

**Renewing Relationships at the Centre:
Generating a Postcolonial Understanding of
Asiniskow Ithiniwak (Rocky Cree) Heritage**

by

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of
The University of Manitoba
in partial fulfillment of the requirements of degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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Winnipeg

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Abstract

For the Asiniskow Ithiniwak (Rocky Cree), the Missinipi (Churchill River) holds many traditional resource areas and cultural landscapes with oral histories that transfer knowledge through the generations (Linklater 1994; Castel and Westfall 2001; Brightman 1993). In recent decades, hydroelectric development in north central Manitoba has impacted Cree livelihood by altering resource use, limiting access to significant cultural landscapes and accelerating the erosion of campsites and ancestral burials into the water. Even with existing provincial heritage legislation, some of these heritage resources remain threatened by land-based developments because of the limitations related to their identification, documentation and presentation in the cultural resource management field. The tendency to focus on physical manifestations of heritage such as archaeological sites, heritage objects and built heritage overlooks other resources of heritage such as places known in the local language. I argue that these biases result from cultural divergences that exist in the understanding and definitions of heritage, particularly Indigenous heritage.

In this dissertation, I articulate how underlying theoretical assumptions of reality influences our understandings of heritage. I present a postcolonial understanding of heritage as interpreted from the perspective of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak using an Indigenous research paradigm, methodologies and the nīhithow language, in conjunction with knowledge based on Western intellectual traditions. The use of a bicultural research model led to new ways in identifying heritage resources important to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak and meaningful interpretations of archaeological materials based on legal traditions. Further, this case study demonstrates that there is no singular or universal definition of heritage for Indigenous peoples.

For successful heritage resources protection, I illustrate that understandings of heritage need to be contextualized locally through a community's language, culture, customary laws and local landscape. This view, promoted by UNESCO, emphasizes that the values and practices of local communities, together with traditional management systems, must be fully understood, respected, encouraged and accommodated in management plans if their heritage resources are to be sustained in the future (Logan 2008; UNESCO 2004). This outcome demonstrates the need to reexamine the practices, policies, legislation and procedures concerned with Indigenous knowledge in cultural and natural resources management in Canada.

Acknowledgements

Although the completion of this dissertation has been a long and arduous journey for me, it has been a time of growth and reflection, not only academically but also on a personal level where it has transformed my outlook on life tremendously. For this, I express my sincerest gratitude to the countless number of teachers that I have encountered across the Asiniskow Ithiniwak territory and outside of it, both ‘past’ and ‘present’. Thank you for the experiences we have shared on the land and for the honour to work with the knowledge and teachings that you have shared with me. In particular, I would like to thank the Kīhtayak and knowledgeable people involved in this project, especially those involved in Asiniskow Ithini Acimowin. I wish to thank Keith Anderson, William Dumas, Leslie Baker, Brenda Dysart-Anderson, William Anderson, and Margaret Dumas for your wisdom, mentorship, support and patience. Others I wish to acknowledge that have helped me through this journey include Bertha Anderson, Dennis Anderson, Burnell Anderson, Charlene Spence, D’Arcy Linklater, Eva Linklater, Bill Dysart, Abel Bird, Pat Linklater, Jake Fortin, Lianna Anderson, Layne Anderson, Lorynn Anderson, Minnie Anderson, Sandra Anderson, Oscar Anderson, Arla-Tait Linklater, Margaret Sprowl, Spencer Sprowl and Shannon Sprowl. I would also like to acknowledge Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation, and Okawamithikani First Nation for your support through this project. In addition, my gratitude extends to my other colleagues Dr. Bret Nickels and Ralph Arthurson involved with the Asiniskow Ithini Acimowin project for their support.

I also want to extend my gratitude to my advisor Dr. Robert Hoppa. You are truly a great mentor to anyone who has the honour of being your graduate student. I thank you

for your dedication, your advice, your patience, your flexibility, your open-mind and your ‘cheerleading skills’. Thank you for taking the time to share this long journey with me. I couldn’t have asked for a better advisor.

Thank you to Dr. Kiera Ladner and Dr. Leigh Syms for joining me on this journey as my committee members. Kiera, you are an inspiration and a role model for anyone engaged in research endeavours involving Indigenous knowledge. Thank you for showing me the way through this research project as a non-Aboriginal person. Leigh, no one can deny your passion for archaeology and Indigenous heritage. Your boundless energy and dedication to ‘fight the good fight’ is a great source of inspiration not only me but to many generations of archaeologists and Aboriginal peoples. I thank you for keeping me balanced in writing this dissertation. I would also like to thank as my external examiner, Dr. Eldon Yellowhorn for taking the time to provide thoughtful input. Your constructive comments were exactly what I needed to push me in the right direction.

I extend my gratitude to my colleagues at the Historic Resources Branch with Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism. Thank you to Donna Dul for enabling me to take the time to complete this dissertation. I extend my gratitude to Brian Smith for his patience, support and knowledge. Thank you for believing in me and taking the measures that you have in order for me to gain the experience and knowledge I needed to get through this process. Thank you to Mark Stroski for keeping me grounded and always reminding me to “have big ears”. Also, I give thanks to Gord Hill for teaching me the art of Zen.

I thank the various organizations and committees that have provided me with funding to complete this work that includes the SSHRC and committees for the J.G. Fletcher Award, the C.T. Shay scholarship, and Enbridge archaeology award.

I would like to thank the many others from the past and present who have helped me in this endeavor. I would like to acknowledge Valerie McKinley, Tomasin Playford, Mavis Reimer, Debbie Schnitzer, Laara Fitznor, Nathalie Piquemal and classmates in the circle of my Ethics and Aboriginal Research class, and the many others, especially my archaeological colleagues who have helped me through this process.

Finally, I would like to thank my family. I extend my sincere gratitude to my husband, Kevin Brownlee and our daughter, Meghan. Kevin, thank you for your never-ending love, patience and support. The first day I met you, you became my first teacher on this topic when you guest lectured in my Human Skeletal Biology class. I would have never started this journey if it wasn't for you and I am glad that we are continuing it together. Thank you for all of your teachings. Meghan, thank you for opening the doorway that I needed to get through to finish. Your teachings are what helped see me through to completion. To my parents, my brother, countless in-laws and extended family, thank you for the love, support, and encouragement, I could not have accomplished this without you.

Dedication

To mahikansis.
You are my joy, my love and my source of inspiration.
Thank you for being my greatest teacher.

I also dedicate this work to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak,
as is this knowledge of the people, especially the generations to come.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

*“The reality is this; when people become disconnected with their history, they need to get their history back again. When you validate people with their history, they will begin to see the past, they will see the present, and they will see the future”
(Dumas 2004:33)*

The Missinipi or Churchill River and its tributaries in western Canada from the Rocky Mountains (Where the White Haired Ones sit in the foothills) to Hudson Bay mark the territory of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak who speak the “th” dialect of the Cree language. In Manitoba, the Asiniskow Ithiniwak are often mistakenly lumped together with their relatives in the south who speak the “n” dialect of the Cree language, the Muskego Inniniwak or Swampy Cree. Otherwise, they are associated with other fabrications such as Woodland Cree, Woods Cree, Western Woods Cree or the Rock Cree that were generated by missionaries, academic scholars, historians or anthropologists. Archaeologists describe their ancestors as belonging to groups of irrelevant names like Northern Plano or Middle Woodland peoples. Despite these misrepresentations of their cultural identity and history, the Asiniskow Ithiniwak continue to assert their collective identity through their language, culture and heritage as the “people from where there is a lot of rock”. *Asini* meaning rock, *asiniskow* refers to rocky or where there is a lot of rock and *ithiniwak* is people. In English, they distinguish themselves from other nations as the Rocky Cree.

These experiences facing the Asiniskow Ithiniwak are found by other Indigenous peoples worldwide. Their individual and collective identities are consistently subject to negotiation in the face of an external, colonizing force (Lawrence 2003; Weaver 2001). The experience of colonization has resulted in a legacy of stereotypes of Indigenous

peoples impacting the consciousness of contemporary Indigenous identity and leaving a set of “jagged world views” (Little Bear 2000). “By force and by terror, and educational policy, it attempted to destroy the Aboriginal worldview but failed. Instead colonization left a heritage of jagged worldviews among Indigenous peoples. They no longer had an Aboriginal worldview, nor did they adopt a Eurocentric worldview. Their consciousness became a random puzzle, a jigsaw puzzle that each person has to attempt to understand” (Little Bear 2000:84).

Colonization has also resulted in the creation of two types of narratives on Indigenous history, heritage and culture:

One has been a dominant history, researched in universities, taught in schools, preached from the pulpit, and published in books. This history has been dominant, both because it reflects the viewpoint of the conquerors of the continent and because it overshadows all others. It resides in institutions, such as schools, universities, and museums that produce and control knowledge in our society. The other type of history was covert. Native Elders taught it to their children in the home to resist the dominant history thrust upon them in the larger world.

(McGuire 1997:77)

Since identity for many Indigenous peoples is grounded in the contexts of community and place (Wilson 2001), much of this “other type of history” remained successfully covert because of the mechanisms used to sustain knowledge such as language and use of the land. For the Asiniskow Ithiniwak, the Missinipi, meaning big water or also known by Canadians as the Churchill River holds many resource areas, cultural landscapes and oral histories that pass on knowledge and teachings through the generations (Brightman 1993; Castel and Westfall 2001; Linklater 1994, 1997). Some places are known to have existed for thousands of years. Like many other Aboriginal communities, the Asiniskow Ithiniwak are witnessing many changes to the landscape

from land-based developments to resource extraction like mining and forestry. In particular, hydroelectric developments such as the diversion of the Churchill River into the Nelson River system in 1976 and dams have impacted the livelihood of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak in this region who today identify themselves as members of Okawamithikani First Nation (Pickerel Narrows) at Granville Lake, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (NCN) at Nelson House, O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation (OPCN) at South Indian Lake and Atihkosakahkanihk (Barren Lands First Nation) at Brochet (figure 1.1). These dams cause intentional flooding of up to 15 feet above original levels from the impoundment of water systems to generate hydroelectricity. For the Asiniskow Ithiniwak, flooding has altered resource use of the Missinipi, affected their ability to navigate safely through the waterways, submerged the cultural landscape, and accelerated the erosion of ceremonial grounds, traditional campsites, cabins, and burial grounds into the river.

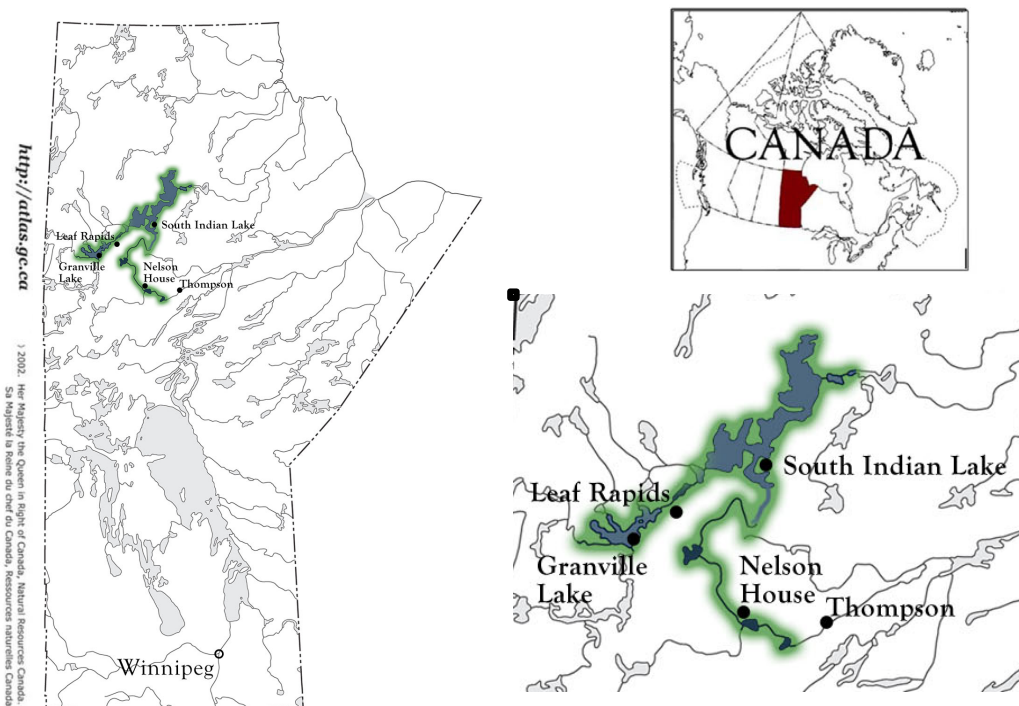


Figure 1.1 - Map of project area

So far, the knowledge of Asiniskow Ithiniwak identity and history along the Missinipi is retained in the living memory of the community, mainly through language, Elders and other knowledgeable people. However, as with many other Indigenous communities in Canada, there is evidence of an intergenerational loss of language, traditions, and skills, influenced partly by residential schooling and the passing of knowledgeable people. Compounding this sense of cultural discontinuity is the nature of current formal educational systems in Canada, which is based primarily on Euro-Canadian values and teaching concepts. This system fails Indigenous youth consistently where they lack the requisite skills, such as language skills, required to participate actively in their communities. This situation suggests that identity for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak is not only being impacted by a loss of place but community as well.

After centuries of facing others who attempt to write their history, the Asiniskow Ithiniwak like other Indigenous peoples recognize that it is time to publicly share their own stories to correct these narratives. These ‘corrective histories’ are needed as people are becoming disconnected from their history through the intergenerational loss of place and community. Further, these histories help to piece “jagged world views” together by validating Indigenous identity.

I am familiar with the intergenerational loss of place and community that is affecting the language, culture, tradition and collective identity of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak in northern Manitoba but not initially as an Asiniskow Ithiniwak myself. I want to situate myself in this research context by sharing with you that I am the daughter of Filipino immigrants. I ended up here by moving from Toronto to Winnipeg to complete a Masters degree over a decade ago and this is where my relationship with the Asiniskow Ithiniwak territory began. Since my specialization was in human osteology, the study of human skeletal remains; I was invited to work with provincial government archaeologists to work on the Churchill River Diversion Archaeological Project (CRDAP). My task was to help recover ancient and historic burials eroding into the Churchill River. I remember my naïveté at the time. I lacked cultural sensitivity and the understanding of how inappropriate it was to treat the remains of any person as “specimens”. At that moment, I thought it was the right thing to do and I remained unaware that my actions would impact the descendants of these people I “studied”. I was taught during my undergraduate education to approach skeletal remains as objectively as possible, without any emotion, to avoid incurring any biases in my observations. Eventually, I have learned that it is impossible to not experience any emotions in such cases. Any work that involves human

skeletal remains, either in an archaeological or forensic setting, bears responsibility and heavy emotion that needs to be acknowledged. This is the first teaching that I received during my initial experience working in Asiniskow Ithiniwak territory. Since then, these teachings and experiences continue through the established relationships that I have with the people and the land today. These relationships have shaped how I have come to understand my work as an archaeologist, particularly now that I work for the provincial government. My motivation for undertaking the work in this dissertation not only stems from the people in this territory who today I consider family but also my daughter. Did I mention that I am married to a Muskego Inniniwak adopted by the Asiniskow Ithiniwak?

For those who engage endeavours of tackling topics such as this one and being of non-Aboriginal descent, there are always those persistent nagging feelings as to whether you have a place in conducting this type of research. What keeps me motivated is the responsibility I carry to those Asiniskow Ithiniwak who have invited me to sit alongside them through this journey. Further, I don't think that this work should only be left to Indigenous archaeologists. By doing so, we encounter the danger of marginalizing non-Indigenous scholars in a postcolonial dialogue that requires everyone to work together. In addition, this approach discourages non-Indigenous scholars from engaging in this type of research and removes their responsibility to acknowledge, accept and incorporate Indigenous knowledge systems in mainstream academia.

Although I had been working in the territory for a few years, my involvement began in 2005 when the Okawamithikani First Nation expressed an interest to document oral histories, cultural landscapes and ancient heritage on Granville Lake to advance their tourism strategies. In addition, they wanted this knowledge to help facilitate negotiations

concerning land-use planning and developments. The First Nation took a proactive approach towards documenting this knowledge in anticipation of potential hydroelectric developments in the future. In 1929, Granville Falls was surveyed as a potential dam site location. Over the years, other members from NCN and OPCN indicated that they wanted to document this knowledge for educational purposes, in an effort to maintain knowledge of the cultural resources in their region. Much of the landscape for these communities has been impacted by hydroelectricity development.

Archaeological research conducted in this region has revealed a rich and diverse archaeological heritage (e.g. Kroker 1990; Malasiuk 1999; Riddle 1994a, b; Smith 1995, 1996, 1997). Although there is extensive written information on this topic available to an archaeological and academic audience, this is not the case for community members in this area. Community leaders and Elders have expressed concern over the lack of non-technical resources presenting local heritage to Aboriginal youth who are losing touch with their past and identity. Further, there are general criticisms with these histories where they fail to capture the meanings and values important to the community including their understanding of the local heritage and history. There is an increasing demand for Aboriginal perspectives and interpretive strategies to be incorporated into these narratives, a criticism usually voiced by those community members who have worked extensively on the CRDAP.

Originally, my goal for this dissertation was to produce a comprehensive narrative featuring heritage resources along the Churchill River in north-central Manitoba. However, I decided to change the topic once I began the research process. I have since learned that the history of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak is not a story to tell on my own but by

the people themselves. Instead, I can help them to create this corrective history as I have been invited to do. While working as an archaeologist over the last several years in this territory, I kept encountering several issues or questions concerning the concept of heritage through discussions, meetings, negotiations, conversations and reflection. Why does the dominant history still prevail in archaeology? Are there distinctions between culture and heritage from an Asiniskow Ithiniwak worldview? Are there different definitions of heritage? Whose heritage is being protected?

How I came to the last question was an eye-opening experience when I first started working for the provincial government. During one of my visits in the territory, I was challenged by someone who I consider one of my teachers with the question, “Why do I need a heritage permit to look for items belonging to my ancestors?” Needless to say, I was left in tears out of sheer frustration in trying to answer this question and ultimately I began to wonder the same. He posed this question to me as an awakening to question the policies and processes in place designed to protect and support heritage, especially Indigenous heritage. Since then I have come to recognize that there is a general lack of understanding of Indigenous heritage and knowledge systems. This is reflected in the policies and processes designed to protect which operate on a frame of reference favouring non-Indigenous understandings of heritage. As a result, there are greater numbers of resources of Indigenous heritage that are vulnerable to destruction or intergenerational loss. How do you begin to share a corrective history if the resources needed to tell it cease to exist? How do you remedy this problem?

Heritage as an Aboriginal or Treaty right

Through my work, I also started to become familiar with the duty to consult processes where the Crown is engaging in consultations with First Nations. The duty to consult involves recent court decisions recognizing that Aboriginal title, Aboriginal rights and treaty rights must be respected according to section 35 of Canada's *Constitution Act* (1982). Since these rights are integral to the cultural identity of Aboriginal peoples, there is an obligation or duty for the Crown to consult meaningfully with First Nations and Aboriginal communities should there be potential for government decisions to adversely affect these rights. For example, the Crown has a duty to consult with First Nations over any land-based developments it approves licenses for that will infringe on Aboriginal or treaty rights and title.

Central to legal discussions and consultations is that First Nations must demonstrate proof that lands and resource use activities that are potentially being impacted by development are integral to their cultural identity. Similar arguments can be made of Indigenous heritage and heritage resources such as archaeological materials as being integral to the cultural identity of Indigenous peoples (Ferris 2003). Since evidence of Indigenous heritage is tied to land, any impacts made to Aboriginal title to land as they affect Indigenous heritage resources must also be considered during consultations. Such understandings are reflected in contemporary treaty negotiations expressing Indigenous interests and jurisdiction over their heritage (Ferris 2003). Further, legal disputes in recent decades demonstrate that Indigenous peoples across Canada clearly view control over their heritage as a right and have responded to governments and developers who threaten their heritage sites (Fradmark 1993; McLellan 1995; Thom 2001). As

Yellowhorn (2000) indicates, First Nations such as the Peigan and other tribes did not surrender their culture at the signing of a treaty and therefore retain an interest over the archaeological record. Similar notions can be applied to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak who by signing treaties 5 and 6 in Manitoba also did not concede their rights over their culture and heritage.

My involvement led me to consider the following questions regarding the nature of the duty to consult process and resources of Indigenous heritage:

- How are rights associated with heritage defined by Indigenous peoples in Canada?
- Treaties uphold and recognize First Nations rights and governance. Indigenous heritage is upheld through a set of legal traditions. Should the Crown recognize these legal traditions since they represent Indigenous governance?
- How does the recognition of Aboriginal heritage as integral to cultural identity shape consultation discussions regarding Aboriginal and treaty rights?
- Is the Crown infringing on treaty rights by making decisions that impact Aboriginal heritage? Does the Crown have a right to manage and make decisions over Aboriginal heritage under existing heritage legislation and historical treaties?
- Are resources of Aboriginal heritage being properly represented at these consultations?

A common theme that appears in the discussions concerning Aboriginal rights is the importance of Indigenous peoples' connection with the land. This is an ideal held among the Asiniskow Ithiniwak as discussed by Linklater (2013:1), "[C]ree culture and our world view teaches us that we are an inherent part of our land, connected to it spiritually, emotionally, mentally and physically. We are not separate from the land, and whatever affects the land must also affect us." The nature of these relationships among Indigenous peoples is as diverse and varied as the landscapes found across Canada. Therefore, although the Aboriginal and treaty rights are protected collectively in the

constitution, they are not held uniformly by all Indigenous peoples and will vary according to each culture.

The importance and nature of this relationship can be difficult to comprehend.

The arguments of different indigenous peoples based on spiritual relationships to the universe, to the landscape and to the stones, rocks, insects and other things, seen and unseen, have been difficult arguments for Western systems of knowledge to deal with or accept. These arguments give a partial indication of the different worldviews and alternative ways of coming to know, and of being, which still endure within the indigenous world.

(Smith 2012:78)

After these experiences, I decided to reconsider the focus of my dissertation by exploring the question, “How is Indigenous heritage defined as a constitutional Aboriginal or treaty right?” Gaining an understanding of the importance of land to Indigenous heritage and cultural identity is central to this discussion. This involves exploring how heritage is used to transmit knowledge as a tradition, custom or practice that is grounded in relationships with the land. By examining the nature of Asiniskow Ithiniwak relationships with the land and how these relationships are integral to the transmission of knowledge, heritage and legal traditions; then it is possible to understand how heritage becomes an Aboriginal or treaty right that is constitutionally protected.

Heritage as a human right

I wish to explore this topic to not only contribute to political or legal discussions concerning Aboriginal or treaty rights but to emphasize that access to and protection of heritage is a human right. Logan (2008:439) best summarizes this notion:

Having a say in determining one’s life circumstances, including one’s cultural and physical environment, is now commonly seen as a fundamental human right. Indeed, it is essential to see cultural heritage (especially intangible cultural heritage) within a human rights context and

as part of people's efforts to maintain their own identity and, through this, the cultural diversity of the world.

Respect and cultural safety of self and identity are important ideals in a democratic society (Rigney 2003). These ideals are extended to include heritage since it promotes the transmission of knowledge and values important to the collective identity of a culture. Heritage represents knowledge and, "if knowledge is fundamental to understanding, interpreting and establishing values within a society, then control over its production becomes as an integral component of cultural survival"(Hoare, et al. 1993:46). Through this dissertation, I wish to explore how human rights involving heritage, particularly Indigenous peoples' rights, are affected by current processes and policies in Canada using Manitoba and the Asiniskow Ithiniwak as a case study. The idea of heritage in the context of human rights has only begun to emerge in archaeological discussion in the last few decades. Many archaeologists still wonder what relevance human rights have to do with their professional work, despite their obvious concerns over issues such as site protection, conduct of excavation, treatment of human remains and return of burial goods to indigenous peoples, all of which are in fact founded on human rights (O'Keefe 1999). I will discuss how current approaches in cultural resources management (CRM) continue to marginalize Indigenous peoples and their knowledge with its foundation in colonialist social histories. Further, I wish to emphasize that without exploring postcolonial theories and approaches that include decolonizing methodologies, indigenous research paradigms and hybridization, the marginalization of Indigenous knowledges will continue as an unintended consequence.

Focusing on Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage

My decision to focus on Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage is not to portray it as a universal understanding of Indigenous heritage. I chose to represent Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage in this dissertation as a single case study for several reasons. I have been adopted into this community as family while working here over the last decade, where it has become established as one of my homes. In Asiniskow Ithiniwak culture, when a person is accepted into the territory and has no direct relatives, they become adopted into a *minisiwin* or *ototemihtowin* (family) through *wahkomitowin* (adoption) (Dumas, personal communication, 2013). Through my extended family and friends I have gained teachings and experiences through these relationships that have helped shaped my identity and who I am today. I am deeply indebted to these people who have adopted me into their family. Further, I have been invited into Asiniskow Ithiniwak territory by several community members to partake in opportunities to explore this topic and help produce corrective histories. Through these relationships I have established the contacts and the knowledge to develop a contextual understanding of this topic. From these personal, professional and academic relationships I have been privileged with an array of teachings and insights to develop a familiarity with Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage and their relationship with the land. Therefore, I decided to undertake this project not only to develop my own understanding but as an obligation to these relationships, both as family and as a community based researcher, where the knowledge is to be shared with the next generations.

I also chose to focus on Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage to demonstrate that there is no singular or universal definition of heritage to Indigenous peoples. I use the knowledge

of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak in this case study to emphasize that an understanding of heritage has to be contextualized locally through a community's language, culture, customary laws and local landscape. I want to emphasize the active role that local communities must have in the protection and maintenance of their heritage by approaching this topic in this manner. This is a view promoted by UNESCO that heritage protection does not only depend on top-down interventions by government or expert actions by heritage industry professionals but involves local communities (Logan 2008). According to UNESCO, it is imperative that the values and practices of local communities, together with traditional management systems, are fully understood, respected, encouraged and accommodated in management plans if their heritage resources are to be sustained in the future (Logan 2008; UNESCO 2004). "Local communities need to have a sense of 'ownership' of their heritage; this reaffirms their worth as a community, their ways of going about things, their 'culture'" (Logan 2008:439).

"Indigenous" and "Aboriginal"

The terms "Indigenous" and "Aboriginal" are used interchangeably throughout this dissertation depending on context. These terms meaning 'original' or 'native' are used by collectives of people across Canada. "Aboriginal", a term now commonly used in place of "Indian" and "Native", is used to refer to First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples across Canada as a collective, particularly in legal frameworks. Throughout this dissertation I use the plural "Indigenous knowledges" to acknowledge the diversity of Indigenous peoples and their knowledge systems. In recent decades,

"Indigenous" has gained currency as a socially and politically powerful term to unite peoples globally that have been marginalized or oppressed by

colonizing entities. The term has enabled the collective voices of colonized people to be expressed strategically in the international arena. It has also been an umbrella enabling communities and peoples to come together, transcending their own colonized contexts and experiences, in order to learn, share, plan, organize and struggle collectively for self-determination on the global and local stages.

(Smith 2012:7)

However, both terms also draw criticisms where they are seen as collectively grouping communities of diverse cultures together that would not necessarily consider each other related. These generic terms overshadow the fact that each culture has a name to which the people identify themselves. Consequentially, Indigenous communities are now using the names in which they identify themselves instead of terms applied to them by a different culture as an assertion of their identity (Fitznor 2012). This is understandable because identity is not a static entity. I believe we all carry what Smith (2012) refers to as multiple layers of belonging as “nested identities”.

Gerald Alfred, for example, conceptualizes Kahnawake identity as including localized Kahnawake, national Mohawk, broader Iroquois, and pan-Native. He says, “Thus people of Mohawk descent who live in Kahnawake have a multi-layered identity which incorporates each one of the ‘communities’ he or she has inherited, and which also includes the broader Native – or more common ‘Indian’ – identity flowing from their racial affiliation an identification as the Indigenous peoples of North America.

(Smith 2012:129)

Out of respect for the people that I have been given the opportunity to work with on this project, I use Asiniskow Ithiniwak to refer collectively to the people who speak the “th” dialect of Cree. I also acknowledge that the Asiniskow Ithiniwak are comprised of several communities along the Churchill River and its tributaries, each with their own names such as the Nisichawayasihk Nehethowuk, the people from where the three rivers meet and who speak the language of the four winds.

My focus on the Asiniskow Ithiniwak in this study is not meant to diminish the fact that they along with other Indigenous peoples have successfully implemented strategies designed to protect their heritage. Instead, I want to highlight that when these strategies are applied in conjunction with other approaches in cultural resources management, cultural divergences over an understanding of Indigenous heritage exist among industry, government and CRM professionals including archaeologists. These divergences lead heritage resources important to local communities to remain vulnerable to destruction by development. Sheehan and Lilley (2008) suggest that the source of cultural divergences is a difference in the collective epistemologies (ways of knowing) and ontologies (assumptions about the nature of social reality) of Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge systems. In this dissertation, I explore this concept in detail as a foundation to support a postcolonial understanding of Indigenous heritage using knowledge derived from the Asiniskow Ithiniwak as a case study.

Postcolonialism

The research process used in this dissertation is supported by theories and methodologies rooted in postcolonialism¹. Postcolonialism can be defined as a multitude of approaches and theories that challenge traditional colonialist epistemologies and explore the complex effects of colonization, colonialism, and decolonization on a society (Liebmann 2008a, b). Since colonization affects the colonized and colonizers, the term postcolonialism is commonly used to refer to, “all the cultures affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day” (Ashcroft, et al. 2008:2).

¹ To clarify, I use the term postcolonial in this dissertation to refer to a theoretical stance that investigates and challenges discourses of colonialism, instead of post-colonial referring to decolonized contexts or events occurring after colonial rule (Liebmann 2008).

Therefore postcolonialists, “strive to develop new understandings of colonial experiences, often emphasizing the agency of indigenous peoples and investigating the hybrid and novel forms of culture that develop out of the processes of colonialism” (Liebmann 2008:2).

There are three distinct areas where postcolonialism articulates with archaeology (Liebmann 2008:4), “1) interpretively, in the investigation of past episodes of colonization and colonialism through the archaeological record; 2) historically, in the study of archaeology’s role in the construction and deconstruction of colonial discourse; and 3) methodologically, as an aid to the decolonization of the discipline and a guide for ethical practice of contemporary archaeology.” Liebmann (2008:4) further identifies that these areas overlap with the following major theoretical contributions of postcolonialism: the role of essentialism in the construction of colonial discourses (Said 1978; 1994), the difficulties inherent in attempting to give voice to the previously silenced subaltern (i.e. marginalized) peoples (Spivak 1988) and the investigation of hybridity in the constitution of postcolonial cultural formation (Bhabha 1994).

Essentialism

Essentialism refers to discourse where complex structures of a social or cultural formation are reduced to a supposed representation of truth or essence. Essentialism has a role in identity construction that can be interpreted as problematic or advantageous depending on context. Historically, essentialist discourses were applied in colonial contexts to associate notions of inferiority with Indigenous peoples. Colonialist regimes relied on essentialism to perpetuate ideals of inferiority and primitivism with Indigenous identity. Such notions were then used to justify the assimilation of Indigenous identity

with the dominant culture. The legacy of these discourses is evident in the stereotypes of Indigenous identity that continue to pervade the dominant society.

Today, essentialism can be applied outside of colonial discourses strategically by Indigenous peoples to resolve power imbalances and promote the recognition of their identities and rights within the dominant society. An example is the use of an unchanging Native American identity to establish cultural affiliation during the repatriation of ancestral human remains through NAGPRA legislation (Liebmann 2008b). Spivak (1987) views this approach as being detrimental to Indigenous identity because it risks perpetuating notions of Native American culture as static and fixed in the past.

Similar views might be expressed with the term 'traditional', an adjective used to associate activities and knowledge with Indigenous cultures such as traditional customs or traditional resource use. "Traditional knowledge" is a commonly used term to describe knowledge that some people assume can only be obtained from Elders in an Indigenous community. Christie (1998:465-466) discusses the use of the term 'traditional' further,

This term is used, some suggest, to generate a false idealized notion of some attribute we can apply to various 'authentic' elements of Aboriginal society. So one hears talk of a 'traditional' pipe ceremony, a 'traditional' story, a 'traditional' elder, all the while imagining that something substantive is being said about the pipe ceremony, the story, and the elder. This, some argue, is to pick out certain features present in the ceremony, the story, and the elder, and elevate them to a misplaced prominence.

In these contexts, the use of traditional can be criticized for perpetuating an exotic, fixed and romanticized ideal of Indigenous identity and knowledge that promotes continued marginalization of Indigenous peoples.

Some argue that although the concept of traditional disguises itself as unchanging, it is dynamic and invented according to political and ideological exigencies (Hobsbawm

and Ranger 1992). Indigenous knowledges conceal their dynamism under the guise of a timeless body of knowledge(Gordon and Krech 2012). “They share a nostalgia for a culturally particular form of knowledge and an imagined past, which makes them an adept tool to resist ostensibly scientific and universal discourses...Indigenous knowledge involve their conceptual power by claims of timelessness, even while their ability to respond to contemporary articulations of power demands flexibility”(Gordon and Krech 2012:6).

Similar criticisms are also found with the use of “Indigenous” and “Western” in discourses of contrasts found in postcolonial literature (Agarwal 1995). Agarwal (1995) suggests that representations of Indigenous and Western knowledges as binary opposites are dangerous because they promote fixed knowledge systems with no crossovers of knowledge or shared similarities and no differences within them. For example, these comparisons can imply that Indigenous peoples cannot be found within Western cultures. There is growing acknowledgement that, “there are differences within, and similarities across, western and Indigenous knowledge systems that confound any attempt to cast the contrast as a simple dichotomy” (Whitt 2009:xvi). Instead, Agarwal (1995) recommends that discussions should focus on where modifications are required in political relationships between indigenous/marginalized populations and elite/state formations. By framing the discussion in terms of political contrasts, the use of dominant and subordinated appears to highlight the role of power within and the power differential among knowledge systems (Whitt 2009).

Despite these criticisms, the word “indigenous” to describe marginalized collective identities will ensue, particularly with the recognition of Indigenous peoples in

the political programs of the United Nations, the World Bank, nongovernmental organizations and certain nation-states (Gordon and Krech 2012:4). The term carries value in an effort to restore power imbalances among political relationships. These views reflect, “a strategic use of positivist essentialism in a scrupulously visible political interest” (Spivak 1996[1985]:214). Spivak (1987) introduces this concept as “strategic essentialism” which refers to , “the ways in which subordinate or marginalized groups may temporarily put aside local differences in order to forge a sense of collective identity through which they band together in political movements” (Dourish 2008:1). The guise of strategic essentialism as, “the ‘rhetoric’ of indigenous knowledge is important because it encourages a discussion that has been suppressed by many years by dominant European centered education systems” (Semali 1996:18).

The restoration of power imbalances involves discussion about “multiple domains and types of knowledge, with differing logics and epistemologies” (Agarwal 1995:6)². This is demonstrated in Smith’s (2012:77) explanation of essentialism, which is often examined from a Eurocentric intellectual tradition.

The concept of essentialism is also discussed in different ways within the indigenous world... the essence of a person is also discussed in relation to indigenous concepts of spirituality. In these views, the essence of a person has a genealogy, which can be traced back to an earth parent, usually glossed as an Earth Mother. A human person does not stand alone, but shares with other animate and, in the Western sense, ‘inanimate’ beings, a relationship based on a shared ‘essence’ of life. The significance of place, of land, of landscape, of other things in the universe, in defining the very essence of a people, makes for a very different rendering of the term essentialism as used by indigenous peoples.

² I interpret Agarwal’s (1995) recommendation as shifting the focus of Indigenous knowledge as universal towards local or community knowledge.

Epistemological racism

Racially-biased epistemologies represent an inherent difficulty for those engaged in emancipatory research. They emerge unconsciously as research tendencies based in positivistic paradigms such as essentialist discourses of binary opposites. The emergence of racially-based epistemologies is best explored by examining the levels of racism that are linked to research: overt and covert individual racism, institutional racism, societal racism, and civilizational racism (Scheurich and Young 1997).

Individual racism

- Individual racism refers to individual acts of prejudice that can manifest as two types, overt and covert.
- Overt individual racism is when a public, conscious and intended act is made by one person to do damage to another such a racial slur directed to someone intentionally in public.
- Covert individual racism involves acts that are not explicitly made such as not hiring someone based on his or her skin colour.

Institutional racism

- Institutional racism is when an institution or organization, including academic settings, have standard procedures (intended or unintended) that hurt members of one or more races in relation to members of the dominant race.
- One example of this type of racism is when educational researchers commonly used the term “culturally disadvantaged” or “cultural deprivation” to indicate why students of color did not succeed (McCarthy 1993).

Societal racism

- Similar to institutional racism, societal racism occurs on a broad, society-wide scale where prevailing societal or cultural assumptions, norms, concepts, habits, expectations favor one race over one or more others (Feagin and Vera 1995; Hacker 1992).
- Societal racism is evident when government programs and policies privilege the values of a dominant culture over others. This leads to social practices with negative consequences for cultures whose views deviate from the “norm”.
- A most extreme example of this type of racism involves the assimilation strategies endorsed by the Canadian government of Aboriginal peoples during the 20th century.

Civilizational racism

- Civilizational racism involves the broad civilizational assumptions that are embedded in how members think and what they name the world or real through categories and concepts. The civilizational level involves, “the deepest, most primary level of a culture or people...[that] encompasses the deepest, most primary assumptions about the nature of reality (ontology), the ways of knowing that reality (epistemology), and the disputational contours of right and wrong or morality and values (axiology) – in short, presumptions about the real, the true, and the good” (Scheurich and Young 1997:6).
- Each civilization constructs the world differently for its inhabitants based on these assumptions. “Just as the material realities of the powerful and the dominated produce separate [social, historical experiences]... each [racial or social group] may also have distinctive epistemologies or theories of knowledge”(Collins 1991:204).
- In large civilizations where there is one dominant culture and one or more subordinate ones, one consequence is that, “[d]ominant racial group members and subordinal racial group members do not think and interpret realities in the same way because of their divergent structural positions, histories, and cultures” (Stanfield 1985:400). In this large, complex civilization, when one group significantly dominates for hundreds of years, their ways of knowing (epistemologies, ontologies and axiologies), not only become the dominant way of the entire civilization but deeply rooted such that they become “natural” or seen as appropriate rather than being historically evolved social constructions (Stanfield 1985, Scheurich and Young 1997).

Epistemological racism emerges from the civilizational level where the range of research epistemologies used today, “arise out of the social history and culture of the dominant race, that these epistemologies logically reflect and reinforce that social history and that racial group (while excluding the epistemologies of other races/cultures) and that this has negative results for people of color in general and scholars of color in particular” (Scheurich and Young 1997:8). Consequentially, epistemologies that emerge from other social histories such as Inuit or Cree social history are not considered legitimate ways of knowing in mainstream culture.

What I have learned through this dissertation is that epistemological racism can be an inherent challenge in postcolonial studies focused on shifting power imbalances

involving marginalized indigenous populations. As a non-Aboriginal person whose worldviews have been shaped primarily from a dominant culture's epistemology, it has been challenging not to engage in epistemological racism in this research. Although I am familiar with the epistemologies of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak, I have found myself unintentionally using interpretive strategies based on the dominant culture's epistemology during my writings such as engaging in essentialist discourse (from a western intellectual sense).

I have also found the research process challenging where I have had to renegotiate my own understandings and how they are deeply rooted in the epistemologies of the dominant culture. Throughout my academic career, I have been trained to prove and disprove theories through the western intellectual tradition which involves rejecting the views, opinions and understandings of others through academic discourse to prove my own interpretations. Yet, such approaches contradict a teaching of respect based on Asiniskow Ithiniwak epistemology. When reviewing my writings with some of the people from the community, I was told not to reject prior understandings of Asiniskow Ithiniwak history and worldview as presented by other people but to leave them as is because that is how they see the world. By rejecting a person's worldview, you are being disrespectful to that person.

From a non-Indigenous academic standpoint, especially if someone has limited or no familiarity with Indigenous epistemologies, epistemological racism is problematic. Methodologies and theories based on a dominant culture's epistemology might be unintentionally applied to interpret knowledge, meanings and values important to the subordinate group. These approaches do more harm than good for marginalized

populations by leading to further suppression and alienation of their knowledge and methodologies.

An example follows the common tendency for researchers to implement *ex-situ* conservation strategies (i.e., isolation, documentation and storage in central repositories) for conserving Indigenous knowledges to maintain a voice for future generations (Agarwal 1995). There is often an urgency to document the traditional knowledge and oral histories of Elders, especially with the increasing diminishment of Indigenous languages. For the sake of posterity, these recordings are often maintained in a central repository with no immediate educational strategies to implement their use within the community. Such approaches are critically viewed as being ill-suited to preserving Indigenous knowledge where, "...if indigenous knowledge is inherently scattered and local in character, and gains its vitality from being deeply implicated in people's lives, then the attempt to essentialize, isolate, archive and transfer such knowledge can only be seen as contradictory" Agarwal (1995:5)³. Instead, Agarwal (1995) endorses the use of *in-situ* preservation strategies to preserve Indigenous knowledge. This approach involves empowering communities to use their own preservation mechanisms that continue to sustain knowledge and culture through the generations. "The appropriate response for those who are interested in preserving the diversity of different knowledge systems, might then lie in attempting to reorient and reverse state policies to permit members of threatened populations to determine their own future, thus facilitating in situ preservation of indigenous knowledge" (Agarwal 1995:5)⁴.

³ Similar arguments can be made towards archaeology where archaeological resources are kept in central repositories that limit engagement or access by communities.

⁴ I want the reader to understand that this is an approach that I am trying to achieve through this dissertation.

Yet, Indigenous scholars are not exempt from engaging in epistemological racism as well. Since a dominant culture's epistemology becomes deeply rooted within a large civilization, scholars from subordinate cultures have had to become bicultural to succeed in research communities (Sheurich and Young 1997).

The negative consequence for scholars of color, however, is that they must learn and become accomplished in epistemologies that arises out of a social history that has been profoundly hostile to their race and that ignores or excludes alternative race-based epistemologies because mainstream research communities have assumed that their epistemologies are not derived from any particular groups social history, i.e., are free of any specific history or culture.

(Sheurich and Young 1997:9)

It is likely that Indigenous scholars have had to grapple with the challenges I shared earlier on a greater level and is reflected in the “jagged worldviews” held by Aboriginal peoples today (Little Bear 2000). “It is said that people now live in a world which is fragmented with multiple and shifting identities, and that the oppressed and the colonized are so deeply implicated in their own oppressions that they are no more nor less authentic than anyone else” (Smith 2012:100).

Decolonization

Decolonization is a term that carries many meanings (Yellowhorn 2006b). In a political sense, the term refers to former colonies regaining political independence as colonizing nations withdraw from their countries (Yellowhorn 2006b). Decolonization can also refer to the means in which an oppressed population seeks self-governance from the state. In an academic setting as it relates to Indigenous knowledges, scholars seek to decolonize the research process by identifying and using, methodologies and approaches to research that privilege Indigenous knowledges, voices and experiences (Smith 2012). Chilisa (2012) describes decolonization as a process where the concerns and worldviews

of the colonized Other is brought into the center for purposes of understanding identity using their own epistemologies and ontologies. This is a process and an event that involves (Chilisa 2012:14):

1. Creating and consciously using various strategies to liberate the 'captive mind' from oppressive conditions that continue to silence and marginalize the voices of subordinated, colonized, non-Western societies that encountered European colonization.
2. Involving the restoration and development of cultural practices, thinking patterns, beliefs, and values that were suppressed but are still relevant and necessary to the survival and birth of new ideas, thinking, techniques, and lifestyles that contribute to the advancement and empowerment of the historically oppressed and former colonized non-Western societies (L Smith 1999; Smith 2008, 2012).

Smith (1999, as cited in Chilisa 2012) identifies several strategies for decolonization, which are as follows:

Deconstruction and reconstruction

- This process involves correcting distorted narratives and stereotypes of colonized societies and historically oppressed peoples.

Self-determination and social justice

- Self-determination involves seeking legitimacy for methodologies embedded in histories, experiences, epistemologies and value systems for those marginalized by non-Indigenous research paradigms. Social justice refers to privileging the voice of those researched by oppressive research.

Ethics

- Exploring ethics involves creating guidelines and legislation that protect Indigenous knowledge systems, as well as promoting ethical issues affecting Indigenous ways of knowing.

Language

- This approach involves conducting research using Indigenous languages as a means to validate Indigenous knowledge.

Internationalization of Indigenous experience

- Internationalization involves disseminating Indigenous experiences into mainstream academic spheres to support a collective Indigenous identity in scholarly research.

History

- This is the process of recovering history, culture and language to reconstruct what was lost in the past, inform the present and support future generations.

Critique

- There is a need to critique the imperial model of research.

There are varying perspectives as to whether decolonization can be successful.

Decolonization is impossible if the idea is that this process will result in a “pure” and “authentic” representation of a subordinate’s culture prior to colonization. From this standpoint, decolonization remains challenging as long as the consciousness of the general society remains entrenched in a dominant culture’s epistemologies. This is evident in ongoing political and social struggles, if not between cultures but within the collective subordinate identity. Evidently, epistemological racism can emerge unintentionally through several forms of racism towards Indigenous identity or persons of ‘color’. “The unfortunate truth is that we can be strongly anti-racist in our own minds but be promulgating racism in profound ways we do not understand” (Pine and Hillard 1990:595).

Alternatively, from an Indigenist perspective, decolonization is possible since it seeks to identify and liberate an “authentic” representation that already exists within an Indigenous identity. “The belief in an authentic self is framed within humanism... it does appeal to an idealized past when there was no colonizer, to our strengths in surviving thus far, to our language as an uninterrupted link to our histories, to the ownership of our lands, to our abilities to create and control our own life and death, to a sense of balance

among ourselves and with the environment, to our authentic selves as people” (Smith 2012:77). This understanding suggests that Indigenous epistemologies and methodologies have always been present and incorporated in some form (i.e. language) to sustain the cultural identity of subordinate populations over generations. In this sense, decolonization is achievable and necessary if it is being used as a liberating approach to articulate these subordinated epistemologies and practice methodologies within the domain of the dominant culture.

Dominant cultures are nuanced with inconspicuous strategies used by subordinated cultures to share their epistemologies and methodologies as a form of resistance. These strategies enable marginalized peoples to exercise their individual and collective agencies as a cultural identity that is unique from the dominant culture. For instance, the Asiniskow Ithiniwak used lullabies to pass on ceremonial songs during the time when ceremonies were outlawed by the federal government. In addition, nuances of ceremonial burial practices were strategically incorporated into Christian practices as a means to engage in customary laws associated with the dead. Sandoval (2000) refers to this practice as mixing, a methodology of survival for the oppressed. Mixing is the necessary reality of surviving as a minority or Other by using every and any aspect of dominant power. I also argue that mixing also facilitates the adoption of dominant epistemologies alongside subordinate ones in the formation of identity. Decolonizing strategies seek to identify these subtle strategies and liberate the epistemologies that underlie them which remained hidden through the process of mixing.

Hybridity and ‘third space’ theory

The concepts of racial epistemology, mixing and an Indigenous authentic self is consistent with most proponents of postcolonial scholarship who do not, “endorse a notion of cultural identity as cut from whole cloth...Modern identities are neither simple continuations of past identities nor created out of thin air; rather, identities draw on history for their legitimacy, restaging the past in the creation of the present” (Liebmann 2008b:82). In this sense, the construction of cultural identities is constant and dynamic with an ongoing relationship with the past where traditional practices are not forgotten but reinscribed and given new meanings (Bhabha 1994; Hall 1990; Liebmann 2008b).

Hybridity is a postcolonial concept premised on this complex and dynamic ideal of cultural identity. The term refers to, “the complex transcultural forms produced through colonization that cannot be neatly classified into a single cultural or ethnic category...[Hybridity] posits that the interaction of social groups produces new cultural forms that are neither wholly immigrant or wholly indigenous but are instead interdependent and mutually constituting” (Liebmann 2008:83). Further, hybridity does not deny the traditions from which it springs from but acknowledges them in new ways (Ashcroft, et al. 1995).

An example of hybridity follows the importance of quilting “star quilts” among contemporary Lakota of the northern US Plains. Euro-American missionaries and educators forced quilting upon Lakota women in the late 19th century. The practices were subsequently adapted to introduce adaptations of a single central star pattern into “star quilts” which today are given to mark significant occasions (Albers and Medicine 1983). “The star quilt, then, has become a new sign of identity for Lakota people, created out of

the ‘in-between spaces’ created by colonialism – in this case, out of boarding schools and missions that mediated the Indian and Euro-American worlds” (Liebmann 2008b:85).

As a theoretical lens, hybridity offers what Bhabha (1994:1-2) refers to as the “in between space”, a

terrain for elaborating strategies of selfhood – singular or communal – that initiate new signs of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society itself.. It is the emergence of interstices – the overlap and displacement of domains of difference – that the intersubjectivity and collective experiences of nationness, community interest, or cultural value are negotiated.

Hybridity and the “in-between space” also referred to as the “third space”, provide insight into the issues surrounding power imbalances and inequalities associated with colonial societies where anticolonial resistance emerges as hybrid forms to empower marginalized peoples (Liebmann 2008b).

Hybridity theory and concepts of the “third space” or “in-between space” are not without its critics. There are objections towards the ambiguity of the term suggesting that its continued use will lead to the dissolution of cultural differences in a pool of cultural homogeneity (Kapchan and Strong 1999). The dissolution of boundaries will lead to universal constructions of identity with the sense that “we are all hybrid citizens of one transnational world” (Liebmann 2008:86). Critics also question the relevance of hybridity as well as other postcolonial theories beyond the academic intellectual realm. These academic debates can divorce theory from the political realities facing marginalized peoples and perpetuate academic imperialism (Liebmann 2008b). “[P]ostcolonial scholars neglect to account for the concrete economic and social conditions faced by people living outside the Ivory Tower who deal with the realities of colonial legacies on a daily basis” (Liebmann 2008a:13).

Hybridity theory in its original conception focuses on migrant experiences and their impact on the “metropolis” – the locus of colonial power (Carey 2008; Sharrad 2007). “This classic post-colonial paradigm maintains the centered position of power relationships as they are informed by colonialist ideologies, whilst asking what marginalized voices, speaking from the periphery, have to say that will impact the legitimacy of that power” (Carey 2008:7). This emphasis on migrant experiences leads Indigenous scholars to reject hybridity theory because, “[B]habha’s notion of hybridity falsely conflates the Indigenous experience of dispossession with the experience of migrancy, and in so doing, positions the marginalized Indigenous voice alongside the marginalized migrant voice, further marginalizing it as one voice within a “menagerie” of Others (Moreton-Robinson 2003:30-33, in Carey 2008:8). A suggestion as to why Indigenous peoples may reject hybridity using this position is for the purpose of claiming an essential originality from which to claim rights and restitutions (Sharrad 2007).

Despite these criticisms, others suggest that hybridity and concepts of “third space” are useful for empowering Indigenous voices. Hybridity can take on different forms and be interpreted in multiple ways to achieve different ends. Therefore, Sharrad (2007) suggests that perhaps like Spivak’s (1987) strategic essentialism, an approach in strategic hybridity is required in response to the needs of different users according to their socio-political contexts. The use of strategic hybridity is demonstrated in Haig-Brown’s (2008) contextualization of the “third space” as it relates to treaty relationships between Indigenous peoples and settler societies. Haig-Brown (2008) uses the teaching/theory embedded in Guswentha, the two-row wampum in relation to “third-space” theory. This belt consists of two bands of purple beads made of quahog shells separated and bordered

by bands of white beads and represents a treaty made between the Haudenosaunee and the Dutch in the 17th century. The two nations involved in this treaty are represented as two vessels travelling along parallel trajectories that never meet on a flowing river. While continuing to exist in peace and friendship, they maintain their separateness and integrity (Haig-Brown 2008:260).

In a move to consider third space, one that engages competing knowledges, I posit the possibility that as the canoe and the boat move on the river, there is a chance for people in them to see what happens across the differences, across the space between the vessels. In each exists a potential for unpredictable, sporadic and complex encounters of knowledges, of contestation and of constant tension, a space for learning and unchanging. If we, for the moment and for the sake of argument, reduce knowledges to Western European and Indigenous traditions (both in all their diversities... Across the space between them, everything and nothing is possible. Any sighting across that space has the potential to inform and/or affect the knowledge in each vessel, to shift understandings, but not the direction or the separation of the canoes' paths, which travel always with space between. Sometimes in these contests, notion changes: the people involved simply maintain their established ways, feeling or seeming unaffected, unaltered. But over time, through history when people inescapably encounter one another in those third spaces, and even when they try to avoid them, these interventions shift the living knowledge held in each canoe and hybridization results.

In other words, these interventions are reciprocal; they subvert in both directions. Discourses change and become even as they maintain a separateness. And this is not to say that they or the knowledges become one. If this should happen, the purpose of the two rows is annihilated, parallelism is lost, the treaty is broken. Like third space, a treaty is a living entity, bringing colonial and Indigenous powers into endless and inescapable relation to one another.

I am drawn to applying concepts from postcolonial studies to this research because they have the purpose of finding an:

In-between space where Euro-Western research methodologies steeped in the culture, histories, philosophies, and the social condition of the Westerners can collaborate with the non-Western colonized's lived experiences and indigenous knowledge to produce research indigenous to their communities and cultural, integrative frameworks with balanced

lending and borrowing from the West.

(Chilisa 2012:12)

I believe that knowledge founded in this in-between space will result in the following (Logan 2008:449), “Rather than cultural heritage being used to reinforce divisions in society and between societies, more inclusive understandings of cultural heritage are required that seek to include elements meeting common acceptance or that are important to each of the components within the overall society”.

Such understandings are crucial for the development of policy and programs outside of the academic sphere. An articulation of epistemologies is necessary as a foundation to understand Indigenous ways of knowing and relationships to the land that are poorly understood in the dominant culture. Such understandings are essential for everyone to exist on an equal footing in this mutually existing relationship drawn up by treaties. As Kovach (2009:13) notes, “Policy and programming grow out of research, and while the influence of research and its methodologies is not always visible in the policy cycle, research is where it starts. Research creates policy and policy generates programs... Indigenous research frameworks have the potential to improve relevance in policy and practice in Indigenous contexts.” My hope is that by exploring heritage as an Aboriginal or treaty right will help influence decision makers at the state-level to reconsider policies and procedures that adversely affect these rights. Further, I want to demonstrate that local community involvement is necessary in matters affecting the protection and maintenance of their heritage and knowledge.

An example of where First Nations interests have affected the development of policy follows an attempt by former Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chrétien to rename Mount Logan after the late Pierre Elliot Trudeau (“Decision to rename Mount Logan”,

2000). The Kluane First Nation objected to the process used by the federal government to make this decision where they were not properly consulted in the naming of places within their traditional territory. This objection along with complaints from other protesters influenced the federal government to reverse its decision.

I recognize that this is an ambitious topic and I aim to discuss it in as much detail as I can through this dissertation. I wish to use this piece to initiate the conversation on how to improve representations of Aboriginal heritage so they are properly represented and understood at the negotiation table. My intention is to promote a familiarity with this topic among different audiences, whether it involves archaeologists, policymakers, educators or so forth. I also want to provoke reflection for those individuals left with jagged worldviews. I believe that nurturing an understanding of this topic is essential for encouraging reflection and encouraging the reader to build a relationship with this knowledge. My hope is that by engaging these audiences in this discussion will influence change in which Aboriginal heritage is protected, maintained and interpreted in a cultural resources management setting. My approach to this topic follows the ideal that decolonization of archaeology depends on the initiative of change. “There is no alternative to action, even if this is what people should desire, since a decision not to act is a decision to preserve the status quo, the inherited legacies of colonialism” (Smith and Jackson 2006:312).

Sillman (2006:16) reads the decolonization of archaeology as, “in part, to examine the practices and discourses of the field for the way that they still resonate with colonialism and, as a result, continue to do work in the world today...I argue here that these two realms – practices and discourses – need different decolonizing tactics that

must work in tandem; discourses need to be sharpened, and practices need to be blurred.”

Further, I wish to demonstrate through this project that,

Collaboration can promote hybrid practices because it does not require that people give up their identities. It only requires that collaborators respect their similarities and differences, understand their histories, share authority, expect dissonance, hope for harmony, and make space for multivocality. These are hybrid practices, sometimes reconciliatory, sometimes challenging.

(Sillman 2006:20).

Generating a postcolonial understanding of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage

In this dissertation, I attempt to generate a postcolonial understanding of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage, especially as relates to archaeological resources. I engage in this discussion to demonstrate that understandings of heritage need to be derived at the local level. By doing so will not only promote a sense of ownership over heritage as a basic human right but also improve strategies in heritage resources protection. I use the term “postcolonial” not in the sense that colonialism has ended but with the idea of moving beyond colonialism. Currently, interpretations of Indigenous heritage emerge from a colonialist gaze, particularly in archaeology. In cultural resources management, Aboriginal heritage is primarily understood through research paradigms and methodologies based in Eurocentric knowledge systems that marginalize Aboriginal knowledge. Further, “research that influences policy and shapes practices that impact Indigenous communities emerges from Western, not Indigenous, knowledge or forms of inquiry” (Kovach 2009:13). Therefore, my approach in this dissertation is not to incorporate Indigenous perspectives into archaeology but rather research and interpret archaeology and heritage from an Indigenous paradigm. Wilson (2001) defines paradigm as set of beliefs that guide actions. In doing so, I engage in decolonization, where

research is being conducted in a way that empowers the marginalized and oppressed from colonization by communicating from their frames of reference (Chilisa 2012).

In chapter 2, I begin this dissertation with a historiography of the relationship that exists between archaeologists and Aboriginal peoples, particularly in Canada and Manitoba to demonstrate archaeology's role in negotiating Aboriginal identity. This section serves as the literature review of the dissertation critiquing the practice of archaeology and its role in the protection of Aboriginal heritage through cultural resources management. The discussion highlights the struggles for self-determination faced by Indigenous peoples in managing and interpreting their heritage in Canada, particularly in association with current legislation and policies. The idea behind this chapter is to encourage reflection among my colleagues where they have inherited a legacy of work that harms Aboriginal identity. I especially want to highlight that the marginalization of Indigenous identity through archaeology will continue to occur should my colleagues continue with the status quo in cultural resources management.

In chapter 3, I engage in a discussion that deconstructs understandings of heritage, as it is understood through archaeology and Indigenous knowledge systems. My intention is not to engage in an essentialist discourse of heritage but to demonstrate that archaeology is built on the epistemologies of dominant cultures that continue to marginalize Indigenous knowledges. The purpose of this section is to provide the reader with a foundation in Indigenous knowledge systems that will help to guide them in following discussions on Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage. I argue that deconstruction and reconstruction is necessary to understand how meanings and values are ascribed to heritage through disparate epistemologies and ontologies. Here, I attempt to dispel

stereotypes concerning the construction of Indigenous knowledge and that different understandings of heritage are attributed to ontology, assumptions about the nature of social reality. I focus on an in-depth conversation on ontology because ontological differences are the sources of cultural divergences. Therefore, differences between Western and non-Indigenous approaches to knowledge can only be dealt with coherently at an ontological level (McCumber 2005; Sheehan 2004). In recognizing these ontological differences, then it is possible to understand why research paradigms based on Western knowledge systems encounter difficulties in interpreting Indigenous knowledge.

Similarly, difficulties are encountered when enforcing laws based in Western legal systems to protect Aboriginal heritage because of existing Indigenous legal traditions. “Indigenous peoples have always had their own laws and procedures for protecting their heritage and for determining when and with whom their heritage can be shared” (Battiste and Henderson 2000:71). I highlight these legal traditions or corollaries that organize and safeguard Indigenous knowledge and heritage, which are incommensurable with Western laws. For Indigenous peoples, legal traditions are supported by symbolic cues or cultural expressions found through activities and the relationship with the land and cosmos. I conclude this chapter by explaining how knowledge is gathered from these cues through methods unique to Indigenous knowledge systems such as oral histories, ‘encultured’ landscapes, and dream work.

To generate postcolonial understandings of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage, I rely primarily on an Indigenous research paradigm to guide the research process. Postcolonial indigenous research paradigms involve approaches to decolonize and indigenize

dominant research methodologies (Chilisa 2012). In chapter 4, I outline the research frameworks that I used to guide practice and engage in a bi-cultural approach towards research that includes Indigenous research paradigms and other research paradigms. I also outline the tools that I incorporate in this dissertation to conduct this project such as oral history and language.

In chapter 5, I explore in detail the postcolonial understandings of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage found through this project. This process engages in the recovery of history from the dominant one used in archaeological narratives. This discussion includes ways in which archaeology is understood through Asiniskow Ithiniwak epistemology and other manifestations of heritage overlooked in cultural resources management. I will also explore the methods of interpretation used to gather knowledge and legal traditions that are grounded in relationships with place and community. The Cree language is integral to this study and I demonstrate its use as a tool that reinforces the continuum in Aboriginal identity through time. My approach is based on the notion that the Cree language reflects organic hybridity as a necessary component of Cree identity that allows for formation of identity to change through time while maintaining a sense of continuity (Bahktin 1981; Liebmann 2008b). I hope to contribute to the conversation of social justice for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak in this discussion. This research was initiated based on perceived deficits in the community but instead these understandings will reinforce the practices and laws that have sustained Asiniskow Ithiniwak identity for generations.

The conversation concludes in chapter 6 with a discussion of the dissertation's implications on the understanding of Aboriginal heritage in heritage resources protection. I also examine the legal traditions specific to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak in protecting their

heritage and their relevance to policy development. I discuss the practical significance of the knowledge gained through this project and its implications on policy and process development and heritage legislation mandates.

On a final note, my intention throughout this dissertation is not to discredit archaeology as a means of supporting Indigenous heritage. I believe that archaeology contributes to discussions on Indigenous heritage by providing contemporary society with insights into the daily lives of previous generations. Not only is it a useful tool in locating cultural expressions made by previous generations but archaeology also has the ability to inspire and draw excitement. There is no comparison to the feeling of awe and inspiration in humanity that you have when you are holding a spear point someone made over 8000 years ago. Not only is it surprising to think about how it has remained intact for over thousands of years but also the connection you have made, not only with the tool but the person who made it. Some questions that cross my mind at that moment include: Were they standing in this very spot? How long did it take them to make this? Did they make it? Did they get to use this and were they successful in their hunt? Did someone else find it and drop it? One can only imagine how what happens in a span of 8000 years.

Other memories that stand out while working archaeology in northern Manitoba for the last several years involve the children from the communities. I remember one girl who had found a piece of pottery on where her grandfather's camp now stands. It was wonderful and inspiring to not only see the excitement on her face that she had found something but the realization that one of her ancestors, maybe her great-great-great-great-grandmother, may have made this pot and camped at this very site. This recollection stands out because it shows how powerful archaeology can be in

reconnecting people with the land and their ancestors. Sometimes we forget that children have inherited this random puzzle of jagged worldviews left by colonization. I believe that archaeology has a role in piecing together this jigsaw puzzle for those left with jagged worldviews by bringing history alive in a physical form and validating people with their history (Dumas 2004).

Chapter 2 Negotiating Aboriginal Identity

Introduction

It was not until the start of my graduate student experience as a Masters student that my awareness shifted over the nature of the work that I do. At this time, I came to recognize that there are consequences associated with the work of my chosen career path that have a negative impact on others. It was in my class “Human Skeletal Biology” where I had to lead off a seminar on the “ethics of studying human remains”. The topic included a guest lecture from the “Aboriginal Liaison Officer” with the Manitoba Government. This was where I learned of repatriation and the conflicts that exist between Indigenous peoples, archaeologists and physical anthropologists. Until that moment, I remained naïve while studying the ancestral remains of Aboriginal peoples during my undergraduate degree. Until then, I had no idea that the work I conducted on human remains could be deemed offensive. Instead, I thought I was merely being helpful by contributing knowledge of the health and well-being of past populations. This kind of naiveté will continue to flourish in the academy as archaeologists and physical anthropologists remain insular without the perceived need to work with Indigenous communities. Further, such ideals will continue to persist if we fail to teach future generations involved in heritage management, archaeology and physical anthropology of these disciplines’ contentious history with Indigenous peoples. I am often surprised by the number of archaeologists and physical anthropologists that I encounter who remain unaware that the actions they carry out in their research or daily work are found offensive by Indigenous peoples. For example, I cringe when I hear a physical anthropologist speak of ancestral Indigenous remains as “materials” or “specimens”.

This chapter serves to set up the context of this dissertation, beginning with a discussion on the definition of heritage and symbols of cultural expression or heritage resources. Exploring the definitions of heritage and heritage resources will demonstrate why societies value heritage, history and material culture. Next, I will focus on a historiography of the relationship that exists between archaeologists and Indigenous peoples, particularly in Canada and Manitoba, to highlight archaeology's role in negotiating Aboriginal identity. The discussion will also follow the issues surrounding the identification, protection and management of Indigenous heritage through heritage legislation, cultural resources management and archaeological practice. The purpose of this chapter is to illustrate that status quo approaches in heritage management are inadequate and detrimental to the relationships between the dominant societies and subordinated Indigenous peoples. With this chapter, I hope to provoke a shift in awareness amongst my colleagues by leaving them with the understanding that they have inherited a legacy of work that harms Aboriginal identity.

Defining heritage and its symbols of cultural expression/heritage resources

Heritage is a set of inherited traditions that share culture, the collective knowledge and values held by a collective group of people or a society. Heritage also represents an inheritance of knowledge systems filled with spiritual, social, political and economic values that are shared through generations of peoples. These values become an essential part of our identity by not only inspiring but also nurturing our worldviews which involve: our assumptions about the nature of reality (ontologies), the ways of knowing that reality (epistemologies), and our moral views and values over what right or wrong (axiology) (Rigney 2003; Shahjahan 2005; Sheurich and Young 1997; Wilson 2001).

Heritage shapes identity, collectively and individually, by building self-esteem and promoting a sense of belonging in the world (Ng 1999). Heritage also supports a cohesive foundation between past, present and future for a defined group of people.

[Heritage is] being in place, renewing memories and associations, sharing experiences... to cement present and future social and familial relationships. Heritage [isn't] only about the past – though it [is] that too-it also [isn't] just about material things-though it [is] that as well – heritage [is] a process of engagement, an act of communication and an act of making meaning in and for the present.

(Smith 2006:1)

Heritage inspires and shapes worldviews through a changing array of cultural expressions that “evoke senses of the collective, including sentiments and memories attached to it” (Holland, et al. 2008:118). These cultural expressions include objects, symbols and customs that have meanings and values (Lowenthal 1985, 1988). Connections are made with these expressions through tactile, intuitional, visual and auditory experiences that nurture identity with spiritual, social, political and cultural values. Since these symbols of cultural expression embody knowledge that can be shared with subsequent generations, they are considered a resource or a “heritage resource”. Culture is expressed in multiple ways, which is reflected in the cultural diversity we see the world today. Therefore, heritage resources as symbols of cultural expression take on an array of forms ranging from the tangible such as monuments, objects, and places to the intangible which include stories, names, language and song. These heritage resources share cultural values and knowledge which help people to understand, express and maintain identity, both personally and collectively.

Respect and cultural safety of one's self and identity are important ideals in a democratic society (Rigney 2003). These human rights are extended to heritage and

heritage resources as essential elements for transmitting knowledge and cultural values. In response, each society develops a set of guidelines or laws to safeguard and maintain the survival of different values and knowledge embedded in heritage resources. The laws supporting cultural heritage protection are encountered in various forms and include heritage legislation enforced by government agencies, customary laws specific to local communities and global cultural heritage conventions and declarations endorsed by world development agencies such as UNESCO.

In Canada, most heritage legislation emphasizes the protection of tangible heritage resources. These instances lead cultural heritage protection to be seen as a technical matter where the best technique is sought by cultural resources management professionals to preserve or restore an artifact, site or monument (Logan 2008).

However, the focus is shifting globally towards the recognition of intangible forms of heritage to include the “living heritage embodied in people” as reflected in the UN declaration of Indigenous Rights. This shift has led to dissonance over the value and meaning of heritage among local Indigenous communities, government agencies and heritage industry professionals including archaeologists. This scenario is commonly found in matters involving the heritage of postcolonial societies (Smith and Waterton 2009). Dissonance refers to the differences between Indigenous or local meanings attached to a place and those held by state heritage agencies whose interests are to emphasize a unified and harmonious national identity (Allen and Phillips 2010).

Dissonance is also associated with concerns over “difficult” heritage places that reflect a darker side of humanity such as massacre sites and places of persecution (Macdonald 2009).

Ziff and Hope (2009) suggest that dissonance over heritage relates to the disparate understandings of basal concepts of property or ownership. Associating heritage resources with physical constructs facilitate their appropriation with modern concepts of property. Heritage then becomes equated with an object that can be acquired and a resource found on a parcel of land with a designated owner, an association that leads to disagreements over the term “heritage resource”. “The conflation of archaeology with heritage, either intentionally or unwittingly, tends to treat archaeological objects as “resources” (as in cultural resources management) and in this resource-based model there is an implicit assumption that objects already have value of some kind” (Watson 2009:31). Carman (2005) suggests that once heritage is considered a resource then it becomes designated as property, therefore archaeology with its focus on cultural property becomes handmaiden of law and economics.

Despite these criticisms, I continue to use the term “heritage resources” throughout this dissertation. To me, a heritage resource is a “resource of knowledge”, a mechanism that transfers values and knowledge among people. With this understanding, I want to extend this discussion beyond the scope of associating heritage with property and ownership. Instead, I suggest that dissonance results from a struggle of control over knowledge systems that are tied deeply to cultural identity (Bailey 1998; McGuire 2003). Barnes (1990) indicates there are three overlapping characteristics found with such conflicts over knowledge which form the basis of debate:

- Knowledge as a kind of property that can be possessed by individuals or groups and can be concealed, bought, sold, stolen, shared and given.
- Knowledge as power to help alter, control, and/or manage the world, either practically or emotionally in either material or the spiritual realms. People either gain or lose depending on their control of knowledge.

- Knowledge as enlightenment, either intellectual or spiritual, enhancing our understanding of the world. The more who possess this knowledge the better.

These characteristics demonstrate that, “knowledge is not discovered but a product of discourse and power relations, a discursive struggle over which (and whose) perspective or understanding emerges as one that ‘counts’, the one that has the power to organize relations” (Strega 2005:218).

Heritage assumes these characteristics because it represents an inheritance of knowledge systems laden with spiritual, social, economic and political values expressed culturally through heritage resources. When these sources of knowledge are exchanged between different cultures, either temporally or spatially, their meanings and values change with differing social histories, disparate epistemologies and approaches to understanding or interpreting knowledge (Lawrence 2003; Scheurich and Young 1997; Seip 1999). During this exchange, the knowledge sourced through heritage resources becomes vulnerable to appropriation, commodification or exploitation for educational, economic, social and/or political gains. For instance, in certain cultures, an archaeological artifact can be valued, “for their relation to people and as something that creates and reinforces social relationships rather than as ‘objects ‘ of material value” (McLay, et al. 2008:198). I interpret this exchange of values and meanings associated with heritage resources and ancestral human remains as a reflection of the “third space” indicated by Bhabha’s (1994:37) where:

It is that Third Space, though unrepresentable in itself, which constitutes the discursive conditions of enunciation that ensure that the meanings and symbols of culture have no primordial unity or fixity; that even the same signs can be appropriated, translated, rehistoricized and read anew.

An example where meanings and values become transformed in a cultural resources management context involves the protection and management of Indigenous burial grounds and human remains. This is a topic that can become contentious for Indigenous peoples, governments, academics, cultural heritage management, and industry. Not only concepts of time and place are debated in relation to this topic but also definitions of heritage, ancestral rights, ownership and spatial boundaries.

Values of respect and care for ancestors and the dead are not exclusive to Indigenous peoples but can be found in all of humanity. All societies partake in burial customs and construct laws that promote honour and care for the dead. However, there are differing notions as to what care for the dead entails. Non-Indigenous legal systems tend to use ownership as a means to protect the disposition of the dead. Under the provisions of Canadian provincial heritage legislation and policies, human remains and associated objects found in an archaeological context are “owned” by the Crown. For example, Saskatchewan maintains ownership over all human skeletal material not found in a recognized cemetery under the Heritage Property Act (Government of Saskatchewan 1979-1980). Ownership over any human remains and artifacts of archaeological interest found after 1967 are retained by the Crown under Manitoba’s Heritage Resources Act (1986). Harper (1999) criticizes the declarations of ownership found in provincial heritage legislation such as Manitoba’s as inappropriate and lacking respect and reciprocity for past and present Indigenous peoples.

These statements make it clear that official ownership of ancient Aboriginal people belongs to the provincial government; policy-makers never think in terms of these arrangements being reciprocated and to consider the appropriateness (or otherwise) of such policy: i.e., if Indigenous nations were to find old Caucasian remains, that they would belong to the Indigenous nation which found them. It might do

government policy-makers well to reflect on a New Testament teaching, one to which their culture gives such credence that it is commonly called The Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you (Mat. 6:12, Lk. 6:31).

(Harper 1999:101)

Further, Harper (1999:101) states a fundamental flaw with this hypothetical argument where for Indigenous people it is impossible to “own” dead people since, “like the land, air and trees, the bodies of the ‘dead’, for they have moved into a spirit world, are considered to belong only to the Creator.”

Existing legislation implies that a burial ground is only significant because of the presence of human remains and associated objects interred at a site. Once they are removed, then the burial ground ceases to exist. Particular Aboriginal communities have not shared this perspective, leading to conflicts over the spatial boundaries of a burial ground. Hamilton explains the concept of boundaries in the legal case of *Poplar Point* (1993) concerning an Aboriginal burial ground subjected to the provisions of Ontario’s Cemeteries Act (Government of Ontario 1990):

In order for [the registrar] to proceed with decision-making you require a boundary around the extent of the burial site. I understand this necessity, and would like to oblige. However, it reflects a notion of the bounded ‘sacred precinct’ of a cemetery. This is a Judeo-Christian concept that has little reference to Native spirituality. The burial(s) is an important secondary element of a much larger sacred system that involves the whole falls area. The current regulatory process is addressing the secondary element, but is ignoring the larger sacred issue.

(Ziff and Hope 2008:193)

Hamilton’s response alludes to a worldview where a burial ground includes the surrounding context of place in which the individual is interred. By acknowledging place, the relationship between people and land significant to an Aboriginal worldview continues to exist, even beyond death. Further, this relationship exists between the living

and non-living as illustrated in Hul'qumi'num Elder Ruby Peters' distress over an ancestral burial desecration (McLay, et al. 2008:155):

Some people don't take it seriously about human bones. But it's serious. It's really serious. I saw one dig over at Somenos Creek, over here in Duncan. And they had open, open graveyards. And they called, called us over there. And I was at the head of the three open graves. And being a *thi'thu'* [medium], I can hear them [the spirits]. I can hear them, and when I got there, the man was really, really angry because of the disturbance that was going on because they were, they were studying their bones. What was that, two thousand years old? And they had open grave. And he was really angry and he was just growling. He was really, really mad. And I, I just, I just spoke to it and tried to calm that man down. And he wouldn't. I went to the next one and it was the wife and she was crying. She was crying. So I was just talking to, talking to her in my mind... Yeah, just think, this was about six years ago. Eight years ago. And I was still talking to them and praying, standing over those three open graves.

Ruby Peters' response to the desecration of the gravesite reflects values of respect and reciprocity that are important to the Hul'qumi'num where ancestors and ancestral places must be respected and that one is socially bound to care for the dead (McLay, et al. 2008). These values are upheld through three customary laws important to the Hul'qumi'num that include (1) the law of non-disturbance of burial grounds, (2) the law governing the avoidance of burial grounds, and (3) the law of an inherited right to care for the dead (McLay, et al. 2008).



Figure 2.1 - Schematic outlining definition of heritage and history.

History or the historical narrative is also symbol of cultural expression that is often used synonymous term with heritage because it is based on a communal set of cultural values (figure 2.1). Sharing history also builds solidarity in a group by encouraging a sense of belonging among individuals. However, not everyone will hold

similar values for the history being shared or are able to grasp the meanings and values embedded in the narrative as originally intended by the author. The historical narrative or history holds knowledge that is shared and maintained through an oral or written culture. Further, it is not static where “over time are recorded, shaped, and fixed according to prevailing societal attitudes. Paralleling any change in the view of the present is a change in the view of the past” (Harper 1999:3). Further, how history is told is largely dependent upon the storyteller and their intended audience:

What we call ‘history’ is a recitation of events from the past, which in its most literal sense is all that has preceded the present: whether it be a rock that fell, a dog that barked, an infant who cried, a woman who coughed, a prince who was enthroned a king. All historians – on occasion each of us is a historian – select from this infinity of events those we deem worth telling. The basis of that selection provided the built-in bias of history. History, more than being a debate about the past is an argument about the present and future. It often tells us less about what was and more about who we are. It is a tool used by all of us either as we now perceive it to be or as we think it ought to be. The past is immutable, but history, a battleground for the public mind, is ever changing.

(Fontana 1994:xi)

The historical narrative is often used to settle land-claim disputes where, “we assume that when ‘the truth comes out’, it will prove what happened was wrong or illegal and that therefore the system (tribunals, the courts, the government) will set things right” (Smith 2012:35). During these disputes, experts in anthropology, history and archaeology often present evidence with the intention of promoting social justice using the historical narrative. In response, Smith (2012:35) indicates,

We believe that history is also about justice, that understanding history will enlighten our decisions about the future. *Wrong*. History is also about power. It is the story of the powerful and how they became powerful, and then how they use their power to keep them in positions in which they can continue to dominate others.

Smith (2012) suggests that the process of decolonization involves revisiting history by highlighting the power imbalances reflected in the historical narrative. This process of “*coming to know the past*” involves critiquing Indigenous histories written by the “West” (Smith 2012).

Negotiating Aboriginal identity in Canadian history

In Canada, historiography reveals that self-determination of identity for Aboriginal peoples is constantly subject to negotiation by an external, colonizing force (Lawrence 2003; Weaver 2001). For the last 500 years, inferior representations of Indigenous cultures in Canadian history has resulted in a legacy of stereotypes that continue to plague Aboriginal identity today (Borrows 2010). The onset colonization saw European cosmographers, explorers, historians, ethnographers, and archaeologists writing historical narratives on the Americas that were influenced by prevailing societal attitudes of Indigenous inferiority. The start of this practice marked the beginnings of two types of historical narratives for Aboriginal peoples:

One has been a dominant history, researched in universities, taught in schools, preached from the pulpit, and published in books. This history has been dominant both because it reflects the viewpoint of the conquerors of the continent and because it overshadows all others. It resides in institutions, such as schools, universities, and museums that produce and control knowledge in our society. The other type of history was covert. Native Elders taught it to their children in the home to resist the dominant history thrust upon them in the larger world.

(McGuire 1997:77)

Establishing stereotypes of Aboriginal identity

The writing of this dominant history began in the 1500s where a proliferation of cosmology and exploration literature influenced European ideologies of an artificial Aboriginal identity (Dickason 1996). Cosmographers mapped the universe (including

heaven and earth), the world, and everything in them. The world was presented as a hierarchy of cultural development where humanity evolved from bestiality to domestication. In the lowest of states, humans took on a primitive form as savages who indulged in cannibalism. By adopting agricultural practices, human beings became domesticated and began to 'evolve' towards the upper echelon of western 'civilization' (Dickason 1996; Rempel 1994). With the advent of exploration, cultures in the 'New World' were assigned to a category according to this hierarchical scale of 'cultural evolutionism'. In the 1500's, French cosmographers, Andre Thevet and Francois de Belleforest presented 'New World' peoples as unformed 'savages' in their cultural infancy (Dickason 1996).

Similar views expressed in other literature during this time influenced and transformed European ideologies of Indigenous identity with two stereotypes: the 'Indian as the mystic foreigner' and the 'Indian as the vulnerable savage'. These descriptions evoked idealistic sentiments among Europeans of a foreign, simplistic culture that many Europeans longed to be part of (Pakes 1985; Pettipas 1994). Artists portrayed Indigenous men as muscular renditions of heroic personages similar to Greek or Roman Gods. Such portrayals reflected a romantic notion of the 'Indian as a mystic foreigner'. The descriptions of Indigenous lifestyles as 'simplistic' along with the societal acceptance of 'cultural evolutionism' led Europeans to contrive an image of the 'Indian as a vulnerable savage'. Also influencing these ideals were biblical representations of Indigenous peoples as pure and innocent humans who were vulnerable to savagery (Pettipas 1994).

These early portrayals influenced the writings of Canadian histories produced well into the fur trade era by the "first" of non-Indigenous historians. In Manitoba,

Alexander Ross, J.J. Hargrave, and Donald Gunn wrote historical narratives from experience (Friesen 1992). They were retired fur traders or associated with the Hudson's Bay Company and educated in Scotland. "Manitoba history for them was the history of the fur trade and of a victorious imperial company, the Hudson's Bay Company. It was an economic system tied to London, of course, but a recognizable new society of Orkney traders, Métis and Aboriginal laborers, Highland settlers and European missionaries..." (Friesen 1992:36). In some archival texts, Indigenous peoples were portrayed as destitute to satisfy certain economic or self-preservation motives. A trader campaigning for promotion might document a large proportion of "starving Indians" in their ledgers to demonstrate a reliance on trade goods and the success of his trading post (Brown and Vibert 1996). Missionaries might refer to Indigenous peoples as "savage heathens" to demonstrate the need to christianize Indigenous communities out of necessity.

Most historical narratives on Aboriginal peoples generated by European historians focused on reconstructing Aboriginal identity after contact and colonization because of the lack of written texts produced by Aboriginal cultures. Historians based in Western intellectual traditions rely on the written archival or historical record to reconstruct a narrative based on significant events or people from the past. Histories linked with societies not supported by literary sources were usually beyond the interests of historians (Lowenthal 2000; Seixas 2000). Since Indigenous peoples maintained an oral history rather than a written one, European historians were quick to associate them with "pre-historic" cultures. Subsequently, archaeology became involved in producing narratives on Indigenous identity because of the discipline's specialization in "pre-history" - the study of cultures prior to the written record in Europe.

An exercise in nation building in Manitoba's history

In Manitoba, early archaeological interpretations of Indigenous identity involved Donald Gunn whose avocational interest in history led him to excavate a burial mound near the Red River Settlement during the 1860s. Upon recovery, Gunn sent the remains and contents with a brief report to the Smithsonian Institute (Gunn 1867). In his report, Gunn referred to the builders of the mound as red skinned people but did not believe that they were the ancestors of the local Indigenous population (Rempel 1994; Schultz 1894).

[The] race who reared [the mounds] and whose remains they cover have passed away, or become absorbed in a race of red men; barbarous, processing less energy and industry; for certainly the present race of red men are in every respect incapable of undergoing the labor necessary to accumulate such heaps of earth.

(Schultz 1894:9-10)

Influenced by his beliefs in Cultural Evolutionism, Gunn believed the Mound Builder race was higher on a scale of civilization than the Indigenous inhabitants of the region (Rempel 1994). Similar conclusions prevailed in interpretations by members of the Manitoba Historical and Scientific Society who studied many of the burial mounds in southern Manitoba during the 1880s. The society encouraged archaeological interests and pursued the excavations of four mounds. One enthusiastic member on this topic was John Christian Schulz, a politically active member in the establishment of the Province of Manitoba who ended his career as Manitoba's Lieutenant Governor. Schulz participated in the excavation of two burial mounds near St. Andrew's Rapids on the Red River and published his conclusions in a local newspaper and the 1881 edition of the Canadian Naturalist and Quarterly Journal of Science (Rempel 1994).

Schulz concluded that the pottery fragments and absence of weapons from the excavated mounds were indicative of peaceful agriculturalists whose culture resembled

Europeans settlers more than the local Aboriginal population. From the skeletal remains, he also asserted that the skulls of the Mound Builders was, “superior to that of the average Indian today”(Schultz 1881:61). Similar myths concerning the Mound Builders continued to dismiss notions that the deceased interred in the burial mounds were ancestors of Indigenous peoples. Eventually, Charles Bell debunked these myths in 1887 when he excavated a series of mounds throughout southern Manitoba. Bell (1887) concluded that the mounds were associated with, “an uncivilized people who lived on the banks of the Red River and its tributaries before the advent of the present Indian tribes”(Bell 1887). After observing their customs, Bell rejected the local Indigenous peoples as the direct descendants of those individuals interred in the mound. Instead, the burial mounds became associated with another Indigenous group.

To support Manitoba’s entry into Confederation in 1870, historians focused on nation building and creating a vision of Manitoba as a province with British, agricultural, modern and industrial foundations (Friesen 1982; Friesen 1992). The establishment of Winnipeg as the capital of the newest Canadian province helped to support a small, culturally and intellectually elite community (Rempel 1994). With the support of this community, Alexander MacArthur founded the Manitoba Historical and Scientific Society in 1879 under the provisions of an Act passed by the Manitoba Legislature (Stewart 1979). The focus of the society was to engage public interest in preserving and promoting the province’s history and heritage. Members were encouraged to present papers on the political and natural history of the province. These presentations served to emphasize the European settlers’ role in the establishment of the province for various

political and economic motives. Incidentally, a number of members with the society also served as politicians.

The lack of written documentation on Indigenous history prior to contact spurred curiosity among settlers as to what life was like prior to their arrival. During the 19th and 20th centuries, archaeology was conducted out of avocational interests and curiosity in the history of Manitoba prior to settlement. Some of this work involved the exploration of burial mounds in Manitoba. The increasing agricultural development during this time led to “hundreds of collectors searching wind-swept fields to recover the chipped stone artifacts and potsherds early man had left behind” (Vickers 1970). The rampant collection of artifacts was influenced by American pioneer-styled property rights of “finders-keepers” where anything old, or otherwise unique and in the ground was considered buried treasure (WhiteDeer 1998). In some cases, the number of arrowheads and human skeletal remains unearthed across the agricultural landscape led to assumptions that Indigenous peoples engaged in battles of epic proportions (Pettipas 1994). These interpretations satisfied the romantic notions of the “Indian as a warlike savage” which were fuelled by events taking place in the United States such as the Minnesota Uprising of 1862 and the Little Big Horn encounter of 1876 (Pettipas 1994).

Cultural interferences in Indigenous heritage

The focus on documenting Indigenous cultures during this period was also in response to the stereotype of the “Indian as a vulnerable savage”. The prevailing assumption was that Indigenous peoples were facing “extinction” from the increasing European settlement of North America were becoming “savage to civilized” from a cultural evolutionary standpoint (Pettipas 1994). “Death by diseases previously unknown

to the Aboriginal people was seen for centuries as doctrinal justification and as racial “superiority” of the European people” (Harper 1999:30).

These beliefs were also strongly influenced with the introduction of legislation in the mid-1800s such as the *An Act to Encourage the Gradual Civilization of Indian Tribes in this Province, and to Amend the Laws Relating to Indians or the Gradual Civilization Act* (1857) and especially the *Indian Act* (1876), a legislation which continues to define Aboriginal identity today (Lawrence 2003). “The Indian Act regulated and restricted the traditional ways of anchoring relationships among individuals, their communities, and the land, with an attempt to erase knowledge of self, culture, and history in the process”(Lawrence 2003) .“Cultural interference took the form of the suppression of Indigenous institutions of government, the denial of land, the forced taking of children, the criminalization of economic pursuits and the negotiation of rights of religious freedom, association due process and equality” (Borrows 2010:149). The traditional forms of Indigenous governance and social organization including hereditary chiefs, clans, kinships and territories were replaced with state-determined government systems of bands consisting of elected chiefs and councilors. Laws forbade the public practice of customs and ceremonies. The establishment of reserve lands displaced people within their territories and transformed land use. Under the provisions of these acts, the government also enacted assimilation strategies to transform Indigenous identity. The relocation of Aboriginal children to residential schools threatened familial and kinship networks resulted in impacts to the social and economic well being of people today (Cunningham, et al. 2008; Warry 1998).

“While many people within Canada were trying to eradicate Indigenous ideas, great effort was simultaneously expended in trying to catalogue Indigenous cultural expression, objects and ideas before Indigenous peoples became extinct” (Borrows 2010:148). With the misperception that the extinction of Indigenous identity was inevitable, many research agendas focused on recording these cultures before their disappearance rather than to facilitate their continuity (Bruner 1986). A “preservation ethic” was adopted amongst the public consciousness to thoroughly document Aboriginal cultures before they “disappeared” through assimilation (Battiste and Henderson 2000). This resulted in the exploitation of Aboriginal peoples through ethnographic study. Cultural anthropologists engaged in the writing of Native “autobiographies” to showcase the daily activities using both written and photographic documentation. Often researchers assumed that they were portraying accounts of Aboriginal culture objectively and in its entirety (Brown and Vibert 1996). These portrayals would include highlights of direct and unmediated quotes by the Native speaker. “Yet, naturally enough, these scientific ‘absent editors’ amended and rearranged what their informants told them, asked telling questions to meet their own research agendas, and sometimes compiled composite materials into one ‘life history’ portrait typifying a group or culture as an object for analysis” (Brown and Vibert 1996:xvii).

The misperception that Indigenous cultures were facing extinction led to perceived justification in the removal of material cultures from communities and excavation of ancestral human remains from their resting places. The intention behind such practices was to preserve evidence of Indigenous cultures for future generations. To demonstrate the enormity of these undertakings, national estimates of one hundred

thousand to two million deceased Indigenous persons in North America were removed from their graves and were displayed or stored by government agencies, museums, universities and tourist attractions (Trope and Echo-Hawk 1992). During the collection and shipment of objects and remains to distant locations in efforts of preservation, Indigenous peoples became alienated from their own history through the diminishment of ties to the land and claims to traditional places and life ways (Fowler 1987; McGuire 1992, 2004; Trigger 1980). Subsequently, archaeologists adopted an authoritative stewardship stance towards safeguarding symbols of Indigenous peoples' cultural expressions and their past (McGuire 1997). "Native sovereignty was reduced both by the very act of appropriation and by the removal of ancestral materials as commodities to distant museums and private collections" (Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2008). The process of rewriting Indigenous historical narratives through a Eurocentric voice and limiting Indigenous peoples' access to their heritage resources supported the removal of Native sovereignty over land. Consequentially, such practices helped to expedite the expansion of the Canadian state and colonization of the Americas by European settlers.

The emergence of globalization

In the 20th century, global occurrences of expansion, industrialization and colonization encouraged globalization, which facilitated social movements and economic developments worldwide. Since respect and safety of cultural identity are important ideals in a democratic society, globalization can be perceived as a means to unify peoples collectively or as a threat to a collective identity necessitating nationalistic reinforcements. With archaeology being, "always and necessarily situated within a historical and social context" (Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2008:3), the events

stemming from globalization has had a significant impact in the development of the discipline over the last few decades.

Globalization influenced several, perhaps coincidental, occurrences on the social movement front. The 1960s and 1970s harboured civil rights movements in the United States involving protests against the Vietnam war, environmental awareness and women's rights movements. Coincidentally, these events resulted in archaeologists to develop interests in egalitarian hunter-gatherer studies, environmental archaeology and feminist archaeology (Nicholas 2009).

For subordinated minority cultures impacted by colonization, globalization unified and empowered these groups towards a social movement in self-identification and self-governance as Indigenous peoples (Oguamanam 2004). The term 'Indigenous peoples' is best summarized by a working definition provided by Jose R. Martinez Cobo (1986/7), a special rapporteur of the United Nations Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities:

Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories and parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop, and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis for their continued existences of as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions, and legal systems.

Through globalization, a worldwide network of peoples became united across different countries to invoke rights to self-determination. Globalization facilitated the recognition of injustices imparted on subordinated Indigenous peoples worldwide who, "have been subjected to the colonization of lands and cultures, and the denial of their

sovereignty, by a colonizing society that has come to dominate and determine the shape and quality of their lives” (Smith 2012:7). The civil rights movements in the United States empowered Native Americans and drew Aboriginal peoples in Canada towards an Indigenous rights movement (Curthoys 2002). In Australia and New Zealand, the turning point was spurred by the outcome of sporting events involving South Africa. In 1981, the acceptance of a racially segregated rugby team from South Africa by the New Zealand Rugby Union and the government revealed deep divisions among New Zealanders and sparked violent confrontations between the police and demonstrators (Allen and Phillips 2010; Webster 1998). Similar responses were invoked in Australia between subordinated peoples and dominant societies.

Smith (1999:108) accredits the Indigenous social movement as developing out of, “survival strategies and cultural systems which have nurtured people, their values, and their beliefs within their own communities, reserves, tribes, and nations for over 500 years.” These strategies are the reason why the assimilation attempts of Indigenous identity by state governments failed. Further, these approaches suggest that Indigenous social movements are empowered by ancient and contemporary knowledges involving a contemporary form of political expression based on tradition and culture (Allen and Phillips 2010; Jung 2008). Prior to this event, ‘the dominant story constructed about Native American culture saw the present as disorganization, the past as glorious, and the future as assimilation. Now, however, we have a new narrative: the present is viewed as a resistance movement, the past as exploitation, and the future as ethnic resurgence’ (Bruner 1986:139).

Reinforcing Canadian national identity through archaeological heritage

In response to the social movements influenced by globalization, governments became interested in reinforcing a sense of national identity, which may be associated with maintaining power and keeping civility among citizens. Archaeology became a natural fit in promoting this agenda since it appealed to public curiosities about the past by providing noble views of history and heritage. Further governments were already familiar with using archaeology to advance their political agendas as demonstrated in Canadian history during the 20th century. At the time, the practice of archaeology and its narratives were used to promote government-initiated assimilation strategies of Aboriginal peoples, even though this was not the intent of archaeologists. Nation building exercises coincided with economic developments facilitated by globalization in the exchange of goods and increasing demands for natural resources such as oil, gas, and minerals. Resource extraction through land developments such as mining, forestry, oil and gas and hydroelectric dam developments changed the North American landscape drastically along with agricultural activities and urbanization. The increase in land-use development activities impacted and/or destroyed heritage sites, particularly archaeological sites and burials and encouraged looting of artifacts and human skeletal remains as a hobby. As stewards of heritage, archaeologists lobbied governments to take more responsibility in preserving and protecting heritage beginning in the late 1960s and 1970s (Allen and Phillips 2010). They encouraged the development of legislation requiring proponents and authorities engaged in land-altering activities to consider the impacts to heritage.

To convince governments, “archaeological rhetoric stressed the value of heritage conservation in terms of the national identity and, somewhat paradoxically, the importance of archaeological sites as contributing to a history of humankind” (Allen 2010:20). Emphasizing collective and individual relationships with historical symbols as an exercise in nation building appealed to governments (Smith 2006).

Developments in heritage legislation

Government agencies subsequently responded by incorporating heritage into land-use legislation and policies, in addition to revising heritage legislation to promote the protection of sites (Ferris 2003). In the United States, the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 was enacted along with similar acts in Australia and New Zealand (Allen 2010; Allen and Phillips 2010; Evatt 1998; Ross 2010; Smith 2004; Watkins 2000). In the 1990s, Canada was set to introduce federal heritage legislation, however, this process became stalled to due disagreements among departments as to who would enforce the legislation and its rejection by the Assembly of First Nations who expressed that they were inadequately consulted in its development (Syms 2012).

Other influential factors involve the legislation being seen as unconstitutionally infringing on rights held by the provinces to manage natural resources (Yellowhorn 1999; 2002). Through a resource model of heritage protection, archaeological materials are equated with non-renewable natural resources susceptible to destruction through land based developments. Since natural resources are constitutionally recognized as being managed by the provinces, any sort of heritage legislation introduced by the federal government would result in a constitutional challenge (Yellowhorn 1999, 2002).

In the absence of federal heritage legislation, each province and territory enacts legislation to protect heritage resources found on Crown lands from commodification and destruction. For example, Manitoba first introduced heritage legislation in 1946 with the “Historic Sites and Objects Act”, and established the Historic Sites Advisory Board who advised the government on matters concerning the identification, preservation and promotion of the province’s heritage (Archives Canada 2009). The act was later revised in 1967 in response to increasing land-use development activities. Under most provincial jurisdictions such as Manitoba’s, ownership of “heritage objects” including human remains of archaeological significance are vested in the Crown with designated custodians (Bell and Patterson 2008; Bell and Solowan 2004; Denhez 2000). A key feature of heritage legislation is that conservation decisions over endangered heritage places and heritage objects are evaluated on their scientific value and whether they provide evidence about the past (Smith 2004).

Other rationale for countries to support the enactment of heritage legislation was to fulfill the signing of treaty obligations to protect heritage. In 1970, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) promoted the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which Canada acceded to in 1978 (Bell and Solowan 2004; Bell, et al. 2008). Canada also adhered to the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (World Heritage Convention) in 1976. Obligations to these conventions are fulfilled by provincial and territorial legislation with the absence of a federal statute governing the protection of heritage. For heritage resources found on federal lands including those found on First Nations reserve

lands, protection depends on the policies and directives of the departmental agency. The only Canadian federal statutes related to the protection of heritage resources are the Parks Canada Agency Act, Cultural Property Export and Import Act and the Environmental Assessment Act, enforced during an environmental impact assessment (Bell and Solowan 2004).

The rise of Cultural Resources Management

As countries increased their efforts to protect heritage sites through legislation, the cultural resource management (CRM), cultural heritage management (CHM) or historic preservation fields emerged with initiatives to protect and preserve heritage sites. CRM, as it is known in North America, or CHM as it may be defined in Western contexts refers to, “the process concerned with the management of material or tangible cultural heritage...also ultimately about the management and governance of the meanings and values that the material heritage is seen to symbolize or otherwise represent” (Smith 2004:195). Growing cultural resources management work in relation to increasing land-based developments encouraged governments to become a regulatory body that facilitates requests made by industry. To maintain economic interests, provincial and territorial governments established departments to oversee the regulatory process in screening projects for their impacts to heritage and to regulate the archaeological profession through a permitting process. In Manitoba, the Historic Resources Branch was created in 1974 and assumed the duties managed by the Historic Sites and Advisory Board and the Heritage Resources Section of the Provincial Parks Branch (Archives Canada 2009). Today, cultural resources management, cultural heritage management or historic preservation represents an entire branch of archaeology with its own methods, cultures

and practitioners (McManamon and Hatton 1999). These fields have encouraged policymaking into different levels of government, management and the conservation of cultural heritage including field archaeology and impact assessments (Allen and Phillips 2010).

The majority of projects in CRM involve identifying heritage sites to create inventories and heritage resource impact assessments where archaeologists evaluate the potential for development to impact sites of heritage significance. These assessments are conducted primarily by consulting companies who identify sites in the area to be impacted by development. If heritage sites are found, recommendations for protection or mitigation are measured against several factors outlined by the government including its heritage significance on the local, regional, or national level and its value for scientific research purposes (Government of Canada 1996; Nasady 2002). The process is regulated through a permitting process where the eligibility of the archaeologist to hold a permit is determined through professional work experience and level of post-secondary education. During these assessments, archaeologists are expected to report on, “the relative importance placed on various site characteristics, such as size, quantity and quality of cultural materials, age, cultural relationships, physical condition, history, etc. which have been used to assess the heritage resource value” (Badertscher 1990). Further, the archaeologist is expected to comment on the extent that the development will impact the heritage site and if it is worth protecting. Through this process, governments rely on archaeologists to act as “intermediaries” and help fulfill the mandates of heritage legislation. In this capacity, governments legitimize the stewardship role that

archaeologists have taken over heritage, particularly Indigenous heritage since the majority of archaeological sites are significant to Indigenous peoples.

On the path to ethnic resurgence

As the narrative transforms for Indigenous peoples from that of a resistance movement to ethnic resurgence, Indigenous communities are becoming engaged in a process of cultural restoration. Cultural restoration involves the process of reclaiming Indigenous identity from colonial regimes. This process seeks to move beyond the experience of colonization by “liberating Indigenous thought, practices, and discourses rather than relying on existing Eurocentric or colonial theory” (Battiste and Henderson 2000:xvii). For centuries, Indigenous peoples have become disenfranchised from their history and heritage through colonialism. Through cultural restoration, Indigenous peoples seek to regain control over their heritage and constructing corrective historical narratives using the Indigenous voice. In the late 1960s and early 1970s, Vine Deloria Jr., a Standing Rock Sioux Indian and law student at the University of Colorado, became a pivotal figure in the Indigenous rights movement empowering Indigenous peoples towards the reclamation of their identity. His initial publication *Custer Died for your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* (Deloria 1970 [1969]) challenged anthropologists on the value of their research for Indigenous peoples:

Perhaps we should suspect the real motives of the academic community. They have the Indian field well defined and under control. Their concern is not the ultimate policy that will affect the Indian people but merely the creation of new slogans and doctrines by which they can clime the university totem pole. Reduction of people to ciphers for purposes of observation appears to be inconsequential to the anthropologist when compared with immediate benefits he can derive, the production of further prestige, and the chance to appear as the high priest of Amerindian society, orienting and manipulating to his heart's desire.

(Deloria 1970 [1969]: 98-99)

Deloria's (1970[1969]) influential work raised issues of ethics and morality, legality and propriety, jurisdiction and self-determination concerning research work with Indigenous peoples (Grobsmith 1997). Not only were new guidelines established in how anthropological research was conducted but Deloria inspired new voices advocating for the indigenization of research in academia. Up until the 1980's, Indigenous knowledges were applied in developing cultural frameworks in anthropology, sociology and geography to celebrate cultural diversity and reverse Indigenous stereotypes of primitivism (Warren et al. 1993, Nakata 2002). Since then Indigenous knowledges are now used in academic and scientific circles supporting the use of Indigenous research paradigms, languages and methodologies. These fields include,

ecology, soil science, veterinary medicine, forestry, human health, aquatic resource management, botany, zoology, agronomy, agricultural economics, rural sociology, mathematics, management science, agricultural education and extension, fisheries, range management, information science, wildlife management, and water resource management.

(Warren et al. 1993:1)

Confronting stereotypes of the 'Indian'

Deloria (1973) also confronted archaeologists by reminding them that the pasts being studied were those of living peoples whose heritage carries a present, a future and a past. Archaeology's emphasis on the past and 'pre-historical' narratives is criticized for being detrimental to Indigenous identity. A continuum of Indigenous cultures from contact to the present is rarely represented in archaeological narratives and likely a product of the dichotomy that exists between history and pre-history in Western intellectual traditions. For archaeological sites that existed after contact, like those from the fur trade era, there is limited research conducted into Indigenous identity mainly due

to the reliance on archival text to support interpretations. “Early times of Contact were portrayed and gave lasting impressions to many, and in far too many history books, the First Peoples are entirely absent after European settlement...Aboriginal people lacked history and therefore by default, a ‘real’ heritage --- this is why they were (and too often, are) presented in a permanent and static time warp – into those early or pre-Contact days.” (Harper 1999:29).

The failure to link the archaeological and historical record with the history and heritage of living peoples results in a static representation of Indigenous identity that reinforces the stereotype of “Indian as the vulnerable savage”. Because of these historical narratives, Indigenous peoples became associated with “foreign” cultures facing extinction at the time of European contact. The influence of these depictions of Indigenous identity in Canada is evident today in contemporary educational curricula. Dion (2009) reflects on the experience of her students completing the “People of Native Ancestry” unit as part of the Ontario school curriculum where students were encouraged to create totems poles and models of ‘Indian villages’. “These lessons focus on Western anthropology’s interpretation of material culture as it existed prior to European contact, reproduced the discourse of the romantic mythical Other, and, as such nurtured a kind of remembering to forget.” (Dion 2009:6). The reinforcement of stereotypes encourages denial in the existence of Indigenous identity and history for both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal peoples. “Too many Canadians are caught in an assimilationist ideology expecting Aboriginal people to disappear. Although initial moves were made by design, more recent moves are driven by ignorance” (Haig-Brown 1997). Dion (2009) attributes the prevalence of these stereotypes to an unawareness of the post-contact experiences of

First Nations peoples in Canadian society. Some people may choose to ignore these experiences due to xenophobia where fear of the unfamiliar will result in the rationalization of self-conception and facing the reflection of one's own identity (Piper 1993). This fear perpetuates feelings of shame and guilt, which leads to the formation of stereotypes. Further, acknowledging the marginalization of Indigenous peoples through colonization defeats the perception held by most Canadians as being defenders of equity, justice and human rights (Dion 2009).

The legacy of stereotypes as a product of colonization continues to disenfranchise Indigenous peoples from their heritage along with impacting their contemporary identity. The stereotypes generated by anthropological and archaeological research described by Dion (2009) often initiates sentiments of anger, denial and blame. These feelings are often associated with residential school experiences where these stereotypes reinforced shame in the students towards their Indigenous identity. Today, the impact of these experiences has left Indigenous peoples with an altered worldview, "By force, terror, and educational policy, it attempted to destroy the Aboriginal worldview but failed. Instead, colonization left a heritage of jagged worldviews among Indigenous peoples. They no longer had a totally Aboriginal worldview, nor did they adopt a totally Eurocentric worldview. Their consciousness became a random puzzle, a jigsaw puzzle that each person has to attempt to understand" (Little Bear 2000:84).

Cultural restoration

Cultural restoration is an attempt to reconcile the "jagged world views" facing Indigenous peoples and involves the production and use of corrective histories reflecting Indigenous knowledges to help dissolve stereotypes. Deloria (1992, 1997) and other

Indigenous scholars (Echo-Hawk 2000) have dismissed existing histories on Indigenous peoples based solely on Western scientific knowledge as myth. These narratives bear little, if any, relevance to how Indigenous peoples recollect their histories and heritage, which becomes noticeably apparent when contrasted against oral traditions. The practice of archaeology and its products with an emphasis in Western intellectual traditions and the discipline's continued involvement in the control of Indigenous heritage are recognized as contributing to an ongoing process of colonial dispossession (Smith 2012). "Racism, which had played a central role in European theories of colonization, was now turned back to archaeologists, whose policies and practices were identified as racist" (Allen and Phillips 2010:21). Fueled by these criticisms, Indigenous peoples began to challenge government control over their history and heritage.

In the 1990s, governments responded with the introduction of new heritage legislation such as the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) in the United States. NAGPRA transformed the relationship in which archaeologists were expected to work with Indigenous communities. This legislation gave Indigenous peoples, in a Western legal context, the right to control and manage the disposition of their ancestors' remains and material culture. Although similar federal legislation was not enacted in Canada, NAGPRA's introduction in the United States still impacted the attitudes of archaeologists and Aboriginal communities. Some provincial governments responded by amending legislation or introducing new policies and guidelines concerning ancestral human remains.

Since the introduction of NAGPRA, archaeologists as well as governments, recognize that Indigenous peoples, "are one of the primary stakeholders in a complex and

multifaceted past owned by no one but controlled by many” (Watkins 2003:129). There are also questions as to whether stakeholder is a valid term to use for Indigenous peoples where McNiven and Russell (2005:236) state:

Indigenous people are not mere stakeholders in their heritage - they own that heritage and have the right to fully control if and how research is undertaken on that heritage. Alternatively, the [interest-group] model needs to be replaced by a host/guest model that sees aboriginal people not as stakeholders but as the owners and controllers of their heritage.

Archaeologists and others involved in heritage resources management recognize that it is no longer acceptable to reap the material and intellectual benefits of another society’s heritage without the involvement of that society to benefit equally from the endeavor (Moser, et al. 2002). Indigenous peoples are now recognized as “descendant communities” to archaeological heritage because of their cultural, social and historical affinities with sites, artifacts and human remains (Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2008). “These communities do not necessarily have more rights (legal or otherwise) to the past revealed by archaeology, but often more complex and compelling interests than other communities, including the archaeological community itself.” (Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2008:8).

Indigenous archaeology

In the last decade, Indigenous archaeology has emerged as a distinct topic in archaeological research to find solutions that address the issues surrounding the practice of archaeology, cultural resource management and Indigenous heritage. Advocates of Indigenous archaeology have begun to engage with postcolonial theories in their research (Preucel and Cipolla 2008). Indigenous archaeology can be defined as:

An expression of archaeological theory and practice in which the discipline intersects with Indigenous values, knowledge, practices, ethics,

and sensibilities, and through collaborative and community-originated or –directed projects, and related critical perspectives. Indigenous archaeology seeks to (1) make archaeology more representative of, responsible to, and relevant for Indigenous communities; (2) redress real and perceived inequalities in the practice of archaeology; (3) inform and broaden the understanding and interpretation of the archaeological record through the incorporation of Aboriginal worldviews, histories, and science.

(Nicholas 2008:166)

Nicholas and Andrews (1997) summarize Indigenous archaeology more eloquently as an archaeology conducted with, for, and by Indigenous peoples.

Archaeologists engaged in Indigenous archaeology strive to replace research models based on Western knowledge systems with more socially and politically self-conscious mode of research that incorporates different cultural perspectives in the interpretation of the “past” (McGuire 2003; Moser, et al. 2002). The focus of this approach is to develop bi-cultural models in archaeological research in collaboration with “descendant communities” that apply both Western and Indigenous methodologies and interpretive strategies to the archaeological record (Allen and Phillips 2010; Atalay 2006; Bray, et al. 2000; Lyons, et al. 2010; Nicholas 2003; Smith and Jackson 2008). Since then archaeologists are engaging in new research directions to work collaboratively with Indigenous peoples and rewrite narratives of Indigenous history from Indigenous heritage and the archaeological record (e.g. (Lyons, et al. 2010; McLay, et al. 2008; Smith and Jackson 2008). Facilitating this process is the increasing number of Indigenous archaeologists emerging in the field (Nicholas 2010a). These collaborations have led to Aboriginal communities to use archaeology as a tool to represent their own interests including advancing economic development and political interests related to land claims and heritage management (Anyon, et al. 1997; Thorley 2002).

Although these engagements have been successful, Nicholas (2010b) cautions against the continued use of the term “Indigenous archaeology” as a reference to any archaeological research involving Indigenous peoples. By keeping the topic distinct from mainstream practice results in marginalization (pushed to/kept on the periphery) and ghettoization (i.e., isolated by type of archaeological research involving Indigenous peoples) of Indigenous knowledges. These scenarios leave archaeologists to question the relevance of Indigenous archaeology with their research work, especially if the topic is of no interest to them. The marginalization of Indigenous archaeology from the mainstream also leaves Cultural Resources Management as a severely under theorized field. “Heritage management practices have failed to keep up with academic research and a gap has formed between the two. Heritage management procedures in the legislation, together with the bureaucracies created to administer them, now have a life of their own outside the needs of either research archaeologists or Indigenous communities” (Allen 2010:164). With increasing Indigenous engagements in North American archaeology, it will be impossible for these archaeologists to feign ignorance, particularly for those engaged in Indigenous heritage on a daily basis through cultural resources management.

Strategies employed in Indigenous heritage protection

Today there are several strategies applied in Manitoba that are designed to protect Indigenous heritage resources that includes, provincial and federal heritage legislation and Indigenous initiatives in heritage protection.

Provincial and federal legislation

In Manitoba, the provisions under the Heritage Resources Act (1986) are designed to protect heritage in the absence of federal heritage legislation. The only exceptions

where heritage is protected federally are in national parks, which fall under the provisions of the Parks Canada Agency Act (1998), federal lands impacted by development projects, which are subject to the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (2012), on First Nations reserves under certain provisions of the Indian Act (1985) and First Nations Land Management Act (1999) and the federal export and import of cultural objects under the Cultural Property Export and Import Act (1985). The responsibility over heritage resources falls under the jurisdiction of the government agencies that administer these acts on behalf of the Crown. The protection of heritage resources significant to Indigenous peoples is limited to the definitions of heritage under these acts. Because these acts focus on tangible and physical aspects of heritage, Indigenous heritage becomes associated with archaeological resources, archaeological burial grounds, historical structures or sites and ethnographic objects (under the Cultural Property Export and Import Act). Sites devoid of archaeological evidence such as significant places known in the local language and ceremonial sites such as dancing circles or of contemporary use are not considered heritage resources. The mandates of these acts limit the input of Indigenous peoples in the management and protection of their heritage. However, Indigenous involvement is encouraged when ancestral human remains are found as outlined in the Policy Respecting the Reporting, Exhumation and Reburial of Found Human Remains (1987).

These acts, with the exception of the Cultural Property Export and Import Act, operate on a resource model of heritage protection (Yellowhorn 2002). This model equates heritage resources with natural resources as a non-renewable object that is only found on the land. Under the guise of Cultural Resources Management, a resource model,

[O]perates under the premise that modern practices such as developing undisturbed lands for residential, industrial, or municipal infrastructure place cultural materials at risk of destruction. The best society can hope for is keeping the destruction light and mitigating the unavoidable impacts. Thus, mobilizing public concern for potential harm to archaeological sites spurred governments to respond with public laws that forced compliance with a process of inventory and analysis. The final product was an impact statement of development plans on archaeological resources.

(Yellowhorn 2002:50)

A factor as to why provinces maintain legislated control over heritage is because the federal government transferred control over natural resources and crown land to most provinces at confederation. The western provinces, British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, were not given this control at this time. In 1930, however, the federal government relinquished control to these provinces through natural resource transfer agreements that became legislated through acts passed by each province. Subsequently, these agreements were ratified once they became entrenched in the Canadian constitution through the Constitution Act (1930). The association of heritage with physical and tangible constructs facilitates the objectification of heritage as a resource of material value. Consequentially, as an object or property that can be found or destroyed, heritage is equated with a natural resource tied to land. Therefore, legislation is developed to treat heritage as a physical entity that requires protection from activities such as looting and destruction through vandalism and land development. The nature of the Natural Resources Transfer Acts found in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba are likely influential in the similarities in heritage legislation found across these provinces where heritage resources are treated like a natural resource. As long as matters relating to land and natural resources remain under provincial jurisdictions as a constitutionally protected right, federal heritage legislation will cease to exist (Yellowhorn 1999, 2002).

Interestingly, First Nations have argued that the ratification of these historical transfer agreements between the provinces and the federal government infringe on their constitutional rights because they were never consulted during the negotiation of these transfers.

These provincial and federal acts recognize the Crown as the “owners” over all heritage resources tied to land under their jurisdiction, including those associated with Indigenous heritage such as archaeological materials and ancestral human remains. However, as Yellowhorn (2000) indicates, in treaty no. 7 there is no explicit mention of the signatory tribes in conceding their rights to the archaeological record and the ability to care for their ancestors. Therefore, the tribes retain residual rights to customary lands that hold archaeological material and burial grounds. Similar assumptions can be made towards treaty nos. 5 and 6 signed by the Asiniskow Ithiniwak in Manitoba. These understandings suggest that activities involving Indigenous heritage and ancestral human remains carried out by the Crown under the provisions of these acts are in violation of treaties and residual rights held by First Nations. Yet, the extent of these rights in these treaty areas has yet to be contested in the courts.

Although, these rights are not explicitly mentioned under the treaties, they are implicitly recognized through other strategies designed to maintain Indigenous interests over their heritage and ancestors. These approaches, some of which involves the Crown, include: the Indian Act legislation, land codes, land use plans, negotiated formal agreements related to development or Crown consultations and formal heritage policies.

Indian Act legislation

Yellowhorn (2000) explores several means in which archaeological resources can be protected by Indigenous peoples using the Indian Act (1985). The Indian Act (1985) was enacted in Canada to consolidate various laws pertaining to Indians with its modern version was passed into law in 1951. Yellowhorn (2000) identifies that heritage protection can be implied through several sections of the act that include trading with Indians, powers of the council, Indian lands and the Indian act, possession of lands in reserves, legal rights, and trespass on a reserve

Trading with Indians

Section 91 of the Indian Act (1985) declares that no one shall, without the written consent of the Minister shall, “remove, take away, mutilate, disfigure, deface or destroy” or can “acquire title to any of the following property situated on a reserve a) an Indian grave house, b) a carved grave pole, c) a totem pole, d) a carved house post or e) a rock embellished with paintings or carvings”. Heritage protection outlined in this section is directed primarily to Northwest Coast cultures associated with these representations of heritage. However, grave houses and rock paintings or carvings can also be associated with other First Nations across Canada but only with those instances found on reserve land. The provisions of this act do not protect against looting, but only the ability to trade with “Indians” and cannot be considered as a reliable strategy for heritage protection (Yellowhorn 1999).

Powers of the council

The Indian Act recognizes the autonomy of First Nations by enabling local band councils to exercise their powers to regulate community matters through band council resolutions (BCR). BCRs enact bylaws regarding matters that are of issue to the

community and “cannot be read to include land outside of the reserve” but “on reserve” (MacEachern 1991:162 in Yellowhorn 1999). In Manitoba, First Nations have used BCRs as an instrument to advance the repatriation of ancestral human remains and reconcile other heritage-related issues.

Indian Lands and possession of lands in reserves

There are 28 sections of the Indian Act that deal specifically with land with regards to administration, control of land for estates, mentally incompetent Indians and trusts and the possession, occupation, designation, and surrender of land (Yellowhorn 1999). Further, under the Indian Act, title to land is vested in the Crown, which is “reserved for the use and benefit of affected Indians” (Yellowhorn 1999:112). First Nations are ineligible to possess individual ownership or property rights to reserve land. Therefore, any house built on a property on the reserve is owned by the Crown and not by any person.

Since heritage sites are inextricably intertwined with land, they become associated with matters under these provisions associated with land under the Indian Act. Yellowhorn (2002) indicates that these statutes are problematic where land can be removed from band control through expropriation. Section 35 titled “Lands taken for Public Purposes”, for instance, can alienate band interests in land if there is a greater public interest in that land (Yellowhorn 1999). Therefore, it is not unreasonable to expect that expropriation can occur under this statute if there are heritage or development matters associated with reserve land that are of interest to the Crown. In scenarios where an archaeological site of national or international significance is found on reserve land,

these sites can be surrendered from band control since legal title is vested in the Crown (Yellowhorn 1999).

Trespass on a Reserve

Section 30 of the Indian Act refers to trespassing on a reserve where anyone who is occupying, in possession of or trespassing on a reserve is guilty and can be charged with a fine not exceeding \$50.00 and face one month imprisonment. The act allows band councils to create BCRs or bylaws for a trespasser's removal and punishment.

Yellowhorn (1999) suggests that through this section of the act, it is conceivable that band councils could form a permitting process providing authorization for persons to conduct cultural resources management work on reserve land.

Extending protection of heritage resources on reserve land can be done through interpretation of various sections of the Indian Act. However, this can only be achieved if each community affected by the act instigates measures involving heritage protection. In my experience, this is already demonstrated where band council resolutions are a common method used by band councils to enforce bylaws pertaining to heritage matters.

Land codes associated with the First Nation Land Management Act

In 1996, Canada and 14 First Nations signed the Framework Agreement on First Nations Land Management that enabled First Nations to opt out of land management sections of the Indian Act and establish self-governing regimes over land and resources on reserve land. This agreement became ratified through the First Nations Land Management Act (FNLMA) in 1999. This act requires First Nations signatory to the agreement to establish land codes or laws to govern reserve lands and address specific community issues like development bylaws (Hammond 2009). In Manitoba, there are

currently three First Nations that are fully operational under the FNLMA: Opaskwayak Cree Nation, Chemawawin Cree Nation and Swan Lake First Nation. There are three other First Nations who have yet to initiate, or are in the development stages of, the agreement: Long Plain First Nation, Brokenhead Ojibway Nation (Baaskaandibewiziibiing) and Buffalo Point First Nation.

The format of land codes and laws are descriptions of goals and policies concerned with the management of reserve land that are voted upon and ratified by the community (Hammond 2009). These codes are drafted in the conventional western law making format, making them accessible to non-Indigenous users (Hammond 2009). Provisions concerned with heritage under land codes can be comprehensive as ones found in British Columbia. The Tsawout First Nation Land Code (2005) describes heritage protection as the “setting aside, protection and regulation of heritage sites, cultural sites, traditional sites, spiritual sites” (Tsawout First Nation 2005:12). This First Nation has a designated a land management committee responsible for development associated with these sites and enactment of land laws concerning heritage that requires community consensus (Tsawout First Nation 2005; Hammond 2009).

In Manitoba, the land codes established by the signatory First Nations related to heritage protection focus on heritage sites. However, there are no explanations or definitions provided by the First Nation concerning the nature of a heritage site. These provisions specifically refer to council consultations with band members in the enactment of bylaws concerned with the protection of a heritage site from development and deletion of a heritage site from a land use plan. The following is an example from Swan Lake First Nation’s Land Code (2010:17):

17. Heritage Sites

Community Input on Development

17.1 No development *shall* be allowed on any site designated as a heritage site under the land use plan, unless the community is consulted on the development plan, provided however that no development *shall* be permitted on any site designated by Land Law as a permanently protected site.

Community Approval for Amendment to Land Use Plan

17.2 No amendment may be made to a land use plan to delete a heritage site unless the amendment is approved by the community.

Similar provisions are found under section 16 in Opaskwayak First Nation's Land code (2002). The general manner which heritage is presented in these land codes suggests that an understanding of a heritage site is open to interpretation by the community. As Hammond (2009:80) indicates, "Land Codes and laws are only the starting point by which priorities are voiced; discharging their directives means detailed methods must be arranged in a another medium so that heritage professionals can readily act on them."

Land and resource use plans

Other measures applied in Manitoba where Indigenous interests are maintained in managing their heritage is through land and resource use plans. These plans direct land-use decisions that involve First Nation interests concerning resource use (e.g. harvesting, hunting), occupation, culture and heritage. The scope of the plans are not limited to particular sites or reserve lands but broad areas encompassing a territory of traditional land use by the First Nation. Although a First Nation may create their own land use plan, the plan may not necessarily be acknowledged during land use decisions made by the Crown. There are only two instances where these plans are legally acknowledged by the provincial government. First, plans generated by First Nations signatory to the First Nations Land Management Act are recognized by the Crown but only in reference to

developments occurring on reserve land. Plans produced by First Nations along the east side of Lake Winnipeg are also legally recognized through the East Side Traditional Lands Planning and Special Protected Areas Act (2009). The motive behind this act results from a joint bid by the First Nations and the Manitoba and Ontario governments for UNESCO to designate this region of the boreal forest as a UNESCO world heritage site. Four First Nations have provided land use plans through this act which are Poplar River First Nation, Bloodvein First Nation, Little Grand Rapids First Nation and Pauingassi First Nation. The policies geared towards heritage protection range from limited statements such as, “No disturbance of burial sites and artefacts or any archaeological site is permitted” (Poplar River First Nation 2011), to more comprehensive procedures concerning special sites (e.g. cultural, burial, ceremonial, etc.) (Bloodvein First Nation 2011). These plans follow similar formats towards heritage protection as found with the provincial government procedures. Hammond (2009) also encountered similar scenarios with First Nations’ land use management plans in British Columbia. Interestingly, the majority of lands management plans use the terms “spiritual” or “sacred” sites instead of “heritage sites” or “heritage resources”. This approach could be interpreted as an effort to demonstrate how Indigenous peoples view their heritage differently from the government. However, the ambiguities concerning the nature and definitions of these sites are evident in the plans found in Manitoba. One plan employs archaeological measures to assess the significance of a site, “Inventory of the sites and identification as to the priority of the site (e.g. one small piece of pottery found – low priority; Burial ground – high priority) will be completed by GPS” (Bloodvein First Nation 2011:35). Most plans apply the provisions of the *Historic Resources Act* (1986)

as an option for protecting these sites, a strategy which has its own limitations in protecting Indigenous heritage resources.

Negotiated formal agreements and heritage policies

Aboriginal interests in heritage protection are also expressed in negotiated formal agreements such as Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) and heritage policies. These agreements and policies are often developed in response to heritage-related issues that emerge during negotiations involving First Nations, the Crown and/or industries over land-based developments that impact First Nations territories. In Manitoba, one of the earliest agreements that incorporated measures of heritage resources protection was the Northern Flood Agreement (NFA) signed in 1977 by the Northern Flood Committee representing five First Nations (Cross Lake First Nation, Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, Tataskweyak Cree Nation, York Factory First Nation and Norway House Cree Nation), Manitoba and Canada. The NFA was designed to compensate these five First Nations for adverse effects brought on by flooding from hydroelectric projects, namely the diversion of the Churchill River into the Nelson River. Through the NFA, heritage resource protection is implied through three provisions outlined in article 7 – Cemeteries and Objects of Cultural Significance (Manitoba Government 1977). First, Manitoba Hydro must allocate funding and equipment to ensure the protection of cemeteries endangered from erosion brought on by flooding. Second, Manitoba Hydro is to make reasonable efforts in protecting objects of cultural significance such as the footprint and chair at Nelson House and to relocate them as directed through band council resolutions. Lastly, the nature, performance and quality of the work required in this article are the responsibility of the Band Council, subject only to the right of Hydro to ensure that the

work is done in a good manner. Evidently, during this time when the NFA was negotiated, there is a demonstrated paucity in the understandings of not only Indigenous heritage but also heritage resources in general.

Since the NFA, more comprehensive strategies for heritage resources protection have been developed and incorporated into recent agreements negotiated in Manitoba. In 2006, the Wuskwatim Heritage Resources Protection Agreement was signed between Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation, Manitoba and Manitoba Hydro to identify and protect heritage resources important to NCN to be impacted by the development of the Wuskwatim hydroelectric generating station (Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation 2006). This Memorandum of Understanding supports the use of a heritage resources protection plan or Aniskowatesewew Ketapahchikewe Othaschikekwin guided by principles based on “The Heritage Resources Act and Ethinesewin (traditional knowledge, including the collective wisdom of Nisichawayasihk Nehethowuk) and western scientific knowledge”. (Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation 2006:2). The heritage resources protection plan mainly outlines the procedures to be followed upon the discovery of an archaeological site or burial ground unearthed by construction. The principles of Nisichawayasihk Nehethowuk customary laws are outlined in the plan as guidelines to ensure the respectful conduct in the handling of heritage resources impacted by the construction of the dam (Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation 2006). For example, ceremonies are conducted to honour ancestral remains uncovered during construction. Also tobacco offerings are made upon the discovery of a site. Further, the agreement ensures that NCN retains ownership of all heritage resources and human remains found during the development of the dam instead

of the Crown. In addition, NCN has their own appointed archaeologist involved in the decision making process alongside a project archaeologist.

Being the first agreement of this kind in Manitoba, I recognize the challenges associated with creating this document to reflect and accommodate different interests (e.g. provincial government, industry, First Nation). Therefore, I am not surprised that the protection plan was modeled after Manitoba's compliance measures of evaluating heritage significance based on archaeological expertise. In addition, the plan used definitions of heritage resources outlined in The Heritage Resources Act as an acceptable corollary. High values are assigned to found human remains, sites with "concentrations of diagnostic, rare or ceremonial/sacred artifacts, and petroforms, pictographs, and tent rings" (Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation 2006:22). Medium values are given to sites with archaeological evidence of campsites, workstations, quarries, kill sites, and historic settlements. Low priority sites are those with isolated finds and undiagnostic lithic scatters. Limited or no efforts are made to identify, document and protect sites lacking archaeological evidence such as places with Cree names and ceremonial sites like dancing circles. Further, there are no concrete provisions made to ensure that ethinisiwin (traditional knowledge) is included in the interpretation of archaeological sites and objects in the plan, even though it is outlined in the principles of Nisichawayasihk Nehethowuk customary law. Although there are well-meaning intentions behind this agreement, it is evident that the construction of the plan was based primarily on western legal understandings of heritage. Whether the full protection of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage in this region was achieved through this agreement and plan remains questionable to some members of the community.

Subsequent heritage resource protection plans have been proposed for other development projects such as the Keeyask Generation Project involving four First Nations (Fox Lake Cree Nation, Tataskweyak Cree Nation, War Lake First Nation and York Factory First Nation). The draft of this plan is similar to that found with the Wuskwatim project with the absence of an archaeologist representing the First Nations interests (Keeyask Hydropower Limited Partnership 2013). Similar issues are anticipated to be encountered with this heritage resources protection plan because it is modeled almost exactly after the one associated with the Wuskwatim generating station project.

Resource and antiquities model of heritage protection

The majority of strategies employed in Manitoba that incorporate First Nation interests in their heritage also follow a resource model of protection (Yellowhorn 1999, 2002). Under this model,

Artifacts and sites stop being the products of native labour and instead appear naturally in the ground like other resources. As cultural resources, heritage objects can be placed legally beyond the reach of aboriginal people...Human remains and artifacts become analogous to objects formed in nature and like other non-renewable resources are uncontrollable in terms of production and location. Ostensibly, CRM is about preserving archaeological material as though they are non-renewable resources deserving protection, but built into the model is the rationale for harvesting cultural resources under the guise of salvage.

(Yellowhorn 2002:65)

The only exception when a heritage resource ceases to be a resource and become cultural property is when it crosses a provincial or federal boundary to become cultural property (Yellowhorn 2002). Manitoba heritage legislation requires that a permit is needed for any heritage objects to be taken outside of provincial boundaries. Outside of these boundaries heritage resources are then subject to the Cultural Property Export and

Import Act that controls the movement and sale of found objects (Yellowhorn 2002). Under this act, objects that are of archaeological, prehistorical, historical, artistic or scientific interest, including those made by the Aboriginal peoples of Canada are considered cultural property and subject to protection.

As an alternative to the resource model, Yellowhorn (2002) advocates for an antiquities model of protection that is employed by this act. Equating heritage resources with cultural property encourages an heirloom effect that recognizes the intrinsic cultural value of heritage resources and there is no worry of their destruction or obliteration (Yellowhorn 2002). The concept of an heirloom effect is analogous to an estate where, “places and possessions carry a meaning only to the heirs. Their intrinsic value lies beyond utilitarian worth because of who owned them previously, rather than for what they are” (Yellowhorn 2002:71). As memories and experiences become associated with place and objects they become imbued with feelings and emotions. As these places and objects are retained in the family through generations to become cherished heirlooms, destruction or sale becomes unthinkable (Yellowhorn 2002). “Aboriginal people appreciate the heirloom effect because an internalist view of the past emanates from the spiritual and emotional link to ancient ancestors” (Yellowhorn 2002:72).

Yellowhorn (2002) suggests that there are also legal arguments supporting the use of an antiquities model to protect Indigenous heritage resources. Equating antiquities as cultural property allows the federal government to enact laws across Canada that does not trample on the resource rights of the provinces. Currently, the only existing legal means where all First Nations can enact an antiquities model of protection on reserve lands is through the Indian Act (Yellowhorn 1999, 2002). Councils can pass Band Council

Resolutions at any time that result in bylaws supporting heritage protection. First Nations signatory to the FNLM agreement can also adopt similar bylaws and land codes.

The concept of an antiquities model emphasizes the importance of exercising agency in heritage protection at the local level. Defining the intrinsic cultural value and significance of heritage resources at the community level, reinforces the community's sense of ownership over their heritage and reaffirms their self-worth as a collective identity (Logan 2008). Further, this approach may also help to identify other strategies and mechanisms used to maintain and protect the community's cultural rights to their heritage. As the values and strategies become articulated and codified in policies, local expertise on heritage matters not only becomes validated at the community level but also externally. Consequentially, encouraging agency at the local level in heritage resources protection and conservation produces an heirloom effect.

In other jurisdictions, First Nations have been able to exercise agency at the local level in heritage protection through internal heritage management policies and modern day treaty agreements. A proactive strategy adopted by First Nations in British Columbia is the use of formal heritage policies developed upon the initiative of the community and not in response to any particular development project. Their format merges action and philosophies important to the community into policy that is applied to the whole traditional territory (Hammond 2009). These policies reflect a hybridization approach that employs a resources and an antiquities model in heritage resources protection. For example, the Stó:lō Heritage Policy Manual (Stó:lō Nation Lalemsye Stó:lō Si:ya:m (LYSS) 2003) outlines measures in which intrinsic cultural values are assigned to particular heritage resources and intellectual property, as well as options in heritage site

management in accordance with Stó:lō principles and beliefs. Further, the policy incorporates a permitting process that mimics provincial government approaches in heritage resources management in an effort to maintain those standards (Hammond 2009; Stó:lō Nation Lalemsye Stó:lō Si:ya:m (LYSS) 2003). The provisions of this policy are enacted in conjunction with compliance measures associated with the BC Heritage Conservation Act.

Other approaches include modern day treaty agreements with the Crown that often reflect a resource model approach to heritage protection. Aboriginal philosophies and values regarding heritage resources are often omitted from these formal documents. Instead, they are incorporated into bylaws passed by Band Council Resolution or heritage policies to complement these agreements. An example follows the Final Umbrella Agreement between Canada, Yukon and the Council for Yukon Indians which was developed as a common template for modern day treaty agreements signed by the individual First Nations in the Yukon (Yukon Government 1993). The agreement includes a section on heritage that outlines the different policies concerning the care, protection and disposition of ethnographic moveable heritage resources, heritage sites, place names and burial sites. Each signatory First Nation adapts the agreement to develop provisions that reflect local interests in heritage protection. In addition, the agreement endorses the development of a Yukon Heritage Resources Board to make recommendations that respecting the management of different heritage resources.

Another example is the modern day treaty signed between Tsawwassen First Nation, Canada and British Columbia that includes a chapter on Culture and Heritage (Tsawwassen First Nation 2006). This treaty agreement recognizes that power of the

Tsawwassen First nation to make laws concerning the protection and conservation of heritage resources and cultural property (Tsawwassen First Nation 2006). Also included in this treaty is monetary compensation to the First Nation by the province to establish a Cultural Purposes Fund for matters pertaining to Tsawwassen artifacts and archaeological human remains.

Concerns over heritage protection

As Aboriginal peoples become increasingly active in exercising agency over the protection of their heritage resources, many concerns have emerged over the practice and products of archaeology, the relevance of provincial heritage legislation and policies, and the role of cultural resources management.

Questioning the practice and products of archaeology

In addition to questioning the right of archaeologists to speak for the archaeological past, the Indigenous critique focuses on whether archaeologists are reliable interpreters of Indigenous history (Allen 1988; Smith 2012). Indigenous peoples question the accuracy of archaeological interpretations in narrating Indigenous histories prior to contact. For example, archaeological narratives in CRM reports distributed to governments and industry often present a history based on archaeological practice and methods of interpretation based on Western intellectual traditions. These reports are often filled with lengthy descriptions of artifacts, sites, and chronologies that focus on changes in technology. The presentation of artifacts, time and cultures in a linear, chronological fashion does not reflect Indigenous understandings of time. Further, lengthy descriptions, classifications of artifacts and assignments of arbitrary names bear limited relevance to Indigenous histories. Archaeologists and anthropologists are criticized as having, “done a

fairly decent job of describing the customs themselves but have failed miserably in finding and interpreting the meaning behind the customs' (Little Bear 2000:81).

If oral traditions are incorporated in these narratives, they are often used as supplementary evidence to support archaeological interpretation and portrayed in a secondary manner to material culture (Anyon, et al. 1997). Instead, oral traditions should be valued on its own merit as evidence of Indigenous history prior to contact. Such practices suggest that there is a lack of understanding in archaeology concerning the nature of oral histories that needs to be addressed to ensure the success of future collaborations with Indigenous peoples.

In archaeological literature it is also common to find the continued use of terms like 'prehistoric' which, 'implies that the archaeological record is not part of history and Aboriginal peoples have little history, all of which is tied into Euro-Canadian history; a preferable term is 'precontact' (Syms 2009:495). Tied to this criticism is the use of categories for artifacts and terms emphasizing dichotomies to describe temporal and spatial abstracts in archaeology (Linklater 1994; Million 2003). These dichotomies are not reflected in Aboriginal language use, which focuses on verbs rather than nouns to encapsulate relationships (Little Bear 1998, 2000; Wilson 2001).

Questioning the role of stewardship

As Indigenous peoples gain an active role in heritage management, they challenge the legitimacy of archaeological stewardship over Indigenous heritage resources, which is central to cultural resources management. "Stewardship is viewed as the disciplinary obligation on part of the expert in archaeological caretaking, indispensable in promoting heritage preservation. It emphasizes archaeology as the preferred means to evaluate the

past to determine on behalf of the public what is significant and what is not” (Nicholas 2009:206). As steward of a collective past, archaeologists attempt to preserve the archaeological record for future generations because they are significant cultural expressions of past human actions providing universal knowledge for humankind. The past is often portrayed as a foreign and mysterious realm requiring archaeological investigation. This sentiment is often found in appeals based on universality of knowledge for humanity such as:

Whether you are a landowner walking across your property and finding heritage objects, a metal detector enthusiast or an archaeologist surveying for sites, we all have an important role in preserving and enriching our knowledge of Manitoba’s ancient heritage. If heritage resources are not managed carefully through proper preservation or protection, then the information they contain will be lost. Everyone must ensure that these irreplaceable resources are properly cared for in order to share with future generations of Manitobans.

(Manitoba Government Department of Culture Heritage and Citizenship 1986:1)

These portrayals serve to bolster public support for nation building and imply that there is no ownership or control over the past as the knowledge that is gained through archaeological interpretation serves all humanity. Pardoe (1992:140) suggests that archaeology has, “legitimized our curiosity by appealing to the noble view of world history, a democracy of knowledge for all...(which) no one person could own.”

Other examples involves the justification for studying human skeletal remains as an appeal to a universal humanity as suggested by Turner (1986:1), “I explicitly assume that no living culture, religion, interest group, or biological population has any moral or legal right to the exclusive use or regulation of ancient human skeletons since all humans are members of the same species, and ancient skeletons are the remnants of duplicable

evolutionary events which all living and future peoples have the right to know about and understand.” Using this logic, archaeologists and anthropologists assume a paternalistic attitude as curators of heritage (Biolsi and Zimmerman 1997). Zimmerman (2001) further criticizes this role where by claiming rights to an Indigenous past as a public heritage is similar to a claim of rights of unlimited access to data from another country.

Inadequacies of policy making and process

Some of the criticisms associated with current heritage legislation in Canada is that it is found to be, “(1) inappropriate or inapplicable, (2) generally too unwieldy and inflexible when it comes to community-held cultural traditions and customary law, and/or (3) because each situation/community is unique”(Nicholas 2009:206). Even though governments are trying to address these criticisms with amendments to current legislation and updated policies, western legal recognition in the protection, evaluation and identification of heritage sites in North America continues to be almost entirely under the jurisdiction of provincial or state agencies and federal governments. The system works to serve in trust of the public that includes Indigenous peoples. However, it may also be patronizing and insensitive to their desires and needs (Nicholas 2009:124).

Harper (1999) uses the following example to illustrate that provincial heritage site officials act according to Eurocentric declarations:

Since 1967, found human remains have been owned by the Province and their custody has rested with the province. A policy concerning the Reporting, Exhumation, and Reburial of Found Human Remains which details the procedures to be followed by persons who discover human remains, how these remains any associated items buried with the person(s) are only to be removed by qualified personnel authorized to do the work, what analysis shall take place, and when the appropriate cultural groups shall be consulted.

(Manitoba Government Department of Culture Heritage and Citizenship 1986:8)

As indicated in the previous chapter, Harper (1999:101) criticizes these statements with the clear indication that official ownership of ancient Aboriginal people belongs to the provincial government where, “policy makers probably never think in terms of these arrangements being reciprocated and to consider the appropriateness (or otherwise) of such policy: i.e., if Indigenous nations were to find old Caucasian remains, that they would belong to the Indigenous nation that found them.” Harper (1999) further clarifies this statement by indicating the hypothetical situation presents a serious flaw from an Indigenous perspective since Indigenous people recognize that they do not ‘own’ dead people but their remains belong to the Creator. This example highlights the insensitivities of policies and process associated with heritage legislation towards Indigenous peoples and policy-makers must be conscious of audience values in the construction of policies.

Other criticisms involve governmental reliance on archaeologists as intermediaries to evaluate the significance of heritage resources and to produce inventories of heritage sites that may be impacted by development. This process is regulated through a permitting process where the government evaluates the eligibility of the “intermediary” to conduct work based on previous work experience and in some jurisdictions, level of post-secondary education. During these assessments, local community involvement, especially Indigenous communities, is limited in most jurisdictions where it is up to the archaeologist to make a request for their participation in “good faith” (Denhez 2000). The absence of Indigenous involvement in evaluations of heritage significance risks privileging the material, scientific, and observable world over the spiritual, experiential and unquantifiable aspects of heritage sites, ancient peoples and

artifacts (Atalay 2006). Therefore, it is likely that inventories of heritage sites resulting from CRM work reflect an inadequate proportion of heritage resources important to Indigenous communities and leaving them vulnerable to destruction.

This reliance on intermediaries continues in recent policies focused on the engagement of Aboriginal peoples in cultural resources management contexts. In these policies, archaeology continues to be the dominant approach in identifying heritage resources as found in the guidelines created by the Government of Ontario (2010) for consulting archaeologists to engage Aboriginal communities in archaeological assessment projects. The purpose of engagement is to consider “the interest of Aboriginal communities in the archaeological assessment, the protection of Aboriginal archaeological sites, and the disposition of Aboriginal artifacts and ancestral remains” (Government of Ontario 2010:1). Although there are good intentions towards engagement, dissonance over heritage resources is expected since authority in these assessments remains with the archaeologist. Archaeology is the primary means to assess, interpret and identify cultural resources to be impacted by development, overshadowing Indigenous ways and methodologies of interpreting archaeological resources important to their heritage. Further, archaeologists maintain the role of intermediaries by reporting to the government on the outcome of engagement on behalf of the Aboriginal community involved. Issues with such practices have emerged during duty-to-consult consultations since negotiations concerning land should be conducted on a government-to-government basis involving Chief and Council and the Crown, not through intermediaries.

The reliance on intermediaries by governments and industry is also standard practice in Environmental Impact Assessments where ecological studies evaluate the

significance of land, natural resources, and wildlife endangered by natural resource extraction and land-based developments (Nasady 2002). Williams (1995) dismisses the use of intermediaries to conduct these assessments combined with limited Aboriginal engagement as discriminatory in his discussion on the “truth rationale”. With governments legitimizing the role of intermediaries suggests that they are believed to be the proper group to define the “truth” of heritage and the environment as it pertains to Aboriginal peoples.

Similar arguments may be applied in Harper’s (1999) example where Manitoba’s burial policy determines who is qualified to conduct work to exhume burials and which cultural groups should be contacted, even if they are known to be ancestral Indigenous remains. These practices discredit or ignore Indigenous methodologies in understanding Aboriginal heritage and knowledge. These perceptions are evident in Canadian federal literature on heritage policies and archaeology in statements such as, “What is the likelihood that archaeology plays a significant role in federal policy? The answer, offered by the federal government itself, is that archaeology is often our only clue to Canada’s past” (Denhez 2007:7) or “We possess written records for only the most recent 400 years of the 12,000 year history of Canada’s peoples.... The principal means we have to trace the settling of our country and to chronicle the lives of 600 generations is through the study and interpretation of their archaeological remains” (Denhez 2000:24). Such statements infer that arrowheads, pottery and archaeological sites existing prior to contact are the only remaining evidence of Indigenous histories in Canada. Oral traditions are ignored as being valid tools that document Indigenous histories in Canada prior to contact.

Archaeological significance and archaeology as a technology of government

Another issue associated with stewardship and the efficiency of heritage legislation in protecting Indigenous heritage resources involves the concept of archaeological significance which underpins every aspect of CRM (Darvill 2005). As an intermediary for the governments, archaeologists are requested to assess the value of sites and burials in terms of their “heritage significance” on a local, provincial and national scale. For example, archaeologists are expected to comment on, “the relative importance places on various site characteristics, such as size, quantity and quality of cultural materials, age, cultural relationships, physical condition, history, etc. which have been used to assess the heritage resource value” (Badertscher 1990:7). Further, archaeologists also provide an evaluation on the extent in which development will destroy or alter the heritage site, which is based on a cumulative score of heritage resource values. The values used to assess archaeological significance are modeled on the natural sciences with the idea that the past can be understood through use of universal laws applicable to all societies (Smith 2005). The measures of significance facilitate decisions as to what heritage resources will be: 1) protected, 2) salvaged with impending destruction or 3) completely destroyed by development. Often the sites with the densest collections of artifacts, most spectacular remains and modified ground are favoured by archaeologists and most likely to be protected under heritage legislation (Wobst 2005). This practice leads to a spatial bias towards these heritage sites and leaves those places devoid of archaeological evidence but important to Indigenous heritage vulnerable to destruction.

Allen and Phillips (2010:35) note that archaeological significance can be used in ways not intended by experts but by policy makers to regulate social and political

problems at a planning level. For example, Canadian history reveals that governments have used archaeology as a tool to build national unity or to maintain economic interests with industry. The current cultural resources management model implies that archaeology offers neutral and value-free knowledge of the past, leaving heritage protection and the construction of history open to the intervention of administrators, politicians and their policy makers (Smith 2004). Archaeology thus becomes inextricably tied to the technology of government (Ross 2010; Smith 2004). Further by controlling archaeology through government funding means that governments can define what is, or is not, relevant in terms of national priorities, which can override local interests (Ucko 1990).

Constitutional rights to heritage

First Nations in British Columbia who question the relevance of the Heritage Conservation Act and its role in protecting their heritage resources for future generation are recognizing many of these issues. Much of the conflict stems from the province retaining full stewardship over First Nations heritage resources.

The current legislation and policies frameworks leave little room for the incorporation of cultural laws and protocols specific to each First Nation, which results in an urgency to establish a flexible range of policies that respond to the specific concerns of each community. First Nations are frustrated by the lack of local mechanisms to address their concerns and resolve immediate operational conflicts. Interim measures must be developed to ensure that First nations are enable to manage their cultural heritage resources in the short term while longer-term strategies can be developed and implemented at the provincial level.

(The First Nations Leadership Council 2011:3)

To address these issues, the First Nations Leadership Council who represents a collective First Nations in British Columbia developed a Heritage Action Plan to facilitate discussions on heritage conservation management at the local level (The First Nations

Leadership Council 2011). The idea is to mobilize efforts collectively and advocate for the reform of current heritage legislation and policies that are based on a resource model of heritage protection.

What the First Nations in British Columbia, as well as other Aboriginal peoples in Canada seek is the protection of cultural manifestations that reflect their worldview that includes heritage resources. “What Aboriginal peoples would like to see protected...are not so much words, pictures, or acts but rather the values, beliefs and principles that give these meaning” (Christie 1998:447). As Christie (1998) indicates, like Yellowhorn (1999, 2002), these value systems are best protected through internal mechanisms held by Aboriginal communities. Yet, these efforts are largely impeded by Canadian legal mechanisms that extend full control beyond their reach such as heritage legislation, which maintains Crown ownership over Aboriginal heritage resources, and archaeological human remains. First Nations, like those in British Columbia, attempt to dispute such legislative controls through the conception of Aboriginal and Treaty rights that are entrenched constitutionally under section 35(1) of the Constitution Act (1982). By constitutionally entrenching these rights, the Crown has offered “its protection to such peoples, accepted that they would retain their lands, as well as their political and cultural institutions and customary laws, unless the terms of treaties ruled this out or legislation was enacted in to the contrary”(Slattery 1992:736). Legal rulings such as *Delgamuukw v. Regina* (1991 and 1993), *Regina v. Sparrow* (1990), and *R. v. VanderPeet* (1996) reinforce this notion by recognizing that Aboriginal rights were not extinguished during the establishment of the Canadian Confederation in 1867. Therefore, Aboriginal and Treaty rights must be respected and the Crown has a duty or obligation to consult

meaningfully with First Nations and Aboriginal communities if there is the potential for a government decision to adversely affect these rights.

In a legal context, Aboriginal peoples are left with the burden of defining the nature and quality of rights (Joseph and Joseph 2012). The source and nature of rights and burden of proof must meet a series of tests that interface with concept of culture which were drawn up by the courts as an outcome of these legal cases (Thom 2001). The nature of Aboriginal rights as they are defined by court decisions are based on tests that do not focus directly on Aboriginal culture but rather, “the protection of Aboriginal activities, such as fishing in particular places, at particular times by particular individuals or groups, for particular reasons” (Christie 1998:449). This approach leads to issues concerning the reconciliation of Aboriginal perspectives with the definition of Aboriginal rights as being specific, precise practices, and cultural traditions integral to the distinctive Aboriginal cultures making claim (Thom 2001). Some criticize the reliance of these tests as restricting contemporary Aboriginal development. Their emphasis on the demonstration of precontact practices portrays an essentialist and static view of Aboriginal identity and culture (Borrows 1998; Christie 1998). Instead, Zalweski (1997:451-52) argues that in order for Aboriginal perspectives to be taken into account, “the courts would have to examine the social structure and beliefs of that Aboriginal group” as “it is the laws and ideologies of Aboriginal groups, not mere practices to which those laws and ideologies give rise”. An ideal that has long been taken into consideration prior to these legal cases by Cove (1982:11-12 in Thom 2001) who suggests that cultural geography studies of Aboriginal people, “would be advantageously integrated with studies of cosmology in an effort to build more holistic systems of land tenure that take

Aboriginal perspectives into account when arguing in Aboriginal rights and title cases.” I believe that similar approaches should be adopted when arguing for heritage as an Aboriginal right, a subject that I am exploring in this dissertation. Since many legal decisions are focused on activities as an Aboriginal right, a holistic approach would strengthen arguments for Aboriginal control over their heritage by demonstrating how their interests meet the conditions outlined in the VanDer Peet/Delgamuukw tests (Christie 1998).

By articulating how heritage is an Aboriginal or Treaty right, then it is possible to understand how archaeological practices that are endorsed by the Crown in the form of impact assessments and archaeological overviews infringe on this right. Archaeological overviews and impact assessments are employed by the Crown to document how development that infringes on Aboriginal rights can proceed with minimal impact on archaeological resources (Thom 1999). First Nations have exercised this right by responding to developers who threaten their heritage sites with legal action (Fladmark 1993; McLellan 1995). Both parties hire archaeological consultants to identify archaeological sites at which work is completed according to compliance measures outlined by the provisions of provincial or environmental legislation. As Thom (2001:24) indicates these strategies, “were never intended to address fundamental concerns over Aboriginal rights, and are inadequate to the task. First Nations often get involved in long involved negotiations over these site specific heritage projects, *while their overall interests in the land and resources – their broad Aboriginal rights and title – are impacted with Crown claims to having satisfied requirements for limited infringement through mitigation of impact to heritage sites*” [emphasis added]. This implies that the

Crown is making decisions on the disposition of Aboriginal heritage resources that include archaeological sites and ancestral human remains without proper consultation with Aboriginal peoples.

The Kitkatla Band identified such infringements in *Kitkatla Band v. British Columbia* (2002) by declaring provisions of the Heritage Conservation Act as unconstitutional. Heritage objects and sites important to the First Nation were argued as representing the core of ‘indianess’ and therefore protection of these heritage resources would necessitate the engagement of federal powers over Aboriginal affairs. As a result, any decisions made by the province through the provisions of the act were challenged constitutionally. The court determined that the act does not single out Aboriginal peoples or impair their status as Indians because all heritage resources are treated equally in their protection. Further, the ruling identified that the manner in which the act is tailored does not affect the established rights but improves the protection of Aboriginal heritage and safeguards the presence and memory of the heritage objects identified in this case. The court ruled that the Heritage Conservation Act was, “highly sensitive to native cultural interests. At the same time, it appears to strike an appropriate balance between native and non-native interests” (at para. 62). Therefore, the Heritage Conservation Act was deemed constitutional. This decision was influenced by weak evidentiary basis provided in this case where the court indicated that, “little evidence has been offered by the appellants with respect to the relationship between the CMTs (Culturally Modified Trees) and Kitkatla culture in this area” (at para. 70). Arguments presented in this case could have been strengthened by articulating rights to heritage through use of a holistic approach associating ideologies and laws important to the First Nation with the heritage resources

in question. Further, it could be argued that the decision is based on assumptions that mechanisms held by the First Nation to protect their heritage and their understanding and values of heritage resources is similar to that of the Crown. This assumption is in conflict with the recognition of the courts that the nature and quality of rights are to be defined by Aboriginal peoples. Therefore, it is important that understandings of heritage resources and their protection be articulated from the perspective and ideologies of the First Nations in such cases to demonstrate the existence of dissonance over Indigenous heritage resources.

Constitutional arguments involving Aboriginal heritage resources present an interesting opportunity for reform in cultural resource management. The issues surrounding court decisions regarding Aboriginal rights and control over Aboriginal heritage resources are related to the nature of evidence presented in court. The evidence presented in these cases is based on a resource model approach to heritage resource protection, which removes the intrinsic cultural value of heritage resources important to Aboriginal peoples. Instead, to support Indigenous claims, these legal cases require proof based on an antiquities model that reflects the Aboriginal and Treaty rights in the control of cultural properties. In *Kitkatla v. British Columbia* (2002), the judge implied that it might be possible for future litigation to demonstrate heritage resources as going to the “core of indianess”. Such rulings open the possibility for the development of federal heritage legislation to protect Indigenous heritage resources and that there may be a need to reform approaches in cultural resources management.

Aboriginal consultation is a process that involves many departments from both provincial and federal jurisdictions and all Aboriginal peoples. Although it is left to

Aboriginal peoples to define the source and quality of their Aboriginal and Treaty rights, governments rely on these definitions to understand what rights would be potentially affected by government decisions and trigger a consultation. These definitions are primarily identified from legal decisions arising in Canadian jurisprudence, leading to rights being equated with activities. However, governments also gain an understanding of these rights through consultations carried out with the communities. Therefore, it is imperative for internal policies to be developed within governments that emphasize that Aboriginal and Treaty rights go beyond activities but are the laws and ideologies maintained through different cultural manifestations. Further, an understanding of these rights can only be defined at the local level not through broad universal definitions. Because consultation is a broad overarching process involving many different parties and affects the relationship between the Crown and Aboriginal peoples, it would be beneficial for governments to revisit their compliance measures that have the potential to infringe on Aboriginal and Treaty rights. However, since the focus of discussions during these consultations is on resources, the political reality is that cultural resources management will likely maintain a resource model of protection where heritage resources will continue to be equated with natural resources. Instead, perhaps these measures can be altered as a hybrid approach to accommodate local understandings of heritage that articulate the intrinsic cultural value of heritage resources on a local level.

Concluding remarks

Thorley (2002:123) writes, “While there has been growing support for Indigenous perspectives, it is doubtful whether wider recognition will be sufficient to resolve underlying conflicts of value”. The status quo is maintained in heritage protection should

one follow this mentality, a process that I have demonstrated in this chapter as ineffective towards protecting Indigenous heritage resources. Further, such notions encourage the continued ignorance, confusion, and conflicts that surround heritage management, archaeology and Indigenous heritage. Archaeology does have a valid role in helping Aboriginal peoples construct new historical narratives on the path towards cultural restoration and understanding of “jagged worldviews”. Successful collaborations involving Indigenous peoples in cultural resources management requires practitioners to become familiar with Indigenous understandings of heritage, Indigenous knowledge systems and worldview. This is a topic that I will attempt to explore in the next chapter. Engaging in such discussions will lead practitioners involved in cultural resources management to, “ask new questions that we never asked before, it will help us challenge old answers that we accepted to readily, and it will provide fresh insights into questions that we currently seek to answer” (VanPool and Vanpool 2003:76).

Chapter 3 Deconstructing and reconstructing heritage

Introduction

The previous chapter highlights the limitations associated with current practices in cultural resources management in protecting heritage resources important to Aboriginal cultural identity. Archaeology dominates public policies concern with heritage protection. A large proportion of heritage sites documented in government databases and registries are archaeological sites. This number continues to grow with government agencies reliance on archaeologists as intermediaries to identify and define sites of “heritage significance”. These practices remain the status quo in cultural resources management as heritage legislation continues to emphasize the protection of built heritage and archaeological objects and sites. Yet, there is increasing recognition that definitions of heritage extend beyond what is found archaeologically, which leaves many to question ‘is archaeological data actually heritage?’ (Waterton and Smith 2009).

Deconstructing heritage

The previous chapter illustrates that heritage is valued differently between the Crown and Aboriginal peoples. Although these differences are becoming widely recognized, Indigenous knowledge systems, including heritage, remain poorly understood in mainstream archaeology and cultural resources management. In this chapter, I demonstrate the need to reconsider definitions of heritage found in heritage policies, procedures and cultural resources management. Drawing upon Smith’s (1999) strategies for decolonization, I deconstruct and reconstruct heritage as it is interpreted through archaeology and Indigenous knowledge systems to correct any misinterpretations of Indigenous heritage. With this chapter, I hope to nurture the reader’s familiarity with this

topic, enough to encourage reflection on the knowledge being shared. By engaging the reader in this discussion promotes phenomenology which encourages understanding, experience and acknowledgement (Smith and Jackson 2008). The purpose of this chapter is to train archaeologists and others, “to not only understand the abstract point that there are other ways of seeing but also to actually see in different ways” (Sheehan and Lilley 2008:106).

Although I approach this topic by deconstructing heritage as it is understood through archaeology and Indigenous knowledge systems, my intention is not to provide an essentialist portrayal that contrasts Western and Indigenous knowledge systems or heritage. Instead, the motive for this approach explores a notion supplied by Pettipas (2003) who examines the Aboriginal and archaeological definitions of heritage. According to Pettipas (2003), heritage as archaeologists understand it in Manitoba is assumed to include Aboriginal heritage. However, the term ‘archaeological heritage’ is defined as,

Archaeological sites and artifacts, their relationship to the land and to each other”...To my way of thinking this ignores the identity of the people who originally created the sites and artifacts. If those people were Aboriginals, then the sites and artifacts are expressions of Aboriginal heritage. Calling them “archaeological heritage” obscures that common understanding and at the same time implies something else.

Pettipas (2003:15)

Pettipas (2003) argues that archaeological heritage refers to the heritage of the discipline of archaeology built on Euro-Canadian values, which are reflected in its products (i.e. reports, Borden designations, etc.). “Bearing in mind that archaeology is an aspect of Euro-Canadian culture, it, like any other aspect of culture, can generate its own heritage value.” (Pettipas 2003:15). I examine these concepts of “archaeological heritage”

and “indigenous heritage” by deconstructing the complexities surrounding each term and reconstructing an understanding as to why power imbalances exist over heritage as a knowledge system.

All knowledge systems rely on heritage to support knowledge of economic, spiritual, social, and political value through generations. These values are maintained through symbols of cultural expression that serve to transfer knowledge. As an extension of cultural identity, these symbols are safeguarded through a set of laws. This framework of heritage is universal to all knowledge systems. However, how heritage is interpreted by each society is unique based on the dominant intellectual paradigm guiding the knowledge systems. A paradigm involves epistemologies (ways of knowing), ontologies (philosophical assumptions about the nature of social reality), axiology (ethics and value systems) and methodologies (approach to understanding knowledge).

My approach to deconstructing and reconstructing heritage involves more than just asking the question, ‘What is archaeological and Indigenous heritage?’

Understandings of heritage are constructed through research paradigms that involve:

A way of describing a worldview that informed by philosophical assumptions about the nature of social reality (ontology), ways of knowing (epistemology), and ethics and value systems (axiology). A paradigm also has theoretical assumptions about the research process and the appropriate approach to systematic inquiry (methodology).

(Chilisa 2012:20)

I attempt to deconstruct and reconstruct heritage through an in-depth discussion covering following topics:

- Epistemologies (ways of knowing reality) of heritage from an archaeological and Aboriginal perspective. How is heritage understood from each perspective? What cultural expressions do each group associate with heritage?

- The role of ontology (assumptions about the nature of reality) behind understandings of heritage. Discussion on ontology provide a better understanding to values which inform theory and support methodologies (Sheehan and Lilley 2008). Ontological differences are the source of cultural divergences. Therefore, differences between western and Indigenous approaches to knowledge can only be dealt with coherently at an ontological level (McCumber 2005; Sheehan 2004). What are the underlying assumptions that organize and guide our approaches to gain knowledge?
- Research paradigms applied towards understanding heritage.
- The methodologies (mechanisms behind knowledge recognition, methods used to facilitate the transmission of knowledge and interpretation of reality) applied to understand knowledge and gain values expressed in heritage. How do we approach knowledge to derive meaning?
- Discussion on Indigenous guidelines or laws established to safeguard heritage by supporting the survival of knowledge. These guidelines help maintain respect for knowledge and ensure safety of cultural identity.

Archaeological understandings of heritage

In Western cultures, value in heritage is placed on cultural pursuits where nature is transformed through human agency such as the construction of a building that alters landscapes and the creation of cultural artifacts from natural elements (Battiste and Henderson 2000). This emphasis on physical manifestations of cultural expressions in Western cultures is associated with the inclination for western knowledge systems and methodologies to bind knowledge with discrete, observable and quantifiable entities. Therefore, heritage or cultural resources are often associated with physical and tangible objects. The focus on physical constructs of heritage in Western society supports the development of archaeology and history as disciplines focused on interpreting humanity through material evidence and written text.

For archaeologists, knowledge of cultural identity is interpreted from material culture and the skeletonized remains of flora, fauna and people. In Canada, archaeologists

retell the nation's history mainly by studying symbols of cultural expression from different time periods to include pottery sherds, projectile points and remnants of fur trade posts. Archaeology has produced many narratives on the history of Canada, particularly on the identity of Aboriginal peoples prior to European contact through archaeological heritage. The stories focus on archaeological interpretations of how Aboriginal peoples lived their daily lives such as what food they ate, their social and political organization, their art and spirituality.

Interpretations of archaeological heritage are based mainly on comparisons of shape, design and manufacture of tools made from animal bone or stone (e.g. spear points, arrowheads and harpoons) or reconstructions of pots from pottery sherds. This approach is based on theories that shape, design and manufacture of pots and tools are the result of skills and patterned behavior gained through teaching and learning in groups and shared through generations. An individual continues with this learned tradition, heritage develops by imitating style. Engaging in these actions nurtures an individual's sense of belonging and reaffirms their identity in a collective (Michlovic 1981). These comparisons of contrast and similarities are thought to lend insight into the social, technological, and ideological constructs of a society, both temporally and spatially (Gregg 1985). Instances where there are contemporaneous differences in styles of pottery and tools are thought to be expressions of human agency where a society is asserting their presence and signifying their territory to other peoples (Hodder 1979). Gregg (1985) suggests that these intentional symbols of cultural expression are driven by economic, ideational and/or sociological motives. Each group of artifacts with similar styles and/or shape is assigned to a category with an arbitrary name and examined with other data such

as radiocarbon dates to associate them with a particular chronological time period. Names are assigned to time periods and are used to characterize the collective identities of cultures and peoples thought to have lived at that time. Often the spatial distributions of similarities in artifacts are compared to interpret the social networks of groups through migration and trade networks across a region.

The following example is an archaeological chronological history produced for north central Manitoba based on the material culture recovered from the region (figure 3.1). There is a particular sequence in the chronology referring to the time period between 8000 to 6000 years ago as the *Paleo* or *Paleo-indian* time period. During this time, archaeologists suggest that there is a movement of large game hunters from the south to northern Manitoba with the draining of glacial Lake Agassiz into what is known today as Hudson Bay. The findings of a type of spear point, referred to as ‘Agate Basin’ suggests that people moved to northern Manitoba in pursuit of large game mammals. Narrative accounts in archaeology often refer to cultures by the name assigned to the technology associated with a culture such as in this example, “In the dialogue of various complexes that will appear below, we will extend their formal names (like “Caribou Lake”) to refer to the once-living cultures that produced them and to the folk that lived the cultures of which the complexes are but the physical remnants. Examples would be the ‘Caribou Lake culture’ and the ‘Caribou Lake People’” (Pettipas 2011:19). I believe that archaeologists should reflect on this common practice found throughout their discipline when interpreting material culture associated with Indigenous identity. Such practices disenfranchise Aboriginal peoples in how they see their history and are detrimental to Indigenous identity. They emphasize the dominant culture’s ideological interpretations of

Aboriginal material culture, which continue to promote romantic stereotypes of Aboriginal culture as a foreign and becoming extinct at time of contact.

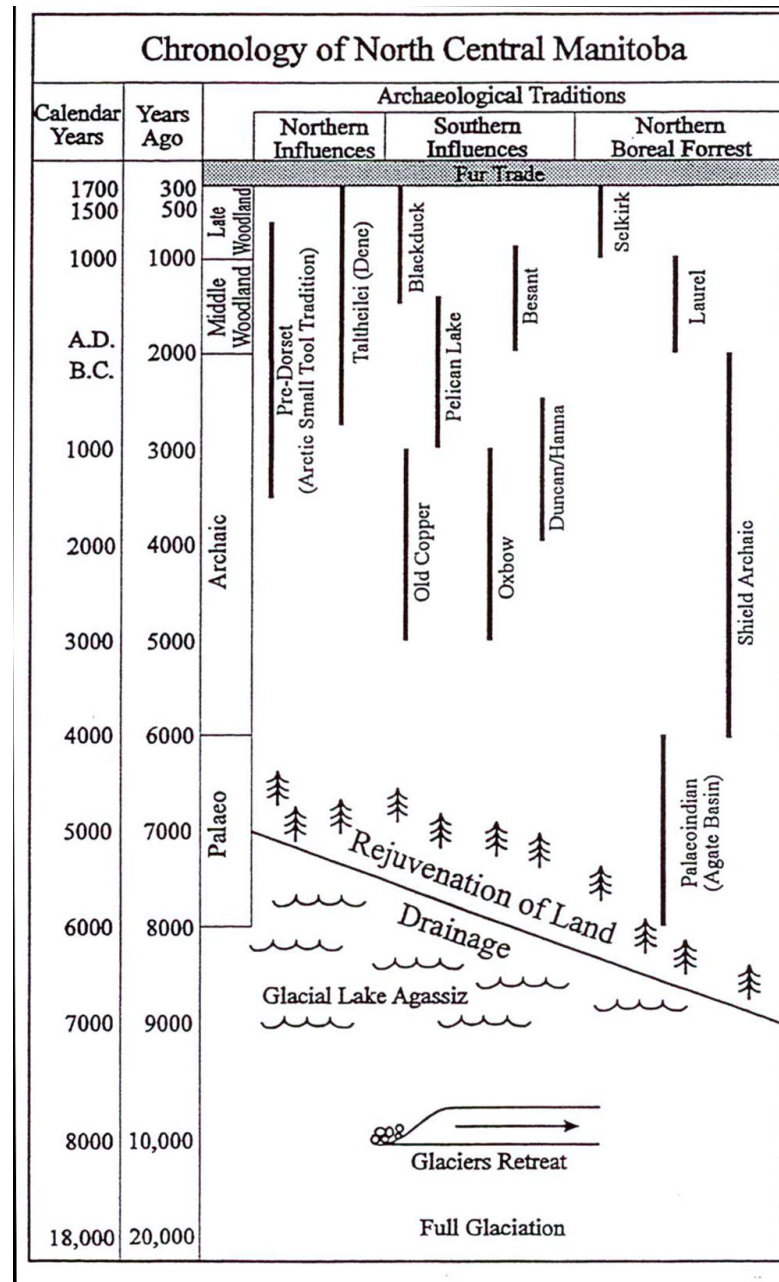


Figure 3.1 - Archaeological chronology reconstructed for north central Manitoba and associated regional influences (taken with permission from Linklater 1994).

Dominant research paradigms in archaeology

The development of chronological histories highlights how archaeology has predominantly operated on positivistic/post-positivistic research paradigms to interpret knowledge and heritage from the archaeological record. Positivism holds the scientific method as the only way to establish truth and objective reality (Chilisa 2012). The methods, techniques, and procedures used in natural sciences are thought to provide the best frameworks to study the social world (Hitchcock and Hughes 1995). The shift towards post-positivism emerged during the mid-20th century with the recognition that reality cannot be known with certainty and error does persist in observations leaving theory revisable. However, objectivity is achieved by using multiple methods and observations and by triangulating data that best approximates what is seen in reality. Positivists and post-positivists assume that there is a single, tangible reality that remains constant across time and setting. Knowledge is seen as inherent to a natural science where it can be empirically tested. Further, attempts are made to conduct investigations that are value free or unbiased to achieve objectivity in research results. However, with post-positivism it is recognized that this is impossible as the researcher has the potential to bias outcomes with his or her theories, hypothesis and background. Positivism and post-positivism apply a research approach that predicts and tests theories and finds relationships between variables or through cause-effect relationships (Chilisa 2012).

Although positivism/post-positivism approaches dominate archaeological research, cultural anthropology has influenced archaeologists in applying other Western-Eurocentric approaches such as the interpretive paradigm. An interpretive research paradigm focuses on understanding humanity with the ideal that reality is socially

constructed and knowledge is therefore subjective (Chilisa 2012; Creswell 2009; Creswell and Clark 2011). With an emphasis in human agency or individuality, reality is a personal or social construct that is mind-dependent and situation-specific. Since truth lies within the human experience, then multiple realities can exist but are bounded in context, time, and space. Interpretive research gathers knowledge of these experiences through observations and interviews of participants in their natural settings. Examples that operate on an interpretive research paradigm include phenomenology, the exploration of truth through human experience which is bound by time, space and context and hermeneutics, the reading and exploring human text to gain a sense of social context in which it was produced which occurs within tradition, space, time and a situation (Chilisa 2012). Other common research designs using an interpretive approach include ethnography, biography, case study, and grounded theory (Creswell 2009).

During the mid-20th century, criticisms towards positivism/post-positivism and interpretive approaches emerged with rising civil rights movements highlighting the injustices imparted on minority groups. One criticism highlighted the observation that most research studies in psychology and sociology were being conducted by white intellectual males focused on male subjects (Gilligan 1982). Other criticisms identified projects that applied western historical and cultural-bound research frameworks that were found to marginalize ways of knowing important to non-western cultures resulting in irrelevant research outcomes (Chilisa 2012). For example, interpretive paradigms are criticized for treating Indigenous ways of knowing as, “barriers to research or exotic customs with which research need to be familiar in order to carry out their work without causing offence” (L Smith 1999:15).

Such criticisms have led to the development of the transformative paradigm which denotes a family of research designs influenced by various philosophies and theories with a common theme of emancipating and transforming communities through group action (Mertens 2010). This paradigm recognizes that reality is comprised of multiple layers that are constructed by social location. Knowledge that emanates from research can be true if it is used to empower and transform the lives of the people involved. Therefore, the purpose of studies applying a transformative paradigm is to, “destroy myths, illusions, and false knowledge and therefore empower people to act to transform society” (Chilisa 2012:36). Action research and participatory action research are common research designs that follow a transformative paradigm.

Today, archaeologists recognize the limitations of positivistic/post-positivistic and interpretive research paradigms in conducting research that impacts descendant communities and Indigenous peoples. A growing collective is advocating for the replacement of these research models with more socially and politically self-conscious modes of research that incorporates different cultural perspectives in the interpretation of the “past” (McGuire 2003; Moser, et al. 2002). Archaeologists are undertaking new research directions based on transformative research paradigms to work in collaboration with Indigenous peoples and rewrite narratives of Indigenous history as it is known from the archaeological record (e.g. Lyons, et al. 2010; Nicholas, et al. 2008; Smith and Jackson 2008). Facilitating this process is the increasing number of Indigenous archaeologists emerging in the field (Nicholas 2010a). These collaborations have led to Aboriginal communities to use archaeology as a tool in representing their own interests related to land claims and heritage management (Anyon, et al. 1997; Thorley 2002).

The Collaborative Inquiry Framework is an example of a model that operates on a transformative paradigm by guiding research in four steps: forming a group of co-researchers, creating the conditions for group learning, acting on the inquiry question, and making meaning by constructing group knowledge (Bray, et al. 2000; Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2008). This approach is an extension of the Participatory Action Research (PAR) model, which focuses on the involvement of researchers working in tandem with clients throughout the investigative process and gathering conventional data on populations (Bray, et al. 2000). The Collaborative Inquiry framework extends the practices of PAR further by,

Focusing on the personal experiences of the researchers, in addition to the scholarly methodologies, building broad understanding, not merely specific problem-solving, and explicitly establishing the group of co-researchers, in addition to the scholarly methodologies, building broad understanding, not merely specific problem-solving, and explicitly establishing the group of co-researchers as a group of peers

(Bray, et al. 2000:38)

Although transformative research paradigms are being incorporated into archaeological research, the following issues still emerge when archaeologists attempt to construct narratives of Indigenous history:

- Language use – Archaeologists still continue to use the terms like ‘prehistoric’, to describe Aboriginal heritage and history prior to European contact. This is a remnant practice clearly tied to the discipline’s roots in Western intellectual traditions. The term “prehistoric”, “implies that the archaeological record is not part of history and Aboriginal peoples have little history, all of which is tied into Euro-Canadian history; a preferable term is “precontact”” (Syms 2009:495). This criticism includes the use of categories to describe artifacts, as well as terms which emphasize dichotomies to describe temporal and spatial abstracts in archaeology (Linklater 1994; Million 2003). Such dichotomies are not reflected in Aboriginal language, which focuses on verbs than nouns to emphasize relationships (Little Bear 1998, 2000; Wilson 2001).

- Use of oral traditions – There are criticisms towards the lack of understanding towards oral traditions and their application in archaeological narratives. Oral traditions that are incorporated into archaeological narratives are often used to supplement historical chronologies and are considered inferior to material culture as evidence of the past (Anyon, et al. 1997).
- Relevance of archaeological interpretations and narratives – “[Anthropologists] have done a fairly decent job of describing the customs themselves but have failed miserably in finding and interpreting the meaning behind the customs” (Little Bear 2001:81). A similar case may be directed towards archaeologists where archaeological interpretations and narratives are criticized for bearing little resemblance as to how Aboriginal people view themselves, their heritage and history (Linklater 1994).

Influence of ontology in Western intellectual traditions

An initial assumption as to why these issues persist may be due to a lack of understanding towards Indigenous knowledge systems on part of the researchers. Instead, I believe that they are the result of methodologies rooted in disparate epistemologies that are being applied to interpret Indigenous knowledges. These difficulties are best understood on an ontological level since, “all knowledge is relative to the context in which it is generated” (Gordon 1990:15). Ontology refers to the underlying assumptions or theoretical constructs that influence how a person approaches their understanding of reality. “Ontology is fundamental because we cannot operate in the world without basic assumptions concerning the nature of the world or being in it” (Sheehan and Lilley 2008:96). Since ontological differences are the source of cultural divergences, differences between Western and Indigenous approaches to knowledge can only be dealt with coherently at an ontological level (McCumber 2005; Sheehan 2004).

Sheehan and Lilley (2008) suggest that the ontological basis for Western colonialism is rooted in the “rights of expansion” concept, which involves the centralization of material resources. Subsequently, any understandings associated with

these resources become managed from this centre. During this process, the colonial centre becomes the primary authority, the seat of knowledge and the producer of wealth. The “rights of expansion” concept is the foundation for the development of civilization.

There are underlying theoretical foundations supporting this centralizing tendency associated with colonization. McCumber (2005) suggests that social formation of the West is founded on the concept of the single account of Being consisting of matter and form with matter dominating over form. This model of Western social formation is predominantly found in contemporary societies where authorities are installed to centralize wealth and singularize ways of knowing (McCumber 2005; Sheehan 2004; L Smith 1999). This ontological dominance prevails as “ousiodic civilization” where *ousiodic* is rooted in Aristotle’s metaphysics of *ousia*, referring to all that belongs to Being (McCumber 2005). In this sense, civilization is compared with the parameters that define Being as, “authoritative, singular, centrally oriented, and contextually independent” (Sheehan and Lilley 2008:94). Western ideologies have been ousiodic since Aristotle, in seeking to assign and validate ultimate singular foundations as influenced by Being (Sheehan and Lilley 2008). Therefore, a theoretical basis in centralization shapes the epistemologies (ways of knowing that reality) of a civilization by focusing on hierarchical, classificatory structures.

The tendency towards centralization provides a theoretical foundation as to how dominant Western societies approach and construct knowledge. Centralization in ousiodic civilization remains evident today as simplified aspects of Western understanding that become internalized. “These limited understandings seem to predominate within social formations that crave certainty because they provide a simple

sense of entitlement to progress through a focus on material objectives and evaluations” (Sheehan and Lilley 2008:94). With these expectations of certainty and security, ossified social frameworks construct their legitimacy by focusing on central principles of classification, which often assumes a mystical authority (Sheehan and Lilley 2008). In the establishment of authoritarianism, the subtle centering of understanding and attitudes occurs to a degree where dominant members of this social formation become limited to self-oriented values and self-affirming understandings. Further, erasure in ontological dialogue persists within this society as it seeks a collective single and central conception of reality (Sheehan and Lilley 2008).

Eventually, these tendencies become deeply embedded within a large, complex civilization to become “natural” or appropriate, phenomenon that Sheurich and Young (1997) refer to as “epistemological racism” which infiltrates into academic discourse. As indicated earlier in this dissertation, epistemological racism refers to the range of research epistemologies arising out of the social history and the culture of the dominant race (Sheurich and Young 1997). “These epistemologies logically reflect and reinforce that social history and that racial group (while excluding the epistemologies of other races/cultures), and that this has negative results for people of color in general and scholars of color in particular” (Sheurich and Young 1997:8).

Epistemological racism has resulted in outcomes of authoritarianism which can be associated with Australian colonization through the following experiences (Sheehan and Lilley 2008; Smith and Wobst 2005):

- The domination of public information, physical space and material economies;

- The streaming of all levels of education to hard science through empirical assessment standards, skewed publication rankings and economic evaluations of objectives;
- The contestation, appropriation, and reformation of history;
- The erasure of the lived experience of Indigenous peoples from the public consciousness;
- The denial of Indigenous understandings concerning the nature of being and place, and the reformation of Indigenous understandings into Western perspectives.

Although Sheehan and Lilley (2008) provide examples of authoritarianism in Australia, similar experiences can be found in the colonization of North America (Battiste 2000; Battiste and Henderson 2000; Bell and Napoleon 2009; Bell and Patterson 2008). Emerging from the resistance to epistemological racism and authoritarianism is the process of decolonization. Decolonization seeks develop strategies that, “liberate the ‘captive mind’ from oppressive conditions that continue to silence and marginalize the voices of subordinated, colonized, non-Western societies that encountered European colonization” (Chilisa 2012:14). This process also seeks to restore cultural practices, thinking patterns beliefs and values that were suppressed through colonization (Smith 1999).

Indigenous knowledge systems

Through decolonization, Indigenous scholars have determined that methodologies and research paradigms based on an ontology focused on centralization are problematic in the interpretation of Indigenous knowledges, which originate from a disparate ontology. “The ontology of Indigenous knowledge originates primarily from deep engagement with systemic understanding that is often related as the knowledge written into events in the landscape through correspondence between actions in natural systems” (Sheehan and Lilley 2003:103). Indigenous knowledge systems are based on relational

structures than linear associations where Being is represented by many forms as opposed to a singular one. Knowledge is derived through relationships among these formations of Being rather than acquired from a single construct of Being. These different formations of Being are founded on the ontology that all in the universe has a spirit/energy/life force and embodies knowledge (Fitznor 1998).

One of the key aspects of traditional knowledge is that there is a spirit in everything, a notion that the Western mind may find difficult to perceive as reality. The earth and her inhabitants, the plants, animals, minerals, rocks, insects, etc., are all viewed in an interactive way – they are viewed as alive as having a spirit, as conscious, and as capable of responding to people. They are our ‘relatives’.

(Fitznor 1998:30)

Value is placed on a continuum of relationships driven by a relational epistemology which is a set of knowledge systems built on relationships (Wilson 2008). This worldview emphasizes connectedness and the transcendence of boundaries beyond self. Ideals of connectedness are highlighted in the *Ubuntu* worldview of “I am because we are” and represents the very essence of being human according to Desmond Tutu (1999:33):

It is not, “I think therefore I am.” It says rather: “I am human therefore I belong. I participate, I share.” A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he [or] she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed, or treated as if they were less than they are.

These ideals of humanity and relatedness are also emphasized in the following Cree proverb:

Ka-kî-kiskêyihôtân ôma, namoya kinwês mâka aciyowês pohko ôma ôta ka-hayayak wasêtam askihk, êkwa ka-kakwêy miskêtân kiskêyihôtamowin, iyinîsiwin, kistêyitowin, mîna nânisitôtâtowin kakiya ayisîniwak, êkosi ôma kakiya ka-wahkôtowak.

Realize that we as human beings have been put on this earth for only a short time and that we must use this time to gain wisdom, knowledge, respect and understanding for all human beings, since we are all relatives.
(Alberta Education 2009:2)

As Stewart-Harawira (2005:35) indicates Indigenous knowledges arise from, “broadly shared beliefs about the meaning of meaning and the nature of interrelationships”.

These include beliefs that interrelationships between and among things are fundamental to sense-making; that knowledge is sacred; that it cannot be found in a “codified canon”, but in life itself; and that it is holistic in that it already acknowledges four dimensions – the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual. In sum, a refusal to divide and compartmentalize in any reductionist way is accompanied by adherence to recognizing that all things existing in relation to one another.

(Haig-Brown 2008:256)

Connectedness and the transcendence of boundaries lend to the cyclical pattern that is often associated with Indigenous philosophies (Little Bear 2000). Million (2003) contextualizes the importance of the circle from an Indigenous worldview as to how the universe (figure 3.2). “All things move around the circle; the sun, the moon, the seasons, and each life. Every movement around the circle facilitates and builds the next movement” (Million 2003:57). Million (2003:58) further discusses the influence of cycles with respect to humanity (figure 3.3):

To realize this symbol in the fullness we must conceive of three horizontal circles inscribed with crosses, all three pierced by the vertical axis of humanity itself. For the Indian, understand that human beings are the intermediate between sky and earth, linking the two, with feet on the ground and the head, or intellect, at the center of the firmament. The middle disc, like the vertical axis represents humanity, for in joining the sky and earth, it is neither pure spirit or gross matter, but synthesis of both... From the understanding of the first, the circle, and the second, the three circles and their linkage by a central human point, comes the third understanding that all circles are the same, are concurrent and are created/realized by individual humans.

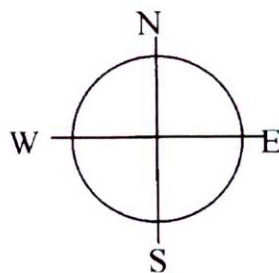


Figure 3.2 - Aboriginal worldview of the universe (taken with permission from Million 2003).

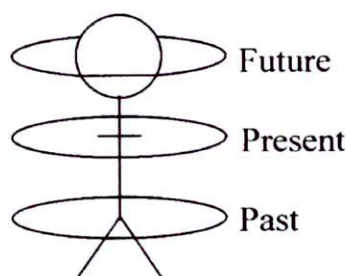


Figure 3.3 - Aboriginal worldview of Being and time (taken with permission from Million 2003).

I interpret Million's alignment of circles or discs further as representing an alignment where individuals center themselves in the continuum of relationships. It involves understanding the concept that, "Rather than viewing ourselves as being in relationship with other people or things, we are the relationships that we hold and are part of" (Wilson 2008:80). This process of centering can involve an individual's adherence to customary laws meant to promote respect and acknowledgement of others, certain life events, participating in ceremonies, acquiring new knowledge, and so forth. All of these actions serve to promote harmony among these relationships. By striving for balance through alignment or centering one's self, they become "a conscious individual who is influenced by, and influences, all moments of time" (Million 2003:68). Further, this

concept can also be extended to include place, which involves more than one dimension or directions as demonstrated in figure 3.2 where all the directions are linked by a central point. Time and place represent never-ending relationships of experience where a person can be situated in at any given moment.

A shaman is an example of a conscious individual with the ability to connect with different dimensions, virtually at will. Two practices associated with shamen are the abilities to foresee future events and to visit the land of the dead (Harris 2005; Million 2003). This connection with different dimensions is best illustrated by the term used to describe a shaman by the Asiniskow Ithiniwak (Rocky Cree) which is *acahkopimohtiho* where *acahk* refers to stars and *pimohtiho* is to travel. An *acahkopimohtiho* reflects Million's (2003) description about humanity where human beings can be situated in different moments and dimensions because of their inherent connections with sky and earth.

The sweat lodge represents another example where such connections are made and demonstrates the fluidity that exists with concepts of time and place from a Cree worldview (Million 2003; Waugh 1997). Figure 3.4 illustrates the floor plan and side view of a sweat lodge. Time is represented by three layers of circles existing concurrently and linked by all individuals in the lodge. These not only include the sweat participants but also the stones in the hearth, which are the ancestors - the grandfathers and/or grandmothers (Million 2003; Waugh 1997). In addition, the spirits of the ancestors are invited into the sweat through the rock pile lying outside of the sweat to the south. The location of the rock pile and entrance to the lodge can be interchanged between the east and the south depending on local tradition of the group and sweat lodge conductor. The

sweat acknowledges the ancestors as animate and vital forces that will give guidance and insight to the sweat participants (Powers 1989; Waugh 1997). From a Cree worldview, an ancestor is not a discrete entity that existed during one moment in time but exists today to help provide guidance for the future. Steinhauer (2001:186) conveys this understanding of ancestors through her metaphor of a tree, “I see the roots as representing our ancestors. Our ancestors play the role of rooting us to our place and keeping wisdom strong and alive... Our ancestors bear this knowledge and continue to feed this knowledge upward. The trunk represents the community, the way knowledge is passed on in this upward spiral. The branches represent the families of the community. The leaves represent our young people.”

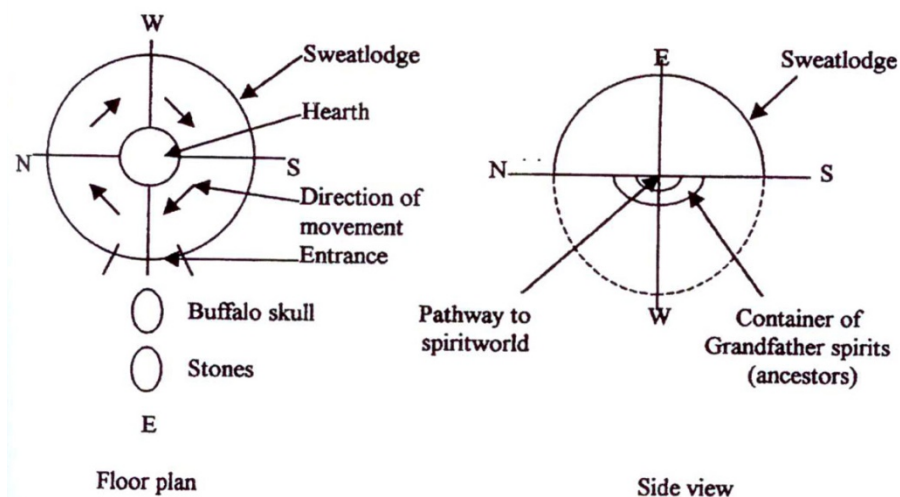


Figure 3.4 - Plan views of sweat lodge (taken with permission from Million 2003).

Indigenous language

The ideals of connectedness and relationships are also reflected in Indigenous languages since language is a cultural expression illustrating how an individual and society view the world. “Language is a central system of how cultures code, create and transmit meaning. While many Indigenous peoples may not speak their language, cultural values remain alive and reflect a worldview found in their native language. Values that

honour relationship are important for cultures that value the journey as much as the destination” (Hoare, et al. 1993:26). Aboriginal languages are process or action oriented, focusing on verbs to encapsulate relationships and “happenings” rather than objects of nouns (Little Bear 1998, 2000; Wilson 2001). Indigenous peoples share their understanding of reality by describing relationships rather than using definitions. Wilson (2001) highlights this emphasis on relationships in the Cree language, “It is not necessarily an object that is important, it is my relationships with that object that becomes important. I was talking about this last night with my family. My father was saying how a couch or sofa in Cree translated literally means ‘someplace where you sit’. Rather than calling it an object, you name it though your relationship to it” (Wilson 2001:177). Further, dichotomies and classifications important to ontologies based in centralization are non-existent in Indigenous languages and worldview. “The categorizing process for Aboriginal languages does not make use of the dichotomies either/or, black/white, saint/sinner. There is no animate/inanimate dichotomy” (Little Bear 2000:78).

Indigenous heritage

From a relational epistemology, heritage for Indigenous peoples assumes a much broader definition than found in the dominant culture. Mainstream cultural resources management practices, for example, focuses on tangible cultural expressions symbolizing particular time periods or events at significant places. From an Indigenist perspective, everything that holds Indigenous knowledge is valued as the collective heritage of Indigenous peoples (Battiste and Henderson 2000). Indigenous heritage includes everything that has been shared from generation to generation that holds knowledge such as language, cultural landscapes, traditional resource use areas, oral histories, songs,

music, dance, ceremonies and the knowledge of the people, especially Elders (Burney and Van Pelt 2002; Daes 1995; Martinez 2006). Everything in an Indigenous knowledge system is considered a cultural expression possessing knowledge and supporting Indigenous heritage through the generations. For example in Umatilla culture, “cultural resources are not just archaeological artifacts or sites; cultural resources include the Umatillas themselves, their treaty rights, religious beliefs, communities and Elders and the things necessary to sustain their way of life: Clean air, water, root grounds, berry patches, an so on” (Martinez 2006:497). A cultural expression or heritage resource, therefore, encompasses all manifestations of knowledge in Indigenous culture and grounds identity in the contexts of community and place.

This explanation of heritage suggests that the terms heritage and culture are synonymous from an Indigenous perspective. There are no distinctions as found in dominant societies where heritage is constructed to occur in the past and culture in the present. From a dominant Western perspective, culture represents the collective values and knowledge held by a contemporary society that can also be inherited from previous generations through heritage. From an Indigenist worldview, the acknowledgement of relationships with many formations of Being (regardless of existing in the past, present or future), supports access to these collective values and knowledge at any given moment. From personal experience, I remember having a long discussion with an Elder and other family members that went late into the morning regarding the concept of culture and heritage from the perspective of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. He relayed to me that there are no distinctions between the term culture and heritage for they are synonymous as reflected in the Cree word *pimatisiwin* referring to ‘life’. The word is formed by an

animate intransitive verb *pimatisi* – “to be alive” where intransitive verbs are those actions that are not transferred to another noun (Okimasis 2004; Settee 2007).

Pimatisiwin embodies the collective ancient knowledge for community-life, well-being and sharing of values (Settee 2007).

Fundamental to pimatisiwin is the concept of, ‘survival/the ability to make a living’, which Cree Elders elaborate as:

a holistic concept that includes a spiritual as well as physical dimension. It is an integral component of traditional First Nations doctrines, laws, principles, values and teachings regarding sources of life, the responsibilities associated with them, including elements seen as necessary for enhancing the spiritual components of life and those associated with making a living.

(Cardinal and Hildebrandt 2000:43)

The Elders’ reference encompasses the Cree description of culture outlined in Okimasis’ (2004) translation of the term *pimacihowin*. *Pimacihowin* with the root word being *pimaci* – to save him and can be regarded as a process or an act of survival (Goulet 2007; MacKay 2011). The concept of *mitho pimatisiwin* (Asiniskow Ithiniwak, ‘th’ dialect) translates into the ‘the ability to make a good living’ where *mitho* refers to good. This word holds a deeper meaning than this translation where the concept of *mitho pimatisiwin* is instilled in Cree identity through training and experience (MacKay 2011). Following *mitho pimatisiwin* is essential to survival because it supports the relationships among many forms of Being. According to MacKay (2011:5),

survival, the ability to make a living involves relationships with others that entail action transfer. It calls to mind the relationship between the prey and hunter; between medicine plants and the afflicted; between the elements of air, water and earth and persons. Similarly people’s social relationships between each other, and their spiritual relationships with God, creator or Great Mystery are involved in people’s ability to survive/make a living. For someone to make a living or survive from the land those relationships

must be respectfully honoured or dire consequences of hardship may ensue.

According to Hart (2002) the concept of *mino pimatisiwin* (Muskego Inniniwak, 'n' dialect) refers to the goal of healing, learning and life in general and is acquired by understanding Cree concepts of wholeness, balance, relationships, harmony, growth, the values of sharing, respect and spirituality that support the goal of a good life (Hart 2002; MacKay 2011). Further other factors that influence a person's goal towards *mino pimatisiwin* include history, their unconscious and spiritual dimensions, their states of being involving alignment or centering, relationships with people and the land, as well as their volition, autonomy and power (Hart 2002; MacKay 2011).

Indigenous legal traditions

Indigenous peoples establish guidelines such as *mitho pimatisiwin* to maintain the continuum of relationships integral to Indigenous knowledge systems. These guidelines are supported by practical applications involving sets of corollaries, inheritances, traditions, laws and customs that not only guide conduct but also enable individual freedoms to be expressed within a circle of communal responsibilities (Battiste and Henderson 2000; Goulet 2007; Henderson 1995). Some examples of corollaries and legal traditions include (Battiste and Henderson 2000):

- The acknowledgement that a reciprocal relationship exists between human and non-human in an ecosystem bearing personal responsibilities filled with respect and obligation (Million 2003; Wilson 2001).
- With knowledge bears responsibility as well as the power to interfere in relationships between humans and non-humans. Sometimes, apprenticeships are required as spiritual preparation to assume this responsibility (Million 2003; Rigney 2003; Wilson 2001).
- There is a "nesting" of different layers of knowledge unique to different people where transmission of knowledge is dependent upon the relationship of kin, clan, and territory (Henderson 1995).

- Indigenous knowledge is maintained between human/animal/land relationships that are localized to an environment and its peoples. It is not conceived to have a general application to other ecosystems (Nasady 2002; Simpson 1999).
- Knowledge may be shared with visitors to the territory but any misuse of this information can be catastrophic to the balance of relationships (Smith 2007; Smith and Jackson 2008).

The nature of corollaries and legal traditions is more complex than the general examples provided above. Borrows (2010) illustrates the complexity of Indigenous legal traditions by outlining different sources of law found in Indigenous knowledge systems involving sacred, natural, deliberative, positivistic and customary laws (Table 3.1):

Table 3-1 - Summary of Indigenous legal traditions (Borrows 2010).

Sacred laws

- laws that are regarded sacred if stemming from the Creator, creation stories or longstanding ancient teachings that are given the highest respect.

Natural laws

- laws developed by Indigenous peoples based on observations of the world around them. The intention is to develop rules for regulation and conflict resolution from a study of the world's behavior.

Deliberative laws

- laws established through process of persuasion, deliberation, council and discussion. Although sacred and natural laws may be the backdrop for the debate, most indigenous law involves discussion among people. This law demonstrates the dynamic nature of Indigenous law since recognition, enforcement and implementation is subject to re-examination and revision through the generations.

Positivistic law

- laws based on authority and intelligence of those who issue them rather than on the notion of creation, nature or community deliberation. These laws maintain weight because proclamations are made by a person or group regarded by a sufficient number of people in a community has an authority.

Customary law

- laws based on practices developed through repetitive patterns of social interaction. These laws are inductive where observations of specific behaviours lead to general conclusions on conduct within a society.

Indigenous legal traditions usually involve the interaction of two or more sources listed above making it difficult to make distinctions between one another. In addition, although laws have changed or been constrained, they have not been widely extinguished because of the nature in which they are maintained in Indigenous knowledge systems. The laws are supported by relationships between cosmos, land, animal, living, non-living, non-humans, and humans - the many forms of Being, through symbolic cues or cultural expressions. They are maintained throughout the local environment as well as through shared histories and traditions. Symbols such as visual, action-based, or auditory cues serve as a source of knowledge or reminders of a shared experience or event among relationships and are shared through particular activities or ceremonies.

Making moccasins is an example of an activity embodying several laws or corollaries that are shared across generations through teaching, learning, and symbolism (Gidmark 1980; Stevens 2004). Moccasins are a main article of traditional Aboriginal clothing worn today, not only for ceremonies but as practical foot wear that enables the wearer to maintain an intimate connection with the land (Clayton-Gouthro 1994; Thompson 1990). The type of animal skins used to make them from is specific to the geographic location of the maker. The Cree word *mīkis* for beads is also the original word for shell (Goulet 2007), which demonstrates through language an acknowledgement of the relationship of an item with its source in nature. The designs used on the moccasins are not only significant to the maker and wearer but are a symbol of respect that acknowledges the animal that provided the skins (Brasser 1987; Thompson 1987). The type of hides used is dependent upon the intended use of the footwear such as thick moose hides are worn in the winter. The change in footwear acknowledges the seasonal

cycles of the earth reaffirming the connection to the land. The act of practicing this tradition enables the maker to remember her origins (Stevens 2004). “The physical and spiritual connections to the land are implicit by the physical materials utilized, the use of the footwear, and the traditional rituals involved in the making of the footwear” (Stevens 2004:204).

Sharing legal traditions and knowledge through these means, especially through oral customary law, holds several advantages that include (Cornet and Lendor 2002; Cruikshank 1998):

- Promotion of the fluidity of knowledge to encourage self-identification and engaging interaction among individuals.
- Flexibility and adaptability as conditions and values of the people change.
- Embodiment and reflection of the unique knowledge traditions including epistemologies and ways of organizing, distributing and maintaining knowledge.
- Value and respect held for Elders in transmitting knowledge and values.

Oral history, traditions and place

Indigenous legal traditions and knowledge are also revealed through symbolic cues in the landscape. This form of knowledge transmission is based on the ideals of universal relationships with beings or ‘life force entities’ (e.g. rock landforms, trees, animals) found across the landscape that hold and share knowledge. These experiences are documented through oral histories or traditions that may be shared among people. Significant events are impressed to collective memory in relation to these symbolic cues and maintained through oral traditions (Deloria 1973). “Oral history takes the form of ‘it happened when people were living there’ or ‘it happened during the year of the short winter when we were near ‘x’” (Ladner 2001:42). Oral traditions provide a history for the creation of the land, its transformation to the present, and share knowledge of relationships in the universe (Linklater 1994;1997). As these traditions become associated

with the locality in which they occurred or based with ecological and seasonal happenings, place becomes an important referent for oral tradition as opposed time. Oral traditions are spatially oriented through the naming of places as the reference to a specific human experience which contrasts with the written historical narrative focused on chronological years (Ladner 2001; Linklater 1997). “Oral history, and symbolic history (e.g. winter counts, rock paintings, tipi designs, bundles, songs and other ‘remembering tools’) represent the memory of past experiences, experiences that find meaning in their relation to the ‘natural world’ and not in their relation to a specific reference point in linear time or to a chronological conceptualization of progress” (Ladner 2001:42). As Smith (2012:34) indicates these, “accounts are stored within genealogies, within the landscape, within weavings and carvings, even within the personal names that many people carried. The means by which these histories were stored was through their systems of knowledge. Many of these systems have since been reclassified as oral traditions rather than histories”.

Colorado (1988:55) further elaborates on these relationships with the “natural world” as being timeless through oral histories,

Native stories, which may be 30 to 50,000 years old, have the ability to integrate and synthesize all the living relationships or events at any given moment in time. When we rely on a story to guide us we are not only integrated with the natural environment around us and with our living relations, but also with the timeless past and culture of our ancestors. Because American Indian cultures are so ancient, and the stories so old, there is almost no human experience or learning which has not been recorded in those stories. Moreover, they are tied intricately with motion, relations, and sense of collapsed time that there is a spiritual essence to them which people often describe as timeless.

Sheehan and Lilley (2008) suggest that the referential approach of Indigenous history with place is associated with, “the way the physical landscape appears to

[Australian] Aboriginal people – its visual organization or structure – reflects spiritual aspects of the organization or structure of the landscape that constrains people's behavior.” This approach follows the broad tradition of phenomenological landscape archaeology developed by scholars such as Tilley's (1994:67) discussion of an encultured landscape, “The landscape is being continually encultured, bringing things into meaning as part of a symbolic process by which human consciousness makes the physical reality of the natural environment into an intelligible and socialized form.” For myself in thinking from a Western construct, I would interpret an “encultured landscape” as a person imposing meaning to a random feature such a rock or a tree. This approach follows Tilley's understanding where human agency imposes meaning on natural landforms on the basis of aesthetics or recognition of features.

From an Indigenist epistemology, the interpretations made by Sheehan and Lilley (2008) and Tilley (2008) regarding the construction of Indigenous history and encultured landscape are false since they downplay the complexity of how knowledge is attained in an Indigenous knowledge system. An “encultured landscape” refers to knowledge that is revealed as a symbol from a being or entity on the land and represents an Indigenous methodology driven by intuition and the exchange of energy in the cosmos/land/animal/living/non-living/non-human/human relationship. For example, a person will be drawn to a particular area to wait and observe. Symbols surface in the forms of a “woman” revealed on a rock cliff, an “owl” further below the cliff face, and a “staff” from a set of willow trees close by. As these symbols are personal, they are left for the person to interpret their meanings for knowledge, which may be for guidance or for other purposes. These symbols represent knowledge that may be maintained orally as

guided by corollaries or legal traditions. This idea follows the concept of “signs” that constitute knowledge or guidance as discussed by Scott (1996:73) where,

Not only humans, but animals and other nonhuman persons send, interpret and respond to signs pertinent to various domains of human action: hunting success or failure, birth and death, and implicit to these, the circumstance of reciprocity between persons in the world. Signs, then, are part and parcel of action, perception, and experience – of life itself.

Therefore, an “encultured landscape” from an Indigenist perspective refers to knowledge that belongs to the land that may become associated with place through oral histories and traditions that acknowledge and honour universal relationships. Further, a place name represents more than just a name but an oral history that is embedded in the landscape and supports knowledge as it is shared through the generations.

Place links present with past and our personal self with kinship groups. What we know flows through us from the ‘echo of generations,’ and our knowledge cannot be universalized because they arise from our experience with our places. This is why name-place stories matter: they are repositories of science, they tell of relationships, they reveal history and they hold our identity.

(Kovach 2009:61)

Linklater (1994; 1997) emphasizes the importance of place in her oral history adaptation for the Nelson House Cree who identify themselves as Asiniskow Ithiniwak (figure 3.5). Their oral traditions include numerous stories about Kiyahs, the ancient past and “provide an explanation for the creation of the land, its transformation to present form, and Cree relationship to land and landscape” (Linklater 1994:30). This representation of history contrasts with the archaeological narrative of the region (figure 3.1) where oral traditions focus on symbolism across the landscape and a sense of timelessness is supported by the interaction of supernatural beings with ancient and

contemporary worlds. This interaction supports different dimensions associated with place that a person can be situated in at any given time.

Cree Oral History			
Cree Oral Traditions			
Náhithowá Acimówina Mina Acathokiwina			
Recent Past Anohciki	Reserves	Iskonkana	Supernatural Beings Interact With Ancient and Contemporary Worlds Acahwak Kiwaciwikonawak Anoch Akwa Mina Mimoci Kiyahs
	Trapping	Owunihikawin	
Long Ago Kiyahs	Fishing	Pakitawawin	
	Gathering	Mawacikewin	
	Treaties	Okimawewin Usutumakiwin	
	Wasahkacahk Puts World Into Order For The Time When There Will Be People Wasahkacahk Ki-o-thastow Askiy Ispiycawi Ithiniskathik		
	Wasahkacahk Tests The Earth's Size Wasahkacahk Ka-ki-nanatawitisahahk Ka-ispihcathik Askithiw		
	Wasahkacahk Recreates the Earth Wasahkacahk Kitwam Ka-ki-osihtat Askithiw Wasahkacahk And The Flood Wasahkacahk Akwa Ka-ki-thiskipik Askithiw		
Ancient Time Mawac Kiyahs	Misipisiw		
	Misipisiw		
	Wasahkacahk's Contest With Wimithothaw Wasahkacahk Ka-ki-mahwinihat Wimithothwa		
	Rolling Head Cicipistikwan Chakapis Shares the Sun Chakapis Ka-ki-nakwatat Pisimwa		
The Beginning of Time Mimoci Kiyahs	Kici Manito Creates Four Major Orders of Being: Physical World, Plant World, Animal Beings and Human Beings.		
	Kici Manito Kakiositat Nao Kikwana: Ithinito Askiy, Kanitowikiki [Tapiskoc Mistihwak], Pisiskiwak, Mina Athisithiniwak.		

Figure 3.5 - Oral history of the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation in north central Manitoba (taken with permission from Linklater 1994).

Indigenous methods

The constructions of place and oral histories are examples of methods unique to Indigenous knowledge systems that inform and share knowledge. As with other Indigenous methods they draw knowledge through exchange of energy through relationships in the universe. An Indigenous method not only relies on these relationships to build understanding but also uses trust in intuition and awareness. I believe that intuition and awareness relate to the concept of centering or alignment discussed earlier and relates to the ability in living mitho pimatisiwin.

Dream work and talking circles are other examples of Indigenous methods used to gather knowledge. Cardinal (1994, 1997) describes the use of both approaches in the following:

The Elders used methods I had not seen elsewhere. They would come into dialogue about a policy, for example, whatever policy was coming down from the Indian Act or Department of Indian Affairs at the time. They would argue for or against, and they would go around in the circle, each speaking in turn. They practiced exquisite listening skills, where they would even paraphrase what the previous Elder had said to make sure that their information was correct. And then they would come to a point perhaps where they could not decide what they were going to do or what recommendations they would make. They would then say, "Let's sleep on it," and the meeting would end... Early next morning... the Elders would talk about their dreams. They would say something like, "I saw this bear walking around the mountain and I was standing there and he took me by surprise," and so forth... Then they compared information from their dream or vision work. They realized the various symbols were dictated from a different part of their being. And suddenly they would come up with an answer.

(Cardinal 2001:181)

Cardinal's (2001) recollection demonstrates that dreams and dream work are valued Indigenous methods for gathering knowledge. Knowledge is gained through symbolic cues in a person's dreams and provides guidance for carrying out activities

occurring in the future or a potential solution to a problem. “We are taking in a lot of information in a deep subconscious place and then in dreams and in dream work. This information communicates without conscience: our subconscious communicates with our conscious” (Cardinal 2001:182).

Through my work as an archaeologist, I have also witnessed this exchange of energy between relationships in action, through dreams informing my consciousness and dialogue between the living and non-living. At the time though, I will be honest that I did initially question my intuition. I was working at a burial ground in northern Manitoba by the Saskatchewan border where several burials were disturbed by road construction. The local First Nation requested that these individuals be recovered so they may be reburied elsewhere. At the bottom of one of the holes that became exposed was the grave of one person whose foot was visible but it was becoming too dark to remove them. As I slept, an image of an elderly woman with sunken cheeks, high cheekbones and long grey hair kept appearing. Through intuition, I knew she was the person who was in that grave but did not tell my coworkers about it. As an Elder came to burial ground to conduct a ceremony to honour the people whose resting places were disturbed, he went to acknowledge the person whose foot was exposed. It was an older woman who told him who she was and that she knew that she came from the west but wanted to know exactly where she came from. As my dream was confirmed, my co-workers remained skeptical of what the Elder had told us. While my colleagues recovered her remains, their skepticism subsided as they saw her with high delicate cheekbones and old age.

Although the use of Indigenous methods are recognized in social sciences research as a valid means of gathering knowledge among Indigenous peoples, this

example demonstrates that the general acceptance and application of these methods remains elusive in mainstream academia. The hesitations are likely because acceptance requires a deeper shift in personal belief systems, especially for those individuals whose beliefs are grounded in positivism. In my experience, I find that much of these understandings are established and reinforced through the educational system, and especially in an undergraduate setting. However, I believe that educators should at least attempt to introduce methods such as sharing or talking circles. These circles promote skills in listening, collaboration, respect, patience and reflection. These methods can enlighten academia by encouraging the development of new skills, leading new areas for investigation, challenging old approaches and gaining new insights to unanswered questions.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I deconstruct heritage by exploring each components of an intellectual paradigm. This approach enabled me to reconstruct understandings of heritage in archaeology and Indigenous knowledge systems. Being founded in Western knowledge systems, archaeology employs a reductionist and centralization approaches to knowledge that singularizes ways of knowing, reduces knowledge to a single truth and installs authorities to centralize wealth and knowledge. These strategies operate on the ideal that reality exists through a single account of Being consisting of matter and form where matter dominates over form (Cardinal 2001:180). Therefore, archaeological heritage focuses on physical manifestations of cultural expression such as pottery fragments and remnants of tools to derive knowledge. Knowledge is gained from these physical symbols through research paradigms grounded in Western intellectual traditions,

particularly positivistic or post-positivistic approaches. Only recently have archaeologists began to use interpretive and transformative research paradigms to guide their research. Interpretations of archaeological heritage are summarized into chronological histories signifying events and narratives or categories describing daily life of past peoples. Since this knowledge is valued for building national identity, property laws are established and enforced by a central authority to safeguard the physical constructs of heritage.

Indigenous knowledge systems are guided by a relational ontology, which recognizes that knowledge exists in multiple forms of Being with no distinctions between form and matter. Knowledge is acquired through an exchange of energy between the relationships of multiple forms of Being consisting of cosmos, land, animals, living, non-living, non-humans and humans. Therefore, Indigenous heritage assumes a broader definition than archaeological heritage where all in the universe that hold knowledge represents the collective heritage of Indigenous peoples. This heritage is upheld through a set of Indigenous legal traditions that work to support the relationships in the universe through guidelines promoting respect and harmony.

In conclusion, dissonance in heritage occurs because paradigms based in Western intellectual traditions emphasizing boundaries and discontinuities are applied to interpret Indigenous knowledge built on relationships and connections (figure 3.6). Instead, Indigenous knowledges are best interpreted through Indigenous research paradigms, which I will discuss in the following chapter.



Chapter 4 Working with Indigenous knowledge

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I demonstrate that research paradigms based in Western knowledge systems are limited in interpreting Indigenous knowledge rooted in relational epistemologies and ontologies. The reductionist strategies applied in Western research paradigms, particularly empiricism and positivism reduces ways of knowing by explaining knowledge through a single truth. These approaches alienate Indigenous knowledge systems that recognize the existence of multiple realities. To address this issue of scientific colonialism, archaeology employs decolonizing methodologies that recognize the rights of descendant communities to (Nicholas and Hollowell 2007:67):

- Share in the processes of archaeological knowledge production and choose how to do so;
- Use archaeological information to construct their own narratives and alternative histories that may enrich or disagree with archaeological knowledge; and
- Benefit from knowledge that comes from research conducted in their communities and its production into various forms of capital.

Decolonizing methodologies can be found in recent archaeological research focused on community-based initiatives and Indigenous archaeology (Nicholas and Hollowell 2007). Community-based research is transforming archaeological practice through collaborative work with Indigenous communities who maintain control over knowledge production and research objectives (Smith and Jackson 2008). Indigenous archaeology supports the engagement of Indigenous peoples in archaeology and use of Indigenous methodologies in interpreting archaeological resources. In recognizing the need for alternative Indigenous approaches to understanding archaeology, Yellowhorn (2002) proposes the use of an 'internalist archaeology' which examines the

archaeological record through Indigenous oral narratives, histories, traditions and customs. To define parameters of archaeology in an Aboriginal context, Yellowhorn (2002) examines Blackfoot oral histories and traditions through Blackfoot epistemologies and methodologies for signatures that would have left an archaeological record. As a result, terms such as “archaic” becomes irrelevant since archaeological evidence is represented in significant Blackfoot oral histories such as “Dog Days” or “Horse Days”. Through an “internalist archaeology” approach, archaeology becomes a useful tool for validating Blackfoot identity through their own history.

Archaeologists engaged in decolonizing methodologies at the grassroots level are committed to influencing change in mainstream archaeological practice and among policy-makers involved in heritage management. At this time, it is difficult to determine if this transformation is occurring since:

- Archaeology in cultural resources management remains under theorized compared to its academic counterpart.
- Existing heritage legislation, policies and procedures governing or managing heritage continue to promulgate colonialist understandings of Indigenous heritage. For instance, these processes assume that archaeological practice is well equipped to identify and locate Indigenous heritage resources in a region to be impacted by development. Further, the archaeological resources identified are misinterpreted as representing the totality of Indigenous heritage resources in this region. As a consequence, a number of heritage resources important to Indigenous communities are left vulnerable to destruction from development.
- Prevailing ideals of stewardship and crown ownership of heritage continues to prevent Aboriginal communities from accessing archaeological resources important to their heritage.

I believe that this transition is slow because of the lack of understanding towards Indigenous cultures and heritage prevailing amongst the dominant society. Dedicating research efforts to decolonize archaeology to empower the colonized or oppressed directs

focus away from the impacts of colonization on the colonizers. Colonialism is experienced differently by the colonized and colonizers. It has left a legacy of stereotypes that continues to influence and shape contemporary Indigenous identity but also the dominant culture's ideologies of the colonized. Misunderstandings of Indigenous identity and ways that marginalize Indigenous knowledge can become deeply embedded in the consciousness of the dominant culture where they are perceived to be the 'norm', a concept that Sheurich and Young (1997) refer to as "civilizational racism".

When any group – within a large, complex civilization – significantly dominates other groups for hundreds of years, the ways of the dominant group (its epistemologies, its ontologies, its axiologies) not only become the dominant ways of that civilization, but also these ways become deeply embedded that they typically are seen as 'natural' or appropriate norms rather than historically evolved social constructions.

(Sheurich and Young 1997:7)

Therefore, "when academics and public opinion leaders construct knowledge... they are influenced by the ideas, assumptions and norms of the cultures and sub societies in which they are socialized" (Banks 1993:15). As a result, the marginalization of Indigenous identity and knowledge in public policies and academic research continues to exist because of civilizational racism. Any work focused on decolonization should not only be directed towards the colonized but everyone impacted by the effects of colonization.

By engaging in decolonization methodologies, my intent through this dissertation is to not only help empower the Asiniskow Ithiniwak but also to try address misperceptions about Indigenous identity and knowledge held by the dominant society. In the previous chapters, I have attempted to do so by using historiography to promote reflection on ideals on Indigenous identity and by "deconstructing heritage" to

reconstruct general understandings of Indigenous knowledge systems and heritage. In this chapter, I outline the methodologies and tools used in this dissertation to generate postcolonial understandings of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage. I rely on metaphor, a storytelling methodology used by Indigenous peoples to convey how I approached this project.

The application of Indigenous research paradigms and methodologies are crucial for interpreting knowledge associated with Indigenous heritage. However, there is still a lack of initiative to incorporate these frameworks in mainstream archaeological practice and cultural resources management. The hesitation experienced by non-Indigenous scholars towards Indigenous approaches to knowledge likely relates to a lack of understanding and feelings of intimidation towards the unknown. The acceptance of Indigenous methodologies and tools requires a shift in personal belief systems in accepting the existence of multiple realities, which for some people can be uncomfortable or intimidating. Personally, I confess that I have felt intimidated at certain times during the research process, especially where language is concerned. I usually address these feelings by accepting that this is a challenge that I have taken on and will have to work my way through the fear and intimidation.

Intimidation is further exacerbated by Indigenous scholars who argue that non-Indigenous peoples should not be engaging in Indigenous research (Swisher 1998). Yet as Champagne (1998:183) indicates, “The mere presence of Indian blood within a scholar, however, does not ensure better or more sensitive historical or cultural understandings of Indian peoples. This can come only with training, motivation, sensitivity, knowledge, and study.” Further, “The question of whether non-Indian

scholars should study Indians should be answered in the affirmative. The debate, however, over scholarly presence in Indian communities should focus on the ethics and guidelines of how scholars should conduct their studies and report their results” (Champagne 1998:184).

Champagnes’ statements highlight two key reasons as to why I advocate for non-Indigenous peoples to explore using Indigenous research paradigms and methodologies in research projects involving Indigenous knowledge. First, validation of Indigenous methodologies can only be achieved if the dominant culture becomes engaged in experiences involving Indigenous knowledge since acceptance is built on exposure and familiarity. Second, incorporating Indigenous research paradigms is necessary since they also act as guidelines of conduct for non-Indigenous peoples where knowledge is handled according to the local protocols of the Indigenous community.

Indigenous research paradigms

Indigenous research paradigms are similar to transformative paradigms where they operate on the assumption that multiple realities exist but differ on how these realities are constructed. Transformative paradigms assume that these realities are constructed by human agency. However, Indigenous research methodologies and paradigms are predicated on the belief that multiple realities are constructed through relationships involving the cosmos, environment, the living and non-living. Since knowledge is relational and all Indigenous knowledge systems are built on relations, relational accountability is necessary to maintain these relationships. Indigenous methodologies and research paradigms operate to maintain relational accountability throughout the research process that involves (Wilson 2008):

- The topic: How we choose what we study
- Methods: How we gather information
- Analysis: How we interpret information
- Presentation: How we transfer knowledge

Maintaining a relational accountability throughout these aspects of research ensures that all practices fosters **respect** for all involved, maintains the **relevance** of the knowledge in its significance to everyone involved, ensures **reciprocity** exists throughout all aspects of the research, and upholds an awareness of **responsibility** for researchers towards the research (Kirkness and Barnhardt 1991; Pidgeon and Hardy Cox 2002; Weber-Pillwax 2001; Wilson 2008). The idea is to support a sense of relational accountability in all aspects of research in being aware of what Pidgeon and Hardy Cox (2002) refer to as the four R's to guide research work.

An Indigenous research paradigm and decolonization strategies provide a framework to ground all actions carried out for this dissertation. These methodologies have not only provided me with focus and guidance through the research process but also a sense of purpose as I write this dissertation. Each chapter that I write in this dissertation aims to contribute to the overall goal of generating postcolonial understandings of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage. Because of these frameworks, I remain constantly aware as to whether my actions uphold the integrity of Asiniskow Ithiniwak knowledge and heritage by revisiting the four R's throughout the research process.

The metaphor of gathering berries

My approach to describing the methodologies and tools applied in this dissertation to gather knowledge is inspired and modeled after Asiniskow Ithiniwak scholar Herman Michell (2009) in his use of the metaphor *gathering berries* to describe

community based research in northern contexts. Michell (2009) relates gathering knowledge in a community based setting as a process similar to gathering berries (figure 4.1). Metaphors provide an understanding of concepts that are difficult to articulate or too complex to understand in academic discourse and are often found in storytelling methodologies used by Indigenous peoples (Kroeber 2004; Michell 2009; St. Clair 2000). Michell (2009:66) provides the following context for gathering berries:

As a person of Woodlands Cree heritage, gathering berries is an inseparable part of Nihithawawatsiwin (Cree way of life) (Michell 2005, 2007). I have fond memories of berry-picking excursions around Reindeer Lake in northern Saskatchewan. I grew up knowing I was part of the land and the land was a part of me. Amongst Nihithawak Ithiniwak (Cree people), gathering berries is about more than survival. Gathering berries brings family together. Any sense of alienation and isolation quickly dissipates as people actively engage in simple talk. Getting in touch with the earth fosters an overall sense of interconnectedness. The fresh air, the sun, the wind and the sounds and smells of nature refresh the mental, spiritual, emotional, and physical dimensions of our being. Gathering berries helps people communicate with that quiet stillness where peace and wisdom dwell. It is through berry picking and prolonged periods of time out on the land that we bond with the natural world.



Figure 4.1 - Blueberries in waiting.

Let's go berry picking

When I first started working in Granville Lake with Brenda Dysart-Anderson, she relayed to me her love of picking berries. I was something that she could do all day going up and down the hills, taking the kids along and teaching them how to pick berries. Brenda taught me when was the right time to pick mossberries and blueberries and she would take me to the different places she knew were good spots. She taught me how to pick them so there are less leaves to clean out at the end. Before we head up, we always ask how the berries are doing to see if we should be packing our pails and ziplock bags for picking. There was one day when I was staying in Leaf Rapids and I had decided to venture out on my own to pick blueberries at a place near the local cemetery by the main roadway. At the end of my adventure, I didn't have much success as I had only picked a few handfuls. I was unsuccessful because I went to an area that had already been picked through, it was already towards the end of the season and I was doing it alone. The next day, I went with Brenda and others and she took me to a secluded place near town known to them over the years where the berries were plentiful. We laid down our tobacco before we started and after a stretch of time we had picked pails full of berries.

This story that I share of picking berries with Brenda Dysart-Anderson holds some teachings that I relate to my experiences with the methodologies and tools used to gather knowledge in this project (figure 4.2). These teachings are as follows:

- Knowing how, when and where to gather them is done through consulting, visiting, learning and practice. Therefore, the best way to gather berries is not alone but in a group.
- Gathering berries, especially in large quantities, takes time and patience.
- Your success is also based on if you follow the right way of doing things.
- Gathering berries involves knowing how to read the signs around you and being aware.
- Berries that are discarded still have a purpose if you can see it that way.



Figure 4.2 - Getting ready to pick berries with Brenda Dysart-Anderson (© The Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg, MB)

Knowing how, when and where to gather them is done through consulting, visiting, learning and practice. Therefore the best way to gather berries is not alone but in a group

*“Certain berries grown in certain places and they are normally gathered when the conditions are right..Like research, discovering the right time to gather berries usually begins by consulting and visiting with knowledgeable people in the community”
(Michell 2009:66).*

*“As berries are gathered, stories are shared and knowledge is passed on to younger generations”
(Michell 2009:69).*

*“Gathering berries is participatory activity that reinforces a strong group orientation. We learn traditional values from the stories that are shared. We in turn use these values to guide our thinking, our relationships, and our decision making relation to the research project. For a healthy yield of berries, it is important to foster the values of cooperation and respect for the good of the whole”
(Michell 2009:68).*

Since cultural identity for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak is grounded in the contexts of community and place, it is the people, the land (including cosmos) that supports heritage. To gain a postcolonial understanding of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage requires the building of relationships based on trust and respect with people and the land. This is what creates the right conditions to gather knowledge. Much of the knowledge that informs this project is based on teachings and experiences shared by knowledgeable peoples in the community consisting of, “Khitiyak (the old ones), the hunters, the traditional land users, the women, and other community members who have scouted out places of interest or who know by reading the complex patterns and signs in the modern and natural worlds” (Michell 2009:67). It would be impossible for me to create a postcolonial understanding of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage on my own by solely looking at the archaeological record and previous literature and ignoring knowledgeable people. This

approach would defeat the purpose of this dissertation and lead me to continue the tradition of promoting colonialist understandings of Indigenous heritage.

The knowledge that I have learned through this project, the places that I have visited and the opportunities to work with the people in this territory could not have happened without years of establishing trust. Given the history and the impacts of colonization, especially the exploitation of Indigenous cultures by anthropologists and archaeologists, Indigenous peoples carry distrust that becomes evident in different contexts. From personal experiences (especially in contexts where I am unknown to the community), as an academic I am met with hesitation but as a government official I am met with skepticism. Regardless, in any role that I find myself, I maintain an ethic of trying to help in any way that I can which in part is being respectful. I am thankful to my parents for sharing this trait with me.

Initially, I came to Asiniskow Ithiniwak territory as a stranger, as a graduate student in a Master's program working on contract for the provincial government. Had I attempted to undertake this project at this point, I would definitely have been unsuccessful. At the time, I was invited to join in on a project occurring in Asiniskow Ithiniwak territory by my now husband who at the time worked for the government as an Aboriginal Liaison Officer. For years, he had been working as an archaeologist in Asiniskow Ithiniwak territory and was considered family there. I remember my initial shock of being somewhere remote and I was also very weary because I anticipated that my initial feelings would be something like, "I don't belong here". I naively thought because I was originally from a large city like Toronto that I would not find anything in common with the people here. As Kevin introduced me to the Dumas and Anderson

families, their generosity overwhelmed me and they reminded me of my family I had left in Toronto. To my surprise, I felt like I had belonged. These beginnings would mark the start of relationships with the people that I consider family today.

Over the years, we would return to the “north” on vacation or through work. Much of this time would be spent visiting with people in the bush. During these visits, I would always be of service helping with tasks like carrying water, cooking food, picking berries, steering the boat and lifting nets during commercial fishing, hauling, cutting and cleaning moose meat. While doing work, everyone would always be engaging in conversation.

What I failed to realize at the time was that I was following in an Indigenous method important for gathering knowledge and important for building trust – visiting and conversation. Visits of a conversational nature with Elders and knowledgeable people are necessary before asking questions (Michell 2009). Knowledge is shared when the person is prepared to receive it and often at unexpected moments and later stages in life. The importance and nature of these visits is outlined by Colorado (1988:57-58):

The visit is an essential ingredient of Native scientific methodology. The visit includes introductions, establishing a relationship between the Elder and the younger person (i.e. Who is your clan? Who is your family? What is your Indian name?) socializing including humour, and finally raising the purpose of the visit. Through visits a contract is established. Often the contracting process requires several visits... Through this process trust is established and a genuine interest in the welfare of the Elder is promoted. This is important – the Elder is about to share knowledge that is powerful, sacral, and often of a personal nature – the recipient must be prepared.

Questions form another part of the Elder-apprentice relationship. Elders often teach by leaving us with a riddle, or with some question in our mind. The result is that we go away curious and wanting more. Furthermore, the way the information is passed to us from Elders causes us to think deeply, to look at our own lives intensely to try and out what the Elder was wanting us to see...

Much of the knowledge that informs this dissertation is based on visits and conversations with knowledgeable people and Elders where most indicated that they wanted to remain anonymous in the teachings and knowledge they shared with me. I did have a set of pre-determined, open-ended questions regarding heritage, archaeology, and land use, which I submitted to the university to receive ethics approval prior to the start of my “field research”. Although I would have these questions on hand during visits, during the research process and even before I had started this project, I discovered that knowledge is best gained through experience, listening, observing and reflection. This approach enabled me to reflect on the discussion and consider relevant questions to ask when the conditions and opportunities were right. Often, I found that these questions were answered during the conversation right before I could ask them.

Gathering knowledge through experience and reflection promotes intuitive learning by engaging self-awareness and intuition. I found that what I was being taught by knowledgeable people was not only to develop my understanding of the research topic but also to learn about myself, nurture my sense of awareness and encourage maturity. Because self-awareness and intuition are important to Indigenous knowledge systems, nurturing these senses is integrated into teachings. Wilson (2001:178) criticizes university settings as being detrimental to Indigenous students and researchers where, “Many people don’t trust their intuition... Rather than living the life and internalizing the things that they are learning about, all you can see are the external trappings. The external show becomes more important than the internal feeling and integrity of the Indigenous beliefs.” I believe that this is also the case for non-Indigenous peoples where we fail to recognize that our intuition also informs our understandings of reality.

Instead of seeking people to conduct interviews on a set schedule, knowledge was gathered at the beginning through visits and conversations with knowledgeable people with whom I had existing connections. These relationships not only led me to others to help inform this project but to people who decided it was time to approach me. For example, after years of seeing Kevin and me working or visiting in area, Leslie Baker, headman at the time for Okawamithikani First Nation decided it was time to approach us and invite us to Granville Lake to help him document places important to the community.

I recognize that much of what has been shared with me is not only to inform this project but also to contribute to my personal growth and maturity. What I have been given are teachings rather than information. Therefore, I follow Ladner's (2001) approach in referring to the knowledgeable people that I have relationships with on this project as my teachers because I consider them more than just 'interviewees', 'respondents', 'consultants', 'contacts' or 'sources'. Although visits would take place over the course of a day to several days, gaining knowledge from these teachings would range from a day to several weeks and even years through constant dialogue.

My circle of teachers has grown through this project where I have been invited to participate, help establish and facilitate the Asiniskow Ithini Acimowin, the Rocky Cree Project involving knowledge people from Asiniskow Ithiniwak communities and both Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars. This collaborative project was initiated by knowledgeable people from communities in northern Manitoba wanting to document knowledge that asserts the identity of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak that has historically been defined differently by others. A list of people who participated in the inaugural workshop is listed in Table 2. The contingent of knowledgeable resource people is growing in this

project with interest emerging from communities in Saskatchewan. This project focuses on documenting and sharing knowledge according to the protocols of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak through a series of annual workshops or work sessions. Knowledge arising from these workshops will be used for curriculum and language development, corrective histories, and other community driven initiatives. Topics discussed at the inaugural workshop held in 2011 included seasonal and moon cycles guiding the Asiniskow Ithiniwak, protocols, governance and laws, language, types of stories, ceremonies, definitions of places and territory and traditional educational structures. Information documented through these workshops is distributed afterwards to participants for reflection and review. Much of the knowledge informing this dissertation was gained through this workshop since all topics under discussion represents Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage.

Table 4-1 - List of participants in the inaugural Asiniskow Ithini Acimowin workshop

Thomas Spence	Pat Linklater
Louis Dumas	Arla Tait-Linklater
D'Arcy Linklater	Josephine Dumas
Eva Linklater	Ralph Arthurson
Reverend Nelson Hart	Kiera Ladner
Leslie Baker	Bret Nickels
Brenda Dysart-Anderson	William Dumas
Keith Anderson	Margaret Dumas
Philip Michel	Kevin Brownlee
Marvin Cook	

I liken the experience of the Asiniskow Ithini Acimowin workshops to a gathering, especially since the inaugural workshop of this project was undertaken outside at a gathering site used traditionally by the Asiniskow Ithiniwak on Sowaki sipi

(Suwannee river) (figure 4.3). Gatherings are important to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak because they bring together people from different communities and places. They encourage visits and conversations among different families, camps, territories and nations and provide a way of maintaining balance among relationships through respect, honour and acknowledgement. It is also a place for gathering knowledge, learning protocols through ceremony and sharing stories which is what these ‘workshops’ entailed bringing together young and old and people from different directions.

Another methodology applied in this dissertation as a consequence of the Asiniskow Ithini Acimowin is the collaborative inquiry framework. This transformative research paradigm guides projects in four steps: forming a group of co-researchers, creating the conditions for group learning, acting on the inquiry question, and making meaning by constructing group knowledge (Bray, et al. 2000; Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2008). This approach is an extension of the Participatory Research (PAR) model, which focuses on the involvement of researchers working in tandem with clients throughout the investigative process and gathering conventional data on populations (Bray, et al. 2000; Whyte 1990). The collaborative inquiry framework extends the practices of PAR by, “focusing on the personal experiences of the researchers, in addition to the scholarly methodologies, building broad understanding, not merely specific problem-solving, and explicitly establishing the group of co-researchers as a group of peers” (Bray, et al. 2000:38).

This approach was adapted in accordance with Indigenous methodologies and facilitated through the use of research sharing circles which enabled participants to contribute knowledge to the topic being discussed at their own comfort level (figure 4.3).

Research sharing circles differ from focus groups because of the protocols that guide the process and the time dedicated to gathering knowledge where each person has a chance to provide their input (Kovach 2009). “They [research-circles] normally require the accompaniment of food, and there is a meditative acknowledgement to all those who are in the circle, including the ancestors that sit with us. An Elder or cultural person often leads the circle...the research circle is a method to engender story. It is meant to provide space, time and an environment for participants to share their story in a manner that they can direct” (Kovach 2009:124). For further details, see Fitznor (1998) for the protocols of sharing circles and their process for gathering knowledge.



Figure 4.3 - Research circle at Asiniskow Ithini Acimowin workshop

Research circles promote accuracy and trustworthiness of knowledge through consensus. Often different people would share the same information demonstrating the reliability of knowledge. At times when no consensus could be reached, the group would either accept the existence of multiple truths to that subject (likely because of family or clan understandings), or decide that it is concept that needs further research. During this

process, respect is fostered among the discussants because of the nature of knowledge and teachings being shared.

Sharing circles embrace such concepts as learning from one another, and learning from what is said, gaining information and knowledge to incorporate into one's life, honoring and respecting what is heard, honoring the confidentiality of who said what, sharing the joy and pain of others, recognizing that what year person says is placed on an equal footing (no one person's voice is more important than another's), and the willingness to share information about one's experiences in light of personal growth and development

(Fitznor 1998:33)

Gathering berries, especially in large quantities, takes time and patience

"Patience and learning to embrace the ambivalence, the unexpected, the flux and change are important for survival"
(Michell 2009:67).

Community-based research is a dynamic process where anything can happen and nothing is ever predetermined (Michell 2009; St. Dennis 1992). I encountered this several times in the research process where the support I thought I had from community members never emerged, connections were lost, I felt like I was chasing people down or meetings were missed. The moment when I felt defeated because of these instances, I was given the following teaching involving the metaphor of a hunter.

As a hunter, if you chase an animal down, you will never catch it. It will keep running away from you because it senses, hears and smells you. However, if the conditions are right and sit still, wait, sometimes call and listen, they will come to you.

What I gained from this teaching is that it is important to *take your time* and *have patience* in any endeavour you undertake. Collaborative research and building relationships based on trust involves *time* and *patience*. Any time you engage in gathering knowledge and furthering your understanding of your reality requires *time* and *patience*.

To understand and learn what you are being taught takes *time* and *patience*. Engaging in these qualities nurtures your intuition.

The metaphor and the teachings relate to the Cree belief that there is a time and place for everything (Michell 2009). From what I understand from my teachers, it is a concept known as *enahipathik* to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak where everything happens when they are meant to happen. This concept relates to the alignment and balance of relationships involved in the events to happen or knowledge to arise. Suspending judgment is necessary for knowledge to surface in its own time (Deloria and Wildcat 2001). By having patience, you maintain trust or faith in these relationships and are guided by intuition. By taking your time, you can influence the balance of the relationships through an exchange of energy and knowledge that affects the direction of events or happenings but you cannot force them to happen.

Concepts like *enahipathik* are central to Indigenous knowledge systems and to understand them requires certain qualities that are taught through visits as indicated by Colorado (1988:57):

The process of the visit teaches the younger person the qualities that are necessary for becoming a Native American scientist. These qualities include tremendous self-discipline, patience, a willingness to share faith and a belief in prayer...

Your success is also based on if you follow the right way of doing things.

*“In Woodlands Cree communities, tobacco is offered to feed the power and spirit that flows through all life (Michell, 2005)”
(Michell 2009:67).*

Another significant Cree belief is there is a right way to do things, *kwayaskitotamowin* (Borrows 2010; Michell 2009). This process involves following specific protocols and laws shared by the community that guide conduct in handling

knowledge (Ermine, et al. 2005). Because knowledge is tied to and shaped by the local environment and its peoples, protocols work to uphold the balance and existence of these relationships by nurturing respect and promoting reciprocity. They acknowledge all involved in the exchange of energy and knowledge among relationships. Protocols operate in the following manner outlined by Ermine, et al. (2005:18):

Because protocol is important, it has to be followed in the proper way within context. For example, particular relationships require certain protocols of behavior with one another. These relationship protocols determined who could talk and who could teach. Within the community system of relationships, these protocols of behavior have to be followed...

The Elders said that this knowledge cannot be released to the general public or to just any individual on an ad hoc basis and without appropriate compensation or commitment. Learning the knowledge and following the protocol is part of the knowledge. The Elders said it is important to be aware what sacredness and protocol mean because it relates to understanding of the purity of the knowledge and for that knowledge to be valid.

An important protocol to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak is the offering of tobacco, which acknowledges the ethic of reciprocity, a code for ethical conduct where by taking something away, you offer something in return to retain the balance in relationships. It is an action for nurturing respect among relationships. As Michell (1999:1-2) indicates, “The act of offering tobacco is the proper and respectful protocol to follow when approaching people for their stories in the Rocky Cree culture. To my people, the act of offering tobacco reinforces the ethic of reciprocity in a cosmological understanding of interdependence, balance and harmony. The act of ‘offering’ in the Rocky Cree language can be referred to as *‘pakintinasowin’*.” Maintaining an ethic of reciprocity is integral to this dissertation because the knowledge that is being gathered and shared (or not shared because of protocol) through this project is significant to Asiniskow Ithiniwak identity.

To reinforce the ethic of reciprocity in this project, tobacco was not only offered to people involved in the research process but also the places where knowledge was gathered.

I relied on Asiniskow Ithiniwak protocols to guide my conduct in the research process so that it maintains the integrity of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage and knowledge. These ethical guidelines influenced the methods that I chose to gather and share knowledge and determined how my visits, conversations and gatherings proceeded. The significance of protocol became evident during one of the research circles of the workshop on a topic that I was leading as a facilitator. Although everyone took turns at the beginning, the conversation became very heated and disorganized. People started interrupting each other because they were so passionate about what was being discussed. Once the discussion came to a lull, an Elder chuckled at our conduct because we were behaving like children. He then proceeded to talk about the importance of protocol in a sharing circle and reminded us that through items such as a talking stick maintains organization and conduct. Afterwards, we began to acknowledge each other with respect by using the talking stick to take turns to speak and take time to listen to each other.

For most visits and conversations, audio recordings and written notes were not taken, only during times when my teachers gave me consent to document knowledge or told me to write down certain words or concepts. During certain visits, someone from the community came to assist me in documenting and translating the knowledge being shared in Cree. This person also helped me develop my understanding of the concept through discussion during and after the visit. In all instances including those visits where notes were not taken during the conversation, I compiled writings for my own understanding

after I reflected on the knowledge being shared. I also relied on my teachers to review my writings, including this dissertation, for verification or clarification.

Because of these internal protocols specific to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak, my teachers only shared with me the knowledge that was to be given to me. Also, they would identify information that was not to be shared publicly. In respecting these protocols, I recognize that there is knowledge that should not be shared because they are private or sacred. Such understandings have influenced my ethic concerning the interpretation of archaeological resources where there are some elements that I refuse to interpret, especially without the input of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. I understand that there is sensitive and sacred information held by archaeological items and sites that can affect the balance and integrity of heritage and knowledge for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. Some non-Indigenous scholars mistakenly assume that spiritual or religious concerns cause knowledgeable people to withhold information. They fail to recognize that relational epistemologies and ontologies drive this reluctance where by sharing or interpreting this knowledge against protocol leads to implications on daily contemporary life.

For example, “pictographs” and “rock paintings” are found throughout the Asiniskow Ithiniwak territory, especially along the Missinipi (Churchill River) (Blomquist 2011; Jones 2006; Lipsett 1990). “Rock art” is fascinating to many because it is unknown *publicly* as to who created them, when and why. Subsequently, archaeologists interpret the meaning of “rock art” to determine their significance and most relate their meanings with spiritual or ceremonial beliefs. Some interpretations are based on comparisons of rock paintings in other territories found in archaeological literature without community input. This approach overlooks the corollary that

knowledge maintained through relationships is localized to an environment and its peoples (Battiste and Henderson 2000). Some archaeologists who engage with communities to assist with interpretations are unfamiliar with protocols and of the greater implications with interpreting and publicly sharing sensitive knowledge that is tied to cultural identity. This is evident in the reluctance encountered by Lipsett (1990) after approaching “informants” to divulge information relating to the interpretation of rock paintings:

Unfortunately, the usual body of stories which would be considered myths were not forthcoming during the interview process. This would include stories concerning the creation of the land, animals, birds, fish, water, and all other things in the world of the Rocky Cree. The myth category would also include stories about the creation of man (Lipsett 1990:141).

It was found that informants were uncomfortable with the proposed travel to [rock painting] sites so this was not pursued (Lipsett 1990:45).

My intent is not to discount the documentation or recording of places with rock art, particularly those in danger of submersion from hydroelectricity developments. However, I believe that interpretations, if necessary, should be completed upon the initiative of the community and conducted accordingly with Asiniskow Ithiniwak protocols and with knowledgeable people that have given proper consent.

In this dissertation, I do not to share specific geographic locations of places important to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak or provide detailed oral histories documented through this project. I believe that this is not the time or place and this knowledge would serve best in corrective histories undertaken by the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. Instead, I focus my attention towards how oral histories operate in upholding relationships of place and community and the integrity of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage.

The trustworthiness of information shared for this dissertation is determined through the protocols internal to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak that act as standards for the dissemination and maintenance of knowledge. Much of this knowledge is used to support an understanding of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage in the next chapter. This is consistent with Wilson's (1997:109-110) argument that,

oral accounts are certainly interpretations of the past and should not be treated as raw data, I do not believe that they should be tested and evaluated by western standards, or any other standards from any other cultures for that matter. The only standards that matter are those set within the culture, and if stories are being told within the oral tradition then they have obviously passed these internal checks.

I do not subject this knowledge shared with me with previously written sources for verification. This is inconsistent with the methodology that I have decided to use in this dissertation. I wanted to focus on knowledge gained through local sources to demonstrate that understandings of heritage need to be contextualized at the local level. To demonstrate the legitimacy of this approach requires local understandings to be recognized as the primary source of knowledge.

Further, the legitimacy of this knowledge is supported by the nesting of knowledge, an internal mechanism within the community where only certain people have the authority to share this knowledge. This is further reinforced by the different contexts in which knowledge was shared in this project such as research sharing circles, a valid Rocky Cree methodology. In these circles, knowledge was shared and validated through consensus within the working group. In instances outside of the research circle, the trustworthiness of knowledge was evident in the similarity of details found in oral accounts from multiple sources.

For certain information where there are different accounts for certain topics, I retained the value of this knowledge by not rejecting, dismissing or subjecting it to evaluation to reconcile these differences. In respecting the corollary that knowledge is localized to relationships of local environment and its peoples, I understood that these differences might be attributed to clan, familial or regional differences. Further, since all that holds knowledge represents the collective heritage of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak and there are multiple realities that inform Asiniskow Ithiniwak identity, I cannot attribute the knowledge shared with me for this dissertation to a single source. Therefore, I do not reference specific individuals unless I am requested to do so. In addition, I refer to those who provided knowledge to me in this dissertation collectively as my teachers to ensure anonymity. I adopted this unconventional approach from Ladner (2001:50) who indicates that, “it is entirely consistent with decolonizing methodology, fourth-world post-colonialism and recent work in the area of oral history methodology.”

In keeping with *Kwayaskitotamowin*, there is a right way to doing things, I retain the use of the Cree language to convey concepts throughout this dissertation. As Chilisa (2012:57) indicates, “Language plays an important role in the research process (1) as a medium of communication, (2) as a vehicle through which indigenous knowledge can be preserved during fieldwork, and (3) as a symbol of objects, events, and experiences a community considers worth naming.” The Cree language as it is used in this project is not only as a symbol of cultural expression but as a tool that reinforces Asiniskow Ithiniwak identity.

When language is used in relation to an archaeological resource, I believe that it asserts the continuity of Asiniskow Ithiniwak identity over time. Michell (1999:6) refers to language as:

an expression of spirit because it contains the power to move people and to express human thought and feeling. The use of language and symbolic works carry a responsibility because they cause things to happen. Words evoke, instruct, and bring pleasure, joy and comfort. They can be used to heal. Words can also destroy, bring harm, and misery if used haphazardly... When Cree people share their stories about their traditions, they convey the spiritual connections they feel to the special places from which they come from through their language. Their stories are a sacred expression of spirit that is physically manifested in the land. When Cree people talk about these special places, they connect their spirit to them through their words, thoughts, and feelings.

Gathering berries involves knowing how to read the signs around you and being aware.

“In other situations we must wade into the ponds and step into the bogs and muskeg in our efforts to gather those pieces of information that will enhance the clarity of our understanding and move us towards action, change, and transformation”
(Michell 2009:69).

Many of these visits and conversations have taken place in various contexts across Winnipeg, Leaf Rapids, Granville Lake, Nelson House and South Indian Lake such as the house or camps of my teachers, my house, offices, boardrooms and classrooms. However, the majority of relationships were nurtured by spending time with people and places on the land. Since this project focuses on heritage supported by community and place, I needed to develop a relationship with my research ideas. I am thankful for my work as an archaeologist because it developed my love for the outdoors, which is your office from the time when the snow and ice clears to when they reappear. Time spent in the bush supported the establishment of connections with knowledgeable people by being of service, learning from them and the ability to understand the knowledge that arises from relationships involving cosmos, land, animals, non-humans and humans.

My time was spent at camps, cabins and homes of my teachers or visiting with them on the Churchill River, Burntwood River and other inland lakes and rivers such as Suwannee Lake. Their camps and homes would be home base, as we would visit with others knowledgeable people, places, and “encultured landscapes”, in addition to finding archaeological resources. There were also times where I would also camp in the bush at spots along the Missinipi. I would also engage in daily activities in the bush that included: going on the trap line, commercial fishing, ice fishing and hunting, cooking and fixing up camp, hauling water, cleaning and packing moose meat and of course berry picking.

I chose to conduct visits in the winter months in addition to the summer to demonstrate that heritage has no boundaries and gathering knowledge can happen at any time of the year. Because archaeology focuses on finding artifacts and excavating sites, my work in Asiniskow Ithiniwak territory is typically done in the summer months. I found this limited my understanding of the people and the land because I would only engage in activities conducted in the summer. In addition, I found historically that most archaeological sites identified in Asiniskow Ithiniwak territory were located along major waterways. This is because the identification and protection of heritage resources in cultural resources management is initiated in reaction to land-based developments rather than proactively. Since hydroelectric developments represent the majority of disturbances to the landscape, work is conducted mostly along shorelines susceptible to flooding. This approach is problematic in a world where archaeological resources are equated as representing the totality of heritage in a region because it leads to the assumption that heritage resources are only found along major waterways.

In the winter months, I accessed different parts of the land that I would never see in the summer such as travelling through inland lakes. I engaged in different activities such as helping on the trap line and ice fishing and recognized there are different camps inland that are accessed during in the winter. Further, these experiences expanded my understanding of the seasonal and moon cycles important to Asiniskow Ithiniwak knowledge systems. Honestly, I actually enjoyed this relationship with the land in the winter more than in the summer, particularly because the quiet of winter promotes reflection (figure 4.4).



Figure 4.4 – Experiencing quiet in winter

These experiences enabled me to relate to the following experience shared by Weber-Pillwax's (2001:173) of time spent in the bush and Indigenous research:

You can live and talk about the bush, and never have set foot on a trail. My father was a trapper, and I lived in that lifestyle. However, until I personally went to the trap line and stayed there for three weeks, I didn't really know the context or the connections between the trapper and the

land, or the trapper and the animals, or the trapper and the weather, or the trapper and 100 other things. Being there for enough time was necessary to the learning to be integrated into my being. Perhaps it is like writing bread on a piece of paper and then eating the paper instead of eating the bread.

A memorable episode that relays Weber-Pillwax's experience is the time when Keith Anderson challenged me to drive his yawl across Southern Indian Lake (figure 4.5):

We finished the day excavating at Fur Trade post on Southern Indian Lake and loading up the boat with the crew and equipment. Keith said to me, "I want you to drive the boat home with no GPS or no map" and I froze. He goes on to say, "What if something happens to me, how do you expect get us out of here?" Point taken. Keith showed me how to navigate along the waterway. "Okay, watch for that stand of birch trees that sticks out and head towards it. Now look at how the flow of water stops there, watch for the reef at that spot. Stay in the middle of the water. Head towards that point where those boulders are". As I drove the boat, I also felt anxious but had to remain calm in front of my crew. As I relayed these feelings to Keith, he said, "Now you know how I feel when I drive the boat with others in it". Afterwards, Keith made me practice my skills by driving the boat back and forth from the site in the following days. Through this experience, Keith was teaching me a few things. He was teaching me how to be aware of what was around me so I could read the landscape to find my way home, something that you could never experience or learn by reading a two-dimensional map or GPS screen. By challenging me to drive the boat full of people, he was helping me build trust in myself to develop my sense of intuition and over come self-doubt.

To understand when certain berries are ready at certain times, you not only have to learn how to read the signs from the land but you also have to trust your intuition by overcoming the fear you experience from self-doubt.



Figure 4.5 - Driving the boat with Keith Anderson.

(Note how I am trying to look all calm, cool and collected for my field crew but really the whole time I was scared that I was going to hit a rock reef.)

Berries that are discarded still have a purpose if you can see it that way.

*“Berries are selected based on ripeness, while others are left to go back to the earth in a continuous cycle of renewal... We study the different types of data that emerge. We look at patches of berries from a global perspective and search for common patterns and distinctions. We study the data that is discarded and we must remember that even these seemingly senseless pieces of information also tell a story of something”
(Michell 2009:70).*

In selecting the tools to gather knowledge in this project, I adopted Wilson’s (2001) approach in asking the following set of questions to evaluate research methods:

One is: What is my role as a researcher, and what are my obligations? You then have to ask yourself: Does this method allow me to fulfill my obligations in my role? Further, does this method help to build a relationship between myself as a researcher and my research topic? Does it

build respectful relationships with other participants in the research? Relationships with the idea or topic, as well as with the people or mice or trees, whatever you are working with, have to be considered.

Asking these questions is consistent with an Indigenous research paradigm to ensure that methodologies and tools used in the research process are consistent with the four R's outlined earlier.

Upon answering these questions, I found that my approach to generating postcolonial understandings of Aboriginal heritage involves a bicultural or hybrid research model that blends methodologies, tools and interpretations based on Indigenous and non-Indigenous research paradigms. The concept of a bicultural research model introduced by Colorado (1988:49) is, “a blending of research efforts, not the domination or extension of ideological control by one culture’s science.” By solely focusing on interpretations generated through Indigenous approaches in this dissertation is not only disrespectful to non-Indigenous peoples but presumptuous in assuming that the Asiniskow Ithiniwak are not interested in the outcomes of previous archaeological research conducted in their territory. If I decided to focus only on archaeological approaches based on dominant research paradigms to understand Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage then I would be continuing the tradition of marginalizing Indigenous knowledge in my interpretations. Using approaches based in different knowledge systems encourages dialogue and supports the exchange of ideas in improving the protection and management of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage through policy and practice. The exploration and incorporation of a bicultural research model in this project will, “strengthen traditional Indian science, enhance cross-cultural communication and

understanding; while at the same time promote the growth of both sciences” (Colorado 1988:49).

Yellowhorn (2006a:205) indicates,

For aboriginal people, whose cultures and identities are found in oral narratives, each generation must determine how best to use such knowledge. They must seek ways to gain a fuller understanding of particular customs and then disseminate the result to the larger community of archaeology. The present generation continues this practice by adapting such narrative lessons, and one way to do this is to construct theories for ancient artifacts visible in the archaeological record.

This is a strategy I adopted in this dissertation where through the working group we are attempting to gain further insights into the customs important to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. The knowledge that has emerged through these discussions along with others have led to new understandings and interpretations of archaeological resources based on a blending of methodologies and theories.

This blending of methodologies to guide the research process involves three primary frameworks outlined earlier in this dissertation: an Indigenous research paradigm (Wilson 2008), strategies for decolonization (Linda Smith 1999) and a collaborative inquiry framework (Bray, et al. 2000). These frameworks guide the methods used to gather knowledge in this project. Knowledge is gathered using Indigenous methods consisting of visits (with community and place), conversations, research circles, and intuition (my own and of knowledgeable people). I also gathered knowledge by examining interpretations of archaeological materials recovered from the region that are housed at The Manitoba Museum. These approaches are balanced with adaptations of methods based in Western research paradigms and interpretations of Asiniskow Ithiniwak history and heritage by non-Indigenous scholars. Other sources, which will be examined

in future studies include previous traditional land-use research studies and archaeological and ethnographic work conducted in the area. There are many technical publications highlighting archaeological sites identified through the Churchill River Diversion Archaeological Project (e.g. Dickson 1972; Brownlee 2001; Riddle 1994, 2000; Wood 1983). Previous ethnographic work has also been conducted in the Granville Lake region that identifies places of cultural significance to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak (Brightman 1993; Castel and Westfall 2001).

Although these interpretations might marginalize Asiniskow Ithiniwak knowledge systems, they should not be disregarded since there is knowledge contained in these writings that can inform this project. When approaching these writings, I draw on Brown and Vibert's (1996) concept of "reading beyond words" by looking for understanding beyond the context in which it was written. Dumas (2004:34) conveys this idea in the following recollection,

A few years ago, this book was given to me it's called, "Anna and the Indians." I'm sure some of you have read it. On the opening page, it says discard. It's supposed to be thrown away. Somebody picked up and thought I'd be interested in it. I asked him why is this book being discarded? He said because there's lots of racism in it. Lot of good things in here. If one looks for positive things you will find them; if you look for negative things, they are there. I read this again coming down, just like the earlier part when people didn't know that they had pottery in their earlier times. Recently, I've been looking for willow basket makers to introduce into our education system. The word I got was us Crees never made those willow baskets. Anna says the people in Norway House, Cross Lake and Nelson House would bring things in willow baskets. It's here. So we cannot discard other peoples' thoughts just because we disagree with them. You will find positive things if you look for them...

Conclusion – It's time to eat berries

“Others will take action, initiate dialogue and talk, build on the research, reconstruct the knowledgebase leading to further research, in a never-ending cycle of truth refinement and change” (Michell 2009:72).

I recognize that my use of metaphor to describe the methodologies and tools employed in this project is an unorthodox approach to some scholars. I know of some individuals that might be uncomfortable in reading this chapter because it follows an unconventional approach in the discipline than what they are used to. I believe that these reactions are a natural part of building a relationship with the unknown, developing familiarity with new knowledge and the initiation of cross-cultural dialogue. If I was able to engage the reader with these reactions by relating my experience with the process of “gathering berries”; then I have contributed one of my goals in this dissertation in training colleagues to not only understand the “abstract point that there are other ways of seeing but to actually see in different ways” (Sheehan and Lilley 2008:106).

Through this chapter, I hope to convey that by following these research frameworks used in this project has transformed the way that I approach knowledge. Further, I hope to have demonstrated how non-Indigenous scholars engaged in research involving Indigenous heritage apply Indigenous methodologies and tools to gather knowledge. From these experiences, I have come to understand that through practice, keeping an open mind and having flexibility diminishes the feeling of intimidation experienced by non-Indigenous scholars when engaging in Indigenous research methodologies and tools. In addition, other qualities of patience, observation and listening are as equally important.

From my teachers and this project, I also recognized the importance of acknowledging your own ethic towards research and its outcomes because it guides your conduct in the research process. The teachings shared not only helped inform this project but also fostered my own axiologies (ethics and morals) that guide my approach towards knowledge in everyday. I try to ground the actions of my everyday life and my conduct in both personal and professional settings based on an ethic of respect, humility, generosity and reciprocity. This ethic that I have adopted over the years based on the teachings that I have received closely resembles a set of guidelines outlined by Smith (1999:120) based on Kuapapa Maori practices:

1. Aroha kit e tangata (a respect for people)
2. Kanohi kitea (the seen face, that is present yourself to people face to face).
3. Titiro, whakarongo...korero (look, listen...speak)
4. Manaaki kit e tangata (share and host people, be generous)
5. Kia tupato (be cautious)
6. Kaua e takahia te mana o te tangata (do not trample over the mana of people)
7. Kaua e mahaki (don't flaunt your knowledge)

What follows in the next chapter is my understanding of knowledge concerning Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage. My interpretations are based on teachings and knowledge that was shared with me in accordance with the protocols of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. Consequently, I will not be divulging any knowledge that is not to be shared publicly. I acknowledge that this knowledge belongs to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak and take full responsibility for any misrepresentations, misinterpretations and misunderstandings of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage in this dissertation. I recognize that by engaging in this research topic, I have assumed these responsibilities towards the Asiniskow Ithiniwak and do not see the outcome of this dissertation as an end point but a starting point. The knowledge gained through this project will be used for several purposes including

education, curriculum development, policy development, corrective histories and hopefully a discussion piece. In retrospect, I can relate to the following statement by Smith and Jackson (2008:190) who describe their experiences with the Barunga people in Australia in being taught to think long term, “We were being tied to the community through the gossamer threads of something more than kith but less than kin, and this would determine our future”. I believe that this statement best captures how I view my relationships with the Asiniskow Ithiniwak and how it is clear that I am here for the long term.

Chapter 5 Contextualizing a postcolonial understanding of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage

Introduction

I begin this discussion by emphasizing that this is an interpretation of Asiniskow Ithiniwak worldview and heritage that I have learned from my teachers. There will be limited citations presented in this chapter because this knowledge is derived from teachings from the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. I do not consider myself an expert but a student and recognize that the knowledge presented in this dissertation does not belong to me but to the people. In this effort to articulate a postcolonial understanding of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage, it is not my intention to do any disservice to the teachings that have been shared with me through this project. Therefore, I take full responsibility over any misrepresentations in my writings.

I reiterate that my approach of using local accounts as my primary sources is consistent with the methodologies and Indigenous research paradigm that I have decided to use to guide the research process. Subjecting this knowledge to external written sources for validation or for scrutiny will cause the research process to deviate from my chosen methodology. Further, in this dissertation I wish to emphasize that an understanding of heritage important to any community has to be contextualized through their language, culture, laws and local landscape. Contextualizing heritage in this manner demonstrates the active role that local communities must have in the protection and maintenance of their heritage.

To be consistent with decolonizing methodologies, I chose to use Cree words throughout this chapter to articulate concepts alongside the English terms. As I had indicated in the previous chapter, language is central to communicating a culture's

worldview and is, therefore, a symbol of cultural expression. This emphasizes that the local language is central in contextualizing heritage, as the community understands it. This approach is consistent with scholars like Smith (2012), Ladner (2001) and Geniusz (2009) who also use local languages in academic discourse as a decolonizing methodology. The application of a local language to reflect worldview in such discussions will help shift power imbalances by bringing the knowledge of a subordinated culture to the forefront of academic discourse.

My approach follows Cove's (1982) recommendation of integrating cosmological studies to build more holistic understanding of land tenure. These are elements that are essential for arguments focused on Aboriginal and Treaty rights. By taking this approach, I believe it is then possible to demonstrate how laws and ideologies shape an understanding of heritage. This is something that I can only do by relying on Asiniskow Ithiniwak understandings as my primary source of knowledge in this dissertation. Further, in keeping with an Indigenous research paradigm, I have reviewed these writings with my teachers to ensure the validity and accuracy of the teachings shared with me.

I also expect that what I present in this dissertation may be critiqued as representing an essentialist portrayal of Asiniskow Ithiniwak identity. Perhaps, I admit it is possible to that this discussion may perpetuate an essentialist discourse but in a strategic sense. When I was invited to work with the Asiniskow Ithiniwak, I was asked to help write corrective histories from knowledge specifically drawn from their perspectives. Further, my approach is not to examine the cultural content of Asiniskow Ithiniwak identity. Instead, I focus on how their collective identity is supported by

mechanisms of knowledge production and maintenance that are influenced by epistemologies and ontologies. This discussion also reflects an essentialist discourse from an Indigenist sense as understood by Smith (2012). To revisit this concept, Smith (2012:77) refers to essentialism as being,

[D]iscussed in different ways within the indigenous world... the essence of a person is also discussed in relation to indigenous concepts of spirituality. In these views, the essence of a person has a geneology which can be traced back to an earth parent, usually glossed as an Earth Mother. A human person does not stand alone, but shares with other animate and, in the Western sense, 'inanimate' beings, a relationship based on a shared 'essence' of life. The significance of place, of land, of landscape, of other things in the universe, in defining the very essence of a people, makes for a very different rendering of the term essentialism as used by indigenous peoples.

Further, Ladner (2001:66) interprets Smith as saying that essentialism "is rooted in spirituality and an understanding that all beings are Creation". Such understandings are reflected in the ideologies of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak presented in this chapter through the natural law of *wahkotowin* - "we are all related", which is significant to Asiniskow Ithiniwak identity.

Throughout this dissertation, I try to be honest and speak from the heart and what I think to interpret as truth with the intention of knowing that I have been given this task to articulate these understandings as part of my *miskanow* - path in life. Given this understanding, I try my best to articulate different concepts associated with the knowledge systems of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. I also know that what I am portraying of Asiniskow Ithiniwak identity in this chapter may not resonate with all people who identify themselves as an Asiniskow Ithiniwak. Further, I anticipate that this discussion will draw similar responses as those experienced by Haig-Brown during an Indigenous student conference (2008:258):

He sounds like a born-again; why is the seemingly hopeless task of preserving an obscure (to 'us') language still seen as a legitimate project in these times of globalization and transnationalism; it looks like tourist ethnography down to the use of photographs in the presentation. Where is the theory? These presentations are too emotion-based, too focused on spirituality and some romantic and essentialist notion of an inviolable past...I found myself...wondering what to do with the comments...what seemed like one more set of disrespectful responses to Indigenous knowledge and topics still arising out of notions of Western European superiority brought to the shores of the Americas by Enlightenment mentalities.

These statements are not dismissive. Instead, they are a reflection of power imbalances where a colonial presence continues to assert its authority. "The colonial presence is always ambivalent, split between appearance as original and authoritative and its articulation as repetition and difference" (Bhabha 1994:32). By engaging in this discussion, I want to provoke reflection upon how epistemological racism pervades our daily lives to prevent everyone from moving forward beyond colonialist experiences.

I believe that this dissertation represents decolonizing work with a purpose (Smith 1999),

to improve people's lives through demystifying knowledge production by taking current and historical colonial relations seriously and situating Indigenous knowledges in their rightful place as foundational and contesting views to those arising directly out of Enlightenment Europe. In this work we as scholars not only regenerate new forms of old knowledges, hybrid forms... but also have the potential to generate new ways of thinking through our relations with one another.

(Haig-Brown 2008:255).

This is what I am attempting to do in this chapter.

I recognize that there are concepts that you as the reader might disagree with which is fine. Nothing written should ever be taken as the ultimate truth on any topic. Also, the beauty of knowledge is that there are many ways to gain understanding of a concept. In the following these writings, discover and use the knowledge that works best

for your understanding of reality and the world that surrounds you. If there is anything in this chapter you disagree with, question it and perhaps look for more answers to build your understanding. But as I have been taught, always remain humble and respectful. This is how we can initiate a cross-cultural dialogue so that we are all on the same page.

The concept of science

Western ethnocentrism often dismisses the methodologies and ideologies that support Indigenous knowledges as being “pseudoscientific” or merely “unscientific” (Scott 1996). Others argue that science is a Western construct that does not apply to Indigenous knowledge systems because it consists of folk knowledge and the idea of Indigenous science is meaningless (Cajete 2000). Such dismissals reflect the underlying power imbalances that exist between dominant and subordinate populations inherent to colonial contexts (Nader 1996a). As a product of Enlightenment period in Europe, “the development of science and technology in the West has considerable overlaps with beliefs in material and social progress” (Nader 1996b:xi). Such beliefs contribute to the ongoing civilizational and institutional racism that continues to subordinate the knowledge systems of marginalized populations today. To address these issues surrounding the uneven distribution of power associated with science, Nader (1996b:xi) suggests that, “we need a perspective on how to regard different science traditions because public controversies over science should not be reduced to polarization and polemics asserting a glorified science or despicable science.”

This perspective was provided in early work by Malinowski ([1925] 1948) who illustrates that the concept of science is not foreign to Indigenous knowledge systems in his essay, “Magic, Science and Religion”. He begins, ““Magic, Science and Religion’

with, “there are not peoples however, primitive without religion and magic. Nor are there...any savage races lacking in the scientific attitude or in science, though this lack has been frequently attributed to them” (Malinowski [1925] 1948:1). In this pivotal essay which spurred much discussion at the time of writing, Malinowski demonstrates that all societies operate within the sacred and profane, in the areas of magic, science and religion (Nader 1996c).

If by science be understood a body of rules and conceptions, based on experience and derived from it by logical inference, embodied in material achievements and in a fixed form of tradition and carried on by some sort of social organization – then there is no doubt that even the lowest savage communities have the beginnings of science... science, of course, does not exist in any uncivilized community as a driving power, criticizing, renewing constructing. Science is never consciously made. But on this criterion, neither is there law, nor religion, nor government...

(Malinowski [1925] 1948:34-35)

There is growing acknowledgement that science is not a concept exclusive to Western societies but is found in non-Western societies, as well. Therefore, science should then be regarded as, “[A] way of understanding the world, a story of how things happen, a way that human beings have evolved and to try and explain and understand existence in time and space and relationships vis-à-vis the natural processes of the world. In this perspective, every culture has a science” (Cajete 2000:3). This understanding of science suggests that,

In order to avoid false or misleading comparisons between a model of science identified with reason and the domination of nature and ‘native’ uses of knowledge (sometimes entwined with magical and religious practices) of non-Western and ‘scientifically illiterate’ western peoples, it is imperative to document the process of knowledge formation and use.

(Nader 1996b:10)

Yellowhorn (2000) explores the scientific method as it is employed among Aboriginal peoples in knowledge formation and use. He examines how, “[N]ative

cultures of the past employed scientific thought and practices to gain a greater degree of control over their natural and cultural environment” (Yellowhorn 2000:74). Indigenous peoples apply an inductive approach towards understanding the world involving observation, analysis, explanation and prediction that involves, “observation of natural phenomena leads to analysis of inherent patterns that yield explanations that make possible predictions of further occurrences” (Yellowhorn 2000:75).

I interpret the idea of control, as discussed by Yellowhorn (2000) as engaging in actions to maintain a sense of balance among the relationship of Beings that extend beyond self. Engaging in these actions is not entirely for self-serving benefits but rather an approach that is grounded in essentialism or essence of being where on a basic level where we are all related or connected.

The Cree disposition seems...to assume common connections among people, animals, and other entities while exploring the nature of their differences. The connectedness assumed by the Cree reminds me of what Gregory Bateson (1979 in Scott 1996) has termed the “pattern which connects,” patterns of dancing, interacting parts within larger patterns, the stories “shared by all mind or minds, whether ours or those of redwood forests and sea anemones”, the “aesthetic unity” of the world”.

(Scott 1996:72)

Therefore, a sense of control as I interpret it involves the following of a set of laws, which strive to maintain a balance in the relationships of individual and collective agencies. This understanding follows the concepts of *kwayaskitotamowin*, there is a right way to doing things, (where actions have implications for not only the individual but the collective) and *enahipathik*, the acceptance that things happen when they are meant to happen (as the Creator intended).

Root metaphors, paradigms & epistemologies

“For tribal people, amassing knowledge about the natural world is not randomly collecting trivia; instead, knowledge is derived through systematic analysis of natural phenomena that requires a particular thought process” (Yellowhorn 2000:72). For the Asiniskow Ithiniwak as I will demonstrate in this chapter, I explore this thought process as guided by what Scott (1996) refers to as “root metaphors” or “paradigms”. Scott (1996:70) explores the ways in which “[R]oot metaphors of pan-species personhood, communication, and reciprocity inform literal models of animal behavior and hunting practice; and how the latter reciprocally transmute the terms of metaphor, as experience is interpreted and actions are formulated.”

I interpret “root metaphors” as used by Scott (1996) as referring to an underlying set of ontologies that manifest as laws or theories to guide epistemologies, methodologies and axiologies. From one standpoint, I understand these laws as being grounded in the recognition of multiple realities, relationships and essence of beings. The scientific approach is, therefore, built on these paradigms and laws where knowledge is gathered through inductive methodologies that observe surroundings and identify exchanges of energy in relationships with multiple beings and realities that are in constant flux. The outcome of these exchanges is also influenced by one’s conduct in these relationships. Continuous observation and participation lends to experience in recognizing when knowledge is being exchanged with these realities and beings, as well as how to react or not react accordingly to the knowledge being shared.

For example, stars and moon phases are reminders that relationships in universe are in a state of flux through the process of skywatching. An inductive approach is

applied to observe the cycles of the moon phases and paths of the stars to gain knowledge and direction such as how to prepare for the anticipated changes in season and plan for events (Yellowhorn 2000). “By observing the behavior of stars, skywatchers became familiar with the paths each travelled, and their observations were the basis of accurate calendric systems founded on seasonal stellar procession. The firmament of stars was the backdrop for the more quixotic motion of planets and other bodies in the solar system and the challenge for these ancient astronomers was to predict these cycles” (Yellowhorn 2000:75).

This notion of relationships and exchange of energy in multiple dimensions is not entirely foreign to Western science as found in quantum theory or particle physics. “The quantum physicist believes that in a reality where consciousness does affect reality, a reality that is in constant motion and can appear as a particle or a wave. This reality is animate and part of an indivisible whole that is uncertain, but full of possibility and potential... Physicists are finding that the network of energy known to Indigenous people is being proved through quantum physics” (Ferguson 2005:125). What this suggests is that notions of connectedness, multiple relations among beings and realities are not exclusive to Indigenous knowledge systems. Instead, the concepts are more readily understood because of the underlying root metaphors and ontologies based on relatedness that guide the scientific approaches employed in these systems.

“So embedded are the Cartesian myths of dualities of mind-body, culture-nature, that we tend to privilege models of physical causality rather than relations of consciousness or significance, in or perception of even sentient nature” (Scott 1996:72). Perhaps because of these embedded myths in dualism, Peat (2012:121) indicates that,

“[western] science may have sacrificed a deeper and more comprehensive vision of the world”.

A sense of place

From an Indigenist perspective, the relationships that are integral to Indigenous knowledge systems imply that there are no distinctions between community and place. Community involves relationships established beyond a group of people to include multiple realities and beings. Place involves more than the representation of space or geographic location but the interaction of different beings and dimensions. In this sense, place and community are not distinctive but refer to the same concept. Michell and colleagues (2008) further elaborates on this concept by exploring five central elements associated with place that are common among various Indigenous groups which are as follows:

1. Place is multidimensional

Place is more than a geographic location where it entails physical and emotional characteristics that involve interactions between location and resident. Edward S. Casey distinguishes from place and space where space is tangible and measurable whereas place includes “locations where one chooses to stay or return” (Cruikshank 2005:67).

2. Place is relational or relationship-based

Place is a spiritual relationship with the tangible world that connects other aspects of life that is evident in the emphasis of connections between Indigenous peoples and the land.

3. Place is experiential

The experiences that a person has on the land (in their place), give place meaning. Since Indigenous knowledge is created through experience, both remarkable and unremarkable, engaging with the land provides tactile and tangible connection between knowledge and life.

4. Place is local

Place is site specific where locality provides an understanding that it is as unique, individual and local as the people who create it.

5. Place is land-based

Land is a central aspect of group identity among Indigenous cultures; therefore, a sense of place is tied to the land. “It is the relationship between the land and the people and the people who inhabit it, the connection people have to the land, and the role of place in the history, culture, and community” (Michell, et al. 2008:29). Place might be better understood as the product of the relationship with and connection to the land.

Contextualizing understandings of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage

To contextualize postcolonial understandings of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage, I use terms based in the local language and the use of the symbol presented in figure 5.1 throughout this discussion. I rely on the language used by the Asiniskow Ithiniwak to articulate concepts important to their cosmology. This is important because language is a reflection of identity and worldview. Many refer to this language as Cree; however, to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak they speak *nīhithow*. *Nīhithow* distinguishes these people from others who speak a similar language but in different dialect. The Asiniskow Ithiniwak use the term *nīhithow* to describe the language they speak, as a means to assert their identity and reinforce their connection with their territory.

The English language is limited in its ability to describe relationship-oriented concepts important to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak knowledge systems. This is because European languages are subject-verb-object oriented and reinforce deeply inbuilt assumptions about the nature of space, time, and causality that are well-defined (Bohm 2002; Peat 2012). Indigenous languages are strongly verb-based depicting relationships

that are in constant flux and flow (Peat 2012). They emphasize the actions that occur in relationships and are not merely words used to describe something. Once these words are spoken, they are enforcing an action that involves the transference of energy and knowledge involving the many beings and realities important to Asiniskow Ithiniwak knowledge systems. Instead of providing a direct English translation to some of the terms in nīhithow, I provide root words to convey its meaning. I believe that this is necessary because many of the words in nīhithow today are directly translated using the English language as a frame of reference. Further, many nīhithow terms have been shortened resulting in a new form of Cree language emerging in the last century. Many people involved in this project have expressed concern over the diminishing number of Old Cree speakers. For instance, one location in the region of *Ithinesahikan*, the Peoples Lake or Southern Indian Lake is known today as *Kawapiskotimik*, White Beaver Dam. In old Cree, this location is known as *wapamiskoskwatim* based on the root words of *wapiskow* for white, *amisk* for beaver, and *oskwatim* for dam. This example demonstrates that breaking up or shortening words, breaks up relationships causing the meaning and significance associated with language to become lost.

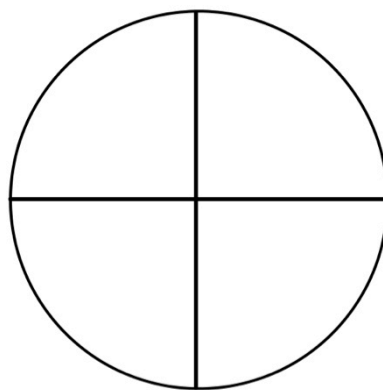


Figure 5.1 - Symbol used to contextualize postcolonial understandings of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage in this chapter.

In this chapter, I will also rely on this symbol in figure 5.1 to contextualize postcolonial understandings of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage to emphasize relationships, the act of centering and multiple realities. I intend to use this symbol as a frame of reference to articulate the worldview of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak where everything that holds knowledge is valued as their collective heritage. This symbol is generally referred to as a medicine wheel and is widely associated with Indigenous peoples in North America. Many people involved in this project expressed the belief that the term medicine wheel is a misnomer that was likely coined by anthropologists and archaeologists during the era when a preservation ethic prevailed to document Indigenous cultures before they “vanished”. According to Ellerby (2001), there is insufficient evidence that validates the general use of the term medicine wheel linguistically among Indigenous peoples. Further, the continued referral of this symbol as the medicine wheel adopted by many Indigenous groups serves to create a pan-Aboriginal stereotype of Indigenous identity (Ellerby 2001). I agree with Ellerby (2001) where the continued use of the medicine wheel to characterize this symbol of cultural expression disenfranchises Aboriginal peoples from asserting their identity. In order to give true meaning and value to this symbol, it has to be contextualized according to the language and within collective epistemologies of a particular Indigenous group.

I begin to contextualize the Asiniskow Ithiniwak worldview through this symbol by first turning it on a 45 degree angle (figure 5.2.). By making this minor adjustment, my teachers have indicated that it reflects the Asiniskow Ithiniwak worldview that everything in the universe is in constant motion driven by a continuous flow of energy that exchanged between dimensions and beings. The symbol in its current form draws a

closed path whereas by turning it there is an “opening of a doorway” promoting the continuous flow of energy across different paths and planes of reality (figure 5.3).

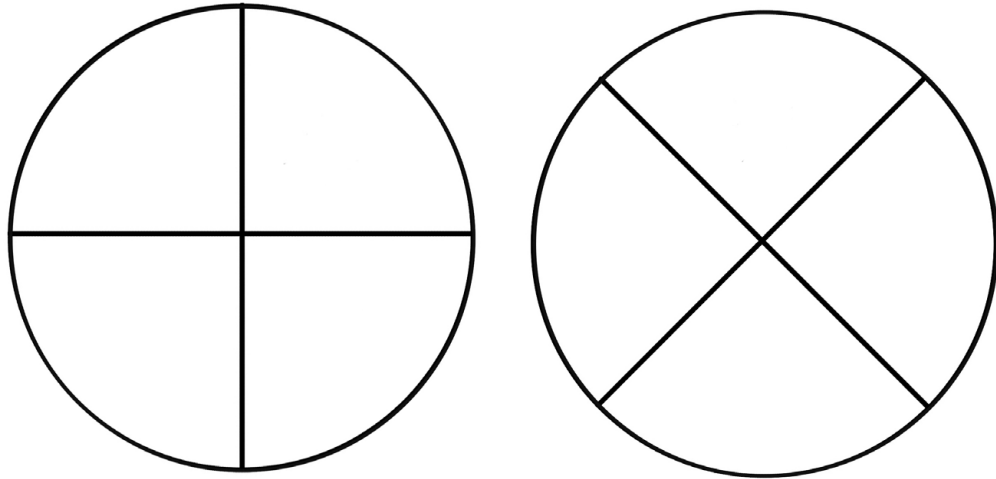


Figure 5.2 - Contextualization of Asiniskow Ithiniwak worldview is best illustrated by turning symbol on a 45-degree angle as shown on right.

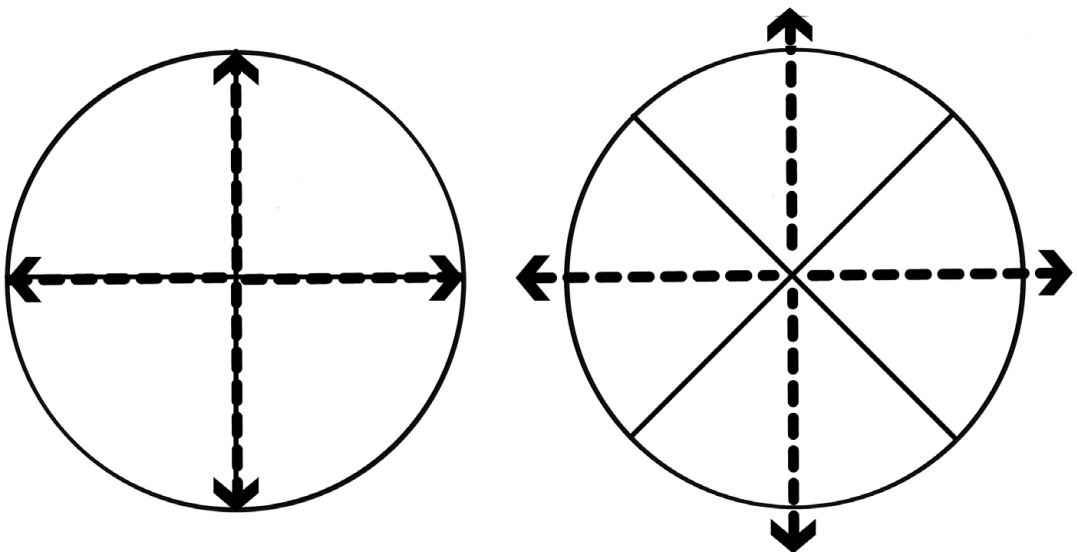


Figure 5.3 - Symbol on left demonstrates the following of path on ‘standard’ medicine wheel prohibits the flow of energy along the pathway. Symbol on right demonstrates ‘opening of doorway’ enabling the flow in direction of energy.

The universe

According to the cosmology of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak, the universe was created by *Kisi Manto* - the Great Spirit who is also referred to as *opihmahicihwew*, the Creator or giver of life (Linklater 1994). This universe can be contextualized by the symbol to represent the cosmos, which is divided into four parts on a vertical plane, consisting of the *kisik* - sky (world), *askī* - earth, *nipi* - water (world), and *atamaskamikoaskī* - under the earth (figure 5.4). Each of the four parts are occupied by beings that are in constant interaction with one another (Linklater 1994, 1997). *Askī*, earth, is made up of different inhabitants known as *athis ithinew*, earth based beings that includes (figure 5.5):

- *Ithiniwak* - the people
- *pisiskiwak* - animals,
- *nipinawisak* - birds
- *kinosiwak* - fish
- *nipimistik* - plants
- *asiniak* - rocks
- *manicōsak* - insects

The center of the illustration featuring the universe (figures 5.4 and 5.5) is the interaction of the different beings from multiple dimensions.

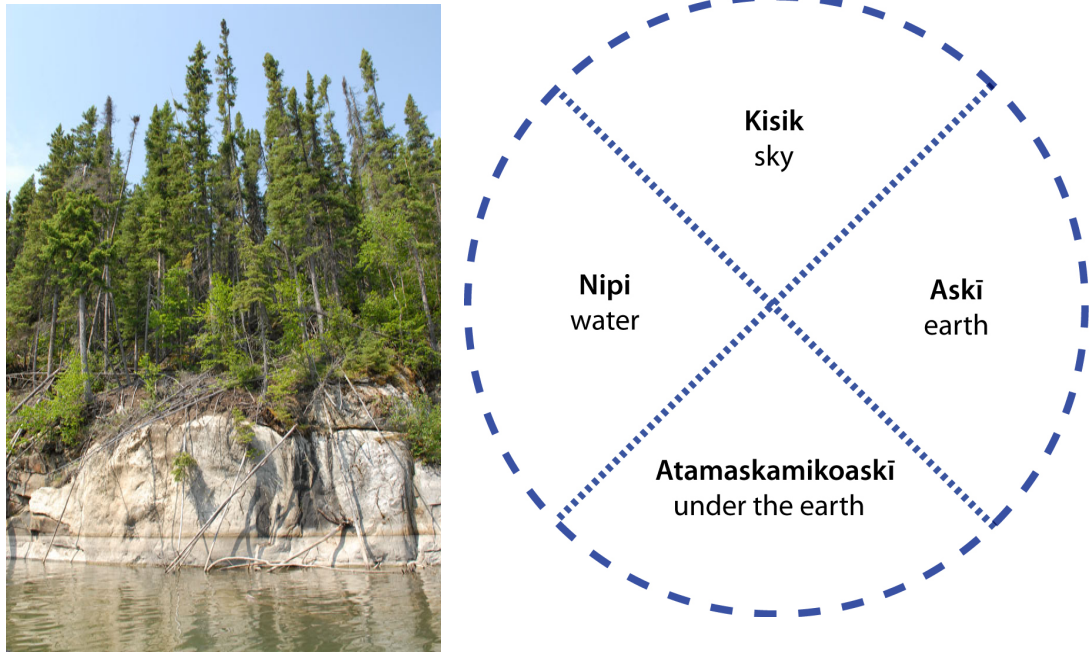


Figure 5.4 - Diagram of the universe as recognized by the Asiniskow Ithiniwak

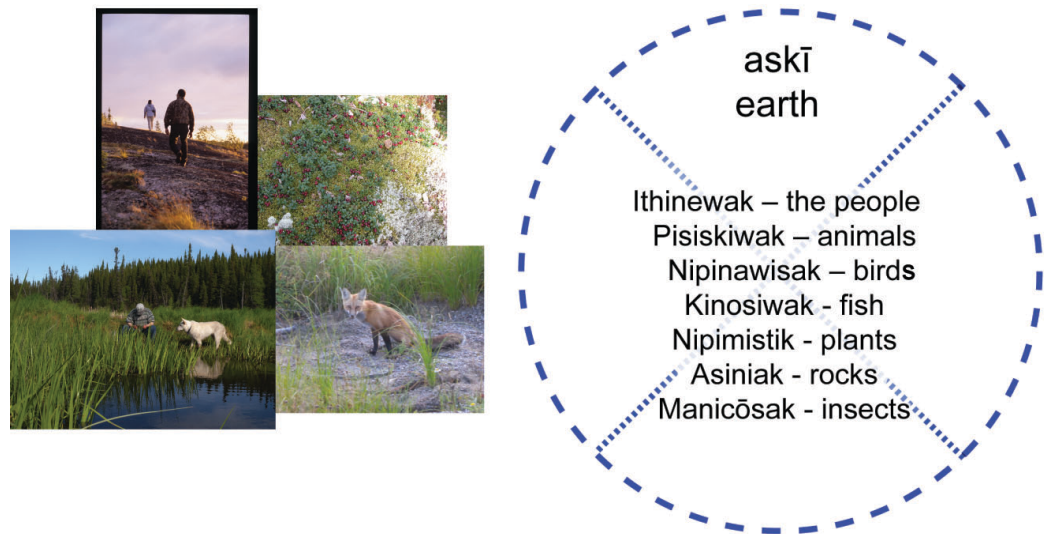


Figure 5.5 - Diagram outlining different beings on askī (earth).

The Directions

The different directions ground the universe and the identity of beings by providing structure through a continuous path (figure 5.6). According to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak, the winds provide this directional structure on *askī*, earth. The winds are as follows:

- *Kīwētin*, north, derived from the root word *kīwē* meaning coming home, is a grandfather, the leader of the winds and is the direction where ice and glaciers recede.
- *Wapanok*, east, brings the day or *kisikawacahk*, daystar, and is related to *nipi*, water, that brings life.
- *Sawanok* or south brings life or warmth that uncovers the blanket of snow and ice on earth.
- *Pahkisimon*, west, is where the day falls or the resting of the sun and is also a direction to where ice recedes.

The directions and the wind ground identity by reminding one that the universe is in constant motion and flux as the earth rotates and the wind changes directions.

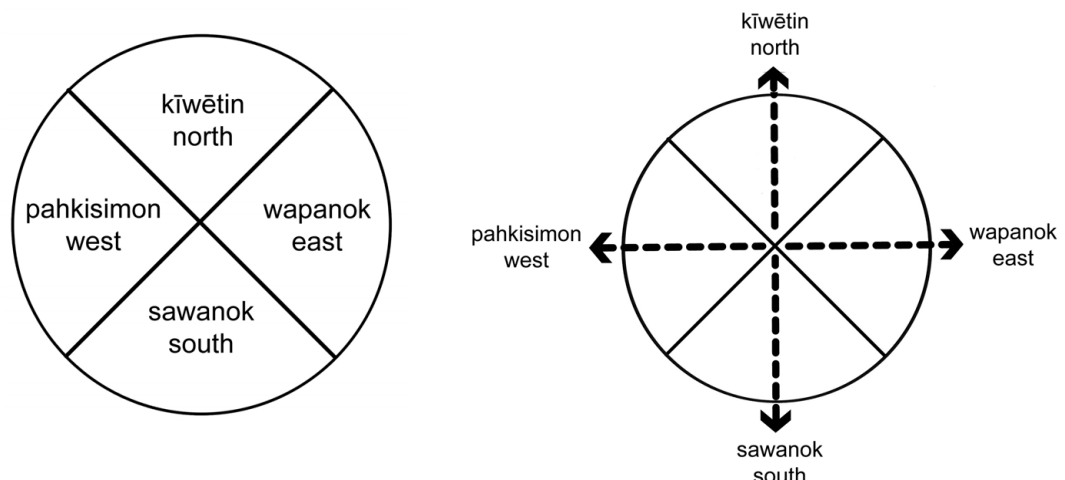


Figure 5.6 - Diagram featuring the different directions

I have also come to understand how observations of the wind and its directions provides knowledge and creates a sense of place. A person has to adapt their conduct according to the flux in knowledge presented by the wind. An example that was shared

with me relates to the changes in weather associated with wind direction. Wind from the north brings cold air and sometimes snow. From the east, it brings rain. Wind blowing from the south provides warm air. Wind coming from the west and northwest brings cool air. Observing these changes in wind direction provides knowledge, such as upcoming changes in weather patterns and seasonal cycles. The observer can gather from this knowledge as to how to go on with their day, where they will be, what activities to conduct, how to prepare for upcoming seasonal changes, and so forth. I recall from one of my teachers when I would ask what he was doing for the day he would say, “I don’t know yet, I’m listening for the wind”. With this person, I know that there is greater knowledge being shared than only waiting for an understanding in weather patterns.

Miskanow

The directions are not only drawn on the vertical plane to correspond with the universe but also on the horizontal plane as a *pimotihowin*, a path, that represents the *miskanow*, life’s path, of every *athis ithinew*, earth based being. To the Asiniskow Ithiniwak, every individual in humanity has a *miskanow*, life journey, which is contextualized by the symbol to represent a *pimotihowin*, path in his or her life from birth to childhood and towards adulthood (figure 5.7).

The root word of Miskanow is Miska “Find”, the suffix now is “conditions or shape of”... In Cree belief you are born to follow a Miskanow from birth to end of life... [It] is the life-long journey from birth to child to adult, a path along which you’re guided by others who help you to recognize your purpose for being here and to develop the gifts for fulfilling that purpose. Miskanow includes the career path, the language path, the genealogy path, the physical life path, the spiritual life path, the thinking path and the emotional path. All of these paths combine to make the whole person.

(Dumas 2012)

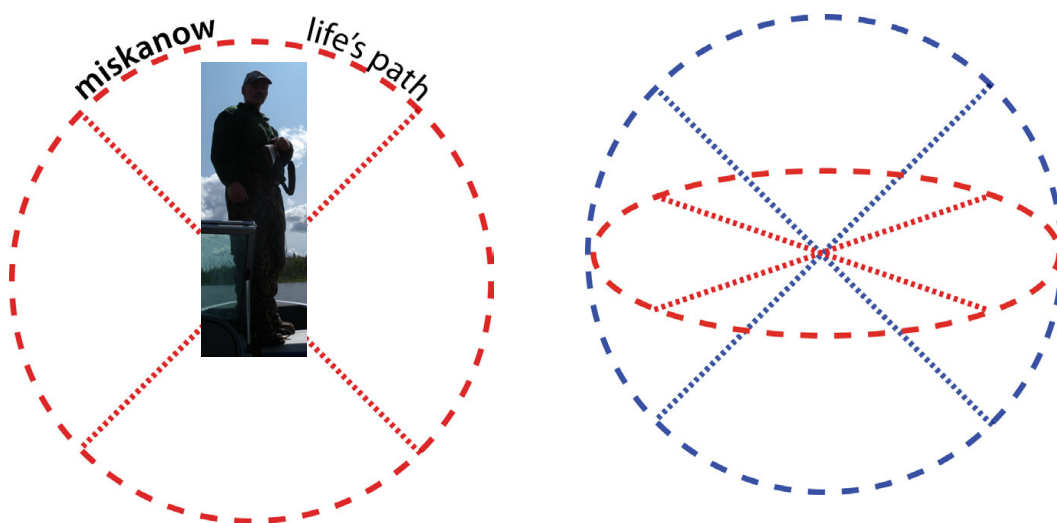


Figure 5.7 - Diagrams featuring a person's miskanoow, life's path that lies on a horizontal plane relative to the universe as shown on the right.

The path of a person's *miskanoow*, life path, is grounded in the directions and structures the four beings that make someone as a *nīhithow* or *nehiyaw* whole. *Nīhithow* or *nehiyaw* is often translated in English as a person who is Cree but this translation fails to capture the true meaning of these terms. In actuality, Cree is a post European contact term that may be a distortion of the French word “chrétien”, for Christian or “kiristinow”, a *kanaci acimowin*, a sacred story, of the star people told by the northern James Bay who speak the ‘r’ dialect. To the Asiniskow Ithiniwak, this story or teaching is known as “kinistinow”, “we are three” referring to the physical being with three beings inside. I have been told that from an Asiniskow Ithiniwak worldview, there are laws that guide your conduct as an *ithinew*, being, in the universe. This governance is structured through language resulting in people identifying themselves through the language they speak. When the Asiniskow Ithiniwak are asked, “What language do you

speak?” The response is *n̄hithow*, which is related to *nehiyaw* and is derived from the number four, *neyo* and *-iyaw*, body.

Each person consists of four bodies or beings that are as follows:

- *wiyawiwin* or *miyaw*, the physical component
- *mitehiwin*, the emotional component or needs
- *acahkowisiwin*, spiritual needs
- *mamitonichikiwin*, where it all comes together through gathering of self-awareness. This component is often mistakenly referred to as the mental or intellectual aspect. However, the term is derived from the word *mami* which refers to all comes together. Therefore, it is the being where all aspects are used to seek understanding of all things in life.

Together, these four bodies make a person *emisiwisein*, whole or balanced physically, spiritually, emotionally and in self-awareness. All four beings examined together, either in an individual or as a collective, reflect a way of life or *n̄hithowatisiwin* (figure 5.8).



Figure 5.8 - Diagram featuring miskanow surrounding the four aspects of being that make a person whole and represents *n̄hithowatisiwin*.

The concepts of *emisiwisein*, wholeness, and *nīhithowatisiwin*, way of life, are best described by Fitznor's (2012:281) understanding of the term wholistic:

[Wholistic] reflects that individuals are multi-dimensional and that each component of our persons cannot be explained without the other aspects of who we are. Aboriginal scholars are increasingly using this term instead of the usual holistic as the term wholistic refers to the four aspects of our beings: physical, intellectual, spiritual, and emotional and all these parts and how we engage with the world is important.

An *ithinew*, human being, enters four phases in their lifetime in their *miskanow*, life path: child, teenage, adult and elder (figure 5.9). The timing of when an individual enters these phases is not dependent upon age but on the person's ability to gain balance in *nīhithowatisiwin*, or the four beings that comprise a person by making them whole. This process relates to *miskasowin*, referring to "going to the centre of yourself to find your own belonging" (Cardinal and Hildebrandt 2000:21). I interpret *miskasowin* as striving to gain balance to get to the center, the intersection of these different beings and during this process you gain knowledge which helps establish your sense of identity and place in the universe. This is the process of following and finding your *miskanow*, life's path (figure 5.10).

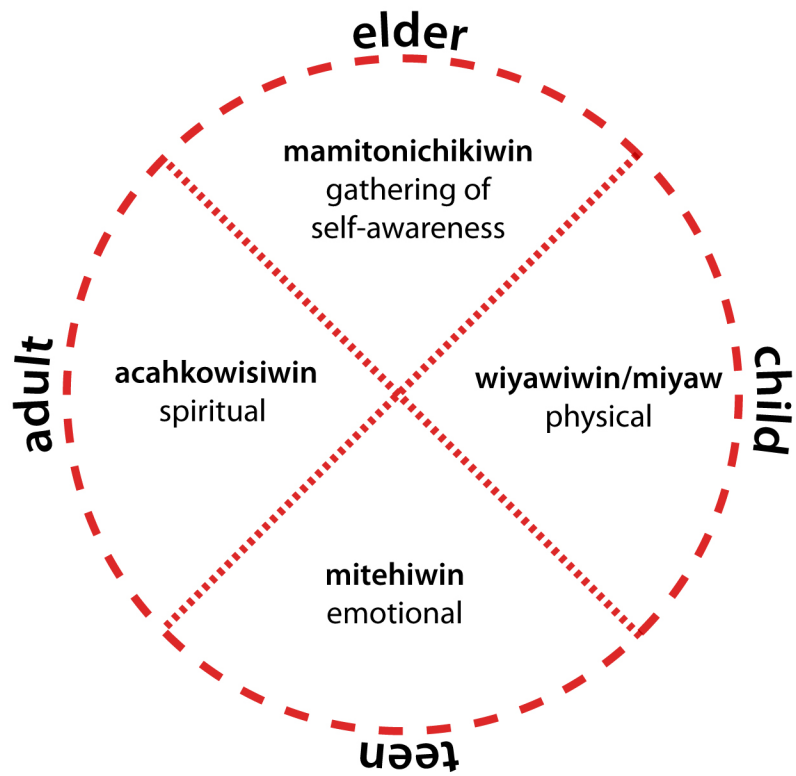


Figure 5.9 - Diagram outlining the phases in person's miskanow.

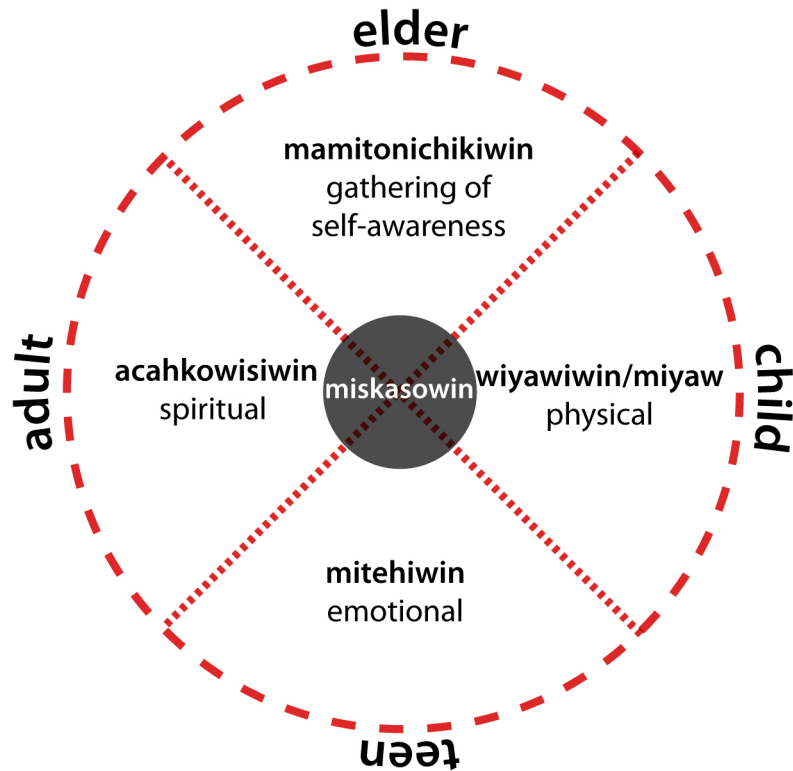


Figure 5.10 - Diagram featuring concept of miskasowin, demonstrating a balance in four aspects of beings.

Maintaining a balance among the four beings that make *nīhithowatisiwin*, a way of life, individually and collectively, is crucial to be able to live *mitho pimatisiwin*, a good life. From a relational epistemology, it is the act of centering, which involves the understanding that actions and conduct contribute and/or impact a greater whole in the cosmos. Engaging in misconduct leads to *maci pimatisiwin*, bad living, because of an imbalance in relationships among beings. When one of these beings is unbalanced, the rest are impacted. For instance, when a person is physically sick, their emotional and spiritual well-being is impacted as well as their self-awareness (Figure 5.11).



Figure 5.11 - Diagram of how imbalance among beings affects ability in miskasowin.
Ithiniwin

In order to guide conduct and maintain a balance in relationships in the universe, laws and teachings are established, bonded and shared through *ithiniwin*. *Ithiniwin* supports the goal of living *mitho pimatisiwin*, a good life, through experience. In English, *ithiniwin* is often translated as ‘traditional knowledge’ or ‘Indigenous knowledge’ which I find understates its complexity and its importance in structuring and guiding conduct for human beings in the universe. This word is best described by breaking down the term to its root words. *Ithine* is derived from *ithinew*, being and *win* refers to a way of being or how you do things. *Ithiniwin* is, therefore, how you do things as a being, and is a concept that I interpret as referring to a set of laws or guidelines.

I believe that *ithiniwin*, how you do things as a being, is represented in the symbol that I use to contextualize Asiniskow Ithiniwak cosmology. This figure is often interpreted as a two-dimensional figure when in fact it is multi-dimensional. I interpret

ithiniwin as a third plane in this figure that is important for maintaining the integrity of relationships among beings and the universe (figure 5.12). How I came to this interpretation of *ithiniwin* resulted from discussions over the term oral history and the oral history adaptation generated by Eva Linklater (1994) for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. I began by contextualizing the oral history adaptation using the circular symbol with Eva (figure 5.13 & 5.14). This adaptation garnered much interest among my teachers who through discussion had a several suggestions and additions. I anticipate that there will be many more after this dissertation is complete as there are more “stories” yet to be identified and the order in which they occur still requires verification. In this project, I chose to modify the oral history adaptation to better reflect an understanding of *ithiniwin* gathered through this project as suggested by my teachers (figure 5.15).

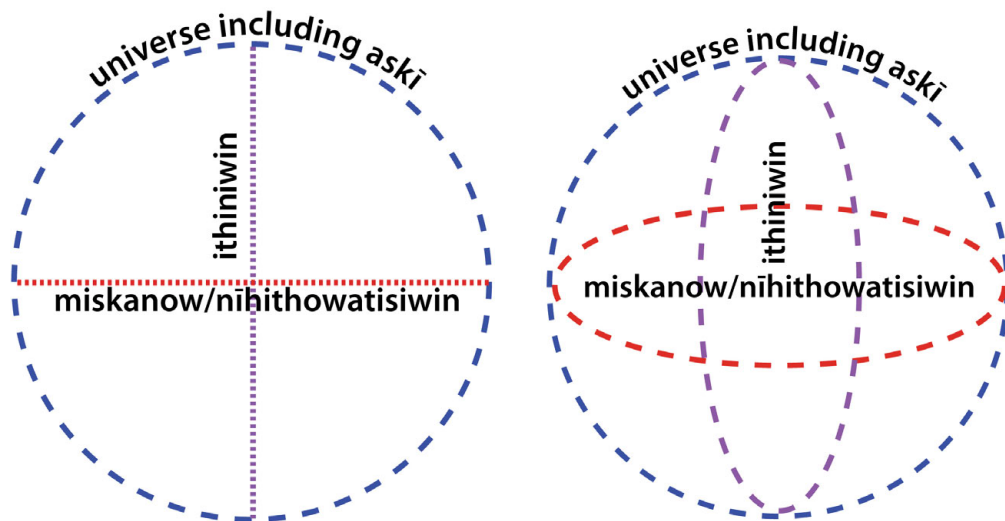
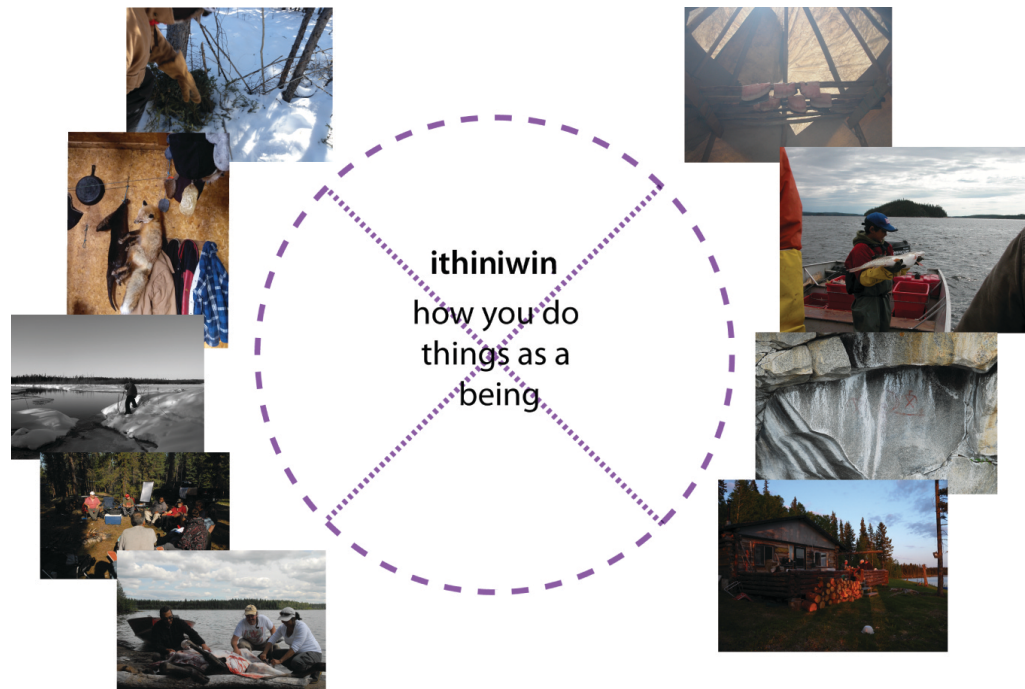


Figure 5.12 - Symbol contextualizing ithiniwin in relation to miskanow/nihithowatsiwin and the universe including aski. A two-dimensional representation is on the left and three-dimensional representation is on the right.

Cree Oral History			
Cree Oral Traditions			
Náhithowá Acimówina Mina Acathokiwin			
Recent Past Anohciki	Reserves	Iskonkana	Supernatural Beings Interact With Ancient and Contemporary Worlds Acahkwak Kiwaciwikonawak Anoch Akwa Mina Mimoci Kiyahs
	Trapping	Owunihikawin	
Fishing	Pakitawawin		
Gathering	Mawacikewin		
Treaties	Okimawewin Usutumakiwin		
Long Ago Kiyahs	Wasahkacahk Puts World Into Order For The Time When There Will Be People		
	Wasahkacahk Ki-o-thastow Askiy Ispiykawi Ithiniskathik		
	Wasahkacahk Tests The Earth's Size		
	Wasahkacahk Ka-ki-nanatawitisahahk Ka-ispihcathik Askithiw		
	Wasahkacahk Recreates the Earth		
Ancient Time Mawac Kiyahs	Wasahkacahk Kitwam Ka-ki-osihtat Askithiw		
	Wasahkacahk And The Flood		
	Wasahkacahk Akwa Ka-ki-thiskipik Askithiw		
	Misipisiw		
	Misipisiw		
The Beginning of Time Mimoci Kiyahs	Wasahkacahk's Contest With Wimithothaw		
	Wasahkacahk Ka-ki-mahwinihat Wimithothwa		
	Rolling Head		
	Cicipistikwan		
	Chakapis Shares the Sun		
	Chakapis Ka-ki-nakwatat Pisimwa		
	Kici Manito Creates Four Major Orders of Being: Physical World, Plant World, Animal Beings and Human Beings.		
	Kici Manito Kakiositat Nao Kikwana: Ithinito Askiy, Kanitowikiki [Tapiskoc Mistihwak], Pisiskiwak, Mina Athisithiniwak.		

Figure 5.13 - Oral history of the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation in north central Manitoba (taken with permission from Linklater 1994).

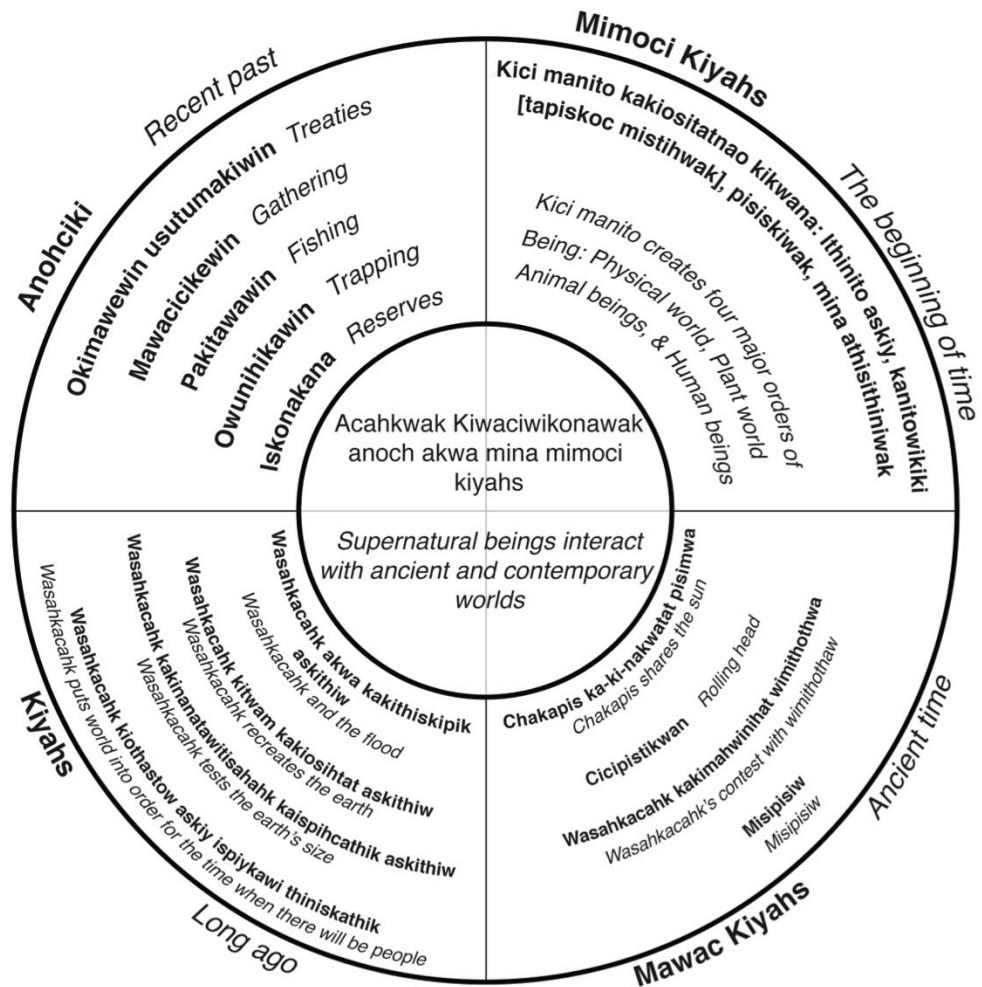


Figure 5.14 - Adaptation of Eva Linklater's (1994) oral history of the Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation in north central Manitoba (adapted with permission from Eva Linklater).

history still exist today. Further, there are *kiskinohamākwina*, teachings that are passed down from generation to generation forever, embedded in “oral histories” that connect past, present and future generations. Like the term “medicine wheel”, I consider the term oral history to be irrelevant where “history” tends to focus on discrete events that occurred in the past. Instead, an “oral history” for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak is a living entity because it encompasses actions, teachings and laws that are carried to the present and into the future. All of which reinforces *miskasowin*, going to the center to find yourself, in addition to upholding the integrity of relationships among beings and the universe. I believe that such understandings demonstrate the need to rethink the use of the term “oral history” as a general word that refers to Indigenous knowledge. Instead, Indigenous knowledge should be contextualized in the language and epistemology of an Indigenous people.

Instead of oral history, there are several alternatives in *nīthithow* (Cree) that have been shared with me in addition to *ithiniwin*, how you do things as a human being, such as *Kisi Manto asotamakiwin (itaskonikiwin)* referring to “this is what the Creator promised (the way he put it together)” and *aniskowatisiwin*, “a way of being forever” which has also been suggested as an alternative to the term heritage. I do not discount any of the terms provided but for the purpose of this dissertation, I chose to focus on the term *ithiniwin*, how you do things as a being. *Ithiniwin* not only captures the essence of the previously mentioned alternatives but emphasizes importance of place and the laws that structure the role of an *ithinew*, a being, in the universe. As shown in the diagram contextualizing *ithiniwin* (figure 5.15), there are no distinctions between culture and heritage because it embodies *pimatisiwin*, life or how we do things to be alive.

Ithiniwin, how you do things as a being, refers all the laws, stories, actions, symbols, beings, dimensions and “things” that support the exchange of knowledge and energy among beings in multiple dimensions.

Unlike written historical narratives, *ithiniwin*, how you do things as a being, does not refer to events that happened in the past. *Ithiniwin* is the *othasiwiwina*, laws or legal traditions, and *kiskinohamākwina*, teachings passed down from generation to generation forever, that guide the conduct of *ithinew*, a being, in their *miskanow*, life’s path. These laws and teachings are reinforced through actions such as interactions with the land and ceremonies and symbols of cultural expression. Some of these symbols include:

- *nīhithow* - language
- *acimowina* - many stories
- *kapisiwina* (places that exist into infinity and beyond where people visit from time to time to time, *kapi* refers to forever, all the time and *siwin* is how you do things at that place, a way of being) and their place names,
- *nikamowina* - songs
- objects that include *mithikowisiwina*, sacred gifts that are passed on and *nakatamakowisiwina*, gifts left behind for next generations

Engaging in these actions and with these symbols supports the exchange of energy and knowledge and reinforces the relationships between beings in the universe. These symbols of cultural expression support *ithiniwin*, the laws and teachings as a living entity that is ongoing and relevant in all moments of time (past, present, and future). Collectively, these cultural symbols represent or describe what has been learned or experienced from this exchange of knowledge but also serve as reminders of the importance of these relationships. Further, all actions and symbols facilitate order in *ithinew*, being, and *nīhithow*, Cree, legal traditions and serve to enforce *wahkotowin*, relatedness or relationship, an overarching natural law governing all relations (Borrows

2010). The term *wahkotowin* relates to the word *wahko* which is by adoption. “This law is said to flow from the Creator who place all life on earth” (Borrows 2010:54). The use of the term, “all my relations” by *Ithiniwak*, human beings, in certain contexts is likely serves as a reminder of the law of *wahkotowin*, that we are all related.

The law of Wahkotowin

Wahkotowin, relatedness, is applied through several laws involving the individual, family, community and nations (Borrows 2010). The interpretation of these laws and teachings to gain knowledge is largely done through observation of surroundings, experience and intuition. This is because the structure for actions and the establishment of identity for both an individual and collective identities is modeled after what is observed in nature. What I mean by observation is not only limited to what is seen by the eyes but involves other senses such as hearing (listening), touch, and intuition. *Ithiniwin*, laws and teachings of how we do things as a being, is organic where its content is derived from what is observed in local surroundings. “The sun, moon, winds, clouds, rocks, fish, insects, and animals all provide illustrations of *wahkotowin*, which the Cree interpret into law” (Borrows 2010:84). Daylight, for example serves as a law of the land that informs people as what they need to know or practice for the day. The observation of daylight serves as a measurement of timing as to what can be done for the day.

Since knowledge is derived through observation, the content of *ithiniwin* will differ based on the local ecology that surrounds the people. For example, the Asiniskow Ithiniwak from Brochet and Reindeer Lake will have access to different resources (e.g. more access to caribou) than those in the Nelson House area. There are also changes in

the landscape where the tree line becomes smaller and soil becomes sandy further north such as in the northern region of *Ithinesahikan*, the People's Lake or Southern Indian Lake compared to the southern region of the lake. This leads to different contexts in how people situate and identify themselves accordingly across the Asiniskow Ithiniwak territory such as: different interpretations of laws, diverse place names in *nīhithow*, differences in landmarks used for navigation, and the variations in *acimowina*, many stories, associated with hunting, harvesting and gatherings.

An example involves the observation of cycles of moon phases, another law of the land, which act as a calendric system for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. The Asiniskow Ithiniwak, through the working group, indicate changes in nature, weather, relationships with other *athis ithinew*, earth based beings and surroundings occur at the onset of the full *tipiskaw pisim*, moon. There are thirteen moon cycles identified by the Asiniskow Ithiniwak, which is similar to other lunar calendars used by other Indigenous groups. At the working group discussions, only the names of the moons were verified. However, there is still ongoing work concerning the workings of this lunar calendar where a 13th moon is inserted to synchronize the lunar calendar year with the solar year every 2 to 3 years. The moon that becomes dropped in this sequence and when this occurs has yet to be identified within the working group. The thirteen moon cycles identified by the Asiniskow Ithiniwak that are named based on what is observed in their local surroundings. As a result, unlike the standardized Gregorian calendar, slight variations in their names are expected across the territory. Through the *Asiniskow Ithini Acimowin*, the Rocky Cree Working Group, the names of the moons were identified as follows:

- *Miskisiwi Pisim* – Eagle Moon
- *Niski Pisim* – Goose Moon

- *Athiki Pisim* – Frog Moon
- *Pinawi Pisim* – Egg Laying Moon
- *Paskahawi Pisim* – Egg Hatching Moon
- *Paskowi Pisim* – Molting Moon
- *Opahamowi Pisim* – Birds Fly Moon
- *Nocihitowe Pisim* – Rutting Moon
- *Pimahamowi Pisim* – Birds Fly South Moon
- *Kaskatinowi Pisim* – Freeze Up Moon
- *Thithikopiwi Pisim* – Hoar Frost Moon
- *Kisi Pisim* – Great/Elder Moon
- *Opawatakwanakwew/Opawatakinikiwi Pisim* – Wind Clearing Moon

The moon cycles correspond with the six seasonal changes known to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak that were identified through the *Asiniskow Ithini Acimowin*, Rocky Cree Working group as:

Sikwan – spring relates to coming under and *sisikwan* ‘rattle’
Winter is over the rattling sound of the ducks awakens the land and people

Mithoskamin – Breakup where *mitho* is good, *skamin* is a ‘state of travel’
Travel is good, snow and ice have melted away and it is a time of renewal

Nipin – Summer, *nipi* - water
A time of birthing and growing

Takwakin – Fall, *Takwa*, adding on and *kin*, is happening
The time of awakening, renewal, birthing and growing is visible and evident.

Mikiskaw – Freeze up – *Mikis*, shiny/sparkling” and *kaw*, plenty of
The sun, moon, stars, northern lights, snow and hoar frost create a ‘sparkling’ blanket on the land.

Pipon – winter
A blanket covers the earth to rest while the medicines rest for replenishment.

The timing of these seasonal changes fluctuates and can only be determined once they are observed. This differs from the relationship of the four seasons in contemporary dominant cultures where each start on a specific date of the Gregorian calendar.

Observing these cyclical changes provides a sense of what is necessary for survival or to engage in *mitho pimatisiwin*, living a good life. These laws of the land are reminders that the world is in constant flux and in order for beings to survive, they need to be aware of these changes and acknowledge them as “facts” that lead them to act (or not act) accordingly. This act of observation builds intuition because an *ithinew* relies on all of their senses, that is, all four beings that compose *nīhithow*, a whole, to have this sense of self-awareness. I believe that these intuitive skills are diminished when we rely on fixed tools or static systems to guide us. For instance, our awareness on what we have to accomplish in a day are no longer regulated by daylight but through the twenty-four hour clock. We measure what we have to do by how many hours we have to do it such as on a nine-to-five schedule. We sleep according to a set number of hours rather than being attuned with what our bodies tell us. On a personal level, as a new parent I have discovered that there is a plethora of parenting books that tell you how to get your child to sleep, how many hours they should sleep, what behaviours you should expect in their first year and what to feed them. By following these texts, we tend to ignore our sense of intuition regarding parenting. Once a child fails to behave within the “norms” outlined in these texts, we tend to experience self-doubt in our ability to nurture.

Not adhering to the laws set out in *ithiniwin*, how we do things as a being, is known as *pastahowin*, which means going against the natural law of *wahkotowin*, relatedness (Borrows 2006; 2010). The negative consequences resulting from *pastahowin*, going against natural laws, are not limited to human beings but also a greater whole in the universe. Related to *pastahowin* is the concept *ochinewin* which involves the breaking of laws belonging to anything other than a human being (SICC

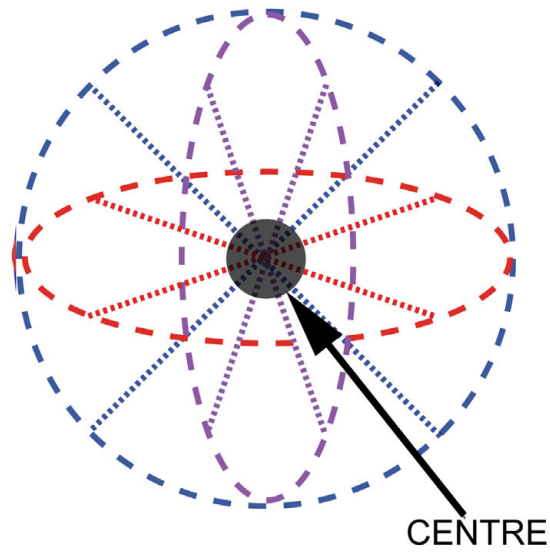
Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Center 1993). For example, animals are recognized as carrying their own *ithiniwin*, laws of how we do things as a being, that can be impacted by disrespectful behaviour exhibited by hunters. This misconduct can include not thanking the animal for sacrificing its life with an offer of tobacco or hunting for trophy purposes by taking only its head and antlers and discarding the meat. As an *ithinew*, human being, continues to engage in behaviour that promotes *pastahowin*, going against natural law, it leads to *maci pimatisiwin*, living badly.

Therefore, what is represented in the diagram featuring *ithiniwin* are not discrete events or a collection of “oral histories”. They represent a governance structure filled with laws and teachings for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak that are relevant today and in the future. *Ithiniwin* supports the integrity of Asiniskow Ithiniwak identity where it is modeled after what is observed or interpreted from their relationships with other beings in multiple dimensions (e.g. the land or dreams). *Ithiniwin* represents both culture and heritage because it is reinforced through activities and supported by the continuous existence of symbols from *kayas*, long ago, to *anohciki*, a little while ago. Further, *ithiniwin* is also the collective knowledge of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak that guides one to live *mitho pimatisiwin*, the good life. As a guide for living *mitho pimatisiwin*, the good life, *ithiniwin* supports and encourages *miskasowin*, “going to the centre of yourself to find your own belonging” (Cardinal and Hildebrandt 2000:21). This knowledge is found through observation where laws and teachings are embedded in what surrounds us. This is why this representation of *ithiniwin* is by no means complete nor will it ever be because it is never ending. It would be impossible to discuss all details of *ithiniwin* in this dissertation. As one of my teachers shared with me when we were reviewing the

diagram together, “If we were to go over everything here, including all of the stories, we would be sitting here forever.”

At the centre

It is at the centre, the intersection of the dimensions of *ithiniwin*, the laws and teachings that guide how we do things as a being, *athis ithinew*, earth based being, *miskanow*, life’s path and the universe where an exchange of knowledge occurs (figure 5.16). As one of my teachers indicated the *n̄hithow* word for round is *wawiyaw* where *wawi* refers to egg. He said, “Life starts from the egg, just like everything starts from the centre”. It is at this intersection where the exchange of knowledge occurs in the relationship between different beings, dimensions and realities. These interactions at the center of all dimensions are reinforced through activities and symbols supported by *ithiniwin*, laws and teachings that guide how we do things as a being, today and in the future. This centre is both culture and heritage where past, present and future intersect and represents everything that holds knowledge in the worldview of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak as contextualized by the symbol. With this explanation, I now reimagine Million’s (2003) interpretation of concentric circles representing past, present and future as discussed in chapter three in the diagram featuring being and time and the universe as referring to the same concept (figure 5.17).



where ithiniwin, miskasowin,
nīhithowatisiwin/athis ithiniwak and
universe intersect and an exchange
of knowledge occurs

Figure 5.16 - Symbol contextualizing the intersection of ithiniwin, miskasowin, nīhithowatisiwin and the universe including askī where an exchange of knowledge occurs among these different entities.

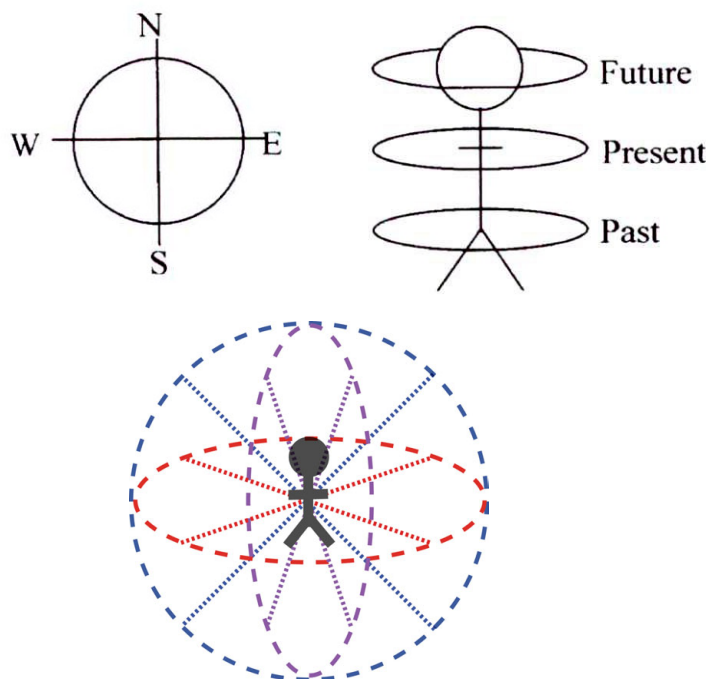


Figure 5.17 - An adaptation of Million's concept of Aboriginal worldview, time and universe as discussed in chapter 3. Original diagrams (left and centre) taken with permission from Million 2003 are contextualized in my interpretation on the right. Multidimensionality exists as universe including the earth and Ithiniwak represented by *miskanow* and *nīhithowatisiwin* intersect with *ithiniwin* and no distinctions exist with future, present, and past.

In revisiting the concept of place, what Michell and colleagues (2008) are referring to in their discussion of place is the centre represented in figure 5.18. In this context, place does not refer to a particular geographic location with a specific place name. Instead, place refers to the centre where the exchange of knowledge occurs in the relationships of beings and different dimensions. Without this knowledge that is tied to the land, an *ithinew*, a being ceases to exist or fails to move forward in their *miskanow*, life's path. This is why the overarching law of *wahkotowin*, relatedness, is significant because it reminds us that everything holds knowledge and to acknowledge the importance of these relationships to our livelihood. Attaining this knowledge is not done through force. Instead, it is a process that involves patience because it emerges through

different contexts when *enahipathik*, things happen when they are meant to happen and *kwayaskitotamowin*, there is a right way of doing things, occurs. Further, this knowledge is interpreted through participation and observations of local surroundings including the land. Therefore the process of *miskasowin*, going to the centre of yourself to find your own belonging, involves situating yourself at this place to find your identity. Therefore, centre as representing place illustrates that it is multidimensional, relational or relationship-based, experiential, local and land-based (Michell, et al. 2008).

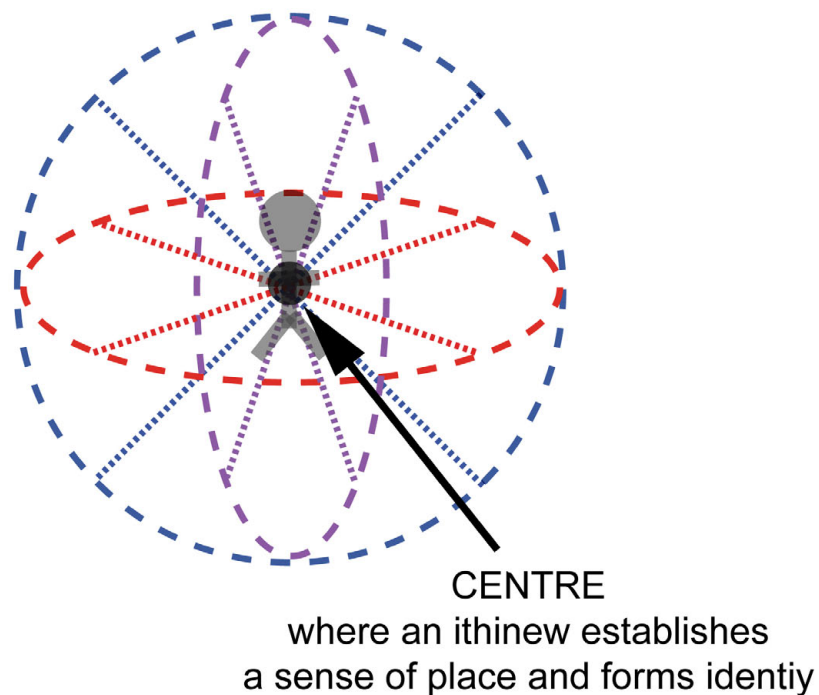


Figure 5.18 - Contextualizing centre where an ithinew establishes a sense of place.

Ways of wanaskiwin

Wanaskiwin is related to the process of *miskasowin*, going to the centre of yourself to find your own belonging, and is translated in English as finding peace with oneself (MWCEA Miyo Wahkotowin Educational Authority 2006) or as identified in this project as a place to ground oneself. The key to translating the meaning of

wanaskiwin is to examine the root words of this term. *Wan* refers to “lose”, *aski* is related to *aski* that is on the ground or earth and *win* is way of. Therefore, *wanaskiwin* refers to a way to lose on the ground. I relate this to the concept where in order to find yourself or *miskasowin* you must first lose yourself. The process of centering involves finding a balance in the relationship of beings to become balanced, clean, good, healthy, etc. This process relates to the concept of *nīhithowatisiwin*, a way of life, comprised of four beings that make *nīhithow*, physical, emotional, spiritual and self-awareness. When one being (e.g. emotional, gathering of self-awareness, physical) is out of balance, this impacts other aspects of being. A fixation on negative aspects, affects our whole outlook on life. I interpret *wanaskiwin*, way to lose on the ground as the following: not to ruminate or fixate but observe and reflect on the habits and behaviours associated with the negativity you experience in life. By doing so, you gain an understanding of their cause and can make adjustments to lose these habits and gain balance in *nīhithowatisiwin*, a way of life.

The process of ‘becoming lost to find yourself’ involves connecting with the land through activities, symbols and tools supporting *ithiniwin*, laws and teachings that guide how you do things as a being. Engaging in activities (e.g. hunting, ceremonies, harvesting and gatherings), symbols and tools supporting *ithiniwin* and enables us to become distracted from thoughts of negativity or the ideals of forcing or willing things to happen in life and reflect on other happenings. Instead, knowledge emerges as it happens while fully engaged with ways of finding *wanaskiwin*, a place to ground oneself, to inform our identity. As one of my teachers indicated *wanaskiwin*, “is a holistic thought where when you go on the land, you are getting rid of toxic elements in

your holistic being”. Therefore, the different ways of *wanaskiwin* supports the connection with place or the centre where the relationships of beings are balanced (figure 5.19). Not only does this process involve understanding the four beings that make up self but the ability to engage in relationships with different beings and realities to gain knowledge. These relationships inform identity by promoting a sense of place and belonging in the universe. That is, *wanaskiwin*, a place to ground oneself, provides the opportunity to become *emisiwisein*, that is whole, emotionally, physically, spiritually, and in self-awareness. For example, a dream involved in dream work or vision is a place and a way of *wanaskiwin* where it provides an opportunity to “become lost to find yourself”. What happens in the dream is beyond our control, yet knowledge emerges through interactions with different beings in a different dimension, which is the dream or vision. Direction and guidance is given through interpretation of this knowledge being shared and represents a means to going to the center to find belonging or *miskasowin*. This experience demonstrates that a way of *wanaskiwin*, a place to ground oneself, is an opportunity to find the knowledge that helps you understand the realities that surround you, the context of where you belong in the world and purpose in life.

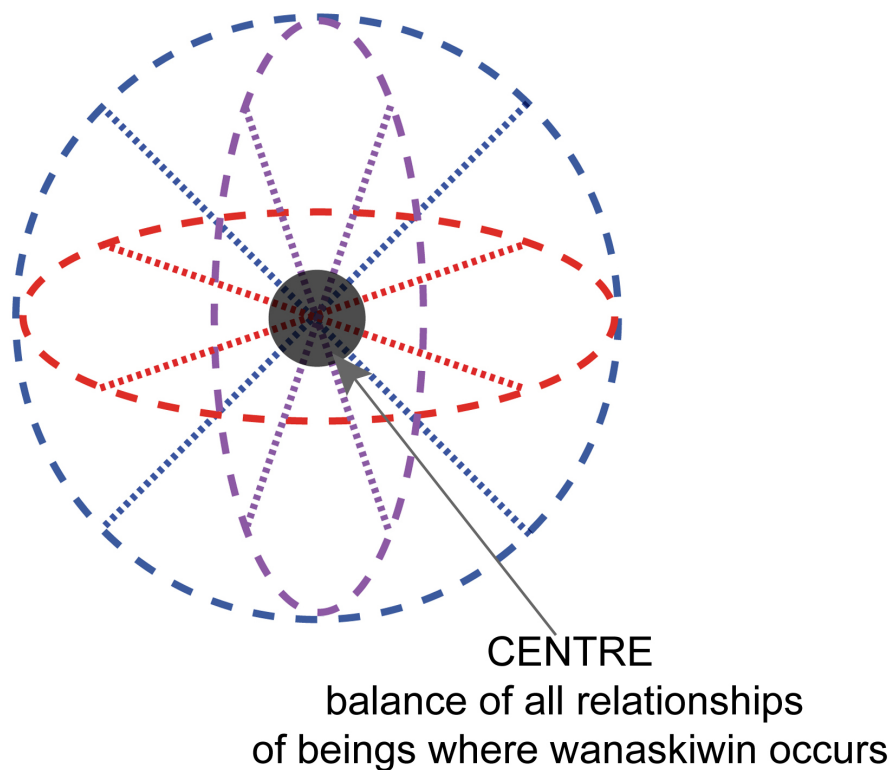


Figure 5.19 - Diagram illustrating wanaskiwin as a way of trying to achieve balance among the different relationships of beings.

Understanding acimowina

These engagements with different beings and realities are documented and shared through *acimowin*. *Acimowina*⁴⁸ embodies laws and teachings and is *ithiniwin* enacted across the landscape. The term *acimowina* is often translated into English as oral histories. However, this translation understates the meaning and value of *acimowina* to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak because they are not accounts of specific events that happened in the past. They are teachings and laws that share knowledge, promote a sense of place and emphasize the importance of relationships. The meaning of the term *acimowin* is best explored through its root words. *Aci* refers to the act of moving forward to the end,

⁴⁸ Acimowin is the singular form and acimowina is the plural form.

mo is to eat and *win* is the way of. Therefore, *acimowin* refers to a way of giving to eat to the end. To understand this concept, I share a teaching that I received while working on Wuskwatim Lake. The words you speak and share with others feeds and nourishes them. This follows the idea that an exchange of energy occurs when you speak with other people. If you use harsh and demeaning words towards someone, you are feeding them negative energy that will impact their whole being. Therefore, it is important to choose your words carefully because you are nourishing others in the process of sharing. It is a teaching that emphasizes the law of *wahkotowin*, relatedness.

The following represents an initial list of different kinds of *acimowina*, many stories, identified in this project, there are likely others types that have yet to be shared:

- *Acimowina*, many original stories, firsthand account of an incident, event
- *Tapacimowina*, many retellings of someone else's story, second hand account
- *Acahthowina*, stories told over and over again from generation to generation that do not change such as lessons on why animals are the way they are, time cannot be define relates to time immemorial
- *Kiskehowin*, a prophecy
- *wawiyasacimowin* , an account of a humorous event
- *kithaskiacimowin* , telling a lie or an embellishment of an incident, etc.
- *kanaci acimowin*, sacred stories such as stories of interactions with other beings like stories of the *mimikwisiw* – little people
- *nikamowin*, song, *nika* refers to come forward, *mo*, to eat, *win*, way of, *nikamowin* the idea that melodies used in voice brings energy forward.

The different names given to *acimowina* reflect a structure of governance among relationships. For example, *tapacimowina* acknowledges that the words being shared are those of someone else's. *Acahthowina* are stories that are shared through the generations without change. They emphasize a sense of structure in relationships for *athis ithinew*, an earth based being, based on the teachings and laws being shared. Most *acahthowina*

feature *Wisahkicahk*, a being that is considered a “trickster” or transformer of nīhithow cosmology (Linklater 1994; Fitznor 2012).

Trickster is a transformer figure, one whose transformations often use humour, satire, self-mocking, and absurdity to carry good lessons. Other well-known Trickster characters include Raven, Weskejac, Nanabozo, and Glooscap. Trickster characters often gets into trouble by ignoring cultural rules and practices or by giving sway to the negative aspects of ‘humanness’ such as vanity, greed, selfishness, and foolishness. Trickster seems to learn lessons the hard way and sometimes not at all. At the same time, Trickster has the ability to do good things for others and is sometimes like a powerful spiritual being and given much respect. (Archibald 2008:5)

In *kayas*, long ago, everything was transformed its current form (e.g. landscape, animals, plants, and human beings) by *Wisahkicahk* (Linklater 1994). These transformations occurred with good intentions as reflected in the translation of *wisahkicahk* where *wi* is wanting to or going to, *sakhi* is to love someone and *acahk* is a spirit or star. *Wisahkicahk* is, therefore, a spirit wanting to love someone. The *acahthowina*, stories told over and over again, featuring *wisahkicahk*, “teach us the ethics of living by cautioning: what not to do and what not to be” (Fitznor 2012:274).

Acimowina, stories, are a testimony of *ithiniwin*, how we do things as a being, etched into the landscape that feature activities carried out across the land and interactions with different beings and dimensions. Knowledge is revealed as symbols from a being or entity that are understood through observation and reflection of what is being shared. *Acimowina*, stories, emerge from what is learned in different ways from various beings and demonstrate that “storytellers” come in different forms other than humans. For instance, birds teach people songs and dances with their movements and the melodies they share which people learn through observation. The goose dance occurs at goose camp gatherings in the spring where dancers move in formations and

call like the geese to encourage geese to fly in close for shooting. These annual gatherings guided by the seasonal cycles that acknowledge the return of the birds to the north in the spring.

Acimowina, stories, are also ways of *wanaskiwin*, a place to ground oneself, where they support *miskasowin*, going to the center to find belonging, and enable a person to engage with place or the centre. This is because there is an exchange of energy in the telling of an *acimowin*, story, where a person is “being fed” knowledge by not only the “storyteller” but also other beings involved in the *acimowin* like *wisahkicahk*, animals, trees, etc. The inclusiveness among relationships in *acimowina* is particularly evident in *kanaci acimowina*, sacred stories, which are accounts of encounters with other beings other than *athis ithinew*, earth based beings. This is reflected in the word *kanaci*, the act of doing something sacred, where *kan* refers to “make clean” and *aci* is the act. I interpret “make clean” as the ability to connect with place or the centre where there is a balance of relationships among beings. The idea of clean refers to a person who is balanced, whole or good. This process involves engaging in relationships with other beings to promote an exchange of energy and knowledge that informs identity. Placing the term *kanaci*, the act of doing something sacred, ahead of another *nīhithow* term acknowledges the ability for the item, tool, story, person, and so forth to act as a bridge that connects and forges relationships between different beings. This is illustrated in one of the examples given to me by one of my teachers who indicated that *Kīhtayak*, Elders, would use the term *kanaci*, the act of doing something sacred instead of *piminawaso*, to cook, when cooking particular foods from the land such as moose meat. *Kanaci*, the act of doing something sacred, used in this context is

meant to acknowledge the animal that sacrificed their life and provides energy nourishment and the promotion of balance in the four beings that make a person whole.

Another example involves *kanaci otinawasowin*, a term that relates to the practice of midwifery where *otina* refers to taking out, *awawaso* relates to awasis (child) but also refers to the shiny one, how the baby looks once it is born, and *win* is the act of. The term *kanaci otinawasowin* describes the action of a midwife “catching” or taking the baby as it enters this world. However, placing *kanaci* in this context acknowledges the central role that the midwife has in the establishment of relationships brought on by birth by ensuring the safe delivery of the baby. The birth of a baby draws people together forming new relationships as part of their *miskanow*, life’s path. It is a time of *miskasowin*, going to the center of finding one’s belonging, where these relationships inform and transform a sense of identity, especially for the mother and father.

In the context of *kanaci acimowin*, sacred story, the term refers to the act of making clean by a way of giving to eat. By sharing these accounts of *kanaci acimowina*, sacred stories, a person is reminded of their place in the world with the knowledge and teachings gained through relationships involving multiple beings and dimensions that extend beyond *athis ithinew*, earth based beings. This is why these stories are considered sacred because they are a way of *wanaskiwin*, a place to ground oneself. Examples of *kanaci acimowina* that involve other beings include the *mimikwisiw*, who are often referred to in English as the little people. The actual translation of the term is “being of sounds like waves” which refers to when the *mimikwisiw* speak they sound like static. Several *kanaci acimowina*, sacred stories, involving the *mimikwisiw*, little people, are

documented across the Asiniskow Ithiniwak territory and associated with particular locations (Brightman 1993; Castel and Westfall 2001; Linklater 1994).

Kapisiwina

Ithiniwin, laws and teachings of how we do things as a being, is etched into the landscape through *acimowina*, stories, and is evident in the *nīhithow* names and accounts tied to specific locations across the territory. These places are known as *kapisiwina*, (*Kapisiwin* - singular, *Kapisiwina* - plural) - a way of being at a place that exists into infinity where *Kapi* refers to forever, all the time and *siwin* is how you do things at that place, a way of being. These are places that have an infinite existence and are where people visit time and time again. *Kapisiwina*, a place that exists into infinity, embodies *ithiniwin*, laws and teachings that guide beings, as places where knowledge is shared through relationships with multiple beings and dimensions and learned through observation and participation. People move constantly across the landscape because they are guided by observation of their surroundings and changes in cycles that inform them of their next direction and actions. This is why *kapisiwina*, infinite places, are so diverse and include locations where people stay, where animals were harvested or hunted, encultured landscapes⁵⁵ where knowledge is shared by multiple beings, ceremonial grounds, places of *mamawewin*, gatherings, plants harvested for medicine, burial grounds, places with particular *acimowina* (stories), etc. There are also multiple activities, landscape features and *acimowina*, stories, that can be associated with a particular *kapisiwin*, infinite place. All of these *kapisiwina* are of equal importance to the collective identity of the Asiniskow

⁵⁵ An 'encultured landscape' refers to knowledge that is revealed as a symbol from a being or entity on the land and represents an Indigenous methodology driven by intuition and the exchange of energy in the cosmos/land/animal/living/non-living/non-human/human relationship

Ithiniwak because they impart *ithiniwin*, how we do things as a being, where *othasiwiwina*, laws and legal traditions, and *kiskinohamākwina*, teachings passed down for generations, are enacted across the land. The actions carried out at these locations, the landscape features, names and stories associated with place uphold governance for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. They are a testimony of the different interactions among beings that occur across the land where knowledge is shared and informs identity.

Kapisiwina, places that exist into infinity, serve as reminders of these relationships that are evident in *acimowina*, stories, associated with particular locations across the Asiniskow Ithiniwak territory. Some are only represented by their names in *nīhithow* referring to natural features (e.g. *apischiwapasihk*, little narrows), activities (e.g. *pichipothakan*, place to harvest fish) and/or engagements with other beings (e.g. *keyaskosapotipathinahk*, seagull narrows). *Kapisiwina*, places that exist into infinity, also serve as guideposts for navigation and a point of reference to which one attaches personal accounts of adventure or misadventure (Linklater 1994, 1997). There are also specific *acimowina*, stories, such as *kanaci acimowina*, sacred stories and *acahthowina*, stories told again and again, linked to *kapisiwina*, infinite places. By the Granville Lake settlement, for example, *Mimikwisiapisk*, little people rock, or known as High Rock by the community (figures 5.20 and 5.21) holds *kanaci acimowina*, sacred stories, that acknowledge the relationship established with the *mimikwisiw*, little people, at this place. The *acimowina*, stories, tell of the *mimikwisiw*, little people, who lived at this location but moved to Manto Island once Europeans arrived into the area in the late 1700s. However, children continue to share their encounters with the *mimikwisiw*, little people, while playing at high rock. There are several caves associated with the

mimikwisiw, little people, that are carved into the rock cliff from the extraction of quartz for purposes like making stone tools and fires (figure 5.22) (Cote 2011). Accounts also refer to *Mimikwisiapisk*, little people rock, as a place for dreaming, a way of *wanaskiwin*, a place to ground oneself, where people would lie on large depressions on the rock cliff or others would go underwater to gain directions from the creator and other beings through dreaming or vision quests (Castel and Westfall 2001).



Figure 5.20 - Mimikwisiapisk photo taken from the Granville Lake community looking southwest (© The Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg, MB.



Figure 5.21 - View to the Northwest from the top of Mimikwisiapisk (© The Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg, MB).



Figure 5.22 - Leslie Baker inside of cave or quarry; notice the large amount of bedrock removed (© The Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg, MB).

A reminder that this relationship still exists with the *mimikwisiw*, little people, is found at Manto Island on Granville Lake (figure 5.23). If anyone points at this island, it suddenly becomes windy and causes waves on the water, proving travel along the waterways to be difficult. Several *kanaci acimowina*, sacred stories, tell of encounters at

this island where people have decided to camp but were chased off with the onset of stormy weather. I have experienced this first hand several times while in Granville Lake. I have accidentally pointed to the island upon my initial visits to the region and witnessed waves appearing suddenly on the water. Another *kanaci acimowin*, sacred story, involves the time when three of us decided to visit Manto Island. It was a beautiful sunny day as we left our boat to explore the island. We happened upon a set of deep crevasses and as soon as we peered down, the weather started to turn with clouds rolling in. Once we reached our boat, the wind picked up with a sheet of rain causing the water to become rough. We left immediately and learned our lesson never to step foot on Manito Island again.



Figure 5.23 - Manito Island taken from the north looking south (© The Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg, MB).

Other examples include *acahthowina*, stories told over and over again across generations, etched across the landscape of the Nisichawayasihk Asiniskow Ithiniwak, the Rocky Cree people where the three rivers meet near Nelson House in Manitoba. There are several *kapsiwina*, infinite places, with names, features and sites that are a testimony to the presence of *Wasahkacahk* (Linklater 1994). Linklater (1994:68) shares the following account of *kayas*, long ago and *acahthowina*, stories told over and over again across generations enacted across the landscape:

It is said that in kiyahs, that there were many beings that are different from today. The mimiwisihwahk were the water people who could go through rock. Their house and canoe was located at Wahskahihkahn awka Cimahn and here they continue to reside. There was Mihsihpihsew, the water lynx and Wasahkacahk, the transformer. A conflict between these two beings resulted in a great flood over the land. Muskrat then brought Wasahkacahk a dab of dirt on his paw and from this he recreated the earth and made it livable for Cree people. In gratitude, Wasahkacahk gave muskrat a special place to live, a river (Wahcasko sipih) and a lake. (Wahcasko-sahkahikahn)... Wasahkacahk then began his travels, changing the animals and the land into what they are today. In his journeys, he was always hungry and continually tried to trick other animals into becoming his meal. At otohewihnihk he got the waterfowl to dance in a circle with their eyes closed, then strangled them one by one. At Ahtihko-sahkahihkahnihk he was able to convince the caribou to run in a circle so that he might practice target shooting with his bow and arrow. More importantly, however, as Wasahkacahk continued his travels through the land, he left behind marks of his passing so that future people would know of his presence. At Wasahkacahk-otitahpihwihn he sat and thought, and in this way he left behind the impression of his posterior in the rock, which he was perched. And at Otitiskiwihnik he left his footprints in the cliff, giving rise to Otitiskihwin sahakahikahnihk, the lake of the footprints.

Evidently, these *kapsiwina*, infinite places, shared by Linklater (1994) serve as reminders that the relationships established in *kayas*, long ago, exist today and forever.

A *kapsiwin*, infinite place, is established through the connection that the Asiniskow Ithiniwak have with a particular place. Such connections are not always based on the landscape features that are present at a particular location. Therefore, there

are certain locations that may be overlooked by someone focusing on physical landscape features to which the Asiniskow Ithiniwak considered a *kapisiwini*, infinite place. These *kapisiwina*, infinite places may carry an energy that is only recognizable through the use of other senses such as intuition, touch or listening. Often these senses lead people to *kapisiwina*, infinite places that have become lost in the living memory of the community. An example involves an *acimowin*, story, about Drumming Point on Granville Lake that was shared by one of my teachers, Leslie Baker. As an accomplished competitive canoeist, Leslie has traveled Granville Lake extensively by canoe for training. While paddling, he stopped at a granite point for a break and while sitting he heard drumming from a point of land across the lake. He went over to investigate where it was coming from but did not find a sign of anyone drumming. While there, he noticed all the poplar trees were twisted and bent as if blown permanently by the wind. He attributes this unusual feature to the point having significant energy (figure 5.24). Prior to his initial visit, Leslie had no knowledge of this place as having any associated activities or *acimowin*. When we visited Drumming Point during this project, faint singing could be heard which led us to acknowledge the relationships existing at this *kapisiwini*, infinite place.



Figure 5.24 - Bent and twisted poplar trees on Drumming Point (© The Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg, MB.

Understanding kanaci apacicikan

Knowledge of other *kapisiwina*, infinite places, that are lost to the living memory of people also emerges through other means like archaeology. Several *kapisiwina*, infinite places, in Asiniskow Ithiniwak territory have been identified through archaeological survey work conducted in response to land base development projects. In this region of Manitoba, most locations are identified because they are affected by the erosion of shorelines from fluctuating water levels brought on by hydroelectric dams. These archaeological sites and burial grounds are *kapisiwina*, infinite places, because they are reminders or *kiskisiwina*, ways of remembering, that support understandings of *ithiniwin*, how we do things as a being and *nīhithowatisiwin*, a way of life at that location. These particular *kapisiwina*, infinite places, along with the items they hold, are

considered *mithikowisiwina*, sacred gifts that are passed on, or *nakatamakowisiwina*, gifts left behind for the next generation. The items that are found through archaeology at these *kapisiwina*, infinite places, as well as across the landscape, are referred to as *kanaci apacicikana*, tools involved in the act of making clean or sacred tools. The term is derived from the word *apaci* which is use, *ci* referring to made and *kan*, made clean. The idea is similar to *acimowin*, story or way of giving to eat, to be aware of the manner in which you share your words because it ‘feeds’ others. I interpret this term given to ‘artifacts’ as implying that they are ways of *wanaskiwin*, a place to ground oneself. By being in a balanced or good state when making tools, this energy becomes shared with those using them. As one of my teachers indicated, “It is best to be in a good state of mind when making tools for others”. My understanding is based on the thought that, “Properly fashioned artifacts contain the energy of the thoughts, materials, and contexts in which they are fashioned and therefore become symbols of those thoughts, entities, or processes” (Cajete 2000:65). Therefore, a *kanaci apacicikan*, sacred tool, carries the energies or knowledge of multiple beings and dimensions to include the person who made it, the person who used it, the being who the tool was made from and others involved in its use and creation. There is also an *acimowin*, story, of the different contexts associated with each tool, which is interpreted by engaging in a relationship with these multiple beings.

By seeking and acquiring this knowledge from these relationships, you establish a sense of place, which is related to your *miskasowin*, life’s path. This knowledge nurtures your sense of identity by providing understanding where you fit in relation to the other beings and contexts associated with the tool. Similar exchanges of energy and

knowledge occur with the remains of people and burial grounds. To the Asiniskow Ithiniwak, ‘human remains’ are referred to as *ithinewikana*, bones of a human being, where *ithinew* refers to being and *ikana* is bones belonging to. A person is recognized as a living entity even though their physical being of the four (e.g. spiritual, emotional, physical and self-awareness) has changed. In respecting the law of *wahkotowin*, relatedness, there is acknowledgement that a dialogue exists through a relationship with this person recognized as another human being. These exchanges of knowledge that occurs in the relationships established with *kanaci acimowina*, sacred tools, and *ithinewikana*, human bones, are considered sacred because they represent a way of *wanaskiwin*, a place to ground oneself.

Different approaches to understanding

I chose to explore the worldviews of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak in a holistic sense to contextualize heritage, as it is understood through their language and epistemologies. Such worldviews do not reflect a complete rejection of archaeological interpretations but illustrate that there are differing logics and epistemologies guided by disparate ‘root metaphors’ or ontologies towards knowledge creation. This discussion so far has demonstrated that Asiniskow Ithiniwak knowledge is, “generated in the immediate context of the livelihoods of people, it is a dynamic entity that undergoes constant modifications as the needs of the communities change” (Agarwal 1995:433). This is reflected in the changing nature of the *nīhithow* language from Old Cree to that used today.

The differing logics supporting knowledge creation among the Asiniskow Ithiniwak may result in a different understanding of a topic than found in the dominant

culture. However, this does not preclude the possibility that similar conclusions or understandings are also being reached. This outcome simply reemphasizes that there are different approaches to knowledge creation that are influenced by logics supported by differing ontologies and epistemologies.

I encounter these similar outcomes in knowledge creation when I have the privilege and honour to work with *ithinewikana*, human bones, and knowledgeable people with a gifted sense of awareness in relationships and energy. These people will often tell me about the person whose *ithinewikana*, human bones, were found before I can identify them using other approaches to knowledge. An example that I have already shared previously in chapter 3 is the story of the older woman that I encountered at one burial ground. Another *acimowin*, story, that I would like to share is an experience on Wuskwatim Lake where I was conducting an archaeological survey visiting archaeological sites impacted by flooding brought on by hydroelectric development. A colleague that I consider my sister asked to stop at a *kapsiwin*, infinite place, because she was drawn there. At that place, she encountered the *ithinewikana*, human bones of a child that were made visible because of the low water levels. This is not the first occasion but one of many where she has been drawn to a location and has found *ithinewikana*, human bones, exposed because the burial ground eroded from the shoreline. During the recovery, she concluded that the *ithinewikana*, human bones, belonged to a girl about three to four years of age based on her experience and intuition. Following the burial recovery, I transported the *ithinewikana*, human bones, with me and decided to visit one of my teachers for a break. While we were drinking coffee and visiting, he motioned to the doorway and said a girl of about four years of age with short black curly hair was

standing there staring at him. He acknowledged her and told me to take good care of her. Shortly after I returned to the office, I conducted a preliminary identification of *ithinewikana*, human bones, as requested by the community. This work involves an identification of age and sex based on measurements and observation of certain features on the *ithinewikana*, human bones. Although I was able to determine that this child was three to five years old at death, the methods I used were unable to assess sex. Yet, I am certain that *ithinewikana*, human bones, belong to a girl based on the prior observations that were shared with me.

The examples that I have provided in this dissertation relating to my own experiences demonstrate that various cultures support different methods that provide insight into interpretations of *ithinewikana*, human bones, and *kanaci apacicikana*, sacred tools. All methods each carry their own strengths in providing a specific level of detail concerning the different contexts that are in question. When *ithinewikana* or *kanaci apacicikan* are encountered at *kapisiwina*, an infinite place, a common question that is asked is “How old are they?” I consider such questions along with others that reflect an interest in different contexts as valid, regardless if the person asking it is Indigenous or non-Indigenous. Answering this question provides the inquirer with a sense of place as to where they fit in relation to this person or the contexts associated with the location of the *kapisiwini*, infinite place, and *kanaci apacicikana*, sacred tools.

Kimosominow, grandfather, quarry along the Missinipi, big water, or Churchill River near Granville Lake is an example where community members, including knowledgeable people, have posed several questions concerning the contexts associated with this *kapisiwini* infinite place (figures 5.25 and 5.26). This *kapisiwini*, infinite place,

is not one “discovered” by archaeologists but a place that is known to the community who sought archaeology to help with their understanding of it. Although several *acimowina*, stories, are already associated with this *kapisiwini*, infinite place, among the Asiniskow Ithiniwak, many questions remained such as, “How long was it used for?”, “How big is it?”, “How old is it?” and “How far did the stone that was extracted from the quarry travel?” Even though the community holds some knowledge about this quartz quarry, archaeological approaches based in dominant research paradigms are helping to answer these questions. Excavations that have been undertaken at the quarry have provided insight into the extent and use of the quarry to extract quartz. The quarry resembles a giant footprint measuring 5 metres by 2.5 metres (figure 5.27). It is estimated that a 200 metric tons of quartz have been extracted from this site. It was first used over 6000 years ago over intermittent periods as determined through radio carbon dating (Brownlee 2011). Other studies are currently ongoing involving the extraction of quartz (Beardsell and Milne 2011) and the extent in which quartz sourced from this quarry was distributed along the *Missinipi*, Churchill River (tenBruggencate and Fayek 2012). At this moment, I will not be divulging specific details regarding this quarry because its interpretation is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Also I feel that it would be disrespectful to share interpretations on this quarry in advance of others who have worked so hard on this project involving this quarry. Detailed interpretations regarding the *Kimosominow*, Grandfather, quarry will emerge in subsequent years. A detail that I have permission to share is that the radiocarbon dates align with the *acimowina*, stories, that Granville Lake is one of the oldest communities along the *Missinipi*, Churchill River, from the time of when the glaciers receded (Brownlee 2011).

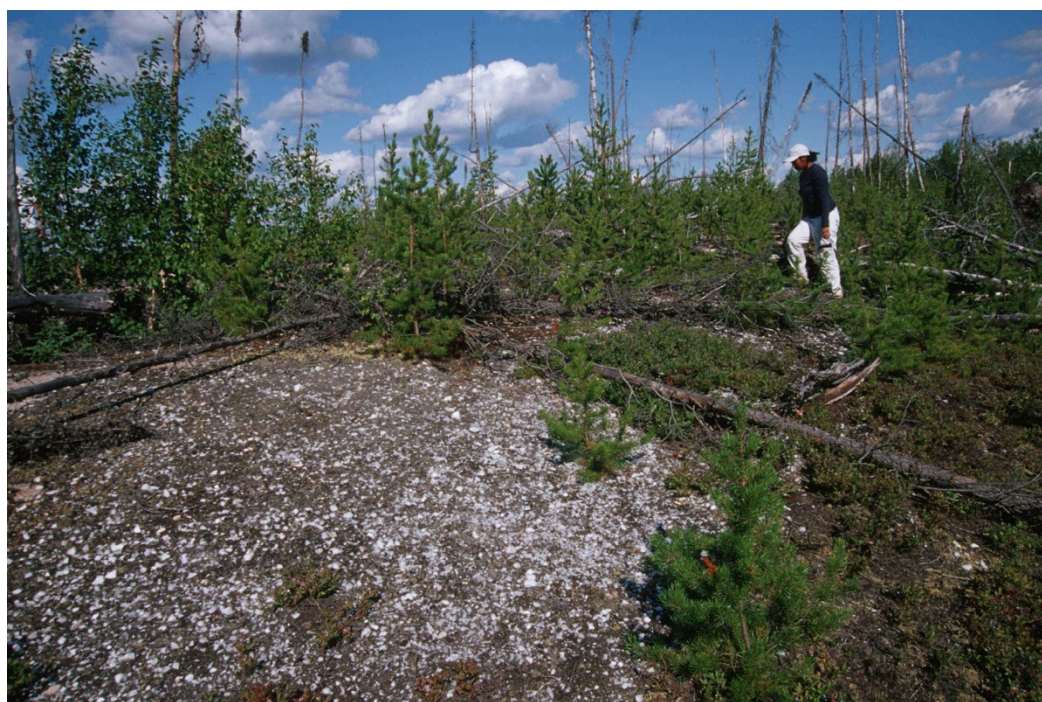


Figure 5.25 - Quartz debris beside the quarry exposed by fire - author in the background (© The Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg, MB).



Figure 5.26 - Smooth quarry wall of solid quartz (© The Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg, MB).

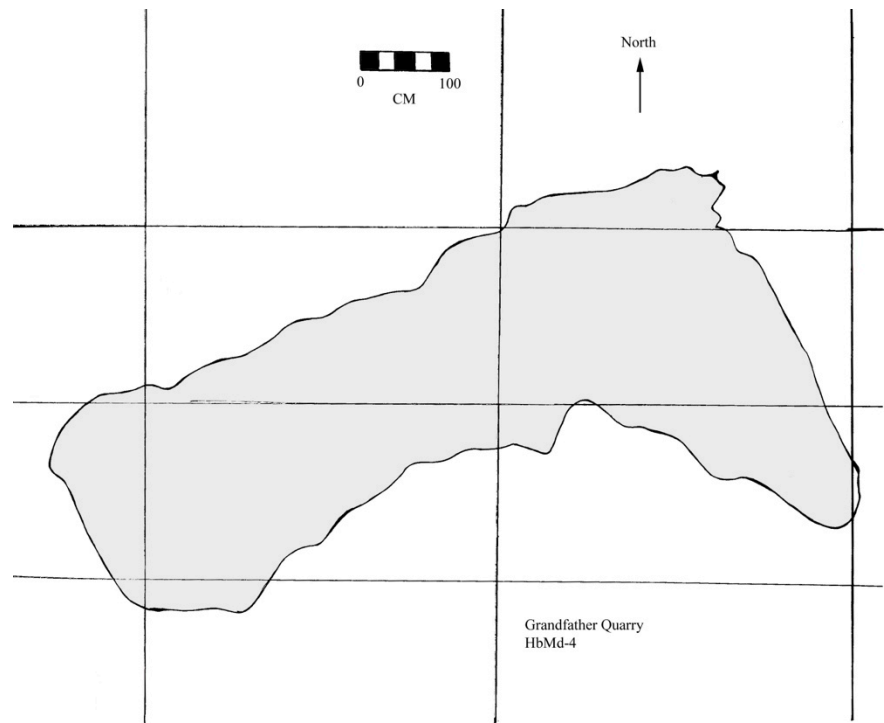


Figure 5.27 - Rough field map of quarry; shaded area is the perimeter of the quarry (© The Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg, MB).

The details that I am most interested are interpretations of the *Kimosominow*, Grandfather quarry, in the context of *ithiniwin*, the laws and teachings of how we do things as a being. This follows the concept of placing contexts associated with this *kapsiwin*, infinite place, as they relate to *ithiniwin*. This follows an ‘internalist archaeology’ approach introduced by Yellowhorn (2002) where the “archaeological record” consisting of *kanaci apacicikana*, sacred tools and *kapsiwina*, infinite places, are examined in relation to oral narratives, histories, traditions and customs. Oral narratives and traditions were examined by Yellowhorn (2002) for signatures that would have left an archaeological record. By doing so, archaeological materials were placed in the contexts of histories known to the Blackfoot such as ‘Dog Days’ and ‘Horse Days’. Linklater (1994) successfully demonstrated the use of an internalist approach in Asiniskow Ithiniwak territory by focusing on *kapsiwina*, infinite places, associated with

acahthowina, stories told over and over again across generations, featuring Wisahkicahk. Across the landscape, these places are a testimony of *ithiniwin*, teachings and laws to guide how we do things as a being, where *kayas*, long ago is enacted across the landscape. At present, insights into the *Kimosominow*, Grandfather, quarry in the context of *ithiniwin* have yet to be interpreted. Although, I have some initial thoughts, I am reluctant to share them at this moment in this dissertation because these interpretations require further work with knowledgeable people. An understanding of how this *kapisiwin* relates within *ithiniwin* is a process that will take time and patience. I leave this process to *enahipathik* where it will happen when it is meant to happen. Perhaps, this knowledge may not be shared at all since it may be nested and I am not privilege to know it. Regardless, the insights provided through archaeological approaches are valid as they recreate the contexts associated with this *kapisiwin*, infinite place. More importantly, they establish a sense of place for those who are interested in this knowledge.

This is life

In order to develop this understanding, it is important to contextualize how *ithinewikana*, human bones, *kanaci apacicikana*, sacred tools, and *kapisiwina*, infinite places relate to *ithiniwin*, how you do things as a being. *Ithiniwin* is the knowledge, laws and teachings held by all beings that structure identity for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. Given this understanding, *ithinewikana*, human bones, *kanaci apacicikana*, sacred tools, and *kapisiwina*, infinite places, are *ithiniwin* where they carry teachings and governance important to the collective and individual identity of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. People from different contexts involving the living and the dead are teachers and carriers of the

different laws. People create and model the tools they use based on the *othasiwiwina*, laws and *kiskinohamākwina*, teachings that are observed and learned from the world around them. These legal traditions and teachings become embedded in the tools, not only through their design but as they are used across the landscape, especially at *kapisiwina*, infinite places, for activities (e.g. hunting, harvesting, cooking) that are essential to a person's *miskanow*, life's path and ability to live *mitho pimatisiwin*, a good life. These activities support an exchange of knowledge or energy with other beings in the universe. This knowledge is gained through observation and experience using the different senses such as listening, seeing and intuition. As these interactions involving the dimensions of *ithinew*, being, *ithiniwin*, how you do things as a being, and the universe are carried out in cycles of constant movement across the landscape; they become documented through *acimowina*, stories, and tied to *kapisiwina* infinite places. Together, these symbols, actions, beings, stories, and places hold knowledge or *Ithiniwin*, to laws and teachings that guide how we do things as beings, to support a network of relationships among beings and different realities in the universe. This network is filled with set of laws that guides an *ithinew*'s, human being's, conduct in the universe. *Ithiniwin* contextualizes an *ithinew*'s understanding of reality, by providing them with knowledge of what they see as real and true in the universe. An *ithinew*, human being, gains a sense of direction from this understanding with the ability to situate his or herself in this network of relationships and realities in the universe. It is at the centre of these interactions of *ithinew*, *ithiniwin* and universe where a person establishes a sense of place or belonging in the universe and forms their identity. As my teachers simply pointed out that the centre and everything that circles around it as

illustrated in the symbol is life and is why *ithiniwin* and *nīhithowatisiwin*, a way of life, are interchangeable because they have the same meaning.

Contextualizing kanaci apacicikana with ithiniwin

Kanaci apacicikana, sacred tools and *kapisiwina*, infinite places, embody teachings and laws gained in this network of relationships since they are modeled, shaped, created and established after what is learned by an *ithinew*, human being from other beings and multiple realities on the land. The *nīhithow* language structures and reinforces the significance of these relationships providing knowledge. This is reflected in the names given to *kanaci apacicikana*, sacred tools and *kapisiwina*, infinite places. Sharing these names in *nīhithow* is an action that reinforces laws based on respect and acknowledges the beings involved in the creation and use of *kanaci apacicikana*, sacred tools, and the establishment of *kapisiwin*, an infinite place. With these understandings, a logical approach to interpreting the different contexts associated with *kanaci apacicikana*, sacred tools, and *kapisiwin*, infinite places, found archaeologically is to reflect on language and observe the land and other beings for knowledge.

A projectile point or arrowhead is a portion of an arrow that is found commonly through archaeology. To the Asiniskow Ithiniwak, they are known as *simakan*, a word derived from *simak* meaning right now and *kan* for made clean. I have been told that a *simakan* is carried by an *ithinew*, being, who has a role in protecting the land as a peacekeeper or “first responder”. At this point in time, I understand this term as referring to a person who maintains peace among beings and works to maintain a balance in relationships among *Ithiniwak*, people, and other beings. In conversation with knowledgeable people, I recognize that the interpretation of *simakan* as a symbol for

peacekeeping will require further work. Perhaps, it relates to the *simakan* as an arrow, a symbol for the directions that draw the *pimotowina*, paths that structures relationships and the *miskanow*, life paths, of *Ithiniwak*, people, in the universe (figure 5.28). Other approaches to interpreting the different contexts associated with a *simakan* involve observing nature to understand what it was modeled after. One teacher concluded that a *simakan* is shaped after birds after observing them flying around him. He concluded that the irregular surface and shape of a *simakan* is modeled after birds whose body shape combined with ruffled feathers and fluttering wings provides resistance to wind and momentum to fly in the air. Direction and momentum is also supported by the fletching of feathers found at the other end of the arrow which functions like the tail of a bird. He indicated that if the arrowhead was ground smooth that it would not achieve the same resistance and momentum as an irregular surface.

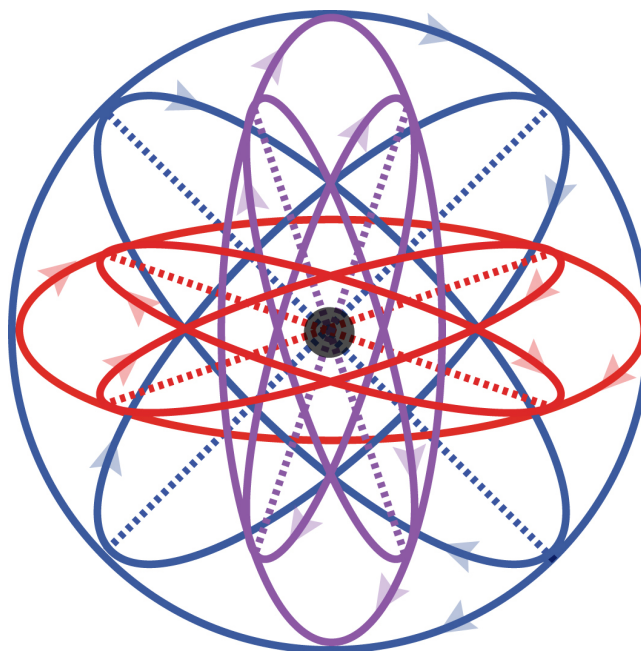


Figure 5.28 - Diagram illustrating how *simakan* may refer to the flow of energy in the various directions found in across different planes and realities associated with *nihithowatsiwin*, the universe and *ithiniwin*. All paths ground *miskanow*, identity and relationships in the universe.

Another example where language and observation informs our understanding of *kanaci apacicikana*, sacred tools, involves pottery. Findings of pottery fragments are common throughout the territory of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak in northern Manitoba. In *nīhithow*, a pot is called *askihk*⁷⁰, which refers to “of the ground or earth” and describes containers made of clay used to hold water and for cooking (figure 5.29).

Archaeological dating techniques have determined that clay pots existed up to 2000 years ago and their use ceased with the introduction of copper pots during the fur trade. Even with this change in technology, the Asiniskow Ithiniwak sustained the use of the term *askihk* over generations as it is still used today in reference to household cooking pots. This is an example how language operates in asserting *nīhithow* identity as a form of resistance against colonization. Rather than describe an object, *askihk* holds a deeper meaning of acknowledgement and respect for the relationships that *Ithiniwak*, people, have with the land or earth. The continued use of terms such as *askihk* reinforces *othasiwiwina*, laws, important to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak where every time that it is shared it is a form of respect for the land in providing the clay to create pottery.

⁷⁰ Pottery is known as askihkwak



Figure 5.29 - Reconstruction of an askihk from fragments found archaeologically on Ithinesahikan – Peoples Lake (© The Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg, MB).

The term *askihk*, of the earth, also acknowledges the relationship of different elements on *askī*, earth, that work together in the making of a pot that is primarily completed by women. Clay is taken from the earth and mixed with particles of crushed rock known as temper to prevent the vessel from breaking during firing (figure 5.30). Water is used to help shape and form the clay into an *askihk*, pot. Air dries the clay as it takes its final form. Finally, the *askihkwak*, pots, are placed in the fire where the heat changes the composition of the clay through hardening to become durable for cooking and carrying water. Throughout this process, the inspiration and knowledge in creating an *askihk*, pot, is drawn from what is observed in the land and in the relationships with other beings. What emerges from the landscape is a set of *othasiwiwina*, laws that structure and define Asiniskow Ithiniwak identity. In particular, what women learn from the land where they seek this knowledge to create *askihkwak*, pots, are a set of laws that structure the role of women in the universe. These laws become embedded in *askihkwak*, pots, as the women create them to support the integrity of *ithiniwin*, laws and teachings

that guide how we do things as beings. Once these laws are interpreted from *askihkwak*, pots, they become *kiskinohamākewina*, teachings that reflect and honor the role of women in the collective identity of Ithiniwak.

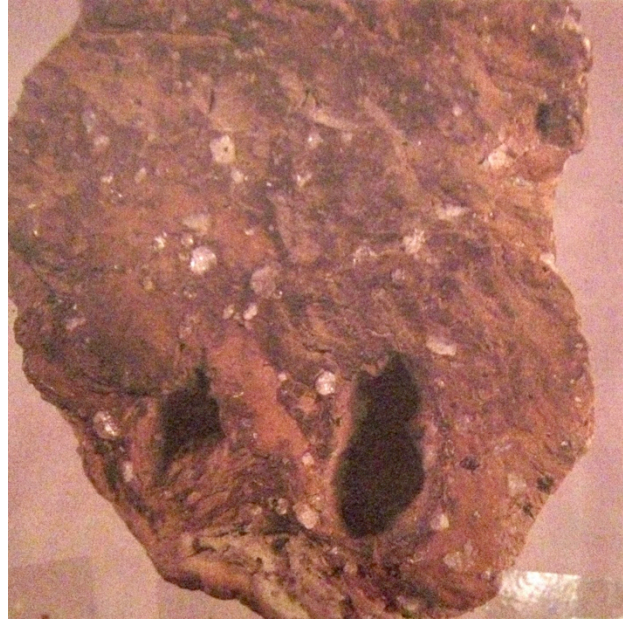


Figure 5.30 - Crushed bits of quartz used as temper found embedded in a fragment of askihk (© The Manitoba Museum, Winnipeg, MB).

I elaborate on this concept by using Skalesky and colleagues' (In Press) interpretations on the form and decoration of *askihkwak*, pottery found in northern Manitoba based on their observations, knowledge of the land and its cycles, archaeological approaches and indigenous methods such as dream work. They interpret the shape of the *askihk*, pot, as resembling the pregnant belly of a woman. The rounded shape of an *askihk*, pot, acknowledges the role of a woman in carrying *nipi*, water or life. The womb is a vessel where the baby is surrounded by water for nine months. Cord wrapped impression decorations sometimes found on the lip of the vessel resembles an umbilical cord that connects woman and baby (figure 5.31). These decorations emphasize the strong connection that exists between mother and child linking generation to generation from conception to birth and beyond. It also acknowledges first teaching

that a child receives from their mother about unconditional love. It is also the start of many teachings that each *ithinew*, human being will learn from each other as life goes on.

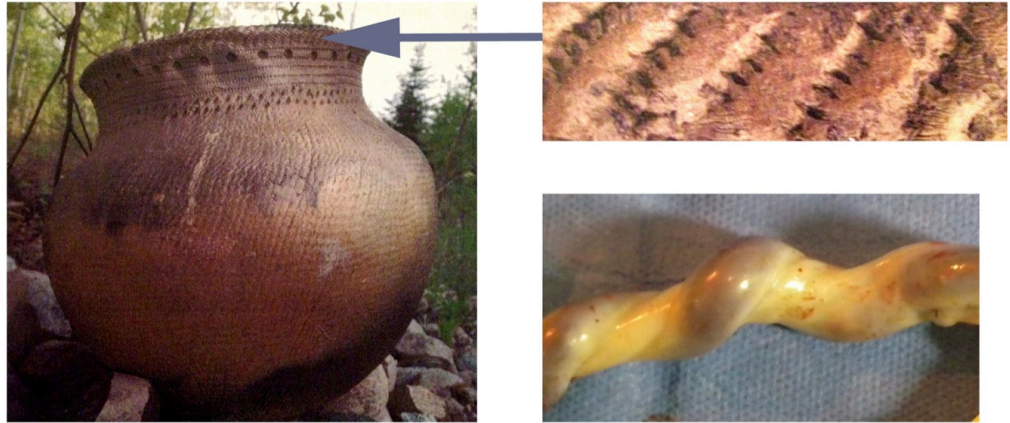


Figure 5.31 - Photos demonstrating cord wrapped impression decorations and similarity with umbilical cord.

A law observed from the various water bodies that encompass the world is the importance of water, which is essential for survival. This encompasses the law of *wahkotowin*, relatedness, on different scales. It is a common element found in all *Ithiniwak*, people, where more than half of the physical human body is water. Because it is found in all *Ithiniwak*, beings, it binds people together collectively both generationally and across territories. Water bodies also connect people geographically. Such understandings are reflected in how the Asiniskow Ithiniwak structure their collective identity based on what they have learned from the *Missinipi*, Churchill River and its tributaries (figure 5.32). It is a major waterway connects all *Ithiniwak*, people, who live along it. Therefore, the river is used as used as a measure to define the boundaries of Asiniskow Ithiniwak territory. This may also be why *Ithinesahikan*, the People's Lake (Southern Indian Lake) is given this name. Women acknowledge the importance of

water in life and their role as water carriers in helping to give life and form relationships across generations and territories. This understanding becomes embedded in the shape of *askihkwak*, pots, as they carry water.



Figure 5.32 - Breathtaking view of the Missinipi

Surrounding the neck of an *askihk* are a series of holes called punctates which Skalesky and colleagues (In Press) associate as representing the cycles of the moon important to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. There is an inherent connection that exists between *nipi*, water, and *tipiskaw pisim*, the moon, evident in tidal changes that occur with the onset of a full moon. Referring to the moon as grandmother moon is an acknowledgement of the relationship that exists between women as water carriers and *tipiskaw pisim*. This is also a reminder that the moon holds many teachings and knowledge such as the natural laws linking the cycle of life on *askī*, earth, with the moon

and its cycles. Cycles of moon phases are reminders that relationships in the universe are in constant flux.

Askihkwak sustain life not only through their use of carrying water but as vessels to cook food, which requires fire (figure 5.33). A law that exists among the Asiniskow Ithiniwak is the recognition that women have a role in keeping fire alive and is recognized in the *nīhithow* term for woman, which is *iskwiw*, woman or *iskwiwak*, women. It is derived from the term *iskotiw*, referring to fire, which is acknowledged by the Asiniskow Ithiniwak as a grandfather. I learned through this project, that this *othasiwiwin*, law, is reinforced where women are expected to ignite and keep the central fire burning continuously during a gathering or ceremony. I interpret the role of an *iskwiw*, woman in lighting *iskotiw*, fire, who is a grandfather represents a balance in relationships and a reminder that it takes a woman and a man to make a life. Maintaining the fire or ‘keeping it alive’ is a reminder of the *iskwiw*’s, woman’s role in sustaining life by giving birth, nurturing her children and as a law keeper responsible sharing teachings, values and beliefs with the family. These *kiskisiwina* or ways of remembering that balance is needed to create and sustain life are also present in the making and use of *askihk*, a pot, a *kanaci apacicikan*, sacred tool that holds *ithiniwin*, laws and teachings on how we do things as a being, specific to the role of *iskwiwak*, women. In the final stages of production of an *askihk*, a pot, fire is needed to set the decorations embodying these laws and teachings and to prepare it for its use. Fire is also required to cook the food inside the vessel, which sustains life.



Figure 5.33 - Photo of an askihk cooking moose meat stew over an open fire.

As traditions of making and decorating pots are passed on from mother to daughter or generation to generation, knowledge of the laws learned from the land that have guided their family are also being shared. These laws embedded in the *askihkwak*, pots, by the *iskwiwak*, women, who share their *acimowina*, stories, of their roles in the community as law keepers. The consistency in styles and decorations found with *askihkwak*, pots, in a region and over generations highlight the importance of matrilineal and matriarchal systems to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. These details found on the *askihkwak*, pots, illustrate that women stayed in a region while men moved through the territory to marry into other families. Through the clan systems established through the mother's lineage, women maintained positions of authority as decision makers within the family and leaders in the community. *Askihkwak*, pots, tell this important role of *iskwiwak*, women, that is recognized by the Asiniskow Ithiniwak.

Conclusion

There is a saying, “Everything happens for a reason”. The Elders believe that the appearance of burials of their ancestors that have been found eroding out of the banks of the Churchill, Nelson, Rat and Burntwood rivers are happening for a reason. “These are gifts from the ancestors to today’s generation. They are to be used by our youth to learn about the old ways and gain respect for the past”.

(Brownlee and Syms 1999:1)

Since I began working in northern Manitoba, a phrase that has always remained in my mind shared by *Kīhtayak*, Elders, is, “There is a reason as to why these *ithinewikana*, human bones, and *kanaci apacicikana*, sacred tools, show themselves to us today.” In this journey, I have always remained aware of this saying and to try to understand why. It is not until very recently that I have come to this understanding of why they show themselves as it relates to my *miskanow*, life’s path. In my profession, I have never, nor will I ever, consider myself a treasure hunter or a gravedigger. However, I often encounter these common misconceptions founded on archaeology’s troubled past. In the last century, Indigenous peoples are forced to adapt with the reality that these people and *kanaci apacicikana* sacred tools have been disturbed after a long rest. Originally, they were unearthed because of this troubled past filled with curiosities and unethical research practices during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Now they are disturbed or destroyed because of industry and land based development activities. A struggle that I encounter with First Nations is how to proceed in taking care of them. I find that people grapple with the issue, especially when I am involved with repatriation of *ithinewikana*, human bones, where they wish for them not to be disturbed but also do not want to see them eroding into the water or destroyed by development. Many are quick to rebury *kanaci apacicikana*, sacred tools, and *ithinewikana*, human bones,

without fully understanding the message or the teachings and laws that they hold and why they are showing themselves today. Perhaps, it is the uneasiness associated with them that I respect related to *pastahowin*, which by disturbing them results in retribution of actions. Adding to this confusion is the lack of a traditional ceremony associated with reburying *ithinewikana* and *kanaci apacicikana*. I have been told that traditionally there is no ceremony practiced specifically for reburying the dead thereby forcing contemporary First Nations to adapt to this situation. This is important because people want to ensure that they are doing things in the right way, *kwayaskitotamowin*. I would rather not see them disturbed as well and this is acknowledged in cultural resources management where the best way to protect heritage is avoidance by leaving sites alone and undisturbed. What I have learned from the statement shared by *Kīhtayak*, the Elders, is that they are continuing their role as teachers and keepers of *othasiwiwina*, laws, upholding the integrity of *Ithiniwin*, how we do things as beings, for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. They are reminders that laws and teachings are embedded in surroundings and land, which are understood through observation and experience. These understandings provide direction by defining a way of being and the opportunity to become holistic.

I was reminded of this only recently in the most profound manner when I became involved in a repatriation of three important women from long ago back to a First Nation community through work. Although I cannot share specific details, I can say that these women held important roles in their families and communities based on insights by knowledgeable people and what they were interred with. These women were hard workers as we know through their *ithinewikana*, bones, and the knowledgeable people

recognized them as carriers of laws. The teachings gained from these women were that they served as reminders that women were treated with the utmost respect among their peoples as keepers of fire and water carriers. This is an important message that knowledgeable people want to share to help address the derogatory treatment of women facing their communities today. It is known that Aboriginal women face high rates of violence within and outside of their communities and the number of missing and murdered women across Canada. I am familiar with this tragedy through my work in forensic anthropology where I have had the honour to provide a voice to those silenced through violence and the ability to provide a way of *wanaskiwin*, finding peace with oneself, to their families. I have worked on forensic cases helping to locate and identify missing men, women, and children and help tell their stories. What I failed to recognize is how all of this as part of my *miskanow*, life's path, comes full circle that if it was not for the *ithinewikana*, bones, such as these women from long ago, I would not have learned how to do such work. My dear friend, who I consider as an older sister and who is working with me on this repatriation reminded me of this through an explanation that she gave the community including Elders and knowledge people concerning the *ithinewikana*, bones. She said very eloquently,

"These women rested for a long time and then were disturbed. However, at their time here they became teachers again by teaching students like Myra, how to locate and identify bone and tell their stories from their remains. If it were not for these teachers, students like Myra would be unable to help identify and locate missing people and tell their stories. These particular people have finished their teachings and now they can go home to rest."

What this explanation has taught and reminded me that *ithinewikana*, human bones and *kanaci apacicikana*, sacred tools, help validate many identities in different

ways regardless if whether the interpretations are based on differing approaches to knowledge creation. These different experiences have provided me with the opportunity and privilege to learn the stories of people. From these *acimowina*, stories, that I have learned about the strength and resiliency of women as a cornerstone in their societies. Further, women are respected for keeping the fires burning by upholding laws and values among *Ithiniwak* and as water carriers. Teaching different generations regardless of how far apart they are is part of the *miskanow*, life's path of these ancestors and is what guides us on our own *pimotihowin*, path, to become incorporated in our *miskanow*. This is a reminder that through all these connections, in life we are all related.

In conclusion, I respect those in the communities that I work with who wish to rebury *ithinewikana*, human bones, and *kanaci apacicikana*, sacred tools, immediately upon their disturbance. However, I believe that it is important for Indigenous peoples to be able to make an informed decision concerning these matters. To understand that by reburying them in haste, we lose the opportunity to gain teachings from *ithinewikana* and *kanaci apacicikana* and the knowledge of *kapisiwina*, infinite places, that have become lost to living memory. We also lose the opportunity to understand them using Indigenous methodologies, observation, experience and languages and to share *acimowina*, stories, to correct outdated narratives of Indigenous history based solely on disparate epistemologies and logics. Also is lost is the ability to eliminate stereotypes of not only Indigenous peoples but of archaeologists. My hope is that through this discussion that I have provided people with evidence to make an informed decision so that we may not continue to lose opportunities provided by the ancestors and these *mithikowisiwina*, sacred gifts that have been passed on.

Chapter 6 Conclusion

“Moving forward requires an understanding of the old and modern ways”

In this dissertation, I explore how heritage can be defined as a constitutionally protected Aboriginal or Treaty right. Central to this discussion is an exploration of how heritage is used to transmit knowledge as a “tradition, custom or practice” that is grounded in relationships with land, community and place. I focused on a single case study involving the Asiniskow Ithiniwak to demonstrate that rights and understandings of Aboriginal heritage need to be contextualized at the local level. This process involved the creation of a postcolonial understanding of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage using Asiniskow Ithiniwak knowledge as my primary source and approaches based on an Indigenous research paradigm, decolonizing methodologies and archaeology.

I wanted to demonstrate in this dissertation that dominant understandings of heritage and heritage resources need reexamination. A common assumption is that the term “heritage resources” refers to physical manifestations of cultural expression such as archaeological sites and heritage buildings. What I have demonstrated in this dissertation is that heritage is a fluid and dynamic concept that involves the transmission of knowledge, which supports individual and collective identities. In this sense, “heritage resources” can refer to sources of knowledge actively used to support the formation of identity today and across generations in the future. This understanding is consistent the broader definition of heritage as assumed from an Indigenist perspective where everything that holds knowledge is valued as the collective heritage of the people (Battiste and Henderson 2000).

My purpose for engaging in this topic is quite simple. I wanted to highlight the issues associated with the protection and management of Indigenous heritage resources in

Canada and explore the means in which to address them. Through this process, I wanted to illustrate to the discipline of archaeology that an Indigenous research paradigm and decolonizing methodologies are valid strategies in creating a bicultural research framework that produces meaningful interpretations of Indigenous heritage. More importantly, as a non-Aboriginal woman of Filipino immigrants with an upbringing in Canada's largest urban centre, I wanted to demonstrate that such work is possible through collaborative work involving Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people.

The reason as to why I decided to undertake this project is the responsibility that I carry towards the Asiniskow Ithiniwak who have adopted me into their families. I am indebted to these people, whose guidance, teachings and patience have shaped my outlook in life and identity tremendously. I could not have taken on this daunting task of change without their teachings on their heritage that I have been given the privilege of working with in my miskanow as an archaeologist. It is these obligations that continue to drive me beyond this project with the initiative to change policies concerned with Indigenous heritage.

In chapter two, I provide a historiography that reflects on archaeology's continued role in negotiating Aboriginal identity, as it is understood today. Further, I discussed the various strategies employed in protecting Indigenous heritage in Manitoba and the issues surrounding these approaches. My goal was to provoke reflection among my colleagues and demonstrate that by maintaining the status quo as directed by cultural resources management practices and policies harms Aboriginal identity. What this discussion reflects is the ongoing power imbalances between subordinated Indigenous peoples and the dominant culture. Presenting this history of relationships involving archaeologists and

Aboriginal peoples demonstrates why change is necessary in the management and interpretation of Indigenous heritage through cultural resources management (CRM). Most strategies employ a resource model in protecting heritage resources. Ideally, an antiquities model as advocated by Yellowhorn (1999, 2002) is the preferred approach in heritage resources protection because it emphasizes intrinsic cultural values associated with cultural property. Defining heritage as a constitutional Aboriginal or treaty right influences the potential to shift strategies used for heritage resources protection towards an antiquities model at the initiative of Aboriginal peoples. However, since Aboriginal consultations often frame the concept of rights through the use of resource models, it is likely that a hybrid of both resources and antiquities models will likely emerge as a form of heritage protection and conservation.

In chapter three, I continue the discussion by using a deconstructive and reconstructive approach in the understanding of heritage. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how ontologies and epistemologies influence the cultural divergences that exist towards the understanding of heritage by subordinated Indigenous and dominant cultures. By recognizing these ontological differences, it is possible to understand why cultural divergences exist in the understanding of heritage between different cultures. This discussion provides an understanding that there is a need to redefine or broaden the definition of heritage in policies to reflect and reconcile these differences in understandings of heritage.

Chapter four outlines the various research frameworks applied in this dissertation to guide the research process through the use of metaphor, a significant storytelling methodology used by Indigenous peoples. I use this approach to convey difficult

concepts regarding the methodologies applied in this dissertation and to demonstrate the validity of its use in academic discourse. In this discussion, I outline how an Indigenous research paradigm is central to this project to maintain the integrity of Indigenous knowledge throughout the research process. Further, I demonstrate the importance of experience, participation and language when engaging in research involving Indigenous knowledge. I believe that following these approaches encourages the development of a bicultural research model which is essential for research and policy development involving Indigenous heritage.

In chapter five, I create a postcolonial understanding of Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage based primarily on Asiniskow Ithiniwak knowledge and epistemologies, and select archaeological knowledge. I decided to use Asiniskow Ithiniwak knowledge as a single case study to articulate how heritage is defined as an Aboriginal and treaty right. I discuss the influence of Asiniskow Ithiniwak ontologies that recognize the existence of multiple dimensions and Beings on the universe in creating a relational epistemology that guides Asiniskow Ithiniwak worldview. I contextualize this understanding through the use of the symbol in figure 6.1. I demonstrate how this figure is a theoretical model for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak from where assumptions on life and the nature of realities are based. By using this model in conjunction with the *nīhithow* language, I demonstrate that the universe is viewed as multidimensional involving the constant exchange of energies or knowledge through a network of relationships of Beings and multiple realities (figure 6.2). Knowledge that informs individual and collective identity is derived from these relationships and is gained through observation and participation. This knowledge is acquired through the balance of these relationships in the universe. Further, this

knowledge represents a set of legal traditions and teachings that guide a way of being for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. This set of laws and teachings encompass *ithiniwin*, a fluid and multidimensional concept that guides a way of being or how you do things as a being.

Ithiniwin, a way of being, becomes incorporated and shared through different means such as:

- *Ithiniwak*, people
- *acimowina*, many stories,
- *kapisiwina*, places that exist into infinity and beyond where people visit from time to time
- *kanaci apacicikana*, tools involved in the act of making clean or sacred tools.

Each teaching and law carries the energy of the Being where it is derived from. Further, each mean embodies the energy of every Being involved in its development to become an instrument that supports *ithiniwin*, a way of being or how you do things as a being. This understanding supports Smith's (2012) definition of essentialism or essence of being as shared earlier in the dissertation where all Beings are related through an essential essence or energy.

Symbol as it is presented in most cases as a 'medicine wheel'

how the symbol is viewed from an Asiniskow Ithiniwak epistemology
It is multidimensional where each section can be contextualize as a Being
or a plane/dimension in life with constantly flowing knowledge or energy

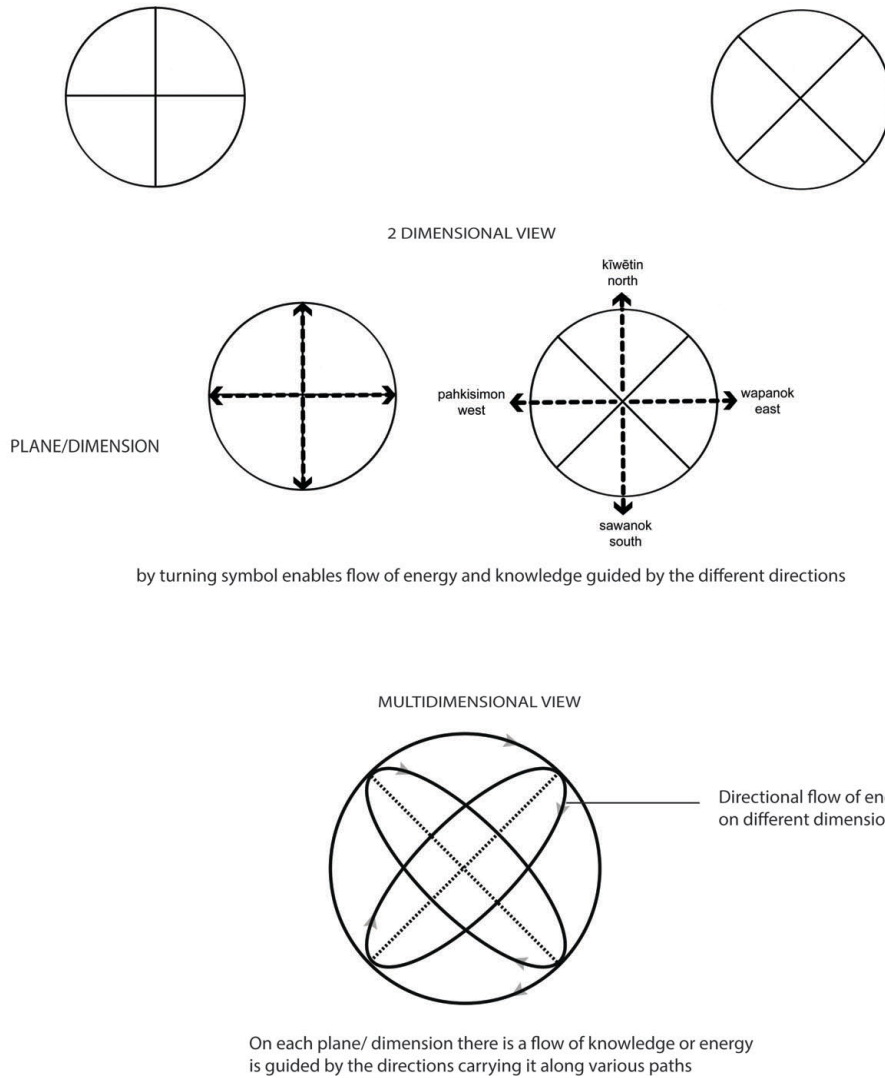
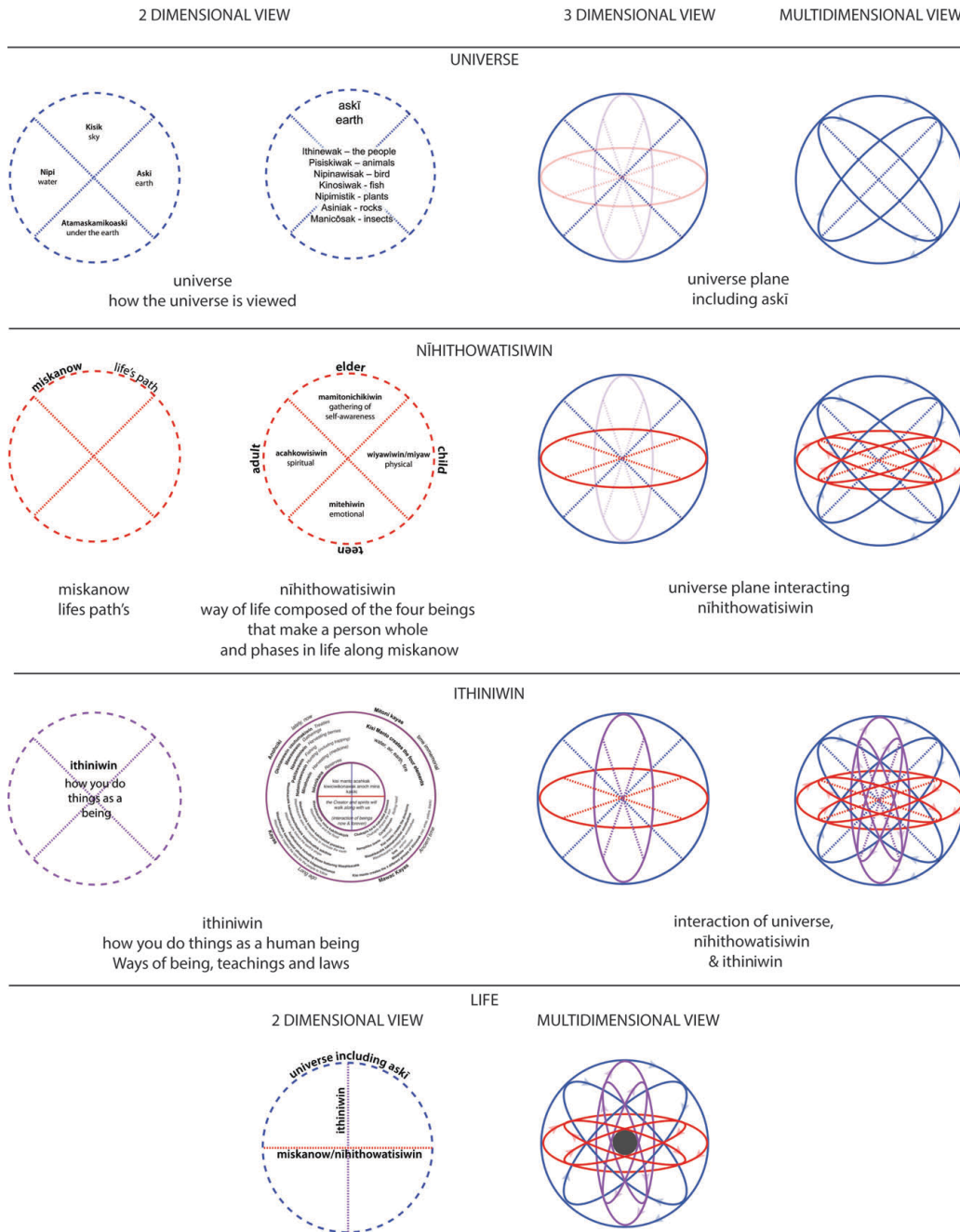


Figure 6.1 - Diagram outlining the process used to contextualize symbol according to Asiniskow Ithiniwak perspectives.

Outline of planes and dimensions in life



as energies of planes overlap, knowledge becomes exchanged especially at the centre where there is a balance relationships among beings in the different dimensions

Figure 6.2 - Summary diagram featuring the symbol to contextualize theoretical assumptions on the structure of life based on my interpretations of teachings shared by the Asiniskow Ithiniwak.

There is a responsibility for carrying this knowledge which encompasses the energies of Beings. Further consequences to sharing this knowledge inappropriately where it can impact the balance of relationships in the universe resulting in *maci pimatisiwin*, bad living. Therefore, there are certain people such as *Kīhtayak*, Elders, or particular knowledgeable people that are designated to hold the responsibility for carrying and sharing these legal traditions and teachings. This knowledge is often not shared unless the conditions are right and protocols are met; following the principles of *kwayaskitotamowin*, there is a right way of doing things, and *enahipathik*, things happen when they are meant to happen (or not happen).

Ithiniwin, way of being, is learned through experience by participating in activities that promote observation and interactions with other Beings on the land. These activities include sharing this knowledge orally through various *acimowina*, stories, and engaging in practices and customs such as hunting, harvesting, feasts and *mamawewina*, gatherings. Interactions with animals and plants, for instance, represent more than just subsistence-related activities. The teachings that are shared by animals provide a way of being for an *ithinew*, human being, as shown in the dances and songs learned from birds used in ceremonies. Approaches to life such as the hunting metaphor discussed in chapter four are learned through interactions with animals. The experience of gathering berries described in chapter five not only teaches how to conduct research using an Indigenous research paradigm but also skills in approaching life with patience. These understandings illustrate that *ithiniwin* is a set of legal traditions that guide an *ithinew* to live *mitho pimatisiwin*, good life, in relationship with other Beings. *Ithiniwin* is why the Asiniskow Ithiniwak maintain their strong connections with the land and ancestors. These legal

traditions and teachings, which are gained from their surroundings and interactions with other Beings ground their identity with a way of being and a sense of place.

The importance of legal traditions for Aboriginal peoples is found across Canada. This is reflected in the diversity of instruments used to support the integrity of these laws and teachings by embodying them such as wampum belts, masks, totem poles, medicine bundles, birch bark scrolls, petroglyphs, and crests (Borrows 2010). When found in an archaeological context, these items are often described as artifacts, which can for some people conjure up associations of something discarded and no longer in use. Yet, for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak they are recognized and valued as *kanaci apacicikana*, sacred tools, regardless if they are found through archaeology. *Kanaci apacicikana* embody *othasiwiwina*, laws or legal traditions, and *kiskinohamākwina*, teachings, because they are modeled, shaped, created and established after what is observed and learned by an ithinew from other beings on the land. Further, they carry the energies or knowledge of multiple beings and realities to include the person who made it, the person who uses it, the beings where it was made from and others involved in its use and creation. Similar exchanges of knowledge associated with *ithiniwin*, the laws and teachings on a way of being, are also held by specific geographic locations known as *kapisiwina*, infinite places, to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. These places are identified through their *acimowina*, stories, like those where landforms are linked with *acahthowina*, stories that never change and told over generations, involving Wisahkicahk, locations like camps where activities are conducted and those located through archaeology.

These understandings transform ideals of natural and cultural resources where from an Asiniskow Ithiniwak worldview, there are no distinctions made between the two

or culture and heritage. Instead, this discussion demonstrates to archaeologists and others involved in natural or cultural resources management that they are working with the teachers, keepers and living documents that hold and share the legal traditions for Indigenous peoples. This is an understanding that can only be contextualized at the local level through a group's culture and language. This is why heritage assumes a much broader definition for Indigenous peoples where everything in the universe that holds knowledge is viewed as their collective heritage. Further, it is also why autonomy is important to Indigenous peoples because this knowledge is derived from what is observed and learned in their local surroundings where the land is a testimony of *ithiniwin*.

The contributions of this work are significant on several levels. One of my goals through this dissertation was to articulate how Indigenous legal traditions become embedded in heritage resources such as artifacts, places and other manifestations to become resources of knowledge. My reason for accomplishing this goal using the *nihithow* language and teachings gained through this project was to demonstrate that this is a practice or custom that has sustained Asiniskow Ithiniwak identity over generations. The purpose for engaging in this discussion was to contribute to legal discussion involving management of Indigenous heritage resources and Aboriginal or treaty rights.

By defining the management and protection of heritage in the context of an Aboriginal or treaty right, questions the Crown's role in managing heritage resources that are important to Indigenous peoples without proper consultation and accommodation. This outcome also encourages policy developers involved in heritage resources management, whether they are working for the Crown or with Aboriginal peoples, to acknowledge the preexisting treaty relationships when developing policies, procedures

and regulations where heritage resources are of concern. Further, my focus on the Asiniskow Ithiniwak as a case study demonstrates that heritage needs to be defined as it is understood at the local level. Not only does this approach generate an heirloom effect associated with an antiquities model of heritage protection but also aids in articulating the philosophies and mechanisms used by this community in knowledge creation and maintenance. By articulating these understandings, then it is possible to proceed in developing ‘hybrid’ or ‘bi-cultural’ strategies in heritage resources protection where all perspectives in a treaty relationship are considered.

In this dissertation, I have attempted to demonstrate how the values, beliefs and understandings of law become embedded in *kanaci apacicikana*, sacred tools, and *kapsiwina*, infinite places along with other resources and *acimowina*, many stories. Further, I have discussed how *ithinewikana*, human bones, continue to maintain knowledge that can be ascertained through Indigenous methodologies and other approaches. The Asiniskow Ithiniwak have maintained this knowledge of *ithiniwin* a way of being, since time immemorial through these resources and the *nihithow* language. This knowledge is further sustained by other continuing practices, customs and traditions carried out across their territory. *Ithinewikana*, human bones, and *kanaci apacicikana*, sacred tools, such as *askihkwak*, pots and *kapsiwina*, infinite places, are carriers of Asiniskow Ithiniwak legal traditions and teachings that are supported within their culture through the *nihithow* language and through customs and activities carried out by *Ithiniwak*, people. By articulating the various ways in which the Asiniskow Ithiniwak safeguard and maintain the integrity of *ithiniwin*, way of being, demonstrates that they

have never ceded their rights in protecting their collective heritage. An understanding, which I believe, has implications on legislation and policy concerned with their heritage.

To discuss these implications, I revisit some of the questions outlined earlier in my introductory chapter concerning the duty to consult process which were:

- Treaties uphold and recognize First Nations rights and governance. Aboriginal heritage is upheld through a set of legal traditions. Should the Crown recognize these legal traditions since they represent Indigenous governance?
- How does the recognition of Aboriginal heritage as being integral to cultural identity shape consultation discussions regarding Aboriginal and treaty rights?
- Is the Crown infringing on treaty rights by making decisions that impact Aboriginal heritage? Does the Crown have a right to manage and make decisions over Aboriginal heritage under existing heritage legislation and historical treaties?
- Are resources of Aboriginal heritage being properly represented at these consultations?

Treaties uphold and recognize First Nations rights and governance. Aboriginal heritage is upheld through a set of legal traditions. Should these legal traditions be recognized by the Crown since they represent Indigenous governance?

Legal traditions need to be recognized because they are intertwined with Indigenous governance. Using the Asiniskow Ithiniwak as a case study, I demonstrated how legal traditions are inseparable from governance because they are guidelines on a way of being for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. They structure how *Ithiniwak*, people, make decisions in life that promote living *mitho pimatisiwin*, a good life. This involves adhering to a governance structure that facilitates balance in relationships among Beings that are found within as an *ithinew*, human being, through *n̄thithowatisiwin*, way of life⁸⁴ and collectively in the universe through *ithiniwin*, ways of being. Because Indigenous

⁸⁴ *n̄thithowatisiwin* – way of life composed of the four beings that make a person whole (wiyawiwini or miyaw, the physical component, mitehiwin, the emotional component or needs, acahkowisiwin, spiritual needs, and mamitonichikiwin, where it all comes together through gathering of self-awareness).

legal traditions are inseparable from the traditions, customs and practices (which also help to sustain them), they are constitutionally protected under section 35(1) of the *Constitution Act (1982)* which states, “The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed.” (Borrows 2010; Chartrand 2005).

How does the recognition of Aboriginal heritage as being integral to cultural identity shape consultation discussions regarding Aboriginal and treaty rights?

This dissertation explored how understandings of heritage are integral to cultural identity using the Asiniskow Ithiniwak as a case study. Heritage is represented by cultural expressions or heritage resources, which take on a range of forms such as actions, objects, symbols, narratives and language. For the Asiniskow Ithiniwak, these expressions embody legal traditions and teachings that guide the formation of individual and collective cultural identities. Such findings shape consultations discussions by suggesting that it is necessary for Aboriginal peoples, government and industry to reconsider the definition of rights beyond a focus on actions. A study focused on identifying the range of these expressions important to a community is essential for consultation discussions. However, it would also be advantageous for these studies to integrate local understandings of cosmologies and epistemologies that contextualize the significance of these expressions to the collective and individual cultural identity of the community. Research circles conducted within the community would be beneficial in generating such discussions within the community.

Such understandings can be integrated into laws and policies that emphasize the intrinsic cultural values associated with cultural expressions or heritage resources. These

laws can be incorporated into band council resolutions, land codes, land use plans, heritage policies and co-management agreements as strategies that maintain Indigenous interests in their heritage. These approaches can be brought into consultation and accommodation discussions.

In addition, framing heritage as an Aboriginal or treaty right forces governments and industries to rethink their internal policies and procedures concerning Aboriginal consultations. From the perspective of these groups, reconciliation is the desired outcome of these consultations and that the process goes smoothly. This is because Aboriginal consultations can involve a range of departments and agencies, federally and provincially, in addition to industries and Aboriginal communities. To facilitate these discussions, it would be beneficial for the Crown and industry to rethink what the definition of rights entails and to recognize that these rights have to be defined at the local level because of the diversity of Aboriginal cultures in Canada. Internal policies and procedures need to be revised to reflect these understandings, which will facilitate consultation discussions.

Is the Crown infringing on Aboriginal and treaty rights by making decisions that impact Aboriginal heritage? Does the Crown have a right to manage Aboriginal heritage?

In this dissertation, I have demonstrated how ‘cultural heritage’ and ‘natural resources’ and ancestral human remains carry legal traditions that inform Asiniskow Ithiniwak identity. These sources of knowledge are gained, maintained and safeguarded through language, traditions, customs, practices and activities that are carried out by the Asiniskow Ithiniwak today. Aboriginal and treaty rights that are protected under section 35 (1) are, “sourced in the actual customs, traditions and practices of the Aboriginal

groups. It is precisely because of this prior existence that the practices are constitutionally protected” (Chartrand 2005:12). On one scale, such understandings suggest or imply that the Crown does infringe on Aboriginal and treaty rights of governance concerning their heritage and has no right to manage these resources important to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. A similar understanding was reached in the decision of *Lax Kw’alaams Indian Band v. British Columbia* where the British Columbia Supreme Court ruled in favour of Lax Kw’alaams in recognizing that there is a duty to consult and accommodate First Nations should alterations to heritage sites infringe on Aboriginal rights (Klassen, et al. 2009).

Further supporting this direction is the Government of Canada’s commitment in November 2010 to supporting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (Government of Canada 2010). In particular, Indigenous rights to governance over heritage are recognized in Article 11 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples that states:

Indigenous peoples have the right to practice and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs. This includes the right to maintain, protect and develop the past, present and future manifestations of their cultures such as archaeological and historical sites, artifacts, designs, ceremonies, technologies and visual and performing arts and literature.

(United Nations General Assembly 2007)

On another scale, one can also argue that the Crown does have a role in managing Indigenous heritage resources to fulfill its obligations in a relationship of sharing the land that were established during treaties. The intent behind heritage legislation is to protect all heritage resources within a jurisdiction, which includes Indigenous heritage resources. With the absence of federal heritage legislation, this duty falls under provincial jurisdiction. This scenario was explored in the legal dispute involving *Kitkatla Band v.*

British Columbia. The Kitkatla Band argued that decisions made concerning Aboriginal heritage objects and sites through the *Heritage Conservation Act* are unconstitutional because they represent the core of 'indianess' and any affairs of Aboriginal interest should fall under federal jurisdiction (Bell 2001; Klassen, et al. 2009). The Supreme Court of Canada recognized the act as constitutional, as a law of 'general application' where all heritage resources are treated equally with no exceptions given to Aboriginal heritage objects and sites (Klassen, et al. 2009). Further, the evidence presented in this case failed to demonstrate that the objects and sites in question go to 'the core of indianess.'

The complexity of this issue leads to the initial question posed to me by one of my teachers, "Why do I need a heritage permit to look for items belonging to my ancestors?" Do I [as a government representative enforcing the *Heritage Resources Act, 1986*] have the right to seek charges if he does not obtain a heritage permit and violates the act? Based on the legal decisions presented above, the answer to this question is yes and no. This suggests that future discussion is required to examine the legal complexities surrounding these issues concerning heritage resources, which lie beyond the scope of this dissertation. Examining similar cases involving natural resources management will be beneficial for this discussion where similar dilemmas are also being encountered in this field. An example follows Pillwax and Weber (2004) who discuss the implications of contemporary laws and policies in criminalizing traditional Aboriginal harvesting practices.

In this discussion, my intention is not to prove that the Crown's role in managing heritage resources should be abolished but to reconsider whether the Crown is fulfilling

the mandates of heritage legislation in protecting and preserving all heritage resources under its jurisdiction, which includes Indigenous resources. On certain legal scales, heritage legislation may appear neutral and constitutional. The reason to protect and preserve heritage remains the same for all cultures with the idea that it is important for establishing identity and transmitting knowledge. However, where these issues cause problems are that practices endorsed by policies and procedures enforcing legislative mandates may infringe on Aboriginal and treaty rights. This is not intentional but a consequence of cultural divergences that exist in the understanding of heritage. Such understandings influence the design of policies and procedures that direct the practices of heritage management and protection. Resolving this issue is a shared responsibility as an outcome of the treaties entered long ago between Aboriginal peoples and the Crown. Not only must the Crown consider Aboriginal interests concerning heritage resources. But Aboriginal peoples must understand the Crown's position in protecting heritage resources since all parties share a mutual goal. Further, this is a mutually benefiting relationship where each party carries knowledge and approaches that can improve the other's understanding of the management and protection of heritage resources. This is where co-management agreements are of benefit to this situation. Yet, a proper heritage resources management plan incorporated into such agreements requires the focus to move away from physical manifestations of heritage, particularly archaeological sites. Attempts should be made to explore and create new methodologies that reflect a broader understanding of heritage. This is where it is vital to understand the different contexts in which heritage is manifested, especially at the local level, as demonstrated in this project.

Further, it is important that these plans incorporate measures of capacity building within the community for sustainability and growth.

Are resources of Aboriginal heritage being properly represented at these consultations?

Throughout this dissertation, I have shown that heritage resources integral to the cultural identity of the Asiniskow Ithiniwak are not being properly represented at consultations. The issue relates to inappropriate methodologies being used to identify the scope and nature of resources important to Asiniskow Ithiniwak identity. Many of these strategies are directed by federal and provincial policies and procedures that enforce legislative mandates which are based on the dominant culture's ontologies or "root metaphors". Such ontologies result in ways of knowing that marginalize knowledges of subordinated societies.

These limitations are found in cultural resources management where there are a number of resources important to Aboriginal peoples that are not being properly identified or are being overlooked. Many heritage policies and procedures focus on the identification on physical manifestations of heritage, especially archaeological features which are often associated with Indigenous peoples. However, there are many heritage resources devoid of physical characteristics that are important to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak found across their territory. They are places that carry knowledge and energies of other Beings that help an *ithinew*, human being, gain a sense of place in the networks of relationships in the universe. These places remain in the collective consciousness of Ithiniwak through *n̄hithow* language, *acimowina*, the stories, customs and practices, all filled with teachings and legal traditions. Examples include ceremonial sites such as

dancing circles, places featuring the interactions of *Wisahkicahk* in the universe, where the *mimikwisiw*, little people, frequent and an ‘encultured’ landscape where a person gained knowledge from observing other Beings in their surroundings. These heritage resources are often not identified through current procedures endorsed by provincial jurisdictions enforcing the provisions of heritage legislation. Instead, these resources that are important to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak are often overlooked or left vulnerable to destruction by land-based developments.

Oral references in *n̄hithow* to these places and interactions known to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak as *acimowina* are often called ‘oral histories’ in English. The use of this English term is inappropriate because for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak they are not discrete or finite events that happened in the past. I also refrain from referring to *acimowina* as ‘legends’ or ‘myths’. I believe that these terms devalue the meaning of the various *acimowina* by associating them with folklore than what they truly represent for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. *Acimowina* are references to the laws and teachings that guide a way of being for the Asiniskow Ithiniwak or *Ithiniwin*. The *n̄hithow* name given to a location is an *acimowin* (story) that binds *Ithiniwin* (way of being) with place. This name acknowledges the location as a *kapisiwin* (infinite place) where knowledge is gained through interactions involving *Ithiniwak* (people) and other beings. Therefore it is expected that many *kapisiwina* (infinite places) hold multiple *acimowina* (stories). People rely on these *acimowina* (stories) to guide or orient themselves within the territory. Further, when a person visits a *kapisiwina* (infinite places), *ithiniwin* (a way of being) is gained through activities and observations carried out at that place and through hearing its *acimowina* (story). Often these places are commonly described in English as

‘spiritual or sacred sites’. Although *kapisiwina* (infinite places) may be considered as such if regarded as a way of *wanaskiwin* (a place to ground oneself). I hesitate to use these terms because initially from a dominant culture’s point of view they conjure imagery of places of worship or referring to religion. I feel that such ideals detract meaning and value from these places that are essential to the formation of a collective identity by substantiating romantic, exotic or new age stereotypes of Aboriginal people.

Many Asiniskow Ithiniwak express the reaction that they feel a sense of displacement once *kapisiwina*, infinite places, are renamed in English or destroyed by resource extraction, flooding and land based developments. They see this practice as a form of extinguishment of Aboriginal identity across the landscape. The destruction of *kapisiwina*, infinite places, and the practice of renaming affect the integrity of *ithiniwin*, a way of being, by erasing the teachings and laws that are associated with the place. This experience disrupts the transfer of knowledge by erasing the *acimowina*, stories, that are instruments for sharing teachings and laws between generations. One episode that is ingrained in my memory is Brenda Dysart-Anderson sharing her *acimowin*, story, of the sense of loss that she feels when she tries to point out to her son the *kapisiwina*, infinite places, that she grew up with prior to the flooding of *Ithinesahikan*, the People’s Lake or Southern Indian Lake, from hydroelectric dam development. Since her son is not fluent in *nīhithow* and many of these *kapisiwina*, infinite places, are under underwater, it pains her to hear the words, “What are you talking about Mom? I don’t understand. I don’t see it.” For the Asiniskow Ithiniwak, many places or locations are not considered a heritage resource without the *acimowina*, story, it has to share. Therefore, a *kapisiwin*, infinite

place must always be accompanied an *acimowin*, story, which includes referring to the location by its *nihithow* name prior to its English one.

This *acimowin* leads me to recommend to policy makers and decision makers that they should rethink what the term mitigation means where Indigenous heritage resources are concerned. In cultural resources management, mitigation refers to mitigating the effects that development will have on heritage resources. Since heritage policies focus on physical manifestations of heritage, the emphasis is often on the removal of these resources to avoid their destruction. Instead, mitigation should involve *in-situ* strategies of conserving heritage and knowledge at the local level (Agarwal 1995). Communities should be empowered to use their own preservation mechanisms to sustain knowledge, culture and heritage through the generations. This process involves consideration into the impacts to the loss of knowledge sustained by communities once these instruments that transfer language, teachings and laws are destroyed. Mitigating strategies should involve initiatives to sustain language resulting from loss and activities that promote the continued use of impacted areas if still accessible. Further, *acimowina*, stories, associated with these places should be fully documented according to standards deemed acceptable to the affected community and made accessible through educational tools and programming.

On a theoretical level, the contribution of this work is a theoretical understanding of Asiniskow Ithiniwak worldviews and their ontology and how they influence their constructs of heritage. Exploring and articulating these theoretical understandings was crucial in this dissertation because they served to facilitate the contextualization of heritage at the local level using Asiniskow Ithiniwak culture and *nihithow* language.

Further, these understandings facilitated the process of defining Asiniskow Ithiniwak heritage as an Aboriginal or treaty right.

Throughout my career, I have engaged in many discussions involving Indigenous heritage where the general premise held by discussants is that Aboriginal peoples hold different understandings of their heritage and that change is necessary to reflect these worldviews. Yet, how to implement this change and create suitable processes is often where the difficulties are encountered. I argue that this is because the theoretical foundation guiding these initiatives is based on differing logics, epistemologies and ontologies.

To understand the complexity of this issue, I decided to take on the task in demonstrating how assumptions about the nature of reality or ontologies influence our understandings of heritage. Although, this topic has been previously explored in archaeology, rarely is it articulated in a concrete manner as to how they operate from an Indigenous worldview. It is even rarer that a non-Aboriginal person attempts to create such understandings in written form using Indigenous methodologies, research paradigms, language and the local perspective as the primary source of knowledge .

By taking these approaches, new ways emerged in how to identify heritage resources found in Asiniskow Ithiniwak territory and to generate interpretations from what is found archaeologically that is meaningful to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak. This process also encouraged the reclamation of Asiniskow Ithiniwak identity that has long been redefined by others outside of their territory. An example involves the symbols, terms and concepts important to Asiniskow Ithiniwak that were appropriated and redefined through colonialism. They were reclaimed by the Asiniskow Ithiniwak as they

became contextualized through *nīhithow*, dream work and research circles of knowledgeable people and *Kīhtayak*.

During this process a cross cultural dialogue emerged, where knowledge gathered through archaeology and skeletal biology became acknowledged as a valid means for informing Asiniskow Ithiniwak identity. This is not only demonstrated in the similarities of interpretations concerning *ithinewikana*, human bones, that has emerged but also in the new understandings of contexts associated with *kanaci apuchichikana*, sacred tools, and *kapisiwina*, infinite places, that cannot be interpreted through Indigenous methods. What was illustrated through this project is that Indigenous methodologies and archaeological approaches based on dominant research paradigms provide knowledge of contexts that may not be ascertained by the other. All of these interpretations enrich our understandings of how we fit in the network of relationships in the universe, whether we identify it as involving other beings through the generations or those from the past, present, and future.

On a practical level, this work contributes approaches to assist in the development of policy that concerns Aboriginal heritage whether it is an initiative of First Nations, provincial governments, cultural resources management, consultants, or industry. First, this piece demonstrates that those engaged in this work need to gain an understanding of the theoretical foundations that guide Aboriginal worldview. An understanding of heritage needs to be contextualized on the local level, not only for the purposes of sustainably protecting and conserving heritage but as a human right. I hope that this dissertation that is focused on Asiniskow Ithiniwak worldview provides some concrete insights into this understanding. I hope that this work provides a sense of how dominant

epistemologies influences thought processes and the inhibitions experienced when engaging in work that involves Indigenous knowledge. I wish to emphasize, however, that what is presented here is not necessarily a reflection of understanding for all Aboriginal peoples in Canada, only the Asiniskow Ithiniwak in this north central region of Manitoba. These understandings must be generated within the contexts important to each community. I demonstrate that, as a non-Aboriginal person, this kind of work can only be completed through long term relationships established within the community based on trust and respect and by participating and engaging in experiences across their territory.

I also demonstrate the use of an Indigenous Research Paradigm as a valid approach to guide any research that involves Indigenous knowledge. By employing measures of relational accountability throughout the research process ensures the following that (Kirkness and Barnhardt 1991; Pidgeon and Hardy Cox 2002; Weber-Pillwax 2001; Wilson 2008):

- all practices fosters respect for all involved,
- the relevance of the knowledge is maintained in its significance to everyone involved,
- reciprocity exists throughout all aspects of the research,
- an awareness of responsibility is upheld for researchers towards the research.

The ways in which I maintained a sense of relational accountability is reflected throughout this dissertation. Some of the examples are as follows:

- The topic of this dissertation was chosen based on an identified need and a common goal of interest to myself and everyone else involved in this project.
- The selection of methods based on Indigenous and non-Indigenous research paradigms to gather information was based on whether each approach could gather and interpret knowledge in a manner that is respectful to all involved.

- Further, I followed and acknowledged the protocols important to the Asiniskow Ithiniwak for gathering this knowledge.
- As I entered the analysis and presentation stage of the dissertation project, I consistently ‘checked back’ with my teachers to ensure that interpretations being shared in these writings reflected the teachings that were initially shared with me.

I endorse the use of an Indigenous research paradigm because of its fluidity in accommodating methods based in dominant research paradigms. Postcolonial Indigenous research paradigms recognize the value of knowledge produced by ‘Western’ knowledge systems. Yet, in order for these approaches to be used successfully when interpreting knowledge associated with Indigenous peoples, they must be adapted in how they acquire, produce, maintain and share interpretations of Indigenous knowledge (Chilisa 2012). I achieved this by adapting methods to follow an Indigenous research paradigm framework where relational accountability is emphasized throughout all aspects of the research process. These adaptations support and maintain the integrity of Indigenous knowledge based on relational epistemologies throughout the research process. Further, this process also respects and acknowledges other approaches to knowledge which is important for encouraging cross-cultural dialogue and addressing issues associated with cultural divergences of knowledge. This is an approach that is consistent with decolonizing methodologies.

Initially, I wanted to incorporate the use of map biographies, a common tool used in land use and occupancy studies, as part of this dissertation. Yet as I proceeded, I found that it was more important to discuss and address theoretical issues prior to developing or adapting any tools. This will be a future direction following this dissertation since I believe that it can be useful tool, once adapted, that can properly represent Indigenous knowledge.

Map biography is a popular method used to document and present places important to Aboriginal communities in their territory is a land use-and-occupancy method called map biography (Tobias 2009). Survey questions are posed to individual community members with the aid of a map to collect traditional land use-and-occupancy data in a specific region. A map auto biography is produced for each individual telling his/her own story on places they have travelled, stayed and procured resources (Tobias 2009). The final product consists of an overall map plotting all of the data provided by all 'respondents'. In Canada, First Nation, Inuit and Métis communities use these maps to present interests and exercise territorial rights in land-claim negotiations.

Although this tool is not widely used in cultural resources management, it can potentially be a useful tool document and present places and other Aboriginal cultural resources across a territory. However, there are several issues that I have identified with this approach that marginalizes Indigenous knowledge as an influence of its methodology based on positivistic paradigms:

- Tobias (2009) advocates for the use of English as the primary language rather than the local language for conducting interviews, documenting knowledge and presenting information on map-biographies, especially for legal purposes. I disagree with this approach because language inherently reflects philosophy and worldview, therefore it is important to present terms and knowledge in the local language to express community interests. Further, there may also be the issue of community members having limited or uncomfortable levels of conversing in English.
- Map biographies focus on physical constructs of heritage and overlook other attributes such as oral histories and place names in the local language that are essential in providing meaning and value to an Indigenous community. Translating place names of an 'encultured landscape' to English and withholding the oral history that accompanies it, affects the integrity of the community's knowledge and heritage.
- There is limited representation or documentation of archaeological heritage in map biographies. The plotting of archaeological sites often remains absent

from use-and-occupancy studies or is presented in disparate sources. Aboriginal communities recognize that most archaeological sites and artifacts are integral part of their heritage and can be associated with 'descendant communities'. By plotting archaeological sites with use-and-occupancy data demonstrates a continuum in the use of sites and areas over a period of time. Further, this approach demonstrates that archaeological sites are part of a living peoples culture and respects the ideal expressed by many Indigenous peoples that they cannot be divorced from their larger environmental and cultural settings (Nicholas 2006).

- The approach is limited in its verification of cultural landscape and sites since interviews are conducted primarily in a formal office setting. Respondents are rarely brought outside to identify locations of cultural significance. In cultural resources management, a survey and visit to the locations is necessary in order to visually document places, support claims and ensure the accuracy of information collected. Further, accuracy can be an issue since an Aboriginal resource user uses maps infrequently as a navigation tool. They are likely to rely on natural landforms as landmarks (e.g. stand of birch trees on a point) for direction and orientation on the rivers and lakes (Eaton 2008). There are also literacy concerns where people who are unfamiliar with maps may not necessarily know how to read them. These examples suggests that there may be issues related to the accuracy of using the map-biography approach to identify cultural resources where the respondent may not be identifying the correct location of the site on the map.
- Lack of accommodation for Aboriginal corollaries governing the knowledge being presented on the map. For example, the use of English and general classifications overshadows the corollary recognizing that knowledge is localized to an environment and its peoples (Battiste and Henderson 2000).

I believe that this tool can be useful to representing Aboriginal interests in their heritage, if it is done properly. Influenced by a relational accountability, I want to address these limitations by adapting the map biography method using methodologies and knowledge based in Asiniskow Ithiniwak knowledge systems. This approach is consistent with Indigenous research paradigms and decolonizing methodologies that recognize the adaptation of tools based in other knowledge systems.

For this moment, I will share a few recommendations that for those who wish to use this tool in documenting and presenting Indigenous knowledge. I propose adopting a

landscape approach to document knowledge where the landscape is considered a part of heritage rather than discrete and disperse sites (Byrne and Nugent 2004; Guilfoyle, et al. 2009). This process involves asking the question, “How can we work together in managing places of importance to you?” rather than “Why is a place significant?” (Guilfoyle, et al. 2009). Guilfoyle and colleagues (2009:169) outline how this approach works below:

This approach prompts local knowledge about how the landscape has changed, the ideas on what should be done for dual natural and cultural heritage conservation. At the same time, the landscape approach necessarily involves the formulation of specific management recommendations and actions for landscape protection that requires integration with methods/plans within the field of environmental or biodiversity conservation and management.

I expect some people will disagree with what I have presented in this dissertation such as those who may think that Aboriginal peoples should not be given ‘special treatment’, should be assimilated into mainstream society or should move beyond ‘traditional ways’ because they are dismissed as ‘primitive, romantic or unsustainable’. My hope is that this dissertation will serve as an educational tool and discussion piece to promote reflection on these statements. Many stereotypes involving Indigenous identity in Canada are based on ideals supported by colonialist practices and a lack of awareness and education of the issues Aboriginal peoples are facing today. In all honesty, sometimes I am saddened by the lack of empathy expressed towards Indigenous peoples in this country but I remain hopeful. I believe that it is important for all Canadians to be aware of the tumultuous history in which Canada has become established as a nation at the expense of Aboriginal peoples. Examples include the enforcement of the Indian Act that continues to shape Aboriginal identity today and earlier assimilation strategies such

as residential schools and the outlaw of ceremonies. These injustices continue to impact Aboriginal peoples tremendously and are evident in the issues of social well being prevailing among communities today such as youth suicides and domestic violence.

What has sustained Aboriginal communities and identity through these injustices is their language, culture and heritage. Activities, some of which are tied to the land, such as hunting, harvesting, sharing of *acimowina*, stories, visiting *kapisiwina*, infinite places, and *mamawewina*, the gathering of peoples have supported Aboriginal peoples in acquiring knowledge from their surroundings through participation and observation. This knowledge is maintains and supports Aboriginal identity through instruments such as *kapisiwina*, infinite places and people like *Kīhtayak*, Elders, who share teachings, laws and language across generations. The diversity in Aboriginal cultures and languages found across Canada is living proof that people continue to engage in these ways today. Many have incorporated these ways with modern ones which is why they continue to exist. As one of my teachers shared, people engage in these ways on the land because, “it is freedom” and it is where you can be at peace with yourself, a way of *wanaskiwin*. Aboriginal leadership recognizes the importance of these activities as a means of healing from social injustices and helping to resolve social issues that their communities are facing today. This is reflected in the number of initiatives emphasizing language revitalization and educational programming focused on ‘traditional activities’ that promote engagements with Elders and knowledgeable people. Any disruptions made to these ‘traditional ways’ or activities impacts the people who rely on these strong connections with the land to gain knowledge that informs their identity. This is why policies, regulations and legislation that impair or prohibit these activities and land-based

developments that destroy or alter resources important to Aboriginal peoples are met with disdain and resistance. These are the reasons why Aboriginal peoples across Canada are now currently engaged in a movement of 'idle no more'.

When I asked someone what he thought about this movement, he shared this teaching with me, "Moving forward requires an understanding of the old ways and modern ways". Although there are several ways in which I can interpret what he meant, I will share this particular interpretation as it pertains to this dissertation. This process involves learning about the old ways such as an understanding of why past grievances exist in a relationship and learning where each person comes from and how he or she form their sense of identity. With this knowledge, it becomes blended with the modern ways to create new paths in which to move forward together.

Epilogue

As I write this, there is a growing Indigenous movement that is occurring in response to the federal government's inaction towards the recognition of Aboriginal rights and treaties. It is inspiring to see but as I peer through the comments associated with news media articles, I am shocked by the number of misinformed and racist comments that I see. One interesting comment that sparked my interest was one by an individual who immigrated to Canada and is working in the north. The premise of their comment was that they are of xxx (somewhere overseas) heritage and living and working in northern Canada. Their ancestors have done nothing to Aboriginal people and if they did what relevance is it to them? Being the daughter of Filipino immigrants, I will be honest that several years back that I would have agreed with this comment. Living and growing up in Toronto, I never knew (publicly) of any Aboriginal people. My understanding was reinforced by an educational system that continued to portray Aboriginal peoples as exotic groups that existed in the past. The school named our lunch time indoor ball hockey groups according to different "Indian tribes" and I was on the 'Ojibway' team. I never learned of treaties in elementary or high school. I remember in grade three being proud that my plasticine diorama of an 'Ojibway' camp complete with tipis, peoples and horse was selected to be showcased in the school office. I was also proud of going to a multicultural school where being 'white' is a minority, all of my classmates were children of immigrants and this is what I associated with being Canadian. I believed in a Canada was a morally just country that promoted the freedom for people to express and participate in their culture and heritage.

It was not until I moved to Winnipeg twelve years ago where I began to learn about Aboriginal peoples in Canada. I recall my initial visit with my cousins who lived here talking with my parents and me about "panas", Indians, in Tagalog which translates to bow as in bow and arrow. As my family talked about them in a derogatory manner, I still remember the gasp from my mother when my relatives said, "There are Filipinos that even marry panas". To this day, I still chuckle at this comment where my parents' perspective has changed ever since I married an Inniniwak and held the wedding ceremony in northern Manitoba. It was not until I moved to Winnipeg and through graduate school that I learned of the injustices imparted on Aboriginal peoples by the Canadian government. However, this knowledge was further reinforced as I began working in northern Manitoba. I did not realize how grossly uninformed Canadian society is especially in the greater urban areas about the history of Canada's relationship with Indigenous people.

Growing up I always questioned my identity, not understanding where I belong or fit in. I never really associated with the Filipino community and I remember when I went to the Philippines that my relatives commented on how American I was. My mother is from a small island in northern Philippines where both of my maternal grandparents are half-Spanish from an era of Spanish colonization spanning three centuries. I remember my grandparents as very generous people, always giving and that is where my mom gets it. They were always on the water in their boats or on the land by their coconut plantation. My dad is the humorous one always the one to make you laugh and smile. My

family would always be feasting and a visit would never be complete without food. It was not until I went up to northern Manitoba where I felt like I belonged because the people there reminded me a lot of my own family through their joking, visiting, feasting and generosity.

Whenever my mother would talk about the Indigenous people on the island where she was from that she would refer to them as foreign and exotic other people. It was not until I said, "We aren't you related to them?" It was that moment that she realized that she was. Yet, it was not until recently that I came to acknowledge this as I was sitting with a group of Anishinaabe clan mothers while undertaking repatriation to a community. One of them asked if I was Anishinaabe. I responded, "No, but my parents immigrated to Canada from the Philippines. Then they smiled and nodded in agreement, "Wow she's come a long way, she's indigenous". One of the best complements I ever received was after that meeting when one of the women shook my hand upon her departure and said, "It was nice to meet you. I know you but I don't know you." I guess I never realized that I even carry jagged worldviews. Perhaps, that is one effect of colonization. It makes us forget that we are all related regardless of where we think we come from.

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Appendix

Sample Ethics Form



Page 9

Research Project Title:
'Enculturating' the Missinippi landscape: A view into Asiniskawithiniwak (Rock Cree) heritage along the Churchill River through Indigenous knowledge, Archaeology, and Map Biographies

Researcher(s):

Myra Sitchon

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

The purpose of this project is to document oral histories of places important to the Cree along the Churchill River from Granville Lake to Southern Indian Lake. Locations such as archaeological sites, camp sites, resource use areas used traditionally for hunting, fishing, and gathering food will be documented on maps when possible during the consultation. Afterwards, the areas you identified may be visited and recorded formally. Relating oral histories to the landscape, especially in Cree, is important for protecting cultural heritage of the community along the Churchill River for future generations.

This project does not involve any more risk than you would experience in your everyday life.

You are being asked to participate in this research project. If you agree to participate you will be asked general questions on your knowledge of places important to the Cree on the Churchill River. You will also be shown archaeological items found along the Churchill River and will be asked for your interpretations. The interview process may last between an hour and a couple of days (14 hours). You will determine the length of time this interview takes based on how much knowledge you are willing to share.

All information collected during this interview will lead to the creation of my PhD dissertation, a summary for the community, and a map showing areas important to the heritage and history of your community along the Churchill River. Information gathered through this research will also be used in presentations to demonstrate the importance of working with Aboriginal communities on projects impact their heritage. All interview information including audio recordings, photographs, video and hand-written notes will be kept in a locked cabinet at my office in Winnipeg. All electronic data will be saved on an encrypted hard drive and a digital copy will be kept with the Anthropology Department at the University of Manitoba. This material will be destroyed on or before May 31, 2012.

Your privacy is important. If you share information with me that is not to be shared with others, please let me know and I will not write it down. The following options allow you to decide how your name is used in this project:

- ☐ You request that your name is not documented
- ☐ You choose to have your name written down as an advisor although the information you share is not associated with your name specifically.
- ☐ You choose to remove your name from anything you are uncomfortable in sharing during the interviews or during follow up on the project during a second visit.

You also have the option to choose which recording method you feel most comfortable for me to use in documenting the consultation:

- ☐ Video recording
- ☐ Audio recording
- ☐ Handwritten notes
- ☐ Check for all of the above

Will you allow photographs to be taken during the interview? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Once all of the consultations are completed, a feedback process will occur. During my second visit, I will be contacting you to in order to confirm the information is appropriate, accurate and presented properly. The second visit will allow you to provide feedback and correct any information that you provided previously. It will also provide you with the chance to add or remove your name from any or all of the previous information that you provided. Every effort will be made to contact you. If for any reason you cannot be contacted, I will contact the person who signed this form as the witness.

Your time is valuable. If you participate in this research, you will be provided with a small honorarium and a pouch of tobacco for your participation. After all consultations are complete, a copy of information recorded during your interview will be made available at your request. You will also be receiving a summary of how your knowledge and others helped my research and a copy of a map narrative featuring areas important to the history and heritage of the Cree on or before May 31, 2012.

You can contact me as the principal researcher - Myra Sitchon at (204) 474-9361 (umsitcho@cc.umanitoba.ca) or my advisor, Dr. Robert Hoppa - (204) 474-6329 (hoppard@cc.umanitoba.ca) for any additional information and I will keep you informed as to the progress of the project.

You have the option to agree in participating in this project by signing this document or giving your oral consent through audio or video recording. Your signature on this form or your documented oral permission indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as an interviewee. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without

prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

Your name (please print)

☐ Check box if consent is provided on audio or video recording instead of signing document.

Your Signature

Date

Witness name (please print)

Witness Signature

Date

Myra Sitchon

Researcher name

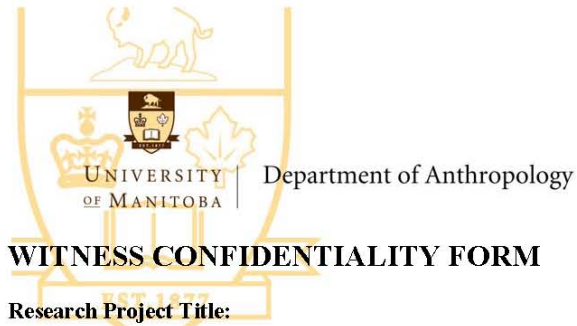
Researcher Signature

Date

This research has been approved by the Joint Faculty Research Ethics Board at the University of Manitoba. If you have concerns or complaints about this research project, please contact:

Margaret (Maggie) Bowman
Coordinator - Human Ethics
University of Manitoba
208 - 194 Dafoe Road - CTC Building
Winnipeg, MB R3T 2N2
(204) 474.7122
(204) 269.7173 (fax)

A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.



WITNESS CONFIDENTIALITY FORM

Research Project Title:

'Enculturing' the Missinippi landscape: A view into Asiniskawithiniwak (Rock Cree) heritage along the Churchill River through Indigenous knowledge, Archaeology, and Map Biographies

Researcher(s):

Myra Sitchon

I, (PRINT NAME) _____, acting as translator/witness on this project will not disclose the information made known during the interviews. All information expressed in this consultation with, (PRINT NAME) _____, will be held in confidence.

Witness Signature

Date