

CREE NARRATIVE MEMORY

FROM TREATIES TO CONTEMPORARY TIMES

Neal McLeod

PURICH
PUBLISHING
LIMITED
SASKATOON, SK. CANADA

Copyright © 2007 Neal McLeod

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means without permission in writing from the publisher, except by a reviewer who may quote brief passages in a review, or in the case of photocopying or other reprographic copying, a license from ACCESS (Canadian Copyright Licensing Agency) in Toronto. All inquiries and orders regarding this publication should be addressed to:

Purich Publishing Ltd.

Box 23032, Market Mall Post Office, Saskatoon, SK, Canada, S7J 5H3

Phone: (306) 373-5311 Fax: (306) 373-5315 Email: purich@sasktel.net

Website: www.purichpublishing.com

Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

McLeod, Neal

Cree narrative memory: from treaties to contemporary times / Neal McLeod.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-895830-31-6

1. Cree Indians – Saskatchewan – Historiography. 2. Cree Indians – Saskatchewan – History. 3. Cree Indians – Saskatchewan – Folklore. 4. Cree Indians – Saskatchewan – Ethnic identity. 5. Oral tradition – Saskatchewan. 6. Oral tradition – Prairie Provinces. 7. Storytelling – Saskatchewan. 8. Oral history – Saskatchewan.
I. Title.

E99.C88M35 2007 971.24004'97323 C2007-904396-8

Cover design by Duncan Campbell.

Cover image of Grandmother and *wihtikôhkân* courtesy Grace Vandall.

Cover painting by Larry Jacobsen / iStockphoto.

Editing, design, layout, and map by Donald Ward.

Cree editing by Arok Wolvengrey.

Index by Ursula Acton.

Printed and bound in Canada by Houghton Boston Printers & Lithographers, Saskatoon.

Purich Publishing gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Government of Canada through the Book Publishing Industry Development Program and the Government of Saskatchewan through the Cultural Industries Development Fund for its publishing program.

This book is printed on 100 per cent post-consumer recycled and ancient-forest-friendly paper.

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ...	5
INTRODUCTION ...	6
1 / CREE NARRATIVE MEMORY ...	11
<i>wâhkôhtowin</i> (Kinship) and Narrative Memory	12
The Reliability of Collective Narrative Memory	15
Toward a Notion of Spiritual History / <i>âtayôhkêwina</i>	17
2 / CREE NARRATIVES OF PLACE ...	19
<i>mistasiniy</i>	19
Other Important Places	24
Communication with the Landscape and Other Beings	26
Dreaming the World	29
3 / RETHINKING TREATY 6	
IN THE SPIRIT OF <i>mistahi-maskwa</i> (BIG BEAR) ...	33
The Historical Context of Treaty Six	37
<i>mistahi-maskwa</i> AND <i>wîhkasko-kisêyin</i> :	
Different Approaches to Treaty	40
4 / <i>kâ-miyikowisiyahk</i> : WHAT THE POWERS HAVE GIVEN US ...	44
<i>mistahi-maskwa</i> 's Resistance	47
The Spirit of <i>mistahi-maskwa</i>	52
5 / SPATIAL AND SPIRITUAL EXILE	
OF THE <i>nêhiyawak</i> (CREE PEOPLE) ...	54
Dwelling in the Familiar	54
Exile	55
Spatial Exile	56
New Order upon the Land	57
Spiritual Exile and the Residential Schools	57

6 /	COMING HOME THROUGH STORIES ...	61
	Playful and Humorous Treaty Stories	61
	Exile	66
	Coming Home through Stories	67
7 /	<i>pîkahin okosisa</i> : A CREE STORY OF CHANGE ...	71
	Historical Context of the Story	72
	<i>pîkahin okosisa</i> : The Story	73
8 /	EMBODIED MEMORY: CONTEMPORARY CREE POLITICAL IDENTITY ...	78
	The League of Indians	83
	The Creation of Modern Indigenous Institutions	88
9 /	CREE NARRATIVE IMAGINATION ...	93
	Modernity and Colonialism:	
	Dislocation from Collective Sound and Memory	95
	Narrative Imagination:	
	Bridging Past, Present, and Future through <i>âtayôhkêwina</i>	97
	Indigenous Theory	98
	Dialogue and Poetry: A Paradigm for Indigenous Theory	99
	APPENDIX A: CREE GLOSSARY ...	101
	APPENDIX B: NEAL MCLEOD'S FAMILY TREE ...	107
	APPENDIX C: MAP OF LOCAL CREE TERRITORY ...	108
	NOTES ...	109
	SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY ...	118
	INDEX ...	130

Note to Readers

Cree names and terminology are used extensively throughout this book. For readers unfamiliar with Cree, a complete glossary appears on page 101.