CONSTRUCTIONS OF LOCAL AND PAN-INDIAN ELEMENTS IN CONTEMPORARY STÓ:LO IDENTITY

by

THOMAS (TAD) MCILWRAITH

B.A., The University of Toronto, 1992

THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS in THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES (Department of Anthropology and Sociology)

We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA October 1995

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Department of Anthropology

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Date August 1995
ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the concern caused to some members of the Stó:lō Nation by the increasing prevalence of Plains cultural traits and activities in the Stó:lō people's Fraser Valley territory of British Columbia. Competing presentations of Stó:lō identity are common, and the identity revealed is neither that of a traditional past, nor one which is fully pan-Indian. I describe that which is often over-looked in the literature: the local-level dilemmas aroused by Stó:lō identity construction. To do this, I recount the opinions of three Stó:lō educators and incorporate the writings on identity, political economy, and pan-tribalism. I am particularly concerned with the competitions between what is viewed locally as traditional Stó:lō culture, and a foreign, Plains pan-native culture. Contention exists around these available identities, and as a result, some Stó:lō people are working to understand and rationalize a pan-Indian presence with a unique Stó:lō heritage. Ultimately, I suggest that the Stó:lō are asserting a flexible and adaptive identity suitable to fit into contemporary political and economic demands.
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PART I: INTRODUCTION

At present, in 1995, some members of the Stó:lō Nation are concerned by the increasing prevalence of Plains cultural traits and activities in their Fraser Valley territory of British Columbia. This influx of non-traditional cultural expression into Stó:lō society is one aspect of a more general debate concerning shifting claims upon identity within the Stó:lō community. Competing versions of Stó:lō identity exist, and the most widely accepted identity is neither a claim to a unique Stó:lō past, nor is it fully pan-Indian. It is a blend.

The Stó:lō today are reasserting a flexible and adaptive identity suitable to fit into the contemporary British Columbia political and economic environment. The Stó:lō rely on multiple expressions of their identity as they work to implement a new governmental structure, and respond to the intrusion of other First Nations or Pan-Indian culture and the mainstream society. There is contention within the community about Stó:lō identity, and to explore this issue, I recount the opinions of three Stó:lō educators, offered orally. Ultimately, some Stó:lō people are working to integrate pan-Indian practices within what they view as a unique Stó:lō tradition.

At heart, Stó:lō people are maneuvering between expressions of pan-Indianism and an alternative, (re-) tribalism. How is it that pan-Indian activities and images remain so pervasive when the rhetoric used in Stó:lō cultural revival and educational programming is focused on what is claimed to be an historical Stó:lō tradition? If the Stó:lō are promoting or selling a purported native tradition to non-natives for strategic advantage then Plains images are an obvious choice because they are easily recognized by non-native people. But reviving a traditional Stó:lō culture has come to be foremost in importance for asserting a unique cultural persona among some Stó:lō themselves. Pan-Indian images are confusing to community members, just as the local symbols, such as the Stó:lō pithouse, are unrecognizable to the general public. The issue is
compounded by the fact that Coast Salish images and customs, including stories, songs, and dances, are seldom discussed publically; they are incorporeal, private property, owned by individuals and families. Plains activities, including the right to powwow dance or sweat, are, however, located in the public domain. A greater number of Stó:lō people can participate in these events, and there is more chance of non-Stó:lō people, native and non-native, to experience these accessible cultural presentations. Still, for Stó:lō people, identities are not mutually exclusive and the identities are created by employing elements of Stó:lō culture, pan-Indianism, and the non-native world.

This study falls within a larger tradition of the comparative analysis of ethnic groups\(^2\). In this case, the academic debates parallel along some dimensions those occurring in the Stó:lō community, and I use a wide range of writings on tradition and identity, political economy, and pan-tribalism to explore fully the Stó:lō example. By analytically focusing on Stó:lō relations with other First Nations, pan-Indian constructions, and the mainstream community, my research stands in contrast to the practice within much of Native North American research to address only one or two of these components. This approach recognizes the complexity of the problems of identity facing Stó:lō people, and it highlights both the prevalence of pan-native symbols in native communities and the stereotyping that non-native people impose sweepingly on native people\(^3\).

**Historical and Political Sketch of the Stó:lō Nation**

The Stó:lō people live in the area surrounding Chilliwack, British Columbia, stretching eastward and westward along the Fraser River between Langley and Yale. They are a Coast Salish people who speak the Halq'eméylem language. The Stó:lō have maintained ties with neighbouring
groups throughout the Lower British Columbia mainland, Washington State, Vancouver Island and into the interior. While the network of winter ceremonial dances had gone into decline during the middle decades of the twentieth century, the return of spirit and sxwe'yxwey dancing since 1970 offer hope to the community that the traditions of the past will not be forgotten. These dance complexes also encourage community and social ties to be maintained (Kew 1990:476), and facilitates the ongoing process of cultural healing in the wake of substantial population decline (Point interview 1995; Jilek 1982).

On October 21, 1994, twenty-one of twenty-three Stó:lō bands united (Pennier 1995:3). Immediately prior to this, Stó:lō administration had been divided into two major organizations, the Stó:lō Tribal Council and Stó:lō Nation Canada; this system duplicated programmes and is said to have wasted resources. Today, the political structure called The Stó:lō Nation includes representation from the people, the elders, and the chiefs (Joe 1995:7), and utilizes three major policy divisions of Aboriginal Rights and Title, Health and Social Development, and Community Development, which incorporates Education (Ann Mohs 1995:16). The organization has a publically-stated commitment to accessible services and cultural development (Joe:7), as reflected in community programming. The formation of this organization is also recognized as a step towards political and cultural healing (Commodore 1995:2).

Cultural revivals which help to foster regional ties have arisen in response to urbanization and the legacies of colonialism. Revivals directed by the Stó:lō people include canoe racing and powwow dance circuits which bring people together from all of southwestern British Columbia and Washington State (Dewhirst 1976). Pan-tribal symbols from this regional contact are quite common in the Stó:lō territory, and include gifts sold in craft shops and the display of a Plains peace pipe in the old Stó:lō Tribal Council Research and Development trailer at Sardis, B.C.
The Research Project

This thesis is a collaborative effort based on fieldwork and interviews with members of the Stó:lō Nation who invited me to investigate the community perspectives on issues of identity. Earlier ethnographic writing has sought to define who the Stó:lō are by recording all of the specific elements that make up their culture and traditions. But, such an effort fails to capture the dynamics of cultural change, and I want to do more here than merely contribute to the reification of Stó:lō culture. For those reasons, I use the words from my interviews, wherever possible, to allow the Stó:lō a voice in my academic constructions. The focus of the research is on the perceptions Stó:lō people have of their own identity, and not of the images non-natives construct of Aboriginal peoples.

Interviews with prominent, professional Stó:lō educators gave me a general perspective on identity issues and the concerns surrounding the diffusion of Plains cultural content into Stó:lō communities. Sonny McHalsie, Gwen Point, and Darwin Douglas are paid cultural experts employed by the Stó:lō Nation. They are involved in the teaching of Stó:lō heritage to native and non-native people by co-ordinating or overseeing cultural programmes of the Stó:lō Nation. Sonny McHalsie, a tribal Lands and Title Researcher became a key consultant concerning Stó:lō identity. He is particularly interested in cultural tourism. Tribal education manager Gwen Point provided her views about educational concerns and identity formation through youth programming. Darwin Douglas, Jr., is a young Stó:lō person who has recently completed the Aboriginal Cultural Stewardship Programme in Victoria, B.C., and is working at the Xá:ytem Longhouse near Mission, B.C., as a cultural interpreter. He and I spoke once in 1994, and again in 1995, and the two interviews provide both the perspective of a younger cultural curator on the role of educational programming in heritage maintenance, and a chance to see one person's
growing and changing experience living and working within a traditional Stó:lō ideology.

The Rhetoric of Cultural Healing

The words and phrases used by Stó:lō people concerning identity issues and, particularly, the way in which they discuss how their culture is reasserted complements my analysis of the content of their rhetoric. Of interest is the rhetoric of Stó:lō cultural healing, and the words which are used by the Stó:lō people to identify and talk about local identity problems. The rhetoric of cultural healing is a recognizable pan-native idiom which shows up in Stó:lō publications such as the Sqwélqwel Te Stó:lō newsletter and in the spoken word of the cultural professionals. This rhetoric embeds the concepts of pride, survival, healing, struggle, and voyage of discovery, and these words make up part of a common terminology which native people share throughout native North America. Members of mainstream society have also adopted these phrases. Locally, I identify four main areas of healing rhetoric used by the Stó:lō, and they are political, educational, heritage, and physical/emotional healing. Like the effort to promote a recognizable a Stó:lō identity, the healing rhetoric is said to encourage a positive self-image of being native, and the hope of a healed community through cultural strengthening. The use of healing rhetoric is a means of promoting solidarity against the perpetrators of the community sickness: European immigrants. But, the use of the rhetoric of cultural healing simultaneously allows the intrusion of current pan-Indian metaphors into Stó:lō usage.

Sonny McHalsie, Gwen Point, and Darwin Douglas differ in their use of the rhetoric of healing. Sonny McHalsie believes this talk is harmful to efforts of reviving what he views as a traditional culture. Sonny McHalsie characterizes the pan-native followers as travelling a 'Red Road' on which they find their spiritual and cultural strength; to Sonny McHalsie this represents a
non-Stó:lō means of reaffirming self through cultural revival (McHalsie interview 1995). The metaphor itself is, historically, a misnomer. A road, for example, is foreign to Coast Salish people whose lives are based around rivers and on travel in canoes, and the term 'red-man' has roots on the American east coast at the end of the seventeenth century (Simpson and Weiner 1989:421). Still, when discussing Plains healing styles and non-Stó:lō ways practiced in the community, Sonny McHalsie is careful and respectful; he usually asserts his position with humility.

Gwen Point uses the rhetoric of healing when discussing benefits of both traditional Stó:lō and pan-native activities to strengthening of Stó:lō culture. Phrases in this idiom, combined with her involvement in pan-native activities, mark her response to the changes occurring to Stó:lō culture. Both Sonny McHalsie's dissatisfaction with healing rhetoric and Gwen Point's use of it are seen in their articles in the Stó:lō Nation Newsletters; the same forum is used to express ideas differently. Darwin Douglas did not discuss this speech form with me, nor have I heard him employ this rhetorical form.

The rhetoric of healing appears in various programmes of the Stó:lō Nation. Sonny McHalsie and Darwin Douglas have worked with the cultural tourism programme, a project which promotes Stó:lō culture, and its economic base, by taking tourists on driving or boat trips through the Stó:lō territory (Gordon Mohs 1994:10-11). This series training workshops has goals of both teaching young people to learn their own and improving the students development of 'self-respect' (Douglas interview 1994). The Longhouse cross-cultural programme, which strives to introduce non-native children to Stó:lō culture, also works to 'heal the community' by promoting positive interactions between natives and non-natives, and by demonstrating to Stó:lō children that their culture is flourishing (Point interview 1995).
Healing rhetoric also comes into these Stó:lō activities from community interaction with other tribes, and through the need to secure money from non-native sources. The alcohol rehabilitation centre at Round Lake, B.C., for example, attracts Stó:lō people and uses a Plains healing circle as part of its programme (McHalsie interview 1995); Stó:lō participants return from the centre with this foreign notion of physical and emotional healing. Cross-cultural and inter-tribal gatherings, such as powwow or native dance, craft and canoe racing festivals, help to reinforce this idiom in the Fraser Valley. Skills programmes, such including the Tsu’ts’lkwatil Life Skills and Teen Mom Programmes, use a therapeutic idiom as their models. With relation to non-native audiences, the rhetoric of healing forms the basis of grant and project proposal writing; again, the language has a therapeutic slant, and is central to the winning of money. While different people use the terminology and rhetoric to differing extents, it is clear that this language has permeated most, if not all, of the daily spoken activities, written work, and community programmes. The rhetoric of healing is a pan-native vernacular which grips the Stó:lō voice at a less-than-conscious level.

If the words and texts that form the basis for this analysis are part of a regional, or even global, native discourse, then a critical response to the Stó:lō identity described using these concepts can be made. It is clear that Gwen Point and Sonny McHalsie talk differently about community healing and Stó:lō culture, but how is that contrast reflected in their commentary about Stó:lō traditions? If the voices of the local heritage experts are in conflict, then what can one make of their claims? Sonny McHalsie bases a cultural continuity with the past on an attainable and former cultural heritage. He is a nostalgist who has learned how ceremonies were once done, or how territory was once defined, and he wants those cultural strengths reincorporated into contemporary Stó:lō lifeways and political negotiations. The potential danger
of this remembering of the past is to reify a static culture and to imply that the Stó:lō community is, and always has been, unconditionally local.

Gwen Point's image of identity reflects her willingness to participate in several realms of Stó:lō society. She dances Stó:lō dances in the Longhouse, demonstrating a Fraser Valley welcoming song to school children, and as she participates in powwow events. She teaches her children Stó:lō history and speaks in the healing idiom. In the educational programmes she promotes, Gwen Point sees community healing as a goal and works with that rhetoric. These programmes also include a Stó:lō focus. Her presentation of Stó:lō culture and identity reveals a pan-native influence, both in the words she uses and activities in which she participates, but these programmes invariably include elements of a Fraser Valley culture (Point interview 1995).

Finally, Darwin Douglas tends towards a traditionalist approach to cultural identity. This is not surprising as he is involved in the activities of the Longhouse, and underwent the cultural tourism training programme with Sonny McHalsie. Darwin Douglas told me, in fact, that he did not participate in pan-native events:

... I know there are a lot of things incorporated into our culture now, and I'm not saying they're bad or anything, like the powwows, sweat lodges, smudging, you know some people call it pan-Indianism. I try and stay away from that and just talk about the best I know - Stó:lō ... It's not that these things are bad; it's just we gotta keep our roots ... (Douglas interview 1995).

As Darwin Douglas begins his work as a cultural expert, he continues to work closely with and be influenced by Sonny McHalsie and other knowledgeable Stó:lō people who fall onto both sides of the pan-native identity debate.

Stó:lō people actively promote and draw connections to a uniquely defined indigenous past. This is a necessary component in the creation of boundaries which delineate Stó:lō and other First Nations cultures. Confusion arises, however, when members of the Stó:lō community
distinguish themselves by having their own view of traditional and authentic culture. There is not one single Stó:lō image of a traditional past. Nonetheless, similarities of healing rhetoric and common political goals indicate that the Stó:lō cultural experts represent different facets of the same issue. The Stó:lō community confronts an identity that is not fully its own.
PART II: CONSTRUCTIONS OF IDENTITY: CONTEXT

The ethnographic information here illuminates many of the social and cultural changes that have occurred recently in the Stó:lō Nation. It also shows how Stó:lō people are asserting their native ancestry in an affirming manner. The way in which the those changes are discussed within the community and demonstrated through local events and displays are, in fact, evidence of conscious decisions meant to emphasize a renewed Stó:lō identity. They are all important components of the negotiation of identity that is on-going within the Stó:lō community.

On Being Stó:lō

Community members disagree about who the Stó:lō people are and what constitutes traditional geography and lifeways. Several sources, however, denote two common themes in the history of the Stó:lō: the Fraser River and salmon. In a draft of the Stó:lō Heritage Policy (Stó:lō Nation 1995a), the Stó:lō Nation political group is described as follows:

Stó:lō ... is a collective name for all Halq'emeylem-speaking people living along the lower 170km of the Fraser River in southwestern British Columbia. Today, the Stó:lō Nation (as a First Nation government organization) includes 21 of 30 First Nations Bands ...

Stó:lō traditional lifeways, past and present, have centred on the Fraser River and fishing, a pattern that has persisted for millennia. Not surprisingly, the Fraser River and fishing are the core of Stó:lō culture (Stó:lō Nation 1995a:1).

Beyond this, the value of the salmon resources is asserted as an Aboriginal right based on the idea that, "From time immemorial, salmon have provided a significant contribution - if not the major contribution - to the Stó:lō economy" (Lower Fraser Fishing Authority 1993:1). Finally, when asked who the Stó:lō people are and where they live, Sonny McHalsie describes it this way:

Look at the word for what we call our people: Stó:lō. Look at that meaning The
River, The River People. The salmon, all the land adjacent to the River; you certainly can [hear] the language Halq'eméylem. What is the extent of Halq'eméylem? Yale, all the way down to the mouth, extending across to the [Vancouver] Island. So you got an idea of who are the Stó:lo, who are the River People (McHalsie interview 1995).

Ethnographic and historical sources reinforce the notion that the Stó:lo, however constituted, were in close contact with neighbouring tribes and communities as a result of their position on the Fraser River. Suttles, for example, suggests that the entire lower Fraser Valley area was intimately connected through social networks, just as it was linked to communities in Washington and on Vancouver Island (Suttles 1963:513). Suttles stressed that marriages and village ties formed the basis of important economic arrangements which solidified contact and exchange throughout much of southwestern British Columbia (Suttles 1963:514). *The Fort Langley Journal* (McDonald 1830) is replete with descriptions of native groups travelling up the river past the fort in the summer to fish or raid, and then returning down the river to home territories.

Not all Stó:lo cultural features derive from these social networks. Scholars describe many of the features that are prominent in Stó:lo lifeways and which are attributable to this movement of people in and through the Stó:lo territory. Suttles argues that the arrival of the Prophet Dance13 in Coast Salish territory during the middle of the nineteenth century was via the Fraser River from the Plateau region to the east (Suttles 1957:387-388); this influx provides an early example of the importation of non-Coast Salish customs. Similarly, Duff emphasizes the place of the Fraser River in the diffusion of basket designs and other items of material culture that came from the Interior (Duff 1952:57), and that marriages (Duff:79; 95), trading (Duff:95), and games (Duff:127) all had links to the Plateau regions. In brief, the Stó:lo have a history of welcoming and accepting foreign ideas and people into their area (Duff:12). The richness of the
Stó:lō lands encouraged many families to move to Stó:lō territory or cross through the area in order to reach other owned resource sites. The Fraser River is a symbol of the long history of Stó:lō interaction with outsiders as much as an enduring symbol of local life.

The idea of being Stó:lō is far more than geographical association. Gwen Point, Sonny McHalsie, and Darwin Douglas articulated several themes when describing contemporary Stó:lō identity. Darwin Douglas noted that Stó:lō people have lived in the Fraser Valley for thousands of years, and that one of the objectives of educational centres such as the Xá:ytem Longhouse is to teach Stó:lō and non-native visitors that there is a continuity of Stó:lō presence in the area. Darwin Douglas states:

There are certain things here about this [Iyá:gtelem] site, and the archaeology that took place that proves some points about continuity. I always talk [to visitors] about how our people always lived here .... Our people lived here for thousands of years ... (Douglas interview 1995).

Darwin Douglas also mentions in his talks the continuity of cultural traditions and skills, such as fishing: "... I talk to them about Stó:lō people, a bit about Stó:lō culture, and important things to us like fishing, and how our lives went traditionally, and the same thing today. We still fish - we're avid fishermen ..." (Douglas interview 1995).

The Halq'eméylem language was often discussed in my conversations with Sonny McHalsie and the relevance of language revival to a rejuvenation of Stó:lō culture is underscored by Sonny McHalsie's emphasis. In one interview, Sonny McHalsie talks of the problems that arise when trying to assign one particular Halq'eméylem name to a site or Stó:lō Nation programme when, in fact, no word is entirely appropriate:

Just within the [Stó:lō] territory there were at least thirteen different tribes. And those tribes had their own dialect of language. When someone spoke, everybody knew exactly where they were from .... Even today, trying to revive the Halq'eméylem language, and the elders will say that there is a different way to say every word ... The language is spoken differently depending on who you are.
They are regional differences ... [and class differences] (McHalsie interview 1995).

Sonny McHalsie also articulates the connections that Stó:lō people have to local places despite the political differences that separate tribal groups (McHalsie 1994:12-14). His commentary emphasizes how community divisions are reinforced by dialect conflicts, while at the same time, efforts to reform a Stó:lō identity are strengthened by attempts to revive the Halq'emeylem language.

Sonny McHalsie, Gwen Point and Darwin Douglas all stated that being a Stó:lō person required one to remain culturally sensitive and relevant. First, discussing Stó:lō culture meant guarding against speaking inappropriately with non-native people or non-spirit dancers. Darwin Douglas reminded me in two different interviews that he is not at all able to discuss spirit dancing (Douglas interviews 1994 and 1995). Like Darwin Douglas, Gwen Point's comments on this issue suggest that being culturally relevant is dependent upon one's behaviors and instructing others on the differences that mark one's Stó:lōness:

There's a real fine line between what you do and what you don't share [with non-natives]. When people come into the Longhouse we tell people this is a sacred place - don't throw things in the fire. And we'll share with them the legends and the songs that belong and the songs that can be shared will be shared ... I guess what we've learned is to be culturally appropriate. That's the responsibility of all of us Stó:lō ... Our children are very much aware ... (Point interview 1995).

For Sonny McHalsie, being culturally relevant includes the efforts made within the community to limit the importing and translating of cultural traits from different native experiences into Stó:lō identity. He told me that Plains stories were irrelevant in Stó:lō territory because such stories are geographically specific (McHalsie interview 1995). And similarly, the adaptation of local words for foreign cultural events or symbols, such as calling a powwow the Halq'emeylem word for winter dance, *switlem*, offers a measure of disrespect for the Stó:lō tradition (McHalsie interview
As opinions differ between Stó:lō people, however, consensus regarding the use of foreign ideas will depend upon continued respect for the ideas and actions of others.

Several other issues of identity appear in the interviews. Sonny McHalsie made the connections between identity and place several times, and also acknowledges a link between the past and being a Stó:lō person today:

If you ask me what is Stó:lō, I am not just thinking what we did now. I'd like to think as to what we did in the past and what was the importance of those things in the past... In [my] past they weren't important, but as soon as I learned about them they became important. The continuity of it... It must have been important in the past to our elders, so it has got to be of importance to our future. I have to base a lot of Stó:lō culture, I have to look at it as a tie of the past to the way we live now (McHalsie interview 1995).

As this comment indicates, Sonny McHalsie agrees that cultures change, but he is mindful of the history upon which those cultural expressions are based. Friedman (1992a; 1992b), a theorist of identity and the relationship of past traditions to present-day assertions of group solidarity, emphasizes the interconnectedness of global processes and social contexts, history and geography. Friedman contends that the way in which historical processes are best framed is by a review of the narratives used by a group which draw the past into the present; it is necessary to acknowledge the reformulation of the past in the present in order to study group identity (Friedman 1992a:837). Furthermore, Friedman writes that myth and history are "simultaneously a discourse of identity; [they consist] of attributing a meaningful past to a structured present" (Friedman 1992b:194). Thus, the ways through which the Stó:lō past is reconstituted in the present reflects how identity construction can exploit the resources of history14.

Darwin Douglas talks of the general identity problems of being a young Aboriginal person. First, he mentions that although he always knew he was a native person, he did not know who he was beyond that:
I can always see that was what kind of made me crazy when I was younger ... I remember people asking me 'What tribe are you from?' Well, I know I'm not Haida.' But I didn't really know because it wasn't really drilled into me (Douglas interview 1995).

Both Darwin Douglas and Gwen Point emphasize that one of the greatest values of the cultural programmes is that they help Stó:lō children understand who they are in a wider arena of competing native identities. Second, Darwin Douglas comments that his youth is both a hindrance and a virtue when talking about Stó:lō traditions. Younger people relate well to Darwin Douglas, but he is aware of his limited exposure to the traditions.

Gwen Point reminded me more succinctly than anyone else about the problems of stereotyping. She tells of an episode in which she witnessed a comedian listing the ten most common sayings by native people, and they included jokes such as: "How do you practice being an Indian? ... I'm gonna go down to the office and write a proposal" (Point interview 1995). Gwen Point's response to this commentary was to address the issue through her educational endeavors and school visits. By doing so, she works to reaffirm a Stó:lō identity, beyond the stereotypical welfare or Hollywood Indian. Part of that teaching is the acceptance that being Stó:lō is a permanent identity, and not a status that comes and goes. Gwen Point states: "I'm Stó:lō when I've got my regalia on. I'm Stó:lō when I've got my suit on. I'm Stó:lō when I'm in Europe, or whether I'm down by the sacred grounds. They can't take that away from me. The things that our people practiced belong to our people" (Point interview 1995).
Displaying Local Culture: Synopsis of Cultural Revival Efforts

By drawing ethnographic context, theory, and observations together, two main issues central to the discussion surrounding identity construction and presentation in the Stó:lo Nation come into focus. First, the displays of cultural symbols which occur throughout the Stó:lo Nation constitute visible signs of being Stó:lo and professing an Aboriginal identity; they are, in fact, used as ways of creating boundaries within the native community, and between native and non-native groups. Second, education is used as part of identity formation and as a means of reasserting a recognized political image. Ultimately, my observations remind me that the forging and maintenance of personal or group identities is at the heart of cultural presentation. The ways in which Stó:lo people choose to present themselves follows a cultural and a real world logic: these identities make sense for the Stó:lo in their navigation of local, provincial and national politics.

The cultural programmes of the Stó:lo Nation indicate the extent of the effort Stó:lo educators have made towards informing natives and non-natives about local heritage. I refer to two programmes in particular as examples of how Sonny McHalsie, Gwen Point and Darwin Douglas are involved in identity formation. First, Gwen oversees a cross-cultural programme in which local native and non-native grade four school children are engaged with Stó:lo artisans in the Coqualeetza Longhouse at Sardis, B.C. During the day of the Longhouse programme, the children observe craft production such as cedar basketry and cedar carving, they witness Fraser Valley dance styles, and they eat a salmon lunch. One of the results of this programme is that children see that Stó:lo culture is different than the Hollywood depictions of native life, and that it is flourishing in their community. Darwin Douglas is involved in a similar cross-cultural programme at the Xá:ytem Longhouse.

Second, the cultural tourism programme teaches young Stó:lo people to guide tourists on
tours through traditional Stó:lō territory. These tours include a boat excursion on the Harrison River to view native pictograph sites, and a road trip visiting places of cultural importance such as pithouse or fishing sites, and stops for viewing native art and totem poles. Sonny McHalsie and Rights and Title Researcher Gordon Mohs have been involved in training the guides in Stó:lō heritage, including stories and place names. Both the Longhouse and the Cultural Tourism programmes emphasize an overtly public presentation of the traditions of the Stó:lō people.

**Public versus private culture**

Making sense of what is consciously displayed publically to native and non-native audiences, and those activities which remain hidden from all but the initiated is not easy. The powwow event, for example, is a flashy dance and song ritual which highlights the place of the dancer in an advertized circuit of public activities. Corrigan (1970) describes three types of Plains powwows, two of which are public events, usually directed towards making money (Corrigan:254-255). Point mentions that the powwow circuit gives more native people the chance to participate in recognized native activities than would otherwise be able if the Longhouse was the only place for such expression (Point interview 1995). Summer festivals encourage powwow dancing, and promote other group demonstrations of nativeness, such as slahal playing, by bringing people together (Amoss 1978:38-40). Powwow dress and Plains regalia have been used in the Stó:lō community since at least the 1950s and 1960s; Jilek's work (1982) depicts Chief Frank Malloway wearing Plains dress in conjunction with his role in establishing native summer festivals (Jilek: between 96-97).

Even sxweyxwey and syuwen dancing have a history of public expression. Bierwert's interviews with Stó:lō people indicates that in the 1930s sxweyxwey dancing was
Notice particularly that Stó:lō symbols are not exclusively private, just as Pan-Indian symbols are not uniquely public. Also, the sxwey'xwey dance complex has moved from a public to a private realm as Pan-Indian traditions have, over time, become the more overt and public expressions of Stó:lō nativeness.
performed in Vancouver and Victoria for the non-native public (Bierwert 1986:482).

Entertainment and monetary gain motivated these performances:

... the dance appears to have become used for 'entertainment', a display which deliberately showed off that part of Indian culture for festivals ... By the 1950s, syuwen dancing was done in the summertime at festivals, again as 'entertainment'. Some groups still do this. Stó:lō people are quick to point out that this is 'just for fun', and not (and is not intended to be) the real winter dancing, or a spiritual expression (Bierwert:482-83).

The Indian Act prohibited native dancing in the first half of the twentieth century and this likely encouraged these presentations of local dance styles as entertainment. Beyond covert dancing, public performances were the only way in which dancing could continue legally, and it is possible that the private religious components of these dances were altered in a way that allowed the Stó:lō to express themselves uniquely to a white public. The publicness of the performances reduced native cultures to a repeated show, thereby diminishing the actuality of a flourishing native culture.

Today, longhouse spirit dances are sacred and private events which occur during the winter ceremonial season. Most often, the dancers belong to established families which have wealth and influence in the community. Bierwert argues, in fact, that the sxwey’xwey dances were the family oriented, status-raising dance, and they contrast with the extreme secrecy surrounding the spirit dances:

Social prestige, gauged by the giving of wealth items, was the focus of [family rituals] and altogether the rituals were signs of collective solidarity and family status. In contrast to the inner emotional intensity of smokehouse dancing, the occasions were more like today's canoe racing festivals (Bierwert:492).

Since the 1930s, there has been increasing secrecy surrounding sxwey’xwey dancing (Bierwert:484), and my conversation with Sonny McHalsie emphasizes the changing role of sxwey’xwey dancing:
The sxwey'xwey ... is not public. [A] big gathering down in Vancouver, the signing of [a] treaty, it was brought out then. It seemed like a public thing but I guess in actual fact it really wasn't. Most of the places I have seen sxwey'xwey it was traditional gatherings. People aren't allowed to take pictures; people aren't allowed to record them. So they are fairly private. They are not something that you can just get up and do, you know, if you go out to a school ... But you can get up and do a powwow dance, and same with a smudge and opening prayers (McHalsie interview 1995).

Amoss also writes that social distance within Coast Salish political realms is maintained by the secrecy surrounding the spirit dance complexes and a special relationship with the spirit world (Amoss 1977:139). The training for spirit dance initiates is carefully protected, and these dance communities provide tightly formed groups and a specific Coast Salish native identity for its participants. Arguing that spirit dancing and sxwey'xwey dancing of the Longhouse are restricted cultural displays contrasts with the publicness of powwow dancing. Coast Salish activities are more guarded, and thus less accessible, than Plains events, and as a result, the Plains, or pan-Indian culture is reinforced as a dominant image. Many Stó:lō people do, in fact, participate in both the Longhouse and powwow dancing, and it seems obvious enough that the powwow circuit offers an outlet for pan-native expression, while at the same time, Stó:lōness is guarded behind the closed Longhouse doors. The result, then, is the creation of boundaries between native and non-native peoples, as well as to separate different groups within the Stó:lō Nation itself; social devices tie Stó:lō people together, just as they create space between them (Amoss:131).
PART III: LOCAL REFLECTIONS ON IDENTITY: COLLABORATORS'S PERSPECTIVES

Cultural Values and Traditional Ways

The importance of Stó:lō cultural values permeated the talks I had with Darwin Douglas, Sonny McHalsie and Gwen Point. While Sonny McHalsie finds it difficult at times to discuss the influx of Plains dancing and ceremonial life into Stó:lō territory and cultural ways, he is gracious in his acceptance of a person's right to participate in those activities. He indicated that respecting others' ways and ideas began among Stó:lō people out of the diversity of cultural expressions that existed within the Fraser Valley:

Because [ours] is an oral history, there are different details of stories, and that's when elders started saying to respect other people's ways and traditions. It doesn't make anyone more important or anyone right or wrong, especially if it is doing something good. That's where that came from (McHalsie interview 1995).

Sonny McHalsie told me, however, that the harder part of that accepting tradition was that his opinions were not always respected in return. Sonny McHalsie stated: "... but it wasn't until I talked to the elders that I learned that I was supposed to respect other people's teachings. But how are they respecting my teachings if they just get up and do this smudge ... There is a place for respect in that [Plains] culture too" (McHalsie interview 1995)\(^9\).

Connected to this idea are the traditions of family teachings and the role of the elders in community and family life. Gwen Point mentioned how important it is for families to be taught what being Stó:lō means and what traditions exist. She asserted, in fact, the need to educate the parents so that the family could help prevent the children from falling into a crisis of identity:

"The reason [the] children didn't feel good about who they were ... was because the parents weren't successful or the parents weren't feeling good about who they were ... How can I give [Stó:lō traditions] to my children if I don't know them myself" (Point interview 1995). Similarly,
Gwen Point described the teachings that occur within her own family, indicating that educating her children in a First Nations way of thinking was crucial to promoting both a positive feeling of personal worth, and reviving appropriate Stó:lō values.

My conversations with Darwin Douglas and Sonny McHalsie also highlighted the family connections and the importance placed on the knowledge of family elders. These roles include verifying place and family names, telling stories, and showing concern for personal behavior (McHalsie interview 1995). Darwin Douglas felt that he knew too little about Stó:lō culture to be interpreting at the Xá:ytem Longhouse, and often he deferred to his older family members as more knowledgeable:

Sometimes I feel inadequate to talk about a lot of these things because I don't know very much really. I don't know hardly anything. I just know a little bit. I don't know anything compared to my grandma, or even my dad. I do the best I can. It comes from my heart so I think that's all there is you can do (Douglas interview 1995).

Sonny McHalsie mentioned that it was a family elder who taught that burnings were to be done in the early morning, and as a result, his family corrected their day-time practice of these events. Talking with Darwin Douglas and Sonny McHalsie taught me the importance placed on the wisdom of older family members and elders and the value of their teachings.

I heard a great deal about cultural revitalization and community healing while doing fieldwork with the Stó:lō. The sense that many members of the Stó:lō community may require help healing the emotional and physical scars that remain from years of personal uncertainty about a First Nations identity appears in Stó:lō Nation literature writing and when talking to Stó:lō people. For instance, in Stó:lō Nation pamphlets and most issues of the Squēlqwel Te Stó:lō newsletter, community healing is discussed and solutions are offered; in just about every case, the need to reaffirm a Stó:lō identity is seen as the foremost goal of healing projects.
Political healing is a priority:

In order for a strong, healthy and unified Nation, we must reject the form of leadership that [The Indian Act Election Regulations] has ... imposed upon us. We must return to the form of leadership that is based upon our traditional practices and values. Dear brothers and sisters, please take to heart these words. If we want a Nation strong and healthy we must find our way as Stó:lo and not as Indian Act Indians. I encourage you to learn more about our culture and traditions (Kelly 1994:2).

The initial Xolhmi:lh newsletter (1993), publication of the Xolhmi:lh Child Welfare Programme, indicates the importance of safeguarding the physical and emotional well-being of children:

Traditionally, grandparents assumed the role of passing on their teachings to make the children strong - emotionally, culturally and spiritually. The programme, Xolhmi:lh, describes our intent to support and honour the family. The programme, Xolhmi:lh, will seek out the strengths in families and communities; will provide a service that is based on respect rather than distrust and disruption of relationships and will emphasize prevention and healing (Xolhmi:lh 1(1):1).

These quotations can be supported by numerous other articles and bulletins through which the Stó:lo Nation programme managers advertise their projects; altogether, the need to strengthen personal senses of worth is addressed repeatedly (see endnote 9).

More striking than these statements are the testimonies of the people I spoke with concerning the need to strengthen Stó:lo culture and traditional ways in order to reaffirm personal Stó:lo identity. Both Gwen Point and Darwin Douglas assert the value of the Longhouse Programme, similar interactive workshops at the Xá:ytem Longhouse, and spirit camps20, as central to showing Stó:lo people, and particularly youth, something of their heritage. Darwin Douglas speaks emphatically about what knowing of one's culture has done for some of his peers:

I notice a lot of sobriety ... I can see that a lot of people are going and getting away from that drug and alcohol. I think it is just because the Spirit is sort of coming back or something. And I see it; people are getting strong (Douglas interview 1995).
And while Gwen Point talks of cultural losses with a great deal of emotion, she has hope for identity reformation and renewed community health:

... it's really important that our people know the history. They have to know where they've been. They have to know what our people have gone through. Although it's negative, the point is we've survived ... you could take away all our regalia ... you could take away our language, you could do these things to our people, but you can't take away the spirit ... I think that our people are getting to the point where they realize that; who they are (Point interview 1995).

It is clear from talking to these people that community healing is about offering people a positive image of being Stó:lō. Delivered through carefully designed programmes, the language of healing is as critical to this revival, just as tradition and values of respect, family, community and pride are fundamental to one's feeling of worth.

**The Diversity of Cultural Expression**

The greatest tension between assertions of Stó:lō identities comes from the controversial use of Plains cultural expressions, such as Cree songs and powwow gatherings, in the Fraser Valley setting. I accept the contentiousness of this issue and I wish merely to describe a few of the facets of this community debate in terms of the Stó:lō values represented by the varying opinions.

It is important to acknowledge that no one attempts to describe what denotes traditional Stó:lō with any exclusivity. While some people are prepared to define Stó:lō people based on the extent of territory, and clearly some traditions are deemed Stó:lō by their use of local resources or demonstrable stories, the boundaries of culture are ambiguous (McHalsie interview 1995). Stó:lō icons find a place competing with Plains symbols and when, for example, jackets display Plains images of powwow dancers, or cars are seen with dream catchers hanging from rear-view mirrors, native and non-native people receive mixed symbols.

One perspective on this debate suggests that while the practitioners of Plains traditions
demand respect, they make difficult the goals of reaffirming traditional Stó:lō practices. Sonny McHalsie suggests that just as Stó:lō stories and dance ceremonies would be out of place on the Plains, the Plains culture is removed from its proper geographical context when powwows, smudges, and sage ceremonies are performed in the Fraser Valley. The same occurs when Plains names are taken by Stó:lō people without personal ties to the regions from which those names originate. The prevalence of pan-Indian influences in the Stó:lō territories, of course, confuses local identity assertions, especially where children are concerned:

When I was going to high school I wasn't taught anything about my own history. I wasn't taught anything about place names, or villages, wasn't taught about sxwey'xwey masks, wasn't taught about the winter dancing. But I was taught that there were Prairie Indians, and that to be Indian you lived in a tipi and had a long flowing head dress, and you're proud and you're noble, and you hunted buffalo, things like that. I wasn't taught about local native culture. And of course watching TV, and watching movies, and everything that was to be Indian was exactly what we were taught in school. Pan-Indianism ... you take that one culture and one people and apply it to everyone (McHalsie interview 1995).

A second perspective on the influx of Prairie dancing indicates that since the Stó:lō traditions of winter dancing are exclusive to initiated dancers, there is a need for other places for people to become spiritually involved in cultural and Aboriginal activities. Gwen Point talks of the alternatives to winter dancing, including those of Plains origin:

And [big drum powwows have] only come to this area in the last twenty-five years. And we've started to promote that, our family, simply because the Longhouse isn't meant for everyone - not everyone can be a part of that. The sweat lodge is available for everyone, but not everyone is comfortable with that. And soccer is a good avenue for our people, but not everyone is part of that. The canoe racing ... is good for the people, but not everyone is part of that. It is not just one thing. There has to be a lot of different areas that our people can say, 'Well, I've tried this and it doesn't work. I'll try this'. And the powwow dancing seems to be taking off, and it's exciting (Point interview 1995).

Gwen Point talks of these areas of community involvement as the means facilitating personal healing, and for her, that is much more vital than the arguments other community members
expound about authenticity; at heart is the opportunity to participate in a positive and affirming Aboriginal activity.

Cultural reassertions encourage community interaction. The return to performing Coast Salish traditional ceremonies after their decline during the period of residential schooling and Indian Act enforcement plays a significant role in identity formation (Kew 1990), and in reinforcing contemporary community ties (Dewhirst 1976). Participation in the Longhouse and sxwey'xwey dancing, in Stó:lō Nation government activities, and in various education programmes allows many, but not all, Stó:lō people the opportunity to be involved in the community. Gwen Point spoke about other community events that promote the interaction of community members and visitors to the region. Native festivals, such as the Seabird Island Festival held annually in May at the Seabird Island Reserve, include soccer tournaments, canoe races and craft sales. These festivals bring people together from all over the region, and permit the practice of pan-native activities including powwows (see endnote 11). The festivals also give Stó:lō native artists a chance to sell their works, many of which are Prairie influenced. As a result, more people are aware of a Stó:lō culture in all of its many variations. These events are accessible to a large number of people, and for that reason, they are engaged as viable means to asserting both an Aboriginal and a Stó:lō identity.

Contemporary Education Programmes

Community education:

The Stó:lō Nation offers numerous opportunities for community members to further their education. These programmes include the cultural tourism classes, stay in school initiatives, teen mom support groups, and in different ways, each one reinforces an identity of being native and
being Stó:lō. Gwen Point reiterates the importance of all of these programmes, stressing that if one Native child is encouraged about his or her heritage, or one non-native person is made more aware, then the programmes have been worthwhile (Point personal communication 1994). Gwen Point is also aware that successes come with time and hard work, something to which her enormously busy schedule of visiting schools and speaking with educational people is testimony: "It is going to take a number of programmes, whether it's cultural awareness, whether it's literacy, whether it's slahal or a pithouse - endless things like that are going to make a difference" (Point interview 1995).

Much of the educational work with which Gwen Point and Darwin Douglas are involved requires discussion of Stó:lō tradition in cross-cultural settings. The cross-cultural work with elementary school children at the Coqualeetza and Xá:ytem Longhouses, for example, is demanded by local schools (Douglas and Point interviews 1995). Witnessing craft making or the preparation of salmon at these centres gives Stó:lō children a chance to see their heritage as something that exists, and non-native children come to witness native culture as more than tipis and head dresses. It is the philosophy of both Gwen Point and Darwin Douglas that "it is not enough just to learn about [culture]; you must do it" (Point interview 1995). Darwin Douglas recounts the objectives for the cultural tourism programme, emphasizing that the training helps the guides to learn respect for the tourists, and for themselves, and also to know their culture, all by involvement in their heritage (Douglas interview 1994).

Community Schools:
The formal educational structures provided by community schools, and their value to reinforcing a positive native self-worth, are well documented. The impetus for locally or band controlled
schools is the deterioration of cultural knowledge, resulting from a legacy of poor quality and assimilationist education in First Nations communities. Sonny McHalsie comments:

I don't think our people had time to learn enough about our own culture, and that's not their fault neither. The residential schools, the Oblates trying to teach us Christianity, [The Department of Fisheries and Oceans] and [The Department of Indian Affairs] trying to turn us into farmers ... all these different things .... So a lot of our own teachings and own pride as Stó:lō has been lost (McHalsie interview 1994).

At the same time, Sonny McHalsie cautions that mixing of cultural traits occurs at some of the existing locally controlled schools, and instead of making the children aware of the differences between the First Nations cultures that are presented, the different groups become lumped together. The result are confused children who can not identify what is Stó:lō and what, for example, are Haida or Cree cultural symbols (McHalsie interview 1995).

Gwen Point's hope for Stó:lō Nation education is a school where locally developed and relevant curriculum is taught; for her, this is one step in reviving the history that she and Sonny McHalsie describe as lost. She conveys this vision concisely:

Our vision is to have our own First Nations school. That's something the parents want. That's something the students want. To have our own First Nations school, K to 12. To have our own First Nations university. To have our own language being used as a vehicle to teach. That's the long term goal, but you have to have something to work towards (Point interview 1995).

Until such a time arrives, the few local band schools, at Seabird Island and at Chehalis, continue to be watched and studied, their successes lauded and failures noted. Funding is a problem, and difficult negotiations with the local Fraser Valley school boards are in progress to appropriate the money the provincial government has ear-marked for native students. This money is usually cut-off from native students by the local school administrations. When thought of together, both the opportunities for Stó:lō people to learn about local traditions, and the place the Stó:lō educational leaders have reserved for non-native education, translate into an enormous medium through
which identities are conveyed, established, and reinforced. This arena is not yet fully utilized in these endeavors.
PART IV: NEGOTIATIONS OF IDENTITY: ANALYSIS

Diffusion of Plains Culture

During my research, I found it difficult to understand how a united Stó:lō territorial claim could be structured for presentation before the British Columbia Aboriginal Treaty Commission when many of the cultural symbols visible in the community belong to foreign native groups. Simply put, I wondered how the needs of a re-tribalizing Aboriginal group were compatible with pan-Indian expressions. Sonny McHalsie pointed out that there are some people who feel pan-Indianism is dangerous to the political realities of land claim negotiations, and in fact, they work actively with programmes and policies to stop the influx and use of prairie culture (McHalsie interview 1995). Concerning this one political level, however, I believe that the provincial government is not always informed enough about the differences between Stó:lō and Plains culture to recognize these contradictions, although some locals do. Similarly, the powwow circuit is firmly rooted in the community and will not likely disappear. Thus, Stó:lō imagery integrates symbols that insiders might recognize as non-traditional, but that the public is not always able to distinguish.

Examples of the community issues surrounding the contradictions between Plains and Stó:lō traditions are common, and they typify the problem stated above. The two cultural symbols most obvious in this discussion are the Stó:lō pithouse and the Prairie tipi. I heard a story about a campground owner who advertised his business on the Trans-Canada highway with a large tipi. Non-natives recognize the image of the tipi, and its connection with the tent and camping make it an ideal lure for tourists. Ironically, the tipi was placed on a pithouse depression, thus negating the marginal Stó:lō image in favour of the stereotypical 'Indian dwelling', the tipi. The result of this is the reification of Plains cultural traits in the Stó:lō area,
adding to the identity confusion among Stó:lo and non-Stó:lo people.

Different reasons for the pervasiveness of the Plains culture abound. The formation of large and active tribal groups reinforces an often stereotypical image of nativeness that transcends traditional and local native affiliations. Similarly, the images of nativeness reified in popular Hollywood films contributes to this. Sonny McHalsie and Gwen Point offer contrasting perspectives on the issue of prairie culture in the Stó:lo community; concerning its demand, they also suggest differing opinions. Sonny McHalsie indicates that familiarity encourages the continued adoption of Plains activities:

I think a lot of [its arrival here] was pan-Indianism and our own people's struggle with their own identity. They're own personal voyage of self-discovery, and trying to learn about themselves and then finding out that they don't have a culture. A lot of its been lost, so what do we do? Well, let's borrow. Let's borrow this powwow dance until we find out some more about us. At the beginning I heard ... let's borrow some of this culture, this smudge, this sweat. But after you do it for so long, you get hooked into it, and accept it as something that belongs to you (McHalsie interview 1995).

Gwen Point offers a starkly contrasting explanation, suggesting that powwow dancing satisfies the need for an attainable native identity. Her words also highlight a spiritual connection to the arrival of powwow dancing:

... the reason why we promote [the powwow] is because you can dance whether you're fully outfitted with regalia or whether you are carrying your runners, and you can dance whether you are two or three years old, or whether you are seventy or eighty ...

An elder came up from Yakima, Washington [for our first powwow], ... and he said, I want you [Gwen Point] to tell the people that this belongs to them. And any First Nation that wants to pick this up, it will always be there. He said it's a medicine ... (Point interview 1995).

Thus the need for a viable native identity, combined with the subjugation of a locally comprehended base of traditions, has encouraged pan-Indianism. Gwen Point's comments also point out that a shift in Stó:lo values is not required by powwow dance participants. Many Stó:lo
prairie dancers are also spirit dancers, and in the absence of a stronger Sto:lo identity, the leap to adopting a visible yet foreign alternative is not great. Similarly, Plains dancing, sweating and smudging are more egalitarian than sxwey'xwey or spirit dancing, for, as Gwen Point comments above, people of all ages can participate in powwows, and initiations are not part of these events. By encouraging a greater number of participants, powwow dancing supports itself and encourages its own growth.

**The Political Economy Approach**

The literature in the political economy of identity offers some rationale for the diversity of images which pervade the Sto:lo landscape. As the public perceives the value of a native identity to be increasing, claims to Aboriginal ancestry in North America becomes a powerful resource for First Nations people. And while it is not true that identity assertions by First Nations groups are purely pragmatic means for obtaining money or recognition, overt techniques of cultural revival help in reclaiming diminished cultural standing within the dominant non-native society. Political economy is a useful approach for crediting the Sto:lo with an active and positive involvement, if not resistance, to the non-native political realm. Political economy also allows an understanding of how assertions of being Sto:lo become translated into economic ventures, such as cultural driving tours of Sto:lo lands. In a similar way, the rearrangement of the political structure of the Sto:lo Nation in the past year is indicative of the need to present a united front and a definite image of being Sto:lo in a time of intensive land, fish and other political and economic negotiations. The symbols of local identity must be recognized by the wider public in order to be utilized pragmatically and thus, the Sto:lo face the task of promoting an identity that is, and in recent decades has been, overshadowed by those images of Plains culture. Despite this
difficulty, the politics of identity are used increasingly throughout North America as a means of recovering a viable strength in governmental affairs (McGuire 1994:827).

Ethnographic examples of the political economy approach include the tipi sitting on the pithouse. This advertising for a camping business is metaphoric of the economic domination objects from the Plains hold over those from the Fraser Valley. Using native summer festivals as another example, Dewhirst's study of Coast Salish Summer Festivals and Jorgensen's *Sun Dance Religion* explore the economic and social relationships between native and non-natives in festival organization. Dewhirst reviews how the festivals solidify images of nativeness within the Aboriginal community (Dewhirst 1976:240-241), and this indicates that economics motivates the domination of Plains symbols. Also, the photographs of Stó:lo elders wearing Plains dress in the 1960s (Jilek) is a reminder of the lengthy association the Stó:lo have with these foreign images, particularly when promoting summer gatherings.

Jorgensen's focus is the American southwest, and he offers the idea that festivals give an opportunity for native people to continue traditions of sports, competition, and cultural expression through dancing. His research is applicable to the Stó:lo summer gatherings, for, these events are native organized and raise money and awareness of issues in the local community. At the same time, festivals encourage people to meet on a regional scale. In terms of identity, economic motives and political opportunism are two forces behind the desire to participate in public, summertime events or other entrepreneurial projects. As well, the social boundaries established by pan-Indian iconography are pervasive and affect native political economy. Unlike the more private winter ceremonies, the festivals offer Plains powwows as the dance centrepiece against the sporting backdrop of the Coast Salish canoe racing tradition. Plains symbols are currently more marketable than Coast Salish symbols within the native and
non-native community, and this strength of foreign icons retards attempts to have Stó:lō images become more recognizable and more saleable.

There are several other results of the diffusion of Plains culture into Stó:lō territory, and they reflect the importance of this debate within the Stó:lō community, and its affect on Stó:lō people. Local involvement with Plains culture is described as personal self-discovery (McHalsie interview 1995), and group cultural revival (Point interview 1995). This means that it either imposes upon the teaching of Stó:lō tradition, or it becomes a means of actively reviving a diminished affinity with any native cultures. Regardless, it is clear that this involvement is an accessible, community-level alternative to the exclusivity of the winter dance complex, or the athletic venues of group activities such as soccer, softball, or canoe racing. The growing place of Plains activities, however, confuses the revival of traditional Stó:lō activities for some Stó:lō people. They argue that because Plains culture doesn't belong geographically in the Fraser Valley, it complicates efforts to educate children in Stó:lō ways. The evidence for this confusion includes the translation of Cree songs into Halq'eméylem, and pan-native educational strategies which teaches a mixture of native cultures under the label of being simply Indian. The arrival of Plains traits also damages political agendas by sending mixed messages to the public. Funding for Plains-related programmes and powwows takes resources from other initiatives, thus compounding the difficulties in asserting more traditional Stó:lō ideals in publically visible educational or social programming such as cultural tourism or the Longhouse programmes.

Plains activities offer a great deal to the community too. Events such as smudges, sweats and powwows provide a strength of imagery that allows community members to feel that they are part of an active and viable native presence, and one that is shared with native communities throughout British Columbia and much of Canada. Despite the efforts to assert a traditional
Stó:lō or Coast Salish identity, the established philosophies, prayers and healing circles of Plains culture gives tangible support to repairing the damage of being distanced from Stó:lō ways because of residential schooling or population decline. Prairie activities are said to promote sobriety by being non-alcoholic functions, and they generally include places for artists to sell their works, and provide an opportunity for the community to come together socially. Economic ventures are encouraged by the publicness of the native festivals, for Plains iconography sells well in both the native and non-native community. Thus, through increased regional contacts and greater income, a personal sense of well-being and the ability to support oneself occurs.

Pan-Indianism is not a homogeneous alternative to Stó:lō culture, and in fact, the range of cultural expressions within the Stó:lō Nation further demonstrate the complexities which surround this issue. Pan-Indianism implies one native culture, but I was told that Stó:lō people were confused by the public with Haida and Cree people specifically. This reflects the prevalence of Haida culture in the Canadian imagination, and indicates that pan-Indianism is regionally varied and less encompassing than the generalization suggests. Hollywood Indians may represent a generic native person, choosing to mix any representative native image in order to trigger recognition within the non-native film audiences. For the Stó:lō, then, one singular native culture is not easy to isolate.

In contrast to the use of Plains traits to promote business, the Stó:lō Nation's efforts at promoting cultural tourism is a way for Stó:lō people to make money and to assert their dancing traditions. The driving tours through Stó:lō territory give young people an opportunity to learn about Stó:lō culture and to present it to interested natives and non-natives. They parallel the older seasonal activity rounds of working in local industries such as fish canneries in the summer and dancing during the winter. Darwin Douglas mentioned, in fact, that these tour programmes
encouraged young people to become involved in time-consuming Longhouse activities during the winter, while earning a little money at other times (Douglas interview 1994). In this case, the Stó:lō do not rely upon Plains traits to generate income or express a native past.

Neither the positive nor negative aspects of this debate detract from the fact that the Stó:lō are asserting an identity as an active First Nations community. The strategic importance of presenting a singular image of Stó:lōness is tempered by significant cultural variations in viewpoint that exist within the large and diverse political landscape of the Stó:lō Nation. It is clear that a great deal was achieved politically by the uniting of the Stó:lō Tribal Council and Stó:lō Nation Canada in the fall of 1994. However, the current Government House of the Stó:lō Nation is a body which oversees the interests of a majority of Stó:lō people from more than twenty member bands (Commodore 1995:1-2). Also, members of those bands hold a variety of views, including differing opinions concerning the use of pan-Indian and Stó:lō traditional symbols. There are dangers inherent in the discourse of plural identities. As Friedman warns: "The emergence of cultural identity implies the fragmentation of a larger unity and is always experienced as a threat" (Friedman 1992a:854). Friedman indicates that while identities emerge or are reconstituted in a broader public forum, conflicts between the parties involved will exist. The many cultural ideas that are expressed within the group itself, however, reveal both the difficulties of acting in unison and the strengths of utilizing a diversity of identity-reviving methods; the choice of multiple cultural icons and traits gives choice when expressing nativeness, but also complicates any hope of presenting a solitary group image.

Ironically, many Stó:lō people participate in both Plains and Stó:lō traditional dances, and commonly mix cultural symbols when doing so. Involvement in both forms of cultural expression allows people to emphasize the distinctions between them, therefore keeping the two
domains separate. Barth (1969) asserts that people sharing a common culture are sometimes distinguished internally by social boundaries (Barth:15). Importantly, people communicate across these boundaries, while at the same time, they work to protect the persisting cultural differences (Barth:15-16); thus, similarity within, and difference outside the group is accentuated.

In the Stó:lō case, the locally situated cultural revival and pan-tribal cultural acceptance both reflect the boundedness of culture in the Stó:lō territory. These forms of cultural expression are also bounded against the non-native society, and each identity demonstration plays a different function at the community level. Thus, the Stó:lō people are asserting flexible boundaries within their community, such as those between powwow and spirit dancers, just as they are now presenting more rigid boundaries to other First Nations groups.

I see, in fact, that there is a community response to specific economic or political needs, and that consciously shaping identity to address that allows Stó:lō people to participate in a diverse number of economic and political realms. Beyond this, while the notion that one cultural image, or expression, is necessary to local assertions of autonomy, cultural heterogeneity supports rejuvenation among these marginalized people. The availability of different customs and traditions from both within and outside the community offers the individual an opportunity for needed native expression, and this presents the group with alternatives to solving the problem of having no visible identity at all.

**Education and Identity**

Educational programming in and out of schools in the Stó:lō Nation contributes to an increased native identity awareness. It has been noted that native curricula "is accepted more readily and can be used more meaningfully in band-controlled schools than in the public school system"
(Archibald 1984:108). Similarly, native teachers and the band-controlled schools offer a context in which a sense of personal worth can be developed, especially in response to a student's native ancestry (Gardiner 1986:19). Again, curiousities exist in an educational strategy which asserts a Stó:lō identity. Sonny McHalsie described the mixed signals which teachers from different native communities present to the children (McHalsie interview 1995). Obviously, if there are not enough Stó:lō teachers educating children at Stó:lō schools, then the local traditions are not going to receive the treatment they might otherwise command. The use of English also adds to the reinforcement of English as a pan-Indian lingua franca. The solution to this dilemma is simple enough: educate more Stó:lō instructors. Of course that is not necessarily possible, and the roots of the dearth of Stó:lō knowledgeable teachers reflect the lack of knowledge in the homes and families, the traditional place of educating the all Stó:lō people throughout their lives.

Culturally relevant programming is difficult to establish, just as defining the traditions, the culture, and the identity that is Stó:lō is problematic. I heard one story of bingo being taught as a Stó:lō traditional game at the beginning of a session for children; this sends a message that Native people should be playing bingo as part of being Native. If I deem it important to describe the pluralities which make-up Stó:lō culture today, then the involvement by local children in identity affirming curricula and programmes should include the open discussion of pan-native and Stó:lō symbols. It seems responsible, however, to work towards programming that acknowledges other cultures and their crafts and arts, while distinguishing them from Stó:lō traditions. In this way, children are aware of the unique qualities of Stó:lō heritage, those activities that differentiate their culture from that of the Haida or Cree, but at the same time, the greater Aboriginal experience in North America is available. Darwin Douglas's comments about his youthful identity misunderstandings enunciate the problem of children's exposure to pan-
native symbols. Yet, the extent of Sto:lō programming is only just reaching the point where the youth are able to actively participate in Sto:lō ways.

There are many community benefits to cultural education programming. Programmes such as the cultural tours or the cross-cultural Longhouse programmes certainly encourage greater awareness of Sto:lō traditions among non-native students and tourists by introducing them to the native cultural geography of the Fraser Valley or allowing children to talk with and observe Sto:lō artisans working in the Longhouse setting. For Sto:lō people these activities also reiterate the message that Sto:lō culture is participated in actively, and it is visible, viable way of living one's life. The cultural tours train young people to deliver the cultural information on the excursions, and the participants in the Longhouse continue to practice their skills. Importantly, all Sto:lō leaders in these programmes have an opportunity to socialize regularly with others who are adept at traditional Sto:lō arts. Finally, community-based programmes, such as those emanating from departments of the Sto:lō Nation government, "must be considered ... as indicators of innovation in community development strategies ..." (Haagen:10). Again, tradition can be used as political currency, and these programmes utilize the past as a means of depicting a Sto:lōness that is different from the way public schools or other local non-native historical institutions have considered. The presentation of a Sto:lō identity through educational programmes disseminates that image more widely than otherwise possible, and for that reason, it is a political force and an agent for asserting Sto:lō cultural autonomy.

Conclusions

Sto:lō identity is constantly shifting in focus and content, and the choices people make regarding which symbols are adopted and promoted is negotiated. Although not everyone agrees with the
different ways in which Stó:lō people investigate and incorporate foreign traditions into their lives, an ethic of respect prevails. The outcome of these identity struggles is a multiplicity of adopted images. Clearly, the people who already understand Stó:lō history, can distinguish what experiences are not generated locally. The dilemmas of identity construction, maintenance and presentation, lie most heavily with the Stó:lō people who are displaced or alienated by virtue of geographical removal, educational experiences, or disinterest, as well as with the children. For this reason, Stó:lō educational leaders are working to make Stó:lō culture more accessible and visible. Spirit dancing revivals have allow many people to return to the spirituality of the Longhouse. Programmes beyond the schools encourage native youth to become involved in culture activities, and here, the language of cultural healing prevails. Altogether, the logic of utilizing the past to develop a recognizable Stó:lō image in the present is sensible from personal healing, political, and economic points of view.

In this thesis, I present a reflection of Stó:lō people recognizing themselves what it means to be a Stó:lō person, despite the fact that the identity with which they are now feeling comfortable is not the culture of, say, 1945 or even 1895. A new government structure exploits the available political and economic resources with numerical strength; it must do so to compete and survive. The management of Stó:lō culture and identity is shifting as, for example, the Stó:lō sxwey’xwey ceremonies become more private and the Plains images become even more recognized at public summer festivals. Educators use formal programmes to teach a native heritage to Stó:lō children in an absence of a stronger Stó:lō presence. To do this, instructors must navigate between older forms of healing and newer, pan-Indian expressions of native revival. There is a constant tension or dilemma between connecting to a larger pan-Indian political and social consciousness, while at the same time guarding the local Fraser Valley native
experience, both past and present. It is this cultural duality, however, which reflects the resiliency of the Stó:lō culture, and the attention of the Stó:lō Nation community.

While the political realities in the 1990s demand that the Stó:lō government understand how to move within a larger, provincial or national context and assert a local and unique autonomy, the full recovery of the past as a tool to do so is not possible. The multiple layers of contemporary Stó:lō identity mean that the Stó:lō people are different from before and the retrieval of an older Stó:lō culture is beyond reach. The question, then, of how to accommodate and exploit the virtues of the larger world while resisting the pressures of pan-Indian symbols or non-native politics is answered by the local efforts to front a definable image of being Stó:lō people\textsuperscript{25}. It appears that despite the challenges of that presentation, an asserted Stó:lō identity exists, and that it embraces local history just as it incorporates other ideas. Stó:lō identity, it seems, is not only creates boundaries between the non-native and the Stó:lō, and between the Stó:lō and other Aboriginal communities, but it works in a way which bridges these realms as well.
ENDNOTES

1. The pithouse was used as a winter dwelling by the Stó:lō people. The pithouse was constructed along the Fraser River and its sloughs by digging a shallow pit and covering it with a roof of cedar logs, mud, and cedar boughs; its low profile helped the structure retain heat and obscured its visibility to potential attackers (Maud 1978:47).

2. Anthropological writings concerning identity have roots in the early 1960s; during that time there was an attempt to understand how communities and cultural groups are delimited. Naroll's piece (1964) draws together many significant ethnographic texts in an attempt to define categorically the term tribe. His work provides a reasonable classification for the term, based on six criteria drawn from a close reading of several acclaimed anthropologists (Naroll 1964:284). This work is important as an attempt to provide a workable definition for a term that is used around the world to define a group of people; its strength lies in delineating cultural groups for comparative purposes.

   Moerman (1965) elaborates upon Naroll's efforts, commenting specifically on the names with which insiders and outsiders refer to the ethnic group (Moerman 1965:1222-1223). Importantly, Moerman includes the notion that ethnic group members do not always refer to themselves in the same way (Moerman:1223), which is mindful of the fact that the current Stó:lō government house unites members of thirteen or more distinct tribes and dialects (McHalsie interview 1995). Moerman's work, however, approaches this issue with an emphasis on who the researcher believes the ethnic group are, and less what insiders think about their identity. Like Naroll's piece, this effort is strongly motivated by ethnographic comparisons.

3. Some examples of the identity literature which emphasizes regional and national pan-Indian symbols and native stereotyping includes: Barsh and Youngblood (1980); Clifton (1989 and 1990); Cornell (1993); Deloria and Lyttle (1984); Francis (1993); Gold (1984); Hertzberg (1971); Jorgensen (1972); Levin (1993); and Tennant (1990).

4. Stó:lō ceremonial dances include the spirit and the sxwey'xwey dance complexes which involved formal initiations and spirit questing. The sxwey'xwey dance is characterized by distinctive wooden masks with protruding eyes on pegs (see Bierwert or Maud:63-66 for accounts of the sxwey'xwey story).

5. The formation of the Stó:lō Nation government in 1994 is a highly public expression of Stó:lō identity meant to gain the attention of natives and non-natives alike. Some Stó:lō people recognize the unification as a non-historical alliance which is prone to collapse (Kelly 1995:3).

6. Originally, the work started under the auspices of the U.B.C. Ethnographic Fieldschool, in which I participated during the spring of 1994; the fieldschool clearly afforded me an opportunity and a medium through which I was involved directly with the people of the Stó:lō Nation. At that time, I became acquainted with Sonny McHalsie, Rights and Title Researcher, and Gwen Point, Education Manager, both working with the Stó:lō Tribal Council. The idea to investigate community interest in identity came during a brainstorming session with Department of Anthropology faculty member Dr. Bruce Miller, and Rights and Title Researcher, Gordon Mohs. Together, we combined my interest in educational programming with a focus on how images of the Stó:lō people and Stó:lō culture were formed and meshed together. Continued interaction with these Stó:lō Nation members over the past year permitted further research into how the community perceives and presents identity concerns.

7. The Xi:ytem Longhouse is located in Hatzic, B.C. The site on which the Longhouse sits is a sacred Stó:lō spiritual and village site called lyd:gtem.

8. Two Stó:lō newsletters are cited in this thesis. The Sqwêlwel newsletter was the news and information forum of the Stó:lō Tribal Council. With the union of the Stó:lō Tribal Council and Stó:lō Nation Canada in October of 1994, the newsletter was renamed Sqwêlwel Te Stó:lō, and the first issue was published in January of 1995. Sqwêlwel Te Stó:lō means news or true stories of the Stó:lō.

9. Within these four areas, writings internal to the Stó:lō Nation use the rhetoric of healing in a manner similar to its use by scholars throughout Canada and the United States. Regarding political healing, see the interviews with McHalsie (interviews 1994; 1995), and articles by Commodore (1995), Deloria and Lyttle (1984), Kelly (1995;

Under the term 'red-man' The Oxford English Dictionary (Simpson and Weiner 1989) notes a use of the term in Louisiana in 1744, and in Vermont in 1794. Both references are part of government documents pertaining to relations with Native Americans. Also, another definition states that the Beothuk people of Newfoundland were the original 'red men' as a result of the penchant for covering their bodies with red ochre (Simpson and Weiner:421). The O.E.D. cites a 1871 article by John Lubbock which uses the term redskin as denoting North American native people as a racial group (Simpson and Weiner:429).

Powwow dancing is a form of native dancing that originated on the Plains. It has a following throughout much of Native North America, including in British Columbia and Washington State. The powwow dance is performed by people of all ages at regularly scheduled summer-time powwow gatherings, many of which are also opportunities for native people to play soccer, race canoes, or sell crafts. Significantly, these gatherings unite people from different regions and cultural influences, thus promoting the spread of healing-type rhetoric.

While both of these programmes are no longer operating, they offer examples of community projects which employ and reinforce healing rhetoric. The Tsu't'stwatx̱eł programme trained people, partly through the use of sharing circles, to raise their own self-esteem and to help others achieve that was well. One participant in the programme writes: "I was anxious to learn how the Stó:lō people used their teachings to raise strong families ... I plan to bring to the community ... the knowledge of helping others to assist them in helping themselves in a good way - that will keep the healing spirit alive" (Jimmie:5). The Teen Mom Programme taught life skills including parenting, culture and spirituality, health and hygiene, budgeting, self-esteem, and assertiveness (Stó:lō Nation 1994:14).

Suttles describes the Prophet Dance as a revival movement which underlied religious activities on the Plateau. It was referred to as the 'religious' or 'praying' dance, and was held under the direction of a leader who interpreted omens. It moved into the Northwest Coast in the middle of the nineteenth century (Suttles:352-353).

Hill's piece (1992) speaks to the danger common to anthropological literature, that of unconditionally disempowering subject peoples; without attention to the positions and political agendas that exist within anthropologized communities, writes Hill, the interpretive work of the researcher in the name of good, truthful science, can be very destructive (Hill 1992:810). The message here is clear: indigenous peoples must make these choices and decisions regarding the writing and rewriting of their histories. Thus, illuminating the various issues and providing an ethnographic context for the cultural change that are ongoing in the Stó:lō Nation is revealing of the range of uses and opinions concerning the past that already exist.

See Figure One for a graphic illustrating the overlapping realms of Stó:lō cultural expression.

Slahal is a gambling game in which one person hides two small bones, one of which is marked, behind the back, and another person must guess which bone is in which hand. It is often played in teams at social gatherings. See Maranda (1984).

See also Amoss (1978), Jilek (1982), and Suttles (1987) for literature on the spirit dance complex and its functions in native identity presentations.

Some Stó:lō people participate in a number of different social domains. Besides the opportunity to dance in two Aboriginal dance traditions, spirit and powwow dances, the Stó:lō are actively engaged in both the native and non-native world. These areas of personal involvement are not mutually exclusive and, in fact, Gwen Point emphasizes that she is a Stó:lō person regardless of the domain in which she is in (Point interview 1995).
19. Sonny McHalsie discusses the ethic of respect in an article entitled "Are the Spirits Addicted?" (McHalsie 1993). Here, Sonny McHalsie accounts for the prevalence of tobacco offerings in the Sto:lo community, and while he argues that tobacco offerings are not traditional, he adds that "our elders teach us to respect other people's beliefs and traditions" (McHalsie 1993:11).

20. The spirit camps are summer-time gatherings for youth, families or elders run through the Xolhmi:lh child welfare programme. They involve camping for up to a week at a culturally-significant site, and stress an opportunity to learn about Sto:lo values and a chance for families to spend time together away from the reserves or local towns (McHalsie interview 1994).

21. Throughout this paper, the expressions of Plains culture to which I refer include elements of material culture such as dream catchers, Peace Pipes, and tipis, activities including smudges, sweat lodges, and powwows, and incorporeal property such as Prairie songs and names.

22. See, in particular, Gardiner (1986), and Archibald (1984), for literature concerning Sto:lo experiences with schooling, and Haagen (1990) for a survey of Aboriginal educational programmes and schools in Canada. Sqwelqwel Te Sto:lo 1(4) is dedicated to educational concerns in the Sto:lo community.

23. The B.C. Aboriginal Treaty Commission was appointed and began work as the provincial treaty negotiating body in 1993. It had received 41 statements of intent to negotiate from 41 native groups by June 15 1994, and since then the Sto:lo have filed a claim.

24. There are many examples of Aboriginal groups struggling with identity issues, including the problems of localized cultural plurality and unrecognized cultural symbols. They are often discussed in light of court cases in which the outcomes are dependent upon the assertion of a single cultural identity. Please see the bibliography for references to a few of these cases: Frisch (1970), writing about the Mohawks of Quebec; Larsen (1983) concerning the Nova Scotia Micmac; Clifford (1988) and Minow (1991) about the Mashpee; Tollefson (1992) for Native Americans in Puget Sound; and Beckett (1988), Levin (1993), and Weaver (1984) for examples from Australia.

25. The distinctions between pan-cultures and local cultures, pan-research and local research are from Bright and Geyer (1987). They argue that, "The central themes of... world history cohere around the ever more radical disjuncture between global integration and local autonomy" (Bright and Geyer:69). The tensions between resistance and accommodation, and integration and autonomy offer a caution to the ethnographer: the investigation of cultural formulation within one society is far more complex than simply a review of the local dynamics of culture.
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