The French–Algonquin Dictionary Fragment in ASSM Manuscrit 14 (Anonyme VI): Some Further Comments

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INTRODUCTION

At the 1994 Algonquian Conference in Winnipeg, I presented some of my research on a French–Algonquin manuscript that is in the Sulpician Archives in Montréal. At the time, I had copied only the first 60 pages of the 100 pages of this manuscript, ASSM Manuscrit 14 (Anonyme VI). During the summer of 1995, I returned to Montréal and finished copying the manuscript in question. Because of this, the present paper is based on Manuscrit 14 in its entirety. I would like to stress that although I have been working on the manuscript for some time, much remains to be done; in this light, my comments herein are based on what is still a partial and incomplete analysis of the data. There may, of course, be some overlap in this paper with my earlier paper, but I trust that it will be minimal. One final comment: I have sometimes taken some very minor liberties with the French glosses in the examples cited, dividing into separate words items that are sometimes written as one word in the manuscript and adjusting the place of the acute accent in two-vowel sequences.¹

DATING THE MANUSCRIPT

As I showed in my earlier paper, the manuscript in question is in the so-called “r-dialect” of Algonquin. Presumably by the early 18th century, this r, from Proto-Algonquian *θ and *l, changed to l; this l has now

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become \( n \) in the modern dialects. Since the title page of the dictionary is missing, there is no indication of its author or date, but it was probably compiled before the end of the 17th century. It has been suggested to me (David Pentland, personal communication) that one can perhaps use one of the sentences in the manuscript in order to arrive at a more precise date:

\[
(1) \quad \text{tanin epitchak michilimakina achönda öntchi,} \\
\text{combien y at’il [sic] dicy a mischilimakina (17)}
\]

In 1670, Michilimackinac was established by the French on Mackinac Island. In 1671, it was moved to the north side of the straits, and the island was abandoned. By the 1690s, French government officials had withdrawn, leaving behind French missionaries and fur trappers. In 1715, the official French presence was re-established, this time on the south side of the straits. Philip Porter, a Mackinac State Historic Parks historian, reports (personal communication) that the name Michilimackinac apparently referred not only to the original French island settlement, but also to both of the subsequent French settlements, as well as to the entire general area. Given the uncertainty surrounding the use of the name, the reference in the manuscript to Michilimackinac, in spite of an initial attractiveness, must ultimately be considered to be of limited value. There seems to me to be no way to know which Michilimackinac is being referred to, with a span of 45 years between the first and the last settlement bearing that name. Thus, the date of composition of the manuscript arrived at through the Michilimackinac reference is as indeterminate as that arrived at from general considerations of Algonquin-Ojibwa linguistic history.

CURIOUS MARGINALIA

One curious feature of the manuscript is the occasional appearance in the margin of what appear to be abbreviations. These abbreviations, four in number, seem to refer in some way to the entry each precedes, but their exact meaning is not at all clear. In 2–5, I show each abbreviation and the entries it occurs with:

\[
(2) \quad f \\
\text{a. nimaratichimich 3. i. maratichimichi,} \\
\text{sum addictus peccato venereo (6)}
\]
b. *ninipiōi*
   [no translation given] (50)

c. *ninipiōitōn,*
   ie le mouille (51)

d. *ninipiōina,*
   effundo semen in ea (51)

e. *ōininike ikōëssens* .i. [?] gōtcharōṣch ōipe,
   cette fille est une debauchée (60)

f. *minagōrintchiōe*
   [no translation given: ‘empuantir’?] (83)

   (3) *p. ef*

   ninamōa,
   ie le couvre, ie luy donne une robe (29)

   (4) *p. e. f./*

   oraghis
   endouille (91)

   (5) *d.*

   a. *nibinakōan ōnige*
      [no translation given] (27)

   b. *nipōssahankōam*
      [no translation given: ‘ie lempeche de dormir’?] (31)

   c. *nitekōakitō’na mitik,*
      i’egale le bois (62)

It seems reasonably clear from the examples given that the first
abbreviation is restricted in use to sentences which deal in some way with
sex or bodily functions, whence the use of Latin in some of the transla-
tions. Ives Goddard has suggested that the abbreviation *f.* may in fact
stand for Latin (*verba* foeda ‘foul, filthy words’). As for the other
abbreviations, the sentences following each do not appear to lend
themselves to any easy characterization and thus do not shed much light
on what *p. ef, p. e. f./, or d.* might stand for.
DIALECT MIXTURE

There are several indications of dialect mixture in the manuscript. The clearest example of this is 6, a sentence which the author of the manuscript explicitly labels as being in Ottawa, although it is somewhat mangled:

(6) *akointilagó òkantikan atagóaghil atigóikat,*
    lòkantikan enfoncé lautomne quand il y a des vagues²
    phrase est őtaüoise (98)

As can be seen, one of the characteristics of the Ottawa of the period is the presence of *l*. In addition to this sentence, there are other instances of words with *l*, as shown in 7:

(7) a. *alísip*  
    ['water' (?)] (47)

    b. ie donne bonne edification, [...] afinqu'ils m'imitent  
    *nisõnga aλamiha kitch kikinóabamiõatch,* (55)

    c. *maleómassinahamághen,*  
    il a pris a credit plusieurs choses (89)

There are also examples, given in 8, which suggest an *r ~ n* alternation in one stem, an alternation which may perhaps be due to dialect mixture:

(8) a. *nirabikóen, nirabikóahan*  
    ie lenfile, ie luy mets au col [?] (95)

    b. *ninabikóe*  
    [no translation given: 'ie lenfile'?] (95)

There is also one example of an unexpected form of the word for 'wood', which is usually given as *mitik* in the manuscript:

(9) *nióakahighen mistik,*  
    du bois ie fais un enclos (86)

In addition to these phonological examples of what may be dialect mixture, there are a small number of examples of demonstratives which appear to be from a Central rather than from an Eastern dialect:

² *vagues* is written above the crossed out word *neiges*. 
(10) a. *manghigi iramô mikan*,
   icy le chemin va droit (41)

   b. *mi maba kissintagan pepakitang*,
   voila celuy qui seme la peste (76)

   c. [...] vel *mandadibi igi*,
   il est allé de ce coté (92)

   d. *manda ekômô nipi*,
   il y a de leau iusques la (98)

Related to this question of dialect mixture is the fact that, particularly on the last five pages of the manuscript, there is evidence of at least one additional person involved in the composition of the manuscript. Some of this evidence is reasonably straightforward, such as the examples given in 11–12. The words in 11 are written vertically in the left-hand margin of the page; all four examples seem to be in a different hand, the first three (11) in light grey or tan ink, the fourth (12) in a very black ink.

(11) a. *nibilegabaerîk*
   [no translation given] (96)

   b. *nibilepîk*
   [no translation given] (96)

   c. *ninibilepîmin*
   allés ranger [?] (96)

The gloss of 11c is not clear. Baraga (1973, 2:284) remarks “*Nibine, in compositions, alludes to a line or row.*”

(12) *maloungasaouanga*4
   terre molle (100)

   In some cases, the additions are apparently intended to clarify what the original author had written. In the examples in 13 words in a different ink and different hand are underlined:

3 The (r) is unclear and the acute accent is very faint.

4 The writer first wrote *marôkitchaôanga* in a very black ink, then crossed it out and wrote *laqul* [?] above, and finally crossed out this word as well, inserting *maloungasaouanga* above the gloss ‘terre molle’.
(13) a. *tōtōganiōan,*  
   on enfonce v.g. dans un marais[s] non pas dans la glace  (98)

b. *nipapariskōantin,*  
i’enfonce dans la neige c'est lorsque la glace nest pas bien [f]orte  
   par ex. une premiere glace  (98)

c. *nitōaskan,* […]  
lorsque la glace (?) romp [sic] i’enfonce  (99)

d. *kintabōgo,* […]  
   […] dans un rapide le canot veut couler a fond  (99)

   In three cases, however, these additions, whatever their intent, raise  
an additional question for which I have no ready answer:

(14) a. *ninanabititigōak naméssak,*  
i’enfile ces poissons […]  (95)

b. *ninabikōtira,*  
i e luy mets au col, ie luy donne pour le mettre a son col  (95)

c. *ninabitoskōantan makak, akik,*  
il passe le bras iusqu'au coude dans lance du sceau, de la chaudiere  (96)

   In each of the examples in 14 there is an ⟨r⟩ written above the second ⟨n⟩,  
   perhaps to suggest that the ⟨n⟩ should be changed to ⟨r⟩. In each case,  
   however, the ⟨n⟩ is not crossed out. This raises an interesting question:  
is the ⟨n⟩ to be interpreted as a mistake, or are forms with either ⟨r⟩ or ⟨n⟩  
   acceptable variants? Thus far, I have little relevant data from the  
   manuscript that would help to resolve this issue.

VERB INFLECTIONS

   Turning now to a look at some of the verbs which occur in the  
   manuscript, I will discuss the major verb classes in turn. The majority  
   of verbs in the manuscript are given in the third person singular Indepen­
   dent Indicative (neutral), but I will include for the most part in what  
   follows forms other than this, forms whose relative rarity in the manu­
   script enhances their interest. I will first list forms in the independent,  
   followed by forms in the conjunct.
Animate intransitive verbs

Animate intransitive (AI) verbs of various types occur in the manuscript:

(15) AI Independent Indicative
   a. nit’ataöe, 3 ataöe,
      ie vend [sic], i’achepte [sic] (77)
   b. nipagöchinimin,
      nous navons pas de l’eau (50)
   c. tetabiskotch maskaöissik.
      ils sont egaux en force (61)
   d. ömpabaöek mentaminak,
      les bleds selevent (64)

(16) etchitine nigatagochin ,i, [?] öibatch,
      dabord ie viendré (43)

(17) a. ka nogössissi,
      il ne paroist point (15)
   b. cheker töek ka göetch akössissik,
      ils feignent, ils ne sont pas malades en effet (93)

(18) AI Conjunct Indicative
   a. nikaskima kitchi sönga aiamiatch.
      ie le faconne par mes paroles afinqu’il prie bien (55)
   b. önenakima ka akössitch ka akössitch [sic]
      sest bien emploie qu’il soit malade (79)

I assume that the repetition of ka akössitch in 18b is a simple mistake on the part of the author of the manuscript.

(19) a. mare misköe öintoshikaöi mi öinsch eka maskaöissitch.
      il a coulé beaucoup de sang voila pourquoi il n'est pas fort (61)
   b. kiraöa ka möskinebieg.
      vous qui etes pleins deau v.g. le canot, le [sic] cabane (78)
   c. arimat kinöra iriniöatch ka cheker nissiöoeatch.
      il est difficile que ceux la vivent longtemps qui ont tué sans suiet (6)
The third person singular of the conjunct of the verb ‘to die’ shows variation in the second vowel. The form nipôch is the expected form; nipitch is unusual and unexplained:

(20) a. ōiaqach ka nipitch,
cest dommage qu’il soit mort (28)

b. Jesus mourut en croix sous l’empire de Tibere,
kicheōkima Tibere erintiba[n] ötiberindanaban aki apitch nipôch Jesus
tchipaiatigông (76)

The ending for the first person singular of the conjunct is written as either (-an), which one could argue is the expected form, or (-en) (as in 22), which, although not rare, is nevertheless both unexpected and unexplained, since the second person singular is also written (-en) (as in 23):

(21) a. pantikeian,
moy en entrant (83)

b. entaían,
ou ie demeure, en ma maison (83)

c. endarakian,
en mon pays (83)

(22) ōassinien,
en mangeant, [...] quand ie mange, ou si ie mange (83)

(23) ie te blame en ce que tu dis que michabôs est un genie,
kinatóétôr [?] ekitöïen michabôs manitoôi (83)

(24) mitassin entachieg,
dix fois autant que vous êtes (23)

Inanimate intransitive verbs

A selection of the inanimate intransitive (II) verbs in the manuscript that I am reasonably sure of follows:

(25) II Independent Indicative

a. arimat kinôra iriniôatch ka cheker nissiôeôatch,
il est difficile que ceux la vivent longtemps qui ont tué sans suiet (6)
b. mamangatō ninik,
   iay le bras gros (68)

c. mirōmagōat .n. si,
   sent bon (74)

d. nissōgōnagat kata aïamiekigikat,
   dans trois iours il sera fête (8)

Note the form of the preverb kata in 25d, a preverb which has been reduced to ta in many modern dialects. This is one of several indicators of the age of the manuscript.

There are several examples in the manuscript of the final -magat added to Al or II stems to form II stems:

(26) a. ikitōmagat,
   on dit (11)

b. tibiskōiamagat kizis őaöieösse,
   égalemant le soleil va en rond (62)

c. kipiskamagat isköantim
   la porte est fermée (75)

d. eau profonde,
   timi, timimagat (47)

e. matchiabō te tchiman, matchiabōtemagat
   le canot est emporté par leau (81)

The last two entries are interesting because they bear out the contention of Bloomfield (1958:94) that the addition of the final -magat to II stems seems to produce no change in the meaning.

In spite of the gloss, example 27 also appears to be an II verb form: cf. Baraga (1973:388) “Totōganowan. There is a trembling piece of ground [...]”.

(27) tōtōganiōan,
   on enfonçe v.g. dans un marai[s] non pas dans la glace (98)

**Transitive inanimate verbs**

A selection of the transitive inanimate (TI) verbs in the manuscript that I am reasonably sure of follows.
(28) TI Independent Indicative
a. *nipamerindananan, nikitchitöaöerindananan, nitaköerindananan niganaöerindananan* aiamiekigik kitchi taköerindamang hech apitchipatch Jesus,
nous honorons, nous croions venerables, nous nous souvenons, nous observons le iour de fête afin que nous nous souvenions en tant que Jesus est ressuscité (8)
b. *nikispinatön, n. ra,*
ie lachepe [sic] (77)

(29) TI Changed Conjunct
*mi maba kissintagan pepakitang,*
voila celuy qui seme la peste (76)

Transitive animate verbs

Transitive animate (TA) verbs of various types are found in the manuscript. A selection of transitive animate direct verb forms is given in 30–31:

(30) TA Direct, Independent Indicative
a. *nimantöha v.g. kinëbik ka nissak,*
ie divinise le serpent que iay tué (21)
b. *niitipaöa ka kimötimak,*
iay satisfait celui a qui iay derobe (28)
c. *eröek nanekatchihik nös, eriöek nigasakiha,*
bié que mon pere me tourmente neanmoins ie laimeray (88)
d. *niöökëechimak siöaköaãnak kitchi sassaakaöntöa,*
iamassee les canes de bled d'inde pour les bruler (74)
e. *nikikerimanänak seakhintöa entötaöiamintöa* (57)
f. *niöindaamaöa,*
ie dis a quelqu'un (9)
g. *nitëtiëanaãamaöak paköichigan,*
ie distribue a tous du pain (19)

The last two forms are examples of the many TA forms in the manuscript with the so-called double-object TA final -amaw-. 
(31) TA Direct, Conjunct Indicative
ie lay vû emmi .i. [?] avec les betes quand ie lay vû,
öitemab ani aôessensak apitch òabamak (72)

A selection of transitive animate inverse verb forms is given in 32–35:

(32) TA Inverse, Independent Indicative
a. nöpahigôk papikôak,
   les puces m'empechent de dormir (32)

b. mösseôek nitakôamigôk,
   des vers me font des douleurs, me mordent (36)

c. iay vû un effroiable serpent,
   ni kôskôik kinebik ka òabamak (60)

d. tu encoureras la haine de ton pere si tu derobes;
   kisakahik kôs, kigachinkerimik dasch kemôtiôane (88)

(33) nissak maskarangôa miskôtch dach ka ninissigôssinânak,
nos ennemis ont etes tués et en echange nous navons pas etés tués par eux (60)

(34) TA Inverse, Conjunct Indicative
les hommes dont tu as eté battu,
arichiriniôak ka pakiteôkôa (30)

(35) TA Inverse, Conjunct Dubitative
Si Marie prie pour moy ie me moqueré [sic] du diable,
gagarôtamaôigôin Marie nigapapinôtaôa matchimanitô (59)

The transitive animate passive or indefinite subject forms in the
manuscript are given in 36–37:

(36) TA Passive/Indefinite Subject, Independent Indicative
a. on ma dit ;
   nitigô (10)

b. nit'ichimigô,
   on dit de moy (11)

c. nikôskôigô [?],
   on mepouvante (72)

d. nipiatôkikômigô,
   on vient emprunter ma chaudiere (82)
e. niga nissa kitikitônaban, nissa dach mi ŏinsch ererimiran ŏkis nissar, ie le tueray disois tu, on la tué voila pourquoi ie pense de toy il la tué (28)

(37) TA Passive/Indefinite Subject, Conjunct Indicative
a. voila cequon ma dit
   mi ka igôian (10)

b. nôragôintchîtôn tchiman name kitchi pakiteôintch
   ie fais pancher le canot afin quon frappe l’esturgeon dardé (100)

c. patakâôntch,
   qu’on a cloué (86)

d. on a emporte la ville d’embleee,
   ôibetch [h] maôikarintch ôten, ôibetch iskôassimîntch anikôassima (67)

The detailed analysis of the forms in 37c–d is unclear to me. The verb in 38 is a TA form in spite of the fact that tchôminer is an inanimate plural noun:

(38) apitch sinsînintôa tchôminer ôntchikaôik,
   quand on presse les raisins ils coulent (18)

Transitive animate “I–you” verb forms are given in 39:

(39) TA “I–You”, Independent Indicative
a. kitirîr,  
   ie te dis (9)

b. kimirîr,  
   ie te donne (29)

c. ie te blame en ce que tu dis que michabôs est un genie,
   kinatôêtôr ekitôiên michabôs manîtôoi (83)

Transitive animate “you–me” verb forms are in 40–42:

(40) TA “You–Me”, Independent Indicative
a. kitîchîm,  
   tu me dis (9)

b. ki mînchs,  
   tu me donne [sic] (29)

c. tandach kitîchîmane,  
   que me dis tu (9)
The form in 40c is questionable in that the ending -ane is unexplained, while the rest of the form appears to be in the independent, not the conjunct.

(41) TA “You–Me”, Indicative Preterite

ôragô ki kis garôchinâban,  
tu mavaïs dit, hier (11)

(42) TA “You–Me”, Changed Conjunct

tane echien,  
que me dis tu (9)

The reflexive and reciprocal A1 verbs formed from TA stems are unexceptional. The only reflexive forms that I have found in the manuscript are given in 43; reciprocal forms are given in 44:

(43) nimôkôtas .3. môkôtassô,  
ie dole pour moy (27)

(44) a. chinkerintik,  
ils se haïssent (13)

b. kikantik,  
ils se querellent (16)

c. pepégik mikatik,  
un a un ils se battent (42)

d. aramikôtatiöek,  
ils sembrassent par affection (69)

Finally, there are four verb forms in the manuscript which strike me as being somewhat unusual. The first two, in 45, show the preverb niibaa- ‘at night’. Interestingly, although niibaa- is the preverb in each form, the gloss suggests that it refers to the second action in the first form, but the first action in the second form. The two verb forms in 46 show the use of what is normally an independent noun as an initial in a verb form. According to Ives Goddard (personal communication) Fox has forms that are exactly cognate to 46a. The form in 46b is particularly intriguing in that the incorporated noun appears to be the locative nibiing.

(45) a. ninipaôissin,  
ie mange avant que de dormir (32)

5 My thanks to Rand Valentine for this form.
b. ninipapōs, [...] 3. i
    ie dors avant que de m'embarquer (32)

(46) a. ninipinat 3. nipinati,
    ie vais querir de leau (50)

b. ninipingōebinan,
    ie le iette dans leau (50)

CONCLUSION

The preceding discussion, although based as it is on what is still a very incomplete analysis of the data, is nonetheless sufficiently detailed to indicate how interesting ASSM Manuscrit 14 is. Subsequent investigations may or may not provide further particulars on the date of composition of the manuscript or on the question of dialect mixture therein. There is little doubt, however, that there is much more to be learned about various linguistic aspects of the document. Manuscrit 14 is relatively short in one sense, yet I believe I have demonstrated that it is wide-ranging enough to provide us with important data on Ojibwa-Algonquin, data in areas such as the verbal morphology, for example, aspects of which I have sketched in this paper. Clearly, further analysis has the promise of leading to potentially valuable results.

REFERENCES
