2015

Emergence and Progression of Acadian Ethnic and Political Identities: Alliance and Land-Based Inter-Peoples Relations in Early Acadia to Today

Katie K. MacLeod
Dalhousie University, katiekmacleod@gmail.com

Emergence and Progression of Acadian Ethnic and Political Identities: Alliance and Land-Based Inter-Peoples Relations in Early Acadia to Today

Abstract

This article provides an ethnohistorical overview of the emergence and progression of Acadian ethnic and political identities over time. Strongly based in their relations with the Mi'kmaq during the colonization of Nova Scotia, the Acadians became a unique political entity who identified themselves as neutral. Through the advances made in the colony, British authorities soon realized that the alliance formed between the Acadians and Mi'kmaq could present a threat. This article provides background for the reemerging Acadian-Mi'kmaq relations occurring today around environmental and land-based concerns and seeks to provide the reader with an overview of the shifting Acadian socio-political ideologies throughout their history.

Emergence and Progression of Acadian Ethnic and Political Identities: Alliance and Land-Based Inter-Peoples Relations in Early Acadia to Today

Katie K. MacLeod

Introduction

This article examines the development of Acadian ethnic and political identities through an analysis of alliance and relations of sharing with the Mi'kmaq and opposition and relations of taking with British colonizers. It also seeks to build an understanding of how land-based identities in the past influenced the development of these peoples. With a focus on the Acadian peoples, I provide an ethnohistorical investigation into the aspects of this identity which were borrowed from, added to, or disrupted by, these inter-peoples relations with the Mi'kmaq and the British. Exploring political and ethnohistorical interpretations from Indigenous ways of knowing, governance, colonial relations, and policies, allows this article to provide a detailed examination of the emergence of an Acadian political identity and how these intercultural relations extend into their present-day relations. As a linguistic and ethnic minority in Canada, the Acadians have undergone a number of struggles throughout settlement, colonization, development of language policy, and minority rights in Canada. This article seeks to examine the shifts and fractures in the Acadian political position over time and how, despite these changes, the Acadians continually demonstrate resilience and strength in their political positionality.

In order to determine how the development of ethnic and political identities are deployed within concepts of peace and neutrality, environmental and ecological factors, and the colonial past of the Acadian peoples, including the Deportation and nationalistic Renaissance, I must emphasize that there were two distinctive political periods in the pre-Deportation era: one of sharing and one of taking. The difference between these two political periods is clearly outlined by John Borrows in his discussion of the Treaty at Niagara:

> In early stages of First Nation/Settler association, the English failed to comprehend some of the diplomatic fundamentals that First Nations required in the definition of their constitutional relationship. One example of the British failure in this regard concerned the presentation of gifts. The French had followed the diplomatic formalities which formalized First Nations/Settler relations and were thus able to maintain peace by supplying gifts to all their First Nation allies. When the British did not meet all the conditions that First Nations established for coexistence, conflict resulted. (Borrows 1997:158)

In respecting these diplomatic formalities, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples were able to engage in a relationship of sharing; however, when these formalities were disrupted, there was a shift to a relationship based on taking.

Prior to the arrival of early French settlers, a similar set of relationships to those described above by Borrows (1997), were in place in Mi'kma'ki: the territory of the Mi'kmaq peoples which encompasses Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and the Gaspé Peninsula. Mi'kma'ki was prosperous and grounded

in its own political, ecological, and spiritual landscape; where concepts of gift, gratitude, and reciprocity were understood by the Acadian people and subsequently ignored by the British settlers.

These concepts of gift, gratitude, and reciprocity, along with alliance and land-based philosophies, will be examined in order to provide insight on the following questions: 1) How did Acadian relations and identity change between initial settlement with Aboriginal populations and the arrival of British settlers? 2) How did the environment, religion, and relations with France influence Acadian ethnogenesis? and 3) How did Acadian ethnic and political identities continue to develop with British imposition of oath and colonial policies?

The article will proceed as follows: first, I will provide an analysis of initial Acadian settlement in Acadie or Acadia, now present-day mainland Nova Scotia. Within this examination, I will provide an emphasis on the economic processes of trade, fishing and agriculture that emerged among the Acadians, the Mi'kmaq, and later, New Englanders. Secondly, I will provide a breakdown of how the Acadians, over the course of a century, became disconnected from French state politics and control. This will provide significant insight into how the Acadians became their own people, independent from other French settlers that would come to settle in Acadia and from those within France proper. Thirdly, I will examine how Acadians and Mi'kmaq living in Acadia developed a sustained mutual understanding founded on a land-based coexistence. This analysis extends from the previous sections to provide a deeper understanding of the unique relations of trade, marriage, *mé-tissage*, and cultural exchange that occurred prior to the Conquest of Acadia in 1710 by the British; relations that developed into a particular land-based political structure. Fourthly, I will examine changes in this land-based political structure as a result of the arrival of the British and the Conquest of Acadia in 1710. This section will focus on the implementation of colonial categorization and policy that was intent on separating the Acadians and Mi'kmaq from sustaining their previous alliances. Lastly, I will examine how the British negotiated with the Mi'kmaq and the Acadians through a number of treaties and oaths of allegiance. Negotiations such as these ultimately led to the implementation of the colonial policy of a scalping bounty on the Mi'kmaq and the Deportation of the Acadians. Although they were dealt with in different ways in the post-1710 period, it will become evident that the relationship sustained between the Acadians and Mi'kmaq prior to the arrival of the British was situated in a relationship of sharing rather than one of taking. I conclude with an analysis of how the deportation was unsuccessful in achieving its goals to destroy the collective Acadian identity and how their political stance has strengthened, particularly between the 1880s and today. I also present an argument that the Deportation was at least partially successful in its goal to sever the alliances between the Acadians and the Mi'kmaq.

To Fail and then Succeed

In 1604, Samuel de Champlain and Pierre Dugua de Monts established the first Acadian settlement on Ile Ste-Croix, a small island located off the coast of St. Stephen, New Brunswick and Maine (Rudin 2009; Faragher 2005). These French settlers were not familiar with the environment or climate they encountered in this

54

new settlement. As a result, there were outbreaks of scurvy throughout the early efforts, resulting in the loss of many men (Rudin 2009). As a result, there is often a negative connotation attached to this first Acadian settlement since the settlers quickly abandoned efforts at Ile Ste-Croix after the first winter. Although the settlement was not successful, Rudin (2009) notes that this settlement presented important foundations for relationships between Acadians and local Aboriginal populations; however, it was not with the Mi'kmaq, but with the Passamaquoddy. The Passamaquoddy aided the settlers and showed them how to live on their new land. Pierre Dugua de Monts and his men likely would not have survived the winter in 1604 without this aid from the Passamaquoddy (Rudin 2009; Reid 2004). Regardless of these positive aspects, the settlement at Ile Ste-Croix was not considered a success. Champlain, de Monts, and the surviving men, established the more prosperous settlement of Port Royal in 1605 along the Bay of Fundy (Faragher 2005; Griffiths 2005). This settlement became a central location in Acadian history, as it was the base from which all other successful posts developed, resulting in a network of trade and fishing posts across the colony of Acadia. Most importantly, Port Royal was a more suitable location for the French settlers to engage in the fur trade than the previous settlement at Ile Ste-Croix (Lang and Landry 2001).

Based on their prior interactions with the Passamaquoddy in these territories, the French settlers were respectful in their approach with the Mi'kmaq when establishing settlement in Mi'kma'ki. There is a consensus among historians that the Mi'kmaq and Acadians worked together and did not interfere with the land that the other wished to inhabit, as Acadians lived on the marshlands and the Mi'kmaq in the uplands (Griffiths 2005; Mancke & Reid 2004; Paul 2000; Faragher 2005). Religion also played a key role in these early relationships at Port Royal between the French Settlers and the Mi'kmaq (Griffiths 2005). Early in the settlement of Port Royal, many Mi'kmaw had converted to Catholicism along with their Grand Chief Membertou, creating desirable marriage circumstances (Paul 2000; Faragher 2005). Ross and Deveau (1992) describe the relationship established with the Mi'kmaq as "the most important accomplishment of Port Royal" (12).

Common religious understanding and unique kinship relations emerged in Port Royal fostering relationships of coexistence (Griffiths 2005:35). The descendants of Charles de La Tour and Phillipe Mius-d'Entremont, prominent Acadian settlers who were responsible for the establishment of various forts and settlements, were known as some of the earliest settlers to marry Mi'kmaw women in Acadia (Faragher 2005; Wicken 2002). Mixed marriages and *métissage* were not uncommon among Acadian men and their sons in this time period (Plank 2003). *Métissage* is the process by which French settlers and Aboriginal peoples produced offspring of mixed ancestry. In fact, these marriages led to sustainable communities (Faragher 2005). On the contrary, Griffiths (2005) and Peace (forthcoming) are unconvinced about the validity of the Acadian-Mi'kmaq marriages due to the lack of records.

In addition to the relations of coexistence established through religion, economy became a dominant part of Acadian lives. In their participation in the fur trade, the Acadians became the middlemen between the Mi'kmaq and posts in Massachusetts. Since they had good relations with

the Mi'kmaq, this increased their ability to move Mi'kmaw trade goods to New England and vice versa (Griffiths 2005:115). Faragher (2005) notes that early French settlers would have communicated with the Mi'kmaq in "trade jargon" and these words would have become common knowledge. As a result, many of these words became incorporated into the Acadian language. Within the fur trade Acadians were successful. Additionally, they were increasing the development of fisheries which proved to be economically prosperous for the Acadians (Griffiths 2005:28).

The population's ability to develop kin-based networks that were also productive economically and politically, established Acadians as a distinctive group in the territory. In addition to the development of this strong community identity, Acadians found prevailing success in the development of agricultural lands from salt marshes along the Bay of Fundy. As the dyking of the lands did not infringe upon the Mi'kmaq, there was little dispute between Acadians and Mi'kmaq over land (Faragher 2005).

Distance from the Empire

By 1607, Port Royal and the settlement of Acadia became less important to France as a colony, as France became focused on the settlement of New France, which was established in 1608. As a result, there was less imperial control and influence placed upon the colony which provided the French settlers with more agency in their political and economic activities (Griffiths 2005:18). With this decrease in French political control, Acadians were able to build their own identity and political position within the territory.

After 1613, the French government was substantially absent from the colony of

Acadia and with fewer and fewer migrants from France, their homeland was no longer their identifier. There was an identity shift, as they began to think of Acadia as their new home, and of themselves as Acadians (Lang and Landry 2001:25-6; Griffiths 2005: xi). Acadians formed their own political, agricultural production in the late 1600s led to more established settlements. Acadia began to be seen as a "border colony" with agriculture becoming the dominant sector of the Acadian economy over the fur trade (Griffiths 2005:132). Strong communities developed around sites of marshland agriculture, with the three main hubs of Acadians at Port Royal, Beaubassin and des Mines (Griffiths 2005; Lang and Landry 2001). There was a steady population increase, and the settlement had expanded by 43% in 39 years (Lang and Landry 2001:40). Steady population growth can be attributed to a sustained economic base as well as little participation in war. Additionally, women sustained strong social and economic processes (such as preparing and preserving food, tending gardens, producing textiles, and attending to ailments) required for these settlements to prosper and families to continue to grow (Griffiths 2005; Lang and Landry 2001).

The Acadians sought to settle on marshlands, land the Mi'kmaq had no use for as they remained in the uplands (Faragher 2005). Dykes allowed Acadians to reclaim marshland from the Bay of Fundy which resulted in agriculture becoming their most prosperous economic activity. Settlers had knowledge of marsh draining from France (Griffiths 2005:67). The majority of this knowledge came from settlers from the Loire Valley in France, who were familiar with this process in the draining of ravines (Faragher 2005). This agricultural practice developed into a unique system of

56

ecological knowledge. It is difficult to determine a date for the technological development of the *aboiteau,* which is defined as "wood that controls the salt water;" however, Lang and Landry (2001) suggest the term generated from southwest Poitou, France (58). The *aboiteau* was a unique draining system that allowed water into the salt marshes, but did not permit the water to drain out. It was comprised of a sluice, the channel which allows the water to travel beneath the dyke, and a *clappé*, which controlled the flow of the water (Bleakney 2004; Chaisson and Rudin 2014).

Griffiths (2005) emphasizes the agricultural advancements the Acadians were able to achieve in the late 1600s and the increased prosperity of their settlements. By 1707 the marshlands were ecologically transformed as the Acadians chose to avoid the uplands and move onto the sea (Hatvany 2003). Because of these processes, the Acadians became known as les *défricheurs d'eau* or the clearers of water, as they continued to develop rich marshland from the sea (Hatvany 2002; Chaisson and Rudin 2014). By the time of the Acadian deportation, the Acadians had expanded their territory by twenty percent (Chaisson and Rudin 2014). With deforested land only accounting for five percent of this expansion, the majority of the land was reclaimed from the sea (Chaisson and Rudin 2014).

Their close relations with the Mi'kmaq influenced these sustained land-based techniques. Furthermore, Acadians learned Mi'kmaq knowledge, hunting, fishing, and craft (Griffiths 2005:174). In present-day southwestern Nova Scotia, it has been demonstrated by Acadians and self-identifying Métis (who derive from Acadian and Mi'kmaq *métissage*) that

land-based techniques have been passed down through generations and continue to be practiced (MacLeod 2013). Chute (1998) also explains that these techniques are also being utilized in contemporary Quinin, an area in southwestern Nova Scotia that is known to have a high degree of *métissage*.

When Aboriginal peoples live for generations on particular lands, they can develop a deep sense of attachment and familiarity with the land and waters, along with an awareness of the other living elements that are in their environment (Krech, 2005:79), or what Inglod (2000) describes as "common involvement in spheres of nature, rather than any principle of shared descent, creates likeness" (149). For the Mi'kmaq, this understanding and coexistence with the land is demonstrated through their concept of *Netukulimk*. *Netukulimk* connects Mi'kmaw spiritual systems, in both collective and individual beliefs, to their natural resources (Barsh 2002; Wiber and Milley 2006). The ecological and spiritual understanding of the land connects living and non-living elements of the environment and promotes communal benefit in any instances of resource development and/or protection (Wiber and Milley 2006; Prosper, McMillan and Moffitt 2011).

Mi'kmaq were in control of their natural resources prior to British colonization (Sable & Francis 2012). However, with the arrival of the Acadians, there was a shared understanding concerning the land. As the Mi'kmaq sought to employ natural law in their relationships with the Acadians, the earth's teachings became a dominant aspect of the lives of the Acadians (Griffiths 2005:18; Borrows 2010:62). The Mi'kmaq shared their vast knowledge of the land of Mi'kma'ki with the Acadians allowing for the two populations to shape

57

similar modes of understanding the earth, land, and waters within a shared territory through extended familial networks and reciprocal relationships (Borrows 2010).

Borrows (2013) argues that living legal traditions based on the jurisdiction of the land can lead to increased relations of reconciliation between peoples. The Acadians did not take land from the Mi'kmaq who lived in the uplands, instead they made new land on the sea, encroaching very little upon the territory of the Mi'kmaq, meanwhile producing ecologically rich land that allowed the Acadians to prosper economically. The process of adapting and learning from the land allowed Acadians to formulate a unique ecological knowledge, as well as being partially governed by the land and the sea. This provides an understanding of the good relations of sharing rather than that of taking.

Tully (2014) notes that while we need to reconcile relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Canada we have a parallel obligation to reconcile the relations between human beings and the earth. While most settler populations are disconnected from the earth and ecological knowledges, Acadians developed their own sustainable systems through a combination of knowledges from French dyking and knowledges learned from the Mi'kmaq of the waters and land of Mi'kma'ki.

Within the economic, political, and legal sharing that occurred in Acadia there was undoubtedly a relationship of interdependency created between the Acadians and the Mi'kmaq in relation to their dependency on the land. Tully (2008) notes that "Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples should recognize each other as equal

peoples who govern themselves and their land by their own laws and cultures"(232). The relationships established between 1604 and 1710 between the Acadians and the Mi'kmaq were arguably governed in this manner, with each population sustaining their own political position in the colony, yet engaging in a productive intercultural dialogue. These relations of interdependency (Tully 2008) combined with earth's teachings (Borrows 2013) allowed the Acadians and the Mi'kmaq to coexist and respect the earth, which was exemplified through their focus on the principle of sharing.

The Neutral French

With the arrival of the British colonizers, strategies of alliance, survival, and co-existence within the colony became increasingly complicated. With the presence of British settlers, there was a disregard for Indigenous ecological knowledge, something which had been respected by the Acadians and had contributed to their ability to coexist and prosper on Mi'kmaq lands. Similar to the processes described by Borrows (1997) at Niagara, the British created anenvironment of conflict and confrontation, as they did not engage in the necessary practices of sharing in order to form good relations with the Mi'kmaq.

In 1710, the Conquest of Acadia resulted in a period of increased British imperial control resulting in a strong change in Acadian identity. During the Conquest of 1710, Port Royal was seized and conquered by British and New England forces (Griffiths 2005:224). Although this seizure increased the military and political power of the British, Griffiths (2005) argues that the post-conquest period led to the Acadians prospering as they negotiated to remain in Acadia. In imperial British Nova Scotia, Acadian communities were able to retain

power in the territory and retain a significant degree of agency (Griffiths 2005:238; Reid 2004).

Although imperial control was established in 1710, the Treaty of Utrecht, implemented in 1713, legitimized British control over Acadia (Reid 2004:121). The Treaty of Utrecht ensured the Acadians would maintain their religious freedoms in Acadia; however, it also advised them to migrate within a year, to either Ile Royale or Ile Saint Jean, which remained French colonies. Catholicism, at this time, also gave the Acadians a degree of political advantage under the British rule whereby they were still able to practice and teach their religion in British controlled territory, although the British did not look upon it favorably (Lang and Landry 2001).

Despite their precarious political position, Acadians remained in Acadia on their own terms, retaining neutrality and agency regardless of the implementation of British policy or attempted coercion (Griffiths 2005:307). This neutral position was largely possible because after 1710, the territory of Acadia was in a period of transition where it was not entirely British, nor did it remain a French colony (Moody 2004:153). The power the Acadians were able to sustain under British imperial and colonial rule is commonly referred to as neutrality, whereby they did not ally with any population (Griffiths 2005; Faragher 2005).

The concept of neutrality is often misinterpreted in relation to the Acadians. They were never *truly* neutral. The Treaty of Neutrality in 1686 stated that peace would be held in North America if war broke out in Europe and vice versa (Griffiths 2005:137). It was not this treaty that positioned Acadians as neutral subjects, rather this status was developed through conditioned obedience or negotiated accommodation with the British (Griffiths 2005). The concept of neutrality is better understood in terms of the Acadian's political position in the colony: refusing to leave or negotiate oaths with the British (Griffiths 2005; Faragher 2005).

The basic understanding within the oaths was that the Acadians would not bear arms against the British, nor would they align themselves with the Mi'kmaq or the French in opposition to the British. In fact, when Acadians were asked to take the last oath of allegiance prior to the Deportations, many refused unless they would be exempt from British military service (Plank 2003:144). Adding to the "neutral" position of the Acadians, while they were indeed considered British subjects in the eyes of British officials, they were not to engage in military activity of any kind. The British did not force oaths of allegiance upon Acadians. Although Acadians were encouraged to move to French controlled territory encouraged for their own safety, oaths of allegiance did they require them to move, as a result, most stayed in Acadia (Faragher 2005; Lockerby 1998).

As a result, with their decision to stay, Acadians demonstrated a great deal of political agency. Although Griffiths (2005) sees neutrality as a deliberate political strategy, Reid (2004) and Basque (2004) see it as a political gesture based on the fact that all Acadians did not necessarily take part in this political stance. Basque (2004) notes that there were many Acadians who did not take oaths of allegiance/neutrality, but rather sided with the French or the British in order to sustain their trade relations.

Between 1713 and 1763 the power of the British steadily increased and the role of France decreased more drastically, as their focus was on Ile Royale and New France (Lang and Landry 2001). One of the early goals of the Acadian Deportation, as planned by Governor Charles Lawrence and Governor William Shirley, was to sever the relations between the Acadians and the Mi'kmaq (Plank 2003). Before the establishment of Halifax in 1749, there was an attempt made by the colonial administration to place Mi'kmaq and Acadians into two distinct groups that would allow them to follow certain political, cultural, and economic development strategies as determined by the colonial officials (Plank 2003:161). Thomas Peace (forthcoming) argues that these relations were strongest in the seventeenth century. As a result of these relations, there was increased difficulty in the categorization of the populations in the eighteenth century (Plank 1996).

When the administration, in particular Samuel Vetch and Richard Philipps, attempted to implement this plan, it became evident that the "close ties between the Mi'kmaq and the Acadians made it difficult to distinguish the affairs of one group from those of the other and Mi'kmaq bands and Acadian villages often stood ready to support each other in times of conflict" (Plank 2003:161). Tully notes that identity differences become more evident as there is increased distinction within a polity:

> The sense of belonging and allegiance comes not only from the public recognition of one's culture, but also because one's culture is respected among others and woven into the public fabric of the association, gaining strength and splendour from its accommodation

among, and interrelations with, the others. This is more than a civic awareness that citizens of other cultures exist in one's polity. One's own identity as a citizen is inseparable from the shared history with other citizens who are irreducibly different; whose cultures have interacted with and enriched one's own and made their mark on the basic institutions of society. (Tully 1995:205)

Acadian political and ethnic identities became more evident in the post-1710 era because political identities became increasingly juxtaposed to those of the British. This juxtaposition was particularly clear within the attempted categorization and 'Othering' of Acadians and Mi'kmaq by the British. In this position, prior to the arrival of the British, Acadians and Mi'kmaq were engaged in a conversation as relational others. However, with the dominance created upon British arrival the conversation shifted to that of the oppositional 'other' blurring the lines of coexistence (Asch 2001).

Additionally, there was a degree to which it was common for the various populations living together in Nova Scotia during this time period, to borrow from one another's cultures as they "adopted attributes of savagery or civility for the purpose of deception" in order to gain additional power (Plank 1996:20). With the colonial policy, there was need to determine and categorize cultural diversity in Acadia/Nova Scotia.

Acadians did not wish to be categorized or controlled by the British, rather they sought to distinguish themselves as culturally and politically distinct based on their distance from the French empire and

60

unique system of coexistence developed through over a century of living with the Mi'kmaq. Borrows (1997) notes that French-Aboriginal relations tended to be more harmonious due to the respect for gift giving and attempted coexistence, but with the British, there was an attempt to implement colonial power. In Acadia, this shift towards colonialism created the neutral French. The Acadian stance of neutrality resulted in them sustaining their political and economic positions in the colony. They were too immersed in the colony to become *true* British subjects, but concessions needed to be made to distance the Acadians from the Mi'kmaq: the British planned to dominate, not coexist.

The Exiled and Treated

The British exerted power in two dominant ways in order to control the populations in Acadia: treaties and exile. Initial conquest of Acadia did not disrupt the lives of the Mi'kmaq, it was not until later when the British began to implement political and economic control that the imposition was not welcomed (Wicken 2004:86; Wicken 2012). The Mi'kmaq and the British negotiated a series of Peace and Friendship treaties between 1720 and 1752. Although it is not entirely possible to determine if the Mi'kmaq understood the terms of the treaties, the main purpose in early Acadia was to ensure the Mi'kmaq did not bear arms against the British and to secure trade relations (Plank 2003).

There was a change in the political landscape of Nova Scotia in 1749 with the establishment of Halifax and the arrival of Governor Edward Cornwallis. The founding of Halifax resulted in significant military stability, which further encouraged the Acadians and Mi'kmaq to move to the French colonies of Ile Royale or Ile Saint-Jean (Plank 2003). For the Acadians, there

were a number of smaller deportations in 1749 as the British began to address their "Acadian problem," and secondly, Cornwallis issued a bounty on Mi'kmaq scalps to address their "Mi'kmaq problem" (Paul 2000; LeBlanc 2005). Remarkably, there was a degree of overlap as these policies continued in the colony, resulting in Acadians scalped and Mi'kmaq deported. This overlap added to the complications of racial and ethnic categorization in the colony at this time (Paul 2000).

The Mi'kmaq were under British control according to treaty, but Acadians were not firmly controlled. In order to ensure Acadians would lose their political and collective power, British officials, Charles Lawrence in particular, decided that the fate of the Acadians must be exile (Plank 2003; Griffiths 2005). With various smaller forced relocations occurring prior to 1755, Lawrence and General Robert Monckton discussed the potential deportation of all the Acadians from the colony (Lang and Landry 2001). Monckton took down Beauséjour in 1754 and Acadians at Beauséjour refused to swear an oath of allegiance after which it was decided that they would be removed (Plank 2005:94).

Oaths to be taken by Acadians were to ensure that Acadians were British subjects. However, with Acadians taking strong political opposition to some of the clauses within these oaths, many needed to be adapted, and a number of concessions were made for the Acadians to remain in the British controlled territory of Acadia. Similar trends mentioned in the Peace and Friendship Treaties exist within the oaths the British insisted that the Acadians take to establish their allegiance to the British Crown. It was understood that if the concessions made within these oaths were not respected, the Acadians would be removed

61

from the territory. As there had been previous conversations of exile in the colony, it was likely that the Acadians were aware of their potential fate. Regardless of this threat and the opportunities for them to move to French controlled territory, Acadians continued to live and flourish in Acadia as they held onto their unique political stance, one that was not present in any other colony at this time (Johnston 2007).

There was no single reason for the initiation of the Acadian Deportations, commonly referred to as *le Grand Derangement* (LeBlanc 2005). Religion, alliance, land, and breaking oaths are all factors that contributed to the ultimate decision of the British to remove the Acadians. In addition to the initial deportations in 1749, the most widely known deportation occurred in 1755, followed by deportations in 1756 from Cape Sable Island and in 1758 from Ile Saint Jean (Johnston 2007:116; Lockerby 1998). In 1755, there was a battle led by Mi'kmaq warriors at Fort Beauséjour. It was at this battle that Acadians were fighting alongside the Mi'kmaq, ultimately disobeying the oaths negotiated with the British. This was the opportunity Lawrence needed to deploy his deportation plan, which had been cumulating between British officials in Nova Scotia and New England (Faragher 2005). The Acadians were deported to thirteen British colonies, along what is now the eastern United States, in a plan to ensure they would not be able to reconstitute as a people (Plank 2003).

Maurice Léger (2005) presents an argument for the role religion played in the Deportation of the Acadians. He argues that their status as Roman Catholics should not be overlooked as a factor at the time of deportation. Regardless of their religious freedom in the Protestant colony, their Roman Catholic status still predisposed the Acadians to discrimination (Léger 2005). This examination is reminiscent of the argument put forward by Plank (2003) around complications in ethnic categorization. With the limited ability to use ethnic identifiers to deport the Acadians, Léger (2005) suggests religion, more specifically Catholicism, was an ethnic identifier that could be used in order to exile portions of the population.

It is clear that both the Acadians and Mi'kmaq were targeted by the colonial administration of Nova Scotia in order to break their alliance. The British aimed to either enforce their control over the populations within the territory or completely remove them from the colony. Asch (2001) argues that the self and the oppositional other is what prevents a conversation from happening at the level of the self and the relational other. Tully (1995:58) argues that constitutional language, such as that used in early colonial structures, can lead authorities to exclude or assimilate all aspects of diversity in order to establish the safety of uniformity. The British colonial administration positioned the Acadians and the Mi'kmaq as 'Others', rather than that of an equal with whom they could coexist, as the Acadians and Mi'kmaq viewed one another.

Post-Deportation to Today

In the post-Deportation period, land-based identities remained essential in the rebuilding of a culture and a people for the Acadians. After the Treaty of Paris in 1763, the Acadians were permitted to return to their homeland (or come out of hiding if they were able to escape the Deportation by moving north into present-day New Brunswick or seeking refuge with the Mi'kmaq). In some cases they were able to reestablish in the same ecological setting,

62

such as the settlements at Pubnico, Beaubassin and Pedicodiac; however, the majority of Acadian land was reserved for the British (Lang and Landry 2001). Once reestablished, Acadian communities reinstated their subsistence practices of farming, fishing, and trapping, which remain significant aspects of the Acadian economy today.

The Treaty of Paris also marked the movement and unification of Acadians from British colonies and Nova Scotia prisons to a "New" Acadia in Louisiana Bayous (Brasseaux 1985). In their new semi-tropical environment, they were able to apply their agricultural skills from Nova Scotia and generate farmland and a new home. Although there were disputes with the Spanish and 'Indians' over the settlements, and the Spanish causing further dispersal of the Acadians in 1768, Acadians were able to establish and sustain a niche in Louisiana strongly rooted in their land-based knowledgesystems (Brasseaux 1985). The successful settlements at Bayou Lafourche and the Mississippi River allowed the Acadians to "reconstruct their shattered culture" (Brasseaux 1985:130), and eventually develop into the diasporic culture of the Cajuns.

The retention of a strong Acadian political identity in the post-Deportation era also led to the continued strength of the Acadian people in Atlantic Canada. Between the years of 1763 and 1850, Acadians focused on the rebuilding of their territorial, social, and political lives in the Maritime Provinces. This did not come without struggle as the increase in British and New England settlers in these provinces resulted in Acadians and Aboriginal populations taking on minority statuses when they had once been the majority (Lang and Landry 2001).

With the emergence of the Acadian Renaissance in the 1880s, Acadian identities once again became a major player in political life. Based on their position as a linguistic minority in Canada, they saw the progress being made in Québec and sought to place themselves within the Canadian political sphere. The clergy of the Catholic Church and the Acadian elite in New Brunswick led the renaissance (Biddiscombe 1990). The Acadian Renaissance focused on ideals of agriculture, religion, and language extending from their pre-1755 history (Rudin 2009). This reformation of identity and ideology allowed Acadians to recover as a people. The renaissance brought about the development of an Acadian nationalistic movement, redefining cultural ideals of the Acadians as a distinct ethnic group in Canada (Griffiths 1982).

The quiet revolution, educational reform in the 1960s, and the establishment of New Brunswick bilingualism in 1969, challenged young people to compare their linguistic struggles to the movement in Quebec. As a result, le Parti Acadien was founded in 1972 by Acadian trade unionists and intellectuals in Moncton (Poplyansky 2013; Basque 2011). Gathering their influences from Québec separatism, Le Parti Acadien strongly asserted that northern New Brunswick should be an Acadian province. The party was most successful in 1979, winning 50% of the vote (Poplyansky 2013). However by 1982, it had lost half of its vote (Poplyansky 2013). Le Parti Acadien remained a recognized New Brunswick Party until 1986 (Poplyansky 2013). The territorial nationalism that called for the annexation of northern New Brunswick was drawing its ideals from the early nationalist movement in the 1880s. These conceptions of nationalism were

outdated and more importantly, did not represent the interests of the Anglophones living in northern New Brunswick who would have become a part of the "new province" in the case of the success of le Parti Acadien.

Most recently, in Nova Scotia, where Acadians remain more of a minority than in New Brunswick, there has been dispute over the Province's decision to phase out the electoral districts of Richmond, Argyle, and Clare, which have been protected ridings representing the Acadian minority (Taber 2012). These districts, having predominantly Acadian populations, have given Acadians a voice within the provincial politics of Nova Scotia. However, it was suggested under Premier Darrell Dexter's government that the boundaries of these electoral districts should be redefined. The reorganization of the districts would lead to the Acadian districts being combined with neighbouring Anglophone districts, diluting the Acadian voices in the province. The Acadians in these districts continue to fight against this decision.

Conclusion

Asch (2013) makes a distinction between sharing the land and taking the land. Throughout this article, I have demonstrated that prior to the arrival of the British, Acadians and Mi'kmaq were engaged in a relationship of coexistence built on an understanding that they were sharing the land. On the contrary, when the British arrived there was a significant political shift in the understanding of land use. This shift resulted in the latter scenario described by Asch (2013): taking the land. The British employed strategies to take the land from both Acadians and Mi'kmaq and attempted to enforce control, not only over the land, but also over the people.

Analyzing Acadian identity-making through this ethnohistorical lens is important in understanding their position in the Maritime Provinces and in Canada as a whole. Along with the developments mentioned in the previous sections, there are more land-based issues at play involving the Acadians and the Mi'kmaq today. It is evident that Lawrence was not successful in destroying Acadian collective power. With the focus to nationalism, Acadians have become increasingly distant from their past position of alliance with Aboriginal Peoples. I would argue that the British officials were at least partially successful in their goals to sever alliances and relationships between the Acadians and the Mi'kmaq.

Land remains a dominant concern of these two groups, as evidenced by the recent shale gas protests at Elsipogtog First Nation in New Brunswick in late 2013, which were led by Mi'kmaq and Acadians alike in a fight against environmental injustice (Howe 2013a). Acadians and Mi'kmaq stood together in requesting that the shale gas industry and Canada respect their shared lands and the promises the British had made to them centuries ago. It was a display to show the rest of Canada that fracking on their lands was a violation of past promises (Howe 2013b).

Asch (2004) suggests that instances of industrial development in the present day are remarkably similar to the instances of trade in early colonial history. These similarities between past and present economic coercion further undermine the voices of Aboriginal populations in the present. Furthermore, Tully (2008) emphasizes that if Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples can coexist in an "intercultural middle ground", there can be increased understanding and justice within a polity

64

(241). It is only appropriate that the Acadians and Mi'kmaq draw upon their shared histories of mutual respect to advocate for the same intercultural dialogue they had achieved in early settlement and for this to resurface in present-day relations with other settlers and the Canadian state.

References Cited

Asch, Michael.
2013, October 4. *Back to the Future: The Confederation Treaties and Reconciliation.* Presented at: Reconciliation: Responsibility for Shared Futures. Dalhousie University.

———. 2004. The Slavey Indians: The Relevance of Ethnohistory to Development. In R.B. Morrison and C.R. Wilson (Eds), *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———.2001. Indigenous Self-Determination and Applied Anthropology in Canada: Finding a Place to Stand. *Anthropologica* 43(2):201-207.

Barsh, Russel. L.
2002. *Netukulimk* Past and Present: Mi'kmaq Ethics and the Atlantic Fishery. *Journal of Canadian Studies* 37(1)*:*15-42.

Basque, Maurice.
2011. Atlantic Realities, Acadian Identities, Arcadian Dreams. In D. Savoie and J. Reid (Eds), *Shaping an Agenda for Atlantic Canada.* Halifax: Fernwood Publishing.

———. 2004. The Third Acadia: Political Adaptation and Societal Change. In *The 'Conquest' of Acadia, 1710: Imperial, Colonial, and Aboriginal Constructions,* (Ed.) J. Reid, M. Basque, E. Mancke, B. Moody, G. Plank, & W. Wicken. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bidddiscombe, Perry.
1990. "Le Tricolore et l'étoile"; The Origin of the Acadian National Flag, 1867-1912. *Acadiensis* 20(1):120-147.

Bleakney, J. Sherman.
2004. *Sods, Soil, and Spades: The Acadians at Grand Pré and Their Dykeland Legacy*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press.

Borrows, John.
2013, *October 18. Akinoomaagewin (Earth's Teachings): Stories of the Fall, Indigenous Law, and Reconciliation.* Presented at Responsibly for Shared Futures. Dalhousie University.

———.2010. *Canada's indigenous constitution*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

———.1997. Wampum at Niagara: Canadian Legal History, Self-Government, and the Royal Proclamation. In M. Asch (Ed), *Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in Canada.* Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Brasseaux, Carl. A.
1985. A New Acadia: The Acadian Migrations to South Louisiana, 1764-1803. *Acadiensis* 15(1).

Chaisson, Herménégilde and Ronald Rudin. 2014, May 2. Commentary on the 1955 film. Les Aboiteaux. Presented at the Atlantic Canada Studies Conference, University of New Brunswick and Saint Thomas University.

Chute, Janet .E.
1998. Mi'kmaq fishing in the Maritimes: a historical overview. In D. McNab (Ed.) *Earth, water, air and fire: studies in Canadian ethnohistory*. Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press.

Faragher, John Mack.
2005. *A great and noble scheme: The tragic story of the expulsion of the French Acadians from their American Homeland*. New York: W.W Norton & Co.

Fowler, Jonathan. 2012.
From Acadians to Planters in the Grand-Pré Area: An Archaeological Perspective.
In S. Henderson and W. Robicheau (Eds), *The Nova Scotia Planters in the Atlantic World, 1759-1830.* Fredericton: Acadiensis Press.

Griffiths, Naomi. E. S.
2005. *From Migrant to Acadian: A North American Border People, 1604-1755*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

———. 1982. Longfellow's "Evangeline": The Birth and Acceptance of a Legend. *Acadiensis* 11(2):28-41.

———. 1992. *Contexts of Acadian History*, *1686-1784.* Montreal: McGill- Queen's University Press.

Gwyn, Julien.
2012. Shaped by the Sea but Impoverished by the Soil: Chester Township to 1830. In S. Henderson and W. Robicheau (Eds), *The Nova Scotia Planters in the Atlantic World, 1759-1830.* Fredericton: Acadiensis Press.

Hatvany, Matthew G.
2002. The Origins of the Acadian Aboiteau: An Environmental Historical Geography of the Northeast. *Historical Geography* 30:87-98.

———.2003. *Marshlands: Four Centuries of Environmental Change on the Shores of the St Lawrence.* Quebec: Les Presses de l'Université Laval.

Howe, Miles.
2013a, July 23. Uncover RMP crash anti-shale gas press conference, activists remain in woods on 'Line 5.' *Halifax Media Co-op.* Retrieved from http://halifax.mediacoop.ca/story/ undercover-rcmp-crash-anti-shale-gas-press-confere/18362

———.2013b, October 2. 8 Women of the 8th Fire lay smack down on RCMP Negotiators. *Halifax Media Co-op.* Retrieved from: http://halifax.media-coop.ca/fr/story/8-women-8th-fire-lay-treaty-law-smack- down-rcmp-ne/19103

Ingold, Tim.
2000. *The perception of the environment essays on livelihood, dwelling & skill*. London; New York: Routledge.

66

Johnston, A.J.B.
2007. The Acadian Deportation in a Comparative Context: An Introduction. *Journal of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society* 10.

Krech, Shepard.
2005.Reflections on conservation, sustainability, and environmentalism in Indigenous North America. *Peace Research Abstracts Journal* 42(5): 78-86.

Lang, Nicole and Nicholas Landry.
2001. *Histoire de l'Acadie*. France : Les Presse universitaires du Septentrion.

LeBlanc, Ronnie-Gilles.
2005. Du Dérangement des guerres au Grand Dérangement : la longue evolution d'un concept. In R-G. LeBlanc (Ed), *Du Grand Dérangement à la Déportation: nouvelles perspectives historiques.* Moncton: Chaire d'Études Acadiennes.

Léger, Maurice. A.
2005. La Déportation et la religion. In R-G. LeBlanc (Ed), *Du Grand Dérangement à la Déportation: nouvelles perspectives historiques.* Moncton: Chaire d'Études Acadiennes.

Lockerby, Earl.
1998, The Deportation of the Acadians from Ile St.-Jean, 1758. *Acadiensis* 27(1).

MacLeod, Katie K.
2013. *Displaced Mixed-Blood: An Ethnographic Exploration of Metis Identities in Nova Scotia.*

Unpublished Master's Thesis: Carleton University.

Moody, Barry. 2004.
Making a British Nova Scotia. In *The 'Conquest' of Acadia, 1710: Imperial, Colonial, and Aboriginal Constructions.* J. Reid, M. Basque, E. Mancke, B. Moody, G. Plank, & W. Wicken (Eds). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Paul, Daniel N.
2000. *We were not the savages: A Mi'kmaq perspective on the collision between European and native American civilizations.* Halifax, N.S: Fernwood.

Peace, Thomas.
forthcoming. *A Reluctant Engagement: Mi'kmaw-European Interaction along the Annapolis River at the Beginning of the Eighteenth Century.*

Plank, Geoffrey.
2005. New England and the Conquest. In R-G. LeBlanc (Ed), *Du Grand Dérangement à la Déportation: nouvelles perspectives historiques.* Moncton: Chaire d'Études Acadiennes.
———.2003. *Unsettled Conquest.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

———. 1996. The Two Majors Cope: The Boundaries of Nationality in Mid-18th Century Nova Scotia. *Acadiensis* XXV(2).

Poplyansky, Michael.
2013. "L"Acadie aux Acadiens"! : Le nationalisme du Parti acadien,

1977-1982," *Acadiensis* XLII:(2).

Prosper, Kerry., McMillan, L. Jane., Davis, Anthony, A. & Moffitt, Morgan. 2011. Returning to Netukulimk: Mi'kmaq cultural and spiritual connections with resource stewardship and self-governance. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal* 2(4): 1-17.

Reid, John. G.
2004. The Conquest of Acadia Narratives. In, *The 'Conquest' of Acadia, 1710: Imperial, Colonial, and Aboriginal Construction.* J. Reid, M. Basque, E. Manqué, B. Moody, G. Plank, & W. Wicken (Eds). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ross, Sally and Alphonse A. Deveau.
1992. *The Acadians of Nova Scotia Past and Present*. Halifax: Nimbus Publishing.

Rudin, Ronald.
2009. *Remembering and Forgetting in Acadie: A Historian's Journey Through Public Memory*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Sable, Trudy. & Francis, Bernie.
2012. *The Language of this land, Mi'kma'ki.* Sydney: Cape Breton University Press.

Taber, Jane.
2012, September 10. N.S. set to phase out special ridings for Acadians, black Nova Scotians. *The Globe and Mail.* Retrieved from: http://www.theglobe-andmail.com/news/politics/ns-set-to-

phase-out-special- ridings-for-acadi-ans-black-nova-scotians/article4535242/

Tully, James.
2014, March 20. *Reconciliation Here on Earth: Shared Responsibilities.* Presented at, Reconciliation: Responsibilities for Shared Futures. Dalhousie University.

———. 2008. *Public philosophy in a new key: Volume 1.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

———. 1995. *Strange multiplicity: Constitutionalism in an age of diversity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wiber, Melanie., & Milley, Chris.
2007. After Marshall: Implementation of Aboriginal Fishing Rights in Atlantic Canada. *Journal of Legal Pluralism* 55: 163-186.

Wicken, William. C.
2012. *The colonization of mi'kmaw memory and history, 1794-1928 : The king v.gabriel sylliboy.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

———.2004. Mi'kmaq Decisions: Antoine Tecouenemac, the Conqust, and the Treaty of Utrecht. In, *The 'Conquest' of Acadia, 1710: Imperial, Colonial, and Aboriginal Constructions.* J. Reid, M. Basque, E. Mancke, B. Moody, G. Plank, & W. Wicken (Eds). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

———. 2002. *Mik'maq Treaties on Trial: History, Land and Donald Marshall Junior.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.