

AUTHORIZED AGENTS
The Projects of Native American Writing in the Era of Removal

by

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For my parents.

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Table of Contents

Dedication	ii
Acknowledgments	iii
List of figures	viii
Introduction: Native Writing in the Era of Removal	1
Chapter One: Projects of Diplomacy	
Pawnee Futures and the Benjamin O’Fallon Delegation of 1821-22	40
Chapter Two: Projects of Intervention	
Black Hawk, Keokuk, and Removal Policy in Sauk Writing and Oratory	109
Chapter Three: Projects of Negotiation	
Indian Removal and Choctaw Nation-Building in the Writings of Peter Pitchlynn.....	176
Chapter Four: Projects of Circulation	
The Networks of Ojibwe Writing in Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, Peter Jones, and George Copway	247
Afterword: Building Keokuk	320
Appendix	328
Bibliography	329

List of Figures

1.	“Tshusick, an Ojibway Woman” (1836).....	2
2.	Diagram of a Lancaster school classroom (1812).....	59
3.	“A Pawnee Brave” (1822).....	79
4.	“Petalesharoo” (1854).....	79
5.	Petalesharro, A Pawnee Brave” (1836).....	80
6.	“The Generous Chief” (1824).....	80
7.	Friendship medal given to Petalesharo (1822).....	83
8.	Treaty at Fort Armstrong” (1837).....	120
9.	“Plate 156: Keokuk” (1847).....	135
10.	Portrait of Robert Lucas (1907).....	163
11.	Records of the Choctaw Council Meeting (1826).....	187
12.	Personal diary of Peter Pitchlynn (1828).....	191
13.	Recommendation letter from Richard Mentor Johnson (1827).....	211
14.	“Plates 221 and 222” (1841).....	212
15.	“P.P. Pitchlynn” (1842).....	225
16.	“Wi-jún-jon, Pigeon's Egg Head (The Light) Going To and Returning From Washington” (1837).....	225
17.	“Waddy Thompson, Jr. ” (1842).....	225
18.	“Wabojeeg: or, The White Fisher” (1827).....	263
19.	Credit River Mission” (1884).....	273
20.	Peace medal from King William IV to Peter Jones (1861).....	283
21.	Portrait of George Copway (1847).....	293
22.	Homepage of the Keokuk Area Convention and Tourism Bureau.....	319
23.	Model of the statue of Chief Keokuk (1913).....	321
24.	Chief Keokuk Monument (ca. 1960).....	321

Introduction

Native Writing in the Era of Removal

1.1 A Surprise Visit

On a snowy night in the winter of 1827, a young Ojibwe woman arrived at the doorstep of Thomas McKenney in Washington. Poorly clothed and tired from traveling, Tshusick had been wandering the streets of Georgetown until she was directed to the house of McKenney, then serving as Commissioner of Indian Affairs. According to McKenney's sketch of the meeting, she explained that she had traveled on foot from Detroit, naming several gentlemen who could attest to the truth of her story. Tshusick told McKenney that her husband had recently died, and that she believed the cause of his death was the anger of the Great Spirit, for "having neglected to worship Him in the manner which she knew to be right"—that is, in the ways of the white man.¹ Upon her husband's death she resolved to travel from Michigan to Washington to call on Mrs. Harriet Boyd, the wife of the Indian agent at Mackinaw, and sister-in-law of president John Quincy Adams. Tsusick had hoped Boyd would "protect her until she should be properly instructed and baptized."²

¹ Thomas L. McKenney, "Tshusick," in *History of the Indian Tribes of North America, with Biographical Sketches and Anecdotes of the Principal Chiefs*, 1837 (Philadelphia: D. Rice, 1872), 120.

² *Ibid.*, 121. The Indian agent was George Boyd. His wife was Mrs. Harriet Boyd, the sister of First Lady Louisa Adams. For more on George Boyd, the Indian Agent at Mackinaw, see Keith Widder, *Battle for the*



Figure 1: “Tshusick, an Ojibway Woman.” By Charles Bird King (1785-1862); lithograph by Henry Inman (1801-1846). In Thomas L. McKenney, *History of the Indian Tribes of North America*, Vol. I (Philadelphia: E.C. Biddle, 1836).

With a typical blend of sympathy and paternalism, McKenney saw in Tshusick’s appearance at his doorstep a fitting illustration of his role as director of the Office of Indian Affairs. He recognized in her “a person entitled alike to the sympathies of the liberal, and the protection of the government,” and was eager to perform his “official duty towards one of a race over whom he had been constituted a sort of guardian.” McKenney put Tshusick up

Soul: Métis Children Encounter Evangelical Protestants at Mackinaw Mission, 1823-1837 (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1999), 58-59.

in a nearby hotel, bought her new clothes, and introduced her at the White House. The painter Charles Bird King drew her portrait, the rector of Christ Church in Georgetown administered her baptism, and a French guest of McKenney's argued that Tshusick's French was that of a "well educated Parisian."³ After she was again sent on her way—baptized, clothed, and fed—a letter from the Michigan Territorial Governor Lewis Cass at Detroit revealed Tshusick's identity. Cass explained that she was the wife of a French kitchen servant employed at the Indian agent Boyd's residence in Mackinaw. She was prone to separate from her husband from time to time, and had before wandered off to Montreal, St. Louis, and other remote trading stations.

McKenney's narrative of Tshusick is remarkable for many reasons. For one, it narrates a unique story of cross-country travel and subterfuge. It imagines the Ojibwe woman as a type of trickster figure, shrewdly playing into her audience's preconceptions about American Indians, and their ideas about Christianity and the civilizing mission. McKenney saw Tshusick as "a sort of female swindler, who practiced upon the unsophisticated natures of her fellow men, by an aboriginal method of her own invention."⁴ But the story also deftly illustrates the sensibilities of American policymakers like McKenney, who pondered the "Indian question." As Tshusick's appearance triggers his feelings of sympathy and paternalism, this reaction is at once deeply personal and shaped by the demands of his office. After all, McKenney's tenure as the Commissioner of Indian Affairs institutionalized an Indian policy that imagined the United States as having paternalistic duty towards tribal nations. Finally, Tshusick's story speaks volumes about how Native people entered the overlapping networks of governmental, religious, and social

³ McKenney, "Tshusick," 123-4.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 127.

life in nineteenth-century America. Employed by the territorial governor, and on friendly terms with the Indian agent (and more importantly, his wife), Tshusick tried to make the personal networks that constituted the Indian Office work for her. Not only did she manage to find the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington, she knew how to work the audience in his drawing room.

I have paused on Tshusick's story to think about what "publication" means in the context of Native people's limited and circumscribed access to writing, printing, and dissemination in the nineteenth century. Ordinarily we might quickly pass by Tshusick's portrait as yet another example of what Gerald Vizenor calls an *indian*: the simulation of an American Indian as the representation of an exoticized cultural Other—vacated of any reference to a "real" historical person or tribal nation.⁵ I propose an alternative, however: to consider Tshusick's textual representation as a performance that testifies to her navigation of a network of institutions, people, and technologies. McKenney's narrative of Tshusick was most widely disseminated through a portfolio of biographies and portraits in *The History of the Indian Tribes of North America* (1836). However, the nature of the mediation of Tshusick's story—by conversational circles, Lewis Cass's letter, Charles Bird King's painting, and finally McKenney's print publication—suggests an important element of publication in the nineteenth century. The "publication" of Tshusick's story happened through a range of technologies: oral conversation, bodily performance, manuscript writing,

⁵ Although Vizenor's work traces numerous examples of the *indian* as a simulation, in *Fugitive Poses* Vizenor writes with reference specifically to the paintings of Charles Bird King: "Natives were simulated in portraiture generations before the invention of photography. George Catlin, Karl Bodmer, Charles Bird King, and other painters have been praised for their exotic and ethnographic portraits of natives. King recorded personal native names with most of his portraits, but the eyes, hands, noses, and costumes were ethnic interimage simulations and homogenous." Gerald Vizenor, *Fugitive Poses: Native American Indian Scenes of Absence and Presence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 161.

and print. In short, by navigating the networks of the Indian Office, Tshusick embraced its multimedia forms of generating notice.

What was at stake in Tshusick's mobilization of this network? Perhaps she was, as McKenney suggests, a swindler. Perhaps she tried to escape the conditions of her life and work at the Mackinaw agency. Or perhaps she tried to benefit from the paternalistic generosity of McKenney and Mrs. Boyd. Either way, as Tshusick secured the attention of McKenney and his personal and professional network, she achieved on a small scale what is a central dynamic of nineteenth-century Native American publication: the attempt to make the networks and resources of American institutions work positively for the divergent projects of Native individuals and tribal nations.

During the period of Indian Removal—when the political sovereignty, land base, and future existence of tribal nations was increasingly under threat—such interventions were a circumscribed yet crucial practice in imagining tribal-national futures in North America. The chapters that follow start from the premise that in the first half of the nineteenth century, Native American writers, speakers, and tribal leaders took on a range of publication technologies to assert themselves in the networks of the Indian Office, missionary organizations, and educational institutions. Like Tshusick, they knew their institutional discourses and infrastructures, and they alternately used, critiqued, and modified them. Native writers and speakers actively sought to not just “touch the pen,” but to engage the wide range of publication technologies. For instance, Nancy Ward (Cherokee) wrote and spoke to both Benjamin Franklin and the Cherokee Council to critique the cession of lands

to the United States.⁶ William Apess (Pequot) tapped into the organizational possibilities of the Methodist Church to solicit, through writing and oratory, public support on behalf of Mashpee self-government in the early 1830s.⁷ And around the same time Black Hawk (Sauk) used print publication to circulate a critique of failed U.S.-Indian diplomacy, American militarism, and Sauk removal.⁸

Registering common patterns of settler encroachment and the erosion of tribal sovereignties in North America, these writings and speeches also reflect on local and situational problems and tribal-national belongings. If Indian removal became a centralized and broadly effective federal policy in the 1820s for addressing “the Indian problem,” it was also a political question that refracted a range of local and regional pressures and conflicts that resulted from North American settler colonialism. As Indian removal was a wide-ranging crisis with no singular timeline or geography, Native American publications from this period express a range of negotiations between colonial pressures and tribal futures.

Authorized Agents examines how during the period of Indian removal—between 1820 and 1860—Native American writing and performance mediated between tribal nations and colonial institutions. It explores how Native writers, speakers, and tribal leaders used different forms of publishing to engage tribal governments, missionary organizations, educational establishments, the Indian Office, and informal networks within associational life. During the removal period, American Indians were actively publishing: writing letters,

⁶ See Nancy Ward’s 1781 and 1785 speeches to U.S. Treaty Commissioners, her 1787 petition of the “Cherokee Women” to Benjamin Franklin, and her 1817, 1818, and 1821 petitions to the Cherokee National Council. Karen Kilcup, ed., *Native American Women’s Writing, 1800-1924: An Anthology* (Malden: Blackwell, 2000), 26-30.

⁷ See especially Apess’s “Indian Nullification of the Unconstitutional Laws of Massachusetts Relative to the Marshpee Tribe; or, the Pretended Riot Explained,” in *On Our Own Ground: The Complete Writings of William Apess, a Pequot*, edited by Barry O’Connell (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1992), 163-275.

⁸ Black Hawk, *Life of Ma-Ke-Tai-Me-She-Kia-Kiak* (Cincinnati: J.B. Patterson, 1833).

books, and magazines; disseminating petitions; holding councils; and performing on the lecture circuit, to name but a few avenues. The chapters that follow, then, are concerned with acts of publication that encompass oral performance, manuscript writing, and print publishing. Embracing the multimedia realm of publication in the nineteenth century, Native writers and speakers used these forms to address and sometimes transform how policy was made, knowledge created, and the “Indian question” debated.

I argue that removal-era Native writings and performances register attempts to assert a measure of control over publication technologies in order to alternately critique, modify, and utilize existing institutions. Native writers and speakers generated what I call *publication projects*: collaborative and future-oriented forms of writing and speaking that imagined institutional and discursive change, through the work of navigating networks within governmental, associational, and religious life. As publication was not principally the work of addressing dispersed, disembodied, or cross-regional audiences, Native American writing and performance constituted acts of finding a politically motivating audience—whatever its size—within governmental spheres and civil society. I use the word *navigating* to signal a measure of control over technologies (of writing and publishing) and to suggest a process of finding the way and creating new routes (within larger organizational structures). Native writers, speakers, and tribal leaders generated a series of publication projects that sought to remake the organizational contexts where Indian removal and North American settler colonialism was debated and contested. In doing so they presented themselves as “authorized agents” to speak on Indian affairs, elaborating a public, political Native presence within them, in order to claim a social and physical place for tribal nations in North America.

I trace this argument by examining a range of publication projects from four tribal-national contexts during the period of Indian removal. In the 1820s, the Pawnee tribal leaders Sharitarish and Petalesharo—in dialogue with Native collaborators and representatives of U.S. governmental and religious institutions—generated public notice through the conversations, oratory, and newspaper publications that came out of an 1822 delegation to Washington. The Sauk tribal leaders Black Hawk, Keokuk, and Hardfish used oratory, print, and manuscript writing to both critique and assert control over communications within the Indian Office. The Choctaw educator, diplomat, and writer Peter Pitchlynn used manuscript writing and oratory to negotiate a tribal-national future for the Choctaw Nation in the face of removal, and to contribute to the organization of Choctaw educational institutions. And the Ojibwe writers Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, Peter Jones, and George Copway fashioned publication projects that asserted indigenous critiques of colonialism within transnational literary, religious, and philanthropic networks.

In what follows, I first outline how I draw on book-historical analyses of the overlay between manuscript writing, oral performance, and print publishing in early America, as well as the embeddedness of publication in associational and institutional life. I argue that this work helps to recognize Native American writings and performances as publication projects that register the multimedia forms through which Native writers and speakers mediated between tribal nations and U.S. colonial institutions. Second, I outline how such negotiations reveal Native writers and speakers' responses to the ramifications of U.S. settler colonialism. Whereas recent work in settler colonial theory has been limited in its engagement with early Native American writing and performance, I propose to read Native American publications as situational and collaborative acts that register how Native writers

and speakers addressed the local and regional pressures through which settler colonialism manifested. Finally, I read Native American publications as attempts to mobilize governmental, religious, and associational networks in order to make them work positively for tribal nations. This offers an alternative to thinking about native agency exclusively along tropes of resistance that might mute a range of Native writers' critiques, negotiations, and nation-building efforts. To re-center the work of institutional navigation, I hope to show, will be a crucial project for studies of the literatures and history of U.S.-Indian relations.

1.2 Native American Writing and the History of the Book

What did it mean for Native American writers and speakers to “publish” in nineteenth-century America? The word *publication* has become closely associated with ideologies of print, print dissemination, and a “public sphere” rooted in the circulation of printed books. Recent scholarship in the history of the book, however, has invested in the historical overlay between oral performance, manuscript writing, and print publication, drawing out a multimedia landscape of publication in the nineteenth century. This work, ranging from Sandra Gustafson’s studies of early American oratory to David Hall’s work on manuscript books, has demonstrated that publishing activates a range of technologies that include oral performance, conversation, letter writing, transcription, translation, printing, and dissemination.⁹ And it has shown that these various forms of publication were embedded in associational life. In early North America, the publishing of what we now call American literature extended such groups as conversational clubs, reading societies, evangelical

⁹ Gustafson, *Eloquence is Power*; David Hall, “Not in Print yet Published: The Practice of Scribal Publication,” Ch. 2 in *Ways of Writing: The Practice and Politics of Text-Making in Seventeenth-century New England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 29-80.

organizations, academies, and seminaries.¹⁰ The work of “publishing” in antebellum North America therefore had a geography that was often local and regional, rather than disembodied and national. Early nineteenth-century print culture did not function as a cross-regional agent that created a cross-regional market for print: rather than a national print market, there existed a variety of local and regional reading publics that were scattered across diverse yet interconnected spaces.¹¹ Even when a culture of mass printing and dissemination did emerge in the United States in the 1840s, this innovation was more the result of American evangelical organizations rather than a disinterested, autonomous print market.¹² In other words, publication is the act of navigating existing networks: even the printed book reflects a series of relational and situational acts. As Elizabeth Maddock Dillon has phrased it,

[o]ngoing work in the history of the book has demonstrated repeatedly that the printed book is the result of a series of collective interchanges (performances of

¹⁰ For instance, David Shields shows that early American periodicals were rooted in the conversational modes and belletrist practices of urban elites. Bryan Waterman’s study of the Friendly Club in New York City shows how a significant number of literary productions of the early Republic came out of voluntary associations extending themselves into print. And Catherine O’Donnell Kaplan’s work suggests that early republican literary publics were comprised of lettered and urban American men participating in an associational life that was centered on conventions of sociability. David Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Bryan Waterman, *Republic of Intellect: The Friendly Club of New York City and the Making of American Literature* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2007); Catherine O’Donnell Kaplan, *Men of Letters in the Early Republic: Cultivating Forums of Citizenship* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 2008). See also Mary Kelley, *Learning to Stand and Speak: Women, Education, and Public Life in America’s republic* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008); Richard Brodhead, *Cultures of Letters: Scenes of Reading and Writing in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).

¹¹ Trish Loughran, *The Republic in Print: Print Culture in the Age of U.S. Nation Building, 1770-1870* (New York: Columbia UP, 2007). This is not to suggest, of course, that there is no reason to speak of “national” American literature during this period. As an affective framework for imagining relatedness and reciprocity, fantasies of national unity permeated early American literature. See especially Lauren Berlant, *The Anatomy of National Fantasy: Hawthorne, Utopia, and Everyday Life* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1991); Michael Warner, *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992); Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, 1983 (London: Verso, 2006).

¹² See David Nord, *Faith in Reading: Religious Publishing and the Birth of Mass Media in America, 1790-1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Candy Gunther Brown, *The Word in the World: Evangelical Writing, Publishing, and Reading in America, 1789-1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004).

sorts) involving authors, editors, printers, publishers, consumers, booksellers, reviewers, and readers not to mention technologies related to such matters as paper production, printing presses, typefaces, and transportation infrastructures. Books are the products of networks of peoples and technologies.¹³

This recognition—that acts of publishing are social acts of mobilizing networks and technologies—stands in contrast to an author-reader dyad that replicates what Dillon calls a “stubborn insistence on the politics of expressive individualism” that renders the sponsorship or other collaborative dimensions of publication as only “context.”¹⁴

In the nineteenth century Native American writers published through oral performance, conversation, manuscript writing, and print—writings that addressed a range of intimate and wider audiences within governmental spheres and civil. As such they engaged what Jürgen Habermas famously called the “public sphere.” In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* Habermas argues that the social conventions of bourgeois society in letters, conversations, clubical conventions, and print publishing, modeled the emancipatory notion of free, rational-critical discourse through which civil society offered a counterbalance to state power.¹⁵ In part through Michael Warner’s *Letters of the Republic* and *Publics and Counterpublics*, the public sphere has come to be closely identified with the medium of print: Warner argues that through its potentially unlimited circulation, print first created the illusion of abstraction and disembodiment that are integral features of the public sphere.¹⁶ Sandra Gustafson, however, suggests that this centrality of

¹³ Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, “John Marrant Blows the French Horn: Print, Performance, and the Making of Publics in Early African American Literature,” in *Early African American Print Culture in Theory and Practice*, edited by Lara Cohen and Jordan Stein (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 338.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 338.

¹⁵ Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, translated by Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence, 1962 (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 14-88.

¹⁶ Warner, *Letters of the Republic*; Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2005), 40. Warner’s work contributes to important correctives of the public sphere model that has pointed out that since

print has often been overemphasized: the imagining of a virtual yet politically motivating public sphere also happens where physicality and performance are more central. Gustafson therefore calls for attention to the centrality of oratory, conversation, classroom instruction, and theater to the public sphere—in addition to print publication.¹⁷

These forms of publication speak to Nancy Fraser’s important argument that the public sphere is not merely an arena for rational-critical discourse within civil society, but for a broader “formation and enactment of social identities.”¹⁸ Given the variety of modes and conditions of “going public,” book-historical studies of early American and Native American writing have emphasized its performative contexts, reading written and printed publications as what Susan Manning calls “mode[s] of cultural production composed of events bound in time and framed in space.”¹⁹ These approaches have contributed to a recognition of the centrality of Native and African diasporic people within American and transatlantic networks of writers and speakers. Susan Scott Parrish’s *American Curiosity*, for instance, demonstrates the centrality of knowledge-creation by African slaves and indigenous people within the transatlantic scientific discourses of the British Royal Society. Hilary Wyss’s *English Letters and Indian Literacies* argues that Native intellectuals in the

Habermas’s model hinges on modern bureaucracies’ distinction between “public office” and “private life,” it is not necessarily hinged on the possibility of any individual ability to openly use reason, but a “strategy of distinction, profoundly linked to education and to dominant form of masculinity.” Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, 51.

¹⁷ Sandra Gustafson, “American Literature and the Public Sphere,” *American Literary History* 20, no. 3 (2008): 467-470.

¹⁸ Nancy Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy,” in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, edited by Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992), 125.

¹⁹ Susan Manning, “Performance,” in *Keywords for American Cultural Studies*, edited by Bruce Burgett and Glenn Hendler (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 177-178. See also Laura L. Mielke and Joshua David Bellin, eds., *Native Acts: Indian Performance, 1603-1832* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011); Joseph Roach, *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996); David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Kate Flint, *The Transatlantic Indian, 1776-1930* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).

eighteenth- and nineteenth centuries modified the structures of Native boarding schools to make them work for self-defined Native politics and indigenous communities. And Sean Harvey's *Native Tongues* demonstrates how Native people operated within networks of educators, policymakers, and intellectuals in order to create knowledge about Native languages.²⁰ As Phillip Round has recently phrased it, this work "clear[s] spaces not only for the identities and voices of subaltern readers and writers," but more importantly for looking at the "material practice" by which they published:

[T]o understand the place of print in Native and African diasporic societies, we must reorient 'scholarly analysis from being to doing,' shifting the ground of our understanding of Native and African diasporic communicative practices from methods based in identity politics towards those centered on social practice.²¹

To think about publishing as a social act, then, suggests that the collaborative contexts of writing are part of a wider performance that includes the use of publication technologies and the organizational settings that allowed access to those technologies.

In Native American literary studies, the turn to book-historical approaches has also spurred an analytical attention to the overlay between (oral) performance, manuscript writing, and print culture. From Robert Dale Parker's recovery work of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft's manuscript poetry, to Drew Lopenzina's study of colonial-era Native writing and education, this work has extended the discussion of print to account for how nineteenth-century writers and speakers inhabited a multimedia realm of publication.²² In doing so it

²⁰ Susan Scott Parrish, *American Curiosity: Cultures of Natural History in the Colonial British Atlantic World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Hilary Wyss, *English Letters and Indian Literacies: Reading, Writing, and New England Missionary Schools, 1750-1830* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012); Sean P. Harvey, *Native Tongues: Colonialism and Race from Encounter to the Reservation* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015).

²¹ Phillip Round, "Early American Studies—By the Book," *PMLA* 128, no. 4 (2013), 998.

²² See Phillip Round, *Removable Type: Histories of the Book in Indian Country, 1663-1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Wyss, *English Letters*. See also Wyss, *Writing Indians: Literacy, Christianity, and Native Community in Early America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000); Drew Lopenzina, *Red Ink: Native Americans Picking up the Pen in the Colonial Period* (Albany: State

has offered useful models for thinking about the colonial conditions of Native American publishing—broadly conceived—in which the access to writing and print often depended on the mediation of non-native collaborators, translators, or sponsors. In *The Networked Wilderness*, most productively, Matt Cohen reads colonial-era printed books about Native and European interactions as multimedia “publication events” that reveal both European and Native communication practices. In these publication events, Cohen argues, “collaboration is present, and problematic, in a range of forms.” Colonial records of Native-Indian political and cultural interactions are mediated by structures of communication and power, and Native speech acts are subject to cultural-political translation, but they also register more than merely colonial projection.²³ Cohen’s publication events, then, are embodied practices of communication filtered through the medium of print, in which neither Native people nor Europeans fully controlled the range of “customs and rhetorics” that shaped its publication.²⁴

In the following chapters I examine publications from the period of Indian removal in which Native American writers and speakers are often similarly subject to colonial translation and mediation. During the removal era, Native writers and speakers produced writing and oratory that was mediated by a range of collaborators such as co-authors, amanuenses, interpreters, translators, sponsors, teachers, and printers—as well as (Native and non-native) participants in conversations and councils. Moreover, their strategies and rhetoric was often shaped by existing discourses within colonial institutions. For instance,

University of New York Press, 2012); Matt Cohen, *The Networked Wilderness: Communicating in Early New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); and 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).

²³ Cohen, *Networked Wilderness*, 15.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

when in the late 1840s and 1850s George Copway outlined his grand scheme for “Kahgegah,” a permanent homeland for tribal nations in the trans-Mississippi west, he imagined an Indian state that looked rather similar to U.S. Congressional proposals for the reorganization of Indian Territory.²⁵ And when in the 1830s and 1840s the translated and transcribed oratory of the Sauk leader Keokuk argued for a permanent social place for the Sauk Nation in Iowa Territory in the 1830s and 1840s, it did so through rhetoric about economic exchange with American trading companies, and the work of U.S.-Sauk diplomacy.

Drawing on Cohen’s notion of the “publication event,” I approach such mediated accounts of Native representation within existing institutions as colonially circumscribed texts to which a range of native and non-native agencies can be seen to have contributed. In characterizing these as *publication projects*, however, I propose a difference in emphasis. First, I read such collaborations as also registering attempts of Native writers and speakers to assert control over the technologies and rhetoric of these publications. Second, I mean to emphasize how such collaborations express attempts to generate discursive change within associational and organizational networks. As I have outlined above, “publication” here signals the collaborative act of navigating official and associational networks through acts of writing and speaking—enabling one to write or speak to a relevant audience of interlocutors (whatever its size, configuration, or location). The word *project*, on the other hand, registers the relation between the collaborative nature of publishing as well as its agentic and imaginative dimensions. My use of the word *project* underscores the attempt of Native

²⁵ George Copway, *Organization of a New Indian Territory, East of the Missouri River. And Reasons Submitted to the Honorable the Members of the Senate and House of Representatives of the 31st Congress of the United States* (New York: W. Benedict, 1850).

writers and speakers to assert control over the technologies, customs, and rhetorics of public discourse. Projects, in my reading, signal attempts to make the decentered and colonially circumscribed act of navigating institutional networks work for self-defined goals.²⁶

In these chapters I therefore attempt to apply a more intentional use of the word *projects* to analyses of publication and public discourse. In many academic usages of the term, *projects* signal a decentered or collaborative process that nevertheless seems to work towards an (imagined) goal or endpoint. Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, for instance, evoke the “project of settler colonialism,” “the decolonizing project,” and “the project of settler innocence.” Similarly, Michael Warner and Lauren Berlant write about the “queer project” of supporting alternative forms of public life, “the project of thinking about sex in public,” and “the project of heteronormativity.”²⁷ In this usage, the word *project* signals a process with an imagined end-goal in which agency is decentered and dispersed, but not absent. In these “projects,” agency belongs to many, yet no one in particular: they sweep up a range of agencies in their path, even if these are unified by a shared end-goal.²⁸ Other usages of

²⁶ In this sense, my definition builds on Scott Richard Lyons’s discussion of “rhetorical sovereignty,” what he terms as the autonomy of Native writers to choose for themselves the means and purposes for public address. Scott Richard Lyons, “Rhetorical Sovereignty: What do American Indians Want from Writing?” *College Composition and Communication* 51, no. 3 (2000): 447-468.

²⁷ Eve Tuck, K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization is Not a Metaphor,” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 3, 8, 16, 19; Lauren Berlant and Michael Warner, “Sex in Public,” *Critical Inquiry* 24, no. 2 (1998): 547-566.

²⁸ I would note also another commonplace use of the word *projects* that is often found in acknowledgment sections, where it is used to reflect on the active process of researching and writing; the institutional support of universities, presses, and foundations; and the support from networks of fellow academics and other collaborators. Indeed, we can hardly think about our own process of writing and publishing without thinking about our “projects.” To give but a few examples from recent titles in Native American literary studies: Jodi Byrd acknowledges in *The Transit of Empire* that “the completion of the project” was made possible by several institutions, and in *The People and the Word* Robert Warrior thanks several institutions for the support of “this project during the years I was writing it.” Lisa Brooks writes in *The Common Pot*, “[I]ike most of the writings in this book, this project emerged from ongoing conversations and a network of collaborative thinking.” Jodi Byrd, *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), 233; Robert Warrior, *The People and the Word: Reading Native Nonfiction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), ix; Lisa Brooks, *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), xi.

projects signal a more intentional form of collaboration. In organizational theory, for instance, projects are “temporary organizations” that both operate through and intervene in existing organizations. As relatively short-term endeavors to achieve change, projects employ existing resources and often operate under a perceived sense of urgency. They are collaborative, and it is in the nature of the project that its various participants may have different objectives.²⁹

In social theory, on the other hand, *projects* signal an imagining of future possibilities. The Austrian social theorist Alfred Schütz defines “projects” as the “phantasying” of social action that precedes any social act. In Schütz’s theory of social action, projects signal a person’s imagining of the impact that their action will make in the social world.³⁰ Schütz makes the seemingly obvious but crucial point that social action is directed not at the past but at the future: it is motivated by how actors imagine their actions will effect meaningful change. In her work on South American youth movements, Ann Mische has drawn on Schütz to theorize “projects” as imagined possibilities that motivate collective social action—what she calls an “imaginary horizon of multiple plans and

²⁹ Organization theorists have most consistently grappled with a theorization of “the project,” and define it as a relatively short-term, transient employment of effort and resources that works both by the virtue of, and as a means to *intervene in* larger organizational structures. The organizational theorists David Cleland and Harold Kerzner suggest that a project is defined by “a combination of human and non-human resources pulled together into a temporary organization to achieve a specified purpose.” Kerzner H. and D.I. Cleland, *Project/Matrix Management, Policy and Strategy* (New York: Van Nostrand/Reinhold, 1985). In a more recent and elaborate definition of the project as a temporary organization, Ralf Mueller and J. Rodney Turner argue that “a project is a temporary organization to which (human, material, and financial) resources are assigned to undertake a unique, novel, and transient endeavor . . . to deliver beneficial objectives of change.” Ralf Mueller and J. Rodney Turner, “On the Nature of the Project as a Temporary Organization,” *International Journal of Project Management* 21.1 (2003): 7.

³⁰ Alfred Schütz, *The Phenomenology of the Social World*, translated by George Walsh and Frederick Lehnert, 1932, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1967), 57-91.

possibilities.”³¹ Relatedly, Elizabeth Povinelli’s work on indigenous communities in Australia uses the moral philosophy of Bernard Williams to define “social projects” as the group-based, projective imagining of alternative lifeworlds, akin to Michel Foucault’s heterotopias and Michael Warner’s counterpublics.³² This notion of projects, in short, is about the imagining of social, political, or discursive change.

Drawing on these different usages, I define *publication projects* as collaborative forms of writing and speaking that imagine discursive and political change through navigating networks within governmental, associational, and religious life. The emphasis on imagined change underscores the connotation of the word *project* as forward-looking (projective). However, following Arjun Appadurai, I use the term “imagining” not to suggest merely fantasy, escape, or contemplation, but rather as a “negotiation between sites of agency (individuals) and globally defined fields of possibility.”³³ As Appadurai notes, such “negotiations” are not utopian or romantically individualized acts, but acts of mediation between individuals, collaborators, and institutional pressures and demands. Indeed, the writings and performances I study in the chapters ahead collaboratively imagine future possibilities for tribal nations and U.S.-Indian relations, but they do so through the circumscribed, fraught, and sometimes damaging work of navigating colonial institutions.

Such negotiations between colonial institutions and tribal nations were important efforts to claim, as the historian Susan Gray has put it, a “social and physical space” for

³¹ Ann Mische, “Projects and Possibilities: Researching Futures in Action,” *Sociological Forum* 24, no. 3 (Sep. 2009): 696. See also Ann Mische and Philippa Pattison, “Composing a civic arena: Publics, projects, and social settings,” *Poetics* 27 (2000): 163-194.

³² Elizabeth Povinelli, *Economies of Abandonment: Social Belonging and Endurance in Late Liberalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2011), 6-9.

³³ Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996), 5-8, 31.

tribal nations under the pressure of settler encroachment and Indian removal.³⁴ By considering circumscribed collaborative publication projects I mean to highlight the ways in which Native writers and speakers attempted to assert a measure of control over their representation within U.S. civil society, the Office of Indian Affairs, missionary networks, and tribal governments. These networks provided the discursive means by which writing and speaking were disseminated to a range of readers and listeners, but they were also inflected, as I will argue, by the agency of publication projects that spoke back to their very structures. Rather than reflecting both more or less “authentic” Native writings and performances, these publication projects critically negotiated different visions for the social and political futures of tribal nations within the context of Indian removal.

1.3 Indian Removal and the “Tempered Logic” of Settler Colonialism

For the field of Native American studies, *Authorized Agents* attempts to open up a space for looking critically at collaborative acts of writing and speaking that were embedded in colonial discourses, but which were trying to mobilize these networks to claim a social and physical space for Indian Nations. During the period of removal—one of the most politically and socially destructive periods for American Indian nations—such acts of writing and speaking are not “collaborations” in any neutral sense. As Neil Schmitz puts it in *White Robe’s Dilemma*: “There is collaboration and then there is collaboration.”³⁵ In a colonial situation in which the technologies of publication were accessible through institutions that

³⁴ Susan Gray, “Limits and Possibilities: White-Indian Relations in Western Michigan in the Era of Removal,” *Michigan Historical Review* 20, no. 2 (1994):

³⁵ Neil Schmitz, *Red Robe’s Dilemma: Tribal History and American Literature* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2003), 53.

were complicit in the expropriation of native lands, the act of collaborative publishing was inscribed by unequal dynamics.

Throughout these chapters, I alternately use the term “collaborative” to denote publications with multiple authors, and/or publications that operated through the translators, publishers, scribes, printers, and sponsors within colonial institutional networks. Following Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, I see publication—broadly defined—as an inherently relational and collaborative act. For Native writing and oratory that engaged the exigencies of removal and U.S. expansion, however, generating public notice through the technologies of colonial governmental, religious, and associational networks was an inherently fraught act. And as John Marshall’s Supreme Court trilogy of rulings on tribal sovereignty codified the status of Indian nations as “domestic dependent nations” in relation to the United States, the negotiation of U.S.-Indian relations was always marked by unequal power relations. In a seminal piece on the colonial dimensions of Native American literature and its relation to federal Indian law, Eric Cheyfitz has argued that in the context of Native American literature and federal Indian law, the word “collaboration” itself carries a host of meanings ranging from cooperation to coercion. As U.S. federal Indian policy simultaneously recognized and compromised American Indian sovereignty, Cheyfitz suggests, Native authors entered into alphabetic and print discourses in a compromised colonial situation. The collaborative production of writing between Natives and Non-natives therefore always signal acts of cultural and political translation, if not coercion.³⁶ So when Native writers generated public notice through writing, speaking, and printing, these acts register their incorporation into, or extension, of a colonial apparatus. And as Native writers and speakers made use of the

³⁶ Eric Cheyfitz, “The (Post)colonial Construction of Indian Country,” in *The Columbia Guide to American Indian Literatures of the United States Since 1945* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006), 7.

publication technologies of, for instance, the Indian Office or missionary organizations, or American schools, they did not necessarily resist them, nor insist on changing them by, say, urging for native representation in their employees or overseers.

On the other hand, they did consistently critique these networks and tried to claim control over communications within them, making issues of tribal sovereignty, settler encroachment, and treaty law visible to politically motivating audiences. In different ways writers and speakers like the Sauk leader Keokuk, the Pawnee delegate Sharitarish, and the Ojibwe missionary Peter Jones tried to hold existing institutions accountable to Indian nations, and to make their routines work positively for the work of claiming a social and physical space for Indian Nations in the nineteenth century. In the process they addressed a range of political, social, and ecological exigencies. For instance, in 1822 the Pawnee tribal leader Sharitarish addressed in his oratory the ecological ramifications of the accelerating trade in American buffalo hides. The Sauk leaders Black Hawk and Keokuk both addressed in the 1830s the Indian Office's failures and offenses at the Rock Island Indian agency. The Choctaw delegate Peter Pitchlynn in 1855 critiqued the failure of the United States Government uphold its treaty agreements and recognize Choctaw land claims in Mississippi. And the Ojibwe writer Peter Jones throughout the 1830s repeatedly addressed the failure of the Canadian colonial government to recognize the Credit River Ojibwe's title to their lands in Upper Canada.

In what follows I start from the premise that the wide range of pressures that these publication projects address, are central to settler colonialism: a particular form of colonialism that extinguished tribal nations' land title and compromised their political sovereignty. Settler colonialism is different from exploitation colonialism in that it hinges

not primarily on the domination of native labor and expropriation of resources, but on the expropriation of native land. As Lorenzo Veracini puts it, if in exploitation colonialism the dynamics between colonizer and colonized can be captured by the phrase “you, work for me,” then in settler colonialism operates the logic of “you, go away.”³⁷ One of the central imperatives of settler colonialism is therefore that it is aimed at the disappearance of the “native.” Patrick Wolfe has therefore defined settler colonialism as “an inclusive, land-centred project that coordinates a comprehensive range of agencies, from the metropolitan centre to the frontier encampment, with a view to eliminating Indigenous societies.” Wolfe argues that this logic of elimination has worked through a range of tactics including physical violence, assimilationist policies, boarding school education, and the erosion of indigenous sovereignty.³⁸ In this sense, settler colonialism is not an event, Wolfe argues (it is not an “invasion,” “encounter,” or a “period”), but an ongoing structure that operates as long as there is a settler demand for land and resources. Under settler colonialism there is little chance of a “postcolonial” situation: the only way for settler colonialism to end is for the settler demand for land to go away.

Settler colonial studies have productively challenged the extent to which postcolonial studies address the political question of indigenous sovereignty in the North American literature and history. In *The Transit of Empire*, for instance, Jodi Byrd has shown how readings of Native American literature through postcolonial theory, ultimately fall short in recognizing North American colonialism as an ongoing structure based in the continued

³⁷ Lorenzo Veracini, “Introducing Settler Colonial Studies,” *Settler Colonial Studies* 1, no. 1 (2011): 1.

³⁸ Patrick Wolfe, “Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native,” *Journal of Genocide Research* 8, no. 4 (2006): 393.

occupation of Native land.³⁹ Settler colonial studies have moreover resisted historical narratives that assume initial conflict between natives and settlers and subsequently the incorporation of American Indian people into the U.S. nation-state. Rather, they emphasize a continuous relationship of Indian nations to colonial rule—one that changes over time but is still a structuring relation to the present. Finally, settler colonial studies have recognized the extent to which the violence of extinguishing native land title in North America and around the world cannot be sufficiently addressed through dominant politics of enfranchisement, political representation, or the recognition of cultural difference.⁴⁰

This growing body of work in settler colonial studies, however, has less immediately spoken to the forms and dynamics of nineteenth-century Native American writing. Its dominant paradigms, namely, have to a large extent hinged on a framework in which indigeneity, if not essentialized, has been constructed through a Native/settler binary (or, in the analysis of Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, a “settler-native-slave triad.”)⁴¹ But within such models, writings and performances that are mediated by colonial institutions too quickly register only what Wolfe calls the logic of elimination. If, as Wolfe has argued recently, settler colonialism is “premised on a zero-sum logic” that seeks to eliminate “Native alternatives,” this poses the risk of reading the writings and oratory of tribal leaders

³⁹ Byrd, *Transit of Empire*. See also Scott Lauria Morgensen, “The Biopolitics of Settler Colonialism: Right Here, Right Now,” *Settler Colonial Studies* 1, no. 1 (2011): 52-76.

⁴⁰ On the politics of political representation and “recognition,” see Glen S. Coulthard, “Subjects of Empire: Indigenous People and the ‘Politics of Recognition’ in Canada,” *Contemporary Political Theory* 6 (2007): 437-460; Lorenzo Veracini, *Settler Colonialism: A Theoretical Overview* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), esp. 16-74. For a discussion of settler colonialism as an affective experience rendered in the literature of the American Renaissance authors, see Mark Rifkin, *Settler Common Sense: Queerness and Everyday Colonialism in the American Renaissance* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014). On the issue of political resistance and anti-racist organizing in a settler colonial context, see Nadita Sharma and Cynthia Wright, “Decolonizing Resistance, Challenging Colonial States,” *Social Justice* 35, no. 3 (2008-09): 120-138; and Bonita Lawrence and Enakshi Dua, “Decolonizing Antiracism,” *Social Justice* 32, no. 4 (2005): 120-143.

⁴¹ Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization,” 7.

negotiating within U.S. governmental networks as, ultimately, merely extensions of a settler state.⁴² Within recent dominant paradigms in settler colonial studies, the logic of elimination is an eradication of Native/non-native *difference*, and happens not only through violence, land theft, and the political-legal extinguishing of Native sovereignty, but also through such things as the education of Native students, conversions to Christianity, and the incorporation of Native people into non-Native industries. The contribution of this work is that it asks us to recognize the many forms in which settler colonialism manifests in North America—rather than exclusively through physical violence and political oppression. On the other hand, it also makes many of the projects of nineteenth-century writers and tribal leaders (to write and publish in English; Christian conversion; education) look a lot like the logic of elimination. To assume, then, a zero-sum game in which the endpoint is always native elimination—and native/non-native *difference* is where this logic plays out—too quickly construct a retrospective framework in which any act on the part of Native people in entering into negotiations with colonial institutions—say, the Indian Office, missionary societies, or schools—registers merely their incorporation into the very fabrics of settler colonialism. Furthermore, such a framework suggests that settler colonialism is a structure that is visible to us now but whose logics were not apparent to nineteenth-century writers and speakers themselves.

In the chapters that follow I show that nineteenth-century Native writers and orators critiqued the various (local and regional) manifestations of the structure of settler colonialism as it affected tribal nations: through settler encroachment and its geopolitical and ecological ramifications; removal policy; and the legal-political diminishing or

⁴² Patrick Wolfe, “Recuperating Binarism: A Heretical Introduction,” *Settler Colonial Studies* 3, no. 3-4 (2013): 257.

extinguishing of Native land title. Alternatively, I draw on theories of settler colonialism that emphasize the long and ongoing tradition of settler colonial contestations between Native and settler claims to land. Frederick Hoxie argues that precisely the value of settler colonial studies is that it reaches beyond the binarism of cultural tropes of a “clash of cultures.” As Hoxie writes:

[T]he settler colonial framework allows scholars to present indigenous populations in other than solely cultural terms. Settler colonialism does not generate narratives rooted in the ‘clash of cultures.’ Instead it directs our attention to a series of confrontations that engages, first, invaders and defenders and, later, a complex array of collaborators, mediators and deal-makers operating on all sides of the confrontation. These encounters produce both resistance, and—in Marshall Sahlins’s words—‘culturally informed processes of interpretation and adaptation.’⁴³

This argument emphasizes that native resistance to settler logics is not necessarily a “pure” form of resistance that operated outside of the negotiations and collaborations through which settler colonialism elaborated. Rather, these sites of negotiation and collaboration constitute what Carole Pateman has called the “tempered logic of the settler contract.” Under the strict logic of the settler contract, Pateman argues, settlers do not recognize any indigenous sovereignty or land title, and no treaties are made with indigenous nations, as in the case of Australia and New Zealand. The North American context, rather, testifies to what Pateman calls the “tempered logic” of settler colonialism, in which indigenous sovereignty *was* recognized, and the imposition of a settler state occurred through (rather than in absence of) U.S.-Indian nation-to-nation relationships.⁴⁴ Under the tempered logic of the settler contract, agents of the settler state *do* make treaties with indigenous nations, and these treaties between settlers and Natives are part and parcel of how native land title is extinguished. As

⁴³ Frederick E. Hoxie, “Retrieving the Red Continent: Settler Colonialism and the History of American Indians in the US,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31, no. 6 (2008): 1157.

⁴⁴ Carole Pateman, “The Settler Contract,” in *Contract and Domination*, edited by Carole Pateman and Charles Mills (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), 35-78.

scholars like Eric Cheyfitz, Maureen Konkle, Lucy Maddox, Susan Scheckel have pointed out in divergent ways, the dynamics of treaty negotiation (the addressing of opposing claims to land) have been a central federal Indian law and tribal sovereignties as the framework for considering how nineteenth-century native writers and speakers represented tribal nations.⁴⁵ But this is not to suggest that Native writing is “complicit” in the elaboration of settler colonialism. Rather, to look at the colonial negotiations about Native and settler claims to land, reveals the critical spaces where Native writers addressed, critiqued, and imagined alternatives beyond the dynamics of settler colonialism.

In the following chapters I therefore approach Indian removal as the immediate crisis to North American Indian nations that it was, as well as a political debate that refracted a range of other settler colonial pressures. Maureen Konkle most meaningfully reads nineteenth-century Native American literature (predominantly histories and non-fiction) as expressing contestations over Indian nations’ political status as sovereign nations, which played out in a historiographical contest over knowledge about American Indians. Konkle rejects the notion that nineteenth-century authors should be read as tragic figures caught between two worlds, as it filters out from their writings the very questions—political, legal, historical—they were actually addressing. During the era of removal, ideologies of the moral inferiority of native people prefigured the erosion of Native land title and indigenous

⁴⁵ Maureen Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations: Native Intellectuals and the Politics of Historiography, 1827-1863* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Lucy Maddox, *Removals: Nineteenth-Century American Literature and the Politics of Indian Affairs* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); Susan Scheckel, *The Insistence of the Indian: Race and Nationalism in Nineteenth-century American Literature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998); Cheyfitz, “(Post)colonial”; and “The (Post)colonial Predicament of Native American Studies,” *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 4, no.3 (2002): 405-427. For a recent example of a study that successfully takes the contestation of opposing land claims as a framework for thinking about Delaware and American literatures, see Andrew Newman, *On Records: Delaware Indians, Colonists, and the Media of History and Memory* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012).

sovereignty, most notably in the John Marshall trilogy of Supreme Court cases that cast Indian nations as “domestic dependent nations” with a diminished right of occupancy to their lands. I draw on Konkle’s analysis as it shows how nineteenth-century writers refuted such ideologies to assert the political challenges of Indian nations as modern nations, living in historical time, and with what should be recognized as undiminished claims to national sovereignty.⁴⁶

Authorized Agents adds to these approaches in two ways. First, I aim to engage more directly the situational negotiations through which settler colonialism was both critiqued and elaborated. The line between “networks,” “institutions,” and “associations” is often a porous one. The Office of Indian Affairs played a central role in the life of tribal nations as well as the United States, but before it became a more centralized bureaucracy after the Civil War, it was a loose network of U.S. officials, American traders, field agents, religious groups, and representatives of Indian Nations. And this network was continually being made and remade in oral conversations, letters, and councils. At the time of the Removal Act of 1830, the Indian Office itself was quite literally an office: its director (Thomas McKenney in the 1820s and Elbert Herring after 1830), his two clerks, and his office managers held only one of the seventeen offices on the second floor of the War Department building. In this structure, Indian policy rested more firmly on the ongoing diplomatic work of Indian traders, agents, the different regional superintendents of Indian affairs, and local field officers. This is not to suggest that removal happened in the *absence* of federal power: rather, as Rockwell puts it, federal policy was designed so that “[t]he Indian Office’s culture of discretionary

⁴⁶ Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations*, 1-41. Eric Cheyfitz argues in a response to Konkle that if federal Indian law is the most relevant framework for considering the politics of Native American writing, then not the Marshall decisions are the historical catalyst behind U.S.-Indian negotiations, but the acts of the U.S. Congress as a law-making body. Cheyfitz, “(Post)colonial Construction,” 110n.

authority and localized decision making rested administrative effectiveness on the talents and decisions of individuals in the field.”⁴⁷

Second, and relatedly, *Authorized Agents* extends the analysis of Native American writing in relation to federal Indian law and tribal sovereignties by recognizing the imbrication of the state and civil society. The publication projects in the following chapters weave new connections between tribal leaders, government officials, religious groups, Indian traders, and groups and individuals within civil society. If Habermas’s model of the public sphere is hinged on a notion of civil society as relatively autonomous from (and a potential corrective to) the state, the context of Indian removal also points out some of the limitations of this model. The legal historian William Novak argues that civil society in the United States was not organized separately from federal policy. If civil society has come to be seen as the sphere of “association and associational life as prerequisites of freedom, community, democracy, and dissent,” this has entailed what Novak calls “a tendency to idealize the civic association and to exaggerate its separateness from state power and other forms of social, economic, and political organization.” As Novak argues, U.S. legal frameworks have traditionally enabled and encouraged—including through fiscal policies—the creation of associations and organizations in civil society.⁴⁸

The imbrication of the state and civil society was a major influence on U.S. Indian policies, including removal. For instance, in 1819 a congressional act established the Indian

⁴⁷ Stephen J. Rockwell, *Indian Affairs and the Administrative State in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 111. Following Ronald Satz’s 1975 *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era*, a dominant narrative of removal has been that the federal government’s inaction rather than action was the cause of removal being as widespread as it was. Rockwell argues against this notion, noting that the federal policy of removal was precisely engineered to engage a wide range of agencies at different levels in the process of removal.

⁴⁸ William J. Novak, “The American Law of Association: the Legal-Political Construction of Civil Society,” *Studies in American Political Development* 15 (Fall 2001): 163.

Civilization Fund, providing \$10,000 per year to support the establishment and support of schools in Indian country. The act stipulated for this financial support to go to religious organizations and individuals to establish schools in Indian nations upon the approval of tribal leaders. In addition, religious organizations solicited individuals, church members, and tribal councils to allocate complementary funding towards tribal day schools, academies, and seminaries within or outside Indian nations.⁴⁹ Furthermore, in the 1820s and 1830s religious groups and church leaders advocated for removal to tribal leaders and influenced the U.S. government's shift towards removal policy following 1824. By the mid-1820s, the idea of Indian removal had gotten a firm hold not only as a government policy proposal, but also as a widespread ideology among individuals and organizations in civil society for thinking about what constituted a humanitarian solution to the "Indian problem." Thomas McKenney, too, saw removal as equally humanitarian in principle as the civilizing mission, writing in 1825 that the removal plan was "one of the kindest that has ever been perfected; and if carried into effect, would in my opinion, perpetuate the Aboriginal race, elevate it to its proper dignity, and impart it to a perpetuity of happiness."⁵⁰ Although McKenney was ousted from office when Andrew Jackson became president in 1830, at that point he had promoted Indian removal not only by championing the Indian Removal Act of 1830 (and by personally negotiating removal with Indian nations), but also by soliciting wide support among missionary groups and reform organizations.

I therefore argue that rather than a monolithic "settler state," Native writers and speakers engaged a woefully and problematically disconnected range of institutions that

⁴⁹ See Rockwell, *Indian Affairs*, 150; Jon Reyhner and Jeanne Eder, *American Indian Education: A History* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2015), 43.

⁵⁰ Qtd in Herman Viola, *Thomas McKenney: Architect of America's Early Indian Policy: 1816-1830* (Chicago: Sage, 1974), 202.

refused to recognize Indian nations' sovereignty and thereby elaborated the process of Indian removal and the extinguishing of native land title. U.S. Indian policy was refracted through face-to-face, oral, and written negotiations with individuals and institutions like William Clark, the superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis; Indian agents; territorial governors; traders; citizen groups; educational institutions; and missionary organizations. The decentralization of Indian affairs is one of the reasons that, as John P. Bowes has recently argued, Indian removal was on the one hand a centralized federal policy, but also "fragmented and filtered through a diverse set of political, economic, and regional interests."⁵¹ For Native writers, speakers, and tribal leaders, then, to engage and critique North American settler colonialism was the work of navigating a range of different if interconnected institutions. As such these publication projects recognize the contestation of settler colonialism as a Gramscian war of position, directed not at a monolithic settler state to be seized and overthrown, but at what Stuart Hall calls "a complex *formation* in modern societies which must become the focus of a number of different strategies and struggles because it is an arena of different social contestations."⁵²

It is for this reason that *Authorized Agents* focuses on the question of how Native writers and speakers moved through networks of individuals within different institutional settings. I mean to pause briefly on my use of the word "institutional." An "institution" is an organization, establishment, foundation, or society that is devoted to the promotion of a particular cause or program, especially one of a public, educational, or charitable character. Examples are missionary organizations, reform societies, and more loosely organized

⁵¹ John P. Bowes, "Indian Removal beyond the Removal Act," *NAIS*, 1, no. 1 (2014): 67.

⁵² Stuart Hall. "Gramsci's Relevance for the Study of Race and Ethnicity," *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 10, no. 5 (1986): 19.

associations within civil society that are dedicated to, say, either pro- or anti-removal causes. Institutions, then, are organizations, associations, and societies outside of elected office or branches of government—and as a term therefore not typically inclusive of the governmental spheres that are an important context for the publication projects in this study. I argue, however, that the central role of the Indian Office in all of these chapters also complicates a strict distinction between institutions and governmental agencies. During the period of Indian removal, the Office of Indian Affairs professed itself to be dedicated to the promotion of particular programs of Indian education and reform—a mission that overlapped with those of religious, educational, and charitable organizations that were often also enlisted by the Indian Office. A strict definitional difference between “institutions” and governmental agencies may therefore be limiting for analyses of Native American writing and speaking.

In other words, the publication contexts of the writings and oratory in this study were never strictly synonymous with existing governmental offices or religious organizations. My aim, then, is to not reify the “context” of Native writing and speaking into discrete notions of U.S. and tribal governments spheres, religious organizations, and educational establishments. On the contrary, I mean to underscore that it is the fluid movement between such contexts that characterizes where Indian policy was formulated and contested. I therefore use the term “network” to characterize a sometimes loose configuration of agencies to which these publication projects formed a situational nexus.⁵³ To do so, I use the

⁵³ Following Matt Cohen’s discussion of “networks” in *The Networked Wilderness*, I want to emphasize that my usage of “networks” should not be read as assuming a standardized system, but rather what Cohen calls an interaction between “both performance and precedent.” Noting the “temporary and local coherence” of communication systems, Cohen argues that the audience or occasion can shape a communicative act as much as more standardized relations between human and technologies.” Cohen, *Networked Wilderness*, 9.

term “institutional” to emphasize the configuration of a network that is explicitly dedicated to the achievement of some social goal or project: for instance, Indian reform, education, “civilization,” or even removal. Alternatively, I use the word “organizational” to denote the (more or less) fixed structural dimensions of these networks: for instance, structures of governance within the Indian Office, tribal governments, or religious organizations. Finally, I use the term “associational” to denote (more or less) organized relationships within groups outside of more rigid governmental or religious settings, such as situation-specific social gatherings; congregations of philanthropists and writers; or ad hoc gatherings of political and religious figures outside of office.

To emphasize these fluid sites where Indian removal and settler colonialism were both elaborated and contested, the chapters that follow emphasize the situational, on-the-ground pressures of what Pateman calls the “tempered logic” of settler colonialism. Indeed, Indian removal looked a lot different depending on where and when you look. In Pawnee country in the 1820s, there was little pressure from whites on tribal lands, although Native people in the region were acutely aware of Shawnees and Delaware people relocating west of the Mississippi. Among the Choctaws during that same decade, however, white settler pressure was real, incessant, and became a factor in everyday debates about education, political organization, and property ownership. And in Sauk country in the 1840s, the pressure for Indian removal was the economic pressure of tribal debts, rather than the military violence of the Black Hawk war a decade earlier. *Authorized Agents* therefore takes as its ultimate object of inquiry the collaborative writings that register how American Indian writers, speakers, and tribal leaders addressed different manifestations of settler colonialism. Through their respective publication projects—by working within official and associational

networks through collaborative acts of writing and speaking—they insisted on tribal sovereignty and challenged institutional knowledge about social, ecological, and political changes in Indian country.

1.4 “Authorized Agents”: Rethinking Resistance and Accommodation

In the chapters that follow I look at publication projects from four different tribal nations to consider where, how, and to what effect Native writers navigated colonial networks and institutions to address the ramifications of North American settler colonialism. In the first chapter I argue that the delegation of Pawnee and other Upper Missouri Indian nations was a collaborative effort—between tribal leaders, their Indian agent, and U.S. officials—to address the limits and failures of U.S.-Indian relations in the Upper Missouri valley. The delegates employed a range of communication technologies to insert themselves into communication practices that relied on the circulation of print, conversation, and oral performance. Through these writings and performances the delegates engaged the government and civil society to address the dynamics between Upper Missouri Indian nations and U.S. Indian department networks, addressing American trade, ecological and geopolitical changes, and missionary activity in the region. By staging a dialogue between the realities of Indian diplomacy in the west and the ideologies of civilization and education of Washington-based Indian policy, the delegates intervened within governmental networks and policies that were undergoing crucial policy reform.

In the second chapter, I examine the Sauk leader Black Hawk’s printed autobiography *The Life of Ma-ka-tai-me-she-kia-kiak* (1833) in relation to a wider series of collaborative Sauk publication projects that included councils, treaties, letters, and petitions

by the tribal leaders Keokuk and Hardfish. These publication projects from the 1830s and 1840s were aimed at intervening in the overlapping networks of the Sauk tribal government, American traders, and the Indian Office at the Rock Island Indian Agency. Black Hawk, Keokuk, and Hardfish alternately protested U.S. militarism; encroachment onto tribal lands; the operations of the Indian Office; ecological changes; and the Sauk Nation's economic dependency resulting from Indian removal and American trade.

Chapter three explores the collaborative publication projects of the Choctaw tribal leader, diplomat, and educator Peter Pitchlynn between 1826 and 1832. Pitchlynn's co-authored oral, written, and printed publications mediated between the Choctaw tribal council, the Indian Office, missionary groups, and educational institutions. Pitchlynn fashioned his own role as a public, political figure by championing educational institutions for the Choctaw Nation and by contesting the colonial government's failure to recognize the land claims of Choctaw landowners. Pitchlynn's publication projects construct a public, nationalist Choctaw perspective in controversies over removal and the practices of U.S.-Indian treaty-making, while promoting the possibilities of Euro-American education as a resource for tribal nation-building.

In the fourth chapter I examine the publication projects of the Ojibwe writers Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, Peter Jones, and George Copway. I argue that their writings, oratory, and print publications stage a self-conscious reflection on the motivating potential of acts of publishing that operates through governmental networks, missionary societies, and the lecture circuit. Jane Johnston Schoolcraft and Henry Rowe Schoolcraft's 1827 manuscript magazine *The Literary Voyager* extended the overlapping networks of the Indian Office and Ojibwe family networks to affirm a prominent place for Ojibwe knowledge within a

modern, cosmopolitan literary culture. The writings and performance of the Mississauga Ojibwe missionary Peter Jones from the 1820s to the 1840s use the resources of tribal, missionary, and colonial-governmental networks across the Atlantic to argue for educational and economic innovations in the Credit River Ojibwe community and to contest the ramifications of removal on Great Lakes Indian Nations. And George Copway's print publications from the 1840s and 1850s offer a commentary on the collaborative and associational nature of publishing, to present himself as an Ojibwe intellectual generating indigenous critiques of an interconnected, transnational world.

What runs across these chapters is these authors' performance of a public, politicized Native presence within a range of institutional networks: how they render themselves as taking on a representational role as what I term *authorized agents*. In his 1847 autobiography *The Life, History, and Travels of Kah-Ge-Ga-Gah-Bowh* George Copway refutes the allegations from the Canada Conference of missionaries that he "was not an *authorized agent* to forward the interests of my poor people."⁵⁴ To make his case, Copway reprints in his volume a letter from Joseph Sawyer, the president of the General Council of Christian Ojibwes, testifying to Copway's appointment by the council to manage an Ojibwe manual labor school. Copway's phrase *authorized agents* registers that as he mediated between the Ojibwe Nation and U.S. missionary networks, the need to address his own ability to speak for his "people" was explicitly part of Copway's project in his autobiography.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ George Copway, *The Life, History, and Travels of Kah-Ge-Ga-Gah-Bowh* (Philadelphia: Harmstead, 1847), 137. Italics in original.

⁵⁵ For additional detail on this episode, see Chapter Four.

In the publication projects at the center of these chapters, the question of authorship is always closely related to the question of tribal-national representation. Nineteenth-century Native American writers and speakers entered a public sphere in which the matter of whether they were the authors of their publications was tied to the question whether they were authorized to speak for—to *represent*—their nations or communities. These projects, in other words, reflect on the politics of representation through which they were published: they authorize Native writers and speakers’ representational function vis-a-vis tribal nations; American Indians generally; or other religious, political, and cultural groups they saw themselves as speaking for. In the process, this also affirms them as the *authors* of texts that were often produced collaboratively, translated, or supported by non-Native institutions. Even when they are mediated—transcribed, translated, edited, and remediated—these projects assert Native speakers as the originators of discourse. To be an *authorized agent*, then, is in the first place to be recognized as speaking for Indian nations or communities within the networks where this representation has political relevance. In the second place, it denotes a (self-) construction as being in control of discourse within these contexts, through acts of writing and speaking. The self-conscious elaboration on their own modes of representation underscores that these publication projects constitute highly modern discourses that challenge the projections of contemporary audiences and interlocutors who wished to imagine Native writers and speakers as representatives of a vanishing race, as objects of pity and sympathy, or as specimens of “savage” cultures.

So even when these publications projects do not present us with a radical opposition to U.S. governmental discourses, they consistently perform meaningful critical work. They outline and intervene in existing debates; they narrate in detailed ways the complex histories

of U.S.-Indian relations; and they critically reflect on their authors' position within organizational networks—as well as the politics of representation within them. In doing so, they insist on the potential of a public, political presence of Indian nations within these settings, in order to engage in more meaningful ways with the historical and social problems of U.S. settler colonialism, treaty rights, and U.S.-Indian diplomacy.

Within Native American literary studies, however, the historical phenomenon of institutionally-inflected Native writing and speaking is still often met with a degree of suspicion. In *The People and the Word*, for instance, Robert Warrior insists on the detachment from precisely such contexts in the intellectual work of William Apess, which makes him a privileged subject for historical inquiry. Warrior writes:

Apess, a Pequot minister, who wrote in the 1820s and 1830s, becomes here a turning point in the history of Native writing. His work, essentially self-published without the benefits of institutional or programmatic support on the margins of the Native world, stands in my reading as a model for contemporary work.⁵⁶

Alternatively, when we do find Native Americans navigating existing institutions, this work often only seems to matter to the extent that it escapes or refuses them. Drew Lopezina argues in *Red Ink* when a seventeenth-century Wampanoag sought education in New England, this represented his “putting on a suit of clothes ... knowing full well that he will shed them once he is finished and return to his more comfortable skin.” In this scheme, Native people's use of and participation in colonial institutions function matter only to determine “where [their] own cultural leanings might be reflected in the text—the Native skin beneath the colonial cloth, so to speak.”⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Robert Warrior, *The People and the Word: Reading Native Nonfiction* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), xiii.

⁵⁷ Drew Lopezina, *Red Ink: Native Americans Picking up the Pen in the Colonial Period* (Abany: State University of New York Press, 2012), 131. Similarly, Lopezina suggests that while the Mohegan minister Samson Occom did remarkable work in organizing Indian education in the eighteenth century, this only

These arguments meaningfully highlight the compromised situation in which Native American writers found their way into print: taking on a radical register in the context of the Mashpee Revolt (as Warrior writes about Apess) and courting the financial support of non-native Christian benefactors (as Lopenzina suggests about Occom). But these interpretations also imply that it is only what is being resisted that makes their projects meaningful. We might foreclose productive avenues of engaging with the past by suggesting that Native texts that are removed from governmental, religious, or associational contexts ought to be considered as “models” for contemporary work. As institutions of various kinds (ranging from tribal colleges and cultural centers to public universities and the Bureau of Indian Affairs) today still play crucial roles in such issues as Native American language preservation, cultural revival, and achieving economic solvency, I deem it counterproductive to hold up as a model of Native writing an idea of texts that are distanced from such circumscribed contexts. Even today, Native writers, thinkers, and students (as well as non-Native ones) stand to gain by more “institutional and programmatic support,” not less.

For these reasons, *Authorized Agents* asks what the work of working through and intervening in existing organizational structures was doing in different tribal nations at different times. This work becomes recuperable when we do not demand from Native writers that they articulate idealized notions of resistance to the settler state. And it becomes meaningful as critical discourse when we see it as contributing to a larger body of Native writing that critiqued, modified, and utilized organizational possibilities of governmental,

obscured a culturally-determined and anti-assimilationist “native” agency underneath (247). For similar assessments, see also Jace Weaver’s discussion of William Apess and Peter Jones in *That the People Might Live: Native American Literature and Native American Community* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), and Donald Smith’s discussion of George Copway in *Mississauga Portraits: Ojibwe Voices from Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013).

religious, and associational networks. The stakes for this are high, and concern whether we think about U.S. settler colonialism as a historical event that has been superseded, or as an ongoing structure that still shapes Indian Nations today. In our present time, Native lands are still kept in trust by the U.S. government for tribal nations, and the work of negotiating these nation-to-nation relationships still shapes efforts to achieve social justice; to increase educational opportunities; or to improve health care and standards of living. There is, therefore, a usable past in writers and speakers like the ones in this study, who tried, against great odds, to claim control over the discursive and concrete spaces where U.S.-Indian relations were both elaborated and contested. And as a range of scholarship in Native American studies has shown, nineteenth-century Indian nations were modern and highly diverse nations: multi-lingual, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious.⁵⁸ The more that Native writings challenge our assumptions about articulations of identity and position, the more they may inform us about the realities Indian nations faced in the past and are still facing today.

⁵⁸ See Jean O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians out of Existence in New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Scott Richard Lyons, *X-Marks: Native Signatures of Assent* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations*. Also, see Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: Kansas University Press, 2004), and Michael Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations: How the Native New World Shaped Early North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).

Chapter One

Projects of Diplomacy

Pawnee Futures and the Benjamin O’Fallon Delegation of 1821-22

1.1 Introduction

When in the late fall of 1821 a delegation of tribal leaders from the Upper Missouri River valley visited Washington, newspaper commentators described the event using familiar tropes. When the delegation arrived in the capital, the *Washington Gazette* enthused that the delegates “possess the true aboriginal cast of feature; and many, though in the rough mould of nature, have a commanding yet an expressive countenance.”¹ When the delegates sat in council with President Monroe, the *National Intelligencer* wrote that “with some vices, and much grossness, they possess many fine traits of character; and we never can forget that they were the native lords of that soil which they are gradually yielding to their invaders.”² And when they took part in an intertribal dance on the White House lawn, the *Washington Intelligencer* commented that “[t]he scene excited interest from its novelty . . . as an exhibition of man in a purely savage state.”³ Within an early republican print culture that invested in ideological preconceptions of Indianness, American commentators saw the

¹ “Aboriginal Deputation,” *Washington Gazette* (Washington), Nov. 29, 1821.

² “Indians at Washington,” *Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington) Feb. 11, 1822.

³ “Indian Dance,” *Washington Intelligencer* (Washington), Mar. 7, 1822.

delegation as staging a narrative of encounter between U.S. civil society and a vanishing race—between savagism and civilization.

Rather than a singular moment that staged a narrative of first encounter, the delegation was a collective effort between tribal leaders, Indian department officials, and hosts in Washington to inflect the execution of Indian affairs in the Upper Missouri valley. In this chapter I study the Benjamin O’Fallon delegation to consider how the Native delegates accessed networks within the U.S. government and civil society to address American trade, missionary activity, and the ramifications of settler encroachment in the region. The delegates employed a range of communication technologies to assert themselves into early-nineteenth century communication practices in which the circulation of print worked alongside conversation, oral performance, and the rhetoric of the body. Through collaborative acts of writing and speaking the tribal leaders expressed a vision for the future of the management of U.S.-Indian relations in the Upper Missouri valley, insisting on the need take Upper Missouri Indian nations seriously as ongoing partners in diplomatic exchange.

By approaching the O’Fallon delegation as a “publication project” I mean to underscore that critical attention to the collaborative and organizational aspects of early Native American writing and oratory help to assess in more nuanced ways its rhetorical and political dimensions. The most extensive historical treatments of the delegation, by Herman Viola, date back several decades, and touch only lightly on the rhetoric and political arguments of the delegates’ oratory.⁴ Today the Pawnee delegate Petalesharo is mostly

⁴ See Herman Viola, “Invitation to Washington—A Bid for Peace,” *The American West* 9 (1972): 18-31; Viola, *The Indian Legacy of Charles Bird King* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1976); Viola, *Diplomats in Buckskin: A History of Indian Delegations in Washington City* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981), 22-41.

known through a portrait painted by Charles Bird King, and James Fenimore Cooper's representation of him in *The Prairie* (1827) and *Notions of the Americans* (1828), in which he represents a literary and visual model of the generic Plains Indian warrior.⁵ The speech of the Pawnee delegate Sharitarish is still often reprinted in literary anthologies, but only as an example of "Pawnee oratory," and not in relation to the other publications (oratory, commentaries, governmental reports) that were circulated in the wake of the O'Fallon delegation.⁶ I argue that the delegation's collaborative acts of writing and speaking were directed at achieving a measure of discursive change within governmental and religious networks in Washington, as the delegates asserted control over oral, written, and print publishing to insist on the political validity of tribal nations' representation within federal Indian policy. Their rhetoric and political interventions therefore constitute a sustained attempt to bring local knowledge of intertribal diplomacy, ecologies, and changing economic situations into the conversations and relationships that constituted U.S. Indian policy.

⁵ See James Fenimore Cooper, *The Prairie: A Tale*, 1827 (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961); Cooper, *Notions of the Americans: Picked up by a Travelling Bachelor*, Vol. II (London: Colburn, 1828), 382. In a letter to the Countess De Broglie Cooper outlined his intentions to use Petalesharo as a model for the principal Pawnee character in his novel *The Prairie*, which was published in 1827. See Wayne Franklin, *James Fenimore Cooper: The Early Years* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 478. Cooper's daughter Susan claimed in the introduction to the 1876 edition of the novel that the Pawnee chief Hard-Heart was modeled on a young chief named "Peterlasharoo" or "Petalasharoo" whom he had met some years before. See Henry Nash Smith, "Introduction," in Cooper, *Prairie*, vi. For more detailed analyses of Cooper's *The Prairie*, see William L. Vance, "'Man and Beast: The Meaning of Cooper's *The Prairie*,'" *PMLA* 89.2 (Mar. 1974): 323-321; Juliet Shields, "Savage and Scott-ish: Masculinity in *The Last of the Mohicans* and *The Prairie*," *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 64, no. 2 (2009): 137-162; Sandra M. Gustafson, *Imagining Deliberative Democracy in the Early Republic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 167-190.

⁶ See W.C. Vanderwerth, *Indian Oratory: Famous Speeches by Noted Indian Chieftains* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1971), 79; Frederick Turner, ed., *The Portable North American Indian Reader* (New York: Penguin, 1974), 247; "Petalesharo," in *The Norton Anthology of American Literature, Vol. B: 1820-1865*, Seventh Edition (New York: Norton, 2007), 1257. The historian Colin Calloway offers a more thorough historical introduction to Sharitarish's speech in Calloway, *Our Hearts Fell to the Ground: Plains Indian Views of How the West Was Lost* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's Press, 1996), 56.

In the first section of this chapter I read manuscript records, government reports, newspaper articles, and missionary publications to sketch the organizational history of the O’Fallon delegation of 1821-22. Originating in policy proposals by the Indian Agent Benjamin O’Fallon and Secretary of War John Calhoun, the delegation was sponsored by the Indian department, a small and chronically underfunded branch within the War Department. O’Fallon and tribal leaders like Sharitarish (Pawnee) and Ongpatonga (Omaha) came to the U.S. capital in an effort to make U.S.-Indian diplomacy—which depended on ongoing, situational negotiations between different bands—more effective and consequential. In Washington, the delegation staged a tension between the tribally-specific and situational diplomacy demanded by the tribal delegates and Indian department officials, and the more programmatic and standardized approach to Indian education and “civilization” that were becoming increasingly central to U.S. Indian policy. Through oratory and conversation within governmental and religious networks, the delegates insisted on a measure of discursive control over federal Indian affairs, at a time when the Indian department was undergoing crucial ideological and policy reform.

Where these delegates’ speeches found a motivating purpose for seeking public notice in Washington, their wider performances (oratory, dance, and ceremonies) were also subject to significant cultural-political translation by white commentators.⁷ In the second section I therefore read newspaper accounts, magazine poetry, and other print culture artifacts around the delegation to trace the wider circulation of the delegates’ performances in Washington. The delegation entered a wider print culture repertoire in which the spectacle of the Indian body mobilized a range of dominant narratives about civilization,

⁷ I draw the term “cultural-political translation” from Eric Cheyfitz: see my discussion on page 21 of the “Introduction.”

“Indianness,” and American identity. In particular the Skidi Pawnee delegate Petalesharo became widely known through the printing and reprinting of various newspaper accounts, overshadowing the political purposes of the delegation in favor of early republican fantasies about American identity, race, and gender. This cultural-political translation of the delegates’ performances staged white Americans’ ideological support for the civilizing mission within governmental spheres and networks in American civil society. This commentary portrayed the delegates as agents of change within tribal nations while simultaneously muting their political motivations for participating in the delegation.

The fact of this mediation, however, did not empty the oratory that emerged from the delegation of its rhetorical attempt to make the policy interventions within U.S. governmental circles. In the final section of this chapter I therefore zero in on transcriptions of the delegates’ speeches in a council with President Monroe in early 1822, outlining how these imagined the role U.S.-Indian diplomacy in securing tribal-national futures of the Pawnee, Kansas, Otoe, Omaha, and Missouri nations. The Chaui Pawnee delegate Sharitarish and the Omaha delegate Ongpatonga, in particular, refuse the dominant narratives of civilization and native disappearance, and assert a measure of rhetorical control over policies proposed by the U.S. Indian department and religious organizations. Their performances insist on the relevance of Native leaders as diplomatic partners; contribute locally specific knowledge of social, political, and ecological changes; and imagine the possibility of Indian education as serving tribal-national agendas. As the delegation challenged U.S. imperial aspirations and historical narratives, it attested to the need for a locally specific approach to Indian diplomacy that recognized the centrality of Native agency as a political mainstay.

By examining the collaborative and situational nature of the delegation—circumscribed by the programmatic demands of the Indian department and missionary organizations—this chapter finds in the writings and oratory that emerged from the delegation nuanced critiques of Indian policy and U.S. expansion during the early period of Indian removal. While the Pawnee Nation and their neighboring nations did not face the immediate effects of Indian removal, the delegates addressed the ramifications of the removal of eastern population movements to the trans-Mississippi west, and the ecological changes resulting from increased American trade in the region. In doing so they accessed, and tried to inflect, U.S. governmental and religious networks that saw policies of education and civilization as responses to these very challenges. This chapter therefore adds a corrective to accounts of the delegation as an event that simply staged a spectacle of “U.S.-Indian encounter.” The O’Fallon delegation brought situational and tribally-specific acts of diplomacy in conversation with more programmatic ideas about civilization and education that were increasingly shaping the Indian department’s approach to Indian affairs. In the process, these collaborative performances critically engaged the range of ramifications of U.S. colonialism in Indian country.

1.2 Council Bluffs and Washington: Upper Missouri Diplomacy and Federal Indian Policy

The writing and oratory that came out of the Benjamin O’Fallon delegation express the logics of U.S. Indian policy, the political situation of tribal nations in the west, and the conditions of indigenous self-expression and publication in the early nineteenth century. It is mostly within studies of U.S. Indian policy that the O’Fallon delegation has entered critical

review, as an example of one of the first of many tribal delegations to Washington.⁸ However, the O’Fallon delegation also generated oratory from tribal leaders that reflected the political situation of tribal nations in the west that had only tenuous interactions with U.S. agents and federal policy. Indeed, more recent scholarship in Native American history has used regional, continental, and nation-specific approaches that emphasize Native history outside of U.S. policy, focusing on the agency of tribal nations and intertribal histories—and often with an increased focus on Midwestern and western tribal nations.⁹ From this perspective, the O’Fallon delegation also circulated the political perspectives of speakers from a largely unincorporated region of tribal nations on the discourses of the Indian department in Washington. The delegation thereby underscores the modes and conditions of self-expression of nineteenth-century Native American writers and speakers, which often intersected with the work of U.S.-Indian negotiations and debates on civilization and Indian education. Within Native American literary history, recent scholarship addressed in increasingly nuanced ways such institutional dimensions of Native writing, finding in texts produced within colonial settings the means by which native authors expressed self-defined

⁸ See Viola, “Invitation to Washington”; Viola, *Diplomats in Buckskin*. I draw on this work throughout this chapter to situate the delegation in its policy context. More generally, as the emergence of Native American history as an academic field was closely related to the work of the Indian Claims Commission, for several decades in the second half the twentieth century historians of Native America documented the effects of U.S. federal Indian policy on tribal nations. See Reginald Horsman, *Expansion and American Indian Policy, 1783-1812*, 1967 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992); Herman J. Viola, *Thomas McKenney: Architect of America’s Indian Policy, 1816-1830* (Chicago: Sage, 1974); Ronald Satz, *American Indian Policy in the Jacksonian Era* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1975); Vine Deloria and Clifford T. Lytle, *American Indians, American Justice* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983); Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1986).

⁹ See, for instance, Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Kathleen Duval, *The Native Ground: Indians and Colonists in the Heart of the Continent* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007); Ned Blackhawk, *Violence over the Land: Indians and Empires in the Early American West* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008); Pekka Hamalainen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Ann F. Hyde, *Empires, Nations, and Families* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011); Michael Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations: How the Native New World Shaped Early North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).

goals.¹⁰

Drawing on these strands of scholarship in Native American history and literary studies, the first section of this chapter asks what happens if we see the O’Fallon delegation as a collaborative project that brought to the fore these related issues of federal U.S. Indian policy; the historical and political agency of western tribal nations; and the colonial publication contexts of indigenous self-expression. I draw the contours of how the policy intervention of the O’Fallon delegation functioned as a multi-discursive enterprise that on the one hand brought native agency and self-expression into the discourses of U.S. policymakers, and on the other hand brought knowledge of U.S. Indian policy into tribal nations. In doing so I mean to show that policy debates on education and the civilizing mission were the programmatic offspring of the U.S. Indian department, but also that the collaboration between Indian agents and tribal leaders circulated indigenous nations’ responses to such policies and ideologies. Native writers and speakers, in other words, were not passive bystanders in policy debates on education, the civilization mission, and U.S. expansion: they used various forms of publication to speak back to these discourses, and to re-assert the importance within U.S.-Indian relations of local diplomacy in the west.

The delegation of Upper Missouri tribal leaders to Washington was the policy proposal of Benjamin O’Fallon, the Indian agent at the Council Bluff agency. Situated near present-day Omaha, Nebraska, the Council Bluffs agency oversaw the Indian trade in the Upper Missouri region, where the Pawnee Nation was under its jurisdiction, as well as the

¹⁰ See, for instance, Matt Cohen, *The Networked Wilderness: Communicating in Early New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Phillip Round, *Removable Type: Histories of the Book in Indian Country, 1663-1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010); Hilary Wyss, *English Letters and English Literacies: Reading, Writing, and New England Missionary Schools, 1750-1830* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012); Drew Lopezina, *Red Ink: Native Americans Picking up the Pen in the Colonial Period* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2012).

nearby Otoe, Missouri, Kansas, and Omaha nations. In 1818 Secretary of War John Calhoun appointed O'Fallon as the Indian Agent to the Upper Missouri region.¹¹ In his letter of appointment, Calhoun suggests that his role was to promote peaceful relations with and among the Indian nations in the Missouri River Valley. Calhoun envisioned O'Fallon's role as a corrective to the influence of squatters and illicit traders in the region, noting that the Indian nations "will not be disposed to hostilities unless incited by the foreign or illicit traders who either have or may desire the monopoly of the fur trade."¹² Yet whatever imperial aspirations Calhoun projected, American fur traders in the Upper Missouri region still found themselves in a region in which Native nations dictated the conditions of interaction. Indian agents employed by the Secretary of War attempted to manage the extension of American trade into areas that were by and large dominated by Native people, while nominally affirming the United States as the sole imperial power in the region.¹³

O'Fallon proposed the delegation in an attempt to gain control over the conduct of Indian diplomacy in the Upper Missouri valley, where the negotiations between U.S. officials and tribal nations were marked by frequent conflict and mistrust. Since the conclusion of the War of 1812, the invasion of Indian territories by squatters continually broke the treaties that Indian nations signed with the United States, causing a widespread distrust of U.S. officials. And the breakdown, after the war, of the trading house system for

¹¹ Christopher Deventer to William Clark, June 23, 1818, SW, IS, LS, Vol D., 174. Benjamin O'Fallon (1793-1842) had a background in the diplomatic work of navigating the world of the Fur Trade in the Missouri River valley. Born in Kentucky, O'Fallon was the son of James O'Fallon and Frances Eleanor Clark, a sister of William Clark and George Rogers Clark. William Clark took guardianship over O'Fallon when his father died soon after his birth, and O'Fallon was raised and went to school at St. Louis, where Clark was stationed as the Superintendent of Indian Trade for all tribal nations west of the Mississippi. In 1817 O'Fallon abandoned an unprofitable mill establishment and became the Indian Agent at Prairie du Chien.

¹² John Calhoun to Benjamin O'Fallon, March 8, 1819, SW, IA, LS, Vol. D.

¹³ As Francis Paul Prucha puts it, this was the time that tribal leaders in the trans-Mississippi west were inundated with presidential friendship medals, a central strategy in the United States' effort to "gain the loyalty of the Indians of the Great Lakes region and on the Upper Mississippi and Missouri." Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indian* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 63.

managing the Indian trade left Indian officials like O’Fallon and Clark, as well as influential traders like A.P. Chouteau, unable to keep their promises to Native nations.¹⁴ O’Fallon and Clark both knew first-hand about the limitations of U.S.-Indian diplomacy in the Upper Missouri River valley. O’Fallon’s task was to preserve the precarious peace that U.S. agents occasionally managed, knowing that his repeated councils with native leaders effected situational agreements rather than long-term political ties.

Federal control over the Indian trade, however, was far from assertive. As William Belko points, at this time the Indian department “referred not to any established and defined agency [within the War Department], but rather to a general designation of appropriated funds directed towards the execution of Indian policies.” The execution of these policies was furthermore defined by “considerable fragmentation of authority.”¹⁵ As the federal overseer of Indian affairs, Secretary of War John Calhoun (1782-1850) Calhoun found himself scrambling for funding as Congress, following the War of 1812 and the financial panic of 1819, had begun to abandon the system of government-sponsored trading houses that had formed the core of U.S. Indian policy since 1795.¹⁶ Calhoun had established a series of military outposts on the Missouri and Mississippi rivers, in an attempt to consolidate American imperial designs after the conclusion of the War of 1812. But the panic had halted the grand scheme of fortifying the U.S. west, leaving O’Fallon’s Indian Agency at Council Bluff exposed as the only outpost west of the Missouri, in a region of some fourteen Indian nations with varying degrees of allegiance to the United States. While the increasing

¹⁴ For a historical analysis of these circumstances, see Ann Hyde, *Empires, Nations, and Families: A History of the North American West, 1800-1860* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 255-262.

¹⁵ William S. Belko, “John C. Calhoun and the Creation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs: An Essay on Political Rivalry, Ideology, and Policymaking in the Early Republic,” *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* 105, no. 3 (2004): 173.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 173.

presence of American squatters and traders had aroused some nations' suspicions of the Americans, the lack of a U.S. military presence in the area had emboldened Native bands in the region that were looking to curtail the encroachment of American hunters, traders, and squatters.¹⁷

The area surrounding the Council Bluffs Indian Agency was therefore one in which American traders remained vulnerable. O'Fallon was particularly worried by increasing reports and rumors about Skidi Pawnee attacks on fur traders. In an attempt to promote peaceful relations among the Pawnee bands and neighboring nations, O'Fallon made a request to Calhoun in May 1821, to visit Washington with fifteen chiefs from what he deemed to be the more belligerent nations.¹⁸ Congressional support and funding for Indian affairs was low, and a delegation to Washington was a relatively cost-effective way to attempt to display U.S. hegemony to Indian nations from a region where that hegemony was tenuous at best. Calhoun promised O'Fallon that he would again raise the issue of the Secretary's "imperfect provisions of the laws regulating our intercourse and trade with the Indians" in Congress, and gave his approval for the delegation.¹⁹ Calhoun again affirmed to O'Fallon that "by a proper combination of kindness and firmness the conduct of the Indians towards our citizens may be much improved."²⁰

For O'Fallon and Calhoun, then, the delegation was a relatively short-term organizing tool in an effort to maintain peaceful relations with the Pawnee Nation and

¹⁷ Viola, *Diplomats in Buckskin*, 25.

¹⁸ John Calhoun to Benjamin O'Fallon, May 22, 1821, SW, IA, LS, Vol E.; Benjamin O'Fallon to John C. Calhoun, April 5, 1821, SW, IA, LR, Vol. 5, 103-4. In the summer of 1821, a deadly attack by a band of Skidi Pawnees on nine fur traders near the Arkansas River accelerated O'Fallon's idea to bring delegates from the Pawnee Nation and neighboring nations to Washington. In response to O'Fallon's request Calhoun wrote that "[t]he conduct of the Pawnee Loups is much calculated to ignite indignation and . . . they should feel the displeasure of the Government," but he also recognized that it would be unwise to respond to the attack with actual military force. John Calhoun to O'Fallon, August 18, 1821, SW, IA, LS, Vol. E.

¹⁹ John Calhoun to O'Fallon, August 18, 1821, SW, IA, LS, Vol. E.

²⁰ John Calhoun to O'Fallon, October 10, 1821, SW, IA, LS, Vol. E

neighboring tribal nations, which remained hard diplomatic labor on the ground.²¹ Given the political organization of the Pawnee Nation, O’Fallon’s diplomatic work in Pawnee country was decentered and situational. The Pawnee Nation was in fact a confederation of four distinct bands along the Platte, Republican, and Loup rivers. Of the more closely allied Southern bands—who lived along the Platte and Republican rivers—there were the Chaui Pawnees (also called the Grand Pawnees); the Kitkehaki (or Republican) Pawnees; and the Pitahaureat Pawnees (or Noisy Pawnees).²² Edwin James’s report on the Stephen Long expedition in his *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains* (1823) gives insight into O’Fallon’s relation with the different bands in the years leading up to the delegation to Washington.²³ James was a botanist and physician who was appointed in 1820 to join Major Stephen H. Long and the Army Corps of Engineers on a scientific expedition to the Platte, Arkansas, and Red rivers. James’s record of the multiple meetings between O’Fallon and tribal leaders from the different Pawnee bands in different villages, underscores the fact that these diplomatic interaction depended on the recurring performance of routinized ceremonies, oratory, and gift exchanges. For instance, during a council with the Chaui Pawnees, the tribal leader Tarrarecawaho shared food with the U.S. delegates in his lodge and performed “a half circuit around the village, and entered it with the sound of

²¹ To hold councils in the U.S. capital was relatively uncommon: of about 370 treaties that were negotiated with Indian nations only 65 were negotiated in Washington. See Viola, *Diplomats*, 29.

²² The Skidi Pawnees lived further north along the Loup River, and were also commonly referred to as the Pawnee Loups or the Wolf Tribe. They had once been a separate tribe but probably in the mid-1700s they were conquered by the Pawnees, even if afterwards they remained rather separate from the southern bands. For a detailed history that traces the migrations, removals, and political changes among the Pawnees during the 1700s and 1800s, George E. Hyde’s *The Pawnee Indians* is still the standard work. See George E. Hyde, *The Pawnee Indians*, 1951 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1974).

²³ The expedition was organized by Calhoun as Secretary of War, and was facilitated by the U.S. Army Corps of Topographical Engineers. In advance of the expedition, Calhoun had instructed O’Fallon to accompany the delegation and to “prepare the Indians for it, by a representation of our pacific view.” Following the expedition, James put together the report of expedition in 1821, and the volume was published in London and Philadelphia two years later. See Edwin James, *Account of an Expedition from Pittsburgh to the Rocky Mountains, Performed in the Years 1819 and ’20, by Order of the Hon. J.C. Calhoun, Under the Command of Maj. S.H. Long, of the U.S. Top. Engineers*, Vol. II (London: Longman, 1823), 67-92.

the bugle, drum, and fife.”²⁴ The children of the village joined in a V-shape procession, and the members of the expedition passed by the residences of the tribal leaders that displayed the American flag in recognition of the delegation.

The extent to which such spectacles indicated American influence in the region can easily be overstated. When the American parade passed by one Chaui Pawnee tribal leader’s house, the Americans noticed something incongruent: “We passed by and saluted the mansions of the chiefs, with the exception only of one that was passed unnoticed, owing to its being distinguished by a Spanish flag; which, however, was struck as soon as the cause of the procedure was understood.”²⁵ The error reveals that rather than a recognition of the United States as the sole imperial power, the Pawnees knew the Upper Missouri region to be a fulcrum in a range of competing overlapping indigenous and European trading empires. Americans were merely one group in a multitude of trading partners, and U.S.-Indian councils represented situational agreements rather than exclusive relationships.²⁶ Moreover, James’s account of the rather uncomfortable interactions between O’Fallon and the Chaui Pawnees suggests that the attempt to assert a U.S. presence in Pawnee country was a delicate

²⁴ Ibid., 75.

²⁵ James, *Account*, 75.

²⁶ Since Richard White’s *The Middle Ground*, several important works in North American Native History have analyzed the competing European claims, (indigenous) trading empires, and diplomatic relations that challenge dyadic notions about U.S.-Indian relations. Work in this area has shown that especially west of the Mississippi before the 1850s, U.S.-Indian diplomacy reflects political situations in which Native nations often dominated the conditions of interactions. This scholarship has not only corrected historical paradigms that presuppose the inevitability of U.S. conquest, but also opened up ways of reading the records of U.S.-Indian diplomacy as assertions of Indian national sovereignty—rather than U.S. imposition or Native people’s accommodation alone. For example, see Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Kathleen Duval, *The Native Ground: Indians and Colonists in the Heart of the Continent* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006); Julianna 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 Hamalainen, *The Comanche Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009); Ann F. Hyde, *Empires, Nations, and Families: A History of the North American West, 1800-1860* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011); Michael Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations: How the Native New World Shaped Early North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012).

balancing act. In April of 1820 O'Fallon and the Corps of Topographical Engineers were supposed to meet with Tarrarecawaho, the tribal leader of the Chaui Pawnees. But when they arrived at the fork of the Loup River, a Canadian interpreter explained that Tarrarecawaho had declined to escort the party into the village and the more accommodating tribal leader Sharitarish greeted the delegation instead.²⁷

Sharitarish was also the main Chaui Pawnee delegate of O'Fallon's 1822 delegation, which was organized to both continue and modify these ongoing diplomatic interaction. O'Fallon persuaded a total of seventeen Pawnee, Omaha, Oto, Kansas, and Missouri tribal leaders to join him to Washington. Varied accounts of the names of the delegates make it difficult to present a precise and accurate overview of the delegates' names, although some of them are relatively certain (see Appendix). The Chaui Pawnee leader Tarrarecawaho declined to come to Washington, so Sharitarish was their leading delegate. He was accompanied by Peskelechaco of the Kithehaki Pawnees and Petalesharo of the Skidi Pawnees.²⁸ With a total of nine delegates the Pawnee bands were most strongly represented of the five nations. The principal chief Ongpatonga represented the Omaha Nation, who lived northeast adjacent to the Pawnees. Choncape, and Hayne Hudjihini represented the Otoes, who lived east of the Pawnees and south of the Omahas. Monchousia represented the Kansas to the southeast of the Pawnees. Besides O'Fallon, the delegates were accompanied by Louis T. Honoré, who worked in the office of William Clark as interpreter and secretary, and a servant named James Graves who cooked for the delegates during their journey to

²⁷ James, *Account of an Expedition*, 73.

²⁸ George Hyde identifies two delegates named "Pitalesharo" who came to Washington in 1822; one a Skidi Pawnee and one a Kithehaki Pawnee. It is possible that the Kithehaki Pitalesharo refers to the same delegate McKenney calls "Peskelachaco. Hyde, *Pawnee Indians*, 175.

Washington.²⁹

In Washington the delegates held audiences and performed oratory within spheres of U.S. governmental networks, religious organizations, and associational life in Washington. The delegation arrived in the capital on 30 November 1822, and throughout November and December most of the delegates paid visits to Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York, and returned to the capital shortly after Christmas. In Washington they attended a New Year's reception at the White house and various social gatherings in Washington society. In addition, some of the delegates met with a women's seminary, commissioners of missionary societies, and Thomas McKenney, the Superintendent of Indian Trade. Before they left Washington in late February 1822, Charles Bird King painted the portraits of the delegates, which were commissioned by McKenney to establish a collection of Native American delegates' portraits for the War Department.³⁰

Through these governmental, religious, and associational networks the delegates generated public notice and published their oral performances in print. On 4 February they sat in council with President Monroe, and five days later the War Department staged a large public spectacle on the lawn outside the White House. The delegates participated in a public performance on the White House lawn. First, the presidential party and the delegates rehearsed the speeches and ceremonial exchanges of the earlier council; after this the delegates performed an intertribal—and as such probably improvised—dance. The dance had been announced in the local press and according to a no doubt hyperbolic account in the

²⁹ Viola, *Indian Legacy*, 24.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 24-25. Details of the expedition's organization have been well-documented by Viola, who has pointed out the interesting fact that while O'Fallon was put up in the more expensive Indian Queen and Joshua Tennison hotels, the Plains Indians stayed in George Miller's tavern, a place where many travellers housed their slaves, and where the board was only half of that of O'Fallon's. See also Steven Conn, *History's Shadow: Native Americans and Historical Consciousness in the Nineteenth Century* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2004), 49-50.

National Daily Intelligencer it attracted “half the population of Washington” as well as members from both houses of Congress.³¹

The O’Fallon delegation of 1821-22 is then an articulation of what I call a publication project, as it organized a range of collaborative acts of writing and speaking, in order to achieve changes within governmental, religious, and associational networks. The delegation mobilized different parties’ efforts and resources in an attempt to modify an Indian policy that was not effective in the trans-Mississippi west. And it was collaborative in the sense that different parties—O’Fallon and Calhoun, the tribal delegates, and their Washington hosts—took part for a range of different interests. For Calhoun, the delegation offered an opportunity to display his “kindness and firmness” towards the Indian delegates, asserting U.S. imperial aspirations while recognizing Indian nations’ hegemony west of the Mississippi. For O’Fallon, the delegation held a promise to communicate to Washington officials the need for more effective Indian policy that left American traders in a more secure position in the Upper Missouri River valley. For the delegates, it held potential to negotiate a stronger U.S. policy on fur traders in Indian country, while not jeopardizing relations with other nearby nations and bands that were suspicious of U.S.-Indian negotiations.

Yet as the delegation worked across different tribal contexts as well as through U.S.-Indian diplomatic relations, this collaborative project was not contained by such projected goals. In Washington, the Superintendent of Indian Trade, Thomas McKenney, took a central role in the public performances and meetings that constituted the delegation. If the delegation was organized to respond to the need to ameliorate Indian diplomacy in the Upper Missouri Valley, McKenney’s involvement also introduced the delegates to the

³¹ *Ibid.*, 31.

increasingly central institutionalized rhetoric of “civilization” and education as cornerstones of Indian policy. McKenney had been appointed as Superintendent of Indian Trade by James Madison in 1816. McKenney’s position was not in the War Department, but he worked alongside it to regulate a network of trading houses, known as the “factory system,” through which the U.S. government provided Indian nations with a range of goods in exchange for furs. McKenney saw the factory system, which was established by Congress in 1795, as a tool for introducing tribal nations to education and Christianity—the bedrock of what McKenney considered “civilization.” McKenney’s influence on the Indian department during these years was the orientation of federal Indian affairs towards “Indian reform,” not only advising Calhoun on this subject but also shaping policy and programs according to a humanitarian understanding of what Indian policy ought to be: “to civilize and Christianize the Indians.”³² Yet Congress systematically cut the budget for Indian affairs, and the factory system was officially abandoned in 1822, helping to get, as Ann Hyde puts it, “the government out of the Indian trade business.”³³

In response, McKenney saw collaborations between religious organizations and the U.S. government as increasingly important to U.S. Indian policy. He embraced the potential of religious organizations to play a part in Indian affairs, and saw agricultural education as the cornerstone of a federal Indian policy centered on reform in Indian country.³⁴ Testifying to this increasing support of missionary education within civil society and the U.S. government, McKenney set up meetings in New York between the delegates, the Committee

³² Herman Viola, *Thomas McKenney: Architect of America’s Early Indian Policy: 1816-1830* (Chicago: Sage, 1974), 24.

³³ Hyde, *Empires, Nations, and Families*, 261. See also William S. Belko, “John C. Calhoun and the Creation of the Bureau of Indian Affairs: An Essay on Political Rivalry, Ideology, and Policymaking in the Early Republic,” *The South Carolina Historical Magazine* 105, no. 3 (2004): 170-174.

³⁴ Viola, *Thomas McKenney*, 25.

of Missions, and the Board of Managers of the United Foreign Missionary Society (UFMS).³⁵ The goal was to promote Indian education among the Pawnees and their neighbors: a brief account of the delegates' meeting in the *Religious Intelligencer* notes, "it is hoped, [the interview] may lead eventually to the introduction of Civilization and Christianity among the tribes to which they belong."³⁶ The month before the O'Fallon delegation arrived in Washington, McKenney had met with the Reverend Philip Milledoler of the UFMS about the Society's plans to establish another mission school for American Indians in the west. The UFMS had begun to experiment with missionary education in Indian nations in the west, having established a school by the trading post Fort Osage in 1821, near present-day Sibley, Missouri. Although not widely successful, the school at Fort Osage received wide coverage in national newspapers, and galvanized missionary societies like the UMFS to "prove that they could do a better job of 'civilizing' the Indians than either the government or private enterprise had done so far."³⁷

When they returned to Washington, the delegates met with McKenney himself, who was asked by the Board of Managers of the UFMS to promote their plans for the mission schools in the west. In a published account of his address to the delegates, McKenney makes an impassioned plea to the delegates on behalf of education. Alluding to the delegates' recent visits to Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New York, McKenney proposes nothing less than a re-imagining of Indian country according to the model of the United States. The *Register* reports,

³⁵ "Indian Deputation," in *Religious Intelligencer*, Vol. 6 (January 1822), 576. The Committee of Missions was an association of Presbyterian, Reformed Dutch, and Associate Reformed missionaries; the UMFS a Presbyterian missionary society.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 576.

³⁷ Hyde, *Empires, Nations, and Families*, 273.

‘Where the great cities now stand, the Red Skins once had their wigwams. All was woods—there were deer and beavers, and bears and wolves. But now they are all gone. . . . Your country has much game in it now, but a good many moons hence the game will be gone. . . . You will be gone too. . . . It is time to begin to show your children how to do when the game is gone. You must teach them to make corn, and to raise animals like the White Skins, and to build houses. . . . How can your children have all these things if the White Skins do not teach them?’³⁸

In outlining the scheme, the *Register*’s account of McKenney’s explanation mobilizes an array of ideologies of American Indians: of pre-conquest America as an empty wilderness; the vanishing Indian; and the nomadic savage. McKenney makes his pitch to introduce education as a potential corrective to the effects of white traders and squatters in Indian country: “You are cheated by the White Skins,” McKenney argues. “If you had been taught, you could not be cheated.”³⁹

To sell the delegates on the educational scheme, McKenney took them to an inspection of the Lancaster School in Georgetown, a public school that had opened in 1811.⁴⁰ The school was named after Joseph Lancaster, the British educator who pioneered a system for mass public education that was based on discipline, standardized efficiency, and memorization. If the Indian trade was organized through the factory system, the Lancasterian method proposed a “factory” of a different kind. The Lancasterian model of education was introduced in the United States in 1806 with the establishment of a public school system in New York.⁴¹ Missionary societies like the UFMS were interested in the

³⁸ “Indian Deputation,” *The American Missionary Register, for the Year 1823*, Vol. IV (New York: United Foreign Missionary Society, 1823), 14.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁴⁰ Joseph Lancaster, *The British System of Education: Being a Complete Epitome of the Improvements and Inventions Practised by Joseph Lancaster: to which is Added, a Report of the Trustees of the Lancaster School at Georgetown, Col.* (Washington: Joseph Milligan and William Cooper, 1812), 122. According to a report of the school’s trustees, in 1812 the Lancaster school in Georgetown already had 370 students, a year after its opening.

⁴¹ Phillip Round, “America’s Indigenous Reading Revolution,” in *Why You Can’t Teach United States History Without American Indians* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 167-168.

Lancaster model as it allowed for efficient and replicable forms of instructions that could cater to their expansive ambitions for Indian education (Figure 2). As Hilary Wyss writes,

Lancaster held out the possibility for missionary societies like the ABCFM of schools that could be run cheaply, expanded indefinitely, and operated as models of efficiency. Through the Lancaster model, students moved in regimental order, rarely allowed to move or speak out of turn. Most significantly, there was to be no opportunity for independent thinking or higher-level instruction in this system, as most of it was accomplished by rote repetition.⁴²

On the tour, the *Register* reports that here “the process of male and female instruction was exhibited and explained.” McKenney addressed the delegates on “the importance of schools for their children, and of instruction in the arts and habits of civilized life for themselves and their people.”⁴³

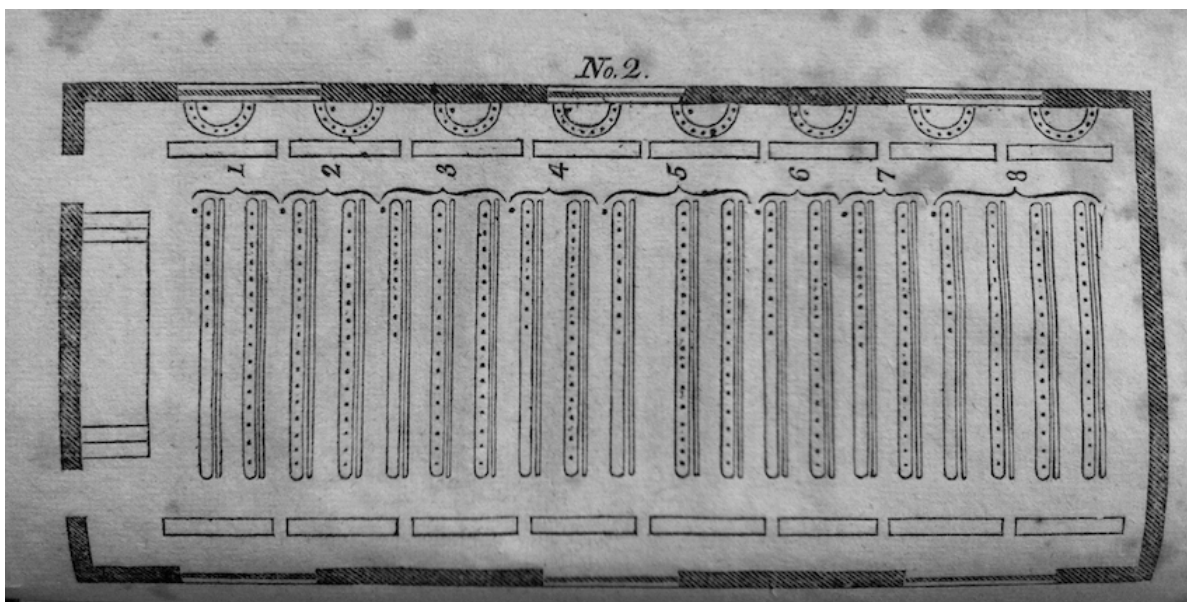


Figure 2: Diagram of a Lancaster school classroom. An 1812 report on the Lancaster School in Georgetown that the delegates visited was affixed to Joseph Lancaster’s *The British System of Education* (1812), which contains this diagram of a typical classroom. The parallelogram on the left represents the schoolmaster’s desk. The semicircles along the top are reading stations where the students stand when reading from large boards on the wall, guided by tutors. The small dots represent students—either at the reading station or waiting in file on their turn to read. The numbers

⁴² Hilary Wyss, *English Letters and Indian Literacies: Reading, Writing, and New England Missionary Schools* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 133.

⁴³ “Indian Deputation,” 14.

represent the levels of proficiency according to which the classroom was organized. In Joseph Lancaster, *The British System of Education: Being a Complete Epitome of the Improvements and Inventions Practised by Joseph Lancaster: to which is Added, a Report of the Trustees of the Lancaster School at Georgetown, Col.* (Washington: Joseph Milligan and William Cooper, 1812). William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.

The replies of five of the delegates to McKenney's plans were printed in the *American Missionary Register's* report, in which the delegates are presented as relatively optimistic about the civilization scheme. The report of the meeting with McKenney includes the rhetoric of an unnamed "Chief" of the Grand Pawnees (Chai Pawnees); "White Plume" (Nom-pa-wa-rah or Monchousia) of the Kansas Nation; a "Pawnee Republic" (Kithehaki Pawnee) delegate; Big Elk (Ontapanga) of the Omahas; and an "Otto Warrior." The transcription of the first three delegates' words address McKenney's education scheme directly. The Chai Pawnee delegate is unnamed in the *Register's* report, but there is reason to assume that Sharitarish was the speaker who addressed McKenney. The Chai Pawnee delegate assesses McKenney's rhetoric perceptively, noting that "[i]t appears you want to take pity on us." He promises McKenney he will relay his words to his "friends and relations" and suggests that "[i]f it can be done, I wish my children to learn to write and read like your children."⁴⁴

Other delegates are represented as more skeptical about the efficacy of Indian education, even as they suggest its material benefits as an important consideration for allowing schools in Indian country. The printed account of his speech to McKenney states that Monchousia has "heard a long time about all these good things. But I have not seen them done yet. This is good talk, but I want to see done what you promise." Registering a measure of skepticism about the successful implementation of McKenney's promises,

⁴⁴ Ibid., 15.

Monchousia's speech also expresses an openness to experiment with education and an interest in its potential material benefits: "You say we must learn to plow, and do like the white skins. I fear you will not learn us. . . . I would be glad if all can be done you talk about. We want cattle. I am afraid you will not give us cattle. If you do, we will thank you."⁴⁵ Similarly, the delegate from the Kithchaki Pawnees also stresses more than anything the material benefits of missionary efforts in Indian country: "Long time . . . I had on me hard Buffaloe [sic] skin. I want you, my father and brother, to be quick and decide on what to do. I want to clothe better—I like your clothes."⁴⁶ In spite of what are at best open-ended responses to his plans, the translated and transcribed words of the delegates at least communicate an openness to McKenney's civilizing scheme.

But as reprinted in the *American Missionary Register*—and circulated in other religious newspapers like the *Religious Intelligencer*—McKenney's written performance of the responses aimed to rally readers behind the prospect of Indian education. One person who was interested in the delegates' responses to McKenney's agricultural education scheme was Jedidiah Morse, who was then compiling information on these matters for a major government report on the state of Indian country for the War Department. Morse (1761-1826) was mostly known as a Congregationalist minister and as the author of the landmark volume *The American Universal Geography* (1793). After he resigned from the ministry in 1819, however, Morse was appointed by John Calhoun to write a report on the present condition of Indian nations from New York to the Mississippi River.⁴⁷ Morse's

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁴⁷ Hyde, *Empires, Nations, and Families*, 282. To gather data for his study, Morse toured the former Northwest Territory, the Great Lakes region, Canada, and the Mississippi River valley. Prior to this assignment Morse had not engaged much with tribal leaders or visited tribal nations in the West. Yet "unlike most Indian advocates he decided to observe and gather data about them personally before pronouncing his recommendations for national policy." For the regions he did not visit, he relied on materials from traders, Indian agents, and

Report to the Secretary of War (1822) laid out a vision for the federal government's approach to the situation of Indian nations within its territories. Like McKenney, it registers the common interest among Indian officials in Washington in the possibility of educating and "civilizing" Native people in North America through agricultural education, property ownership, and Christianization. Morse's *Report* outlines policy proposals that are compatible with McKenney's view for the civilizing mission, concluding that, in Ann Hyde's words, "the U.S. government and its citizens, in partnership with missionary groups, had a moral duty to 'civilize and redeem' the Indians. In Morse's view a national project of 'moral and religious improvement of the Indians' would provide uplift for the nation at large even though it would be expensive and difficult."⁴⁸

Not coincidentally, Morse's *Report* reprints speeches by the Indian delegates that address the educational schemes of McKenney, the Committee on Missions, and the UMFS. If the delegation was a shared project between tribal nations and the Indian department, the speeches were more than likely reprinted without the delegates' knowledge, underscoring the extent to which this publication project was marked by discrepancies in power relations as well as access to print technologies. The speeches were delivered in council with President Monroe and John Calhoun on 4 February 1822, and in them they returned to the subject of Indian education. The council took place in the antechamber of the Red Room of the White House. Monroe gave a short speech based on handwritten notes, after which delegates from the various nations gave their speeches and the parties exchanged gifts. However, if the UFMS missionaries and McKenney were eager to get started on the mission

military officers. One such source of information for Morse was the journal of Captain John R. Bell, who had accompanied Stephen Harriman Long on his expedition of 1819-1820. Morse furnishes information about the Pawnees from Bell's journal, as well as information on other tribal nations.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 283.

school as soon as possible, the delegates' oratory puts a hold on the idea of establishing agricultural education among the Pawnees. The Chaui Pawnee delegate (again, probably Sharitarish) has a solid understanding of the plan, but deems it too early for it:

My Great Father—Some of your good chiefs, or, as they are called, *Missionaries*, have proposed to send their good people among us to change our habits, to make us work, and live like the white people. I will not tell a lie, I am going to tell the truth. . . . It is too soon, my Great Father, to send those good men among us. We are not starving yet.⁴⁹

The Chaui Pawnee delegate projects a future in which cultural change and education may happen, but it offers an alternative to Morse's policy proposals to introduce education among western Indian nations. He argues that in the future there may be a situation where ecological circumstances are so pressing that education will be desired, but as it is the Pawnees "are not starving yet," so cultural change and education should only be introduced at the demand of tribal nations themselves. The Omaha chief—probably Ongaptonga—concurs with the Pawnee's sentiment:

My Great Father—I have heard some of your Chiefs, who propose to send some good people amongst us, to learn us to live as you do; but I do not wish to tell a lie . . . I am afraid it is too soon for us to attempt to change habits. We have too much game in our country. We feed too plentifully on the buffaloe to bruise our hands with the instruments of agriculture.⁵⁰

Outlining a present situation in which the ecological and economic situation of the Pawnees is sustainable, the Omaha delegate argues that "chang[ing] habits" is an interruption of a way of life that is presently amenable to the Omahas.

In his introductory remarks to the speeches, however, Morse bends himself in innovative ways to try to control the delegates' objections to the missionary project.

⁴⁹ Jedidiah Morse, *Report to the Secretary of War, of the United States, on Indian Affairs: Comprising a Narrative of a Tour Performed in the Summer of 1820* (New Haven: Davis and Force, 1822), 244-245. In other newspaper accounts of the speech the sentence begins: "Some of your good chiefs (missionaries), have proposed..." It is likely that the phrase "as they are called, *Missionaries*" is an editorial intervention by Morse.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 146.

Introducing the delegates' speeches, Morse admits that they "will shew what are their feelings, particularly on the subject of civilization." But lest readers be discouraged by the refusal of the civilizing mission in these speeches, Morse suggests that

I should, however, consider these feelings, which are natural in their state of ignorance of the value and necessity of the blessings offered them, as forming no serious obstacle to a prudent commencement of an Education Establishment among them, under the protection of the Government, and their intelligent and efficient Agent, at the Council Bluffs.⁵¹

So on the one hand Morse registers the delegates' muted interest in the proposed U.S. policy of Indian education. But on the other hand, by filing away these objections as "ignorance," Morse paradoxically presents the delegates' qualifications of the civilizing mission as making a case for the need of Indian education in the first place.

But as their shared rhetoric—"it is too soon"—creates a link between present and future conditions, the Pawnee and Omaha delegates do not offer a blank refusal of agricultural education and the rhetoric of civilization. They do critique, however, an overtly programmatic approach to promoting education in which native people's current ecological and economic circumstances do not figure in the equation. Moreover, the delegates argue that the urgency with which McKenney, Morse, and the UFMS promoted their schemes sidelined the tribes' choice in the matter: the Pawnees and Omahas might very well welcome education, but on their own time, and at their own request. At a moment when the Indian department was abandoning the business of regulating Indian trade through the factory system, and increasingly operated through religious organizations, the delegates took the opportunity to speak back to the civilizing mission as a policy proposal.

These collaborative speech acts—by the delegates, Morse, McKenney, translators, scribes, and publishers—negotiate a tension that was inherent in U.S. Indian policy: between

⁵¹ Ibid., 241.

the situational and tribally specific logics of U.S.-Indian diplomacy in the west, and the programmatic logics of the “civilizing mission” that was increasingly central to an Indian policy that had Washington as the center. By coming to the United States capital, the delegates were directly introduced to the ideological tenets and policy proposals of a reformed Indian policy that operated through governmental networks as well as religious organizations. As they came to Washington at a moment when U.S. Indian policy was undergoing major ideological and policy reform, they represented only a limited Native agency within these institutional practices. But by intervening in these governmental and religious networks the delegates asserted a measure of rhetorical control over institutional discourses about their own tribal nations’ present and future.

The delegation thereby created a dialogue about tribal futures in the Upper Missouri River Valley—one that raised the discourse above dialectics of the “savage” and the “civilized.” Rather, as a short-term intervention in larger, ongoing diplomatic practices, it was an opportunity for negotiating different approaches to U.S. Indian policy. O’Fallon and the delegates were trying to inflect ongoing practices of diplomatic exchange that spoke to the situational pressures the Pawnees and neighboring nations were facing in the Missouri River Valley. Washington policymakers like McKenney and Morse were testing the waters for a federal Indian policy that was hinged on the civilizing mission and Christianity. These publications from the O’Fallon delegation, then, register the delegates’ navigation of these institutional networks in an effort to change the conditions of U.S.-Indian diplomacy in Indian country. This project was shaped by U.S. political-cultural translation, but was also a discursive process that made and remade the organizational networks of the Indian department, religious organizations, and tribal nations. For the Upper Missouri delegates,

Washington was briefly the center stage for thinking about the present and future of U.S.-Indian relations.

1.3 Reprinting Petalesharo: Performance, Print Culture, and the Indian Body

The O’Fallon delegation was a multi-discursive enterprise that created situational collaborations between tribal delegates, their Indian agent, and a range of interlocutors and audiences in Washington. Its project was in the first place directed at inflecting diplomatic practice at the Upper Missouri Indian agency and in Washington governmental circuits. However, through a range of print publications the delegation became a wider cultural event within Washington civil society and eastern reading publics. In Washington, the delegates performed an intertribal dance on the White House lawn, attended social gatherings, and were at the center of ceremonies that were a corollary to their official business in the capital. In this section I analyze how the delegation was represented to American spectators and reading publics. I mean to show that in spite of the active participation and contributions of tribal leaders, the delegation also became an opportunity for Euro-American ideological projections of “civilization” and the moral compatibility between white Americans and native people. Within the wider cultural repertoire around the delegation—especially around the representation of the Skidi Pawnee delegate Petalesharo—early Americans scrutinized the depoliticized Indian body, through which they tried to assess and debate the character of American Indians and the possibility of their “civilization” and salvation.

In doing so, I draw on and complicate the scholarship on the literary representation of Native Americans in non-native American writing. Within Native American studies, the study of white “representations” of Native people has a long (if occasionally undervalued)

history.⁵² Work ranging from Roy Harvey Pearce's classic *Savagism and Civilization* to Philip Deloria's *Playing Indian* has shown how in different ways the image of "the Indian" became a site for interrogating notions of American identity, history, and exceptionalism. And this work has shown in different ways how this "Indian" became an ideological trope figure that muted the political, historical, and social agency of native people. At the same time, Gordon Sayre has demonstrated in his work on nineteenth-century literary representations of Native American historical figures, that the vast body of literary texts that ostensibly elaborated American fantasies of the male Indian leader also originated in conversational contexts where dialogues between Native people and Americans shaped the contours of these representations.⁵³

Adding to this work, this section argues that the print culture representations of the delegates' performances in Washington, co-opted the delegation's political dimensions, but also emphasized the delegates' agency in staging debates on the moral affinities between tribal nations and U.S. civil society. The representations of these performances were not political in the same way as the conversations and oratory with McKenney, Monroe, and O'Fallon: they were not aimed at inflecting policy, or the negotiation of tribal affairs. At the same time, throughout this work I argue that Native people often generated public notice in contexts where the boundaries between scenes of government, religious organizations, and associational life are porous. The representation of the delegates' performances thus

⁵² See, most importantly, Roy Harvey Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind*, 1953 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); Robert Berkhofer, Jr., *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage, 1978); Helen Carr, *Inventing the American Primitive: Politics, Gender, and the Representation of Native American Literary Traditions, 1789-1936* (New York: New York University Press, 1996); Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997); Shari Huhndorf, *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination* (Cornell University Press, 2001); Gordon Sayre, *The Indian Chief as Tragic Hero: Native Resistance and the Literatures of America, from Moctezuma to Tecumseh* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

⁵³ Sayre, *Indian Chief*, especially 268-288.

underscores the fact that their participation in debates on tribal futures happened not only in scenes of U.S.-Indian diplomacy, but within wider arenas of associational life. I therefore suggest that the circulation of the delegates' performances through print publication (and newspapers in particular) muted the delegates' rhetorical engagements with U.S. Indian policy. Nevertheless, as extra-governmental commentators assessed the delegates' public performances, they used the imbricated rhetoric of civilization and humanitarianism that characterized Monroe-era approaches to the "Indian problem." These performances and their cultural-political translation, extended governmental and religious support for the "civilizing mission" within U.S. civil society. While the political content of the delegation was lost in this newspaper commentary, the delegation generated a more widespread dialectic on civilization and humanitarianism that overlapped with the ideologies and policy imperatives of the Indian department.

The printed newspaper publications through which the O'Fallon delegation became known to wider reading publics were embedded in associational life. In the early U.S. republic, newspaper writing depended on the extension of intimate epistolary networks rather than on professional writers. Newspaper articles were often contributed by "friends" writing personal letters to editors, often but not always with the explicit request or expectation that their letters would be published in their newspapers. In the absence of copyright law, such contributions were then reprinted in newspapers, often, but not always, with an acknowledgment of the original source. They could achieve region-wide circulation within only days while maintaining the character of personal communication. As such, the delegates' council with president Monroe, the mock council, and the dance at the White House were observed by lettered Washingtonians, then published in newspapers like the

Daily National Intelligencer and the *Georgetown Metropolitan*, and widely printed in a range of newspapers like the *American Mercury* (Hartford, Connecticut), the *Independent Statesman* (Portland, Maine), and the *Republican Gazette* (Fredericktown, Maryland).

The translation of oral performances into print culture artifacts reveals how in a wider cultural repertoire, the Native delegates' political rhetoric was appreciated by white audiences for its staging of a bodily performance of "Indianness." One such newspaper commentary, first printed in the *Daily National Intelligencer*, was written by an anonymous contributor who was present at the delegates' ceremony with Monroe at the White House. In the *National Intelligencer* commentary, the delegates represent a curiosity within a larger narrative of Native disappearance. Following the speeches of the Plains Indian delegates, it suggests that "[i]t is impossible to see these people, and believe, as I do, that they are destined, in no very long lapse of time, to disappear from the face of the earth, without feeling for them great interest."⁵⁴ To this extent the commentator describes in detail Sharitarish's headdress of turkey feathers, and an "elderly chief of the Missouri tribe" as donning a head dress that was made of "a profusion of horse hair, stained, of a bright scarlet, and surmounted (*risum teneatis?*) with two polished taper *horns*, as long as those of an ox."⁵⁵ Not only the ceremonial dress gave pause for reflection, but also the delegates' donning of American uniforms and other markers of distinction. Dressed in blue uniforms with red cuffs and capes, the delegates appeared "in complete American costumes," except for their hair and face paint. But the commentator observes that "they were evidently not easy in their new habiliments—their coats seemed to pinch them about the shoulders; now

⁵⁴ "Indians at Washington," *Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington), Feb. 11, 1822.

⁵⁵ The article explains that the chief in question was accompanied by his wife. Shaumonekuse of the Oto nation was the only delegate who had a female companion, Eagle of Delight, who was one of his wives. *Risum teneatis?*: "Can you help but laugh"?

and then they would take off their uneasy headdresses, and one sought a temporary relief by pulling off his boots.”⁵⁶ So while speakers like Sharitarish and Ongpatonga were carefully modifying the civilization discourse of the missionary groups they had met with, onlookers were admiring the delegates’ physicality and their clothing, as matters of “interest” in light of their presupposed disappearance.

The emphasis on “interest” in these U.S. commentaries on the delegation, suggests an imbrication of “interest” as a concern for the welfare of tribal nations, and “interest” as a preoccupation with Native people as a curiosity in Washington. Concomitantly, the bodily aspect of the delegates’ performances offered commentators the opportunity to conjecture about the moral character of Native people, and their similarity to American civil society. In the *Intelligencer’s* commentary, the presence of the female Otoe delegate Hayne Hudjihini makes the delegation legible as a narrative about gender, taste, and civilization. After the other delegates’ speeches, Eagle of Delight—“dressed in scarlet pantaloons, and wrapped in a green cambric cloak, without any ornament on her long black hair”—argues to President Monroe that she has not received a medal, and that “those who had no silver medals would look still better if they had them, and that she too would like to be dressed as a white woman if her great Father would give her a new dress.”⁵⁷ The *Intelligencer* commentator bemusedly suggests that Eagle of Delight’s plea is “as natural as her blushes and smiles. You see that the love of finery is not created by civilization; it merely becomes more chaste and discriminating.” Eagle of Delight’s interest in participating in the exchange of clothing here negatively emphasizes that to early U.S. diplomats and commentators, men’s accouterment actually mattered, whereas Eagle of Delight’s request to be included in the exchange is read

⁵⁶ “Indians at Washington.”

⁵⁷ “Ibid. Hayne Hudjihini (Eagle of Delight) was one of the wives of the Otoe delegate Shaumenokusse, and accompanied her husband to Washington and participated in the council at the White House.

as merely an ephemeral interest in finery. In a letter reprinted in William Faux's *Memorable Days in America* (1823), an anonymous observer traces the delegates' ability to conform to codes of politeness, as evidenced in their conversation, demeanor, and self-presentation. For instance, it suggests that Eagle of Delight and her husband Shaumenokusse "have taken tea with and frequently visited us. She was a very good natured, mild woman, and he shewed great readiness in acquiring our language, being inquisitive, retaining anything that he was once informed."⁵⁸ About the rest of the delegates the author remarks that the men were "of large stature, very muscular," but also had "fine open countenances, with the real noble Roman nose, dignified in their manners, and peaceful and quiet in their habits." The author comments that there was "no instance of drunkenness" among them, and praises their easy wit.⁵⁹

These print culture accounts thus staged a dialectic about Indian "character": were Native people capable of civilization, or irredeemably savage? Were their moral sentiments compatible with those of U.S. civil society? And how might this question be resolved by observing the fleeting interactions between the delegates and Washingtonian spectators? Nineteenth-century U.S. social commentators invested heavily in the question of how one could read other people's "character"—especially that of strangers. In *Confidence Men and Painted Women*, Karen Halttunen has shown that in a mobile and dispersed society, in which social contact with strangers was part of everyday life, the question of how one might judge another person's character was increasingly based on immediate visual perception."⁶⁰

⁵⁸ William Faux, *Memorable Days in America: Being a Journal of a Tour to the United States*, 1823, reprinted in *Early Western Travels*, edited by Rueben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland: Arthur Clarke, 1905), 52.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 49, 52.

⁶⁰ Within these norms of social interaction, Halttunen writes, "[c]ostume, manner, body markings, and linguistic patterns could indicate status or rank, occupation, nationality, and . . . moral character." As "character literally denoted a "'mark made by cutting or engraving,' inner virtues and vices cut their mark on the outward man . . . [and] inner character was believed to be imprinted upon his face and thus visible to anyone who understood the

This logic of reading bodies for inner virtues entered a racialized regime in which non-white orators were seen as representing not only their inner character, but could also validate white audiences' appraisals of their potential for civilization. The position of Native orators like the delegates is thus in some ways similar to that of African American orators as performing their humanity through the display of the eloquent body. As Robert Fanuzzi writes in *Abolition's Public Sphere*, black abolitionists' oratory constituted a "visual sphere" in which "white audiences occupied the omnipotent, disembodied position of spectator and trained their eyes on the orator's black body."⁶¹ This visual sphere was linked ideologically and materially to print publications, in which figures like Frederick Douglass were represented as staging a bodily performance that could prove the correctness of abolitionist discourses.⁶² Again, the audience's "interest" in the figure of non-white orators stood in for an "interest" in the well-being of the people whose political situation they represented.

Likewise, the reception of the delegates' speeches suggest that what was at stake in their oratory was not so much the arguments they were making, but to what extent their bodily rhetoric—their gestures, their clothing, their physiognomy—supported white conjectures on their potential for successful education and civilization. Whether commentaries on the delegates' oratory affirmed or rejected the possibility of Indian civilization, they staged a dialectic in which Native people always represented a set of contradictions. In the *Intelligencer's* commentary on the council with Monroe, the Chau Pawnee delegate Sharitarish used "gestures which, though violent and excessive, were never

moral language of physiognomy." See Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-class Culture in America, 1830-1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 36, 40.

⁶¹ Robert Fanuzzi, *Abolition's Public Sphere* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 84.

⁶² Douglass's audiences, Fanuzzi writes, "sharpened their observations of the black orator, whose every anatomical feature and gesture could signify the superiority of abolitionist principles." Fanuzzi, *Abolition's Public Sphere*, 83-84.

ungraceful, and always appropriate.”⁶³ Reading his body language, the commentator argues that Sharitarish’s bodily rhetoric is an inherent contradiction: it is “violent” yet “never ungraceful”; “excessive” yet “always appropriate.” Similarly, a Washingtonian writing to an editor of the *Providence American*, describes the delegates dance performance on the White House lawn on 9 February, 1822. During this spectacle the delegates and the presidential party first held a “mock council” in which they rehearsed oratory from earlier in the week, followed by an intertribal dance. The commentator notes that “[t]he gestures of the Indian speakers were violent, but energetic, and frequently graceful; affording a striking specimen of native oratory.”⁶⁴ Again, the commentator’s tropical use of contradictory adjectives in describing the delegates’ bodily rhetoric—simultaneously “violent” and “frequently graceful”—embraces the tension of the scene, which to the observer displays the hallmarks of savage discourse but is also poetically pleasing for this very reason.

The newspaper commentaries performed in print a preoccupation with the Native body within associational life. These conditions of publication led to the delegates being circulated more widely as a collective “public body” that allowed for a dialectic on savagism and civilization. Some commentators took on the transgressive potential of the “Indian dance” to reflect on American race and gender relations. A “whimsical account” of the dance, originally published in the *Georgetown Metropolitan*, underscored the opportunity of the dance as underscoring white women’s fascination with, and desire for, the naked Indian body:

Figure to yourself five or six great strapping fellows all beautifully bedusted with party colored paint, & bunches of feathers sticking *a posterioribus*, resembling a nicked peacock, and then you have a tolerable idea of their appearance. Our ladies

⁶³ “Indians at Washington.”

⁶⁴ “Indian Dance,” *American Repertory* (Burlington, VT), Mar. 5, 1822. An earlier—possibly the first—printing of this account appeared in the *Providence American*.

gazed very intently and sighed as they reflected they might look in vain for as much bone, sinew, muscle in their more civilized but less athletic husbands. Oh, thought I, what a charm there must be in a red skin. Several dandies offered to treat the ladies to a like dance . . . but, they turned up their noses with ineffable disdain and contempt.⁶⁵

In spite of their “more civilized” appearance, the white “dandies” cannot physically match the spectacle of the naked Indian body. Conversely, in the *Providence American’s* commentary on the public spectacle, the improvised intertribal dance becomes a religious commentary on an inherent U.S.-Indian dissimilarity:

The dance was a rude kind of leaping, governed, in some measure, by the sullen sound of a sort of drum. They uttered shocking yells, and writhed and twisted their bodies in frightful contortions. They were painted in a savage style, and presented a truly ferocious aspect. The scene excited interest from its novelty, and as an exhibition of man in a purely savage state.⁶⁶

But this “exhibition” only reveals “the untamed fierceness of sinful passions, and the ferocious character of savage character, unhumanized by any arts or maxims of civilized society.” The equivocal language (“a rude kind of leaping”; “in some measure”; “a sort of drum”) registers a measure of transgression in the dance: its spectacle escapes representation as it cannot be precisely put into words. If the performance of the mock council had teased the audience with thinking about the potential of refined sentiments in “savage” bodies, the dance gives reason to draw sharp boundaries around the transgressive potential of the public performance. To the author the dance is ultimately “a rare exhibition, which no person of liberal and philosophical curiosity would willingly have missed seeing, and which no one who viewed it . . . would choose to witness again.”⁶⁷

In the context of this newspaper commentary on the delegation, then, the ceremonial and political function of the delegation took a backseat to commentaries on American’s

⁶⁵ As reprinted in the *Baltimore Patriot and Mercantile Advertiser* (Baltimore), Feb. 14, 1822.

⁶⁶ “Indian Dance.”

⁶⁷ Ibid.

racial and sexual politics. Public spectacles like the mock council and dance suggest that for early republican inhabitants of cities, ideas about national identity were forged through spectatorship, parades, and public performances.⁶⁸ Ethnically and regionally diverse Americans elaborated their version of American nationalism through celebrations, parades, oratory, and other social events, constituting what David Waldstreicher has called a “national popular political culture.”⁶⁹ While print media became increasingly important in the early nineteenth century, Susan Davis has shown that city-dwellers’ ideas about social relations depended more on their participation in “collective gatherings and vernacular dramatic techniques—reading aloud, oratory, festivals, work stoppages, mass meetings, and parades.”⁷⁰ As they invited white Americans to reflect on Native people’s propensity for civilization, such public spectacles also held up a mirror to reflect on white Americans’ own capacity for sympathetic identification across cultures.

This double-sided reflection is demonstrated in what became the most popular printed artifacts from the O’Fallon delegation. During the delegation’s visit to Washington and for decades after, newspapers, magazines, and books recounted the backstory of Petalesharo, one of the representatives from the Skidi Pawnees. Although the historical record is scant, the person referred to as “Petalesharo” appears to have been born around 1795 or 1797. He was the son of the Skidi Pawnee tribal leader identified in most sources as Lachelesharo. He was born in a village on the Loup River near present-day Fullerton, Nebraska. Petalesharo first made his name by through a confrontation with a Chaui Pawnee tribal leader that helped Lachelesharo negotiate an agreement between the Chaui and Skidi

⁶⁸ David Waldstreicher, *In the Midst of Perpetual Fetes: The Making of American Nationalism, 1776-1820* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 2-3.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁷⁰ Susan G. Davis, *Parades and Power: Street Theatre in Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1986), 4.

Pawnees. In the fall of 1825 he signed alongside his father Lachelesharo a treaty between the Skidi Pawnees and the United States, at Fort Atkinson, agreeing not to attack any Americans traveling on the Santa Fe Trail.⁷¹ While he was in Washington, Petalesharo became known for having intervened in the Skidi Pawnees' Morning Star ceremony in 1817 and 1819, saving a captive girl (a Comanche girl, according to various accounts) from ritual sacrifice by fellow Skidi Pawnees.

The Petalesharo anecdote catered to early republicans' interest in representations of male native heroes as well as ethnological information about their traditions. The Morning Star ceremony was a ritual of the Skidi Pawnees that sometimes took place over several days during the winter, and paid respect to the union of the Morning Star (*Upirikutsu*) and Evening Star (*Cupirittaka*), who gave birth to the Girl Child, the first human.⁷² In James Brooks's words, the Morning Star ceremony, which occurred only very rarely, "restored the balance of contentious but complementary male and female powers that had first brought human life to the world."⁷³ Brooks traces the significance of the ceremony to the Pawnees' central role in a "great captive exchange complex" that stretched from the Southwest Borderlands to the Great Lakes region. Playing a central role in a network of human exchanges—both as captors and as captives—the Pawnees recognized sacred, familial, military, and market-driven motives for the forcible capture of men, women, and children.⁷⁴ The "intertwined displays of violence, honor, and gender" of the Morning Star ceremony

⁷¹ Hyde, *Pawnee Indians*, 179.

⁷² James Brooks, *Captives and Cousins: Slavery, Kinship, and Community in the Southwest Borderlands* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 11.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 13-14.

⁷⁴ Brooks, *Captives and Cousins*, 14-15.

reflected both Pawnee cosmology and an acknowledgment of the geographically expansive social mixing that occurred through violent encounters.⁷⁵

Petalesharo's story became widely known on the east coast through a brief newspaper account titled "Anecdote of a Pawnee Chief." The "Anecdote" was extracted from Morse's *Report to the Secretary of War*, published in the *Daily National Intelligencer* late January 1822, and reprinted through February and March that year in a bewildering array of newspapers in Virginia, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Connecticut, New Jersey, Vermont, New York, Maryland, Maine, Georgia, and Pennsylvania.⁷⁶ In it, Morse describes Petalesharo as twenty-one years old and of "fine size, figure, and countenance," and the Morning Star ceremony as the Pawnees' "savage practice." Morse interprets Petalesharo's intervention in the Morning Star ceremony as the singular heroic act of one person against the "multitude" of Pawnees who wanted to proceed with the sacrifice:

Just when the funeral pile was to be kindled, and the whole multitude of spectators were on the tip toe of expectation, this young warrior . . . rushed through the crowd, liberated the victim, seized her in his arms, placed her on one of the horses, mounted the other himself, and made the utmost speed towards the nations and friends of the captive. The multitude, dumb and nerveless with amazement at the daring deed, made no effort to rescue their victim from her deliverer. They viewed it as the immediate act of the Great Spirit, submitted to it without a murmur, and quietly retired to their village.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ Ibid., 16. Brooks notes: "That the historically known captives dedicated to the Morning Star came from Comanche, Cheyenne, Sioux, and Spanish backgrounds lends credibility to this expansiveness, as does the fact that the sacred Morning Star pipe was decorated with a woven belt of 'Navajo or other Southwestern origin.'"

⁷⁶ "Anecdote of a Pawnee Chief," *Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington), Jan. 29, 1822. Morse had presented his report to the U.S. Congress during the time that the delegates were in Washington. Morse, in turn, had based his narrative of Petalesharo on the journals of Captain John Bell, a member of Stephen Long's 1819-20 expedition to the Rocky Mountains, who had recorded oral narratives about Petalesharo's 1817 Morning Star intervention. The *Intelligencer* notes that "the facts in this anecdote . . . are sanctioned by Major O'Fallon, Indian Agent near the scene of the transaction here related, and who commands the Indian Delegation now here."

⁷⁷ Ibid.

The “Anecdote” concludes with the observation that “since this transaction no human sacrifice has been offered in this or any other of the Pawnee tribes. The practice is abandoned. Of what influence is one bold act in a good cause!”

Years after the delegation, the written account of Petalesharo’s narrative also appeared in a range of newspapers and print publication. In September 1822 the *Daily Georgian* adapted the “Anecdote” for a brief account of the Morning Star episode under the title “Indian Chivalry.”⁷⁸ Petalesharo also inspired magazine poetry and songs. When in 1824 and 1825 the French Revolutionary War general the Marquis de LaFayette made a triumphant tour of twenty-four states, he was presented with a commemorative collection of songs written for the occasion, one of which adapted the story of Petalesharo (Figure 6).⁷⁹ “The Generous Chief” was written by Isaac Garner Hutton, an English-born bookseller from Washington, who set his lyrics to the music of the song “Lochinvar” by the English composer Joseph Mazzinghi. Finally, Petalesharo’s story is also told in “The Pawnee Brave,” a magazine poem that originally appeared in the *New York Commercial Advertiser* in 1833.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ “Indian Chivalry,” *Daily Georgian* (Savannah), Sep. 3, 1822.

⁷⁹ I.G. Hutton, “The Generous Chief,” 1824, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan. For details about Lafayette’s tour, see John Foster’s *Sketch of the Tour of General Lafayette on His Late Visit to the United States, 1824* (Portland: A.W. Thayer, 1824), 58-210.

⁸⁰ “The Pawnee Brave,” *New York Commercial Advertiser* (New York), Feb. 21, 1833. This version of Petalesharo narrative is noteworthy for having an “Indian death song” as part of it. The Indian death song was a thriving poetic genre in Britain and the United States in the late-eighteenth century, and were typically composed “by female poets about male Indians and by male poets about female Indians. With “The Song of Alknomook” from Royall Tyler’s drama *The Contrast* and Wordsworth’s “Complaint of a Forsaken Indian Woman” as arguably the most famous examples, the dramatic effect of the Indian death song is hinged on the protagonist’s refusal to “speak the language of pain or lament.” See Julie Ellison, *Cato’s Tears and the Making of Anglo-American Emotion* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 98. Helen Carr has suggested that some death songs “aimed more at evoking frissons of horror” rather than admiration for the hero’s stoicism, but either way the linking of what Carr calls primitivist themes and the elegiac constructed readers as involved in “rare examples of true depth of feeling.” Helen Carr, *Inventing the American Primitive: Politics, Gender, and the Representation of Native American Literary Traditions, 1789-1936* (New York: New York University Press, 1996), 97-98.



Figure 3 (l): “A Pawnee Brave.” In Jedidiah Morse, *Report to the Secretary of War* (New Haven: S. Converse, 1822). William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.

Figure 4 (r): “Petalesharoo.” In Samuel Gardner Drake, *Biography and History of the Indians of North America*, Eleventh Edition, 1833 (Boston: Mussey, 1854). William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.

Bespeaking the interest in native people’s bodies, the portrait of Petalesharo went practically viral, as it was adapted for a range of print publications in the 1820s and 1830s. Petalesharo’s portrait was painted by Charles Bird King in late February 1822, shortly before the delegates left Washington. McKenney commissioned the portraits from King to for an “Indian Gallery” of Native objects, artifacts and portraits to exhibited in the office of the War Department. King made portraits of eight of the delegates, receiving 300 dollars from the War Department for his services. Petalesharo’s portrait was adapted for the frontispiece to Morse’s *Report to the Secretary of War* (1822; Figure 3), as well as for the antiquarian Samuel Gardner Drake’s *Biography and History of the Indians of North America*

(1833, Figure 4), and Thomas McKenney's *History of the Indian Tribes of North America* (1836; Figure 5).

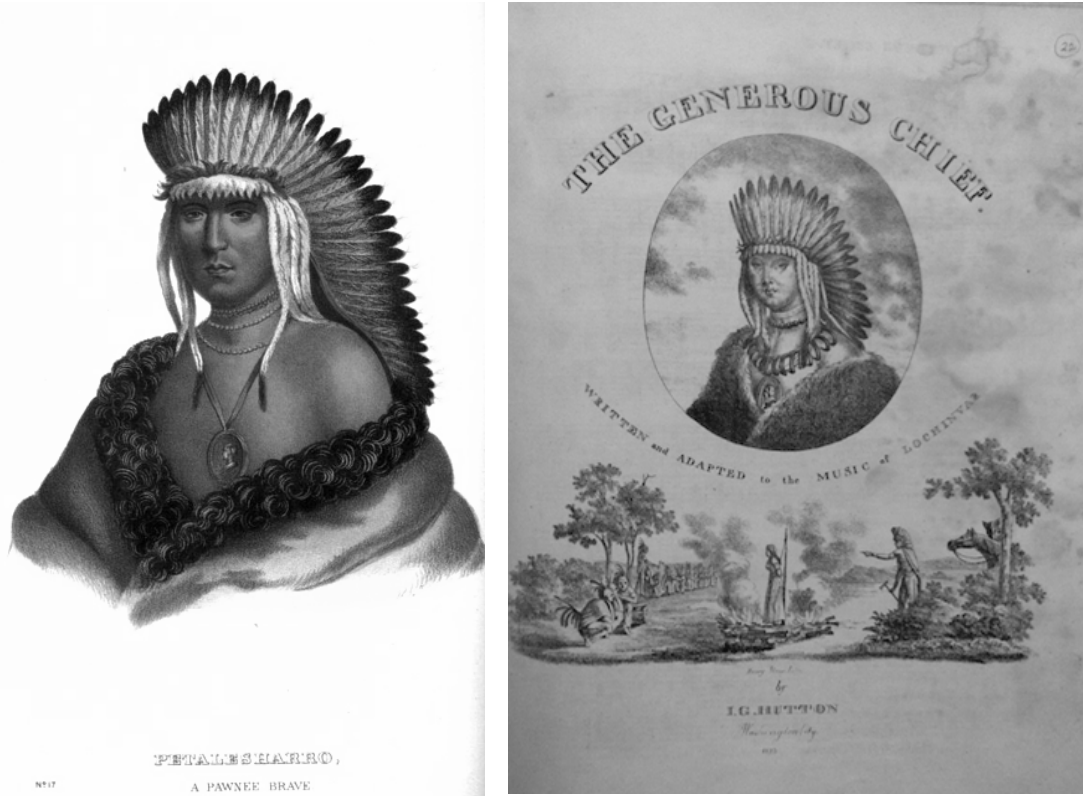


Figure 5 (l): “Petalesharro, A Pawnee Brave.” Lithograph by Henry Inman. In Thomas L. McKenney, *History of the Indian Tribes of North America*, Vol. I, (Philadelphia: D. Rice, 1836). In 1830 McKenney began the project of printing a portfolio of Charles Bird King’s paintings of Native American persons to be sold by subscription. The invention of the lithograph provided a means to reproduce the paintings effectively, and the Philadelphia lithographer Henry Inman of Inman and Childs collaborated with several other artists to produce the detailed prints that were included in the eventual volumes. For the first volume printed in 1837, McKenney partnered with the Cincinnati jurist, historian, and editor James Hall, who wrote the biographies and historical narratives for the collection. However, the bank panic of 1837 and the ensuing financial difficulties of the project held that McKenney had to abandon the project as subscriptions dwindled. The first folio edition was published in three volumes, between 1842 and 1844 by a range of outside printers and lithographers. See Shirley H. Bowers, “Captured on Canvas: McKenney-Hall’s *History of the Indian Tribes of North America*,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* Vol. 71, no. 3 (Jan. 1993): 339-347.

Figure 6 (r): “The Generous Chief.” Title page, I.G. Hutton, “The Generous Chief” (Washington: 1824). William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.

In the narrative of Petalesharo that circulated, however, the emphasis on his “one bold act” sidelines the fact that his intervention was sanctioned by Pawnee factions opposing the Morning Star to begin with, thus portraying the possible abandonment of the ceremony as something that was not debated within the Pawnee nation. In fact, the Morning Star ceremony was also marginal and contested ritual among the Pawnees: it took place only on rare occasions and was only practiced by the Skidi Pawnees and not by other Pawnee bands. Moreover, Lachelesharo’s relation with superintendent William Clark at St. Louis held that the Morning Star ceremony was already a politically contested and even polarizing issue among the Skidi Pawnees.⁸¹ Edwin James’s sketch of Petalesharo in his *Account of an Expedition* indeed notes that Petalesharo was directed by “[t]he present mild and humane chief of the nation, Latelesha, [who] had long regarded this sacrifice as an unnecessary and cruel exhibition of power.”⁸² This makes it less likely, then, that Petalesharo’s agency in halting the ceremony reflected only his individual motives. Richard White writes that warriors like Petalesharo—whom early republican Americans called “braves”—acted as the village *nahikut*: soldiers who were authorized by chiefs to employ the *raripakusus* (the village police) to “take decisive action even when opposition existed within the tribe.”⁸³

Rather than one individual halting an uncontested tribal tradition, Petalesharo probably played a more circumscribed role as he found himself in the middle of a social-political controversy. The anthropologist Melburn Thurman suggests that an 1827 Morning Star ceremony led to factional divisions among the Skidi Pawnee. Several chiefs had negotiated with Indian agents and made a commitment to halting the ceremony, and it was

⁸¹ Brooks, *Captives and Cousins*, 14. This is also the interpretation in George E. Hyde, *The Pawnee Indians*, 1951 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1974), 160.

⁸² James, *Account*, 153.

⁸³ Richard White, *The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment, and Social Change among the Choctaws, Pawnees, and Navajos* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 174.

the principal chiefs and tribal members who had the most trade relations with Americans who favored the release of the captive, while others saw reason to continue the sacrifice.⁸⁴ Thurman notes that the opposition to the Morning Star sacrifice ought not to be attributed to “a vague ‘humanitarianism.’” Within a stratified society, the power of the chiefs was connected to their control over the redistribution of goods, and their mediating position between tribal members on the one hand, and American traders and the political system on the other.⁸⁵ The controversy over the Morning Star ceremony had been a matter of factional divisions among the Skidi Pawnee over the meaning of traditional customs in light of the changing intertribal and U.S.-Pawnee relations.

In the wider cultural repertoire around the O’Fallon delegation, however, Petalesharo’s narrative became that of a civilizing agent to the Pawnee nation. Petalesharo came to be embraced as a potent symbol of Monroe-era negotiations between the U.S. republic and Indian nations, in which the civilizing mission was imagined as a shared undertaking of government and civil society. The popularity of this anecdote led to Petalesharo’s participation in a meeting of a female seminary in Washington. Described in newspapers as a meeting of “Miss White’s female seminary,” the meeting was held at the house of Daniel Rapine, the former mayor of the city.⁸⁶ It is unknown whether it was Thomas McKenney’s involvement that led to Petalesharo’s invitation, but in either case he was present. The scholars presented Petalesharo with a friendship medal to honor his saving of the captive Comanche girl, the medal being engraved with illustrations of the Morning

⁸⁴ Melburn D. Thurman, “The Skidi Pawnee Morning Star Sacrifice of 1827,” *Nebraska History* 51 (1970): 272.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 275-6.

⁸⁶ *Ladies’ Literary Cabinet* (New York), March 9, 1822. It appears that the report of Rapine and Petalesharo’s speeches was first published in the *Georgetown Metropolitan* of March 2, 1822. For more information on Daniel Rapine, see Michael I. Weller, “Four Mayors of the City of Washington,” in *Records of the Columbia Historical Society* (Washington DC: Columbia Historical Society, 1899), 252.

Star ceremony story. Rapine's daughter Mary was chosen to present the medal to Petalesharo and deliver a speech. As a variation on the friendship medals that were a commonplace in U.S. federal Indian policy at the time, the medal Rapine presented to Petalesharo does not display a portrait of the president, but a representation of Petalesharo's narrative. The front has an image of Petalesharo leading the Comanche girl away to safety, with an inscription of the phrase "to the bravest of the braves." The back of the medal bears an image of the empty scaffold, with five Pawnee figures looking on. (Fig. 7)



Figure 7: Friendship medal given to Petalesharo. In 1822 the Skidi Pawnee delegate Petalesharo was given this medal by the students of a Washington seminary for young women. In Herman Viola, *The Indian Legacy of Charles Bird King* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1976), 31.

In Mary Rapine's speech to Petalesharo, the sympathetic identification with the male hero and female victim of Petalesharo's story allows for the conjecture on Native character. Steeped in the tropes of early U.S. ventriloquizations of Native oratory, Rapine's speech interprets Petalesharo's commitment to ensuring the girl's return to her home as indicative

of his capacity for moral sentiment. As reprinted in the *Ladies' Literary Cabinet* of 9 March, 1822, Rapine addressed Petalesharo as follows:

Brother, we have heard of your humanity in rescuing a young squaw of the Paduca nation from a cruel death and still more cruel torture, and leading her back to her home and tribe. It was the influence of the Great Spirit operating on your heart, and may it always so operate. Your white brethren admire and honor such virtue, and will always esteem their red Brethren in proportion as they display this generosity and heroism. You see we are all young, but we love and admire benevolence and courage, whatever the color of the skin that covers them.⁸⁷

Joining the chorus of voices providing commentary on Indian “character,” Rapine’s declaration of a shared commitment to “benevolence” employs the rhetoric of nation, race, and gender to code white men and women as sympathetic to Native nations. Rapine proclaims that “the report of this good action has filled us with esteem for you and your nation. Wherever you go, the white man and white woman will be your friends; because you have been a friend to one in distress and danger; and because they love and respect those who do good to each other.”⁸⁸ Continuing on this note, Rapine urges Petalesharo to “accept this token of our esteem—always wear it for our sakes, and when again you have the power to save a poor woman from death and torture—think of this and us, and fly to her relief and rescue.”⁸⁹

Petalesharo’s response to Rapine’s oratory is brief and seemingly fragmentary, and offers something of a puzzle in terms of its reliability or its meaning. In the account from the *Georgetown Metropolitan* Petalesharo’s addresses Miss White’s seminary as follows:

‘Brothers and sisters—This [the medal] will give me ease more than I ever had, and I will listen more than I ever did to white men. I am glad that my brothers and sisters have heard of the good act that I have done. My brothers and sisters think that I did it

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

in ignorance, but I now know what I have done. I did it in ignorance and did not know that I did good; but by giving me this medal I know it.⁹⁰

The mediated conditions of Petalesharo's publication make it hard to assign these words to any authorial interiority. But as a collaborative performance in which Native agency is circumscribed but not absent, the ceremony around Petalesharo generates a colonial narrative in which Native men represent their culture's capacity for civilization by showing their capacity for saving Native women. The Petalesharo narrative here suggests a variation on the trope by which Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak has argued colonialism is systematically legitimized: that the relationship between the colonizer and colonized is that of "[w]hite men saving brown women from brown men."⁹¹ Mary Rapine's speech to Petalesharo modifies this narrative as it reads the Skidi Pawnee as encoding a narrative of "brown men saving brown women from brown men." In this trope, the role for white American civil society is to then reward and explain the workings of the virtuous act. As enacted by Miss White's seminary, the meeting with Petalesharo extends the civilization discourse of McKenney and Morse, as Petalesharo's narrative suggests a potential for moral sentiment in Indian Nations, in effect becoming an agent to the U.S. civilizing mission. As women's educational and religious organizations were a significant avenue for their participation in public life in the early republic, the heterosocial interactions between the students, Petalesharo, and

⁹⁰ Morse, *Report*, 249. In a different account of the meeting at Miss White's seminary, from Thomas McKenney's *History of the Indian Tribes of North America*, McKenney revisits the ceremony as follows: "We saw the medal put on his neck, and saw him take it in his hand, and look at it. Holding it before him, he said—'This brings rest to my heart. I feel like the leaf after a storm and when the wind is still. I listen to you. I am glad. I love the pale faces more than I ever did, and will open my ears wider when they speak. I am glad you heard of what I did. I did not know the act was so good. It came from my heart. I was ignorant of its value. I now know how good it was. You make me know this by giving me this medal.'" In Thomas McKenney, *History of the Indian Tribes of North America*, Vol. I, 1836 (Philadelphia: D. Rice, 1872), 149.

⁹¹ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 93.

McKenney extend the political and religious discourse of civilization that inflected the O'Fallon delegation.⁹²

The seminary meeting, in other words, performed the compatibility of emerging governmental policies with U.S. civil society' moral sentiment. After all, McKenney and Morse believed that the civilizing mission was not the purview of government alone, but depended on its wide support from different religious, educational, and associational spheres in civil society. In the wider print culture repertoire around the delegation and Petalesharo, the performances of the delegation registered the rhetoric of civilization and "Indian reform" within the overlapping spheres of U.S. governmental networks, associational life, and newspaper and magazine culture. Projecting their own notions of savagism and civilization onto Petalesharo and the delegates' public performances, early republicans cemented their own nation's self-image at a moment of national consolidation and imperial aspirations. Their preconceptions of Indianness overshadowed the actual political agency of the delegates, and worked the publications around Petalesharo into affective, ideological, and political frameworks for thinking about U.S.-Indian relations. Compared to Sharitarish and Ongpatonga, whose oratory was recorded and received more attention, Petalesharo represents the flipside of the collaborative effort to achieve public notice: his own agency is muted to the extent that it stood in for a narrative of civilization and savagism.

Different avenues of publication thus shaped the meaning of the delegation as a cultural text. Yet in the translation of the delegation within a wider cultural arena, native agency was not absent: it was the delegates' active participation within scenes of

⁹² See, for instance, Mary P. Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1865* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Mary Kelley, *Learning to Stand and Speak: Women, Education, and Public Life in America's Republic* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006).

associational life made their print culture representations meaningful. In this culture of performance and reprinting, the O'Fallon delegation became a staging ground to show the moral compatibility between white American civil society, the U.S. government, and tribal nations. The reprinting of Petalesharo's story and the delegates' public performances insisted on Indian-white difference, discursively rendering the body of the Indian to refract notions of American ideologies of race and gender. At the same time, the performance around Petalesharo actively solicited the delegates' participation in demonstrating the compatibility of white and native virtue, and the capacity of Indian nations to change, and become "civilized" according to the ideological demands of the Indian department and associations within civil society. But this demonstration sidelined the agency of tribal nations in staging their own debates about the future of tribal nations, instead constructing Petalesharo as an agent of civilization that was closely related to American influence. Mediated, translated, and replicated, Petalesharo's body became an emblem of cultural change in Indian country—but only of change as Americans imagined it.

1.4 Native Futures and "Indian Eloquence" in the Oratory of Sharitarish and Ongpatonga

Amid the misrepresentations, distortions, and failures to listen to Indian oratory, the agency that the delegates wielded within Washington governmental and associational spheres is indeed tenuous. Given the mediation of this collaborative effort, how do we then read the oratory from the delegation to Washington? How did they assess the approaches to U.S. Indian policy as imagined in Council Bluffs and Washington? And what vision did they

offer for U.S.-Indian relations that would be beneficial—or at least not harmful—to the Indian nations in the Upper Missouri River valley?

The final section of this chapter offers a rhetorical analysis of the most important speeches of the tribal delegates who took part in the O’Fallon delegation. I therefore return to the oratory of the delegates in council with President Monroe, to ask how their rhetoric inflected the diplomatic project of the delegation. In particular, I focus on the oratory of the Pawnee delegate Sharitarish and the Omaha delegate Ongpatonga to argue that the publication context of the O’Fallon delegation became an avenue for the circulation of tribal knowledge about U.S.-Indian relations in the west. This approach resists the logic of these speeches’ anthologization as “Indian oratory” or exemplars of an inherent “native eloquence,” and highlights instead the political responses from tribal leaders to the realities of U.S.-Indian relations and American expansion. Within a publication context marked by translation and U.S.-Indian diplomacy, these orators’ rhetorical goals were shaped by the convergence of both U.S. Indian policy and the logics of intertribal relations in the Upper Missouri Valley. Nevertheless, their oratory projected tribal futurities within scenes of diplomacy where the ramifications of U.S. expansion and Indian removal were being debated. Together, these speeches insist on a future for U.S.-Indian relations, in which tribal nations continue to be recognized as partners in diplomatic exchange and as political agents in the trans-Mississippi west.

Petalesharo’s popularity was so widespread that one of the most important speeches from the O’Fallon delegation has long been misattributed to him. While contemporary accounts do not attribute the speech to anyone at all, besides a “Pawnee Chief,” the scholar

W.C. Vanderwerth included it in the 1971 volume *Indian Oratory* as Petalesharo's speech.⁹³ The misattribution was repeated by, among other publications, the *Norton Anthology of American Literature*, which indeed notes that "we do not know whether 'Petalesharo's speech' was in fact delivered by him or by an unnamed 'Pawnee chief.'"⁹⁴ Yet it is more likely that the speech should be attributed to the delegate referred to in the record as Sharitarish, who came to Washington to represent the Grand Pawnees.⁹⁵ As with Petalesharo, there are few reliable biographical facts about the life of Sharitarish, but it seems certain that he was the son of a Chaui Pawnee tribal leader of the same name. The elder Sharitarish had been engaged with a long struggle over power with Tarrarecawaho since 1806, and after his death in 1819 his son continued this struggle. As Tarrarecawaho refused to go to Washington in 1821, the younger Sharitarish went in his stead.⁹⁶ And as the *American Missionary Reporter* makes mention of a "brother" who was part of the Chaui Pawnee delegation, it is likely that Sharitarish was accompanied by his brother Iskatappe.

⁹³ Vanderwerth, *Indian Oratory*, 79.

⁹⁴ "Petalesharo," in *Norton Anthology*, 1257. The cause of the confusion is unclear, but has likely to do with the fact that Sharitarish's oratory was usually reprinted in newspapers anonymously. In Jedidiah Morse's *Report to the Secretary of War* (1822), the frontispiece features Petalesharo portrait, with an asterisk referring the reader to a section of the book in which Sharitarish's speech is printed prominently.

⁹⁵ In the *Portable North American Indian Reader* (1974) the editor Frederick Turner indeed attributes the speech to Sharitarish, as does Colin Calloway in *Our Hearts Fell to the Ground* (1996). There does not seem to any direct evidence that proves that the "Speech by the Pawnee Chief" was spoken by Sharitarish rather than Petalesharo, but several circumstantial factors make Sharitarish the more likely source. First, it is probable that the Chaui Pawnee delegate would have been the first to speak after President Monroe, since the Chaui Pawnees were the most prominent and influential band of Pawnees. Second, Sharitarish had been instrumental in facilitating the relations between the Chaui Pawnees and Benjamin O'Fallon, showing himself more willing than other tribal leaders—including the Chaui Pawnee tribal leader Tarrarecawaho—to engage in U.S.-Indian diplomacy. Third, in several newspapers and volumes that reprint the delegates' speeches, the first and longer speech is given as the speech of "Pawnee Chief," while a second, much shorter speech is more specifically as by a "Pawnee Loup Chief." For these reasons it is probable that the first speech was given by the main Chaui Pawnee representative Sharitarish. Turner, ed., *Portable North American Indian Reader*, 247; Calloway, *Our Hearts Fell to the Ground*, 56. See also "Aboriginal Eloquence," *Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington), Feb. 16, 1822, and James Buchanan, *Sketches of the history, manners, and customs of the North American Indians* (London: Black, Young, and Young, 1824), 38-42

⁹⁶ Hyde, *Pawnee Indians*, 152.

On February 4, 1822, Sharitarish and the other delegates sat in council with President Monroe and John Calhoun. They were invited into the Red Room, one of the antechambers on the State Floor of the White House. In attendance were the president, O'Fallon, Calhoun, and numerous unnamed spectators. The council began with a speech by President Monroe who alluded to the visit the delegates had made to arsenals and navy yards, framing the council's purpose of displaying imperial power and to speed up Indian pacification in the trans-Missouri west. According to the *Daily National Intelligencer's* report the president "adverted to the visit they had made to our large towns—to our arsenals, navy yards, and the like, and told them that as much as they had seen, it could give them but a faint idea of our numbers and strength." During their visit, Monroe stated, the delegates

had met with few of our warriors, because they were not wanted at the seat of government, and because we were at peace with all the world—but if we were in a state of war, all our citizens would take arms into their hand, and become brave warriors. He enjoined them to preserve peace with one another, and to listen to no voice which should persuade them to distrust the friendship of the United States.⁹⁷

U.S. friendship, in this reading of Monroe's speech, means U.S. hegemony: the choice for the delegates is presented as one between freely assenting to "preserv[ing] peace" or to face the threat of U.S. military force. Monroe's address was interpreted into the various languages of the delegates. The *Intelligencer* report gives an account of the performative contexts of the delegates' speeches, noting that the speeches were interpreted, sentence by sentence into English and the various different languages of the delegates. During the President's speech, the Judges of the Supreme Court, "happening to call on the President, increased the number of attentive auditors."⁹⁸

⁹⁷ "Indians at Washington," *Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington), Feb. 11, 1822. The article is dated 6 February 1822.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*

How “attentive” were these auditors, though? Even with the amount of time it took to interpret the speeches sentence by sentence, the commentator expresses his “regret that I had not thought of taking notes, or even of impressing on my mind what was said by each. As it is, I can only recal [*sic*] some of their most striking remarks, without always remembering by which speaker they were made.”⁹⁹ Were others listening in the same way? Does the fact that the Supreme Court Justices wandered into the room late and by coincidence suggest that the council was but another opportunity to admire Native bodies? Then again, the delegation also extended the situational and tribally specific negotiations O’Fallon was engaged in at Council Bluffs. Indeed, after the president’s speech, O’Fallon “encouraged them to speak with the same freedom that they would use in their own village.”¹⁰⁰ Calhoun and O’Fallon would not have listened to the delegates’ speeches as mere curiosities, as they were facing on a daily basis the difficulties of negotiating between American traders, U.S. policy, and tribal nations’ hegemony in the Upper Missouri River valley. The council with Monroe, then, was an opportunity to perform in Washington what Indian diplomacy sounded like on the ground—and for Calhoun and O’Fallon there was a lot at stake in registering their oratory with an eye for detail. The speeches were likely interpreted by William Clark’s assistant Louis T. Honoré, or possibly by O’Fallon’s interpreter John Dougherty. And although they are steeped in the dominant tropes of U.S.-Indian diplomacy, they also register detailed responses to the tenets of Indian policy as the delegates had them explained.

In the first and longest of the delegates’ speeches, Sharitarish stresses the Chaui Pawnees’ desire for maintaining autonomy and peaceful relationships between them and the

⁹⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

United States. Adopting a separatist rhetoric, Sharitarish mobilizes the intentions of the Great Spirit as an argument for the validity of cultural difference and self-sufficiency:

The Great Spirit made us all—he made my skin red, and yours white; he placed us on this earth, and intended that we should live differently from each other. He made the whites to cultivate the earth, and feed on domestic animals, but he made us, red skins, to rove through the woods and plains, to feed on wild animals and to dress with their skins. He also intended that we should go to war to take scalps—steal horses from and triumph over our enemies—cultivate peace at home, and promote the happiness of each other.¹⁰¹

Sharitarish makes a case for the desirability of an uninterrupted way of life for the Pawnees. But Sharitarish *does* invest in the need for productive relations between tribal nations and their local Indian agents. Sharitarish acknowledges his appreciation for O’Fallon’s Indian agency at Council Bluff. “My Father has a piece on which he lives,” Sharitarish explains, “and we wish him to enjoy it—we have enough without it—but we wish him to live near us to give us good counsel—to keep our ears and eyes open that we may continue to pursue the right road.”¹⁰² It would be easy to read Sharitarish’s insistence on O’Fallon’s proximity and his “good counsel” as indicating that the agent was a handmaiden to U.S. imperial aspirations in Pawnee country. But Sharitarish’s confidence in O’Fallon here signals a desire to retain control over U.S.-Pawnee diplomatic relations: Sharitarish also argues that “[y]ou have already sent us a father; it is enough, he knows us, and we know him.” Here the delegate suggests that the only Indian agent the Chaui Pawnees need is the one they have ongoing ties with—and who therefore offers the possibility of rhetorical control over diplomatic relations.

Sharitarish’s oratory does not reject, therefore, the U.S. Indian policy of establishing Indian agents to regulate the fur trade. Rather, he insists that U.S. Indian policy is more

¹⁰¹ Morse, *Report*, 244.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 244-245.

productively oriented to diplomatic relations between tribal representatives and U.S. agents who have deep, local knowledge of social, political, and ecological contexts in Indian country. For instance, Sharitarish presents a historical narrative in which the Pawnees are forced to respond to ecological and social changes. Sharitarish recognizes the ripple effects of American trade on ecologies and economic organization:

There was a time when we did not know the whites—our wants were then fewer than they are now. They were always within our control—we had then seen nothing which we could not get. But since our intercourse with the *whites* (who have caused such a destruction of our game), our situation is changed. We could lie down to sleep and we awoke [and] we would find the buffalo feeding around our camp—but now we are killing them for their skins, and feeding the wolves with their flesh to make our children cry over their bones.¹⁰³

Sharitarish's oratory points out that the increasing trade in buffalo robes had brought about new customs of hunting for buffaloes even if it was not necessary for sustenance, and removing the skins and leaving the rest of the bodies behind. The social ramifications of this were that hunting expeditions had to travel further and further from their villages, "traveling hundreds of miles each summer and winter to obtain buffalo."¹⁰⁴ Sharitarish characterizes the alienating effects of the transition—one not directly imposed by U.S. policy but effected by increasing American trade in Pawnee country—to new forms of social and economic organization.

Sharitarish thereby sketches the changed use of natural resources; new forms of subsistence; a new way of dealing with wants and plentitude; and a changed relation to the market. It is worth pausing, though, on what it meant for Sharitarish to argue that "our wants were then fewer than they are now." How do we read the statement that the Pawnees' "wants" have increased? When Sharitarish's American spectators heard the rhetoric of

¹⁰³ Ibid., 245.

¹⁰⁴ Hyde, *Pawnee Indians*, 175.

native “wants,” it may have led to conjectures on their disappearance and the need for white agricultural education. After all, at their visit to the Lancaster School in Georgetown, Thomas McKenney had told the delegates that “[y]our country has much game in it now, but a good many moons hence the game will be gone. . . . It is time to begin to show your children how to do when the game is gone.”¹⁰⁵ Richard White notes, however, that not until the mid-nineteenth century did the failure of crops or the hunt immediately threaten the Pawnee way of life. In a mixed economy of horticulture and hunting, there was security against death of starvation unless ecological chaos affected both horticulture and hunting.¹⁰⁶

As White argues, by the mid-nineteenth century Americans

assumed the Pawnees starved and suffered . . . because they had always starved and suffered; such conditions, they have assumed, merely reflected the exigencies of the Indian economy. If this were so, however, the Pawnees and other horticultural tribes could never have survived as long as they did . . . The crop failures and famines of the 1840s, 1850s, 1860s, and 1870s resulted from the historical conditions that verged on chaos, not from any inherent shortcomings of the Indian economy that forced them to rely on whites as soon as white aid became available.¹⁰⁷

Before the epidemics of the 1830s, moreover, the Pawnee numbered well over ten thousand people, and their village sites on the Platte and Loup rivers were consistently occupied for a remarkably long period of time.¹⁰⁸

Sharitarish’s explanation of the Pawnees’ increased wants is therefore not necessarily reflective of the Chaui Pawnees’ permanent social and economic situation, but actively plays into tropes of sympathy that were commonplace in U.S.-Indian negotiations. By evoking the Pawnees as the suffering subjects that early republican politicians projected onto the delegates, Sharitarish calls for curbing the encroachment of American traders in the

¹⁰⁵ “Indian Deputation.”

¹⁰⁶ White, *Roots of Dependency*, 199-203.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 199.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 154-156; 162.

region. Sharitarish in effect shifts the contours of the debate—away from seeing suffering as reflective of a “primitive” condition, and instead as an effect of white encroachment in Indian country. Mobilizing institutionalized ideas of sympathy through the tropes of Native “wants,” Sharitarish’s assertion that the Pawnees’ wants have increased paradoxically works in tandem with his more militant statement that “[w]e have everything we want. We have plenty of land, *if you will keep your people off of it.*”¹⁰⁹

The delegate from the Omahas gave the speech following that of Sharitarish. As with the latter, its authorship is not attributed to any specific delegate, but it is highly likely that Ongpatonga was the Omaha delegate who gave the speech in council with Monroe, as the various contemporary accounts of the delegation are most consistent about his participation. Ongpatonga’s speech begins with a bodily rhetoric in which he addresses President Monroe directly, stressing the Omahas’ success in avoiding intertribal and U.S.-Indian conflicts: “Look at me, look at me, my father, my hands are unstained with your blood—my people have never struck them. It is not the case with other red skins. Mine is the only nation that has spared the long knives.”¹¹⁰ Like Sharitarish’s oration, Ongpatonga’s also stresses friendship and peaceful co-existence, but his reminder that the Omahas’ sparing the “long knives” is as much a profession of friendship as a statement of Omaha power. Relatedly, Ongpatonga challenges the idea that these negotiations at the seat of the U.S. government can sway political affairs in Omaha country in a significant way. His speech stresses that as a tribal delegate to Washington he represents the Omaha nation only in a limited way: “I am chief, but not the only one in my nation; there are other chiefs who raise their crests by my

¹⁰⁹ Morse, *Report*, 244. Italics in original.

¹¹⁰ “Aboriginal Eloquence.”

side.”¹¹¹ Ongpatonga reflects critically on the representational function of his participation in the delegation. He reminds his interlocutors that any attempt to streamline U.S.-Omaha relations through the delegation is hinged on a fundamental fiction: that to establish friendship with Ongpatonga means establishing friendship with the Omahas. Noting that there are “other chiefs who raise their crests by my side” Ongpatonga suggests that in Washington, far away from the Omaha villages and Council Bluffs, the delegation could represent the Omahas only to a limited extent.

But where Monroe’s speech to the delegates casts U.S.-Indian relations in the context of the United States’ pacification of tribal nations in the west, Ongpatonga’s oratory draws attention to the military and geopolitical ramifications of white expansion in the Upper Missouri River valley. He ends his speech by emphasizing deteriorating Omaha-Sioux relations as a major concern for Indian policy to recognize:

I am fond of peace, my Great Father, but the Sioux have disturbed my repose. They have struck upon me and killed two of my brothers, and since more of my bravest warriors, whose deaths are still unrevenged. . . . I am forced to war, my Great Father, and I am in hopes you will assist me; I am in hopes that you will give some arms to my Father to place in the hands of my braves to enable them to defend their wives and children.¹¹²

If O’Fallon had imagined the delegation as a partial remedy for Americans’ vulnerability west of the Missouri, Ongpatonga manages to seize the moment affirm that native people in the Missouri River Valley were affected by the intertribal conflicts that were the social, political, and ecological ripple effects of American trade in the region. According to the Omaha leader’s rhetoric, Monroe’s projections of U.S. Empire mattered less in a social world that was increasingly marked by the westward expansion of the Sioux. In making this argument, Ongpatonga does not take very seriously the position of the Sioux at this time,

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid.

who were not only facing the pressure of American encroachment, but also other militarized Indian nations who had allied with the United States.¹¹³ In raising the issue, however, Ongpatonga challenges the notion that effective U.S.-Indian diplomacy can take place without accounting for the effects of U.S. expansion and trade on intertribal relations and military conflicts.

Even more drastically, in a third speech the delegate of the Skidi Pawnees seizes a moment to refute the power dynamics supposedly undergirding the delegation. If Monroe had intended to bring home the vulnerability of the Plains Indian nations to the power of the United States military, the Skidi Pawnee speaker brings his audience back west of the Missouri, and reminds them that there—in a space unincorporated into the U.S.—it is the other way around. “My Great Father,” he begins, “[w]henver I see a white man amongst us without a protector, I tremble for him. I am aware of the ungovernable disposition of some of our young men, and when I see an inexperienced white man, I am always afraid they will make me cry . . . I am always afraid that they will be struck on the head like dogs.”¹¹⁴ The speaker reverses ideas of sympathy to reveal Americans’ vulnerability in Indian country. The immediacy of the bodily rhetoric reverses the narrative in which white sympathy for native subjects was the motivation behind the civilizing mission. Instead, the inadequacy of the United States’ regulation of the Indian trade makes American subjects subject to the volatile disposition of various tribes, and to the sympathy of their leaders. But if the speech begins as a profession of sympathy, it ends as a warning:

When your people come among us, they should come as we come among you, with some one to protect them, whom we know and who knows us. Until this chief came

¹¹³ For a historical analysis of the Western Sioux territorial expansion, see Richard White, “The Winning of the West: The Expansion of the Western Sioux in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century,” *Journal of American History* 65, no. 2 (1978): 319-343.

¹¹⁴ “Aboriginal Eloquence.”

among us, three winters since, we roved through the plains only thirsting for each others blood—we were blind—we could not see the right road and we hunted to destroy each other . . . Our warriors were always going to and coming from war. I myself have killed and scalped in every direction. I have often triumphed over my enemies.¹¹⁵

It is on this note that the report of the speech ends, and it subverts U.S. notions of what power dynamics were at play in the council: U.S. military aspirations notwithstanding, west of the Mississippi U.S.-Indian relations defy narratives of imperial power. The Skidi Pawnee speaker's language insists on the delegates' validity as diplomatic partners. Given the imperfect reach of imperial power in the Missouri River valley, and the vulnerability of American traders there, the speaker reminds Monroe of the need for U.S.-Indian diplomacy to take the Indians delegates seriously as political actors.

Again, contemporary commentators may not have been primarily interested in such specific interventions. For one thing, the delegates' speeches were published in newspapers as "Aboriginal Eloquence," advertising the spectacle of Indian oratory rather than the political issues it addressed. U.S. newspaper and magazine articles bearing the title "Indian Eloquence" (or a variation thereon) had a long history in early American print culture going to British-colonial times.¹¹⁶ The most famous example is the speech in which the Mingo

¹¹⁵ Ibid.

¹¹⁶ For different examples of speeches reprinted in newspaper under the rubric of "Indian Eloquence" before the 1822 delegation, see the following titles. Many of these were reprinted in or from several newspapers the same year. A more systematic survey of such publications would undoubtedly lead to more results. "Indian Eloquence: Speech of the Chief of the Mickmakis, or Maricheets Savages, From An Account of their Customs and Manners, published in the year 1758," in *The Providence Gazette, and Country Journal*, 7 July 1764; "Indian Eloquence: Invocation of the Moon," in *The Impartial Gazetteer, and Saturday's Evening Post*, 31 May 1788; "Indian Eloquence: A Speech made by an Indian Chief, called Garangula, in Answer to a severe one made to him, and some of his Tribe, by Mons. De La Barre . . . in 1684," in *The General Advertiser*, 31 October 1791; "Fine specimen of Indian eloquence," in *The State Gazette of South Carolina*, 27 February 1792; "Indian Eloquence," in *The Columbian Centinel*, 12 December 1792; "Interesting Specimen of Indian Eloquence," in *The Columbian Courier*, 26 June 1799; "Indian Eloquence," in *The Washingtonian*, 30 July 1810; "Indian Eloquence," in *The Columbian*, 17 August 1813; "Indian Eloquence," in *Poulson's American Daily Advertiser*, 27 May 1814; "Indian Eloquence," in *The Weekly Recorder*, 27 September 1815; "Indian eloquence: Speech of John Scanando" in *The Washington City Weekly Gazette*, 17 August 1816; "Indian Eloquence: From the Star in the West," in *The Ladies' Weekly Museum, or Polite Repository of Amusement*

chief Logan explains the reasons for going to war against the English in 1774, which was reprinted in a slew of newspapers and—most famously—Thomas Jefferson’s *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1782).¹¹⁷ Since Logan, reprinting Indian oratory was a commonplace in early national magazines and newspapers, to give evidence for American Indians’ perceived innate oratorical qualities. The reprinting of their oratory (in which native subjects typically admonish white Americans) performed various ideological tasks for American reading audiences: it articulated a unique American history that was different from English and native American history, and offered the possibility of redemption through admitting collective responsibility for wrongs to Indian subjects.¹¹⁸ Yet as the shared acknowledgment of past wrongs to Native people did not translate into political action, Carolyn Eastman argues, the figure of the eloquent Indian was “gradually absorbed into the popular imagination as a tragic but inevitable story.”¹¹⁹ The reprinting of Indian speeches thus underlines that, in Laura Stevens’s words, Indians proved “useful to feel with,” even if these sentiments were more important to readers’ sense of identity than for an understanding of the historical and political realities Indian people faced.¹²⁰

and Instruction, 16 August 1817; “Indian Speech,” in *The American Yeoman*, 30 September 1817; “Indian Eloquence,” in *The Albany Gazette*, 26 August 1818; “Indian Eloquence: Speech of Tecumseh,” in *The Daily National Intelligencer*, 13 November 1818; “Indian Eloquence,” in *The Boston Recorder*, 8 April 1820.

¹¹⁷ Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia*, 1782 (Baltimore: W. Pechin, 1800), 68. For two perceptive recent discussions of Logan’s speech, see Gordon Sayre, *The Indian Chief as Tragic Hero: Native Resistance and the Literatures of America, from Moctezuma to Tecumseh* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 162-202, and Carolyn Eastman, “The Indian Censures the White Man: ‘Indian Eloquence’ and American Reading Audiences in the Early Republic,” *William & Mary Quarterly*, Third Series, 65, no. 3 (2008): 535-563.

¹¹⁸ Eastman, “Indian Censures,” 537.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 538.

¹²⁰ Laura M. Stevens, *The Poor Indians: British Missionaries, Native Americans, and Colonial Sensibility* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 137. For more on the discourses of sympathy as related to Indian oratory, see Mark L. Kamrath, “American Indian Oration and Discourses of the Republic in Eighteenth-Century American Periodicals,” in Mark L. Kamrath and Sharon M. Harris, *Periodical Literature in Eighteenth-Century America* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2005), 168.

Moreover, the representation of the O'Fallon delegation was aimed at carefully recording the peculiarities of the Indian delegates in light of their inevitable disappearance. In an 1820 newspaper contribution titled "Indian Eloquence" the author and politician Caleb Atwater had suggested that "[i]t has often been asked, if it not high time, before it be forever too late, to collect into one body, specimens of Indian eloquence."¹²¹ The suggestion that there may be a time when it is too late underscores that this collective impulse to preserve and collect native oratory had an antiquarian rather than a political purpose. Given Atwater's impression that "[t]hese people are in small numbers, lingering on our borders, just about to disappear forever from human sight," the effort to collect native oratory was strongly linked to the idea that American Indians were a vanishing race.¹²² Similarly, the *Daily National Intelligencer* notes, "[c]onsidering the race to be thus transient, I have often wished that more pains were bestowed, and by more competent persons, in recording what is most remarkable and peculiar among them, now that those peculiarities are fresh and unchanged by their connection with us."¹²³ What was so special about the O'Fallon delegation, then, was that it offered the opportunity to see and then commemorate a transient race, as the delegates "possess many fine traits of character; and we never can forget that they were the native lords of that soil which they are gradually yielding to their invaders."¹²⁴

¹²¹ Caleb Atwater, "Indian Eloquence," *City of Washington Gazette* (Washington), Jun. 28, 1820. The *City of Washington Gazette* attributes the article to the *National Gazette*.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ "Indians at Washington."

¹²⁴ *Ibid.* The wider intellectual discourse in which images of native disappearance encoded narratives that served imperial or settler-colonial agendas is what Lora Romero called the "cult of the Vanishing American." Lora Romero, "Vanishing Americans: Gender, Empire, and New Historicism," *American Literature* 63.3 (Sep. 1991). See also Brian W. Dippie, *The Vanishing American: White Attitudes and U.S. Indian Policy* (Lawrence: Kansas University Press, 1982); Sayre, *Indian Chief as Tragic Hero*; Jean O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians out of Existence in New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010); Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, *This Violent Empire: The Birth of an American National Identity* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

Yet the Indian delegates were not standing idly by while they were being eulogized. It is precisely this impulse to mourn the inevitability of Native disappearance that the delegates' oratory refused. Sharitarish and Ongpatonga's oratory offers a narrative of changing conditions within their tribal nations that resists the impulse, in Johannes Fabian's terms, to deny Indian nations coevalness: to assign them either to the past or an eternal present.¹²⁵ Conversely, Sharitarish's oratory appropriates narratives of disappearance to offer a different notion of temporality by stressing Pawnee futurity. Offering a selection of gifts to President Monroe, Sharitarish addresses what he sees as the purpose of the gift-giving that ended the council: to facilitate diplomatic relations that continue into the future. Sharitarish argues that

the robes, leggins [*sic*], mockasins, bears-claws, &c, are of little value to you, but we wish you to have them deposited and preserved in some conspicuous part of your lodge, so that when we are gone and the sod turned over our bones, if our children should visit this place, as we do now, they may see and recognize with pleasure the deposits [*sic*] of their fathers, and reflect on the times that are past.¹²⁶

The Pawnee's phrase "as we do now" emphasizes his projection that later generations will be present in the same manner as he himself is—as delegates of his nation. And the gifts he leaves behind are not to be preserved as tokens for U.S. republicans to mourn over; they are left as a visible link between the Pawnees' past and future, projecting a future for meaningful U.S.-Indian diplomacy in which the Pawnees and other tribal nations receive full political recognition as sovereign nations.

Ongpatonga, also outlines a current situation that is sustainable for a foreseeable future, urging his listeners that there is no need to change the Omahas' mode of subsistence: "I believe that when the Great Spirit placed us upon this earth he consulted our happiness.

¹²⁵ Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*, 1983 (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 25-36.

¹²⁶ Morse, *Report*, 245.

We love our country—we love our customs and habits. I wish that you would permit us to enjoy them as long as I live.” He is aware, however, that historical conditions change, and while he refutes the idea of “civilization” at the hands of missionaries for the present, he suggests that matters of historical contingency may make missionary education seem welcome in the future:

When we become hungry, naked—when the game of our country becomes exhausted, and misery encompasses our families, then, and not till then, do I want those good people among us. Then they may lend us a helping hand—*then* show us the wealth of the earth—the advantages and sustenance to be derived from its culture.¹²⁷

Ongpatonga offers a historical narrative that offers a sensitive account of historical changes that proposes to consider the Omahas’ understanding of the past, present conditions, and a (volatile) future. The move from a past tense to a present and conjunctive tense reflects that the emphasis on Omaha autonomy ought not to suggest a “culture” that was stuck in time or forever resistant to the onset of modernity, and hence doomed to fade away in light of “civilization.” Instead, Ongpatonga implies, the Omaha live in historical time, and historical changes will happen that might persuade them to adopt the principles of missionary education and other forms of reform.

Sharitarish and Ongpatonga, then, were balancing between the need to address the ramifications of white Americans expansion and the risk of playing into declension narratives that validated the civilizing mission and ignored the immediate ecological and political realities their nations were facing. As Richard White argues, Americans’ westward encroachment did not become an immediate threat to the Pawnee until the 1830s.¹²⁸ Yet the delegates were not naïve about the changes in the Upper Missouri River valley. Since the

¹²⁷ Ibid., 246-247.

¹²⁸ White, *Roots of Dependency*, 154.

late 1700s the Upper Missouri nations had been keenly aware of the ripple effects of U.S. expansion to the west. As Delaware and Shawnee people had moved into Osage territory, and native people along the lower Missouri faced both the westward expansion of American settlers and that of the Tetons, Indian tribes that lived in village sites—like the Pawnee—bore the brunt of these population movements in the early nineteenth century.¹²⁹ And Ongpatonga, Sharitarish, and the other delegates were deeply informed about the displacement of Eastern Woodlands Indian populations, the increasing presence of white Americans in the region, changes in the buffalo population, and the ripple effects of these developments in the Missouri River valley.

Sharitarish's oratory thus promotes a place for the "local" within nation-to-nation diplomacy. He appraises positively the situational knowledge that O'Fallon and his Indian agency represented, while he—like Ongpatonga—criticizes the more programmatic ideologies of an emerging federal Indian policy that revolved around the civilizing mission. His rejection of the immediate need for missionary education balances between asserting his own understanding of the Pawnees' historical condition and the possibility of change:

It is too soon, my Great Father, to send those good men among us—we are not starving yet. We wish you to permit us to enjoy the chase until the game of our country is exhausted—until the wild animals become extinct. Let us exhaust our present resources before you make us toil and interrupt our happiness—let me continue to live as I have done, and after I have passed to the Good or Evil Spirit from off the wilderness of my present life.¹³⁰

"We are not starving yet"—again, early U.S. republicans might well have taken the seeming inevitability encoded in this phrase as communicating a narrative of native disappearance. Was Sharitarish convinced that the Pawnees would eventually starve to death, and vanish as

¹²⁹ Loretta Fowler, *The Columbia Guide to American Indians of the Great Plains* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 44, 53.

¹³⁰ Morse, *Report*, 245.

a nation? In that case, Sharitarish's oratory would seem to represent a people on the brink of social and physical disaster, and in need of the salvage work of the civilizing mission.

Sharitarish's oratory, however, is rooted in the rhetorical conventions of Fur Trade interactions. Among participants in the Fur Trade, variations on the word *starve* were used on a continuum of meanings that did not always denote the immediate threat of physical harm. Mary Black-Rogers has delineated the ways in which the verb *to starve* was typically used in the writings of traders, and suggests that it alternately served three different rhetorical functions: first, a literal usage that "entails messages about lack of adequate food, with gradations from hungry to dead"; second, a technical usage that encoded messages about the business of the fur trade referring to the scarcity of food; and, third, a manipulative usage that might either be a metaphorical employment of the literal or technical usage, or part of "certain ritual routines in the repertoire of a culture's speech events."¹³¹ The rhetorical move of professing vulnerability should not be read too easily as suggesting real conditions, but as part of a shared idiom for negotiating reciprocal relationships. Sharitarish's use of the word "starving," Ongpatonga's deployment of "hungry" and "naked," and the Pawnee Loup's evocation of immediate pity for white traders (as well all delegates' invocation of kinship relations), suggests that these are rhetorical strategies for insisting on the need for reciprocity, not a direct expression of Indian subjects in a state of imminent want or vulnerability.

So what newspaper articles were decoding as "Indian eloquence"—a way of speaking that was innate to a cultural Other—should be understood as the fairly ritualized, relational, and intercultural figures of speech that were central to Fur Trade interactions.

¹³¹ Mary Black-Rogers, "Varieties of 'Starving': Semantics and Survival in the Subarctic Fur Trade, 1750-1850," *Ethnohistory* 33, no. 4 (1986): 358.

Sharitarish in particular mobilizes these conventions to not just engage in specific trading practices, but to address, more widely, Monroe, Calhoun, O'Fallon, the tribal delegates, and missionaries—the interlocutors who constituted the loosely configured networks of what was called the Indian department. At this very time the operations of Indian Affairs were being reconfigured away from the management of Indian trade and towards the “philanthropic” enterprise of civilization and removal. And at this time various groups within U.S. civil society were rallying behind missionary work, education, and reform. Recognizing these discourses through the temporary project of the delegation, Sharitarish addresses the implications of how these political changes might bear on Pawnee autonomy.

As such, Sharitarish modifies the discourse of Native “wants” to claim a measure of rhetorical control over how problems like ecological changes and scarcity are to be addressed within U.S.-Indian diplomacy. As Scott Richard Lyons has suggested, Sharitarish’s speech is a refusal, representing “cultural resistance insofar as [Sharitarish] articulates the differences between Pawnees and whites and resists the latter.” As the civilization scheme is offered to him, the Pawnee speaker “understands how cultural changes are bound to produce new desires among his people . . . The thing is, he does not want them. Modernity is not his bag.”¹³² But the conditional mode of his oratory also suggests that for Sharitarish to claim a future for the Pawnees means recognizing historical contingency. Sharitarish qualifies his refusal of missionaries and agriculture by anticipating the likelihood of profound historical changes. While suggesting that during his own lifetime there may be no need for missionaries and agricultural education in Pawnee country, he acknowledges the possibility of future needs, depending on historical, political, and environmental changes west of the

¹³² Scott Richard Lyons, *X-Marks: Native Signatures of Assent* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 122-123.

Mississippi. Sharitarish holds out the possibility of a future need for missionaries and agricultural education—the key emissaries of the civilizing mission. His wish to make use of currently available resources is a call for an uninterrupted way of life, but the whites’ “good people” might be necessary if this mode of subsistence becomes precarious.

By representing their arguments to O’Fallon, Calhoun, and Monroe, Sharitarish and Ongpatonga introduce into these diplomatic interactions a notion of a Pawnee and Omaha futurity that is imagined in historical terms, and imagines a range of possibilities—neither a stable continuation of the present, nor an anticipation of McKenney’s paradigmatic prediction that “[y]ou will be gone too.” Sharitarish and Ongpatonga do not merely dismiss the idea of missionaries and agricultural education: they also open the door to future negotiations about them, depending on historical and environmental changes. Sharitarish and Ongpatonga both project a possible adoption by the Pawnees and Omahas of missionary education, but only in a situation in which this would happen in acknowledgment of their own terms, and their own understanding of historical, ecological, and economic pressures. They refuse the civilizing scheme only to the extent that they are perceived to have no agency in debating such policy proposals as education and agriculture; and they sign off on it to the extent that it represents as a future possibility to be tapped into at a moment of their own choosing. So as U.S. republicans were scrutinizing or eulogizing the Native delegates, Sharitarish and Ongpatonga asserted rhetorical control over their own history and their own projections for the future.

1.5 Conclusion

In this extended historical and rhetorical analysis, I have used the O'Fallon delegation as an example of the Native American publication project. The O'Fallon delegation organized institutionally embedded and collaborative acts of writing and speaking in order to inflect networks of Native and non-native participants. Through this approach I have tried to capture the relationship between the collaborative and circumscribed nature of Native publishing in the early nineteenth century, as well as its agentic dimensions and political motivations. In the first place, the O'Fallon registers what I have called the institutional dimensions of Native publication, as it brought into dialogue federal Indian policy and the diplomatic traditions of Upper Missouri tribal nations. The multiple publication technologies through which this project generated notice, however, meant that its collaborative dimensions were marked by the cultural-political translation of print media and associational contexts within U.S. civil society. Yet in spite of these circumscribed conditions of publication, the project recorded the attempts of Native tribal leaders to use writing and oratory as a tool to achieve a measure of discursive and political changes within U.S.-Indian relations.

For studies of nineteenth-century Native American literature, my aim in situating the O'Fallon delegation within this framework is twofold. First, the critical attention to publication projects as multi-discursive and multi-party enterprises, highlights U.S.-Indian dialogues that record Native people's responses to, and critiques of, various manifestation of U.S. settler colonialism. Rather than approaching Native writing as a reflection of tribal cultures, identities, or fixed positions within a colonial structure, the analytical emphasis on such dialogic exchanges help to re-center the locally-specific rhetorical strategies through

which Native writers and speakers addressed U.S.-Indian relations. Second, within this paradigm texts may become recuperable that could otherwise be dismissed as registering only the political projections of white translators, collaborators, or policymakers. The policy proposals of the Indian department and, more widely, American ideologies of Indianness were not merely constraints on Native self-expression: they were also discursive contexts that prompted Native people's alternative rhetorical and political projects.

Indeed, the collaborative speech acts of the O'Fallon delegation formed a project of intervention in the discourses and diplomatic networks that made up the Indian department. The oratory of the delegates constituted a situational act of representation that addressed, reflected on, and critiqued the efficacy of the negotiations between tribal leaders, Indian agents, and representatives of religious organizations. Taking stock of the present state of Indian country as well as U.S.-Indian affairs, the delegates invested in a more effective execution of diplomatic relations that were being reorganized, and offered their own vision for a future of U.S.-Indian diplomacy. Navigating networks within the U.S. government, civil society, and religious organizations, the delegates attested to the need for Native people's representation as serious political actors within these networks. Insisting on the ongoing relevance of native people in speaking back to ideologies of civilization, the delegates articulated an indigenous future in which U.S.-Indian diplomacy retains a central place, and in which tribal nations are recognized as ongoing political actors.

Chapter Two

Projects of Intervention

Black Hawk, Keokuk, and Removal Policy in Sauk Writing and Oratory

1.1 Introduction

In 1832, a year after waging a failed military campaign against settler militias, the Sauk warrior Black Hawk published an autobiography in which he presents a tribal history of the war that came to bear his name. Black Hawk's *Life of Mâ-ka-tai-me-she-kià-kiàk* is the apologia of a military leader whose dissident and uncompromising position on U.S. land theft led him to a failed military campaign. As the most widely read—and most frequently adapted—Sauk text from the nineteenth-century, the *Life* came to embody the Sauk as a nation-people, describing a cultural landscape that stood in sharp contrast to U.S. settler society. The text ranges from personal narrative and ethnological description to the account of the Black Hawk War and the events leading up to it. According to Arnold Krupat, Black Hawk's *Life* taps into traditional Sauk cultural repertoires to move beyond loss and defeat. While laying bare the struggles over native land title, diplomacy, and trade in the Great Lakes region, the *Life*, Krupat argues, can also be read as “the story of what it means to be a Sauk, a national story not strictly a personal one, a ‘communitist’ not an individualist

story.”¹ So while the text secured for its author a measure of authority that his loss in the Black Hawk War had compromised, this authority also became a synecdochic representation of Sauk collectivity.

If the *Life* defined Black Hawk as the Sauks’ militant adversary opponent of U.S. encroachment, it also represented the opposing tribal leader Keokuk as the Sauks’ accommodationist. At the Treaty of 1832 that followed the Black Hawk War, General Winfield Scott had given to Keokuk the position of the U.S. government liaison of the Confederated Band of the Sauks and Meskwakis.² Through this appointment Keokuk was rewarded for seeing more potential in accommodation with the settler population that was flooding into the Mississippi valley, and for doubting the efficacy of trying to stave off land cessions and removal through military means. By the time the Sauks’ conflict with white settlers came to a head in the late 1820s, Keokuk’s opposition to military action and his influence among the Sauks had “cut deeply into the number of Black Hawk’s followers.”³ From this perspective Black Hawk’s account in his autobiography of the lost campaign against the U.S. can be read also as a narrative of the loss of cultural coherence due to the influence of more accommodationist tribal leaders of the Sauk nation.

In this chapter I decenter Black Hawk’s *Life* as a text that by itself represents the history and culture of the Sauk as a nation-people during the period of Sauk removal. I

¹ Arnold Krupat, “Patterson’s *Life*; Black Hawk’s Story; Native American Elegy,” *American Literary History* 22, no. 3 (2010): 543.

² The Sauk and Meskwaki tribes were culturally related and allied, albeit separate nations. Although the Meskwakis—erroneously called “Foxes” by French traders but often referred to by that name—had its own government, the Bureau of Indian Affairs dealt with the Sauk and Meskwaki nations in concert, sometimes even eliding the cultural and political separation between the two. In order to minimize the potential for erroneously lumping the two nations together, this chapter focuses mostly on the representation of Sauk nationhood, although at certain points political relations and controversies between the Sauks and Meskwakis come to the fore.

³ Michael D. Green, “The Sac-Fox Annuity Crisis of 1840 in Iowa Territory,” *Arizona and the West* 16, no. 2 (Summer, 1974): 142.

approach the book as but one instance in a series of collaborative Sauk publication projects that included councils, treaties, letters, and petitions, including those of Keokuk. The history of the Sauk Nation in the period from the mid-1820s to their removal to Indian Territory in 1847, offers a series of publication projects that were aimed alternatively at protesting encroachment onto tribal lands, promoting national unity, and managing the bureaucratic relations with the Office of Indian Affairs.

First, I study the representation of the Sauk leader Black Hawk in his *Life of Ma-ka-tai-me-she-kia-kiak*. As it was translated by a U.S. government interpreter and a clerk in an American trading company on Rock Island, the *Life* can be seen as a publication project through which Black Hawk critiques the overlapping spheres of Indian agents and officials, American traders, and tribal leaders. In particular, Black Hawk addresses the failure of these government agencies to prevent the escalation of the political conflict at the heart of the Black Hawk War. This communicative breakdown is not the result of the mistranslations of cross-cultural encounter, but as the refusal of existing U.S. organizational structures to halt settler encroachment in Sauk country. In doing so, I argue that Black Hawk uses the language and technologies of U.S.-Indian negotiation in order to correct his own discursive circulation as an illegitimate representative of the Sauk Nation.

Second, I examine the councils, oratory, and petitions of the Sauk and Meskwaki civil chief Keokuk, to examine how he similarly intervened in the Indian Office networks at Rock Island. I argue that Keokuk's oratory with Indian Office commissioners represents not merely—as critics have argued—his co-opting by U.S. bureaucratic discourse. Rather, the oral and manuscript publications of Keokuk register a sustained project of trying to assert a political voice of the Sauk Nation within these networks. Keokuk's "smooth tongue" has

long been interpreted as indicating his opportunistic catering to U.S. Indian agents, traders, his own followers, and his own pocketbook. While I do not mean to offer an apology for Keokuk, I suggest that his rhetorical moves also reveal the means by which tribal leaders sought to inflect existing communication networks in order to try to mitigate the consequences of land encroachments and removal.

Finally, I study writings and oratory by Keokuk, the Sauk leader Hardfish, and the Iowa territorial governor Robert Lucas around a prolonged debate, in the late 1830s and early 1840s, over Sauk and Meskwaki annuity payments. I argue that this controversy within the Sauk and Meskwaki Nations shows how after the Panic of 1837, tribal leaders differently imagined the possibility of organizing their nations politically and economically in the face of repeated removals. In their respective publication projects, Keokuk and Hardfish collaborated with U.S. officials in an attempt to intervene in tribal, federal, and territorial networks. At the same time, through these collaborations the annuity debate was decoded by U.S. territorial officials as an argument for Indian removal and the consolidation of Iowa as a settler state.

By decentering Black Hawk's *Life* and reading it alongside the publication projects of his contemporaries, I mean to show how Sauk writers' discursive engagement with U.S. settler colonialism extended well beyond the events of the Black Hawk War. The critical emphasis on Black Hawk's *Life* has closely identified the literary representation of the Sauk Nation and its removal with only Black Hawk's account of U.S.-Sauk military conflict. Moreover, interpretations that have only accessed Keokuk through Black Hawk's account of him, have too eagerly constructed a binary between the two, in the process eliding the range of economic, political and ecological pressures of settler encroachment that led to removal.

Such readings have in effect perpetuated limited ideas of Native “resistance.” After all, Alvin Josephy’s influential sketch of the two leaders explains the history of Sauk removal in a chapter named “The Rivalry of Black Hawk and Keokuk.”⁴ In reading Black Hawk’s *Life* alongside a range of oral and manuscript publications, we may see the literary record of the Sauk Nation as registering wider critiques of the governmental pressures and failures that elaborated removal and U.S. settler colonialism. As Black Hawk, Keokuk, and Hardfish navigated settler institutions to critique and modify their discourses and operations, they contributed to the work of claiming a social and physical space for the Sauk Nation in a radically changing cultural landscape.

1.2 Publication as Policy Critique in Black Hawk’s *Life of Mâ-ka-tai-me-she-kià-kiàk*

In the *Life of Mâ-ka-tai-me-she-kià-kiàk, or Black Hawk* (1833) the warrior Black Hawk presents a corrective reading of the history of U.S.-Sauk treaty-making that led to the Black Hawk War. It narrates how in 1804, U.S. General William Henry Harrison had made a dubious agreement with a number of Sauk delegates led by Quàshquàmè, the principal signer of the Sauks. Asked to come to St. Louis for the U.S. to deliver a Sauk murder suspect, the delegation was unprepared for the negotiations about land cessions. Black Hawk narrates how Quàshquàmè and the other delegates were brought to St. Louis on false pretenses and “had been drunk the greater part of the time while at St. Louis.”⁵ The resulting treaty ceded to the U.S. major territories in present-day Illinois, Missouri, and Wisconsin,

⁴ Alvin Josephy, Jr., *The Patriot Chiefs: A Chronicle of Native Resistance*, 1958 (New York: Penguin, 1976), 209-254.

⁵ Black Hawk, *Life of Black Hawk, or Mâ-ka-tai-me-she-kià-kiàk*, 1833 (New York: Penguin, 2008), 18.

and profoundly shaped U.S.-Sauk interactions since then.⁶ In the decades that followed, Black Hawk and his faction looked to England for protection from the United States, and continuously challenged this fraudulent land seizure. As white homesteaders flooded into the region, this “British Band’s” resistance to these developments spurred reactions from U.S. military forces and Illinois militias. In 1832 this conflict came to a head in what became known as the Black Hawk War, which lasted about fifteen weeks and took several hundred American Indian lives.⁷

Following the war, a new treaty was made that would again shape the history of the Sauk Nation and the closely allied Meskwaki Nation for years to come. The 1832 treaty was signed by the Sauk chiefs Keokuk and Pashepaho, the Meskwaki chiefs Wapello and Powsheek, and twenty-nine other Sauk and Meskwaki leaders. Made up in the presence of Generals Winfield Scott and John Reynolds, the treaty stipulated a cession of all Sauk lands East of the Mississippi, including the principal village of Saukenuk, near Rock Island, Illinois. A four hundred square-mile tract of land on both sides of the Iowa River was to be kept as a reservation⁸ The Treaty proclaimed the Sauks’ lands to be opened for settlement beginning June 1833.

The publication of Black Hawk’s *Life* reflects on and extends the history of the war. Along with four other Sauk and Meskwaki leaders, Black Hawk was taken to Washington after the war’s conclusion. The War Department held them in Virginia for five weeks, and

⁶ Roger L. Nichols, *Black Hawk and the Warrior’s Path* (Arlington Heights: Harlan Davidson, 1992), 27-28; J. Gerald Kennedy, “Introduction,” in Black Hawk, *Life*, ix.

⁷ Although official reports spoke of 150 American Indian casualties, it is likely that twice that number died at the Battle of Bad Axe on August 2, 1832 alone. For a complete account of the Black Hawk War, see Nichols, *Black Hawk and the Warrior Path*, and Kerry A. Trask, *Black Hawk: The Battle for the Heart of America* (New York: Holt, 2006).

⁸ Treaty with the Sauks and Foxes, 1832, in *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties*, Vol. II, ed. Charles J. Kappler (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904), 349.

took them on a widely publicized tour of Eastern cities.⁹ The captivity tour was intended to “humiliate the Indians by placing them on display . . . to convince them of the uselessness of warring with a far more numerous and powerful people, and to demonstrate to the American public Andrew Jackson’s control over his Indian policy.”¹⁰ The captivity tour was thus a corollary of U.S. imperialism in its staging—through the bodies of the five captives—of a pacified frontier. Black Hawk became a celebrity through public spectacles (staged by the War Department and the Office of Indian Affairs), his meeting of prominent figures in governmental circles and civil society, and through the numerous articles published in a host of local newspapers—a flurry of publicity for which one newspaper editor coined the phrase “Blackhawkiana.”¹¹ Upon returning to the Sauk Nation in the summer of 1833 after his imprisonment at Fort Monroe, Black Hawk entrusted his life story to Antoine LeClaire, a French-Potawatomi government translator at the Rock Island Indian Agency. It was edited and published by the clerk and newspaper editor John Barton Patterson in 1833.

The *Life* makes visible the collaborative and organizational dimensions of its publication, constructing Black Hawk as the originator of a mediated and translated oral performance. A statement by the government translator LeClaire, following the title page of the original 1833 publication, confirms Black Hawk as the author of the text—the originator of discourse:

⁹ Besides Black Hawk, the group of prisoners included Wabokieshiek (“The Prophet), a Sauk-Winnebago; Neapope (“The Broth”), a principal Sauk Chief; Pamaho (“Fast-Swimming Fish”), one of Wabokieshiek’s adopted sons; and Nasheaskuk (“The Whirling Thunder”), Black Hawk’s eldest son. For a discussion of the group of prisoners, their confinement, and their tour of the East Coast, see Donald Jackson, “Introduction,” *Black Hawk: An Autobiography*, 1833 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1955), 1-15; and Tena L. Helton, “What the White ‘Squaws’ Want from Black Hawk: Gendering the Fan-Celebrity Relationship,” *The American Indian Quarterly* 34, no. 4 (Fall 2010): 498-520.

¹⁰ Kennedy, “Introduction,” xiv.

¹¹ These newspaper articles on “Blackhawkiana” included a range of writings, varying from those on Black Hawk’s popularity among white American women to satirical pieces that appropriated Black Hawk for humorous commentary on American politics. For a recent article that explores the publicity around Black Hawk in terms of its gender dimensions, see Helton, “What the White ‘Squaws’ Want,” 498-520.

Black Hawk, did call upon me, on his return to his people in August last, and express a great desire to have a History of his Life written and published, in order, (as he said) ‘that that people of the United States, (among whom he had been travelling, and by whom he had been treated with great respect, friendship and hospitality,) might know the *causes* that had impelled him to act as he had done, and the *principles* by which he was governed.’¹²

At the same time, it draws attention to the way the publication of Black Hawk’s text is mediated by the work of U.S. government officials. LeClaire dates his preface “INDIAN AGENCY, Rock-Island, *October* 16, 1833,” and signs it “ANTOINE LeCLAIR, *U.S. Interpreter for the Sacs and Foxes.*” Furthermore, Black Hawk’s dedication of the text is to General Henry Atkinson, who had been not only the general commander of the U.S. troops that fought in the Black Hawk war, but also the immediate commander of the massacre at the Battle of Bad Axe on August 2, 1832. By presenting the dedication both in English and in the Sauk language, Patterson and LeClaire emphasize the colonial conditions of the text’s history, and the bureaucratic context of its production and translation.

In doing so, the *Life* foregrounds not Black Hawk’s original “voice,” but rather the technologies of U.S.-Indian negotiation at the Rock Island Indian Agency. Recent scholarship on Black Hawk’s *Life* has recognized the complexities of the texts’ mediation, and avoided the old binaries of the oral, “authentic” input of Black Hawk and the written, “inauthentic” contribution of LeClaire and Patterson. Arnold Krupat’s early work on the text influentially termed it a “bicultural composite composition,” a form of writing produced by Native people in collaboration with non-native translators and editors, in which the Native speaker is constructed as originator of the text.¹³ Following Krupat, scholarship on the *Life*

¹² Black Hawk, *Life*.

¹³ Arnold Krupat, *For Those Who Come After: A Study of Native American Autobiography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 31. In a more recent analysis, Krupat notes that “Black Hawk was not, of course, a *writer*, but he may nonetheless be placed among the earliest Native American *authors*.” Krupat, *That the People Might Live: Loss and Renewal in Native American Elegy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), 109.

has typically approached the text as an intercultural collaboration that activates a range of voices, and represents a “middle ground” sphere of Indian-U.S. negotiations and cultural interaction.¹⁴

But whom did this intercultural collaboration address? There has been a tendency in the scholarship on Black Hawk’s *Life* to suggest that it imagines a cross-cultural readership of which native people—or more specifically, Sauk readers—are a central part. Neil Schmitz suggests that Black Hawk addresses not just “the people of the United States,” but appeals to a disinterested justice that transcends nations: “Black Hawk seems not to address us, Patterson’s Jacksonian public, but some transcultural justice, some future, multiracial United Nations or sovereign Algonquian Nation.”¹⁵ Schmitz’s imagining of a multiracial and pan-indigenous reading public works alongside Arnold Krupat’s recent argument that Black Hawk’s narrative hails a bifurcated public of white and Sauk readers. Black Hawk’s *Life*, Krupat writes,

did indeed wish to explain to the whites his responses to their relentless invasions, though central to a Sauk history are not Indian-white but Indian-Indian relations. Black Hawk’s *Sauk* history tells the story of what it means to be a Sauk, the ongoing narrative of a nation-people, a community. This story, it is time to recognize, is not only addressed to the whites but in an important measure to the Sauks as well.¹⁶

¹⁴ For instance, Michelle Raheja reads Black Hawk as a textual character that represents “an elusive subject in between the [supposedly] real bodies of the writing-speaking subjects” of Black Hawk, Patterson, and LeClaire. And Joshua David Bellin explicitly challenges notions of authorial authenticity, arguing that the *Life* cannot be read as “a text whose subject can be divorced from the contact situation.” As an intercultural text in which no voice is any more authentic than another, the *Life* generates a discourse on the conditions of its own production that “echoes the conditions of Indian-white encounter.” And Mark Rifkin argues that the mediated quality of the narrative is not so much a problem of interpretation as a “political intervention”: as the text asserts a difference between U.S. and native frameworks of representative strategies, it marks the conflict between the two. See Michelle Raheja, “I leave it with the people of the United States to say”: Autobiographical Disruption in the Personal Narratives of Black Hawk and Ely S. Parker,” *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 30, no. 1 (2006): 92; Joshua David Bellin, “How Smooth Their Language: Authenticity and Interculturalism in the *Life of Black Hawk*,” *Prospects* 25 (October 2000): 485-511; Mark Rifkin, *Manifesting America: The Imperial Construction of U.S. National Space* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 77-78.

¹⁵ Neil Schmitz, *White Robe’s Dilemma: Tribal History in American Literature* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001), 72.

¹⁶ See Krupat, “Patterson’s *Life*,” 531.

Both Schmitz and Krupat offers ways of reading Black Hawk's *Life* from a Sauk-nationalist perspectives, meaningfully opening up the text as a national narrative that communicates not only loss but continuity as well. And the book's overwhelming success on the 1830s print market and after, suggests that the imagining of an inclusive reading public was not only the textual Black Hawk's fantasy but a commercial reality as well.

If we think about the "publication" of Black Hawk's *Life* as a social act, however, then the fact of Black Hawk's narrating his story to Patterson and LeClaire becomes more significant than as mere "context" to Black Hawk's textual critique. After all, as Timothy Sweet reminds us, the "immediate audience for Black Hawk's narrative is the United States government as represented in the person of the interpreter LeClaire and the physical space of the Rock Island Agency."¹⁷ John Barton Patterson (1806-1890) was originally from Virginia, but had moved to Rock Island, Illinois in March 1832, where he lived with the family of George Davenport, then a trader for the American Fur Company.¹⁸ At Fort Armstrong Patterson met Addison Philleo, the editor of the Democratic newspaper *The Galenian*, who asked Patterson to temporarily take over the position of editor while he was fighting in the war. Patterson was also recruited to join the Twenty-seventh Regiment of the Illinois Volunteers, working as the regimental printer during the war. After the war Patterson returned to Rock Island in October 1832 and became a clerk in George Davenport's trading establishment on Rock Island—right around the time Black Hawk and Antoine LeClaire began the publication of the *Life*.¹⁹ LeClaire, in turn, was employed as interpreter by the Indian Office as well as by Davenport and the American Fur Company. He was born in St.

¹⁷ Sweet, "Masculinity," 478.

¹⁸ John Lee Allaman, "The Patterson Family of Oquawka," *Western Illinois Regional Studies* 11 (Spring 1988): 57. Allaman notes that Patterson was related to the Davenport family, although it is not clear what the family connection was.

¹⁹ Allaman, "Patterson Family," 57.

Joseph in present-day Michigan, as the son of a French-Canadian trader and blacksmith and a Potawatomi mother. William Clark sponsored LeClaire's education, and in 1818 LeClaire first came to Rock Island to do translation work for Davenport and the AFC. By 1827 LeClaire had set up at Rock Island as trader, working for the AFC, the Chouteau Company, and on his own account. In addition to this, he was appointed as government interpreter to the Sauks and Meskwakis at the Rock Island agency.²⁰ LeClaire was not only the interpreter of the 1832 treaty, but he was also granted a portion of the Sauks' lands by its stipulations.²¹

The collaboration between LeClaire and Patterson suggests that spaces like the Rock Island Indian Agency did not operate according to U.S. governmental policies alone. As both LeClaire and Patterson were part of Davenport's trading house, the editorial/translation work of Patterson and LeClaire reflects the imbrication of trading companies and the Indian Office. George Davenport had arrived there in 1816 when the U.S. military established Fort Armstrong at the confluence of the Mississippi and Rock River, five miles north of the Sauk main village of Saukenuk. In 1818 Davenport started an independent business for the Indian trade, before he partnered with Russell Farnham and the two were bought out and employed by the American Fur Company. Davenport had built both his house and business on Rock Island, and even when the U.S. government declared the island to be used for military purposes only, an act of Congress allowed Davenport to retain his own estate while other squatters were removed from the island. Furthermore, the government recognized

²⁰ Charles Snyder, "Antoine LeClaire, the First Proprietor of Davenport," *Annals of Iowa* 23, no. 2 (1941): 85-93.

²¹ Article VI of the 1832 treaty stipulates: "At the special request of the said confederated tribes, the United States agree to grant, by patent, in fee simple, to Antoine LeClaire, Interpreter, a part Indian, one section of land opposite Rock Island, within the country herein ceded by the Sacs and Foxes." "Treaty with the Sauk and Foxes," 350.

Davenport's residence as the Rock Island post office in 1825.²² The close connection between the work of the Indian Office and trading companies is further reflected in the Treaty of 1832: J.B. Patterson's employers, Davenport and Russel Farnham, were beneficiaries of the Sauks' tribal debts that were paid off by the United States according to Article V of the treaty.²³

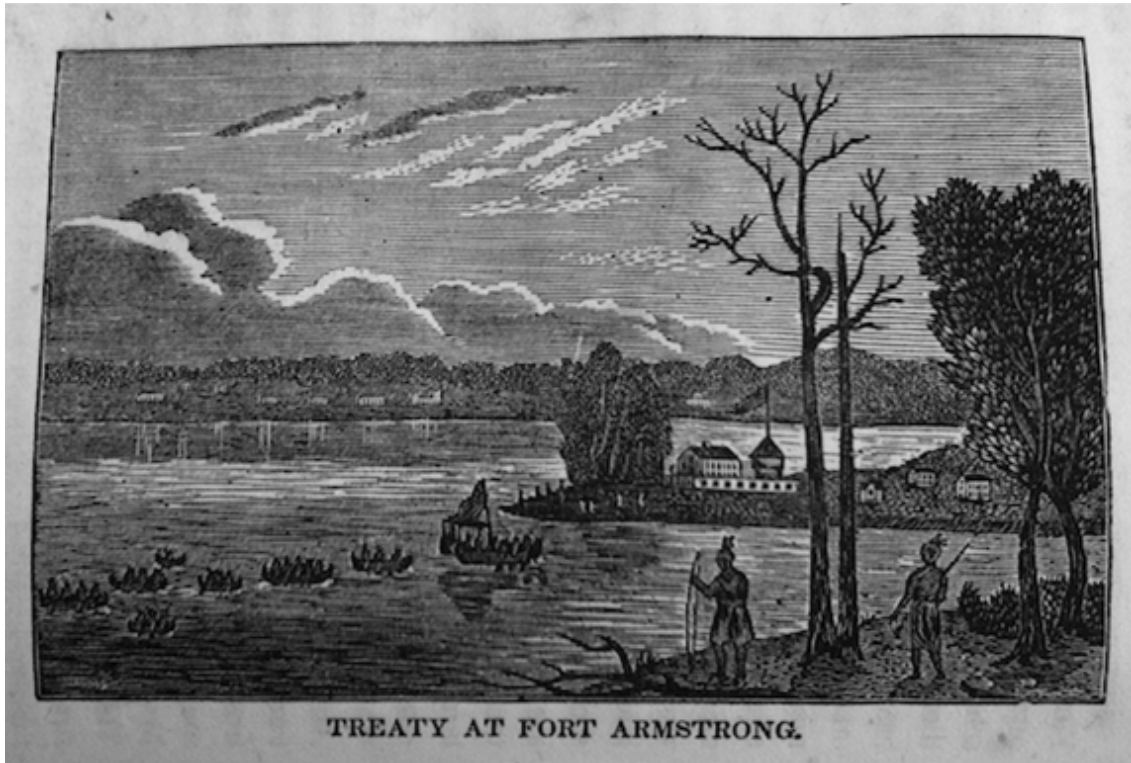


Figure 8: "Treaty at Fort Armstrong." Artist's impression of Fort Armstrong on Rock Island. Rock Island is located on an isthmus on the east of where the Rock River and the Mississippi converge. Besides a U.S. military arsenal, the island was home to the Indian Agency to the Sauk and Meskwaki

²² Davenport's house was the post office even though he himself was not sworn in as postmaster. There was no official postmaster until 1834, when John Conway took up the position as first postmaster at Rock Island. H.P. Simonson, "History of the Rock Island Post Office," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 9, no. 3 (1916): 292-293. Davenport continued his activities as trader in the region until the mid-1830s, when he turned to land speculations and became Indian Agent to the Sauks and Meskwakies in 1837.

²³ Article V of the 1832 treaty stipulates: "The United States, at the earnest request of the said confederated tribes, further agree to pay to Farnham and Davenport, Indian traders at Rock Island, the sum of forty thousand dollars without interest, which sum will be in full satisfaction of the claims of the said traders against the said tribes, and by the latter was, on the tenth day of July, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-one, acknowledged to be justly due, for articles of necessity, furnished in the course of the seven preceding years, in an instrument of writing of said date, duly signed by the Chiefs and Headman of the said tribes, and certified by the late Feliz St. Vrain, United States' agent, and Antoine LeClaire, United States' interpreter, both for the said tribes." "Treaty with the Sauk and Foxes," 350.

tribes as well as George Davenport's office of the American Fur Company. Saukenuk, the principal village of the Sauks before removal in 1832, was located south of Rock Island, on the other side of Rock River. In Benjamin Drake, *The Life and Adventures of Black Hawk* (Cincinnati: George Conclin, 1837). William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.

The text of Black Hawk's as-told-to narrative is therefore concerned to a large extent with speaking back to the network of traders, Indian agents, and federal representatives at Rock Island. The *Life* critiques the imbrication of the Indian Office and the trading companies by directly implicating LeClaire and George Davenport in the mismanagement of Indian affairs, and the deterioration of the conflict between Black Hawk's band and white settlers. In Black Hawk's narrative, when in 1830 Sauk women have begun to plant corn but white settlers destroy the crops, the *Life* reaches a turning point wherein the narrative now centers on a military standoff between Black Hawk's band and the U.S. military. Leading up to this point, however, Black Hawk suggests that it is the impossibility of dialogue within the structures of Rock Island and St. Louis that leads to the deterioration of the conflict. The *Life* implicates the network of LeClaire, Davenport, and the Indian agent Thomas Forsyth in the problem of Black Hawk lacking political recognition within the structures of the Indian Office. The *Life* presents Black Hawk as holding the door open for negotiations, if only he will be taken seriously as a partner in diplomatic exchange. But the various representatives of the Indian Office offer only one option:

I visited Rock Island. The agent again ordered me to quit my village. He said, that if we did not, troops would be sent to drive us off. He reasoned with me, and told me, it would be better for us to be with the rest of our people, so that we might avoid difficulty, and live in peace. The *interpreter* joined him, and gave me so many good reasons, that I almost wished I had not undertaken the difficult task that I had pledged myself to my brave band to perform. In this mood, I called upon the *trader*, who is fond of talking, and had long been my friend, but now amongst those advising me to give up my village.²⁴

²⁴ Black Hawk, *Life*, 99.

Willing to listen to his “friend” Davenport, Black Hawk is portrayed as being far less intransigent than LeClaire, Davenport, and Forsyth, all of whom rigidly adhere to the mandate of Sauk removal. Indeed as Neil Schmitz puts it, the trader, agent, and interpreter are “never named [and] are frequently discussed in the text, spoken of almost as a single identity, because what they say to the Sauks is always the same.”²⁵ The insistent rhetoric about Sauk removal makes even Black Hawk waver in his opposition:

[Davenport] inquired, if some terms could not be made, that would be honorable to me, and satisfactory to my braves, for us to remove to the west side of the Mississippi? I replied, that if our Great Father would do us justice, and would make the proposition, I could then give up honorably. He asked me ‘if the great chief at St. Louis [William Clark] would give us six thousand dollars, to purchase provisions and other articles, if I would give up peaceably, and remove to the west side of the Mississippi? After thinking some time, I agreed, that I could honorably give up . . . I did not much like what had been done myself, and tried to banish it from my mind.’²⁶

In this passage, the repetition in Davenport’s questions communicates the intransigence of the institutionalized rhetoric of removal—insistent enough to persuade Black Hawk to act against his own interests.

From this perspective, Black Hawk’s *Life* levels the critique that the Black Hawk War was not inevitable, but that the conflict deteriorated because of an institutional structure wherein the shared rhetoric of a range of agencies (trader, Indian agent, interpreter, and superintendent) does not offer any space for U.S.-Indian dialogue. Indeed, when news from St. Louis arrives, Black Hawk is told that William Clark “would give us *nothing!*—and said if we did not remove immediately, we should be *drove off!*” Black Hawk’s rhetoric here suggests both frustration and relief:

I was not much displeased with the answer brought by the war chief, because I would rather have laid my bones with my forefathers, than remove for any considerations. Yet if a friendly offer had been made, as I expected, I would for the

²⁵ Schmitz, *White Robe’s Dilemma*, 71.

²⁶ Black Hawk, *Life*, 100.

sake of my women and children, have removed peaceably. I now resolved to remain in my village, and make no resistance, if the military came, but submit to my fate! I impressed the importance of this course on all my band, and directed them, in case the military came, not to raise an arm against them.²⁷

As the news from St. Louis confirms for Black Hawk the Indian Office's entrenched position, Black Hawk continues by narrating how even the replacing of Indian agent Thomas Forsyth does not bring about any changes in its institutional rhetoric. In the spring of 1830, Forsyth was dismissed from his office after voicing repeated criticisms of William Clark, and was replaced by the much younger Felix St. Vrain.²⁸ Black Hawk's observations on St. Vrain's replacement suggests the impossibility of discursive and policy changes in the administration of Indian Affairs at Rock Island:

About this time, our agent was put out of office . . . I then thought, if it was for wanting to make us leave our village, it was right—because I was tired of hearing him talk about it. The interpreter, who had been equally as bad in trying to persuade us to leave our village, was retained in office—and the young man who took the place of our agent, told the same old story over, about removing us. I was then satisfied, that this could not have been the cause.²⁹

In other words, the *Life* here mounts the criticism that if the Indian Office's major offense is the extinguishing of the Sauks' title to their land, another is its refusal to take seriously the Black Hawk band's ability and willingness to discuss diplomatic options. Although for Black Hawk the land—in particular the women's cornfields and the village of Saukenuk—is always the primary concern, this is never detached from the other part of the equation: the

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 100-101.

²⁸ Kerry Trask, *Black Hawk: The Battle for the Heart of America* (New York: Holt, 2007), 89. Trask suggests that St. Vrain fell sharply in line with Clark, and, like Forsyth before him, advocated strong government intervention in the conflict with Black Hawk. Also, his appointment has a hint of nepotism to it. Before his appointment, St. Vrain operated a sawmill in Kaskaskia. As Trask notes, “[a]lthough St. Vrain had almost no experience in dealing with Indians, he was a member of a politically important St. Louis French family and a good friend of Senator Elias Kent Kane. Kane, in turn, was a close acquaintance of William Clark's, and it was Kane who recommended St. Vrain to Clark for the position.” Trask, *Black Hawk*, 89.

²⁹ Black Hawk, *Life*, 101.

need to recognize native sovereignty by taking native leaders seriously as partners in political dialogue.

This issue is raised, too, in the *Life*'s description of the Sauks' council with the U.S. General Edmund Gaines. When a council is convened at Rock Island between Gaines and the Sauk leaders Wapello and Keokuk, Black Hawk and his band are summoned to come to the council house. Gaines urges the Sauks to remove peacefully "from the lands you have long since ceded to the United States." In order to avoid military conflict, and Gaines urges them to "leave the country you are occupying." In the following exchange Black Hawk insists on the political autonomy of the Black Hawk band—one that is not recognized by Gaines:

I replied: 'That we had never sold our country. *We* never received any annuities from our American Father! And *we* are determined to hold on to our village!'

The war chief [Gaines], apparently angry, rose and said:—'Who is *Black Hawk*? Who is *Black Hawk*?'

I responded:

'I am a *Sac*! *my forefather was a Sac*! and all the nations call me a *SAC*!'³⁰

Black Hawk's forceful statement to Gaines has been much analyzed. As Mark Rifkin notes, by taking up Gaines's inclusive "you" as a more exclusive "we" of Sauks that never assented to the sale of Sauks lands, Black Hawk's statement expresses a notion of Sauk authority based in "traditional Sauk notions of identity and territoriality."³¹ In doing so, Black Hawk performs what Arnold Krupat has suggested is key in this passage: a "synecdochic" mode of self-identification in which the speaker's identity is important foremost in its representation of a larger collectivity.³²

³⁰ Ibid., 104.

³¹ Rifkin, *Manifesting America*, 101.

³² Arnold Krupat, "Patterson's *Life*; Black Hawk's Story; Native American Elegy," *American Literary History* 22, no. 3 (2010): 527.

But Black Hawk's riposte is not only a statement of identity: it is also a statement of positionality within the overlapping networks of government agents and traders. It points out how Gaines's rhetorical question—"Who is *Black Hawk*?"—reveals a lack of institutional knowledge about the pressing debate around the Sauks' political representation within Indian Office networks. As Gaines just made his way down Rock River to attend the council at Rock Island, he quickly dismisses the political relevance of Black Hawk, suggesting his inability to represent the Sauk Nation since he was not recognized by U.S. officials as civil chief. Black Hawk's statement of identity, which hinges on Krupat's synecdochic mode of representing Sauk collectivity, discloses the failure of this governmental network to give recognition to the political faction that Black Hawk represents.

The lack of recognition of Black Hawk as a political subject is then the flipside of the other main thrust of the *Life*'s critiques. In the narrative Black Hawk critiques how Sauk removal operates in tandem with the established authority of Keokuk within Indian Office networks. Keokuk had been appointed as war chief by a Sauk tribal council in 1813, engaged in frequent treaty councils with Thomas Forsyth and William Clark (as early as 1816), and had been on a diplomatic trip to Washington in 1824.³³ Recognized by U.S. officials as the leader of the majority of the Sauks who had remained neutral during the Black Hawk War, Keokuk was the first Sauk signer of the 1832 treaty. In Black Hawk's

³³ At the heart of the Black Hawk and Keokuk rivalry lay Black Hawk's contestation of Keokuk's status as civil chief. Keokuk was appointed as war chief in 1814 in light of an upcoming battle with U.S. forces. The battle never took place, but Keokuk retained his title as war chief. "With his new status," Thomas Burnell Colbert writes, "Keokuk became a spokesman for the tribe with the United States government" (55). Black Hawk did not recognize as duly appointed tribal leader, a fact that was probably exacerbated when General Winfield Scott appointed him as official liaison to the U.S. (and civil chief) in 1832. See Thomas Burnell Colbert, "'The Hinge on Which All Affairs of the Sauk and Fox Indians Turn': Keokuk and the United States Government," in *Enduring Nations: Native Americans in the Midwest*, Russell David Edmunds (Urbana: U of Illinois P, 2008), 55-56.

reading, Keokuk uses his skills in oratory to foment dissension among the Sauks, especially to discredit Black Hawk:

[A]ll the whites with whom I was acquainted, and had been on terms of intimacy, advised me contrary to my wishes, that I began to doubt whether I had a *friend* among them. Ke-o-kuck, who has a smooth tongue, and is a great speaker, was busy in persuading my band that I was wrong—and thereby making many of them dissatisfied with me.³⁴

Joshua David Bellin and Mark Rifkin have pointed out that Black Hawk's description of Keokuk's "smooth tongue" echoes his earlier reflection on his interaction with U.S. whites: "How smooth must be the language of the whites, when they can make right look like wrong, and wrong like right."³⁵ Recognizing in both Keokuk and whites an ability to manipulate language and unduly influence tribal members, Black Hawk ascribes to Keokuk's rhetoric an active role in the formation of factions in the Sauk Nation, going along with the pressure from the U.S. for the Sauks to abandon the village of Saukenuk. "We were a divided people," Black Hawk writes, "forming two parties, Ke-o-kuck being at the head of one, willing to barter our rights merely for the good opinion of the whites; and cowardly enough to desert our village to them. I was at the head of the other party, and was determined to hold on to my village, although I had been *ordered* to leave it." As opposed to Black Hawk's refusal to remove and what Timothy Sweet calls his "centeredness within the traditional tribal worldview," Keokuk becomes a "nonwarrior who repeatedly violates Sauk traditions," and is implicated in the process of extinguishing Sauk land title negotiating with U.S. officials.³⁶

Black Hawk's *Life* thereby critiques the politics of tribal representation in the Treaty of 1832. Black Hawk challenges the legitimacy of Keokuk's leadership since he cannot

³⁴ Black Hawk, *Life*, 98-99.

³⁵ Bellin, "How Smooth Their Language," 494-495; Rifkin, "Documenting Tradition," 695.

³⁶ Sweet, "Masculinity and Self-Performance," 485.

represent the Sauk Nation, given his violation of Sauk tradition, his failure to resist removal, and the United States government's support of his tribal leadership.³⁷ As Mark Rifkin puts it, in Black Hawk's *Life* Keokuk is an "unreliable indicator of popular assent to U.S. claims. If treaties are based on consent instead of coercion, how can a figure so disconnected from the needs and desires of his people possibly be taken as speaking for them?" Black Hawk's challenge to Keokuk's leadership "upends the republican logic of the treaty-system, seeking to open room for an alternative, decentralized vision of Sauk politics."³⁸

However, Black Hawk's dismissal of Keokuk's authority does not blankly refuse the necessity of diplomatic relations between tribal leaders and the Indian Office. A key passage in the *Life* narrates the moment when Black Hawk begins to see military action as the inevitable alternative to U.S.-Sauk diplomacy. The Sauk principal chief Neapope tells Black Hawk that the Winnebago "Prophet" Wabokieshiek has promised that a significant force of Potawatamis and British fighters will come to Black Hawk's aid in resisting U.S. militias. Keokuk, however, tries to convince Black Hawk that he has "been imposed upon by *liars*, and had much better remain where I was and keep quiet."³⁹ The *Life* subsequently narrates:

When [Keokuk] found that I was determined to make an attempt to secure my village, and fearing that some difficulty would arise, he made applications to the agent and great chief at St. Louis [William Clark], for permission for the chiefs of

³⁷ Black Hawk was not alone in this critique among the Sauks and Meskwakis. Two years later, for instance, the Meskwaki chief Appanoose also challenged Keokuk's appointed leadership in a letter to the United States president. Appanoose sees Keokuk's leadership of the Sauks and Tribes as violating the Meskwaki's autonomy and their rights to a majority of the annuity payments. In an 1834 council Appanoose spoke: "Ke-o-kuck, (acting as principal chief of the Sac Tribe, having been made such by commissioners appointed by our Great Father to treat with our people in the Summer of 1832, and without being a descendant of any of our former chiefs, or in any manner connected to them, -and contrary to the customs and laws of our Nation throughout all time,)-has been using all his influence to reduce my Band and create dissatisfaction among my people. Appanoose argues that since the 1832 treaty his band no longer receives a proportionate amount of the annuities to the Sauks and Meskwakis. Appanoose had not been informed that the annuities had been distributed at St. Louis, and found out that Keokuk had "received all the Annuities, and paid it . . . for debts contracted previously, by themselves, with the American Fur Company."From A-pe-noose, Fox chief, 22 September, 1834.

³⁸ Rifkin, *Manifesting America*, 100.

³⁹ Black Hawk, *Life*, 111.

our nation to go to Washington to see our Great Father, that we might have our difficulties settler amicably.⁴⁰

As Black Hawk hears “nothing favorable from the great chief at St. Louis” and the trip to Washington fails to materialize, Black Hawk remains resolved to keep his warriors mobilized. “[T]he *peacable disposition* of Ke-o-kuck, and his people,” Black Hawk states, “had been, in a great measure, the cause of our having been driven from our village, [and therefore] I ascribed their present feelings to the same cause; and immediately went to work to recruit all my own band.”⁴¹

The narrative here seems to present a set of binaries: Black Hawk as action-driven, leaning towards military options, and swayed by tribal knowledge to assess the political situation; as contrasted with the passive, “peacable” Keokuk who is persuaded by the information of white settler governmental figures. But even as the narrative builds to a moment where resistance to U.S. settler encroachment on Sauk territories is increasingly imagined as a military one, this is not in direct opposition to the work of intervening in diplomacy or navigating existing governmental networks. When Keokuk tries to arrange a meeting in Washington, the *Life* narrates how the trader to the Sauks “had called on our Great Father and made a full statement to him in relation to our difficulties, and has asked leave for us to go to Washington, but had received no answer.” It subsequently notes that “[e]very overture had been made by Ke-o-kuck to prevent difficulty, and I anxiously hoped that something would be done for my people, that it might be avoided. But there was *bad management somewhere, or the difficulty that has taken place would have been avoided.*”⁴² Black Hawk’s emphasis on “bad management” moves the discourse beyond the tropes of

⁴⁰ Ibid., 111-112.

⁴¹ Ibid., 112.

⁴² Ibid., 112.

action and inaction, and characterizes Sauk removal as stemming from a more systemic problem. While the phrase may obscure the personal accountability of any individual, the reference to “bad management” implicates the management of information and relationships within the Office of Indian Affairs in the escalation of the conflict. Black Hawk here diagnoses a fundamental inefficiency in the communication circuits that link the trader to the Office of Indian Affairs and the federal government. In this instance, Black Hawk is not resisting diplomacy, but inefficient diplomacy; not the management of Indian affairs by the U.S. government, but the “bad management” of Indian affairs.

Working through LeClaire and Patterson, the publication of Black Hawk’s *Life* depended on the overlapping networks of the Sauk and Meskwaki Indian Agency, the American Fur Company, and Sauk and Meskwaki leaders—as represented by the physical space of Rock Island. Black Hawk’s dictation of his narrative constitutes a publication project aimed at intervening in these overlapping networks. Besides an appeal to “the people of the United States” and a larger intercultural public, the *Life* also constitutes a self-conscious critique of the operation of Indian affairs at Rock Island as it was characterized by “bad management.” At stake in this project was the reclaiming of a political authority that was denied Black Hawk by the Indian Office, Davenport, and LeClaire. Moreover, in making this critique Black Hawk challenges the logics of tribal representation of the Treaty of 1832. Signed by the civil chiefs in September 1832, the treaty of 1832 delegitimized Black Hawk as a “lawless” leader of a small faction, and established Keokuk as the authorized representative of the Sauk and Meskwaki nations. By referring to “the Sac and Fox nation” in the treaty, the U.S. commissioners projects a singular national identity onto

the two confederated tribes.⁴³ Black Hawk figures in the treaty as one of the “lawless and desperate” leaders of the Sauk and Meskwaki nations. The treaty proclaims that “peace and friendship are declared, and shall be perpetually maintained between the Sac and Fox nation, excepting from the latter the hostages before mentioned.”⁴⁴ The exception of these hostages—a group of five Sauk leaders that included Black Hawk—is central to this declaration of friendship between the U.S. and the Sauk and Meskwaki nations. The treaty’s preamble presents a narrative of pacification, in which the captured leaders of the military resistance are the bodies on which this narrative is played out:

[W]hereas, the United States, at a great expense of treasure, have subdued the said hostile band, killing or capturing all its principal Chiefs and Warriors—the said States, partly as indemnity for the expense incurred, and partly to secure the future safety and tranquility of the invaded frontier, demand of the said tribes, to the use of the United States, a cession of a tract of the Sac and Fox country, bordering on said frontier, more than proportional to the numbers of the hostile band who have been so conquered and subdued.⁴⁵

Casting the Black Hawk War as a violent confrontation between Indian lawlessness and settler civilization, the treaty represents Black Hawk figures as one of the “lawless and desperate leaders” who catalyze the narrative of conflict and pacification by which the treaty legitimates itself.

Publishing the *Life* then had the potential to correct, within the networks of the Rock Island agency, the representation of Black Hawk and his band as “lawless” and “desperate”—governed by no notion of legality nor sense of reality. Patterson’s preface already introduces Black Hawk’s intended meaning for the *Life* as a corrective:

⁴³ This rhetorical move had long been a commonplace in European imperial discourses that sought to use the language of nationhood as a means to elaborate dominion over a large number of bands or tribes by grouping them together as a nation and extending the political reach of nation-to-nation relationships. For a discussion of how this played out in the Great Lakes region in the seventeenth century, see Michael Witgen, “The Rituals of Possession: Native Identity and the Invention of Empire in Seventeenth-Century Western North America,” *Ethnohistory* 54, no. 4 (2007): 639-668.

⁴⁴ Treaty with the Sauks and Foxes, 350.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 349.

Several accounts of the late war having been published, in which he thinks justice is not done to himself or his nation, [Black Hawk] determined to make known to the world, the injuries his people have received from the whites—the causes which brought on the war on the part of his nation, and a general history of it throughout the campaign.⁴⁶

The *Life*, in other words, presents an oppositional narrative of the Black Hawk War, and insists on Black Hawk's ability to politically represent the Sauk Nation within U.S. institutional networks. Patterson's preface already states that Black Hawk will be seen "in the character of a Warrior, a Patriot, and a State-prisoner—in every situation he is still the Chief of his Band, asserting their rights with dignity, firmness and courage."⁴⁷ For Black Hawk, this representation acknowledged both the colonial conditions of the text's production (his incarceration as a "State-prisoner") as well as his tribal leadership. For LeClaire and Patterson, it made the *Life* conform to the popular genre of the narrative of the brave, conquered Native hero. On the one hand, the trope of the stoic Native leader—who meets defeat with "dignity, firmness, and courage"—echoes ideologies of the generic male Native American leaders whom early U.S. reading audiences were all too eager to cathart over.⁴⁸ On the other hand, this trope is mobilized in order to amplify Black Hawk's representation of Sauk nationhood, even if this is expressed through the confusing juxtaposition of the terms "Patriot" (where the Sauk Nation is the referent) and "Chief of his Band" (referring to Black Hawk's "British Band" of followers).

Indeed, the self-conscious performance of Black Hawk as a public figure is part of the publication project. Towards the end of the book, LeClaire and Patterson use the occasion of the widely publicized captivity tour of eastern cities as an opportunity for

⁴⁶ Ibid., ix.

⁴⁷ Ibid., ix.

⁴⁸ For an in-depth analysis of the wide-ranging literatures about conquered male Native heroes, see Gordon Sayre, *The Indian Chief as Tragic Hero: Native Resistance and the Literatures of America, from Moctezuma to Tecumseh* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005).

constructing Black Hawk as a voice of authority on public affairs. Here Black Hawk is asked to offer his thoughts on slavery in the U.S., writing that “[d]uring my travels, my opinions were asked on different subjects—but for want of a good interpreter, were very seldom given.” Black Hawk continues:

The subject of colonizing the *negroes* was introduced, and my opinion asked, as to the best method of getting clear of these people. I was not prepared, at the time, to answer—as I knew but little about their situation. I have since made many inquiries on the subject—and find that a number of states admit no slaves, whilst the balance hold these negroes as slaves, and are anxious, but do now know, how to get clear of them. I will now give my plan, which, when understood, I hope will be adopted.⁴⁹

Proposing, rather oddly, that the slavery problem might disappear if all female slaves were brought to non-slaveholding states, Black Hawk assumes a position of a public intellectual figure, having his opinion solicited, inquiring into the issue, and speaking out publicly about it. By narrating the process of being informed about a public, political issue, and then speaking out authoritatively about it, the *Life* distinguishes itself from the type of as-told-to narratives that Ann Fabian has shown to be a thriving genre in the early nineteenth century, and which catered to a voyeuristic interest in the personal experience of the cultural Other.⁵⁰ As William Boelhower puts it, Black Hawk’s telling of his story is not mere narration but that of “a rhetor self-consciously speaking in public.”⁵¹ Rather than assigning Black Hawk to a representation of Indian alterity, Patterson and LeClaire emphasize that Black Hawk should be understood as a public, political self.

The fact that Black Hawk tells his story to white readers and governmental officials is more than merely the “context” of its production: it was also a motivating condition of its

⁴⁹ Ibid., 153.

⁵⁰ For an overview of the wider popularity of as-told-to life writings in the nineteenth-century United States, see Ann Fabian, *The Unvarnished Truth: Personal Narratives in Nineteenth-Century America* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002).

⁵¹ William Boelhower, “Saving Saukenuk: How Black Hawk Won the War and Opened the Way to Ethnic Semiotics.” *Journal of American Studies* 25, no. 3 (1991): 336.

publication. For Neil Schmitz, LeClaire and Patterson's translational and editorial work as "Anglo-Indianist constraint" on the text: "Black Hawk delivers his captive utterance, his entrusted discourse, through a suspect agency: an opportunistic Anglo editor . . . and a profiteering, mixed-blood (French/Potawatomi) interpreter." This recognition leads Smith's analysis to then look beyond their intrusions to tease out Black Hawk's authorial, individual utterance: "In locating and specifying Patterson's Jacksonian Indianizing, we should not lose the substance of Black Hawk's resisting text, its contrary logic, its contestation."⁵² But if Schmitz sees Patterson and LeClaire's "suspect agency" as a constraint on Black Hawk's oral performance, I argue that it is a motivating condition as well. Enlisting agencies that are implicit in the communication networks of the overlapping networks of the U.S. state and the American Fur Company is key to Black Hawk's publication project: the point of Black Hawk's publication project is in part that he *is* speaking to individuals who played a role in U.S. expansion in Sauk country, and were connected not only to technologies of print but also tapped into colonial governmental networks.⁵³

Black Hawk's *Life* therefore achieves its critique of federal Indian policy and Keokuk's authority not in spite of the collaborative context in which it is produced, but rather because of it. Working within settler networks to produce a critique of U.S. Indian policy constituted an act that could modify the discourse within those very networks. Black Hawk's *Life*, then, is a book about *publishing*: it is about the navigation of official and associational networks in order to assert control over the conditions of communication and information within them. In publishing his life story, Black Hawk should not be imagined as

⁵² Schmitz, *White Robe's Dilemma*, 69, 70.

⁵³ I therefore want to nuance Krupat's argument slightly to suggest that Black Hawk tells his story not *to* Sauk readers, but tells it to his white interlocutors in a way that he deems other Sauks would recognize and approve. See Krupat, "Patterson's *Life*," 531.

speaking *through* Patterson and LeClaire, but also *to* and *against* them. The *Life*'s publication context is Rock Island, where U.S-Indian discourse was shaped by the intransigent rhetoric of the Indian Office as it worked through Indian agents, translators, and traders. This governmental rhetoric suggests that Black Hawk was able, through the nature of this collaborative publication project, to claim a critical, political voice within the networks and discourses of the Indian Office—one that is denied him throughout the history he recounts. As a social act of navigating these networks, the publication of Black Hawk's *Life* becomes an act of institutional critique.

1.3 “Our Wants and Our Wishes”: Keokuk's Oratory as Institutional Intervention

That Black Hawk's *Life* has ultimately reshaped the wider discourse around the Black Hawk War, is perhaps evidenced by the fact that there has been something of a straight line from Black Hawk's suspicions of Keokuk to the analysis of later historians and critics. In the 1830s, Keokuk was widely admired by American commentators for his character and skills in oratory. In 1837 the artist George Catlin wrote in his published notes:

There is no Indian chief on the frontier better known at this time, or more highly appreciated for his eloquence, as a public speaker, than Kee-o-kuk; as he has repeatedly visited Washington and others of our Atlantic towns, and made his speeches before thousands, when he has been contending for his people's rights, in their stipulations with the United States Government, for the sale of their lands.⁵⁴

The historian and politician Caleb Atwater called Keokuk “a shrewd politic man, as well as a brave one, [possessing] great weight of character in their national councils”; the author Benjamin Drake wrote that “the eloquence of Keokuk and his sagacity in the civil affairs of

⁵⁴ George Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians* Vol. II, 4th ed. (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1842), 210.

his nation, are, like his military talents, of a high order.”⁵⁵ And according to Thomas McKenney Keokuk was a “fine person,” and “gifted with courage, prudence, and eloquence.” Keokuk was, in McKenney’s summary, “in all respects, a magnificent savage.”⁵⁶



Figure 9: “Plate 156: Keokuk.” In George Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Condition of the North American Indians*, Vol. II (London: Catlin, 1841). Catlin’s sketch of Keokuk was probably made after, rather than before, a more fully developed portrait of Keokuk. Catlin made his original portrait on a visit to Rock Island in 1835-1836, and in Catlin’s *Letters and Notes* it was included in an extensive chapter on the Sauk and Meskwaki Nations. According to Catlin, upon Keokuk’s request he also drew a portrait of Keokuk on horseback, which is included in the same volume, along with a portrait of Black Hawk and his sons.

⁵⁵ Caleb Atwater, *Remarks Made on a Tour to Prairie du Chien; thence to Washington City, in 1829* (Columbus: Isaac B. Whiting, 1831), 73; Benjamin Drake, *The Life and Adventures of Black Hawk: with Sketches of Keokuk, the Sac and Fox Indians, and the Late Black Hawk War*, Seventh Edition, 1837 (Cincinnati: George Conlin, 1849), 126.

⁵⁶ Thomas McKenney, *History of the Indian Tribes of North America: with biographical sketches and anecdotes of the principal chiefs*, 1838 (Philadelphia: D. Rice, 1872), 348.

In Black Hawk's *Life*, however, Keokuk's communication with whites betrays the Sauks' cultural coherence, and becomes a handmaiden to Sauk removal. Echoing Black Hawk's description of Keokuk's "smooth tongue," the historian Donald Jackson writes in his 1955 introduction to Black Hawk's autobiography that "Keokuk was a smooth talker and a politician who planned to co-exist with the Americans; Black Hawk was a bull-headed fighter who chose a bitter last stand against extinction."⁵⁷ More recently, Joshua David Bellin's analysis of the *Life* has quickly dismisses Keokuk as one of the "puppet leaders" who falsely assumed tribal leadership and worked as an extension of the United States government.⁵⁸ It is no accident, then, that where Black Hawk's *Life* is widely read today, Keokuk's oratory has all but disappeared from critical review.⁵⁹

Yet the lack of critical engagement with Keokuk's rhetoric risks overlooking a body of oratory that may inform us about the role of Native agency within bureaucratic discourses during the height of the removal era. We can safely say that Keokuk knew how things worked in the Indian Office. In 1824 Keokuk had taken part in a delegation of Sauks and Meskwakis to Washington, where he contested the Osages' sale of lands in between the mouth of the Des Moines and the mouth of the Two Rivers. Keokuk argued successfully that

⁵⁷ Donald Jackson, "Introduction," *Black Hawk: An Autobiography*, 1833, ed. Donald Jackson (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1955), 31.

⁵⁸ Bellin, "How Smooth Their Language," 486. Mark Rifkin is more careful to entertain the probability that Keokuk's status as a "puppet leader" is an effect, at least in part, of Black Hawk's rhetorical strategy: "Keokuk functions as the villain of the narrative, appearing as an advocate for removal, an extension of U.S. speech, and a puppet for imperial interests." In Rifkin's reading, Black Hawk's dismissal of Keokuk's "smooth tongue" implicates Keokuk in acting as an "extension of the bureaucratic discourse" through which U.S. territorial mappings were imposed on Indian country. Black Hawk's critique casts Keokuk's communication with U.S. officials (and his negotiations about land cessions, annuity payments, and tribal borders) as an elaboration of the political imaginary that bureaucratic discourse projected onto Indian territory. Rifkin, "Documenting Tradition," 695

⁵⁹ Bellin, "How Smooth Their Language," 486. In a historical reappraisal of Keokuk's diplomatic work, Thomas Burnell Colbert shows that historians have typically parroted Black Hawk's critiques of Keokuk, often repeating the accusations that he appropriated tribal funds for his own use—with particular offenses being his opposition to the sale of liquors while struggling with alcohol himself, and the fact that he owned a three hundred dollar horse. See Colbert, "Keokuk."

these lands belonged to the Sauks and Meskwakis “by the same right by which the United States claimed its land, by right of conquest.”⁶⁰ In the summer of 1830, Keokuk successfully secured a thousand dollar payment of trade goods to compensate for the death of several Meskwaki men who had been killed by a Sioux war party. On this occasion Keokuk brought about two hundred Sauk and Meskwaki warriors into William Clark’s office in St. Louis and the grounds surrounding it, staging a public bodily performance of Sauk sovereignty to remind Clark that Native nations could still inflect the conditions of U.S.-Indian diplomacy.⁶¹ At the same time, because of his visit to Washington and his informed position within Indian Office networks, Keokuk had a rather pessimistic view of the possibility of staving off U.S. expansion, and “became more fully convinced that the only prudent political position was for his people to ally with the Americans.”⁶²

If Black Hawk sees Keokuk’s oratory as an extension of bureaucratic discourse, I argue that it also reflects the compromised conditions wherein Indian nations were politically represented within the networks of the Indian Office. Keokuk’s oratory is constrained by the legal fictions of U.S.-Indian treaties, the economic pressures on the Sauk and Meskwaki nations, and the programmatic concerns of the Indian Office, which was by now embracing Indian removal as a policy tool. At the same time, in his councils, petitions, and letters—authored collaboratively with Indian Office translators, scribes, and interlocutors—Keokuk tries to assert control over communication within the Indian Office in order to hold it accountable to its treaties, and to make its negotiations address Sauk and Meskwaki demands. Keokuk’s oratory thereby underscores Phillip Round’s argument that

⁶⁰ Hagan, *Sac and Fox Indians*, 94-95; Colbert, “Keokuk,” 56.

⁶¹ Council with the Sacs & Foxes, St. Louis, 27 March 1830. Letters Received Office of Indian Affairs. Roll 728, Sac and Fox Agency, 1824-1833.

⁶² Colbert, “Keokuk and the United States Government,” 56. Colbert notes that Secretary of War Calhoun drew up a new treaty that paid the tribes for the disputed lands and established a reservation for mixed-blood Sauks and Meskwakis in southeast Iowa.

Indian nations' ability to generate public political discourse depended to a large extent on the establishment and bureaucratization of the Office of Indian Affairs. Within the communication networks of the Indian Office, Round shows, we can recognize the "efforts of indigenous nations . . . to construct and perform a public, political *Indianness*." By taking part in what Round calls "a mixed audience of Native and non-Native auditors in the public sphere of the early Republic," Native writers and speakers like Keokuk saw within this space opportunities for speaking back to the Indian Office's discourses, performing a politicized Indianness to inflect organizational structures they could not control.⁶³

In negotiations with Indian traders, agents, and the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Keokuk worked within organizational structures that simultaneously recognized and compromised the authority of Native leaders like Keokuk. One of Keokuk's most frequent interlocutors in his councils and oratory is William Clark, the Superintendent of Indian Trade at St. Louis. In the spring of 1830, Keokuk met with William Clark, to discuss a proposed delegation of Sauk leaders to Washington; to address the issue of more effective management of the borders between the Sauks and the Sioux; and to protest a U.S. purchase of land from the Kansas Nation, which Keokuk argued had belonged to the Sauks.⁶⁴ The council between Keokuk and Clark reveals a rhetorical situation that suggests both cooperation and U.S. imposition. As Keokuk refuses to tell Clark the specifics of what the visit to Washington will be about, Clark tells Keokuk that he has recommended the Sauks' visit to Washington, but that the War Department "wishes to know more about it." Keokuk declines to give Clark further information until he can meet in council with the two tribes. In

⁶³ Phillip Round, "Performing Indian Publics," in *Native Acts: Indian Performance, 1603-1832*, ed. Joshua David Bellin and Laura L. Mielke (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 251.

⁶⁴ Council with the Sacs & Foxes, St. Louis, 27 March 1830. Letters Received Office of Indian Affairs. Roll 728, Sac and Fox Agency, 1824-1833.

response Clark asserts that he understands well what the Sauks wished to gain from the negotiations, and enumerates the many different political and economic problems the Sauk Nation were facing. Clark tells Keokuk:

I know all that you people want—all except the views of the British Party—of them I am not yet fully informed. As you do not wish to tell me, I will tell you. First, you want peace among yourselves with your neighbors. . . . You want to be settled (you are at present unsettled) and to be by yourselves, that you may rise as a Nation. You want an enlargement of your annuities, so that you may be enabled to help yourselves in your new establishments. You are harassed with debts + you wish to be extricated from those which are now hanging over you. You are dissatisfied with the sale made of your lands many years since because it was not understood by the nation. You want it well understood by everyone. You also want to do something to unite the British party with your own, & to bring both Tribes of Sacs & Foxes together, so as to be strong and respectable as a Nation. And you think if you could get rid of spirituous liquors from among you, your happiness & comfort could be effected . . . Have I not guessed pretty nearly your wants?⁶⁵

Signing off on Clark's list, Keokuk responds that Clark "described exactly our wants & our wishes." Keokuk's silence forces Clark to enumerate the problems of settler encroachment in Sauk country, in effect putting Keokuk in a position where he is not purely suppliant to Clark.

This stylized, ritual speech act—in which Keokuk assents to Clark's enumeration of his own political motivations—illustrates that these dialogues elaborated a U.S. bureaucratic interpretation of the political viewpoints of leaders like Keokuk. If it is a collaborative speech act, it is so only in a more negative sense where collaboration is shaped by unequal power relations within the Indian Office and in U.S.-Indian relations. Clark's projection of Keokuk's "wants" and "wishes" is an act of translation, making Keokuk's politics legible in a concrete situation that is shaped by Clark's own political projects. One of these is to "bring both Tribes of Sacs & Foxes together, so as to be strong and respectable as a Nation."

⁶⁵ "Minutes of a Talk held at Jefferson Barracks, 27 March 1834, Letters Received, Office of Indian Affairs, roll 729, Sac and Fox Agency, 1834-1837.

Keokuk's assent to this proposal suggests that he went along with what was ultimately established in the Treaty of 1832: that for the United States Keokuk represented both the Sauk and Meskwaki Nations as civil chief. This controversial appointment ignored Meskwaki sovereignty in an effort to streamline the nation-to-nation relationship between the tribes and the United States. Moreover, Clark was not a collaborator in any neutral sense of the word. In his capacity of Superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis, Clark controlled Indian agents such as Benjamin O'Fallon, Thomas Forsyth, Lawrence Taliaferro, and Pierre Menard. His office issued licenses and passports, provided payments for injuries and injustices, arrested and punished lawbreakers, surveyed boundaries, distributed annuities, and conducted treaty councils. As his biographer Jay Buckley observes, Clark's position in the region was such that American Indian leaders deemed treaties invalid unless they were conducted with Clark personally.⁶⁶

On the other hand, Clark's list of pressures on the Sauk Nation is also a remarkably accurate and complete portrait of the ramifications of U.S. expansion on Indian Nations during the removal period—and addresses a range of pressures Keokuk addresses in his oratory over the next decade. To recap the problems that Clark lists: he imagines that the Sauk Nation wish for more secure borders; financial compensation for the lands they have lost; a halt to the liquor trade; to be recognized and respected as a sovereign nation; more transparency and accountability with regard to treaties; and to be rid of tribal debts. So although the Indian Office allowed for the policies that had led tribal nations into debt, it also presents a space where the problems facing Indian Nations were addressed and critiqued by Native speakers. And Native speakers and tribal leaders like Keokuk thus

⁶⁶ Jay H. Buckley, *William Clark: Indian Diplomat* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2010), 148.

played a more prominent and critical role within its organizational structures than the dismissal of Keokuk as a “puppet leader” allows.

The personal nature of U.S.-Indian councils—its reliance on face-to-face communication—allowed figures like Clark but also his agents to have a significant measure of autonomy. In a council between Clark and Keokuk two days later, on 16 June, 1830, Clark capitalizes on the opportunities to sway Keokuk’s opinion by professing himself a “friend” and “private” council to Keokuk. As Clark explains to Kekouk:

As we are now in private council, I will give you my opinion (my private opinion, & that from the Govt) of what you should do. You should offer to sell to the Government a piece of your land on the Mississippi for the purpose of enlarging your annuities, to enable you to pay your debts, & to assist you in farming. . . . Should it succeed it will be the only means of keeping together all your people, by applying with effect for the general benefit whatever means the nation should possess. . . . These are my private opinions, as your friend, not being authorized thereto by the Government. You should sell lands enough to get a sufficient annuity.⁶⁷

What makes the council “private,” all of a sudden? The interpreter is still there; the talk is written down and circulated (not to mention archived) in the Indian Office; and Clark is advising Keokuk on matters of public interest. Clark’s words illustrate how within these bureaucratic interactions there is distinction between the “public” and “private”: in the early nineteenth century the Office of Indian Affairs was a loose network of American and Native participants in councils and treaties. As Stephen Rockwell writes, before the increased bureaucratization of the Office of Indian Affairs in the second half of the nineteenth century, its operators were typically “*more* innovative, more independent, and more autonomous”

⁶⁷ “Talk of Genl Clark to the Sacs & Foxes, in Council, 16 June 1830, Letters Received Office of Indian Affairs, Roll 728, Sac and Fox Agency, 1824-1833.

than in later times, wielding a bureaucratic autonomy in which interpersonal communication was still central to exerting political influence.⁶⁸

But the face-to-face dimensions of U.S.-Indian diplomacy also means that Native leaders could potentially wield an important measure of institutional agency as well. Indian Office decision-making happened on the ground—in, or close to, Indian nations, and in the oral discourses that constituted the bureaucratic practice of the Office of Indian Affairs. And speakers like Keokuk took up circumscribed forms of collaborative writing and speaking in order to have some control over these relations. For instance, Keokuk repeatedly charges the Indian Office with failing to uphold the various agreements made in U.S.-Indian treaties. Keokuk addressed both the encroachment of white settlers in the Rock Island region as well as its effects on intertribal relations. At a council with William Clark three months later, on 14 June, 1830, Keokuk addresses the Indian Office's failure to uphold the agreements of the first Prairie du Chien council. At this treaty council, held in 1825, United States commissioners had negotiated peace and tribal boundaries between representatives from several Indian nations: the Sioux, Sauk, Meskwaki, Menominee, Ioway, Winnebago, Ojibwe, Ottawa, and Potawatomi. Following the treaty, however, the influx of white settlers into the region put pressure on the neutral hunting grounds and tribal borders between the Sauks and Sioux, leading to continued violent conflicts.

In his council with Monroe, Keokuk voices his refusal to attend the upcoming treaty council in July, due to the recent murder by a war party of Peahmuska, one of the Meskwaki signers of the 1825 Prairie du Chien treaty. In 1830 Peahmuska was invited by an Indian

⁶⁸ Stephen J. Rockwell, *Indian Affairs and the Administrative State in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 62.

agent to return to Prairie du Chien on official business, but on the way there was killed by an enemy war party. Keokuk asks:

My Father: How is it possible for our people to go to P. du Chien? When Piemosky [Peahmuska] went to Washington the President gave him a Flag, a medal & some other things; when he was going to P. du Chien he took these things with him to show who & what he was, but he was fallen upon by murderers, and his flag, Your Flag, the Flag of the United States was trod under foot & then burned.⁶⁹

Keokuk's rhetorical question directly communicates a political situation that is no longer tenable. Emphasizing the flag and medal that Peahmuska had received in Washington, and the bond of friendship these rhetorically constituted, Keokuk directly challenges the meaning of these symbols in light of the ability of the U.S. to enact on the nation-to-nation relationship they promise. That "his flag, Your Flag" was "trod under foot & then burned" signals the U.S.'s inability to provide the protection that Sauk and U.S. representatives had negotiated in treaties. As Clark had urged Keokuk to attend the July 1830 treaty council at Prairie du Chien, Keokuk states his refusal to participate: "My Father: We have never before refused you anything, you have always said true (ever had your own way) but now we cannot go . . . I am firm and immovable in my determination not to go to Prairie du Chien."⁷⁰ Keokuk questions the legitimacy—and practical use—of treaty councils if the diplomatic relations they establish have little meaning on the ground.

Keokuk's oratory emphasizes the inefficiency of the Indian Office's bureaucratic apparatus in managing the organization of Indian country it had promised in signed treaties.⁷¹ In doing so, Keokuk challenges the bureaucratic projections by which the physical space of Prairie du Chien represents an extension of the American state. Keokuk continues

⁶⁹ Council with the Sacs & Foxes, St. Louis, 14 June 1830. Letters Received Office of Indian Affairs. Roll 728, Sac and Fox Agency, 1824-1833. According to Thomas McKenney in *History of the Indian Tribes of North America*, Peahmuska was killed by a Menominee war party—not Sioux. See McKenney, *History of the Indian Tribes in North America*, Vol I, 396-397.

⁷⁰ Council with the Sacs & Foxes, 14 June 1830.

⁷¹ Colbert, "Keokuk and the United States Government," 58.

by stating, “[m]y Father: I now tell you from the bottom of my heart that I cannot go to Prairie du Chien & hope I will say true, and have my way in my turn, for once. I am done.”⁷² Keokuk’s decided tone signals a moment when the conversational back-and-forth of his councils with Clark makes way for a more uncompromising statement of an absolute position. Noting that “we have our homes, & can do business very well there,” Keokuk is looking to change the conditions of interaction between the United States and the Sauk Nation, and to hold treaty councils in Sauk political space.

In response to Keokuk’s intervention, Clark explains that the death of Peahmuska is the result of what he calls the “bad management” of Indian affairs:

My friends: I have deeply lamented the deaths of my friend [Peahmuska]. The Sub Agent who invited your people to go to the Prairie du Chien, was ignorant of Indian affairs—he supposed that one or two chiefs could make a peace for both your Tribes. [Pimosky] was killed at an unfortunate time for his people, & by bad management they were deceived; and that by the ignorance of a man who had no authority to do as he had done.⁷³

There are several dimensions to what constitutes this “bad management.” First, Clark signals his office’s inability to manage traders’ dealings with Indian nations. Clark explains that the invitation that led to Pimosky’s death was “from a different power than that of a Sub Agent,” as it came from a French fur trader at Prairie du Chien, Jean Joseph Rolette of the Mackinac Company. Second, Clark signals the limitations of his own agency in relation to federal policy. Explaining to Keokuk that he cannot change the location of the treaty council, Clark states that “[t]he President has the whole American Nation at command. He has fixed the place for you to meet, and it cannot be altered by me.” The lack of specificity and the passive voice in Clark’s assessment that “by bad management they were deceived”

⁷² Council with the Sacs & Foxes, 14 June 1830.

⁷³ Ibid.

registers a bureaucratic discourse in which agency and accountability are dispersed and intransparent.

Clark and Keokuk's collaborative speech act thereby offers both institutional rhetoric as well as institutional critique. One of the main objects of critique is the failure of the Indian Office to manage the pressures Indian nations were facing after the reorganization of tribal borders following Sauk Removal from Rock Island to the Iowa River. In December 1832 Keokuk and seven Sauk and Fox tribal leaders wrote a petition to Clark that outlined recent events between the Sioux and the Sauks and Meskwakis. It was translated by Francois Labussier, a French-Sauk interpreter who frequently acted as interpreter to Keokuk.⁷⁴ Pointing out that the Sioux "advanced within our boundaries seventy miles," the petition asks that the U.S. "take such measure as will oblige the Sioux to keep within their own limits, for without this, it is impossible for a peace to last."⁷⁵ Keokuk was caught between the pressure from many of his warriors to enter into battle with the Sioux, and his own desire to heed the directive from Clark and the Indian Office to preserve peace. Within the negotiations between Clark and Keokuk, then, the violence of settler encroachment takes a backseat and is displaced onto the Sioux. The issue of managing the newly configured borders in Indian country is made out to be not about managing white settlers, but about tribal leaders managing young warriors within their tribes.

Keokuk's oratory over the following years repeatedly addresses the Sauk and Sioux conflict, but he does not see his complaints addressed by Clark or the Indian Office. Furthermore, Keokuk challenges the intents and efficiency of Indian agents in managing peace between the different tribal nations. To raise the issue again, in 1834 Keokuk

⁷⁴ Trask, *Black Hawk War*, 152.

⁷⁵ Petition to General William Clark, 19 December 1832. Letters Received Office of Indian Affairs. Roll 728, Sac and Fox Agency, 1824-1833.

participates in a council with General Henry Atkinson, the military commander at Jefferson Barracks, just south of St. Louis. Joined by the Meskwaki leaders Wakashawske, Poweshiek, and Wopeshiak, Keokuk gives the longest speech of the four and implicates the Sioux Indian agent's involvement in the deterioration of Sauk-Sioux relations:

We think it must be the fault of the Sioux Agent and trader who advise the Sioux to go on the Sac land and hunt. . . . I believe our Agent here [at the Sauk and Meskwaki agency] goes the straight road—I believe M^r Choteau our trader goes the straight road, and advises us to keep back on our own land and not get into difficulty—but the Sioux Agent and Trader tell the Sioux's to go any where they can find game.⁷⁶

For Keokuk, however, what he sees as the Sioux agent's mismanagement is only one part of a wider governmental failures and refusals to manage Indian Affairs in a way that responds to the demands of tribal nations. Referring to the other Meskwaki chiefs present at the council, Keokuk tells Atkinson that his request to address the issue of managing tribal borders has systematically been ignored:

Our Great Father the President had us all gather together at Prairie-du-Chien three different times to talk to us—and every time I expressed my wish that the Commissioners sent by the President could make known to the Sioux's that they were not to come on our land . . . last fall when Genl Scott made a treaty with us I requested him to tell the Sioux's to keep off our land—last spring I came to see Genl Clark and repeated the same words to him—and came here and repeated the same words to you.⁷⁷

Keokuk's voice in this council is one that insists on accountability: for the Indian Office to recognize and document the disconnect between the promises made in Indian treaties and its repeated failures to address the political and social upheaval that their reorganization of native space had caused.

Indeed, Keokuk's most consistent object of critique was the failure of U.S. officials in fulfilling their treaty-stipulated obligations to manage tribal nations' changed political,

⁷⁶ Minutes of a Talk, 27 March 1834.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

social, and economic circumstances—to manage, in effect, the ramifications of U.S. settler colonialism. For Keokuk this surfaced in a range of problems, which by 1834 also included the encroachment of whites onto Sauk lands. In January 1834, Keokuk and three other tribal leaders, Pashepaho, Wahcamme, and Peat-Tshe-Noi, collaborated on a letter to William Clark to protest the presence of white hunters in Sauk country. Translated by Francois Labussier, the letter again addresses the lack of an institutional response to this problem:

We have recours [sic] to this paper to inform You that here is som [sic] white people hunting on our land since last fall and their intention is to remain all this winter and the next spring. We have informed our father the Agent of our Tribes of it. But we received no satisfactory answer. We have recourse to you. We know father your exertion to do justice to the Indians and we appeal to your Benevolence to remedy our right that is violated by the White peoples.⁷⁸

Having received “no satisfactory answer” from the Indian agent, Keokuk takes “recours to this paper” in order to signal his own dedication to transparent communication and accountability; and to express the lack thereof within the networks of the Indian Office. To ensure receiving Clark’s answer, Keokuk insists: “We expect an answer of the content of the said information if you saw it—address your Letter to Ke’O-Kuck and to the care of the post-master at Fort Edward, Hancock County—Illinois.”⁷⁹ By performing in writing his own control over these existing communication technologies, Keokuk thus asserts the presence of a Sauk political voice in the communications of the loose networks that constituted the Indian Office.

To this extent, Keokuk’s oratory expresses no apparent distrust of the translated, written word. On the contrary, it sees the potential of written documents not as deception but

⁷⁸ Keokuk et al to William Clark, 28 January 1834. Letters Received Office of Indian Affairs. Roll 729, Sac and Fox Agency, 1834-1837.

⁷⁹ Ibid. Fort Edwards was a military post that was built in 1815 near present-day Warsaw, Iowa. But it was abandoned as a military station in 1825, and afterwards was used by the American Fur Company. See William E. Whittaker, *Frontier Forts of Iowa: Indians, Traders, and Soldiers, 1682-1862* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2009), 86-88.

as accountability. Imagining that the written record of these publications will reach Washington, Keokuk imagines them as holding the potential to be passed on in a reliable, routinized way. The construction of written documents recording both oral and written transactions are not only a supplement to oratory, but a material record of the failures of spoken conversations and oratory to effect policy. In this sense, the records of Keokuk's oratory become a record of the failures of the workings of the Office of Indian Affairs. At his council with Henry Atkinson in March 1834, for instance, Keokuk refers to the Meskwaki chiefs present to explain that "[a]ll these chiefs join me in shaking hands with you—and in shaking hands with you we shake hands with the Great Father the President. What we say to you now we wish you to put down on paper, so that the president may know what we have said to you."⁸⁰ Keokuk suggests that only the complementary use of oratory and writing could make these councils politically valuable. Indeed throughout his oratory in councils Keokuk repeatedly insists that his words be written down on paper, to then be sent to the U.S. President or Indian officials. In his August 1834 council with Indian agent Joseph Street, too, Keokuk states, "[w]e wish you to send this talk to the President of the U.S. and ask him to send us an answer by you in the Spring"; give our word to the President."⁸¹ And at an 1837 treaty council Keokuk argues that "[w]hen you make treaties, you put them on paper and the paper cannot lie."⁸²

For Keokuk, to perform what Round calls a "public, political Indianness" within the Indian Office, was to wield control over a range of communication technologies: oratory, translation, transcription, and dissemination. Keokuk embraced translation and transcription

⁸⁰ Minutes of a Talk, 27 March 1834.

⁸¹ Substance of a talk made to Genl Joseph M. Street Indian Agent, by the principal men of the united tribes of Sac and Fox Indians, at Rock Island, 19 August, 1834, Letters Received Office of Indian Affairs, Roll 729, 1834-1837;

⁸² At a talk held with the confederated Tribes of Sac and Fox Indians, in St. Louis, 24 June, 1837. Letters Received, Office of Indian Affairs, Roll 729, Sac and Fox Agency, 1834-1837.

as communication technologies that might prevent the inauspicious manipulation of spoken language, and that could establish a record of governmental refusals and failures to respond to the problems of settler encroachment. The work of the interpreter Antoine LeClaire was key to the Sauk leader's ability to assert control over communication within U.S. Indian Office networks. In August of 1834, Joseph Street and George Davenport recorded Keokuk's objection to the proposed reduction of LeClaire's pay by an act of Congress. As witnessed by Street and Davenport, Keokuk's oratory tries to intervene in the organizational changes within the Rock Island Indian Office:

This Man is our Interpreter we have long used him, he speaks our language well, and when we want to speak to our Father we know he will get all say correctly, and that that what is said to us will be truly repeated. We have great confidence in him for he never deceived us. He now tells us you have reduced his pay so much that he will not be able to Interpret for what you offer him any longer. You and Gov. Clark tell us it is all the Great Council of the White People at Washington have advised the President to give & he has told you to give one interpreter no more. We are very sorry for this. For we can have no other Interpreter but this man.' (LeClair)⁸³

As a collaborative publication, there is certainly a shared interest between Keokuk, Street, and Davenport in arguing on behalf of LeClaire. All of them—the Sauk tribal leader, the Indian Agent, and the trader—depended on LeClaire's translating and interpreting. But if Davenport and Street's support of LeClaire's increased pay is not free of hints of nepotism, for Keokuk this collaborative publication also is an important means to address the need for the Sauks to maintain control over the negotiations between tribal leaders, Indian agents, and traders.

Keokuk's writings show the double bind of these acts of navigating the networks of the Indian Office through writing and speaking. On the one hand, Keokuk's oratory insists on keeping the existing structures and operations of the Indian Office at Rock Island intact.

⁸³ Substance of a talk made by the principal chiefs, 19 August 1834.

On the other, by demanding continuity in LeClaire's appointment, he insists on Sauk control over the communications between tribal nations, the Indian Office, and the American Fur Company. Indeed, Keokuk's "talk" stresses the need to place Sauk tribal affairs above U.S. financial considerations:

We have no confidence that our talk, and yours, would be truly understood, and our confidence will be gone if this man is not by to talk between us. We hope our Great Father will consider this and the danger there will be and not deprive my Nation of their interpreter to save a little money.⁸⁴

Keokuk argues that the U.S. government ought to recognize the economic and environmental problems that the pressure on Sauk lands has caused. Only with adequate financial resources, Keokuk argues, might the Sauks and Meskwakis begin to cope with these:

We have sold most of our country to the President, our land is small, the game is getting very scarce and it takes all our money to support us, and yet we are frequently in want & many of us suffer. If we also have to pay our interpreter we must take it from our money and our wants and sufferings will be greater. I am told the Great Council has done this but have said that the President may give more when two tribes speaking different languages are in the same Nation. This is our case, the Sacs speak a different language from the Foxes, and our Interpreter speaks both well.⁸⁵

Keokuk's support of LeClaire, then, was part of a larger project to assert control over the Indian Office's management of the effects of U.S. expansion—in an effort to make it a space where Sauk demands and critiques could continue to be represented to the satisfaction of tribal leaders.

Keokuk's oratory thus recognizes that the Sauk Nation has moved into a new situation wherein the written word is now central to negotiating U.S.-Indian nation-to-nation relationships. Rather than an extension of U.S. bureaucratic discourse, Keokuk asserts a

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

Sauk political voice within the operations of the Indian Office. Keokuk's acts of representation were constrained by the political projections of collaborators like Clark, Davenport, Street, and LeClaire. And Keokuk's interventions ultimately did not resist or refute the Indian Office's legitimizing of Sauk removal. His contested collaborations register U.S. co-optation and translation, as well as the circumscribed means by which he was able to present himself as a political self.

In short, the conceptual clarity of Keokuk as a puppet leader at the behest of the United States government is limiting in light of the porous boundaries of the governmental agencies tribal leaders like Keokuk were in dialogue with. The officials at the Indian Agency overlapped with trading companies; government translators were both collaborators with tribal leaders as well as settlers on their lands; and tribal leaders both elaborated and protested the operations of the Indian Agency. In the context of such amorphous relations between tribal nations and colonial institutions, the resistance to settler encroachment was a corollary to the attempt on the part of Indian Nations to positively inflect the management of U.S.-Indian affairs. Yet studies of Black Hawk and Keokuk have too easily invited critical reflections that cast Black Hawk as the conquered noble hero and Keokuk as the opportunistic, scheming sycophant to whites. As Thomas Burnell Colbert writes, "Americans traditionally have focused their attention on Native American leaders who opposed federal officials through armed resistance, glamorizing 'war chiefs' who led brave but futile military actions against the United States." Historians and critics have typically regarded Black Hawk as "a noble Native American leader trying to save his culture," perpetuating Keokuk's dismissal as "a self-seeking sycophant to whites, especially the

government of the United States.”⁸⁶ Narratives that consider “pure” forms of resistance as a basis for the merit of Native people’s political representation, downplay the agency and political presence of Native nations in a compromising colonial situation. As Native nations faced not only the pressures of land encroachment but also the erosion of their political sovereignty, the fraught collaborative publications of Keokuk register how he tried to find new routes within colonial governmental networks to secure a critical, political Native voice within them.

1.4 “White Hard Money”: Tribal Futures and the Sauk and Meskwaki Annuity Debates

In spite of his controversial position, Keokuk remained in place as civil chief and government liaison to the United States. In its insistence on organizational change within the local Indian agency and the wider structures of the Indian Office, the oratory of Keokuk operated on a projective notion of how U.S.-Indian relations might be reconfigured in Sauk country. By using writing and oratory to inflect the organization and policy of existing governmental agencies, then, Keokuk participated in publication projects that insisted—in compromising contexts—on alternative futures. Given the fact, however, that Keokuk’s leadership of the Sauk and Meskwaki nations remained contested among tribal members, Keokuk’s routes to tribal-national organization should be seen in dialogue with those of tribal leaders who imagined different routes to asserting a social place for the confederated Sauk and Meskwaki nations. Especially in regard to the Sauk and Meskwaki’s economic organization, the publication projects of Keokuk tried to intervene in the management of

⁸⁶ Colbert, “Keokuk and the United States Government,” 67.

tribal affairs in ways that were contested by the writings and oratory of other native writers and speakers.

In the remainder of this chapter I therefore analyze how the debate over economic policy played out discursively in various publication projects by Keokuk, the tribal leader Hardfish, and Robert Lucas, the territorial governor of Iowa. In particular, this section outlines the intra-tribal debate over annuity payments that emerged in the course of the 1830s. This controversy generated a flurry of oral, written, and printed publications that offered alternative visions of how to claim the Sauk and Meskwakis' future in a region that had been opened for white settlement. First, I show that Keokuk worked within the Indian Office to insist on collective payments to the tribal leaders, in a sustained attempt to use collective payments as a means to secure an economic route to claiming a permanent space for the Sauk Nation in Iowa Territory. Second, I show how Hardfish recruited Governor Lucas to speak publicly against Keokuk and for individual payments. The resulting publication projects—in the form of a policy speech and government report by Lucas—critique the economic and political crisis that was caused by white expansion in Sauk and Meskwaki country. However, while the Hardfish-Lucas collaboration responded to a need to change policies within both tribal and territorial institutions, it ultimately co-opted an intra-tribal political debate in order to justify settler expansion and Indian removal. In the context of the pressure of removal, both Keokuk and Hardfish show how access to the technologies of publication was a resource in the attempt to inflect tribal-national organization to stave off removal. At the same time, their efforts also underscore how the compromised access to publication simultaneously undermined the right and ability of tribal nations to assert rhetorical control over their own futures.

The annuity payment controversy that generated the political opposition of Keokuk and Hardfish, was one of the result of U.S.-Indian treaty negotiations. In 1837 Keokuk took part in a delegation of Sauk and Meskwaki leaders to Washington, during which the delegates signed a treaty with U.S. officials. In return for one million acres of land, 100,000 dollars would be paid towards Sauk tribal debts. In addition, 67,000 dollars were to be provided for mills and farming assistance; and 10,000 dollars to be paid in annuities.⁸⁷ The payment of these treaty-negotiated annuities intensified a debate about the manner in which the annuities should be paid to the Sauk and Meskwaki Nations. Prior to 1834, there had not been a fixed policy: some annuities were paid in money, some in goods; some were made to the chiefs, and others to the heads of individual families. In 1834 Congress investigated a new organization of Indian policy regarding annuity payments and recommended a system whereby payments were made to the chiefs, but the resulting law still allowed for the continued possibility of individual payments, as it authorized payments in any manner specified by the Sauk principal chiefs.⁸⁸ These policy changes led to a conflict between different Sauk and Meskwaki tribal leaders about whether treaty-stipulated annuity payments should be paid to the principal chiefs or to the heads of individual families.

These two sides in the debate over the annuity payments reveal the different ways Sauk and Meskwaki leaders imagined the link between the control over economic resources and tribal organization. In his arguments for centralized, tribal control of the annuities, Keokuk suggests that the most significant problem facing the Sauk Nation stemmed from immediate economic pressures on Indian country. Since the early nineteenth century, the implementation of U.S. federal Indian policy was premised on the idea that tribal debts

⁸⁷ Ibid., 64.

⁸⁸ Green, "Sac-Fox Annuity Crisis," 143.

would make American Indians “favorably disposed to extinguishing their debts through land cessions.”⁸⁹ Keokuk’s oratory recognizes this dynamic, imagining a future situation beyond tribal debts: receiving annuity payments on a collective basis, Keokuk argues, may help reduce tribal debts and in doing so prevent further land cessions in the future.⁹⁰ In his speeches, Keokuk sees tribal control over the annuities as a means to take tribal control over the money coming into the Sauk Nation, to fashion a more intentional economic policy. Keokuk and the Meskwaki leader Appanoose had argued in 1833 that the system in which payments were made to tribal leaders, was already sanctioned by the authority with which United States representatives endowed the principal chiefs:

When any thing happens between us & the whites or between us & other Indians, to whom do you apply? . . . When difficulties are to be settled, treaties to be held, or any business of consequence to be transacted, you apply to the Chiefs. . . . The annuities should be paid in the old way—all concerned will be benefitted by it.⁹¹

Seeing the negotiations between tribal nations and the Indian Office as the legal framework for determining the proper disbursement of the annuities, Keokuk embraces the history of annuity payments as sanctioning the disbursement to the civil chiefs.

Moreover, Keokuk imagines the distribution of payments to the chiefs as being in the interest of the socially vulnerable in the Sauk Nation. At a council at Rock Island in the summer of 1833, for instance, Keokuk suggests that “[t]here is but a small portion of these annuities coming to each of us, and this mode of distributing it individual would ruin my people: as there are many among them who would take their money and buy Whiskey, instead of such articles of necessity, as they would otherwise receive.”⁹² At an 1833 council

⁸⁹ Rockwell, *Indian Affairs*, 62.

⁹⁰ Extract from talks of Keokuk, 25 and 27 March 1833. Letters Received Office of Indian Affairs. Roll 728, Sac and Fox Agency, 1824-1833.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² Council of the Sacs & Foxes, held at the Indian Agency at Rock Island, 18 June, 1833, Letters Received Office of Indian Affairs. Roll 728 Sac and Fox Agency, 1824-1833.

with William Clark at St. Louis, accompanied by all the principal chiefs and approximately ninety warriors, Keokuk's oratory insists that the annuities should be paid to "one or two" of the principal chiefs, as this would provide a measure of social security for those in need. In addition, it would offer a means to preserve peace with other tribal nations, allowing the chiefs the ability to pay off warriors who would otherwise retaliate in case of any tribal conflicts. As Keokuk explains it to Clark:

[I]n case of the deaths of a brave, or any other national occurrence, the Chiefs can buy the necessary articles to bury him. It is also the only means which the Chiefs have of turning back a war party of young men—by paying them. Sometimes a considerate Indian comes to the Chiefs, and states that a poor family are suffering for Provisions or clothing, the Chief then has to buy and give to them. Old men who cannot hunt, old women who cannot work, or find support have to be fed & clothed by the heads of the nations, and if the Chiefs have no more means to afford the required relief, than others, the helpless and miserable must suffer.⁹³

Keokuk's oratory reflects a transition from an older political economy—shaped by the redistribution of goods and the political agency of young warriors—to a new one marked by the economic imbrication of tribal nations and the United States. In envisioning the annuity payments as a collective resource for a measure of social security, Keokuk's oratory registers that the most immediate problems facing the Sauks and Meskwakis during the Removal era was the economic assault on Indian country that had been part of U.S. Indian policy since the early nineteenth century. Recognizing this structural pressure, Keokuk attempts to claim control over the pace of change.

In working within the Indian Office to insist on tribal control over the annuities, Keokuk's oratory elaborates a larger project of institutional intervention, hinged on projecting a future social place for the Sauk and Meskwaki nations through economic exchange. In June 1837, for instance, Keokuk argued in council for the payment in specie, as

⁹³ Extract from talks of Keokuck to Supt. Ind. Affs., 25 and 27 March 1833.

stipulated by the treaty. The council was held with the agent Street and Captain Edward Hitchcock, the disbursement officer to the Henry Dodge, the territorial governor of what was now Wisconsin Territory. Addressing Street and Hitchcock, Keokuk tells them he has heard rumors that the annuities will not be paid in specie but in goods—or “white hard money”:

Since our arrival, some bad birds have been singing in our ears. We have privately consulted about their talk. I have been present at every treaty made with the Sac and Fox Nations, and they promise to pay for our lands in white hard money. Since we came here, we are told we are not to get money, but goods. Our promise to our trader is to pay money, and goods will not pay one money instead. . . . When you bought our lands, we did not ask what you would do with them, they were yours to do what you pleased with them. We are told you have no more white hard money and can't pay money. We want money to pay to different people to whom we have given our promises, and we desire to be faithful.⁹⁴

It is perhaps easy to see why Keokuk is not as widely read as Black Hawk: much of his oratory from the late 1830s is devoted to the unromantic yet crucial work of managing the annuity payments. But Keokuk's insistence on receiving these payments in cash has been categorically dismissed by his contemporaries and later critics as a means to pocket the annuity payments and pay the traders of the local agents of the trading companies: the American Fur Company and the Chouteau and Company.⁹⁵

Keokuk's oratory, however, also reflects an attempt to make the political framework of U.S.-Indian treaties and annuity payments work positively for the Sauk-Meskwaki project of securing an economic presence in Iowa Territory. Keokuk's insistence on “white hard money” in the first place calls on the Indian Office to recognize its treaty obligations, holding it accountable to following up on them. Like the written record of native oratory of within the Indian Office, the need for specie is materially linked to treaty issues: in a 1837 council Keokuk argued that “[w]e sold you one land, and you promised to pay us hard

⁹⁴ At a talk held with the confederated Tribes of Sac and Fox Indians, 24 June 1837.

⁹⁵ Colbert, “Keokuk and the United States Government,” 62-63.

money for it. We moved off the land, and will abide by our Treaty, and so we hope will you.”⁹⁶ Keokuk sees a necessity for the Sauks and Meskwakis to maintain positive relations with the trading companies, as the Sauks—removed from their homelands, and experiencing rapid political and social changes—depended on American traders for a variety of goods. As Keokuk and other principal chiefs had promised to pay traders their debts in money, the payment in goods put the tribal leaders in a difficult position.

More important, Keokuk’s oratory imagines the ability to maintain tribal control over the annuities as a key factor in claiming a space for the Sauk Nation in a region that had been opened up for white settlement. A little over a month earlier, namely, in May 1837, banks in New York suspended specie payments at full face value, leading the United States into the financial panic of 1837, the start of a long-term economic depression. The panic halted the influx of settlers in the west, and coins became virtually impossible to come by in the Western Territories.⁹⁷ In the wake of the panic, specie flooded out of the territories, and Indian nations that received treaty-stipulated payments in cash became the only entities for miles around that had access to specie in a “nearly cashless world.”⁹⁸ As Susan Gray has argued in an analysis of tribal nations in western Michigan, the financial panic of 1837 and the ensuing economic depression made the reassertion of economic exchange with white settlers a key factor in Indian nations’ attempts to “claim a social and physical place.”⁹⁹ The Panic made it more appealing for settlers to keep Indian nations around, and as such their treaty-stipulated access to specie meant leverage in a society that was economically being reconfigured by the panic.

⁹⁶ At a talk held with the confederated Tribes of Sac and Fox Indians, 24 June 1837.

⁹⁷ Peter L. Rousseau, “Jacksonian Monetary Policy, Specie Flows, and the Panic of 1837,” *The Journal of Economic History* 62, no. 2 (2002): 457-459.

⁹⁸ Susan Gray, “Limits and Possibilities: White-Indian Relations in Western Michigan in the Era of Removal,” *Michigan Historical Review* 20, no. 2 (1994): 81.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 78.

From this perspective, Keokuk's insistence on treaty-stipulated payments in specie, projects a future in which the Sauk Nation could become an economically stable influence in the region, making removal an unattractive policy for white settlers in a region where coins were few and far between. The Sauks' access to coins allowed for Keokuk's imagining of a future for the Sauk Nation that moves beyond the economic pressures that U.S. Indian policy imposed on tribal nations. Keokuk's oratory thereby entertains a vision of Sauk futurity that is not only beyond tribal debts, but also reconfigures the Sauk Nation as an economic mainstay in the region. Elaborating an economic policy that was aimed at "tribal economic solvency through small land cessions," Keokuk attempted to avoid the complete loss of Sauk and Meskwaki lands and removal from Iowa.¹⁰⁰ Keokuk's arguments thereby engage the fact that Indian removal thrived on economic policies that enlisted trading houses in an attempt to lead Indian nations into debt.¹⁰¹ Recognizing the centrality of Indian debts to the vulnerability of Indian Nations, Keokuk's arguments in the annuity debate imagine a situation beyond tribal debts, wherein commercial relations between the Sauks and American traders would help the former to carve out a more solid political-economic position within a region that had been opened up for white settlement.

Throughout the 1830s the Sauk leader Hardfish (Wishecomaque) raised public notice to challenge Keokuk's leadership and the principal chiefs' control over the annuities in the 1830s. Critics of Keokuk and the "money chiefs" saw this method of disbursement as their tyrannical attempt to control or even hoard the annuity payments, arguing for disbursement either to individuals or heads of families. Hardfish was a member of the Sturgeon or Fish clan that had traditionally supplied the Sauk civil chiefs: his father had been civil chief

¹⁰⁰ Colbert, "Keokuk and the United States Government," 64.

¹⁰¹ Rockwell, *Indian Affairs*, 62. See also Rockwell, 88, 94.

before Keokuk. Hardfish had been a follower of Black Hawk's and he opposed Keokuk and the other money chiefs' control over the annuities, arguing that the distribution to tribal leaders went against the wishes of the Sauk and Meskwaki confederation's overall population. In an 1836 tribal council Hardfish was suggested to replace Keokuk as principal chief after all tribal debts were paid, but the Indian Agent Joseph Street opposed this decision and annulled it.¹⁰² Hardfish's subsequent leadership challenged both Keokuk and the Indian Office. Where the Treaty of 1832 stipulated that those affiliated with Black Hawk's "British Band" be divided up over the different Sauk and Fox towns along the Des Moines River (Keokuk, Appanoose, and Wapello's towns) Hardfish and his followers openly defied this stipulation and in 1840 established Hardfish's Town on the east shore of the Des Moines river, to the north of Wapello's Town, Keokuk's Town, and Appanoose's Town.¹⁰³

Hardfish's publication projects generated public notice to sway both public opinion and policy to counter the "money chiefs." As early as 1835 Hardfish had presented a memorial to the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, which stated that under "the existing regulations respecting the payment of our annuities, we have *again* been deprived of our just rights as members of the Sac and Fox nation."¹⁰⁴ It urged Congress to have the Superintendent of Indian Affairs pay the annuities to individuals rather than the tribal leaders. By 1840 the controversy had intensified and, as Michael Green notes, "disrupted the federal administrative apparatus in Iowa, caused bitter confrontations within the tribal

¹⁰² Colbert, "Keokuk and the United States Government," 62.

¹⁰³ Green, "Sac-Fox Annuity Crisis," 147.

¹⁰⁴ Memorial of the Chiefs, &c., of the Fox Tribe of Indians, 7 January 1835. Letters Received Office of Indian Affairs, Roll 729, Sac and Fox Agency 1834-1837. The memorial was made up in the presence of J.B. Patterson, William Cousland, Alexis Phelps, and the interpreter Joseph Cota.

councils, and in 1841 forced a change in government which temporarily removed the ‘money chiefs’ from control over the payment.”¹⁰⁵

In February of 1840, Hardfish and his followers published a “Notice to the Public” that appeared in the *Iowa Territorial Gazette*. In it, the “Chiefs and Representatives” of the Sauk and Fox tribes write against Keokuk’s authority as civil chief to the Sauks and Meskwakis. According to the memorial, Keokuk is not “authorized” by the Sauk Nation to represent them politically, since his position is intimately linked to the history of land cessions and removal:

[We] caution the public from trusting Keokuk, as he never was authorized by our nation, so to do since we have begun to sell our country to government, or to contract any debts in the name of our nation, though for years we have suffered with patience his encroachments on our rights, we have kept silent in seeing him acknowledge great sums of money as our national debts due to his friends among the white people.¹⁰⁶

The notice further urges readers to understand that no debts contracted since the last payment ought to be paid out of the tribes’ annuities. In this controversy the Hardfish faction were backed by the majority of the Meskwakis, for whom the issue was more than only the matter of individual over collective annuity payments. The Meskwaki chiefs stated that Keokuk had wrongfully used the annuities to pay off tribal debts to the American Fur Company and the Chouteau Company, but also that the Meskwaki tribe had not received a proportionate amount of the annuities following the last signed treaties.¹⁰⁷ Hardfish’s efforts at generating public notice against Keokuk and the money chiefs were greatly successful. By

¹⁰⁵ Michael D. Green, “‘We Dance in Opposite Directions’: Mesquakie (Fox) Separatism from the Sac and Fox Tribe,” *Ethnohistory* 30, no. 3 (1983), 134. In September of 1840 tensions flared up greatly between the two factions when Keokuk advised Joshua Pilcher (William Clark’s successor as Superintendent of Indian Affairs at St. Louis) to physically remove the annuity moneys from Sauk and Meskwaki country until the conflict over the method of payment was settled.

¹⁰⁶ “A Notice to the Public,” *Iowa Territorial Gazette*, February 29, 1840.

¹⁰⁷ Green, “Annuity Crisis,” 150. Joshua Pilcher (1790-1843) succeeded William Clark in this post upon his death in 1838. Pilcher served until his death in 1843.

1840, Michael Green notes, “the Governor, the legislature, various citizens’ groups, and an important Sac and Fox faction were firmly on record as opposing the prevailing payment system.”¹⁰⁸

Moreover, in raising public notice about the annuity debate, Hardfish recognized the need for a collaborator who carried significant weight, and was able to assert an authoritative voice within the territorial government. The Hardfish faction successfully recruited Robert Lucas, who was appointed as the Territorial Governor in 1838, when Wisconsin Territory split off and the Sauks and Meskwakis now found themselves within the boundaries of Iowa Territory.¹⁰⁹ In a petition dated April 22, 1840 Hardfish and his allied chiefs call on Lucas’s authority and his feelings of sympathy, in effect authorizing Lucas to speak publicly on their behalf:

All our hope is in you, Because since we have had Recours to the office of the Government of the United State none of them have shewed us so much compassion for the fate of our Tribes. . . . If it is not in your Power To make it a Law to pay our Annuities Individually, we hope that [you] will use your Influence in our behalf.¹¹⁰

Lucas, in turn, sent President Van Buren a petition with three pages of signatures from white settler “friends” in Iowa, supporting the Hardfish and arguing for individual payments.¹¹¹

This public notice was a collaborative project by which Hardfish managed to seize the interests of white settlers and Governor Lucas in order to sway public opinion against Keokuk and the money chiefs. The most important text from this collaboration is arguably Lucas’s 1840 report to the War Department on Indian Affairs in Iowa. Dated 23 October,

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 150.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 145.

¹¹⁰ Sauk and Fox Chiefs’ Petition, 22 April, 1840.

¹¹¹ Petition of Iowa settlers to President Van Buren, 5 August 1840, Letters Received, Office of Indian Affairs, Roll 730, Sac and Fox Agency, 1838-1840. Not only did Lucas agree to support the Hardfish faction, he continually circumvented the Indian agent John Beach. Lucas promised Hardfish, for instance, that the 1840 annuities would be distributed individually—circumventing not only agent Beach but also the tribal council. Green, “Annuity Crisis,” 148.

1840, Lucas's lengthy report Lucas indicts Indian agent Keokuk, John Beach, and the Chouteau Company with fashioning an unsound entanglement of interests between traders, agents, and tribal leaders. Lucas's lengthy report is based on government papers, personal correspondences, and hearsay, and proposes Lucas argues that one correspondence "point[s] the most superficial observer to the malign influence that controls the actions of two of the principal chiefs, viz. Keokuck and Appenoose."¹¹²

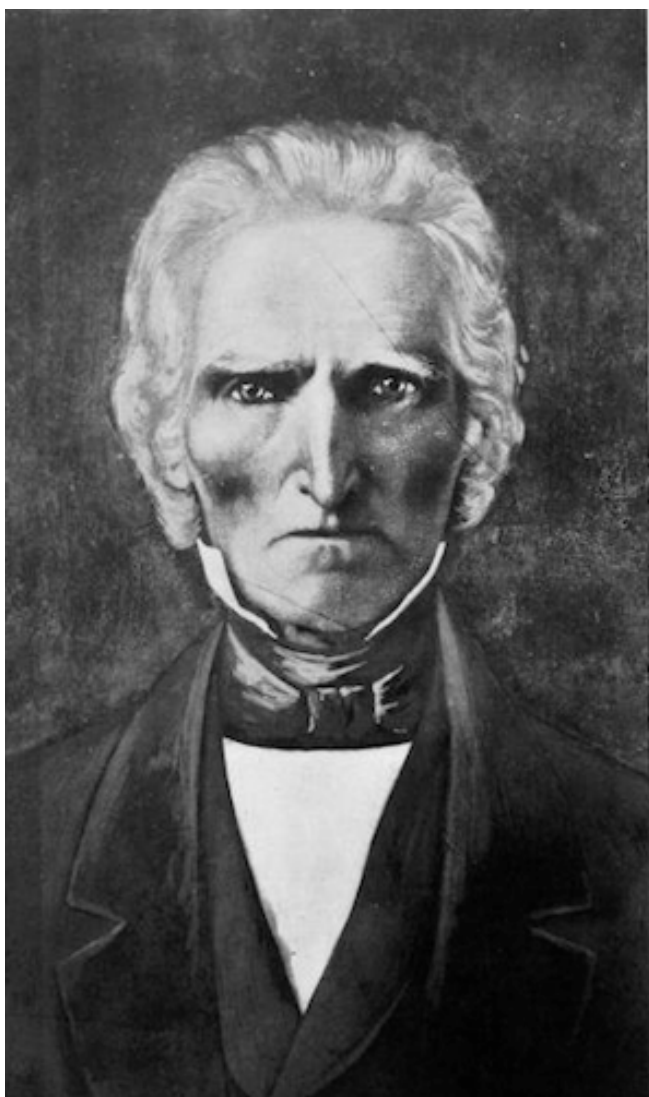


Figure 10: Portrait of Robert Lucas. Frontispiece, in John C. Parish, *Robert Lucas* (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1907).

The report to the War Department is emblematic of the anti-Keokuk discourse, placing the origins of the annuity controversy not with the economic and social pressures imposed by the treaties, trading practices, and settler encroachment, but rather with the tribal leaders themselves. Referring to the annuity controversy, Lucas states that Keokuk's actions "explain in a

¹¹² Robert Lucas, "Indian Affairs of Iowa in 1840," *Annals of Iowa: A Historical Quarterly*, Third Series, XV, no. 4 (April 1926): 262.

great measure the cause of the excitement that has . . . existed among the Indians with regard to the payment of their annuities.”¹¹³ Furthermore, Lucas accuses Keokuk of creating false documents: in an almost ironic reversal, he charges Keokuk with producing fraudulent signatures on a petition to the U.S. president in May of 1840. In the petition, dated 5 May 5, Keokuk and his allied chiefs and warriors had requested that the annuity payments be made to the tribal leaders. Addressed to “our Great Father the President of the United State, the petition reads:

We, the undersigned Chiefs, Braves [illegible], and hunters of the Confederated [Tribes] of Sacs, and Foxes, in consequence of a difference of opinion of a small portion of our nation, as to the manner of Receiving our Annuities, would respectfully ask our Great Father, to have them . . . paid as heretofore to our Chiefs.¹¹⁴

The petition is central to Lucas’s attack on Keokuk’s party, arguing that the x-marks are fraudulent since it has more signatures than the Keokuk faction would have been able to garner.¹¹⁵ If the signatures were real, Lucas argues, the Sauks and Meskwaki nations must have experienced astronomic population growth in just one year.¹¹⁶

Lucas’s report sees Keokuk as being controlled by the American Fur Company, which he argues uses Keokuk as a means to gain access to the annuities to the Sauk Nation.¹¹⁷ The payment of annuities to the tribal leaders is not explained as the conscious plan to pay traders in order to reduce tribal debts, but works the other way around: the

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 262.

¹¹⁴ Petition to the President of the United States, 5 May, 1840, Letters Received Office of Indian Affairs, Roll 730, Sac and Fox Agency, 1838-1840.

¹¹⁵ Lucas, “Indian Affairs,” 263-264.

¹¹⁶ Michael Green argues that Lucas’s accusation is “open to question.” As Green writes, “evidence . . . suggests that the Keokuk faction possibly did outnumber the Hardfish group. There are no official population statistics for the Sacs and Foxes in 1840, but a careful enumeration in September of 1842 revealed 2,348 people—1,146 males and 1,202 females. This number . . . was only 48 above the October 1841 figure. Of the total, 498 were children under ten years. Assuming no radical population shift occurred from 1840 to 1841 (and assuming one-half the children were boys), the total Sacs and Foxes numbered 897 males over ten years in 1840. If Lucas correctly estimated 250 chiefs and warriors in the Hardfish faction, that leaves 647 males, 503 which could have signed the May petition to support the money chiefs.” See Green, “Annuity Crisis,” 151.

¹¹⁷ Lucas, “Indian Affairs,” 262.

influence of the American Trade Company is assumed to co-opt any Native agency that was committed to economic solvency. In this sense, Keokuk comes to represent the problem of the Sauks and Meskwakis as a whole: Lucas writes that the Sauks “have hitherto in their intercourse been under the control of the American Fur Company, and their present condition is a living commentary upon the paternal policy of that company towards their interests. This company has for many years controlled this tribe without a rival.”¹¹⁸ Lucas sees this influence as having entailed a form of dependency that has caused the general decline of the Sauks and Meskwaki nations:

The rapid decrease in the number of this tribe presents a gloomy picture. In 1837 they are reported at 6,400 . . . they are now by actual enumeration in 1840 found to number 2,999. The mind is naturally led to inquire, Why this rapid decrease? They formed a gallant band of hunters a few years since, and brought into market upwards of \$50,000 worth of peltries annually . . . Their annuity at this time amounts to \$47,000, and still they are a miserable people . . . But what is remarkable in this nation is their opposition to the introduction of schools and missionaries among them.¹¹⁹

The perceived influence of American traders makes Lucas take recourse to a declension narrative. In the governor’s account, neither the Sauk and Meskwakis’ original mode of subsistence (hunting), nor the current dependency on annuities offers reprieve from their depredation. Their “opposition to the introduction of schools and missionaries” suggests a cultural unwillingness to change, and Lucas casts their national prospects as bleak indeed.

At the same time, Lucas’s report insists on the possibility of the economic regeneration of the Sauk and Meskwaki nation, using the tribal nations’ very geography to project alternative ways forward. Lucas narrates how in late September of 1840 he and the miller Jeremiah Smith visited the new town on the Des Moines River where Hardfish and

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 264.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 264.

his faction had established themselves.¹²⁰ Lucas stresses the town's prosperous outlook, naming Hardfish's town "the neatest looking village I have seen in the Indian country."¹²¹ Besides the town's professed dedication to peaceful relations with neighboring tribes, Lucas observes a desire to establish schools in the nation:

I made some inquiries relative to the establishment of schools among them. They observed that it would be a good thing, and some of them expressed a desire to have their children taught. I requested them to think on the subject, and told them that if after mature consideration they should think it advisable to have a school established among them that we would endeavor to send some good man to live with them who would not want their money or their land, but whose whole object would be to do them good, and to instruct their children.¹²²

In Lucas's Report, then, Hardfish's town shows the potential of what the Sauk and Meskwaki nation could, and should, aspire to. Lucas notes that before his visit the town had been represented to Lucas as "the residence of a set of seceders from the confederated tribes, the remnants of the war party who were endeavoring to establish themselves in violation of the treaty of 1832." However, Lucas finds it not to be the provisional settlement of a band of squatters, but "the most thriving and populous village in the nation and inhabited by the most sober and orderly Indians, many of whom declare that they came there to get away from the scenes of dissipation that were constantly carried on at the lower towns."¹²³ In this remarkable description, Lucas finds in Hardfish town an indigenous echo of a settler-colonial narrative: escaping the vices of village life, the Hardfish faction blossoms and seems amenable to "civilization" in a remote, unauthorized settlement that draws away from established structures of power. The Hardfish town thereby signals a modernizing impulse: Lucas uses the rhetoric of education and civilization to imagine a regeneration of Sauk life

¹²⁰ Philip D. Jordan, "Iowa's Puzzling Jeremiah Smiths," *Annals of Iowa* 45, no. 5 (1980): 362-368.

¹²¹ Lucas, "Indian Affairs," 272.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 272-273.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 273.

that is predicated on its (literal) movement away from the corrupting influences of Keokuk and the money chiefs, and the American Fur Company.

By contrast, the towns of Keokuk and the money chiefs represent the emblems of Indian degradation: the established towns further south on the Des Moines River offer only scenes of dissipation. Lucas explains that although the flooding of the Iowa River did not permit him to visit Keokuk's, Appanoose's and Wapello's towns, he reports they are "situated in the vicinity of the American Fur Company's trading house," and present a "dilapidated appearance." Lucas continues:

Everything about them have evident marks of dissipation and its destructive effects. A gentleman who resides in the vicinity informed me that during the summer there appeared to be an almost constant scene of dissipation and revelry, that whiskey by the barrel had been landed on the bank of the river at Keokuck's town, and that from the noise of the confusion kept up at the towns he supposed that upwards of fifty barrels must have been used by them the season.¹²⁴

Again, the information from the "gentleman" links the economic condition of the Sauk towns to the idea that they were unduly influenced by traders. The proximity of the established towns to the American Fur Company's trading house is pivotal to Lucas's argument, which holds that "the benevolent designs of government toward the Indians could never be consummated until the power and influence of the traders were counteracted."¹²⁵ Within the sphere of American traders, the older Sauk towns were destined to remain merely the puppets of the American Fur Company's designs.

Lucas, then, explains the very geography of the Sauk Nation through his notion of the varying degrees of governmental efficiency of Hardfish and Keokuk. In a sense Lucas's report recognizes the same problems that Keokuk's oratory does: economic hardship, the influence of traders on tribal affairs, and the influx of hard liquors into tribal nations. But

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 275.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 278.

whereas Keokuk envisions a strategy of negotiating between tribal leaders, the Indian Office, and trading companies to negotiate a social place for the Sauks and Meskwakis in Iowa Territory, Lucas suggests that the problem of settler encroachment is beyond the scope of this diplomatic work. Lucas instead argues that the only way for the Sauk Nation to exist is through what he euphemistically calls “emigration”:

The Sac and Fox Indians, from once being warlike and a terror to their enemies, are fast progressing towards extermination. And it seems to me that nothing but emigration from their present residence can wrest them from the avaricious control of the traders, and the blighting effects of intemperance, which combined are fast hastening to the lowest degree of degradation. . . . I am under the impression that the ensuing year would be peculiarly favourable for treating with them for a cession of their whole country and their removal south of Missouri.¹²⁶

Advocating removal to Indian Territory and the wholesale cession of Sauk lands, Lucas’s report juxtaposes the blossoming Hardfish’s town with the dilapidated lower towns. Lucas intervenes in the intertribal debate through which Sauk futurity was being negotiated, but in promoting Sauk removal to the War Department, Lucas’s report sees the potential of the Hardfish town as having already been superseded by a settler state that is imagined through Indian removal. In other words, Lucas’s report only takes the possibility of a Sauk futurity seriously to the extent that it suggests the promise of the Sauks and Meskwakis’ economic regeneration only after removal.

Hardfish successfully claimed a measure of control over an influential figure within the Iowa territorial government. Finding in Lucas a collaborator who could sway public opinion and policy, Hardfish’s anti-Keokuk discourse overlapped with Lucas’s projections for Sauk futurity. But in this publication project the convergence of these two goals also co-opts the annuity debate for Lucas’s more ambitious plans for a “pacified” and fortified frontier. Hardfish’s publication project was not only fraught but potentially dangerous. Ten

¹²⁶ Ibid., 278.

days after he submitted his report to the War Department, Lucas gave a speech to the legislative assembly of Iowa Territory in which he pitched the annuity payment crisis as a signifier of potential Native hostility. In his oratory Lucas suggests that the delays in the annuity payments that the controversy was causing had the potential to incite the Sauks and Meskwakis to violence. In his address to the Iowa legislative assembly, therefore, the annuity debate becomes an incentive for debating not Sauk-Meskwaki political organization but the safety of the “frontier”:

I have little doubt but that [the annuities] will be distributed among the different bands justly, and be paid, as far as it will go, towards the liquidation of their just debts. But should the payment, from any consideration, be much longer delayed, there is danger that the excitement produced by its postponement will burst beyond the bounds of restraint and thereby endanger the peace of our frontier.¹²⁷

The projection of lawlessness onto the Sauks and Meskwakis justifies in Lucas’s message the prospect of “frontier” pacification. Although there had been no sign of the annuities stirring up violence, Lucas sees the intra-tribal debate as a cause of “excitement” that could endanger the tranquility of the frontier. Lucas’s speech to the legislative assembly, then, assumes that intra-tribal debate would devolve into violent conflict. This, in turn, justifies Lucas’s plans for consolidating Iowa Territory militarily, arguing that Iowans should be “prepared to meet every possible contingency that might endanger the peace of our frontier.” The potential for “Indian depredations” here becomes a prerequisite for establishing a territorial army of settler volunteers:

In consideration of this state of things, I would respectfully suggest to the legislative assembly the expediency of authorizing by law, the organization of a number of mounted volunteer riflemen, say one company at least to every regiment of militia within the Territory, with authority for the commandment of any brigade to increase

¹²⁷ Robert Lucas, “Third Annual Message, November 3, 1840,” in Benjamin F. Shambaugh, ed., *The Messages and Proclamations of the Governors of Iowa* (Iowa City: State Historical Society of Iowa, 1903), 151.

the number to a battalion within his brigade, and to provide for calling them into service in case of Indian depredations or threatened invasion.¹²⁸

To aid the prospect of fortifying the frontier, Lucas further notes that he has received information that the War Department had made plans to establish a “depot of public arms and munitions of war” at Rock Island, to be “supplied to the citizens of the Territory under proper regulations, should the same be wanted to enable them to defend themselves against Indian hostilities.”¹²⁹

Hardfish’s collaboration with Lucas can then be termed a publication project gone awry. As Lucas effectively outlines his Indian policy, he betrays Harfish not only to the federal government but also to that of the Iowa Territory. Hardfish’s efforts to generate public notice about the annuity debate are co-opted by Lucas to outline a settler manifest of Indian hostility and pacification. That Lucas and Iowan settlers publicly supported Hardfish and his party, should then be met with some suspicion. As Michael Green explains, the logic behind supporting the individual payments is that it would prevent disgruntled Sauks and Meskwakis from coming into white settlements to seek compensation for missed annuities: “Iowans were concerned largely with justice for themselves. . . . If the annuities were distributed directly, they argued, the Indians would not commit depredations ‘to supply themselves with the necessaries.’” But Iowans were even more worried, Green notes, by “the threat by the Hardfish faction that they would sell no more land if Keokuk and his chiefs continued to control the annuity money.”¹³⁰

Hardfish’s success in soliciting the support of Governor Lucas thus shows the double-sidedness of how Native tribal leaders entered public discourse. Lucas’s intervention

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 151-152.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 152.

¹³⁰ Green, “Annuity Crisis,” 149.

in the debate casts intra-tribal disagreement as merely a pretext for imagining Indian nations as an “outside” threat to the tranquility of the frontier. Abandoning the policy specifics of the annuity debates, Lucas’s publications reflect a wider pattern of settler ideology that Philip Deloria has pointed out, in which any sort of conflict was taken by settlers as a pretext for making it “seem as if the United States had been defending its own territory all the time.”¹³¹ If Hardfish was able to challenge the Indian Office’s institutional support for Keokuk, he was not finally able to upend the conditions of publication, in which Robert Lucas’s collaboration served a political agenda that did not imagine a future Sauk-Meskwaki presence in Iowa Territory.

But Hardfish’s intervention did disrupt the routines of Indian Affairs in Iowa for several years. The annuities to the Sauks and Meskwakis were paid to the tribal chiefs as usual in 1840; then the following year half of the payments would be made collectively and half to individual families. All of the payments were made to heads of families in 1842. As divisive as the annuity controversy had been, however, the Hardfish and Keokuk factions united in 1841 over the political question of removal. At the annuity payments of 1841—perhaps swayed by Lucas’s recommendation in his report to the War Department—U.S. commissioners pushed for the Sauk and Meskwaki nations to remove to present-day Minnesota. In protesting the commissioners, Hardfish now supported Keokuk’s role as spokesperson of the Sauks and Meskwakis to the U.S. government. But as the nations did not manage to achieve tribal solvency, and their tribal debts started to exceed annuity payments by 1842, the confederated nations agreed that year to remove to Western Iowa in 1843 and to Indian Territory four years later.

¹³¹ Philip J. Deloria, “From Nation to Neighborhood: Land, Policy, Colonialism, and Empire in U.S.-Indian Relations,” in *The Cultural Turn in U.S. History: Past, Present, Future*, edited by James W. Cook, Lawrence B. Glickman, and Michael O’Malley (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 353.

The Sauk Nation's time in Iowa, from 1832 to 1847, was thus marked by intra-tribal schisms, a crisis of leadership, and the crippling pressures of white encroachment, tribal debts, and removal policy. Keokuk and Hardfish both tried to map out a future course for the Sauk Nation by managing U.S.-Indian relations within federal and territorial government networks. Both articulated visions of how to claim a social and physical space in Iowa Territory during a time of an increasing influx of settlers. And both their projects were a sustained intervention in the entangled networks of Sauk-Meskwaki tribal leaders, the Office of Indian Affairs, and the territorial government. In their attempt to assert what Anne Mische calls an "imaginary horizon of multiple plans and possibilities," Hardfish and Keokuk saw policy change as directly linked to social and economic change, and intervened in U.S.-Indian relations to elaborate a wider, land-centered project of staking a permanent claim to Sauk and Meskwaki lands in Iowa Territory.¹³² This resistance of removal did not take the form of violent U.S.-Indian conflict, in spite of the consistent encroachment of whites onto tribal lands. Rather, Hardfish and Keokuk's projected paths to a permanent tribal future that insisted on the importance of the (re-)assertion of economic relations with white settlers. Through the cultural-political translation of these projects, however, Lucas's policy proposals raised the specter of Indian violence as an explanatory framework, and impeded the Sauks and Meskwakis' attempt to claim an economic place within Iowa Territory.

¹³² Ann Mische, "Projects and Possibilities: Researching Futures in Action," *Sociological Forum* 24, no. 3 (Sep. 2009): 696. See also Ann Mische and Philippa Pattison, "Composing a civic arena: Publics, projects, and social settings," *Poetics* 27 (2000): 163-194.

1.5 Conclusion

The publication projects of Black Hawk, Keokuk, and Hardfish constructed Sauk collectivity in ways that were concerned with contemporary problems and a debated and contested vision for the future. They differently engaged Native and settler interlocutors, and posed the question of how to reorganize the Sauk Nation in light of the pressures of tribal debts, ecological changes, and white encroachment. And they presented Black Hawk, Keokuk, and Hardfish as authorized agents to speak for the Sauks and Meskwakis as a political body. In hindsight these projects may seem to register little more than the end-game of settler colonialism, in which the “elimination of the native” is always the ultimate goal. But there is also an attempt in these projects to make the organizational structures of the state work differently—to be amenable to self-defined projections of the future for the Sauk and Meskwaki nations. While the publication projects of Black Hawk, Hardfish, and Keokuk register colonial dynamics in which Native agency was circumscribed and even co-opted, they also address, critique, and attempt to upend the very economic and political pressures through which removal was enforced in Sauk and Meskwaki country.

The history of Sauk writing and oratory in the era of removal thereby complicates dominant understandings of how Indian removal was effected and contested. The publication projects of Black Hawk, Keokuk, and Hardfish reflect that because of the decentralization of Indian affairs, removal was not a singular event but a drawn-out political process that spanned decades. And rather than a monolithic settler state, it depended on the agency of a range of government agents, trades, territorial governments, and settler publics. The triangulation of these different publication projects therefore helps to recover otherwise neglected critiques of settler colonialism in the nineteenth century. To be sure, Black

Hawk's *Life of Ma-Ka-Tai-Me-She-Kia-Kiak* is a landmark text in the history of Native American writing and American literature, and in no uncertain terms denounces the political, ecological, and military assault on Indian Nations in the Midwest—and most importantly lays bare American violence in the Black Hawk War. As John P. Bowles has argued, however, for northern and Midwestern tribal nations, Indian removal was also a systemic attack on tribal sovereignty that covered multiple decades, and refracted a range of political and economic pressures that were shaped by regional and local contexts and agencies.¹³³ The oral and written publications of Keokuk and Hardfish, in other words, register the contestation of settler encroachment and U.S. land claims beyond the historical events of the Black Hawk War.

Studies of early Native American writing and performance may therefore productively build on scholarship in print culture studies that have challenged categorical divisions between print publishing, manuscript writing, and oratory.¹³⁴ By reading Native American print publications alongside the oratory of tribal leaders in the records of the Indian Office and territorial governments, we may arrive at a fuller understanding of the conditions, strategies, and rhetoric of Native American publication—broadly conceived. Not only will this undo longstanding binaries of oral and written cultures, it will also offer a more nuanced picture of how Native writers and speakers have generated public discourse. Moreover, to reclaim these different modes of writing under a broader category of “publication” offers a more complete understanding of the multi-faceted critiques of settler encroachment and Indian policy that Native people generated. For Black Hawk, Keokuk, and Hardfish, their navigation of American institutions amounted to a sustained critique of

¹³³ John P. Bowles, “Indian Removal beyond the Removal Act,” *NAIS*, 1, no. 1 (2014): 65-87.

¹³⁴ See “Introduction,” 9-15.

U.S. settler colonialism. In this context any political projectivity necessarily engaged the less-than-ideal and limited choices imposed by removal policy and the institutional failures of the Indian Office. But the work of intervening in the networks where these issues were both elaborated and contested, mattered then as it does today.

Chapter Three

Projects of Negotiation

Indian Removal and Choctaw Nation-building in the Writings of Peter Pitchlynn

1.1 Introduction

In the early 1860s the Choctaw tribal leader Peter Pitchlynn narrated the story of his life to the Michigan-born author Charles Lanman. In the ensuing sketch, Pitchlynn's diplomatic travels represent to Lanman "the most important and romantic incidents in his career."¹ In Lanman's hands Pitchlynn's 1828 expedition to survey Indian Territory becomes a fabricated tale of "severe skirmishes with the Comanche Indians," in keeping with the "wild and romantic country" through which he had traveled.² Pitchlynn himself, a wealthy slave-owner with several years of formal education, becomes an Indian chief who also performed the "duties of a cow-boy," "roam[ed] the forests for game," and "fill[ed] his mind with the

¹ Charles Lanman, *Recollections of Curious Characters and Pleasant Places* (Edinburgh: D. Douglas, 1881), 70.

² *Ibid.*, 79. Born in Michigan Territory, Charles Lanman (1819-1895) was an artist, explorer, librarian, and editor who achieved some measure of public notice with his travelogue *A Summer in the Wilderness* (1847). Lanman had already published a biographical sketch about Pitchlynn in an 1870 article in the *Atlantic Monthly*. As the compiler of a government-sponsored collection of biographies of congressmen, it is likely that Lanman and Pitchlynn had one or more interviews during Pitchlynn's many diplomatic visits to Washington in the 1850s and 1860s. In both his *Atlantic Monthly* article and in *Recollections* Lanman notes that his sketch of Pitchlynn is based on conversations with him.

refining influences of nature.”³ And Pitchlynn’s love of nature makes him particularly suited to tell the “history and romantic traditions” of the Choctaws:

[H]is love of nature is so acute, and his appreciation of the beautiful so delicate, that his narratives are oftentimes exceedingly charming. . . . [H]e has communicated to the writer many Choctaw legends, stored up in his retentive memory, which . . . but for his appreciation of their beauty would scarcely have been repeated to a white man.⁴

Pitchlynn’s embodiment of Choctaw culture and his love of nature, Lanman writes, make him the very “poet of his people.”

Lanman’s portrait of Pitchlynn imagines a naturalized link between the Pitchlynn as a tribal leader and Choctaw nationhood, as expressed in its “traditions” and history. But unsurprisingly (and unromantically), Pitchlynn’s position as a public figure had little to do with any natural embodiment of Choctaw nationhood. During the period of Choctaw removal and the rebuilding of Nation in Indian Territory—from the 1820s through the 1850s—Pitchlynn secured a role as a public figure through acts of writing: transcribing Choctaw council meetings, promoting education, and petitioning the U.S. government. Although Pitchlynn did not become principal chief of the Choctaws until the 1860s, he emerged as one of the most important Choctaw writers and tribal leaders in the first half of the nineteenth century. In spite of this central status in Choctaw cultural and political life, attention to Pitchlynn within studies of nineteenth-century literature has been marginal. The literary scholar Robert Dale Parker has corrected some of this lacuna by including two of Pitchlynn’s manuscript poems in his recent collection of early Native American poetry.⁵ As Parker acknowledges, these poems represent a mere fraction of Pitchlynn’s written work:

³ Ibid., 67-68.

⁴ Ibid., 88, 93-94.

⁵ Robert Dale Parker, ed., *Changing is not Vanishing: A Collection of Early American Indian Poetry to 1930* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011), 135-137.

He played key roles in writing the Choctaw constitution in 1826 and again in 1834, in writing Choctaw laws over many years, and in negotiating the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit in 1830, which forced the Choctaws to leave their homeland. He also played key roles in armed opposition to the same treaty, in founding the Choctaw educational system in Indian Territory, and in many additional treaties and negotiations with the United States, often representing the Choctaws in Washington, D.C.⁶

Within Native American literary studies, however, Pitchlynn has been accessed not through his written work, but through a brief representation of him in Charles Dickens's *American Notes for General Circulation* (1842).⁷

By extending the literary study of Pitchlynn's writing to a range of collaborative publication projects, I mean to show that Pitchlynn's prominence as a writer and tribal leader emerged through the work of mediating between tribal, religious, and governmental networks. As a Choctaw councilmember, educator, and diplomat, Pitchlynn published many of his writings within the context of the negotiation of Choctaw removal and the rebuilding of the Choctaw Nation west of the Mississippi. In this chapter I therefore ask what happens when publication projects contribute to larger projects of nation-building—the attempts to establish and modify legal, political, and educational institutions in the Choctaw Nation. Pitchlynn's collaborative writings both managed and contested Choctaw removal and its legal and political legacy, and he elaborated Choctaw nation-building and education in ways that claimed a political space for the Choctaw Nation, even when perpetuating existing social and racial hierarchies within it.

To make this argument, the first section of this chapter explores three collaborative publication projects Pitchlynn participated in between 1826 and 1832: the records of the

⁶ Ibid., 135.

⁷ See Gerald Vizenor, *Fugitive Poses: Native American Indian Scenes of Absence and Presence* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998), 81-90; Kate Flint, *The Transatlantic Indian, 1776-1930* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 147-148; Jace Weaver, *The Red Atlantic: American Indigenes and the Making of the Modern World, 1000-1927* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2014), 12, 24, 104.

Choctaw General Council meetings (1826-1828); a report of an expedition to survey Choctaw lands in Indian territory (1828); and a letter to Lewis Cass to critique the implementation of Choctaw removal (1832). These collaborative publications address the exigencies of removal policy and project Choctaw nationalism after removal. Mediating between the Choctaw tribal council, the Indian Office, and religious groups, they were shaped by the political discourses on removal, but also register the attempt to claim a place for a modernized Choctaw Nation in North America.

The second section looks at manuscript and printed sources to examine how Pitchlynn contributed to wider nation-building efforts by championing educational institutions for the Choctaw Nation. Contemporary commentators like Charles Dickens and George Catlin read Pitchlynn's self-presentation as an educated man of letters as registering ideologies of Native assimilation and "civilization." Yet for Pitchlynn education was a resource for tribal organization in a colonial situation, and he promoted Choctaw schools as sites of self-determination. Making and remaking tribal-national educational institutions, Pitchlynn's often opportunistic educational schemes nevertheless projected a Choctaw futurity west of the Mississippi that invested in education as a public good and a resource for affirming tribal sovereignty.

Finally, the third section examines the publications projects related to Pitchlynn's diplomatic work in the late 1840s and 1850s. In a collaboratively written protest against a congressional bill to reorganize Indian Territory (1849), Pitchlynn presented a nationalist argument against the reorganization of Indian Territory based on Choctaw removal history and the centrality of tribal nations' treaties with the United States. The protest mobilizes a notion of intertribal difference that affirms Choctaw education as a resource for Choctaw

nationalism. I next examine the oral and written publications that came out of an 1854 delegation to Washington led by Pitchlynn, during which he took part in a series of councils, ceremonies, and writing projects in order to contest the American Government's failure to recognize the land claims of Choctaw landowners. Introducing a nationalist history of the Choctaw Nation within U.S. governmental discourses, this publication project elaborated an anticolonial critique of the very practice of treaty-making.

This chapter thereby asks how Pitchlynn contributed to a literary record of Choctaw nationalism, and how tribal nationalism figured rhetorically for tribal leaders who developed tribal institutions through the work of negotiating U.S.-Indian relations. The literary nationalism of Pitchlynn was not defined according to culturalist notions of tribal tradition that, as Craig Womack has influentially suggested, determine the boundaries of what can be called tribal-national literatures.⁸ Rather, Pitchlynn's writings underscore what Scott Richard Lyons calls a "realist" nationalism that recognizes that at "the moment of treaty," Indian nations were more diverse and complex than notions of tradition and ancestry can fully capture.⁹ Pitchlynn's writings often reflect pragmatist—and sometimes opportunistic—modes of address and rhetorical strategies, and they played into existing social hierarchies within the Choctaw Nation. Moreover, they were not able to fully resist the ideology and implementation of Indian removal. At the same time, these various writings insist on the right and ability of the Choctaws for self-determination, and claim a political place for the Choctaw Nation as a modern and diverse Nation. At stake in my analysis of Pitchlynn's

⁸ Craig Womack, *Red on Red: Native American Literary Separatism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 1-24.

⁹ Scott Richard Lyons, *X-Marks: Native Signatures of Assent* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 140. In this analysis, acts of writing do not only reproduce or "reflect" existing traditions or notions of culture, but also constitute "the modernization of oral traditions" as the "nationalization [and] modernization of an *ethnie*" (156).

writings, then, is the idea that the work of Choctaw nation-building was not disconnected from the interests and political power of educated, propertied men who were able to claim prominence as tribal representatives. In an economically stratified and slaveholding tribal nation, the work of championing education, contesting treaties, and asserting tribal sovereignty perpetuated existing social hierarchies within the Choctaw Nation. Furthermore, as Pitchlynn's political role emerged through the work of negotiating removal, his leadership position was an effect of the very governmental, religious, and educational networks that he critiqued. This ought not to suggest, however, that Pitchlynn's writings, oratory, and educational schemes are most productively read as an assimilationist or inauthentic voice in nineteenth-century Native American writing. These publication projects construct a public, tribal-nationalist perspective on the colonial practice of U.S.-Indian treaty-making, and they contribute to a writing tradition that laid a basis for imagining Choctaw futurity in material terms.

1.2 Reconstructing Choctaw National Space in Peter Pitchlynn's Removal Writings

Peter Pitchlynn (1806-1881) belonged to a generation of young, educated, and privileged mixed-race men who came to dominate Choctaw public life in the 1820s and 1830s. He was born in the Choctaw community of Hush-ook-wa, in present-day northeastern Mississippi. His father was the Scottish immigrant trader John Pitchlynn, and his mother was Sophia Folsom, the Choctaw daughter of Ebenezer Folsom. Pitchlynn was born to a wealth landowning and slaveholding family that derived not only prominence from their economic position, but also from their relation to Mushulatubbee, one of the Nation's principal chiefs. In 1824 Pitchlynn married Rhoda Folsom, the sister of the Choctaw leader David Folsom of

the Northeastern District, and the same year Pitchlynn was elected captain of the tribal police force called the Lighthorse, a position that gained him the title of “colonel” that he used throughout his life and career. Pitchlynn’s social prominence is reflected in the literary record of the early nineteenth-century Choctaw Nation: he wrote not only the Choctaw Council records that formed the bases of the Choctaw Constitution in the 1820s, but also several key documents that negotiated Choctaw removal.

In this first chapter section, I analyze the Choctaw Council records of 1826, Pitchlynn’s diary of an 1827 exploration of Indian Territory, and an 1832 letter from Pitchlynn to the United States Secretary of War. Together these writings reflect how the politically fraught negotiations of Choctaw affairs in the context of removal, also contributed to wider projects of Choctaw nation-building. Pitchlynn’s prominence as a public figure took shape in the 1820s as the Choctaw National Council appointed him to several long-term tasks: to function as scribe at the Council Meetings where a national legal framework was drafted; to explore and report on the ceded territories west of the Mississippi where the Choctaw Nation would potentially move to; and to oversee the practical implementation of removal after the Treaty of 1832. These appointments were occasions for several publication projects in which Pitchlynn co-authored state papers, and collected and recorded the political arguments on removal by tribal leaders, U.S. governmental figures, and religious groups. Rather than presupposing existing factions that were either for or against removal, these publications show how a more fluid process in which removal became a central impetus for the reorganization of tribal political structures and the incorporation of western lands into Choctaw national space.

Pitchlynn's social-economic status and mixed-race identity has shaped the critical appraisal of Pitchlynn as a central figure in these processes of negotiation. W. David Baird's detailed 1972 biography (which is still the standard monograph on Pitchlynn), has shown that his involvement in tribal affairs was often spurred by the economic interests of his own family, as well as those of a wider class of mixed-race Choctaw elites.¹⁰ It underscores the extent to which indigenous nationalist movements developed through the pragmatist politics of tribal leaders who represented their people politically even when they also represented a more exclusive class within a highly stratified society. Such dynamics, however, are often interpreted as suggesting a primarily cultural conflict between traditional Choctaw society and the imposition of Euro-American religion, cultural values, and institutions. For instance, the historian Donna Akers has argued that Pitchlynn's life and career are best understood as registering his identity as a mixed-race Choctaw leader, laying "claims to two different worlds: that of the Choctaws and that of Euro-Americans."¹¹ In this analysis, "Pitchlynn's life reflected a syncretic identity," and although "he continued to assert his identity as 'Choctaw' throughout his life, his identity was not that of the traditional people."¹²

Akers's analysis rests on a spatial notion of "culture," in which Pitchlynn's political and educational work is imagined as wavering between two opposite ends of a spectrum—neither wholly Euro-American nor wholly Choctaw. My disagreement with such analyses, however, is that they read the negotiations between Native politicians and the U.S. government through a culturalist lens that downplays the actual political aims and strategies of tribal representatives. More productively, Frederick Hoxie's *This Indian Country* places

¹⁰ W. David Baird, *Peter Pitchlynn: Chief of the Choctaws* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1972).

¹¹ Donna Akers, "Peter P. Pitchlynn: Race and Identity in Nineteenth-Century America," in *The Human Tradition in Antebellum America*, edited by Michael A. Morrison (Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, 2000), 132.

¹² *Ibid.*, 132-133.

Pitchlynn among a wider cohort of American Indian activists including the Choctaw lawyer James McDonald and the Cherokee chief William Potter Ross. Hoxie demonstrates how Native American activists used diplomatic work to protest U.S. expansion and to secure a political presence for tribal nations through courts, legislative bodies, and public opinion.¹³ By extending the emphasis on such negotiating strategies to Pitchlynn's literary record, I suggest that his collaborative writings were publication projects that contributed to innovations in tribal institutions in the Choctaw Nation—innovations that were shaped by the colonial context of U.S.-Indian relations, removal, and existing social diversity and hierarchies in the Choctaw Nation. These publication projects, then, are not primarily statements of identity or of fixed political positions: rather, they are situational acts of writing and speaking that imagined possibilities for tribal futures through the dialogic process of establishing and modifying tribal institutions.

It is in this context that Pitchlynn—then only twenty years old—entered the Choctaw Nation's literary record in August 1826, as the secretary to the meetings of the Choctaw General Council. During these meetings, the Council adopted the Nation's first set of laws that applied to all three of its districts, and missionaries referred to Pitchlynn's written record of the meetings as the Choctaws' first "constitution."¹⁴ Held on three different occasions between August 1826 and August 1828, it laid the groundwork for establishing the newly agreed-upon civil and criminal laws, institutions, and political organization of the Choctaw Nation. Pitchlynn was tasked with transcribing the meetings, which agreed on a legal framework for the tribe's organization. The records of the three meetings between

¹³ Frederick Hoxie, *This Indian Country: American Indian Activists and the Place They Made* (New York, Penguin, 2012), see especially 45-142.

¹⁴ *Report of the American Board of Commissioners Foreign Missions, Compiled from Documents Laid Before the Board, at the Eighteenth Annual Meeting* (Boston: Crocker and Brewster, 1827), 122-123.

1826 and 1828 formulate the procedures for passing laws, the frequency of general council meetings, and political representation. It also initiated a “standing committee” for using annuity moneys from the U.S. government, charged with “oversee[ing] their lawful use to benefit the Choctaw nation” and preventing the “wanton, unlawful use of these funds”¹⁵ Mostly, the records outline laws regarding criminal punishment, marriage practices, and property ownership—including laws related to the ownership and punishment of slaves. The records of the 1826 meeting were signed by the speakers of three district chiefs Tvepahumma, David Folsom, and Greenwood LeFlore; fifteen “shamans, captains, and warriors”; and sixty other attendees. The transcript ends with the statement that the scribe Moses Foster and Peter Pitchlynn “have documented all of this.”¹⁶

Pitchlynn’s records represent a collaborative project to change existing structures for the purpose of tribal reorganization: to use writing as a means to organize as a centralized tribal Nation. An oral performance between the participants in the council and Pitchlynn as scribe, Pitchlynn’s transcription reproduced in writing the political innovations that were happening in the Choctaw Nation during the 1820s, when alphabetic writing had become a central technology in a movement to rebuild Choctaw legal, educational, and governmental institutions. Registering a political interest in institution-building, Pitchlynn’s records negotiate between a desire for continuity between past and present forms of Choctaw political organization, and a need to develop procedures for replacing old laws that will be “laid aside and forgotten.” The August 1826 Council Meetings records state:

So it is that each district has always possessed laws. In the past, our forefathers always had laws for all concerns. If the new Choctaw laws that are being legislated

¹⁵ Peter Perkins Pitchlynn, *A Gathering of Statesmen: Records of the Choctaw Council Meetings, 1826-1828*, ed. and transl. Marcia Haag and Henry J. Willis (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2013), 54. Originally recording the meeting in the Choctaw language, Pitchlynn produced the records also in an English version.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 65-66.

are quite problematic, and if the old laws are completely laid aside and forgotten, this new law needs to be permitted and approved by the Nation, through this procedure.¹⁷

In weighing the value of old and new laws, the record makes a distinction between “laws” and “strong laws.” It suggests that there is a sense of continuity in that the current council projects into the future the traditional practice of district chiefs’ law-making. The text of the council emphasizes the agents of the legislative process, imagining tribal representatives’ agency in the present as a permanent element of government:

In the past we have always had laws; however the Choctaw people shall possess this series of strong laws. We have efficient councilmen and we shall continue to legislate. And so it is, we are thus passing laws—however, on other days, the same legislators may find the passed legislation does not meet standards. If there is a mistake on the record, we shall erase it.¹⁸

In this instance, the current national deliberations affirm an ancestral precedence that legitimates the council meetings’ innovative purposes. At the same time, the procedures it outlines for amending the record suggests that the laws are only legitimate in the context of ongoing oral deliberation between the lawmakers from the different districts.

¹⁷ Ibid., 49-50.

¹⁸ Ibid., 61.

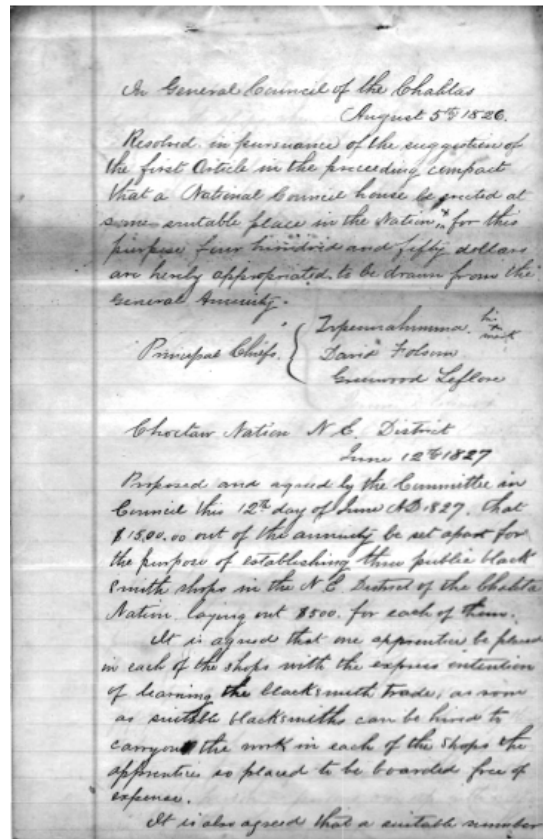


Figure 11: Records of the Choctaw Council Meeting. Pitchlynn wrote an English version of the records of the Choctaw Council Meeting of 1826. Peter Pitchlynn Collection Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Libraries, Norman, Oklahoma. Accessed 26 July, 2015. <<https://digital.libraries.ou.edu>>

In this sense, the formulation of new laws is a projective act of interpretation, in which the past serves as a national framework for establishing laws and governance structures in the presence.¹⁹ As the General Council meeting records reflect an impetus to centralize Choctaw political organization and consolidate political power, this projectivity is explicitly nationalist rather than tribal. The Choctaw Nation was organized into three

¹⁹ In a more contemporary example of this dynamic, Audra Simpson's *Mohawk Interruptus* analyzes the writings of the twentieth-century Mohawk tribal leader and intellectual Louis Hall, highlighting how within nationalist rhetorical strategies older political traditions serve as "a just and desirable model for governance, but one that may be revised and transformed according to its own democratic principles, rather than procedure." Such processes of nation-building, Simpson suggests, "are premised upon the belief that the past shall be made dynamic by the demands of the present and the hopes of the future." Audra Simpson, *Mohawk Interruptus: Political Life across the Borders of Settler States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2014), 28.

districts: Okla Falaya, or the Western District; Ahepat Okla, or the Northeastern districts; and Okla Hannali, the Southeastern District. In the past the leaders of the separate districts had frequently come together in council, and had established laws in each. But these laws were tied to the social life of families and clans, and given the increasing centrality of U.S. treaty-making to Choctaw political life in the 1820s, the Council records established for the first time a set of laws that “applied uniformly to the whole nation and that centralized power in the hands of a single group of people.”²⁰ The record of the meeting of 5 August 1826 registers concerns about the ineffectiveness of the political decentralizations of the three districts. As Clara Sue Kidwell suggests, the need to “be of one mind” speaks to the need for agreement between the tribal leaders of the different districts in order to organize effectively—and “think”—as a nation.²¹ Pitchlynn’s records state:

What value can we provide for our Nation? This shall be our concern. These concerns are, that those of us here continue not to be of one mind, and we are ineffective. It is necessary for us to finally conclude that we are certainly not effective at the things we are doing. If we continue to work and to finalize this legislation it shall be worth the time and effort for our nation. And we shall proceed to pass a few of these laws.²²

In this instance, Pitchlynn records the council in language that explicitly reads as recorded oral speech: the use of the collective “we” and future tense (“This shall be our concern”) intimately conveys not only the content of the council deliberations but also the process. In doing so, Pitchlynn textually reproduces the complementary use of writing and oral conversation as sites for the practice of democracy as process.

Pitchlynn’s transcription of the Council Meetings thereby registers the wider political innovations in the Choctaw Nation during the 1820s. In the 1820s the political organization of the Choctaw Nation became increasingly modeled after Euro-American

²⁰ Clara Sue Kidwell, “Introduction,” in Pitchlynn, *Gathering of Statesmen*, 6.

²¹ Kidwell, “Introduction,” 5-6.

²² Pitchlynn, *Gathering of Statesmen*, 45-46.

forms of political organization—forms of government that centrally addressed codified laws, property ownership, and financial policy. Nineteenth-century nationalisms, in Scott Richard Lyons’s words, “said yes to modernity” and “no to the domination of outsiders.” The aim of such nationalisms is not cultural revitalization, Lyons argues, but “political evolution.”²³ Native American nationalisms depend on what Arnold Krupat calls an emphasis on a “decrease in the ‘dependency’ of Native nations on the federal government and a greater degree of ‘autonomy.’”²⁴ More particularly, in the context of the Choctaw Nation in the 1820s these political goals stressed the need to exist independently as a nation-people, without interference from the State of Mississippi and away from the pressure of whites on Choctaw lands.

As such, the General Council meetings express a modern Choctaw nationalism that centered its political organization on written laws, national unity, and an ideological investment in modernity as well as property ownership.²⁵ The investment in centralized national organization was a recourse in a colonial context in which the pressure to remove was steadily increasing: they envisioned a unified tribal nation could withstand U.S.

²³ Scott Richard Lyons, *X-Marks: Native Signatures of Assent* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010), 131.

²⁴ Arnold Krupat, *Red Matters: Native American Studies* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 5.

²⁵ The innovations reflected in the General Council records also sharpened an already existing factionalism in the Choctaw Nation. During the 1820s, political power in the Choctaw Nation had moved away from the hereditary tribal chiefs to a new generation of younger, often mixed-race leaders who had received European-style education and who members of elite, landowning families. The social stratification in the Choctaw Nation during the 1820s and 1830s led to a distinction between what contemporaries called the landless “full-blood” Choctaws and the landowning “mixed-blood” elites—a distinction the historian James Taylor Carson has more recently characterized one between the “primordialists” and the “cosmopolitans.” For the primordialist tribal leaders (like the district chiefs Mushulatubbee of the Western District and Pushmataha of the Southern District) the three separate districts were the central units of Choctaw cultural and political life, rather than a consolidated tribal nation. They held that governance should be based mostly in existing models of traditional Choctaw political organization, and traditional ideologies predicated on the different districts’ autonomy and the chiefs’ redistribution of goods. The “cosmopolitans” (such as Pitchlynn and the tribal leaders David Folsom, Greenwood LeFlore, John Garland, and Hwoolatahoomah) sought to use aspects of Anglo-American cultural institutions, education, government, and religion to formulate a more centralized form of Choctaw nationalism. James Taylor Carson, *Searching for the Bright Path: The Mississippi Choctaws from Prehistory to Removal* (Lincoln University of Nebraska Press, 2003), 87-89.

pressure on their land and secure the Choctaw Nation's political autonomy. During the 1820s settler pressure on Choctaw lands increased, and the state of Mississippi and the Office of Indian Affairs tried to persuade the Choctaw Nation to sell its lands in the South in exchange for lands in the trans-Mississippi Indian Territory. In 1820 and 1825 the Choctaw district chiefs had already signed treaties with the United States government for land cessions in Mississippi in exchange for lands in Indian Territory. These treaties ceded to the Choctaw approximately one-third of the present state of Oklahoma—the Southeastern part of Indian Territory—and allowed the U.S. government to present Indian removal as a viable option for the Choctaw Nation.²⁶

Written two years after the first General Council meeting of 1826, Pitchlynn's report of an expedition to Indian Territory responds to the pressures of removal of the Choctaw Nation and the possibility of rebuilding the nation in Indian Territory. In 1828, Pitchlynn participated, along with delegates from the Creek and Chickasaw nations, in a survey of Indian Territory, assessing the lands to which the Choctaw Nation would remove in case they signed a removal treaty. Pitchlynn wrote the report on the expedition ostensibly to inform the Choctaw tribal council on the condition of the western lands that were ceded to them. The basis for the expedition had been laid in 1827, when the head of the Indian Office, Thomas McKenney, visited the Choctaw Nation, to negotiate the terms for a removal treaty. As the Choctaw leaders were not willing to sign a removal treaty, McKenney suggested they send a delegation to explore the country west of the Mississippi River, along with delegates from other southern Indian nations. This would allow them to survey and inspect the lands that were ceded to the Choctaws in their 1820 and 1825 treaties with the

²⁶ These were the treaties of Doak's Stand (1820) and Washington City (1825).

Government.²⁷ In early 1828 the United States Congress approved the expedition, and Pitchlynn was one of the Choctaw delegates that participated, taking on the role of scribe to report his travels and observations.

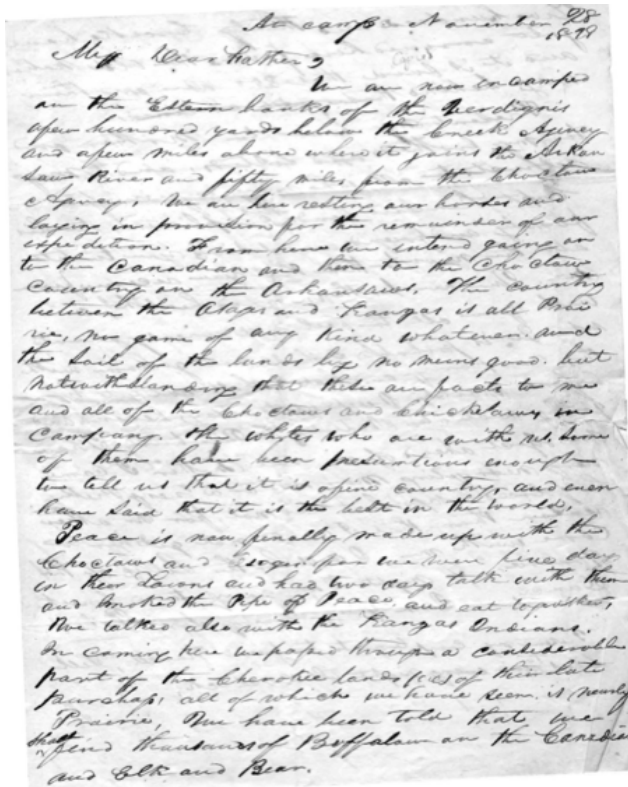


Figure 12: Personal diary of Peter Pitchlynn, 1828. Peter Pitchlynn Collection, Western Historical Collections, University of Oklahoma Libraries, Norman, Oklahoma. Accessed 26 July, 2015. <<https://digital.libraries.ou.edu/>>

Pitchlynn’s “removal diary” has been overlooked in studies of Native American writing, even though Speer Morgan and Greg Michalson published an edited version of the text in the *Missouri Review* in 1991. Indeed, the diary is a key text in the literatures and history of the early Choctaw nation and

the crisis of removal, as it gives a first-hand account of the expedition that Pitchlynn took part in on behalf of the Choctaw Tribal Council. The expedition itself as well as Pitchlynn’s report of it mediated between the Indian Office (where removal was promoted) and the Choctaw tribal council (where removal was being considered). The expedition consisted of

²⁷ In a statement transcribed by Pitchlynn during the meeting between McKenney and Choctaw principal chiefs, the Choctaw leaders assented to the expedition: “We have confidence in you—we hope to part friends, as we met friends; and although we do not agree to your proposition for an exchange of country, we would have no objection, if our great father would permit, although not with any view to exchange our country, to let six of our people go with our older brothers, the Chickasaws, and return home by the way of the Arkansas.” See “Answer of the Choctaw Chiefs to Colonel McKenney,” 17 October 1827, in Thomas McKenney, *Memoirs, Official and Personal: with Sketches of Travels among the Northern and Southern Indians* (New York: Paine and Burgess, 1846), 338.

two Choctaw delegates from each district—six total—thirteen Chickasaw delegates, and four Creek delegates. On the U.S. side, several participants appointed by the War Department took part in the expedition, including the topographer Washington Hood and the physician George Todson. In addition, the expedition brought along several interpreters and one black servant who accompanied the Chickasaws.²⁸ The expedition departed in September 1828 and reached St. Louis on October 12, where they met with William Clark, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and had several meetings with government officials.²⁹

The expedition underscores the fact that the American government's promotion of Choctaw removal worked through the policy imperatives of the Indian Office as well as missionary organizations. It was led by the U.S. Army Captain George Kennerly and the Baptist missionary and surveyor Isaac McCoy (1784-1846), an influential figure in the Indian Reform movement, which by 1827 was firmly rooted in the promotion of Indian Removal.³⁰ Throughout the 1820s McCoy championed the idea of a permanent home for all American Indians west of the Missouri. Here, he believed, Native people could gradually adapt to Christianity and thus civilization, while escaping the corrupting influences of whites. McCoy had begun lobbying for this plan by presenting it to Secretary of War and the Baptist Board of Missions in 1824, and the delegation was part of his larger project of promoting Indian reform. But McCoy was pessimistic about the prospect of "Indian reform" while tribal nations remained where they were. McCoy saw removal as the only way for

²⁸ Speer Morgan and Greg Michalson. "A Man Between Nations: The Diary of Peter Pitchlynn." *The Missouri Review* 14, no. 3 (1991): 56.

²⁹ Baird, *Peter Pitchlynn*, 32.

³⁰ McCoy had been a Baptist minister in Indian Territory in the early 1800s, before he was appointed as missionary to the Miami on the Wabash River in and the Potawatomi and Ottawa in Michigan Territory. McCoy held this position at the time of the expedition, and his *History of the Baptist Indian Missions* strongly suggests that McCoy was interested in the Choctaw-Creek-Chickasaw expedition mainly because it allowed him to also organize a similar expedition for the Potawatomis and Ottawas, which he conducted shortly before the Choctaw expedition. In 1830, McCoy's effort in promoting Indian removal helped him to get appointed as a U.S. government surveyor under Andrew Jackson to help implement Indian removal.

Indian Nations to avoid economic and social degradation through their proximity to whites. In his 1829 policy proposal, *Remarks on the Practicability of Indian Reform*, McCoy suggests “the concentration of all the tribes in some suitable portion of country, under such guardianship of our Government as shall be found conducive to their permanent improvement; together with the guaranty . . . of said country to them and to their posterity *for ever*.”³¹ The 1828 expedition married McCoy’s concern for religious instruction to Indian reform, investing in the capacity of Christianized Indian nations to build tribal nations in Indian Territory.

Pitchlynn’s report was initiated and sponsored by the Choctaw Tribal Council, the Office of Indian Affairs, and the various collaborators taking part in the expedition. As Morgan Speer and Greg Michaelson note, Pitchlynn’s diary is a first-hand account of the process of organizing Indian removal, and much of the diary was “written literally with a pencil on Peter Pitchlynn’s knee in the woods.”³² But it is also a collaborative text that was shaped by tribal, religious, and U.S. governmental demands; and one that recorded many voices, including Pitchlynn’s own. Pitchlynn records the observations and experiences of the party during the expeditions, as well as transcriptions of his own oratory and that of tribal leaders he met during the expedition. It communicates Pitchlynn’s views on the situation of tribal nations already living in the area by recording meetings with Shawnee and Osage

³¹ Isaac McCoy, *Remarks on the Practicability of Indian Reform, Embracing their Colonization* (New York: Gray and Duncce, 1829), 25. McCoy saw the work of saving tribal nations through removal as closely connected to the spiritual work of saving Indian souls, and in his account of the 1828 expedition in *History of Baptist Indian Mission* (1840) he comments favorably on the presence of “two or three” instructors of religion among the Choctaw, Chickasaw, and Creek delegates of the 1828. McCoy specifically mentions the delegate Pitchlynn’s interest in the bible: “P. Pytchlynn, a Choctaw; though not a professor of religion . . . frequently borrowed my small bible to read, which I afterwards presented to him. I had much interesting conversation with him. At one time he enquired how his happened that Christians differed so much in opinion, when each sect appealed to the Scriptures for proof of its doctrines . . . I endeavoured to account for it satisfactorily to him, by the proneness of man to err.” McCoy, *Baptist Indian Missions*, 355.

³² Morgan and Michalson. “Man Between Nations,” 62.

tribal leaders in Indian Territory.s

For instance, Pitchlynn recounts his meeting on 3 November 1828 with the Shawnee political and religious leader Tenskwatawa (1775-1836). In the years before the War of 1812 Tenskwatawa's religious visions had spurred Tecumseh's pan-Indian political and military alliance of resistance to the United States. During the war Tenskwatama had fled to Canada, returning to the United States in 1825 when the Shawnees were removed to Indian Territory. In 1826 he established a village near present-day Kansas City, just west of the border between Missouri and Indian Territory.³³ By recounting a speech made by Tenskwatawa, Pitchlynn projects a new possible future in nation-to-nation relations, offering a vision of a region pacified through amicable relationship between the United States and the Shawnee Nation. Pitchlynn notes that Tenskwatawa "spoke some length of time on the subject of the ignorance of the Indians in general," and insisted on the need for peaceful diplomatic relations between the United States and Indian Nations:

He said that they knew not anything, even that which was good for them. He then spoke of the great wisdom of the President of the United States. He said that he knew what was for their good. Knowing these things to be true, he said that he had given up his own opinion on things respecting the interest of his nation and that he looked to the Great Father, the President, to advise in every thing, and that he obeyed him in all things like an obedient child, and recommended that we should do the same.³⁴

Pitchlynn's report thus reads the Shawnees' presence in Indian Territory as a narrative of pacification, registering a political situation in which Native people's militarized resistance to the United States is a thing of the past. In Pitchlynn's rendering of Tenskwatawa's speech the report performs a moment of fashioning political relations with the Shawnees:

³³ For a historical account of Tecumseh and Tenskwatawa's religious movement and political resistance, see Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 469-516; Gregory Evans Dowd, *A Spirited Resistance: The North American Indian Struggle for Unity, 1745-1815* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 123-190.

³⁴ Pitchlynn, Removal Diary, in Morgan and Michalson, "Man between Nations," 67.

He [Tenskwatawa] was glad, he said, that we did not pass his nation as strangers, that we had, after travelling a great distance, come to see him. He then spoke some time of the former interviews they had with our forefathers, and that it seemed the Great Father had ordered it so that we should meet again and take each other by the hand. After he had ended his speech he presented to each of the delegations white beads and tobacco as a renewer of our old friendship.³⁵

Alluding to “our forefathers,” the speech remembers the history of Choctaw leaders not joining Tecumseh’s cross-regional, pan-Indian alliance against the United States during the War of 1812.³⁶ In his rendition of Tenskwatawa’s profession of “friendship,” Pitchlynn suggests that the expedition adds a new chapter to this history, in which the Choctaws’ and Shawnees’ profess a mutual dedication to intertribal peace and non-resistance to the United States.

Therefore, if McCoy saw the expedition as promoting Indian reform, Pitchlynn’s report of the 1828 expedition invests in another matter: to convey the extent to which the ceded lands in the west allowed for the projection of a tribal-national future west of the Mississippi. Pitchlynn’s removal diary represents the ceded lands west of the Mississippi as Choctaw domestic space, through a textual performance of intertribal diplomacy. Pitchlynn similarly transcribes his own oratory to Osage leaders to suggest a newly found peace between the Osages and the Choctaws. While the 1820 and 1825 treaties had ceded to the Choctaws large tract of land that had previously belonged to the Osages, the two Nations had long been in conflict over boundaries and hunting rights—and part of the expedition’s purpose was to cement friendly relations between the two.³⁷ Pitchlynn’s entry for 21 November recounts the talks between the delegates of the expedition and the Osage tribal leader “Pretty Bird”—named “Belle Ouizo” in McCoy’s account. Pitchlynn’s transcription

³⁵ Ibid., 66-67.

³⁶ Dowd, *Spirited Resistance*, 148.

³⁷ Pitchlynn, *Removal Diary*, 56.

of his own oratory again emphasizes intertribal amity between the Osages and Choctaws, as a legitimization of the Choctaws' land claims in Indian Territory:

It is a fact that our nations have been at times in enmity with each other, and like men and warriors made the ground red with each other's blood whenever they saw each other. The Choctaws are thought to be the largest nation of red people in the United States and they, like other red men, love war, but we have been told by our Great Father, the President, to be at peace with all nations, and teach our young men how to work, and advise them to pursue the ways of the white man.³⁸

Here Pitchlynn sees the future of the Choctaw Nation and other Indian nations as irrevocably bound up with the nation-to-nation relationship with the United States. In his speech his recollection of a meeting in October with William Clark at the Superintendency in St. Louis underscores the Choctaws' friendly relations with the United States: "I first came to St. Louis and there saw General Clark, the great friend of the red man. The Choctaws had seen him before, and they were very proud when they saw him."³⁹ Pitchlynn pledges that the Choctaws "have laid by everything like war, and wish to be at peace with all nations, and particularly the nations of red people."⁴⁰

Recording the expedition on behalf of the Choctaw tribal council, Pitchlynn's report creates knowledge about removal, attempts to influence policy, and projects a notion of Choctaw nationalism after removal. Pitchlynn's participation in the expedition contributed to his emergence as a public figure in the Choctaw Nation, a role that was shaped by the political context of Indian removal. As a member of a cohort of young, educated, male leaders, Pitchlynn secured a prominent leadership position through the intercultural negotiations between the Choctaw leadership and the Indian Office. Pitchlynn's position on removal, however, was complex to say the least. Although his report did not change the tribal council's position on removal, it takes removal seriously as a future possibility. In

³⁸ Ibid., 74.

³⁹ Ibid., 73-74.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 74.

1830 Pitchlynn was one of the signers of the removal treaty; afterwards he protested the treaty; and finally he oversaw the process of removal. Although Andrew Jackson's pro-removal platform was consolidated by his election as president in 1828—and by the Indian Removal Act of 1830—what more immediately put pressure on Choctaw removal was the State of Mississippi extending its jurisdiction over Indian nations within its border in March 1830. On March 17, the Choctaw district chiefs held a council where a proposed removal treaty was drafted with the help from several missionaries and with Pitchlynn transcribing the meeting. Although the U.S. government initially rejected the terms of this treaty, at a treaty council at Dancing Rabbit Creek in September 1830, the final removal treaty was signed, also by Pitchlynn, which has become known as the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek. Following the signing, however, Pitchlynn helped to organize an armed resistance to removal. Although the rebellion was short-lived, it earned Pitchlynn the approval of fellow tribal members, and he was elected as temporary chief of the Northeastern district in early 1831, replacing his uncle Mushulatubbee for the duration of the removal process. The first wave of removed Choctaws arrived in Indian Territory in 1831, and Pitchlynn was charged with overseeing the early stages of removal.

Through working within U.S. governmental networks, Pitchlynn cemented his role as a leader of the Choctaws during removal. In his capacity of overseeing removal, he wrote to Secretary of War Lewis Cass, who had succeeded John Eaton as Secretary of War in 1831. The former governor of Michigan Territory and a close ally of Andrew Jackson's, Cass was one of the architects of federal Indian Removal policy. Pitchlynn's "removal letter" was a collaborative effort to control the interpretation of the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, and to claim a politicized Choctaw presence in the policy implementation of

Choctaw removal. Although Pitchlynn signed the letter to Cass, he was not the sole author. As David Baird has pointed out, both the original and final drafts are in the handwriting of Henry Vose, a schoolteacher in Natchez, Mississippi, and a friend of Pitchlynn's.⁴¹ Vose corresponded with Pitchlynn during the process of removal, and had a particular interest in the Choctaws' pursuit of "arts & sciences."⁴² In the collaborative letter, Pitchlynn used Henry Vose's skills in composition, while Vose constructed Pitchlynn as its author.

This collaborative letter reflects the extent to which tribal leadership positions were often constructed through the situational dynamics and contingencies produced by removal. In their letter, Pitchlynn and Vose request Cass to approve Pitchlynn's appointment as chief of the Northeastern district, ostensibly so that he could claim the government's stipend for tribal leaders who oversaw removal.⁴³ In the attempt for Pitchlynn to be officially recognized as the district chief of the Northeastern District, the authors insist on his district's

⁴¹ Baird, *Peter Pitchlynn*, 45.

⁴² Henry Vose to Peter Pitchlynn, 13 September, 1831, Peter Pitchlynn Collection, Box 1, Folder 26, Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma, Norman Oklahoma. Although little is known about Henry Vose, a pamphlet titled *Topography of the State of Mississippi* appeared under the name of Henry Vose in 1835. Also, in 1835 Vose published an article in the *Daily National Intelligencer* titled "Choctaw Analogies," registering similarities between the Choctaw terms and those in Hebrew, Greek, Chinese, and other languages. *Daily National Intelligencer* (Washington), May 16, 1835. In a letter to Pitchlynn from 1831, Vose saw education as a means for the Choctaws to "perpetuate their name" by becoming "the manufacturers of the South, and the carriers for the remote west." In this, Vose, wrote, "[u]nity is everything; without it, the proudest nations must fall, as Assyria, Babylon, Judea, & others, to rise no more." In this letter, Vose also writes about the death of the Choctaw leader J.L. McDonald, who had been instrumental during an 1824 delegation to Washington to secure \$6,000 dollars for Choctaw education as part of a treaty bargain. Vose suggests that with the passing of McDonald, Pitchlynn had lost his most "competent" ally in promoting Choctaw education. Perhaps Vose, in collaborating on Pitchlynn's removal letter of 1832, had meant to provide assistance that he imagined Pitchlynn now needed. Henry Vose to Peter Pitchlynn, 13 September, 1831.

⁴³ In January 1831, a council of fifty-four Choctaw "captains and warriors" had approved Pitchlynn's replacement of Mushulatubbee as chief of the Northeastern District. In a letter to Secretary of War John Eaton they wrote: "Our old chief, Mushulatubbee, having declared, this day, in open council, his intention to resign his office of chieftainship, we have with one voice elected P.P. Pitchlynn as our principal chief. We trust that Government will acknowledge him as such, and all business to be transacted by your Government with our people will be done through him. We are happy to inform you that we have every confidence in P.P. Pitchlynn, as a man that is truly devoted to the interest and happiness of his countrymen, and that we shall be happy under his administration." See Choctaw council to John Eaton, 16 January, 1831, in Commisary General of Subsistence, *Correspondences on the Subject of the Emigration of the Indians*, Vol. III (Washington: Duff Green, 1835), 393.

approval for his role as district chief, despite the fact that Pitchlynn was only meant to serve as district chief during the process of removal:

Notwithstanding this restriction, the people have invariably looked to me to transact their public business; and, from the present state of affairs among my people, I am conscious that I shall be under the imperious necessity of assuming the entire responsibility of leading my people in their next emigration, to our country beyond the river Mississippi, as I had done last winter, at their earnest desire, and settled on the waters of the Arkansas river.⁴⁴

The immediate goal of the letter was not achieved: the U.S. War Department did not recognize his position west of the Mississippi, and denied him the stipend that was specified in the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek. Still, the collaborative letter puts Pitchlynn forward as a representative of his “people” through the very act of writing within U.S. governmental networks. Pitchlynn attempted to legitimize his own position of tribal chief not only by referring to his election, but also in the suggestion that his leadership is an “imperious necessity” created by the practical challenges of Choctaw removal.

To this effect the Pitchlynn/Vose letter intervenes in the U.S. government’s practical implementation of Choctaw removal. The letter insists on improving the conditions under which removal was to occur. Most pressingly, during the winter of 1831 and 1832, removal had become disastrous due to the poor clothing and facilities for almost two thousand Choctaws who were stranded due to low water in the Arkansas River. The letter therefore addresses the need for improvements to the organization of the removal process. It argues that there ought to be an opportunity for cattle to be retrieved; that more than fifteen dollars per person needs to be allotted for the process of removal; that more wagons and supplies be provided for safe passage; that rations be provided in a more efficient way; and that the tools

⁴⁴ Peter Pitchlynn to Lewis Cass, in Daniel Feller, Laura-Eve Moss, and Thomas Coens (eds.) *The Papers of Andrew Jackson: Vol. 8, 1830* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2010), 394. After removal, the Northeastern District was named the Mushulatubbee District, after its principal chief.

for husbandry that were promised be of better quality than they had been thus far.⁴⁵ Adding force to their argument, the Pitchlynn/Vose letter characterizes the western lands as a “wild” and “uncultivated” land in order to appeal to Cass’s sense of justice:

I beg sir, that for a whole nation to give up their whole country, and remove to a distant, wild, and uncultivated land, more for the benefit of the Government than the Choctaws, is a consideration which, I hope, the Government will always cherish with the liveliest sensibility. The privations of a whole nation before setting out, their turmoil and losses on the road, and settling their new homes in a wild world, are all calculated to embitter the human heart.⁴⁶

Playing on ideological tropes of the wilderness as a hostile environment, the letter here stresses the uprootedness caused by the Removal treaty. Pitchlynn and Vose thus characterize Choctaw removal as a test case for sensibility: as the “human heart” is imagined as a collective possession, the “turmoil and losses” experienced by the Choctaws urges the Secretary of War to mobilize a feeling of fellow-suffering into political action.

In doing so, Vose and Pitchlynn raise the issue of the United States’ fulfillment of treaty obligations, insisting on the need to uphold the promises made in the treaty to protect the Choctaw people who were removed:

At the time the treaty was made our understanding with the commissioners was, that we should be removed to our new country in the same comfortable manner as the whites do in moving from one country to another. . . I mention these things that the treaty may be fairly fulfilled, that my people may have no cause of complaint, and that they may reach their new homes as conveniently and happily as possible; and have, when there, the means of living comfortable in their new situation.⁴⁷

The Pitchlynn/Vose letter thereby reflects the fraught collaborative act of negotiating between the signers of the Treaty of 1830, and the governmental networks that he saw were failing to give the support the treaty warranted. It argues more widely that the autonomy of Indian Nations implied in treaties, is of little use if treaties’ actual promises—financial,

⁴⁵ Pitchlynn to Cass, 395.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 396.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 395.

infrastructural, and political—are not acted upon. To this extent, it considers the signed treaty not exclusively as a signing away of Choctaw lands east of the Mississippi, but also as an instrument for securing the means to rebuild the Choctaw Nation in the west.

The collaborative letter by Pitchlynn and Vose thus underscores that the assertion Choctaw sovereignty depended on fraught, situational acts of representation within colonial networks. The establishment of the Choctaw legal framework and the subsequent management of the Nation's removal to Indian Territory, were brought on by intense pressure of white settlers on Choctaw homelands. Pitchlynn's General Council records, his report of the 1828 expedition, and his letter to Cass all sought to intervene in how existing institutions dealt with the pressures of U.S. expansion on the Choctaw Nation. It is through these projects that Pitchlynn emerged as a public figure, in a way that was intimately connected to the colonial context of U.S.-Choctaw negotiations around removal. These projects constructed for Pitchlynn a representational role that was a demand of the tribal and American colonial contexts through which his collaborative writings operated.

Pitchlynn's writings thereby express a form of nationalism that cannot be understood through tribal traditions alone: rather, it is a politicized nationalism that insists on national unity and sovereignty through treaty recognition and acts of U.S.-Indian negotiations. Pitchlynn's writings, however, complicate narratives of a clash of cultures, as well as the notion that figures like Pitchlynn were suspended, in Donna Akers's words, between "two different worlds."⁴⁸ As studies of Native American literature have increasingly recognized U.S.-Indian relations as the framework in which Native American literature challenges settler claims to tribal lands, Pitchlynn's publication projects offer a glimpse into the ways Native writers participated in discourses in which competing claims to land were

⁴⁸ Akers, "Peter P. Pitchlynn," 132.

contested.⁴⁹ Like the O'Fallon delegation of 1821-22 and the writings and oratory of Black Hawk and Keokuk, Pitchlynn's publication projects constitute a sustained effort to make these negotiations (between tribal nations and American networks of government and civil society) work as assertions of self-determination. As I argue in what follows, mobilizing these efforts for the purposes of building tribal institutions in the Choctaw Nation marked the Pitchlynn's writings and oratory in the decades to come.

1.3 "A Man of Nature's Making": Choctaw Education and Indian Gentility

If Pitchlynn's emergence as a Choctaw tribal leader depended on his diplomatic work in mediating between the tribal council and the U.S. government, in the 1830s and 1840s he contributed to wider efforts of tribal nation-building through his promotion of Choctaw education. Since the mid-1820s Pitchlynn had sought out different educational opportunities for himself, and championed tribally-controlled education as a resource for Choctaw self-determination. Pitchlynn established schools, he sat on boards of oversight, and he proposed legislation. Although Pitchlynn's investments in formal education were often short-term, they helped to establish him as a public intellectual and political figure in the Choctaw Nation before and after removal in 1832. And although Pitchlynn did not become principal chief until the 1860s, he carved out a political role as representing the Choctaw Nation by promoting educational projects that were shaped by the Choctaw tribal council; religious

⁴⁹ See, for instance, Mark Rifkin, *Manifesting America: The Imperial Construction of U.S. National Space* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Jodi Byrd, *The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011); Andrew Newman, *On Records: Delaware Indians, Colonists, and the Media of History and Memory* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2012). For studies of more contemporary contexts, see Miahuana Goeman, *Mark My Words: Native Women Mapping Our Nations* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013).

organizations that administered Indian education; and the colonial government in the form of the Office of Indian Affairs.

In this section I read manuscript and printed publications to argue that Pitchlynn's representation and self-representation as an educated man of letters made legible the ideology of Indian education as a resource for tribal nation-building. Whereas American and English commentators like George Catlin and Charles Dickens imagined Pitchlynn as performing an "Indian gentility" that expressed native people's capacity for "civilization," Pitchlynn himself saw formal education as part of the process of establishing Choctaw institutions that could contribute to a consolidated, economically viable tribal nation. By negotiating between tribal politics and Euro-American educational platforms, Pitchlynn wielded an institutional agency that insisted on the political relevance of promoting European-style education, and claimed its forms for tribal-national purposes. The writings by Pitchlynn I examine in this section therefore constitute publication projects that mediated between tribal, religious, and governmental networks in order to effect changes in the educational landscape in the Choctaw Nation. If Pitchlynn's council records and removal writings emphasized Choctaw futurity after removal, Pitchlynn's championing of education imagined such a futurity by linking tribal modernization to nation-specific (Choctaw) institutions of learning. In other words, in the collaborative attempts to promote education for himself and other Choctaws, Pitchlynn made European-style education legible as a resource of tribal nation-building.

As he championed Choctaw education, Pitchlynn realized that the introduction of formal education encoded narratives of cultural change. In a manuscript poem from circa 1850, Pitchlynn imagines his daughter Rhoda's feelings about being away from the Choctaw

Nation while attending school in Virginia. Expressing his daughter's sentiments, Pitchlynn writes: "I'm looking on the mountain / I'm gazing o'er the plain / I love the friends around me / But wish for home again!"⁵⁰ Pitchlynn's poem imagines a Choctaw girl who is quite literally in a country not her own. As she recognizes the Choctaw Nation as both her familial and ancestral home, this home is the place of her immediate family, her mother's grave, and her "race and kindred":

My mother's grave is yonder,
And there it must remain;
My father's care is tender,
I wish for home again!

O, take me to my Nation,
And let me there remain;
This other world is strange, strange--
I wish for home again.⁵¹

The Choctaw girl's "wish for home again" can hardly be read without calling to mind the history of Choctaw Removal. But it also registers the cultural disorientation of a Native student attending school yet pining for her tribal nation: the girl experiences her school in Virginia as not just a different country, but as "[t]his other world."⁵² Pitchlynn's poem seems to prefigure the "between-two-worlds" trope that has come to be associated with Native students' experiences in federal boarding schools. The need to be away from the Choctaw Nation in order to be educated, the poem implies, immediately alienates that education from her family and nation.

Yet there is a certain irony in the poem's splitting apart of education and national sentiments: Pitchlynn promoted Choctaw nation-building by spurring several innovations in the landscape of Choctaw education in the 1820s, drawing on and modifying existing

⁵⁰ Peter Pitchlynn, "Song of a Choctaw Girl," in Parker, ed., *Changing is Not Vanishing*, 136.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 136.

⁵² According to Robert Dale Parker, Pitchlynn's poem was written for his daughter when she visited her father in Washington D.C. Parker, *Changing Is Not Vanishing*, 136.

educational resources in the Nation. The American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions (ABCFM) had first established mission schools in the Choctaw Nation in 1816. The chiefs of the three districts that comprised the Choctaw Nation—Puckshanubee of the Western District, Mushulatubbee of the Northeastern District, and Pushmataha of the Southern district—actively promoted the mission schools as instruments of nation-building.⁵³ Not only were many of these mission schools initiated at the behest of tribal leaders, sometimes they were even located at their residences. For instance, the ABCFM first ventured into a day school at the home of the Northeastern District chief Mushulatubbee in 1824, where the teacher Aden Gibbs taught five students in both Choctaw and English.⁵⁴ These educational opportunities, however, also played into the social stratification that already existed among the Choctaws. The day schools tended to privilege the children of rich, land-owning Choctaws and were established, in Clara Sue Kidwell's words, in "communities that were marginal to the mainstream of Choctaw cultural life."⁵⁵ In 1830 it was reported that there were 11 schools in the Choctaw Nation, with a total of 29 teachers, and an enrollment of 260 children. In addition, 250 adults had been taught to read

⁵³ Clara Sue Kidwell demonstrates in her remarkable study *Choctaws and Missionaries in Mississippi, 1818-1918* that Missionary education was a dialogue between tribal leaders and Missionaries of the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions (ABCFM) in the late 1810s and 1820s. The Choctaw tribal leaders closely collaborated with the ABCFM missionaries Cyrus Kingsbury and Cyrus Byington to establish formal education in the nation, the first of which was the Elliot School in 1820. Even during these early years of Choctaw education, tribal leaders actively intervened in missionary networks to maximize the benefit of these schools to the Choctaw Nation. In 1821 the Choctaw leaders' enthusiasm for mission schools temporarily waned over a disagreement about pedagogical content: tribal leaders criticized the fact that the curriculum overemphasized manual labor and physical discipline, ignoring Choctaw leaders' understanding of what was needed in these schools: for instance, the tribal leader Robert Cole criticized the Elliot school for not being in session long enough, and for making boys work with too heavy equipment. As students' mechanical labor had become too central to the mission schools, there emerged a "discrepancy between what the Choctaw leaders wanted from mission schools and what the missionaries were prepared to give." See Clara Sue Kidwell, *Choctaws and Missionaries in Mississippi, 1818-1918* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 54-63.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 65-67.

⁵⁵ Kidwell, *Choctaws and Missionaries*, 57.

their native language.⁵⁶ Yet as the schools served the children of landowning elites, they registered an inherent discrepancy between the class statuses of its students and the overall population.

Within contemporary criticism, the tropes of assimilation and vanishing still often serve as an interpretive framework for studies of such early forays into tribal education. In reference to the Choctaw Nation, for instance, Donna Akers has argued that the missionaries' introduction of formal education in 1816 was an attempt at "conversion" of Choctaws into white culture; a means to achieve cultural assimilation through English education, Christianization, and promoting Euro-American values. As Akers puts it, to the missionaries "Native people, in order to be 'saved,' had to adopt the culture, values, and language of the dominant white society," even when "missionaries failed miserably in their quest to convert Choctaws into white people."⁵⁷ However, to what extent the trope of "conversion" captures the purpose and logics of mission schools in the Choctaw Nation is arguable. The introduction of formal education in the Choctaw Nation never achieved Choctaw's cultural assimilation into dominant society. Rather, it invigorated what Richard White calls a new "strain of Choctaw nationalism." Landowning elites promoted mission schools and European-style education, and saw the nationalist impulse behind education as addressing in the first place economic concerns. The cultural change that mission schools suggested was not to effect cultural conversion, but rather to adapt on a national scale to an economic system that had previously precipitated a slide into economic dependency. White argues that the Choctaw nationalists saw persisting traditional practices as halting the

⁵⁶ Angie Debo, *The Rise and Fall of the Choctaw Republic*, 1934, Second Edition (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1961), 45.

⁵⁷ Donna Akers, *Living in the Land of Death: The Choctaw Nation, 1830-1860* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2004), 34-35

prospect of self-sufficiency:

Thrift and accumulation had to be encouraged, respect for property inculcated, and, equally important, sobriety instituted and the liquor trade banned. Although these changes also served their personal interests, protected their wealth, and guaranteed them status and power, the nationalism of the mixed-bloods was real nonetheless. Without the missionaries' intending it or even realizing how it was happening, Christianity became a vehicle for a strain of Choctaw nationalism.⁵⁸

The elites who championed education saw this as a strategy for building a consolidated Choctaw Nation that could withstand the pressures of white encroachment, land cessions, and the policy of removal.

Pitchlynn saw the interests of the Choctaw Nation as being served by the opportunities for young Choctaw men, and he promoted Choctaw national education when he entered Choctaw public life in the 1820s. In 1825 he promoted the establishment of Choctaw Academy, to provide advanced education for talented boys who could further develop skills to attain future leadership positions. The treaties of 1820 and 1825 established an educational fund for the Choctaw Nation, which tribal leaders up to that point had used to sponsor mission schools on tribal grounds. Pitchlynn, however, argued that the funds were better used for a more advanced school for Choctaw students that was located among the whites. The Choctaw tribal council approved for the school to be established in Kentucky, and negotiated an agreement with the U.S. government for it to be set up according to the Indian Office's regulations for Indian schools.⁵⁹ Choctaw Academy was therefore administered by a complicated range of institutional networks to put in place regulatory policies, to administer funds, and to specify land use and buildings. It was housed on the plantation of the Kentucky senator Richard Mentor Johnson, a former military commander

⁵⁸ White, *Roots of Dependency*, 118-119.

⁵⁹ Herman J. Viola, *Thomas McKenney: Architect of America's Early Indian Policy, 1816-1830* (Chicago: Sage, 1974), 189; Baird, *Peter Pitchlynn*, 24.

and the future vice president under Martin Van Buren, and its students were served by Johnson's slaves.⁶⁰ It was financed by Choctaw annuity funds that were administered by the Indian Office, and the Southern Baptist Association of Blue Springs managed daily operations.⁶¹ Choctaw Academy therefore responded to different organizational and personal demands. For the financially pressed Johnson, it offered a "badly needed bailout."⁶² For the Choctaw tribal council, the Academy offered the possibility of educating the future leaders of the Nation. For the Indian Office, it offered compensation for the closing in 1826 of the ABCFM's Foreign Mission School in Cornwall, Connecticut, which had been the most prominent Indian boarding school up until then.

Choctaw Academy was in every sense a colonial construction, but it was also a springboard for Pitchlynn's own higher education and career. Pitchlynn personally brought the first Choctaw students, twenty-one in total, to Choctaw Academy in October 1825.⁶³ It opened its doors in November 1825, with fifty-five enrolled students: students from other tribal nations were also admitted, as were some white students from the Blue Springs area.⁶⁴ His plans for the establishment of Choctaw Academy coincided with his own ambitions to use an advanced education to claim a prominent social place among Choctaw elites. Thomas

⁶⁰ Baird, *Peter Pitchlynn*, 23. Richard Mentor Johnson (1780-1850) was a long-serving U.S. congressman who had consistently run on a platform of representing the "common man" in Congress, not only supporting legislative acts against imprisonment for debt, but also defending settlers rights to public lands. Johnson was related to the Indian agent to the Choctaws, and adapted his plantation house in order to accommodate students. Ronald Rayman, "Joseph Lancaster's Monitorial System of Instruction and American Indian Education, 1815-1838," *History of Education Quarterly* 80, no. 4 (1981): 402. See also Steven Crum, "The Choctaw Nation: Changing the Appearance of American Higher Education, 1830-1907," *History of Education Quarterly* 47, no. 1 (2007), 49-51.

⁶¹ Viola, *Thomas McKenney*, 189. Since the school was not on tribal lands, it could not be funded from the civilization fund that provided the financial support for other Indian schools.

⁶² Rayman, "Monitorial System of Instruction," 49.

⁶³ Baird, *Peter Pitchlynn*, 23-24.

⁶⁴ Viola, *Thomas McKenney*, 189-190. As Viola notes, its "advanced curriculum . . . included surveying, natural and moral philosophy, bookkeeping, history, algebra, and astronomy" (189). Five years after its opening, the Choctaw Academy had enrolled Creek, Potawatomi, Miami, and Osage students, in addition to Choctaw and white students; later in the 1830s students from Plains Indian nations enrolled at the behest of William Clark, including Sioux students.

McKenney paid for Pitchlynn's expenses upon approval from the tribal council, and in February 1827 Pitchlynn enrolled at Choctaw Academy. But he disenrolled after only three months to attend Transylvania University in Lexington instead. He again changed his mind due to the death of the president of Transylvania University, and enrolled at the University of Nashville. He attended classes during only one term, from November 1827 to April the next year. Despite his brief enrollment, Pitchlynn claimed to be a graduate of the University of Nashville.⁶⁵

A range of agencies invested in Pitchlynn's education. From Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas McKenney he secured \$500 from the Choctaw educational funds, which he used to buy clothing and books.⁶⁶ And during his brief stints at Choctaw Academy and Nashville he secured letters of introduction from Richard Mentor Johnson (for his application to the University of Nashville) and from Philip Lindsley, the president of the University of Nashville. Johnson's letter testifies not only to Pitchlynn's devotion to his studies, but also to his mixed-race identity and innate moral character:

He is part Choctaw & part white blood he belongs to the Choctaw Nation. He is a gracious man of amiable manners & disposition; nature has endowed him with great & good qualities; industrious & resolute, & more devoted to study than is usual. He will pursue his studies with ardor & zeal what will do honor & credit to any student.⁶⁷

Philip Linsley likewise testifies to Pitchlynn's "uniformly good moral character" and states that "his whole deportment has been amiable, correct, & gentlemanly—that he has made respectable proficiency in the studies to which his attention has been directed—and that he

⁶⁵ Baird, *Peter Pitchlynn*, 28-30.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 53. As Baird notes, Pitchlynn purchased "books on the Masonic Order, logic, natural philosophy, synonyms, political economy, chemistry, and moral philosophy. He also secured a volume on the history of Rome and a copy of Milton's *Paradise Lost*."

⁶⁷ Richard Mentor Johnson to the Professors of Transylvania University, 11 March, 1827, Peter Pitchlynn Collection, Box 1, Folder 10, Western History Collection, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

is now regularly dismissed from this institution at his own request.”⁶⁸ Such personal letters of introduction were not only used for the practical purposes for which they were intended. As Konstantin Dierks has shown, they were instruments of political action: they created new futures and defined what people imagined themselves being able to do in the world. Amid economic, political, and social change, letter writing was a way to accommodate oneself to a socially mobile society by securing personal networks. Letters were not just written and read: they were held onto and carried around to find economic possibilities, and to foster an understanding of oneself as an agentic subject.⁶⁹ Pitchlynn’s navigation of these educational networks was then a means to cement a position of prominence not only within Choctaw social and political life, but also within networks of American sponsors and benefactors.

⁶⁸ President Lindsley to unidentified, 15 April, 1828, Peter Pitchlynn Collection, Box 1, Folder 13, Western History Collection, University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma.

⁶⁹ Konstantin Dierks, *In My Power: Letter Writing and Communications in Early America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 99, 140.

gentleman,

Blue Spring.
11 March 1827

Capt P. Pitchlynn wishes to study
certain branches of Science at the University,
and he goes to day to see upon what terms he
can be admitted. I will be responsible for his
board & tuition & advance what may be
required. He is part Choctaw & part white blood &
belongs to the Choctaw Nation, He is a young
man of amiable manners & disposition, Nature
has endowed him with great good qualities,
industrious & resolute, more devoted to study than is
usual he will pursue his studies with an
ardor & zeal which will do honor & credit
to any student. Hope he may be received upon
the most favorable terms - If he finds the
terms acceptable I will go with him to
Lexington in a few days.

With great respect yours
R. M. Johnson

Figure 13: Recommendation letter from Richard Mentor Johnson. Johnson wrote this recommendation of Peter Pitchlynn in 1827 in support of his efforts to enroll at Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky. At the time Johnson was the superintendent of Choctaw Academy in Blue Springs, Kentucky, where Pitchlynn was briefly enrolled earlier that year. Peter Pitchlynn Collection, Box 1, Folder 10, Western Historical Collections. University of Oklahoma Libraries, Norman, Oklahoma. Accessed 26 July, 2015. <<https://digital.libraries.ou.edu>>

His education is a key factor in contemporary appraisals of Pitchlynn by George Catlin and Charles Dickens, for whom his education made him legible as a Choctaw political leader, despite the fact that he did not become tribal chief until three decades later. When the American artist George Catlin visited the Choctaw Nation in 1834, he painted the portraits of several tribal leaders including Pitchlynn (Figure 13), as well as scenes of hunting and ball games. In his brief comments on Pitchlynn in his published notes, Catlin stresses Pitchlynn's "distinguished and very gentlemanly" self-presentation, noting that he has been "well-educated." In addition, Catlin notes that Pitchlynn gave him "much curious

and valuable information, of the history and traditions of his tribe.”⁷⁰ Catlin’s brief note suggest that he sees Pitchlynn playing a particular role as a representative of his Nation: his education and gentlemanly manners position him to be able to claim a measure of authority in speaking to Catlin about his people’s traditions and history.



Figure 14: “Plates 221 and 222.” These sketches by George Catlin portray Mushulatubbee (l.) and Peter Pitchlynn (r.) Mushulatubbee was the chief of the Northeastern district; Peter Pitchlynn was his nephew. Catlin’s sketches were typically adapted from more elaborate portraits for the purposes of his print publications. In George Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of the North American Indian*, Vol. II (London: George Catlin, 1841).

Charles Dickens offers a similar appraisal of Pitchlynn in his published travelogue *American Notes for General Circulation* (1842).⁷¹ Published in October 1842, Dickens’s

⁷⁰ George Catlin, *Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs, and Conditions of the North American Indian*, Vol. II (London: George Catlin, 1841), 123.

⁷¹ Within studies of Native American literature and history today, Dickens’s account remains one of the central texts through which Pitchlynn is analyzed as a public figure. See Vizenor, *Fugitive Poses*, 81-90; Flint, *Transatlantic Indian*, 147-148; Weaver, *Red Atlantic*, 12, 24, 104. It is striking that two of these studies examine Pitchlynn within the context of the “transatlantic,” despite the fact that Pitchlynn himself never traveled across the Atlantic himself. This does underscore, however, Meredith McGill’s argument that texts

narrative recounts the author's travels as far west as St. Louis, and his visits to American governmental institutions, hospitals, and prisons. Highly anticipated by American readers, *American Notes* was quickly and widely reprinted, selling 50,000 copies in the United States within mere days.⁷² In one chapter, Dickens narrates his chance meeting with Pitchlynn on a steamboat from Cincinnati to Louisville in the spring of 1842. Like Pitchlynn's records of the General Council meetings and his transcription of Shawnee oratory, Dickens's account is a reconstruction in writing of an oral conversation. In Dickens's rendering, the two men converse about literature, art, the Choctaws, and the "Indian"—meanwhile exchanging pleasantries and witticisms. Dickens describes surprise and delight at Pitchlynn's hallmarks of a well-educated gentleman. He notes that Pitchlynn "*sent in his card to me*" before the two sit down—the italics suggesting a sense of irony in the fact that a "chief of the Choctaw tribe of Indians" would have a calling card. Dickens notes that "[h]e spoke English perfectly well, though he had not begun to learn the language, he told me, until he was a young man grown." In spite of this, Dickens makes Pitchlynn legible as a well-educated gentleman, ready to converse with ease about books and poetry:

He had read many books; and Scott's poetry appeared to have left a strong impression on his mind: especially the opening of *The Lady of the Lake*, and the great battle scene in *Marmion*, in which, no doubt from the congeniality of the

such as Dickens's were part of a decentered culture of reprinting that was "transnational in scope." See McGill, *Culture of Reprinting*, 1.

⁷² As James W. Cook writes, "[i]n fall 1842, most U.S. commentators were positively dazzled by the pace with which Charles Dickens's *American Notes for General Circulation* moved across international markets. Within seventy-two hours, Dickens's widely anticipated travelogue . . . sold 50,000 copies in the United States alone." See James W. Cook, "The Return of the Culture Industry," in *The Cultural Turn in U.S. History: Past, Present, and Future*, edited by James W. Cook, Lawrence B. Glickman, and Michael O'Malley (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), 295. Meredith McGill's extended discussion of Dickens's work explains the wide and swift circulation of Dickens's book as a manifestation of a wider "culture of reprinting," in which authors' works could be easily reprinted and disseminated across the Atlantic in the absence of international copyright law in the United States—a situation Dickens frequently spoke out against. See Meredith McGill, *American Literature and the Culture of Reprinting, 1834-1853* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 109-140.

subjects to his own pursuits and tastes, he had great interest and delight.⁷³ But Dickens's scrutiny is telling. He writes that Pitchlynn "appeared to understand correctly, all he had read; and whatever fiction had enlisted his sympathy . . . had done so keenly and earnestly, I might almost say fiercely."⁷⁴ In this passage, it seems to be not enough for Pitchlynn to show that he is well-read; Dickens also probes the extent to which he has understood correctly *what* he has read.

What is at stake in this assessment? What mattered in the distinction between the reading of literature and the *understanding* of literature? As Dickens writes that Pitchlynn chooses his literature "earnestly," he suggests that there is no art or calculation in his choice of books. Dickens's rendering of the conversation thereby makes Pitchlynn's self-presentation a test-case of native people's capacity for attaining Euro-American notions of gentility. As represented in *American Notes*, Pitchlynn registers what Karen Halttunen calls "genteel performance": an ideology of conduct in everyday polite conversation that demanded a "flawless self-discipline practiced within an apparently easy, natural, sincere manner."⁷⁵ In an age when conduct manuals and etiquette books helped middle class people to imitate natural and sincere politeness, ideologies of gentility distinguished between true gentility and its mere imitation. The ideology of the genteel performance reconciled the need for easy and "transparent courtesy with . . . the rigorous demands of the civilizing process."⁷⁶ As David Shields puts it, in scenes of public life, lower class aspiration manifested as what was read as a "willingness to emulate." True gentility, however, demanded a "consciousness that could not be transmitted by mechanical imitation," but

⁷³ Charles Dickens, *American Notes*, 1842 (London: Penguin, 2000), 184.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 184.

⁷⁵ Karen Halttunen, *Confidence Men and Painted Women: A Study of Middle-Class Culture in America, 1830-1870* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 93.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 93.

which combined “courtly” and “high” manners with a form of easy social play that hinged on aesthetics, wit, and a “distancing from the business of everyday life.”⁷⁷

Dickens’s scrutiny of Pitchlynn’s reading habits thus registers the need to see his “civilized” accomplishments not as mere artifice, but rather as natural. Pitchlynn’s performance of an Indian gentility thus encompasses both the stateliness of his role as an American Indian “chief” and his easy wit and conversation—but without any suggestion that the latter is studied artifice. So on the one hand, Dickens describes Pitchlynn as “chief” of his tribe and “stately.” On the other hand, there is no artfulness in his performance; no hint that his gentility is mere imitation: Dickens observes Pitchlynn to be well-read and handsome, but also dressed in “our ordinary every-day costume, which hung about his fine figure loosely, and with indifferent grace.” The ease of Pitchlynn’s self-performance, then, makes him to Dickens “as complete a gentleman of Nature’s making, as ever I beheld.” In the sketch in *American Notes*, Pitchlynn’s performance of Indian gentility allows him to be “chief” and an intellectual, as well as a gentleman who wears his education with ease and grace. For Dickens his status as “chief” and his education lend him the authority to speak on Choctaw history, while his easy and natural manners suggest that this is not merely a pose.

In Dickens’s account, then, the story of Indian education is not about tribal institution-building, but rather one that perpetuates a vanishing ideology. It invests in a narrative of change and disappearance to which the Choctaw people are almost passively subjected. As Kate Flint argues, Dickens’s passage on Pitchlynn captures his alertness to the rapidity with which American Indians were thrust into change, even as Pitchlynn’s social

⁷⁷ David Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 35-37.

status makes him an atypical example.⁷⁸ Dickens's translation of Pitchlynn's speech acts, indeed, represents the Choctaw Nation as signaling a particular moment within a narrative of "assimilation":

There were but twenty thousand of the Choctaws left, he said, and their number was decreasing every day. A few of his brother chiefs had been obliged to become civilised, and to make themselves acquainted with what the whites knew, for it was their only chance of existence. But they were not many; and the rest were as they had always been. He dwelt on this: and said several times that unless they tried to assimilate themselves to their conquerors, they must be swept away before the strides of civilised society.⁷⁹

Through Dickens, Pitchlynn's account of the Choctaws represents the wider ideological trope of the vanishing "red man." Ventriloquizing Pitchlynn, Dickens sees the Choctaw leader as mourning the tribe's cultural assimilation:

On my telling him that I regretted not to see him in his own attire, he threw up his right arm, for a moment, as though he were brandishing some heavy weapon, and answered, as he let it fall again, that his race were losing many things beside their dress, and would soon be seen upon earth no more: but he wore it at home, he added proudly.⁸⁰

Pitchlynn may have been "playing Indian" here, but regardless, Dickens reads Pitchlynn's clothing not only as part of his performance of gentility, but also as a marker of cultural change suggesting Native disappearance.

The absence in Dickens's *American Notes* of the institutional angle of Indian education is striking to say the least, since Dickens's volume is a study (and critique) of American institutions and their functioning. Throughout his volume, for instance, Dickens provides commentary on the American government, prison system, schools, hospitals, and an institute for the blind. Yet Dickens's narrative deprives Pitchlynn of any institutional agency in the promotion of Choctaw modernization through the establishment and reform of

⁷⁸ Kate Flint, *The Transatlantic Indian, 1776-1930* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 147.

⁷⁹ Dickens, *American Notes*, 185.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 184.

educational institutions. Instead, Dickens's account invests in ideologies of assimilation as cultural vanishing, registering instead a narrative of cultural change. Pitchlynn, however, saw mission schools and other educational institutions as resources and tools for Choctaw nationalism, which he saw as a framework for political and economic reform. Pitchlynn's trip from Cincinnati to Louisville was his return journey from a diplomatic trip to Washington, where he had lobbied in Congress for more tribal Choctaw control over the funding of Choctaw education.⁸¹ Rather than having education and change "imposed upon" his people, Pitchlynn established his own public figure by championing Choctaw education through various avenues. For instance, he arranged funds from the U.S. government's Indian Civilization Fund for the education of Choctaw girls at Wheelock Academy, which had been established in the Choctaw Nation in 1832.⁸²

He also secured financial support from the Choctaw Council and the U.S. government to establish a new tribal academy in the Choctaw Nation, after its removal from Mississippi to Indian Territory. Pitchlynn had long eyed an academy for advanced students closer to their new homes, and in 1842 he wrote an educational act that established what Clara Sue Kidwell calls an "elaborate system of schools."⁸³ The act established three academies for male students, and four schools for girls. Of the new schools established in the wake of the 1842 education act, Spencer Academy was the only one that remained under the direct control of the Choctaw tribal council, who saw it as the "training ground for its future leaders."⁸⁴ Pitchlynn championed Spencer Academy as the post-removal replacement for Choctaw Academy in Kentucky, which he saw as failing to respond to the more

⁸¹ Clara Sue Kidwell, *The Choctaws in Oklahoma: From Tribe to Nation, 1855-1970* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2007), 9.

⁸² Baird, *Peter Pitchlynn*, 60-61.

⁸³ Kidwell, *Choctaws in Oklahoma*, 9

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 10.

immediate needs of the Choctaw Nation after removal. First, in the course of the 1820s and 1830s, Choctaw Academy increasingly served a pan-Indian student body from various tribal nations. Second, in 1828 the teacher Robert Ould had arrived to introduce the Lancastrian model of instruction, based on routinized and mass instruction in reading and writing.⁸⁵ And third, in 1832 the school's report to the War Department indicated that its teachers deemed the standards of education too high for the student body, pointing its mission away from advanced education to manual labor instruction.⁸⁶ So although seventy-one Choctaw students were enrolled at Choctaw Academy in 1832, Pitchlynn saw it as abandoning its dedication to provide an advanced education for the future leaders of the Choctaw Nation.⁸⁷

Pitchlynn's replacement of Choctaw Academy with Spencer Academy was a direct—even blunt—act of institutional intervention carried out in order to re-nationalize advanced Choctaw education. After Richard Mentor Johnson had accepted the vice presidency under Van Buren in 1837, he offered Pitchlynn the position of superintendent to the Choctaw Academy, which Pitchlynn ultimately took in 1841, upon approval from the Choctaw Tribal Council.⁸⁸ But Pitchlynn assumed control of Choctaw Academy only to dismantle it.⁸⁹ When Spencer Academy opened in its place in the Choctaw Nation, Pitchlynn served until 1846 on the board of trustees that oversaw the school and selected its teachers.⁹⁰

⁸⁵ Rayman, "Monitorial System," 402

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 402.

⁸⁷ Quarterly Report of the Choctaw Academy, August 1832, Peter Pitchlynn Collection, Box 5, Folder 22, Western History Collections, University of Oklahoma Libraries, Norman Oklahoma.

⁸⁸ Richard M. Johnson to Peter P. Pitchlynn, 7 February, 1841, Peter Pitchlynn Collection, Box 1, Folder 61, Western History Collection, University of Oklahoma Libraries, Norman, Oklahoma. See also Baird, *Peter Pitchlynn*, 58-60.

⁸⁹ In the first instance, Pitchlynn took thirty-nine Choctaw students out of the Academy and put them on a steamboat back to the Choctaw Nation; later he dis-enrolled the remaining Choctaw students. W. David Baird, *Peter Pitchlynn*, 58-61.

⁹⁰ American commentators often still considered tribal schools and academies as anomalies, institutions whose very purpose was at odds with their location in Indian nations. In an 1844 newspaper article titled "Indian Education," for instance, the *Arkansas Intelligencer* announces the benefits of the newly established Spencer Academy. Despite more than two decades of mission schools, day schools, boarding schools, and tribal

Through a correspondence with the author and merchant Josiah Gregg, Pitchlynn circulated more widely his own views on the importance of Spencer Academy, and its replacement of Choctaw Academy to re-nationalize the tribe's education. Gregg was a merchant in Van Buren, Arkansas, near the Choctaw Nation; his older brother John was the former agent to the Nation. In April of 1843, both men had asked Pitchlynn for information regarding the Choctaws, especially their laws, history, language, and religion, and about the "missionaries, and schools & academies in the Nation."⁹¹ Pitchlynn used this opportunity to publicize the reasons for abandoning the Choctaw Academy in favor of tribally-controlled institutions. Gregg published Pitchlynn's responses, attributed to "Col. P.," in his 1844 travel account *Commerce of the Prairies*. Gregg writes that the Choctaw Academy had been the "most extensive literary institution which has ever been in operation, for the benefit of the 'red man,'" but was not "as successful, however, as was anticipated by its projectors," and was transferred to a tribal academy "wholly supported out of the Choctaw fund."⁹² Pitchlynn uses Gregg's publication to make an argument for the need for Indian schools to be on tribal grounds and under tribal financial control. Moreover, this was especially pressing, Pitchlynn argues, since in that situation "[t]he influence of the institutions would there be more likely to extend to all classes; and by gradual, the only practicable means, a chance might be wrought upon the nation."⁹³ As relayed by Gregg, Pitchlynn's notion of

academies in the Choctaw Nation, the *Arkansas Intelligencer* articles insists on the novelty of "the studies usual in our academies" in tribal nations: "[I]t must have been an interesting sight, that of a young savage in the backwoods construing the Commentaries of Caesar!" Representing an outsider's view of Spencer Academy, I would argue, the article renders the Choctaw students as what Philip Deloria terms "Indians in unexpected places," registering a critically unexamined sense of disconnect when dominant U.S. culture is confronted with instances of Native people adopting modern technologies, perspectives, or institutions. See Philip J. Deloria, Jr., *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004).

⁹¹ Josiah Gregg to Peter Pitchlynn, 4 April 1843, Peter Pitchlynn Collection, Box 1, Folder 87, Western History Collection, University of Oklahoma Libraries, Norman, Oklahoma.

⁹² Josiah Gregg, *Commerce of the Prairies*, Vol. II (New York: Langley, 1844), 261.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 262.

what was at stake in his championing of Spencer Academy was the opportunity to use education as a means toward national innovation that could benefit “all classes” in a society that he noted was highly stratified socially.

As Pitchlynn prioritizes Choctaw education—as opposed to *Indian* education—he suggests that the pan-tribal make-up of Choctaw Academy’s student body stood in the way of it being a national educational institution. In Gregg’s rendering of Pitchlynn’s information, the Academy’s openness to students from other tribal nations had an adverse effect on its contribution to Indian nation-building. In particular the loss of language and “customs,” Pitchlynn argues, led to a degeneration among its students:

This [Choctaw] Academy proved very unsatisfactory to many of the tribes concerned. They said, with apparent justice, that their boys, educated there, forgot all their customs, their language, their relatives, their national attachments; and, in exchange, often acquired indolent and effeminate, if not vicious habits; and were rendered unfit to live among their people, or to earn a maintenance by labor.⁹⁴

Gregg characterizes Pitchlynn’s vision for Choctaw education as a nationalist project of promoting economic progress (“to earn a maintenance by labor”) and social belonging (“to live among their people”), hinged on a sense of a Choctaw cultural identity that is separate from political organization or mode of education. Here Choctaw nationalism works as a framework for tribal-political organization, and is located in what Arnold Krupat calls a “cultural integrity that underpins Indian claims to autonomy and self-determination.”⁹⁵ Pitchlynn here imagines nationalism as living in culture, language, family, and “national attachments”—a specific social stake in one’s own community. In Pitchlynn’s promotion of Spencer Academy, then, Choctaw nationalism is an effect of what Manuel Castells calls the “sensual cultural materials of peoples”: the sharing of traditions, history, and language.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Ibid., 261-262.

⁹⁵ Krupat, *Red Matters*, 5.

⁹⁶ Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity: The Information Age* (Malden: Blackwell, 1997), 31.

And this sense of community-specific nationalism works here rhetorically as an affective framework for responding to specific economic and social needs.

Yet in Pitchlynn's educational schemes this cultural nationalism is never separate from the more pragmatic concerns of building tribal institutions through U.S.-Indian nation-to-nation negotiations. By championing Choctaw education, he appropriated American-style formal education for a larger project of Choctaw nation-building. Investing in the post-removal continuation of a range of previous schools sponsored by the Choctaw tribal council, Pitchlynn stressed the need for Euro-American methods of education as well as the need to assert tribal-national control over them.

Pitchlynn's promotion of education thereby complicates histories of early Native American education as registering narratives of "assimilation" or "cultural conversion." These early investment in European-style education in tribal nations were investments in tribal institutional-building, a recognition that urges against reading these early forays into tribal education as processes that successfully "de-indigenized" Native people.⁹⁷ Changes in education, economy, and political organization in tribal nations in the nineteenth-century radically altered forms of social interaction and U.S.-Indian relations, but these things in themselves did not make Indian nations any less "native." To assess the work of writers like Peter Pitchlynn therefore asks us to recognize the colonial dynamics of their publication, as well as the nationalist projections they articulated.

Pitchlynn's mediation between the tribal and American governmental networks

⁹⁷ As Scott Richard Lyon has succinctly put it, "Indians don't assimilate; they modernize." To this effect, Lyons argues in this piece that the suspicion of English-language instruction in tribal colleges need not necessarily register an incorporation into settler structures, noting that tribal nations have always made moves to incorporate non-tribal languages, forms of education, and other cultural and political forms into tribal-national contexts. Scott Richard Lyons, "The Fine Art of Fencing: Nationalism, Hybridity, and the Search for a Native American Writing Pedagogy," *JAC* 29, no. 1-2 (2009): 93.

suggests no idealistic or utopian nationalism. Rather, in his writings the “Choctaw Nation” represents a framework for responding to what were also Pitchlynn’s own financial and political needs. His projects are fraught not just because Pitchlynn was a wealthy, property-owning member of the elite, but because his nationalist version of institution-building either directly or indirectly promoted the interest of wealthy, property-owning elites.⁹⁸ Yet although Pitchlynn’s championing of Choctaw education was tied in with personal financial and political considerations, it also engaged the more structural questions of how to address current political and social problems through the framework of the Choctaw nation. Pitchlynn’s institutional agency depended on strategies by which existing resources and ideologies could be re-appropriated to make them work for the economic and social needs of tribal nations.

1.4 “The Fixed Sentiment of Our People”: Treaty-Making and Choctaw Futurity in Peter Pitchlynn’s Diplomatic Projects

If Pitchlynn’s contribution to Choctaw nation-building was to a large extent the result of his educational schemes, his diplomatic work extended his efforts to secure the resources and support for the establishment of tribal institutions. In 1837 he negotiated with the Chickasaws about the terms of the latter nation living within the boundaries of the Choctaw Nation; he participated in diplomacy with the Osages and Comanches; and in the 1840s the Choctaw tribal council appointed Pitchlynn to make frequent trips to Washington, negotiating the Nation’s annuities, educational expenses, and land claims. By the late 1840s,

⁹⁸ This is not, of course, categorically the case: I want to acknowledge Manuel Castell’s argument in *The Power of Identity* that nationalisms are not necessarily a strictly elite phenomenon. Castells, *Power of Identity*, 31. For the context of the Choctaw Nation during the 1820s, however, the nationalist movement seems to be firmly intertwined with social and political power. See especially Akers, *Land of Death*; White, *Roots of Dependency*; Arthur DeRosier, Jr., *The Removal of the Choctaw Indians* (Nashville: University of Tennessee Press, 1981).

Pitchlynn had secured a central role in Choctaw public life as the Nation's main delegate to the U.S. capitol in its official dealings with the American government.

In the final section of this chapter I study the publications that came out of two diplomatic cases in which Pitchlynn was centrally involved as a tribal delegate. First, in a collaboratively written protest against a Congressional bill to organize a new Indian Territory, Pitchlynn produced a statement on Choctaw sovereignty and treaty rights (1849). Second, in 1854 Pitchlynn took part in a delegation to Washington, to insist on the government's recognition of the Choctaw Nations' land claims from the Treaty of 1830. In these projects, Pitchlynn and his collaborators employed a range of communication strategies in order to assert control over Choctaw history, to critique the practice of treaty-making, and to project a critical, politicized notion of Choctaw nationalism within U.S. governmental networks.

My argument here is two-pronged. First, the collaborative publications that Pitchlynn generated in response to these controversies, assert an alternative interpretation of the Removal Treaty of 1830, and elaborate a wider critique of the colonial practice of treaty-making. Second, they stress this critique of treaty-making not as a retrospective contestation of a historical event: rather it is a projective act in which the negotiation of U.S.-Indian treaties carries a potential to work positively for tribal nation-building, by securing educational funds. As these projects revolved around the cession of and compensation for Choctaw lands, they expound a discourse of land not as a cultural good or environmental resource, but a discourse based in property rights that is materially linked to tribal institution-building. In the process, I hope to underscore that Pitchlynn's understandings of tribal nationalism enlists a range of rhetorical strategies and ideologies that defy static

notions of tribal culture or community. Rather, these publication projects elaborate a modern notion of tribal nationalism that marries the critical work of negotiating treaties to the future-oriented work of building and sustaining tribal institutions, as resources for self-determination.

An 1842 portrait by the Congressional portrait painter Charles Fenderich suggests that Pitchlynn had established a prominent status as a tribal delegate in Washington. The portrait shows the Choctaw leader in a dark double-breasted suit, with his hair combed back and a fashionable patterned scarf tied in a loose bow across his chest (Figure 15). Gazing to his left over the shoulder facing the viewer, Pitchlynn appears contemplative yet determined. If Pitchlynn's sitting for Fenderich's portrait was intended as an act of expression according to his own self-perception, Fenderich's portrait may be uniquely successful among nineteenth-century U.S. portraits of Native American leaders. While Pitchlynn looks decidedly fashionable, the portrait suggests no hint of foppishness, as in for instance George Catlin's famous 1832 portrait of the Assiniboine delegate Wi-jun-jon, in which the donning of Euro-American fashion mobilizes a narrative of assimilation and effeminacy (Figure 16). In its pose and composition it is similar to Fenderich's portrait of the South Carolina representative Waddy Thompson (Figure 17). The Pitchlynn portrait refutes the representation of Native leaders along the tropes of either assimilation or authenticity: the caption characterized Pitchlynn both as a "speaker of the National Council of the Choctaw Nation" as well as a "Choctaw delegate to the Government of the United States." Even as the portrait paints him as quite at ease in the role of intercultural broker, his national identity is quite straightforwardly "Choctaw."

Figure 15 (top): “P.P Pitchlynn.” Charles Fenderich, lithograph, 1842. Fenderich (1805-1887) was a Swiss-born American artist who made a significant number of portraits of American statesmen and other prominent figures between 1837 and 1848. Pitchlynn’s portrait was made during his 1841-42 diplomatic travels to Washington. See Alice Lee Parker and Milton Kaplan, *Charles Fenderich, Lithographer of American Statesmen: A Catalogue of His Work* (Washington: Library of Congress, 1959), 1-13.



Figure 16 (l.): “Wi-jún-jon, Pigeon's Egg Head (The Light) Going To and Returning From Washington.” George Catlin, oil on canvas, 1837.

Figure 17 (r.): “Waddy Thompson, Jr.” Charles Fenderich, lithograph, 1842.



In the Choctaw Nation, too, Pitchlynn's status was such that the tribal council appointed him to perform the tribe's diplomatic work in Washington—in the later decades of his life he even spent the majority of his time in the U.S. capital. In 1848 the United States House of Representatives considered one of many bills to reorganize Indian Territory, proposing that the several Indian nations in Indian Territory, west of the Mississippi, would be united under one permanent territorial government. While the bill did not come close to passing the House of Representatives, it represented a longer history of similar proposals. In the 1830s Isaac McCoy had headed a commission that proposed the establishment of a territorial government for Indian Territory to Congress in 1834. Similar bills had been considered by Congress in 1836, 1837, and 1838, although none of them had passed.⁹⁹ The June 1848 bill—titled “A bill to provide for the organization of an Indian Territory west of the Mississippi river”—was presented by Abraham McIlvaine, a Pennsylvania Whig representative who served on the Congressional Committee on Indian Affairs. It proposed that the territories west of Missouri and Arkansas, south of the Platte River, and north of Mexico would be organized as a territory, and “hereafter reserved for the use of the various Indian tribes who may have a right to [the lands within its boundaries].”¹⁰⁰ The Territory would have a governor and secretary appointed by the President, and a general council of tribal representatives that would meet yearly to make “all needful regulations respecting the intercourse among the several tribes.”¹⁰¹ The Indian nations' tribal councils would be able to “establish and maintain such government for the regulation of their internal affairs as to them may seem proper,” as far as this was consistent with the United States constitution and

⁹⁹ Debo, *Choctaw Republic*, 67; Grant Foreman, *Advancing the Frontier*, 1933 (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1968), 182-188.

¹⁰⁰ “A Bill to provide for the Organization of an Indian Territory West of the Mississippi River,” Jun. 27, 1848, House of Representatives, 30th Congress, 1st Session, Report no. 736, 12.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 13.

laws.¹⁰²

To protest the bill Pitchlynn contributed to a collaboratively written statement of protest to the House of Representatives.¹⁰³ Pitchlynn presented the “Remonstrance of Col. Peter Pitchlynn, Choctaw Delegate” orally in the United States House of Representatives on 20 January 1849: Pitchlynn had arrived in Washington more than a year before on diplomatic business involving claims against the Chickasaws, when the Congressional proposal on Indian Territory began to occupy his time. Pitchlynn presented his protest to the House of Representatives and the written version was filed with Congress two weeks later. But although the text affirms Pitchlynn as its author and he delivered it orally in Congress, it was drafted by unknown collaborators. As David Baird notes, “[t]he inspiration may have been his, and even some of the imagery,” but the drafting of the statement was done by others—as was the case with most of Pitchlynn’s state papers.¹⁰⁴ In this regard the “Remonstrance” is a collaborative publication that nevertheless authorized Pitchlynn as tribal representative within a situational project of U.S.-Choctaw negotiation.

The “Remonstrance of Col. Peter Pitchlynn” rejects the Congressional proposal on nationalist grounds. For its authors, the territorial scheme would only bring confusion and dissension among tribal nations:

We look with gloomy forebodings to the passage of this bill, and should it be the pleasure of Congress to enact it we earnestly pray that we (the Choctaws) may be excluded from the operations of it. Bad men will use it as a means of introducing discord and confusion among our people, and finally driving them from their present happy home to wander on the shores of the Pacific, or sink in its deep waters.¹⁰⁵

Imagining that the bill would “drive them from their present happy home,” the protest uses

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 13.

¹⁰³ Peter Pitchlynn, “Remonstrance of Col. Peter Pitchlynn, Choctaw Delegate,” Feb. 3, 1849, House of Representatives, 30th Congress, 2nd Session (Misc. Documents 35): 1-4.

¹⁰⁴ Baird, *Peter Pitchlynn*, 69.

¹⁰⁵ Pitchlynn, “Remonstrance of Col. Peter Pitchlynn,” 3.

the history of removal in a typological move: the only prospect would be renewed removals, perpetuating a wandering state that is incompatible with the desires of the Choctaw Nation. The territorial scheme, then, looks to the protestors like a potential repeat of the State of Mississippi extending its laws over the Choctaw Nation in 1830, the legal move which originally drove the Choctaws from their home. The petition stresses the violence of removal, arguing that “[f]or a mere pittance we yielded to you our country in Mississippi, the most beautiful and productive, rendered dear to us by the associations of our youth, the traditions of our people, and the graves of our fathers.”¹⁰⁶ The possibility of a future in a reorganized Indian territory, in other words, is rendered destructive by remembering the Choctaw past.

The “Remonstrance” thereby specifically pitches removal history as Choctaw history, offering a particularly nationalist critique of the Congressional proposal. By evoking Mississippi as “our country”—and the Choctaws as “our youth,” “our people,” and “our fathers”—the protest mobilizes the intimate language of nationhood in order to register the violence of removal. The Choctaws’ history of removal is then related to, but decidedly separate from, other tribal nations’ removal histories. This is a nationalist move. As Scott Richard Lyons notes, nineteenth-century nationalists addressed the past in three important ways: by characterizing it as history; by rendering it unique; and by suggesting it is comparable to other nations’ pasts.¹⁰⁷ The protest of “Col. Peter Pitchlynn” thus asserts the autonomy of the Choctaw Nation within Indian Territory. While recognizing that the practice of removal affects innumerable tribal nations, and seeing the territorial scheme as “evil to all the Indian tribes,” the petition takes particular time to urge against the scheme “in

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹⁰⁷ Lyons, *X-Marks*, 131.

behalf of my own people.”¹⁰⁸ Rejecting pan-Indian territorial organization, the protest sees the wager of assimilation—the social and political organization in a manner that is modeled after that of the United States—as an investment in continued national sovereignty. Narrating the Choctaws’ adoption to Euro-American practices and institutions, the protest suggests that for the Choctaw Nation “Indian reform” is now complete:

Schools, civilization upon Christian principles, agriculture, temperance and morality are the only politics we have among us; and adhering to these few primary and fundamental principles of human happiness, we have flourished and prospered: hence we want none others. We wish simply to be left alone, and permitted to pursue the even tenor of our way.¹⁰⁹

The Choctaws, in this reading, want to be left alone with the Choctaw Nation.¹¹⁰ Outlining an inherent difference not between whites and American Indians but between different tribal nations, it makes an argument for tribal separatism and against pan-Indian political organization.

The “Remonstrance” makes its nationalist argument by turning Euro-American ideology of civilization into a Choctaw historical narrative. As the Choctaw narrative of “adopting civilization” comprises a history that—so the authors suggest—distinguishes them from other tribal nations, the various Indian nations in Indian Territory cannot be organized under one political unit. The organization under one government of dissimilar tribes would

¹⁰⁸ Pitchlynn, “Remonstrance of Col. Peter Pitchlynn,” 2. I want to note here, that the petition’s wavering between “my people” and “our people” is significant. The “my” constructs Peter Pitchlynn as author of the collaborative text, while the “our” confirms his representational function as speaking for and abstracted Choctaw people.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

¹¹⁰ Although the “remonstrance” does not mention slavery explicitly, I want to point out that this issue likely weighed heavily on the decision to advocate for the present form of Choctaw political organization. As Barbara Krauthammer argues, following the end of the Mexican-American war in 1848, the issue of U.S. westward expansion spurred national debate on whether slavery would expand in western territories. Pitchlynn’s call for the Choctaw Nation to be allowed to “pursue the even tenor of our way,” mattered in the context of the Choctaw Nation’s dependence on slave labor, and Pitchlynn’s urging of governmental non-interference in the organization of Indian Territory can hardly be read as a statement of sovereignty in any uncontroversial sense. Barbara Krauthammer, *Black Slaves, Indian Masters: Slavery, Emancipation, and Citizenship in the Native American South* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012), 47.

only highlight their differences and bring about discord:

There is no community of interest among them, as must be manifest from the foregoing statements; for that which will promote the interest of the hunters, induced the agriculturists to idle their time and neglect their farms. . . . Their laws and customs are wholly different—that which is regarded as a virtue by the civilized Indians, being considered as a weakness by the hunters; and those actions which are regarded as manly and heroic by the wandering tribes, are vices of the darkest character among the others.¹¹¹

The language here combines an appreciation for tribal nations' (differing) "interests" and cultural relativism with a commitment to Choctaw national identity. The authors of the "Remonstrance" thus highlight the differences in how tribal nations imagine the relation between political economy and national identity: they underscore the extent to which the rhetoric of "civilization" is not merely U.S. ideology, but also a framework for national identity based on intertribal differences in social organization.

The "Remonstrance" hereby offers a modification of the reigning paradigm of what Maureen Konkle calls the "theory of Indian difference." Formulated by the Scottish Enlightenment historian William Robertson in his *History of the Discovery and Settlement of North America* (1777), the idea of "Indian difference" holds that the supposed moral inferiority of Native Americans (compared to Europeans) meant the impossibility of rising out from a state of nature.¹¹² Widely influential on early republican American politicians and a prerogative for extinguishing native land title, the theory of Indian difference held that this moral inferiority made Native people ill-disposed to labor, intellectual improvement, or political organization beyond small communities.¹¹³ The Choctaws' argument against the Congressional Bill is thus made on the grounds that there exists a chasm not between whites

¹¹¹ Pitchlynn, "Remonstrance of Col. Peter Pitchlynn," 2.

¹¹² Maureen Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations: Native Intellectuals and the Politics of Historiography, 1827-1863* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 10.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 11-13.

and Native Americans, but between the civilized Choctaw nation and the hunting and gathering tribes within the borders of Indian Territory.

In the “Remonstrance,” however, this notion of Indian difference is not absolute but tempered. It sees this difference as situated on a temporal scale, where different tribal nations are at a “different platform of civilization”:

They have been separate and independent of each other from time immemorial, and are exceedingly sensitive in relation to any matters that may affect independence. They occupy different platforms in civilization; some being nearly wholly civilized, others partially so, and others, again, retaining the wandering habits of their fathers, may properly be termed hunter tribes.¹¹⁴

Although there is a diacritical logic of difference at play here that recognizes “different platforms in civilization,” it is not necessarily an essentialist one. The remonstrance’s notion of intertribal difference echoes more closely Adam Ferguson’s theory of stadial development in his *Essay on the History of Civil Society* (1767), which sees in the American Indian an example of the “rude nations” from which civil society naturally evolves, but which also represent a model of civic roundedness to which civil society must aspire.¹¹⁵ The Ferguson model, as Roy Harvey Pearce argues in *Savagism and Civilization*, rejects the notion that the “state of nature was one of simple animality,” and sees “primitive society” as capable of evolution and “potentially good.”¹¹⁶ Mobilizing a notion of “rude nations” that are radically different from the Choctaw Nation but not therefore morally inferior or incapable of “civilization,” Pitchlynn and his co-authors argue that because of these nations’ different places on an imagined scale of civilization, their interests and goals are too different to be encompassed by a single state. Although “beautiful in theory,” the bill would

¹¹⁴ Pitchlynn, “Remonstrance of Col. Peter Pitchlynn,” 1.

¹¹⁵ Adam Ferguson, *An Essay on the History of Civil Society*, edited by Fania Oz-Salzberger, 1767 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 74-106.

¹¹⁶ Roy Harvey Pearce, *Savagism and Civilization: A Study of the Indian and the American Mind*, 1953 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 84-85.

be “destructive to all the long cherished hopes of the friends of the red men, as it would introduce discord, dissensions, and strife among them.”¹¹⁷

The “remonstrance” bases its argument for Choctaw nationalism not only on the grounds of conjectural history, but also on the legal construction of U.S.-Indian treaties. It argues that the territorial scheme would fail as these different tribal nations’ political sovereignty is constituted by a range of separate treaties that would frustrate the project of territorial reorganization. “Each of these tribes,” it states, “hold the country they occupy by tenures differing from the others, and according to the terms of the several treaties by which they have acquired them from the United States, and all independent of each other.”¹¹⁸ Pitchlynn suggests that each of these nations’ presence in Indian Territory testifies to separate and complex histories of U.S.-Indian relations and treaties. The “remonstrance” makes the argument that the political schemes of American politicians, however well-intended, prove necessarily short-sighted in an intertribal geography configured by a complicated overlay of histories of treaty-making, intertribal differences, and Indian nationalisms. The co-authors thereby registers an important nationalist critique within governmental debates on the political organization of Indian country. Mobilizing Euro-American tropes of civilization to stress the political differences between tribal nations, it offers an alternative to U.S. ideologies that render the political and social situation of Indian nations as all the same. In a region shaped by complex histories of U.S.-Indian treaties and Indian removal, they argue, any catch-all political solution from the colonial government cannot recognize the sovereignty of tribal nations.

After the proposal for the reorganization of Indian Territory was defeated in 1849,

¹¹⁷ Pitchlynn, “Remonstrance of Col. Peter Pitchlynn,” 1.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1.

several years passed until Pitchlynn returned to Washington on diplomatic business. In 1854, however, Pitchlynn led a delegation to Washington to address the United States government's failure to recognize the Choctaws' claims on lands that were ceded in Mississippi in 1830. Pitchlynn's involvement in negotiating the net proceeds claim cemented his status as a Choctaw political figure. Operating at the intersection of treaty law, financial claims, and group lobbying, this publication project was a multi-discursive enterprise that insisted on a historical argument for the United States' accountability to its treaties. According to Pitchlynn and the delegates, the Treaty of 1830 dictates that the U.S. government had failed to compensate landowning Choctaws for the lands that they ceded in Mississippi by removing to Indian Territory. In brief, the claim held that the "net proceeds" of the Mississippi lands ought to be paid in a settlement to the Choctaw Nation as a whole, rather than being used to contribute to the yearly annuity payments. As Baird succinctly puts it, "Pitchlynn and his co-delegates wanted to combine all the individual claims against the United States into one large demand with any financial settlement being administered locally by the tribal council. Accordingly, they requested that a new treaty be written encompassing such a proposal." The original claim of the Choctaws was \$3 million, and was lowered to \$2.3 million in the course of the delegation. Ultimately, Pitchlynn and the other delegates achieved limited success by securing about \$900,000 in payments in 1855.¹¹⁹

The 1854 delegation to Washington was a collaboration between Pitchlynn and his fellow delegates, as well as a number of non-Choctaws who helped them strategize their negotiations at the seat of the U.S. government. The delegates were approved by the Choctaw tribal council in November 1853: they appointed Pitchlynn, his brother-in-law Samuel Garland, the minister and tribal leader Israel Folsom, and the attorney Dickson W.

¹¹⁹ Baird, *Peter Pitchlynn*, 99.

Lewis. In order to help with the diplomatic work of navigating Washington political networks the delegation employed the charismatic Arkansas lawyer and poet Albert Pike, who advised them on the protocols of diplomacy in Washington. Pike was familiar with the Choctaw claims case, and arranged the assistance of three influential collaborators to the case: the attorney John Cochrane; Luke Lea, an attorney and the former Commissioner of Indian Affairs; and Douglas Cooper, the Indian agent to the Choctaws.¹²⁰ The various collaborators focused on different aspects of the delegation: Pike outlined the overall strategy; Cochrane conducted the various correspondences; and Cooper conducted the financial investigation into the Choctaws' claims. The delegates, meanwhile, provided additional information into the case, and Pitchlynn made the speeches.¹²¹ Through this collaborative process they generated a series of writings that addressed the Secretary of the Interior Robert McClelland, Commissioner of Indian Affairs George Washington Manypenny, and ultimately president Franklin Pierce.¹²²

In the process of generating notice about the Choctaw land claims, the collaborators' oral, manuscript, and printed performances offer a critique of the lack of governmental accountability regarding the colonial practice of treaty-making. In the oral and written publications that constituted the labor of the 1854 delegation, the Choctaw representatives insist, first, on the need to recognize the stipulations of the 1830 Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek and, second, on the desirability of a new treaty that would acknowledge the Choctaw

¹²⁰ Ibid., 97-98. Not only did Pike negotiate for himself and these three collaborators an equal share of the potential fee—which would be twenty-five percent of any settlement—he also secured the same for Pitchlynn, who, as David Baird notes, was “never unmindful of an opportunity for profit.”

¹²¹ Ibid., 100-104.

¹²² In 1849 the Office of Indian Affairs was transferred from the War Department to the Department of the Interior, meaning that the Commissioner of Indian Affairs no longer reported to the Secretary of War, but to the Secretary of the Interior. Manypenny directed the Office of Indian Affairs from 1853 to 1857. In 1880 he published a book on Indian policy and its failings, with proposals for an improved Indian policy. See George Washington Manypenny, *Our Indian Wards* (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke, 1880).

land claims and make more transparent all the agreements between the Choctaw Nation and the United States government. The delegates presented a memorial to Manypenny in which they argue that the precarious political and economic situation of the Choctaw Nation is a direct result of the 1830 treaty. The written treaty, the delegates suggest, was a precursor to the colonial condition that the Choctaws Nation is caught in:

Nearly twenty-four years have elapsed since that treaty was made, during the whole of which time there have been contests and disputes of one kind or another in regard to the execution of its different stipulations, which, to a greater or less extent, have kept our people in a state of perplexity, uncertainty, and dependence, extremely embarrassing and prejudicial to their interests and welfare. It is the fixed sentiment of our people that scarcely one of its executive stipulations has been carried out by the government in a manner to do justice.¹²³

It is not just the Treaty of 1830 that that has held back the Choctaw Nation's well-being, but the entire ensuing history of legal claims and disputes.

The delegates' challenge to the Treaty of 1830 is then a critique of wider governmental failures by which removal became "disastrous" through its implementation, in addition to its attack on tribal sovereignty and land title. The petition reminds Manypenny that the political question of removal, for the Choctaw signers, was between becoming subjects of the state of Mississippi, or to remove and remain organized as a tribal nation, but "[t]he great body of the people . . . yielded to the policy and solicitations of the government, and consented to remove west." However, in their reading it is not only the pressure to sign a removal treaty itself that caused the Choctaws' situation of "uncertainty" and "dependence," but also the failure of the United States government to uphold the treaty according to its stipulations: "We were to have had ample time to prepare [for removal], but every means and appliance was used to hurry us off, and the emigration was disastrous in

¹²³ Peter Pitchlynn, Israel Folsom, Samuel Garland, Dickson W. Lewis to George Washington Manypenny, 5 April 1854, *Papers Relating to the Claims of the Choctaw Nation against the United States, arising out of the Treaty of 1830* (Washington: A.O.P. Nicholson, 1855), 13.

the extreme in the loss of both life and property.”¹²⁴ In doing so, the delegates insist on the validity of the Treaty of 1830 and its stipulations, while making the argument that Choctaw dispossession happened through whites’ malpractice and the government’s failure to implement justice:

These reservations were sold from them by the government as public land, or they were forcibly disposed of, or by threats and intimidations driven from them, by heartless and lawless white men. When these facts became known to the government, justice required that it should repossess them of their property, but no effort for that purpose was made. They were told that their reservations were gone, and could not be restored.¹²⁵

The memorial outlines a version of Choctaw removal that is not captured by the Treaty of 1830, which recounts the dispossession by the United States following the Choctaws’ removal. To hold the United States accountable to the Treaty of 1830, then, also means holding it accountable to the subsequent histories of dispossession that U.S.-Indian treaty-making gave rise to.

The petition puts forward a claim from Choctaw citizens disaffected by the execution of the treaty’s provisions, which bases the notion of “our people” on property ownership: its notion of the Choctaw “people” works within a nationalist argument framed by the rights and needs of property-owning tribal members. In essence, the delegates’ contestation of the 1830 treaty is about the dispossession of land. But this notion of “land” is not in the first place cultural, spiritual, or ecological. Nor is the notion of land primarily political in the sense that Maureen Konkle has suggested, as being about “governments, boundaries, authority over people and territory”—although it is certainly about these matters too.¹²⁶ Rather, the petition expresses a concept of land that is commoditized: sectioned off, surveyed, and conveyed in monetary terms. The Mississippi lands were the Choctaw

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 13.

¹²⁶ Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations*, 2.

people's homeland, but they were also property. As much as the address to Manypenny evokes the affective nationalist framework of "our people," the delegates' publications were an intervention in policy that was motivated by the economic interests of a more exclusive group.

Petitioning for Choctaw tribal control over any restitutions for property losses, the delegates see the United States' accountability to its treaties as a material resource for Choctaw nation-building. On May 29 the delegates sat in council with Manypenny, and sent him a transcript of the "substance" of the talk the next day. In it, the delegates emphasize the Choctaws' devotion to educational projects in the Nation. The settlement of past injustices thereby becomes a framework for imagining Choctaw futurity through the "resources" of education:

It is time that all matters between [the Choctaws] and the United States were finally settled and disposed of. They wish to turn their whole attention and efforts to the improvement of their people, by the extension of schools, and other means of enlightenment and civilization. It is of consequence to them to know what resources they will have to rely upon. It is their wish and intention to devote all their means to that great object.¹²⁷

Even as their "talk" with Manypenny states that the Choctaws want "nothing but justice," this notion of "justice" is not just an abstract principle, but a resource for Choctaw nation-building in Indian Territory.¹²⁸

The Secretary of the Interior Robert McLelland rejected the Choctaws' claims on 20 June, 1854, arguing that the Treaty of 1830 does not conclusively state that the proceeds from their lands in Mississippi were to be paid to their original owners—separately from the

¹²⁷ Pitchlynn, Samuel Garland, and Dickson W. Lewis to George W. Manypenny, 30 May 1854, *Claims of the Choctaw Nation*, 40.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 13.

Choctaw annuity payments.¹²⁹ In response to the decision, the delegates petitioned to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs restating the case and suggesting their openness to negotiation. Arguing that justice is not being done to the Choctaw Nation, the protest also claims that the fact of their being a southern slave-holding nation played a part in the government's decisions. Noting that other non-slaveholding tribal nations had managed to obtain similar restitutions, the protest introduces the "very unwelcome and painful question ... whether the fact of our being a southern and slaveholding people has anything to do with the apparent indisposition to act liberally and justly towards us." The delegates charge the government with a regional bias in administering Indian Affairs:

whether under a northern administration of Indian affairs we are to fail in our efforts to obtain justice for our people. We are beginning to feel there is, somehow, a difference in the present disposition in policy of the government towards the tribes inhabiting different latitudes.¹³⁰

Their critique holds that the Choctaws are subject to another form of misrecognition, accusing the government of a regional bias over the issue of slavery. The delegates' critique, then, also reflects the extent to which negotiations around the removal treaty were circumscribed by historical, political, and factional controversies—not in the least the issue of slavery.

Following the initial rejection, debates stalled in the fall of 1854, but in early February of 1855 the delegates made an appeal to President Franklin Pierce.¹³¹ The delegates presented their petition to Pierce and Pitchlynn gave an oration that asked the

¹²⁹ R. McClelland to Charles E. Mix, 20 June, 1854, *Claims of the Choctaw Nation*, 41-42.

¹³⁰ Peter Pitchlynn, Samuel Garland, and Dickson Lewis to C.E. Mix, 11 July 1854, *Claims of the Choctaw Nation*, 47.

¹³¹ Although the president would not have had any legal powers to intervene in this matters, the involving of Pierce suggests an older tradition in U.S.-Indian diplomacy. As Vine Deloria and Clifford Lyle note, for American treaty commissioners "the use of the president's assurance [was] a means of cementing a legal-political relationship with the Indians. Thereafter and until the present, Indians have ultimately looked to the president for the enforcement of their treaties whether or not he personally had the power, political or otherwise, to uphold the treaties." Deloria and Lytle, *American Justice*, 36.

president if he would “consent to interfere and cause justice and liberality to be extended towards us.”¹³² The petition and speech generated a wider circulation in the press: the Congressional printer Alfred Nicholson reprinted Pitchlynn’s address and the delegates’ petition in the *Daily Union*, the Washington newspaper he edited. In it, Nicholson describes Pitchlynn’s speech “a most touching and eloquent address,” by which the President “found himself much gratified.”¹³³ Still, the delegates’ petition was not immediately successful: Pierce did not intervene in the debate directly, and it took several more months before a settlement was reached.

As a rhetorical engagement with the 1830 Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, however, the petition is a remarkable critique that characterizes U.S.-Indian treaty-making as an inherently colonial practice. The delegates pressed on Pierce that the matter of the net proceeds claim is about the Choctaws’ control over interpretation, not only of the written treaty itself but also the context of its signing. The delegates argue that especially in a colonial context of unequal power relations, the United States government has the obligation to take seriously any doubts on the part of Indian nations about the interpretation of treaties:

[I]n case of doubt or obscurity, we have the right, by a well-established principle of interpretation, to go back and refer to the facts preceding and connected with the formation of the treaty, and especially to the promise of the commissioners, as to what the treaty should contain, to show its meaning and intent.¹³⁴

The delegates’ reference to the “well-established principle of interpretation” suggests that elucidating the context of treaty signings are part and parcel of the negotiation of U.S.-Indian affairs. Between countries of equal stature, they argue, the right to re-examine treaties

¹³² Peter Pitchlynn, “Colonel Pitchlynn’s address, delivered to President Pierce, upon presenting the appeal of the Choctaw delegation for a settlement with the government,” *Claims of the Choctaw Nation*, 3.

¹³³ *Daily Union* (Washington), Feb. 6, 1855.

¹³⁴ Pitchlynn, Folsom, Garland, and Lewis, “To his Excellency General Franklin Pierce, President of the United States,” *Claims of the Choctaw Nation*, 6

and their making “can be claimed only on the most clear and undoubted grounds.” In the context of U.S.-Indian relations, however, unequal power relations dictate that Indian nations’ claims ought to be addressed more quickly:

[B]etween a great, powerful, and enlightened government such as the United States, and a weak, helpless, and comparatively ignorant people like the Choctaws, it is one which should be conceded on the slightest grounds of doubt. We humbly submit that it would ill-become the dignity, honor, and fair fame of this ‘great republic’ to stand upon technicalities in such a case.¹³⁵

Mobilizing Euro-American conceptions of Indian nations as “weakened” and unenlightened nations, Pitchlynn and the delegates echo ideologies of the civilizing mission, removal, and the very concept of Indian nations as domestic dependent nations. Yet by positioning the Choctaw Nation as a “weak” and “helpless” nation, the petition also insists on the United States’ accountability in interpreting and re-interpreting treaties that are central to the nation-to-nation relationships between tribal nations and the United States government.

The histories surrounding the actual practice of treaty-making, moreover, reflect a situation of unequal control over the rendering of oral discourses through the technology of writing. Recalling the Treaty of 1830, the delegates make reference to the time pressures and misunderstanding that surrounded the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek. Pitchlynn and the delegates suggest a discrepancy between the written treaties and the “promises” of the U.S. commissioners who negotiated it:

The Choctaws, and we, as their delegates and representatives, contend that the treaty, as it stands, though less specific than the promises of the commissioners—upon which our people relied in hastily signing the treaty without its being read to them—does, by a fair and just interpretation, give to them the value of the lands ceded by it.¹³⁶

This argument works two ways. On the one hand, the written treaties have the potential to be read for a “fair and just interpretation,” and should in this case be read as giving the treaty

¹³⁵ Ibid., 10.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 10

signers “the value of the land.” On the other hand, as a document that registers an agreement made in an oral context of misunderstanding and coercion, there is an extra impetus for them to be read with fairness and justice in mind. The treaty of 1830 was misunderstood and “hastily signed,” they argue, but this does not delegitimize it. On the contrary, it means that any act of interpretation should take more seriously Native people’s contestations than the treaty commissioners originally did. Because treaties cannot be read separately from the context of their signing, there should be extra incentive for tribal nations’ claims to be considered seriously, even if—and especially if—there is obscurity and ambivalence in its language.

To communicate the oral context of its signing, the delegates attached letters from the U.S. commissioners of the 1830 treaty, a white observer who was present at the treaty council, and the Choctaw agent Cooper. In an attempt to control the president’s reading of the treaty’s historical circumstances, the petition communicates to President Pierce the interpretive problems associated with contesting the history of a treaty twenty-four years after the fact—and insists that while history cannot be reversed, it can, and should, be re-interpreted. The delegates’ critique of treaty-making as a colonial technology thus testifies to the fraught contexts of and unequal power relations implicit in U.S.-Indian treaty-making, registering, as Vine Deloria, Jr. and Clifford Lytle put it, that “[a]lthough ‘treaty’ seems to imply an equal bargaining position, the Indians were often at a clear disadvantage when negotiating such arrangements.”¹³⁷ But their insisting on the unequal relations between Choctaw and U.S. commissioners during the treaty negotiations does not vacate the meaning of the treaty.

¹³⁷ Vine Deloria, Jr. and Clifford T. Lytle, *American Indians, American Justice* (Austin: university of Texas Press, 1983), 5.

What it does do is rhetorically evoke these inequalities as a means for securing support for Choctaw nation-building through education. The petition presents the Choctaws as being in a pivotal moment in history that is simultaneously a moment on an imagined scale of civilization. In projecting a future state of the Choctaw Nation, the 1830 treaty becomes a framework for securing “means and resources” for nation-building:

[T]he future of the Choctaws materially depends upon what is now done, or omitted to be done, for them. They have arrived at a critical point in their history. They have made great advances in civilization. This has been done mainly by education. To promote this great cause, they have exerted every energy, and used all the means and resources they could command, for the purpose.¹³⁸

At this “critical” point of history, the delegates argue, the issue of treaty rights and Choctaw sovereignty is never detached from the “material” conditions of the present. As they suggest that the current moment will determine the future course of the Choctaw Nation, its potential future as a regenerated nation is pictured by also projecting its opposite:

[P]ublic spirit on the subject [of education], which has been sedulously cultivated and promoted in every possible way, is in danger of languishing, and the Choctaws are becoming discouraged, and retrograding. In their anxiety upon the subject, they are beginning to see and realize how slow is their progress, and how little is accomplished, compared with what might be effected if their means were more ample.¹³⁹

The motivating rhetoric of the Choctaws’ “public spirit” here is not wholly abstract: it is an investment in public goods that is subject to an economy of energy and fatigue, and therefore time-sensitive. As the ideals of “education” and “civilization” are a relevant framework for attaining the “means” and “resources” for building tribal institutions and economies, the United States’ accountability to its treaties is central in the process of nation-building through an investment in tribally-controlled education.

The delegates’ critique of the colonial practice of treaty-making did not take the form

¹³⁸ Pitchlynn et al, “To His Excellency,” 12.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 12.

of the spectacle of the Native speaker cursing the U.S. government where it lives. Rather, it worked through the agency of three lawyers and an Indian agent, and aimed to secure the economic interests of propertied Choctaw men. Moreover, the work of securing the net proceeds claim does not resist the commodification of land as property, nor undo the Choctaws' dispossession. Finally, its reading of Choctaw history does not offer an alternative to American ideologies for thinking about Indian nations, education, and civilization. Like Pitchlynn's 1849 protest against the Congressional proposal on Indian Territory, its rhetorical engagement with Choctaw history, removal, and nationalism is shaped by the situational context of multi-party negotiations and the political pressures of colonial law-making bodies.

By revisiting and critiquing the history of treaty-making, however, Pitchlynn's publications insist on recognizing the possibilities of asserting treaty rights as tools for Choctaw nation-building. To approach writings like Pitchlynn's as publication projects, is to ask how these situational writings operated within existing structures, but also how they intervened in their discourses. Where did they find spaces for institutional critique? Or were they opportunities for affirming tribal sovereignty? Or were they simply a means to secure treaty-stipulated rights or benefits? These questions are the politics of pragmatism, for sure, but they are more than that. U.S. settler colonialism was not just the historical event of removal, but an ongoing structure of U.S.-Indian relationships. For Pitchlynn, the work of attesting to Choctaw sovereignty in the context of this nation-to-nation relationship was the very fabric of tribal nationalism.

1.5 Conclusion

Pitchlynn's collaborative writings and performances find Choctaw nationalism in unexpected places. For studies of nineteenth-century Native American writing, his publication projects therefore register a key problematic: how do we make sense of Pitchlynn's brand of nationalism when it differs substantially from what "nationalism" signifies in contemporary criticism? Within Native American literary studies, the work of nationalist criticism has highlighted the need for critics to make their work meaningful to contemporary Native communities. Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, for instance, argued in the 1980s for Native studies to become more directly relevant to the political needs of tribal nations.¹⁴⁰ In the following decades, this nationalist orientation in Native American literary studies generated work in which tribal nationalism is considered as "cultural resistance." Craig Womack's *Red on Red* reads Native American literature (mostly Creek) through a politicized notion of nationalism based in tribal culture; Robert Warrior's *Tribal Secrets* coined the term "intellectual sovereignty" to call for intellectual and historical work not based in European theory and ideas of sovereignty; and Jace Weaver's *That the People Might Live* coined "communitism" as an ethics of community-responsive critical practice that was rooted in tribal nations' traditions of "telling and hearing of communal stories."¹⁴¹

¹⁴⁰ Arguably the most widely read of Cook-Lynn's writings to this effect is Elizabeth Cook-Lynn, Elizabeth, "Who Stole Native American Studies?" *Wicazo Sa Review* 12, no. 1 (1997): 9-28. For two other excellent analyses of the early nationalist moment in Native American literary studies, see Shari Huhndorf, "Literature and the Politics of Native American Studies," *PMLA* 120 (2005): 67-73, and Arnold Krupat, "Nationalism, Transnationalism, Trans-Indigenism, and Cosmopolitanism: Four Perspectives on Native American Literatures," *Journal of Ethnic American Literature* 3 (2013): 5-63.

¹⁴¹ Womack, *Red on Red*; Robert Warrior, *Warrior, Tribal Secrets: Recovering American Intellectual Traditions* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995); Jace Weaver, *That the People Might Live: Native American Literature and Native American Community* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 40. For a more extensive review of examples of the nationalist school of Native American criticism, see Arnold Krupat's *Red Matters: Native American Studies* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 1-23, and "Nationalism, Transnationalism, Trans-Indigenism, and Cosmopolitanism: Four Perspectives on Native American Literatures." *Journal of Ethnic American Literature* 3 (2013): 5-63.

As these critical approaches have theorized nationalism according to notions of culture and community, however, Pitchlynn's work may easily escape critical attention within these paradigms. Only occasionally may we find in his political writings a valorization of culture, tradition, or communal stories. More often, Pitchlynn's nationalism is articulated through claims to sovereignty that are based in U.S.-Indian negotiations; through ideas of property and law that are rooted in European models; and through establishing institutions that re-appropriated Euro-American ideologies for tribal-national purposes.

These collaborative publication projects deserve attention since they indicate the need for a critical perspective that recognizes the rhetorical and ideological work of asserting tribal nationalism in all its forms. As I have argued throughout this work, acts of publishing—whether they are oral, scribal, or printed—are situational acts of navigating existing organizational structures within governmental and associational life. The work of tribal nation-building, I have shown in this chapter, was deeply imbricated in the strategies of writers and tribal leaders to negotiate the resources and political support for the practical work of building tribal institutions. And in the case of Pitchlynn, such strategies operated through the very institutions where removal was debated and critiqued, but also promoted and managed. They remind us that the representation of tribal nations within governmental networks was often situational and circumscribed by institutionalized ideologies—of civilization, removal, Christianity, and the limited recognition of Native sovereignty. In appropriating these ideologies, however, such acts of representation could also assert politicized notions of tribal nationalism: not only by evoking it rhetorically, but through the

codification of laws, the negotiation of treaties, and (as in the case of Pitchlynn's report of the 1828 expedition) the projection of tribal futures after removal.

Both the negotiation of removal and the promotion of tribal-national institutions overwhelmingly spoke to the interests of property-owning elites who held positions that lent access to these debates, and who brought forward property-based claims to Choctaw lands in Mississippi. As Pitchlynn performed the rhetorical work of claiming U.S. ideologies and resources for Choctaw nationalist purposes, his writings ultimately present a notion of the Choctaw people that hinges on property ownership and economic opportunity, and which obscured and perpetuated existing social hierarchies within the Choctaw Nation. At the same time, they contributed to the continuation of Choctaw nationalism in a colonial situation, contested the nature of treaty-making, and claimed political recognition within colonial institutions. In his efforts to take rhetorical control over Choctaw history, Pitchlynn's projects imagined a national future beyond removal, and register the diversity and persistence of Choctaw writing.

Chapter Four

Projects of Circulation

The Networks of Ojibwe Writing in Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, Peter Jones,
and George Copway

1.1 Introduction

In August of 1850, the Ojibwe author George Copway stood on the stage of St. Paul's Church in Frankfurt, Germany, and addressed the audience of the Third International Peace Congress. Having traveled to Frankfurt from New York by way of England, France, and Belgium, Copway gave a speech and introduced an act against military intervention by nation-states, and in support of the rights of global indigenous nations. The following year, Copway published an account of his travels and participation in the Peace Congress under the title *Running Sketches of Men and Places* (1851). In his chapter on the Peace Congress in Frankfurt, Copway reprints newspaper commentary about his own appearance. By reprinting this newspaper article, he shows himself remarkably self-reflective about how he was perceived in Frankfurt:

None seemed to attract more notice then [sic] an Indian Chief, who it appears is one of the delegates from America . . . The ladies direct their looks no longer to the finely bearded men on their left; the beardless Indian Chief, with the noble Roman

profile, and the long, shining, black hair, takes their attention. . . . The Frankforters are sorry that he wears a modern hat, instead of a cap with feathers.¹

By reprinting this newspaper commentary, Copway renders in print not only his self-representation, but also the perceptions of wider audiences about his performance. Recording the audience's excitement about his performance, as well as their potential disappointment, the practice of reprinting texts offers a commentary on how Copway circulated through different media and audiences.

Copway was one of a number of nineteenth-century Ojibwe writers who contributed to a transnational literary culture through writing, oratory, and print publication. In this chapter I explore how nineteenth-century Ojibwe publication projects translated situations of cultural exchange into critiques of the dynamics of a transnational colonial culture. It starts from the premise that works by Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, Peter Jones, and Copway address colonial dynamics through their reflection on the collaborative and sociable act of writing and publication. For instance, Henry and Jane Schoolcraft's manuscript magazine *The Literary Voyager* claims a place for Ojibwe writing within a transnational Great Lakes culture, and its collaborative composition address a colonial culture in which Ojibwe knowledge is subject to misinterpretation. The writings of the Ojibwe missionary Peter Jones address the British-colonial government's failure to recognize Ojibwe land title in Upper Canada, and insist on the organizational potential of transatlantic Methodist networks in claiming the social and political recognition of tribal nations. Finally, the print publications of the Ojibwe writer and lecturer George Copway stress the control of indigenous intellectuals over publication and communication technologies and, thereby, their representation within transatlantic literary, political, and philanthropic networks.

¹ George Copway, *Running Sketches of Men and Places, in England, France, Germany, Belgium, and Scotland* (New York: J.C. Riker, 1851), 223.

These different forms of publication—manuscript magazines, published journals, autobiographies, petitions, and travelogues—register the dynamics of U.S.-Indian and intertribal relations that have been at the center of this study so far. Additionally, they reflect the social geography of the Ojibwe people, which stretch across the U.S.-Canadian border. Finally, they testify to a culture of transatlantic literary exchange that was elaborated through the circulation of print and oratory on the lecture circuit. This chapter therefore asks what happens to the category of the publication project when it operates in different transnational contexts.² This question matters since, as Jace Weaver has suggested, it is important for literary historians not to only attest to the presence of Native people in larger processes of social, economic, and cultural exchange, but also to more fully understand the historical, political, and literary contributions of this participation.³ Jane Johnston Schoolcraft, for instance, actively co-created an intercultural literary society in which Ojibwe-American cultural exchange became a pretext for subtle critiques of colonial dynamics. And Peter Jones and George Copway participated in transatlantic cultural exchange to contribute materially to projects of Ojibwe education, and to address the

² Recent scholarship on Native American literature has integrated the study of Native American literature with ongoing work in American literary studies from a transatlantic perspective. In particular, see Kate Flint, *The Transatlantic Indian, 1776-1930* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009); Tim Fulford and Kevin Hutchings, eds., *Native Americans and Anglo-American Culture, 1750-1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Jace Weaver, *The Red Atlantic: American Indigenes and the Making of the Modern World, 1000-1927* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina University Press, 2014); Scott Richard Lyons, ““Migrations to Modernity: The Many Voices of George Copway’s *Running Sketches of Men and Places, in England, France, Germany, Belgium, and Scotland*,” in *The World, the Text, and the Indian: Global Dimensions of Native American Literature*, edited by Lyons (Albany: State University of New York Press, in press). See also the discussion of transatlantic approaches in Native American literary studies in Arnold Krupat, “Nationalism, Transnationalism, Trans-Indigenism, and Cosmopolitanism: Four Perspectives on Native American Literatures.” *Journal of Ethnic American Literature* 3 (2013): 5-63. Both Weaver and Krupat helpfully points out a much earlier example of transnational Native American studies in Carolyn Foreman’s *Indians Abroad, 1493-1938* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1943).

³ Namely, Jace Weaver argues in the context of what he terms the “Red Atlantic” that there has been a “patronizing paternalism” in scholarship on Native people traveling abroad, which has rendered such cases as anomalies rather than as a regular component of transatlantic exchange. As Weaver puts it, “[e]ven if not articulated, the attitude towards [scholarship on Native people participating in transatlantic exchange] was often a feeling of preciousness. It was as if scholars thought, ‘Isn’t that cute? A few Indians *did* go to Europe.’” Weaver, *Red Atlantic*, 17.

relations between colonial governments and tribal nations within politically motivating publics. I argue, then, that through collaborative multimedia projects of intercultural (and transatlantic) exchange, nineteenth-century Ojibwe writers mobilized the diversity and potential of Native acts of writing and speaking to elaborate social critique and nation-building projects. In particular, I highlight how they address the conditions of their own publication, since this makes visible not only these authors' projective goals, but also the collaborations and multimedia strategies through which they operated. The writings of Schoolcraft, Jones, and Copway reflect on how they originated in contexts of textual collaboration and oral conversation, within associational, religious, and governmental networks. The work of mobilizing these collaborations to generate tribal-national and anti-colonial discourse, I argue, is at the center of their work.

In the first section of this chapter I examine the contributions of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft and Henry Rowe Schoolcraft in the 1820s manuscript magazine *The Literary Voyager*. As an extension of a literary society the Schoolcrafts initiated in Sault Ste. Marie, the magazine demonstrates how Ojibwe texts circulated within an intimate network of Native informants, traders, and U.S. Indian agents in the region. In reproducing the conditions of its production, the *Voyager* stages a dialogue between the ethnological impulse behind Henry Rowe Schoolcraft's collection and circulation of Ojibwe stories through Indian Office networks; and Jane Johnston Schoolcraft's presentation of Ojibwe stories as collaborative family productions. In doing so, the collaborative manuscript publication turns the conditions of transcultural exchange in the Great Lakes Region into an opportunity for addressing the workings of colonial discourses on Ojibwe culture.

In the second part of this chapter I examine the reprinting and circulation of texts in the writings of the Mississauga Ojibwe missionary Peter Jones. In his *Appeal to the Christian Public of Great Britain and Ireland* (1844) and the *Life and Journals of Kah-Ke-Wa-Quo-Na-By* (1860), Jones reflects on his own work in mediating between tribal, Methodist, and colonial-governmental contexts as an indigenous intellectual and missionary. As a writer and public speaker Jones addressed tribal communities, government officials, and transatlantic audiences of benefactors in order to claim a political place for the Credit Ojibwe and First Peoples in Upper Canada. In his journals, Jones reprints letters from various interlocutors, sponsors, and collaborators to demonstrate the potential of Methodist organizations for this purpose, while also revealing their limitations. Jones's commentary on his own mediation between Ojibwe communities and the colonial government, invests in the anticolonial potential of transnational networks of philanthropists, religious organizers, and governmental figures.

In the final section of this chapter, I examine George Copway's print publications *Life, History, and Travels of Kah-Ge-Ga-Gah-Bowh* (1847) and *Running Sketches of Men and Places* (1851), to understand how he used print publishing to construct for themselves a public, political voice. I argue that Copway's publications are part of a multi-discursive project of claiming authority as an indigenous intellectual within transatlantic religious, literary, and philanthropic communities. These communities were increasingly tied together through a burgeoning transatlantic print market, and Copway underscores his own control over the technologies of print as well as his representation as a public intellectual who is able to speak for the Ojibwe Nation. As his books reprint letters, oratory, tribal councils, petitions, and newspaper articles, they represent Copway's acts of publication as a multi-

discursive effort in which he mediates between tribal nations and colonial publics. Refuting a subject-position as an exotic object or curiosity within transatlantic literary culture, Copway affirms the role for indigenous intellectuals as critical mediators within a decentered discourse.

Taken together, these publications suggest how the sociable dimensions of publication within a cross-cultural context become opportunities for colonial critique. Rather than simply reflecting Ojibwe “culture,” or representing an indigenous subject-position within a colonial public sphere, these writings present their authors as modern and self-reflective voices that underscore the relevance of indigenous critiques in an interconnected world. Their publications register more than a colonial dynamic in which the tools of publishing are only available to Native writers in a limited and circumscribed way. As they produced texts that knowingly reflect on the circulation of Ojibwe discourse, they projected a central role for indigenous intellectual work within transnational literary culture.

1.2 The Schoolcrafts, the *Literary Voyager*, and Sault Ste. Marie Society

The surge in interest in Jane Johnston Schoolcraft’s poetry has been a remarkable corrective to the presumed unavailability of poetry by early Native American writers, and has underscored the diversity of nineteenth-century Ojibwe literature. Furthermore, from Maureen Konkle’s analysis of Schoolcraft’s treatment of Ojibwe culture and history to Robert Dale Parker’s textual history of her manuscript poems, this scholarship has contributed to a nuanced understanding of the many aspects of Schoolcraft’s life and

writings.⁴ In this chapter I mean to add to this scholarship by studying Schoolcraft's stories and poetry within the context of their collaborative publication in the manuscript magazine *The Literary Voyager*. Written and circulated in 1826 and 1827, the *Voyager* was produced by Schoolcraft and her husband Henry Rowe Schoolcraft to extend a Sault Ste Marie literary society. The *Voyager's* dialogic composition addresses a modern readership that could critically differentiate between the magazine's different authorial voices, genres, and discourses. Rather than subsuming Ojibwe writing within Henry Rowe Schoolcraft's ethnological discourse, the *Voyager* imagines a modern cross-cultural readership that is modeled on the Schoolcrafts' conversational circles, and which could critically engage the overlay between literary and oral traditions, Ojibwe and Euro-American sensibilities, and governmental and familial discourses. The format of this publication project, I argue, expresses the dynamics a culture of exchange that is modern and multi-voiced, and opens up a critique of the colonial dimensions of literary production in a Great Lakes context of U.S.-Ojibwe relations.

In his 1827 travelogue *Sketches of a Tour to the Lakes*, the U.S. Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas McKenney reprints a letter detailing his summer visit to the house of the Ojibwe-American family of John Johnston in Sault Ste. Marie. At the dinner to which Johnston invited him the year before, "the domestic skill of the family was discovered": the

⁴ Most notably, see Robert Dale Parker's remarkable 2007 edited volume of Schoolcraft's poetry, *The Sound the Stars Make Rushing Through the Sky: The Writings of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 1. Also, see Scott Michaelson, *The Limits of Multiculturalism: Interrogating the Origins of American Anthropology* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999); Maureen Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations: Native Intellectuals and the Politics of Historiography, 1827-1863* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Bethany Schneider, "Jane Johnston Schoolcraft's Syncretic Strategies," *A Journal of the American Renaissance* 54, no. 1-4 (2008): 111-144; Arnold Krupat, *That the People Might Live: Loss and Renewal in Native American Elegy* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012), 125-133. Konkle, "Recovering Jane Johnston Schoolcraft's Cultural Activism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Indigenous American Literature*, edited by James H. Cox and Daniel Heath Justice (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 81-101.

meal was “prepared in a style that would vie with the skill of the professed cooks in Washington—yet it was all prepared by Mrs. J. and her daughters. We were regaled also with fine wines.”⁵ McKenney’s comments portray the family of John Johnston, among the most prominent families in the Sault Ste. Marie region, as exhibiting a cosmopolitanism on par with Washington DC. The art of polite conversation is key in McKenney’s appraisal of the Johnstons: “But chief, and in my esteem more valuable than all the rest . . . [was] an intellectual display on the part of the old patriarch, that would have done honour to those clubs of which Addison and Steel, and Parnell and others, formed part.”⁶ For McKenney, the “intellectual display” at the Johnston residence marks the conversations of a literary culture. His interest in the Johnstons is then not surprising: his own publication of *Tour to the Lakes* reflects that for McKenney, the practice of U.S.-Indian affairs also generated his own fantasies of establishing a literary career.⁷ As McKenney traveled was the overseer of Indian Affairs in the United States, his commentary on the Johnstons and their literary culture suggests that the networks of the administrative state overlapped with the world of polite sociability and literary groups within civil society.

At Sault Ste. Marie McKenney also met the Indian Agent Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, who had married Johnston’s daughter Jane four years prior, and who was also fashioning a literary career out of his appointment in the Indian Office. The winter before—of 1826 to 1827—Henry and Jane Schoolcraft had collaborated on a weekly manuscript magazine, to pass the time during the harsh and isolating winters in Sault Ste. Marie. *The Literary*

⁵ Thomas McKenney, *Sketches of a Tour of the Lakes, of the Character and Customs of the Chippeway Indians, and of Incidents Connected with the Treaty of Fond Du Lac* (Baltimore: Fielding Lucas, 1827) 26.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁷ For instance, after McKenney was dismissed as Commissioner of Indian Affairs by Andrew Jackson in 1830, he devoted much of his time to the ambitious if unprofitable publication of his *History of the Indian Tribes of North America* (1836-1842). See also chapter one.

Voyager extended the conversational life of a literary society that the Schoolcrafts inaugurated in 1826, which met on a weekly basis. In the words of Philip Mason:

With the Johnstons, other local citizens, and a number of officers and their wives as members, Schoolcraft turned out the 'Literary Voyager' as an outgrowth of the society and with its sponsorship. He described the magazine as 'one of the little means of supporting existence in so remote a place, and keeping alive at the same time the sparks of literary excitement.' Schoolcraft read each issue of the newspaper . . . at the meetings of the literary society before he passed it on to the local residents.⁸

Although the Schoolcrafts produced very few copies of each issue (in some cases only one), its circulation extended beyond Sault Ste. Marie to Detroit and New York through the Schoolcrafts' family and professional network.⁹ Besides Schoolcraft himself, the magazine includes many contributions by Jane Schoolcraft—under the pen-names “Rosa” and “Leelinau”—as well as contributions by Jane's mother Oshauguscodaywayquay and her father John Johnston. The *Literary Voyager* further contained contributions from the sutler John Hulbert at Fort Brady in Sault Ste. Marie, and Zina Pitcher, an army surgeon who later became mayor of Detroit. More remote friends also contributed to the magazine, which contained writings from Schoolcraft's friend Charles Gaines, a glass-maker from Salisbury, Vermont. As the *Literary Voyager* extended the conversational networks of the Schoolcrafts' political and social life, it does not simply juxtapose the “public” voice of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft the Indian agent and, on the other hand, the “private” voice of his Ojibwe wife Jane Johnston Schoolcraft. The *Voyager* demonstrates why the terms *public* and *private* fail as descriptive analytical categories in this instance: the circulation of the Schoolcrafts' writing underscores the overlapping networks of familial, friendship, and governmental spheres.

⁸ Philip P. Mason, “Introduction,” in *The Literary Voyager*, edited by Philip P. Mason, 1826-27 (Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1962), xxvi.

⁹ *Ibid.*, xiv.

These associational networks were embedded in a Great Lakes social world in which Ojibwe literary traditions were at the center rather than the periphery. With Sault Ste. Marie as a cultural center, this region was shaped by longstanding cultural exchange between Native people, fur traders, and emissaries of European empires in the Great Lakes region. Since French colonization, Richard White has shown, these dynamics created what Richard White famously termed the “middle ground”: a new cultural plane that was created from the negotiations, mistranslations, and adaptations between these various actors.¹⁰ Building on White’s concept, historian Michael Witgen has more recently demonstrated that the Anishinaabe people’s longstanding dominance in this region (well into the nineteenth century) was accomplished through their continual adaptation to new economic situations, alliances, and geopolitics. In the process, Anishinaabe peoples were at the center of what Witgen calls the “Native New World,” a “polyglot, cosmopolitan social world that emerged during the course of nearly three centuries of ongoing encounter and interaction between the agents of European empires and North-American nation-states and the Native peoples of the Great Lakes and western interior.” Shape-shifting and forward-looking, these nations were at the very root of modernity in the Atlantic world, as Anishinaabe peoples’ survival as distinct political entities depended on the continual remaking of political, cultural, and social identities.¹¹

Jane Johnston Schoolcraft was born into this “polyglot, cosmopolitan social world” in 1800, near Sault Ste. Marie. She was the daughter of Oshauguscodaywayquay (Susan Johnston), the daughter of the Ojibwe chief Waubojeeg, and John Johnston, a prominent

¹⁰ Richard White, *The Middle Ground: Indians, Empires, and Republics in the Great Lakes Region, 1650-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

¹¹ Michael Witgen, *An Infinity of Nations: How the Native New World Shaped Early North America* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 11.

Irish-born trader in the Sault Ste. Marie area. Growing up with seven siblings on the St. Mary's River, Schoolcraft started writing poetry when she was fifteen, and wrote some fifty poems between then and her death in 1842.¹² Writing in English and Ojibwe, Schoolcraft—also known under her Ojibwe name Bamewawagezhikaquay (Woman of the Sound the Stars Make Rushing Through the Sky)—also translated traditional Ojibwe stories and songs, in addition to other kinds of prose writings. Jane was educated both by her father, who possessed an extensive library of printed books, and her mother, who taught her about Ojibwe stories, songs, and family history.

Jane married Henry Rowe Schoolcraft in 1823, a year after he was appointed as U.S. Indian agent at Sault Ste. Marie. In this capacity, Schoolcraft was directed by the War Department to enforce fur trade regulations, to dissuade American Indian traders from visiting British trading posts, and to keep tabs on the growing hostilities between the Ojibwe and the Sioux nations. He negotiated peaceful relations between Native leaders and American traders in order to open up Michigan for future white settlement. Schoolcraft was connected to officials like Lewis Cass, the Territorial Governor of Michigan; Thomas McKenney, the director of the Office of Indian Affairs; and Indian traders and agents at Sault Ste. Marie, Detroit, and eastern cities. Established within U.S. governmental networks, Schoolcraft was engaged in diplomatic work that had him participate in treaty councils across the Great Lakes, extending to the Mississippi River. Schoolcraft was present, for example, at the 1825 treaty council at Prairie du Chien, where Superintendent of Indian Affairs William Clark negotiated the boundaries between various Indian Nations of the

¹² Robert Dale Parker, "Introduction: The World and Writings of Jane Johnston Schoolcraft," in *Sound the Stars Make*, 1.

Great Lakes and Western Interior, including the Ojibwe, Potawatomi, Odawa, Sioux, Sauk, and Meskwaki nations.¹³

At the same time, his marriage to Jane helped Schoolcraft to insert himself into the social and political networks of the Johnston family, establishing himself as a figure of note in Sault Ste. Marie through both the Indian Office as well as by marrying Jane. The Johnston family inhabited a prominent cultural role in the Great Lakes region, claiming a position that was “extraordinary for [its] political and social influence in Ojibwe, British, American, and métis culture.” As Robert Dale Parker argues, the Johnstons’ influence stretched

from everyday to elite cultures, from woodlands and waterways to literary salons and treaty negotiations, from Ojibwe elites to a frontier version of predominantly white high society, from British military service to U.S. officialdom . . . and from British poetry to Native storytelling. . . . Their trilingual Ojibwe, French, and English world of commerce, cultural exchange, government, and daily life stretched across an enormous expanse of what is now the United States and Canada.¹⁴

While employed as an Indian Agent, Henry Rowe Schoolcraft was eager to establish himself as a “man of letters,” and the *Voyager* is but one instance of Schoolcraft’s fashioning a literary career drawing on his knowledge of Indian nations. When the Schoolcrafts visited New York in 1825, for instance, Henry already aspired to launch a magazine with specimens of what he called “Indian eloquence.”¹⁵ In New York Schoolcraft was introduced to Samuel Conant, an occasional writer for Charles King’s newspaper *The New York American*, who had proposed a similar magazine that would “present not only honorable testimonials of Indian genius and valor, but some defence [*sic*] of their character, and an exposition of the slanders and vulgar errors which, through blind traditions, have obtained the authority of

¹³ See 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 to A.D. 1842* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Grambo, & Co, 1851), 213-221.

¹⁴ Parker, “Introduction,” 6.

¹⁵ Jeremy Mumford, “Mixed-Race Identity in a Nineteenth-Century Family: The Schoolcrafts of Sault Ste. Marie, 1824-27,” *Michigan Historical Review* 25, no. 1 (1999): 2.

truth.”¹⁶ Conant wrote Schoolcraft a letter of introduction to the lawyer and journalist Theodore Wright, and the three of them made a plan to publish a “magazine devoted to Indian subjects,” for which they were in talks with the publishers Wilder and Campbell.¹⁷

Although the magazine never appeared in print, the proposal suggests Schoolcraft’s eagerness to establish himself as a man of letters by producing miscellanies of Indian oratory and oral traditions. Many of the materials that were first published in the *Literary Voyager* later found a wider audience in such publications as Schoolcraft’s *Algic Researches* (1839), *The Red Race of America* (1847), and *The Myth of Hiawatha* (1856). The English writer and critic Anna Brownell Jameson also reprinted the Schoolcrafts’ renditions of Ojibwe stories in her 1838 travelogue *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles*.¹⁸ Several of the legends in the *Literary Voyager* were also reprinted in Dr. Chandler R. Gilman’s *Life on the Lakes* (1836).¹⁹ The most famous adaptation of Schoolcraft’s writings, of course, is Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s 1855 epic *The Song of Hiawatha*, which drew on the stories and information from Native visitors like George Copway but also Schoolcraft’s *Algic Researches*, *Myth of Hiawatha* and other ethnological writings.

Reflecting Henry Rowe Schoolcraft’s literary interests, the majority of the contents of the *Literary Voyager* are the ethnographic, historical, and linguistic treatises written by Henry Schoolcraft himself. Many of its pieces cater to an ethnological interest in national difference—as in, for instance, “Customs of Distant Nations,” “Types of Mexican

¹⁶ Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, *Personal Memoirs*, 203.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 207.

¹⁸ Anna Brownell Jameson, *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*, Vol. III (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1839), esp. 27-87. Traveling to Canada to join her husband, Jameson proceeded on a tour of Indian Nations in Lower Canada, visiting the Schoolcrafts in Sault Ste. Marie in 1836. Phillip Mason suggests that Jameson had access to the *Literary Voyager* during this visit, and “examined the magazines in detail and extracted several of the Chippewa legends for her book.” Mason, “Introduction,” xv. For a longer discussion of Anna Jameson’s use of the Schoolcrafts’ stories and her visit, see Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations*, 179-181.

¹⁹ Chandler Robbins Gilman, *Life on the Lakes, Being Tales and Sketches Collected during a Trip to the Pictured Rocks of Lake Superior* (New York: George Dearborn, 1836.)

Civilization,” and “Some Singular Customs of the Chippewas.” Even a historical poem by Henry Rowe Schoolcraft, about the clash of European and Native cultures in the wake of colonization, carries the pseudo-ethnographic title “An Essay on the Origin of the Indian Tribes.”²⁰ Many of these draw on Schoolcraft’s diplomatic work as an Indian Agent in the Great Lakes region: Schoolcraft held interviews with large numbers of native people who visited his Sault Ste. Marie office during the summers. In addition, Schoolcraft held councils and interviews with tribal leaders by taking part in exploratory expeditions on behalf of the U.S. government, and by participating in treaty councils at Prairie du Chien, Butte de Morts, and Fond du Lac.²¹

The *Literary Voyager* then signals the launch of Schoolcraft’s long career of reprinting, adapting, and circulating Ojibwe (oral) stories and writings. But he would not likely have produced much of these without Jane, her parents, and her brother George. As Jeremy Mumford notes, by “teaching Henry about Chippewa culture and folktales, [Jane] laid the foundation for Henry’s later fame as [a] writer about Indians.”²² The *Voyager* thereby reminds us of the fact that early American periodicals were typically rooted in the reading and writing practices of intimate networks and literary coteries, in which readers were expected to be writers, and vice versa.²³ As the Schoolcrafts’ literary society traversed the Indian agency as well as the Johnston family, the *Voyager* emerged, on the one hand,

²⁰ See “Customs of Distant Nations,” *Literary Voyager*, 27; “Types of Mexican Civilization,” 27-28; “Ojibway Traditions,” 31; “Algonquian Language,” 31-33; “Some Singular Customs of the Chippewas,” 42-43; “The Indian Languages,” 46-47; “Inclusiveness of Indian Traditions,” 63-64; “An Essay on the Origin of the Indian Tribes,” 72-76; “Traits of Personal Attachments among the Ojibways,” 78-81; “Antique Arts of the Indians,” 97-99; “Indian Mode of Recording Ideas,” 102-103; “Manners and Customs of the Chippewas,” 119-121. Page references to Philip P. Mason edition.

²¹ Mason, “Introduction,” xxi.

²² Mumford, “Mixed-Race Identity,” 2.

²³ See, for instance, David Shields, *Civil Tongues and Polite Letters in British America* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997); Bryan Waterman, *Republic of Intellect: the Friendly Club and the Making of American Literature* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007); Catherine O’Donnell Kaplan, *Men of Letters in the Early Republic: Cultivating Forums of Citizenship* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008).

from the ethnological discourses generated by Henry's participation in treaty councils; conversations with tribal leaders and traders; and correspondences with Indian office employees. On the other hand, it includes Jane's family histories, stories, and literary writings. The magazine thereby registers what Konkle has called "the conflict between Jane Johnston Schoolcraft's and Henry Schoolcraft's understanding of Ojibwe knowledge." According to Konkle, Henry's contributions and his framing of pieces by Jane's mother and father perform a capitulation of the magazine's discourse to the "superiority of white knowledge."²⁴ Indeed, Henry's main stake in the publication is the magazine's impulse to "collect" Ojibwe stories and ethnographic knowledge about the Ojibwe and the "North American Indian."

The curious thing about Henry Rowe Schoolcraft's contributions to the *Voyager* is that even when his materials are provided by members of Jane's family, he transcribes their oral narratives in an ethnographic mode. For instance, in the issue of December 1826 Henry contributed a piece called "Waub Ojeeg: or, The Tradition of the Outagami and Chippewa History." The piece is a historical account of Jane's maternal grandfather and the times during which he lived, narrated by Jane's mother Oshaguscodawaqua (Susan Johnston). Schoolcraft's sketch begins with the explanation:

the following tradition is related by Oshaguscodawaqua, a female of Chegoimegon on lake Superior, the ancient capitol of the Chippewa nation. A grand daughter of the reigning chief of that place,—possessing a high opinion of the origin, bravery and position of her tribe, with every means of learning their traditions, full credence appears to be due, to the general incidents of her narrative.²⁵

Denoting his mother-in-law as a "female of Chegoimegon," Schoolcraft downplays (or perhaps ironically comments on) the magazine's production through familial networks.

²⁴ Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations*, 171.

²⁵ [Henry Rowe Schoolcraft], "Waub Ojeeg, or The Tradition of the Outagami and Chippewa History No.1," *Literary Voyager*, 23.

Instead, Schoolcraft authorizes Oshaguscodawaqua's account in a similar way as he does for other informants—by casting her as a representative informant from a larger cultural group. Schoolcraft writes that “[t]radition represents that the Chippewa bands who first settled themselves at Shogwoinecan, or *LaPointe*, on lake Superior, had the lands bestowed upon them by the Outagamis, who were temporarily fixed there; but had resolved on migrating further west.”²⁶ By presenting “Chippewa tradition” as the subject of the sentence and capable of affirming fact, it here denotes a communal tribal source of knowledge affirming information about the political organization of the Ojibwe. Schoolcraft's reference to “Chippewa tradition” suggests an ethnographic use of Oshauguscodaywayqua's knowledge, as well as an attempt to place such knowledge within a larger political and historical context of colonial dynamics.

In Henry Schoolcraft's adaptation, Oshauguscodaywayqua's oral narrative speaks the language of U.S.-Indian negotiations. Schoolcraft begins the story of Waub Ojeeg by stating that “Chippewa tradition affirms, that their ancient council fire—and capitol was on the island of Chegoimehgon in Lake Superior.”²⁷ A few paragraphs of Schoolcraft's editorializing excepted, the article presents a narrative around Waub Ojeeg's lineage; the geopolitics of the Seven Years War; Waub Ojeeg's succession of Ma Mongazida; ecological changes; intertribal conflicts and alliances with the Sioux and Outagamis; migrations; Ojibwe tribal politics; diplomacy and its failures; U.S. Indian Affairs; Waub Ojeeg's life and death; and economy and trade. Oshauguscodaywayqua's “tradition” thereby renders a complex history of Ojibwe settlement in the Great Lakes region, offering a detailed account of the chief's life in the context of profound social and political change. The poems and

²⁶ Ibid., 23.

²⁷ Ibid., 23.

stories by Jane are somewhat subsumed by the bulk of Henry’s contributions. For instance, in the second issue of the *Literary Voyager*, the inclusion of Jane’s 1823 poem “Pensive Lines” suggests that Schoolcraft’s poetry had more of an additive value for the magazine. On the right side of the page the Schoolcrafts placed Henry’s long narrative “Wabojeeg, or, the White Fisher”—his retelling of an Ojibwe oral narrative (Figure 17). On the left side of the page, they left open one column for the inclusion of poem Schoolcraft had written in 1823. But with not enough space left to include the poem, the column was left blank, and Jane’s poem included on a separate piece of paper. In this instance, Jane’s poetry was literally made to conform to the structure of their magazine, in which Henry’s steady supply of historical and ethnological pieces form the majority of the contents.

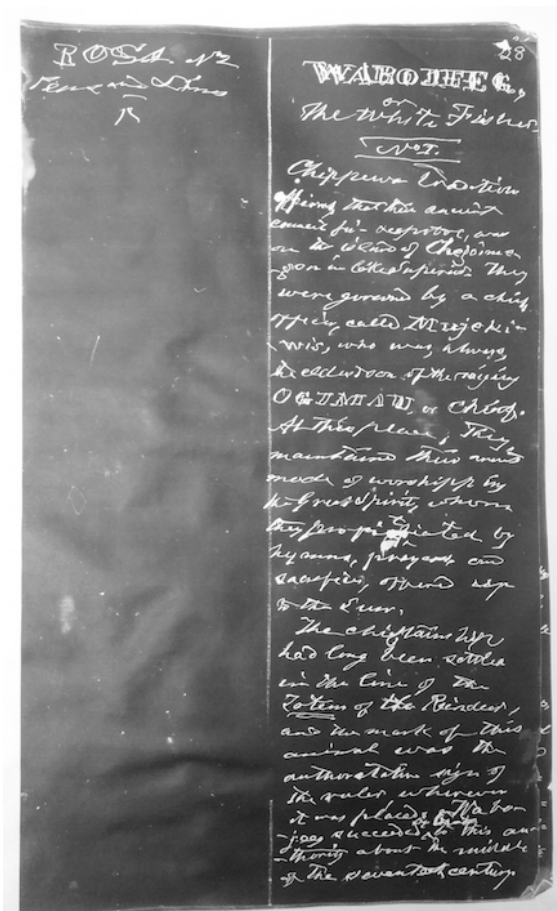


Figure 18: “Wabojeeg: or, The White Fisher.” In Henry Rowe Schoolcraft (ed.), *The Literary Voyager 2* (1826), Henry Rowe Schoolcraft Papers, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan. This page also illustrates the Schoolcraft’s practice of making the manuscript magazine echo print publication in manuscript form, not only through the use of columns of text, but also in its mimicking of typeface.

The collaboration between Henry and Jane, however, makes visible the tension

between familial and ethnographic writing, creating a dialogic space that simultaneously elaborates and challenges Henry's textual authority as an ethnologist. Rather than merely incorporating Oshauguscodaywayquay's oral narrative or Jane's poetry within the language of ethnological discourse, the magazine stages a productive tension between these different sources of knowledge. In the issue from 10 March 1827, for instance, the juxtaposition of two dissimilar poems comments on the form and content of the magazine. At the back of this issue the Schoolcrafts placed two poems that both seem to be inspired by Jane's maternal grandfather Waubojeeg. The first is the "Otagamiad," published anonymously but written by Henry Schoolcraft; the second is Jane's "Invocation to My Maternal Grandfather, on Hearing His Descent from Chippewa Ancestors Misrepresented."²⁸ Written in heroic couplets and iambic pentameter, Henry's "Otagamiad" recounts a war council centered on a warrior named "Ojeeg." With its anonymous inclusion in the *Voyager* and the generic epithets afforded the councilmembers, the "Otagamiad" registers a sense of a dominant discourse for writing and thinking about American Indians. The poem's first lines establish a vague geographical location, and present Ojeeg as an example of the idiomatic Native warrior-leader:

In northern climes there liv'd a chief of fame,
La Pointé his dwelling, and Ojeeg his name,
Who oft in war had rais'd the battle cry,
And brav'd the rigors of an Arctic sky²⁹

²⁸ As Christopher Phillips notes, "anthropologists have usually followed the main modern source for the poem, Philip P. Mason's 1962 edition of the *Literary Voyager*, in attributing the poem to Jane Schoolcraft. However, Robert Dale Parker's recent edition of Jane Schoolcraft's poems, the first ever published, demonstrates that the poem is almost certainly by Henry Schoolcraft. The Ossianic element that A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff has noted in 'The Otagamiad' turns out to Henry's account of a historic Ojibwe war council, the title's "-iad" ending signifying his effort to humanize Native cultures as well as his tendency to heroicize those cultures." See Christopher Phillips, *Epic in American Culture: Settlement to Reconstruction* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2012), 198.

²⁹ [Henry Rowe Schoolcraft], "Otagamiad," in *Literary Voyager*, 139.

Ojeeg is raised to his “simple forest throne,” and as he sees his nation’s lands “hem’d around by foes,” he urges his council to go to war. In the stanzas that follow, different council members offer their thoughts. For instance, Camudwa—“fam’d for eloquence of tonque”—urges them not to go to war but to use “pliant speech, to gain our purpos’d will,” and the “sage” Canoakeed preaches “calm judgment” before heading to war.³⁰ The poem ends on a lack of resolution that nevertheless reflects positively on Indian nations’ propensity for democratic process:

Each for himself, both knows & feels & sees,
The growing evils of a heartless peace,
And the sole question, of this high debate,
Is—shall we longer suffer—longer wait,
Or, with heroic will, for strife prepare,
And try the hazard of a gen’ral war!³¹

As a fantasy of democratic deliberation, the “Otagamiad” builds towards the moral that, as Maureen Konkle puts it, “these Indian warriors are too philosophical to murderously take up the tomahawk and scalping knife.”³²

By framing the poem’s narrative through the war council’s dialogue, Henry Schoolcraft renders in epic form the types of negotiations he knew intimately from his work as Indian agent. Ventriloquizing Ojeeg’s public address, Schoolcraft narrates the realities of intertribal conflict he tried to manage as Indian agent. Ojeeg alludes to a non-specific enemy, observing that “[t]hey pierce our forest, & they cross our lines / No treaty binds them, & no stream confines / And every spring that clothes the leafy plain / We mourn our brethren, or our children slain.”³³ The poem represents the council members as elaborating rational political discourse, investing in a notion of the American Indian tribal leader as a

³⁰ Ibid., 141-142.

³¹ Ibid., 142.

³² Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations*, 174.

³³ [H.R. Schoolcraft], “Otagamiad,” 139.

model for republican sentiments of civic dedication. And by connoting Jane's grandfather Waub Ojeeg through his naming the main character "Ojeeg," Schoolcraft filters Jane's family history through republican fantasies of Native democratic deliberation.

Its juxtaposition with the following poem by "Rosa" produces an effective contrast with the "Otagamiad," bringing the story of Waub Ojeeg back into familial conversational circles. According to the date below the poem Jane Schoolcraft wrote her "Invocation to My Maternal Grandfather, on Hearing His Descent from Chippewa Ancestors Misrepresented" in 1823. Its title suggests that Schoolcraft's poem is a correction to a form of misinformation: it speak backs to what she knows to be the mistaken notion that her grandfather, Waub Ojeeg, was of Sioux rather than Ojibwe ancestry. The title's emphasis on "hearing" invokes the unreliability of spoken discourse within conversational circles, rendering the poem as an act of intervening in conversational discourses that are imagined as being within earshot.

Schoolcraft's poem establishes the fissure between the speaker's own internalized knowledge about her family ancestry, and the malleability of that knowledge in the social world. As an "invocation," the poem's action is to summon up the spirit of a deceased loved one, and indeed the imperative verb with which Schoolcraft's poem opens—"Rise bravest chief! of the mark of the noble deer"—invokes the presence of Waub Ojeeg both as a member of a clan and as part of the poem's intimate audience. In contrast to Waub Ojeeg's presence, the poem proceeds to explain that "The foes of thy line / With coward design / Have dar'd, with black envy / to garble the truth."³⁴ Here, the past-perfect tense verb absents Waub Ojeeg's slanderers from the poem's moment, even if their speech acts have lingering

³⁴ [Jane Johnston Schoolcraft], "Invocation, To My Maternal Grandfather, On Hearing His Descent from Chippewa Ancestors Misrepresented," *Literary Voyager*, 142.

effects in the present (“And stain, with a falsehood, thy valorous youth”). The next stanza further suggests a contrast between Waub Ojeeg and his slanderers:

They say, when a child, thou wer’ t taken from the Sioux,
And with impotent aim,
To lessen thy fame,
Thy warlike lineage basely abuse,
.....
And thou noble chieftain! art nerveless and dead,
The bow all unstrung, and thy proud spirit fled.³⁵

Even with his “bow all unstrung” Waub Ojeeg is still “warlike,” while his detractors are denied such status: the “impotent aim” of their slander is suggested by the colloquial “[t]hey say.” The exclamation point in the invocation (“And thou noble chieftain!”), by contrast, gives Waub Ojeeg a more prominent presence in the poem than the conversation of his detractors.

As juxtaposed with the “Otagamiad,” Jane’s poem to her maternal grandfather turns the *Literary Voyager*’s dialogic composition into an opportunity for a subtle critique of the politics of writing about Ojibwe culture. If in Henry’s ethnographic materials oral transmission is a source of authority, here it is the opposite; where Henry brings to the fore the authority of the (orally delivered) information of the Native tribal leaders, Jane’s poem insists on the possibility for misinformation within spoken discourse. The publication of Henry and Jane’s poems side-by-side, I would argue, should not be read in a limited sense as reflecting a literary reworking of the personal or cultural dynamics in the Schoolcrafts’ marriage. Even as the volume of Henry’s ethnological pieces assert control over the presentation of Jane’s poems and stories, the dialogic format of the *Voyager* allows poems such as Jane’s “Invocation” to (almost literally) speak back to what Maureen Konkle calls

³⁵ Ibid., 142.

“Henry Schoolcraft’s understanding of Ojibwe knowledge.”³⁶ This practice of juxtaposing miscellaneous texts thereby imagines readers capable of differentiating between these various modes. The logic of the *Voyager*, then, is the logic of the literary miscellany. In her study of early literary anthologies Barbara Benedict argues that the miscellany allows readers to negotiate an ideological relation to a literary culture, as they “embody the literary choices of individual readers” in making sense of a range of different texts.³⁷ As they invite readers to differentiate between texts and measure their comparative qualities, miscellanies activate reading practices that Benedict argues constituted the process of making modern readers.

The Literary Voyager thereby presents a literary reworking of the type of cultural interactions between Indian Nations and Europeans/Euro-Americans in the Great Lakes region. The collaborative dimensions of the *Voyager* project a modern Ojibwe literary culture that is not constituted by oral traditions, literary writings, or ethnology alone. Within a world of Atlantic trade and cultural exchange, the Schoolcrafts’ *Literary Voyager* projects a notion of Ojibwe culture that not only as the object of white ethnography, but also as a modern, multi-generic literary culture. The *Voyager* does not present Ojibwe culture as a discrete, static entity that can be represented accurately *either* in traditional oral *or* in written ethnological discourse; instead, Ojibwe culture is what literary, historical, and traditional writings stage a dialogue about. This dialectic, crucially, does not necessarily register a conflict between Native and non-native; male or female; or public and private. Rather, it echoes the conversational logics of the salon and the literary society—a modern, heterosocial, and in this case cross-cultural space where public and private are intertwined,

³⁶ Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations*, 169.

³⁷ Barbara Benedict, *Making the Modern Reader: Cultural Mediation in Early Modern Literary Anthologies* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 4.

and where both official and private knowledge are part of the same conversation. The collaborative publication of the *Literary Voyager* was an act of making and remaking intimate and official networks. Through this navigation, the *Voyager* imagines a place for modern Ojibwe writing to address the colonial dynamics within a cosmopolitan literary culture.

1.3 “The Importance and Utility of Native Agency”: Peter Jones and the Credit River Ojibwe

One of the many visitors to the Johnston family’s residence at Sault Ste. Marie was the Mississauga Ojibwe missionary and writer Peter Jones. In June of 1833 Jones, also known by his Ojibwe name Kahkewaquonaby—had breakfast with the Johnstons, as he recorded in his journal:

Brother Hurlburt and myself took breakfast at Mrs. Johnston’s, a kind friendly family. Mr. J. who died some time since, was an Irishman who married a Chippeway woman, and by whom he had raised a large family of well-behaved and well educated children; one of them has been married to Henry R. Schoolcraft, Esq., Indian Agent among the Chippeways.³⁸

Following the visit to the Johnstons, Jones writes that he attended a preaching room with “a pretty large congregation of our Indian brethren.” His journal entry, published in Jones’s *Life and Journals of Kah-Ke-Wa-Quo-Na-By* (1860), registers the multiple networks through which Jones traveled during his life and work as a Methodist missionary: extended families, government officials, and countless gatherings of Native and non-native Methodist missionaries and congregants. Throughout his copious journal entries beginning in 1825, Jones took detailed account of his travels, sermons, and political activism.

³⁸ Peter Jones, *Life and Journals of Kah-Ke-Wa-Quo-Na-By: (Rev. Peter Jones,) Wesleyan Missionary* (Toronto: Anson Green, 1860), 362.

In this section I explore how the Ojibwe missionary Peter Jones addressed the conditions of mediating between Methodist, Ojibwe, and British-Canadian governmental networks as an indigenous missionary and tribal member.³⁹ In particular, I focus on Jones's published journals (written throughout the 1820s and 1830s but published in 1860), and an 1844 petition to the British crown, which insist on the potential of a transatlantic community to promote political, educational, and economic changes for the Credit River Ojibwe. These texts reveal how through the use of multimedia publication strategies—oratory, letter writing, petitions, and print—Jones tried improve the political recognition of the Credit Mission Ojibwe community in Upper Canada, where he became an ordained Methodist minister in 1833. As Jones's publications imagine a tribal future for the Credit River Ojibwe through the organizational possibilities of Methodism, his writings reflect on the conversational and organizational contexts of his missionary work, which were transatlantic in scope, and insist on the need for cross-cultural reciprocity in a colonial culture. In the process, as I argue in what follows, Jones projects a politicized Methodism that was both pan-tribal as well as dedicated to the negotiation of land title for specific tribal nations.⁴⁰

³⁹ During his lifetime, most of Jones's print publications consisted of Ojibwe-language hymnals, spelling books, tracts, and bibles—published under the auspices of the Methodist Church and the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. As Michael McNally has demonstrated in *Ojibwe Singers*, through their wide circulation and adaptability to different oral and performative contexts, these hymnbooks became a vital part of traditional religious practices among the Ojibwe in Canada and the United States, especially after the consolidation of the reservation/reserve system in the 1870s. Michael McNally, *Ojibwe Singers: Hymns, Grief, and Native Culture in Motion* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2000), 43-122.

⁴⁰ Donald B. Smith, *Mississauga Portraits: Ojibwe Voices from Nineteenth-Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 25. Jones's *Life and Journals* was published posthumously in 1860, after his widow Eliza Jones consented to their publication at the request of the Wesleyan Methodist missionary Egerton Ryerson. Jones turned the manuscripts over to Reverend Enoch Wood, who oversaw the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada. The printed volume of Jones's comprises the bulk of Peter Jones's surviving journals—only little of his manuscript journal entries are available today. Following the publication of *The Life and Journals*, Eliza Jones edited and published Jones's unfinished manuscript *History of the Ojebway Indians with Especial Reference to Their Conversion to Christianity*. See Smith, *Mississauga Portraits*, 26.

Jones was born in 1802 among the Mississaugas on the north shore of Lake Ontario as Kahkewaquonaby (Sacred Feathers) in 1802.⁴¹ He was the son of the Ojibwe woman Tuhbenahneequay and Augustus Jones, a Welsh farmer who was already legally married to an Iroquois woman. Jones spent his childhood among the Mississauga tribe of Ojibwe on the north shore of Lake Ontario, a community that was much affected by the War of 1812 and the influx of white settlers in Upper Canada following the war. At a camp meeting in 1823 Jones converted to Methodism, after which he began an active career as an exhorter in Ojibwe and Iroquois communities. In 1827 he performed missionary work throughout Ontario, and began the work of translating hymnbooks into the Ojibwe language. In 1830 Jones was ordained as a deacon of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference, and became the first Native Methodist minister three years later.⁴² That same year Jones married Eliza Field, an English woman Jones had met during his travels in England in 1831.

In 1826 Jones had helped the Methodist Church establish a Mission station at the Credit River Ojibwe community. This settlement of some two hundred Ojibwe people and thirty log cabins was located on two hundred acres of land along the Credit River in present-day Southern Ontario. As the pastor to the Credit River community of Mississauga Ojibwe, Jones was appointed tribal leader there in 1836. Fulfilling the role of both religious and tribal leader, Jones continued his missionary work while also lobbying the colonial

⁴¹ Peter Jones's life has been thoroughly detailed by his biographer Donald B. Smith. Most importantly, see Donald B. Smith, *Sacred Feathers: The Reverend Peter Jones (Kahkewaquonaby) & the Mississauga Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), and Smith, *Mississauga Portraits*, 3-32. "Mississauga" was a term the British applied to the Ojibwe people on the north shore of Lake Ontario. As Smith writes, "[t]he British Canadians' minimal interest in Ojibwe language and history best explains their designation of these Ojibwe as Mississauga. As . . . Peter Jones . . . pointed out in his *History of the Ojebway Indians; with Special reference to their Conversion to Christianity* (1861), a 'common mistake is, that the Messissauga Indians are distinct from the Ojibways, whereas they are a part of that nation, and speak the same language.' In their own tongue, these Ojibwe-speakers called themselves, 'Anishinabe,' or in its plural form, 'Anishinabeg.'" Smith, *Mississauga Portraits*, xvi. Since Peter Jones himself mostly uses the word "Ojebway" throughout his writings, I use the modern spelling "Ojibwe" of that name in this chapter, unless there is cause to use a different term.

⁴² Smith, *Mississauga Portraits*, 18.

government of Canada on behalf of his community. In particular, Jones petitioned the government in order for the Credit River Ojibwe to obtain a title deed to their lands at the Credit River, to which they had relocated from a more dispersed area in 1826. In his capacity of overseeing the Credit Mission community, Jones worked closely with William Case and Egerton Ryerson. Case was the presiding elder at the camp meeting where Jones was converted, and directed his activities as an exhorter and missionary. In addition, Case instructed Jones to keep a journal of all his “travels and labors.”⁴³ Ryerson was an educator, missionary, and politician who was appointed by the Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1826 as the first missionary at the Credit River Mississauga mission. Although he stayed for only one year, he worked closely with the community and its tribal leaders. With Jones as translator, Ryerson set up a school for Ojibwe children, where they were instructed in English and Ojibwe.⁴⁴

Overseeing the establishment of the Credit Mission, Peter Jones also became the first aboriginal person in Canada to write to the Canadian Indian Department.⁴⁵ Jones’s work in establishing the Credit Mission underscores the fact that Indian Affairs in British Canada was intermingled with the promotion of Christianity among First Peoples. In June of 1825 Peter Jones wrote to the Indian Agent James Givins at York regarding the payments of annuities to the Ojibwe Indians of the newly established mission on the Credit River.⁴⁶ At this time Givins served as the representative of the British crown to the First Nations near

⁴³ Qtd in Smith, *Mississauga Portraits*, 17

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 19. Ryerson became a close friend of Jones’s and was even present at his deathbed in 1856. Ryerson has become known for pioneering Canada’s public school system

⁴⁵ In Canada, Indian affairs were managed by the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs until 1828, when the position of Chief Superintendent of Indian Affairs was created to supervise the Indian Department.

⁴⁶ Givins was a veteran commander of the War of 1812, who had commanded British as well as Ojibwe soldiers at the Battle of York in 1813.

York in Upper Canada.⁴⁷ Adorned by the language of deep humility, Jones’s letter requests “all information, respecting their presents, to what time you will be ready to issue them presents, or to what time you would wish them to come down.”⁴⁸ Jones copied Givins’s brief reply in his journal entry for July 11, 1825. Givins writes:

Dear Sir—I have consulted the parties concerned, and it is universally agreed upon that the Indians should meet the day after tomorrow (Wednesday) at the Humber, to receive their payments and presents, I therefore wish you to be there with your scholars and singers, as the Parson and gentlemen will be up with me to see them.⁴⁹

Givins requests that the leadership of the Credit Mission put on display its students and hymn singers; to verify that they have in fact, in Jones’s words, “embraced Christianity, and are attending to the means of Education.”



Figure 19: “Credit River Mission.” This engraving depicts the Methodist mission at the Credit River Ojibwe community, ca. 1825-1830. The small house on the right is Peter Jones’s study. From Egerton Ryerson, *The Story of My Life, Being Reminiscences of Sixty Years’ Public Service in Canada*, edited by J. George Hodgins (Toronto: William Briggs, 1883).

⁴⁷ For a more detailed sketch of Givins, see Smith, *Mississauga Portraits*, 212-213.

⁴⁸ Peter Jones to James Givins, 14 June 1825, Peter Jones Fonds, Box 3, University of Victoria.

⁴⁹ Jones, *Life and Journals*, 37.

Jones's reprinting of the writings of missionaries and governmental figures in his published journals, provides a commentary on the sociable dimensions of how he negotiated tribal-national politics, the colonial government, and missionary organizations. For instance, in his entries for the Fall of 1825 and early winter of 1826, Jones's volume reprints a series of letters exchanged between Jones, William Case, the Munceytown teacher John Carey, and Mr. Crawford, a teacher at a Mohawk mission in the Bay of Quinte region. The note that precedes the first of these letters, by Reverend Case, suggests that the letters are included to prove that in spite of Case's relocation to the Bay of Quinte District, he "in every way in his power aided us in the work amongst the Indians by correspondence."⁵⁰ In his letter, dated at York on 5 October 1825, Case gives Jones detailed instructions on how to fill out the record book for the Credit Mission that he had sent him: which information to include about its baptized members and which pages to leave blank for the Society's use. In a hurried postscript, Case asks Jones to write him "if any thing favorable takes place concerning Indian Affairs."⁵¹

Jones's inclusion of his reply to Case communicates that the community-building at Credit River depends not only on the spiritual work of salvation but also on the material and administrative dimensions of education and economics. In his response to Case, he reports the news of ten new converts, noting that "[t]he good Lord is still carrying on his work amongst us, in bringing poor Indians out of heathenish darkness to the most marvelous light of the Gospel." But preceding this news of the conversions in progress at the Credit Mission, Jones first reminds Case of the promise of material improvements that had been made to the mission:

⁵⁰ Ibid., 45.

⁵¹ Ibid., 45-46.

[M]y brother John and I had an interview with His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor respecting the settlement of our Christian Indians on the River Credit. He has kindly offered to build twenty dwelling houses, and a school house for us, between this and next spring. . . . I do not know to what extent he will aid us in our establishment, but he has certainly opened the hand of liberality to us to build twenty log houses which will not cost a little.⁵²

Jones's letter prioritizes not only the spiritual work of conversions but also the governmental negotiations that are needed to make the Credit River mission sustainable. To this extent Jones copies a letter from the teacher John Carey, who reports on the progress made on the building of homes at the Munceytown mission, and his receiving a "good supply of books and stationery."⁵³

In his letters Jones understands the situational and personal aspects of missionary work and education at the Credit Mission, as well as his own position as mediator between missionary mandates and community members. Case had asked Jones for an update on a young boy who had traveled a hundred miles to attend school at the Credit Mission. In his reply Jones notes that "[a]s to the boy who came from York to school, he has not attended since we came from the Credit, but he tells me he intends to go to school after he gets settled: he is shortly to be married." Next, Jones comments on his own personal situation:

I hope, dear brother, we have an interest in your prayers, that the Lord may prosper His work amongst us, and that we may hold fast the beginning of our confidence in the Saviour. I have had many inward trials of late, but I trust the Lord has brought me out of them all. O pray for me, that I may be strong in the Lord, and that I may be humble!⁵⁴

Jones takes up Case's rhetoric of God's "work amongst us" to emphasize that the work of conversion is contingent on deeply personal matters of devotion and private life—rather

⁵² Ibid., 46.

⁵³ Ibid., 47.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 49.

than on only the Church's imperative of conversion. Jones's reference to his "many inward trials" perhaps hint at the personal toll of Jones's missionary work among his own people.

These situational and personal observations stand at odds with the replies from Case that Jones includes. The last of the reprinted letters is followed by one from Case sent to a "Mr. Crawford," a teacher at one of Mohawk missions. In it, Case informs Crawford that the Church "wish[es] much to see a work of grace amongst the Mohawks on the Bay of Quinte" and explains that he envisions frequent missionary trips to the Mohawks there, knowing that there are "none more likely to get access to them than yourself and brother Peter Jones"—presumably not least because Jones spoke Mohawk.⁵⁵ In Case's letter, his emphasis on completed goals rather than process ("we wish much to see a work of grace"), and his understanding of Jones's role as being about "get[ting] access" to Native communities, suggests perhaps Case's only secondary interest in Jones's intersectional role as missionary and tribal member. Furthermore, having read Jones's remarks about his "many inward trials," Case prods Crawford about Jones's situation, gently pushing him to keep Jones on track:

What is brother Peter doing? Tell him that by all that is lovely in the sacred duties of religion, not to think of the world, its cares, and wealth, but to spend his life in the service of the Church of Christ, in bringing sinners to the knowledge of the truth. There is much for him to do, and he will be wanted, for there are new and important fields opening for faithful, humble labourers.⁵⁶

Case's letter somewhat condescendingly sees in Jones's commitment to community building a preoccupation for "wealth" and worldly affairs.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 49-50. The 1860 edition of Jones's *Life and Journals* dates this letter 18 January, 1825, most likely mistakenly, given the chronological ordering of the letters in Jones's journal and the letter's reference to a mission trip to the Mohawks that Case proposed for the winter of 1826.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 50.

By copying these letters, Jones on the one hand performs his own deep commitment to the work of converting and educating Indian communities—as well as his capacity for (self-) criticism. On the other hand, the inclusion of these letters communicates a tension between Jones’s situational and empathetic knowledge of the people of the Credit Mission, and the more programmatic concerns of William Case and white Wesleyan missionaries. If not critiquing the Wesleyans directly, Jones’s journals lay bare at least some of the politics of being an indigenous missionary to Native communities—including one’s own. For Jones, matters of conversion and spiritual guidance were programmatic but also local and personal. Furthermore, they were not only connected to the work of Methodism, but also the work of building the Credit River Ojibwe community.

The more explicit critiques in Jones’s journals, however, are directed at white traders and the colonial government. In an 1826 entry Jones critiques the Indian agent “Mr. S., the great Indian trader” at Rice Lake, to “enquire the state of the Indians” there. As Jones reports, the trader “informed me they were very intemperate and wicked, but he thought they might be reformed if proper means were used, adding, ‘he would help me if there was any hope of making them more industrious in catching beaver,’—prizing the beaver more than the souls of the poor Indians.”⁵⁷ Jones recognizes how the Methodist project of Ojibwe conversions could play into colonial schemes that were less interested in the well-being of native people and more so in developing white economic interests in Upper Canada. In a later entry that same year Jones critiques the Governor General of Canada, Peregrine Maitland, who was opposed to the Ojibwe attending Methodist camp meetings. The day before, the Indian agent James Givins had summoned the tribal leaders of the Credit River Ojibwe to a council in York, where Givins gave voice to the Governor’s arguments. The

⁵⁷ Ibid., 69.

chiefs decide to follow the instructions (“particularly as we were just commencing a settlement”), but Jones observes “I abstain from giving further comments on this affair, but leave others to judge for themselves.”⁵⁸ Jones more directly criticizes James Givins in an 1829 entry, when Givins is reluctant to recognize Jones and his uncle Joseph Sawyer (Nawahjegezhegwabe) as proper tribal representatives when delivering the annuity payments for that year.⁵⁹ Jones rebukes Givins by narrating how his attempt to de-authorize Jones and Sawyer is rejected by all the present representatives, offering an implicit critique of these governmental networks by exposing how the Indian agent’s political decisions are based on personal whims.

In this sense, Jones’s reflections on his work as a Methodist missionary—and his commitment to the conversion of Ojibwe and other First Peoples—is never detached from addressing the political problems of settler encroachment and Native land title. From 1826 to 1847, Jones consistently pressured the colonial government to secure for the Credit Mission Ojibwe a title deed to their land. But he also pushed for title deeds for all Great Lakes tribal nations, an endeavor with decidedly transnational dimensions. Having heard accounts of Cherokee Removal in the United States, Jones began to imagine the Ojibwe homeland as “a place of refuge” for Indian nations of the Great Lakes. U.S. removal policy had its ripple effects on Upper Canada, where “[s]everal thousand Ojibwas, Ottawas, and Potawatomis emigrated from the American side of the Great Lakes to avoid relocation.”⁶⁰ For Jones, the coming together of tribal nations was a key component of successful pressure on the settler government. In Donald Smith’s words,

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁵⁹ Donald Smith notes that Givins had a suspicion of Methodists as he associated them closely with Americans, whom he had disliked as a consequence of his experiences in the War of 1812. Smith, *Mississauga Portraits*, 212-213.

⁶⁰ Smith, *Sacred Feathers*, 172-174.

Peter's dream had been exactly this: Indian unity. 'Be united in all your important matters, Union is Strength,' he had told Joseph Sawyer [in 18380]. Wise in the ways of the settlers' political system, the perceptive Indian missionary knew that pressure must be constantly applied until they had the promised title deeds in hand.⁶¹

Jones simultaneously imagined pan-tribal unity and the direct focus on securing of title deeds for specific Native communities. The organizational structures of Methodism allowed Jones to expound an ethics of community that he imagined to be crucial in dealing with settler encroachment in Indian country. As Jace Weaver has argued in *That the People Might Live*, not only did Jones elaborate a consistent critique of whites' treatment of Native Americans, but "in his praxis as well as his writing" was dedicated to an ideal of Native community.⁶²

In Jones's writings, the promise of Methodism is in part the promise of a universal framework for both of Jones's objects: "Indian unity" as well as more tribally-specific claims of land title. His commitment to the land claims and economic well-being of the Credit River Ojibwe is unambiguously imagined through the work of spiritual conversion. Well-positioned for this work, Jones displayed, in Michael McNally's words, "a remarkable dexterity in multiple cultural worlds."⁶³ While every piece of evidence suggests that Jones's spiritual commitment to the doctrines of Methodism was sincere, Jones's writings also suggest that the work of spiritual salvation offered a way to extend into a contemporary context traditional patterns of communal reciprocity and care. Or, as Smith explains, Jones "knew that the Anishinabeg shared values compatible with those of Christians. . . . He now translated into Ojibwe lively Wesleyan hymns that brought out common Christian and age-

⁶¹ Ibid., 175.

⁶² Jace Weaver, *That the People Might Live: Native American Literature and Native American Community* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 64.

⁶³ McNally, *Ojibwe Singers*, 51.

old Anishinabeg beliefs. The messages sounded familiar to the Mississauga.”⁶⁴ Yet it would be a stretch to suggest that Jones’s use of Methodist networks was a strategic adoption of colonial technologies to resist settler encroachment. Laura Donaldson’s analysis of William Apess’s relation to Methodism suggests a more useful framework for thinking about Jones’s imbricated acts of securing Native land title as well as conversions to Methodism. In her analysis, Donaldson takes up Rayna Green’s concept of “retraditionalization,” originally developed by Teresa LaFromboise to signal women’s “extending [of] traditional care-taking and cultural transmission roles to activities in predominantly non-Native settings.”⁶⁵ In this reading, retraditionalization is an effort to integrate pre-existing ethics of care and community into contemporary pressures and demands.⁶⁶ The continuation of traditional Native practices is not contingent on an absence of historical, cultural, or religious change—indeed, it recognizes that notions of what is “traditional” are shaped or re-shaped by contemporary demands and pressures. In the case of the Pequot author William Apess, Donaldson argues, we may recognize how Methodist practices “extended rather than subsumed” existing cultural practices of community and care among American Indian and First Peoples communities.⁶⁷ Writers like Apess, in other words, saw Methodism as offering organizational and economic means to claim a social and physical space for tribal nations.

In Jones’s journals, this work did not happen through Methodist organizations alone, but was also contingent on Jones’s diplomatic work between tribal nations, religious organizations, the colonial government, and audiences of potential benefactors. In 1831

⁶⁴ Smith, *Mississauga Portraits*, 18.

⁶⁵ Laura Donaldson, “Making a Joyful Noise: William Apess and the Search for Postcolonial Method(ism),” in *Messy Beginnings: Postcoloniality and Early American Studies*, edited by Malani Johar Schueller and Edward Watts (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2003), 40.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 38-39.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 36.

Egerton Ryerson arranged for Jones to join him on a visit to England, from March 1831 to April of the next year. During his travels Jones gave lectures and sermons, and met with a bewildering range of prominent figures in English civil society. Kate Flint summarizes well the organizational dimensions of Jones's travels and performances:

The journal gives an excellent sense of the scope of his official duties: preaching, speaking both about the 'superstitions' of the Indians and what the Gospel has done for them; asking not just for funds but . . . for local wares, such as joiners' tools and cutlery; writing to the committees of the Sunday School Union and the Sunday School Society for books for Indian Sunday schools; and receiving the news that he would be paid by the British and Foreign Bible Society for translating portions of the New Testament into Ojibwa.⁶⁸

Jones's travels, in short, contributed to the work of nation-building for the Credit River community by mobilizing transatlantic networks of religious and philanthropic individuals and groups. Indeed, the circulation of books and other texts becomes part of Jones's attempt to generate political support for the Credit River Ojibwe within transatlantic governmental and charitable contexts.

For instance, in his journal Jones reflects on an audience with King William IV and Queen Adelaide in 1832, where he offered the King a copy of his Ojibwe translation of the Gospel of St John. In the published account, he narrates how he asked the Queen whether she had received the "few articles of Indian work" by "the Indian women of Canada" that Jones had asked Lord Goderich to send to them in advance of his trip to England.⁶⁹ In return, Jones receives a peace medal from the King, an illustration of which he later reprinted in his *History of the Ojebway Indians* (Fig. 19). This act of exchanges may seem purely ceremonial and perhaps irrelevant—or even an act of Jones's incorporation into a

⁶⁸ Flint, *Transatlantic Indian*, 211.

⁶⁹ Jones, *Life and Journals*, 342.

colonial power structure.⁷⁰ Yet Jones's gift of books and goods insists on the potential of a cross-cultural understanding of reciprocity and economic exchange in a colonial situation. Moreover, Jones explicitly politicizes the circulating of texts in his journal entries on his second visit to England from 1837 to 1838. Here Jones recounts a brief audience with Queen Victoria in which Jones's gift-giving addressed the political situation of the Credit River Ojibwe. At this point, the Credit River Ojibwe were still waiting on the colonial government to follow up on their earlier promise to grant them a permanent title deed to their lands. Jones was presented to the Queen at Windsor Castle in September 1837, in the presence of Lord Glenelg, the Secretary of War and the Colonies. Although the audience apparently did not last for more than five minutes, Jones claims discursive control over the brief meeting by making a gift of a document that needed additional explanation from Jones:

I then said I had great pleasure in laying before Her Majesty a petition from the Indians residing at the River Credit in Upper Canada, which that people had sent by me; that I was happy to say Lord Glenelg (pointing to his Lordship,) had already granted the prayer of the petition, by requesting the Governor of Upper Canada, to give the Indians the title-deeds they asked for.⁷¹

⁷⁰ Tim Fulford has argued that Jones's state visit carried little political weight. Because "Indian power was so reduced that whites no longer needed their military aid, feared their opposition, or relied upon their trade goods," Fulford argues, Jones operated from a position of weakness compared to previous tribal leaders visiting the English seat of government, such as the Iroquois leaders Joseph Brant and John Norton. In this situation, Jones "could only appeal to people's goodwill and compassion." Tim Fulford, *Romantic Indians: Native Americans, British Literature, and Transatlantic Culture, 1756-1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 260. However, Fulford's analysis relies on a rather narrow definition of what is considered relevant political work. The exchange of material and textual artifacts had a long history as an act of making and remaking political alliances. The historian Bruce White has shown that in Great Lakes Ojibwe diplomacy, gift-giving reinforced kinship relations as well as economic and diplomatic relations with Europeans. Through the exchange of gifts, for instance, Ojibwe leaders signaled an understanding of social reciprocity and gave "material demonstration of concern for the welfare of the other Indians within his family or within the larger group, showing that he was worthy, generous, and unselfish." Such practices of gift-giving were the means by which foreigners like fur traders and government officials could "hope to arrive at his political ends." See Bruce M. White, "'Give Us a Little Milk': The Social and Cultural Meanings of Gift-Giving in the Lake Superior Trade," *Minnesota History* 48.2 (1982), 71. See also White, "A Skilled Game of Exchange: Ojibway Fur Trade Protocol," *Minnesota History* 50.6 (1987), 229-240.

⁷¹ Jones, *Life and Journals*, 407.

Jones writes that Queen Victoria “bowed in token of approbation of His Lordship’s having granted the thing prayed for by her red children,” after which Jones presents the petition to her, “thinking she would like to possess such a document as a curiosity.”⁷²



Figure 20: Peace medal from King William IV to Peter Jones. This illustration of the peace medal King William IV gave to Jones in 1832 appeared in Peter Jones, *The History of the Ojebway Indians; with Especial Reference to Their Conversion to Christianity* (London: A.W. Bennett, 1861).

Jones’s gift is a remarkable one. First, by alluding to the “prayer of the petition,” Jones evokes the mix of politics and religion that fueled his missionary and diplomatic work. Second, he offers Queen Victoria a decidedly urgent and political written artifact—one that has already been presented to the colonial government at this time. By presenting this document in the presence of Lord Glenelg, to whom he had officially introduced the petition previously, Jones makes visible the accountability of the Secretary to both the Queen and

⁷² Ibid., 407.

her “red children.” Third, while delivering the petition to the Queen, Jones explains the symbolism of this gift exchange, making sure that is not accepted as a mere “curiosity.” As the petition has a string of wampum attached to it (as well as totems that mark the “names of the Indians who signed it”), Jones explains the meaning of the wampum when the Queen thanks him for it. Jones tells her

that the white wampum signified the loyalty of good feeling which prevails amongst the Indians towards her Majesty and Her Government; but that the black wampum was designed to tell Her Majesty that their hearts were troubled on account of their having no title-deeds for their lands; and that they had sent their petition and wampum that Her Majesty might be pleased to take out all the black wampum, so that the string might be all white.⁷³

Jones’s exegesis of the wampum strings conveys the political dimensions of his travels to England, insisting on a more ethical relationship between the colonial government and tribal nations. Jones’s oral performance around the petition disrupts the conversation between him and the Queen, as he makes an explicitly political request to go along with the gift of the petition.

Jones’s circulation of texts within both intimate and public circles, insists on the need for reciprocity in a colonial culture: Jones’s writing and his circulation of books and petitions imagines a remaking of Native-European relations and a space for the Ojibwe Nation in Canada. On his third travels to Great Britain from 1844 to 1846, Jones’s circulation of writings addresses the need for support of Ojibwe education. Jones traveled on the lecture circuit in Ireland and England, giving talks on the “Customs, Manners, and Religion of his North American Brethren, in behalf of the intended Schools.” During this trip he circulated a pamphlet titled “Appeal to the Christian Public of Great Britain & Ireland, in behalf of the Indian Youth in Upper Canada.” Signed on Boxing Day 1844,

⁷³ Ibid., 407-408.

Jones's pamphlet appeals to the language of civilization and "Indian degradation" to affirm the need for monetary support for a proposed manual labor school for the Credit River Ojibwe:

All our great and wise men in Canada, who are acquainted with the habits of the Indian Tribes, agree in the necessity and importance of such schools being established amongst them; in order to effect their entire civilization, and thus to raise them from their present indolent and degraded state.⁷⁴

The specific plan is to establish two schools: one for a hundred male students and one for a hundred female students. The boys were to be instructed in "a common English education, the art of Farming and useful trades;" the girls in reading and writing, as well as "[d]omestic Economy, Sewing, Knitting, Spinning; so as to qualify them to become good wives and mothers." At the same time, these schools would also be a stepping-stone for talented boys and girls towards becoming missionaries—to "select from each School the most promising boys and girls, with a view of giving them superior advantages, so as [to] qualify them for Missionaries and School teachers among their brethren." For Jones, this plan holds a potential for improving the representation of Native people in Methodist missionary networks, as "[n]o one can doubt the importance and utility of Native agency, in carrying forward the work of reformation amongst the pagan nations of the earth."⁷⁵

Jones's pamphlet performs his own intersectional position within religious, colonial, and tribal-national political networks. First, it notes his appointment by the Ojibwe council as chief of the Credit Mission: he signed his pamphlet as an "Indian Missionary and Chief, from Upper Canada," having been "duly appointed by my fellow Chiefs and Countrymen in Canada, and the Missionary society under whose direction I have been laboring for many

⁷⁴ Peter Jones, "An Appeal to the Christian Public of Great Britain & Ireland, in behalf of the Indian Youth in Upper Canada," [1], National Archives of Canada, Ottawa.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, [2].

years.”⁷⁶ In addition to tribal and Methodist authorization, Jones notes, “I am happy to say that His Excellency SIR CHARLES METCALFE, Governor General of Canada, has expressed his entire approval, and kindly given his name as a subscriber.” Jones’s assertion of his representative function communicates his own movements between Methodists, the multiple tribal leaders he met and had councils with, and the colonial government with which he negotiated.

The 1844 pamphlet also authorizes Jones as a representative of the Credit River Ojibwe by appealing to a sense of community among its tribal members. Jones constructs a notion of “the Indian parents” that further authorizes his scheme to raise money for the manual labor schools:

The Indian parents have repeatedly acknowledged and mourned over their want of government, and knowledge of bringing up their children in the way they should go; especially to teach them the habits of industry, and I have often heard them say that they would gladly consign them over to the care of suitable teachers, for a certain number of years.⁷⁷

His rhetoric echoes the programmatic demands of the Methodist church, but also communicates an ethics of reciprocity between himself and Ojibwe tribal members—however much strategic this body of “Indian parents” may be. To affirm that this notion of the “Indian parents” is not just an imagined one, his pamphlet reprints “extracts from appeals sent by them through me, to the Christians of every class and denomination, throughout the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.” Through his insistence that these appeals are sent *through* rather than *to* him, Jones insists on his own role as a transparent mediator between Ojibwe and British publics.

⁷⁶ Ibid., [1].

⁷⁷ Ibid., [1].

To cater to his British audience, Jones translates the Credit River Ojibwe into more generic tropes of the “Indian” as an object of white philanthropy. Arguing that the historical pressures he has outlined have significantly reduced the Ojibwe to a position of dependency, Jones concludes that “[t]hese remnant children of the forest, now call upon their rich kind Christian friends in England and Ireland, to help to rescue their descendants from utter ruin and extinction.”⁷⁸ Jones’s reference to “these children of the forest” in effect signals the same political body of Ojibwe that the excerpted testimonies in his “Appeal” are supposed to represent. Here, however, Jones takes up a more generic figure of speech, playing into a sentimentalized notion of the “poor Indians” that were the objects of missionary discourse and benefaction.

But as Jones offers readers a legible concept of the Ojibwe Nation for British and Irish audiences, his reprinting of “extracts from appeals” by Ojibwe tribal members and leaders ensures that this construct is not emptied of a clear reminder of Ojibwe tribal sovereignty. Jones’s extracts carry the weight of tribal authorization: according to Jones the statements were “signed in Council of the Sachems, Chiefs, and Principal Men of the above Tribe”; written down in the presence of the missionary Samuel Belton and the interpreter David Sawyer; and signed by the chiefs Nawuhjegeezhegwaby (Joseph Sawyer) and Thayendenegea (John Jones), in the presence of “twenty-two Warriors.” Jones’s pamphlet gives tribal-national specificity to rhetoric that the Methodist Church promoted. In addition, it authorizes Jones himself as the agent of this Ojibwe project of retraditionalization, noting that “the Tribal Council have . . . commissioned their beloved friend and brother, KAHKEWAQUONABY, (the Reverend Peter Jones,) to solicit the aid of all Christian people on behalf of the poor Red Men of the forest, desirous of being reclaimed from the

⁷⁸ Ibid., [3].

habits of savage life.” A second statement is from “the chiefs in council, at Muncey-Town on Thames, Canada,” made up in the presence of the Indian Department clerk Joseph Bryant Clench and signed by Bwunowashkung (John Riley) and “Four other Chiefs.” Addressing Jones directly, the chiefs’ statement reads:

We have learnt with heartfelt satisfaction, that you are about to cross the Great Salt Lake for the purpose of appealing to the generosity of our English Brethren, to assist in raising Funds to establish Manual Labor Schools for the benefit of our poor Red brethren in this Country: we authorize you on our part to plead for us.⁷⁹

In his “Appeal,” Jones suggests that the “best proof” that these statements reflect the “genuine feeling of the Indian,” is the fact that its authors had already subscribed to Jones’s plans financially. From “their small annuities” the chiefs had committed the £550 towards and £250 as annual support, as well as two hundred acres of land to build the school. For Jones, these financial contributions from Ojibwe leaders and tribal members signal a tribal-national commitment to his educational project.

Jones stresses the compatibility of European and Ojibwe feelings of sympathy, and strategically characterizes the British as a nation of benevolence:

As the British Nation has always manifested a kind and sympathizing feeling towards the oppressed and degraded of every clime, and by the expenditure of an immense sum of money, has under the blessing of the Great Spirit, broken off the slavish chains of the poor Negroes in the West Indies.⁸⁰

Seeing the abolition of slavery as holding a promise for moral sentiment among the British, Jones professes himself “emboldened in behalf of my countrymen, to make an appeal to the Christian and Benevolent people of this country.”⁸¹ To further persuade his readers of the

⁷⁹ Ibid., [2].

⁸⁰ Ibid., [2]. Signaling a notion of cultural relatedness through blood—if not in a familial sense—Jones suggests that “[o]ur Fathers, in every time of danger took up the tomahawk and manfully fought the enemies of Great Britain, and in the struggle many of them fell and mingle their blood with those of your children, whose bones now lie side by side.”

⁸¹ Ibid., [1].

good cause of supporting the Credit Mission, Jones lists the English donors and subscribers who have already committed to financial support of Jones proposed schools. In doing so, Jones sketches a network of patrons and supporters stretching across Brighton, Epsom, Southampton, Chelmsford, Dorking, Norwood, Canterbury, Stoke Newington, Tottenham, and London. Committed to a communal notion of care and reciprocity, Jones envisions his own activism as extending this sense of community across the Atlantic.

By reprinting letters and circulating texts by himself and others, Peter Jones registered the tensions and inequalities of a colonial culture. His publication projects refute notions that he was either a Native writer “assimilated” into white culture, or one who simply adopted Methodism in a strategic attempt find the tools to burn down the colonial mansion. Jones’s writings, indeed, are not so much concerned with binaries of Native and settler, or with fixed structures of dominance. Rather, they insist on the potential of networked acts of communication: the potential contribution to Ojibwe nation-building through the circulation of letters; through performance on the transatlantic lecture circuit; and through visible acts of cultural exchange at the English court.

1.4 “Book-Making” and (Self-)Representation in George Copway’s Writings

For Native American literary studies, arguably the most significant act of Methodist conversion Peter Jones encouraged was that of the Ojibwe author George Copway.⁸² Jones visited Copway’s village near Rice Lake in the mid-1820s, where he promoted the blend of Methodism, education, and economic development that he had brought to the Credit River

⁸² Copway was born in the Rice Lake Mississauga Ojibwe community, near what is now Trenton, Ontario. As Scott Lyons notes, his Ojibwe name was Kahgegagahbowh, which means “stands forever,” or “standing forever”; and “Copway” was an Anglicized version of *gaabawi*, meaning “he is standing.” See Scott Richard Lyons, “Migrations to Modernity.”

Ojibwe Community. Four years later Copway was working as a missionary himself among native communities south of Lake Superior. Having attended school at Ebenezer Academy in Illinois in 1838 and 1839, by the early 1840s Copway combined his missionary work in Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa, and Illinois with lecturing on American Indian affairs and temperance on the lecture circuit in the East. Throughout the 1840s and early 1850s, Copway became a well-published author and a public voice on temperance, education, and the history and political situation of American Indians in Canada and the United States. Traveling throughout the eastern and Midwestern United States, as well as to Europe in 1850, Copway has increasingly been recognized as a cosmopolitan voice among Native American authors of the nineteenth century.⁸³

In this remaining section I examine how George Copway's print publications represent a multimedia project to address Ojibwe nation-building and Indian reform in a transatlantic culture of writing and performance. Focusing on his *Life, Letters, and Speeches* (1847) and *Running Sketches of Men and Places* (1851), I read these texts for their reprinting of other authors' texts; their reflection on the programmatic and collaborative aspects of publishing; and Copway's self-performance as an Ojibwe writer and speaker. I argue that Copway's self-conscious reflection on the organizational and sociable aspects of publishing, allows him to position himself not as an exoticized object of curiosity, but as an indigenous intellectual orchestrating a decentered public discourse. Enumerating the multimedia publication strategies through which he entered public discourse—oratory, the circulation of letters, journaling, and print—Copway put himself forward as a public,

⁸³ See especially Lyon, "Migrations to Modernity." For an informative discussion of cosmopolitanism as related to Native American literary studies, see Krupat, "Nationalism, Transnationalism, Trans-Indigenism, and Cosmopolitanism," and Krupat, *Red Matters: Native American Studies* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 1-23.

political voice within the transatlantic networks of religious, literary, and philanthropic organizations and associations. Mobilizing tropes of a transatlantic community of sentiment, Copway's publication projects imagine the sociable aspects of publishing as a crucial relevant resource for tribal-national purposes and for the goals of Indian reform in North America.

Copway's professional trajectory—from Ojibwe Methodist minister to a published author on the history and present situation of North American Indian nations—was by no means a smooth one. In 1846, when Copway was working as a Methodist missionary and had been suggested to oversee the operations of a Manual Labor School in the Ojibwe Nation, four tribal leaders at the Saugeen Ojibwe mission accused Copway of embezzling tribal funds. They reported him to the Indian Department, and Copway subsequently spent several weeks in a Toronto prison and was ousted as a member of the Canada Conference of Methodist Missionaries.⁸⁴ Following this episode Copway moved to New York, where he began a significant if short-lived literary career by publishing his autobiography *The Life, History, and Travels, of Kah-Ge-Ga-Gah-Bowh* (1847). It was the beginning of an unusual string of publications. In 1850 Copway published his *Traditional History and Characteristic Sketches of the Ojibway Nation* and an epic poem, *The Ojibwey Conquest*, which was actually written by Julius Taylor Clark.⁸⁵ From July to October 1851 Copway published a newspaper in New York, *Copway's American Indian*, and the same year he published *Running Sketches of Men and Places*.⁸⁶ *The Life, History, and Travels* was

⁸⁴ Smith, *Mississauga Portraits*, 32-33.

⁸⁵ For an in-depth comparison of Copway's *Traditional History* and Peter Jones's *History of the Ojibway Indians* (1861), see Scott Michaelson, *The Limits of Multiculturalism: Interrogating the Origins of American Anthropology* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 107-138.

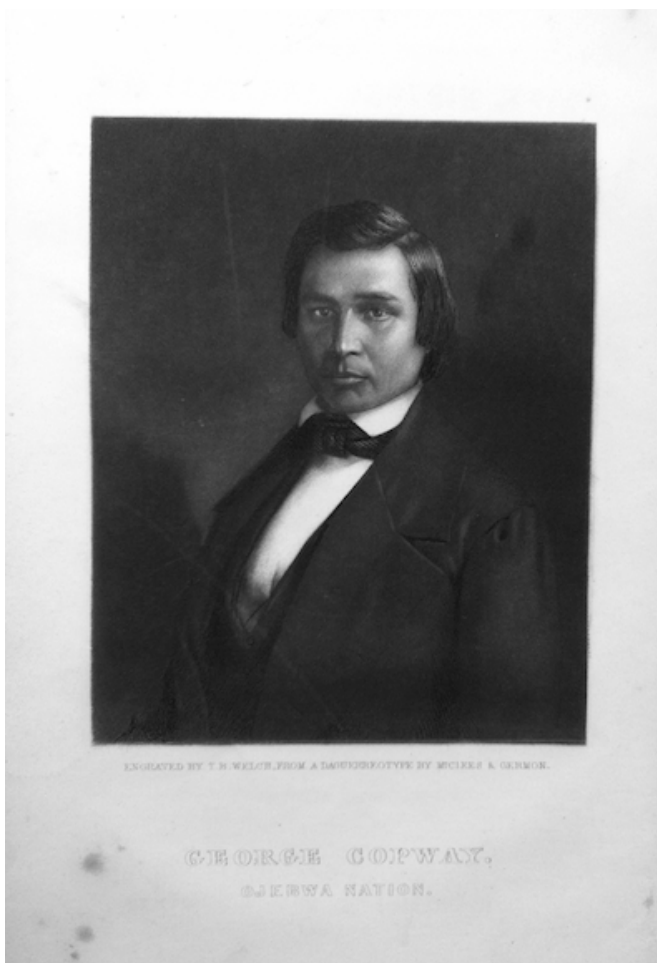
⁸⁶ [Julius Taylor Clark], *The Ojibwey Conquest, a Tale of the Northwest. By Kah-Ge-Ga-gah-Bowh, or G. Copway, Chief of the Ojibwey Nation* (New York: Putnam, 1850).

Copway's most popular work, and was reprinted seven times in one year. In 1850 it was republished under two different titles: the American edition is titled *The Life, Letters, and Speeches of Kah-ge-gah-bowh*; the English edition *Recollections of a Forest Life: or, the Life and Travels of George Copway*.

With his *Life, History, and Travels*, Copway entered a diverse market for print that had engendered a reading culture centered on an innovative mix of religious writing, history, and life writing. By fashioning a career as a man of letters, Copway entered what was arguably the first mass market for print publications.⁸⁷ In the *Life*, Copway uses the technology of print not only to narrate the story of his life and his missionary work, but also to represent himself as an authoritative voice on Ojibwe history and politics. In chapter sixteen of his *Life*, Copway does this by reprinting the oratory from an 1845 General Council meeting of the Christianized Ojibwe; one of their petitions; and a series of letters. First Copway sets the scene, explaining that General Councils of the "Christianized

⁸⁷ By the late 1840s evangelical organizations had pioneered an infrastructure for mass publication that Copway was shrewdly navigating. During this time, Bible and tract societies helped to disseminate reading materials across dispersed geographical locations, as evangelical publishers encouraged the creation of one extended religious community. In 1841, the American Tract Society had pioneered a national distribution system that depended on salaried line employees, geographically dispersed administrative systems, and salaried managers. By 1850 an elaborate system of colportage distribution was in use by Baptists, Presbyterians, and Methodists, and as tract societies grew into major publishing houses, these organizations laid the groundwork for what would become the first mass media in North America. Evangelical organizations—such as the Society for Propagating the Gospel among the Indians and Others, the Massachusetts Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and the New England Tract Society—published in numbers that suggest the emergence of mass publication through the systematic distribution of printed texts. Moreover, these organizations had centered this mass print culture on both religious principles as well as a political presence in the world, and reform movements such as the temperance movement worked through the infrastructure of evangelical organizations. As such, debates on the pressing social issues of the time—slavery, the Indian question, and women's rights—were sustained in publications that were sponsored by evangelical organizations and associations. See Shelby Balik, "'Scattered as Christians Are in This Country': Layfolk's Reading, Writing, and Religious Community in New England's Northern Frontier," *New England Quarterly* 83, no. 4 (2010), 604-640; Barbara Sicherman, "Ideologies and Practices of Reading," in *The History of the Book in America, Volume 3: The Industrial Book, 1840-1880* (Chapel Hill: North Carolina Press, 2007), 297-302; Candy Gunther Brown, *The Word in the World: Evangelical Writing, Publishing, and Reading in America, 1790-1880* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004). See David Nord, *Faith in Reading: Religious Publishing and the Birth of Mass Media in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Ojebwas” were “convened, and conducted, in the same manner as public and other business meetings are conducted among the whites.” Copway notes the council representatives came from “Lakes St. Clair, Huron, Ontario, and Simcoe, and from Rice and Mud Lakes.” Copway explains that the main purpose of the council was threefold: to determine if the lands of the Saugeen Ojibwe could be held “for the sole benefit of the Ojebwa Nation; to petition the Canadian government to help establish a manual labor school at Saugeen, and “to ascertain the views and feelings of the chiefs in relation to forming one large settlement among themselves at Owen’s Sound, there to live in the future.”⁸⁸ In other words, the



General Council discussed many of the political issues Peter Jones also addressed in his writings and organizing work: the securing of native land title, education, and the future organization of the Ojibwe as a tribal nation.

Figure 21: Portrait of George Copway. Engraved by T. H. Welch, after a daguerreotype by McClees and Germon. Frontispiece in George Copway, *The life, history, and travels, of Kah-ge-ga-gah-bowh (George Copway): a young Indian chief of the Ojebwa nation* (Albany: Weed and Parsons, 1847). William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan.

⁸⁸ George Copway, *The Life, History, and Travels of Kah-Ge-Ga-Gah-Bowh* (Philadelphia: Harmstead, 1847), 132.

Through the *Life's* subsequent reprinting of the oratory of the General Council, Copway represents himself as being privy to tribal-political knowledge about affairs in the Ojibwe Nation in Canada. Copway prints in full the oratory of John Jones, the chief at Owen Sound and the brother of Peter Jones. Jones's oratory suggests that Copway is in a position to represent not only his own account of Ojibwe history, but also a more collaboratively constructed knowledge of tribal affairs. In Copway's rendering Jones argues:

Fellow Chiefs and Brothers, I have pondered with deep solicitude, our present condition and the future welfare of our children, as well as ourselves. I have studied deeply and anxiously, in order to arrive at a true knowledge of the proper course to be pursued to secure to us and to our descendants.⁸⁹

Jones's proposals to the General Council, then, do not merely render his own perspective, but are rather the result of sustained reflection on the present and future condition of the Ojibwe Nation. Having outlined their present situation, Jones proposes a set of "considerations" for the council, presented by Copway in a numbered list—one of many in Copway's *Life*:

1. Whether it would not be better for the whole Ojebwa Nation to reside on this, our territory.
2. Would it not be well to devise ways and means to establish Manual Labour Schools for the benefit of the nation.
3. Ought not a petition to be drawn up and presented to our Great Father [the Governor General,] for the purpose of fixing upon a definite time for the distribution of the annual 'presents,' and the small annuities of each tribe.
4. Is it not desirable to petition to the Governor General, to appoint a resident Indian interpreter, to assist the agent in Toronto.
5. As we [the Christian part of our nation] have abandoned our former customs and ceremonies, ought we not to make our own laws, in order to give character and stability to our chiefs.⁹⁰

Copway follows this concrete list with a reprinting of the chiefs' draft of a *Petition of the Ojebwa Chiefs in General Council, respecting the unceded lands north of Saugeeng and Owen's Sound, June 5th, 1845*, which is addressed to Lord Metcalf the Governor General of

⁸⁹ Ibid., 133.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 147.

British North America. By reprinting Jones's proposals and the petition quickly after one another, Copway's *Life* establishes the General Council as action-driven, efficient, and rendering immediate service to the Ojibwe Nation.

This reflection on the Ojibwe General Council characterizes the Ojibwe Nation as undergoing a modernizing impulse through the very deliberations of the General Council. Copway writes that he was "never more delighted than with the appearance of this body":

As I sat and looked at them, I contrasted their former (degraded) with their present (elevated) condition. The Gospel, I thought, had done all this. . . . This assembly was not convened for the purpose of devising schemes of murder; plans by which they could kill their enemies; but to adopt measures by which peace, harmony, and love, might be secured, and a 'smooth and straight path' made for their children.⁹¹

This political "body" of the council is also represented by the physical body of the Native orator. Copway praises the visual theater of the chief John Sunday's oral performance, noting that it was "uncommonly eloquent."⁹² Most important, Copway renders himself as firmly embedded in this modernizing tribal-political discourse. Copway reprints a letter from the chief and missionary Joseph Sawyer that establishes Copway's authorization by the General Council to be in charge of the proposed manual labor school. Signed by Joseph Sawyer in his capacity as the "President of the General Council of the Ojibwa Nation," the letter stresses that the "Chiefs, of the various Tribes of the Ojibwa Indians, do hereby appoint and authorize our beloved brother, the Rev. George Copway, as our agent for the Manual Labor School."⁹³

Of course, by the time Copway published the *Life*, the General Council had charged Copway with embezzlement and Copway lost not only his position as manager of the

⁹¹ Ibid., 136.

⁹² Ibid., 138. In Copway's sketch, Sunday's face and bodily rhetoric reinforce his political rhetoric: Copway praises Sunday's "keen black eyes, flashing fire," and notes that "his large brawny arms extended, gave great effect to his speech."

⁹³ Ibid., 137.

school, but as also ousted by the Canada Conference of Methodist Missionaries. Yet Copway reprints the Council letter to declare not only his own tribal-political authorization, but also to suggest his own independence from the Canada Conference of Methodists. Copway pre-empts any possible critique from them against his own position as a public writer and speaker on Ojibwe affairs, and corrects the potential misrepresentations of his own person. Copway suggests that it is not up to the missionary organizations to determine who is authorized to speak for the Ojibwe:

I give these, for the benefit and instruction of those, who have been so kind as to insinuate, or assert, that I was not an *authorized agent* to forward the interests of my poor people. Those who have been the loudest and most active in this slander, have done the least, in rendering the Indians any essential service. Let them go on, with their gossippings, while I go on my way rejoicing in doing all I can for my poor people, independently of the Canada Conference. Neither have I any disposition to court the favor of this Conference. Indeed, my heart has often sickened at the divisions and subdivisions of the Canada Methodists.⁹⁴

Alongside the reprinting of texts that confirm his own embeddedness in Ojibwe politics, Copway's critique renders the Canada Conference inessential to the cause of any real Indian reform. Furthermore, Copway casts its discourses and divisions as mere "gossippings," constructing his own public speaking and writing as more directly rendering "essential service" to his people, and being sanctioned by actual political Ojibwe authority.

Copway's *Life, Letters, and Speeches* thereby announces his rejection, born out of necessity, of an existing organizational network. Ousted by the Canada Conference, Copway sets out to render service to his people—both Ojibwe and North American Indians generally—by fashioning an alternative network beyond that of established Methodist networks. In other words, in the *Life* Copway carries out his own role as a public intellectual through the strategic reprinting of the oratory from the General Council, its petition to Lord

⁹⁴ Ibid., 137-138. Italics in the original.

Metcalf, Sawyer's letter of appointment, and Copway's critique of the Canada Conference. As he goes on to render his "essential service" to his people, he offers numbered lists of proposals of his own. Following his critique of the Canada Conference, Copway writes that "I have often been asked the question, 'What is the reason that the Indians are diminishing in numbers in the midst of their white neighbors?'" Copway's introduction of this question deftly positions him as an established public authority on Indian affairs. Suggesting that a proper answer would "require almost a separate volume," Copway offers the following:

1. The introduction of King Alcohol among them.
2. The introduction of new diseases . . .
3. Their inability to pursue that course of living, after abandoning their wigwams, which tends to health and old age.
4. Their spirits are broken down in consequence of seeing that their *race* are becoming homeless, friendless, moneyless, and trodden down by the whites.
5. Their future prospects are gloomy and cheerless—enough to break down the noblest spirits.⁹⁵

The *Life's* adoption of the rhetoric of the numbered list lends Copway the authorial voice of the General Council—a decentered, yet action-driven voice that registers both a taking stock of present conditions, as well as a projection for future possibilities. The list not only presents concrete and easily replicable knowledge to its readers, it also presents Copway as being in charge of a wide range of information, able to condense, arrange, and sequence it. And if Copway's first list looks "gloomy and cheerless," it is mirrored by another list in which Copway offers a plan of action for Indian nations' economic and social regeneration:

1. They should establish missions and high schools wherever the whites have frequent intercourse with them.
2. They should use their influence, as soon as the Indians are well educated . . . to have them placed on the same footing as whites.
3. They should try to procure for them a territorial or district government, so that they may represent their own nation.
4. They should obtain for them, deeds of their own lands; and . . . urge their right to

⁹⁵ Ibid., 139.

vote.⁹⁶

By echoing the General Council's discourse, Copway proclaims the role of indigenous public intellectuals who are not sanctioned by the approval of missionary networks, but authorized by the knowledge and rhetoric of tribal-governmental bodies.

Copway's *Life* thereby reflects that print publication is not necessarily a means to reach a mass audience, but to perform in an easily circulated way one's own navigation of organizational networks, and to cement a own role as speaking to non-native publics on behalf of the Ojibwe people. It registers the collaborative dimensions of intellectual production, suggesting that his proposed schemes for tribal revitalization extend the oral contexts of tribal council negotiations. Copway circulates in print what he constructs as a collaboratively produced discourse that underscores his ability to perform what Phillip Round calls a "public, political Indianness."⁹⁷ This publication project may strategically adopt more generic notions of the native speaker, but it also carries concrete tribal political support.

In this sense, there is more continuity between Copway's *Life* and his 1851 publication *Running Sketches of Men and Places* than previous scholarship has allowed. In *Running Sketches* Copway renders in print a newly minted network of benefactors, sponsors, and organizers who enabled his print publications and speaking tours. In 1850, Copway traveled to Europe with letters of recommendation from American writers such as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Francis Parkman, and with the support from a range of wealthy patrons, including the mayor of Boston, the merchant and philanthropist Amos Lawrence,

⁹⁶ Ibid., 141.

⁹⁷ Phillip Round, "Performing Indian Publics," in *Native Acts: Indian Performance, 1603-1832*, edited by Joshua David Bellin and Laura L. Mielke (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011), 251.

and Reuben Walworth of the Temperance Society and the Tract Society.⁹⁸ Traveling through England, Copway lectured at meetings of such organizations as the Temperance Society, the Bible and Tract Society, and the Mechanics' Institute in Liverpool. The origin of his trip was Copway's invitation to take part in the Third International Peace Congress in Frankfurt. He was invited by the famous philanthropist Elihu Burritt, one of the main organizers of the Congress and a "leading figure in the American peace movement." As Scott Lyons writes, "[l]ed by American Quakers, European republicans, and British radical bourgeoisie; the six Peace Congresses held between 1848 and 1853 [tried] to create a lasting international institution of dispute resolution, thus anticipating global bodies that were not established until the twentieth century."⁹⁹ Besides Burritt and Copway, other delegates to the Peace Congress in Frankfurt were Victor Hugo, Richard Cobden, Émile de Girardin, and a host of prominent abolitionists.

With *Running Sketches* Copway published the first full-length travel narrative by a Native American author. In it, Copway details his lecture tour in England and his participation in the Peace Congress, and shared his miscellaneous observations on European customs, institutions, scenery, and celebrities. His narrative is interspersed with many long excerpts that he reprinted from travel narratives by other writers, tourist guides, magazines, and newspaper articles. These reprinted excerpts detail mostly the places he visits, the biographies of people he meets, and commentaries on Copway's own performances on the

⁹⁸ Copway, *Running Sketches*, 17. John Prescott Bigelow (1797-1872) was the mayor of Boston at the time of the publication of *Running Sketches*. Amos Lawrence (1786-1852) was a merchant and philanthropist whose family firm had founded Lawrence, Massachusetts in the 1840s. Julius Auboyneau Palmer (1803-1872) was the Boston representative to the state legislature, who also ran several times as a temperance candidate for mayor of Boston. Copway dedicated his 1850 publication *Traditional and Characteristic Sketches of the Ojibway Nation* to Lawrence. And Reuben H. Walworth (1788-1867) was a former House representative from New York who also served as president of the Temperance Union and vice-president of the Bible Society and the Tract Society.

⁹⁹ Lyons, "Migrations to Modernity."

lecture circuit. In spite of its novelty, *Running Sketches* received a muted reaction, in no small part to its admittedly excessive reprinting of other people's writings. A reviewer of the *New York Tribune* wrote at the time: "There is too much book-making in the volume, even for a Yankee compiler, to say nothing of an Indian chief, and a great portion of the extracts from common-place sources would have been better omitted."¹⁰⁰ But what the *New York Tribune* reviewer calls Copway's excessive "book-making," actually signals one of Copway's literary practices that demand closer attention. For a long time, critical review of *Running Sketches* has sounded rather similar. Like all of Copway's writings it was practically ignored until the 1970s, and after that it has been almost uniformly critically dismissed. Because of its reprinting of excerpts by other writers, *Running Sketches* has been seen as a rushed afterthought to his autobiography. Bernd Peyer notes (with some justice) that *Running Sketches* is "his lengthiest and most pompous publication, but also the least accomplished."¹⁰¹ The *Heath Anthology of American Literature* describes it as "hurriedly stitched together." And LaVonne Brown Ruoff notes that "[a]lthough it contains interesting sketches of London celebrities, it is primarily a collection of quotations from local guidebooks [and does not equal] the narrative power of his autobiography."¹⁰²

More recent critical commentary, however, has opened up Copway's text in ways that pick up on the often unexpected and idiosyncratic commentaries it offers on the relation between Native people and modernity. Kate Flint argues in *The Transatlantic Indian* that Copway's reprinting of different texts is "an acknowledgment of the need for a fluidity of

¹⁰⁰ Qtd in Donald B. Smith, *Mississauga Portraits*, 198.

¹⁰¹ Bernd Peyer, *The Tutor'd Mind: Indian Missionary-Writers in Antebellum America* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press 1997), 254.

¹⁰² A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff, "The Literary and Methodist Contexts of George Copway's *Life, Letters and Speeches*," in George Copway, *Life, Letters, and Speeches*, 1850, edited by A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff and Donald B. Smith (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), 19.

styles and registers when it comes to making some kind of sense and order of modern, urban existence.”¹⁰³ Flint takes seriously Copway’s admiration of modernity and, subsequently, his fascination with European cities, which opens up Copway’s text as performing meaningful critical work in spite of its hurried publication and its flawed author. In a recent reappraisal Scott Richard Lyons argues that this “radical interplay of different ‘voices’”—its hyper-visible *heteroglossia*—is not only reflective of modernity, but also actively affirms native people’s central presence *within* modernity.¹⁰⁴

Drawing on this work, I argue that *Running Sketches* is a performance in print of the organizational networks that enabled Copway’s travels—making and remaking a transatlantic community of readers through his own acts of writing and performance. *Running Sketches* suggests that Copway’s travels extend the networks in which he is operating, and highlight the role of new communication technologies in securing them. Copway both celebrates and critiques ideals of cross-cultural and transnational relatedness, and suggests that his own movements signal the possibilities and limitations of cross-cultural sensibility in a colonial situation. The philanthropist Elihu Burritt invited Copway to the third World Peace Congress in Frankfurt, Germany in August 1850.¹⁰⁵ In a first chapter that reads as much as an acknowledgment of support as a travel narrative, Copway situates himself in a network of individuals who were deeply involved in politics and commerce as well as philanthropy and the temperance movement:

To the following gentlemen I am greatly indebted for their kindness in preparing for my journey. God bless them. I have never asked a true American anything but I have

¹⁰³ Flint, *Transatlantic Indian*, 217.

¹⁰⁴ Scott Richard Lyons, “Migrations to Modernity.”

¹⁰⁵ Burritt was one of the main organizers of the congress and founder of the League of Universal Brotherhood in 1846. He was one the most prominent names in the American and international peace movement. Copway, in turn, traveled to Europe “[a]rmed with letters of recommendation from American men of letters such as Longfellow and Parkman” and with support from a range of wealthy philanthropists. Peyer, *Tutor’d Mind*, 249.

received. I can do nothing more than to love and cherish them. Their smiles have left a lasting sensation in my heart. I may find in the world men equally kind to me, but these I shall never forget: J.P. Bigelow, the Mayor, Amos Lawrence, Julius A. Palmer, and Mr. Walworth.¹⁰⁶

The book's frequent reflections on Copway's own embeddedness in such networks, qualifies his own agency as a pioneer of transatlantic Native diplomacy: he consistently reminds his readers that he is there by the grace of the friendships and organizations that has made it possible.

Copway's preface underscores that these personal connections are both the means and purpose of getting into print. In the first place, Copway notes that his trip emerges from a conversation with Burritt: "It is nearly five months since I first had any idea of going to Germany. It was suggested in a conversation I had with the great Philanthropist and celebrated 'Learned Blacksmith,' Elihu Burrett [*sic*], in Washington."¹⁰⁷ And in publishing his notes in book form, Copway writes, he intends to "satisfy the inquiries by my friends in this country, how I liked my tour through Europe, as well as to preserve the pleasing incidents which were shown me, by the people wherever I sojourned." Echoing republican ideologies of the social utility of print, Copway proclaims his intent to offer "sketches of men now prominent before the European public, which I hope will repay the reader for the time occupied in reading them. Evening after evening I have been requested to recite my impressions of the country since I have returned. I send forth this volume to the fireside of

¹⁰⁶ Copway, *Running Sketches*, 17. John Prescott Bigelow (1797-1872) was the mayor of Boston at the time of the publication of *Running Sketches*. Amos Lawrence (1786-1852) was a merchant and philanthropist whose family firm had founded Lawrence, Massachusetts in the 1840s. Julius Auboyneau Palmer (1803-1872) was the Boston representative to the state legislature, who also ran several times as a temperance candidate for mayor of Boston. Copway dedicated his 1850 publication *Traditional and Characteristic Sketches of the Ojibway Nation* to Lawrence. And Reuben H. Walworth (1788-1867) was a former House representative from New York who also served as president of the Temperance Union and vice-president of the Bible Society and the Tract Society.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 11.

the paleface.”¹⁰⁸ Extending in print the interpersonal, transatlantic networks of the peace movement, Copway argues that its publication will play a useful part in collecting information about its most prominent political figures. As he sends his volume “to the fireside of the paleface,” Copway both echoes the intimacy of his communication and the suggestion that this information is all the more unique for coming from a Native author.

By drawing attention to the interpersonal connections and conversations that led to its publication, *Running Sketches* imagines the networks of Christian reformers as a potential avenue for anti-colonial organizing work. Copway here stresses that his benefactors, Bigelow, Palmer, and Walworth “gave me encouragement in their expression of good-will to my race, and notwithstanding all the many aggravated wrongs which my poor brethren have received from the hands of the Pale face. I have a nature within me which, when I see the kind acts of the white man, covers a multitude of sins.” Copway’s commentary seems very strange: his “nature,” he argues, is to forgive a multitude of sins of the whites on account of very few white people’s “kind acts.” The point, however, seems not so much absolution as a warning: Copway reminds his readers that for the “Christians of this country . . . opportunities of doing good have been numerous; and who when he has embraced these opportunities has enjoyed more of Heaven’s smiles than any one could experience elsewhere.”¹⁰⁹ Using the language of salvation, Copway’s praise of his benefactors is both a form of flattery and a way of holding them accountable to their principles.

As *Running Sketches* traces how Copway becomes as a node in a network of transatlantic organizers, he reflects on the technological conditions by which his oral, written, and printed publications are made possible. Copway highlights his own efforts to

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, v.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 18.

carry letters to other members of the affiliative networks he is part of, drawing attention to his own participation in a communication network in which he is asked to carry information on behalf of others. At the end of the fourth chapter, for instance, Copway comments on this arrival in Liverpool:

This is Liverpool.

We meet some of those who preceded us to this country.

Sunday morning. I hunted among those to whom I carried letters for some one who would invite me to attend church with him, and was fortunate enough to succeed. Spoke in the afternoon. Encountered a few dozen beggars in the street on my way to church. I find it hard to get small change for them all.¹¹⁰

In this note, the work of carrying letters secures connections across geographical distance, as well as intimate connections between Copway and as yet unfamiliar people to attend church with. Moreover, Copway's authorial voice here registers the fragmentary, multimedia conditions of Copway's own discursive circulation. Echoing the form of either a journal entry or a telegram, it reproduces the various publication techniques through which Copway's thoughts reached readers and listeners. Here *Running Sketches* suggests that the contents of *Running Sketches* originated from missives he sent out in all directions, and from speeches and conversations that were spoken, written, and printed in other venues. Elsewhere, Copway comments on his lectures in Liverpool, and suggests that "[t]o Mr. Baines the Editor of the Times, and to the Editors of the other papers, I am indebted for the kind manner in which they came forward to place me before the citizens of Liverpool and the British public in general."¹¹¹ Drawing out the communication circuits in which he is operating, Copway acknowledges the *Times* and other papers' active role in organizing Copway's lecture tour.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 41.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 43.

In the process Copway underscores—and probably exaggerates—his own authority to politically represent the Ojibwe Nation. For instance, in the fifth chapter Copway reprints a letter to a “Rev. Mr. Norris” (possibly Edward Norris Kirk of the Mount Vernon Congregational Church in Boston) in which he notes that “I must still send ‘paper talk’ to my American friends, though I am 3,000 miles from them.”¹¹² Reporting to Norris about British institutions and how they operate, he signs the letter “Copway, of the Ojibway Nation,” signaling his own presence in England as that of an “authorized agent” of his nation.¹¹³ Moreover, when Copway reprints a *London News* article on his visit to the House of Commons, he does not correct its misrepresentation of him as having been “chief of a tribe of Ojibbeways”: although Copway had been vice-president of the Rice Lake Tribal Council, he had not been chief of the tribe.¹¹⁴ Finally, the title page to *Running Sketches* also represents Copway as a “Chief of the Ojibway Nation, North American Indians,” an assertion that strengthens—and probably exaggerates—the tribal-national framework for his missionary work and publication.

Emphasizing his role as an official representative of his nation, Copway presents a set of rules that he urges himself to uphold, Benjamin Franklin-style. Copway’s list of rules characterize the politics of representation as a tribal delegate on the lecture circuit:

I will uphold my race—I will endeavor never to say nor do anything which will prejudice the mind of the British public against my people—In this land of refinement I will be an Indian—I will treat everybody in a manner that becomes a gentleman—I will patiently answer all questions that may be asked me—I will study to please the people, and lay my own feelings to one side.¹¹⁵

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 44.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, 96.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 98.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 55.

Copway's list of rules pulls in two different directions: on the one hand, he casts aside his own feelings in order to enter into public discourse as a disinterested participant in a transatlantic public sphere. On the other hand, his avowal to "uphold my race" and "endeavor to say nor do anything which will prejudice the mind of the British public" means that Copway's participation is already circumscribed by a colonial relationship in which Native people cannot be perceived to be purely disinterested. So Copway is caught between the *potential* of his public speaking as free civic discourse; and the bounds on that freedom for people of color who are expected to represent their people within a racialized regime of representation. Copway's list seems to invite, or provoke a set of questions: on the lecture circuit, can Copway "lay [his] own feelings to one side" and still "uphold [his] race" as a Native speaker? Can Copway avoid to "say nor do anything which will prejudice the mind of the British people" and at the same time "[i]n this land of refinement . . . be an Indian"? Even the visual layout of Copway's list—horizontally rather than vertically organized—seems to recognize little sense of order in how Copway's resolves work together. For someone notably fond of the numbered list, its absence here is striking.

But this lack of organization also means that Copway's answer is an affirmative *yes*. By presenting these different aims without explanation or even organization, Copway insists that he sees these different strategies as not standing at a tension with one another.¹¹⁶ *Running Sketches* reminds its readers that American Indians can represent tribal nations while also being committed to disinterested discourse—that the categories of public intellectual and Native public intellectual are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, throughout *Running Sketches* Copway self-consciously positions himself as a transparent narrator rather than an object of discourse. For instance, when he recounts his arrival in Liege, Copway

¹¹⁶ Many thanks to Susan E. Gray for helping me to clarify this point.

narrates a brief instance of recognizing his own symbolic representation of “the Indian.” In Liège, on his way to Cologne by train, Copway writes that “for the first time the people recognized me as being the Indian from America. They came and stood in groups just by, and watched me as I paced the platform of the station.”¹¹⁷ But Copway’s commentary on this situation ends here: it does not dwell on the implications of being recognized as an “Indian from America” as a cultural category. Instead, Copway comments on his introduction in Cologne to Thomas Buchanan Read, the “Painter Poet” from Philadelphia, as well a contemporary of the poet Ferdinand Freilingrath’s, whom Copway identifies as “Charles Close.”¹¹⁸ The narrative brackets Copway’s reflections on his representation as an “Indian from North America” in favor of a discussion of his position within a network of poets and artists. This transition refutes the assumption that the experience of an American Indian in Europe must by default be that of an object of curiosity, and the consistent emphasis on this network of benefactors, hosts, and fellow writers reframes Copway’s representational work as not merely entertaining anonymous audiences and onlookers, but as being entertained by his literary peers.

In a related move, *Running Sketches* reinforces Copway’s representation as an indigenous cosmopolitan by reprinting newspaper commentaries on Copway’s travels and oratory in England and Germany, staging Copway’s own entrance into a wider, decentered print culture. In the sixth chapter Copway reprints a substantial notice from the Liverpool newspaper *The Mercury* that reviews Copway’s lecture at the Mechanics’ Institution. Rather than merely excerpting the newspaper’s commentary on his oratory, however, the *Mercury*

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 186.

¹¹⁸ Although there is no historical record for a poet named “Charles Close,” the phonetic resemblance between “Close” and “Klaus” makes it a possibility that Copway meant Klaus Groth (1819-1899), a Low German poet who became known for his epic verse and lyrical poems.

also offers an extended description of Copway's work to raise public notice around Native-U.S. relations, and how this work depended on engaging a range of communication technologies. As reprinted in Copway's narrative, the *Mercury* writes:

[I]f he could get, say £2,500 . . . he would return to Washington again, and he intended to send out three of his brethren to deliver addresses throughout the country, and at the time have blank petitions circulated, and at certain given time . . . he wanted to touch the wires which vibrated from one end of the country to the other, he wanted to besiege the white house of the Government of the United States, and knock at the door of the American Government, that justice might be done to the Indian by giving him a home from which he shall never be removed again.—(Applause.)¹¹⁹

As reprinted in *Running Sketches*, it outlines the multimedia dimensions of Copway's brand of activism: oratory on the lecture circuit and the circulating of petitions, as well as, potentially, the telegraph and personal negotiations at the seat of the U.S. government. Copway's inclusion of the *Mercury* article thereby gives readers a glimpse into the mechanics of Copway's circulation on the lecture circuit and in print. Copway's practice of reprinting reproduces the practicalities and technologies of navigating these transnational networks, capturing the mechanics of the fundraising campaign that Copway's European travels were part of.¹²⁰ By offering a look behind the scenes of his transatlantic fundraising, Copway refutes the idea that his presence on the lecture circuit is about a general—or even generic—Indianness: instead it gives insight into the agency of Copway as an author of his publication project.

As Copway highlights the role of communication technologies in creating a modern, connected world, his observations on the London post office project a fantasy of

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 63.

¹²⁰ Indeed, the *Mercury* article lays out how listeners to Copway's speeches were able to join in on this campaign by contributing financially. According to the *Mercury*, Copway played into his audience's feelings of generosity by stating that "it should be understood that with the general treatment of the Americans towards the Indians they had nothing to do. After a powerful appeal, from the chairman, urging individuals to come forward and contribute their mite towards so philanthropic an object, many persons responded to the call, and their names were entered on the subscription list." *Ibid.*, 65.

connectedness across space. Following a description of London's architecture, Copway notes that "[t]he General Post Office is a very fine building. Here all day long, including the whole twenty-four hours, can be seen the coaches that convey the letters and papers of the population of the kingdom." Copway singles out the postman as "a man of importance" to the circulation of letters and print:

His red coat makes him conspicuous, and his employment is not devoid of variety. He sports a whip and a horn. With a blast of the latter he clears the track: to impede his progress would be an insult to the Queen. . . . [O]f all men he is the most industrious—punctual to a minute in his going and coming—you can always depend on him."¹²¹

These observations are not simply Copway's anglophile celebration of British institutions. Copway's celebration of the post office registers a communication revolution that was also underway in North America. By the 1840s innovations in the U.S. postal service fostered an increased popular awareness of interconnectedness and interdependency across the United States. The emergence of postal culture was both constitutive and reflective of the creation of new institutions and social practices: market expansion, participatory democracy, class formation, railroad transportation, urban transit, mass publishing and literacy, public schooling, and daily newspapers. Although these innovations did not collapse difference, they helped create a modern historical consciousness and an experience of nationality that was rooted in a sensation of connectedness.¹²²

Running Sketches likewise evokes the projective dimensions of Copway's *own* travels, celebrating the imaginative possibilities of human agency in a mobile world. Reflecting on his own passage to England, Copway charts the transatlantic commerce and migration that he witnesses, insisting that all Europe-bound passengers "hav[e] an object in

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 92-93.

¹²² David Henkin, *The Postal Age: The Emergence of Modern Communications in Nineteenth-Century America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).

view.” Copway sketches his own participation in this transatlantic community as affirming the potential role of Native peoples in this mobile world:

On board this Steamer bound for Europe are people from all parts of the United States—from the south, north, and west—each having an object in view. Some are going to the continent, and others on business of an official character, while others are in pursuit of happiness or riches. Here I am too, a Delegate to the Peace Congress in behalf of the *Christian Indians of America!* A few years, and what a change! ¹²³

By affirming his own presence on the boat as what Scott Lyons has called a “migration to modernity:” the “pursuit of happiness or riches” catalyzes an imagining of new futurities that exist in Native and non-native people alike. From this perspective, the narrative movement—Copway’s passage from America to England—also becomes a frame for imagining a movement in time: an active signing on to modernity—travel, commerce, and transnational connectedness.¹²⁴

But the narrative movement from America to England also activates another “movement”: a sensation of emotional transport. Copway’s emotionally charged rhetoric in these passages communicates a heightened sense of time, place, and bodily presence: “Here I am too”; “The scattered and mangled remains . . . I have seen!” *Running Sketches* is punctured by sustained reveries in which Copway reproduces the bodily feeling of moving across space, performing the potential for identification with others across space and time. For instance, while en route to Liverpool and passing through the North Channel, his movement along the Irish coast spurs a sustained expression of a feeling cross-cultural sympathy. Copway writes:

I have had in my native land, reasons to thank the Irish, for when I have met an Irish gentleman I have found a gentleman indeed—high-minded, generous, and noble! A love of country is in my breast! There is none so devoid of feeling but that at times he sighs for home; and in my own country I have seen this people weep, wringing

¹²³ Copway, *Running Sketches*, 18.

¹²⁴ Lyon, “Migrations to Modernity.”

their hands, while they talked of Cork, the scenery of Killarney, the famed Blarney-stone, and a thousand other things.”¹²⁵

As Copway subsequently reflects on the eloquent Irish statesman Daniel O’Connell, he links this bodily rhetoric to a type of natural eloquence. “This is the land,” Copway writes, “which gave birth to O’Connell, the fiery fagot of eloquence! His tongue fanned the fire of Patriotism, and bathed a nation in tears.” This sustained episode reflects on the rhetoric of national sentiment as an affective framework for imagining relatedness across space. The emotional oratory of O’Connell, Copway argues, has the potential to bring together people across national boundaries and political divides:

O’Connell stood pre-eminent in the British Parliament until his death. When he spoke, the shaggy mane of the British Lion gave evidence of the magnetism of his oratory. The tears of O’Connell mingled with the tears of the two Houses, and of the Reporters, who could not help weeping at the recital of Ireland’s misfortunes. The warm hearts of his people justly loved him.¹²⁶

O’Connell’s tears and emotional oratory transports Copway back to a personal experience as a young boy in Canada. Copway narrates how on one day he and his father were out hunting and came upon a settler’s cabin:

[W]e heard the peculiar brogue of the Irish inviting me to come in. My father lighted his pipe and was going out, when the man of the cabin insisted he should sit down. The scanty appearance of straw in one corner told the amount they had of this world’s goods. ‘Sit down, master, sit down wid me.’ My father took a seat, and then commenced a queer conversation. From all that I could learn from my imperfect knowledge of English, he was trying to impress my father with the greatness of Daniel O’Connell, his achievements in Ireland, and his speeches in the British Parliament.”¹²⁷

The mere act of reflecting on O’Connell’s emotional delivery transports Copway across time in space to an episode in his childhood in Rice Lake. This episode, in turn, represents the

¹²⁵ Copway, *Running Sketches*, 36.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 37-38.

possibility of an emotional connection between an Irish settler and the Ojibwe father-and-son couple.

How do we read these representations of weeping and feeling in Copway's *Running Sketches*? It would be easy to dismiss Copway's reflections as being merely in a "sentimental mode," but indeed this episode evokes what James Chandler has called the "sympathetic imaginative mobility" that was a cornerstone of literatures of sensibility.¹²⁸ Copway uses a rhetorical strategy of representing feelings to mobilize "the capacity . . . of passing into points of view not one's own."¹²⁹ In eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Anglo culture, emotion attained a previously unremarked import as a powerful social phenomenon, and literatures of sensibility recognized the "empirical origins" of feelings as well as "their social benefits."¹³⁰ Sensibility materialized in Anglo-/American literature as what Julie Ellison calls "extravagant emotion through rhetorically intense and narratively complex textual episodes."¹³¹ Literatures of sensibility generated norms of social conduct and politeness, but also imaginative frameworks for social commentary and political reform. Sensibility allowed authors to engage—through emotionally charged rhetoric and scenes of imagination—the boundaries created by colonialism, diasporas, and racial and class stratification.¹³²

¹²⁸ James Chandler, *An Archaeology of Sympathy: The Sentimental Mode in Literature and Cinema* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2013), 303.

¹²⁹ James Chandler, "The Languages of Sentiment," *Textual Practice* 22, no. 1 (2008): 26.

¹³⁰ Adela Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion: Epistemologies of Emotion from Hume to Austen* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 7.

¹³¹ Julie Ellison, "Sensibility," in *A Handbook to Romanticism Studies*, edited by Julia Wright and Joel Faflak (London: Blackwell, 2012), 37-38.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 41. As Ellison notes, "[c]irculating through [the poetry and prose of sensibility] is the flickering knowledge that Britain's prosperity—sustained by trade, colonialism, and empire—was responsible for the figures around which such strong feelings swirled: slaves, servants, 'poor Indians', war widows, rural families displaced by enclosure, and victims of the Poor Laws. . . . [F]or the most part, sensibility matted because it provided a way to feel toward others across distances of place, time, race, and social class."

In *Running Sketches*, then, Copway taps into a potent transnational register for representing the bodily experience of feeling and cross-cultural relatedness. At the same time, Copway's narrative only teases readers with the possibility for complete cross-cultural understanding. Namely, when the Irishman asks Copway's father if he is impressed with O'Connell's reputation, his father mistakenly answers "no" when in fact he intends to say yes, enraging the Irish settler.¹³³ The episode expresses a potential in a colonial context for cross-cultural sympathy between the Irishman and the Ojibwe, suggesting the possibility of a shared reflection on experiences of colonialism and diaspora between Natives and settlers. However, a language barrier prevents this identification across difference from being complete. In other words, as *Running Sketches* taps into ideologies of cross-cultural identification, Copway also point out the limitations of such imaginative mobility in a colonial culture.

In this sense, then, Copway's sentimentalized notions of cultural exchange and cross-cultural relatedness also articulate the potential for a critique of the workings of a transatlantic colonial culture. As Copway adopts his role of a carrier back-and-forth of information within a mobile world, this role is inflected by his adoption of a critical subject-position as an indigenous intellectual. Opening up unexpected spaces for institutional and anti-colonial critiques, sometimes these are directed at the U.S. nation-state. When Copway is poised to depart for England, for example, he is musing in anticipation on his trip to Europe, but his reveries are interrupted by news relating the death of President Zachary Taylor:

¹³³ As Scott Richard Lyons has noted, this trope of Native people confusing the words *yes* and *no* is a commonplace in Native American writing, echoing similar passages in William Apess's *Son of the Forest* (1829) and Francis LaFlesche's *The Middle Five* (1900). See Scott Richard Lyons, "Migrations to Modernity" (forthcoming).

I perceived quite a commotion among the boarders as they sat at the table, and I could distinguish the following sad sentences, ‘The President is dead! He died last evening.’ Then General Zachariah Taylor is no more! and we shall take to Europe the news of his death. My only wish on hearing of this event was for his safety; and I hoped the Great Spirit had forgiven him for killing so many of the red men of my country.¹³⁴

Copway recognizes that the conversation among the passengers is more than mere pass-time, and situates himself as a node in a transatlantic information circuit: “[W]e shall take to Europe the news of his death.” At the same time he mobilizes this conversation for an anti-colonial critique: he remembers Taylor’s direction of troops as colonel in the Black Hawk War of 1832 and his victory as a commander in the Second Seminole War between 1838 and 1840. In this critique, Copway’s professed hope for the President’s forgiveness by the Great Father expresses Copway’s supposed neutrality as a carrier of information, a rhetorical move that renders his critique all the more potent.

At other times these critiques are aimed more generally at discourses of savagism and civilization, and Copway produces an oppositional rhetoric that upends the dominant tropes of Native people’s relation to modernity. Traveling in Germany along the Rhine, Copway notes the European countries hold on to retrograde ideas more so than the American Indian: “Tales and Legends [that] are told at each crevice of the rocks. Wonders and displays of miraculous power, and a great deal of superstition, much more than the North American Indians ever had.”¹³⁵ Similarly, having noted the remnants of warfare in this very region, Copway hints when he travels from Frankfurt to Heidelberg that warfare is now a thing of the past in Ojibwe country, compared to the retrograde reality that it still is in Europe. When Copway observes a military parade for the Prince’s “review of the soldiers,” he muses that

¹³⁴ Copway, *Running Sketches*, 13.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 199-201.

[t]heir burnished weapons and splendid equipage glittered before the sun, and the tall plume of the Prince, who was conspicuous on the field, waved before us as we passed. These soldiers make a brilliant and formidable appearance, but such things are altogether repugnant to my feelings since my warrior's creed has been changed to a harmless one.¹³⁶

In this cleverly constructed paragraph, Copway invites his readers to join in own his own admiration of the spectacle of militarism. But consistent with his institutional affiliation with the Peace Movement, he reminds us that this admiration is only a glossy, state-sanctioned form of savagism: as Copway suggests here, militarism and violence is the purview of the State—not of modern tribal nations.

The critical reappraisal of Copway's *Running Sketches* helps to situate this work in relation to texts like his *Life, History, and Travels*, as part of a wider, multi-discursive publishing strategy. In this light, Copway's celebration of modernity is not a naïve denigration of his tribal background: as Scott Richard Lyons has argued, it communicates a movement in time that claims a place for Native people within modernity.¹³⁷ Likewise, his emotionally charged rhetoric is not merely textual excess, but mobilizes ideologies of a transatlantic community of sentiment as a political resource in a colonial culture. And the practice of excerpting and reprinting miscellaneous texts in Copway's work more than just his attempt to get a substantial volume in print in a short amount of time: Copway orchestrates a decentered discourse in which the American Indian speaker is not an object of curiosity, but simultaneously plays the role of Native critic as well as transparent mediator. Punctured by reprints of councils, newspaper commentary, and his own oratory, Copway's *Life* and *Running Sketches* represent the Native American publication project as a multimedia and self-reflective act of circulating indigenous critiques in a colonial culture.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 254-255.

¹³⁷ Lyons, "Migrations to Modernity."

Performing in print his own movement through religious, literary, and philanthropic networks, Copway imagines this movement as a framework for communicating indigenous critiques of an interconnected world.

1.5 Conclusion

Writings such as those of Copway, Jones, and Schoolcraft, I have suggested, are self-consciously about the process and politics of publication in a transnational or transatlantic culture of exchange. The recent turn within Native American literary studies towards transnational approaches may therefore be particularly relevant for studies of nineteenth-century Native American writing and performance. These new developments in the field have offered meaningful alternatives to thinking about transnational indigenous literatures as a marker of a global “sameness.” Chadwick Allen’s work in *Transindigenous*, for instance, promotes the value of what he terms “purposeful indigenous juxtapositions.” In this paradigm, a critical perspective in which the comparison of Native writing from different global contexts works not to read for a global indigenous identity, but to help scholars fashion new and meaningful readings of work from particular settler-colonial contexts.¹³⁸ Arnold Krupat, too, has argued for the need to approach Native American literature from a cosmopolitan perspective that recognizes how Native writers espoused tribal-national and indigenous perspectives, while also always acknowledging their own position as global citizens.¹³⁹ To extend these perspectives to nineteenth-century Native authors will add historical dimensions to the notion that, as Shari Huhndorf has argued, although tribal

¹³⁸ Chadwick Allen, *Transindigenous: Methodologies for Global Native Literary Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), xi-xxxiv.

¹³⁹ See Arnold Krupat, *Red Matters*, 1-23; and “Nationalism, Transnationalism, Trans-Indigenism, and Cosmopolitanism”; Lyons, *World, Text, Indian*.

nationalism is a dominant paradigm for articulating anticolonial perspectives, indigenous politics are profoundly shaped by their transnational dimensions as much as tribally-specific ideas of nation, culture, and identity.¹⁴⁰

To more fully understand the cross-cultural and transnational dynamics of nineteenth-century Native literature, scholarship will benefit from the attention to the organizational contexts through which Native writers and speakers published. As Elizabeth Maddock Dillon puts it, publication is the result of a “collective series of interchanges” that encompass acts of writing and speaking but also the material, collaborative dimensions of print publication that co-constitute the publication project as a cultural event.¹⁴¹ As these publication contexts were also motivating discourses for self-expression, nineteenth-century Native American literatures turned situations of cultural exchange into politically charged moments of articulation colonial critique and dedication to tribal nation-building. To understand these interchanges within the parameters of the publication projects, will therefore help to understand the agency of Native writers as they reflected on the dynamics of self-expression in a colonial culture. Moreover, the attention to Native expression as a multi-discursive and multimedia strategy of navigating existing institutions, helps to look beyond their mere “inclusion” or “participation” within wider structures of cultural exchange, to recognize the nuanced critiques they articulated.

The writings of the Schoolcrafts, Jones, and Copway, then, are projects of circulation: they are self-consciously about the insertion of Ojibwe writing and performance into wider arenas—literary societies, the lecture circuit, missionary networks, and a

¹⁴⁰ See Shari Huhndorf, *Mapping the Americas: The Transnational Politics of Contemporary Native Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009).

¹⁴¹ Elizabeth Maddock Dillon, “John Marrant Blows the French Horn: Print, Performance, and the Making of Publics in Early African American Literature,” in *Early African American Print Culture in Theory and Practice*, edited by Lara Cohen and Jordan Stein (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), 338.

bourgeoning print market. Their writings offer alternatives to thinking about Native American literature as “reflecting” Ojibwe culture or identity: instead they stress their own mediating position within a conversation on culture, colonialism, and U.S.-Indian relations. Here they find opportunities for contesting Euro-American knowledge of Native people and for anticolonial organizing, and claim a space for Ojibwe knowledge within a modern, transnational literary culture.



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Rhonda Vincent Concert

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Chief Keokuk
Keokuk National Cemetery
Keokuk Veterans' Memorial
Lock & Dam #19
Miller House Museum
The Grand Theatre
Verity River Museum

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Keokuk Event Calendar
Tri-State Area Event Calendar

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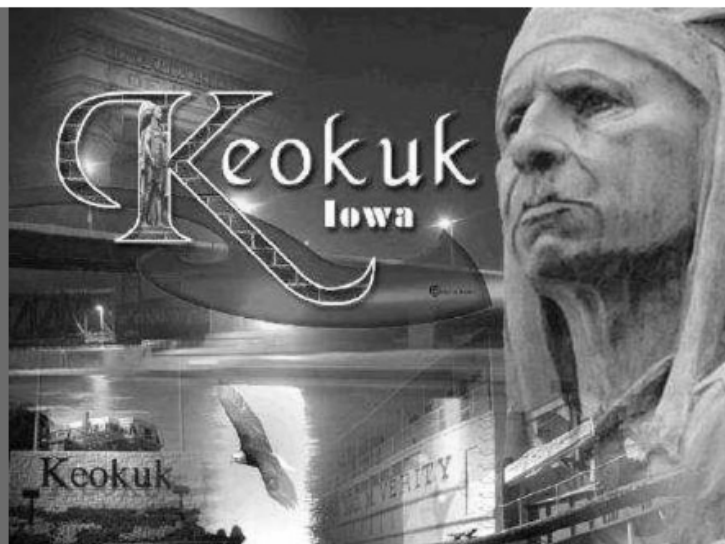
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TOURISM
KEOKUK AREA CONVENTION AND TOURISM BUREAU

Figure 22: Homepage of the Keokuk Area Convention and Tourism Bureau. Online. Accessed 5 May 2015. <<<http://www.keokukiowatourism.org>>>

Afterword

Building Keokuk

On 22 October, 1913, the local chapter of the Iowa Daughters of the American Revolution unveiled a statue in Keokuk, Iowa, representing the Sauk leader after whom the city was named. Made by the sculptor Nellie Walker, a student of Lorado Taft's at the Art Institute of Chicago, it was placed in Rand Park, looking east towards the Mississippi. The most distinguishing features of the bronze statue must be Keokuk's neoclassical pose and his Plains headdress. The latter is the result of some artistic license, for sure, serving as "white America's marker of that archaic brand of authority."¹ And the commemorative plaque on the pedestal keeps remarkably quiet about Keokuk himself. The dedication makes no mention of the person depicted by the bronze figure, but gives us only the DAR's narrative of settlement in the West—the opening of a "pioneer highway":

To the memory of the pioneers who entered Iowa by Keokuk, the Gate City, and either settling in our state or passing farther west, traveled over the well-worn road known as the Mormon Trail.

...

'They crossed the prairies, as of old
The pilgrims crossed the sea,
To make the west, as they the east,

¹ Philip Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 189.

The homestead of the free.’²

Surely this story intersected with Keokuk’s, but the inscription does not say how.



Figure 23 (l): Model of the statue of Chief Keokuk. The statue was unveiled in Rand Park, Keokuk, Iowa, Oct. 22, 1913. Postcard, 1913.

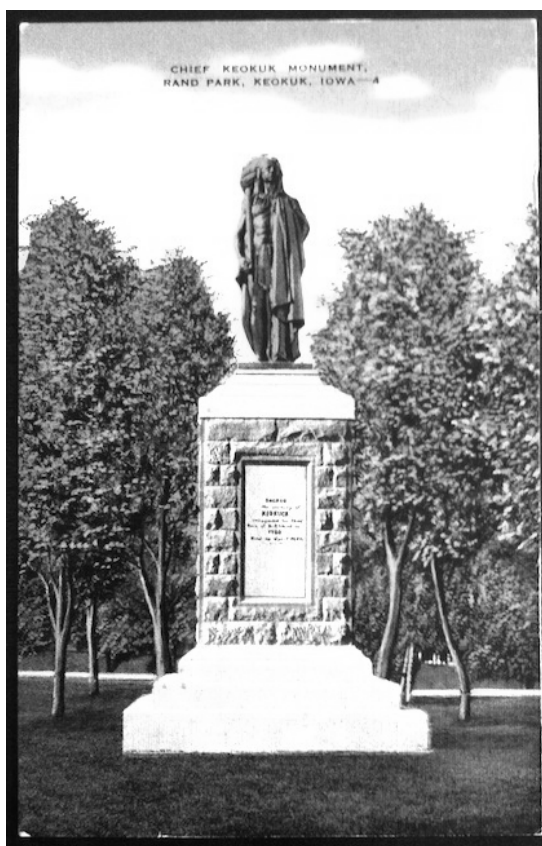


Figure 24 (r.): Chief Keokuk Monument. Postcard, 1960.

A century later, and the town still doesn’t quite know what to make of Keokuk. In 2013 the Keokuk Tourism Board organized a “Re-dedication and Centennial Celebration” of Nellie Walker’s statue. The event featured storytelling, dancing, and “authentic Native American food”; the board also announced that “Family Members of Chief Keokuk will be present.”³ But the tourism board also appears unsure of Keokuk’s commemorative function

² “The Keokuk Monument,” *Annals of Iowa* 11, no. 4 (1914): 354.

³ “Chief Keokuk Statue Re-Dedication & Centennial Celebration,” Keokuk Area Convention and Tourism Bureau. Online. Accessed 5 May 2015. <<<http://www.keokukiowatourism.org/chief2013.htm>>>.

for the city of Keokuk, Iowa. On its website, a brief sketch of Nellie Walker's statue and the historical figure notes that "[i]t is unclear why the city was named after a man who barely, if ever spent any of his life in the town named after him." It furthermore de-authorizes Keokuk not only as an emblem for the town of Keokuk, but as a "real" Native leader to the Sauks:

Kiyokaga [Keokuk] was not a full blooded Indian, and was not in line to be the Chief that he later was acknowledged to be. His father was one-half French and one-half Indian. His mother was a full blooded Indian. In fact, if surnames were used as they are today, his last name would have been LaMotte(e). According to the records, he was more of a politician than a brave leader.⁴

It seems that one issue here is the relation of identity to political role. The description gives Keokuk back his supposedly more "correct" Sauk name Kiyokaga, only to then suggest that it might have just as well been LaMotte(e). And the fact that Keokuk was not a "full blooded" Indian appears to challenge his role as the "Chief that he was acknowledged to be." Keokuk was not a "brave leader," but rather merely a "politician" (apparently not the thing for tribal leaders to be), a statement verified by the authority of "the records."

Keokuk's statue poses a challenge to the commemorative function of the American Indian leader in a colonial culture: to remember him (for such figures were almost always male) as a symbol of white civic identity. One way to do this is to commemorate the Indian as a marker of an indigenous presence before eventual white settlement. This Indian might have been noble and friendly, but never modern.⁵ Another way is to commemorate the brave warrior-leader who challenged settler culture through armed resistance—a noble cause, for sure, but ultimately in vain. Since the founding of the United States, dominant American culture has cherished the image of the Indian leader as a tragic warrior figure, his resistance

⁴ "Chief Keokuk." Keokuk Area Convention and Tourism Bureau. Online. Accessed 5 May 2015. <<http://www.keokukiowatourism.org>>.

⁵ See Jean O'Brien, *Firsting and Lasting: Writing Indians out of Existence in New England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).

a trope in the colonial culture's forging of a national identity.⁶ But as seen in 2013, Keokuk doesn't represent an "original" Native inhabitant of the city, nor did he perform the spectacle of anticolonial resistance that could warrant his commemoration as a warrior leader. So what is Keokuk doing in Rand Park?

The thing is, Keokuk was one of the founders of the settlement named after him—albeit in a complicated, colonial kind of way. In 1824 he was one of the signers of a treaty that ceded Sauk lands in southern Iowa to the United States, but which also established the "Half-Breed Tract" for the Sauks and Meskwakis in the Keokuk area. The "Half-Breed" tract was designated for mixed-race Sauk and Meskwaki individuals and families who were not eligible for the tribes' annuities. Like other Native communities, they would hold this land collectively rather than in fee simple. And again, like other Native communities, their lands were highly desirable to white settlers, and through a range of tactics white people bought the lands piece by piece. In 1837 the area was opened for general purchase, and rampant speculation led to the building of the town of Keokuk.⁷ During this process, Keokuk protested the presence of white people more than he's given credit for. In 1830 Keokuk and five other chiefs demanded that William Clark put a halt to white squatters on the Half-Breed Tract:

Father; we wish you to remove all the white people now on that tract of land which we intended for the use of the half-breeds of our nations and not to allow any white people of any description to settle and live on that land except a father, a husband or wife of any of the half-breeds or an agent or agents appointed by the President.⁸

Keokuk *was* protesting the white man's theft of native lands—just not in the way that offers the desired settler catharsis.

⁶ Gordon Sayre, *The Indian Chief as Tragic Hero: Native Resistance and the Literatures of America, from Moctezuma to Tecumseh* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 33.

⁷ Lucy Eldersveld Murphy, *Great Lakes Creoles: A French-Indian Community on the Northern Borderlands, Prairie du Chien, 1750-1860* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 250-260.

⁸ Qtd in Murphy, *Great Lakes Creoles*, 254.

Studies of nineteenth-century Native American literature, broadly conceived, constitute a crucial site for interrogating such entanglements of settler ideology, history, and the politics of expression in a colonial culture. Native American writing and performance in North America refracts the dynamics of settler colonialism as it was elaborated in different regions and tribal nations. The vast body of writing produced by Native Americans in the nineteenth century is what we may call “cultural” in the broadest sense: about how people make sense of what people think, do, and cause—from ecological and economic changes to physical violence and political diplomacy. Culture does not come to us as discrete, pre-formed patterns of thought and behavior: culture is always what we negotiate, transform, or fight about. This notion of culture is far from the liberal multicultural notion of “cultural difference.” As Maureen Konkle argues, nineteenth-century Native writing becomes meaningful within a paradigm that is not organized around a notion of culture that prompts us to “condemn those who do not measure up, culturally speaking.”⁹

Native writers and speakers took part in a wide range of colonial contestations, many of which have been overlooked, and some of which seem alien or even problematic to us now. But such contestations are not explicable in terms of the dramatic trope of a “clash of cultures.” They are, rather, ongoing and often slow-moving negotiations within public discourse about the relations between Indian Nations and settler culture. And this issue is still wrapped up today in the question of how we may rethink and change existing institutions. As James Cox reminds us in *The Red Land to the South*, in the second half of the twentieth century the work of the National Congress of American Indians was characterized by “slow, cautious, and tedious negotiations” within governmental networks.

⁹ Maureen Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations: Native Intellectuals and the Politics of Historiography, 1827-1863* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 29, 289-291.

And these acts of negotiation contrast sharply with “popular depictions of the direct actions of the Red Power period.”¹⁰ In our present time, Kathryn Shanley argues, one important arena of such negotiations is the ongoing question of Native representation in higher education. This work, too, Shanley suggests, depends on our re-imagining of existing institutions:

Exactly whose ‘culture’ the academy is may be subject to debate, yet, for Indians, developing a sense of belonging within mainstream institutions will be the prerequisite for redefining that space—actual and intellectual—as Native American. However that is done, it will be a long time before the number of Indians will constitute a critical mass.¹¹

The asymmetry between Native and non-native access to “mainstream institutions” surely registers that the work of redefining these institutions has been slow in the making. But it also reflects what nineteenth-century writers and speakers also demonstrate: that the contestation of settler colonialism has not traditionally been directed at a monolithic settler state, but has happened through the work of navigating, critiquing, and intervening in existing institutions.

In thinking both about nineteenth-century Native writing and settler colonialism today, we may look, then, at a range of different *projects*: projects that mobilize a range of agencies, employ multimedia modes of communication, and are directed at the crucial question of how we may arrive at meaningful social, institutional, and discursive change. In reading *projects*, in which agency is circumscribed and decentered, it will be imperative not to replicate what Gerald Vizenor calls “terminal creeds” for thinking about the agency of Native people’s speech acts. Terminal creeds are narrative patterns that situate Native

¹⁰ James Cox, *The Red Land to the South: American Indian Writers and Indigenous Mexico* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 108.

¹¹ Kathryn Shanley, “Writing Indian: American Indian Literature and the Future of Native American Studies,” in *Studying Native America: Problems and Prospects of Native American Studies*, ed. Russell Thornton (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 146.

Americans in fixed subject-positions, ultimately signaling only a colonial simulation of Native-settler relations. Terminal creeds reproduce images of the *indian* that place Native people in a perpetual position of victimhood, within a narrative that is ultimately a narrative of colonial dominance.¹² And terminal creeds make us think about “resistance” in ways that filter out the institutional navigations of Native writers and speakers, past and present. In asking instead what different things Native American writing and performance was doing, we may see that the many forms, conditions, and projects of Native writing resist colonial simulations of the *indian*.

These simulations run deep, though. When it comes to the topic of navigating colonial institutions, dominant culture has made its assumptions about Native agency going back to at least the early republic. Philip Freneau’s 1788 poem “The Indian Student: or, Force of Nature” offers an appealing—because romanticized—notion of a politics of rejection. Freneau’s poem imagines an unbridgeable distance between Native lives and the possibility of transforming colonial institutions to pursue self-defined goals and strategies.¹³ In it, an American Indian boy encounters a missionary who convinces him to go to college in the East. The boy departs to Cambridge to trade the “silver stream” and “limpid lake” for “musty books, and college halls.” But once he is there, the Indian student finds nothing that is of use to him. In the end, he is compelled to return to “nature’s ancient forests,” where tropes of savagism and the vanishing Indian find a more fitting backdrop:

‘My heart is fix’d and I must go
To die among my native shades.’

¹² Gerald Vizenor, *Manifest Manners: Narratives on Postindian Survivance* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994).

¹³ See Scott Richard Lyons’s discussion of “rhetorical sovereignty”—the autonomy of Native writers to choose for themselves the means and purposes for public address. Scott Richard Lyons, “Rhetorical Sovereignty: What do American Indians Want from Writing?” *College Composition and Communication* 51, no. 3 (2000): 447-468.

He spoke, and to the western springs
(His gown discharged, his money spent
His blanket tied with yellow strings,
The shepherd of the forest went.¹⁴)

Of course, Freneau's poem is much more about white U.S. republicans and their nostalgic longing for an imagined past than it is an engagement with the theme of Native American education. But this romance of rejection—the colonial image of the *indian* for whom navigating colonial institutions is by definition a loss of self—is also a terminal creed. If we fail to recognize how Native writers and speakers have always used, critiqued, and adapted institutions that still shape U.S.-Indian relations today, then the “Indian Student” will have cast a long shadow indeed.

¹⁴ Philip Freneau, “The Indian Student: or, The Force of Nature,” in *The Poems of Philip Freneau: Poet of the American Revolution*, Vol. II, edited by Fred Lewis Pattee (Princeton: University Library, 1903), 373-374.

Appendix. Names of the delegates of the O’Fallon delegation of 1821-1822.

Several accounts suggest that there were seventeen in total, but I have not been able to identify all of them. Different sources, furthermore, give different spelling of their names, although some of them clearly indicate the same person. The *American Missionary Register* report notes that “[i]n spelling these names, we have followed the sound, as given by the Interpreter.” Many thanks to John Ludwickson for drawing my attention to the article in the *Register*.

	Thomas McKenney ¹	<i>American Missionary Register</i> ²	Charles Bird King ³
Chaui Pawnee (Grand Pawnee)	Sharitarish Shar-i-tar-ish	Sarretarish	
		“his brother”	
		Kiskie	
Kithehaki Pawnee (Republican Pawnee)	Peskelechaco Pes-ke-le-cha-co		
		Teragouteraheki	
		Ishkatapie	
Skidi Pawnee (Pawnee Loups)	Petalesharro	Terrakatawaha Tare-ke-to-wa-ho	Terrekitauahu
		Larawhakou	
		Ashoukout	
Omaha	Ongpatonga Ong-pa-ton-ga Big Elk	Big Elk	
Kansas	Mon-chonsia White Plume	White Plume	Monchousia
		Eagle	
Otoe	Chon-mon-i-case Shaumenokusse		
	Hayne Hudjihini Eagle of Delight		
	Choncape Chou-ca-pe		
		Alleton	

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1. In Thomas McKenney, *History of the Indian Tribes of North America*, Vol I (Philadelphia: Biddle, 1836); Vol. 2-3 (Philadelphia: Rice and Clark, 1842-44).
2. In “Indian Deputation,” *American Missionary Register*, Vol. II (New York: Harper, 1822), 281.
3. From the original titles of the various portraits C.B. King painted in 1822. I have only given these where they differ from the names in McKenney’s *History of the Indian Tribes of North America*.

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