

Traditional Knowledge in Site Recognition

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Where do these people come from? Outside? You tell different stories from us people. You people talk from paper. Me, I want to talk from Grandpa. (Mrs. Annie Ned [Yukon First Nations' Elder; born 1890s; deceased 1995] speaking at a 1992 meeting of the Yukon Historical and Museums Association in Haines Junction, Yukon (Cruikshank 1991: 44))

Mrs. Ned's comment and self-introduction followed a formal presentation by an archaeologist. It was directed towards a largely non-Native group, of which the author was a member, assembled to discuss the human history of her southwest Yukon homeland. Her words clearly illustrate the gulf that exists between the two different perspectives of the past: the Western scientific view, as known through archaeology, and the traditional knowledge view, as found in the stories Mrs. Ned's had heard and taught throughout her lifetime.¹

The gulf between these two worlds and ways of knowing the past certainly isn't unique to Yukon, the western Subarctic (Biewlawski 1989; various authors, this volume), or even to Canada. Pertinent examples can be found in Green (1989) for information on the Maori and New Zealand context; McBryde (1992) and Davidson et al. (1995) for the situation in Australia; and Downer (1989) for Navajo perspectives on sites and historically important places in the U.S. Southwest. As many of the papers in this volume testify (particularly Denton, Ch. 7; Hanks, Ch. 11; Henderson, Ch. 13; and McGhee, Ch. 16), the challenges remain in bringing these worlds together in some harmonious fashion. One thing is certain, greater awareness and understanding of the traditional knowledge perspective of the past is affecting the practice of archaeology in many jurisdictions.

This chapter examines the role of traditional knowledge in western Canadian Subarctic archaeology. Although the applications of traditional knowledge in archaeology are many, the underlying theme of the present discussion is on the contributions that traditional knowledge has made to site recognition. This topic touches upon such issues as the history of place, site significance, values about the past, and definitions of sacred versus secular sites—all issues that are culturally based. Examples of the substantive contributions of traditional knowledge, and namely how it has helped the archaeologist recognize sites, are also provided.

By first reviewing the history of archaeological research in this area, I will show that, although the discipline has a relatively long history of using traditional knowledge, only in the past few years has this knowledge begun to be truly integrated in archaeological work. With this integration, traditional knowledge is no longer simply being utilized when convenient, but is having a significant impact upon the discipline and its approach to knowing the past. As a result of such integration, the nature of two of the primary concerns of contemporary archaeology, cultural resource management (CRM) and public history interpretation, are changing in the Territories.

The Yukon and the Dene area of the western Northwest Territories is the geographic area of principal concern here, although archaeological field studies in interior Alaska are also mentioned. Summary articles on the traditional culture and history of the Aboriginal groups of the western Subarctic include Gillespie (1981); McClellan (1981); McClellan and Denniston (1981).

LABELS: TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE, ETHNOGRAPHY

Until this volume, few archaeologists (though see Hart 1994) have referred to *traditional knowledge* by that term, more commonly reporting it as *informant derived ethnographic data*, *ethnohistory*, *local knowledge*, *oral history*, or *oral tradition*. Background and pertinent discussions on these various methodological approaches, and on types of information concerning the past can be found in Charlton (1981), Cruikshank (1988), Jennings (1982), Thompson (1978) and Trigger (1982, 1986a, 1988).

¹ For more on Mrs. Ned's background, see Cruikshank et al. (1990).

In the western Subarctic at least, the various types of information falling under these labels can rightly be characterized as *traditional knowledge*. That is, they are a way of knowing or understanding the human past or history, just as traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) is a way of knowing or understanding the biosphere and its inter-relationships, with parallels in the disciplines of biology and ecology (see Fast and Berkes 1994; Johnson 1992). Other aspects of traditional knowledge similarly relate to such social realms as justice, medicine, and social organization (see Nahanni 1993).

There are many definitions of traditional knowledge, but that developed by the Government of the Northwest Territories' Traditional Knowledge Working Group, which is not specific to any realm (historical, biophysical, or social), is adequate for present purposes: "traditional knowledge is knowledge derived from, or rooted in the traditional way of life; the accumulated knowledge and understanding of the human place in relation to the universe, which encompasses spiritual relationships, relationships with the natural environment and the use of natural resources, relationships between people; this knowledge is reflected in language, social organization, values, institutions and laws" (Legat 1991:1-2)

Traditional knowledge has much to offer scholars trained in the Western sciences, but as the biogeographer R. Weeden (1992:148) has rightly asked, how do we integrate traditional knowledge without assimilating it? By assimilation, Weeden was referring to the practice of using it merely when convenient, or when it supports an hypothesis derived from another research approach, or when it provides insight into a new methodology. Looking beyond Weeden's concerns, we might also ask what are the consequences if and when traditional knowledge is successfully integrated? For example, does the integration of traditional knowledge change a research approach and its attitudes towards the data of concern? These issues will be explored below.

Oral History Versus Oral Tradition

Oral history and *oral tradition* are two different types of information in which traditional knowledge is embedded, and are often confused with each other. The former is generally taken as a first-person recounting of experiences that occurred within the lifetime of the reporter. The accuracy of oral history accounts is demonstrated by experiments that indicate that long-term memory of factual materials has a high degree of reliability (Thompson 1978: 101).

The Aboriginal cultures of the western Subarctic, however, also have strong oral traditions. That is, up until recently, their history has been oral, not something that is written in books (see Cruikshank 1981, 1989; various papers in Helm 1981). When one undertakes historical interview work with First Nations elders in this area, one generally get oral tradition information as well as the first person recounting of events the informant has personally witnessed or been part of; it is the latter information that is typically considered to be oral history.

In the social context of the western Subarctic then, oral history and oral tradition are not separate. As Cruikshank has noted, although caution is obviously needed in interpreting the historical events recorded in oral tradition, it nonetheless is a bountiful, if untapped source of information (see Cruikshank 1981, 1988, 1989, 1990, 1991). This same researcher has demonstrated the accuracy of Yukon native legends in recording, for example, known geological events (Cruikshank 1981; also Moodie et al. 1992; Hanks, Ch. 11), and has noted that place names feature considerable historical information (Cruikshank 1990; also Andrews 1990). There are many examples of events of the historic period being noted in regional oral traditions (e.g., Cruikshank 1989; Helm and Gillespie 1981; McClellan 1970).

TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE IN WESTERN SUBARCTIC ARCHAEOLOGY

Whatever term is used, the use of data that can be characterized as traditional knowledge is common throughout the history of discipline of archaeology (see Trigger 1989). In recent decades, it has been most often employed under the label of *ethnoarchaeology* (see Donnan and Clewlow 1974; Gould 1978), and commonly utilized for the purposes of analogy or functional interpretation.

Archaeologists working in the western Subarctic have a particularly strong history of using the information here referred to as traditional knowledge (see Arundale et al. 1989: 88), as com-

pared to many other parts of North America, and especially to Europe (Trigger 1989). Subarctic archaeologists have had access to traditional knowledge as available in anthropological and ethnographic reports, and those archival and historic documents that shed light on a region's ethnohistory, as well as through direct contact with members of the Aboriginal community. Subarctic archaeologists have a long record of hiring local Aboriginal residents to help them in their studies, usually as guides or field assistants. Like many other field-based disciplines operating in the North, archaeology and archaeologists wouldn't have been able to function safely and effectively without this help. The guides, of course, did more than provide valuable logistical assistance; they shared much knowledge that greatly improved the success of these projects.

The primary reasons for the popularity of traditional knowledge in the region are:

- *Historical continuity.* Historical records indicate no major migrations or population displacements in the area following European contact, exploration and colonization; and
- *Similarity in land-use patterns.* In the Subarctic biome, the land occupied and the life styles of the Aboriginal peoples were and are closer to that of the long-ago cultures, which are the subject of the archaeologist's inquiry.

The relationship between traditional knowledge and archaeology is a rather broad subject. Even within the western Subarctic, its incorporation in and contributions to many types of research problems is evident (cf., Arundale et al. 1989; Denton, Ch. 7; Greer 1990a; Hanks and Pokotylo 1989; Janes 1983, 1989, 1991). It has been used to predict pre-contact site locations, to understand the distribution of pre-contact sites across a landscape, to understand site depositional and taphonomic history, to interpret the distribution of artifacts within sites, to interpret artifact function(s), and to assign symbolic and hence cultural significance to different artifact types, and artifact distribution patterns.

Given such broad applications, the focus I have chosen is on the contributions that traditional knowledge has made to site recognition, and how it is affecting site definition in cultural resource management. Before doing so, a brief outline of the history of western Subarctic archaeology will illuminate the role that traditional knowledge has had in regional research designs. Other reviews of the history of western Subarctic archaeological research are found in Arundale et al. (1989); Cinq-Mars and Martijn (1981), and Clark (1981).

TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE IN RESEARCH DESIGN

Early Studies

The earliest archaeological projects in the western Subarctic by researchers such as Frederica de Laguna in the 1930s, and Douglas Leechman, Frederick Johnson and Hugh Raup, and Catherine McClellan in the 1940s and 1950s were really joint archaeological and ethnographic studies (e.g., Leechman 1946, 1951, 1954; Johnson and Raup 1964; McClellan 1975). These researchers not only asked the Aboriginal people they were studying about their view of their history, but where their old sites and archaeological sites could be found. Johnson and Raup's (1964) report on archaeology in the Yukon's Burwash Landing area thus contains a wealth of information on traditional material culture, including such topics as house structures, tools and containers, as well as site locations. Likewise, de Laguna's (1947) monograph on the archaeology of the lower Yukon is a compendium of site-specific and Aboriginal history data, with information on site locations, toponyms, histories and functions, all recorded from local residents. One could indeed argue that the most important contribution of Leechman's Yukon archaeological studies from this period (e.g., 1952) are the traditional stories he recorded.

Although these early studies in the Yukon and interior Alaska² are characterized by their use of traditional knowledge data, it remained inarticulated as a research strategy. In addition, the lack of acknowledgment of the contribution of information sources is a feature of this early work. Finally, like most anthropological or ethnographic reports of the time, the information is generally presented anonymously.

² There were no such equivalent studies in the Mackenzie basin.

1950s - 1970s

Compared to these earliest research efforts, it is harder to find the contributions of traditional knowledge in its various forms (e.g., ethnographic data, oral tradition) in the Subarctic archaeology of the 1950s to 1970s. This is the time when archaeology presented itself as a "science," not as a historical tool or research approach. Site survey reports from this period usually feature an ethnographic summary chapter, but commonly the information is not integrated into the project's research objectives or methodology (e.g., Clark 1975; Cinq-Mars 1973; Gordon 1976; MacNeish 1953, 1964; Millar 1968; Noble 1971). Furthermore, many projects did not record or register in government site databases historic period Aboriginal sites (e.g., Cinq-Mars 1973). As Hanks and Pokotylo (1989: 141) have noted, often only pre-contact (i.e., stone tool) sites and those historic period sites that were predominantly European in origin were recorded. Clark (1982) is an exception and features many examples of historic period Aboriginal sites in the Great Bear Lake area.

A primary research focus during this interval was chronology. Important archaeological sites were those with a long record of occupation or those of great antiquity, hence the lack of value placed on historic period Aboriginal sites. In defense of researchers of this period, as Trigger (1986b: 259) has noted, until recently most North American archaeologists devoted most of their efforts to studying earlier phases of American prehistory, assuming that that ethnologists could tell them what Native cultures were like in late prehistoric or pre-contact times. It is now apparent that archaeologists are the ones taking on that research responsibility (see also Trigger 1981).

Regardless, it is apparent that archaeological research projects of this period gave little direct recognition to traditional knowledge and the contributions it might make to their research objectives and methods. Undoubtedly it made a silent contribution through the project guides and field assistants earlier mentioned. The exceptions to this trend are those projects that sought to develop cultural chronologies by working from the present to the past, using what is termed the direct historical approach. In these cases, traditional knowledge of site use during historic times was the critical variable in allowing the archaeologist to trace the pre-contact archaeological antecedents of the ethnic group being studied. Under these circumstances, investigations were conducted at such sites as Dixthada in the Tanana area of central Alaska (Shinkwin 1979); KloKut (Morlan 1973) and Rat Indian Creek (Le Blanc 1983) in the Vuntut Gwich'in area of the northern Yukon; Chimi in the Southern Tutchone Champagne and Aishihik area of southern Yukon (Workman 1978); and various sites in the Chipewyan Great Slave Lake area (Noble 1975), and Fort Reliance in the Han area (Clark 1995).

There were several projects in the 1970s where traditional knowledge was an integral part of the research methodology, and these exceptions should be noted. The investigation of sites in the Koyukon area by Annette McFadyen Clark and Don Clark (1974), and Bob Jane's study of the Dene at Fort Alexander on the Mackenzie River (1975, 1991) compared the archaeological or material record of the past with the traditional knowledge view. James Van Stone's (1979) research on Ingalik settlements of the lower Yukon River in Alaska must also be mentioned; it stands as a classic study in ethnohistoric archaeological research.

1980s - 1990s

It is in archaeological projects of the 1980s that traditional knowledge finally began to make a real contribution and impact on the discipline. Projects in the Dene area used traditional knowledge data, such as trails and place names, to indicate areas of high archaeological potential (Andrews and Zoe, Ch. 10; Janes 1983; Hanks and Pokotylo 1989). These studies took an ethnoarchaeological approach, rather than cultural-historical one; they began examining the relationship between ethnographic observations of living Dene society and patterning in the archaeological record. The avenues of inquiry were broadened so that questions from the Native perspective were incorporated in the research design. Traditional knowledge thus began to feed into archaeological research not only as substantive data or as part of the research methodology, but in the definition of objectives.

In the Yukon, traditional knowledge input into the definition of project objectives similarly appear in projects around this time (e.g., Greer 1984b; O'Leary 1992). The Fort Selkirk archaeological project of 1987-89, under the direction of Ruth Gotthardt of the Yukon Heritage Branch, was characteristic of this new style of archaeology (Easton and Gotthardt 1987; Gotthardt 1990a; Gotthardt and Easton 1989). The project was a joint First Nation and government one that collec-

ted land-use data for the Selkirk First Nation. It was also a field school that provided training opportunities for local community youth, and integrated the community's knowledge of the past—their oral history—with the archaeological perspective. Most importantly, it brought project information and results back to the community in accessible formats (both video and print).

Similar projects have since been conducted by the Yukon Heritage Branch in collaboration with the concerned First Nation; at Tatlain Lake in the Northern Tutchone area near the community of Carmacks; at Frances Lake in the Kaska area; at Annie Lake in the Carcross-Tagish area; and at both Fish Lake and Lake Laberge in the Southern Tutchone area near Whitehorse. A series of award-winning, public-oriented booklets has resulted from these efforts reports (e.g., Charlie and Clark 1993; Gotthardt 1992a; Gotthardt and Hare 1994; Hare and Greer 1994), as well as the usual archaeology reports (Gotthardt 1992b, 1993, 1994, 1996; Hare 1995).

By the late 1980s, traditional knowledge had become an integral part of many projects run by archaeologists. In the Mackenzie District, for example, the Territorial Government archaeologist was recording trails and place names, and the stories that go with the names, from Dogrib elders (Andrews and Zoe, Ch. 10). Traditional knowledge was no longer being collected merely to help the archaeologist find sites, or because it conforms to the rules of Western science (cf., Weeden 1992:147), but for its own sake. First Nations' elders are now identifying those places in their traditional territory that are important in *their* history. The community's view of its past was finally regarded as being worthy of recording, regardless of whether or not it contributes to site identification or interpretation. Often it did, but this reason was no longer required for the contribution to be valid.

This trend has continued in the 1990s, although now there are new players in the scene. First Nations' Governments or their agencies are now initiating archaeological studies in their traditional territories on their own. Thus, the Yukon's Champagne and Aishihik First Nation obtained funding and undertook an archaeological survey of the portion of the Tatshenshini River that lies within their traditional territory in British Columbia (French 1993). The newly created Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute, under the Gwich'in Tribal Council (Kritsch and Andre, Ch. 8), undertook an archaeological survey of the Arctic Red River (Greer 1994), and operated an archaeological training field school at one site along this river, *Martin Zeh*, the following year (Damjkar 1996). The objectives of these studies were broad; all have included community awareness, skills development, and transfer of traditional knowledge as part of their mandate.

The traditional knowledge research approach in archaeology has become so well-established by the 1990s that the one major federal government site inventory project operating in the area, NOGAP, included traditional knowledge components (see Andre 1991; Kritsch et al. 1994; Pilon 1994). Such studies were not recognizable in the earlier efforts of NOGAP (Cinq-Mars and Pilon 1991), except for those components of the programme directed by northern-based archaeologists (Arnold and Hanks 1991).

SITE RECOGNITION

In this section I provide substantive examples of how traditional knowledge has led to the recognition of archaeological sites, and briefly consider the epistemological basis of the knowledge involved. Andrews and Hanks (1987) characterized traditional knowledge as providing "pathways to archaeology." This observation was based on the convergence between Mountain Dene oral tradition and the distribution of archaeological features in the Drum Lake area of the Northwest Territories. I suggest that different types of traditional knowledge are represented here, and that both direct and indirect pathways are present. It could be argued that these two pathways represent the emic and etic manifestations of a culture's way of knowing the past.

Direct Pathway

The first, or direct, pathway is through actual site relocation, when a member of the Aboriginal community pinpoints the archaeological site. In 1989, for example, Gwich'in elders from Dawson and Fort McPherson directed the author to the site of Black City, located by the Blackstone River in the upper Peel River basin and now situated by the Yukon's Dempster Highway, north of Dawson (Greer 1989, 1990b). In the 1910s and 1920s, Black City was the main winter camp of a

Gwich'in group that was still living most of the year out on the land, hunting, but undertaking some fur trapping and making twice yearly trading trips to Dawson. Outlines of wall tents, meat grinding/pounding stones, and hearth places from their occupations were easily recognizable on the ground surface.

As indicated previously, because there is significant overlap or continuity in land-use patterns between pre-contact and historic times in the western Subarctic, many historic period camp sites also display evidence of earlier occupation and use. Thus, while at the Black City site, the elders recalled being told that "old-timers used to live over there." They were pointing to an area of the site that featured a deep semi-subterranean housepit—an older dwelling type used in precontact and early historic times. Black City has yet to be excavated, but has potential to shed light on the Gwich'in past in this area.

The Black City case is a good example of traditional knowledge providing a direct pathway to site identification. Whether or not the complexity or the antiquity of a site's occupations are recognized by the informant is irrelevant. Being able to lead the archaeologist to a place of former occupation or use is what matters. This example also shows the benefits to on-site interviews with elders. Higher quality information is shared when the actual place of concern is revisited, and memories return to the informant.

The traditional knowledge base from which the First Nations individuals have drawn in directly identifying site locations for archaeologists can be divided into two categories:

1. *Oral tradition.* This is knowledge transferred through the spoken word; for example, being told by their elders that the place was an old camping site or place of special importance to long ago people; and
2. *Knowledge gained from direct, personal experience.* This can be derived from:
 - a) their own personal use of the place or site. This knowledge is most forthcoming from those individuals who have spent a significant portion of their life out on the land. Sites that date to the early twentieth century are thus recorded.; and
 - b) their personal observations, that is, seeing things from long ago, such as stone tools or hunting blinds. Such knowledge comes from those with a detailed understanding of their environment, people who recognize phenomena that do not occur naturally, and that therefore humans must have made. In the southern Yukon, a range of site types, including lithic scatters, traditional-style brush houses, and sheep hunting blinds, have been thus identified (Greer 1984a, 1986, 1987).

Aboriginal Ethnogeography, and Traditional Land Use

The second possible traditional knowledge pathway to archaeology is through consideration of Native *ethnogeography*, or culturally distinct geography. This is the route followed by researchers Tom Andrews, John B. Zoe, Chris Hanks, and David Pokotylo in the Dene cultural area of the Northwest Territories (Andrews 1990; Andrews and Zoe Ch. 10; Andrews and Hanks 1987; Hanks and Pokotylo 1989). In the Yukon, the information of concern to the archaeologist has been referred to as traditional land-use data (Gotthardt 1993; Greer 1984a, 1984b, 1987). Land-use values has been the term applied to this type of data in the North Slope Borough area of Alaska (see Hoffman et al. 1988, for example).

This approach involves either determining which aspects of the environment are recognized as being culturally relevant and therefore meaningful to the group, or which parts of the landscape have been used by them in recent times and are therefore apt to have been used in the past and thus likely to feature archaeological sites. While some traditional land-use data have been condensed into point-specific (site) and linear (trails) formats, mainly for land claims purposes, (but useful for the archaeologist), it is more commonly available only in narrative form (e.g., McClellan 1975: 99-103).

In an interesting twist to this line of analysis, and yet another dimension to traditional knowledge, it should be pointed out that it isn't always the archaeologist who uses ethnogeography to predict possible site locations. On a site-recording trip in the Southern Lakes area of the southern Yukon, one Carcross-Tagish First Nation elder frequently suggested where I might find pre-contact sites (Greer 1984b). His predictions, often correct, were based on those ecological conditions that he personally looked for in selecting a campsite, such as proximity to an important resource locale (e.g., game lick or fishing hole) and access to fresh water and firewood. An

understanding of the dynamic nature of the local environment was also involved in Mr. Johns' predictions; he knew where evidence of past occupations was apt to be preserved and thus enter the archaeological record.

Two specific categories of traditional knowledge data, *trails* and *place names*, have proved especially fruitful for ethnogeographic analysis. Trails are cultural features that transect the landscape and thus spatially define Aboriginal land-use (Andrews and Hanks 1987). In the Dene cultural area, they have been found to have a high correlation with site locations (Andrews and Zoe, Ch. 10). Hanks and Pokotylo (1989:141) reported that both pre- and post-contact sites in the Drum Lake area of the Mountain Dene are located along foot trails that were regularly used until the 1950s.

Place Names

Aboriginal place names are increasingly being recognized as one of the region's most important types of historical information (Andrews 1990; Cruikshank 1990). As Cruikshank 1990 has noted, place names become symbolic resources that are used to encode, enrich, and structure accounts of the past. Place names reflect, among other things, knowledge of the distribution of resources important to the subsistence economy; they also encode and relate information about flora, fauna, and traditional technology. Locations known to have been utilized historically are named (e.g., Ritter 1976, Wonders 1987; see also Kritsch and Andre 1994) and site function influences place-naming. They have been successfully used as predictor of site locations (Hanks and Winter 1983, 1986; Greer 1990b).

The following examples illustrate the range of site information and traditional land use data potentially encoded in Aboriginal toponyms. These examples also show that often it is not just the place name, but the traditional story associated with the toponym that is most informative to the archaeologist (see Kritsch and Andre, Ch. 8).

The Southern Tutchone toponym *K'ùà Mán* refers to Kloo Lake, a small waterbody in the traditional territory of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nation, north of Kluane National Park (Yukon Government 1991). The name translates as "place where you set a fish trap, the kind used to catch spawning salmon." As salmon have not been able to reach Kloo Lake for many centuries, ever since a glacier blocked their ascent of the Alsek River system (Champagne and Aishihik First Nation Heritage Dept. files), this place name refers to land-use activities, and hence likely site locations, of pre-contact times.

The Gwich'in toponym *Tthal dáii dh'aai* refers to a mountain on the west side of the Richardson Mountains chain in the upper Eagle River, Porcupine River drainage. The name translates as "big fence mountain" (Greer 1989) and indicates that a caribou fence hunting structure was once located on this landscape feature. No evidence of the actual fence structure has been located (Le Blanc 1994), but the general area is extremely rich in pre-contact sites (Gotthardt 1990b).

The Southern Tutchone name for Sekulumun Lake, in the Champagne and Aishihik area of Yukon, is *Tthechäl Mán*, which means "flat stone scraper lake" (Yukon Government 1991). It refers to a major source area for getting the particular stone used in making the woman's hide scraping tool known as a *tthechäl* in the Southern Tutchone language (M. Workman, pers. comm. 1995); these same tools are most often referred to as "chi-thos" in the regional archaeological literature.

Whether place names, trail data, traditional stories/narratives, or oral history accounts, these various forms of traditional knowledge data have made significant contributions to site recognition. In addition, it is now apparent that traditional knowledge has been integrated successfully into western Canadian Subarctic archaeology. That is, the traditional knowledge view of the past is now, in at least some projects, being collected for its own sake, not merely because it helps the archaeologist find sites.

SITE MANAGEMENT AND HISTORY INTERPRETATION

In this section I consider the consequences of the integration of the traditional knowledge view of the past, showing how changing ways of recognizing or defining sites has had its impact on site management and public history interpretation. These changes are taking place within the

context of both non-native and First Nations' governments.

In Canada, heritage or cultural resource management programs have been directed towards the protection and management of sites. There are as many official definitions of sites as there are jurisdictions charged with managing these places, but what all have in common is that they more or less define sites as *places that have historic or heritage value ascribed to them*. Most definitions do not specify whether or not there has to be material evidence for such historic or heritage value. However, since CRM programs were initiated in the 1970s, the ascription of historic or heritage value has largely been on the basis of material evidence of the past. That is, places where valued things or structures that tell us about the past (e.g., artifacts, buildings) were found were deemed to be historically important and thus worthy of preservation.

With the growing acceptance of the traditional knowledge view of the past in the Yukon and Northwest Territories, government offices charged with managing heritage sites are broadening their definitions to include places whose heritage values rests solely in the stories or past events associated with them. In this, the Territories are not unique, as broader definitions of heritage values are also now being recognized in other jurisdictions (e.g., Downer 1989: 149-175, and Kelly and Francis 1993 for the Navajo area).

The Canadian Parks Service, for example, in looking for ways to commemorate Dene history in the Mackenzie valley, has been supporting research on historically important landscape features in *Denendah*, the Dene homeland (Andrews 1990; Hanks 1993; Hanks, Ch. 11). One such feature is Bear Rock, by Fort Norman, where *Yamoria*, the culture hero of the Mackenzie Dene, long ago slayed the last of the giant beavers and made the land safe for humans (cf., Blondin 1990; Hanks, Ch. 11). Another landscape feature under consideration for historic commemoration is the trail between Windy Island (on the Mackenzie River) and Sheldon Lake (Yukon). The traditional use of this trail touches on many of the issues important to the history of the Mountain Dene (Hanks 1993: 50). If the Dene communities concerned give their approval, such landscape features will be publicly recognized as important in Dene history. If this commemoration process would have been happening in the 1970s, it is likely that Dene history would have been commemorated by either a fur trade post or a pre-contact site; not so today.

While there has been less government-sponsored research and recognition of the historical importance of named landscape features in the Yukon to date, place names research, primarily by the Yukon Native Language Centre, has documented many landscape features of likely historical importance to Yukon First Nations. These include landforms associated with creation and Crow, the creator, or with ancient animal forms and monsters, as well as places more typically recognized as sites, such as old gathering and trading places, old camp locations, and grave sites (e.g., Cruikshank, 1991; Sidney 1980). Their Land Claim Agreement also gives Yukon First Nations majority representation on the Territorial Geographic Names Board, the body that determines which toponyms receive official recognition. With such control over official place names, it is likely that there will be greater public recognition of those places that are important in First Nations history, and not just sites where artifacts and buildings are found. Such an approach is evident in a site evaluation study recently undertaken by one First Nation (CAFN et al. 1993).

Traditional knowledge is now part of CRM programs in the Territories, and is a required component of impact assessment studies (see Andrews et al., Ch. 17). In the Yukon, consultants inventorying sites in development areas are expected to work with First Nation elders to record traditional knowledge on land-use patterns, old sites, and historically important places in the study area, where possible (Ruth Gotthardt, pers. comm. 1996). Researchers are expected to record not only the location of the place of concern, but also the story that goes with the place; in this way, much local history, as well as local values about the past, are being noted. Similarly, participation of community members in field studies is more or less standard (Arnold and Hanks 1991).

More changes in the definitions of sites, and in the public recognition of heritage significance in the Territories, are anticipated once the heritage and CRM programs of the First Nations are fully operating. At present, these programs are few in number. The Gwich'in of the Northwest Territories Land Claim Agreement established the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute, which is to be responsible for heritage issues. To date, only one Yukon First Nation, Champagne and Aishihik, has set up a formal Heritage Office, but others are no doubt forthcoming.

These First Nations' heritage programs are still in their infancy, and are only now defining their mandates and priorities. CRM programs and policies are not yet defined, but are anticipated. Under the Yukon Land Claims Agreement, for example, the First Nations own and manage all archaeological and historic sites on settlement lands. When all fourteen final agreements are completed, these will amount to about 8% of the Territory's lands, and likely a significant portion of the Territories' archaeological sites. Ownership of sites is not specified in the Gwich'in (NWT) claim, nor the earlier (failed) Dene Land Claim Agreement. Nonetheless, as major land owners, the Northwest Territories First Nations will have site management responsibilities.

The land claim agreements also give First Nations in the Territories say over sites and other places of heritage value on non-Settlement lands through the land-use planning process. Their input in this more public process may lead to a clarification of site significance, as well exploration of the issue of public release of information on sacred sites.

CONCLUSIONS

Archaeology in Canada's western Subarctic is changing. First Nations' values concerning the past and sites (i.e., places that have heritage value ascribed to them) are now being recognized in heritage research, site management, and historical interpretation. A new type or style of archaeology is now emerging, one that blends the more typically Western scientific view of the past with the traditional knowledge view of the past. In changing, archaeology in this area is better reflecting the social context (cf. Bielawski 1984) within which it works, and is clearly more of a historical, rather than scientific, discipline.

It is no coincidence that this new style of archaeology has appeared when it did, when First Nations were finally gaining some political power in their homeland, nor that the projects that heralded the changes were undertaken largely by archaeologists based in the Territories, where the political power of the First Nations could not be ignored. It is only with the empowerment of the Territory's First Nations that traditional knowledge is able to make its full contribution to archaeology as a way of knowing the past. These changes in Canadian Subarctic archaeology are attributed to a number of factors. Primary among them is the increasing political power held by First Nations in the Yukon and Northwest Territories, and not merely the participation of individuals of Aboriginal descent in archaeology, as Trigger (1990: 785) has argued, to correct the biases of archaeology.

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