

‘THOSE WHO WERE FOUND HERE’: AN ANALYSIS OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF
SENSE OF PLACE AMONG THE CŒUR D’ALÉNE PEOPLE THROUGH THE LENS OF
THE COYOTE CYCLE OF ORAL HISTORIES, WITH DISCOURSE ON THEMATIC
ROLES IN THE HISTORIES, AND A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE LANGUAGE ITSELF

By

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A Thesis Submitted to the Honors College

In Partial Fulfillment of the Bachelors degree
with Honors in

Linguistics

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

May 2016

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author wishes to thank the entire Coeur D'Alene Language Resource Center Team,
Specifically:

Dr. Amy Fountain, PhD, University of Arizona

Mr. John Ivens, University of Arizona

Dr. Shannon Bischoff, PhD, University of Indiana-Purdue Fort Wayne

Dr. Ivy Doak, PhD, University of North Texas

Ms. Audra Vincent, Coeur D'Alene Tribal Nation & University of British Columbia

I place on record my sincerest gratitude in particular to my Honors Thesis Advisor, Dr. Amy Fountain. Without her guidance throughout my years as a student at the University of Arizona, this project and all the subsequent research I have had the privilege to do would have been impossible. Thanks again so very much Dr. Fountain.

DEDICATION

This thesis paper is dedicated to the Snchitsu'umsh people of Northern Idaho. The over two thousand enrolled members of the Coeur D'Alene Sovereign Nation have created a thriving community built on their shared heritage as well as an emphasis on environmental stewardship. The community works always to create a better ecological balance on their traditional lands and beyond. I have had the honor and privilege of being able to transcribe and analyze the oral histories passed down through their people, and it is this honor for which I am both humbled and grateful.

Lim Lemt.sh (Thank You).

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ABSTRACT

The Coyote Cycle of oral history of the Coeur D'Alene people is rich in etiological content. These narratives seek to anchor the ethnic Snehitsumsh group geographically as well as provide context to the origin of much of the Coeur D'Alene world, such as the origin of the native tribes, the release of salmon to feed the people, and much more. The texts will be used to provide evidence of this etiological intention and show that in many cases the oral histories tie the ethnic community with specific geographical locations on their traditional lands. A specific case study of an auxiliary character with emphasis on thematic role in the narratives explains some of the intent in these oral histories. Lastly, by tracing some historical changes in the language and assessing ways in which the community has responded to language attrition, specifically, that issues of language purity have arisen as a consequence of this attrition. Evidence will show that the language borrowed some words from English and French as well as created its own words for many of the new concepts upon contact.

‘Those Who Were Found Here’, an Introduction

The Coeur D’Alene People, like many other indigenous communities of the Americas, use oral histories to anchor themselves etiologically in their traditional homelands. Many of these narratives are part of the Coyote Cycle, which is focused around the trickster figure Coyote. It will be shown that narratives such as those within the Coyote Cycle seek to explain the world of the ethnic community as well as tie them to specific geographical locations. In making these origin narratives, the Coeur D’Alene are within the tradition of many other groups around the globe. To better illuminate how the narratives create a sense of place within the community the appendix to this document includes two maps made using the free-to-use Google My Maps © feature. These maps will show modern place names as well as their corresponding name in Snchitsu’umshtsn. An extended example of one of the auxiliary characters in the Coyote Cycle of oral history, cricket, will be analyzed for evidence of linguistic inventiveness and thematic role. Lastly, a brief history of the use of the language will be made, one which provides evidence of borrowing from Indo-European languages (specifically English and French). As contact with Europeans increased, both the ethnic population and the number of speakers of the native language decreased. This attrition has led to issues of linguistic purity, and the incorporation of further more modern topics became a subject of intense debate among the remaining speakers of the language. Throughout, some historical context will be provided to show the progression of the Coeur D’Alene people and track the trajectory of the use of their language.

An Overview of the Coeur D'Alene with Discussion of Etiology in their Oral Histories

The Coeur d'Alene or Snychitsu'umshtsn people are a Native American tribe who currently live on a reservation in what is today the panhandle of Northern Idaho¹. According to the tribe's official website, the name for the tribe ultimately derives from *schitsu'umsh*, meaning 'those who were found here'². This name seems to be related to other ways that Native American groups form names for themselves, echoing examples such as *Anishinaabe* 'original people'³, or *Diné*⁴, *Lenape*⁵ and *Inuit*⁶, which all translate as 'the people'. However, it is worth noting that instead of an endogenous ethnonym such as those cited previously, the Snychitsu'umshtsn people instead rely on the external discoverance of their people as an ethnonym. That is to say, by calling themselves 'the people who were found here', the Snychitsu'umshtsn to some degree shift their own agency by placing some in the hands of an outside observer, while also anchoring themselves historically through the use of the past tense. Since coming into contact with the tribe, Europeans have oversimplified the lengthy and agglutinative endonym to *Skitswish*, which is reflected in some of the literature produced by the tribe as *Snychitsu'umsh*⁷. Shortly after initial

¹ Lewis, M. Paul. "Coeur d'Alene: Ethnologue report for language code: crd". Ethnologue: Languages of the World (18th ed.). Dallas, TX: SIL International. 2015.

² "The Coeur D'Alene Tribe". Coeur d'Alene Tribe HQ. <http://www.cdatribe-nsn.gov/> Accessed 1 May 2016.

³ Johnston, Basil. *Ojibway Heritage*, p. 15. University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln and London, 1990.

⁴ Carey J., Harold. 'Navajo People: The Dine'. Navajo People, 1994-2013.

⁵ "Lenape Talking Dictionary". Lenape Tribe of Delaware Indians, 2012.

⁶ Kaplan, Lawrence. "Inuit or Eskimo: Which name to use?" Alaskan Native Language Center, UFA.

⁷ "The Coeur D'Alene Tribe". Coeur d'Alene Tribe HQ. <http://www.cdatribe-nsn.gov/> Accessed 1 May 2016.

contact, the French selected the sobriquet Coeur d'Alene or 'Awl-hearted' (sometimes translated as 'pointed hearts'), which is thought by some to reflect their apparent shrewdness in trading with the French fur trappers and voyageurs then entering the region⁸. It is this phrase which gives its name to the city of Coeur d'Alene as well as the eponymous lake.

Historically the Coeur d'Alene traversed almost four million acres in what is today the panhandle of Idaho, centered around Lake Coeur d'Alene.⁹ The tribe was semi-nomadic and relied heavily on fishing, so much so that native produced literature such as that on the tribal website refers to Coeur d'Alene Lake as 'our lake'¹⁰. The importance of fishing to the Coeur d'Alene is reflected in narratives such as 'War Between Land and Water People'¹¹, 'Coyote and Fox Gamble With Fish'¹² and 'Coyote Hunts With Crane and Releases Salmon'¹³. In these oral histories, marine life and fish in particular have central roles. According to fur company clerk Ross Cox, in the 1790s the tribe fought a vicious and destructive war with the neighboring

⁸ Reichard, Gladys. *An Analysis of Coeur d'Alene Indian Myths*. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1947. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969.

⁹ Chalfant, Stuart A; Bischoff, William N. *Historical material relative to Coeur d'Alene Indian aboriginal distribution*. New York: Garland Pub. Inc, 1974

¹⁰ "Environment". Coeur d'Alene Tribe HQ. <http://www.cdatribe-nsn.gov/> Accessed 1 May 2016.

¹¹ Miyal, Tom, Julia Antelope Nicodemus & Gladys Reichard (1927-1929). 'War Between Land and Water People'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

¹² Nicodemus, Dorothy, Tom Miyal and Gladys Reichard (1927-1929). 'Coyote and Fox Gamble with Fish'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

¹³ Nicodemus, Dorothy, Tom Miyal and Gladys Reichard (1927-1929). 'Coyote Hunts With Crane and Releases Salmon'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

espokan ‘Spokane’ people.¹⁴ Eventually the tribes came to an amicable agreement that led to intermarriage between the two nations.¹⁵ The historical relationship between the two peoples is a major theme of the Coyote Cycle narrative ‘War Between Land and Water People’, in which the Spokane and the Coeur D’Alene are allegorically represented as land animals and water creatures.¹⁶

Today the Coeur d’Alene people count approximately 2,000 members and, according to their website, operate a casino/hotel as well as golf course.¹⁷ According to the tribal website, sovereign lands of the tribe are today approximately 350,000 acres near Plummer, Idaho, south of the town of Coeur d’Alene.¹⁸ In 2001 the tribe won rights to the lower third of lake Coeur d’Alene as well as 20 miles of the St. Joe River, both of which are historical trout and salmon fishing grounds of the Snchitsu’umshtsn.¹⁹ The state of Idaho appealed the decision, but it was upheld by the Supreme Court.²⁰ While historically the Coeur d’Alene people practiced a unique version of native animism they have been nominally Roman Catholic since the arrival of Fr. Pierre Jean De Smet in 1842, a change reflected by many of the extant audio recordings in the

¹⁴ Cox, Ross. *The Columbia River, or scenes and adventures during a residence of six years on the western side of the Rocky Mountains among various tribes of Indians hitherto unknown*. Chapter 22. First published 1831.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Miyal, Tom, Julia Antelope Nicodemus & Gladys Reichard (1927-1929). ‘War Between Land and Water People’. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d’Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

¹⁷ “The Coeur D’Alene Tribe”. Coeur d’Alene Tribe HQ. <http://www.cdatribe-nsn.gov/> Accessed 1 May 2016.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ *Idaho v. United States*, 533 U.S. 262.

²⁰ *Idaho v. United States*, 533 U.S. 262.

Coeur d'Alene language such as examples of the Lord's Prayer or the Angel's Salutation.²¹ The tribe's reservation is noteworthy as the setting of the 1998 film *Smoke Signals*, which is a reflective account of the spiritual journey of two members of the Coeur d'Alene nation.²²

The native language of the *Snchitsu'umshtsn* is a member of the Interior branch of the Salishan language family and is critically endangered, having only two elderly speakers recorded in 2007.²³ Arguably the greatest efforts to preserve the language were undertaken by two individuals, one a professional linguist and the other a member of the Coeur d'Alene Nation with a background in language instruction. The former, Gladys Reichard, conducted two major field studies in 1927 and 1929, handwriting and then hand typing hundreds of pages of field notes, mostly oral histories, in the Coeur d'Alene language.²⁴ It is these oral histories upon which this work draws primary linguistic data. The second of these two important figures in the preservation of the language is Lawrence Nicodemus, a native speaker who in addition to many years of teaching the language has written thousands of index cards in order to make a dictionary for his language, cards that have since been largely digitized by John Lyon and published in the *Northwest Journal of Linguistics*.²⁵ In order to analyze the stories, Gladys Reichard relied on the

²¹ Original Speaker Unknown. 'The Lord's Prayer, Angel's Salutation (in Coeur d'Alene)'. Recording date unknown. Made accessible by the Coeur D'Alene Online Language Resource Center. Accessed 1 May 2016.

²² *Smoke Signals*. Dir. Chris Eyre. Alliance Vivafilm, 1999.

²³ Lewis, M. Paul. "Coeur d'Alene: Ethnologue report for language code: crd". Ethnologue: Languages of the World (18th ed.). Dallas, TX: SIL International. 2015.

²⁴ Boaz, Franz, Editor. Gladys Reichard, Author. 'Coeur D'Alene'. Handbook of American Indian Languages Part Three'. Columbia University Press, 1933-1938. Page 534.

²⁵ Lyon, John & Lawrence Nicodemus. 'Lawrence Nicodemus's Snchitsu'umshtsn File Card Collection in Dictionary Format' *Northwest Journal of Linguistics*. Volume 4, Issue 2 (2010) Pp. 1-110.

memories of Dorothy Nicodemus and Tom Miyal in addition to the help of Julia Antelope to bring the stories together. Dorothy Nicodemus was the daughter of Nicodemus, who was anthropologist James Teit's primary informant in his work on the language.²⁶ Julia Antelope was Dorothy's daughter in law and Tom Miyal was another community elder and speaker of Coeur d'Alene.

The narratives recorded by Gladys Reichard are split among several genres. They can be divided into accounts of Chief Child of the Root, accounts within the Coyote Cycle, accounts not in the Coyote Cycle, and accounts with historical elements. Chief Child of the Root was a leader figure in Snychitsu'umshtsn oral history, a benevolent guide of his people through various tribulations. The narratives not associated with Coyote rely heavily on some of the same intents, namely the recording of oral history, without the use of a so-called 'trickster figure' such as *smiyi 'w*/Coyote. The narratives with historical elements deal primarily with the Snychitsu'umshtsn people's relationships with other neighboring peoples, detailing alliances and armed conflicts. A recurring theme here is the Snychitsu'umshtsn relationship with perennial enemy turned ally the *espokan* (Spokane). The Coyote Cycle of Coeur d'Alene oral history focuses on *ta smiyi 'w*, or the Coyote.²⁷ The figure of Coyote represents a kind of trickster spirit to the Coeur d'Alene people, often deceiving the anthropomorphic spirits around him, with humorous or disastrous results.²⁸ Coyote also is held in high regard as something of a creator,

²⁶ Teit, James A. Boaz, Franz, Editor. 'Coeur D'Alene Tales by James A Teit.' *Folk Tales of Salishan and Sahaptin Tribes*. The American Folk-Lore Society, 1917.

²⁷ Reichard, Gladys. *An Analysis of Coeur d'Alene Indian Myths*. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1947. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969.

²⁸ *Ibid*, Page 11.

having in one of the oral histories become the guide of the Native American tribes when he kills a giant and frees the ancestors of various tribal groups from his belly.²⁹ The inventiveness and audacity of Coyote is well-recorded and he is an integral presence in over twenty different oral histories recorded by the Coeur d'Alene people.³⁰ It is this inventive audacity which makes him seemingly immortal as a character, which in turn makes him the protagonist around which a recounter may 'spin an infinite number of tales'.³¹ The thematic role that Coyote fulfills, that of immortal trickster, is supplemented by a variety of characters that fulfill supplementary or auxiliary roles.³²

Of vital importance to any culture is a concept of the beginning of the world as it is known, an ultimate etiology for the cosmos and all of its aspects. A possible exception to this rule is the Pirahã culture of Brazil, which reportedly has no creation narrative.³³ The oral histories dealing with creation seek to explain the world and spring from a distinct cultural need to explain the origin of universe and all of its inhabitants, that is to say, that humanity's very existence necessitates the passing on of such histories.³⁴ All cultures assign varying degrees of

²⁹ Nicodemus, Dorothy, Tom Miyal and Gladys Reichard (1927-29). Origin of Indian Tribes (From Parts of Monster). Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

³⁰ Reichard, Gladys. *An Analysis of Coeur d'Alene Indian Myths*. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1947. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969.

³¹ Ibid, Page 12.

³² Ibid.

³³ Everett, Daniel. (2009). *Don't Sleep, There are Snakes: Life and Language in the Amazon Jungle*. Vintage. ISBN 0307386120.

³⁴ Womack, Mari (2005). *Symbols and Meaning: A Concise Introduction*. AltaMira Press. ISBN 978-0-7591-0322-1. Page 81.

either literal or symbolic truth to these etiological narratives.³⁵ Indeed for many Native American cultures etiological narratives in these literary traditions ‘transcend the mythical realm’.³⁶ There exist many examples of such narratives across the world. To the Ancient Greeks, the world itself and everything in it springs from chaos and darkness and from the union of these primordial beings the heavens and the earth came forth. To others, the earth and all it is sprang forth from a cosmic egg that released the universe upon hatching. These etiological narratives appear to be a near universal cross culturally as their very purpose is custom-tailored to the various cultures of the world, explaining our ‘priorities and prejudices’ and say a great deal about ‘who we are’ as a culture and a greater human family.³⁷

In this robust tradition of etiological narrative composition, the Salishan Coeur d’Alene people are no exception. Specifically, the oral tradition that references the slaying of a world eating monster by the eponymous hero of the Coyote Cycle is for the Snchitsu’umshtshn just that narrative. In the oral history, Coyote and Rabbit slay a giant referred to only as ‘Gobbler’.³⁸ Coyote then instructs rabbit to butcher the slain giant, who had previously consumed all of the makings of humanity and stalling their emergence on earth.³⁹ Like a proverbial sower of crops, Coyote takes individual portions of the butchered giant and with his supernatural powers causes

³⁵ Leeming, David A. (2010). *Creation Myths of the World* (2nd ed.). ABC-CLIO. ISBN 978-1-59884-174-9. Page xvii.

³⁶ Zepeda, Ofelia. "The continuum of literacy in American Indian communities." *Bilingual Research Journal* 19.1 (1995): 5-15. Page 12.

³⁷ Leeming, David A. (2010). *Creation Myths of the World* (2nd ed.). ABC-CLIO. ISBN 978-1-59884-174-9. Page 87.

³⁸ Nicodemus, Dorothy, Tom Miyal and Gladys Reichard (1927-29). *Origin of Indian Tribes (From Parts of Monster)*. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d’Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

them to spring into the various tribes surrounding the Coeur d'Alene people, while including themselves in the narrative as the descendants of the heart of 'Gobbler' and an 'overbearing' people.⁴⁰ For reference, the primary etiological section referenced above is included, as transcribed by the author from the field notes of Gladys Reichard, as related to her by native speakers Dorothy Nicodemus and Tom Miyal.⁴¹

- (1) Ni'ténts x^wiýä häpi'lumx^w. niténts həi aaya'R ni'ténts. k^wints
 He cut it this Gobbler he cut it then all cut it he took it
- lä smIyi'w tcI tcmi'nts tcälgułtsä'näl kum ułk^wi'nem lä 'äänä'k^wä'ä.
 Coyote threw it what are to be those then he took another
- kum tcI tcmi'nts. kum x^wiýä maí sttá'malqçen tcI tcmi'nts. tcälkustq^wi'hcenemc.
 then he threw it then this near the leg he threw it you are to be Blackfoot
- äku'stus tcälku'tsä'calq^w kum x^wiýä tcätpä'stä'ä
 he said to him you are to be tall then this one side (ribs)
- (2) tcI tcmi'nts. tcälkuwähi'mä'ä. äk^wn lä smIyi'w tcälku'kəmqI s
 he threw it you are to be the Nez Percé he said Coyote you are to be his head
- ła xäst kum luwä sittc äku'stus tsi' I tcälku'si'tcc
 The good (ones) then that stomach he said to there you are to be stomach
- tcälkuptpi'sgul.
 you will have big bellies
- (3) kum lä ytspu'us tcI tcmi'nts tcälku'tcäst tcälkustci'tsu'umc
 then the heart he threw it you are to be overbearing you will be the Coeur d'Alene
- tcälku'tcäst. həi kum tcI tcmi'nem tcI tcmi'nem tcI tcmi'nem
 you will be overbearing and then he threw he threw he threw
- tcI tcmi'nem. həi tsäsp. həi la'qem ästä'dä'ä. həi x^wi' Ił axel.
 he threw then it was all gone then he pulled out some grass then this is they way

⁴⁰ Ibid

⁴¹ Ibid.

(4) i'p'äptctem kufi x'wi' Ił a'xɛl. x'wi'yä stä'dä'ä x'wi' Ił axi'stus.
He wiped and wiped his hands then here he did thus this grass thus he did to it

tc I tcmi'nts tsi'I tcälkus I ntä'ätä'u'lɛmc. tcäлку^uq^{wa}'yq^{wi}y't.
He threw it all right you are to be the Spokane you will be pitiable

həi tsi' Ił h I nxux^{wa}'tpalqs.
then and so the little road comes to an end.

(A Note in Reichard 1947 adds the details that when the pieces of the monster's body hit the ground they turned into smoke and revealed a dwelling for the people. In some accounts, the second stomach of the monster became the Palouse Indians.⁴²

Perhaps most telling in this narrative is the Coeur d'Alene narrators' firm placement of the Spokane (the perennial enemy of the Snehitsu'umshtshn) as the 'pitiable' descendants of the blood from 'Gobbler' wiped on the grass and thrown on the ground.⁴³ This animosity is reflected in other narratives of the Coyote Cycle, notably 'War between Land and Water People', in which Spokane characters are likewise characterized as intrinsically evil as they are personified at the opposite of the Coeur d'Alene characters (the heroes).⁴⁴ With this narrative, then, the Coeur d'Alene better construct not only the sense of place for their distinct culture, but they also assign specific niches for cultures neighbouring their own to inhabit. This formation of sense of place as pertaining to an etiological narrative is further evidence of the processes detailed previously that form sense of place in a culture.

⁴² Reichard, Gladys. *An Analysis of Coeur d'Alene Indian Myths*. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1947. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969. Page 71.

⁴³ Nicodemus, Dorothy, Tom Miyal and Gladys Reichard (1927-29). *Origin of Indian Tribes (From Parts of Monster)*. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

⁴⁴ Miyal, Tom, Julia Antelope Nicodemus & Gladys Reichard (1927-1929). 'War Between Land and Water People'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

Through the oral histories mentioned above, the Snchitsu'umshtsn anchor themselves in a specific geographical place and tie themselves to the land itself. The oral histories may seem on the surface to contain nuance and be open to interpretation, but in several places it can be seen that specific places are actually being referenced in the histories. One example of this can be found in the history 'Coyote Snares the Wind'. In the story, the wind blows all the time, greatly disturbing the inhabitants of the world by blowing their houses away (Coyote Snares the Wind).⁴⁵ In response, Coyote by means of his supernatural abilities and trickery is able to ensnare the wind (an anthropomorphic being in the history) to a mountain, and forces the wind to only blow during certain times instead of continually.⁴⁶

k'u'íents ła antɛta'q^w ła 'ättc'ɛmi'tcn' hä gwunaŋq'i' I ut.
 he did it at a little hollow on a ridge a low shoulder

həi tsi' I ɬ rä'tsɛnts. həi k'u'íents ła tcaɬRaRätsm'I'n' I s.
 then there he tied it then he fixed it to be a trap
 (From 'Coyote Snares the Wind')⁴⁷

The location of this event was a very real place to those relating the historical event of the wind's entrapment, and this place is identified by Gladys Reichard in her 1947 *Analysis of Coeur d'Alene Indian Myths*. According to Reichard, the place being spoken of in the above passage corresponds to either Tekoa Mountain in Eastern Washington State, which is right across state lines from the reservation and firmly in traditional Snchitsu'umshtsn ancestral lands, or to Liberty Mountain, about 16 miles northwest of the reservation in the state of Washington and

⁴⁵ Miyal, Tom, Dorothy Nicodemus, Julia Antelope Nicodemus & Gladys Reichard (1927-1929). 'Coyote Snares the Wind'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

also within ancestral Snchitsu'umshtsn lands.⁴⁸ Tekoa mountain is specifically identified as the location of the oral history about the friendship between rabbit and jackrabbit, which is not in the Coyote Cycle.⁴⁹ In this narrative, the 'relative-friends' each bring one another a gift (pitch to make a fire and bitterroot and camas to eat) when they mistakenly believe that the other is cold or hungry.⁵⁰ They meet on Tekoa Mountain and realize that the other does not the gift, so they leave the pitch and food on the slopes of the mountain.⁵¹ This is the Coeur D'Alene explanation (and therefore, etiology) for why the slopes of Mount Tekoa are an excellent source of pitch, camas and bitterroot.⁵²

Another example of geographical place in the oral histories is the release of salmon by Coyote through trickery, an event that is credited as bringing salmon, a staple of the traditional Snchitsu'umshtsn diet, to the people.⁵³ In the narrative, evil cannibal sisters are responsible for damming up a river and hoarding the world's bounty of fish to themselves. In order to help humankind, as well as to punish the cannibals for their evil ways, Coyote uses his magic to turn into a baby, which the cannibal sisters adopt.⁵⁴ Once a day when the cannibals aren't looking, Coyote transforms into himself and digs at the dam, until one day it breaks and salmon are

⁴⁸ Reichard, Gladys. *An Analysis of Coeur d'Alene Indian Myths*. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1947. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969. Page 146.

⁴⁹ Miyal, Tom, Dorothy Nicodemus, Julia Antelope Nicodemus & Gladys Reichard (1927-1929). 'Rabbit and Jackrabbit'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ Nicodemus, Dorothy, Tom Miyal and Gladys Reichard (1927-1929). 'Coyote Hunts With Crane and Releases Salmon'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

released into the world for native peoples to consume.⁵⁵ The location for this auspicious event was interpolated by the narrator to Reichard as being one of either the Snake or Columbia Rivers.⁵⁶ Similarly, the events of the story ‘Little Mosquito’ are given by the narrator as taking place in the Coeur D’Alene homelands at a place ‘where the trail is dense with undergrowth and thick with mosquitoes’, possibly referencing a specific place that would be recognizable to Snychitsu’umshtsn familiar with traditional trails used by their people.⁵⁷ In this narrative, a clever group of geese tricks a family of man killing mosquitoes into drinking too much blood and bursting, which leaves their many descendants unable to kill humans but merely to annoy them.⁵⁸

While not a geographical place on earth, the story of Coyote and Badger does include two characters, referred to as nits (a type of pest) who are transformed into two stars that twinkle like their jumpiness in life.⁵⁹ Examples such as the above show that to those relating these oral histories, the events depicted were historical events that, while anchored temporally only in the distant past, could be identified geographically as recognized places within the ancestral homeland of all Snychitsu’umshtsn. These homelands were also recognized areas, albeit ones that had distinct political boundaries. For example the oral history relating the adventures of Skunk and Fisher, which is not within the Coyote Cycle, references the traditional lands of the Cayuse

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Reichard, Gladys. *An Analysis of Coeur d’Alene Indian Myths*. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1947. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969. Page 101.

⁵⁷ Nicodemus, Dorothy, Julia Antelope Nicodemus & Gladys Reichard (1927-1929). ‘Little Mosquito’. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d’Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Miyal, Tom, Dorothy Nicodemus, Julia Antelope Nicodemus & Gladys Reichard (1927-1929).. ‘Coyote and Badger’. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d’Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

people of Oregon, who are considered enemies by the Coeur D'Alene narrator and by the characters of the history.⁶⁰

The cultural practices of the Snchitsu'umstsn also serve to anchor them to the land that they occupied. Much of the dry land that they called their own has been termed 'camas-prairie', taking its name from the plant that grows in these areas, the so called 'Indian Camas' (*Camassia quamash*). The colloquial name alludes to its importance to Native American Peoples of the area, who ate the bulbs as a staple of their diet, such as in the oral history 'Coyote Devours His Own Children'.⁶¹ The very word is a corruption of the Kootenai (Ktunaxa) word for the plant, *ya·qa·kmuma#ki*.⁶²

The Coeur D'Alene language itself is classified as 'Interior Salishan', indicating the geographic provenance of the people themselves and alluding to the group's lack of access to the open ocean, which features prominently in the oral histories of the Snchitsu'umshtsn's western neighbors.^{63 64} This is reflected by the narratives, which are devoid of pelagic characters and instead focus on riverine creatures such as salmon. As a group native to the Rockies, mountains,

⁶⁰ Miyal, Tom, Dorothy Nicodemus, Julia Antelope Nicodemus & Gladys Reichard (1927-1929).. 'Skunk and Fisher'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

⁶¹ Miyal, Tom, Dorothy Nicodemus, Julia Antelope Nicodemus & Gladys Reichard (1927-1929).. 'Coyote Devours His Own Children'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

⁶² "Nature / Environment - place names: words. Ktunaxa." First Voices Media Group. Accessed 1 May 2016.

⁶³ Reichard, Gladys. *An Analysis of Coeur d'Alene Indian Myths*. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1947. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969.

⁶⁴ Lewis, M. Paul. "Coeur d'Alene: Ethnologue report for language code: crd". Ethnologue: Languages of the World (18th ed.). Dallas, TX: SIL International. 2015.

lakes and rivers are prominent in the oral histories of the Snychitsu'umshtsn. As stated above, the fishing of salmon is and continues to be an important cultural practice for the Snychitsu'umshtsn, with the people using traditional angling as well as the use of nets, traps, gaff hooks and other spears, sometimes at night by torchlight. According to the tribal website of the Coeur D'Alene Reservation, traditional lands of their people were and are abundant in trout, whitefish and, the most importantly, salmon.⁶⁵ Due to the pivotal case *United States v. Idaho* mentioned briefly above, the Coeur D'Alene have retained access to the lower third of Lake Coeur D'Alene as well as a twenty mile stretch of the St. Joe River, areas that correspond to a significant part of areas that were traditionally fished by the Snychitsu'umshtsn, thus preserving some of their ties to their traditional lands.⁶⁶ According to the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, the St. Joe River in particular is abundant in fish and is home to four edible whitefish species, four trout species and two species of salmon, the Chinook and the Kokanee.⁶⁷

The importance of the Salmon to the Snychitsu'umshtsn is shown by their narrative histories, many of which allude to fishing for them. Perhaps the most important of these salmon stories is 'Coyote Hunts with Crane and Releases Salmon', mentioned previously.⁶⁸ This narrative, above the others featuring salmon, is primarily an etiological narrative. The evil cannibal girls have dammed up the life giving river of the area, preventing the spawning of

⁶⁵ "Environment". Coeur d'Alene Tribe HQ. <http://www.cdatribe-nsn.gov/> Accessed 1 May 2016.

⁶⁶ *Idaho v. United States*, 533 U.S. 262.

⁶⁷ "St. Joe River Subbasin Assessment and Total Maximum Daily Loads . Idaho Department of Environmental Quality, July 2003.

⁶⁸ Nicodemus, Dorothy, Tom Miyal and Gladys Reichard (1927-1929). 'Coyote Hunts With Crane and Releases Salmon'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

salmon and their spread to humanity, here championed by animal heroes Coyote and Crane.⁶⁹ It is worth noting that in Snchitsu'umshtsn narratives, characters were almost always anthropomorphic and their distinctness from humanity itself was often blurred. In the narrative, Coyote through the use of his magic transformative powers is able to slowly destroy the dam and release salmon to humanity, who thankfully proceed to fish it with vigor, feeding many starving bellies in the process.⁷⁰ While often the antics of Coyote prove to be destructive, whimsical or spiteful, in this instance Coyote in fact provides a great benefit to the Snchitsu'umshtsn, which perhaps accounts for some of the reverence they hold for him.⁷¹ By linking the bringing of salmon to humanity to this specific event, the narrators of the oral history provide a specific explanation for cultural practice that links the people to the rivers and lands where the Salmon exist, tying practice to locale and to a greater sense of place. Like the gathering of camas in the highland prairies of Northern Idaho and Eastern Washington State, the fishing of salmon as cultural practice, as told through the Coyote narratives, link the Snchitsu'umstsn to their traditional lands.⁷²

⁶⁹ Nicodemus, Dorothy, Tom Miyal and Gladys Reichard (1927-1929). 'Coyote Hunts With Crane and Releases Salmon'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

⁷⁰ Nicodemus, Dorothy, Tom Miyal and Gladys Reichard (1927-1929). 'Coyote Hunts With Crane and Releases Salmon'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

⁷¹ Reichard, Gladys. *An Analysis of Coeur d'Alene Indian Myths*. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1947. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969.

⁷² Ibid.

**‘My younger brother’; an Analysis of Slä’äwi’nätc/Cricket, a Recurring Auxiliary
Character in the Coyote Cycle of Coeur d’Alene Oral History**

The intention of this section of the paper is to analyze the thematic role of Cricket, an auxiliary character in the Coyote Cycle of Coeur d’Alene oral history. Specifically, discussion and analysis will be made regarding the ‘Cricket Narrative’ and its purpose in solidifying the thematic role of the character, as well as discourse on a nonsense language peculiar to Cricket and separate from onomatopoeic utterances from the same. A brief overview of the insect family Orthoptera as regards the beliefs of indigenous American peoples will also be made.

As stated previously, the Coeur d’Alene or Snychitsu’umshtsn people are a Native American tribe who currently live on a reservation in what is today the panhandle of Northern Idaho.⁷³ Their native language, which is a member of the Interior branch of the Salishan language family, is critically endangered, having only two elderly speakers recorded in 2007.⁷⁴ Arguably the greatest efforts to preserve the language were undertaken by two individuals, one a professional linguist and the other a member of the Coeur d’Alene Nation with a background in language instruction. The former, Gladys Reichard, conducted two major field studies in 1927 and 1929, handwriting and then hand typing hundreds of pages of field notes, mostly oral

⁷³ Lewis, M. Paul. "Coeur d'Alene: Ethnologue report for language code: crd". *Ethnologue: Languages of the World* (18th ed.). Dallas, TX: SIL International. 2015.

⁷⁴ Lewis, M. Paul. "Coeur d'Alene: Ethnologue report for language code: crd". *Ethnologue: Languages of the World* (18th ed.). Dallas, TX: SIL International. 2015.

histories, in the Coeur d'Alene language.⁷⁵ It is these oral histories upon which this work draws primary linguistic data. The second of these two important figures in the preservation of the language is Lawrence Nicodemus, a native speaker who in addition to many years of teaching the language has written thousands of index cards in order to make a dictionary for his language, cards that have since been largely digitized by John Lyon and published in the *Northwest Journal of Linguistics* (as stated previously).⁷⁶ In order to analyze the stories, Gladys Reichard relied on the memories of native speakers Dorothy Nicodemus and Tom Miyal in addition to the help of Julia Antelope to bring the stories together.⁷⁷ Dorothy Nicodemus was the daughter of Nicodemus, who was James Teit's primary informant in his original work on the language during a flurry of activity in the Rocky Mountains.⁷⁸ Julia Antelope Nicodemus was Dorothy's daughter-in-law and Tom Miyal was another community elder and speaker of Coeur d'Alene.⁷⁹

The Oral Histories recorded by Gladys Reichard are split among several genre groups. The oral histories can be divided into accounts of Chief Child of the Root, accounts within the Coyote Cycle, accounts not in the Coyote Cycle, and accounts with historical elements. The Coyote Cycle of Coeur d'Alene oral history focuses on *ta smiyi'w*, or the Coyote (Reichard

⁷⁵ Reichard, Gladys, editor. Tom Miyal and Dorothy Nicodemus, Narrators. Julia Antelope Nicodemus, Interpreter. 1927-1929 Field Notes in Northern Idaho. Unpublished typed manuscript.

⁷⁶ Lyon, John & Lawrence Nicodemus. 'Lawrence Nicodemus's Snchitsu'umshtsn File Card Collection in Dictionary Format' *Northwest Journal of Linguistics*. Volume 4, Issue 2 (2010) Pp. 1-110.

⁷⁷ 'History of Materials'. Coeur D'Alene Online Language Resource Center. Web. Accessed 1 May 2016.

⁷⁸ Teit, James A. Boaz, Franz, Editor. 'Coeur D'Alene Tales by James A Teit.' *Folk Tales of Salishan and Sahaptin Tribes*. The American Folk-Lore Society, 1917.

⁷⁹ 'History of Materials'. Coeur D'Alene Online Language Resource Center. Web. Accessed 1 May 2016.

1947).⁸⁰ The figure of Coyote acts as a kind of trickster spirit to the Coeur d'Alene people, often deceiving the other anthropomorphic spirits around him, with alternately humorous, productive or disastrous results.⁸¹ Coyote also is held in high regard as something of a creator, having in one of the oral histories become the guide of the Native American tribes when he kills a giant and frees the ancestors of various tribal groups from his belly.⁸² The inventiveness and audacity of Coyote is well-recorded and he is an integral presence in over twenty different oral histories recorded by the Coeur d'Alene people.⁸³ It is this inventive audacity which makes him seemingly immortal as a character, which in turn makes him the protagonist around which a recounter may 'spin an infinite number of tales'.⁸⁴ The thematic role that Coyote fulfils, that of immortal trickster, is supplemented by a variety of characters that fulfill supplementary or auxiliary roles.⁸⁵ Perhaps one of the most interesting of these auxiliary characters is *slä'äwi'nätc*, which is usually translated in English as cricket. Cricket is a main character alongside Coyote, fulfilling a role similar to the 'comic relief' of many of the stories through his stereotypical humility and resilience. Additionally, both of these characters have linguistic characteristics that make them interesting. Cricket has a formulaic question-response monologue establishing his character whenever he appears as well as a 'nonsense language' made up of gibberish sounds in Coeur

⁸⁰ Reichard, Gladys. *An Analysis of Coeur d'Alene Indian Myths*. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1947. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969.

⁸¹ Reichard, Gladys. *An Analysis of Coeur d'Alene Indian Myths*. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1947. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969. Page 11.

⁸² Nicodemus, Dorothy, Tom Miyal and Gladys Reichard (1927-29). *Origin of Indian Tribes (From Parts of Monster)*. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

⁸³ Reichard, Gladys. *An Analysis of Coeur d'Alene Indian Myths*. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1947. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969. Page 12.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

d'Alene.⁸⁶ Cricket, whose characterization allows him to fill a supplementary thematic role to Coyote, is the topic upon which the analysis of this work rests.

Crickets, locusts and grasshoppers feature prominently in the oral traditions of many of the native peoples of the Americas. Sösöopa or 'cricket' is one of the many katsina spirits of the Hopi people, a 'runner' spirit who appears in kivas during the night (Kritsky & Cherry 2008).⁸⁷ Among the Cheyenne, it was believed that crickets helped guide the people to the buffalo herds.⁸⁸ For the Cherokee, crickets are resourceful little hero figures who succeed in everything that they do despite their small stature.⁸⁹

In making these assessments about Cricket in the Coeur d'Alene narratives, the author used both the unpublished field notes of Reichard herself as well as Reichard's published English translation of the narratives. The author has been in the process of transcribing the oral histories to make them searchable online and has read most of the extant texts recorded by Gladys Reichard. Thus, in making these assessments of how the character Cricket fits into the broader Coyote Cycle, an attempt to understand the basic conventions of narratives within the cycle was made. With the knowledge gained from a full appreciation of the depth and extent of the narratives in the cycle, the author then had the context to create his own impressions.

It is from a tradition similar to this last example that the Coeur d'Alene conception of the cricket,

⁸⁶ Nicodemus, Dorothy, Julia Antelope Nicodemus and Gladys Reichard. (1927-29). 'Coyote Kills Cricket With Elk Fat'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC)

⁸⁷ Kritsky, Gene & Cherry, Ron. *Insect Mythology*. Writer's Club Press, 2000.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

or slä'äwi'nätc, is found. Cricket as a character is the source for much comic relief as his humility and optimism is inescapable. This is constructed by the main hero Coyote in what the author has termed the 'cricket narrative'. The Cricket narrative is a series of formulaic questions and answers that serve to establish both Cricket's place as the comic relief, as many of the jokes are at his expense. The greatest of these inside jokes is the idea that Coyote and Cricket are 'kindred spirits'. This is proposed by Coyote multiple times, when he explains that cricket is his younger brother, the most detailed iteration of which is found in the history 'Coyote Kills Cricket with Elk Fat'.⁹⁰ This could be construed as humorous because the trickster himself is declaring that he, a large predatory mammal, has fictive kinship with a small, unassuming insect. After cricket claims to be unaware of their kinship, Coyote explains:

Äku'stus tc'itścänca'i'wäs. äk^wn læ hɪnpi'pä'ä hɪɫ ɪnpi'pä'ä

he said to him we are real brothers he said my father and your father

äk^wn täpāpā'ās hɪɫ pi'łtsä'ä täpāpās.

he said then his father and his father his father

(Coyote Kills Cricket with Elk Fat)⁹¹

A shorter version of this idea is found in 'Cricket Rides Coyote':

⁹⁰ Nicodemus, Dorothy, Julia Antelope Nicodemus and Gladys Reichard. (1927-29). 'Coyote Kills Cricket With Elk Fat'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC)

⁹¹ Ibid.

gwi'tcɛn x^wä hɪsɛsi'ntsä'ä nă'ätsmä'ysɛn hɪsɛsi'ntsä'ä. äk^wn lutäy'tsmä'ysɛn

I saw him my younger brother perhaps he knows he is my brother he said “I do not know”

lut äku'stus k^wɪcɛci'ntcä'ä.

“no” he said to him “you are my brother”.

(Cricket Rides Coyote)⁹²

The second part of this shared formula establishing cricket's role as a comic relief figure is the idea that he has no house, which is expressed in both histories that feature cricket with the agglutinated expression lutähintsä'tx^w, translated as ‘I have no house’. This word can be further broken down into its component morphemes.⁹³ Reichard asserts that lutä is a compound of lut- which is a negation particle that sometimes acts as a stem, and the definite article -(h)ä (Reichard 1938: 580).⁹⁴ The remainder is in-tsä'tx^w which translates to ‘my house’ for an interpretation somewhat approximated by ‘not have a house of mine’.

The homelessness of cricket is contrasted to the affairs of Coyote, who is portrayed (as in Coyote Kills Cricket with Elk Fat) as not only having a house, but also a family (Coyote Cuts

⁹² Nicodemus, Dorothy Julia Antelope Nicodemus and Gladys Reichard. (1927-29). ‘Cricket Rides Coyote’. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC).

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Boaz, Franz, Editor. Gladys Reichard, Author. ‘Coeur D'Alene’. Handbook of American Indian Languages Part Three’. Columbia University Press, 1933-1938. Page 534.

Sun's Heart & elsewhere). This relationship of cricket as the wayward and humble character is supplemented by his diet, which consists simply of grass:

kum̃ äkʷn lã slã'äwi'natc lutätsi'ln xʷä 'iɫn lã

then he said Cricket I don't eat what he eats

'ästã'dã'ã lu'u qami'lɛn.

Just grass there satisfies

(Taken from 'Cricket Rides Coyote')⁹⁵

This contrasts to the carnivorous diet of Coyote, who is particularly fond of elk. It is this fondness that prompts Cricket, who is sad that his new brother has nothing to eat, to go 'hunting'. Cricket does succeed in killing an elk, but in truth, the poor animal jumped off a cliff after becoming startled by Cricket's chirping.

The chirping is worthy of some note, as it is depicted in the oral histories with onomatopoeic words. Variants of the sound of a chirping cricket in Coeur d'Alene include ut̃sat̃ɛt̃ɛt̃ɛt̃ɛ (Coyote Kills Cricket with Elk Fat)⁹⁶ and ts̃at̃ɛt̃ɛt̃ɛt̃ɛ (Cricket Rides Coyote).⁹⁷ In the

⁹⁵ Nicodemus, Dorothy Julia Antelope Nicodemus and Gladys Reichard. (1927-29). 'Cricket Rides Coyote'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC).

⁹⁶ Nicodemus, Dorothy Julia Antelope Nicodemus and Gladys Reichard. (1927-29). 'Coyote Kills Cricket With Elk Fat'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC)

narrative in which Cricket ‘kills’ an elk, his normally humble demeanor is transfigured into one of self importance and boasting. Cricket climbs up the antlers of the dead elk and celebrates his victory;

‘ätci’imɛn læ ‘äsni’itci’st hɪɪ ä’mɪc. äkʷn tuts

On the antler the longest one there it was he sat he said tuts

Tuts tuts læ pu’lusɛn læ xa’sxasälstcɛn xa’axa’ilstcɛn

Tuts tuts I killed him (nonsense syllables)

læ xa’sxasälstcɛn xa’axa’ilstcɛn læ t’ast’astsa’sqit.

(more nonsense syllables)

(‘Coyote Kills Cricket with Elk Fat’)⁹⁸

The highly repetitive nature of these ‘nonsense syllables’, termed as such by Reichard, perhaps suggest some sort of successful war chant, but do not seem to match up with any known song among the actual native people (Reichard 1947).⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Nicodemus, Dorothy, Julia Antelope Nicodemus and Gladys Reichard. (1927-29). ‘Cricket Rides Coyote’. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d’Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC).

⁹⁸ Nicodemus, Dorothy, Julia Antelope Nicodemus and Gladys Reichard. (1927-29). ‘Coyote Kills Cricket With Elk Fat’. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d’Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC)

⁹⁹ Reichard, Gladys. *An Analysis of Coeur d’Alene Indian Myths*. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1947. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969.

It could be argued that, because Cricket is small, unassuming and in no way warlike, this is a warrior taunt common to Crickets but rarely heard. Thus, these strange syllables become a uniquely ‘Cricket’ language, with an inherent sense of otherness divorced from common morphological or even syntactic rules that the average (Coeur d’Alene) character in the oral histories use when speaking. Indeed, with the notable exception of Cricket’s warrior language and Meadowlark, who can speak Spokane, all the characters use Coeur d’Alene to express themselves in dialogue.¹⁰⁰ This hypothesis that Cricket is using a unique language is perhaps challenged by Reichard, who suggests a possible translation of part of his utterings as ‘big-horn’, presumably referring to the large rack of antlers of the slain elk.¹⁰¹ The remainder of the dialogue is, however, still untranslatable:

lä slä’äwi’nätc äk^wn tuts tuts tuts

Cricket said tuts tuts tuts

lä pu’lusɛn læ xaxa’i’lstɛɛn læ xaxaxami’lstɛɛn

I killed him (nonsense) (big horn?)

Ła stastatsa’sqit.

¹⁰⁰ Miyal, Tom, Julia Antelope Nicodemus & Gladys Reichard (1927-1929). ‘War Between Land and Water People’. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d’Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016..

¹⁰¹ Reichard, Gladys. *An Analysis of Coeur d’Alene Indian Myths*. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1947. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969.

(nonsense)

(Taken From 'Coyote Kills Cricket With Elk Fat')¹⁰²

It could be argued that these types of nonsense phrases, as they come from an unlikely source, are ironic and by extension, humorous. This is strengthened by the situational irony of the elk's death not at the hands of Cricket, but killing itself out of fear, which is not how Coyote is depicted as hunting. As a linguistic device then, the use of nonsense language seems to serve an ironic or humorous purpose.

The character of Cricket in the Coyote Cycle of Coeur d'Alene oral history is developed into a comic relief and supporting character of Coyote, This effect can be analyzed through discursive analysis of the proposed 'Cricket Narrative' as well as through the unique 'nonsense language' of Cricket himself, which deviates from common onomatopoeic expressions. In the future, further analysis of the frameworks and paradigms of the Coyote Cycle may be made.

¹⁰² Nicodemus, Dorothy, Julia Antelope Nicodemus and Gladys Reichard. (1927-29). 'Coyote Kills Cricket With Elk Fat'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC).

Some Discourse on The Effect of Attrition on the Coeur D'Alene Language

To say that the Snychitsu'umshtsn people as well as the language they spoke underwent great changes after contact with European powers would be a grave understatement. The Europeans that moved into the traditional homelands of the Snychitsu'umshtsn introduced disease and religion to the populace, leading to changes that affected every facet of their society. These changes are reflected by their descendants' current values and, in the cases of the two remaining speakers, in their vocabulary. The following section of this paper seeks to provide a brief history of language use among the Coeur D'Alene ethnic community as well as explore how the community has evolved in response to severe attrition of the speaker's of their ethnic language.

It is thought that the Snychitsu'umstsn were first 'contacted' by Europeans in the 1790s, when they were reached by French fur traders who gave them the epithet Coeur D'Alene (mentioned previously), or roughly 'pointed hearts', for their perceived shrewdness in trade dealings.¹⁰³ The 1810-1814 journals of North West Company fur traders Alexander Henry the younger and David Thompson reveal that when they operated in the area the Coeur D'Alene 'were very numerous', noting in particular that they 'spoke a different language [Salish]' than their neighbors.¹⁰⁴ The Coeur D'Alene of the period were known to be wary of the Europeans that they increasingly came into contact with, and Pacific Fur Company clerk Ross Cox noted in his memoirs of his travels up the Columbia River that the Coeur D'Alene had 'expressed no

¹⁰³ Frey, Rodney. 'Coeur d'Alene (Schitsu'umsh)'. Web. University of Washington Libraries, Accessed 1 May 2016.

¹⁰⁴ Coues, Elliot, editor. *Journals of Alexander Henry and David Thompson*, Vol. II, p. 711.

desire for the establishment of a trading post among them', which contrasted to the generally warm reception the neighboring Salish group, the Espokan (namesake of Spokane, Washington) had giving the foreign visitors.¹⁰⁵

From the above evidence, it could be asserted that the Coeur D'Alene were reluctant to increase their contact with the Europeans, who were increasingly crossing into their lands. Their ability to resist the influx of outside influence changed in the 1840s, however, when a delegation of Montana Salish speaking peoples requested knowledge about the Christian faith after hearing about it from their neighbors, a delegation which in the past had failed due to disease and massacre in the lands of the Sioux. The speakers of Montana Salish live in what is today Washington, Idaho, Montana as well as Southwestern Canada and are a conglomeration of ethnic groups including the Flathead, Kalispel (Qalispé), Spokane (Npoqínišcn), Pend d'oreille, and Bitterroot Salish (Séliš).¹⁰⁶ Like Coeur D'Alene, the Montana Salish language is critically endangered, with Ethnologue reporting its number of speakers at around 66 in 2005.¹⁰⁷ This delegation of Salishan peoples caught the attention of Belgian Jesuit Pierre-Jean De Smet, who began preparations to establish a mission to spread his Roman Catholic faith to the Salishan peoples.

¹⁰⁵ Cox, Ross. *The Columbia River, or scenes and adventures during a residence of six years on the western side of the Rocky Mountains among various tribes of Indians hitherto unknown*; (first published in 1831). Chapter 22.

¹⁰⁶ Lewis, M. Paul. "Montana Salish: Ethnologue report for language code: fla and spo". Ethnologue: Languages of the World (18th ed.). Dallas, TX: SIL International. 2015.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

To this end, in 1841 De Smet founded St. Mary's Mission in present day Stevensville, Montana in the extreme western part of the state, a location that gave him access to congregants as well as a native workforce to assist in the building of the church, which was constructed out of wood and 'capable of holding 900 persons'.¹⁰⁸ This church, significant for being the first permanent settlement built by Europeans in present day Montana, was rebuilt in 1866 and still stands, being added to the National Register of Historic places in 1970.¹⁰⁹ Through the influence of his mission, De Smet was able to convert many of the Coeur D'Alene to Roman Catholicism in the following decade. Like many missionaries who had gone before him, De Smet advocated for the converted peoples to assimilate to a more European lifestyle, and he frustratedly noted that the traditionally mobile way of life embraced by Salishan people such as the Coeur D'Alene made it 'impossible to do any solid and permanent good among these poor people...'.¹¹⁰ Accordingly, he appealed to the American public to aid him in assimilating the Salishan groups and providing materials to adjust them to a settled farming lifestyle and to provide them 'with implements, with cattle, with seed'.¹¹¹

The impact of the change to agriculture was reflected by the language, which quickly borrowed agricultural words like *tmidus*, meaning 'tomato' and *buuli* meaning 'bull'. These words were joined by religious concepts taught at the mission, such as *ansh*, meaning 'angel'

¹⁰⁸ Smet, Pierre. *Origin, Progress, and Prospects of the Catholic Mission to the Rocky Mountains*. Fairfield, Washington: Ye Origin Galleon Press, 1972. pp. 5-6.

¹⁰⁹ "National Register Information System". *National Register of Historic Places*. National Park Service, 2010. Accessed 1 May 2016.

¹¹⁰ Smet, Pierre. *Origin, Progress, and Prospects of the Catholic Mission to the Rocky Mountains*. Fairfield, Washington: Ye Origin Galleon Press, 1972. pp. 9-11.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

(possibly a French loan) and *djisu kris*’, meaning ‘Jesus Christ’, also spelled *jiisu kriis*.¹¹² A more comprehensive list of some of the borrowings from English into Coeur D’Alene has been provided below, the information coming from John Lyon and Rebecca Greene-Wood’s 2007 dictionary, which has in turn become available on the COLRC website.¹¹³ In reading the table, it is worth noting that many of the words are introduced crops and animals.

Table 1: Snychitsu’umshtsn Loanwords from English

Snychitsu’umshtsn	English
buuli	bull
benene	banana
bins	beans
beetlyem	‘Bethlehem’
tsosep/jsusep	Joseph (given name)
ts’or	Can mean ‘salt’ as a noun or ‘sour’ as an adjective, cognate to English sour
chis	cheese
aadam	Adam (given name)
deenyel/den/diini	Daniel/Dan/Danny (given name)
daapit	David (given name)
aadwa	Edward (given name)
juulay	July

¹¹² Nicodemus, L., Matt, W., Hess, R., Sobbing, G., Wagner, J. M., & Allen, D. (2000). *Snychitsu’umshtsn: Coeur d’Alene reference book*. Plummer, ID: Coeur d’Alene Tribe.

¹¹³ Lyon, J., & Greene-Wood, R. (2007). *Lawrence Nicodemus’s Coeur d’Alene dictionary in root format*. Missoula, MT: UMOPL.

buts	boots
keemel	camel
maari	Mary (given name)
moonki	monkey
enyas	Agnes (given name)
pichus	peaches
plams	plums
paataq	potato
aapotar	apostle
q'wemp	to cramp (verb)
soltes	soldier
sip	sheep
shar	Charles (given name)
tmidus/tmerus	tomato/ketchup
timuuti	Timothy (given name)
wlumsmu	William(s) (given name)
epls	apple

In contrast to the above loanwords that have a clear English origin, the Coeur D'Alene language uses existing morphemes to create words for new concepts (as do the vast majority of languages). Examples of this include *ts'amts'malqs*, translating to 'pointed ends' and meaning pears. Other examples include *cha'w'nsh aats'aqhal*, glossed as 'would that it be so' meaning amen, a concept brought with missionaries such as Father De Smet. Another European concept, the railroad, was also given a name using native morphology: *chdlamalqw*, translating literally to

‘he galloped on logs’. An example of a more modern creation in the language would be *qha'yqhi't ha gwaru'lmkhwn*, literally ‘big ground scraper’, which is the Coeur D’Alene way of saying bulldozer. Of particular interest to the author in making maps for defining the language is *stsenku'l'ls khwe tmikhw'lumkhw*, literally ‘means of making a description of land’ for map. Lastly, one with which the author finds great inventiveness and some humor; *snlaquss ha st'maltmsh*, literally ‘a cow’s chewing gum’ and meaning the cud of a cow.¹¹⁴

Due to many years of contact with French traders, known as either *Voyageurs* or *coureur des bois*, the Coeur D’Alene language acquired several loans from the French language. Of the twelve identified in the following table, it is worth noting that eight contain some form of the articles l’, le, la or les in the Coeur D’Alene lexeme.¹¹⁵ It is also worth noting that five of these words pertain directly to aspects of French culture (the proper name mshel) and religion (ansh, liibeche, lebeetemm). The remaining seven loanwords are either goods or animals that could conceivably have been introduced or traded during a period of French influence.

Table Two: Loanwords From French

Snchitsu’umshtsn	French	English
ansh	l’ange	angel
liibeche	l’évêque	bishop

¹¹⁴ Lyon, J., & Greene-Wood, R. (2007). Lawrence Nicodemus’s Coeur d’Alene dictionary in root format. Missoula, MT: UMOPL.

¹¹⁵ Lyon, J., & Greene-Wood, R. (2007). Lawrence Nicodemus’s Coeur d’Alene dictionary in root format. Missoula, MT: UMOPL.

lebeetemm	le baptême	baptize
lebuutem	le bouteille	bottle
lkaapi	le café	coffee
lokooso	le cochon	pig
liipul	la poule	hen, chicken
liipwe	les pois	peas
liiti	le thé	tea
leeswip	le Juif	Jew
mshel	Michel	Michael
nors	orge	barley

While it could be said that many of the new crops and technologies introduced to the Coeur D'Alene proved to be beneficial, increased contact with Europeans proved to cause great hardship as well. Children were forced to attend the De Smet Catholic Boarding School, where they had their long hair cut and were forced to not use their native language.¹¹⁶ It must be said that despite this attitude, the Coeur D'Alene of today are still greatly impacted by Catholicism and many practice its tenets.¹¹⁷

Military expeditions such as those of Lieutenant Colonel Edward Steptoe in 1858 or Colonel George Wright shortly after were marked by massacre, extrajudicial hangings, and scorched policies that killed almost a thousand Coeur D'Alene horses and bushels of crops.¹¹⁸ After this, the actual native population was greatly reduced, being herded into their present

¹¹⁶ Frey, Rodney. 'Coeur d'Alene (Schitsu'umsh)'. Web. University of Washington Libraries, Accessed 1 May 2016.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

reservation after executive orders passing in 1873, 1887 and 1889, which reduced their sovereign lands while simultaneously depriving them of any form of remuneration for their ceded lands.¹¹⁹

The executive order of 1887 in particular was used to resettle many Coeur D'Alene onto the newly established reservation.¹²⁰ By the time of the Allotment Act of 1909, individual land holdings on the reservation were greatly reduced.¹²¹ Due to these land holdings being much smaller, they were unable to sustain large scale agriculture and the 'unused' land was often divided up to white settlers.¹²² Due to these policies, by 1921 only four Coeur D'Alene families were able to successfully farm their lands, and the new agricultural way of life being introduced by Europeans was halted by their imposed laws.¹²³

Due to the aforementioned instances of massacre, food shortage and disease, the total ethnic population of the Coeur D'Alene people was greatly reduced. The above mentioned causes, coupled with the policies of the Indian Boarding Schools, led to a drastic decline in the population speaking the language. This attrition affected the ethnic community differently and the remaining speakers (mostly tribal elders) adopted different manners of speaking to adapt to their changing world and new status as some of the last speakers of a critically endangered language. To illustrate this, take the example of the two primary informants Reichard interviewed between 1927 and 1929: Tom Miyal and Dorothy Nicodemus.

¹¹⁹ Frey, Rodney. 'Coeur d'Alene (Schitsu'umsh)'. Web. University of Washington Libraries, Accessed 1 May 2016.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Ibid.

¹²² Ibid.

¹²³ Ibid.

Tom Miyal, through his relation of many of the oral histories discussed above, represents a more modernizing, evolving aspect of the Coeur D'Alene language. Tom often uses more 'modern' language in his telling of the narratives, such as his relation of the Land People 'phoning up river' in 'War Between the Land and the Water People'.¹²⁴ Of this instance, Reichard notes that it is a reference to 'the way white people do things'.¹²⁵ In another instance, Tom modernized a narrative by telling that Waterbird had become a dishwasher out of shame for missing an appointment with the daughter of a chief.¹²⁶ Recordings of his voice compared to Dorothy Nicodemus, Reichard's other primary narrator, reveal that Tom not only chose more 'modern' vocabulary and expressions, but that he employed a wide degree of variance in tone and accent, which he was able to employ in making the modernizations and foreign phrases, in Reichard's words, 'even funnier than they ordinarily sounded'.¹²⁷ Reichard is quick to note that Tom was a very enthusiastic narrator who emphasized the movement and flow of the narrative, which unfortunately led to some of his turns of phrase becoming lost; Reichard laments that the recorded texts which he narrated 'do not do justice' to his style.¹²⁸ On the whole, the above evidence suggests that, at least for some, the Snchitsu'umshtsn language was able to undergo a great deal of change in the face of the social upheaval and subsequent linguistic attrition. Indeed, Tom Miyal is an excellent example of the 'modernization' of the language.

¹²⁴ Miyal, Tom, Julia Antelope Nicodemus & Gladys Reichard (1927-1929). 'War Between Land and Water People'. Field Notes. (typed manuscript). In the Coeur d'Alene Online Language Resource Center (COLRC), Accessed April 2016.

¹²⁵ Reichard, Gladys. *An Analysis of Coeur d'Alene Indian Myths*. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1947. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969. Pages 6 and 7.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Reichard, Gladys. *An Analysis of Coeur d'Alene Indian Myths*. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1947. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969. Page 33.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

In sharp contrast to Tom, the narratives of Dorothy Nicodemus represent a more conservative, traditional approach to the language. The widow of Teit's ethnology informant Nicodemus, Dorothy had an excellent memory and 'took great pride in her knowledge'.¹²⁹ She eschewed non-traditional ways of narrating and speaking her language and relied heavily on gesture and intonation to get her point across to eager listeners like Reichard.¹³⁰ Much to Reichard's chagrin, Dorothy often made similes while narrating the oral histories when she would say 'like this he did', her pantomime being the only semiotic clue to the semantics of her utterance.¹³¹ She also used very few 'modernities', instead retaining many of the older expressions and ways of telling the story, which to her meant more 'authentically'.¹³² As previously noted, this led to great difference in word choice from her contemporary Tom Miyal. Even when asked to explain some phrases in her narratives when the translator was unclear, she would refuse to modernize the concept, shake her hand and say only 'it belongs to the story' by way of explanation.¹³³ This linguistic conservatism as well her distaste of modern phrases in her use of the language was a direct result of her life, which Reichard notes was spent in a time when the Coeur D'Alene 'possessed and used the rivers, lakes, forests and prairies as fishing, hunting and digging grounds'.¹³⁴ Her narrative style harkened back to these bygone days, and virtually no

¹²⁹ Reichard, Gladys. *An Analysis of Coeur d'Alene Indian Myths*. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1947. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969. Page 33.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid.

modern concepts found their way into her narratives.¹³⁵ As such, her narration style contrasts starkly to the style of Tom Miyal, who used a great deal more ‘modernization’ of the language.

Like other indigenous groups, the Coeur D’Alene utilize a robust tradition of oral history to anchor themselves etiologically in their traditional homelands. The many narratives, such as those within the Coyote Cycle, seek to explain many of the mysteries of the world of the ethnic community while also tying the people to specific geographical locations. In support of this argument, evidence from the oral histories was presented alongside linguistic analysis and historical context. Specifically, the auxiliary character Cricket was examined in depth for evidence of linguistic inventiveness and thematic role. A brief overview of the culture was presented with particular emphasis on the impact of European contact on the tribe. As contact with Europeans increased, both the ethnic population and the number of speakers of the native language decreased due to factors such as disease, massacre and forced language abandonment. This attrition of the language lead to concern of linguistic purity, a concept that was examined through comparison of Gladys Reichard’s two primary informants, Tom Miyal and Dorothy Nicodemus. Throughout, some historical context will be provided to show the progression of the Coeur D’Alene people and track the trajectory of the use of their language.

¹³⁵ Reichard, Gladys. *An Analysis of Coeur d’Alene Indian Myths*. Philadelphia: American Folklore Society, 1947. New York: Kraus Reprint, 1969. Page 33.

Appendix: Maps Made on Google My Maps © with English and Snchitsu'umshtsn Names

Figure One: The Reservation Environs around Benewah County, Idaho

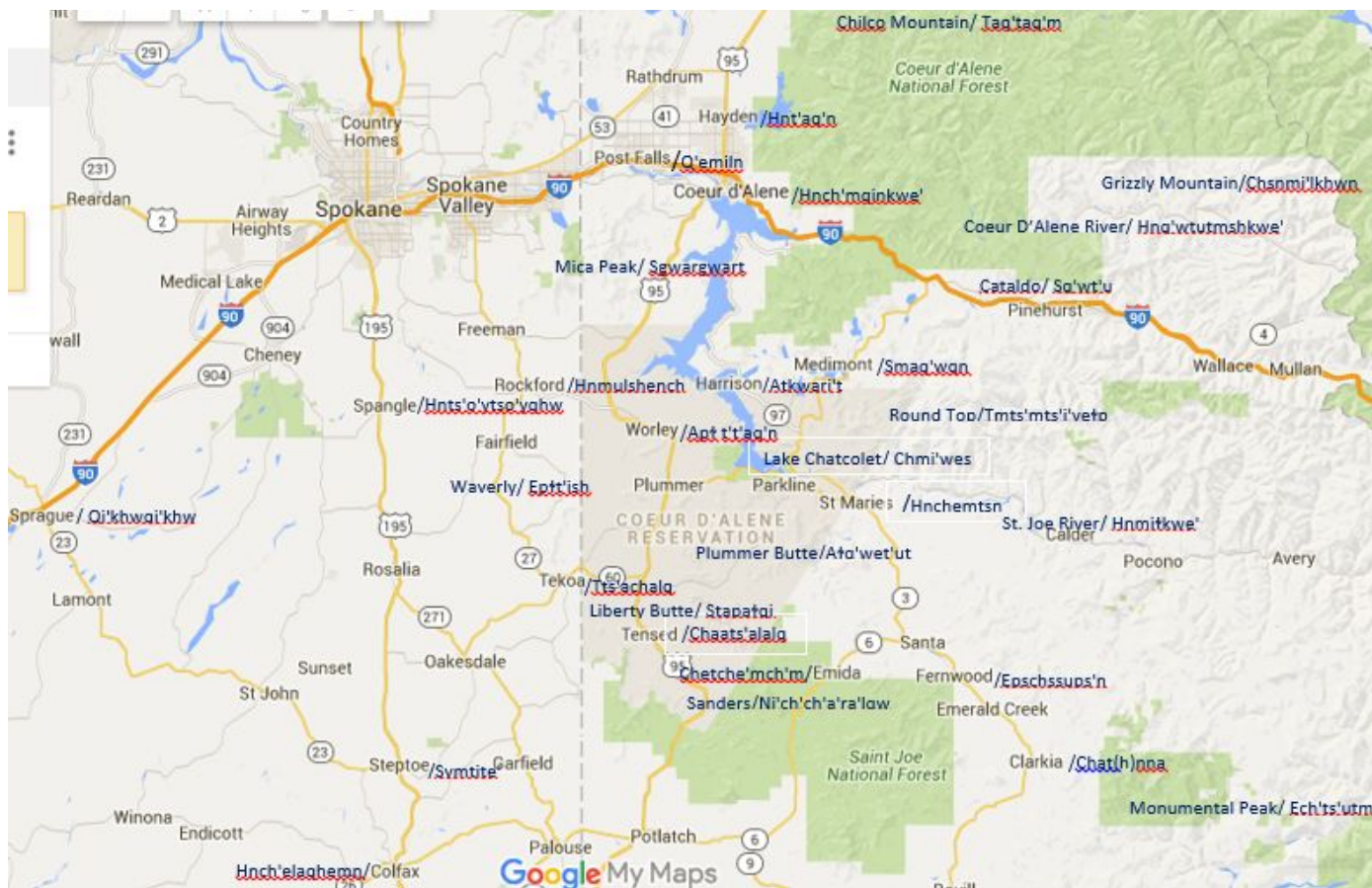
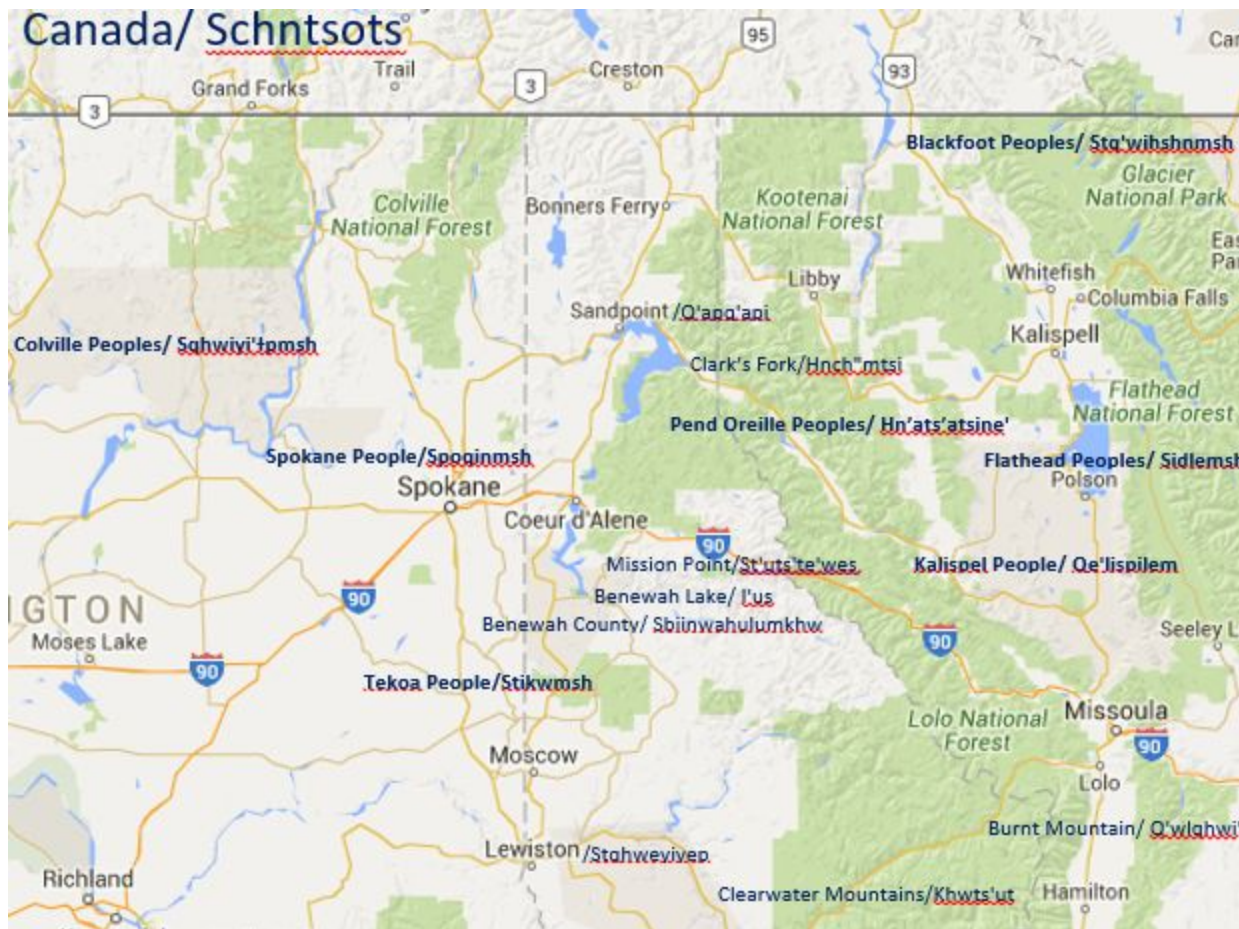


Figure Two: The Traditional Neighbors of the Coeur D'Alene



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