

CONTESTED AUTHORITY:
INDIGENOUS BORDERLANDS OF THE WESTERN GREAT LAKES

By

Jacob Jurss

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

History- Doctor of Philosophy

2017

ABSTRACT

CONTESTED AUTHORITY: INDIGENOUS BORDERLANDS OF THE WESTERN GREAT LAKES

By

Jacob Jurss

“Contested Authority,” uses the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council as a case study to examine the dynamics of power and authority of an Indigenous borderland located in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century wild rice lakes and maple sugar forests of the western Great Lakes. This research centers on the interactions and overlapping territorial claims of Dakota and Ojibwe communities that complicated efforts by United States officials to solidify their own claims to the region. The Americans argued that leaders of Great Lakes tribes should delineate their boundaries believing that such boundaries would secure peace between the tribes. American authority in the region was still a weak presence, but American efforts led by Michigan Territorial Governor, Lewis Cass, intended to strengthen the federal government’s position in the lands west of Lake Michigan. The ongoing conflict between the Ojibwe and Dakota greatly concerned the Americans as the tribe’s sporadic warfare dampened the enthusiasm for settlement and endangered American settlers. Cass’ efforts to enforce American ideas of private property conflicted with Ojibwe and Dakota community understandings of environmental resources and property. This research presents the multi-dimensional relationships that made up authority in Ojibwe and Dakota society, explores the efforts of Cass and American agents to disrupt these traditional power structures, and highlights how Indigenous leadership structures persisted despite these American attempts to dismantle them.

Copyright by
JACOB JURSS
2017

To Leah, my family, my teachers, and the peoples of the Great Lakes

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Persistence is perhaps the most important quality needed when striving to complete a doctoral program. I have been fortunate to have an extensive support system during the last five years made up of individuals who have helped me persist. Thank you to Susan Sleeper-Smith, my advisor, whose training pushed me to extend my thinking and expand my capabilities as a scholar. Her clear insights, gentle criticisms, and editor's pen made this a far stronger dissertation. Thank you Susan for your continuous support and guidance. Thank you also to my dissertation committee members: Mindy Morgan who taught my first graduate class and mentored me throughout my studies; Peter Beattie who pushed me to broadly consider the concept of borderlands in Central America and South America; Thomas Summerhill who in addition to providing valuable feedback on my research was a wonderful teaching mentor. Thanks also to Sayuri Shimizu who gave me the confidence to draft my first article and has always been a source of encouragement. The history department at Michigan State University provided a demanding but supportive environment. My thanks to the professors who led graduate seminars and extended their offices hours to me, Liam Brockey, Lisa Fine, Walter Hawthorne, Ethan Segal, Jane Vieth, and Helen Zoe Veit. Special thanks to graduate director Michael Stamm who read drafts of my writing, helped secure funding necessary for research trips and conferences, and attended several practice presentations. Thank you to Pero Dagbovie who served as graduate director during my first three years as a graduate student and provided much needed guidance on how to navigate the profession, and encouraged my development as a young scholar. A special note of thanks to the history department staff, Deb Greer, Jeanne Norris, and particularly graduate secretary Elyse Hansen. Without you the department would cease to function. Thank you for guiding me through mounds of paperwork.

Thank you to the Michigan State University American Indian and Indigenous Studies program who always welcomed me and provided a broader perspective to my project as well as the opportunity to participate in events outside of my research. Thank you to members of the faculty including Matthew L.M. Fletcher, Kate Fort, Wenona Singel, Estrella Torrez, Kyle Whyte, and director Dylan AT Miner. Thanks also to the members of the MSU Indigenous Graduate Student Collective: Mike Cavanaugh, Adam Haviland, Kelli Henry, Victor Del Hierro, Shelbi Nahfilet Meissner, Meenakshi Narayan, Santos F. Ramos, Marie Schaefer, Jaquetta Shade, and Nikki Silva. From participating in discussions with senior scholars in the Frybread Faculty Forum, to spring sugar bush, to making snowsnakes, my graduate life was enriched because of all of you. Miigwech!

During my graduate studies I had the good fortune to meet dozens of scholars at conferences and events whose perspective and encouragement enriched my education. Institutional partnerships have enriched my experience and exposed to me many different currents of thought. Through the Big Ten Academic Alliance, the Committee on Institutional Cooperation I was able to take a course at the University of Michigan and benefited from engaging with graduate students from outside of my own institution. Thank you to Michael Witgen for leading the course and for his comments on my early ideas. My appreciation and thanks also go to several scholars from outside of my Michigan State bubble. Raymond Fogelson, C. Joseph Genetin-Pilawa, Benjamin Johnson, Robert Morrissey, Jean O'Brien, and Bruce White have graciously welcomed and encouraged me throughout my early career. You have warmly welcomed me at conferences, made introductions for me, and have pointed out sections of my scholarship that could be expanded. A very warm thank you to Cary Miller whose own research provided much of the grounding for my own. Thank you Cary for the meals,

discussion, and generous comments on several sections of this research. Thanks also to David Bontrager Horst Lehman, Andrew Dietzel, Jameson Sweet, Susan D. Wade, and Margaret Huettl, all fellow early career scholars whose work I admire. It has been wonderful to get to know each of you and your work.

The Newberry Library in Chicago, IL became a second academic home for me. The programming at the library has been instrumental in my own professional develop and houses an extensive collection that has contributed greatly to this project. Through the Newberry Consortium in American Indian Studies I was able to participate in several seminars and research trips and benefited from working with graduate students and professors from a variety of academic institutions. My thanks to Alyssa Mt. Pleasant and Jennifer Denetdale for facilitating the 2013 NCAIS Spring Workshop in Research Methods, and Erin Debenport and Scott Stevens for facilitating the 2013 NCAIS Summer Institute where my initial research of this project began. Thanks also to the other graduate student attendees whose questions and conversations helped shape my thinking. Through the American Indian Studies Seminar Series I had the opportunity to present a chapter of my scholarship and received specific feedback on my research. It was one of the best experiences of my graduate career and I am so thankful for the supportive environment. I am very appreciative to the staff of the Newberry Library who continued to open their doors me. Special thanks to Patricia Marroquín Norby, Patrick A. Morris, and Seonaid Valiant for their help while I was at the Newberry Library.

Libraries are one of the greatest inventions in the world. They are democratizing institutions that provide everyone access to the knowledge of the world. Even in the increasingly digital world, historians continue to rely on the physical collections of libraries and archives. This project received financial support from libraries, archives, and Michigan State University

that allowed me to travel to several archival institutions. My thanks to the Newberry Library and their NCAIS Graduate Student Fellowship, the Bentley Historical Library and the Stevens Researcher Travel Fellowship, and to Michigan States University College of Social Sciences Summer Research Scholarship Program Fellowship Award. This funding allowed me to travel and research at the Bentley Historical Library, Ann Arbor, MI; William L. Clements Library, Ann Arbor MI; Michigan State University Library Microfilm Collection, East Lansing, MI; Newberry Library Chicago, IL; Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, WI; Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, MN; Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; and the National Archives, Washington, D.C. Libraries have served as major turning points in my growth as a scholar. From the West Bend Memorial Library where I began my early reading to the Rondo Community Outreach Library in St. Paul, MN where I applied for graduate school, to the Minneapolis Central Library where my wedding reception was held, libraries have been a cornerstone in my life and this research project. They have provided access to materials and a quiet place to write and think. My thanks to the libraries where much of this dissertation was written including: Michigan State University Library, Library of Michigan, Capital Area District Library Lansing, MI; Detroit Lakes Public Library Detroit Lakes, MN; White Earth Tribal and Community College Library Mahnomen, MN; Martin Luther King Jr., Memorial Library Washington, D.C.; Cleveland Park Interim Library Washington, D.C.; South Dakota State Library Pierre, SD; and Rawlins Community Library Pierre, SD. The staff at these libraries provided a warm, welcoming environment for a traveling graduate student to sit and contemplate.

I was fortunate to share this experience with a Michigan State graduate community who genuinely cared about each other. Thanks to the Michigan State University Graduate Employees

Union. Solidarity Forever! Thanks to David Bennett, Sara Bijani, James Blackwell, Emily Elliott, Alex Galarza, Helen Kaibara, Alison Kolodzy, Kathryn Lankford, Shaonan Liu, Aaron Luedtke, So Mizoguchi, and Christine Neejer. I would like to make a special note of thanks to Andrea Ayotte, Eddie Bonilla, Carolyn Pratt, Ryan Stoklosa, Liz Timbs, and Adrienne Tyrey for extensive grading sessions, late night food runs, and shared pitchers of beer. John Milstead and Amanda Milstead, your generous hospitality, delicious brewing skills, and tales of Mexico adventures always helped lifted my moods. Brian Van Wyck, our long talks mixed with your eloquent wit and steady friendship aided my development as a thinker and as a person. Ryan Huey, thank you for the humor you brought to the daily grind of graduate life. My graduate experience was far more enjoyable because of our soccer matches and other various misadventures. Rich Mares, well I suppose I can squeeze you into these as well—as much as you will be embarrassed by it. I probably owe you a few beers for your steady belief that this project would be completed. I appreciate your feedback and the long hours we spent in silence writing, followed by longer talks over beers. This Lansing/East Lansing community of friends' support helped make the daily efforts manageable.

When I entered graduate school I was given a piece of advice that I, at times, struggled to keep in the forefront of my mind—it was to remember that life does not stop, there is no pause button. During my time in graduate school I, along with friends and family, experienced a range of life event; marriages, deaths, major moves, new jobs, tears, and many laughs. These life events are greater than a single piece of research, and I appreciate the love and support throughout this process.

My deep thanks to David and Denise Hickey, who warmly welcomed me into their family out on the edge of Minnesota prairie and have been so generous with their love.

To JoAnne Riegert, John Nelson, Jacob, Maria, and the entire Riegert family, thank you for the noisy and intense love. From holidays making sausage to long talks on bitter cold winter nights out on the edges of the White Earth Reservation, you welcomed me into your family with open arms.

To my parents Chris and Sheila, thank you. Thank you for the opportunities you provided through your love, encouragement, and sacrifice. My appreciation for you extends much further than supporting my decision and work on this project. You have helped me grow into a man. Though I will fail at times, I will continue each day to strive to do good in this world because of the lessons you have provided me.

To my brother Joshua, brothers share a special bond. I'm proud of what you have accomplished so your life and am proud to be your brother.

A special note of thanks to Mitten Animosh Jurss who has heard more than her fair share of this dissertation and who remains me daily to stop and walk around the world a bit.

Finally, thank you to the single person who has meant the most to me during this process, Leah, who besides being my wife is an amazing scholar, lawyer, editor, cyclist, beader, chef, encourager, confident, and a multitude of other roles. Leah has helped me edit my writing, endured long conversations about minute aspects of this project, and always been willing to hear about just one more document I found. Leah, you are always there to remind me that while I was writing this history we needed to live in the present and make our own history. The last few years have been a wonderful start to our lives together. I cannot wait to see where our adventure takes us next.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES.....	xiii
AN INTRODUCTION: INDIGENOUS BORDERLANDS.....	1
Guiding Questions.....	9
Historiography and Theoretical Bases.....	10
Methods.....	22
Chapter Summaries.....	25
CHAPTER 1 SEASONS OF MOVEMENT: THE ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF THE WESTERN GREAT LAKES REGION.....	29
A Fertile Landscape from Frozen Beginnings.....	35
<i>Iskigamizige-giizis Ziibwan</i> : Sugar bush and Spring.....	43
<i>Niibin</i> : Summer and the Summer Villages.....	49
<i>Dagwaagin</i> : Fall and the Harvest.....	53
<i>Biboon</i> : Winter.....	58
Ojibwe Reaction to the 1799 Massacre.....	60
CHAPTER 2 OJIBWE AND DAKOTA RELATIONS: THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER AND IDENTITY IN THE INDIGENOUS BORDERLANDS.....	63
Two Brothers.....	64
Ojibwe Relationships.....	70
Ojibwe Power, Manidoog, and the Spiritual World.....	73
Dakota Power, Wakan, and Spiritual Power.....	80
Origins of the 1679 Ojibwe-Dakota Alliance.....	85
The Broader Indigenous Borderlands.....	90
CHAPTER 3 ASPIRATIONS OF EMPIRE: LEWIS CASS' NETWORK OF INFLUENCE.....	101
Lewis Cass and Michigan Territory.....	108
1820 Headwaters of the Mississippi Expedition.....	116
American Networks in Michigan Territory.....	120
Henry R. Schoolcraft: An American in an Indigenous Borderland.....	122
Schoolcraft's Overreach & Taliaferro's Retort.....	128
Problems in the Lead Up to the 1825 Prairie du Chien Treaty Council.....	132
Drawing Conclusions from Lines Drawn on Maps.....	136
CHAPTER 4 THE 1825 PRAIRIE DU CHIEN TREATY COUNCIL.....	137
A Sickness in the Camp.....	137
Indigenous Borderlands; American Borders.....	140
The Americans and the Lead-Up to the 1825 Prairie du Chien Treaty Council.....	142
Nations of the Borderlands Arrive.....	150
The Opening of the Prairie du Chien Treaty Council.....	151
A Treaty Signed.....	166
Unintended Consequences.....	169

CHAPTER 5 CASS' CONTESTED REACH.....	172
Unfinished Business of 1825: Fond du Lac in 1826.....	173
McKenney's Travels to the Interior.....	175
The Imperfect Father: Cass' Attempt to Redevelop the American's Role.....	184
Aftermath of the 1826 Fond du Lac Treaty.....	193
CONCLUSION: ATTEMPTING TO DISMANTLE THE INDIGENOUS BORDERLANDS.....	196
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	204

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: J.O. Lewis, “View of the Great Treaty Held at Prairie du Chien.”.....	1
Figure 2: William Clark, “Plan of the N.W. Frontier. [1813]: additions created by Jacob Jurss demonstrating American Indian claims and American Forts.”.....	6
Figure 3: R.G. Bailey, “Ecoregions of the United States.”.....	33
Figure 4: Leah Jurss, “Collecting Sap.”.....	45
Figure 5: Leah Jurss, “Boiling Sap.”.....	46
Figure 6: Leah Jurss, “Maple Sugar.”.....	48
Figure 7: Jacob Jurss, “Genealogical Chart of Wapahsha and Mamaangizide.”.....	66
Figure 8: John Melish, “Map of the United States with the contagious British & Spanish possessions.”.....	103
Figure 9: T.B. Welch, “Lewis Cass/ engraved by T.B. Welch from a drawing by J.B. Longacre.”.....	106
Figure 10: Jacob Jurss, “Connections Between Participants of Lewis Cass’ 1820 Expedition.”.....	120
Figure 11: CJ Lippert, “Map of the 1825 Treaty Boundaries.”.....	165
Figure 12: Jon. L. Beaux and John A. Clark, “Field Notes of 1835 Survey of the 1825 Prairie du Chien Treaty Boundary Line.”.....	197

AN INTRODUCTION: INDIGENOUS BORDERLANDS



Figure 1: J.O. Lewis, “View of the Great Treaty Held at Prairie du Chien.”

James Otto Lewis *The Aboriginal Port-folio: A Collection of Portraits of the Most Celebrated Chiefs of the North American Indians, 1835-1836*. (Philadelphia : J.O. Lewis, 1835[-36]), 17 [e-book] Wisconsin Historical Society online facsimile accessed April 11, 2017 at <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/turningpoints/search.asp?id=119>.

An American flag waves majestically about a podium where two white men, Michigan Territorial Governor Lewis Cass and General William Clark, address an assembly of Great Lakes Indians. In the painting by J.O. Lewis three other American flags wave in a light breeze. Lewis depicted hundreds of Great Lakes Indians circled and sitting cross-legged around the standing commissioners while five neat rows of blue-clad American soldiers sit at attention nearby. In the foreground, smaller groups of Great Lakes Indians carry out daily tasks while mothers tend their children. The painting, included in Lewis' collection of portraits of famous American Indian leaders, is of the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council.¹ Lewis' use of positioning depicts the United States as in complete control of the council, while the Great Lakes Indian leaders sit in rapt attention. This carefully composed painting speaks to an imagined landscape of a powerful nation state and defeated tribes, but it misrepresents the power that Indigenous people held in this region and obscures the power relationship between Native nations.

The Great Lakes region is an expansive space and home to many American Indian tribes.² At the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council, the United States hosted representatives from nine different American Indian nations. The goal of the council was to solidify peace in the region by drawing borderlines that the Americans deemed suitable boundaries. When several

¹ Wisconsin Historical Society, James Otto Lewis, View of the Great Treaty Held at Prairie du Chien, Viewed online at <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Content.aspx?dsNav=N:4294963828-4294955414&dsRecordDetails=R:IM3142> from James Otto Lewis, *The Aboriginal Port-folio: A Collection of Portraits of the Most Celebrated Chiefs of the North American Indians*. Lithographed by Lehman & Duval of Philadelphia, 1835. Held at Wisconsin Historical Society, WHS-3142.

² Though still an imperfect term, I have chosen primary to use the terms American Indian and Indigenous when than when referring to the collective grouping of the original inhabitants of North America. For the Indigenous groups living within the Great Lakes region I use Great Lakes Indians. Each term contains it's own baggage and history thus when possible I used the individual tribe name preferred by the tribal when referring to individual ethnic groups. Though these can still be problematic, they are the most descriptive terms for the collection of first peoples in the upper Mississippi River and western Great Lakes borderlands who shared a common language and culture. When quoting directly from sources of the time period I have keep the tribal names and spellings as they appear in the sources. For example the Anishinaabeg are known variously as "Ojibwe," "Ojibwa," and "Chippewa." The Dakota are the "Sioux." The Ho-Chunk and the "Winnebago." The Sauk are the "Sac." The Meskwaki are the "Fox." When referring to phenotypically white or Caucasian descendents from Europe who came to settle in American I use the term Euro-American or settler. Citizens of the United States are referred to as American.

American Indian leaders explained tribes understood the boundaries between them without the need for lines, the American commissioners rejected this idea. The Americans viewed physically drawn boundaries between the tribes as a way to strengthen the federal position in the region. The United States understood this territory as plagued with violent confrontations that endangered and contributed to the deaths of settlers in the region. The legal power of the United States did not yet extend throughout the territory, making it difficult for commissioners Cass and Clark to ensure the safety of future American settlers. This dissertation uses the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council as a case study to analyze the nature of Native power and examine United States attempts to undermine tribal systems of authority in the region in order to establish the United States' own authority over the territory. This study focuses in-depth on the relations between the Ojibwe and Dakota because, in part, they were two of the most powerful tribes present at the 1825 treaty council, a council created specifically to draw a border separating the tribes. Authority in both Ojibwe and Dakota societies was not centralized in a single person and was dispersed among several village leaders. To understand the actions taken by Ojibwe and Dakota leaders at 1825 Prairie du Chien council it is necessary to unfold the complexity of power relations in and between Ojibwe and Dakota communities. Their relationship, based on an interwoven web of connections between environmental resources, community members, and spirituality, complicated the American commissioners' efforts to increase American settlement in the region. Cass' attempts, in particular, to assert American authority through the creation of borders and private landownership conflicted with Ojibwe and Dakota community values that placed an emphasis on maintaining community access to environmental resources, particularly wild rice lakes and maple sugar trees.

While several other tribes participated in the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council, this research focuses on the Ojibwe and Dakota relationship because their relations largely spurred the Americans to take the action of assembling the council. While three other treaties were held at Prairie du Chien within five years of the treaty of 1825, including two in 1829 and one in 1830, those were land cession treaties.³ Of the four councils held at Prairie du Chien between 1825 and 1830, the treaty of 1825 was unique in that no lands were ceded to the United States. Furthermore, it was the only council of the four where the Dakota and Ojibwe were both present at the same time. By focusing on the 1825 treaty council, my research positions the relationship of the Ojibwe with the Dakota at the center of the narrative. Their relationship is particularly intertwined because of the proximity of their village locations to each other in eastern Minnesota. Both tribes relied on the same environmental resources. Unlike the Meskwaki of southwestern Wisconsin who were able to grow and store corn during times of scarcity, the Ojibwe and Dakota both relied on hunting and gathering wild rice and maple sugar, to survive the region's long winters.⁴ Finally, the relationship between the Ojibwe and Dakota is integral to the history of northwestern Wisconsin and eastern Minnesota. Chapter five explores the persistence and adaptation of the Lake Superior Ojibwe at the 1826 Fond du Lac treaty council; a council made possible by an agreement made at the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty. As a result of these councils

³ David H. DeJong, *American Indian Treaties: A Guide to Ratified and Unratified Colonial, United States, State, Foreign, and Intertribal Treaties and Agreements, 1607-1911* (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2015), 27; Bethel Saler, *The Settlers' Empire: Colonialism and State Formation in America's Old Northwest* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 142-143.

⁴ "Meskwaki Tribe," *Milwaukee Public Museum* Accessed March 29, 2017, <https://www.mpm.edu/research-collections/botany/collections/ethnobotany/meskwaki>; See also *Meskwaki Nation Sac & Fox* Accessed March 29, 2017, <http://www.meskwaki.org/index.html>. The name Meskwaki, formerly spelled as Mesquakie, refers to the tribe known by many Americans as the Fox. Meskwaki means red earth or red earth people. I have chosen to use the preferred tribal spelling of Meskwaki in my research. The Meskwaki were close allies of the Sauk also spelled as Sac. When directly quoting period documents I use Fox-Sac to avoid confusion. When it is unclear in the documentary evidence whether an individual was Meskwaki or Sauk I used Meskwaki-Sauk. More information on the Meskwaki name can be found on the Milwaukee Public Museum and the Meskwaki Nation websites.

and increasing encroachment by American settlers, the Ojibwe and Dakota were forced to adapt to changing power structures that reflect the strength of their communities and highlight the importance of considering the role of environmental resources in shaping the history of North America.⁵

The Ojibwe and Dakota both maintained contested land claims to the resource rich region of the western Great Lakes. I used the term western Great Lakes to mean the lands west of Lake Michigan along the southern shores of Lake Superior that stretched into the wild rice lakes of eastern Minnesota and surrounding lands of Leech Lake. The contested zone between the Dakota and Ojibwe moved steadily west from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century. The primary Ojibwe-Dakota borderland zone of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century was centered in the upper Mississippi River region between the St. Croix River north to Lake Superior and west to the wild rice lakes in modern day north-central Minnesota, including Lake Mille Lacs and north through Leech Lake to the Rainy River. From this contested zone, Ojibwe territory extended further north and east surrounding Lake Superior to Lake Nipissing. Dakota territory branched further west into modern North and South Dakota, into their Lakota ally's homelands.

⁵ See generally William Warren, *History of the Ojibway People* (St. Paul: Borealis Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984). The persistence of Ojibwe and Dakota communities is of note as there are many Native communities that continue to maintain reservations and communities throughout present day Wisconsin and Minnesota. Though their territory has been greatly reduced, the communities maintain strong ties to their homelands and resisted several removal attempts by the United States. The Ojibwe-Dakota relationship is further focused on because of the nature of writing history. Historians are reliant on the sources they can obtain. Because the Ojibwe-Dakota relationship was important to American agents, their letters and notes make several references to both tribes. The nineteenth-century and mixed-heritage Ojibwe historian William Warren also provides a great deal of primary source material and recorded oral histories from the time period.

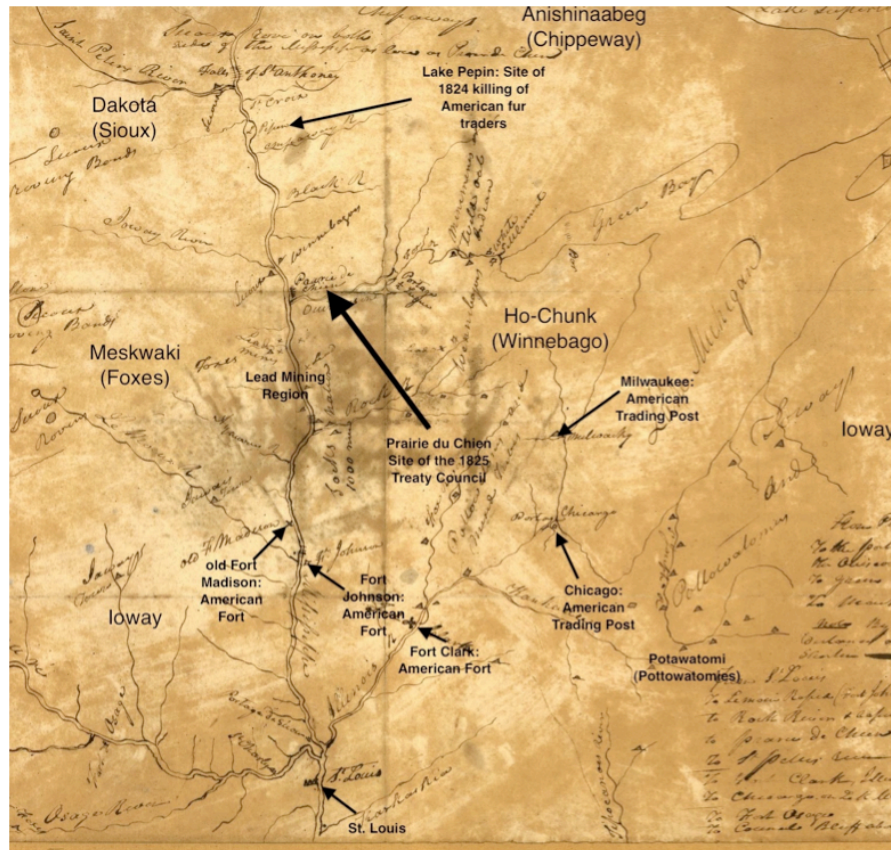


Figure 2: William Clark, “Plan of the N.W. Frontier. [1813]: additions created by Jacob Jurss demonstrating American Indian claims and American Forts.”

Library of Congress Digital ID: <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g4042m.ct000904> Library of Congress Geography and Map Division Washington, D.C. Call Number: G4042.M5 1813 .C5

Accessed April 11, 2017.

This region was a borderland, but the social and political relations in the region were based on the control of resources, rather than artificially imposed nation-state borderlands that centered on the private ownership of land. Ojibwe and Dakota leaders maintained their influence by ensuring their community had access to environmental resources. The contested lands surrounding the Chippewa River and lakes of north-central Minnesota contained vital resources, including wild rice and fresh fish. Through intermarriage and expanding kinship networks, individuals procured and ensured continuous access to these resources. The joint sharing of resources reinforced their network of relationships. Borderlands histories typically examine instances of cross border political authority. My concept of an Indigenous borderland expands

this framework by incorporating environmental resources into the analysis of Indigenous power. By understanding the influence of environmental resources on power and authority in the borderlands between tribes, relations between Indigenous nations can be better understood and illuminate the motivations of tribal leaders who worked to protect access to environmental resources in treaty negotiations with the United States.

United States officials used treaties to legally justify the taking of American Indian lands. The treaty from 1825 Prairie du Chien council laid out the tribal boundaries so that the Americans could map conceptually on paper and physically through a boundary commission the extend of Ojibwe and Dakota territories. The boundary commission did not begin work for ten years after the treaty commission. In the intervening years, both the Americans and tribal leaders loosely recognized the boundaries agreed upon in the Prairie du Chien treaty. While not a physical reality, the boundary lines were tools for the American government that allowed territorial officials to point to the treaty if intertribal disputes arose over which tribe maintained control over a particular territory. Once the 1835 Chippewa-Sioux boundary line commission began surveying the lines drawn on maps it ran into resistance from both Ojibwe and Dakota leaders who were less inclined to recognize the agreements made at the 1825 treaty council.

Cass was well aware of the potential issues that territorial disputes could have on treaty negotiations. In 1804, General William Henry Harrison negotiated a treaty with the Sac and Fox at St. Louis. The treaty contained language that ceded a vast tract of land, including much of western Illinois and the lead mining region of southwestern Wisconsin. Following the signing of the 1804 treaty, Meskwaki-Sauk leaders maintained that the treaty was fraudulently signed and many refused to recognize American claims. The controversy over the treaty, created continual problems between United States and the Meskwaki-Sauk that contributed to the outbreak of the

Black Hawk War of 1832.⁶ American federal agents like Cass and Clark sought to avoid territorial disputes that challenged American treaties. Both Cass and Clark saw an opportunity at the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty to force each tribe to map their own territorial claims and agree to those claims in front of the other tribes present. For the Americans, boundaries and borders were crucial to the state development in the nineteenth century. Without established and clearly discernible borders, the federal government could not defend its sovereignty because it was unclear where United States jurisdiction began or ended.⁷ Accurately drawn borders between tribes were important for American negotiators to control future land cession treaty councils and to help avoid confrontations that led to costly military interventions.

Throughout the decade following the War of 1812 the United States remained a weak force in the Great Lakes, a war that supposedly secured the United States' claims to the region. A majority of tribal leaders and elders concerned themselves more with encroachment by enemy tribes on their individual territories in the immediate aftermath of the war because the American government was relatively weak and white settlers were few in number. Americans like Cass considered the Ojibwe and Dakota and their lack of firm, nation-state borders, as evidence of their "uncivilized" way of life, which led to increased warfare and American involvement in the region. However, it was not true that the Ojibwe and Dakota did not understand ownership and control over territories and resources. The United States and American Indian tribes maintained a different understanding of land ownership. Indigenous notions of land ownership were based on

⁶ DeJong, *American Indian Treaties*, 27; Bethel Saler, *The Settlers' Empire*, 88.

⁷ Maps are an important aspect of this process. "Like censuses, European-style maps worked on the basis of a totalizing classification, and led their bureaucratic producers and consumers towards policies with revolutionary consequences." Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006 Revised Edition), 173. Anderson further quotes the research of Thongchai Winichakul "A map anticipated spatial reality, not vice versa. In other words, a map was a model for, rather than a model of, what it purported to represent..." Thongchai Winichakul 'Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of Siam' (Ph.D. Thesis, University of Sydney, 1988), 310, quoted in Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006 Revised Edition), 173.

the control of resources rather than the control of individual land parcels. At treaty councils, Great Lakes Indian leaders employed strategies to protect their communities' access to environmental resources. The Indigenous borderlands, the overlapping and contested space in-between tribal land claims, centered, in part, on the control of environmental resources. Great Lakes Indians' view of ownership shaped an understanding of power that varied from that of the American government. My research examines the resistance and persistence of Native nations in the Great Lakes by showing how they maintained access to environmental resources and attempted to use treaties to their advantage, despite pressure from American settlers and attempts to remove them from their homelands. Writing the story of this persistence also recognizes that Ojibwe and Dakota communities remain in present-day Wisconsin and Minnesota, and continue to shape the history of the region.

Guiding Questions

Many borderlands historians have viewed borderlands and frontiers as intertwined spaces that existed at the outer reaches of empires or nation-states. These spaces were sites of intercultural exchange. Recent literature on borderlands has largely focused on either the American southwest or the state borders between the United States and Canada. Borderland histories are useful because they focus the historical narrative on previously marginalized zones. Using the framework of borderlands theory can re-orient the spaces at the edges of empires to the center of the narrative. In my research, borderlands theory also disrupts the narrative of continual United States expansion, exposes the complicated negotiations of power between both the American government and tribes, and between tribes themselves. The firmly drawn borders that the United States hoped to create through the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council refutes

traditional borderlands theory analysis. This dissertation expands the traditional categories of borderlands theory to incorporate those environmental areas surrounding the borders created through legalistic means, my research examines the “unofficial” Ojibwe and Dakota borderland exchanges created through resource negotiation, allocation and intertribal ties.

The western Great Lakes borderlands were rich in natural resources. In treaty negotiations these lands emerged as contested spaces between American Indian communities. The waters teeming with wild rice and forests of maple sugar trees characterized the borderlands between Dakota and Ojibwe lands. The contests over these lands became evident during the 1825 Prairie du Chien Treaty and revealed the nature of power and authority in Indian Country. Power and authority are the central focus of this dissertation; what constituted it, who had it, and what did it mean to control it in the western Great Lakes Indigenous borderlands in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century?

Historiography and Theoretical Bases

This dissertation draws on borderlands theory, environmental history, and American Indian history. While existing borderlands history shapes the theoretical framework, my research expands existing definitions of the borderlands to incorporate the environmental borders of American Indian tribes. Studies of borderlands have explored the intercultural relations between Euro-American and American Indian interactions, but this often perpetuates the idea that all American Indian tribes took the same attitudes and actions in response to Euro-Americans. My research centers on the intercultural exchanges and fluctuations in authority over natural resources between tribes themselves. Though my research is focused on the relationship between tribes, it does not ignore the presence of American agents working to manipulate those

relationships for their own purposes. While my research on the Indigenous borderlands, like other borderland studies, is concerned with social and political connections, it strongly considers how those relationships were constantly affected by the contest between tribal communities over those spaces.

Borderlands historians, Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron, argued that while historians used the concept, borderlands, to enrich the “understanding of the complexity and contingency of intercultural relations,” by 1999 the field shifted from Herbert Bolton’s original understanding of borderlands as a contested imperial space during the age of empire.⁸ Bolton’s borderlands appeared in the presence of imperial powers that vied for authority over their territorial claims. They argued that North American borderlands existed temporally at a time of imperial competition in the eighteenth century between Spain, Britain, and France. The borderlands were the spaces in-between that allowed for fluid relationships between American Indians and Europeans.⁹ In the nineteenth century, the nation-state usurped empires and replaced former imperial claims. At the point empires shifted to nation-states, “ethnic and social relations rigidified.”¹⁰ Aron and Adelman contend that borderlands existed in the Great Lakes during the eighteenth century when woodlands were transformed into borderlands by “Europeans’ drive for the North American peltry.”¹¹ Like frontiers, borderlands were not timeless concepts, instead as with “Turner’s opening and closing frontier, borderlands also signifies an era with discrete

⁸ Jeremy Adelman and Stephen Aron, “From Borderlands to Borders: Empires, Nation-States, and the Peoples in between in North American History,” *The American Historical Review* Vol. 104, no. 3 (Jun., 1999): 815, accessed March 29, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2649569>.

⁹ Adelman and Aron, “From Borderlands to Borders.” 817.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 817.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 818.

turning points.”¹² It was the shift from competition between imperial powers to the establishment of nation-states that “turned borderlands into *bordered* lands.”¹³ Borderlands spaces existed in places of strong imperial competition where imperial agents relied on relationships between Native populations to support their interests.

In 2011, Pekka Hämäläinen and Samuel Truett argued that borderlands had done much to recast the American historical narrative; “If frontiers were the places where we once told our master American narratives, then borderlands are the places where those narrative come unraveled.”¹⁴ For all of borderlands historians’ insights into “centrist blind spots,” they argued the theory lacked a core narrative, and could only tell “small-scale tales.”¹⁵ Hämäläinen and Truett stated,

[t]he challenge is to respect the very real power of empires and nations without missing the field’s central insight: that history pivoted not only on a succession of state-centered politics but also on other turning points anchored in vast stretches of America where the visions of empires and nations often foundered and the future was far from certain.¹⁶

¹² Ibid., 816.

¹³ Ibid., 817.

¹⁴ Pekka Hämäläinen and Samuel Truett “On Borderlands,” *The Journal of American History* Vol. 98. no. 2 (September 2011): 338, accessed March 29, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41509959>. Between 1999 and 2011, borderlands history experience a resurgence of scholarship. Violence, cultural interactions, and the place of American Indians in imperial economic exchanges dominated these borderlands histories. Many of these studies centered on the American Southwest borderlands. For further examples see: James Brooks, *Captives & Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).; Juliana Barr, *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007).; Pekka Hämäläinen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).; Brian DeLay, *War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexican War*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).; Karl Jacoby, *Shadows at Dawn: An Apache Massacre and the Violence of History*, A Penguin History of American Life (New York: Penguin Books, 2009).

¹⁵ Hämäläinen and Truett, “On Borderlands,” 338-339.

¹⁶ Ibid., 340.

Another key insight that borderlands theory illuminated was that the history of America was a “history of entanglements of shifting accommodations-rather than one of expansion.”¹⁷ Relationships between peoples became complicated through intermarriage at the edges of empires. Empires, and later nation-states wanted to simplify these complications, “delineating insiders from outsiders and assimilable from unassimilable others.”¹⁸ The field, however, was held back by the paradigms of frontier and empire.¹⁹ “If previous historians envisioned borderlands as peripheries to European realms, new scholarship is as likely to find them taking shape around indigenous cores.”²⁰ The Ojibwe and Dakota borderlands may have existed at the far edges of the United States’ reach, but they were central to their own world. Hämäläinen and Truett recognized that borderlands history could expand its view to include how American Indians “created the conditions for borderlands histories rather than simply looking at how they acted within it.”²¹ The Dakota and Ojibwe maintained their own understanding of borderlands in the western Great Lakes separate from the European and American empires’ understandings.

Juliana Barr re-oriented the concept of borderlands by understanding these lands through an Indigenous lens, rather than through a European understanding, but as imagined by American Indians. She asked that if the Spanish in the eighteenth century recognized American Indian boundary markers, “then why are they not more familiar to us?”²² The erasure of Indigenous

¹⁷ Ibid., 347.

¹⁸ Ibid., 348.

¹⁹ Ibid., 349.

²⁰ Ibid., 352.

²¹ Ibid., 352.

²² Juliana Barr, “Geographies of Power: Mapping Indian Borders in the Borderlands of the Early Southwest,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* Vol. 68, No. 1 (Jan 2011): 6, accessed March 29, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5309/willmaryquar.68.1.0005>.

boundaries happened through the creation of Euro-American maps that “functioned as geopolitical ‘statements of territorial appropriation’ and erased American Indian geography by replacing American Indian domains with blank spaces of pristine wilderness awaiting colonial development.”²³ Her examination illuminated the “manifestation of Indian sovereignty on the land.”²⁴ When reconsidering the geographical space that American Indians claimed, Barr cautioned that “we cannot seek to recognize and read native borders by simply redrawing a North American map with a different set of lines; we must still seek the ideas, attitudes, and practices that gave meaning to diverse territorial claims.”²⁵ Understanding the power relations between tribes shows how American Indians gave legitimacy to their own claims. These claims, at least for the Ojibwe and Dakota, were based on their access to environmental resources.

Sami Lakomäki focused on the geographical borderland of the American Great Lakes, and describes the borderland created there during the early American Republic. In “‘Our Line’ The Shawnees, the United States, and Competing Borders on the Great Lakes ‘Borderlands,’ 1795-1832” Lakomäki showed the influence of Adelman and Aron’s understanding of how territory is shifted from “borderlands” to “bordered lands.” Lakomäki argued, “[e]xamining Shawnee borders underlines the complexity and contingency of the transformation of the Great Lakes country from an intercolonial ‘borderlands’ into the ‘bordered lands’ of the emerging nation-states during the early nineteenth century.”²⁶ The Shawnee were diasporic, “[c]aught between the republic and the local Indians, they had to carve new homelands for themselves

²³ Ibid., 7.

²⁴ Ibid., 9.

²⁵ Ibid., 10.

²⁶ Sami Lakomäki, “‘Our Line’ The Shawnees, the United States, and Competing Borders on the Great Lakes ‘Borderlands,’” 1795-1832,” *Journal of the Early Republic* Vol. 34, No. 4 Winter 2014: 598, accessed March 29, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.proxy1.cl.msu.edu/docview/1628557288?accountid=12598>.

around the Great Lakes in a way which both the Americans and local Natives would accept as legitimate.”²⁷ Indigenous communities in the Great Lakes and in the Northeast maintained “complex traditions of sharing land with allies.”²⁸ The Ioway leader White Cloud echoed this sentiment at the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council when he discussed how his community traveled and hunted upon the lands of his allies.²⁹ Lakomäki argued that the United States “encouraged Indian nations to treat their homelands as exclusive tribal possessions.”³⁰ Such advice, when followed, made it easier for the United States to negotiate with one tribe at a time during land cession treaties. Like the Great Lakes Indian leaders attending the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council, the Shawnee used many strategies to defend their land claims. Some, like the Shawnee village at Wapakoneta in northwestern Ohio, sought federal recognition of their lands in Indian Territory. Others exemplified by the Shawnee Prophet Tenskwatawa, claimed lands in territories that overlapped American claims. Lakomäki argued this showed Tenskwatawa’s desire to mark land based on racial boundaries, separating a unified Indian territory from the United States.³¹

Barr and Lakomäki demonstrated that Indigenous borderlands looked and operated differently from Euro-American borderlands, and that American Indian communities maintained borders between their villages and outsiders. Their research serves as an example of how

²⁷ Ibid., 600.

²⁸ Ibid., 600.

²⁹ “November 19, 1825 Mission to the Indians: from the National Journal” *The Niles Weekly Register* ed. H. Niles Vol. XXIX From September, 1825, to March 1826 (Baltimore: Franklin Press) [e-book], 190. White Cloud informed the American commissioners in 1825 that “[t]he land I live on is enough to furnish my women and children. I go upon the lands of our friends the Socs and Foxes—we alternately go upon each others land. Why should we quarrel about lands, when we get enough on what we have.”

³⁰ Lakomäki “Our Line”, 600.

³¹ Ibid., 601.

American Indian narratives can be incorporated into borderlands histories, without relying solely on imperial or nation-state to define those borders. My dissertation extends Barr's and Lakomäki's research by recasting the narrative of the western Great Lakes as an Ojibwe-Dakota borderland where power and boundaries were linked to resource control.

The history of American Indians in the Great Lakes has expanded with recent works that tell the narratives of individual Ojibwe communities. The scholarship of Cary Miller, Anton Treuer, Erik Redix, and Michael Witgen has proposed an Anishinaabeg centric narrative of the Great Lakes where leadership structure, spirituality, and Native worldview reorient narratives of dispossession and erasure. Their work focuses on individual American Indian communities, amplifies Indigenous voices, and re-interprets narratives of cultural exchange.³²

Cary Miller's *Ogimaag* (2010) analyses political and spiritual power structures in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Ojibwe communities. Miller found that in contrast to earlier understandings of Ojibwe political systems as weak and separate from religious authority, individuals who maintained spiritual authority often influenced political power in the community.³³ Miller's research demonstrated the link between spiritual and political authority and shows how it influences Ojibwe power relationships, which reflects my understanding of Ojibwe authority and its importance of the environment. For the Ojibwe physical, political, and spiritual worlds are not separate. Individuals who had strong spiritual power were often selected to lead their communities because their links to the supernatural world could aid the community's physical needs. Every aspect of life including, spiritual, political, societal, and interpersonal was connected to the physical environment. Satisfying the need for food, water,

³² Susan Sleeper-Smith, "Native American Histories in North American," *Oxford Bibliographies*, accessed January 30, 2017, 10.1093/obo/9780199730414-0157.

³³ Cary Miller, *Ogimaag: Anishinaabeg Leadership, 1760-1845* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 2-3.

shelter, and clothing were only possible with either spiritual aid or aid from a more powerful human with a connection to the supernatural world. Power stemmed in part from the ability of an individual to secure access to environmental resources and who in turn relied on a variety of social and spiritual networks.

Anton Treuer's *Assassination of Hole In The Day* (2011) explored the life of Ojibwe leader Hole-In-The-Day and examines the changes in Ojibwe political leadership during the nineteenth century.³⁴ The rise of Hole-In-The-Day's family showed a shift from hereditary power to a reliance on the "political connections to outside groups including the Americans and the Oceti Sakowin (Seven Council Fires of the Sioux), especially the Dakota" that increased in importance in the region.³⁵ Echoing Treuer, my research concludes that while certain Ojibwe doodems or clans held historical claim to leadership positions, by the late eighteen century the ability to procure environmental resources for the greater community became a more important element of an individual's ability to lead.³⁶

Redix's, *The Murder of Joe White* (2014), examined Wisconsin Ojibwe community leadership. Through an examination of Joe White's hereditary line, Redix showed how American settler-colonialism, in the form of the state, municipal, and corporate power, led to the breakdown of tribal sovereignty and community leadership in the Lac Courte Oreilles community. It was not solely federal policy that dismantled Ojibwe community leadership, but instead was a combination of state, local, and what he discusses as corporate forces, the

³⁴ Anton Treuer, *The Assassination of Hole In The Day* (St. Paul: Borealis Book Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2011), 8.

³⁵ Ibid., 9.

³⁶ Ibid., 15. Treuer explains doodem is an Anishinaabemowin term that can be loosely translated as "clan."

corporate interests invested in resource extraction, which undermined Ojibwe societal structures.³⁷

Michael Witgen's *An Infinity of Nations* (2012) explored the history of American Indians in the Great Lakes from an Indigenous point of view.³⁸ From Witgen's perspective the Anishinaabeg forced Euro-Americans to conform to their conventions during the nineteenth century. Actions taken by Ojibwe were not always in response to Euro-Americans, but instead undertaken for the community's benefit. My work builds on Witgen by shining a light on the intercultural interactions between the Dakota and Ojibwe. Like Witgen's understanding of the motivations of tribal actions, my research indicates that internal and inter-tribal power politics had a greater impact on tribal decision making than American influence.

Additionally, my dissertation has been shaped by environmental history. Environmental historians have argued that "[n]ature and culture are always entangled."³⁹ While borderlands

³⁷ Erik M. Redix, *The Murder of Joe White: Ojibwe Leadership and Colonialism in Wisconsin* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2014), xvii.

³⁸ Michael Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations: How the Native New World Shaped Early North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), see Chapters 1, 3, and 4. See also Witgen's quote on page 25 "This book begins with a simple premise, that it is possible to write a history of Native North America in the seventeenth century." Witgen's work to illuminate the hidden and invisible narrative of Anishinaabeg authority in the Great Lakes emboldened my research to consider the Anishinaabeg (Ojibwe) and Dakota as driving the events of the eighteen- and nineteenth-century Great Lakes. While Witgen focused on the Anishinaabeg I expanded his conclusions to incorporate the Dakota as well. By viewing the region as an Indigenous borderlands I expanded the intertribal narrative typically invisible in borderlands histories that center on Euro-American and Indigenous interaction.

³⁹ Sarah T. Phillips, "Environmental History," *American History Now* ed. Eric Foner (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011), 286. These entanglements between humans and nature varied depending on the framework the scholar used. See also Alfred W. Crosby, "Virgin Soil Epidemics as a Factor in the Aboriginal Depopulation in America," *The William and Mary Quarterly* Vol. 33, no. 2 (1976), 289-299. Crosby explored the idea of "virgin" epidemics and the role of disease in the depopulation of the Americas. Crosby's argument was that disease brought from Europe traveled quickly through village trading networks and reached American Indian villages before Europeans could interact with interior groups. William Cronon, *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983), 170. In his classic study of American Indians and English settlers in New England, William Cronon demonstrated that in addition to American conquest, changing environmental factors brought by English settlers placed new pressures on American Indians. European capitalism "[a]lienated the products of the lands as much as the products of human labor, and so transformed natural communities as profoundly as it did human ones. By integrating New England ecosystems into an ultimately global capitalist economy, colonists and Indians together began a dynamic and unstable process of ecological change which

history provides the historical framework for understanding Native agency and power, environmental history demonstrates the link between power and access to environmental resources. Chantal Norrgard's *Seasons of Change: Labor, Treaty Rights, and Ojibwe Nationhood* (2014) relied on an economic framework to expose the links between the environment and tribal sovereignty. Both Norrgard's research and Redix's *The Murder of Joe White* focused on the sovereignty rights of the Lake Superior Ojibwe. Both historians noted the economic value of environmental resources to tribal sovereignty. Norrgard's work stretches into the twentieth century and argued that state governments, like Wisconsin, struggled to establish their jurisdiction over environmental resources traditionally controlled by the Ojibwe. This made tribal survivance so difficult that "Ojibwe economic actions took on a new meaning: they not only were a way of making a living; they also served as a form of resistance and a way to assert sovereignty against state encroachment."⁴⁰ Norrgard focused on labor and demonstrated how it was not only "shaped by their culture and identity, but their sovereignty and self-determination." The rights to environmental resources were protected in treaties between the United States and Ojibwe in 1837, 1842, and 1854. These treaty rights became important legal defenses for twentieth-century Ojibwe economic sovereignty and economic power.

While building on Norrgard's research my work stretches further back in time to show how environmental resources like wild rice and maple sugar were vital to power and authority in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Ojibwe and Dakota communities.⁴¹ These resources were

had in no way ended by 1800." See also Shepard Krech III, *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999). Shepard Krech III furthered idea that American Indians interacted and manipulated their environment in order to make survival possible.

⁴⁰ Chantal Norrgard. *Seasons of Change: Labor, Treaty Rights, and Ojibwe Nationhood* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 8.

⁴¹ Ibid., 129-30. Norrgard's research noted this well writing, "Ojibwe headmen and U.S. officials both had economic interests in mind during treaty negotiations in the mid-nineteenth century. Ojibwe leaders saw traditional

crucial to surviving the winter months and explain why tribal leaders attempted to protect and ensure tribal community access in later treaty negotiations. The power dynamics at work between the Ojibwe and Dakota were evident during treaty negotiations hosted by the Americans. While tribal leaders worked to defend their access to environmental resources, the American treaty negotiators at the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council were focused on drawing borders so that at later treaties they could confirm their authority through land cessions. Americans sought to own lands where resources could be extracted and turned into products used to fuel the needs of the emerging capitalist state. Though far more often favorable towards the United States, treaties could be used as a tool for both sides. The boundary defining treaty of 1825 encouraged by Michigan Territorial Governor Lewis Cass laid the foundation for the future legal jurisdiction of state and federal authority over Ojibwe and Dakota lands, but also created the legal tools the Ojibwe would later use in the 1837, 1842, and 1854 treaties to defend their continuous access to environmental resources.

Environmental historians have also begun to link their work with that of borderlands historians. Andrew Graybill's essay in *The Oxford Handbook Of Environmental History*, "Boundless Nature: Borders and the Environment in North America and Beyond," explained how environmental history intersects with borderlands studies. Graybill argued that environmental and borderlands history mutually reinforced each other,

considering the extent to which political demarcations arbitrarily divide the natural world. Put another way, the environment is the historical actor seemingly least confined by the dictates of the nation-state, and as such it offers scholars an opportunity to think beyond national borders.⁴²

livelihoods and access to their homelands as critical to their people's survival as well as to their sovereignty. They reserved the right to hunt, fish, and gather in the 1837, 1842, and 1854 treaties in an effort to guarantee both."

⁴² Andrew R. Graybill, "Boundless Nature: Borders and the Environment in North America and Beyond," *The Oxford Handbook of Environmental History* ed. Andrew C. Isenberg (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 670.

Few environmental scholars have considered the connection between the borderlands, the environment, and American Indian history.⁴³ Understanding that humans do not live outside of their environment and that the environment constantly shapes and influences their actions the role that environmental resources had in the politics of authority becomes apparent. Through family ties and spiritual connections, the power and authority of Ojibwe and Dakota leaders were linked to their ability to provide access to resources like wild rice. Lacking this ability lessened a leader's effectiveness, weakening their positions at treaty councils, and diminishing their authority. In analyzing these power dynamics the link between control over food resources and political power becomes apparent.

Indigenous borderlands depended on three factors: cultural and spiritual practices, family kinship networks, and environmental resources. While the progression of Adelman and Aron's "borderlands" to "bordered lands" neatly explains the transition of lands west of the Lake Michigan into the state of Wisconsin, it does so from an American perspective. This framework fails to describe the borderlands between the Ojibwe and Dakota. The Indigenous borderlands of the western Great Lakes were boundary spaces where tribal claims to environmental resource overlapped, and where intertribal relationships relied on the kinship networks that spanned tribes and provided access to environmental resources.

Tribal communities chose leaders who were able to secure and maintain access to environmental resources. Hunting was an important aspect of the Indigenous borderlands because of the Atlantic fur trade, but it was also crucial to recognize that other environmental resources played a determining role in tribal movements and shifts in power. In the western Great Lakes, wild rice and maple sugar were two necessary food sources. Winters in the region

⁴³ Ibid., 680. Graybill noted that studies of stateless locales would likely provide a difficult but innovated approach to history.

were long and could be brutal. Corn, a staple in more southern locations, lacked a growing season sufficient for corn to fully mature. In addition to hunting, the Dakota and Ojibwe relied on harvesting wild rice and maple sugar because of their combined nutritional value, high caloric content, and their ability to be stored for long periods of time. Wild rice was typically harvested in late autumn before winter set in while the flowing of maple sap signaled the end of winter and provided much needed and easily accessible energy in the early spring. As Ojibwe villages moved further west, they were careful to establish their villages near sugar maple tree groves and lakes of wild rice to maintain access to these valuable food sources. When village leaders presented their understandings of their borders in 1825, they tried to maintain access to wild rice and maple sugar trees as well as access to hunting grounds.

Methods

Family ties were essential to power in the western Great Lakes, and mapping these kinship relations illuminates the complicated networks between tribes, fur traders, and government agents. My genealogical research helped trace the relationships between Dakota, Ojibwe and American family members. Though there are few eighteenth- and nineteenth-century primary sources written by Great Lakes Indians, one exception that helped trace these family lines was mixed ancestry Ojibwe-American William Warren writings whose history of the Ojibwe people was written during the early 1800s.⁴⁴ Warren's history showed many these family

⁴⁴ J. Fletcher Williams, "Memoir of William W. Warren," William Warren, *History of the Ojibway People* (St. Paul: Borealis Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), 17. William Warren was a mixed-heritage Ojibwe and a man "whose life integrated features from both Ojibway and non-Indian societies, with emphasis on Euro-American religious, social, and economic traditions." While some scholars have criticized Warren for his biases towards his home community, and his lack of accurate dates, he serves as a critical nineteenth century source. Warren's writings came from oral histories, passed to him by "Esh-ke-bug-e-coshe, or Flat Mouth," who spoke to Warren on several occasions to recount Ojibwe history. See also W. Roger Buffalohead, "Introduction," William Warren *History of the Ojibway People* (St. Paul: Borealis Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), x, xii, xiv. Buffalohead writes in the introduction to Warren's work that when first published in 1885 it was called "a rare

linkages. I compared the family ties Warren recorded with the research conducted by American Indian agent Henry Schoolcraft on his wife's family history, research that was further bolstered by the Johnston family archives at the Bentley Historical Library. Johann Georg Kohl's trip to the Lake Superior region provided another account of the family histories of the Lake Superior region, which was recorded by Loon Foot, the grandson of Bi-aus-wa II, and great-grandson of Biasuwa I.⁴⁵

I did not conduct oral history interviews, but relied on previously recorded oral histories.⁴⁶ These recorded oral histories provided access to the thoughts and worldview of the Ojibwe and Dakota that enhanced simply reading Euro-American sources "against the grain". This was also a technique employed in my research.⁴⁷ Ojibwe elder and scholar, Basil Johnston's

book...valuable because it is written by one who understood all their history. It is exceedingly interesting as a narrative, and surprises one with the ease and clearness of its style.' The assessment is still valid." Buffalohead's introduction continued discussing how useful Warren's work still was for scholars. "For some scholars, Warren's method of research presents a problem. Professional historians who study American Indians find few topics more agitating than the validity of oral history; cultural anthropologists, in contrast, need no convincing of its value...scholars may also question the influence on Warren's work of 19th-century ideas about, and perceptions of, Ojibway history and culture. Easily discernible in Warren's narrative is considerable evidence that he believed in the superiority of American culture over Ojibway or other Indian ways of life."

⁴⁵ Johann Georg Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami: Life Among the Lake Superior Ojibway* (St. Paul: Borealis Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1985), 147.

⁴⁶ Traditionally historians have centered their research and work in archival and primary sources. Oral histories, while at times included, have largely been left to the purview of ethnographers and anthropologists. Historians using broader sources including images, materials cultural, archeology, and oral histories have found a scholarly home within the field of ethnohistory. While my work follows in many ways along traditional historian practices, the collaboration between scholars and members of Native communities is a strong benefit to histories of Native North America. Anton Treuer's use of community interviews is one demonstration of incorporating oral tradition into works of history. Treuer, along with Cary Miller, Erik Redix, and Michael Witgen also rely on the use of Anishinaabemowin, a trend that continues to develop in Native North American scholarship. Learning a language enlightens the learner to the broader worldview of the community. See also Gwen Westerman and Bruce White, *Mni Sota Makoe: The Land of the Dakota*. Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2012. Their strong community supported history of Minnesota from a Dakota perspective points towards another method of how historical work can be used to give a more encompassing narrative of voices largely left out of histories reliant on traditional sources. The larger incorporation of language and community elders within academic histories will strengthen the narratives historians can tell in future research. Though I did not conduct interviews, I actively sought out published Ojibwe and Dakota archival speeches, interviews, and oral histories. Additionally, much of this work benefited from community members from across the Native Great Lakes who read and commented on this research.

⁴⁷ Ann Laura Stoler, "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance," *Archival Science* 2002. 2: 90, accessed March 29, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.proxy1.cl.msu.edu/docview/214901803?accountid=12598>.

work, particularly *The Manitous* (1995), helped incorporate an Ojibwe worldview and explained the links between spiritual power and authority within the physical world.⁴⁸

My research also drew on more traditional archival resources of the Bentley Historical Library in Ann Arbor, MI; William L. Clements Library in Ann Arbor, MI; Michigan State University Library in East Lansing, MI; Newberry Library in Chicago, IL; Wisconsin Historical Society in Madison, WI; Minnesota Historical Society in St. Paul, MN; Library of Congress in Washington, D.C.; and the National Archives in Washington, D.C. Among the most crucial sources for my work were the papers of Lewis Cass, Henry R. Schoolcraft, Lawrence Taliaferro, and C.C. Trowbridge. Lewis Cass writings were frequently used in order to expose the Territorial Governor's thoughts on American Indian policy as he was participating in several treaty councils. Paired with Cass were Schoolcraft's journals as he participated in negotiations with Cass during his travels. This dissertation also benefited from access to the Internet Archive, the Wisconsin Historical Society online collections, and the Newberry Library online collections. The availability of access to hard to find resources preserved digitally enabled more practical concerns of research including travel and expenses to be kept to a reasonable budget while conducting thorough research. The digital writing platform of Scrivener and Scapple helped me organize and map the social networks of the Great Lakes.⁴⁹

Stoler presented how western archives are places of extraction as well as places of knowledge creation. In order to break out of the Euro-American mindset, it is necessary to employ techniques that "read against the grain" to allow for non-western perspectives to penetrate the archive.

⁴⁸ Basil Johnston, *The Manitous: The Spiritual World of the Ojibway* (New York Harper Collins Publishers, 1995).

⁴⁹ Robert Englebert, "Colonial History in the Age of Digital Humanities," *Borealia: A Group Blog on Early Canadian History*, posted Feb. 12, 2016 accessed March 30, 2017, <https://earlycanadianhistory.ca/2016/01/12/colonial-history-in-the-age-of-digital-humanities/>. The Voyageur Database Project is of note in this regard. Though not used in this project it is another example of how digitally mapping social networks can help scholars visualize relationships between historical individuals.

Chapter Summaries

My dissertation has five chapters, along with an introduction and conclusion that explore how power functioned in the Indigenous borderlands of the western Great Lakes. I begin by examining the geographic space and environmental resources that made up the western Great Lakes. Chapter One explains the importance of the cyclical movements that the Ojibwe and Dakota followed in the woodlands of the Great Lakes to harvest the environmental resources necessary for survival. Recent studies have extended analysis of woodlands resources to demonstrate how the fur trade connected the western Great Lakes to the Atlantic World.⁵⁰ Likewise, studies of American Indian agriculture have done much to dispel the myth that all American Indians were nomadic and has produced evidence for extensive agrarianism.⁵¹ However, far fewer studies focus on the role of gathered resources, like wild rice and maple sugar.⁵² Both wild rice and maple sugar were present in the specific locales that villages returned to year after year.

Building upon the environmental reconstruction of this Great Lakes Indian world, chapter two delves into the intertribal relationships in the western Great Lakes. Genealogies, recorded oral traditions, and recent studies of kinship shape the framework of this chapter. Whereas environmental resources provided the necessary raw material for power, human societal relationships gave value to that power in the form of authority. Relationships between

⁵⁰ Richard White, *Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991). White's research helped pull the history of the Great Lakes into the consciousness of researchers of early America. Michael McDonnell, *Masters of Empire: Great Lakes Indians and the Making of America* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2015) continued these linkages by re-centering the Odawa as central figures in early North American wars.

⁵¹ Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Exchange in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 75. Sleeper-Smith notes the importance of Potawatomi women's agriculture to feeding "an increasingly large refugee population and also the influx of Frenchmen," during the Fur Trade Wars.

⁵² Susan Deborah Wade, "Indigenous Women and Maple Sugar in the Upper Midwest, 1760-1848" (master's thesis, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 20110, [pdf].

individuals and the spiritual world were all linked together in a complex system that determined how an individual's power could be recognized as authority. By understanding these power systems it is easier to explain actions undertaken by individuals and groups.

Chapter three follows the efforts of Michigan Territorial Governor Lewis Cass in the early 1800s as he attempted to assert the authority of the United States federal government in the western Great Lakes. By positioning himself as an expert in American Indian affairs, Cass became one of the key architects of the United States' Indian policy in the early nineteenth century. To achieve these goals, Cass did not operate alone. He surrounded himself with like-minded subordinates who worked to diminish Native authority and institute a new American state in the western Great Lakes. Cass, along with William Clark, represented American interests at the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council, where they made special efforts to establish the borders between tribes.

Chapter four focuses on the events surrounding the Prairie du Chien treaty conference. The American negotiators attempted to use the council to define borders and by doing so redefine intertribal relationships based on western style borders. Leaders of the nine different tribes representing dozens of villages worked to maintain their access to environmental resources. The Ojibwe and Dakota had a long-standing relationship that cycled through periods of peace and warfare, and both groups were reliant on similar environmental resources. While other tribes were present at the 1825 council, I focus on the relationship of the Ojibwe and Dakota because Ojibwe-Dakota warfare greatly concerned the American representatives. American settlers on several occasions had been injured and killed in the violence throughout the Ojibwe and Dakota disputed lands. Stories of their deaths suppressed the eagerness of American settlers to secure land in the region and weakened American claims of sovereignty in the region.

Great Lakes Indians employed many tactics to push back against the federal government. While the treaty that was eventually signed appears to reflect American values, the minutes of the treaty tell a different story, one where American Indians leaders controlled the proceedings.

The Lake Superior Ojibwe were underrepresented at the 1825 Prairie du Chien council, which made finalizing the boundary between the Ojibwe and Dakota impossible to accomplish. The American commissioners and inserted an article in the treaty of 1825 that called for another treaty council to be held in 1826 at a location easier for the Lake Superior Ojibwe to attend. Chapter five explores the 1826 at Fond du Lac. Cass wanted to ensure the 1826 meeting at Fond du Lac meeting ended favorably for the United States. While the Americans in 1825 did not demand land cessions from any of the tribes, in 1826 Cass secured access to mineral rights, and began the process of commodifying Ojibwe lands into individual land allotments. While the Ojibwe continued to assert authority in the western Great Lakes for many years following the 1825 council, Cass' treaty efforts in 1826 represent a shift in American views regarding their relationship with the Ojibwe. As a result of the 1826 treaty there were unintended environmental consequences. The leaders who delineated their boundaries to secure their territory soon had their claims used against them. The federal government used the tribal created boundaries to isolate tribes in an effort to secure the cession of American Indian lands. In response, tribal leaders who believed they had been betrayed by the federal treaty process attempted to defend their territorial claims through force. However, many Ojibwe and Dakota communities were located at great distances from one another that made it difficult to secure an adequate and unified defense against the intrusion by settler colonists.

It is tempting to conclude that the Indigenous borderlands completely fell apart following the growth and transformation of former trading posts into American towns. However, American

Indians continued to maintain a strong, vibrant culture that has not been erased from the landscape of the western Great Lakes. Nineteenth-century Ojibwe and Dakota leaders were able to harness their influence, authority, and power in order to force the United States to respect and acknowledge their continued rights to the resources of the land. While treaty councils in J.O. Lewis' painting assumed the authority of the United States, the daily reality of how power was asserted was a far more complicated social, cultural, and political undertaking.

CHAPTER 1

SEASONS OF MOVEMENT: THE ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF THE WESTERN GREAT LAKES REGION

In the late winter of 1799, Dakota warriors killed 67 Ojibwe men, women, and children. The Ojibwe were harvesting maple sap and processing it into maple sugar when they were ambushed, attacked, and driven from the sugar bush. The trees were near Sandy Lake, a territory previously occupied by the Dakota in present-day north central Minnesota. The attack signaled a new chapter in the long conflict between the Dakota and Ojibwe. In the years just prior to the attack there had been only sporadic attacks between the Dakota and Ojibwe, as the Dakota had left the woodlands to the Ojibwe, preferring the Plains for themselves.¹ The Ojibwe considered the Sandy Lake area to be “finely wooded with large Maples, which had never been tapped.”² The source of these details, an Ojibwe man named Sheshepaskut, recalled that the Dakota still claimed the maple sugar trees, even though other sources agree that the Ojibwe had resided on the land for at least thirty years before the attack.³ The attack was likely caused by Ojibwe hunters encroaching further on Dakota hunting territory during the previous hunting season and was a push back from the Dakota against the Ojibwe.⁴

¹ There is some controversy over whether the Ojibwe pushed the Dakota out of the lands surrounding Mille Lacs or if the Dakota were drawn further west by new resource opportunities. Chapter 2 delves more deeply into this discussion.

² David Thompson, *David Thompson's Narrative of his Exploration in Western America 1784-1812* ed. J. B. Tyrrell (Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1916), 264. [online book] *Internet Archive* accessed March 29, 2017, <https://archive.org/details/davidthompsonsna00thom>. Thompson was a British-Canadian explorer and a fur trader. He recorded the story after speaking with Red Lake Ojibwe Sheshepaskut. See also Harold Hickerson, *Chippewa Indians II: Ethnohistory of Mississippi Bands and Pillager and Winnibigoshish Bands of Chippewa* (Garland Publishing Inc., New York, 1974), 92. Hickerson listed Thompson informant to be Sheshepaskut of Red Lake.

³ Harold Hickerson, *Chippewa Indian II*, 92. William Warren, *History of the Ojibway People* (St. Paul: Borealis Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), 344-345.

⁴ Hickerson, *Chippewa Indian II*, 94. William Warren, *History of the Ojibway People* (St. Paul: Borealis Minnesota Historical Society Press), 1984, 344-345. Both Hickerson and Warren agree that the Ojibwe had territorial control of Leech Lake, Mille Lacs, and Sandy Lake by 1799 and had been in the region since 1768. The Dakota had moved further south down the Mississippi River and were more likely attacking the Ojibwe in retaliation for Ojibwe hunting camps encroaching on Dakota hunting territory. The sources agree that the usual temporary

The extension of Ojibwe hunting parties onto Dakota land represented a central tension in the western Great Lakes and constituted a key aspect of the Indigenous borderlands—the protection and control of community access to environmental resources. By 1799, the maple sugar bush and hunting lands surrounding Sandy Lake was emblematic of how Indigenous borderlands operated in the western Great Lakes region. The Ojibwe were killed because of their continued expansion into previously held Dakota Territory. Overlapping claims to environmental resources complicated authority in the region, resulting in violence. The contest over environmental resources between the Ojibwe and Dakota at Sandy Lake exemplified the danger that Ojibwe and Dakota villages risked in order to sustain their communities in the harsh climate of the western Great Lakes. Access to resources determined whether a band could survive the harsh winters and fueled competition in the region.

Borderlands histories are typically written about spaces at the edges of Euro-American empires, and often focus on the American Southwest. This framework has expanded in recent years as borderlands historians Hämäläinen and Truett argue that borderlands history should be freed from “older orthodoxies by approaching space and territoriality from new angles.”⁵ Though these histories have presented opportunities to tell more Native-centric narratives, they continue to be based on Euro-centric definitions of space, place and power. Hämäläinen and Truett ask “how Indians created the conditions for borderlands histories rather than simply looking at how they acted within it.”⁶ The western Great Lakes of the eighteenth and nineteenth century were at the edge of the French and British empires, and later the American nation-state. Yet, the lands

spring peace had not occurred that year and that the sugar bush the Ojibwe were tapping had at one time been in Dakota control.

⁵ Pekka Hämäläinen and Samuel Truett “On Borderlands,” in *The Journal of American History* Vol. 98, no. 2, 351, accessed March 29, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41509959>.

⁶ Ibid., 352.

also contained borders known to American Indian tribes. These borders did not operate the same as European empires understood their borders. Juliana Barr demonstrated that American Indians had borders and that those borders were recognized by European powers, the Spanish in the American southwest.⁷ Sami Lakomäki furthered this idea by applying Native borderlands to the southern Great Lakes in the Ohio River Valley.⁸ Yet Barr and Lakomäki's borderlands retained elements of Euro-American definitions of borders. This dissertation focuses on Indigenous borderland as a relation to environmental resources. Native leaders who maintained their communities' access to environmental resources were able to hold power and influence. Intra and intertribal relations complicated how power and influence were developed and wielded. This chapter focuses on the wild rice, maple sugar, and other food sources of the western Great Lakes because of their importance to the power relations between tribes and their fundamental effects on borders in the region.

The Ojibwe lived throughout the western Great Lakes region, encompassing the present day states of northern Michigan, Wisconsin, and eastern Minnesota. The borderlands that they shared with the Dakota were located along the waters of the upper St. Croix River towards the east, north to the western tip of Lake Superior, and along the upper Mississippi River to the clustering of lakes surrounding Leech Lake. These waters and woodlands were the geographical center of the Indigenous borders in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Although modern development and human alterations have changed aspects of the western Great Lakes ecology, driving along the modern superhighway of Interstate 94 provides a snapshot of the Native

⁷ Juliana Barr, "Geographies of Power: Mapping Indian Borders in the Borderlands of the Early Southwest," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (Jan 2011), 6, accessed March 29, 2017, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5309/willmaryquar.68.1.0005>.

⁸ Sami Lakomäki, "Our Line" The Shawnees, the United States, and Competing Borders on the Great Lakes "Borderlands," 1795-1832," *Journal of the Early Republic* 34, no. 4 (Winter 2014) accessed March 29, 2017, <https://search-proquest-com.proxy1.cl.msu.edu/docview/1628557288?accountid=12598>.

landscape that defined eighteenth and nineteenth century Indigenous borderlands. The interstate was built through woods, around lakes, skirting marshlands, and over rivers. These diverse habitats, along with the plants and animals that made their homes there, were essential to sustaining life. From the arid plains of the Dakotas to the pine forests of upper Minnesota, Wisconsin, and northern Michigan, Native peoples' access to these resources led to *mino-bimaadiziwin* (a good life) in the region.⁹ Access to vital environmental resources determined which Native communities gained power, and villages often declined in population due to a lack of resources.

Ecologically, the landscape shifts from pine forests to grasslands just west of the Sandy Lake area. The Red River that flows north to Lake Winnipeg and its tributary the Bois de Sioux River served as an outer border by the 1800s after the Ojibwe forced the Dakota to the outer boundaries of the western Great Lakes.¹⁰ Helen Hornbeck Tanner's maps of the geographical region c. 1600 label the vegetation as deciduous and coniferous forests made up of maple, basswood, birch, hemlock, red, white, and black spruce, and fir trees.¹¹ The United States Forest Service labels the northern region surrounding the lakes as Laurentian Mixed Forest Province. The major geographic features include hills, lakes, moraines, drumlins, eskers with winters that "are moderately long and somewhat severe . . . A short growing season imposes severe

⁹ Translations of this term come from the John D. Nichols, ed. "Ojibwe People's Dictionary," *University of Minnesota's Department of American Indian Studies and University Libraries* accessed March 29, 2017, <http://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/>. See also Cary Miller, *Ogimaag: Anishinaabeg Leadership, 1760-1845* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 151. *Mino-bimaadiziwin* is Anishinaabemowin for living a good life and is a fully encompassing idea of living a good life connected to all of society.

¹⁰ Helen Hornbeck Tanner, *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History* (Norman: Published for The Newberry Library by the University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 98-99. See map 20 "Indian Villages c. 1810".

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 14 and 15 "Map 3 Natural Vegetation c. 1600."

restrictions on agriculture; the frost-free season lasts from 100 to 140 days.”¹²

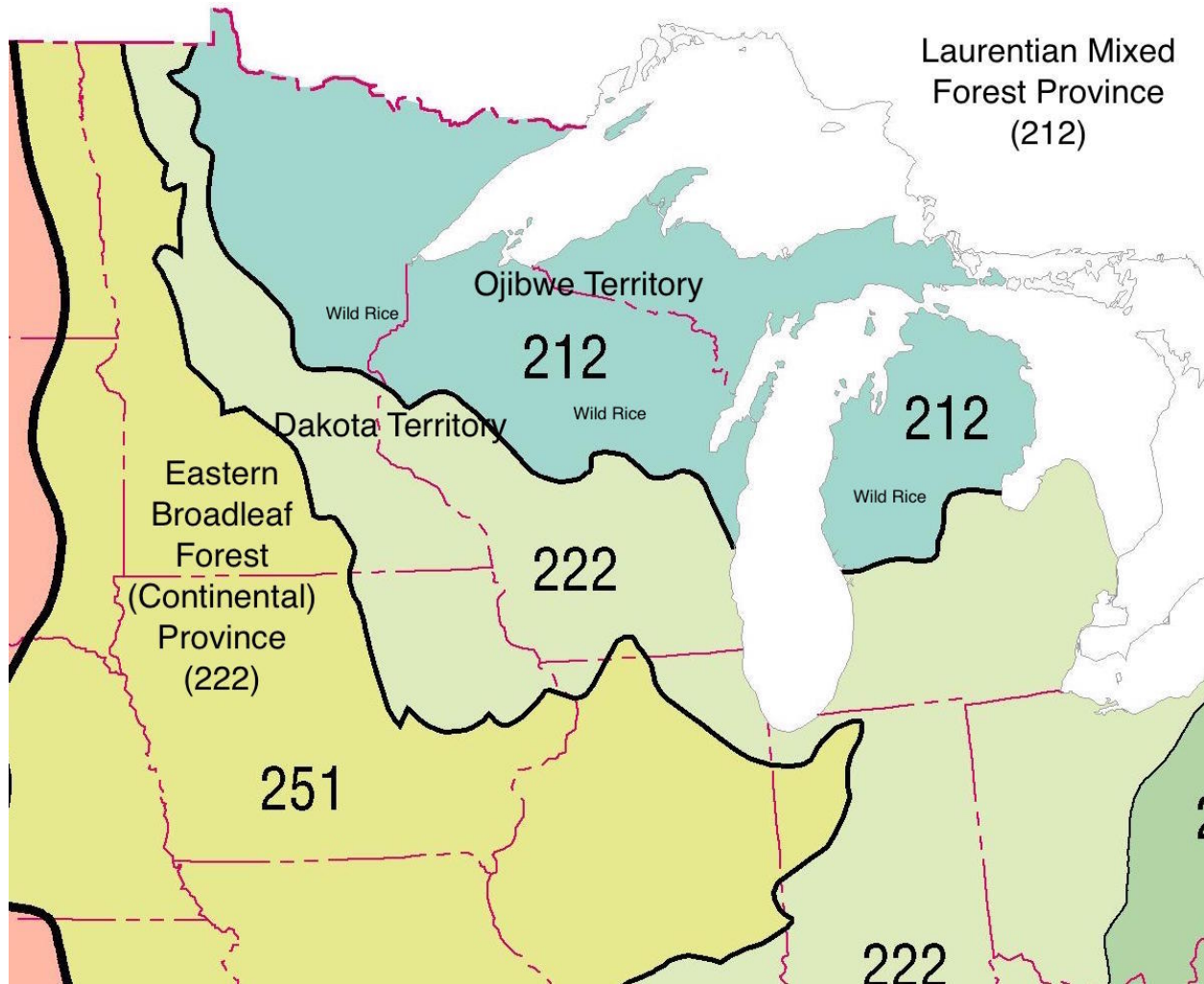


Figure 3: R.G. Bailey, “Ecoregions of the United States.”

USDA Forest Service (scale 1:7,500,000. revised 1994) <http://www.fs.fed.us/rm/ecoregions/products/map-ecoregions-united-states/#>. Accessed April 19, 2017. The map labels were created and place by the author of this dissertation.

The modern borders of the western Great Lakes states are clearly defined. When driving along I-94 through Wisconsin over the St. Croix River, visitors to Minnesota are welcomed with a massive wooden cutout sign in the shape of the state. Though travelers have just crossed a massive river that marks the legal border between the states, the large cutout officially announces

¹² “212 Laurentian Mixed Forest Province,” *US Forest Service*, accessed March 31, 2017. <http://www.fs.fed.us/land/ecosysmgmt/colorimagemap/images/212.html>.

the edge of the states' borders. Today, these borders seem permanent and lasting, built and re-enforced through the use of maps and sanctioned by the federal government. It is important to remember that these are deliberately constructed boundaries. The modern borders were politically constructed, mapped onto the region by the United States after they had asserted authority over the land from the Ojibwe and Dakota. In the nineteenth century when these state lines did not exist, boundaries in the western Great Lakes were no less real, but were based on different factors. At that time, Indigenous borderlands were defined by the ecologies of place where access to natural resources dictated the boundaries of these spaces.

The contests between the Ojibwe and Dakota over environmental resource were not the only environmental disputes of the early nineteenth century, nor were they the first. Because of the wealth of environmental resources, many American Indian communities called the region home. The long history of human inhabitation allowed American Indians to develop strategies for survival during the four seasonal changes of spring, summer, fall, and winter, another key environmental marker of the region. For Great Lakes Indians the, "major purpose in life was to survive."¹³ The greatest danger to human life was not warfare over resources, but the environment itself. Wild animals, flooded rivers, infections from small injuries, and starvation all posed the threat of death. Spring, summer, and fall contained these dangers, but winter was the greatest threat, and drove the work done in the other three seasons. Food needed to be stored, shelters constructed, and coverings created to protect the body. If these tasks were not accomplished, the winter would be deadly.

¹³ Basil Johnston, *The Manitous: The Spiritual World of the Ojibway* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, Inc., 1995), xvii. Johnston writes, "Survival was the need and first reality that governed their dreams, hopes, aspirations, and outlook and the kind of training and discipline that would best prepare their offspring to cope and be equal to the demands and challenges of primal life."

A Fertile Landscape from Frozen Beginnings

The flora and fauna in the present states of Wisconsin and eastern Minnesota have long sustained humans, as evidenced by several prehistoric cultures that made this region their home. The harvesting of native plants was supplemented by access to dozens of animals, including deer, rabbits, squirrels, martens, bears, wolves, foxes, and beavers. The snow and ice that made winter so dangerous was also responsible for this diverse and fertile landscape. The landscape was created approximately 20,000 years ago during the latest advancement of the Wisconsin glacialiation.¹⁴ Over a period of 10,000 years, this glacial ice sheet slowly receded, began to carve out the Great Lakes, and left behind the fertile soil. The Great Lakes filled to their approximate current levels and shape around 4,000 years ago.¹⁵ According to some archeologists, the first groups of Paleo-Indians lived in the Great Lakes region almost 12,000 years ago.¹⁶ While many archeologists and anthropologists continue to hold this theory, it conflicts with the oral histories that many tribes maintain.¹⁷ In total, anthropologists and archeologists believe there have been nine broad periods of human inhabitation in the region. The Paleo-Indian (10,000-8500 BC), Early Archaic (8500-6000 BC), Middle Archaic (6000-3000 BC), Late Archaic (3000-1000 BC), Early Woodland (1000-300 BC), Middle Woodland (300 BC-AD 400), Late Woodland (AD

¹⁴ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory "About Our Great Lakes: Background", accessed 10/19/2015
<http://www.glerl.noaa.gov/pr/ourlakes/background.html>.

¹⁵ NOAA, "About Our Great Lakes," accessed 10/19/2015
<http://www.glerl.noaa.gov/pr/ourlakes/background.html>.

¹⁶ George Irving Quimby, *Indian Life in the Upper Great Lakes: 11,000 B.C. to A.D. 1800* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960), 19.

¹⁷ Johnston, *The Manitous*, xvi. Anishinaabe elder Basil Johnston writes, "The Anishinaukaek believe that their people were born on this continent while it was still in its infancy, a conviction that differs from that of conservative scholars, who maintain that the North American Indians' place of origin is somewhere in Asia and that the Indians came to this continent via the Bering Strait anywhere from 10,000 to 25,000 years ago. The theory that the North American Indians originally came from Asia is at odds with more recent scholarly studies and discoveries that have suggested that humans have inhabited this continent far longer than was first believed, from as long as 250,000 years ago."

400-1100), Mississippian (AD 900-1600), and the contemporary era.¹⁸ While there continues to be some debate regarding the origins of the tribes inhabiting the western Great Lakes region, it is firmly established that American Indians have lived on the North American continent since 10,000 BC and possibly long before that. The agricultural, gathering, and hunting practices of the ancient cultures of the Middle Mississippian and Oneota peoples resemble the traditional seasonal migration patterns of the early nineteenth century American Indian inhabitants.

Around AD 1050, Middle Mississippian groups established the cultural center of Aztalan on the Crawfish River in Wisconsin.¹⁹ At the site, evidence of a wide variety of animals and birds remains were found, including various types of waterfowl, marsh birds, white-tailed deer, fish, freshwater mussels and the now-extinct passenger pigeon.²⁰ Between the years AD 1000-1100, a group of people known as the Oneota cultural groups came to live throughout much of Wisconsin.²¹ Like the people at Aztalan, the Oneota group grew corn, in addition to hunting and gathering. Oneota peoples extensively fished the area's rivers and lakes, and there is evidence to suggest that hunters traveled west for large game animals like bison, deer, and elk.²²

By the late 1300s, three major linguistic traditions had superseded the earlier Mississippian cultures throughout the region. These Iroquoian, Algonquian, and Siouan speakers were direct ancestors to the Ojibwe (Chippewa), Potawatomi, Odawa (Ottawa), Menominee, Ho-

¹⁸ "Indian Country: Archaeological History," *Milwaukee Public Museum*, accessed March 31, 2017, <https://www.mpm.edu/wirp/ICW-22.html>.

¹⁹ Sturtevant, William C., Douglas H. Ubelaker et. al. *Handbook of North American Indians Volume 3 Environment, Origins, and Population* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 2006), 407.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 407.

²¹ University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Archaeological Research Laboratory, *The Crescent Bay Hunt Club Site: Oneota in Southeast Wisconsin*. Last update August 26, 2003 accessed March 31, 2017, <http://www4.uwm.edu/archlab/Oneota/>. See also Ronald J. Mason, *Great Lakes Archaeology* (Caldwell, The Blackburn Press, 1981), 362.

²² Sturtevant, *Environment, Origins, and Population*, 417.

Chunk (Winnebago), Meskwaki (Fox), Sauk (Sac), Ioway, Dakota (Sioux), Miami, Wyandot (Huron), and Illinois who resided in the region during the early nineteenth century.²³ Many of these tribes were represented at the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council, though my research focuses on the Ojibwe and Dakota who made their homes along the upper Mississippi River and lakes region west of Lake Superior. These tribes relied heavily on the same food sources that had sustained the Mississippian and Oneota cultures.²⁴ Similar cultural and food gathering practices between Oneota archeological remains and early Ho-Chunk articles have lead some scholars to conclude that the Ho-Chunk were the direct descendants of the Oneota culture group.²⁵

Proto-Ojibwe groups that were part of the Algonquian language speaking communities in the region lived in smaller, family-based societies. Archeologist Ronald Mason argues that proto-Ojibwe groups like the Amikwas or Maramegs either faded away due to warfare, sickness, or through marriage into larger groups; or like the Noquets (People of the Bear), became the Noka Clan and a part of the Ojibwe tribe.²⁶ Like other migrant peoples, they followed large herds of game animals. Similar to the Oneota, proto-Ojibwe groups subsisted largely on large game hunting, small agriculture, and wild rice cultivation.²⁷ Helen Tanner's "Map 4 Subsistence Patterns" labels the region with a focus on hunting for deer and moose in northern reaches of the

²³ The Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Odawa were closely linked peoples called the Anishinaabeg. Their language, Anishinaabemowin falls under the Algonquin language family. The Meskwaki, Sauk, Ioway, Menominee, Wyandot, and Illinois languages also fall under the Algonquin family. The Dakota and Ho-Chunk languages are both a part of the Siouan language family, though they are not closely related. The Iroquois made up of the Seneca, Cayuga, Onondago, Oneida, Mohawk, and later the sixth lodge of the Tuscarora added after 1722 were all part of the Iroquoian language family.

²⁴ Ronald J. Mason, *Great Lakes Archaeology*, 5.

²⁵ University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Archaeological Research Laboratory, *The Crescent Bay Hunt Club Site: Oneota in Southeast Wisconsin*. Last update August 26, 2003 accessed March 29, 2017, <http://www4.uwm.edu/archlab/Oneota/>.

²⁶ Ronald J. Mason, *Great Lakes Archaeology*, 9.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

territory. Wild rice is found throughout the entire region, and major fisheries were located in the Great Lakes and especially in the shallows at Sault Ste. Marie on Lake Michigan and at La Pointe on Lake Superior. Included in an insert on the map is a small detail of the number of frost-free growing days. The majority of wild rice lakes fall within the “limited potential for Indian agriculture,” with 120-140 frost-free days.²⁸ While archeological data can tell scholars one truth, the oral histories of tribes can be equally enlightening truth about how people came to be and reveal the values of early societies.

The Ojibwe were a part of the Anishinaabeg (three fires confederacy) along with the Potawatomi and Odawa. Anishinaabeg oral tradition explains that after creation, the ancestors of the Anishinaabeg of the Great Lakes lived along the eastern Atlantic coastline, likely near the present-day Canadian province of New Brunswick.²⁹ One day, seven prophets came to the Anishinaabeg with seven prophecies for the people. Along with their prophecies, the prophets explained that the people would have to move from the Great Salt Water and settle in the land “where food grows on water.”³⁰ While some did not believe the prophets, many began a 500-year journey to the Great Lakes. According to oral accounts that have since been written down, the people began their odyssey around AD 900. Along the way, the people stopped at seven different locations: the first at an island shaped like a turtle located somewhere around modern Montreal; the second at Niagara Falls; the third at the eastern shore of Lake Michigan; the fourth at Manitoulin Island; and the fifth at Sault Ste. Marie. At Sault Ste. Marie, the people split into two parties, one moving north along Lake Superior to the sixth stopping place of Spirit Island at

²⁸ Tanner, *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, 20 and 21, map 4.

²⁹ “Ojibwe Waasa-Inaabidaa ‘We Look in All Directions’ Timeline,” *PBS Eight*, accessed March 31, 2017. http://www.ojibwe.org/home/about_anish_timeline.html.

³⁰ Mike Swan et al. “The Anishinaabe Migration Story,” *White Earth Nation (Gaa-waabaabiganikaag) History*, accessed March 31, 2017, downloadable <http://www.whiteearth.com/history.html>, Slide 10.

the west end of Lake Superior; the other moved to the southern shore, stopping at another turtle shaped island called *Mo-ning-wun-a-dawn-ing* (the place that was dug) or Madeline Island, the seventh stop. In this way, the council fires of the Anishinaabeg were spread throughout the northern Great Lakes. The last migration ended around 1400, about 200 years before sustained contact with Europeans.³¹

The first Europeans to encounter the Ojibwe in the western Great Lakes were the French *coureur des bois*, who traded European goods for beaver peltry in the woods surrounding the Great Lakes.³² These French *coureur des bois* followed closely behind French Jesuit priests, who were the first Europeans to have sustained contact with the western Great Lakes tribes beginning in the early 1630s.³³ While the *coureur des bois* were mainly concerned with gathering and trading the wealth of furs from this region, the Jesuits were Catholic missionaries who had come to the New World to save souls. The *Jesuit Relations* record tales of their successes and failures, but they are also a record of the bountiful natural world of the Great Lakes.

³¹ Mike Swan et al. "The Anishinaabe Migration Story," *White Earth Nation (Gaa-waabaabiganikaag) History*, accessed March 31, 2017, downloadable <http://www.whiteearth.com/history.html>. The downloadable powerpoint includes "The Anishinaabe Migration Story." C.C. Trowbridge also recorded the Anishinaabeg migration narrative that included in the fourth stopping for generations until told to move north, "Eventually they stopped at the place where 'food grown on water,' as told in another prophecy." C.C. Trowbridge Papers ca. 1823-ca. 1840 "C. C. Trowbridge Folder Response to Governor Lewis Cass's questionnaire concerning the Chippewa, Ottawa, and Winnebago Indians" housed at the Bentley Historical Library, Ann Arbor, MI.

³² *Coureur des bois* is French and literary translated as "runners of the woods." France only officially licensed a handful of traders. Those without an official French license operated outside of French law, but were often able to make large amounts of profits.

³³ Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791* Vol. 1 (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers Company, 1899) [online text] http://moses.creighton.edu/kripke/jesuitrelations/relations_01.html Accessed March 29, 2017 see General Preface, vii. "It is not true, as Bancroft avers, that the Jesuit was ever the pioneer of New France; we now know that in this land, as elsewhere in all ages, the trader nearly always preceded the priest. But the trader was not often a letter-writer or a diarist; hence, we owe our intimate knowledge of New France, particularly in the seventeenth century, chiefly to the wandering missionaries of the Society of Jesus." The Jesuits were a Catholic order founded in 1534 that had missionaries around the world.

The Ojibwe who lived at the western end of Lake Superior in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries lived in a similar environmental world as the Ojibwe and other Algonquian language tribes who had lived in seventeenth-century Green Bay on the shores of Lake Michigan. The food and environmental resources surrounding Green Bay were plentiful. Rather than the shattered refugee center as Richard White has depicted the region, the people making up the multi-ethnic villages of Green Bay were drawn to the location for the opportunities of trade and exchange.³⁴ Using a conservative estimate of four to five women and children for each male warrior, Sleeper-Smith estimated the 4,000 to 5,000 warriors at Green Bay indicated a population of 16,000 to 20,000.³⁵ The community at Green Bay was able to rely on abundant fishing, hunting, and wild rice to provide enough food for such a large population.

Later, Jesuits found the plentiful food sources continued as they traveled further southwest from Green Bay. Fathers Dablon and Allouez journeyed down the Fox River³⁶ from Green Bay and described the landscape: “Vines, plum-trees, and apple-trees are readily found on the way; and seem by their aspect to invite the traveler to land and taste of their fruit, which is very sweet and exceedingly abundant.”³⁷ Fr. Dablon further described the Fox River Valley

³⁴ Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Lost Worlds: Indian Women, Power, and Authority in the Ohio River Valley, 1690-1792* (Chapel Hill: Omohundro Institute of Early American history and Culture by the University of North Carolina Press forthcoming), 85.

³⁵ Sleeper-Smith, *Lost Worlds*, 94. See also Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791* Vol. 23 (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers Company, 1899), 277-279, [online text], http://moses.creighton.edu/kripke/jesuitrelations/relations_23.html. “The news of his coming quickly spread to the places round about, and there assembled four or five thousand men.”

³⁶ The Fox River connects Lake Winnebago to Lake Michigan through Green Bay. The lower portion of the Fox River flows at a southwestern away from Lake Winnebago and passes within two miles of the Mississippi River at the village of Portage, WI.

³⁷ Reuben Gold Thwaites ed., *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791* Vol. 55 (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers Company, 1899) [online text], Chapter V, 195, http://puffin.creighton.edu/jesuit/relations/relations_55.html. “Of the Mission of St. François Xavier, and the Nations Dependent Thereon Article II Journey of the Same Two Fathers the Fire Nation and the Beauty and Curiosities of that Country.”

country as covered with “wild oats,” a name the French used to describe wild rice. Fr. Dablon also described the wildlife along the Fox River, detailing the presence of *Pisikiou* (bison). The priest noted the abundance of fish and birds in the numerous ponds and lakes that pooled in and around the river.³⁸ The land between Green Bay and the Fox River was so plentiful that some early historians argued that this wild rice region supported more American Indians than the entirety of the rest of the region.³⁹

For some, river travel was difficult because of the abundance of wild rice. French fur trader Robert de la Salle minimized his fellow Frenchman Du Lhut’s journey into the region, arguing that there was little value in the place because it was “consisting entirely of swamps and unnavigable rivers teeming with wild rice to the point of congestion.”⁴⁰ While congested rivers and lakes of wild rice may have seemed a hindrance to early French traders, the availability of food was critical to the daily life of the Ojibwe and Dakota. Wild rice could support large populations with relative ease. In addition to using wild rice beds as a primary food source, they were also places where animals, such as wild fowl, came to eat.⁴¹ The draw of the wild rice beds allowed Ojibwe and Dakota to hunt animals looking to feed on the rice.

The bounty of the western Great Lakes was not limited to wild rice and game animals. The natural world provided dozens of food options, such as the roots and tubers of the broadleaf

³⁸ Ibid., 195-196. See also A.E. Parkins, “The Indians of the Great Lakes Region and Their Environment” *Geographical Review*, 6, no. 6, (Dec., 1918): 508, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/207682>. Historical Geographer Almon E. Parkins wrote, “According to many writers, the early explorers considered the wild rice region a veritable paradise.” See Parkins’ footnote 22 on page 508 for more information.

³⁹ A.E. Parkins, “The Indians of the Great Lakes Region and Their Environment” *Geographical Review*, 6, no. 6, (Dec., 1918): 508, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/207682>.

⁴⁰ Michael Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations: How the Native New World Shaped Early North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 147.

⁴¹ Parkins, “The Indians of the Great Lakes Region and Their Environment,” *Geographical Review*, Vol. 6, No. 6 (Dec., 1918): 508, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/207682>.

arrowhead and the Jerusalem artichoke.⁴² For Great Lakes Native communities who lived south of the 222 line (see figure 3), the Jesuits recorded that Indian corn, beans, and squash were planted because the crop-killing frosts came later in the season, allowing for the necessary growth.⁴³ The soil was very good for growing corn, beans, squashes, fruits like strawberries and raspberries, and many roots.⁴⁴ French fur trader Nicolas Perrot described several of the roots that were harvested, such as the Indian turnip; *poke-koretech*, a root that once cut and roasted had a similar taste as chestnuts; and Indian potatoes.⁴⁵ In describing the lands near Fox River, Perrot wrote that the Natives there had “lifelong good-fortune; animals and birds are found there in great numbers, with numberless river abounding in fish.”⁴⁶ The shallows of the Great Lakes themselves were plentiful with all kinds of fish, including lake sturgeon, white sucker, shorthead redhorse, channel catfish, black bullhead, brown bullhead, yellow perch, walleye pike, northern pike, and several species of bass.⁴⁷

The western Great Lakes region was a world of plenty, but it was Indigenous knowledge of how to best use the environmental resources that was the key to surviving the long winter season. Without the knowledge the elders gave to each successive generation, the ability to survive and thrive in the unforgiving climate would have been lost. Oral history passed these teachings through the generations, and explained to the Anishinaabeg their place in the world

⁴² Sturtevant, *Environment, Origins, and Population*, 407.

⁴³ Emma Helen Blair, ed., “Memoir on the Manners, customs, and religion of the savages of North America by Nicolas Perrot,” in *The Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley and Region of the Great Lakes as described by Nicolas Perrot, French commandant in the Northwest; Bacqueville de la Potherie, French royal commissioner to Canada; Morrell Marston, American army officer; and Thomas Forsyth United States agent at Fort Armstrong*. Vol 1. (Cleveland: The Arthur Clark Company, 1911), 102.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 113.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 113, 116, 117, 119.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 113.

⁴⁷ Sturtevant, *Environment, Origins, and Population*, 419.

and how to survive in it. The ability to use the abundant environmental resources strengthened the community. The food that grew on the water in the original prophecies was wild rice, and it became a central food source for the survival of the Anishinaabeg people. Just as important was access to maple trees and the knowledge of how to tap and process maple sugar. Maple sugar was critical to recovering from the winter months, because it provided easily accessible calories that could be stored for long stretches of time. Its long-term storage properties also meant that it could be traded across great distances. Maple sugar, animal furs, and wild rice formed a trinity of natural resources and trade goods necessary to survive in the western Great Lakes.

The Ojibwe and Dakota maintained cyclical seasonal migration to harvest the seasonally dependent environmental resources they were reliant upon. The cycle of the seasons organized the daily actions of Great Lakes Indians. Each season brought with it specific challenges and new opportunities. The seasons dictated the movement of villages and settlement throughout the Great Lakes. Strategic migratory patterns increased the odds of surviving the harsh winter season. Exploring these seasonal movements identifies the most highly prized environmental resources, and what the region's tribe's would do to maintain access to those resources.

Iskigamizige-giizis Ziibwan: Sugar bush and Spring⁴⁸

During the 1700s, the western Ojibwe lived along the southern shore of Lake Superior and were beginning to look towards expanding further west.⁴⁹ Anishinaabeg villages at the time

⁴⁸ "The Ojibwe People's Dictionary", *University of Minnesota Department of Indian Studies; University of Minnesota Libraries*, accessed March 30, 2017, <http://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/>. See in particular the Cultural Galleries of "Iskigamizigewin (sugaring)" accessed March 30, 2017 <http://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/category/galleries/sugaring>. Translations were taken from the University of Minnesota's Department of American Indian Studies and University Libraries. For more on the Ojibwe language see John D. Nichols and Earl Nyholm, *A Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995).

⁴⁹ Edmund Jefferson Danziger Jr., *The Chippewas of Lake Superior* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978), 7.

could be found at the northern Lake Huron shoreline, from Detroit to Sault Ste Marie, and to La Pointe at the western edge of Lake Superior. While the shallows of Lake Superior provided opportunities to fish for whitefish and sturgeon, the winters on Lake Superior were very harsh. The running of maple sap from maple trees signaled that times of plenty were coming, a joyous occasion, especially if the winter had been unusually harsh. The spring sugar bush brought extended families back together from their winter hunting camps to celebrate surviving another winter, and to help each other harvest the vital maple sap.⁵⁰ The maple sap was processed into maple sugar, which made it easier to store and transport than in its liquid form. Though the northern Ojibwe produced some of the largest quantities of maple sugar, tribes throughout the western Great Lakes region also made sugar during the early spring. The Dakota controlled much of the sugar bush territory prior to the Ojibwe's expansion west.⁵¹ While disagreements over hunting and trapping territory were one of the reasons why the Ojibwe and Dakota went to war with each other, sugar bush locations were equally contested lands. Maple sugar was crucial to both food preparation and as a valuable trade product. Though the implements have changed slightly, the process for making maple syrup and sugar has largely stayed the same.

To gather the sap, the Ojibwe cut or drilled into a sugar maple tree, and then hammered in a grooved piece of wood. This *negwaakwa* (tap), worked like a spigot to draw the sap out of the tree. The sap drained into a folded and sealed *biskitenaagan* (birch bark bucket), resting at the base of the tree.

⁵⁰ The author would like to acknowledge the Gun Lake Potawatomi Camp Jijak Sugar bush and Great Lakes Lifeway Institute for the kind welcome during the sugar bush season of 2013.

⁵¹ Gwen Westerman and Bruce White, *Mni Sota Makoe: The Land of the Dakota* (Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2012), 97-98. Even in the 1830s and 1840s the Dakota continued to maintain sugar bush locations in the lands surrounding Minneapolis and Saint Paul. Conflict was ever present over these sugar bush locations. In addition to westward moving Ojibwe, American soldiers stationed at Fort Snelling cut maple trees for firewood and tapped trees.



Figure 4: Leah Jurss, “Collecting Sap.”

Jijak Foundation Sugar Bush at Gun Lake Potawatomi 2013 courtesy Leah Jurss.

In order to process the maple sap into sugar, the water in the sap needed to be boiled off. The sap was poured into large boiling kettles, with huge fires beneath the kettles. When European traders arrived, the Ojibwe swapped their bark kettles for large copper kettles called *okaadakik* (treaty kettles). In these kettles, the sap would *iskigamizige* (boil down), into syrup. The fires used to boil the sap needed to be stoked and kept alive, rapidly consuming large quantities of timber. Younger children were tasked with finding kindling and hauling logs to be used by the fires. If left untended, the fires beneath the boiling kettles would burn out, stopping the boil until the fires could be restarted. Food also needed to be gathered and prepared for the sugar bush workers. Young men were tasked with hunting and trapping for the sugar bush workers, while the women tended to the maple sap. It took a community’s effort and the generosity of the gifts of the trees to ensure a good harvest.



Figure 5: Leah Jurss, “Boiling Sap.”
Jijak Foundation Sugar Bush at Gun Lake Potawatomi 2013 courtesy Leah Jurss.

Maple sugar trees need the warm sunny days and cold, frosty nights that occur in spring to begin to produce their watery sap. In the month of *Iskigamizige-giizis* (around March), northern Great Lakes families, including Ojibwe, gathered together from their winter hunting grounds to their family sugar bush to begin the harvest. While much of Ojibwe society was organized patrilineally, sugar bush locations were controlled through a matrilineal system.⁵² Families returned to the same sugar groves year after year, but the sugar produced remained the property of the woman from whose sugar bush it came.⁵³ Tools like *makak* (birch bark containers), and *okaadakik* (treaty kettles), could be left at family sugar bushes for the next

⁵² Miller, *Ogimaag*, 49.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 50.

season.⁵⁴ If a family was just starting out or did not have a sugar grove from which to harvest, the village *ogimaag* (civil leaders) could designate a location, however permission had to be requested in advance of any harvest.⁵⁵ Harvesting maple sap and processing it into usable sugar was time consuming and physically demanding work, but maple sugar also provided a quick source of calories for people during times of nutrient scarcity.⁵⁶ The amount of maple sap needed to create maple sugar varied on the percent of water to sugar in the sap, which varied based on the age of the trees. Benjamin Rush, writing to Thomas Jefferson in 1792, explained that “[a] tree of ordinary size yields in a good season from twenty to thirty gallons of sap, from which are made from five to six pounds of sugar.”⁵⁷ Ojibwe families working larger sugar bushes could produce many more pounds.

⁵⁴ Hickerson, *Chippewa Indians II* 97; Thompson, *Thompson’s Narrative of his Exploration in Western America 1784-1812* 276.

⁵⁵ John Tanner, *The Falcon: A Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1994), 69. John Tanner was white man taken captive as a little boy by two Ojibwe men who later sold him to an Ottawa woman. Tanner was adopted into the woman’s family and was recognized as an Anishinaabe man. His narrative gives extensive details of life as Anishinaabeg in the far western Anishinaabeg territory including one story of his family requesting permission from the Natives at Ke-nu-kau-ne-she-way-boant for permission to harvest maple sap from trees in the area. “We applied to the Indians there to give us some trees to make sugar. They gave us a place where were a few small trees...” page 69. See also *Thompson’s Narrative of his Exploration in Western America 1784-1812*, 276. David Thompson also echoes Tanner’s experience writing, “for some few years have begun to give something like a right of property to each family on the sugar maple groves, and which right continues in the family to the exclusion of others. But as this appropriated space is small in comparison of the whole extent; any, and every person is free to make sugar on the vacant grounds. The appropriation was made by them in a council, in order to give to each family a full extend of ground for making sugar, and to prevent the disputes that would arise where all claim an equal right to the soil and it’s productions. And as in the making of sugar, several kettles and many small vessels of wood and birch rind for collecting and boiling the sap are required, which are not wanted for any other purpose, [they] are thus left in safety on their own grounds for future use.”

⁵⁶ Miller, *Ogimaag*, 49.

⁵⁷ Benjamin Rush, *An account of the sugar maple-tree, of the United States, and of the methods of obtaining sugar from it, together with observations upon the Advantages both public and private of this Sugar. In a Letter to Thomas Jefferson, Esq. Secretary of State of the United States, and one of the Vice Presidents of the American Philosophical Society*. (Philadelphia: R. Aitken & Son, 1792), 15. *Sabin Americana*. Gale, Cengage Learning. Michigan State University Libraries. March 31, 2017 <http://galenet.galegroup.com.proxy1.cl.msu.edu/servlet/Sabin?af=RN&ae=CY3801063083&srchtp=a&ste=14>.



Figure 6: Leah Jurss, “Maple Sugar.”

Jijak Foundation Sugar Bush at Gun Lake Potawatomi 2013 courtesy Leah Jurss.

There were several forms of maple sugar that were produced and used by the Ojibwe. To process the sugar, *naseyaawangwaan* (sugar troughs), were used to grind the granules into a useable sugar that could be stored for months. During the production of maple sugar, a candy like sugar product, termed by Johann Kohl as “gum” or “wax sugar,” was created when the partially boiled sugar was poured into fresh snow.⁵⁸ This resulted in a coagulated form of the sugar that could be chewed or twisted like taffy.⁵⁹ A second form of maple sugar was a “cake sugar,” used as a trade good and for gifts.⁶⁰ The sap was boiled and without stirring it, poured into a mold before it crystallized. Kohl recorded that Natives “ma[de] it into all sorts of shapes, bear’s paws, flowers, stars, small animals, and other figures, just like our gingerbread-bakers at

⁵⁸ Johann Georg Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami: Life Among the Lake Superior Ojibway* (St. Paul: Borealis Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1985), 323-324.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 324.

⁶⁰ Miller, *Ogimaag*, 50. Miller’s research of trade records revealed “that women often traded the products of their labor- wild rice, maple sugar, tanned hides- for goods and utensils that they needed to produce these products more easily, such as kettles.”

fairs.”⁶¹ The maple sugar that was the most versatile sugar was similar to “granulated sugar.” Boiling the sap down and then stirring it constantly in a naseyaawangwaan until it crystallized produced this.⁶² This sugar was used throughout the year as an easily accessible source of energy, sweeter, and preservative.⁶³ The Ojibwe placed the processed maple sugar into makak for storage. These birch bark boxes were watertight and stored sugar for long periods of time. Sugar could be used as a stand-alone food source, but more often was used as a type of condiment on meats, soups, and stirred into wild rice mixtures. Sugar added flavor, and was often used in the place of salt for flavor.⁶⁴ As spring turned to summer and the flow of maple sap slowed, the processed sugar was stored or prepared for the summer trade.

Niibin: Summer and the Summer Villages

Summer brought with it warmer temperatures and more opportunities for harvesting food sources like roots and berries. Families often moved together into villages along lakes and rivers where access to fishing was more readily available. Community life expanded during summer as families took advantage of the ability to harvest and gather foods more quickly and easily. Summer berries included wild blueberries, chokecherries, raspberries, and June berries that could

⁶¹ Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami*, 324.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 323.

⁶³ Frances Densmore, *Chippewa Customs*. (Saint Paul: Borealis Book of Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1979), 123. Densmore recorded, “Maple sugar was used in seasoning fruits, vegetables, cereals, and fish, being used more freely than the white race uses salt.” She also supported Kohl’s description of it eaten as a candy and mentioned it was “dissolved in cold water as a summer drink. It was frequently mixed with medicine to make it palatable, especially for children.”

⁶⁴ Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami*, 319. See also Henry Schoolcraft, *Narrative Journal of Travels Through the Northwestern Regions of the United States: extending from Detroit through the Great Chain of American Lakes to the Sources of the Mississippi river, Performed as a Member of the Expedition under Governor Cass in the Year 1820* ed. By Mentor L. Williams East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 138-139. Schoolcraft mentions that “The Indians have no salt, but make use of maple sugar, when in season.”

be dried in order to preserve them for future use. Frances Densmore recorded that these berries were often dried, and that raspberries were formed into “like cakes” useful for storage.⁶⁵ Ojibwe families who lived in locations where corn was difficult to grow planted more hardy vegetables like pumpkin and squash.⁶⁶ An important preparation for these fields was controlled burns. While farming and tending to squash and potatoes fell within women’s domain, men were tasked with using fire to clear fields before planting and at the end of the season.⁶⁷

Another key source of protein, especially for villages on Lake Superior and Lake Michigan was fish.⁶⁸ In a response to Michigan Territorial Governor Lewis Cass questionnaire regarding tribal practices, C.C. Trowbridge wrote that the “Chippewas subsist chiefly on Fish- say 3 days out of four- the Ottaways have more corn- but depend also on fish- 2 days we will say out of four.”⁶⁹ Fish spawning began around April, and different species of fish continued spawning through the summer months and into the fall. Fishing was prevalent along the shores of the Great Lakes, and the many rivers and smaller lakes of the region produced several varieties of fish. Sault Ste Marie was a major fishery for the Ojibwe living there and they were dependent on catching fish for survival. Gill nets were the method of choice for catching fish.⁷⁰ The nets

⁶⁵ Densmore, *Chippewa Customs*, 127.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 124.

⁶⁷ Miller, *Ogimaag*, 50-51.

⁶⁸ Densmore, *Chippewa Customs*, 124. Densmore noted that “[u]nder some circumstances the people moved directly from the sugar camp to their gardens, but more frequently they went from sugar camp to a place where they could fish.”

⁶⁹ C.C. Trowbridge Papers ca. 1823- ca. 1840 “C. C. Trowbridge Folder Response to Governor Lewis Cass’s questionnaire concerning the Chippewa, Ottawa, and Winnebago Indians” housed at the Bentley Historical Library, Ann Arbor, MI.

⁷⁰ Densmore, *Chippewa Customs*, 125. Densmore noted seven different methods for procuring fish: “(1) By the use of seines; (2) by spearing at night with a torch; (3) by spearing through the ice with a decoy; (4) by traps; (5) by the use of bait; (6) by fishhooks; and (7) by trolling.”

were made from nettle-stalk twine and were tied to poles with stronger ties.⁷¹ Whitefish and lake trout spawned in the late fall and early winter months, and could be frozen and smoked in order to preserve them over the winter.⁷² Like the fishers at Sault Ste Marie, Potawatomi and Ojibwe fishers along the Fox and Wisconsin Rivers and the shallows of Lake Superior sought to catch sturgeon. Lake sturgeon are the largest Indigenous freshwater fish in the Great Lakes basin, and can grow to be up to 200 pounds and have reached lengths of seven feet.⁷³ Female lake sturgeon can live up to 100 years, and can deposit between 4,000 and 7,000 eggs per pound of fish.”⁷⁴ Because of their size, Anishinaabeg used spears to fish for sturgeon. Often, torches were used to shine fish. At night, the light from torches would lure the fish closer to the water surface, where they could be stricken with spears.⁷⁵

Summer preparations were vital to prevent the dangers of starvation in winter, but periodic warfare had the potential to disrupt these vital preparations for winter. Warfare was undertaken for a variety of reasons. Most war parties sought revenge for wrongful deaths in a community. Accidental deaths caused by another community member were solved through a ceremonial practice of “covering the dead” or “paying the body;”⁷⁶ with the relatives of the deceased receiving gifts of blankets, guns, and food from the accused murderer or his family to cover their loss and appease the spirit of the departed person. In a society where each individual

⁷¹ Ibid., 154.

⁷² Tanner, *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, 22.

⁷³ “Background on Lake Sturgeon,” *Michigan Department of Natural Resources*, accessed March 30, 2017. http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10364_18958_61264-276682--,00.html.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami*, 328. See also Densmore, *Chippewa Customs*, 125. “Fishing,” *Milwaukee Public Museum*, accessed March 30, 2017. <https://www.mpm.edu/wirp/ICW-29.html>.

⁷⁶ Anton Treuer, *The Assassination of Hole In The Day* (St. Paul: Borealis Book Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2011), 30.

was highly valued for the labor they produced, it was essential that the family be compensated for the emotional loss of a loved one and for the physical hardship caused by a lost member. When a stranger killed a family member, the ceremony of covering the dead was rarely used, and instead a revenge killing took place.⁷⁷ In order to partake in a war party for a revenge killing, it was necessary to receive community approval for the action. The assembling of warriors was a ritualized process. The potential leader of the war party called on his network of supporters by sending tobacco with a messenger, who was tasked with explaining the purpose of the expedition. All who agreed to join the party smoked the pipe of the messenger and made preparations to join the war party.⁷⁸

During the summer, a member of the family who had been wronged could call young warriors together to offer them an opportunity to join the leader in revenging his family. While American and European observers of the practice deemed it “savage,” participation in the raids “served important cultural and spiritual purposes.”⁷⁹ It was the duty of relatives to ensure either compensation in the form of goods or retribution against the murderer was achieved in order to allow the spirit of their murdered relative to move on to the spirit world.⁸⁰ If they could not locate the murderer, a member of their family was captured to replace the deceased, or killed to cover their loss. Revenge killings often spanned several seasons. Because families were gathered in large villages, the attackers needed to consist of enough members to break the defenses. The

⁷⁷ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 31. Treuer, *The Assassination of Hole In The Day*, 31.

⁷⁸ Densmore, *Chippewa Customs*, 132.

⁷⁹ Erik M. Redix, *The Murder of Joe White: Ojibwe Leadership and Colonialism in Wisconsin* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2014), 15.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 15.

long journeys required for these attacks often saw members fall away until there were too few to stage the attack.⁸¹

War parties also protected and increased access to vital environmental resources. Population growth, poor harvests, and migrating game patterns often deprived a community access to environmental resources.⁸² War parties undertook raiding missions to disrupt and destroy enemy crops and push villages from resource rich territories. The push and pull between American Indian groups over the environmental resources of the western Great Lakes region became the visible embodiment of how the Indigenous borderlands operated. Throughout the eighteenth century, the western Ojibwe living at La Pointe gradually pushed Dakota further west as they secured additional environmental resources needed because of their population expansion.⁸³

Dagwaagin: Fall and the Harvest

Fall in the western Great Lakes was a bountiful and vital time of preparation for the coming winter. Winter in the western Great Lakes could devastate a community caught unprepared, therefore the work of harvest was crucial to surviving the winter. In the southern region of the Great Lakes there were just enough, around 140 frost-free days, to produce a

⁸¹ Tanner, *The Falcon*, 114. Due to a variety of reasons, sometimes war parties did not meet their goal of engaging with the enemy. John Tanner's memoir mentions that this happened on occasion. In one instance he recalled, "I now rejoined the chief and told him if he was willing to go on himself, I would accompany him, if no other would. The other three men who remained, being his personal friends, were willing to have gone on if he had wished it, but he said he feared we could do very little, being so few in number, and if the Sioux should discover us, we could not fail to be but off. So the excursion was abandoned, and every man sought to return home by the most convenient and expeditious way, no longer paying the least regard to any thing except his own safety and comfort."

⁸² Treuer, *The Assassination of Hole In The Day*, 32.

⁸³ Ibid., 32. While Treuer argues that large-scale warfare between the Dakota and Ojibwe primarily occurred in the eighteenth century and that most warfare in the nineteenth century "consisted mostly of small raids back and forth." The act of going to is still important to investigate, especially regarding the reasons that Dakota and Ojibwe peoples went to war.

reliable crop of corn.⁸⁴ A rough diagonal line from Green Bay to Prairie Du Chien and up the Mississippi to the Twin Cities, then straight west represented the area suitable for corn production.⁸⁵ Above this line, the number of frost-free days decreased, forcing a greater reliance on large game hunting, fishing, and wild rice production.⁸⁶ Tribal nations such as the Potawatomi, Illinois, Miami, and Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) all relied on corn production as a staple in their diets; the Ojibwe and northern Dakota relied on wild rice.⁸⁷ The southern corn producers stored corn to help them survive through the winter, and used excess corn to trade with non-corn producing nations.⁸⁸

The Ojibwe who lived where the growing season and soil conditions were often too short or poor for corn to grow relied on harvests of wild rice.⁸⁹ Ojibwe villages in these northern climate zones were often located adjacent to lakes or rivers suitable for wild rice production.⁹⁰ The oral histories that explained the Anishinaabeg migration to the Great Lakes also highlight the importance of the land, and in particular wild rice, to the community. According to tradition,

⁸⁴ Tanner, *Great Lakes Atlas*, 19. See also recent scholarship has posited that corn grown in ridge field gardens may have grown corn in northern regions in Menominee County, Michigan. See Marla M. Buckmaster, "The Northern Limits of Ridge Field Agriculture: An Example from Menominee County," in *An Upper Great Lakes Archaeological Odyssey: Essays in honor of Charles E. Cleland* ed. By William A. Lovis. (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004), 30-42.

⁸⁵ Tanner, *Great Lakes Atlas*, 20 and 21. See Map 4 "Subsistence Patterns".

⁸⁶ Ibid., 20 and 21. See Map 4 "Subsistence Patterns".

⁸⁷ Ibid., 18 and 19.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 19.

⁸⁹ Surendiran, Gangadaran, et al. "Nutritional Constituents and Health Benefits of Wild Rice (*Zizania* Spp.)." *Nutrition reviews* 72.4 (2014): 228. *ProQuest*. Web. March 31, 2017. Other names used for wild rice have included "Indian rice, Indian oats, American rice, Canadian rice, Canadian oats, squaw rice, water oats, March oats, Foll Avoin, false oat, mad oat," among others. The early Jesuits missionaries called wild rice, wild oats or foll avoin. The meaning of Menomonee is the wild rice people. Early Frenchmen called the Menomonee Foll Avoin as a translation of the literal meaning of their name.

⁹⁰ Redix, *The Murder of Joe White*, 7.

during the migrations the people would know to stop “at the place where food grows on top of the water.”⁹¹ *Manoomin* (wild rice) maintained a sacred place in Anishinaabeg society as a gift of the manidoog to be protected.⁹² It was not the only gift of the manidoog in the Great Lakes, but it was very important one that was able to support a large number of peoples from many different Native communities.

Wild rice is a wild grass that grows at the edges of shallow, murky bottomed lakebeds.⁹³ It is harvested in autumn, typically around late August and early September during *Manoominike Giizis* (Wild Rice Moon). Wild rice was a key element of Ojibwe diet for its nutritional value and its ability to be stored for long periods of time in dry food caches without spoiling.⁹⁴ In a time without refrigeration, any food source that could be harvested, stored, and provided nutritional value was the key to surviving the often-harsh climate of the Great Lakes. Wild rice is a good source of protein, which is low in fat but high in vitamins, minerals, starch, and fiber, and contains antioxidant phytochemicals.⁹⁵

Wild rice grew along the shore of lakes and rivers in tall green stalks. Preparation for wild rice harvest started in the middle of summer when women reestablished their claims to rice fields by tying together small bundles of the stalks in sheaves. The borders of each woman’s rice

⁹¹ Mike Swan et al. “The Anishinaabe Migration Story,” *White Earth Nation (Gaa-waabaabiganikaag) History*, accessed March 31, 2017, downloadable <http://www.whiteearth.com/history.html>, Slide 10.

⁹² Miller, *Ogimaag*, 7. Basil Johnston, *The Manitou: The Supernatural World of the Ojibway*, (New York: Harper Perennial, 1996), xxi. The concept of *manidoog* or *manitou* is loosely translated to mean spirit, however as Miller explains the terms does not fit a one to one definition. Miller quotes Basil Johnston in describing the manitou as “spiritual, mystical, supernatural, godlike, or spiritlike, quiddity, essence... Manitou refers to realities other than the physical ones of rock, fire, water, air, wood, and flesh.” Densmore. *Chippewa Customs*. 124. Frances Densmore explains further that the Ojibwe also maintained a custom of “offering of first fruits” to the manidoo as thanks and “offered petitions for safety, health, and long life.”

⁹³ Redix, *The Murder of Joe White*, 7-8.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 7-8.

⁹⁵ Surendiran, Gangadaran, et al. "Nutritional Constituents and Health Benefits of Wild Rice (*Zizania Spp.*)." *Nutrition reviews* 72.4 (2014): 230. *ProQuest*. Web. March 31, 2017.

were indicated with stakes in the water.⁹⁶ Like sugar bush, men and women maintain separate jobs in the process. Men often “poled” canoes into the thick masses of wild rice stalks, while the women bent the tops of the stalks over the side of their canoes.⁹⁷ They used knocking sticks to tap the grains out of the stalks, which fell onto a blanket spread out along the bottom of the canoe. Much of the chaff from the stalks would also fall into the blanket, and it was necessary to remove this chaff by fanning it out on the blanket after the grain was separated from the husk in the canoe.⁹⁸ The rice was then dried and either parched “by smoke drying or scorching in kettles.”⁹⁹ To thresh the useable grain, the Ojibwe often used their feet or a stick to beat the rice inside of a bag.¹⁰⁰ It was relatively easy to store. Once dried, wild rice was placed into cordage bags that could be hung or kept in makaks and stored for use during the winter.¹⁰¹ The rice could also be stored covered with a deerskin blanket and buried in a hole in the ground.¹⁰² The Ojibwe often made so much extra rice that they were able to trade their excess rice to military and trading posts in exchange for goods.

⁹⁶ Densmore, *Chippewa Customs*, 128. Densmore wrote that the rice camps “corresponded somewhat to the maple-sugar camp of the early spring. Each group of relatives had its share of the rice field as it had its share of the sugar bush, and this right was never disputed.” See also Thomas Vennun, Jr., *Wild Rice and the Ojibway People* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1988), 82. Vennun Jr. noted that accounts of binding were “reported in nearly all the oldest sources. Of the several reasons for this activity, the principal one was to declare ownership.”

⁹⁷ Densmore, *Chippewa Customs*, 128.

⁹⁸ Juliette M. Kinzie, *Wau-Bun: The “Early Day” in the North-West* (Chicago: Derby and Jackson, 1856), 71. Henry R. Schoolcraft, *Narrative Journal of Travels: Through the Northwestern Region of the United States extending from Detroit to Great Chain of American Lakes to the Sources of the Mississippi River in the Year 1820* ed. Mentor L. Williams (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1992), 138.

⁹⁹ Vennun, Jr., *Wild Rice and the Ojibway People*, 81.

¹⁰⁰ C.C. Trowbridge Papers ca. 1823- ca. 1840 “C. C. Trowbridge Folder Response to Governor Lewis Cass’s questionnaire concerning the Chippewa, Ottawa, and Winnebago Indians” housed at the Bentley Historical Library, Ann Arbor, MI.

¹⁰¹ Kinzie, *Wau-Bun*, 71.

¹⁰² C.C. Trowbridge Papers ca. 1823- ca. 1840 “C. C. Trowbridge Folder Response to Governor Lewis Cass’s questionnaire concerning the Chippewa, Ottawa, and Winnebago Indians” housed at the Bentley Historical Library, Ann Arbor, MI.

The wild rice that remained in the village was a food source throughout the year. Henry Schoolcraft described the wild rice grain as “a long cylindrical shape, [which] becomes dark colored and hard as it dries. It contains more gluten than common rice, and is very nourishing. It is simply boiled in water until it assumes a pasty consistence, and it has an agreeable flavour.”¹⁰³ When combined with fish, wild berries and roots, maple sugar, and animal protein, wild rice was the foundation of northern peoples diets. It was used in soups with fish and stews with venison. It was easily carried and could be added to almost any dish. This environmental resource was worth fighting over, and in the western Great Lakes American Indian communities did fight over it.

When Ojibwe populations increased, communities needed to harvest more wild rice. They did so by harvesting from more lakes. Leech Lake and Mille Lacs were both good places for growing wild rice, and convenient because of the proximity to maple sugar forests. This combination, along with expanding hunting grounds, made the former territory of the Dakota a very appealing expansion site for Ojibwe communities. As will be discussed in chapter two, the fights and overlapping claims of authority in this region is key to understanding the power politics in the Indigenous borderlands. As Redix recently argued, “most battles Ojibwe people found in Wisconsin were over access to ricing areas.”¹⁰⁴ Battles between the Dakota and Ojibwe in western Minnesota, while often understood as battles over the fur trade and hunting access, were more likely due to lakes and streams available in the region where wild rice was harvested.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Schoolcraft, *Narrative Journal 1820*, 138.

¹⁰⁴ Redix, *The Murder of Joe White*, 7.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

Biboon: Winter

Each season brought with it new dangers, and with winter came an increased amount of sickness, starvation, and the dangers of freezing temperatures.¹⁰⁶ The large villages that harvested the autumn bounty broke apart once again into smaller winter hunting camps. While hunting camps were small, people continued to stay relatively close should another camp need assistance. Though war parties occurred less frequently in winter because of the difficulties of travel and access to food, thaws often provided instances for opportunistic strikes against enemy camps. Winter was also a time for storytelling. Elders instructed young men and women in everything from history to spiritual guidance through the use of stories.¹⁰⁷ These lessons preserved knowledge and encouraged community engagement. This winter knowledge, like food harvested in the fall, was stored for future use.

Winter forced people to focus on daily necessities. While food stores of wild rice, dried meat, and corn sustained people throughout the winter, hunting when possible provided the luxury of fresh meat. C.C. Trowbridge related that if food became scarce in winter, the Ojibwe would at times subsist on “small acorn or Beach nut.”¹⁰⁸ He also related that during extreme points of the season starvation could affect “whole lodges say 30 or 40 at a time, as has actually

¹⁰⁶ Johnston. *The Manitou*, 221-222, 224. An additional concern especially in winter were the Weendigo or Wendigo. Ojibwe elder Basil Johnston writes, “The Weendigo was a giant manitou in the form of a man or a woman, who towered five to eight times about the height of a tall man...was gaunt to the point of emaciation...a giant cannibal that fed only on human flesh, bones, blood... The Weendigo was born out of human susceptibility. It was also born out of the conditions that men and women had to live through in winter when it was sometimes doubtful that the little food they had would carry them through until spring. From the moment their supplies began to thin, the people faced starvation and death...and the Weendigo.”

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, xx.

¹⁰⁸ C.C. Trowbridge Papers ca. 1823- ca. 1840 “C. C. Trowbridge Folder Response to Governor Lewis Cass’s questionnaire concerning the Chippewa, Ottawa, and Winnebago Indians” housed at the Bentley Historical Library, Ann Arbor, MI.

taken place in the Fond du Lac Country of Lake Superior with a few years past.”¹⁰⁹ While fishing was particularly important during spring spawning and in late fall just before winter, the Ojibwe could obtain some fresh protein by spear fishing throughout the winter season. After cutting a hole in the ice, the fisher lay flat on their stomach facing the opening, while using a decoy to draw the fish close enough to the hole to spear it.¹¹⁰ The winter was also the season of trapping smaller mammals like beavers, minks, and rabbits. American Indians relied on furs for warmth long before Europeans found them fashionable. Increased European interest in fur clothing increased the frequency of Native American trapping. Trapping was an all year activity, though when European traders entered into the woods and streams of the western Great Lakes, trapping increasingly shifted to a winter activity. Winter furs were the most luxurious because the colder temperatures required the animal to grow a thicker coat for insulation. During winter, furbearing animals’ pelts made the highest quality protection for Indians and European traders.

As prized as these furs were, trapping in winter was a dangerous occupation. In order to take a beaver pelt, a hunter needed to float into freezing water to break up the beaver’s hut.¹¹¹ A hunter who lost his footing and fell into the water without a partner could freeze to death in minutes. Hunters often needed to travel long distances from their villages as the season worn on and the surrounding areas became trapped out. Hunters encountered enemies with more frequency during the early nineteenth century, leading to greater numbers of violent clashes over hunting territory. From 1790 onwards, game supply had depleted rapidly in northwestern

¹⁰⁹ C.C. Trowbridge Papers ca. 1823- ca. 1840 “C. C. Trowbridge Folder Response to Governor Lewis Cass’s questionnaire concerning the Chippewa, Ottawa, and Winnebago Indians” housed at the Bentley Historical Library, Ann Arbor, MI.

¹¹⁰ Densmore, *Chippewa Customs*, 126.

¹¹¹ “The Beaver and other Pelts,” *McGill University Digital Library*, accessed <http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/nwc/history/01.htm>.

Wisconsin, and the Dakota-Ojibwa borderland had become a refuge for animals because the danger of violence kept hunters away.¹¹² The early 1800s saw an increase of warfare between the Dakota and Ojibwe because the Ojibwe continued to send hunting parties further west to Dakota territory, eventually cementing their claims to the abundant wild rice region surrounding Sandy Lake.

Ojibwe Reaction to the 1799 Massacre

While the global fur trade was of importance to both the Ojibwe and Dakota, access to life giving environmental resources of the western Great Lakes region, including wild rice, maple sugar, and hunting grounds, was the primary motivation for war parties during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. The massacre of the Ojibwe in 1799 was not the first battle over the Sandy Lake, Leech Lake, and Mille Lacs territory. Throughout the eighteenth century, the Ojibwe staked claims to the hunting and gathering area surrounding the Dakota villages of Mille Lacs and Leech Lake. These had been ancient Dakota villages and were some of the Dakota's best hunting and wild rice grounds.¹¹³ Between 1768 and 1799, the Ojibwe and Dakota actively fought one another on the lands surrounding Leech Lake, Mille Lacs Lake, and further down the Mississippi River to present day Wabasha, Minnesota. This warfare endangered the lives of American citizens who entered the region prior to the 1825 treaty council.

¹¹² Hickerson, *Chippewa Indians II*, 90-91. "By the end the 1790's, however, the game supply in places up to that time accessible to the Chippewas of Area 357 had apparently become depleted after the exhaustive hunting of the past twenty years or more. In the descriptions of the Montreal Merchants, and those of Mackenzie and Dickson, it was repeatedly indicated that the richest game areas were on the Sioux-Chippewa frontiers, and that successful exploitation of them depended on peaceful relations between the two peoples...This is a major driver of peace efforts prior to the Prairie du Chien Treaty Council."

¹¹³ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 223. The Ojibwe leader was Waus-e-ko-gub-ig (Bright Forehead) who was Esh-ke-bug-e-coshe's (Flat Mouth) grandfather.

Warren's history of the Ojibwe people recounted that the 1799 attack on the Ojibwe sugar bush at Sandy Lake had been a serious blow dealt by the Dakota, it did not force the Ojibwe to evacuate their village. Instead, "they held their vantage ground against the Dakota with greater determination and tenacity," alongside the new warriors from Lake Superior who came to augment the Ojibwe around Sandy Lake.¹¹⁴ Even after the loss of so many of their kinsmen, the Ojibwe of Sandy Lake and Lake Superior did not abandon the region to the Dakota, but instead redoubled their efforts to secure safe access to the region's environmental resources.

Into this bloody confrontation stepped a new Ojibwe leader, Babiizigindibe (Curly Head), who took power around 1800.¹¹⁵ He was a member of the Crane clan and left from "the Great Lake" to set up a new village site "in dangerous proximity to the Dakota."¹¹⁶ As will be discussed in Chapters two and four, Ojibwe leaders from the mid-1700s through 1825 worked to deliver the promise of safety and security to their villages. Access to available environmental resources was at the center of that mission and deeply influenced village politics.

The delicate balance that connected Ojibwe village life to the cycle of seasons was linked to the bountiful wealth of the environmental resources in the western Great Lakes region. The western Great Lakes region was a land of plenty, but only if one knew where and how to look. The constant threat of starvation during winter focused village energies on hunting, gathering, and growing a diverse array of foods, while at the same time protecting vital environmental resource locations through complex social arrangements and occasional warfare. Leaders who were able to provide for their community worked to ensure the status quo maintained their

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 348.

¹¹⁵ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 344-348. Warren marks Babiizigindibe's rise sometime just after 1800. He was certainly a leader of the Lake Superior Ojibwe by 1820.

¹¹⁶ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 348. Warren uses the spelling Ba-be-sig-aun-dib-ay on page 47. I have used the spelling of Curly Head found in Treuer, *The Assassination of Hole In The Day*, 55.

influence, while younger leaders, especially those without strong hereditary claims worked to create greater kinship network ties to increase their own standing. The environment resources were so valuable that whole villages were willing to fight and die to maintain their access to this bounty. While the fur trade influenced Ojibwe efforts to secure hunting and trapping grounds further west into Dakota territory, the trade itself was not the only motivation for Ojibwe expansion. At the turn of the nineteenth century, overlapping Dakota and Ojibwe claims, a growing equality in access to firearms, and a competition for both American Indian and European allies forced a stalemate in the contest over this territory. Yet the goal of securing access to additional environmental resources remained unchanged, and village leaders who successfully accomplished this were held in high esteem in their villages. This created new contests for influence and power at treaty negotiations and in tribal councils. Ojibwe leaders like Curly Head, Broken Tooth, and Flat Mouth, along with the Dakota leader Wapahasha, understood that ties of kinship provided greater access to environmental resources, and gave them more authority in their own communities. The leaders used kin linkages to expand their territorial claims in the eighteen and nineteenth centuries. Many of their claims overlapped near the maple sugar bushes and wild rice lakes west of Lake Superior surrounding Leech Lake and Mille Lacs. These overlapping claims muddled the Indigenous borderlands of the western Great Lakes region. Though the Ojibwe and Dakota were often enemies fighting over similar resources, alliances strengthened through marriage ties presented families living at the far edges of Ojibwe and Dakota territory an opportunity to access more resources.

CHAPTER 2

OJIBWE AND DAKOTA RELATIONS: THE STRUGGLE FOR POWER AND INDENTITY IN THE INDIGENOUS BORDERLANDS

The story of the half-brothers Mamaangizide and Wapahasha demonstrates the complicated nature of kinship, community, and personal identity in the Indigenous borderlands of the western Great Lakes. This chapter reevaluates prevailing ideas in borderlands history that focus on the cultural boundaries that existed between Euro-American imperial powers and American Indian nations. Instead, exploring intertribal cultural boundaries through borderlands theory expands the tribal narrative in the Great Lakes. An examination of the complexity of the internal tribal power structures of the Ojibwe and Dakota helps to explain the actions taken by leaders of these two tribes at the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council.

Though nine different tribes were represented at the council, this research focuses on the relationship between the Dakota and Ojibwe as a case study for other intertribal relations in the region. The tribes' long cyclical history of warfare and peace, their dependency on wild rice in a northern climate, and their distinct cultures provide several points of comparison. These two tribes were also chosen as a case study because of the availability of primary sources that allow for comparing and contrasting of tribal actions.

While historians often highlight the French fur trade as a key motivation for attacking or defending territory in the Great Lakes, American Indian actions in the Indigenous borderlands can be better explained by kinship obligations and the necessity of performing essential life functions: obtaining food, gathering water, and defending their families from the hostile actions of enemies. The need to collect and store environmental resources, especially wild rice and maple sugar, was more critical for the survival of both Dakota and Ojibwe communities than a trade alliance with the French. This chapter further examines how kinship influenced who had

power, and how that power was used in both Dakota and Ojibwe communities. By recognizing the region as an Indigenous borderlands controlled by American Indians who were motivated by community concerns, this chapter does not suggest that non-Indian actions did not create consequences for Great Lakes Indians. Instead, it focuses on Indigenous competition and relationships in the region as the primary motivations for tribal action, rather than secondary concerns. Chapter one demonstrated the importance of seasonal movement within the Indigenous borderlands. Chapter two expands upon this by adding details of the social-cultural interactions between tribes. The environment of the region created its geographical borders and provided opportunity for humans to live well in the Great Lakes. The relationships between people present in the region created the nuanced political, economic, and social ties that made the Great Lakes an Indigenous borderland. Histories that solely focus on the larger systematic forces in an event, or on the individuals of great importance of the time, undervalue the smaller, daily decisions of individuals that actually shape the history of a moment and region.

Two Brothers

One hundred years before the attack on Ojibwe maple sugar gatherers by Dakota raiders at Sandy Lake, one family's alliance created a bridge of friendship between eastern Dakota villages and the western Lake Superior Ojibwe. During this time, intermarriage between members of the Ojibwe and Dakota bands was a common practice that reaffirmed the peaceful commitment between the villages. Around the year 1720, a young Ojibwe woman and a Dakota man met and married. From this union two sons were born, the eldest named Wapahasha.¹ Sadly

¹ The union between the families of Wapahasha and Mamaangizide is cited by several sources. Henry R. Schoolcraft's research into the lineage of his wife, Bamewawagezhikaquay (Jane Johnston Schoolcraft's) grandfather Waabojiig makes up a large portion of this material. Henry R. Schoolcraft's "Wabojeege, Or The White Fisher" is found in several of his publications including Henry Schoolcraft, *Oneóta, or, Characteristics of the red*

for the family, the marriage of Wapahasha's parents did not last long, as tensions along the Indigenous borderlands flared and the alliance between their tribes fell apart, forcing mixed Dakota-Ojibwe households to separate. During these forced separations, "instances were told where the parting between husband and wife was most grieving to behold."² Wapahasha retained his Dakota heritage and identity, and stayed with his father's village. Knowing her life would otherwise be in danger, Wapahasha's mother left to return to her kin living near Lake Superior at

race of America: from original notes and manuscripts (New York: Wiley & Putnam, 1845), 306-317 [e-book]. William Warren uses Schoolcraft's published works as a source and directly quotes Schoolcraft in his history of Waabojiig see William Warren, *History of the Ojibway People* (St. Paul: Borealis Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), 248, for Warren's citation of Schoolcraft. See pages 218 and 219 for his history of Mamaangizide (Warren uses the spelling Ma-mong-e-se-da or Big Feet in reference to Mamaangizide). Though Warren's lack of dates and use of questionable dates have been cited as problematic by some scholars his work continues to be indispensable for scholars of the region and time period for an indigenous perspective. Additionally, Schoolcraft's work on the Johnston family and Waabojiig is further utilized in Charles H. Chapman work on the Johnston family with several sections directly quoted from Schoolcraft's published sources. See Charles H. Chapman, "The Historic Johnston Family of the 'SOO.'" In *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society* Vol. XXXII (Lansing: Robert Smith Printing Company, 1903), 347 and 348. Chapman's edition list the first son born to the Ojibwe woman and Dakota man as the father of Wapahasha however he is likely making this reference in regards to his son Wapahasha II the Dakota leader present at the famous 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council. Warren writes that Wapahasha and Mamaangizide were half-brothers. Mark Diedrich who has conducted oral interviews with descendants of Wapahasha's family cites Warren and Joseph Nicollet records the child born to the Ojibwe and Dakota parents as Wapahsha I the half-brother of Mamaangizide. Mark Diedrich, *The Chiefs Wapahasha: Three Generations of Dakota Leadership, 1740-1876*. (Rochester, MN: Coyote Books, 2004.), 12. Schoolcraft placed Waabojiig, son of Mamaangizide, birth around 1747, which places his father's birth sometime around the late 1720s. This allows for Mamaangizide's half-brother, Wapahasha to be born in the late 17 teens or early 1720s. This matches the timeframe for peace between the Dakota and Ojibwe who did not break into open warfare until around 1737. Schoolcraft relates that he had heard stories of Wabojieeg, Mamaangizide's son and had made inquiries. He found a living sister of Waabojiig and two of his children a son and daughter who were middle aged by the time of Schoolcraft's interview. Schoolcraft and Warren are not the only two sources who highlight the Dakota-Ojibwe peace in the western Great Lakes. Claude Charles Le Roy, Bacqueville de la Potherie recorded that a Dakota and Ojibwe alliance was solidified in the region and that "they [Nadouaissieux (Dakota)] made a treaty of peace with the later [Sauteurs (Ojibwe)] by which they were mutually bound to give their daughters in marriage on both sides. That was a strong bond for the maintenance of entire harmony." Claude Charles Le Roy, Bacqueville de la Potherie, *History of the Savage Peoples who are allies of New France* [from his *Histoire de l'Amérique septentrionale* (Paris, 1753), tome ii and iv]. in *The Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley and Region of the Great Lakes* Vol. I ed. Emma Helen Blair (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company 1911), 279.

² William Warren, *History of the Ojibway People* (St. Paul: Borealis Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), 171.

Shagwaamikong.³ After her return, she married an Ojibwe man from the Reindeer doodem.⁴

Figure 7: Jacob Jurss, “Genealogical Chart of Wapahsha and Mamaangizide.”

³ Warren, *History of the Ojibway*, 48. See also Michael Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations: How the Native New World Shaped Early North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 65. Warren uses an older Ojibwe spelling of Shaug-a-waum-ik-ong while Michael Witgen uses the modern double vowel system forming Shagwaamikong. Both spellings refer to La Pointe that Witgen suggests comes from a French description, “La Pointe du Chequamegon.” La Pointe referred to a small peninsula that stretched across the top of a bay at the southwest end of Gichigamiing. *Chequamegon* or *Shagwaamikong* was an Anishinaabe place name that meant “soft beaver dam.” Witgen’s explanation linked the place name and a story of Nanabozho who had turned himself into a human-sized beaver at the place.

Together they had a son named Mamaangizide, and as he grew he earned a reputation as a leader of the western Lake Superior Ojibwe.⁵

Mamaangizide was renowned for his hunting skills, and often extended his hunting expeditions deep into Dakota territory. This was especially dangerous because following the breakup of the Dakota-Ojibwe alliance, renewed tensions in the region saw a drastic increase in violence between the historic rival tribes. The tensions between the Dakota and Ojibwe created a corridor where hunters from both bands avoided going because of the great risk of attack. In this narrow geographic space, the animal population rebounded and created a rich hunting region.⁶ Enticed by the opportunity to find plentiful game, Mamaangizide led a small group of “his near relatives, amounting usually to 20 persons, exclusive of children,”⁷ and embarked to the hunting grounds “near the borders of the Dakota country, in the midland district lying between the Mississippi and Lake Superior.”⁸ This region was the geographical center of the Indigenous borderlands.

⁵ Warren, *History of the Ojibway*, 52, 195, 218, 219, 243. See these pages for brief stories of Ma-mong-e-se-da and his son Waub-o-jeeg. Warren’s spelling of Ma-mong-e-se-da fluctuated throughout his work. His most common spelling was Ma-mong-e-se-da, but also spelled the name as Ma-moug-e-se-do and occasionally used the English equivalent of Big Foot. On 248 he relates a story of the family copied down by Henry Schoolcraft. Page 219 and 220 relate the stories of Ma-mong-e-se-da and his connection to the Dakota. Henry Schoolcraft also used different spellings of the names Ma-mong-azida and Waabojeeg as seen in “Autobiographical Letters of the Late John Johnston, Esq., of the Falls of St. May’s, Michigan 1844,” in Chapman, *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society Vol. XXXII*, 347 and 348. I have standardized the spellings to Waabojiig, the same as Michael Witgen uses in his work and Mamaagizide which more closely reflects the contemporary Minnesota double vowel system of writing. When quoting sources I have maintained the source’s spellings.

⁶ Gary Clayton Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind: Dakota-White Relations in the Upper Mississippi Valley, 1650-1862* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 106 and 107. Anderson posits that warfare between tribes allowed animal populations to rebound. “The steady competition produced dramatic ecological changes, as staple animals declined in number. Major Stephen H. Long, whose second expedition toured the northwest in 1823, took special note of the lack of game along the river valleys.”

⁷ Chapman, *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society Vol. XXXII*, 348.

⁸ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 219. Robert Michael Morrissey, “The Power of the Ecotone: Bison, Slavery, and the Rise and Fall of the Grand Village of the Kaskaskia,” in *The Journal of American History* 102, no. 3 (2015): 668. The term ecotone is borrowed from the field of field biology and used by Robert Morrissey to describe transitional geography between flora and fauna. Morrissey’s article is focused on the southern sections of the western Great Lakes on the upper Illinois Valley.

Though Mamaangizide had hunted far from his main village before, this time the risk did not pay off. While the small hunting party made preparations for their hunt, Dakota warriors discovered and fired on the party. One of the Ojibwe was wounded in the second volley.⁹ The situation appeared desperate to Mamaangizide, and he called out in Dakota asking if his half-brother Wapahasha was with the Dakota party.¹⁰ The Dakota paused their attack. After a long moment, Wapahasha stepped out from the tree line to meet with his Ojibwe half-brother, Mamaangizide, stopping the fighting between the two parties.¹¹ The half-brothers shared the same Ojibwe mother, yet their individual identities stemmed from the community in which they were raised. Dakota and Ojibwe village and kinship structures differed greatly from each other. Each man likely understood the concept of kin and obligation to kin differently, yet their shared maternal connection was strong enough to stop this particular skirmish.

An individual's connection to a large community was one of the keys to survival in the region, but each community was a collection of individual person who had agreed to band together.¹² The Ojibwe and Dakota differed in how these practices functioned, yet an individual's need for community was the same for both tribes. While modern identity is made up of a web of affiliations, the nation-state is often the primary lens through which people understand themselves and others. In the Indigenous borderlands, nation-state identity was non-existent, but that did not mean that there were not firm boundaries of identity that bonded some

⁹ Chapman, *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society Vol. XXXII*, 348.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 348.

¹¹ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 220.

¹² Nicolas Perrot. "Memoir on the Manners, Customs, and Religion of the Savages of North America," in *The Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley and Region of the Great Lakes* ed. Emma Helen Blair (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1911), 145-146, footnote 112. Jules Tailhan explains "The greatest punishment that could be inflicted on the guilty person was, not to defend him, and to allow those whom he had injured freedom to take vengeance on him at their own risk and peril."

peoples together while separating others. Family kinship and village ties created these strong bonds and were centers of identity, as well as obligation. On certain occasions, like the meeting of Mamaangizide and Wapahasha, family ties could bridge the gap between cultures. Cross-cultural exchange was not limited to that between Euro-Americans and American Indians, but where American Indians tribes lived in close proximity it occurred frequently between tribal groups.

Mamaangizide's and Wapahasha's family bond was complicated by their social-cultural identities as Ojibwe and Dakota men. Their mixed-identity was not unique; so many children were born to parents of Ojibwe-Dakota marriages that a new Ojibwe doodem was constructed for these children.¹³ Wapahasha's and Mamaangizide's ancestral lineage represented a physical manifestation of the exchanges that occurred in the Indigenous borderlands as a result of the Ojibwe and Dakota peace accords exchanged culture through grand ceremonies, like the Covering of the Dead, and everyday occurrences, like marriage, birth, warfare, and death. This joining of cultures occurred, in part, to ensure the peaceful access and utilization of the environmental resources of the region.¹⁴ Practices used between the Ojibwe and Dakota to incorporate each other into the community were adapted to incorporate French fur traders and later British and American government officials. However, these practices had their roots in the cross-cultural interactions between tribes.

¹³ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 165. Warren writes that the Wolf doodem was numerous at St. Croix and Mille Lac because Wolf clan members were descendents of mixed Dakota-Ojibwe marriages.

¹⁴ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 29-34. Witgen's discussion of the Feast of the Dead argues that the Dakota and Anishinaabeg came together in order to solidify a peace with each other by taking one another as relatives. He notes that Harold Hickerson, "The Feast of the Dead Among the Seventeenth Century Algonkins of the Upper Great Lakes," *American Anthropologist* 62, no. 1, and Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1991), 102-104 both highlight the central importance to peaceful negotiations that ceremonies like the Feast of the Dead served.

Politically, neither Ojibwe nor Dakota villages operated like eighteenth-century nation-states with omnipotent rulers nor central councils able to compel subjects or citizens to follow laws, regulate trade, and conduct war within their communities.¹⁵ While Ojibwe and Dakota communities moved seasonally from larger summer villages to smaller winter hunting camps, the structure within these societies differed.¹⁶ Ojibwe societal connections were based on patrilineal doodems or clans. The eastern Dakota did not maintain patrilineal clan descendancy, instead relying on the village as the central organizing feature of their society. The two cultures shared a rejection of an omnipotent ruler or central council that could compel citizens to follow laws, regulate trade, or conduct war.

Ojibwe Relationships

While there has been debate between scholars regarding the role and origin of the doodem in Ojibwe society, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century in western Wisconsin and eastern Minnesota, Ojibwe villages held a wide variety of doodems.¹⁷ Doodems

¹⁵ Nicolas Perrot, "Memoir on the Manners, Customs, and Religion of the Savages of North America." In *The Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley and Region of the Great Lakes* ed. Emma Helen Blair (Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1911), 145-146. Cary Miller, *Ojimaag: Anishinaabeg Leadership, 1760-1845* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 3-6. Miller explains that the "acephalous political systems" given by anthropologists does not mean Ojibwe power systems were "weak" instead argues the flexibility was a strength.

¹⁶ See Chapter 1 of dissertation

¹⁷ See Cary Miller, *Ojimaag: Anishinaabeg Leadership, 1760-1845*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 33, 35- 39. Anton Treuer. *The Assassination of Hole In The Day* (St. Paul: Borealis Book imprint of the Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2011), 15-23. Erik Redix, *The Murder of Joe White: Ojibwe Leadership and Colonialism in Wisconsin*, (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2014), 4. Edward Benton-Banai, *The Mishomis Book: The Voice of the Ojibway*, (Hayward, WI: Indian Country Communications Inc., 1988), 75. Theresa Schenck, *Voice of the Crane Echoes Afar: The Sociopolitical Organization of the Lake Superior Ojibwa, 1640-1855*, (New York: Garland Publishers, 1997). Warren, Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 35, 41-45. Basil Johnston, *The Manitous: The Spiritual World of the Ojibway*, (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1995), xvi-xvii. Research on the Ojibwe doodem system has accumulated greatly, especially in recent years. Scholars have debated whether doodem represented a personal spiritual protector, signified family connection, where tied to specific villages, or maintained specific roles in society. My understanding of where the doodems originated comes from nineteenth century Ojibwe scholar William Warren and twentieth-century Ojibwe elder Basil Johnston. Edward Benton-Banai explained that each doodem had a specific role to play in society. The original seven doodem included

helped to organize life and became central to how Ojibwe society organized itself. The Ojibwe translations for heart, village, and clan were ode, oodena, and doodem. These terms each contain the morpheme “de,” which is translated as “heart” or “center.”¹⁸ This shared morpheme between a person’s heart, their village, and their clan demonstrated the centrality of kinship to Ojibwe life.

Doodems were not static conceptions. Warren, writing in the nineteenth century, demonstrated that the concept of doodem shifted and adjusted as daily life required. From the original five clans sprouted more than twenty different doodem. Ritual adaptation, the natural death of a family doodem, and intertribal marriage all shifted how the doodem system operated.¹⁹ While some scholars believe that at the very beginning of the clan system the Ojibwe may have married cross cousins, by the eighteenth and nineteenth century, marriage within the same doodem was strictly forbidden, similar to contemporary taboos regarding incest.²⁰ Warren’s history explained that long ago members of a certain doodem had engaged in the practice of

Crane and Look as chieftainships, Fish as intellectuals, Bear as policy makers, Martin as warriors, Deer as gentle people, and Bird as spiritual leaders. Theresa M. Schenck devoted several chapters to analyzing the structure of Ojibwa society based on doodem. From her sources, she concluded that originally the term came from the word for village and that each doodem was a separate family village. Later on in the nineteenth century some western Ojibwa village merged on the violent frontier between the Dakota and Ojibwe forming larger composite villages each with its own chief. Cary Miller agreed with Schenck analyze that doodemag served as markers of identity, but also connected that marker with the oral tradition that Warren related. Miller further explained that while some anthropologists including Schenck argued that larger multi-doodmag villages only came into being post-contact, Miller explains in her footnote 51 from page 33 that it was unlikely there were not multi-doodmag villages prior to contact. Anton Treuer’s engagement on the debate began with an analysis of the term doodem by breaking down the word’s meaning into parts. He followed with oral history interviews and used William Warren’s and Edward Benton-Banai’s work to further demonstrate the place of doodems in Ojibwe society. Eric Redix also concurs with Miller and Treuer arguing that doodem were inherited from the father and were “an integral part of the fabric of Ojibwe society, most significantly in kinship.” It must also be noted that doodems were not a static institution and their meanings, role, and place in society continually changed and adapted based on the circumstances that confronted the Ojibwe.

¹⁸ Treuer, *The Assassination of Hole In The Day*, 15.

¹⁹ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 41-53. Warren discusses the division of the doodems, referred to as totems, in Chapter II.

²⁰ Schenck, “*The Voice of the Crane Echoes Afar*,” 33.

marrying within their doodem, despite the taboo. Because of this the doodem had been destroyed.²¹ Some Ojibwe bands forbid the marriages of those in the same doodem, even if they belonged to separate tribes, due to the belief that they were relatives through their shared doodem.²²

Because of the strict prohibition of marrying within one's clan, villages were made up of at least two different doodems.²³ The relationships between band members were tied in kinship through either consanguinity or affinity.²⁴ Heidi Bohaker wrote that

In this cultural tradition, people inherited their *nindoodemag* identities from their fathers; they conceived of themselves as related to and having kin obligations toward those who shared the same other-than-human progenitor being. Evidence from a wide range of sources, including oral traditions, iconography, linguistics, and material culture, all speak to the importance of these networks in Anishinaabe social and political life. *Nindoodemag* shaped marriage and alliance patterns and facilitated long-distance travel; access to community resources was also negotiated through these networks. Sources dating from the seventeenth century suggest that in this earlier period and likely before contact, *nindoodemag* operated as an important component of Anishinaabe collective identities, fulfilling similar social and political functions.²⁵

²¹ In a report made for Governor Lewis Cass, C. C. Trowbridge wrote, "Those of the same mark never intermarry our with the others as all of the same mark consider themselves as Brothers and sister" C. C. Trowbridge response to Governor Lewis Cass' questionnaire concerning the Chippewa, Ottawa, and Winnebago Indians Box 1, C. C. Trowbridge Papers ca. 1823-1840, Bentley Historical Library University of Michigan (originals examined). See also Warren, *The History of the Ojibway People*, 35. Warren noted, "The Totem descends invariably in the male line, and inter-marriages never take place between persons of the same symbol or family, even, should they belong to different and distinct tribes, as they consider one another related by the closest ties of blood and call one another by the nearest terms of consanguinity."

²² Redix, *The Murder of Joe White*, 4.

²³ Schenck, "*The Voice of the Crane Echoes Afar*," 33. See also Treuer, *The Assassination of Hole In The Day*, 16. Treuer agrees that there must be at least two doodem in a village, "If married couples and families lived in a village, there had to be at least two clans there; typically there were five or more."

²⁴ Schenck, "*The Voice of the Crane Echoes Afar*," 33.

²⁵ Heidi Bohaker, "'Nindoodemag': The Significance of Algonquian Kinship Networks in the Eastern Great Lakes Region, 1600-1701," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, Vol. 63, No. 1 (Jan., 2006), 26-29.

Each individual's identity was tied to the greater communal network of the doodem. This network gave structure to the Ojibwe society, allowing the maintenance of kinship and community ties across vast distances.

Ojibwe Power, Manidoog, and the Spiritual World

In eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Ojibwe society, the spiritual and secular worlds were intimately linked.²⁶ The Ojibwe *manidoog* and the Dakota *wakan* were central concepts in each society's spiritual life. The Ojibwe concept of manidoo remains difficult to translate into English terms. Early Jesuit missionaries often conflated a belief in manidoo with devil worship, and mistakenly translated manidoo or manitou as "devil," or less sinisterly, "spirit." Ojibwe elder and scholar Basil Johnston argued that translations of the term manitou or manidoo as "spirit" did not fully encompass the meaning of the word. Depending on how the term was used, it could invoke "property, essence, transcendental, mystical, muse, patron, and divine."²⁷ Early Jesuits often translated their concept of God as Gijie-manidoo or Gitchi-manidoo, meaning Kind Spirit or Great Spirit. Ojibwe people today often use these translations to indicate a great creator, others use Mide Manidoo to mean the Grand Medicine Spirit as the creator spirit from which everything came.²⁸

²⁶ Richard G. Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar: The Life of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft*. (Mount Pleasant: Clarke Historical Library, 1987), 97-98, 110. For many Europeans and white Americans of the eighteenth and nineteenth century, this was true as well. Henry R. Schoolcraft religious affiliation grew stronger following the 1823-24 winter and his religious instruction from Rev. Robert Laird.

²⁷ Basil Johnston, *The Manitous: The Spiritual World of the Ojibway*. (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995), 2. See also Miller. *Ogimaag*, 7.

²⁸ Frances Densmore, *Chippewa Customs*. (St. Paul: Borealis Book Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1979), 87. Densmore writes, "Gagewin did not use the term 'Gijie'manido' ('kind spirit'), which has been used by missionaries to denominate God. None of the informants used the term 'Gitchi manido' ('great spirit'). Two informants said that the highest conception of the Midewiwin was of a deity called Mide manido (Grand Medicine spirit). Subordinate to this were four manido, one at each of the cardinal points, and a multitude of lesser manido who assumed the forms of animals."

Through bonds of kinship, the gifts of the manidoog were passed from one generation to the next. Upon the birth of a child, the family gave gifts to an elder who, through the power of dreams, determined the child's name. This ceremony tied the elder to the child and transferred some of the power of the manidoo that aided the elder in naming the child to the newborn.²⁹ This bond was important, because it reflected the daily need of individuals to seek aid from the greater community in order to survive in the northern climate of the Great Lakes.

The concept of manidoo was essential to an individual because it was interwoven throughout daily Ojibwe community life. Power and kinship within Ojibwe relations mimicked the interactions between the manidoog and humans. Historian Cary Miller argued that the example of the manidoog forced Ojibwe into a paradox, "in which individuals aspired to independence but considered it achievable only through the establishment of the widest possible network of mutual obligations with both human and manidoo partners."³⁰ The paradox of independence created the ties of mutual obligation necessary to survive, as well as laid the foundation for societal power structure. The highest ideal an individual could achieve was the ability to be self-sufficient, and yet only by constructing an extensive kinship network relying on the intercessions of humans, animals, plants, and manidoog could a person survive in the region.

For the Ojibwe, living in a self-sufficient manner equated to holding power.³¹ Mary Black argued that "the importance of individual autonomy in Ojibwa culture can hardly be

²⁹ Miller, *Ogimaag*. 25.

³⁰ Ibid., 19.

³¹ Ibid., Chapter 1. Cary Miller's research on ogimaag and the manidoo has greatly influenced my conception of how power operated in the western Great Lakes region. It helped me to develop the concept of how indigenous borderlands operated in the early nineteenth century. See also Mary B. Black, "Ojibwa Power Belief System," in *The Anthropology of Power: Ethnographic Studies from Asia, Oceania, and the New World* ed. Raymond D. Fogelson and Richard N. Adams (New York: Academic Press, 1977), 141-151.

overemphasized.”³² Those beings that did not rely on other beings to survive were more powerful than those who needed to beg for their existence. The Ojibwe relied on each other, but ultimately they relied on the sympathy of the manidoo and other powerful beings to aid them in survival. “In the Ojibwe world the clearest demonstration of power was lack of dependence for food, safety, health, and material goods.”³³ As humans, Ojibwe individuals were among the weakest forms of creation. Plants who could make their own food without the help of humans or animals were less dependent. Power thus stemmed from the relationship between the self and the environment—the people, animals, plants, and elemental forces in that space.³⁴

Power flowed from the manidoog to humans. Through this relationship, an Ojibwe person acted as a “conduit[] for the power of the manidoog.”³⁵ Rather than holding power, the manidoog worked through an Ojibwe person, typically an elder, to transfer their power to others in the community.³⁶ Humans were at the mercy of the manidoog for the basic necessities of life. For the Ojibwe, Gitchi-manidoo served as the greatest symbol of unselfishness, and acted as a model for one’s life.³⁷ All Ojibwe relationships modeled themselves on the relationship between the manidoog and human beings. Ojibwe who made themselves appear worthy of pity, either through ritual practices of starvation or demonstrating their lack of power, might receive power from the manidoog.³⁸ Traditional stories frequently recounted tales of Ojibwe granted special

³² Black, “Ojibwa Power Belief System,” 150.

³³ Miller, *Ogimaag*, 23.

³⁴ Black, “Ojibwa Power Belief System,” 147.

³⁵ Miller, *Ogimaag*, 25.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 25.

³⁷ Johnston, *The Manitous*, 4.

³⁸ Miller, *Ogimaag*, 25

powers, such as invisibility, the ability to transform into animals, or the ability to travel vast distances quickly in dire circumstances.³⁹ These “supernatural” powers relegate many of these tales as “fiction” to modern western readers, however for the Ojibwe, gifts of the manidoog demonstrate their ability to accomplish tasks that an individual could not do without spiritual help of the manidoog.⁴⁰ Mary Black made the comparison between these gifts with how “a father might give his son the tools and knowledge of his trade so that he would be able to get on alone in future.”⁴¹ These gifts were frequently of a nature that allowed the individual to become more self-sufficient, “on his own.”⁴² Another key gift-giver in Ojibwe society were animals. Animals did not need humans to survive, but humans relied on animal protein for sustenance and fur for warmth and shelter. Because animals could survive in the world without humans, they were considered to be more powerful beings, and like plants, sacrificed themselves as gifts to weaker human beings.

Human gift giving was based on the models learned from the manidoog, animals, and plants, and through gift exchanges, ties of obligation were created and strengthened. In times of scarcity the giver could ask for goods or help in return. More powerful members of society were able to provide for more people, increasing both their network of obligation and their network of aid. Power, and the following ability to become self-sufficient, could grow only by the extension

³⁹ Warren, *History of the Ojibway Peoples*, 387-389. Warren relates the story of an Ojibwe war-leader named Black Dog who after becoming surrounded by Dakota enemies had “miraculously escaped” which he explained in the “most supernatural account” of the events. James H. Lockwood, “Early Times and Events in Wisconsin” in *Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin* edited by Lyman Copeland Draper, LL. D. Vol. II Under the editorial direction of Reuben Gold Thwaites Wisconsin Historical Society Madison Published by the Society 1903, 145. “The Chippewas finding that they were discovered, and that their fate was sealed, send one of their number home to carry tidings of their probable destruction.”

⁴⁰ Black, “Ojibwa Power Belief System,” 149.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 149.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 149.

of network connections.⁴³ This meant building connections to the spiritual world through the *midwin* as well as solidifying connections to powerful mide practitioners in order to be able to call on the world of the manidoog for help in times of need.⁴⁴ These network connections also required linking between other tribal and village leaders that maintained access to the region's vital environmental resources. Through these two networks, the spiritual and the physical, a community received the essential environmental resource gifts of wild rice lakes, maple sugar groves, and hunting grounds.

The gifts given by the manidoog were not just physical, but also formed building blocks of the Ojibwe doodem system itself, an organizing center of Ojibwe kinship relations. In his history of the Ojibwe people, William Warren told the story of six beings that came from sea while the world was still new.⁴⁵ One of these powerful beings wanted desperately to look at the Anishinaabeg. It uncovered its eye and peered at one Anishinaabe man; the man fell dead instantly because of the power of the being, a manidoo. The other manidoog immediately banished the sixth, but they remained with the Anishinaabeg "and became a blessing to them."⁴⁶ Basil Johnston recounted a similar story of five manidoog that were sent to teach the Anishinaabeg five survival necessities: "life, guardianship, healing, leading, and teaching."⁴⁷ In Johnston's telling, after the manidoog returned to where they had come from, the Ojibwe organized themselves into family clans and adopted a symbol from each of the five manidoog.⁴⁸

⁴³ Ibid., 149.

⁴⁴ Miller, *Ogimaag*, 27-29.

⁴⁵ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 43-44.

⁴⁶ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 44.

⁴⁷ Johnston, *The Manitous*, xvi.

⁴⁸ Johnston, *The Manitous*, xvi; Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 44. Johnston and Warren both mention that five manidoog arrived to teach the Ojibwe how to best live. Edward Benton-Banai, *The Mishomis*

From the original families sprang up to twenty more doodem, including merman, reindeer, eagle, sturgeon, and wolf.⁴⁹ During the Ojibwe migration to the Great Lakes, the doodem families spread themselves throughout the region, each passing patrilineally to the next generation of children.⁵⁰

Like doodems, Ojibwe village leadership often passed from a father to a son, especially if the son appeared to possess many of the same attributes that his father did. Though rare for the Ojibwe, sons sometimes adapted the name of their father as a way of continuing and reminding the community of his lineage's influence.⁵¹ This often caused power to be concentrated in a single doodem. Many oral traditions link specific doodem with particular positions within the village. As one example, the *ajijaak* (crane) doodem often held a leadership and speaking position within the village. Members of the loon doodem also claimed a chiefly or royal line within villages. Tribal members suggested this because the color around the neck of the loon resembled the "royal megis, or wampum" that Ojibwe chiefs sometimes wore.⁵² At times, there was tension between members of the crane and loon doodems, in part because the crane

Book, 74. Edward Benton-Banai writes that there were originally seven doodem the Crane, Loon, Fish, Bear, Martin, Deer, and Bird.

⁴⁹ Warren, *The History of the Ojibways*, 44-45.

⁵⁰ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 45. "The old men of the Ojibways whom I have particularly questioned on this subject, affirm that all these different badges are only subdivisions of the five great original totems of the An-ish-in-aub-ag, who have assumed separate minor badges, without losing sight or remembrance of the main stock or family to which they belong."

⁵¹ Treuer, *The Assassination of Hole In The Day*, 83, 85. "Although Bagone-giizhig's assumption of his father's name was a break with Ojibwe custom, a few other well-known Ojibwe leaders, including Eshkibagikoonzh and Waabojiig, did the same thing."

⁵² Warren, *History of the Ojibwe People*, 48.

members believed the French had unjustifiably recognized members of the loons doodem as chiefs at Quebec.⁵³

Treaty records from the nineteenth century include Ojibwe leaders from many different doodem. This variety suggests that doodem were not static forms of social organization. Hereditary leaders were given respect, and often reverence, but the community ultimately followed and promoted those leaders who were able to deliver results.⁵⁴ The multitude of doodem present in treaty records also reveals the practices of the treaty commissioners. Rather than searching out recognized community leaders, treaty commissioners often called upon those Ojibwe that were agreeable to the United States goals to act as signatories.⁵⁵ By the nineteenth century, both internal and external forces were moving Ojibwe leadership out of the control of a single doodem and into the hands of individuals.

The flexibility of the doodem was a strength of social organization because it allowed for the adoption of outsiders into the community. As reflected in the story of Wapahasha and

⁵³ Ibid., 48.

⁵⁴ Rebecca Kugel, *To Be The Main Leaders of Our People: A History of Minnesota Ojibwe Politics, 1825-1898*, (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1998), 3-5. Leadership of Ojibwe communities, like doodems, has continued to be a contested concept. Rebecca Kugel explored several levels of Ojibwe leadership, but placed at the center of her argument the division in leadership methods between civil chiefs and military chiefs. Miller, *Ogimaag*, 4-19. Miller's assessment of Ojibwe leadership blurred the lines between civil, military, and religious leaders arguing the many leaders necessarily held several positions in Ojibwe village and that it was their "power" their strong network of physical and spiritual resources that was most important for Ojibwe leadership. Treuer, *The Assassination of Hole In The Day*, 21. Treuer directed stated that Kugel "perhaps oversimplifies a very complicated and rapidly changing nexus of relationship that transcended categories." and instead used the rise in power of Hole-In-The-Day to analyze Minnesota Ojibwe power throughout the nineteenth century. Redix, *The Murder of Joe White*, xxi. Redix builds further on the subject of Ojibwe leadership by tracing the history of the Lac Courte Oreilles band and how the colonialism of the United States affected the dynamically fluid process of Ojibwe sovereignty to the contemporary era.

⁵⁵ Charles E. Cleland *Rites of Conquest: The History and Culture of Michigan's Native Americans* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992), 160. Cleland discusses that the Americans believed they could appoint Ojibwe leaders. "Such commissions must have been a great joke among the Indians, who, of course, maintained their traditional mode of political leaders." In reference to Colonel Alexander McKee in 1796 trying to manipulate Ojibwe leadership structure he continued, "The fact that such blatant attempts were made to manipulate Indians and the way these attempts were made shows a gross misunderstanding on the part of both British and American military men and civil authorities of the principles upon which Indian society was organized."

Mamaangizide, intermarriage between Ojibwe and Dakota tribal members occurred, often during times of peace. To ensure the social organization was not disrupted, a new Ojibwe doodem, the wolf, was created for children of mixed Ojibwe-Dakota heritage.⁵⁶ At the time of Warren's writings, the wolf clan was a small clan that resided mainly between the St. Croix River and Mille Lac, in the heart of Ojibwe-Dakota borderlands.⁵⁷

Dakota Power, Wakan, and Spiritual Power

Ojibwe oral tradition tells the story of a great migration of the Ojibwe people from the eastern seaboard to the western Great Lakes. In contrast, oral tradition from the Oceti Sakowin (Sioux) tradition tells the story that the Oceti Sakowin had originated from a single encampment at Sacred Lake, known today as Mille Lacs.⁵⁸ Storytellers related that the earliest Dakota were tricked by "Iktomi (tricksters or Spider) and Anog Ité (Double Face Woman)" into emerging from their home and coming onto earth near Sacred Lake.⁵⁹ The people that originated at Sacred Lake expanded their territory each winter through the use of winter camps. These camps eventually broke apart, and became independent of the original council fire as their distance from Sacred Lake grew. Three divisions were formed: Dakota, Nakota, and Lakota, from which the seven council fires grew: Bdewakantunwan (Mdewakanton), Wahpetunwan (Wahpeton), Wahpekute, Sisseton (Sisseton), Hankunwan (Yankton), Hankunwanna (Yanktonai), and

⁵⁶ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 165.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 49.

⁵⁸ James R. Walker, *Lakota Society* ed. Raymond DeMallie (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 6.

⁵⁹ Walker, *Lakota Society*, 10.

Titunwan (Teton).⁶⁰ The divisions further distilled into smaller bands organized by camps or villages. The Dakota bands were mainly located along the eastern edge of the Oceti Sakowin nation in Minnesota and the eastern edge of North and South Dakota. The Nakota located centrally within the Dakota territory; eventually, the Assiniboiné broke away from the Nakota to form their own nation.⁶¹ The Lakota lived along the western edge of the Dakota territory.

Each camp within the Oceti Sakowin was led by a headman and like the Ojibwe, camp members had the option of whether or not they wanted to follow their village's leaders. If an individual was not satisfied with their leaders, they maintained the option of leaving and starting a new camp elsewhere.⁶² Depending on the number of camp members that left, a new band could be created or the leader of the previous band could be removed. Once a leader had followers, a council of elders and advisors was chosen to aid in the daily operations of the camp.⁶³ From this council an *akicita* was appointed to enforce the decisions and community standards made by the band's leaders. The *akicita* operated as a policeman, judge, jailer, and executioner, making individuals entrusted with the position powerful village members.⁶⁴

The Dakota did not inherit clans patrilineally like the Ojibwe. Instead, village identity was at the center of Dakota society. The editors of *Lakota Society* explain, [t]he best way to

⁶⁰ "Oceti Sakowin: The Seven Council Fires," *Minnesota Historical Society's The U.S.-Dakota War of 1862*, accessed March 31, 2017 <http://www.usdakotawar.org/history/dakota-homeland/oceti-%C5%A1akowi%C5%8B-seven-council-fires#>. This interactive history shows Oceti Sakowin and Dakota language information. For more on the split of the tribes and bands of the Oceti Sakowin see Raymond J. DeMallie "Kinship and Biology in Sioux Culture" in *North American Indian Anthropology Essays on Society and Culture* ed. Raymond J. DeMallie and Alfonso Ortiz (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994), 125, 130. Roy M. Meyer. *History of the Santee Sioux: United States Indian Policy on Trial* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), ix, and 20-21.

⁶¹ Edwin T. Denig, *The Assiniboiné* ed. J. N. B. Hewitt (Regina, University of Regina Canadian Plains Research Center, 2000), 1, 2.

⁶² Walker, *Lakota Society*, 24.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

visualize Lakota social groups as they existed on the ground is as parts of a dynamic process, not as a static classification.”⁶⁵ James Howard references Ruth Landes’ research in his writings on the importance of grouping by village for the Santee. Howard details Landes’ comparison between Dakota village orientation to the “individualized orientation of their neighbors, the Ojibwa.”⁶⁶ Landes attributes the centering of villages because of “the necessity for group cooperation in pursuing the bison, which the Dakota hunted and the Ojibwe did not.”⁶⁷ While many eastern Dakota relied on similar environmental resources as western Ojibwe like the stationary wild rice lakes, many Dakota communities did use bison hunting as another staple in their diet.

Like the Ojibwe, the spiritual world of the Dakota was necessarily integrated with the physical world.⁶⁸ Unlike the Ojibwe, Dakota spirituality was sharply divided into male and female roles. Men served as religious leaders. DeMallie noted that “[w]omen were important and essential participants in religious ceremonies but they were never the directors of them.”⁶⁹ Power in Dakota communities was linked to the spiritual world. The Dakota viewed themselves as a part of the greater natural world, rather than as something separate and distinct that needed to force nature into submission. The universe could neither be fully understood nor fully known.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 5.

⁶⁶ James H. Howard, “Some Further Thoughts on Eastern Dakota “Clans,”” *Ethnohistory*, 26, no. 2 (Spring, 1979), 135. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/481088>. Howard cited Ruth Landes, *The Mystic Lake Sioux. Sociology of the Mdewakanton Santee*. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968).

⁶⁷ Ibid., 135.

⁶⁸ See generally Raymond J. DeMallie and Robert H. Lavenda, “Wakan: Plains Siouan Concept of Power,” in *The Anthropology of Power* ed. Raymond D. Fogelson and Richard N. Adams. (New York: Academic Press, 1977), 154.

⁶⁹ Raymond J. DeMallie, “Male and Female in Traditional Lakota Culture” in *The Hidden Half: Studies of Plains Indian Women* ed. Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine. (Lanham: University Press of America, Inc., 1983), 240.

The difficulty in defining and describing manidoog corresponds to the Dakota's term for the similar, yet distinct concept, *wakan*. Loosely translated, *wakan* means "something that is hard to understand."⁷⁰ *Wakan* were divided into "good" and "evil" distinctions, and these distinctions offered a social commentary on the ideal operation of Dakota communities. Good *wakan* beings were organized closely together, with kinship ties mirroring those of the Dakota. However, bad *wakan* existed in a state of aloneness.⁷¹ Raymond DeMallie and Robert Lavenda wrote that this spiritual belief demonstrated that relationships between people were the most highly valued of all Dakota society.⁷²

A state of kinship existed between all kinds of beings, both human and non-human.⁷³ Kinship depended on relationships, and spirituality was central in all relationships. In the Dakota language, the word "to pray" could also mean "to address by kinship term."⁷⁴ Praying was seen as calling on a relationship for aid.⁷⁵ The Dakota prayed to the *wakan* to help them survive. The Dakota also sought aid through the use of a *hanblecya*, a type of vision or dream quest.⁷⁶ The individual performed a ritualistic fast and "might make himself pitiful in the eyes of the *wakan*

⁷⁰ Raymond J. DeMallie and Robert H. Lavenda, "Wakan: Plains Siouan Concept of Power," in *The Anthropology of Power* ed. Raymond D. Fogelson and Richard N. Adams. 154.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 154.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 154.

⁷³ DeMallie, "Kinship and Biology in Sioux Culture," 125. "For the Sioux, kinship provided what Deloria characterized as 'a scheme of life that worked' (1944:24). Far from a scholarly abstraction, in Sioux society kinship provided the driving force of everyday life." DeMallie argues that previous studies have focused too much attention "on a genealogical definition of relationship." Because a social structural and cultural pattern may differ from each other, DeMallie argues historians must separate these two practices. DeMallie, "Kinship and Biology in Sioux Culture," 141. "While Dakota kinship, like Ojibwe kinship, has been broken down along a genealogical definition of kinship this kind of study failed to understand cultural power that kinship ties contain."

⁷⁴ DeMallie and Lavenda, "Wakan," 156.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 156.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 157.

beings through self-inflicted hunger, thirst, and exhaustion.”⁷⁷ Dakota individuals hoped that the wakan beings would be moved to send their messenger, which often came in the form of an animal.⁷⁸

Scholars have explored how French traders and American Indian leaders used kinship ties to increase trade and secure peace, but have neglected the story of similar ties used between Native communities.⁷⁹ The Ojibwe and Dakota bands that shared a border maintained their societal uniqueness, even though they lived in close proximity, hunted and gathered similar animals and crops, and traded with the same Frenchmen. Yet, within this societal uniqueness intertwined kinship ties and intertribal relations. Tribes, villages, and individual relationships were not static, and individual personal identity thus became a shifting concept.⁸⁰

Spirituality, kinship, and power were branches of the same tree in the Indigenous borderlands for both the Ojibwe and Dakota. Native society in the region relied on networks of people tied to each through familiar bonds, and on the manidoog and wakan. In determining where someone belonged, both physically and spiritually, neither the Ojibwe nor the Dakota

⁷⁷ Ibid., 157.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 157.

⁷⁹ Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001). Scholars have demonstrated the importance of Native women to the fur trade. American Indian women through marriage were able to incorporate their husbands into their extended kinship networks. See Since the early 2000s historians have built upon this work, especially in studies of borderlands interactions between American Indians and Euro-Americans. Juliana Barr, *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands*. (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007). Erik M. Redix’s research has demonstrated how marriage between powerful American lumber interests and Ojibwe women benefited lumber baron’s access to timber. Redix, *The Murder of Joe White*. However, relations between American Indian tribes themselves marriages between tribes have received far less attention. The arguments in this chapter are important in addressing this gap.

⁸⁰ The modern concept of “blood quantum” is an example of the contemporary attempt by nation-state institutions to solidify a foreign and radicalized concept of identity. Tribal affiliation in the seventeenth and eighteenth century Great Lakes had little to do with blood and everything to do with the tribal community recognizing an individual as part of their community. For a brief history of the use of blood quantum by the United States, see Paul Spruhan, “A Legal History of Blood Quantum in Federal Indian Law to 1935.” *South Dakota Law Review*, Vol. 51, No. 1, 2006. Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=955032>.

relied solely on the idea of biological lineage. Instead, the tribes placed value on a person's language, their mannerisms, and their participation in community life. Those who were recognized as members of the community, and who could use their abilities and connections to provide for the community as a whole, were able to develop a higher-ranking status in society.

Origins of the 1679 Ojibwe-Dakota Alliance

The peace that allowed Wapahsha and Mamaangizide's parents to meet resulted from a series of discussions between Dakota and Ojibwe representatives held during the winter of 1678-79. The peace, which lasted more than fifty years, illustrates the complex intertribal relations operating in the region, well before the Americans conceived of the 1825 treaty council at Prairie du Chien. The prior conflict that existed between the Dakota and Ojibwe communities had resulted in a contested territory in which neither tribe hunted because of their fears of attack. In this region south of Lake Superior, the beaver population ballooned.⁸¹ A firm peace between Ojibwe and Dakota bands over this hunting territory, and beyond, was secured in 1679 at a council attended by the French fur trader Daniel Greysolon Sieur du Lhut. Du Lhut gave himself credit for the peace achieved at the council.⁸² He had been invited by the Ojibwe to join in the talks as a representative of the French traders, but he was not a key arbitrator in the talks.⁸³ Du

⁸¹ Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind*, 107. "Despite the utter exhaustion of game along the main river courses, large numbers of animals existed in the debated zones lying between the Sioux and the Chippewas."

⁸² Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 148. While Du Lhut gave himself credit, Witgen describes the behind scenes action of the Dakota and Ojibwe arguing that the peace talks were not held at large principal villages, but instead "at smaller encampments in their winter hunting territory..." Witgen further refutes Du Lhut's claims with the Frenchman La Salle's own writing "'There were many talks with the Nadouesieux,' according to La Salle, rather than the singular event described by Du Lhut".

⁸³ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 195-200. See also Harold Hickerson. "Ethnohistory of Chippewa of Lake Superior," *Chippewa Indians III* (New York: Garland Publishing INC, 1974), 16 and 17. Hickerson's description of the events gave "Duluth" credit for successfully bringing the "Sioux and Chippewas" together "in peace councils." Witgen. *Infinity of Nations*, 198. However, Witgen argues, "The hold that Du Lhut claimed to exercise over these people was clearly weak."

Lhut attended the peace discussions because he believed, along with trader Robert de La Salle, that peace between the Ojibwe and Dakota would result in hunting in the contested area, which would lead to more furs and a larger profit for the traders.⁸⁴ Because of what the French stood to gain from peace, the narrative has been dominated by historians pointing to hunting and trapping for furs as the primary motivation for peace.⁸⁵ Witgen argued that this dominant narrative excludes the Dakota motivations for peace, which extended beyond securing access to French goods.⁸⁶ Dakota leaders wanted a military alliance with local Ojibwe villages because this would ensure Dakota protection from any eastern threats.⁸⁷ The Dakota communities would then be able to focus on threats coming from elsewhere.

The borderlands that existed between the Dakota and Ojibwe did not exist in a vacuum; the presence of other tribal groups influenced the action and movement of the Dakota and Ojibwe. During the 1670s, the Dakota felt pressure from the north by the Cree and Assiniboiné, who intruded into Dakota hunting grounds and attacked Dakota villages.⁸⁸ To the south of the

⁸⁴ Edmund J. Danziger Jr. *The Chippewas of Lake Superior*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978), 28. Médart Chouart, Sieur des Groseilliers and brother Pierre-Esprit Radisson were two of the first French traders to arrive in the Dakota-Ojibwe borderlands in 1659. Both were unlicensed and when they returned the French governor of Quebec quickly confiscated their goods. However, the amount of furs they brought back enticed many other *coureurs des bois* to enter the borderlands. Daniel Greysolon le Sieur Du Lhut, a French military officer, arrived in the borderlands of the Dakota and Ojibwe as an unlicensed trader, charged with exploring the region from the French governor. His presence and relationship with the Ojibwe and Dakota created an opportunity for more *coureurs des bois* to flaunt French authority in the east and embark on their own trading missions. Theresa M. Schenck. *"The Voice of the Crane Echoes Afar": The Sociopolitical Organization of the Lake Superior Ojibwa, 1640-1855* (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1997), 49; Danziger. *The Chippewas of Lake Superior*, 28-29; Witgen, *Infinity of Nations*, 144-145, 147. René-Robert La Salle, a licensed French trader was concerned over Du Lhut and his connections with *coureurs des bois*, and was angered over what he perceived as a disruption of his trading network. Witgen, *Infinity of Nations*, 147.

⁸⁵ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 148.; Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind*, 32.

⁸⁶ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 149.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 149.

⁸⁸ Edwin T. Denig, *The Assiniboiné* ed. J. N. B. Hewitt (Regina, University of Regina Canadian Plains Research Center, 2000), 1, 2. Denig's research stemmed from a circular he received sometime around 1853 from Henry Rowe Schoolcraft sent in 1847. Throughout the early 1850s Denig recorded his ethnographic study of several tribes in the upper Missouri with specific reference to the Assiniboiné. Like Warren, Denig recorded that the

Dakota's stronghold in Mille Lacs were the Iowa, Meskwaki, and Sauk, who continued to stretch their hunting and planting range further north and west, into Dakota territory. The affiliated Green Bay tribes of the Meskwaki, Sauk, and their allies held close ties to the French, who were able to provide them with firearms and the incentive to expand their hunting grounds into Dakota territory.⁸⁹ A military alliance between the Dakota and Ojibwe ensured that the southern region of Lake Superior would remain relatively conflict free, and allow joint military actions against the Meskwaki to the south.⁹⁰ This military alliance thus strengthened the positions of both the Ojibwe and Dakota.

Lost in historical analysis of the politics of the 1679 alliance was the availability in the newly shared region of key food staples in the diets of both tribes. While hunting providing peltry for trade and meat for sustenance, wild rice was a daily staple that both the Ojibwe and Dakota depended on as a supplement to the region's short growing season for corn. Neither the Dakota nor the Ojibwe were dependent on French trade goods in 1679, so neither needed the

Assiniboine broke away from the eastern Dakota, though he lists the date at around 1760. The editors note that Jesuit missionaries recognized the Assiniboine far earlier, in the mid-1600s. Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 138. Warren also notes the separation of the Assiniboine and eastern Dakota based on story by Esh-ke-bug-e-coshe (Flat Mouth) who told Warren that two men fought over a woman one killed the other matter beyond usual length feud continued to occur group broke off went to live by Ke-nis-te-no (Cree) who had formerly been their enemies. The conflict split so deeply between the Assiniboine and Dakota that the Assiniboine preferred to make peace with the Cree and Plains Ojibwe.

⁸⁹ Richard White, *Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 11. White argues that between the 1640s and the 1660s Algonquian speaking refugees including the "Ottawas, Potawatomis, Fox, Sauks, Kickapoos, Miamis, Illinois, and many others" arrived on the western shore of Lake Michigan and clustered in villages like Green Bay. These "refugee centers" provided temporary relief from the "hammer" of the Iroquois (Haudenosaunee) and the "anvil" of the Sioux (Dakota) whose military exploits "shattered" Algonquian speaking peoples. However, this theory does not take into account the Anishinaabeg creation story that depicts both push factors of the Haudenosaunee conflict, but also the pull factor of the availability of sacred environment resources. Furthermore it does not explain the warfare undertaken by "refugee" tribes of Meskwaki-Sauk (Fox-Sac) against the Ojibwe and the eventual Ojibwe-Dakota alliance of 1679-1680.

⁹⁰ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 143-151.

French to survive in the region for trade purposes.⁹¹ While the trade provided beneficial materials, the combined force of the Dakota and Ojibwe could have forced the French from the region in a similar manner to how the newly allied Dakota-Ojibwe force pushed the Meskwaki to consolidate with the Sac during the Fox Wars in the early 1700s.⁹² Rather than a focus on increased hunting territory to provide furs to the French, the Ojibwe-Dakota alliance was more likely formed because of the unique nature of the environmental resources present in the region.⁹³ The alliance would allow Ojibwe-Dakota hunters more access to hunting territory, but this served as an additional benefit, rather than an essential aspect of the Ojibwe-Dakota peace and the ability to harvest wild rice, maple sugar, and animals for food without harassment from each other. Men in both the Ojibwe and Dakota bands were the designated hunters, often leaving the women, children, and elders to harvest wild rice.⁹⁴ By its very nature, wild rice had to be harvested in open lakes—without a peace alliance between the two groups, there would always be a high risk of attack during this harvest because of the inability to ensure protection on a lake. Thus, the food that hunting provided paired with the security of the alliance undoubtedly aided in finalizing an alliance for the Ojibwe. The ability to obtain more access to more wild rice lakes and streams likely played a larger role than acknowledged by the French in the negotiations.

⁹¹ Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind*, 46. “Trade was not a life-and-death issue for the eastern Sioux in the early eighteen century, despite their eagerness for it. Game was plentiful, and the bow and arrow continued to be an effective means of taking animals.” Anderson’s quote highlights the availability of game, but neglects to mention other essential food sources including wild rice, fish, and maple sugar that both the Dakota and Ojibwe relied on.

⁹² Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 118.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 147.

⁹⁴ Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami*, 126. While there were jobs predominately done by men or women, individuals were allowed to move between categories. Kohl noted, “It is, by the way, no rarity here for the women and girls to take part in the employments of the men’s, and even in their wars.” Redix, *The Murder of Joe White*, 102. Redix devotes an entire chapter to Aazhaweyaa, a celebrated Ojibwe warrior of the 1840s and 1850s, and mentioned by Kohl in his writings. See Redix, *The Murder of Joe White*, 104-114. Redix also notes usual gender roles during seasonal labor.

Prior to and after the Ojibwe-Dakota alliance, the localized autonomy of villages strengthened both Ojibwe and Dakota social structures, but it also complicated and fractured the region into many micro-borderlands. In these spaces, some villages could be at war with their neighbors, others in alliance, and others still that had little or no connection to their neighbors. Following the peace discussions of the 1678-79 winter, the contested Dakota-Ojibwe borderland became a space where multi-cultural hunting parties worked together to harvest furs.⁹⁵ The Ojibwe-Dakota peace also functioned as a localized alliance of convenience. Though Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi from the Michigan region traveled for trade and to visit distant family members living in the western Lake Superior region, these eastern Ojibwe relatives had little to do with the locally created alliance between the Ojibwe and Dakota. This likewise was the case for western plains Dakota who had left the region and adapted to a mobilized lifestyle of hunting bison herds on the Plains. That the alliance was local to the bands of western Lake Superior demonstrates the lack of central authority within both tribes, an issue that later plagued United States in its treaty making endeavors. The villages and bands that made up the Ojibwe and Dakota tribes operated largely independently of each other, with individual members who were free to join or leave or they saw fit for their own families.⁹⁶ Kinship, both fictive and biological, ruled relationships and spanned tribal identities.

⁹⁵ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 148. "In effect, the Anishinaabeg and the Dakota passed the winter like relatives, living together in small winter camps. The French colonial official La Potherie reported that during this time, 'they gave their daughters in marriage to one another,' creating blood ties to augment the kinship of the alliance. Living in peace, the Anishinaabeg and Dakota undoubtedly began to hunt beaver for trade."

⁹⁶ Miller, *Ogimaag*, 229.

The Broader Indigenous Borderlands

The 1679 alliance temporarily halted raids by the Dakota and Ojibwe on one another, but these were not the only tribes that recognized the valuable environmental resources of the western Great Lakes region. From the western tip of Lake Superior to the upper Mississippi river was a much larger region contested by several other Native nations. To the south and west of Green Bay, the Meskwaki-Sac made their homes on the edge of the prairie.⁹⁷ Prior to the expansion of the Ojibwe from the north into their territory, the Meskwaki had hunted and gathered resources in the Wisconsin and Fox Rivers basin. With major settlements at Green Bay and Milwaukee, their villages extended from Lake Michigan to the St. Croix River.

From their villages near Green Bay, the Meskwaki maintained a close relationship with French traders. However, the increased presence of the Ojibwe in their hunting and gathering territory, and the Ojibwe's relationship with the French, threatened the Meskwaki communities.⁹⁸ Following the destruction of the Wyndot (Huron) by the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) during the Beavers War, the Odawa moved into the position of middleman trader between the French and the other Anishinaabeg. Through their peace treaty with the Dakota, the Ojibwe secured their position on the western edge of the Anishinaabeg alliance, and established a large community near La Pointe, on the shores of Lake Superior. From this position, Ojibwe hunters trapped and hunted beaver throughout the Lake Superior region. Their ties to French traders positioned them conveniently as middlemen in the fur trade.

⁹⁷ Tanner ed. *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, 42; 64-65. The Meskwaki (Mesquakie, Fox) are a Great Lakes tribe. Due to warfare with the Ojibwe, Dakota, and French in the 18th century, they were pushed from villages in the western edge of Wisconsin on the Chippewa River and Fox River to the southwestern portions of the state.

⁹⁸ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 148. Witgen argues that it is not enough to view the Dakota-Ojibwe alliance in economic terms. Rather, it was a strategic necessity for both tribes during the early eighteenth century. Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind*, 29. Anderson argues that the Dakota maintained direct access to the French and used ceremonies to incorporate French traders into Dakota society. Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind*, 43. Relations only soured after perceived betrayal of the Dakota by the French in 1733.

Several Ojibwe villages allied themselves with the Dakota at a time when the Meskwaki were trying to push Dakota hunters away from the French traders at Green Bay. Tensions and distrust between the competing nations ratcheted up until 1712 when a group of Meskwaki near Detroit attacked Ojibwe and Odawa members allied with the French. This event triggered the beginning of the Meskwaki Wars, which pitted the Meskwaki against the Dakota and Ojibwe.⁹⁹ Their alliance with the Dakota enabled the Ojibwe to move their hunts south of Lake Superior into Meskwaki territory, a move that aided the Dakota desire to secure the region.¹⁰⁰

During Dakota-Ojibwe peace that lasted until 1737, several lodges led by Ojibwe ogimaa Biauswa made camp about forty miles west of La Pointe.¹⁰¹ Relations between the Lake Superior Ojibwe and Meskwaki had been strained during the Dakota-Ojibwe alliance. Bands of Lake Superior Ojibwe had pushed southwards into Meskwaki hunting territory. In response, Meskwaki warriors extended their patrols to prevent further incursion onto their lands. One morning while Biauswa was off hunting, a large Meskwaki war party came upon the camp and killed everyone except an elder and a young boy, Biauswa's son, who had ran into a nearby swamp and became stuck. The Meskwaki took the two Ojibwe captive. Biauswa returned later in the evening to a smoldering camp set ablaze by the Meskwaki. Biauswa's painful discovery of the deaths of his immediate family and extended relations drove him to begin tracking the large Meskwaki war party back to their village.

Biauswa observed the Meskwaki participating in a ritualistic torture of the elder. When the elder died from to his wounds, the young boy was brought out. When Biauswa saw that it was his son, he "proudly and boldly" stepped out from his hiding place and into the ring of

⁹⁹ Tanner, *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, 42.

¹⁰⁰ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 149.

¹⁰¹ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 127.

Meskwaki.¹⁰² He announced to the Meskwaki that his young son had never harmed the Meskwaki, while he was an old man who had many times fought the Meskwaki. Biauswa offered himself to be tortured and killed in order that his son might go free to return to the Ojibwe at La Pointe. Warren writes that the Meskwaki, “even having coveted his [Biauswa’s] death, and now fearing the consequences of his despairing efforts, they accepted his offer, and releasing his son, they bade him to depart, and burnt the brave father in his stead.”¹⁰³ The young boy hurried to La Pointe where he recounted the story, causing a large Ojibwe war party to form. The party attacked the Meskwaki and drove them from “the rice lakes and midland country about the St. Croix and Chippeway rivers,” to points further south.¹⁰⁴

The death of Biauswa occurred during the Meskwaki Wars. Helen Hornbeck Tanner argued that following the 1712 attack on the Meskwaki by allied Algonquian language speaking tribes near Detroit, the Meskwaki, along with the Sauk, Mascouen, Kickapoo, and some Dakota, engaged in warfare against tribes who had allied themselves closely with the French.¹⁰⁵ The Meskwaki and their allies held a key position on the Fox River between Green Bay and the Mississippi River that prevented Odawa, Wyandot, and French traders from obtaining free access to fertile lands and river highways. The French, led by the Odawa and Wyndot, attacked the Meskwaki several times during the 1720s and 1730s, until the Meskwaki and their allies the Sauk were pushed to the mouth of the Wisconsin River at Prairie du Chien.¹⁰⁶ This left villages near Green Bay and Lake Superior empty, allowing repopulation by Ojibwe bands.

¹⁰² Ibid., 129.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 129.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 129.

¹⁰⁵ Tanner, *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, 42.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 42.

The recorder of Biauswa's story, William Warren, was a mixed ancestry Ojibwe individual from the same region who certainly had reasons to portray his home community in the best light possible. Beyond a story of selflessness and community pride, however, the story reveals the impact of individuals on larger tribal history. Placing value on the individual acts and actors that comprise history does not neglect the importance of larger, market forces. Instead, this analysis ensures that the individual actions are valued as more than the sum of their parts and individuals are not lost in a grand sweeping narrative of the past. These narratives, of Wapahsha and Mamaangizide's family, and Biauswa's sacrifice, demonstrate the complex personal politics present in the larger tribal movements within the Indigenous borderlands. These individual stories, along with the greater access to environmental resources like wild rice and maple sugar, are just as critical to understanding the Ojibwe's western movements as the economic incentives of the fur trade.

Biauswa's individual narrative also offers insight into the reasons bands warred amongst one another. When Biauswa's son came to his extended relations at Lake Superior and told his story, the community was moved to action. Their anger, coupled with fears of attacks on their own families, was enough to motivate members of the Lake Superior band to gather into a war party and attack on the offensive. The personal connections between Biauswa's family and the tightly knit village leaders motivated this action, rather than abstract allegiances to foreign governments. This was one reason why French traders found it necessary to marry into the families of their allies, because without such kinship connections, relations between people were fleeting and carried little weight. The use of terms of endearment and love were used between

related allies in order to reconstitute their dedication to each other. The breaking of such bonds often proved to hold deadly consequences.¹⁰⁷

The story of Biauswa's son does not end with the boy's return to La Pointe. Like his father, Biauswa II as the boy became known, grew into a well-respected *mayasewininiwag* or war leader himself.¹⁰⁸ According to Warren, Biauswa II "never let pass an opportunity of taking revenge and letting his prowess be known among the enemies of his tribe . . . having adopted the name of his murdered father, Bi-aus-wah, eventually became a noted war-leader and chief, and the first Ojibway pioneer in the country of the Upper Mississippi."¹⁰⁹ He moved to Fond du Lac, which after the break down of peace between the Ojibwe and Dakota in 1737, had become a launching point for Ojibwe incursions into Dakota territory. From here, Biauswa II led several war parties into the fertile and resource rich region surrounding Sandy Lake, the traditional homeland of the eastern Dakota.

The marriages that bridged the divide between the Ojibwe and Dakota during the 1679 peace strengthened the ties between the tribes. The alliance became firm, but it was not unbreakable.¹¹⁰ A mix of betrayal and simmering conflicts exposed potential fault lines that led to the joined families of Dakota and Ojibwe to painfully separate for fear of their lives. Historians have blamed the breakdown of the 1679-1737 Ojibwa-Dakota alliances on a variety of factors, including the influence of the global markets through the fur trade with the French, the

¹⁰⁷ Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 50-93. See the second chapter titled, "The Middle Ground," for more on how the French and Great Lakes Indian relations relied on kinship ties.

¹⁰⁸ Miller, *Ojimaag*, 73. Miller uses separate definitions for civil chiefs and war leaders. She defines *mayosewinini* as "war leader".

¹⁰⁹ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 176. Warren's spelling fluctuates throughout his history in the spelling of Bi-aus-wa. I have standardized the name here as Bi-aus-wa to avoid confusion.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 166. Warren includes a story of a Dakota who possibly had Ojibwe heritage. He was so angry that "he wished to let out the hated Ojibway blood which flowed in his veins."

decline of French influence, and the rise of British influence.¹¹¹ These justifications place the cause of the raids and breakdown of the alliance on external factors.¹¹²

As historians have depicted, prior to 1737 the Dakota and Ojibwe had formed a firm alliance with one another, and had fought together against the Cree and Assiniboiné. This alliance allowed the Ojibwe to hunt west of St. Croix in territory claimed by the Dakota, as well as allowed the Ojibwe to serve as middlemen between the Dakota and French fur traders.¹¹³ Historian Helen Tanner argued that the Dakota were “[i]rritated by the French-Cree compact, the Dakota killed La Verendrye and nineteen other Frenchmen near Fort St. Charles in 1736. In retaliation, the Ojibwe broke with their former allies and joined the Cree.”¹¹⁴ Witgen’s account of the failing of the alliance includes more nuanced political maneuvering. The Cree were Algonquian language speaking people living north of Lake Superior and edging their hunting range into the Canadian plains. Eastern Cree had been allies of the Saulteaux, the Ojibwe at the Sault Ste Marie Falls. The alliance between the western Ojibwe from the village of Shagwaamikong and the eastern Dakota had angered northern Cree. The French, allies of both the Dakota and Ojibwe, had counseled Cree warriors against attacking the Dakota. The Dakota were enemies of the Assiniboiné, who at the time were allies of the Cree who wanted the Cree to attack the Dakota. The Frenchman La Verendrye, who held a near-monopoly on the French fur trade with the western Great Lakes nations, was told by the Cree and Monsoni that they “planned

¹¹¹ Helen Hornbeck Tanner, *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History* (Lincoln: Published for the Newberry Library by the University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 42-47. “With such discrepancies in the oral accounts, it becomes essential that early French documents receive far closer scrutiny.” Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind*, 48. Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 25. Witgen also relies heavily on French sources yet comes to a different conclusion. “This book begins with a simple premise, that it is possible to write a history of Native North America in the seventeenth century.”

¹¹² Tanner, *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, 42-43; White, *The Middle Ground*, chapter 4.

¹¹³ Tanner, *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*, 42.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 42.

to raid the Dakota, but would refrain from attacking the people of Shagwaamikong with the apparent goal of splitting up this alliance and alienating the Dakota from the French.”¹¹⁵ In pursuing this tactic, the Cree and their allies called on La Verendrye to join in the raid. La Verendrye allowed his son to join the raiders who attacked the Dakota with a force of nearly 600 warriors.¹¹⁶ It was necessary for the Cree to have La Verendrye’s son with them, because they believed that “the Dakota would consider La Verendrye’s son to be another version of himself, implicating the French in their attack.”¹¹⁷ The leaders of the attack succeeded in this plan, and a year later Dakota and Lakota allies raided a Cree encampment near Lake of the Woods and found La Verendrye’s son there. As word of the attacks spread throughout the region, the Dakota looked inward to their own communities, while the western Anishinaabeg including those at Shagwaamikong renewed their alliance ties to the Cree and Assiniboine. By 1737, the Ojibwe-Dakota alliance had broken and the French had withdrawn from the territory they “had claimed as part of their empire since the late 1600s.”¹¹⁸

Internal politics contributed to the further breakdown of relations between the western Ojibwe at La Pointe and the Dakota. Following his father’s death, Biauxwa II took up his father’s mantle. His father’s generation, along with their Dakota allies, had pushed the Meskwaki away from their French allies and further south and west, nearly out of the wild rice region. Warren wrote that after years of smaller skirmishes against the Dakota, Biauxwa II sent out a wampum belt calling for war throughout the Anishinaabeg nation, asking for warriors to come to Fond du Lac and follow him into battle against the Dakota stronghold at Sandy Lake. “It is said that the

¹¹⁵ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 305.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 307.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 307.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 311.

train of warriors which followed Bi-aus-wah on this occasion, was so long, as they marched in their usual single file, that a person standing on a hill could not see from one extremity to the other.”¹¹⁹ Biauswa II, along with those loyal to him, continued their battle against the Dakota until they were able to push the Dakota further west and south. Ojibwe from Lake Superior, drawn by the vast hunting grounds, maple sugar trees, and wild rice ponds, traveled to Sandy Lake and helped to build the community there, which later served as an expedition point for bands traveling even further south and west. The defeat of the Dakota signaled a great victory for Biauswa II and the people he led to the Mille Lacs and Sandy Lake regions. The lands of the region were filled with wild game and plentiful stores of wild rice and maple sugar.

Dakota scholar Gary Anderson argues that historians have placed too much significance on Warren’s account of the Ojibwe-Dakota raiding parties between 1737-50. The Dakota contacts Anderson interviewed “immediately dismissed claims of Chippewa conquest, pointing instead to the commercial advantages offered by the Mississippi valley as inducements for westward migration.”¹²⁰ Anderson further argued that French documents supported the idea that the Dakota had largely evacuated the region prior to the 1730s, that they had left only “three hundred fighting men, most likely all of the Mdewakanton tribe, they still outnumbered the Chippewas inhabiting both La Pointe and the Keweenaw Peninsula.”¹²¹ Furthermore, Anderson argued that a plague that struck key game sources was the primary motivation for the Dakota to

¹¹⁹ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 177.

¹²⁰ Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind*, 48.

¹²¹ Ibid., 48. According to Anderson the Dakota outnumbered the Ojibwe, and while they did not have a unified policy dedicated to pushing the Dakota out, they did end up with enough warriors following their leaders to sustain warfare against the Dakota.

move west and that “[d]isease and warfare played only minor roles in comparison.”¹²² The plague that struck the animal populations also infected people who ate part of the infected animals.¹²³ Anderson argued that while the Ojibwe and other woodland tribes had grown dependent on French trade goods, the Dakota continued to live at the periphery of French influence and could manage without access to the guns and other metal works proffered by the French.¹²⁴ Rather than engage in combat with the Ojibwe over these goods, an increasing number of Dakota followed the herds of bison onto the Great Plains prior to 1737.

The Ojibwe did not have a culture of bison hunting, and thus were far more reliant on traditional gathering practices, including the gathering of maple sugar and wild rice. Their foothold in the upper Mississippi region, established by Biauxwa II and his kinsfolk, grew as more Lake Superior Ojibwe moved into the region. During the late winter of 1799, the descendants of Biauxwa II were the ones who gathered at the sugar bush camps surrounding the former homeland of the Dakota.¹²⁵ While some Dakota families did move west to pursue bison and to leave the warfare of the woodlands behind, Mille Lacs was an ancestral home of the

¹²² Ibid., 27. Anderson’s use of oral tradition strengthens his argument that factors other than Ojibwe military force pushed the Dakota out of the Mille Lacs region. However, violent confrontation likely played some role in the movement of the Dakota away from Mille Lacs as the lake was a sacred place and played a role in the Dakota origin story.

¹²³ Ibid., 27.

¹²⁴ White, *The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), xv. Dependency theory gained a number of adherents during the 1990s. The theory argued that once American Indians were introduced to the quality of European goods, they increasingly relied on trade goods in order to survive. This dependency created a malleable population of people who hunted fur primarily for the French, and later British and American, trade. See Richard White’s discussion on the application of dependency from Latin American and African studies to American Indian history. See also Anderson, *Kinsmen of Another Kind*, 48; Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 311-14. While many American Indians adapted tools and weapons from Europeans, dependency theory overestimated the effects of European trade goods on American Indian relations. While Anderson may have over emphasized how much the Ojibwe relied on the French, he did accurately point out that the Dakota increasingly were drawn to hunting bison to the west. Witgen in particular demonstrates how the French and their goods had far less influence on American Indians than dependency theory adherents suggest.

¹²⁵ See chapter one.

Dakota and was surrounded by a plentiful landscape of fur bearing animals, lakes of wild rice, and maple sugar groves. Anderson's argument that the Dakota left the region neglects the sizeable contingencies of Dakota who continued to reside in the Minnesota woodlands into the middle of the nineteenth century. The eastern Dakota continued to follow a seasonal hunting and gathering cycle that included both wild rice and maple sugar gathering. By the Dakota attack in 1799, the alliances of the 1720s and 1730s were long over, and two generations of Ojibwe and Dakota had grown up as enemies engaging in a continual cycle of violence and fragile respites up through the Prairie du Chien treaty council of 1825.

Under the leadership of Biauxwa II, several groups of western Ojibwe expanded their presence from the western shores of Lake Superior to the headwaters of the Mississippi River. When asked later at the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council to define their territorial claims by the Americans, Biauxwa II's son, Broken Tooth and his aide-de-camp Hole-In-The-Day defended the claims, saying that had been taken in the same manner the United States had taken their lands: through conquest.¹²⁶ Broken Tooth followed his grandfather and father and became a leader of the Sandy Lake Ojibwe. The 1825 Prairie du Chien Treaty Council served as a reunion, as the son of Wapahasha was also present at the treaty council. Wapahasha II's village continued to reside on the Mississippi River as his father's had, but further south, near Fort Snelling. Wapahasha II's distantly related Ojibwe relative, Waabojiig (White Fisher) inherited many of his father's traits and became a well-respected Ojibwe leader.¹²⁷ Though not present at the 1825

¹²⁶ Benjamin Ramirez-Shkwegnaabi, "The Dynamics of American Indian Diplomacy in the Great Lakes Region," in *American Indian Cultural and Research Journal* 27:4 (2003), 62, <http://dx.doi.org.proxy1.cl.msu.edu/10.17953/aicr.27.4.f2217880186w0332>. "When Cass asked Broken Tooth how he justified his claim to a vast territory that included Dakota territory, Hole-in-the-Day, then a pipe carrier for the ogimaa Curly Head, boldly retorted, 'Upon the same ground sir, that our Great Father claimed this country from the British King, by conquest! We drove them from the country by force of arms and have since occupied it, and they cannot, and dare not, try to dispossess us of our habitations.'"

¹²⁷ Chapman, *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society Vol. XXXII*, 311.

Prairie du Chien treaty council, White Fisher had family connections to the council through his daughter's marriage to Henry R. Schoolcraft, an American Indian agent. While the Ojibwe and Dakota engaged in a diplomatic battle during the council, the Americans, represented by Schoolcraft and Cass, hoped to increase their influence in the region. This increased American participation in Native diplomacy further complicated power relations in the western Great Lakes.

CHAPTER 3

ASPIRATIONS OF EMPIRE: LEWIS CASS' NETWORK OF INFLUENCE

Relations between Ojibwe and Dakota bands in the Indigenous borderlands underwent rapid changes during the early 1800s. Following the American Revolution, American explorers and military expeditions embarked on a series of missions on behalf of the expanding United States federal government. These missions collected information regarding the settlement potential of the land and of the people already living in the region. During the explorations, government agents attempted to solidify the United States' claim to the territory. At the beginning of the War of 1812, American federal power extended only to the Mississippi River. By the conclusion of the war, the newly appointed Michigan Territorial Governor Lewis Cass concerned himself with the project of extending and securing federal authority to the furthest western reaches of the Great Lakes. At the center of this expansion project rested the establishment of American rule of law and the commodification of property. Historian Bethel Saler explained, "reform of local economies, religious conversion by missionaries, and the regulation of marriage and family were all foundational aspects of state formation in and of themselves."¹ Cass' goals and the American federal project of western settlement were at odds with both Dakota and Ojibwe society. The Americans wanted to replace the Ojibwe and Dakota villages' authority with a state and federal system of governance based on individual private property. If Cass' vision of settlement was to succeed, he needed to force a recalibration of how power and authority functioned in the region.

Cass' personal and professional fortunes were linked with the fortunes of the Michigan Territory. Early American settlement helped federal claims to the region against the British, but

¹ Bethel Saler, *The Settlers' Empire: Colonialism and State Formation in America's Old Northwest* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 8.

reports of American Indian warfare and poor land conditions stifled growth. As Cass faced increased resistance from Ojibwe and Dakota leaders, he deemed it beneficial for American goals to circumvent tribal political structures. He viewed American Indians as racially inferior to whites and considered American state creation as essential to providing “civilization” to the region. This justified an Indian policy that worked to break down tribal social structures by fostering conditions that forced tribal communities to adapt to an American economy. Cass’ primary concern was the elimination or minimization of British influence over the Great Lakes tribes. He continually inserted treaty language that stated Great Lakes Indians acknowledged American authority in the region and rejected their ties to Great Britain. This laid the framework for future laws that commodified Native lands into purchasable entities by incoming settlers. Additionally, at least in the view of the Americans, it also extended American legal jurisdiction over tribes. This jurisdiction later allowed the federal government to justify the use of the military to enforce settler land claims. As will be discussed in chapter four, several leaders at the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council attempted to adapt and adjust to these shifts in authority. Tribal adjustment to new authorities in the region broke the complex and complicated nature of the Indigenous borderlands. Cass served as an excellent tool of the federal government to direct this change. He was a staunch supporter of the federal power of the United States, part of a family of Ohio settlers, and understood the speculation market so well that he use money from his family lands in Ohio to establish his family home in Detroit. He was inquisitive of American Indian culture, but ultimately dismissive of what he perceived as the inferior, savage, and backwards societies.

Power and authority held by Great Lakes Indian leaders was power and authority that was difficult for the Americans to wield. To secure American authority through legal means the

United States, as represented by men like Cass and William Clark, used treaty councils. To succeed in councils, Cass needed to understand American Indian diplomatic procedures. Cass surrounded himself with men who were intimately involved in Indian affairs, several of whom had married into important tribal families, which helped him better understand tribal power. Cass also partook in expeditions that explored the land and introduced him to the important leaders of the region. His expertise in American Indian culture and position as Michigan Territorial Governor allowed him to persuade Washington D.C. to appoint him joint commissioner at the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council. It was at this council that Cass and the Americans gained a greater foothold in the western Great Lakes while working to dismantle the complex Indigenous borderlands through the use of maps and treaties.



Figure 8: John Melish, “Map of the United States with the contiguous British & Spanish possessions.”
Philadelphia 1816 Graff 2744 Publisher John Melish, engraved by J. Vallance & H.S. Tanner Newberry Library
Chicago, IL.

In 1816, cartographer John Melish created a map titled “United States with the contagious British & Spanish possession.” In addition to the eastern United States, the map included the western Great Lakes region containing present-day Wisconsin labeled as the Northwest Territory. Like other maps of the time, Melish included rivers, portages, and places of interest, like the “Lead Mine Hills” located on the “Ouisconsin R.” just east of the “Vill. of Prairie du Chiens.”² Unlike John Cary’s 1825 map of the same region, Melish did not include labels indicating the location and territory of Great Lakes Indians.³ Rather, Melish indicated the presence of a few “Chippeway” and “Sioux” villages scattered throughout the region. Melish also included in a section of northwestern Illinois the label “*Ceded by the Sac & Fox 3. Nov. 1804.*”⁴ This cession of land was still contested at the time of the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty and was addressed in Articles 2 and 3 of the treaty.⁵ Instead of highlighting the complexity of the region, the map tells a simple story, one that does not include the competition between Great Lakes tribes for control of resources. It is a story of an empty frontier, with highways of rivers waiting to be settled by an American public who believed they had secured their right to the territory following the War of 1812. Melish’s geographical booklet accompanied the map and highlighted the possibilities of immediate settlement. While other listed locations included population statistics, the “Northwest Territory” only included its land area and description

² Map of the United States with the contagious British & Spanish possession John Melish Philadelphia 1816 Graff 2744 Publisher John Melish, engraved by J. Vallance & H.S. Tanner Newberry Library.

³ Cary’s map consists of less detail, but his map contains the sites of American Indian territory and villages. *A New Map of Part of the United States exhibiting the North West, Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois Territory, the states of Kentucky, Ohio, Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania/ from the latest authorities* (John Cary, 1825.) Newberry Library; Chicago, Il Hermon Dunlap Smith Collection: map4F G4060 1825 .C3 (PrCt).

⁴ Map of the United States with the contagious British & Spanish possession John Melish Philadelphia 1816 Graff 2744 Publisher John Melish, engraved by J. Vallance & H.S. Tanner.

⁵ Charles J. Kappler ed, “Treaty with the Sioux, Etc.,” August 19, 1825. 7 Stat., 272 Proclamation. Feb. 6, 1826” *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties: Vol. II Treaties* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904) [online], *Oklahoma State University Library*, <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/KAPPLER/Vol2/treaties/sio0250.htm>.

because, as Melish wrote, “[f]ew settlements have yet been made in this extensive region, and the inhabitants were not included in the last census.”⁶ Melish described the soil as “excellent,” the climate “[t]owards the south pleasant. To the north cold,” and the region as a whole “rising fast into importance. Colonel Hamilton’s Rifle regiment, stationed at the village of Prairie du Chiens, will check and control the Indians in that quarter...”⁷ Such peace, or at the least the guarantee that settlers would not face hostile tribes, was an crucial step in the settlement of the Old Northwest.⁸ Melish’s optimistic phrasing was intended to calm incoming emigrants concerns of Indian attacks, and encourage American settlement of the region.

⁶ John Melish, *A Geographical Description of the United States, with the contagious British and Spanish Possessions, intended as an accompaniment to Melish’s Map of these countries*. (Philadelphia: published by the author. T. H. Palmer, printer.) 1816 (second edition)
Case oE 165 .M513 1816a page 131.

⁷ Ibid., 131.

⁸ Colin G. Calloway, *The Victory with No Name: The Native American Defeat of the First American Army*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 9.



Figure 9: T.B. Welch, “Lewis Cass/ engraved by T.B. Welch from a drawing by J.B. Longacre.”
 Library of Congress. Digital ID. cph 3c11474 //hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3c11474. Accessed April 11, 2017
<https://lccn.loc.gov/94508743>.

Just to the east in the city of Detroit (pop. 770) in the same year Melish’s 1816 map was published, 34-year-old Lewis Cass was in the midst of working to solidify and fortify the United States’ position in the Great Lakes following the War of 1812.⁹ Cass was the most powerful American official in the territory of Michigan, and the de facto superintendent of Indian Affairs in the region. The federal government wanted the authority it claimed through maps to be an

⁹ John Melish, *A Geographical Description of the United States, with the contagious British and Spanish Possessions, intended as an accompaniment to Melish’s Map of these countries*. (Philadelphia: published by the author. T. H. Palmer, printer.) 1816 (second edition). Case oE 165 .M513 1816a page 130.

accurate reflection of its power in the Great Lakes. Before the United States and its agents could begin negotiating with tribes, they needed to understand the lands they were attempting to take. Military expeditions, such as Lewis and Clark's expedition, were the preferred method for the United States to gain this knowledge, as they could fulfill both military objectives and satisfy the curiosity of eastern citizen-scholars.¹⁰ Knowledge of the land and resources shaped the direction treaty councils could proceed. Understandings of tribes' societal structure also shaped the diplomatic proceedings and protocols. Cass recognized that knowledge was powerful tool in this endeavor. Cass embarked on a series of expeditions to familiarized and acquainted himself with tribal leaders, Indian agents, and military men experienced in American Indian affairs. Through these expeditions, Cass surrounded himself with men like Henry R. Schoolcraft and C.C. Trowbridge, who had married into powerful Great Lakes Indian families and had lived near Great Lakes Indian communities. The young men further their careers by participating with Cass on his expeditions. Cass' own experience as leader of the expedition later helped him climb the federal political ladder as an expert in Indian affairs.

¹⁰ "Rivers, Edens, Empires: Lewis & Clark and the Revealing of America," *Library of Congress*, accessed March 31, 2017, <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/lewisandclark/lewis-landc.html>. The Lewis and Clark expedition of the American West is an example of one such exploration. After President Jefferson's purchase of the Louisiana Territory he tasked his secretary Meriwether Lewis with putting together a party to explore the newly acquired territory. During the same period in 1805 Zebulon Pike was tasked with exploring the upper regions of the Mississippi River. Both of these missions were undertaken to increase the federal government's knowledge of the land and people within the territory the government claimed for itself. There are many biographies, histories, and edited volumes of Lewis and Clark's mission. The Library of Congress maintains a digital exhibitions of material cultural from the expedition. See also "The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition," *University of Nebraska Press / University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries-Electronic Text Center*, accessed March 31, 2017, <http://lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu>. For Zebulon Pike's journal see Zebulon Pike, *The Journals of Zebulon Montgomery Pike: With Letters and related Documents* Vol. 1 ed. Donald Jackson (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966).

Lewis Cass and Michigan Territory

Lewis Cass was born on October 9, 1782 in Exeter, New Hampshire.¹¹ His father, Jonathon Cass, enlisted in the Continental Army during the American Revolution as a private and soon rose to the rank of captain.¹² Jonathon Cass' strong nationalistic Federalist views influenced Lewis Cass' own early political viewpoints. However, Lewis Cass came of age in Ohio, where Democratic-Republican ideals and policies heavily influenced the state's politics. His biographer, Willard Klunder wrote, "While Cass understood the political expediency involved in joining the Democratic-Republicans, he believed sincerely in such Jeffersonian principles as popular rule and a federal government of limited powers."¹³ Cass was active in Ohio politics until the War of 1812, where he served as a colonel and later a general. He was present when General William Hull surrendered Detroit to the British.¹⁴ Cass testified against his former commanding officer at Hull's court martial, and benefited by Hull's downfall by avoiding blame for the defeat of Detroit.

Cass became the civil Governor of the Michigan Territory in 1813. The appointment intertwined Cass' personal and political fortunes. Cass' father had been awarded bounty lands

¹¹ Willard Carl Klunder, *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation*. (Kent: The Kent State University Press, 1996), 1.

¹² Ibid., 2-3. Following the American Revolution Cass rejoined 1791 the army and was promoted to the rank of major two years later. While he served under General Anthony Wayne he was not present at the decisive Battle of Fallen Timbers due to a broken leg. After Congress set aside a portion of Ohio for military bounties, the elder Cass applied and received four thousand acres and settled his family near Zanesville Ohio. This land later became the basis for much of Lewis Cass' wealth.

¹³ Ibid., 6.

¹⁴ Ibid., 15. Cass served as a witness at Hull's court-martial. "General Hull experienced understandable bitterness when Cass testified for the prosecution at his trial. Cass was a brigadier general in the regular army and Hull's successor as governor of Michigan Territory. In an effort to place the onus of Detroit's surrender squarely on the shoulders of William Hull, the administration unstintingly rewarded his subordinates, and Cass was among the chief beneficiaries."

near Zanesville, Ohio for his service during the Revolutionary War.¹⁵ Lewis Cass sold part of this inheritance to purchase property in Detroit. Cass rapidly increased his property holdings in Detroit, and “made extensive land purchases in Macomb and Monroe countries” that increased his holdings throughout Michigan Territory.¹⁶ In addition to his personal land holdings and real estate dealings, Cass was the largest local shareholder of the Bank of Michigan. The bank, chartered in 1817, was the only financial institution in the territory for the next ten years.¹⁷

As a result, Cass became a boisterous supporter of the Michigan Territory to boost migration to the territory and stimulate public sales of land to white settlers.¹⁸ Cass confronted three main problems in promoting the settlement of Michigan: perception of the quality of land, presence of the British, and fear of attacks from American Indian tribes.

When Congress set lands in Michigan aside for military bounties, settlement seemed a foregone conclusion. However, Surveyor General Edward Tiffen’s initial survey found much of the land swampy and unfit for settlement, and ultimately concluded that bounty lands should be given elsewhere. This setback forced Cass to redouble his efforts, and he eventually convinced Tiffen and Congress to conduct additional surveys of Michigan Territory. These later surveys came to a more favorable conclusion regarding the suitability of the lands for agriculture.¹⁹

Cass’ concern with American settlement was linked to his fears of the British presence along Michigan Territory’s border. His experience during the War of 1812 and presence at the

¹⁵ Ibid., 5.

¹⁶ Ibid., 22.

¹⁷ Ibid., 22.

¹⁸ Ibid., 25.

¹⁹ Ibid., 25-26. After receiving word of the disappointing land survey results, Cass went to work writing letters to Washington. Cass claimed “that Tiffen’s men ran their surveys during an unusually rainy season, so they were ignorant of the true quality of the land. Since that time other surveyors had been highly impressed, one declaring the region to be ‘the finest Country he ever saw.’”

defeat of Detroit made him wary of the British. While survey maps created imagined representations of American land holdings, military force was necessary to back these claims against British aggression. Cass preferred a plan that created a string of American forts connected by military roads, which would link Detroit to Fort Dearborn in Chicago, Fort Crawford in Prairie du Chien, and Fort Howard in Green Bay.²⁰ Historian Francis Prucha explained that in 1825 Cass still considered “this frontier the weakest and most exposed in the Union,” and demanded more troops for the protection of Detroit.²¹ Even with Cass’ attempts at projecting American power, American influence in the Michigan Territory was minimal at best, and held only through a scattering of fur trading posts and Indian agencies.

The War of 1812 nearly pushed the Americans completely out of the region. Originally named Fort Shelby, the American post at Prairie du Chien was defeated in 1814 by a combined force of British and Great Lakes Indians. It took two years for the United States to retake the post, after which they renamed it Fort Crawford. At that time, the nearest American forts that could be relied on for support were Fort Armstrong on the Mississippi River near Rock Island, Illinois; Fort Snelling near St. Paul, Minnesota; Fort Howard in Green Bay, Wisconsin; and Fort Dearborn in Chicago, Illinois; each a march of several days away.²² American attempts at state creation in the region demonstrated a willful ignorance of the reality that faced American forces on the ground. Throughout the 1820s, the United States attempted to increase its presence and

²⁰ Francis Paul Prucha and Detroit Historical Society, *Lewis Cass and American Indian Policy*, The Lewis Cass Lectures 1966 (Detroit: Published for the Detroit Historical Society by Wayne State University Press, 1967), 3. Newberry Library Ayer 240 P971 1967.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

²² Helen Hornbeck Tanner ed. *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History* (Norman: Printed for the Newberry Library by the University of Oklahoma Press, 1987), 106-107, 140, 144. Tanner’s maps including “The War of 1812: Indian Involvement 1811-1816,” “Indian Villages c. 1830 Illinois,” and “Indian Villages c. 1830 Wisconsin Region of Michigan Territory,” depict not only American forts in the region, but the presence of Great Lakes Indian tribes and their proximity to United States military posts.

influence among Great Lakes Indians. These efforts were often weak and ineffective compared to British efforts, though neither the British nor the Americans could maintain as much influence as Native leaders themselves held in their communities.²³ To confront these issues, the United States used treaty councils to solidify assurances of peace between tribes as well as obtain land cession. Once the region seemed secure, federal officials encouraged white American settlers to enter the region.²⁴ But such settlement largely eluded Cass' early attempts in the western Great Lakes where the Ojibwe and Dakota maintained their homes.

The presence of American Indian tribes throughout Michigan Territory was Cass' third barrier to fulfilling his desires of American settlement. Cass' views towards American Indians dictated official policy throughout the territory. Prucha described Cass' personal views towards American Indians.

Admittedly, Cass's opinions of the Indians were less than complimentary. When viewing them simply as an enemy, as he did in his first days in Detroit, he could speak in the harshest terms. When viewing them as a primitive and uncivilized people, he could speak with the disdain of a superior being. But Cass was an enlightened man of his times, and there was in him a strong, sincere, and persistent streak of humanitarianism.²⁵

Perhaps, as Prucha writes, Cass believed his actions were guided by humanitarian motives. In practice, Cass' actions demonstrated a racist conception of Native society. In one unpublished

²³ Michael Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations: How the Native New World Shaped Early North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 325.

²⁴ John Melish, *A Geographical Description of the United States, with the contagious British and Spanish Possessions, intended as an accompaniment to Melish's Map of these countries* (Philadelphia: published by the author. T. H. Palmer, printer, 1816 (second edition)), 131. John Melish's maps and land descriptions provided would be settlers an idea of what kind of land they could expect upon arrival. It also attempted to reduce fears of attack by perceived hostile American Indians. Melish's note on the North-West Territory reads as follows; "This extensive territory has not yet been organized into a regular government; but it is rising fast into importance. Colonel Hamilton's Rifle regiment, stationed at the village of Prairie du Chiens, will check and control the Indians in that quarter; and the measures that will probably be taken to settle Carver's Grant, before noticed, will form the basis of a society requiring the usual forms of government in the other territories."

²⁵ Francis Paul Prucha, *Lewis Cass and American Indian Policy* (Detroit: Published for the Detroit Historical Society by Wayne State University Press, 1967), 7-8.

document from 1815, he writes that “[o]ur first and principal duty is to reclaim them as far as practicable, from the savage situation, in which they are placed, and to impart to them as many of the blessings of civilized life, as their manners and customs and inveterate prejudice will permit.”²⁶ For Cass, the thought of slowing or halting American progress was inconceivable. The expansion and growth of the territory was an inevitable and foregone conclusion.

As the natural progress of our settlements cannot be prevented, as no sound politician would seriously propose that the present Indian boundaries should be a barrier to our expanding population and as there is no American Citizen who does not anticipate with pride the day when civilization and improvements will be coextensive with the limits of the republic, the idea cannot for a moment be entertained that cessions of land will not hereafter be required of the Indians.²⁷

Cass’ personal convictions mirrored his approach to federal Indian policy. He was inquisitive about how Native society functioned, and sought out men with similar curiosities for promotions to positions of authority throughout the Michigan Territory. Cass believed the United States maintained three fundamental duties to the tribes: 1) bestowing the “blessings of civilized life;” 2) paying the annuities owed; and 3) continuing the practice of distributing presents.²⁸ On the surface, such beliefs appear to stem from a humanitarian nature. However, there was a far more pragmatic and calculated concern behind each. “Civilization” for Cass was primarily based on the assumption that the Michigan Indians did not understand the concept of private property, but they could be brought to an understanding of the concept. Cass wanted to force Great Lakes Indians to behave as “settled m[e]n by giving him notions of exclusive property and by ensuring to him the enjoyment of it.”²⁹ Cass wrote, “in fact it is impossible to conceive, that any society

²⁶ Newberry Library, Chicago VAULT Ayer MS 601 Box 1 Folder 1 Lewis Cass Papers. Lewis Cass “In the Formation of a system for the regulation of Indian Affairs...[ca. 1815,] 2.

²⁷ Ibid., 12.

²⁸ Ibid., 2, 8-9.

²⁹ Ibid., 8.

can exist without the possession of personal property.”³⁰ Cass’ belief was flawed in several ways. Great Lakes Indians did maintain ideas of private property. While land was not held in the same way as Americans held fee simple land, individuals and families were granted exclusive gathering rights to certain locations.³¹ While bands moved seasonally to different locations, they maintained and reused village and winter sites year after year. Women held control over sugar bush and wild rice locations. Additionally, tribal members maintained personal items like baskets, bows, and clothing as private property. Cass did not believe this was a true understanding of private property. Instead it lacked the qualities that made it a “civilized” practice. In holding this view, Cass exposed a common nineteenth-century viewpoint, racist by contemporary standards, which ignored the complex societies that were present throughout the Great Lakes.³²

The second fundamental duty Cass believed the United States owed tribes was the payment of annuities. Cass’ desire to pay these seems in part suspect as the annuities often were used to cover inflated debts owed to fur traders.³³ Driving American Indians into debt in order to

³⁰ Ibid., 3.

³¹ John Tanner, *The Falcon: A Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1994), 69. See also Chapter 1 of this dissertation.

³² Lewis Cass, *Considerations on the Present State of the Indians, and Their Removal to the West of the Mississippi [From the North American Review, No. LXVI. For January, 1830.]* (Boston: Gray and Bowen, 1828 reprint edition Arno Press, 1975), 2. Cass was a man of his time and maintained similar views towards American Indians as many of his colleagues. These included viewing American Indians as a lesser people, who needed white civilization to “save” them. Regardless of his “humanitarian” motivation, Cass’ view and actions were inherently racist. In one of his writings, titled “On the Present State of the Indians, and Their Removal,” Cass writes, “The destiny of the Indians . . . has long been a subject of deep solicitude to the American government and people. Time, while it adds to the embarrassments and distress of this part of our population, adds also to the interest which their condition excites, and to the difficulties attending a satisfactory solution of the question of their eventual disposal, which must soon pass *sub judice*.” There is also a copy of this piece titled “Documents and proceedings relating to the formation and progress of a board in the City of New York for the immigration [sic], preservation, and improvement of the Aborigines of America. July 22, 1829” found in the Lewis Cass papers July 22, 1829-August 1, 1831 Box 5 Folder 9 William L. Clements Library Ann Arbor, MI.

manipulate favorable conditions for treaty agreements was a strategy used often by the United States. In 1803, President Thomas Jefferson counseled William Henry Harrison that it was necessary to give American Indians “effectual protection against wrong from our own people,” but also that the federal government should urge tribes to give up hunting and take up farming.³⁴ Jefferson thought that once tribal members became farmers, they would be willing to trade with the United States for farming implements. Additionally, Jefferson believed that Native Americans would “be willing to pare [lands] off from time to time in exchange for necessities for their farms and families.”³⁵ If that did not work quickly enough, the United States could use its trading posts to drive “good and influential individuals” into debts.³⁶ During treaty councils, these individuals may then be more willing to pay down those debts through land cessions.³⁷ Cass’ viewpoint on this matter seemed to mirror Jefferson’s.

The final obligation that Cass believed the United States owed to American Indians was the distribution of presents. This policy stemmed from the direct competition Cass perceived he was in with the British. As governor of a territory with a porous border along British Canada and a veteran of the War of 1812, Cass was concerned about British influence in the region. He researched the British Indian affairs model, and concluded there was much to be envied in the British model. The British “generally made it a principle to employ every active young man, speaking the Indian language and acquainted with their manners and customs, more particularly

³³ Charles E. Cleland, *Rites of Conquest: The History and Culture of Michigan’s Native Americans* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992), 212-218. This occurred in several situations including Saginaw Treaty of 1819.

³⁴ “Letter Thomas Jefferson to William Henry Harrison February 27, 1803.” *National Archives Founders Online*, accessed July 20, 2016, <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-39-02-0500>.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

if, as often happens they are connected by blood or marriage with the Indians.”³⁸ Cass suggested modeling the United States Indian department on many of the policies the British used successfully. This included hiring men who could speak Native languages and who had connections by marriage or birth to tribes. Furthermore, Cass argued that copying the British policy of present distribution would strengthen ties with tribes and save the federal government money by not having to engage in costly wars. Cass was perceptive enough to understand that annuities did not function in the same manner as presents could. One issue was that annuities were “considered property of the whole,” and

[t]he chiefs receiving the same share that falls to the lots of any other individual are unable by a proper distribution and by a display of disinterestedness to ensure the attachment of the rest. Not so with presents. These being granted by us without compensation, are received by them without offence however disturbed. We have therefore the opportunity of presenting to the principal Chiefs, whose friendship and services are important to us valuable means of strengthening and securing their influence.³⁹

Presents from the Americans undermined the British position and strengthened ties between friendly tribal leaders and the United States.

Cass’ humanitarianism veiled an ulterior motivation for the subjugation of Great Lakes tribes under the United States. His three principals of engagement with Great Lakes Indians shaped his future efforts in tribal negotiations. Until the United States backed the borders it projected through maps with military force, Cass was obligated to work through slower diplomatic challenges where tribes continued to hold an advantage.

³⁸ Newberry Library, Chicago VAULT Ayer MS 601 Box 1 Folder 1 Lewis Cass Papers. Lewis Cass “In the Formation of a system for the regulation of Indian Affairs...”[ca. 1815,] 18-19.

³⁹ Ibid., 25.

1820 Headwaters of the Mississippi Expedition

For Cass, American Indian alliances were messy, complicated, and a slow method of governance. Cass was a nineteenth-century frontiersman and a businessman who appreciated order. He wanted neat lines clearly marking individual land holdings that were transferable. Indian boundaries in the Great Lakes did not appear orderly to Cass. Wars between the Ojibwe and Dakota did not have neat conclusions. American authority in daily interactions continued to be weak in the western Great Lakes. This weakness forced Cass to participate in negotiations on Native terms. Nowhere was this reliance on Native negotiation structures more apparent than during the incident at Sault Ste Marie in 1820.

In 1818, Congress expanded Michigan Territory to include the straits of Mackinac, the entirety of present-day Wisconsin, and a small section of Minnesota. To better administer American justice, the additional territory was divided into three new counties, with county seats located at Mackinac, Green Bay, and Prairie du Chien.⁴⁰ In an 1819 letter to Secretary of War John C. Calhoun, Cass proposed that he receive authorization to form an expedition to explore the newly added northern and western portions of Michigan Territory. The expedition would further secure American claims to the region and allow Cass to personally explore the territory.⁴¹ The expedition was to serve several purposes: defense, promotion, and intelligence. Cass believed the goal of defense could be accomplished through additional military forts and an increase in American settlers. Cass, like Calhoun, wanted to build an American military post at Sault Ste Marie because of its strategic location between British Canada and the United States. Cass had an expansive vision for the 1820 expedition beyond merely securing a location for a

⁴⁰ Saler, *The Settlers' Empire*, 213.

⁴¹ "Letter 3. Lewis Cass to John C. Calhoun November 18, 1819 Appendix B" in *Schoolcraft's Narrative Journal of Travels* ed. Mentor L. Williams (East Lansing, Michigan State University, 1992), 302-305.

future military fort. He wanted to use the trip to extend his travels further northwest to meet with several tribes of the western Great Lakes to gather intelligence. This, he argued, would improve relations with those tribes and ready those locations for American settlement.⁴² The intelligence gathered in the extended expedition would help in future treaty negotiations and promote settlers to move to the region. Calhoun agreed to Cass's mission prior to the expedition's departure, with a few minor adjustments. In 1820 Cass's Northwest Territory expedition departed to continue the legacy of American statecraft through exploration in a similar manner as Lewis and Clark's expedition to the Pacific Ocean and Zebulon Pike's mission up the Mississippi River fifteen years prior. The campaign, like Pike's before it, failed to locate the headwaters of the Mississippi River, was not able to secure peace between the tribes of the western Great Lakes, and did little to stop British fur traders, but the trip succeed in purchasing lands for the military and further developing necessary intelligence for future American operations.

Before an American fort could be built at the Sault, Cass needed the Odawa and Ojibwe living around the site to sell him the land to build the fort. This led to a confrontation between the American expedition and the Ojibwe and Odawa at the Sault. The location of the Sault was extremely valuable to the Ojibwe and Odawa as a trading post, military installation, and fishing village. Sault Ste. Marie was located at a narrow strip of water that separated British Canada from the United States and served as an east-west launching point for trading expeditions in both directions. The strategic position placed the Ojibwe and Odawa residing at the Sault in an important trading position and one they did not want to share with the Americans. Henry R. Schoolcraft, the expedition's geologist, described the Sault.

The commanding position of the Sault de St. Marie . . . No place could, therefore be better adapted to acquire an influence over the savage tribes, to monopolize

⁴² "Letter 3. Lewis Cass to John C. Calhoun November 18, 1819 Appendix B" in *Schoolcraft's Narrative Journal of Travels* ed. Mentor L. Williams, 302-303.

their commerce, and to guard the frontier settlements against their incursions... and it appears to have been among the primary objects of the expedition to prepare the way for the induction of an American garrison at this place.⁴³

The negotiations for the fort began poorly and ended abruptly. Cass stormed throughout the village enraged when his Ojibwe counterpart, Sassaba raised the British standard. Agitated, Cass demanded that no flag other than the flag of the United States of America ever be raised over the southern side of the Sault. Cass, so angered by the display, ripped the British flag down to the shock of those present.⁴⁴ The rest of the afternoon, the Ojibwe and Odawa maintained a watchful presence on the Americans. American influence in the region would gain its foothold through the intercession of an Ojibwe woman, Ozhaguscodaywayquay. Throughout the evening, Ozhaguscodaywayquay worked to ease tensions and helped the Americans secure access to land for their fort. Ozhaguscodaywayquay's importance in securing the claim was not recounted by either Henry Schoolcraft or James Doty in their recollections of the event. The narrative was passed down from Johnston family biographer, C. H. Chapman: "I have heard Governor Cass say that he felt himself under the greatest obligations to Mrs. Johnston for her co-operation at that critical moment; and that the United States is debtor to her, not only on account of that act, but on many others." Cass' reliance on Indigenous methods of negotiation and transfer of power at the Sault were further evidence of the lack of authority the United States maintained in the region. It was not until Ozhaguscodaywayquay used her influence with the village that an accord was made and a treaty signed regarding the land surrounding the Sault.⁴⁵

⁴³ Henry R. Schoolcraft, *Narrative Journal of Travels: Through the Northwestern Region of the United States extending from Detroit to Great Chain of American Lakes to the Sources of the Mississippi River in the Year 1820* ed. Mentor L. Williams (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1992), 96-97.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 99.

⁴⁵ C.H. Chapman, "The historic Johnston family of the 'SOO'." in *Collections and Researches Made by the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society Vol. XXXII*. (Lansing: Robert Smith Printing Company, State Printers and Binders, 1903.), 308.; Richard G. Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar: The Life of Henry Rowe*

Ozhaguscodaywayquay's influence stemmed in part from her heritage that placed her in a powerful position. She was the daughter of Waabojiig, granddaughter of Mamaangizide, and wife of Scot-Irish fur trader John Johnston, all well respected members of the Sault.⁴⁶ Later, in 1823 her daughter Bamewawagezhikaquay married Henry R. Schoolcraft.⁴⁷ Ozhaguscodaywayquay represented an expansion of the social relations in the Indigenous borderlands that incorporated European traders into its power structure. Her family also participated in a shift in borderlands politics, wherein Americans like her future son-in-law and his superior Lewis Cass would take an increasingly powerful role. The 1820 expedition proceeded from the Sault and continued on meeting with tribal leaders throughout the region. Upon the men's return, the expedition was deemed a success. For many of the men it was not what was discovered during their journey, but the personally connections to each other and Cass that had a lasting impact on their lives.

Schoolcraft. (Mount Pleasant: Clarke Historical Library Central Michigan University, 1987), 37; Robert Dale Parker ed. *The Sound the Stars Make Rushing Through the Sky: The Writings of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 4, 16. See particularly Parker's endnote 16 on page 78-79 which details several accounts of the story. Parker write, "most versions by white observers or dependent on them ignore or underestimate Ozhaguscodaywayquay's role and take white, masculine, and United States authority and conquest as self-evidently superior, inevitable, and just, as if reluctance to sign away Indian lands could come only from savage foolishness." The story made a strong impact on the participants and several accounts of the events were copied down. See also Schoolcraft, *Narrative Journal of Travels*, 94-100. C.C. Trowbridge, and James Doty's accounts can be found in Schoolcraft's *Narrative Journal of Travels* in Appendix F "The Journal and Letters of James Duane Doty" 411-413 and Appendix G "The Journal and Letters of Charles Christopher Trowbridge, Expedition of 1820." 468-469.

⁴⁶ See Chapter 2 of this dissertation for more information regarding the family history of Mamaangizide.

⁴⁷ Parker ed. *The Sound the Stars Make Rushing Through the Sky*, 21.

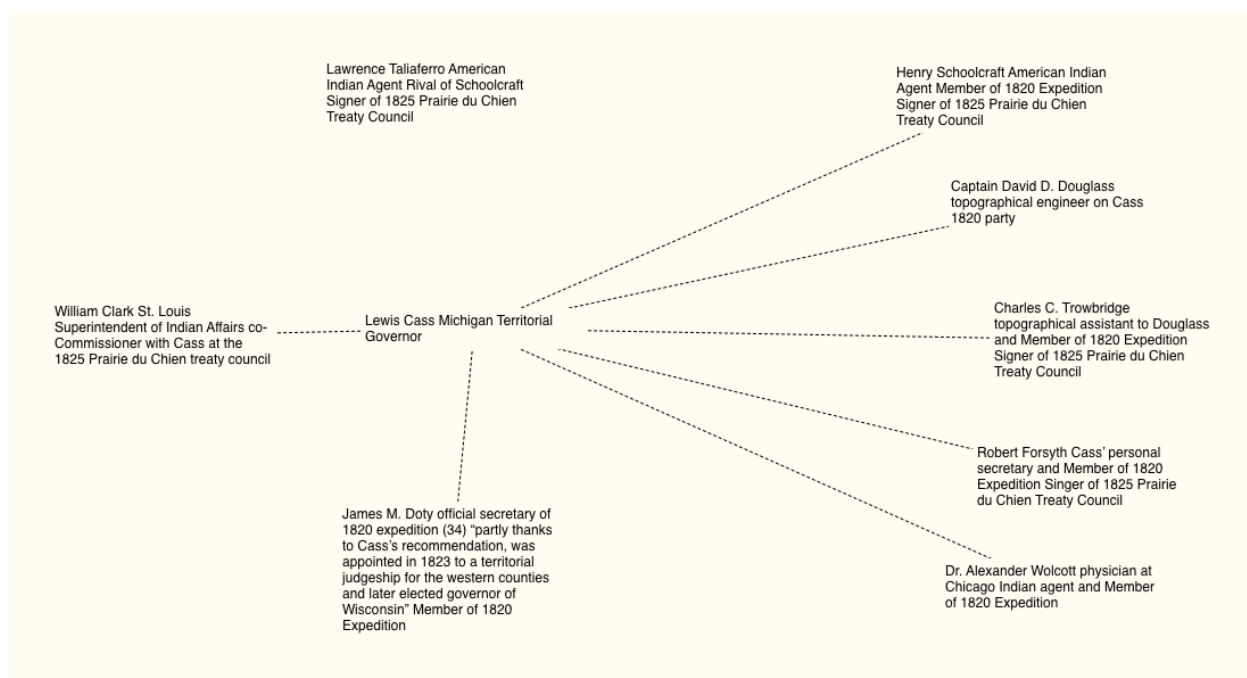


Figure 10: Jacob Jurss, “Connections Between Participants of Lewis Cass’ 1820 Expedition.”

American Networks in Michigan Territory

Perhaps most important for Cass was the assembly of a core of young American officials skilled in negotiation with Great Lakes Indians. These men controlled Indian policy throughout Michigan Territory for the next twenty years.⁴⁸ Federal positions in the Great Lakes were concentrated in the hands of loyal supporters of territorial governors and political leaders. The 1820 expedition built and strengthened the political bonds between the men selected. These connections remained firm for many years following the expedition. The Indian agents, territorial judges, and military men who traveled with Cass owed a great deal of their experience with American Indian nations to his patronage. Cass benefited by handpicking the officials who

⁴⁸ Philip P. Mason, “Editor’s Note” in *Schoolcraft’s Expedition to Lake Itasca: The Discovery of the Source of the Mississippi* ed. Philip P. Mason (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1958), ix, x. The 1820 Cass Expedition stopped short of the eventual headwaters later marked by Henry Schoolcraft as Lake Itasca during an 1832 expedition.

carried out his daily orders. Because many of the agents were protégés of Cass, his influence over federal Indian policy was outsized compared to others in the Great Lakes.

The men's personal connections kept their collective power over Grand Lakes Indian interactions closed to outsiders. Key members of Cass' team included C. C. Trowbridge, a political supporter of Cass who served as an assistant to United States army Captain David Bates Douglass. Douglass' assistant, C.C. Trowbridge, later was a signer of the 1825 treaty council.⁴⁹ Douglass was brought on as the lead geologist and an assistant Indian agent. In 1824, Lewis Cass wrote to Captain David Bates Douglass explaining that his duties as governor made it impossible for him to visit Douglass at West Point, but that their mutual acquaintances, "Forsyth and Trowbridge leave here today for N. York. I hope they will be able to see you."⁵⁰ Also a signer at the 1825 treaty council was R.A. Forsyth, who was a part of the 1820 expedition where he served as Cass' private secretary.⁵¹ Forsyth was also present at Cass' infamous 1819 Saginaw treaty council where Cass, a staunch advocate of limiting fur traders' ability to use alcohol in trade negotiations, used alcohol to facilitate treaty negotiations.⁵² A member of the expedition, but not

⁴⁹ Klunder, *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation*, 39. Captain Douglass did not attend the Prairie du Chien treaty council of 1825. He had been appointed mathematics chair at West Point, thanks in large part to Cass's recommendation to Secretary of War John Calhoun. Cass' biographer noted that during the first decade of the Bank of Michigan's existence, Lewis Cass was the largest local shareholder and that "One of his political supporters, Charles C. Trowbridge, was an officer of the Bank of Michigan; after Cass joined President Jackson's cabinet, the bank became a federal depository." Klunder, *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation*, 22.

⁵⁰ William L. Clements Library, Ann Arbor, MI. "Letter Lewis Cass to D.B. Douglass May 29, 1824," in the *Lewis Cass Papers 16 August 1823-29 May 1824* Box 1 Folder 17 Original in D.B. Douglass Papers.

⁵¹ Klunder. *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation*, 39. James Doty, who was not a signatory at the Prairie du Chien Treaty Council, but was appointed in 1823 to a territorial judgeship and later became a governor of Wisconsin

⁵² There is some debate over this point. Cass' biographer takes a more sympathetic view of Cass' actions at the 1819 Treaty of Saginaw disagrees with Bernard C. Peters assertion that Cass used alcohol during negotiations writing, "Peters a geography professor, is unconvincing in arguing that a governmental cover-up existed regarding alcohol and Indian land cessions." See endnote 41 on page 40, which directs reader to page 324-325 for Klunder's note. Klunder, *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation*, 40. For his part Peters "Although Cass publicly condemned the use of whiskey by traders, evidence indicates that he used whiskey to serve his ends, typically to induce Indians to cede their lands to the United States government. The earliest evidence incriminating Cass

present at the later 1825 treaty council was James Duane Doty. Doty became the first territorial judge in the Wisconsin territory and maintained connections with Lewis Cass throughout his tenure. Henry R. Schoolcraft served as a mineralogist for the 1820 expedition. He eventually became an Indian agent and was present at the 1825 treaty council. Schoolcraft later increased his value to Cass through his marriage into Ozhaguscodaywayquay's family. Through their political connections, these men created a system of power and influence similar to the one that was already present in Native communities in the region. Rather than basing their power on maintaining access to environmental resources, the Americans maintained power through their access to influential Great Lakes Indian leaders, and by their perceived expertise of a particular tribe or region.

Henry R. Schoolcraft: An American in an Indigenous Borderland

Henry R. Schoolcraft was an archetype of a protégé of Lewis Cass. Schoolcraft received an appointment as Indian agent for the Ojibwe and Odawa living in the Sault Ste. Marie region in 1822.⁵³ He was born March 28, 1793 near Albany New York.⁵⁴ After failing in business as a glassmaker, Schoolcraft traveled west as a geologist to examine the lead mining operations along

emerges with his efforts to exact a land cession at the 1819 treaty negotiations with the Saginaw band of Chippewa." See Bernard C. Peters, "Hypocrisy on the Great Lakes Frontier: The Use of Whiskey by the Michigan Department of Indian Affairs," in *Michigan Historical Review*, Vol. 18, No. 2 (Fall, 1992), 3 and 4. Peters claim is further backed by Charles E. Cleland, who described Governor Cass "prepared for the ten-day parley by purchasing 39 gallons of brandy, 91 gallons of wine, 41 ½ gallons of fourth proof spirits, 10 gallons of whiskey, and 6 gallons of gin from the Whipple and Smyth Company...*Kishkauko*, who bitterly opposed land cession, was kept drunk until the time came to sign the treaty." Charles E. Cleland, *Rites of Conquest: The History and Culture of Michigan's Native Americans*. (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1992), 213-215.

⁵³ Richard G. Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar: The Life of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft* (Mount Pleasant: Clark Historical Library Central Michigan University, 1987), 54.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

the Missouri River.⁵⁵ He received his appointment to Cass' 1820 expedition based in large part on his research on the Missouri's lead mining operations.⁵⁶ Following the expedition and a brief stint as Cass' personal secretary, he received his appointment to the Sault Ste. Marie Indian agency.⁵⁷ Cass held Schoolcraft in high esteem, and maintained high demands on Schoolcraft as with rest of the Indian agents serving in Michigan Territory. In placing Schoolcraft, Cass wrote:

Your jurisdiction will extend over a very extensive & a very important frontier, where the Indians are exposed to an undue share of foreign influence, and where the indications of a hostile feeling to the United States have not been equivocal. To withdraw them from their accustomed intercourse and associations, mildly but firmly to support the rights and enforce the laws of the United States, to render them every service compatible with your own interest and with that just economy, which is necessary, carefully to license the traders & to scrutinize their conduct and punish any infractions of the laws, & to act as a vigilant sentinel at an advanced post are among your most important & obvious duties.⁵⁸

Cass' letter detailed Schoolcraft's job description and highlighted some of his most immediate concerns. As an Indian agent, Schoolcraft served as the official contact for the Ojibwe and Odawa of Sault Ste Marie with the United States federal government. By 1822, the position of Indian agent also represented a role as gatekeeper for British and American fur traders in the region.⁵⁹ Indian agents were tasked with enforcing the official Indian policies of the United States, including who was allowed to enter Indian country and who could conduct legal trade

⁵⁵ Ibid., 14-15. Bremer posits that Schoolcraft's travels into the Missouri lead district resulted, "from his previous experience as a glassmaker. Lead figured prominently in several branches of glass manufacture and he had doubtless investigated the subject in the course of his mineralogical researches... lead mining could appear one of the more promising routes to rapid wealth."

⁵⁶ Ibid., 23.

⁵⁷ Klunder, *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation*, 39. "Governor Cass was lavish in his praise of those who participated in the expedition, focusing attention on the contributions of Captain Douglass and Schoolcraft." See also Bremer, *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar*, 57.

⁵⁸ Prucha, *Lewis Cass: And American Indian Policy*, 6.

⁵⁹ Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press), 97. Following the War of 1812, Prucha writes, "By a law of April 29, 1816, licenses to trade with the Indians within the territorial limits of the United States were refused to noncitizens, although the president could permit such licenses if he thought the public interest demanded it."

with Great Lakes Indians.⁶⁰ Cass warned in a letter to another Indian agent that the man should take great pains in avoiding any action that might appear to constitute bribery or a *qui pro quo*, advice likely also given to Schoolcraft.⁶¹ The role of gatekeeper became increasingly important as the United States fur trade factory system failed and was disbanded.⁶² Indian agents were supposed to operate in a paternal manner on the behalf of American Indians, which would curtail the efforts of fur traders' policies that were in conflict with federal policy. Because of this, Indian agents often made enemies of the fur traders that disliked federal oversight over their business. The fur traders resented the governmental oversight, especially the laws that barred the trade of alcohol.⁶³ Independent fur traders also disliked what they perceived as federal interference in the federal fur trade factory system, and were happy to see it disbanded by 1822.⁶⁴ Indian agents used gifts, threats, military action, treaty conferences, and pleas to ensure tribes submitted to the authority of the federal government.

Schoolcraft's personal life aided in his position as Indian agent at the Sault. Soon after his appointment, Schoolcraft courted and married Jane Johnston (Bamewawagezhikaquay), daughter of the Scottish-Irish trader John Johnston and Ozhaguscodaywayquay.⁶⁵ This marriage connected

⁶⁰ Ibid., 94-98.

⁶¹ Klunder, *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation*, 33.

⁶² Francis Paul Prucha, *Lewis Cass and American Indian Policy* (Detroit: Published for the Detroit Historical Society by Wayne State University Press, 1967), 10. According to Prucha Cass did not support the use of the trade factory system. "I am as well convinced as I can be of any fact," he wrote to the Secretary of War in his first extensive statement on Indian matters (September 3, 1814), "that in our intercourse with the Indians we have adopted too much the ideas of trading speculation.- Our trading factories, and our economy in presents have rendered us contemptible to them. The Government should never Come in contact with them, but in cases where its Dignity, its strength, or its liberality will inspire them with respect or fear."

⁶³ Prucha, *The Great Father*, 98-102.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 133.

⁶⁵ Saler, *The Settlers' Empire*, 216. Intermarriage occurred frequently between Europeans and American Indians in the Wisconsin region. Schoolcraft's marriage was a continuation of this practice, though a practice that was slowing as more American women settled in the region. Saler relates that "Sons of high-ranking clerks and

him not only to the family of one of the preeminent traders of Sault Ste Marie, but also to an important Ojibwe family lineage.⁶⁶ John Johnston's wife and Jane's mother, Ozhaguscodaywayquay, was the same woman who two years earlier had saved Cass' 1820 expedition at the Sault. The marriage of Jane and Henry in 1823 merged the traditional leadership of Ojibwe residing at the Sault with the emerging power of the United States. In this light, their marriage reflected the expansion of kinship networks common in the Indigenous borderlands.

Schoolcraft's marriage to Jane mirrored his father-in-law's marriage. The elder Johnston's marriage represented the arc of Canadian-American and Indigenous borderlands that scholars have turned their attention to in recent years.⁶⁷ John Johnston was born in Ireland in 1770. He arrived at Sault Ste. Marie as a young man in 1791 and shortly after became a trader in the western Great Lakes. After obtaining the necessary supplies, he traveled to his post at La Pointe. He established a strong working relationship with Waabojiig, one of the leaders of the Ojibwe at La Pointe, and soon asked for Waabojiig's daughter's hand in marriage.⁶⁸ Marriage was a significant step in strengthening alliances between fur traders and Native communities. As Sleeper-Smith explained,

traders would often initially marry high-born Native women to secure their connections with nearby Indian bands and then later leave this first relationship to form long-term unions with well-placed métis women."

⁶⁶ C.H. Chapman, "The historic Johnston family of the 'SOO'." in Collections and Researches Made by the Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society Vol. XXXII, 305-353. See also Box 1 Johnston Family Papers 1822-1936 Bentley Historical Library University of Michigan. Ann Arbor, MI.

⁶⁷ While research on the north continues to lag behind the southwest the US-Canadian borderlands have seen much more attention in recent years. Like much of the writing on the southwestern border American Indian are depicted in a more holistic view, however the focus on nation-states borderlands continues to be favored. See Kornel Chang, *Pacific Connections: The Making of the U.S.-Canadian Borderlands*. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012.); Sheila McManus, *The Line Which Separates: Race, Gender, and the Making of the Alberta-Montana Borderlands*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005).

⁶⁸ Untitled Johnston Family History Sault Sainte Marie collection circa 1802-1930 Essays and sketches on the history and biography of Sault Ste. Marie typewritten, microfilm edition roll 16 originals at Bayliss Public Library Sault Sainte Marie, MI microfilm at the Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, page 2.

Native women who married fur traders successfully incorporated their French husbands into their community. These women were important links in the exchange process. They did not “marry out” of the villages in which they were raised and ensured that exchanged remained defined by kinship behaviors.⁶⁹

However, as much as Waabojiig enjoyed the connection to the British trader, he was not anxious to tie himself to Johnston and refused the young trader’s initial offer.⁷⁰ Johnston returned the following year and renewed his request for Ozhaguscodaywayquay, which was eventually granted by Waabojiig. Johnston and Ozhaguscodaywayquay were married in 1793 and returned to Sault Ste Marie to establish a trading post there.⁷¹

When Schoolcraft married the eldest daughter of the powerful Sault Ste. Marie trader he continued the practice of outsiders gaining access to the community through marriage ties.⁷² For Schoolcraft, Johnston’s education and social ties as a daughter of an important trader of the Sault likely made her an even more appealing marriage partner. Jane Johnston traveled with her father in 1809 to Ireland, and received an education there during her stay. Robert Dale Parker collected Jane Johnston’s later writings, and described her education. “Though her stay was brief and trying, contemporary accounts of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft made much of what they called her

⁶⁹ Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 5.

⁷⁰ From page 2 of Untitled Johnston Family History Sault Sainte Marie collection circa 1802-1930 Essays and sketches on the history and biography of Sault Ste. Marie typewritten, microfilm edition roll 16 originals at Bayliss Public Library Sault Sainte Marie, MI microfilm at the Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan. In one accounts relating to Waabojiig, he allegedly said, “I want to see her protected and married as white men marry their wives. The white traders take our Indian girls, for a time, and then put them away and say that they are not their wives, this cannot happen to my daughter.” This is not likely an accurate quotation of Waabojiig. Parker ed., *The Sound the Stars Make Rushing Through the Sky* 8-9. However, he did deny Johnston request until Johnston returned the next summer.

⁷¹ Untitled Johnston Family History Sault Sainte Marie collection circa 1802-1930 Essays and sketches on the history and biography of Sault Ste. Marie typewritten, microfilm edition roll 16 originals at Bayliss Public Library Sault Sainte Marie, MI microfilm at the Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, page 2.

⁷² Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men*, 43. Sleeper-Smith expands on the idea of kinship writing, “Kinship was more flexible than nationality, ethnicity, or race in constructing identity. Kinship permutations were endless, and, in this already complex world, a new kinship structure grew out of the marriage of French fur traders to Native women that not only incorporated their mixed ancestry offspring, but also facilitated the expansion of the fur trade.”

Irish education. At a time when few girls attended school, an overseas education was a mark of distinction for any woman on the frontier.”⁷³ Schoolcraft was a dedicated reader and extremely interested in American Indians cultures. Though his government salary was modest his political ties and position allowed him to live comfortably that perhaps interested Jane Johnston in him as a marriage prospect. Pragmatically the marriage allowed Schoolcraft more direct access to the Ojibwe community in his charge and access to one of the power broker families of the Sault in the form of Jane’s father, John Johnston. He may have also recalled how influential Johnston’s mother was three years prior during the Cass expedition.

Schoolcraft’s marriage linked him to an extended Indigenous borderland that stretched back to the connections between the half-brothers Wapahasha and Mamaangizide. Schoolcraft used these kinship connections to further his own study and writings on Great Lakes Indians. However, many scholars believe Schoolcraft actually plagiarized much of his work from his wife.⁷⁴ Schoolcraft’s extended study of the Ojibwe led him to the belief that Native society would fade away in front of “white civilization.” Although his extended kinship networks may have influenced him to take a more sympathetic view of the Ojibwe, this was outweighed by his ambitions to climb the governmental ladder. Schoolcraft was a loyal supporter of Governor Lewis Cass and believed in many of the United States’ goals of removal and subjugation of Indigenous populations.⁷⁵ Through his studies, Schoolcraft viewed the contested region between the Dakota and Ojibwe in the west as a conflict zone dangerous to United States’ ambitions for

⁷³ Ibid., 15.

⁷⁴ Parker ed., *The Sound the Stars Make Rushing Through the Sky*, xv, 26, 27.

⁷⁵ For more on Cass’ beliefs regarding removal see Lewis Cass. *Considerations on the Present State of the Indians, and Their Removal to the West of the Mississippi [From the North American Review, No. LXVI. For January, 1830.]* (Boston: Gray and Bowen, 1828 reprint edition Arno Press, 1975). Schoolcraft maintained his ties to Cass to the extent of writing a key piece of biographical propaganda during Cass’ 1848 presidential run. Klunder, *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation*, 43.

the region.⁷⁶ While he had little official control over the Ojibwe west of the Mississippi in this conflict zone, he still attempted to make policies controlling the western Ojibwe.⁷⁷

Schoolcraft's Overreach & Taliaferro's Retort

For over a decade, Cass worked towards the twin goals of projecting American authority throughout the Great Lakes and building his own credentials in Indian affairs. He was successful in fostering his identity as an expert in American Indians through continuously expanding his network of influential Indian agents and participation in negotiations. Although Cass held the most powerful position in Michigan Territory and had a network of loyal Indian agents, working for him, the physical territory Ojibwe and Dakota Indigenous borderlands spanned an extensive region that continued beyond Cass and Schoolcraft's reach. At its far western edges and at the center of Dakota and Ojibwe conflict worked Lawrence Taliaferro, who noticed and resented Henry Schoolcraft's ambitions to influence tribal leaders in his area. Taliaferro was an Indian agent who maintained a working relationship with Cass, but was outside of the governor's direct influence and not a participant in the governor's 1820 expedition.

Lawrence Taliaferro's rise in the Indian department was similar to Schoolcraft's in that he had relied on more powerful political patrons who aided his career. He had served in the military

⁷⁶ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 7. "In his official reports and his published books Schoolcraft asserted a paternalism and sense of cultural superiority over Native peoples that was commonplace in nineteenth-century America."

⁷⁷ Letter Lawrence Taliaferro to Lewis Cass September 28, 1825 Document 58 Lawrence Taliaferro Papers. Roll One: Correspondence and Miscellaneous Papers, undated, and 1813-1835. Microfilm copy in Michigan State University Library of original in the Minnesota Historical Society. Not only did Schoolcraft claim power over the Ojibwe and Odawa of his agency he also pushed for authority over tribes in Lawrence Taliaferro's agency placing the two agents at odds with one another. Following the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council when Schoolcraft's trader allies attempted to convince western Ojibwe to travel to Sault Ste Marie. While Taliaferro defended the Ojibwe ability to travel to St. Peters this action had more to do with defending his own influence in Indian affairs rather than any ideas of protecting Ojibwe sovereignty from United States encroachment. Still the incident demonstrates a divide in policy and authority over territory within the Indian department itself something some village leaders may have used to their advantage.

during the War of 1812 and was present when President James Monroe made his tour through the western states.⁷⁸ In 1818, Taliaferro fell ill and needed to take leave of his military appointment. When he recovered, he traveled to the city of Washington and visited with President Monroe, who remembered Taliaferro and requested that he leave the military to accept a position in the civil service as an Indian agent. Taliaferro agreed and received the appointment of Indian agent for the upper Mississippi at St. Peters. He moved to Fort Snelling to assume his role in 1820.⁷⁹

Taliaferro was given authority over all American Indians in the upper Mississippi region, territory Schoolcraft later claimed should be part of his agency, including the bands of Ojibwe and Dakota who lived in the Indigenous borderland of the western Great Lakes. Taliaferro made it his mission to settle the violent confrontations between the Ojibwe and Dakota who resided in his region. Taliaferro held several peace conferences between the Ojibwe and Dakota, including a failed peace attempt in 1823.⁸⁰ In 1824, along with St. Louis commissioner of Indian affairs William Clark, Taliaferro accompanied a group of upper Mississippi River Dakota and Meskwaki bands to Washington D.C. as well as on a tour to several other eastern American cities, including Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York City.⁸¹ This was an attempt to demonstrate the modern power of the United States, but it made little difference in their negotiations in the upper Mississippi borderlands. Taliaferro believed that a larger treaty council

⁷⁸ Lawrence Taliaferro, *Auto-biography of Major Lawrence Taliaferro: Written in 1864*. (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1894), 195. [e-book] <https://archive.org/details/autobiographyofm00talirich>.

⁷⁹ Taliaferro, *Auto-biography*, 197. Taliaferro joined Colonel Leavenworth's expedition who was tasked with building Fort Snelling "at the junction of the St. Peter and Mississippi" where Taliaferro would be stationed as Indian agent.

⁸⁰ Gwen Westerman & Bruce White, *Mni Sota Makoece: The Land of the Dakota*. (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2012), 91, 148.

⁸¹ William T. Hagan, *The Sac and Fox Indians*, (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), 95. See also Westerman & White, *Mni Sota Makoece*, 148-149.

was necessary to ensure peace in the western Great Lakes. This belief laid the foundation for the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council.⁸²

Upon receiving word that a large gathering of western Great Lakes tribes planned on assembling at Prairie du Chien in 1825, Governor Cass successfully petitioned the Department of War to allow him to attend based largely on his credentials as an expert in Great Lakes Indian affairs.⁸³ Cass convinced Henry Schoolcraft to attend and to bring a delegation of Lake Superior Ojibwe with him. During the 1825 council, not all of the council meetings took place during the official council.⁸⁴ One of these meetings had particular relevance to Taliaferro and Schoolcraft's tumultuous relationship.

Taliaferro recorded in his autobiography that John Holiday, an agent for the American fur trade company, approached several of his Ojibwe friends living near his agency. These Ojibwe friends "kept the agent [Taliaferro] constantly informed of the secret councils called to detach them from his camp and join their friends, but all in vain- they would not be detached."⁸⁵ Taliaferro explained that Holiday, whom he called "a drunken Scotch trader," tried to "bully and annoy" Taliaferro throughout the proceedings. Taliaferro believed Holiday and Schoolcraft were the instigators of another incident, which further demonstrated the contempt that Taliaferro held for both Holiday and Schoolcraft. The incident began when Cass summoned Taliaferro to his

⁸² Westerman & White, *Mni Sota Makoece*, 148.

⁸³ Lewis Cass to Thos. L. McKenney March 30, 1825 Indian Office Files, Michigan, 1824-1828. Pension Building. Wisconsin Historical Archives Madison, WI. Witgen writes, "American officials in Michigan Territory, like Governor Cass, wanted to use the treaty process to transform Anishinaabewaki from a multipolar social formation into discrete and politically subordinate tribal entities with limited territorial claims. Toward this end, Cass called another treaty council at Prairie du Chien at the confluence of the Wisconsin and Mississippi Rivers with the goal of bringing an end to any ongoing or future warfare between Native peoples in the northwest interior." Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 346. While Cass appears to be a strong motivator behind the call for the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty, he merely added to the work Taliaferro and Clark had already begun several years prior.

⁸⁴ See Chapter four for a more complete discussion of the events occurring at the treaty council.

⁸⁵ Taliaferro, *Auto-biography*, 207. Taliaferro wrote the autobiography in third person.

encampment and explained that the commission had received word that a “that a young Sioux had brandished his war club over the head of a young Chippewa near the Fort Crawford gate, and that one rash act might produce at once a scene of blood shed and you had better send the Chippewas of your camp to that of Agent Schoolcraft.”⁸⁶ At the beginning of the council, Cass and Schoolcraft had arrived with their Ojibwe delegations from northern Michigan and established a camp near each other. Several Ojibwe who lived further to west in the region of Taliaferro’s agency maintained a camp nearer to the Dakota from the same region and near Taliaferro. Taliaferro asked to see the man who had complained about the arrangement. In response, Holiday pointed the man out, but Taliaferro was suspicious. Taliaferro believed the entire story another attempt on the part of Holiday and Schoolcraft to consolidate the Ojibwe in their camp. Taliaferro explained that this ploy was likely thought up by Schoolcraft, “for whom the Chippewas have no respect, for they seldom see him from his remoteness at Sault Ste. Marie,” and that “[t]he Commissioners on reflection found the Sioux Agent too well booked up on Indian affairs; that he knew what he was doing as a point of duty and self respect. So Mr. Holiday was foiled, both he and his falsifying tool.”⁸⁷

For the Americans, the fight over who had influence and authority over particular tribes was not a trifle matter. Taliaferro was furious that Schoolcraft had attempted to claim authority over all of the Ojibwe in the western Great Lakes. One month after the council at Prairie du Chien, Taliaferro penned a letter to Cass with a copy of an 1821 letter from the War Department outlining Taliaferro’s responsibilities. He did so to put “to rest any ideal claim which Mr. Schoolcraft or any other agent may suppose they have as to the direction of the affairs of the

⁸⁶ Ibid., 207-208.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 208.

Chippeway residing on the waters of the upper Mississippi.”⁸⁸ Taliaferro believed the accompanying letter would erase any doubt that he was intended to be the agent for the western Ojibwe.

The rift between Taliaferro and Schoolcraft demonstrates that American actions towards American Indians were not always unified. Those agents who were able to wield power effectively in the region found more success in treaty councils. Cultivating strong alliances with tribal leaders ensured an agent stayed relevant and could be relied on by both tribes and the federal government. The rift between Schoolcraft and Taliaferro is also an example of tribal agency. The fact that western Ojibwe leaders preferred to travel the short distance to Taliaferro’s post, rather than the more arduous journey to Schoolcraft’s post at the Sault is not surprising. However, in refusing to travel to Schoolcraft, the western Ojibwe leaders implicitly rejected Cass and Schoolcraft’s claim of authority over them. By imposing their own agency, the Ojibwe ogimaag demonstrated that their power had not succumbed to American forces. Rather than blindly obeying Schoolcraft’s demand, they exercised their own agency in dealing with Taliaferro, a man with whom they had cultivated a personal relationship. Interagency rivalries were not the only problems the Americans confronted in the preparations for the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council. Cass’ desire for American influence in the region would be undermined by another Ojibwe ogimaag’s rejection of American authority.

Problems in the Lead Up to the 1825 Prairie du Chien Treaty Council

By the spring of 1824, Lewis Cass had held the position of governor of the Territory of Michigan for over a decade. He had traveled extensively throughout the region and participated

⁸⁸ September 28, 1825, Correspondence and Miscellaneous Papers doc. 58 Lawrence Taliaferro Papers. Microfilm copy held at Michigan State University Library of original in Minnesota Historical Society.

in several treaty negotiations in the attempt to secure American rights to land use, cession of large swaths land that would become the state of Michigan, and the establishment of military forts. Through his network of Indian agents, consistent use of presents and annuities, and speeches given to white audiences on the importance of bringing American “civilization” to Great Lakes Indians, Cass appeared to be the powerful and knowledgeable federal agent. Yet the Melish’s map of American claims, like Cass’ power, continued to be an idealized illusion of projected power. British traders continued to cross the border between the United States and Canada to trade in the region, despite more restrictive laws. Although lead mining regions in Wisconsin saw a slight influx of emigrants from the northeast, American settlers had not flooded into the region at the rate Cass hoped. The region instead continued to reflect Great Lakes Indian power. The murder of an American fur trader in 1824 by Ojibwe warriors who refused to submit to American jurisdiction for prosecution became an embarrassment for Cass, and further demonstrated the lack of federal power prior to the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council.

During the summer of 1824, a white fur trader known as Mr. Finley, along with three of his Canadian boatmen, were killed by a group of Ojibwe near Lake Pepin. In his account of the murder, Schoolcraft lists Keewaynoquet/Kewaynokwut (Passing Cloud/Returning Cloud) as the Ojibwe war leader responsible for the killing, while Warren’s account lists Nub-o-beence/Nawajiwienoce as the leader of the party.⁸⁹ Schoolcraft recorded that the Ojibwe leader had been ill, but was cured after praying to the manidoog; in return, he had promised the manidoog to embark on a mission to attack the enemy Dakota. Warren recorded that the Ojibwe leader had been distraught over the death of a child who had been killed by the Dakota; Nub-o-beence then

⁸⁹ Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Personal Memoirs of a Residence of Thirty Years with the Indian Tribes on the American Frontiers*, 2004, June 22 Chapter XXII <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/11119>. See also William Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*. (St. Paul: Borealis Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), 389-393.

convinced a group of Ojibwe warriors to join him in taking revenge, but that they were unsuccessful in finding the responsible Dakota.⁹⁰ In both narratives, the Ojibwe party became discouraged after not finding their enemy. On the return home the party came upon Mr. Finely and his workers. After brief friendly encounter where the two groups traded items, but a few warriors were still dissatisfied with their expedition, and returned to kill all four white men. Rather than hiding this action, the warriors preformed a scalp dance in front of local trader J.B. Corbin's front door.⁹¹

Upon receiving word of the murders, Cass called on Schoolcraft to force Ojibwe leaders to bring the perpetrators into an American outpost so that the United States could exercise American law and justice on the alleged murderers. The fur trader William Holliday convinced the Ojibwe party responsible for the murders to turn themselves in to the Americans at Michilimackinac. They escaped after discovering that Cass intended to prosecute them.⁹² Witgen argued the failure of the Americans to utilize their authority to bring accused murderers to justice demonstrated how elusive American sovereignty in the region remained. "When Native prisoners, who turned themselves in voluntarily, escape from your island fortress at will- it becomes difficult to sustain the claim to be the sole political authority in Michigan Territory."⁹³ Witgen argued the murders

represented a minor tactical maneuver in the epic struggle waged between the Dakota oyate and the Anishinaabeg doodemag for control of a vast inland trading system. From this vantage point it was the larger struggle, the Indian struggle in

⁹⁰ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 389.

⁹¹ Ibid., 390.

⁹² Ibid., 392. Warren writes "The leader of the party, who lived on the shores of Lake Superior, was secured by Mr. William Holliday, trader at Ance Bay. The four captives were sent to Mackinac, and confined in jail. While orders were pending from Washington respecting the manner of their trial, they succeeded in making their escape by cutting an aperture through the logs which formed their place of confinement."

⁹³ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 352.

the western interior that had the longer history and the greater consequence. American claims to govern this territory were no more than a nuisance, the illusion of empire.⁹⁴

Witgen explained the murder as part of the larger struggle between the Ojibwe and Dakota for control over the western Great Lakes trading system of the region.⁹⁵ American officials, meanwhile, viewed the attack as an attack on American sovereignty in the region. Through much of the summer and fall, American officials sent letters back and forth updating each other on the progress in bringing the murderers to justice.⁹⁶ The Ojibwe's escape frustrated the attempts of federal officials to assert American sovereignty, and strengthened the argument that the Americans continued to maintain weak authority in the region.⁹⁷ United States laws were sporadically enforced in the region, and usually only if tribal members allowed enforcement.

That American law could not be enforced was unacceptable to Cass. He demanded additional federal support in securing the western Great Lakes.⁹⁸ For a United States government anxious to expand and maintain a white settler population in the Great Lakes, Finely and his crew's deaths created more bad publicity. It was a reminder of the weakness of federal authority and the government's lack of ability to control Great Lakes Indian populations. Cass blamed the situation partly on the continuous British influence in the region. He made it a point in all future treaty negotiations to force tribal recognition of American authority throughout the Great Lakes

⁹⁴ Ibid., 352

⁹⁵ Ibid., 350.

⁹⁶ March 10, 1825 William Clark to Josiah Snelling Gen. William Clark. VAULT Box Ayer MS 170 folder 2 of 2. The murders sent ripples throughout the Indian offices. William Clark sent a letter to Colonel Snelling to help the Indian office locate and bring the Ojibwe to American justice.

⁹⁷ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 352.

⁹⁸ Klunder, *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation*, 29.; Prucha, *Lewis Cass and American Indian Policy*, 3.

region. Cass believed this recognition would secure American authority in the region, while further deterring British interference in what he believed were internal American affairs.

Drawing Conclusions from Lines Drawn on Maps

The United States' insertion in the Ojibwe and Dakota politics of the nineteenth century were an attempt to strength American claims to the region. Cass used expeditions to increase his personal knowledge of tribal diplomatic protocols and enhance his claims as an American Indian expert. He further strengthened his knowledge by surrounding himself with men who were as inquisitive about Indian affairs as he was. The information gleaned from their research was used to further the American goals of settlement and to force American Indians to recognize American authority. By 1825, Governor Lewis Cass had over a decade of experience in Indians affairs and had signed 13 treaties.⁹⁹ By furthering their own goals for the region, Cass and other federal agents attempted to reconfigure power, basing it on land ownership and property rights for citizens who acknowledged the authority of the United States. By doing so, they restricted and reduced Native leader's authority by changing how borders were created and how power was obtained. Limiting access to environmental resources was a key element to this project of dispossession.

⁹⁹ Charles J. Kappler, ed. *Indian Treaties 1778-1883*. (New York: Interland Publishing Inc., 1972).

CHAPTER 4 THE 1825 PRAIRIE DU CHIEN TREATY COUNCIL

“After I understood the object of the treaty, I asked Gov. Cass what good he thought would result from it. He shrugged up his shoulders, and smiling said, that they would have it so at Washington.” –James H. Lockwood¹

“I wish to live in peace. But in running marks round our country, or in giving it to our enemies, it may make new disturbances and breed new wars.” –Anishinaabeg Ogimaa The Wind²

A Sickness in the Camp

Throughout his life, Babiizibindibe (Curly Head) was a respected voice in the Ojibwe villages located in the Ojibwa-Dakota borderlands of the western Great Lakes. He was a *mayosewininiwag* (war leader) and an *ogimaa* (civil leader) for the Crow Wing Ojibwe.³ In the fall of 1825, he was returning to his home after serving his village in a prominent role at the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council. Babiizibindibe had worked hard in side meetings at the treaty council to secure permanent access to wild rice, maple sugar, and hunting grounds for his community. Although they were still hundreds of miles from their home village on the Mississippi River near Crow Wing, Babiizibindibe’s party slowed and came to a stop at Lake Pepin.⁴ Babiizibindibe was sick with a mysterious illness. Many in the camp, including

¹ James H. Lockwood, “Early Times and Events in Wisconsin,” in *Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin* ed. By Lyman Copeland Draper under the editorial direction of Reuben Gold Thwaites (Madison: Democrat Printing Co., 1903), 153.

² Thomas Biddle, “Journal of the Proceedings...” in *Ratified treaty no. 139, documents relating to the negotiation of the treaty of August 19, 1825, with the Sioux, Chippewa, Sauk and Fox, Menominee, Iowa, and Winnebago Indians and part of the Ottawa, Chippewa, and Potawatomi of the Illinois Indians*. University of Wisconsin Digital Collections. <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/History.IT1825no139> (Pages 1-44) see page 18. “November 19, 1825 Mission to the Indians: from the National Journal” in *The Niles Weekly Register* ed. H. Niles Vol. XXIX From September, 1825, to March 1826 (Baltimore: Franklin Press) [e-book], 188.

³ William Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*. (St. Paul: Borealis Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), 47. See also my discussion of the Ojibwe positions of leadership Chapter 2.

⁴ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 348. William Warren lists that Babiizibindibe (Ba-be-sig-aun-dib-ay; Curly Head) “belonged to the Crane family, and removed to this region with a small camp of his relatives

Babiizibindibe himself, feared he was near death.⁵ Aware of his impending death, he called two young *oshkaabewisag*,⁶ pipe carriers and personal aides, to come see him. Babiizibindibe wanted to bestow his blessing on the two *oshkaabewisag*, the brothers Bagone-giizhig (Hole-In-The-Day) and Zoongakamig (Strong Ground), to serve as leaders of their village.⁷ Babiizibindibe had gained his own prominent position in the village in part because of his family lineage and his individual talents, reflecting the traditional leadership qualities of his doodem, the Crane.⁸ From his birth village on the shores of Lake Superior, he moved south, ending up in Crow Wing in the northern Mississippi River region. Crow Wing was one of the furthestmost western outposts for the Great Lakes Ojibwe people, in the heart of the Indigenous borderlands.

Now that his death was near, Babiizibindibe bestow his blessing that Bagone-giizhig and Zoongakamig should be tasked with the leadership of the Crow Wing village, and charged them to defend its claims to the hunting grounds, maple sugar bushes, and wild rice lakes that were found throughout the territory. The new boundaries drawn at the treaty council were intended to

from the shores of the Great Lake. He did not stop at Sandy Lake, but proceeded down the Mississippi, and located his camp in the vicinity of Crow Wing, on a plentiful hunting ground, but in dangerous proximity to the Dakotas.” See also, Charles J. Kappler ed., “Treaty with the Sioux, Etc., 1825. Aug. 19, 1825. 7 Stat., 272 Proclamation. Feb. 6, 1826” *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties: Vol. II Treaties* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904) [online] Oklahoma State University Library Treaty with the Sioux, Etc., 1825 <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/KAPPLER/Vol2/treaties/sio0250.htm>. The Treaty lists him as Ba-ba-see-kundade Curling Hair from Sandy Lake. This likely indicated that this cluster of villages were Sandy Lake Ojibwe.

⁵ To Lawrence Taliaferro October 20, 1825, Nicholas Boilvin to Lawrence Taliaferro Papers 1813-1868. Microfilm copy in Michigan State University Library Film 19550 Roll 1 of original in the Minnesota Historical Society. The illness struck nearly every party in attendance at the council. In a letter sent to Lawrence Taliaferro, Indian agent at St. Peters from a citizen at Prairie du Chien the letter writer recounted that “We have had a great many Deaths, specially the Manomines have died at this place to the number of thirty men, women, and children. There was one day died in this place, six Manomines and Mr. Roletts sister and a child of Mr. Tuson and I myself was very near going with them my health at this present time is not very good, I suffer yet with pains and I can get no sleep at nights, I am sorry to learn by your letter that the Red Wing is dead.”

⁶ Anton Treuer, *The Assassination of Hole In The Day* (St. Paul: Borealis Book an imprint of the Minnesota Historical Society Press, 38. Treuer explains that *oshkaabewisag* was a established position by the nineteenth century and had several different translations including “‘messenger,’ ‘helper,’ and ‘official.’”

⁷ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 47. Treuer, *The Assassination of Hole In The Day*, 41.

⁸ See Chapter 2 regarding the role hereditary lines played in Ojibwe leadership.

secure the Crow Wing village community's access to these resources, but Babiizibindibe recognized the need to continually protect these vital assets.⁹ While Babiizibindibe's blessing that Bagone-giizhig and Zoongakaming should succeed him in village leadership was important, in accordance with Ojibwe custom, the Crow Wing community itself needed to grant the final approval of the new leaders in a village council meeting.¹⁰ In time, both brothers proved to be strong advocates for the rights of their bands against the Dakota and American settlers. The treaty held mixed outcomes for individuals and communities alike. Babiizibindibe contracted an illness that cost him his life at a treaty council that ultimately failed to indefinitely secure the newly drawn borders. The unintended consequences that spiraled from this treaty council signaled a coming recalibration of relations in the western Great Lakes.¹¹

⁹ The near silence in the documentary record regarding the contributions of men like Bagone-giizhig and Zoongakaming is not surprising. Because the majority of real work of the council occurred in Native-run council meetings away from American official's recording. This likely where Bagone-giizhig and Zoongakaming would have had more opportunity to express and reiterate the concerns of the Sandy Lake band. Much of what is known about the council comes from the minutes that American commissioner secretary Thomas Biddle, and Indian Agent Henry Schoolcraft recorded during the larger full councils. Because American records of the council were based on American notions of what would be deemed a success, subsequent writings on the council have most often labeled it, while an interesting footnote, a failure. The United States had called the tribes of the western Great Lakes together in order to create and gain acceptance of tribal boundaries. These boundaries, the Americans believed, would create the foundation for a lasting peace in the region. Peace did not hold in the region very long after the council. In fact, warfare between the Ojibwe and the Dakota began almost immediately following the council.

¹⁰ Anton Treuer, *The Assassination of Hole In The Day*. (St. Paul: Borealis Book, 2011), 9-10. That Bagone-giizhig and Zoongakaming both rose to power in the nineteenth century was the beginning of a shift in how the Ojibwe determined leadership. Treuer examines this phenomenon writing, "Bagone-giizhig's contested rise to power defied the accepted Ojibwe definitions of political leadership, which were hereditary and clan-based. Under Bagone-giizhig's leadership, political connections to outside groups including the Americans and the Oceti Sakowin (Seven Council Fires of the Sioux), especially the Dakota, grew in importance...In addition, both Bagone-giizhigs defied the established custom wherein chiefs represented specific communities, not geographical regions."

¹¹ Treuer, *The Assassination of Hole In The Day*, 43. Babiizigindibe passed away on September 5, 1825. He was laid to rest "above the Fall of St. Anthony (in present-day Minneapolis) in accordance with Ojibwe war custom, sitting up and facing west."

Indigenous Borderlands; American Borders

The first three chapters of this dissertation have focused on the importance of the environmental resources in the geographical space of the Indigenous borderlands; the complex intertribal relationships between the Dakota and Ojibwe; and the ambitious goals Lewis Cass, Michigan's Territorial Governor, held for the region. Chapter Four brings these narratives together at Prairie du Chien itself. The 1825 Treaty Council of Prairie du Chien was a large gathering of leaders in the western Great Lakes. While hosted by Americans attempting to project a still-imagined power over the region, it was dominated by Native protocols, Native concerns, and Native desires, which dictated how the council functioned. The Americans called for a treaty that would secure the borders between every tribe in the Great Lakes. For the Americans, the violence that plagued the region was attributed to the lack of borders between tribes—draw the borders and peace would inevitably follow.

However, the Ojibwe and Dakota leaders of the western Great Lakes understood the relationships, peace, and violence between tribes as a far more complex and complicated system than the Americans imagined. There were three broad strategies used by tribal leaders at the council to influence its outcome. The first strategy was to refuse to attend the treaty council and reject the legitimacy of any American influence in the region. Only a few leaders employed this strategy with any success and more often it led to warfare, as was the case for Black Hawk and his band of Meskwaki-Sauk.¹² The second and third strategies both held the end goals of ensuring community security via access to environmental resources secured through participation at the council. The second strategy rejected the idea that individual bands could make claims to

¹² Black Hawk. *Black Hawk: An Autobiography* ed. Donald Jackson. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1955). See Black Hawk's autobiography for more on the Black Hawk War of 1832.

land, because the lands were understood as shared by all.¹³ These leaders, like White Cloud, argued that borders would not prevent violence, but instead would increase its prevalence. Hunters who were used to traveling in certain areas and were cut off from their hunting grounds by these borders could cause an increase in a region's violence. Furthermore, as it was common practice for allies to allow one another to cross hunting grounds and harvest resources when necessary, of which the American's view of defined borders discouraged. The third strategy, employed by Babiizibindibe and other leaders, accepted the creation of borders, so long as the Native leaders were allowed to draw them. These leaders attended the council with pre-drawn birch bark maps supporting their expansive territorial claims.¹⁴ These claims often conflicted with other leaders in attendance, which necessitated the need to negotiate a border.

The security of villages and need for access to environmental resource drove the strategies of the leaders that attended the council. The leaders held differing philosophical views from one another. They expressed these through the different strategies they employed at the treaty council. The varying strategies complicated the Americans' attempts of drawing borders and projecting power in the Great Lakes region. Although present, American power was still weak in 1825, and could not compel Native leaders to be bound by any agreement of which they did not approve. Though unenforceable at the time, the agreements made at the Prairie du Chien treaty council resulted in future unintended consequences, largely benefitting the Americans. In subsequent negotiations, the Americans used borderlines created in 1825 to their advantage by negotiating with fewer leaders from opposing tribes in land cessation discussions, which resulted in fewer dissenting viewpoints.

¹³ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 190.; Biddle, "Journal of the Proceedings", 37.

¹⁴ Biddle, "Journal of the Proceedings", 37.

However, in 1825 many Native leaders at the treaty council viewed their key adversary not the United States, but rival bands of Great Lakes Indians who, unlike the Americans, presented an actual physical threat to life and their communities. Power flowed to those able to provide access to environmental resources. Western Ojibwe leaders who drew borderlines attempted to use the Americans to their advantage by convincing them to back their territorial claims over any rival enemy claims, like the Dakota. This astute diplomatic move was undertaken purposefully to strengthen their community's position over its competition.

The Americans and the Lead-Up to the 1825 Prairie du Chien Treaty Council

On March 11th, 1825, James Barbour, the newly appointed Secretary of War, sent a letter granting General William Clark \$10,400 to be used for the upcoming 1825 treaty council. Barbour emphasized Clark's orders to conduct a council "for the purpose of establishing boundaries, and promoting peace among those tribes"—the Dakota, Anishinaabeg, Menominee, Sauk, Meskwaki, Ioway, and Ho-Chunk.¹⁵ Barbour required that any compromise be "made on the most advantageous terms that could be obtained for the Government."¹⁶ Beyond that, Barbour gave Clark wide latitude in determining which Indian agents Clark wanted present, and how the allotted funds were spent.

The federal government planned for the council to be held at Prairie du Chien, a small fur-trade outpost located in present-day southwestern Wisconsin. During the 1820s, Prairie du

¹⁵ James Barbour to William Clark March 11, 1825 Indian Office Letter Book 1. Mar 18, 1824-May 3, 1825. Pension Building page 400. Wisconsin Historical Archives Madison, WI.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Chien served as the central meeting place for a wide range of peoples.¹⁷ A November 11, 1827 letter from Indian agent Joseph Street described Prairie du Chien as a hub of tribal activity:

This place appears to have been from time immemorial, or at all events from the earliest knowledge of the Whites, a point common to all the Indians who inhabit the country lying upon the Mississippi and its waters about the Missouri, the Wisconsin, Green Bay, and Lakes Michigan and Superior, and their waters.¹⁸

Prairie du Chien was not only a meeting place for American Indians, but also for fur traders. Before disembarking to their outlying posts, fur traders came to Prairie du Chien to recuperate and re-supply. Agent Street highlighted the importance of the Prairie du Chien location for the American military to the Secretary of War, writing in “this place, our forces can be more rapidly concentrated, than any other on the Indian frontier. And it affords a point of meeting known to the Indians of various Tribes, and easily approached in canoes in a short time.”¹⁹ The overlapping territorial claims made by Indian tribes to the region surrounding Prairie du Chien made it both centrally located and vital to the United States’ military strategy.

The 1825 council promised to be a major event for all—both Native and non-Native—in the area. Cass, saw an opportunity to serve at the head of the commission with Clark. He wrote to Thomas L. McKenney, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, to express his desire to be included in the federal commission. He detailed his expertise in Indian affairs and argued it qualified him serve. Cass explained to McKenney that for the last three years he had collected materials on American Indians, but was having some trouble finishing the work because “the Menomonies, Wenebagoes, Sacs and Foxes, and Sioux are at such a distance, that they are

¹⁷ For more information regarding the ethnic diversity of Prairie du Chien see Lucy Eldersveld Murphy. *Great Lakes Creoles: A French-Indian Community on the Northern Borderlands, Prairie du Chien 1750-1860*. (New York: Cambridge University Press), 2014.

¹⁸ Joseph M. Street to Secretary of War James Barbour, Nov. 11, 1827 page 18 Joseph Montfort Street Papers, 1806-1898 Wis Mss AD Wisconsin Historical Society Archives.

¹⁹ Ibid.

without the range of my personal observation.”²⁰ For Cass, these tribes were the most important attendees of the treaty council because the least was known about them. The myth of the vanishing Indian was present in Cass’ mind, “The Indians are daily diminishing around us, their traditions are becoming idle legends, their distinctive traits of character are disappearing, and all that is valuable in their history and condition will, if not soon arrested, pass beyond the possibility of recovery.”²¹ Cass further advocated for the inclusion of the yet-uninvited tribes in the Lake Superior area.

It is essential to our character and influence among the Indians, that the Chippewas from this Superintendency about Lake Superior should be summoned to Prairie. The murders committed by them last fall cannot be passed over. If they should be, there will no security for their future good conduct, and they will keep the frontier in a state of alarm. Authority should be given to summon them; and that authority must be exercised here. There is no communication with them by the Mississippi Country. Messengers should be sent to them from the Sault Ste Marie.²²

Cass referenced Mr. Finely’s murder that occurred during the prior year. By 1825 American justice had still not been served in the eyes of Cass.

On April 16, 1825, after approval from McKenney and his supervisor, the Secretary of War Barbour, Cass was appointed to be a lead commissioner, along with General Clark, for the treaty council.²³ Cass’ desire to be included in the treaty council was, in part, a desire to demonstrate the power of the United States to the Lake Superior tribes—which could help in his efforts to maintain control over the Michigan Territory. Cass did not intend to arrive alone at the

²⁰ Lewis Cass to Thos. L. McKenney March 30, 1825 Indian Office Files, Michigan, 1824-1828. Pension Building. Wisconsin Historical Archives Madison, WI.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ Secretary of War James Barbour was Thomas L. McKenney’s supervisor and had the ultimate say in who represented the United States at the council.

treaty council. Soon after receiving word of his commission, Cass wrote to his protégé Henry Schoolcraft, the Indian agent at Sault Ste Marie. Cass wanted Schoolcraft to make the journey to Prairie du Chien, suggesting that Schoolcraft would find “something interesting out of the proposed treaty.”²⁴ More than one letter was sent from Cass to Schoolcraft in this regard, including one listing relevant dates and appropriate travel times:

You must calculate the time when I shall probably reach Mackinack, and I trust you will join us there. I have a thousand reasons why you should undertake the tour. Many of the Indians will be from your agency, and such a convocation will never again be seen upon this frontier. You can return by the Chippewa River, which will give you a fine opportunity of becoming acquainted with a part of the country very little known.²⁵

Compelled in part by Cass’ pleas, Schoolcraft agreed to attend the treaty council. Upon leaving for the council, Schoolcraft reflected upon the momentous occasion ahead.

The convocation to which we were now proceeding was for the purpose of settling internal disputes between the tribes, by fixing the boundaries to their respective territories, and thus laying the foundation of a lasting peace on the frontiers. And it marks an era in the policy of our negotiations with the Indians, which is memorable. No such gathering of the tribes had ever before occurred, and its results have taken away the necessity of any in future, so far as relates to the lines of the Mississippi.”²⁶

For many of the American participants, the gathering was the largest such council that they had attended. Idealism about the event permeates throughout Schoolcraft’s later memoirs—but these glowing reviews should be carefully examined. Schoolcraft’s memoirs were published for an American audience, and held an optimistic description of the treaty council. In describing Clark’s and Cass’ efforts at the council, Schoolcraft described the men glowingly.

²⁴ Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Personal Memoirs of a Residence of Thirty Years with the Indian Tribes on the American Frontiers: with brief notices of passing events, facts, and opinions, A.D. 1812- A.D. 1842*, (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo and co., 1851), [ebook], 206, <https://archive.org/details/personalmemoirs00schogoog> .

²⁵ Ibid., 209.

²⁶ Ibid., 214.

It was a pleasing sight to see the explorer of the Columbia in 1806, and the writer of the proclamation of the army that invaded Canada in 1812, uniting in a task boding so much good to the tribes whose passions and trespasses on each other's lands keep them perpetually at war."²⁷

In contrast to Schoolcraft's memoirs of the event, Prairie du Chien resident James H. Lockwood had a decidedly less enthusiastic and less hopeful outlook on the proceedings. Lockwood's recollections note that after hearing of the details of the treaty, he asked Lewis Cass "what good he thought would result" from the treaty.²⁸ Cass responded only, "they would have it so at Washington."²⁹ This response is curious, considering the alternate, enthusiastic reaction that Cass and Schoolcraft have about the treaty in Schoolcraft's memoirs. Perhaps Cass' response indicated that while Schoolcraft and Cass were both excited to attend the large and important meeting, the actual outcome was of little importance to them. The response may also be a reframed memory for Lockwood, written in light of the peace that did not materialize following the council. Or, the response could point towards ulterior motives that drove Cass to attend. In other writings, Cass displayed strong paternalist and occasionally racist beliefs towards American Indians. His lack of confidence that peace could be achieved may have derived from a belief that warfare was in the American Indian's inherent "nature."³⁰

²⁷ Ibid., 217.

²⁸ Lockwood. "Early Times and Events in Wisconsin", 153.

²⁹ Ibid., 153.

³⁰ VAULT Ayer MS 601 Lewis Cass Papers Cass, Lewis "In the formation of a system for the regulation of Indian Affairs... [ca. 1815] Ayer MS 601 Box 1 Folder 1. Newberry Library Chicago, IL, 2. Cass noted in his writing "Our first and principal duty is to reclaim them as far as practicable, from the savage situation, in which they are placed, and to impact to them as many of the blessings of civilized life, as their manners and customs and inveterate prejudice will permit."

Still, it appeared that several of the Americans present intended the treaty to actually make a lasting and firm bond.³¹ In the spring of 1825, Thomas Forsyth wrote to William Clark to express his general impressions and suggestions for the Prairie du Chien treaty council. He advised Clark to hold the council in early August to ensure that the majority of tribal leaders could be present.

I would strongly advise that the principal chiefs and braves of each nation of Indians be invited to attend the Treaty of Council for any thing done with inferior chiefs and braves will be like many of the treaties made with the Indians previous to the late war... and the nations of Indians that any of those inferior chiefs and braves may belong will never confirm or abide to any of their acts.”³²

By 1825 several American officials had enough experience with tribal leaders to understand the protocols of treaty making. Forsyth displayed a keen insight into tribal politics of the nineteenth century western Great Lakes: there was no single king or body who ruled with complete authority. If the Americans wanted the treaty council to achieve their desired goals, they had to engage in Indian diplomacy. Unless respected tribal leaders signed the treaty, it would not be honored.

In addition to ensuring that well-respected leaders were in attendance, in their role as hosts United States officials were also expected to provide gifts during the council. Gifts were an important way to establish kinship ties between groups of people in order to strengthen bonds and agreements. Clark’s budget included these gifts both to provide for those who came, but also

³¹ Gwen Westerman and Bruce White. *Mni Sota Makoce The Land of the Dakota* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2012), 148. One of these men was Lawrence Taliaferro who was present at the 1825 council. In the years in the lead up to the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council Taliaferro worked to secure peace in the region. In 1823 he suggested sending Dakota and Ojibwe delegations to Washington D.C. and in 1824 he accompanied delegations of “Dakota, Ojibwe, and Menominee on the first of a series of trips to Washington, one purpose of which was to give them a chance to see something of the white man’s strength and numbers.” Taliaferro was no stranger to Ojibwe and Dakota diplomacy.

³² Letter from Thomas Forsyth to General William Clark April 9, 1825 in Thomas Forsyth Papers Vol. 4” found in the Draper Collection Wisconsin Historical Society: Madison, WI.

as a draw to encourage attendance by tribal leaders.³³ Clark estimated that 2,000 Indians would attend the council, staying for 15 days. He understood that gifts were a necessary part of treaty councils to ensure good faith conversations between participants. To address this responsibility, Clark's detailed budget sent to Washington asked for one and a half rations per day, per person of beef, along with tobacco, salt, sugar, guns, powder, lead, and spirits.³⁴ These provisions, Clark explained to Congress, were to be used to feed not only the heads of the villages who came to the treaty council, but also the members of the villages who came along to observe and be part of the gathering.

Clark also appeared to better understand the United States' role as "father" of the proceedings than most congressmen in Washington. Americans largely misinterpreted the concept of "father" and "son" relationships during treaty talks. Americans understood the role of father to be one that fit European notions of an authoritarian figure, where what the father said was law. In contrast, American Indians in the western Great Lakes understood the role of father to be one who provided and protected his children.³⁵ Thus, the role of the father was to provide and act in service. Anthropologist Raymond DeMallie's research on the 1851 Fort Laramie treaty between the Sioux, Cheyenne, Assiniboiné, Shoshones, Arikaras, Gros Ventres (Hidatsa), Mandans, Arapahoes, and Crows demonstrated that when American Indians positioned themselves as "children" it was a subtle, but strategic move. "Indian orators exploited the father-children metaphor to ask for favors. In Plains Indian cultures this relationship was a very

³³ Cary Miller, "Gifts as Treaties: The Political Use of Received Gifts in Anishinaabeg Communities, 1820-1832," *The American Indian Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (Spring 2002): 221-245.

³⁴ Biddle, *Journal of the Proceedings*, 4.

³⁵ Bruce White, "Give Us A Little Milk": The Social and Cultural Meanings of Gift Giving in the Lake Superior Fur Trade," in *Minnesota History*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (Summer, 1982), 65-66. See also Witgen. *An Infinity of Nations*, 52.

important one in which the father gave freely to his children.”³⁶ Like the leaders in DeMallie’s research on the 1851 Fort Laramie treaty, American Indians leaders in the western Great Lakes also used the terms of father and children throughout the treaty making process in order to gain a better bargaining position and final deal for themselves and their people.

Ojibwe and Dakota leaders during the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty used familial terms strategically to place the burden on the American commissions for keeping the peace.³⁷ However, as DeMallie pointed out, this strategy only worked if the American commissioners understood the subtle uses of the terms the Ojibwe and Dakota used. The United States needed both to understand the usage of the term and possess the capabilities and desire to fulfill the role of father. Any peace established at the council was the father’s responsibility to maintain. This vital understanding of the role of father in keeping the peace was often misunderstood, and more often deliberately neglected by the United States. Clark understood, at the very least, part of this obligation and thus requested adequate supplies and gifts in the budget for the council.

By the summer of 1825, the United States Indian agents and commissioners of the Great Lakes laid the groundwork for their great council of Great Lakes Indians. The organizers sent runners to inform as many tribal leaders as possible of the gathering at Prairie du Chien. Funding had been secured from the Department of War, and both Clark and Cass embarked on their journeys to Prairie du Chien. Yet by late July it was still unclear how many tribal leaders—if any at all—would show up for the great council on the Mississippi.

³⁶ Raymond DeMallie, “Touching the Pen: Plains Indian Treaty Councils in Ethnohistorical Perspective.” In *Ethnicity on the Great Plains*, edited by Frederick C. Luebecke, 38-53. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980. 354.

³⁷ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 188. All of the speakers during the treaty council utilized familial language while addressing each other including when they address Cass and Clark. This is recorded in the meeting minutes and including the Ojibwe Grosse Guelli and Shin-gau-ba-W’Ossin and the Dakota Wabasha.

Nations of the Borderlands Arrive

The splash of canoe paddles and sounds of men singing momentarily interrupted the chirping of birds in the late July heat in the Mississippi River valley. Henry Schoolcraft and Lewis Cass arrived at Prairie du Chien “on the July 21st, making the whole journey from Mackinac in twenty-one days.”³⁸ Schoolcraft colorfully recorded his first impressions of the occasion in his journal. The messengers sent out by the United States requesting the presence of tribal leaders of the villages and bands of the Great Lakes succeed in their mission. Many leaders and their families made the journey, and they set up camps up and down the banks of the Mississippi River near Prairie du Chien. The sight that welcomed Schoolcraft at Prairie du Chien impressed him. “We found a very large number of the various tribes assembled. Not only the village, but the entire banks of the river for miles above and below the town, and the island in the river, was covered with their tents.”³⁹ While Schoolcraft collected detailed descriptions of the Dakota, Ojibwe, and Ho-Chunks, he had the most colorful description of the Meskwaki and Sauk.

Their martial bearing, their high tone, and whole behavior during their stay, in and out of council, was impressive, and demonstrated, in an eminent degree, to what a high pitch of physical and moral courage, bravery and success in war may lead a savage people. Keokuk, who led them, stood with his war lance, high crest of feathers, and daring eye, like another Coriolanus, and when he spoke in council, and at the same time shook his lance at his enemies, the Sioux, it was evident that he wanted but an opportunity to make their blood flow like water. Wapelo, and other chiefs backed him, and the whole array, with their shaved heads and high crests of red horse-hair, told the spectator plainly, that each of these men held his life in his hand, and was ready to spring to the work of slaughter at the cry of their chief.⁴⁰

³⁸ Schoolcraft, *Personal Memoirs*, 214.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 214.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 216.

Schoolcraft hoped, in agreeing to accompany Cass to the treaty council, to be able to study and record observations of the council. He was in the process of gathering ethnographic material of American Indian tribes throughout the United States, but the western tribes of the Great Lakes were still relatively unknown to the Americans—an omission Schoolcraft wanted to remedy. William Clark arrived nine days after Cass and Schoolcraft.⁴¹ Thomas Biddle, who kept the official record of the proceedings for Clark, was far more subdued than Schoolcraft in his initial reflections on the council simply recording, “July 30, 1825 Reached Prairie des Chiens after sundown found Gov Cass who had been here since the 21st.”⁴²

The Opening of the Prairie du Chien Treaty Council

Cannon fire boomed in the air during the morning of August 5, 1825, the official opening day of the Prairie du Chien council. The representatives assembled under a specially built bower to listen to the opening speeches. The Americans explained that they would use the cannon to mark the beginning of that day’s meeting.⁴³ Many of the tribal leaders were familiar with the ritualized procedures of treaty councils. Great Lakes treaty councils followed a careful pattern filled with symbolism that gave weight to the events transpiring.⁴⁴ Whichever party called for the

⁴¹ Biddle, “Journal of the Proceedings”, 7. Clark arrived at Prairie du Chien from St. Louis on July 30, 1825.

⁴² Ibid., 7.

⁴³ Ibid., 9, 10.

⁴⁴ Benjamin Ramirez-Shkwegnaabi, “The Dynamics of American Indian Diplomacy in the Great Lakes Region,” in *American Indian Cultural and Research Journal* 27:4 (2003), 57, <http://dx.doi.org.proxy1.cl.msu.edu/10.17953/aicr.27.4.f2217880186w0332>.

council first held the responsibility of opening the council with a speech that called on all participants to meet and discuss in good faith.⁴⁵

In addition to the commissioners Cass and Clark, the Americans invited the Indian agents Henry Schoolcraft, Nicholas Boilvin, Lawrence Taliaferro, and Thomas Forsyth and subagents Alexander Forsyth, C.C. Trowbridge, and R.A. Forsyth also attended. Several fur traders also signed the final document including John Holiday, Dunable Denejlevy, and Bela Chapman. The presence of the fur traders and Indian agents represented the interests of both the United States military power and the economic power it wished to project into the region. Clark used his introduction to project this power at the opening of the council. He began his speech by reiterating that the United States had not come to the council to take any land, but instead came purely for the benefit of those assembled.

We want nothing-not the smallest piece of your land-not a single article of your property. We have come a great way to meet you for your own good, and not for our benefit. Your Great Father has been informed that war is carried on among his red children, the Socs, Foxes, and Chippawas, on the one side, and the Sioux on the other; and that the wars of some of you began before any of you now living were born.”⁴⁶

Clark continued the United States’ argument that peace should be secured throughout the region: “There is land enough for you to live and hunt on, and animals enough for your support[.]”⁴⁷ He knew some of the tribal leaders blamed the United States for the violence that existed throughout

⁴⁵ David H. DeJong, *American Indian Treaties: A Guide to Ratified and Unratified Colonial, United States, States, Foreign, and Intertribal Treaties and Agreements, 1607-1911*. (Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2015), 10. Diplomatic protocols were sophisticated and required participants to be well versed in procedures. “Because diversity in language, culture, custom, and tradition among tribal nations existed-especially within larger geographic regions...tribal leaders, including holy men, developed a sophisticated language and process for engaging in diplomatic matters that all tribal diplomats understood.” For Great Lakes Indian procedures in particular see Ramirez-Shkwegnaabi, “The Dynamics of American Indian Diplomacy in the Great Lakes Region,” 57.

⁴⁶ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 187.

⁴⁷ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 187.; Biddle, “Journal of the Proceedings”, 14.

the territory, but refuted this accusation by the placing blame on the tribes themselves and the British.

Some of you may think that the white people have been the cause of the decrease of the Indians. I know that it cannot be the case, as tribes have been reduced who have had no intercourse with the white settlements. Very few of the red skins have been killed by the whites, and those only in open hostility, which had been provoked by the foolish conduct of theirs, or into which they have been led by the favor and persuasion of the British, who have wanted you to fight their battles.⁴⁸

His statement is representative of the American state of mind at the time. Clark believed that the decline in population of American Indians occurred because of their own failings. Implicit in this sentiment was that in order to preserve their communities, tribes needed to assimilate to white American culture. This supports Saler's argument that "Cass and Clark aimed for a grander effect than merely a cessation of hostilities; their actions elicited a conversion of consciousness from one way of conceiving of government and territoriality to a very different view-grounded in the assumptions of U.S. state formation."⁴⁹ Clark dismissed the idea that tribal leaders might use military operations against the United States as either foolish or inspired by a conspiracy headed by the British to turn American Indians against the United States.

The looming presence of the British in the Great Lakes was an ever-present concern for both Clark and Cass since before the War of 1812.⁵⁰ The war concluded just ten years prior to the treaty council, and many tribes continued to hold hostile views against the Americans. In 1821, for the first time in "more than twenty years" the Ojibwe leader Flat Mouth met with an

⁴⁸ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 187.; Biddle, "Journal of the Proceedings", 15-16.

⁴⁹ Bethel Saler, *The Settlers' Empire: Colonialism and State Formation in America's Old Northwest*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 106.

⁵⁰ "The second obstacle to the permanent continuance of peace is the influence acquired by the British agents which has been uniformly exerted to hostile and insidious purposes... Every British trader admitted into the Indian Country is in fact a British Agent; They systematically seize every opportunity of poisoning the minds of the Indians." Lewis Cass. "In the formation of a system for the regulation of Indian Affairs... [ca. 1815] 12-13. VAULT Ayer MS 601 Lewis Cass Papers Box 1, Folder 1. Newberry Library Chicago, IL.

American representative, Lawrence Taliaferro.⁵¹ Flat Mouth's choice of dress and statements spoke volumes to his ability to obtain the best result for his people.

I came down to day and you must not think hard of me that I come into your house with a red coat on.

I have been a long time acquainted with the British, but this day have a wish to quit them

My father I came down this day to see you. Our young men have been at war with the Sioux. Your children about here I have nothing to say against. It is the sussetongs and the Sioux at the head of the river St. Peters and after I am down talking to you I hope you will permit me to talk to your children about you.⁵²

By wearing a red coat during this conversation, Flat Mouth signaled to the Americans that he was respected as a leader by the British, and thus should be respected by the Americans. Four years after this meeting with Flat Mouth, the American commissioners at Prairie du Chien again attempted to expand their sphere of power by gaining the trust of respected tribal leaders. Clark knew that many tribal leaders remained wary of the American's hidden motives in calling for the treaty council, and attempted to assuage their worries with his opening remarks. Clark claimed that the Americans had "come a great way to meet you for your own good, and not for our benefit."⁵³ Only by ensuring tribal leaders understood this, Clark believed, could the treaty-making process succeed.

Clark focused on the problem of the lack of "defined boundaries," which he thought caused the cyclical violence in the region.⁵⁴ The Americans thought that without defined boundaries, there could be no clear demarcation of territory and no peace. Thus, when hunters

⁵¹ August 29, 1821. Lawrence Taliaferro Papers 1794-1871. Box 10. Minnesota Historical Society, Saint Paul, MN P1203.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29 187. Biddle, "Journal of the Proceedings", 14.

⁵⁴ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29 187. Biddle, "Journal of the Proceedings", 16.

“follow[ed] the game into the lands claimed by other tribes,” outbreaks of violence occurred.⁵⁵ Clark explained that the central proposition, drawing tribal territorial boundaries, ensured that tribal members would not pass into each other’s territories, which would prevent intertribal violence in the region.⁵⁶ Before concluding his opening statement, Clark attempted to project more American power by promising the protection of the United States to the gathered tribes. Clark promised that “whoever injuries either of you injures us-and we shall punish him as we would punish one of our own people.”⁵⁷ This extension of both physical and jurisdictional power in the region was hopeful thinking as the United States did not possess the military capabilities to enforce the boundaries at that time. Without the overwhelming presence of military backing in the region, there was no way for Clark to command obedience from the attending tribal leaders. To convince them of his border-drawing plan, he needed to show respect and deference to the tribal leaders and their treaty protocols.

The first day recorded only this speech made by Clark. The day’s events, at least for the Americans, concluded with the smoking of a pipe and throwing the ashes from the pipe into the council fire. This too was a highly ritualized and important aspect of the council. Used in diplomatic ceremonies, the pipe ensured peace continued throughout the proceedings and was a ritual that the Americans had adopted when entreating with tribes.⁵⁸ The presence of the pipe was, by 1825, a common object seen at councils between undertaken by the United States, and it was an important symbol of Native power that forced the Americans to follow American Indian protocols during such ceremonies.

⁵⁵ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 187. Biddle, “Journal of the Proceedings”, 16.

⁵⁶ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 188. Biddle, “Journal of the Proceedings”, 16.

⁵⁷ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 188. Biddle, “Journal of the Proceedings”, 17.

⁵⁸ Ramirez-Shkwegnaabi, “The Dynamics of American Indian Diplomacy in the Great Lakes Region,” 57.

As strong and forcefully Clark attempted to portray his position, authority and power in the region was fleeting. At best Clark could sympathize, cajole, and argue for the American plan, but he and the other Americans could not command obedience from the tribal leaders in attendance. The Americans believed that Great Lakes Indians did not understand the concept behind borders, but as the birch bark maps produced later in the council demonstrated this was a false idea. The Great Lakes bands were aware of their own boundaries and several leaders were acutely in tune with the power that American acknowledgement could bring to back their territorial claims. Progress on convincing all of the tribal leaders to submit to American-style mapped borders, and the developing of the borders themselves moved slowly.⁵⁹

Throughout the following day, the leaders of several bands met in their own councils to discuss the American's proposal. On August 6th, all parties came together to engage in discussion. Many of the opening statements from the tribal leaders included phrasing that their "ears are open to hear the words of our Great Father."⁶⁰ This symbolic language indicated that the leaders were considering the American's border drawing proposal. The day began slowly as not all the tribal leaders were willing to be so open with their thoughts. The Meskwaki and Sauk present refused to give their opinions because several of their other important leaders were absent, and had not yet made their opinions known. After the Meskwaki and Sauk, speaking rights moved to the leaders of the Ojibwe. Cut-Ear declined to make a statement in support of the proposal, but reiterated that he listened "with open ears" to the suggestions of the Americans.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Biddle, "Journal of the Proceedings", 28. *The Niles Weekly Register*, 189. Biddle notes on Monday August 8, 1825 that Pee-a-cuck (Single Man) an Ojibwe leader from St. Croix presented his claim and then offered a birch bark map delineating the boundaries for all the council to see.

⁶⁰ *The Niles Weekly Register*, 188. Biddle, "Journal of the Proceedings", 22. The Ebbing Wave an Ojibwe from Leech Lake is noted as having made this statement.

⁶¹ Ramirez-Shkwegnaabi, "The Dynamics of American Indian Diplomacy in the Great Lakes Region," 58. Proceedings could often move slowly. Ramirez-Shkwegnaabi writes, "Basil Johnston, an Ojibwe scholar, has

Noodin opened with an outright rejection of the American ideas.⁶² While Noodin valued his friendship with the Americans, especially with Lawrence Taliaferro, he had little confidence in the border-drawing plan. “I wish to live in peace. But in running marks round our country, or in giving it to our enemies, it may make new disturbances and breed new wars.”⁶³ Noodin was not alone in this assessment of the goals of the treaty council. Shin-gau-ba W’Osin, who was listed in the journal of the treaty proceedings as the “1st chief of the Chippewas,”⁶⁴ also held strong reservations about the wisdom of trying to construct tribal boundaries.⁶⁵ While he expressed pleasure that the American had put forth some effort to help maintain peace, he also explained his misgivings about the process.

My fathers⁶⁶ have taken a great deal of trouble to collect their red children together and to keep them in peace. But I am afraid it will not be good. The young men are bad and hard to govern, though there are some respectable chiefs among them.⁶⁷

observed that “there were many practical reasons for ‘taking time,’ but dominating them all was a reverence for ‘the word’. To be asked to make a decision was to be asked to give ‘word’, an awesome request.” Following the initial pipe ceremony and speech by the host, Indian leaders routinely thanked the speaker and informed him that they would take time to think over his words and being discussions the following day. Ogimaag frequently met with one another before and after the opening sessions of treaty councils to share information and coordinate tactics. Throughout the course of the treaty councils, ogimaag frequently called for a halt to the proceedings to discuss issues among themselves.”

⁶² Redix. *The Murder of Joe White*, 222 see footnote 87. Redix notes that Noodin was identified in the treaty minutes as “The Wind, Chippewa.” Redix recounts further that Noodin “was a somewhat prominent ogimaa in Ojibwe politics during the treaty era, signing treaties in 1826, 1837, 1842, and 1847.”

⁶³ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol.29, 188. Biddle, “Journal of the Proceedings”, 20.

⁶⁴ Biddle, “Journal of the Proceedings”, 21.

⁶⁵ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 47, 317, 392-393. Shin-gau-ba W’Osin is listed by William Warren as Shin-ga-ba-ossin or Spirit Stone also spelled as Shingabawossin. Warren writes that Shingabawossin was an ogimaa at Sault Ste. Marie from the Crane doodem and was present at both the 1825 and 1826 treaty councils.

⁶⁶ Ramirez-Shkwegnaabi, “The Dynamics of American Indian Diplomacy in the Great Lakes Region,” 57 and 58. Ramirez-Shkwegnaabi describes the use of this kinship language rather than an indication of subordination “such language drew on ceremonial forms of address and supplication that helped ease the process of negotiation. The use of parental or fraternal terms was a sign of respect, as was a request for help.”

⁶⁷ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 188. Biddle, “Journal of the Proceedings”, 21-22.

The Americans likely designated Shin-gau-ba W'Osin, an Ojibwe ogimaa from eastern Lake Superior and an area over which Henry Schoolcraft claimed influence, as the "1st chief the Chippewas" because he appeared generally sympathetic to the American goals. Designating a "friendly Indian" was common in treaty negotiations.⁶⁸ Yet, at this particular treaty council, Shin-gau-ba W'Osin appeared ambivalent about the American claim that peace could be ensured through the establishment of boundary lines.⁶⁹

Unlike Shin-gau-ba W'Osin's ambivalence, the Iowa leader White Cloud adamantly rejected the border drawing plan. Arriving late, White Cloud was not able to meet with the leaders assembled discussing the southern borderlines until August 9th.⁷⁰ When he spoke, White Cloud, did not wish to formally claim any particular lands, explaining "The land I live on is enough to furnish my women and children. I go upon the lands of our friends the Socs and Foxes-we alternately go upon each others land. Why should we quarrel about lands, when we get enough on what we have."⁷¹ He also indicated his view of the oneness of the assembled tribes,

⁶⁸ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 349. Witgen argued that the Americans tried to "reconfigure Anishinaabewaki" into their own conception of a single nation designating Shingaba' wassin as "the first chief of the Chippewa nation." Witgen argued "[t]hey gave the ogimaa this title in part because he was a prominent civil leader at Sault Sainte Marie, a village of enormous political, spiritual, and cultural importance to the Anishinaabeg. But they also wanted to simplify the complex leadership patterns and social relationships that defined Anishinaabewaki in order to make it governable." This attempted, Witgen argued, failed as the Anishinaabeg forced to commissioners to meet with the Lake Superior tribes separately the following year thereby rejecting the attempt by the Americans to consider the Anishinaabeg a single entity with a head leader.

⁶⁹ Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 392-393. Shingabawossin appears later with Cass at the 1826 council at Fond du Lac. Warren recounts at that council Shingabawossin made a speech "wherein he urged them to discover to the white their knowledge of the minerals which abounded in their country. This, however, was meant more to tickle the ears of the commissioners and to obtain their favor, than as an earnest appeal to his people, for the old chieftain was to much imbued with the superstition prevalent amongst the Indians, which prevents them from discovering their knowledge of mineral and copper boulders to the whites."

⁷⁰ Biddle, "Journal of the Proceedings", 6. White Cloud had met Clark when Clark paused at Fort Edwards on July 17, 1825 on his way to the council. They arrived at the fort because their agent had requested that they do so. Biddle recorded that the agent had been in error and that "The Indians are without provision or the means of transportation to Prairie des Chiens- Gave them a barrel of pork and one of biscuit and borrow a canoe for them from the American Fur Company. They say a Beef has been killed for them which is yet to be paid for."

⁷¹ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 190.

rather than individual, distinct peoples. “My fathers: You see people here apparently of different nations, but we are all one. You Socs, Foxes, Winnebagos and Minominies, we are one people, we have but one council fire, and eat out of the same dish.”⁷² White Cloud’s statements echoed those of Tenskwatawa and Musquaconocah (Shawnee), who advocated at the Treaty of Greenville in 1795 for a common American Indian territory, rather than territories owned by specific tribes. Musquaconocah had then explained, “The Great Spirit gave us this land in common. . . . He has not given the right to any one nation, to say to another, this land is not yours, it belongs to me.”⁷³

Intertribal land use was also brought up by Co-ra-mo-nee, a Ho-Chunk speaking on behalf of four other Ho-Chunk leaders, The Boy of Wyno-Spuck, The Elder, Four Legs, and Dog’s Head.⁷⁴ Co-ra-mo-nee presented a land claim surrounding Lake Winnebago, but explained, “The lands I claim are mine, and the nations here know it is not only claimed by us, but by our brothers the Socs and Foxes, Menominies, Iowas, Mahas and Sioux. They have used it in common-it would be difficult to divide it- it belongs as much to one as the other.”⁷⁵ This shared access to resources was common in the Indigenous borderlands, but often the groups with the secondary access rights were expected to request permission to gather resources from the group with the primary access rights. When claims and use of land overlapped without such an agreement, conflict arose. Even with the expectation of asking permission, the land itself was not

⁷² *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 190. Biddle, “Journal of the Proceedings”, 36.

⁷³ Sami Lakomäki, “Our Line” The Shawnees, the United States, and Competing Borders on the Great Lakes “Borderlands,” 1795-1832. in *Journal of the Early Republic*, 34 Winter 2014, 601 and 603. Lakomäki explained, “[w]hile the treaty made no mention of tribal borders, the eagerness of many Indian leaders to evoke such lines publicly during the negotiations left the landless Shawnees worried.”

⁷⁴ *The Niles Weekly Register*, 190. “Journal of the Proceedings”, 38-39. Often times an orator would be selected in order to speak on behalf of a community. This orator would always indicate upon whose behalf they were speaking on as Co-ra-mo-nee does here.

⁷⁵ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 190. Biddle. “Journal of the Proceedings”, 38.

viewed as held as private property as in the American tradition. “I did not know that any of my relations had any particular land,” Co-ra-mo-nee explained, “It is true, every one owns his own lodge, and the grounds he may cultivate. I had thought the rivers were the common property of all red skins, and not used exclusively by any particular nation.”⁷⁶ Co-ra-mo-nee’s words acknowledged that Great Lakes Indians held individual private property, but that it operated differently than in American culture⁷⁷—a refutation of Cass’ prior understanding. Their lodges, their goods inside that lodge, even the lands set aside for their own cultivation. These things were made from the resources of the land.

Co-ra-mo-nee’s discussion of land sharing excludes all Anishinaabeg tribes. The Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Odawa were not friends allowed to travel freely throughout these lands, but were part of a separate alliance. Chamblee, an Anishinaabeg leader, explained that the three bands were a part of a single council fire, rather than the separate tribes the United States described.⁷⁸ The Anishinaabeg leader admonished the Americans saying that they should have known better than to ask to draw borderlines between the Anishinaabeg. He explained tribal members freely

travel in search of game. We also have lands. I never yet heard from my ancestors, that any one had an exclusive right to the soil. My chiefs are now in council on that subject, and their minds will be made known to you. You, (addressing governor Cass), know the situation of our lands, and that it would be difficult to divide them. You know we have always listened to your counsel.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 190. Biddle. “Journal of the Proceedings”, 39.

⁷⁷ Newberry Library, Chicago VAULT Ayer MS 601 Box 1 Folder 1 Lewis Cass Papers. Lewis Cass “In the Formation of a system for the regulation of Indian Affairs...[ca. 1815,], 8. Cass writes, “The first step in the progress of improvement is to convert the wandering savage into a settled man by giving him notions of exclusive property and by ensuring to him the enjoyment of it.”

⁷⁸ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 190. “Journal of the Proceedings”, 39. Chamblee begins, “I salute you and all my relations. We three nations-Chippewas, Pattawatomes, and Ottawa-have but one council fire.”

⁷⁹ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 190. “Journal of the Proceedings”, 39-40.

Shin-gau-ba W'Osin, Noodin, Chamblee, and White Cloud's arguments presented strong opposition to the American goals of the council. Making matters more difficult, the tribal leaders could not force any person to follow their orders unlike the political model of the American nation-state. This posed the problem that even if borders were drawn they appeared to be nearly impossible to enforce. Furthermore, animals did not recognize such territorial boundaries. The idea that hunters living at the edge of the borderlands would stop when in pursuit of game because of the boundary created at the council must have seem unlikely to the Native leaders. Finally, those who believed that warfare would stop because of borders underestimated the complexity that surrounded calls for war. More often war parties were undertaken to avenge a wrong committed by an outside party than solely to expand an area deemed necessary for the band. During these excursions young men were offered the opportunity to prove themselves and remedy wrongs committed against their families. Borders would not prevent such instances of warfare.

On August 6, Governor Cass responded to the pessimism of the Native leaders. He berated the assembled leaders saying, "I hope we will not hear again that the young men will break the peace. They shall not break the peace. The old men must take the tomahawks from them and throw them in the fire."⁸⁰ Cass stubbornly maintained the belief that peace would follow the establishment of United States backed borders. Rather than listening to the concerns of the gathered leaders over the usefulness of borders, Cass encouraged tribal leaders to continue to meet outside the formal council and work out boundaries amongst themselves.

Not all of the leaders were concerned over the potential difficulty of creating borders. Even White Cloud curiously brought along a birch bark map. Pumpkin, another Iowa leader, rose

⁸⁰ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 189.; Biddle. "Journal of the Proceedings", 24-25.

to speak after White Cloud saying, “I live with my relations the Socs and Foxes. I have no reason to deny my brethren.”⁸¹ But then in the notes of the minutes it is mentioned that Pumpkin then presented a map drawn by White Cloud.⁸² Tribal leaders living at the edge of western Great Lakes seemed especially open to the drawing of borders. Dakota and Ojibwe communities on the western edges saw more violence in competing for environmental resources. Leaders in these communities were much more eager to display their land claims, providing detailed birch bark maps of suggested boundaries.⁸³

As the council proceeded, details and compromises emerged, although slowly. On August 10, the Meskwaki announced that peace had been made with Wapahasha’s band of Dakota, and a boundary line established. The Americans consulted Wapahasha and asked him for confirmation, to which he replied, “I never made any arrangement with the Foxes about lines. The only arrangement we made was about peace.”⁸⁴ Evidencing the complexities of inter-tribal negotiations, the Meskwaki replied, “We had an interview this morning; and an interpreter also; but from what you say, we have misunderstood each other, and now are lost. When we spoke, we alluded to peace and boundaries both, and we spoke of commencing at the mouth of the Iowa river.”⁸⁵ Upon urging from the Americans, the tribal leaders met again for several days to discuss the issue. Determined to make some sort of progress, the Americans switched their attention to the boundaries between the Dakota and Ojibwe. After several additional days of negotiations, an

⁸¹ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 190. Biddle, “Journal of the Proceedings”, 37.

⁸² *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 190. Biddle, “Journal of the Proceedings”, 37.

⁸³ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 189. These leaders included Dakota leader Wapahasha and Ojibwe leader Broken Tooth who presented their claims on August 8th.

⁸⁴ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 191. Biddle, “Journal of the Proceedings”, 44.

⁸⁵ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 191. Biddle, “Journal of the Proceedings”, 44-45.

agreement acceptable to both parties was made on August 15th.⁸⁶ Eventually, each of the tribes came to a rough agreement regarding these borders, although whether this was done in sincerity or to placate the American interests will never be completely understood.

The treaty was completed and signed on August 19, 1825. General Clark produced a belt of wampum to secure the peace of the treaty.⁸⁷ The wampum belt depicted the United States as a great village at the head of the belt. Surrounding the village were twenty-four fires, representing the bands present at the treaty.⁸⁸ Clark explained, “Those smaller villages represent the different tribes who are now parties to this treaty, and connected with each other by straight roads from one to the other, commencing at your Great Father’s village.”⁸⁹ The treaty council, like the opening of assembly, concluded by the smoking of a peace pipe and a feast.⁹⁰ After the council’s conclusion, Clark and Cass reported the positive results to their superiors in Washington. Overall, they wrote, “The effect of this paternal interposition on the part of the United States is most favorable and will be permanent.”⁹¹ They explained that “[i]n our efforts to procure a reconciliation among the hostile tribes, we encountered no serious obstacles.”⁹² But, the commissioners recognized the difficulty in establishing a complete peace in the region, at least initially: “We do not feel confident, that the peace thus established will not be interrupted. There is such a strong tendency to war, in the whole of the Indian institutions that it is difficult and

⁸⁶ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 191. Biddle, “Journal of the Proceedings”, 48 and 49.

⁸⁷ DeJong, *American Indian Treaties*, 11.

⁸⁸ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 192.

⁸⁹ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 192. Biddle, “Journal of the Proceedings”, 55.

⁹⁰ *The Niles Weekly Register*, Vol. 29, 192.

⁹¹ Clark and Cass to Barbour September 1, 1825.

⁹² *Ibid.*

almost impossible to restrain their young men.”⁹³ Glossing over the complex negotiations that had occurred, Clark and Cass explained that in the end “All parties were well satisfied, and in fact the boundaries were established by themselves.”⁹⁴

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.



Figure 11: CJ Lippert, “Map of the 1825 Treaty Boundaries.”

CC BY 3.0, Accessed April 20, 2017. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=7727737>.

A Treaty Signed

The resulting treaty contained fifteen articles that solidified tribal borders and secured a peace throughout the western Great Lakes. The document runs a fine line between one of American design meeting American paternalistic goals, and one of tribally controlled interests topping American fears of inadequate power. The United States' fear that an uncontrollable war would occur opened the treaty: the region's violence "if not terminated, may extend to the other tribes, and involve the Indians upon the Missouri, the Mississippi, and the Lakes, in general hostilities."⁹⁵ A large-scale war in the region would require the United States' participation to protect the land claims of American settlers. Article 1 of the treaty directly addressed this fear by solidifying a firm peace between the Dakota and Ojibwe; the Dakota and Meskwaki-Sauk; and the Dakota and Iowa. Articles 2 through 9 explained the extent of the territorial boundaries agreed upon in council.

In Article 10, the Americans included language requiring the tribal signatories to "acknowledge the general controlling power of the United States, and disclaim all dependence upon, and connection with, any other power."⁹⁶ Historian Michael Witgen explained that this article served the future legal interests of the United States.⁹⁷ By requiring allegiance to the United States, the treaty attempted to exclude the remaining British power in the region and ensure submission only to the United States. However, the tribal leaders likely held a different understanding of this article.

⁹⁵ Charles J. Kappler ed., "Treaty with the Sioux, Etc.," August 19, 1825. 7 Stat., 272 Proclamation. Feb. 6, 1826" *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties: Vol. II Treaties* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904) [on-line] Oklahoma State University Library <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/KAPPLER/Vol2/treaties/sio0250.htm>.

⁹⁶ "Treaty with the Sioux, Etc.," August 19, 1825, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties: Vol. II Treaties* ed. Charles J. Kappler [ebook] <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/KAPPLER/Vol2/treaties/sio0250.htm>.

⁹⁷ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 347.

It is impossible to know what the Native treaty signers understood when they recognized the “general controlling power” of the United States. At a minimum they would not have recognized American political power as sovereignty, that is, as the supreme power within a fixed territory that was formerly their homeland but was now part of the United States. More likely they simply recognized the *manidoo* or *wasicun* of the republic.⁹⁸

Witgen’s interpretation of how the Ojibwe and Dakota likely understood the Americans helps explain why several of the leaders decided to participate in the treaty council and acknowledge their land claims to the Americans. While the Americans in 1825 could not militarily control the Wisconsin region of the Michigan territory, tribes recognized the Americans held power in the region in other ways—from military might in the Ohio River Valley to the ability to procure desired goods for trade.

In Article 11, the United States agreed to secure the newly recognized borders, in part by granting the United States the right to gather the tribes for discussions should disagreements about the borders result in the future.⁹⁹ Articles 11 and 12 laid the foundation for future treaty councils. Article 11 explained, “It is agreed, however, that a Council shall be held with the Yancton band of the Sioux, during the year 1826, to explain to them the stipulations of this treaty.”¹⁰⁰ Mirroring this, Article 12 called for a council, if needed, in 1826 with the Lake Superior Ojibwe in order to explain the 1825 treaty.¹⁰¹ Witgen argues this is another piece of evidence that Ojibwe power in the region remained strong. At the outset, the 1825 treaty was

⁹⁸ Ibid., 347-348.

⁹⁹ “Treaty with the Sioux, Etc.,” August 19, 1825, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties: Vol. II Treaties* ed. Charles J. Kappler [ebook] <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/KAPPLER/Vol2/treaties/sio0250.htm>.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

supposed to be the legal mechanism by which all Great Lakes Indians would be bound.¹⁰² Yet, this ran counter to the well-established political structure of the Ojibwe, delineated by independent bands that could decide to participate in treaty negotiations on their own. This forced the Americans to engage in further diplomacy with the Fond du Lac Ojibwe who were not present in sufficient enough numbers at Prairie du Chien.¹⁰³ Securing further diplomacy and councils in Article 12 of the 1825 treaty opened the possibility to future access to mineral and land rights. While nothing was secured at the 1825 treaty council, at the 1826 treaty council, Cass included provisions opening American access to mineral rights in the lands surrounding Lake Superior.¹⁰⁴

An additional sign of tribal power, and American recognition of tribal sovereignty, Article 13 of the treaty secured tribal authority to permit hunters of other tribes to access their lands. This article largely backed the status quo stating tribes could give “reciprocal rights of hunting on the lands of one another, permission being first asked and obtained, as before provided for.”¹⁰⁵ The article echoed how White Cloud understood borders within the region when he stated, “I go upon the lands of our friends the Socs and Foxes—we alternately go upon each others land. Why should we quarrel about lands, when we get enough on what we have.”¹⁰⁶ The provision can be interpreted in two distinct ways. In the first, tribal borders operated the same way American borders did—the sovereign had the ability to determine which individuals

¹⁰² Biddle, “Journal of the Proceedings”, 21. As an example of this, the treaty commissioners had attempted to name Shin-gau-ba W’Osin as “first chief of the Chippewas.”

¹⁰³ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 349.

¹⁰⁴ “Treaty with the Chippewa.,” August 5, 1826, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties: Vol. II Treaties* ed. Charles J. Kappler [ebook] <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/vol2/treaties/chi0268.htm>.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ *The Niles Weekly Register*, 190.

or governments entered their lands. In the second, Native leaders were successful in asserting their own authority, maintaining gateway procedures that had worked for many years prior. Article 13 thus demonstrated the power and influence of Native leaders over the treaty making proceedings, and the continued rejection of the American philosophy of land management and ownership. Finally, Article 14 reiterated that all parties would seek to continually settle differences of opinion over the borders, and Article 15 contained the signatures of those present.¹⁰⁷

Unintended Consequences

The 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council did not succeed in solidifying a permanent peace between the western Ojibwe and eastern Dakota, thus failing in light of the American's officially stated objectives for the treaty. Though in a letter from Cass and Clark to the Secretary of War James Barbour both Americans expressed confidence in a successful council and pessimism that it would last.¹⁰⁸ Warfare between bands of the Dakota and Ojibwe started began anew almost immediately after the council. Whether these conflicts were increased because of the borders drawn at Prairie du Chien is difficult to measure. The border drawn between the eastern Dakota and western Ojibwe, however, illuminates the two hundred years of conflict that existed up until that point. The western Ojibwe sought to solidify recent land expansion claims along their western borders that contained wild rice ponds, maple sugar groves, and rich hunting territory. The eastern Dakota fought to maintain their hold on these lands, looking to their

¹⁰⁷ "Treaty with the Sioux, Etc.," August 19, 1825, *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties: Vol. II Treaties* ed. Charles J. Kappler [ebook] <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/KAPPLER/Vol2/treaties/sio0250.htm>.

¹⁰⁸ Lewis Cass and William Clark to Secretary of War James Barbour September 1, 1825 in *Ratified treaty no. 139, documents relating to the negotiation of the treaty of August 19, 1825, with the Sioux, Chippewa, Sauk and Fox, Menominee, Iowa, and Winnebago Indians and part of the Ottawa, Chippewa, and Potawatomi of the Illinois Indians*. University of Wisconsin Digital Collections. <http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/History.IT1825no139> (Pages 1-44) see page 41-42.

western relatives for support. For Babiizibindibe, the treaty council brought the illness that resulted in his death. He was not alone. Many of the attendees at the council and the residents of Prairie du Chien fell ill in the aftermath of the treaty council.¹⁰⁹ Those that survived, like Ojibwe leader Bagone-giizhig, arrived back at their home villages determined to defend his village's claims to the environmental resources that sustained it, and acted as power for tribal ogimaag. Following the treaty council, the leaders of the western Great Lakes tribes recognized the potential power of the United States, but had little reason to fear the immediate threat of an American military invasion. While the Americans continued to attempt to project power in the region and settlers had started to arrive, daily danger came not from American soldiers or settlers, but from enemy tribes. Thus leaders' primary concerns continued to focus on securing access to food and avoiding conflict with rival bands.

The results for the United States of the Prairie du Chien council of 1825 were mixed. When viewed from an Indigenous borderlands perspective, the treaty did not clarify boundaries in actuality, but it did create the legal foundation to do so. Because tribes were loose confederations of extended family villages, rather than nation-states with centralized leadership structures, it was impossible for the federal government to require or force a tribe to take a certain action, or exist in a certain way. American leaders, recognizing their weakness in the region, looked towards solidifying borders and establishing transferable private property holdings. This was a slow process and in the immediate aftermath of the 1825 treaty council was not forthcoming. Many of the firm boundaries desired by the United States would not materialize until enough American settlers were in the region. Instead, many tribal lands stayed much as they always had—village members were permitted to traverse, gather, and hunt on allies' lands.

¹⁰⁹ To Lawrence Taliaferro October 20, 1825, Nicholas Boilvin to Lawrence Taliaferro Papers 1813-1868. Microfilm copy in Michigan State University Library Film 19550 Roll 1 of original in the Minnesota Historical Society.

However, the legal precedent created by attaching tribal names to particular lands aided future land cessations. The United States now had ownership names assigned to territory, which they could point to in future treaties when land cessation was the desired goal. Tribal leaders could not protest that they could not give up the land as they did not own it, because the treaty of Prairie du Chien said otherwise. While Great Lakes Indian leaders continued to struggle with the new reality of the continuous American presence in the Indigenous borderlands, the United States began to rely on the drawn borders to take advantage of treaty negotiations, creating the new frontier for settlement. This required vast land cessations and the transformation of the Indigenous borderlands from lands where value was based on the natural resources that could be hunted and gathered into a new entity, transferable property to be bought and sold often on speculation. This process was one that Cass continued at the 1826 treaty council at Fond du Lac in Lake Superior.

CHAPTER 5 CASS' CONTESTED REACH

At the treaty of Fond du Lac, the United States commissioners recognized the chiefs of the Ojibways, by distributing medals amongst them, the size of which were in accordance with their degree of rank. Sufficient care was not taken in this rather delicate operation, to carry out the pure civil polity of the tribe. Too much attention was paid to the recommendation of interested traders who wished their best hunters to be rewarded by being made chiefs. One young man named White Fisher, was endowed with a medal, solely for the strikingly mild and pleasant expression of his face. He is now a petty sub-chief on the Upper Mississippi.

From this time may be dated the commencement of innovations which have entirely broken up the civil polity of the Ojibways.¹

– William Warren

The proceedings of the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council demonstrated to Governor Lewis Cass that the Americans continued to lack the coercive power necessary to bend Native leaders' to the American's will. However, by signing the treaty, Ojibwe and Dakota leaders unleashed several unintended consequences of which Cass quickly took advantage. Through the treaty the United States legally recognized tribal boundaries; boundaries that federal officials like Cass, could use to begin codify Native lands into private property. Cass used the basis and provisions of the Prairie du Chien treaty of 1825 to convene the Fond du Lac treaty council of 1826 at which he again obtained recognition of United States authority, but also secured copper rights for the United States throughout the Lake Superior region. The minutes of the 1826 council reveal Cass' strategy used at subsequent negotiations that used the boundary lines of 1825 treaty against Great Lakes Indian leaders. As tribal leaders focused on adjusting and adapting to the changing borderlands, Cass' tactics began to change the configuration of power in the Great Lakes. The breakdown of Indigenous power structures allowed United States federal

¹ William Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*. (St. Paul: Borealis an imprint of the Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984), 393-394.

power to assert itself as the law of the land through judicial means that reinterpreted property rights based on race.

Unfinished Business of 1825: Fond du Lac in 1826

Article Twelve of the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty established the right for the United States to hold a treaty council with the Lake Superior Ojibwe in 1826.

The Chippewa tribe being dispersed over a great extent of country, and the Chiefs of that tribe having requested, that such portion of them as may be thought proper, by the Government of the United States, may be assembled in 1826, upon some part of Lake Superior, that the objects and advantages of this treaty may be fully explained to them, so that the stipulations thereof may be observed by the warriors. The Commissioners of the United States assent thereto, and it is therefore agreed that a council shall accordingly be held for these purposes.²

The absence of sufficient representation of the northern Lake Superior Ojibwe at the 1825 council resulted in this Article.³ The boundary lines created in the 1825 treaty could not be finalized and surveyed until several controversial sections of the border, requiring the participation of the Lake Superior Ojibwe bands, were settled. The Ojibwe ogimaag in 1825 refused to finish negotiations over these borders until the northern Lake Superior Ojibwe bands had their opinions heard. While this frustrated the American commissioners, it also offered them another opportunity to conference with the Ojibwe.

At the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council, the Americans repeatedly claimed they had no interest in discussing land cessions. The commissioners emphasized that their only goal was to be a “father” who secured peace for his “Indian children.” These assurances, combined with the limited power of the American military in the region, allowed Ojibwe leaders to focus their attention on community concerns rather than the more distant American threat. Americans were

² Charles J. Kappler, ed. *Indian Treaties 1778-1883*. (New York: Interland Publishing Inc., 1972), 253.

³ *Ibid.*, 253.

forced to negotiate with the Ojibwe on their terms, including Ojibwe leaders refusing to speak for other leaders not present. While the Americans continued to work to “simplify the complex leadership patterns and social relationships that defined Anishinaabewaki in order to make it governable,” the Ojibwe refused to cede their leadership organizations completely.⁴ Though, as Witgen argued, forcing the Americans to hold additional councils was evidence of Ojibwe power, the Fond du Lac treaty council presented Cass with an additional opportunity to negotiate with tribal leaders.⁵ Cass successfully petitioned for an appointment as lead commissioner for the council and was joined by recently appointed Secretary of Indian Affairs Thomas McKenney. Cass’ goals for the region included securing peace, obtaining mineral rights, securing land claims for mixed-ancestry persons, and establishing an enforcement mechanism for American sovereignty. This process began in earnest following the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council.

Like many of the tribal leaders at the 1825 treaty council, Ojibwe ogimaag in the Fond du Lac region agreed to the terms of the 1826 treaty, but did so based on their perception of benefits it could bring to the tribe. They did not believe they surrendered any real power to American authority. There were some white and mixed-ancestry individuals who lived around Lake Superior, but most of them continued to maintain lifestyles similar to their Ojibwe friends and relatives. American influence had a limited influence in the region. Instead it was the neighboring Dakota, in 1826, whom presented the greatest danger to Ojibwe daily life. As with other communities within the Indigenous borderlands, the political structure within the Lake Superior Ojibwe derived in part from a leader’s ability to provide for their community. Furthermore, several Ojibwe leaders perceived the increased presence of the United States in the

⁴ Michael Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations: How the Native New World Shaped Early North America*. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 349.

⁵ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 349.

Fond du Lac region as a way to increase their community's access to trade networks, and reaffirm their own status as community leaders. The outcome of the Fond du Lac treaty, however, stretched the ability of Ojibwe society to adapt to new power structure, both internal and external, and allowed the United States to begin to test their authority in the Lake Superior region.

McKenney's Travels to the Interior

Secretary of War John C. Calhoun established the Office of Indian Affairs (later renamed the Bureau of Indian Affairs) on March 11, 1824.⁶ Calhoun appointed his political ally, Thomas McKenney, as the agency's first commissioner.⁷ In 1826, McKenney requested permission from Secretary of War James Barbour to take leave from his post in the federal city of Washington, and attend the treaty council at Fond du Lac in Michigan Territory. Upon receiving approval, McKenney left on May 31, 1826 and began a journey that took him through Baltimore, New York, Albany, the Erie Canal, and the Great Lakes before arriving at Fond du Lac on Lake Superior.⁸ Arriving in Michigan Territory, McKenney joined Cass and was impressed with the Governor's grasp and knowledge of Indian affairs.

Few men have so intimate a knowledge of the Indian character as Governor Cass. He has had much experience, and his mind never fails to profit by whatever subject comes in his way. He seizes and analyzes every thing, and with the rapidity of thought. I wrote him

⁶ Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians Vol. I* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 164.

⁷ Ibid., 164. Calhoun's letter of appointment laid out McKenney's duties as, "to take charge of the appropriations for annuities and current expenses, to examine and approve all vouchers for expenditures, to administer the fund for the civilization of the Indians, to decide on claims arising between Indians and whites under the intercourse laws, and to handle the ordinary Indian correspondence of the War Department."

⁸ Thomas Loraine McKenney, *Sketchers of a tour to the lakes, of the character and customs of the Chippeway Indians, and of incidents connected with the Treaty of Fond du Lac. Also, a vocabulary of the Algonic, or chippeway language, formed in part, and as far as it goes, upon the basis of one furnished by Albert Gallatin.* (Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1959 Reprint of 1827) [e-book]., 9.

before I left home, that I should attend as a pupil- and, therefore, would expect him to conduct the whole proceedings. I do not, therefore, expect to open my lips on this occasion.⁹

McKenney, an eager student, faithfully made note of his journey, and recorded the minutes of the treaty council in a series of letters published a year after the event's conclusion.¹⁰

Cass' informed McKenney of his goals for the treaty council including securing the authority of the United States over the Lake Superior Ojibwe.¹¹ For Cass, the accomplishment of this goal would help further secure the border with the British-Canadians in the Great Lakes and bring the Ojibwe under the jurisdiction of the United States. The commissioners in 1826 sought an increase in American authority and power that included securing access to minerals and securing consent to the borderlines established through 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty.

Following the arrival of the federal commissioners, Cass opened the treaty council at Fond du Lac with a speech of welcome. Cass recounted that the 1825 Prairie du Chien council had been undertaken for the benefit of all of the Great Lakes Indians, and that the successful signing of the treaty signified peace throughout the region.¹² The purpose of this new council, Cass continued, was to explain to provisions of the 1825 treaty to those living in the Lake Superior region. He acknowledged that both the distance between Fond du Lac and Prairie du

⁹ McKenney, *Sketchers of a tour to the lakes*, 312-313 [e-book].

¹⁰ Herman J. Viola, *Thomas L. McKenney: Architect of America's Early Indian Policy: 1816-1830* (Chicago: Sage Books The Shallow Press Inc., 1974), 137. "Sometime during the governor's holiday, McKenney seized upon the idea of accompanying him to Lake Superior the following summer. By writing a book about his experiences, McKenney hoped to publicize the need for an Indian department equivalent to other federal agencies. Not only might a treatise on Indians be just the catalyst needed to prod Congress into establishing a Bureau of Indian Affairs, it might also enhance the author's reputation and ensure his appointment."

¹¹ Kappler ed., *Indian Treaties 1778-1883*, 253 and 270. The establishment of United States authority had been an important aspect of the 1825 Prairie du Chien council. Cass made sure to include language to this extent in Article 10. 1826 proved to be no different as Cass included similar language in Article 8 of the 1826 treaty.

¹² McKenney, *Tour to the Lakes*, 457. At the back of McKenney's book he included an Appendix entitled, "Copy of the Journal of Proceedings under the Treaty of Fond du Lac, as noted by the secretary."

Chien and the lack of a federal Indian agent at Fond du Lac, like Schoolcraft at Sault Ste Marie or Taliaferro at St. Peters, deterred several of the Lake Superior Ojibwe ogimmag from making the trip. Cass explained, “Your great father has therefore sent us here to state to all your people in the middle of your own country, what was transacted at the Prairie, and to express his wish that it may be faithfully adhered to on your part.”¹³ Furthermore, the Governor stated the peace secured at Prairie du Chien was backed by the United States. The federal government no longer accepted warfare in the region and expected all groups to abide by this proclamation.¹⁴

Beyond the goals stated in Article 10 of the 1825 treaty, Cass explained three additional reasons for the Fond du Lac gathering. The first dealt with the still undermined boundary between the Ojibwe and Menominee. Second, the United States had new concerns that some land claims should be left aside for individuals of mixed Ojibwe and American ancestry. Third, the Americans wanted permission to access to copper mines throughout the Lake Superior region.¹⁵ Cass concluded his opening remarks with an ominous statement, “We shall have another subject to mention to you, but we will finish what has already been mentioned before we enter upon that.”¹⁶ It was an open secret that the Americans were interested in finding and bringing to American justice the young men who had killed the fur trader Mr. Findley nearly two years before and whose continued freedom presented a challenge and constant embarrassment to Cass and the United States’ authority throughout the western Great Lakes.¹⁷

¹³ Ibid., 458.

¹⁴ The prevention of warfare was a key component of the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council. Ensuring that all of the tribes agreed to this proposal was necessary if the United States hoped to enforce the peace.

¹⁵ McKenney, *Tour to the Lakes*, 458.

¹⁶ Ibid., 458.

¹⁷ For more on the murder of Mr. Finley and his party see Chapter 3 in the section entitled, The Americans and the Lead-Up to the 1825 Prairie du Chien Treaty Council.

The final document of the 1826 council mimicked that of the 1825 in that it appeared that the United States successfully achieved each of its stated goals. The minutes of the 1826 council, however, reveal the continuity of power that Ojibwe kinship and leadership maintained even while Cass attacked the leaders' authority. Several leaders present at the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council also made an appearance at 1826. Importantly, Shingauga W'Ossin who had been listed as the "1st Chippeway Chief," had the honor of opening the council discussion on Thursday August 3, 1826.¹⁸ Shingauga W'Ossin's opening speech appeared to eloquently defend the American position to the other Ojibwe ogimaag assembled as the best course of action to pursue. He announced that he approved of the actions taken a year prior at Prairie du Chien, and urged completion of the Ojibwe-Menominee border. Somewhat unsettlingly, Shingauga W'Ossin stated it was advantageous to sell the Americans access to the copper. His words appeared to urge the selling of copper in the region, but not likely not the land itself. "If you have any copper on your lands. I advise you to sell it. It is of no advantage to us. They can convert it into articles for our use. If any one of you has any knowledge on this subject, I ask you to bring it to light."¹⁹ William Warren argued that his statement should not be taken at face value, but

was meant more to tickle the ears of the commissioners and to obtain their favor, than as an earnest appeal to his people, for the old chieftain was too much imbued with the superstition prevalent amongst the Indians, which prevents them from discovering their knowledge of mineral and copper boulders to the whites.²⁰

Warren's argument reflects Shingauabua W'Ossin's role as an intermediary between the Americans and Ojibwe bands traveling to represent the Ojibwe at several treaty councils. Urging for the allowance of an American right to search for copper and other minerals, without

¹⁸ Shingauga W'Ossin is listed at the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council as the first chief of the Chippeway, but no mention of this is made in the treaty of 1826 at Fond du Lac.

¹⁹ McKenney, *Tour to the Lakes*, 459.

²⁰ William Warren, *History of the Ojibway People*, 393.

divulging their location, was a shrewd diplomatic move that allowed Shinguabua W'Ossin to retain his favored status in the eyes of the Americans, without losing all of his credibility with other Ojibwe leaders. Article Three of the 1826 treaty reflects this, granting a "right to search for," minerals, without specifying particular locations. Further it stated, "The Chippewa tribe grant to the government of the United States the right to search for, and carry away, any metals or minerals from any part of their country. But this grant is not to affect the title of the land, nor the existing jurisdiction over it."²¹ The language explicitly reserved the title of the land to be retained by the Fond du Lac Ojibwe. The preservation of title to the land was a crucial insertion and mineral rights under lands remained a contentious issue in the decades that followed.²²

In 1826, providing access to copper was likely seen by tribal leaders as a way to form a stronger relationship with the United States. Ojibwe leaders wanted to build a strong trade based relationship with the United States as they had with French and British. This relationship could benefit tribal communities and help them maintain access to environmental resources necessary for survival. For Shinguabua W'Ossin, this negotiation could elevate both his status with the Americans, and his status at home through his ability to secure greater access to more goods.

Although the request for continuous access to copper was part of the treaty negotiations, the American made preparations for the extraction of a large rock of copper well before their

²¹ Kappler ed., *Indian Treaties 1778-1883*, 269. These lines are quoted from Article 3 of the Treaty with the Chippewa, 1826.

²² Tribal treaties rights continue to affect issues in northern Wisconsin in the contemporary moment. The Bad River Chippewa, an Ojibwe tribe whose reservation is along the shores of Lake Superior near present-day Ashland, WI, has been fighting against the Gogebic Taconite mining company since 2013. The Bad River tribe have argued that the state has no right to permit the enormous mine without their agreement since the site lies in "ceded territory," an area covering a large portion of Northern Wisconsin where tribal members maintain special hunting, fishing and harvesting rights enshrined in federal treaties." The treaty the tribe refers to is a later agreement than the 1826 treaty, but is a demonstration of the continued importance of tribal treaty rights and the defense of tribal access to environmental resources. Dan Kaufman, "The Fight for Wisconsin's Soul," Opinion Section *New York Times Sunday Review* March 29, 2014. <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/30/opinion/sunday/the-fight-for-wisconsins-soul.html>. For more on the fight see Lee Bergquist, "Bad River Chippewa Could Have Say in Gogebic Iron Ore Mine" *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* Feb. 17, 2013. <http://archive.jsonline.com/news/wisconsin/bad-river-chippewa-could-have-say-in-gogebic-iron-ore-mine-ek8pstn-191612841.html>

arrival at Fond du Lac. Cass sent letters to Schoolcraft, trained geologist and trusted confidant, in early June, two months before the treaty negotiations. Cass instructed Schoolcraft to make preparations for the extraction of the copper. “We must remove the copper-rock, and, therefore, you will have to provide such ropes and blocks as may be necessary.”²³ Schoolcraft followed his instructions recollecting, “[w]hile the Commissioners were engaged in the treaty, an effort was made, under their direction, to get out the large copper-boulder on the Ontonagon. This task was entrusted to Col. Clemens, of Mount Clemens, and a Mr. Porter. The trucks and ropes taken inland by them proved inadequate.”²⁴ Although the copper rock failed to be removed at that moment, Article Three of the 1826 treaty ensured the Americans’ rights to try again as well as remove “any metals or minerals from any part of their country.”²⁵

Three tribal leaders from Ontonagon were particularly interested in the discussion of mineral rights in the Lake Superior region. These leaders, Yellow Thunder, Plover, and an unnamed leader, took their time in speaking about minerals, and asserted that their lands did not contain copper. Yet, Plover recounted that at one time white men had come to his community in search of rock, but he admonished them not to attempt to take anything. A statement from the unnamed Ontonagon man supported Plover when he explained that the rocks were “the property of no one man. It belongs alike to us all. It was put there by the Great Spirit, and it is ours.”²⁶ He recounted a story of a group of British men whom after learning there was copper in the area

²³ Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Personal Memoirs of a Residence of Thirty Years with the Indian Tribes on the American Frontiers: with brief notices of passing events, facts, and opinions, A.D. 1812- A.D. 1842.* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo and co., 1851), 243.

²⁴ Schoolcraft, *Personal Memoirs*, 245.

²⁵ Kappler ed., *Indian Treaties 1778-1883*, 269. These lines are quoted from Article 3 of the Treaty with the Chippewa, 1826.

²⁶ McKenney, *Tour to the Lakes*, 463-464.

attempted and failed to take it away. The British continued in their attempts to remove copper until three were killed when a mine collapsed.²⁷ The leader from Ontonagon indicated his willingness to sell the copper, but admonished that the Americans would have to be prepared to pay a high price for it, in order that the community's children could be provided for in the future.²⁸

The potential for increased mineral mining in the northern Great Lakes region presented an opportunity both for increased settlements and for desperately needed natural resources for the United States. While copper was growing in demand at the time, lead mines were already prolific in Wisconsin and northern Illinois, and had become a key part of the emerging nation's economy. The United States was reliant on lead for many household items, from shod and sheeting to pipes and candlesticks. Lead was also a major component of paint in colonial America, and "by 1767 the use of lead paints had become so popular that the British government hoped to derive a considerable revenue from the colonies by levying a duty upon them," through the Townshend Act which listed lead and paint among its taxable objects.²⁹ As the United States population grew following the American Revolution, the demand for natural resources, including lead, began to exceed domestic production. It was necessary for the Americans to import large quantities of foreign lead. By 1825, lead factories in New York and New Jersey had started to compete with foreign lead, an expansion made possible by raw material shipped from the Wisconsin lead mines. This shipment began cheaper and faster after the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825. Expanding into the copper mining business looked to be a lucrative endeavor for the United States and expand settlement opportunities in the Lake Superior region.

²⁷ Ibid., 464.

²⁸ Ibid., 464.

²⁹ Joseph Schafer, *The Wisconsin Lead Region* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1932), 6.

The potential for a drastic increase in American industry in the northwestern Great Lakes region also aided Cass' goal of "civilizing" the Ojibwe. Establishing lands for mixed-ancestry individuals could keep individuals in the area that would set an example of "civilized" life for the Ojibwe. Article Four of the 1826 treaty secured lands reserved for Ojibwe of mixed-ancestry.³⁰ The mixed-ancestry individual would aid the tribe, Cass explained, and "would be able then to support themselves comfortably, and to assist you."³¹ While there were few white Americans who lived in the region prior to the 1826 treaty, Cass likely considered those of mixed ancestry potentially strong allies for the United States.³² Securing Ojibwe lands for mixed-ancestry relations was also a tactic for American traders—men like Schoolcraft who married into predominantly Ojibwe families—to ensure their own access to choice lands.

In his own writings, Schoolcraft did not mention the negotiations surrounding Article Four. Perhaps because his mother-in-law Ozhaguscodaywayquay "and her descendents," including Schoolcraft's wife and their future children, were allotted lands "adjoining the lower part of the military reservation, upon the head of Sugar Island."³³ Schoolcraft wrote and published his *Personal Memoirs* after the United States Congress had removed Article Four from the 1826 Fond du Lac treaty, which may explain this absence. Instead, Schoolcraft recounted the

³⁰ Charles J. Kappler ed., "Treaty with the Chippewa, 1826." August 5, 1826. 7 Stat., 290 Proclamation. Feb. 7, 1827" *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties: Vol. II Treaties* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904) [on-line] Oklahoma State University Library <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/VOL2/treaties/chi0268.htm> Article 4 lists the lands granted to persons of mixed Chippewa ancestry. The lands amounted to 640 acres and located "upon the island and shore of the St. Mary's river". Congress removed this article prior to passage of the treaty.

³¹ McKenney, *Tour to the Lakes*, 458.

³² Soon after Cass was appointed to Michigan Territorial Governor he worked to increase the American population. "Cass saw little hope for the advancement of civilization in Michigan Territory until a migration of Americans could strengthen the moral fiber of its population..." Willard Carl Klunder, *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation*. (Kent: The Kent State University Press, 1996), 19.

³³ Kappler, ed. *Indian Treaties 1778-1883*, 269. These lines are quoted from Article 4 of the Treaty with the Chippewa, 1826.

discussions surrounding Article Six, which provided for “an Indian school at St. Mary’s, and made some further important stipulations respecting their advance in the arts and education, through the element of their half-breeds.”³⁴ Schoolcraft shared Cass’ belief that establishing a school for mixed-ancestry Ojibwe students would only further American authority in the region. Locating a school in the region would ensure progress was made in the continuing goal of “civilization,” and would work to spread American influence organically through Ojibwe communities using their own kinship and power networks.

The Ojibwe ogimaag likely did not view setting aside lands for mixed-ancestry relatives as an attempt to change Ojibwe culture. Nor did they believe it was the United States’ responsibility to look out for what they saw as Ojibwe interests. Shingauga W’Ossin explained that his band would provide for their own and that the others assembled he would “leave it to you to provide your reserves for your own.”³⁵ William Warren claimed that “the Ojibways, who felt a deep love for the offspring of their women who had intermarried with the whites, and cherished them as their own children, insisted on giving them grants of land on the Sault Ste. Marie River...”³⁶ Like most communities, Ojibwe leaders and tribal members cared that their relative had the resources they needed to survive.³⁷ Similar to when adopted John Tanner and his family

³⁴ Schoolcraft, *Personal Memoirs*, 244. Schoolcraft’s term “half-breeds” was a common phrasing for any person who had mixed heritage. The Americans later used the concept of “blood-quantum” to establish who had “enough” American Indian blood to be viewed by the law as American Indian. I have avoided the use of term because of its racist connotations. “The modern concept of “blood quantum” is an example of the contemporary attempt by nation-state institutions to solidify a foreign and radicalized concept of identity. Tribal affiliation in the 17th and 18th century Great Lakes had little to do with blood and everything to do with the tribal community recognizing an individual as part of their community. For a brief history of the use of blood quantum by the United States see Paul Spruhan, “A Legal History of Blood Quantum in Federal Indian Law to 1935.” *South Dakota Law Review*, Vol. 51, No. 1, 2006. Available at SSRN: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=955032>”

³⁵ McKenney, *Tour to the Lakes*, 459.

³⁶ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 393.

³⁷ John Tanner, *The Falcon: A Narrative of the Captivity and Adventure of John Tanner*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1994), 69. Though sensationalized through publication, the narrative of John Tanner and his family

received permission from an Ojibwe council to harvest maple sap from area trees, many of the mixed-heritage Ojibwe were seen by the community to be Ojibwe and maintained rights to the shared environmental resources.³⁸ Ensuring that mixed-heritage relations maintained strong connections to the community was also important to ensure a consistent American trade presence in their community. Beyond their role as family and community members, mixed-ancestry Ojibwe had an important place in maintaining trade with Americans through their ability to translate words and negotiate terms. Mixed-ancestry Ojibwe communities were created by intermarriages, like the Johnston and Waabojiig family.³⁹ These marriages reflected earlier inter-tribal marriages that existed throughout the Indigenous borderlands. Most commonly, children of mixed-ancestry were born from the marriages of American men and Ojibwe women.

The Imperfect Father: Cass' Attempt to Redevelop the American's Role

Like at the Prairie du Chien treaty council in 1825, Cass could not begin to further the establishment of American authority without first engaging in Ojibwe diplomacy and treaty council protocols. Like at previous councils, the speakers at the 1826 council heavily employed familial language in describing the role of the United States. This metaphorical role as “father” in treaty relationships held physical consequences in diplomatic relations. When French fur-traders first arrived in the Great Lakes, they built a daily working relationship with the Ojibwe. Though parts of this relationship were built on misunderstandings with European powers the relationship

of mixed-ancestry Ojibwe who had received permission to harvest maple sap from area trees exemplifies this concern for community members and kinship relations.

³⁸ Ibid., 69.

³⁹ See Chapter 2 Section “Americans Enter the Indigenous Borderland.”

was also based on ties of mutual obligations.⁴⁰ As the Americans claimed influence in the region from the French and British, Ojibwe leaders continued to expect the Americans to engage in the same Native diplomacy and mutual, familial obligations as the French.

The French presumed that they would accrue an inherent power in accepting their status as father of the alliance....Native people assumed a position of ritualized humility, which demanded kindness and intervention. In effect, an Anishinaabe father did not exercise power over his children; he wielded power on behalf of his children.⁴¹

The Ojibwe had maintained relations with Europeans for over two hundred years before the treaty councils of 1825 and 1826, and expected the Americans to approach diplomatic relations in the same way as the Europeans had—full of mutual obligations, not a top-down domineering status. These competing diplomatic philosophies continued into the early nineteenth century, because both the Ojibwe and the American federal agents believed their communities maintained influence over the western Great Lakes. Early in their relationship, many Ojibwe had little issue with Americans taking the demanding role of “father,” because it was expected in that role the person was responsible for securing and maintaining peace. The Americans reinforced this belief as Cass repeatedly claimed that peace in the 1825 treaty was to be enforced by the United States government. However, by the 1826 treaty council, Cass and the American influence was reconfiguring the relationship between the Americans and Ojibwe to one the Governor had envisioned all along – the Ojibwe respecting American authority led by an all-knowing, white, patriarchal father.

The American goals for the two treaty councils were the similar: increase American presence and power in the region, decrease Ojibwe resistance to American authority, and ensure

⁴⁰ Richard White, *Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), Chapter 2.

⁴¹ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 52.

suitable conditions for American settlements. By drawing borders in 1825, Cass attempted to de-emphasize collective intertribal action in the region to allow, in 1826, individual tribal meetings that focused on their relationship to American power. Using treaty language that could later be defended in American courts imposed a foreign legal style on Ojibwe tribes. Cass' early efforts to create a friendly view towards American legal practices could pay dividends if he could enforce rulings from American courts. Ojibwe leaders continued to view their relationship with the Americans as they had previously, a diplomatic father-son reciprocal relationship. This explains why in 1826 they agreed to the terms of the 1826 treaty. Cass was able to project a need—and authority to force—future land and mineral cessations.

The Ojibwe leaders present, however, continued to require Cass to engage in traditional means of council ceremony and diplomacy. American authority in the region had not yet grown to a point where it Cass could avoid these requirements. Following these protocols, Gitshee Waabeyhaas spoke after Shingaubas W'Ossin. First, he assented to the proposed boundary line between his band and the Dakota affirmed at Prairie du Chien. He then turned quickly to the relationship between the Ojibwe and the United States, calling on the United States to do more to strengthen the relationship. "You, *Fathers*, travel in a full canoe. Your young men always see enough before them. But my canoe, *Fathers*, is empty."⁴² The use of the term 'fathers' was critical here. Bruce White, in his analysis of treaty language, argued that the Ojibwe would address those whom they wanted to entered into a reciprocal gift-giving relationship by calling them "father" and then appealing to his "pity."⁴³ Gitshee Waabeyhaas's village of Ojibwe at Fond du Lac was further removed from the American trading relationship than those bands, like

⁴² McKenney, *Tour to the Lakes*, 460.

⁴³ Bruce White, "Give Us A Little Milk": The Social and Cultural Meanings of Gift Giving in the Lake Superior Fur Trade," in *Minnesota History*, Vol. 48, No. 2 (Summer, 1982), 70.

Shingauba W'Ossin's, that resided at Sault Ste Marie. Gitshee Waabeyhaas thus had more need to appeal to the Americans during the treaty council, because his band could not rely on daily relations to strengthen the trading relationship.

In response Cass demonstrated his shift in priorities through his greater concern in securing obedience and neutrality from the Fond du Lac Ojibwe, rather than the deference he granted to those tribes attending the 1825 treaty council. This was revealed when Gitshee Waabeyahass rose to speak. The continuous encroachment of the British on American claims in the Great Lakes especially after the War of 1812 constantly occupied Cass' mind during negotiations with the Ojibwe. The British had given Gitshee Waabeyahass a medal of friendship, which he wore to the treaty council. Before Cass allowed Gitshee Waabeyahass to speak, he required the leader remove the British sign from his chest, offering no deference to the tribal leader.

[W]e presume you brought this here as an ornament. If we thought you displayed it as a mark of authority, we would take it from your breast, throw it in the dust, and trample it under our feet. As we do not suppose you wear it as the evidence of any authority, but simply as an ornament, we will smoke your pipe.⁴⁴

The offending medallion was removed and replaced with an American one. This incident reflects Cass' continued stance against the British and reveals the lingering fear the Americans harbored regarding British influence in the region.

Bizhiki (Peezhicke; Buffalo; La Beef), a representative of the Ojibwe villages at La Point, pointed out Cass' lack of attention and care in the northern region. "Some of these, your children, were at the Prairie. But half of them do not yet know you. They want to put out the hand to you."⁴⁵ Bizhiki appeared willing to accept the creation of map enforced borders and

⁴⁴ McKenney, *Tour to the Lakes*, 460.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 462.

spread a birch bark map out on a table in front of the council commissioners. “This, *Fathers*, (spreading a map on the table before the Commissioners) was given to us by our forefathers. There are few now here who were then living. *Fathers*, — I want to take nothing from my friends. I want my own only.”⁴⁶ Just as tribal leaders had prepared birch bark maps in preparation for the 1825 treaty council, Bizhiki demonstrated his preparation in anticipation of American demands by projecting Ojibwe power over the region through the use of maps. Bizhiki displayed this action in front of the Americans, but called on his “brothers” the other assembled Ojibwe leaders to recognize that the problem with the Dakota was in part an Ojibwe created issue. He believed the current problem with the Dakota stemmed “because you have deserted your country. Where your fathers lived, and your mothers first saw the sun, there you are not. I alone, am the solitary one remaining on our own ground.”⁴⁷ Bizhiki ignored the American’s presence for the moment, and spoke to internal tribal politics, denouncing the rapid westward expansion of Ojibwe communities into Dakota territory.

Spurred, in part, by the search of resources, Ojibwe leaders were continually moving further west into Dakota ricing and hunting territory.⁴⁸ Bizhiki believed that this “conquest,” to use Hole-In-The-Day’s words, had created animosity between the Dakota and Ojibwe.⁴⁹ Thus rather than secure peace and protect the borders, the American attempts at the 1825 council further exacerbated an already intense situation. Bizhiki used the opportunity of the 1826 council to call out those leaders he deemed responsible for this while calling the Americans to strengthen the relationship between the federal government and the Ojibwe. He concluded his remarks with

⁴⁶ Ibid., 462.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 462.

⁴⁸ See Chapter 4 of dissertation.

⁴⁹ Anton Treuer, *The Assassination of Hole In The Day* (St. Paul: Borealis Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2011), 42.

two statements directed at both the gathered Ojibwe leaders and the Americans: First, “We ask you, in locating your children, to place those of the Burnt Wood country on the left side of the Portage;”⁵⁰ then, “*Fathers*,—You have many children. But your breasts drop yet. Give us a little milk, *Fathers*, that we may wet our lips.”⁵¹

These two statements offer a summation of what Bizhiki saw as the two central issues in the western Great Lakes region. The first statement called upon the Ojibwe to remove themselves from Dakota territory, while the second offered a critique of American negotiation techniques within its cry for help. The appendix to the treaty council minutes lists “milk” as “whiskey.” This supports Bruce White’s research that argues that milk, in American-tribal negotiations, meant liquor or rum.⁵² White argues that with this statement, Bizhiki was both insulting the Americans’ tactics, yet also trying to get the best deal for himself. White’s argument established that the language of “milk” harkened to the essential, primary gift a child received from its mother. The giving and receiving of this vital gift solidified a strong relationship between the two beings.⁵³ In a similar way, “Rum, given in diplomatic dealings, symbolized the seriousness with which the Ojibway and other Indians groups treated these diplomatic transactions.”⁵⁴ Bizhiki’s demonstrated his expectation that a more serious and beneficial relationship be built between the Ojibwe bands and the Americans. The remaining leaders that spoke on the first day continued to discuss setting aside land for mixed-ancestry

⁵⁰ McKenney, *Tour to the Lakes*, 462.

⁵¹ McKenney, *Tour to the Lakes*, 462. See also White’s interpretation of the events, White. “Give Us A Little Milk,”” 67.

⁵² White, “Give Us A Little Milk,”” 71.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 67.

community members, mineral exploration rights, and the expectation that more of their “father’s milk” be given.⁵⁵

Saturday, August 5, 1826 opened with the American commissioners’ presentation of the treaty they wished the Ojibwe to sign. Soon after its presentation, the treaty was signed, concluding the treaty part of the council.⁵⁶ Immediately following the signing, Cass and McKenney explained there was another issue to be discussed, and brought up the incident at Lake Pepin in 1824. They demanded that anyone present at the dealings be brought to them in order to face an American trial and American justice system.⁵⁷ Cass likely viewed the murders “as an affront to American sovereignty. In truth, however, they were a reflection of the fact that this sovereignty did not yet exist in Anishinaabewaki.”⁵⁸ Although already established in 1825, the 1826 treaty council was a chance for Cass to demonstrate the strength of American authority in the region. Cass “had pretended the strength of American sovereignty, and now he had to prove it—and he had to do so without any of the institutions of the American nation-state.”⁵⁹ Such efforts presented problematic challenges not only for Cass, but also for Ojibwe leaders at Fond du Lac.

The next day, a spokesman for the Ojibwe spoke on the demand for justice, explaining its difficulties.

[N]o young men attached to us. It is very difficult for us to make an answer to you. We have first to consult our friends, and we then make answer to any

⁵⁵ McKenney, *Tour to the Lakes*, 462-468. These other leaders included Yellow Thunder, Plover, Maw-gaw-gid, and several other unknown leaders from Ontonagon including one curiously noted as “The melancholy Indian, from the Ontonagon.”

⁵⁶ McKenney, *Tour to the Lakes*, 469.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 469-471.

⁵⁸ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 352.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 353.

question proposed to us. *Fathers*, —We will see the men belonging to the war party, and tell them they are sent for by you. When we hear what they say, we can give you our final answer.⁶⁰

Predictably, this answer did not satisfy the commissioners, who demanded the complete submission of the Fond du Lac Ojibwe to American sovereignty. The commissioners retorted that they would not withdraw their demand simply because of the difficulty, and that they expected to receive the accused the next season in the springtime. Cass and McKenney further threatened that if the suspects were not produced, “destruction will fall on your women and children. Your father will put out his strong arm... Nothing will satisfy us but this.”⁶¹ After further internal consultation, the tribal leaders reported to the Americans that they would deliver the accused. Yet, during the following year the leaders from Fond du Lac instead of sending the prisoners to Cass delivered a letter and wampum with the Indian agent George Johnston writing they would not turn the murderers in and instead would cover the dead considering the matter closed.⁶² Rather than the capture of accused murderer the message from the Ojibwe leadership demonstrated that Cass and the other Americans held “less authority and control in Anishinaabewaki than Daniel Du Lhut had exercised in 1684. The ‘middle ground’ was long gone, surviving only in embodied form in the persons of the Métis, and they served the interests of the American fur trade rather than the nation-state.”⁶³ Cass’ inaction after receiving this letter in 1827 reflects his true lack of authority in the region. Despite Cass’ aspirations, the region continued to be controlled by Ojibwe power.

⁶⁰ McKenney, *Tour to the Lakes*, 471.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 471.

⁶² Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 354-355.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 355.

The establishment of land reserves for people of mixed-Ojibwe and European ancestry forwarded Cass' goals for "civilization" in the Lake Superior region, but only if those individuals followed United States law. In order for American sovereignty to assert itself it needed the state apparatus of the judiciary to provide justification for Cass' executive power to be enforced. The distance from the northern and western outpost of Michigan Territory proved to be too far for most cases to be brought in front of a judge in Detroit and so Cass petitioned Congress to create the Additional Court of Michigan Territory and it was established in 1823 and appointed an additional justice to the Additional Court of the Michigan Territorial Court, James Duane Doty.⁶⁴ Doty had come from New York to clerk at the Michigan Territorial Court in Detroit, He, like Schoolcraft and Trowbridge, joined Cass on his 1820 expedition and owned part of his appointment to Cass' lobbying of President Monroe.⁶⁵

Like Cass, Doty was a land speculator throughout Michigan Territory and held property in several locations including Prairie du Chien, Sault Ste. Marie, and later held lands, which became the capital of the state of Wisconsin, Madison.⁶⁶ While Cass struggled to force the Lake Superior Ojibwe to abide by American law and bring those accused of Finley's 1824 murder to justice, Doty worked to enforce American marriage laws on the residents of Michigan Territory. Much of the Wisconsin side of Michigan Territory's population in the 1820s was of French ancestry whom had married according to Ojibwe custom. However, this co-habitation without a

⁶⁴ Bethel Saler, *The Settlers' Empire: Colonialism and State Formation in American's Old Northwest* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 213; Patrick J. Jung. "Judge James Duane Doty and Wisconsin's First Court: The Additional Court of Michigan Territory, 1823-1836" in *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol. 86, No. 2 (Winter, 2002-2003). <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4637025>, 33.

⁶⁵ Jung, "Judge James Duane Doty and Wisconsin's First Court," 35.

⁶⁶ Saler, *The Settlers' Empire*, 214.

formal marriage license blurred property rights based on racial identities. The United States recognized different property rights depending on whether one was “white” or “Indian.”

That is, race signified different claims to property tied to different political statuses of citizens and government wards... But underlying these different proprietary and political positions were distinctions of culture: white Americans constructed their authority in this area on hierarchical differences between “Indian” and “white,” differences that assumed the social distinctiveness of each group and cultural superiority of whites. In all these senses, establishing stable racial categories constituted a fundamental part of Americans’ endeavors in the post-War of 1812 period to transform former Indian lands into a U.S. territory formed and possessed by white American settlers.⁶⁷

Doty’s judicial rulings were another part of Cass’ goals of “civilization” Doty pressed Green Bay traders to affirm their marriages to their largely Native women under American law further divorcing Indigenous practices from the governing principals of the territory.

Aftermath of the 1826 Fond du Lac Treaty

In *An Infinity of Nations*, Witgen argued that the “Anishinaabeg remained politically autonomous,” even after the 1826 treaty, and that though confrontations and negotiations they were able to maintain their place in a “distinctly Native New World.”⁶⁸ This world had been a mix of cultures and traditions long before the Americans arrived and began negotiating in the region. Rather than attempt to control and dominate the encroaching Americans, tribal leaders worked through political and cultural methods that had served them well in previous confrontations. Communities and leaders in this region derived their power from access to the natural world, which did not change after the Americans’ arrival. Words spoken and boundaries drawn continued to remain less important than leaders and villages that were able to provide resources and protections to their members.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 214.

⁶⁸ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 355.

The treaty minutes reveal that the Americans successfully obtained unlimited access to copper in the region, which leaders like Shingaubá W'Ossin believed was beneficial because the Americans could “convert it into articles for our use.”⁶⁹ Allowing Americans to obtain copper, turn it into goods, and trade those goods with Ojibwe communities represented a continuation of tribal practices of negotiating and trading with outside communities. The Ojibwe had traded furs with the French and worked through centuries of negotiations with the Dakota. The Americans in many ways were just the next group with something to offer. As they always had, the leaders of Ojibwe communities worked to build wide-ranging partnerships that would provide access to necessary materials in times of need. Shingaubá W'Ossin operated under the assumption that this was the best way to continue to provide for his community. American settlers in 1826 were not overwhelming population centers in the lands of the western Ojibwe along the shores of Lake Superior. For the Ojibwe it was the Dakota communities who continued to represent a threat to the community as did environmental factors like winter. While the Americans were a growing concern, they were also a resource to draw upon as long as Ojibwe leaders maintain authority in their own villages. The defiance showed by Ojibwe leaders in the Finley case was not only a rebuke to American sovereignty in reaction to Cass' maneuverings, but also, when viewed through the lens of an Indigenous borderland, a way to demonstrate their own authority in the region. Refusing American forms of justice for the murders at Lake Pepin not only rebuked Cass' claim of expanding American sovereignty, but also demonstrated power to members of their own communities. Rather than viewing tribal action as occurring only in response to American stimuli, the theory of the Indigenous borderlands allows the full light of Ojibwe agency to shine. At the same time, it acknowledges that treaties protected Ojibwe access to environmental resources also threaten their authority over the region. Cass strategy of forcing

⁶⁹ McKenney, *Tour to the Lakes*, 459.

tribes to acknowledge the sovereign power of the United States and his attempts to build the judiciary threatened to dismantle traditional Ojibwe power structures, but created new opportunities to legally defend access to environmental resources.

CONCLUSION: ATTEMPTING TO DISMANTLE THE INDIGENOUS BORDERLANDS

The Ojibwe tracked the noisy survey party for days. The year was 1835, a decade after the signing of the Prairie du Chien treaty council, when Americans John Clark and Jon Beaux finally embarked on their mission to survey the boundary lines agreed upon between the Dakota and Ojibwe in the 1825 treaty. The Ojibwe warriors watched the Americans as they walked in a straight line pausing momentarily to take notes in their surveyor's journal. As they slowly and methodically continued their task they finally noticed something that frustrated their efforts. Behind them they saw young Ojibwe men pulling up the newly placed boundary markers.¹

John Clark and Jon Beaux's mission to survey the Dakota-Ojibwe borderline appeared futile, at least to the lead surveyor John Clark who wrote to his superior, General William Clark to explain their slow progress.² It was due, in part, to a lack of funds and a lack of military support. However it was also a physical manifestation of the inverse of J. O. Lewis' idealized image of the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council. Whereas the painting depicted an imagined reality of American power and influence in the western Great Lakes, the boundary line commission faced the harsh, physical reality of marking on the land what was represented on paper. In the ten years following Lewis' depiction, the Americans attempted to physically establish a stronger military and settler presence while physically marking the borderline between the Dakota and Ojibwe. In that effort the survey commissioners confronted the difficult

¹ Anton Treuer, *The Assassination of Hole In The Day*. (St. Paul: Borealis Books an imprint of the Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2011), 55.

² The original copies of these survey notes can be found at the National Archives in Washington D.C. See RG 75: Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs; Records of the Land Division Surveying and Allotting Record; Field Notes of Ancient and Miscellaneous Surveys, 1787-1887 Box 1 PI-163 Entry 315 #4 Field. The Wisconsin Historical Society holds a Photostat copy of these originals. #4 Field notes of a survey of the "boundary line between the Sioux and Chippewa Nation of Indians as contemplated by the 3rd article of the Treaty of Prairie du Chien of the 19th of August, 1825." Survey 1835 Jon. A. Beaux and John A. Clark surveyors In two volumes: Book I: 49 sheets, 1 cover and 1 mounted sheet. November 11, 1835 Letter to William Clark from Jon A. Beaux.

reality that continued to plague American attempts to enforce United States authority in Ojibwe and Dakota lands.

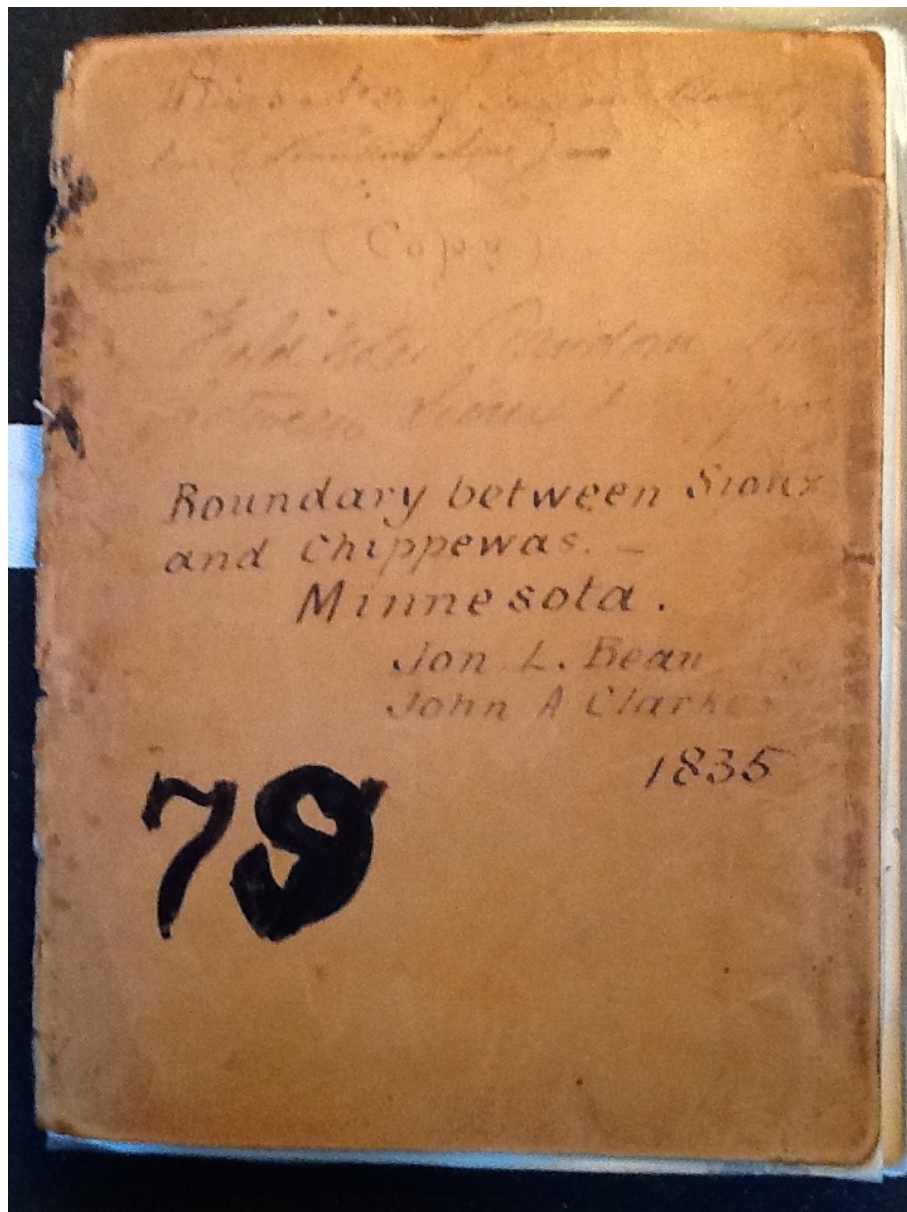


Figure 12: Jon. L. Beaux and John A. Clark, “Field Notes of 1835 Survey of the 1825 Prairie du Chien Treaty Boundary Line.”

Jon. A. [L?] Beaux and John A. Clark “Field notes of survey of the “boundary line between the Sioux and Chippeway Nation of Indians as contemplated by the 3rd article of the Treaty of Prairie du Chien of the 19th of August, 1825,” From “Ancient and Miscellaneous Surveys,” vol. 2. National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Even though it appeared to the American surveyors that Ojibwe authority was as strong as it was the decade before, Native political power had diminished especially near American trading post border towns where American influence and legal authority backed by military force could extend the furthest. Following Congress' passage of the Indian Removal Act in 1830, Great Lakes Indian power and Great Lakes Indian people came increasingly under attack from the expanding United States. The treaty line survey commission undertook its directive five years after the passage of the Indian Removal Act and just three years after the United States military and settler militia's pursued Sauk-Meskwaki leader Black Hawk and his band throughout the Wisconsin territory ending with hundreds of Sauk-Meskwaki massacred by the Americans at Bad Axe.³ Violence perpetuated by the Americans increased as the federal government sought to firmly establish American rule of law east of the Mississippi River. To the north in the lands of the Ojibwe and Dakota, American settlement was slower, but both groups were not isolated from the events affecting other signatories of the 1825 treaty council.

By 1835, Lewis Cass no longer was the Territorial Governor of Michigan. Instead in 1831 President Andrew Jackson appointed him to Secretary of War, a position that placed him in charge of the all things related to Indian affairs including the appointment of the commissioner of Indian Affairs. Cass was not Jackson's first choice, but Jackson perceived him to be a safe

³ Willard Carl Klunder, *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation* (Kent: The Kent State University Press, 1996), 70. Noted by Cass' biographer that the conflict between Black Hawk and the United States "was the only instance in which northwestern Indians were forcibly removed by the military while Cass was secretary of war, but other tribes were also relocated by the Jackson administration." This included the Chicago cession treaty of 1833 regarding Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Odawa removal. The treaty included lands "along the western shore of Lake Michigan, and between this Lake and the land ceded to the United States by the Winnbago nation, at the treaty of Fort Armstrong made on the 15th September 1832- bounded on the north by the country lately ceded by the Menominees, and on the south by the country ceded at the treaty of Prairie du Chien made on the 29th July 1829 – supposed to contain about five million acres." See also Charles J. Kappler. ed. "Treaty with the Chippewa, Etc., 1833." September 26, 1833. 7 Stat., 431 Proclamation. Feb. 21, 1835" *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties: Vol. II Treaties* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904) [on-line] Digitized by Oklahoma State University Library, accessed March 30, 2017, <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/chi0402.htm>. For more on Black Hawk see Black Hawk, *Black Hawk: An Autobiography* ed. Donald Jackson (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1955).

choice as Cass shared similar political views as Jackson and was a “prominent northwestern Democrat.”⁴ Secretary Cass’ experience in American Indian relations as Michigan Territorial Governor impacted his judgment and efforts as the Secretary of War. On November 21, 1831 then Secretary of War Lewis Cass delivered a report that he hoped would direct future Indian policy to fix the issues at the time. Secretary Cass’ conclusion was that removal of American Indians to the West was in the interest of all and outlined seven familiar points. Two points in particular included, “The employment of adequate military force in the vicinity of the Indians in order to prevent hostility between the tribes,” and “Encouragement to the Indians to adopt severalty of property.”⁵ These two points echoed Cass’ attempts as Governor at the 1825 and 1826 treaty councils with the Ojibwe to establish peace backed by United States military force and establish private property within Great Lakes Indian communities. They were now points that Cass intended to implement throughout the federal Indian policy of the United States, particularly in the American southeast.

Lewis Cass’ reach was felt further still as United States legal institutions gained support through another one of Cass’ protégés from his 1820 expedition. James Duane Doty service as a judge in the western portions of the territory of Michigan lasted until 1832 when he joined the Michigan Territorial Council from 1833 to 1835.⁶ Doty later became governor of Wisconsin territory in 1841. His rulings as a territorial judge set in motion further legal justifications for American authority based in part on Cass’ previous efforts to ensure that Great Lakes Indian

⁴ Klunder, *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation*, 56. Jackson’s first two choices were Hugh Lawson White and William Drayton both of whom turned the president down.

⁵ Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians Vol. I* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 271.

⁶ Klunder, *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation*, 39. “James Doty, partly thanks to Cass’s recommendation, was appointed in 1823 to a territorial judgeship for the western counties and later elected governor of Wisconsin.”

recognized the United States as the political authority in the region.⁷ American legal jurisdiction based on an economic policy of capitalist development and land privatization conflicted with the delicate balance that constituted the Indigenous borderlands. The “civilization” policies Cass was so intent on popularizing included western style education systems that attempted to break apart Indigenous bonds of knowledge and new racial policies that attempted to divide communities into “Indians,” “mixed-bloods,” and “whites.”

Leadership within Ojibwe society persisted in spite of American attempts to dissolve Native authority. It continued to maintain its complexity in the face of American expansion throughout the western Great Lakes. Ojibwe society was flexible and this strength allowed it to mold and reinvent its political and social structure to adapt to the shifting political climate. However, the continuous presence of the federal government created difficulties for those used to wielding power as they had in the Indigenous borderlands. This was because American treaty commissioners continued to reformulate where and how power derived its meaning. The Americans insisted on obtaining greater access for themselves and increasingly American corporations to environmental resources while providing limited material goods and money for exchange to continuous extraction of resources.⁸ As states worked to assert their jurisdiction over more lands, the Ojibwe found ways of persisting and resisting. “Ojibwe economic actions took

⁷ Bethel Saler, *The Settlers' Empire: Colonialism and State Formation in America's Old Northwest* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 214. Bethel Saler highlighted Doty's strict rulings on the regulation of sexual and marriage relations between American Indians and white Americans. These rulings, “confirmed the primary racial division with which U.S. officials tried to divide and organize new territories out of the Northwest.”

⁸ Erik Redix, *The Murder of Joe White: Ojibwe Leadership and Colonialism in Wisconsin*. (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2014), xvii. Redix argued that studies of the interaction between American Indians and the American settler state have relied heavily on an examination of federal policies. However, he argued this view misses part of the colonization process. He argued “that colonialism at the state, municipal, and corporate levels deeply affected Lac Courte Oreilles economic conditions and sovereignty as much as if not more than federal policies of the time including the allotment of reservation lands to individual ownership or enrollment of Native children in boarding schools. Timber companies flooded rice beds, and the state of Wisconsin prosecuted Ojibwe fishers and hunters, undermining an entire economy.”

on new meanings: they not only were a way of making a living; they also served as a form of resistance and a way to assert sovereignty against state encroachment.”⁹ Ojibwe leaders who adapted to American power structures were rewarded with private land holdings, a valued asset in American culture, but one far more difficult to transfer into Ojibwe power. A power struggle ensued in Ojibwe communities over those who maintained more “traditional” methods of living and societal structure verses those who maintain adaption of American ideals in order to maintain land access and power for their families. Though such divisions often appear as community struggles between mixed-ancestry and traditional members, such biologically based divisions obscure the reality that members of the Ojibwe community had married outside of the community for hundreds of years.¹⁰ Ojibwe identity had been much more reliant on action and community recognition rather than the newly created American ideal of biological “blood quantum.” Yet, American settler society valued racial differences as a method to ensure power was vested in a limited number of decision makers.

The unintended consequences that resulted from the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty council included the weakening of the structures of the Indigenous borderlands and a re-conception of power based not on maintaining access to environmental resources, but on obtaining access to land that could be commodified and sold. These consequences stemmed from a seemingly small aspect of the treaty that stated the tribes agreed to acknowledge American authority over the region. As Witgen explored, the Ojibwe and other Great Lakes tribes understood this statement

⁹ Chantal Norrgard, *Seasons of Change: Labor, Treaty Rights, and Ojibwe Nationhood* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 8.

¹⁰ For a reservation based case study of such divisive debates see Melissa L. Meyer, *The White Earth Tragedy: Ethnicity and Dispossession at a Minnesota Anishinaabe Reservation* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994).

likely differently than the Americans understood the provision.¹¹ Yet, in future years the Americans like Doty, Schoolcraft, and Cass were able to use this acknowledgement to reinforce and apply American jurisprudence in the Great Lakes. While the entirety of Cass' military defense of the Great Lakes was not implemented, large portions of the plan were deployed and these military posts backed American legal jurisdiction.

Though increasingly subjected to United States legal jurisdiction, the Ojibwe and Dakota of the western Great Lakes did not disappear as more American settlers arrived in the region. Though lumber companies held interest in northern locations, white settlers deemed these locations less desirable for agriculture. Settlement in these regions took place at a much less frantic pace than in Milwaukee or the lead mining region surrounding Prairie du Chien. The Dakota maintained large areas of influence further west in Minnesota through the Dakota War of 1862.

Authority in the eighteen- and nineteenth-century western Great Lakes rested in the hands of those whom the community recognized as holding power and dedicated to the community. Within Ojibwe and Dakota villages these persons included those who were able to provide access to environmental resources, including wild rice and maple sugar, for the greater community. Through their ties to the manidoog and wakan as well as links to other powerful families in marriage, leaders ensured their community's continual survival. The Indigenous borderland between the Dakota and Ojibwe were a flexible framework of power relations that adapted and changed when confronted with new threats. As the Americans continued to work to change the Indigenous borderlands into lands they could more easily control, village leaders adopted new strategies. Tribal leaders used future treaty negotiations to ensure their communities

¹¹ Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations*, 352-353.

continued to maintain access to vital environmental resources including hunting, fishing, and gathering resources even when the Americans forced land cessions.

Tribal Nations today continue to work to use such treaty language to favor the interests of contemporary communities. Today, there is a resurgence in the defense of treaty guaranteed rights to environmental resources. While tribes have used American courts to defend their sovereignty, tribal communities also continue to rely on traditional resources as a way to maintain cultural sovereignty. Several tribal governments in the western Great Lakes have instituted programs to harvest and sell wild rice.¹² While this has turned the resource into a commodity it has also provided jobs to tribal members. Other programs continue to harvest wild rice in methods similar to the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Harvests from these sustainable practices have been used to feed elders and vulnerable persons within the community. Through revitalization programs and independence efforts, tribal leaders have continued to ensure their communities maintain access to these spiritually and physically vital environmental resources.

¹² These entities include tribal governments like the White Earth Ojibwe Nation that market and sell their own wild rice, and other products. “White Earth Real Wild Rice,” *White Earth Nation*, accessed March 30, 2017, <http://realwildrice.com/>. It also include non-government organizations like Native Harvest, an organization based out of White Earth which continues to market American Indian grown and harvested goods. “Native Harvest,” *Native Harvest Ojibwe Products, a subdivision of White Earth Land Recovery Project*, accessed March 30, 2017, <https://www.nativeharvest.com/>.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Archives

Bentley Historical Library, Ann Arbor, MI.

Sault Sainte Marie Collection c. 1802-1930, Johnston Family History [microfilm] originals at Bayliss Public Library Sault Sainte Marie, MI microfilm.

C.C. Trowbridge Papers ca. 1823- ca.

Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

Henry R. Schoolcraft Papers

Michigan State University Library, East Lansing, Michigan

Lawrence Taliaferro Papers. Correspondence and Miscellaneous Papers, undated, and 1813-1835. Microfilm copy of original in the Minnesota Historical Society.

Minnesota Historical Society, St. Paul, Minnesota

Lawrence Taliaferro Papers (1794-1871)

National Archive, Washington D.C.

RG 75: Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs

Newberry Library, Chicago, Illinois

Edward E. Ayer Manuscript Collection (Vault Boxes)

Everett D. Graff Collection of Western Americana

Hermon Dunlap Smith Collection

Lewis Cass Papers

William L. Clements Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan

Lewis Cass Papers

David Bates Douglas Papers

Wisconsin Historical Society: Madison, Wisconsin

Draper Collection

Thomas Forsyth Papers

United States Bureau of Indian Affairs Collection: Indian Office Files Michigan, 1824-1828
(Photostat copies)

Joseph Montfort Street Papers

Jonathan L. Bean Survey Notes 1835

Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Online Archive

Library of Congress Online

Geography and Map Division

National Archives Online

National Archives Founders Online <http://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/01-39-02-0500>

Oklahoma State University Digital Library:

Kappler, Charles J., *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties Treaty with the Chippewa, 1826*
Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904; Oklahoma State University Digital
Library. <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/vol2/treaties/chi0268.htm>

Wisconsin Online Archive

Ratified treaty no. 139, documents relating to the negotiation of the treaty of August 19, 1825, with the Sioux, Chippewa, Sauk and Fox, Menominee, Iowa, and Winnebago Indians and part of the Ottawa, Chippewa, and Potawatomi of the Illinois Indians. University of Wisconsin Digital Collections.
<http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/History.IT1825no139> (Pages 1-44).

Wisconsin Historical Society, James Otto Lewis, View of the Great Treaty Held at Prairie du Chien, Viewed online at
<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Content.aspx?dsNav=N:4294963828-4294955414&dsRecordDetails=R:IM3142> from James Otto Lewis, *The Aboriginal Portfolio: A Collection of Portraits of the Most Celebrated Chiefs of the North American Indians*. Lithographed by Lehman & Duval of Philadelphia, 1835. Held at Wisconsin Historical Society, WHS-3142.

Articles

Adelman, Jeremy and Stephen Aron. "From Borderlands to Borders: Empires, Nation-States, and the Peoples in between in North American History." *American Historical Review* 104, no. 3 (1999): 814-841. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2650990>.

Barr, Juliana. "Geographies of Power: Mapping Indian Borders in the Borderlands of the Early Southwest." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 68, no. 1 (2011): 5-46. Accessed April 5, 2017. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5309/willmaryquar.68.1.0005>.

Bergquist, Lee. "Bad River Chippewa Could Have Say in Gogebic Iron Ore Mine" *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* Feb. 17, 2013. Accessed April 5, 2017.
<http://archive.jsonline.com/news/wisconsin/bad-river-chippewa-could-have-say-in-gogebic-iron-ore-mine-ek8pstn-191612841.html>.

Black, Mary B. "Ojibwa Power Belief System." In *The Anthropology of Power: Ethnographic Studies from Asia, Oceania, and the New World* edited by Raymond D. Fogelson and Richard N. Adams, 141-151. New York: Academic Press, 1977.

Bohaker, Heidi. "'Nindoodemag': The Significance of Algonquian Kinship Networks in the Eastern Great Lakes Region, 1600-1701," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 63, no. 1 (2006): 23-52. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3491724>.

Buckmaster, Marla M. "The Northern Limits of Ridge Field Agriculture: An Example from Menominee County." In *An Upper Great Lakes Archaeological Odyssey: Essays in honor of Charles E. Cleland* edited by William A. Lovis, 30-42. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004.

- Crosby, Alfred W. "Virgin Soil Epidemics as a Factor in the Aboriginal Depopulation in America," *The William and Mary Quarterly*. 33, no. 2 (1976): 289-299. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1922166>.
- DeMallie, Raymond J. "Kinship and Biology in Sioux Culture." In *North American Indian Anthropology Essays on Society and Culture* edited by Raymond J. DeMallie and Alfonso Ortiz, 125-146. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1994.
- DeMallie, Raymond J. and Robert H. Lavenda, "Wakan: Plains Siouan Concept of Power." In *The Anthropology of Power* edited by Raymond D. Fogelson and Richard N. Adams. New York: Academic Press, 1977.
- DeMallie, Raymond J. "Male and Female in Traditional Lakota Culture." In *The Hidden Half: Studies of Plains Indian Women* edited by Patricia Albers and Beatrice Medicine. Lanham: University Press of America, Inc., 1983.
- DeMallie, Raymond J. "Touching the Pen: Plains Indian Treaty Councils in Ethnohistorical Perspective." In *Ethnicity on the Great Plains* edited by Frederick C. Luebecke, 38-53. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1980.
- Graybill, Andrew R. "Boundless Nature: Borders and the Environment in North America and Beyond," In *The Oxford Handbook of Environmental History* edited by Andrew C. Isenberg, 668-687. New York: Oxford University Press, 2014. doi: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195324907.001.0001.
- Hämäläinen, Pekka and Samuel Truett. "On Borderlands." *The Journal of American History*. 98, no. 2 (2011): 338-361. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/41509959>.
- Hickerson, Harold. "The Feast of the Dead Among the Seventeenth Century Algonkins of the Upper Great Lakes." *American Anthropologist*. 62, no. 1 (1960): 81-107. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/666909>.
- Howard, James H. "Some Further Thoughts on Eastern Dakota "Clans," *Ethnohistory*. 26, no. 2 (Spring, 1979): 133-140. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/481088>.
- Jung, Patrick J. "Judge James Duane Doty and Wisconsin's First Court: The Additional Court of Michigan Territory, 1823-1836," *The Wisconsin Magazine of History*. 86, no. 2 (Winter, 2002-2003): 30-41. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4637025>.
- Kaufman, Dan. "The Fight for Wisconsin's Soul," Opinion Section *New York Times Sunday Review* March 29, 2014. <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/03/30/opinion/sunday/the-fight-for-wisconsins-soul.html>.
- Lakomäki, Sami. "Our Line" The Shawnees, the United States, and Competing Borders on the Great Lakes "Borderlands," 1795-1832." In *Journal of the Early Republic*. 34, no. 4

- (2014): 597-624. Accessed November 10, 2017. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1353/jer.2014.0071>.
- Miller, Cary. "Gifts as Treaties: The Political Use of Received Gifts in Anishinaabeg Communities, 1820-1832," *The American Indian Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (Spring 2002): 221-245. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4128460>.
- Morrissey, Robert Michael. "The Power of the Ecotone: Bison, Slavery, and the Rise and Fall of the Grand Village of the Kaskaskia." *The Journal of American History*. 102, no. 3 (2015): 667-692. November 20, 2016. doi: 10.1093/jahist/jav514.
- Parkins, A.E. "The Indians of the Great Lakes Region and Their Environment." *Geographical Review*. 6, no. 6 (1918): 504-512. Accessed October 21, 2015. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/207682>.
- Peters, Bernard C. "Hypocrisy on the Great Lakes Frontier: The Use of Whiskey by the Michigan Department of Indian Affairs." *Michigan Historical Review*. 18, no. 2 (Fall, 1992): 1-13. Accessed April 10, 2017. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20173343>.
- Phillips, Sarah T. "Environmental History." In *American History Now* edited by Eric Foner, 285-335. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011.
- Ramirez-Shkwegnaabi, Benjamin. "The Dynamics of American Indian Diplomacy in the Great Lakes Region." *American Indian Cultural and Research Journal*. 27, no. 4 (2003): 53-77. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.17953/aicr.27.4.f2217880186w0332>.
- Sleeper-Smith, Susan. "Native American Histories in North American," in *Oxford Bibliographies* 10.1093/obo/9780199730414-0157.
- Spruhan, Paul. "A Legal History of Blood Quantum in Federal Indian Law to 1935." *South Dakota Law Review*. 51, no. 1 (2006): 1-50. Accessed November 20, 2016. <http://ssrn.com/abstract=955032>.
- Stoler, Ann Laura. "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance." *Archival Science* 2, no. 90 (2002): 87-109. Accessed November 20, 2016. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1023/A:1020821416870>.
- Surendiran, Gangadaran, et al. "Nutritional Constituents and Health Benefits of Wild Rice (Zizania Spp.)." *Nutrition reviews* 72.4 (2014): 228. *ProQuest*. Web. March 31, 2017.
- White, Bruce. "Give Us A Little Milk': The Social and Cultural Meanings of Gift Giving in the Lake Superior Fur Trade." *Minnesota History*. 48, no. 2 (1982) 60-71. Accessed November 20, 2016. collections.mnhs.org/MNHHistoryMagazine/articles/48/v48i02p060-071.pdf.
- Williams, J. Fletcher. "Memoir of William W. Warren," in *History of the Ojibway People* St. Paul: Borealis Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984.

Books

- Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 1983 Revised Edition 2006.
- Anderson, Gary Clayton. *Kinsmen of Another Kind: Dakota-White Relations in the Upper Mississippi Valley, 1650-1862*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984.
- Barr, Juliana. *Peace Came in the Form of a Woman: Indians and Spaniards in the Texas Borderlands*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2007.
- Bremer, Richard G. *Indian Agent and Wilderness Scholar: The Life of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft*. Mount Pleasant: Clarke Historical Library, 1987.
- Brooks, James. *Captives & Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002.
- Calloway, Colin G. *The Victory with No Name: The Native American Defeat of the First American Army*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Chang, Kornel. *Pacific Connections: The Making of the U.S. - Canadian Borderlands*. Berkley: University of California Press, 2012.
- Cleland, Charles E. *Rites of Conquest: The History and Culture of Michigan's Native Americans*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992.
- Cronon, William. *Changes in the Land: Indians, Colonists, and the Ecology of New England*. New York: Hill and Wang, 1983.
- Danziger Jr., Edmund J. *The Chippewas of Lake Superior*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1978.
- DeJong, David H. *American Indian Treaties: A Guide to Ratified and Unratified Colonial, United States, States, Foreign, and Intertribal Treaties and Agreements, 1607-1911*. Salt Lake City: The University of Utah Press, 2015.
- DeLay, Brian. *War of a Thousand Deserts: Indian Raids and the U.S.-Mexican War*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.
- Denig, Edwin T. *The Assiniboine*, Edited by J. N. B. Hewitt. Regina: University of Regina Canadian Plains Research Center, 2000.
- Densmore, Frances. *Chippewa Customs*. Saint Paul: Borealis Book of Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1979.

- Diedrich, Mark. *The Chiefs Wapahasha: Three Generations of Dakota Leadership, 1740-1876*. Rochester, MN: Coyote Books, 2004.
- Hagan, William T. *The Sac and Fox Indians*, Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958.
- Hämäläinen, Pekka. *The Comanche Empire*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008.
- Hickerson, Harold. *Chippewa Indians II: Ethnohistory of Mississippi Bands and Pillager and Winnibigoshish Bands of Chippewa*. New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1974.
- . *Chippewa Indians III: Ethnohistory of Chippewa of Lake Superior*. New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1974.
- Jacoby, Karl. *Shadows at Dawn: An Apache Massacre and the Violence of History*. New York: Penguin Books, 2009.
- Kappler, Charles J. ed. *Indian Treaties 1778-1883*. New York: Interland Publishing Inc., 1972.
- Klunder, Willard Carl. *Lewis Cass and the Politics of Moderation*. Kent: The Kent State University Press, 1996.
- Krech III, Shepard. *The Ecological Indian: Myth and History*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1999.
- Kugel, Rebecca. *To Be The Main Leaders of Our People: A History of Minnesota Ojibwe Politics, 1825-1898*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1998.
- Landes, Ruth. *The Mystic Lake Sioux. Sociology of the Mdewakanton Santee*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1968.
- Mason, Ronald J. *Great Lakes Archaeology*. Caldwell: The Blackburn Press, 1981.
- McDonnell, Michael. *Masters of Empire: Great Lakes Indians and the Making of America*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2015.
- McManus, Sheila. *The Line Which Separates: Race, Gender, and the Making of the Alberta-Montana Borderlands*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2005.
- Meyer, Melissa L. *The White Earth Tragedy: Ethnicity and Dispossession at a Minnesota Anishinaabe Reservation*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994.
- Meyer, Roy M. *History of the Santee Sioux: United States Indian Policy on Trial*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967.
- Miller, Cary. *Ogimaag: Anishinaabeg Leadership, 1760-1845*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010.

- Murphy, Lucy Eldersveld. *Great Lakes Creoles: A French-Indian Community on the Northern Borderlands, Prairie du Chien 1750-1860*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- Norrgard, Chantal. *Seasons of Change: Labor, Treaty Rights, and Ojibwe Nationhood*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2014.
- Nichols, John D. and Earl Nyholm, *A Concise Dictionary of Minnesota Ojibwe*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995.
- Parker, Robert Dale. ed. *The Sound the Stars Make Rushing Through the Sky: The Writings of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007.
- Prucha, Francis Paul. *Lewis Cass and American Indian Policy*. Detroit: Published for the Detroit Historical Society by Wayne State University Press, 1967.
- . *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986.
- Quimby, George Irving. *Indian Life in the Upper Great Lakes: 11,000 B.C. to A.D. 1800*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1960.
- Redix, Erik M. *The Murder of Joe White: Ojibwe Leadership and Colonialism in Wisconsin*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2014.
- Saler, Bethel. *The Settlers' Empire: Colonialism and State Formation in America's Old Northwest*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015.
- Schafer, Joseph. *The Wisconsin Lead Region*. Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1932.
- Schenck, Theresa. *Voice of the Crane Echoes Afar: The Sociopolitical Organization of the Lake Superior Ojibwa, 1640-1855*. New York: Garland Publishers, 1997.
- Sleeper-Smith, Susan. *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001.
- . *Lost Worlds: Indian Women, Power, and Authority in the Ohio River Valley, 1690-1792*. Chapel Hill: Omohundro Institute of Early American history and Culture by the University of North Carolina Press, forthcoming.
- Sturtevant, William C., Douglas H. Ubelaker et. al. *Handbook of North American Indians Volume 3 Environment, Origins, and Population*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 2006.

- Tanner, Helen Hornbeck. *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History*. Norman: Published for The Newberry Library by the University of Oklahoma Press, 1987.
- Treuer, Anton. *The Assassination of Hole In The Day*. St. Paul: Borealis Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2011.
- Vennum, Jr., Thomas. *Wild Rice and the Ojibway People*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1988.
- Viola, Herman J. *Thomas L. McKenney: Architect of America's Early Indian Policy: 1816-1830*. Chicago: Sage Books The Shallow Press Inc., 1974.
- Walker, James R. *Lakota Society* ed. Raymond DeMallie. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1982.
- Westerman, Gwen and Bruce White. *Mni Sota Makoe: The Land of the Dakota*. Saint Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2012.
- White, Richard. *Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991.
- White, Richard. *The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988.
- Witgen, Michael. *An Infinity of Nations: How the Native New World Shaped Early North America*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012.

Documents, Published Primary Sources

- Benton-Banai, Edward. *The Mishomis Book: The Voice of the Ojibway*. Hayward, WI: Indian Country Communications Inc., 1988.
- Black Hawk. *Black Hawk: An Autobiography* edited by Donald Jackson. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1955.
- Blair, Emma Helen. Editor. *The Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley and Region of the Great Lakes as described by Nicolas Perrot, French commandant in the Northwest; Bacqueville de la Potherie, French royal commissioner to Canada; Morrell Marston, American army officer; and Thomas Forsyth United States agent at Fort Armstrong Vol. I*. Cleveland: The Arthur Clark Company, 1911.
- Cass, Lewis. "Letter 3. Lewis Cass to John C. Calhoun November 18, 1819 Appendix B." In *Narrative Journal of Travels: Through the Northwestern Region of the United States extending from Detroit to Great Chain of American Lakes to the Sources of the*

- Mississippi River in the Year 1820*, edited by Mentor L. Williams. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1992.
- Cass, Lewis. "Considerations on the Present State of the Indians, and Their Removal to the West of the Mississippi," In *The North American Review*, No. LXVI. For January, 1830. Boston: Gray and Bowen, 1828 reprint edition Arno Press, 1975.
- Chapman, Charles H. "The Historic Johnston Family of the 'SOO.'" In *Michigan Pioneer and Historical Society* Vol. XXXII. Lansing: Robert Smith Printing Company, 1903.
- Doty, James Duane. "The Journal and Letters of James Duane Doty." In *Narrative Journal of Travels: Through the Northwestern Region of the United States extending from Detroit to Great Chain of American Lakes to the Sources of the Mississippi River in the Year 1820*, edited by Mentor L. Williams. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1992.
- Johnston, Basil. *The Manitous: The Spiritual World of the Ojibway*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1995.
- Kinzie, Juliette M. *Wau-Bun: The "Early Day" in the North-West*. Chicago: Derby and Jackson, 1856.
- Kohl, Johann Georg. *Kitchi-Gami: Life Among the Lake Superior Ojibway*. St. Paul: Borealis Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1985.
- Le Roy, Claude Charles. "Bacqueville de la Potherie. History of the Savage Peoples who are allies of New France [from his *Histoire de l'Amérique septentrionale* (Paris, 1753), tome ii and iv]." In *The Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley and Region of the Great Lakes* vol. I edited by Emma Helen Blair. Cleveland: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1911.
- Lockwood, James H. "Early Times and Events in Wisconsin." In *Collections of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin* edited by Lyman Copeland Draper, LL. D. Vol. II Under the editorial direction of Reuben Gold Thwaites Wisconsin Historical Society Madison Published by the Society 1903, 98-196.
- McKenney, Thomas Loraine. *Sketches of a tour to the lakes, of the character and customs of the Chippeway Indians, and of incidents connected with the Treaty of Fond du Lac. Also, a vocabulary of the Algonic, or chippeway language, formed in part, and as far as it goes, upon the basis of one furnished by Albert Gallatin*. Minneapolis: Ross & Haines, 1959 Reprint of 1827. [e-book]. <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015035315848>.
- Melish, John. *A Geographical Description of the United States, with the contagious British and Spanish Possessions, intended as an accompaniment to Melish's Map of these countries*. Philadelphia: published by the author. T. H. Palmer, printer, (second edition) 1816.

- “November 19, 1825 Mission to the Indians: from the National Journal” In *The Niles Weekly Register* edited by H. Niles. XXIX (187-192). Baltimore: Franklin Press, September, 1825, to March 1826. [e-book].
- Perrot, Nicolas, “Memoir on the Manners, customs, and religion of the savages of North America by Nicolas Perrot,” In *The Indian Tribes of the Upper Mississippi Valley and Region of the Great Lakes as described by Nicolas Perrot, French commandant in the Northwest; Bacqueville de la Potherie, French royal commissioner to Canada; Morrell Marston, American army officer; and Thomas Forsyth United States agent at Fort Armstrong Vol. I.* edited by Emma Helen Blair, 25-273. Cleveland: The Arthur Clark Company, 1911.
- Pike, Zebulon. *The Journals of Zebulon Montgomery Pike: With Letters and related Documents* Vol. 1 ed. Donald Jackson. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1966.
- Rush, Benjamin. *An account of the sugar maple-tree, of the United States, and of the methods of obtaining sugar from it, together with observations upon the Advantages both public and private of this Sugar. In a Letter to Thomas Jefferson, Esq. Secretary of State of the United States, and one of the Vice Presidents of the American Philosophical Society.* Philadelphia, 1792. *Sabin Americana*. Gale, Cengage Learning. Michigan State University Libraries. March 31, 2017.
<http://galenet.galegroup.com.proxy1.cl.msu.edu/servlet/Sabin?af=RN&ae=CY3801063083&srchtp=a&ste=14>.
- Schoolcraft, Henry R. *Narrative Journal of Travels: Through the Northwestern Region of the United States extending from Detroit to Great Chain of American Lakes to the Sources of the Mississippi River in the Year 1820*, edited by Mentor L. Williams. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1992.
- . “Wabojee, Or The White Fisher” In *Oneóta, or, Characteristics of the red race of America: from original notes and manuscripts*. New York: Wiley & Putnam, 1845, 306-317 [e-book]. Accessed November 20, 2016.
<https://archive.org/details/onetaorcharacte00schogoo>
- . *Personal Memoirs of a Residence of Thirty Years with the Indian Tribes on the American Frontiers: with brief notices of passing events, facts, and opinions, A.D. 1812- A.D. 1842*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo and co., 1851. [ebook]
<https://archive.org/details/personalmemoirs00schogoo> .
- . *Personal Memoirs of a Residence of Thirty Years with the Indian Tribes on the American Frontiers: with brief notices of passing events, facts, and opinions, A.D. 1812- A.D. 1842*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo and co., 1851. [ebook]
<http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/11119>.
- . *Schoolcraft’s Expedition to Lake Itasca: The Discovery of the Source of the Mississippi*, edited by Philip P. Mason. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1958.

Taliaferro, Lawrence. *Auto-biography of Major Lawrence Taliaferro: Written in 1864*. St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1894. [e-book]
<https://archive.org/details/autobiographyofm00talirich>

Tanner, John. *The Falcon: A Narrative of the Captivity and Adventures of John Tanner*. New York: Penguin Books, 1994.

Thompson, David. *David Thompson's Narrative of his Exploration in Western America 1784-1812*, edited by J. B. Tyrrell. Toronto: The Champlain Society, 1916. [e-book]
<https://archive.org/details/davidthompsonsna00thom>.

Trowbridge, Charles Christopher. "The Journal and Letters of Charles Christopher Trowbridge, Expedition of 1820." In *Narrative Journal of Travels: Through the Northwestern Region of the United States extending from Detroit to Great Chain of American Lakes to the Sources of the Mississippi River in the Year 1820*, edited by Mentor L. Williams. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1992.

University of Nebraska Press / University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries-Electronic Text Center. *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*. <http://lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu>.

Warren, William. *History of the Ojibway People* St. Paul: Borealis Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1984.

Online

"212 Laurentian Mixed Forest Province," *US Forest Service*. Accessed November 21, 2016.
<http://www.fs.fed.us/land/ecosysmgmt/colorimagemap/images/212.html>.

"About Our Great Lakes: Background." *National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory*. Accessed November 20, 2016.
<https://www.glerl.noaa.gov/education/ourlakes/background.html>.

"Background on Lake Sturgeon," *Michigan Department of Natural Resources*, Accessed March 30, 2017. http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10364_18958_61264-276682--,00.html.

Englebert, Robert. "Colonial History in the Age of Digital Humanities," *Borealia: A Group Blog on Early Canadian History*, posted Feb. 12, 2016 accessed March 30, 2017,
<https://earlycanadianhistory.ca/2016/01/12/colonial-history-in-the-age-of-digital-humanities/>.

"Fishing." *Milwaukee Public Museum*. Accessed March 30, 2017.
<https://www.mpm.edu/wirp/ICW-29.html>.

- “Indian Country: Archaeological History.” *Milwaukee Public Museum*. Accessed March 22, 2017, <https://www.mpm.edu/wirp/ICW-22.html>.
- Kappler, Charles J. editor. “Treaty with the Sioux, Etc.,” August 19, 1825. 7 Stat., 272 Proclamation. Feb. 6, 1826” *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties: Vol. II Treaties*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904. [on-line] Oklahoma State University Library <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/KAPPLER/Vol2/treaties/sio0250.htm>.
- . “Treaty with the Chippewa, 1826.” August 5, 1826. 7 Stat., 290 Proclamation. Feb. 7, 1827” *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties: Vol. II Treaties*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904. [on-line] Oklahoma State University Library <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/VOL2/treaties/chi0268.htm>
- . “Treaty with the Chippewa, Etc., 1833.” September 26, 1833. 7 Stat., 431 Proclamation. Feb. 21, 1835” *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties: Vol. II Treaties*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904. [on-line] Oklahoma State University Library. <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/kappler/Vol2/treaties/chi0402.htm>
- “The Beaver and other Pelts.” *McGill University Digital Library*. Accessed November 20, 2016. <http://digital.library.mcgill.ca/nwc/history/01.htm>.
- Meskwaki Nation Sac & Fox* Accessed March 29, 2017, <http://www.meskwaki.org/index.html>.
- “Meskwaki Tribe.” *Milwaukee Public Museum*. Accessed April 10, 2017. <https://www.mpm.edu/research-collections/botany/collections/ethnobotany/meskwaki>
- “Native Harvest,” *Native Harvest Ojibwe Products, a subdivision of White Earth Land Recovery Project*, accessed March 30, 2017, <https://www.nativeharvest.com/>.
- “Oceti Sakowin: The Seven Council Fires.” *Minnesota Historical Society’s The U.S.-Dakota War of 1862*. Accessed April 6, 2016. <http://www.usdakotawar.org/history/dakota-homeland/oceti-%C5%A1akowi%C5%8B-seven-council-fires#>.
- “Ojibwe Waasa-Inaabidaa ‘We Look in All Directions’ Timeline,” *PBS Eight*, accessed March 31, 2017. http://www.ojibwe.org/home/about_anish_timeline.html.
- “Real Wild Rice.” *White Earth Nation*. Accessed March 30, 2017, <http://realwildrice.com/>.
- “Rivers, Edens, Empires: Lewis & Clark and the Revealing of America,” *Library of Congress* Accessed November 21, 2016 <https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/lewisandclark/lewis-landc.html>.
- “Sugaring: Iskigamizigewin.” *University of Minnesota Department of Indian Studies; University of Minnesota Libraries*. Accessed March 30, 2017 <http://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/category/galleries/sugaring>.

Swan, Mike et al. "The Anishinaabe Migration Story," *White Earth Nation (Gaa-waabaabiganikaag) History*, accessed March 31, 2017, downloadable <http://www.whiteearth.com/history.html>.

"The Crescent Bay Hunt club Site: Oneota in Southeast Wisconsin." *University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Archaeological Research Laboratory*, Last update August 26, 2003. Accessed April 10, 2017, <http://www4.uwm.edu/archlab/Oneota/>.

"The Ojibwe People's Dictionary", *University of Minnesota Department of Indian Studies; University of Minnesota Libraries*, accessed March 30, 2017, <http://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/>.

Thwaites, Reuben Gold ed. *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791* Vol. 1 (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers Company, 1899) [online text] http://moses.creighton.edu/kripke/jesuitrelations/relations_01.html .

———. ed. *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791* Vol. 23 (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers Company, 1899) [online text] http://moses.creighton.edu/kripke/jesuitrelations/relations_23.html.

———. ed. *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents: Travels and Explorations of the Jesuit Missionaries in New France 1610-1791* Vol. 55 (Cleveland: The Burrows Brothers Company, 1899) [online text] Accessed October 15, 2015. http://puffin.creighton.edu/jesuitrelations/relations_55.html.

Thesis

Wade, Susan Deborah. "Indigenous Women and Maple Sugar in the Upper Midwest, 1760-1848" Masters Thesis The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2011.

Libraries, Museums, and Archives:

Becker County Historical Society, Detroit Lake, MN

Capital Area District Library, Lansing, MI

DC Public Library, Washington, D.C.

Detroit Lakes Public Library, Detroit Lakes, MN

Fenner Nature Center, Lansing, MI

Gun Lake Potawatomi Camp Jijak Sugarbush, Gun Lake, MI
Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Mahnomen City Historical Society, Mahnomen, MN
Michigan State University Library, East Lansing, MI
Minnesota Historical Library, St. Paul, MI
National Archives, Washington, D.C.
National Museum of the American Indian, Washington, D.C.
Newberry Library, Chicago, IL
South Dakota State Library, Pierre, SD
State Library and Archives of Michigan, Lansing, MI
White Earth Tribal Community College Library, Mahnomen, MN
William L. Clements Library, Ann Arbor, MI
Wisconsin Historical Society, Madison, WI
Ziibiwing Center of Anishinaabe Cultural and Lifeways Mt. Pleasant, MI