

First National Symposium for Canadian Jungian Analysts

Landscape and History in the Formation of Cultural Conscious and Unconscious Life Keynote Address by Janice Dicken

In a discussion of anima (and animus) embedded in a much longer study of Individuation, Carl Jung made his only recorded psychological assessment specific to the subject of this conference. In an explanatory aside utilizing the persona as foil, Jung stated:

When the anima continually thwarts the good intentions of the conscious mind, by contriving a private life that stands in sorry contrast to the dazzling persona, it is exactly the same as when a naïve individual, who has not the ghost of a persona, encounters the most painful difficulties in his passage through the world. There are indeed people who lack a developed persona — “Canadians who know not Europe’s sham politeness” — blundering from one social solecism to the next, perfectly harmless and innocent, soulful bores or appealing children, or if they are women, spectral Cassandras dreaded for their tactlessness, eternally misunderstood, never knowing what they are about, always taking forgiveness for granted, blind to the world, hopeless dreamers. From them we can see how a neglected persona works, and what one must do to remedy the evil. (CW 7:318)

It was in 1916 that Jung made his first pass at the “Two Essays on Analytical Psychology” from which this passage is taken. From 1 July until 18 November of that year, Canadians encountered the most painful difficulties in their own passage across 6 miles of French farmland in the Battle of the Somme. On the very first day, no “Canadians” were part of the British attack force but not-as-yet Canadians (whom I choose to treat for the purposes of this talk as full participants in the landscape and history of Canada), the 1st Newfoundland

Regiment, suffered 324 dead and 386 wounded within thirty minutes, leaving only 91 perfectly harmless and innocent, soulful bores to blunder on to their next social solecism.

I think it is important to note that Jung's phrase, "Canadians who know not Europe's sham politeness," is in quotation marks in his text. I assume therefore that it is taken from another source, in my strong suspicion translated from a non-English source, since the phrase as it stands does not come up on Google associated with anyone other than Jung. I suspect it comes from a literary piece too obscure now to as yet be digitized but of some currency in its days: its reversed phrasing is poetical; Jung seems to expect the reader to recognize the context; its generality does not point to precise familiarity on the part of the author but rather to sweeping judgment. My immediate emotional response upon encountering Jung's passage about a decade ago was a familiar one of delight at finding oneself under-estimated, a treasured vantage point that never fails to offer advantage. Over the years, however, it has - as a good literary portrait should do - led me down the path of thoughtfulness. In preparing myself for this presentation, I found that it provided me with a container that allowed me to bring together my three fields of training - history, law and (curtailed) analytical psychology - in contemplation of whether there is indeed a conscious and unconscious typical of Canadians and, if so, what elements in our experience might have been the prime movers.

I strongly doubt that either the quote or Jung's commentary refers solely to *Canadiens*, despite the fact that "solecism" can refer to nonstandard or ungrammatical usage and that continental snobbery in regard to the French language as it has evolved in the New World is *de rigueur*. I think rather that Jung uses "solecism" here in the sense of impropriety. If we take, then, the designation "Canadians" as inclusive of that heterogeneous collection of peoples contained within our current borders, we can ask what Jung's experience actually was of the persona-lessness of "Canadians." I have no knowledge of any in his circle and wonder how many British subjects, as we were at the time, would have stayed on after 4 August 1914, when Britain declared war on Germany not only for itself but on behalf of its Empire. Still, he might have been referring to Cassandras and appealing children personally encountered in his own past.

I did consider whether Jung just might have taken on the worldview of one of his American intimates, still in Europe at this point, not at war until April 1917. Despite the fact that they still tend to find our manner a bit backwoods and seem to mistake our society for a rather whimsically incorrect version of their own, Americans remain impressed by the Canadian tendency to apologize in the face of social awkwardness and are therefore unlikely to characterize us as unable to navigate politeness. My strong impression though is that Americans

project onto the apology manoeuvre (which I recently noted, while thinking of the task of writing these remarks, to be as prevalent on the streets of London, England as on the streets of London, Ontario) a servile tendency to forelock-tugging rather than a social strategy (a “sham politeness,” if you will) devised – like its cousin the rule of law – to maintain order. It’s not that I don’t think Americans might not portray us as rubes, it’s just that I don’t think they would be happy with a portrayal of Canadians as caring less for convention than they, nor as sophisticated kin of Cassandra whose sin after all was not that she was wrong but that she was driven to madness by having her insight underestimated.

Whether either Jung or the person he is quoting had the slightest inkling as to what did or did not make up a “Canadian,” I find myself intrigued by the fact that he believed we have no persona. What might that mean? How did we come to appear that way? What forms the character that makes us uniquely Canadian? If the forces at play did manage to make us as a culture appear to others as persona deficient, what might those forces be? I don’t have answers but I do have thoughts.

Certainly the old men who sent those poor sods out onto the killing fields of the Somme took little interest in Canadianness. They were British soldiers, and with one great advantage! Their mutilation and death cost the decision-makers

little among the electorate they answered to. As a result, colonials were the go-to guys for the worst fighting. Not only the battle of the Somme but those of Vimy, Ypres, Passchendaele have long been credited by historians with creating a national identity for Canada, an identity unique from our subordinate role as a sort of vice-regent acting at large for Mom throughout her sphere of influence. Canadians are not born Canadians until 1947; we do not adopt our own flag until 1965; we still recognize the Queen of England as our head of state. In return, Britain long treated Canada as favorite son. I just returned from a month in England, staying at small heritage properties preserved by The Landmark Trust. At a place called The Grammar School in Kirby Hill, North Yorkshire, exam questions for senior students early in the last century were available for perusal by those residents nerdy enough to take an interest. The senior social studies curriculum heavily favored quite detailed knowledge of Canada, in particular of our transportation systems and resource industries. We were part of their grid.

If we accept the assessment of Jung that we indeed had no persona as of 1916 and the assessment of historians that Canadian national identity actually did take root during the First World War, we can argue that we blundered a very long way in a very short time towards laying the basis for consciousness of a national character, surely a building block necessary to persona when negotiating on the international stage. The Canadian abroad now had an

anchor he or she might not have had before. But in order for nationhood, a political entity, to constellate among those who saw their comrades die, as well as among those to whom those comrades did not return, there had to be an array of heavenly bodies already swimming about in the unconscious, there had to be a critical mass pre-existing cultural consciousness. To find that we must look to what existed before, sometimes long before. For that we must look to our history, in particular to how the various peoples who came to control the second largest geographical unit in the world have interacted with the land itself.

Just as Jung used persona to make a point about anima, I will make some mention of the histories of the other countries with which we share the in order to help explain what makes Canada and Canadians unique. I have neither time nor taste here for narrative, a word that first entered the English language as a legal term, designating the logical sequencing of events necessary to final resolution of situations in which all other forms of human redress have failed. Much early Canadian history purports to be “the facts” but narration has been unmasked by more recent scholars as starkly ideological. Take, for example, A.R.M. Lower’s characterization of French (Lower) Canada and English (Upper) Canada as separate museum cultures at the end of the War of 1812, left behind as the United States marches on, united, to glorious confirmation of its manifest destiny. Lower’s theory of Two Nations, doomed to inferiority by

failure to break the bondage of Britain and to separation from one another by “race,” was proposed in the mid-1940s and picked up by Hugh MacLennan for his dreary novel *Two Solitudes*. It is of note that race relations were of less urgency at that time in North America than they should have been. White Protestant males still pretty much called the shots. Cloaking social and economic inequities in “race” – and then treating it as an unsolvable problem – appeared to be a comparatively safe cop-out.

Post-World War II issues of class were less settled. During the Depression, the rightwing Conservative government of RB Bennett had imported Rooseveltian reforms to *forefend* class restructuring, not to further it. With the end of the war, and in the hope that Depression conditions would not return, anti-Communism sprang back on both sides of the border, fertilized by the individual ambitions of the Soviet Union after the German defeat. Citizens seeking economic redress and social equality could be dismissed as traitors, particularly so in the United States where the concept of something called an un-American Activity entered public consciousness. Anti-Communism would fill the need for a release valve until the mid-1960s when Black-instigated riots started to consume American slums and the purposively named *Front de liberation du Quebec* embarked on its campaign of terror. Even then, while Black and FLQ movements may have anchored themselves in “race,” what they really sought was equal opportunity to make their own way in their own

country. They wanted to be active participants in the formation of cultural consciousness. These outsiders were not satisfied with being part of some narrative; they wanted to be part of the story; they wanted into history.

The terms story and history both come from the Latin root, *historia*, but were adopted into the English language at different times, “story” long predating the more formal “history.” It is logical that cultural tales should predate chronological ordering thereof. History may be necessary to the ordering of cultures but story is necessary to the ordering of lives. We use stories to make sense of our world and to share our understanding with others. They are located in our experience and that experience is heavily influenced by our surroundings. The reality is that, sharing a continent though they do, Americans and Canadians inhabit different physical and social landscapes. The two nations create different stories; those stories engender different histories; those histories dictate differences in conscious and unconscious life. The same can be said for residents of the Americas further to the south.

Some physical landscapes you can conquer and some you just plain can't! It is telling that at the end of the Seven Years War in 1763, France conceded possession of all its North American territory (with the exception of two small islands to keep an eye on the mouth of the St. Lawrence River) in exchange for getting back the Caribbean island of Guadeloupe, to this day a part of France.

New France was dismissed as though it actually were only – as Voltaire sneered – “*quelques arpents de neige.*” New France had been part of France since at least 1608 (though land was first claimed for France in 1534); by 1740, its population boasted 44,000 colonists, mostly born in the New World; it was Catholic, French and economically viable. Guadeloupe was tiny, hard to defend (the British had taken it more than once before and would again take it back then give it back again in the early 19th century), but it could be made to yield. “Discovered” in 1493 (which visit reputedly gave Europe the pineapple), Guadeloupe was one huge plantation by the time of the Treaty of Paris, producing six times the amount of sugar of all the British Caribbean islands put together. The land had been denuded of native vegetation and wildlife and planted to cane, its Carib population virtually wiped out and replaced by African slaves, incapable of escape and with nowhere to go home to even if they could. In Canada, there was no negotiating with natives who could slip off to watch you from the woods if they didn’t like the deal on the table and there was trouble negotiating a land that was big, cold and filled with scary animals.

The eastern edge of the geographical area that now comprises Canada was long known to the canny Portuguese as excellent fishing territory and had already been tested and found wanting as settlement space by the Vikings by the time the Age of Discovery revealed it as just some place in the way of where people really wanted to go. The French took foothold but were no

exception in this: the city of Lachine is named for its rapids, beyond which obstacle *La Chine*, China, would surely materialize out of the mist. In fact, the nearest Canadian access to the Pacific Ocean, at what is now the city named for the explorer-from-the-other-direction, George Vancouver, is some three and a half thousand km. to the west as the airplane flies, and more or less 5000 km. as the car drives, depending on whether you take the quicker route through the U.S. or the more patriotic route over the Great Lakes. What lay beyond the standing waves Jacques Cartier “discovered” in 1535 was not a navigable river to a navigable sea but a river into the heart of a massive territory, sparsely populated by immigrants from Asia who had some 16,000 years or more before followed large prey across the land bridge that from time to time (millennially speaking) rises out of the shallow waters of the Bering Sea.

By the time of European arrival, these peoples had spread over two continents and adjacent islands, establishing economies and societies that worked and changed according to climate, to population pressure, to exhaustion of resources and to spiritual forces we can only surmise. It is no surprise that the name we have now settled on for this indigenous population within our own borders is plural, First Nations. We know there was a system of contact, notably along extensive trade routes, and of course in conflicts over territory and possessions, but it is telling that, even just considering the land north of Mexico, there were 296 languages, grouped into 29 families, with 27 individuals

still left over as isolates or as unclassified. The four European nations that would colonize the bulk of the Americas arrived, in short, not only into different areas but among different peoples, peoples who already had extensive experience with living off their particular piece of the land.

The Spanish, to both their good and bad fortune, happened upon two rich, plunderable empires. Although huge swathes of indigenous population were killed by disease and disruption, there were still sufficient numbers on the mainland to force into labor, stripping gold and silver from both above and below ground. Long used to paying tribute, these people to some extent, simply changed masters. Most of this wealth would go directly (through privateering) or indirectly (through trade for manufactured goods) to England. Spain would waste years seeking another windfall, its travels taking it far into the Pacific where it found in trade with China – a silverless country whose economy anomalously depended on silver coinage - a ready source of luxury goods. The Philippines, a Spanish colony by 1570, was really just a marketplace in the same manner that New Spain was really just a mine. As colonists took hold from Europe, Spanish America would experience an increase in small agriculture and small manufacture necessary to sustain an isolated colony and notably saw the introduction of cattle (and the horses needed to herd them) to a landscape previously devoid of large mammals. Vines were transplanted from Europe, effectively quarantining a species that

would be reintroduced back into Europe after the parental stocks were wiped out by the wine blight of the 1850s, ironically caused by a New World aphid that had hitched a ride on some ship.

Portugal's experience was quite different. It had opted to access the riches of the "orient" by sailing south in order to go east. It was the ignorance of Pope Alexander VI (and, in his defence, everyone else on Planet Earth) that would provide the smaller Iberian kingdom with its foothold in the New World. The Treaty of Tordesillas (1494), meant forever to divide the spheres of Spain and Portugal by drawing a line down the middle of the Atlantic, instead severed the nose of Brazil. There was no ready wealth (with the relatively labor intensive exception of dyewood) waiting for Portugal to carry off, however, and it would require the investment of colonists, time and capital to make the land pay. Slave-dependent sugar was first, along with cattle (mostly for jerked beef, slave food) and later some hardwon gold. Eventually the land-gobbling inherent to cotton and coffee and rubber helped push the slavery-resistant native populations even farther into the woods, setting in place a division of populations we can still see the remnants of today. Inevitably, enslaved Africans increased in numbers, setting up a racial issue largely unknown in adjacent continental Spanish colonies (though not of course in the monoculture-friendly Caribbean).

England had ambitions for the New World other than just stealing Spanish gold. As the dominant force on two unimportant little islands with relatively large populations, the English found themselves, with the discovery of the New World, moved from the back door to the front door of Europe. Almost overnight, sea-going became chic, boat-handling skills became more than just a way of supplying an ocean-locked people with sufficient protein, and a way other than civil war was opened to ease population pressure and political dissatisfaction. In remarkably short order, the potato (acknowledged by Friedrich Engels as underpinning the Industrial Revolution) would increase that population even further. Shorn of its continental possessions by The Hundred Years War, England could not look to expansion into mainland Europe (though its monarchs maintained their claims to the French throne into the 19th century). At the onset of the Age of Discovery, the British Isles had both people to spare and people who wanted to go. The Puritans and Pilgrims (1620-1660) set up in what came to be known as the Thirteen Colonies in part to gain religious freedom. They were from the outset looking to stay and would constitute both the economic and spiritual origin of the American icon of independent agriculturist.

Other settlements within what is now the United States were overtly set up by English investors to engender ready wealth but Jamestown in Virginia (1607-1699) served as a clear example that the Nations and lands of the

northern territories were unlike those Spain had lucked its way into in the south. There might be some trade but there was neither much to pillage nor a large enslavable population. Over time, the English colonies further south proved accessible to monoculture (in the beginning, tobacco and rice, later cotton) and started to import enslaved Africans. The cooler colonies instead took up a corner in the Atlantic trade triangle which linked London and the Caribbean. All thirteen colonies to some extent lived off the new land and, of course, the sea, but they were still expected to send value “home.” Spanish American Natives had to come up with tribute; British descendants who became native to America instead created wealth for Mother by consuming her manufactured products and by paying heavy taxes to boot, even on items such as tea which they were perfectly capable of going and getting themselves. In addition, the English in America chafed at England’s failure to support their desire to expand west and north into French territory, their unhappiness brought to a head by England’s decision to hold the border firm even after it won New France in the Treaty of Paris in 1763. That same treaty confirmed France’s transfer to Spain of land that the young United States of America would purchase 27 years after its successful overthrow of British rule: 828,000 sq mi for the 2014 USD equivalent of 42 cents an acre.

Once on a tour of some public building in St. Louis, Missouri, I was moved to ask the guide why all the rivers stopped at the border. High on the wall was a

map locating the city on that mighty waterway through the heart of the continent, the Mississippi River. As portrayed in a lovely mosaic in that lovely building, its sources sprang up miraculously along a line that separated the somewhat topographically detailed United States from a trackless waste designated "CANADA." When I look back now at what might be dismissed as channeling – before its time – Rick Mercer's "Talking to Americans," I am a little abashed at my arrogance. What bothered me was what I saw as discontinuity in the historical record. How does one understand the history of that city without tracing the route of the French across that johnny-come-lately political border, diligently at first in search of a route to China and later equally as diligently in search of trade? Only as I have been writing this have I had a flash of understanding: that's our story. Their story is of westward expansion, manifest destiny and a young country scraping together enough money to purchase the massive watershed running down into Louisiana so its farmers could guarantee an inheritance for all their sons, a story of slave states and civil war and Indian Wars, a compromised but nonetheless heroic march to the western sea. Our St. Louis is not their St. Louis, no matter its establishment by New World French in the late 17th century, on the site of earthworks of the Mississippi culture. Our St. Louis was given away by a Mother who had more important interests elsewhere.

Which brings us to the experience of the fourth nation important to the Europeanization of the Americas. Jacques Cartier laid claim to land for the King of France in 1534 but significant occupation took years. Samuel de Champlain established Montreal in 1608 and the Acadians established themselves in what is now the Maritimes about the same time, spilling over down the Mississippi all the way to the Delta. In the Great Expulsion of 1755-64, Britain would expel the Maritime French who fell into its control under the Treaty of Utrecht (1713), transporting them by sea to New Orleans to join the Cajun population already in residence. One lesson we can draw from the experiences of these two different French colonies in the New World is that, when they could farm, they farmed; when they could fish, they fished; when they couldn't, they did something else. Spain got gold, Portugal got Brazilwood and a difficult future, England got arable land. What France got was cold empty space, a miraculous system of rivers and lakes and trade-minded neighbors willing to help respond to Old World clamor for furs.

Supported spiritually by a state-supported religion, *Canadiens* threw themselves into exploration and commerce, travelling far into the interior. There, not only did they come into contact with the various Nations that peopled the land, their offer of trade brought those Nations into peaceful contact with one another. The indigenous population under the Spanish was wiped out or exploited. The indigenous population under the Portuguese was

wiped out or driven inland. The indigenous population in the English colonies that would become the United States would be hounded into smaller and smaller pockets by white annexation of arable land. The First Nations of what would become Canada knew where the animals were, knew how to hunt them, knew how to process them, knew how to navigate the waters necessary to bringing furs to market, knew when to travel and when to stay indoors, knew how to dress so you wouldn't freeze to death, knew what to eat, where to sleep, whom and what to trust. At the same time, they could see that the manufactured goods stood to make their lives for the most part easier and richer. These were a people who ate better and were healthier than the Europeans who sought them out; these were a people with whom the *coureurs de bois* shared their lives when not home in their base of small settlements on the limited farmland along the Saint Lawrence River. Some *Canadiens* did not go home; many more left children who would become the basis for another Nation, the Metis.

So long as the fur trade lasted, the First Nations had real power and there were certainly power struggles amongst them. Just ask a Blackfoot what the sign language is for "Cree." The latter, very successful under the trade, are seen as interlopers in the west, their residence coming with white settlement, increasingly common as English traders moved in from the "unclaimed" territory at the north of the continent. *Coureurs de bois* did not have to cross

the ocean to return home at the end of a career: they had families waiting for them at the end of the river system. For English (and more often, Scottish) traders, going home meant not only leaving country wives and children behind but fetching up again in a land where drive and prosperity did not guarantee a comfortable place in a now foreign class system. Many did go home (the Manitoba and Orkney descendants of Scottish traders keep up a system of contact) but others stayed. Peter Fidler, map-maker extraordinaire, was born in Derbyshire in 1769, working in York Factory by 1788, exploring modern-day Saskatchewan within a year and later established in what is now Alberta. He and his Cree wife, Mary Mackagonne, had 14 children. He never went “home,” dying in Dauphin, Manitoba in 1822.

Competition in the fur trade existed not only on the Native side but on the European side and inevitably this led directly from greater profits for the suppliers to over-exploitation of the supply. By the mid-1850s that problem was ironically solved by the collapse of the European fashion for fur. Native communities were plunged into poverty and despair. Like all populations that have gone through a significant economic change, they could not simply go back and had difficulty seeing a way forward. Their search for a new vision for their lives both aided and destroyed by alcohol, they had overnight changed from a necessary partner to a problem to be solved. There was no place for them – as themselves - in a new economic model adopted by a new political

entity, the Dominion of Canada. Seeking a way to maintain political hold over land to which the old European settlements were no longer economically tied but to which they still felt connected and entitled, A.R.M. Lower's two "museum cultures" (which had achieved some sort of autonomy with the grant of Responsible Government after the Rebellions of 1837) sought something to be called Confederation with the now-English Maritime colonies, sought possession of the interior lands belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company and made a deal with the united Colonies of Vancouver and British Columbia to sling a railway from coast to coast. Finally a route to China, after more than 300 years!

The union proposed would engulf the *Canadiens*. Cut off politically from their mother culture since 1763, they had been allowed to keep their own language and religion under the Quebec Act of 1774. A kindness when compared with the deportation of the Acadians, it carried with it the expectation that *Canadiens* would die out, assimilate. Not so and the new union attempted to keep the spirit of the Quebec Act alive. "Americans" had long wanted to move into the farmland of what is now southern Ontario and another clause of the Act of 1774, effectively sequestering those and lands farther west from the Thirteen Colonies, was a direct cause of the Revolution of 1776. United Empire Loyalists moving north were inspired at least partially by economics. Certain forces in the Maritimes would flirt with joining the revolt but decided to stay on

to eventually join the new union, Newfoundland felt sufficiently safe to remain a separate entity within the British Empire for more than another hundred years, tiny Prince Edward Island was reluctant but won over by concessions to its own fears of being engulfed, the separately-established Pacific colonies were motivated at least partially by British failure to consider their interests in the Oregon Treaty of 1846 and by the Alaska Purchase of 1867.

English colonial fears that Britain would not do much about American encroachments were a huge motivation in the creation of Canada. The War of 1812 can be seen as British desire to fight for lands that would later become Canadian but it can also just be seen as a home team struggle related to the general Napoleonic Wars. At any rate, it left the border of the Maritimes in play, a problem that Britain would solve with little regret by ceding claims to parts of Maine in 1842. American manifest destiny also played out in Fenian Raids in the east and in the west in a serious attempt to purchase the lands of the Hudson's Bay Company. British colonists in North America needed to move to protect themselves, Britain more than encouraged the move, and the outbreak of the American Civil War provided the perfect chance to get it together. That war played out in the background of negotiations. It was easy to see the problems lurking in "too loose" a union and Canadian confederation documents look like the American constitution set on its head when it comes to division of federal and provincial powers.

The new country immediately looked to creating its own empire, to creating its own consumers. The West was to be Colonized, preferably by Ontarians and the Quebecois (a faint hope: most of western Canada's considerable French-speaking population trace their heritage to the fur trade, emigrating Quebecois instead went south, along the waterways their forebears had followed) and British immigrants. Next in line were "clean" ethnics - western Europeans - but soon concessions were made to attract good farming people from Eastern and even Southern Europe. The odd colony of Hungarians, Italians, continental French, Muslims, and English gentlemen were established and generally quickly ran into trouble. Americans (some of them descendants of Ontarians who had gone South because West was barred until construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway across the Canadian Shield) followed the call of arable land. Others came fleeing persecution: Russian Mennonites to Saskatchewan and Manitoba, American Blacks and Mormons to Alberta. Meanwhile, others faced new persecutions. The Metis rose in rebellion in 1869 and again in 1885 and the various treaties that would bleed into the Indian Act of 1876 sought to sequester former trade partners until they could be "enfranchised," a code word for being stripped of reserve status and amalgamated into dominant White culture. Residential schools were set up by various denominations to guarantee Native children necessary language skills and to prepare them for the job categories most needed by the immigrants

now squatting on their land: maids for the house and laborers for the land. The good Christians involved were at the very least guilty of failure to question either the value of their motivations or the consequences of their actions.

At this point, I am going to stop my headlong dash through several centuries of history. There is so much more I could say but I have understood my task to be that of providing you with some sort of playing field on which to continue the main discussions of the conference. I do however need to return to Jung and to adapt him to the country of my birth. In the continuation of the quote I started with, he provides a remedy for persona-less-ness.

Such people can avoid disappointments and an infinity of sufferings, scenes, and social catastrophes only by learning to see how men behave in the world. They must learn to understand what society expects of them; they must realize that there are factors and persons in the world far above them, they must know that what they do has a meaning for others, and so forth. Naturally this is child's play for one who has a properly developed persona.

I take his meaning but, as a Canadian, as someone whose country was built not only by immigrating Europeans but by the earlier immigrants, the story of "how men behave in the world" has an active participant in the form of the land itself. We are not an urban people. Neither are we a rural people, in the European sense. We are instead a wilderness people. I decided that if I had time I would read from a doctoral dissertation recently defended by a blond Metis from Ontario with the good French name of Patenaude, an outstanding scholar with a M.A. in Blake Studies from York University in England (where he

spent 6 years) and who currently runs a wilderness camp in the mountains of Alberta. It is Troy's argument that Canadian consciousness has been fundamentally formed by Native consciousness for the simple reason that we have had to be in conversation with the land in order to make a place for ourselves here. In the excerpt in question, he talks of how his happening on and returning to a new place changes not only him but the land itself..

One of my favorite places to go in the world is a high subalpine meadow right on the Continental Divide up the river from my house in the heart of the Rocky Mountains. As I write this, I can smell its sweet-scented subalpine fir after the rain, hear the thundering echo of the rockfall on the cliff band above me building through the air, and I am warmed by the profusion of colour before me in the meadows of wildflowers swaying in the breeze, as I bend down to taste the leaves of my favourite-tasting lily. I have no way of knowing for sure but I think I have been to this place more than anyone else in the world – walking in it, watching in it, resting in it, listening in it, gathering in it, living in it now for over twenty years... I go to these meadows often – guiding people as part of my job, of course, or alone, whichever – and frequently know when new animals have passed through, new humans have passed through, if the berries are late or early, and when the spruce buds are best for tea. But over these years something else has been going on. Something that only started to come into my awareness *because of* all this time I have been spending and returning here: this place started *to introduce itself to me on its own terms*.

It all started one day when I climbed down through a boulder field a slightly different way that I usually go. Just as I came out through the trees above it and peered down into the boulders to scout out my through-route, one of the large boulders - a good two metres high – at the base of the talus scree slope across the field, jumped out at me differently than it had ever done before. I have been passing it from the other direction now for well over a decade, but it somehow stood out more from the other boulders near it on this day. It wasn't even close to being the largest boulder; nor the smallest, but the only way I know how to say it is that it *was powerful*. It had *an energy* that I was just drawn to the particular day (probably because I was only now *ready* to notice it in my life for whatever reason). I kept on working my way down the mountain, but for many trips back since, I made a point of glancing over toward it each

time I passed. One day, I turned my head toward it and it was gone! Or more accurately, it was no longer just a boulder, but it had changed into a huge toad! It was still very much like a boulder, but it was definitely a stone toad as well, and everyone I have pointed this out to since also sees it. It is so obvious now, though, that I can't believe I didn't see it before.

Time passed, I got to know this toad and its home a little better, and I would point it out to people every now and then as we passed by. Mostly, people laugh, like it's a funny coincidence in the middle of this boulder field. Many take pictures, though, and are genuinely amazed for a while by the presence of this stone toad. One day amidst all this unfolding between myself and the place I noticed that above this boulder, despite the cool, lush meadows and subalpine lakes, there were next to no toads. Below it, however, I noticed the creeks and forests are full of them. Above it, when it rains higher up in the meadows, the thunder is also louder than it is anywhere else in the area (and I know this because I also frequently visit many other places nearby as well). The lightning is also particularly close and strong right here. Some of the most awesome lightning storms I have ever experienced were right in these very meadows. It literally brings down the mountains. Some of the visitors I've guided here have even decided to turn back early because they were so scared of the unique lightning in these skies, and the way in which it can completely rend everything in its presence. Then I noticed one day that the stone toad had a large crack down its back, just like the lightning white stripes down the backs of the Boreal Toads in the valley below it. Then I started to recognize everything around me in a much more holistic way than I'd ever experienced before – like a veil was being lifted from my eyes and mind.

I was glimpsing, or rather, *deepening into*, more and more, the larger story unfolding all around me. It is a story of this place itself: where I can now easily imagine a young overconfident toad, long ago, wandering away one day to where his parents told him not to go (up towards the meadows). He got away with it for a while, but eventually he was struck by lightning and turned to stone. He now stands like a guardian for the toads, warning them not to go past up into the meadows, which is where the lightning and thunder come to play in this part of the world. In their playing, they are not always paying attention to what's around them. And that's how the Boreal Toad got the lightning stripe down its back! And this is just the beginning. The storied earth here continues to unfold with me even today.

What impresses me most now is just how much I am aware that none of this is just "my imagination" – as in, not my individual knowing mind *working alone* somehow *outside* this landscape in a transcendent consciousness and imposing something on to the land. It has nothing to do with a special kind of

“knowing,” for I don’t control where the toads go here, I don’t control where the lightning strikes hard and often. This story, rather, unfolded around me as I really got to know this place, and *paid attention to it*. I was nothing more than listening and ready to hear – free for a while of all the jumbled thoughts and intellectual distractions going on in my head – this place literally *taught* me. And now I am aware *that it also stories me*. I didn’t learn what I learned (and am still learning), through a tiny compartmentalized picture. It’s always huge in its complex fullness.

The short story I just recounted of how the Boreal Toad got its stripe is in every way something that I and this place *imagined together*. It couldn’t have been otherwise. And now all who come here with me learn how to respect this place for who, in part, it really is; for a story it tells, which is still dynamic, alive, animating, and unfolding. It also gestures me towards an even larger story, one where I am now also aware that *no language, culture, or stories ever really die*. They may be forgotten, but if we learn to pay attention again, their building blocks are all right there in front of us, waiting to have life breathed back into them. In the meantime, these people I guide to this place, get at least to remember the place in a more personal and meaningful way, which can be incorporated into remembering *their own places* again, wherever they call home.

In reading this, I recalled what the English poet, Rupert Brooke, said about Canada, that there were no ghosts in the forests. Always a little offended by this dismissal, I nonetheless have always acknowledged its perspicacity. After reading Troy Patenaude’s thesis, I now realize that it is my work involves peopling my own forests with my own ghosts. Simply put, I have to pay attention to the world I am in and help create a story that allows me to survive there. Which is sort of what Jung is saying. But for me Coyote says it better. Patenaude refers to Coyote more than once in his work and I was compelled by his argument that observation of our world as some sort of performative art

practice takes us places European thought processes alone cannot. I now really and truly end this by giving you The Coyote's Eyes.

Long time ago, when mountains were the size of salmon eggs, Coyote was going along, and saw that Rabbit was doing something. Now, this Rabbit was a Twati, an Indian doctor, and as Coyote watches, Rabbit sang his spirit song, and the Rabbit's eyes flew out of his head and perched on a tree branch. Rabbit called out, "Whee-num, come here," and his eyes returned to their empty sockets.

This greatly impressed Coyote, who immediately begged Rabbit to teach him how to do this.

Rabbit said no

Coyote begged.

Rabbit said no.

"Oh, please," cried Coyote.

"No," replied Rabbit.

"But it's such a wonderful trick! Teach me."

"No."

"But I'll do exactly as you say!"

"I will teach you," said Rabbit, "but you must never do this more than four times in one day, or something terrible will happen to you." And so Rabbit taught Coyote his spirit song, and soon Coyote's eyes flew up and perched on a tree.

"Whee-num! Come here!" called Coyote, and his eyes returned to him.

Now Rabbit left, and coyote kept practicing. He sent his eyes back and forth to the tree four times. Then he thought, "I should show off this new trick to the Human People, instead of just doing it for myself."

So Coyote went to the nearest Indian village, and yelled out for all the people to gather around him. With his new audience, Coyote sang the Rabbit's song, and the crowd was very impressed to see his eyes fly out of his head and perch on the branch of a tree.

"Whee-num!" Coyote called out. His eyes just sat on the tree and looked down at him. The Indian people started to laugh.

"Come here!" shouted Coyote. His eyes just looked at him.

"Whee-num!" Just then a crow flew by, and spotting the eyes, thought they were berries. The crow swooped down and ate them.

Now Coyote was blind, and staggered out of the village, hoping to find new eyes. He heard the sounds of running water, and felt around, trying to find the stream. Now, around flowing water, one finds bubbles, and Coyote tried to take those bubbles and use them for eyes. But bubbles soon pop, and that's what Coyote discovered.

Now Coyote felt around and discovered huckleberries, so he took those and used them for eyes. But huckleberries are so dark, everything looked black. Now Coyote was really feeling sorry for himself.

"Eenee snawai, I'm just pitiful," Coyote cried.

"Why are you so sad?" asked a small voice, for little mouse had heard him.

"My dear Cousin," said Coyote, "I've lost my eyes ... I'm blind, and I don't know what to do."

"Snawai Yunwai," replied Mouse. You poor thing. I have two eyes, so I will share one with you." Having said this, Mouse removed one of his eyes and handed it to Coyote. Now Coyotes are much larger than mice, and when Coyote dropped Mouse's eye into his socket, it just rolled around in the big empty space. The new eye was so small it only let in a tiny amount of light. It was like looking at the world through a little hole.

Coyote walked on, still feeling sorry for himself, just barely able to get around with Mouse's eye. "Eenee snawai, I'm just pitiful," he sobbed.

"Why are you crying, Coyote?" asked Buffalo in his deep voice.

“Oh Cousin,” began Coyote,” all I have to see with is this tiny eye of Mouse. It’s so small it only lets in a little bit of light, so I can barely see.”

“Snawai Yunwai,” replied Buffalo. “You poor thing, I have two eyes, so I will share one with you.” Then buffalo took out one of his eyes and handed it to Coyote. Now Buffaloes are much larger than Coyotes, and when Coyote tried to squeeze Buffalo’s eye into his other socket it hung over into the rest of his face. So large was Buffalo’s eye that it let in so much light, Coyote was nearly blinded by the glare ... everything looked twice as large as it ordinarily did. And so, Coyote was forced to continue his journey, staggering about with this mismatched eyes. (Tafoya 1982, 21-22)

Sources:

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