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**“Mattawa, Where the Waters Meet:”
The Question of Identity in Métis Culture**



by

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**In partial fulfillment of the requirements of the
Master in Music
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To Pépère, with special thanks to the Raven and the Wolf

Acknowledgments

This study is neither a beginning nor an end but simply a given moment in the long process of "being and becoming Métis" (Petersen 1985). It would not have been possible without the guidance and generosity of many people.

First and foremost, I want to acknowledge my grandfather's spirit who walks with me, guides and protects me on this long and sometimes painful journey. His death in 1971 marked the end of many traditions in our family. But it is his legacy that has inspired and permitted me to do this work. Because of him I have been welcomed with open arms into the heart of the Métis community in Mattawa and many other Métis centres in Ontario.

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Abstract

This thesis is about Métis music and the Métis people. Its purpose is to examine the intimate connections between the two and how music constitutes an inherent component of Métis identity(ies). The premise of this study is that Métis identity is fluid and flexible and that Métis musical traditions do not merely reflect these characteristics but are instrumental in its construction. In the same vein, I am arguing that multiple Métis identities have emerged from several specific factors, including individuality, regionalism, socio-economic conditions, historical events, political manipulations, various *métissages*, and spiritual beliefs and values.

The goal of this study is to acknowledge the multiple Métis identities which are experienced and articulated among Métis through the examination of their musical practices. This study is based on an in-depth ethnography of the musical practices of the Métis community in Mattawa, Ontario. This community provides a case-in-point from which Métis identity can be studied. It features a wide and diverse range of musical practices typical of the Métis communities in Ontario, and it enacts the internal divisions which have undermined its official representation at the local as well as the regional and national levels.

TECHNICAL NOTES

Michif

In 1985, the Michif Languages Conference officially regognized four main Michif-related languages: (1) Michif-Cree; (2) Michif-French, (3) Ojibway; and (4) Swampy Cree. However, only one of these, Michif-Cree, has received much attention in terms of research from linguists. As a matter of fact, Michif-French is generally not considered a language by linguists but, rather, a dialect which demonstrates a tremendous amount of regional variation. This study includes the translation of a significant amount of dialogue, which is in Michif-French. There is not, as of yet, a recognized orthography for Michif-French.

Table 1 presents some of the sounds of Michif-French. They are represented by indicating the letter I have used in my translations to represent specific sounds. This is followed by the International Phonetic Alphabet symbol. I also include word examples to demonstrate the sounds (when possible in both French and English). There is a substantial mixture of French and English in Michif, and because some sounds are not used in English I can only provide a French example.

Table 2 presents a translation of some words which are used in this text whose meanings may not be obvious in either French or English. Finally, words that are simply "transferred," in terms of

meanings and pronunciation from French or English, are spelled according to the orthography of those languages respectively.

Table 1

Vowels

<u>Transcription</u>	<u>IPA</u>	<u>Word Examples</u>	
		French	English
<u>i</u>	[i]	si	sea
i	[I]	vite	hit
a	[ae]	la	sat
à	[ɔ]	botte	but
o	[o]	eau	no
eu	[0]	ceux	
oe	[oe]	soeur	
é	[e]	nez	say
e	[ø]	merc <u>re</u> di	<u>a</u> head
ai	[ɛ]	pain	
ou	[u]	boue	<u>y</u> ou

Consonants

tch	[c]	chip
sh	[s]	chaud
s	[s]	seau
zh	[z]	rouge
g	[g]	garage
dj	[d]	jeans
r	[r]	rond

Table 2

<u>Michif</u>	<u>French</u>	<u>English</u>
astoer	maintenant	now
bedon	c'est-à-dire	or else
ché	tu sais	you know
moé	moi	me
shà	c'est ça	that is
ste	cet ou cette	that
shebain	je suppose	I suppose

Musical Transcriptions

The musical transcriptions in this study are used specifically to discuss certain musical features. However, it should be noted that many of the sounds which characterize these musics cannot be appropriately represented using a system which does not recognize microtones and which is rhythmically based on mathematical divisions rather than rhythmic speech patterns. For these reasons, audio recordings accompany all written musical transcriptions to provide a more comprehensive demonstration of the musical features which are discussed.

The Use of Nicknames

The use of nicknames in Métis culture is quite common and carries many meanings.¹ I cannot speak for other regions other than my own but, in the area in which this study was conducted, these names are important signifiers both of individual identity and a particular type of social interaction. First, nicknames are generally associated with a physical characteristic, personality trait, or behaviour which is typical of that individual. Often, these nicknames are related to the animal world or something in nature. There is often a story which accompanies nicknames if they are related to a particular event. Therefore, nicknames are generally conferred sometime after birth and may change or be numerous throughout one's life. After some discussion with the Elders, it was agreed that nicknames are related to Native naming rituals without actually performing the ceremony.

Second, the knowledge and the use of one's nickname is generally reserved for friends, family, and members of the community, and is a sign of friendship, affection, and community acceptance. For these reasons, I am uncomfortable with the use of given names when referring to the speakers in this study because it is never the way I address them when we interact, and because it could actually create distance and be perceived as pretentious on my part. It is coincidental that two

¹ For a discussion of the role of mestizaje nicknames in Paraguay, see Christina Bolke's article "The role of Mestizaje of Surnames in Paraguay in the Creation of a Distinct New World Ethnicity" (1993).

of the main speakers have the same nickname specifically, ''Chiga'' (meaning ''little boy''), both based on physical characteristics. To avoid confusion between the two, I have opted to use their surnames when necessary rather than refer to them by their given names.

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Introduction

This study focuses on Métis socio-musical practices and how these practices constitute representations and constructions of Métis identity. The complex, and controversial, nature of Métis identity leads to many issues, including: Does a Métis socio-musical practice exist? What are the main characteristics of Métis music? Who participates in Métis musical practices?

More specifically, these issues emerging from a historical misrepresentation of Canada's Métis raise the following questions: By what criteria, by whom, and for whom is Métis music, and thereby, Métis identity defined? Should a definition of Métis music be rooted in the 'materials of music' (Shepherd 1993), or in racial, political definitions? (Tagg 1989)

I suggest that a concept of Métis cultural identity must acknowledge the dynamic and varied nature of hybrid societies, and by so doing question the borders and boundaries musically implied in the construction of Métis identity. The romantic notion of the Métis as a homogeneous, nomadic people of the West, born out of the intermingling of two races, existing 'between two worlds,' is outdated and inappropriate. Rather, I propose a vision of the Métis that emphasizes the fact that the Métis Nation is made of a heterogeneous people, sharing a multi-faceted geneology and heritage, and living in many worlds.

These many worlds represent the reality of Métis existence today, which ranges from a stigmatized, marginalized, poverty-stricken life on road allowances, to an anonymous, upper middle-class, urban life. I argue that Métis identity constitutes a complex mosaic of demographic, historical, socio-political, and cultural elements, and that this mosaic is not only reflected, but actually mediated through a wide range of musical practices.

Métis musical practices, ranging from traditional, ceremonial music to contemporary music, have been profoundly influenced not only by intimate contact with various First Nations tribes, but also by government policies, religious interference, and public perception. This study of local Métis musical practices casts a new light on the intricate web of the Métis multi-form identity, as it is manifested today in Ontario.

Historically, the Métis Nation has been associated with Western Canada. However, recent studies point to the genesis of Métis culture in Ontario. For example, research into Métis art has traced its origins north of the Great Lakes region (Brasser 1985). The historical and sociological studies of J. Petersen followed by Brown also point to the development of Métis culture in the Great Lakes Region (Petersen 1978; and Brown 1985). The consistent Ojibway element in the Métis language, called Michif, has led to speculation that Métis culture was also developed in Northern Ontario (Bakker 1992).

These controversies have led to hotly contested debates on the existence and characterization of Métis culture and identity. It is for

these reasons that I have called the first section of this study ''Debunking the Myth.'' Chapter One, which is a historiographical examination of writings on and about the Métis, reveals that there are actually two prominent myths about Canada's Métis. The first myth is that the Métis Nation, and therefore Métis culture, has never and still does not exist. The second myth is that Métis culture was developed and still only exists in Western Canada.

Chapter Two, the ''Musicography'' is a survey of existing studies of Métis musical practices. Here, I examine how these representations of Métis music reflect the constructions of Métis identity which were noted in the historiographical survey and how they contribute to the historical (19th century), and geographic (Western Canada) circumscription of the Métis Nation and Métis culture.

Chapter Three drifts into ''uncharted territory'' in that it deals with musical practices and people that are not traditionally associated with Métis culture and identity. This section introduces important factors which should be considered in the definition of Métis musical practices and identity such as regional specificities, sense of community, and the various types of music which constitute the soundscape from which Métis music is articulated.

Chapter Four deals specifically with the implications of borders and boundaries on the Métis of Ontario. To do this, this chapter reviews in detail the literature directly or indirectly related to the community under study, Mattawa, and is organized around three themes: regional specificities, sense of community, and Métis music. It should

be stressed here that, in spite of a large Métis population and an active, if controversial, political scene, research of the Ontario Métis was only begun quite recently. In this context, this chapter aims at providing a critical examination of the few documents which trace the historical formation of the Métis communities in Ontario, but more specifically, that of Mattawa.

Mattawa is a town of approximately 2,500 people in the "Near North" of Ontario. Literally translated, Mattawa means, "meeting of the waters." Its location at the confluence of the Mattawa and Ottawa rivers made it an important voyageur route and meeting place where the first white contact can be traced as early as 1610. Today, the population of Mattawa still includes a large Métis community (Morel, 1980).

The socio-musical practices in Mattawa range from ceremonial chanting, to country and western music and the blues. This spectrum of musical practices reflects the demographic and cultural variety of the Métis population of Ontario, and therefore provide an excellent ground from which to address the issue of Métis identity.

Part 2 of this study is based on an ethnography conducted in Mattawa which began in the fall of 1994 in the form of frequent visits until very recently. Most of the summer of 1995 was also spent in Mattawa conducting field work. This ethnographic study focuses on the relations between the varied Métis musics, cultures and politics enacted in this city. Chapter Five introduces the main speakers of this study through an important feature of Métis culture, namely,

"storytelling." The acknowledgment of this particular tradition as discourse serves also to show how this practice unavoidably involves the crucial element of community acceptance in Métis gatherings.

Chapters Six and Seven examine the socio-musical practices of the Métis community of Mattawa, as they are presented by the main speakers of this study. Accordingly, I examine the musical styles that came to be associated with the two areas of Mattawa known as "Gaspé Town" and "Squaw Valley." Here, I focus on two main aspects of these practices, namely, style and sensibility.

The geographic division used by the speakers serves as a starting point from which the issue of Métis identity as it is expressed through socio-musical practices is articulated. Other factors, such as economic, political, and gender-based, which serve to further divide the Métis community of Mattawa and situate the socio-musical practices through which other Métis identities are expressed, are also considered. This study is based on a vision of Métis culture and identity which is fluid, relational, and globalized (on the discussion of Creole cultures, see Guilbault 1993; Martin-Barbero 1993).

Methodology

This research focuses on Métis identity from two main perspectives: (1) from the Métis' points of view; and (2) from the non-Métis perspective. This allows for a detailed study of how Métis identity is constructed through musical associations, attributions, and

representations, and, according to what criteria, by whom, for whom, and for what interests, various musical meanings are derived, and musical values attributed.

The ethnography of the Métis community in Mattawa was produced through personal interviews, participant observation, attendance to significant formal and informal musical events, recordings, and the study of relevant documentation. Personal interviews include individuals and groups from the Métis, First Nations, and non-Native² communities in Mattawa. The procedure ranged from informal, unstructured, spontaneous interviews, to formal, structured ones. These interviews were conducted with one or several informants at a time, and lasted between one and six hours.

Participant observation, whenever appropriate, was used to gain a better understanding of specific musical practices. My research includes exclusively community-based musical practices that lead Métis and non-Métis to voice their perceptions and conceptions of Métis identity. During the performance of such significant musical events, my participation in performing was often required or expected. Furthermore, my participation and experience and knowledge of hunting and fishing was also required to be permitted to observe certain musical practices.

This study is not based on quantitative measurements, but rather, on the analysis of musical practices from various perspectives which

²The Canadian Constitution states that Canada's Aboriginal peoples include First Nations, Inuit and Métis. In this study, the term "Native" is used in the same way as the term "Aboriginal" is defined by the Canadian Constitution and includes the three distinct groups mentioned above.

inform the social, cultural, and even political elements that contribute to the construction and constitution of Métis music. By the same token, the number of informants were determined by their expertise, position in the community, personal experience, and the ability to clearly articulate their conceptions of Métis musical practices and identity.

The use of both audio and audio-visual recording technologies facilitated the collection of data, including music and interviews. However, the use of these technologies was limited to, and bound by, the expressed consent and approval of the informants.

Finally, my study of the existing documentation pertaining directly or indirectly to Métis culture includes government publications and official documents dealing with legal issues, local reports on musical activities, and personal documents which were provided by people from the community. With the collected data and the existing documentation on the various aspects of Métis culture, my aim is to show how musical practices associated with the Métis, by Métis and non-Métis people, constitute various, and at times, conflicting representations and constructions of Métis identity.

Recent political recognition of the Métis Nation has fostered an avid interest in Métis culture and a controversial and heated debate over Métis identity and Aboriginal rights. Today, the Métis Nation is faced with tremendous social, economic, political, legal, and cultural problems such as marginalization, alcoholism, racism, and so on. It is, however, these very problems which have incited the Métis Nation to

rise again in its struggle for survival. My point is that the voice of the Métis Nation should not only be heard in political debates and legal arenas, but as rising from a rich musical legacy. This is what this study aims to demonstrate.

Part 1

“Debunking the Myth”

INTRODUCTION

In 1982, the Métis¹ people of Canada were recognized as an Aboriginal people and their rights were enshrined in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. However, political recognition has not demystified Métis identity. In fact, this newly acquired political status has focused definition of the Métis on constitutional, legal, social, and historical issues. In the past ten years, a plethora of studies have examined these issues, and attempted to redress misrepresentations of the Métis that have abounded in the past. Nevertheless, these questions still remain unanswered: (1) Who are the Métis? (2) Where do they live? (3) How do they live? (4) What constitutes Métis identity?

The purpose of this thesis is to examine these questions through the study of local, contemporary Métis musical practices. In this study, the relations between these musical practices and Métis identity are examined through a contextualization of the historical, socio-economic, and cultural factors which inform them. The aim of this examination is to better understand the reality of Métis existence in Ontario today, and how culture, more specifically music, is an integral part of Métis individual and collective identities.

¹ For the purposes of this study, the use of the capital letter "M" in Métis refers to members of the Métis Nation, whereas the lower case "m" indicates any person of mixed ancestry.

Despite assimilation policies, the process of political socialization,² and colonial oppression, distinct Métis cultural identities have not disappeared but survived through the process of transformation. I am arguing that these transformations are not only expressed but actually effected through musical traditions. It is these transformations that this study intends to explore.

I would also like to emphasize the fact that Métis identity and culture has been, and still is, in a constant state of flux, and today more than ever the Métis Nation is in the process of (re)defining itself. This process which began with the first generation of Métis has been inevitably influenced by many outside factors including legal definitions, academic representations, and even public perception of the Métis.

Historically, the "birth" of the Métis Nation has been associated with the Battle of Seven Oaks in 1816 which occurred in Manitoba. The association of the emergence of the Métis Nation with this particular event and specific region has effectively circumscribed much of the academic research on the Métis to subsequent events in and to the Métis communities of Western Canada. Furthermore, many of these studies have contributed significantly to a homogeneous image of the Métis people and culture. The notion that there exists only one Métis people and culture who live in Western Canada constitutes the two

² Political socialization refers to the process through which governments influence public perception through control of information. This process is largely implemented through the educational system and the mass communications system. For example, the fact that Métis history is taught differently in French and English schools helps to shape public perception of the Métis, as well as their own perception of themselves.

prominent myths about Métis identity which this study attempts to examine and ultimately challenge.

In reality Métis communities developed and still exist in many parts of Canada and the United States, and are in fact diverse and fluid. For example, many large Métis settlements in the plains of Western Canada were developed through the buffalo hunts, an activity which demanded many participants and sophisticated social and political structures to be successful on a large scale.

In contrast, the Métis settlements of Northern Ontario were more closely related to hunter/gatherer societies and developed smaller more mobile settlements. These settlements often arose from their specific roles in the fur trade, for example, the "homeguard Cree"³ of Moose Factory.

As anthropologist Jennifer Brown states,

Rather than a unified, bounded society, the fur trade was the meeting ground of many Indian communities and two major groups of specialized, relatively transient European traders---the English HBC men with their royal charter, remote directorship, and salaried 'servant' status, and the Montreal-based Scottish and French entrepreneurs who coalesced into the dominantly Scottish North West Company after 1784.

(1985:197)

It is only very recently that the concept of cultural diversity within the Métis Nation has been explored or even considered. The

³ The "homeguard" was largely comprised of Métis and Native peoples who lived within the vicinity of fur trading posts. Their role was often to provide provisions for the employees of the post. This led to the development of communities which lived just outside the fort itself. For more details, see Carol Judd's article "Housing the Homeguard at Moose Factory" (1983).

controversial and problematic nature of Métis identity is inextricably linked to many issues that have yet to be recognized and researched. For example, what effects did the policies of the French and English colonial régimes have on the development and eventual dispersion of Métis communities? How did the fundamental differences between the interbreeding policies (discussed below) of the fur trade companies contribute to the role and position of the Métis within fur trade society? And finally, how did the religious interference that was so predominant in the 18th and 19th centuries, and for that matter, the twentieth century influence the Métis Nation?

If indeed there were/are many Métis cultures born of the fur trade that have yet to be identified and/or recognized and researched, this leads me to the following questions: According to what criteria--- racial, legal, cultural, social, and/or geographic---is the label "Métis" being assigned? Where/who are the Métis people(s) today? These questions are at the very heart of the issue of Métis identity.

Without question, the fact that the word "métis"---as well as many other terms including *half-breed*, *mixed-blood*, *half-caste*, *chicot*, *bois-brulé*, *country-born*, *Canadese*, and *Canadian* ---has been used for centuries to refer to many different people has confused the issue.⁴ Furthermore, the fact that these many appellations of the Métis seem to have acquired different meanings, depending on the time period and region, is traditionally ignored. Finally, and possibly the most important

⁴ For a detailed discussion of the historical use of the term Métis, see John E. Fosters' "The Métis: the People and the Term" (1978).

point here, is the fact that Métis representations by Métis and non-Métis vary greatly in their characterization and definition of Métis identity.

The problem here is that hybrid identity does not easily correspond to the usual frames of reference and bounded definitions. Given these considerations, the historiographical survey which follows does not seek to imply or deduce meanings but, rather to contextualise and, in some cases, juxtapose many different representations of the Métis. Hopefully, this can provide insights on how these multifarious definitions and representations have contributed to the construction of past and contemporary Métis identity.

The importance of recognition and definition of Métis identity is related to the question of legal status, and the interpretation and implementation of aboriginal rights and land claims. Anthropologist Derek Smith who has collected and published early documents and legislation concerning Canadian Indians states:

Land and 'Indian identity' are intimately linked, as much a consequence of Canadian policy as the persistence of aboriginal sentiments of affinity with the land. This question is also a basic one for the Métis and 'non-status Indian' problem, and has been since long before the Riel Rebellions.

(1975:xix)

These issues linked to the question of identity, I want to argue, cannot, and should not be addressed solely in political terms. The cultural element (including language, musical traditions, and so on) as

an inherent component of Métis identity must also be considered. This component is sadly neglected in this new body of literature, despite the fact that survival of many facets of Métis culture has depended and still depends on oral tradition.

Here I would like to posit that music serves as more than a mere reflection of identity but is actually an active component of its construction. The inextricable relations between music, belief and value systems, family and social interactions, ideology, and even political structures necessitate a theoretical and analytical approach which can acknowledge these interrelations.

Métis songs play an important role in the survival of Métis culture. Aside from serving as cultural markers, these songs constitute historical records, national symbols, educational vehicles, and the means of preserving and transmitting the Métis language, Michif.⁵ It is the specificity of these cultural elements in conjunction with social, regional, and historical factors which, I want to argue, help shape Métis identity, and which ultimately characterize and define "Métisness."⁶

On another level, Métis music has also served as an agent of social change. One of the most well-known examples refers to the Riel Rebellions during which Pierre Falcon's song about the Battle of Seven

⁵ Although the word "Michif" is used by linguists to refer specifically to one Métis language, Michif-Cree, the Métis people themselves use the word Michif to refer to the four main Michif-related languages which were officially identified by the Michif Languages Conference in 1985: Michif-Cree, Michif French, Ojibway and Swampy Cree. For more information on Michif, see Peter Bakker's 'A Language of Our Own': The Genesis of Michif the Mixed Cree-French Language of the Canadian Métis (1992); and the works of Robert Papen (1984; 1993).

⁶ The term "Métisness" is commonly used by Métis writers to refer to the "ways of being" Métis.

Oaks was used to rally support for the Métis cause. This song was subsequently banned by the government for that very reason.

On a personal level, music has played a fundamental role in my own self-identification process as Métis. Through my life experience as a musician, I have been confronted with many aspects of my music. These aspects have included not only my own belief and value systems, but also my predilection for certain performance practices. My own questioning about my heritage has led me to wonder why so few studies have been done to examine the links between Métis identity and Métis music.

The question of hybrid identities and musics has recently been the focus of studies on various cultures throughout the world. For example, many ethnomusicologists have focused their research on the advent of 'world music,' a phenomenon directly linked to the technological revolution of the twentieth century and the effects of globalisation, commodification, and commercialization on music. These effects include the formation and development of many diasporic cultures which has led to numerous studies on the question of hybridisation and homogenization with respect to identity.⁷

In his book Dangerous Crossroads George Lipsitz demonstrates how immigrant populations around the globe are finding their cultural identities through the fusion of traditional and popular musics in

⁷ On world music, see Jocelyne Guilbault, Zouk: World Music in the West Indies (1993); Reebee Garofalo, Rocking the Boat: Mass Music & Mass Movements (1992); and Simon Frith (ed.), World Music, Politics and Social Change (1991); see Veit Erlmann's article, "The Politics and Aesthetics of Transnational Musics" (1993); and see Louise Meintjes' article, "Paul Simon's Graceland, South Africa, and the Mediation of Musical Meaning" (1990).

urban settings (1994). Lipsitz examines these hybrid musics in relation to questions of ethnicity, politics and social issues.

In their recent book Visions of Sound Beverley Diamond, M. Sam Cronk, and Franziska von Rosen present the instruments of First Nations communities within a framework which acknowledges the Native point of view (1994). This is accomplished through the use of metaphor and abstract notions of sound and image---an approach which is also useful in the study of Métis music which is partially constituted by Native musical traditions.

Many of the abovementioned studies are rooted in issues that are linked to postmodern theory and recent political, social, cultural and ideological movements.⁸ Within this perspective, they have raised some serious ethical and moral questions as to ethnographic authority and the politics of representation/difference.

These are serious issues which must be contended with in any research which involves "others," and I feel obliged to comment on them. First and foremost, I do not pretend to speak for anyone but myself, and many of the observations in this study are drawn from my own life and musical experience. Secondly, to deny that my work is political would be naive as it is inevitably suffused by my membership in the Métis Nation. Actually, this study would not have been possible if I wasn't both Métis and politically involved.

⁸ Here I am referring specifically to postcolonialism, notions of essentialization and homogenization, and the acknowledgment of difference.

The complexity of contemporary Métis identity can only be understood within an historical context of the influences which have contributed to its multifarious constructions. As previously mentioned, because the definition and characterization of the Métis has varied depending on the era, it is important to be fully aware of the chronology of the publications on Métis. Therefore, the various texts examined here will be linked to significant events which have spurred writings on Métis history. In my survey of documents, I have located groups of texts organized around the following historical periods: pre-1816, 1816-Confederation (1867), the Riel Rebellions (1869-1885), and finally the post-Riel eras (1885-1982; 1982-present).

Each text examined here is further identified as to one of two types of discourse: (1) legal definitions (including colonial régimes and governments); (2) scholarly representations (including anthropological, social and historical academic writings and travellers' accounts).

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORIOGRAPHY

Pre-1816

Legal Definitions

Today legal definitions continue to plague and hinder the process of Métis recognition and identification, and the definition of Métis rights. This is partially due to the fact that legal definitions have been rooted in various criteria---cultural, racial, and lifestyle---as determined by different governments over several centuries. This complex process of defining the aboriginal population of Canada is described by Bradford Morse as follows,

To summarize:the Indian population of Canada is defined in a variety of ways. They are called treaty Indians; non-treaty Indians; non-registered Indians. They are all Indians; yet the result of this process of registration has been to divide the Indian people. That is, the dominant white society has decided which Indians it is willing to consider as being legal "Indians" for the purposes of receiving the benefits which flow from that status---special federal programs, tax exemptions, residence on reserves, treaty rights, and so on. The procedure has been amazingly successful in fostering division and competition between the status and non-status Indians of Canada.

(Morse 1991:4)

This is directly linked to the problem of Métis identity in that, initially, Métis have been classified and considered as Indians and/or Non-Status Indians. The Royal Proclamation of 1763 is often quoted as the most important piece of legislation which recognizes aboriginal fiduciary rights in Canada that pertain to the Métis Nation. It states,

And whereas it is just and reasonable, and essential to our Interests, and the Security of our Colonies, that the several Nations or Tribes of Indians with whom We are connected, and who live under our Protection, should not be molested or disturbed in the Possession of such Parts of our Dominions and Territories as not having been ceded or purchased by Us, are reserved for them, or any of them, as their Hunting Grounds.

(Boldt, 1993:Appendix 1)

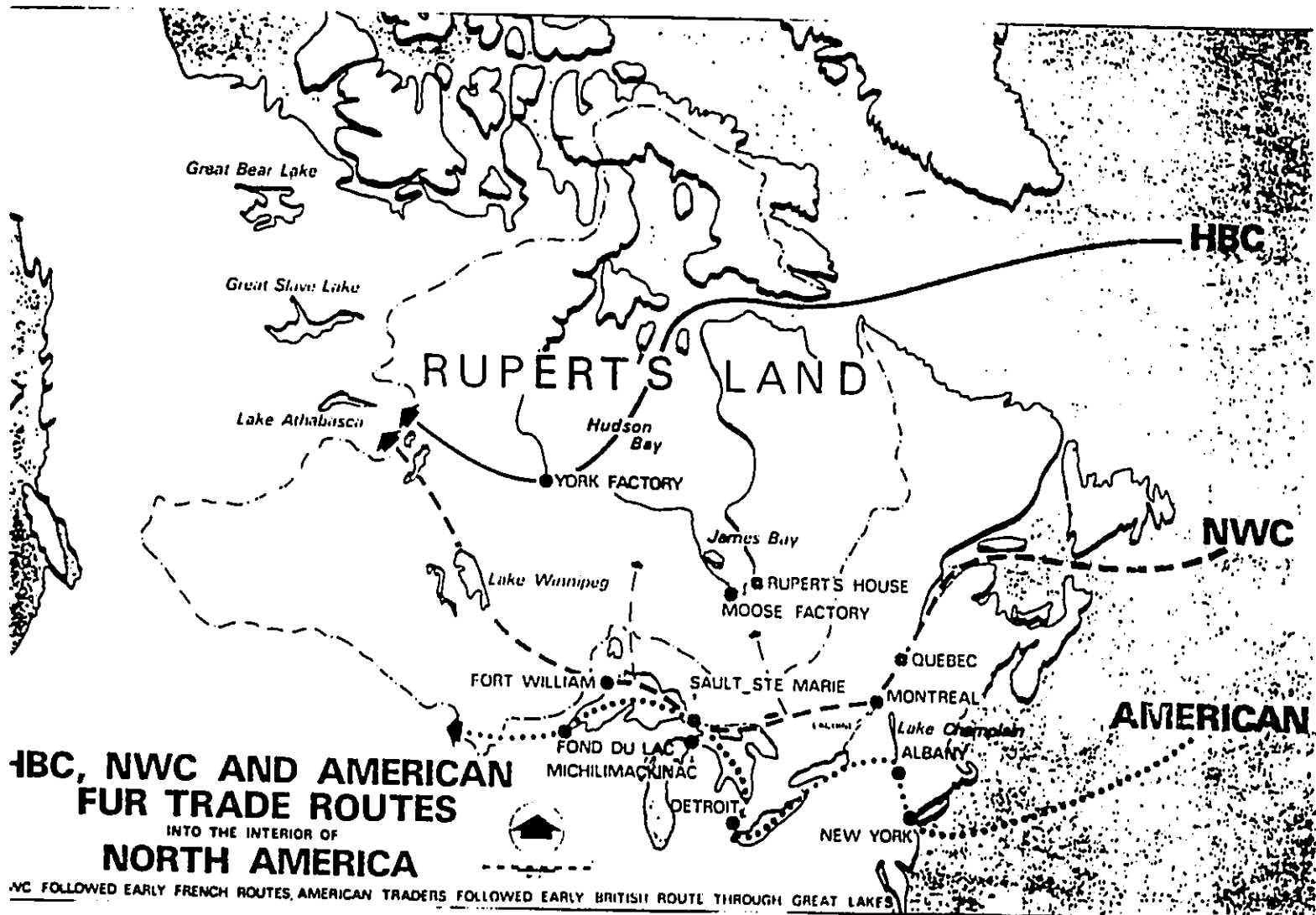
This proclamation does not define who these Indians are, but it does recognize those who are considered Indians through affiliation and lifestyle by specifying "or any of them" and in the reference to "Nations or Tribes." A definition of "tribes" is provided in the Report on the Indians of Upper Canada, 1839 which states "The tribes and classes of coloured men in question, are Indians; Esquimaux; and descendants of Africans; with a considerable number of mixed blood" (1839:1). According to this report then, Métis are included as members of the tribes in question.

This report goes on to state that "In 1759 the French colonists and traders amounted to about 60,000 souls, of whom a considerable number are believed to have been a mixed race, either illegitimate, or,

in not unfrequent cases, sprung from marriages of French with Indians'' (ibid.).

These marriages, largely the result of French policy of the era which encouraged these liaisons to further trade, are significant in that they produced the first generations of métis. Derek Smith states, ''Somehow Canadians have been inclined to shrug off the French Indian legislation as dead history with no modern relevance. However, such issues as the formation of Métis communities and their dispersion cannot be dissociated from the pre-1763 French policy and practice''(1975:xi).

The issue of Métis identity in this era is further complicated by the differing policies of the fur trade companies towards inter-breeding and marriage. These policies were determined by their respective colonial governments. Whereas the Hudson's Bay Company was controlled from London and discouraged intermingling, the NorthWest Company which was Montreal based used Indian-White affiliations as useful liaisons to further trade. Furthermore, each of these companies more or less traded in different territories which contributed to regional peculiarities until the amalgamation of the two in 1821 (see Map no.1)



Map no. 1: Fur Trade Routes (Campbell 1976:11)

These policies also led to highly complex social structures,⁹ socio-economic roles, and class stratification within fur trade society. Class stratification within fur trade socio-cultural divisions was largely determined by race and position.¹⁰ These divisions, which were fed by regional, socio-economic, and genealogical factors, in my opinion, constitute the first indications of cultural diversity within the Métis Nation.

Métis history is traditionally considered to begin with the Battle of Seven Oaks in 1816 whereas, in my opinion, it should be viewed as beginning from about, as Duke Redbird states, 'nine months from the time the first white man set foot in North America'(1980:1). Although this early development of the Métis Nation has yet to be researched in great detail, there is considerable evidence of a large population of métis from this time onwards. However, research in this historical context has been difficult because often the first generations of Métis were actually classified and regarded as Indians.

In addition to these policies and classification systems, the formation of early Métis communities was also the result of differing kinship systems within First Nations tribes. In Aboriginal Cultures of Ontario (1987), Paul Driben states:

⁹ See Arthur J. Ray's Indians in the Fur Trade (1974); Sylvia van Kirk's Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870 (1983); Daniel Francis and Toby Morantz, Partners in Furs: A History of the Fur Trade in Eastern James Bay 1600-1870 (1983).

¹⁰ For a discussion of class and race divisions, see Ron G. Bourgeault, "Race and Class Under Mercantilism: Indigenous People in Nineteenth-Century Canada" (1988); "The Indian, the Métis and the Fur Trade: Class, Sexism and Racism in the Transition from 'Communism' to Capitalism" (1983).

Yet it is likely that Métis people first emerged as distinct cultural groups in Ontario rather than the west, most likely in what is now the northern part of the province.

In Southern Ontario, among matrilineal tribes such as the Iroquois, the offspring of British and French fur traders and Indian women likely were incorporated directly into Native society since membership was determined by descent through the female line, and their mothers were Indian. However, in the north, among Algonquian people, who traced their descent through the male line, the offspring of European fathers and Indian mothers likely could not be incorporated directly into the Indians' society on account of their fathers. Nor were they usually incorporated into European society. Instead they formed their own society based primarily but not exclusively on the fur trade, in which many Métis found employment as guides, translators and intermediaries between Indians and Europeans.

(1987:9)

The profound effect of these kinship systems on the development of Métis communities in Ontario has yet to be explored in great detail. For example, these communities were linked through common roles and positions within the fur trade rather than through living in large settlements, as was required in the large scale buffalo hunts of the West. Moreover, as we will see later, the fact that métissage mostly occurred between Native women and White men and that, among patrilineal tribes these women and children were not accepted by the band, facilitated the enfranchisement process.¹¹

¹¹ Enfranchisement is the legal process through which Native peoples in Canada either voluntarily or involuntarily lost their aboriginal status through various provisions of the Indian Act.

Despite this process of assimilation, recent research also indicates that Métis communities were actually developed during this period. For example, in her research on the Great Lakes Métis, Jacqueline Petersen points out that,

While there is no question that Louis Riel's proclamation signalled the political maturation of the Manitoba Métis, it did not mark the beginnings of a distinctive Métis culture. Instead, Riel's Rebellion was the culmination of nearly two centuries of ethnic formation rooted along the St. Lawrence and in the Upper Great Lakes and transplanted, of necessity, in the northern Red River Valley.

(1978:46)

This transplantation, largely the result of declining fur stocks and the push for expansion towards the west, constitutes the first dispersion of the Métis. In spite of the fact that there is much evidence of the formation of Métis communities in this early period, so little research has been conducted on any level that it is difficult to assess exactly what effects the early development of Métis communities has had on contemporary Métis identity. Nevertheless, it is in my opinion crucial to at least acknowledge this formative period, because recognition of the existence of Métis communities today in areas other than Western Canada depends on it.

1816-Confederation (1867)

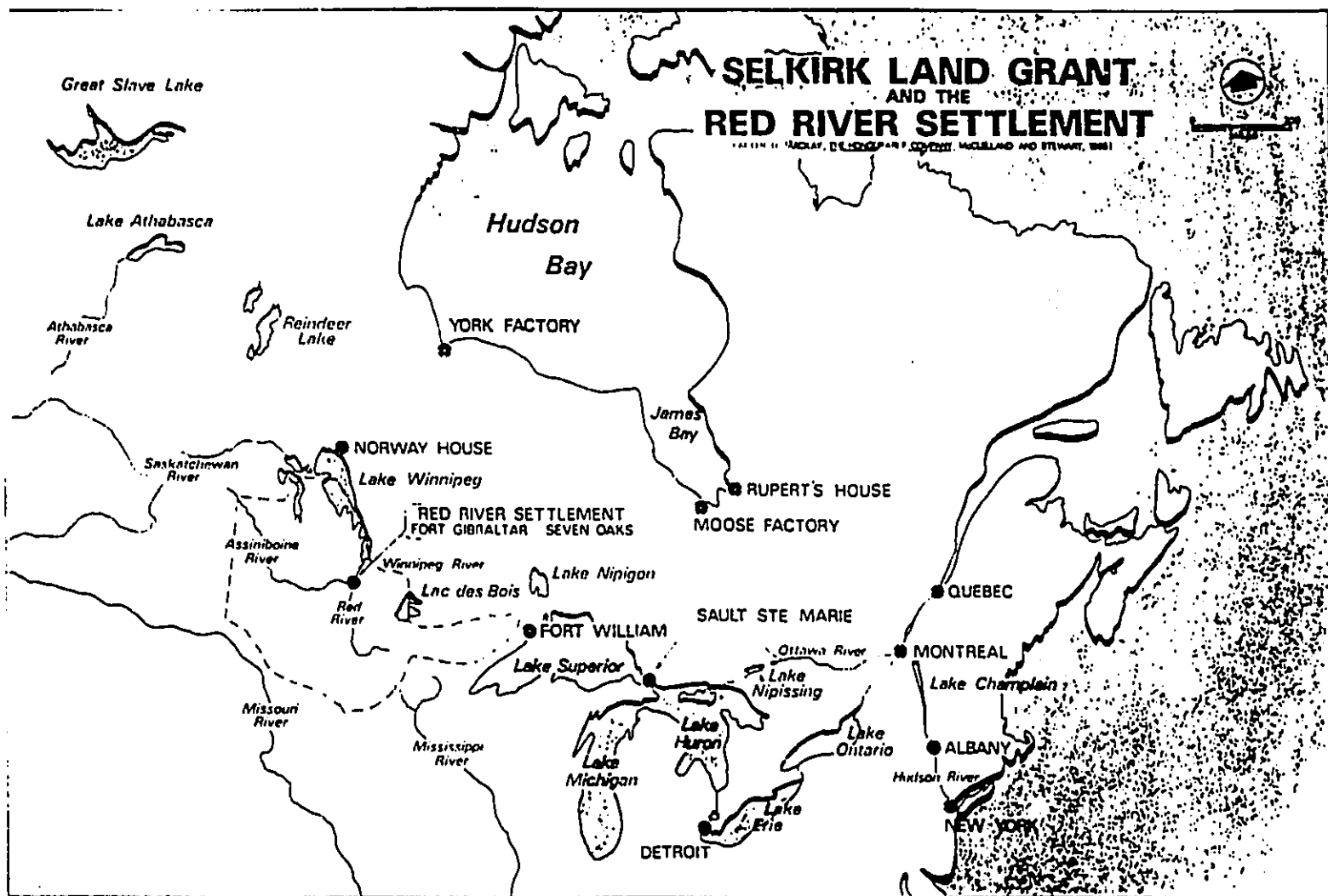
The Selkirk Land Grant of 1811 brought many immigrants to the Red River area (see Map no.2). Surveyors were sent to divide lands which the Métis felt belonged to them since they had occupied the area for many years. The lack of consultation with the Métis with respect to land allotments led to the Battle of Seven Oaks in 1816, and signalled the awakening of political consciousness within the Métis Nation.

The period that follows this first military action includes important developments which contributed to diversification and division within the Métis Nation, and ultimately, to the complex definition of Métis identity. These developments are the colonization of the West and the reorganization of labour through industrialization.

The Métis settlements of the West were the direct result of the demands of the buffalo hunting industry. These large scale hunts required meticulous organization and the first Métis political structures---such as Louis Riel's provisional government¹² ---were inspired by the legislatures and regulations of the buffalo hunt. The encroachment of colonization, which threatened Métis lands, gave rise to political consciousness and revolution, which was exhibited by military action.

As the main impetus of the fur trade was shifted towards western expansion, other economic developments ensued in Ontario. The effects

¹² For a detailed discussion of Métis political structures, see Lawrence J. Barkwell "Early Law and Social Control Among the Métis" (1991).



Map no. 2: Location of Selkirk Land Grant and
 Battle of Seven Oaks (Campbell 1976:16)

of industrialization were heralded by the logging industry as early as 1839 in Northern Ontario. This was soon followed by the discovery and exploitation of the rich mining deposits of the Cambrian Shield.

Industrialization necessitated appropriation of these lands which was accomplished through various treaties. It was through the creation of treaties that Métis lands were threatened and eventually lost.

Whereas the large settlements of the West fought for their land through military action, Métis political consciousness in Ontario was manifested in the various petitions of the Métis to be included in the annual gift-giving, treaty negotiations, and land settlements. These events contributed to a division within the Métis Nation which would become much more pronounced as will become evident in the various definitions which follow.

Legal Definitions

Indians are defined for the first time in colonial legislation in 1850. The definition reads as follows:

13 and 14 Victoria (1850) Cap. 42 (Province of Canada).
An act for the Better Protection of the Lands and Property
of the Indians in Lower Canada. (passed August 10, 1850).

V. And for the purpose of determining any right of property,
possession or occupation in or to any lands belonging or
appropriated to any Tribe or Body of Indians in Lower

Canada. Be it declared and enacted: That the following classes of persons are and shall be considered as Indians belonging to the Tribe or Body of Indians interested in such lands:

First---All persons of Indian blood, reputed to belong to the particular Body or Tribe of Indians interested in such lands, and their descendants.

Secondly----All persons intermarried with any such Indians and residing amongst them, and the descendants of all such persons.

Thirdly---All persons residing among such Indians, whose parents on either side were or are Indians of such Body or Tribe, or entitled to be considered as such: And

Fourthly---All persons adopted in infancy by any such Tribe or Body of Indians, and their descendants.

This legislation, which clearly considers Métis as "Indians," bases its classification on racial and lifestyle criteria. Furthermore, band membership is determined by community acceptance and all descendants are legally recognized.

This position is also reflected in The Robinson Treaties which were negotiated in the same year.

As the half-breeds at Sault Ste. Marie and other places may seek to be recognized by the Government in future payments, it may be well that I should state here the answer that I gave to their demands on the present occasion. I told them I came to treat with the chiefs who were present, that the money would be paid to them---and their receipt was sufficient for me ---that when in their possession they might give as much or as little to that class of claimants as they pleased.

(Morris 1991:20)

This position marked an important turning point in the eventual loss of aboriginal rights and lands for the Métis of Ontario. Although the Métis petitioned the Canadian government to be considered separately in treaty negotiations, the fact that they were legally classified as Indians was used to relegate that responsibility to the Indian chiefs and the bands in question. This classification of the Métis as Indians meant that there were very few "half-breeds" who were included in the treaties that were negotiated within Ontario.¹³

Travellers' Accounts

References to the mingling of races in the 17th and 18th century are not difficult to find but what is more problematic is the untangling of various terms and appellations that are linked to the specific occupations and positions of the fur trade, and who is Métis and who is not. A few examples will serve to illustrate the complexity and difficulty in researching these historical references to Métis in early periods.

A frequently quoted source in writings on the Métis is J. G. Kohl's Kithchigami Wanderings Round Lake Superior which was initially published in 1860. In the context of a conversation with a voyageur, Kohl defines the term "chicot" as follows:

¹³ See David T. McNab's "Métis Participation in the Treaty-Making Process in Ontario: A Reconnaissance" (1985).

I must remark here, in explanation, that my Canadian had some Indian blood in his veins, either on the father or mother's side, and hence, jestingly, called himself 'Chicot.' That is the name given in Canada to the half-burnt stumps, and has become a nickname for the half-breeds. They also call themselves, at times, 'Bois brûlés,' or 'Bois grillés,' in reference to the shades of colour that bronze the face of a mixed breed.

(1956:260)

Kohl adds in a footnote that "In addition to half-breeds, there are also quarter-breeds, quadroons, called in Canada 'quarts' (1956:260).

This particular definition reflects the racial basis for identification of the Métis which was previously noted in the earlier legal definition. It also confirms the fact that the term "Canadian" when referring to voyageurs was also used to refer to Métis voyageurs.

The following definition taken from Washington Irving's Astoria, another frequently quoted source, contrasts the aforementioned definitions in its focus on cultural characteristics such as language, dress and lifestyle.

The voyageurs form a kind of confraternity in the Canadas, like the arrieros or carriers of Spain. The dress of these people is generally half civilised, half savage. They wear a capote or surcoat, made of a blanket, a striped cotton shirt, cloth trousers or leathern leggins, moccasins of deerskin, and a belt of variegated worsted, from which are suspended the knife, tobacco-pouch, and other articles. Their language is of the same piebald character, being a French patois embroidered with English and Italian words and phrases.

(Irving 1895:160)

It is significant that Irving refers to the voyageurs as a distinct social grouping with specific cultural characteristics. His description

of their dress and language, which have been used here as cultural markers of Métis identity, are often overlooked in academic literature. As a matter of fact, representations of the voyageurs are generally highly romanticised and represent them as being strictly French Canadians.¹⁴

Confederation and the Riel Rebellions (1867-1885)

Legal Definitions

Confederation marked the beginning of a significant period in the definition, and eventual erasure, of Métis aboriginal status and cultural identity in Canadian politics. First, the fact that Manitoba was not included in the union of the first four provinces of Canada automatically subjected the Métis populations of Western Canada and the Eastern provinces to different governmental policies (see Map no.3).

Furthermore, the push for expansion towards the west through the building of the railroad created an urgency for the sale of Rupertsland by the Hudson's Bay Company to Canada. This transfer of land and citizenship was negotiated and eventually effected without consultation with the Métis who lived there. As in 1816, surveyors were sent out to reassign Métis properties to a new influx of immigrants. These events sparked the second Métis battle, which occurred in 1869. In an effort

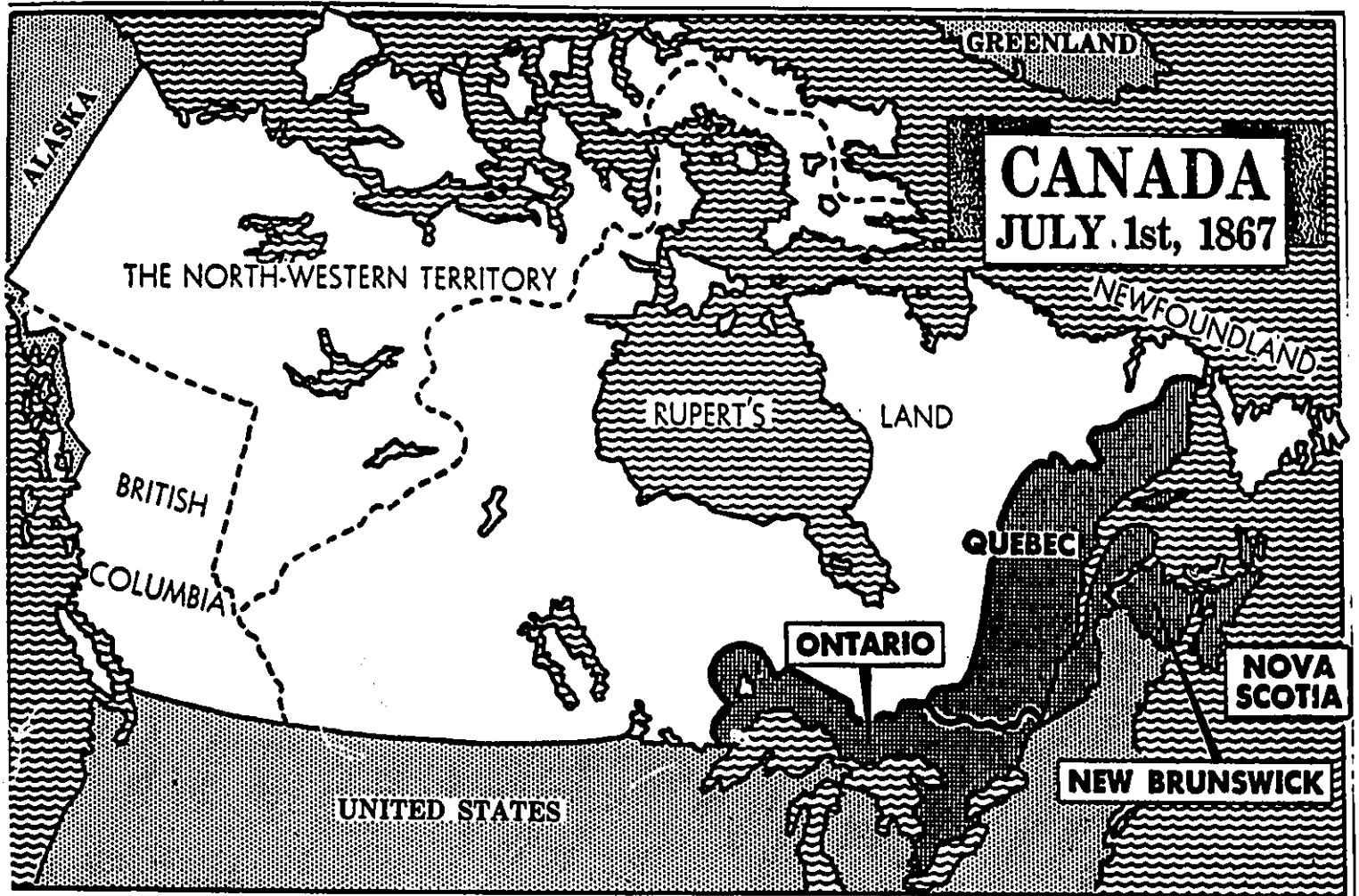
¹⁴ For typical representations of the voyageurs, see Grace Lee Nute The Voyageur (1931) and Peter C. Newman, Company of Adventurers (1986).

to be recognized, and because there was no legal government at the time in the area, Louis Riel set up a duly elected council and provisional government for the Métis in order to negotiate with the Canadian government.

These events preceded the passing of the Manitoba Act in 1870. It is not surprising that given the political climate at the time and the military resistance of the half-breeds that the Manitoba Act recognized their land claims. Following is an extract from this Act, which includes the lands promised to the Manitoba Métis which have yet to be settled, and, which I might add, is still being debated in Canadian courts today.

33 Victoria(1870) Cap.3 (Canada). An Act to Amend and Continue
the Act 32 and 33 Victoria Cap. 3; and to Establish and Provide
for the Government of the Province of Manitoba (The Manitoba Act, 1870).
/assented to May 12, 1870/ (Extract)

31. And whereas, it is expedient, towards the extinguishment of the Indian Title to the lands in the Province, to appropriate a portion of such ungranted lands, to the extent of one million four hundred thousand acres thereof, for the benefit of the families of the half-breed residents, it is hereby enacted, that, under regulations to be from time to time made by the Governor General in Council, the Lieutenant-Governor shall select such lots or tracts in such parts of the Province as he may deem expedient, to the extent aforesaid, and divide the same among the children of the half-breed heads of families residing in the Province at the time of the said transfer to Canada, and the same shall be granted to the said children respectively, in such mode and on such conditions as to settlement and otherwise, as the Governor General in Council may from time to time determine.



Map no. 3: Confederation
(Payette 1966:400)

Only 6 years later the first Indian Act is passed. The following extract defines who is and who is not Indian, and provides a useful comparison to earlier colonial definitions. It is also important to note that the act specifically excludes Manitoba Métis who were granted land in the Manitoba Act. The final result being that those Métis west of the Manitoba border are legally recognized and those east of the border are not.

39 Victoria (1876) Cap. 18 (Canada). An Act to Amend and Consolidate the Laws Respecting Indians (The Indian Act, 1876). /assented to April 12, 1876/

1. This Act shall be known and may be cited as "The Indian Act, 1876;" and shall apply to all the Provinces, and to the North West Territories, including the Territory of Keewatin...
3. The term "Indian" means
First. Any male person of Indian blood reputed to belong to a particular band;
Secondly. Any child of such person;
Thirdly. Any woman who is or was lawfully married to such person.
- c) Provided that any Indian woman marrying any other than an Indian or a non-treaty Indian shall cease to be an Indian in any respect within the meaning of this Act,...
- e) Provided also that no half-breed in Manitoba who has shared in the distribution of half-breed lands shall be accounted an Indian..
4. The term "non-treaty Indian " means any person of Indian blood who is reputed to belong to an irregular band, or who follows the Indian mode of life, even though such person be only a temporary resident in Canada.
5. The term "enfranchised Indian " means any Indian, his wife or minor unmarried child, ...who has received letters patent granting him in fee simple any portion of the reserve which may have been allotted to him...

Many significant changes can be noted between this definition and colonial legislation. First, this legislation is aimed at the extinguishment of Indian Title to lands as opposed to the protection of the Indians' rights. Second, and most significant, is the exclusion of aboriginal status for Native women who married white men. As the fur trade was built on the marriage of Indian women to White men, many families of Métis automatically became enfranchised, and thereby not only lost their aboriginal status, but any claims to land. Effectively, this legislation determined aboriginal status according to land claims issues and the treaty process as opposed to social, cultural, regional, or even racial criteria. This legislation also created a new category, the Non-Status Indian.¹⁵

The Métis political structures that were in place at this time, such as Louis Riel's provisional council, provide us with no legal definitions of who the Métis are. However, it might be most appropriate to include here the often-quoted definition provided by Louis Riel himself when he wrote his 'History of the Half-Breeds.' It reads,

This is how the Métis think of the matter in their own hearts. It is true that our Indian origin is a humble one, but justice demands that we honour our mothers and our fathers. Why should we care to what degree exactly of mixture we possess European blood

¹⁵Non-Status Indian refers to Native people in Canada who were not registered under the first Indian Act of 1876 (often because they were out hunting or fishing when the Indian agent came), or who subsequently gave up, or lost, their status through the process of enfranchisement. Many Métis are often included in this classification.

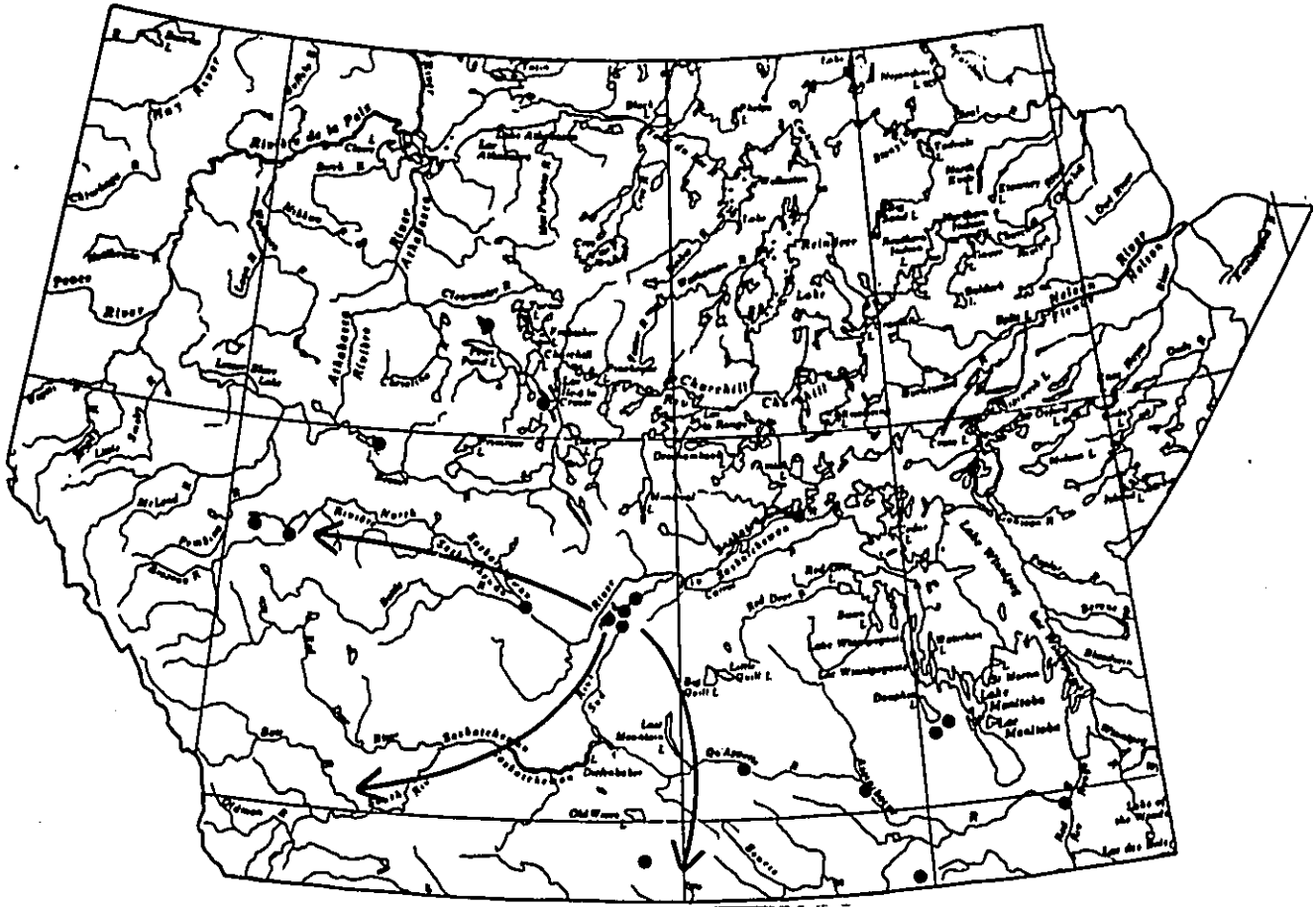
and Indian blood? If we feel ever so little
gratitude and filial love towards one or the
other, do they not constrain us to say:
"We are Métis. "

(Flannagan 1985:165)

The events that took place in 1869 pushed the Métis further west into Saskatchewan. Louis Riel was elected as the representative of his community to the House of Commons in 1873, although he was never allowed to serve. Instead, he was accused of murder and faced exile. By 1885, the Métis were again faced with losing their lands to incoming immigrants, and those in Saskatchewan sought to be recognized as the Manitoba Métis had. The final battle at Batoche signalled the end of Métis military encounters, and finally Louis Riel was accused of treason and hung in 1885.

From this point on, the dispersion of the Métis Nation became more widespread (see map no. 4). Further marginalised by their lack of legal status, they were forced to live on the fringes of reservations (when permitted by the bands) or on road allowances,¹⁶ or to take their chances in the city. Those in the east were forced to adopt a white or Indian identity.

¹⁶ A road allowance is a section of land that was put aside by the government to build roads. Because this land could not be sold, many Métis who could not live on reservations took up residence on these lands.



Map no. 4: Red River Métis Dispersal 1885-1890
(Anon. 1992:12)

Scholarly Representations

During this period in Métis history an interesting academic debate between French and English Canada focused on who was responsible for or benefitted from the Métis uprisings. In the historiographical introduction to his revisionist book of the Métis rebellions, D.N. Sprague states, "And since the defeat of the Métis represented a conquest of persons whose language was French and religion was Roman Catholicism, the victory was a triumph for English-Protestant ascendancy" (1988:1). Sprague defines early historical writings on the Métis, from the English and French point of view as, "the government-vindication and the clerical-beatification polemics," respectively (1988:1).

In 1880, a report of the Smithsonian Institute called "The French Half-Breeds of the Northwest" was published. It included a section called Appellations of French mixed-bloods, which I present here.

The French mixed-bloods of the Northwest are known under the several names of half-breeds, métis, and bois-brûlés. Métis is probably derived from the Spanish mestizo, itself traceable to the Latin mixtus. Bois-brûlé (burnt-wood), an appellation mostly used in the British provinces, is explained by referring to the maternal dialect of a large proportion of half-breeds. In Chippewa they are called Wisahkotewan Niniwak (men partly burned, or half burned), that is, I infer, men tinged with Indian blood, but not quite burned into the coppery complexion. The usual name of half-breeds used by English and Americans presupposes blood from the paternal and maternal ancestors, mixed in equal proportion; but, as mentioned before, this is not often the case. The term mixed-blood is too vaguely comprehensive. Métis, when referring to French mixed-bloods, seems the most appropriate name. The designation of French is often indifferently applied to Canadians, métis of all

grades, and even pure Indians who associate with métis and speak their patois. It should also be stated that in Manitoba and other places a certain proportion of mixed-bloods, from English and Scotch fathers, bearing such names as Grant, Grey, Sutherland, &c., are classified as French, from their language, religion, and associations, while occasionally such names as Lambert and Parisien are found among English half-breeds.

(Havard 1880:314)

This academic definition points to the difficulty in identifying Métis according to blood quantum, and even socio-cultural divisions. The difference between the French Métis and the English Métis of the Red River area has recently been noted and researched by John E. Foster. He refers to the English-speaking, Anglican group in Red River as the "country-born."¹⁷

In L'histoire des Canadiens Français, Benjamin Sulte denied that early Canadians intermarried, except in very rare instances, with the Indian tribes (1885 I:154). As a rebuttal, John Reade stated in an article entitled "The Half-Breed" that:

By 1870 the half-breeds and métis of Manitoba, as we may distinguish these of British and French origin, numbered about 10,000. Besides them there was a tribe of métis hunters, numbering at one time 6,000 and a métis population of uncertain number scattered through the Northwest, not to speak of the large population of half-breeds among the Indian bands living on reservations in the older provinces.

(1885:11)

¹⁷ For more information on the "country-born," see John E. Foster "The 'country-born' in the Red River Settlement, 1820-1850" (1973).

It should be noted that Reade also made a distinction between the French and English Métis, and even mentioned the métis populations in other areas---at this point in history, the Northwest included large portions of Northern Ontario and Quebec. This debate was carried on well into the twentieth century, as is demonstrated by the histories discussed below.

The Post-Riel Eras (1885-1982)

Legal Definitions

By 1885, the Manitoba Métis still had not settled with the Canadian government and a new influx of immigrants sparked the final military battle which eventually defeated the Métis nationalistic movement and forced another dispersal of the nation. From 1885 until 1951 the legal definitions of Métis, or for that matter Indians, did not change substantially.

In his article "'Métis Participation in the Treaty-Making process in Ontario: A Reconnaissance,'" McNab notes that,

Prior to 1885 Métis in Ontario were involved in treaty negotiations and, in some cases, participated in them as Métis communities. After 1885 they were involved only as individuals and often did not even participate as individual Métis, but rather as 'Indians.'

(1985:58)

Until 1982, the only recognition of Métis rights existed in the Manitoba Act of 1870, scrip,¹⁸ and a few half-breed adhesions to some treaties in Ontario. Métis people who lived outside of Manitoba were considered either white or Indian (often Non-Status Indian). It should be stressed that this distinction is crucial to an understanding of the current struggles of the Ontario Métis to be legally recognized.

Since then many changes have taken place which have exacerbated the need for a legal Métis identity. The rise of Métis political organizations since the 1960s has not really resolved the issue, but it has at least provided definitions which were outlined by the Métis themselves. Initially, many definitions restricted Métis membership to those with Red River ancestry and land claims. Since then, the Métis Nation has grown to include significant populations all over the country---although not all ten provinces are represented by the Métis National Council. For example, the Métis Nation Accord defined Métis as follows:

Métis means an aboriginal person who self-identifies as Métis, who is distinct from Indian and Inuit and is a descendant of these Métis who received land grants and/or scrip under the provisions of the Manitoba Act, 1870, or the Dominion Lands Act, as enacted from time to time.

(Document Three, 1992)

¹⁸ James Frideres defines scrip as follows: "Scrip is a certificate giving the holder the right to receive payment later in the form of cash, goods or land" (1988). Scrip was offered to many Métis (who often did not understand its value) to extinguish their rights to land. Many Métis sold their scrip to incoming immigrants for very little. Today, Métis lawyers maintain that many Métis of the North West (as defined in late 19th century) were eligible for scrip and were never offered it, thereby have outstanding land claims.

Unfortunately, land claims issues and the question of aboriginal rights have often led to power struggles and internal disagreement over who should or should not have status. This has not only impeded progress towards an acceptable solution, but in some cases has actually paralyzed the process completely.

New criteria return to community acceptance (as was evidenced in colonial legislation) as an important factor in determining membership. This is demonstrated by the membership requirements of the Métis Nation of Ontario which are as follows: a member of the Métis Nation is a person who a) is alive; b) self-identifies as Métis; c) is distinct from Indian or Inuit; d) has genealogical ties to Aboriginal Ancestry; and e) is accepted by the Métis Nation.

Scholarly Representations

Métis histories of the twentieth century from the English and French points of view vary considerably. As far as the French were concerned, the Métis Nation did not exist. In contrast, the English in the main took the position that the Métis were incapable of winning the battle against civilization due to their nomadic lifestyle which ultimately, in their view, spelled their doom.

In the twentieth century, writings by and for the Métis begin to appear. In 1935, A. H. deTrémaudan, a representative of the Métis Association, published L'Histoire de la Nation Métisse (History of the Métis Nation), often referred to as the first "official" Métis

history. In response to this book, French historian A.G. Morice writes "There is not, has never been, and never will be a métis nation...It's a race, not a nation"¹⁹ (Morice 1938:38).

In the same year George Stanley published The Birth of Western Canada. He states that,

Fundamentally there was little difference between the half-breed and the Indian question... By character and upbringing the half-breeds, no less than the Indians, were unfitted to compete with the whites in the competitive individualism of white civilization, or to share with them the duties and responsibilities of citizenship.

(1960:vii)

In 1945, Marcel Giraud from France published a massive work, Le Métis Canadien, in which he states that the Métis were "incapable of understanding any plan of life other than nomadism" (1945:388). One could conclude that the academic debate over "who" the Métis were/are, and what happened in the Riel military conflicts has essentially been a battleground for the French-English struggle for power, which has largely resulted in the erasure of the Métis.

Assimilation policies which were introduced in the Indian Act of 1876, specifically with respect to voluntary and involuntary enfranchisement, were carried on in the twentieth century through the residential school system²⁰ and the denial of basic human rights. For

¹⁹ "Il n'y a point, il n'y a jamais eu et il n'y aura jamais de nation métisse...C'est une race, non pas une nation" (Morice 1938:38).

²⁰ From about the 1920s to the 1950s Native children from the age of five were removed from their homes and forced to go to boarding schools called "residential schools." In these schools, the children were not allowed to speak their native language or see their families. In some cases, these children were taken from quite remote areas and did not get to see their families again until they were adults.

example, status Indians had no right to vote until 1960, could not buy alcohol or own land, or become lawyers, doctors, professionals of any kind. Effectively, the reservation system amounted to the equivalent of the apartheid system of South Africa.

The civil rights movement in the United States was paralleled in Canada by the Red Power movement. In 1969, the introduction of the White Paper by Jean Chrétien, which was aimed at extinguishing all aboriginal rights, led to the mobilisation of many Native political organizations. Métis efforts were finally rewarded in 1982 through the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, in which Canada's Métis were finally officially and legally recognized as an aboriginal people, distinct from First Nations and the Inuit.

1982-Present

Although legal recognition has given rise to a deluge of writings on and by the Métis, the existence of Métis cultures outside of Western Canada is still only rarely acknowledged. A perusal of the attached bibliography quickly demonstrates the focus of many of these writings on legal, constitutional, and land claims issues. Métis status is determined by the individual provincial Métis organizations which are federally recognized and funded by the Canadian government and which set their own criteria for membership. The Canadian government has not yet defined who is legally Métis, although significant changes to the Indian Act have been made in the past ten years. Notably, gender

discrimination was ended with the passing of Bill C-31 in 1985 through which Aboriginal status was reinstated to those women who lost it through marriage to white men.

Ironically, this policy further marginalised many Métis because it meant that all of the families with reinstated Indian status had rights to move to their respective reservations. Shortage of housing and funding meant that many band councils did not allow Métis to stay.

Throughout the 1980s, and still today, many studies still maintain that the Métis live in Western Canada, but this point of view is gradually changing to include other communities and different aspects of Métis identity and culture. For example, Sylvia Van Kirk has studied the role of Native women in the fur trade (1993). Nicole St-Onge has studied variations in Métis identity in the Red River area (1992; 1994). In her article "Variations in Red River: The Traders and Freeman Métis of Saint-Laurent, Manitoba," she states that "life was more diverse, 'Métis' self-identification more nebulous, and class-based structures and relations more complex within Red River than has been argued" (1992:3).

Jacqueline Petersen's social studies of the Great Lakes communities have acknowledged the Métis diaspora and diversity, but they are focused on the American Métis (1985). Some studies have been done on the role of the Métis in the treaty process (McNab, 1985; J.S. Long, 1985). Each of these studies represent a beginning in the acknowledgment of difference within the Métis Nation.

However, much more research is needed in all disciplines to truly understand the Métis phenomenon and the complex issue of Métis identity. Legal recognition has finally spurred the process, and as legal matters get settled, more research is forthcoming.

CHAPTER TWO

MUSICOGRAPHY

The few existing studies on Métis musical practices reflect in many ways the legal and academic representations of Métis identities discussed above. The purpose of this section is to present an overview of the research that has been conducted on Canadian Métis socio-musical practices. It is also an examination of the various criteria which have been used to represent Métis culture and identity, and how these criteria have, in the same way as institutional definitions and most scholarly publications, contributed to the construction of a homogeneous image of the Métis. The same chronological divisions that were used in the previous section, except for the pre-1816 era, will be used here to facilitate the contextualization of the texts examined.

1816-Confederation (1867)

The best known Métis songwriter of the 19th century is Pierre Falcon.¹ His songs were known and sung all over by the voyageurs. They

¹ For information on Pierre Falcon, see Margaret Complin's article "Pierre Facon's 'Chanson de la Grenouillère'" (1939); Grant MacEwan, "Pierre Falcon The Métis Maker of Songs" (1981); and Margaret Arnett MacLeod, "Bard of the Prairies" (1956).

were often referred to in early travellers' accounts, and are still sung by many older Métis .

However, there are still problems with the collections and publications of Falcon's songs. Some of the lyrics to a few of Falcon's songs were published in the 19th century.² However, it wasn't until 1939 that one of Falcon's song was published by Margaret Complin with both the music and the text. In this article Complin comments on the difficulty in finding information on Falcon's song about the Battle of Seven Oaks. She states, "Parenthetically, I might say that many of the older Métis, though they understand English, often speak nothing but a French-Cree-Saulteau dialect, and are exceedingly difficult to understand (1939:54). Complin also notes "Falcon, possibly because of the difficulties of his Métis dialect, has suffered many things from translators" (1939:55).

Published versions of Falcon's music which present the lyrics in French or English seldom mention the fact that his songs may have been originally written in Michif, in spite of the significant implications of text on musical features. The many published versions of known Falcon songs all vary considerably in melodic features, and especially in musical form. These variations, I submit, could be attributed to many factors, including translation, performance practice, and regional influence. Nevertheless, it is certain that the use of the Michif

² Versions of Pierre Falcon's songs can be found in J.J. Kohl's Kitchi-gami, Wanderings Round Lake Superior (1956); F.A.H. LaRue's article "Chansons Populaires et Historiques" (1863); J.J. Hargrave's Red River (1871); and Joseph Tassé's Les Canadiens de l'Ouest (1878).

language in Falcon's songs is a significant characteristic which should be acknowledged as part of Métis musical culture.

Throughout the 19th century, a significant number of travellers' accounts comment on the musical talents of the voyageurs (which undoubtedly included many Métis) and their skills at composing songs. However, these references do not include any musical notation, only the text. What has remained of this music in published works are the better-known French songs, and vivid descriptions of distinctive musical practices which have yet to be examined and studied. It is my belief that an in-depth, historical exploration of this literature---which is not within the scope of this study---would do much to provide more information on early Métis musical traditions.

The Riel Rebellions (1869-1885)

From 1863 onwards many collections of French Canadian music appear which include some of Falcon's music. During the Riel Rebellions his song about the Battle of Seven Oaks was banned by the Canadian government because it was used to rally support. Complin commented on the difficulty in finding people who still knew this song because of its forced disappearance from the repertoire.

Colonization of the West began in the early 1800s. In contrast, colonization of Northern Ontario only began around 1860. Therefore,

documentation of the Métis in these remote areas is largely limited to missionaries' and travellers' accounts. These have yet to be studied in great detail with respect to information they might contain about Métis musical practices.

Post-Riel era (1885-present)

Ethnomusicological studies of the Métis of Canada have thus far been sparse, sporadic, and geographically, exclusively representative of Métis communities in Western Canada. Many of these representations reflect the same perceptions that were found in the historiography section.

In 1916, Marius Barbeau recorded a version of Falcon's song about the Battle of Seven Oaks, often called "La Grenouillère" (which Barbeau called "Les Bois-Brûlés"), at Tadoussac. This song was not published until 1942 in an article called "Voyageur Songs." An in-depth investigation, including listening to the original recording and examining of Barbeau's field notes and transcriptions of this particular song has allowed me to observe substantial discrepancies between the published version and the original recording as sung by Edward Hovington, an elderly Hudson's Bay Company clerk, from whom Barbeau collected the song.

The disparities between the original recording and the published version included change of words, melodic variations and alterations of phrasing and aspects of musical form. My point is that if, as I could

show, the distinctive, irregular, features of Métis music have been "corrected," it could be argued, when the particular features of this musical culture have been effectively erased.

On the issue of Métis identity, Barbeau states

Some of the singers, particularly among the Bois-Brûlés or Chicots, were endowed with a gift for song-making, if not sheer improvisation. The Bois-Brûlés were half-breeds; or at times, white men married to Indian women.

(1942:18)

The first ethnomusicological research of Métis music was conducted by Margaret Arnett MacLeod. In 1959, MacLeod published Songs of Old Manitoba, a collection of indigenous songs which was actually a by-product of her detailed social research of the Red River area. This collection includes historical notes for each song, transcriptions of the melody for the first verse, and French text.

In the introduction to her work, MacLeod includes a short biography of Pierre Falcon. Of the songs MacLeod states that "The earlier ones were composed by the French element in the community and, as far as can be learned, Pierre Falcon was the only person who to any extent put the life of the country into verse" (1959:1).

That Falcon would be referred to as French is not unusual---as has been noted in Havard's definition of Métis identity---if inaccurate. As a matter of fact, many of his songs can be found in French Canadian song collections from 1860 onwards and in much of the voyageur

literature previously discussed. However, the irony is that even though these songs often treat of Métis historical events and daily life, were composed by a Métis, and, more than likely were sung in the Métis language, they are not often represented as constituting Métis music.

Translations of Falcon's songs have proven problematic for many researchers, undoubtedly because many of the singers who still know Falcon's songs speak Michif and sing in that language. Whether or not Falcon wrote his songs in Michif cannot be proven. However, if this were the case, then many of the distinctive features of these songs would necessarily be erased in order to accomodate the French and English translations which constitute the large majority of his published music. On the issue of translation, MacLeod states that "The translation can be sung to Pierre Falcon's original tune with some stretching, but no more than to sing his own words requires" (1959:9). This "stretching" would involve changes in melody, phrasing, and even the overall form of the song.

Barbara Cass-Beggs collected a few Métis songs which were published in 1967 under the title, Seven Métis Songs of Saskatchewan. These songs were collected in Lebret, Saskatchewan and sung by Joseph Gaspard Jeanotte. This collection includes extensive notes on the historical significance of these songs. Transcriptions of the melody for the first verse are included and the text is in French.

This collection also includes the music of Pierre Falcon. It is interesting to note that the text to Falcon's songs that can be found in many travellers' accounts invariably demonstrate irregular stanzas,

both in the length of phrases as well as the number of verses. One could conclude from this that the text would demand an irregular musical structure as well. However, this cannot be acknowledged since musical notation has only been provided for the first verse.

In 1985, Lucinda Clemens recorded an album of prairie Métis songs. A singer and musicologist from the Qu'Appelle Valley in Saskatchewan, Clemens also learned most of these songs from the Métis singer Gaspard Jeanotte. However, for commercial purposes, the songs were arranged by Clemens using a variety of instruments as accompaniment.

The most detailed studies of Métis music have been conducted by Anne Lederman throughout the 1980s. Lederman's research focuses on old Native and Métis fiddling in Manitoba. She has published numerous articles which include detailed musical analyses of Métis fiddling. Two cassette recordings of Métis fiddle music taken from field recordings have also been released. The Canadian Museum of Civilization has a complete collection of Lederman's work, including field notes, sound recordings, and dance videos.

Lederman mentions that interpretations of the same tune vary greatly from one player to another, due to the fact that the combination, melodic alteration, fragmentation, and/or repetition of the motivic units of each piece is not predetermined. This performance practice allows for a wide range of individual expression which nevertheless results in a distinctive style that is disjunctive, unpredictable, and fluid.

Although Lederman's work has been effective in identifying, characterizing, and analysing a distinctive Métis style of fiddling, it should be pointed out that the Métis communities that Lederman has worked with could easily be classified as what Will Straw refers to as a "musical community," which he defines as "a population group whose composition is relatively stable...and whose involvement in music takes the form of an ongoing exploration of one or more musical idioms said to be rooted in a geographically specific historical heritage" (1991:373).

Furthermore, due to its geographic location and its relatively homogeneous population, the Western communities from which Lederman's studies are based fit the traditional representations of the "historical"³ Métis identity, that is, a historic people of the West whose culture is relatively homogeneous. What I am alluding to here is the fact that it should not be assumed that the musical traditions of these particular regions are in this country representative of Métis musical traditions in general.

Another point of view is provided by the research of Lynn Whidden who has also focused on Métis fiddling in Manitoba. In 1993, she published a book of Métis songs called, Métis Songs: Visiting was the Métis Way. This collection was the culmination of the Saskatchewan Music Educators' Project and was intended for teaching purposes in the school system. It includes transcriptions of the melody with guitar

³ The term "historical" Métis is often used to refer to the Métis community who lived in the prairies, were associated with the buffalo hunt, the Riel Rebellions, and their descendants.

accompaniment, French text with occasional English translation, and a few notes on the historical significance and the sources of the songs.

This work is significant in that it attempts for the first time to publish songs in the Michif language. However, the original versions are significantly altered to accomodate the purpose of the project, that is, to teach these songs to young children. Therefore, they are once again simplified and corrected to facilitate this process.

Some isolated studies of Métis fiddling can also be found, which are included in the annotated bibliography. However, I would like to point out that, as recently as 1993, statements such as the following are quite common: "Through the preaching of the missionaries, the métis nation became inevitably Catholic and French" (Deschênes 1993:3).⁴ These interpretations which deny the existence and the possibility of cultural diversity that currently exists within the Métis Nation raises many questions. For example, how have the English-speaking, Anglican Métis communities which have been noted in the studies of John Foster and the social and cultural diversity documented by Jacqueline Petersen and Nicole St-Onge been taken into account? In the same vein, how does one deal with the large number of Métis who were raised and live on reservations and have a native language as their mother tongue?

In even more concrete terms, how does one explain that, on the Turtle Mountain Reserve, there exists a large population of Michif-

⁴ "Par l'évangélisation des missionnaires, la nation métisse est devenue inévitablement catholique et francophone" (Deschênes 1993:3).

speakers who neither speak nor understand French, and yet sing a large number of French-Canadian songs in French? These musical traditions reflect the complex relation between music and identity which this study intends to explore in great detail.

CHAPTER THREE

UNCHARTED TERRITORY

This section seeks to outline the premises of this study. I have used the terms "uncharted territory" because where I am going has not yet been "mapped out" in the literature on Métis music. Here I want to emphasize the importance of regional specificities and the sense of community which is constructed in relation to specific geographic areas and socio-musical practices.

Regional Specificities

Regional specificities in a study of Metis socio-musical practices must be addressed to acknowledge and better understand the cultural diversity which characterizes the Métis Nation. Regional specificities in the case of Metis socio-musical practices involves not only the particular soundscape of the region, but also genealogical relationships, socio-economic development, historical events, government policy and geographic borders.

The Canadian Constitution recognizes three aboriginal peoples which are First Nations, Inuit, and Métis. Historically, these classifications have been based on cultural, geographic, and social factors which acknowledged different cultures, especially in the case of First Nations people. In spite of aboriginal status, legal

definitions of the Métis seem to ignore the effects of various Native-European affiliations, lifestyles, and geographic considerations, not to speak of governmental and religious interference, and varied histories, on Métisness and the resulting cultural diversity on both the individual and the collective levels.

It is interesting to note that the Michif Language Conference of 1985 has begun this recognition of many cultures by officially acknowledging the existence of four Métis languages. With that in mind, and because this study is concerned with Métis culture, I aim to emphasize the cultural, sociological, and genealogical factors which I believe have contributed to the development and existence of many Métis cultures in Ontario specifically.

Moreover, the significant differences between the Plains tribes and Eastern Woodlands tribes must, in my opinion, be recognized to fully understand the Métis of Ontario. Although classification systems can be reductionist and serve to homogenize, the complexity of Métisness needs to be acknowledged in terms of regional differences nevertheless.

One final, but crucial, word on this issue. The borders which have been defined throughout Canadian history through legal means cannot, and should not, be those which define the cultural boundaries of the Métis Nation, any more than they cannot, and should not, define the cultural boundaries of First Nations tribes. This point will be discussed in much greater detail in a section below on borders and boundaries.

This approach is not intended in any way to challenge the coherence of the Métis Nation. Rather, it is an attempt to respect difference within the Nation and the fact that although it was born of the same phenomenon, various segments of the Nation have grown and developed in different ways. As with the First Nations people, I want to submit, the various Métis communities share many similarities and yet are very different.

Sense of Community

Dealing with the Métis Nation in Ontario necessitates a different understanding of community from that of the large Métis settlements of Western Canada. The regional, historical, and legal differences between the lifestyle of the ''historical'' Métis and the Métis of Ontario have meant that dispersion and fragmentation of the Métis Nation in Ontario has been much more pronounced. I do not mean to imply however that this has resulted in the assimilation or dissolution of the Métis Nation in Ontario, but rather that communities are not necessarily defined by living in the same village or settlement. What I want to show here is that there are what could be perceived as less tangible means through which the Métis communities of Ontario have bonded and developed their sense of Nation.

The first significant factor which has informed the cultural diversity within the Métis Nation is geneology. As previously mentioned, the different kinship systems, based either on patrilineal

or matrilineal practices, among First Nations tribes must be considered in conjunction with European ancestry. Other historical factors which tended to contribute to the development of different Métis cultures include the hiring practices and fur trade routes of the Hudson's Bay Company and the NorthWest Company, and their tremendous impact on Métis heritage.

For example, the Plains' tribes did not follow the same lifestyle as the Eastern Woodlands, and since most research on Métis culture has been carried out in the West, many people believe that the Métis were buffalo hunters. However, the Eastern Woodlands tribes were hunter/gatherers who did not live in large community settings. They were however in close contact through their various roles as guides, interpreters and voyageurs in fur trade society. These lifestyle differences have had a significant impact on the type of communities that developed in Eastern and Western Canada.

Whereas in the West the disappearance of the buffalo brought about drastic changes in Métis communities and lifestyle, in Northern Ontario, the encroachment of the logging industry and ensuing effects on traplines brought different but as dramatic changes to the lives of the Métis from this area. At the same time, it should be stressed, the smaller more widespread communities of Ontario are no less closeknit than the larger ones of, say, Manitoba.

Here, I would like to show through a personal anecdote how the various Métis communities in Ontario are profoundly interconnected despite geographic distance.

Last year, the President of the Métis Nation of Ontario (Tony Belcourt) wanted to contact me but had lost my phone number. Although he knew I lived in Ottawa, he could not remember my last name, but knew my family's name (Giroux) and where my grandfather was from (River Valley). My cousin Ti Lou who took over and still traps my grandfather's line, lives in River Valley and so Tony called an 84-year old Métis trapper of the area to ask if he knew of me. This trapper had just turned over his trapline to a young local by the name of Eric and so he asked him if he knew of a young woman doing research on Métis music. Eric in turn asked his mom, who happens to be my mom's cousin. "Oh! That's Jean's daughter," she said, and proceeded to call my mother in Sudbury who then called me in Ottawa to tell me Tony was trying to get a hold of me. This whole process took about an hour and a half at which point I called Tony back and we both had a very good laugh.

All this to say, that no matter how far apart they are, the families that have been linked through the fur trade still share that bond today. I have found that no matter where I go or who I talk to in the various Métis communities, many members of these communities either knew, or knew of my family because of my cousin's ongoing involvement in the fur trade.

Even though membership in the Métis Nation of Ontario is also defined by self-identification and aboriginal ancestry, it is ultimately determined by community acceptance. Acceptance in this particular Métis community is not only based on historical,

genealogical, and political factors, but is often based on a common understanding of "family."

Family is constituted by an extended kinship system which includes grandparents, aunts and uncles, and cousins. Even if contact between distant relatives is infrequent, knowledge of them is enough to establish a common bond. This bond even includes those that are not still living.

For example, my membership in the Métis Nation is transgenerational. I am "known" by the Métis community through my grandfather's legacy. The fact that my cousin 'Ti Lou still traps on what used to be my grandfather's farm and is still actively involved in the fur trade today, has maintained a link with the Métis community throughout the province. But even beyond that, the many Métis people I have spoken to in my research have worked with, or still remember my grandfather or his brothers through their involvement in the fur trade or the logging industry.

It is this memory of my grandfather and his siblings that has granted me the privilege of being welcome in the Métis community of Ontario, and of the trust that has been conferred to me by the Elders who knew and respected them. These observations constitute the essentials of what I consider to be the sense of community as it relates to the Ontario Métis, and will be discussed in greater detail throughout this study.

Métis Music

This study is based on a notion that Métis music, as Métis identity, within a Canadian context, is multifarious. Here, I want to argue that although the term 'Métis music' can be used as an all-encompassing category to represent a distinct hybrid musical culture, it is in reality constituted by many variations which are expressed through many 'micromusics' (Slobin 1992).

My argument is based on two premises: (1) that Métis music is expressed through many micromusics that are contingent upon the specificity of Métis experiences (various Native and White affiliations, urban and reservation lifestyles, regional and historical peculiarities, and so on); and (2) that Métis musical traditions are actually expressed along a continuum, with Native and white elements at either end. I also want to argue that musical representations can contribute to the construction of a nation or, as in the case of the Métis, to the erasure of, and even the denial of its very existence.

I am heading towards uncharted territory with respect to Métis musical traditions in a number of ways. First, I am working towards an understanding of contemporary Métis musical traditions and how they have been developed and shaped by various influences. To do this, I focus on not only 'traditional' music, but also on popular music which also constitutes an important 'heritage' of a more contemporary nature.

Second, an understanding of Métis musical practices necessitates a methodological approach which can acknowledge the distinctive belief and value systems that inspired them. The hierarchies produced by the Western European canons have served quite effectively to legitimate certain types of music as well as certain aspects of music over others. Here the challenge is to try to feature Métis musical practices as they are articulated through different value and belief systems.

In the same vein, the challenge in this study is to address the socio-musical practices of Métis in terms of the particular aesthetic sensibility which characterizes them.

CHAPTER FOUR

BORDERS AND BOUNDARIES

...in Ethnography, the distance is often enormous
between the brute material of information...and the
final authoritative presentation of the results
---Malinowski

This chapter examines how borders and boundaries have affected the development of past and contemporary Métis identity in Ontario. To do so it presents a small collection of publications on the subject which operate on different levels, and explore the different geographic, cultural, and even psychological spaces which have thus been constructed. I see these studies produce an inward spiral, using an ever-narrowing point of view from global to regional and local perspectives, and ending in individual and personal spaces.

These different and often contrasting perspectives are important because they help explain some of the controversies which exist over Métis identity. Furthermore, they also lead us to examine who is speaking for whom and the vantage point from which the authors articulate their viewpoint.¹

The first section, then, situates the Ontario Métis in terms of the effects of borders and boundaries on Métis identity from my point of

¹ The vantage point is a crucial aspect of my perspective of the Ontario Métis because it is a constant reminder that I am influenced and sometimes clouded by my own experience. In an effort to see beyond my own view, I use the metaphor of an inward spiral which allows me to focus on different perspectives, visually, intellectually, and psychologically.

view, at a vantage point which permits me to see Ontario in a global context. This is linked to a discussion on the development and significance of the criteria which have been established by the Métis Nation of Ontario for being recognized and registered as Métis.

The second section examines the existing research on the Ontario Métis. This survey includes many different points of view, both Métis and non-Métis, and could be seen as a study of power relations and how these affect and limit the processes of defining Métis identity in Ontario.

The third section is based on written documentation of the community of Mattawa. This localized survey traces the historical development of the community from a non-Métis point of view. It is essential in that it presents a picture of how the Métis of Mattawa have been perceived by those around them and, at the same time, helps us to trace the historical path of these perceptions.

The Ontario Métis

Borders can create boundaries. Many different types of boundaries. This has been especially the case for the Ontario Métis. These boundaries have been defined by legal, geographic, historical, cultural, and even psychological parameters, and are neither fixed nor stationary. Indeed, borders themselves have changed over time.

Throughout Canadian history the delineation of international, provincial, and Native territories has determined legal status for the Métis. For example, the creation of the Manitoba/Ontario border which led to different legal definitions of the Métis on either side resulted in provincial borders which created Métis cultural boundaries.

To the east lies the Ontario/Québec border. This border also created a peculiar division within the Métis Nation. First, the provincial Métis organization in Québec (l'Alliance Autochtone) is not recognized by the Métis National Council. Second, Mattawa was actually at one time an outpost of Timiskaming,² which is now part of Québec. This means that, although Mattawa and Timiskaming share a common history, the Métis in Mattawa are recognized and represented on a national level and those in Timiskaming are not.

Such political divisions have had even more drastic implications when one considers that the Métis who live near the U.S./Canada border are actually subjected to laws from a different country altogether. These communities are nevertheless linked culturally and historically, even if today they are separated by an international border.³

Ongoing negotiations for a Métis land base means that borders will shift again in the future. Shifting borders mean shifting government definitions and policies, and ultimately, shifting Métis identities. In Ontario, these Métis identities include Status Indian, Non-Status

² Also spelled Temiskaming, Temiscamingue or Temiscaming.

³ These similarities have been noted in linguistic studies of Michif, which is essentially the same language on both sides of the border.

Indian, Métis, and white identities, none of which are mutually exclusive.

Actually, in many cases, the choice to be one or the other is determined by what is most advantageous, either economically, legally or socially, at the time. I have often been told by white people and Natives alike that the flexibility and adaptability of the Métis is an enviable characteristic. However, on the other hand, individual choices have divided many families and in turn created divisions at the community, provincial, and even national levels.

This process of ''becoming'' Métis is really rooted in two main events which are part of the criteria for registration in the Métis Nation of Ontario. These are self-identification and community acceptance. Although aboriginal ancestry is a requirement, membership is not based on blood quantum. As an Aboriginal person, a Métis begets a Métis, so to speak.

However, self-identification can be a very lengthy and complex process which is influenced by many factors. Although ''becoming Métis'' is an individual decision, often Métis ancestry has been denied or hidden. This can be exacerbated for those who have lived in urban settings for some generations.

Many genealogical forays lead to the discovery of aboriginal roots, but does this necessarily mean that one is Métis? I have been asked this question many times and the need to explain has forced me to deal with this issue in great detail. The common representation of the Métis as ''not fitting in'' either the White or the Native world reinforces a

homogeneous and essentialized representation of the Métis---a representation which has not really been my experience. I have functioned equally well in both White and Native worlds in the same way as I have in the French or English worlds. The difference is that, in the Métis community, I can be comfortable integrating all components of my cultural heritages, and freely interchange elements from all three cultures---Native, French, and English. These elements include language, spiritual beliefs, ideology, music, life experience, and so on, even though the common links between whichever Métis I am interacting with may change.

This does not necessarily mean that all Métis feel the same way. There are still some who believe that being Métis is linked to Red River ancestry (''historical'' Métis). There also exists a public perception which still equates being Métis with being Indian (this is certainly the case in Northern Ontario where I come from) which creates many psychological boundaries, and in some cases barriers, to self-identifying as Métis.

These psychological barriers have been reinforced by the education system, religious teachings, and political socialization. The effects of these strategies, which are aimed at assimilation, have seriously undermined the self-identification process for many Métis---myself included.

The combination of cultural identification in conjunction with family history is what leads to community acceptance. Whether or not one is raised in the city, there are often family links among

communities. These links facilitate the verification process.⁴ In my case, the links that I have with the northern Ontario Métis community were actually created by my grandfather (transgenerational links), and my cousin's ongoing involvement in the fur trade (extended family links). These links are extremely important in that they provide the Ontario Métis community members with their sense of Nation.

Arguably, the option to choose from a multiplicity of identities has been the Métis prerogative for centuries, and has been exercised throughout. For example, many Métis children (mostly sons initially) were sent abroad or East to be educated. Some returned, some didn't, such as Cuthbert Grant who chose to return to Canada to become a prominent Métis military leader after his education, while his brother James stayed in Scotland.

Variety of legal and cultural identities within Métis families, on an individual and collective level, is a common phenomenon that is especially evident in Ontario. This basic issue in the dilemma of Métis identity is far from being resolved. In Ontario, the Métis Nation has yet to be identified, enumerated,⁵ and registered, and verification is

⁴ The verification process is the way in which the provincial council determines membership in the Nation. Verification includes documentation of aboriginal ancestry, and community acceptance as the main criteria. Recently, the Métis Nation of Ontario has hired a "verifications officer" to assess all applications for membership in the Nation.

⁵ Identification and enumeration are inextricably linked because funding to the Nation is provided based on numbers. These numbers are expressed mathematically as a percentage of the Native population at large. For example, today the Métis population in Ontario which is represented by the Métis Nation of Ontario is assessed as 16.5% of the Native population including First Nations, and Non-Status Indians, which means that 16.5% of funds for the programs in question are allotted to the Métis Nation. Therefore, statistical data is crucial to Métis-specific funding, which in turn means that the verification process becomes all-important. Whether one is considered Métis or Non-Status Indian has serious implications in terms of funding and which political organization controls the disbursement of these funds to the Métis communities.

a constant conflicting issue in the process. Researching this undefined population is difficult at best, and has seriously undermined the study of the Ontario Métis in any field.

First, the limited funding provided to the Métis Nation is primarily aimed at identifying the population and its needs, and land claims issues. Second, the acknowledgment of multiple, shifting Métis identities does not facilitate research but makes it more complex than ever. Moreover, this notion of Métis identity as being flexible and fluid challenges much of the previous research which has often focused on only one aspect of Métis identity, that is, either a legal definition or a representation of the "historical" Métis, thereby reinforcing the perception of the Métis as static and homogeneous. Finally, because these issues of identification, enumeration and registration are current and paramount, the process of "being and becoming" Métis has begun again with renewed vigor and is only now being actively explored academically.

Recent Research of Ontario Métis

Existing research which deals specifically with the Ontario Métis is mostly linked to the question of legal identity and socio-economic conditions. These have been sponsored by Métis and non-Métis political entities. Although the enumeration and registry process has not been completed, a few preliminary studies have been conducted towards characterizing the Métis population of Ontario.

The first of these called The Ontario Métis: Characteristics and Identity was published in 1991. This text interprets data taken from a survey which was conducted by the Ontario Métis and Non-Status Indian Association (now the Ontario Métis and Aboriginal Association) in 1985. The question of "Who are the Métis" is approached by comparing Métis and Non-Status Indian responses to the survey (Peters 1991).

The conclusion acknowledges the difficulty in pinpointing Métis identity as follows,

In terms of how a Métis identity is defined, Métis respondents strongly identified with an Aboriginal heritage (although how they defined that heritage was not explained in the questionnaire), and indicated that Aboriginal and spiritual values are important in their everyday lives (although these are also not defined). They show a sense of separateness from both Status Indians and from non-Native society, preferring an independent Métis status and supporting separate Native political representation and institutions, and a separate Métis land base.

A comparison of attitudes and opinions of Métis with different socio-economic characteristics showed that while age, gender, education, employment and urbanization do not appear to dilute a sense of Aboriginal identity or a desire for separate Métis status, other elements of Métis identity varied for people with different attributes. These results lend support to the definition of "Métisness" as a dynamic phenomenon. People who define themselves as Métis are also in the process of defining and redefining what it means to be Métis.

(Peters, Rosenberg and Halseth, 1991:60)

The process of defining what it means to be Métis has become more urgent and visible since legal recognition of the Métis as an

Aboriginal people in 1982. For the many Métis who were legally forced to adopt a White or Indian identity and whose heritage was denied or hidden, it means finally being able to reclaim their identity. The fashion in which that identity is reclaimed is highly individualistic and therefore, on a collective level, is displayed as a spectrum of Métis identities. Perhaps this is one of the most distinctive features of 'Métisness.'

Although many surveys have been conducted on the Ontario Métis (mostly through government agencies), these largely deal with social issues such as health, housing, and employment. However, demographic information provided by these sources is difficult to assess because of inconsistent results due to the lack of an official registry. Statistics vary wildly from one source to the other, but the fact that Métis populations are marginal, economically and socially disadvantaged, is emphasized throughout.

Another publication which deals specifically with Métis culture is Paul Driben's Aboriginal Cultures of Ontario: A Summary of Definitions and Proposals Made by the Native People of Ontario to Preserve Their Cultural Heritage (1987). The first page includes this disclaimer, "This research was funded under contract by the Ministry of Citizenship and Culture and the Ministry of Education, Ontario. This report reflects the views of the author and not necessarily those of the ministries" (1987).

One can easily understand this statement if one knows that the task of dealing with the Métis has been bandied about between the

provincial and federal governments, neither of which wants to assume full responsibility for settling Métis claims and defining their aboriginal rights.⁶

This report was prepared in 1983 for the 1984 First Ministers' Conference and states as its aim "to present 'definitions of Aboriginal or Native culture...as articulated by the Native people, [and] what is required to assist the Aboriginal people of Ontario to maintain their Aboriginal culture'" (1987:1).

The result was not "one" definition of the Métis as such, but an overview of various definitions which have been put forth by Métis political organizations and Métis writers, most of whom have been previously discussed. The number of definitions provided here, which vary from one year to the next, and from one organization to the other, is in and of itself significant, as it illustrates the difficulty in agreeing on one legal definition of Métis identity today.

Legal definitions have had crucial implications over such issues as land claims for the Métis of Ontario.⁷ Other research pertaining to this issue includes preliminary investigations on the role of the Métis in treaty negotiations (McNab 1985; J.S. Long 1985).

Very little research has been conducted on the cultural and social aspects of the Métis in Ontario. Carol Judd has studied the distinctive architecture of Métis communities at Moose Factory (1983). The social

⁶ Métis lawyer Jean Teillet---great-granddaughter of Louis Riel---specializes in Métis land claims. She refers to the legal position of Ontario Métis as "jurisdictional limbo" (telephone interview, July 15, 1996).

⁷ Métis lawyers maintain that because the borders of Rupertsland included parts of Northern Ontario and Northern Québec at the time the Manitoba Act was passed, that these Métis were also eligible for scrip and were never offered it. Therefore, they believe that these Métis have outstanding land claims.

studies of Jacqueline Petersen provides detailed research of early Métis communities in the Great Lakes area, but mostly focuses on American communities (1981;1987). Finally, the research of Ted Brasser traces the Ojibway influence on Western Métis artwork to Ontario (1987).

These studies all point to the genesis of Métis culture in Ontario, but no in-depth analysis of Métis culture in Ontario has yet been conducted. This raises many questions as to why this is the case. Is it because of the lack of a legal definition and identification of the population in question? Or is it because of the lack of funding to support this type of research? In either case, the fact remains that research which directly pertains to Métis culture in Ontario has barely begun.

Mattawa

Mattawa the meeting place...
There is a story here where rivers meet...

Such reads the sign which greets all who enter Mattawa, and Mattawa, as we will see, is truly a place of many meetings and stories. Mother nature's meetings include the Ottawa and Mattawa rivers, the boreal forest and Pre-cambrian shield, and the red and white pines.

These ''natural'' meetings gave rise to many human meetings: the four First Nations tribes which surround the town,⁸ and the English and the French. These human meetings led to the fur trade and the logging industry, and the attempts to evangelize and colonize.

The following survey is based on archival documents including missionary reports, newspaper articles (local and others), academic writings, and government publications which pertain to Mattawa and its history. They are important because these writings largely constitute the only available written documentation on the historical development of the Métis community in Mattawa. Furthermore, these representations largely reflect the constructions of Métis identity which were examined in great detail in previous sections. Contextualization of the texts examined in this section is facilitated by acknowledging two important aspects of these representations namely, the chronology and the vantage points from which they are written.

Mattawa's history is dotted by significant events which constituted major turning points in the development of the community. These can be categorized as the fur-trade era (pre-1844), the ''religious centre'' era (1844-1881), and the colonization/industrialization era (1881-present). As we will see, Mattawa's role as a meeting/trading place and as a ''service'' centre has really changed

⁸ These are the tribes of Chief Antoine Kiwiwisens (north of the Mattawa river), and Chief Amable Dufond, Montagnais who immigrated from the Two Lakes Region (near Montreal) in the early 1800s. To the west, was Chief Commanda, and north of Lake Nipissing was Chief Beaucage, both of the Nipissings tribe.

very little over the centuries, although the ''services'' themselves and the ''customers'' have.

Most of these hi/stories were written by local non-Native people and feature both the French and English points of view. These perspectives portray individual and personal experiences as well as local and provincial official views. The view of Mattawa, as presented by the Métis community, produces a somewhat different picture, and will be discussed in following chapters.

Literally translated, Mattawa means ''meeting of the waters.'' But there is another story which says that the town was named Mattawa because it is where the chiefs from the many tribes of the area would meet, trade, and even sometimes intermarry. These meetings were designed to set their territorial boundaries and keep peaceful relations.⁹ This story also mentions that it was at Mattawa that these chiefs signed a peace treaty. As we will see, Mattawa is actually a place of many stories, which very much vary depending on who the ''storyteller'' is.

Fur-Trade era (pre-1844)

The development of Métis communities in Ontario were a product of the fur trade. A brief historical overview of Mattawa's fur trade history provides important information as to why Northern Ontario's

⁹ For a more detailed account of this story, see l'abbé J.E. Gravelle's article ''Mme Noah Timmins a été la première femme blanche à s'installer à Mattawa'' (1963).

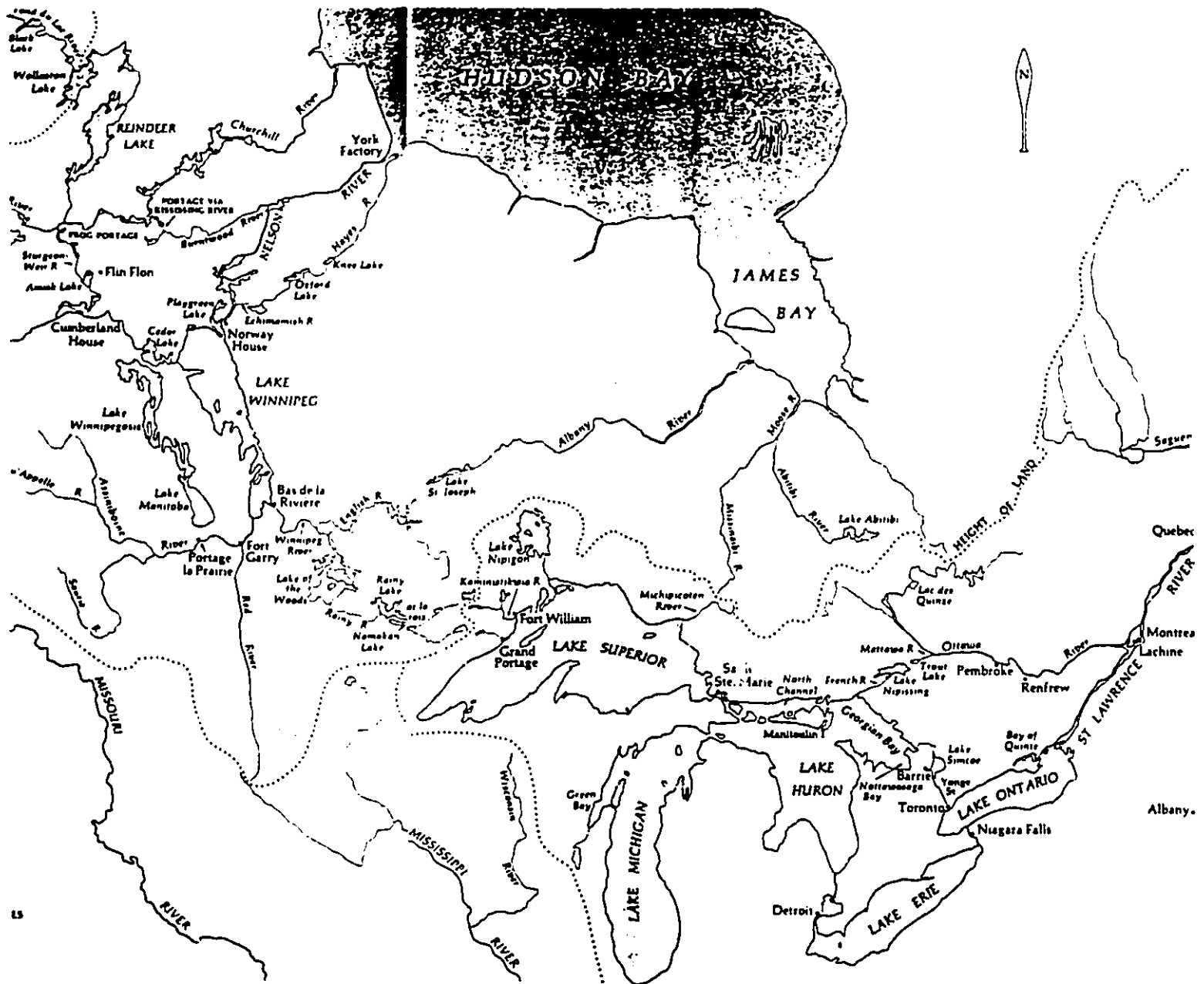
Métis have remained in relative obscurity. However, a better understanding of these communities today can be accomplished through an historical examination of their continual transformations.

I chose to date the Fur Trade period "pre-1844" not because the furtrade ended in 1843, but because it is at this point in time that Mattawa's role changed in terms of the services it provided. Mattawa's location at the confluence of the Mattawa and Ottawa rivers made it an important voyageur route and meeting place where the first white contact can be traced as early as 1610. Mattawa was the turning point, one river providing the way north and the other was the gateway to the west (see Map no.5).

Literally all travellers,¹⁰ voyageurs, and missionaries would at least stop at Mattawa before going on their way. These stopovers would often be used to repair canoes and repack supplies for the next leg of the journey. It is also at Mattawa that the local tribes would meet to exchange goods and later to trade with white people and amongst themselves.

As a matter of fact, according to local historian Leo Morel, the Chevalier de Troyes reported the existence of an Indian settlement on the north shore of the Mattawa river as early as 1686. Morel quotes from de Troyes diary "The 12th day of May we went to Mataouan (Mattawa) meaning in the Indian language, fork of the rivers...We were

¹⁰ I use the term "travellers" in the same sense as James Clifford. In his article "Traveling Cultures" he states "Victorian bourgeois travelers, men and women, were usually accompanied by servants, many of whom were people of color. These individuals have never achieved the status of "travelers." (1992:106). Within the scope of Clifford's definition, voyageurs---especially Métis or Indian voyageurs---would not be considered "travelers."



Map no. 5: Location of Mattawa
(Morse 1971:54)

at this location on a point dotted with Indian cabins and the Indians were making birch bark canoes'' (1980:21).

Researching Mattawa's early fur-trade history has proven to be extremely difficult for many reasons. As W.S. Wallace states,

We know in great detail the story of quite obscure trading-posts in the West; but we know little about the story, for instance, of such an important trading-post as Fort Timiskaming, which was the centre of the fur-trade in a district which has since become perhaps one of the richest areas in Canada.

(1939:1)

Wallace goes on to describe various reasons why this has been the case. First, even though there apparently was a NorthWest Company furtrading post in Mattawa as early as 1784, documents dealing with the furtrade in this area are scarce. Second, it seems that, in spite of this region being one the most lucrative and productive in the fur trade, Mattawa's proximity to Montreal enabled the traders to deal directly with Montreal and not the main posts of the district (Timiskaming or Fort William). Therefore, those in charge of the Mattawa posts never attended the annual ''parliament'' meetings of the partners and were not included in the minutes of the meetings.

Third, another main reason for the obscurity of the early trade in this region is that the main impetus of the fur trade was westward, resulting in the Timiskaming region remaining as somewhat of a backwater, mostly controlled by free-traders where the Hudson Bay Company never really challenged the supremacy of the NorthWest Company.

Unfortunately, most of the NorthWest Company's documents have disappeared and few were ever recovered.¹¹

After the merger of the Hudson Bay Company and the Northwest Company in 1821, a Hudson's Bay post was erected in Mattawa around 1830 as an outlet of the Timiskaming post.¹² Later, Mattawa became the main post in the district. In the meantime, Mattawa was still no more than a meeting place for traders, travellers, and basically consisted of an Indian village. The Hudson's Bay Post closed in 1908, but to this day the fur trade continues in the area and now the locals trade their furs at North Bay.

On another level, world events that had serious implications for the rest of Canada in this era had relatively little impact in Mattawa. As reported in the local newspaper, the Mattawa Recorder,

While France and England and even Holland were engaged in a destiny-determining struggle for North America, Fort Mattawan remained much the same little Indian settlement that it was when Champlain passed through it many decades before. After Canada had passed permanently into the hands of the English we find Mattawa was included in the tip of land marked off as Canada by the proclamation of 1763. The all-important Québec Act of 1774 was a major issue in Québec but it was relatively unimportant to the Indians of Mattawa.

(August 1992:5)

¹¹ For a detailed discussion, see W.S. Wallace "An Unwritten Chapter of Fur Trade History" (1939); and Elaine Allan Mitchell Fort Timiskaming and the Fur Trade (1977).

¹² The date of the establishment of the Hudson's Bay fort varies depending on the source. Some sources indicate that it opened in 1837.

Religious era (1844-1880)

This period in Mattawa's history constitutes a transition period between the furtrade era and the days of the voyageurs, and the industrialization and colonization era. Most of the written documentation pertaining to Mattawa during this period consists of the records and reports of the Oblate priests. In these texts, no mention is made of important historical events in Canadian history which occur during this period, such as the Riel Rebellions, the Confederation and the Manitoba Act. However, in my opinion, given that Mattawa was the "highway" of the furtrade it would seem highly unlikely that its residents¹³ did not hear some news of these events. Nevertheless, the impact of these events on the Mattawa community could not be assessed without an in-depth historical investigation of historical writings, which is not within the scope of this study.

Missionaries regularly passed through Mattawa from 1818 onwards, but the establishment of the first regular mission in 1843 by M. de Bellefeuille, a Sulpicien, marked the beginning of a shift in Mattawa's role as a "service" centre. This shift was largely due to the large influx of loggers and the decline of the fur trade which meant a reorganization of labour in the local community.

¹³ I would like to make a clear distinction between the two terms "residents" and "settlers." The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines a resident as "a permanent inhabitant of a town or neighbourhood" and a settler as "a person who goes to settle in a new country or place; an early colonist." During this era, I consider the Native and Metis population of Mattawa as residents given that this area has constituted their tribal hunting grounds which used the Mattawa river as their hunting boundary, and place of residence for centuries. Colonial settlers did not arrive in this area until the early 1860s.

During this period Mattawa became a focal point from which various churches ministered to the large number of loggers in nearby "chantiers" (shanties). In 1844, the Oblate Fathers were charged with the responsibility of the missions of the Upper Ottawa. This responsibility was mainly aimed at the christianization of the Indians and ministering to the large number of loggers working in the area.

The first church in Mattawa was built in 1863 under the direction of Father LeBret. In an article entitled "Mattawa et les Oblats," Eugene Marcotte states, "In 1864, the first three residents came to settle in Mattawa: a French-Canadian, Mr. Noé Timmins; an Englishman, Mr. John Bangs, and a savage, Amable DuFond" (Le Droit, Ottawa, Dec. 20, 1941:1).¹⁴

Chief Amable Dufond is often included in historical writings as one of the first three settlers in Mattawa, despite the fact that he had lived there for many years. This is more than likely due to the fact that he built a house in the same year as the settlers did. The cultural mixture that is mentioned in this article, that is, French-Canadian, English and Native elements predominate in Mattawa to this day as the following writings will demonstrate.

The missions that were established served the whole area and ministered to loggers, voyageurs, and the Native population. This "floating" population meant that the missionaries needed to go to the congregation. The diversity of nationalities demanded much effort on

¹⁴ "En 1864...les trois premiers résidents de Mattawa venaient s'installer: un canadien-français, M. Noé Timmins; un anglais, M. John Bangs; et un sauvage, Amable Dufond (Marcotte 1941:1).

the part of the missionaries in terms of communication, involving not only language but also access to its members.

The first school in Mattawa was organized in 1871. Classes were taught by Père Jean-Marie Nédélec, who was known as "le petit Père Brûlé" because of severe burn scars on his face. The story that is most often told about him is that he was tortured by Indians (Carrière o.m.i. 1961:1). However, another story reports that it is more likely that he was burned while sleeping too close to the campfire (Sylvestre 1983:10). He served the Mattawa community for 25 years.

The three main cultural elements in Mattawa are evidenced in the school and the church. In his "Notes pour l'histoire de Mattawa" Nédélec writes "Here the savage is friends beside the white man, the English beside the French, the rich beside the poor. The three languages namely, French, English, and Savage, are used in the school (1872:10)."¹⁵ Mass is also conducted in the same three languages, "savage" being Algonquin.

This cultural mixture also gave rise to interesting musical practices in the church. Father Nédélec died on February 28th, 1896. His obituary, published by the local French newspaper La Sentinelle, includes this description of the mass: "The savages took part in singing the Dies Irae, singing their part in their language, and alternating with the church choir. The Rev. P. Pian preached before the

¹⁵"Ici le sauvage est amis à côté du blanc, l'anglais à côté du français, le riche à côté du pauvre. Les trois langues, à savoir, français, anglais, sauvage, sont en usage dans l'école" (Nédélec 1872:10).

absolution in Algonquin. S.G. Mgs. Lorrain said the eulogy for the deceased in French and in English'' (1896:1).¹⁶

These excerpts illustrate how the three cultures which predominated in Mattawa at the end of the 19th century namely, French, English and Algonquin, were present in daily life. More often than not, Nédélec specifically referred to the English-speaking population as Irish. He states ''Actually, we have amongst our catholics French-Canadians, Irishmen, and Indians'' (1878:31).

Statistical data provided by Nédélec's writings reflect the colonial attitudes previously presented in the historiography section in that Métis and Indians are often classified and enumerated together. In 1875, Nédélec states ''nombre de sauvages ou métis 113'' (1875:17).

Colonization/Industrialization (1881-present)

In 1881, the railway reaches Mattawa and opens the way to the north. Mattawa is declared a village in 1884 with 165 families. This is also the year that the Catholic church began a colonization project of the Timiskaming area (called the ''colonization principle''), in an effort to prevent families from moving to the States.

Statistical data provided by the church records is inconsistent and varied at best. For example, Nédélec writes in his diary that the Mattawa census for 1889 includes 18 families of métis or Indians

¹⁶ ''Les sauvages prirent part au chant du Dies Irae, chantant leur partie en leur langue, et alternant avec le chœur de l'église. Le Rev. P. Pian a prêché avant l'absoute en langue algonquienne. S.G. Mgr Lorrain a fait l'éloge du défunt en français et en anglais'' (Anonymous 1896:1).

(1890:88). However, the church bulletin reports that between 1880 and 1890 there were 50 mixed marriages performed (Mattawa: cahier d'annonces 1891).

Two local newspapers began publication in 1895 (dates of closure are not known). In that year, The Mattawa Tribune publishes an historical sketch of the town. In an article entitled "'Mattawa: A Distributing Point for all the Great Lumbering Firms,'" the author states,

From a period beyond which the mind of man
runneth not to the contrary, this point has
been inhabited by the 'noble Red Man' who made
this Point his center of operations when engaged
wither in war with tribes of his own race, with
the white man or against the denizens of the woods
and floods by which he was surrounded. Time passed
on and a trading post of the Hudson's Bay Co. was
established here. Still the Aborigines made this spot
their home and do so to the present day, a portion
of their descendants occupying a part of the town
known as 'Squaw Valley' or 'Indian Town.'

(Anonymous 1895:1)

In all the documentation I searched, this is the only reference I found to Squaw Valley. Today, this part of town is called "'Rosemont'" and has actually become the exclusive section where most of the affluent people live.

The colonization principle led to the building of roads, and access to the area encouraged settlement. By the turn of the twentieth century, Mattawa became a major distributing centre for the logging industry. In his history of Mattawa Leo Morel reports, "'By 1895 there

were at least six hotels to provide for the thousands of shantymen in the area'' (1980:49). Today, logging is still the main industry in Mattawa.

Another important industry is tourism, which is encouraged by the local summer festival called ''Voyageur Days.'' This festival draws approximately five thousand people to the town every summer.

Statistics on Mattawa's Métis population is problematic. The 1988 municipal enumeration quotes the total population of Mattawa is 2,491 people (Blackbourn 1990). The Métis political organizations estimate the Métis community as anywhere from 150 to 350. The 1991 census information provided by Statistics Canada numbers only 35 Métis in Mattawa.

In Mattawa, the issue of Métis identity is embodied in the active presence of two opposing factions seeking political representation: The Ontario Métis and Aboriginal Association (OMAA) and the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO). The Mattawa Recorder reports the comments of an OMAA member at a local meeting:

''How are we supposed to work as a small community within our community that already has another Métis group, '' she asked? ''To me we're causing dissention among our own native people, we don't know which wind to accept, the north or the south? ''

(Arrowsmith April, 12 1995:4)

This fight between the two associations over the definition of Métis identity and representativity presents a serious obstacle in

negotiations with the Canadian government and, to a large extent, compromises the political status which provides the Métis with funding and control of their own culture.

Part 2

La Mizik, Culture, and Politics

INTRODUCTION

No one can speak better for us than ourselves¹
---Elijah Harper

The second half of this study will explore the various relations between music, culture, politics, and Métis identity. Here I want to argue that a multiplicity of Métis identities is not only expressed, but actually constructed through many living musical traditions in Mattawa. Furthermore, these traditions which are informed by historical, cultural, political, and socio-economic factors are expressed in a highly individualistic manner even though they may share some similarities.

Ironically, the ''meeting of the waters'' which led to the meeting of cultures also gave rise to a cultural segmentation of the Métis community. The Mattawa and Ottawa rivers served as a natural border between these different segments and this division led to particular musical styles which came to be associated with the two areas of town known as ''Little Gaspé Town'' west of the Ottawa River and ''Squaw Valley'' south of the Mattawa River (see Map no. 6).

¹ Recently, I attended the Aboriginal People's Commission Policy Forum through which Native organizations can speak directly to federal ministers to express their views and concerns on federal policy. One of the speakers was Elijah Harper. In his presentation he spoke of the need for Aboriginal peoples to get involved in mainstream politics if they want to be heard. In my opinion, this emphasized the importance of having a voice and how much information can be lost, misinterpreted, or miscommunicated through mediation and translation.

The map depicts a settlement area, referred to as "Little Gaspé Town", situated along the Mattawa River. The town is organized into a grid of numbered lots, ranging from 1 to 15. Key geographical features and landmarks include:

- Water Bodies:** The Mattawa River flows through the town. To the west, there is a lake labeled "PAPINEAU LAKE (10 m.)". To the east, a larger body of water is labeled "OTTO MOLECHNI (500 ft) 15 m." and "TENSICAMP (50 m.)".
- Historical and Cultural Sites:** A "HISTORIC CANOE ROUTE" is marked on the western side. A "HISTORICAL SITE (100 ft) 100 ft" is located near the center-right. A "MOOSE HEAD LODGE (2 m.)" is situated on the northern shore.
- Infrastructure and Roads:** "TUPCOTTE PARK" and "PARK ENTRANCE" are located on the western side. A road labeled "PAPINEAU LAKE (10 m.)" runs along the southern edge. A road labeled "DAMI (3 m.)" runs along the eastern edge.
- Geographical Features:** "MT. ANTOINETTE (1100 ft) 3 m." is located to the northeast. "GRACE PLAZA" is situated near the river on the eastern side.
- Administrative Boundaries:** The map indicates the "PROVINCE OF QUEBEC" and "PROVINCE DU QUÉBEC" on the right side.
- Compass Rose:** A compass rose is located in the upper right corner, indicating North is towards the top right.

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However, cultural, political, and legal identities cannot be dissociated from one another. Political affiliations and class stratification also contribute to divisions within the community (more details on this will appear below). Because of this, a considerable amount of interconnectedness and overlapping exists between geographic, cultural, political divisions.

The following chapters examine the particular musical styles and genres---albeit interrelated---that came to be associated with ''Little Gaspé Town'' and ''Squaw Valley,'' and how these are connected to cultural and political Métis identities. These musical genres range from ceremonial to country and western music. They include instrumental music as well as vocal music.

To demonstrate how Métis identity is expressed by and through music, I present and analyse the musics of three locally reknown speakers which are associated with various identities, and examine how these associations developed. The choice of the main speakers in this study is linked to political and/or cultural identities and is discussed in great detail in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five introduces the speakers selected for this study. It is from their perspective that the meanings of contemporary Métis musical traditions and issues of identity will be examined. An explanation of the methodology used to both acquire and present this information is also presented here.

In Part 2, the reader will notice the transcription of a significant amount of dialogue to allow the speakers to express their

own views, opinions, and words. Whenever possible, I present their words verbatim, and supplement these with my own observations and understanding of these discourses.

Chapter Six reflects the natural geographic border constituted by the Mattawa River that initially contributed to socio-economic and cultural boundaries which continue to divide into two communities the Métis Nation in Mattawa. It introduces the distinctive style of music which is associated with Gaspé Town from two different points of view. The first is provided by Vic "Chiga" Groulx,² a Métis who was born and raised in Gaspé Town. The second is provided by Charlie Pépin, his *accordeur*, an Irishman who was raised in Squaw Valley.

This chapter also examines the issue of individuality in Métis identity. Although Chiga Groulx's music is representative of the style of music that is associated with Gaspé Town, his knowledge and mastery of many musical instruments has permitted him the appropriation of many different genres. In this way, he has developed a distinctive style of his own, one which could be better described as a particular sensibility and which each musician strives to develop in their own way.³

Chapter Seven presents the music of the area north of the Mattawa river which is known as "Squaw Valley" (see Map no. 6). It was in

² Chiga's full name is Vic "Chiga" Groulx. In this study I will use the name "Chiga" to refer to Vic for the reasons outlined in the technical notes at the beginning of this study. To avoid confusion between Chiga Groulx and Chiga Bélanger I will also include their given name in parenthesis when necessary.

³ In ethnomusicology, the focus is often on the traditions of a community instead of an individual. However, to take this approach in studying Métis musical traditions would erase individual interpretation which is highly valued in Métis communities and which constitutes an extremely important facet of Métis music.

this area, on the river shore that the local Indians and the first Métis community lived. This is the Indian village that travellers referred to in their accounts. Throughout the colonization period and the first half the twentieth century, the Indians and many Métis continued to live there. At that time, it was the poorest section of town but, by the 1950s and 1960s, the area was converted to an exclusive neighbourhood called "Rosemont." It is still referred to by many locals as the "Valley."

In this chapter I present the three most prominent and distinctive musical traditions which are associated with Squaw Valley. The first section focusses on the various relations between spirituality, political ideologies, music, and Métis identity through the music of Ed "Chiga" Bélanger---a Métis Elder who was born and raised in Squaw Valley.

The second section of this chapter examines a vocal musical genre which I refer to as "story songs." The importance of this tradition lies in the active, historical documentation of daily life from different recollections by various composers of the same event through music. Such a documentation not only draws from personal expressions but, more importantly, reflects perceptions of personal, local, regional, and even national events.

This particular musical genre is introduced here through the examination of a local song which was written by residents of Squaw Valley. The compositional process and performance practice of this particular song is examined both to demonstrate the distinctive Métis

social interactions which inform it and to show how this musical tradition is linked to community acceptance.

Finally, the third section of this chapter on Squaw Valley presents music which is representative of a segment of the Métis population whose silence resonates loudest throughout the province. The focus is on the music of one man, Jean-Philippe, Gaston ''Bunny'' Gauthier, a Métis Elder who was also born and raised in Squaw Valley.

Here, I show how socio-economic conditions, class stratification, and racial discrimination contribute to a highly idiomatic musical expression, which is nonetheless associated with local traditions, more particularly with Squaw Valley. The last section of this chapter also acknowledges other ''silent'' members of the Métis Nation whose traditions could not be dealt with within the scope of this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

"LES PARLEURS" (THE SPEAKERS) ⁴

This chapter introduces the speakers of this study through 'storytelling.' The reasons for this choice are manifold. There is a significant portion of Métis culture which remains bound to oral traditions. These traditions, which include songs and stories, constitute an important aspect both of Métis culture through which Métis history is preserved and imparted and of Métis social interactions.

In this context, the privileging of written language over oral traditions can create a great distance between the text and the subjects themselves---some of which neither read nor write, and are not in a position to comment on what I am saying about them. For this reason I felt it was important to convey Métis experience using the same style of narrative by and through which it was shared and continues to be recounted.

Second, due to its highly individualistic nature, the process of 'community acceptance' (an aspect crucial to this study and of Métis identity), is best understood through the recounting of my own personal

⁴ I chose to use the term "*parleurs*" out of respect for the speakers. A critique of the use of the term "informant" can be found in James Clifford's article "Partial Truths" (1986) and "On Ethnographic Authority" (1983); for a discussion of ethnographic writing and "diverging voices," see Jocelyne Guilbault's article "Interpretation out of Contradiction: A World Music in the West Indies" (1994).

experience. Each of these stories represents the ways through which I have been privy to the information contained in this study.

Third, the notion of participant observation is problematic and paradoxical for me. The fact that I am a participant precludes to a great extent a detached observation of others as such, since I share much of the same experiences and feelings. Indeed, the more I did fieldwork in Mattawa, the more I saw myself through observing several members of the Métis community. As a result, understanding in most cases could only be acquired through understanding my own experiences as a Métis.

Finally, the point of this study is not necessarily to provide 'a' voice for the main speakers, a voice removed from their own expression. Rather, it is to allow the speakers' own voices to be heard, using their own language and level of discourse. In the same way, for some issues, I can best elucidate some Métis musical practices through using my everyday form of expression rather than resorting to a traditional academic formulation.

My choice of the main speakers in this study was based on the following criteria: (1) their prominence in the community; (2) their knowledge of music; (3) their ability to clearly articulate their views on Métis identity. The speakers were selected through a two-step process. First, their prominence in the community is what led me to them. Preliminary inquiries at the information centre and local businesses were met with the same response: 'Oh you have to talk to so and so about that.'

The second step was somewhat more complicated in that it involved community acceptance. Before each of these speakers would talk openly and share their music with me, I needed to establish a "trust bond." There is a story which accompanies the creation of each of these bonds, and it is through these stories that I can best introduce the speakers of this study.

I first met Vic "Chiga"⁵ Groulx, artist/musician/trapper/logger/Elder, in October of 1994. I was on my way up north⁶ to hunt moose with my father and my brother, and I had just made the decision to base this study on the Métis community in Mattawa. As Mattawa is on the way to Sudbury, I decided to stop and do a little preliminary field work in Mattawa.

One of the local stores which is located on the highway deals in Native crafts and I thought this might be a good place to start asking questions about the community. The owner of the store immediately named Chiga and his talents as an artist/musician and his prominence in the community.

Coincidentally, this merchant's store was located directly beside Chiga's house, and he offered to take me over and introduce me. Chiga was very happy to show me his artwork and reconstruction of Native tools and instruments. Chiga makes replicas of 16th and 17th century

⁵ "Chiga" is the Michif-French pronunciation of "Ti-Gas" (in Québécois pronounced Tsi-Gas), a derivative of "petit gas" meaning little boy.

⁶ What is referred to as "northern Ontario" is actually central Ontario, geographically speaking. The government has divided the northern part of Ontario into three areas. Mattawa is considered the "near north" (which is further south); where I'm from (Sudbury) is called "northern Ontario," and further up is referred to as the "far north."

bows and arrows, drums, rattles, each using the original materials--- hides, sinew from moose and deer, as well as antlers, and so on. His work has been recognized nationally and internationally and has been displayed in many museums. His passion for his work is evident, and his meticulous craftsmanship has gained him an extensive reputation and much respect.

At the end of this initial encounter, Chiga asked me to bring him back the moose legs for the sinew (which he uses for his bows) and the hoof (which he uses for rattles). Generally, hunters do not take the legs as they are not edible and quite heavy to haul out (especially if you are hunting in a remote area which is only accessed by canoe, as we do). I agreed to drop them off on the way back and in exchange Chiga agreed to make a rattle for me.

As it turned out, my time on the hunt was limited to three days and my dad got the moose on the fourth day, after I was gone. I had explained to the hunting party (which consists of my dad, my brother, and my cousin) the importance of my promise and they agreed to take the legs out of the bush for me. Afterwards, I made arrangements to have them brought to Chiga by a friend who was passing through Mattawa.

In retrospect, I now realize that Chiga most certainly did not need me to provide him with moose legs (Mattawa is one of the best hunting areas in the province and Chiga is an experienced hunter/trapper), but rather this exchange served to establish a relationship of trust. As per our agreement, on my next visit he

presented me with a rattle and a handmade wooden necklace and our friendship grew from there.

During subsequent trips to visit my family, I often stopped to visit with Chiga and spent many hours listening to his stories of trapping and lumbering, and to play music. As it turns out, he trapped and worked in a logging camp with my grandfather's brother and knows my cousin 'Ti-Lou'⁷ through the fur trade. Chiga is an excellent fiddler/guitarist/mandolin player, and has even rebuilt his own violin.

Chiga is a member of the Métis Nation of Ontario. He speaks French, English and a little Ojibway. A native of Mattawa, Chiga was raised and still lives in the section of town called 'Gaspé Town.' He is 60 years old and is now retired because of a back injury he sustained while working as a lumberjack.

It is through Chiga that I met Charlie Pépin and his brother Paul. Charlie is Chiga's *accordeur* (accompanist) and the first few times Chiga played for me, he insisted that it would be much better if he had his *accordeur* there.

Finally, on one of my visits that wasn't a stopover, Charlie was able to come and we made music 'til the wee hours of the morning.' Charlie and Paul were raised in 'Squaw Valley' and are of Irish background. Charlie, the older brother, is an accomplished fiddler and guitarist. Paul, who is somewhat younger, is an accomplished guitarist.

⁷ 'Ti-Lou' means "little wolf" in English, and his nickname came from the fact that as a child he was extremely shy and used to hide under tables and chairs.

They are also excellent songwriters, as will be seen in the next chapter.

Throughout our many 'get-togethers' Charlie and Paul would frequently say that I should meet Bunny Gauthier. They lauded his skills as a singer and mandolin player, and the fact that he played a very special style of music. This style of music was apparently typical of Squaw Valley and yet was highly individualistic.

It is through Paul that I was introduced to Bunny, a Métis Elder who was raised in Squaw Valley, and whom Paul befriended in his childhood. Paul didn't have a phone when I was in Mattawa last summer and so getting a hold of him to set this meeting up was not easy. As luck would have it, on a beautiful summer day, I ran into him in town and he invited me to 'camp'⁸ for a barbecue and music-making with him and Bunny.

This particular camp was not too far out of town, maybe a half hour drive, and so I agreed with pleasure. Seated on the south shore of the Mattawa River, we ate steaks, made music, and talked by the fire and the river until it was very late. Bunny is reknown locally as a musician, mostly for his abilities on the mandolin and for his singing.

Finally, I was led to Ed 'Chiga' Bélanger for two reasons. First, his position as a prominent local and provincial political leader for the past twenty-seven years was well-known. Second, Mattawa has some of the best pickerel fishing around, and I thought while I was there I

⁸ I would like to point out here that where I come from, "camp" is in some ways a summer cottage, but generally when you go to camp there is no running water, electricity, or telephones even though the building itself may be quite elaborate and well-furnished.

might as well get my winter stock. Everybody told me that Chiga would be the one to take me fishing (he is a well-known guide in the area, and reknown for his fishing skills). Furthermore, Chiga had told me in our first interviews that he often chanted while fishing. It seemed like the perfect opportunity to both collect his music and get some fishing in.

After one or two guarded meetings, Chiga agreed to take me fishing and sing for me. It seems that he forgot our first scheduled fishing expedition. So, I called him back and he informed me that he has a tendency to forget, and that I needed to call him to remind him. We scheduled another appointment and Chiga picked me up, gave me a tour of the town, showed me the area he was raised in (Squaw Valley), and talked to me about local history.

Then we went to get his boat to go fishing. As we approached the dock Chiga said "Where's my boat? Those...kids stole my boat again!" Apparently his boat was stolen three times in the last year. And so, another expedition was cancelled. Fortunately, this time it was not stolen but had been borrowed by a friend who neglected to tell him.

Eventually though, we did manage to go fishing. Chiga's boat is a twelve-foot aluminum boat with a relatively small motor. As we embarked Chiga said with a chuckle, "Now we'll see whether or not you're a Joner." I didn't understand what he meant by that, but was about to. I couldn't help but notice there were no life-jackets, but I trusted that we would be going into safe waters. En route, Chiga pointed out the major landmarks which can only be seen and appreciated from the water.

As we went up the Ottawa river, the La Cave dam came into sight, and what a site to behold (see Plate no. 1). As we approached signs began to appear,

'Turn Back
You Have Entered
Dangerous Waters

Faites Demi-Tour
Eaux Dangereuses''
(see Plate no. 2)

I immediately understood the meaning of ''Joner''⁹ and that sharing Chiga's music depended on whether or not I was one.

We not only entered those ''Dangerous Waters'' but we fished within fifteen feet of the dam, which is opened intermittently, for the rest of the afternoon (see Plate no. 3). The skill is in knowing when they let the waters flow and not. The current is so fast it creates the optical illusion of not moving, and when crossing from one side to the other one must be careful not to be tipped by the current (see Plate no. 4).

In any case, we caught ten pickerel. Chiga graciously showed me the best way to clean and filet them, and gave them to me to enjoy throughout the winter.

Upon leaving, Chiga informed me that I was no Joner, and invited me to fish with him anytime I was in town. From this point onwards

⁹ According to Chiga a Joner is someone who can't catch fish. On a deeper level though, I understood it as meaning someone who is afraid to go where the best fishing is, and that's part of the reason they don't catch fish.

Chiga also gave me a standing invitation to all ceremonies including sweatlodge, sunrise ceremonies, and local feasts. Our relationship today is one of mutual trust and respect.

These stories represent the types of relationships that I share with each of these speakers. To this day, when I see Chiga Groulx there is generally a gift-exchange. Currently he is making me a birch-bark moose call which I am to pick up the next time I pass through Mattawa. In exchange, I will give him a copy of Beverley Diamond's work on First Nations instruments which I know he will enjoy. Gift-exchange is symbolic of trust and friendship in many Native cultures, and constitutes a non-verbal expression of these feelings.

My relationship with Bunny Gauthier is representative of the challenges and difficulties in accessing the silent majority of the Métis population in Ontario. More often than not, especially in remote areas of Northern Ontario, this segment of the Métis Nation live through a subsistence strategy and lifestyle.

This lifestyle does not often include modern conveniences such as electricity, telephones and so on. It does not even necessarily include a permanent address where they can be reached. Given these circumstances, the only way to have access to them is through community acceptance and networking.¹⁰

Finally, my relationship with Chiga Bélanger is characterized by respect and mutual trust. I respect the fact that Chiga has struggled

¹⁰ When I attended the Aboriginal Policy Forum, a white employee of the Métis National Council was flabbergasted and horrified that these conditions still exist in a "civilized" community such as Mattawa. I was horrified that he didn't know.

for the past thirty years to achieve recognition and status for the Métis people of Ontario according to his own beliefs and ideologies. He has told me that he respects the fact that I am working for the same cause by acquiring an education and through research.

On another level, and perhaps more importantly, we both love fishing and nature, and I trust him to take me wherever the best fishing might be. In exchange, Chiga has asked me to help him with respect to researching and accessing historical documentation.

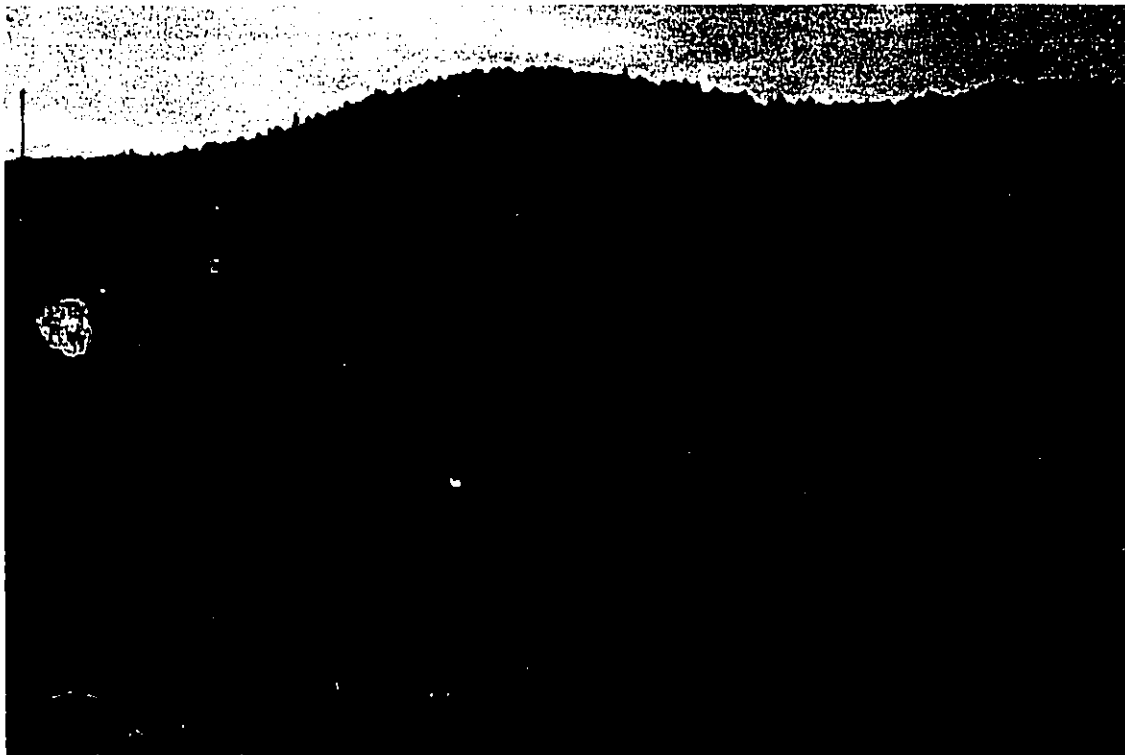


Plate no. 1: The La Cave Dam (Otto Holden Hydro Development Project) north of the town of Mattawa. Photo by Annette Chrétien



Plate no. 2: "Dangerous Waters"
Photo by Annette Chrétien

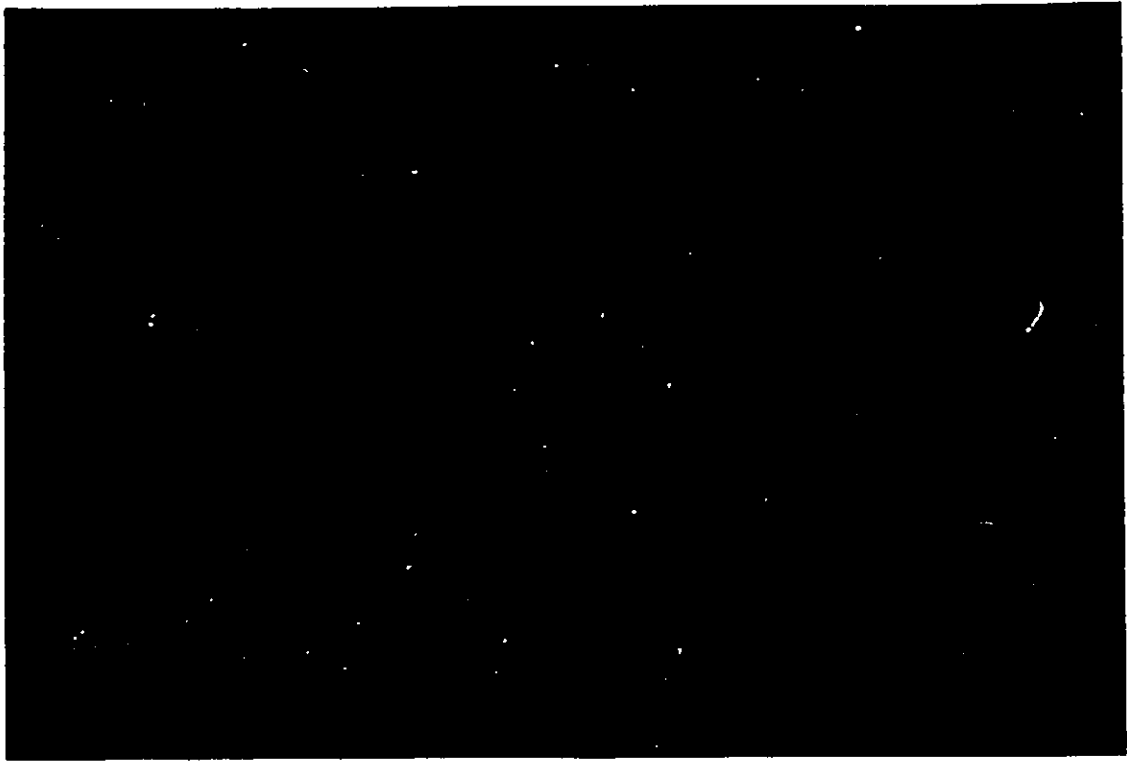


Plate no. 3: Chiga Bélanger fishing right by
the dam. Photo by Annette Chrétien

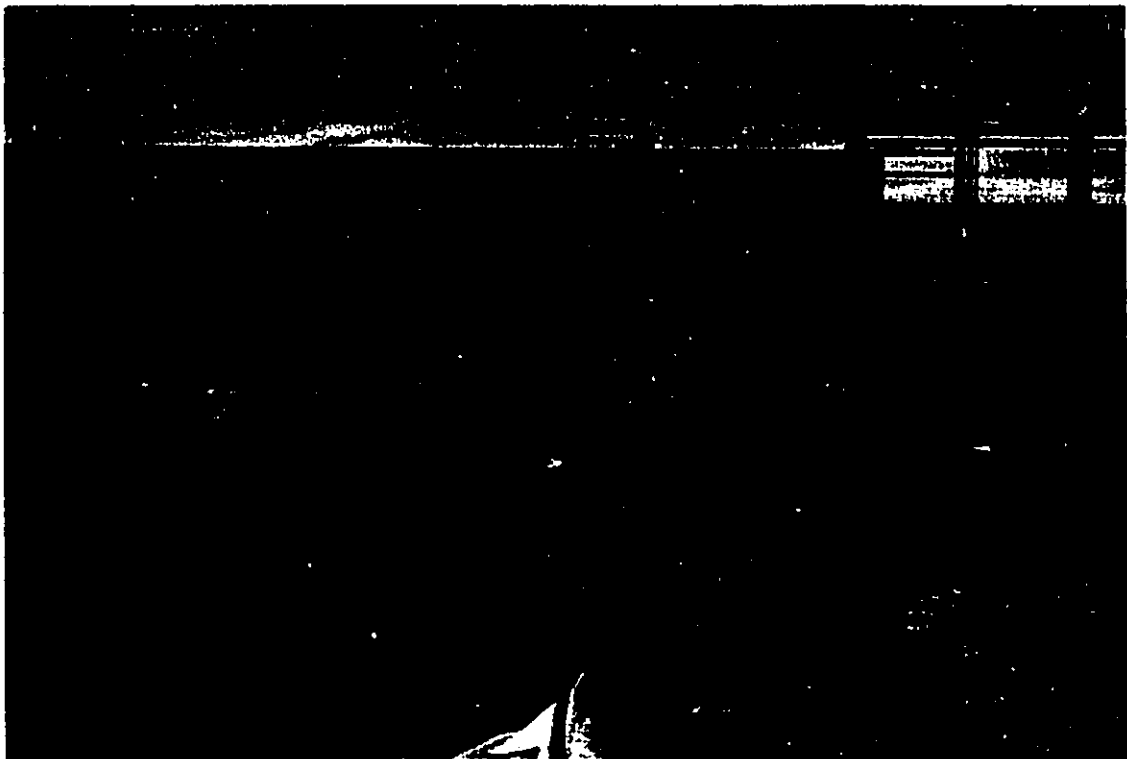


Plate no. 4: Tippy Waters
Photo by Annette Chrétien



Plate no. 5: Vic "Chiga" Groulx Playing the Fiddle
Photo by Annette Chrétien



Plate no. 6: From left to right, Charlie Pépin and Bunny Gauthier making music in the house where Chiga Groulx was raised. Photo provided by Charlie Pépin



Plate no. 7: "Making music by the Mattawa River." From left to right, Paul Pépin and Bunny Gauthier. Photo by Annette Chrétien



Plate no. 8: Charlie Pépin, Chiga Groulx's
accordeur. Photo by Annette Chrétien

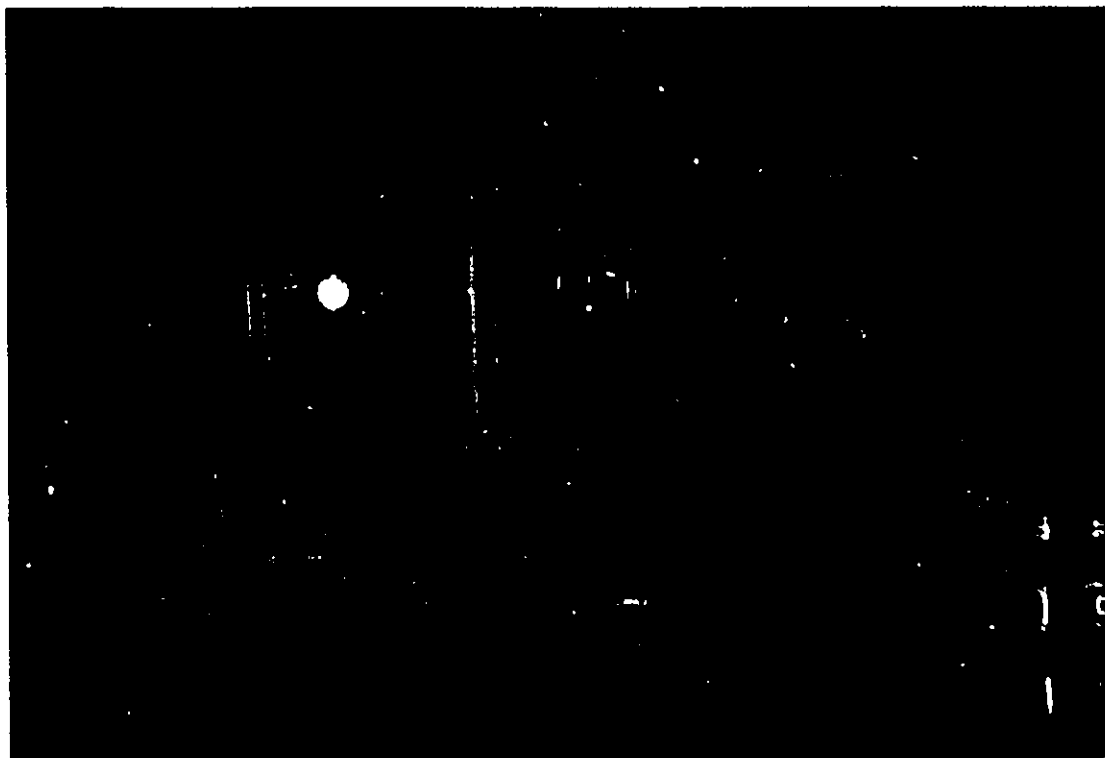


Plate no. 9: "Making music at Chiga Groulx's."
From left to right, Charlie Pépin, Chiga Groulx,
Paul Pépin and Meno Groulx. Photo by Annette
Chrétien



Plate no. 10: Chiga Groulx playing the
guitar using a capo. Photo by Annette
Chrétien



Plate no. 11: "Wabi, the singing dog."
Photo by Annette Chrétien

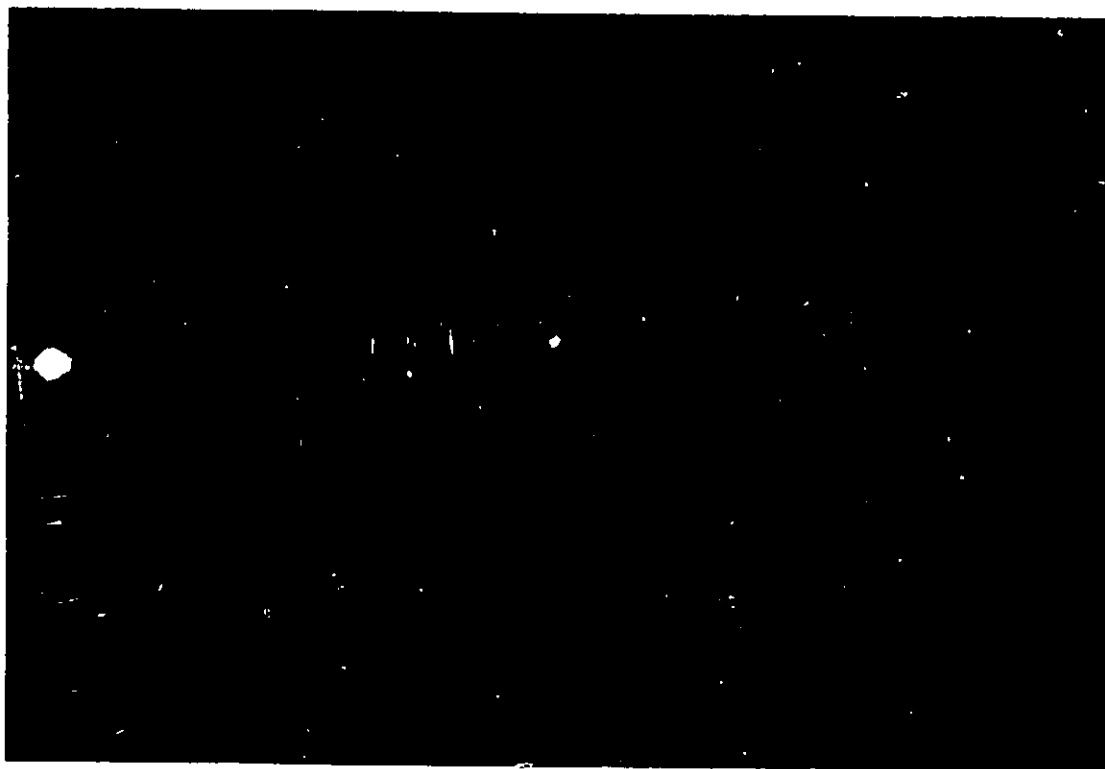


Plate no. 12: Charlie Pépin standing
to play the fiddle. Photo by Annette
Chrétien

CHAPTER SIX
' ' LITTLE GASPÉ TOWN: ' '
THE MUSIC OF CHIGA GROULX

Vic "Chiga" Groulx is an Elder of the Métis Nation of Ontario.¹¹ He was born and raised in Mattawa in the area known as Gaspé Town. Throughout his life he has spent many years as a trapper and then as a logger. He has been retired for some time due to a back injury he sustained while working as a logger. Chiga is a member of the Métis Nation of Ontario, although he has many reservations about being politically active.

As previously mentioned, Chiga is well-known for his craftsmanship in reconstructions of Native tools and instruments. Locally, he is also reknown as an excellent musician. According to the locals I interviewed, Chiga's music is representative of the local Métis musical traditions of Gaspé Town, and of Métis musical traditions in general. From my perspective, Chiga's music is also an excellent example of how cultural hybridization can produce variety through individual expression.

Chiga's music is best described as an amalgamation of many styles and the product of a particular sensibility.¹² Following a definition

¹¹ In the Métis Nation of Ontario, Elders must be 60 years of age, Chiga is 60.

¹² Style has been defined in many ways according to the musical traditions in question. On the description of style, see John Miller Chernoff's "Style in Africa" (1979); Robert Walser, "Heavy Metal Appropriations of Classical Virtuosity" (1993); and Jocelyne Guilbault, "Zouk in the Eighties" (1993).

of the terms "style" and "sensibility," this chapter is devoted to an analysis of Chiga's music and an examination of the various influences which contribute to its distinctive nature.

The term style---as it is consistently used by the speakers themselves and has been defined for me by them---is described in concrete musical terms. Because it also involves a characteristic selection process, I use the term "musical tools" to refer to various musical features selected from different "cultural pools."¹³ Analysis of Chiga's musical style then involves an examination of the musical tools he uses and of the cultural pools from which they are drawn.

The order of presentation of the musical tools used by Chiga has been guided by the hierarchy established by the speakers themselves. In their view, some musical tools are more significant than others in terms of defining the distinctive musical features which characterize Chiga's style. In this thesis, I tried to respect the musical values as articulated locally.

For this reason, these tools have been categorized in the following way: (1) accents; (2) drones, double-stringing and slides; (3) bowing techniques; (4) use of particular keys; (5) runs; (6) phrasing and time signatures; (7) improvisation and musical form; (8) instrumental transfer; and (9) repertoire. The cultural pools from

¹³ Here, I am using a biological analogy. Whereas genetic pools determine the parameters of hybrids, I perceive musical hybridization in similar terms in that musical tools are the equivalents of genes, and cultural pools are the equivalents of genetic pools. The only difference is that, in musical hybridization, the performer has the power to select which variety he wishes to reproduce. Nevertheless, variety is still limited to the cultural pools available.

which these tools are drawn include French-Canadian, Scots-Irish, and American fiddling traditions, hillbilly music,¹⁴ and bluegrass music.

The term 'sensibility' refers to more abstract concepts of music and deals with the relationships between the performers, the music, nature, and the instruments themselves. Sensibility inspires style in that it is a 'way of being' that is expressed through music, using various musical tools. As will be shown, this way of being is linked to particular value and belief systems, feelings and emotions, and music-making conventions which guide in significant ways the production of a given style.

Style

(1) Accents

The following excerpt is taken from my first interview with Charlie Pépin, Chiga's *accordeur* in which he describes Chiga's style of playing.

Tsigas¹⁵ plays a lot of...he's really a mixed bag on style. He doesn't play the clear, concise Don Messer type, 'down-east'...um...but he does play

¹⁴ Hillbilly music comes from the United States and was popular in the 1920s and 1930s. It is considered the precursor of bluegrass and country and western music. For a more detailed discussion, see Mark Miller's article on "Country Music" in The Encyclopedia of Music in Canada (1992).

¹⁵ Charlie pronounces "Chiga" as "Tsigas," hence the different spelling.

excellent ''southern'' style, [that is], ''bluegrass'' style.

Following is Charlie's definition of what these styles mean to him. First, he defined for me the ''down-east'' style which is apparently not representative of Chiga's style. In his own words,

Ya, and those notes are very...they're very precise, smooth, from the AA to the BB part it's suave you know. Tsigas would play---if he plays that type music---would play it...it's more like [pause] it's a Métis style, which is: that's a boil down of French Canadian,¹⁶ and I guess in the West, Scottisch, but in this area, it's also the Irish have a hand in it, playing the same jigs. Sometimes they do change the notes...the accents come in a different way.

(personal interview, June 28, 1995)

Charlie's comments could be summarized as follows. First, Chiga does not play in the smooth, ''down-east''¹⁷ style. Rather, Chiga plays in a Métis style which Charlie defines as a mixture of French

¹⁶ According to The Encyclopedia of Music in Canada (1992), French Canadian fiddling is characterized by a 16th note pulse accent which accompanies the clogging patterns. Charlie defines it as playing one note at a time.

¹⁷ A more detailed discussion of each of these styles can be found under ''fiddling'' in The Encyclopedia of Music In Canada (1992).

Canadian, and Irish (repertoire and ornamentation), and as using distinctive accents.

The accents which Charlie refers to are prominent in both the melody and the accompaniment of Chiga's playing. The offbeat is consistently played *sforzando*, often in a percussive manner (sometimes even by muting the notes). Chiga uses this rhythmic tool whether playing the fiddle, mandolin or guitar. Both Charlie and Chiga have described this way of playing as typical of Gaspé Town (see written and audio examples 6.1). This example demonstrates Chiga's use of offbeat accents in his guitar accompaniment to Charlie's mandolin version of "Ragtime Annie," a traditional fiddle tune.¹⁸ Note here that Charlie accents the downbeat in the melody, while Chiga accents the offbeat.

The image shows a musical score for two instruments: Mandolin and Guitar. The Mandolin part is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a melody of eighth notes with accents on the downbeats. The Guitar part is written on a single staff with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It features a bass line of eighth notes with accents on the offbeats. The notation is for a 5-measure excerpt.

Example 6.1: Gaspé Town Accentuation in accompaniment.
Chiga Groulx on Guitar, Charlie Pépin on mandolin
playing "Ragtime Annie".

After this demonstration Chiga offered these comments on the offbeat, "See, this is the Gaspé Town here. You loud it up, and step it up [here, Chiga is referring to the tempo], and the fiddler and the

¹⁸ According to R.P. Christenson, "Ragtime Annie" is "probably in the repertoire of every fiddler" (1973:172). He does not associate it with any one specific cultural pool.

mandolin player...[Charlie interjects]...do the best they can to keep up!" (personal interview, May 31, 1996).

This local, typical use of offbeat accentuation is also used in the melody. For example, the following version of "Ragtime Annie" is played by Chiga's cousin Meno¹⁹ on mandolin, with Chiga's accompaniment on guitar (see written and audio examples 6.2). Charlie calls this "Ragtime Annie with a French twist," alluding to the fact that Meno and Chiga are of French-Canadian background, and that their interpretation uses what is associated with the Gaspé Town offbeat accentuation.

The musical score is written for Mandolin and Guitar. The Mandolin part is in the treble clef with a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#). It features a melody with offbeat accentuation, indicated by '>' symbols above the notes. The Guitar part is in the treble clef with the same key signature. It provides a rhythmic accompaniment, with some measures containing a double bar line and a slash, indicating a break or a specific rhythmic pattern. The score is divided into two systems, with the Mandolin and Guitar parts grouped together in the first system and the Mandolin part continuing in the second system.

Example 6.2: Gaspé Town Accentuation in Melody.
Meno Groulx on mandolin and Chiga Groulx on guitar
playing "Ragtime Annie."

¹⁹ "Meno" means minnow, a tiny fish used as bait for fishing.

(2) Drones, ''Double-Stringing,''²⁰ and Slides

The use of drones and double-stringing is characteristic of Chiga's playing. This musical tool and the use of off-beat accents has also been noted by Ann Lederman in her studies of Métis and Native fiddling in Manitoba. She states,

There are also resemblances in style between the Native tradition under discussion and some American playing such as the frequent use of doublestops and drone notes (or ''double-stringing '' as Native players often call it) and the emphasis on heavy offbeat accents reminiscent of the 'shuffle' style of the American south.

(Lederman, 1991:42)

Charlie relates this practice to the ''southern'' (meaning Southern United States) style.

The southern style of fiddling, for one thing it's speeded up a lot and it's slurred a lot, and they'll pick up extra strings in the southern style, and you'll get that a little bit in Métis style too.

(personal interview, June 28, 1995)

²⁰ ''Double-stringing'' means playing consistently on two strings. Chiga calls this ''*au double*'' (double). He also says that they use to call this the ''radio sound'' referring to the fact that it was learned from hearing it on the radio (personal interview, June 30, 1996).

Here are Chiga's comments on the source of 'double-stringing.'

There used to be a novelty segment in fiddling contests where they played tunes like 'Orange Blossom Special.' Now, they play 'gospel.' What I noticed the most is that they play two tunes in one, and in different keys (see audio example 6.3) (after demonstration). But they used to play this with two violins. What a sound! The second violin can pause a little and fit in the slides. Ah! This is what I find is the the most beautiful!²¹

(personal interview, June 26, 1995)

According to Lederman, Chiga's reference to the use of two violins reflects another typical aspect of Métis and Native fiddling: 'In some areas, accompaniment of another fiddler was once common in the form of drones, two-note chords, or a version of the melody an octave lower' (Canadian Encyclopedia of Music, 1992: 457). Chiga calls this style of playing 'gospel' style. For him, 'gospel' style is characterized by the 'double-stringing,' slides, and the repertoire (in the case of

²¹ "Avant y joua uh...yava un contest au fiddling. La novelty, ché comme "Orange Blossom Special..." pi asteur y joua du "gospel" comme...ben quécé zhi rmarqué dplus là, ci deux lures dans une, ché pi deux différentes clés comme y con jouer. [audio example 6.3]. Ça, ça vâ a deux violons. Pi ça sonne saint sacrement! Le deuxième peut, leu peut pauser pi rentrer le slides. Ah. Oui! Châ shroue le plus beau moi" (personal interview, June 26, 1995).

audio example 6.3, a medley of two Gospel tunes ''Amazing Grace'' and ''Just a Closer Walk With Thee).''

Chiga's accompaniment style is consistent with other features Lederman mentions above. If Chiga is playing the fiddle, he uses offbeat accents with two-note chords; if he is playing the guitar or the mandolin, he uses full chords but keeps the same accents. Regardless of the medium (meaning, mandolin, guitar, or fiddle), the style remains consistent through the use of similar rhythmic musical tools.

Another musical tool which characterizes Chiga's individual style is the use of slides used to modulate to a different key which will be discussed later in the section on runs. Characteristically, these slides are often combined with double-stringing. Chiga attributes this to a popular fiddler of the 1920s by the name of Arthur Smith. In Chiga's opinion, this was the beginning of Bluegrass.²²

When the radio first came out, there
was a great player by the name of Arthur
Smith. He is the one who started Bluegrass.
He hardly ever played on open strings.
Instead of playing on one string, he would
play say on the first and second string and
it would make a double sound. It was that type

²² According to The Encyclopedia of Music in Canada, the term bluegrass did not come into use until the 1950s and is attributed to Bill Monroe's band, the Blue Grass Boys (1992).

of playing. It completely changed the sound of
the violin. The boys all wanted to learn that.

(personal interview, June 26, 1995)²³

On a recent visit, Chiga showed me the liner notes to one of Smith's records. In these comments, the sliding of notes are attributed to a blues influence.²⁴ Whether or not it is Smith who started bluegrass, the fact remains that Smith influenced Chiga's use of double-stringing.

Both Chiga and Charlie trace these musical tools, namely, the use of drones, double-stringing and slides, to a Southern States cultural pool. One could conclude from their comments that this influence largely came from early American radio programs through which they heard the music of Arthur Smith whom they tried to emulate. It is interesting to note that, according to Lederman, these particular tools have also been adopted by Métis and Native fiddlers in Manitoba.

²³ "Quand le radio à sorti, le grand joueur là qui appela Arle Smil cè lui qu'ia commencer le zhouaghe de Bluegrass. Y sonna presque pà d'chordes ouverte. A place de toucher une ouverte, mellons, y toucha la première et deuxième, pi ca fesa un son double, plus qu'un son double. Cèla du zhouaghe de meme Lui yà changer toute le son du violon. Le gas cèla toute pour apprendre cà." (personal interview June 26, 1995)

²⁴ In his book Bluegrass, Neil Rosenberg credits Fiddling Arthur Smith (not to be confused with Arthur "Guitar Boogie" Smith) with developing a particular style and repertoire which would have a significant influence on the development of bluegrass (1985).

(3) Bowing Techniques

Many of the musical tools that Chiga uses are linked to specific instrumental techniques. For example, phrasing and articulation on the fiddle are closely linked to bowing techniques which characterize, and are often associated with, specific cultural pools. Charlie described these characteristic bowing techniques in the following way.

The "down east" style, if you watch them, the whole bow gets used. A lot of the Irish use a lot of bow, and the Scottisch. French Canadians tend to use---and the Métis type, use a very small section of the bow and that's why it...I guess that makes it its own style. It's somewhat chopped because you don't have a choice if you're not using a long bow...You have to go like hell because the bow has to move, stay moving...down east is almost like a violinist and the others are fiddlers you know.

(personal interview, June 28, 1995)

Here, Charlie is describing for me what type of bowing technique is generally associated with various cultural pools. Each of these techniques produces a different musical effect. First, he points out

that the "down-east" and Scots-Irish use long bow strokes which results in music that is more legato. Then, Charlie explains that using only a small section of the bow requires more strokes to play the same number of notes which produces a more detached, choppy articulation. He associates this technique with French-Canadian and Métis fiddling.

Following is Chiga's demonstration of Métis bowings and his own adapted technique (audio example 6.4 and written examples 6.4a and 6.4b).

The Métis play using short bow strokes.

I use a little more bow when I play.

Because of this they have trouble playing waltzes. For example, in a piece like "Over the Waves," they would play [demonstration of Métis bowing, see example 6.4a], when it should go like this (see example 6.4b).²⁵

(personal interview, June 27, 1995)

²⁵ "Lé Métis y zhough par coups...plush que...plush dé chi coups d'archa. Moï jou ain peu plush d'archa...main...Ben d'eusaut on d'la miser dans le waltz. Comme uh, on va dir "Over the Waves" là, y joua ça comme uh...leu peu dansher dshu mè y vôn zhuer; (personal interview, June 27, 1995).

Violin

Detached

Example 6.4a Demonstration of Métis Bowing.

Violin

Example 6.4b Chiga's Bowing

Another musical tool which Chiga uses to construct his music draws on various bowing techniques which he associates with specific cultural pools. He demonstrated the difference between what he calls ''Canadian'' and ''American'' bowing by playing a traditional fiddling tune called ''Back Up and Push'' (see audio example 6.5).²⁶ For Chiga, the ''Canadian'' style is characterized by the use of short bow strokes and playing one note at a time. The ''American'' style is characterized by the use of double-stringing and slides which require longer bow strokes.

In this demonstration, Chiga switches from one technique to the other in the middle of the piece (the American style begins with the double-stringing), rather than stopping in between the two. This is also typical of his performance practice where he might play one section of a piece using one technique and then switch to another.

Chiga's use of bowing techniques as a musical tool can be said to be drawn from many different cultural pools. First, he is familiar with, and can play what are considered to be typical Métis bowings which he uses on occasion. According to Chiga and Charlie, Métis bowing is characterized by the use of extremely short bow strokes which result in a detached articulation. Second, when he plays traditional French-Canadian fiddle tunes, he will more than likely use that type of bowing which is characterized by single-note playing and more legato. Finally,

²⁶ I could not find any published versions of ''Back up and Push'' even though, according to Chiga and Charlie, this is a standard traditional fiddling tune. This may be due to the fact that this particular tune is known under a different title. It does, however, bear a strong resemblance to a tune that they call Rubber Dolly."

his predilection towards double-stringing is taken from an American cultural pool, more specifically the fiddling style of Arthur Smith. More often than not, Chiga will use all of these in different tunes, and sometimes within the same tune.

In my opinion, the use of different bowing techniques could be said to be typically Métis, however, the extent and manner in which these various techniques are used are characteristic of Chiga's own individual style.

(4) Use of Particular Keys

The following excerpt is taken from my first interview with Charlie Pépin and discusses the use of particular keys that came to be associated respectively with the two local styles that is, Gaspé Town and Squaw Valley.

This is a small town. This side of the river plays a different style from that side of the river...you know. That side²⁷ was all A [major] and E [major]. Everybody played A and E over there. D [major], you had to come to Gaspé Town to hear anybody play stuff in D.

(personal interview June 28, 1995)

²⁷ The locals consistently refer to Squaw Valley and Gaspé Town as "that side" and "this side," respectively. It is interesting to note that even though Charlie was raised in Squaw Valley, he still refers to it as that side.

This reference to the keys which were used in each of these areas was reaffirmed time and time again by all the musicians I interviewed. Squaw Valley used almost exclusively the keys of A major and E major. In a later discussion, Charlie provided some insight as to why these keys were so popular in Squaw Valley.

Why they ended up in E and A that's where Bunny and Bobby sang. That's how they dictated where you'd play.

(personal interview, May 31, 1996)

According to Charlie and Chiga, these keys were all that was necessary. When a player wanted to transpose to another key, or if he didn't know how to play in a particular key, a capo²⁸ was used to transpose to the required key. This procedure is extremely economical in that, the player really only needs to learn how to play in two or three keys and can quite easily play with other musicians, or accomodate the voice range of the singer through the use of a capo (see Plate no. 10).

According to Charlie, this tradition was also developped to accomodate bluegrass picking patterns which were often in G major since banjos often use an open G major tuning. The use of a capo facilitated

²⁸ A capo is a tool which is used to dampen all the strings of a fretted instrument, usually the guitar, for the sake of transposition. For example, on the guitar, if you place the capo at the second fret, you can play in the key of D major using the same fingerings as the key of C major. In Mattawa, they made their own capos using a piece of wood and a leather thong, and apparently it was also used on the violin for the same purpose.

the use of the same fingerings in any key. Furthermore, Charlie says that banjos were far more popular in Mattawa in the 1950s before the guitar became the preferred instrument.

This particular musical tool is drawn from an American cultural pool, more specifically, from bluegrass which was only developed and became popular in the 1950s.²⁹

(5) Runs

Annette: What's the difference between the Gaspé style
 and the Valley style, mostly the keys?

Charlie: Ya, and I guess the way, the way the runs would
 fit in.

(personal interview, May 31, 1996)

Runs constitute an important aspect of both styles; specific runs on the guitar and mandolin were associated respectively with Gaspé Town style and Squaw Valley style. Here, Chiga describes the Gaspé Town runs for me. (see audio examples 6.6 and written examples 6.6a and 6.6b).

²⁹ For more details on the history and development of bluegrass see Neil Rosenberg's book Bluegrass (1985).

"Us, on this side of the river they'd play":



Example 6.6a: Gaspé Town Run in G Major

"Or if you were in D [major]":³⁰



Example 6.6b Gaspé Town Run in D Major.

These runs serve many musical functions, including melodic filler during sustained notes in the melody, modulating bridges to an

³⁰ "Sur s'bord sit d'la rivière y ghousa...ou bedon ci cila sur D" (ex. 3.6).

improvisational section, and in general, melodic bridges between chord changes. The following excerpt describes how a guitar run in the Gaspé style would be used to accompany a modulating slide on the violin.

Chiga: See, on the violin, let's say you're in
 G [major] and you slide to A [major].
 Well, the guitar, if you practice, the guitar
 should [accompany the] slide in a run when you
 go, 'cause you're changing from G to A.

Annette: So you're adding a bridge between the two?

Chiga: Ya, ya, to change keys like.

Charlie: And sometimes we burn the goddam bridge!

(personal interview, May 31, 1996)

Charlie's comment speaks to the fact that the accompanist often misses the modulation because the bridges that Chiga uses to modulate are tacked on to the ends of phrases, and are not necessarily in the same meter. Moreover, Chiga modulates at whim, another source of difficulty for the accompanist.

Audio example 6.7 is a version of the "Wednesday Night Waltz",³¹ as played by Chiga on the fiddle and accompanied by Charlie on the guitar. This example demonstrates Chiga's use of a slide to modulate to another key. It also demonstrates how Chiga switches to a different bowing technique---constituted by the impromptu tremolando section at the end---to improvise another verse.

According to Chiga and Charlie runs became popular in the 1950s and 60s when fiddling and banjos became less popular and the guitar became predominant. Chiga says many of the runs were drawn from the guitar picking of Jimmie Rodgers.³² Once again, this musical tool is drawn from an American source but this time from hillbilly music, which belongs to an earlier era than bluegrass.

6) Phrasing and Time Signatures

The following excerpt comments on Chiga's distinct sense of timing which Charlie described for me in the following dialogue.

Tsigas' a tough guy to play with...

If you know what he's gonna play, you're

better off. Tsigas can throw you sometimes

³¹ In the The Old-Time Fiddler's Repertory, this waltz is said to be based on the song "Wednesday Night Waltz," a version of which was initially published in 1936 in a Carson J. Robinson collection (Cohen 1973).

³² Jimmy Rodgers was a well-known hillbilly singer. Rosenberg describes him as the "blue yodeller...a self-styled railroad drifter from eastern Mississippi who mixed a generous proportion of rambunctious blues with his sentimental songs" (1985:19).

on timing badly. The secret to him is to watch his foot. Don't listen to him! Just watch his foot because, if you listen to him, unless you really know the tune [pause]. There are some really good rhythm players, that know a lot of old tunes, and they'll always say that about Tsigas...he does have a very distinct type of timing. He can make it work, you know...but I find that's what it is. And I've played with him enough that I find if I'm getting a bit lost, I watch his foot because that's where he is. What he does with a mandolin or a fiddle, he can work around that and he'll fit it in. But he'll throw you by listening to what he's playing sometimes.

(personal interview June 28, 1995)

As a guitarist, I also experienced the difficulty in accompanying Chiga the first time I met him. In my opinion, the challenge in playing with him does not only lie in his sense of timing, but perhaps more in his sense of interpretation and phrasing. The use of offbeat accents in the accompaniment creates an overall effect that amounts to a unit-pulse.³³ This approach allows for spontaneous ornamentation and

³³ After a comprehensive search of various discussions on rhythm and meter, I could not find any term that would describe the particular use of offbeat accents which characterizes the Gaspé Town style. For lack of a better term, I've decided to use the term unit-pulse, meaning the use of a regular, unmetered, offbeat accent.

improvisation which is heralded by his foot-tapping (his foot keeps the quarter-note beat throughout).

This unit-pulse permits the extension or embellishment of phrases either through the use of cadential extensions, ornamentation, runs, rubato and/or fermatas. All of these tools are used in an improvisatory manner. Following is a rendition of the "Double Eagle Polka,"³⁴ as played by Charlie and Chiga which demonstrates Chiga's phrasing and the resulting asymmetry (see written and Audio examples 6.8).

1

The image shows a musical score for Violin and Guitar in 2/4 time. The Violin part is on a single staff with a treble clef, and the Guitar part is on a single staff with a treble clef. The Violin part begins with a whole rest in the first measure, followed by a half rest in the second measure, and then a series of eighth notes with accents in the third and fourth measures. The Guitar part begins with a quarter rest in the first measure, followed by a series of eighth notes in the second measure, and then a series of eighth notes with accents in the third and fourth measures. The notation is in 2/4 time, and the key signature is one flat (B-flat).

³⁴ Chiga calls this piece the "Double Eagle Polka." It is actually called "Under the Double Eagle," and was originally a march written in the late 19th century by Joseph Franz Wagner who was apparently known in his day as the "Austrian March King." "Under the Double Eagle" became the semi-official march of the Austro-Hungarian Empire (Horwood 1985). It was rearranged and recorded by John Philippe Sousa in the 1920s. Both Charlie and Chiga learned it from their fathers.

5

10

15

(Charlie gets lost here)

Example 6.8: Demonstration of Chiga's Asymmetrical Phrasing.
Chiga Groulx on fiddle and Charlie Pépin on guitar playing
the "Double Eagle Polka."

In this example, Charlie's introduction is played on guitar, in a strict meter with regular phrasing and Chiga's accompaniment on the fiddle demonstrates the two-note chord accompaniment which is typical of Métis fiddling mentioned earlier in the section on accents. However, Chiga consistently enters with a lower mordent (see measure 16), extending the phrase by one beat---which inevitably throws the guitarist off, unless he is playing a regular unit-pulse accompaniment. This phrasing is more or less consistent in the many versions of this piece I recorded, although the length of the phrase varies depending on the type and amount of ornamentation which Chiga uses in that particular rendition.

Chiga's use of ornamentation includes not only lower mordents but also other musical tools such as turns, trills, slides, rubato, fermatas, and the inclusion of runs when required. Audio example 6.9 is a solo version of ''Under the Double Eagle Polka'' which demonstrates Chiga's phrasing and use of ornaments (the background noises are provided by myself trying to figure out the accompaniment on the guitar and the thumping noise is Chiga's foot tapping out the beat). Note here that Chiga uses a lower mordent at the beginning of the phrase and in the second phrase an upper mordent.

Recently, Chiga explained to me that he actually depends on the accompanist to keep a regular beat. He says that when the accompaniment is consistent, it facilitates his re-entry after extensions, embellishments or improvisations. He also commented that other players' complaints that he is difficult to play with are rooted in the fact

that they do not keep a consistent beat. He says that the best *accordeur* he has ever had played, 'played like a drum,' meaning with a steady beat (personal interview, May 30, 1996).

Chiga's distinctive sense of phrasing can be said to be characterized by the selection of musical tools from many different cultural pools. On the one hand, his use of a unit-pulse can be linked to many native drumming traditions. I would go so far as to say that Chiga's use of the guitar has simply replaced the drum as an accompaniment. This is supported by his own views of the role of the guitar as an accompaniment instrument.

On the other hand, Chiga's phrase lengths are more the result of how Chiga feels at the time, and who he is playing with. When he really feels good about his playing and the sound he is producing, he will elaborate much more, producing more asymmetric phrasing and highly embellished melodies. If he is nervous or self-conscious, his playing is much more conservative and reserved, following more traditional practices.

7) Musical Form and Improvisation

Chiga uses the various musical tools at his disposition in such a way that musical form can seldom be predicted. I call this 'free-form music' because depending on the combination of instruments, players, and how Chiga feels at the time, each rendition is different. There are, however, some features of his style which can be identified and

are often present. These are Chiga's use of various musical tools to introduce and announce the endings of his pieces. These are also typical of the Gaspé style.

First, Chiga's introductions often consist of one repeated chord or note depending on which instrument he is playing. This performance practice sets the tempo for the accompanist and often alludes to the rhythmic nature of the piece (see Audio example 6.10).

This version of "Old Joe Clark"³⁵ also demonstrates the second feature of Chiga's style, namely, the announcement of the end of the piece. This is often accomplished through the use of a run (sometimes two runs), an arpeggio, a repeated tone or chord, or a sustained chord which in effect creates a kind of codetta. Chiga explained this way of ending a piece in the following way. "Even the Indians, in their music, it's the same. Everything is round, not square, everything is round like the drum. The music rolls" (personal interview, June 31, 1996).³⁶

Chiga explained this analogy to the drum by saying that the piece comes to a full circle when the end parallels the beginning. He also explained to me that the music "rolls" when it is not confined by regular phrasing or musical forms.

³⁵ I found a version of this tune in a collection titled Ozark Folksongs in the section on play-party songs. According to this collection this tune is often called "Liza Jane" (Cohen 1982). However, according to Samuel P. Baynard it is considered a standard fiddle tune, still based on a play-party song, but very seldom goes by any other name (1982).

³⁶ "Même les Indiens dans leur musique, c'est pareil. C'est rond, not square. Everything is round like the drum. La musique roule" (personal interview, June 31, 1996).

Lederman also comments on this aspect of Métis fiddling, "Beginnings usually demonstrate a strong sense of introducing a tune. Older players almost always play an introductory chord, motif or longer phrase" (1991:43). With respect to musical form then, Chiga demonstrates a "strong sense" of beginning and ending---a musical tool which proves very useful to the accompanist in such an improvisatory style of playing.

Improvisation plays a significant role in Chiga's playing. In some cases, complete sections may be improvised (more about this in the section on sensibility). In other cases, sections are repeated again and again to try a more ornamented, or otherwise varied, version of the tune. These variations can, and often do, include musical quotations from another piece; sometimes a whole section might be quoted.

Often this quotation is extensive enough to actually be considered a medley. Meno's version of "Ragtime Annie" provides a perfect example of this improvisatory tool and resulting musical composition. Audio example f.11 begins with an introductory chord on mandolin. This is followed by "Ragtime Annie." This is followed by the AA section of "Tuggerman's Jig," which is in turn followed by the BB section of the "Pea Soup Reel." Then, Meno returns to "Ragtime Annie" and concludes the piece with the "Chicken Reel,"³⁷ and a codetta which consists of two runs.

³⁷ Versions of both "Tuggerman's Jig" and the "Chicken Reel" can be found in Samuel P. Baynard's Dance to the Fiddle, March to the Fife: Instrumental Folk Tunes in Pennsylvania. Although the "Chicken Reel" is generally considered to be American, Baynard speculated on its origins by comparing it to an Irish tune called the "Chicken" tune (1982).

The combination of, and quotation from, different tunes is also typical of Chiga's playing. Charlie says that any tune that is in the same key and of the same meter can be used in this way, and often is. Musical form, then, is subject to individual improvisation and the musical tools at the disposition of that individual.

One final word about musical improvisation and musical form. Both Charlie and Chiga say that the phrasing and form that most musicians use in Gaspé Town are largely due to the fact that many of the tunes they play were learned from their fathers. Their fathers heard many of these tunes on the radio, but then they would head out to the bush for a month or so (typical length of time that a trapper or logger would spend). Often they could only remember portions of the pieces they had heard, and so would experiment musically with the phrases they did know. It should be added that both Charlie and Chiga feel strongly about improvisation since it provides variety whereas, in their opinion, traditional musical forms can be boring and predictable.

In general, Chiga's interpretations vary greatly in that the repetition and order of phrases and sections is freely interchanged depending on whether or not he is playing with someone else, which instruments are involved, and how familiar they are with his playing. This is also a typical feature of Native and Métis fiddling.

In these musical examples, many different musical tools can be identified from various cultural pools. First, there is a strong Native influence that affects meter, phrasing, and musical form which was

described by Chiga in his analogy of music and the drum.³⁸ Second, the distinctive Gaspé style of accentuation is evident in Meno's "Ragtime Annie" medley. Notably, the music going from one tune to the next is uninterrupted in this recording because both Chiga and Meno are familiar with the style, and Chiga plays a consistent accompaniment which facilitates Meno's improvisations. American influences can be observed through the use of slides and also that of the mandolin. Irish influences have been incorporated through the use of Irish tunes in the repertoire.

8) Instrumental Transfer

As previously mentioned, many musical tools which Chiga uses are transferred from the fiddle to mandolin or guitar, including the use of double-stringing, sliding into notes, and tremolo. Charlie explains why he thinks this is so.

I think people who play that stuff would love to play it on the fiddle, but it's a bitchin' job to play it on the fiddle. They can with reasonable ability and without taking the effort to churn it out on the fiddle...you can get it out of a guitar---you can get it out of a mandolin, and

³⁸ For a detailed discussion of the significance of "circle imagery" in Native cultures, see Beverley Diamond's Visions of Sound: Musical Instruments of First Nations Communities in Northeastern America (1994).

I think that's where that pickin' style comes from, because on some of the tunes it's possible to get all the notes...you know it stopped being a rhythm instrument and started being a melody instrument. I think that's what it's about. Are you a frustrated fiddle player? I think that's what it's about.

(personal interview, June 28, 1995)

The transfer of fiddle music to mandolin is also facilitated by the fact that they are both tuned in the same way. However, the point here is that, regardless of the instrument Chiga plays, he plays them in the same way, using the same musical tools. Audio example 6.12 is a rendition of "Back Up and Push,"³⁹ as played by Chiga on mandolin. Note the use of slides and double-stringing, and the offbeat accentuation.

The transfer of fiddling tunes and techniques to the guitar and mandolin is paralleled by the transfer of vocal music to instrumental music. For example, Chiga will play a hillbilly song called "Kentucky," on the mandolin using double-stringing and slides. He says that originally this song was performed by two singers, then it used to be played with two violins. Today he plays a solo version through the use of double-stringing.

³⁹I could not find any published versions of "Back Up and Push" but according to Charlie and Chiga it is a standard fiddle tune.

This musical tool shows a significant bluegrass influence in the use of the mandolin which became popular in the 1950s. However, what should be noted here is that much of the repertoire is transferred from one instrument to the other. Charlie often says that Chiga can "pick a fiddle" like a guitar. The significance in this process is that instrumentation is effectively a musical tool through which musical expression is voiced while, it could be concluded, the style in which the music is expressed remains consistent.

9) Repertoire

Typically, as is the case for most musicians of Gaspé Town, Chiga's repertoire is varied and extensive. Although he still plays many traditional fiddle tunes, he also performs many instrumental renditions of songs.⁴⁰ These songs not only include country and western tunes, but actually include many American songs from the civil war years (that pre-date radio and records) which were learned from his father.

According to Charlie and Chiga, Gaspé Town and Squaw Valley are associated respectively with particular music-making and repertoire.⁴¹

⁴⁰ This explains the fact that instrumental pieces are often called songs hence, the expression "play me a song."

⁴¹ According to the speakers of this study, younger musicians prefer to play music which is more contemporary. This is attributed to the fact that the Saturday night music-making gatherings which were typical for many decades are no longer very popular. Therefore, the Gaspé style and the Squaw Valley style are mostly played by older players. However, recently a renewed interest in these particular musical practices has been expressed by younger players and music-making occasions are once again becoming popular in the Mattwa community.

Chiga: De Valley, der songs were more blues. Here dey
liked the Nashville stuff.

Charlie: Like he was saying a while ago, they played like
more traditional tunes here, and they played a lot
of fiddle tunes.

(personal interview, August 1st, 1995)

According to Charlie and Chiga, Squaw Valley musicians seemed to prefer singing to playing instrumental music. Moreover, the two groups of musicians do not necessarily like the same artists. The Valley musicians preferred sad country tunes such as the songs of Marty Robbins (more about this in the next section). Gaspé Town musicians seemed to prefer the virtuosic nature of bluegrass music and artists such as Arthur Smith, Jimmy Rogers, and Smiley Bates.

Charlie and Chiga like to play many traditional fiddle tunes from Irish, French-Canadian and American repertoire; a practice that apparently has almost disappeared locally due to the coming of rock and roll and the fact that regular Saturday night house parties are no longer the norm.

Many of the conversations I had with Chiga and Charlie about the Valley were in the past tense, partly because it is now a different neighbourhood called Rosemont, but also because many of the musicians

they were talking about are no longer living. Many Métis in the area died at a young age either from work-related accidents or alcoholism.

Today, the particular musical styles which are associated with Gaspé Town and Squaw Valley are mostly known and played by older players. Younger musicians seem to prefer "rock and roll." However, according to Chiga and Charlie, recent political recognition has encouraged the younger generations to take more interest in their cultural heritages and some of the older players are teaching the younger musicians to play these specific styles.

Chiga demonstrates a wide array of musical tools taken from many different cultural pools, including gospel, Southern, Métis, bluegrass, Canadian and American musics. This selection process, I want to argue, speaks to his sensibility.

Sensibility

There are many aspects of Chiga's playing that cannot be defined in concrete terms and yet which guide his style. These can be linked to his relationships with his acoustic environment, nature, and his instruments. I have categorized these aspects as follows: (1) beliefs and values; (2) feelings and emotions; and (3) relationships and music-making conventions.

Beliefs and Values

John Miller Chernoff states, "The essential criteria for distinguishing excellence in African music are...as much ethical as aesthetic" (1979:153). One could say that Chiga's criteria for distinguishing excellence are also "as much spiritual as aesthetic." His great attention to sound quality comes from his belief that instruments are living entities that have their own voice. Chiga is constantly seeking to make the music speak through that voice. He knows his instruments intimately, and how well they can speak. He says,

A violin, especially, and the guitar, you have to play it for about an hour. You have to warm it up. Wood is life, and it's stiff. You have to force the sound of your violin. [If] you hear it right in your ear you can make it do anything you want. The music itself has to be played if you want it to become alive. A violin, you have to fight with the sound. It's not there. That's because music has to be played.⁴²

(telephone interview, May 30, 1996)

⁴² "Un violon surtout, pi la guitar, faut l'jouer a peu pra un heure. Faut l'réchauffer. Si d'la vie, le bois, el yé raide. Faut lu force lon son d violon. J'entend drite dans l'oreille, l'chu peut fère n'importe quoi lu veux. D'la mizik elle même, faut qu'a soit jouer pour qua devient vivante. Un violon faut qu'lu l'batte avec le son. Yé pas là. Si parque la mizik faut lu la zhoug." (telephone interview, May 30, 1996).

Chiga's belief that instruments are living entities is expressed anthropomorphically both in the way he treats his instruments and in the terminology he uses to describe music, his instruments and his acoustic environment. For example he says, 'you have to play it about one hour. You have to warm it [the violin or the guitar] up. In other words, as opposed to warming himself up, Chiga needs to warm up the instrument. This is accomplished by playing it, by making the wood come to life.'⁴³

The notion of wood constituting life and having its own voice is common in many Native cultures with respect to instruments, especially drums (see Diamond et al, 1994). Chiga also builds drums, and recently, when a drummer friend dropped by, Chiga provided him with a hand drum he made himself that he had heated over the stove first (a short-cut method of 'warming it up'), to make it 'speak' properly.

Other manifestations of Chiga's belief in 'living instruments' can be found in the terminology that he uses to refer to music in general and his instruments in particular. For example, he calls the post of his violin 'l'âme' or the soul. When his violin is not speaking well, he adjusts the 'soul' by moving it to a different position. On one occasion, Chiga was displeased with the sound he was producing because he had re-strung his bow and it was 'lispering.'

Chiga's belief in living entities is equally applied to other living beings and entities. This is manifested in the translation of

⁴³ Chiga says his father used to make him (meaning Chiga) play his violin for an hour (for this reason) before he would play himself.

his acoustic environment into musical terms: Wabi,⁴⁴ his dog, sings in C minor (see Plate no. 11); the tea kettle sings in G major. He knows this because he has actually picked up his guitar to find the key.

When I asked Chiga where his playing style came from, he replied, "From the old style. What I feel like playing. A sound I like, I suppose" (telephone interview, May 30, 1996).⁴⁵ The "sound he likes" is mediated by Chiga's values with respect to music in these ways. Even though Chiga tunes to A 440 (with an electronic tuner sometimes), his playing does not necessarily follow the diatonic scale. He is often flat or sharp in diatonic terms. His intonation is guided by "feeling" the sound and the vibrations that his instruments produce. It could be concluded that the quality of the sound is determined according to a "kinesthetic" scale rather than the diatonic scale.

What I mean by a kinesthetic scale is the process of calibrating sound---even though it is based on the diatonic scale---using a multi-sensory, cross-modal process as opposed to depending strictly on auditory perception. This type of intonation is linked to feeling the vibrations of the sound produced. As John Backus states in his study The Acoustical Foundations of Music, "...it is difficult to tell when a vibration stops becoming a sound and becomes a feeling instead" (1969:10).

⁴⁴ Chiga says "Wabi" means "white" in the Indian language, but he is not sure which language it comes from.

⁴⁵ "Dju vieux style. Que ça sente de phruer. Un son que j'aime shabain" (telephone interview, May 30, 1996).

This aspect of Chiga's sensibility characterizes his individual style in the following ways. His search for specific sounds---based on the way his instruments are speaking at the moment---are a constant guide to the music itself. What I mean is that, if he is not satisfied with the sound or interpretation of a particular phrase, or even a whole section, he will repeat it or, in some cases, move on thereby omitting or adding repetitions of phrases. Or, vice versa, if he is pleased, he may repeat it simply to rejoice in its effect. These "feelings" are bound to his emotions.

Feelings and Emotions⁴⁶

The second aspect of Chiga's sensibility which guides his style and performance involves his personal feelings and emotions. First, the way Chiga feels the response of his instruments kinesthetically guides his performance with respect to intonation, improvisation and musical form. However, the way he feels emotionally seems to determine the extent and character of improvisation he will include in any given piece. On some occasions, this can amount to the inclusion of complete improvisatory sections, where he will experiment with various sounds, ornamentation, and articulations. He will even imitate particular

⁴⁶ Here, I would like to draw a distinction between these two terms. Feelings not only refer to emotions, but can also refer to physiological phenomena such as kinesthesia, as well as other senses. Emotions refer to the psychological manifestation of these phenomena such as sadness, happiness and so on. These two aspects are inextricably linked because feelings can be experienced emotionally and emotions can be felt physiologically.

performers (some local, some not). He not only listens to, but feels, the music and the response of his instruments.

His phenomenal ability to imitate sounds is sometimes expressed musically through musical onomatopoeia.⁴⁷ The following excerpt is taken from a tune which he calls the "Mockingbird." According to Chiga and Charlie, it was a civil war song called "Sweet Molly."⁴⁸ After the verse and chorus, Chiga improvises a complete cadenza section of bird-like sounds (see Audio example 6.13).

Notably, Charlie has some difficulty in accompanying Chiga's rendition of this song. In the cadenza section Charlie hums the tune to keep track of the chord changes. The unpredictable nature of such improvisations precludes anticipating where or which chord changes would be appropriate. At the end, Chiga changes tempo and the piece ends unexpectedly. This improvisation also affects Chiga's intonation in that nature doesn't speak in whole tones and semitones.

This acute sensitivity to the natural acoustic environment has been noted by Beverley Diamond in her research on Native cultures as typically Algonquian, specifically Montagnais. She states, "I was astonished by elders' sensitivity to the nuances of natural sounds, their ability to distinguish and imitate sounds, and sometimes their detailed and rich vocabulary for the acoustic environment" (Diamond, 1994:67).

⁴⁷The term "musical onomatopoeia" refers to the use of music to produce a sound which is associated with a particular object or living entity. For example, the reproduction of bird calls on a musical instrument.

⁴⁸This piece was at one time very well known in fiddlers' contests. It is usually referred to as "Listen to the Mocking Bird." The words and music were composed by Alice Hawthorne in 1855.

From my own experience on the moose hunt I have learned that heightened sensitivity to the sounds around you in the bush is a necessary tool for survival and a successful hunt. This sensitivity includes kinesthetic and intuitive responses to the environment (sometimes you sense or smell the presence of another animal such as a bear, wolf, or moose, before you actually see it). In my opinion, this intimate relationship with nature is where the ability to assimilate and imitate naturally-produced sounds comes from.⁴⁹

Audio example 6.14 is one of Chiga's renditions of the "Orange Blossom Special." Charlie calls this "the train on the tracks." This example demonstrates another important aspect of Chiga's emotions which guide his performance that is, humour. Throughout this performance, Chiga is quite obviously having fun---with the music, Charlie and his audience---as Charlie audibly comments on his difficulties in following Chiga.

On an emotional level, the two previous audio examples serve as a demonstration of Chiga's sense of humour which is audibly demonstrated by the laughing at the end. Humour is an extremely important aspect of Chiga's style. He often uses his musical tools just to have fun or poke fun at something or someone. This is another way in which his feelings and emotions guide his style.

For example, when Chiga is playing "Over the Waves," he will on occasion play a phrase or two in an exaggerated detached "Métis" style (as previously discussed) which was apparently typical of a local

⁴⁹ As a matter of fact, it is quite common for hunters to "call" out a moose.

Métis fiddler by the name of Wally Bélanger who is no longer living. This musical "quote" inevitably solicits howls of laughter from those who knew Wally and leads to funny stories about him. I would like to emphasize that this is no way intended to be derogatory but rather is a way of remembering friends.

This aspect of Chiga's sensibility is manifested in another musical way through word play. The "Wednesday Night Waltz" is often called the "Once a Night Waltz" or the Tuesday, Saturday---whatever night it happens to be during which this melody is played---Night Waltz. The first line of the song "Now and Then There's a Fool Such as I" which is "Pardon me if I'm sentimental" becomes "Pardon me if I'm slightly mental." "The Double Eagle Polka" becomes the "Dying Eagle" or the "Dead Eagle" if the performance doesn't go very well. Jokes abound in these music-making occasions which actually speaks to an aspect of sensibility involving a particular type of social interaction.

Relationships and Music-Making

Chiga's style is guided by his relationships to nature, his instruments, the acoustic environment, and to other people. Most of these have already been discussed previously but his relationship to other people guides his style in the following ways. First, he is extremely sensitive to those who accompany him. When he is aware that

they are not familiar with his style, he will slow down the tempo and announce chord changes for them when he modulates. This convention is used even with his own accompanists if he is in a particularly playful mood and they are having difficulty in accompanying him.

Second, the notion of sharing music with others is also a crucial part of Chiga's style. Participation, especially for a musician, is a mandatory requirement at all the gatherings I have attended with Chiga.⁵⁰ This includes solo performances, accompanying, or on occasion providing just one verse of a given piece. This performance practice has been described by Charlie in this way "Music is a meshing, a welding of spirits. It's the spirituality of people who can share" (personal interview, August 1st, 1995).

This sharing occurs on different levels. Sometimes it means a solo performance of a given piece on your chosen instrument, where everybody else listens. At other times, it is enacted within one given piece where the performance is shared by all present and phrases or whole sections of pieces are bandied about spontaneously (this is often cued verbally as well). Musical content, in this case, largely evolves out of a collective process which depends on the contributions of the performers who are present.

This sensibility, which is characteristic of many Métis musicians, contributes to a great extent to the highly improvisatory nature of Chiga's playing. The fragmentation of phrases, cadential extensions,

⁵⁰ This convention is actually typical of the other Métis gatherings I attended in Mattawa as well as Métis gatherings outside of this community.

asymmetric phrasing, changes of tempo, ornamentation, and irregular musical forms arise from the need to both express his feelings and emotions, and interact with other musicians at any given time. And, to do this he draws on all the musical tools at his disposal.

Finally, Chiga's search for a particular sound is physically manifested in that, he performs standing instead of sitting. Chiga says that it is more efficient to play that way because you can use your body. According to Chiga, this is also a standard practice among the local fiddlers (see Plate no. 12). The only time he sits is if his back is bothering him. He does not clog when he plays, although he does keep the beat with his foot.

To summarize, Chiga's musical style is said by the interviewed local musicians to be typical of local Métis musical traditions from Gaspé Town. However, his own abilities, choice of musical tools, and the distinctive way in which they are used to make music also permits a high level of individual expression.

CHAPTER SEVEN

' ' SQUAW VALLEY ' '

This chapter presents three different musical traditions from Squaw Valley. As previously mentioned, Squaw Valley is associated with vocal music more than instrumental music. Three different vocal traditions are presented here: (1) ceremonial music; (2) 'story' songs; and (3) the blues.

The first section of this chapter presents the musical traditions of Ed 'Chiga' Bélanger. Here, I explore how musical expression can be guided by spiritual beliefs and political ideologies. These influences are traced through a contextualization of Chiga's spiritual beliefs, political ideologies, and his own self-identification process. This contextualization permits some insights into how political identities and spiritual beliefs can lead to the selection of completely different musical tools than those of Gaspé Town while sharing a similar sensibility.

The second musical tradition which is examined deals with storytelling through song. It is an examination of how life experience is not only expressed but actually re-lived, re-constructed, shared, and documented through music. This musical genre is linked to socio-economic conditions which contribute to this particular choice of musical tools.

This choice is examined through an analysis of the compositional process which guides it. This process is also representative of a distinctive sensibility which determines the character of this particular musical style---a style which in this case could actually be considered a musical genre.

The third part of this section presents the music of a great segment of the Métis population living in poor socio-economic conditions through an examination of the repertoire and style of one man, Jean-Phillippe Gaston ''Bunny'' Gauthier. Here I show how Bunny's style has been informed by various socio-economic and political conditions which have in many ways encouraged his particular choice of musical tools. These choices have led to a highly individual style which is, as will be shown, nonetheless distinctively Métis and also linked to other local traditions, most notably, the Squaw Valley style.

At this point it is important to remember that although ''Squaw Valley'' has been rebuilt into an exclusive neighbourhood, it still exists in the minds of those who were raised there. It is remembered and documented through contemporary musical traditions.

Ceremonial Music: The music of Ed ''Chiga Bélanger''

Ed ''Chiga'' Bélanger¹ is an Elder and a political leader in the Ontario Métis and Aboriginal Association (OMAA). He has been active in

¹ None of the interviews I conducted with Chiga were recorded on tape, out of respect for his discomfort. I have discussed his wishes at great length, and it is at his request that I do not include any musical transcriptions in this section due to their spiritual significance and private nature.

Métis politics for the past 27 years. Chiga was born, raised, and still lives in Squaw Valley. He speaks French, English, and a little Cree and Algonquin. His personal choices are representative of the dilemma which faces the Métis Nation today, that is, self-definition. Chiga's choice of musical tools cannot be dissociated from his political ideologies, spiritual beliefs, and his emotions and feelings. He expressed his views on this in the following way:

Music comes from spirituality. Old music comes from being spiritual, your feelings and emotions. That accounts for the style of music. It is gift-giving, sharing.

(personal interview, August 14, 1995)

To me, Chiga's comments mean that no matter which genres of music Métis musicians choose to play, the end results are characterized by a distinctive Métis style. Although this style may vary regionally through the use of different musical tools, it is nevertheless associated with Métis, as Métis music, and is ultimately guided by a typically Métis sensibility. A Métis sensibility could be here defined by its special emphasis on spirituality, feelings and emotions, intimate relationship with nature, and political ideologies.

The importance spirituality plays in Chiga's life is manifested through his predilection towards performing sacred, ceremonial music, which he refers to as 'old' music or 'traditional' music. However,

the "way" in which Chiga uses these "traditions"² are, as we will see, typically Métis.

Chiga's spiritual beliefs are expressed musically through unaccompanied chanting and a tobacco ceremony, when he goes fishing.³ Chiga calls his chanting a "personal thing." Other ceremonies which Chiga practices include the sweatlodge ceremonies (to purify and cleanse the mind and soul) and the shaking tent ceremony (through which Elders ask the Creator if something is right, and for advice), and the burning of sweetgrass.⁴

Some of these ceremonies (such as the Shaking Tent ceremony) are extremely private and the time and location of these events is often kept secret. Some of them are less private, and are practiced as a group during special celebrations. Public celebrations include a "Welcome to Summer Feast" and in the fall the "Harvest Feast." These usually begin at dawn with a Sunrise Ceremony and continue all day ending with a fish fry.

² On re-inventing traditions, see Chris Waterman's article "Our tradition is a Very Modern Tradition: Popular Music and the Construction of Pan-Yoruba Identity" (1990); and Eric Hobsbawm, The Invention of Tradition (1993).

³ The tobacco ceremony is common to many Native cultures. It consists of either smoking or burning tobacco for various reasons. In Chiga's case, he offers tobacco to the Four Winds as an apology and thanks for taking a life.

⁴ Here, I do not want to dwell on detailed descriptions of ceremonial music because the way in which these rituals are appropriated is also highly individualistic. For example, Chuga Groulx burns sweetgrass before he performs, which he collects himself and sanctifies with a tobacco ceremony. In other words, the same ceremony is used for different purposes and is not necessarily performed in the same way. However, what seems to remain consistent here, is the spiritual belief that the tobacco ceremony affects the outcome of particular activities. The desired outcome itself, as well as the activities themselves, are determined on an individual basis. For a detailed description of Montagnais rites, see Barriault's Mythes et Rites Chez Les Indiens Montagnais (1971).

I asked Chiga if his use of the above traditions was typical of the Métis in Squaw Valley and he emphatically replied that they were. Chiga says that the specific chants he performs are drawn from many different cultural pools, some local, some not. For example, he sings many Algonquin chants which are drawn from local cultural pools. However, he also learns many chants from recorded music including Iroquois, Paiute and any other Native traditions which he likes. He says "If I like it [meaning the chant], I learn it and use them [it] for my own purposes. You make it mean what you want" (telephone interview, July 22, 1996). When I asked him if he understood the ritual and linguistic meanings of the chants he learns from other Native cultures he replied, "Sometimes I know what they mean. I do them because I like them" (personal interview, July 22, 1996). He went on to explain to me that what appeals to him is generally the "air" of the tune meaning the melody, and that often he will use a melody he likes and substitute his own words.

When I asked him if it mattered whether or not the meanings of the words or the spiritual significance of the chants mattered, he said not really because "The teachers are all gone. Even in the Natives there are no teachers. The tradition is passed down but the meanings are lost" (personal interview, August 14, 1995).

Chiga's choice of what could be termed "traditional Native musical tools" is significantly influenced by his feelings and emotions. He described this aspect for me by explaining that his choice of chant is determined by how he feels at the time. He states,

Each chant has a feeling attached to it.
Some are happy, some are sad. They're close
but sometimes I put a different version
[meaning words] to it but use the same air.
I use different words depending on the
circumstance.

(telephone interview, July 22, 1996)

Chiga's choice of traditional Native musical tools could be summarized as follows. First, he chooses unaccompanied chanting in the ritualistic setting of ceremonial music from many different Native cultural pools. Second, the choice of musical tools such as the "air" and the text are guided by how he feels emotionally at the time. Finally, in all cases, Chiga specifies that for him, chanting is mostly used as prayer and thanks for taking a life when he is hunting or fishing.

For Chiga, music is an emotional, and very personal, expression because it amounts to expressing his own beliefs and feelings. Sharing this particular music with someone or with a group of people constitutes an intimate interaction. When music is this closely linked to personal beliefs, feelings, and emotions, it becomes a gift-giving gesture when it is shared with others. In Chiga's opinion, this musical tradition is not intended for public performance.

This philosophy is reflected in his feelings about music in general. Chiga says:

There's more feeling at home...family gatherings not for community...How can you play when you're not happy to play? Music is for happy times and funerals. There was no music during the depression, no happy times. On the reserves, there's no music everyday, but during festivals or powwows. There used to be house parties every Saturday night. It's coming back now [due to] the reality of [having] more fun at home than going out.

(personal interview, August 14, 1995)

House parties provided an intimate setting which permitted this type of music-making and yet, paradoxically, they also provided the exposure to other types of music that became part of Chiga's musical tools. He mentioned that at these parties the radio became extremely important. He said that his family and friends would get "solace from radio."

Reception was only possible at night and the programs that they could receive came from Chicago (WWJD) and West Virginia.⁵ Chiga expressed his opinions about contemporary music by saying this, "Music

⁵ Charlie Pépin says that they would have to lay out about 700 feet of cable up a pine tree to get a half-decent reception. Furthermore, not everyone had radios and therefore friends would gather at someone's house who did to share.

is part of Native and Métis culture. Country and western music was one of the greatest gifts from the white man'' (personal interview, August 14, 1995).

This contemporary influence has led Chiga to have mixed feelings about his choice of musical tools and Métis identity. On the one hand Chiga says: ''part of me feels that it's wrong to go after the past; another part wants it'' (personal interview, August 14, 1995). Chiga explained to me that what he means by the ''past'' includes Native traditional ways and practices including culture, music, lifestyle and governmental institutions.

He also says, ''you gotta have the new with the old to keep it interesting'' (personal interview, June 28, 1995). For Chiga, the ''new'' refers specifically to contemporary musical practices and the use of technology (such as electric guitars, samplers, and so on). The ''old'' means traditional Native musical traditions such as chanting, the use of drums, and ceremonial music. Christopher Waterman has commented that he sees popular music as ''a medium for the retrospective definition of tradition'' (1990:369).

This dual sense of identification is demonstrated by the fact that Chiga not only identifies with the ''old'' but also with contemporary musical traditions, and uses this new technology as well. For example, he uses recordings to listen to and learn new chants from other Native cultures. On the other hand, he also loves the music of Wapistan, a Métis singer/songwriter who combines Native chanting with country and western music. As Christopher Waterman states, here popular music is

used as 'a medium for the retrospective definition of tradition'
(1990:369).

Chiga also expresses himself musically through more contemporary traditions such as playing the guitar and harmonica. I asked Chiga whether he plays the guitar in the Gaspé style or the Squaw Valley style. He replied,

Style depends on who's there and how you feel.
The people my age are well versed in both
styles. If there is more French people [present],
you play the Gaspé style. When there is more
Native people you play the Squaw Valley style.

(personal interview, June 28, 1995)

Although Chiga is familiar with the local styles, he says that he is introverted when it comes to music and feels very shy. For him, playing music is a private and spiritual practice that doesn't belong in a public setting.

Chiga also uses musical tools from contemporary country and western music. In terms of repertoire he prefers to sing the music of Hank Williams and Ernest Tubbs. He will also use different local musical tools such as the Gaspé style as previously described, or the Squaw Valley style depending on who is present and how he feels. However, he never plays contemporary music for anyone but himself because he says he is too shy.

Finally, Chiga's musical style is inextricably linked to his political ideologies and self-identification process in the following ways. He believes ''We are all brothers and sisters.'' He would like to see all Native peoples across Canada (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis) represented by one council, one which would respect individual traditions.

Second, he is currently working towards developing and implementing a Native justice system which would focus on traditional values. This system would integrate healing circles and use retributive sentencing methods that would follow the old ways.⁶ He strongly disagrees with adopting the ''white man's judicial system,'' and even its form of government.

Consequently, as a Métis, Chiga feels that traditional ways are his birthright, to learn, assimilate, and practice according to his own beliefs and values. These beliefs have not only informed his own self-identification process, but have also influenced his choice of musical practices in the following ways.

When Chiga showed me around Squaw Valley, he drove down by the Mattawa river and recounted that ''high society'' lived on the other side and that, as kids, they would throw rocks at each other across the river. He says that they hated each other. This life experience is related to the fact that in Northern Ontario there is still a strong

⁶ Chiga's use of the term traditional, and the expression ''the old ways'' are equivalent. He is referring to traditional Native practices (including cultural, spiritual, social, and institutional practices). However, because he believes that all Native peoples are brothers and sisters, he feels equally comfortable in appropriating Cree traditions as he does appropriating Ojibwe traditions. This choice is guided by his beliefs and personal preferences, and life experience.

perception that Métis are Indians which often leads to feelings of shame when self-identifying as Métis. I believe that this part of Chiga's life experience greatly contributes to his preference for playing music in private, regardless of the musics he chooses to play.

The shyness of Métis musicicans in Mattawa has been mentioned to me countless times. No matter how talented they are---many of them apparently good enough to play professionally---they seemingly can never overcome their acute anxiety at performing publicly. The fact is that choosing a Métis identity and the musical tools through which that identity can be expressed is ultimately of an extremely personal nature. Yet, musicians seem to fear that the choices of musical tools typical of Métis musicians can inadvertently lead them and their music to be classified under racist categories.

Some of these racist categories---which should be more aptly called "constructions"---are rooted in the public classification of Métis as Indians. In Northern Ontario, public attitudes towards Indians are often expressed in very negative ways. They are considered lazy alcoholics who do not want to work, and who just live off the government. Land claims, it should be added, have intensified this sense of resentment on the part of non-Natives in this part of the province.

The choice to self-identify as Métis therfore can lead to overt racist attacks. Such discrimination prevents many Métis from openly declaring their heritage or obtaining their status card. As a result,

this hesitance has substantially inhibited the progress of Métis political organizations.

My point here is that racist discrimination has greatly influenced Métis's musical expressions. In practical terms, this means that one may be afraid to be considered an Indian and, yet, spiritually and emotionally may prefer to express oneself using some of the musical tools associated with Native cultural pools. Because of this, it is not likely that this same person will share his or her music openly. More often than not, the result is the effective silencing of his or her music altogether.

As was demonstrated in Chapter Six in relation to Chiga Groulx's music, the choice of different tools does not necessarily change the distinctive musical approach of Métis musicians; it simply produces a great variety of Métis musics. This great variety of musics could be said to be symbolic of the outside influences and pressures and the personal beliefs and life experiences of Métis musicians. In the case of Chiga Bélanger, he chooses to express himself using more "traditional" Native musical tools but the selection process itself is still guided by his spiritual beliefs and his feelings and emotions. Furthermore, one could say that Chiga Bélanger's political identity and life experience has also had a significant impact on his choice of musical tools as well as on his choice to perform these traditions in private.

Here, I would like to end this section with Chiga's definition of Métis musical style.

Métis music, style, is [the way it is] because of the way they are, because of the way they think, their mannerism, because who you are comes out in music...Métis cultures are so close and so far. So many different identities and lifestyles. Sault Ste Marie is different from Moosonee. Up north, they live their culture, they're less inhibited. It amazes me that it can be so different and yet so close. So different in terms of doing things, but so close in thinking the same.

(personal interview, June 28, 1995)

Here, I interpret Chiga's comments on style as meaning that style is determined by individual choices and a particular sensibility. Furthermore, these choices and sensibility are guided by many factors, including historical, genealogical, and regional factors which, in effect, help differentiate the various regions where Métis live. This, it should be stressed, does not challenge the existence of a distinct Métis identity. Even though the socio-musical practices and styles may vary from one locale to another, they are all connected by what has been referred to earlier in this chapter as a Métis identity, that is, a special emphasis on spirituality, feelings and emotions, intimate relationship with nature, and political ideologies.

II

'Story Songs'

Another vocal musical tradition which is associated with Squaw Valley is what could be called 'story songs.' I use this term for two specific reasons. First, the distinctive narrative features which characterize this particular musical genre are closely linked to many features of Métis 'storytelling' traditions. These traditions have been classified by Richard Rhodes as 'âtayôkanak 'sacred stories' versus tipâcimowina...les conte et les *z'histoire* respectively' (1987:298). The song which is presented in this section is closely related to a *z'histoire* or story.

Second, the compositional process and 'performative' (see Suzanne Cusick, 1994) aspects of this particular musical genre are also closely related to, and guided by the paralinguistic features of storytelling.⁷

In Squaw Valley, musicians have traditionally sung their histories, daily lives, and their fortunes and miseries. This songwriting tradition can be traced back as far as the beginning of the 19th century with the songs of Pierre Falcon, some of which are still sung today. It was practiced by the voyageurs who were reknown for their ability to compose songs spontaneously.

⁷ For details on the importance of speech genres in Native cultures and questions of structure and paralinguistic performance, see Beverley Diamond's "Le mythe et la musique" (1985-86). On performance practice in Métis storytelling, see the section on narratives and songs in Patrick Douaud's Ethnolinguistic Profile of the Canadian Métis (1985); and Richard Rhodes "Les contes Métif--Métif Myths" (1987).

Aside from describing daily life, these songs actually document and provide eye-witness accounts of historical events on a local, regional and even national level. They also represent a distinctive compositional process that is guided by particular social interactions and ways of being.

I chose to present the ''Squaw Valley Song'' as representative of this musical genre for many reasons. First, the story of the ''Squaw Valley Song'' permits me to explore the various relations between government policy, socio-economic conditions, this particular songwriting tradition and certain criteria in the definition of Métis identity.

Second, an examination of the compositional process of this song provides some insights into the typical Métis sensibility which characterizes this particular genre. Finally, on a practical level, the fact that one of its composers namely, Charlie Pépin, was willing and available to comment and explain some of the song's meanings, compositional processes, and performance practices helped me to gain more insights.

The Story

The ''Squaw Valley Song'' was originally written by two Métis namely, Bob Johnson and a cousin of Bunny Gauthier's from Squaw Valley, and Charlie Pépin, also from Squaw Valley. At my request, Charlie was kind enough to write out the text and provide me with some historical

notes on its meanings. He told me it took him a great deal of time to put these thoughts down on paper and I could not express them more clearly or effectively than he does himself. Therefore, Charlie's text and notes can be found in Appendix A.

Audio example 7.1 presents a version of the Squaw Valley song as sung by Charlie's younger brother Paul and Charlie himself (humming in the background is provided by Meno). I present here, for the reader's convenience and the sake of further discussion and analysis, the text which is used in this particular recording.

'Squaw Valley Song'

These verses are sung by Paul Pépin:

Verse 1:

If you go to Squaw Valley
Go and spend the night
You can go to Lacelle's and
You'll see a good fight
They'll smash the television
And break the radio
When officer Grey comes
Watch Honeybee go

Verse 2:

And down through the pasture
Grey chased Honeybee
The night was so dark
Old Grey couldn't see
I don't think old Grey ran
so fast ever since
The night he ran into old
John Montreuil's fence

Verse 3:

Old Squaw Valley
Go and spend a day
They'll fight and drink wine
Just to pass the time of day
Open the cupboards and there
you will see
Shoe polish, vanilla, 5-7-1-B⁸

These verses are sang by Charlie Pépin:

Verse 4:

We're up at Boh Johnson's
Was about 12 o'clock
When down to Harold Bell's
On the door we did knock
And we asked him to join us
To have a good time
And he reached in the cupboard
And brought out the wine

Verse 5:

Have a drink on the house boys
Old Harold said sloshed
And I reached in my pocket
For the Squaw Valley Scotch
And we laid by the Rubbie, the
shoe polish free
And we washed it all down with
5-7-1-B

⁸ As Charlie describes in the Appendix, "shoe polish, vanilla, and Rubbie (rubbing alcohol) are references to the substances that "hard-core" drinkers in the Valley would resort to drinking when nothing else was available. 5-7-1 B is the serial number of Catawba wine, the cheapest wine available at liquor store for which you had to fill out a form to purchase. Catawba is also referred to in the song as "Squaw Valley Scotch."

Verse 6:

Now my Dad's going crazy
with the parties we make
While the guitars and fiddles
the banjos are played
He says that our parties
Have just gone too far
While Annette is out looking
for wine with her car

The song ends with this verse as sung by Paul Pépin:

Verse 7:

Old Squaw Valley
Go and stay the night
You can go to Lacelle's
Just to watch a good fight
Open the cupboard and
There you will see
Shoe polish, vanilla, 5-7-1-B
Open the cupboard and
There you will see
Shoe polish, vanilla, 5-7-1-B

The lyrics to this song and the notes provided in Charlie's text (see Appendix A) speak very powerfully to the issue of racism and to how federal policies are experienced on a local and human level. It tells about the government policy which discriminated against Indians and the Métis who looked like and lived with Indians, by not permitting them to buy alcohol until 1969. It also points to the harsh control placed on these population groups by forcing them to fill out forms at the liquor store.

On a local level, this song tells of the social problems which have plagued Native communities for many decades including alcoholism and family violence.⁹ However, these meanings are subverted by the 'staged' event in the story of the song which is that Honeybee never gets caught by Officer Grey, and as Charlie explains in his notes, Grey actually left town due to his embarrassment.

The serious aspects of this song are also subverted by the fact that when, it is sung, the focus is on Honeybee and the fact that the residents of Squaw Valley got a tremendous amount of amusement and satisfaction from seeing him escape Officer Grey, not to mention the fact that Grey actually got hurt in the process.

When the 'Squaw Valley Song' is performed---as can be heard on the recording---it is the source of much laughter and initiates more storytelling about the characters involved. In this case, the accumulation of details through this performance practice constitutes an important source of documentation in terms of local socio-economic conditions and government policy.

⁹ In his article "Canada's Aboriginal Peoples: Social Integration or Disintegration?" Lawrence Barsh states, "It is difficult to find any reliable way of measuring alcohol and drug abuse. Arrest rates depend too much on the 'tolerance' policies of local law-enforcement officials, which may be biased in favour of punishing Aboriginal people, and self-reports of abuse are unlikely to be entirely candid. An average of 3.0 percent of Aboriginal people reported drinking 4 times or more per week in 1991...(Statistics Canada, 1993a). This compares favourably with 7.7 percent of all adult Canadians who reported consuming 14 or more drinks weekly in 1985 (Statistics Canada, 1987:48). On the other hand a 1985-86 study found that 8 percent of persons in Ontario alcohol and drug treatment programs were Aboriginal, although Aboriginal people comprise scarcely 2 percent of the population of Ontario (Health and Welfare, 1991a:41)... A 1990 study of admissions to one psychiatric hospital discovered that 51 percent of the Aboriginal patients had not been diagnosed as having a specific major mental illness, compared with 23 percent of all other patients (Health and Welfare, 1991b:27)...If this study is representative, it could indicate not only an inappropriate use of psychiatric commitment, but a very ineffective response to the interrelated problems of depression, alcohol-and-drug abuse, and violence" (1994:28).

Here, I would like to refer the reader to Charlie's extensive notes on the meanings of the song which demonstrate the following points. First, the narrative of the song includes a tremendous amount of ''inside'' information on local characters, socio-economic conditions, and even government policy, much of which could not possibly be understood by non-locals or even non-natives.

These types of ''inside'' references have been noted by Anne-Marie Gallagher in her study of calypso music ''From Trinidad to Toronto: Calypso as Way of Life'' in which she states, ''The ''inside'' references help it [calypso] to fulfill its function of passing on knowledge of calypso culture within the culture itself'' (1991:125). I want to argue that, Métis story songs, as demonstrated by the ''Squaw Valley Song'' serve a similar function in terms of passing on knowledge of local people and events, Métis history and social life.

Second, the focus on details---many of which are provided during the performance of the song itself (more about this later)---surrounding the story itself constitutes a documentary process which also serves to transmit and preserve historical and genealogical knowledge of local Métis families in particular, and Métis culture in general. This feature of Métis narratives has been noted by Patrick Douaud in his ethnolinguistic studies as being drawn from Native cultural pools. He states ''...as is common in Amerindian narrative or didactic discourse, what seems to us an inordinate amount of time is spent in the 'wings' of the staged action'' (1985:78).

Third, Gallagher also comments on the use of "naming" techniques in calypsos to transmit knowledge of the culture. "...it uses an economy of words, invoking simply the names of places, persons, or things, to suggest a wealth of meaning" (1991:124). Here, I would like to direct the reader to the last line of Verse six of the "Squaw Valley Song" which as Charlie points out in his notes, is strictly reserved for first-time auditors who are accepted by the community.

It should be pointed out that these auditors are not necessarily Métis. In fact, there is generally a story which accompanies the presence of that particular individual which specifies who they are and why they are there. This practice identifies who belongs and who doesn't belong to the Métis community.¹⁰ I would suggest that this ritualized "naming" technique used to document who does and doesn't belong to the local Métis community symbolizes the importance of community acceptance in the definition of Métis identity.

The Music

An examination of some of the musical features of this song demonstrates from which cultural pools the musical tools are drawn. It should be stressed, however, that the way in which it is performed means that the musical tools and the cultural pools from which they are

¹⁰ For example, on one occasion I brought a friend of mine "up north" to a family wedding and stopped in Mattawa on the way. Charlie explained to me that this friend would probably be included in the song if he were the first-time auditor at a performance of the "Squaw Valley Song." However, who he was (ie. a music student at the University of Ottawa), his purpose for being there (accompanying me to a family wedding in Sudbury) would also be documented through the accompanying story.

drawn are contingent upon the composers of that particular performance and that this particular genre varies according to regional influences.

This musical genre could be considered a variation of a ''chanson de timbre;' ' a French-Canadian musical tradition which is characterized by the use of a different text for a given melody.¹¹ In this case however, the melody is taken from an American cultural pool and uses English lyrics. Specifically, it is based---quite loosely, I might add---on the tune of ''Sweet Betsy from Pike'' (see Appendix B).¹²

At first hearing, the ''Squaw Valley Song'' seems quite simple, and yet, attempts at transcribing it into Western musical notation proved to be very difficult because of the relationship between the text and the music, the compositional process which characterizes it, and the narrative qualities of the melody. Actually, the text can be said to guide the rhythmic, melodic and harmonic aspects of the music in the following ways.

First, one simply needs to look at the text itself to notice that the syllabic content of each line varies considerably---which means that when sung, the rhythm of the melody needs to change in accordance with the words. For example, the first line of Verse 1 is: ''If you go to Squaw Valley'' (7 syllables); the first line of Verse 2 is: ''And down through the pasture'' (6 syllables); the first line of Verse 3 is: ''Old Squaw Valley'' (4 syllables), and so on. This is further

¹¹ For a detailed discussion see Conrad Laforte's Poétiques de la Chanson Traditionnelle Française (1993).

¹² ''Sweet Betsy from Pike'' was based on a song from the 1840s ''Villikins and his Dinah'' and was made popular by a recording by Burl Ives. For details, see The Burl Ives Song Book (1953:234). Other versions are listed in Songs of the American West (1968:42) and Cohen's Ozark Folksongs (1982:193).

complicated by the fact that any given line, or maybe even a newly composed line of text, can be sung to this given melodic phrase.

Second, accentuation in the melody is also based on the text. Following is the pattern of accentuation in the melody of the first verse:

If you > go to Squaw > Valley
> Go and spend the > night
You can > go to LaCelle's and
You'll > see a good > fight
They'll > smash the tele>vision
And > break the radio
When > officer > Grey comes
Watch > Honeybee > go

This accentuation establishes a regular beat but not a regular meter as such. A visual examination of the text demonstrates that the number of syllables in each line demands a different rhythm within each unit-pulse beat.

In a section titled "Conflict between Rhythm and Metre," Walter Durr and Walter Guerstenberg state that, "Temporal formations may indeed follow exactly regular procedures without necessarily belonging to a metrical system, or the system may cut across mathematically definable divisions." (Duerr and Guerstenberg, 1995 (15):808).

I would submit that the "Squaw Valley Song" adheres to both these features in that the melody is rhythmically guided by a unit-pulse and that the rhythmic subdivisions within each pulse vary considerably based on the text. Furthermore, the speech patterns on which the singing of the melody are based would be extremely difficult to divide mathematically.

Duerr and Gursternberg also comment on the relationship between speech rhythm and vocal music in the following way: "Another type of rhythm that interacts with a metrical ordering is that of speech-rhythm in the context of vocal music. It is not of general relevance whether the sung text is itself in metre" (1995:808). Here, I would also argue that the melody of the song is actually based on rhythmic speech patterns which are drawn from the narrative quality of the text.¹³

The rhythmic aspect of the melody becomes even more complex when combined with the accentuation in the accompaniment. In the introductory chords and at the beginning of the first verse, a 6/8 meter is established quite clearly in the guitar accompaniment supported by an alternating bass pattern. However, the alternating bass pattern is not used throughout because of the chord changes. Moreover a

¹³ As far as I know, there are no linguistic studies of the English-based Métis dialect known as Bungee (or Bunji) that have been conducted in Northern Ontario. Due to regional variations, it is therefore impossible for me to substantiate any claims that inflection in the "Squaw Valley Song" can be linked to a Michif-related language. However, what I can say is that the spoken inflection is very similar to the sung version of the text. Furthermore, I can also substantiate the existence of an English-based Michif-related language that has been classified as Bungee---that has yet to be officially recognized---as demonstrated by these few studies namely, F.J. Walters' "Bungee as she is spoke" (1969-70); Stobie's "The dialect called Bungi" (1971) and "Background of the Dialect called Bungi" (1970).

3/8 bar is inserted on the word ''Honeybee'' before resuming the 6/8 meter.

Noticeably, there is a break in between the verses which consists of just the guitar accompaniment. This practice gives the performers the opportunity to both decide which verse, or version thereof, to sing and to switch to another musician. This often also provides background for the performers to comment verbally on the meanings or characters of the previously sung verse. This performance practice can be linked to the earlier comments on the practice of Métis storytelling where much time is spent on the details surrounding the ''staged'' action.

In the audio example, the words, verses, and even the story, of the Squaw Valley song (see Appendix B) are noticeably different from those provided by Charlie in Appendix A. Charlie calls this ''movable parts.'' These movable parts include the text, phrasing, and musical form. In other words, the order in which these musical tools, meaning text and melodic phrasing are presented does not really matter when the song is performed locally, but the main theme of the lyrics remains the same.

The constantly changing movable parts to which Charlie refers are necessary to accommodate the forever changing text. This flexible musical form seems to be typical also of Native and Métis fiddling where the number and order of phrases are interchanged freely. Lederman comments on this aspect of Métis fiddling, ''...the phrases vary greatly in length and number from one tune to the next, as well as in

the same tune played by different players, and even on repeats of a tune by the same player'' (1987:4).

Furthermore, this compositional process allows for individual expression. When performed in a group, this song is expanded by the different perspectives of others who knew the characters in the story. This performance practice is what I term the process of ''collective composition.'' It is a process which allows for spontaneous composition (basically an improvisation), which is inspired by the moment. This moment allows for each individual to express themselves in their own style (as is evidenced by the Squaw Valley runs inserted occasionally on the recording). This exchange in itself constitutes gift-giving, and sharing.

This performance practice lies is based on participation. For example, whoever has the floor at the time will say, ''Annette, take this verse.'' Individual expression is then given a voice, and the other musicians try to follow as best they can. One could conclude that this performance practice respects individual experience. If the improvisation is particularly inspired, it will be ''picked up'' by the other players and repeated in other circumstances.

This process of collective composition permits a detailed, and multi-faceted documentation of the event in question. It also permits for individual expression of one's musical vocabulary by featuring the musical tools one has learned from other cultural pools. For example, note Charlie's use of Irish ornamentation in the melody when he sings the fourth, fifth and sixth verses.

The guitar accompaniment, in this case in C major, uses mostly tonic, subdominant, and dominant harmonies, except for the inclusion of a D major 7th chord at the end of the verses. This chord sounds oddly "out of tune" with the melody and is associated by the interviewed musicians as a "blue" note effect or as giving a "blues feeling." In his study of the blues called Urban Blues Charles Keil comments on this aspect of the blues,

This blues feeling derives largely from "blue" notes, supposedly "the third and seventh scale degrees which are used either natural or flatted, and which are frequently played deliberately out of tune. The phrase "out of tune" here has misleading connotations, and it is not at all clear that the third and seventh degrees of the scale are the only points where blue notes can be found. The flatted fifth is often referred to as the heart of "funk," "soul, or blues feeling, and it has even been said that blue notes can be found in all the cracks between the keys of the piano. The flattening or bending of thirds, sevenths, and fifths into quarter tones is part of a general defining feature difficult to specify concretely, that may simply be called blues chromaticism.

(Keil 1991:53)

Keil's comments highlights another aspect of the melody which is pertinent to the way the melody of the "Squaw Valley Song" is usually performed: pitch. On the recording included here, there is a noticeable downward inflection at the ends of the melodic phrases and much sliding and "bending" of the notes. Keil comments on this feature of the blues in the following way: "In speaking of tonal blends, twists, slides, and dips that every blues artist uses, I am moving from

structure to texture, from abstract formal prototypes to concrete idiosyncratic qualities of sound'' (1991:53). A careful listening of the ''Squaw Valley Song'' shows how the performers make great use of the sliding and bending of notes as described above by Keil.

At this point, another hearing of the ''Squaw Valley Song'' can help demonstrate the following specific musical tools: (1) the use of different accents in the melody and accompaniment; (2) the use of an underlying unit-pulse, instead of a regular meter, which coordinates the melody and accompaniment; (3) the inclusion of a D major 7th chord at the end of the verses which produces an ''out of tune'' effect; (4) the sliding and bending of notes in the melody and the inclusion of Squaw Valley runs as cadential extensions; (5) the verbal commentary which provides information in between verses; (6) the extended bridges in between verses which permit the choice of which verse to sing, verbal commentary, and switching performers; and (7) the jovial atmosphere which pervades in spite of a serious underlying topic (see Audio example 7.2).

I would submit that, the ''Squaw Valley Song'' uses musical tools from three different cultural pools. First, it uses the French-Canadian tradition of ''chansons de timbre'' in that the melody is taken from another song. Second, it also features also American influence in the use of the tune from ''Sweet Betsey of Pike'' and musical tools drawn from the blues such as sliding and bending of notes, and singing ''out of tune.'' Third, its distinctive narrative quality can be traced to Native cultural pools such as descriptive qualifiers which surround the

main event in the story. Finally, it is Métis because the "way" in which these tools are used can be linked to a typical Métis sensibility rooted in storytelling performance practices which, focus on a particular type of social interaction, namely, the documentary process in oral tradition and community acceptance.

This musical genre can be said to share many characteristics with the style of Chiga Groulx's music in terms of its improvisatory and spontaneous nature, that is, free-form music. It also demonstrates how the choice of different musical tools from various cultural pools can produce a different variety of music altogether while, nevertheless, featuring "ways of being" which are distinctively Métis.

One final word about the performance practice of this particular genre. The composition and performance of this genre is characterized by a distinctive type of social interaction. Some features of this interaction, including "collective composition" and "inside references," can be said to be aimed at the documentation and preservation of Métis culture through musical tradition. Other features, such as "naming techniques," "movable parts," and "free-form" music can be said to constitute gift-giving and sharing which is linked to the process of community acceptance.

As Lynn Whidden states, "The boundaries among Métis/French/Native music are at times indistinct yet there are certain genres of music and dance which can be identified clearly as Métis" (1994:5). The "Squaw Valley Song," I would argue, is representative of a typical Métis musical genre.

III

The "Other Métis"

The Music of Bunny Gauthier

Jean-Philippe Gaston "Bunny" Gauthier is a Métis Elder from Squaw Valley. Bunny is one example of the hidden majority of the Métis population in Ontario.¹⁴ Many factors contribute to the silence of this segment of the Métis community, including socio-economic conditions, lifestyle preferences, and perhaps more significantly, class stratification.

For many Métis, these conditions combined with frustration due to the political climate and incessant arguing over membership leads to withdrawal and isolation from the Métis community at large. In the case of Bunny, this situation, in musical terms, can be said to have greatly contributed to the development of a highly idiomatic style in musical expression that is nevertheless associated by Métis people to Métis practices.

Politically, Bunny has been associated with, and has been a member of, the Ontario Métis and Aboriginal Association for many years. However, as we will see, this really means very little in terms of his everyday existence. Bunny has spent most of his life living basically a

¹⁴ Statistics Canada estimates that there are 240,000 people of aboriginal ancestry in the province of Ontario (including Non-Status Indians). Out of these, it is speculated that there are at least 100,000 who self-identify as Métis. The total membership of both the Ontario Métis and Aboriginal Association and the Métis Nation of Ontario is somewhere in the neighbourhood of 3,500.

subsistence lifestyle which continues to predominate in the Mattawa Métis community.

In Mattawa, the furtrade labour force partly found employment in the logging industry, guiding, and the mining industry, although trapping continues to provide a supplementary income for many. For long periods of time these workers would be in the bush or in logging camps and when they returned to town, they would live in a section of Squaw Valley that was referred to as the "hydro colony" because of its location near the La Cave dam. Its residents included many Métis and Indians, as well as transient workers. Charlie Pépin described it for me as follows:

The hydro colony was [pause], they were somewhat distinct from the Valley. That's where all the fights were and the drinking and "low-life" so-called. Ya, and there were some cases that were terrible. Things that happened that would never happen today: child molestation, wife-beating. But, that was happening over here too, but there was no hypocrisy on that side. It was---the laundry was aired out over there

quite plainly.¹⁵

(personal interview, June 28, 1995)

According to Chiga Groulx, the most dangerous jobs were generally filled by Natives and Métis, where many were injured or died.

In his book Bushworkers and bosses: Logging in Northern Ontario, 1900-1980, Ian Radforth comments on the attitudes of the employers towards Native people. He states,

At the bottom of the pile were native peoples. 'They will work for a time and then take a rest while spending the money they have earned,' said the Canada Lumberman in 1911. 'There is no telling how long an Indian will stay on a job.' Yet on the river drives the Indian's skills gained him a high reputation.

(Radforth, 1987:34)

Chiga Groulx has explained to me that many of the Native and Métis people in the area refused to take on employment for any extended period of time because they felt exploited, and did not like working for the White man. They would work just enough to get by. Seasonal work provided some income and the rest of the year they would live off the land, hunting when they needed food, basically living a subsistence lifestyle.

In Mattawa, music has played an important role in this survival strategy. Chiga Groulx mentioned to me that, at one time, the three

¹⁵ "Airing out your laundry" is a local expression. The full expression is "you don't air your dirty laundry out in public." It means that you don't fight or bring out personal and family arguments in the presence of others.

most important people in lumber camps were the cook, the musician, and the foreman. Musical skills then, were instrumental in securing a job. Charlie elaborated on this issue for me by saying that local Métis musicians were also often invited to perform for social events in the local "high society" houses. According to Charlie, the musicians were treated very well, with much respect, but it was their only opportunity to experience how "the other side" lived.

This segment of the community is referred to by Chiga as the "real Métis." In his own words,

I think the real Maytees...he's still getting pushed away...Let's say you go to [the Department of] Natural Ressources and say "I want a job here, it's what I can do." The real Maytees, that I know here in Mattawa, he looks aboriginal and he won't get the job. They're going to say, "You're aboriginal." And so he wants to get his card so he can get away from tax and get free hunting and fishing. [And they say] "No! You're a White man." So he's caught in the middle...And that's what I say in the meetings there, that it's not fair. They're the ones that's gettin' hell and you go in the meetings and who [do] you see there? Well, you can hardly

tell if he has any Indian or not. It's a White man sitting there with a pen.

(personal interview, May 31, 1996)

In Chiga's opinion, physical features pose a great handicap in job opportunities. Those Métis who look aboriginal are socially regarded as Indians and yet do not qualify for status and cannot benefit from their aboriginal rights. Those who look white can choose not to self-identify as Métis and live as a White man, as many do.

Charlie described the socio-economic conditions that existed prior to the rebuilding of Squaw Valley in the 1950s. He described the segment of the community who could not pass for Whites in the following way.

They had no way out. You could get a job at the mill [for] at a dollar ten an hour, and that was too attractive to go beyond grade eight (and they had the brains, but they didn't have the means). By the time they reached grade eight, there was no way they could see to finish high school. Basically, what would usually happen is they'd work there for four or five years, and then the monotony would get them, and by then, they'd be old enough to drink legally, and the booze'd

get them. That's really what would get them
in 90, or more, percent of the cases. The booze'd
just find a way and it'd kill them.

(personal interview, June 28, 1995)

Bunny Gauthier is representative of this seasonal work force, and
of day to day existence. In his own words,

I worked for the hydro for a while.
I worked all over Ontario, but I had
to quit because my father was getting
sick and I had to come back to Mattawa.
But, I don't regret it, we made a living.
Now, I'm just about semi-retired I'd say.
Right now, I'm cutting grass for a chum...
I don't have to do this but I like to do
it to get the exercise. I like doin' that
and I quit anytime you want. You know, when
it's gettin' too hot, you [just say] ''that's
enough.''

(personal interview, August 18, 1995)

According to Chiga Groulx, Bunny is an educated man (he completed
Grade 10), and could have had a very successful career in whatever

field he wanted. He chose instead a day to day existence because he didn't want to be exploited, and was extremely uncomfortable with institutions and their processes. Although Bunny continues to be a member of, and worked for, the Ontario Métis and Aboriginal Association for two years, in his opinion aboriginal status does not change his life. He had this to say:

Well, I have my Maytees card. I worked for them for a while...I did surveying properties for homes...You can't do it all the time because there's no money involved...but I had to go to meetings and stuff, which I hate...I'm not a meetings guy. I said ''I don't want meetings I don't want this''...but I helped them out in that way.

(personal interview August 18,1995)

Bunny is representative of many Métis who, whether or not they get a membership in one of the provincial organizations, never attend meetings, or do not participate in any way in local activities. I asked Bunny if he felt that Métis status entitled him to any rights. He said,

No. Not to me. A lot of them probably it

does, but to me, I buy my card and I just live from day to day, the way it is... You see, most of the Maytees are in this for something they can get...like a job or they'll get something out of it. But, I didn't take any money. I did this for two years on my own...because I wanted to give them a hand.

(personal interview, August 18, 1995).

Accusations of corruption in the higher ranks of the Métis political organizations abound. Many Métis feel that the money that was intended for social programs ended up in people's pockets instead. Because of this, there is little faith in political leaders and their ability to bring about social change.

One could surmise that the extremely difficult socio-economic conditions of this section of the Valley have greatly contributed to lead the Métis of Squaw Valley to find a deep affinity with the African Americans singing the blues. Chiga Groulx would often say "Dat's the Valley der, dat sound. Dat's de type of song, blues" (personal interview, August 1st, 1995). Indeed, many of the musical tools which characterize the Valley "sound" are drawn from the blues¹⁶ and from country and western songs.

¹⁶ Here, the musical tools which Bunny draws from this cultural pool are associated with the blues traditions of the 1920s and 30s, as defined in Canadian Encyclopedia of Music which characterizes them as follows: "The basic elements of blues have remained constant: the tonic, sub-dominant, dominant-

This predilection for the blues led to a local tradition which was called the ''sad song contest.'' Charlie Pépin says the object of the contest was to see who could sing the most obnoxious tearjerker. He characterized this repertoire as consisting of classic ''hurtin'' songs. Bunny Gauthier was apparently a frequent winner of this contest.

Many of the musical tools which characterize Bunny's style---which according to Chiga and Charlie, is typical of the Valley style---are also used by Chiga Groulx in the Gaspé style, but they are used in different ways. The first of these tools is the use of accents. Bunny also uses a unit-pulse with an offbeat accent, but he plays what he refers to as a ''slap style''¹⁷ (see Audio example 7.16).¹⁸

In this example, Bunny is singing and accompanying himself on the guitar, and Paul Pépin¹⁹ is singing the harmony. According to Paul, Bunny is the only player he has ever heard use this slap style of accompaniment in Mattawa. Bunny explained his predilection for using this style of playing as follows:

I used to like Eddy Arnold when I was
a kid and he used to have that slap

seventh, tonic harmonic structure, typically in 12-bar cycles; the preponderance of 'blue notes' (ie. flattened thirds and sevenths) and the highly emotional content of the music, predominantly as a personal expression of the grievances and frustrations of US blacks in terms ranging from despair to humour" (1992:134).

¹⁷ This slap-style is produced by muting the strings of the guitar with the left hand while striking the strings with the side of the right hand causing them to hit the fretboard thereby creating a percussive effect.

¹⁸ The audio examples in this section include much background noise due to the setting, which was outside by the Mattawa river. In this example, a motorboat can be heard passing by.

¹⁹ Paul Pépin is Charlie Pépin's younger brother. He is in his early 30s and has known Bunny since he was a child. It is through Paul that I got introduced to Bunny.

style...you'll hear [it] in the background
to records. I heard [it] through records
and radio. I liked it and I decided I was
gonna do that. It's better than a straight
chord to me, it gives more rhythm to it.

(personal interview, August 18,1995)

In Bunny's playing, the offbeat accentuation is still noticeable, even though it is somewhat softer than the Gaspé style and more percussive. At the end of this song, Bunny plays a chord which Charlie has referred to as his best ''away from town chord,'' and which he apparently uses often at the ends of his songs.

According to Charlie and Chiga Groulx, the blues were picked up in Temagami,²⁰ where many Métis and Indians are employed during the summer to guide in the tourist camps. These tourist camps often cater to American hunters and fishermen from whom they also heard this style of music.

Bunny has taught Paul how to play the slap style. In audio example 7.4,²¹ when Bunny and Paul play a duet, Paul uses this slap-style to accompany a 12-bar blues improvisation. In this example, Bunny is playing the lead and Paul is playing the accompaniment.

In audio example 7.4, many local musical tools which were identified in Chiga Groulx's style can be noticed, however they are

²⁰ Temagami is about a one hour drive from Mattawa.

²¹ Here, the background noise is provided by Bunny's dog who seemed quite taken with the microphone.

used in different ways. First, Bunny uses the distinctive offbeat accents but combined with a slap-style. Second, he incorporates drones in his playing and uses runs as cadential extensions. Unlike Chiga Groulx, however, these runs are based on a blues idiom and only seem to serve one function, specifically, cadential extension.

Still, in the same recording, other musical tools which are similar to those of Gaspé Town include aspects of musical form. The beginning of this 12-bar blues improvisation includes a repeated one-note introduction, and a codetta which consists of a run and a sustained chord---in this recording Bunny's 'best away from town chord.' Finally, this example also demonstrates a strong affinity for improvisatory music.

Bunny's style of playing shares many characteristics of the Gaspé Town style. Even though Bunny's music is drastically different from Chiga Groulx's music in terms of style, the selection process of musical tools from different cultural pools is similar. In the case of Bunny's music, some of these tools come from local traditions, whereas others come from the blues, and country and western music. Bunny's choice of repertoire is also apparently representative of the type of music which was preferred in Squaw Valley.

The Squaw Valley repertoire is noticeably different from Gaspé Town. Chiga Groulx says 'our playing here [meaning Gaspé Town] was more traditional [a reference to fiddling music]' (personal interview, May 31, 1996). It seems that most of the instrumental music was played in Gaspé Town and most of the vocal music was played in Squaw Valley.

Much of Bunny's repertoire is drawn from country and western tunes from the 1950s and 60s, all played in a blues idiom.

In my opinion, the preference for vocal music in the Valley is one way through which music could speak to the socio-economic conditions and the lifestyle which prevailed there. Charlie Pépin's says ''When Bunny sings the blues, he is the blues'' (personal interview, June 31, 1996). I interpret this as meaning that the music Bunny chooses to play, like other Métis from Squaw Valley, speaks to his life experience.

When I asked Bunny to describe Métis music for me, he answered,

Oh, it's a mixture of Irish songs, jigs, reels, and country and western...The younger kids go in for rock & roll and stuff like that. In the long run...they're a country and western style people and they go for, you know, violin music and stuff like that jigs, reels, what have you.

(personal interview August 18, 1995)

I asked Bunny if he considered the music he plays as Métis music and he replied, ''Well no, well, it's a mixture you know. Ya, some but not all'' (personal interview, August 18, 1995). I interpreted this comment as symbolic of the dilemma which faces many Métis today and that is the question of self-definition.

Essentialist and homogeneous representations of Métis identity and culture combined with the process of political socialization have been extremely influential in terms of defining what is and is not Métis. In this context, there are many Métis themselves who believe that "Métis" means those with Red River ancestry, and that Métis music is constituted by the fiddling traditions associated with Western Canada. The "naturalization" of the term "Métis" as referring to the "historical" Métis contributes in a significant way to maintain the silence of the majority.

Within this perspective, it is important to note that there are some glaring omissions in this study. This study could have indeed featured Métis musical practices in Mattawa based on categories other than geographic ones, such as "this side" or "that side" of the river. Various Métis musical practices, not examined in this study, could have been presented, for example, in relation to divisive factors such as political affiliations, gender, class issues, or race. However, each of these constitutes a study in itself and is not within the scope of this work.

Given that, I would like to briefly outline who these "other Métis" are. Many of these other Métis are women. There is the noticeable absence of any female musicians in this study. Throughout my many visits to Mattawa, I have yet to meet any female musicians, although I am certain they exist. According to Charlie Pépin and Chiga Groulx, the Métis women of Mattawa were reknown for their singing and

dancing skills. There used to be a Métis Women's Association in Mattawa, but it withered due to lack of participation.

In many cases, the silence of Métis women is due to the lack of affiliation to a political organization which is an important source of information on those who self-identify as Métis. On the provincial and national levels, Métis women have also had difficulties in getting a voice, to the extent that a separate National Organization was founded because Métis women were not represented in national negotiations. These political divisions can be said to further complicate the process of defining Métis identity in that each political organization determines its own criteria for membership.

There are also other Métis who are politically affiliated, another area which deserves a more detailed examination. These Métis are caught in the present power struggles which impede the processes of self-definition and self-determination. In the meantime, multiple Métis identities on all levels continue to divide families, communities, and the Nation.

Finally, the other Métis include those with multiple identities, including legal and cultural identities. For example, a substantial number of Métis are legally considered Indians through the provisions of the Indian Act. However, many self-identify as Métis culturally and psychologically. These Métis cannot be registered as Métis because they have already been given the legal status of First Nations members.

The Métis community in Mattawa well exemplifies the many divisions which exist in the Métis Nation. These divisions can be seen from the

family level to the community, provincial, national, and even international levels.

The multiple identities embraced by Métis in the small community of Mattawa is paralleled by the many musical traditions which help construct these identities. They are all linked to the ongoing process of both constructing a Métis identity and, by so doing, defining what is meant by 'Métisness'.

CONCLUSION

"Tipe Yim Isowak"¹ (The People That Own
Themselves or That Nobody Owns)

In 1994, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) was incorporated. It represents the only existing Métis-specific provincial political organization in Ontario. In its "Statement of Prime Purpose" the MNO states its main goal as that of "building the Nation." This mandate has forced the issue of Métis identity and the determination of membership criteria.

The criteria that have been established recently include: (a) aboriginal ancestry (including Métis ancestry); (b) self-identification; and (c) community acceptance, meaning that the Nation decides who belongs and who doesn't. Throughout this study, I have shown that the definition of Métis identity is influenced by many factors from which a multiplicity of Métis identities have emerged. These Métis identities, I have argued, can be best understood by examining various socio-musical practices which play a crucial role in the process of defining "Métisness" both in legal and cultural terms, as described below.

First, the documentation of aboriginal ancestry has proven to be problematic for many Métis. Historically, government policy demands written documentation as proof of aboriginal ancestry such as a band number, or census identification. As mentioned in the historiography

¹ This term is how the Cree refer to the Métis.

section, many Indians and Métis were not present to be registered when the Indian agent came, or lost their status through various provisions of the Indian Act. Furthermore, in many cases, genealogical information is extremely difficult to find in written documentation, because Métis culture is largely rooted in oral tradition.

As we have seen, documentation of aboriginal ancestry as well as family, local, and even regional histories have been for the most part transmitted from generation to generation through song. In the case of the Métis Nation, this source of information has yet to be acknowledged as legitimate documentation.

Recognition and acknowledgment of the important documentary role that Métis music plays in Métis culture, in my opinion, can help to better understand how genealogical and historical factors have contributed to the development of multiple Métis identities. Moreover, the legitimization of oral tradition can facilitate the verification process, a mandatory requirement in obtaining legal status which has significantly impeded the growth of the Nation.

Second, as I have shown throughout this study, the self-identification process, while it has been impeded by factors such as racism, socio-economic conditions, and class stratification, has been made possible and has perhaps been best articulated through cultural practices and, more specifically, through music. For example, self-identification has, in many cases, been prompted by the realization that family traditions are distinctive. Curiosity about this

distinction has impelled many individuals to learn more about their cultural heritage and to develop the sense of pride in being Métis.

This sense of pride has fuelled the struggle for recognition for many centuries. Musical practices have served at various historical times as the catalyst to set the process of self-identification in motion (as was the case with myself, and many others I have spoken to). In this way, Métis music, I have argued, plays a significant role in terms of the self-identification process and the definition of Métis identity.

Third, community acceptance is not only contingent on proof of aboriginal ancestry, but perhaps more importantly, on the unique sense of community through which the Ontario community has developed its sense of Nation. As previously discussed, this sense of community is largely constituted by extended family links and 'knowledge' of the person in question. Again here, I have argued that Métis music plays an important role both in the documentation and the acceptance of community members through distinctive practice performances and Métis social interactions.

There is a rich legacy which has been passed down from early in the 17th century to the Métis descendants of today. However, as I have discussed throughout this thesis in great detail, historical events, socio-economic conditions, and political definitions have caused deep divisions within the Métis community itself and much confusion and animosity as to the definition of individual and collective Métis identities.

The goal of this study has been to bring Métis and non-Métis alike to acknowledge the existence of musical diversity and multiple Métis identities within the Métis Nation. It is my belief that cultural diversity, including musical practices, has always been present in Métis culture and that acknowledgment of this diversity and difference within Métis culture could do much to unify the Métis Nation. This acknowledgment has yet to be commonplace, as the Nation remains divided still---politically, socially and culturally. This is reflected by current attitudes which continue to perpetuate the myth of the "historical" Métis.

To represent the music of the Métis Nation by only one specific genre would do violence to the various experiences and multi-faceted definitions of Métis identity spurring heated debates in Métis gatherings. This study has hopefully demonstrated that, although subject to transformation, Métis musical practices continue to play a significant role in the construction and definition of Métis identity today.

It is for this reason that the Cree expression for the Métis, "the people that own themselves" is so important: it is a powerful reminder that the Métis are not "owned" by, or belong to, other cultures because, as I have tried to show, they have their own---a rich and diversified culture which has existed for centuries.

Appendix A

Squaw Valley Song: Notes provided by Charlie Pépin, June 2, 1996

Annette, there are many verses and versions of this song all of which I can't remember. Some of them were written by Bob Johnson (a Métis) and a cousin of Bunny Gauthier, and some by me when I was 15 or 16. The tune that it is sung to is a very close version of «Sweet Betsy from 'Pyke'» [a popular folk song].

Now [here are] some of the verses I wrote,

If you go to Squaw Valley
on a Saturday night.
You can go by Lacelle's
and see a good fight.
Smash the television, break
the radio.
When officer 'Grey' comes
You'll see 'Honeybee' go.

Squaw Valley is an area of Mattawa on the north side of the Mattawa river where many Métis families resided along with some aboriginal families.

Lacelles were a Métis family of seasonal workers (mostly guides),¹ who were binge drinkers, and would fight often, and mostly among themselves. They were basically good people who would share

¹ Guiding is a reference to the tourism industry. Many people (mostly Americans) come to Northern Ontario to hunt and fish. Generally, locals are hired (often Métis and Native people) to take them to the best «spots» (as they are locally called) to catch whatever they want. This seasonal work has been one of the mainstays of Aboriginal survival in Northern Ontario for many generations and provided (in some cases still does provide) a large portion of their income.

anything they had with you but, typically, could not handle alcohol and hence would break things in the home when these family fights would occur.

'Grey' was a policeman employed by the town and was 'set up' by the one other constable (Lachance) to catch 'Honeybee, 'when 'Honeybee' was on a tear [pronounced a terr meaning, on a rampage]. Lachance told Grey that nobody could handle Honeybee, and Grey being a new cop was out to show the world that he could handle anybody.

Now down through the Nun's
pasture 'Grey' chased 'Honeybee'
But the night was so dark you
could barely see
And I don't think that 'Grey'
has ran that fast ever since
As the night he crashed into
Old 'John Montreuil's' fence.

The Nun's pasture was an area west of the Valley where the 'Gray nuns' used to keep milk cows at one time.

In this verse, 'Honeybee' had been on a binge and fighting, and the family had called the police. [The following background information deals with a previous incident which accounts for the animosity between the two, namely, Honeybee and Grey]. The winter before, Honeybee had been drunk (and fighting with the family) and 'Grey' had been sent by Lachance for his first encounter with Honeybee. The Lacelles heated their house with a woodstove (kitchen type) and it was about 30 below so there was a hell of a fire on. When 'Honeybee' saw the cruiser [police car] come in the yard, he pretended to be really drunk (and out

of it [meaning so drunk that he didn't know what was happening]) and sat in the woodbin across from the stove appearing quite helpless.

Grey come through the door like 'gangbusters' walked up to 'Honeybee' grabbed him under the shoulder and said «I'll fix you now you S.O.B.» and stood Honeybee up. With that Honeybee says «the fuck you will» and grabbed Grey by the waist and sat and held Grey on the woodstove for as long as he could, and then ran away while Grey did his best to cool his ass and save his dignity. The stage had now been really set for any further encounters between the two.

[Now back to the verse at hand.] In this verse, Honeybee (who was quite athletic) was running ahead of Grey along the river on the old wagon road that led to the Nuns' pasture. The pasture had subsequently been rented to a local jobber,² John Montreuil, where he kept 12 or 15 teams of horses in the summer time. John had fenced this pasture with a peige-wire [pronounced page-wire] fence which at this time was brand new and singing tight.³ Honeybee would stay 75 or 100 feet of Grey tounting [antagonizing] him all the while. As they approached the fence, Honeybee let the gap close to about 20 or 30 feet. And just as 'Grey' gave it everything he had to catch up, Honeybee jumped the fence like a deer and stopped to watch. Grey tied [ran] into the fence going everything he could [running as fast as he could], and hit it dead

² A «jobber» means, in Charlie's words «a lumber profiteer.» He would be a local employer who had a license and/or a government contract to cut wood and would hire local help (often Métis and Indians), at minimum wage, to do so.

³ According to Charlie, this type of fencing (which was commonly used to corral cows) needed to be extremely taut in order to prevent the cows from escaping. This was accomplished by tightening the fencing with the use of a tractor so that it would be very strong.

centre of a 16 foot span [between the posts, where the fence was the loosest, and would act as a slingshot]. He must have sprung back and forth for half a minute before he could untangle himself and hobble back to his cruiser [a source of great amusement for Honeybee and those who were following, including the neighbourhood kids and Charlie]. He never did catch Honeybee and it wasn't long after that Grey left town [apparently because of his great sense of embarrassment].

Some of Bob Johnson's [verses]

Now Mrs. Johnson is going crazy
with the parties we make.
While the guitars and fiddles and
the banjos are played.
She says that our parties have
just gone too far.
(here anybody who was listening to
the song's name would be inserted)
While Annette is out looking for
wine with the car.⁴

Mrs. Johnson is Bob's mom, and really, she loved music as did his father, Johnny, who was a good singer and mouth organ player.

Now we left there at [to go to] Johnson's
it was about twelve o'clock [midnight].
And down to Harold Bell's on the
door we did knock.
He asked us to join him and
have a good time.
Then he reached in his cupboard and he
'hocked' [took] out some wine.

The Bells were a Valley family of party people and music lovers.

⁴This practice is reserved for people who are accepted in the community. According to Charlie, anyone who is not accepted would never be mentioned in this song.

Have a drink on the house boys
old Harold said 'sloshed' [drunk]
So I reached in my pocket for
the 'Squaw Valley scotch'
We laid by [drank down] the 'Rubbie,' the
shoe polish free [freely] and we washed
it all down with 5,7,1,-B.

'Squaw Valley scotch' was 'Catawba' wine which was one of the
cheapest of the cheap wines available through the L.C.B.O [Liquor
Control Board of Ontario] at the time. It was made by Barnes, and when
you bought it you had to fill out a slip at the Liquor store, and
Catawba's serial number was 571-B.⁵

'Rubbie' is a reference to rubbing alcohol which was sometimes
drank, as was shoe polish, by some hardcore drinkers.

Now theres great 'pickers' in the
Valley and I'm sure you've heard tell
Bob, Charlie, and Bunny, and then
there's 'Boots Bell'
But the one who's the greatest, the
one we all hail
Is that old 'Pickin Biddy' he can
make the dead wail.

The 'Pickin Biddy' referred to here was a Métis musician---who in
my opinion was a musical genius---who I probably will never have the
privilege of knowing, or playing with [such a great player], in my life
again. Robert 'Pickin Biddy Green' was a cousin of Bob Johnson and
Bunny Gauthier. He could play guitar, fiddle and mandolin. On mandolin

⁵ Charlie's father managed the liquor store in Mattawa. Filling out forms was a way of controlling to
whom, and how much, liquor was sold. Indians (and Métis) were not allowed to buy liquor in this area
until 1969. Chiga Groulx told me that, at one time, the quota («and that was for White people») was four
bottles a year.

he was in a class of his own. He could play anything and any style, he could mesmerize any musician who heard and watched him. Unfortunately, he was introverted to the extent that he never played professionally until later in life, and even at that, the gigs were spotty [few]. He had the musical ability to play with any band in the world, but I feel his background undermined him. He died tragically, being misdiagnosed with stomach flu when he actually had a burst appendix. Would he have had a better chance at the hospital had he not been Métis? I know that my life and the world is missing a great musician.

Appendix B
 "Sweet Betsey from Pike"

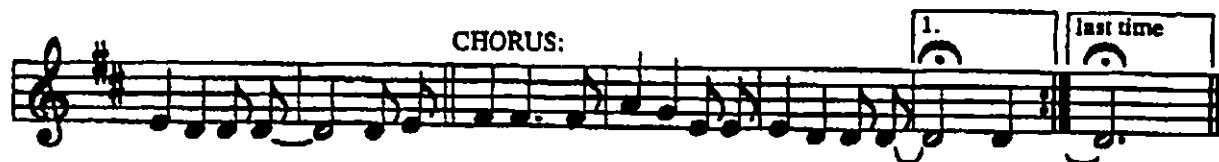
Waltz



1. Do you re - mem ber sweet Bet - sy from Pike?_ 'Crossed the big moun - tains with



her lov - er like... with two yokez of ox - en, a big yel - low dog, a tall Shang hai rooster, and



one spo - ted hog... Hoo die ; dang, fol - de - di - do, hoo die - dang, fol - de - day... 2. They...

Excerpt from Ives (1953:234-35)

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