Introduction

Theoretical issues pertaining to notions of tribal territoriality and ethnicity are among the more complicated and least understood problem areas in ethnohistory. Researching the history of the various Indian tribal groups in northeast North America, I have come to the conclusion that the currently popular views on tribal distribution among the Eastern Algonquian peoples in the post-contact period fail the test of adequate documentary evidence. It appears that those ideas concerning ethnicity and territoriality reveal more about ideology and certain general preconceptions than about the actual historical cultures which form the subject of our investigations.

In this paper I discuss the problem of tribal territories and boundaries of Maliseets and Micmacs, in particular in the valley of the St. Lawrence River area during the colonial period from the 17th century until the British conquest of Canada in the mid-18th century. As a theoretical issue, this concern belongs within the realm of a field known as cultural ecology. Cultural ecologists view cultures as adaptive systems and try to analyze "how a local population maintains itself in an eco-system and by which means a regional population maintains and coordinates its groups and distributes them over land" (Rappaport 1978:233). A typical misconception among anthropologists describing tribal cultures is the belief that somehow "primitive peoples" have managed to remain untouched by historical agitation. Indeed, notwithstanding the fact that anthropologists
have begun to walk “the obscure path of Indian history” (Schoolcraft 1837:58), many researchers continue to collapse tribal history into the ethnographic present (Yerbury 1976:239, 257). The idea that tribal cultures have no real history — the history which harbours change and causes profound transformations in regional eco-systems — remains entrenched in our thinking (see also Wolf 1982).

I believe that anthropologists are in need of a more dynamic perspective in cultural ecology, a theoretical framework which allows us to couple the notion of cultures as adaptive systems with the idea that tribal groups inhabiting a certain region are jointly engaged in a historical process of power which affects the various communities occupying their respective niches in the shared eco-system. For such a research strategy, which combines the insights of political economy and cultural ecology and places the analytical framework in the context of historical process, I have coined the term “political ecology” (Prins 1982). The lack of such a dynamic cultural ecology in ethno-historical studies has stifled our understanding of the opportunistic, fluid nature of cultures as adaptive systems surviving in the course of centuries of historical change. Here I intend to illustrate this characteristic of certain tribal cultures as they existed during the historical period, arguing that Micmacs and Maliseets constitute ethnic groups which are the products of long-term adaptation processes in changing eco-systems. Specifically, I maintain that stable and rigid tribal boundaries which have remained unaltered over many centuries are the products of anthropological powers of imagination instead of the results of tribal adaptations to cultural eco-systems in the course of time.

A Critique of Tribal Distribution Maps

Before we discuss the ethnohistory of Micmacs and Maliseets in the St. Lawrence River valley, we need to critically review some of the tribal distribution maps designed to guide us through the realm of ethnohistoric confusion. In light of the above-mentioned lack of ethno-dynamics in anthropological concepts about tribal territoriality and boundaries, we need not be surprised that the editors of the volume on the Northeast in the Handbook of North American Indians present, along with a general map, a “Key to Tribal Territories”:

This map is a diagrammatic guide to the coverage of this volume rather than
an authoritative depiction of tribal ranges. Sharp boundaries have been drawn and no territory is unassigned. Tribal units are sometimes arbitrarily defined, subdivisions are not mapped, no joint or disputed occupations are shown, and different kinds of land use are not shown. Since the map depicts the situation at the earliest periods for which evidence is available, the ranges mapped for different tribes often refer to quite different periods... (Trigger (ed.) 1978:viii)

Certain ethnic entities mentioned in the early colonial reports are omitted from this tribal distribution map, most typically tribal group names recorded in French documents such as Etechemins, Gaspeians, Sokokis and so on. Calling this a "basically ahistorical and therefore unrealistic" portrayal of tribal territories and boundaries, Bernard Hoffman voiced the following criticism against such tribal distribution maps:

It cannot directly indicate the relative position of different groups at specific time periods. This is particularly true with regard to the European colonists, who are never represented on a map of Indian distributions. (Hoffman 1967:3)

In other words, any adequate tribal distribution map needs to indicate the position of tribal groups in a regional eco-system which they share with other groups, both Indian and White, in a given time following the contact period. On the general map in the Handbook (ix), we are shown a flat picture in which the St. Lawrence Iroquois occupy the St. Lawrence River valley from Lake Ontario to the mouth of the Saguenay, while the Maliseet-Passamaquoddy occupy territories confined to the St. John and St. Croix River drainages. On another map in the same volume, illustrating the chapter on Maliseet-Passamaquoddy Indians, we are presented with a picture of the territories about 1890 which include a tract around the Rivière du Loup drainage on the south bank of the St. Lawrence River (Erickson 1978:124, fig. 1). In fact, the St. Lawrence Iroquois ceased to exist as an identifiable ethnic group in the late 16th century, and this region was subsequently occupied by other ethnic groups, including French, Micmacs and Maliseets. Assuming that Etechemins were the ancestors of the Maliseet-Passamaquoddy, we can conclude that parts of the St. Lawrence River valley were occupied by Maliseets from at least the early 1600s onwards. The very first time that Europeans noted these Indians as a distinctive group was in 1603, when Samuel de Champlain encountered them in the St. Lawrence River valley at
Tadoussac, opposite Rivière du Loup (Champlain (1):101). Portraying the Maliseet tribal territories during the last decade of the 19th century — when these tribespeople formed a marginal minority occupying tiny reservations within their traditional tribal range, then mainly occupied by whites who vastly outnumbered the regional native population — is not very realistic. We have to keep in mind that by the late 19th century these Maliseets had been forced to abandon much of their traditional way of life and were no longer able to pursue their hunting activities as a viable means of subsistence.

Similar difficulties exist regarding the way the traditional tribal districts of the Micmacs are depicted on the tribal distribution maps. The author of the chapter in the Handbook on the Micmac indicates that their tribal territories were limited to Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, the coastal stretch of the Gulf of St. Lawrence in New Brunswick and the areas around the Bay of Chaleurs in Québec (Bock 1978:110, fig. 1). Yet on the general tribal distribution map, Micmac tribal territories cover a larger tract of land — the entire Gaspé Peninsula, including the south bank of the mouth of the St. Lawrence River as far as Rimouski. Micmac hunting territories in Newfoundland are not considered at all, in spite of the fact that this area formed part of their tribal range since the late 17th century.

There are also problems with the map showing the tribal territory of the group called “Eastern Abenaki.” It presents the reader with a picture in which the various river drainages are tracts representing linguistic subdivisions within this ethnic group (Snow 1978:138, fig. 1). However, these linguistic subdivisions stop abruptly at the international border between the state of Maine and the province of Québec, a depiction which is not in accord with reality. In addition, they overlap with Maliseet-Passamaquoddy territories delineated in the previously mentioned map.

In addition to these difficulties, no real sense of ethno-dynamics is evident in the maps. Analyzing tribal histories, we are confronted with the fact that these cultures, in particular the Maliseet and Micmac, created migratory subsistence strategies which were adaptable to changes in the regional eco-system. Consequently, a built-in opportunism existed which allowed for maximum flexibility in accordance with the challenges and chances available to these peoples. Speck and Hadlock (1946:372), reflecting on this flexible aspect of these Eastern Algonquian cultures, observed that “... in drawing a
map of the area controlled or claimed by groups of Indians who were in a constant state of migration, such a map can at best only indicate probable limits of tribal territories in the history of the tribe . . ." In the light of these observations, I find myself in full agreement with Hoffman (1964:3), who commented many years before the aforementioned maps were drawn: "It is naive, or even incomprehensible, to contend that it is valid or meaningful to distort reality in such a manner."

**Joint Use Territories and Fluid Open Boundaries**

In order to grasp the fluid and opportunistic nature of the relationship between environment and the peoples dependent on a food-collecting subsistence strategy within a changing eco-system, we must think in more dynamic terms. As I indicated earlier, the notion that tribal territories were permanent, stable and exclusive tracts with clear-cut, immutable boundaries is not supported by the documentation available. Judging the history of the tribal peoples in the Maritimes and New England, we should be aware of the fact that substantive changes occurred, including the removal of entire communities migrating to refuge areas, and the restructuring of family groups into new tribal units (Prins and Bourque 1986). Compare, for example, 17th century reports of Maliseet tribal territories with the claim that this ethnic group was confined to the St. John River drainage. Along with other 17th century descriptions by French observers, Joseph Robineau de Villebon, French Governor of Acadia, noted in 1694 that the Maliseet occupied lands located between the Penobscot and St. John Rivers:

> The Malicites begin at the River St. John, and inland as far as the Rivière du Loup, and along the sea-shore, occupying Pesmonquadis [Passamaquoddy], Majais [Machias], Les Monts Deserts [Mt. Desert Island], and Pentagoet [Penobscot], and all the river along the coast. (Murdoch 1865(1):214)

Given Villebon’s descriptions, which are fully corroborated by the observations of his contemporaries, the picture of tribal territories and boundaries presented in the volume on the Northeast in the *Handbook of North American Indians* fails to convince.

In addition to such observations indicating fundamental transformations in the ethnohistorical landscape of this area, the docu-
umentary evidence available presents us with the impression that a considerable overlap in the tribal use of natural resources in certain regions existed throughout the colonial period. In order to grasp this dynamic complexity, I employ the concepts of “tribal range” and “catchment area” (see also Braudel 1982:184-190). These theoretical constructs allow us to think about Indians as agents engaged in tribal activities within a changing world, rather than as anonymous members of primeval cultures belonging to a mythological universe in which they occupied ancestral lands from time immemorial until the modern period. An example of such joint use of certain areas is given, among others, by the Sieur de Diereville who lived in Acadia during the years 1699-1700:

The Savages in the neighborhood of Port Royal [Annapolis] are called Mique-maques [Micmacs]; they are also found along the St. John River . . . The Maricites [Maliseets] likewise dwell there . . . (Diereville 1933:184-5)

Further evidence of joint land use and the far-reaching activity ranges of tribespeople such as Micmacs and Maliseets can be found in the church registers of the various parishes in the St. Lawrence River valley. Parish documents recording Micmac and Maliseet activities establish that the region between Québec and the mouth of the St. Lawrence River formed part of the historical catchment area of these tribes. Although similar evidence exists regarding Micmac and Maliseet activities within the region presently considered part of Maine and the Maritimes, I confine my discussion to the St. Lawrence River valley during the 17th and 18th centuries.

Etechemins/Maliseets and Gaspésiens/Micmacs

Some scholars, including Ives Goddard (1978:70-77), argue that the Etechemins of the 17th century were not the ethnic ancestors of the Maliseet-Passamaquoddy. However, it is my belief that there is substantial evidence that they were. For instance, the term “Etechemin” was used by Frenchmen in the 17th century to describe the Maliseets and Passamaquoddy (see also Wherry 1979). Working from the premise that Etechemins were in essence the same people later described as Maliseets and Passamaquoddies (Erickson 1978:123, 125), I present the following evidence for Maliseets in the St. Lawrence River valley during the 17th century.
As already noted, in 1603 Samuel de Champlain encountered these “Etechemins” in Tadoussac at the north bank of the St. Lawrence River, where they were camped with their Montagnais and Algonquin allies, celebrating a victory over the Iroquois (Champlain (1):101). Several years later, following his stay among the Micmacs and Maliseets in Acadia, Champlain established his headquarters at Québec. Referring to the Chaudière River, which runs into the St. Lawrence near that place, he noted that it was the route to the land of the Maliseets and called it therefore “Rivière des Etechemins” (Champlain (1):25, 269, 272-3; (4):230).

Twenty years after Champlain’s first report of Maliseets in the St. Lawrence River valley, another French observer, the Recollet missionary Gabriel Sagard-Théodat also noted “Etechemins” on the north bank of the river, living on the Saguenay near Tadoussac. Sagard-Théodat reported that “almost all [Maliseets] have been killed in the various wars and encounters which they have had with the Canadians [Montagnais and/or Micmacs?]...” (Sagard-Théodat 1865:141; 1866:100, 149-50). About two decades later, Jesuit missionaries at Sillery heard about a “big war” between these Maliseets and the “Savages of Gaspé”, presumably Micmacs, which took place in the fall of 1645 (Thwaites 1896(28):203-5). Immediately following this conflict, a Maliseet familiar with the Chaudière River as travel route to Acadia guided Gabriel Dreuillettes, a Jesuit priest, to the Abenakis inhabiting the Kennebec River area (37:247).

From this time onwards, Maliseet presence in the St. Lawrence River area near Québec was reported upon frequently. For example, Jesuits at the Sillery mission noted in 1648 that a group of Maliseets had visited the village, leaving a “very sick” tribesman with the missionaries (32:221). And four years later, in 1652, the Jesuits wrote that there were at least two Maliseet families living at their mission near Québec (Charbonneau and Legare (3):272). About this time, Iroquois raiders became a serious threat to the communities inhabiting the valley, and Maliseets and Micmacs, as well as Montagnais and Algonquins, joined with the French and formed a common defense league. Also in 1652, Maliseet and Micmac warriors, plus other native groups, stayed some time in Québec, which served as a resting place on their way to Trois Rivières from where they launched their war-parties against the Iroquois (Thwaites 1896(38):181). Several years later, in 1673, Maliseets came to Québec where they had
a child baptized by the priests of that city (59:27).

In 1676, Father Morain founded a new mission village on the south side of the St. Lawrence River, on the banks of the Rivière du Loup, which was established for Micmacs [Gaspéians] and Maliseets [Etechemins], both described as migratory peoples in the Relation of 1677 (60:264-5). Meanwhile, Maliseets, and others such as the “Montagnized Abenakis” and Algonquins, moved up the Saguenay River where they established settlements at Lake St. John and other locations in Labrador (60:251, 255-7). For example, in 1678 François de Crepieul reported that this region was occupied by various tribal groups, in particular Maliseets, Abenakis, Algonquins and Montagnais, who were hunting in the Chicoutimi area between Tadoussac and Lake St. John (61:85-7). Five years later, this same Jesuit missionary noted that Maliseet tribespeople together with other hunting groups, assembled on the north shore of the St. Lawrence below Tadoussac at the Assumption River opposite the Gaspé Peninsula (62:221-3).

In 1685, groups of Maliseets and Micmacs were living near Québec in the mission village of Sillery, where Abenakis, Algonquins, Montagnais and Sokokis were also settled. According to the priest Jacques Bigot, some Indians suffered from alcoholism, and abuse within the village was punished. That year Bigot took three Maliseets and a Sokoki woman to jail because they were drunk (63:109). Among the last times the French referred to Maliseets as Etechemins was in 1686, when the Jesuit missionary at Tadoussac reported that these “Etechemins” continued to hunt across the St. Lawrence in the area around Lake St. John and the Saguenay River, where they “lead a wandering [and] innocent life in the woods” of Labrador (63:253-5). From that time onwards, the tribal name of Maliseets (variously spelled) was generally used in the French reports. Villebon, the Governor of Acadia, then stationed at the St. John River in Nashwaak, commented in 1694 that the “Malicites begin at the River St. John, and inland as far as the Rivière du Loup” and that they inhabited the territories between these rivers and the Penobscot (Murdoch 1865(1):214).

Eighteenth Century Evidence of Joint Use

Perusing the various baptism, marriage, and burial registers in
the church records of the parishes located downriver from Québec City, I encountered scores of natives designated as “Sauvages” or as “Amérindiens”. However, to my surprise, many were explicitly identified in terms of their ethnicity, such as “Malecite”, “Micmac”, “Montagnais”, “Abenaki”, or otherwise. The large category of Amerindians consisted in part of natives with mixed ethnic backgrounds, involving any of the above-mentioned tribal groups. Intermarriage among Micmacs and Maliseets appeared to be the most common form of exogamy in this region. In the case of these mixed couples, the patrilineal tendency among these tribespeople is evident since the children were generally classified according to the tribal status of their fathers. However, based on the available data, we may conclude that endogamy was the more common form among these people during the colonial period.

Beginning with the city of Québec, frequented by many Indian groups throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, its most common native visitors were probably Abenakis. However, the sojourn of a group of Maliseets from Meductic mission on the St. John River in 1707 was recorded, since one Maliseet child was baptized during that summer (Charbonneau and Legare 1900(8):45). Indians were also registered in the records of the small parish of Chateau Richer, on the north bank of the St. Lawrence, just below Québec. During the period 1705-1742, about 17 tribespeople were identified, namely five Abenakis, three Montagnais, three Hurons, three Micmacs and one Maliseet. The other two were only identified as Amerindians (9:101, 106, 108, 140-1; 19:142-5). A short distance from Chateau Richer is the parish of St. Anne de Beaupré, also on the north bank of the river, located about 20 miles from Québec. Large numbers of Native Americans frequented this place. Again, judging on the basis of the church registers, certain conclusions may be drawn about the relative popularity of this location as a stopover within the tribal range of various ethnic groups. By far the most typical native visitors were Micmacs, who constituted about two-thirds of the total number (104) mentioned in the church registers recording baptisms, marriages and burials in this parish. Indeed, the number of Micmacs roaming the valley must have been impressive, since the Jesuit missionaries at Tadoussac warned that “Those Mikmak runners [coureurs Mikmaks] who, not knowing which way to turn, spoil most of the missions, or beg their bread along the banks of the
[St. Lawrence] river and in Québec” (Thwaites 1896(68):107). The numbers of Maliseets, Abenakis and other tribespeople frequenting St. Anne de Beaupré was probably smaller than the numbers of Micmacs, since only about seven percent Abenakis and a similar percentage Maliseets were registered during this period. A number of families consisted of mixed Micmac-Maliseet couples, while the remainder was made up of Montagnais, Hurons and a number of native families identified as Amerindian (Charbonneau and Legare 1980(9):41-61, 72-74, 82, 94-95, 109-113). Not far from this parish, also located on the north bank, is the village of St. Joachim, where during the period 1735-1745 only seven Indians were registered, namely four Micmacs and three Montagnais (19:142-145). About 40 miles down, still on the same side of the river, is the parish of Baie St. Paul. No Maliseets were registered there from 1701 to 1721, and only three Amerindians. The largest number of Indians mentioned here were Micmacs (25), and the remainder were Montagnais (9) (9:1-10). Finally, we come to Tadoussac where, between 1700 and 1749, large numbers of Amerindians were registered in the church records. Of the 40 individuals whose ethnic backgrounds were mentioned, half were Micmacs, while the remainder were Montagnais and others (9:535-542; 19:552, 555, 557, 567-570).

Having reviewed the documentary evidence for the various parishes on the north shore of the St. Lawrence from Quebec to Tadoussac, we will now look at the situation on the other side of the river, and review the evidence for the various parishes on the south bank from the Chaudière River mouth to Rimouski on Gaspé Peninsula. At Lévis, opposite Québec City, data in the church records show the presence of Micmacs, Maliseets and others. In particular during the years 1720, 1728 and 1741-1748, a number of native individuals were recorded in the registers of the parish. About two-thirds (21) were Micmac Indians, while the remainder were Abenakis (4), Maliseets (1) and Amerindians (6). Among other data, these records reveal intermarriages between Micmacs and Abenakis (11:247, 259, 261; 22:273, 275, 296-303).

Several miles downriver from Lévis is the village of St. Michel where mainly Maliseets were recorded in the church registers. In particular in the period from 1745 to 1747, a large number of these tribespeople were present in the area. In total, 97 Maliseets were listed by name, while only seven names belonged to Micmacs and
a remaining 12 were identified as “Sauvages” (22:126-129, 139, 146-
147). Further down, at Point à la Caille, during the years 1707 and
1736-1747, only a handful of Indians were registered in the church
records of the parish. In total, three were listed as Indians from the
St. John River, while another three were mentioned as Abenakis.
Largest in number were the Montagnais (9), a group of tribespeople
usually identified with locations on the other side of the St. Lawrence
River during the 18th century. Finally, three natives were mentioned
as Amerindians in the documents of this place (11:417; 21:266, 281,
288, 291). Somewhere in this area is also the parish of L’Ange
Guardien, where in the years 1712-1715 a number of Micmacs (6)
and Abenakis (3) were registered by the missionary of this location
(9:248-251).

Not far downriver from Point à la Caille, is the parish of St. Ig-
nace where a number of Maliseets (7) and Amerindians were regis-
tered during the period from 1705 to 1710 (11:480-483). It is just a
short distance from St. Ignace to the next location, known as L’Islet.
The records of this parish for the years 1736-1745 show only a hand-
ful of natives — two Maliseets and four Amerindians. One of these
native families was ethnically mixed. (21:233, 242). A similar pic-
ture emerges from the 1743-1747 records of St. Roch des Aullneies,
which show a total of eight Amerindians (21:233, 242). The next
place is La Pocatière. Here, from 1716 to 1717, 16 Amerindians were
recorded in the church registers of this parish (11:210, 213).

Near La Pocatière is a village named Rivière Ouelle, where from
1734 to 1747 about 15 natives were mentioned by name, six of whom
were Micmacs and the balance of whom were identified as Amerindi-
ans. (21:6, 10, 14, 27, 28, 31). From Ouelle River to Kamouraska,
which is about 25 miles upriver from Rivière du Loup, is not far.
Large numbers of Indians from various groups, in particular Mic-
macs and Maliseets, frequented this place. The church registers of
the parish refer to 113 native persons — 45 Micmacs, 40 Maliseets,
4 Abenakis, 14 Montagnais and 10 Amerindians. As seen elsewhere,
there were mixed couples (in particular three Micmac-Maliseet fam-
ilies) among the native groups frequenting this area between 1729
and 1748 when these records were made (11:229; 21:111-115, 118-
120, 123, 127-134, 144-149). Finally, the parish of Rimouski, located
about 50-60 miles downriver from Rivière du Loup, was also visited
by Micmacs, Maliseets and other tribespeople identified as Amerindi-
The 1713-1718 and 1732-1749 church records of this parish show 8 Micmacs, 4 Maliseets and 42 Amerindians (11:552-555; 21:529-539). The presence of these tribespeople in the St. Lawrence River valley during the first half of the 18th century was noted by various observers reporting their findings to the French colonial authorities. Especially during the years of violent threats by the English, who tried to gain total power over northeastern North America during the French and Indian Wars, Micmacs, Maliseets and Abenakis drifted to the refuge regions under French control. For example, during the King George’s War of 1745-1748/49, French documents specifically referred to these Indians as “irreconcilable enemies of the English” (Murdoch 1865(2):80). In 1745, when the French had lost Cape Breton, the Jesuit missionary Charles Germain noted that a band of 80 Micmac families were “on their way to Québec” (O’Callaghan 1849(10):17, 18). Later, in May 1746, the French reported that Micmacs, Maliseets and Abenakis lived “scattered throughout the different parts of the Government of Quebec in the villages of Becancourt and St. Francis” (10:57). The following quote, one of various references to these Micmacs, Maliseets and Abenakis camping in the St. Lawrence valley during this period, illustrates their tribal range during these years:

Subsistence and clothing are continued to be provided for the Indians of the different villages of Acadia who are settled, since the fall [of 1747], at Point à la Caille to the number of 200 men, women, and children; some of them go hunting; we have persuaded them to do so . . . The same course has been pursued towards the Indians of the different tribes who winter at the River des Etrechemins [near the Chaudière River], 3 leagues from Québec, numbering 400 men, women and children, some of whom also go hunting. (O’Callaghan 1849(10):146-147)

Employing the church registers noted above as indicators of native presence in the St. Lawrence River valley, we must keep in mind the following inference: for each individual recorded in the baptism, marriage, or burial registers of the various parishes in the 18th century, many tribespeople roaming the woodlands near these French settlements remained undocumented. In general, I surmise that the chance of Micmacs, Maliseets or other native people visiting and being noted by these local parish priests was minimal. In the first place, these registers refer to major events which called for a priest
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administering the holy sacraments and which occurred maybe once every 20 to 25 years in an individual's lifetime. Secondly, specially trained missionaries who were familiar with the native cultures and languages served the mostly converted Micmacs and Maliseets during the 18th century, and were stationed in established mission headquarters, such as Meductic at the St. John River. It is likely that tribespeople would wait for baptism and marriage until they returned to these headquarters at some point during their migrations through their tribal ranges. Comparing the number of Indians (200) reported as located at Point à la Caille in 1747 and 1748 with those noted in the church records at that time (3), I believe that the number of Micmacs, Maliseets and other tribespeople actually roaming the St. Lawrence River valley in the 18th century far exceeded those listed in the parish reports outlined in the preceding paragraphs.

Conclusion

Although further ethnohistorical evidence exists for joint use of the lands in the St. Lawrence River valley through the 18th and 19th centuries, I have restricted my study to the French colonial period which lasted until the mid-18th century. I have demonstrated that the tribal ranges of Micmacs and Maliseets were not confined to their alleged tribal territories and that the supposed boundaries between the various Eastern Algonquian groups were open and fluid, changing in the course of time. The evidence presented shows clearly that the St. Lawrence River valley fell within the activity ranges of both the Micmacs and the Maliseets, as well as some other tribal groups. Also, I have criticized the biases of those scholars committed to theoretical models such as the "river drainage theory", for example Snow (1976, 1978). I have presented documentary evidence of the fact that the tribal territories changed in the course of time and that they were not necessarily coterminous with these drainages. Finally, I have argued that without a dynamic perspective in cultural ecology, our commitment to understand the adaptive processes in tribal cultures remains an unfulfilled dream — an empty promise to shed light on "the obscure path of Indian history."
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