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INCLUSIVE AND EXCLUSIVE PERCEPTIONS OF DIFFERENCE: NATIVE AND EURO-BASED CONCEPTS OF TIME, HISTORY AND CHANGE

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In 1558, confronted by the differences in the ways Native peoples and Europeans perceived and structured their respective societies, Renaissance travel writer André Thevet asserted that the indigenous populations of North America, unlike Europeans, had neither religion, civility, nor books, and lived like 'beasts without reason' (Thevet [1558] 1878, 134-6). In 1603 Samuel de Champlain wrote of the Native groups he encountered that since each 'prayed in his heart just as he liked,' that in effect they had 'no law among them and do not know what it is to worship God and pray to Him, living as they do like brute beasts' (Champlain 1922-36, 6:52). In contrast, Native groups, although not always conciliatory, nonetheless sought out ways to incorporate Europeans into existing political and ideological structures, inviting Champlain, Jesuit missionaries and others to come to live with them, and to participate in their way of life (Dickason 1996, 103, 107). A fundamental element of Rotinonhsyonni diplomacy was the political necessity to achieve integrations so that at least ideologically Europeans and Iroquoians could perceive themselves to be brothers, one and the same people (JR 27: 253-61). When Jacques Cartier encountered the Montagnais-Naskapi in 1534 he remarked on their ease of manners coming 'freely on board our vessels as if they had been Frenchmen' (Cartier 1924, 76).

It wasn't that Renaissance explorers and observers did not see that Native groups had organized customs, languages, and beliefs. Nor were they unaware that indigenous information and knowledge was valuable to their survival on the continent and even had real parallels with their own intellectual traditions. It was that sixteenth-century Europeans saw themselves as separate and superior to peoples who were not Christian and capitalist (Dickason 1979, 182, 200-1). This separation of Native ideologies, forms of government, and religious beliefs from European ones, by virtue of their supposed 'inferiority' was essential to the European taking possession of the 'new' world. Missionization went hand in hand with economic expansion. Europeans perceived that indigenous North American beliefs and ways of seeing were incompatible with their own social, political and religious systems. Champlain refused to sanction French trade with Native groups unless they also accepted missionaries (Dickason 1996, 127). Missionaries were necessary to replace Native religions, languages and customs with Roman Catholicism and French culture (Grant 1984, 31).

In the twentieth century writing about the 'Renaissance' in Canada, as well as the

writing of North American history in general, seems also to be troubled by the idea that Native perceptions of history are not compatible with Euro-based ideas of history and change. Although both Native and non-Native historians have made attempts since the early nineteenth century to write histories that integrate Native and non-Native ideas of time, place and history, the history of Canada remains firmly based in European, not indigenous ways of seeing the past. By this I mean that although both Native perspectives and voices have been incorporated, the history of Canada remains firmly based in European deeds and actions (Trigger 1985, 48-9). Indigenous participation is at best viewed as marginal to the telling of Canadian history. As it stands now, the tens of thousands of years of history in North America are deemed to be largely unknowable, and the province not of history but of archaeology. Real history does not begin until Europeans arrive (Trigger 1985, 4-5; Petrone 1990, 35-70). The writings of nineteenth-century Native historians such as David Cusick ([1827] 1848) or George Copway (1847; 1850) are more often viewed as sources of history than as themselves historiographic. The legacy of past definitions of difference as separate and exclusionary, instead of as inter-connecting and inclusive, requiring incorporation into a whole, may have helped to obscure points of possible rapprochement between two different ways of ordering knowledge and conceptualizing the past.

One fundamental point of separation between the two has been the idea that Native people have 'myth' but not history. In 1541 the Franciscan friar Motolinía, who had written a history of New Spain, complained that most Aztec histories did not tell 'the truth' since they were mixed with 'dreams, illusions and superstitions' (Boone 1994b, 50). The seventeenth-century Jesuits, in recording the stories and customs of the Huron and others, did so in order to better debunk them as 'superstition' and fallacies (Grant 1984, 32, 34). Laurie Anne Whitt has argued that even into the twentieth century 'the dominant knowledge system of the West' has often viewed indigenous knowledge systems as "'tainted" with a normative and spiritual component' that renders them 'mere superstition, the very antithesis of knowledge' (Whitt 1995, 236).

Recent scholarship about South American indigenous history has begun to question assumptions that 'pre-literate societies' lack historical consciousness. As Terence Turner argues, the structuralist idea that indigenous societies see themselves as having 'static social systems' with 'myth' but not 'history,' needs revision (Turner 1988a, 195-6). Yet the perception of the basis and structures of 'history' among indigenous peoples does differ dramatically from Euro-based concepts. Indigenous conceptualizations of history are not the same as those that came out of a European tradition. Turner argues that European history is based on a tradition that stems from Thucydides' emphasis upon re-telling events in a chronological sequence as part of one universal history, but that other kinds of history order events as episodes, not strictly connected to one another in a set chronology (Turner 1988b, 249-50). Alcida Ramos further argues that the separation of myth from history is part of a process of compartmentalization that is unnecessary in indigenous thought but essential to European-based ideas of rationalism and empiricism (Ramos 1988, 229).

However, European-based histories are just as informed (albeit perhaps less overtly) by

their own specific cultural myths and symbols as indigenous oral traditions are. The twentieth-century assumption that historians must not make direct reference to their own myths is in itself a kind of cultural belief system. As Turner points out, cultural myth is usually compatible with, and mutually informing and complementary to, narrative forms of history (Turner 1988b, 237). Narrative histories written now, like the accounts constructed in the time of first contact between Native peoples and Europeans, reflect differing cultural systems. Does this then mean, however, that they are incompatible with one another?

Centuries of syncretic adaptation of European-based ideologies and structures to Native knowledge systems by Native peoples would argue otherwise. Renaissance explorers such as Champlain relied heavily upon Montagnais and Huron conceptual maps and geo-political interpretations of their territories to make their own maps. In an essay elsewhere in this volume Conrad Heidenreich argues that Champlain was successful largely because he undertook to accept and incorporate Native technologies, outlooks and ways of living. Germaine Warkentin has pointed out that some Renaissance Europeans such as Pierre Esprit Radisson, were able to form a synthesis of Native and European meaning since Native rituals and customs had many parallels within French court culture (Warkentin 1996, 67)

Although seventeenth-century North American history has been written within the tradition of Thucydides' idea of the historical narrative, many of the actual intellectual forms operating during this time period were in fact enmeshed with Native intellectual constructs. Initially treaties and diplomacy with Native groups in the Northeast took Native, not European forms. Even though they sought to manipulate the process to their own gain, British and French officials learned and used the requisite Native protocols and metaphoric rhetoric that were based in Native religious/cultural conceptualizations of trade and military alliances (Foster 1984). Colonial documents bear testimony to the influence of Native names and languages, and their concepts of seeing North America and living within it, yet the effects of colonial powers on Native cultures and their perceived cultural structures are usually central to the writing of this history rather than the other way around (Druke 1987, 29-30). Seventeenth-century life was in many ways broadly bi-cultural, or at least syncretic, with both sides incorporating both Native and non-Native ways of thinking and being. Why is this not reflected in the way that its history is written? Why is it that attempts to incorporate Native versions of seventeenth-century events by attending to Native oral traditions and stories have proved to be so frustrating to scholars who seek to write within the western tradition of historical writing?

Do Native conceptualizations of history, focused as they are on episodes, clash fundamentally with western notions of time as made up of separate segments of time joined in a strict chronological sequence of distinct segments? In her paper elsewhere in this volume Toby Morantz drew together for discussion several concerns that historians have concerning the incorporation of Native oral traditions into western historical narratives. One of them, of central and enduring difficulty was the problem of separating contemporary Native perceptions of the past from those of the Native people living at the time. Although Euro-based concepts of history can accept the idea that history is

rewritten over time and that perspectives of the past change (White 1986, 488), it cannot accept the degree of temporal continuity and unity underlying Native concepts of history. Just as categories of what is 'myth' and what is empirically determined historical observation' must appear separate and distinct, so must the perspectives of groups of people separated by certain pre-determined blocks of time. Clearly in the academic world there must be a gulf between the past and the present. David Lowenthal, in *The Past is a Foreign Country*, explains that since the Renaissance, distance between the past and present in western thought has been a useful cultural tool to legitimize change (Lowenthal 1985, 9, 77, 79, 233, 235). In discussing Australian colonial history, Paul Carter calls history that 'pays attention to events unfolding in time alone,' imperial history, because it seeks not so much to explain as to legitimate (Carter 1995, 375-6). Critics such as Derek Walcott have discerned that as a result, 'amnesia is the true history of the New World' (Walcott 1995, 372). That the past is distinct, differentiated and thus, separate from the present has worked to create a mental gulf between the past and the present within contemporary mainstream North American societies.

Native concepts of history find no gulf between different segments of time. Each time is different but it does not mean that there is an impenetrable wall because of that difference. In a Seneca story that explains the origins of stories about the past, an old man from the world of the ancients comes to visit a boy who is hunting birds. He explains that the boy must come back to the same place by a large rock every night to hear the stories. Every night the boy returns and brings with him gradually more and more people to listen until there is a great crowd. Ostensibly some of the people have arrived at different times but they are nonetheless all part of the assembled crowd. The man who tells the stories explains that he and others like him have 'remained at home in the world that was' but can visit the world that is. There is little if any actual physical distance between the two worlds of what is and what was. They are different and distinct and yet rather than being unconnected by a gulf, they are in essence part of the same incorporated universe (Hewitt, ed. 1918, 680-1).

Throughout this paper I have interspersed references to the 'seventeenth century' and the 'nineteenth and twentieth centuries,' not because I am unaware that events and people are different during these time periods, but because the continuities across time are essential to understand the 'Renaissance' in the twentieth century. Western societies based on European concepts also stress continuities, but in different ways and for different purposes. The most obvious example is the very title of this collection of essays, 'De-Centring the Renaissance: Canada and Europe' refers to a nation that did not really come into being in the sense discussed here until 1949, when Newfoundland joined the Canada established in 1867. 'Canada' did not exist in the Renaissance, yet no one has any difficulty discussing this topic since the continuities seem apparent and useful for organizing discussion.

Although Rotinonhsyonni concepts of time present no gulf between time periods, they do not imply a static lack of change any more than Euro-based concepts do. In fact in Rotinonhsyonni thought there is continual movement, not stasis. The creation story itself emphasizes this continual movement. For a while there is movement towards enlarging

life (Spring) by Sapling, the elder brother of twins. This is followed by movement for a time back towards contraction (Winter), brought about by Flint, the younger of the twins. Although this cyclical movement is balanced, it is not productive of stasis. Each seasonal cycle is never exactly the same, and the overall result of varied repetition of cycles is the gradual growth, layering and development of the earth -- a continual state of change and transformation brought about by balanced forces interacting with one another.

This Rotinonhsyonni idea that change is the product of repeated activities, consolidating and subsuming inter-related structures is explained in a discussion of social change given by Cayuga linguist and ritualist Reg Henry:

At the beginning . . . when the Creator created this earth, somebody had to be responsible for the environment, for this earth, to keep it going, so he created a man to do this Later on he as looking at this man, seeing how he was doing . . . in time, he seemed lost, had his head down and the Creator said, well, it seems like I'll have to get a companion for this man and see if that helps. Needless to say it did perk up the man quite a bit. They seemed to be getting on well, so the Creator said now I can officially put you together as man and wife; they give birth to children, a lot of children, and everything went well . . . there was sort of a large population of Indians then. Later on . . . Creator was looking down and there was something wrong with these people. They were wandering around aimlessly, not really organized in what they were doing. And the Creator said, what I will do is give them clans. And since all their lives revolved around the woods, the clans were based on animals in the woods. So then they can start to organize and do for each other what was to be done . . . so that was the beginning.

As the story continues things go on until a need for further organization arises at the Six Nations Confederacy level. Subsequently the Great Law (the Great Peace) and the introduction of the Four Ceremonies further organizes the connections of mankind to the natural world and to the Creator (Hewitt 1928, 558, 570; Wallace 1946, 5, 7). In this narrative, like many other Rotinonhsyonni representations of history, cyclical patterns continue their accumulative effect until change occurs as a result of those very patterns. No level of organization actually disappears but is incorporated within institutions with larger and larger spatial contexts. History is an additive process building upon what has gone before in a kind of consciously constructed continuity.

In the creation story, the descendants of Odendoonniha and Awenhanyonda, the first man and first woman, follow repeatedly the instructions of De'haen'hiyawa'kho - 'Sky Grasper' or the 'Creator' or 'he who finished our bodies' - until there are a great many people on the earth and it becomes apparent that an uneasy 'unfinished' situation has arisen in their relationships with one another: There was, as it were, absolute silence; they had no ceremony which they should have been performing, also no business that they should have been attending to; everything was just neglected, all was silent; they

traveled about with their ohwachira (families); it was so that one would think they only went about standing in different places (Hewitt 1928, 558). Then De'haen'hiyawa'kho or 'Sky-Grasper' returns and establishes the Four Ceremonies (Great Feather Dance, the Skin Dance, the personal chants and the Betting Game). To the earlier idea of families 'traveling about' is added and incorporated the idea of organized group activities centered about the change in seasons. To the initial idea of difference is added the idea that two things differing 'among themselves' brings contentment to the mind when they have reciprocal responsibilities to one another. The new pattern of the four ceremonies incorporates and is centered upon the concept of complementary differences between groups of people, between men and women and between winter and spring. In adding the four ceremonies, nothing is lost or taken away but all is incorporated within the next addition and differences actually function not to separate but to unify groups (Hewitt 1928, 605-7).

The mysterious young man, Ho'nigo'heowa'nen', or 'His-Mind-is-Great' then introduces the idea of clans. He takes the idea of family and the idea of difference, and the idea of reciprocal relationship among different groups and creates groups of families or clans, separating them into two moieties who also have reciprocal relations to one another. He recreates a 'middle' line between the two groups of clans. In so doing, he creates reciprocal relationships between the groups that join everyone together into a whole and yet keep them spatially distinct and separate from one another (Hewitt 1928, 605-7). Society is organized on the idea of unified difference on many different levels from the family to the moiety. Reciprocal relationships among family members are not repudiated by the larger clan moiety structure but rather subsumed by it. Change, in this conceptualization of time and history is not replacement, but incorporation and subsuming the structures of the past. Continuity without separating gaps is central to this view of history.

The type of story discussed here is only one of the many different kinds of historical narrative that form part of Native conceptualizations of history. They provide the elements of how the world is structured, others tell of actual living people, movements and interactions. In Native perceptions of history as continually moving continuities, oral traditions are ideally suited to recording and recounting these histories. During the diplomacy of the seventeenth century, Rotinonhysonni and other Native peoples used councils to recount and continually update histories of interactions between nations (Druke 1987, 37-9). Knowledge was stored in symbolic form using images on wampum belts, birchbark and fur pelt drawings, utilizing images that evoked concepts rather than reproducing spoken language. Richard Preston, as part of his work with Cree elders, as outlined two different kinds of Cree stories that make up their conceptualization of history: atikan, or mythic stories about the creation of the world, and tipachimun, or stories of actual human beings in their everyday life (Preston 1975, 292).

Historians have been most interested in the latter kind of oral narratives. In her essay Toby Morantz invokes Elizabeth Tonkin's admonition to scholars to not pick out the currants and ignore the cake in their quest to find useful 'evidence' to corroborate their own culturally-based perspectives (Tonkin 1992, 6). Without distortion of information it's

not possible simply to pick out the types of historical narrative that look the most like Euro-based ideas of empirical, compartmentalized descriptions of actual events and include them as 'another perspective' in chronological Euro-focused histories. In any case, detailed contemporary accounts of events in the Renaissance period from the point of view of Native peoples are nearly non-existent in the European record (Trigger 1985, 125). In part this may be because seventeenth-century chroniclers could not see beyond their own cultures and the supposed 'lack' of organized law, government, history and culture of Native groups. For example Champlain concludes his lengthy description of Huron customs with the dismissive phrase 'this is all I have been able to learn about their brutish beliefs' (Champlain 1922-36, 4:52). Radisson, for all his empathy, in the end saw the customs and ideas that he so carefully described as 'fabulous beleafes of those poore People' (Warkentin 1996, 59). Even the observant and culturally curious Moravians, who like the Jesuits learned Native languages, did not think it necessary to give more than passing reference to the 'Cayuga archives.' These 'pictures hanging in the trees' describing war exploits on the way of Onondaga were not seen as real history (Beauchamp 1916, 41).

Further, contemporary seventeenth-century record keepers failed to recognize that wampum belts and pictographs were valid kinds of recording systems. In the minutes of innumerable council meetings with Native nations only passing mention is made of wampum belts, and although the writer may indicate that they were hung up during a speech, they are almost never described in any detail or given much consideration in the written record. For instance, in records of seventeenth-century treaties made with the British Secretary for Indian Affairs, (John Livingston, 1654-1728), references to wampum are more concerned with quantity than in the patterns or intellectual imagery of the belts and strings. Frequent reference is made to 'a fathom of wampum' or 'a hank of wampum.' In 1683 at a treaty between the New York governor and the Oneida, the record describes 'a belt 12 deep,' and at the record of an Albany conference in 1704, the point is made that there were 'seven hands of wampum' (Leder, ed. 1956, 36, 39, 91, 197). Furthermore, mid eighteenth-century treaties with the Iroquois, kept by Sir William Johnson, the British Indian commissioner in New York state, strings of wampum or wampum belts are mentioned but never described in terms of their patterns or intellectual imagery. Thus any attempt to include Native-authored material in non-Native histories of the Renaissance time period in North America by necessity is based on nineteenth and twentieth-century oral traditions.

To try to distil from Native oral traditions narratives describing events which happened in the seventeenth century, or in other words to convert Native knowledge into something closer to what western historians consider knowledge, is to distort the information that these narratives contain. Usually this is a very difficult task in any case, as oral traditions do not normally contain conveniently dated signposts. David Cusick, a Tuscarora historian, attempted about 1825 to write a chronological Six Nations history up to the arrival of Columbus in North America, based on nineteenth-century oral tradition. As he stated in his preface it was 'impossible for [him] to compose the work without much difficulty' (Cusick [1827] 1848, preface). The resulting history, although organized chronologically from the beginning of the world to the arrival of Columbus, is

still much more focused on cultural structures than on the English calendar. The work still requires the reader to be culturally literate enough about Rotinonhsyonni culture to understand the allusions to 'stonecoats,' 'lake serpents,' 'flying heads,' or the 'tree of peace.' Even though Cusick organizes his history into three different kinds of narratives, the first mythic, the second 'legend and folklore' and the third, a 'history' of events, textual references to Rotinonhsyonni mythological/cultural symbols and metaphors occur throughout all three sections regardless of the category (Cusick [1827] 1848, 14, 16, 24).

Cusick places Rotinonhsyonni cultural content within a loose chronological framework that becomes increasingly more precise about location and place names as it begins to approach narrative history. This connection between the narrative and metaphors mentioned above, and specific places on the Great Lakes and on the Hudson, Mohawk, Susquehanna and Ohio River watersheds, overshadows the occasional chronological reference to 'perhaps 800 years before the Columbus discovered the Americas' (Cusick [1827] 1848, 25).

The matrix of Rotinonhsyonni cultural identity has always been rooted in place and territory. In Mohawk the word for clan, *otara*, means land, clay and earth. When one asks an individual what clan they belong to (*oh nisen'taroten'*), one is literally asking what is the outline or contour of your clay?' (Hewitt 1888). In seventeenth-century Rotinonhsyonni thought, an individual without a clan and a land base to which to belong, was socially dead. As a nineteenth-century Native related, 'Our Ancestors has certain Marks, each Tribe [clan] had a certain Boundary or Line they called their own, of the Land the Great Spirit gave them' (Hough 1861, 278; see also Grassmann 1969, 651). For a nation not to have people organized into communities with which to maintain control over territories was to be no longer a people. Seneca and Mohawk clans carried out the so-called 'mourning wars' of the 1630s and 1660s to obtain people from other Native and European nations to fill the clans attacked by a series of devastating small-pox epidemics (Richter 1992, 145). Political independence required that the population be connected to particular land bases. Each of the Five and then Six Nations called themselves names which really describe their seventeenth-century territories. For instance, the Seneca called themselves *Nundawaono* or 'Great Hill People,' the Cayuga *Guengwehoni* or 'People of the Mucky land,' and the Mohawk, *Kahnye'kehaka* or 'People of the Place of the Flint' (Brodhead 1853, 83). In the traditional story outlining the founding of the Confederacy, the Onondaga word for nation is *tsyakauhwetsya'atta'shu'* or 'earth, land be one,' implying that in order to be a nation, a group of people must fundamentally share the same land. The term for external nations outside of the Confederacy of shared lands is *thihotiohwentayatenyo*, literally 'other and existing' (Gibson 1992, 109, 426).

Seventeenth-century Europeans were also very interested in describing land in their accounts, but as part of the process of mapping resources, not in defining social relationships. The stories connected with place names and their relevance to Native intellectual concepts were not recorded in the contemporary seventeenth-century European record. In fact, European missionaries, traders, politicians and cartographers

often gave locations English or French names, obscuring the history contained within the Native place names. Even the names by which we discuss ourselves and are discussed in the written discourse are not our own. Huron, Iroquois, Algonkian, Montagnais are words derived from English or French approximations, often of names our enemies called us. The fundamental importance of Native languages to understanding Native history has been recognized by contemporary scholars (Brown and Vibert, eds. 1996, xiii), but very little of this essential information enters into general discussion. Would anyone attempt to write a history of the Renaissance in Ojibwa or Mohawk or Oneida and expect to enter into discussion with other scholars?

In a sense, Native cultures with their particular conceptualization of difference solved this problem of communication across different cultures a long time ago. One of the strengths of a 'writing' system without words is that it can confer concepts and information without the participants having to share the same spoken language. Elizabeth Hill Boone questions the idea that indigenous cultures in North America did not have 'true writing,' pointing out that phonetical 'visual speech' (that is, alphabetical writing), is not superior to other forms of visual communication. Spatial, mathematical, and aesthetic concepts cannot adequately be conveyed by alphabetical text since there are some forms of thinking that can not be easily or precisely described by the inscribed spoken word (Boone 1994a, 3-4, 9-13). During the Renaissance the printing press was invented in Europe. This revolutionized the written word by separating painting and drawing from visual representations of language. Drawings and illustrations became subordinate to the mechanical inscription, or as some have argued, the 'taming' of the voice (Mignolo 1994, 293-4).

Still, European culture did have many other forms of record keeping than the written or printed word. In the early period of mapping North America, Native and European ideas were not incompatible. Renaissance cartographers reworked Native descriptions and maps that, like oral traditions set out cosmologies, histories and politics in a record of landmarks and landscapes. Early European maps were not precisely drafted on mathematical grids of scale and, with their illustrations making reference to classical myth, resembled Native maps and conceptualizations of the landscape that incorporated mythological, religious, historical and political information (Brotherston 1992, 82). The difference of course was that although map making was a collaborative process it was never acknowledged by Europeans as such.

Again the perception of difference as necessitating separation, and the necessity of European superiority to further their goal of colonization, coloured Renaissance Europeans' dealings with Native intellectual contributions to European records and constructions of knowledge about North America. The legacy of these ideas continues to influence contemporary ideas about the incompatibility of Native and Euro-based concepts of history.

Jacques Derrida has challenged the fallacy that written text ever stands alone or that oral and written script are mutually exclusive (Brotherston 1992, 42). Euro-based history is based upon its own mythologies, icons and metaphors just as much as Native history.

It also bends time to emphasize certain culturally important continuities but finds it difficult to accept Native continuities that stress different versions and structures of history. In Native world views, such as the Rotinohsyonni one briefly alluded to here, difference is inclusive in that relationships and interactions exist because of difference, not their absence.

Native concepts of forming and transferring knowledge are based on kinds of concrete conceptual thinking that individualize or 'personalize' knowledge. But it is not, as Champlain thought, just a case that each 'pray[s] in his heart as he thought good' (Champlain 1922-36, 1:117). How a person knows something is very important to its credibility to others. To speak from personal experience, as Robin Ridington writes, is to know with authority a complete but small part of the whole world (Ridington 1990, xv). In the Rotinohsyonni conceptual world, to know something one must interact directly with a world that incorporates rather than separates out the mythic. Reality is experienced in an individualized, personalized way that is bounded by shared collective conventions. One's personalized experience of the mythic or spiritual is shaped by the collectively determined practices surrounding rituals and specialized interpretations of dreams (Shimony 1961, 30, 173). The descriptive, visual nature of the languages, the evocative power of the multiple meanings of concrete metaphors and the means of recording knowledge such as wampum belts, all support this kind of concrete, experientially-based knowledge. To explain or discuss using metaphors requires one to think in ways that emphasize multiple meanings in parallel, and not in ways that focus on separate distinct segments linked together in a linear chain. As a concrete, spatial way of explaining change and how the world works, successful metaphors must also integrate their varied expressions in a variety of contexts.

In the seventeenth century the Rotinohsyonni people often referred to their leaders, territories and social units such as clans by the same name. For instance the leader of a prominent Oneida wolf clan village was known simply as 'the wolf' (Jameson, ed. 1909, 144). The royaner (Six Nations Confederacy chief) clan titles themselves incorporated more than just reference to a single individual, since the title could refer to an individual, to the clan, or to an entire group of people and their lands. In the condolence ritual conducted by Captain John Deserontyou at Lachine in the 1790s the narrative signifying the Tyendinaga Mohawks begins 'I, the Tekarihoken.' By this he meant the Mohawk leading clan from which this was the Confederacy chief title, the Mohawk people themselves incorporated within this leading national title, and the land to which they belonged and all the previous holders of this title -- four separate meanings and contexts, individually encapsulated within one another and all without any idea of contradiction or confusion (Deserontyou [1782] 1926, 139-40). Each meaning is different but not unconnected or separate from the rest.

Native and European-based histories have not developed in isolation from one another. Toby Morantz remarks on the dissatisfaction of treating Native history both as a separate 'parallel' version of history and as a source of information relevant to western ideas of history. Currently, Native knowledge systems interact with the writing of Canadian history from a position of marginalized opposition to a dominant narrative.

Although it is essential that Native writing both speak to and understand colonization and issues of power, and subjugation, it is just as important that Native intellectual traditions be more carefully understood for what they are, and not for what European-based conceptualizations have assumed they have been and always will be. As Alcida Ramos reflects, 'to insist on dividing "primitive" from "historical" societies is to add to the intellectual apparatus of domination, to build a sort of indigenist Orientalism' (Ramos 1988, 230).

Native intellectual traditions and Euro-based traditions need not operate in isolation because they are deemed mutually unintelligible to each other. If one looks at the Renaissance it's possible to conclude that Europeans and Native peoples successfully communicated ideas and concepts across cultures. In the twentieth century, Louis Owens, writing about Native literatures, has observed that Native concepts of identity and of the essential dialogic nature of the world coincide with many of the tenets of western post-modern theory (Owens 1992, 6-12). Yet the discourse surrounding the history and interaction between cultures remains founded on oppression, bounded by ideas of a 'dominant' and 'subordinate' narrative. Ironically this continued focus on the 'dominance' of the colonizer often serves to support the inequality being repudiated in the first place. If the primary basis for denying the equal compatibility of two knowledge systems is that Native concepts are different from western history's culturally-determined categories, then perhaps the categories of history need to be re-examined, revised and enlarged. Rather than trying to fit Native information into Euro-based structures of history, perhaps the inter-relationships between Native and European histories need to be more closely examined. How could two groups of people have lived together for 500 years and not have influenced one another's thinking or have communicated with one another? Is the ambivalence of the Renaissance writer who painstakingly describes Native ideas and customs only to dismiss them as unimportant and uninfluential to their own thinking, part of the contemporary problem of perceiving how Native intellectual concepts relate to the writing of history in North America?

Although not an intellectual impossibility, a true synthesis of traditions does not appear to have been historically sought out by either side. On the Native side, nations such as the Mohawks articulated the ideal of peaceful co-existence and non-interference with one another in the Kahswentha (Two Row Wampum), a seventeenth-century agreement made with the Dutch traders to ensure that neither side interfered with the others' customs (Ratelle 1992). This did not mean that there wasn't a relationship between the two peoples - and in fact the opposite was intended. It did mean that the two would interact as equals. The European mythology of Native inferiority and the idea of 'primitivism' underlay nineteenth and twentieth-century assimilation policies designed to get rid of the separating 'differences.' They functioned to preclude European acceptance of Native intellectual concepts as equal to their own (Berkhofer 1978, 24, 29-30).

The writing of the history of the Renaissance in Canada and North America is the intellectual product of interactions between Native and European peoples, yet except for the story of the relationship between the two based on colonization, one rarely knows

that. European and Native concepts of history, time and change are not the same. Furthermore the differences, once perceived, are not sufficient to explain why it appears as if Native concepts have been excluded, marginalized and deemed unimportant to the writing of the history of the North American continent in general. If the reasons are primarily political and ideological, then perhaps it is to the ending of marginalization of indigenous knowledge systems that post-colonial debates will ultimately lead.

NOTES

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¹ This is the Mohawk word for Iroquois. Unless otherwise stated, all terms will be in Mohawk.

² Missionaries made good use of points of convergence in Native and European ideas in order to explain their faith and persuade people to convert: see Grant 1984.

³ Sam Cronk, 'Reg Henry's Cultural Discussion at Cayuga Language Class, May 15, 1990, Six Nations, Ontario.' Recorded by Sam Cronk (unpublished manuscript).

⁴ Johnson 1921-65, 3: 782-91; 4: 466-9, 'three strings,' 'A bunch of black Wampum'; 471, 'A Belt.'

⁵ Each of these words is in the language of the nation naming itself; the spellings are mine, not Brodhead's.

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