NATIVE WRITERS RESISTING COLONIZING PRACTICES IN CANADIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND LITERATURE

By

EMMA LaROCQUE

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Program of Interdisciplinary Studies
University of Manitoba
Winnipeg, Manitoba

© September, 1999

National Library
of Canada

Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Acquisitions et
services bibliographiques

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-45006-6

Canada

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

*****

COPYRIGHT PERMISSION PAGE

NATIVE WRITERS RESISTING COLONIZING PRACTICES IN CANADIAN HISTORIOGRAPHY AND LITERATURE

BY

EMMA LaROCQUE

A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University

of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree

of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

EMMA LaROCQUE ©1999

Permission has been granted to the Library of The University of Manitoba to lend or sell copies of this thesis/practicum, to the National Library of Canada to microfilm this thesis and to lend or sell copies of the film, and to Dissertations Abstracts International to publish an abstract of this thesis/practicum.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither this thesis/practicum nor extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

ABSTRACT

Native Writers Resisting Colonizing Practices in Canadian Historiography and Literature

This dissertation begins with the recognition that the Euro-Canadian colonization of Aboriginal peoples is the ground upon which we, the colonizer-colonialist and the Native colonized, have built our discourse. This dissertation examines the Native writer's resistance response to the problem of gross misrepresentation of Aboriginal peoples in Canadian historiography and literature, particularly, the problem of dehumanization inherent in the civilization-savagery construct which has provided the basis for the colonizer's treatment. A survey of the chronological development of Native writing locates it as Resistance Literature within both indigenous and post-colonial intellectual and cultural contexts. My engaged research is situated within resistance discourse. The focus on selected historical and literary texts demonstrates how they are constructed to serve as techniques of mastery in the social, cultural and political life of the colonialist. The Native counter-discourse is the last section. While there is a remarkable unity of fact, process and experience in the Native writer's exposition of political and textual disempowerment, the writing is complicated by problems of internalization and notions of difference. These problems are also evident in white intellectual reading of Native writing. I interrogate both Native and white responses and call for an intellectual direction which moves beyond ethnological typologies and ideological paradigms which plague the study of

Native peoples. The conclusion is that Native writers have indeed produced Native resistance literature, a production that is based on and informed by contemporary indigenous ethos and epistemologies. While much is in the process of changing in white scholarly, critical and constitutional treatment of Native peoples, much more work remains to be done. Aboriginal scholarship and creative writing is in a unique position of advancing this work; however, all scholars and other intellectuals are challenged to attend to decolonization in keeping with our respective legacies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My thanks go to the late Maggie and Napoleon Larocque, my mother and father, who by allowing and supporting my intellectual and spiritual freedom, taught me that each generation has a duty to re-invent itself. Thanks also to my sister Delphine and my brothers Morris and Rene and their families. Their choices to live inventively, despite all odds, continue to nurture and inspire my work. In addition to my family of birth, I have been privileged to have adopted other families in the many roads I have travelled. For their support and sustained friendship, my appreciation and affection must go to Harold and Erma Lauber, and Ike and Millie Glick. And special thanks to my childhood friends in Cree: Mercedez Cardinal-Rizzoli and Tantoo Cardinal.

I continue to appreciate those many friends and colleagues who have followed my career and/or facilitated my works, among them Joyce Green, Jeanne Perreault, Christine Miller and Carl Urion. I have also appreciated the computer assistance and the jokes provided by my colleagues in Native Studies: Fred Shore, Wanda Wuttunnee, Jill Oakes and Chris Trott. And for all the zeroxing and extras, I thank our departmental assistant Nancy Schuster. For her computer magic, I thank Marlyn Bennett.

A special thanks must go to my dissertation committee members for whom I have the highest regard. Their critical contributions were invaluable. I consider Jean Friesen my mentor and friend in the history of Native/White relations. I thank Dennis Cooley for modifying my dangling participles, but

most especially for appreciating my poetry. I thank Parker Duchemin from the University of Carleton for agreeing to be the external reader and for taking an interest in my work. My deepest appreciation must go to my advisor, Keith Louise Fulton, professor of English and Coordinator of Women's Studies from the University of Winnipeg, whose unstinting support went far beyond the duties of an advisor. I value her brilliant way with words and her understanding of power relations. I appreciated her respectful ways of motivating me and for the patience of clearing bureaucracy so I could be freer to get to the finish line.

And for the red Mexican sunflowers by my 'station,' for all the wonderful aromas of coffee and gourmet snacks, for all the ceremonies to mark each important step in this stationary and protracted process, for all the gifts of beauty and excellence of words, for all the paper-runs, and for "driving Dr. Daisy" my abiding appreciation to Ruthie Lepp. And to Jasper -- for just being.

Native Writers Resisting Colonizing Practices in Canadian Historiography and Literature

Table of Contents

Abstract 1
Acknowledgements 3
Perspectives 7

Introduction 8
Methodology 12
A Word on Terminology 21
Organization 30

Chapter One 34
Native Resistance Literature: Survey and Theory
Is Native Writing Resistance Literature? 36
Native Writers Resisting Colonial Practices 50
Voice as Resistance Scholarship 58

Chapter Two 79
Part I: Dehumanization in Text
The Frame: the 'Civ/Sav Dichotomy' 82
Double-Double Standard 96
Demonization in Canadian Literature 109

Part II: Currency and Social Effects of Dehumanization 115
The Colonizer's Culture 125

Chapter Three 137
Native Writers Resist: Addressing Invasion
Exposition of the Invasive Process 142
Devastating Consequences of Colonization 156

Chapter Four 172

Native Writers Resist: Addressing Dehumanization

- Challenging Historical and Cultural Records: The Sub-text of the Power Struggle 173
- Feeling the Savage: Dehumanization as an Experience 180
- Seeing the Savage 186
- "We Are Not Savages, We Have Faces and Feelings" 193
- "We Were Not the Savages, We Were/Are Civilized" 197
- "We Were Not the Savages, You Were" 202

Chapter Five 215

An Intersection: Internalization, Difference, Criticism

- Internalization 217
- Authenticity, Cultural Difference and the Noble Savage 239
- Cultural Difference and Criticism 242
- The Problem of Audience 251

Chapter Six 256

Native Writers Reconstruct: Pushing Paradigms

- Finding A Way Out 256
- Aboriginal Basis for Contemporary Criticism 268
- Re-inventing Ourselves in Resistance 281

Conclusion 289
- Outstanding Issues 297

Bibliography 305

PERSPECTIVES

"...and on the 18th of June we cast anchor at Tadoussac....It was here that I saw Savages for the first time."
Father Paul Le Jeune, *Jesuit Relations,* 1632

The "sinuous form of the first savage was raised above the gunwale, his grim face looking devilish...and his fierce eyes gleaming and rolling like fireballs in their sockets."
John Richardson, *Wacousta*, 1832

"The wild Indian was, in many respects, more savage than the animals around him."
Alexander Begg, *History of the North West*, Vol. I, 1894

"His Indian blood gave him cunning, animal instincts, and a certain amount of ruthlessness....But always...his relentlessness was tempered by the white blood in him."
Luke Allan, *Blue Pete: Rebel*, 1940

"When Brebeuf and His Brethren first came out, a friend of mine said that the thing to do now was to write the same story from the Iroquois point of view."
James Reaney in *Masks of Poetry*, 1962

"Even in solitary silence I felt the word 'savage' deep in my soul."
Howard Adams, *Prison of Grass*, 1975

"I am not / What they portray me / I am civilized."
Rita Joe, *Poems of Rita Joe*, 1978

"It is only a hundred years and now we stand before you in this great institution with our art work on the walls. Now we are civilized, aren't we?"
Joane Cardinal-Schubert in *Racism in Canada*, 1991

"I think I had this missionary zeal to tell about our humanity because Indian-ness was so dehumanized and Metis-ness didn't even exist."
Emma LaRocque in *Contemporary Challenges,* 1991

INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines dehumanization and resistance in the context of works written under colonial conditions. The colonial practice(s) evident in Euro-Canadian records are considered to provide context to the de-colonizing practice(s) evident in Native writing. Colonization, resistance and post-colonial theories as well as Aboriginal ethos, epistemologies and experience form the basis of this study.

It is taken that Native/White relationships in Canada are rooted in the colonizer/colonized complex, much as profiled in Albert Memmi's *The Colonizer and the Colonized.* In this now classic work, Memmi focuses on the distance (both real and symbolic) designed by the colonizer both to rationalize and maintain his power over the colonized. Memmi explains:

> The distance which colonization places between him and the colonized must be accounted for and, to justify himself, he increases this distance still further by placing the two figures irretrievably in opposition; his glorious position and the despicable one of the colonized. (54-55)

This means that as Canadian Native and non-Native peoples, we find ourselves, our respective lives and experiences, constructed and divided as diametrically opposed to each other. We may then find ourselves, our respective stations and places in our country, reflected in Albert Memmi's 'portrait' of the "colonizer and the colonized."[1] The 'face of the colonizer' is made visible through what Edward Said in *Orientalism* calls the "techniques of representation," in this case, textual records colonizers have left and continue to perpetuate in the Canadian academy. It is also reflected in the continuing exploitation of 'the Indian' in the media and marketplace. However, this dissertation focuses on the colonized in Canada, the Native peoples, with emphasis on their response to these colonial constructs. The colonized, to the extent that they become aware of the colonial forces, resist all along. Colonization is as much the story of resistance as it is of control. Over time, a complex relationship develops between the colonizer and the colonized. Both classic (Fanon, Memmi) and contemporary works (Said, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Harlow, Blaut, Puxley, Adams),[2] have convincingly shown that colonization produces a pervasive structural and psychological relationship between the colonizer and the colonized and is ultimately reflected in the dominant institutions, policies and literatures of occupying powers. It is also reflected in the remnant institutions, traditions, inventions and literatures of the occupied. It is the 'literatures of the occupied' that interest me here.

Peoples under poet Duncan Mercredi's "occupied territories" tell us that, on a fundamental level, colonizers invade, steal and exploit natural and human resources, the consequences of which leave the colonized dispossessed, demoralized, objectified and marginalized. Lynette Hunter in *Outsider Notes* provides a thoughtful and cogent reading on marginalization which I find useful. "By marginalized," Hunter explains, "I understand those people who have difficulty of access to participating in the modes of communication that carry power and authority in their society" (145). Native peoples' marginalization is reiterated in various ways throughout the dissertation for two reasons: to maintain orality and Native ethos but also to keep reminding the non-Native audience, especially scholars, about this experience just as Native peoples are reminded of it in their daily lives. It is occurring to me that some scholars may live in the illusion that they not only understand 'natives,' but that somehow by their powers of analysis, however brilliant or even decolonizing, they have neutralized the colonial experience. No one--White or Native--should ever assume to understand the whole of this experience, much less believe the alienation is over. For many reasons Native writers will make more apparent, neither the political nor the textual devastations are over.

---

[1] Memmi was treating colonization in the context of his location, Tunisia.

[2] Any contemporary study of Native peoples in most disciplines must necessarily consider colonization. There are numerous works (uneven in scope and quality) available, many of which are listed in the Bibliography. One of the earlier histories to situate the Native experience in the colonial context is E. Palmer Patterson, *The Canadian Indian Since 1500*; and of course, most Native Canadian writing as treated here.

Post-colonial resistance strategy places the colonized or the subjugated at the centre of its investigation and strives to understand the colonial forces such as the use of language in the historical record and cultural productions, forces which have become, in the words of Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, "systemic mediums through which a hierarchical structure of power is perpetuated, and the medium through which conceptions of 'truth', 'order' and 'reality' become established" (*The Empire Writes Back* 7). These authors argue that the study of history and English and the growth of Empire

> ...proceeded from a single ideological climate and that the development of the one is intrinsically bound up with the development of the other, both at the level of simple utility (as propaganda for instance) and at the unconscious level, where it leads to the naturalizing of constructed values (e.g. "Savagery", 'native', 'primitive', as their antitheses and as the object of a reforming zeal). (7)

They conclude that a "privileging norm was enthroned at the heart of the formation of English Studies as a template for the denial of the value of the 'peripheral', the 'marginal', the 'uncanonized'" (3). Similarly, a privileging value exists concerning archival and historical works. These privileging norms and the concomitant 'othering' are what resistance writers and intellectuals are attempting to 'dethrone.' Barbara Harlow in *Resistance Literature* emphasizes that an intellectual struggle against colonization is "no less crucial than the armed struggle" (7). The Canadian Native people's struggle is principally discursive.

As central to this thesis, a primary place is given to those numerous Native writers who have addressed colonial forces, especially dehumanization. I address an important yet relatively unrecognized area of research: the impact of White judgement on Native peoples as expressed in Native social protest, creative and scholarly writing. I highlight the ways in which Native writers have experienced, researched and resisted the many facets/faces of colonization. Native writers are an extraordinary group of people whose critical, creative and life works have, until recently, been ignored or relegated to ethnographic and personal 'narratives,'[3] which, if read differently, actually contain much anti-colonial theory, or at least, much theoretical possibility.

My work is grounded in two major concerns: scholarly exposition of Native resistance response(s) to what Canadian analyst Peter Puxley, in his philosophical essay, "The Colonial Experience," calls "the colonial theft of history" (112), and my own refusal to be remote from this discussion. Colonization is very much present in Canadian scholarship; accordingly, I situate my "voice" in scholarship as a technique of textual resistance. I provide at the outset, and largely leave there, snippets of personal data so as to reveal my location in this discourse. They are not to be dismissed as anecdotal, but are offered to address colonization in academia, most especially, to personalize the depersonalized "Indian." By re-examining both White and Native Canadian writing, this research may generate new frameworks of interpretation, certainly dramatically new perceptions concerning the power of text as it speaks to the White/Native encounter in Canada. It should also remind us of the extensive contribution Native writers have made and are continuing to make to Canadian culture, especially to intellectual development in history, anthropology and criticism.

Methodology

First, consistent with my thesis, I have chosen to 'privilege' Native voices by citing generous portions from the Native documents and writing, especially in the middle chapters. While I do comment on the material, I do emphasize the facilitation of Aboriginal voice and discourse as much as possible. This is not to suggest that Aboriginal material is either too transparent or too different or that it should not be commented upon, but it is to suggest that it requires a new critical approach and reading. Anne Zimmerman, specialist in New Zealand literature and a professor at University of Berne, Switzerland, argues for a critical approach that allows for "extensive quotations...to stand for themselves, perhaps as voices that are not in tune with the speaking subject's and allow for dissonances of a kind similar to those which occur in conversation or discussion" (qtd in Eigenbrod, "Can 'the Subaltern' Be Read?" 100). In the case of an Aboriginal scholar treating Aboriginal texts, the issue may not be as much about dissonance as about mediation and reiteration. In a way, I am re-citing the documents because they have not been readily available to readers, nor have they received the hearing they deserve. My objective is to highlight Native texts because I wish to convey as much as possible the flavour and details of the Native experience and insight, epistemologies and arguments.

---

[3] With respect to Native accounts, the words 'narrative' and 'tales' have been used interchangeably, thereby de-grading the Native experience. Only recently has the literary meaning of the word 'narrative' been applied to Native writing.

To be sure, there are degrees of dissonance between any text and any writer, even if there exists cultural and experiential similarites between the two. I am no mere "facilitator" for these writings. I am an intellectual with "an inquiring mind" as a certain catchy phrase might say. I aspire for "that critical and relatively independent spirit of analysis and judgement," which Edward Said argues "ought to be the intellectual's contribution" (*Representations of the Intellectual* 86). Like everyone else I struggle about my idealism or my ways of seeing against the long training under Western 'eyes' as well as against the practical everyday concerns which all intellectuals must necessarily live. Some more than others. However, if I am restrained in my critique of Native texts, it is in the interests of consistency with my thesis. In other words, my goal is not primarily to perform criticism *on* Native writing, instead, it is to foreground Native responses to that particular and long-lasting EuroCanadian textual tradition of dehumanizing Native peoples (against which I passionately perform criticism). It is also to respect what appears to be in the making among Aboriginal intellectuals, namely, an Aboriginal-based criticism within the community which seeks to be non-violent and unintrusive. As one who is trained all too well in the aggressive tradition of western criticism, which many locate as a condition of patriarchy, I consider myself a student of Native criticism. Aboriginal literary criticism, though, is formative and I take up in chapter six some of the issues which confront us as we seek to theorize Native Canadian writing and experience.

But is there a 'Native experience'? Given that some 100 different indigenous cultures representing 10 unrelated linguistic families, or about 50 different languages,[4] greeted Europeans (not all at once of course) at the site of first encounter (s), and given all the changes (historical, cultural, legislative) experienced and yet the cultural continuity exhibited, by Native peoples since this time, it may seem foolhardy to speak of a Native experience in the singular. An incalculable amount of material exists detailing anthropological data as well as the historical development of the Euro-Canadian/Native relations. These works point to “a kaleidoscope” of diversities among indigenous peoples, but also some fundamental commonalities, especially in spirituality and use of resources (Frideres 22). Of course, under certain methodologically-defined contexts, the differences must not only be taken into account, they must be highlighted. But the same can be said of their commonalities which have become more important with time.

---

[4] Morrison and Wilson in *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience* provide such anthropolgical details, see especially 13-66; see also Dickason, *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times* 20-85.

As may be surmised by my acceptance of the phrase “The Native experience” (within certain contexts), I have taken, perhaps perilously, a panoramic view largely because my research led me to it. Both the Euro-Canadian textual dehumanization and Native response to it have been broadly, if not sweepingly, expressed. Colonial time has collapsed some fundamental differences among indigenous peoples in areas such as resources, economies, technologies, education, parental and kinship roles, governance, language, religions and land base, among others. The Indian Act has determined identity and locality, defining margins and centres even within the Native community. Besides cultural commonalities, Native people’s sustained and multifaceted resistance to colonization has also bonded them and provided them with similarities. In other words, we can speak of the ‘Native experience’ from a number of bases, and certainly from their colonial experience. This though, does not in any way imply or hold that Native peoples’ colonial experience is unidimensional. But it is there. This will become more apparent when we ‘hear’ the Native writers across many demarcations.

Because of the sheer volume of Native writing and of historiographic and critical writing on Native history and literature, I stop at about the end of 1997, though I do include some works published since then, mainly in the bibliography. This is not an anthology, and I do not include every Native writer or every work available. For that matter, neither can one writer ever begin to include all the writing from the Western tradition. It would obviously take volumes to produce a complete, chronological encyclopedia of the Euro-Canadian ideas, images and attitudes, not to mention, policies, concerning both "Indians" and Native peoples--if this were my purpose, which it is not. My parameters for this dissertation are twofold and interrelated: Native resistance writing implies there is something to resist. Native writers are resisting colonial dominance as imposed in material terms and as expressed in ideological terms.

To date, the vast majority of Native writers speak to power, particularly, the power of text and misrepresentation. To place resistance in context, chapter two is given over to the study of textual dehumanization and its social consequences. The colonizer's language employed against indigenous peoples is odious. This chapter may be disturbing, which is as it should be if understood properly. There may be the temptation not only to exceptionalize this material, but to protest that it is selective, that it does not represent all the writing about "Indians." Specifically, one may protest that there have always been dissident, even anti-colonial voices amidst the rubble of colonial forces. But when all the western scholarly penchant for disassembly is done with, what will remain is that there is an overwhelming presence of Eurocentric and hate material in our archives, histories, literatures, school textbooks and contemporary popular cultural productions. This will remain because it is indisputably there, and equally, because it continues as currency for the colonizer's art and entertainment. But what is most important (and what is the central focus of the middle chapters) is that this has had severe repercussions for Native peoples, intellectuals no less. Even if only one tenth of what is dehumanizing existed, its impact on Native peoples would remain the issue. This cannot be overemphasized. It is the overwhelming Native response to savage treatment which has lead me to chapter two. Naturally, and inevitably, some selection of text is involved. But quite frankly, from "the dominant narrative of Canadian beginnings" with its "structured reproduction of selective knowledge," as Metis scholar Joyce Green caps it (Diss 35), I had a fathomless well of inflammatory material to choose from--so in what sense might I have "selected"? This is not a rhetorical question.

As to dissident, anti-colonial material, the western world does have a noticable prophetic tradition. Within Judeo-Christian and European theological and philosophical developments, there have always been dissidents and visionaries. And throughout the many phases and expressions of colonization, there have been those who abhorred European--and later, White American--cruelty against indigenous peoples. Some also--Spanish theologian Francisco de Vitoria comes to mind--defended Native humanity and Native rights in the early 1500s.[5] In Canada today there are non-Native organizations and countless individuals that support and advance Native rights and well-being. We should never discount any individuals with a moral conscience, and I certainly do not. But there are several points fundamental to this thesis which direct me away from what Dickason refers to as "that strain of tolerance toward Amerindians" in European thought which "never dominated, yet was never entirely absent" (*The Myth of the Savage* 193).

---

[5] Vitoria's defense is often cited in the context of origins of the theory of Aboriginal rights. See for example, Cumming and Mickenberg, *Native Rights in Canada 13-14.*

My objective is to facilitate Native writers' perspectives, not to dangle dissident material in front of them. To do so would be to undermine their experience as they have shared it, therefore, to discredit their voice yet again. My research has found that the vast majority of Native peoples encountered the hideous Savage more than they ever communed with Hiawatha (perhaps until very recently). Native resistance to the Savage cannot be dismissed as overly reactive or emotional. Patricia Olive Dickason, in her exhaustive and excellent study *The Myth of the Savage: And the Beginnings of French Colonialism in the Americas* concludes:

> It would be difficult to overestimate the effect of Europe's classification of New World men as homees sauvages, whether 'bons' or 'cruels.' The French, for all their policy of douceur toward Amerindians, never officially accepted that they were anything other than 'sans roy, sans loy, sans foy.' Like the Wild Men of the Woods, Amerindians represented anti-structure, man before the acquisition of culture had differentiated him from the animals. It mattered little whether these savage New World men were perceived as living in a Golden Age or as wallowing in unrelieved bestiality. The fact was that in the European folk imagination, denizens of the New World, like the Wild Men, were living metaphors for antisocial forces that could be brought under control only by...transformation into the spiritual and cultural conformity that Europeans acknowledged as the condition of being civilized. (273)

It would be misleading to foreground what may be called 'Native-positive' White constructions, for the debris from Native-negative material is one of the defining characteristics, if not the core of Native resistance response. But there is another point--it is debatable to what extent anti-colonial material was ever truly anti-colonial. Even those who spoke against European cruelties did not advocate an abandonment of colonial projects.

Discovering the New World posed new conceptual problems for the Europeans. As part of addressing philosophical, theological and practical questions, Europeans--and later, colonists--engaged in lively debates about Amerindians. Whether it was about unigenesis or polygenesis, whether it was about the degeneration of Europe or of America, whether Amerindians had souls or not (which was contingent on their land rights and missionary attention), the Amerindian soon became used as an item of proof, or lack thereof, for various vested interests and pet theories. One of the results of all these debates was a morass of contradictions--and yet generalizations--about indigenous peoples. For example, it served the interests of Spanish and Portuguese colonizers to stress the (presumed) cannibalism, promiscuity and viciousness of the Amerindian. On the other hand, some philosopher-theologians such as Vitoria and Las Casas defended Amerindians not merely for moral reasons but because their theological assumptions as well as their missionary investments were challenged.[6]

---

[6] There are many works available on European views and debates concerning New World peoples. For further study, see for example, Honour, *The New Golden Land;* Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race*; Berkhofer, *The White Man's Indian*. See especially Dickason, *The Myth of the Savage.*

It is true too that a handful of Europeans, particularly within the primitivist tradtion have always expressed admiration for Native life. The Englishman Archie Belany, or, Grey Owl and English-born but Canadian-raised E.T. Seton come to mind. To this day there are communities of Europeans, for example in Germany, who believe they are emulating Native culture by imitating what are, in fact, Hollywood versions of "the Indian." Whether the primitivist tradition is positive or not is a question I raise in chapter five. At a purely emotional level, it is understandable that people of all sides of the colonial divide would crave for something "positive." There are beginning indications some Native intellectuals will move in this direction as well. What, though, is "positive"? Is it possible that in our peculiarly Canadian haste to find the positive (often expressed as "two sides to a story"), we short-circuit our understanding of our history and our assumptions? Might this be what is often called "false-consciousness"?

Today, there is of course, a rapidly growing, consciously alert, decolonizing scholarship, much of it inspired through post-colonial and liberation/resistance criticism. We all stand on the shoulders of such works--who in turn stand on the sloping shoulders of the colonized. But even this, however significant, has only begun to address in any sustained way the concerns here expressed by Native writers. Nor do all Native writers receive this gratefully as Native educator and manager of Theytus Books, Greg Young-Ing, suggests in his thought-provoking argument that even the most supportive white academics who treat Native issues have "the effect of ultimately blocking-out the Aboriginal Voice" ("Aboriginal People's Estrangement" 182). The twofold legacy of colonization remains: Native resistance response to political and textual disempowerment.

A Word on Terminology

Terminology about identities is always challenging given the history of stereotypes and legislative divisions, not to mention real cultural and historical differences. For example, the term "Indian" is, as Robert Berkhofer has shown in *The White Man's Indian,* the White man's invention. The invention began with Columbus full of his cultural baggage of preconceptions, and later turned into a sub-culture of stereotypes for White North American entertainment and cultural productions. In Canada the designation also represents colonial power through the Indian Act. I therefore make an important distinction between "Indian" and "Native peoples." The difference between these terms is the difference between what Daniel Francis calls "the imaginary Indian" and the real human beings who are indigenous to this land. Although the terms "Aboriginal" and "Native" also reflect their colonial origins, I do use these terms, often interchangeably, but I still prefer the phrase 'Native peoples.' My preference comes from my political origins in the 1970s when Status and Non-status Indians and the Metis of the Prairies referred to themselves as "Native peoples" with the shared understanding of themselves as a cohesive indigenous body in a common struggle against colonization. The word 'peoples' identifies it as a resistance self-designation due to massive depersonalization to which *Ai-see-nowuk* ('the people' in Cree) have been subjected. I do specify self-designated First Nation terms whenever it is relevant. Although several Native Canadian scholars use the term "Amerindian," and though it is useful when referring to the indigenous experience throughout the Americas, I find that this term obscures cultures and experience specific to Native Canadians. I use the term 'Native American' when referring to Native peoples from the United States. Because of Hollywood connotations, not to mention, White frontier and military racist uses of the word "red-skin," I cannot use the term "Red" seriously. And the post-colonial designation "indigene" is no less problematic than the words "Indian," "Aborigine" or "Aboriginals" in that it is no less depersonalizing.

I also make a distinction between metis (or halfbreed) and Metis Nation peoples, the former meaning those individuals who are first generation part Indian and part White; the latter referring to those peoples whose ancestors were originally White and Indian but who went on to develop as a distinct peoples by marrying within their own group over generations and becoming a new race or ethnicity. Such peoples went on to develop regionally specific cultures, particularly in the Red River and far northwest areas. In western Canada circa 1800-1980s, the majority of these peoples grew up with Cree and/or Michif languages, combining land-based and wage labour lifestyles.[7] Metis history and identity is complex because, among other factors, most Metis of western Canada also have non-status Indian linkages and lineages.Fanon has used the terms 'native' in opposition to the word 'settler.' Post-colonial studies generally refer to 'indigenous' against 'invader-settlers.' I take the view that Native peoples were the original settlers in the sense of inherent indigenous presence on this land we now call

---

[7] For a good overview of the process of metis to Metis identity/ethnic development, see Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer S.H. Brown, eds. *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Metis in North America.*

Canada, therefore, I refer to all other State-created Canadians as immigrant re/settlers.

For purposes of this dissertation I am for the most part referring to those re/settlers with European colonizer origins. I use the terms "Euro-Canadian" and "White" to locate them within what J.M. Blaut in *The Colonizer's Model of the World* refers to as 'Eurocentric diffusionism" with its racial politics which set the foundation of colonization. The term "White" is of course problematic because, among other things, it is in many ways as reductive, stereotypical and obstructive as the word "Indian." But like the word "Indian," "White" was birthed at the site of colonization. As Native texts reveal, the dehumanization of Native peoples is located squarely on White social and racial doctrines. That this is so is confirmed by numerous western and non-western, pro and anti colonial scholars, many of them cited throughout this dissertation. Most of the racially biased images, social arrangements, policies and legislation which have had an irretrievable impact on Native peoples come specifically from European views and frameworks. It is, therefore, virtually impossible to deny either the term or the existence of racism in any study concerning power relations between White and non-White peoples. To be sure, it is not always comfortable, and it certainly is not personal as such; the terms and the discussion are a social study of power relations in society.[8]

The term "White" does appear often throughout this dissertation because the vast majority of Native writers use this term. They are conveying an experience which has come to them as "White"; a "lesson" as Metis poet Alice Lee captures in one breath:

---

[8] Of course, racism is personal when it is personally experienced, and Native peoples experience racism virtually on a daily basis. But to expose and study racism is not to be taken as a personal attack on white or any other people. Racism is a social and ideological problem, rather than a problem unique to a certain 'race.'

> the year i turned six i began school i wanted to learn to read the first day i learned that the teachers are white the children are white in my new book Dick Jane and Sally are white i learned new words at recess squaw mother dirty halfbreed fucking indian i hope i know how to read soon i already know my colours. (qtd in Perreault and Vance 160)

No one can read Lenore Keeshig-Tobias' devastating post-modern treatment of "white" in an entry called "Trickster Beyond 1992: Our Relationship" (in *Indigena* 101-112) without having to rethink what "white" must mean to Native peoples. The title is deceptively academic but her multimedia conversation with the phantom Trickster is decidedly unbookish. But she implicates academia: "...after three hundred years of prayer and missionaries, things were no better, and getting worse. The white folk kept getting cleaner and cleaner. Heck, they had the best food, cars and *real culture*--great literature, classical music, theatre--and God was always on their side..." (103). Her opening quotation by Iktomi (trickster) provides the mirror--and the tricky knife--to her dialogue: "He is like me, a Trickster, a liar ...a new kind of man is coming, a White Man" (101). As a rule, Native writers use this word contrapuntally, sometimes ideologically, but not in a racist way. To charge these writers with "reverse racism," as some may be quick to do, is to miss entirely the point of their "white" experience.

Since there cannot be racial politics without some 'racists' in the politics, I do use the word "racist" whenever applicable or unavoidable.

However, I do not "employ it in a simplistic fashion as a diatribe" as Terry Goldie generalizes concerning its usage (6). In *Fear and Temptation*: *The Image of the Indigene in Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand Literatures,* Goldie, though he concedes that "the questions of racism, like those of imperial history, lie behind each line" of his analysis, takes sweeping exception to the usage of "racist" with the hackneyed argument that no one is "beyond racism" (6). Perhaps no one is beyond racism but not everyone is empowered by social or legislative means to exercise it. Strictly speaking, racism is a belief in the genetic superiority of one's "race." Surely, not everyone from every culture carries such a genetic ideology. I believe we as human beings are, as a rule, conditioned to be ethnocentric (not necessarily racist) within our respective cultures, Native peoples no less so, but racism as it has come to be employed by colonizers and experienced by the colonized is specifically European in origin.[9] I use the word 'racism' or 'racist' in the context of European colonization in that "...racism as a specific social doctrine is an invention of the European peoples in the modern period of their expansion around the world" (Berkhofer 55). Racism is both the foundation and justification of colonization. It "appears" not "as an incidental detail, but as a consubstantial part of colonialism" (Memmi 74). As such it must be treated in relation to "Native/White" history in Canada.

---

[9] I am not suggesting that Native peoples may never be racist. Nor am I suggesting that only whites are racist towards Native peoples. As more non-white immigrants come to Canada we may expect to see more tension between these immigrants and Native peoples. Non-white immigrants arrive with preconceived notions about "Indians" because they too have seen Hollywood movies. Further, Native peoples experience a new level of displacement when they see immigrants getting educational and job opportunities, for example the ESL programs, that are not as readily available to them. Urban Native peoples especially struggle with these issues.

While this work focuses on Native/White (English) textual relations in Canada, it does draw on White portrayals of Native North Americans from the United States to the extent that these portrayals have informed and influenced or paralleled Canadian productions. I resist the temptation to draw in to any extent Native American literature and criticism, for several reasons. One, there is a considerable body of material which would seriously complicate my objectives. But more importantly, Canadian Native writers and writing deserve the focus; so often, we can be easily eclipsed by White and Native *American* profiles. I am also suggesting that while we may share significant cultural and political realities, the Native American experience is not exactly like the Canadian Native experience. I am devoted to bringing to the foreground our Native and Canadian experience and expression. Naturally, we have much to learn from our Native North American colleagues, as well as from, to use a favored Native expression, "all our relations" around the world.

Even though I grew up with an inconsistent mix of French prefixes and suffixes in my Cree (a form of Michif),[10] English, not French, is my second language. As a western Canadian Metis, Cree, not French is my affiliation. Dickason in *The Myth of the Savage,* treats numerous French sources which reflect Eurocentric bias. I would say that French Canadian historiography and literature cries out for re-examination.[11] As a Nehiyawewsquoh (Cree speaking Native woman) I have a dialectical relationship with colonial languages. Today English is my language, and though I will always keep a wary eye on its colonial workings, I consider it my primary means of linguistic expression. I use Cree sparingly for a number of technical reasons, among them, that very few would understand it. I engage in this discourse to advance dialogue, not to further the dissonances in our many-layered "babbel of knowledges" (Said, *Representations* 90). I of course share deeply with my Native colleagues the extent to which we have been dehumanized. Clearly, no one, no human being, no individual, no group can find tolerable any form of dehumanization. Human beings want to be known as human beings. As sixteenth century Shakespeare's Shylock, a despised and persecuted merchant, put it:

---

[10] For a brief discussion on the features and formation of Michif, see John C. Crawford, "What is Michif?: Language in the metis tradition."

> I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as a Christian? If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? (*Arden* 843)

---

[11] For an early and thoughtful examination of French historiography, see Cornelius Jaenen, "Amerindian Views of French Culture in the Seventeenth Century." Another fine work is Donald B. Smith, *Le Sauvage. The Native People in Quebec: historical writing on the Heroic Period (1534-1663) of New France*. See also Bruce G. Trigger, "Champlain Judged by His Indian Policy: A Different View of Early Canadian History." For an astonishingly optimistic view of French historiography see Trigger, "The Historians' Indian: Native Americans in Canadian Historical Writing from Charlevoix to the Present."

In 1849, in a protest letter remarkably similar in tone to Shylock's,[12] Ojibway leader, Shinguaconse, made his claim for his/Native humanity:

> Father,
> We are men like you, we have the limbs of men, we have the hearts of men, and we feel and know that all this country is ours; even the weakest and most cowardly animals of the forest when hunted to extremity, though they feel destruction sure, will turn upon the hunter.[13]

Shinguaconse's colonially influenced gender-defined humanity is problematic, but the call is clear: we Native peoples are human and cannot be treated as less than human. The task then is to humanize the "Indian" by, on one hand, dismantling the view of Natives as "savage," and on the other, by putting forward the Native people's humanity through their writing. This entails the re-framing of what Joyce Green refers to as "the sanitised and partial 'school-book histories'" (Diss 24).[14]

In the tradition of my ancestors who come from "many roads,"[15] and in the tradition of liberation resistance literature which has provided the basis

---

[12] Notwithstanding the genre and circumstances of the characters are dissimilar.

[13] This is from a letter written to Lord Elgin, Governor-General of Montreal, as quoted in Penny Petrone, *Native Literature in Canada* 64. It has normally been assumed that the early custom of addressing whites as 'father' indicates infantilization, however, Olive Patricia Dickason (*Canada's First Nations* 16) suggests that this may reflect a cultural custom of respect, not authority.

[14] Green here is, in part, quoting from *The Fourth World* by George Manuel and Michael Posluns.

[15] I owe this phrase to Jacqueline Peterson, "Many roads to Red River: Metis genesis in the Great Lakes region, 1680-1815" in Peterson and Brown, eds., 37-72. My ancestors include, in the broad sense of the word, Louis Riel and the poet Pierre Falcon, both of whom 'frontiered' in liberation resistance literature.

"for a re-examination of literary critical methodologies and the definitions whereby a literary corpus is established" (Harlow 4), I do challenge western intellectual conventions with their "hegemonic canonical assumptions" of universality, and I most certainly reject textual domination and dehumanization. I make no attempts to provide 'solutions' as such; the purpose of this dissertation is to re-contextualize Native writers' responses to colonial records.

Finally, I believe that in as much as we must seek to recognize the faces of both the colonizer and the colonized, we must at the same time acknowledge that we are human beings and as such are more than the sum total of our colonial parts. There are many non-Native peoples in our country who are supportive of Native peoples. I especially appreciate the rapidly growing number of scholars who are engaged in decolonizing research. Native peoples too take exception to being restricted to colonial models, not to mention, experience. Nevertheless, our encounter is informed by colonization. Colonial texts are offensive, in fact, many of these texts constitute hate literature. It remains that few scholars, comparatively speaking, have challenged these records in any direct way. That this is so serves to alienate Aboriginal intellectuals from the Canadian intellectual community. It also dampens desire to engage in reading offensive material. How many potential Aboriginal scholars have these records turned away? Shakespeare's Shylock cried out for a recognition of his humanity in the sixteenth century; at the dawn of the twenty-first century Native resistance to dehumanization continues. I have struggled with the ramifications of my exposition because I would like to be generous. I was raised to be polite and generous. But how does one read hate literature--or the selective inattention to it--generously?

ORGANIZATION

Chapter One, "Native Resistance Literature: Survey and Theory," introduces the chronological development of Native writing and situates it as Resistance Literature within and outside of the post-colonial intellectual context. The undercurrent of this writing is, however, contemporarily indigenous. My 'engaged research' is explained as part of the methodology basic to this dissertation.

I break down Chapter Two into two parts to show the intimate connection between text and society. In "Part I: Dehumanization in Text," I outline the meaning and evidence of dehumanization in Canadian historical and literary writing. As I will show, the "Indian" as an invention serving colonial purposes is perhaps one of the most distorted and dehumanized figures in White North American history, literature and popular culture. My focus is on textual construction and its social and political function. "Part II: Currency and Effects of Dehumanization in Society" emphasizes the supportive role the "Indian" construct has played in popular culture as well as in Canadian intellectual development. However, recycling this construct entrenches individual and institutional racism which only perpetuates the adverse effects on Native peoples and impairs relationships between Native and non-Native communities.

Chapter Three, "Native Writers Resist: Addressing Invasion," situates the political disempowerment of Native peoples as the source of Native resistance in writing. Here the emphasis is on the devastating impact colonial forces have played and continue to play in the lives, lands and cultures of Native peoples. This devastation which is at the heart of the colonial experience informs early and contemporary Native writing.

In Chapter Four, "Native Writers Resist: Addressing Dehumanization," it is shown that Native writers have taken particular exception to being portrayed as savages. Native writers have countered this portrayal with a number of techniques including humanizing the 'Indian' through the exhibiting of Native faces and feelings, reestablishing the viability of Aboriginal cultures and even reversing charges of savagism. However, Native resistance literature is complicated by internalization of both positive (as found in romanticization) and negative (as expressed in dehumanization) stereotypes.

Chapter Five, "An Intersection: Internalization, Difference, Criticism," explores a convolution of issues central to the colonizer/colonized relationship. We find here an interlayered mix of romanticization, exaggeration of Native 'difference' and the continuing problem of internalization, all of which challenge our understanding. Both White and Native intellectual responses to the existing historical and cultural material is assessed in light of this mix. What emerges is the tendency by both White and Native writers and critics to sweep all things Native under the familiar aegis of cultural and colonial paradigms, though this has not lead to much basis of dialogue. In a continuing attempt to find a culture unspoiled by contact, difference has been fetishized, so much so that a notion of the authentic native is very much in vogue. This puts Native peoples in an untenable situation; we are wrapped in stereotypes and are expected to remain pre-Columbian. This very process entrenches the isolation and marginalization of contemporary Native peoples who are struggling to unearth ourselves, to be heard in a way meaningful to ourselves and to others. The task is daunting; there are real cultural and political differences between White and Native peoples in Canada but given the overwhelming history of misrepresentation, how do we know what is real or what is important? Therefore, I consider the importance of an educated criticism and audience. What, though, is the substance of that 'education'? And on whom does the onus fall for Native writers to be fully appreciated and included in the Canadian canons? This chapter ends with a question and an answer concerning reconstruction.

Chapter Six, "Native Writers Reconstruct: Pushing Paradigms," explores the possibility of constructing an Aboriginal literary theory which challenges misrepresentation and is at once specific to Indigenous ethos and experience. This chapter concludes by showing it is possible to criticize and create Native works taking into consideration their respective cultural and political contexts without compromising their humanity or their individuality. This directs us not only to an Aboriginal basis (or bases) for contemporary criticism but also to an appreciation of a decolonizing scholarship freer of ideological formulas.

The "Conclusion" reiterates Native resistance to dehumanization and challenges the academy to re-examine its privileged position. The assumption is of course that radical change is required. Our collective aspiration must be the ending of our (Native) marginalization in society and in scholarship. There are also significant 'outstanding' issues in our resistance which call for further treatment: poetry, women's writing, Aboriginal literary theory and the Native portrait of the colonizer in creative works. The last word is mine.

CHAPTER ONE

NATIVE RESISTANCE LITERATURE: SURVEY AND THEORY

> To be an aboriginal person, to identify with an indigenous heritage in these late colonial times, requires a life of reflection, critique, persistence and struggle.
>
> (Gerald McMaster and Lee-Ann Martin, *Indigena* 11)

In the summer of 1974, I worked for the Native Curriculum Resource Project, Department of Education in Alberta. My job was to research alternatives to Alberta's provincial curriculum with respect to its treatment of Native peoples. I was struck immediately by the endless layers of stereotypes in both elementary and secondary textbooks, particularly in history and social studies. It came easily for me to connect what I was re/discovering with what I had known as a Metis student in public schools. I was connecting my knowledge with my experience, or as I have written earlier, my footnotes with my voice.[1] This research enabled me to write *Defeathering The Indian*, which addresses the problem of stereotypes in schools and in society. *Defeathering The Indian* is on one level, a curriculum handbook for teachers. On another, perhaps more important level, *Defeathering The Indian* is a resistance book without the political language to mark it as such. What I was resisting was the portrayal of Native peoples as befeathered savages. I pointed out the prevalence of the stereotypes both in school textbooks, classroom politics, and in society, particularly as promoted by the media and marketplace. I explained how dehumanizing it is to be seen and treated as savages, that is as less than human creatures bereft of valuable culture, coherent language and multidimensional personalities. I turned to facts of biography and cultural information, and used humour among other things, to highlight our (Native) humanity. I used my "barbed wit" as the publisher put it, to challenge the Canadian historical record and its gamut of culturally-produced stereotypes. I also resorted to turning the tables, to pointing out, however meekly, who the "real savages" (meaning the American cavalry) were. In the end, I optimistically (naively some would say) appealed to our common humanity, to commonsense and to common decency. I tried to be subtle rather than 'explosive' but I think such a concern was more a mark of my colonization than of my liberation. And certainly, I was unaware of sexist language. I was young and in the early stages of decolonization. In many ways I was not particularly aware of western-defined politics. I was just beginning to shore up my Plains Cree Metis-based youthful knowledge with another kind of knowledge, the gathering of many voices and the gathering of footnotes.

---

[1] For a beginning discussion of Native "voice" in response to the notion of Native "voicelessness" in literature (and society), see my "Preface" xv-xxx.

I was also entering a particular kind of discourse. I was quite unaware, at the time, that I was well within an established *and* developing Native resistance tradition in facts, process, tone and approach. The unity of experience, presentation and argumentation across the centuries of this tradition is dramatic. Whether in the form of social and historical commentaries, autobiographies, short stories, legends, poetry or plays , whether it was in the 1790s or 1990s, whether it was lands, reserves, homesteads, homes, parents, children or women personally invaded, or whether it was languages, ceremonies, epistemologies or faiths suppressed, there is a striking unity of occurrence. Native writers record historical and personal incursions, social upheavals, a range of emotions, unique individual and cultural backgrounds, and struggle for hope and determination. The style of recording these many realities is often a mixture of keen rhetorical stratagem, sharp sociological perception, moral outrage, and dignified poignancy. Literary devices are both inventive and prosaic. The argumentation combines Aboriginal and contemporary traditions, including resistance and post-colonial strategies. The writing is multilayered and sustained.

Is Native Writing Resistance Literature?

Native activists and intellectuals have been *resisting* Canada's political and intellectual treatment of Native peoples. However, since this dissertation does to some extent draw on post-colonial arguments, particularly Barbara Harlow's treatment of "resistance literature," the question is whether Native writing qualifies as resistance literature. It is more than a rhetorical question because for a number of complex historical and cultural reasons, Native writing does present its own unique problems, approaches and features.

Barbara Harlow traces the development of the theory of resistance literature to organized resistance movements for national liberation and independence "on the part of colonized peoples in those areas of the world over which Western Europe and North America have sought socio-economic control and cultural dominion," movements such as the PLO (Palestine), the FLN (Algeria), the FLN (Vietnam), Mau Mau (Kenya), the ANC (South Africa) and so forth (7). These movements have produced "a significant corpus of literary writing, both narrative and poetic, as well as a broad spectrum of theoretical analyses of the political, ideological, and cultural parameters of this struggle" (7). The writers, ideologues and theoreticians of these movements "have articulated a role for literature and poets within the struggle alongside the gun, the pamphlet and the diplomatic delegation" (xviii). Drawing on Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe's fable (1958) of an imperialist tortoise brought down (literally) by the unexpected smarts of a parrot, Harlow explains:

> ...this happens because the parrot, legendary for his proclivity to repeat just what he has heard, has overcome this stereotypical image and learned to use language to his and the bird's own ends.... Achebe's message is clear: the language skills of rhetoric together with armed struggle are essential to an oppressed people's resistance to domination and oppression and to an organized liberation movement. (xv)

In her list of resisting peoples, it must be noted that Harlow does not include Aboriginal peoples from North America. Neither, for that matter, do Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin in *The Empire Writes Back* except in a few passages and only in relation to white re/settlers who are situated as the ones resisting British standards in an imperial-colonial tug of war. In Ashcroft *et al*, it is the re/settler whites who are treated as the colonized resisting the mother country. Frantz Fanon in *Wretched of the Earth* does not deal with the treatment of Native North Americans either; indeed, his only reference to

United States is in the context of it as a colony "two centuries ago" having emulated Europe so well it grew to be a "monster" (313). Memmi, in the context of discussing Europe's consideration of exterminating Algerians as a solution to colonization, refers, ever so briefly, to Indians: "...there is no longer much of an Indian problem in the United States (extermination saves colonization so little that it actually contradicts the colonial process)" (149). The assumption here seems to be that Indians--meaning from United States (as there is no mention of Canadian Natives)--were so conquered as to constitute the exterminated. Or so disempowered as not to be able to "resist." Perhaps Peter Hitchcock's application of the term 'the oppressed' gives us a clue on this interestingly limited notion of the resisting oppressed:

> The oppressed are here taken as those who are socially, economically or culturally marginalized, subordinated or subjugated in a myriad of ways, *but whose singular mark lies not in the oppression itself but in their capacity to end it.* (4)

Given these parameters, Native writing perhaps cannot easily qualify as "resistance literature" within the early Third World[2] terms. In the first instance, Native peoples of Canada did not have a written language, therefore they did not leave their own written record of their resistance activities against the early European intruders. Indeed, it is not until the late 1700s and early 1800s that a few individual Natives were able to write in English, having learned the skills of literacy from missionaries. Reflecting the complexity of the Native People's relationship with the missionaries and the Canadian school system, be it public or residential, Native writing as a form of any collective expression has not been possible until about the 1970s, if not the 1980s.[3] This, though, brings up the question of associating literacy and resistance: is knowing how to write (whether in one's language or in another) a necessary signal of resistance? The answer to this is not simple; Native writers have a complex relationship with the English language, a relationship which reflects the 500 years of cultural, linguistic and political appropriations, exchanges and challenges. As Albert Memmi pointed out, literacy is a linguistic, political and psychological challenge for a colonized peoples of Oral Traditions who move on to the technique of writing, that is, of adopting the colonizer's language (106-109).

---

[2] Harlow also traces the problematic term "The Third World," noting that it "seems to possess more rhetorical power than precision" (4).

Many Native writers including myself have certainly commented on the difficulties of adopting the colonizers' language(s).[4] This awareness is perhaps why many Native writers and speakers have felt compelled to acknowledge our Oral Traditions. Apparently self-conscious of the fact Native North Americans did not have written languages, Native writers have extolled their spoken languages as well as their methods of recollection. But it is more than self-consciousness or concession, it is assigning equal value to the oral traditions even as we are adopting the ‘enemy’s methods of writing. One of the earliest Native writers, George Copway, begins his cultural defense in 1847 by what at first appears to be concession: “I have not the happiness of being able to refer to written records in narrating the history of my forefathers,” but also immediately stakes out the value of oral tradition by calling on his memory, “but I can reveal to the world what has long been laid up in my memory...” (qtd in Moses and Goldie, eds. 19). Similarly, a century later, Chief Dan George wrote: “My people’s memory / Reaches into the / Beginning of all things” (85). The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples Report, published in the mid-1990s, also highlights an anonymous statement by one of the Native presenters: “I have no written speech. Everything that I have said I have been carrying in my heart, because I have seen it. I have experienced it” (n. page).

---

[3] For an adequate summary of Native people's experience of the Canadian school system, see James Frideres, *Aboriginal Peoples in Canada* 148-168. Frideres presents figures that still indicate about 60% of Native students do not complete high school.

[4] Both the earliest writers such as George Copway and contemporary writers such as Janice Acoose, Howard Adams, Jeannette Armstrong, Maria Campbell, Bernice Halfe, Basil Johnston, Thomson Highway, Rita Joe, Gerald McMaster, Lee Maracle and others, have in various ways addressed the dialectical relationship Native writers have with the colonizer languages.

In 1969 Northwest Coast folklorist, artist and actor George Clutesi (1905-1988) introduced his collection of Tse-Shat traditions, traditions he translated into English, by declaring that he avoids documentation: “This narrative is not meant to be documentary. In fact, it is meant to evade documents. It is meant for the reader to feel and to say I was there and indeed I saw.”[5]

It is often taken for granted that ‘literacy’ is an enormous improvement in human evolution. Those of us who came from Oral Traditions have quite different perspectives on literacy for, obviously, when words are used for ‘extinguishment’ purposes, as Ojibway activist Mrs. Catherine Soneegoh

---

[5] Clutesi emphasizes this point by setting the whole statement in an unnumbered page at the beginning of his book *Potlatch*.

Sutton (1823-65) put it so beautifully, literacy in this sense becomes the enemy. Not only is English (or French) the vehicle for the extinguishment of Aboriginal Rights, it is also the expressive means of dehumanization. Mohawk lawyer, activist and writer Patricia Monture-Angus explains that, "It is probably fortunate for Aboriginal people today that so many of our histories are oral histories. Information that was kept in people's heads was not available to Europeans, could not be changed and molded into pictures of 'savagery' and 'paganism'" (11). For these reasons, and as George Clutesi knew so well, under certain contexts documentation must be assiduously avoided. My parents, who interestingly were of Clutesi's generation, knew this too. This is why my father refused to let me go to school until he had no choice. This is why my grandmother and my mother told us stories deep into the winter nights. Clearly, it is not by accident that I grew up so close to my language, a language which remains closest to my 'soul,' and just as clearly I have my parents to thank for their insight, an insight I did not fully appreciate until adulthood.

Through our languages we carry our worldviews which are, in turn, expressed, in our epistemologies.[6] This means then that our approaches to knowledge, and to the gathering and use of knowledge may be quite different from those that inform Western conventions. Anthropologist Robin Ridington has argued that oral-based, hunting Aboriginal societies approach knowledge rather than materials as technology, and that "they code information about their world differently from those of us whose discourse is conditioned by written documents" ("Cultures in Conflict" 277). These 'differences' as Ridington appreciates, and as I argue in later chapters, are much more complex than any typologies which have become current in discussions on Aboriginal cultural differences or 'traditions.'[7] In any event, the Indigenous *weltanschauung* has, of course, implications for us engaged in Western-defined scholarly activities. Janice Acoose finds "writing in the colonizer's language simultaneously painful and liberating" (*Iskwewak* 12). Painful because English provides her "the only recourse...to convey the reality of the Indigenous peoples." Painful because as I have pointed out, our words have been infantilized, stolen, silenced or erased. For Acoose "writing in the colonizer's language" is also liberating because "doing research and writing encourages re-creation, renaming and empowerment of both Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous peoples."

---

[6] For a consideration of the indispensable significance of Aboriginal languages in the maintenance of Aboriginal epistemologies, see Basil Johnston, "One Generation from Extinction" 10-18.

There is no question but that literacy and the art and politics of documentation presents us with cultural problems when, for example, literacy steals the nuances of oral expressions and with political problems when words are used to dehumanize or to dispossess. But literacy does also offer us new and expanded horizons, with endless possibilities of becoming acquainted with numerous worlds and cross-cultural imaginations. In certain contexts I can certainly appreciate George Clutesi's strategy of avoiding documentation, but for those of us today engaged in scholarship and writing, we must not avoid documentation. For now we are here. And document we must for much of the 'war' is in the words. And document we do.

---

[7] See also Ridington, "Technology, World View, and Adaptive Strategy in a Northern Hunting Society" 103-117. Ridington has perhaps one of the most perceptive understandings of how northern hunting societies conceive of and apply knowledge, and that this knowledge is intimately linked to language, land and skills. Land-based Native cultures are intricate, and this should raise questions about the translation of such intricacies into our modern lives, literatures and criticisms.

Further, we are approaching the year 2000, and English (or French) is as much our birthright as our Aboriginal languages. English is in many respects our new 'native' language for it has become the common language through which we now communicate. English ironically is now serving to unite us, therefore, serving to de-colonize us. Our usage of English is of course not that of the colonizer's usage of English. Since we have a painful and political relationship with this language, we attend to the task of "re-inventing the enemy's language" as Native American poet Joy Harjo has so aptly put it.[8] To re-invent the 'enemy's language' is a re-creative process, and as such, English is now as much our vehicle of creative expression as it is our vehicle of resistance.

Besides the matter of peoples of oral traditions having to labour under the terms of colonial rule and influence, no one Native nation or peoples has produced literature from an "organized resistance movement" within a "specific historical context." This is undoubtedly due to the vast cultural, linguistic and geographical differences among the indigenous peoples of Canada. Riel came closest to producing literature within an organized resistance movement, but he had no colleagues in this pursuit. To date, Native writers have not called for an armed struggle.[9] And only since the late 1960s have some Native writers (in what has not exactly been a mass movement) specifically called for de-colonization, and only since the 1990s have some Native intellectuals turned to decolonization or modern deconstruction theories.

---

[8] This phrase is original to Harjo and is now the title of a recently published anthology which is co-edited with Gloria Bird. *Re-inventing the Enemy's Language: Contemporary Native Women's Writings of North America* is a substantial collection.

Assessing Native resistance writing is also complicated by the fact Natives are still expressing the presentness of their colonization. It is clear that Native peoples are not uniformly conscious of or resistant to their condition. It is interesting, though not entirely surprising, that different generations of Native writers (e.g. Copway, 1850s; Johnston, 1900s; Redbird, 1970s) have been exhibiting similar internalization problems. This is to be expected because the nature and effects of colonization have hit different Native cultural groups at different times in different yet similar ways over a span of five centuries.

Another consequence of this internalization is the Natives' sense of shame concerning their Indianness many Native writers note. This is another indication of having taken on the images, standards or expectations of the colonizer which Metis historian and social critic Howard Adams refers to as "the White Ideal" in *Prison of Grass*. Powerful media through which White North America's conceptions of beauty, status, acceptability, privilege or reality become established have had damaging effects on both White and Native self-images. Whereas for Whites the 'White Ideal' has, as a rule, provided them with an exaggerated self-assurance, Native peoples, much like other oppressed or 'minority' groups, have struggled with self-acceptance in the face of formidable racial and cultural rejection.

---

[9] Even Riel, who today would be considered liberationist or Third World, did not call for an armed struggle as such. His writings (along with Pierre Falcon's musical poetry concerning the Seven Oaks encounter in 1816) need to be reconsidered in the light of post-colonial comprehension.

Frantz Fanon and Albert Memmi are the classic sources for discussion on the processes of internalization, a process that both the colonizer and the colonized experience, albeit from opposite ends of the spectrum. Afro American writers have also dealt with their struggles with self-rejection/acceptance in the face of racial hatred and history of slavery.[10] And Native peoples are constantly hounded and haunted by White North America's image machine which has persistently portrayed them as either the grotesque Savage or the Noble Savage. Our struggles are reflected in both startling and subtle ways. The study of Native writing must take into consideration this not so inconsiderable problem evident in our works, a point to which I will return in chapter five.

Related to internalization is the issue of our cultures having been massively stereotyped. To what extent have we internalized these stereotypes? And to what extent is current post-colonial literary criticism employing stereotypes in its treatment of Aboriginal writing? Ironically, the new emphases on cultural studies in literature adds new stresses to our struggle to dismantle the stereotypes of Native persons as carbon copies of a fixed monolithic culture, and to re/place them with our multidimensional qualities and personalities. There is our struggle to maintain cultural integrity as peoples of oral traditions in the face of western written conventions, as well as our intention to claim the English language and other cultural changes as our birthright. The challenge then is to present our humanity and our cultural integrity without submitting to stereotypes.

---

[10] Some of the classic Afro American statements on this include *Notes of a Native Son*, *Malcolm X Speaks* and *Roots*

In any case, resistance literature is no longer limited to specific historical liberation struggles in Africa, Central and South America or the Far and Middle East; it has broadened to include what is now generally referred to as post-colonial literatures. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin use the term 'post-colonial' to "cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day," and they suggest that "it is most appropriate as the term for the new cross-cultural criticism which has emerged in recent years and for the discourse through which this is constituted" (*Empire* 2).

However, even in this broadening, Native writers of the United States and Canada are not usually included in international post-colonial discourse, although this is in the process of changing. Much is being written *about* Native works and/or writers, especially since 1990, and some of this has been exceptional (Fee, Godard, Hulan, Hunter, Lutz, Eigenbrod), but direct representation by Native writers and scholars themselves is as yet minimal. An increasing number of Native writers are being invited to present and submit papers or to read creative works to international and national conferences on post-colonial or "commonwealth" literary themes.[11] However, the lateness (we have been actively writing since the 1970s) and shape of our inclusion in this discourse probably reflects a number of different factors, among them ignorance about our existence which may be due, in part, to the international tendency to pay little attention to Canadians in general. It is difficult for Aboriginal intellectuals to break into what appears to be a tightly-knit circle.

---

[11] I am aware, for example, of writers like Jeannette Armstrong and Lee Maracle being invited to such conferences; I have been invited to a number of them (e.g. Australia, Leeds, Ottawa, Montreal, Banff) over the last several years. Often, though, we are invited one at a time, making it difficult to make any real incursion or impact on such conferences.

As White and Native Canadians we also find ourselves in the awkward position of competing for space and acknowledgement. It appears that white Canadian literature has been the officially accepted representative of 'post-colonial' literatures, even if white Canadian writers themselves do not always feel their works have received adequate recognition. As noted above, Ashcroft *et al* treat white Canadian literature as post-colonial. In *Empire* the authors are aware of "indigenous populations" which have been invaded by "settler colonies" and provide Australia as a case in point of "contradictions which emerge" where "Aboriginal writing provides an excellent example of a dominated literature, while that of white Australia has characteristics of a dominating one in relation to it. Yet white Australian literature is dominated in its turn by a relationship with Britain and English literature" (32). While *The Empire Writes Back* is sprinkled with references to Indigenous populations, overall, the authors do not pursue the literary relationship between white colonizer/native colonized except to say such a study would be "fascinating" (32).

In *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader,* however, Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin do pursue such "fascinating" studies. The place of various Indigenous peoples vis a vis White "invader settlers" is given special consideration. However, while several white Canadian writers and critics (Fee, Goldie, Hutcheon) address the relationship between Native and White Canadians, no Native writers or scholars are included. A number of other White Canadian writers (Kroetsch, Lee, Brydon) concern themselves with their struggles vis a vis British colonialism. 'Fascinating' it is. I find it unacceptable in a postcolonial reader, especially one published in the 1990s, that Natives are represented only through non-Native Canadians. Indigenous peoples of North America, Native peoples of Canada in particular, fall within (and outside of) the inclusive terms as set out by Ashcroft *et al*: "to cover all the cultures affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present" in which there is concern "with the world as it exists during and after the period of European imperial domination and the effects of this on contemporary literatures" (*Empire* 2).

Obviously, Native Canadians cannot enjoy fully 'post-coloniality' since their colonial experience is imbricated with the past and present. Nor do Native peoples have at this time the 'capacity to end' their oppression, as Hitchcock requires. Neither is the Native experience of colonialism well understood nor has Native writing as resistance been clearly recognized abroad or at home. Nevertheless, Natives have been protesting their subjugated or exiled position within the conditions of being dominated by 'settler colonies.' They have certainly been articulating their experience and as Ashcroft *et al* put it 'talking back to the imperial centre' (2).

Articulating the experience and 'talking back to the imperial centre' constitutes, according to Hitchcock, a 'dialogics of the oppressed,' and while dialogics does not end the oppression it does "constitute a significant logic of resistance and an array of contestatory practices" (4). Native peoples of

Canada have been engaging in 'contestatory practices' right from the initial contact with Europeans to the present. But more to the point, Native writers and critics are not going to depend on external definitions as to whether they have written resistance literature or not. Nor is it fruitful to lock into a debate as to whether it is Natives or Whites who ought to be the official "post-colonials."[12] We may all be 'post-colonials' but we are not all placed on the same rung of privileges in the vertical mosaic of Canada. Native intellectuals are keenly aware of their placement. It is to Native writing that critics must turn to be able to assess the cause and nature of the resisting Native in Canada.

To be sure, resistance may not always be immediately apparent to the unstudied, for example, in the gentle, humanist or post-modern works, say, by Chief Dan George, Rita Joe, Ruby Slipperjack, Thomas King, Thomson Highway or Richard Wagamese. Certainly, many Native works cannot be considered works of resistance in the tradition of liberationist 'Third World' philosophes/writers (Harlow), or the explosive American Black writers of the 1960s such as Eldridge Cleaver or Malcolm X, but I would argue, a simple assertion of one's (Native) humanity is a form of resistance given the magnitude of dehumanization over a span of 500 years. In this overarching history of colonization, Native peoples have developed a collective sense of relationship to the land, to each other and to the common cause of decolonization. In this sense, every politically-aware Native teacher, scholar, writer, artist, filmmaker, poet or activist is ultimately a producer of resistance material. In fact, precisely because Native writers have not written 'alongside the gun,' their writing is all the more the form of articulate resistance in Canada.

---

[12] See Brydon's and Hutcheon's articles in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader.*

Native Writers Resisting Colonial Practices

I find it useful now to present a brief chronological survey in order to introduce a sense of the depth and scope of Natives engaging in 'contestatory practices' right from the initial contact with Europeans to the present.[13] In the following chapters I highlight Native writing as it expresses the Native experience of the colonial process. While Native peoples have not reclaimed all their lands as such, they have "emerged in their present form out of the experience of colonization" (*Empire* 2). Natives peoples have been resisting their subjugated or colonized conditions through many means.

Throughout the many phases of the colonization process, Native peoples were, of course, resisting, but because their resistance was framed in terms of "civilization inevitably winning over savagery" it went not only unrecognized but was degraded as something infantile and less than human. Colonial history, for example, records Native resistance as Indian Wars. Aboriginal Nations fighting to save their persons, communities, cultures and lands, was simply propagandized as irrational violence of aimlessly wandering intractable bloodthirsty savages.

---

[13] Penny Petrone in *Native Literature in Canada: From the Oral Tradition to the Present* offered one of the first comprehensive studies of Native literature in Canada. Petrone is Professor Emeritus of Lakehead University. German scholar Hartmut Lutz has also produced a number of works detailing various writings by Native peoples. I offer a brief overview in my "Preface" to *Writing The Circle*. There are also brief surveys in the recent collection *Native North America: Critical and Cultural Perspectives*, edited by Renee Hulan.

But once the Native/White encounter is understood as colonial, and once Native peoples are accorded humanity, we can find their voices of resistance in a variety of genres going back to the earliest encounters. So read, the theme of resistance can be seen to pepper the very records that sought to minimalize Native humanity. For example, as recorded in the *Jesuit Relations,* Father Brebeuf remarks on Huron resistance to the Jesuit tenets of creation and "our other mysteries." Apparently miffed that the "headstrong" Huron approached this discussion with cultural relativism, Brebeuf points out to them "by means of a little globe...that there is only one world," to which the Huron "remain without reply" (Mealing 44). This is a fairly classic instance of early Europeans resorting to technical trickery to strengthen their claim to superiority, especially when they were confronted with Native cultural and intellectual skepticism or resistance. Parker Duchemin explains that, as a way of establishing White authority over Native peoples, "a charade of white omniscience and omnipotence...was played and replayed" by European Explorers (53-54). It had to be replayed because Native peoples were not so easily impressed.[14] The point is Native peoples were not glazed-eyed savages sitting on their haunches by the seashore waiting for European gods and baubles. In the understated words of Olive Patricia Dickason: "Most authorities agree that it is highly unlikely that 'civilization' was brought over whole to a welcoming population waiting to be enlightened"

---

[14] Native resistance is also recorded in fur trade journals and in fur trade history. For example, accounts of resistance are commented on in Saum, *The Fur Trade and the* Indian; Ray and Freeman, *'Give Us Good Measure'*; Van Kirk, *'Many Tender Ties.'*

(*Canada's First Nations* 60). A critical, or post-colonial, review of archival records shows they resisted ideological impositions, economic exploitation, cultural insults and personal abuse.

In terms of Native-written resistance, as Penny Petrone has documented, it was the evangelical Christian movement of the mid-1800s in Southern Ontario that first facilitated English literacy among Native individuals, especially those who became missionaries or ministers. Among such notable people were Peter Jones, George Copway, George Henry, Peter Jacobs, John Sunday and Henry Steinhauer. Most of them were Ojibway. They were very well-known and well-travelled orators and personalities who produced autobiographies, letters, reports, petitions, poetry and ethnographic and personal histories. They formed the "first literary coterie of Indians in Canada" (35). In the 1850-1914 period, eastern residential schools produced a few Native writers such as Catherine Soneegoh Sutton, P.D. Clark, Louis Jackson, Dr. Peter Martins, Francis Assikinack and J. Brant-Sero. Their writing added to the Native missionaries' critical essays, letters, sermons and petitions which especially served as forms of protest to government officials, missionaries and newspaper editors (ch 2 and 3).

The next significant Native resistance literature was produced by "metis" poet Pauline Johnson. Born in 1862 to an English mother and a Mohawk father on the Six Nations Indian Reserve, Johnson was to become a famous poet who defended Native people in her works. But she was a product of Victorian society, and her defense was limited and defined by the strictures and prejudices of the times. Put in an impossible situation of having to use, if not internalize, the colonizer's language and imagery, and having to play the role of Pocahontus Princess when reciting, she nonetheless expressed outrage at the treatment of Native peoples, and she defended the humanity of the Indian. She ended up with a mixed result, as her collection of poetry in *Flint and Feathers* reveals.

In western Canada, the signing of the treaties, the quashing of Metis resistance, the forcing of reserves and residential schools, and the splitting of Native peoples into scattered legislated units rendered the peoples powerless, and for a long and lonely century (1870s-1970s), western Natives remained largely silenced.[15] It is this era and experience that may appropriately be referred to as a time of voicelessness in that Native peoples had no visible political or cultural representation in Canadian society.[16] They served only as shadowy props in the morality plays of White Canadian cultural productions, scarcely noticed in the periphery of mainstream Canadian consciousness.

Beginning in the late 1960s, Canadian Natives reflecting a new political awakening in the Native community, began to articulate their oppressed conditions in a manner comprehensible--at least linguistically--to Canadian society. Much of this articulation came in the form of speech, maintaining the great oral traditions of the people. But it also came in the form of writing. If any era birthed Native resistance literature proper, it is this.

Harold Cardinal signalled the arrival of contemporary resistance literature with his *Unjust Society*, published in 1969. Cardinal challenged the smug Canadian self-image of being a just society and in particular, challenged Pierre Trudeau's 'White paper' proposal to undo the existing relationship between Status Indians and the federal government. This was soon followed by a number of social commentaries. In *Prison of Grass* Howard Adams questioned the conventional historical mis/treatment of Riel and situated the "Native's' struggles with "the White Ideal" in the broader context of colonization and oppression. Other social protest non-fiction writers of the era include Waubegeeshig (ed. *The Only Good Indian*), Wilfred Pelletier (*No Foreign Land*), George Manuel (*The Fourth World*) and me (*Defeathering The Indian*). We took on various injustices as we found them in the media, the schools, the federal and provincial governments, the stealing of lands and resources, racism and general destruction of Aboriginal ways.

---

[15] For a good overview of treaties, the Indian Act, reserves. residential schools and Metis loss of lands see Frideres, *Aboriginal Peoples in Canada*; Miller, *Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens*; Dickason, *Canada's First Nations*.

[16] Of course, as peoples of cultivated words, a point of significance in my "Preface" to *Writing The Circle*, the Native people were neither voiceless nor silent within their own cultural contexts and communities.

There were also autobiographies. Maria Campbell's *Halfbreed* received national attention. Campbell's account of her life of loss, abuse and oppression exploded Canada's naive notions of a caring and charitable country. Less well known but important work that was published in 1973, the same year as *Halfbreed*, is *Geneish: An Indian Girlhood*, by Jane Willis. With painstaking detail and anger, Willis recounted her years in residential school in northern Quebec as a time of mental, intellectual and physical abuse. Routinely denounced as "savages" and divested of all things Indian, Willis and fellow students were repeatedly subjected to hard physical labour, corporal punishment, isolation and a host of other humiliations. All this in the name of civilization and Christianity.

Also in the 1970s, poets such as Sarain Stump (*There Is My People*

Sleeping), Duke Redbird (*Red On White: The Biography of Duke Redbird*, edited by Willie Dunn), George Kenny (*Indians Don't Cry*), Rita Joe (*Poems of Rita Joe*) and even the genteel, if not Hiawathian, Chief Dan George (*My Heart Soars*) produced protest prose and poetry. Also published in this era were an assortment of collections which presented a cross section of biographies, essays of social and literary criticism, interviews, government reports or proposals, newspaper articles and editorials, short stories, drama and poetry. They include: Kent Gooderman (ed. *I Am An Indian*), Waubegeeshig (ed. *The Only Good Indian: Essays by Canadian Indians*), Orville, Wayne and Ronald Keon (*Sweetgrass*), William and Christine Mowat, (eds. *Native Peoples in Canadian Literature*), David Day and Marilyn Bowering (eds. *Many Voices*).

This was followed in the 1980s, finally, by novels. Beatrice Culleton's *In Search of April Raintree*, Ruby Slipperjack's *Honour The Sun,* Jeanette Armstrong's *Slash* (and Lee Maracle's *I Am Woman* which is not a novel) became popular reading in Canadian Native literature. Armstrong took the theme of colonization head-on through her main character Slash. Culleton spoke to the abuses of the Child and Welfare system which has had a disastrous impact on Native individuals and families. Slipperjack gently addressed community and family disintegration brought about by anomie and alcoholism. Maracle roared against male violence and organizational lethargy.

By the 1990s, streams of Native-authored material covering every genre is being produced. Thomas King (*Medicine River*; *Green Grass, Running Water*), Ruby Slipperjack (*Honour The Sun*; *Silent Words)*, Lee Maracle (*Sundogs*; *Raven*) and Richard Wagamese (*Keeper'n and Me*; *A*

Quality of Light) lead the list as Native novelists in this time. Poetry, in particular, poured in from a host of writers, much of which is to be found in current anthologies on Native literature as well as in literary journals and periodicals. Editors of such anthologies include Thomas King (*All Our Relations*); Jeanne Perreault and Sylvia Vance (*Writing The Circle*); Heather Hodgson (*Seventh Generation*); Penny Petrone (*Canadian Native Literature*); W.H. New (*Native Writers and Canadian Literature*); Agnes Grant (*Our Bit of Truth*). Daniel David Moses and Terry Goldie (*An Anthology of Canadian Native Literature in English*); Connie Fife (*Colour of Resistance*) and Joel T. Maki (*Steal My Rage*). Interestingly, with the exception of the last three entries, all these anthologies were published in the year 1990.

Also in the 1990s published books of poetry include: Beth Cuthand (*Voices in the Waterfall*); Marie (Anaharte) Baker (*Being on the Moon*; *Coyote Columbus Cafe*); Duncan Mercredi (*Spirit of the Wolf*; *Dreams of the Wolf*, *Wolf and Shadows*); Marilyn Dumont (*A Really Good Brown Girl*); and Louise Halfe (*Bear Bones and Feathers*, *Blue Marrow*). Well-known magazines such as *Border Crossings, Descant, Prairie Fire* and *Contemporary Verse 2* occasionally carry Native poetry. Short stories are also to be found in both old and new anthologies. Entertaining short story writers include humorist Drew Taylor, Emma Lee Warrior and veteran writer and ethnologist Basil Johnston.[17] And of course, plays by Thomson Highway

---

[17] Read for example, Taylor's "Pretty Like a White Boy," and Emma Lee Warrior's "Compatriots" in Moses and Goldie, and Basil Johnston's collection of satirical stories in *Moose Meat and Wildrice*.

(*The Rez Sisters*, *Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing*) have received international recognition. And I suspect his recently published first novel *Queen of the Fur Trade* will also receive considerable attention. Other playwrights include Drew Hayden Taylor, Margo Kane, Fred Favel, Daniel David Moses, Ian Ross and Monique Mojica.

Finally, the welcome arrival of Native literary criticism is to be found in the publication *Looking at the Words of Our People: First Nations Analysis of Literature*, edited by Jeannette Armstrong. This is a Native Canadian published collection of critical essays attempting to situate Native North American writing in American and Canadian intellectual life, though, many of the essays focus on American material. However, essays by Janice Acoose, Kateri Damm, and Gerry William treat Canadian writers such as Maria Campbell, Howard Adams, Beatrice Culleton, and Thomas King. This important collection adds to the handful of works (usually in the form of reviews, introductions, prefaces and some essays) representing Native literary criticism in Canada. Of course, Native peoples have been producing other kinds of critical works; for example, while I refer to many Native scholars throughout, I have not here listed Native scholarly publications.[18]

There are resistance themes common to all these works, irrespective of genre, gender, era or even chronology. They engage fairly overt post-colonial themes that include the re-establishing of Native cultures (Highway, Johnston, Keeshig-Tobias, Moses, Shilling) and the challenging of historical and cultural records (Adams, Doxtator, Green, LaRocque, McMaster). The texts also expose destructive government polices and social injustices (Cardinal, Kirkness, Manuel, Willis). Many recount cultural fragmentation in the form of community and personal crises (Armstrong, Campbell, Culleton, Halfe, Kenny, Maracle, Mercredi, Redbird, Slipperjack, Wagamese). Others analyse colonial records (Acoose, Adams, Armstrong, Dickason, LaRocque, Sioui, Waubageeshig), and some focus on the struggle for revitalization and self-determination (Alfred, Cardinal, Manuel). I am somewhat arbitrary in the way that I link specific writers to specific 'postcolonial themes' because, reflecting the Aboriginal weltanschauung of interconnectedness among parts, these writers tend to address the experience of colonization in a holistic way. However, we all do emphasize some themes more than others, just as we all do choose different forms or genres of expression. And experiences and personalities unique to each of us are reflected in our emphases and styles.

---

[18] Nor have I listed legends, children's stories, ethnographies, arts and crafts or 'how-to' sorts of material. I have previously considered such 'soft-sell' literature, but they are also forms of resistance because they represent contemporary efforts to re-establish the validity of Native values, beliefs and expressions.

Voice as Resistance Scholarship

The forces of colonization have been far-reaching and many issues remain to be addressed, not the least of which is how colonization affects scholars and scholarship, not only in the pursuit of research and theory but also in the classrooms. As a long-standing scholar and professor (in role, not in rank) in Native Studies, I bring to this examination my reflections and experiences about what confronts those of us who are not only Native (and women) but are *also* intellectuals and researchers working within the confines of ideologically-rooted, western-based canons.[19] This is a struggle not peculiar to Aboriginal scholars; it is shared by other academics, perhaps more so by non-white ones. And perhaps even more so by 'women of colour.' While reading Arun Mukherjee's *Oppositional Aesthetics,* I was struck by the similarities of our experiences, particularly the struggle to stand intellectually free in the face of current western scholarship's continuing practice of universalizing western experience and epistemology. This struggle becomes personal when confronted with livelihood and ranking in universities. Mukherjee explains:

> If it was simply an intellectual struggle where I spoke out my disagreements with other scholars in a dialogical mode, it would have been fun. However, it has not been fun because the literary institution does not provide equal access to all points of view. If one does not write in sanctioned ways, one does not get published in the right places. And if one does not get published in the right places...one does not get a tenure-stream job. I had to wait until forty-four years of age to get that coveted job since I did not meet the above-mentioned criteria. (xiii)

To write and research in sanctioned ways often involves the invocation of theory. In the context of post-colonial theory, especially as it is applied in literary criticism, Barbara Christian questions what she calls "the race for theory" in an article of the same title. Christian notes that "there has been a takeover in the literary world by Western philosophers" such that "they have re-invented the meaning of theory..." (457). She believes that this has served to silence and to intimidate "peoples of color" whether they are creative writers or academics.[20] She argues that this represents a new version of western hegemony: "I see the language it creates as one which mystifies rather than clarifies our condition, making it possible for a few people who know that particular language to control the critical scene" (459). She adds that this took place "interestingly enough, just when the literature of peoples of color...began to move to 'the centre'." And like Mukherjee, Christian argues this is political. "It is difficult to ignore this takeover" she explains "since theory has become a commodity which helps determine whether we are hired or promoted in academic institutions--worse whether we are heard at all..." (459).

---

[19] Parts of this discussion have been presented in my "Preface" and in my article "The Colonization of a Native Woman Scholar."

Native scholars share these concerns and, as I have written elsewhere, "We are in extraordinary circumstances: not only do we study and teach colonial history, we also walk in its shadow on a daily basis ourselves" ("Colonization of a Native Woman Scholar" 12). This is not even to mention the politics in our classrooms when students do not or will not understand the political nature of western epistemology. Mukherjee made important discoveries concerning the students' use of ideology in their inability, if not refusal, to place literary characters within "the colonial situation." Instead, students focussed on "human" emotions and generalized them as universal. This, explains Mukherjee, "enabled my students to efface the differences" between "colonizing whites and colonized blacks," between the rich and the poor, and between black and black (30-38).

---

[20] I do note that she does not include Native peoples of the Americas in her listing of "peoples of color".

Both Mukherjee and Christian comment on the lack of systemic support about these issues, for example, in the choice of texts and vocabulary in the curriculum which has the effect of neutralizing the expression of material or epistemology which has 'subversive' potential. One may ask here whether exclusion of non-western material necessarily reflects western hegemony. Might one's choice be entirely a matter of personal preference? 'Is everything racist?' one might protest. Of course not. But when such exclusion is broadly consistent over time, we must raise the possibility that what is assumed to be 'personal taste' is really an expression of what is in fact the dominant *normative.* For Aboriginal students and scholars, the pressures of the dominant normative have meant adhering to conventions which have defied our cultural integrities. Western epistemology is especially impositional around ideas of 'objectivity.' Dictates of western intellectual standards form concepts of objectivity in which "objectivity" is simply assumed by utilizing techniques of supposed absence:

> In our society discourse tries never to speak its own name. Its authority is based on absence. The absence is not just that of the various groups classified as 'other', although members of these groups are routinely denied power. It is also the lack of any overt acknowledgement of the specificity of the dominant culture, which is simply assumed to be the all-encompassing norm. This is the basis of its power. (Ferguson 11)

This 'technique of absence,' or what may be called the inaudible western voice, is nowhere more present than in the classically colonial, archival and academic descriptions and data about Natives' tools, physical features, beliefs (which are often degraded to 'rituals') or geography. There is as Duchemin explains an "appearance of impartiality" to these descriptions, and it is this appearance that has been mistaken for objectivity (63). Such appearances are in fact imperial and are not at all objective. Further, such airs of detachment are in direct contrast to my Cree socialization which encourages integration between the "self" and the "word." In my "Preface" to *Writing The Circle*, I began to re-examine my role as a Cree-Metis woman having to produce works under western terms. As a scholar, I am expected to remain aloof from my words; I am expected to not speak in my own voice because it is assumed "voice" must be full of "self" which in turn is assumed to be blindly subjective. Perhaps in the western world this may be so, but it is not necessarily so in other worlds. As Barbara Christian puts it: "For people of color have always theorized--but in forms quite different from the western form of abstract logic" (457).

Cree-Metis people engaged in abstract logic but not necessarily or totally in the same way or about the same things as western peoples. If this is so, it must make a difference in our theories and research. My primary socialization is rooted in the land-based peoples of oral literatures and kinship systems of the Plains Cree Metis. In that culture people certainly know the difference between *atowkehwin* (stories of legendary bent or sacred origin) and *achimoowin* (factual and objective accounts). Because Cree clearly differentiates *achimoowin* (fact) from *atowkehwin* (fiction), it allows the speaker to speak in one's own voice without assuming that voice is mired in what Kathleen Rockhill calls "chaos of subjectivity" (12). Further, one's own Native voice is never totally of one's self, in isolation from the community. At the same time, one's self is not a communal replica of representation.

The implication for me as a scholar is that when I use my voice (through references to community, family, experiences, perceptions, anecdotes or facts of biography for instructional purposes), I am not in any way abandoning scholarship. In fact, as a scholar, I am exposing bias--in this study--Western bias. I am, as Barbara Harlow writes, "imposing a review" of what is understood as "literature, literary studies and the historical record" (4).

Does it need saying that my exposition of bias is not restricted to Euro-Canadian bias? Native intellectuals are not immune to their own forms of bias but they are no more predisposed to it than are western intellectuals. Natives are often accused of bias yet such accusations are glaringly ironic given the inflammatory language and racism evident in White writing on Native peoples and cultures. More, there is overwhelming evidence that the argument for 'objectivity' is a self-serving tool of those accustomed to managing history. The Cree were known as *Nehiyawak*, The Exact Speaking People (although in some dialects it could refer to People of Four Directions). As a *Nehiyohsquoh* (Indigenous/Cree woman) I choose to use my 'exact-speaking' voice whether I am writing history or whether I am writing poetry. I may not always speak in my own voice, but when I do, I experience no necessary imposition of my "self" onto my "footnotes." We live with many anomalies for western-based scholars have traditionally strengthened their power by claiming their information as objective while stigmatizing Native-based data as subjective or partisan.[21]

---

[21] Toni Morrison in *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination*, has also noticed the same modus operandi at work with respect to White treatment of

Nonetheless, scholars and writers from non-western traditions (and many feminists from many traditions) are refusing to remain alienated from their 'selves.'[22] Likewise, by refusing to remain distant from my words and works, I am not only attempting to remain true to my heritage, I am also seeking 'cultural agency.' Peter Hitchcock's exploration of dialogics in which "both subject and object are decentered" is helpful here:

> Rather than assume subaltern subjectivity as forever the concern of what has been derisively called 'victim studies' a dialogic approach emphasizes the cultural agency of the oppressed and also shows what political implications this might have for literary analysis in general and cultural studies in particular...the underlying concern is to develop a critique of the epistemological bases of the academy that marginalize or ghettoize those cultures that would call its authority into question. (xi)

Clearly, the tension that comes out of the colonial relationship has not escaped the academic community, and much work needs to be done to address western hegemony in Canadian scholarship. And I, as a Native woman, am compelled to pursue and express my scholarship by maintaining orality in writing,[23] taking an interdisciplinary and/or multi-disciplinary

---

Black, or Afro American, material.

[22] Jeanne Perreault in *Writing Selves: Contemporary Feminist Autography* writes that feminist writers and theorists "of all races, sexualities and classes" (1) have been "grappling with modes of expression that evade the familiar narrative of life events" (3), and out this "a new kind of subjectivity is evolving" (4). In the process of writing "self-in-the-making" concepts such as subjectivity, agency and self are being reframed.

[23] For an insightful commentary on the Aboriginal writers' use of orality in their written works, see Eigenbrod, "The Oral in the Written: A Literature Between Two Cultures" 89-102. The question, though, is this: does the use of 'orality' in writing reflect

approach to genre, calling for ethical re/considerations (not to be confused as 'censorship') in the archiving of hate material,[24] and openly (rather than covertly through the technique of inaudibility) referring to voice within academic studies.[25] I do appreciate academic skills, at the same time I must respect my Plains Cree Metis way of approaching knowledge. My use of voice is a textual resistance technique in that it concerns discourse and presentation, not simply personal or familial matters. It is, in part, corrective scholarship. Native scholars and writers are demonstrating that voice can be, must be, used within academic studies, not only as an expression of cultural agency, but as a form of counteracting the dehumanization entrenched in Canadian historiography and literature. The political nature of the colonizer's language(s), western history and other hegemonic practices have inspired what should most appropriately be understood as *Native resistance scholarship and writing.* We are creating a space and place to be able to enter into the particular discourse of western thought without having to compromise our personal and cultural selves. *How* we express scholarship remains a tug of war but it is an issue about which Native scholars are in the process of responding.

Palestinian writer and critic Ghassan Kanafani challenged western

---

an in-between-ness, or is it more a reflection of an on-going-ness, that is, recreating and reinventing a language and literature from Aboriginal poetics?

[24] I raise the issue of publishing historical material which contains racist tenets, terminology and classifications in "On the Ethics of Publishing Historical Documents" 199-204.

[25] Readers will find a similar declaration in my article "The Colonization of a Native Woman Scholar" 13.

scholarship by arguing that research of the subjugated was finally legitimized only by the researcher's engagement in the language and resistance of the subjugated. In an essay quoted by Harlow, Kanafani asserted that "...no research of this kind can be complete unless the researcher is located within the resistance movement itself inside the occupied land, taking his testimony from the place in which it is born...the lips of the people." Kanafani, as Harlow explains "not only disclaims any pretense to 'academic objectivity' or 'scientific dispassion,' he rejects too the very relevance in a study of resistance literature of such critical stances or poses" (3).

A scholar interested in contemporary Palestine, Edward W. Said has written extensively on the relationship of power to knowledge. In *Orientalism* he locates his interest as, in part, personal. As one with Palestinian roots, and therefore, subject to western cultural domination through the "Occident"'s representation of the "Orient," Said points out that while the West's requirement for knowledge be nonpolitical, that is, "scholarly, academic, impartial, above partisan or small-minded doctrinal belief," it is an "ambition in theory." In practice it is "much more problematic" because no one "has ever devised a method for detaching the scholar from the circumstances of life, from the fact of his [sic] involvement (conscious or unconscious) with a class, a set of beliefs, a social position, or from the mere activity of being a member of a society" (9). That "there is such a thing as knowledge that is less, than more partial...than the individual who produces it," does not mean this knowledge is "therefore automatically nonpolitical." Said challenges the "general liberal consensus that 'true' knowledge is fundamentally nonpolitical (and conversely that overtly political knowledge is not 'true' knowledge)." In fact, argues Said, this view "obscures the highly if obscurely organized political circumstances obtaining when knowledge is produced." Said continues, "No one is helped in understanding this today when the adjective 'political' is used as a label to discredit any work for daring to violate the protocol of pretended surprapolitical objectivity" (10). Said's observations and analysis is certainly applicable to the Canadian academic community and its treatment of Aboriginal history, text and scholarship.

In this work I will avoid as much as possible obscure language which has become such an uncontrollable part of post-colonial criticism. I do use words like ideology and discourse, but from an interdisciplinary rather than any post-structuralist or philosophical basis.[26] Indeed, much of the current post-colonial discourse reminds me of a giant runaway rumball, picking up an inchoate tangle of philosophical bits and bytes as it avalanches its way to--where? Who can cogently tr/eat this thing? The mystification of the English language provides no necessary proof of comprehending the experience of colonization or support in the task of re-evaluating colonial writing. I want my scholarship to be useful to my audience which must include those who inspire my research and writing, the subjugated Native peoples of Canada. I am thinking especially of future generations of Native students who will need intellectual traditions meaningful to their histories and perspectives. My long life in the university would certainly have been made more intellectually satisfying had I had a contemporary Native intellectual basis from which to develop my thinking, teaching and research. Writing, as Mukherjee reminds us, "is not just a matter of putting one's thoughts on paper. Writing is also about social power. How I write depends a lot on who I write for" (xiii).

---

[26] There is, of course, extensive literature and theory on ideology and discourse. However, neither post-colonialists nor post-structuralists own such words. These words--and concepts--are understandable and useful to scholars in a wide variety of disciplines. I have "examined" the 16 shades of meaning for the word 'ideology' in Terry Eagleton's *Ideology: An Introduction.* I also find useful *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies* by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, for words like 'discourse' when used within the post-colonial discourse.

This is a point that may have escaped Penny Petrone in 1983 when she, in my opinion, misjudged Native social protest writing as "some of it written by militant patriots and couched in strident, sloganistic language" (*The Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature* 383-388). In a later chapter I give some attention to Petrone's reading of Native literature; here Petrone's entry sounds more like White backlash than an objective study of resistance literature. For my part, I am no militant patriot and I will not couch my language.

The matter of 'language' however, does raise some key issues: does resistance scholarship have what may be called an extraordinary mandate to use tones and styles beyond or outside of what is circumscribed by western scholars as "scholarly"? And if so, what are the implications for research methodology, theory, dissertations or even for marking? Recently, in a class of Native adults, a number of students assuming the role of "elders" challenged me concerning the basis of knowledge, and by implication, grading. As one Native gentleman put it: "My truth will cost me my marks." (I should add he received a B). Another one suggested that Aboriginal students from the north should be given oral exams, not written ones. These students are carrying to logical extents the issues raised in this discussion on legitimation of knowledge.[27] These are issues which often receive theoretical acknowledgement in post-colonial ruminations but are not followed through with any real changes in academia. How do we really deal with the western canons which have a direct bearing on non-white scholarship which draws on non-western sources and methods of knowledge?

Resistance is in me and in the literature I will present. However, I am immersed both in the practices of the colonizer and in the voices of the colonized. I find it useful to make a distinction between scholarship as a disciplined way of approaching knowledge which requires training in certain academic skills and language, and scholarship (purportedly) which advances a particular ideology. The question is whether we can separate skill or craft from ideology. In order for me to practice liberation, I must create an intellectual practice which claims my own humanity and style, one which builds scholarship based on this humanity. I consider it good scholarship, not a contradiction as some might suggest, to question even the very tenets of western epistemology. And I certainly must call into question those features of western scholarship which would undermine Aboriginal epistemology and experience. In other words, my work consists of engaged research which draws on what may be called 'embodied discourse.'[28]

---

[27] In participatory action research and environmental studies there is a lively discussion on the principles of western (ie 'science') and Aboriginal (ie 'traditional') epistemologies (Colorado, Ridington). If the discussion can keep away from typologies (Berkes), it is an area rich with interdisciplinary possibilities relevant to historiography and literary criticism because it raises important questions on the legitimation of knowledge.

[28] I owe some of these neat phrases here to Dr. Keith Louise Fulton, phrases caught during our discussions on this project.

Moreover, as part of claiming my own distinctiveness and exercising my ideals of scholarship, I will not serve merely as a conduit of other voices, Native or otherwise. I am observing that as various Native communities are flexing their political or cultural muscles, Native scholars may find themselves in difficult positions. We are no different from any other human community in that we hold dearly some beliefs and assumptions, which if challenged, even with all the best data and argumentation, may evoke responses which could affect our research. For example, studies of violence, traditions, women, spirituality or even images of "indians" are fraught with potential politics. The Native community is as vulnerable as the White community in its internalization and perpetuation of stereotypes.

Even though generalizations about a uniform Native identity remain, we are a complex peoples representing many differences. Of course, in important ways, we have many things in common which come from our colonial experience as well as shared cultural attributes. But we are also very different from each other, not only as individuals and cultural human beings but also in our circumstances and perspectives. It is important to name our differences as it is to articulate the national experience of invasion(s) in our lives. We have all experienced colonization, which is to say "invasion," but we have not all experienced it in the same way or to the same degree. As an individual, I cannot entertain racist, sexist or ideological injunctions that I must be a carbon copy of other colonized persons and colleagues.

It is imperative that we treat with respect other people's works upon which we build our 'dialogics,' not to mention, our degrees; it is also important to maintain our right(s) to disagree. Writers owe much to each other, and I acknowledge my debt to all these writers I use, but I must also retain my right to debate and to question. My goal is not to settle for politically-correct or kitsche notions, as I have been pressured to do by both White and Native camps; my objective is to offer valuable criticism and my own thinking. Edward Said in *The World, The Text and the Critic* has written: "criticism must think of itself as life-enhancing and constitutively opposed to every form of tyranny, domination and abuse; its social goals are noncoercive knowledge produced in the interests of human freedom" (29). The important thing is that we all have the right to speak, the right to be represented fairly, as well as the obligation to represent fairly, and the right to express ourselves true to our lives, experiences and research. As resistance Abenaki filmmaker, poet, singer Alanis Obomsawin has explained in an interview in *Cinema Canada*:

> The basic purpose is for our people to have a voice. To be heard is the important thing, no matter what it is that we are talking about...and that we have a lot to offer society. But we also have to look at the bad stuff, and what has happened to us, and why.... We cannot do this without going through the past...because we are carrying a pain that is 400 years old. We don't carry just our everyday pain. We're carrying the pain of our fathers, our mothers, our grandfathers, our grandmothers... it's part of this land. (13)

I too carry "the 400 [500] year pain," a "pain" that is part of this land; I too carry the pain of my mother, my father, my sister, my brothers, my nieces and nephews, my grandfathers and mothers, my aunts and uncles. And I carry my own pain. Here I offer vignettes of life experiences relevant to the profound sense of alienation I have experienced in the world of education, an experience which has propelled me to pursue scholarship, particularly, the story of dehumanization, so passionately. I must emphasize that to me, it is not enough to simply tell the story, it is equally important that we name, locate and situate the 'story.'

Neegan (First) Narrative

"Get em Daniel Boone, get em." My eyes were wide open, my hands clutching the sides of my desk. I waited breathlessly as America's mythic frontiersman Daniel Boone, with an ironcast frying pan in hand, stood ready to spring upon a hideously painted Indian stealthily crawling into his boathouse. Then "BOINNG"--and our grade four (mostly Metis) classroom burst into gleeful applause--the gallant frontiersman had "got em."

Of course, it was not my first and certainly not my last exposure to such imagery. My relatives and I were well acquainted with the scene of the tomahawk-swinging savage who took shrieking delight rushing upon wagon trains and defenseless white women and children.

Niso (Second) Narrative

When my brothers and I were in elementary school we were required to draw Columbus' ship. I drew a large, detailed picture of a multi-storied clipper, its tall white sails fluttering against a cerulean blue sky, the sky touching the deep blue sea. It must have been then that I had to memorize the famous ditty: 'in 1492/Columbus sailed the ocean/deep and blue.'

I was a northern Canadian Cree Metis child with a political and cultural heritage that was in contradistinction to the Columbus narrative. At the time I of course had no knowledge of the ramifications behind Columbus' ship, but I was left with the distinct impression that he was some god-like white hero who had done the universe an inestimable, not to mention irreversible, favour by 'discovering' the 'New World.'

Neesto (Third) Narrative

In Goshen College (Indiana) the showing of the BBC film series "Civilisation," written and narrated by Kenneth Clark, was a campus-wide mandatory event. Clark begins by arguing that Roman-Graeco cultural accomplishments defined civilization against the powerful but impermanent achievements of African masks or wandering Viking ships. What has stayed with me about this series is how Clark compared a surviving "pitifully crude" stone baptistry to a wigwam by saying: "But at least this miserable construction is built to last. It isn't just a wigwam".

I could not speak.

Nehwi (Fourth) Narrative

In the summer of 1976, and prior to enrolling in Canadian history at the University of Manitoba, I had an occasion to 'visit' the Martyr's Shrine in Middletown, Ontario. From the outside The Martyr's Shrine looked like any eastern Roman Catholic cathedral--stone-built, large and reminiscent of edifices shown in Kenneth Clark's "Civilisation" television series. On the inside, it looked like a large version of the Catholic churches my parents and teachers had made my siblings and me attend--dark, echoing and full of flickering candles. I really had no idea what 'the martyr's shrine' represented until my eyes adjusted to the darkness--there at the very front of the pews were looming life-sized, wax museum figures. I slowly realized what they were: kneeling priests angelically looking up, hands folded, praying for mercy as open-mouthed, hideously-painted, evil-eyed savages tower over them, about to bury hatchets in their skulls!

Post-cards and pamphlets were handed out to frame-lock the view, perhaps in case one exposed to the light of day what the eyes could not see. Inside myself I resolved to know the truth behind such soul-numbing presentations. I walked out of that structure with fire in my head. Consciousness was seeping in. Liberation resistance scholarship was in the making.

Re-Discovering the Narrative

Of course, Columbus or the Jesuits were but the beginning of an endless string of White heroes that filled the pages of my comics and my school textbooks. The Explorers, the Conquistadores, the Missionaries, the Fur Traders, the Pilgrims and Puritans, the Daniel Boones, the American Cavalry and the Cowboys, Canadian Confederation--they were all presented as "great" and their greatness still is directly related to the degree to which they killed, dehumanized or de-Indianized Indians.

Hollywood put in motion the glorification of the Whiteman. While Whites could experience a vicarious greatness watching Cowboys beat the Indians (no matter how ferocious and 'cunning'), Native audiences crouched onto their seats grateful for the theatre's darkness.[29] Similarly, in so many of Canada's signal places, Native peoples have had to cringe within themselves having to cope with the re/settler's heroic point of view. I have noted that at every important juncture and place in my life or in my family or community's life, our worlds have been either deleted, belittled, or de-contextualized by an assortment of White North America's propaganda machines.

As can be surmised from my narratives, my student life has been filled with considerable distress.[30] Before I was in any position to appreciate the history and sociology of racism, I experienced a sense of shame and alienation from 'foreigner' teachers, textbooks, comics and movies that portrayed Indians as savages. Later, as I pursued "higher" education, I soon discovered that many university professors and most textbooks presented Native peoples in as distorted and insulting ways as the elementary texts had done. The racist theme of Western civilization/Indian savagery was ever present. Some professors were less subtle than others.

This belief in civilization/savagery, which is to say the notion of cultural hierarchy is, of course, ethnocentric in its basis because "civilization" and its antithesis "savagery" was (and is) invariably defined and measured by European standards. It should be needless to point out that such an unscientific belief was and is racist because it sets up Whites as superior and non-Whites as inferior. Yet such evolutionism continues to form the basis of much western intellectual tradition. In disciplines of anthropology, history, psychology, sociology, religion, and even in Marxist thought, theories on human development are still largely premised on patriarchal, Euro-centric and evolutionary notions about so-called "primitive" peoples.

---

[29] Fanon in *The Wretched of the Earth* refers to "The Native town is a crouching village" but in quite a different context, namely, he was speaking of the settler's views of the Native habitat as a place filled with "ill repute" (39).

[30] Some of these experiences of racism in the educational system are included in my autobiographical essay "Tides, Towns and Trains" 74-91.

I have not been impressed. I have experienced Canada's archives, libraries, cathedrals, martyrs shrines, museums, movies, forts and university hallways--all places which reflect Eurocentrism--as places of exile.

> I've walked these hallways
> for a long time now
> hallways without windows
> no way to feel the wind
> no way to touch the earth
> no way to see....
> I do my footnotes so well
> nobody knows where I come from
> hallways without sun
> the ologists can't see....
> they put Ama's moosebones
> behind glass
> they tell savage stories
> in anthropology Cree
>
> My fellow inmates
> they paste us prehistoric
> standing in front of us
> as if I am not there too
> as if I wouldn't know....
> they take my Cree for their PhD's
> like LeBank
> as my Bapa would say
> they take our money for their pay.... (*Ariel* 122-126)

Re-framing the Narrative

My liberation has come from re-discovering the Columbus narrative for what it is: a self-serving white cultural myth which has been effectively transmitted from generation to generation and institutionalized by White North America's powerful teachings. The other aspect of my liberation has come from the 'knowing' that Native peoples were not as they were imagined.

I have always 'known' within myself that there was absolutely no connection between the faceless images and the consummate humanity of my parents, brothers and sister, my nokom (grandmother), my aunts and uncles, my nieces and nephews. It is this unsung humanity as much as the vilification of Native peoples that has compelled me to this place of research. It is important that we understand the workings of colonial machinations behind the fantastic hero-ification of the Whiteman, especially as it has been legitimized in western scholarship. It is imperative that our understanding is taken from the words of those who have suffered from this proselytizing, the Native peoples of Canada. In *There Is My People Sleeping*, the late Sarain Stump speaks movingly to the significance of understanding:

> I was mixing stars and sand
> In front of him
> But he couldn't understand
> I was keeping the lightening of
> The thunder in my purse
> Just in front of him
> But he couldn't understand
> And I had been killed a thousand times
> Right at his feet
> But he hadn't understood.

Before "he" can "understand," we must situate Native response in the context of colonization; in particular, room must necessarily be given to the exposition of what Parker Duchemin calls "textual strategies of domination" in Euro-Canadian writing.

CHAPTER TWO

PART I: DEHUMANIZATION IN TEXT

dehumanize: "to divest of human qualities or personality"
dehumanization: "the act or process or an instance of dehumanizing"

Colonization has required rationalization which in turn has produced an overwhelming body of dehumanizing literature about Native peoples. Colonial writing, Joyce Green argues, has been "legitimised not only through racist construction but through creation of language celebrating colonial identities while constructing the colonised as the antithesis of human decency and development..." (Diss 25-26). Colonizers require a system of thought and representation to mask their oppressive behaviour. In other words, they require an ideology to legitimate and to entrench the unequal power relations set up by the whole process of colonization. Memmi characterizes the colonizer as a "usurper" who "needs to absolve himself" about his "victory." He therefore, " endeavours to falsify history...anything to succeed in transforming his usurpation into legitimacy" (52). This can be done, Memmi continues, by "demonstrating the usurper's eminent merits, so eminent that they deserve such compensation. Another is to harp on the usurped's demerits, so deep that they cannot help leading to misfortune" (52-53).

White North American writers have supported their 'eminent merits' by constructing "evidence" of Natives' demerits. In Canadian scholarly and popular writing there are a number of such constructions which centrally dehumanize the subjugated 'native.' This dehumanization has been effectively advanced through what I have come to call the 'civ/sav dichotomy,'[1] which provides the framework for 'interpreting' White and Native encounters. The framework is really an ideological container for the systematic construction of self-confirming "evidence" that Natives were savages who "inevitably" had to yield to the superior powers of civilization as carried foreword by Euro-Canadian civilizers. Since the civ/sav paradigm undergirds, encases and permeates colonizer texts, it obviously requires much greater in(tro)spection than it has received thus far in Canadian writing. In this chapter I pay particular attention to lexical strategies of belittlement which especially serve to degrade and infantilize Native peoples.[2] These are textual techniques often veiled by a set of scientific-sounding classificatory words and images which can be found in much of imperialist writing; here, I examine selected Canadian archival sources with some focus on western nineteenth century, and to a lesser extent, Canadian historical and literary writing.

I am also interested in the powerful device of demonization (next of kin to animalization). This too can be found in much of White literature (perhaps more in fiction) which juxtaposes Whites as agents of civilization in moral combat against sub-human, demonic shrieking savages. Perhaps demonization is the ultimate expression of dehumanization, the ultimate textual "technique of mastery," to borrow Duchemin's phrase (55). I point to several works from John Richardson and Ralph Connor because they represent some of the clearest examples of the colonial practice of demonology to produce Othering, another web to the colonizer's ideology. Richardson and Connor were also, each in their respective eras, widely read, and continue to influence the Canadian literary community as well as discourse between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. Their representation, though, was not atypical.[3]

---

[1] My discussion of the civ/sav dichotomy first published in "The Metis in English Canadian Literature" 85-94.

[2] For an insightful psycho-analytical study of the White American habit of addressing Native peoples as children, see Michael Paul Rogin, *Fathers and Children*. For a Native Canadian perspective see Harold Cardinal, *The Unjust Society*.

I focus on exposing what is in effect, textual warfare, and while I obviously must draw on the "enemy's language," namely, the relevant archival, historical and literary works such as exploration, fur trade and missionary journals, (John West, John Mclean, John McDougal, Alexander Ross, Alexander Begg), the emphasis is on the textual constructions, not on the authors, eras or genres per se. I especially inspect the key 'traits' or devices of the 'civ/sav dichotomy'; then I make some critical observation concerning its function and its social and intellectual influences in our culture(s). Of course, care is taken to place specific data in its proper contexts as appropriate or relevant, but it is not my goal to rewrite Canadian history or even to offer literary criticism as such; the objective is to expose constructions instrumental to racism. Also, since providing "context" to racist material can have the effect of legitimizing it, I would want to do it with extreme care when dealing with inflammatory material.

What is being suggested here is nothing less than the deconstruction of the very basis of imperialist writing concerning White and Native relations. The metaphor of rebuilding a roof may be helpful. Re-building a roof entails first deconstructing it, which is to say, taking it apart shingle by shingle. Then, it means reconstructing it. But my research has found that the very frame which holds the shingles is so rotten that it too needs to be thrown away, and a whole new frame needs to be built before any new shingles can be nailed in. Simply repairing the roof would be poor carpentry. This dissertation calls for the dismantling of the very frame which houses the roof. In fact, the emphasis is more on this frame than it is on the details of the shingles.

---

[3] Most, if not all, early British Canadian novelists depicted Indians as savages, noble or ignoble. See Norman J. Williamson, "The Indian in the Canadian Novel in English in the Period 1860-1918" and Leslie Monkman, *A Native Heritage: Images of the Indian in English Canadian Literature*.

The Frame: the 'Civ/sav Dichotomy'

Behind the Civilization-Savagery construct is the European's long-held partisan belief that humankind evolved from the primitive to the most advanced, from the savage to the civilized (Honour 55). With respect to the Americas there are great similarities between a widely circulated ethnological classification done in 1576 by Spanish Jesuit Jose de Acosta,[4] and an anthropological theory published in 1877 by American anthropologist Lewis Henry Morgan. Both placed Amerindians at the lowest level and Euro-Whites at the highest in their respective constructs. The main difference between them was that for Acosta, the Spanish were the highest of the high, and for Morgan, White Americans were.

The civ/sav view is succinctly stated by Morgan: "...savagery preceded barbarism in all the tribes of mankind, as barbarism is known to have preceded civilization. The history of the human race is one in source, one in experience, one in progress" (preface). Eventually, as Pearce in his revised study of *Civilization and Savagism*[5] shows, White Americans latched onto such notions to elevate their expansionist conquering practices into theories of progress: "American civilization would thus be conceived of as three-dimensional, progressing from past to present, from east to west, from lower to higher" (49). It was actually four-dimensional in that civilization was synonymous with white and savagism with the non-white "Indian." To be non-white was to be "lower," or savage, which as Pearce states "was at best an hypothesis which called for proof" (105).[6] But 'proof' meant using Euro-White notions by which to judge non-European peoples and cultures, making the civ/sav construct self-serving.

---

[4] Not insignificantly, Jose de Acosta's work was translated into Italian, French, English, Dutch and German.

Ethnohistorian Francis Jennings discredits this 'proof' in his 1976 publication *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest.* Although Jennings works within the context of seventeenth century Puritans and their version of the Holy Crusades against the "wilderness" and its "savage heathen," the added value of this outstanding work is its scope. It is a masterly analysis of Europe's colonizing "master myth" of civilization encountering savagism which was first applied by various warring groups in Europe then brought to the Americas for colonial purposes. Jennings traces variations of the civ/sav construct to "very ancient times" of the Greeks and Romans to Europe's pre- feudal history, and shows that at every point there was political conflict, the 'enemy' was always cast as the antithesis to human decency, or 'civilization.' At each and any convenient turn, attempts were made to prove "the factual difference between civilization and savagery" but, often, "the difference was political and no more," as in the case between 'Englishmen' and 'Irishmen' (7). Jennings points out that while there was no "substantial difference" between the English and the Irish except "tribal government on the one hand and a feudal state on the other," the rulers of England "set themselves up as carriers of civilization to a savage people" (8).

---

[5] This book was first published in 1953 as *The Savages of America: A Study of the Indian and the Idea of Civilization.* It was revised in 1965 as *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind.* Pearce found a broad base in American writing (political, missionary, literary, anthropological) for the concept of Indian savagism.

[6] Pearce might have added that civilization as a hypothesis called for proof too. I do find it interesting that while some scholars seem more than willing to question one part of the civ/sav equation, they do not question the other, namely, 'civilization.' A number of Native thinkers are challenging the Western assumption of what constitutes civilization.

Jennings explains how "powers bent on conquest" made "floundering attempts at explanation" to substantiate cultural differences between themselves (the 'civilized') and their opponents (deemed uncivilized). "Most frequently" he argues, "the difference has been one of religion. At other times it might have been nomadic instead of sedentary habitation or one mode of subsistence versus another: communities without agriculture--or those possessing horticulture but lacking animal husbandry--were barbarous or savage" (8). These arbitrary distinctions reflect "moral sanction" rather than "any given combination of social traits susceptible to objective definition." Jennings bluntly concludes: "It is a weapon of attack rather than a standard of measurement" (8).

However floundering or arbitrary, nineteenth-century social scientists did make efforts to define and measure civilization--or its converse, savagism.

The extremes of this led to a movement known as Scientific Racism; the most obvious expression being the measuring of cranial structures of different "races."[7] While craniology was relatively short-lived, the attempts to measure "uncivilized" or "primitive" "cultures" has remained, if not any longer in actual physical terms,[8] certainly in overall anthropological and other intellectual theories.

During the heydays of Scientific Racism, Lewis Henry Morgan, sometimes referred to as the "father"of American anthropology, studied the Iroquois in searching for "empirical criteria with which to distinguish one stage from the other." At times Morgan used metal technology as the final mark of distinction but finally he "fixed upon literacy" as the foundation of civilization. "The highest stage of human development" he wrote, "had begun with the phonetic alphabet" (9). Finally, Morgan turned to White hegemony as the ultimate proof of White superiority. He applied the social Darwinian 'survival of the fittest' theory to seal his argument that "The American aborigines are possessed of inferior mental endowment," whereas "The Aryan family represents the central stream of human progress, because it produced the highest type of mankind, and because it proved its intrinsic superiority by gradually assuming the control of the earth" (qtd in Jennings 9).

What exactly formed the basis of White superiority, or 'civilization,' was indeed a wide-ranging debate but the very essences of each stage or step was to be defined solely by White Judeo-Christian European cultural standards. As Jennings so definitively shows, constructs of civilization and its supposed antithesis are inherently biased for

---

[7] Berkhofer in *The Whiteman's Indian* treats scientific racism in its relation to the development of Indian imagery.

[8] Although, there remain genetic studies and genetic theories about Native people, especially around alcohol.

> *civilization* necessarily implies not only technical but moral superiority over the stages assumed to be lower on the evolutionary scale. Civilization is rarely conceived of in terms of empirical data, and although its phenomena might vary as widely as those of ancient Sparta and Victorian England, its essence is always its status on the top of the evolutionary ladder. (9)

While the term itself can have many meanings, Jennings takes pains to point out that "civilization" in its "mythical sense" is "omnipresent in American history and literature" and is treated as "an absolute quality that cannot be grammatically pluralized" (10). Here "a myth of social structure" was developed "in which civilization and savagery stood as reciprocals, each defined as the other was not, and both independent of any necessary correlation with empirical reality" (10).

Canadian historical writing and literature has been very much influenced not only by British advancements of imperialist "civilization" but also by White Americans. Equally, Canadian recorders have been informed by their own vested interests concerning Native lands and resources. Generally, in Canadian writing as in American publications, the civ/sav dichotomy was spelled out in terms of cultural 'traits' reflecting binary opposites, each civilized trait corresponding, inversely, with a savage one. In Canadian writing, civilization is consistently associated with settlement, private property, cultivation of land and intellect, industry, monotheism, literacy, coded law and order, Judeo-Christian morality and metal-based technology. Civilization stands for what is illuminated, progressive and decent, while savagery is its shadowy underside (and therefore destroyable). Such a 'civilization' is best outlined against Indian savagery in which Savagism is seen as a psycho social fixed condition, the antithesis of the highest human condition. Indians then by contrast, are delineated as wild, nomadic, warlike, uncultivating and uncultivated, aimless, superstitious, disorganized, illiterate, immoral and technologically primitive.

A number of nineteenth century writers on the Canadian west, many of them missionaries, provide astonishing examples of such bias. The missionaries here chosen were not obscure bigots in the fringes of society. They were well-known, well-read, well-travelled men who saw themselves as "agents of a superior civilization" (Francis 52). They played the role of "experts" on matters "native," and were often consulted by colonial officials if they themselves did not become the officials. Of course, they had differences of opinion about a host of things but their beliefs about European civilization confronting indigenous savagery were standardized. For example, the Anglican clergy in Red River society in the period 1818-1870, "struggled to recreate...a little Britain in the wilderness," preaching the virtues of civil law, settlement, cultivation, industry, puritanical morality and Christianity against "barbarism" (Pannekoek in Berger and Cook 75). In 1820 Anglican missionary John West arrived in Red River. He served mainly as chaplain to the Hudson's Bay Company. West reflected prevailing attitudes in his 1834 *Journal:*

> Savages talk of the animals that they have killed...but they form no arrangement, nor enter into calculation for futurity. They have no settled places of abode, or property, or acquired wants and appetites, like those which rouse men to activity in civilized life, and stimulate them to persevering industry....Their simple wants are few, and when satisfied they waste their time in listless indolence...and the scarcity of animals that now prevails...is a favourable circumstance towards leading them to the cultivation of the soil; which would expand their minds, and prove of vast advantage.... (116-117)

Writing in the late 1860s, John McDougall, son of a missionary to western Native peoples, and himself a missionary as well as husband to a Plains Cree woman, envisions in *Pathfinding on Plain and Prairie* that the "The wild nomadic heathen life" will "give way to permanent settlement, and the church and school will bring in the clearer light..." (80). Similarly, Methodist missionary John McLean, a highly educated man, even an apologist on Indian traditions, proposed "guiding" Indians "out of nomadic life into the stationary residence attending a life of agriculture" (263) in his *The Indians of Canada.* "Our motto must be" he declared, "Religion, Education, Self-Support--the Bible and the Plough" (274).

The persistent civ/sav theme was also recited by secular authors. Alexander Ross, fur trader, Sheriff of Assiniboia, and historian of the Red River settlement, anticipated that once the buffalo were extinct, the "wandering and savage life of the halfbreed, as well as the savage himself, must give place to....The husbandman and the plough, the sound of the grindstone, and the church-going bell" (267).

It must be noted that besides harping on the Indians' 'nomadic-ness', Ross variously slanders them as barbarous, savage, wild, vile, wretched, superstitious, degenerate children of nature.[9] Neither Ross's Native wife and children, nor the 'settled and industrious' Natives around his 'colony garden'[10] seems to have tempered his harsh judgement.

Nothing seems to have tempered Alexander Begg's racist judgement of Aboriginal peoples. Journalist, novelist and historian, Begg reviles 'Indians' as scalpers, thieves, liars, plunderers, abusers of the elderly, women and the sick. All this in a four-page passage of bile in Volume I of his *History of the Northwest* (1894). Begg's dehumanizing attitudes are perhaps best captured in his remark that "The wild Indian was in many respects, more savage than the animals around him" (217). Presumably, as Volume II of his *History* implies, the 'Indian's savagery was related to his [the Indian's] "wine of life" of buffalo hunting, and most especially to the "unsettled conditions of the Indians" (417). In the manner of early American writers and historians, Begg refers to the Saskatchewan country as "wild and uninhabited" (417), even though there may have been 60,000 Aboriginal peoples between the Rocky Mountains and Lake Superior, according to Doug Owram in *Promise of Eden*.[11] What is being implied by these writers is the expansionist vision of transforming the 'wilderness' and replacing it with White (particularly Anglo) 'civilization.' Such visions were, and are, of course "...by-products of the master myth of civilization locked in battle with savagery" (Jennings 146) and were elevated to social doctrine.

---

[9] Ross. See pages 205, 206, 79-80, 192, 199, 242, 302, 336, etc.

[10] See such descriptions of Native life in George Bryce, *John Black: The Apostle of the Red River*, e.g. 46.

[11] Owram begrudging allows for this figure: "Man was, in fact, a relatively small presence in this vast area and it is unlikely that there were more than sixty thousand people living between the Rocky Mountains and the head of Lake Superior at any time in the first half of the nineteenth century. Moreover, the great bulk of this population was ... nomadic..." (9). However, I do not consider Owram as the most reliable source on Indian populations, as most expansionists underestimate Aboriginal populations to support their civ/sav ideologies, a point Jennings makes convincingly.

The idea of an abstract Civilization 'inevitably' winning over Savagery neatly served the White North American 'usurper.' Everything the Whiteman did was legitimized by "civilization" and everything Indians did was "explained" by their supposed savagery. This is clearly the profile of Memmi's Nero complex, or the usurper. This was ideology at its brutal best. As Pearce has shown, Americans developed a doctrine of Savagery as a moral antithesis to Progress. In the United States it became a morality script in which the Cowboys finished what Columbus, the Conquistadores, or the Puritans began. Cowboys--and before them the Puritans, the frontiersmen and the cavalry-- moving west and killing "Indians" could then be equated with moral and human progress.

Whether Whites crushed the Natives (as in United States[12]) or dispossessed them largely through legal means (as in Canada[13]), they have justified their 'victory' by creating a myth that Indians were only a handful of vicious savages who "roamed rather than inhabited" the "virgin" land.[14] As Jennings describes so incisively:

---

[12] Violence against Native American peoples is graphically documented in Dee Brown, *Bury My Heart in Wounded Knee*. For more academic discussions on violence against Native Americans, see Satz, Prucha, Sheehan, and Rogin.

[13] See for example John L.Tobias, "Protection, Civilization, Assimilation: An Outline History of Canada's Indian Policy" 13-30. Also see Tobias "The Subjugation of the Plains Cree, 1879-1885" 519-548.

> The basic conquest myth postulates that America was virgin land, or wilderness, inhabited by nonpeople called savages; that these savages were creatures sometimes defined as demons, sometimes as beasts 'in the shape of men'; that their mode of existence and cast of mind were such as to make them incapable of civilization and therefore of full humanity; that civilization was required by divine sanction or the imperative of progress to conquer the wilderness and make it a garden; that the savage creatures of the wilderness, being unable to adapt to any environment other than the wild, stubbornly and viciously resisted God or fate, and thereby incurred their suicidal extermination; that civilization and its bearers were refined and ennobled in their context with the dark powers of the wilderness; and that it was all inevitable. (15)

The myth that Indians "roamed rather than inhabited" the North American country was pronounced at least as early as 1612 when Jesuit missionary Pierre Biard wrote of northern Aboriginal peoples: "Thus four thousand Indians at most roam through, rather than occupy, these vast stretches of inland territory..." (qtd in Jennings 80). Such a portrayal became a convenient ideology in the hands of colonizers such as the Puritan Samuel Purchas whose phrase "range rather than inhabit" validated killing Atlantic Native Americans throughout the seventeenth century, and was to be repeated by countless American white men whose interests ran counter to those of the indigenous peoples (qtd in Jennings 80).

---

[14] For American historiographic versions see Henry Nash Smith, *Virgin Land;* Roderick Nash, *Wilderness and the American Mind.* For a Canadian expansionist view and terminology see Doug Owram, *Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West 1856-1900.*

Similarly, John Quincy Adams' rhetorical question--"What is the right of a huntsman to the forest of a 1000 miles, over which he has accidentally ranged in quest of prey?"--is a classical note of self-exoneration in pursuit of "virgin land" (qtd in Rogin 6). So is Canadian writer Alexander Begg's reference to Native-populated Saskatchewan country as "wild and uninhabited," as is William Butler's depiction, albeit romantic, of the western landscape as the 'great lone land.' Similarly, subsequent White Canadian writers have referred to white expansionism as 'peopling' the west, a most telling expression.[15] These expressions, while clearly political in nature, have been elevated to theoretical absolutes in Canadian courts concerning concepts of property vis a vis Aboriginal rights.[16]

Re-settling expansionists have argued that agricultural (and as it became convenient, industrial) peoples represent a superior stage of development, such that by divine sanction and "natural law" have claimed the right to "dispossess hunters from their sovereignty over nature."[17] In other words, it was morally mandated to disinherit them. And the moral mandate was often rationalized by portraying hunters as disorganized and brutal "bands" aimlessly wandering over land. White Canadians interested in the West certainly promoted the image that Indians were uncultured primitives who lived solely as hunters and were therefore displaceable. Such views were often noted matter-of-factly. Alexander Ross, in support of Sir George Murray, quotes Murray to that effect: "The white people, by their habits of cultivation, are spreading everywhere over the country...and unless the Indians will conform themselves to those habits of life, and will bring up their children to occupy farms and cultivate the ground...they will be gradually swept away..." (Ross 322).

---

[15] Writers often take on the language of the subject they are studying. Owram in *Promise of Eden* often describes the land and Native peoples in such a way as to leave one wondering whether he is simply relaying expansionist attitudes or he himself is expressing them. The following is a typically unclear comment: "...the North West began to be described in terms more ... than to a vast *unpeopled* land" (74, my emphasis).

[16] The more recent extreme expression of this is to be found in the case of Delgamuukw v. The Queen. The Supreme Court of British Columbia's Chief Justice Allan McEachern ruled (1991) against the Gitskan and Wet'suwet'en peoples on the grounds "natives" lived, "nasty, brutish and short" lives (Thomas Hobbes), that is, too primitive to qualify for land rights! For an excellent discussion on this ruling based on eighteenth century bias, see, for example, Frank Cassidy, ed., *Aboriginal Title in British Columbia: Delgamuukw v. The Queen.*

[17] For an early treatment of this see Pearce 69-71.

Hunting, according to colonialist justifications, was essentially an expression of savagism.[18] As savages, "Indians" wandered and warred in the "wilderness." Nineteenth century Canadian writers reflected the biases of the 17th century Puritans who feared the "wilderness" full of dark, chaotic and evil forces which had to be conquered. These attitudes, explains Roderick Nash, were rooted in the Old World mythology and religions. The wilderness was "instinctively understood as something alien to man [*sic*]--an insecure and uncomfortable environment against which civilization had waged an unceasing struggle" (8). They set for themselves the task of 'civilizing' the land whose unknown parts symbolized the anarchic and the sinister: "Civilizing the new World meant enlightening darkness, ordering chaos and transforming evil into good. In the morality play of westward expansion, wilderness was the villain, and the pioneer, as hero, relished its destruction" (Nash 24). In the words of Owram, "wilderness, by definition, implied a region where the natural dominated the works of man, whether those works be put in technological, legal or spiritual terms....wilderness was irreconcilable with civilization" (73).

---

[18] Colonialists reserved for themselves the right to hunt whenever they needed to, whether to eat, make a profit or annihilate the buffalo as a military strategy against the Plains Peoples. In Europe, hunting had largely become a sport as practiced by the upper classes.

The 'Indians' were viewed as part of the foliage; in Nash's words, "savages were almost always associated with wilderness." They were the "terrifying creatures...sweeping out of the forest to strike, and then melting back into it" (28). To Owram, the Canadian "missionary's attitude to the wilderness determined his view of the Indian," and this view was the Indian "as a degraded savage who 'endured all the miseries and privations inseparable from a state of barbarism'" (24). The Euro-Americans--and later the Euro-Canadians--believed their destiny was to master the 'wilderness,' and this of course, meant mastering the 'Indian' as well.

And so it was for White Canadians moving west. Although they have worked out and are still working out their westward trek somewhat differently from the Americans, they certainly ascribed moral properties to the 'wilderness,' regarding it variously as a "heathen and moral desert," a "barren waste," and the "dreary land" that kept 'Indians in a "degraded state."[19] Missionaries conceded that all the earth, even the "howling wilds," was God's handiwork. Many could not help but marvel at "nature's grandeur and beauty." But as Owram repeats: "the fact that it was a heathen wilderness" demanded the light of the Gospel and European civilization (72). Of course, once the Euro-Canadians began to assume interest and rights over this area, the wilderness no longer "howled" but beckoned. For the expansionists "the charm of the wilderness lay mainly in its potential for development" (Owram 72).[20]

---

[19] Respectively: West 49; McLean 270; Young 12; McDougall 70.

Both the missionaries and the secularists were confident that the 'Indians' and their land would succumb to the "resistless tide of progress" (Begg 417). Some like McLean and Butler could express sadness for the Indian, but greater happiness in the anticipation that white civilization would impose itself upon the Canadian landscape.[21] Egerton Ryerson Young, a missionary in northern Manitoba in the 1870s, actually exulted over Canada's future prospects in the west:

> In fancy's ear I heard the lowing of cattle from the hillsides, the hum of industry from a 100 towns and villages, the merry shout of children returning from school, and in the distance the thundering tread of the iron horse as he sped swiftly across the plain. As I looked again the whole scene was transfigured. Everywhere quiet homesteads dotted the plains and nestled among the hills, the smoke of factories rose thickly on the air, a hundred village spires glittered in the rays of the setting sun, while golden fields...waved in the passing breeze; and I said in my heart: 'Lo, here is a dominion stretching from sea to sea.' (68-69)

The issue of transforming the savage into a civilage (my invention) was, of course, central to most discussions on 'Indians.' Although the distinctions were profiled as a binary trait per trait phenomenon, the reverse logic of using the process of elimination was not extended whenever Native peoples assumed 'civilized' characteristics. The question--how many civilized traits would a savage need to qualify as a civilage?--was not asked nor were the implications of asking it taken to their logical conclusions. Instead, a double-standard was developed in response to contradictions which inevitably came out of the civ/sav polarity.

---

[20] Owram makes distinctions between missionaries, romantics and expansionists in their attitudes towards "Indians." Such distinctions are of course scholarly, but it must be remembered that to Native peoples, especially in retrospect, all Whites were expansionists.

[21] See McLean 83, and Butler 243.

Double-Double Standard

James St. G. Walker, in a germinal essay "Indians in Canadian Historical Writing," notes that archival sources and historians judged Native people using a double standard. It is important to look at the uses of the double standard (and what I call the double double standard) because we see more clearly the extent to which Canadian writers have clung to their beliefs about themselves in contrast to Native peoples. An analysis of contradictory White treatment of "White vices" in relation to "Indian virtues" is useful in understanding how the double standard works.

For all the vilification of Indians expressed in archival sources there is also a great amount of praise, and even admiration and respect. And for all the emphasis on white civilization, there is a lot of concession concerning white "vices." The cumulative list of both Indian "virtues" and white "vices" is considerable, but the manipulation of such traits is what is revealing about the original writers. This was not anti-colonial writing.

A quick list of positive Indian characteristics as gleaned from these works includes: generosity, helpfulness, compassion, trustworthiness, honesty, intelligence, eloquence, humour, courage, loyalty, durability, industriousness, openness, communality, fairness, wisdom and spirituality, and even some allusion to non-violence. Also recognized, though at times begrudgingly, were technical skills demanding precision and keen judgement, such as navigation or marksmanship in hunting. Missionaries, beginning with the Jesuits, also had to contend with Native specialists possessing knowledge in medicine, human psychology and religion.

It is significant to note that Native 'virtues' were not offered in the context of romanticism which defined the Noble Savage. None of the nineteenth century Canadian writers believed in the Noble Savage. In fact, most were aware of the Noble Savage as an invention,[22] and Young, McLean, Butler and Ross explicitly claimed to present the "true Indian."

On the matter of white 'vices' there is also much evidence that a hefty number of white men were not paragons of 'civilized' human behaviour. They engaged in murder, pillaging, scalping, torturing, sexual assault, deceit, dishonesty, drunkenness, laziness and generally, 'lawless' behaviour. They exhibited cowardice, greed, ignorance, bigotry and irreverence. Many were fully or semi illiterate, and most wandered from place to place. In fact, they were so much like the very traits they purported to see and hate in 'Indians' that perhaps a psychological study of their projections would add to our historiographic inquiries. Given that these Canadian writers liberally recognized positive, if not civilized, qualities in Native peoples and cultures, and on the other hand, also acknowledged that the civilized showed signs of the 'savage,' the logical outcome here, one would think, would lead these writers to abandon the belief that Euro-Canadians were universally civilized and Indians savage. If traits were counted, it would be difficult to say who were the civilages or the savages. Was there nothing to be reconciled here? How could they hang on to their civ/sav theory?

---

[22] It must be noted that even though the Noble Savage was an invention, it does not mean that positive Native qualities were fabrications, as American fur trade historian Lewis Saum in *The Fur Trade and the Indian* implies.

It is precisely here that we see most clearly the blinding power of the Eurocentric civ/sav construct. As products of their Western culture these Canadian writers assumed their superiority. To them there were no contradictions to be reconciled. They did not seem to notice that to maintain their framework they had to do some scurrying from mental corner to mental corner. The construct within which they were encapsulated was a locked system of dogma. It was an ideology veiled as an objective and judicious moral understanding of human development. Although some of these writers, especially Nelson, McLean, McDougall and Butler, did notice Indian 'virtues' against white 'vices,' and they at times reflected conflicting attitudes and inconsistent judgements, and some like Butler perceived deep contradictions, they never waivered from their given framework. John McLean, for instance, perhaps one of the most liberal and enlightened missionaries of his time, chided his contemporaries for being "guilty of judging these people in light of our own customs, and not estimating them from their own standard" (83). But as a missionary he believed in the Morganian notions of progress, and that all peoples, given the Gospel and the plough and education, would ultimately progress to the "ideal race," "speaking a universal language and accepting a common faith."

There is absolutely no question that his 'ideal race' would look and live like his 'race,' the universal language would be English and the common faith, Christianity. He, like Nelson, Butler, McDougal, all men who found much to admire in Native peoples, entertained no doubts that the Whites had a superior intelligence and a "nobler system of morality and religion" (61, 115). The same is true of most other Euro-White writers cutting across the centuries, for example, the writers in *The Jesuit Relations*. In fact, to maintain the framework against evidence to the contrary, they resorted to ingenious mental constructs of exceptionalizing (in both directions). While the offending Whites were liberally criticized (and even called 'savages' or 'brutes'--in behaviour, not in evolution--by Butler and McLean), White savagery was never extended to all Euro-Canadians. However, Indian savagery was applied to all Indians. Native persons exhibiting 'civilized' and Christian behaviour or traits were seen as exceptions, usually "noble," and invader-re/settlers exhibiting 'savage' behaviour or traits were viewed as aberrants, usually as "ruffians."

This explains why even when Whites and Indians behaved the same, for example, in warfare, religion, or trade, positive values were assigned to Euro-Canadians and negative ones to Natives. It is quite common, for example, for fur trade historians to generalize Indians as having a "covetous disposition," quite obviously employing the double standard by over-looking European self-interests. And when it was conceded that Native people had displayed 'positive' behaviours, Natives were then classified as Noble savages in order to be able to maintain the civ/sav construct. When invader-re/settlers displayed 'negative' traits they became "wicked" or "ruffian," true, but they were still names operating within the civilized fold. Only occasionally could they become 'savage,' and usually only in fiction such as Richardson's Wacousta who becomes a White Savage. He is allowed to be a Savage in order to beat the Indians at their own game. But like Indian Savages, all White Savages must also die.[23] Such ingenious mental constructs I have come to call the double-double standard.

Such double-double standards were employed politically as well. For example, "roaming" "huntsmen" were not allowed the right to defend themselves. Nowhere is John McLean's cultural blindness more apparent than on the topic of warfare. In the same breath (or stroke of pen) that he itemizes White acts of savagery, such as scalping and torturing, he insists that "the superior intelligence of the white race should always be sufficient guarantee for the prohibition of cruel and savage rites" (61). Native resistance to White encroachment was always framed in terms of innate "blood-thirsty"-ness. In turn, Indian violence was blamed for the destruction of Indians (Jennings, Rogin). Yet, despite all the atrocities of war and human torture in the history of Europe, including horrific violence against Indigenous peoples, the Civilages believed their form of warfare was "a rational, honourable and often progressive activity while attributing to the latter (the Indians) the qualities of irrationality, ferocity and unredeemable retrogression. Savagery implies unchecked and perpetual violence" (Jennings 146). This can be the only explanation for the phrase "gone Indian" when Whites exhibited violence or "savagery." By blaming Indians for White violence, the civ/sav mentality could be maintained.

---

[23] See Roy Harvey Pearce's treatment (200-212) of James Fennimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*, in which the hero is a white frontiersman who must be as cunning a fighter and killer as the savages he must destroy. However, Cooper's white savage Hawkeye is more noble than Richardson's Wacousta.

Native peoples were, of course, neither "bloodthirsty" nor "insanely irrational." Nor was the land "virgin,"[24] neither in the United States nor in Canada. Nor were Aboriginal peoples "wild"or anarchic. But no matter. Reflecting the colonial interests, the myth proved indispensable. As I have argued in previous works, specific words and categories were (and are) chosen to indicate the ranking of Indians as less evolved, less developed and less ordered in their social and political lives. Nouns, pronouns or adjectives used (in both scholarly and popular writing) to describe Whites could not be used to describe Native peoples. For example, Native men are "bucks" or "warriors," women are "squaws."[25] All political leaders, no matter how diverse their roles and functions, remain "chiefs" or "headmen"; spiritual specialists are "conjurors," "shamans," even "sorcerers." There are "Indian villages," not hamlets or towns; Native peoples are "tribes" or "bands," not nations.[26]

Native educators have long noticed the contradictory, biased and dehumanizing treatment of "Indians" in history. Such treatment is consistent with war-time conditions in which "the enemy" is cast as an unhuman (inhumane) violent obstruction to everything that is good, right, just and progressive. In this war of words, Whites explore, Indians wander; Whites have battles or victories, Indians massacre and murder; Whites scout, Indians lurk; Whites go westward, Indians go bloodthirsty; Whites defend themselves, Indians 'reek revenge,' Whites appear as officials who simply assume authority, Indians are "haughty," "insolent," "saucy" or "impudent"; Whites have faiths, and so they pray; Indians have superstitions, and so they conjure; Whites may be peasant, Indians are primitive; Whites may be "wicked" or "ruffian," but Indians remain savage and barbaric in their "heathen" lands.

---

[24] This is not to mention, how perniciously sexist the term 'virgin' is!

[25] Even though "squaw" sounds like a mispronunciation of the Algonquian "squoh" (meaning woman), the white male usage of the term, as a rule, has had no resemblance to its origins. See Lutz' conversation with me on this in his *Contemporary Challenges*.

[26] Early colonial writers often referred to Native societies as 'nations' though it is not always clear what they meant by that. The Indian Act, old anthropology and Hollywood have been instrumental in demoting Native nations to "tribes" and "bands."

In effect, Indians could not win. Every aspect of their life and culture was censured. An example of the degree to which this could be carried is to be found in Alexander Mackenzie's writings as outlined by Parker Duchemin in his article "'A Parcel of Whelps': Alexander Mackenzie among the Indians." Since Alexander Mackenzie's journal has provided Canadian historians much grist for their mill, I take some time here to summarize Parker Duchemin's re-assessment of Mackenzie.

Duchemin challenges Exploration Literature's "heroic point of view" and lays bare Mackenzie's attempted "techniques of mastery" over the Indians. Employing various means including threat, force, bribery, the 'appearance of benevolence,' liquor or "the talismanic value of his scientific instruments" which "helped to create an impression of awe," Mackenzie sought to establish his authority over the Indians (54).[27] He was most successful in his journals.

> By writing about them, defining them and explaining them, he could assert to himself and to his readers that he, as a white man was ultimately in control, that his authority, or at the very least, his superiority, remained intact. Information about the Indians...was necessary for the development of the fur trade, and, in a broader sense, for the process of extending European hegemony into every part of the globe. (51)

Consistent with the dehumanization process inherent to the colonial purpose, Mackenzie showed no interest in the Indians as individual human beings with personalities of their own. Instead, Mackenzie turned to impersonal descriptions of their physical features and material culture. In these descriptions, Mackenzie adopted "...a deceptively impartial appearance, skilfully blending a selection of 'facts' and value judgements." Duchemin's brilliant analysis of Mackenzie's descriptions of the Sekani men and women merits an extensive quotation here.

> 'Low stature', 'meagre appearance,' 'small' eyes and a 'swarthy yellow' complexion are ugly and repulsive by the standards of Mackenzie's society. However, these images do not constitute a merely aesthetic judgement: they strongly impute qualities of cunning, deceit, and treachery to the unfortunate Sekani. Even worse are the moral qualities implied in his images of their 'dingy black' hair, 'hanging loose and in disorder'....By European standards, women ought to be small and fastidious, but among these people, Mackenzie

---

[27] Duchemin 54. Compare Fr. Brebeuf's 'method' of calling the Huron to assembly: "I use the surplice and the square cap, to give more majesty to my appearance." in Mealing, ed. *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents*, 46.

> implies in richly suggestive imagery, the normal distinctions of gender have been inverted, the women being 'of a more lusty make than the other sex'....Their physical appearance (which he constructs) is a mirror of their moral condition (which he also constructs). While appearing to be neutral, Mackenzie's language and imagery is in fact highly evaluative and judgmental. (60-61)

From imperial heights, Mackenzie provides 'details' of what he considers the "more 'identifiably savage' customs": the "cartilage of their nose is perforated....the organs of generation they leave uncovered." Such 'details' Duchemin notes are "calculated to provoke the scorn of his readers, violating so clearly their English notions of decorum, common sense and reason." Further, Mackenzie's select "almost scientific" vocabulary gives him that air of "objectivity" and

> intensifies the impact....The message assumed or implied, is that these customs are grotesque, primitive and reprehensible. This is a judgement fully anticipated and mutually acknowledged by writer and reader; in an important sense, it exists already before it is stated, since it is, in reality, based on their shared cultural experience. (61)

Duchemin also analyzes Mackenzie's fascination with the Indians' material culture whereby the "Indians' tools acquire a significance of their own while becoming oddly disconnected from the people who employ them" (62-63). Providing "mind-numbing" ethnographic details, Mackenzie "resembles one of the eighteenth century virtuosi whose cabinets were stuffed with costumes, utensils, ornaments, and other ethnographical curiosities from around the world, divorced from their social context..." (63).

This is very similar to my reading of David Mandelbaum's treatment of

Cree 'tools' in *The Plains Cree*. Mandelbaum, one of the earlier anthropologists in the 1930s to study the Plains Cree, divides Cree technology into disparate pieces, giving the impression of a people frozen in time with only a handful of 'simple' (meaning primitive) tools. I well recall my introduction to what may best be called as soul-stealing toolography in my first years as the only Native graduate student in history. This book was first published in 1940 but I do not recall any discussion about it's Eurocentric assumptions. My history and actually my living culture (as my parents were still using a number of the tools in question) were being treated as inferior and alien. That they most likely were received as alien to my classmates only intensified my sense of being 'Othered.'

Similarly, Duchemin found Mackenzie's language and anthropology to have the accumulative effect of freezing the Sekani, "...they are fixed, by their culture and their environment, and they exist in a kind of timeless ethnographic present, where everything he has noted about their appearance ... defines them for all time" (61). Finally, the "effect of this is to lend powerful support to his textual strategies of domination....Mackenzie's terms of reference for his 'ethnography,' therefore, as well as his language, tend to diminish and dehumanize the objects of his description" (63).

Even when Mackenzie conceded positive aspects to Native peoples, Duchemin points out that Mackenzie resorted to "an especially subversive" strategy. He used a

> ...rhetorical stratagem of allowing the Indians to have, among their vices, a few virtues, which he proceeds at once to qualify severely. Although the Beaver are 'excellent hunters', the physical demands of

> this activity reduce them to 'very meagre appearance'...They 'appear' to be fond of their children, but they are 'as careless in their mode of swaddling them as they are of their own dress'. The effect of these qualifications is to give an appearance of balance to his portrait while at the same time preventing it from conferring on them a full measure of humanity. (68)

This is, of course, consistent with the technique of exceptionalizing, thereby setting up Native's "positive" features only to smash them down. Perhaps it can be called textual bowling, and is a variation of the double standard. When writers conceded that Indians were intelligent through skill, trade or theological discourse, they immediately qualified the concessions by undermining Natives with words like "shrewd"(rather than intelligent), "simple" (rather than, say, efficacious within Native cultural context, e.g. canoes), or "cunning." For instance, fur trade historian E.E. Rich persistently uses colonial phrases such as "crafty," "shrewd enough," "sophisticated enough" or "hardened enough" when describing Indians taking advantage of competition (11, 12, 17). Even the more objective John C. Ewers qualifies his complements about Natives for their business acuity with the phrase "sharp enough" (17). Walker too notices the contradictions: "Because they yearned after European goods, Indians are described as 'grasping' and 'greedy.' Not one of the histories consulted talks of Cartier in the same way, yet he and his colleagues travelled thousands of miles to gain easy Eastern wealth" (34).

There was nothing that "Indians" could be or do that would meet with approval because inherent in these comments were colonial purposes and moral sanctions, not objective accounting of behaviour or ethnography. Some such instances are more brazen than others. After receiving hospitable treatment from "Chief Pigewis" (a "settled" Christian Indian), John West mixed insult with "gratitude": "Our hungry party put the liberality of the Indians to the test, but it did not fail; as I believe it seldom does, in *their improvidence of tomorrow*" (68, italics mine).

Alexander Ross was completely incapable of accepting Indians as anything less than inferior. In the following classically colonial passage he begins by pretending to praise the Cree but in the end twists their 'positive' qualities to undermine them:

> ...after a settled life of twenty years with the advantages of religious instruction...the Swampies were universally allowed to be a docile ... people...and obliging in their manner....their sole study, as it appeared, was to make themselves useful to their employers....
>
> But time developed their true character. When they...got accustomed to our people...they...began at once to compare themselves with the whites, and to have a great itching for dress and finery. The blue coat, frilled shirt...were no sooner adopted than they became saucy, tricky, dishonest; and in place of their former docility, they now showed themselves as proud....

And, in the imperious words of Ross, "If they have become less notorious for their drinking propensities...they are now *proportionately expert in cheating*." (284-285; italics mine). Typical of colonialists, Ross is assuming familiarity and knowledge of 'the native,' but feigning mystification when the native does not behave according to his predictions.[28] Such 'knowing' carries a sense of authority *over* the native.

---

[28] Memmi, Said, Achebe, among many other analysts, including contemporary sociologists (Frideres, Ponting) who study the nature of prejudice, have pointed to this

In effect, by using these various textual techniques at every turn Whites always secured for themselves a sense of mastery, quite at the expense of Native peoples. Walker also found this to be true:

> Before the arrival of the European, Indian life is pictured as simple, honest and free, a childlike existence shattered by the intrusions of civilization. Unfortunately even such sympathetic references serve to reinforce the image of the Indian as a man of inferiority to whites. Using material culture as the only criterion, a judgement is made that a technological stage through which Europe had passed centuries before represented an earlier stage in human development. The stone age implements of the Indian are taken as a reflection of some lower level of evolution....
>
> Their intricate stone implements, their invention of the canoe and snowshoe, their longhouses and tipis...their forest and hunting sense, all are given fair credit....Often this is done in negative terms and in contrast to European technology, as in Wrong's statement that the pre-contact Indian had 'no vehicles, no wheels, no pulleys nor derricks, and no machinery'. *The bottle may be half-empty or half-full.* (23, 25-26; Italics mine)

In this article, published in 1971 by the Canadian Historical Association, James St. G. Walker provided one of the first scholarly attempts to analyze the treatment of Native peoples in archival and historical material. Walker studied 88 titles, ranging in publication date from 1829-1970. Among the 74 sources Walker uses are notables such as Careless, Creighton, Eccles, Garneau, Groulx, Lower, MacNutt, McIinnis, McNaught, A.S. Morton, W.L.

---

easily observable phenomenon in people who oppress or discriminate.

Morton, Stanley and Wrong. He reported that these sources presented "the Indian as a human being...in confusing, contradictory and incomplete ways" (21). He also found that Indians are given significance only in relation to white history, appearing "so fleetingly in our national story." Indian differences are generalized and Indian actions are placed out of context. Although some "Noble Savage" qualities are attributed to the Indian, his savagery is assumed and emphasized.

In attempting to explain the reasons behind this "neglect and generally poor treatment" of the Indian, Walker points to the practices (by both the original and historical writers) of the double-standard, the need for heroes in Canadian historiography, and a belief in the "manifest destiny of European civilization." He especially pays attention to the "unwise use of sources" by historians who failed to take into account the beliefs, objectives and ambitions of the original narratives. From such sources are repeated by historians a "long string of epithets," the term "savage" predominating (22, 31-37).

Demonization in Canadian Literature

The "Savage" was especially carried to extremes in early literary productions. It is there that we find some rather startling examples of the civ/sav ideology which, when carried to its logical extent, results in the demonization of Indians. With respect to early English Canadian literature proper, numerous writers have demonized Native peoples, but perhaps no writer will ever equal Major John Richardson's sensational portrayal of Indians as grotesque gobblers of human organs and quaffers of human blood.

Richardson (1796-1852), born and raised in Upper Canada, advertised himself as "the first and only writer of historical fiction the country has yet produced" (Klinck 2: 195). He is best known for his personalized history of the War of 1812 (in which he was engaged as a teenager), as well as for his fiction, particularly for his novel *Wacousta.*

Sounding much like the early sources, of which he was familiar,[29] murderous dark savages stalk Richardson's pages. Margaret Turner in *Imagining Culture: New World Narrative and the Writing of Canada* suggests that savages stalk Richardson's mind because as "the savages drop shrieking from the trees...it is clear that something has gone wrong in Richardson's imaginative transition to the new world...." But more than imaginary fear is at work here. Turner points to the "failure of the discursive construction of place and culture" and "of the gap between the experience of the place and the language available to describe it" for Richardson's world of "paralyzing fear and potential madness" (26-27). The fear of "Indians" Turner explains, comes from the "European inability to discern an intelligible (and familiar) reality" (33). But more, she suggests that there was a basis of reality to Richardson's fear, namely that he could not accommodate his [civilized] self of "Gothic" novels of "love" and "honour" with what he experienced "in the new world savagery and violent cultural confrontation" (27).

---

[29] Compare for example, Henry the Elder's (1739-1824) gory and graphic description of what white historians call the Michilimackinac massacre of 1763: "...from the bodies of some, ripped open, their butchers were drinking the blood...quaffed amid shouts of rage and victory" (qtd as in Carl F. Klinck in his introduction to Richardson's *Wacousta* rpt in 1967) x.

Herein may lie the crux of the disagreement between Native and White Canadian intellectuals in our reading of White treatment of "the Indian." To suggest that Richardson, or his characters, could make no sense of 'the new world' (ergo 'Indian) violence, is to suggest that Europeans--or British Canadians, as was Richardson--were innocents in the face of Native violence. In effect, it is to embrace the Old World Structure (Civilage)-meets-New World Anti-Structure (Savage) prototype.

It is certainly understandable that Whites (like anyone else, for example, Native peoples), would experience fear, even terror, in a threatening military situation, but neither fear nor displacement explains sufficiently Richardson's unrestrained treatment of "Indians" as "fiendish," "demonic," "shrieking" or "swimming savages" in *Wacousta* or in *Wau-Nan-Gee.* It is not as if warfare, brutality and mayhem were alien among Whites, neither in Europe nor in North America. If Europeans could not "discern intelligible reality" in the New World, it is because they created unintelligible savages long before they ever set foot in the Americas, and long before they ever fought with any real Native men. The theme of White terror against Indian degeneracy and irrational violence is a theme so prevalent in White North American culture that it constitutes a genre all its own. Given this, Richardson did not offer anything so different than most other White writers before and during his lifetime. Perhaps way too much has been given to his psychological state; he was actually borrowing an already established tradition, which today we might consider Hitchcockian horror. He may have been personally troubled but was he really lost in a 'new world' without a narrative?

Reminiscent of Captivity Narratives, the Jesuit's Iroquois, James

Fenimore Cooper's Mohicans, *Wacousta*[30] is typically peppered with nightmarish savages terrifying in their stealth, and heart-stopping in their sudden bursts of "mingled fury." Richardson's repeated descriptions of Indians as "fearless devils...brandishing their gleaming tomahawks ... ejaculating...a guttural ugh," or "swimming savages" whose "grim" faces and "fierce eyes" are "gleaming and rolling like fireballs in their sockets" (276-279) are really not that original. But what Richardson lacks in originality, he more than makes up in intensity. As if there is not enough sensationalism in *Wacousta*, Richardson provides what Leslie Monkman refers to as "the ultimate portrait of degenerate savagery" (presumably of the Pottowotamies) in his *Wau-Nan-Gee*:

> Squatted in a circle, and within a few feet of the wagon in which the tomahawked children lay covered with blood, and fast stiffening in the coldness of death, now sat about twenty Indians, with Pee-to-tum at their head, passing from hand to hand the quivering heart of the slain man, whose eyes, straining as it were, from their sockets, seemed to watch the horrid repast in which they were indulging....So many wolves or tigers could not have torn away more voraciously with their teeth, or smacked their lips with greater delight in the relish of human food, than did these loathsome creatures who now moistened the nauseous repast from a black bottle of rum.... (100)

As I have suggested, Richardson was not the only fictionalist to exploit the civ/sav tradition. Ralph Connor (1860-1937), a Presbyterian minister also known as the Reverend Charles William Gordon, built a successful literary career, in part based, on such an exploitation. He also indulges in demonization, though to a lesser extent than Richardson. Connor not so much compares Indians to demons as to animals; in fact, there is virtually no difference between animals, savages and Indians in his treatment. Whites are terrified of Indians, or 'halfbreeds' as the case may be, because Indians can turn into animal-like savages at any time.

---

[30] Literary historian Carl F. Klinck, suggests that John Richardson's *Wacousta* was based on Henry's adventures. However, Klinck did not question the authenticity or bias of Henry's sensationalist blood-curdling accounts of supposed Indian rituals or warfare.

Connor often used "halfbreed" characters to highlight White civilization against Indian savagery. In *The Foreigner* one of Connor's characters is a Scot-Cree halfbreed whose name is Mackenzie. In one scene, a teenage boy, Kalman 'the foreigner,' tries to tear a bottle of whiskey away from Mackenzie. Mackenzie goes through a palpable transformation:

> The change in Mackenzie was immediate and appalling. His smiling face became transformed with fury, his black eyes gleamed with the cunning malignity of the savage, he shed his soft Scotch voice with his genial manner, the very movements of his body became those of his Cree progenitors. Uttering hoarse guttural cries, with the quick crouching run of the Indian on the trail of his foe, he chased Kalman ... there was something so fiendishly terrifying in the glimpses that Kalman caught of his face now and then that the boy was seized with an overpowering dread. (233)

But at his English master's appearance and command, Mackenzie's "fiendish rage" fades "out of his face, the aboriginal blood lust dying in his eyes like the snuffing out of a candle. In a few brief moments he became once more a civilized man..." (234).

Kalman, though, is not the only foreigner. Mackenzie too is a foreigner when he turns "Indian," that is, a savage. It is an ironic treatment that a character, at least half native to the land, becomes an alien to humanity when 'the Indian' in him comes out in the form of an animal! He stops being a savage, that is, a 'foreigner' only when he returns as a Scot, that is, as a 'civilized' man.

In another novel *The Patrol of the Sun Dance Trail* (1914), Ralph Connor continues very much in the same vein with his characterization of Jerry, a "halfbreed" scout caught between his white and indian "blood." This novel is set against the Riel "Rebellion" of 1885; the tension is between the Northwest Mounted Police and a Sioux "chief" Copperhead whose intention it is to rally a political movement of Piegans, Blackfoot and Crees in support of Riel. In a scene where the white hero and his halfbreed scout are listening to Copperhead's 'machinations,' a transformation similar to Mackenzie's comes over the scout:

> For that hour at least the half-breed was all Sioux. His father's blood was the water in his veins, the red was only his Indian mother's. With face drawn tense and lips bared into a snarl, with eyes gleaming, he gazed fascinated upon the face of the singer. In imagination, in instinct, in the deepest emotions of his soul Jerry was harking back again to the savage in him, and the savage in him thirsting for revenge upon the whiteman who had wrought this ruin upon him and his Indian race. (191)

PART II: CURRENCY AND SOCIAL EFFECTS OF DEHUMANIZATION

> ...power is sustained through popular culture without much critique simply because its very existence is deemed to legitimate it. Society for the most part, takes as given the way things are. Those who advance radical critiques of the way things are bear the onus of legitimating their critique of what most accept as common sense. And yet common sense can be popular misconception, mythology, or ideology that serves some at the expense of others. (Joyce Green, Diss 1997)

Perhaps Richardson and Connor were only trying to make money and become famous by using sensationalism. Perhaps as colonialists presumably with inferiority complexes they were trying to gain recognition. The point is, whatever their intentions, the effect of their spectacular dehumanization of Native peoples is that of hate. The imagery their words and phrases evoke can sear the hearts of the most experienced Native readers. Yet, in the guise of art, colonial art I might add, such works which, at the very least, should qualify as hate literature, are protected and perpetuated. I have long been concerned with the hate content of such sources, especially that in the vehicle of education, unconscious educators and even scholars, continue to be agents of transmission of racist and hate material. I am not suggesting that studying hate literature is an offence. Arguably, it is better to study it than to burn it. However, *how* we study this material may be an offence. In Canada hate literature is a federal offence, and were we to apply the law to sources routinely used for research and teaching, we would certainly notice diminished archives.

Given the extent of hate expressed against Native persons and cultures in Canadian writing, I find James Walker's assessment of Canadian historical writing conservative and inadequate. While Walker's article is an eye-opening and ground-breaking re-assessment of Canadian historiography, and as such is a very important contribution, it does not go deep enough into the underlying assumptions that both cause and justify the dehumanizing treatment of the Indian. It is disappointing that after all the racism and bias Walker has studied and exposed, he concludes: "Generally speaking the times in which these early accounts were written made prejudice and ignorance inevitable" (99). Does any time ever make prejudice (to put it mildly) "inevitable"? Canadian historiography is not that benign. The broader purpose and effect to all these techniques of mastery was colonization.

It is neither "inevitable" nor by happenstance that much White intellectual and literary tradition is founded on name-calling. How else to explain Canadian historiography and literature which is replete with inflammatory writing against Native cultures, peoples and persons? "Savage" is not the only word which predominates in the epithets ascribed to Native peoples. As Walker himself establishes, and as the many examples in this dissertation indicate, standard sources indulged in a lexical orgy, defaming Natives at every turn.[31]

To say the least, deprecating terms indicate political intentions, not to mention bias, slander and just plain hatred. Terms or techniques construct, as well as express, hatred. Hatred, though impossible to quantify and difficult to pinpoint, must certainly be a factor in all this name-calling, especially in the demonization of Native characters. We may even speculate on behalf of these writers that they were afraid and that their insults were projections, perhaps were attempts at taming their fears of the unknown. Such speculations may or may not serve Aboriginal history because they can take the direction of absolving the colonizer of his racial or sexual hatred instead of undermining the presumed objectivity and authority of such works. I worry about making dead people's racist and at times genocidal prejudices "inevitable" or "human" by over-exploring their psyche or cultural conditioning, especially when this is done without any challenge to either the vocabulary, the images or theories which advance racism, sexism and/or hate. If we explain away hatred of the past, the implication is that hatred today is also explained away.

---

[31] For similar findings see Walker 21-43.

By 'challenge' I do not mean simply to 'contextualize.' To a growing number of peoples concerned with scholarship, it is not enough to contextualize people's prejudices or society's stereotypes or governments' policies when these are so clearly destructive to certain populations. Contextualizing without confronting offensive literature can have the effect of defending, neutralizing, even legitimizing it. If this is not apparent to the researcher, it is certainly apparent to the 'target group.' I am of course raising the issue of ethical responsibilities for scholars who use racist or hate material for our research. We are members of society and we are not immune to societal or governmental pressures. Who after all has made possible the building of weapons of mass destruction? And it has been pointed out by sociologists who study the nature of prejudice that often, programs (or pograms) of ethnic destruction begin with verbal and written campaigns of hate. While this observation has often been applied to Nazism, it has rarely been applied to the textual/political treatment of indigenous peoples of the Americas. That few scholars have noticed the connection between hate literature and violence against Indigenous peoples (and women, for example) is testament to the colonial powers of prejudice and propaganda. Are scholars to be exempt from having to address the historical and social consequences of textual dehumanization? Are scholars to assume some inspired right not to 'dirty' their heads with texts which do have social consequences? The thought that scholars can be so alienated from the social purpose of knowledge is not a comfortable thought.

There are serious conflictual situations between White and Native Canadians, and institutionalized racism is not an insignificant contributing factor. According to Canadian sociologist James Frideres, there is unmistakable evidence which "reveals that racism widely distorts the attitudes of white Canadians toward Aboriginal people (10). In turn, such attitudes result in a domino-effect of related attitudes: " Whether blatantly or covertly, most Canadians still believe that Aboriginals are inferior; as a result, these people believe that there is a sound, rational basis for discrimination against Aboriginals at both the individual and institutional level" (10). We see clearly the results in Natives' struggles for land rights and self-government, to say nothing about social inequality. Frideres highlights biased Canadian historical treatment of Native peoples as an institutionalized expression of racism. "To legitimize its power, the dominant groups must reconstruct social history whenever necessary...today, most Canadians continue to associate 'savage' and 'heinous' behaviour with Canadian Aboriginals" (12). That

Canadians continue to associate 'savage' with Natives goes back to hate literature in Canadian writing.

By "hate literature" I do not mean that it is merely about the emotion of hate; I mean it as a particularly pernicious racist point of view which is transmitted from generation to generation through systemic forces of colonization (language, history, schooling, media, marketplace). The Euro-Canadian point of view is a self-perpetuating, profoundly institutionalized 'machine' of thought we often refer to as 'Eurocentrism.' Blaut's distinction between Eurocentrism as "a sort of 'prejudice'" and Eurocentrism as a "set of empirical beliefs" is significant to our understanding of this 'machine.' As an 'attitude,' it could be "eliminated from modern enlightened thought in the same way we eliminate other relic attitudes," but, as Blaut explains, "the really crucial part of Eurocentrism" is that it "includes a set of beliefs that are statements about empirical reality, statements educated and usually unprejudiced Europeans accept as true, as propositions supported by 'facts'" (9). Eurocentrism, then, is "a very complex thing," according to Blaut, but perhaps it is only as complex as its ideological purposes.

I am not convinced that the European bias as an attitude has been eliminated, but the point is that European prejudices have enabled western peoples to believe their attitudes have some basis in "empirical reality." This is where the media and the marketplace come in, most handily at that. In no small way, the graphic presentation of re/settler encounters with "natives," however imaginary, are simultaneously an expression of and constant reification of Eurocentrism. In other words, prejudices and what social scientists refer to as "the social construction of reality" (thought to be empirical reality) feed off each other, especially through the dissemination of images.

Through the means of pulp fiction and other cultural productions, commercial exploitation of the "Indian image" is continuing at a fairly frenetic pace. Hollywood, for example, is churning out a relentless array of remakes (*The Last of the Mohicans)* and new takes (*Dances With Wolves, Blackrobe, Legends of the Fall, The Scarlet Letter, Squanto, Pocahontus, Indian in My Cupboard)* depicting "Indians" in the tradition of Captivity Narratives, *Leatherstocking Tales* and Buffalo Bill's Wild West Shows.[32]

The power of graphic presentation is incalculable. Nor can we underestimate the impact technology has on us in its ability to bring text to 'life.' Through movement, sound and colour, the archival and literary hate material, much of it expressed in the cardboard comics many of us Canadians grew up with, is made even more "real" through the experiencing of contemporary "techno-techniques" of movies. Looking at still photography is impressive enough, imagine looking at Cooper's Mohican's in the full splendour of technology's sound and fury.

There is also the power of repetition. Hilger in *The American Indian in Film* points out that, "The repetition of these techniques through each historical period is what really impresses the fictional Indian on the minds of audiences" (4).[33] Movies are plastic and their stories are often fabrications, but because Hollywood has bombarded the global public with thousands of Cowboy and Indian movies (and off-shoots of such movies), the image of the Indian as a primitive and crazed blood-thirsty 'wildermann' terrorizing good, innocent and, to boot, glamorized White men, women and children has become more real in the minds of the public than any **real** Native peoples as human beings.[34]

---

[32] Berkhofer traces the development of White America's invention of sensationalist depictions of 'Indians,' beginning with captivity narratives, moving on to dime novels, then to Buffalo Bills' Wild West Shows and culminating in the 'social construction of reality' through motion pictures.

What should be of interest to scholars is that pulp fiction and commercial movies take their cue and their themes from all the usual archival and historical sources which have promoted the Western/Cowboy/Hero point of view. We see so clearly Parkman's *The Oregon Trail*,[35] Frederick Jackson Turner's "frontier thesis" (adopted and adapted by Canadian historians such as George F. Stanley, W.L. Morton, Doug Owram, and then by folk historians such as Grant MacEwan and Pierre Berton), or James Fenimore Cooper's *Leatherstocking Tales*, in turn adapted to the Canadian forest by Richardson's White Savage *Wacousta*. And what can one say about *The*

---

[33] For further study of film as a powerful medium in the dehumanization of Native peoples, see also John E. O'Connor and Peter C. Rollins, eds. *Hollywood's Indian*; Deborah Doxtator, *Fluffs and Feathers*; Raymond W. Stedman, *Shadows of the Indian* and Ralph and Natasha Friar, *The Only Good Indian: The Hollywood Gospel.*

[34] For example, while there were violent confrontations between White and Native peoples, they were neither as violent, as frequent or Native-originated as they are portrayed in movies. See O'Connor, *The Hollywood Indian*, for further comment on this. For excellent studies of audience inability to distinguish between Hollywood (fantasy) and real Indians, see Berkhofer and Francis.

[35] Pearce calls Parkman an "artist-historian," and finds woven into Parkman's influential historical works Parkman's personal journal he called "The Oregon Trail" (1847). "The Oregon Trail" was based on Parkman's journey west (163-168).

Blackrobe which comes from an unstudied reading of *The Jesuit Relations*? The theme of Indian savagism inevitably yielding to white civilization as it advances west (or to the frontier) defines all these works.

Textbooks too serve to disseminate the frontier/pioneer point of view. Textbooks, for example, continue to depict a world which revolves around, and out of, Europe and its descendants. As Blaut explains: "Textbooks are an important window to a culture; more than just books, they are semiofficial statements of exactly what the opinion-forming elite of the culture want the educated youth of that culture to believe to be true about the past and present world" (6). Blaut continues that while "in the main" racism has been discarded in textbooks and "non-Europe is no longer considered to have been *absolutely* stagnant and traditional," prominent historical scholars continue to maintain and focus "on Greater Europe as the perpetual fountainhead of history" (7). Always presented as 'makers of history,' Europeans are accorded "permanent superiority": "Europe eternally advances, progresses, modernizes. The rest of the world advances more sluggishly, or stagnates: it is 'traditional society.' Therefore, the world has a permanent geographical centre and a permanent periphery: an Inside and an Outside. Inside leads, Outside lags. Inside innovates, Outside imitates" (1). Blaut calls this *Eurocentric diffusionism*, and argues that it

> ... lies at the very root of historical and geographical scholarship. Some parts of the belief have been questioned in recent years, but its most fundamental tenets remain unchallenged, and so the belief as a whole has not been uprooted or very much weakened by modern scholarship. (1)

In Canada racism in textbooks is by no means a thing of the past.[36] What needs to be pointed out here is that insightful, well-documented studies of textbook bias was provided by Native analysts, politicians, writers and educators as early as the 1970s. Such analysts included Harold Cardinal, Howard Adams, George Manuel, Bruce Sealey and Verna Kirkness, Douglas Cardinal, Jane Willis and myself, among others. Native peoples consider textbook bias in the school curriculum so unacceptable that even Native organizations have published material on the matter.[37] What is troubling is that, as a rule, non-Native Canadian scholars and educators have not availed themselves to Native analysis or to Native scholars and documentation. This unscholarly behaviour of non-Native educators is reflective of an on-going colonial tactic of denial: erase by selection (by simply not noticing the relevant parts) not only the records which attest to the hate and racism but also the Native recording of it. Here again, we see the power of prejudice. Frideres points out what Native scholars know so well, that readers "react quite differently" to books by Native authors such as Cardinal and Waubageshig, "than they have" to books by authors such as Morton or Lower (12-13). "The layperson typically rejects the conclusions" of the Native authors "as the products of bias," but, explains Frideres, "the same layperson tends to accept the explanations provided by...'established academic' authors" (13).

---

[36] See for example, McDiearmid and Pratt, *Teaching Prejudice*. For a more contemporary assessment of racism in textbooks see Jon Young, ed. *Breaking The Mosaic*. The Native community remains concerned about bias and racism in school curricula.

[37] Manitoba Indian Brotherhood, for example, released a report in 1977 on textbook bias entitled *The Shocking Truth about Indians in Text Books!*

Obviously, if it takes a White person (usually an educator) to say there is a problem with racism in textbooks before other White scholars and educators will find the statement credible, then Canadian society has not even begun to deal with its colonizer face of racism. By denying even Native documentation, a vehicle much sacralized in western culture, Canadian colonialists are showing both their colours and their inabilities to deal with history and its legacies. They are approving Canada's official story. Muffling or re-presenting Native concern is a huge part of maintaining the Eurocentric point of view.

The combined effect is powerful. The 'heroic point of view' with its tendentious use of words and classifications has served to de-grade Natives, and De/grading Native societies has served to infantilize and objectify them, thus, 'verifying' the very assumption which set them up as savages in the first place. But these sets of ingenious rationalizations were not just playful mind games. They were an inherent part of White North American ideology in the service of subjugating Native peoples. They served to justify invading Aboriginal lands, resources and cultures. Demonizing them has served to erase any sense of responsibility for the destruction of Aboriginal peoples, places and cultures. The cumulative effect of all this is staggering. To come back to the point of this dissertation, Native peoples are perhaps the most dehumanized and misrepresented peoples anywhere, if not in archival and scholarly sources, certainly in popular culture.[38]

---

[38] For a comparative study of the White image of Aboriginal peoples of Canada, Australia and New Zealand, see Terry Goldie, *Fear and Temptation: The Image of the*

The Colonizer's Culture

This puts into perspective whatever changes (or anti-colonial material) have taken place in White writing and other cultural productions about "Indians." To begin with, the changes have been extremely slow and uneven. For example, while novels of the 1960s and 70s had eased up on the ever present dark Savages shadowing the landscape, works were still problematic in their literary presentation of 'The Indian.' For example, David Williams' *The Burning Wood*, Mort Forer's *The Humback* and Betty Wilson's *Andre Tom MacGregor* immerse Native characters in stereotypic misery and dissipation. The objectification of Native women as sexually servile is particularly noxious but classically colonial. In Williams, the treatment is couched as mystical; in Forer, Metis women merely serve as biological but blurry-eyed vehicles for sex and species; in Wilson, "Indian" women are shamelessly presented as repulsive. The Native men in all these novels are stilted, hollywoodish, stock caricatures, often named Joe with a surname of an animal.

To say the least, such novels are depressing and predictable. And it is difficult to know exactly how to respond to W.P. Kinsella's treatment of Native characters in his controversial works such as *Dance Me Outside*. At best, he caricatures; at worst, he draws on popular societal stereotypes and prejudices, and in this, his works serve to confirm existing racism. However, Kinsella does also caricature white society and characters in ways which expose white arrogance, hypocrisy and stupidity. But does his critical

---

Indigene in Canadian, Australian and New Zealand Literatures.

treatment of white culture outweigh Frank Fencepost's broken English?

Of course there have been exceptions. Anne Cameron, Margaret Laurence, George Ryga, Rudy Wiebe, George Woodcock, Margaret Atwood, Margaret Craven, among others, have treated Native characters and themes much more respectfully and some, elegantly; however, they are not all free of problems and stereotypes either. And a number of self-consciously post-colonial Canadian writers continue to simply re-arrange old and familiar themes which draw on and perpetuate stock images of 'Indians' or 'natives.' Often, Indian characters are created to act as spiritual guides to the landscape so that Canadian colonialists can more deeply and completely appropriate the land.[39]

Richardson and Connor appropriated the land and the "Indian" violently rather than spiritually, but they were within the Canadian tradition of using the "Indian" or "halfbreed" from which to build their personal reputations as well as Canadian art and culture. This is a point cogently treated by Leslie Monkman in A *Native Heritage: Images of the Indian in English-Canadian Literature.* Canadian writers, explains Monkman, "have repeatedly found in the confrontation of native and non-native heritages a unique focus for the exploration of their own concerns and culture" (3). Whether they found in the Indian an enemy or an alternative model by which to develop their identity, writers, "in each era of Canadian literary history... have turned to the Indian and his culture for standards by which to measure the values and goals of white Canadian society, for patterns of cultural destruction, transformation, and survival, and for new heroes and indigenous myths" (3). Here, it may be instructive to turn to Said's analysis of the role of the constructed Orient "as a sort of surrogate and even underground self" for European identity (3). As such, Orientalism was a cultural investment which brought to Europe "a created body of theory and practice" (8-9), or, a "mode of discourse with supporting institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles" (2). By no means as exotically treated as Said's "Orient," the "Indian," nonetheless has served Canadian identity and culture quite extensively.[40]

---

[39] Margaret Turner does not really pay attention to this rather conspicuous feature of Canadian literature in her treatment of some rather famous Canadian writers *Imagining Culture.* There is not much new here from the Native perspective.

If "the Indian" was for Canadian cultural clarification and development, it certainly has been quite something else for Native peoples. But before we turn to the Native writers' experience of "the Indian," another layer of the colonizer's culture must be attended to. White Canadian intellectual response to the existing historical and literary racist material must be of interest here. It is important to comprehend the stunning degree to which Native peoples have been subjected to degradation. What is equally striking is that it has taken White intellectuals a half a millennium to begin to recognize this blatant racism and hate literature, not to mention, dismal ignorance about Native peoples. While important and welcome changes are taking place in scholarship, it remains a glaring fact that, until quite recently, the dehumanization of Native peoples in colonizer texts and productions seemed to have escaped the eyes of most scholars and critics. It is still escaping way too many of them. Obviously reflecting profound association with the western myth of civilization, Canadian scholars and fictionalists have given relatively little attention to the ethnocentric and racist basis that informs their interpretation.

---

[40] Attempts to exoticize the "Indian" usually take on Noble Savage, Hollywood or plastic overtones, depending on the era. See Daniel Francis' discussion of "performing," "celebrity," "plastic" and "childhood" Indians in which he includes Grey Owl, Pauline Johnson and E.T. Seton (chapters 5-7).

White scholars or writers have not understood Native intellectual or political response to all this. Instead, scholars and writers have traditionally rationalized, if even they recognized, the use of what is, in effect, hate and Eurocentric diffusionist literature as sources to advance their own research, theories and fiction. Focusing on ethnography or using Indian motifs with stock themes of good and evil, of light and darkness, of the 'primitive' or 'the savage' in 'man' has served to detract or dilute what should be intolerable in much of the writing on Native peoples. I was disappointed, for example, to read Gaile MacGregor's *Wacousta Syndrome*, a book full of entertaining and important insights concerning the Canadian psyche, yet a book which does not challenge the dehumanizing hideousness of Richardson's *Wacousta*. The focus is on the white Canadian's 'colonized' position vis a vis the Americans. Given the voluminousness of this book, there is inadequate recognition of Native presence, and only in relation to the white Canadian's experience and response to the landscape.[41]

Margaret Turner in *Imagining Culture: New World Narrative and the Writing of Canada* does acknowledge, dutifully I thought, Native peoples but largely as backdrop to her main study. She devotes her examination to four classic Canadian writers, among them Richardson on *Wacousta*. She departs from MacGregor slightly in her emphasis on Richardson's virtual madness due to his sense of displacement in the 'new world.' But like others before her, she does not deal with Richardson's "shrieking savages" as hate literature. This, plus the fact she makes no mention or use of contemporary Native criticism, is disappointing.

---

[41] See a similar treatment in Carl F. Klinck's trilogy *Literary History in Canada.*

One wonders, how could intelligent Canadians have missed so much racism in their research and writings? It is not as if it were obscure. To go into the many historically-rooted 'reasons' for all this tolerance of suspect literature is to go right back to the point of this dissertation, that colonial constructs are for the purposes of conquest, not knowledge (Jennings), and that they serve to blind and condition subsequent generations to see through 'stereotypic eyes.'[42]

That Canadians turned to the landscape and to the "Indians" in their early writing points, of course, to the layers of colonization evident in our Canadian experience. White Canadian writers and post-colonial critics have more than amply treated this issue of identity for Canadians. Clearly, all Canadians are subject both to European and White American intellectual and cultural productions but just as clearly, Native peoples remain the colonized of the 'colonized' in that they are still circumscribed by the Euro-White North American historical, literary and political representation.

The essence of the colonial relationship as Canadian writer Peter Puxley explains, is that the colonized are "unilaterally defined by the other"

---

[42] This phrase comes from Fraser J. Pakes, "Seeing With The Stereotypic Eye: The Visual Image of the Plains Indian" 1-31.

(116). The colonizer then cannot accept "any move toward real autonomy on the part of the colonized." And any such move is either "ignored, defined as unacceptable, or reprimanded, depending on the degree of institutionalization of the relationship" (116). The colonial forces attacking Native peoples in Canada have not been military, as a rule, but rather, have been institutional through economic, religious, educational legislative, and media systems (Frideres, Ponting, Miller, Dickason, Green). Not surprisingly, the colonial relationship between White and Native peoples is profoundly institutionalized, and has grown more so with time. One of the indices of such systemic control is the extent to which Native peoples have been defined (both legally and socially), and when they seek to re-define meet opposition in many cloaks.

Reception to Native expressions, especially resistance, reveals the extent to which Native peoples have been defined by the Other. If Native resistance has not been readily apparent to the unstudied, it has not always been appreciated by the studied. Even Penny Petrone does not always respect or recognize the intricacies of Native resistance writing in her leading contribution, *Native Literature in Canada.* Petrone seems unaware that she is undermining Native social protest writers, particularly those from the 1970s, by repeatedly labelling and psychologyzing them as "bitter."[43] She impresses upon this point further by praising those works which (to her) show no "anger" or "rage" or "sentimentality" (134, 150, 162). She goes so far as to denounce these writers (by indirect reference) of "self-pity" (142) and even reduces Sarain Stump's powerful protest poetry to "laments" (130). While Petrone understands that Native writing "has always been quintessentially political, addressing their persecutions and betrayals and summoning their resources for resistance," she judges this writing in a patronizing way:

---

[43] See especially pages 112, 117, 118, 120, 134, 135, 158, 162, 178, 182. Further, Petrone resorts to hackneyed stereotypes and typologies in her references to "the untrained Indian mind" (26, 146).

> Already many are able to deal with the culture clash and their own identity not only with perception but with some detachment and control, moving beyond the worst excesses of emotion and diction that marred much earlier protest writing. (182)

There are a number of such patronizing comments throughout the book, which detracts from an otherwise exceptional and valuable work. It is revealing, I think, that Petrone feels most comfortable with Native oral traditions, which she largely treats as a thing of the past. Her obvious respect for Native languages and oral traditions, is, at times marred with stilted ethnological generalizations (4-7). But here she criticizes Westerners for failing to appreciate the "highly developed and extensive body of native Canadian oral literature," and explains that this literature was "misunderstood because, although it did not conform to the conventions of Western literary criticism, scholars still treated it as Western literature" (3). It is puzzling why Petrone does not apply this observation to Native social protest writing because she does provide insightful "reasons" why scholars have "neglected and ignored" Native literature generally. She introduces her work by listing the reasons:

> European cultural arrogance, and attitudes of cultural imperialism and

> paternalism that initiated and fostered patronizing stereotypes of the Indian; European antipathy and prejudice towards the oral literatures of so-called primitive peoples; the European belief that the Indian was a vanishing race; the purists attitude of Western literary critics towards literature that does not conform totally to their aesthetic criteria; and finally, the difficult problems of translating native literature. (1)

Petrone is not the only critic who has reprimanded Native writers. In the 1980s Native writers were variously criticized for "blustering and bludgeoning society" or were generalized as "minorities" who were "strangling in their own roots." Even what I call "soft sell" literature such as Beatrice Culleton's *Spirit of the White Bison*, was received with little discernment.[44] The confrontation between the Canadian Writer's Union and Native writers on the issue of cultural appropriation was revealing for its oppositional politics. This important debate, which flared up in the late 1980s, quickly broke down into counter-accusations: some White writers cited Natives with censorship in response to the charge of racism.[45]

As writers we struggle enough with white Canadian judgement and labelling about our presumed bitterness, anger or militancy, legitimate as such responses to untenable situations may be. Our works are further gauged with a language of containment. Bruce Trigger's foreword to George Sioui's *For*

---

[44] See for example, a review of *Spirit of the White Bison* in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, 10 August, 1986.

[45] For further treatment on this see Hartmut Lutz' "preface" to his *Contemporary Challenges: Conversations with Canadian Native Authors*; my own "preface" to Perreault and Vance's *Writing the Circle*; See also Marlene Nourbese Philip, "The Disappearing Debate: Or how the discussion of racism has been taken over by the censorship issue" and "Whose Voice Is It, Anyway? A Symposium on who should be speaking for whom," *Books in Canada* 20.1 (1991): 11-17.

An American Autohistory provides a typical example of containment: "While this is a polemical work, it never descends to recrimination and vituperative condemnation, even when that might seem justified...it is a polemic written at the level of philosophy" (ix). So long as colonialists can determine for us when or how our resistance might seem justified, white Canadians need not worry about a revolution. But what is resistance if it cannot be expressively resistant? Are we now to resist only in metaphors? Not all Native writers wish to frame or couch their resistance through their Tricksters. Resistance is not about making resistance palatable to the colonizer! These are the 2000s. As long as Native writing is constantly defined within colonizer terms, it is neither free nor received.

I am not suggesting that all Native expressions of protest are lovely or that they are easy to receive. I can appreciate that protest is difficult to absorb; Native resistance does reflect poorly on the Canadian self-image. Nor would I ever suggest that Native writing cannot be criticized or reviewed. But scholars, especially historians and literary critics writing in the 1990s, must make it their mandate first to comprehend the noxious nature of colonization before dismissing utterances of decolonization merely as "sloganistic," "bitter," "biased" or "polemical." These are high-handed charges which reflect an ideology that only Whites are "objective" and only they are able to discern balance, emotional or intellectual. In most instances, such accusations, especially when redundant, are patronizing labelling techniques consistent with the phenomenon of white backlash to minority groups.[46] To call Native writers "bitter," "angry" or any number of related labels is to imply there is something emotionally or psychologically wrong with them. Labelling or psychologyzing them serves to discredit the basis of their resistance. Or their research. Such *ad hominum* tactics reflect the colonizers' wish to neutralize the "negative" or "accusatory" tones that *they* hear. It is the wish to sidestep the uncomfortable truths that the anger in oppressed people reveal. "Anger" as used by oppressed people is not a psychological problem to be diffused by yuppie therapy; it is not just a feeling, it is an expression of moral outrage against injustice. Anger is a tool of revolutionary potential. It is a political sign. In this context, I worry when I read Native writers advocating Hiawathian spirituality as a way of replacing Native anger.[47]

---

[46] There are timeless observations about this in Ryan, *Blaming The Victim.*

Social protest, as a rule, cannot be beautiful; neither is the ground from which it is born. It must be understood that Native resistance writing, much of it beautiful and gracious despite the colonial climate, is as yet not primarily about aesthetics, it is about the "400 [500] year pain" that Alanis Obomsawin spoke about, a political pain that must be expelled. We are engaged in nothing less than an intellectual revolution. And if Native writers have been angry or polemical in their counter-discourse, it is only because so much of Eurocentric material requires excision, a work White Canadian intellectuals have really just begun to do.

It is difficult to be overly optimistic. The same is true about movies. There are several new and better movies. *The Education of Little Tree,*

---

[47] There is an aspect to anger that is dangerous. Fanon observed that oppressed people in an unconscious state tend to internalize this anger and turn it upon themselves or to their same-other. And of course, it can be dangerous to the colonizer.

Dance Me Outside and *Smoke Signals* come to mind. And since the 1970s Canadian scholarship, in specialist fields and pockets, has produced an impressive body of new and generally decolonized/ing material. But I caution that we not relax, that, as indispensably significant as the new works are, we have much more deconstructing and reconstructing to do. Like Blaut, I find 'the sheer quantity' of Eurocentric material daunting. Refutations[48], no matter how persuasive, "cannot be placed, so to speak, on one arm of a balance and be expected to outweigh all of the accumulated writings of generations of European scholars, textbook writers, journalists, publicists, and the rest, heaped up on the other arm of the balance" (9-10).

Canada has taken some significant constitutional and legal steps to accommodate Aboriginal peoples' rights to lands and self-government, and Aboriginal peoples have shown incredible tenacity as reflected in their political and cultural re-awakening.[49] But even as white scholars, writers, reviewers and audiences are beginning to appreciate the complexities of Native histories, cultures and characters; Native scholars, students and audiences are still under the effects of 500 years of textual and political dehumanization. Even as (some) white and Aboriginal scholars are tackling racist sources, such sources remain uncritically open to the public and to all students.

---

[48] It should be pointed out that Blaut's refutations do not centre on issues of values or bias or prejudices, but on confronting "statements of presumed historical and scientific fact...and we try to show, with history and science, that the presumptions are wrong and these statements are false." (9).

[49] For a good summary of the constitutional, political and cultural changes, see Dickason, *Canada's First Nations* 292-420.

The impact of White judgement and dehumanization remains current. To the extent this literature is archived, the hate/fear 'techniques of mastery' are recycled. As long as we continue to go to our archives, textbooks and theatres, not to mention, pulp fiction magazine stands, we are constantly confronted with it all. And how many (both Native and non-Native) who go to educational institutions, libraries or to the movies are trained critically to contextualize such material? This question is more somber than it may appear; for example, in 1991 only 2.6% of Native peoples and only 12.2% of non-Native Canadians have university degrees (Frideres 162), and of course, not all university graduates are trained in decolonized criticism either in historiography, literature or social relations.

I must live with the reality of this material's continued existence, for among other things, it provides fodder for scholarship. But unlike Terry Goldie in *Fear and Temptation,* I cannot have the luxury of avoiding the term 'racist' in my study. Perhaps, and I feel ambiguous here, but perhaps those of us who bear the brunt of this racist literature must view and treat the flammable material as monuments of our experience, of our dispossession, of our holocaust. As far as Aboriginal peoples of the Americas go, the fire is in the millions destroyed (but without much notice by anyone, certainly without any fanfare or enduring monuments) as well as in the war of words against us, a war which has caused Native peoples extreme distress and aggravation.

CHAPTER THREE

NATIVE WRITERS RESIST: ADDRESSING INVASION

Subjugation of Aboriginal peoples is, of course, the context both to the subjugator's justification literature, and to the subjugated's resistance response. To appreciate Native resistance we need to understand their "long walk" as they have experienced it and as they have told it, and now as they are recording it.

"My people are a storytelling people...." So begins Mohawk lawyer, academic and writer, Patricia Monture-Angus in *Thunder in my Soul.* And Native people have been telling a story. The story (and the story within the story) they have been telling is not a legend, not *atowkewin*. They have been telling a factually-based story, a type of story the Plains Cree call *achimoowin.* In telling this story these writers are in effect challenging the Canadian canons of history, culture and representation. In this it is a political story. Like all stories having to do with unequal human relationships, this story or series of stories is of course involved and difficult to hear. But it is unmistakable. And if it is difficult for Euro-Canadians to hear this story, imagine how difficult it is for Native writers to have to reiterate it.

When the dust settled (so to speak), Aboriginal peoples across the Americas were massively destroyed and exiled in their own lands. For the last half millenia, White colonization of North America has been nothing short of catastrophic for Aboriginal peoples. The numerical loss alone is staggering. Contrary to the mythmaker's blithe estimates there were only 1,000,000 pre-Columbian Indians north of the Rio Grande, Jennings, for example, places Indigenous populations at 10,000,000-12,000,000.[1] More recently, in the context of discussing "the incalculably devastating effects of early epidemics," anthropologists Morrison and Wilson in *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience* record estimates ranging from 4.5 million to 18 million (51). But even if such estimates are high, even if we were to reduce the numbers by half, they do still indicate that Native peoples suffered and died in holocaustic proportions. In any case, the destruction of a people should not be qualified by their numbers.

Colonization as an historical event (or series of events) in Canada has now been amply documented by numerous scholars representing a wide variety of disciplines, and it is certainly being documented by Aboriginal scholars and writers. We know that Aboriginal peoples lost their balance of power in relation to Euro-Canadians. We can trace this loss not only to military invasion but also to attempted genocide, starvation, land theft and structural changes over time in areas fundamental to cultural integrity. Colonial land theft in Canada is best understood in the study of what sociologist James Frideres calls "geographical incursion," as well as the study of Aboriginal rights, treaties, the Indian Act and constitutional law. While institutional invasion is less definable, it is possible to trace the Euro-Canadian colonial forces which have disempowered Aboriginal peoples in every area vital to their well-being. These 'forces' implicate actual people who came as missionaries, treaty and scrip commissioners, soldiers, colonial officials, police, land speculators, Indian agents, storekeepers, and even artists, travellers, and poets.

---

[1] See especially chapter two in *Invasion of America*. Jennings challenges white America's convenient and ideological view that "savages" are sparsely populated. However, there is no final agreement as to Native populations at various stages of their pre and post contact with Europeans. Most historians provide wide-ranging estimates; see as another example, Gerald Friesen's estimate of 6-10 million north of Mexico between 1000-1500 A.D in *The Canadian Prairies* (15).

But the invasion is only the beginning of this colonization process. As the invasion deepens, the colonizer moves to protect and enhance its newly gained position of power. This is done in many ways including "usurpation and replacement," as A.D. Fisher has put it (37-44), or from the colonizer's perspective "peopling" the "empty" spaces, re-naming the "natives" and (their) landscape, building strategic points of entry and defense (ie forts) and occupying strategic roles as (re)educators, employers and gradually, as legislators (Waubageshig 74-102). In some places such as in Central America and United States, brutal violence was exercised against Aboriginal peoples which speeded up and collapsed the invasion and replacement process. In Canada, because the invasion and power maintenance has been largely structural, the process has been slower. But because the aggression and destruction has been less visible it has been all the more insidious, for the "ultimate consequence of colonization is to weaken the resistance of the colonized Aboriginals to the point at which they can be controlled" (Frideres 7).

What makes this unhappy (and on-going) Canadian story of control so complex is that colonization is not a uniform movement, nor is it a movement that is only in the past. Succeeding generations from every culture group (generally but not universally moving east to west) across Canada have experienced various versions of invasions repetitively. For western Native peoples, for example, there have been at least three major periods and phases of colonization: pre-confederation consisting largely of explorers, missionaries, fur traders and expansionists; confederation which effectively ended Native independence through displacement and legislation, and the post-World War II era which brought in modernization.

For Native people of Canada, the dispossession[2] and the dying continues. The incursion is definitely not 'of the past.' In fact, the grossest amount of "final" destruction has been taking place since World War II.[3] Between 1940-1990s, the Canadian government and society has been aggressively whipping Native peoples into "modernization."[4] In addition, both the American and Canadian governments have treated Native lands as the last frontier. In Canada, Native peoples continue to lose massive amounts of lands and resources to mega-projects such as hydro, lumber, gas and oil, mining of uranium and other minerals. Even in areas where First Nation or Inuit groups (excluding the Metis whose land rights have been ignored) have succeeded in recovering or reclaiming land space, they are confronted with potential ecological and cultural disasters. What is left of Native lands is being threatened with sound and chemical pollution, white businesses, deforestation and destruction of animals.[5] And what is left of an economically viable land-based lifestyle for many northern Native peoples,[6] is being threatened by animal rights activists. The loss cannot be measured strictly in terms of square footage or annual income because Native peoples' relationship to the land is more than about commodities; threatening Native lands and resources is not only assailing Native livelihood, it is also threatening Native spirituality and identity. What is culturally essential cannot be measured in monetary terms, though of course, the importance of economy should not be underestimated. In other words, what white colonization of 500 years could not accomplish, 'modernization' and yuppie politics are still managing.

---

[2] For an incisive and readable overview of this dispossession see Geoffrey York, *The Dispossessed: Life and Death in Native Canada.*

[3] Obviously, the Canadian Native experience was/is not like the Jewish experience under Hitler. However, German scholar and critic Hartmut Lutz has observed that white Canadian response (e.g. guilt and denial) to the cultural destruction of Native peoples has been similar to the German response regarding the holocaust. See Hartmut Lutz, "Confronting Cultural Imperialism" 132-151. See also his conversation with me in Hartmut Lutz. *Contemporary Challenges* 181-202.

[4] Governments have imposed modernization schemes on a wide variety of peoples throughout many parts of the world. In this country there has been little understanding about the dramatic effects of forced modernization on Native peoples because of the dearly-held notion that "Indians" are inherently anti-development.There is, however, powerful evidence (see sources in notes 2 and 5) that Native peoples have been battered by industrial assaults. See also Anastasia M. Shkilnyk, *Poison Stronger Than Love.* For more personal observations on 'modernization' see my autobiographical article "Tides, Towns and Trains."

Such on-going destruction and management is still being rationalized as

---

[5] See Boyce Richardson, *Strangers Devour The Land*; Warner Troyer, *No Safe Place*; Hugh and Karmel McCullum, *This Land Is Not For Sale*; Boyce Richardson, ed., *Drumbeat*.

[6] Kerry Abel and Jean Friesen, eds. *Aboriginal Resource Use in Canada* is a significant acknowledgement in Canadian scholarship concerning the viability of Native use of lands and resources.

"progress" and "development" and the consequences are still nothing short of deadly. Not only do Native peoples continue to lose their land, the very ground of their cultural beings, but they continue to lose their lives in horrific proportions.[7] There is in a mythical and practical sense a connection between Columbus, Cowboys, Confederation, The *Last Spike*, *The Last of the Mohicans*, *Ten Little Indians* and the distressing trend of social break-down among Canada's Native communities. It is in this sense that there is nothing "post-colonial" about the Native experience.

Some attention has been given to establishing the Eurocanadian subjugation of Aboriginal peoples because it is this, the destruction which subjugation has wreaked, that places Canadian Native peoples as the colonized. Colonization is not abstract, it is an experience (Puxley 104). Native persons have experienced invasion, dispossession and objectification as nothing less than devastating. This devastation which is at the heart of the colonial experience informs early and contemporary Native writing.

This Canadian story spills over all the usual boundaries of geographies, eras, and cultures. The ways in which Native peoples have been overrun have lead to the ways in which they have responded. Resistance is necessarily defensive, at least at first. Since Native peoples have been depreciated politically and textually (and the two go hand in hand), they have tended to address their dislocation as well as their marginalization.

---

[7] *Choosing Life*, a study released by the The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples in 1995, reported that the rate of suicide among Aboriginal people for all age groups is "2 to 3 times higher than the rate among non-Aboriginals," and that it is "5 to 6 times higher among Aboriginal youth than among their non-Aboriginal peers" (1).

Exposition of the Invasive Process

> I had a dream -- but I did not believe my dream -- that there would be white men everywhere, overwhelming this land. Today I see it. I love this land greatly, and what is still the Indian's I am resolved to hold fast. For that I pray much.
>
> Thunderchild, 1923 in *Voices of the Plains Cree*

As soon as Native individuals could use the techniques of writing in 'the enemy's language,' in this case, the English language, they immediately addressed their colonial conditions. At the outset, the emphasis was of course on loss of lands and resources. The earliest Native writers speak to the material loss of space. Of landscape. Of homelands. The Mohawks, for example, suffered land loss several times over. They were among the loyalists who were relocated onto Mississauga land after America's declaration of independence. Once relocated, the Mohawks then suffered shrinkage of land space as a result of British Canadian invasive policies. On December 10, 1798, Loyalist Mohawk Joseph Brant wrote a letter to Captain Green, obviously hoping for a positive resolution concerning their new lands around Grand River. Brant exposes the multifarious ways British Canadian officials incurred on the Mohawk land space around the Grand River area.

> I presume that you are well acquainted with the long difficulties we had concerning the lands on this river--these difficulties we had not the least idea of when we first settled here, looking on them as granted to us to be indisputably our own, other wise we would never have accepted the lands, yet afterwards it seemed a little odd to us that the writings Gov. Haldimand gave us after our settling on the lands, was not so compleat as the strong assurances and promises he had made us at first.... (qtd in Moses and Goldie 14)

There were other protests. In July 1847 Ojibway George Copway (or Kah-ge-gah-bowh, as he was also known) addressed what he referred to in the terminology of his times, as "the Indian's hunting grounds." First he sets out the Ojibway cultural ways of dealing with landholdings, uses and abuses:

> The hunting grounds of the Indians were secured by right, a law and custom among themselves. No one was allowed to hunt on another's land, without invitation or permission. If any person was found trespassing on the ground of another, all his things were taken from him, except a handful of shot, powder sufficient to serve him in going *straight* home....If he were found a second time trespassing, all his things were taken away from him, except food sufficient to subsist on while going home. And should he still come a third time to trespass on the same, or another man's hunting grounds, his nation, or tribe, are then informed of it, who take up his case. If still he disobeys, he is banished from his tribe. (Moses and Goldie 22)

These ways pre-existed the White man's ways. Invasion implies something and somebody exists prior to the invasion. Moreover, what exists exists in a certain, culturally coherent manner. In other words, what exists before the invasion, and what makes invasion 'invasion'is precisely the fact that peoples and cultures original to the landspace exist/ed. This may seem so obvious as to merit no comment, but in the context of colonial politics, the Native re/establishment of the Native's culture is (and becomes even more) crucial. It is crucial because it has been denied. The colonizer's denial of a pre-existing culture served to justify the dispossession. And dispossession there was, as Copway details the Ojibway loss of lands in the early nineteenth century: "In the year 1818, 1,800,000 acres of land were surrendered to the British government." Rhetorically, Copway asks "For how much, do you ask?" Then answers "For $2,960 per annum! What *a great sum* for British generosity!" Copway, obviously dismayed and disgusted, hopes that with respect to what lands remain unsold, "the scales will be removed from the eyes of my poor countrymen, that they may see the robberies perpetrated upon them, before they surrender another foot of the territory" (Moses and Goldie 22).

But dispossession and displacement was everywhere, and so was Native protest in the form of letters, petitions, editorials. Shinguaconse (c. 1773-1854) of Garden River near Sault Ste. Marie who fought with General Brock in the War of 1812, wrote a remarkable letter to Lord Elgin in 1849. Earlier I quoted a portion of this letter next to Shakespeare; I include it here in its full length as it is quoted in Petrone because it is one of the best in its tradition.[8] Clearly furious with invader-re/settlers, Shinguaconse skillfully impeaches Whites with their mendacity, trickery and betrayal.

> When your white children first came into this country, they did not come shouting the war cry and seeking to wrest this land from us....They sought our friendship, we became brothers. Their enemies were ours, at the time we were strong and powerful, while they were few and weak. But did we oppress them or wrong them? No! And they did not attempt to do what is now done, nor did they tell us that at some future day you would.
> Father.
> Time wore on and you have become a great people, whilst we have melted away like snow beneath an April sun; our strength is wasted, our countless warriors dead, our forests laid low, you have hounded us from every place as with a wand, you have swept away all our pleasant

---

[8] For a fuller treatment of Shinguaconse see Janet E. Chute, *The Legacy of Shingwaukonse*.

> land, and like some giant foe you tell us 'willing or unwilling, you must now go from amid these rocks and wastes, I want them now! I want them to make rich my white children, whilst you may shrink away to holes and caves like starving dogs to die! Yes, Father, your white children have opened our very graves to tell the dead even they shall have no resting place.
> Father.
> Was it for this we first received you with the hand of friendship, and gave you the room whereupon to spread your blanket? Was it for this that we voluntarily became the children of our Great Mother the Queen? Was it for this we served England's sovereign so well and truly, that the blood of the red skin has moistened the dust of his own hunting grounds....
> Father,
> We Begin to fear that those sweet words had not their birth in the heart, but they lived only in the tongue; they are like those beautiful trees under whose shadow it is pleasant for a time to repose and hope, but we cannot forever indulge in their graceful shade-they produce no fruit.
> Father,
> We are men like you, we have the limbs of men, we have the hearts of men and we feel and know that all this country is ours; even the weakest and most cowardly animals of the forest when hunted to extremity, though they feel destruction sure, will turn upon the hunter.
> Father,
> Drive us not to the madness of despair. We are told that you have laws which guard and protect the property of your white children, but you have made none to protect the rights of your red children. Perhaps you expected that the red skin could protect himself from the rapacity of his pale faced bad brother." (qtd in Petrone 65)

But the White conscience was shameless. And traditionless. No matter that Shinguaconse or Copway or any other indignant Native spoke in the indigenous tradition of metaphors or thundered in the manner of Biblical prophets. The colonizers' march was largely dictated by their re/settling schemes which they overlaid with ideology and covered up with double-dealings. The eastern Native resistance tradition of tactically calling on White moral sense or White ignominy, or to common humanity or to veiled threats--all of it fell on deaf ears as colonizing Eurocanadians stole the east and then turned westward.

Perhaps it should come as no surprise that an eastern Native poet, one of the first officially recognized Native poets, came to the defense of her western colleagues. Born in 1862 to an English mother and a Mohawk father on the Six Nations Indian Reserve, Johnson was to become a famous poet who celebrated and defended Native people in her works. Though her defense was in some ways compromised, she gained an international reputation as a champion of Native rights. Her collection of poems in *Flint and Feather* is a Canadian classic.

Two poems in particular stand out as works protesting physical invasions that took place in her time. One poem addresses the military invasion which conventional historians have called "The Northwest Rebellion." The other poem defends a 'cattle thief' (most likely a reference to Almighty Voice, the Cree man who was hunted and shot by the Northwest Mounted Police for killing a white man's cow to feed his starving family). In these two poems we find dramatic examples of resistance. In the poem "The Cattle Thief" (10-14), Johnson is emotional and convincing in her defense of the starving Cree man who she calls Eagle Chief. After the "English" shoot him down, Eagle Chief's daughter rushes to protect his body, and then harangues the English:

You have cursed, and called him a Cattle Thief, though
You robbed him first of bread...
How have you paid us for our game? How paid us for
our land?....
When you pay for the land you live in, we'll pay for
the meat we eat.
Give back our land and our country, give back our
herds of game...
And blame, if you dare, the hunger that drove him to
be a thief.

"A Cry From an Indian Wife" (15-18) is an intense poem expressing the humanity of both white and Indian fighters, of white and Indian wives during a war. The context is the Riel Resistance and even though Johnson (perhap because she was a halfbreed) is caught between the two sides, she supports the Indian finally on the basis of land rights. The poem begins with the Indian wife telling her husband

Here is your Knife!.
'twill drink the lifeblood of a soldier host.
Go; rise and strike, no matter what the cost.
Yet stay. Revolt not at the Union Jack.
Nor raise Thy hand against this stripling pack
They never think how they would feel today,
If some great nation came from far away,
Wresting their country from their hapless braves,
Giving what they gave us--but wars and graves.
Then go and strike for liberty and life,
And bring back honour to your Indian wife.
Your wife? Ah, what of that, who cares for me?
Who pities my poor love and agony?....
Who prays for vict'ry for the indian scout?
None-therefore take your tomahawk and go.
My heart may break and burn into its core...

> Yet stay, my heart is not the only one
> That grieves the loss of husband and of son...
> Think of the pale-faced maiden on her knees...
> She never thinks of my wild aching breast
> Nor prays for your dark face...
> O! Coward self I hesitate no more;
> Go forth and win the glories of the war
> Go forth, nor bend to greed of white men's hands,
> By right, by birth, we Indians own these lands...

It is intriguing that Johnson, herself an eastern metis, refers only to whites and Indians about a situation that principally involved the Metis of Red River. The issue of Metis loss of land space in western Canada is as much an issue about Aboriginal land rights as it is for other Native groups. Yet, for all the attention Riel has received in the Canadian canons, Metis loss of their homelands remains the least appreciated in Canadian consciousness. This despite Riel's exceptionally clear explanation of the 'causes' behind the Red River Metis resistance of 1869. In an article published in Montreal in 1874 Riel pointed out that, in the first instance, Canada began doing 'public works in its name' two years before the NWT was officially transferred. Further,

> The arrival of the Canadian agents in the country was remarkable by the disdain which they affected for the authority of the company and for the original settlers. They attempted to seize the best properties of the Metis, particularly at Oak Point....They pretended that they had bought these properties from the Indians.
>
> ...Canada committed another intrusion in the summer of 1869 by surveying the public and private lands around Fort Garry with a new system of measurement, thus disturbing, without any explanation, the

> established order and unscrupulously upsetting the original settlers in the peaceful and legal possession of their land.
>
> The objections of the Hudson's Bay Company government were soon followed by those of the settlers who greatly objected to the fact that people thus suspected should open public roads and survey their (the settlers') own lands, in the name of a foreign government, and with no guarantees.
>
> At the same time, Mr. McDougall appeared on the frontier at Pembina....He brought with him a Council entirely composed of men whom we did not know. But his principal claim to our respect was that a considerable number of rifles were following him close behind.
>
> ...neither the English government nor the government of the Hudson's Bay Company had...spoke to us about Mr. McDougall....Therefore, Mr. McDougall was an invader. We repulsed him on November 1, 1869....
>
> As a result of all this, and since the Imperial authorities had seen fit to reprimand the cabinet at Ottawa, it has always seemed strange to the people of Assiniboia to hear themselves spoken of in official and other documents in Canada as a rebellious and misguided population, because we did not want to submit to the arbitrary procedures of the Canadian government. (qtd in Bowsfield 35-37)

Of course, the Metis saga of land loss only got worse with time. As it did for all the other Aboriginal groups in Canada. Moving east to west, Euro-Canadians expanded, took up the space and through the manipulative powers of legislation, both strengthened and rationalized their displacement of Aboriginal peoples. In western Canada, as noted earlier, Native peoples were rendered peripheral and were a/voided for a century, by both White Canadian historical records and cultural productions as well as from social consciousness. It was as if they had no history, no cultures, no life worth mentioning.

It is a great loss to Canadian knowledge that with the exception of Riel, western Native peoples were not able to tell us in their own written words the encounters and the facts of the invasion processes as these things happend to them. Oral tradition of this experience exists, of course, but it is not yet received. Nor was it received in the Canadian courts during the trials of Big Bear, Poundmaker or Riel. These men gave their testimonies but they were not received. Riel supplemented his testimonies and interviews with his own writing but none of it was received. During the 1860s to the 1880s, the time when western Native (Indian and Metis) peoples lost their lands, lives and independence, Riel was alone in his ability to express in writing Canada's displacement of Aboriginal peoples. Riel's style and resistance deserve greater revisitation than I can give here.[9] In many respects, he is an anomaly. Riels's mother language was Red River French, not Cree or Ojibway. At the tender age of fourteen, Riel was plucked from his home by a patronizing order of priests, and placed in a foreign institution. His training in a Quebec seminary coupled with his interest in law, as well as his experience in his people's liberation struggle mark his style. He uses few metaphors, is more formal, logical, direct and factual in approach. He believed in the powers of Western reasoning. Yet, he struggled profoundly with matters of faith rather than reason. His mysticism and visionary religion and politics complicates our understanding of his resistance. Though he gave his life for Aboriginal rights, he was in many ways deeply colonized, especially in his general acceptance of Western social and religious traditions. However, he did come to see the Roman Catholic Church and its priests, along with the invading Anglo easterners, as usurpers. It was his decolonizing and prophetic traditions which led to his death. Riel's "rebellion" anticipated Third World liberation struggles, but his heart, his poetics and his lonely stand place him within Native resistance traditions. But his style was decidedly different from the eastern largely Ojibway writing.

---

[9] There are, of course, numerous works and viewpoints on Riel. For an introduction to Riel's thoughts and beliefs, see Flanagan, ed. *The Diaries of Louis Riel,* and Flanagan, *Louis 'David' Riel: Prophet of the New World.* For a more contemporary overview, see Siggins, *Riel: A Life of Revolution.*

In western Canada there had not yet developed a "coterie of Indian writers" who could report in the language of English but maintain an indigenous ethos on an era which was extremely significant, even cataclysmic in the lives of western Aboriginal peoples. The deaths of Almighty Voice, Big Bear, Poundmaker and Riel, among thousands of other Native peoples who will remain nameless in Canadian history, are an indication of how devastating and disturbing this particular era was. As we know so plainly, for the most part we can only rely on the colonizer's powers of documentation and interpretation. Penny Petrone in *Native Literature in Canada* reports that between 1914-1969, there were a handful of residential school graduates who wrote essays or short biographies (95-111). However, most of these individuals had difficulty finding avenues of publication. One voice from that era does stand out.

Saskatchewan-born, Plains Cree Edward Ahenekew (1885-1961) produced an intriguing collection *Voices of the Plains Cree*. Ahenekew was an ordained Anglican deacon who spent many years teaching in mission schools. In 1918-19 an epidemic of influenza devastated thousands of Native peoples throughout the far northwest. Deeply affected by this suffering, Ahenekew at the age of thirty-five, entered medical school in Edmonton. Illness and finances forced him to leave his medical training, and under the encouragement of his church, Ahenekew went to rest at Chief Thunderchild's reserve. It was there in 1923 that he began taking notes for *Voices of the Plains Cree,* but it was not until 1973, fifty years later, that the manuscript found publication under the editorship of Ruth Buck.

Voices of the Plains Cree is an ingeniously crafted resistance book which combines *achimoowin* and *atowkehwin* through the voices of Chief Thunderchild and Ahenekew's literary creation 'Old Keyam.' In Part One we hear the voice of Thunderchild (1849-1927) who, as a young man, was a follower of Big Bear, and was the last to sign Treaty Number 6. In Cree and to a Cree audience while a Cree man was taking notes (to translate to English), Thunderchild offers legends and history as he recounts the days of Cree freedom, of buffalo hunting, Blackfoot fighting and Sun Dancing. Thunderchild exudes sadness, outrage and disbelief that within such a short span of time the freedom-loving Cree had become exiles and prisoners of alien forces in their own lands. Losing freedom of worship was particularly "heart-rending." Thunderchild told of the effects on Fine Day's wife: "Fine Day is one who is not permitted to make the Sun Dance that he vowed, and the shock has stunned his wife, as though she had been shot" (69).

Perhaps because Ahenekew the missionary was not free to express directly his outrage that his lands were occupied and his people shattered, he devised 'Old Keyam.' 'Keyam' is a Cree word with many subtle shades of meaning. Depending on the context, *keyam* can connotate either a fatalistic resignation or a wise acceptance of things we cannot change. Ahenekew interpreted it as 'I do not care,' and explained,

> Old Keyam had tried in his youth to fit himself into the new life; he had thought that he would conquer; and he had been defeated instead. If we listen to what he has to say, perhaps we may understand those like him, who know not what to do, and in their bewilderment and their hurt, seem not to care. (13)

Through Old Keyam Ahenekew tried to understand Cree responses which appeared disproportionately placid given the staggering events which had overtaken them. He could also address White injustices and express his own disillusionments with White culture. There was also a part of 'Old Keyam' in Ahenekew who had tried "to fit himself into the new life," but "had been defeated instead." He was a man in agony, one who felt the desperations of his people yet remained committed to Christianity, the enemy's religion as Thunderchild made clear. As it turned out, Ahenekew's Plains Cree voices were not to be heard until the 1970s, the era which swept in new generations of decolonizing Aboriginal voices who would begin to re/fill the pages of Canadian history.

Contemporary Native resistance literature essentially begins with Harold Cardinal whose opening statement challenges Canadian records and policies:

> The history of Canada's Indians is a shameful chronicle of the white man's disinterest, his deliberate trampling of Indian rights and his repeated betrayal of our trust. Generations of Indians have grown up

> behind a buckskin curtain....Now, at a time when our fellow Canadians consider the promise of a Just Society, once more the Indians of Canada are betrayed by a programme which offers nothing better than cultural genocide. (Cardinal 1)

Taking the Canadian politicians and public by storm, young, Cree and President of the Indian Association of Alberta, Harold Cardinal charged the government with a "thinly disguised programme of extermination through assimilation," only slightly modifying the famous American saying "The only good Indian is a dead Indian" to "The only good Indian is a non-Indian."

Native people, Cardinal explained, "look back on generations of accumulated frustration under conditions which can only be described as colonial, brutal and tyrannical, and look to the future with the gravest of doubts." Cardinal continued:

> As an Indian writing about a situation I am living and experiencing in common with thousands of our people it is my hope that this book will open the eyes of the Canadian public to its shame. I intend to document the betrayals of our trust, to show step by step how a dictatorial bureaucracy has eroded our rights, atrophied our culture and robbed us of simple human dignity. I will expose the ignorance and bigotry that has impeded our progress, the eighty years of educational neglect that have hobbled our young people for generations, the gutless politicians who have knowingly watched us sink in the quicksands of apathy and despair and have failed to extend a hand.

Cardinal spelled out what such an extension of hand could look like:

> I challenge the Honorable Mr. Trudeau and the Honorable Mr. Chretien to reexamine their unfortunate policy, to offer the Indians of Canada hope instead of despair, freedom instead of frustration, life in the Just Society instead of cultural annihilation.

He criticized Canada's priorities by comparing Canada's preservation of whooping cranes while neglecting and assimilating Indians:

> It sometimes seems to Indians that Canada shows more interest in preserving its rare whooping cranes than its Indians. And Canada, the Indian notes, does not ask its cranes to become Canada geese. It just wants to preserve them as whooping cranes. Indians hold no grudge against the big, beautiful, nearly extinct birds, but we would like to know how they managed their deal. (1-3)

Since this watershed moment between the federal government and status Indians in Canadian history, Aboriginal writers of many identities have continued the tradition of thunderous tellings of their historical and contemporary place in Canadian society. On the heels of Cardinal's clear and furious challenge to Canadian society and government came a slight but steady stream of other writers, each of them articulating the multifarious places of invasion experienced by Native peoples.

It must be emphasized here that as we move from the early Native sources to contemporary Native writing, the themes and texture become more complicated. We are addressing not only layers and legacies of historical experiences, interpretations and issues, but also of contemporary facts of neo-colonialism. Many Native writers combine all these ways of responding. We are at once deconstructing and reconstructing. Our works are a complex combination of challenging and re-inscribing historical and cultural records and at the same time protesting on-going injustices and current social conditions. Needless to say, the multifacetedness of contemporary Native response makes it extremely challenging to speak from it or for its members.

Devastating Consequences of Colonization

With invasion comes the consequences. With the loss of lands came the loss of independence and pride. Indians were herded unto reserves and confined and regulated under the terms of the Indian Act. The Metis did not even get any homelands due to the vagaries of the federal government's scrip program.[10] As Lussier and Sealey have so aptly said, they became "Canada's forgotten people."[11] Besides documenting the material and associated spiritual and cultural invasions, these writers have of course at the same time addressed the devastating consequences that colonization has wrought, repeatedly, century after century. Thousands of human lives have been lost through the centuries and thousands more continue to suffer a host of socio-economic consequences.

One of the most immediate ramifications deriving from the Native peoples' loss of space and freedom was the loss or severe curtailment of using the land for hunting and other resources, the very basis of their cultural integrity. Already in 1798 through the letter of Joseph Brant, we see that the British Canadian assumption of Native lands was destroying the hunting possibilities for the Mohawks, not to mention their political sovereignty and livelihood. In a letter to Captain Green which revealed the many ways that British Canadian government was pressuring the Mohawks, Brant explained:

---

[10] For an excellent overview of the Metis' loss of lands in the aftermath of the two Riel/Metis resistances, see RCAP, "The Metis Perspectives" 198-386; see also Sawchuk & Sawchuk. Ferguson and Metis Association of Alberta, *Metis Land Rights in Alberta.*

[11] For a nationalist rendering of Metis history, see Lussier and Sealey, *The Metis: Canada's Forgotten People.* Unfortunately, Lussier and Sealey adopt George F. Stanley's civ/sav interpretation of the Metis' resistance and exodus from the Red River.

> ...the movements of Gov. Simco in attempting to curtail our lands to one half of the River, and recollecting our deed from Gov. Haldimand to be unequal to his first promises caused us to make such a large sale at once that the matter might come to a point and we might know whether the land was ours or not--the next reason was that the lands all around us being given away to different people, some of them, those that had even been engaged in war against us we found it necessary to sell some land, that we might have an income, the hunting being entirely destoyed.--We now learn that the ministry never intended we should alienate the lands.... (Moses and Goldie 14-15)

Control of lands was clearly not in the hands of the Mohawks, just as it had not been in the hands of the Mississaugas on whose lands the loyalist Mohawks now depended. In any event, to say that Native peoples lost their lands and resources is also to say that they lost the ground of their cultural being. For Native peoples land was truly everything. Their very cultures and their very physical and economic existence depended on their use of lands and land-based resources. To Aboriginal peoples land was a relationship, a relationship often expressed in kinship and spiritual terms. As Douglas Cardinal has explained: "We feel a great sorrow for the destruction of the land, for life springs from the earth. When the land is destroyed all those living on the land are destroyed too and we, the people of the land, feel a sense of our own destruction" (44). As is finally beginning to be understood, Aboriginal concepts and therefore uses of land were fundamentally at variance from European concepts.[12]

---

[12] Much has been learned concerning the real differences between Native and Colonizer concepts and treatments of land through the study and legal cases on Aboriginal Land Rights. Many scholars in this field may be consulted, including Cumming and

So many explanations offered on Native/White relationships, particularly on the socio-economic disparities between these two groups have revolved around stereotypical notions of "cultural differences." Such a treatment of Native culture(s) has been full of problems including generalizations, stereotypes, romanticization, reductionism, all of which has led to typological trait-listing. In a later chapter I come back to this persistent (and often typologized) theme of cultural differences in the context of Aboriginal literary criticism. It is in response to these rather layered ideas that I refer to *real* differences. The Aboriginal use and relationship to the land is one such real difference. It truly represents a cultural difference and White treatment of these land issues did and do impact on Native peoples in ways White peoples have not understood, or have denied understanding. To dispossess Aboriginal peoples of their land space was and is to disconnect them of their spirituality and of their economic well-being. Contrary to the stereotypes of 'Indians' as aimless wanderers, Aboriginal peoples were and are profoundly rooted to their lands. Land was never just a legal, economic or real estate commodity that could be sold, enclosed or replaced.[13] For Aboriginal peoples; land has always been a deeply emotional, spiritual and political relationship. Aboriginal peoples did not 'just' lose land space, which would be bad enough in itself, but they lost and continue to lose a way of life.

The material loss of lands has left an emotional and spiritual gash in the hearts of all Aboriginal peoples. For example, in western Canada, it is

---

Mickenberg, Sanders, Slatterry, Asch, Woodward, Cassidy.

[13] York in *Dispossession* makes the same point.

significant that shortly after the Metis were defeated and the First Nations were herded unto reserves, some of the more well-known leaders died. Poundmaker and Big Bear, after having been jailed, died of broken hearts because they understood the import of losing lands and freedoms. I believe this can also be said of Riel. He was hanged, yes, but long before that day, I believe he had been dying of a broken heart. Politically beaten, physically exiled and intellectually isolated, it was his heart, not his mind that was torn. And I also believe that of all the Native peoples who have been dying since the Europeans began invading, a great majority of them have been dying from broken hearts. Of course, it is difficult to 'prove' that humans die of broken hearts, but the death toll among Native people, particularly the gross rate of suicide among Native youth, cannot be explained entirely by cold hard facts.

Clearly, invasion and dispossession ravages the human spirit. Geographical and legislative restrictions, powerlessness and the growing depletion of their customary resources overtaxed the Native peoples. Their use (or abuse) of alcohol, for example, is best understood as a symptom of dispossession rather than as some cultural reflex to an alien item. As early as 1861, Native Methodist missionary Peter Jones reveals the Native's confusion and despair in their usage of alcohol and clearly associates this with White incursion:

> Oh, what an awful account at the day of judgement must the unprincipled white man give, who has been an agent of Satan in the extermination of the original proprietors of the American soil! Will not the blood of the red man be required at his hands, who, for paltry gain, has impaired the minds, corrupted the morals, and ruined the constitutions of a once hardy and numerous race? (qtd in Petrone 37)

And of course, one of the primary reasons why Chief Crowfoot, the controversial Blackfooot leader of the 1870s, chose to sign Treaty Number Seven and to align himself with the Northwest Mounted Police, Father Lacombe and the Canadian Pacific Railway, was because his people were suffering desperately from deadly diseases, starvation, demoralization, confusion and despair even before they lost the lands through treaties and the Indian Act. They expressed their desperation by turning to alcohol. He thought he could best assist his people by the process of making treaties, a process familiar to Crowfoot since treaties have Aboriginal roots.[14] Treaties signified honour in the highest sense because treaties between Native peoples were based, obviously, on the spoken word. Peoples of oral traditions approached treatied words with utmost respect and ceremony. Peoples' honours literally depended on their word. Neither Crowfoot nor other Native negotiators could have anticipated such disregard for honour as in the Euro-Canadian exploitation through treaties.

The theme of Native people's socio-economic confusion and despair runs through much of Native writing. Native missionaries, analysts, commentators, scholars, novelists, poets, playwrights--all in some way address the emotional costs of imperialism. Despair and violence run particularly strong in the novels of Armstrong and Slipperjack (treated later), Culleton and Maracle. A similar theme runs in much of the autobiographies and poetry written by Native peoples.

---

[14] Negotiated agreements were certainly not alien to Aboriginal politics or cultures. Historians (Rotstein, Jean Friesen, Dickason, Ray) have noted the Aboriginal tradition of gift exchange and ceremony which often attended the conclusion of trade or verbal agreements. These rituals signified the central importance of keeping one's word.

Beatrice Culleton's *In Search of April Raintree* deals with the disintegrating effects of colonization on a family.[15] The story follows two metis sisters who are on one level, searching for re-integration of family selves, but on another perhaps deeper level, searching for a positive Native identity. April is searching for her sister Cheryl who had been taken away by Child and Family Services. Both sisters are searching for a positive self/image about their Indianness, an image based apparently on the 'White man's romanticized invention of the "Indian." April's search for her sister is also a search for herself. Having been conditioned to be ashamed of her Native-ness, April finds self-acceptance through her sister, but not before April's personal dignity and Cheryl's life are sacrificed.

But Cheryl too is searching. All along April thinks Cheryl is proud of her Native heritage. But what Cheryl was proud of was the romantic image she held about both Indians in the past and about her parents whom she never knew. How else explain Cheryl's fairly rapid disintegration following her discovery that her father, "a gutter creature" as Culleton describes him, was a drunk in the slums? From hereon, Cheryl takes us to the slums, to prostitution, to squalor, to despair. Cheryl finally takes her life. The reader is left wondering whether she committed suicide because her romanticized image of Indianness, an image that had kept her obviously fragile identity together, was blown apart, or whether because she blamed herself for the horrific attack against April, which as the courts unravel, was meant for Cheryl, or because Cheryl could no longer cope with the socio-economic hopelessness all around her, a hopelessness she and her friends lived in.

---

[15] For an erudite critical treatment of *April Raintree* see Hoy, "'Nothing but the Truth': Discursive Transparency in Beatrice Culleton."

Squalor, slumming, male violence against Native women, and rage and despair also run strong in most of Lee Maracle's works, beginning with *I Am Woman,* published in 1988. Lee Maracle spares the reader nothing. Her style is unrestrained as she relentlessly juxtaposes the despair against the uncaring Canadian society and co-opted Native organizational leadership.

Frustration and anger is also apparent in much non-fiction writing, particularly of the 'social protest' era of the 1970s. However, this writing does not so much go into the details of despair as much as the resistance to it. We write against despair. We write as an alternative to our own despair. And we write because we want to alleviate the conditions which make people live desperate lives. Metis social analyst, scholar and writer Howard Adams in *Prison of Grass* (1975) and again in *A Tortured People: The Politics of Colonization* (1996) seethes with outrage and criticism that Native peoples continue to live in extreme poverty and powerlessness. His works combine scholarship (documenting and questioning racist historical sources) and social protest. Other social protest non-fiction writers of the 1970s (Waubageshig, Pelletier, Manuel, LaRoque) were also challenging the racist constructions of the dominant narrative as well as re/establishing the emotional and cultural basis of Native humanity. Although we were not as expressively "angry," we also used a combination of documentation, facts of biography and "barbed wit" to point to historical and current injustices in areas such as education, the media, the governments, lands, resources and racism.

George Manuel reviewed how provincial and federal Native organizations pressed for land and resource rights in the face of British

Columbia's obstinate refusal to honour Native land rights. Wilfred Pelletier recalled his "childhood village" as a model for networking and organizing. Waubageshig turned to Frantz Fanon, the Algerian psychiatrist turned revolutionary of the 1950s in his exposition of colonization as experienced by Canada's Native peoples. Kirkness and myself, among a number of others, provided alternatives to the racist constructions in Canadian school textbooks and classrooms.

Biographies and autobiographies also pointed to historical and contemporary injustices. Some Native writers (Maracle, Monture-Angus, Keeshig-Tobias) argue that theory in Native writing comes not from the construction of the narrative but from the telling of the story itself. I have found that most Native autobiographies are not centrally about personal life events, rather, life events are recounted to make sense of what was a colonial experience not understood at the time such events or responses took place. In other words, life events are told to locate the story. For example, Maria Campbell begins in *Halfbreed* by situating her community against the backdrop of the Northwest "Rebellion" and the Canadian treatment of Halfbreed peoples. Campbell traces her community struggles to the consequent and subsequent colonial forces surrounding them. Forces such as landlessness, poverty, the police, the priests, the prejudice of white people in town and in the school. Her own family was able to withstand some of these pressures until her mother died when Campbell was 12 years old. After this period, Campbell's life took on a nightmarish slide. Her heartrending account of her early marriage, loss of her siblings to Child and Welfare bureacracy, birth of her children, abuse by her husband, her own abuse of drugs, her eventual prostitution and suicidal depression, as well as her experiences with racism exploded Canada's naive notions of a caring and charitable country.

Significantly, Campbell highlights her great grandmother Campbell she affectionately called 'Cheechum.' Cheechum was a niece of Gabriel Dumont "and her whole family fought beside Riel and Dumont during the Rebellion." Cheechum passed on stories of this event and of the people to Campbell. She believed that the land belonged to Indian and Halfbreed peoples, not to white "settlers"; she refused to be a Christian and she scorned offers of welfare and old age pension. She made her living from hunting, trapping and gardening. Cheechum "never accepted defeat at Batoche" and remained, in her own way, a resistance fighter throughout her life.

Perhaps poets and the medium of poetry have expressed most powerfully the drastic legacy that 'defeat' has engendered. Willow Barton, Cree metis from Saskatchewan introduces her poem "Where Have the Warriors Gone" in *Writing The Circle* by explaining that she was inspired to write this poem while wondering what "circumstances contribute to success in a Native person's life" (8-14). But the poem is really about what circumstances lead to Native individual to the streets or to a mental hospital. The poem follows the classic Native style of situating culture and colonization. It is a long poem (six pages) and though through it we hear the anguish of disempowerment, violation, betrayal, guilt, sorrow, remarkably, it struggles hope for the new generation. A young Cree woman/child addresses her grandmother whom she learns has died. She begins by situating her "life of innocence" living the "indian way," of knowing "the secrets of earth and wind." Such "Truths" are shattered when "the white man comes," particularly "a man with long black robes" who "took something he didn't own."

> Grandmother, he didn't take a woman
> today he took away the child
> the sky is crying and I am cold

The poet leaves her grandmother for the city "full of electric lights" but begs forgiveness for she had to leave, escape "the secret burning in my soul." The city, however, is barren and unforgiving: "there are no buttercups or wild blue violets," a barrenness no city shoes can cushion:

> walking in pink patent leather shoes
> grandmothers, i am barefoot no more
> but why is it i feel so cold?

No one is there to protect her, no one was there to protect her innocence: "there are no warriors riding strong and brave." But she hastens to explain, "they cannot see the enemy's face / nor swing a hatchet against white man's ways." The oppression is in the profoundest sense, 'invisible' because it is at once systemic, yet also very private. She was alone to face the elements of the city, to face the enemy, the vulture in the large car. She entreats the unmarked and violent thieves of the unknowing to "see": "Can you really see? / I was a fawn with trusting eyes."

Her innocence again re-broken, for oppression is not a one-time thing; she is left to deal with a child, a child she calls Donovan, "a white name, it means dark warrior." This is a child by the enemy; a child she is not even allowed to keep, the "people from the welfare came." She finds "amber grace" in "the bottle," for it "washes away my boy-child's face." In her despair she internalizes a stereotype: "i am just another drunken indian."

The young woman/child then appears to have a breakdown, is apparently hospitalized and finally responds to "a gentle thief the old doctor [who] sneaks / within the pocket of my soul to steal / sleeping secrets where they lie hidden." But opening up "sleeping secrets" cannot disappear the outrage of invasion which steals forever childhood, grandmothers and one's own sense of self: "grandmother, you wouldn't know my face / you, who called me morning star." She does not know her face either and from a place of suicidal despair she crys out:

> from the valley of peace, i call you
> as my ancestors called before me
> dear grandmother, i have need of dream

The young woman struggles to come back to life and wonders what it takes. Does it take "forgiveness"? What is forgiveness?

> didn't you say forgiving is the lame old leg
> we sometimes have to carry around reminding
> that we cannot hate all for one sin done...

The poet needs "forgiveness" if for no other reason than that "she cannot carry hate upon [her] back." She needs it to be able to end on "dreams upon an eagle's wing" so that when her "child will look upon [her] face / it will not be with shame or hate."

Perhaps no one Native poet has treated more the theme of contemporary despair than Duncan Mercredi of Winnipeg. In a successive series of books of poetry published in the 1990s (*Spirit of the Wolf, Dreams* *of the Wolf,* and *Wolf and Shadows*), Mercredi sets the 'wolf' against 'the rage of the city.' He too writes about the "Black Robe," about how "parking trucks on the block / circle endlessly / luring black and blue children," about smoke filled bars where "brown" men and women [are] "dancing in the past / playing the blues / into back alleys / tripping over bodies wasted on city life." He writes too of leaving 'the land of northern lights' and Kokum, about the forest and eagles against city lights, concrete, sirens and streets, about caskets and 'the blues at midnight.'

In a poem called "dreams of the wolf in the city" the wolf "feels anguish" and "wolf runs as he feels the breath of diesel monsters / and the forest turns to concrete under his feet / and trails turn to back alleys." Mercredi knows why the brown people from the forest now live in "needle tracks" with "scarred trees."[16] In "Occupied Territories" Mercredi also uses some of the same imagery that Willow Barton uses. He too tells us of an old "warrior" facing "new enemies" in a "new battlefield" of "shadows"and "alleys" making him remember

> occupied territories
> old warrior stops
> he remembers his reason
> he fought to free occuppied territories
> medals flash bombs explode

---

[16] I can see why Mercredi uses the imagery of the 'wolf in the city' to highlight Native alienation in the city; 'wolf' as a natural, forest-based creature is, like the Native, totally out of his element in concrete. However, even if we see the wolf positively, I am not comfortable with the implied association between the wolf and the Native, given that white literature is replete with unromantic metaphors associating Indians and animals. It does also bring to mind Kevin Costner's not so subtle association between Indians and wolves in the movie *Dances With Wolves*. It is quite clear with whom the white hero is dancing.

And just as in war, there is death here; more, death here of children is because of internal war, the occupation of Native lands. This is as deadly to young men as war:

> (Vision of a child rope around his/her neck)
> here over there
> old warrior crouches in the alley
> occupied territories...
> (A rifle shot-forest goes silent-a young man falls)
> here over there...
> (A little body rises from beneath the water)
> here over there
> old warrior cries
> over there hero
> here what does he want
> occupied territories
> he had returned
> to occupied territories. (50)

The city as a battlefield is a theme that runs through much of Native poetry. In 1977 Ojibway poet George Kenny also wrote about Native people's struggles. In a poem "Rubbie at Central Park" Kenny situates Winnipeg as a place where "thirty thousand Indians / find acceptance / with a 10 fl. oz bottle of rubbing / alcohol to start forgetting."[17]

> the personnel man at the Bay
> or any other employment office
> took a look at clothes one didn't
> have...

---

[17] It is doubtful that Kenny meant to say that all "thirty thousand Indians" were on the streets of Winnipeg!

Or maybe, just said to himself,
oh oh, a wino, look at his
scarred face
and said a sorry he didn't mean. (6)

What society has done with Native suffering startles Jeannette Armstrong. In a poem "Death Mummer" she walks through Vancouver's "Thunderbird Park" and notes

There are no Indians here
None
even in the million dollar museum
that so carefully preserves
their clothing, their cooking utensils
their food;
for taxpayers...
to rush their children by

There are some Indians
hanging around Kings hotel
and they are dead,
preserved in alcohol.
It would be neater though
to kill us all at once...

But it isn't just society that startles Armstrong. She too feels implicated for having items which are used for museum pieces: "With blood-stained fingers / I remove my mask." But she "staggers under" the "clever mask" that she has "fashioned" for herself:

from the bones and skin
of my dead tribe
and dipped in the fresh blood

> of my brothers and sisters
> scooped from old battle streets
> near hotels. (In Fife 10-11)

Native resistance literature, then, is born on the bones and tears of suffering Native humanity. But the suffering is complex and is not found merely in back alleys, barrooms or poor houses. With piercing verse, Sarain Stump captured the '400 [500] year old pain': "and I had been killed a thousand times / Right at his feet / But he hadn't understood."

CHAPTER FOUR

NATIVE WRITERS RESIST: ADDRESSING DEHUMANIZATION

Native intellectuals and writers also suffer. Our vocations do not protect us either from dispossession, social inequality, poverty or the daily indecencies of racism in stores and streets or in our places of play and work. Many, if not most of us have direct connection to those people "preserved in alcohol" or those who beg, or those who are looking for their sisters, or those going to faraway places in order to hunt, to get a job or to go to school. Or those people left behind to fend off village bullies. Or those whose "blueberry hills" have been stolen. In the poetic words of Metis writer Marilyn Dumont: "Who knows what it's like to leave, to give up a piece of land? If you do, it might haunt you forever, follow you til you come back."[1]

Many of us "come back" to lands that have no earth. Many of us come back haunted from the war of words ringing in our heads. But who knows us in these paper-chasing places? "I do my footnotes so well / nobody knows where I come from." Our 'footnotes' serve as reminders that colonial writing is about power and legitimization, and those who must live under its terms are like poet Duke Redbird's "Old Woman in the field / bent low..." (in Dunn 84-86). Yet as writers we are impelled to disturb any people who are sleeping. To be a Native intellectual is to wrestle with ideas, images and words that dehumanize us. Textual dehumanization, much like invasion, has many faces, fronts and forms. So does resistance to it.

---

[1] In this article called "The Gift," Dumont writes of watching her father revisit and linger over a beloved spot of land he had long ago lost.

Challenging Historical and Cultural Records: The Sub-text of the Power Struggle

> They say that sometimes we cover our hair with feathers and wear masks when we dance. Yes, but a white man told me one day that the white people have also sometimes masquerade balls and white women have feathers on their bonnets and the white chiefs give prizes for those who imitate best, birds or animals. And this is all good when white men do it but very bad when Indians do the same thing. (Letter dictated by Nootka leader Macquinna in 1896, in Petrone 93)

Most if not all Native writers have in some way protested their dehumanization based on the colonizer historical and cultural records, refuting in particular the charge of savagery because this charge is at the heart of the dehumanization of Aboriginal peoples. This discourse is a power struggle. From the earliest writings, it is painfully clear how deeply Native peoples were affected by the destructive effects of racist constructions. Surely at sites of contact, and certainly, long before Native peoples were able to write, they addressed what they considered untrue and hypocritical, as for example, in the above letter dictated (for publication in a Victoria daily in 1896) by Nootka leader Maquinna. Maquinna was protesting the 1894 Indian Act prohibition of the potlatch. Such editorials are to be found around events that Native peoples were questioning, events such as land grabs, treaty signings, religious prohibitions or residential schools. Extant are numerous translated speeches, debates or petitions. Though such sources are valuable, I do not treat them here.

Rather, my focus is on those works written by Aboriginal peoples. As soon as Native individuals learned the skills of literacy, they challenged, even retaliated against the stereotypes and the name-calling. And they fought the battle of words rather brilliantly at times, especially when they responded in kind. There are exceptional examples from the earliest Native writers.

Mrs. Catherine Soneegoh Sutton (1823-65), an Ojibway born near Credit River, Ontario, was a Native rights activist of the mid-1800s. She spoke, wrote and protested on behalf of Native peoples, especially concerning their land rights. She herself was embroiled in a land dispute against the Indian Department. She may have been one of the first status Indian women to openly and officially resist her loss of land title due to marriage to a non-Indian. Of interest is a letter to the editor (recorded in her journal and quoted in Moses and Goldie) that she wrote in response to a vicious editorial. I quote both the editorial and her refutation. The following is the editorial circa 1864:

> On the shores of Goulais Bay Lake Superior...an Indian reserve was laid of a few years ago...some of the best land in the country and so situated as to block up the means of access to the entire regions lying in the rear of it and all this for about a dozen of the most wretched, squalid, miserable specimens of human nature that I have ever seen: indeed, a close inspection of, and a little acquaintance with, these creatures leads one to doubt whether they are human, but whether they are men or monkeys, it matters not now, the present administration have found means to extinguish their title....

The following is an excerpt of Sutton's unpublished retort (her use of words, spelling and grammar is left as is):

> I suppose the individual who published the above and Mr. Charles Linsey, the great Hearo who tried last fall to frighten the Manitoulin Indians out of their sences and their lands are, one and the same....I have frequently seen those Indians alluded to but I never took them for monkyes neither did I ever hear such a thing hinted at by the white people I think they were allways, considered to be human beings, possessing living souls....when I was in England...I saw a great many monkeys....I observed there was one trait common to them all and a close inspection & a little acquaintance with the Editor of the Leader has led me to the conclusion that the same trait stands out prominenetly in his natural disposition....I will tell you the trait which I observed so common to every variety of monkeys was an entire abscence of humanity.

Sutton continues, perhaps with tongue-in-cheek:

> ...my english his so poor that I frequently have to consult Webster and I find the word extinguish means to destroy to put an end to...our present administration can extinguish the red man's title at pleasure, what hope is their for the remnant that are yet left....I suppose Mr. Linsey will...go to manitoulin with soldiers to subdue the Indians or monkeys as he calls them. (26-27)

In calling Indians 'monkeys' Mr. Linsey was no doubt reflecting the 'scientific' racism in vogue at that time.[2] It is interesting Mr. Linsey did not call the Indians "savages" since it is by far the most used terminological weapon of choice throughout the centuries of contact. It is clear, however, that the editorial follows Canadian tradition in that he likens "Indians" to animals, which is simply another way of saying they were savages. Being called savage has especially infuriated Native peoples as reflected in their responses to this particular depiction. In fact, it would be difficult to find any Native Canadian writing that did not in some way respond to that image.

---

[2] For a good discussion on 'scientific racism' see Berkhofer, *The Whiteman's Indian.*

Naturally, the first response to being characterized a savage or a non-human is to simply say 'I am not a savage.' In a contemporary poem, "Prejudice (Or, In-laws)," the writer Constance Stevenson of Saskatchewan echoes a long tradition of objection, however defensive, even uncertain:

> I am of a different race,
> And I know it bothers you...
> Is it because I'm an Indian
> Or, in your terms, a savage?
> I never asked to be Indian,
> Nor am I a savage. (Perreault and Vance 265)

That Native peoples have felt compelled to address the charge of savagery is an indication of the powers such a charge carries. Comprehending this is central to understanding the colonial relationship between Whites and Natives. It has not been by happenstance that everytime the proverbial 'White man" has made any advances against Native lands, resources or peoples, he has justified it by claiming it is for the 'advancement' of humanity. Jennings explains that words like 'savagery' "evolved from centuries of conquest have been created for the purposes of conquest rather than the purposes of knowledge. To call a man savage is to warrant his death and to leave him unknown and unmourned" (*Invasion* 12). This understanding stands in sharp contrast to Canadian historian James Walker, who despite pointing out how much the torturing techniques of white Quebecers of the 1600s resemble those of the Iroquois, defends the past usage of the the term 'savage': "Perhaps 'savage' was a meaningful word, when used with regard to Indians, for historians fifty years ago. Today that word has taken on connotations that are no longer acceptable" (33). But did this word--and the imagery that comes with the word--ever take on acceptable connotations? Berkhofer traces "the image behind the terminology" to an ancient German legend the *wilder Mann*. Such a wild man "was a hairy, naked, club-wielding child of nature who existed halfway between humanity and animality," one who lived "a life of bestial self-fulfillment, directed by instinct, and ignorant of God and morality....strong of physique, lustful of women and degraded of origin" (13). The *wilder Mann* was in effect Europe's caveman. Curiously, Berkhofer seems to agree with early French and English usage with regard to Native peoples of the north, who lacked "complex social and governmental organization," and to the explorers "were wilder [than Aztec or Inca] Indians." And so, writes Berkhofer, "perhaps the denomination of these peoples as *sauvage* in French and *savage* in English seemed more appropriate...(13). Berkhofer's very own thesis concerning the 'White man's inventions,' would seem to contradict such a generous reading of exploration literature, not to mention, Berkhofer is not a cultural specialist on northern native peoples. Airs of scholarliness, it appears, prevents one from making commitments.

In any event, the word and the substance of the word is never acceptable, certainly not to Native peoples. In any context, civilization means being more ‘human,’ and savagery less than ‘human.’ Dickason in *The Myth of the Savage* notes that the French used the verb *humaniser* when referring to evangelizing Indians. “There was never any doubt” she asserts, “as to the meaning *humaniser*: it signified the transformation of savages into Europeans” (59). Dickason argues that “the idea of savagery made it possible for Europe to by-pass the complexity and integrity of New World societies, it also greatly eased the task of bringing about the acceptance and assimilation of new facts that did not accord with cherished beliefs” (59). She also contests the view that the French use of ‘savage’ in the sixteenth and seventeeth centuries simply meant ‘a man of the woods‘: “While shades of emphasis could and did vary from writer to writer, the general implication was always clear: to be savage meant to be living according to nature, in a manner ‘closer to that of wild animals than to that of man.’ The beast far outweighed the innocent” (63-64). To be called a savage, whether “man” or woman, is to be divested of humanity.

Native writers have felt keenly and understood exactly the political and dehumanizing purposes of this mis/representation. In the context of discussing the federal government’s collusion with missionaries concerning residential schools, Harold Cardinal in *The Ujnust Society* wrote: “The unvarnished truth is that the missionaries of all Christian sects regarded the Indians as savages, heathens or something even worse” (53). Douglas Cardinal, internationally-recognized metis architect whose various speeches were edited and published as “writings” in *Of the Spirit* stated:

> The immigrant culture tried to change our philosophy and destroy our spirit and pride by introducing an alien immigrant philosophy and

> religion that fostered inhumanity and forced on our minds the idea that we were savages.... (43)

But being the brunt of name-calling calls for a response beyond the artifice of documentary tones. There are a number of interesting textual techniques which Native writers have adopted or invented to impress the fact that Native peoples were/are not savages.

The vast majority of Native writers necessarily take an argumentative, stylistically contrapuntal approach in their refutation against the savage portrayal. For purposes of analysis I begin with Native writer's *feelings* about being called savages. Their experience has been difficult, to say the least, but one made considerably more uncomfortable by *seeing* graphic representations of savage "Indians." To such drastic dehumanization, these writers have responded in several strategic directions under the heading "We Are Not Savages": one stream takes a defensive stance by saying "we are civilized" and seeks to establish that Native peoples were civilized, that they had and have cultures. The other stream takes the offense by arguing contrapuntally that it is the 'Whiteman,' not the Native people who were/are the savages. This stream can take several sub-directions: one that simply uses White records to show that Whites were the savages (not in the ideological abstract civ/sav terms but in behaviour); the other takes a turn towards an idealized nativism[3] in which Aboriginal culture(s?) represent a higher moral vision, and therefore, a 'better culture' (which leads us to an intersection of issues so complex that I treat it in a later chapter).

---

[3] By "nativism" I use Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin's definition: "A term for the desire to return to indigenous practices and cultural forms as they existed in pre-colonial society" in *Key Concepts* 159.

Native writers are, to adopt the words of Ashcroft *et al.*, "talking back to the imperial centre," placing Native writing as resistance (Harlow) within the post-colonial intellectual tradition.

Feeling The Savage: Dehumanization As An Experience

Again, colonization is not abstract, it is an experience. The outcome is loss and denigration. Clearly, the characterization of Native peoples as savage has had a profoundly painful and distressing impact on Native writers. This should come as no surprise to anyone who has an inkling about the power of images and the power of the dominant narrative. That is, in the words of Metis scholar Joyce Green:

> racism becomes part of the structural base of the state, and permeates the cultural life of the dominant society, both by its exclusive narrative of dominant experience and mythology, and by its stereotypical rendering of the 'Other' as peripheral and unidimensional. (Diss 26)

Jane Willis, author of *Geneish*, spent her growing years in residential schools in northern Quebec and Ontario in the 1950s and 60s. Besides recording horror stories about bad food, child labour, health problems, military type regulations and loneliness, Willis provides the intellectual connection between racism and its effects on an individual. The general theme of Willis' autobiography is how the school changed her from a self-confident, curious and spontaneous child to one of doubts, inhibitions and fears. She explains:

> For twelve years I was taught...to hate myself. I was made to feel untrustworthy, inferior, incapable and immoral. The barbarian in me I was told, had to be destroyed if I was to be saved. I was taught to feel nothing but shame for my 'pagan savage' ancestors....Because they were savages they did not have the right to defend their land and families. The white man...had a perfect right to kill whole tribes of Indians....I was told I was intelligent, but not intelligent enough to think for myself. Only the white man could do that for me. Ony he knew what was good for me....When I had been stripped of all pride, self-respect, and self-confidence, I was told to make something of myself to show the whiteman that not all Indians were savages or stupid....For twelve years I was brainswashed into believing that 'Indian' was synonymous with 'sub-human', 'savage', 'idiot', and 'worthless'. It took almost that long for me to regain my self-respect.... (67-68)

However, as Metis and non-status Indians can attest, the brainwashing of Native youth into self-hate has not been confined to Status children in residential schools. Howard Adams shared how disturbing the dominant narrative was to his psyche:

> ...I knew that whites were looking at me through their racial stereotypes...it made me feel stripped of all humanity and decency, and left me with nothing but my Indianness, which at the time I did not value....Not only did my sense of inferiority become inflamed, but I came to hate myself for the image I could see in their eyes. Everywhere white supremacy surrounded me. Even in solitary silence, I felt the word 'savage' deep in my soul. (*Prison* 16)

Maria Campbell also struggled with feelings of inferiority, shame and self-hate that comes with the racist connection between Indianness and savagery. In *Halfbreed* Campbell recounts how a combination of poverty and prejudice led to her feelings of shame. In school white children "would tease and call 'Gophers, gophers, Road Allowance people eat gophers.'" Campbell goes on: "We fought back of course but we were terribly hurt and above all ashamed" (50). Throughout her years in school, Campbell along with other Halfbreed children continued to face racism. The depth of her shame came out at a school dance where white peers poked fun at her chaperone Sophie, an older Native woman. When a white girl asked if Sophie was Maria's mother Campbell recalls "Everyone started to snicker and I looked at her and said "That old, ugly Indian?" Campbell instantly felt remorseful, "...I felt shame and hatred for her, myself and the people around me. I could almost see Cheechum standing beside me with a switch saying, 'They make you hate what you are'" (103).

For a long excruciating time Campbell hated what she was, so much so that she rejected her boyfriend Smokey's marriage proposal. She remembers "looking at him and saying 'Marry you? You've got to be joking! I'm going to do something more with my life besides make Halfbreeds." As a youngster Campbell could not make sense of her confusion.

> I wanted to cry. I couldn't understand what was wrong with me. I loved Smokey and wanted to be with him forever, yet when I thought of him and marriage, I saw only shacks, kids, no food, and both of us fighting. I saw myself with my head down and Smokey looking like an old man, laughing only when he was drunk. I loved my people so much and missed them when I couldn't see them often. I felt alive when I went to their parties, and I overflowed with happiness when we would all sit down and share a meal, yet I hated all of it as much as I loved it. (117)

What was it that Maria Campbell dreamed about? What was it that drove her so far away from herself, her loved ones and her community? Campbell, much like so many of us in our childhood years, was inculcated with what she and Howard Adams call the "white ideal" of success. Campbell points to a simple dream in explaining her "driving ambition". That dream was for her brothers and sisters to have a toothbrush, a bowl of fruit, a glass of milk and cookies "and to talk about what they want to do. There will be no more mud shacks and they'll walk with their heads high and not be afraid" (133). Campbell's Cheechum understood the power of suggestive symbols. She "would look at her and see the toothbrushes, fruit and all those other symbols of white ideal of success and say sadly, 'you'll have them, my girl, you'll have them" (134-135). As her book reveals, Campbell paid a very high price to attain some of those symbols.

In *Prison of Grass* Howard Adams situates the Native's struggle with the "White Ideal" in the broader context of colonization and oppression. He argues that the native who has "internalized" the colonizer's culture, judges him-or-herself against the standards, expectations and stereotypes of the "White Ideal."[4] Such a native then aspires to achieve the colonizer's terms and materials of success. This includes the colonizer's standards of beauty. More, the colonizer stands as the standard of beauty.

As part of explaining how 'The White Ideal" works inside the colonized, Adams relates a personal story about a love affair. At the age of 21 Adams fell in love with a white girl.

---

[4] For the most part I find Adams' analysis of the 'White Ideal' perceptive, however, he does generalize a lot, especially on chapter 13. Also, much of the data or sociological commentary upon which he based much of his argument in 1975 is simply no longer applicable. Also, one cannot decry ossification, on one hand, and on the other, criticize Native people for any exhibition of modern aspects of culture. It is to fall into ossification when disallowing change, colonial or not.

> I had always known what ultimate beauty would be....This blonde blue-eyed goddess matched my vision perfectly....Because she was white, she automatically possessed beauty and virtue...when I did kiss her I was kissing white beauty, white dignity, and white civilization ....Her love had baptized me in the stream of whiteness and led me to seek white success. (142-143)

However, the romance did not last. It could not last, for as Adams explains "Her whiteness oppressed me. It crushed me into inferiority; it emphasized my Indianness." Adams generalizes this condition to all Native people:

> Every native person has this inclination towards acceptance and success in white society. Because it operates subconsciously, it is not clearly understood at the conscious level. The supposed splendour of whiteness and the ugliness of things non-white deeply affects native people in their thought and behaviour....These flattering and pleasing myths reinforce the white man's so-called superiority, but to native people they are degrading and destroy their esteem, confidence and pride. (144)

Campbell too provides powerful examples of how a people behave when they have lost their confidence and pride. She explains that it was not simply poverty which drove the people to shame and despair, it was lack of hope which comes from the oppressive dispossession. Speaking to the white audience Campbell states: "...you at least had dreams, you had a tomorrow. My parents and I never shared any aspirations for a future. I never saw my father talk to a white man unless he was drunk. I never saw him or any of our men walk with their heads held high before white people" (9).

Both Campbell and Adams eventually come to a new consciousness about their colonial conditions, particularly about how the colonized respond to oppressive racism. Adams relates how, when years later reading Black radical Eldrigde Cleaver's confessions about his obsessions (which were terrifyingly misogynistic) with whiteness and white women in *Soul on Ice* "I recognized that Cleaver's experiences and my own were very similar."[5]

For Campbell feelings of shame and confusion did not diminish until years later, after much personal disintegration, when she finally came to understand that her heartbreaking journey was all part of the colonization experience. She situates Metis' defeat at Batoche as the site which haunted Campbell's family and community.

The "Savage" has generated much sense of shame, a theme not restricted to the protest literature of the 1970s. The Native confrontation with 'The Savage' continues in more recent writing of every genre. In an autobiographical essay called "Disadvantage to Advantage" included in Jaine and Taylor, 1992, metis writer Ernie Louttit shares his experiences with racism growing up in Thorold, Ontario. His family circumstances were such that his siblings looked white while he had "dark hair, brown eyes and dark skin" he had "inherited" from his " natural father in my mother's first marriage." At the age of five he was first made aware of his "difference" when his "blue-eyed Irish stepfather" roared at his mother to "get that little black bastard out of my sight." In his elementary school years, Louttit was the only "Indian" and often found himself taunted by other children: "Where's your bow and arrow, Geronimo? Where's your bow and arrow?" In an effort to help him, his brother used to say, "Don't let them call you that." As Louttit explains "I do not think my brother meant to insult me but the meaning it conveyed was that it was bad to be Indian" (100). Louttit, like so many other Native writers, continued to experience racism in school at every turn. In high school his brother conveyed to him "it was not a good thing to be seen with an Indian girl, much less date them." Louttit had a white girlfriend. However, "My white girlfriend's father insisted his daughter was degrading herself by dating a 'savage'" (103).

---

[5] Actually, both Adams and Cleaver borrow much from Fanon's *Black Skin, White Mask*. See especially chapters two and three in Fanon.

Jeannette Armstrong's Slash in *Slash* also faces youthful dating dilemmas produced by discrimination in the town school. Some of these experiences Slash could relate (to a sympathetic priest), things such as dealing with the usual stereotypes (of teepees and feathers) and name-calling ("Injuns" and "full of lice"). But, there "were some things" Slash says "that we were too ashamed to even tell. Like all the white girls laughing at Tony when he asked one of them to dance at the sock-hop. He quit school after that. Also how none of the Indian girls ever got asked to dance at the sock-hops because us guys wouldn't dance with them because the white guys didn't" (35).

Seeing The Savage

Should anyone wonder still why the 'savage' has caused us extreme distress and aggravation, it is important to remember that most of us who became writers first met the Savage visually, not only abstractly in print. For many of us we first saw the Savage Indian image in comic books, in school textbooks, and in movie theatres. It was my experience with the pictorial image as much as with written material that 'drove' me to research and resistance. As I have recorded, graphic colorful 'larger than life' presentations of the lurking, crouching, tomahawk swinging, scalp-taking, painted, naked, howling Savage (who was rumored to be my forefather) had a profound and lasting impact on me, and as this thesis shows, on others.

A handful of Native educators and writers have counter produced works on the Indian image-making industry. Such creations range from my slim *Defeathering The Indian* to the *Fluffs & Feathers: An Exhibit on the Symbols of Indianness* by Deborah Doxtator to the voluminous *The Myth of the Savage* by the prolific pace-setting scholar Olive Patricia Dickason. Such productions have not been well understood as the resistance works that they in fact are. For example, in *Fluffs and Feathers*, Mohawk author Deborah Doxtator counter-exhibits a poem published in 1895, a poem extolling Bill Cody, aka Buffalo Bill, in effect, a poem extolling civilization:

> Bill Cody
> (by an old comrade)
>
> You bet I know him Pardner, he
> ain't no circus fraud
> He's Western born and Western
> bred, if he has been abroad,
> I knew him in the days way back,
> beyond Missouri's flow.
> When the country round was
> nothing but a huge Wild Western
> Show

> When the injuns were as thick as
> fleas, and the man who ventured
> through
> The sand hills of Nebraska had to
> fight the hostile Sioux,
> These were the times, I tell you;
> and we all remember still
> The Days when Cody was a
> scout, and all the men knew Bill.

Doxtator is putting on display an 'artifact' of White culture much like museums have treated Native articles. By exhibiting this poem which sees "injuns" as fleas, Doxtator is exorcising the hate and the imagery. She is also using the poem as a monument to remind us all what the nature of this discourse is about. Many of us chose satirical titles for our works, for example, "Indians Without Tipis," "Indians Don't Cry," "The Only Good Indian," or "Defeathering" to taunt the stereotypes.[6] Dickason's title "The Myth of the Savage" is a declaration but represents more closely Western rather than Native tradition. Still, I consider it an expression of resistance for it is clearly anti-colonial.

The combination of graphic and written portrayals make for a very powerful medium. Not only does it perpetuate racism, it pressures all Native producers of culture--be they writers, historians, anthropologists, sculptors, architects, filmmakers or visual artists--to have to address the depictions. In other words, it pressures all Native artists to produce resistance works. While it is not within the scope of my study here to detail these streams of responses, I think it is significant that a number of Native visual artists (Cardinal-Schubert, Shilling, McMaster,Young Man) also turned to writing to express their resistance to dehumanization. Blackfoot poet of the 1970s era, Sarain Stump presented his poetry with his own sketches.

---

[6] I have been dismayed to see my "Defeathering" retitled as "Defeating" in a bibliography! I have also been told by Native readers that they thought the title meant to suggest taking away Native culture! At the time of its publication I tried to have a sub-title put in but the publishers paid no heed. Still, an author can only foresee so many things but we cannot anticipate all the audience variables.

Some of these artist-writers are included in *Indigena*. *Indigena* is a handsome collection which features the works of eight writers, including Jeannette Armstrong and Lenore Keeshig-Tobias and 19 visual artists, all of Native ancestry, all responding to the 500th year anniversary of Columbus' "landfall" to the Americas. *Indigena* is an integration of resistance material *par excellence*. In their introductory comments, the editors Gerald McMaster and Lee-Ann Martin point to the Native intellectual struggle which centres around colonial historiography, objectification, invisibility and dehumanization. The editors declare that the all the contributers to *Indigena* "reject the ethnocentric language of conquest and dominance, and the denial of aboriginal identity and sovereignty that it implies" (11). They especially locate "references to the 'New World,' and the 'Pagan,' 'Primitive,' and 'savage' peoples" as supporting "European hegemony" (23).

Artist and Professor, Alfred Young Man argues that in order to appreciate North American Native art, one must understand the "new retelling from the *Native perspective*." He explains:

> The retelling involves the unmasking of a profound fallacious unconsciousness, the exposing of many false images....Aboriginal Americans, their history and their art have always challenged the

> popular American and European ethnocentric archetypal notions of 'history'.... (83)

The Savage can wear many masks. There are many false images and from every angle possible, Aboriginal intellectuals are challenging both scholarly and popular, old or redressed, misrepresentations. In addition to the Savage or Noble Savage portrayals, there are numerous related stereotypes--most of them off-shoots from the two--that Native peoples have to contend with. In a production called *Moonlodge*[7] Margo Kane, plays with many of these stereotypes. Margo Kane, Saulteux/Cree/Blackfoot, is a multi-talented actor, teacher, singer and choreaographer, known for acclaimed performance as Rita Joe in the 1980s production of *Ecstasy of Rita Joe.* Kane also produces her one-woman shows. In 1989 she created and performed *Moonlodge.* The written version of *Moonlodge* is to be found in the anthology edited by Moses and Goldie (271-291). For purposes of simplicity, I will not refer to any specific pages in the following treatment. The play begins with social workers taking the child Agnes away, and eventually placing her with a white woman, a "sensible woman" named Aunt Sophie. But the play centers around Agnes as a young woman in search of her identity, or culture; when Agnes wants to join the Brownies, Sophie encourages her "to get in touch" with her "tribal heritage." Agnes replies: "Tribal heritage? I just want to go to Brownies." At the Brownies Agnes first learns of Indian and campfire songs.

To the tune of 'Born to be Wild' Agnes' search takes her on the road.

---

[7] I had the privilege of seeing Kane perform this play at Winnipeg's Gas Theatre in 1989. It is one of these 'must see' performances.

Her search does take some tragic turns and tones (in violations and nightmares) and is connected to Kane's memorable and masterly treatment of stereotypes. For much of the play, there are sounds of Hollywood tom-toms and war whoops. She mocks Hiawathian treatments of Indian culture, often breaking into national songs such as "Land of the Silver Birch," or "Running Bear" ("On the banks of the river/stood Running Bear, young Indian brave/and on the other side of the river/stood his lovely Indian maid"). She makes parody of the primitivist concept of "savage tragedy!" with various cartoon Indian poses, and Hollywood acts including chorus line kicks, shading of eyes, 'war dances,' women shimmying ("primitive, primal, savage, supernatural love") and walking 'ten paces behind' their 'Running Bear.' She lays bare racist radio songs like "Kawliga" ("Kaliga was a wooden Indian. He always wore his Sunday feathers/and held a tommyhawk ...Poor ole Kaliga/ he never got a kiss...").

Kane also peeks into modern Indian practices of 'Indian culture,' obviously making a comment on the Native American community's internalization of the Hollywood images. She meets up with "Lance," a 'brother,' who takes her to a 'Pow Wow' in Santa Fe. When she first arrives "it was like a scene out of the movies." She joins in a circle dance which was "a sea of rippling fringes, beads and feathers." She also meets "Wannabees," a "guy" dressed "like an Indian, sort of. He's got all kinds of beads and claws and stuff...and scrawny braids--but he's blonde!" Agnes turns to Aunt Sophie to figure this one out: "Well, Aunt Sophie always says 'Never judge a man until you've walked a mile in his mocassins!'" Agnes continues: " Indian Tarot cards? Sacred dog? Sacred Eagle? Sacred Bat. (*Reading*) Peter Many

Painted Ponies. Shaman for any occasion. Ceremonies. Sundances, Vision Questing, Rebirthing and Past Life Regression. Thanks, See ya."

But Agnes is further confused by a chorus of Native American women who taunt her: "You don't look Injun. What tribe are you? Well, where're you from, Canada? Ohhhh, so you must be Eskimo. If you're an Indian what's the color of North on the Sacred Medicine Wheel? What's your Indian name?....Do you have a totem animal....You should go to the sweatlodge to get one....I'm a pipe-carrier as well and I'm training to be a Medicine Woman."

Agnes runs to Millie, a kindly Indian woman, and asks her about medicine. Millie counsels her to go back to "her people" from whom she will get her medicine. Startled, Agnes says: "My own people? But I don't remember who they are." But Kane implies that, even if Agnes remembered who 'they are,' would 'they' know who they are?

Kane is, of course, suggesting that stereotypes have, to an immeasurable degree, informed and confused contemporary Native peoples. How can anyone know who or what is real under such conditions? The forces of misrepresentation are formidable and relentless. The powerful role of these forces in the social construction of reality comes into relief here. It suggests too why Native intellectuals are so intent on challenging the stereotypes--they do cut through the heart of Native identities. They do disturb Native cultural integrity and they do damage personal self-esteem. Why else would there be such a counter-chorus of resistance? But Kane is actually making an even greater exquisitely terrifying comment in this play. She is saying that in our desperate journeys for cultural meaning, we run back to Hollywood's "pretend Indians"[8] with their rituals and symbols out of synch with our realities. Worse, we catch rides with strangers who turn on us and ambush us. We keep getting violated. We keep paying the price many times over for the colonizer's cultural curios. And no one, not even the frybread-making Millie, the only character that resembles reality, can take the nightmare of ravagement away. But we rise, we 'honour the sun' to say, we are human, we have faces and feelings.

"We Are Not Savages, We Have Faces and Feelings"

> There is no difference between us, under the skins, that any expert with a carving knife has ever discovered....We are as well behaved as you and you would think so if you knew us better....
> (Levi General, qtd in Petrone 103)[9]

> "Indians cared, loved as passionately as other people"
> (Basil Johnston, qtd in Moses and Goldie 110)

To reconstruct our humanity is to say we are human, namely, that we have faces and feelings. In all the ways noted throughout, every Native writer seeks to re/claim Native humanity. Chief Dan George goes to the heart--or faces--of this issue in his first collection *My Heart Soars*. It is here that his prose and poetry most evidently qualifies as protest writing. Using the device of addressing various parties through prayers, lectures and intimate conversations, Chief Dan George simply unveils Native humanity. In one poem he begins with classic deconstructing--"They say we do not show our feelings"-- then immediately provides the reconstructionist retort, "This is not so"(42). Dan George moves on to re/establish Native humanity by variously drawing on the faces of "my people." There are some heartbreaking lines, even when prosaic:

---

[8] This phrase comes from a book of the same title by Bataille and Silet. It is one of the earlier studies of Hollywood's construction/exploitation of the "Indian."

[9] From a speech made over the radio in 1925 by Native activist Levi General (1873-1925) of the Six Nations.

> Look at the faces of my people:
> You will find expressions of love and despair,
> hope and joy, sadness and desire, and all the
> human feelings that live in the hearts of people
> of all colours. Yet, the heart never knows
> the colour of the skin. (72)

Between the lines are drawings by Helmut Hirnschall of Native peoples, many of them close-ups of faces, expressive faces, engaged faces, pondering faces, angry faces, tearful faces, sad faces, funny faces, baby faces, gentle faces, wrinkled faces, laughing and joyful faces. Faces uniquely human.

Ojibway writer George Kenny has also been particularly 'driven' to put forward Native humanity, "as if Chaucer himself was kicking/him along, never letting him rest,/this indian dedicated to becoming/published" (35). Kenny was born in 1955 in Sioux Lookout, Ontario and raised in Lac Seul Indian Reserve. Unlike Ojibway artist Arthur Shilling's 'Ojibway dream,'[10]

---

[10] Shilling, perhaps because he was passionate about painting and colour, emphasized "the beauty of my people" in *Ojibway Dream*; Kenny, while highlighting the humanity of Native peoples, tends to dwell on the not so beautiful effects of colonization on "his people."

George Kenny's "people" are not always beautiful but they are always consummately human in his slim collection of 18 poems and 8 short stories, *Indians Don't Cry*. In a short story of the same title, Kenny begins "Indians don't cry. That's bullshit. Frank Littledeer cursed as tears streamed down..." (7). The story is set in northwest Ontario. It is September and Frank, an Ojibway man, just back from having seen his children flying off to residential school "some eighty miles away" comes home to an empty cabin echoing with pain and brokenness. There he reflects on his problems: drinking, unemployment, racism in town, retrieving his wife from town barrooms where "white men would call him names," finding his wife in bed with a white man, his raging reaction, his wife's leaving, his great loneliness. Kenny packs into a few pages some of the devastating realities of colonization. Obviously stung by dehumanization, George Kenny ends his vignette: "Tomorrow would come ... In spite of the dry, racking sob that was rising in his throat, a grim smile played on Frank's lips as he remembered how they had ridiculed him--Indians don't cry. That's a goddamn lie" (7-10).

Clearly in response to the stereotypes of the Mainstreet Indian (which were running rampant, especially in the 1950s-1970s) Kenny gives us a number of poems to remind us of the humanity of street people. In "Broken, I knew A Man" Kenny writes:

> His soul was like the open pages of
> Layton's best works, always penned in truth,
> no matter how dirty or whiskey
> soaked....
> Today, I read in the local paper
> INDIAN KILLED BY FREIGHT TRAIN IN HUDSON

> and I wondered, who will be next
> to greet, broken, the summer sun. (71)

Kenny also provides the reader with emotional sketches of his family's cultural integrity, hard work, beliefs and achievements. He especially provides us with a glimpse into his own family's humanity by showing us the heartbreaks they experienced in residential schools, cities and the deaths of his parents. His grief over the deaths of his good parents provide some of the most moving poems.[11]

Purposefully, Kenny begins and ends his collection with poems which mimic and confront age-old stereotypes. In "Rain Dance" he writes "as a modern Indian" who will "chant my songs / clap my hands / wriggle my hips / flash my feet," performing "for the crest-gleaming teeth / of the green-backed tourists" (5). In response to the nursery rhyme "One little, two little, three little / Indians," Kenny, uncharacteristically, wants to "slice that composer's neck / like a rabbit on snare wire, by its throat."

Kenny in this poem is one of the very few (indeed, so few as to be rare) Native writers to express a militancy with visions of actual violence, to meet violation with violence. But even his desire to "slice" and to make the composer scream "child-like" is qualified with a moral and social purpose: "until he or she realized / that stupid song's driving my soul / into the ranks of AIM" (78). The poet would go to the length of violence so that the composer will be brought to a consciousness of what his or her words have done to Native peoples. If reconstructing our humanity sometimes appears as extreme romanticization or as 'militant,' it is in reaction to extreme dehumanization.

---

[11] See especially poems "Legacy" and "Death Bird" in this collection.

"We Were Not the Savages: We Were/Are Civilized"

> Five hundred years of colonialism, and the colonizers still ponder whether we are peoples with lands. Five hundred years of colonialism and court judges still rule whether or not we are peoples with laws. And what of our cultures? They too have been ruled upon by others, determining whether we have a history, art, literature, or even an imagination.
>
> (Loretta Todd in *Indigena* 71)

Another way of saying 'I am not savage' is to say as Veteran Mikmac poet Rita Joe has simply put it: "I am not / What they portray me / I am cvilized" (*Poems of Rita Joe* 2).

An associated image of the Savage as unspeakably cruel is the Savage without culture. And in the rather memorable precis provided by sixteenth century French cosmographer, Andre Thevet, natives were, "a remarkably strange and savage people, without faith, without law, without religion, without any civility whatever, living like irrational beasts, as nature has produced them, eating roots, always naked, men as well as women" (qtd in Dickason, *The Myth* 30). This is the savage with barely a language, with barely a 'human' face. This is the creature of White wrath, "more savage than the animals around him" as Alexander Begg exploded. Emphasizing 'savagery' has been a key element of "proof" in the arsenal of colonial attack.

The belittlement and stereotyping of Aboriginal cultures has generated a chorus of counterculture response. Native speakers and writers have often been “cornered into the hapless role of apologists” as I have put it, that is, of having to explain and defend the Native way of life (Preface xxii). And so for Native writers to say we are civilized is to say we are rational, we do have faiths, laws and governments, and ‘civility’, that is, we do have cultures, which is to say we are human. This is done by re/establishing that we had cultures. Whether we re-establish ‘the trickster,’ invoke ‘earth and wind,’ recall our languages or dissect racist words, all this is in direct resistance to the colonizer misrepresentation of “Indians”as creatures without culture.

Again, the earliest Native writers lead the way in addressing the colonial charge that ‘Indians’ had no or inferior culture. Perhaps because they were in a most painful position of having to defend a culture which they had, in parts, rejected, Native missionaries, among them Peter Jones, George Copway, George Henry, Peter Jacobs, John Sunday, Allen Salt, Henry Steinhauer, and Henry Budd, were especially vocal on the subject.

Re/establishing Aboriginal culture is particularly strong in non-fiction social commentaries of the 1970s. One of the first such books of the era is *Indians Without Tipis*, edited by D. Bruce Sealey and Verna J. Kirkness. Advertised as a “resource book” *Indians Without Tipis* is a compilation of essays and articles on the history and culture of ‘Indians and Metis.’ The material is written by some of the earlier Manitoba Native educators and organizational leaders. The style is restrained, at times, even apologetic. In their assessment of “recorded history” as “unkind” and unbalanced, the editors are careful to say that “undoubtedly a bias is present” in their view of history, a “history as seen through the eyes of the conquered race.” But, they explain, “the viewpoint must be appreciated, if not agreed with, if Whites are to understand why Indian and Metis people feel as they do (1).

The editors introduce the culture section by writing "If one accepts as a working defintion of the word culture 'the sum total of the way in which people live' then a study of the cultures of native peoples would fill many volumes" (55). But even here they qualify this with "Many will disagree with the approach and the content. The great value of the articles is that they give a viewpoint of Native people...." The culture section includes discussions on language, 'Indian contributions' to the world and cross-cultural communication problems.

Most Native writers, whether historians or poets, have felt compelled to emphasize the cultivated basis of Native cultures. It is with some significance that Micmac elder poet Rita Joe, introduces some of her poems in her first collection *Poems of Rita Joe* with historical and cultural explanations. In a poem that "lament[s] forgotten skills" and notes that "regret stays" and "uncertainty returns to haunt / The native ways I abandoned." Rita Joe explains "Before the white man came, we had our own political, educational and economic way of life..." (3). Normally understated and gracious, even Rita Joe called for the death of words "that were written":

> So my children may see
> The glories of their forefathers
> And share the pride of history
>
> That they may learn
> The way of their ancestors...
> Our children read and hate
> The books offered -
> A written record of events

> By the white men. (21)

Today Native writers are no longer hesitant or apologetic for reclaiming their cultural heritage. In an article "From Colonization to Repatriation"[12] included in *Indigena* Gloria Cranmer Webster, who comes from the Northwest Coast people of the potlatches, begins her Kwakiutl (which Edward Curtis photographed and filmed) cultural recounting with a classic phrase: "When the white people came, our ancestors were living as they had for centuries" (25). For centuries, her people had been living in the abundance of "unpolluted rivers and oceans" which provided numerous species of seafood and fishes. The "forests" too she writes, "provided everything else they needed: from cedar trees for houses, canoes, furniture and clothing, to roots, berries and game to supplement their diet." Cranmer Webster describes food preservation methods, all of which enabled her people to develop a rich artistic and ceremonial culture including "Carving masks and rattle, composing songs, performing dances, feasting, and telling myths and legends." Then, "together all of these activities ensured that each individual group enjoyed a healthy sense of identity" (25).

Reclaiming one's cultural heritage can take satirical tones too. In *Bear Bones and Feathers*, in a series of Pope poems (or "da fadder poop", as it would be in Cree-ified English) contemporary Cree poet Louise Bernice Halfe desacrilizes 'holy' history and not so holy behaviour. In a poem "Im So Sorry" Halfe mocks missionary midseeds and arrogance:

---

[12] In an interesting turn of emphasis, Cranmer Webster seems self-conscious that she extols the very seas and forests upon which her people built their culture. She takes pains to say her people were not Noble Savages living in primeval innocence.

> I'm so sorry, the pope said
> I thought you were just gathering
> to lift your legs, thump your chest
> around that tree of old men.
> I didn't know the rock and twig
> you smoked.
> Blueberries and sweetgrass
> were your offerings.
> I wouldn't have taken your babies
> and fed them wafers and wine.
>
> I'm so sorry, I just thought
> we could borrow land for a little
> to plant our seeds...
> I really didn't know how you survived
> for centuries...
> I'm so sorry, I should have told
> the settlers to quit their scalping,
> selling hair at two bits for each Indian
> I'm so sorry. I'm so sorry. (98)

In a bit of a different medium, Joane Schubert-Cardinal also takes a mocking view, reconstructing Aboriginal culture even as she is deconstructing 'civilization.' On the occasion of an art exhibit in Ottawa (and later in Calgary) the well-known contemporary visual artist (and sister to metis architect Douglas Cardinal) provides a typical 'in a nutshell' explanatory response to cultural takeover:

> It is only a hundred years since our ancestors lived in tipis, hunted the buffalo, and invented beef jerky. It is only a hundred years and some since your ancestors herded us onto reserves, washed us with scrubbrushes and lye soap, and chopped our hair off, uniforming the children in religious residential schools in an attempt to knock out the

> savagery. Our ancestors were beaten for speaking their language....It is only a hundred years and now we stand before you in this institution with our art work on the walls.

With tongue-in-cheek, Schubert-Cardinal ends with a mock/ing question: "Now we are civilized, aren't we?" (7).

Shubert goes on to say that Native cultures pre-existed European arrival, and that because of racism, it took her a long time to like herself, to take a stand and to be proud of her heritage. But to be proud of the Indian heritage means having to dispel the hounding myth of civilzation/savagery; it means having to say we are not the savages.

"We Were Not The Savages, You Were"

Many Native writers move from a position of defense to that of offense in their counter charges of savagery. Using metaphor, rhetoric, sarcasm, parody, Native writers have challenged and redefined who and what is a savage. Sometimes their styles are reminescent of Shakespeare's Anthony and Brutus sparring about honour and dishonour. Often, the writer sets up the argument by casting a line of doubt. In 1847 George Copway begins one of his paragraphs: "I have heard it said, that our forefathers were cruel to the forefathers of the whites." Copway questions the presumed Native cruelty by contextualizing (therefore humanizing, though quite apologetically) Native actions: "But was not this done through ignorance, or in self-defence?" He then re/turns the blame for whatever violence occurred: "Had your fathers adopted the plan of the great philanthropist, William Penn, neither fields, nor clubs, nor waters, would have been crimsoned with each other's blood." It is no accident that he likens White cruelty to animal behaviour for one of the key features of White writing has been to compare Indians with animals: "The white men have been like the greedy lion, pouncing upon and devouring its prey. They have driven us from our nation, our homes, and possessions," and using barbed sarcasm Copway sallies: "...and will, perhaps, soon compel us to scale the Rocky Mountains; and for aught I can tell, we may yet be driven to the Pacific Ocean, there to find our graves" (qtd in Moses and Goldie 17-24).

In charging the White man with ungratefulness and betrayal, Copway asks, by way of ironic contrast, "Is it not well known that the Indians have a generous and magnanimous heart?" The question is rhetorical as he goes on to answer (in the context of the Governor of Massachusetts having thanked Indians for their assistance): "I feel proud to mention in this connection, the names of a Pochahontus, Massasoit ... Philip, Tecumseh... and "a thousand of others" whose names "are an honour to the world." Copway again uses the rhetorical technique: "And what have we received since, in return? Is it for the deeds of a Pochahontus, a Massasoit...that we have been plundered and oppressed, and expelled from the hallowed graves of our ancestors?" *Et tu Brutus?* Copway then turns back to casting doubt on stereotypes: "It is often said, that the Indians are *revengeful, cruel* and *ungovernable*." Again, Copway sallies: "Go to them with nothing but *the* BIBLE *in your hands,* and LOVE *in your hearts*, and you may live with them in perfect safety..." (Moses and Goldie 17-24).

Pauline Johnson too counter punches the name-calling and the imagery. She goes to battle for Native peoples much more directly in her poem "The

Cattle Thief" (already referred to above). She not only defends the 'cattle thief' but returns the shots, so to speak, with name-calling of her own. Johnson goes after the invaders, using and turning the knife of 'the enemy's language.' She even demonizes the "desperate English settlers" as the savages [cursing] "like a troop of demons" or [rushing] "like a pack of demons on the body." She assumes the English voice:

> 'Cut the fiend up into inches, throw his carcass on the plain
> Let the wolves eat the cursed Indian, he'd have
> treated us the same'
> A dozen hands responded, a dozen knives gleamed
> high.

Obviously aware that White writers often portrayed "Indians" as savage creatures who tortured and mutilated white bodies, Johnson is deliberate in her choice of words and imagery. Perhaps she had read Richardson's *Wacousta*, or Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans,* or perhaps any number of Captivity Narratives or dime novels of her era. Her intent is apparent, she is returning and reversing the violation.

Most contemporary Native writers also turn the tables on the colonizer to point out White cruelty and contradictions, in effect to point to White savagery. The following poem, "Savage Man" by Alfred Groulx, follows a well established technique of setting Native 'truth' against White betrayal and hypocrisy. The style is stark:

> You came to our land
> You called us savage man
> We greeted you with smiles

You greet us with lies...
We shared with you this land
You demanded more than you needed
We sent our chiefs to sign treaties
You sent your armies to enforce them....
We agreed to learn your tongue
You took more, you took our voice...
We respected Mother Earth and her ways,
You cut off her limbs and scarred her face
We honoured your way of life
You robbed us of ours. (in Maki 18)

Duke Redbird uses a 'warm' style to point to Invader lies. Using the metaphor of an old woman, Redbird provides an image of White treachery against golden brown innocence and humanity in his poem "Old Woman," He first establishes the earth's energy and beauty:

Old Woman, I know who you are.
I know this barren wasteland
Upon which I stand
Was once a forest.
And you Old Woman,
Had life and beauty,
Energy and passion,
Love and endurance,
Freedom and chatter with the gods...
But your body carried the burden
Of sorrow, and the weight of treachery.
For others came, pale helpless souls.
And your arms enciricled them...

Redbird rhetorically asks,

Where are they now,
After they cut down your beloved forest,

And slaughtered your animal brothers,
And tore the wings from your bright birds,
And ground your mountains to dust?
Did they leave you anything at all? (in Dunn 86)

The brutal acts and devastating consequences of White invasion and dispossession are the sticks used to throw back to Whites their savagery. Scalping is one such stick. This is not unexpected because colonialist writers have traditionally used Indian scalping as one of the "final" proofs of Indian savagery. Native writers have turned the tables on this too.

In *Prison of Grass*, Adams quotes an elementary textbook used in Saskatchewan schools in the 1970s which smears Indians as warlike scalpers, and explains that "Ideas like this continue to affect the attitudes of whites and Indians alike; many Indians in fact believe that their ancestors were totally savage and warlike" (18). "The truth is" Adams retorts, "scalping was done more frequently by whites than by Indians." Adams provides evidence of "White settlers" paying bounties for dead Indians "and scalps were actual proof of the deed." English newcomers were paid to bring in the scalps and such actions were taken throughout the New England area. The French too participated in scalp-taking: "In the competition over the Canadian fur trade, they offered the Micmac Indians a bounty for every scalp they took from the Beothuk of Newfoundland" (19). The reason that Adams, especially in this era, has to point to White scalping is *to balance the savagery scale.* If scalping is one proof of savagery, then Whites too are savage. Amazingly, such an 'equalizer' argument may still be lost on White audiences.

It is not a point lost on Micmac historian Daniel N. Paul. Adams could have challenged his dated source (Cox, 1959: 330) because Micmac writer Daniel N. Paul emphatically denies in *We Were Not the Savages: A Micmac Perspective on the Collision of European and Aboriginal Civilization* (1992) that Micmacs took Beothuk scalps. Calling it "despicable propaganda," "false and malicious rumours" used by the British to "spread fear and hatred of the Micmac," Paul argues "There is not one shred of evidence to support such allegations" (64). Quite to the contrary, "the extinction of the Beothuk was brought about by the brutal actions of Europeans involved in the fishery off Newfoundland and by the Inuit..." (64). Not only were the Euopeans largely responsible for Beothuk extinction, according to Paul, they were also responsible for the dispossession and decimation of the Micmac.

Significantly, Paul too turns to evidence of White scalping to indicate White savagery. In the context of massive depopulation suffered by the Micmac due to "genocide, diseases, starvation and war," the Micmac declared war on the British on September 23, 1749.[13] In response, Lord Cornwallis called a meeting of Council and in effect proposed a policy of extermination including a reward "for every Indian Micmac taken, or killed." In Paul's words: "The horror contained in these words probably escaped the British. In their blind arrogance they could not see the unspeakable crime against humanity which they were about to commit" (108). Paul points to a proclamation of extinction issued by Lord Cornwallis on October 2, 1749. Parts of it parts read:

---

[13] Paul explains this declaration of war "was actually a continuation of the war Nova Scotia and New England had declared against them on October 19, 1744" (107).

> Whereas...the Micmacs have of late in a most treacherous manner taken 20 of His Majesty's Subjects prisioners...
>
> For those cause we...do hereby authorize and command all Officers Civil and Military, and all his Majesty's Subjects or others to annoy, distress, take or destroy the Savage commonly called Micmac...and with the consent and advice of His Majexty's Council, *do promise a reward of ten Guineas for every Indian Micmac taken or killed, to be paid upon producing such Savage taken or his scalp* (as in the custom of America).... (108)

We Were Not the Savages re-examines and re-inscribes the Euro-Canadian colonizer narrative concerning the Euro-Canadian/Micmac encounter. In chapter after chapter Paul marshalls a relentless array of evidence from the colonizer records supporting his central thesis that the Micmac were largely a democratic and peaceful people who were brought to near extinction by European arrogance, dishonour and brutality. Paul ends his revision with a classically rhetorical question:

> You have now read a history of one of the American Aboriginal peoples, a people who gave their all to defend their home and country and fought courageously for survival. Based on what you now know, what is your honest judgement about *who were the barbarian savages* (his emphasis) when the Europeans and Aboriginal Americans collided? (340)

The theme of imperialist Whites lacking humanity runs from "sea to shining sea." In a poem "History Lesson," British Columbia's Okanagan educator, novelist and poet Jeannette Armstrong, uses powerful imagery from the stereotypes to express who the savages were in the early encounters between European and Aboriginal peoples:

> Out of the belly of Christopher's ship
> a mob bursts
> Running in all directions
> Pulling furs off animals
> Shooting buffalo
> Shooting each other...
> Pioneers and traders
> bring gifts
> Smallpox, Seagrams
> and Rice Krispies
> Civilization has reached
> the promised land. (Moses and Goldie 203-204)

Armstrong also turns to oral tradition to impress the same point. In "This Is My Story" (in King, *All My Relations* 129-135), a not so subtle allegory, Armstrong imagines the return of Kyoti. The vision is that of Kyoti, an Okanagan legendary character with Trickster-like qualities, a character who likes to sleep long into the morning. But in her vision Kyoti wakes up "from an unusually short nap" and hoping to feast with the Salmon people, takes a walk "up the Okanagon River which runs into Columbia River." "Kyoti had come up through there before. One time before that I know of." And that time had been a happy, joyful time when the Salmon people would gather and feast during the salmon run. But this time "Kyoti noticed a lot of new things," things like the landscape full of Swallow people, things like the Salmon people not knowing their Salmon language, things like new chiefs who were afraid to dismantle dams that would free up the salmon to run again.

> Kyoti had seen People in really bad shape. They walked around with

> their minds hurt....Their bodies were poisoned....They thought they were Swallows, but couldn't figure out why the Swallows taunted and laughed at them....They couldn't seem to see that the Swallows stole everything they could pick up for their houses, how they took over any place and shitted all over it, not caring....
>
> Kyoti could see...that them Swallows were still a Monster people. They were pretty tricky making themselves act like they were People but all the while, underneath, being really selfish Monsters that destroy People and things like rivers and mountains....

By discovering that the Swallows were Monsters, Kyoti finds once again a reason to wake up early: "It was time to change the Swallows from Monsters into something that didn't destroy things. Kyoti as Kyoti and that was the work Kyoti had to do." Obviously Armstrong has turned the tables. The Swallows are the Savages, The Salmons are the human People, and Kyoti has a humanizing (civilizing) mission to fulfill.

We have come full circle. Whites have accused us of savagery; they convinced themselves that their descriptions, their actions and their policies were justifiable, indeed, necessary, so that they could civilize us. But their very own records show us that the 'civilization' drive was more professed than real, that what was real was the oppressive behaviour. And of course, this behaviour and its effects on human beings and on the land was and remains anything but civil. Now we can write and re-inscribe the documents not only arguing we are civilized, but that we are more human and our higher moral Native ethics call us to civilize the Whites.

Perhaps Douglas Cardinal in *Of The Spirit* speaks most bluntly to the Native's higher moral vision, which, as editor Melnyk explains, consists of a 'primitive' or "first" vision based on a cultural (natural, cultivating, tending), not 'civilized' (anti-natural) understanding of life and land. The Indian sense of the land is both dynamic and encompassing. According to Melnyk, "Self-understanding comes not only from an image of growth but from the immense organic being of the land." In Cardinal's vision, Melnyk continues, "life is holy, life is one, life is whole. This is not the phallic one of our culture. The oneness of Indian culture finds its symbolic expression in the circle, the native peoples' ultimate metaphor for totality" (10-22).

Cardinal makes clear, in a style reminscent of the earliest writers, that this vision is morally superior to the 'civilized' vision. Facetiously, Cardinal refers to White colonizers as guardians then spells out their obvious contradictions in their actions:

> These racists are the present guardians of our children, our future... These guardians of our people, our children, these guardians of education, honour, justice, these guardians of the lands, the rivers, the air, these guardians of humanity, these guardians of the concept of the Great Spirit have shown by their actions that they are not fit guardians....

Not only are they not fit guardians, they are not fit humans: "It is our belief that the atrocities perpetrated on our people were done by ignorant men who lacked the knowledge and insight to conduct themselves as human beings" (64).

Such declarations are not only prophetic but are sociological observations and historical judgements. We will perhaps always be tempted to turn the tables, this may be the 'inevitable' conclusion to experiencing dehumanization for half a millenium. This is perhaps the supreme irony of history, that the colonizer's debris always rains on his umbrella, sooner or later. But Armstrong and Cardinal here are not just reversing roles, they are questioning the very tenets of western civilization. This is, in part, why they compare European and Indigenous behaviours. This is why Adams and Paul, among others, point to the glaring (if not to Euro-Canadians, certainly to Native peoples) contradictions concerning scalping. How could a people so callous and cruel become the standard bearers of "civilization," so arrogantly at that? This is also every other Native writer's question and challenge. Given the evidence of history, is this not a legitimate question?

Some here may suggest that this is simply "reverse racism," that reversing the old colonial civ/sav (human/subhuman) binary keeps us mired in colonialism and continues to rob both sides of our humanity. Perhaps to some extent this should be an issue of concern. But there are fundamental differences between Native writers' calls to humanity and the 500 years of dehumanization to which Indigenous peoples around the world have been subjected. In the first instance, as noted earlier, racism is a belief in genetic superiority. There is absolutely no indication that Native writers, and certainly not Armstrong and Cardinal, have adopted any genetic argumentation in their discussions about humanity. In all the Native material I have read, I have not found one piece of Native writing that I could classify as racist. That Natives point to European (be they Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, English or French) inhumanity is an inevitable feature of the counter-discourse. But this does not make them racist. To suggest so is to attempt to discredit them and the weight of history and experience from which they speak. It is also to attempt to neutralize the indisputable history of global colonization. Memmi reminds us that the "colonized is not free to choose between being colonized or not being colonized" (86). To insist the colonized get out of the imposed binaries is largely to serve the colonialist conscience or liberalist ideals for it is not possible for the colonized to skip merrily over colonial fences. If they could, they would. There are numerous indications contemporary Native intellectuals are making every effort to move beyond colonial paradigms but this is for their liberation. Nor should the onus of moral behaviour always fall back on the colonized.

For the issue is centrally about power. To the charge of "reverse racism" it must be emphasized that racism is a particular prejudice or ideology which legitimizes an unequal relationship. Native writers speak from a place of relative powerlessness. And there is no affectation here or elsewhere. The brutal reality of powerlessness stares at Native peoples everywhere they turn, as noted at the outset of this chapter. And even if some Native writers were to be "racist" in theory, they do not have the power to exercise the racism, certainly nothing that could ever begin to approximate the scale with which Euro-White peoples have exercised their racism. For the record, however, were I to find racism in Native writing I would challenge it. In any case, what is clear, is that as long as the dehumanization and the inequality exists, each new generation of Native writers will take up the mantle of situating the humanity issue.

Arguing that 'we were not the savage, you were' inevitably leads to what appears simply as romanticization. For example, ascribing higher moral properties to 'natural' living against 'civilized' living is reminscent of

Rousseau's *bon savage* of the eighteenth century. However, romanticization is by no means simple nor necessarily positive; it may not only have some basis in fact, to the extent Native cultures are based on an ethical and practical relationship to the land, but it also reflects a confusing intersection of issues including the infantilization and naturalization of Native cultures (which in turn confuses stereotypic and real cultural differences), misrepresentation in texts and popular cultural productions, internalization and decolonization. It is virtually impossible to appreciate Native resistance writing without having to deal with all this. These issues hound and inspire both Native and non-Native writers and critics, and this is why they run throughout this dissertation. I devote the next chapter to show further their interconnectedness as well as their influence on us all as Canadians, perhaps as an international community.

CHAPTER FIVE

AN INTERSECTION: INTERNALIZATION, DIFFERENCE, CRITICISM

> I was born in *Nature's wide domain!* The trees were all that sheltered my infant limbs--the blue heavens all that covered me. I am one of Nature's children; I have always admired her; she shall be my glory; her features--her robes, and the wreath about her brow--the seasons--her stately oaks, and the evergreen--her hair, ringlets over the earth--all contribute to my enduring love for her; and wherever I see her, emotions of pleasure roll in my breast, and swell and burst like waves on the shores of the ocean....It is thought great to be born in palaces, surrounded with wealth--but to be born in Nature's wide domain is greater still.
>
> I remember the tall trees, and the dark woods...where the little wren sang so melodiously after the going down of the sun in the west--the current of the broad river Trent--the skipping of the fish and the noise of the rapids a little above....Is this dear spot, made green by tears of memory, any less enticing and hallowed than the palaces where princes are born? I would much more glory in this birthplace, with the broad canopy of heaven above me, and the giant arms of the forest trees for my shelter, than to be born in palaces of marble, studded with pillars of gold! Nature will be Nature still, while palaces shall decay and fall in ruins. Yes, Niagara will be Niagara a thousand years hence! (George Copway, 1850)

Reconstruction entails both deconstruction and romanticization. For us especially, because of the ideological complex of our dehumanization, we have had to deconstruct to reconstruct. We have woven our re-inventions throughout our deconstructive argumentations. However, the fabric of our weaving is anything but simple. We carry the weight of the 'the colonizer's model of the world,' in our case, specifically, we remain shadowed by the Savage, both *le bon* and *les cruels* (Dickason 273). Our resistance, therefore our reconstruction, does remain textured with idealization and internalization.

A convolution of issues central to the relationships I have been here discussing emerges when we examine our reconstruction process. We find here a fascinating and confusing mix of issues which braid together an array of stereotypes, notions of cultural differences and problems of internalization. As I have emphasized it is virtually impossible to understand or situate Native resistance writing without having some appreciation of what these issues are, and how they 'glue' together. The scope and magnitude of this sticky 'mix' is such that it may never be possible to completely peel off the layers; nonetheless, we must explore their effects on us. In this and the next chapter I turn to some of those 'effects' on us, effects which have considerably complicated our resistance.

Up to this point in the dissertation, I have studied Native writing in its broad sense, taking in history, biography, social commentaries, and so forth, as well as fiction and poetry. In this and the next chapter I focus more on Native writing, particularly novels and poetry, which is usually considered 'literary' proper. However, my examination of this literature is interdisciplinary rather than literary, as such. My interest is to shift the traditional typological and ideological approaches which plague the study of Native peoples. But before we can shift paradigms we must sift through colonial debris, much of which sits in the hearts and minds of the colonized.

Internalization

The concept of internalization is not perfectly understood for much of it appears to be an unconscious process. In previous chapters I have emphasized its manifestation in the lives of Native writers in terms of their feelings about themselves as peoples subjected to social and theoretical 'hatred' based on their racial/cultural/ethnic grouping as "Indians." Post-colonial intellectuals, especially non-western, have long noted that something dramatic and profound happens inside people who have been subjected to othering for a sustained amount of time. Scholars studying Native peoples have been slow to ask what may be the most important question here: what happens to a people whose very essences have been soaked in stereotypes for half a millennium? My study of White and Native writing has been centrally concerned with the much maligned and misrepresented "Indian" because it has dramatically distressed Native peoples at every crucial place of their lives. Even while "they are sleeping" (Stump). At minimum, what we can learn from the Native experience with stereotypes is that words and images are not just words and images. At this place nothing is "beyond words."

We must come back to the Savage, the good and the cruel, with its gamut of ideologically produced images. There is overwhelming evidence we struggle mightily with these images, whether we are trying to dismantle them, or whether we are (unconsciously) internalizing them in our everyday lives or in our intellectual pursuits. As Puxley has pointed out: "A lengthy colonial experience not only deprives people of their right to define their experience authentically, but even deprives them of consciousness of such a right" (116). The internalization of the grotesque, ignoble savage is perhaps the most damaging. This savage leads us to a sense of shame (who wants to claim the hideous Magua as a forefather?), and self-rejection which then often leads to the rejection of the 'same other.'[1] By same-other, I mean that one's sense of racial shame is projected unto those of the same race/grouping who are unconsciously cast as Other. Many Native writers have had to deal with their own struggles of rejection of the same-other, as they have been impacted by what Howard Adams calls 'the White Ideal,' that is, adopting colonizer standards such as beauty and status. We have already learned from Native writers that this process is excruciating and disorienting because it makes us hate those we love. And we live shrouded in shame. In this chapter I turn to the problem of internalization in text. And here too we see much internal conflict in the writers.

'Hatred' of the same-other is particularly evident in some early missionary writing. The following is a letter, perhaps one of the most extreme expressions of 'hatred' of the same-other, comes from the pen of an Ojibway missionary of the 1830s. In a letter sent to a Methodist paper *The Christian Guardian* George Henry wrote:

> Yes, Mr. Papermaker, if you had seen these Indians a few years ago, you would think they were the animals you called Ourang Outangs, for

---

[1] In addition to Fanon and Memmi's expositions on internalization, my study of the Afro American experience especially as articulated by Malcom X, Eldridge Cleaver, Toni Morrison. Alice Walker and Maya Angelou has contributed to my understanding of the internalization problem. And of course, the more recent post-colonial studies have enriched our treatment of the 'subaltern.' But most of all, I owe my understanding to my Native colleagues, who by their honesty, confirmed my own experiences and research.

> Great Spirit has blessed them, they have good clothes; plates and dishes; window and bed curtains; knives and forks; chairs and tables.... (qtd in Petrone 49)

Yet this same man also provided among the most unflattering and ethnocentric assessments of European culture, assessments based on his tour of Europe as a performing Indian (sponsored by George Catlin that famous American artist of the 1830s in search of the 'vanishing Indian'). For example, he compared Londoners to mosquitoes: "Like musketoes in America in the summer season, so are the people in this city...in their numbers, and biting one another to get a living..." (qtd in Petrone 49).[2] Clearly, individual Native responses to untenable colonial situations are complex. Our critical awareness is embryonic. Internalization, for obvious reasons, is to be expected from sources reflecting Native adoption of Christianity. But most of us have had to deal with some sort of internalization problem.

Many writers seem unaware (usually in parts, not in total) that they are projecting images, words, descriptions or beliefs that have been imposed by European prejudices. Perhaps Pauline Johnson provides among the most interesting and clear examples of the colonized adopting or internalizing colonizer terms and images. From Johnson's collection *Flint and Feather* we find some rather startling examples of negative internalization. Johnson was a staunch defender of Indian actions and rights, but she seems to have adopted much of the colonizer's language.

---

[2] Actually, there is a role reversal in Henry's description of the Queen's culture which is reminiscent of Alexander Mackenzie's ethnographic imperial descriptions of 'Indians.' Peter Jones, another Native missionary who went to Europe, makes similarly scathing and ethnocentric remarks about Europe and Europeans

Two poems from *Flint and Feather* "The White Wampum" (1-3) and "As Red Men Die"(4-6) indicate the troubling extent to which Johnson had internalized white stereotypes of "Indians." One wonders what readings had inspired these poems. She was, undoubtedly, schooled in exploration literature, missionary writings, captivity narratives and dime novels, literature considered fashionable in her era. Such schooling is evident in the following poems. "The White Wampum" is a story of a Mohawk woman Ojistoh who was captured by the Huron as an act of revenge against her husband

> ...they hated him, those Huron braves,
> Him who had flung their warriors into graves,
> Him who had crushed them underneath his heel,
> Whose arm was iron, whose heart was steel
> To all--save me, Ojistoh, chosen wife...

In their hate the Hurons "with suble witchcraft" and cowardice ("Their hearts grew weak as women at his name") "councilled long" how to avenge their dead, and come upon a scheme to strike him where "His pride was highest, and his fame most fair" by seizing her. After a gallant struggle Ojistoh is flung "on their pony's back" and tied to her captor whom she despises. As they neared the Huron home fires, Ojistoh stereotypically draws on her feminine--and savage--wiles, that of sensual treachery:

> I smiled, and laid my cheek against his back;
> "loose thou my hands" I said...
> Forget we now that thou and I are foes.
> I like thee well, and wish to clasp thee close...

Predictably, the foolish Huron "cut the cords" and she "wound" her arms "about his tawny waist," and then her hand

> ...crept up the buckskin of his belt
> His knife hilt in my burning palm I felt
> One hand caressed his cheek, the other drew
> the weapon softly...
> And--buried in his back his scalping knife.

Then she was free and rode home joyfully and madly back to her "Mohawk, and my home...."

"As Red Men Die" is an unabashedly ethnocentric glorification of her people the Mohawk at the expense of the despised Huron. The poem tells of an unflinchingly courageous Mohawk who mocks the hated Huron even to his torturous death at the burning stake. In wording and imagery, "As Red Men Die" could have been inspired by a combination of the *Jesuit Relations* and *Wacousta:*

> Captive! Is there a hell to him like this?
> A taunt more galling than the Huron's hiss?
> He--proud and scornful, he--who laughed at law,
> He--scion of the deadly Iroquois,
> He--the bloodthirsty, he--the Mohawk chief,

The Huron captors then taunt the Mohawk to either "Walk o'er the bed of fire" or *"with the women rest thee here?"* To such baiting, the Mohawk's "eyes flash like an eagle's / Like a god he stands / Prepare the fire!" he scornfully demands." The poem's ending triggers images from *The Last of the Mohicans*:

He knoweth not that this same jeering band
Will bite the dust--will lick the Mohawk's hand;
Will kneel and cower at the Mohawk's feet;
Will shrink when Mohawk war drums wildly beat.
His death will be avenged with hideous hate
By Iroquois, swift to annihilate
His vile detested captors...
Not thinking, soon that reeking, red and raw,
Their scalps will deck the belts of Iroquois ...
Up the long trail of fire he boasting goes,
Dancing a war dance to defy his foes.
His flesh is scorched, his muscles burn and shrink,
But still he dances to death's awful brink.
The eagle plume that crests his haughty head
Will *never* droop until his heart be dead...
His voice that leaps to Happier Hunting Grounds
One savage yell--
Then loyal to his race
He bends to death--but *never* to disgrace.

One wonders why Johnson borrowed this language so extensively. She surely must have felt conflicted--and indeed she did as her poem "A Cry From An Indian Wife" so clearly records--because her defense of Native humanity is unmistakable. Is it a sufficient explanation to say that she had little choice but to latch onto popular stereotypes to gain an audience? But were there any other words or tropes available to her in her era? Could she not have created a different language? Or at the very least, avoided it? That she used such hate literature tradition is disturbing and speaks to her educational background, her largely English upbringing in a Mohawk community with Loyalist traditions, and her own mixed loyalties as well as the power of the dominant narrative on Canadian audiences and writers.

Whether intellectual or emotional, the Ignoble Savage has generated enormous psychological and structural damage within the Native community. This reality cannot be overemphasized. But what is little understood is that internalizing the Noble Savage may nearly be just as damaging.

Let us look at Johnson again. True, she uses startling colonial phrases such as "wild," "tomahawk," "hapless brave," "hissing" and so forth. However, in "A Cry From An Indian Wife" Johnson begins with Hiawathian grandeur: "My Forest Brave, my Red-skin love, farewell." To go with this verse, she donned the Princess regalia during her performances. Modeling ourselves after Hiawatha, or Pocahontus, may seem benign. But the fact is, Johnson had little choice in her dramatic readings. Though British Canadian audiences adored Johnson, they soon demanded that she entertain them not just with her romantic "Red-skin," but also her "red cloak, buckskin and a bearclaw necklace" (Doxtator 24). In order for her to have an audience, she had to acquiesce to dominant requirements that Indians, if alive, must be Noble. Johnson in real life was an elegant halfbreed "lady" who wore Victorian gowns as easily as she navigated Mohawk streams in her beloved canoe. She was a proud, determined and highly gifted woman whose artistic freedom was largely determined by the colonial forces of her times. To what extent she capitalized on prevailing images or to what extent she was victim of them remains a question.

There are indications that other creative Native individuals have suffered various consequences under the travails of the Noble Savage. George Copway lost his friends because he refused to submit himself to societal expectations of his friends. Those individuals who refuse to submit to stereotypical performances may lose their audience. I recall, in the very early 1970s, a University of Alberta audience giving Chief Dan George a standing ovation but booing then well-known activist Kahn Tineta Horn.

But beyond its ill effects on individuals, the Noble Savage construct presents a number of complexities for the Native community. Chief Dan George, for example, gained great popularity because his bearing reflected, unmistakably, the Noble Savage. To this day, he leaves us wondering how we should read his acting or his poetic prose, along with his long, flowing grey hair, chiselled cheek bones, and soft undemanding voice complete with a dignified bearing reminiscent of that self-ennobling English imposter Grey Owl.[3] Ironically, the age-old notion of the Vanishing Indian (a variation of the Noble Savage) was perhaps best expressed by George in his famous elegy "My Very Good Dear Friends." He rang out:

> ...for I was born a thousand years ago...born in a culture of bows and arrows. But within the span of half a lifetime I was flung across the ages to the culture of the atom bomb....And from bows and arrows to atom bombs is a distance far beyond a flight to the moon....For a few brief years I knew my people when we lived the old life....But we were living on the dying energy of a dying culture.... (qtd in Waubageshig 184-188)

Perhaps it was appropriate that Chief Dan George played the role of Rita Joe's father in Ryga's *Ecstasy of Rita Joe*. Hailed as Canada's centennial play, *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* presents Indian culture as belonging to the past, a culture that cannot 'make it' in white society. Confronted by Jaime, the frustrated, volatile and city-hungry suitor to his daughter, David Joe, Ryga's symbol of the "authentic" Indian, can only whimper: "I know nothing...only the old stories" (85). Native peoples, it seems, are so culturally different as to be irrelevant, so that upon contact with the modern (civilized? superior?) world, they become disoriented, living in a dream or trance, like Rita and her father. Incapable of living a culturally efficacious life either in the city or on the reserve, and whites being incapable of effectively responding, the two young people Rita Joe and Jaime who represent the future of Native society meet horrible deaths. In other words, they vanish. And the old man is left in a state of sorrow and reminiscence. It is just a matter of time that he too will vanish.

---

[3] See Ojibway poet Armand Garnet Ruffo's *Grey Owl: The Mystery of Archie Belaney*.

The Vanishing Indian is a quintessentially colonial expectation. In Canada, an assortment of artists, travellers, missionaries, officials, soldiers, poets, novelists and anthropologists "all agreed that Indians were disappearing" (Francis 53). The "imminent disappearance of the Indian," writes Daniel Francis, "was an article of faith among Canadians until well into the twentieth century" (53). Canadian (or White American) interest in Indians was fed in large part by this expectation. As Berkhofer put it, "Most romantic of all was the impression of the Indian as rapidly passing away before the onslaught of civilization" (88). Various artists build their reputations on capturing "a record of their [Indian] culture before it died away" (Francis 53). Photographer Edward Curtis traversed the length and breadth of North America in his mission to "present Indians as they existed before the whiteman came." As is well-known, Curtis, along with other well-known artists such as George Catlin or Paul Kane, doctored their pictures to convey what they became famous for, an Indian "unspoiled" by White culture.

In the early nineteenth century United States, the Vanishing Indian spawned a particular version of the Noble Savage as cultural nationalists revived and romanticized legendary Indian figures such as Pocahontus. This Noble Savage was somewhat different from European primitivist construction in that Americans created it only after they had, for the most part, destroyed Native Americans. Their Noble Savage was not a critic of their society as it was cultural appropriation for their art. Their Savage was Noble only because he was "safely dead and historically past" (Berkhofer 90). Berkhofer situates Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's *The Song of Hiawatha* within this tradition. Hiawatha[4] continues to impact on Canadian intellectuals, certainly Native writers.

Born in the dying arms of the Vanishing Indian, Hiawatha has become the "authentic" Indian. Despite centuries of expecting the 'Indian' to vanish, the Indian has not. Nor have the **real** people. But 'the Indian' continues to be generalized and symbolized as one monolithic stone-age culture, a "culture" of the past, the only pure expression of Indianness, the only "authentic" Indian. But "authenticity" exacts a deadly price. If the Indian did not vanish physically, he had to remain moribund culturally. A Noble Savage could exist only in a timeless vacuum. In effect, Indians could have no movement in their culture(s), therefore, they could have no histories. They can only have "traditions" which are always placed and treated as 'pre-historic' or 'traits.' In many ways the Noble Savage construct is really a form of intellectual genocide in that it absolutely disallows Native cultural change. While westerners have assumed their culture is inherently dynamic and progressive, they have invented a native whose culture is timeless and fixed. The moment the native steps out of timelessness, he or she is deemed assimilated, that is non-Indian. This sets up the native as immutably and antithetically unprogressive. As Francis explains, "Indians were defined in relation to the past and in contradistinction to White society. To the degree that they changed, they were perceived to become less Indian" (39). Thus Native society has been ossified and relegated to the natural world.

---

[4] My use of "Hiawatha" is general and symbolic, and is not restricted to the actual book length poem by Longfellow (1855). Within certain contexts, I use the terms Noble Savage and Hiawatha interchangeably.

Consigning the Indian to an unchanging natural world has deep European roots. In the context of trying to make sense of the New World and its colonial discoveries and behaviours, a minority of European thinkers (spanning the Renaissance, Enlightenment and Romantic periods), idealized their "l'homme savauge" of the Americas. Whether it was Montaigne and Las Casas in the 1500s, or Voltaire and Rousseau in the 1700s, the "positive" treatment of the New World Man was centrally about the Old World Man. New-found indigenous peoples around the world provided an enormous spurt of intellectual growth for Europeans. The Indian, among them, invigorated the European mind. As a critic of European society, the culturally 'raw' Indian was dichotomized from the Old World overgrown with conventions. If Europe had too many rules, the Indian had none. If Europe burdened its peoples with its lords and its propertied, the Indian had no kings or property over which to oppress the masses. If the Church was corrupt, the Indian had only his primeval forest to commune with. Berkhofer points out that while there were variations in emphasis at different periods, ideas around the Noble Savage remained largely the same. It was thought that human freedom was inherent in the raw state of nature. What was man-made was artificial and untrue, what was "unspoiled" and natural (thought to be) found in earliest "primitive man" was inherently good. Finding (even if in large parts constructed) such a world promised a new social order for Europeans. The ennobling of the Indian was almost accidental, and Native peoples as human beings largely inconsequential to European (and later White American) concerns. Berkhofer makes this clear. Not only did the American Indian take "a minor position in comparison to other exotic peoples in the Noble Savage convention," but

> no philosopher or *literateur* intended for his fellow citizens to adopt the lifestyles of the savages, noble or otherwise. Critical though the *philosophes* and authors may have been of European civilization, they merely wanted to reform it, not abandon it for the actual life of savagery they so often praised. (77)

Concerning White American uses of the Noble Savage, Berkhofer comes to the same conclusion, that while the "noble Indian deserved White pity for his condition and his passing," his way of life "no less than that of the ignoble savage demanded censure according to the scale of progress and the passage of history" (91).

Idealizing the Indian's presumed natural world appears, at first glance, to be positive, as in the usage of the *bon savage* in primitivist criticism of

European conventions. However, upon closer inspection, there are serious historical and sociological problems with such a presentation. Being used as the colonizer's social conscience but left behind as irrelevant to modern culture carries chilling implications.[5] Related to this is the deculturalization of Native peoples. Blurring the 'native' with the landscape, conveying the impression that 'Indians' take no control of their environment, of their social life and regulations, of their children, of their intellects or of their urges are not taken as complimentary by most Native intellectuals. Nor is there any anthropological support whatsoever for such deculturalization. Dickason emphasizes that whatever "the differences may be between 'tribal' societies and 'civilizations,' the presence or lack of order is not one of them. The people of the New World all led highly structured lives..." (*Myth* 273). And as we have seen, treating the Indian, noble or otherwise, as part of 'the fauna and flora' (Walker) has had its unhappy effects in Canadian historiography and literature. Extreme versions of the naturalization of the Indian are found in the widespread association of Indians with animals, whether such associations were intended as insults or compliments. Dehumanizing Indians through hate literature or deculturalizing them through primitivist perspectives, has much the same effect. Indians remain non-human.

---

[5] E.T. Seton's "Red Man" is a perfect example. As an outspoken critic of America's burgeoning industrialization in the early twentieth century, Seton offered the Indian as a social conscience of the times. Seton was most sincere, even arguing that the Red Man's spiritual-based culture was superior to the White man's materially-based one. He admired and respected the Indian he constructed. However, Seton's nature-loving Indian came complete with buckskin, headdresses, canoes, bows and arrows, tipis and Indian villages--the beginnings of the Boy Scout and Girl Guide movements. Not surprisingly, such a caricatured Indian had nothing meaningful to say to modern America, and was left behind along with Seton. See Seton's *Two Little Savages* and *The Gospel of the Redman*. See also Daniel Francis' discussion on Seton, especially pages 144-168.

The Noble Savage is the flipside of the Ignoble Savage and as proposed throughout this dissertation, one is as unreal as the other. For the Native community, it carries social, political and intellectual consequences. Hanging on to Hiawatha in the face of everyday reality may paralyze and disorient contemporary youth, for how must they reconcile the repulsive, scalping, "redskin" savage with the gentle, generous, intuitively all-knowing golden but pre-historic Hiawatha in a post-modern society? Katerie Damm observes that "Indianness can be erased when the reality of Indigenous life confronts the fiction of Indigenous stereotypes" (14). This is not to mention, Native peoples must contend with non-Native Canadians who often express confusion or disappointment, even anger, when they must reconcile their idealist expectations with reality. Real Native peoples are measured against the Noble Savage. A number of Native humorists have in fact build their counter-discourse around satirical treatment of this experience (Basil Johnston, Emma Lee Warrior, Drew Hayden Taylor, Margo Kane).

But White disappointment can have more serious political implications. Daniel Francis records the poet Charles Mair's surprise, at Treaty Number Eight (1899) negotiations, to find "commonplace men smoking briar-roots" instead of "the picturesque Red Man" (4). In the words of Mair, secretary to the Half-Breed Scrip Commission for northern Alberta:

> there presented itself a body of respectable-looking men, as well dressed and evidently quite as independent in their feelings as any like number of average pioneers in the East....One was prepared, in this wild region of forest, to behold some savage types of men; indeed, I craved to renew the vanished scenes of old. But alas! One beheld,

> instead, men with well-washed unpainted faces, and combed and common hair; men in suits of ordinary store-clothes, and some even with 'boiled' if not laundered shirts. One felt disappointed, even defrauded. (qtd in Francis 3)

Had Mair and his colleagues in the colonial offices in Ottawa, expected to see what he in fact saw, common men similar to Eastern pioneers (to him), might the outcome from treaties and Half-breed scrips been entirely different? And one wonders to what extent Mair--or Paul Kane, Edward Curtis and numerous others at each epoch of contact--were expressing disappointment that they had not encountered the exotic Orient of Said's analysis?

True, the Noble Savage has imbued our writers and even some scholars with a tradition of idealism. This in itself is not necessarily negative but its impact on our reconstruction is evident. As treated in the previous chapter, Native peoples have had to emphasize cultural differences to counter the portrayal of themselves as uncultured savages. In this process of defending and re-positioning, we have, inevitably perhaps, 'utopianized' our culture(s). The 'Noble Savage' has been an ideal image--and tool--for this. Again, this process has not necessarily been conscious; the enduring image has been there for us to internalize. It has also provided us fodder for our art.

Writers and poets of different eras have not only drawn from romanticized images to shore up arguments that we were not savages, we have, perhaps irresistibly, built our inventions around them too. Perhaps more than any other writer, Duke Redbird has turned the Hiawathian vision of pre-colonial Native into a fine art form. In fact, it became his signature poetry. Redbird's poetry, especially his earlier stuff, is replete with primitivist yearnings for his "moccasins" to have walked along "giant forest trees," for his hands to have "fondled the spotted fawn," or his eyes to have beheld "the golden rainbow of the north" (in Dunn 53). In the tradition of primitivism, Redbird often juxtaposed what was artificial with what was natural. In "I Am The Redman," Redbird poses as the "Son of the forest, mountain and lake" or as "Son of the tree, hill and stream" and immediately retorts after such lines: "What use have I of asphalt?" or "What use have I of china and crystal / What use have I of diamonds and gold?" Redbird ends this poem by not only challenging one of European's key posts of civilization, Christianity, but by submitting the "white brother" can only be saved by "the red man's" natural-based spirituality.

> I am the redman
> Son of the earth and water and sky...
> What use have I of nylon and plastic?
> What use have I of your religion?
> Think you these be holy and sacred
> That I should kneel in awe?
>
> I am the redman
> I look at you white brother
> And I say to you
> Save not me from sin and evil,
> Save yourself. (in Dunn Introduction)

Native romanticism is more than an imitation of European primitivism. In the following poem from *My Heart Soars,* Chief Dan George uses words and imagery which might evoke a Hiawathian vision, yet he is expressing something much deeper than a glorified version of his cultural background:

> I have known you
> when your forests were mine,
> when they gave me clothing.
> I have known you
> in your streams
> and rivers
> where your fish flashed
> and danced in the sun,
> where the waters said come,
> come and eat of my abundance.
> I have known you
> in the freedom of your winds.
> And my spirit,
> like the winds,
> once roamed your good lands. (63)

At first glance, one might think Chief Dan George is also simply a romanticist in the tradition of Longfellow. His golden and graceful world does sparkle with gleaming streams and sun. Yet George, like most Native romantics, cannot be so easily dismissed. Though he too expresses intimacy with nature, his gentle and pensive style belies his resistance. Take, for example, another poem in which he indicates the pain of 'no longer' having the beauty or agency of his culture:

> No longer
>   can I give you a handful of berries as a gift,
> no longer
>   are the roots I dig used as medicine,
> no longer
>   can I sing a song to please the salmon,
> no longer
>   does the pipe I smoke make others sit
>   with me in friendship,

no longer
    does anyone want to walk with me to the
    blue mountain to pray,
no longer
    does the deer trust my footsteps.... (30)

Some might describe this poem as mere nostalgia or lament, but George is actually re-establishing the value of his world. He is, like Copway before him, staking out his culture as equal to (if not better than) the civilizer's. Like most Native romantics, he is using romanticization as a technique of resistance. Take, as another example, the following poem by Rita Joe. Both in intent and content, this poem is even more reminiscent of Copway's "wide domain" above. By juxtaposing the glories of lands, seas, rivers and scenery against "monuments" and "scrolls" (or in the case of Copway, marbled palaces), the poet is both romanticist and resistant.

Aye! No monuments,
No literature,
No scrolls or canvas-drawn pictures
Relate the wonders of our yesterday.

How frustrated the searchings
of the educators.

Let them find
Land names,
Titles of seas,
Rivers;
Wipe them not from memory,
These are our monuments...

Rita Joe in *Poems of Rita Joe* places Micmac text alongside the

English; by so doing she is also re-positioning her culture as original and equal to the colonialist's. But there is another intriguing theme that runs through these works, and that is the theme of cultural tenacity. With some significance, Rita Joe turns directly to "scholars"--scholars because they are the keepers of history and culture--to remind them they will "find our art / in names and scenery / Betrothed to the Indian / since time began" (poem #10). Similarly, Copway associates his universe with the sheltering forests. He points, defiantly, to the enduring qualities of Native culture: "Nature will be Nature still, while palaces shall decay and fall in ruins." "Yes," Copway exults, "Niagara will be Niagara a thousand years hence!" And even though Chief Dan George can no longer give away berries, roots or salmon, these spirit-nourishing elements will remain. They will not vanish. However, a massive portion of the Natives' lands did and continues to vanish. Even the most generous and optimistic of romantics "are bent low" with grief.

The Noble Savage has engendered tension between romance and reality. First, it must be pointed out that some White Canadians in high places of power have contested Native people's claims to land as mere expressions of the Noble Savage. Doxtator in *Fluffs and Feathers*, reminds us that Supreme Court British Columbia's Chief Justice Allan McEachern, in his 1991 ruling against the Gitskan and Wet'sue't'en, discounted their testimonies regarding their close relationship to the land as nothing more than romanticization (13). Even though his ruling was later overturned, it is instructive to what extents colonialists will go to entrench their material benefits.[6] However, it is the purview and craft of writers, even if colonized, to take poetic license with words and metaphors. And just because they demonstrate, in style or in vision, a 'Hiawathian' penchant, it does not in any way suggest that the real Natives' relationships to their lands are imaginary. These writers are real too. Copway, Rita Joe, Chief Dan George--all are mourning the loss of their land-based cultures of which they had the privilege of actually experiencing. The form and contents of their romanticism do raise important issues concerning the complexities of our identities and writing, but it cannot undermine the Native reclamation of lands. Many of us, including myself, did in fact grow up in land-based **real** cultures.

Internalization of European-originated romantic traditions does present interesting challenges for us, even, it appears, in scholarship. It bears on Native writers as we seek for a meaningful identity in contemporary terms. Georges Sioui in *For An Amerindian Autohistory* takes quite an unusual approach. Sioui, historian of Huron heritage, actually recalls French romanticist Lahontan, and argues that Lahontan was not inventing but in fact expressing Native worldviews. In other words, the Noble Savage was not constructed out of thin French air (my elaboration), it was founded on Native cultures. Sioui, in effect, argues that historians must "rehabilitate" friendly European sources to get back to the "circle of life," that is, to Native social and moral ethics (61, 8).[7] But more, historians must incorporate the "vigour of the Amerindian conscience" in their works, they must turn to Native traditions (and traditionalists) and to the people for a "proper understanding" of Native history (31, 38).[8] Sioui refers to this as "Amerinidan autohistory." He explains: "If no fair or satisfactory historical evaluation seems to have come from the outside (heterohistory), the only remaining source is autovision or autohistory" (37).

---

[6] This is the same judge who quoted Hobbes ("nasty, brutish...") to assert the Gitskan were too savage. Too savage or too noble--Native peoples cannot not win.

[7] See especially chapter five.

It is true that Native ethics and epistemologies were grounded in a moral understanding of the human relationship to the universe (all of which is difficult to translate into English). But Sioui's thesis on "autohistory" is at times obscure, especially when he turns to the issue of historical methodology. For example, it is not at all clear whether he is espousing a 'division of labour' between white and Native (or Huron?) historians when he argues that Amerindian history "should be based on a delimitation and recognition of its ideological territory and its particular philosophy..." (36). There are other obscurities but the thesis is most clear as an idealized value: "The goal of Amerindian autohistory is to assist history in its duty to repair the damage it has traditionally caused to the integrity of Amerindian cultures" (37).

Parts of Sioui's proposal for an "Amerindian autohistory" is appealing, for example, his call for "an ethical approach to history." Nor can I argue with his reasoning that "all written data that have been used by the dominant society so far to 'write the history of the Amerindian' should be revised and reinterpreted" (38). But I have difficulty with his idealization of what he calls his "ideological portrait of Amerindians" (38), especially to the extent the portrait resembles the Noble Savage. I have difficulty with the use of the Noble Savage, whether the symbol was constructed by Europeans or Natives, as some kind of final authority on the Native "moral code." Of course, I am not disputing that Native peoples always had moral codes, but it troubles me that we keep relying on the Noble Savage for who we are, or who we think we are. Also, Sioui's movement between the era of Lahonton and that of contemporary Native elders requires some imagination. Sioui does make an interesting, if not optimistic argument for the "rehabilitation" of friendly European sources which could perhaps be applied to historiography. But as we reconstruct our histories, must we again go back to Adario or to Hiawatha?

---

[8] For this more philosophical--and idealized--discussion, see chapter three.

And what of those of us who cannot, or who will not present ourselves in this way? To say the least, the socio-cultural effects and political ramifications are powerful. There is tremendous pressure today for all Native artists and intellectuals to produce works expressively and materially different from the dominant culture. We are expected not only to produce 'authentic' material (notice the new pressure for Native scholars to do 'traditional epistemologies," to validate any and all research through 'elders' or to write poetry in Cree), but even to look authentic and different![9] Marilyn Dumont chides against universalizing "one experience of nativeness" and calls for attention to "a multiplicity of experiences out there that go on being ignored because they do not fit a popular understanding of culture, but which have to be expressed because their denial by the image making machine is another kind of colonialism" (qtd in Armstrong 49).

---

[9] This is a long-standing and potentially lethal problem for Native peoples who do not or will not fit into White expectations of the 'authentic Indian.' George Copway, for example, suffered desertion and distrust for, as Petrone sees it: "He had become a confused individual, torn by conflicting loyalties. He wanted to be accepted into the world of the whiteman, and yet he was bound by pride in his own people's heritage" (45). It appears Copway was resisting the prevailing stereotypes and expectations that offered him no options. He was also proposing an Indian Homeland which most likely threatened his white friends.

Authenticity, Cultural Difference and the Noble Savage

There is a deep, convoluted and abiding connection between notions of Native cultural difference and the Noble Savage. Take the issue of land. Our intimate connection to the land/scape and its ecology did and does make a difference in our worldviews and epistemologies. To say it again, Native peoples' relationship to the land is different from legal and capitalist notions of use and occupancy of land. As Ridington suggests, noted earlier, the difference is more profound than has been appreciated. It is not just about living off the land; it is about a whole way of perceiving, practicing and connecting land, knowledge, skill and spirituality. Aboriginal peoples have constructed their languages, myths, visions, technologies and human relationships based on their land-based cosmologies. But it is a difference which has obviously been compounded by dispossession. And this involves everything we mean by "cultural differences." Here some might interject that Whites too love their lands. There is no question that they do. We would not here be discussing dispossession otherwise. Of course, people love land (or home) in a myriad of ways. There is a spectrum of difference among Catherine Soneegoh Sutton, Chief Dan George, Justice Allan McEachern, Grey Owl or an 'ordinary Canadian' beautifying their backyard. But 'love' is not just about attitudes and sentiments, even if expressed in the finest

Euro-Canadian literature, art and music; it is about who ends up with the actual land mass with its enormous resources. Further, *how* we understand and approach this difference is complicated by prevailing uses of the Noble Savage, uses which have confused both Native and non-Native peoples.

It is a layered and vicious circle. The stereotype holds that Indians were primitive, and as such, their cultures were infantile and fixed, or frozen in time. The underlying assumption here (or the logical outcome of ossifying native society) is if Native people change, the Indian will vanish! Seen this way, an 'archiving' mentality becomes crucial. This is partly why, for example, museums have gone so far as to collect and display skeletal remains of the Native dead. For the colonized Native world, 'archiving' (meant poetically here) is reflected in the sacralization of the past and anyone who represents the past. Such sacralizing is born from and leads back to the conclusion that only old people know anything "real" or "authentic" about Native culture. Authenticity has been linked, even restricted, to "elders" and "traditions." In other words, Native identity has been consigned forever to the past. Hence, much confusion and some division in our ranks. Besides the horrifying genocidal implications of being mummified, we have become entrenched in still a new way as the Other, the very thing we have fought to overcome.

And when taken to extremes cultural romanticization can lead to fundamentalism, even jingoism. These, in turn, can lead right to where the colonizers would want us to remain: stereotypes and therefore ossified and benign. Internalizing the Noble Savage makes us even more benign. Can the Noble Savage have a revolution? It might be that romanticism (especially when mixed with spirituality and nativism) blocks a consciousness required for decolonization and material resistance. Adams who has written much on the "ossification of native society" insists that Aboriginal peoples dispel stereotypes and "destroy all encrustations of colonial mentality that repress them" (*Tortured* 34).

It is bizarre. Authenticity demands we be 'different' but if our 'difference' is defined outside ourselves, be it legislatively or socially imposed, or if our difference is restricted to the past, such a difference is not ours! Whose interest does it serve that we be 'different'? Why should we be different?[10] What is the colonizer's agenda for keeping us 'different'? We must here recall Memmi's observation:

> Colonial racism is built from three major ideological components: one, the gulf between the culture of the colonialist and the colonized; two, the exploitation of these differences for the benefit of the colonialist; three, the use of these supposed differences as standards of absolute fact. (71)

Racist ideology is developed by the colonizer to both rationalize and maintain his power over the colonized. It also affords the colonizer the room to exploit Native culture(s) for economic and entertainment purposes, which is the basis for real estate, Hollywood, tourism, art and literature (of any genre), and even to a large extent, scholarship.

---

[10] Many questions can be pursued on this issue. Are we that different? Surely, after 500 years, we might have significant cultural similarities. Axtell, Weatherford, Wolf, among others, have noted the significant cultural exchange that in fact took place between Europeans and indigenous peoples. There is also the problem of restricting Aboriginal rights to cultural difference. What if we were not different but still original to this land? I have pursued some of these issues in a wider social context in "Re-examining Culturally Appropriate Models in Criminal Justice Applications."

Cultural Difference and Criticism

There is a 'vicious circle' process here that colonization has produced. Disempowering and dehumanizing Native peoples has put them in a reactive and resistance position. Romanticization is both a reflection of internalizing colonizer images and standards, but it is also a resistance posture. What is even more complicated, not all romanticization is without foundation, as noted above. Further, and more recently, the Native emphasis on cultural difference reflects a 'post-colonial' response to the problem of western intellectual dominance, particularly to the problem of 'universality.' As Ashcroft *et al* explain:

> The idea of 'post-colonial literary theory' emerges from the inability of European theory to deal adequately with the complexities and varied cultural provenance of post-colonial writing. European theories themselves emerge from particular cultural traditions which are hidden by false notions of 'the universal.' Theories of style and genre, assumptions about the universal features of language, epistemologies and value systems are all radically questioned by the practices of post-colonial writing. Post-colonial theory has proceeded from the need to address this different practice. Indigenous theories have developed to accommodate the differences within the various cultural traditions as well as the desire to describe in a comparative way the features shared across those traditions. (11)

To put content into this discussion, Native peoples, in particular, have developed (and are still developing) a profile of 'difference,' especially emphasizing the beautiful natural land and lifestyle, languages, values, spirituality, holistic worldviews, egalitarian organizational structures and even a different sense of time and space. It is here that many typologies are constructed. Well-intentioned charts comparing Native and White values have become popular in a wide variety of settings including social work, education, medical and legal communities.[11] From this comes the monolithic Indian whose cardboard culture can be unfolded something akin to a DNA structure through which White and "Red" cultural traits are contrasted. Whites are materialistic, Reds spiritual; Whites are linear, Reds circular; Whites are individualistic, Reds tribal. Whites are patriarchal, Reds blur with "Mother Earth." If I may be rhetorical: is this not some continuation of the civ/sav construct?

But typologies and trait-listing lead us back to the very stereotypes from which they come, the very stereotypes which have dehumanized or collectivized us, the very stereotypes we are resisting. Here all the old themes come back in: The Warrior. The Vanishing Indian. Mother Earth.[12] The Elder. The Holy Community. The influence of these constructs is evident in our works and responses. But given the colonial conditions, how do we know what is 'real' and what is constructed or fantasized?

As variously noted throughout, Aboriginal cultures are, of course, real, and they are in many fundamental respects (but not totally) different from Western culture(s). Native peoples carry within them centuries of cultural ethos, and to the extent that they are alive and relate to each other, they have living cultures. Peter Puxley makes this same point in the context of Dene development by defining culture as "what people do together," encompassing a "total" range of expressions from drumming to re/defining their (Dene) political, linguistic and cultural place in Canada (111). Aboriginal peoples' cultures are real, they do not have to be "different" as such (especially visibly or ceremonially) to know this. What is problematic is that their cultures have been presented as "remarkably" different. All this has been confounded by Canadian legislation which restricts Indian identity. That Native peoples struggle with their identities should come as no surprise. 'Who we are,' as Canadian Native literary critic Kateri Damm points out, "has been constructed and defined by Others to the extent that at times we too no longer know who we are" (11).

---

[11] Frideres refers to such charts. See footnote 8 in the next chapter.

[12] Except for the term "mother earth," about which I feel ambivalent, most of these caricatures reflect the colonial tradition of masculinizing 'Indian' identity.

What is of particular interest to me, given ideological paradigms, is where and how 'cultural differences' have been worked out by both Native and non-Native writers and critics. We can see a developing (and universalized) profile of "Native culture" in a number of different fields, concerns and disciplines.[13] Here, we are interested in recent literary criticism as treated by both Native and non-Native writers and critics. The collection of essays in *Looking at the Words of Our People: First Nations Analysis of Literature* indicates that Native writers are in the process of "seeking a critical center," to borrow Native American critic Kimberly M. Blaeser's phrase. However, in our efforts to define our center we can see the pull of colonialist definitions. Here too what is emerging is a profile of the Native culture as 'tribal' (term used in United States)[14] or "collective" (Canadian) featuring themes of the Mother and of the Circle. These presumed features are typically juxtaposed against the Western culture as "individual,' patriarchal and linear, respectively.[15]

---

[13] Arguments for 'cultural differences' (as a basis for 'culturally-appropriate' programs) are most evident in proposals for self-government in areas such as education, criminology and health. Such arguments are elaborated in the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry Report (Manitoba, 1991) and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (Canada, 1995).

Many Canadian Native writers have presented such a profile (with various emphases by each writer), among them, Janice Acoose, Jeannette Armstrong, Douglas Cardinal, Maria Campbell, Lee Maracle, Daniel David Moses. Non-native scholars, especially literary scholars, have been quick to 'read' Native works under such increasingly popularized terms. Well-intentioned Hartmut Lutz, has pushed the study of Native literature in these directions.[16] I want especially to interrogate this issue because many of the assumptions have been treated as, in the words of Memmi, "absolute truth." They in fact present us with interesting sets of problems.

"Cultural studies," a relatively recent phenomenon in literary studies which has emphasized cultural differences, was meant to free the colonized from Western hegemonies, both in cultural and critical modes. (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, *Key Concepts* 60-61). However, debates abound within the post-colonial community concerning the uses and concepts of 'culture' and about its diversities.[17]

---

[14] Among the Native American intellectuals and writers who use this term are Paula Gunn Allen, Louis Owens, Gerald Vizenor.

[15] American critic Arnold Krupat is irritated by this in his interesting work *Ethnocriticism*, but he too stays within the circles of arguments he dislikes. Why contain the discussion of Native literature to ethnology? For a cogent and thoughtful treatment of Native American literature, see Louis Owens, *Other Destinies*.

[16] See especially Lutz, "Confronting Cultural Imperialism." Lutz has written a number of works on Native literatures and writers. He has made special efforts to get to know Native authors and has done much to advance awareness of Native writing.

With respect to Native peoples, applying 'Cultural Studies' to Native literary works poses problems similar to that of applying 'cross-cultural' methodologies in historical works. I am thinking of the neo cross-cultural approach adopted by Native specialist scholars from about the 1960s-1980s era (Bailey, Jaenen, Trigger, Brown, Van Kirk). This approach tended to qualify most data, be it theoretical or descriptive, with anthropological explanations.[18] Scholars working within this approach tended to frame all things Native in typical terms of "cultural differences" or "traditions." Compared to earlier racist material, this is, of course, a much improved approach to Native history. And with greater awareness, there is greater improvement. However, ethnological descriptions have a 'distancing' effect between the describer and the described. The manner of delivering what I call 'cultural tid-bits,' such as excessive detail to the most ordinary or functionalist interpretation to the smallest item or gesture, objectifies the people or thing described. This process results in Othering the very people the researcher is trying to make understandable to his or her audience. In turn, audience reception depends on the audience. The Native audience finds ethnological objectification irritating and alienating. Mohawk author Deborah Doxtator finds that "Indians are perceived to have culture, not history," and "'Culture' can be presented as anonymous, almost divorced completely from real human beings. 'History' involves the actions of actual named individuals." It is not "unusual," she explains, for museums to "focus on presenting ethnographic 'pre-contact,' 'Native culture' in ways that are perceived inappropriate for displacing Canadian history" (12). Not all ethnological studies or displays fall into the distancing mode, but many do. Because Native peoples are often approached as cultural entities vastly and mysteriously different from whites, there is a tendency to treat both Aboriginal history and contemporary cultural productions only as ethnological expressions. To Doxtator, academic disciplines "still have great difficulty accepting Indian art, history, literature, music and technology as art, history, music and technology without first placing it in an anthropological context" (12).

---

[17] These debates are challenging and fascinating but to enter them here would serve to detract the much needed attention that must be paid to Native Canadian issues.

[18] See in *Many Tender Ties*, for example, Van Kirk's listing of all the items of fashion or jewelry metis women were "very fond of" (101-103). There is an unstated assumption that such interests are abnormal or 'remarkable' for these women to acquire.

Applied "cultural studies" in literature usually means re/settler scholars and writers trying to 'understand' the 'native' with that oft unstated ethnographic assumption the 'native' is 'remarkably' different. Forms of ethnographic trait listing appears in literary criticism. Related to this is the tendency in criticism to confuse what is 'literary' or simply 'human' with what is presumably 'cultural' or specific to a 'community.' Critics reach for cultural explanations in themes that may not necessitate anthropological assistance. For example, is a poem about loneliness or lost love or death a matter of ethnology, or is it an expression of a Native individual who feels personal loss for whatever reason?

This begs the question of what constitutes literature as opposed to, say, anthropology, or 'cultural studies.' And of course, it begs the question of how Native writing should be reviewed or analyzed. On my part, I am annoyed that ethnology and ideology have so pervaded literary criticism that the human personality is forgotten in non-white, especially Native, writing. I am in some respects (and at some risk) arguing for 'common humanity' here. There is, obviously, tension between keeping a wary eye on western universalization ('common' humanity) on the one hand, and on the other hand, applying ethnology ('cultural difference') to what is discernibly human in Native literary presentations.

Apparently reflecting on this matter of 'common humanity,' Victor J. Ramraj, editor of *Concert of Voices: An Anthology of World Writing in English*, prefaces the anthology with this explanation:

> ...despite historical and cultural specificities(the focus of cross-cultural and multicultural studies), commonalities and affinities exist among these writings and between writings on both sides of the hegemonic divide.
>
> The colonial-imperial, marginal-central binary informs much of the writings of this linguistic community but it is not the exclusive or overriding preoccupation of the writers. They do not confine themselves to political and ideological issues or subsume beneath them other geneses and dimensions of experiences of love, ambition, resentment, envy, generosity, anger, and the range of responses that make humans human. To do this would be to simplify and falsify their complex lives. Moreover, to trace all experiences to hegemonic politics is to deny individuals and communities agency and responsibility for their own fates.... (xxix)

In the case of treating Native literary works, I am in many respects arguing for the 'commonsense' to recognize the almost infinite range of human experience and expression. Consideration of the cultural context to any work is important, no less so in the treatment of Native writing. However, a literary review should ideally concern itself primarily with the psychology or individuality of Native characters, rather than, say, viewing Native feelings or behaviour as evidence of some cultural reflex. Reviewers are often in search of some generalized cultural pattern or pathos when they could be interested in uniqueness. Here I obviously commit myself to what I think, in part, constitutes literary studies. But it is more than a concern about literary theories or aesthetics. Because of the overwhelming history of misrepresentation, it is particularly crucial that what is unique about a Native person or persons is recognized. In other words, the focus on supposed cultural differences between the 'native' and the re/settler by-passes the reality of Natives as uniquely human individuals who are not comprehensible in isolation from other individuals.

The point is, the overemphasis on the supposed cultural differences between the "Indian" and the "White man" has contributed to our extreme marginalization and has created new stereotypes. White Canadian reviewers, perhaps afraid to offend our presumed cultural sensibilities, have been reluctant to touch our works. *We* are reluctant to criticize each other, a point I take up later. Those who do take interest tend to take our works to the familiar, perhaps 'safer' havens of ethnology and colonization studies.[19] Native literature receives little serious critical attention. But relegating Native literature to cultural or political studies can keep us continuously Othered, therefore truly invisible with the potential to keep us ghettoized.

---

[19] As noted earlier, Campbell, Culleton, Armstrong and Maracle's works have especially been reviewed under ethnological and/or victim terms.

These are not the only options available to us as writers and critics.

However, before I can move on here, I need to bring in the other critical tool which has been used with respect to treating Native writing, a tool employed in this dissertation but one which can also produce generalizations. Related closely to cultural studies is the new awareness by Canadian literary specialists that yes, along with cultural awareness, historical awareness is also important. Since the 1980s those specializing in (or making forays into) Native writing have acknowledged the influence and role of colonization in Aboriginal history and culture. This in itself has been an important recognition by writers as varied as Armstrong, Fee, Godard, Lutz and Maracle. But again, political interpretations have tended to submerge literary concerns and individual profiles. Similar in consequence to the civ/sav construct as well as to ethnolographic treatment of all things Native, ideological formulations produce a lumping effect. Once again, Natives are generalized as a mass, and 'mass-ness' is 'a sore subject,' one may say, to Native peoples.

Native writers, after all, are attempting to undo 500 years of caricatures by replacing the stereotypes with "real" human personalities. Arguably, it is difficult if not virtually impossible to see real human personalities when presenting Native literature as a 'voice' of culture or even of resistance. But it is impossible to deal with anything human without reference to culture or historical experience. Inescapably, Native writers, like all other writers, have to contextualize their cultural and political lives. Clearly, the issue is not whether we should refer to our cultures, our histories or our contemporary lives, the issue is how this is done, but equally, how this is received and addressed.

The Problem of Audience

On the issue of audience, Native writers are confronted with a double-headed problem. Neither the White nor the Native audience has yet received Native writers and intellectuals in adequate ways. Marlene Nourbese Philips has written: "No work is in any full practical sense produced unless it is also received" (qtd in Perreault and Vance, xxii). In many important ways, Native writers are without an audience. If White audiences have misunderstood and stereotyped us, Native audiences are virtually non-existent. The White audience remains largely uneducated with respect to the key issues of cultures and Native political experience. For example, even when Native productions are (or could be) free of stereotypes, or are modernized, non-Native audiences may not, or cannot, catch the nuances, the languages, the specific cultural symbols, myths or legends in many Native works.[20] And I emphasize, this is so not because we are so different or 'remarkable' that 'normal' readership cannot fathom us, but because this readership is simply uneducated and miseducated about who contemporary Native peoples are. Concerning political facts, while there is a growing appreciation of the Native political experience, audiences, especially EuroCanadian, may not yet or ever fully appreciate or accept the socio-political and cultural ramifications of comprehending power and powerlessness which implicates them.

---

[20] I appreciate that, for example, CBC journalists have attempted to understand the 'trickster' in Thomson Highway's plays, and it is to Highway's credit that he makes the effort to educate the audience.

The Native audience is also largely uneducated but about different things. In the first instance, as noted in the first chapter, technical literacy in the English language is still an issue for Native peoples. Among the consequences of our alienation from the dominant Canadian educational system are the gaps in our knowledge about Western culture, especially the more esoteric aspects such as the organization of history, the rise and fall of ideologies, philosophy or criticism.[21] Conceptualizing and focussing on "Great" men (such as Shakespeare, Aristotle, Freud, Nietzsche, Marx, or Lacan, Derrida or Northrop Frye) is quite alien to the majority of Native peoples.[22] So are literary events. Only a minority of Native people busy themselves with such 'uneveryday' concerns. The attendance at the CBC-hosted Aboriginal Achievement Awards is exceptional. Going to hear poets, playwrights and other writers is still unfamiliar to the majority of Native peoples. In a certain sense, all Canadian writers face the problem of audiences but all the more so for Native writers. As may be appreciated, factors such as these present special challenges for western-trained Native intellectuals. While we are growing as a community, we are still extremely small. Largely due to scarcity in emotional and material resources, both personal and collective, we have not built effective means of communicating, publishing, advocating or conferring.

---

[21] This fact does raise more interesting possibilities: if we were to remain illiterate re Western modes of communication and knowledge, does this mean we would be uncolonized? Are we now uncolonized or less colonized than say Fanon's Algerians or Memmi's Tunisians?

[22] As it may very well be for many white Canadians and other non-Natives, but I would argue it is especially so for Native peoples even at this time in Canadian intellectual life. Eric Wolf's "people without history," that is, the "common people" (x), were most likely alienated from "Great men" too.

As far as Native writers communicating with each other, I have wondered if there is much of a dialogue here too. I was struck by this after reading Hartmut Lutz' interviews with 18 Native writers in *Contemporary Challenges: Conversations with Canadian Native Authors*. Lutz selected Native academics, cultural critics, poets and novelists. Our reluctance to criticize or even notice each other is painfully evident. Only in response to Lutz' prodding did the Native authors refer to other Native writers, and those who did tended to go over the same authors (e.g. Armstrong, Campbell, Highway, Maracle) and issues (e.g. appropriation, storytelling, oral traditions) non-Native critics have highlighted. Some even admitted they were not familiar with Native literature, and some were not familiar with even the 'big' names in Native literature.[23]

Is there a way out of here? Is there any basis of dialogue besides the usual havens of cultural and political re/presentations? The overpowering dominance of the Wild West Machine constantly puts us in a reactive situation. It might be understandable that those among us would confuse stereotyped 'cultural difference' as decolonization. How might we respond? What must Native and non-Native writers do to dismantle formulated portrayals and characterizations? The next chapter seeks to show that it is possible to criticize (and create) Native works taking into consideration their respective cultural and political contexts without compromising their humanity, that is, to those aspects such as individuality which make us uniquely human.

---

[23] I will say here that those commenting on Native literature (and an ever growing variety of peoples seem to) have a responsibility to have at least read a number of Native works. And perhaps Native authors have a special responsibility to read other Native writers.

I began this chapter with questions about our reconstruction. I end with one of the clearest descriptions of what this entails, at least for the potlatch peoples of the Northwest Coast who had encounters with "white people" such as Captain Vancouver, Edward Curtis, Franz Boas and the infamous potlatch-hating Indian Agent William Halliday. In a lovely overview of her people's experience "From Colonization to Repatriation," Gloria Cranmer Webster addresses "some criticism" that potlatches today are not like they were "in the old days." But "how could they be?" she asks, then sets out to explain such changes as financing and recordkeeping, arguing that in each case, the people have found a way to maintain continuity:

> There is no longer the system of loans with which to finance a potlatch. As the old people say, 'Now, a man just puts his hand in his own pockets to pay for it.' Today, we write out names and dances, because there are no longer recordkeepers as there were in the old days who could keep all this information in their minds. We videotape potlatches these days....If a culture is alive, it does not remain static. Ours is definitely alive and changes as the times require.
>
> We do not have a word for repatriation in the Kwak'wala language. The closest we come to it is the word *u'mista*, which describes the return of people taken captive in raids. It also means the return of something important. We are working towards the *u'mista* of much that was lost to us. The return of the potlatch collection is one *u'mista*. The renewed interest among younger people in learning about their cultural history is a kind of *u'mista*. The creation of new ceremonial gear to replace that held by museums is yet another *u'mista*. We are taking back, from many sources, information about our culture and

> our history, to help us rebuild our world which was almost shattered during the bad times. Our aim is the complete *u'mista* or repatriation of everything we lost when our world was turned upside down, as our old people say. The *u'mista* of our lands is part of our goal and there is some urgency to do it....While the white people celebrate Columbus's five hundredth anniversary, we celebrate our survival in spite of everything that has happened to us since the white people first came to this continent. (36-37)

Native peoples in real life are going about reconstructing their lives and communities, pushing paradigms long before we can write our novels and poems, or our dissertations. This process is infinitely more subtle and interesting than what we might think were we to fix upon caricatures and typologies.

CHAPTER SIX

NATIVE WRITERS RECONSTRUCT: PUSHING PARADIGMS

Finding A Way Out

This dissertation began by setting out the problems inherent to the Civ/Sav construct. Since such a construct is found untenable by which to study either White or Native peoples, or Native/White relationships, another construct, the colonizer/colonized was adopted. However, this, while it offers much, presents its own problems, not the least of which is its Marxist ideology, which, after all is largely Eurocentric. This then leads us to search for further ways we can understand the complex of issues and relations that are part of colonial conditions. Situating Aboriginal self-expression within the post-colonial intellectual development has proven most useful. However, since much of the post-colonial discourse centers on issues of culture and politics, we see that such discourse has its own set of limitations.[1] How might we break through the seeming impasses of Western cultural dominance? It becomes very clear that our 'way out' must involve 'pushing,' if not dismantling, the paradigms which restrict our identities to pre-determined typologies.

---

[1] There are, of course, international writers who quarrel on a number of post-colonial theories. Among the issues which have come under scrutiny are the excessive use of philosophy in literary criticism, pressure for theory, cultural difference, representation, and the treatment of indigenous writers and themes within 'colonialist' countries. Some of these debates are included in *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*, edited by Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin.

In this search for 'a way out' we must keep sight of our central task, which is the humanization of Native peoples. This is more of a challenge than we may at first imagine because Native history and cultures have for so long been encased in stereotypes. How do we deal with **real** Native cultures and political actions which are an integral aspect of humanity without resorting to ethnological or political generalizations?

And on whom does the task of deconstruction and reconstruction fall? I believe this task must be shared by all Canadians, by all intellectuals, Native and non-Native alike. Of course, we will come at this from a number of different perspectives but the common goal must be the dismantling of racist material and the continuing development of works which promote Native humanity. Perhaps such a task might be most effective through literary means rather than through standard documentation or standard politicization. But it must be done in every field and area of study. As one who has taught both Native history and Native literature for more than two decades, I have certainly observed that students and other audiences (both Native and non-Native) respond to creative literature more openly. For all its potential abuses (as we have so clearly seen in Canadian literary treatment of Native themes and characters) literature may still offer the best avenue through which we can convey Native humanity.

In this chapter I turn to Native literary expression, to two novels to be precise, in order to explore further what it may mean to move our discourse to some mutual understanding of what 'humanization' may mean. We come back to the question: what does make us human? Obviously this is a question particularly significant in this study. Since 'human' cannot exclude cultural, community and political elements, how might we recognize 'human' versus ethnological or ideological characterization in a Native literary work? In what ways can we treat Native literature such that we can recognize cultural and political factors yet not turn to stereotypes which surround Native cultures and history?

With these issues in mind, I offer a (relatively brief) comparative study of two quite different novels, *Slash* by Jeannette Armstrong and *Honour The Sun* by Ruby Slipperjack. Both these works have received substantial though uneven attention but here I revisit these novels not for the sake of literary criticism per se (I draw on few references from outside sources), but to show the intersection of issues and problems which confront us in the study of Native resistance writing. It is my hope such a reading may move us in new directions.

These two novels approach virtually everything differently, and their differences bring to relief many of the issues discussed in the previous chapter. It is also interesting to me that *Slash* has received much wider critical (particularly post-colonial and feminist)[2] attention than *Honour The Sun,* even though *Honour The Sun* is quintessentially female-centered in comparison to *Slash.*

---

[2] In the early 1990s several critics focussed repeatedly and almost exclusively on Armstrong, Campbell, Culleton and Maracle. See for example essays by Margery Fee, Barbara Godard, Agnes Grant and Noel Elizabeth Currie in W.H. New, *Native Writers and Canadian Literature*. Such a focus has lead to a 'spin-off' of further studies focussing again on these writers, for example, in *Looking at the Words of our People.* What this means is that many other Native writers, including Slipperjack, have not received the critical attention they merit.

First, the authors. Jeannette Armstrong is an Okanagan woman educated both in the ways of her Okanagan linguistic and cultural heritage and in Western schooling and culture. Besides publishing the novel *Slash* (which turned out to be one of the most critiqued Native works), Armstrong has written poetry, children's literature, social criticism and instructional writing. Armstrong is Director of the Native School of Writing in Penticton, B.C. She is a frequent lecturer in literary and educational circles, and continues to be an active writer/advocate of aboriginal peoples. She always greets other Native writers and orators with open arms. Her soft-spoken ways belie her tough and unrelenting decolonial criticism of Western history, culture and literature.

Ruby Slipperjack is an Ojibway woman from Ontario who is obviously well versed in Ojibway ways of the Canadian shield as well as in the Canadian mainstream system of schooling. Slipperjack has published two novels, *Honour The Sun* and *Silent Words*, and is a visual artist as well. Approachable and generous of spirit, Slipperjack prefers to stay out of the political forays but sees and says much through her gentle and perceptive sense of humour. She is currently working on a dissertation combining (Native) education and literature at Lakehead University.

There are many significant differences between these two writers. They come from very different languages, cultures and geographical regions of Canada. Naturally, their differences are reflected in their works. Their main characters, Armstrong's Slash and Slipperjack's Owl, provide us with two quite different presentations of what, in the final analysis is a common colonial experience.

Tommy Kelasket, or Slash as he is better known, begins his journey in his close-knit Okanagan home in British Columbia. He grows up on a ranch in a well-integrated, functioning, caring home where parents work hard and take care of their children. Okanagan culture and language provides the ground of Slash's being. Everyone who is important to him speaks the original language, recites Okanagan myths and legends, stays connected to the land in the original ways and eats home-cooked meals made in the original recipes.

Slash is a relatively happy boy until he goes to the town school.[3] It is here that his safe and harmonious world slowly unravels as he is confronted with an alien language, dehumanizing history and everyday racism from his White classmates and teachers (24). Slash cannot make sense of his world; he looks at Jimmy, his boyhood friend and cousin, who has aspired to gain White middle-class status. He is not impressed (nor in the end is Jimmy). On the other hand, he cannot integrate his early childhood life (or 'traditions' as some would be tempted to say) with Town. Nothing that his parents or old Prac-wa, the apparent elder of his community, taught him can help him out in his new tough world. The rest of the novel is about Slash's rollercoaster slides into a world of drugs, booze, women and a blur of Indian sit-ins and AIM politics.

Tommy at the age of 18 gets his nickname Slash as a result of a violent incident during one of his alcohol-dazed bouts. For this he is imprisoned. Interestingly, it is in prison he meets Mardi, a young activist who directs him towards political involvement (58-121). Slash joins her, moving from sit-in to sit-in across both United States and Canada. Slash, however, finds no peace here, and after Mardi dies (political reasons are intimated), Slash takes to drinking and again finds himself in prison. Again, it is in prison Slash finds another alternative, this time Native traditions (179-218).

---

[3] Like other indigenous writers (ie Ngugi, 1986), most Canadian Native writers point to the 'town' or 'school' as primary sites for their early and often crushing encounters with colonialism. In addition, I do find it interesting that Adams, Campbell and I, all of us Plains Cree Metis, have especially connected our earliest colonial 'consciousness' to our encounters of racism in "Town," as I call it in my essay (Tides, Towns and Trains").

Towards the end of the novel Slash finally figures things out--at least for himself. Tired of political rhetoric that never seems to make any changes, tired of his hateful feelings and confusion, and just plain tired, Slash goes back home to find himself, this time to stay.

Though much had changed while he had been gone (his parents also succumb to a bout of drinking after his brother dies but regain their composure after his father suffers from a heart attack), Slash finds peace in Native spirituality, and in a family of his own. He and his wife, though, come to very different conclusions about political differences within the Status Indian community. He chooses to stay home and use his language and his land while his wife continues to attend meetings on the repatriation of the Canadian constitution. The novel abruptly ends on a jarring note of personal despair (his young wife dies in a car crash en route to a political rally) and a hazy intimation of promise for the future in his little son.[4]

---

[4] For a refreshingly perceptive and cogent treatment of *Slash*, see Lynette Hunter, *Outsider Notes* 159-163. Hunter's reading of the ending as "proto-Messianic" is intriguing. It invites a much more complex discussion on issues of gender, tradition, and the basis of hope and reconstruction than is normally understood about this and other Native works.

Honour The Sun is told through the eyes of Owl, a ten year old girl who records her life with a series of seasonal journal entries beginning in the "Summer 1962" when she is ten and ending in "Summer 1968" when she is sixteen and leaving home and community. More than three-quarters of the novel is given to Owl's perspective as a ten year old. Owl's community is a small Ojibway (non-status and non-reserve) village somewhere along the C.N.R. rail line cutting through the Canadian Shield in northern Ontario. Her home, located near a lake and close to the railroad, is a cabin full of lively children (siblings, cousins, half-siblings) overseen by her somewhat gruff but kind and capable mother. On one level, there is a sense of the ordinary throughout as can be gleaned from some of the titles of her entries: Blueberry Days, Ordinary Days, Camping, Gathering Firewood, Spring Time, Dog Days, Just Tagging Along or Christmas At Home. And just as the titles suggest, much of the book is given to the everyday events as experienced by the pre-teen girl (1-169). Such events include being teased by her boy cousins, for example, being tricked into chewing snuff; the excitement of going to school for the first time, affection for their dog Rocky, affection for her family, sibling rivalry and so forth. When recording these, Slipperjack writes with a wonderful sense of humour and warmth. There is a constant sense of adventure and delight in Owl's childhood days.

Yet there is nothing "ordinary" about Owl's life when compared to, say, a middle-class white girl growing up in a Canadian town or city. Among other things, Owl practically lives outdoors. Her family's life generally revolves around the outdoors whether at play, work or excursions. Indeed, Owl and her family often canoe to an island where the family goes camping, picking berries or fishing. Or hiding. This island becomes the source of her family's sustenance as well as sanctuary from those end- of- the- month drinking sprees which bring out the sickos of her community (35-37, 87-94, 105-113).

The two characters, both young, share in their frustration concerning the environment around them, an environment which closes in on them and one over which they as youngsters have no control. But there are fundamental differences in the treatment of these two characters. For one thing, the environment is different. What closes in on Slash is the encounter with the world outside, the school, the town, the federal even international politics. Slash responds by unravelling, hits rock bottom, then eventually comes home to his land, his family, his spirituality. What closes in on Owl is her own home and community, specifically John Bull (aptly named), a village terrorist who shoots innocent pets and bursts in on Owls' family and mother in the middle of nights (35-37). And as Owl grows up into her teens, boys her age bewilder her and make her claustrophobic. As does her mother's capitulation to drinking, a capitulation that leaves Owl angry, frightened and lonely. It also turns her into a latch-key teen (181-210). Owl, resolving to be free of drunks, grabby guys and physical intimidation, finds in residential schooling an avenue of escape. Imagine, running towards residential school in order to run away from an intolerable home and community! For Owl this is the only way out and she does take it. She does come back but unlike Slash, she does not stay. She does though intimate that the values her mother taught her, the value of 'honouring the sun,' that is, the gift of life, every morning, no matter how drastic and desperate the night, will stay with her no matter where she travels (223-224).

There are other fundamental differences. Besides the obvious gender and age difference, Slash and Owl come from different geographies and landscapes, unrelated linguistic families and cultures. They also experience and respond to their worlds quite differently. And of course, the authors have very different styles of writing. *Slash* is rather full of Slash's inner chatter and schoolish lectures on the various causes and consequences of colonization. There is virtually no humour in this work, nor is there much, if any, sense of innocence. Owl's journal entries and her numerous adventures full of funny twists make *Honour The Sun* a most readable novel. Even through the darkest moments there is a lilt that does not go away until Owl's mother starts drinking (181). One does wonder though whether this is meant to show Owl's innocence or to be reflective of Slipperjack's innocence?

By studying these two novels we can see further how issues of culture, resistance, literary expression and humanization intersect. *Slash* is a good example of what problems can emerge when making Native characters representational. For example, who knows Slash as an individual person? Does he make one cry? Laugh? Hate? Love? Feel lonely? Feel conflicted or Happy? Or is he largely a mouthpiece for a political agenda? Clearly, Armstrong uses Slash as a teaching tool to trace a particular political history. Accordingly, the novel concerns itself much more with historical and political issues than with literary ones. Even with all the inner conflict expressed by Slash, Slash as a personality remains stilted with very little, if any character development.

Compare Owl--a believable 10-year old girl whose playground is the Canadian shield. One can laugh with her when funny things happen, whether she occasions them or happens upon them. One can wince with her when she describes children torturing an animal. One can cry with her when she grieves over their family dog brutally shot by the village bully--and who does not know about a village bully? One can cry for her and with her when she watches helplessly as her mother succumbs to personal violence, community depression and anomie in the form of persistent inebriation. One can weep silently when in order to survive she has to leave home, but pays the price of a haunted loneliness that will never leave her.

The challenge here is twofold if our task is to humanize the Native. Is it possible to make a Native character representational without compromising his/her humanity? Are we convinced that Slash is a real feeling human individual with a wide range of emotional responses? On the other hand, is it possible to treat Native characters as individuals without decontextualizing either their cultures or political histories? Are we convinced that Owl has a cultural and political context?

Actually, Armstrong does present Slash with quite a range of emotions, beginning with Slash's childhood contentment, his transition towards anger and confusion in reaction to the 'Town,' then to a feeling of resolution in his return to his homeland, though the resolution is somewhat uncertain as it ends with Slash's personal anguish and muted despair. Often, the most moving emotions are expressed when he comes home to see his parents. But even so, I felt that the character Slash was too subjected to a political formula. In contrast, I laughed and cried my way through *Honour The Sun*. There is no question (to me) about Owl's very human presence. She is utterly convincing as a child character in a northern Ontario setting.

While Owl's individualness stands out, Slipperjack does provide numerous and unstereotyped clues as to Owl's cultural background. There is her playground: the landscape of the Canadian shield; there is her land-based life: the blueberry picking, the fishing, and the many resource capabilities of her family; there is her social organization: her mother the matriarch, the extended family; there are the myths, the language, the humour (in Ojibway, as Owl notes in one brief acknowledgement). And there are the clues of colonization (but to what extent is Owl or Slipperjack conscious or aware of colonial forces?): the alcohol, the railroad, the church, the day school on the reserve and the residential school far away, the hospital far away, the male violence. And yes, there are the cultural differences such as when the children think the white teacher had 'lost it' by bringing a spruce tree into the classroom--and watch with astonishment and some delight as the teacher transforms it into a glittering Christmas tree.

Obviously, a Christmas tree was alien to Owl's cultural background, but just as obviously, and perhaps more significantly, Ojibway children, like all children, can find delight and wonder in Christmas glitter. In other words, acknowledgement of cultural differences cannot preclude appreciation of our humanity, however 'common' it may be.

But is there not also a sense of naivete here? Slipperjack does point to cultural and political differences but never in terms of resistance or conflict, always in terms of simple fact. Can we rest with that? Perhaps Hartmut Lutz in *Contemporary Challenges* was thinking of this when he in an interview suggested to Slipperjack that she, despite her claim that she [does not] "go for stridently political books that come with an open message, or preach...," was in fact political, especially in her "strong statement about violence against women and children" (208). To this Slipperjack answers, perhaps with an essentialist argument: "Well, it says, 'this is how I feel...this is what is happening around me' and 'this is how I am reacting"....This is where it stops. I cannot tell you why this and this and that happens; you figure it out yourself." Slipperjack goes on to suggest that she uses the theme of the child to create a common ground of experience: "The child has memory of creation....That is one thing we all have in common, and I think that is one way that we can all communicate....We all have that one thread that connects us all to creation" (208-209).

Armstrong, on the other hand, as she explained to Lutz, "wanted a tool to use in education" in order to deal with a particularly significant historical period. But she did not want to restrict her writing to historical documentation, she wanted to go "beyond that," she wanted to convey "the feeling of what happened during that militancy period" especially "the spirit of the people, and the rise, and the groundswelling and *how* that occurred, what the people were feeling, what they dreamed, and what their pain and joy were during that time" (14). Accordingly, Armstrong created in Slash a composite character through what is, in effect, an historical novel.[5]

However, Armstrong, aware that Slash has received criticism for its lack of character development has explained that she "couldn't isolate the character and keep the character in isolation from the development of the events in the community, and the whole of the people. And I know! I took creative writing, so I know what I should have been doing, but I know what I couldn't do and make the story for my people" (16).

---

[5] Not of the Russian social realism type, and actually not strictly an historical novel in that the setting is contemporary, not centuries removed.

Armstrong explains she had to convey Slash's "connectedness to his family, his friends, his people, and to the outer world always entered in... More than Slash as a person" so

> The character development of the people around him, the pieces of character that come in and out, are all part of *his* character development....And looking at it from my point of a view as a writer, it can't be any other way! With Native people it can't be any other way. That's how we are as a people....And if I hadn't presented it that way in the novel, it wouldn't have been readable for our people, or it wouldn't have been real or truthful. Because as I was saying, its difficult for us to look at things in a separate way. Everything is a part of something else. Everything is a part of a continuum of other things, a whole....The characters I presented are all parts of that whole. (16)

Armstrong does concede that she as a young writer could not do both--feature an individual and a community at the same time. "Maybe, perhaps, later on, when I'm a more mature writer, I may be able to do that."

Aboriginal Basis For Contemporary Criticism

Here I divulge my preferences about Slash and Owl. As far as the literary concerns of humanization go, I favour Owl. I like the character development. But from an historical perspective and as an exposition of the colonial experience, I favour Slash even though it lacks character development. By committing myself here I hasten to emphasize that my assessment is not determined solely by Western standards of criticism or universalist notions of what constitutes humanity. It is not just Westerners or the Western canons which can measure aesthetic value of art, literature, narrative or character development! For a number of reasons in a real sense authentic to my Plains Cree Metis cultural background, I can appreciate character development, among other literary ploys and tropes.

In the Cree language and awareness we can make clear distinctions between different essences and qualities of things.[6] In Cree we are provided with all sorts of information which helps us develop our senses and intellects, which provides us with moral and aesthetic values and which prepares us to appreciate literary studies--even in a different language. And I of course, grew up with Wesakehcha, the character of characters, the always interesting cultural teaser/psychoprophetic Wehsehkehcha (who today is largely reduced to the Western understanding of "Trickster"). But Wehsehkehcha was much, much more than a trickster, as both Canadian and American Native writers and critics keep explaining (Johnston, Highway, Keeshig-Tobias, LaRocque, Owens, Vizenor).

Owl, incidently, may have grown up with Nanabozo, a character akin to the Cree's Nehnab/push, a twin of sorts to Wehsehkehcha, but we do not know as the author does not convey this to us. In any case, Slipperjack provides us with a memorable individual whose culture is obviously unique (and yes, in a number of significant ways 'different' from the Canadian mainstream), but she does not go into any particular ethnological explanation. Owl is a northern child, clearly Native as we can see in her lifestyle and language, but she remains convincing as a child, even if somewhat precocious. Her humanity is never compromised, nor is her culture.

---

[6] It is still important to emphasize this point because one of the more common traits ascribed to Natives is their egalitarianism; from this it is often assumed Natives live in some sort of an amorphous collective consciousness. But our worlds and worldviews are not a flatline of spiritualities and equalities.

Armstrong does not indulge in cultural mystification or ethnological lessons either. Though she points to the central importance of Okanagan myths and legends, language, elders, spirituality and land, Slash's humanity is certainly not obscured by cultural concerns. Instead, she raises a lot of issues (often in the form of questions by Slash) concerning culture and the meaning of tradition and spirituality in the context of a world made more complex with colonial time. But as I noted above, assessing Armstrong's participation in culture building is not so easy because I do think Slash as an individual is compromised in the interests of politics, certainly in the interests of the collective. But this point is intentional.

What troubles me is that literary critics have latched onto this presentation (along with the theme of the Circle and the Mother) as representing an 'authentic' Aboriginal ethic or epistemology, which then can be used as a new yardstick by which to judge other Native works.[7] Novelist and critic Thomas King has expressed similar concerns. In his introduction to *All My Relations,* he explains:

> There is, I think, the assumption that contemporary Indians will write about Indians. At the same time, there is danger that if we do not

---

[7] See Rasporich "Native Women Writing: Tracing The Patterns." See also Hartmut Lutz, "Contemporary Native Literature in Canada and 'The Voice of the Mother.'" See how Lutz applies this in his 'conversations' with Native authors. See also Goldie and Moses' treatment of Campbell as "the Mother of us all" in their conversational introduction to their anthology. In line with this, see also Acoose's assumption all Native female authors were inspired by Campbell in her *Iskewewak.* Such assumptions, besides not being correct, contribute to our collectivisation.

> centre our literature on Indians, our work might be seen as inauthentic. Authenticity can be a slippery and limiting term when applied to Native literature for it suggests cultural and political boundaries past which we should not let our writing wander. And, if we wish to stay within these boundaries, we must not only write about Indian people and Indian culture, we must also deal with the concepts of 'Indian-ness', a nebulous term that implies a set of expectations that are used to mark out that which is Indian and that which is not. (xv)

We are faced with a considerable task: on the one hand, we do wish to advance an Aboriginal literary basis of criticism, but on the other hand, we face the spectre of ghettoization, much like that faced by Native visual artists.[8] In other words, everything we create gets re-translated to fit preconceived notions of who we are. Our creative works are often reduced to ethnographies. This, of course, is what keeps us marginalized and Othered.

There are issues which critics have not investigated. For example, what about the cultural differences between Native intellectuals and artists? My own reading of Slash raises questions, not only about the bases from which we may appraise Native writing (often cast as Western versus Aboriginal) but perhaps also about cultural differences among Native peoples. To what extent does my Nehiyawew Metis background (linguistically, Plains Cree and Michif; anthropologically, woodlands; culturally, non-industrial and industrial) influence my reading of other Native works? There is also the possibility my response is entirely personal. For example, might I be drawn to Owl as a character because I too grew up by the railroad tracks in a small northern hamlet, and I too loved my pets. Perhaps I respond to Owl in much the same way I respond to Maria Campbell's ghost stories in *Halfbreed,* and again in her *Stories of the Road Allowance People.*

---

[8] Visual artists have long expressed such a concern; this theme is the foundation of inquiry in a number of the essays included in *Indigena*.

My own Aboriginally-based Metis identity is not 'nebulous' and I offer some cultural material here for instructive purposes. I did grow up in a culture which valued community, spirituality, land, kin and motherness. If my background is read superficially or with a 'stereotypic eye' it might appear to confirm popular generalizations about Native culture, and I may be expected to exhibit certain traits and beliefs. However, if 'known' or 'read' beyond those expectations, one would find my primary socialization as highly complex, and not a world defined by fixed, cultural characteristics. For instance, individuality could be encouraged without compromising community values. We could appreciate individuality and the interests of the collective. To repeat what should be obvious, but often is not, we were and are multidimensional! We were not expected to be carbon copies of each other, or even to submit our individual selves to the collective.[9] It was not taken for granted that the collective always and necessarily represented what was best for each of us. More bluntly, some of my/our 'relations' were by no means likable or even decent human beings![10] In what meaningful ways, then can we idealize 'all our relations'?

---

[9] This is in contrast to one of the typologyzed 'traits' which has become attached to Nativeness. Frideres, for example, cites a chart on "Cultural differences between Whites and Aboriginals" (246) which juxtaposes 19 Native versus White cultural attributes. He explains in a 'holistic' Native worldview individuals "are to be subordinate to the whole" (245). Such cultural formularizations are being produced by both Natives and non-Natives, and to the extent they become prescriptive, we must question their premises.

[10] Such an unavoidable acknowledgement does not in any way preclude the consideration of colonial forces as a backdrop to certain human behaviours. At the same

We were most assuredly 'human' and how best to know this but by our individualities. Individual dreams were encouraged, and people were given nicknames based on their personalities. Nor were we without a spirit of competitiveness. After all, the Cree and the Metis were 'pushers of the envelope' when it came to business acuity and cultural exchange, as exemplified in fur trade history. It is true we shared our resources and held a very special and unique relationship with the land and each other, but it is equally true we did not exist in some mythical Hiawathian forest of collective good feelings.[11] This suggests that not everything about who we were were always reflections of our colonization. We were/are people, colonization or no colonization. This of course begs for much greater treatment than I can give it here, but perhaps my interest in literature lies here, namely, that through the truth value of fiction we may more freely explore our humanity in its fuller spectrum than has been possible under the constraints of certain academic disciplines as well as oppositional politics.

There is in my background what may be called a creative tension between our cultural and our colonial selves (though this is not unique to the Metis as I believe there is a necessary transculturalness or 'hybridity' and 'liminality' in all of us engaged in post/colonial discourse). By 'tension', I am not in any way suggesting that peoples of the Metis Nation are caught

---

time, this points to another reality, that colonization is not experienced the same way by men and women.

[11] This is confirmed by Native works, perhaps especially in those dealing with male violence in Native communities, e.g. in Maracle, Slipperjack and in much of the poetry by Native women.

'between two worlds' as ethnologist Julia Harrison and others have posited.[12] And here it must be emphasized that the post-colonial assumption of a necessary 'hybridity' in 'Halfbreed'or 'mixed-blood' writers or themes should not be extended to mean a stuck or static 'in-betweenness' about Metis Nation culture(s).[13] There are Halfbreed peoples but it should not be assumed that they are one and the same as Metis of the Red River Nation with particular histories and cultures (Cree/French, Cree/Anglosaxon, Ojibway/French, Ojibway/Anglosaxon, etc.). The Metis Nation peoples come from a cohesive, integrated, land and Aboriginally-based cultures with a shared fur trade history and political experience. They are not 'half white, half Indian' or between white and Indian worlds, as such. They are as Peterson and Brown have shown a 'new peoples'.[14] Obviously, halfbreed peoples have their own unique cultures and on their own deserve acknowledgement, but the point here is that there are real differences among Native peoples including those distinctions that exist between Metis and Halfbreed peoples. The point I am raising suggests that literary critics must begin to pay closer attention to cultural differences between Native peoples.

---

[12] See Julia D. Harrison, *Metis: People Between Two Worlds*, 1985. In literature we have seen how Ralph Connor has treated the 'halfbreed' as half savage and half civilage, depending on the occasion. Luke Allan, *Blue Pete: Rebel* (1940) also characterizes a "halfbreed" as half savage and half civilage. In Canadian historiography, George F. Stanley interprets the 'Riel Rebellion' as an outcome of Metis savagery in conflict with civilagery within and without the Metis community.

[13] Canadian writers Kateri Damm and Janice Acoose treat the theme of 'hybridity' in 'mixed-blood' writing in their essays in *Looking At the Words of Our People*. They do not attempt to make distinctions between 'halfbreed' and Metis Nation identities.

[14] See especially essays by Peterson, Foster and Dickason in the Peterson/Brown collection.

I could go on here but I am not an anthropologist and I don't wish to serve as a cultural informant for anthropology or for 'cultural studies' or for studies in 'difference' in literature. Nor do I wish my observations and experience to be taken as representative of either the 'Native' or 'Metis' experience. Suffice it to say, my mother culture not only permits me to be a strong individualist, but it also trained me to appreciate uniqueness. And it also trained me and nurtured me to transfer my mother gifts to new contexts and places. As I have written elsewhere, I try to do in English what my grandmother and mother could do in Cree. To me none of this is 'remarkable,' it just is.

But more, Aboriginal people's cultures are as inherently dynamic as western cultures, and to say otherwise is to fall right back to colonizer stereotypes. Of course, this is a complex subject where we need to make distinctions between voluntary and forced change, between agency and victimization, and between different ethnicities within the Native populations. My own family and community were open to natural (as opposed to forcible) change, though this is of course made considerably complex by many forces, many we cannot measure. While there is no question but that colonization arrested (or ossified) Aboriginal cultural development, clearly, it did not kill it. Even in places where our communities no longer exist, individuals exist. And it is individuals, not cultures, that live and change. Change is as much my birthright as is my gender. I am a contemporary modern woman and I am informed by more than one era, one culture, one language, one perspective or one tradition. The genius of cultural portability must be as much mine as anyone else's. While my primary socialization and all the range of emotions that come with this is Plains Cree Metis, I do not submit to the expectation that my early childhood and cultural background must be the only factors to be considered the rest of my (writing) life.

I did grow up all in Cree in my primary years. This of course points to real differences between my cultural upbringing compared with a Westerner's cultural upbringing. It also raises another important question: what about those Native writers who did not grow up in a Native language? Or those who did not grow up in a meaningful land-based culture? Both of these questions are becoming more crucial with time. Most Native languages are in danger of becoming extinct. Only Cree, Ojibway and Inuktitut "appear to have the best chances of survival" (Dickason, *Canada's First Nations* 419).[15] Moreover, 40-60% of Native peoples live in urban centers.[16] These writers, I believe, face an even more difficult task as they seek to develop an Aboriginally-based 'critical center.' Perhaps they are even more vulnerable to idealization than those of us who are privileged to have grown up in Aboriginally-based lifestyles. Native intellectuals do have a rich romantic tradition but it is clear not all romanticization in Native writing is made from the same stuff. Further, these realities suggest that it may be hopelessly outdated to keep framing Native writing in terms of orality, tribalization or the 'sacred circle,' since these notions normally depend on a land-based epistemology. Obviously, and as I have just suggested and modelled, we are confronted with having to revise ideas of cultural change and continuity if we hope to make our presence meaningful for our contemporary lives. In fact, in real life, as modelled, for example, by the potlatch people, Native peoples are living meaningful lives as Natives in a contemporary world. It behooves writers and literary critics to locate this reality.

---

[15] For a detailed listing of Native linguistic families, languages and number of speakers remaining, see Morrison and Wilson, *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience* 26-32.

[16] It is actually notoriously difficult to get exact statistics on Aboriginal urbanization. Frideres, for example, cites 1991 studies which show that 38.2% of Status Indians are "off-reserve." This though does not take other Aboriginal (Status and non-status Indians. Inuit and Metis) peoples into account. Such stats are further complicated by failure to specify terms. Frideres often uses the normally inclusive term "Aboriginal" when he is referring to "on or off-reserve Indians." Other times he uses 'Aboriginal' to include the Metis but not the Inuit. Generally, Aboriginal urbanization varies considerably from region to region.

Many questions remain concerning the meaning and application of an Aboriginal basis (bases?) for criticism. Does it mean the critic should speak an Aboriginal language or have grown up with an Aboriginal way of understanding and living? Would knowing our Tricksters in the original languages make a difference in our treatment of ourselves, for example? I notice in our literatures while we poke fun at ourselves (Thomas King, Drew Hayden Taylor, Basil Johnston, Emma Lee Warrior, Maria Campbell) we do not treat, at least not directly, the not so funny part of ourselves, our own lies and secrets, even evils.[17] Yet, Wesehkehcha--sometimes a non-gendered entity--spared no one, especially ownself (Cree-ified).

Not only do we not study in any depth our own human condition, we also tend to avoid any criticism of each other's works. The quality of Native writing is a subject virtually no one has touched. Like everyone else, I have my preferences when it comes to liking or disliking Native works. I obviously do not think all Native literature is excellent. But after all, as resistance literature Native writing is primarily a political activity, not leisurely, playful expression.[18] This though is also growing more complex with time. There are yet many Native writers who do not write primarily for recreational or aesthetic purposes, they write 'to save' themselves, but at the same time, there are (newer ones especially) writers who write for the love of writing. Of course, this does not exclude the likelihood their works have an undercurrent of resistance given the political conditions in this country (and assuming their topic is Native). In any event, does this mean we have some responsibility to be respectful even when we cannot agree or admire the material? However, there is a fine balance between this point and political control of our rights to debate and interrogate.[19] As Native people know so keenly, stifling expression and difference can only lead to mediocrity and silencing. Does or should an Aboriginal basis of criticism make some difference as to how we analyze each other, or anyone else? How inclusive is Aboriginal criticism? To what extent does it allow layers of difference within the Native communities, for example, in areas of sexuality, religion, political party or ethnic affiliations, gender politics or the role of traditionalism and so forth. Can we recognize what is reactive and what is our 'center' in Aboriginal criticism?

---

[17] There are exceptions, of course. Maria Campbell has always dealt honestly with Metis foibles; Slipperjack does not hesitate to hate the hateful bully; Maracle takes a crushing blow against male violence within (and without) Native families, Howard Adams severely criticizes Native leaders and Tomson Highway treats Native violence in both men and women (though, I think he borders on presenting Native women as buffoons in *The Rez Sisters*). And if read carefully, many poets reflect the spectrum of our light and shadow selves.

---

[18] During a conversation with Lutz, Thomas King expressed dislike for Native poetry, saying there was a difference between "preaching" and poetry, "a skilled thing." (112). King here seems to make a distinction between creative and political writing. But political writing is often creative and does not have to constitute 'preaching.'

[19] In a spontaneous conversation/interview with Lutz, I commented on some of our kitschy titles and questioned whether some terms (such as "academic squaws") can be reclaimable. For these I received chiding and some silent treatment from other Native writers.

As it should become clear, dialogue between and among Native and non-Native intellectuals is a lot more complex than may seem. It brings back the whole issue of 'audience' response and comprehension. It remains for Native artists and educators to engage in the exhausting and at times irritating task of having to educate our audiences and our colleagues before we can even begin dialoguing with them. Nor should we assume there is uncomplicated dialogue among Native writers and critics. There are many sides to the colonial divide, and so what will become our bases of dialogue? Finding a means to mutual understanding is a goal we can all share.

If it were possible to assess non-western works solely by non-western standards, perhaps there would be no issue. Nor would there be any discussion between Western and non-Western writers. However, we are all inescapably involved and engaged in this discourse, even if it remains a tug of war, the moment we enter the discussion. Even Kenyan poet and critic Ngugi wa Thiong'o, who bid farewell to English in 1977 as a vehicle for his creative writing and then in 1986 renounced it entirely, and espoused an exclusive use of Gikuyu and Kiswahili, left the door open for dialogue with Westerners. In *Decolonising The Mind* he expresses the "hope that through the age old medium of translation I shall be able to continue dialogue with all" (xiv).

Native writers cannot 'bid farewell' to English, for we are in a more difficult position for two basic reasons. In Canada there are about 50

Aboriginal languages representing (now) 11 unrelated linguistic families. Of those languages not facing endangerment, in which language should we converse? But a more practical problem is that most of these languages are not in any written form. Even the syllabic system that was developed in the 1840s (by a Manitoba missionary and several Metis persons) is restricted to Algonkian usage and is not used by most Native writers. The Inuit do use Inuktitut syllabics but mostly for political and symbolic purposes and, in any case, all other Native peoples would not be able to enter into Inuktitut. Further, for many of the younger Native writers their first language is English. But even for those of us whose first language was Aboriginal, we have adopted (appropriated?) the English language as our own. I certainly claim the English language and modern culture as much my birthright as my original Plains Cree/Michif language and historic culture. I claim as my birthright anything that existed in Canada when I was born.

Besides, to the extent Native writing remains resistance writing, our targeted audience has to include the White Canadian audience. Jeannette Armstrong in a conversation with Lutz explained that she had two audiences in mind when she wrote *Slash*, her grandchildren and the colonizing Canadians: "I wanted to give to my grandchildren what I felt, and what others felt through that time...I wanted them to know the heart of the people during that time." *Slash* is also "an important documentation for those people who colonized this country and who continue to make mistakes in terms of the colonizing process..." (14-15).

My targeted audience is also inclusive. I research and write and build Native Studies and Native literature so that future generations can have a written intellectual tradition that respects both 'orality' and documentation, a tradition which bridges many worlds, linear and qualitative, a tradition they can build on. And of course, I write so that my family and community can be represented in recorded history. That is, I write to reclaim the historical and cultural record. And I write to re/educate the Canadian sons and daughters of colonizers (as exhausting as this can be). I also wish to advance our discourse, not our marginalization. But responsibility for dialogue cannot rest solely on Native peoples. And I cannot compromise my tradition of resistance so long as resistance is required.

Re-inventing Ourselves in Resistance

The discourse, though, must be thought of in a different way. We cannot keep giving all the power to western/ers by submitting to the popular and canonical thought that all things literary or all concerns about the individual or about character development emanate from the western culture. Nor can we (nor should we) 'return to the past,' that is, to pre-Columbian nativism, anymore than we should surrender to post-Columbian stereotypes. To acquiesce to either of these colonial markers is to subordinate ourselves to 'the colonizer's model of the world,' that is, the 'doctrine' that Europe's rise to world dominance is due to some "internal" and "autonomous" quality of race and culture, that the world derives its 'progress' from the diffusion of European civilization (Blaut 1-3). In other words, we cannot accept that human progress begins and ends with European culture.

Fanon, brilliant, troubled and perhaps circumscribed by his own ideologically-rooted paradigm, not to mention, his male-defined reality, called for a New Native. He spared no words: "Leave this Europe where they are never done talking of Man, yet murder men everywhere they find them, at the corner of everyone of their own streets, in all the corners of the globe. For centuries they have stifled almost the whole of humanity in the name of a so-called spiritual experience" (qtd in Levine 37). Fanon's call for revolution was consummately radical, but he argued against Algerian nativism. "In repoliticizing his experience," Fanon argued for a New Native, a native who had to find his way, a way that was "neither tribal nor western" (Levine 37).

Fanon was of course thinking of the inevitability of re-invention. I believe we must reinvent ourselves, possibly our country. By reinvention I do not mean re/fabrication or myth-making; I mean, among other things, throwing off the 'weight of antiquity,' and by so doing, offering new possibilities for reconstruction. Quite frankly, I think most of us, both European and Indigenous were re-invented at the site of our encounters.[20] Europeans and their North American descendants have yet to acknowledge this. Native peoples have had to deal with it per force of political circumstances. But of course, each new generation is called to re-invent. Aboriginal writers, scholars have been re-inventing, and will continue to do so with each new generation.

An inspiring example of re-invention are the changes in the Afro-American imagery and literature. Afro-Americans have also been excessively dehumanized, both politically and textually, and as Toni Morrison has shown, the struggles continue.[21] There are of course many fundamental differences between the Afro American and Native Canadian experience. But I have been struck by the Afro American's powerfully human presence in popular culture, which I can only envy. To be sure, this presence is not always free of stereotypes, but it is certainly evident. Whether I read or watch Alex Haley's *Roots*, Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, or Maya Angelou's *I Know Why a Caged Bird Sings*, I see the cultural and political contexts, but primarily, I see people, I see individuals. I see characters. I react to these individuals. I don't have to part the seas of abstract collectivities, be they negative or romanticized, trip over typologies before I can appreciate Black humanity. (The same of course would hold true for White humanity). Neither cultural nor political concerns obscure this Afro-American humanity. I hunger for such a change in the presentation of Native individuals and characters in Canadian productions.[22] Who will nurture *my* spirit?

---

[20] Among the scholars who have advanced this historically grounded thesis are: Jennings, Axtell, Jaenen, Weatherford, Ridington and Blaut.

What I like about literature (whether oral or written) are its possibilities of treatment of the human being as a complex psychological phenomenon, a human being with a wide range of human emotion and behaviour with all the possibilities of re-invention. Perhaps it is through literature we can most fully treat Native individuality and psychology as well as Native change, and we can do this without compromising our uniqueness or the facts of our colonized condition. Had western scholars been educated they would have recognized the empirical bases for the inherent value in indigenous cultures. Indeed, had critics been adequately educated, they would have long ago recognized the complexities of Native writing.

---

[21] For an inspiring, original and fresh read, see Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination.*

[22] The movie *Smoke Signals* (1998) is an American production with a largely Canadian cast. At last some personality comes to the foreground. Some angst. Individuality. A little sex appeal. Humour. Still, *Smoke Signals* is circumscribed by John Wayne's long shadows. And of course, there is tragedy. But it is a start.

I want here to come back to resistance literature. Resistance literature does not in any way preclude emotion or psychology. Indeed, the very fact and essence of resistance is our humanity. We resist dehumanization because we are human. And, I emphasize, our resistance may not, need not, be beautiful, for dehumanization is not a thing of beauty. And our expressions may most certainly be angry, even “bitter” but that is for us to determine. As long as there remains injustice there will be anger. In fact, I am surprised when Native writers say they are not angry. The colonial experience is damaging and damage is anger-producing. When oppressed peoples are ‘sounding’ the injustice, no one has the right to tell such peoples how to hurt or how to sound. By re-inventing, I do not mean skimming over the grounds either of our colonizer records or of our resistance. I do not mean to suggest any false sweetening of our colonial experience. We cannot, we must not, etherealize our colonized history or our colonized condition in the name of craft or literary pull or even desire to make friends. The important thing is the resistance. However, our resistance cannot be restricted to politics or to culture. Decolonization has to mean something beyond a collective rage or reversion to cliches. It is crucial not only to de/struct colonial constructs, but to re/struct our humanity, and the heart of that humanity is thought and emotion.

Native writers, no less than other writers, have been expressing an enormous range of human emotions as well as articulating the places of invasion in our lives and histories. Within our cultures and our political experience lies the basis of our analyses, scholarship and creativity. We do not need to go 'beyond' culture or resistance, as such, to get to our range of intellect and emotions! We need an educated audience to read and to understand what is already there. And what is already there is considerable. In addition to Armstrong and Slipperjack, whom I have foregrounded, there are a vast array of Native writers who do present Native characters and themes in dynamic and interesting ways; since this is not an anthology I could not possibly treat them all! The point is this generation of Native writers (and all Canadians) do have an extensive Native intellectual tradition (in writing) and community to draw from.

In summary then, it is an inherent part of Aboriginal worlds to frame human experience as more than some collective reflex, thereby providing Native writers an Indigenous literary theory specific to their experience in North America. Harlow writes: "The theory of resistance literature is in its politics" (30). The theory in Native writing is to be found in the complex combination of our colonial and contemporary experience(s), along with our respective dynamic indigenous poetics. An Aboriginal basis for criticism cannot be typological, it must be human-centered and fluid. I prefer to treat our Aboriginal traditions and epistemologies as trends and tasks in motion rather than as traits and typologies. Jeannette Armstrong, in an article "The Disempowerment of First North American Native Peoples And Empowerment Through Their Writing," directs us to Aboriginal ethics of "peace and co-operation" which she believes "transcend violence and aggression." She sets "principles of co-operation...which shall endure" as the new standards for change and for criticism (211).

These reflections perhaps pave the way towards finding standards of criticism authentic to the Native experience(s): that one resists not primarily for impersonal ideologies or even solely for politically defined collective existence but for the advancement of what makes us human. Ultimately, it is to Native writers we must turn for illumination on Native humanity.

Arthur Shilling, an Ojibway artist from Ontario dedicated his art and poetry to portraying "the beauty of my people" as he put in a film with the same title. Shilling died in 1986 from heart failure at the age of 45 but not before he could produce *The Ojibway Dream*, a book mixing poetry and art. He wrote exquisitely:

> When I paint, I feel like I'm still at the beginning, excited at the next bend in the river. Frightened and scared. I can hear the beauty, smell it like sweetgrass burning, the sound of my people. Their cries mix in with my paint and propel my brush. What else could bring reds and blues so clear, such as I have never seen before. (20)

It is here now that we make a turn, that we look 'at the next bend in the river' of Native writing. The next bend in the river of expression promises to be exciting. If (another Ojibway) writer Richard Wagamese's *Quality of Light* is any indication, there is an infinite quality of (more) colour and light to come. He opens his novel (about a Native boy growing up in a White home):

> We are born into a world of light. Every motion of our lives, every memory, is coloured by the degree of its intensity or shaded by the weight of its absence. I believe the happy times are lit by an ebullient

> incandescence--the pure white light of joy--and that the sadder times are bathed in swatches of purple, moving into pearl gray. When we find ourselves against the hushed palette of evening, searching the sky for one singular band of light, we're filtering the spectrum of our lives. We're looking through the magic prism of memory, letting our comforts, questions or woundings lead us--emotional voyageurs portaging a need called yearning. Because its not the memories themselves we seek to reclaim, but rather the opportunity to surround ourselves with the quality of light that lives there.
>
> The muted grays of storm clouds breaking might take you back to the hollowness you found in a long good-bye. The electric blue in a morning horizon might awaken in you again that melancholic ache you carried when you discovered love. Or you lay on a hillside in the high sky heat of summer, the red behind your eyelids making you so warm and safe and peaceful. It's like the scarlet a part of you remembers through the skin of your mother's belly when you, your life and the universe was all fluid, warmth and motion. (3)

It is tempting to end the dissertation here, at this site of beauty, with all this colour and light. But of course, even in these works our suffering is unmistakable, and we are called to the task of reconstruction. It calls us to challenge colonial imaginings. Lest we forget, Jeannette Armstrong reminds us that the "bloody sword" of colonization "has been to hack out the spirit of all the beautiful cultures encountered, leaving in its wake a death toll unrivalled in recorded history. This is what happened and continues to happen" (208).

Yet, the human spirit is remarkable in its elasticity and its boundless optimism for a better tomorrow. Even amidst devastations of wartime proportions, humans create life and art. It is the stuff of resistance to re-invent and to re-create. However, my attention here to art, beauty and creativity, usually the province of literary concerns, should not in any way detract from the point to this dissertation, namely, that we are a colonized people who must resist any and all expressions of dehumanization. Then without false consciousness we must search for meaningful ways we can re-invent ourselves. It is the way of the New Native for the years 2000.

CONCLUSION

Without question under any category--'third world,' 'fourth world,' post-colonial or indigenous--we have produced resistance literature. Native writers are, and indeed, have long been, in the words of Ashcroft *et al.*, "talking back to the imperial centre," that is, they are and have been rewriting 'the story' because it is their stories which have been erased, falsified, slandered or stolen.

Native writers representing a cross section of eras and peoples, have poignantly recorded how difficult it is to grow up Native in a country that has institutionalized "hatred of the Other" (Green, Diss 26). To be Native and to read White literature is to be placed in a war zone of images and feelings. To be Native and to read White literature is to walk a long journey of alienation. In response to the war of words against us, we Native writers and scholars have drawn on our various languages, legends, narratives, or footnotes, to dismantle stereotypes, upset conventions, and invent new genres. We have especially questioned the mis/representation of Native peoples and cultures in historical, ethnographic, literary and popular productions. In this process of revisiting, we have sought to establish our own humanity by a wide variety of means, including re-inscribing history and the cultural records, turning to facts of biography, expressing human qualities and emotions as individuals through fiction, poetry and drama, or by using voice in scholarship.

We have shown that the presentation of us as stone-age Savages in immoral combat against progressive righteous Civilages has been a construction of the colonizer. We have also shown that this construction is not benign, it has had and continues to have profound consequences for Native peoples. The savage typology has indeed generated, on one hand, provocations for Native scholars and artists, on the other, a fathomless playbox of intellectual and recreational handles for the colonizer society.

As Native peoples we have lived under the shadows of the colonizer since Columbus and cohorts put their medieval notions and political interests to pen. Throughout the chapters I have directed my attention to some of those colonial shadows which have both haunted and inspired our own expressions. The 'shadows' remain colossal both in their magnitude and in their effects on us all, and we the decolonizing continue to struggle against them. We face a monumental task in our efforts. Reconstruction has begun but it will not come easily or quickly.

But this task, as I have everywhere indicated, is not reserved only for Native peoples. The onus to deconstruct and to rebuild cannot fall solely on the colonized! The responsibility to clean up colonial debris, whether in historiography or in creative writing, lies first with the colonizer. Colonizer sons and daughters need, even more than us, to dismantle their colonial constructs. Some colonialists choose to harden and to entrench themselves into the spaces fortified by their forefathers. I along with my Native colleagues are re-defining our positions in Canadian life. Invariably, this may cause discomfort or anger in the readers. I have, rather methodically I think, been "pulling out their fenceposts of civilization / one by one / calling names in Cree / bringing down their mooneow hills / in English too..."[1] I can hear the remonstrations: 'how then shall we respond?'

Jeanne Perreault, English professor at the University of Calgary, counsels her colleagues against retreat or silence. As co-editor (in 1994) of a special issue devoted to Native literature in *Ariel*, Perreault writes, "...critical obtuseness...is not appropriate at this moment....Rather than retreating into silence or withdrawal, bringing an informed consciousness about one's position can be useful for both literary critic and general reader." Historians too can find much value were they to engage in greater introspection than they are normally trained to do. This means that "...what readers and writers need to do is to discern from within the critical material...what values are held and how they are expressed" (10).

Another way is to learn from Native writers--and Native scholars--how to 'read' and even how to 'see' their literatures and their methodologies. Lynette Hunter, professor of 20th Century literature and culture at the University of Leeds in England, suggests as much in her treatment of marginalized Canadian women in *Outsider Notes*. She advocates "the risks of personal vulnerability necessary to committed engagement," and observes that although she "cannot meet the text on the writer's ground," she can "listen" (159). As an outsider listening, she can "participate in the conversation and begin to discuss the issues even though [her] reading may be embarrassing" (159). Her *Notes* indicate Hunter listens sensibly and intelligently. There is a saying about audiences "arguing with the speaker," which of course pre-determines what is selectively or inventively 'heard.' W.H. New, in a discerning editorial to the 1990 *Canadian Literature* special issue on Native writing, provides some thoughts on why people may not be willing to hear:

---

[1] *Mooneow* refers to white people but not in terms of colour, rather, it connotates commodity or money.

> Sometimes people are willing to listen only to those voices that confirm the conventions they already know. The unfamiliar makes them fear. Or makes them condescend. Neither fear nor condescension encourages listening. And no one who does not listen learns to hear. (4)

New chooses to treat the discourse between EuroCanadian and Native writers as "a series of opportunities to begin listening" because "boundaries are processes of interaction as much as they are lines of demarcation" (8). He cautions that if Native writers "are not recognized for the creativity of the differences they bring to bear on cultural perception, margins also have a way of making the centre irrelevant, and of speaking on their own" (8).

Canadians might begin their listening by recognizing the import of Native resistance. Hearing the resistance means making changes. The implications for Canadians is that they must abandon pervasive and prevailing assumptions that western, in particular, Canadian historical and literary productions are inherently innocent and apolitical but that the Native "voice" is "bitter" and biased.[2] For non-Native historians this means letting go of the colonial bedposts of thought and language, namely, the civ/sav canopy with its underlying eurocentric epistemology which continues to perpetuate colonization. It means revisiting and in many cases abandoning old heroes. It means destructing 'empirical sets of beliefs' so to see other empirical data heretofore obscured by blinding eurosubjectivism.

---

[2] In this context, voice and victim have been used interchangeably in reference to Native peoples.

Scholars must set aside old presuppositions or paradigms, however deeply embedded they are in the Canadian psyche. This means, at the very least, works like *Wacousta* should be dissected, even excised instead of being accorded gothic proportions, as they commonly are in the Canadian literary tradition. All archival and subsequent historiographic and critical works should be re-investigated. There is a dangerous tendency to tolerate, if not perpetuate, racism in scholarship in the guise of narrative and history. Wacousta is not just another story, neither are Ralph Connor's Mounties, nor much of imperialist writing.

But more, scholars are being challenged to abandon the 'colonizer's model of the world.' This implies the necessity for a completely fresh approach to Canadian treatment of Aboriginal peoples. This must include taking into serious account Aboriginal scholarship and analysis; the move is crucial if for no other reason than the historian's mandate to correct biased and empirically unbalanced material. Of course, this means non-Native (including non-white, post-colonial and/or feminist) scholars must educate themselves about Native scholars and their works.[3] There are many other reasons why conventional and post-colonial scholars should incorporate Native scholarship into their research and writing, among them, that Native scholars are bringing 'the other half,' the shadowed half of Canada into light, and that we are doing it with style and admirable balance.

---

[3] Perhaps I expect more from works touted as feminist, so I was dismayed to find in *The Illusion of Inclusion: Women in Post-Secondary Education*, edited by Stalker and Prentice, that no Native women scholars are included. One chapter is given to "Native Students and Quebec Colleges" by a non-Native writer. There are quite a number of Native women academics who could have represented our marginalization in academia. I would think this would have strengthened the thesis of the book.

It does mean that conventions of genre must be opened up. Native writers' comprehensive and holistic use of language and epistemology require that historians use biographical, oral and literary sources, and literary critics reach for non-literary sources, and that both include Native scholarship in a way that is meaningful. In fact, it is not possible to do any study of Native peoples without applying an interdisciplinary approach. This dissertation, for example, while primarily examining historical and literary works in an interdisciplinary program, is in fact, multidisciplinary. As the bibliography indicates, I have had to consult works from a wide variety of disciplines. This is standard methodology in Native Studies. It is the scholarly way of respecting Aboriginal history and epistemology.

Such respect entails reconsidering approaches to knowledge. Here I finish an argument I started in chapter one: Native use of 'facts of biography' is a counter-discourse to emphasize a point made by the earliest Native writers, namely, that we are not savages, we have cultures. This is why we write about our places of birth, *our* landscapes, our grandmothers and grandfathers, our parents, our kin, our networks, our social regulations, our livelihoods, our use of resources, our foods, our ways of organizing, our faiths and ceremonies, our technologies, our music, our languages, our arts and our stories. These attentions are central to our strategies. This is our contribution to scholarship, whose distant and dry style should not be confused with objectivity. An inaudible voice is voice nonetheless. Our 'audibility,' on the otherhand, is no necessary indication our scholarship is wanting; our voice amidst our footnotes should not preclude our inclusion in Canadian scholarship.[4] If anything, our precarious and difficult existence in the academic community pushes us, as well as our non-Native colleagues, to be excellent. Referring to Aboriginal women whose "presence and the original and radical nature" of their work "challenge[s] the academy to confront its particular forms of privilege and its bases of exclusion," Joyce Green argues that "...to the extent that we contest what knowledge is, how it is evaluated, and what the power relations are that configure it, we instigate academic excellence and social transformation."[5]

I have always understood scholarship as primarily dialogical, as knowledge in process, and as such, potentially transformative. It may be instructive to remind ourselves that western scholarship assumes its right for knowledge in process. Relevant to this thesis are the changes in the terms and methodologies in literature and history. Parameters of literature, for instance, have changed extensively, taking on more restrictive, more academically determined definitions only in the 19th and 20th centuries, with increasingly exclusive concentration upon poetry, drama and fiction. Until the mid-20th century, according to *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Literary Terms*, many kinds of non-fictional writing--in philosophy, history, biography, criticism, science and politics--were counted as literature, and "seems more tenable than the later attempts to divide literature as creative, imaginative, fictional or non-practical" (124).

---

[4] The value of introspection or engagement in scholarship continues to be examined, especially in post-colonial, deconstructionist and feminist works.

[5] This is from an unpublished paper "Transforming at the Margins of the Academy" by Green. This is a reflective not comprehensive paper given at a conference; to be published in Linda Paul *et al. Women in the Academic Tundra.*

And of course, concepts, objectives, styles and methodological approaches to history have also changed.[6] The questions and debates concerning the study of history which came out of Michelet's passionate and engaging *History of the French Revolution* (1833-67) comes to mind.[7] And Eric Wolfe's *Europe and the People Without History* is a radical departure from western history which has excluded both "native" victims and Europe's "silent witnesses" from its chronicles of the "victorious elites" (introduction). Much more radical is Blaut's criticism of western culture which is presented as the hub of the human wheel out of which emanate all things progressive in culture and intellect, as it acts in colonization.[8]

There is no basis for western, specifically Canadian scholars, to keep Native scholars, critics and writers at bay, as if we are less scholarly because we knock on the doors of convention. Change, though, is underway. There has been a marked improvement in non-Native Canadian scholarship on Native peoples since the 1970s, but mostly by those specializing in areas relevant to Native peoples and issues. Many, and by no means all, such scholars have been used throughout this thesis. However, with respect to mainstream writing, Native histories, issues and literatures are still largely marginalized and ghettoized. Coates and Fisher, editors of *Out of the Background: Readings on Canadian Native History,* express optimism that there is "historiographical vitality of this field," but concede that "enormous historiographical gaps remain" (3).[9] Clearly, we have just begun. Much 'dethroning' remains to be done. The politics of literature as determined by those in power perhaps no longer totally overshadows our discourse, but it still definitely shadows it. Native scholars and creative writers are engaged, unavoidably, in political repartee with conventional Canadian canons.

---

[6] For a more personal approach into why some study history, see *Visions of History: Interviews With* by MARHO (the Radical Historians Organization, 1976-1984).

[7] In his apologist introduction to Michelet's translated work, Gordon Wright wrote: "Michelet could never be the impartial judge, weighing the evidence and letting it guide his decision. He was an *historians engage*, the impassioned evangelizer of a new gospel" (xv). Michelet would have taken to Kanafani, who argued only those engaged with a people can qualify to write their history (in Harlow 3).

[8] Blaut makes mention of Wolfe in a footnote, affirming Wolfe for providing a "useful and important survey" showing how "unconvincing is the theory that non-European civilizations, historically, were stagnant and unprogressive." But Blaut criticizes Wolfe for stopping short of "questioning the truly crucial Eurocentric belief that Europeans were *more* progressive than non-Europeans..." (137, note 15).

Outstanding Issues

This dissertation is by no means a comprehensive study either of Native history or of Native writing. The prolific, excellent and indefatigable scholar Patricia Olive Dickason has led the way in bringing to the foreground a Native presence in Canadian history and culture. Other Native scholars are highlighting our political relationships, and still others are concentrating on specific First Nation histories. Still, given the record, we are largely at the beginning stages of correcting and balancing Canadian historiography. Changes are especially underway in the study of contemporary Native literature, but again, much remains to be developed. Poetry, in particular, needs to be highlighted. There is a tendency in Canadian literary circles to treat novels and drama as some pinnacle of writing. Many of us have been writing and publishing poetry long before any appearance of Native novels and plays, yet we are rarely if ever treated as writers deserving equal attention, either by the media or by literary critics. In this we share Canadian poet and professor Dennis Cooley's concern in *Replacing* that while "some critical activity" is apparent on prairie fiction, "almost none of it has been directed at prairie poetry" (10). Exclusion/inclusion is a many layered thing in Canada. In modern culture, poets generally, it appears, are often the last to be appreciated. Yet, it is in poetry we will find among the most powerful and exquisite expressions of our humanity and of our resistance, as well as our call to a higher moral vision by which we all can live. And it is in poetry we see most clearly the maintenance of orality in writing, the maintenance of Cree-struction. Delightful examples of Cree-ifying english in poetry can be found in Maria Campbell's *Stories of the Road Allowance People* and in Louise Halfe's bare-boned or *peeksquehwin* (truth-speaking, conferring) verse. In the best of our poetry, in the melding of our past, present and the future, we see most clearly the genius of transforming tradition.

---

[9] Though several chapters are written by Natives, Coates and Fisher do not consider the impact of contemporary Native scholarship in the study of Native peoples. They restrict their extremely brief mention of methodology to historical consideration of oral testimony. Further, it might have been more useful for Canadian historiography to have included Walker and Dickason than James Axtell or Calvin Martin.

Another area is Native women's writing: there has been a profusion of writing, including poetry, by Native women which requires much greater study. Considering experiences particular to women may be another way we can address our collectivization which tends to determine any treatment of the

'Native experience.' This, of course, assumes such a study would not lump Native women as one indistinct battered but mother-earthly body (which is an on-going problem in writing and in criticism)! As may be noticed, though I am gender inclusive, the undercurrent of my analysis and creativity is woman-oriented. As my own consciousness continues to be raised, I continue to re-visit myself and my sources. Even during this project, I have changed my treatment of Fanon and Memmi, for example. I find their male-defined reality limited and limiting. Further, I find Fanon and Memmi quite wedded to Marxist thought which, for all its valuable analysis of the nature of power and oppression, remains Eurocentric. Fanon and Memmi provide powerful and original insights concerning colonization, but application of their analysis (and Fanon's proposal of radical violence) can only go so far for Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Native peoples remain seriously outmuscled in their own country. But that is the most obvious difference. There are other fundamental differences, including a Native ethic of tolerance that does not easily turn to ideology or political violence.

Further, if we were to completely adopt Fanon or Memmi's thinking, we would end up in another kind of airtight paradigm. Besides, they wrote in another era under very different geographical, political and cultural circumstances. Not that we cannot make comparisons, for some emerge with startlingly familiarity. I have been struck by the degree to which I can relate my experiences and research with those of Fanon's and Memmi's. But as is obvious in post-colonial writing, there are new and stimulating analyses of colonization today which deserve as much consideration as Fanon and Memmi received.

I remain intrigued, though, with Memmi's portrait of the colonizer. Native Canadian scholars and writers have been portraying the colonizer, which, I believe, is largely why our writings have been received with hesitation, defensiveness or seeming incomprehension. In Canada, Native peoples are, as I have pointed out in earlier works, the Uncomfortable Mirrors to the White Canadian identity. Not only are we painting "the beauty of our people," as artist Arthur Shilling put it, we are also painting the colonizing face. However, to date, our portraits have been restricted to political and constitutional arenas and commentaries, and to a lesser extent in our poetry. I look forward to more substantial treatment of the colonizer personality and psyche, which has yet to appear in our novels and plays.[10]

The Aboriginal bases (note the pluralization) for contemporary criticism is in process of development. I of course can only point to some of the salient issues within the scope of my dissertation, but it is an area rich in intellectual challenge, in large part because it is a multidimensional intersection of many roads, many worlds. In my concern for fluidity in criticism, I do not mean to discount the Aboriginal intellectual search for the kind of "critical centre" which Native American critic, Kimberly Blaeser, mentions in her thoughtful essay "Native Literature: Seeking a Critical Center." Much remains to be explored, not only in our portraits of the colonizer but in our portraits of ourselves.

---

[10] Native writers have tended to use caricature, often humorous, in their characterization of the colonizer. Margo Kane makes 'face' at the colonizer through her scathingly humorous treatment of stereotypes in *Moonlodge*. There are sprinkles of colonialist (usually white) characters in other Native works, the most extensive is Armand Garnet Ruffo's playful study of Grey Owl. Basil Johnston also pokes fun at the colonizer in *Moosemeat and Wild Rice*. Richard Wagamese deals with White psyche to some degree, but the issue remains ripe for treatment.

Throughout this dissertation I chose writers whose works and words met best the mandates of my thesis; this of course means I did not use or treat numerous others equally deserving. Nor did I treat any Inuit writers. Nor any other number of Native scholars, playwrights and poets. Needless to say, I was often presented with some difficulty in having to make textual choices; there is so much more I wanted to make available to readers but I could not possibly fit everyone in! I did however, try to facilitate as many views as I could, which, I have noticed, is something not always done in some anthologies.[11]

Narrow treatment of Native history and literature can only be addressed by recognizing both Native history and Native writing (or in the case of Native writers, Native reality) in all its dimensions, complexity and context. For all of us, dismantling paradigms will require developing new critical languages and approaches. With time and experience and dialogue, it will become easier to crystalize (in the sense of clarity, not hardening) our bases of knowledge and expression.

Of course, we will attend to different tasks as befits our historical legacies, but we all must assume the task of deconstructing and reconstructing the records. Here, I must emphasize that while there may be numerous thematic similarities between what white colonial re/settlers experienced vis-a-vis the British Empire, and what Native original settlers experienced vis-a-vis the Canadian Confederation, the two should never be confused. The white re/settler experience is not at all the same as the original Native settler experience. In fact, in some critical ways the two are diametrically opposed. In other words, while on a literary level white Canadians can play with themes like place, landscape and identity (Ashcroft *et al*, MacGregor, Monkman, Turner), however poignant, they cannot compare their privileged, indeed, dominant, positions with Aboriginal peoples whose places have been stolen, whose landscapes have been bulldozed and whose identities have been irreparably damaged. White Canadian historians and writers must come to terms with their privileged, colonizer positions. Daniel Francis has explained:

---

[11] For example, the Moses/Goldie anthology continues to deny mention of *Writing The Circle* even in its revision. This probably indicates an on-going (apparently) political rift on the issue of cultural appropriation. However, I might point out, the cultural appropriation critique is glaringly missing on numerous works which have white editing, white co-authorship or white publishing before and since *Writing The Circle*. This confirms my assessment all along, that the argument Annharte and Deranger (discussed in Lutz, 1995) started against the white editors of *Writing The Circle* was largely personal. I am not suggesting cultural appropriation is a non-issue, but I believe that particular argument was managed. Today *Writing The Circle* remains one of the most used anthologies, therefore, it is puzzling that Moses/Goldie continue to treat it as non-existent.

> Canadians are conflicted in their attitudes toward Indians....And we will continue to be so long as the Indian remains imaginary. Non-Native Canadians can hardly hope to work out a successful relationship with Native people who exist largely in fantasy. Chief Thunderthud did not prepare us to be equal partners with Native people....The distance between fantasy and reality, is the distance between Indian and Native. It is also the distance non-Native Canadians must travel before we can come to terms with the imaginary Indian, which means coming to terms with ourselves as North Americans. (224)

I would qualify Francis' last statement. What White Canadians need to come to terms with is not so much their 'North American' selves, but their colonialist selves.

For Native intellectuals the challenge is to maintain our cultural integrity without resorting to stereotypes, fundamentalism or nativism. How shall i/we say I am human and at the same time different without resorting to stereotypes or to a 'return to the past'? How shall i/we say I am different and yet the same as a human? And how shall i/we claim and develop our cultures unique to us (sense of community, importance of the matriarch, and the holistic connectedness of all things, or the 'circle,' among other features) without having always to juxtapose them against western portrayals and canonization? Or without always pre-occupying ourselves with the colonizer's primitivist yearnings for 'authenticity.' As we go about the task of deconstructing and reconstructing, we must allow ourselves the possibility that we cannot resolve or transcend the many questions we ask. We are individual and cultural selves-in-process. For non-Native intellectuals the challenge must be a humbling introspection and change, which hopefully can lead to more useful historiographic and literary tools to dismantle this box, a box they have constructed in no small measure. This box that shadows all of our relations, and all of our relationships. Gaile McGregor in *The Wacousta Syndrome,* invokes W.L. Morton's history lesson: "...the only real victories are the victories over defeat...what is important is not to have triumphed, but to have endured" (200-201). Perhaps, but Native peoples have had about enough of enduring; we seek now to take our places in Canadian society as socially and culturally vibrant intellectuals and artists. We seek now to be unmarginalized, unobjectified, uncollectivized and unethnographied.

For all of us the challenge is to cross boundaries. It remains: how do humans with real cultural, linguistic and serious political differences inside a country cross borders? Who should do the crossing? Can Ramraj's 'shared human experiences' (*Concert of Voices*), transcend cultural and political interests? We know that neither Shylock's nor Shinguaconse's invocations concerning their humanity end the prejudices against them or their people.

Finally, once the colonizer sons and daughters learn what Maria Campbell's 'road allowance people' know, namely, the haunting consequences for people who steal, can we take some hope that they will return the stolen goods? Listen:

> Hees not just dah stealing dats bad you know.
> All dough dats bad enough.
> Dah real bad ting is your kids and all your grandchildren
> Dey don got no good stories about you if your a teef. (143)

To finish, then, on a note of resistance and the personal:

> Oh I did my footnotes so well
> nobody knows where I come from
>
> I've walked these hallways
> with them a long time now
> and still they don't see
> the earth gives eyes
> injustice gives rage
> now I'm standing here
> prehistoric designer jeans and all
> pulling out their fenceposts of civilization
> one by one
> calling names in Cree
> bringing down their mooneow hills
> in English too
> this is home now.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abel, Kerry and Jean Friesen, eds. *Aboriginal Resource Use in Canada: Historical and Legal Aspects.* Winnipeg: University of Manitoba, 1991.

Aboriginal Justice Inquiry of Manitoba. Government of Manitoba, 1991.

Achebe, Chinua. "Colonialist Criticism." Ashcroft *et. al. The Post-Colonial Studies Reader* 57-61.

Achimoona. Introduced by Maria Campbell. Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1985.

Acoose, Janice. *Iskwewak: Kah' Ki Yaw Ni Wahkomakanak.* Toronto: Women's Press, 1995.

---. "Post Halfbreed: Indigenous Writers as Authors of Their Own Realities." Armstrong, *Looking* 27-44.

Adams, Howard. *A Tortured People: The Politics of Colonization.* Penticton: Theytus Books, 1995.

---. *Prison of Grass.* Toronto: General Publishing, 1975.

Ahenakew, Edward. *Voices of the Plains Cree.* Ruth M. Buck, ed. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1973.

Alexander Begg's Red River Journal and Other Papers Relative to the Red River Resistance of 1869-70. Edited by W.L. Morton. Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1956.

Alexie, Sherman. *The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fist Fight in Heaven.* 1993. First Harper Perrenial Edition, 1994.

Alfred, Gerald R. *Heeding The Voices of Our Ancestors.* Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1995.

Alieoof, Maurie and Susan Schouten Levine. "Interview: The Long Walk of Alanis Obomsawin." *Cinema Canada* June 1987: 10-15.

Allan, Luke. *Blue Pete: Rebel.* London: Herbert Jenkins, 1940.

Allen, Paula Gunn. *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering The Feminine in American Indian Traditions.* Boston: Beacon Press, 1986.

Angelou, Maya. *The Complete Collected Poems of Maya Angelou.* New York: Random House, 1994.

---. *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings.* New York: Bantam Books, 1970.

Armstrong, Jeannette, ed. *Looking at the Words of our People: First Nations Analysis of literature.* Penticton: Theytus Books, 1993.

---. *Slash.* Penticton: Theytus Books, 1985.

---. *Breath Tracks.* Toronto: Williams-Wallace Publishers, 1991.

---. "The Disempowerment of First North American Native Peoples and Empowerment Through Their Writing." Moses and Goldie 207-211.

Asch, Michael. *Home and Native Land: Aboriginal Rights and the Canadian Constitution.* Toronto: Methuen, 1984.

---. ed. *Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in Canada: Essays on Law, Equity, and Respect for Difference.* Vancouver: UBC Press, 1997.

Ashcroft, Bill. "The Myth of Authenticity." Ashcroft *et. al. Post-Colonial Studies* 237-241.

Ashcroft, Bill and Gareth Griffiths, Helen Tiffin. *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literature.* New York: Routledge, 1989.

---. *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader.* London and New York: Routledge, 1995.

---. *Key Concepts in Post-Colonial Studies*. London and New York: Routledge, 1998.

Atwood, Margaret and Robert Weaver. *The New Oxford Book of Canadian Short Stories in English.* Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Axtell, James. *The Invasion Within: The Contest of Cultures in Colonial North America.* New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.

Bailey, A. G. [1937] *The Conflict of European and Eastern Algonkian Cultures 1504-1700.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969.

Baker, Marie Annaharte. *Being On The Moon.* Winlaw: Polestar Press, 1990.

Baldwin, James. *Notes of a Native Son.* Boston: Beacon Press, 1949.

Bhabba, Homi K. "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences." Ashcroft *et. al. Post-Colonial Studies Reader* 206-212.

Begg, Alexander. *History of the North-west.* Volumes I and II. Toronto, 1894.

Berkes, Fikret. "Traditional Ecological Knowledge in Perspective." *Traditional Ecological Knowledge: Concepts and Cases*. Julian T. Inglis, ed. International Program on Tradtional Ecological Knowledge and International Development Research Centre, 1993.

Berkhofer, Robert F. *The White Man's Indian.* New York: Random House, 1978.

Berger, Carl and Ramsay Cook. *The West and the Nation.* Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1976.

Berger, Thomas. *Northern Frontier, Northern Homeland: The Report of the Mackenzie Valley Pipeline Inquiry: Volume One.* Minister of Supply and Services, 1977.

Berton, Pierre. *Hollywood's Canada.* Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1975.

Blaut, J.M. *The Colonizer's Model of the World: Geographical Diffusionism and Eurocentric History.* New York/London: The Guilford Press, 1993.

Blaeser, Kimberly M. "Native Literature: Seeking a Critical Center." Armstrong, *Looking* 51-62.

Bolt, Christine. *Victorian Attitudes To Race.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971.

Boon, T.C. *The Anglican Church From the Bay to the Rockies.* Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1962.

Border Crossings, 1. 4 (Fall) 1992; Special Issue on "First Nations Art & Culture".

Bowsfield, Hartwell. ed. *Louis Riel: Rebel of the Western Frontier or Victim of Politics and Prejudice?* Toronto: The copp Clark Publishing Company, 1969.

Brant, Beth, ed. *A Gathering of Spirit: Writing and Art of North American Indian Women.* Toronto: The Women's Press, 1988.

Brant, Beth. *Mohawk Trail.* Ithaca, NewYork: Firebrand Books, 1985.

---. "A Long Story." Moses and Goldie 152-156.

Brant Castellano, Marlene. "Vocation or Identity: The Dilemma of Indian Youth". Waubageshig 52-60.

Brodribb, Somer. "The Traditional Roles of Native Women in Canada and the Impact of Colonization". *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 4.1 (1984): 85- 103.

Brown, Dee. *Bury My Heart at Wounded knee.* New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1970.

Brown, Jennifer S.H. and Elizabeth Vibert. *Reading Beyond Words: Contexts for Native History.* Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1998.

Brown, Jennifer S.H. and Robert Brightman. *"The Orders of the Dreamed": George Nelson on Cree and Northern Ojibwa Religion and Myth, 1823.* Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1988.

Brown, Rosemary. "Through The Fog: Looking at Academia." Turner 91-97.

Bryce, George. *John Black: The Apostle of the Red River.* 1898.

Brydon, Diana. "The White Inuit Speaks: Contamination as Literary Strategy." Ashcroft *et. al. Post-Colonial Studies Reader* 136-142.

Butler, Wm. Francis. *The Great Lone Land.* 1872. Edmonton: Mel Hurtig, 1968.

Cameron, Ann (Cam Hubert). *Dreamspeaker and Tem Eyos Ki and the Land Claims Question.* Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Co, Ltd, 1978.

Campbell, Maria. *Halfbreed.* Toronto: McClennan & Stewart, 1973.

---. *Stories of the Road Allowance People.* Penticton: Theytus Books, 1995.

Canadian Fiction Magazine, Number 60, 1987. Special editor Thomas King.

Cardinal, Harold. *Unjust Society.* Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1969.

---. *The Rebirth of Canada's Indians.* Hurtig Publishers, 1976.

Cardinal, Douglas. *Of the spirit.* Edited by George Melnyk. Edmonton: NeWest Press, 1977.

Cardinal-Schubert, Joane. "Surviving As a Native Woman Artist", Ormond McKague, ed. *Racism in Canada,* 1991: 71-81.

Carter, Sarah. *Lost Harvests: Prairie Indian Reserve Farmers and Government Policy.* Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990.

---. "The Missionaries' Indian: The Publications of John McDougall, John Maclean and Egerton RyersonYoung." *Prairie Forum* 9.1 (1984): 27-44.

Cassidy, Frank, ed. *Aboriginal Title in British Columbia: Delgamuukw v. The Queen.* Lantzville (B.C.): Oolichan Books and Montreal: The Institute for Research on Public Policy, 1992.

Christian, Barbara. "The Race for Theory." Ashcroft *et. al. Post-Colonial Studies Reader* 457-462.

Chute, Janet E. *The Legacy of Shingwaukonse: A Century of Native Leadership.* University of Toronto Press, 1998.

Clark, Kenneth. *Civilisation.* New York, London: Harper & Row, 1969.

Cleaver, Eldridge. *Soul on Ice.* New York: Dell, 1968.

Clutesi, George. *Potlatch.* Sidney, B.C., Grays, 1969.

Colorado, Pam. "Bridging Native and Western Science." *Convergence* 21.2-3 (1988): 49-67.

Connor, Ralph. *The Foreigner.* 1909. Rpt. By National Library of Canada, 1978.

---. *The Patrol of the Sun Dance Trail.* Toronto: The Westminster Co. Ltd., 1914.

Cooley, Dennis, ed. *Replacing.* Downsview: ECW Press, 1980.

Cook, Ramsay, Craig, Brown and Carl Berger, eds. *Approaches to Canadian History.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967.

Cooper, James Fennimore. *The Last of the Mohicans.* Rpt. London: Pan Books, 1977.

Copway, G. *The Traditional History and Characteristic Sketches of the Ojibway Nation.* London, 1850.

Craven, Margaret. *I Heard the Owl Call My Name.* Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Co. Ltd., 1967.

Culhane-Speck, Dara. *An Error in Judgement.* Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1987.

Culleton, Beatrice. *In Search of April Raintree.* Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1983.

---. *Spirit of the White Bison.* Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1985.

Cumming, Peter A. and Neil H. Mickenberg. *Native Rights in Canada.* Toronto: General Publishing, 1970.

Currie, Elizabeth Noel. "Jeannette Armstrong and the Colonial Legacy." New 138-155.

Cuthand, Beth. *Voices in the Waterfall.* Penticton: Theytus Books, 1989.

Damm, Kateri. "Says Who: Colonialism, Identity and Defining Indigenous Literature." Armstrong, *Looking* 9-26.

---. "Dispelling and Telling: Speaking Native Realities in Maria Campbell's Halfbreed and Beatrice Culleton's In Search of April Raintree." Armstrong, *Looking* 93-114.

Day, David and Marilyn Bowering, eds. *Many Voices: An Anthology of Contemporary Canadian Indian Poetry.* Vancouver: J.J. Douglas, 1977.

Dene Nation. *Denendeh: A Dene Celebration.* Yellowknife: The Dene Nation, 1984. Distributed by McClelland and Stewart.

Dickason, Olive Patricia. *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times.* Toronto: McClennan & Stewart, 1992.

---. *The Myth of the Savage and the Beginnings of French Colonialism in the Americas.* Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1984.

---. *The Native Imprint: The Contribution of First Peoples to Canada's Character.* Athabasca: Athabasca University, 1995.

---. "From 'One Nation' in the Northeast to 'New Nation' in the Northwest: A look at the emergence of the metis." Peterson and Brown 19-36.

Doxtator, Deborah. *Fluffs and Feathers: An Exhibit on the Symbols of Indianness.* Brantford: Woodland Cultural Centre, 1992.

Duchemin, Parker. "A Parcel of Whelps': Alexander Mackenzie among the Indians." New 49-75.

---. "Stealing History." *Briarpatch.* October (1988):17-23.

Dumont, Marilyn. *A Really Good Brown Girl.* London, Ontario: Brick Books, 1996.

---. "Popular Images of Nativeness." Armstrong, *Looking* 45-50.

---. "The Gift." Perreault and Vance 44-46.

Dunn, Marty. *Red on White: The Biography of Duke Redbird.* Toronto: New Press, 1971.

Eagleton, Terry. *Ideology: An Introduction.* London: Verso, 1991.

Eigenbrod, Renate. "Can 'The Subaltern' Be Read? The Role of the Critic in Postcolonial Studies." *Acolit,* Sonderheft Nr. 2 (1996): 97-102.

Eigenbrod, Renate. "The Oral in the Written: A Literature Between Two Cultures." *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 15.1 (1995): 89-102.

Emberly, Julia V. *Thresholds of Difference: Feminist Critique, Native Women's Writings, Postcolonial Theory.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993.

Evenson, Brad. "native postmodern." *Saturday Night* October 1998: 17-19.

Ewers, John C. "The Influence of the Fur Trade Upon the Indians of the Northern Plains", Malvina Bolous, ed. *People and Pelts.* Winnipeg: Peguis Publishers, n.d

Fanon, Frantz. *Black Skin, White Masks.* 1952. New York: Grove Press, 1967.

---. *The Wretched of the Earth.* New York: Grove Press, 1963.

Fee, Margery. "Upsetting Fake Ideas: Jeannette Armstrong's 'Slash' and Beatrice Culleton's 'April Raintree'." New 168-182.

---. "Who Can Write as Other?" Ashcroft *et. al. Post-Colonial Studies Reader* 242-248.

Ferguson, Russell. "Introduction: Invisible Center." *Out There: Marginalisation and Contemporary Cultures.* New York: The New Museum of Contemporary Art, 1990.

Fiddler, Don and Linda Jaine, eds. *Gatherings* (6 volumes) Penticton: Theytus Publishers, 1995

Fife, Connie. *The Colour of Resistance: A Contemporary Collection of Writing by Aboriginal Women.* Toronto: Sister Vision Press, 1993.

Fisher, A.D. "A Colonial Education System: Historical Changes and Schooling in Fort Chipewyan." *Canadian Journal of Anthropology,* 11.1 (Spring 1981): 37-44.

Fisher, Robin and Kenneth Coates, eds. *Out of the Background: Readings on Canadian Native History.* Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1988. Rev. 1996.

Flanagan, Thomas. *Louis 'David' Rield: Prophet of the New World.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1979.

Flanagan, Thomas, ed. *The Diaries of Louis Riel.* Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1976.

Forer, Mort. *The Humback.* Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1969.

Foster, John E. "Some Questions and Perspectives on the Problem of Metis Roots." Peterson and Brown 73-93.

Francis, Daniel. *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture.* Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1992.

Frye, Marilyn. *The Politics of Reality: Essays in Feminist Theory.* Freedom: The Crossing Press, 1983.

Friar, Ralph and Natasha. *The Only Good Indian: The Hollywood Gospel.* New York: Drama Book Publishers, 1972.

Frideres, James S. *Aboriginal Peoples in Canada: Contemporary Conflicts*. Scarborough: Prentice Hall Allyn and Bacon Canada, 1998. (First edition 1974).

Friesen, Gerald. *The Canadian Prairies: A History*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984.

Friesen, Jean. "Magnificient Gifts: The Treaties of Canada with the Indians of the Northwest 1869-70." *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada, Series V*, Vol. I (1986): 41-51.

Frye, Northrop. *The Educated Imagination*. Toronto: CBC Enterprises/les Entreprises Radio-Canada. 1963. 1983 (18th printing).

Fulton, Keith Louise. "Journalling Women: The Authentic Voice and Intellectual Cross-Dressing." *A Reader in Feminist Ethics*. Ed. Debra Shogun. Canadian Scholars Press, 1992. 423-436.

Gagne, Marie-Anik. *A Nation Within A Nation: Dependency and the Cree*. Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1994.

Give Back: First Nations Perspectives on Cultural Practice. Vancouver: Gallerie Publications, 1992.

Grace, Patricia. *Mutuwhenua: The Moon Sleeps*. Auckland: Penguin Books, 1978.

Grant, Agnes. "Contemporary Native Women's Voices." New 124-132.

Grant, Agnes, ed. *Our Bit of Truth: An Anthology of Canadian Native Literature*. Winnpeg: Pemmican Publications, 1990.

George, Chief Dan. *My Heart Soars*. Saanichton: Hancock House, 1974.

---. "My Very Good Dear Friends..." Waubageshig 184-188.

Godard, Barbara. “The Politics of Representation: Some Native Canadian Women Writers.” New 183-228.

Goddard, John. *Last Stand of the Lubicon Cree.* Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1991.

Goldie, Terry. *Fear and Temptation: The Image of the Indigene in Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand Literatures.* Kingston: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1989.

Gooderham, Kent, ed. *I Am An Indian.* Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1969.

Green, Joyce A. “Towards A Detente With History: Confronting Canada’s Colonial Legacy.” *International Journal of Canadian Studies* 12 (Fall 1995): 85-105.

---. “Exploring Identity and Citizenship: Aboriginal Women, Bill C-31 and the Sawridge Case.” Diss. University of Alberta, 1997.

---. “Transforming at the Margins of the Academy.” Linda Paul, *et al.*, eds. *Women in the Academic Tundra.* To be pub. McGill-Queens.

Haig-Brown, Celia. “Border Work.” New 229-242.

Haley, Alex. *Roots.* New York: Bantam Books, 1977.

Halfe, Louise. *Bear Bones and Feathers.* Regina: Coteau Books, 1994.

---. *Blue Marrow.* Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1998.

Harjo, Joy and Gloria Bird. *Reinventing the Enemy;s Language: Contemporary Native Women's Writings of North America.* New York: W. W. Norton, 1997.

Harlow, Barbara. *Resistance Literature.* New York: Methuen, 1987.

Harrison, Julia D. *Metis: People Between Two Worlds.* Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1985.

Highway, Tomson. *The Rez Sisters*. Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1988.

---. *Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing*. Fifth House, 1989.

Hilger, Michael. *The American Indian in Film.* Metuchen, N.J. & London: The Scarecrow Press, 1986.

Hitchcock, Peter. *Dialogics of the Oppressed.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993.

Hobsbawn, Eric and Terrence Ranger, eds. *The Invention of Tradition.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983.

Hodgson, Heather. *Seventh Generation.* Penticton: Theytus Books, 1989.

Honour, Hugh. *The New Golden Land.* New York: Pantheon Books, 1975.

hooks, bell. *Feminist Theory: from margin to center.* Boston: south end press, 1984.

Hoy, Helen. "'Nothing But the Truth': Discursive Transparency in Beatrice Culleton." *Ariel* 25.1 (January 1994): 155-184.

Hulan, Renee, ed. *Native North America: Critical and Cultural Perspectives*. Toronto: ECW Press, 1999.

Hunter, Lynette. *Outsider Notes: Feminist Approaches to Nation State Ideology, Writers/Readers and Publishing.* Vancouver: Talonbooks, 1996.

Hutcheon, Linda. "Circling the Downspout of Empire." Ashcroft *et. al. Post-colonial Studies* 130-135.

Jaine, Linda and Drew Hayden Taylor, eds. *Voices: Being Native in Canada.* Saskatoon: University of Saskatchewan, 1992.

Jannetta, Armando E. "'Travels through forbidden geography': Metis Trappers and Traders Louis Goulet and Ted Trindell." *Ariel* 25.2 (April 1994): 60-74.

Jaenen, Cornelius J. "Amerindindian Views of French Culture in the Seventeenth Century." *Canadian Historical Review* 55.3 (1974): 261-291.

Jennings, Francis. *Invasion of America: Indians, Colonialism, and the Cant of Conquest.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1976.

Joe, Rita. *Poems of Rita Joe.* Halifax: Abenaki Press, 1978.

---. *The Song of Eskasoni: More Poems of Rita Joe.* Charlottetown: Ragweed Press, 1988.

---. *Song of Rita Joe: Autobiography of a Mi'kmaq Poet.* Ragweed Press, 1996.

Johnson, Pauline E. *Flint and Feather.* 1917. Toronto: Paperjacks Ltd., 1987.

Johnston, Basil. *Moose Meat & Wild Rice. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1978.*

---. "One Generation From Extinction." New 10-15.

Kane, Margo. "Moonlodge." Moses and Goldie 279-291.

Karrar, Wolfgang and Hartmut Lutz, eds. *Minority Literatures in North America: Contemporary Perspectives.* Pre-publication based on the International Symposium at the University of Osnabruck, January, 1988.

Keeshig-Tobias, Lenore. "Stop Stealing Native Stories." *The Globe and Mail* 26 January, 1990.

---. "Trickster Beyond 1992: Our Relationship." McMaster and Martin 101-112.

Keller, Betty. *Pauline: A Biography of Pauline Johnson.* Halifax: Goodread Biographies, 1981.

Kenny, George. *Indians Don't Cry.* Toronto: Chimo Publishing, 1977.

Keon, Orville, Wayne and Ronald. *Sweetgrass: A Modern Anthology of Indian Poetry.* Elliot Lake: Algoma Printing Service, 1971.

King, Thomas. *All My Relations.* Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1990.

---. *Medicine River.* Toronto: Penquin Books, 1989.

King, Thomas, Cheryl Calver and Helen Hoy. *The Native in Literature.* Winnipeg: Hignell Printing, 1987.

Kinsella, W.P. *Dance Me Outside.* Canada: Oberon Press, 1977.

Kirkness, Verna J. *Education of Indians in Federal and Provincial Schools.* Ottawa: DIAND, 1978.

Klinck, Carl F. "Literary Activity in the Canadas (1812-1841." Carl F. Klinck, ed. *Literary History of Canada: Canadian Literature in English,* Volume I. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965.

Kroetsch, Robert. "Unhiding the Hidden." Ashcroft *et. Al. Post-colonial Studies* 394-396.

Krupat, Arnold. *Ethnocriticism: Ethnography History Literature.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

---. *For Those Who Come After: A Study of Native American Autobiography.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985.

LaRoque, Emma. *Defeathering The Indian.* Agincourt: Book Society of Canada, 1975.

---. "The Metis in English Canadian Literature." *Canadian Journal of Native Studies* 3.1 (1983): 85-94.

LaRocque, Emma. "Long Ways From Home." *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature* 25.1 (January 1994): 122-126.

---. "On The Ethics of Publishing Historical Records." Jennifer S.H. Brown and Robert Brightman 199-203.

---. "Preface--or--Here Are Our Voices Who Will Hear?" Perreault and Vance xv-xxx..

---. "Re-examining Culturally Appropriate Models in Criminal Justice Applications." Ash *Aboriginal and Treaty Rights* 75-96.

---. "The Colonization of a Native Woman Scholar." Miller and Chuchryk 11-18.

---. "Tides, Towns and Trains." Turner 76-90.

---. "When the Other Is Me: Native Writers Confronting Canadian Literature." Jill Oakes and Rick Riewe, eds. *Issues in the North.* Occasional Publication Number 40. Canadian Circumpolar Institute, 1996.

Larson, Charles. "Heroic Ethnocentrism: The Ideas of Universality in Literature." Ashcroft *et. al. Post-Colonial Studies* 62-66.

Laurence, Margaret. *The Diviners.* Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974.

Lee, Bobbi. *Bobbi Lee: Indian Rebel.* Richmond: LSM Information Center, 1975. Rpt under Lee Maracle by Toronto: Women's Press, 1980.

Lee, Dennis. "Writing in colonial Space." Ashcroft *et. al. Post-Colonial Studies* 397-401.

Levine, Paul. "Frantz Fanon: The Politics of Skin." *Divisions.* Toronto: The Hunter Rose Company for CBC Publications.

Louttit, Ernie. "Disadvantage to Advantage". Jaine and Taylor 100-105.

Lutz, Hartmut. *Contemporary Challenges: Conversations with Canadian Native Authors.* Saskatoon: Fifth House Publishers, 1991.

---. "Confronting Cultural Imperialism: First Nations People Are Combatting Continued Cultural Theft." *Multiculturalism in North America and Europe: Social Practices-Literary Visions.* Hans Braun and Wolfgang Kioos, eds. Tries, Germany: Wissenschafthicher Verlag Tries, 1995.

---. "Contemporary Native Literature in Canada and 'The Voice of the Mother.'" Ed. Jorn Carlsen. *O Canada: Essays on Canadian Native Literature and Culture.* Aarhus (Denmark): Aarhus University Press, 1995. 79-96.

Lutz, Hartmut, ed. *Four Feathers: Poems And Stories By Canadian Native Authors.* O.B.E.M.A. No. 7 Bilingual edition. Osnabruck: Druck-& Verlagscooperative 85 GmbH, 1993.

Maki, Joel T., ed. *Steal My Rage.* Vancouver/Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1995.

Malcolm X. *Malcolm X Speaks: Selected Speeches and Statements.* George Breitman, ed. New York: Grove Press, 1965.

Mandelbaum, David G. *The Plains Cree.* 1940. Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1979.

Manitoba Indian Brotherhood. *The Shocking Truth About Textbooks in Manitoba.* Winnipeg: Manitoba Indian Cultural Centre, 1977.

Mannoni, O. *Prospero and Caliban.* New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964.

Manuel, George and Michael Posluns, *The Fourth World.* Toronto: Collier, 1974.

Maracle, Lee. *I Am Woman.* Vancouver: Write-On Press, 1988.

---. *Sundogs.* Penticton: Theytus Books, 1992.

---. *Ravensong.* Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers, 1993.

Martin, Calvin, ed. *The American Indian and the Problem of History.* New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Mason, Peter. *Deconstructing America: Representation of the the Other.* New York: Routledge, 1990.

MacEwan, Grant. *Metis Makers of History.* Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1981.

McCallum, Hugh and Karmel. *This Land Is Not For Sale.* Toronto: Anglican Book Center, 1975.

McCallum, Hugh and Karmel, and John Olthius. *Moratorium: Justice, Energy, The North and Native People.* Toronto: Anglican Book Center, 1977.

McDiarmid, C. And David Pratt. *Teaching Prejudice.* Toronto: The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1971.

McDougall, John. *Pathfinding on Plain and Prairie.* Toronto, 1898.

McGregor, Gaile. *The Wacousta Syndrome: Explorations in the Canadian Landscape.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985.

McKague, Ormond. *Racism in Canada.* Saskatoon: Fifth House Publishers, 1991.

McLean, John. *The Indians of Canada: Their Manners and Customs.* 1889. Rpt Coles, 1970.

McMaster, Gerald and Lee-Ann Martin, eds. *Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives.* Toronto/Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1992.

Mealing, S.R., ed. *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: A Selection.* 1632-73. *Toronto*: McClelland & Stewart, 1965.

Memmi, Albert. *The Colonizer and the Colonized.* Boston: Beacon Press, 1957.

Mercredi, Duncan. *Spirit of the Wolf.* Winnipeg: Pemmican, 1991.

---. *Dreams of the Wolf in the City.* Pemmican, 1992.

---. *Wolf and Shadows.* Pemmican, 1995.

Michelet, Jules. *History of the French Revolution.* Edited and Introduction by Gordon Wright. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967.

Miller, Christine and Patricia Chuchryk, eds. *Women of the First Nations: Power, Wisdon and Strength.* Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1997.

Miller, J.R. *Skyscrapers hide the heavens.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989.

Monkman, Leslie. *A Native Heritage: Images of the Indian in English Canadian Literature.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981.

Monture-Angus, Patricia. *Thunder in my Soul: A Mohawk Woman Speaks.* Halifiax: Fernwood, 1995.

Morgan, Lewis Henry. *Ancient Society.* 1877. Eleanor Burke Leacock, ed. New York: World, 1963.

Morrison, Bruce R. And C. Roderick Wilson. *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience.* Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1986. 2nd ed. 1995.

Morrison, Toni. *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992.

---. *The Bluest Eye.* 1970. New York: A Plume Book, 1994.

Morton, W.L. "The Canadian Metis." *Beaver* (September 1950): 3-7.

Moses, Daniel David and Terry Goldie. *An Anthology of Canadian Native Literature in English.* Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1992.

Mowat, William and Christine, eds. *Native Peoples in Canadian Literature.* Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1975.

Mukherjee, Arun. *Oppositional Aesthetics: Readings from a Hyphenated Space.* Toronto: TSAR, 1994.

Murray, David. *Forked Tongues: Speech, Writing and Representation in North American Indian Texts.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991.

Nash, Roderick. *Wilderness and the American Mind.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967.

National Indian Brotherhood. *Indian Control of Indian Education.* 1972.

New, W.H. *A History of Canadian Literature.* London: Macmillan Education Ltd., 1989.

New, W.H., ed. *Native Writers and Canadian Writing: Canadian Literature Special Issue.* Vancouver: UBC Press, 1990.

Ngugi wa Thiong'o. *Decolonising The Mind.* London: James Curray, 1986.

O'Connor, John E. *The Hollywood Indian.* Trenton: New Jersey State Museum, 1980.

Overall, Christine. *A Feminist I: Reflections from Academia.* Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1998.

Owens, Louis. *Other Destinies: Understanding the American Indian Novel.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992.

Owram, Doug. *Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West 1856-1900.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980.

Pakes, Fraser J. "Seeing With The Stereotypic Eye: The Visual Image of the Plains Indian". *Native Studies Review* I, 2 (1985): 1-31.

Pannekoek, Frits. *A Snug Little Flock: The Social Origins of the Riel Resistance 1869-70.* Winnipeg: Watson & Dwyer Publishing, 1991.

---. "The Anglican Church and the Disintegration of Red River Society, 1818-1870." Berger and Cook, *The West* 72-90.

Patterson, Palmer E. *The Canadian Indian: A History Since 1500.* Toronto: Collier-Macmillan Canada, 1972.

Paul, Daniel N. *We Were Not The Savages*. Halifax: Nimbus Publishing, 1993.

Pearce, Roy Harvey. *Savagism and Civilization.* 1953. John Hopkins Press, 1965.

Pelletier, Wilfred and Ted Poole. *No Foreign Land.* New York: Pantheon, 1973.

Perreault, Jeanne. "Notes from the Co-editors." *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature.* Special Issue. 25.1 (January 1994): 9-11.

Perreault, Jeanne. *Writing Selves: Contemporary Feminist Autography.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995.

Perreault, Jeanne and Sylvia Vance, eds. *Writing The Circle: Native Women of Western Canada.* Edmonton: NeWest Publishers, 1990.

Peterson, Jacqueline. "Many Roads to Red River: Metis Genesis in the Great Lakes Region, 1680-1815." Peterson and Brown 37-72.

Peterson, Jacqueline and Jennifer S.H. Brown, eds. *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Metis in North America.* Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1985.

Petrone, Penny. "Indian Literature." *Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature.* Oxford University Press, 1983. 383-388.

---. *Native Literature in Canada.* Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1990.

---. "Aboriginal Literature, Native and Metis Literature." E. Benson and Wm Toye, eds. *The Oxford Companion To Canadian Literature.* Oxford University Press, 1997. 6-15.

Philip, M. Nourbese. *Frontiers: essays and writings on racism and culture.* Stratford: The Mercury Press, 1992.

Ponting, J. Rick, ed. *Arduous Journey: Canadian Indians and Decolonization.* Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1986.

---. *First Nations in Canada: Perspectives on Opportunity, Empowerment, and Self-Determination.* Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd. 1997.

Ponting, J. Rick and Roger Gibbins. *Out of Irrelevance: A socio-political introduction to Indian affairs in Canada.* Totonto: Butterworths, 1980.

Prucha, Francis Paul. *The American Indian Policy in the Formative Years.* Harvard University Press, 1962.

Puxley, Peter. "The Colonial Experience." *Dene Nation-The Colony Within,* Mel Watkin, ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977.

Ramraj, Victor J. *Concert of Voices: An Anthology of World Writing in English.* Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1995.

Rasporich, Beverly. "Native Women Writing: Tracing the Patterns" *Canadian Ethnic Studies* (Spec Issue: Ethnic Themes in Cdn Lit) 28.1 (1996).

Ray, Arthur J. *Indians in the Fur Trade: their role as trappers, hunters, and middlemen in the lands southwest of Hudson Bay 1660-1870.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974.

Ray, Arthur J. And Donald Freeman. *'Give Us Good Measure': An Economic Analysis of Relations Between the Indians and the Hudson's Bay Company before 1763.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978.

Redbird, Duke. *Loveshine and Red Wine.* Cutler, Ont., Woodland Studios Publishing, 1981.

Rich, E.E. "The Indian Traders." *The Beaver.* (Winter 1970): 4-20.

Richardson, Boyce. *Strangers Devour The Land.* Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1975.

Richardson, Boyce, ed. *Drumbeat: Anger and Renewal in Indian Country.* Toronto: Summerhill Press, Assembly of First Nations, 1989.

Richardson, John. *Wacousta.* Philadelphia, 1832.

---. *Wau-Nan-Gee, or The Massacre of Chicago.* New York, 1852.

Ridington, Robin. “Cultures in Conflict: Problems in Discourse.” New 273-289.

Ridington, Robin. “Technology, World View, and Adaptive Strategy in a Northern Hunting Society.” Ed. Olive P. Dickason, *The Native Imprint* 103-117.

Rockhill, Kathleen. “The Chaos of Subjectivity in the Ordered Halls of Academe.” *Canadian Woman Studies* 8.4 (Winter 1987): 12-17.

Rogin, Michael Paul. *Fathers and Children.* New York: Knopf, 1975.

Ross, Alexander. *The Red River Settlement: Its Rise, Progress and Present State.* London, 1856; rpt by Ross and Haines, Minneapolis, 1957.

Rotstein, A. “Trade and Politics: An Institutional Approach.” *Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology* 3.1 (1972): 1-28.

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. *Choosing Life: Special Report on Suicide Among Aboriginal People.* Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1995.

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. Vol. 4, Chapter 5. “Metis Perspectives.” (1996): 198-386..

Ruffo, Armand Garnet. *Grey Owl: The Mystery of Archie Belaney.* Regina: Coteau, 1997.

Ryan, William. *Blaming The Victim.* New York: Random House, 1971.

Ryga, George. *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe and other plays.* Don Mills, General Publishing,1971..

Said, Edward W. *Orientalism.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978.

---. *Representations of the Intellectual.* New York: Vintage Books, 1996.

---. *The World, The Text, and the Critic.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983.

Sanders, D. "The Rights of the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada." *Canadian Bar Review* 6.1 (1983): 314-338.

Satz, Ronald N. *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era.* University of Nebraska Press, 1975.

Saum, Lewis O. *The Fur Trade and the Indian.* Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1965.

Sawchuk, Joe and Patricia Sawchuk, Terry Ferguson, Metis Association of Alberta. *Metis Land Rights in Alberta: A Political History.* Edmonton: Metis Association of Alberta, 1981.

Sealey, D. Bruce and Antoine S. Lussier. *The Metis: Canada's Forgotten People.* Winnipeg: Manitoba Metis Federation, 1975.

Sealey, D. Bruce And Verna J. Kirkness, eds. *Indians Without Tipis.* Agincourt: 1973. Book Society of Canada, 1974.

Seton, E.T. *The Gospel of the Redman: An Indian Bible.* London: Psychic Press, Ltd., 1937.

---. *Two Little Savages, Being the Adventures of Two Boys Who Lived as Indians and What They Learned.* New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1903.

Shakespeare, William. "The Merchant of Venice." *The Arden Complete Works of Shakespeare*, 843.

Sheehan, Bernard W. *Seeds of Extinction.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1973.

Shilling, Arthur. *The Ojibway Dream.* Montreal: Tundra Books, 1986.

Shkilnyk, Anastasia M. *A Poison Stronger Than Love: The Destruction of an Ojibwe Community.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985.

Siggins, Maggie. *Riel: A Life of Revolution.* Toronto: Harper Collins Publishers, 1994.

Sioui, Georges. *For An American Autohistory.* McGill-Queens, 1992.

Slattery, Brian. "Understanding Aboriginal Rights." *Canadian Bar Review* 66 (1987): 727-83.

Slipperjack, Ruby. *Honour The Sun.* Winnpeg: Pemmican Publications, 1987.

---. *Silent Words.* Saskatoon: Fifth House Publishers, 1992.

Smith, Allen. "Seeing Things: Race, Image and National Identity in Canadian and American Movies and Television". *American Review of Canadian Studies* (Fall 1996): 376-390.

Smith, Donald B. *Le Sauvage. The Native People in Quebec: Historical Writings on the Heroic Period (1534-1663) of New France.* Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1974.

Smith, Henry Nash. *Virgin Land.* Harvard University Press, 1950.

Stalker, Jacqueline and Susan Prentice. *The Illusion of Inclusion: Women in Post-Secondary Education.* Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1998.

Stanley, George F. 1936. *The Birth of Western Canada: A History of the Riel Rebellion.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1960.

Stedman, Raymond William. *Shadows of the Indian: Stereotypes in American Culture.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1982.

Stevenson, Michael. "Columbus and the War on Indigenous People." *Race and Class* 32.3 (1992): 27-45.

Swann, Brian and Arnold Krupat. *I Tell You Now: Autobiographical Essays by Native American Writers.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987.

Stump, Sarain. *There Is My People Sleeping.* Sidney: Grays, 1970.

Taylor, Drew H. "Pretty Like A White Boy: The Adventures of a Blue-Eyed Ojibway." Moses and Goldie 327-330.

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

Tiffin, Chris and Alan Lawson, eds. *De-scribing Empire: Post-colonialism and textuality.* London and New York: Routledge, 1994.

Tobias, John L. "Protection, Civilization, Assimilation: An Outline History of Canada's Indian Policy." *Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology* 6.2 (1976): 13-30.

---. "The Subjugation of the Plains Cree, 1879-1885." *Canadian Historical Review* 64.4 (1983): 519-48.

Todd, Loretta. "What More Do They Want?" Mc Master and Martin 71-80.

Tong, Rosemarie. *Feminist Thought.* Boulder & San Francisco: Westview Press, 1992.

Trigger, Bruce G. "Champlain Judged by His Indian Policy: A Diffferent View of Early Canadian History." *The Native Imprint*, Vol I. Ed. Olive P. Dickason. Athabasca University, 1995. 197-221.

---. "The Historians' Indian: Native Americans in Canadian Historical Writing from Charlevoix to the Present." in Dickason, 1995. 423-449.

Troyer, Warner. *No Safe Place.* Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company, 1977.

Turner, Frederick Jackson. *The Significance of the Frontier in American History* [1893]. Ed. Harold P. Simonson. New York: Frederick Ungar, 1963.

Turner, Margaret E. *Imagining Culture: New World Narrative and the Writing of Canada.* Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995.

Van Kirk, Sylvia. *'Many Tender Ties': Women in Fur-Trade Society 1670-1870.* 1980. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1983.

Visions of History: Interviews With. By MARHO (The Radical Historians Organization). New York: Pantheon Books, 1983.

Vizenor, Gerald. "Crows Written on the Poplars: Autocritical Autobiographies." Swann and Krupat 99-110.

Wagamese, Richard. *Keeper'n Me.* Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 1994.

---. *Quality of Light.* Toronto: Doubleday Canada, 1997.

Waldram, James, B. *As Long As The Rivers Run: Hydroelectric Development and Native Communities in Western Canada.* Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1988.

Walker, Alice. *The Color Purple.* New York: Pocket Books, 1982.

Walker, James St. G. "The Indian in Canadian Historical Writing." *Canadian Historical Association Report* 22 (1971): 21-51.

Warrior, Emma Lee. "Compatriots." Moses and Goldie 160-167.

Watkins, Mel, ed. *Dene Nation-The Colony Within.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977.

Waubageshig. "The Comfortable Crisis." Waubageshig 74-102.

Waubageshig, ed. *The Only Good Indian.* 1970. Don Mills: New Press, 1974.

Webster, Gloria Cranmer. "From Colonization to Repatriation." McMaster and Martin 25-38.

Welsh, Christine. *"Women in the Shadows: Reclaiming a Metis Heritage." Descant 82*, 24.3 (Fall 1993): 89-104.

West, John. *Substance of a Journal During Residence At The Red River Colony.* London, 1824; rpt by S.R. Publishers, 1966.

Wheeler, Jordan. *Brothers in Arms.* Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1989.

Wiebe, Rudy. *The Scorched Wood People.* Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1977.

Williams, David. *The Burning Wood.* Toronto: Anansi, 1975.

Williamson, Norman J. "The Indian in the Canadian Novel in English in the Period 1860-1918," M.A. Thesis, University of Manitoba, 1976. Unpub.

Willis, Jane. *Geneish: An Indian Girlhood.* Toronto: New Press, 1973.

Wilson, Betty. *Andre Tom McGregor.* Toronto: Macmillan, 1976.

Woodcock, George. "Prairie Writers and the Metis: Rudy Wiebe and Margaret Laurence." *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 14.1 (1982): 9-22.

Woodward, Jack. *Native Law.* Toronto: Carswell, 1989.

Wolfe, Eric R. *Europe and the People Without History.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982.

York, Geoffrey. *The Dispossessed: Life and Death in Native Canada.* London: Vintage U.K., 1990 (First pub. in 1989).

Young, Egerton R. *Stories from Indian Wigwams and Northern Campfires*. London, 1893. Rpt by Coles, 1974.

Young, Jon, ed. *Breaking The Mosaic: Ethnic Identities in Canadian Schooling*. Toronto: Garamond Press, 1987.

Young Man, Alfred. "The Metaphysics of North American Indian Art." McMaster and Martin 81-100.

Zolbrod, Paul G. *Reading The Voice: Native American Oral Poetry on the Page.* Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1995.