomie.[9]

To what extent does this image reflect reality? Unfortunately, this has nothing to do with realistic representation since this is pure stereotypical imaging, which sadly still prevails in the twenty-first century. Leacock is not the only writer who reflected on this aspect of the subdued Native. Margaret Atwood also observed it, when she commented on white ignorance regarding Native humor:

[8] Ibid., 16–17.
[9] Stephen Leacock, *The Greatest Pages of American Humor,* New York, The Sun Dial, 1942, 9.

> There were a lot of adjectives. Lacking among them was *funny.* Savage irony and morbid humor did sometimes enter the picture as a kind of self-flagellation device for whites, but on the whole Natives were treated by almost everyone with the utmost gravity, as if they were either too awe-inspiring as blood-curdling savages or too sacrosanct in their status of holy victim to allow of any comic reactions either to them or by them. Furthermore, nobody ever seems to have asked them what if anything *they* found funny. The Native as presented in non-Native writing was singularly lacking in a sense of humor; sort of like the "good" woman of Victorian fiction, who acquired at the hands of male writers the same kind of tragic-eyed, long-suffering solemnity.[10]

This insensitivity of the whites toward any understanding of Native humor began to change and show signs of progress with the social and political upheavals of the 1960s and early 1970s. These changes involved actions resulting in decolonization and self-determination, which ultimately led to Native writers creating literature with humor as its basic feature. This sparked the development of quite a few Native theater groups throughout North America.[11] The new literary works written by Native playwrights, however, seem to have caught the non-Natives by surprise, causing bewilderment and incredulity. As Margaret Atwood comments:

Things are changing. Natives are now writing fiction, poetry and plays, and some of the literature being produced by them is both vulgar and hilarious. A good many stereotypes are hitting the dust, a few sensibilities are in the process of being outraged. The comfortable thing about a people who do not have a literary voice, or at least not one you can hear or understand, is that you never have to listen to what they are saying about *you*.[12]

The "you" that Atwood refers to is the non-Native white Caucasian. For a white European scholar/critic studying Native humor, the realization that this theme is loaded with pitfalls of all kinds is rather unnerving. Why? Native humor is unlike American, Canadian, English, Irish or even Hungarian humor. In trying to understand Native humor one should comprehend its essence, and its roots. Like any form of humor, it can heal and release stress, and depression. According to Cynthia Lindquist Mala, "being able to laugh is a way to cope that promotes healing and unity. Indian humor is rooted in life lessons. It means laughing at the myriad of tests thrown at us since

[10] Margaret Atwood, A Double-Bladed Knife, Subversive Laughter in Two Stories by Thomas King, in W. H. New (ed.), *Native Writers and Canadian Writing,* Vancouver, UBC, 1992, 243–244.

[11] Diane Debenharn, Native People in Contemporary Canadian Drama, *Canadian Drama,* 14-2, 1988, 137.

[12] Atwood, A Double-Bladed Knife, 244.

colonization."[13] Therefore, maintaining their sense of humor has helped the Indigenous people to survive their hardships. And as Lakota scholar Vine Deloria Jr. explains, "when a people can laugh at themselves and laugh at others and hold all aspects of life together without letting anyone drive them to extremes, then it would seem to me that the people can survive."[14] It is specifically through the use of humor that Native comedians and writers can awaken their people to the still existing stereotypes and the major social-political issues prevailing within their own communities. Humor, thereby, strengthens the community, heals, and is ultimately a form of survival. Another unique feature of Native humor is teasing, also referred to as "ribbing" or "razzing."[15] This is put into practice when "someone who gets a little too 'tall' may help shrink them back to the right height. [...] if you are being teased, you are 'in' and part of the family and community. Sometimes non-Natives have difficulty understanding this concept. Laughing at ourselves is good medicine."[16]

Native humor, therefore, is inherent in Native culture, and has basically been present since time immemorial. Laughter is a form of cultural survival, a means of coping with life, which has also helped the Natives as a people to survive colonization, strengthen togetherness, and belonging within their communities. Thus, "contemporary Native writers rely on this mediating and didactic capacity of humor, on its transcendence of the purely rational, to renegotiate images of Nativeness that are located in the readers' imaginations."[17]

However, one should keep in mind that Native humor was originally embedded in Native oral culture which was transmitted orally from generation to generation for centuries. And within this oral culture, humor uses specific gestures, mimicry and body language, which does not necessarily come across in written form. Nonetheless, Native culture is still an oral culture and the written form is not a result of the former. Though the prose form and especially the short story has become very popular within the sphere of Native literature, according to Tomson Highway,

> But why not write novels? Why not short stories? Why the stage? For me, the reason is that this oral tradition translates most easily and most effectively into a three dimensional medium. In a sense, it's like taking the 'stage' that lives inside

[13] Cynthia Lindquist Mala, Very Good Medicine: Indigenous Humor and Laughter, *Tribal College Journal,* Vol. 27, No. 4 (Summer 2016), 3, https://tribalcollegejournal.org/very-good-medicine-indigenous-humor-and-laughter/ (accessed 19 March 2020).

[14] Mala, *Very Good Medicine,* 3.

[15] Eva Gruber, *Humor in Contemporary Native North American Literature: Reimagining Nativeness,* New York, Camden House, 2008, 11.

[16] Mala, *Very Good Medicine,* 4.

[17] Eva Gruber, *Humor in Contemporary,* 10.

> the mind, the imagination, and transposing it – using words, actors, lights, sound – onto the stage in a theater. For me, it is really a matter of taking a mythology as extraordinary and as powerful as the human imagination itself and re-working it to fit, snugly and comfortably, the medium of the stage.[18]

The theater has become an important medium for Native writers, because drama is ultimately the closest to storytelling and within its scope humor is an essential factor with a major driving force. This serves as a basis for maintaining the oral tradition, the ritual practices and for the formulation of a new form of expression.

As mentioned above, Native theater is a relatively recent development which considers the works written and performed by Native people. These plays discuss and portray the culture and everyday lives of the Native Peoples in Canada. Like all theater, Native theater also "provides the possibility of direct confrontation, brings people together, introduces thought-provoking ideas and fosters an openness to dialogue and change."[19]

Within a multicultural Anglophone society, how effective is Native drama in its portrayal of the contemporary Indian with an oral culture based on storytelling, vibrant and full of symbolism, which reaches back to an oral tradition of thousands of years? Native heritage inherent in contemporary Native theater and drama is an experimental platform that combines Native symbolism, ritual, belief and heritage with contemporary cultural trends and genres. Furthermore, with the use of the trickster figure or tricksterish spirit – the figure that traditionally links the spiritual world with the physical world – the audiences are introduced to the concept of magic and the absurd. This allows for the dramatic demonstration of the constant opposing entities of fantasy and reality on stage on the one hand, and the projection of identities and stereotypical images as they accommodate themselves to the English language and non-Native culture, on the other. The function of Native humor, therefore, aided by the trickster is to hold up a mirror to humanity in which we, as Natives and non-Natives, see ourselves.[20]

The above features can be further expanded by exploring the blues and the Gothic as diverse genres that highlight the grotesque and absurd factors that support Native humor. These elements will be examined within the framework of the article. One of the most well-known and active figures within the Native theatrical scene is Drew Hayden Taylor, whose plays focus

[18] Tomson Highway: On Native Mythology, in Don Rubin (ed.), *Canadian Theatre History*, Selected Readings, Toronto, Playwrights Canada, 2006, 405.

[19] Mirjam Hirch: *Subversive Humour: Canadian Native Playwrights' Winning Weapon of Resistance*, in Drew Hayden Taylor (ed.) *Me Funny*, British Columbia, Douglas and McIntyre Ltd., 2005, 102.

[20] Hirch, *Subversive Humour*, 114.

on contemporary themes set within the Rez-milieu. The article will view in depth four popular plays by D. H. Taylor: *The Bootlegger Blues* (1991), *The Baby Blues* (1999), *Toronto at Dreamer's Rock* (1990), *Education is our Right* (1990). These works will be discussed in two subsections in this article. The first explores the "Blues" theme in popular culture and its interconnectedness with Native humor that shifts and blends within the timeframe of past and present. The second investigates the Gothic theme in its classical (Dickensian) understanding, blended with Native humor and spiritual symbolism with its shifts and mix-ups between past and present. Both themes seek to investigate Indigenous transcultural identities, the way in which they move and interconnect between cultures, hence taking or appropriating words, phrases, behavioral attitudes in order to probe the depths to which Native heritage (language and culture) can adapt itself to the English language within our globalized environment. Or vice versa? In brief, and to quote the humorist Victor Borge: "Laughter is the shortest distance between two people."[21]

## Transcultural Blues?

Humor is a "cross-cultural language," which, according to Hirch, functions as a weapon that is able to "bridge two worlds on one stage."[22] This transcultural connectedness is the basis of most Native plays. And "whether confronting annihilation in the physical or in the spiritual sense, the comic tenacity of Native playwrights suggests that the most deeply liberating function of humor is to free others to hope for the impossible."[23] These plays are written not only for Native audiences, but also for non-Natives. As Tomson Highway explains: "I like to write in such a way that it moves all people, moves rocks. Then I think my job has been done."[24]

In the following, two plays will be examined which will illustrate to what extent Native playwrights like to experiment with diverse genres, such as the blues. The blues is not necessarily a genre one would obviously associate with Native cultural values as it is historically closely linked with Afro-American cultural history. Is this cultural appropriation? Evidently not, it is rather a genre experiment in which everyday situations and happenings that involve the Native peoples are presented through the blues theme. The concept of deconstructing authenticity is described by Däwes in her article: "[n]ative theater provides powerful alternatives to conventional politics of identity. [...] Identity (in its prominent sense of signifying ontological substance) is exposed as the site

[21] Mala, *Very Good Medicine*, 5.
[22] Hirch, *Subversive Humour*, 116.
[23] Ibid., 114.
[24] Ibid., 115.

of inter- as well as intracultural oppression, exclusion, and appropriation, which is in dire need of revision."[25] This, according to Däwes, is a model for interculturalism – a dynamic construct under continuous alteration.[26]

The blues then becomes a clay-like substance ready to be molded into form in the hands of Native playwrights. The blues, by definition, is not linked in any way with Native culture but was originally developed in the southern United States following the American Civil War (1861–1865). It is a form of secular folk music created by African Americans, which originates from work songs and field hollers, minstrel show music, ragtime, church music, and the folk and popular music of the white population. The creation of the blues was largely connected to Southern black men, most of whom were agricultural workers. The earliest references to blues date back to the 1890s and early 1900s. Contrary to the etymological origins of the word, in which blue means sadness and melancholy in its various connotations, the blues were songs about "overcoming bad luck, saying what you feel, getting rid of frustrations, letting your hair down, and just plain having fun. No other form of music communicates more genuine personal emotion."[27]

Drew Hayden Taylor uses the blues theme in his plays to contradict the "tragic" and "stoic" Indian stereotype and present stories and everyday situations that "have their roots in the belly laughs of the communities."[28] The driving force of these plays is, therefore the aboriginal sense of humor at its best. The blues appears in Drew Hayden Taylor's so-called *blues tetralogy* that consists of four plays: *The Bootlegger Blues* (1991), *The Baby Blues* (1999), *The Buz'Gem Blues* (2001) and *Berlin Blues* (2007). The focus of this article, however, will consider the first two plays from the 1990s, which were Taylor's first experiments within the dramatic genre and the blues theme.

By writing *The Bootlegger Blues* Taylor was intent on writing a comedy "with absolutely no socially redeeming qualities whatsoever."[29] His focus was on telling a funny story, and the foundation of the play is based on a similar incident he had heard from someone on the reserve. The location of the play is a present-day reserve located in central Ontario, Canada and the duration is the twenty-four hours of a powwow weekend.[30] The cast consists of six characters altogether, all Natives and representing three generational groups:

[25] Birgit Däwes: "How Native is Native if You're Native?" Deconstructions of Authenticity in Drew Hayden Taylor's Performative Project, in Robert Nunn (ed.), *Drew Hayden Taylor, Essays on his Works*, Toronto, Guernica, 2008, 22.

[26] Däwes, "How Native is Native?", 22.

[27] Blues-Music, *Encyclopedia Britannica*, https://www.britannica.com/art/blues-music (accessed 20 March 2020).

[28] Drew Hayden Taylor, *The Baby Blues*, Vancouver, Talonbooks, 1999, 7.

[29] Birgit Däwes – Robert Nunn: Interview with Drew Hayden Taylor, in Robert Nunn (ed.), *Drew Hayden Taylor, Essays on his Works*, Toronto, Guernica, 2008, 220.

[30] Drew Hayden Taylor, *The Bootlegger Blues,* Saskatoon, Fifth House Publishers, 1991, 8.

Andrew (nicknamed Blue) and Angie are in their twenties and represent the young and carefree lifestyle; Marianne and David, married by common-law, in their mid-thirties, are the "Indian yuppies," with jobs, responsibilities and an expensive car. We find the following description of David's persona in the stage directions: "David is Marianne's common-law husband, a stuffed shirt with an overly developed sense of office and life protocol. He is an Indian yuppie."[31]

And finally, there is Martha, in her late-fifties, a devout and "good Christian woman,"[32] and an active member of the reserve Church committee. All the protagonists are stereotypical stock characters, who represent the average contemporary Native living in Canada today. However, one of the characters is the odd one out: Noble, a mid-thirties, Aboriginal dancer, who merely follows the powwow circuit and lives off the competition money awarded to the winners. The play projects a very strong sense of *carpe diem*, questioning whether one should live without any social restrictions or follow the unwritten social norms of the dominant white Anglophone Canadian. Noble follows no rules, his name is "short for Noble Savage,"[33] which identifies him with the eighteenth century European romanticized image of the great Indian warrior. For Noble, the powwow and traditional dancing are a spiritual quest, the opportunity to be an Indian in its true sense of the word, as he himself says at one point in the play: "That's why I go to powwows. It's a chance to sleep under the stars, the light bulbs of Heaven, on the grass, listen to the trees and the insects. To me, that's the voice of the Creator. I'd rather hear the voice myself than go through a middle man."[34]

Through Noble's figure, Taylor introduces the tricksterish spirit, the likeable/loveable rogue, who we identify with the fantasy warrior of our imagination. But fantasy clashes with reality, because Noble is an aging drunkard, a womanizer, without ties, responsibilities or a fixed address. He is a loner and a misfit, who can influence those who may feel lost within the white man's world, like Marianne within the play, who is overburdened by her duties as a wife, her middleclass obligations (diet, jogging, wholesome food), and the role she is forced to play. David and Marianne have shifted from their own Native identity, their past and heritage, to conform to an ideal that neither know how to handle, and this is where Taylor's humor becomes a major force. Noble, the irresponsible drunkard, disrupts this artificial and frail world by presenting an alternative to Marianne: "I don't want to be an Indian yuppie. I want bannock, not whole meal. I want to fry my food, not microwave it. Especially that quiche stuff of yours. The Creator meant eggs

[31] Ibid., 15.
[32] Ibid., 11.
[33] Ibid., 36.
[34] Ibid., 68.

to be fried, not baked."[35] This back-and-forth movement between cultures is the cause of mix-ups and the identity crises that Marianne faces. She has her responsibilities as a wife, but she longs to be the traditional Native dancer and carefree girl that she was a decade ago. She decides to leave David and go with Noble to Michigan, the location of the next powwow. However, she does offer David the alternative of going with her: "There's an escape route for every place and situation David. Here's yours. Come with me. Let's hop in your Camaro and go to Michigan. Just say, what the hell, we're here to burn rubber and gas. Then I'll know there's still something still alive in you."[36]

David's inability to decide forces Marianne to act and leaves with Noble. This dramatic conflict, however, is not the main line of the story. The major comic element within the play is the act of bootlegging, which is carried out by Martha, an elderly and devout Native Christian woman, who is forced into an unpleasant situation in which she must illegally sell one hundred and forty-three cases of light beer. Martha, the image of the decent, god-fearing woman, is willing to bootleg beer to raise money for a church organ. The situation is utterly impossible and hilarious, which, nevertheless, dramaturgically functions well on stage. As an elder in her community, and within her family, she behaves contrary to expectations, and succeeds in selling the beer within the community. But there is a double sidedness to her character: she sells beer only to those financially better situated, while admonishing others for drinking instead of providing for their families. This bilateral function within the play reflects the contradictions abounding in the lives of Natives, which ultimately point to the interconnectedness, hence transcultural movements and shifts between Native and non-Native cultures. Furthermore, it also adds to the contradictory conceptions of the past in terms of heritage and cultural roots, and the present with its multicultural framework. The play offers us a glimpse of the Native way of life, which offers two directions, but as Martha explains, it is the individual's decision to choose: "In my life I've seen two kind of Indians, those that are happy doing what they do, and those that feel they should be happy but aren't. I think it's every person's journey in life to choose which one they are."[37] The ability to choose is our inherent right, but are we capable of deciding at all or do we have cultural obligations and standards forced upon us? After all, living on a reserve in Canada today differs from living in one of the big Canadian cities, where different social norms, standards and expectations must be met.

Perhaps one of the major obstacles that Indigenous Peoples have had to overcome was the use of the English language, which markedly differs from the native languages and the worldviews they project. The medium for Native

[35] Ibid., 72.
[36] Ibid., 77.
[37] Ibid., 79.

authors' work is the English language, but if their voice is to be heard at all, these authors and playwrights must learn to adapt. As Tomson Highway adds, "we are very conscious of the fact that we are working with a language that we must reshape to our own particular purpose."[38] This then is not a one-way development but a reciprocal one since these native voices also have a say in the shaping of the language. Through dramatic performances and humor these works are effective in opening those channels that universally connect and interconnect peoples of all nationalities.

Humor, then has no limits and as Taylor said in an interview with Robert Nunn and Brigit Däwes, "I was always taught humor should amuse, not abuse."[39] *The Bootlegger Blues* follows this maxim entirely: the blues theme further deepens and heightens the pure and unselfish enjoyment of life portrayed by the characters, which the work communicates well towards its readers and audiences.

The blues theme continues in Drew Hayden Taylor's next play, *The Baby Blues*. As in the previous work, the setting is the "campground and food court" of any typical powwow on a summer day in a reserve in Central Ontario.[40] Of the six characters who comprise the cast, only one is familiar from *The Bootlegger Blues*: Noble, the "aging fancy dancer who refuses to grow up, thirty-eight years old."[41] The other protagonists belong to three generations, as previously: Pashik (17), a teenager who is intent on seeing the world, and Skunk (20), an attractive young fancy dancer, like Noble once was; Noble (38) and Jenny (37), Pashik's mother, a strong-willed independent woman; Amos (60), "a Mohawk elder who travels the powwow trail dispensing food and wisdom".[42] Again three generations are present in which the elders, whether in their thirties or sixties, serve as examples and function as the storytellers for the younger generations like Pashik and Skunk. The story illustrates the saying that life repeats itself to such an extent that this could justifiably be said to be the play's motto. Pashik and Skunk are the mirror image of what Jenny and Noble were two decades ago, while Noble is the image of the kind of person that Amos had been thirty odd years ago. No wonder, since Pashik turns out to be Noble's child, and as a final touch at the end we learn that Noble is in fact Amos' son. *C'est la vie,* one may say.

The fun and the blues continue, and, as in *the Bootlegger Blues*, we are confronted with humorous moments that present clashes between Native and white cultures. This, however, is dramatized further with the introduction of a white character called Summer. She is the typical wannabee who has all the

[38] Tomson Highway: On Native Mythology, 405.
[39] Däwes – Nunn: Interview with Drew Hayden Taylor, 221.
[40] Drew Hayden Taylor, *The Baby Blues*, Vancouver, Talonbooks, 1999, 10.
[41] Taylor, *The Baby Blues*, 10.
[42] Ibid., 10.

preconceptions of whites seeking the "authentic Indian."[43] In other words, the vanishing imaginary Indian that Summer – a white (blond) twenty-five-year-old university student doing Native Studies – is trying with too much enthusiasm to capture as proof of her understanding of Native culture and her "one sixty-fourth Native" heritage. As she declares with somewhat childish excitement: "I found evidence that my great-great-grandmother, Donna Seymour… was one quarter Native. […] I am proud to say one-sixty-fourth. And proud of every aboriginal cell in my body. Can you see it in my features?"[44]

Summer's continual search for authentic native spirituality highlights typical non-native blunders in which she believes any story told by a Native to represent deep spiritual meanings. Similarly, she is unable to differentiate between the various tribal languages, therefore she comes prepared with a few sentences of Ojibway, Mohawk and even Cree. However, in her failure to be understood she experiences a moment of apologetic realization: "Oh my…I'm so sorry. That was just my white concept of pan-Indianism coming through."[45] However, Amos and Noble continue to tease and make fun of Summer with popular quotations from French and Latin. This results in total confusion on the part of Summer, and she exclaims: "Wait a minute. This isn't how it's supposed to be!" Noble's responds: "oops, kind of ruins the image, don't it?"[46] The play, then, is a mockery of the romanticized stereotypical image of the Indian, encouraging the audience to laugh at Summer's overenthusiastic and silly behavior. In fact, this is the so called "comic shock recognition"[47] whereby the native and non-native audience laughs at themselves, because these situations reflect their views of themselves.

The comic illustration of transcultural shifts and mix-ups in *The Bootlegger Blues* and *The Baby Blues* is the underlying force of the plays in which humor is directed at two distinct cultures. The incidents in the plays show how certain cultural markers have been appropriated and embedded into the everyday usage of the language and individual identities. To illustrate this, it is worth quoting the stage directions from the beginning of Scene Two: "Amos is getting his food stand together. It is a trailer-like structure with signs on it saying things like 'Nish Chalet,' 'Fortune Scones,' 'Nee-Cheese Burgers,' 'Corn soup from the (ab)original recipe.'"[48]

The signs with the food names are clear transcultural identifications with multicultural labels. "Nish Chalet" refers to the well-known Canadian menu of grilled fish chalet, where chalet, an obvious French word, recalls the wooden cabins or houses used by holidaymakers in the Swiss Alps. "Fortune scones" is a

[43] Hirch, Subversive Humour, 112.
[44] Taylor, *The Baby Blues*, 14.
[45] Ibid., 37.
[46] Ibid., 38.
[47] Hirch, Subversive Humour, 114.
[48] Taylor, *The Baby Blues*, 26–27.

clear reference to the Chinese fortune cookies, which, in this case, is a "special kind of bannock," an idea that Amos has acquired in a Chinese restaurant. These he fries with "little philosophical Indian sayings in the middle," basically a replica of the Chinese fortune cookies.[49] Therefore, the fish, the cheeseburger, the corn soup and the fortune cookies are certainly not native originalities, but a resourceful marketing catch that aims at linking aboriginal heritage with non-native popular consumer food. The inventive wordplays offer a taste of foreignness, an exotic color to otherwise boring clichés.

The particularities portrayed within these two plays offer an insight into the transcultural changes that have thoroughly suffused and continue to influence the English language in Canada. The differences and distinctness of Aboriginal culture and white European culture seem to have become less, however, the plays imply a tendency of Native culture to favor a somewhat backward movement toward heritage and authentic traditions and rituals. The popularity of Native theater suggests that the most appropriate forms of Native storytelling and comedy as an inherent feature is best played out on the stage. And Drew Hayden Taylor's plays, as presented above, aided by the blues theme emphasize the lighthearted nature of these works. Humor is the cover theme that carries transcultural peculiarities that highlight socio-historical issues which are acutely present in the lives of Canadians and the Aboriginal Peoples.

## Native Experiments within the Gothic Genre

Drew Hayden Taylor's plays are widely known for their comic framework; however, he has also written works that specifically address the youth. These carry a serious tone with additional irony and sarcasm, and raise questions that examine the identity, heritage and cultural values of the Aboriginal youth. In the previous section, two of Taylor's light and carefree comedies were examined which function efficiently within the blues genre. Obviously, serious drama requires a different approach, one that can link the scope of time (past, present and future), and tell a story, because "stories are memories that must be shared with the Universe."[50]

In the following, two youth dramas will be examined, *Toronto at Dreamer's Rock* and *Education is our Right.* The common ground of both works is the Gothic genre, which Taylor closely associates with Charles Dickens' famous short story, *A Christmas Carol* (1843). In terms of its historical development, the Gothic was very popular in the mid-eighteenth century England, which was initiated by Horace Walpole's immensely successful *Castle of Otranto*

[49] Ibid., 35.
[50] Drew Hayden Taylor, *Two One-Act Plays*, Calgary, Fifth House Publishers, 1990, 6.

(1765). Most Gothic novels are tales of mystery and horror, intended to chill the spine and curdle the blood. They contain a strong element of the supernatural and have all or most of the now familiar topography, sites, props, supernatural appearances and happenings: wild and desolate landscapes, dark forests, castles, abbeys, dungeons, secret passages, trapdoors, apparitions, curses, etc.[51] Though the early Gothic romances died of their own excesses of plot, the Gothic atmospheric machinery continued to permeate the fiction of major writers such as the Brontë Sisters, Edgar Allan Poe and even Charles Dickens among others. In the second half of the twentieth century, the term came to be applied to paperback romances with the same kind of themes and trappings as the originals.

*A Christmas Carol* was probably the most popular piece of fiction that Dickens ever wrote. The story is a candid allegory with an episodic narrative structure. The story contains the classic elements of the Gothic: the frightening and chain rattling ghosts, the metonymy of gloom and horror, an atmosphere of mystery and suspense, and the dark, cold, lonely and sparsely furnished house. Dickens was considered an important social commentator, who used fiction to criticize the economic, social and moral abuses within Victorian England. The timeframe of past, present and future is intricately joined to formulate a thematic function, whereby the Ghost of Christmas Past represents memory, the Ghost of Christmas Present is empathy and charity, while the Ghost of Christmas Yet to Come highlights the fear of death. The aim of these ghosts is not merely to frighten, but to influence the decision of self-serving and insensitive people and transform them into caring and charitable members of society through the intervention of moralizing lessons.

In the play, *Education is Our Right* (1990), Drew Hayden Taylor uses the Dickensian Gothic formula and creates an Aboriginal version of *A Christmas Carol.* In general, Taylor does not focus on one issue, but in this particular play there is "very little fiction in this drama."[52] The controversial issue at stake concerns Pierre Cadieux, the then Federal Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, who announced a cap on post-secondary education for Native students. The play was in fact written and produced, according to the production notes, less then a year after the announcement.[53] The cast consists of many characters, however, only four actors perform on stage, but "in a variety of roles."[54] The location is variable, as it is in other plays by Taylor, but should be set on a fictional reserve in central Ontario. The time is not fixed either, which implies that the time context is flexible and open to setting other time periods. The Scrooge figure of the play is Ebenezer Cadieux,

[51] Diana Neill, *A Short History of the English Novel,* New York, Collier Books, 1967, 104–105.
[52] Drew Hayden Taylor, *Education is Our Right,* Calgary, Fifth House Publishers, 1990, 78.
[53] Ibid., 78.
[54] Ibid., 79.

which is an explicit reference to the contemporary politician Pierre Cadieux, whose callousness is the subject of the play. Interestingly, the obvious switch of forenames is all Taylor was willing to do to maintain the authenticity of the theme. In Canada, the years 1984 to 1993 were the era of the progressive conservatives under the leadership of Brian Mulroney as prime minister. Due to a cabinet shuffle, Pierre Cadieux was appointed Federal Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs between 30 January 1989 and 22 February 1990. His appointment lasted merely a year as his decisions concerning educational cuts were rejected by the Aboriginal population so passionately that political marches were organized to Ottawa. Furthermore, several young Natives chose to go on a hunger strike to express their rejection. Neither the minister nor the government revoked the decision, however, the incident illustrated that the Native Peoples of Canada were able to unite their forces, and they showed a greater presence and voice then expected, not to mention the fact that any future political concerns and decisions made by the Federal government cannot exclude their opinion anymore.

*Education is our Right* is a youth drama which closely follows the Dickensian structural layout and has a temporality of past, present and future that is illustrated through the appearance of ghosts and visions. The images and mental pictures portrayed highlight frightening incidents from the past and present which are linked to cultural, traditional and language appropriation. This provides the story and the issue at stake with greater dramatic range and irony. There are altogether four spirits that appear in the play, as in Dickens' story, and their aim is to show and confront Cadieux with the other side of life, reality. The first ghost is the Spirit of Knowledge, "the keeper of all knowledge," who explains that "in that knowledge, salvation can be found. Salvation not only for the soul, but of the mind and spirit."[55] This implies the survival of the Native Peoples. The second ghost is Education Past, in the form of a traditionally dressed Indian male (a stereotypical image), whose aim is to confront Cadieux with the past by presenting traditional methods of teaching, hence storytelling by elders, and the residential schools. The effects of the latter meant that "entire generations of culture, spirit dead, because of government decision about our education [sic]."[56] From the past we move to the next spirit, Education Present as a young Native girl dressed in a contemporary powwow dancing outfit, whose task is "to help my people regain everything we've lost over the centuries."[57] Her task is to show Cadieux how the Native Peoples react to the cutback by organizing a march from Manitoulin Island to Ottawa and also allows the youngsters on a hunger strike to express their opinions, in the form of an interview, to the outside world. The final

[55] Ibid., 86.
[56] Ibid., 98.
[57] Ibid., 116.

ghost is Education Future: a man dressed in a three-piece suit, looking very business-like and full of self-esteem, very much the Indian yuppie figure, who first shows an image of a Native woman, as one example and consequence of the issue, who cannot study medicine because of Cadieux's decision. As a final confrontation, Cadieux is the teacher explaining "the Cadieux tragedy" to his students with three projected versions (stereotypes) of aboriginal life: "a dirty looking Indian," "a bum, tramp, alcoholic, national disgrace"; then the "Reserve Indian," whereby "Reserves today are seriously overpopulated by neurotic and socially dysfunctional people."[58] And the third image is a nicely dressed young woman, "the Integrator," the "outcast," who "started out telling people she was Spanish or Hawaiian. Now she has everything she wants. Except her people." These images reflect reality and the effects of white colonization, which points toward an identity crisis. One of the major questions is whether the survival of the Native Peoples is possible at all with the odds stacked against them. With the cap on post-secondary education, any possibility of educating their people is now strictly limited, predicting a bleak and pessimistic future for the Aboriginal population. Nevertheless, Taylor ends his play on an optimistic note, in the words of the ghost of Education Future: "everybody chooses their own future."[59] In Dickens' story Scrooge undergoes a definite change, willing to open his heart to his environment, and to extend his hand to those in need. Here, Cadieux's last sarcastic remark is "that's politics",[60] which hints at the untrustworthiness of government policies and politics in general. But there is a change taking place within the Native communities and the question of identity within the scope of past, present and future clearly emerges, pointing toward a promising future in Taylor's plays.

The Gothic and its machinery provide the props that manage the movement between past, present and future. The concept of time has major importance in another youth drama by Taylor, *Toronto at Dreamer's Rock* (1990). The location of the play is Dreamer's Rock, which is a "real place with real power. It's located beside a highway on Birch Island Reserve, and many people still go there for guidance."[61] The play was first produced by De-Ba-Jeh-Mu-Jig Theatre Group under the direction of Larry Lewis, and the cast consists of only three characters, three teenage boys, aged sixteen. The time of the performance is not particularly important but a summer afternoon, possibly a Saturday afternoon would be preferred to fit the references in the text. The Dickensian structural layout is used to connect past, present and future, and open dimensions to the otherworld. This work does not employ

[58] Ibid., 133.
[59] Ibid., 137.
[60] Ibid., 139.
[61] Drew Hayden Taylor, *Toronto at Dreamer's Rock*, Calgary, Fifth House Publishers, 1990, 10.

ghosts, but rather magic, a tricksterish spirit and spirituality, and the meeting of past-present-future at one moment in time. Why is this relevant? The three figures, Rusty (present), Keesic (past), and Michael (future) meet across three dimensions of time. Since the location of the play, Dreamer's Rock, is a "sacred site"[62] the magical element is given greater emphasis, and this is further highlighted by the symbolism of the crow. If we are looking for a trickster figure, then the crow has an important function, because its cawing at the beginning and at the very end of the story, with the sound of drums beating, is a sign that a magical occurrence is taking place, furthermore there is a hint later on that the crow is in fact the "messenger of the Creator."[63]

The symbolism of the crow has acquired different meanings throughout history, which is worth looking into in order to understand its relevance. In general, the crow has acquired a bad reputation and is considered a bad omen, a scavenger. In Christian tradition, it is depicted as being evil and one that carries the spirit of the damned to its final destination.[64] However, in Native American culture the crow is respected and honored as a "sacred keeper of law" and as being "powerful spirit guides" and their "message to us has the power to heal by bringing aspects of ourselves to consciousness."[65]

The three boys represent three different time periods, therefore Rusty is the present generation of the early 1990s, who typically hates school, drinks, is angry and frustrated with his Indianness and himself, and tries to absorb traits of the dominant culture, but has to realize that "I don't fit in."[66] Keesic is virtually dropped in from the past of approximately five hundred years ago. He first speaks his native language then through his contact with Rusty and magic suddenly begins to speak in English, but he is very conscious and proud of his identity as an Odawa, exclaiming that "we are the people."[67] In the present, Rusty came to Dreamer's Rock to ironically enjoy some solitude and drink his beer, while, in his own time dimension, Keesic visited Dreamer's Rock as a "dream quest" in order to find answers to his questions through prayer, fasting and dreams.[68] Authenticity clashes with transculturalism, through which the validation of cultural criteria begins to fall apart. Then, into this tense moment arrives Michael from the year 2095, who is educated, polite, has an in-depth knowledge of history, but as an Odawa has lost most of his heritage. The ultimate question then is why were they brought here?

[62] Ibid., 16.
[63] Ibid., 37.
[64] Jules Ravenheart, A Look at the Powerful Native American Crow Medicine, *Fractal Enlightenment,* https://fractalenlightenment.com/38167/culture/a-look-at-the-powerful-native-american-crow-medicine (accessed 29 May 2020).
[65] Ravenheart, American Crow Medicine.
[66] Drew Hayden Taylor, *Toronto at Dreamer's Rock*, Calgary, Fifth House Publishers, 1990, 47.
[67] Ibid., 38.
[68] Ibid., 26.

For Keesic, the realization is that his culture has been lost, since the language has disappeared, the sweatlodge as well, there is no tribal warfare, no warriors, and Dreamer's Rock, a sacred and spiritual place, has been turned into a touristic attraction. Communication, however, is the key to finding their answers as they slowly comprehend that "those who don't remember the past are condemned to relive it."[69] Keesic, then, is the past and with it the Native heritage that Rusty and Michael must "relive" and grasp. Rusty and Michael must come to understand that culture, language and heritage, hence their Native identity, is not lost after all, because "we still exist. Changed, but Odawa."[70] And the reason they have met on Dreamer's Rock is because this is "part of the land, part of Mother Earth. […] The land is the basis for everything. We have survived not just on the land, but with it."[71] Therefore, Taylor's underlying humor and the Dickensian formula of linking past-present-future also functions effectively here in directing Rusty back to his roots, heritage and ultimately his identity.

## Conclusion

The concept of identity is a fluid term that incorporates many perspectives which outline specific human features and historical associations. Native theater provides an outlet for Native storytelling through humor, and as presented in the article offers both the Native and non-native audiences a glimpse of contemporary Indigenous transcultural identity. With the use of humor, Native comedians and writers awaken their people to persistent stereotypes and the major social-political issues prevailing within their own communities. Native humor is thus an inherent entity in Native cultural history and an essential element of cultural survival. The four plays by Drew Hayden Taylor that were analyzed within the scope of this article are experiments within the Blues and the Gothic genres highlighting the notion that both comedy and serious drama work well within this dramatic range. Major themes that were elaborated show that there is a constant movement, shifting and even mix-up between Native culture and the dominant forms of culture. However, this progress does not necessarily entail a one-way development, but rather a bi-directional tendency in which some cultural identities are incorporated into the everyday lives of the Indigenous peoples, while there is also a tendency to move toward a pure and clear vision of Native heritage and identity. What Taylor conclusively offers in his plays through the scope of humor is the importance of maintaining both cultures consciously

[69] Ibid., 42–43.
[70] Ibid., 69.
[71] Ibid., 70.

while also retracing and identifying with Native culture on a deeper and more profound level, because this essentially will ensure the survival of Native cultural identity. Survival in this sense acquires flexibility, which allows for a greater dimension and an optimistic view, as Rusty said "I survive in my time, you survive in yours. [...] The point is, we've survived. We're still here today."[72]

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[72] Ibid., 71.

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# THE SHIFTING SITES OF IDENTITY NEGOTIATION IN BOYDEN'S *THREE DAY ROAD*[1]

Judit Ágnes Kádár[2]

Abstract

*This paper addresses the "broken taboos and uncomfortable truths" of mixed blood identity in Contemporary Métis writing, through the example of Joseph Boyden's* Three Day Road *(2005). In my extended research I explore identity negotiation and the radical textual undoing of ethnic identity concepts (including stereotypes) reflected in Métis Canadian and US Southwestern writing and visual arts. Here I present how our understanding of interracial identity is challenged by mixed heritage authors and how their protagonists' negotiate this in the shifting sites ("journey") of identity formulation. I study the fluctuation between more social identities, ethnic choice and specifically the possibilities for escaping prescribed identity formulations and reconnecting with tribal heritage that manifests the clashing of Western and idigenous cosmologies and tackles the problems of ethnic pride, shame and stigma.*

This paper addresses the problem of mixed ethno-cultural identity presented in the prose writings of a novelist of Anishinaabe and Irish origins, Joseph Boyden (1966–), whose self-identification and indigenous ties have been questioned recently. Here my focus is the text and the mixed heritage protagonist, and not necessarily the writer's ethnicity, which only matters insofar as his sensibilities, cultural background and experiences influence the story and the writing process. I believe that being born into a mixed ethno-cultural heritage that incorporates the traits of both the former colonizer and colonized peoples, i.e. those of Euro-Canadian and indigenous cultures, generates special sensibilities in a writer. Even if the primary subject matter or protagonist is not of mixed-blood, the literary text depicts the problems

[1] An essay of similar focus has been published in: Multicultural Identity Negotiation in Recent Canadian Mixed-Blood Narratives: Boyden's *Three Day Road*. *Central European Journal of Canadian Studies,* Vol. 12–13 (2018), 133–144, https://digilib.phil.muni.cz/bitstream/handle/11222.digilib/138499/2_CentralEuropeanJournalCanadian_12-2018-1_12.pdf?sequence=1 (accessed 9 December 2020)

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of racism, discrimination, identity turmoil, acculturation challenges, identity negotiation and authenticity. I explore how the widespread pattern of return to Indigeneity is actually tackled in the view of different personal transformation processes. Two powerful novels published the same year seem to have had a major impact on Boyden's *Three Day Road*: the US Southwestern Leslie Marmon Silko's *Ceremony* (1977) and the Canadian Timothy Findley's *The Wars* (1977).

A series of Boyden's novels explore the challenges of identity construction: *Three Days Road* (2005), *Through Black Spruce* (2008) and *The Orenda* (2013). Here I will focus on the first in this series, which uses a historic incident to draw parallels with some contemporary concerns and explores how certain "broken taboos and uncomfortable truths" related to mixed ethno-cultural heritage in North America perpetuate in a broader sense the problems of ethnic pride, shame and stigma, and which Paula Gunn Allen has called "conflicting blood strains."[3] As for Canadian mixed blood writers, what Tomson Highway (Cree), Drew Hayden Taylor and Richard Wagamese (Ojibwe), Thomas King (Cherokee) and Richard Van Camp (Dogrib) share is their Indigenous and Caucasian ancestry and their sensibility for embodying conflicting ethno-cultural heritages of aboriginal and Anglo-American nature. Similarly, in the US Southwest, Paula Gunn Allen (Laguna/ Scottish/ Lebanese) and Silko (Laguna Pueblo/ Mexican/ Anglo–American), have paved the literary way for writing about previously stigmatized mixed blood identities, while Wilma Mankiller (Cherokee/ Irish/ Dutch), Louis Owens (Cherokee/ Choctaw/ Irish) and the by now nationally aclaimed Joy Harjo of Muskogee, (Cherokee/ French /Irish) focuses on the so called "hybrid potential,"[4] that replaces the earlier stigmatized identity of their protagonists. I am aware of the mixed critical reception of any approach to an author's ethnocultural affiliation, the Authenticity Debate, the colonial blood quantum ideology, and I respect the authors' self-identification and the occasional refusal to discuss mixed heritage and the Anglo-American part of one's ancestry respectively. Nevertheless, I am convinced that beyond measuring how much one is considered Indigenous, increased ethno-cultural awareness and knowledge does matter and play a significant role in our understanding of diverse archives of cultural knowledge and our ability to narrate, edit and recreate identity.

[3] In Gunn Allen's "Dear World" the author shares her dilemmas, frustrations and emotional load that derives from her mixed Euro-American and Pueblo heritage and refers to the historical conflicts between the colonizer and the colonized that mixed blood persons internalize and take as a lifetime psychological challenge.

[4] Louis Owens, The Syllogistic Mixed Blood: How Roland Barthes Saved Me from the *indians*, in Monika Kamp – D. J. Rosenthal (eds.), *Mixing Race, Mixing Culture: Inter-American Literary Dialogues*. Austin, Texas University, 2002, 227–239.

Boyden scrutinizes ethnic stereotypes and discrimination, shame and victimhood with regard to First Nations identity in general and Cree identity in intercultural encounters and the First World War, respectively. *Three Day Road* works at multiple narrative levels as a war novel, a *buildungsroman* and a postcolonial counter-narrative. As for identity negotiation and the shifting sites of identity formulation, i.e., the physical and spiritual "journey," Boyden's novel presents us with a contrastive pair of personality developments depicted within a concentric circle of sites. *Three Day Road* is a story of two Cree friends and hunters from Ontario, Xavier Bird and Elijah Weesegeechak/ Whiskeyjack. Xavier was raised by his aunt Niska in the bush, while Elijah ran away from a residential school and was raised with Xavier. The friends join the Canadian army and fight in the Firat World War actually fighting their own "wars" on different fronts, those of military, racial, physical, mental and spiritual nature. Xavier, the quiet one, clings to his Cree identity and finds the war an alien environment. Elijah, on the other hand, is more adaptive to white Canadian lifestyle and war mentality even at the loss of a sense of self. The friends become emotionally separated and their spirits drift into in different worlds. For Xavier, returning home means reconnection with his heritage and also healing the unbearable wounds of his heart.

*Three Day Road* is narrated in a vague, shifting time and has a special storyline. The narrative is cyclic, starting from the return from war and reconnecting with Indigeneity. To understand the latter, Boyden takes us back to the childhood of the protagonists, with references to Niska's birth before that, when the *wmistikoshiw* (whites) still depended on the Natives. Storytelling is in fact part of the identity negotiation process, especially when it makes references to the gaps between narrator, listener and the archaic tradition: it is a virtual umbilical cord per se. However, there are numerous indications of the challenges such a reconnection with Indigeneity might entail, and of the slight chance of success any naïve claim to complete recovery and full reintegration to a tribal community might have. The ending of the narrative, the sweat lodge scene, the ritual purification and reference to Xavier's future sons[5] reconnects the cyclic storyline to the beginning of the novel, while giving a future dimension to it as well. In addition to the organic pattern of storytelling (Niska and Xavier) with its rolling, embracing and cyclic nature serves as a source of wisdom and healing therapy, too. Laura Groningen and Neta Gordon agree that, within the "healing aesthetics" of Boyden's novel, the author's aim is to devictimize, commemorate and destigmatize the Aboriginal soldiers and to "recover marginalized histories."[6] In addition, the *windigo* story provides

[5] Joseph Boyden, *Three Day Road,* Toronto, Penguin Canada, 2005, 379.

[6] Neta Gordon, Time Structures and the Healing Aesthetic of Joseph Boyden's *Three Day Road,* https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/scl/article/view/11212/11952 (accessed 4 April 2017).

another dimension to comprehend and interpret the actual story of two Cree guys going to European wars and expands its scope with an allusion to the survival of First Nations communities and individuals in modern times.

We observe how the two kids grow up in the context of clashing cultures and paradigms. The residential school and the urban environment are a harsh contrast with Niska's bush land. The binary of Western and Indigenous paradigms appears in different settings, for instance the European war frontline and the army, though these sites of interaction do not significantly change the protagonists. The author specifies one aspect of those worlds that Xavier finds challenging but Elijah seems to adjust to all too easily: violence. The *windigo* killer story denotes violence, too, for the reader can understand the wisdom behind killing the evil spirited one in the community insofar as violence is accepted as an essential part of the world. However, in European and Anglo-Canadian culture, racist verbal violence and actual physical violence in the modern warfare of the First World War perpetuate countless examples of inhumanity and the two friends react very differently to this. While Elijah becomes the chief killer at war, Xavier says: "I will never understand this god, these people"[7] who celebrate love, forgiveness and purity at Christmas and constantly act against their faith. The violence-related allusions compare Western and Indigenous notions of violence: "The sickness of the *windigo* could spread as surely as the invisible sickness of the white man *wemistikoshiw*".[8] The *windigo* killer appears in parallel worlds: the Huns' new weapons in the First World War resemble the weapons of cultural genocide applied in Anglo-American and Indian relations, like the residential schools and other racist means of conquest.

The particular communities as sites of shifting identity transformations are the residential school, the small Canadian town community with "converted Indians [who] look full of food",[9] "a place of stones and glass called Toronto"[10] and the army on the French frontline, signifying the double frontline[11] of military warfare and racism. All these sites of transformation are marked by initial conflict and gradual acculturation, but obviously to various extents in the case of the two Cree youngsters. The dichotomy between archetypical and critically depicted civilizations versus the wilderness[12] seems to give rise to alienation and conflict for them. However, other human beings, both white and Indigenous, are what surprise or shock Elijah and Xavier, due to their attitudes which perpetuate the problem of innate racism and their personality shortcomings.

7 Boyden, *Three Day Road,* 309.
8 Ibid., 263.
9 Ibid.,174.
10 Ibid., 87.
11 Ibid., 327.
12 Laroque uses the abbreviated reference to "civ/sav" (68) in Emma Laroque, The Métis in English Canadian literature, *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies,* Vol. III, No. 1 (1983), 85–94, http://www3.brandonu.ca/library/CJNS/3.1/laroque.pdf (accessed 1 October 2016).

From time to time, the Cree protagonists face some sources of frustration, namely authenticity, identification and validation. What actually underlies both narratives is the identity crisis of Indigenous persons in conflict with their surroundings as well as with themselves. There are some concentric circles of identification, Cree/Indian/Canadian/Brit in *Three Day Road.* The identity of the protagonists fluctuates between these definitions and they especially struggle with the negative definitions others attach to them. *Three Day Road* tackles the primary early childhood frustrations of the residential school and the bush Indian ("heathen") versus urban Catholic Indian disparity, and then the army experience. All these perpetuate the basic problem of Indigenous identity and its challenges in modern urban culture in North America. While in the residential school the question is, who can keep any of his or her Indigenous identity despite the cultural genocide practiced by the nuns and authorities?, the "bushed Indian goes to town" situation challenges the extent to which one might wish to and is able to retain her or his tribal heritage. Authenticity and validation are central every time Aunt Niska goes into town in Moose Factory, Canada. Assimilation is an escape option as well as pressure both at the residential school and in town ("So you are an Indian, then? […] You are pretty short for an Indian, ain't ya?"[13]). As for the army, there seems to be less pressure to assimilate, in fact, even invisibility bothers Elijah for a while: "They ignore us like we are ghosts floating by".[14] Becoming visible, respected and achieving a great reputation as a scout are essential to him. However, he unconsciously decides to enforce the stereotypical Indian image that is traditionally praised for special military skills and attitude. In the army, nobody is really interested in their tribal affiliation, Native ways of life and thinking. The war situation does not allow for more personal attention than acknowledging the fact that the two men are different and perhaps racially still inferior, but certain skills earn respect for them. The impact of this is to underline the prototypical racial divides, but does also, at least for periods of time, release some of the frustration the two Cree fellows had. We can see the same general pattern emerging in all the 20th century wars fought by the US and Canadian armies: the contribution of ethnic minorities' is temporarily appreciated and even taken as heroic examples for compatriots, however, the fundamental racial divides remain in place during and after the war.[15]

[13] Boyden, *Three Day Road*, 35.

[14] Ibid., 34.

[15] See Chapter 14 in Ronald Takaki: *Different Mirror* and on the particular race relations that Canadian Aboriginal veterans were affected by in, for instance, "Postwar Experiences of Aboriginal Soldiers" at https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1414152378639/1414152548341#chp7 (accessed 6 June 2017).

Beyond the interpersonal identification challenges, Elijah unconsciously formulates his own (ethnic) identity. Xavier observes the changes and defines his own identity in relation to Elijah's transformations: "Elijah wants to become something he's not",[16] from "a dirty bush Indian"[17] but smart trapper he can become "somebody." Interestingly, he de-stigmatizes himself through adapting to Anglo needs, and then through acting out the warrior stereotype. "He says he couldn't speak in his old voice even if he wanted to now. It's gone somewhere too far away",[18] he collects scalps, a symbolic act that reinstates his position as "a true Indian warrior." Elijah gradually becomes an oversized cartoon-like Indian, whose personality changes can be detected from early childhood traumatic experiences through adolescence up to the embodiment of the stereotypical merciless killer Indian warrior. He developed his own argument, too: killing many helps those killed get to the spirits' world,[19] and scalping is necessary to prove the "confirmed kills" he has achieved. The army peers underline and validate that fearful image of a hero: "Breech says that it is our Indian blood, that our blood is closer to animal than that of a many".[20] Actually, while Elijah replaces the stigmatized Indian image with that of the heroic warrior on the one hand, on the other hand, he replaces it with a temporary identification with fellow non-Native soldiers: "We are an army to be reckoned with suddenly, no longer the colonials, as the Englishmen call us, looking down at us".[21] Here he shifts from double to single minority status, and then with the top number of killings he becomes an achiever doing "[m]ost in our regiment. Most of any Canadian. Or Brit for that matter".[22]

Interestingly, Boyden makes use of irony in passages that otherwise take a stand against racism, for instance the two Cree pals observe that a "Fritz smells differently than an Englishman or a Frenchman or a Canadian".[23] In another instance, Elijah tells others that Xavier is a "heathen, speaks his own tongue fluently, nothing else",[24] that way serving whites' craving for the well-known stereotype and protecting his friend. Finally, another incident shows how racism is turned against the very person who was shown to be racist earlier: when Frenchman raped Niska in the church and called her a squaw whore[25] goes mad and commits suicide, the local community refuses his Christian burial.

[16] Ibid., 86.
[17] Ibid., 297.
[18] Ibid., 145.
[19] Ibid., 107.
[20] Ibid., 109.
[21] Ibid., 242.
[22] Ibid., 36.
[23] Ibid., 144–145.
[24] Ibid., 207.
[25] Ibid., 108–181.

Escaping prescribed identity formulations through the acts and processes of ethnic choice and through reconnecting with Indigeneity (tribal or pan-Indian) is a central issue in the novel. Boyden offers the reader an insight into the spectrum of conscious and unconscious choices regarding one's ethnic identity and relation to Indigeneity in *Three Day Road*. Actually, the two pals, Elijah and Xavier exemplify the very choice, its manifestations and impacts that Native Americans and mixed blood persons make every single day. In that regard, the novel seems to play out the same dilemmas that Sergeant Nathan Marx and Sheldon Grossbart present in Philip Roth's "Defender of Faith".[26] In a telling situation, their superior expresses his disapproval of Grossbart's unique ways of keeping tradition, while Marx acts more in line with expectations, regardless of his Jewish traditions, and the question is, what kind of success can validate one or the other attitude? In the military context, the majority of superiors seem to praise more the one who is ready to fight and forget about ethnic pride than the one keeping traditions:

> Look, Grossbart, Marx here is a good man, a goddam *hero*. When you were sitting on your sweet ass in high school, Sergeant Marx was killing Germans. Who does more for the Jews, you by throwing up over a lousy piece of sausage, a piece of firstcut meat—or Marx by killing those Nazi bastards? If I was a Jew, Grossbart, I'd kiss this man's feet. He's a goddam hero, you know that? And he eats when we give him. Why do you have to cause trouble is what I want to know![27]

In *Three Day Road*, Elijah has a similar attitude to Marx: a bit opportunistic, truly adaptable to the way and expectations of the majority, without any concerns about losing touch with his authentic ethnic origins, and certainly placing survival above ethical considerations. Xavier, however, is similar in attitude to Grossbart: on the one hand, ethnic and humanistic concerns do trouble him in the army and he often feels challenged by not fitting the white man's Indian stereotype, while on the other hand, he revitalizes himself through tribal spirituality, just like Grossbart does when practicing his Yiddish rituals.

The etimology of Xavier's name refers to his role: he is a bird and he feeds Elijah, who is always hungry[28] for survival, both physical and spiritual. I believe that this symbolic bird status is the embodiment of his effort to reconnect with ancestral ties, "the old way" of praying in Cree,[29] though such prayers are

[26] Philip Roth, Defender of Faith, in Nina Baym – Ronald Gottesman – Laurence B. Holland – David Kalstone (eds.), *The Norton Anthology of American Literature,* New York, Norton, 1989, 2326.

[27] Ibid., 2326.

[28] Boyden, *Three Day Road,* 291.

[29] e.g. Ibid., 120.

difficult for him far from home. Remembering means mental and emotional survival in hard times: "I force myself back to Mushkegowuk".[30] He reinforces his own ethnic identification in several ways, for instance through naming that expresses ethnic pride[31] and keeping his Cree language as a primary medium of communication. Xavier loses his hearing a bit, which suggests his being deaf to alien ways, too, although Elijah sometimes serves as an interpreter. Finally, when he returns home, Xavier physically and spiritually reconnects with his ancestral roots with the help of Niska, the facilitator of their transformations and reference point for their ethnic identification and provider of the sweat lodge ceremonial cleansing and healing that cures Xavier.

In terms of ethnic identity change, the army and the war provide a cataclysmic space for personal development, as in the tradition of the war novel in Crane, Findley, Heller and Vonnegut. The friends start their journey with a moose hide bag, a medicine bundle that Niska gave them to provide spiritual protection. Dreams and visions which serve as passages between worlds[32] help both of them. They "share a space"[33] and their primary confusion in the trenches of the French frontline as well as in their position among military peers. But this shared space stimulates totally divergent reactions in them. Xavier is certainly able to keep the core of his identity intact both in terms of his personality traits and his ethnic identification. Although the war makes both pals ghost-like liminal beings, the entire journey to European fronts and back home makes Xavier experienced but does not profoundly change who he is. The whole experience of war and living in the army focuses on the problem of escaping in disguise, and Xavier definately learns the pragmatics of camouflage as a scout. Nevertheless, Elijah goes far beyond that. A sign of this is already present at residential school, where he protests against the nuns' traditional hairstyle by shaving his own head bald.[34] In contrast, he is willing to have his hair cut for the army. As for language, "as a child he was so proud that more than once he claimed that he would never speak the *wemistikoshiw* [white man's] tongue".[35] However, in the European military environment, they learn that adapting somewhat to white ways and also using Cree language and skills for their own benefit are necessary survival skills. They become practically bilingual and their language choice depends on the situation. They use Cree as a code language[36] and also express emotions in a slightly manipulative fashion,[37] as the situation demands.

[30] Ibid., 123.
[31] Ibid., 117.
[32] e.g Ibid., 80, 88.
[33] Ibid., 39.
[34] Ibid., 101.
[35] Ibid., 98.
[36] Ibid., 279.
[37] e.g. Ibid., 60.

Elijah is more adaptive in manners, speaks the language, follows white morality, and becomes an Indian hunter who takes killing too far. The general story and fundamental paradox of the *windigo* killers seem to run in parallel, especially when Elijah shows symptoms of going mad and taking pleasure in killing[38] – even killing a mother and child with a sense of shame to follow. Escaping prescribed identity formulations is an essential process that the two protagonists experience in two different paths in life. Elijah escapes one disadvantageous stigmatized image by becoming another, that of the warrior Indian, and although this stigma alteration is societally successful it has disastrous and tragic impact at the individual level. Meanwhile, Xavier manages to escape the prototypical "dumb *indjun*" stereotype by becoming a tactful scout and reliable comrade, a sensitive human being whose affection for Elijah, Lisette, Niska and even unknown people in trouble underline the general human features making one person truly good and another a villain, as a victory over racial divides. Moreover, his unfaltering connection with his tribal culture sustains a model in which a human being can take several social roles, that of a nephew, a Cree youngster, a Canadian soldier at the European frontline, friend, comrade and inheritor of a mythic grand narrative of tribal wisdom and stories. In that sense, *Three Day Road* makes a statement about the possibility of escaping fixed ethnic identity constructs by developing individual concepts and constructs of one's identity configuration.

The parallel process of a radical textual undoing of ethnic identity concepts (including stereotypes) underlies the whole narrative. As mentioned earlier, escaping prescribed identity formulations is an essential (unconscious) trait in *Three Day Road.* Part of this is achieved through irony and playing out the stereotype, mockery and other means of radical textual undoing of ethnic identity concepts posed by the Colonial ideological agenda the protagonists were born into. The Cree protagonists, especially Elijah, play out the Indian stereotype, less in order to identify themselves among peers than for achieving some minor benefits: "I am a Cree Indian from Moose Factory, and I have come to kill Germans"[39] "Better to let them know you're an angry warrior than some fucking bush Indian".[40] They present a careful, wise and sensitive distancing from the stereotype for their own security: they decide not to capture goose, for surely Indians would be blamed for it[41] along the negative connotations of the stereotype. However, as for the positive features attributed to Indians, since they are said to make fine scouts, there is a need to recruit more,[42] and guys like Elijah are respected for killing, thus their

[38] Ibid., 284.
[39] Ibid., 67.
[40] Ibid., 68.
[41] Ibid., 93.
[42] Ibid., 193.

"added value" increases during wartime. These considerations indicate that the re-evaluation of a person based on merits attributed to ethnic affiliation and race shows the confusion of values in the two worlds colliding.

As for ethnic change, another interesting approach is that of assimilation versus integration. Elijah seems to adapt way more easily in his adolescence to white culture, while Xavier is more careful and critical: "I rely on Elijah to help me in their world",[43] but "their" signifies the distance that separates Xavier from the alien environment. "He teaches us the importance of blending into our surroundings",[44] meaning symbolic and pragmatic assimilation, which is not necessarily internalized. In addition, the suspended steps of their identification are fostered by the fact that they are initially invisible to officers.[45] Besides, the cultural differences do not really disappear with partial acculturation, for instance, they interpret Christmas as the feast of sadness and the fundamental paradox of the celebration on the frontline and the religious ideology while killing continues remains. The two pals diverge in their attitude to non-Native culture. While Elijah hopes that they can return to the bush and to Niska, Xavier knows that Elijah has gone too far, that the inhumanity in his deeds essentially cuts him from his core ethnic culture and one can see him less and less as a representative of First Nations and increasingly as a fallen villain, a human being who has lost everything. He adapts to cruelty, becomes a borderline personality in the psychological sense, like Frenchman, and his act of killing and blasphemy at the sculpture of the Virgin Mary[46] has nothing to do any more with any kind of morality but ultimately pushes him into a vacuum, both cultural and psychological, from which he cannot ever escape.

Another relevant aspect of ethnic change in *Three Day Road* is the identity game and masking Elijah and Xavier play throughout the story. "Conceal yourself here"[47] is the rule of survival on the frontline, as well as in a more abstract sense among peers, and, in the broader concentric zones of identification, among white folks, wherever, including the residential school back in their childhood.[48] Back then, they believed that the tooth of the lynx gives speed, vision and invisibility,[49] a different kind of protection for hunters and warriors than the masks the trickster uses (Elijah, the trickster[50]). Xavier is the only one who sees past Elijah's mask, he can fool everyone else. Xavier's clear vision develops into a number of sour experiences, take his sweetheart, Lisette, who turns out to be

[43] Ibid., 68.
[44] Ibid., 94.
[45] Ibid., 183.
[46] Ibid., 203–204.
[47] Ibid., 123.
[48] Ibid., 159.
[49] Ibid., 295.
[50] Ibid., 312.

a prostitute. Elijah knew but played along for Xavier's sake, he says. Earlier, in a parallel world, Niska has fallen in love with Frenchman, who turns out to be a racist villain who rapes her. Niska also has to conceal herself when in town to avoid being a target of racist remarks and assault, she needs to change clothes and "fit in" to look like a young homegrown Indian.[51] Then in the European context, charcoal face masking is a survival practice at war,[52] along with hiding in a cellar or covering one another on the frontline due to the constant fear of being found and killed. If we enter the game of invisibility, the lethal game of hide and seek, we can read the novel on multiple levels. One is the actual physical visibility the soldiers try to avoid.[53] The other is the question of their visibility as human beings in the context of racial divides in the army: "I am especially proud to note that Acting Corporal Whiskeyjack has been recommended for the MM for unmatched bravery in the face of the enemy",[54] but Xavier is then invisible and frustrated.[55] There is even a sarcastic game of invisibility at the end of the war: Bird tries to save Elijah but cannot, kills the *windigo* in him, rips off his ID and keeps it in his own pocket. However, when wounded and still carrying Elijah's ID, Bird is mistaken for Elijah, praised for bravery, returned home as if he was a great Fritz killer. His guilt complex is relieved through the sweat lodge ritual, when identities are resettled in home grounds.

In conclusion, Boyden's novel depicts a fundamental aspect of interracial relations and identity development of Indigenous persons who are intensively exposed to the culture of Euro-Canadians, and that is the fluctuation between more social identities and utilizing the "hybrid potential" in post-racial nations in North America. Xavier claims that "I am stuck between these two places"[56] in a vacuum, that can be resolved by reconnecting with his tribal heritage, through the sweat lodge rebirth ritual facilitated by Niska. Both comrades experience a major identity transformation process of oppositional outcomes and the radical undoing of ethnic stereotypes surrounding them. Similarly to Silko's *Ceremony*, where Tayo's journey towards spiritual wholeness and mental health are achieved through a complex learning process, the two Cree men also attempt to reach those, but only Xavier can actually achieve both. Rituals and ceremonies of transformation mark those journeys, and the reader can feel the painstaking process and also understand the relevance of rituals both in a tribal cultural and in a personal psychological sense. Above, I presented how a mixed heritage author challenges interracial understanding and what happens in his protagonists' identity negotiation in the shifting sites

[51] Ibid., 177.
[52] Ibid., 187.
[53] Ibid., 235–236, 249.
[54] Ibid., 255.
[55] Ibid., 256.
[56] Ibid., 372.

of its formulation. The fluctuation between more social identities and ethnic choice are the most exciting aspects of these characters, and their story also reflects the author's experiences of being born mixed blood. In the context of the challenge to the binaries of prototypical civilized versus barbarous savage and medicine versus genocide dichotomies, the ethnical paradigm of the novel allows the reader to reformulate her or his reading of history and race relations. The problems of ethnic pride, shame and stigma have been eliminated in various ways, but most successfully through reconnecting with one's Indigenous heritage, which seems to be a general pattern which applies both to the authors of this social background and their protagonists as well.

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