



## Watching to see until it becomes clear to you: metaphorical mapping – a method for emergence

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## **Watching to see until it becomes clear to you: metaphorical mapping – a method for emergence**

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Searching for a methodology that would allow the author to ‘see’ across worldviews and articulate them both was the academic challenge of investigating learning ideology across Canadian and Aboriginal worldviews with Aboriginal Nuu-chah-nulth Elders. A mode of inquiry was required permitting the author to hold a Euro-heritage and an Aboriginal heritage in a bi-cultural balance as experienced by a participant in both. She employed a life-history technique situating herself in the cross-cultural context of her experience in both heritages. Using her personal terms of address in both cultures as metaphors to establish a common bi-cultural ground against which her trajectory could remain visible, the author describes the development of her ability to follow the direction of the elders to ‘watch until it becomes clear.’ The method employs what Lakoff and Johnson have termed metaphorical mapping to take a snapshot of the activity that the author has previously described as phenomenological orienteering.

My search for a methodology began in the Qualitative Methods class at the University of British Columbia (UBC) in the fall of 1996, led by Brent Davis (Davis and Sumara 1997) and Karen Meyers (Fels and Meyers 1997). They too were struggling to birth a model of inquiry that was lived, embodied, creative and could deal with complexity. They provided qualitative methodological strategies which had legitimacy and authority that suited my cross-cultural adult learning/education needs to help me move from an indigenous way of seeing and doing to an ‘academic method’. Their process helped me to get ‘un-stuck’ from my way of seeing by helping me to interrogate my way of seeing so that I could see more clearly.

My research problem required a model of inquiry that would allow me to understand transpositions across worldviews, life worlds and time. I had returned to doctoral studies to learn to articulate the value distortions and social erasure which government programming required of me in my role as Executive Director and Program Manager of a social service NGO in my Nuu-chah-nulth<sup>1</sup> First Nations<sup>2</sup> community on the west coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada. I needed to understand how indigenous life worlds and values are discounted and colonized in what seemed a zone of institutional subduction through what Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Public Works Canada, 2004) calls ‘devolution’.

I began to understand this process of change as a process of deconstruction and re-construction in the context of emancipatory adult education. Lather (1991) provided me with my first clue that a ‘studied ambivalence’ was needed with which to ‘see’. Haraway (1991) allowed me to claim my situatedness and recognize the cyborg<sup>3</sup> that I was becoming. The need to be accountable and ethical for my research position in the First Nations community required that I demonstrate my situatedness and interests (Butler 2005). While my dear friend, V-Lee Chapman (2005), found

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support in Foucault for her critical autoethnographic approach, I, like Somerville (2007), found the post structural theories did not meet my need for de- and re-construction in the dialectical liminality that I inhabited. While poststructural theories helped me to begin to understand how I may have participated in my own embedded, embodied (Lakoff and Johnson 1999), and cognitized oppression (Battiste 1986), I needed to understand it in a way that would permit me to identify a methodology to account for postmodernist transformations (Cranton 1997) and de-colonizations (Smith 1999) for my dissertation (Atleo 2001). One of the ways I began to understand this was by reflecting on my different names (terms of address), understanding my life in a narrative rather than a categorical logic (Cochran 1997), how I transformed as my names did and how I still stayed the same.

### **A living inquiry: many Mar(e)s**

My voicemail greeting chimes, 'Hi, this is Mar(e), Marlene or Marilyn...' in a tone cultivated to include at least those three of me. The greeting is my attempt to be relational, my attempt to reach back to anyone from any of my life spaces attempting contact. The tone is meant to be inclusive of everyone wanting to speak to at least an aspect of me. The voicemail is a convenience so that I might be readily available for the research project that I am working on with my son in our consultation partnership. Perhaps I should have included 'Mom', 'Nana' and 'Mrs. Richard Atleo' because the cellular phone was a birthday gift from my husband to help me stay 'in touch' with him and the kids as I began the residency for my doctoral program a ferry ride away on another landmass. The cellular relationship is the legacy of the 'cyborg mom' and technical worker: physically, emotionally, psychologically absent, but potentially technologically present. It is a foreshadowing of transition in which 'getting unstuck' in 'real' time and space becomes a ritual requisite for watching the emergence of new 'realities' until they become clear.

Voicemail becomes a disembodied means of staying 'in touch' without touching as my partner and I labor in different economic fields usually separated by at least one body of water and vast stretches of pavement. The white Volkswagen Passat, which serves as a recharger for my phone's battery, should be vacuumed and washed more often, because it is my real 'home away from home'. I can be 'with' everyone any time, anywhere, by traveling at the speed of sound in techno-space. '?eh-?eh-naa-tuu-k<sup>W</sup>iss', my Nuu-chah-nulth First Nation traditional name, is conspicuously unacknowledged in the greeting. I occupy her seat in mythic time, in ritual space, as the hakum (chief's female partner), in the hahoothee (system of spiritual, moral, social, political, and economic rights and obligations of the Nuu-chah-nulth chieftainships), of the third chief (Umeek), in the territory of the Ahous-aht First Nation<sup>4</sup> (Clayoquot Sound), (Atleo 2006) and have not the heart to capture her in the techno-space of my voicemail mailbox. But all of me, and especially she, was present there in my Thunderbird Residence student room, as I explored how and why I had become interested in the development of life careers of First Nations individuals in a comparative perspective with other Canadians, immigrants and Native Americans.

While there are 'many Mar(e)...s', I do not have 'multiple personality disorder', but am merely polyphasic as Laughlin (1992, 1994) would describe it, in which I recognize my patterns of experience, which ranged from a focus on adaptation (I always let my partner manage the temperature in the home) and relationships to the world outside of myself, that are structured by my life time and spaces. A life lived beside and then on the Trans-Canada Highway that runs the width of Canada and past the end of the 401 (1½ hours by seine boat) has demanded a psychosocial development of me ranging across the Canadian landscapes through which I have recently come to understand my life in postmodern and postcolonial terms (Atleo 1996). Postmodern inasmuch as it has allowed me to see through the reified structures of time and empire, like X-ray vision through the concrete forms of modernity. Postcolonial inasmuch as the strategies of

colonization are being identified, addressed and dismantled. The terms by which I am addressed help me to locate myself in a social time and space that provides utility for grounding in a situated reality (Haraway 1991).

In German, my first language, reflexive verbs allow me to perceptually orient myself. In German, influence attempts by adult non-relatives featured reflexive verbs with the child in the third person (e.g. The little girl wants to go to bed). In my family, adults explained why it was time for me to go to bed. I knew when I did not want to go to bed but could appreciate and comply with a reasonable argument about why I should. The difference in approaches sensitized me to (a) develop discernment between influence attempts based on persuasion and those based on argument, (b) use a reflexivity check to understand the origin of the motivation, and (c) reflect on the dialectic between my expectations and those of others who would objectify me, especially across cultural, linguistic, social and occupational contexts. Consequently, I will employ dimensions of myself to reflect on the reason for and the nature of my interest in the lifespan patterns of individuals. Each dimension will be contextualized and its role substantiated.

'?eh-?eh-naa-tuu-k<sup>w</sup>iss' is the overarching metaphor that provides me with orienting self-definition, so I can see backwards and forwards. 'Marlene' (the German, 'Mar-lane', and the English, 'Marlene') will represent the contradictions and discontinuities. 'Marilyn' will represent the highly embedded spaces. 'Mar(e)' represents the intimate space. 'Nana', as a childhood nickname in German and a term of address by grandchildren in middle age, represents continuity between stages of life, continents, cultures and centricities. 'Mrs Richard (Atleo)' represents the anchor in legal and social space in the First Nations<sup>5</sup> community. 'Mom' represents my program of a minimally bi-cultural future. These dimensions will be used as lenses to provide some insight into how my perceptions and beliefs are framed as a means to understand some of the biases which I have developed in the process. Identifying some of these biases in turn will provide substance with which to formally question their implications for my research program on life patterns across cultural contexts and adaptations (Erickson 1980; Czikszenmihalyi 1993; Cochran and Laub 1995).

### **'?eh-?eh-naa-tuu-k<sup>w</sup>iss': the organizing metaphor**

I began to gain insight into the diachronic and synchronic aspect of cultural articulation through the organizing metaphor of my name. Insight which comes from what Hall (1983) describes as a complex of convergent types of times typical of high-context cultures. High-context cultures are typified by indigenous cultures in which there is in-group solidarity based on common history and tradition often in a specific territory for millennia wherein the group is valued over the individual and common experience requires little need for explanation of a phenomenon that is deeply normative. Because of this deep structuring diachronic and synchronic times are interactive in the foreground, and the ancestors become alive in the present to make their name great.

When I married, it was a union with a man who lived in the deep time of a Nuu-chah-nulth chieftainship. In the mid-1960s, he was a university student, participating in the epitome of low-context cultural training. He did not come with a label that said, 'Caution: High Context: Cultural Hazard'. I recall graphically the interchange that oriented me towards him and away from my escort, a male friend of more than two years. It was beer-parlour banter that demonstrated to me his skill at comparing biological systems with social systems and mechanical systems, on a variety of levels, in a playful manner, which was intriguingly rigorous conceptually. He had learned his low-context lessons well, but it was a place he just visited. He lived in the times of high context Nuu-chah-nulth culture. Hall (1983) has described such 'times' as (a) metaphysical time (e.g. experiences with ancestors, sacred sites, etc.); (b) micro time (e.g. the largely out-of-conscious awareness) that was idiosyncratically specific to the Ahousaht village of Maaqtusiis; (c) sync time,

which required ‘relating’ to by fitting in, keeping the local rhythm; and (d) sacred or mythic time, in which ceremonies are conducted and the participants inhabit.

‘?eh-?eh-naa-tuu-k<sup>w</sup>iss’ comes on the mists of mythic time, diachronic time. She is the embodiment of a symbolic immortality that reaches into the past and towards the future from the present. Many women of the lineage into which I have committed myself have been clothed with that name. It is now my time to wrap the name around me like a shawl and make it great by developing the position in my time. Some of the connotations of the name ‘?eh-?eh-naa-tuu-k<sup>w</sup>iss’ are a person that speaks in metaphors, a person who can say the same thing in many different ways, a person who gives examples (to help you see), who can see the similarities in difference and the difference in similarities. ‘?eh-?eh-naa-tuu-k<sup>w</sup>iss’ was the woman who married in and could ‘see’ the emergence of new aspects of the environment because she was not structured by deep culture and relations of that community.

The current complement to the name is my partner’s name, ‘Umeek’: a person who provides for the needs of the community. Fishing boats named ‘Umeek’ connote the provision of concrete resources. The lineage we inhabit is the ‘Atliu’, anglicized as ‘Atleo’. The Atliu legacy, specifically the legend of Umeek, is about provision for the community by identifying alternatives when the local resources become scarce and the ‘rivalry’ of chiefs becomes outwardly conflictual. The Atliu lineage is of the younger brother and, appropriately, has a special legacy in innovation and mediation rather than conservatism and confrontation. Consequently, the Atliu lineage was appointed chief-managers of the spoils of war of the Ootshousaht, Manhousaht, Kelsemaht and Ahousaht war. A war so costly in lives that the Atliu lineage was appointed to manage the resources so there would never again be war over resources. Umeek and ‘?eh-?eh-naa-tuu-k<sup>w</sup>iss’ live in the lineage of Atliu, the big house called ‘Kaakish peethl’/‘Hymix-klaaq’, in which the riches of the territory provide a foundation for the community.

Thus we live in a story, a dance in which we find ways to provide our community with alternative resources so there will not be conflict that causes bloodshed. Our position in mythic time has been confirmed, affirmed in potlatch ritual. The working out of our story happens in profane time, in real time, in physical time, in biological time. To navigate through the many gates of time requires a meta time in which to understand the many different types of time and their relationship to each other (Hall 1983). Tracking life in various time zones can add to our understanding of individual change and its implications for our research programs, our storywork (Archibald 1997; Atleo 2001).

### **‘Marlene’: contradictions and discontinuities**

When I was born in Germany, neither of my parents knew that only government-sanctioned Germanic names were legally valid. My mother had been born in Silesia, a German colony, in what is now Poland. My father had just returned from a seven-year internship as a prisoner of war in Canada. In 1939, at 19 years of age, he fled the Nazi draft by joining the German merchant marine. When war broke out he jumped ship in Panama, and again on Vancouver Island, was captured and spent the seven war years in prisoner of war (POW) camps across Canada. My parents wanted to name me ‘Marilyn’ in honour of the eldest daughter of a Canadian farmer who welcomed my father into the family despite his POW status. By default I was named ‘Marlene,’ which is pronounced ‘Maa-lane’. The bureaucracy won the first round.

My grandfather ‘mothered’ me for the first 15 months of my life. He invested ‘Maa-lane’ with love and caring by sharing his daily experiences. His daily round of caring for rabbits, chickens, sheep and the garden were my first lessons. His excitement with the tractor trailer trucks that rumbled by the house, fish ponds and technological gadgets became my delights to this day. His love of strategy games like cards and chess became my passion. When he died

suddenly he left behind an un-grieved gestalt that forever sought his voice, his tone. The name he called me by. 'Maa-lane' evokes what in Nuu-chah-nulth is called yaa-uk, the dialectic of love and pain.

Our immigration to Canada was sponsored by the family whose daughter I was named after. In Canada, I used the name 'Marilyn'. My mother pronounced it 'Merlin'. In the southern Ontario schools in the early 1950s, it would not arouse the postwar anti-Nazi sentiment. I became 'Marilyn'. It sounded so English. I felt so German. It was horrible at first, but, I consoled myself, it was better than being labelled a 'D.P.' or 'Nazi' in the school yard. 'Marilyn' learned to read very, very quickly. By the end of grade one, there was not a hint of accent. My mother would listen to me read 'Dick and Jane'. I knew she could not understand the English words I spoke. It made me feel very sad.

### **'Marilyn': developmental spaces in two immigrant experiences**

'Marilyn' was my German-Canadian childhood experience in the 1950s and '60s of involuntary immigration as described by Ogbu (1987). As 'Marilyn', I spent the first part of my life moving through towns and schools. My father was a tool and die maker in a country under-industrialized by European standards. He went into farming, sales, real estate and the civil service. We moved frequently. The back seat of the car became more crowded as our family grew. He kept the squirming little bodies in the back seat occupied with math quizzes and singing harmonies to made-up songs such as 'Esso'.<sup>6</sup> The whole family would harmonize 'Esso' for miles. We entertained ourselves in the face of economic hardship. My parents relativized our hardships to the personal and political devastation of war or imprisonment. Today, I still have a tendency to use 'being strafed by Allied fire' as an initial baseline for assessing the level of danger in any given situation. When I call my mother with 'news', she counters with experiences of greater catastrophes as if it was a game of cards and she held a trump hand, amplifying fear and conflict. It is hard to keep these tendencies in myself at bay.

The second part of my life, as 'Marilyn', was spent in spaces of relatively longer duration. While it was 'Marilyn' who met Richard, it was 'Maa-lane' who recognized in 'Umeek' a tone, a voice that echoed the promises of the 'lost' grandfather. We lived as 'Marilyn' and 'Richard' in profane time, truly profane time, socializing one another while procreating, becoming educated, and establishing jobs and careers. We came from different worldviews and time zones to negotiate in English. We both spoke English, but neither of us acted English or even Canadian.

He took me to the 'Home' territory of Ahousaht. This university-educated man had failed to tell me that technically 'home' was one room in his grandmother's house, and the only convenience was cold, running water in the village 15 miles as the raven flies beyond the end of the 'Western World' (Bracken 1997). He sailed back into the Territory and 'micro time' (Hall 1983) of his culture. We were disconnected from the neck up by chrono-logic. It took me years to learn to surf that time wave with him. It took us years to create a micro time, in which we could synchronize with each other, our respective families and the larger community. When we bought our first new car to drive to the end of that highway, it was the 'synchro-mesh' technology of the transmission that sold us. We knew the value of smooth shifting potentials.

When the children were young we lived on isolated reserves. The children experienced the physically unrestricted extended family supervision on the reserve. As a couple we agonized in the 'too close for comfort' social relations of family as friends, especially as I was initially culturally inept. I thrived on the relationships with women. I had never experienced large, age-graded groups of same-sex friends. There I was part of a cohort of young mothers with many common concerns and interests. Many of my lifespan expectations were shaped in that period. One of the most prominent needs is to be involved in promoting healthcare and health workers

in the local community to which some of us still come together today (re)visiting that social space or working in the community.

As ‘Marilyn,’ I was a fisher. I trolled with my husband. I was the first woman to be paid as a tallyman on the West Coast during the salmon fishery of a summer on the Fraser River. I graded herring roe during the industry boom of the mid-1970s. I was promoted from ‘blue’ collar seasonal hourly work to ‘pink’ collar year-round salaried employment. My supervisor, a big Asian refugee who had survived the horror of the Uganda of Idi Amin, taught me not to fear numbers. He always said, ‘You can do anything you set your mind to.’ I was terrible with the manual ledger system. He was solid and forgiving. He was a magician with numbers. He scaffolded me. We worked well together. The company went into bankruptcy. I was moved to the ‘Other Big Fishing Company’ as part of the bankruptcy agreement. My new supervisor was also solid and forgiving. I had learned my lessons well. I had lots of time and energy to spare for choral work at the church.

‘Marilyn’ is an alto. For eight years my choir work took up at least 20 hours weekly. For most of those years we video-recorded a church service every Sunday night for TV broadcast and produced at least one or two musicals a year. My body filled with words and music and spirit of that Pentecostal denominational experience until it overflowed. I was an alto. Often I was the only alto. I had trained to be an alto when we sang ‘Esso’ on the highway. I am a natural soprano, but I have an alto identity carved out of spaces in which I find myself, which is so typical of the ‘Marilyn’ experience.

#### **‘Marlene’: revisiting contradictions and discontinuities**

‘Marlene’ came back to haunt me as I returned to the university, which could only acknowledge me by my legal, German name. It was a strange revisiting. German syntax reformatted my essays. German grammar rearranged my sentences. German patterns of thinking mushroomed paragraphs that clouded the horizon of my advisor. She and I spent years together exploring and exorcizing the German patterns of contextual details in my thesis. The thesis highlighted the planning behaviour of First Nations mothers and unleashed the crouching techno-rationalist in me. Finally, it was fully exposed in a thesis so technically constructed, so rigorously technical, so technically complex that no one could picture themselves really living there.

‘Marlene’ was ready for the sanctification of work in the First Nations community. The progression of that sanctification seems to test whether what you have become while away obtaining an education can fit back into your social space. Is all that academic work practical in the territory in cultural time and space?

First, I participated with my partner, Umeek, in a three-year research project sponsored by a First Nations organization of long standing. My role was to sensitize community co-investigators about science. My means for accomplishing this was through the development of critiques of research about First Nations issues by non-First Nations people. The approach was limiting because my use of metaphorical devices could not illuminate the philosophical continuities desired in research. From a pragmatic perspective the process was very successful. From a philosophical perspective I have reservations. The process allowed me to field test some of the technical aspects of my thesis model and revisit some of the relationships between variables on the ground. I brought all my ‘Marilyn’ experience to bear on this project.

Second, my eldest son, his wife, my partner and I founded a company to participate in filling educational programming gaps in Aboriginal education in southern British Columbia. The role of my son was to manage the operations of a private post-secondary educational institution that could deliver training, skill development and cross-cultural educational initiatives. For years he ran a business that delivered new and innovative programming to both the First Nations and the

non-First Nations community. Young and educated First Nations people are recruited and work in the organization to become embedded in the network of First Nations organizations. The name of the company is 'Umeeek Human Resource Development' (UMEEK). I provided academic support and problem-solving skills. I provide on-the-ground tests. My husband provided the legitimization through his academic training and cultural status. He brings a cross-paradigmatic, cross-cultural, international legitimacy to the operations of the company. We saw that capacity building in the Aboriginal community is critical. We saw that building understanding in the non-First Nations community is equally critical. UMEEK provided and continues to provide a vehicle in which we can all work to such ends. Umeeek is a metaphor that moves us across the borders of culture and place.

Third, I took a job with a non-profit society in my Home First Nations community. For two years, I permitted myself to be deconstructed and examined. I demonstrated on the ground of the territory in the everyday life of work, play, grief and travel what my educational development meant in that place to the community and to me. Through this process, I facilitated the construction of a community team of health, education and social service workers that moved from a passive dependence on outside programming initiatives to locally based, planned and executed programs. In two years, I transferred the learning of the previous 10, not all the details of course, but the big organizing metaphors. Such metaphors provided legitimization and reorganized the field in a way to which my community could relate. With the men I used fish catching and hunting metaphors and with the women value-added metaphors that focused on smoking fish, cooking, basket-making, weaving, or beading to bring the good news of funding and program opportunities. It was in those two years that the 'Marlene' and the 'Marilyn' and the 'Mar(e)' converged in the mythic time of '?eh-?eh-naa-tuu-k<sup>w</sup>iss'.

#### **'Mar(e)': intimate spaces**

It is only recently that the intimate spaces of 'Mar(e)' have begun to be carved out of the bleak landscape of diverse 'times'. My siblings called me 'Mar(e)' as we were growing up and still do. 'Hogging' the back seat of the '56 Ford Farlane automobile would provoke an exasperated 'Mar(e)!' from the brother next to me. That 'Mar(e)' was the older sister in whom they expected a measure of predictability. I am rewarded by being addressed as 'Mar(e)' in Ahousaht. For two years, I commuted weekly from Nanaimo<sup>7</sup> to Ahousaht. It is an eight-hour, 500-kilometre round trip. The last leg is by water over a stretch of open ocean. The 30-passenger water taxi schedule is only disrupted for gale-force winds. In 30 years, I have not become accustomed to traveling on the open ocean at Catface Mountain.<sup>8</sup> I often wish that I had been born there so that it would be first nature to me. Community members see and know my fear and respect my persistence, and it adds to the 'Mar(e)' relations with my relatives. 'Mar(e)' has the connotation of intimacy and shared experiences.

#### **'Nana': continuity over the life span**

My mother's youngest brother started calling me 'Nana' when I was very young. He was my rival for my mother's attention. He called me 'Nana' to tease me about competing for bananas, which were scarce in that postwar era and rationed for infants, not for teenagers. Recently, I visited him in Germany. He was still competitive, appealing to the 'Nana' child in me, but experience as '?eh-?eh-naa-tuu-k<sup>w</sup>iss' has taught me how to dampen conflict instead of amplifying it. He retired this year and we are friends at a distance.

I am also 'Nana' to Tyson, Tara, Alex, Kwin, Kira and Krista. I have 600 minutes a month of free talk time on my cellular phone contract to talk to them. I was a 'young' grandmother to

Tyson. We are great friends. I fuelled his passion for creepy-crawly things. Tyson has been a mask dancer since he was two, is a ‘mid-field general’ in soccer and attends enriched academic programming. His sister Tara proudly announced in grade four that she could now manage her own program at school. She was recently reading a book with ‘instructions about morphing (shape shifting)’. We discussed how it relates to the traditional Nuuchahnulth stories about Mucous-Made (Snot-Boy) and Raven, the Trickster. She soberly suggested that shape-shifting needs to be undertaken with care. She started dancing at 18 months. Alex arrived 13 years ago when I was traveling and had so little time. We have an action based relationship but she loves her ‘Papa’ best. We connect in common activities when she helps jar fish, make jam, bake, cook, feed the birds or sew with us. We live in different time zones. Kwin, Kira and Krista arrived more recently. They gather colorful karate belts and herd day care children in the Hummingbird day care that is their home. They visit me on webcam and with Airmiles.<sup>9</sup> I enjoy being ‘Nana’ to all six, delighting in their delights, achievements and the fullness they bring to my life.

### **‘Mrs. Richard’ (Atleo): Legal and Social Anchors**

When I first moved to Ahousaht, the community held a shower in honour of the homecoming of a new heir. The elders sat in a circle around the church hall. They handed my small son around for all to touch and called me ‘Mrs. Richard’ as a sign of respect. It was a simple way for them to locate me in their own social network. The people of the village did not know me as a child. The advantage was that I could not be socially constrained by references to childish behaviour. The disadvantage was that they never knew from where I was coming.

‘Mrs. Richard’ had a lot of learning to do, a lot of watching. My husband’s father’s mother taught me how to behave as ‘Mrs. Richard’, ‘Umeek’s wife’, and as ‘?eh-?eh-naa-tuu-k<sup>w</sup>iss’. She taught me with reference to mythic frames and evaluated me in a real, social time frame. She had a meta-metaphor that permitted the cross-time analogies I needed as developmental cues. It was a game we played. I would lie on the bed beside her and she would draw social landscapes in the still of the early afternoon. Her game became my life. Her game was powerful. The game is a serious social device, an intellectual property of tremendous value. ‘Nan Margaret’ was a master player who honed her skills with cloud-scape analysis and ‘cat’s cradle’ stories. The game frames perceptions and harnesses them for cultural creation and re-production.

As ‘Mrs. Richard’ I had become a status Indian under the Indian Act<sup>10</sup> (Government of Canada 2004) when I married. I had no inkling of what that meant. In Port Alberni, I found that I lacked the social sensibilities about Indians that the average small-town Canadian had. I was shunned by high school classmates for fraternizing with Indians. When I moved on reserve I began to slowly understand the colonization of local life by federal legislation. I hit all the invisible walls constructed through the social articulation of the legislation. The walls were streaked with the anguish and pain and tears of my altered life. The process is still too painful to cognitively deconstruct at this time. In time, my socialization into the colonialization of the Indian Act, which became a more articulated part of my conceptual framework but now remains a perceptual frame.

### **‘Mom’: bi-cultural reproduction**

I am the ‘Mom’ of two sons. My elder son is the heir to the chieftainship. When he was six months old, the village elders all held him. When he was four years old, the village celebrated his birthday. Shortly thereafter this small four-year-old looked at me in a matter of fact way and said, ‘You can’t tell me what to do. I am a chief.’ When he was eight years old, he was initiated into the Wolf Society, and his father danced for him. He became strangely humble. He too had

been caught in mythic time. His current name means ‘the community depends on you’. He is a doer. He led our youth on a canoe journey to Bella Bella.<sup>11</sup> He sits in the seat of his father at the treaty table. He will be 41 soon.

My younger son was born in Bella Bella, Waglisla, in Heilsuk territory. He is my ‘village’ son. Conceived, born and shaped by ‘the village’ for the most formative years of his life. The community almost pulled him out of my hands when he was very young. He was socialized in community standards. He understood himself in the deep cultural time of the community. When we moved to campus housing in Vancouver, when he was four years old, he came running home to me excited because he had ‘discovered’ other women with ‘long faces’ like his mother. He was confused and disoriented because no one knew who he was personally. His village experience left him unprepared. I had left him unprepared. As a teenager he seined with his uncles during the summer. In the October, during dog salmon seining, after his high school graduation, he was mugged and assaulted on the Victoria waterfront. He lay in an alleyway for hours near the waterfront looking like just another drunk Indian until the ambulance was called. He was in a coma for weeks. His rehabilitation took years. His father and I were more directly involved in his second childhood although the community again vied for his attention. The pain of that time is still close to the surface. He is an electrician. He is a husband and a father. He is an overly conscious and deliberate man. My guilt of offering him up to community childrearing standards can never be discounted. He needed two childhoods! I joke with him about not having the energy for a third childhood. We move between ‘times’ in a dance that is often too ragged and forced meeting in synchronic or present time.

### **Wallowing in/losing myself in the ocean/field/perception**

My ritual name sensitizes me to figures of speech, especially metaphors, but I live in the social dynamic ocean/field from which they emerge. The use of terms of address as organizing metaphors to investigate my perceptual fields and beliefs has been illuminating, useful to reflect on the process and communicate it. Interestingly enough, Pesmen (1991) flags the fact that mixed metaphors have been suspect from ‘Aristotle through the Enlightenment to the present time, textbooks on rhetoric and style forbid it’ (213), in part because they are seen to contradict a philosophical demand for sociological coherence that ‘governs our judgments of the “truth”, “validity”, and “realism” of pictures of that world and distinguishes things we can think about from things we find objectionable and/or impossible to think’ (214). ‘Messing with metaphors’ has caused outrage over the centuries in literary circles and also awe (Pesmen 1991), possibly because the context or tropical domains (Fernandez 1991) in which metaphors have their lives are not well articulated or understood.

Trop(e)ical domains (Fernandez 1986, 1991), as intellectual territories of cultural systems other than the colonizing Eurocentric, have thus been oppressed due to a perceived lack of truth, validity, realism and believability in capturing the essence of social logic. I recall clearly how I wrestled with *A hundred years of solitude* (García Márquez 1970) at a period in my life when I had just been diagnosed as being a schizophrenic by a physician, a general practitioner, who served our remote, sea-locked reserve. Having moved from a Canadian urban landscape with my husband into the remoteness of an island off the west coast of Vancouver Island, I was suffering from culture shock (Bennett 1986), a condition yet to be articulated and more generally known in the later 1960s. There, soothing my nursing baby, quieted by anti-depressants, I wrestled with the mind-mushing metaphors crafted by García Márquez. The sheer concreteness of his images and the amazing metonymic machinations provided anchors for my perceptions in a sea of cross-cultural communicative chaos (Bennett 1992). I was saved from perceptual framelessness through a philosophy of the flesh (Lakoff and Johnson 1999) which was affirmed by the march

of characters over time (García Márquez 1970). The narrative thread of my storywork has the power to transcend communicative and cultural chaos to provide me with coherence in the face of essentializing categories of formal logic and allow me to see beyond the now to what is emerging (Chandler et al. 2000).

Employing terms of address as metaphors for dimensions of myself, as lenses to see back and forth across the bi-cultural space I inhabit, has provided some insight into the nature of my bi-social coherence. The approach has provided specific insights about how my perceptions and beliefs are framed and the continuities maintained. Having identified some of these biases provides the opportunity to systematically question them to understand their implications for my research program. I seem to lack a uniform ‘modality’ of normative notions and impulses, instead possessing several modalities. It looks as if a ‘German’, a ‘Canadian’ and an ‘Ahouasht First Nation’ modality are each identifiable. These modalities do not seem to be discrete but layered one on top of the other and penetrating each other through the activities of my life. It does seem very confusing, but the developmental progressions provided layers of development in distinct contexts to which Hall’s (1983) concepts of time add to the analysis.

My re-search requires a meta-narrative, with explanatory power to provide important ‘zipper’ functions for the cross-institutional and cross-cultural parallels that I need to be able to draw. This project required a meta-narrative powerful enough to provide a framework to stabilize a vertical and horizontal integrity that spanned over millennia. The haunting specter of the bricoleur (Levi-Strauss 1963), the craftsman, arises, whose unarticulated methodology, embedded, embodied, has been historically seen as a contrivance and unnatural, illogical and academically invalid. Bricolage, that ‘jerry rigging’ that cannot be recognized by the professions, fills my pages. My life has meaning, its own integrative integrity. Clearly, we need to understand bricolage, not from the perspective of deviousness, but from the perspective of creativity, systematically a function of developmental opportunity articulated as life career. Without essentializing categories, I risk wallowing in as frameless a perceptual experience as I dare until the anxiety is overwhelming, and then, my rising panic is meta-motivationally transformed (Apter 1989) into a new, satisfying, perceptually organizing frame and shifting to a new metaphor that calms me in the paradox of life. Affirmed afresh, I reach for my cell phone remembering to follow the utility provider’s program and ‘let my fingers do the walking’ to ‘reach out and touch somebody.’

### **Metaphorical mapping: a method for emergence**

The challenge was how to anchor such a methodology in literature and operationalize the process to work with the Umeek narrative and the Elders who would read the gathered fragments from the anthropological record and family teachings. Before Lakoff and Johnson (1999) theorized about a philosophy in the flesh, they had written about metaphorical mapping as a means to move through social spaces. Although Fernandez (1991) suggested that there are no immaculate perceptions, I have the impression of jumping from rock to rock as the tide moves in and out and actually moving through physical, natural space. I could have theorized from a phenomenological perspective how the social and physical interact in my embodied experience, a means of orienteering in which metaphorical mapping became the vehicle of vehicles (Atleo 2001).

In 1996, while Davis and Meyer provided me with a class at UBC that was a facilitating developmental context and the experiential principles for re-search and accountability, ‘?eh ?eh naa tuu k<sup>w</sup>iss’ provided the organizing meme. Her name provided a key for searching the environment; she provided a search template for similarities in difference and difference in similarity. She provided a clue to the perceptual shifts that come with positionality and new vantage

points. I have demonstrated through the device of using terms of address as metaphors how this can occur. ‘?eh ?eh naa tuu k<sup>w</sup>iss’ could see systems principles; aspects of metaphor emerge in different settings. She could map the metaphorical structures across domains/space/time/place in ways that Lakoff and Johnson (1999) began to describe in their work. She had the insight of ages in her name and consequently needed to be accountable for her ‘seeing and saying’. The reifying nature of English seems to syntactically and grammatically obscure as much as it reveals, and especially when interrogating, Aboriginal cultures must be loosened in ways that only rhetorical devices such as figures of speech can reveal. Figures of speech need to be let loose in the text to re-cover emergences. The power of metaphorical mapping is a way of ‘seeing’ in the chaos of emergence, to de-and re-construct, a way of seeing that entails, as Trudy Frank, *an Ahousaht elder*, maintains, ‘Just watching until it becomes clear to you (2000 personal communication)’ (Atleo 2001, 76).

### Notes

1. Nuu-chah-nulth are a Canadian Aboriginal tribal group occupying the length of the west coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia, Canada. Historically called ‘Nootka,’ the tribe comprises 14 First Nations, each with a distinct dialect of this Wakashan linguistic group. The group is administered by the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council. The recent population numbers approximately 9000.
2. In this paper Aboriginal and First Nations are used interchangeably. Canadian people of Aboriginal origin include First Nations (with and without status, with and without treaty), Inuit, and Métis people.
3. The cyborg (Haraway, 1991) is an acknowledgement that technology is an extension of my body (the cellular phone and the car), naturally ‘unnatural means’ by which to remain affiliated with my family members.
4. An Aboriginal community with a membership of approximately 2000 with about 800 people living in the main village of Maaqtusiis on Flores Island in Clayoquot Sound, British Columbia, Canada. Ahousaht is an amalgamated band under the Indian Act, administered by a band council with the participation of three hereditary chiefs.
5. ‘First Nations’ is used in this instance to describe the make-up of a community that is amalgamated at several levels. Ahousaht First Nation is made up of several First Nations or independent lineage groups in a confederacy originating after a legendary war and also from amalgamations prompted by the federal government of Canada for administrative convenience.
6. Esso is a brand of gas. Gas stations with this name were dotted along the highway and consequently provided continuities along the way by prompting a chorus each time one appeared.
7. Nanaimo is where the author lived when commuting to work weekly to the village of Ahousaht. The commute took three hours by car and then another hour by speedboat over open coastal waters at all times of the year and under a range of weather conditions.
8. Catface is a sacred site in Ahousaht territory, but it is also marks the site of a dangerous rocky point which had taken many ships in rough seas.
9. Airmiles are points collected through consumer purchases that can be redeemed for, in this case, airplane fares.
10. The Canadian federal government has been defining and determining Indian status and band membership of aboriginal peoples since 1850. Over time this legislation became known as The Indian Act. From 1850 on Indian status was defined as one being aboriginal by birth or blood, by being a member of a particular band or body of Indians, or one who marries an Indian or is adopted by Indians.
11. Bella Bella is a Heiltsuk village on the central coast of British Columbia, Canada, which is also called Waglisla. My younger son was born there in 1970 when my partner taught at the school.

### Notes on contributor

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