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Maps of Experience: The Anchoring of Land to Story in Secwepemc Discourse. By Andie Diane N. Palmer.

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north of the line, they were faced with a transfer of government from company to dominion and a new set of arrangements to be made.

During the early 1870s, US and Canadian commissioners surveyed the forty-ninth parallel, a line that almost followed the 500-mile trail made by Métis carts that led from Pembina, on the Red River, to Wood Mountain in the buffalo country of southern Saskatchewan. At about the same time, the Yanktons and those Teton tribes that had reached Montana and western Dakota Territory learned of the approach of the Northern Pacific Railroad. Their resistance to the advancing railroad, and their continuing raids on the Crows and village Indians on the Missouri River, led to the Great Sioux War. By 1877, hundreds more Sioux had crossed the border into Canada. There they parleyed with officers of the Northwest Mounted Police, who had arrived a few years earlier to suppress the transborder trade in alcohol. Dwindling buffalo herds north of the Missouri River deprived these Sioux of food, clothing, and shelter, and most of them returned south and surrendered to US authorities; the most famous of them, Sitting Bull, managed to hold out until 1881.

McCrary is well acquainted with the archival sources on both sides of the border as well as the secondary literature, and he writes well. *Living with Strangers* serves as a valuable corrective lens to the national blinkers that limit some historians' vision. It suggests the need for further studies of Native peoples divided by European-imposed boundaries in North America and on other continents.

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Maps of Experience: The Anchoring of Land to Story in Secwepemc Discourse. By Andie Diane N. Palmer. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005. 250 pages. \$60.00 cloth; \$27.95 paper.

Many years ago at a conference in Wisconsin, I listened with interest to the Abenaki writer and storyteller, Joseph Bruchac, explain to the audience how he helped his tribe win a land claim in the state of Vermont by demonstrating that Abenaki oral histories and folklore were inextricably tied to specific features of the New England landscape. Vermont's arguments that the Abenaki did not historically live in the region, but merely passed through on their way to someplace else, were dramatically belied by the detailed descriptions of places and landmarks in Native oral culture so skillfully demonstrated by Bruchac.

Maps of Experience, by Andie Diane Palmer, a linguistic anthropologist at the University of Alberta, examines similar themes of "linguistic mapping" of land and resources through the shared narratives of the Secwepemc in the Alkalai Lake region of British Columbia. Some readers might know this northern Plateau culture by its older name, Shuswap. Traditionally and to the present day, the Secwepemc derive much of their livelihood from hunting, gathering, and fishing, although they have been significantly affected by a Westernized cash economy and the colonial policies of the Canadian government. They

historically spoke an Interior Salish language, but, as the author points out, the youngest generation now speaks English as its first language and knows little or nothing of the Native tongue.

The author analyzes numerous linguistic interactions—storytelling, ordinary conversations, interview responses, prayers, even testimony at Alcoholics Anonymous meetings—and shows how these are used by interlocutors to mutually construct abstract maps of experience literally grounded in landscapes and resources (as well as other dimensions of life). These resulting narratives of place have implications for everything from individual success (or failure) as a participant in a human society to institutional success (or failure) on the national level (for example, in claims courts). The new focus on narratives of place and experiential (mental) maps partly results from a series of treaty negotiations begun in the 1990s between Native groups, such as the Secwepemc, and the British Columbian and Canadian governments. The need to compile resource-related evidence to support land and sovereignty claims created a desire for a greater understanding of the role of language in subsistence in any natural environment.

Palmer first places her linguistic analysis into historical context, examining the traditional, colonial, and modern experiences of the Secwepemc. She revisits much of the work of earlier Plateau ethnographers, particularly the work of James Teit, and provides a solid historical and ethnographic foundation upon which to build her analysis of Secwepemc narratives and interactions. Throughout the text, whether focusing on storytelling, mapmaking (in the abstract sense), the sharing of memories, or other linguistic phenomena, the author provides a wealth of concrete examples, with carefully transcribed conversations, interviews, and narratives.

Often the written form of these oral events appears on the page as a sort of poetry, capturing the cadence and rhythm of respondents' speech, at least as experienced by the author. This results from a transcription technique in which the end of a line indicates a short pause in speaking, and a blank line indicates a much longer pause. But the poetic appearance of speech on the page did make me contemplate the implications of how transcribed spoken language physically looks on paper and about the continuing responsibility of ethnographers and linguists to "capture" the speech of others in ways that preserve meaning and integrity. One example will suffice. Here is a short passage from one of Palmer's interviewees (96–97):

'Bout 10 days
two weeks
Angela's mom was
drying
My father-in-law me an him we go to hunt
One time we kill five
five deer n' eight does sometime

Pretty scarce now again
Too many hunters

The overall impression is of an extended haiku. Although enjoyable to read, there is the danger that our transcriptions as researchers might add whole dimensions of meaning that may not really be there. They also could add to romanticized Western notions of the mystical, poetical Native mind. Conversely, transcribing genuine human speech with all of its idiosyncrasies and errors into complete sentences arranged in neat paragraphs with thesis statements creates its own sorts of dilemmas.

Very important in Secwepemc life (and human life generally) is the frequent use of oral autobiography or, as one of the author's informants calls it, "telling my life." Palmer identifies a couple of self-referential narrative styles used by the Secwepemc: a Westernized, linear, chronological style with little interaction with one's listener(s), and a style "that invites listener interaction and is told in many discrete segments, each strongly linked to place" (136). It is this second style that predominates in this text. The author, like any linguist or ethnographer, collects information about people and events in nonlinear segments, one conversation or other speech event at a time. The use of numerous flashbacks in film or novel may be confusing to some, but this is how all of us learn about each other in everyday life. It is also how we revise or "repair," as the author puts it, past events in our own or others' lives, and this has implications for the whole idea of the social construction of reality.

In general, anthropologists have come rather late to the analysis of environmental narratives, sense of place, landscape as metaphor and constructed reality, and related subjects. They have excelled at collecting data about subsistence and habitats and compiling collections of stories, folklore, and other narratives, but cultural geographers have been "anchoring land to story," to borrow a phrase from the subtitle of this book, longer than anthropologists have. Palmer's work makes a valuable contribution to the perspectives that anthropologists, linguistic anthropologists in particular, can bring to bear on these subjects. This work is also a valuable addition to Plateau ethnology, language, and culture and ties these things together in new and important ways. But it will be welcomed by anyone interested more generally in narratives of place, the mutual construction of social reality and memory through language, the use of these narratives and memories in sociopolitical movements, and human (abstract) interpretation of the (material) world, or "lived experience."

This book includes many maps of the Alkalai Lake region, endnotes, a good index, and an appendix with selected transcripts of conversations and interviews. One weakness of this volume, which is not the author's fault, is the inferior quality of the black-and-white photographs, at least in the softcover edition. They are very murky and of poor contrast, which I suspect is a function of the publishing process and type of paper used in this text. Ordinary copy machines produce better results than are presented here. But *Maps of Experience* is about words and mental images, not physical images, so the substandard photographs are a minor consideration.