

MAKĚÓČHE WAŠTÉ, THE BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY: AN INDIGENOUS  
LANDSCAPE PERSPECTIVE

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**Title**

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**MASTER OF ARTS**

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## ABSTRACT

The Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (Seven Council Fires; “Great Sioux Nation”) occupied an area from the woodlands to the Great Plains. The landscape and the wind influenced their language and culture in a way that suggests a long occupation. Major landmarks like Ĥesápa (Black Hills), Mathó Thípila (Bear Lodge; “Devils Tower”), Pahá Makháaska (White Earth Butte; White Butte, ND), and Oǵúǵa Owápi (Images Burned Into The Stone; Jeffers Petroglyphs, MN) were woven into the cultural identity of the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ.

The pictographic record, traditional song, and oral tradition recall events like first contact with the horse at the Čhaŋsáŋsaŋ Ožáte (White Birch Fork), or the James River-Missouri River confluence in C.E. 1692.

The historical pictographic record, oral tradition, and occupation will be examined in this paper to support the idea that Očhéthi Šakówiŋ have a cultural occupation of the Great Plains that long predates the European record.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Wičháweksuye. I remember them.

Ité Gléğa sáŋp čhiŋča. The descendants of Striped Face.

Waníyetu Wakhúwa sáŋp čhiŋča. The descendants of Hunts In Winter.

Niyákhe Yúza wótakuyapi. Taken Alive relatives.

Thípi Sápa sáŋp čhiŋča. The descendants of Black Lodge (Rev. Phil Deloria).

Íjyaŋ Pahá Wiŋ sáŋp čhiŋča. The descendants of Rocky Butte Woman.

Šóta Wiŋ sáŋp čhiŋča. The descendants of Smoky Woman.

Tħokéya Ináži. The First To Arise (Kevin Locke).

Mathó Ská. White Bear (Clifford Canku).

Joseph Marshall III. Jerome Kills Small. Louie Garcia. Mary Louise Defender-Wilson.

Virginia Driving Hawk-Sneve. Joseph Fire Crow. Calvin Grinnell. Nicolas Haganar. Emily

Levine. Harriet Skye. Paul Durand. Jan Ullrich. Anton Treuer. Leo Omani. Craig Howe.

Elizabeth Fenn. Kingsley Bray. Pete Looking Horse. Dawí / Huhá Máza. Tom Isern.

## PREFACE

Háu mitákuyapi.

Ithó iyápi waŋží epíŋ kté. Watóhaŋl šna iyówaglašna čha émičiktunža pó.

Dakhóta Thaté Thípi Wašté wašiču emáčiya. Ozúye Núnpa emáčiyapi. Očhéthi mitáwa kíŋ hená Thítunwaŋ. Ináwaye Húnkpapha na atéwaye Wíčhiyena Dakhóta. Makhóče kíŋ Aíchita Háŋska Wakpála homákšila. Íŋyaŋ Woslál Oyánke emátarhaŋ. Waŋná Čhaŋté Wakpá makhóče el wathí.

Thaté na maŋpíya makhóče he e čha el waútarhaŋ. Eháŋni leyápi, "Makhóče Wašté le épelo," eyápi. Očhéthi Šakówiŋ oyáte kíŋ héčhena makhóče lél ouŋyaŋpi. Lél wačhékiyapi. Lél okhíčhizapi. Lél kičhíč'íŋpi.

Héhaŋ Šináska ahí. Laláwaye Šináska kíŋ wačhékiya wičháša. Lalá heyás, "Malákhóta. Lakhóta thúnpi," heyápi. Heyápi weksúya.

Psalm 99:9

“Uŋkíthá Wakhán Thánka yawášte na wočhékiye thapáhata; uŋkíthá Wakhán Thánka kíŋ wakhán.” Nuŋwé.

Heché tú peló.

Greetings my relatives.

I would like to share a few words [in Lakhóta]. Forgive me if some of my words are incorrect.

My everyday name is Dakota Wind Goodhouse. My Lakota name is Two Wars. My campfire is Those Who Dwell on the Plains. On my mother's side I am Hunkpapa Lakota, and on my father's side I am Upper Yanktonai, the Middle Dakota. As a boy, I lived in Long Soldier Creek Country (Fort Yates, ND). I am from Standing Rock Agency. I now live in Heart River Country (Mandan, ND).

I like to say that I am from the Land of Sky and Wind. Long ago they said, "This is the Beautiful Country." The Seven Council Fires have always lived here in this country. They prayed here. They fought here. They carried each other here.

The Episcopal Church came. My grandfather was an Episcopal priest. He said, "I am Lakota. I was born a Lakota." What he said I will remember.

Psalm 99:9

"Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at His holy hill; for the Lord our God is holy."

Amen.

This is the way it is.

The Lakota Language Consortium's (LLC's) Standard Lakota Orthography (SLO) is employed in this document.

The Očhéthi Šakówiŋ, Seven Council Fires (“Great Sioux Nation”):

Dakhóta, or Isáŋyathi (“Santee”); located east of the Red River of the North and east of the Big Sioux River:

Bdewákhąŋthuŋwaŋ (Dwellers at the Spirit Lake)  
Sisíthuŋwaŋ (Fish Scale Village)  
Waŋpéthuŋwaŋ (Dwellers Among the Leaves)  
Waŋpékhute (Shooters Among the Leaves)

Middle Dakhóta, located between the Missouri River on their west and the Red River of the North and Big Sioux River on their east; their traditional homeland centered on the James River:

Iháŋkthųŋwaŋ (End Village), also called “Yankton”  
Iháŋkthųŋwaŋna (Little End Village), also called “Yanktonai”  
Lakhóta, located west of the Missouri River:  
Thíthuŋwaŋ (Dwellers on the Plains)

The Thíthuŋwaŋ, while part of the Seven Council Fires, have seven council fires of their own. These are:

Húŋkpapŋa (Head of the Camp Circle)  
Oóhenuŋpa (Two Boilings; “Two Kettles”)  
Sihásapa (Black Soled Moccasins; Blackfoot)  
Itázipčho (Without Bows), also called “Sans Arc”  
Mnikhówožu (Planters by the Water)  
Sičhąŋgu (Burnt Thighs), also called “Brulé”  
Oglála (Scatter Their Own)

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The vast, arid, open prairie of North America has been examined and described variously throughout Euro-American history as “immense and trackless deserts” by President Thomas Jefferson in 1803, the “Plains” by Lt. Col. G. A. Custer, and “The Great Plains” by Walter P. Webb. Sophie Trupin remembered Jewish settlers in the Painted Woods area north of present-day Bismarck, North Dakota, referring to the land as endless prairie, a forbidden land, and heathen. The people of her settlement eventually left.<sup>1</sup>

It seems that every topic of the Great Plains has been written about, including paleontology, geology, anthropology/archaeology, geography, history, and many more. Most of them have been researched and filtered through a western scientific lens with an emphasis on expansion, development, and production. Some of these subjects have been studied using a cultural sociology approach (i.e. Bower’s *Mandan Social and Ceremonial Organization*; Fenn’s *Encounters at the Heart of the World*) in which the authors invest years of time and resource and immerse themselves in the culture about which they research and write.<sup>2</sup>

Regarding all the aforementioned areas of study, geography has largely escaped a cultural examination. This does not mean that it has never been done. The State Historical Society of North Dakota commissioned the Mandan artist Sitting Rabbit to construct a map of the Missouri River with Mandan and Hidatsa place names, which is accessed and studied more today by North Dakota fourth graders than by collegiate scholars. Mark Warhus’s *Another America: Native American Maps and the History of Our Land* offers an academic study of several map pieces

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<sup>1</sup> Kevin J. Hayes, *The Road to Monticello* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 488; George A. Custer, *My Life on the Plains* (New York: Sheldon & Co., 1874), 5; Walter Prescott Webb, *The Great Plains* (Boston: Ginn & Co., 1931), 3; Sophie Trupin, *Dakota Diaspora* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1988), 32.

<sup>2</sup> Alfred Bowers, *Mandan Social and Ceremonial Organization* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1950); Elizabeth Fenn, *Encounters at the Heart of the World* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2014).

authored by indigenous hands. Warhus's work provides pre-history recall of the landscape largely before American expansion. Anton Treuer's *Atlas of Indian Nations* is a massive representation of cultural locations of first nations across North America. First nations are organized by geographical regions where they lived and where they were displaced.<sup>3</sup>

A cultural geography on its own terms, that is the relationship that the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ have with the landscape, how they survived, hunted, traded, to which direction they are oriented, where they prayed and when, of a landscape recognized by the indigenous people who lived in it has not been done, as least on the scale that includes the traditional homelands of the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ and the distances or influences of travel and trade – of those places known in the language of the Dakhóta and Lakhóta peoples.

Traders' and military efforts to construct a map of the landscape, with locations and streams demarcated in the indigenous languages, in the 1800s were made to reveal the locations of camps, villages, trails, and resources, and though these resources might contain Očhéthi Šakówiŋ places, they do not present a cultural world orientation. In 1843 Joseph Nicollet produced his *Hydrographical Basin of the Upper Mississippi River*, which includes many places and streams in the Iháŋkthuŋwaŋ and Iháŋkthuŋwaŋna middle Dakhóta dialect. In 1849 John Pope, known as Wóphethuŋ Háŋska, or "Long Trader" among the Dakhóta, produced his *Map of the Territory of Minnesota* which features many landscape names in the Dakhóta language. In 1973 Virginia Driving Hawk-Sneve published her *South Dakota Geographic Names*, which lists various places in the middle Dakhóta dialect as well as Lakhóta, but only of places in South Dakota. In 1982 Paul Durand, an amateur cartographer, began constructing a map of the

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<sup>3</sup> "Unit 1: Set 2: Mapping the Land & Its People - Sitting Rabbit's Map," [http://history.nd.gov/textbook/unit1\\_natworld/unit1\\_2\\_sittingrabbit.html](http://history.nd.gov/textbook/unit1_natworld/unit1_2_sittingrabbit.html); Mark Warhus, *Another America* (New York: St. Martin's Griffen, 1997); Anton Treuer, *Atlas of Indian Nations* (Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2013).

traditional homelands of the Dakhóta people in Minnesota. His map is unique in that it includes places, lakes, and streams in the Dakhóta and Ojibwe languages. Durand drew on Pope's and Nicollet's maps, and though the resource he created has many sites, his work did not attempt to examine or interpret the landscape as the Dakhóta and Ojibwe understood it. His book has since gone out of print. Sometime around 2013, Louie Garcia, tribal historian of the Spirit Lake Oyate, donated a file of Dakhóta and Lakhóta place names to the North Dakota State Archives. This valuable work, like Driving Hawk-Sneve's, is a list, not a map.<sup>4</sup>

As Europeans spread west, they mapped their various expeditions. Early maps included indigenous place names for summits, ranges, lakes, streams, and other points of interest. Pictographic records, called winter counts, also contain references to places. As European colonialism and later American expansion spread across the landscape, it was renamed. Places, their names, and the histories behind them were, are, in danger of being lost.

I have referenced over two-hundred maps have through the David Rumsey Map Center at the Stanford University Library to reconstruct a landscape of indigenous identity. This online tool offers users an opportunity to “geo-reference” maps by superimposing historical maps onto a variety of modern digital maps including terrain, street, political, and satellite. By pinning a location on the historical map to its present-day location, changes over time are revealed on the historic map. Once a location has been fixed and correlated with other historic maps and the modern map, that location is pinned on an interactive Google Map I have created, named:

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<sup>4</sup> Martha Coleman Bray, ed., *Joseph Nicollet and His Map* (Sioux Falls: Center for Western Studies, 2008); John Pope, *Map of the Territory of Minnesota* (Minnesota: Minnesota Land Surveyors Assoc., 1849); Virginia Driving Hawk-Sneve, *South Dakota Geographic Names* (Worthing: Brevet Press, 1973); Paul Durand, *Where the Waters Gather and the Rivers Meet* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994); Louie Garcia, *Indians of North America* - #112955, Box #1, 1944-2017, North Dakota State Archives, Bismarck, North Dakota.

*Makǰóche Wašté: The Beautiful Country*. Over 24,000 places have been geo-referenced to reconstruct the territory, the homelands, of the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ.

As this map project progressed, names of the traditional homeland, and by extension North America, were revealed. Not one was “Turtle Island,” despite an entry in the New Lakota Dictionary, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, that defines North America as “Khéya Wíta,” or “Turtle Island.”<sup>5</sup> This term may be borrowed from the Ojibwe of Minnesota and their Chippewa kin at Turtle Mountains. The Annishinabe creation story of North America after a Great Flood recalls a great turtle upon whose back the world, North America, grew.<sup>6</sup>

Makǰóche Wašté (The Beautiful Country): this is what the Dakǰóta and Lakǰóta people called the Great Plains, and by extension, North America. According to Lakǰóta elder Deloris Taken Alive, the Lakǰóta called the Great Plains and North America Makǰóche Lúta (The Red Country). According to Leksi Virgil Taken Alive, the Great Plains and North America can also be called Makǰóche Čhaŋuŋpa (Land of the Pipe). The council of elders on Standing Rock offered another ancient name of Makǰóche Owánase Thánka (The Country of The Great Hunting Grounds).<sup>7</sup>

According to Lekší Joseph Marshall III, the Great Plains, and by extension North America, can also be called Uŋthípi Kiŋ Él (Where We Live).<sup>8</sup> Chief Luther Standing Bear

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<sup>5</sup> New Lakota Dictionary, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., s.v. “North America.”

<sup>6</sup> Louise Erdrich, 1980. Erdrich shared this story to this writer as a child in Boston back in 1980. This writer’s mother worked at the Boston Indian Council (BIC) as a nurse. Erdrich was the editor of “*The Circle*,” the newspaper of the BIC.

<sup>7</sup> Deloris Taken Alive, 2018 (during the 2018 Lakota Summer Institute at Sitting Bull College, Mrs. Taken Alive openly shared this Great Plains name. This designation is interesting because she employed the use of “Lúta,” a word used with people names and with objects or places with spiritual or ceremonial significances); Virgil Taken Alive, 2018 (at the Standing Rock Council of Elders gathering at the Wakpala Day School in July, 2018, Leksi Virgil shared this name. The gathering was a reservation-wide observation of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty; Council of Elders. July, 2018. This name was offered by not just one individual, rather the Council of Elders).

<sup>8</sup> Joseph Marshall III, December 2012. Marshall was signing books after a reading at the Lakota Nation Invitational, an annual event with a focus on a basketball tournament. The event also hosted several educational workshops.

referred to the Great Plains as Waŋblí Glešká Tĥamákĥoĥe (Land of the Spotted Eagle).<sup>9</sup> The New Lakota Dictionary lists an entry regarding the Great Plains as Obláye Makĥóĥe (The Plains Country).

The Rev. Dr. Clifford Canku offered yet another reference to the Oĥéthi Šakówiŋ, Makĥóĥe Oĥókaŋhe, meaning, “The Heart of the Country.” “This is what I think of when I hear the phrase *Makĥóĥe Wašté*,” said Canku.<sup>10</sup>

Additional Oĥéthi Šakówiŋ world view perspectives in the people’s own historical context must be considered, such as how camp was set up, which directions are faced when called to prayer, and map construction. All reveal a unique world view.

Before Ptehiŋċala Sá Wíŋ (White Buffalo Calf Woman) brought the gift of the sacred Čhaŋnúŋpa to the Oĥéthi Šakówiŋ they were called Ikčéya (Common) and fought each other as much as they fought their enemies. Battiste Good’s Winter Count begins a pictographic record of the history of the Dakhólkiċhiyapi (the Dakhóta and Lakhóta people; lit. “They Who Speak the Affectionate Language”) in the year AD 901. After she left the encampment, she transformed into a bison calf, and rolled/turned four times, each time appearing to change a different color. By this sign, the order of Wóċhekiye (Prayer) was established. Black, West; White, North, Red, East; Yellow, South. On occasion, when some people pray they include the directions of the sky, whose color is designated with blue, and the earth, whose color is green.<sup>11</sup>

There is a Seventh Direction.

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<sup>9</sup> Chief Luther Standing Bear, *Land of the Spotted Eagle* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin. 1933).

<sup>10</sup> Rev. Dr. Clifford Canku, October 2019.

<sup>11</sup> Kevin Locke, July 2012; Battiste Good, “Battiste Good’s Winter Count,” in Garrick Mallery’s *Picture Writing of the American Indians*, Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of American Ethnology, 1888-1889 (Washington, DC; GPO, 1893; reprint, 2 volumes, New York, NY; Dover, 1972), 1: 294, 297-300, 303-305, 311, 316, 318.

The Seventh Direction is the human heart. Long ago, before human beings walked the world, Wakǰáŋ Tháŋka (The Great Mystery; “Creator”) held a great council with the animal nations to decide where to put the Seventh Direction. Beaver suggested the waters, but Creator looked ahead and saw that humans would travel the waters and under the waters. Bear suggested the mountains could keep the Seventh Direction, but Creator looked ahead and saw a race of humans who would enter the mountains in search of a yellow metal. Eagle suggested that he take the Seventh Direction to the moon, but Creator looked ahead and told the people that the eagle would land there. Lastly Mole suggested that the Seventh Direction be placed in the human heart, so that humans should realize that the thing very thing they are looking for is important, sacred, and valuable, and that it was with them all along. So, creator put it there.<sup>12</sup>

The story of the Seventh Direction reveals a philosophy of the people’s relation to the landscape. Everywhere they go, they take the Seventh Direction with them. When they pray with the pipe, they call creation to witness at that moment and at that place. For a moment, this event becomes Čhaŋté, the heart or center, of creation.

When camp is set up, the entrances of all of the lodges face Wí Hináphǎ (Sunrise). The only lodge that was the exception was the one from which scouts departed, the war lodge. The door faced their direction of departure and a fire was kept burning to guide them home. The camp was arranged in a circle, but not closed entirely, rather like a great horseshoe with the opening facing east.

There are some Očhéthi Šakówiŋ maps that provide testimony of a south-oriented world view, in particular, the Wičhíyena band of the Iháŋkthūŋwaŋna Dakhóta and the Húŋkpapǎ Lakǰóta. A Wičhíyena map of the 1863 Whitestone Hill Conflict by Takes His Shield and

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<sup>12</sup> Kevin Locke, August 1984, July 1993, July 2018. Kevin Locke has shared this story with very little variation. It may be apocryphal, that is, a post-reservation era story. The story shared here is abbreviated.

Richard Cottonwood details the arrival of General Sully's command from the northwest and Major House's approach from the southeast, rendered with a south-oriented perspective.<sup>13</sup> Several Húnkpap̃ha south-oriented maps of P̃hežíšla Wakpá Okíčhize, the 1876 Little Bighorn Fight, are featured in Michael Donahue's "Drawing Battle Lines: The Map Testimony of Custer's Last Fight." All these maps detail not just a south-oriented worldview, but also a perspective that is focused on the camp, not the military engagements.<sup>14</sup>

Dr. Craig Howe's "Oceti Sakowin Origins and Development" offers not a time when the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ formed, rather, Howe suggests that once long ago, the original Council Fire was a single one established at Bdé Wakhán̄ (Holy Lake), or Bdé Thán̄ka (Great Lake), though more commonly known as Mille Lacs Lake in Minnesota. The other six council fires grew out of this first, with the last being Thít̃huŋwaŋ.<sup>15</sup>

When the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ camped together, it was set up in a great horseshoe shape, with the open entrance in the direction of the sunrise, in this original order from southeast, clockwise around to the northeast: Ihán̄kthuŋwaŋna, Thít̃huŋwaŋ, Waḥpéthuŋwaŋ, Bdewákhan̄thuŋwaŋ, Waḥpékhute, Sisíthuŋwaŋ, and Ihán̄kthuŋwaŋ. The current camp circle arrangement is: Ihán̄kthuŋwaŋna, Waḥpéthuŋwaŋ, Waḥpékhute, Thít̃huŋwaŋ, Bdewákhan̄thuŋwaŋ, Sisíthuŋwaŋ, and Ihán̄kthuŋwaŋ.

The Thít̃huŋwaŋ camp circle is arranged as follows in this original order from southeast, clockwise around to the northeast: Húnkpap̃ha, Sihásapa, Itázip̃cho, Oglála, Mnikhówožu, Oóhenuŋpa, and Sičhán̄g̃u.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Takes His Shield (witness) and Richard Cottonwood (artist), 1933, #10085, box 41, oversize, State Historical Society of North Dakota, Bismarck, North Dakota.

<sup>14</sup> Michael Donahue, "Warrior Maps," *Drawing Battle Lines* (El Segundo: Upton and Sons, 2008).

<sup>15</sup> Dr. Craig Howe, *Oceti Sakowin Origins and Development* (Martin: Center for American Indian Research and Native Studies Press, 2012), 11-13.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, 13-15.



Luther Standing Bear, a noted Oglála Lakhóta leader, recalled in his youth, when he was sent off to the Carlisle Indian Industrial School, an encounter in class when a geography teacher entered and brought with him a globe of the world. Regarding his reaction to this scientific revelation, Standing Bear said, “We had been taught to believe that the world was flat, with four corners. Our teacher, however, told us it was round, and that it did not stand still, but was moving all the time, which was the reason we had day and night, as well as the four seasons. She brought a ball into the classroom. It was painted in several colors, and with it she explained how the earth revolved. After this lesson was over, we boys got together for a talk. We could not exactly believe this story that the earth revolved around an axis, and turned upside down.” Standing Bear’s narrative tells readers that the world turned upside down doesn’t just serve as a metaphor for an Indian in a white man’s world; it does, but it also presents a cultural south-oriented world view.<sup>17</sup>

Ask any Očhéthi Šakówiŋ how long they have been here, and the answer will invariably be “always.” A perspective drawn from maps cannot tell the historian how long the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ have occupied their homeland, but linguistic data might provide some insight.

There are three major dialects, each long associated with regions. A quantitative comparative linguistics calculation using the Glottochronological Theorem could provide an estimate for distance (time and place) when the Lakhóta dialect separated from Dakhóta, but a new study out of the University of New Mexico argues that environment may be a big factor for the development of the various dialects. No timetable is calculated, but the evidence suggests a very long occupation for the Lakhóta dialect to develop on the Great Plains.

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<sup>17</sup> Chief Luther Standing Bear, *My People the Sioux* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1975), 155.

According to an analysis by Ian Maddieson (Department of Linguistics, University of New Mexico) and Christophe Coupé (Laboratoire Dynamique de Langage, CNRS-Université Lyon-2), and a map constructed by Alyson Hurt (National Public Radio) based on their work, the Lakǰóta language falls right of center on a consonant-heavy scale, with right being consonant-heavy and left being consonant-light. The arid conditions of the Central Great Plains led to languages that lean just left or right of the middle on Hurt’s map. According to Maddieson a hot climate might wreck a word’s coherence, and “sunny days create pockets of warm air that can punch into a sound wave...[it disrupted] the way it was originally produced, and it becomes much harder to recognize what sound it was.”<sup>18</sup>

Another environmental factor that led to the development of the Lakǰóta dialect is the constant presence of the wind on the Great Plains. Wakǰnyaŋ Thó, or Blue Thunder, a renowned camp crier among the Iháŋkthuŋwaŋna, was clearly heard five miles away, despite the heat and wind. The question arises then, “How could Blue Thunder be heard so far away despite the environment?” The answer is simple. He changed how he pronounced syllables of some words. Traditional singers still do this.

Maddieson’s work cannot tell us when this this development began. His comparative analysis of world language, inspired by bird song and their environments around the world, tells us that this adaptation occurred a long time ago as a natural response to the environment. It is not likely that Lakǰóta speakers sat down one day, calculated how far they thought they needed to be heard, and concluded that they needed some more consonants and to change “ah” sounds to “aye” sounds.

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<sup>18</sup> Ian Maddieson, *Approaches to Phonological Complexity*, eds. Ian Maddieson and F. Pellegrino (Berlin, Germany: Mouton de Gruyter. 2009), 83-110; Angus Chen, "Did The Language You Speak Evolve Because Of The Heat?" <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2015/11/06/454853229/did-the-language-you-speak-evolve-because-of-the-heat>.

When the Lakǰóta speaker tells the Great Flood story, it was Tǰašíyagmuŋka, or Western Meadowlark, that taught Lakǰóta to the children born after that event. It was Tǰašíyagmuŋka that raised Wičháŋpi Hiŋǰpáye, Fallen Star or Star Boy, and taught him how to speak before he came among the Thítǰuŋwaŋ. There is a parallel between Maddieson's studies, the Thítǰuŋwaŋ natural observation of the Meadowlark in a hot arid environment, and the development of the Lakǰóta dialect.

The Očhéthi Šakówiŋ relationship to the landscape is reflected in the names of places that developed so long ago in the remote past that there is a name for this ancient history: Ohúŋkakaŋ (the mythological past, or "mythhistory"). This history is as special to the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ as the Bible is to the Christian. This ancient history relates the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ to more than the landscape, but to the heavens and stars. The constellations and the Ohúŋkakaŋ tie the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ to the geography in a way that could not happen elsewhere.

Ronald Goodman offers us an estimation when the Thítǰuŋwaŋ first began to synchronize their movements across the vast open plains "and their ceremonies to the motion of the sun and the stars on the ecliptic."<sup>19</sup> Long ago, the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ observed that the sun passed through Ipúspa Čhaŋšáša (the "Dried Willow," more commonly known as Triangulum and Aries) constellation, which signaled an end to winter, when the red willow could be gathered, and when the Thítǰuŋwaŋ winter camps would plan their bison hunts. Goodman treats the indigenous constellation as an "artifact," and employing an archeoastronomy calculation which has determined that the sun moves one degree west on the ecliptic every seventy-two years, that the sun has moved at least thirty degrees (when the sun began to move out of the constellation) to as much as fifty degrees (when it began to move into the constellation) west on the vernal equinox.

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<sup>19</sup> Ronald Goodman, *Lakota Star Knowledge* (Mission: Sinte Gleska University, 1992), 46-47.

If we take an average of forty degrees multiplied by the number of years for one-degree shift, we arrive at an estimate that tells us that the Lakǎóta have been in their Plains environment for 2,880 years. Goodman says, “Lakota constellations are associated, as we have seen, with specific landforms here on the prairie.”<sup>20</sup>

In 2010 Leroy Curley (enrolled member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe) determined the Thítǎuŋwaŋ calendar year to be 40,010. Curley said, “In verbal and symbolic Thítǎuŋwaŋ Lakǎóta history, the sacred circle built near Sioux Valley, Manitoba, Canada show[s] carbon-dating at 20 to 40,000 years old of man-made structures. Thus, this new year is Lakǎóta Year 40,010 as most nearly the correct annual record of our Thítǎuŋwaŋ Lakǎóta history in this region of the world.” Taking Curley at his estimate, the current year is now 40,019.<sup>21</sup>

The traditional calendar system of the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ provides insight into the relationship that these people had with their landscape. There is no standard universal system to the names of the months, indeed, the many names for the months tell of a complex cycle of survival in their environment. The Očhéthi Šakówiŋ calendar is based on a lunar cycle, which means a thirteen-month long calendar year, and relates to the seasons. Spring is two moons, summer is four moons, fall is two moons, and winter is five moons. The new year begins with the spring. The names of the moons are not standardized, which again reflects the cycle of survival. Here follow some of the known names of the months as they might fit in the 2019 calendar year (fourteen moons):

Waničhokaŋ Wí (Mid-Winter Moon): Dec. 7, 2018, to Jan. 4, 2019.

Tǎhékapšunŋ Wí (Moon When Deer Shed Their Horns)

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 46-47.

<sup>21</sup> Dakota Wind, "The New Year Begins In Spring," *The First Scout*, April 22, 2014, <http://thefirstscout.blogspot.com>.

Haŋhépi Háŋska Wí (Long Night Moon)

Wióthehika Wí (Moon of the Scarce Sun): Jan. 5, 2019, to Feb. 3, 2019.

Thehí Wí (Difficult Moon)

Napé Oyúspa Wí (Holding Hands Moon)

Čaŋnáphópapi Wí (Moon of Popping Trees): Feb. 4, 2019, to March 5, 2019

Aŋpétu Núnpa Osní Wí (Two Cold Days Moon)

Thiyóheyuŋka Wí (Frost on the Lodge Moon)

Šuŋgmánitu Thánka Wí (Wolf Moon)

Wičhíteglega Wí (Raccoon Moon)

Aŋbhánkeya Wí (Half-Day Half-Night Moon): March 6, 2019, to April 4, 2019

Ištáyazaŋ Wí: (Sore Eyes [Snow-blindness] Moon)

Ištáwičhayazaŋ Wí (Sore Eyes Moon)

Maǵá Aglí Wí (Moon When the Geese Return): April 5, 2019, to May 3, 2019

Maǵáksiča Aglí Wí (Moon When the Ducks Return)

Pheží Tho Wí (Green Grass Moon)

Wakínyaaŋ Aglí Wí (Moon When Thunder Returns)

Maǵáokada Wí (Moon When Geese Lay Their Eggs)

Watópħapi Wí (Moon When They Paddle Their Canoes [Because the Ice Has Broken])

Wihákakta Čhépaŋi Wí (Moon of the Last Born Fat Ones[Bison calves])

Čaŋwápetħo Wí: (Green Leaf Moon): May 4, 2019, to June 2, 2019

Čaŋwápenableča Wí (Moon When The Leaves Unfold)

Waħčá Hdehdé Wí (Flowers Bloom Here and There Moon)

Ptehíŋchala Thún Wí (Moon When Bison Calves Are Born)

Wóžupi Wí (The Planting Moon)

Wípazukħa Wašté Wí (Moon When Juneberries Are Good): June 3, 2019, to July 1, 2019

Maħčhínčha Nuŋwáŋ Wí (Moon When Ducklings Swim)

Uŋžínžintka Wí (Prairie Rose Moon)

Thínpsinla Wí (Prairie Turnip Moon)

Thínpsinla Woptá Wí (Digging Up Prairie Turnips Moon)

Thínpsinla Itkáħča Wí (Moon When the Prairie Turnips Blossom and Seed)

Blokétučhokaŋ Wí (Mid-Summer Moon)

Čhaŋphásapa Wí (Ripe Chokecherry Moon): July 2, 2019, to July 30, 2019

Wašúnphá Wí (When The Geese Shed Their Feathers Moon)

Wažúštečaša Wí (Ripe Strawberry Moon)

Wazíškeča Wí (Strawberry Moon)

Kħaŋtáša Wí (Ripe Plum Moon): July 31, 2019, to Aug. 29, 2019

Wasúthuŋ Wí: (Moon When Things Ripen)

Čhaŋwáphē Ġí Wí (Brown Leaf Moon): Aug. 30, 2019, to Sept. 27, 2019

Čhaŋwápe Zí Wí (Yellow Leaf Moon)

Psín'hnáketu Wí (Moon When They Lay Up Rice [To Dry])

Čhaŋwáphē Kasná Wí (Falling Leaf Moon): Sept. 28, 2019, to Oct. 26, 2019

Wážupi Wí (Drying Rice Moon)

Ĥeyúnka Wí (Frost Moon): Oct. 27, 2019, to Nov. 25, 2019

Thákhíyuhá Wí (Deer Rutting Moon)

Waníyetu Wí (Winter Moon)

Waníchokaŋ Wí (Mid-Winter Moon): Nov. 26, 2019, to Dec. 24, 2019

T̥hahékapšuj Wí (Moon When Deer Shed Their Horns)

Haṅhépi Háṅska Wí (Long Night Moon)

Wiótheḥika Wí (Moon of the Scarce Sun): Dec. 25, 2019, to Jan. 21, 2019

Theḥí Wí (Difficult Moon)

Napé Oyúspa Wí (Holding Hands Moon)

The various evidences from development of the Lakḥóta dialect, observations of the stars and associations with places in the world, to the many names of the months in the traditional calendar system, an eleven-hundred year pictographic recorded history, all support the indigenous narrative that the Očhéthi Šakówin have been here for a very long time; and their world view is south-oriented.

## 2. TRADITIONAL TERRITORY, DIALECT, AND CULTURE DEFINED BY WATERS

In 1915 Colonel Welch met Wakíŋyaŋ Thó (Blue Thunder), a renowned camp crier (his voice was said to have carried five miles) and traditional historian of the Wičhíyena Dakhóta and Húnkpap̄ha Lakhóta at Fort Yates, North Dakota. Welch asked Blue Thunder from where he came. Blue Thunder replied that he was born in 1836 on Thaspáŋna Wakpána (“Thorn Apple Creek;” Apple Creek), or Bismarck, North Dakota.<sup>1</sup>

Blue Thunder’s answer reflected the pre-reservation tradition of naming the stream along which one was born, from which one came, by way of introductions. It also enforced the ideology of territorial boundary. The pre-reservation Očhéthi Šakówiŋ named one’s band one belonged to, or one’s parents belonged to, in introduction. Today, the post-reservation Očhéthi Šakówiŋ is likely to name his or her agency where he or she is enrolled at, in introduction.

Blue Thunder was also Waníyetu Wówapi Yuháŋpi (a Winter Count Keeper), a historian of the Wičhíyena Dakhóta and Húnkpap̄ha Lakhóta peoples. A winter count is a pictographic record in which an image represents a winter, or year.

The Očhéthi Šakówiŋ people keep their collective history alive in the winter counts. One such winter count, the Brown Hat Winter Count, reaches back to what ethnologists, anthropologists, and historians might call “myth-history,” to circa 901. The pictographic history recalls the arrival of the horse in 1692, the first horse stealing raid in 1706, inter-tribal conflict, contact with traders, smallpox, starfalls, eclipses, comets, sun dances, white bison hunts,

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<sup>1</sup> Col. Aaron B Welch, "Native American Sacred Stones and Holy Places: Chapter XIV, White Spirit Woman’s Story," *Welch Dakota Papers*, December 1, 2011, <https://www.welchdakotapapers.com/2011/12/sacred-stones-and-holy-places/>.



conflicts with soldiers, treaties, the arrival of settlers, the boarding school and reservation era, and survival.<sup>2</sup>

Perhaps the best example to articulate an understanding of Očhéthi Šakówiŋ territory expansion, conflict, and waterways as a definite marker of Očhéthi Šakówiŋ territory is Íjyaŋwakaġapi Wakpá (Stone Maker River), also called Íjyaŋ Iyé Wakpá (Talking Stone River), commonly known as the Cannonball River; Čhaŋté Wakpá (Heart River) served as a boundary between the Mandan and Húŋkpapħa. These streams share a continuously occupied status among the Miwátani (Mandan), Pħaláni (Arikara), Šahíyela (Cheyenne), the Iháŋkthuŋwaŋna Dakhóta, Húŋkpapħa Lakhóta, as well as British and American presence.

The north and south banks of the Cannonball River are rife with physical evidence of historic and cultural occupations of people who are still here. This physical evidence of village remains and midden mounds is complemented by surviving oral tradition. There are also various mentions in historic journals from English resources (i.e. John Evans) to American resources (i.e. Manuel Lisa, Corps of Discovery).<sup>3</sup>

The Sitting Rabbit map of the Missouri River, from the North Dakota-South Dakota border to the North Dakota-Montana border, was commissioned by Orin Libby in 1906. At the time, Libby was the Secretary of the State Historical Society of North Dakota (SHSND). Libby sought out Sitting Rabbit, a Mandan man, to capture the geography of the Missouri River as they knew it. Sitting Rabbit did not disappoint in his efforts. In fact, the Mandan Indian villages at the mouth of the Cannonball River, both the north and south bank villages, are called the Big River

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<sup>2</sup> James H. Howard, "Yanktonai Ethnohistory and the John K. Bear Winter Count," *Plains Anthropologist* 21, no. 73, (August 1976): 1-78; Garrick Mallery, "Battiste Good's Winter Count," chap. 10 in *Picture Writing of the American Indians* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1972).

<sup>3</sup> Wood, W. Raymond, "The John Evans 1796-97 Map of the Missouri River," *Great Plains Quarterly* 1, no. 1, (Winter 1981): 39-53; John Bradbury, *Travels into the Interior of America* (London: Smith and Galway, 1817), 139-40.

Villages. The Mandan Indian name of the Cannonball River is “Big River.” While the physical evidence supports a Mandan occupation, there is evidence at the North Cannonball Village Site that the Mandan constructed defenses in anticipation of conflict, according to Calvin Grinnell, with “the Sioux. The first ‘colonizers.’” The fortifications at the North Cannonball site may well represent a key transformation in plains village life, as drought caused strife in the Missouri River valley. This may have been cause for the Mandan to move closer together, and build fortifications, for safety.<sup>4</sup>

According to Col. A.B. Welch's "Seven Fires," sometime around 1750, the Šahíyela (Red Talkers; Cheyenne) were compelled by the Lakǵóta to cross the Mníšoše (the Water-Astir; Missouri River) at the mouth of the Cannonball River. The Šahíyela were hard pressed to make peace with the Lakǵóta or be exterminated, so they embraced their old foe and became allies. A great inter-tribal adoption, cemented by marriages, was arranged. However, not all the Lakǵóta were keen to make an ally of a former enemy.<sup>5</sup>

The Brown Hat Winter Count (aka Baptiste Good Winter Count; Sičáŋġu, or “Brulé”) recalls 1762-63 as the “people were burnt winter.” The entry details a great prairie fire that caught up to this people. The story goes, that a band of Lakǵóta had fought the Cheyenne in the Cannonball area. The Cheyenne retaliated by crossing the Mníšoše at the mouth of the Cannonball River and tracked the Lakǵóta along Bdé Háŋska Wakpá (Long Lake Creek), where they set fire to the plains. This fire killed many people and horses as it burned the plains. The survivors made it through this trial by jumping into Bdé Háŋska (Long Lake) and were burnt

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<sup>4</sup> Calvin Grinnell, June 2018, discussion with the author; Dr. Elizabeth Fenn, July 2016, discussion about the Cannonball River.

<sup>5</sup> Col. Aaron B. Welch, "War Drums (Genuine War Stories from the Sioux, Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara), Story No. 8: Sioux Make Peace with Northern Cheyenne," *Welch Dakota Papers*, October 13, 2013, <https://www.welchdakotapapers.com/2013/10/war-drums-genuine-war-stories-from-the-sioux-mandan-hidatsa-and-arikara-written-by-col-a-b-welch-a/#story-no-8>.

about their legs. The late Albert White Hat Sr. (Rosebud; Sičáŋǵu), recalled the oral tradition of the Sičáŋǵu as taking place in the Bismarck region. The conflict between the Cheyenne and this particular band of Lakǵóta resulted in the formation of the Sičáŋǵu, a conflict that began at the mouth of the Cannonball River. The identity of one of the tribes of the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ (The Seven Council Fires; “The Great Sioux Nation”) tied to this location is significant because they are one of the seven divisions of the Thítǵuwaŋ.<sup>6</sup>

The Pictographic Bison Robe at the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University details the intertribal conflicts amongst the Arikara, Mandan, Hidtsa, Húnkpaphá Lakǵóta, and Iháŋkthuŋwaŋna Dakǵóta in the Heart River and Cannonball River area along the Missouri River during the 1790s. This same robe details one of many conflicts between the tribes of the Upper Missouri River, which concluded in the 1803 Battle of Heart River, and saw the expansion of the Húnkpaphá territory. This conflict is remembered in the Drifting Goose Winter Count (aka John K. Bear Winter Count) as Thá Čhánǵe Wakpá ed okíčhize, or “There was a battle at Heart River.”<sup>7</sup> The expansion of Húnkpaphá territory is significant. This territorial boundary is recognized in the 1851 and 1868 Fort Laramie Treaties.

The Očhéthi Šakówiŋ claim to the Cannonball and Heart Rivers did not go uncontested, nor did American expansion. Ensign Nathaniel Pryor, a sergeant of the Corps of Discovery during the expedition, recorded on September 9, 1807, that the Arikara and Mandan were at war. The Mandan had killed two Arikara at the mouth of the Cannonball River. Testimony of the conflict at Cannonball River was delivered to Pryor at the Grand River by the Lakǵóta. Pryor’s

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<sup>6</sup> Albert White Hat Sr., June 2006, discussion with the author.

<sup>7</sup> James H. Howard, “Yanktonai Ethnohistory and the John K. Bear Winter Count,” *Plains Anthropologist* 21, no. 73, (August 1976): 1-78.

previous experience with the Arikara and Lakǰóta made him aware that the best policy was to place every confidence in their word; they had no reason to lie.

Manuel Lisa, a fur trader of the American Fur Company, recorded that tensions were high on the Northern Plains among tribes who formed trade with the English, those who were pro-American trade, and American Fur Company trappers in the fall of 1812. The Crow and Lakǰóta had killed American trappers, the Hidatsa had stolen American Fur Company horses, the Arikara had indiscriminately killed trappers be they English or American, and the Cheyenne had robbed and whipped American Fur Company trappers on the Cannonball River.

Flora and fauna were familiar to the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ. Botanist John Bradbury made a journey to the Cannonball River in 1811. Bradbury noted late in the day on June 20, that the

“valley of Cannon-ball River, bounded on each side by a range of small hills, visible as far as the eye can reach; and as they appear to diminish regularly, in the proportion of their distance, they produce a singular and pleasing effect. The Cannon-ball River was muddy at this time; but whether it is constantly so or not, I could not learn. It is here about one hundred and sixty yards wide, but so shallow that we crossed it without swimming. We camped on a very fine prairie, near the river, affording grass in abundance, nearly a yard high. The alluvion of the river is about a mile in breadth from bluff to bluff, and is very beautiful, being prairie, interspersed with groves of trees, and ornamented with beautiful plants, now in flower.”

Among Bradbury’s findings was a species of flax he identified as *Linum perenne*. The Lakǰóta know the native blue flax as Čaŋǰlóŋaŋ Nabláŋa (“Hollow-Stem To-Blossom-From-Within”) and use the seed in their food stock. Women add it to their soup to make it go further.

Some waters and sites have more than one name for events that were still occurring in recent historic times. The Blue Thunder Winter Count, the No Two Horns Winter Count, and the High Dog Winter Count, all of which are in the collections at the State Historical Society of North Dakota - - the High Dog Winter Count is on display in the Early Peoples Gallery - - all recall a devastating flood in the spring of 1825. The High Dog Winter Count and Blue Thunder

Winter Count recall the flood as Mní wičhát'té, or "Many died by drowning." According to the High Dog Winter Count, this fatal winter camp was opposite of the mouth of the Cannonball River, and the site is remembered as Étu Pǎ Šung t'é, or "Dead Horse Head Point." The Steamboat/Thin Elk Winter Count, in the collections of the Buechel Museum at the St. Francis Indian School on the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota, records that thirty Iháŋkthunwaŋna Dakǎóta lodges drowned in the Horsehead Bottom flood. This flood story and location is remembered in the Medicine Bear Winter Count at the Hood Museum at Dartmouth College. This information is repeated for the same year in the Chandler-Pohrt Winter Count, which is located at the Detroit Museum of Arts.

The Arikara were still contesting Cannonball River Country in the 1830s. The Long Soldier Winter Count entry for 1835-36 recorded an Arikara camp on the Cannonball River. The Húŋkphapǎ Lakǎóta went to the Arikara camp to trade for wagníza (corn). The Arikara, not wanting the Lakǎóta around, perhaps owing to the part the Lakǎóta played in the Arikara War of 1823, killed six of the Lakǎóta.

The late Dr. Harriet Skye remembered her grandmother Annie Skye telling her about a smallpox epidemic that struck the Húŋkphapǎ camp on the floodplain at the mouth of the Cannonball River in 1837. They put the bodies up on scaffolds and moved.<sup>8</sup> "All of our homelands are sacred. Some places are special because of conflict, and some places are remembered because of terrible events that took place there," said Skye. Regarding the most recent events at the Cannonball River, Dr. Skye had far more to say: "I believe that as long as they remain peaceful and unarmed, and each day they are there, is a win. This kind of action confuses those who would come in with their guns and armor because their intent is to kill. They

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<sup>8</sup> William Wade, *Paha Sapa Tawoyake*, ed. Mamie Wade Wilson, (Mandan: self-published, 2012), 114.

arrested people who were praying, but the powers that be know that the world is watching, but more importantly, know that our Ancestors are watching because they fought and died so we could be here. This struggle is everyone's struggle to maintain our clean water. Water is life."<sup>9</sup>

The Cannonball River is a special place for the Hóhe (Assiniboine). The 1862-63 entry on the Long Soldier Winter Count shows a conflict at the Cannonball River between the Lakhóta and Assiniboine. Twenty Assiniboine came on the warpath, there was a battle there, and they hid behind the cannonball concretions. The pictograph consists of a circle that tells us the Assiniboine were surrounded and fired upon. A fox image which overlays the Assiniboine tells us they fought with guile.<sup>10</sup>

In September of 1863 Brigadier General Alfred Sully began an assault on the Siouan encampment at Whitestone Hill as part of the punitive campaigns organized by Major General John Pope to make Americans feel safe following the 1862 Minnesota Dakota Conflict, and to open the frontier for settlement. Sully's command killed as many as 200 (mostly women and children) and took 256 prisoners (mostly women and children). Survivors, those who escaped, turned west and crossed the Missouri River at the Cannonball confluence. According to the late Rev. Innocent Good House (Húnkpap̃ha; Standing Rock), a woman with a baby refused to move on with her people as they fled before the advance of white soldiers. When her people returned for her, they discovered that she had become stone.<sup>11</sup>

The US military selected the Cannonball River to begin its 1864 Punitive Campaign. On July 29, 1864, after spending two weeks hastily constructing Fort Rice, General Sully took his command of 2200 soldiers, which included a detachment of Winnebago Indian scouts, and

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<sup>9</sup> Dr. Harriet Skye, July 2016, personal discussion about the Cannonball River.

<sup>10</sup> *The Long Soldier Winter Count*, a copy of which is on display at the Sitting Bull College Library in Fort Yates, North Dakota.

<sup>11</sup> Rev. Innocent Good House, summer 1989.

ascended the Cannonball River on the south bank, his punitive campaign on the Isányathi Dakhóta renewed. Known or not, Sully also marched against the Thíthunwan Lakhóta (Húnkpapha, Itázipcho, Sihásapa, and Mnikhóžu), and Ihánkthunwan Dakhóta, two Siouan groups who had nothing to do with the 1862 Minnesota Dakota Conflict. Sully received a dispatch from Fort Rice at midnight on July 22 that the Dakhóta were on the Knife River. The next day Sully's command crossed the Cannonball River near present-day communities of Porcupine and Shields, North Dakota.<sup>12</sup> This river, held sacred by so many peoples, fought over repeatedly by the same, became a part of US western history with this campaign.

In the summer of 1865, the Saún (an old term for the Thíthunwan north of Hinhan Wakpá [Owl River, or Moreau River]) camped at Heart River and heavily debated whether to make peace with the soldiers or go to war. The elders won the discussion and soon camp was established at Psín Othúnwahe (Rice Village, the Lakhóta term for Fort Rice).<sup>13</sup> Even as Americans expanded, the Saún were determined to call these occupations by terms in their own language.

A third entry from the Long Soldier Winter Count indicates that the Húnkpapha were camped at the Cannonball River in 1866-67. Soldiers captured the Húnkpapha leader, Phizí, known better as Chief Gall, that winter and took him to Fort Berthold where they stabbed him. Gall was left for dead and the camp moved on. What makes this tale remarkable is that Gall walked to the Húnkpapha camp at the Cannonball River and recovered.

In 1878 the Hunkpapha chief Ištá Sápa (Black Eyes) met with William Wade, a cattle rancher on the Cannonball River, and shared this about the terrible 1825 flood:

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<sup>12</sup> Doreen Chakey, "Chapter 14: Indecision," in *Terrible Justice* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2012), 259-72.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, 273.

“We camped on this bottom land just below here. It was the Wolf Month [February] and it had been warm for a long time. One night the water started coming in over the ground from the river and before we could get to higher ground we were surrounded by water and ice chunks. Our only chance was to get to high ground before we would all be covered up with water. We tried to carry our tepees and supplies but finally had to leave them and many of the women were drowned trying to save their children. Most all our old people drowned and many others. Most all our horses went under and you can still see their heads (skulls) laying [sic] along at the foot of the hills after so many, many years. Two Bears (Mato Nopa) a Yankton chief [sic], saved the lives of several women and children by carrying them from camp to the higher ground.”<sup>14</sup>

The mouth of the Cannonball River became a memorial.

Permanent reservation borders were established in the Dakotas when North Dakota and South Dakota entered the union. The Cannonball River was selected as the border for the Standing Rock Sioux Indian Agency. This river, long important to the Saúŋ, became a modern political boundary.

In July 1937, about 1500 members of the Standing Rock Sioux Indian Agency selected the flood plain at the mouth of the Cannonball River to hold their *Wiwányang Wačhípi*<sup>15</sup> (Sundance), once an annual tradition. This one was the first open ceremony since 1881.<sup>16</sup>

The late Vine Deloria Jr. (*Iháŋkthuŋwaŋ*; Standing Rock) gives us the best insight for understanding why the *Očhéthi Šakówiŋ* and other indigenous hold the earth so close to their hearts. Deloria said in his “God is Red: A Native View of Religion,” that for many Americans,

The first and most familiar kind of sacred lands are places to which we attribute sanctity because the location is a site where, within our own history, something of great importance has taken place. Unfortunately, many of these places are related to instances of human violence. Every society needs these kinds of sacred places because they help to instill a sense of social cohesion in the people and remind them of the passage of generations that have brought them to the present. A society that cannot remember and honor its past is in peril of losing its soul.

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<sup>14</sup> William Wade, *Paha Sapa Tawoyake*, ed. Mamie Wade Wilson, (Mandan: self-published, 2012), 100.

<sup>15</sup> Col. Aaron B. Welch, "Life on the Plains in the 1800s: Sundance," *Welch Dakota Papers*, October 25, 2011, <https://www.welchdakotapapers.com/2011/10/life-on-the-plains-dances-thru-exchange-media/>.

<sup>16</sup> Francis Densmore, *Teton Sioux Music & Culture* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1992), 4.



Indians, because of our considerably longer tenure on this continent, have many more sacred places than do non-Indians.

A second category of sacred lands has a deeper, more profound sense of the sacred. It can be illustrated in...[when] Joshua led the Hebrews across the River Jordan into the Holy Land. After crossing, Joshua selected one man from each of the Twelve tribes and told him to find a large stone. The twelve stones were then placed together in a monument to mark the spot where the people had camped after having crossed the river successfully. In the crossing of the River Jordan, the sacred or higher powers have appeared in the lives of human beings. The essence of the event is that the sacred has become a part of our existence.

It is not likely that non-Indians have had many of these kinds of religious experiences, particularly because most churches and synagogues have special rituals that are designed to cleanse the buildings so that their services can be held there untainted by the natural world. Non-Indians simply have not been on this continent very long; their families have rarely settled in one place for any period of time so that no profound relationship with the environment has been possible.

The third kind of sacred lands are places of overwhelming holiness where the Higher Powers, on their own initiative, have revealed Themselves to human beings. We can illustrate this point in the Old Testament narrative. Moses spent time herding sheep on Mount Horeb. One day to his amazement [he] saw a bush burning with fire but not being consumed by it. Approaching this spot, Moses was startled when the Lord spoke to him. 'Put off thy shoes, for the place where thou standest is holy ground.' This tradition tells us that there are places of unquestionable, inherent sacredness on this earth, sites that are holy in and of themselves. These holy places are locations where people have always gone to communicate and commune with higher powers.<sup>17</sup>

Water, especially the Mníšoše, has played an important role in the history of the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ people. The direction the river flows has shaped their worldview as well. South is called Itókağata, meaning "Facing Downstream." Western worldview places north as the orienting direction. How utterly confusing the first contacts and early Indian education efforts must have been for Očhéthi Šakówiŋ young men and women!

The Mníšoše is the boundary between the Lakǵóta dialect on the west side and the Dakǵóta dialect on the east. For Americans this stream begins at the Three Forks in Montana. Its

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<sup>17</sup> Vine Deloria Jr., "Chapter 16: Sacred Places and Moral Responsibility," in *God Is Red* (Golden: Fulcrum Publishing, 1994), 267-82.

history is firmly tied to American western history because of its association with the Corps of Discovery Expedition. It means something.

This same headwater is known to the Thítħuŋwaŋ as Mní Tháŋka (The Great Water), which becomes the Mníšoše. The name Mníšoše, the Water-Astir, refers to swirls in the river where tributaries converged with it. When the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ crossed the Mníšoše, they did so upstream of the various confluences. The Thítħuŋwaŋ believe that it is the Hǎhǎwakpa (Falling Water River; Mississippi River) that converges with the Mníšoše, and so the river flows to its own end, where it is once again called Mní Tháŋka (Great Water; Gulf of Mexico).

The Mníšoše was not a boundary in the sense that it separated the Thítħuŋwaŋ west of the Mníšoše from the Dakhóta on the other side, but it reinforced some things, like dialect. This natural boundary determined that west of the river more boxelder grew, which the Thítħuŋwaŋ tapped for its sap to make syrup. The Middle Dakhóta tapped White Birch. In fact, the Middle Dakhóta name for the James River is Čhaŋsáŋsaŋ Wakpá, which translates as “White Birch River,” because of this natural resource. It was so central to the Middle Dakhóta that they simply called this stream “Wakpá.” The Isáŋyathi Dakhóta tapped the maple tree.

Conflicts on the Great Plains, water, and the wind have played a large role in shaping the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ people for untold generations, but it is the relationship that the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ fostered with the landscape, ritual and prayer, life and death, birth and burial, ceremony, a way of life embraced over generations that determined how the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ survived and cared for the land that nourished them.

The Dakhóta and Lakhóta elders recall their earliest identity for themselves, Ikčéya Oyáte, the Common People. As supernatural guidance and intervention changed their world, they

took to calling the sacred landscape Makǎóche Lúta, the Red Country, and took the identity Dakhólkičhiyapi, They Who Speak with Affection. The Dakhóta.

### 3. MYTH-HISTORY, FALLEN STAR, AND THE LANDSCAPE

The Fallen Star narrative is a series of stories told on long winter nights across the prairie landscape. Western folklorists would call this type of storytelling a cycle. There is no definite beginning, nor a definite end. The cycle weaves back into its own origin; the cycle binds the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ to the landscape with each telling. The landscape is familiar, and this is where something significant and profound happened. These sites become places where pilgrims went and continue to go to pray, sing, and rejoice. These are places of deep ancestral memory where indigenous identity is renewed.

The Lakhóta share Ohúnkakaŋ (stories from the distant past) and Wičhówoyake (stories, legends, myth) during the five lunar months of Waníyetu (the winter season), and during this moon especially, they share stories like the Fallen Star narrative.

#### **Fallen Star and the Heart of All That Is**

The story of Wičháhpi Hinjhpaye (Fallen Star) begins with his parents. This story is a kind the Očhéthi Šakówin call Ohúnkakaŋ, meaning that it happened in the distant past. There are many variants of this story. According to Ella Deloria, Ohúnkakaŋ are held to be true and only told after sunset.<sup>1</sup>

Long ago, Thaphúnj Šá Wíŋ (Red Cheek Woman) and her sister went down to the river to get water. It was evening, the final stop of four throughout the day, and camp was established. Ella Deloria referred to this time of day as the courtship hour when men took their horses to the water and women went to get water and gathered fuel for the night's fire.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ella Deloria, *Dakota Texts* (New York: G. E. Stechert & Co. 1932), 221 & 222.

<sup>2</sup> Ella C. Deloria, "Chapter 6: Courtship and Marriage," Ella Deloria Archive, [http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria\\_archive/browse.php](http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive/browse.php).

As they were drawing water, the two sisters noticed the stars coming out in the evening sky, and they remarked to each other that they thought certain stars were handsome and would marry them. On their return to camp, two men in white buckskin stepped from behind a tree and remarked that they heard the two sisters' declarations, came for them, and took them into the sky world to be with them.

Time passed, and Třaphúŋ Šá Wíŋ became pregnant. Her husband went out to hunt early one morning and warned Třaphúŋ Šá Wíŋ not to pick a certain turnip, but she did anyway, and when she dug it out, she noticed that she could see the world below through the turnip hole. She was overcome with a desire to see her people again and the idea to return to them came to her mind. She plaited the turnips into a long rope.

Třaphúŋ Šá Wíŋ then affixed the turnip rope so it would hold her as she lowered herself. The hole from which her descent came is the center of the four stars that make up the constellation the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ call Wičháŋpi Akhíyuha (the Stars That Carry One) but is more commonly known as the Big Dipper.

Her husband returned as she was going down, and she could hear him call out for her as he searched for her when he came across the hole. She descended faster but the turnip braid could not hold her. It snapped and Třaphúŋ Šá Wíŋ fell to the earth.

Třaphúŋ Šá Wíŋ landed in a prairie surrounded by dark timbered hills. The Lakhóta call this site Pěšlá, which means "Bald Spot," but is more commonly recognized as "Reynold's Prairie." This bald patch lies in the middle of Pahá Sápa, or the Black Hills. It is also referred to as Wamákha Ognáka Ičhánŋte, or "The Heart of Everything that Is;" Hóčhokayapi, or "The Center of All;" Heháka Bláye, or "Elk Flat;" Pě Huŋkáikoza, "They Wave it Over their Heads," a reference to the Huŋkayapi (Making of Relatives [Adoption] Ceremony).

Her baby yet alive was discovered and raised by T̥hašiyagmuŋka, the Western Meadowlark. According to Madeline White (Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate) it was a family of Ičáps̥iŋp̥siŋčala, or Swallows, that found him nursing from his mother.<sup>3</sup> Some say that he was found by Lak̥hóta people after they tracked his fall, and that they took him to a barren woman to raise. Whether it was the birds or people who raised him, they called him Wičháh̥pi Hiŋh̥paye.

The husband of T̥haph̥h̥úŋ Šá Wíŋ, overcome with sorrow and regret, knelt down where he stood and moved no more. His name is Wičháh̥pi Owán̥žila, or “The Star that Does Not Move,” but commonly known as the North Star.

Wičháh̥pi Hiŋh̥paye grew and aged at an exceeding rate and soon became a young man. He became aware that his destiny was to defend his people, bring them light, and give them hope.

According to James LaPointe, Wičháh̥pi Hiŋh̥paye told his earth parents that Táku Wak̥hán̥, Something Sacred, instructed him to take his place in the sky and watch over the world.

One night, Wičháh̥pi Hiŋh̥paye quietly and mysteriously left for sky world. From his place, somewhere near Wanáŋi T̥hách̥án̥ku, the Trail of Spirits, also known as the Milky Way, he sends his people rays of hope.<sup>4</sup>

### **Fallen Star Saves the Seven Sisters**

Long ago, they were camped near what is called today Black Elk Peak (formerly Harney Peak). This summit has many traditional designations too, including: Hiŋhán̥ Káŋa Pahá (Owl Maker Peak) / Pahá P̥héstola (Sharp Peak Mountain) / Oškáte Pahá (Play Inside The Mountain) / Opáhata Í (Mountain Where He Arrives At) / Pahá T̥hoká (First Hill) / Ĥé Wičhín̥čala Šakówiŋ

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<sup>3</sup> Madeline W. White, *Wi-Can-h-Pi—Cek-Pa* (Sisseton: Sisseton Wahpeton College, 1990), 5-13.

<sup>4</sup> James LaPointe, *Legends of the Lakota* (San Francisco: The Indian Historian Press, 1976), 29-34.

Hóčhokata (Center of The Seven Sisters Mountains). Each traditional name refers to how and when the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ relate to that summit.

Once, there lived a great evil presence atop the peak. LaPointe describes this creature as a great night owl which had ugly yellow eyes and large basket-like ears, and an appetite for the delicate flesh of young animals and little children. It delighted in tormenting its victims until they died before it ate them.

Long ago, they were camped there in Pahá Sápa to gather lodgepoles for their homes. The long days' work was followed by an evening of socializing. At night they heard a great flapping sound of a bird in flight. One night, a listless child so frustrated her parents that the mother took her daughter to the entry of the lodge and in jest said, "Wanági lé ičhú," meaning "Take this one with you." Suddenly a great clawed hand reached through the door and snatched the girl whose frantic cries woke the entire camp. Her cries echoed throughout the land, followed by utter silence.

The children were kept under close guard, but no matter how well they were watched, each night a child was stolen. The warriors gathered together and climbed the hill to take back their own, but could not find the creature's nest, nor could they find traces of their children.

The warriors returned to camp, weary and despondent. The parents whose children had been abducted gathered together on a hilltop and offered prayer to Wakǎńj Thánka, the Great Mystery, when a warrior in simple garb appeared to them. It was none other than Wičháŋpi Hiŋǰpaye, who told them that the creature would steal no more children because he, in fact, fought and felled it.

Wičháŋpi Hiŋǰpaye directed the grieving parents to look west, through a mountain, which had become transparent. There, atop what is called today the Needles, which the Lakǎóta

call Hiŋháj Kǎ́ka, or Rattling Owl, stood the little girls. Wičháŋpi Hiŋhápaye explained that the girls would never be happy on the world and that he would take them with him back to the sky world. He assured the parents that he would care for them as a father, then he raised them into the sky where they became Wičhíŋčala Šakówiŋ, the Seven Girls, or the Pleiades.

The Wičhíŋčala Šakówiŋ also serve as a point in the constellation Thayámni, meaning “Set of Three,” which includes Orion.

### **Fallen Star Returns to Sky World**

According to Ronald Goodman’s work in his *Lakota Star Knowledge*, Fallen Star was renowned among the Lakǎ́óta as “the Protector, the bringer of light and higher consciousness.” After becoming a father, Fallen Star ascended “a hill at night with a friend,” and told him that he was going to return home. Fallen Star laid down upon the hilltop and died. His spirit was seen as a light that rose into the star world. “At some time in the past, all Lakǎ́óta acquired the gift of light he brought them,” said Goodman.<sup>5</sup>

In 1967, Helen Blish published her thesis, *A Pictographic History of the Oglala Sioux*, featuring the works of Amos Bad Heart Bull (~1868-1913), a noted Lakǎ́óta artist. Amongst the works is a map of the Pahá Sápa and other features including Pahá Ská, or White Butte. White Butte is noted as being north of the Pahá Sápa.

Goodman discusses an ancient central symbol strongly associated with the heavens and the world. This symbol is referred to as Kapémni (“the action is swinging around and around,” as with a warclub or bullroar), and resembles an hourglass. One half represents all that is heavenly, the other half represents all that is worldly. What is in the heavens is also present in the world. In the pages of *Lakota Star Knowledge*, this “mirroring” is demonstrated in a map of the Lakǎ́óta

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<sup>5</sup> Ronald Goodman, *Lakota Star Knowledge* (Mission: Sinte Gleska University, 2017), 32.



constellation Čhaŋgléška Wakháŋ, or the Sacred Hoop, which demarcates the locations of landmarks in and around the Pahá Sápa. It is a general map; not everything matches up perfectly. Mathó Thípila is not actually within Khiŋyaŋka Očháŋku, the Race Track, the outer edge of the Pahá Sápa. The Race Track is the “mirror” of the Sacred Hoop, a constellation. White Butte is not a part of the Pahá Sápa, but it is north. It is a real butte. It is also the hill upon which Fallen Star made his journey back to the sky.

Like Mathó Thípila, Devils Lodge, or Devils Tower, White Butte appears to be in the narrative of the Sacred Hoop, though it is not so on earth. Yet according to the map of the Sacred Hoop constellation in *Lakota Star Knowledge*, a star commonly known as Capella, the brightest star in the constellation Auriga, appears as part of the Sacred Hoop.

Referencing Bad Heart Bull’s map and tracking the sky from the Čhaŋgléška Wakháŋ to Wičháŋpi Owáŋžila, one sees the stars associated with the constellation Auriga “pointing” or “reaching” towards Wičháŋpi Owáŋžila. The constellation Auriga appears to be Kapémni, or “mirror” of Pahá Ská, or White Butte, and the immediate landscape surrounding that beautiful plateau. It is possible that Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye is the star Capella, and Auriga, the constellation that Capella is in, is his constellation.

White Butte, the highest summit in North Dakota, which appears as the northern most site on Bad Heart Bull’s map, is the “mirror” of Capella and Auriga. It is the summit where Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye made his journey back to the sky. There “he sends rays of hope to his earth people.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> James LaPointe, *Legends of the Lakota* (San Francisco: The Indian Historian Press, 1976), 34.

## Fallen Star and the Origin of Bear Lodge

Long ago, a band of Thítŕuŕwaŕ was traveling east of the headwaters of Čhaŕšótka Wakpá, Big Timber River, known today as the Little Missouri River. Seven girls had wandered off from the main column and could not be accounted for. Swiftly, search parties set off in all directions when they were spotted, surrounded by hungry bears, yet the search party was not close enough to render aid.

A voice out of the sky spoke to the girls, “Pahá akhíli,” or “Go back there to the hill as a group.” This voice had the effect of paralyzing the bears which gave the girls time to scramble up the hill. Then the earth shook and rose at the command of the voice. The bears growled and clawed at the sides of the rising hill. Then stone fell down the sides and buried the bears.

The girls looked like specks atop the summit and the people worried how to get them down when the voice spoke to the girls, “Do not cry. You will not fall. I have many pretty birds with me. Make friends with them, for soon you will ride upon a pretty bird, away and away to the ground.” The voice was none other than Wičháŕpi Hiŕŕhpaye.

Each girl chose a bird who carried them to the ground. That’s how Mathó Thípila, or Bear Lodge (Devils Tower) came to be.<sup>7</sup>

According to Mary Louise Defender-Wilson, a traditional arts scholar and enrolled member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, the historic etymology of Húŕkphapŕa is that the tribal name was once Henúŕpaphapha (a designation relating to two horns), and related to a time when this particular division of Thítŕuŕwaŕ people were camped near Mathó Thípila (Bear Lodge; Devil’s Tower). Mathó Thípila is also called Ptehé Ğí, or Brown Bison Horn.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 65-67.

<sup>8</sup> Mary-Louise Defender-Wilson, July 2013.

## Fallen Star and the White Crow's Punishment

Long ago in wintertime, when the creatures of earth and air spoke a common language, a band of Thítuŋwaŋ were camped on the east side of the Pahá Sápa where the water runs so swiftly that never freezes over. The swift unfreezing water, Mnilúzahaŋ (Rapid Creek), runs close by a steep range, called Pahá Heháka or Elk Hill. This general area is known today as Rapid City.

It was a deadly cold winter with very little game available. Hunters sometimes did not return. One hunter who did manage to return brought news of a large white crow which was warning the bison of nearby hunters.

One day, the villagers gathered together in prayer for an answer to their desperate plight, when a voice called out, "I am Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye. Messenger of Wakháŋ Thánka." Then he advised them to select two young, brave, and fleet men to disguise themselves as bison and to infiltrate a herd of such; a hunting party would hide in the snow, their clothing rubbed with white clay to blend into the snow.<sup>9</sup>

According to Black Elk, it was Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye who transformed himself into a bison to catch the crow.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> The old term for the Northern Thítuŋwaŋ is Saúŋ, meaning "Wearing White Rubbed Skins." The Saúŋ include the Húŋkpaŋŋa, Sihásapa, Oóhenuŋpa, and Itázipčo. These four divisions generally lived north of Wakpá Wašté, which means the Beautiful River; or Cheyenne River.

In Josephine Waggoner's "Witness: A Húŋkpaŋŋa Historian's Strong-Heart Song Of The Lakotas" another word history is offered. It is as different in the telling as it is comes from a different Lakhóta tribal perspective, the Oglála. The Oglála historian, Makhúla (Breast), recounts that "in the earliest days, the Húŋkpaŋŋaya were of the Oglála band, who wandered far north and roamed on the upper part of the Missouri River and further up into Canada. They were called the upper river Indians – Íŋkpaŋŋaya, afterwards called Húŋkpaŋŋaya.

In a discussion with Jerome Kills Small (Oglála) in September 2012, Kills Small related much the same story as recounted in Waggoner's book, that the Húŋkpaŋŋa were once Oglála whose country was the Upper Missouri River. He was deliberate in his explanation, too, in the pronunciation of Hunkpapa as Húŋkpaŋŋa, and offered no variation of the name.

<sup>10</sup> Raymond J. DeMallie, *The Sixth Grandfather* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984), 403.

Despite the hunter's preparation, the crow was not deceived by the hunters' efforts to hide in the snow. However, the hunters who dressed as bison fooled the crow, and they caught him! They tied the crow to a pole and carried the pole into camp. The crow's head hung low in disgrace.

Following the instructions of Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye they tried the crow for its crimes against the superiority of humans, and its punishment was for its beautiful white feathers to be turned black. So, they raised the pole to its place at the top of the council lodge. Pine pitch was burned so that the smoke would be as black and sooty as possible. There the crow stayed until its feathers were black as night, then it was released.<sup>11</sup>

### **Fallen Star and the Chief who Lost his Arm**

A long time ago, when Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye was a young warrior, the chief of his people asked him to go to another village. There he happened to walk past a thípi and was captured by the beauty of the chief's daughter, Čhupé Wíŋ, or Marrow Woman. Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye was so taken by her, that he felt that she was the one he was searching for.<sup>12</sup>

The traditional courting hour, according to Ella Deloria, was towards evening when the sun hung low and men took their horses to water, when the women went to gather fuel and water to last the night. That evening the mother of Čhupé Wíŋ instructed her daughter to go down to the stream for water, and she obliged.<sup>13</sup>

Once at the stream, Čhupé Wíŋ saw Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye. She then returned to her mother with water and she asked if she might draw water again, but this time to draw water and to visit

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<sup>11</sup> James LaPointe, *Legends of the Lakota* (San Francisco: The Indian Historian Press, 1976), 73-77.

<sup>12</sup> Madeline W. White, *Wi-Can-h-Pi—Cek-Pa* (Sisseton: Sisseton Wahpeton College, 1990), 54. White's notes say that Čhupé means "Marrow," but it also can be translated as the "essence of anything."

<sup>13</sup> Ella C. Deloria, "Chapter 6: Courtship and Marriage." Ella Deloria Archive, [http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria\\_archive/browse.php](http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/deloria_archive/browse.php). This bit about the courting hour may seem repetitious, this is normal and entirely necessary. Children hearing these stories needed to hear elements repeated especially when it was reflected in daily life. White tells it this way, and this is the way it must be shared.

with someone. Her mother approved and Čhupé Wíŋ returned to the stream to meet Wičháŋpi Hiŋhpaye.

Čhupé Wíŋ revealed that her father was the chief of her band, and leapt to the heart of the matter between them, that she was free to marry who she chose but under conditions. Wičháŋpi Hiŋhpaye inquired what conditions, and after a few false starts to sharing her father's story and conditions, Čhupé Wíŋ told him with a demand of secrecy.

As a young man, the chief, the father of Čhupé Wíŋ, had received a special knife from her mother to carry with him.<sup>14</sup> The elders of his time warned him about a river monster.<sup>15</sup> The young woman of her time went down to draw water for her people's needs, and the young man went to help.

At the water, the young man was drawn to his own reflection<sup>16</sup> and shared a smile with himself, when suddenly the river monster lunged out of the water and swallowed the young man whole. Inside, the young man saw other people within; fear began to descend upon him when he touched his special knife. Courage broke his fear and so he cut his way out. Once out, some of the others who were trapped followed him. Others feared him and stayed within the remains of the monster.

Čhupé Wíŋ finished this part of her father's story and promised to meet Wičháŋpi Hiŋhpaye the following day at the same time.

They met again the next day at the waters and Čhupé Wíŋ told him yet another part of her father's story.

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<sup>14</sup> Madeline W. White, *Wi-Can-h-Pi—Cek-Pa* (Sisseton: Sisseton Wahpeton College, 1990), 45. White explains that the knife is a metaphorical weapon, sharp, and represents a knowledge of power and respect, of bravery.

<sup>15</sup> In the Lakḥóta dialect, this river monster is called Uŋhčéŋila; in Dakhóta this same creature is Wambdúška.

<sup>16</sup> The traditional word employed is Naǵí. Reflection is Naǵí, or Spirit. Shadow, too, is Naǵí. As is visible breath and the dream self.

A grandmother tasked the young man with gathering firewood, but he was intent on using his time for himself and walked into the woods with no intention of gathering wood for anyone. Suddenly, a large owl seized him. Remembering the advice of his father to always carry his bow and arrows when he went about, he shot an arrow into the owl's ear and was released. He then went about the business of gathering wood for the elder who had asked him for wood, and he did it gladly.

Čhupé Wíñ finished this second part of her father's story and promised to meet Wičháñpi Hiñhpaye again the following day at the same time.

They met again, and this time Wičháñpi Hiñhpaye played a flute. As he played, Čhupé Wíñ found his appearance handsome; he appreciated her beauty, too. She told him three stories in a row about her father.

As a young man, the father of Čhupé Wíñ went on a hunting party looking for bison. A white crow gave warning to the bison when the hunting party drew near. The future chief took it upon himself to dress himself in a bison robe to trick the white crow. When the white crow landed beside him, he grabbed it and tied it with sinew. The hunting party brought the white crow back to the people where they decided to purify and smudge the white crow with smoke before eating it.

The white crow somehow managed to free itself and fled. Wičháñpi Hiñhpaye interpreted this event with the understanding that the white crow was sacred medicine, meaning that it represented the law of nature, and that people should not kill a prayer with smoke. Yet, another band of Očhéthi Šakówiñ killed the white crow, and shared its feathers amongst themselves.

This other band suddenly had arrows that would not miss, and they became consumed by their own greed. There was no more bison to hunt by their actions because they were such unnaturally excellent hunters and killed so many.

Čhupé Wíŋ then told Wičháhpi Hiŋhpaye that they learned how to plant and grow corn by pouring water over seed and singing a water song. When it came to harvest, they put some back in the earth to please Wakháhŋ Tháhka. They learned more of the plants of the earth from Wičháhča Blokétu, Old Man of the Summer.

The future chief then met with Wičháhča Waníyetu, Old Man of the Winter, and broke that elder's belongings in his own lodge. Only later did the future chief realize that they needed the important teachings of Wičháhča Waníyetu. The elder, however, sought vengeance on the future chief's band and brought his children Ĥeyúŋka (Frost) and Wá (Snow) to the people, killing many of them.

The future chief lamented that when he met with Wičháhča Waníyetu, that he should have asked for guidance.

Čhupé Wíŋ then shared the last story of her father.

The future chief touched Čhaŋwákhaŋ, the Holy Tree, after looking at it. A sharp branch broke off and cut his arm off in the process. The Wakínyaŋ (Thunder-Beings) snatched his arm and tossed it up into the night sky, then followed the severed arm into the sky themselves. The future chief sometimes saw his arm in the heavens and hoped that someone would return to it to him someday. Čhupé Wíŋ then shared that her father said she can marry the man who returns his arm to him.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> The Holy Tree mentioned here is the sacred Sundance Tree, the Tree of Life.

Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye took Čhupé Wíŋ by the hand and promised he would bring her father's arm back, and to wait for him. She promised just that and returned to her mother's lodge. Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye returned to his earth mother's lodge and told his parents of his intention.

The earth father of Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye shared traditional songs and prayers with him; the earth father then instructed how Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye must approach the father of Čhupé Wíŋ if he was going to ask to marry her. Čhupé Wíŋ said aloud that she will marry the man who can recover her father's arm. Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye vowed to do so in her father's presence. The match was approved, and both sides exchanged gifts.

Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye went to pray in the Inkaŋapi (the Sweatlodge) and spent the season in prayer. The chief gifted him with sinew, a live coal, an eagle plume, a swallow feather, a wren feather, and an eagle bone whistle. He then went through Wiwáŋyaŋg Wačhípi (the Sundance) in which his spirit made the journey across the landscape before ascending to the sky world.<sup>18</sup>

Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye looked into the night sky and saw the chief's arm amongst the Wakíŋyan and Inktómi (the Trickster). To get to the arm, he transformed into a wren. Once there he touched the chief's arm with sinew and transformed the arm into sinew, then he tied the eagle feather onto it. Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye transformed into an eagle, but during his change, he was spotted by the other beings. The Wakíŋyan cast their lightnings at him, and he was thrown into a dark hole in the universe.

Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye asked the other Wičháŋpi (Star [People]) for aid but they mocked him. He tried songs of prayer, but they were ineffective in that dark place. He remembered the live coal, held it out, and lit the darkness. The evil Wičháŋpi reached out to him to keep him there, but he was an eagle yet and flew out of the dark tunnel.

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<sup>18</sup> The season that Fallen Star spent in prayer was winter. The Sundance in this story happened in the spring, not in midsummer as is custom.



Iŋktómi was there at the entrance with a spider web to catch him. Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye threw his coal at Iŋktómi and blinded the trickster, then transformed into a wren and flew through the web. The Wičháŋpi guided him to the Čhangléška Wakháŋ constellation where he learned his words of prayer meant living a life of mercy and forgiveness.

On the third day of Wiwányanŋ Wačhípi, Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye returned to the world whole. The chief was whole too. Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye gifted the chief the sinew and plume. The chief realized he now had a way to the sky world. Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye and Čhupé Wíŋ married and had a son together.

Wičháŋpi Hiŋŋpaye taught his son about where they come from, the renewal of souls, and the renewal of seasons. In the spring, the constellation of the Chief Who Lost His Arm (Orion, a winter constellation) sets early in the evening. A corresponding opposite constellation rises in the east in the morning completes the allegory of renewal and fertility.<sup>19</sup>

These stories detail a natural and supernatural relationship to the landscape. The Očhéthi Šakówiŋ are related to the land by the hunts, gatherings, prayers where ancestors prayed, living and dying where ancestors lived and died, and by sacrifice. This deep relationship did not happen suddenly, but over a very long undetermined time. There is very little evidence of sun dances on the landscape, and there shouldn't be. There is some evidence where people prayed, where they demarcated a circle around themselves with stone. These features today are called stone circles. Young men ascended hills, buttes, and mountains to get closer to the creator. There is little

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<sup>19</sup> Bender, Herman E, "The Star-Beings and stones," *The Journal of Lithic Studies* 4, No. 4 (2017): 28. Note: This second constellation might be Wakháŋgli (Lightning), as it was Wakíŋyanŋ (Thunderbirds) that took the chief's arm. It is Wakíŋyanŋ that return each spring and renew the earth. They bring cleansing rain and vanquish the Uŋhtéŋi (Great Serpents) that cause the spring floods. The Wakíŋyanŋ have a constellation (Draco and Ursa Minor) and bearing south of it is this constellation Wakháŋgli, or Scorpius. According to Bender, the constellation Scorpius is seen in many cultures throughout the world as a snake. Columbia, Puppis, and Canis Major comprise the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ snake constellation.

evidence of these vision quests, and there shouldn't be. People went to pray, not to leave evidence.

This last story of the Fallen Star narrative as it is told does not reveal a physical location as the others before. There is one location where this narrative is associated with, if this Ohúŋkakaŋ story were treated as history and not simply as myth. This place is called Oǵúǵa Owápi (Images Burned There [Into the Stone]). It is commonly known today as Jeffers Petroglyphs in western Minnesota, about thirty-one miles south of Redwood Falls, MN. There among the many sacred petroglyphs is an image of the Chief's Arm.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Kingsley Bray, August 2018, personal correspondence. According to Lekší Rick Two Dogs, Oǵúǵa Owápi is tied to the ancestral origins of the seven Thíthunwan divisions. They sang, danced, and prayed there. It is a special sacred place of all Očhéthi Šakówiŋ divisions.

Long ago, the Thíthunwan were camped there, and during the night they saw sparks flashing about on this stone and heard tapping as tools on stone. The next day they saw images upon the stone which were not there before. The holy men interpreted these pictographs as a divination for their future.

#### **4. MYTH-HISTORY, THE WHITE BUFFALO CALF WOMAN, AND THE GREAT PLAINS**

There are many variants of the story of the Čhaŋnúŋpa Wakǵáŋ, the Gift of the Sacred Pipe. There are also different sites associated with the appearance of Ptehíŋčala Sáŋ Wiŋ, the White Buffalo Calf Woman, the woman who brought this sacred covenant to the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ.

According to the late Pete Looking Horse, Ptesáŋwiŋ appeared twice before, once as Woǵpé (Falling Star Woman; representing Wóopǵe which means “Law,” or “Custom”), and once as Waǵčá Wašté (Beautiful Flower Woman).<sup>1</sup>

Each visit changed the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ in a profound way. Each remembered place she visited is holy. Each site serves as a memorial to a sacred way of life. Before she brought the pipe, the people were called Ikčéya, or Common. After the pipe, in reference to themselves in their own language, they were called Dakhólkičiyapi, or They Who Are With Affection.

The first name of the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ, which is still remembered today, is Pté Oyáte, or “Bison Nation.” This name reflects a time when the people depended on the bison for sustenance. This name is used reverently when speaking of the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ in an ancestral manner.

##### **White Buffalo Calf Woman as Falling Star Woman, the Beautiful One**

There is no site associated with this narrative, but this story explains the origin of the four seasons. The Očhéthi Šakówiŋ reckon a year as a winter, which is the longest season upon the Beautiful Country. The story of Woǵpé (Falling Star Woman) is associated with the change of the seasons.

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<sup>1</sup> Kevin Locke, March 2011.

There are various stories about the Wind, but the basics are that after creation, Tǎté (Wind) took the daughter of Old Man and Old Woman, Ité (Face) as his wife. They had five sons, the Tǎtúye Tópa (the Four Winds) and Tǎtéiyumni (Whirlwind). Inǰtómi, the Trickster, persuaded Ité to begin an affair with Wí (the Sun) to gain status.

The affair backfired, and Takú Wakǰáj Škaǰškáj (the Spirit that Gives Movement to Everything) gave Haǰwí (the Moon) her own domain (nighttime) and sent Old Man and Old Woman to earth along with Ité. Ité was parted forever from her husband, Tǎté, and their sons. As punishment for her insolence, Ité was hideously scarred on one side of her face and thereafter known as Anúǰg Ité (Double Face) and never trusted again.

Woǰpé, daughter of Wí and Haǰwí was sent to earth – in fact, all the stars in the night sky are the children of Wí and Haǰwí, but this story regards one special star. Woǰpé became the wife of Okáǰa (the South Wind) and they raised Tǎtéiyumni as their son. Woǰpé is generally regarded as the matron of beauty, compassion, harmony, and peace.

James R. Walker features the courtship of Woǰpé in his *Lakota Myth*.<sup>2</sup> After Woǰpé fell to earth, she sought shelter with the Wind brothers. They saw her beauty and her beautiful dress of many designs and colors. They agreed to let her stay with them; the four older brothers each wanted her for his wife.

The eldest brother, Wazíya (the North Wind) liked to hunt, but each time he brought his catch to Woǰpé it was frozen, and his coldness extinguished the fire. Okáǰa (the South Wind) enjoyed making things. Eyá (the West Wind) helped Wazíya and Okáǰa. Yaǰpá (the East Wind) was lazy. The youngest brother, Tǎtéiyumni, sometimes called Yúm, liked to play and entertain his brothers.

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<sup>2</sup> James R. Walker, *Lakota Myth* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1983), 183-86.

Only Okáğa engaged the interest of Woǰpé, and she promised herself to him. Wazíya grew angry because, he thought, as the eldest of the brothers, that she rightfully belonged to him. Wazíya argued long with Okáğa to take Woǰpé and in the end Okáğa and Woǰpé left the lodge of the Winds' home and set off to the south to make a home of their own. They took Thatéiyumni with them.

Wazíya set off after them to steal Woǰpé at a moment when she was not with his brother. Upon realizing the intentions of Wazíya, Woǰpé took her beautiful dress, spread it out, and hid under it. When Wazíya came across the dress, he sought to take it and Woǰpé, but his touch froze the dress and would not move. At the approach of Okáğa, Wazíya fled, and though Okáğa recognized the dress of Woǰpé, he could not move it. Okáğa left and when he did so, Wazíya returned for Woǰpé.

Woǰpé took her dress and spread it out further until it covered the world as a blanket, and being as the dress had no end, Woǰpé could not get out from under it. Wazíya being the eldest was also the strongest. Whenever he comes, he brings deadly cold, his breath brings frost; he killed all the colors on the dress of Woǰpé. Eyá assisted Okáğa in bringing warmth to Woǰpé and her dress in an endless cycle that the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ recognize as the changing of the seasons.

### **White Buffalo Calf Woman as the Beautiful Flower Woman**

A long time ago, the surface of makhá (the world) which is the blanket of Uŋcí Makhá (Grandmother Earth), which is also the dress of Woǰpé, was desert and held no beauty. Thatéiyumni had the landscape for his playground.

Uŋcí Makhá was sad at heart because her blanket had no beauty with flowers and living things with bright colors, and she said, "There are flowers in my heart. Oh, that they might be on

my poor blanket. Ugly Thatéiyumni.” And when a flower of her heart, to please her, would go up onto her blanket, Thatéiyumni would rush for the flower saying, “What business has she in my playground of dust and storms?” And he blew out her life.

At last Uᅇžínžinᅇka (Prairie Rose), her mother’s darling flower, went up onto Makhóče’s blanket by a water spring, and Thatéiyumni rushed upon her crying, “How sweet her breath is! And her dress is clean and pretty. I like her. It is not in my heart to blow out her sweet life. She may have part of my playground for her home and I shall name her Uᅇžínžinᅇka.”

Then others came and Thatéiyumni liked them and played with them and became gentler, and then other flowers and grasses and trees came, and Thatéiyumni played with them and became still more gentle.

So the Dakhóta put the colors of Uᅇžínžinᅇka on their garments and lodges (it was the Húnkpapᅇa tradition to paint prairie roses on the smoke flaps of the lodges), and when Thatéiyumni sees this color he remembers his first love for Uᅇžínžinᅇka and he becomes too gentle to kill the people, though he sometimes plays with them boisterously.<sup>3</sup>

In this story, the Prairie Rose, the Beautiful Flower, represents the incarnate appearance of Woᅇpé. Thatéiyumni, the whirlwind, can become a tornado. For a plains people, a tornado on the open plains with scattered thípi villages is akin to the trailer parks of modern times. The tornado was concurrently seen as a great sky turtle that reached its tail down out of the sky; regardless of how the tornado is perceived, it is by the grace and beauty of the Beautiful Flower that saves the Thíthunᅇwan from harm.

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<sup>3</sup> Rev. Aaron Beede, “Indian Mythology: Stories, Tales, Traditions, Animal Fables from Col. A. B. Welch interviews,” November 5, 2011, <https://www.welchdakotapapers.com/2011/11/mythology/#prairie-rose-myth>.

## White Buffalo Calf Woman and the Gift of the Sacred Pipe

According to the Battiste Good Winter Count, also known as the Brown Hat Winter Count, Ptehíŋčala Sáŋ Wíŋ (White Buffalo Calf Woman), also called Ptesáŋ Wíŋ, (a contraction of her full name) brought the Gift of the Sacred Pipe in the year A.D. 901. The acknowledged Keeper of the Sacred Pipe, Mr. Arvol Looking Horse, says that this momentous event happened at Mathó Thípila, or Bear Lodge (Devils Tower, WY). Black Elk says that this happened in the spring. Before Ptesáŋ Wíŋ brought the pipe to the people, it was held in a secret cave on the north side of Mathó Thípila.<sup>4</sup>

The story of the Gift of the Sacred Pipe has many variations, but all have common elements. Here follows a brief summary of the Gift of the Sacred Pipe.

Long ago, all the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ divisions were camped together. They were in a long state of famine. Two scouts went out looking for game and went to the hill. When they reached the top, they were surprised to see a beautiful young woman coming up the hill on the other side. She carried a bundle. Hanging about her dress were braids of sweetgrass.<sup>5</sup>

She looked to the scouts and said to them, “I came from heaven to teach the people how to live and what their future shall be.”

One of the scouts looked at her beauty and was immediately filled with bad intentions. The other scout urged his friend to consider that the woman might be wakháŋ.<sup>6</sup> The young

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<sup>4</sup> J. W. Powell, *Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, 1888-1889* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1893), 287-291; Arvol Looking Horse, May 2013, Solen, North Dakota (Looking Horse was not aware of any winter count commemorating the Gift of the Sacred Pipe); Joseph Epes Brown, *The Sacred Pipe* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953), 3-9; J. R. Hanson and S. Chirinos, *Ethnographic Overview and Assessment of Devils Tower National Monument* (Arlington: University of Texas, 1991).

<sup>5</sup> The phrase “going to the hill,” or “went to the hill,” has two connotations. The first is that when one goes to the hill, he or she, is going to pray; the second meaning is that one goes to the hill as a spy to look for the enemy or for game.

<sup>6</sup> Albert White Hat Sr., May 2006. The late Albert White Hat, Sr., suggested that the original intent of this word meant “with-energy,” as opposed to the Christian syncretic meaning of “holy” or “sacred.”

woman bid the scout with lustful intentions to approach her. A cloud surrounded them. The wind blew about suddenly, lightning flashed, and thunder rolled about the hill. Then the cloud dissipated, and the sky cleared.<sup>7</sup>

At her feet were the white bones of the lustful scout who thought to take her for himself. She turned to the remaining scout and gave him instructions to erect a thípiyókhiheya, a council lodge made up of several poles and lodge skins, and for his people to receive her there in the center of the nation in four days. He returned to his people to prepare them for her arrival.

She came to them at daybreak singing this song the Lakhóta call the Song of the White Buffalo Maiden, her breath like a cloud before her in the cold early morning air:

Niyáŋ thaŋínyaŋ (With visible breath)<sup>8</sup>  
mawáni ye (I am walking)  
oyáte waŋ (this nation [this Bison Nation])<sup>9</sup>  
imáwani (I walk toward)  
na (and)  
ho'thaŋínyaŋ (my voice is heard)  
mawáni ye (I am walking)  
niyáŋ thaŋínyaŋ (with visible breath)  
mawáni ye (I am walking)  
walúta waŋ (this scarlet offering [this pipe])  
imáwani ye ([for it] I am walking)<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Black Elk told John Neihardt that the scout's bones were covered with worms. John Fire Lame Deer told Richard Erdoes that the scout's remains were devoured by snakes. In Battiste Good's account, he does not mention that a scout was overcome with lust or that one of them was felled by her power.

<sup>8</sup> For the Lakhóta person there are four aspects of the human spirit: breath, shadow, spirit, and the dream. When Ptehíŋčala Sáŋ Wiŋ appeared to them, they could see that she was living and breathing, that she was real and actual. The "visible breath" also refers to the act of drawing breath on the pipe and exhaling one's prayer. Kevin Locke interprets this as a metaphor of winter transforming into spring. What is visible is this holy breath wafting upon the collecting heart of the Buffalo Nation. The Lakhóta call this Niyá Awíčhableze, the Breath of Life, the spring wind upon which all life returns.

<sup>9</sup> This is a reference to both the Buffalo Nation as bison, and the Buffalo Nation as people who depended on the bison for sustenance.

<sup>10</sup> Kevin Locke, August 2010. Many traditional Lakhóta singers know this song. I have heard this song a few times. Kevin Locke interpreted and explained each line for my edification.



It was quiet and still. No baby cried. No dog barked. She sang as she approached the camp and walked to the place of honor in the council lodge. The chief dipped a braid of sweetgrass into a bison horn cup and offered it to her to quench her thirst.<sup>11</sup>

Black Elk described the bowl of the pipe as having a bison calf carved on one side which is taken to represent Uŋći Makhá (Grandmother Earth) who bears the people and provides for them; eagle feathers were tied to the stem with grass, a feather to represent each month and to represent the sky. Arvol Looking Horse explains that the bowl represents what is female; the stem represents what is male. The stone of the bowl represents the earth; the stem represented all that grows upon the earth and Čhaŋwákhaŋ, the Tree of Life. When the bowl and stem are put together, it is understood that one is calling all of creation to witness what is about to take place.<sup>12</sup>

“Behold! With this you shall multiply and be a good nation. Nothing but good shall come of it. Only the hands of the good shall take care of it and the bad shall not even see it,” Ptesáŋ Wiŋ said, “I give you this pipe. Keep it always.”<sup>13</sup>

According to Battiste Good, Ptesáŋ Wiŋ also gifted to the people four different colored grains of corn: white, black, yellow, and another variegated. Then she said, “I am a buffalo, the White Buffalo Cow. I will spill my milk all over the earth, that the people may live.” Milk is a metaphor for corn.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Joseph Epes Brown, *The Sacred Pipe* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953), 3-9.

<sup>12</sup> Arvol Looking Horse, May 2013. This can mean the sacred tree that is used in Wiwáŋyaŋ Wačhípi, the Sundance. Looking Horse says that this means the roots of our ancestors. The term Čhaŋwákhaŋ recalls the Tree of Life upon which life returned to the world following an ancient cataclysmic flood. Those who didn't survive the deadly water drowned, their bodies were transformed into the red pipestone, transformed into the red Sioux quartzite which envelopes the area where red pipestone is acquired. The stone is treated respectfully, reverently.

<sup>13</sup> John G. Neihardt and Chief Luther Standing Bear (illustrator), *Black Elk Speaks* (New York: MJF Books, 1996), 4-5; J. W. Powell (Director), *Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution*, 1888-1889 (Washington, D.C.: Washington Government Printing Office, 1893), 290.

<sup>14</sup> J. W. Powell (Director), *Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution*, 1888-1889 (Washington, D.C.: Washington Government Printing Office, 1893), 290.

Then Ptesáj Wiŋ loaded the pipe, took a glowing chip from the fire and lit it. She established the order of Wočhékiya, the order of Prayer, which the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ keep to this day. “After I have offered it to the Powers that are One Power, and sent forth a voice to them, we shall smoke together,” she said. Then she raised it to the sky, “Grandfather, Great Spirit, you have been always, and before you no one has been. There is no other one to pray but you. You yourself, everything that you see, everything has been made by you. The star nations all over the universe you have finished.” Then she offered smoke to the earth saying, “The four quarters of the earth you have finished. The day, and in that day, everything you have finished. Grandfather, Great Spirit, lean close to the earth, that you may hear the voice I send.”<sup>15</sup>

Then she offered smoke to the west. “You towards where the sun goes down, behold me. Thunder Beings behold me!” Then she offered smoke to the north. “You where the White Giant lives in power, behold me!” Then she offered smoke to the east. “You where the sun shines continually, whence comes the day-break star and the day, behold me!” Then she offered smoke to the south. “You where the summer lives, behold me!” Then she turned back to the sky and earth. After her offering and prayer, she offered the pipe to the person on her left. It went from person to person around the circle; children touched it as it passed by.<sup>16</sup>

When the pipe completed a circuit around the camp, and it came back to Ptesáj Wiŋ, she leaned it on a bison skull, and addressed them, “In time all of you will have a pipe. Carry it always, and the Great Spirit will help you on your pathway through life.” Battiste Good said she addressed the people three times, each time taking a step back to the entrance of the council lodge and turned to look at them. She also told them to follow her. Lame Deer noted that she

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<sup>15</sup> John G. Neihardt and Chief Luther Standing Bear (illustrator), *Black Elk Speaks* (New York: MJF Books, 1996), 5-6.

<sup>16</sup> John G. Neihardt and Chief Luther Standing Bear (illustrator), *Black Elk Speaks* (New York: MJF Books, 1996), 5-6; Joseph Epes Brown, *The Sacred Pipe* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953), 3-9.

said, “Look after this pipe, and it will guide your people to the end of the world. In time, I will return. Mitákuye Owás’iŋ.”<sup>17</sup>

Then Ptesáŋ Wiŋ stepped back a fourth time and turned. She mysteriously transformed into a bison calf. Some say that she rolled or turned and with each roll or turn she transformed into a different color bison before becoming a white bison calf. Battiste Good noted that she disappeared altogether, and they followed the direction she was stepping in. The calf turned and ran over the hill. They followed her and discovered a herd of bison on the other side of the hill. According to Lame Deer, the bison surrounded the camp as the people were in prayer, that the “White Buffalo Woman had brought her Buffalo Nation with her.”<sup>18</sup>

The stone by which pipe bowls are made comes from a special place known as Čhaŋnúm Ok’é (Pipestone Quarry) or Čhaŋdúhupa Šá K’ápi (Where They Dig Red Pipestone) but is known today as Pipestone National Monument. The sacred red stone was revealed after the bison danced there. The people came across this wallow and found the stone washed and polished by the wind and rain. This revelation was a gift of the Bison Nation.<sup>19</sup>

The sacred pipestone is reverently treated as if it were a person, or people. They say long ago, the world flooded, and those who drowned at the end of the old world sank to the bottom of the ocean, and the Great Mystery turned the drowned into stone. It is still acquired through traditional means today. This sacred stone was given the scientific name *Catlinite*, after George Catlin.

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<sup>17</sup> Joseph Epes Brown, *The Sacred Pipe* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953), 3-9. The Očhéthi Šakówiŋ conclude their prayers with the phrase Mitákuye Owás’iŋ, which generally means, “All My Relatives.”

<sup>18</sup> J. W. Powell (Director), *Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution*, 1888-1889 (Washington, D.C.: Washington Government Printing Office, 1893), 291; Joseph Epes Brown, *The Sacred Pipe* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1953), 3-9.

<sup>19</sup> Cedric Good House Sr., May 2014. A bison wallow is called Pteówačhi, or “Where the Bison Dance.”

## White Buffalo Calf Woman and the Bison Call

Wakínȵaŋ Thó, Blue Thunder, was the historian for the Wičhíyena Iháŋkthuŋwaŋna (the Upper Yanktonai Dakhóta) and Húŋkpap̃ha Lakhóta peoples. He kept a winter count, a pictographic mnemonic device in which the year is recalled by one outstanding event and a pictograph is produced to articulate each year. Blue Thunder enlisted as a US Indian Scout at Fort Rice and ran mail between the forts on the Northern Plains. He picked up the winter count tradition in the post-reservation era continuing until he died sometime around 1925.

The first entry of his winter count records an account of a meeting with Ptesáŋ Wiŋ. A year was not assigned to this entry, other than “Eháŋna,” or “A long time ago.” The story for this event simply tells us “Wakháŋ Tháŋka wíŋȵaŋ waŋ iyéyapi,” or “They found a Great Spirit Woman.” It is regarded to be a true event. Accompanying oral tradition tells us a little more.

Sometime about 1925, Col. Alfred Welch recorded the story of the Woman In White. They were starving. She appeared to them dressed in white. The Dakhóta received her at a time when they were starving and she brought them bison calling songs. Col. Welch, a historian and adopted member of the Húŋkpap̃ha, cited No Two Horns (a historian for the Húŋkpap̃ha); based on the oral traditions, Welch supposed this event took place in a little valley through which runs the Little Heart River, at a bend in the Missouri River where the Little Heart River converged with the Missouri.<sup>20</sup>

These buffalo calling songs and the location where the Húŋkpap̃ha received them is both an important event and place. These songs and dance are still remembered by the Húŋkpap̃ha today. The Buffalo Society lodge had two bison tails affixed to the top of two lodge poles, a

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<sup>20</sup> Col. Aaron B. Welch, "The Arikara Indians...Who Are They and When Did They Come to Dakota," Welch Dakota Papers, November 15, 2011, <https://www.welchdakotapapers.com/2011/11/tribal-history-notes-on-the-arikara/>.

bison tail was also affixed to the backside of the lodge. The society wore bison headdresses, danced, and prayed to bring the great bison herds to them, for a successful hunt.<sup>21</sup>

About ten miles southeast of where the Woman In White gave them these songs, is a plain called Akánlyya Wašté (Beautiful High Plain). At the southeastern most point of this plain, about three and a half miles north-northwest of Fort Rice, on private land today, is a bison jump. It is no coincidence these two sites are so close together.

These stories might be interpreted as the myth or legend. The first two take place on the Great Plains at no definite site, but the landscape description is the Great Plains – there is no forest or mountains. The story of the Gift of the Sacred Pipe is associated west of the Missouri River, west of the Black Hills, and so long ago, it defies the conventional historical and anthropological assumption that the Thítħunwaj ventured onto the plains in the latter half of the seventeenth century.

The only site east of the Missouri River in any of the White Buffalo Calf Woman narratives is the Pipestone site in Minnesota. If anything, this informs the historian that the people moved back and forth across the plains in an ancient tradition that far predates the earliest non-native explorers. The sacred stone that made the bowl of the pipe was brought to them almost three thousand years ago a Mathó Thípila (Bear Lodge), or Devils Tower.

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<sup>21</sup> Cedric Good House Sr., summer 2015. Discussion about Buffalo Society.

## 5. PLACE AND STORY ON THE NORTHERN PLAINS

### Encounter with the Horse

The Mnišóše, the Water-Astir (the Missouri River) holds a special place in the history and mythology of the Plains Indians. For the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ, the Missouri River and many of its tributaries serve as boundaries for ancestral territories. These territorial boundaries were often contested and changed throughout the years. Sometimes great events would transcend these boundaries, like floods, fires, eclipses, and great starfalls. Among these great events was the arrival of the horse on the Mnišóše.<sup>1</sup>

The Očhéthi Šakówiŋ have many variations of the story about their first encounter with the horse on the Great Plains. Each story relates a respect for the mystery of creation and all of its unrevealed sacred gifts for humanity. That respect for the horse and the connection that the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ felt for it is reflected in their names for this creature in their first encounter.

The called the horse by names including: Elk Dog, Holy Dog, Spirit Dog, Mysterious Dog. In the Lakhóta language the word for dog is Šúŋka, meaning Common Animal. There was no word for horse until they saw one. The most common name is Šúŋkawakħaŋ, meaning Common Animal with Energy.

Ihąŋkthuŋwaŋna Dakhóta elder Mary Louise Defender-Wilson shares the story of the first horse on the Makoche Studios album *My Relatives Say: Traditional Dakotah Stories*. According to Defender-Wilson's account: Long ago, there were two men who went out hunting along the Mnišóše. It was called such because when tributaries converged with Mnišóše there would be a great swirl. Before the dams, the river ran brown.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Dakota Goodhouse, "A Long Time Ago, They Saw Many Horses," *On Second Thought*, Spring 2012, 26-29.

<sup>2</sup> Mary-Louise Defender-Wilson, *My Relatives Say* (Bismarck: Makoche Studios, 2001), CD.

The two hunters followed the course of Mnišóše and noticed a great swirl that began to turnabout in the river. As they stood transfixed by the swirl, a violent thunderstorm suddenly manifested about them. They stood their ground in the growing storm, and as they carefully watched the river a bolt struck the swirl.

From the middle of the swirl appeared what looked like a head with a long face. As this head followed the direction of the swirl in circles, a long neck was revealed, which lifted its head out of the water. Then a great body, like that of an elk, rose from the water. The creature then fought against the swirl and current of Mnišóše, broke free, and swam for the shore where the hunters stood watching.

The creature ascended the bank of Mnišóše and walked into the grass where it began to graze. Because it ate grass, the hunters assessed that it was similar to bison. The hunters watched the creature in curiosity a while before deciding to approach the creature, but as they neared it, it moved away. As they were close, they observed that the creature had a young one with it.

The hunters supposed that the creature and its little one were somewhat like the other four-leggeds, a wariness of people. It was also different too, in that it did not have horns. There seemed to be a familiar connection between the creature and them.

The hunters returned to their people and told them of the creature's strength and grace, and of an apparent familiarity with them. The people spoke among themselves about the nature of the creature, its seeming domestication, and its purpose in the world. They eventually concluded that the creature was sent to help them in the hunt, on the warpath, and in their many moves across the plains.

The people deliberated amongst themselves further about how best to approach the creature and welcome it into their lives. They eventually turned to the singers to compose a song

of invitation to the creature and its little one, because they did not want to capture them and force them into a new life.

The people believed that the creature was sent to them to ease their burdens, as Šúŋka, Dog, long ago had come to help them. In the days before horses, they called that time “dog days.” In those days, Šúŋka helped them haul firewood or personal belongings using šuŋ’óŋk’iŋ. Lodges in those days were much smaller too. The people hauled their burdens in one-man travois alongside their Šúŋka – these travois were called waŋžíkšila. Šúŋka also served the people as guard dogs, especially over the children, for in those days the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ took children from their enemies, as they took them from the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ, and raised the children of their enemies as their own.<sup>3</sup>

The singers then composed the very first horse songs to tame them and bring them into plains village life. As the horse adjusted to a new way of living, it began to help them. The people learned to fashion saddles, bridles, and new travois they called šuŋúŋk’oŋpa, the pony-drag.

The dog days came to an end. The Plains Indian horse culture began. Defender-Wilson tells this story with a reminder that all things come from Wakháŋ Thánka, the Great Mystery, and must be respected.

If one interjects the question, “When did this happen?” after Defender-Wilson tells it, one should be prepared to hear the answer, “A long time ago.” Generally speaking, this would satisfy the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ ear, but the answer can be found in the Drifting Goose Winter Count.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Kevin Locke, spring 2012. Locke shared these words with me when I asked about the Dakhóta words for travois. Šuŋ’óŋk’iŋ appears in the New Lakota Dictionary, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Waŋžíkšila and Šuŋúŋk’oŋpa do not appear in this resource.

<sup>4</sup> James H. Howard, “Yanktonai Ethnohistory and the John K. Bear Winter Count,” *Plains Anthropologist* 21, no. 73, (August 1976): 1-78. The Drifting Goose Winter Count is more commonly known as the John K. Bear Winter Count.



The Drifting Goose Winter Count tells the history of the Iháŋkthuŋwaŋna Dakhóta, the Yanktonai Dakota, a division of the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ. This winter count details the earliest record of the horse on the Northern Great Plains. This is a significant event and this record is often overlooked – the general estimate that horses arrived on the Great Plains is usually around 1750. This record tells us: Waníyetu eháŋna, šuŋgnóni otá kiŋ, or “A long time ago, there were many wild horses.” Counting back from major events like starfalls, smallpox, or war, this record indicates that they saw those many horses in 1692.

The Iháŋkthuŋwaŋ and Iháŋkthuŋwaŋna were living in earthlodge villages at that time on the banks of Čaŋsaŋsaŋ Wakpá, the Creamy White Tree River (White Birch River), presently known as the James River. They planted corn, squash, and beans, not unlike other sedentary tribes; they hunted game and fished. In the late winters they tapped the White Birch for its sweet sap. Mnišóše Čaŋsaŋsaŋ Wakpá okhízata éd waníthipi, “The confluence of the Water-Astir and the White Birch River was where they established winter camp.” Howard’s informants told him this location was a favorite wintering site, meaning they camped there regularly when winter came, and were certainly there when the horse arrived in 1692.<sup>5</sup>

A practical interpretation of Defender-Wilson’s story, along with cultural information found in the Drifting Goose Winter Count, informs readers that the two hunters were hunting in the vicinity of their favorite winter site when they came upon horses emerging from the river. Defender-Wilson’s story informs readers how it unfolded, the oral tradition tells us the location, the winter count tells us when.

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<sup>5</sup> James H. Howard, “Notes on the Ethnogeography of the Yankton Dakota,” *Plains Anthropologist* 17, no. 58, Part 1 (November 1972): 281-307.

Kevin Locke, master storyteller and pre-imminent fluteplayer, recorded the “Thunder Horse Song,” sung by the late Pete Looking Horse. This song recalls the Dakhóta people’s very first encounter with the horse.<sup>6</sup>

Wakáŋtaya thokéya ičháǵe ló (Above, the first time we saw it, it changed).

Wakáŋtaya thokéya ičháǵe ló (Above, the first time we saw it, it changed).

Šúŋka Wakháŋ waŋ thokáhé keč’úŋ (Even as it was the First Horse).

Maŋpiya ičháǵeya, ičháǵe ló (Even as the clouds changed, it changed).

The horse increased capacity for baggage and enabled the people to travel several miles a day. They determined four times a day, mid-morning, noon, afternoon, and late afternoon, made the best productive travel on the plains with the horse. Hunters rode alongside the great bison and fell them. Before the horse, hunting bison required concerted effort of a band to drive bison over a cliff in a buffalo jump.

The arrival of the horse kicked a “horse race,” like a kind of arms race. The horse was as much a sacred gift as it was a weapon of mass destruction. This precious resource must be in the hands of the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ. War parties travelled further than before to secure an expanding territory.

The earliest record of horse stealing on the Northern Great Plains is that recalled on the Brown Hat Winter Count. In 1706 the Dakota stole horses from the Ĥewáktokta, a Lakǵóta term for the Hidatsa. The Hidatsa at that time were living north of the Mandan Indians in the vicinity of Knife River.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Kevin Locke, summer 2013.

<sup>7</sup> J. W. Powell, *Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution*, 1888-1889 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1893), 287-291. Mallory includes Dr. Corbusier’s (who collected a copy of the Baptiste Good Winter Count) notes, which remarked that this was the first mounted assault.

The earliest record of making war on horseback also comes from the Brown Hat Winter Count. Baptiste Good recalled a curious development in warfare. In the entry for 1714-15 a warrior astride a horse, carrying a pine lance, came to attack, but killed no one. This mounted attack was the first of its kind experienced by the Sičhánǵu. The rider certainly did not come to joust like a medieval knight with his lance. He came to collect war honor, not to kill.<sup>8</sup>

Jon Eagle, Sr., Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, offered this first horse story.<sup>9</sup>

A long time ago, the people traveled west to some mountains, then turned south where they encountered a camp of people whom they had never met. In that camp, they noticed too, that there was an animal that they had never seen. Unfortunately, enthusiasm of first contact swiftly broke down and violence broke out. During the conflict, the horses broke free and scattered. Warriors went into the new enemies' camp during the fight and stole women thinking to make wives of them. The people, the Lakǵóta, made a run north with the enemy in hot pursuit. Gradually, it happened that the enemy lost heart and turned back. The people slowed their flight, and to their wonder, encountered the horses. Warriors wanted these horses and tried taking them without success. In the evening, after camp was established, the enemy women went out in the field and sang to the horses which drew them in. With the horses drawn closer to the familiarity and soothing tone of the women, warriors would attempt to capture them to no avail. All the while the thiyóšpaye kept moving. A day came when they came to a river, there they made an abrupt turn east, back to their ancestral territory, and lo, the horses followed. Gradually the horses and warriors came to an understanding and so that's how this one band of Lakǵóta came to have the horse.

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Jon Eagle Sr., spring 2013.

According to the story as Eagle heard it, the enemy from whom the Lakḥóta took women and horses were the Spanish.

Ella Deloria, Iháŋkthuŋwaŋ Dakhóta (Yankton), recorded a horse story as well; this one took place in Makhóche Čhaḥlí Wakpá, or Powder River Country.<sup>10</sup>

One winter the people lived without want in Čhaḥlí Wakpá Makhóche, where bison were abundant, and everyone was happy; and then spring arrived about the time of the Sore Eyes Moon (about the month of March). The cry went forth from the council lodge that the people were to move. So, everyone broke camp, and soon they were gone.<sup>11</sup>

Only one man and his wife were left behind. The reason was that they owned one horse, a mare that was not much good, and with it they could not hope to keep up to the pace of the tribe, and hence, they stayed behind.

They went from campsite to campsite, picking up what they found, of discarded bone, or bits of meat; and to the south, there was a lake, so they walked around it, gathering wood.<sup>12</sup>

Then the man ascended a hill and sat down to rest and view the surrounding country, when he saw something come up over the horizon, in the spot where the sun rises, and advanced towards his direction. When it was near enough to be observed, it proved to be a beautiful black spotted horse which was coming to drink at the lake.

After drinking, he stopped under a tree, and rubbed against it, laid down and rolled, and then he rose and went back the way he came. Then, a tiny grey bird flew to the man and sitting down next to him said, “I’ll bring you šúŋkawakḥaŋ (a horse). Go home and make a bridle and

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<sup>10</sup> Ella C. Deloria, *Dakota Texts* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 256.

<sup>11</sup> Ištáwíčhayazaŋ Wi translates as, “Sore Eyes Moon.” According to Deloria the sun shone brightly in that country and while the snow was on the ground, the brightness caused snow blindness; Thípiyókhiheya translates as “Council Tipi.” The last time a lodge like was established was at the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ camp on the floodplain of the Missouri River at the mouth of the Cannonball River in 2016.

<sup>12</sup> Discarded bone, if still green, can be pounded and boiled, and the grease that rises to the top is skimmed off to be used later in pemmican, and other rich dishes.

apply this medicine to it, and hang it, in the form of a noose, from that tree where he rubs himself. When his head becomes caught in the rope, chew this root, and apply it on yourself, and catch him. Rub some of this medicine on the mare which you already have.”<sup>13</sup>

So the man went home and carried out the orders in detail.

The black spotted horse came again, so the man caught him and blew some of the medicine on his nose, which made the horse stand still and permitted himself to be held. He stared at the man every second and yet he did not try to get away, so the man stroked him and took him home.

The little grey bird talked to him again, “The days of your hardship in the tribe are now over. By and by this black spotted horse is going to sire many horses; he will thus multiply himself, but on both sides.” So he allowed the horse to stay with the mare he already owned, and the following summer, there was a colt, as beautiful as, and marked exactly like, the black spotted horse. It was a male. Another year and then a female colt was born. Again, the following summer a male was born. So, from that horse which the bird had brought him, the man owned three horses, exactly alike, possessing inconceivable speed.<sup>14</sup>

In the tribe the man and his horses became famous, and the man was now far different from that poor man he used to be; his name was held high in the tribe.

During the night he used to picket these horses in front of his door; and one night, someone crept up to them, planning evil against them; but the first black spotted horse spoke,

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<sup>13</sup> Waǵiyōǵi, the Hermit Thrush is possibly what Deloria mentions. She recorded: “A bird resembling the common prairie blackbird, and which the same habits of staying around buffaloes and cows, but with a grey instead of a black coat.” According to Deloria, the bird used “the un-contracted term for horse, šúŋkawakǵáj, mysterious dog. In songs, and formal speech and religious language of the old days, this form was always used when the horse was spoken of with the respect due it.

<sup>14</sup> Ella C. Deloria, *Dakota Texts* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 256. Deloria wrote, “...the black horse was destined to sire a breed through both a male and female line.”

“Wake up, and come out. Someone approaches with the intention of causing our death.” He said this while neighing and his master heard it and came outside.<sup>15</sup>

This is what he [the master] said, “I do not keep these horses in order that you shall insult me through them. I keep them for the sole purpose of bringing good to the tribe, and in that spirit, I lend them to you to hunt meat for your children, as you know; you have used them freely in war and, as a result, have achieved glory. These horses are here to serve. Yet when I tied them for the night and then came into rest, someone sneaked up on them and caused them to run home. You see then it is useless to do anything to them, even in secret.”

That man understood the speech of the horses. The first horse then spoke, so his master announced it, “In order that you in this tribe might be fortunate in all things, I and my young have multiplied; and from that, you have benefited in the past; yet now, because an evil thing has entered the tribe, this source of good shall stop. You must go back to your former state when things were hard for you, all because that one who tried to kill us has by his act brought it upon the entire tribe.”

In that way he spoke, so his owner told the people. The horses now lost their power to run as of old, and no more colts were born, until at last that entire breed became extinct. In that way, this tribe, which was so fortunate, took a backward step to their former state of hardships. That man who owned them and permitted the tribe to rely on them was named [Wak]Táya Máni Ú (He Walks Guardedly When He Approaches).

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<sup>15</sup> The Dakhóta sometimes hear things in the utterances of animals. Old people used to say the wolves told the future, when they howled at night. Anyone, with or without supernatural power, can understand the meadowlark. Its song is not indicative of impending evil; only amusing, and a welcome note of spring.

He was pitied and caused to have good fortune himself; had he so wished, he might have enjoyed it all alone; but that was not what he wanted. He caused all the tribe to share in it; and then, regretful fact, one, through jealousy perhaps, brought ill fortune on them all.

Keúŋkeyapi, (That's what they said.)<sup>16</sup>

Plains Indian horse culture began along the Missouri River at first contact with the horse in 1692, not ~1750 as most research and museums attribute. Horse stealing quickly became a war honor and was encouraged among young men seeking to prove themselves.

### **The Origin of Counting Coup**

The traditional war honor of counting coup reaches back to a time before the First Nations walked upon Makhóche Wašté, the Beautiful Country. When the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ arrived, they learned to survive by observing their natural environment.

When the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ learned warfare, they were prepared for the First Battle by Thókéya (First [Man]), aided by Iŋktómi (the Spider Nation in this instance, not the legendary trickster) and Ziŋtkála (the Bird Nation).

With a heavy heart, Thókéya gave the first bow and arrows to men. “Misúŋkala (Little Brother/s),” said Thókéya, “the time to give you weapons is now and I am sorry to do so. Now, at last there is war in the hearts of animals and man.” According to Ohíyesa (The Winner; aka Dr. Charles Eastman) and his work *Wigwam Evenings*, Thókéya gave them a spear as well and showed them how to use these tools.<sup>17</sup>

Iŋktómi fashioned stone tools for arrows, spears, and knives, then scattered these things across Makhóche Wašté for the people to find and use. They say that Iŋktómi continued to knap

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<sup>16</sup> This end phrasing at the end of a story was an indicator that this was a true telling.

<sup>17</sup> Charles Eastman and Elaine Goodale Eastman, "Sixteenth Evening: The First Battle," *In Wigwam Evenings* (Mineola, NY: Dover, 2000), 139-146.

stone up until recent times. The high-pitched ring of stone on stone was heard by Lakǵóta men and women on Standing Rock. “Some people have heard him at work but could never see him. I have, myself, heard him at work, chipping stones. It was a small hole south of Fort Yates where I heard him working. He went slow (chip chip). We got within a few feet of the hole, when he would stop and we could not find him then. When we went, away he worked again,” said Bull Bear to Col. Aaron Welch in 1926.<sup>18</sup>

In the First Battle, the Ziŋtkála had chosen the side of the people. In the story of the Great Race around Ĥesápa, the Black Hills, between man and animal, to decide who would hunt who. Again, Ziŋtkála stood with man, because like man, Ziŋtkála has two legs.

The Očhéthi Šakówiŋ observed how Ziŋtkála defended their nests from one another and from other threats. In 1919 Siŋté Wakíŋyaŋ (Thunder Tail; Oglála) shared that all Ziŋtkála are alike in the regard they have for their young. When approached, Ziŋtkála cries out vigorously, and if the interloper still advances, only then do they fly out and give chase. “...iwíčhačupi čhíŋpi šni hé uŋ héčhapi (...they do not want their children taken, that’s why they do this),” said Siŋté Wakíŋyaŋ. He continued:

Wóeye kiŋ le othéŋike lápi: ‘Blihíč’iyapo! Ziŋtkála waŋ iyé wípĥe yuhá šni yéš čhíŋčá awíčhakikšíža,’ eyápiča na hé tóna okíčhize él ophápi kiŋ hená líla óta waŋtoŋyaŋpi kta ogná škaŋpi nakúŋ t’ápi eyáš na oyáte kiŋ hé uŋ awáŋjglakapi.

(They have a determined saying: ‘Take courage! Birds have no weapons and yet they keep their young,’ they said. They fight determinedly and wound their many enemies, sometimes killing them to protect what is theirs.)

Heháŋl íčhinuŋpa wóeye kiŋ: ‘Ziŋtkála owé oyásiŋ kiŋyaŋpi na okté šičápi.’ Hé uŋ oyáte kiŋ okíčhize él ziŋtkála iyéčhel škaŋpí. (They have a second saying: ‘All the birds fly and strike the bad ones.’ In battle, the people are like birds.)

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<sup>18</sup> Col. Alfred Welch, "Inktomi Stories," *Welch Dakota Papers*. November 5, 2011, <https://www.welchdakotapapers.com/2011/11/mythology/>.



Counting coup then, can be taken by way of touching the enemy with one's own hand, with a stick, quirt, lance, bow, staff, or even a rifle. The Očhéthi Šakówiŋ call this honor: Tǎ́oka Kté ("Strike/Kill an enemy"). The coup stick is called Čhanwápaha. Recounting these deeds is called WaktóglakA. The victory dance is Waktégli Wačhípi.

The Baptiste Good Winter Count recalls a curious development in warfare, a marriage of counting coup and riding horse against the enemy, whoever that may be. In 1714-15 a warrior astride a horse, carried a pine lance and came to collect war honors.<sup>19</sup>

The Rosebud Winter Count (Sičáhŋŋu) mentions coup a few times, the earliest of which will be shared here. In 1774-1775, a man named Red Dragonfly counted coup using a bow on a Crow Indian. A winter count entry was selected because it was outstanding. Counting coup was bold and daring, and young men were expected to be so as well. Not every war party went to count coup. In fact, some had coup counted on them, and the unlucky returned in humiliation. There was something exceptional about this particular deed that needed to be remembered.<sup>20</sup>

The Long Soldier Winter Count (Húnkpápǎha) mentions coup in the entry for 1816-1817, "2 Sioux killed 2 Crows and scalped them and blackened their own faces for gladness and came home [sic]."

For the Húnkpápǎha, there are four coups: first coup is for the one who struck the enemy first, alive or dead, second coup is for the one who struck second, third coup for third strike, and fourth coup for fourth strike. A coup must be substantiated by an eyewitness.

According to Mathó Wathákpe (John Grass), first coup is designated by an eagle tail feather with the quill painted red, bound in red cloth, or embroidered with quillwork. A first coup

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<sup>19</sup> Lakota Winter Counts Online, March 3, 2005, <http://wintercounts.si.edu/index.html>.

<sup>20</sup> The Saúŋ, or Northern Thítuŋwaŋ, were generally located north of the Cheyenne River. The Sičáhŋŋu were typically south of the Cheyenne River. This entry took place in Crow country which was around the Bighorn Mountain area. The event of counting coup from astride a horse was memorable.

feather may be colored or notched to include second, third, or fourth coup. A rider would designate first coup with a horse tail affixed beneath the horse's bridle bit. Other methods of showing one's first coup included attaching a streamer of horsehair to the tip of an eagle feather, or a small tuft of plumage was carefully glued to the tip of the feather. Second, third, and fourth coup would be evidenced by stripes, perhaps on a shirt, leggings, or even painted on a horse when riding to meet the enemy.<sup>21</sup>

Living narrative of the coup designations survives today in lekší (uncle) Wilbur Flying By. "Amongst our Hunkpapa relatives the first to count coup wore a center eagle tail feather straight up. [The] second to count coup wore an eagle feather to the right. [The] third to count coup wore an eagle feather to the left, and the fourth to count coup wore a buzzard feather."<sup>22</sup>

The coup stick might have the crown (the scalp) of an enemy attached to it. The swirl, or crown, of hair represented the soul to the Lakhóta. Taking the crown, or scalping the enemy, meant taking the soul of the enemy.

Counting coup was not limited to touching just the enemy. Sometimes a warrior made a run through an enemy village, on his pass through, he might reach out and touch a painted lodge, stealing the other's medicine and take it home with him to put on his lodge.

Sometimes a man would gather his honors, his feathers, and had he accumulated enough, created a wápaha, a kind of banner or staff, sometimes adorned with cloth. Other banners or staves, were long and crooked on one end, and wrapped in otter fur. The feathers were arranged to adorn either wápaha.

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<sup>21</sup> Charles I. Walker, summer 2013. Walker attributed his knowledge to Wilbur Flying By.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, as related to Charles Walker.

An esteemed warrior might even invite his *kǎholákičhiyapi*, his brothers-in-arms or society, to his wife's lodge for a meal. Then they would recount the stories of each feather earned, then the man might make a *wapǎháha*, a warbonnet or headdress.

The honor of the coup could also be gifted to another. This honor can be the one feather or more, a warshirt, a staff, or even a headdress. When this honor was gifted, it was also accompanied by a song and a feast.

In 1941, Col. Welch was visiting *Húnkpápǎha* friends at *Wakpála* on the Standing Rock Sioux Indian Reservation. Welch inquired about the significance of the *wičhápǎhaha ógle* (the warshirt), the *wápaha*, and the *wapǎháha*. The *Húnkpápǎha* told Welch the most important symbol of the *ithánǰchaŋ* (chief) was the *wápaha*, specifically the kind of staff that was crooked. They detailed to Welch a staff that was squared and painted white on two sides and red on the others. High Reach said that the white represented purity of purpose, and the red symbolized honor. A blue band was painted at the halfway point of this staff, which stood for the everlasting sky above. The feathers hung down on one side of the staff and a five-pointed star hung from the crook.<sup>23</sup>

Conflict wasn't about taking life, but securing personal honor and demonstrating courage. *Lakǎóta* military strategy was carefully planned to avoid unnecessary risks. Warfare, according to *Ohíyesa* who ever sought to put the best possible face on the *Očhéthi Šakówiŋ*, "... was held to develop the quality of manliness and its motive was chivalric or patriotic, but never the desire for territorial aggrandizement or the overthrow of a brother nation."<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Col. Aaron B. Welch, "Life on The Plains in The 1800's," *Welch Dakota Papers*, November 2, 2011, <http://www.welchdakotapapers.com/>.

<sup>24</sup> Charles A. Eastman and Elaine Goodale Eastman, "Sixteenth Evening: The First Battle," *Wigwam Evenings* (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2000), 139-146.

In 1879 a young Lt. William Philo Clark was stationed in Dakota Territory. There he was charged with learning the Plains Indian sign language. Clark recorded the sign for counting coup as: hold the left hand, back to left and outwards, in front of the body, index finger extended and pointing to front and right, others [remaining fingers] and thumb closed; bring right hand, back to front, just in rear of left [hand] and lower, index finger extended, pointed downwards and to the left, right index finger under left, other fingers and thumb closed; raise right hand, and turn it by wrist action so that end of right index strikes sharply against [the] side of the left as it passes.<sup>25</sup>

The Očhéthi Šakówiŋ learned to survive by observing nature. Especially Ziŋtkála (the bird nation). Ziŋtkála built nests at certain times of the year, and defended their young and their makhóche (country; territory) when needed. Ziŋtkála even help each other sometimes; the meadowlark never reminds the prairie chicken of the time they defended their ground nests from a common foe. Ziŋtkála doesn't disparage the ways of other Ziŋtkála. When the seasons change, each respects its time and calling.

The development of this war honor did not originate anywhere else but the Great Plains in North America. This is significant. The Thítŋuŋwaŋ observed this in the birds of the Great Plains and took this lesson to heart for themselves. They defended their people, their homeland, and their territories from enemies.

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<sup>25</sup> W. P. Clark, *The Indian Sign Language*, (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1982), 128-29.

## 6. STANDING ROCK: A WOMAN TRANSFORMED INTO STONE

There is more than one Standing Rock. First Nations on the Northern Great Plains that have an association with a Standing Rock include: the Arikara, Cheyenne, Mandan, and the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ.

These Standing Rock mythhistories demonstrate an affiliation of a First Nation to a place. The Mandan Standing Rock story references the Thíthunwaŋ, set during the Heart River Phase of the Mandan occupation (A.D. 1400 – 1710). The Mandan story reflects a time before the first major smallpox epidemic of 1781 when they still occupied the On-A-Slant Village.<sup>1</sup>

The Standing Rock stories serve as lessons in how women should monitor their behavior when in public. These stories also alert listeners/readers to place and people involved. Here follow selected Standing Rock stories detailing places along the Missouri River.

### **Standing Rock and the Winter She Turned into Stone**

The Drifting Goose Winter Count, or John K. Bear Winter Count, details an account for the year A.D. 1740. At that time the Iháŋkthuŋwaŋna were living along the Čhaŋsáŋsaŋ Wakpá, the White Birch River (James River). The entry reads: Wínyaŋ waŋ wačhíŋkho ečhékna ínyaŋ ičháğa, or “A woman with ill feelings transformed into stone.” A woman had a baby when her husband had taken a second wife. When camp broke, the lodge was taken down around her when she refused to budge and the people left her behind. When they returned for her, she and her baby had become stone.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> North Dakota Studies, 2016, [http://history.nd.gov/hp/PDFinfo/5\\_SouthernMissouriRiverStudyUnit2016.pdf](http://history.nd.gov/hp/PDFinfo/5_SouthernMissouriRiverStudyUnit2016.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> James H. Howard, “Notes on the Ethnogeography of the Yankton Dakota,” *Plains Anthropologist* 17, no. 58, Part 1 (November 1972): 281-307. I have taken the Dakhóta text, rewritten it employing the LLC’s Standard Lakota Orthography, and re-interpreted the entry.

The Očhéthi Šakówiŋ say that when a person pouts (experiences anger, depression, or becomes withdrawn from society, perhaps even becoming immobile through inactivity) he or she risks turning into stone.

The Standing Rock Sioux Indian Reservation derives its name from a Standing Rock legend.

### **Standing Rock and the Brave Woman who Refused to Take another Step**

The late Rev. Innocent Good House (Húŋkpap̃ha; Standing Rock) maintained a version of the Standing Rock legend in which a woman and her child turned into stone when they refused to accompany their people as they fled before the advance of General Alfred Sully's command in a punitive campaign which came up the Missouri River in July 1863. The people moved up the Porcupine River to escape the notice of Sully. The Húŋkpap̃ha hold this stone in high regard - sacred even - and today this stone rests on a pedestal in front of the Standing Rock Sioux Indian agency headquarters in Fort Yates, ND.<sup>3</sup>

The original location of this Standing Rock stood low on a gentle sloping hillside about a mile south of Porcupine Creek, at the north end of the Burnt Hill range.

According to the Mnikhówožu historian K̃haŋpéska Imánipe Wí (Tracks The Shell Woman; Mrs. John Grass) this was a Wičhíyela (the Lakhóta term for the Iháŋkthūŋwaŋna [Yanktonai] and Iháŋkthūŋwaŋ [Yankton]; the Upper Iháŋkthūŋwaŋna use the term Wičhíyena) stone. This stone feature was not part of Thítūŋwaŋ culture. She referenced the Standing Rock stone as Íŋyaŋ Wosláta. "The people prayed there," she said, "It was Holy. There were red and blue blankets there by that stone. There was cloth there and food to eat. If a Wiceyelo [sic] was

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<sup>3</sup> Innocent Good House, summer 1989.

sick he went there and prayed to get well. If he got well he tied some tobacco in a bag and hung it there on a stick. Sometimes, the Tetons [sic] would take what was left there.”<sup>4</sup>

### **Standing Rock and a Lesson about Pouting**

Marie McLaughlin recorded a Dakhóta-Pħaláni (Arikara) version of Standing Rock in which a Dakhóta man takes a Pħaláni woman as his wife, and had a child with her. He eventually took a second wife, but his first wife took umbrage. When it came to break camp and move, the first wife refused to move from where she sat. The lodge was taken down around her, and belongings were packed away, yet she remained, and the thiyóspaye (extended family) moved on without her. Sometime later, the Dakhóta husband called his community to a halt when he noticed his first wife was not with them. He asked two of his brothers to go back for her and bade them to haste for he feared his wife might grow desperate and kill herself.<sup>5</sup>

The two brothers rode off. Upon arriving at their previous campsite, they espied their sister-in-law sitting yet on the ground. The elder of the two called out to her, “Haŋká (Sister-In-Law), get up. We have come for you. The camp awaits you.” When she did not answer, he reached out and touched her head and discovered that she had turned to stone.

The two brothers returned their brother with the incredible news. Their brother, the chief, refused to believe them and brought the thiyóšpaye back to their previous camp, where all saw for themselves a stone where sat a woman. They constructed a hupáwaheyuŋpi (lit. “pole/s and bundles”), a pony drag, also called a travois. They painted the horse and drag, and embellished both with streamers. The stone was considered wakħáŋ and placed in the center of camp. They

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<sup>4</sup> Col. Aaron B. Welch, "Native American Sacred Stones and Holy Places," Welch Dakota Papers, December 1, 2011, <https://www.welchdakotapapers.com/2011/12/sacred-stones-and-holy-places/#chapter-iii>.

<sup>5</sup> Marie McLaughlin, *Myths and Legends of the Sioux* (Bismarck: Bismarck Tribune, 1916), 40-41.

did this for many years until the Indian agent, Major James McLaughlin ordered the stone placed on a brick pedestal in Fort Yates. The agency was named Standing Rock after the stone.<sup>6</sup>

### **Standing Rock and a Lesson about Waiting to Marry**

The Pħaláni tell a different version and a different location regarding the woman who became stone. They say the Standing Rock that is now at Fort Yates, formerly stood in a Pħaláni village in the vicinity of the old town Winona, directly across the river from Fort Yates.

The headman of this village had a beautiful daughter. She was much sought after by young men of the tribes to wed. She refused them all. It was her custom to spend much time among the growing corn in the fields of the village. She cultivated the plants with the shoulder-blade hoe and talked to the corn and sang songs to the pumpkins in the fields, for the Pħaláni raised corn. She was very different from the other young women of the village and there was not a word of scandal regarding her. In fact, she was thought to be very pure and holy. She refused many men who were good hunters and brave warriors, and her parents, at last, became displeased with her about this. At such times she would say that it was not intended that she should marry and that it would displease the spirits.

At last a noble young man appeared from a great distance and played his eagle-bone flute outside her father's lodge, or rather, earth lodge. She persisted in refusing to marry and her father said, "It is always good for Indian women to show respect towards their parent's desires in such matters; that she was not displaying the proper filial obedience and that they were displeased with her. This time she must marry whether she wanted to or not."

The young chief brought a great pile of furs and other presents for the parents of the young woman and laid them at the door of the lodge. He presented his horses to the father. At

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.



last the young woman was married to the young chief from far away. She still contended that it was the wrong thing for her to do, that she was not intended for marriage and that it was all a big mistake. A great feast was given and, after many days of merry making, the two young people started upon the long journey toward the west where dwelt the people of the young chieftain.

Sometime afterward there staggered into the Pňaláni village this same young woman, tired and weary with hunger. She had made the long and dangerous journey alone, she said. Her anxious mother asked her what the trouble had been, if her husband had abused her, if she did not have enough to eat, if she had not been well cared-for and many other questions, such as a mother would ask her daughter.

The daughter said that she had been well-treated by her husband, that he gave her the softest skins to rest upon, that she was well fed, and that her husband was the perfect man in all things, but she said, "I told you that it was not intended that I should wed, and now see the ruin you have caused by compelling me to marry."

She then displayed her womanhood to her mother. Behold, what had been formerly shaped like the beautiful flower of the pumpkin blossom was now faded and drooped. Her parents comforted her as well as they knew how, but that night she disappeared. After a long search, she was found upon the top of the hill to the northeast of the village, but she refused to return to her parents' lodge.

Then her father went to speak with her, but she still refused. Her mother next talked with her, but she told her that she was slowly turning to stone and could not go. She was stone to the knees.

Terribly alarmed, her parents urged the medicine man and all the people to go with them to the hill and have her return. They went, but it was, indeed, true, she was turning to stone and

could not move. Her little faithful dog climbed up into her lap and would not be disturbed. Soon she had turned to stone to her private parts, then to her breasts, and finally her entire body and that of the little dog were turned to stone.

Then a terrible storm came up, spirits rushed through the air, the people were scared and terrified. When the storm had passed over, the daughter was still there, but stone, as you see her, today. So, this stone was sacred ever after and was put up in the sacred enclosure in the middle of the village.<sup>7</sup>

### **Standing Rock and A Lesson in Eternal Faithfulness**

The Šahíyela (lit. “Red-Talkers;” Cheyenne) have their story of a Standing Rock too, and the event where this occurred is located on the prairie steppe above the Šahiyela Ožúpi Wakpá (Where The Cheyenne Plant River), the Sheyenne River, north of Fort Ransom State Park at what is now the Standing Rock State Historic Site.

The late Joseph Fire Crow (Northern Cheyenne) told a story of a young newly married couple. The young man was called to protect his people and joined a war party. When the war party returned, the young man did not come back with them. When it came time for the Šahíyela to move on, the young woman vowed to stay behind until her man returned. Creation was moved by her love and dedication, that she transformed into stone where she sat. Her love stands forever. Fire Crow composed a flute song for Standing Rock and her enduring love for his self-titled album in 1996.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Col. Aaron B. Welch, "Native American Sacred Stones and Holy Places," *Welch Dakota Papers*, December 1, 2011, <https://www.welchdakotapapers.com/2011/12/sacred-stones-and-holy-places/#chapter-iii>.

<sup>8</sup> Joseph Fire Crow, spring 1996.

## Standing Rock and A Lesson in Bravery and Determination

The Mawátani (Mandan) tell a tale of a woman turning into stone as well. They even recall her name. Black Hare, a young woman, was renowned by many nations near and far for her great beauty. She turned down all her suitors for the simple reason that she did not want to leave her village there overlooking the floodplain of the Heart and Missouri Rivers. According to the Sitting Rabbit map of the river, this village was called Watchman's Village, present-day On-A-Slant Village located in Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park.<sup>9</sup>

A Thíthunwaj man whom the Nu'Eta knew as Crow Necklace, a leader amongst his people, approached the Mandan and wanted Black Hare for his woman. She declined. Crow Necklace then threatened the Mandan leader with death, to be carried out by sundown, if Black Hare was not brought to him.

The Mandan leader, "To'sh," induced Black Hare to go walking with him, and on this walk, he took her to where Crow Necklace was lodged, and turned her over to the Xa'Numak (lit. "Grass Man"; the Mandan word for the "Sioux"). When To'sh returned to safety within his palisaded village, he contrived to tell his people that Crow Necklace abducted Black Hare.

The Mandan suspected the insincerity of To'sh', and the other leader of the village -- for each village each had a civil chief and a war chief -- ordered To'sh to be buried on the spot up to his neck for his disingenuity. The other Mandan leader then made the very threat to To'sh that Crow Necklace made earlier that day, saying that if Black Hare were not returned by sundown, To'sh would die.

From a distance, To'sh saw Black Hare returning to the village, her feet wounded and bleeding. The Mandan's recollection does not tell readers why Black Hare would return in this

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<sup>9</sup> "Unit 1, Set 2: Mapping The Land and Its Peoples: Sitting Rabbit's Map," [http://history.nd.gov/textbook/unit1\\_natworld/unit1\\_2\\_sittingrabbit.html](http://history.nd.gov/textbook/unit1_natworld/unit1_2_sittingrabbit.html).

condition, but other first nations of the Great Plains know by cultural understanding that when a Lakǎóta man stole a woman from another tribe with the intention of making her his wife, he removed her hánpa (her moccasins) so that she would be less likely to return to her people. Makǎóche Wašté is filled with unǎkčéla (little cacti). In this story, Black Hare was a strong-willed young woman who left her captor and returned to her people.

To'sh feared that Black Hare's return would reveal his falsehood, and earnestly prayed for her to turn into stone. Lo! Black Hare turned into a red calcined stone! A bird sang out during this transformation, and a spirit planted seeds in Black Hare's bloody footprints. Winter spread its mantle of purity over the stone of Black Hare and her seeded tracks. The sun warmed the land, and from Black Hare's innocent blood grew trees to shade and shelter her stone memorial.

The stone is near Watchman's Village, about halfway up the plateau. When the 17th Infantry arrived in 1872, they cut all but eight trees, which were transplanted in front of the officers' quarters at Fort McKeen. Black Hare's stone lay on the hillside, bereft of shade and shelter. The water wagons used the stone to check and hold the rear wheels to afford the mules momentary rest. By 1922 the last tree that grew from Black Hare's blood remained on the hilltop.<sup>10</sup>

### **Standing Rock and the Accusation of Infidelity**

Col. Alfred Welch interviewed many other men and women regarding the legends of Standing Rock. Some said that she was a spirit and became stone before returning to the spirit land. One of Welch's informants, Thomas Ashley (Standing Rock) attributed Standing Rock to the Mandan. Iron Roads said Standing Rock was Pǎhaláni.

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<sup>10</sup> Capt. Henry Marcotte, "The Clump of Trees on The Hogsback," *The Bismarck Tribune* (Bismarck, ND), December 15, 1922.

An unnamed informant told Welch another version of Standing Rock: A long time ago, a young Húŋkpápha warrior went to war with a small party against the Kǎŋǎgi (the Crow Nation). Just before he went away he got a woman of the Sihásapa (lit. “Black Sole Moccasin;” Blackfeet, a division of the Thítǎwǎŋ) for a wife. She brought out his horse for him and gave him several new pairs of moccasins and some wasná (dried meat with marrow and wild cherries ground together) for the journey, and he rode off with his party toward the west. He hoped to steal some Kǎŋǎgi horses and gain some war honors. After they had traveled into Kǎŋǎgi country, they got a lot of enemy horses and started for the Mníšoše after they had struck the enemy many times.

But the winter was awful bad and they stopped for a winter camp in a good place and stayed until spring came. Then they started again and crossed the badlands and came on into the country of their own people. They came into camp. The people all came out to meet them. The young man was looking for his woman. He saw her. She had a baby on her back. He beat her then and drove her out of the camp. The people told him that he was wrong, but he would not listen to them. The woman was gone.

Then, after a while, some women went out to look for her and get her to return to camp. When they found her they told her that it was all right and to come back to her lodge. She would not go back. She told them that she was turning into stone and that her feet were already stone. The women ran back to camp and told the warrior about it. He went out and begged for her to return. But she told him that she had turned to stone as far as her body and could not go back now. Greatly alarmed, the young husband sought out the parents of the woman and they went to her there and tried to get her to return. But she had turned to stone as far as her breasts. The parents fled to camp and went to the medicine man. He carried his pipe before him and the whole

camp followed, singing and wailing. When they arrived at the place she, and her babe on her back, had turned completely into black stone.

Some Očhéthi Šakówiŋ might interpret that this woman transformed into stone because she had ill feelings. Perhaps she and her baby were transformed into stone as an enduring reminder that a man should treat his wife and children properly.

The Good House, Fire Crow, and Mawátani narratives indicate that some of these transformed women demonstrated exceptional bravery in the face of adversity. These three are not stories of punishment or pouting.

The Standing Rock stories all take place in a pre-contact world in a bison landscape, in Missouri River country, a country co-occupied with enemies, on the Great Plains. The only exception to these stories is the Good House Standing Rock narrative, which takes place in a post-contact and pre-reservation country.

These stories are known by several tribes of the Great Plains. They are tied to the identity of the people as much as they are associated with the tribes and places they occupied.

## 7. CONCLUSION

A cultural geography of the Great Plains, of the lands where the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ lived, has not been attempted before, at least not like this, and certainly not in the language or dialects on the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ themselves.

Other efforts to construct maps of the plains which have employed placenames in the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ language and dialects were done so to give settlers an idea what was out there - not to record or detail the cultural worldview perspective, but to catalog waters and summits, all of which would be renamed as the indigenous were dispossessed of their homelands.

This does not mean that cultural maps have never been done. In 1905, the State Historical Society of North Dakota commissioned the Mandan Indian Sitting Rabbit to produce a map of Mandan places along the Missouri River. The map appears to be based on the Missouri River Survey Maps of 1892. The Sitting Rabbit map might show places familiar to the Arikara, Hidatsa, and Mandan, but it does not present their worldview.<sup>1</sup>

A few maps have several Očhéthi Šakówiŋ placenames: Joseph Nicollet's 1843 *Hydrographical Basin of the Upper Mississippi River* is a wonderful explorer's map of Minnesota River, James River, and part of Missouri River countries. John Pope's 1849 *Map of the Territory of Minnesota* detailed locations of prominent Dakhóta villages.

Pope's geographical knowledge provided intelligence to the military response following the 1862 Minnesota Dakota Conflict. Having indigenous place names on a map does not mean that the worldview has also been provided, however.

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<sup>1</sup> Sitting Rabbit, "Unit 1: Set 2: Mapping the Land & Its People - Sitting Rabbit's Map," [http://history.nd.gov/textbook/unit1\\_natworld/unit1\\_2\\_sittingrabbit.html](http://history.nd.gov/textbook/unit1_natworld/unit1_2_sittingrabbit.html); W. Ray Wood, "Mapping the Missouri River Through The Great Plains, 1673-1895," *Great Plains Quarterly* 4 (Winter 1984): 29-42, <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2816&context=greatplainsquarterly>.

There have been a few efforts, by Dakhóta people or by Dakhóta people working with non-natives, to produce maps or a listing of Očhéthi Šakówiŋ place names. Virginia Driving Hawk-Sneve produced a listing of such in her 1973 *South Dakota Geographic Names*, but this was not a map and was primarily focused on South Dakota. Paul Durand produced a hand-drawn map and book of place names in both Dakhóta and Ojibwe in his 1994 work, *Where the Waters Gather and the Rivers Meet: An Atlas of the Eastern Sioux*, but this was filtered through a European understanding of geography. Louie Garcia gathered a list of hundreds of Dakhóta-Lakḥóta, Mandan-Hidatsa, and Chippewa place names over the many years, and explanations for sites, but his work is not a map.

In 1997, Mark Warhus curated and edited a collection of various Native American maps drawn by the native peoples themselves, which represents a wonderful achievement in showcasing parts of North America as most Americans would not see it. Yet, these maps are also drawn with an eye towards explaining their landscapes to Europeans.

In 2014 Aaron Carapella (Cherokee; Oklahoma) produced a set of maps of North America (Alaska, Canada, United States, Mexico, Central America, South America, and the Caribbean) which identified hundreds of first nations and placed them where they were located historically with both their contemporary name and original identity name for themselves. Carapella's website argues that his maps are the "most comprehensive maps of pre-contact and at-contact Native North America to date." Carapella's mission is to instill a sense of pride in the indigenous, especially about who they are and where they're from. His work is so inclusive that there is no focus for any single one tribe, much less a format to showcase any first nation's relationship with the landscape.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Aaron Carapella, *Tribal Nations Maps*, 2017, <http://www.tribalnationsmaps.com/>.



In 2014 Anton Treuer worked with National Geographic and produced *Atlas of Indian Nations*, which includes some historical and cultural information about the tribes in the lands that they lived in, but set with US political lines. This atlas is profusely and beautifully illustrated with maps and paintings (by mostly non-native artists) showcasing the first nations' homelands. Like Carapella's cartography, Treuer's work focuses on tribes and their locations, but not their relationship with their environments. When placenames are mentioned, they are places and waters that happen to still be known by the original placename.<sup>3</sup>

A map, and a basic cultural understanding of the landscape, featuring places in the original language in the original territory has not been done on a scale before. Nicollet, Pope, Driving Hawk-Sneve, Durand, Garcia, Carapella, and Treuer, have all constructed works within a "colonial" framework.

Throughout American expansion, the American West has been called anything but beautiful. Thomas Jefferson called the lands between the Mississippi River and the Rockies "immense and trackless deserts," Stephen Long described American West on his map of the 1820 Expedition as "The Great Desert," Alfred Sully on his 1864 Punitive Campaign referred to the Little Missouri River country as "hell with the fires burned out." George Armstrong Custer called it simply the "plains;" about sixty years later, Walter Webb aggrandized it by calling it the "Great Plains."<sup>4</sup>

In Lakǰóta, wašté means "good." It also means "beautiful." One of the many names they called this land was Makǰóche Wašté, which means "Beautiful Country." It provided everything

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<sup>3</sup> Anton Treuer, *Atlas of Indian Nations* (Washington, DC: National Geographic, 2014).

<sup>4</sup> Kevin J. Hayes, *The Road to Monticello* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 488; Stephen H. Long & James Edwin, (*Composite Map of*) *Country drained by the Mississippi Eastern Section (and) Western Section. Drawn by S. H. Long Maj. T. Engineer. Engrav'd by Young & Delleker* (Philadelphia: Carey and Lea., 1823); Makosica Interpretive Panel, South Unit Visitor Center, Theodore Roosevelt National Park Visitor Center; George A. Custer, *My Life on the Plains* (New York: Sheldon & Co., 1874), 5; Walter Prescott Webb, *The Great Plains* (Boston: Ginn & Co., 1931), 3.

for them for thousands of generations. Every kind of bird and fish, every kind of animal, every kind of bug, every plant and flower, had a name. Not every mountain had a name, but each range east of Ĥeská, the Rocky Mountains, was known. Not every creek had a name, but many did, and each major tributary was known.

They traveled across the plains in a pattern undiscernible to explorers, trappers, traders, miners, and settlers. They traveled along the streams, from source to source. They traveled across the vast open plain, directed to special places, determined by the seasons and the stars.<sup>5</sup>

Ronald Goodman's calculations regarding the constellations and the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ religious practice of Wiwáŋyaŋ Wačhípi, the Sundance, places the Thítŋuŋwaŋ west of the Mnišóše at Mathó Thípila, Bear Lodge, or "Devils Tower," as early as 900 BCE.<sup>6</sup>

The wind was a constant presence on the plains then – it still is – and the day without a breeze is rare. The wind is also a part of the culture. Takú šiča owás'įŋla kaŋwóg įŋyaŋyįŋ kté (All the bad things will blow away). It is said the patterns on one's fingertips tell one the direction the wind was blowing on the day of one's birth. Each spring the south wind brings the Enlightening Breath upon which all life returns. Each fall the north wind brings the first snow which makes hunting game easier.

The Očhéthi Šakówiŋ spoke a language divided into three distinct dialects. The Thítŋuŋwaŋ speak Lakhóta. Lakhóta is uniquely suited to the Plains. This dialect developed in a land of near constant wind to be carried far when sung. When this dialect is sung, some words

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<sup>5</sup> Jon Eagle Sr., Sept. 30, 2018; Ronald Goodman, *Lakota Star Knowledge* (Mission: Sinte Gleska University, 1992).

<sup>6</sup> Ronald Goodman, *Lakota Star Knowledge* (Mission: Sinte Gleska University, 1992), 46-47.

change pronunciation. This development did not happen overnight, or in the span of a hundred years. It developed over a long period of time.<sup>7</sup>

They called both the sun and moon, Wí (Luminary). To differentiate between the two in conversation the sun might be called Anpétuwi (Day Luminary), the moon, Haŋwí (Night Luminary). They developed narratives to explain natural history. These narratives reflected a relationship with the landscape. It took time for these narratives to develop and become tradition.

The Mandan, whose earliest historical record was established on the north bank of the Cannonball River circa 1300, constructed fortified villages to defend themselves from their enemy, the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ, “the first colonizers.” The physical evidence and the oral tradition of the Mandan places the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ west of the Missouri River well before 1700.<sup>8</sup>

The Lakǰóta pictographic record, the Battiste Good Winter Count, begins its record in circa 901 with the arrival of Ptehíŋčala Sáŋ Wí, White Buffalo Calf Woman, when she brought the gift of the sacred pipe and directed the people to take up the sundance. Arvol Looking Horse, the nineteenth-generation pipe-keeper tells the oral tradition that this major event happened at Mathó Thípila.

Language research, archaeo-astronomical evidence, the pictographic record, and oral tradition all place the Thítŋuŋwaŋ west of the Mnišóše centuries before Englishman John Mitchell drafted his map of England’s claim to North America in 1757. Mitchell’s map placed the Thítŋuŋwaŋ at Mdé Íŋyaŋ Tháŋka, Big Stone Lake. Nicolas de Fer drew on the testimony of

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<sup>7</sup> Angus Chen, "Did The Language You Speak Evolve Because Of The Heat?" *National Public Radio*, November 6, 2015, <https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2015/11/06/454853229/did-the-language-you-speak-evolve-because-of-the-heat>.

<sup>8</sup> Elizabeth Fenn, “Chapter One: Migrations: The Making of the Mandan People,” in *Encounters at the Heart of the World* (New York: Hill & Wang, 2014); Calvin Grinnell, summer 2016.

Louis Hennepin's interior travels to draft his 1718 map, also placing the Thítħuŋwaŋ at Big Stone Lake.<sup>9</sup>

This does not mean the Thítħuŋwaŋ were in one place, unmoving; it means they came east, as they regularly did to meet and trade with their Dakhóta relatives.

Two maps have been created for this Beautiful Country project: an interactive online map developed with Google Maps, and another using Google Earth. The site data is drawn from oral tradition; previous efforts to record placenames (i.e. Driving Hawk-Sneve, Durand, and Garcia); historical maps (over 200, including Pope, Nicollet, and Durand); and books. Over 1800 places have been re-written using the LLC's Standard Lakota Orthography, including translations, and have been geo-referenced with over 24,000 pins on historical maps on the David Rumsey Map Collection at Stanford Library, an online map application, then pinned to corresponding places on Google Maps. There is no comparable work to this effort at present.

Ethnography is a research method employed in Anthropology, in which the researcher immerses himself or herself in the culture of study. Without including the indigenous historiography (language, oral tradition, pictographic, astronomy), researchers with agency set the rules for study and that makes our collective history the poorer for it.

In 1883 Garrick Mallery, ethnologist for the Smithsonian Institution, recorded the Baptiste Good Winter Count. This winter count is a pictographic record that reaches back to AD 901. Mallery dismissed much of this record's earlier imagery and narrative as being so long ago that the record can not be verified. Mallery also dismissed a record of horse-stealing around AD 1141 because it "happened at a much later period." It was entirely paternalistic for Mallery to

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<sup>9</sup> John Mitchell, *A Map of the British and French Dominions in North America with the Roads, Distances, Limits and Extent of the Settlements* (London: John Mitchell, 1757). Nicolas de Fer, *Composite: Le cours de Missisipi, ou de St. Louis (with) Partie meridionale de la Riviere de Missisipi* (Paris: N. de Fer., 1718).

dismiss the possibility that the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ stole a horse so early when Viking inventories like Erik the Red's reveal that they brought horses with them on their travels. For years archaeologists argued the case that there is no physical evidence of the horses that the Vikings brought. That is true, that there is no physical evidence, yet it is also true that the Vikings ate their horses. In fact, the horse is a regular feature on the Icelandic menu.<sup>10</sup>

Archaeological evidence of Viking settlement has been building since 1960 in the Gulf of St. Lawrence area. Historical evidence from Leif Erikson's explorations and others (i.e. Thorvald, Thorstein, Karlsefni, and Freydis) informs us that he called the land he "discovered," he called "Vinland." The Book of Icelanders, *Íslendingabók*, on permanent display at the National Museum of Iceland, contains an inventory which includes the horse, when they settled there.<sup>11</sup>

The Isáŋyathi Dakhóta traveled and traded as far east as the Saint Lawrence River. They call that stream Psiŋhú Wakpa, which means, "Wild Rice Stem River."<sup>12</sup>

The pictographic record says the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ saw horses, and details a horse-stealing event around circa 1141. The Vikings settled somewhere in the Gulf of Saint Lawrence in the same time frame and brought horses. There is enough information to challenge Mallery's ethnological narrative that there were Viking horses and that there is a chance that a horse was stolen.

Regarding present and future studies of the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ homeland, the landscape was already changing in the nineteenth century as lakes were drained in the broad Red River

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<sup>10</sup> J. W. Powell, *Tenth Annual Report of the Bureau of Ethnology to the Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution*, 1888-1889 (Washington, DC: GPO, 1893), 287-328.

<sup>11</sup> *The Columbia-Viking Desk Encyclopedia*, Third Edition, s.v. "Saint Lawrence, Gulf of," (New York: Viking Press, 1960); Magnus Magnusson and Hermann Pálsson, *The Vinland Sagas* (New York: Penguin Books, 2004), 73-105.

<sup>12</sup> Leo J. Omani, "Perspectives of Saskatchewan Dakota/Lakota Elders on the Treaty Process within Canada," PhD thesis, (Saskatoon: University of Saskatchewan, 2010), 150.

Valley, in Minnesota River country, and the Big Sioux River country. Forests that Pope recorded in Minnesota and Dakota Territory were cleared in the mid-nineteenth century. Rivers and streams were channeled in the mid twentieth century to manage draining. Fort Yates, ND tribal headquarters of the Standing Rock Sioux Indian Reservation is a virtual island in the middle of Lake Oáhe. Lake Oáhe itself a product of the dams projects of the mid-twentieth century to manage annual flooding.

As the landscape was appropriated, as the people were dispossessed, features were renamed. Placename history has nearly been forgotten, and perhaps some has already been lost. Očhéthi Šakówiŋ identity is deeply connected to the landscape that would be nearly unrecognizable to the ancestors. It is imperative to record as many historical placenames and features as possible. It will be necessary to develop a new relationship with the landscape as the world changes.

Over 1800 traditional placenames and streams have been pinned to the Google Map called Makǎóche Wašté. The benefit of constructing an online interactive map is that it is in a media that is easily understood by upcoming generation. Placenames can be easily edited as additional information comes forward. Some sites have more than one name as site information is revealed. In a hundred years, the future generations will see what Makǎóche Wašté looked like, what we recovered in this online map project, and how we related to the landscape.

Eháŋna leyápi, “Makǎóche Wašté le épelo,” eyápi. Héčhena. A long time ago they said, “This is The Beautiful County!” It still is.

Čhaŋtéyata kiŋ kičhíla. The Seventh Direction is with me.

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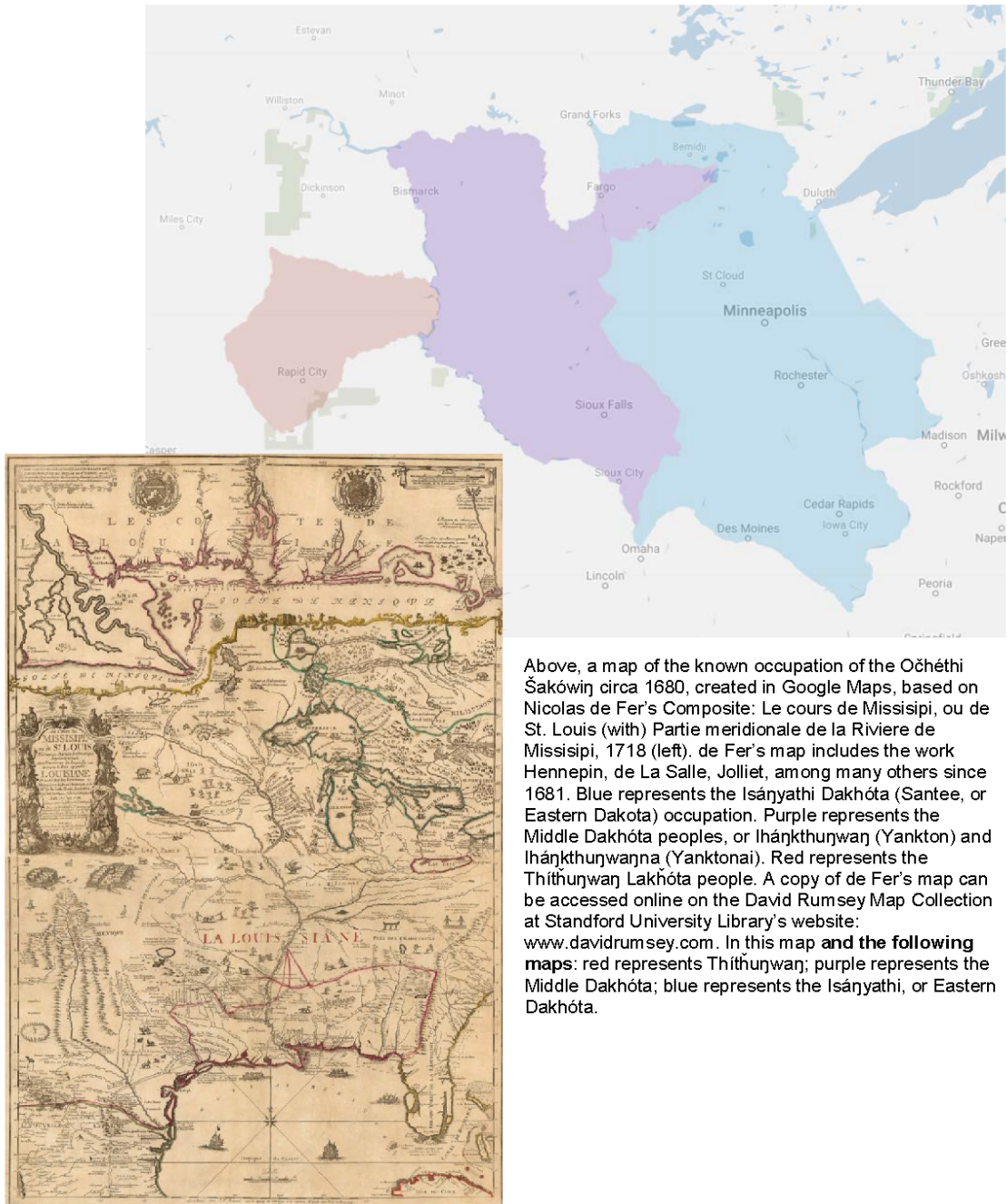
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## APPENDIX A. PRE-1600

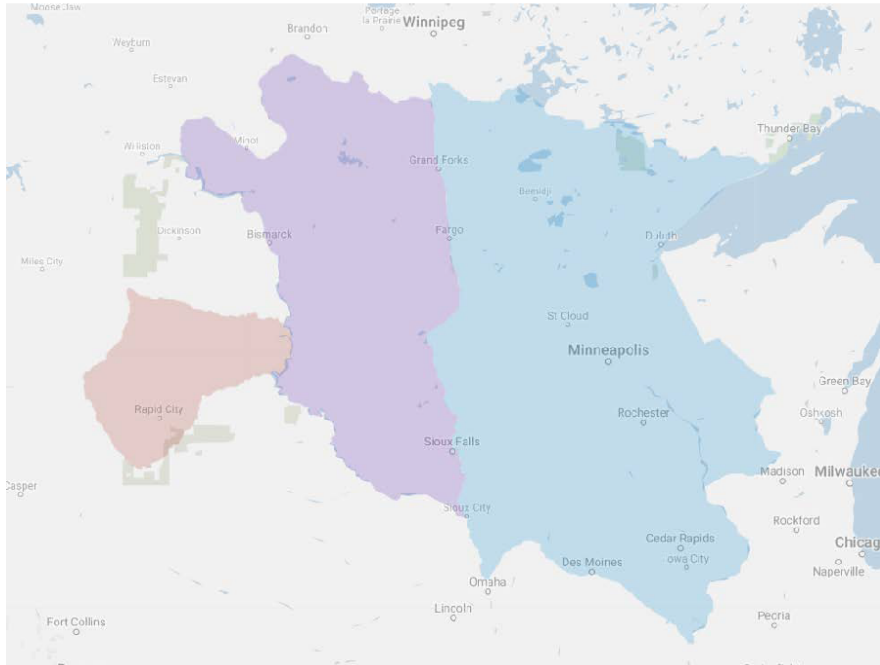


Above, a map of the extend of cultural occupation of the Očhéti Šakówin created in Google Maps, based on Dr. Leo Omani (Waphéthurwarj Dakhóta) map (left) "Traditional Lands of the Oceti Sakowin," appearing in, *Wapeton Dakota Nation Community History*, appendix G, page 20, *Wapeton Dakota Nation*, 2012.

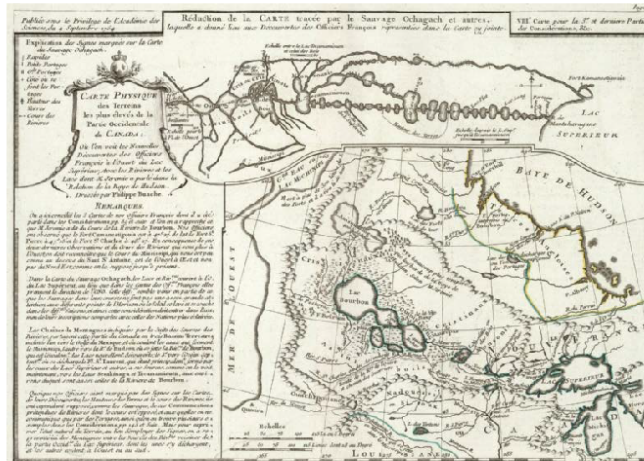
## APPENDIX B. CIRCA 1680



## APPENDIX C. CIRCA 1700

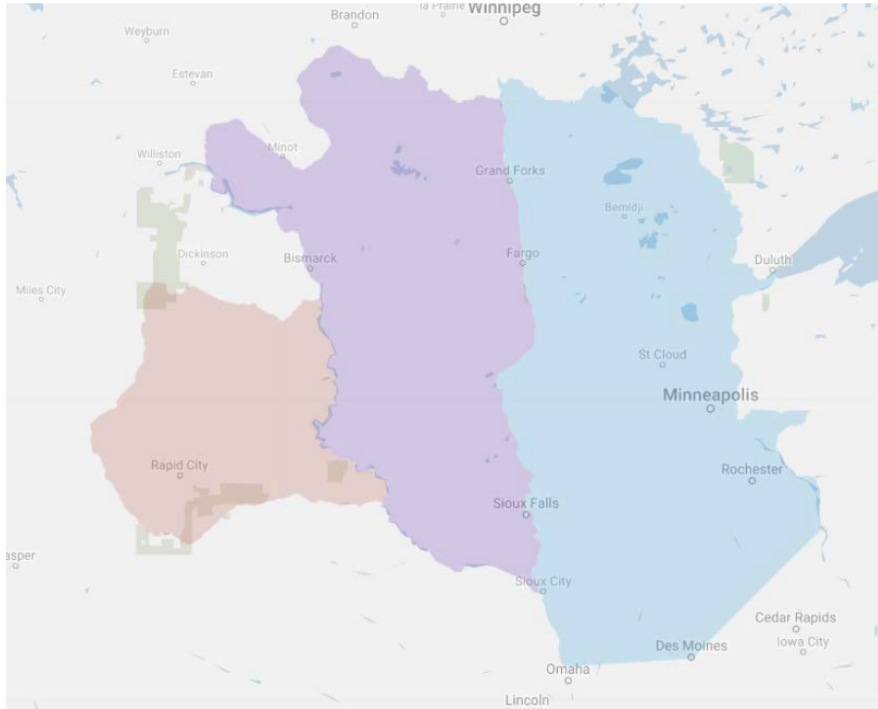


Above, a map of the known occupation of the Ochéthi Šakówinj circa 1700, created in Google Maps based on Philippe Buache's *Carte physique des terrains les plus elevés de la partie occidentale du Canada*, Academie Royale des Sciences, 1754 (below). "Buache's depictions for this map were gathered from indigenous native sources as well as from manuscript material drawn by early French explorers and fur traders. In fact, the title of the upper depiction states that the information was gathered by Ochagach, a North American native, which was then given to French officers." David Rumsey Map Collection notes. Ochagach's map depicts a journey from present-day Duluth, MN to present-day Knife River Indian Villages National Historic Site. The Drifting Goose places the Yanktonai occupation centered on the James River and Sheyenne River around 1700.

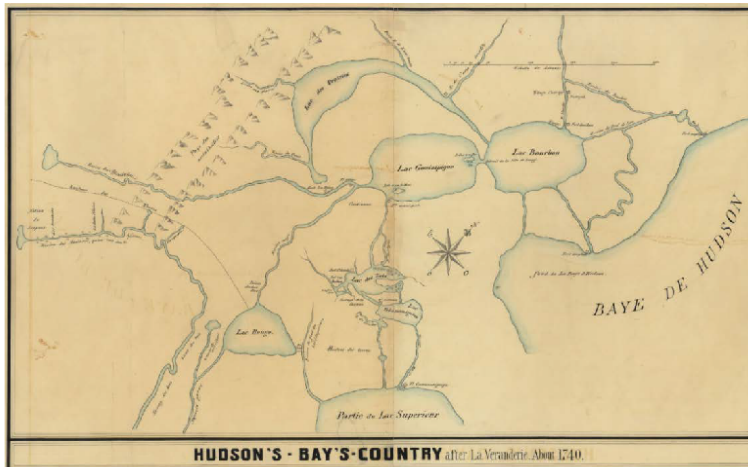




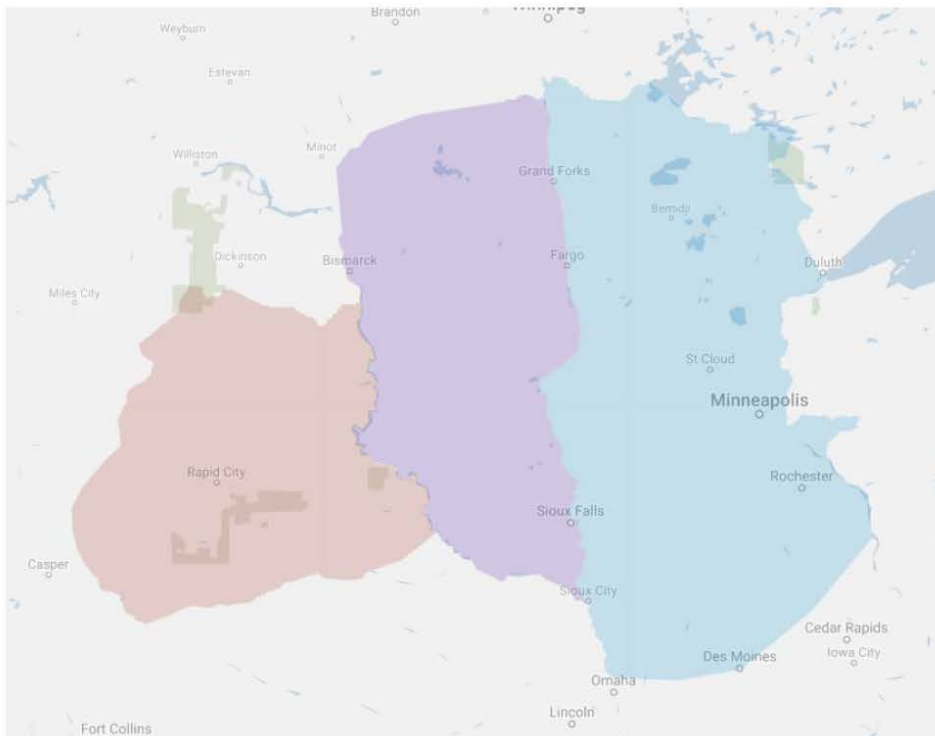
## APPENDIX D. CIRCA 1730



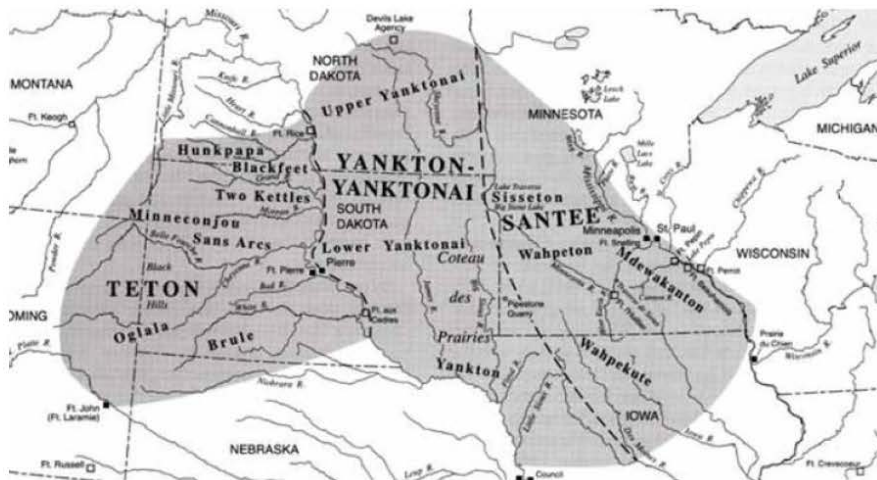
Above, a map of the known occupation of the Ojéwé circa 1730 based on Pierre Gaultier de Varennes, sieur de La Vérendrye's *Hudson's Bay's country after La Veranderie*, Hudson Bay's Company, about 1740 (below). The Assiniboine explained to la Verendrye where their enemies resided on the landscape as they escorted him and his sons to the Mandan in 1738. Library of Congress, LOC Control No. 2003623381.



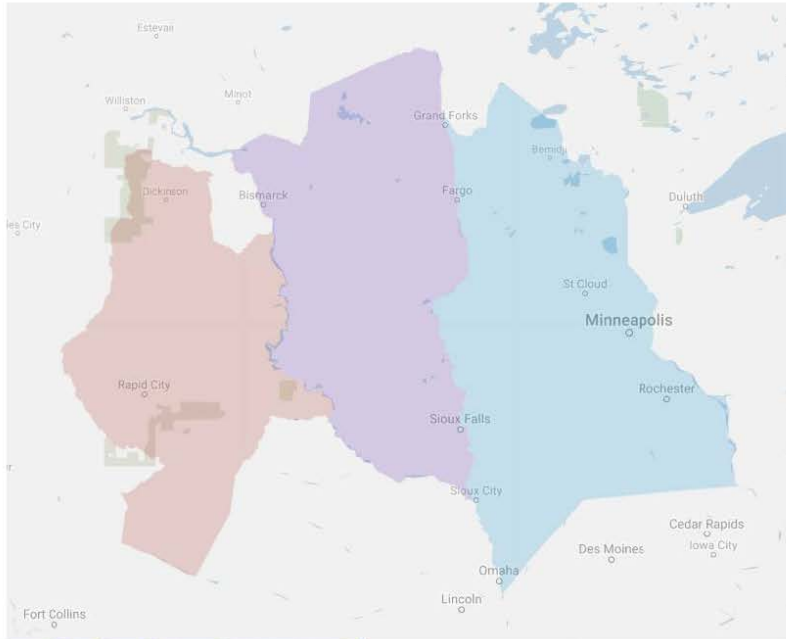
## APPENDIX E. 1750



Above, a map of the known occupation of the Ojéwé Šakówin circa 1750 created in Google Maps, based on Dr. Jerome Tweton's map (bottom) for the North Dakota Studies project, the North Star Dakotan, NDHC, 2000.

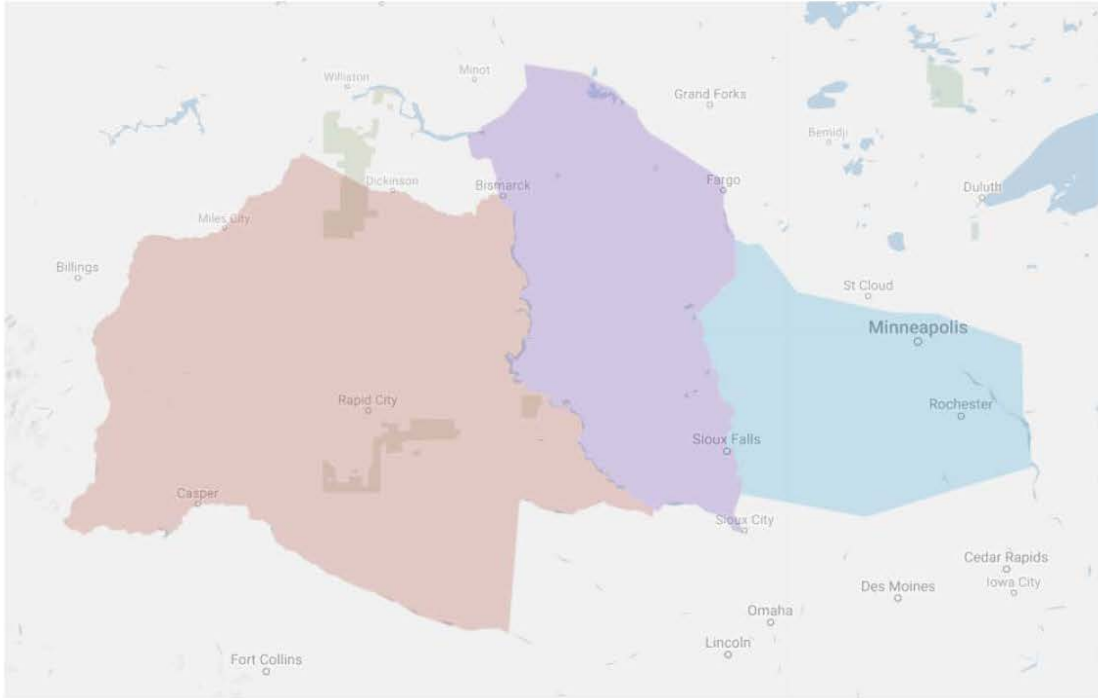


## APPENDIX F. 1770



Above, a map of the known occupation of the Očhéti Šakówiŋ circa 1770 created in Google Maps, based on Nicolas Haganar's map (left) for Demis, a web map server in the Netherlands. Haganar, Demis, 2007.

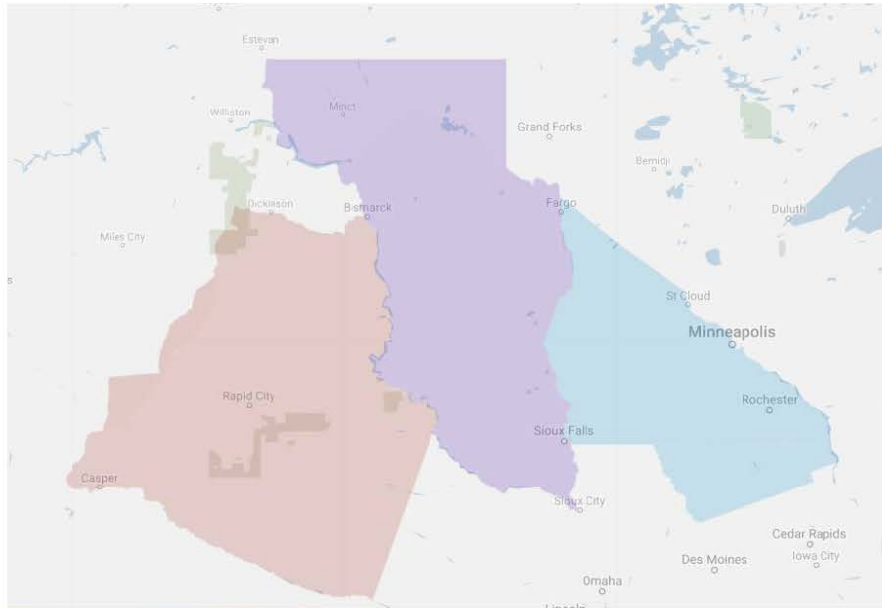
## APPENDIX G. 1822



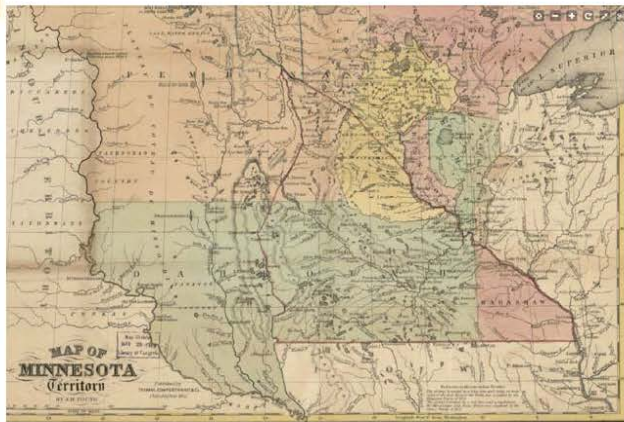
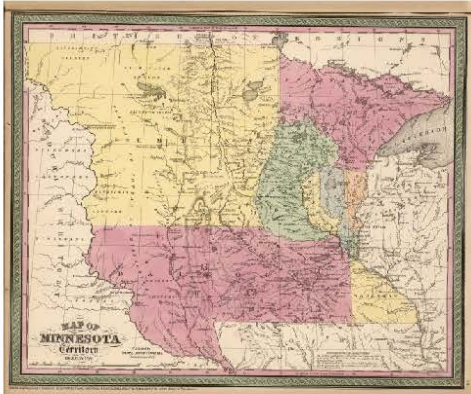
Above, a map of the known occupation of the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ in 1822 created in Google Maps, based on "Sioux Territory Map 1822," (left) on the Dakota Sioux page of the website: [genealogytrails.com](http://genealogytrails.com). Attributed to Doane Robinson, accessed May, 2018. The map was uploaded onto Google Earth to geo-locate known points on the map to corresponding location of sites today.



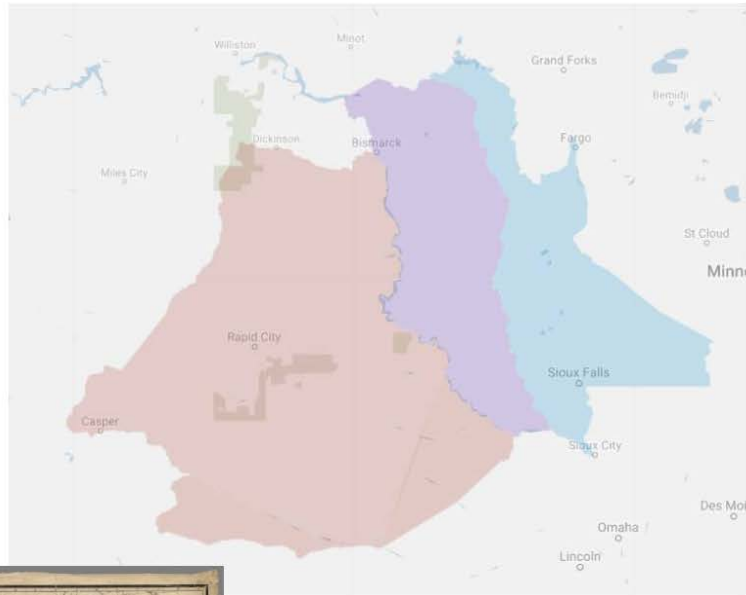
## APPENDIX H. CIRCA 1851



Above, a map of the known occupation of the Ojibwe in 1851 created in Google Maps based on three maps: Pierre De Smet's "Map of the upper Great Plains and Rocky Mountains region," (left) which was referenced in the 1851 Horse Creek [Fort Laramie] Treaty, LOC, G4050 1851 .S6; Samuel A. Mitchell's & J.H. Young's "Map of Minnesota Territory," (bottom left) Thomas Cowperthwait & Co., 1853, David Rumsey Map Collection, Stanford Library; a screen capture of Samuel A. Mitchell's & J.H. Young's "Map of Minnesota Territory," (bottom) Thomas Cowperthwait & Co., 1851 David Rumsey Map Collection, Stanford Library.

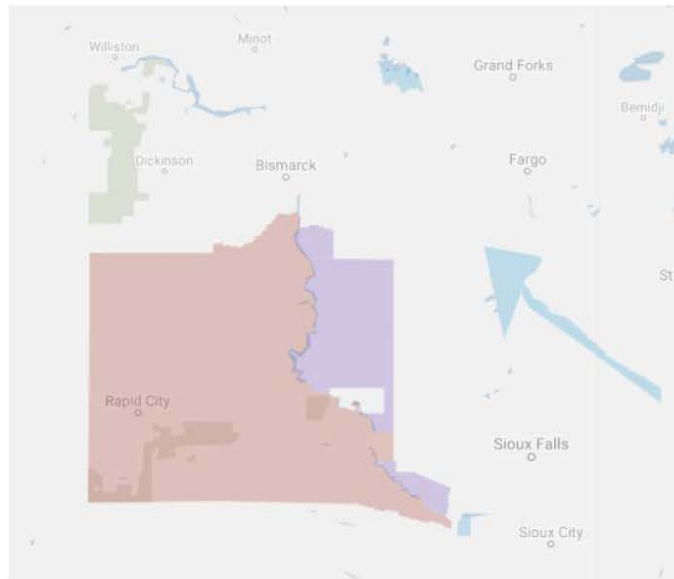


## APPENDIX I. 1858

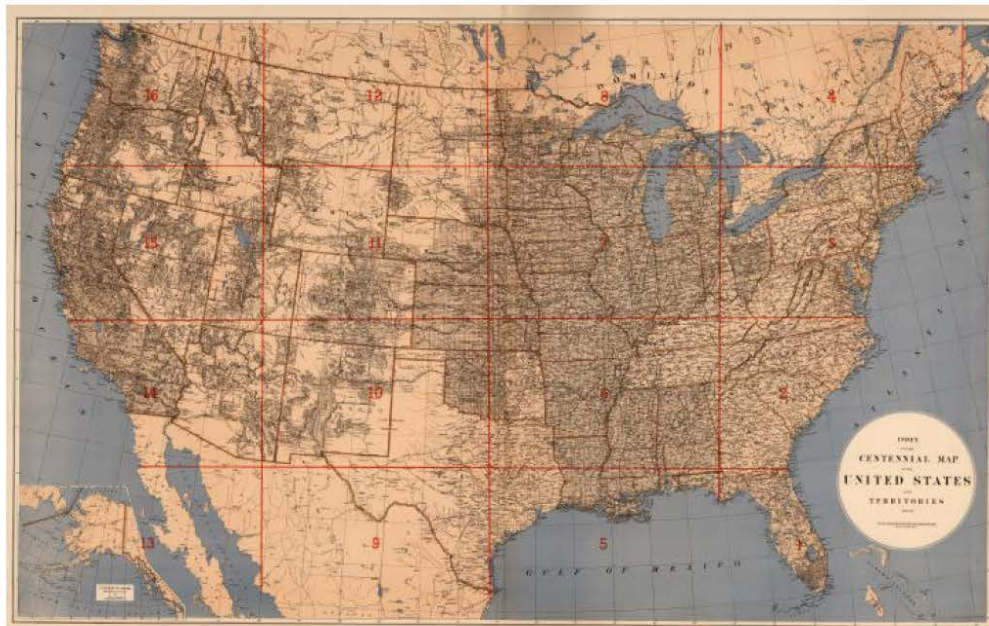


Above, a map of the known occupation of the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ in 1859 created in Google Maps based on Gouverneur Kemble Warren's "Military Map of Nebraska and Dakota," Washington, D.C., 1859. David Rumsey Map Collection at Stanford Library, accessed May, 2018. Note: Thítunŋwaŋ territory actually expanded despite the boundaries determined by the 1851 Horse Creek [Fort Laramie] Treaty.

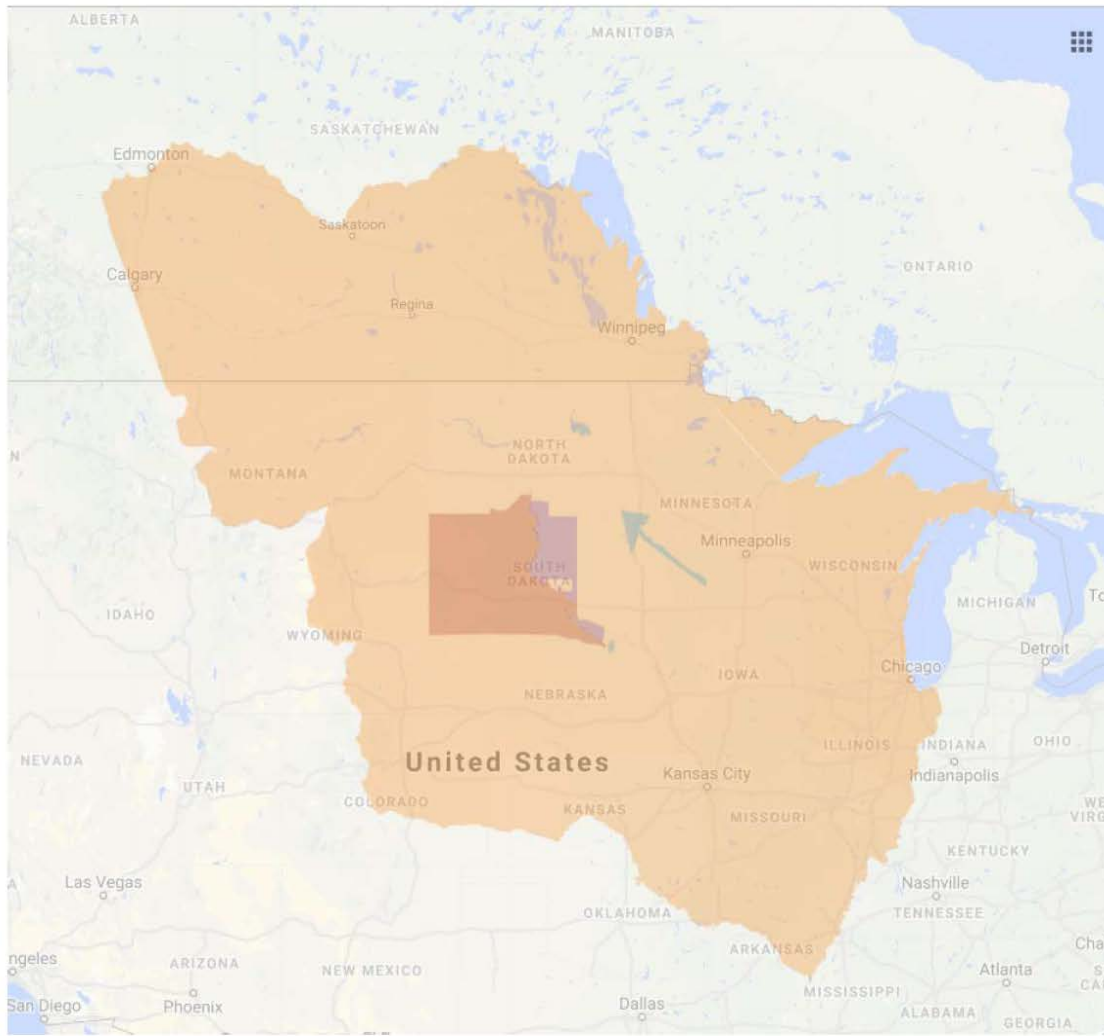
## APPENDIX J. 1878



Above, a map of the known occupation of the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ in 1878 created in Google Maps based on U.S. General Land Office map sections 7,8, 11, and 12, 1878. David Rumsey Map Collection at Stanford Library.



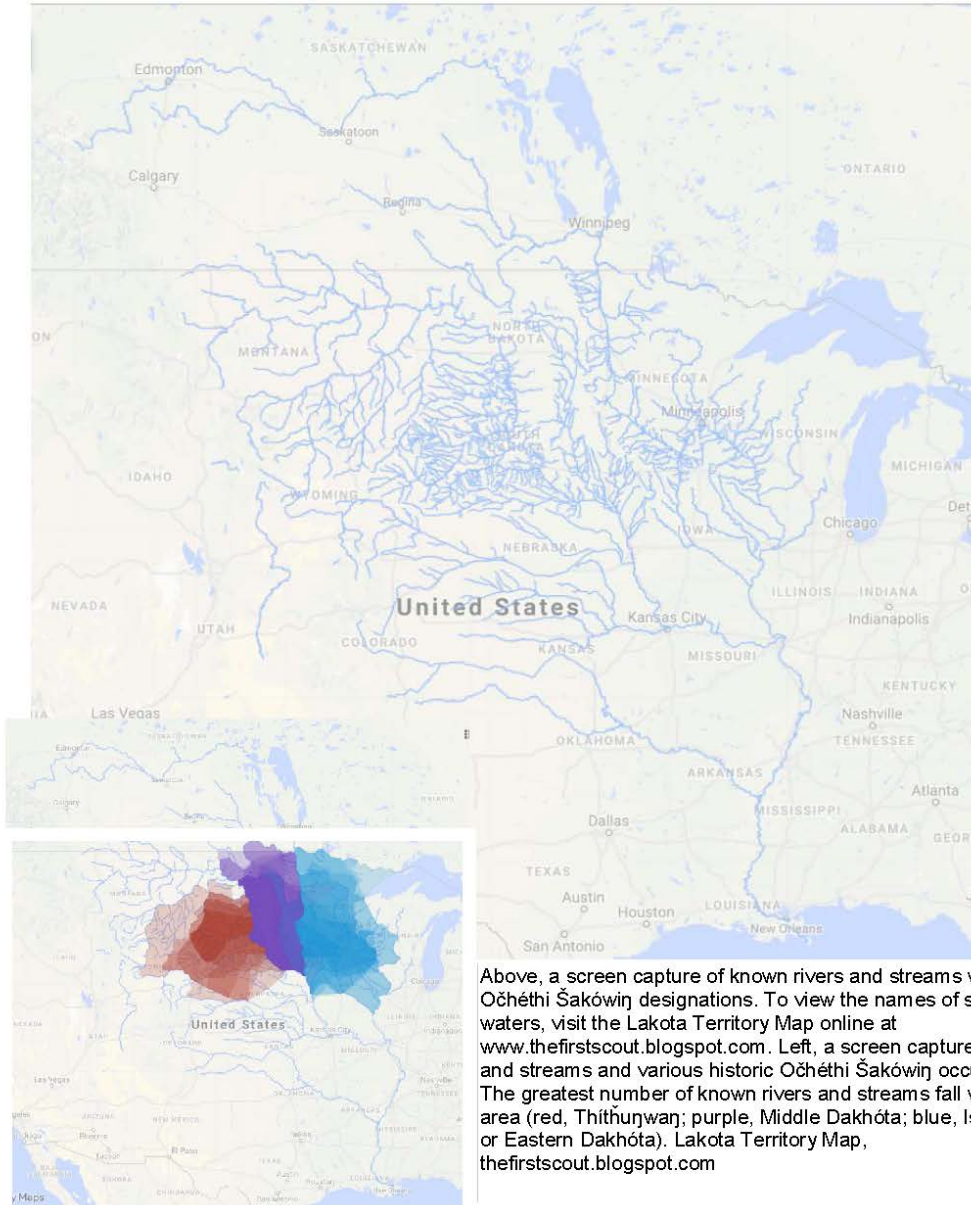
## APPENDIX K. AN OVERLAY OF OČHÉTHI ŠAKÓWID TERRITORY LOSS



This overlay consist of pre-1600 occupation (orange) and reservations in the United States in 1878 (red, Thítunwan; purple, Middle Dakhóta; blue, Isányathi, or Eastern Dakhóta). For Peck Indian Agency was established in 1871 within the stockade of Fort Peck. It was eventually expanded to be about 110 miles long and forty miles wide, about 3,200 square miles, but in 1871, much of northern Montana was Blackfeet, Blood, and Piegan reservation.



## APPENDIX L. STREAMS



Above, a screen capture of known rivers and streams with Očhéthi Šakówiŋ designations. To view the names of sites and waters, visit the Lakota Territory Map online at [www.thefirstscout.blogspot.com](http://www.thefirstscout.blogspot.com). Left, a screen capture of rivers and streams and various historic Očhéthi Šakówiŋ occupations. The greatest number of known rivers and streams fall within this area (red, Thithuŋwaŋ; purple, Middle Dakhóta; blue, Isáŋyathi, or Eastern Dakhóta). Lakota Territory Map, [thefirstscout.blogspot.com](http://thefirstscout.blogspot.com)

**APPENDIX M. MAKĚÓČHE WAŠTÉ, THE BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY: A LAKOTA  
LANDSCAPE MAP ONLINE**

Access the Google Map, MakĚóče Wašté, The Beautiful Country: A Lakota Landscape

Map online at:

[https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1pbLuALDtMHbxpigEh28R\\_6KZXdyPj1X-  
&ll=44.50190068942081%2C-94.68051100000002&z=4](https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?mid=1pbLuALDtMHbxpigEh28R_6KZXdyPj1X-&ll=44.50190068942081%2C-94.68051100000002&z=4)