University of Alberta

Tse Keh Nay-European Relations and Ethnicity
1790s-2009

by

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Abstract

This thesis examines Tse Keh Nay (Sekani) ethnic identity over three periods of Aboriginal-European relations: the fur trade period, the missionary period, and the treaty and reserve period. It examines the affects these three periods have had on the Tse Keh Nay as an ethnic group in four chapters, the first two dealing with the fur trade and missionary periods, and the last two with the treaty and reserve aspects of the treaty and reserve period. In it I argue that during the first two periods wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity was reinforced, while during the latter period local Tse Keh Nay identities were reinforced through government policies that dealt with Tse Keh Nay subgroups on a regional and localized basis. Despite this shift in emphasis, wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity has remained, proving that Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity is both situational and dynamic.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

List of Maps

Terminology

Dakelh – Carrier

Dene – Athapaskan

Denesoline – Chipewyan

Dene Tha – Slave

Kwadacha – Fort Ware

Kwakwaka'wakw – Kwakiutl

Nehiyawak – Cree

Niitsitapi - Blackfoot

Secwepemc – Shuswap

T'atsaot'ine – Yellowknife

Tli Cho – Dogrib

Tse Keh Nay – Sekani

Tsilhqot'in – Chilcotin

Tsuu T'ina – Sarcee

Introduction

In 1999 the McLeod Lake Indian Band signed an adhesion to Treaty No.

8. They cited as justification for this action the location of their traditional

territory within the boundaries of Treaty No. 8.[1] They saw this act as the

redressing of a historical oversight, namely that the Treaty Commissioners had

failed to visit McLeod Lake to sign an adhesion, and therefore had never properly

gained surrender, or given compensation for their land.[2] Their decision to pursue

this course of action, however, raises many questions, because the McLeod Lake

Indian Band is part of the Tse Keh Nay First Nation. Historically known as the

Sekani, the Tse Keh Nay are a nomadic Dene (Athapaskan) speaking people that

live in northern British Columbia, and are currently subdivided into four First

Nations and corresponding communities: Kwadacha/Fort Ware, McLeod Lake,

Takla Lake and Tsay Keh Dene. If one accepts the continental divide as the

western boundary of Treaty No. 8, (as early federal maps indicated) then all four

First Nations' traditional territory are at least partially within the boundaries of

Treaty No. 8.[3] (See Appendix B and Appendix C, Map C-2) Despite this, apart

from some Tse Keh Nay who signed the Fort Nelson adhesion in 1910, no other

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[1] Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, (INAC) "Backgrounder: The McLeod Lake Indian Band Final Agreement," http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/nr/prs/j-a2000/00115bk_e.html (accessed 3 June, 2003; site not discontinued).

[2] Ibid.

[3] BC Treaty Commission, (BCTC) "Statement of Intent: Traditional Territory Boundary: Carrier Sekani Tribal Council," http://bctreaty.net/nations/soi_maps/Carrier_Sekani_SOI_Map.pdf (accessed 8 March, 2009); BCTC "Statement of Intent: Traditional Territory Boundary: Kaska Dena Council," http://www.bctreaty.net/nations/soi_maps/Kaska_Dena_Council_SOI_Map.pdf (accessed 8 March, 2009); BCTC, "Statement of Intent: Traditional Territory Boundary: McLeod Lake Indian Band," http://www.bctreaty.net/nations/soi_maps/McLeod_Lake_SOI_Map.pdf (accessed 8 March, 2009); BCTC, "Statement of Intent: Traditional Territory Boundary: Tsay Keh Dene Band," http://www.bctreaty.net/nations/soi_maps/Tsay_Keh_Dene_SOI_Map.pdf (accessed 8 March, 2009); Library and Archives Canada, (LAC) RG 10M 78903/45, "Map Showing the Territory Ceded under Treaty No. 8 and the Indian Tribes Therein."

Tsay Keh Nay has signed Treaty No. 8, despite the fact a Fort Grahame adhesion was suggested in the same year.[4]

This difference in regards to treaty among the Tse Keh Nay has continued in the modern comprehensive treaty process, (which includes a land claims aspect) where each Tse Keh Nay First Nation has taken a separate approach to it.[5] The decision of the Tse Keh Nay to pursue their treaty and land claims separately raises important questions regarding their ethnic identity. Indeed, two groups (Takla Lake and Kwadacha) have opted to enter the modern British Columbia treaty process in largely non-Tse Keh Nay tribal organizations (the Kaska Dena Council/Kaska Nation for Kwadacha and the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council for Takla Lake).[6] One would assume that since they all self-identify as Tse Keh Nay (and share a common language and culture) that they would work together towards a common aim in both the historic and modern treaty periods.[7] That this is not the case makes Tse Keh Nay identity multifaceted and complex.

My thesis is an attempt to examine some of these issues and in doing so analyze Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity. It is part of a wider ethnohistorical

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[4] LAC, RG 10, Volume 8595, File 1/1-11-5-1, Indian Treaties – Correspondence Regarding Western Treaty No. 8 and the Fort Nelson Adhesion 1909-1972, untitled Fort Nelson Adhesion, 15 August, 1910; LAC, RG 10, Volume 8595, File 1/1-11-5-1, Indian Treaties – Correspondence Regarding Western Treaty No. 8 and the Fort Nelson Adhesion 1909-1972, Memorandum for Deputy Minister from Indian Commissioner D. Laird, Ottawa, 11 January, 1910.

[5] BCTC, *Changing Point: Treaty Commission Annual Report 2005* (Vancouver: BC Treaty Commission, 2005), 24, 29, 31, 35.

[6] BCTC, *Changing Point*, 24, 29, 31, 35; BCTC, *Where Are We? Treaty Commission Annual Report 2003* (Vancouver: BC Treaty Commission, 2003), 27; Kaska Dena Council, "The Kaska Dena," http://www.kaskadenacouncil.com/overview.html (accessed 3 September, 2009).

[7] McLeod Lake Indian Band, "McLeod Lake's History," http://www.mlib.ca/about_us.htm (accessed 8 March, 2009; site now discontinued); Tse Keh Nay, "Our Communities," http://tsekehnay.net/index.php?/communities (accessed 8 March, 2009).

movement of analyzing ethnic identity, rather than just accepting it.[8] In

particular, it is a major departure from previous academic works dealing with

First Nations, which have perceived them in rather simplistic terms as the

"Indian" other, who are more a part of nature than of society in general.[9] Beyond

its significance for understanding treaty and land claims, this topic should be of

interest to anyone studying ethnic identity. Understanding how Tse Keh Nay

ethnic identity has been shaped by circumstances and outside influences reveals

the dynamic nature of not only Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity, but also ethnic

identity in general.

I argue Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity is situational and dynamic in nature,

and that this is the reason why four different First Nations could pursue four

separate goals (in the treaty and land claims processes) and yet still self-identify

and identify each other as Tse Keh Nay. It allows Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity to

encompass all four First Nations while at the same time allowing each composite

First Nation to actualize this ethnic identity in different ways, and towards its own

goals. This identity is dynamic in that it is not derived from an abstract unitary

cultural whole, but from key Tse Keh Nay characteristics be they cultural, social,

political or biological. These characteristics are the basis for Tse Keh Nay ethnic

boundaries, and are the reason why despite the reinforcement of local and

regional identities in the treaty and reserve period, Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity

has not disappeared for the majority of Tse Keh Nay. In this way Tse Keh Nay

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[8] Aya Fujiwara, "Reconsiderations of Frameworks of Ethnic History: A Comparison of Métis and Ukrainian-Canadian Historiographies," *Past Imperfect: The Journal of History & Classics Graduate Students* 9 (2001-2003): 43-46.
[9] Paige Raibmon, *Authentic Indians: Episodes of Encounter from the Late Nineteenth-Century Northwest Coast* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005), 7.

ethnic identity moves beyond the ahistorical ethnographic recording and becomes a living entity.

As a living entity, Tse Keh Nay identity responds to the world around it. Like other ethnic identities, Tse Keh Nay identity is only relevant when it is actualized from its latent state. This latent state is the result of a process of acculturation starting from birth (and indeed partly based on it) that gives someone the potential to be ethnically Tse Keh Nay. This potential ethnic identity remains potential and therefore insignificant until it encounters a situation where it is desirable and can be actualized. In the absence of such situations, this potential ethnic identity will not be actualized, and therefore will not be significant, but nonetheless will still exist in a latent state. Indeed, if not actualized Tse Keh Nay identity runs the risk of being subsumed by other more significant (and therefore more actualized) identities. All of this means of course that all ethnic identity is situational. Therefore, given the fact that Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity has remained viable, (even in non-Tse Keh Nay organizations) situations must exist that have allowed this to be.

Tse Keh Nay historiography is rather limited in size and scope, especially when compared to other First Nations. No doubt this limited historiography is because three of the four Tse Keh Nay First Nations (Kwadacha, Takla Lake and Tsay Keh Dene) are isolated from the main population centers of British Columbia. This means of course that research among them is hard to do (when compared to more accessible First Nations) and indeed Guy Lanoue claims that in

1978 he was the first person in over fifty years to conduct research among them.[10]

Nevertheless academic works dealing specifically with the Tse Keh Nay do exist.

Three notable ones are Diamond Jenness' *The Sekani Indians of British*

Columbia, Glenda Denniston's article on the "Sekani" in *The Handbook of North*

American Indians, and Guy Lanoue's *Brothers: The Politics of Violence among*

the Sekani of Northern British Columbia. As all three authors are anthropologists,

the history they contain in their works are limited in nature.[11] All three accept

Tse Keh Nay ethnogenesis as a given, namely that the Tse Keh Nay and Dunneza

(Beaver) were once one First Nation split apart by the fur trade prior to contact,

and deal with Tse Keh Nay identity as is.[12] All three deal with Tse Keh Nay

ethnic identity and history as being distinctly Tse Keh Nay from the time of Sir

Alexander MacKenzie,[13] even though Guy Lanoue admits that "For the Sekani it

is not at all clear that a sense of tribal identity and autonomy existed or was

claimed, even in its modern diluted form, before the creation of Williston

Lake."[14] Indeed, all three scholars claim MacKenzie's Rocky Mountain Indians

are actually Tse Keh Nay.[15] While all three deal with cultural change, Lanoue is

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[10] Guy Lanoue, *Brothers: The Politics of Violence among the Sekani of Northern British Columbia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), ix.

[11] Glenda Denniston, "Sekani," in *Subarctic*, vol. 6, *Handbook of North American Indians*, ed. June Helm (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1981); Diamond Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*, no. 84, *Anthropological Series*, no 20 (Ottawa: J.O. Patenaule, I.S.O., 1937); Lanoue, *Brothers*.

[12] Denniston, 433-435; Diamond Jenness, *The Indians of Canada*, 6th ed., no. 65, *Anthropological Series*, no. 15 (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1967), 284; Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*¸ 5-8; Lanoue, *Brothers*, 1, 144, 155, 186.

[13] Denniston, 439-440, 433-435; Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*, 5-16; Lanoue, *Brothers*, 2, 141-143.

[14] Lanoue, *Brothers*, 141.

[15] I will show in chapter one why I believe this is not the case. Denniston, 440; Jenness, 5-6; Lanoue, *Brothers*, 2.

alone in using a theoretical framework in doing so.[16] As such, he is alone in

going into any depth regarding Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity, but only in regards to

how it relates to societal organization, affiliations, and pan-Indianism.[17]

Nevertheless, it is clear that Tse Keh Nay historiography lacks an in depth

analysis of Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity.

      The sources each authors uses are similar. Understandably, all use the

journals of Simon Fraser, Daniel Harmon, Sir Alexander MacKenzie, Archibald

McDonald, and the works of Adrien Gabriel Morice, which represent the first

written records about the Tse Keh Nay.[18] Indeed Jenness places enough

significance in Simon Fraser's journal that he includes an extract of it at the end

of his book.[19] One notable exception from this list is the journal of Samuel Black,

which was published eighteen years after Jenness' book and is only found in

Denniston and Lanoue's work.[20] Similarly, R.M. Patterson's *Finlay's River*,

which was published in 1968 is also absent in Jenness' book.[21] A further

omission from Jenness' book are Hudson's Bay Company and Indian and

Northern Affairs records, which are used in both Denniston's and Lanoue's

works, with Lanoue in particular looking at the records from McLeod Lake, Fort

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[16] Denniston; Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*; Lanoue, *Brothers*, 3, 5-17, 205-214.

[17] Lanoue, *Brothers*, 205-214.

[18] Jenness mistakenly attributes Archibald McDonald's journal to Sir George Simpson, an understandable mistake when one considers the title ends with "by Sir George Simpson." Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*, 5-11; Denniston, 433, 434, 436, 440; Lanoue, *Brothers*, 222, 224, 225.

[19] Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*, 80-82.

[20] Samuel Black, *A Journal of a Voyage from Rocky Mountain Portage in Peace River to the Sources of Finlays Branch and North West Ward in Summer 1824*, ed. E.E. Rich (London: The Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1955); Denniston, 433; Lanoue, *Brothers*, 147, 221, 223.

[21] Denniston, 440; Lanoue, *Brothers*, 226; R.M. Patterson, *Finlay's River* (Vancouver: Touch Wood Editions, 2006).

Grahame, Liard Post and Dunvegan Post.[22] Notably missing in this list of fur

trade records are those of Fort Nelson, the site of the only Tse Keh Nay to sign

Treaty No. 8 prior to the McLeod Lake adhesion.   Beyond this, Lanoue is unique

in using Paul Haworth's journal, records from the McKenna-McBride Royal

Commission and unpublished Tse Keh Nay sources in his book.[23] Finally, each

author influenced their successors, with Jenness influencing Denniston, and both

Jenness and Denniston influencing Lanoue.[24] Less overt, however, is the

potential influence these works had on the Tse Keh Nay themselves.

Beyond written sources both Jenness and Lanoue conducted research

among the Tse Keh Nay: Jenness in 1924 at McLeod Lake and Fort Grahame, and

Lanoue in 1978 at McLeod Lake and Fort Ware.[25] This choice of communities

might reflect changes in Tse Keh Nay environmental history. Prior to the creation

of Williston Lake in 1968 Fort Grahame was the northern Tse Keh Nay

population center, while after 1968 (with Fort Grahame 300 feet under water) Fort

Ware had apparently replaced it.[26] A third community, however, emerged in

1970 after the destruction of Fort Grahame, called Ingenika, which Lanoue does

not include in his study.[27] As well, neither Jenness nor Lanoue conducted

research at Takla Lake, no doubt, because it is outside the Rocky Mountain

Trench, and allied with the Dakelh (Carrier). It is this lack of research at both

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[22] Denniston, 439, 440; Lanoue, *Brothers*, 222, 228-231.
[23] Lanoue, *Brothers*, 222, 230-231.
[24] Denniston, 433; Lanoue, *Brothers*, 222, 223.
[25] Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*, v; Lanoue, *Brothers*, ix-x.
[26] Jenness, 10; Lanoue, *Brothers*, 3; Bernard McKay, *Crooked River Rats: The Adventures of Pioneer Rivermen* (Surrey: Hancock House Publishers Ltd., 2000), 174.
[27] Jean Isaac, "Sekani History," unpublished paper, 2; Lanoue, *Brothers*, 3.

communities, combined with the lack of an in depth analysis of Tse Keh Nay

ethnic identity and ethnogenesis that leaves Tse Keh Nay historiography deficient.

Beyond this, however, all three works are problematic. This is especially

true in regards to Tse Keh Nay first contact with Sir Alexander MacKenzie,

particularly in regards to the number of Tse Keh Nay groups each author claims

MacKenzie either encountered, or mentioned. Glenda Denniston maintains

MacKenzie encountered one Tse Keh Nay group "near Table River along the

upper Parsnip River."[28] Guy Lanoue, however, maintains MacKenzie mentioned

"two groups of Indians, one in the Parsnip River valley itself and one living on the

shores of McLeod Lake."[29] A quick check of his footnote, however, reveals the

first group is the same one Denniston mentions, while the second group is

presumably in reference to their trading partners who they tell MacKenzie dwell

on another tributary of the Parsnip River,[30] "and an adjacent lake."[31] In regards

to the second group, Lanoue assumes three things. The first is that this tributary

is the Pack River and the lake is McLeod Lake. The second is that this group's

trading partner is the same ethnic group, something they do not claim.[32] The third

assumption is that the information this group gave was correct, a prospect made

all the more unlikely when one considers the sentence prior in which the same

group had told MacKenzie "they were not acquainted with any river to the

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[28] Denniston, 434.

[29] Lanoue, *Brothers*, 142.

[30] Lanoue's citation states page 286. Upon identifying I had the same edition he refers to, however, I found that the page he refers to only recounts the immediate events of first contact, while the succeeding page has the unnamed Indians MacKenzie encounters refer to other groups. Lanoue, *Brothers*, 142, 157, 225; Sir Alexander MacKenzie, "Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean," in *The Journals and Letters of Sir Alexander MacKenzie*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb (Toronto: MacMillan Canada, 1970), 287.

[31] MacKenzie, "Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean," 287.

[32] Ibid., 287.

Westward."[33] All of this suggests the claim this second group are Tse Keh Nay is

nothing more than an assumption, particularly when one considers it is not

entirely sure the first group, the one MacKenzie actually meets, are actually Tse

Keh Nay, as it is unnamed in MacKenzie's journal.[34]

Further compounding this problem is that Diamond Jenness claims

MacKenzie refers indirectly to four Tse Keh Nay groups in his journal. The last

two correspond with those Lanoue mentions, and therefore have the same

problems, while the first two are said to dwell in the headwaters of the Parsnip.[35]

Unfortunately, the citation for this claim seems to refer to Jenness' claim that at

least part of the Rocky Mountain Indians referred to in MacKenzie's journal are

Tse Keh Nay.[36] It suffices to state here that both groups that Lanoue and Jenness

have in common, as well as the one Lanoue, Jenness and Denniston have in

common are unnamed in the journals, unlike the Rocky Mountain Indians who are

named as such when MacKenzie first encounters them.[37]

Nevertheless, looking through MacKenzie's journal for reasons why

Jenness would claim two additional groups, I found two instances. The first

instance is MacKenzie's expectation, at an encampment at Arctic Lake, to find

Aboriginals, something he does not do, and his claim on his return voyage to have

found evidence that said Aboriginals had been there in his absence.[38] Jenness's

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[33] Ibid., 287.
[34] Ibid., 285-292.
[35] Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*, 6.
[36] Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*, 5-6; Sir Alexander MacKenzie, *Voyages from Montreal on the River St. Laurence, Through the Continent of North America, to the Frozen and Pacific Oceans, in the Years 1789 and 1793: With a Preliminary Account of the Rise, Progress and Present State of the Fur Trade of that Country* (London: R. Noble, Old Bailey, 1801), 140.
[37] MacKenzie, "Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean," 249-250, 253, 260, 285-292, 319.
[38] Ibid., 294-295, 401.

claim that this proves the existence of other Tse Keh Nay groups is based on two assumptions. The first is that MacKenzie was justified in expecting to find Aboriginals at the encampment, and the second is that his evidence that Aboriginals had passed through was not made by the group he previously met on the Parsnip, or his guide from that group who deserted MacKenzie after first passing through the encampment, and therefore presumably passed through it again before MacKenzie's return.[39] The second instance is MacKenzie's encounter with a "Rocky Mountain native" near Alexandria, who told him that her people, who lived at the mouth of the McGregor River, were raided by the Nehiyawak (Cree) and eventually driven into the mountains by the Dakelh.[40] This claim seems to be based on Jenness' earlier statement that some of the Rocky Mountain Indians in MacKenzie's journal were Tse Keh Nay. This statement, however, is not only based on the assumption the term Rocky Mountain native is the same as Rocky Mountain Indian, but also that these Rocky Mountain natives were driven north across the Parsnip-McGregor Divide by the Dakelh, when no direction is given in the journals.[41]

There is further disagreement regarding Jenness' list of subgroups he identified in the fur trade literature. In particular it is in regards to Jenness' inclusion of both MacKenzie's Beaver and Rocky Mountain Indians, (the latter which he divides into two groups) as Tse Keh Nay, claiming the former became Nehiyawak, while the latter became either the Dunneza in Fraser and Harmon's journal, or Tse Keh Nay proper, with a small band of the latter at Stuart Lake

[39] Ibid., 303.
[40] Ibid., 312-322, 318.
[41] Ibid., 319.

becoming Dakelh.[42] Denniston simply ignores this list of subdivisions, preferring

rather to emphasize the list of subdivisions Jenness provides based on his oral

research.[43] Lanoue on the other hand questions the inclusion of both

MacKenzie's Beaver and Fraser and Harmon's Beaver (the first group of Rocky

Mountain Indians) since they are outside the Rocky Mountain Trench, while

arguing the group Harmon mentions at Stuart were not Tse Keh Nay based on the

evidence given by Father Adrien Gabriel Morice.[44] This reflects a bias on

Lanoue's part that the Tse Keh Nay lived only in the Trench and therefore any

outside it were, by definition, not Tse Keh Nay. This issue of fur trade "Tse Keh

Nay" groups and in particular MacKenzie's "Tse Keh Nay" calls for a complete

re-evaluation of the period based on the evidence alone and not on preconceived

notions of who is and who is not Tse Keh Nay, where they are, and what they are

called.

Some historians who have examined other First Nations, their history and

their identity in greater depth, include Alexandra Harmon, David Dinwoodie and

Paige Raibmon. Alexandra Harmon, in her book *Indians in the Making*, examines

the connotations of Aboriginal identity and ethnic relations in the Puget Sound

area of Washington State.[45] In particular she deals with the problem of First

Nation continuity from the contact to the present.[46] This she argues is a departure

from the older American historiography, which treated the ethnic category of

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[42] Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*, 7.
[43] Denniston, 433-434.
[44] Lanoue, *Brothers*, 150-151.
[45] Alexandra Harmon, *Indians in the Making: Ethnic Relations and Indian Identities around Puget Sound* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000).
[46] Ibid., 1-3.

Indian and tribe as innate and obvious categories.[47] This older view is

problematic, she notes, because "more than any other group, Indians depend on

representations of history for their identification as Indians,"[48] and that

"Indigenous nations or tribes – shredded by disease and thrown into a bubbling

stew of European traders and colonists, African slaves, and displaced aborigines –

often disintegrated and fused and dissolved again."[49] It has meant that "people

who profess to be Indians have had to defend their claims with a frequency and

rigor seldom demanded of people in other ethnic and social classes."[50]

Nevertheless, Harmon argues that continuity is possible because despite being

continually renegotiated and redefined ethnic boundaries that gave Aboriginal

ethnic identity significance in the Puget Sound have remained.[51] This

significance, however, has not been universal, for as Harmon notes different

people had different reasons for actualizing or leaving latent their Aboriginal

identity, as well as different ways of doing either.[52] As such, definitions of

Aboriginal identity which were not adequate when they were created at contact,

have only become more confused with changing situations, different government

policies, and the passage of time.[53] Based on this, Harmon argues that the history

of the Puget Sound region disproves the arguments "that change erodes Indian

identity, and that Indians are not Indians unless they cling to a traditional core of

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[47] Ibid., 3.
[48] Ibid., 3.
[49] Ibid., 3.
[50] Ibid., 3.
[51] Ibid., 4.
[52] Ibid., 245.
[53] Ibid., 246-247.

aboriginal culture."[54] In this way Harmon's work in important in examining how

continuity can exist in change.

In *Reserve Memories*, David Dinwoodie examines Tsilhqot'in (Chilcotin)

ways of dealing with the present by using traditional narrative practices in

contemporary circumstances.[55] By using a combined approach of Marxism,

historical anthropology, and ethnography of speaking, Dinwoodie identifies three

literary forms that provide a historical context to the present.[56] These three forms

are the historical narrative, which help structure historical disjunctures introduced

by outsiders in a traditional context,[57] contemporary myth, which help structure

historical disjunctures "within the group and within the self,"[58] and new genre

types, (like the 1989 Chilcotin Declaration) which are hybrid in nature and

encompass non-Tsilhqot'in genres within the framework of Tsilhqot'in ones.[59]

By providing a historical context to the present, Dinwoodie argues, these three

forms provide continuity between the past and present.[60] It is this continuity,

which gives significance to Tsilhqot'in ethnic identity, ensuring its continuation

into future.

Finally, Paige Raibmon, in her book *Authentic Indians*, examines three

historical episodes which articulate the dichotomy between Euro-Canadian and

Euro-American concepts of "authentic" Aboriginal identity and actual Aboriginal

identity, and show how Aboriginals were able to actualize the latter within the

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[54] Ibid., 249.
[55] David Dinwoodie, *Reservoir Memories: The Power of the Past in Chilcotin Communities* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2002), 1.
[56] Ibid., 107.
[57] Ibid., 58.
[58] Ibid., 80.
[59] Ibid., 83, 92-101.
[60] Ibid., 107.

confines of the former.[61] These episodes are: the Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl)

pavilion at the 1893 Chicago World Fair, late nineteenth century Aboriginal

migrant hops pickers in Washington State, and the court case of Tlingit artist

Rudolph Walton over whether he and his children were civilized.[62] All three

show the inherent contradictions of Aboriginal authenticity, which according to

Raibmon were created by anthropologists who "transformed the most traumatic

and turbulent period in the history of western North American Aboriginal people

into the benchmark of timeless Aboriginal culture." [63] In doing so it created a

binary framework of what was authentic and what was inauthentic, and given the

fact that one of these binaries of authentic and inauthentic was traditional and

modern, this meant that Aboriginals could not be modern and still be authentic.[64]

As Raibmon states:

> The notion of a singular Aboriginal culture – a culture that could
> be preserved in the static representation of ethnographic texts,
> museum cases, or stylized performances – held Aboriginal people
> to impossible standards of ahistorical cultural purity. Aboriginal
> people inevitably deviated from their prescribed cultural set,
> because no culture conforms to an unchanging set of itemized
> traits, a fact that goes uncontested when the culture in question is
> the dominant one.[65]

Furthermore, these "notions of authenticity… simultaneously generated and

delimited opportunities for Aboriginal people."[66] Despite this, however,

Aboriginal people had no choice but to work within this framework, which many

of them willingly did to their own advantage, despite the fact that this only

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[61] Raibmon.
[62] Ibid., 3-4.
[63] Ibid., 5.
[64] Ibid., 7.
[65] Ibid., 9.
[66] Ibid., 198.

reinforced it.[67] In doing so, they challenged this dichotomy by fashioning lives

that defied it, an action that was both political and cultural in nature.[68] This

challenge meant that they were neither "subsumed by stereotypes… [nor] entirely

[eschewed] them,"[69] but rather created a hybrid identity of both "traditional" and

"modern" elements "that were authentic on Aboriginal terms."[70] It is because of

this hybrid identity, Raibmon argues, that twenty-first century society should

reconsider the concepts of Aboriginal authenticity it inherited from the nineteenth

century.[71]

Beyond these differences there are certain themes that reappear in all three

authors' works and are significant to my study. One, is that each challenges

preconceived notions of Aboriginal identity as being inherently innate, simplistic

and largely unchanging.[72] As such, they call for a re-examination of Aboriginal

identity. Another is that each deals with historic continuity among First Nations,

which itself was influenced by interaction with European settlers and their

descendents in the United States and Canada.[73] As such, each calls for an

examination of this continuity in other First Nations.

To apply their approaches to the Tse Keh Nay, one must take into account

the particular problems in Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity. The Tse Keh Nay were a

nomadic Dene speaking people. As such, they are linguistically related to many

of the other First Nations in this area: the Dakelh, the Dene Tha (Slave), the

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[67] Ibid., 10-12.
[68] Ibid., 11, 200.
[69] Ibid., 12-13.
[70] Ibid., 13.
[71] Ibid., 13-14.
[72] Dinwoodie, 7; Harmon, 3; Raibmon, 9.
[73] Dinwoodie, 1, 7; Harmon, 1-3; Raibmon, 5-14.

Dunneza, the Kaska and the Tahltan. Indeed, according to the *Handbook of North American Indians* Tahltan and Kaska are dialects of the same language, which itself is similar in phonology to Dunneza and Tse Keh Nay, which themselves are mutually intelligible.[74] Beyond this linguistic connection, however, there are biological links between these groups, as historically individuals from each group have intermarried with each other. For example my own grandmother, who is Tse Keh Nay, is partially of Tahltan descent.

All of these problems raise questions regarding ethnic identity. How it is formed? How it is defined? After all, how is it that each group can have a distinct ethnic identity if they share a similar (or indeed common) language and/or familial descent? These questions get to the very heart of the primordialist-instrumentalist debate in ethnic theory, that is, is ethnic identity based on innate characteristics, as the primordialists hold, or on socio-economic interests, as the instrumentalists hold.[75]

One of the proponents of the instrumentalist approach is Fredrik Barth. In his introduction to *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* he argues that previous assumptions about ethnic groups have failed because they have presupposed their basis to be a common shared culture, despite the fact that historically culture changes over time and is often situational.[76] If one accepts the primordialist view, then any cultural changes become problematic and one finds oneself faced

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[74] Michael E. Krauss and Victor K. Golla, "Northern Athapaskan Languages," in *Subarctic*, vol. 6, *Handbook of North American Indians*, ed. June Helm (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1981), 82.
[75] Fujiwara, 45.
[76] Fredrik Barth, "Introduction," in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*, ed. Fredrik Barth (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1969), 10-13.

with the problem of Theseus' ship, that is, at what point do these cultural changes change ethnic identity, if indeed they necessarily change it at all?[77] Considering these problems, Barth argues that ethnic groups are "categories of ascription and identification by the individuals themselves, and thus have the characteristics organizing interaction between people."[78] It is this social aspect of ethnic identity rather than the totality of cultural differences that is significant to defining ethnic identity – it is only those differences that are deemed significant in this interaction that actually defines an ethnic group via the formation of an ethnic boundary, which in turns provides continuity in change.[79] This continuity in change is possible because these significant cultural differences and the ethnic boundaries they form are not static. As Barth notes "the cultural features that signal the boundary may change… [and] yet the fact of continuing dichotomization between members and outsiders allows us to specify the nature of continuity, and investigate the changing cultural form and content."[80] As such, "the critical investigation… becomes the ethnic boundary, [and] not the cultural stuff it encloses."[81] Taking Barth's approach, the linguistic and familial connections lose their significance in regards to Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity, and what becomes significant are those cultural differences that form ethnic boundaries, and separate them from other Dene groups.

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[77] Theseus' ship poses the question that if one has a wooden ship and replaces a plank on it at what point does this replacing of planks change the original ship into a new one? And if one accepts that one can change all the planks and still have same ship, what happens if someone else were to take the old planks you replaced and builds a new ship? Louis P. Pojman, *Philosophy: The Pursuit of Wisdom*, (Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing Company, 1994), 211-212.
[78] Barth, 10.
[79] Ibid., 13-15.
[80] Ibid., 14.
[81] Ibid., 15.

The instrumentalist approach, however, is not without its detractors. Some ethno-historians have argued that by defining ethnicity solely on a socio-economic basis, instrumentalists have made ethnic identity too political, and have ignored any non-political and potentially innate basis for ethnic identity.[82] As Aya Fujiwara argues, separating ethnicity from culture "not only fails to show why 'cultural groups' emerge in the first place, but also limits the definition of ethnicity to the actions of politically motivated elites."[83]   From this point of view, she notes, "ethnicity is a matter of definition."[84] This is problematic she argues, because in using "ethnicity… as a framework in writing ethnic histories… it leads historians to anachronistically apply currently-existing ethnic boundaries to the past."[85] Furthermore, she argues, "the argument that ethnic groups vary in the degree of primordial attachment appears to be valid, given that distinctions between instrumental and primordial identities are not always clear."[86] This suggests that rather than being a purely socio-economic thing, ethnic identity, and therefore its boundaries, can also be based on more innate objective characteristics. This view has led some historians to try to synthesize the two approaches.[87]

These two approaches are critical to my investigation of Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity. This may seem strange at first because both approaches seem to be at odds with each other. This need not be the case, however, and it is possible

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[82] Fujiwara, 45-46.
[83] Ibid., 46.
[84] Ibid., 46.
[85] Ibid., 46.
[86] Ibid., 46.
[87] Ibid., 45.

to argue that each strengthens the other if taken together. Barth's approach, via his concept of ethnic boundaries, provides a means to examine continuity in change. And while Fujiwara argues the instrumentalist approach can lead to anachronistically applying ethnic boundaries to the past, this need not be a reason to abandon it, but can serve as a warning to anyone attempting to use it. Furthermore, her assertion that primordial attachment varies from ethnic group to ethnic group need not destroy Barth's concept of ethnic boundaries, but rather provide a potential basis for them. Therefore, by taking both together I will be able to examine Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity and continuity based on ethnic boundaries, which themselves may include a significant primordial basis.

Beyond these two approaches, however, there is another concept, which is specific to the Tse Keh Nay as a colonized ethnic group. For as Eugeen Roosens notes in *Creating Ethnicity*:

> The isolated, culturally, homogenous tribe or ethnic unit was often
> the creation of the colonial administrator or the missionary who
> wanted to divide 'his area' clearly into separate population groups,
> or of the ethnographers and ethnologists who wanted to situate the
> 'tribes' of a region conveniently on a map.[88]

Not only is this important because of what it reveals about the impact of outsiders in the creation of Aboriginal ethnic identity, but also because it is important to understand that many of the written sources we have dealing with Tse Keh Nay were created by "colonial authorities," and therefore might simply reflect their inventions or administrative categories. Indeed, it echoes Alexandra Harmon in her article "Wanted: More Histories of Indian History," who argues that certain

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[88] Eugeen E. Roosens, *Creating Ethnicity: The Process of Ethnogenesis* (London: Sage Publications, 1989), 13.

First Nations were the result of "political, economic, and ideological pressures and opportunities associated with European activity."[89] Furthermore, it calls into question whether or not the similarities between the Tse Keh Nay and their neighbors I mentioned earlier might actually be indicative of these groups being a single ethnic group, which was divided by the colonial state for easier administration and control. This is a point that must be kept in the forefront of any analysis of Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity.

It is with these three approaches in mind that I will examine Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity, ethnogenesis and history. I frame my investigation on ethnic lines based on my definition of ethnic groups, ethnicity, and ethnic identity. I define ethnic groups as social groups that are self-perceived and perceived by others to exist, and who have a perceived claim to a common ancestry, culture, and other socially significant commonalities.[90] Based on this definition, ethnicity is either used interchangeably or to refer to the characteristics of an ethnic group, while ethnic identity refers to self-perception and perception by others of an ethnic group and the characteristics that define an ethnic group. It is the claim to a common culture, ancestry and other socially significant commonalities found in my definition of ethnic group that distinguishes my study from a cultural study, as cultural study would either include other Dene groups with a similar culture to include Takla Lake, or exclude Takla Lake altogether because as a mixed Dakelh-Tse Keh Nay community has a mixed Dakelh-Tse Keh Nay culture that distinguishes from the other three Tse Keh Nay communities, despite the fact

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[89] Alexandra Harmon, "Wanted: More Histories of Indian Identity," in *A Companion to American Indian History*, ed. Philip J. Deloria & Neal Salisbury (Malden: Blackwell, 2002), 253.
[90] Barth, 13; Steve Fenton, *Ethnicity* (Malden: Polity Press, 2003), 3.

Takla Lake claims to be Tse Keh Nay. Similarly, the lack of political unity among the Tse Keh Nay in the modern comprehensive treaty process precludes my study being politically centered, because as with cultural studies the uniting factor between all four Tse Keh Nay communities is their claimed common ethnic identity

And it is based on this and the three approaches previously mentioned that I argue that Tse Keh Nay identity, rather than being solely (or indeed primarily) primordial, has been historically contingent or situational from first contact to the present. In each of their contact relationships with various Europeans, the Tse Keh Nay were perceived differently. Furthermore, this situational identity had a geographic, economic, social, and legalistic context, as can be seen in three key historical periods: the fur trade era, the missionary era, and the treaty and reserve era. These periods, however, are not wholly distinct from each other, and indeed are not even chronologically separated, and because of this, they affect each other. Nevertheless, they represent three clear relationships where Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity and ethnic boundaries can best be seen and examined. Chronologically, they span well over the last two hundred years: the fur trade era from the 1790s to the 1920s, the missionary era from the 1870s to the 1930s, and the treaty and reserve era from the 1870s to the present. By examining each of these eras or relationships individually I hope to be able to show how each has affected Tse Keh Nay identity.

In chapter one I examine fur trader perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay, their relations with other First Nations, (particularly MacKenzie's Rocky Mountain

Indians) and their territory. These perceptions are critical to any study of the Tse

Keh Nay because fur traders were the ones who made first contact with them, and

left the earliest written accounts of them. Because of this, their perceptions of the

Tse Keh Nay influenced all succeeding perceptions which either rejected them or

accepted them. And since the critical feature of ethnic groups is "self-ascription

and ascription by others,"[91] by influencing others perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay

as an ethnic group, the fur traders affected the Tse Keh Nay as an ethnic group.

Based on this, I argue that perceptions of a wider Tse Keh Nay ethnicity emerged

during the fur trade period, despite the fact that fur traders generally referred to

local Tse Keh Nay groupings.

In chapter two I examine missionary perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay,

particularly those of Adrien Gabriel Morice, an Oblate missionary. I will

compare these observations to the fur trader perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay,

looking at not only the overt differences, but also the different relationship

missionaries had with Tse Keh Nay. Next, I will look at Morice's observations,

his claims regarding the Tse Keh Nay, and the influences working on him as a

missionary ethnographer, as well as his theoretical background. Based on all of

this, I argue, despite claims his observations were superior to those of the fur

traders due to his knowledge of Tse Keh Nay, Morice's observations often

supplemented or supported fur trader perceptions of a wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic

identity and even expanded on it, albeit with localized identities within it.

In chapter three, I examine the treaty period, and the affects treaty and the

treaty processes had on Tse Keh Nay identity. It is in this chapter that I will try to

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[91] Barth, 13.

answer why the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay signed Treaty No. 8, while the other modern Tse Keh Nay communities did not. In particular I look at how the Tse Keh Nay as whole were never under the same treaty or treaty policy and the affects this had on them, and wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity. I begin by looking at British Columbia treaty policy prior to the modern comprehensive treaty process. Then, I examine Treaty No. 8, the reason behind it, and which First Nations and what territory it was supposed to include. Based on this, I will look at the affects Treaty No. 8 has had on the Tse Keh Nay who signed it, Tse Keh Nay perceptions of the treaty, and its affects on Tse Keh Nay relations with other First Nations, like the Dunneza. Following this, I examine the McLeod Lake adhesion and their decision to sign. I will conclude by looking at the modern comprehensive treaty process and the decision of all four Tse Keh Nay communities to pursue it separately. Based on this, I argue the treaty period has reinforced pre-existing regional Tse Keh Nay identities, at the expense of wider Tse Keh Nay identity.

In chapter four, I examine the reserve aspect of this period and the affects it has had on Tse Keh Nay identity. I will begin by looking at British Columbia reserve policy as established in the British Columbia Reserve Commission (1876-1908), and how it relates to the first Tse Keh Nay reserve at McLeod Lake. Next, I examine the McKenna McBride Royal Commission (1913-1916) in particular looking at how it classified the three Tse Keh Nay communities it visited: Bear Lake, Fort Grahame and McLeod Lake. Based on this, I examine how Tse Keh Nay communities have appeared in subsequent reserve schedules up to 1992.

Related to this, I examine the affects the Williston Lake Reservoir has had on the Tse Keh Nay, in particular in regards to reserve policy and the Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay whose territory it flooded. Finally, I examine how in the land claims aspect of the modern comprehensive treaty process each modern Tse Keh Nay community has taken a separate approach, and claimed their own traditional territory, in particular looking at how their claims relate to the fur trader perceptions of Tse Keh Nay territory. Based on this I argue that the reserve and land claims period, like the treaty period, reinforced localized Tse Keh Nay identities over a wider Tse Keh Nay identity.

Arguing that treaty, reserve, and land claims reinforced local Tse Keh Nay identities may seem to suggest a deterioration of wider Tse Keh Nay identity or, as we shall see with the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay in Chapter Three, the destruction of it. This, however, is not the case, and the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay appear to be the exception rather than the rule. This is because Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity is both dynamic and situational, and it responds to the situations it encounters, rather than remaining an unchanging monolith. During the fur trade and missionary periods a wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity emerged in the minds of Europeans, and given that ethnic identity is a social relationship defined by not only self-identification, but the identification of others, these perceptions affected wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity.[92] This wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity, however, also co-existed with localized identities, often based on geography or fur trade posts. As such, in the first two periods there existed both a wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity as well as localized identities, with the emphasis being

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[92] Ibid., 13.

placed on the wider ethnic identity, which by definition would have an apparent uniting affect on the Tse Keh Nay. In the latter period, however, this emphasis shifted to more localized identities, which by definition had a dividing affect in regards to wider Tse Keh Nay identity. This reinforcement of local identities, as well as the precedent of the Crown policy that led to it, is the reason for the separate approaches taken in the modern comprehensive treaty process. This shift in emphasis did not mean the destruction of wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity, just as an emphasis on wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity in the fur trade era did not destroy localized identities. Rather it reflects the dynamic nature of Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity, which adapted to particular situations and diverse government policies. In this way the reinforcement of local Tse Keh Nay identities caused by the treaty and reserve period did not erode Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity, but merely shifted the emphasis to localized Tse Keh Nay identities. And as we shall see in the conclusion, wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity still exists even in their separate approaches to the modern comprehensive treaty process.

The sources I use are a mixture of written (both primary and secondary) and oral sources. The secondary sources include works that deal with the Tse Keh Nay directly (which I have dealt with in the previous historiography section) and those that do not. Of the latter they can be divided between those that give context to the primary sources, like R.M. Patterson's *Finlay's River* and those that contain vignettes of Tse Keh Nay history, like Wilson Duff's *The Indian History of British Columbia*.

The primary written sources can be divided into government records and documents, fur trade records and literature, and ethnographic information and works. Of these the government records (as a whole) are the most recent, and can be divided into three topics: Treaty No. 8, the McKenna-McBride Royal Commission, and the British Columbia Aboriginal land question, reserve policy, and classification. As such, they are obviously relevant to chapters two and three. What is not obvious, however, is that they are just as relevant to chapter one. This is because all of them either accept or reject fur trade perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay on some level, even if it is only in regard to the name the fur traders eventually had for a group of related native bands.

Fur trade records and literature are critical to capturing a sense of fur trader perceptions of Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity during the fur trade period. Notable among the literature in this category are the journals of Alexander MacKenzie, Simon Fraser, Samuel Black, Daniel William Harmon, and Archibald McDonald. I have also looked at the post journals, correspondence and district reports from McLeod Lake, Fort Grahame, Finlay Forks, and Fort Nelson. These records in particular are valuable for the fact that they reflect continual contact with the Tse Keh Na on an almost daily basis.

This is where the ethnographic records come into play. Where the fur trade records record a continual contact on a business basis, the ethnographic records and literature represent encounters with the Tse Keh Nay on an anthropological basis. Notable authors, who have produced works in this category, are Diamond Jenness, Guy Lanoue and Adrien Gabriel Morice. These

works are valuable for the ethnographic information they provide, as well as the wealth of cultural data the authors collected. Significant to many of these works (and indeed what I argue separates them from secondary sources) are the field and oral research the authors conducted and incorporated into them.

I have conducted my own oral research among the Tse Keh Nay for this project. This research took place at Tsay Keh Dene during two visits, each lasting for about a month, in the fall of 2008. It was done with the ethical approval of the Arts, Science and Law Research Ethics Board, and the consent of the community and individuals involved.[93] Originally I had intended to visit McLeod Lake as well, but my letter and subsequent email to the chief and band council were never responded to. My method of oral research consisted of relatively unstructured interviews with Tsay Keh Dene band members that were digitally recorded. From these interviews I gained an appreciation of the present day Tse Keh Nay perspective of their ethnic identity and related history.

My research was no doubt great aided by my connections to the Tsay Keh Dene community. I am a band member. My father was born at 8 Mile and was part of the Tomah family, while my mother (who is Euro-Canadian) grew up in the predecessor village of Ingenika. Through my father I am related to a significant portion of the community, and to many of the individuals I interviewed. And although I never lived in the community, I grew up hearing about it, its recent history and many of the people. All of this not only made it easier for me to conduct interviews with the individuals in question, but also

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[93] As part of my release forms all of the interviewees were offered the chance to be kept anonymous. None of them expressed a desire for this.

influenced how I perceived the interviews I did, and how the interviewees interacted with me. As such, I am both tied up in the connotations of what my research involves, and the conclusions I might draw from it and the affect this might have on Tse Keh Nay identity. Nevertheless I have attempted to be unbiased in my research and conclusions, while at the same time staying true to my heritage.

Finally I should explain my practice in relation to names and terminology. In regards to names, some of the sources I use are from sources that are handwritten and sometimes faded or otherwise illegible. In these cases I have tried to make them out as best as possible. Furthermore, since these sources are unedited, names change not only between authors, but also within the writings of a single author. As a rule, therefore, I have chosen to use the most common form of names, based on phonetic similarity, with the exception of those names which have a clear connection to modern Tse Keh Nay names. In these cases I have used the modern spelling. All of this means of course that the names as they appear in my thesis might not be spelled the same as those found in other works.

In regards to terminology, I have chosen to use Aboriginals terms, rather than European ones. As such, instead of Athapaskan I use Dene; instead of Beaver I use Dunneza; instead of Slave I use Dene Tha; instead of Chilcotin I use Tsilhqot'in; instead of Carrier I use Dakelh; instead of Cree I use Nehiyawak (except when referring to the language); instead of Sekani I use Tse Keh Nay; and instead of Fort Ware I use Kwadacha. In regards to Kaska and Tahltan, however, I have used the European names, as they have been adopted by both groups as

their own.[94] I would like to further note that these names are not necessarily

universally accepted among all members of these groups, and indeed my choice

of Tse Keh Nay is not necessarily the universally accepted term either, but instead

is the one I chose based on the www.tsekehnay.net website, which reflects a

collective Tse Keh Nay response to Amazay Lake and the Kemess North

project.[95] This use of Aboriginal names, however, will not apply to direct

quotations. Thus if I write about Black's journal, stating that he encountered the

Tse Keh Nay, who he called the Thecannie, I acknowledge this difference in

names, whereas if I quote him directly, I use Thecannie, the name he uses.

And finally there is the need to define how I use and understand certain

terms that appear throughout my thesis, namely band, tribe, nation and First

Nation. First and foremost I use each term when it is contained in a direct

quotation, or when I'm discussing a concept or fact found in a particular source

that uses the term specifically. Beyond this, however, there are some unique ways

in which I use these terms.   For example, I use band to refer to groupings smaller

than ethnic groups, and as it is defined in the Indian Act, Section 2.[96] Similarly, I

use nation when discussing the nation to nation relationship that is assumed in

treaties. This last use highlights the difference between ethnic group and nation,

namely that nations are politicized.[97] This in turn brings me to my use of the term

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[94] John J. Honigmann, "Kaska," in *Subarctic*, vol. 6, *Handbook of North American Indians*, ed.
June Helm (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1981), 449-450; Bruce B. MacLachlan,
"Tahltan," in *Subarctic*, vol. 6, *Handbook of North American Indians*, ed. June Helm
(Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1981), 465-467.
[95] Tse Keh Nay, "Tse Keh Nay – Save Amazay Lake from Northgate Minerals!"
www.tsekehnay.net (accessed 7 September 2009).
[96] Canada, *Indian Act R.S.* 1985, c. I-5, s. 2, http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/I-5/FullText.html
(accessed 16 November 2009).
[97] Fenton, 23.

First Nation, which I use in two different ways: as an alternative for the term band as defined in Section 2 of the Indian Act, in this instance emphasizing the political aspect of the nation, and as an alternative to ethnic group, in this instance emphasizing the claimed common ancestry and culture found in both nation and ethnic group.

Chapter One
Fur Trade Perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay

The fur trade was the reason for the first sustained European presence in what would become British Columbia. When the European fur traders entered the interior of British Columbia they entered a region settled and controlled by various First Nations. Many of these fur traders left records of these encounters in which they noted their perceptions of the First Nations they worked and lived among. Among them were the Tse Keh Nay (Sekani). In this chapter I examine these fur trader perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay and their relations with other First Nations. These fur trader perceptions of Tse Keh Nay ethnicity are important to any study of Tse Keh Nay ethnohistory for the simple fact that they represent the oldest European perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay. As such, they are the closest one can come to pre-contact ethnographic observations about the Tse Keh Nay. They are also important because it was during the early post-contact period (1793-1810) that the unnamed Indians of MacKenzie's journal, and the multiple First Nations in Fraser's journal, became the Sicannies of Harmon's journal. This recognition or invention of the Tse Keh Nay by the fur traders is important because they describe not only Tse Keh Nay ethnicity, but also Tse Keh Nay relations with other First Nations. All of this is critical to any study of the Tse Keh Nay as these perceptions shaped all later perceptions, which either accepted or rejected them.

This chapter begins with Alexander MacKenzie's first contact with the proto-Tse Keh Nay in 1793 and then examines the writings of successive fur traders who came into contact with this and other proto-Tse Keh Nay and Tse Keh

Nay groups. These fur trade writings are not only examined for their portrayal of

the Tse Keh Nay, or in MacKenzie and Fraser's case groups that would be later

identified as being Tse Keh Nay, but also their descriptions of Tse Keh Nay

relationships with other groups and the clues they provide of Tse Keh Nay

territorial boundaries. (See Appendix A) And finally, I also include an analysis

of the post records of Fort Nelson, McLeod Lake and Fort Grahame to establish

Tse Keh Nay territoriality at both wider and local levels, with the latter in

particular dealing with McLeod Lake and Fort Grahame.

The first European to encounter the Tse Keh Nay was probably Sir

Alexander MacKenzie, who apparently encountered them on the Parsnip River

below the Table River on 9 June 1793.[98] This encounter, however, is problematic

as MacKenzie only refers to them as Indians and they are only later identified by

others as being the Tse Keh Nay.[99] Indeed, an Anglicized form of Tse Keh Nay,

Sicannies, is not found in the fur trade records until Daniel Harmon's journal in

1810, a full 17 years after MacKenzie's journal.[100] The reason why the group

MacKenzie met were later perceived as being Tse Keh Nay is unclear, but

presumably it is because of the location where they were encountered, or due to

the fact that MacKenzie distinguishes them from their neighbors: the Rocky

Mountain Indians, the Dunneza (Beaver), the Dakelh (Carrier), and the

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[98] Sir Alexander MacKenzie, "Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean," in *The Journals and Letters of Sir Alexander MacKenzie*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb (Toronto: MacMillan Canada, 1970), 285-291.

[99] W. Kaye Lamb, "Notes," in "Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean," in *The Journals and Letters of Sir Alexander MacKenzie*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb (Toronto: MacMillan Canada, 1970), 287, note 2; MacKenzie, "Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean," 285-291.

[100] I say *an* Anglicized version rather than *the* Anglicized version as Harmon's version was not universally adopted, with Sekani instead becoming the generally accepted English name for the Tse Keh Nay. Daniel William Harmon, *Harmon's Journal 1800-1819*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb (Victoria: New Caledonia House Publishing, 2006), 114.

Secwepemc (Shuswap). The argument from location, however, is problematic.

This is because although in his journal MacKenzie states the Rocky Mountain

Indians' territory only extended east to the Rocky Mountains, thereby excluding

them as the group he encountered on the Parsnip, the map accompanying

MacKenzie's journey places the Rocky Mountain Indians west of the Rockies.[101]

This not only contradicts his earlier claim, but potentially makes the unnamed

Indians he encountered on the Parsnip, Rocky Mountain Indians. This would

seem to indicate that either the journal or the map is wrong. Given, however, that

the map is based on the journal, and not the other way around, it would appear

that the map is wrong. More convincing in identifying this group as Tse Keh Nay

are the conflicts MacKenzie discovers between this group and the other four: the

Dunneza, the Rocky Mountain Indians, the Dakelh and the Secwepemc. After

talking to the unnamed Indians MacKenzie noted:

> [They are] almost continually compelled to remain in their strong
> holds, [presumably the mountains] where they sometimes perished
> with cold and hunger, to secure themselves from their enemies,
> who never failed to attack them whenever an opportunity presented
> itself.[102]

This statement, combined with the fact that MacKenzie had earlier stated the only

Rocky Mountain Indians to have knowledge of the country west of the Rockies

had gained it through war, and his Rocky Mountain Indian crewmen had been

warned by their relatives that MacKenzie was bringing them into enemy territory,

seems to confirm that the Rocky Mountain Indians were not only not the same as

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[101] Sir Alexander MacKenzie, "A Map of MacKenzie's Track from Fort Chipewyan to the Pacific Ocean in 1793," in *The Journals and Letters of Sir Alexander MacKenzie*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb (Toronto: MacMillan Canada, 1970), facing 239; MacKenzie, "Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean," 260-261.
[102] MacKenzie, "Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean," 287.

the unnamed Indians in question, but in fact one of their enemies.[103] And

although MacKenzie does mention Rocky Mountain Indians and a Rocky

Mountain native south of this group of unnamed Indians and the Parsnip-

McGregor Divide, there is no proof in MacKenzie's journal that they are related

to the group of unnamed Indians MacKenzie encountered on the Parsnip or indeed

that these two groups are the same.[104] One definite enemy of this group of

unnamed Indians is the Dunneza as we find out later in the passage.[105]

MacKenzie tries to use the animosity between this group and the others to get a

guide to what he thought was the Columbia River. Indeed he even promises to

make peace between them and the Dunneza, which if he understood the conflict

between them correctly would seem to indicate they were two distinct First

Nations.   As he states:

> I therefore assured them that, if they would direct me to the river
> which I described to them, I would come in large vessels, like
> those that their neighbors had described, to the mouth of it, and
> bring them arms and ammunition in exchange for the produce of
> their country; so that they might be able to defend themselves
> against their enemies, and no longer remain in the abject,
> distressed, and fugitive state in which they then lived. I added
> also, that in the mean time, if they would, on my return,
> accompany me below the mountains, to a country which was very
> abundant in animals, I would furnish them, and their companions,
> with everything they might want; and make peace between them
> and the Beaver [Dunneza] Indians.[106]

The animosity, however, appears to be too strong and despite these promises he

was only able to get a guide to the next First Nation on his journey by persuading

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[103] Ibid., 260-262, 275.
[104] Ibid., 318-319.
[105] Ibid., 288.
[106] Ibid., 288.

one of the unnamed Indians with presents.[107] This guide, however, did not fulfill

his end of the bargain, becoming distressed after crossing the Parsnip-Fraser

divide and eventually deserting before contact with them was made.[108] This

distress and eventual desertion, when combined with MacKenzie's comment that

the group was under constant attack from their neighbors, and the fact no one

from this group wanted to guide him, would seem to suggest that the group was

distinct and in conflict with those First Nations south of the divide: the Nanscud

Denees and the Nagailers, (who are both Dakelh) and the Atnah (or the

Secwepemc).[109] All of this would seem to indicate that this group of unnamed

Indians was distinct from the Rocky Mountain Indians, the Dunneza, the Dakelh

and the Secwepemc, and therefore a distinct First Nation.

A further hint to this group's ethnic identity is found in the journals of

Simon Fraser, who was the next fur trader to leave a record of his perceptions of

this group of natives. On 27 June 1806 at the same location where MacKenzie

encountered this group Fraser encounters a group of Aboriginals who were

probably the descendents of, or indeed the same, Aboriginals MacKenzie had

encountered thirteen years earlier.[110] Like MacKenzie, however, Fraser does not

identify the group as Tse Keh Nay. Rather he refers to them as Barbin's Band

and his relatives, and does not indicate that they are related to the Big Men

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[107] Ibid., 288-289.
[108] Ibid., 289, 295-296, 300, 303.
[109] It is unclear if the Aboriginals MacKenzie encountered below the Fort George Canyon were Dakelh, although W. Kaye Lambe believed they were, a view potentially supported by their location. W. Kaye Lamb, "Notes," in "Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean," 307, note 1; MacKenzie, "Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean," 307-308, 312-322, 338.
[110] Simon Fraser, "First Journal of Simon Fraser from April 12th to July 18th, 1806," in *The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser 1806-1808*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2007), 226-227.

Indians, or Meadows Indians, both of which were later identified as being Tse

Keh Nay by later scholars due to their territoriality.[111] The best hint Fraser gives

regarding their identity is found earlier in his journal when he sends for the Big

Men Indians at Carp Lake, and Barbin himself arrives, although it is unclear if

this is a mere coincidence.[112] Perhaps the only piece of literature that could

definitely solve this problem are the elusive journals of John Finlay, who Fraser

claims had previously met with Barbin's Band at the same location in 1797.[113]

Nevertheless, what is important here is that later generations of fur traders, and

through them Europeans, would perceive this unnamed group as Tse Keh Nay.

    Where Sir Alexander MacKenzie led a voyage of exploration, Simon

Fraser not only explored, but also established fur trade posts along the Peace

River and into what would become British Columbia.[114] In 1805 he established

"Rocky Mountain Portage, at the foot of the turbulent Peace River Canyon."[115]

This post is significant, because based on MacKenzie's journals, its position at the

edge of the Rockies would place it on the western boundary of the Rocky

Mountain Indian territory. Furthermore, according to Fraser, and the editor of his

journal, W. Kaye Lamb, the post lay within the traditional territory of the

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[111] According to Fraser the Big Men resided at McLeod Lake and the Nation River. Fraser, "First Journal of Simon Fraser," 184-185, 213-214, 226-227; According to W. Kaye Lamb the Meadow Indians resided along the Moberly and Pine Rivers, along with the adjacent Parsnip River Valley, whereas the Big Men Indians resided along the Parsnip and Nations Rivers. W. Kaye Lamb, "Notes," in *The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser 1806-1808*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2007), 315, note 5, note 6.

[112] Fraser, "First Journal of Simon Fraser," 218.

[113] John Finlay is an enigmatic North West Company explorer and employee, who I shall talk about later in the chapter in regards to Samuel Black. It suffices to state here that his journal, if they ever existed, has disappeared. Fraser, "First Journal of Simon Fraser," 227; R.M. Patterson, *Finlay's River* (Vancouver: Touch Wood Editions, 2006), 7-9.

[114] W. Kaye Lamb, "Introduction," in *The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser 1806-1808*¸ ed. W. Kaye Lamb (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2007), 34.

[115] Lamb, "Introduction," in *The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser*, 35.

Meadow Indians, a group later identified as being Tse Keh Nay.[116] Proceeding up

the Peace River in 1805, and then down the Parsnip and Pack Rivers, Fraser

established[117] "Trout Lake Post, later Fort McLeod, the first permanent settlement

west of the Rocky Mountains in what is now British Columbia."[118] This post, or

McLeod Lake, is one of the four "modern" Tse Keh Nay communities in British

Columbia.

During his 1806 stay at Rocky Mountain Portage Fraser mentions seven

First Nation groups either residing, visiting, or in the vicinity of the post. The

first two are the previously mentioned Big Men Indians and Meadow Indians,

who were later identified as being Tse Keh Nay.[119] Beyond these two groups

there are five others identified. These include the Chief's Band, who are distinct

from, dominant over, and yet allied with and related to the Meadow Indians, and

who resided up the Finlay River and around Bear Lake, and the enigmatic Little

Head's Band.[120] The last three groups are identified with groups distinct from

Tse Keh Nay. They are the Rocky Mountain Indians and the Dunneza, who

apparently steal local women from the first four groups, and the Kaska who are

allied with the Meadow Indians and who live along a tributary of the Liard River,

presumably the Sikanni Chief River.[121] What is problematic is that Fraser also

mentions unnamed and uncategorized Aboriginal groups, such as the band of

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[116] Fraser, 183-195; Lamb, "Notes," in *The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser 1806-1808*, 315, note 7.
[117] McLeod Lake was established in 1805. Guy Lanoue, *Brothers: Politics of Violence among the Sekani of Northern British Columbia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982), 163.
[118] Lamb, "Introduction," in *The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser*, 36.
[119] Fraser, "First Journal of Simon Fraser," 184-185, 195.
[120] Ibid., 188, 189.
[121] Ibid., 195, 197.

Aboriginals that come into Rocky Mountain Portage on 9 May 1806.[122] Their

apparent later inclusion in Fraser's summary of the inhabitants of the post, given

that the post lay within the traditional territory of the Meadow Indians, would

seem to suggest that they are Meadow Indians, although this is never

confirmed.[123]

Beyond the seven named groups Fraser encounters or mentions at Rocky

Mountain Portage there are three others that he encounters on his voyage to the

Pacific that are, or could be, related to the Tse Keh Nay. The first one is Pouce

Coupe's Band, who he encounters on 28 May 1806 near Finlay Forks, and who

are apparently related to the Meadow Chief, who presumably is a Meadow Indian,

and which presumably would make them Meadow Indians as well.[124] The next

group is Barbin's Band, which I have previously mentioned. One of Barbin's

relatives (presumably a member of Barbin's Band) guides Fraser to the Parsnip-

Fraser Divide and tells him about a third group, the Says–Thau Dennehs, or

Bawcanne Indians, who apparently reside up the Fraser River and in the

headwaters of the Smoky River.[125] Though not much is said about them, and they

apparently disappeared from later fur trade records, Diamond Jenness believed

they were Tse Keh Nay.[126] His rational for this identification seems to be their

location, and the fact that they, like other identified Tse Keh Nay groups of that

time (MacKenzie's unnamed Indians, and Fraser's Meadow Indians and Big Men

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[122] Ibid., 196.
[123] Ibid., 197.
[124] Ibid., 208-210.
[125] Fraser, "First Journal of Simon Fraser," 227-239; Lamb, "Notes," in *The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser 1806-1808*, 319, note 44.
[126] Diamond Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*, no. 84, *Anthropological Series*, no. 20 (Ottawa: J.O. Patenaule I.S.O., 1937), 7.

Indians), the Bawcanne Indians were in conflict with the Dunneza and Dakelh.[127]

The latter part of this rational is problematic, however, because apart from having

enemies in common (the Dunneza and the Dakelh) with other identified Tse Keh

Nay groups, the Bawcanne Indians were also in conflict with the Big Men

Indians, a group later identified as being Tse Keh Nay.[128] This conflict with an

identified Tse Keh Nay group would suggest that either the Bawcanne were not

Tse Keh Nay and the conflict was between two distinct First Nations, or that

during this period groups later identified as being Tse Keh Nay were in conflict

with each other, something that does not appear to be true for other proto-Tse Keh

Nay groups. This therefore suggests they were not Tse Keh Nay.

Part of the confusion over the identity of these groups is due to the fact

that they do not appear in later records. This has led later academics to try to

equate them to modern ethnic groups and in doing so explain why they

disappeared from the record. For example, Jenness argues the Bawcanne Indians

either were exterminated, or mixed with Europeans or the Dunneza thereby losing

their Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity.[129] This predilection to equate historical groups

with modern First Nations can lead to greater confusion, however. For example,

the editor of MacKenzie's journal, W. Kaye Lamb, equates the Rocky Mountain

Indians in the journal to the Dunneza, stating they are in fact the Western

Dunneza, while the Beaver in MacKenzie's journal are in fact the Eastern

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[127] In his journal Fraser is concerned that a Big Men attack on the Dakelh in the Autumn of 1805 might cause problems for his voyage. Later he tells about how the Meadow Indians are being attacked by the Dunneza. Fraser, "First Journal of Simon Fraser," 185, 195, 238-239.
[128] Ibid., 239.
[129] Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*, 7.

Dunneza.[130] This is again problematic as it contradicts MacKenzie's own

perceptions of the two groups and his separation of them into two distinct First

Nations based on the influence of the Nehiyawak (Cree) on the Beaver.[131] This

might seem justifiable if the only difference between the two (the Rocky

Mountain Indians and the Beaver) is the influence of the Nehiyawak, but it creates

more problems when one looks at another journal which Lamb edited, the journal

of Simon Fraser. In this journal Lamb equates the Dunneza with the Tse Keh

Nay, (whom as I stated previously, he equates with the Big Men Indians and

Meadow Indians) stating the only difference between the Dunneza and Tse Keh

Nay is the influence of the Nehiyawak.[132] This would seem to suggest, when

taken in conjunction with his equating of the Rocky Mountain Indians with the

Dunneza that not only are the Rocky Mountains Indians Dunneza, but that the

Dunneza are Tse Keh Nay. This would mean of course that rather than there

being three distinct First Nations in the area, (the Rocky Mountain Indians, the

Dunneza and the Tse Keh Nay) as the fur traders perceived, there was in fact only

one, the Tse Keh Nay. This, however, contradicts the perceptions of both Fraser

and MacKenzie who perceived all three groups (the Rocky Mountain Indians, the

Dunneza and the Tse Keh Nay) as distinct First Nations.

The next European fur trader to leave a written record of the Tse Keh Nay

was Daniel William Harmon. A North West Company trader, Harmon was sent

to New Caledonia in 1810 to take charge of the company's posts first at Stuart

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[130] Lamb, "Notes," in "Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean," 240, note 2, 250, note 1;
MacKenzie, "Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean," 240, 250.
[131] MacKenzie, "Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean," 240, 253.
[132] Fraser, "First Journal of Simon Fraser," 185; Lamb, "Notes," in *The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser 1806-1808*, 315, note 7.

Lake (Fort St. James) and then at Fraser Lake (Fort Fraser).[133] What is interesting

in Harmon's journal is that the unnamed Indians of MacKenzie's journals, along

with the Meadow Indians, the Big Men Indians, Barbin's Band, the Chief's Band,

Little Head's Band, and Pouce Coupe's Band no longer appear. Instead one finds

the Sicannies, who Harmon first encounters at Rocky Mountain Portage, (which

according to Fraser was within the territory of Fraser's Meadow Indians) and

McLeod Lake (which according to Fraser was the territory of Fraser's Big Men

Indians).[134] Like the unnamed Indians of MacKenzie's journal these Sicannies

are surrounded by other First Nations who attack them and have driven them into

the mountains.[135] And like the Big Men Indians and Meadow Indians of Fraser's

journal they are in conflict with the Dunneza and Dakelh and are wary of the

Secwepemc.[136] On the east they are opposed by the Dunneza and Nehiyawak,

while on the west by the Dakelh and Secwepemc.[137] Based on this, it would

appear that Fraser's multiple proto-Tse Keh Nay groups, and MacKenzie's

unnamed Indians have coalesced in the perceptions of the fur traders into a single

ethnic group, the Sicannies or Tse Keh Nay.

Beyond being the first to use the term Sicannie, Harmon is also the first to

state other things about them as well. He is among the first to try and explain Tse

Keh Nay ethnogenesis. According to him:

> It is supposed that formerly they [the Tse Keh Nay] belonged and
> were a part of the Beaver Indian Tribe – who on some quarrel

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[133] W. Kaye Lamb, "Introduction to the 1957 Edition," in *Harmon's Journal 1800-1819*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb (Victoria: New Caledonia House Publishing, 2006), xvii-xix.
[134] Harmon, 114-117.
[135] Ibid., 114-115.
[136] Fraser, "First Journal of Simon Fraser,"185, 195, 210; Harmon, 114-115.
[137] Harmon, 114-115.

separated themselves from their Countrymen by leaving their lands
to come higher up the [Peace] River & who are now as I am
informed a pretty numerous Clan or Tribe.[138]

As proof for this he later states that "their dialect differs little from that spoken by

the Beaver Indians."[139] If this is true it supports Lamb's assertion that the

Dunneza and the Tse Keh Nay were at one time a single First Nation. What is

interesting here, however, is that Harmon states the Tse Keh Nay are Dunneza

and not that the Dunneza are Tse Keh Nay as Lamb claims, which means that

rather than the Dunneza being an offshoot of the Tse Keh Nay, the Tse Keh Nay

were an offshoot of the Dunneza. Also interesting is the complete absence of the

Rocky Mountain Indians in Harmon's journal.

So far the historical record has dealt with those Tse Keh Nay encountered

along the Peace, down the Parsnip and Pine Rivers and in the vicinity of McLeod

Lake. It would appear, however, from Fraser's journal that there were also Tse

Keh Nay living up the Finlay River and along the Halfway River to the Sikanni

Chief River to the north, where the Kaska live.[140] I have not, however,

encountered a written record of anyone who had explored up the Halfway River.

I have, however, found evidence of fur trader exploration up the Finlay River.

The first person to do so, the enigmatic John Finlay, apparently traveled up to the

junction with the Ingenika River in 1797.[141] Unfortunately, a written record of

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[138] Ibid., 115.
[139] Ibid., 116.
[140] Fraser, "First Journal of Simon Fraser," 188-190, 195; Lamb, "Notes," in "*The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser 1806-1808*, 316, note 12.
[141] R.M. Patterson, "Introduction," in *A Journal of a Voyage from Rocky Mountain Portage in Peace River to the Sources of Finlays Branch and North West Ward in Summer 1824*, ed. E.E. Rich (London: The Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1955), xiii-xiv.

this (if it ever existed) has not survived to the present.[142]   What we have instead is

Samuel Black's journal of his journey up the Finlay River in 1824. Black was

charged to find the source of the Finlay River, and then travel to the northwest

either to Bear's Lake, or to the Liard River or one of its tributaries (although it

should be noted Black himself seems to be looking for a westward flowing river,

presumably the Stikine).[143]

This journey would take him into the territory of Fraser's Meadow

Indians, and their relatives the Chief's Band, the former who had been driven

there by the Dunneza.[144]   Black refers to them as the Thecannies (an apparent

variation of Sicannies) and at the beginning of his journal notes that they and the

Dunneza "differ but little in language."[145]   Nevertheless, this group is clearly the

same as Harmon's Sicannies, as Black later encounters two separate Thecannie

from McLeod Lake and his guide Old Slave is a Thecannie from the Peace River

area, (presumably Rocky Mountain Portage) both locations which, according to

Harmon, are Sicannie.[146]   According to Black, however, the first McLeod Lake

Thecannie does not know the Finlay River area, while Old Slave only knows it

indirectly.[147]   Guy Lanoue uses these statements to claim the McLeod Lake/Peace

River Thecannie and Finlay River Thecannie were separate at the time and

possibly had a separate origin, suggesting the connection between the two was a

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[142] A tragedy no doubt aided by the fact that Samuel Black's journal of his exploration up the same
river was long believed to be that of Finlay. Ibid., xiii-xix.
[143] Ibid., xlviii-lvii,
[144] Fraser, "First Journal of Simon Fraser," 188-190, 195.
[145] Samuel Black, *A Journal of a Voyage from Rocky Mountain Portage in Peace River to the
Sources of Finlays Branch and North West Ward in Summer 1824*, ed. E.E. Rich (London: The
Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1955), 5-6.
[146] Ibid., 6, 15, 185.
[147] Ibid., 15.

fur trader creation.[148] This ignorance on the part of the two Tse Keh Nay

individuals, however, seems an isolated phenomenon as Black later encounters a

different McLeod Lake Thecannie near Thutade Lake, at the head of the Finlay

River.[149] Furthermore, what separates them from the Dunneza is not their own

language, which is similar to that of the Dunneza, but rather a knowledge of Cree.

Encountering a band of Thecannie on 24 May 1824 after passing the Ospika River

Black notes:

> One of these Indians speaks Cree a little a rare circumstance
> amongst the Thecannies, although their Neighbours the Beaver
> Indians generally speak that language a little.[150]

From this, it would appear that not only are Harmon's Sicannie and Black's

Thecannie the same, but also that what separates them from Dunneza is a

knowledge of Cree.

During his journey Black encounters three Tse Keh Nay groups and hears

about one other that lives at Bear Lake. The main group which he encounters is

Methodiates' Band who have come from the Toodoggone River/Lake area and

who he not only repeatedly encounters in his voyage, but who also guide him

from Metsantan Lake to the Chukachida River.[151] Methodiates informs Black

about the area and the First Nations and bands located there.[152] Indeed, it is he

who tells Black about the Tse Keh Nay families on Bear Lake. [153] The

information gained from Methodiates, however, can be problematic as Black later

[148] Lanoue, *Brothers*, 146.
[149] Black, 185.
[150] Ibid., 14.
[151] Ibid., 48, 54, 58, 107-125, 134-142.
[152] Ibid., 51-55, 58, 107-125, 132, 134-142, 184, 185-186, 188, 189-190.
[153] Ibid., 51.

admits he can barely understand Methodiates and is dependent on an interpreter to understand and communicate effectively with him.[154] These language difficulties worsened when first his Denesoline (Chipewyan) interpreter, Le Prise, abandons him on the 25 July 1824, followed by his Tse Keh Nay guide, Old Slave, on 5 August 1824.[155] The only other groups Black encounters on his travel are Methodiates brother's band (although it is unclear if they were separate from Methodiates' Band) and an apparently unrelated band of Thecannie.[156] This band he theorizes are the ones said to live between the Liard River and Rocky Mountain Portage, and who seldom visit a fur trade post.[157] Based on Fraser's journal one can assume that these are what Fraser had called the Meadow Indians, or one of their relatives.

Black also encounters another First Nation during his voyage, the Thloadennis. This group is problematic as modern academics cannot agree which modern day First Nation they equate to. Bruce MacLachlan equates them to today's Tahltan in the *Handbook of North American Indians*.[158] E. E. Rich, the editor of Black's journal, however, holds that the Tahltan appear in the journal as the trading Nahannies and not the Thloadennis, who the trading Nahannies keep from the coast and seem to be in conflict with them.[159] In regards to territoriality they are separated from the Tse Keh Nay by the Stikine-Finlay divide, which

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[154] Ibid., 188.
[155] Ibid., 5-6, 137, 154.
[156] Ibid., 184, 197-198.
[157] Black, 197; E.E. Rich, "Notes," in *A Journal of a Voyage from Rocky Mountain Portage in Peace River to the Sources of Finlay's Branch and North West Ward in 1824*, ed. E.E. Rich (London: The Hudson's Bay Company Record Society, 1955), 197, note 3.
[158] Bruce B. MacLachlan, "Tahltan," in *Subarctic*, vol. 6, *Handbook of North American Indians*, ed. June Helm (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1981), 461.
[159] Patterson, "Introduction," lxxiv.

Black calls the Peak or Piked Mountains.[160] Black is told that "the Thecannies

were not afraid of them, but they were not their Masters [either]."[161]

Furthermore, according to Black, the Thloadennis were linguistically related to

the Thecannie:

> Their language is the same as the other Slave Tribes in the Rocky
> Mountains perfectly understood by the Thecannies tho differing a
> little in many words but soon learn to understand one another.[162]

Beyond this they are similar to the Thecannie in other ways. For example, "their

clothings are made in the same manner as the Thecannies & their ways the

same."[163] All of this leaves them an enigmatic group who presumably are

Tahltan, but might also be Kaska or even Tse Keh Nay, much like the Dunneza or

Rocky Mountain Indians in other journals. Indeed, Guy Lanoue claims many

residents at Kwadacha (Fort Ware) claim them as their ancestors, although it is

unclear if this statement reflects inter-ethnic marriage or that they were Tse Keh

Nay.[164]

Related to Black's journal are the Fort McLeod post records for 1823-

1824 kept by John Stuart.[165] Upon being made superintendent of New Caledonia

Stuart had departed from York Factory with Black on his way to McLeod

Lake.[166] McLeod Lake is clearly Sicannie in this period, as is seen the 1824

District Report:

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[160] Black, 43, 51-54.
[161] Ibid., 57.
[162] Ibid., 109.
[163] Ibid., 109.
[164] Lanoue, *Brothers*, 147.
[165] Hudson's Bay Company Archives, (HBCA) B.119/a/1, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1823-1824; HBCA, B.119/a/2, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1824; HBCA, B.119/a/3, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1823-1824.
[166] HBCA, B.119/a/1, 23 July 1823, page 3, 25 October 1823, page 22.

Those dependent on McLeod Lake are what are called Sicannie…
[They] are in number about thirty five men able to carry arms,
about twenty of whom have families but the number of women and
children I am unacquainted with there is but one Chief and five
other men of note amongst them, but they are all good hunters.[167]

On his way there Stuart passes through Rocky Mountain Portage.[168] Unlike the

earlier fur trade accounts, however, Stuarts finds not only the Tse Keh Nay, (from

McLeod Lake) but also the Rocky Mountain Indians here.[169] This would appear

to reflect a change in the local population since Fraser's time, when Fraser noted

the Rocky Mountain Indians along with the Dunneza stole local Tse Keh Nay

women, and Fraser had tried to prevent the Dunneza (and presumably the Rocky

Mountain Indians as well) from establishing a foothold there. Regardless of this

attempt by Fraser to keep Rocky Mountain Portage Tse Keh Nay, by this time it

would appear that the Rocky Mountain Indians were the dominant group there,

although the Tse Keh Nay apparently still traded there and were with the Rocky

Mountain Indians, as seen by the fact they pay Stuart a visit together on the 10

October, 1823.[170]

Black also comments, in a series of letters related to several murders in

1823, on the distinction between the Tse Keh Nay, Dakelh and Dunneza.[171] In

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[167] HBCA, B.119/e/1, Reports on Districts – McLeod Lake 1824, McLeod Lake Report 1824, page 11.

[168] HBCA, B.119/a/1, 5 October 1823, page 13.

[169] HBCA, B.119/a/1, 5-6 October 1823, page 13-14.

[170] HBCA, B.119/a/1, 5-6 October 1823, page 13-14, 10 October 1823, page 15, 12 October 1823, page 16-18; HBCA, B.119/b/1, Correspondence Books – McLeod Lake 1823-1824, Letter 137: Letter from Mr. Francis Herron, Rocky Mountain Portage, Peace River, 27 December, 1823, page 100.

[171] The first the murder was that of Joseph Bagnoit and Belone Duplante at Fort George by some of the local Dakelh, followed by the murder of Guy Hughes and four others at Fort St. John at the beginning of November in 1823. E.E. Rich, "Notes," 6, note 1; HBCA, B.119/a/1, 24 October 1823, page 20; HBCA, B.119/b/1, Letter 137: From Mr. Francis Herron, Rocky Mountain Portage, Peace River, 27 December 1823, page 100, HBCA, B.119/b/1, Letter 139: From Samuel Black, Esq., R.M. Portage, 15 December, 1823, page 101-103; HBCA, B.119/e/1, page 12.

the letters resulting from these murders it is revealed that the fur traders at the

time were confused over whether or not the Rocky Mountain Indians or Dunneza

had committed this act, arising in part because both groups had been

intermarrying and were beginning to coalesce.[172] In response to this Samuel

Black tells Stuart:

> My opinion is that White half breeds under the same determination
> ought to be the principal actors a few Beaver Indians to make all
> act and joined by the Thecannys, for tho the latter are the natural
> enemies of the Beaver Indians and if well Armed and delicately led
> into it will one day be the death of the Beaver Indians and the
> Hated Carriers too if one managed but it requires a delicate touch
> and I think Beaver Indians ought to be of the party to satisfy their
> timorous minds that they have only the Murderers to deal with
> which ought to satisfy us.[173]

By suggesting the Tse Keh Nay be used to punish the both the Dunneza and

Dakelh Black reveals that he perceives them as being distinct from one another.

It would appear, therefore, that by this time the Tse Keh Nay had become an

established and defined ethnic group in the view of the fur traders.

The last journal in this early fur trade period is the journal of Archibald

McDonald who accompanied Sir George Simpson on his voyage from York

Factory to Fort Langley in 1828.[174] The Tse Keh Nay first appear in his journal

on 6 September when McDonald and his companions "fell in with two Indians of

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[172] Black mentions in "Letter 139" that one of the murderers was an adopted Tse Keh Nay, a statement which implies the other three murderers were not Tse Keh Nay. Black, 122-123; HBCA, B.119/b/1, Letter 136: Letter to William MacKintosh Esq., McLeod's Lake Western Caledonia, 14 January, 1824, page 99-100; HBCA, B.119/b/1, Letter 137: Letter from Mr. Francis Herron, Rocky Mountain Portage, Peace River, 27 December, 1823, page 100; HBCA, B.119/b/1, Letter 138: Letter to Francis Herron, page 101; HBCA, B.119/b/1, Letter 139: From Samuel Black, Esq., R.M. Portage, 15 December, 1823, page 101-103; HBCA, B.119/b/1, Letter 140: To Samuel Black, Esq., McLeod's Lake, Western Caledonia, 14 January 1824, page 103-105.
[173] HBCA, B.119/b/1, Letter 139: From Samuel Black, Esq., R.M. Portage, 15 December, 1823, page 103.
[174] Bruce Peel, "Introduction to New Edition," in *Peace River: A Canoe Voyage from Hudson's Bay to Pacific by Sir George Simpson in 1828*, ed. Malcolm McLeod (Edmonton: M.G. Hurtig Ltd., 1971), v.

the Chicanee Tribe, from which we got a little dry meat. They had beaver, which they mean to trade at Trout [McLeod] Lake."[175] According to him "this tribe is at variance with the Beaver Indians and [because of it] do not like to visit the establishment of Peace River."[176] Unlike Harmon, Black and McLeod Lake post records from 1823-1824, McDonald seems to divide these Chicanee from the Aboriginals at McLeod Lake and those on the Finlay. This is seen when he reaches McLeod Lake on the eleventh, and states "the Indians of this place are twenty-six, exclusive of the Chicanees, and not counting those about Finlay's branch."[177] The reason behind this apparent distinction between the Chicanees and the residents at McLeod Lake and along the Finlay River is unclear. In light of other sources, it would seem that McDonald was either misinformed or his language is misleading. What is clear is that the Tse Keh Nay had gone from the unnamed Aboriginals in MacKenzie's journals to the Sicannies and Thecannies of Harmon's, Black's and the McLeod Lake's journals. However, even as late as 1828, ethnic boundaries were apparently not necessarily clear or well defined in the minds of all fur traders.

Tse Keh Nay territoriality during this early fur trade period is also ill-defined. And as we have seen, MacKenzie does not specifically name the Tse Keh Nay in his journal. Instead he mentions an unnamed Indian group between the Rocky Mountain Indians and Dakelh, who are later perceived as being Tse Keh Nay. If we accept this group is Tse Keh Nay, then given that the Rocky

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[175] Archibald McDonald, *Peace River: A Canoe Voyage from Hudson's Bay to Pacific by Sir George Simpson in 1828*, ed. Malcolm McLeod (Edmonton: M.G. Hurtig Ltd., 1971), 20.
[176] Ibid., 20.
[177] Ibid., 21.

Mountain Indians only know about the territory to the east side of the Rockies, and the guide MacKenzie takes from among this group of unnamed Indians becomes concerned after crossing the Parsnip-McGregor divide (the continental divide) over fear of the Dakelh and Secwepemc, it would seem to suggest the boundaries of Tse Keh Nay territory during the 1790s were the Rocky Mountains on the east and the continental divide to the southeast. More uncertain, however, are their northern or western boundaries.

These territorial boundaries, it would appear, did not change by Fraser's time. What did change were the western boundaries of the Rocky Mountain Indians and Dunneza, who were not only stealing local women, but also in the case of the Dunneza pushing the local the Tse Keh Nay Meadow Indians into the mountains, and threatening to drive them away from the Halfway and Sikanni Chief Rivers, and Rocky Mountain Portage, which was in Tse Keh Nay territory.[178] Fraser tried to prevent this, and when a Dunneza hunter Argenton arrived at the post with a woman, he not only sent him away, but also took the woman and all his supplies away from him.[179] He did this, he said, to prevent the Dunneza "from taking a footing… and to prevent others from coming for women."[180] To the south it again appears that the continental divide is still the boundary between the Tse Keh Nay and the Dakelh, although if the Bawcanne

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[178] Fraser, "First Journal of Simon Fraser," 195, 197, Lamb, "Notes," in *The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser 1806-1808*, 316, note 12.
[179] Fraser, "First Journal of Simon Fraser," 185.
[180] Ibid., 185.

Indians are indeed Tse Keh Nay then the boundary presumably would also include the headwaters of the Fraser and Smoky Rivers.[181]

Just as Harmon was the first to use an Anglicized form of Tse Keh Nay, he is also the first to give a southwest boundary for the Tse Keh Nay. He seems to suggest that it is the northern shore of Stuart Lake. This is seen when he encounters a village of Tse Keh Nay speakers on the north end of Stuart Lake. As he states:

> Mr Stuart &c. are gone to Fraser Lake and whom I accompanied to the other side of this [Stuart Lake,] where I saw all the Indians of this Village & who may amount to about ninety Souls – and a ragged set of People they appear to be, and who as I am informed speak much the same dialect as the Sicannies – who no doubt formerly were one and the same Tribe.[182]

This combined with the fact he first encounters the Tse Keh Nay at Rocky Mountain Portage, seems to suggest that during Harmon's time their boundary was Rocky Mountain Portage to the east, and Stuart Lake to the southwest, and assuming the boundary had not changed from MacKenzie and Fraser's time the continental divide to the southeast.

Samuel Black is the first fur trader to leave a written record of the northern Tse Keh Nay. His journey greatly expanded fur trade knowledge of Tse Keh Nay territoriality. While going up the Finlay River, Black gives us the first sense of northern Tse Keh Nay territory when his guide, Old Slave, tried to get him to go up the Fox River, across the Fox-Kechika divide and down the Kechika and Liard Rivers stating he knows this path to[183] "the Canyons of the Liard between Fort

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[181] Ibid., 229-230.
[182] Harmon, 120.
[183] Black, 6, 25.

Halkett and Hell Gate."[184] This according to Old Slave is the furthest any Tse

Keh Nay had ever gone and is the land of the Thluckdennis/Thloadennis.[185] Later

Methodiates tells Black that the furthest he, or any Thecannie, has gone to the

northwest is down the Chukachida River as far as the Thloadennis road that he

later guided Black to.[186] Despite the fact Methodiates guided Black here, it is

never established where exactly this road is, but the important thing here is that it

would appear that during this period Tse Keh Nay territoriality extended to the

northwest to the Chukachida River.[187] Later Black mentions on his return voyage

that the Tse Keh Nay are aware of the Muskwa (Sikanni) and Sikanni Chief

Rivers, which would make sense when one considers the unnamed Tse Keh Nay

group in Black's journal reside between Rocky Mountain Portage and the Liard

River.[188] Taken together Black's journal reveals Tse Keh Nay territoriality

extending north of both the Peace River and McLeod Lake, bounded by Bear and

Thutade Lake to the west, the Chukachida River to the northwest, the Liard River

to the North and the Muskwa (Sikanni) and Sikanni Chief Rivers to the northeast.

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[184] Rich, "Notes," 25, note 2.
[185] Black, 6, 25-26.
[186] The river Black names appears first as the Thetadzue (115), then as the Schadzue (121) and still later as both (134). The editor R.M. Patterson claims it is the Stikine River, but according to the map at the back of the journal it would actually be the Chukachida River, a tributary of the Stikine. This claim is supported by Black's description of the river flowing west, combined with Methodiates assertion its source is to the east, which matches the Chukachida better than the Stikine, which loops back on itself in the mountains. Furthermore, from the perspective of Black's last identifiable location, Metsantan Lake, he would have to cross the Stikine as it flows north, with its source to the southwest. Black, 58, 107-125, 134-142; British Columbia Ministry of Environment, Lands & Parks, *British Columbia Recreational Atlas*, 3rd ed. (Victoria: P.T.C. Phototype Composing Ltd., 1993), 61-62; Rich, "Notes," 114 note 1, 173-174 note 2; E.E. Rich, "Samuel Black's Rocky Mountain Journey, 1824," in *A Journal of a Voyage from Rocky Mountain Portage in Peace River to the Sources of Finlays Branch and North West Ward in Summer 1824*, ed. E.E. Rich (London: The Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1955), back cover [map].
[187] Black, 125, 134-142.
[188] Black, 196; Rich, "Notes," 196, note 2.

Black tries to answer in his journals whether or not the Tse Keh Nay

winter in the northern mountains, or retreat to the foot of the Rockies around

Rocky Mountain Portage. For example, near the Fox River Pass Black sees:

> Two Winter Encampments & enquiring of the Old Slave if ever the
> Thecannies passed the Winter here abouts for they generally leave
> the mountains in the fall & pass the Winter in the plains below on
> each side of the R.M. Establishment. The Old Slave told us that
> there were some Thecannies Wintered hereabouts under the
> guidance of an Old Chief he names Methodiates.[189]

Inquiring of Methodiates he is told Methodiates' "party generally Wintered here

abouts & on the Sources of the Liard River."[190] This, however, is contradicted

when Methodiates later admits that "he & his Band some times pass the winter in

the Plains at the foot of the Mountains near the Rocky Mountain

Establishment."[191] This confirms Black's earlier statement regarding the Tse Keh

Nay who lived around the post.[192]   After hearing this, and towards the end of his

journey, Black concludes that most of the Tse Keh Nay do this, rather than stay in

the mountains during the winter.[193] Based on this it would appear that by the

1820s the majority of the Tse Keh Nay did not winter in the northern mountains,

instead retiring back to the plains east of Rocky Mountain Portage, and

presumably south around McLeod Lake.

Part of the reason for Black's inquiry is that he is looking for a good place

to establish a new fur trade post. Towards the end of his voyage Methodiates

inquires about the establishment of a post at the Fishing Lakes, promising to

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[189] Black, 41.
[190] Ibid., 51.
[191] Ibid., 53.
[192] Ibid., 41.
[193] Ibid., 188.

convince his relatives to winter in the area if they do.[194] Black does not believe

this is a good idea, however, due to the lack of supplies at this location.[195]

Indeed, it is for this reason alone that he comes to the conclusion that Methodiates

and his followers are the only Tse Keh Nay who do, and indeed can, winter in the

mountains.[196] Further complicating his intention to establish a new post is that

upon Black's return he finds Rocky Mountain Portage has been abandoned in the

spring due to the murder of Guy Hughes and four others at Fort St. John around

the beginning of November 1823 by some of the local Aboriginals.[197] This

closure he feels will only be temporary, and he states that the post will be re-

established in the fall.[198] In regards to establishing a new post, he comes to the

conclusion that one should be built down river from Moberly Lake, which can

serve not only the Tse Keh Nay, but also the St. John Rocky Mountain Indians.[199]

      The McLeod Lake post records for 1823-1824 do not add anything new to

our understanding of Tse Keh Nay territoriality. They do, however, clearly state

that Tse Keh Nay territory is perceived by the Tse Keh Nay as being distinct from

Dunneza territory. This is seen in a letter from James McDougall to John Stuart

after the murder of Joseph Bagnoit and Belone Duplante at Fort George by some

of the Dakelh locals.[200] In response to the murder Stuart, the district

superintendent, suggests that if the Dakelh do not punish the perpetrators, the

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[194] Black, 188; Rich, "Notes," 188, note 2.
[195] Black, 188.
[196] Ibid., 189.
[197] Black, 201, Patterson, "Introduction," lxix.
[198] Black, 201.
[199] Black, 204-205; Rich, "Notes," 204, note 1.
[200] HBCA, B.119/a/1, 24 October 1823, page 20; HBCA, B.119/b/1, Letter 11: Letter from James McDougall, Esq. Fort Saint James, 17 November, 1823, page 7-8.

Hudson's Bay Company should use the Dunneza to punish the whole First

Nation.[201] In response to this McDougall wrote Stuart stating:

> Mr. Brown told me you had informed the Indians of McLeod Lake
> that if they heard the Beaver Indians were in this Quarter during
> the winter, not to be surprised or alarmed, as you had sent word to
> them to come. I told them also, and added, that as you yourself
> would accompany them thro these places, they might rely upon
> you taking particular care that nothing should be done to any
> others, than those concerned in the Murder of the Whites. The first
> part perfectly corresponded with their Ideas, but they did not like
> to hear of the Beaver Indians being brought on their lands.[202]

From this it would appear that by Stuart's time the Tse Keh Nay were definitely

distinct from the Dunneza, and that the Tse Keh Nay resented the idea of the

Dunneza being brought through their territory, even by the Hudson's Bay

Company.

During this early fur trade period the Tse Keh Nay went from the

unnamed Indians of MacKenzie's journal to the Sicannies and Thecannies of

Harmon's, Black's and Stuart's journals. As part of this transition they were

preserved as a distinct First Nation in the minds of the fur traders and separate

from their neighbors the Rocky Mountain Indians, the Dunneza, the Dakelh, the

Secwepemc, and the enigmatic Thloadennis. Despite the general use of the Tse

Keh Nay label (or its Anglicized variants) it was not applied universally by fur

traders as evidenced by Archibald McDonald's journal of 1828. Nevertheless,

from these journals we get a sense of Tse Keh Nay territoriality extending from

Bear and Thutade Lake to the west, the Chukachida River to the northwest, the

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[201] HBCA, B.119/a/1, 27 October 1823, Letter to James Murray Yale, McLeod Lake, 27 October, 1823, page 30; HBCA, B.119/b/1, Letter 3: Letter to the Governor, Chief Factors and Chief Traders, McLeod Lake, 30 October, 1823, page 2-4.

[202] HBCA, B.119/b/1, Letter 11: Letter from James McDougall, Esq. Fort Saint James, 17 November, 1823, page 7-8.

Liard River to the north, the Muskwa (Sikanni) and Sikanni Chief Rivers to the

northeast, the Rockies and Rocky Mountain Portage to the east, the Parsnip-Fraser

divide to the southeast and south, and Stuart Lake to the southwest. This territory

was not exclusive Tse Keh Nay territory, however, and often overlapped with the

territory of their neighbors. Indeed, in the case of the Rocky Mountains and

Rocky Mountain Portage it appears that their eastern neighbors the Rocky

Mountain Indians and Dunneza were pushing them west, with the Rocky

Mountain Indians moving east and apparently supplanting the Tse Keh Nay as the

dominant group at the Rocky Mountain Portage. This in turn, apparently led to

the Tse Keh Nay residing more and more in the northern Rockies during the

winter, instead of the plains around Rocky Mountain Portage.

For the period from 1828 to 1887 few fur trade records exist for this

region. While there are isolated journals for McLeod Lake for 1845-1848 in the

Glenbow Archives the period from 1828 to 1887 is a bit of a vacuum.[203]

Nevertheless, by examining first the period from first contact to 1828 and then

from the 1890s to the 1920s I am able to examine not only how fur trade

perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay were formed, but also how they changed in a later

era during the early treaty and land claims period. Moving ahead to the 1890s we

find the situation had changed from the early fur trader period. Gone are the

Rocky Mountain Indians, presumably absorbed by the Dunneza, and the

Thloadennis, who are presumably renamed as the Tahltan. Rocky Mountain

Portage at this time was no longer considered a Tse Keh Nay post, with Fort

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[203] Guy Lanoue claims they are for 1823-1848, but the Glenbow Archives states they only have
the post records for 1845-1848. Glenbow Archives, Hudson's Bay Company Posts Fonds;
Lanoue, *Brothers*, 228.

McLeod supplemented by the establishment of Fort Connelly on Bear Lake in 1826 among the Tse Keh Nay, Dakelh and Gitxsan.[204] Fort Connelly was abandoned in 1890 partly due to Tse Keh Nay-Gitxsan conflicts, in favor of Fort Grahame on the Finlay River, which had been first established twenty years earlier.[205]

For this later period the journals of Fort Nelson are of particular note. Though not usually considered to be a historical Tse Keh Nay locality, it is here that some Tse Keh Nay signed Treaty No. 8 in 1910.[206] Furthermore, in 1892 the Tse Keh Nay were seemingly more numerous in the district than any other group. As the 1892 district report stated, "The hunter's attached to the Post are 24 Slaves and 37 Siccaunies."[207] Nevertheless, when looking at the fort's journals it is difficult to determine who is Tse Keh Nay and who is not. This is because the names found in the journal often do not include ethnic identifiers. Two exceptions are the Thekennais Chief (and his associated camp, and brigade) and the Thekennais Hunter.[208] They are the only ones that can be identified as being

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[204] Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*, 8, 11.

[205] Fort Grahame was established in 1870, but apparently abandoned between 1885-1889 when the local Tse Keh Nay were drawn to Sylvester Landing / McDame. HBCA, B.119/e/2, Reports on Districts – McLeod Lake 1891, Inspection Report – McLeod Lake Post, New Caledonia District, by J McDougall, Inspecting Officer, 29 August, 1891, page 8; Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*, 11-12; Lanoue, *Brothers*, 168-169.

[206] Library and Archives Canada, (LAC) RG 10, Volume 8595, File 1/1-11-5-1, Indian Treaties – Correspondence Regarding Western Treaty No. 8 and the Fort Nelson Adhesion 1909-1972, untitled Ft Nelson Adhesion, 15 August, 1910.

[207] HBCA, B.320/e/1, Reports on Districts – Fort Nelson 1892, Inspection Report - Nelson Post, MacKenzie River District, J. MacDougall, Inspecting Officer, 18-19 August, 1892, page 10.

[208] Note the difference in spelling between the District Report and the Post Journals. HBCA, B.320/a/1, Post Journals – Fort Nelson 1887-1890, 8 October 1887, page 6, 12 October 1887, page 6, 20 August 1888, page 34, 4 May 1889, page 63.

Tse Keh Nay, and with Slave Lamalice, the only Aboriginals referred to in the journal by ethnic designations.[209]

Unfortunately the journal entries for the Thekennais Chief and Thekennais/Sekennais Hunter do not indicate where either they, or their bands, traveled throughout the year other than to indicate they come from the Thekennais Chief's camp.[210] Where this camp was located is never mentioned, although one assumes it was either on the Muskwa (Sikanni) or Sikanni Chief Rivers.[211] This is supported by anthropologist Wilson Duff, who in his notes records that a Milligan reported in 1913-1914 that the Tse Keh Nay "keep west of the Ft Nelson R[iver]."[212] One potential answer as to where they might have traveled throughout the year, however, is found in the Fort Grahame journals, where Fort Nelson Indians appear in 1896 three years after Fort Nelson closed.[213] They reappear at the post three years later in 1899, as is seen when journal states "three Indians came in from Fort Nelson to trade."[214] The next visit by Fort Nelson Indians is in 1901 when they arrive with some local Aboriginals: Two Bitts, Ahkoos and Hanaka.[215] Clearly, these particular Fort Nelson Indians are on friendly terms with the local Aboriginals from Fort Grahame, although it is not clear from the journals that any of these individuals (both those from Fort Nelson

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[209] HBCA, B.320/a/1, 12 October, 1888, page 27.

[210] HBCA, B.320/a/2, Post Journals – Fort Nelson 1890-1893, 29 January 1893, page 78.

[211] The Sikanni Chief River was after the Tse Keh Nay resident there. Dominion of Canada, "Fifteenth Report of the Geographic Board of Canada: Containing All Decisions to March 31, 1917," in *First Session of the Thirteenth Parliament of the Dominion of Canada*¸ vol. 11, no. 25c, *Sessional Papers*, vol. LIII (Ottawa: Hunter Rose, 1918), 245.

[212] Unfortunately Milligan is unidentified in the notes. BC Archives, (BCA) GR 2809 Research Notes of Wilson Duff 1950-1978, File 77 Athapaskan: Sekani, Milligan 1913-14.

[213] HBCA, B.249/a/4, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1896-1899, 11 April 1896, folio 1d, 23 May 1896, folio 3d; HBCA, B.320/a/2, 9 June 1893, page 89.

[214] HBCA, B.249/a/4, 19 February 1899, folio 45.

[215] HBCA, B.249/a/6, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1899-1902, 6 April, 1901, folio 28.

and those from Fort Grahame) are Tse Keh Nay. The Fort Nelson Indians do not

appear in the journals again until 1915.[216] Nevertheless, the Fort Grahame

journals do mention a Fort Nelson Trail seemingly indicating travel existed

between these two forts enough to warrant a trail being cut between the two.[217]

Furthermore, if these Fort Nelson Indians are Tse Keh Nay, then according to

anthropologist Wilson Duff they are the Tseloni subgroup of Tse Keh Nay, a

group which appears in the Fort Grahame journals annually from 1897-1908,

reappearing in 1912 and then disappear from the record.[218] The Tseloni are

interesting as in the later fur trade record they are the only Tse Keh Nay group

referred to by their Tse Keh Nay name as opposed to a geographic location.

Given they appear in the journals the same years as the Fort Nelson Indians it

would appear these particular Tseloni are distinct from them, although it is still

possible the Fort Nelson Indians are another group of Tseloni referred to by their

geographic place.

Evidence also exists that the Fort Nelson Indians later join the local

Aboriginals of Fort Grahame. For example, in 1916 the journals state "two men

& two boys from Fort Nelson in today… this band intend to attach themselves to

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[216] HBCA, B.249/a/9. Post Journals – Bear Lake 1908-1917, 29 December 1915, page 304.

[217] Ibid., 17 August 1914, page 252, 29 September 1914, page 257, 5 October 1914, page 257, 21 December 1914, page 265.

[218] Wilson Duff, *The Indian History of British Columbia: The Impact of the White Man*, new ed. (Victoria: Royal British Columbia Museum, 1997), 49; HBCA, B.249/a/4, 5 June 1897, folio 20, 25 November 1897, folio 27, 26 January 1898, folio 29d, 5 June 1898, folio 35, 13 November 1898, folio 41d; HBCA, B.249/a/5, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1899, 4 June 1899, folio 5; HBCA, B.249/a/6, 31 May 1900, folio 15, 4 June 1901, folio 31, 7 June 1901, folio 31d, 4 June 1902, folio 46; HBCA, B.249/a/7, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1902-1905, 11 November 1902, page 11, 15 November 1902. page 12, 16 November 1902, page 12, 26 May 1903, page 34, 11 November 1903, page 45, 23 November 1903, page 46, 27 May 1904, page 71, 8 June 1905, page 98; HBCA, B.249/a/8, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1905-1908, 10 December 1906, page 52, 8 June 1907, page 76; HBCA, B.249/a/9, 30 May 1908, page 19; HBCA, B.249/a/9, 29 May 1912, page 176.

this bunch & are now camped with Alick, Pool, Stephen at Deserter's Canyon."[219]

What is interesting here is that unlike Two Bitts, Ahkoos and Hanaka, these three

names are names associated with the ancestors of individuals who today consider

themselves Tse Keh Nay and are presumably Alick Pierre, Old Poole, and

Stephen Solonas.[220] These Fort Nelson Indians later come to the fort on 21 May

with Stephen.[221] These actions seem to reflect a desire to amalgamate with the

Fort Grahame Aboriginals, and the next year one of the girls from the group was

working around the post with other local Aboriginals, such as Frank Pierre.[222]

Later that year the whole band came in and is recorded as consisting of "about 25

men[,] women[,] and children."[223] The number of men seems to be different than

the number of hunters as is seen the next day when the journal states, "The band

consists of 12 Hunters, 52 souls in all Men[,] Women[,] and Children… they

intend to stay for the Winter."[224] The next time the Fort Nelson Indians appear is

in 1919 when they come in to trade, although the journal does not indicate from

where.[225] They return again in 1922, which unfortunately is the last year of the

journals.[226] From this evidence it is not possible to determine if the Fort Nelson

Indians do eventually amalgamate with the Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay, in

particular those identifiable as being Tse Keh Nay.

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[219] HBCA, B.249/a/9, 14 May 1916, page 330.
[220] BCA, MS 2273, Guy Lanoue, "Continuity and Change: The Development of Political Self-Definition Among the Sekani of Northern British Columbia" (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 1983), 116-119; Lanoue, *Brothers*, 47; Elsie Pierre, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 10 November, 2008.
[221] HBCA, B.249/a/9, 21 May 1916, page 331.
[222] Ibid., 1 October 1917, page 388.
[223] Ibid., 24 October 1917, page 391.
[224] Ibid., 25 October 1917, page 391.
[225] HBCA, B.249/a/10, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1917-1922, 24 March 1919, page 56.
[226] Ibid., 17 March 1922, page 180, 18 March 1922, page 180.

As with Fort Nelson post journals, McLeod Lake and Fort Grahame post

records seldom recorded ethnic identifiers for the local Aboriginal population.

When they are used, however, the local Aboriginal population is clearly identified

as being Tse Keh Nay.[227] Ethnic or geographic adjectives are more commonly

used to identify non-local Aboriginals who visited the post, including those from

other Tse Keh Nay communities.[228] This would seem to suggest that the authors

of the McLeod Lake journals felt that the ethnic and geographic identity of the

local Aboriginals was the norm at the post, and that they therefore only had

identify those Aboriginals who deviated from it. Whether this pattern of

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[227] Most references to the McLeod Lake Indians being Tse Keh Nay seem to be associated with the entries made by Thomas Hammett during his first tenure as post manager (1 September 1901 – 5 September 1907). The fact he does not do this during his second tenure (22 July 1908 - 4 August 1911) would seem to suggest that by that time he had, like the other authors, accepted it was given the local Aboriginals were Tse Keh Nay and therefore only needed to differentiated those who were ethnically different and non-local. HBCA, B.119/a/10, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1901-1902, 31 August 1901, folio 4d, 1 September 1901, folio 5, 21 October 1901, folio 7, 4 December 1901, folio 9d, 20 December 1901, folio 10d, 25 December 1901, folio 11, 11 January 1902, folio 12, 22 January 1902, folio 12d, 28 October 1902, folio 26; HBCA, B.119/a/11, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1902-1905¸ 26 December 1902, folio 2, 2 January 1903, folio 2d, 5 January 1903, folio 2d, 23 January 1903, folio, 3d, 6 February 1903, folio 4d, 7 February 1903, folio 4d, 19 February 1903, folio 5d, 3 April 1903, folio 7d, 24 October 1903, folio 17d; HBCA, B.119/a/12, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1905-1911, 3 September 1907, page 58, 5 September 1907, page 58, 20 July 1908, page 92, 21 July 1908, page 92, 22 July 1908, page 92, 19 June 1911, page 197; Interestingly, although the early entries of the Fort Grahame journal refer to individuals as Tse Keh Nay, it is the Inspection Report for McLeod Lake in 1891 that states that the local Aboriginals of Fort Grahame are Tse Keh Nay. HBCA, B.119/e/2, page 8; HBCA, B.249/a/1, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1891-1893, 25 October 1891, folio 2d, 23 January 1892, folio 5d.

[228] HBCA, B.119/a/5, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1891-1893, 16 December 1892, folio 20; HBCA, B.119/a/7, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1895-1896, 1 July 1895, folio 2, 10 August 1895, folio 5d, 20 March 1896, folio 25; HBCA, B.119/a/8, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1896-1898, 6 October 1897, folio 29d; HBCA, B.119/a/9, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1898-1901, 26 April 1899, folio 14, 17 May 1899, folio 15, 9 June 1900, folio 30; HBCA, B.119/a/10, 15 April 1902, folio 17d, 25 October 1902, folio 26; HBCA, B.119/a/11, 13 September 1903, folio 15d, 7 October 1903, folio 16d, 9 April 1904, folio 25d, 16 June 1904, folio 29; HBCA, B.119/a/12, 20 October 1907, page 64, 25 October 1907, page 64, 28 March 1908, page 79; HBCA, B.249/a/1, 3 December 1891, folio 4, 22 March 1892, folio 7d, 19 July 1893, folio 21d; HBCA, B.249/a/2, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1893-1895, 16 December 1893, folio 4d; HBCA, B.249/a/4, 8 June 1896, folio 4d, 26 June 1896, folio 6, 8 July 1896, folio 6d, 31 December 1896, folio 14d; B.249/a/6, 16 April 1900, folio 12d, 21 July 1900, folio 16d; HBCA, B.249/a/7, 11 November 1902, page 11; HBCA, B.249/a/10, 11 November 1918, page 43.

identification also reflected a perceived division among the local and non-local

Tse Keh Nay beyond residency, however, is unclear.

The two posts understandably differ in regards to the territoriality of the

local Tse Keh Nay. At McLeod Lake we find a small number of locations

mentioned and a major focus on travel to and from Stuart Lake/Fort St. James.

This is logical as Fort St. James/Stuart Lake was the Hudson's Bay Company's

principal depot in the district, a Dakelh community and also the site of a

permanent Oblate mission.[229] This is also the furthest west of any of the locations

mentioned in post journals. The next most popular location mentioned is the

Parsnip River, which is interesting as it was on this river that MacKenzie

apparently first encountered the Tse Keh Nay in 1793. This is followed, in the

number of mentions, by Tudyah Lake to the north and Fort Grahame, which of

course was the other major Tse Keh Nay population centre at the time (Fort

Connelly being abandoned in 1890 and Fort Nelson being a mixed Tse Keh Nay-

Dene Tha community). Depending on whether or not the location of Finlay River

is meant to only extend to Fort Grahame or to its source, (I believe the former is

the case) then Fort Grahame is the furthest north of any location mentioned in the

journals. The furthest east of any of the locations is Rocky Mountain Portage,

which as mentioned was the traditionally seen as the boundary between the Tse

Keh Nay, and their eastern neighbors, once the Rocky Mountain Indians and

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[229] Malcolm McLeod, "Notes," in *Peace River: A Canoe Voyage from Hudson's Bay to Pacific by Sir George Simpson in 1828*, ed. Malcolm McLeod (Edmonton: M.B. Hurtig Ltd., 1971), 98-99, note lxiii; Adrien Gabriel Morice, *The History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia* (Smithers: Interior Stationery Ltd., 1978), 62-66, 342; Margaret Tobey, "Carrier," in *Subarctic*, vol. 6, *Handbook of North American Indians*, ed. June Helm (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1981), 417.

Dunneza, but presumably now the Dunneza. The most southern place name mentioned is Giscome Portage between Summit Lake and the Fraser River. Extrapolating from this we can estimate the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay territory as extending from Fort Grahame to the north, to Rocky Mountain Portage to the east, to Giscome Portage on the continental divide to the south, and to the Stuart Lake to the west. (See Appendix A)

In the Fort Grahame journals the major emphasis in named locations was on rivers and locations on rivers. These post journals are unique as besides mentioning the Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay, they also include the Bear Lake and McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay, as well as the enigmatic Fort Nelson Indians. Of the first group the dominant destinations are up and down river, which is logical given the fort's location on the Finlay River. Unfortunately, it does not tell us where people are going and therefore is almost impossible in establishing Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay territoriality with any degree of certainty. The next most popular location is Finlay Forks. As a destination and point of departure it makes sense because in an area where rivers served as the main means of transportation, this location (where the Peace River meets the Finlay and Parsnip Rivers) was a natural transportation hub.[230] The next most popular location mentioned is McLeod Lake, although the number of times it is mentioned is anomalous with departures outnumbering arrivals by fourteen. This was because every summer the factor in charge of Fort Grahame went to McLeod Lake taking local Tse Keh Nay with him, who then returned before the factor and therefore were not

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[230] Bernard McKay, *Crooked River Rats: The Adventures of Pioneer Rivermen* (Surrey: Hancock House Publishers Ltd., 2000), 7-8.

recorded in the journals as arriving from there. The locations noted in the

journals which are furthest west are Bear Lake and the Head of the Finlay River.

The one furthest to the northwest is McDame/Sylvester Landing on the Dease

River. This location is far removed from Fort Grahame. The only explanation for

why the Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay would travel there is found in the McLeod

Lake District Report for 1891. In it the inspector recalls how Fort Grahame "was

abandoned in 1885, when the Indians were drawn to Black [Kechika] River in

Cassiar by Sylvester."[231] This mention refers to Rufus Sylvester who had

independent posts on the Dease River, (known as Sylvester Landing and later

McDame) the Kechika River and the Liard River.[232] In this instance, therefore, it

would appear they were going there for personal reasons, presumably due to

having established personal connections while trading there earlier, as the

Hudson's Bay Company had bought out Sylvester in 1888.[233] Besides this

location the one furthest to the north is the Fox River. The one furthest to the east

is Horn Creek. And to the south the furthest location is McLeod Lake. From this

we get a vague sense of Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay territory extending from Bear

Lake and the Head of the Finlay to the west, to McDame to the northwest, to the

Fox River to the north, to Robinson Creek to the east, to McLeod Lake to the

south. When combined with the territoriality of the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay

this extends further south to Giscome Portage on the east and Stuart Lake/Fort St.

James on west. (See Appendix A)

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[231] The post was re-established in 1889, with the Tse Keh Nay who left in 1886 returning in the spring of 1891. HBCA, B.119/e/2, 8.
[232] HBCA, "Albert Egnell," in *Biographical Sheets* http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/hbca/biographical/e/egnell_albert.pdf (accessed 7 July 2009).
[233] Ibid.

European fur traders made first contact with the Tse Keh Nay in the late 18th century and their trade continued to at least 1922. During this period MacKenzie's unnamed Indians and Fraser's Big Men and Meadow Indians among others, became the Sicannies of Harmon and Stuart, the Thecannies of Black and the Chicanees of McDonald. Whether this amalgamation or grouping together of the Tse Keh Nay is a function of Europeans slowly coming to a better understanding of the boundaries of pre-existing ethnic groups, or whether the fur trade itself was creating this amalgamation, or whether the fur traders were inventing these new categories to better suit fur trade practices is not clear. It would appear, however, that a group (or groups that were related to each other) existed that was (were) not part of other neighboring ethnic groups like the Dakelh, the Dunneza, the Rocky Mountain Indians, the Kaska, the Secwepemc or the Tahltan. What is also clear is that during the fur trade period Europeans not only formed and developed perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay as an ethnic group, but also influenced other Europeans in this period to perceive the Tse Key Nay in this way.   Beginning with MacKenzie each author deals with the relationships the Tse Keh Nay had with their neighbors: the Dakelh, the Dunneza, the Rocky Mountain Indians, the Kaska, the Secwepemc or the Tahltan. From this emerges a sense of the Tse Keh Nay living in the Rocky Mountain Trench periodically under attack from the east by the Dunneza and Rocky Mountain Indians[234] and to the south and southwest by the Dakelh and Secwepemc. It would appear from this that it was only to the north and northwest that they had continually good

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[234] This problem is further complicated by the fact it appears the Rocky Mountain Indians are slowly being absorbed by the Dunneza.

relations with their neighbors the Kaska and Tahltan. From fur trade records we can hypothesize that during the early fur trader period (1790s to 1830s) Tse Keh Nay territoriality extended from Bear and Thutade Lake to the west, to the Chukachida River to the northwest, to the Liard River to the north, to the Muskwa (Sikanni) and Sikanni Chief Rivers to the northeast, to Halfway River, the Rockies and Rocky Mountain Portage to the east, to the Parsnip-Fraser divide to the southeast and south, and to Stuart Lake to the southwest. Moving ahead to the 1890s we find the Tse Keh Nay residing not only at McLeod Lake, which was established by Simon Fraser in 1805, but also at Bear Lake to the northwest, Fort Grahame to the north and Fort Nelson to the northeast. Of these population centers Fort Nelson is the most enigmatic, with the Tse Keh Nay there simply labeled as the Thekennais Chief, his associate band, and the Thekennais Hunter. Tse Keh Nay territoriality also seems to have changed slightly between the two periods. Bear Lake and the Head of the Finlay (which would be Thutade Lake) are the west boundary in both periods. Similarly, the northwest boundary seems to be relatively unchanged, with the ill defined Chukachida River boundary[235] being replaced by the Dease River where McDame/Sylvester Landing is located. From here the northern boundary in both periods seems to be the Liard River thanks to the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay. They also apparently provide a northeast boundary in both periods of the Fort Nelson and Sikanni Chief Rivers. To the east Rocky Mountain Portage serves as an eastern boundary in both periods, although it seems that in the later period the Tse Keh Nay no longer resided there

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[235] Methodiates guided Samuel Black to a Thloadenni road across the Chukachida River, which he tells Black is the furthest any Tse Keh Nay has ever gone, Black, 125, 134-142.

or Halfway River. To the southeast and south the boundary seems to be the continental divide in both periods, thanks to the Giscome Portage, which bridges the divide, and is apparently the easier route a member of Barbin's Band told Fraser he could have shown him had he met Fraser at McLeod Lake.[236] And finally to the southwest the boundary is Stuart Lake/Fort St. James in both periods. This territory was not exclusive Tse Keh Nay territory, however, and it is best to think of it gradually becoming less and less Tse Keh Nay the closer one gets to the edge of it. (See Appendix C, Map C-1)

What is significant in these fur trader perceptions is that as time went on, the Tse Key Nay were progressively defined as a single ethnic group with more or less distinct boundaries. Whether or not this ethnic labeling, and the boundaries that went with it, corresponded to the reality on the ground, (there is significant evidence local identities remained strong) is unclear.

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[236] Fraser, "First Journal of Simon Fraser," 229-230.

Chapter Two
Missionary Perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay

Fur traders dominated Tse Keh Nay-European interactions until the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Beginning in the 1870s, however, Roman Catholic Oblates missionaries began to minister to the Tse Keh Nay (Sekani).[237] Like fur traders, missionaries left records of their encounters with the Tse Keh Nay, particularly Father Adrien Gabriel Morice. Unlike fur traders, however, Morice's writings are more academic than descriptive in nature. Despite this difference, Morice's ethnographic observations supplemented, and often supported, fur trader perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay. Indeed, both fur traders and missionaries recognized a larger Tse Key Nay ethnicity that encompassed the more local or post-level band groupings.

To examine both these similarities and differences it is important to understand the relationship between missionaries and the Tse Keh Nay, which differed dramatically from the business oriented fur trade. This is particularly important in light of Morice's claims that his observations were categorically superior to that of the fur traders because of his knowledge of Tse Keh Nay language, and through it the Tse Keh Nay themselves. Indeed, he places a great importance on language, using it as a means of identifying Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity. His observations, however, not to mention his claims for their superiority to fur trade observations, are problematic, as Morice seemed to have been unaware of his own biases and the influences working on him as a

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[237] Glenda Denniston, "Sekani," in *Subarctic*, vol. 6, *Handbook of North American Indians*, ed. June Helm (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1981), 439.

missionary ethnographer. Nevertheless, the scope and detail of his observations make them important to any study of Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity.

In the following chapter I examine missionary perceptions of Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity by first looking at the history of missionary activity among the Tse Keh Nay and the relationships it resulted in. Next, I briefly describe the most famous of the missionaries among the Tse Keh Nay, the Reverend Father Adrien Gabriel Morice. Following this, I examine the influences and biases that worked on Morice as a missionary ethnographer. Finally, I conclude by examining the ethnographic material he produced regarding Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity, their relationships with other First Nations, their territoriality, and demographics.

Missionaries were relative late comers to the Tse Keh Nay and it was not until 1870 that Father McGuckin (a Roman Catholic Oblate) began to actively minister to the Tse Keh Nay.[238] Even then a permanent Durieu style mission[239] was never established in any of the previously mentioned Tse Keh Nay communities, with the missionaries merely visiting them from Stuart Lake where a mission had been established in 1873.[240] These visits were infrequent at best, however.[241] For example, McLeod Lake journals from 1891-1911 only record eight visits by the priests in 1895, 1902, 1904, 1905, 1907, 1909, 1910, 1911 for

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[238] Adrien Gabriel Morice, *The History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia* (Smithers: Interior Stationery Ltd., 1978), 341.

[239] A missionary style developed by Oblate missionary Paul Durieu, which has been described as a "strict Roman Catholic tribal theocracy." Jacqueline Gresko, "Durieu, Paul," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online*, Vol. XII, http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?BioId=40202 (accessed 14 November 2009). Under the control of the priest potential converts were taken through two stages of conversion, the *action de repression*, in which "traditional" practices, ceremonies and morals were repressed, and the *action de formation*, in which the potential converts were then shaped into "proper" Christians. David Mulhall, *Will to Power: The Missionary Career of Father Morice* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1986), 8.

[240] Morice, *The History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia*, 342; Mulhall, 35-38, 46.

[241] Mulhall, 36-37.

the entire twenty year period.[242] This is truly surprising given the amount of

travel between Stuart Lake and McLeod Lake found in the fur trade journals, as

mentioned in the first chapter. Supplementing this visitation pattern is the fact

that in 1906 the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay went to the Stuart Lake to see the

bishop, and in 1909 went to see the priest alone, (which might explain his visit

later that year).[243] Perhaps more shocking is the fact that in the Fort Grahame

journals from 1891-1922 there is only one recorded visit of missionaries in the

thirty one year period, with one instance of the local Tse Keh Nay going to Bear

Lake to visit the priest who was visiting there.[244] A possible explanation for this

lack of visits can be found in the autobiography of Adrien Gabriel Morice, who

was the missionary among the Tse Keh Nay from 1885 to 1903. In it he states:

> Speaking of the Sekanais, especially those of the north, we are
> afraid we have not bestowed on them all the attention they deserve
> in our account of Father Morice's missionary labours. They were
> so hard to reach, you were so little sure to find them, that, though
> their pastor never neglected them, he could not have as frequent
> contact with them as with the Carriers and Babines.[245]

Based on this it would appear that visits to the Tse Keh Nay at McLeod Lake and

Fort Grahame were sparse because of the difficulty in traveling to each location,

with McLeod Lake receiving more because it was easier to reach.

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[242] Hudson's Bay Company Archives (HBCA), B.119/a/7, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1895-1896, 17-19 August 1895, folios 6-6d; HBCA, B.119/a/10, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1901-1902, 5-9 July 1902, folio 21; HBCA, B.119/a/11, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1902-1905, 18-21 June 1904, folio 29, 17-21 June 1905, folio 45d; HBCA, B.119/a/12, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1905-1911, 17-21 October 1907, page 63-64, 15-19 October 1909, page 137, 8-15 June, 1910, page 158-159, 13-22 June 1911, page 196-197.

[243] HBCA, B.119/a/12, 4 June 1906, page 22, 9 June 1909, page 22.

[244] HBCA, B.249/a/3, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1895-1896, 5-10 August 1895, folio 4d-5; HBCA, B.249/a/9, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1908-1917, 7 June 1911, page 140.

[245] DLS [Adrien Gabriel Morice], *Fifty Years in Western Canada: Being the Abridged Memoirs of Rev. A.G. Morice O.M.I.* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1930), 126.

Despite these infrequent visits, however, it would appear that the Oblates were a significant part of Tse Keh Nay life. This is seen in the Tse Keh Nay willingness to go and visit the priests. It is seen at McLeod Lake when the Tse Keh Nay there at various times cleaned up in preparation for the priest's arrival, sought to borrow money from the post manager to get the priest from Stuart Lake, traveled to bring the priest from Stuart Lake, and waited till the point of starvation at War Lake for the priest.[246] It is seen at Fort Grahame in the Tse Keh Nay willingness to await the priest for days, if not weeks on end.[247] Indeed the fur traders seemed to be aware and even resent the role the missionaries played in lives of the Tse Keh Nay. In the McLeod Lake journal for 1903, while discussing the cessation of issuing credit to the Tse Keh Nay the manager writes:

> The effect of no debt being given will I am afraid mean the entire extinction of the Sicanies as they are so careless and unthrifty that the major part of the time they will be in a starving condition *and getting priest ridden has made or is making them feel that debt paying is the last thing they ought to do* (emphasis mine).[248]

What can explain this apparent dichotomy between a general lack of visits from the missionaries and the importance they seemed to play in Tse Keh Nay life?

A partial answer can be found in writings of the Oblate missionary Adrien Gabriel Morice. In his article, "The Fur Trader in Anthropology," he states

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[246] HBCA, B.119/a/11, 29 May 1904, folio 28; HBCA, B.119/a/12, 17 May 1911, page 192, 2 June 1911, page 195; Mulhall, 52.
[247] HBCA, B.249/a/1, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1891-1893, 12-15 August 1893, folios 23-23d; HBCA, B.249/a/8, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1905-1908, 18 August – 3 September 1907, pages 80-82.
[248] HBCA, B.119/a/11, 7 February 1903, folio 5.

"perhaps the greatest characteristic of the Dene stock is its unparalleled

receptiveness."[249] He goes on to state:

> In the north, we cannot fail to remark that the receptiveness of that
> race are ever readily, nay eagerly, manifesting it in our own day by
> assimilating the religious notions of the whites and copying such of
> their manners as are consistent with the mode of life imposed on
> them by nature.[250]

This openness to European beliefs is similarly seen in his article, "Notes

Archaeological, Industrial and Sociological, on the Western Denes," in which he

states:

> The Northern Denes, who are eminently gentle in disposition, have
> generally shown a remarkable receptiveness. And this explains
> how it's that, with few exceptions, they are all to-day practical
> Christians, and conform to the customs of the whites as much as
> their social status will permit.[251]

This receptiveness was evidently apparent when the Tse Keh Nay were first

visited by missionaries in 1870. As Morice writes in his *The History of the*

Northern Interior of British Columbia:

> Circumstances led him [Father McGuckin] even to visit the
> Sekanais of Fort McLeod, who received him with open arms and
> gave him the greatest consolations. Their congeners of Bear Lake
> were granted the same favor….[252]

If all of these statements are true, then it would appear the Tse Keh Nay were

responsible for the missionaries playing such a large part in their life and not the

missionaries themselves.

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[249] Adrien Gabriel Morice, "The Fur Trader in Anthropology: And a Few Related Questions," *American Anthropologist* 30, no. 1 (1928): 74.
[250] Ibid., 74.
[251] Adrien Gabriel Morice, "Notes Archaeological, Industrial and Sociological, on the Western Dene: With an Ethnographic Sketch of the Same," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada* 4 (1893): 20.
[252] Morice, *The History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia*, 341.

Part of this can be explained by looking at Tse Keh Nay socio-political structures. Former Chief Izony writes in his treatise on Tse Keh Nay government that:

> The Headman (Da-Yee) is the spiritual leader of our Tsay Kehnnay Dene Nation…. The Headman is the overseer of God's Principles on Earth; all land, air, water, fire and seasons of the eco-system are known to him. The Headman is looked upon by our people as spiritual and wise, at the head of our band. He is guided by wisdom, which he seeks from the Great Spirit, God…. The Headman of the Tsay Kehnnay Dene bands has changed with the coming of the European peoples. They brought along with them their churches that took us away from the Spiritual life we used to have…. The Tsay Kehnnay Dene Chief is called "Mein Jiih A" or "Mein-Jah" which means "his thoughts alone"…. With the coming of the European peoples, the Chiefs have now to deal with governments and laws pertaining to native groups in Canada. They must take themselves away from the work they did as Spiritual Chiefs, and become political.[253]

It would appear from this, that when the Europeans arrived (first in the form of the fur traders and then as a missionaries and Crown officials) they displaced both the Headman and the Chief in their spiritual capacity, a capacity that was then filled by the priests. This would explain why the Tse Keh Nay seemed so receptive to them, and why despite only visiting sparingly the missionaries seemed to have played an important part in Tse Keh Nay life.

This answer, however, is not the one given by Adrien Gabriel Morice. He maintained the Tse Keh Nay had no socio-political structures or hierarchy prior to contact. As he states in his autobiography:

> What we call society and even primitive political organization
> were things nonexistent with them. There is no society among
> wild non-gregarious animals, nor are they organized with a view to
> commandment or subjection. With all due respect to our fellow

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[253] Ray Izony, *Tsay Kehnnay Dene Nation: Government and Spirituality of Our Bands*, unpublished book, 9-11.

men called the Sekanais, or Mountaineers, such were their conditions considered from the viewpoint of their relations to one another.[254]

This denial of Tse Keh Nay socio-political structures, although unproblematic during Morice's time, is problematic today and calls into question the reliability of his other ethnographic works and observations. This questionable reliability has also impaired the work of those scholars who have used Morice without questioning his biases.[255] For this reason it is important not only to examine his ethnographic works and observations, but also Morice himself and the influences working on him as a missionary and ethnographer.

Born in France on 28 August 1859, Morice decided to become a missionary in Western Canada after a visit by Bishop Vital-Justin Grandin to his seminary in Mayenne.[256] Grandin, however, was not the only missionary to influence the young Morice, and it was during his succeeding years of study that he would come across the career of missionary ethnographer Father Emile Petitot in the Oblate *Missions*, who was widely recognized in the French ethnographic and anthropological community as an "explorer, linguist and anthropologist."[257] The young Morice believed Petitot was an example of the perfect missionary and sought to emulate him in his own career.[258] Towards this end Morice produced numerous ethnographic, historic and geographic works dealing with Western

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[254] DLS, 127.
[255] Denniston; Diamond Jenness, *The Indians of Canada*, 6th ed., no. 65, *Anthropological Series*, no. 15 (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1967); Guy Lanoue, *Brothers: The Politics of Violence among the Sekani of Northern British Columbia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992).
[256] DLS, 5-6.
[257] Mulhall, 4.
[258] Ibid., 4.

Canada and the Dene First Nations he ministered to.[259] These works were his

claim to fame and in fact twenty-six years after his mission was done among the

Tse Keh Nay "The Daily Colonist" newspaper in Victoria would state about him:

> Like the cloistered monks of past centuries, Rev. Father A.G.
> Morice, O.M.I., now residing in Winnipeg, Manitoba, is one of the
> original intellectuals of the West. He is or has been anthropologist,
> missionary, author, musician, lecturer, publisher, newspaper editor,
> photographer, stenographer, lexicographer, explorer and
> cartographer – in short, "jack-of-all-trades."[260]

It is perhaps ironic then that in his attempt to be the perfect missionary and

emulate Father Petitot, Morice's ethnographic work so interfered with his mission

that the Dakelh at Stuart Lake (where his permanent mission was) complained to

the bishop about him.[261] It is possible that complaints like this, and other

concerns about his ethnographic work and its conflict with his job as a

missionary, led to his removal in 1903.

As a missionary ethnographer Morice differed from his fellow

missionaries to the Tse Keh Nay in that he was influential in how the Tse Keh

Nay have been perceived through the ethnographic works he produced.

Furthermore, given that ethnic groups can be defined as having "a membership

which identifies itself, and is identified by others, as constituting a category

distinguishable from other categories of the same order,"[262] Morice by affecting

outsider and insider perceptions of Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity, affected Tse Keh

Nay ethnic identity itself. What is perhaps more disturbing is that regardless of

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[259] DLS, 177-199.

[260] BC Archives, (BCA) MS 0392 Frank Cyril Swannell Fonds, Box 12, File 76-7, "Aged Missionary Still Active."

[261] Mulhall, 168-174.

[262] Fredrik Barth, "Introduction," in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*, ed. Fredrik Barth (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1969), 11.

how accurate his ethnographic observations were, the very act of recording them

in a written format, gave them a permanence that oral traditions simply do not

have. Furthermore, their academic nature gave them an air of expertise compared

to the ad hoc fur trade records and journals. And finally, their permanence meant

that succeeding generations of Tse Keh Nay would also access them thereby

completing Morice's influence by influencing later Tse Keh Nay perceptions of

themselves.

Adding to this influence and sense of authority, and further compounding

the issue over the reliability of his observations, was the fact Morice, in an

attempt to get his works accepted and used by others, actively sought to promote

their accuracy. He did this by questioning the reliability of fur trader records.

This is clearly seen when in "The Fur Trader in Anthropology," he states:

> The supposed assertion of a fur trader who could never understand
> a word of its language, and shields himself behind the personality
> of a more or less scrupulous half-breed for much of what he
> writes.[263]

The ability to converse with his subjects in their own language, Morice claims,

allowed him to get to know them in ways a translator could not. As he states in

"On the Classification of the Dene Tribes:"

> It must be admitted that the opinion of such a scholar who
> personally knows the different tribes, should outweigh that even of
> travelers like Hearne and MacKenzie, who, for all their
> information, were entirely at the mercy of their interpreters and
> who were doomed occasionally to misunderstand and be
> misunderstood.[264]

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[263] Morice, "The Fur Trader in Anthropology," 61.
[264] Adrien Gabriel Morice, "On the Classification of the Dene Tribes," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada* 6 (1898): 76.

Morice considered himself such a scholar and as such he states in his

autobiography:

> One thing is certain. It was that mastery of the language he
> ultimately acquired which was to render him the king of the
> country, especially if we join that linguist achievement to his great
> impartiality and his astonishing penetration of the Indian character
> as well as the instinctive sense he had of the probable results of a
> measure, or, of a direction on his people.[265]

Adding in "The Fur Trader in Anthropology:"

> But who would today turn to the pages even of a La Salle or a
> Tonty, to mention only the French, if, having mastered the dialect
> of a native tribe, he could have at his disposal the services of its
> old men, the natural guardians of its history and legitimate keepers
> of its manners and customs?[266]

And finally beyond establishing himself as an authority due to his knowledge of

his subject's language, and all the benefits that arose from this knowledge, Morice

protected his knowledge by not teaching his subjects English, thereby making it

hard for anyone to challenge his observations and ethnographic writings.[267]

Nevertheless, questions remain regarding how well he knew the Tse Keh Nay

language, or indeed how often he had a chance to use this knowledge to further

his knowledge about the Tse Keh Nay themselves in light of the fact he

apparently rarely visited them.

One fur trader whom Morice challenged was Daniel William Harmon

who, as seen in the first chapter, was the first recorded individual to use an

anglicized version of Tse Keh Nay, Sicannies. Morice categorically denies

Harmon's record of Tse Keh Nay cremation, since in his own time the Tse Keh

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[265] DLS, 47

[266] Morice, "The Fur Trader in Anthropology," 60.

[267] Jennifer S.H. Brown, Review of *Will to Power: The Missionary Career of Father Morice*, *The American Historical Review* 93, no. 2 (1988): 530.

Nay did not practice it.[268]   He also rejects Harmon's claim to have encountered a

village of Tse Keh Nay speakers on the northeast end of Stuart Lake. Morice

claims that Harmon was mistaken to state the village was a Tse Keh Nay one,

arguing instead that at best there were a few Tse Keh Nay in an otherwise Carrier

village. As he states:

> As to the village north of Stuart lake which Harmon asserts was
> inhabited chiefly by Sicannies, the reader will find it marked a
> Koeztce on my ethnological map. Its name among the whites is
> Grand-Rapide, and it is an unimportant Carrier locality without
> even a chief…. Only the two brothers Stephen and Casimir had
> Sekanais blood in their veins, their father being related to that tribe
> – perhaps a full Sekanais.[269]

Indeed he even seems to ridicule Harmon at the end of the article over his

assertion of there being a Tse Keh Nay village, when he describes the reaction he

got from the Dakelh when he asked them about it. As he states:

> "A Sekanais village indeed!" they [the Dakelh] exclaimed with a
> scornful grimace, which I wish Mr. McLeod could have witnessed,
> "Where did you ever see a Sekanais village? The Sekanais are like
> the beasts of the forest: they do not have a single home, let alone a
> village, and are always on the move. Yet, in former times, there
> occasionally were a few of them at that place, because this was to
> them like an outlet, a landing point whither they would repair from
> their eastern hunting grounds to trade their pelts, and especially
> their dressed skins, with us. A few did, in course of time, settle
> there and intermarried with out women; but, of course Kœztce is
> and has ever been a Carrier village."[270]

What is interesting here is that while presenting himself as an academic authority,

as opposed to Harmon who was a fur trader recording his observations, Morice

seems to the cross the academic line by not only refuting Harmon and Harmon's

editor Malcolm McLeod, but apparently "rubbing it in" at the end of the article by

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[268] Morice, "The Fur Trader in Anthropology," 83-84.
[269] Ibid., 79-80.
[270] Ibid., 84.

asking the Dakelh themselves and then recording their reaction to the question, including a reference to a scornful grimace. In keeping with his claim that this knowledge of language gave him a better understanding of the Dene, Morice explains both mistakes as being due to the fact that Harmon did not know the language and was therefore dependent on others for translation.[271] Both instances are ironic, however, in that Harmon's accounts were based on his observations, just like Morice's own works. Furthermore, Harmon's account of Tse Keh Nay villages is supported by Tse Keh Nay oral tradition which makes reference to numerous pre-contact Tse Keh Nay villages.[272]

This rejection of Harmon's Tse Keh Nay village reveals one of the problems found in Morice's works. Rather than examining or interrogating other sources or observations, he categorically rejects them if they do not match his observations made years later. In this instance it seems that his conclusion is that because the Tse Keh Nay had no villages in his time, they must have never have had villages.[273] This conclusion, however, calls into question his description of the village located at Bear Lake, which he repeatedly says is within Tse Keh Nay territory, and yet is apparently Dakelh. [274] As he states in "Notes… on the Western Dene:"

> By right Bear's or Connolly lake and adjacent country belong to
> the Tse'kehne; but, as a matter of fact, the village which is situated
> close to the H.B.Co's fort is now the rendezvous of representatives
> of three different tribes, namely: the Tse'kehne who periodically

[271] Ibid., 61.

[272] Ray Izony, interviewed by author, Prince George, BC, 23 September, 2008; Gordon Pierre, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 17 September, 2008.

[273] DSL, 39-40, 126-127; Adrien Gabriel Morice, "The Western Dene: Their Manners and Customs," *Proceedings of the Canadian Institute* 7, no. 1 (1889): 165.

[274] Morice, *The History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia*, 56, 135, 178.

congregate there for trading purposes and have no permanent
residence; the Carriers, a band of whom now inhabit the village
and hunt in the vicinity of the lake with the consent of the former;
and the 3tnas or Kitiksons from the Skeena river who are
considered as mere intruders and as such live there only on
sufferance.[275]

What is troubling about this quote is that this clear separation of all three First

Nations seems to suggest there was no intermixing between the three in village

itself, or that if there was one was automatically Dakelh if one lived permanently

in the village, Tse Keh Nay if one periodically lived in the village, and Gitxsan if

one was viewed as an intruder. Furthermore, his statement that the Dakelh

"'now'" inhabit the village,"[276] seems to suggest the village existed prior to the

Dakelh residing in it, and therefore raises the question of who built it, and who the

original inhabitants of it were. Indeed, it seems conceivable from this quotation

that the Tse Keh Nay built the village for their periodic rendezvous, but did not

reside in it year round, and that the Dakelh merely moved into it, and became

permanent residents there. Not only does this show that Morice's observations

are problematic because of his biases, but it also might explain why Bear Lake's

successor First Nation, Takla Lake, are often not included in lists of Tse Keh Nay

First Nations. After all if only the village dwellers remain, and if the Tse Keh

Nay had no villages, then they (the village dwellers) cannot be a Tse Keh Nay

based on Morice's assertions. Either way it serves as a warning to those who

would give Morice's works a greater weight than fur trade records because of

Morice's apparent academic stature. Like any other observer, Morice had biases

that influenced his views.

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[275] Morice, "Notes," 26-27.
[276] Morice, "Notes," 27.

Morice's ethnographic observations were also influenced by his background as a missionary. Like other missionaries, he saw First Nations as being cowardly, materialistic, dishonest, unreliable, and opportunistic.[277] Understandably, views like this prevented Morice from even considering Tse Keh Nay world views, and led to the devaluation and simplification of their cultural tenets, as well as a failure to recognize their adaptive capabilities.[278] Added to these views was the fact Morice was unaware of his own biases and how they affected his work.[279] This is clearly seen in the strange dichotomy found in his article "The Western Dene." In it he states:

> I think I could, by ignoring some necessary exceptions, give them credit for relative morality, great honesty, intense fondness of their offspring and a general gentleness of disposition, not excluding, however, occasional freaks of irascibility. But to qualify these lines, and given their true portrait, I should immediately add that they are prone to lying, addicted to gambling, naturally selfish, cowardly, and at times very lazy, especially the stronger sex.[280]

This way of always qualifying these apparent images of the noble savage with their sinfulness is also found in his autobiography. In it, specifically dealing with the Tse Keh Nay, he states:

> The Sekanais are a quite different type: the unspoiled children of the mountains, pure as the air of their fastnesses. As they are always on the move in quest of venison game, and as, on the other hand, they travel in groups of related individuals, breaches of morals are almost unheard of among them. They are hard to reach, however, and, like all primitives, they are great gamblers and not a little superstitious.[281]

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[277] Terrance L. Craig, *The Missionary Lives: A Study in Canadian Missionary Biography and Autobiography* (New York: Brill, 1997), 47-48.
[278] Ibid., 47-48.
[279] Mulhall, 101.
[280] Morice, "The Western Dene," 118.
[281] DLS, 50.

Clearly, Morice's education as an Oblate (which included concepts of original sin

and inherently sinful nature of humans) influenced his view of the Dene cultures

he worked with. And by describing these cultures in such negative terms, Morice

was not only reflecting missionary views, but also justifying missionary

activities.[282] This clear bias, however, created problems for him as an

ethnographer, who was supposed to examine subject cultures in unbiased

objective terms.

Morice's missionary background not only biased his ethnographic

writings, it also inhibited his ethnographic perspective. In an era when Darwinist

anthropology, with its basis of knowledge consisting solely of observations, was

replacing Enlightenment ethnology, Morice fell into neither camp.[283] For

example, although some of his popular works contained the image of the noble

savage, (a tenet of the Enlightenment since Rousseau) the image is notably absent

in his academic works, or as I have shown, qualified by the imperfections of the

group or person in question.[284] This shows that academically, at least, he rejected

the concept. Similarly, he also rejected the polygenesis of the Darwinists arguing

the Dene were originally Israelites and had become more uncivilized the further

they traveled from the Holy Land.[285] Aware theories like this could make his

works unacceptable to Darwinists Morice mentioned them sparingly or else

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[282] Craig, 28; George W. Stocking Jr., *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: The Free Press, 1987), 88.

[283] Jane Samson, "Ethnology and Theology: Nineteenth-Century Mission Dilemmas in the South Pacific," in *Christian Missions and the Enlightenment*, ed. Brian Stanley (Richmond: Curzon Press Ltd., 2001), 100, 108; Stocking, 239, 247-248.

[284] Bryan Magee, "Rousseau: Critic of Civilization," in *The Story of Philosophy: A Concise Introduction to the World's Greatest Thinkers and Their Ideas* (New York: DK Publishing, 2001), 127-128; Mulhall, 99; Samson, 108.

[285] Morice, *The History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia*, 7; Morice, "The Western Dene," 162; Samson, 109; Stocking 152, 154.

relegated them to his footnotes.[286] Nevertheless, despite not falling into either

camp, Morice's observations are valuable as ethnographic information.

The most important thing, to keep in mind when considering Morice's

ethnographic works, is the central importance he places on language as an ethnic

boundary. In "The Unity of Speech among the Northern and Southern Dene" he

states, "But we must not forget that in America language is the safest guide to

racial differentiation."[287] Later discussing the Denes he states in "Notes… on the

Western Dene," that:

> How is it then that tribes of aborigines occupying so widely
> separated territories and so utterly dissimilar from a psychological,
> technological, sociological and mythological standpoint can be
> classed under one single denomination of Denes? The answer is in
> every mouth: this is owing to linguistic analogy. Language,
> therefore, is the trait-d'union which unites into one homogenous
> body such apparently heterogeneous elements. Through it we are
> certain that the same blood flows in their veins, and that they are
> the children of a common father. Whoever he may have been.[288]

It is for this reason that when identifying Tse Keh Nay subgroups, he includes the

Dunneza (Beaver) and Tsuu T'ina (Sarcee).[289] As he states:

> Let me only remark that in that list I classed the Beaver Indians as
> a separate tribe merely to conform to the long established custom
> of the traders and missionaries. But as in America, Ethnography is
> based chiefly, if not entirely, on Philology, I must explain that,
> from a philological standpoint, the Beavers (*Tsa'tenne* in Carrier)
> are genuine Tse'kehne. The idiomatic difference noticeable in the
> speech of these two artificial divisions are not any more
> pronounced than those which exist between the dialects of the
> Lower and the Upper Carriers. The reason the Beavers go by a
> distinctive name even among their congeners is that, being citizens

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[286] Mulhall, 101.
[287] Adrien Gabriel Morice, "The Unity of Speech among the Northern and Southern Dene,"
American Anthropologist 9, no. 4 (1907): 726.
[288] Morice, "Notes," 21.
[289] Ibid., 16, 28-31.

of the plains, they cannot with propriety be called Tse'kehne or "Inhabitants of the Rocks" viz.: the Rocky Mountains.[290]

Why he would conform to fur trade practice, when at other times he rejects fur traders such as Daniel Harmon for being wrong, is unclear. Morice continues:

> For the perfect completeness of our aboriginal census, we should add to the above the Sarcees, a band of Tse'kehne who, upon a difference arising from a trivial offense, separated, not very long ago from the main body of the Dene nation and were adopted by the Blackfeet, an Algonquin tribe, among whom they have since lived, while keeping their linguistic autonomy. They do not number more than 100 souls.[291]

Furthermore, he equates the Rocky Mountain Indians (who are differentiated from both the Tse Keh Nay and Dunneza in the fur trade records) to the Tse Keh Nay.[292] Both decisions, however, seem too inclusive, especially when one takes into account the conflict between the Tse Keh Nay, the Dunneza and Rocky Mountain Indians mentioned in the fur trade records.[293] In fact, Morice mentions the Tse Keh Nay-Dunneza conflict in his book *The History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia*, when he states:

> By that time, however, the Sekanais themselves were in no happy position, owing to a circumstance which none of them could have

[290] Ibid., 11.
[291] Ibid., 11-12.
[292] DLS, *Fifty Years in Western Canada,* 39
[293] Samuel Black, *A Journal of a Voyage from Rocky Mountain Portage in Peace River to the Sources of Finlays Branch and North West Ward in Summer 1824*, ed. E.E. Rich (London: The Hudson's Bay Record Society, 1955), 123; Simon Fraser, "First Journal of Simon Fraser from April 12th to July 18th 1806," in *The Letters and Journals of Simon Fraser: 1806-1808*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2007), 195, 197; Daniel William Harmon, *Harmon's Journal: 1800-1819*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb (Victoria: New Caledonia House Publishing, 2006), 114-115; HBCA, B.119/a/1, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1823-1824, 6 October 1823, page 13-14; HBCA, B.119/b/1, Correspondence Books – McLeod Lake 1823-1824, Letter 11: From James McDougall, Esq., Fort Saint James, 17 November, 1823, page 7-8; HBCA, B.119/b/1, Letter 136: To William MacKintosh Esq., McLeod's Lake, Western Caledonia 14 January 1824, page 99-100; HBCA, B.119/b/1, Letter 138: To Mr. Francis Heron, page 101; HBCA, B.119/b/1, Letter 139: From Samuel Black Esq., R.M. Portage 15 December, 1823, page 101-103; HBCA, B.119/b/1, Letter 140: To Samuel Black, Esq., McLeod's Lake, Western Caledonia 14 January 1824, page 103-105.

> foreseen. Aborigines of the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains, they had been gradually driven into the recesses of that lofty range, where they had acquired their name, and finally to the west thereof, by a section of their own tribe now constituted into a distinct branch of the great Dene family, the Beaver Indians, who many years had been at enmity with their parent stock.[294]

This claim that they constituted their own distinct branch seems to contradict his previous statement in "Notes… on the Western Dene." It would appear therefore that either this is another example of following fur trader practice, or a result of this being a later work when he had more knowledge about both groups. Either way it raises questions regarding his decision to blur ethnic lines between the Tse Keh Nay and their eastern neighbors, based simply on linguistic similarities.

Whereas Morice blurs the line between the Tse Keh Nay and their eastern neighbors, he is more definitive in dividing them from their western neighbors. This is again due to Morice's linguistic classification: Morice classifies the Tse Keh Nay as either Eastern or Intermediate Dene, and therefore distinct from their western neighbors the Western Dene.[295] This can be seen in his "The Fur Trader in Anthropology," where he states:

> As to the Sekanais, they are not even western but eastern Dene, even though some of them now have their hunting grounds to the west of the Rocky Mountains.[296]

What distinguishes them from the western Dene is language and not location. This is clearly seen in his article "The Western Denes," were he states:

> Their lexical differences on the contrary are so wide that the Carriers and the Sekanais, though geographically neighbours, can

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[294] Morice, *The History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia*, 29-30.
[295] Morice, "The Fur Trader in Anthropology," 64, 71-72; Morice, "The Western Dene," 113.
[296] Morice, "The Fur Trader in Anthropology," 64.

scarcely understand a word of each other languages unless they have previously learned it by personal intercourse.[297]

This distinction, however, is problematic due to the mixed populations not only at Bear Lake, but also apparently at Harmon's village of Kœztce.

Based on his observations Morice also gives a definition of Tse Keh Nay territoriality. This is important to any study of Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity due to the possible correspondence between territorial and ethnic boundaries.[298] Morice's information regarding Tse Keh Nay territoriality, however, reflects his own geographic base at Stuart Lake. This is seen in his article the "The Fur Trader in Anthropology," where he states:

> There are, of course, some Sekanais who are north of some Carriers. But, taken as an ethnological unit, the territory of the former is, I repeat, just east of the Stuart Lake Carriers, those I have always had in mind when I mentioned the tribe. "The greater part" of them live not only east of the Carriers, but east of the Rocky mountains, where lie their original haunts.[299]

Further expanding this definition of territoriality he states in his book *The History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia*:

> From north to south these are: the Sekanais, on the west slope of the Rocky Mountains and throughout the adjoining territory, almost as far the 53rd degree of latitude.[300]

This definition of Tse Keh Nay territoriality, however, differs dramatically from that given in "The Fur Trader in Anthropology." It also differs from Tse Keh Nay territoriality defined in "The Western Dene," where he states:

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[297] Morice, "The Western Dene," 113-114.
[298] Barth, 15.
[299] Morice, "The Fur Trader in Anthropology," 79.
[300] Morice, *The History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia*, 4.

> Tsekenne, more commonly called, Sekanais who roam over the
> Rocky Mountains on either slope and the adjacent forests and
> plains from about 54° to 60°, north latitude.[301]

Given that *The History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia* is popular,

whereas the others are strictly academic this might explain the difference, or it

could simply be due to the fact one deals strictly with the interior of British

Columbia, whereas the others have a broader orientation. Nevertheless, the

question remains as to why one would say the western slope, whereas the others

would say both the western and eastern. Morice is more definitive, however, in

defining the posts which are in Tse Keh Nay territory. He states in *Fifty Years in*

Western Canada:

> They yearly rendezvous, and are visited by the priest, at McLeod's
> Lake, the very first post established within British Columbia, and
> farther north, at Bear Lake, where stood Fort Connolly of the early
> traders, without counting Fort Grahame, on the Finlay, which
> never had any church.[302]

He qualifies this last statement by stating in *The History of the Northern Interior*

of British Columbia that "Fort Connolly… was established in 1826 for the benefit

of the northern Sekanais Indians who roam in the vicinity of the very Bear

Lake,"[303] later adding that "Bear Lake is within Sekanais territory, and is

frequently visited to this day by the Finlay River Indians."[304] From these two

statements it would appear that the Finlay River Indians are northern Tse Keh

Nay, a claim confirmed in his article "Notes… on the Western Dene," where he

classifies the three Tse Keh Nay subgroups from Fort Connelly and Finlay Forks

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[301] Morice, "The Western Denes," 112.
[302] DLS, 39-40.
[303] Morice, *The History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia*, 135.
[304] Ibid., 56.

north in relation to their position north of all the other Tse Keh Nay subgroups, and states the subgroup furthest north trades at Fort Grahame.[305] This is contradicted, however, in his autobiography where he states that "Fort Grahame, on the Finlay, [was] the rendezvous of the Eastern Sekanais."[306] Despite these apparent contradictions, if one takes into account all the ethnographic observations Morice made about the Tse Keh Nay, his concept of Tse Keh Nay territoriality would include an area from the 53° latitude along the Rockies (so just north of Mount Robson, Jasper and the Yellowhead Pass) to north along the Rockies to the 60° latitude (or in the Watson Lake area), with Bear Lake to the west and an unclear boundary on the east.

One thing Morice does, which the fur traders do not (unless you count all the subgroups in Fraser's journal that were only later perceived as being Tse Keh Nay) is provide a list of perceived constituent Tse Keh Nay bands. He names nine: the Yutsut'qenne, the Tse'kehneaz, the Totat'qenne, the Tsat'qenne, and the Tse'taut'qenne, the Sarcees, the Saschut'qenne, the Otzənne, and the Tselohne, as well as gives a description of each band's territoriality.[307] This territoriality is not exclusive or definitive, however, and as Morice states:

> Though each band had traditional hunting grounds, the limits of these are but vaguely defined… Therefore no very strict boundaries can be assigned to the following tribal subdivisions.[308]

The first two seem to correspond with the present day McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay. The Yutsut'qenne according to Morice inhabited an area bounded by the

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[305] Morice, "Notes," 29, 31.
[306] DLS, 126.
[307] Morice, "Notes," 30-31.
[308] Ibid., 28.

Salmon River to the west and southwest, to McLeod Lake to the north and along the Fraser River until it crosses the 53°30' latitude in the vicinity of Goat River.[309] The Tse'kehneaz inhabited the area to the east of the Yutsut'qenne to the midrange of the Rockies.[310] The next three seem to correspond with the present day Dunneza. The Totat'qenne inhabited the eastern slopes of Rockies and plains to the east of these to the British Columbia-Alberta border.[311] The Tsat'qenne or the Dunneza inhabited the plains to the east of the Rockies, and south of the Peace River.[312] The Tse'taut'qenne inhabited the area east of the Rockies and north of the Peace River.[313] These three are followed by the Sarcees, (Tsuu T'ina) who inhabited the area east of the Rockies at about the 51° latitude among the Niitsitapi (Blackfoot).[314] So far Morice has dealt with the southern Tse Keh Nay below the 56° latitude (which is where Finlay Forks was). North of this line we find three groups that seem to correspond with the Fort Grahame and Bear Lake Tse Keh Nay, or the present day Tsay Keh Dene, Kwadacha (Fort Ware) and Takla Lake First Nations.   First there is the Saschut'qenne who inhabited the area around Bear Lake and to the north.[315] Next there is the Otzǝnne who inhabited the area north of the Sachschut'qenne west of the Rockies, but south of the Tselohne who inhabited the area around Fort Grahame and to the north.[316] Taken together with the information found in Morice's other works about the Tse Keh Nay we can see an territory that extends from the 60° latitude

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[309] Ibid., 28.
[310] Ibid., 28-29.
[311] Ibid., 29.
[312] Ibid., 29.
[313] Ibid., 29.
[314] Ibid., 29.
[315] Ibid., 29, 31.
[316] Ibid., 29, 31.

to the north to the 53° latitude to the south (excluding the Tsuu T'ina at the 51°

latitude) with the Salmon River to the southwest and Bear Lake to the west, and a

still an undefined eastern boundary.

Finally Morice is among the first to give a sense of the total numbers of

the Tse Keh Nay. This is problematic, however, because as a nomadic group one

could never be sure if one was examining a small part of the Tse Keh Nay or the

majority. As Morice states in his 1930 autobiography *Fifty Years in Western*

Canada:

> The Sekanais, whose various bands, difficult to count because so
> nomadic, may have formed an aggregate of 380, if not more,
> counting those who frequented Fort Grahame but had no church.[317]

This number is greater than a previously mentioned estimate given in 1889 in

"The Western Denes," where Morice states, "At present there are not more than

250 of them [the Sekanais] in British Columbia."[318] Whether this difference in

numbers is a result of an increase in population, an increase in knowledge about

the Tse Keh Nay, or because the first number includes Tse Keh Nay groups

outside of British Columbia (the Dunneza or Tsuu T'ina) is unclear. What is clear

is that it seems to contradict his claim that "the Sekanais had been decreasing ever

since they had been known of the whites."[319] Nevertheless, by helping establish a

population estimate for the Tse Keh Nay, Morice finally gave people a sense of

how big the Tse Keh Nay First Nation was.

Missionary perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay supplemented, and indeed

often supported, fur trader perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay, despite the fact

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[317] DLS, 40.
[318] Morice, "The Western Denes," 112.
[319] DLS, 129.

Morice claimed his observations were superior to those of fur traders because of his knowledge of Tse Keh Nay. For example, in keeping with his emphasis on the importance of language Morice claimed language was the key indicator of ethnicity and that based on this the Tse Keh Nay and Dunneza, as well as the Tsuu T'ina were a single First Nation. This statement is in line with statements made by Samuel Black that the Tse Keh Nay and Dunneza (Beaver) differed little in regards to language, and by Daniel Harmon that they were once a single ethnic group. Similarly, Morice's definition of Tse Keh Nay northern and southern boundaries being the 60° and 53° along the Rockies, bound by Bear Lake on the west, and Salmon River on the southwest, and with an undefined boundary on the east, although less specific then those found in fur trade records (particularly in regards to the eastern boundary) more or less matches it if you disregard his claim the Dunneza are Tse Keh Nay, as the fur traders do. Moving beyond merely expanding on, or agreeing to, fur trader perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay, Morice gives a summary of nine Tse Keh Nay constituent bands, along with their respective territory. Similarly, he is among the first to give an estimate of the total Tse Keh Nay population. This similarity should not be surprising as both groups, regardless of their different relationship to the Tse Keh Nay, were describing the same First Nation.

Morice's observations, however, are not without their problems. Although Morice accords the Tse Keh Nay a broad ethnicity based on linguistic patterns or similarities, he grants them little political autonomy by rejecting the very notion of Tse Keh Nay political structures or even villages. In this he entirely ignores

Tse Keh Nay traditions that missionaries were simply filling a role in the Tse Keh Nay society replacing political structures destroyed by European contact. This difference between tradition and Morice's observations raise some doubts as to how familiar Morice was with Tse Keh Nay society beyond their language. Indeed, Morice seldom visited the Tse Keh Nay. Most important, however, for the purposes of this thesis is that Morice, like the fur traders, accorded the Tse Keh Nay a broad ethnicity or group boundary. Even while claiming superiority over fur trade accounts of the Tse Keh Nay, based on his linguistic skills, Morice generally supported fur trade perceptions of Tse Keh Nay ethnicity.

Chapter Three:
Treaties and the Regionalization of Tse Keh Nay Identity

Whereas fur traders and missionaries can be considered agents of empire, it was not until the treaty and reserve period that the Tse Keh Nay (Sekani) began to interact with the colonial state directly. In the case of the treaties these interactions are often perceived today as being nation to nation. This raises the question, however, of what is meant by nation, particularly in regards to the Tse Keh Nay. During the fur trade and missionary periods the Tse Keh Nay were perceived both as an ethnic whole, and as regional bands associated with fur trade posts. And although the fur trade and missionary perspectives noted both, the government dealt only with regional bands during the treaty and reserve period.

Thus far the Tse Keh Nay have been involved in two treaty processes, the numbered treaties with Treaty No. 8, and the ongoing modern comprehensive treaty process. During the early treaty process, the Tse Keh Nay were referred to as a unified whole in the order-in-council authorizing Treaty No. 8, but in the actual treaty making were treated along regional lines.[320] This represents a shift in emphasis in Tse Keh Nay-European relations away from the wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity emphasized in the fur trade and missionary periods to a regional Tse Keh Nay identity. This regionalization of the Tse Keh Nay might explain why the Tse Keh Nay communities in the modern period have chosen to follow their own agenda in regards to treaties, and land claims. It could represent both an internalization of government policy during the early treaty process

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[320] Library and Archives Canada, (LAC) RG 10, Volume 3848, File 75, 236-1, Treaty 8 – Treaty Negotiations between the Indians Affairs Department and the Native People 1891-1899, Extract from a Report of the Committee of the Honourable the Privy Council approved by His Excellency on the 27th June 1898, P.C. No. 1703.

period, and a strategic decision seeing regional claims as more effective than wider Tse Keh Nay ones.

For the Tse Keh Nay, the treaty process stretches from Treaty No. 8 in the 1890s to the present day with the modern comprehensive treaty process in British Columbia. This differs from most other British Columbian First Nations, where the treaty making process is relatively modern, and generally began in the 1990s. This is because British Columbian treaty policy prior to, and following, the union with Canada was unique from the rest of Canada where treaties were signed prior to intensive settlement. Instead, in British Columbia the colonial and later provincial governments simply chose to deny Aboriginal title in the colony/province and appropriated Aboriginal lands. This is important for an understanding of the treaty process among the Tse Keh Nay because the vast majority of the Tse Keh Nay were affected by this policy.

The next treaty policy to affect the Tse Keh Nay was that found in Treaty No. 8 and formulated by the federal government. It emphasized a regional Tse Keh Nay identity because not all of the Tse Keh Nay west of the Rockies were included in it. Indeed, during the initial signing and adhesion period only the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay signed an adhesion in 1910. Besides the separate treatment of Tse Keh Nay groups under Treaty No. 8, the almost complete inclusion of the Dunneza (Beaver) juxtaposed the two ethnic groups. In this way Treaty No. 8 effectively ended the debate found in the fur trade and missionary records over what the relationship between the Dunneza and Tse Keh Nay was and whether or not they were a single ethnic group/First Nation. The next adhesion to Treaty

No. 8 to include a Tse Keh Nay group occurred in 1999 with McLeod Lake adhesion, which included the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay. Despite this, like the other three "Tse Keh Nay" communities (Kwadacha/Fort Ware, Tsay Keh Dene, and Takla Lake), McLeod Lake has also chosen to pursue the modern comprehensive treaty process separate from the other three. In the case of McLeod Lake and Tsay Keh Dene they have chosen to do so as independent First Nations, while Kwadacha and Takla Lake have chosen to do so as part of larger First Nation groupings: the Kaska Dena Council for Kwadacha and the Carrier-Sekani Tribal Council for Takla Lake. For all of these reasons I argue that the treaty period strengthened regional Tse Keh Nay identities at the expense of a wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity.

During the numbered treaty process regional Tse Keh Nay identities were strengthened by the ill-defined boundaries of Treaty No. 8, and the fact not all Tse Keh Nay were included in the treaty. This in turn led to the creation of two types of Tse Keh Nay, those with treaty rights, and those without, a categorization that corresponded to those Tse Keh Nay east of the Rockies, and those west of the Rockies. Later, during the interlude between the numbered treaties and the modern comprehensive treaty process, this reinforcement of regional identity was caused by the McLeod Lake adhesion to Treaty No. 8, which (given the apparent disappearance of the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay who signed Treaty No. 8) succeeded in renewing the dichotomy of non-treaty and treaty Tse Keh Nay. West of the Rockies this now corresponded to those in the north versus those in the south. And finally in the modern comprehensive treaty process it is caused by

the decision of the four Tse Keh Nay communities: McLeod Lake, Tsay Keh Dene, Kwadacha and Takla Lake, to pursue their own separate agendas.

To examine these issues and processes I begin by looking at early British Columbian Aboriginal policy, in particular comparing that of James Douglas with his successors. This set the stage not only for Treaty No. 8, but also for the modern comprehensive treaty process. Next, I examine Treaty No. 8 in particular looking not only at the question of what territory it was supposed to include, but also which First Nations it was to include. I then look at the affect the treaty had on the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay who signed it, as well as on Tse Keh Nay-Dunneza relations. Of particular note here are the perceptions of Treaty No. 8 among the modern day Tse Keh Nay at Tsay Keh Dene. Next, I look at the 1999 McLeod Lake Adhesion, the reasons behind it. Finally, I look at the modern comprehensive treaty process, in particular examining the possible reasons for the each Tse Keh Nay community pursuing its own agenda in it, as well as the implications this might have on wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity.

British Columbia treaty history prior to the modern comprehensive treaty process is summed up neatly by Tony Penikett who states in *Reconciliation: First Nations Treaty Making in British Columbia*:

> Between 1850 and 1854, James Douglas, the colony's first governor negotiated fourteen local treaties with tribal groups on Vancouver Island. In 1899 the Dene in the northeast corner of British Columbia signed Treaty 8 with Canada. One hundred years later, at the end of the twentieth century, the Nisga'a Nation on the north coast concluded the province's first modern treaty. But that's it.[321]

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[321] Please note James Douglas was not the first governor of the Colony of Vancouver Island, but was preceded by the ineffectual Richard Blanshard. Tony Penikett, *Reconciliation: First Nations Treaty Making in British Columbia* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2006), 5.

This is important to bear in mind as the vast majority of the Tse Keh Nay were

under this policy until the modern comprehensive treaty process. At first glance

this might seem to be a large number of treaties for a single province, (Alberta has

five treaties covering its territory for example). Given the fact that the Douglas

covered only 358 square miles on Vancouver Island near Victoria, Nanaimo and

Fort Rupert, while Treaty No. 8 includes only the northeast corner of British

Columbia, these treaties leave the vast majority of British Columbia and its First

Nations not dealt with via treaty.[322] This is further problematized by fact that:

> At the time of contact, the Indians of this area were among the
> world's most distinctive peoples. Fully one-third of the native
> population of Canada lived here… Here, too, was the greatest
> linguistic diversity in the country, with two dozen languages
> spoken, belonging to seven of the eleven language families
> represented in Canada.[323]

This lack of treaties differed from the general policy followed in the rest of

Canada. Indeed, the Canadian government seemed quite proud of its history of

treaty making as is seen in the 1922 report of the Deputy Superintendent General

of Indian Affairs which states:

> From the time of the first British settlement in New England, the
> title of the Indians to lands occupied by them was conceded and
> compensation was made to them for the surrender of their hunting
> grounds. The Crown has always reserved to itself the exclusive
> right to treat with the Indians for the surrender of their lands, and

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[322] Devlin Gailus Barristers and Solicitors, "Case Overview," in *Willson et al. v. HMTQ et al.
(Western Boundary of Treaty No. 8)*
http://www.devlingailus.com/litigation/Westernboundary/Case_Overview.pdf (accessed 13 July,
2009), 1; John D. Leslie, "Preface," in *British Columbia Indian Treaties in Historical Perspectives*
(Ottawa: Research Branch, Corporate Policy, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1981), i.
[323] Wilson Duff, *The Indian History of British Columbia: The Impact of the White Man*, new ed.
(Victoria: Royal British Columbia Museum, 1997), 15.

this rule which was confirmed by the Royal Proclamation of October 7, 1763, is still adhered to.[324]

What then can explain this apparent dichotomy between general British Imperial and Canadian Aboriginal policy, and British Columbian Aboriginal policy?

The "official" answer is a lack of money during James Douglas' tenure as governor and a change in policy among his successors. Because of this lack of funds, Douglas abandoned his initial treaty policy due to a lack of funding from the imperial and local governments in favor of establishing Aboriginal defined reserves, and allowing Aboriginals to pre-empt land like other settlers.[325] His successors cancelled this alternative to treaty, but rather than renewing the treaty process, they simply denied Aboriginal title in British Columbia.[326] This would remain British Columbian Aboriginal policy until a series of court cases, beginning in 1970 and ending in 1997, established that Aboriginal title had existed in British Columbia and presumably still did.[327]

As mentioned, this policy was at odds with wider Canadian Aboriginal policy where First Nations were treated with prior to intensive settlement. This was the reason for the numbered treaties in the Canadian prairies. Treaty No. 8 is unique among the numbered treaties as it includes part of British Columbia. This caused a conundrum in which one level of government, the federal, recognized Aboriginal title in northeast British Columbia, while the other, the provincial, did not recognize it at all. It raised questions regarding why Treaty No. 8 encroached

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[324] LAC, RG 10, Volume 8594, File 1/1-11-1, Treaties – Generally 1916-1947, *Sessional Paper*, No. 14, Part 1, A. 1923, 13 George V, "Report of the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs for the Year Ended March 31, 1922," 7.
[325] BC Treaty Commission, (BCTC) *Why, in this Day and Age, are We Negotiating Treaties in BC?* (Vancouver: BC Treaty Commission, 2000), 1; Duff, 85-86; Penikett, 75.
[326] BCTC, *Why*, 1.
[327] Ibid., *Why*, 1-3.

into British Columbia at all, and why, depending on how you define its western boundary, the Tse Keh Nay are either theoretically included or excluded.

The catalyst for Treaty No. 8 was the Klondike Gold Rush.[328] This was not because the area included the Klondike, but rather because of the influx of Europeans trying to reach the Klondike from the prairies was disrupting local Aboriginal life and raising the possibilities of Aboriginal warfare.[329] This is seen in the order in council which approved the creation of the treaty, P.C. No. 1703.[330] It states:

> On a memorandum dated 18th June 1898 from the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, stating that a report was received some time ago from the Commissioner of the North West Mounted Police, as to the advisability of steps being taken for the making of a Treaty with the Indians occupying the proposed line of route from Edmonton to Pelly River. He intimated that these Indians – though few in number – were turbulent and liable to give trouble should isolated parties of miners or traders interfere with what they considered their vested rights; that the Halfbreeds of Lesser Slave Lake showed dissatisfaction with the appearance of the Police in that District, and that the situation thus created would be made more difficult by the presence of the numerous parties who had come into the country and were scattered at various points between the Lake and the Peace River; that the Beaver Indians of the Peace

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[328] Of course there were other reasons including the potential of oil and minerals present in the treaty area, the expansion of railways in the treaty area, the arrival of settlers in the area due to this and overland routes to the Klondike goldfields and the reported unease of the area's First Nations towards these incursions into their territory. Indeed many of them had desired a treaty as early as 1880s due these incursions as well as the hardship they were faced at the time, and their need for government aid. Richard Daniel, "The Spirit and Terms of Treaty Eight," in *The Spirit of the Alberta Indian Treaties*, 3rd ed., ed. Richard T. Price (Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press, 1999), 55-66; Arthur Ray, "Treaty 8: A British Columbia Anomaly," *BC Studies*, no. 123 (1999): 7-34.

[329] Indeed it was feared that if the treaty was left to late this influx of prospectors would lead to the discovery of the regions mineral potential by its resident First Nations, which would make the extinguishment of title harder for the federal government. LAC, RG 10, Volume 3848, File 75, 236-1, Treaty 8 – Treaty Negotiations between the Indian Affairs Department and the Native People 1891-1899, Letter to the Hon. Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior, Ottawa from James Walker, Commissioner, Calgary 30 Nov. 1897.

[330] Robert Irwin states in "Treaty 8: An Anomaly Revisited," that PC 1703 approved the creation of the treaty, while PC 2749 merely informed British Columbia of the potential that the treaty would include parts of the province east of the Rockies. Robert Irwin, "Treaty 8: An Anomaly Revisited," *BC Studies* no. 127 (2000): 89-91.

and Nelson Rivers as well as the Sicamies and Nihamies Indians,
were inclined to be troublesome, and that the Halfbreeds were
likely to influence them in that direction.
The Minister states that he caused a copy of the Commissioner's
report to be transmitted to the Indian Commissioner at Winnipeg,
who thereupon reported that the extension of Governmental
authority to the Upper Slave Lake and Peace River Districts before
the relinquishment of the aboriginal title had been regarded more
or less jealously by the Indians and by the large Half-breed
population of the Lesser Slave Lake District. He expressed the
conviction that the time had come when the Indian and Halfbreed
population of the tract of territory north of that ceded to the Crown
under Treaty No. 6, and partially occupied by whites either as
miners or traders, and over which the Government exercised some
measure of authority, should be treated with for the relinquishment
of their claim to territorial ownership.[331]

One of the Pelly River routes mentioned in this order-in-council went through the

heart of Tse Keh Nay territory, running "from Edmonton, Alberta, to the Finlay

River (via the Peace) and then up the Finlay and Fox Rivers to Sifton Pass and

down the Muddy [Kechika River] to the vicinity of Deadwood Lake. From here

the trail leading to Chee House ran to McDame Creek where river travel could be

resumed [down the Dease River]."[332] It is for this reason that the Sicamas and

Nihames (today's Tse Keh Nay and Kaska) were included in the order-in-council

authorizing the treaty, and given the location of the route west of the Rockies, this

would seem to suggest the treaty was meant to include parts of British Columbia

west of the Rockies.[333] This, however, raises the question of why the federal

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[331] LAC, RG 10, Volume 3848, File 75, 236-1, Treaty 8 – Treaty Negotiations between the Indian
Affairs Department and the Native People 1891-1899, Extract from a Report of the Committee of
the Honourable the Privy Council approved by His Excellency on the 27th June 1898, P.C. No.
1703.
[332] J. Bruce Melville, *Report: Indian Reserves and Indian Treaty Problems in Northeastern British
Columbia* (Vancouver: British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority, 1982), 1.17.
[333] In his work Melville mistakenly cites P.C. 2749 as the order-in-council authorizing Treaty No.
8. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this citation both P.C. 1703 and P.C. 2749 stated "the
proposed line of route from Edmonton to Pelly River." LAC, RG 10, Volume 3848, File 75, 236-
1, Treaty 8 – Treaty Negotiations between the Indian Affairs Department and the Native People

government would purpose to treat with a First Nation exclusively found in British Columbia on the apparent basis of a trail that is for the most part west of the Rockies in their territory. This is particularly, puzzling given the fact the province denied that Natives possessed any Aboriginal title at the time.

The federal government's proposal to include northeast British Columbia was controversial and the federal government knew it. Nevertheless it appears that they felt the pros outweighed the cons. As Richard Daniel has pointed out the original 1891 proposal for the treaty excluded British Columbia.[334] This changed for three reasons: the first was the overland route to the Klondike Gold Rush; the second was the knowledge that the British Columbia-Northwest Territory border was not an ethnic boundary; and the third was the perception that the mountains were an ethnic boundary. This is seen in the order-in-council advising British Columbia of the creation of the treaty, (P.C. No. 2749) which states:

> As the Indians to the West of the Mountains are quite distinct from those whose habitat is on the eastern side thereof, no difficulty ever arose in consequence of the different methods of dealing with the Indians on either side of the Mountains. But there can be no doubt that had the division line between the Indians been artificial instead of natural, such difference in treatment would have been fraught with grave danger and been the fruitful source of much trouble to both the Dominion and the Provincial Governments.
> The Minister submits that it will neither be polite nor practicable to exclude from the treaty Indians whose habitat is in the territory lying between the height of land and the eastern boundary of British Columbia as they know nothing of the artificial boundary,

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1891-1899, Extract from a Report of the Committee of the Honourable the Privy Council approved by His Excellency on the 27th June 1898, P.C. No. 1703; LAC, RG 10, Volume 3848, File 75, 236-1, Treaty 8 – Treaty Negotiations between the Indian Affairs Department and the Native People 1891-1899, Extract from a Report of the Committee of the Honourable the Privy Council approved by His Excellency on the 6th December 1898, P.C. No. 2749; Melville, 2.17.
[334] Daniel, 60; LAC, RG 10, Volume 3848, File 75, 236-1, Treaty 8 – Treaty Negotiations between the Indian Affairs Department and the Native People 1891-1899, Certified Copy of a Report of a Committee of the Honourable the Privy Council approved by His Excellency the Governor General in Council on the 26th January, 1891.

and, and being allied to the Indians of Athabasca, will look for the same treatment as is given to the Indians whose habitat is in that district.[335]

Despite informing the province that Treaty No. 8 might include that part of British Columbia east of the Rockies, ultimately the boundaries of the treaty were left to discretion of the Treaty Commissioners. As stated in P.C. No. 1703:

> The Minister also considers that, as to the territory to be ceded, the Commissioners will likewise have to be given discretionary power, for its extent will depend upon the conditions which are found to exist as a consequence of the inroads of white population; but he is of opinion that the territory to be treated for may in a general way be restrict to the Provisional District of Athabaska, and such of the country adjacent thereto as the Commissioners may deem it expedient to include within the territory.[336]

It is for this reason that despite mentioning the Tse Keh Nay, the Kaska, and the Pelly River route in P.C. No. 1703, (which in regards to both First Nations territories was west of the Rockies) as well as the continental divide (which is west of the Rockies with regards to the Tse Keh Nay and Kaska) in P.C. No. 2749, the final treaty boundary was stated to run from:

> The main branch of the Red Deer River in Alberta, thence due west to the central range of the Rocky Mountains, thence north-westerly along the said range to the point where it intersects the 60th parallel north latitude.[337]

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[335] LAC, RG 10, Volume 3848, File 75, 236-1, Treaty 8 – Treaty Negotiations between the Indians Affairs Department and the Native People 1891-1899, Extract from a Report of the Committee of the Honourable the Privy Council approved by His Excellency on the 6th December 1898, P.C. No. 2749.

[336] LAC, RG 10, Volume 3848, File 75, 236-1, Treaty 8 – Treaty Negotiations between the Indians Affairs Department and the Native People 1891-1899, Extract from a Report of the Committee of the Honourable the Privy Council approved by His Excellency on the 27th June 1898, P.C. No. 1703.

[337] Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, (INAC) "Treaty No. 8: Made, June 21, 1899 and Adhesions, Reports, etc.," in *British Columbia Indian Treaties in Historical Perspective* (Ottawa: Research Brand, Corporate Policy, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1981), 86.

This boundary means the only Tse Keh Nay included in Treaty No. 8 are those at

Fort Nelson, which is east of the Rockies. This is attested to by the fact the Fort

Nelson Tse Keh Nay were the only Tse Keh Nay to sign Treaty No. 8 during one

of its initial adhesions, the 1910 Fort Nelson adhesion, a fact that differentiated

them from other Tse Keh Nay.[338]

Despite the clear wording of the treaty, and the discretionary power given

to the Treaty Commissioners, there has been some debate regarding the western

boundary of Treaty No. 8, and whether it is the central range of the Rockies or the

continental divide. The basis of this debate is predicated on the belief that the

Treaty Commissioners were ignorant of the difference between the central range

of the Rocky Mountains and the continental divide.[339] As Robert Irwin, however,

has shown, not only were the Treaty Commissioners informed regarding the

difference, but they carried maps with them showing the difference.[340] A possible

reason for why this debate emerged is seen in a memorandum dated the 30

December 1909, in which J.A. Macrae mentions the 1900 map of the treaty,

which some have taking as being authoritative, did not follow western boundary

as stated in the treaty and therefore he suggests might have to be corrected to be

prevent further confusion regarding the issue.[341] (See Appendix C, Map C-2) In

reference to this a memorandum was released on 19 January 1910, which stated:

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[338] LAC, RG 10, Volume 8595, File 1/1-11-5-1, Indian Treaties – Correspondence Regarding Western Treaty No. 8 and the Fort Nelson Adhesion 1909-1972, untitled Fort Nelson Adhesion, 15 August, 1910.
[339] Arthur Ray, "Treaty 8 and Expert Witnesses: A Reply to Robert Irwin," BC Studies no. 127 (2000): 106; Melville, 2.17.
[340] Irwin, "Treaty 8,"96-99.
[341] LAC, RG 10, Volume 8595, File 1/1-11-5-1, Indian Treaties – Correspondence Regarding Western Treaty No. 8 and the Fort Nelson Adhesion 1909-1972, Memorandum for the Deputy Minister, Ottawa, December 30 1909.

> This map [the 1900 Treaty No. 8 map] would never be referred to
> in fixing the boundaries of any Treaty that might be made with the
> Indians of the Western portion of British Columbia as the territory
> ceded by Treaty No. 8 is described in the Treaty itself and must be
> interpreted according to the language of the Treaty.[342]

Despite this statement that the boundary of Treaty No. 8 is the central range of the

Rockies, the view that it is the continental divide has remained to the present[343] as

is seen in the 1999 McLeod Lake Adhesion to Treaty No. 8, which states:

> Canada and McLeod Lake assert that the western boundary of
> Treaty No. 8 follows the height of land separating the waters
> draining into the Arctic Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. British
> Columbia does not agree with this assertion.[344]

Rather, British Columbia interprets the treaty literally and holds the central range

of the Rocky Mountains proper is the boundary, a boundary that would have

historically excluded McLeod Lake from Treaty No. 8.[345] Further compounding

the issue of the western boundary of Treaty No. 8 is the fact that an 11 January

1910 memorandum from Indian Commissioner David Laird, which makes

reference to the Pelly Route to the Klondike gold fields[346] and states, "It will

probably be necessary before long to get the adhesion of the Indians in the

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[342] LAC, RG 10 Volume 8595, File 1/1-11-5-1, Indian Treaties – Correspondence Regarding Western Treaty No. 8 and the Fort Nelson Adhesion 1909-1972, Memorandum: Deputy Superintendent General, Ottawa, Jany. 19th, 1910.

[343] In response to this "in August 2005, six BC Treaty 8 First Nations… filed a lawsuit in the B.C. Supreme Court seeking a declaration as to the geographic location of the western boundary of Treaty No. 8." Devlin Gailus Barristers and Solicitors, "Case Overview," 1.

[344] Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), *McLeod Lake Indian Band Treaty No. 8 Adhesion and Settlement Agreement* http://www.aaf.gov.bc.ca/aaf/treaty/mlfinaldraft.htm (accessed 11 March, 2000; site now discontinued).

[345] LAC, RG 10, Volume 8595, File 1/1-11-5-1, Indian Treaties – Correspondence Regarding Western Treaty No. 8 and the Fort Nelson Adhesion 1909-1972, Memorandum for the Deputy Minister, Ottawa, December 30 1909; Adrien Gabriel Morice, "Notes Archaeological, Industrial and Sociological, on the Western Dene: With an Ethnographic Sketch of the Same," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada* 4 (1893): 28-29.

[346] LAC, RG 10, Volume 8595, File 1/1-11-5-1, Indian Treaties – Correspondence Regarding Western Treaty No. 8 and the Fort Nelson Adhesion 1909-1972, Memorandum for the Deputy Minister, Ottawa, January 11 1910.

vicinity of Fort Graham."[347] The question emerges, therefore, given the

discretionary power of the Treaty Commissioners regarding the boundary of

Treaty No. 8, why an adhesion was not signed at Fort Grahame.

There is no official government record of why an adhesion was not signed

at Fort Grahame, or later Tsay Keh Dene, or Kwadacha. Some would argue this

proves the province's contention that the western boundary of Treaty No. 8 was

indeed the central range of the Rocky Mountains proper. Given that the treaty

was a federal affair, however, this seems unlikely. The more likely reason is the

issue of reserve lands in British Columbia in those areas covered by Treaty No. 8.

In the same memorandum which proposes a Fort Graham adhesion the author,

David Laird, states:

> The main difficulty in contention with Treaty No. 8 respecting
> British Columbia is not its boundary in that Province, which is
> scarcely doubtful, but in regard to the provision in the Treaty
> which says, "And Her Majesty the Queen hereby agrees and
> undertakes to lay aside reserves for such bands as desire
> reserves…" Under the circumstances… an appeal now to the
> British Columbia Government to grant form its lands such reserves
> to the Indians of that Province as are mentioned in the Treaty
> would doubtless be in vain.[348]

In a later memorandum in reference to this the chief accountant for the

Department of Indian Affairs states:

> The Province is not bound by any land provisions in a Treaty
> negotiated by the Dominion Government with their concurrence
> and we must sooner or later face the difficulties which our own
> action has created. Upon the whole I do not anticipate any trouble
> over this matter. The only adhesion to the Treaty so far given by
> British Columbia Indians is that at Fort St. John… The other two
> chief points at which the British Columbia Indians living within

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[347] Ibid.
[348] Ibid.

the boundaries of Treaty No. 8 trade are Fort Graham and Fort Nelson.[349]

Based on this, it would appear that the federal government, although concerned about the adhesions in British Columbia in regard to reserve lands, did not see it as an insurmountable barrier to further adhesions.[350] Nevertheless an adhesion was not signed with the Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay, a point brought to light during the McKenna-McBride Royal Commission, when Dominion Commissioner J.A.J. McKenna wrote the Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, Duncan Scott, inquiring about the area covered by Treaty No. 8, which First Nations lived in it, and whether those First Nations needed reserves.[351] In his reply to this letter, Deputy Superintendent Scott wrote, describing those First Nations within the boundaries of Treaty No. 8, "We estimated that there are about 300 Indians west of Fort St. John, and on the Finlay river, who trade at Fort Graham; these Indians have not been taken into treaty."[352] This estimate was apparently wrong, and following the commission's investigation of the area, the commission's secretary, C.H. Gibbons, would write Deputy Superintendent Scott stating:

> The only Indians living within British Columbia territory covered
> by Treaty No. 8 for whom provision [of a reserve] has not as yet
> been made would appear therefore to be the Indians of the Fort

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[349] LAC, RG 10, Volume 8595, File 1/1-11-5-1, Indian Treaties – Correspondence Regarding Western Treaty No. 8 and the Fort Nelson Adhesion 1909-1972, Memorandum Deputy Superintendent General, Ottawa, Jany. 19th, 1910.

[350] INAC, "Treaty No. 8," 86-87, 96-98, 102-103.

[351] LAC, RG 10, Volume 8595, File 1/1-11-5-1, Indian Treaties – Correspondence Regarding Western Treaty No. 8 and the Fort Nelson Adhesion 1909-1972, Letter to Duncan C Scott, Deputy Superintendent-General of Indians Affairs, Ottawa from Dominion Commissioner J.A.J. McKenna, Victoria, BC, December 18th, 1913.

[352] LAC, RG 10, Volume 8595, File 1/1-11-5-1, Indian Treaties – Correspondence Regarding Western Treaty No. 8 and the Fort Nelson Adhesion 1909-1972, Letter to J.A.J. McKenna from Deputy Superintendent General Duncan Scott, January 2, 1914.

Nelson Band, numbering approximately two hundred and thirty five (235), and the estimated three hundred (300) Indians west of Fort St John and trading at Fort Grahame to whom your letter refers. These latter, in the opinion of the Commissioners who visited the territory last season, are in reality the Indians trading at Fort Grahame and at Fort McLeod, at present numbering approximately one hundred and ten (110) rather than three hundred (300).[353]

This inclusion of McLeod Lake and Fort Grahame in the area of Treaty No. 8 was expanded during the interview of the local Indian Agent W.J. McAllan, who told the commissioners that not only were Fort Grahame and McLeod Lake within the territory of Treaty No. 8, but that they and Bear Lake (which was not within the area of Treaty No. 8 by any definition) should be included in it as well.[354] Despite this, another treaty with the Tse Keh Nay was not signed until 1999, and then only with the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay. This then leaves the question of why the federal government never signed an adhesion at Fort Graham if it was, as the repeatedly stated, were within the boundaries of Treaty No. 8, and wanted to include the Tse Keh Nay in the treaty. Regardless, by signing an adhesion only with the Tse Keh Nay east of the Rockies, the federal government reinforced Tse Keh Nay regional identity on an east-west basis on both sides of the Rockies.

Two possible answers can be found in the oral tradition at Tsay Keh Dene (a successor community of Fort Grahame) regarding why no adhesion was signed at Fort Grahame. The majority view is that the chief at Fort Grahame at the time of the treaty, Charlie Hunter, refused to sign the treaty when it was offered to

[353] LAC, RG 10, Volume 8595, File 1/1-11-5-1, Indian Treaties – Correspondence Regarding Western Treaty No. 8 and the Fort Nelson Adhesion 1909-1972, Letter to Duncan C Scott, Esq., Deputy Superintendent General from Secretary C.H. Gibbons, Victoria, B.C., August 6, 1915.
[354] BC Archives, (BCA) MS 1056 Royal Commission on Indians Affairs in British Columbia (1913-1916) Transcripts 1914-1915, Box 3, File 4, Stuart Lake Agency, Examination of W.J. McAllan, Indian Agent for the Stuart Lake Agency at the Board Room, Victoria, November 15th, 1915, 262, 337.

him.[355] According to Jean Isaac, the Hunter family came from the east to avoid

the treaty, eventually settling at Fort Grahame and advising the Tse Keh Nay there

to not take treaty when offered.[356]   The other view, held by Albert Poole, is more

pragmatic regarding the lack of an adhesion at Fort Grahame as a simple

oversight, stating that they "passed us up here… in the wilderness."[357] Some Tse

Keh Nay, like Grand Chief Gordon Pierre have even gone so far as to state no Tse

Keh Nay signed Treaty No. 8 prior to the McLeod Lake adhesion.[358] Upon being

informed of the Fort Nelson adhesion, and the Tse Keh Nay who signed it there,

Pierre figured that it was the Tse Keh Nay east of the Rockies, who he says live in

communities like the Prophet River, Halfway River, Blueberry River, and Fort

Nelson.[359] This suggests a dichotomy in the mind of Pierre between those Tse

Keh Nay west of the Rockies who did not sign Treaty No. 8, and who he earlier

refers to as being all the Tse Keh Nay, and those Tse Keh Nay east of the Rockies

who did sign Treaty No. 8. This supports the view that Treaty No. 8 reinforced

east-west Tse Keh Nay regional identities. None of the communities east of the

Rockies mentioned by Pierre, however, are presently considered Tse Keh Nay,

with the first two self-identifying as Dunneza, the third as Dunneza- Nehiyawak

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[355] Phillip Charlie, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 6 November, 2008; Jean Isaac, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 9 September, 2008; Seymour Isaac, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 7 November, 2008; Gordon Pierre, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 17 September, 2008; Bill Poole, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 8 September, 2008; Mabel Troendle, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 16 September 2008.
[356] Jean Isaac.
[357] Albert Poole, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 6 November, 2008.
[358] Gordon Pierre.
[359] Ibid.

and the last as Dene Tha- Nehiyawak.[360] Nevertheless Grand Chief Gordon

Pierre sees them as being Tse Keh Nay at some level due to the linguistic

similarities, a view shared by former Chief Ray Izony.[361] From this we can tell

three things about modern Tse Keh Nay perceptions of Treaty No. 8 and their

relation to it. One, that despite the fact Treaty No. 8 reinforced the perceived

separate Dunneza-Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity, the modern Tse Keh Nay see

themselves as being related to the Dunneza, if not part of the same ethnic group;

two, that they view the McLeod Lake adhesion as the first adhesion for any of the

Tse Keh Nay west of the Rockies, a distinction that has reinforced Tse Keh Nay

regional identity west of the Rockies on a north-south basis; and three, that part of

the reason no adhesion was signed west of the Rockies until 1999 was the fact the

Tse Keh Nay were so isolated and the desire of the Tse Keh Nay there not to sign.

This last perception seems to indicate that the Tse Keh Nay, at least today, see

Treaty No. 8 and adhesion to it as a decision to be made by regional bands, a view

which suggests the continued importance of regional bands and identities that

were evident in the early treaty period. These perceptions, however, raise two

questions regarding Treaty No. 8. What affect did this regionalization of Tse Keh

Nay identities have on the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay who signed it? And what

impact did it have on Tse Keh Nay-Dunneza relations?

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[360] Treaty 8 Tribal Association, "Treaty 8 Communities: Blueberry River," http://www.treaty8.bc.ca/communities/blueberry.php (accessed 21 July, 2009); Treaty 8 Tribal Association, "Treaty 8 Communities: Fort Nelson," http://www.treaty8.bc.ca/communities/fortnelson.php (accessed 21 July, 2009); Treaty 8 Tribal Association, "Treaty 8 Communities: Halfway River," http://www.treaty8.bc.ca/communities/halfway.php (accessed 21 July, 2009); Treaty 8 Tribal Association, "Treaty 8 Communities: Prophet River," http://www.treaty8.bc.ca/communities/prophet.php (accessed 21 July, 2009).
[361] Ray Izony, interviewed by author, Prince George, BC, 23 September, 2008; Gordon Pierre.

One person who tried to understand what happened to the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay, as well as other Tse Keh Nay in the twentieth century was anthropologist Wilson Duff. According to his research the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay, or Tseloni, were divided into two groups, the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay and the Nelson River Nomads.[362] According to him the Nelson River Nomads left Fort Nelson when it was abandoned by the Hudson's Bay Company, due to a lack of game in the area, only to reappear in 1910 to the west at Lower Post near the junction of the Liard and Dease Rivers, with their main camp apparently east of Lower Post at the junction of the Liard and Kechika Rivers.[363] Both groups, however, ceased to be socially relevant Tse Keh Nay with the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay apparently amalgamating with the Dene Tha at Fort Nelson in 1956 and the Nelson River Nomads apparently amalgamating with the Kaska Liard River Band in 1960.[364] If this is true, then the question remains as to why they (the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay and the Nelson River Nomads) would find their Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity socially irrelevant. Was it due to Treaty No. 8, and its strengthening of regional identity in a mixed community, or was it because of

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[362] BCA, GR 2809 Research Notes of Wilson Duff 1950-1978, File 77 Athapaskan: Sekani, Ft Nelson Sekani; BCA, GR 2809 Research Notes of Wilson Duff 1950-1978, File 77 Athapaskan: Sekani, Nelson River Nomads; Duff, 49-50.

[363] Please note Duff uses the old name for the Kechika River, the Muddy River. BCA, GR 2809 Research Notes of Wilson Duff 1950-1978, File 77 Athapaskan: Sekani, Nelson River Nomads; Diamond Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*, no. 84, *Anthropological Series*, no. 20 (Ottawa: J.O. Patenaule, I.S.O., 1937), 11.

[364] Based on Fredrik Barth's assertion that ethnic groups have continuity based on ethnic boundaries formed by socially relevant differences, if the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay and Nelson River Nomads amalgamated with the Dene Tha and Kaska, and thereby lost their Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity, then the socially relevant differences which had previously separated the two groups and maintained their separate Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity, must have ceased to be socially relevant, and not been replaced by other socially relevant differences. Fredrik Barth, "Introduction," in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*, ed. Fredrik Barth (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1969), 14-15; Duff, 49-51.

other factors like the Hudson's Bay Company closing the post?[365] If the former is

true, what does this mean for the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay who were the next

Tse Keh Nay to sign Treaty No. 8. Perhaps we can gain an understanding by

examining why they signed Treaty No. 8.

The official reason given for the McLeod Lake adhesion was to correct a

historical wrong.[366] The Indian and Northern Affairs "Backgrounder" to the

adhesion states:

> The McLeod Lake Indian Band was not visited in 1899 when
> Treaty No. 8 was negotiated… Canada's review of historical
> evidence found that, although the First Nation was overlooked by
> the early Treaty No. 8 Commission, the MLIB's ancestors
> inhabited the area covered by Treaty No. 8 and are likely entitled
> to adhere to the Treaty.[367]

Even though this was the claim, the adhesion did not occur at the federal

government's instigation, but as a result of litigation started by the McLeod Lake

Tse Keh Nay. This might explain why similar adhesions were not also signed at

Tsay Keh Dene or Kwadacha, the successor communities of Fort Grahame. As

the "Backgrounder" states:

> In 1982, the MLIB (McLeod Lake Indian Band) first filed a court
> action in this matter. In 1986, it filed another court action against
> B.C. and several logging companies claiming Aboriginal title over
> its entire claimed traditional territory. This was later changed to an
> action for land under Treaty No. 8. In December 1988, the B.C.
> Supreme Court issued an injunction against logging within the
> MLIB's claimed traditional territory. In 1993, the MLIB, the
> B.C.'s and Canada's agreement, opted to negotiate a settlement of

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[365] Diamond Jenness does not include Fort Nelson as a Tse Keh Nay community is his book *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*. Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*.

[366] Dale Lovick, "Statement by Minister of Aboriginal Affairs Dale Lovick at Initialing of McLeod Lake Adhesion of Treaty No. 8 and Settlement Agreement, September 30, 1999," http://aaf.gov.bc.ca/aaf/news/McLLstatement.htm (accessed 11 April, 2000; site now discontinued).

[367] INAC, "Backgrounder: The McLeod Lake Indian Band Final Agreement," http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/nr/prs/j-a2000/00115bk_e.html (accessed 3 June, 2003; site now discontinued).

the matter by pursuing its treaty entitlement through federal specific claims process.[368]

Why the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay would sue to gain adhesion to Treaty No. 8 is unclear. A possible answer is given by former Tsay Keh Dene Chief Seymour Isaac. According to him Indian Affairs told the chief at the time of the adhesion that "everything was going to change… The housing [was] going to be better and other business, band business [was too]."[369] If this was the case it would suggest the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay were enticed by Indian Affairs into demanding an adhesion to Treaty No. 8 based on the perceived benefits they would received from it. Why other Tse Keh Nay communities like Kwadacha or Tsay Keh Dene did not follow suit can be seen in the statement of former Tsay Keh Dene Chief Ray Izony. He states:

> I think it's a bad move, because I think by signing the treaty they've given the government… jurisdiction over them to be assimilated into the society that we are today. To be controlled by the government, economy wise [and] everything. They [are] kind of pulled into that society to disarm them, to take away their rights to be a native person, their rights to have a culture, their rights to have a tradition, their rights to have an oral history. When you sign a treaty that is one sided that's what happens. When the government promises you all kinds of things, they are assimilating you into their society, so you become like a white person. That's the way I seen.[370]

From this it would appear that at least some of the Tse Keh Nay are concerned over the impact the McLeod Lake adhesion will have on the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay and their ethnic identity. Will the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay, like the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay, cease to be socially relevant Tse Keh Nay, and adopt

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[368] INAC, "Backgrounder."
[369] Seymour Isaac.
[370] Ray Izony.

the ethnic identity of other Treaty No. 8 groups? Unlikely, I think, because

McLeod Lake is not ethnically mixed like Fort Nelson was. Because of this any

reinforcement of regional identity would not be of a mixed Dene Tha-Tse Keh

Nay identity, but rather of a Tse Keh Nay identity alone. Regardless of this, the

McLeod Lake adhesion has led to the creation of two groups of widely[371]

recognized Tse Keh Nay in the Rocky Mountain Trench: those that are Treaty

Indians, and those who are not, thereby reinforcing a north-south regional identity

in the Trench.

Treaty No. 8 also reinforced the perceived separate ethnic identity of the

Tse Keh Nay from their eastern neighbors the Dunneza. This is because the

Dunneza as a whole were included in Treaty No. 8, whereas the Tse Keh Nay

were not.[372] This might not seem like an issue at first since it is commonly

accepted today that they are two distinct First Nations. This was not always the

accepted view, however, and as mentioned in chapter one and chapter two, there

was much debate over what their relationship was, and whether or not they were

one single ethnic group, both in the distant past and in the more recent past. The

view that the Tse Keh Nay and Dunneza are one single ethnic group is supported

by the oral tradition among the Tse Keh Nay I interviewed.[373] Unfortunately I

was unable to interview any Dunneza regarding this issue. Instead the closest I

came to getting the Dunneza perspective regarding their relationship to the Tse

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[371] I state widely here because although some Tse Keh Nay signed the Fort Nelson adhesion they are not widely known, Fort Nelson is not generally considered a "Tse Keh Nay community," and their descendents apparently do not currently self-identify as being Tse Keh Nay as seen by the First Nation's website. Treaty 8 Tribal Association, "Treaty 8 Communities: Fort Nelson."
[372] INAC, "Treaty 8," 84, 89-91, 96-97.
[373] Ray Izony; Gordon Pierre.

Keh Nay is in a thesis found in the Wilson Duff fonds at the BC Archives.

Identified as the "Ridington Thesis: Appendix I" it talks about the subdivisions of

the Dunneza and purports to give a list of the ones the Dunneza themselves

recognize. Among these subdivisions are three Tse Keh Nay groups: the

UchUchianne, who Ridington identifies as the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay and

who he states are Morice's Yutsut'qenne; the Sasusan, who Ridington identifies

as possibly being the Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay, and who he states are Jenness'

Sasuchan; and the TseKenu and who Ridington states are Morice's Tsekehneaz,

and Jenness' Tsekani.[374] Their inclusion in the list is explained by Ridington who

states:

> The Beavers recognize various named subdivisions which they call
> wutdune, the people of a certain place… The white traders classed
> all the Indians east of the Rockies together as Beavers, a term
> which probably derives from tsa-huh or tsa-dunne, Beaver People.
> The Rocky Mountain Indians they called Sekani after tsekani or
> teskene, Rocky Mountain people. To the Indians, tsa-huh and
> tsekani are simply two wutdune out of many but to the whites the
> terms became tribal names referring to two broad geographic and
> dialectical divisions.[375]

This last statement, that it is European and not an Aboriginal perception that

separates the Dunneza from the Tse Keh Nay, is similar to Adrien Gabriel

Morice's earlier claim that the division between the Tse Keh Nay and Dunneza

was a fur trade creation. Indeed, in a 1906 special dispatch to the Globe,

Superintendent Constantine of the Northwest Mounted Police not only states that

the Fort Grahame Indians were upset due to the Klondike Gold Rush, and the

repercussions it had on them, but also that they "are non-treaty Beaver

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[374] BCA, GR 2809 Research Notes of Wilson Duff 1950-1978, File 76 Athapaskan: Beaver,
"Ridington Thesis," 146-147.
[375] Ibid., 145-146.

Indians."[376] Given that the Fort Grahame Indians are repeatedly referred to as Tse Keh Nay in the fur trade and missionary records, this dispatch either indicates that Superintendent Constantine is wrong, or that at some level the terms Tse Keh Nay and Dunneza were interchangeable. All of this suggests that not only did different perspectives of the Dunneza and Tse Keh Nay lead to different treatment under Treaty No. 8, but that if they were one single ethnic group, then Treaty No. 8, when it was initially signed, effectively divided this ethnic group into two by reinforcing the east-west divide: those who were in Treaty No. 8 and lived on the eastern side of the Rockies, and those who were not in Treaty No. 8 and lived on the western side of the Rockies.

The fact that Treaty No. 8 reinforced regional Tse Keh Nay identities explains the separate approaches taken by the four modern "Tse Keh Nay" communities in the modern comprehensive treaty process. By dealing with the Te Keh Nay on a regional basis in the early treaty period the federal government established a precedent of regional Tse Keh Nay-Crown relations. Also by reinforcing regional identities compared to a wider Tse Keh Nay identity the early treaty process reinforced the importance of regional bands. This increased importance, combined with the precedent of early treaty making explains why the Tse Keh Nay are not represented by one table in the voluntary modern comprehensive treaty process, but rather by four tables.[377]

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[376] BCA, GR 0429 Attorney General Correspondence 1872-1937, 1950, Box 13, File 04, Folio 2687/06 Fort Grahame, Beaver Indians, "The Beaver Indians: Strong Feelings Against the White Man: Report from Superintendent Constantine of the Northwest Mounted Police at Fort Grahame, B.C. – Fear They Are Going to Lose Their Land."
[377] BCTC, *What's the Deal with Treaties? A Lay Person's Guide to Treaty Making in British Columbia*, 2nd ed. (Vancouver: BC Treaty Commission, 2002), 5.

These modern comprehensive treaties are tripartite, involving both the federal and provincial governments, along with the interested First Nation. This is major departure from the previous policy of the provincial government, which held that treaties were not necessary because First Nations in British Columbia did not have Aboriginal title. This legal view was challenged in a series of court cases: the Calder Case (1973), the Sparrow Case (1990) and the Delgamuukw Case (1997).[378] These three court decisions left a situation in British Columbia where:

> The courts had confirmed that aboriginal rights still existed in B.C., that these rights are unique and unlike conventional property rights, and that the rights are constitutionally entrenched so that neither the federal nor the provincial government can interfere with them, let alone extinguish them, without meeting strict constitutional standards.[379]

This, combined with the actions of various First Nations organizations, led to the creation of the modern comprehensive treaty process.[380]

Despite signing an adhesion to Treaty No. 8 McLeod Lake has also entered the modern comprehensive treaty process, entering it alone on 4 February 2004.[381] These negotiations, however, are unique as "it is anticipated that… [they] will build upon the McLeod Lake Treaty 8 Adhesion and Settlement

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[378] BCTC, *Annual Report 1995-1996* (Vancouver: BC Treaty Commission, 1996), 15-17; BCTC, *Treaty Commission Annual Report 1999* (Vancouver: BC Treaty Commission, 1999), 32-38; Canada, *Calder et al. v. Attorney-General of British Columbia*, [1973] S.C.R. 313, "Judgments of the Supreme Court of Canada," http://scc.lexum.umontreal.ca/en/1973/1973scr0-313/1973scr0-313.html (accessed 15 November 2009); Canada, *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia*, [1997] 3 S.C.R. 1010, "Judgments of the Supreme Court of Canada," http://scc.lexum.umontreal.ca/en/1997/1997scr3-1010/1997scr3-1010.html (accessed 15 November 2009); Canada, *R. v. Sparrow*, [1990] 1 S.C.R. 1075, "Judgments of the Supreme Court of Canada," http://scc.lexum.umontreal.ca/en/1990/1990scr1-1075/1990scr1-1075.html (accessed 15 November 2009).

[379] BCTC, *Annual Report 1995-1996*, 17.

[380] BCTC, *What's the Deal with Treaties?*, 3.

[381] BCTC, *Consider: Treaty Commission Annual Report 2004* (Vancouver: BC Treaty Commission, 2004), 27.

Agreement finalized in 2000."[382] Similarly, the other three Tse Keh Nay

communities have chosen to follow their own agenda in the modern

comprehensive treaty negotiations rather than together as a united whole. Tsay

Keh Dene has chosen to pursue treaty on their own, while Kwadacha has chosen

to unite with the Kaska Dena Council, which also represents the Liard First

Nation that Nelson River Nomads joined.[383] Kwadacha's decision might be

explained by the Tse Keh Nay subgroups that apparently compose the Kwadacha

First Nation. For example, anthropologist Wilson Duff states that the Kwadacha

First Nation are a combination of the Fort Grahame Nomads, (who elsewhere at

McDame, Dease Lake, and along the Dease River merged with the Kaska) and the

Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay.[384] This suggests that there are ties between the

present Tse Keh Nay population at Kwadacha and the Kaska. These ties,

combined with potential for territorial overlap they bring suggests a possible

answer for why the Tse Keh Nay at Kwadacha have chosen to enter the modern

comprehensive treaty process as part of the Kaska Dena Council. Simply put, it

was a pragmatic decision to align themselves with another First Nation they had

ties to, and avoid the issue of resolving territorial overlap with them.[385] Based on

this, and the fact Kwadacha self-identifies as Tse Keh Nay on their website, it

would appear this combined Kaska-Tse Keh Nay table is more regional than

ethnic in nature.[386] And finally Takla Lake, which is the successor First Nation of

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[382] Ibid., 27.
[383] Ibid., 19-20, 24, 31.
[384] BCA, GR 2809 Research Notes of Wilson Duff 1950-1978, File 77 Athapaskan: Sekani, "Fort Graham Nomads," "Sikani;" Duff, 49.
[385] BCTC, *What's the Deal with Treaties?*, 23-24.
[386] Kwadacha Nation, "Kwadacha Nation," http://www.kwadacha.com/nation/1/home (accessed 22 July, 2009).

the Bear Lake Tse Keh Nay, has chosen to pursue the modern comprehensive treaty process as a part of Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, which is fitting considering Takla Lake is a mixed Dakelh-Tse Keh Nay First Nation, and being west of the Rocky Mountain Trench is regionally connected to the Dakelh (Carrier) who, as seen from the fur trade and missionary period, lived to the south and west of the Tse Keh Nay.[387] This decision to pursue different agendas in the modern comprehensive treaty process reflects the regional treatment of the Tse Keh Nay in Treaty No. 8.

During the fur trade and missionary periods perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay moved from the unnamed Indians MacKenzie encountered, to the numerous related bands of Simon Fraser to the Tse Keh Nay as is commonly accepted, to the super inclusive Tse Keh Nay of Morice that included not only the Dunneza, but also the Tsuu T'ina. During the treaty and reserve period the various regional Tse Keh Nay groups were treated differently by the federal government and the Dunneza in particular. This different treatment created differences between regional Tse Keh Nay groups that reinforced different regional identities. This represents a shift away from wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity. This shift was initiated by Treaty No. 8, which differentiated those Tse Keh Nay and the Dunneza east of the Rockies from those west of the Rockies, who were not included in the treaty. This effectively ended any European perceptions that the Dunneza and Tse Keh Nay were one ethnic group. It also resulted in the apparent disappearance of the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay, who found their regional identity, (which was a mixed Tse Keh Nay-Dene Tha identity) precluded their wider Tse

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[387] BCTC, *Consider*, 19-20; Duff, 50; Gordon Pierre.

Keh Nay ethnic identity. This reinforcement of regional identities by the treaty process has continued into the present era with the McLeod Lake adhesion, which differentiated the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay from other Tse Keh Nay groups west of the Rockies. This history of dealing with the Tse Keh Nay on a regional basis has resulted in all four modern "Tse Keh Nay" communities taking separate approaches to the modern comprehensive treaty process.

Most important, however, for the purposes of my thesis is the shift in importance from wider Tse Keh Nay ethic identity to regional Tse Keh Nay identities during the treaty process. This represents a change from the European perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay found in the fur trade and missionary periods.

Chapter Four:
Reserves and the Localization of Tse Keh Nay Identity

The establishment of reserves between 1892 and the 1990s reinforced the

more local Tse Key Nay (Sekani) identities associated with particular fur trade

posts. This process, like the treaty process, highlights the dichotomy found in

both the fur trade and missionary perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay being identified

as Tse Keh Nay in the general sense on the one hand, and as the "Indians" of a

particular fur trade post on the other. Given that the main reserves for most "Tse

Keh Nay" communities were centered on fur trade posts, this post identity was not

necessarily contradictory to a wider Tse Keh Nay identity, but it appears that the

fur trade did have a centripetal effect among the Tse Keh Nay. For example,

Diamond Jenness argues that the four historic Tse Keh Nay subgroups he was

able to identify via oral tradition in 1924: the Tsekani, the Yutuwichan, the

Sasuchan, and the Tseloni were reduced to two groups due to the affects of

disease and affects of fur trade posts, with the two southern groups, the Tsekani

and Yutuwichan, uniting to become the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay, and the two

northern groups, the Sasuchan and Tseloni, uniting to become the Fort Grahame

Tse Keh Nay.[388]   This creation of post identities, which was a subset of regional

Tse Keh Nay identities, was reinforced by reserves, and how they were

categorized by the government. This reinforced local identities, combined with

the emphasis on regional trajectories found in the treaty process, led to the

separate approaches taken in the land claims aspect of the modern comprehensive

treaty process.

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[388] Diamond Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*, no. 84, *Anthropological Series*, no.
20 (Ottawa: J.O. Patenaule, I.S.O., 1937), frontispiece, v, 10-11, 16.

The reserve process begins in 1892 with the establishment of the McLeod Lake reserve, the first Tse Keh Nay reserve.[389] This reserve was the result of the British Columbia Indian Reserve Commission. Because of this I start by examining the issues that led to this commission and policies that arose from it. Next, I examine the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs in British Columbia, the so-called McKenna McBride Commission of 1913-1916, which not only established reserves for the Fort Grahame and Bear Lake Tse Keh Nay, but also expanded on the original McLeod Lake reserve. Although recognizing key Tse Keh Nay locations found in the fur trade records, the commission also began the practice of categorizing Tse Keh Nay communities separately, a practice that has continued to the present in official reserve schedules. Moving ahead to the 1960s I examine how the creation of Williston Lake affected Tse Keh Nay identity, and what this flooding and creation of new reserves reveals about the understanding the government had in regards to Tse Keh Nay territory. Finally, I look at the land claims portion of the modern comprehensive treaty process, and what it reveals about Tse Keh Nay perceptions of their territory and unity. In particular I look at how these perceptions have been affected by government reserve policy among the Tse Keh Nay, and how much the Tse Keh Nay might have internalized these government policy and perceptions of themselves.

As mentioned in the previous chapter on treaties, the policies of Sir James Douglas in allowing First Nations in British Columbia to determine their own reserve size and pre-empt land along with settlers were abandoned by his

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[389] BC Archives, (BCA) GR 2982 Indian Reserve Commission Minutes of Decision 1876-1980, Box 5, File 4a 902/93, Minute of Decision: McLeod Lake Indians, O'Reilly, September 12, 1892.

successors, who not only denied Aboriginal title, but also often shrunk pre-existing reserves. Indeed, Aboriginal title in British Columbia was not dealt with until the modern comprehensive treaty process. Reserve lands and Aboriginals land claims instead were taken care of by a joint federal-provincial commission that was established in 1876, the British Columbia Indian Reserve Commission.[390] This commission, however, was not sufficiently supported by either government and as such it was reduced to one commissioner in 1877 who would continue to establish reserves in one form or another around the province until 1908 when the province put an end to it.[391] One of these reserves was the one at McLeod Lake.

Three policies adopted by the British Columbia Indian Reserve Commission had an impact on the Tse Keh Nay in general, and McLeod Lake in particular. The first was the decision, due to the cost of the commission, to only deal with Aboriginal land issues and reserves where there were points of contention or extensive non-Aboriginal settlement.[392] It is apparently for this reason that none of the other "Tse Keh Nay" communities received reserves during this early period. The second was the decision "to concentrate the Indians, where possible without disturbing their minds, or doing violence to old

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[390] Library and Archives Canada, (LAC) RG 10, Volume 3611, File 3756, Reports Concerning the Work of a Committee of the Executive Council Dealing with Land Questions in British Columbia 1878, Indian Reserve Commission, British Columbia, March 2nd, 1878 submitted by D Mills.
[391] Wilson Duff, *The Indian History of British Columbia: The Impact of the White Man*, new ed. (Victoria: Royal British Columbia Museum, 1997), 94
[392] LAC, RG 10, Volume 3611, File 3756, Reports Concerning the Work of a Committee of the Executive Council Dealing with Land Questions in British Columbia 1878, Letter to the Hon. The Minister of the Interior, Ottawa from the Provincial Secretary A.E. Elliott, Province of British Columbia, Victoria, B.C., 27th January, 1877; LAC, RG 10, Volume 3611, File 3756, Reports Concerning the Work of a Committee of the Executive Council Dealing with Land Questions in British Columbia 1878, Untitled Document (Incomplete) from W.A. Himworth, CPC."

associations."[393] This of course was problematic for the Tse Keh Nay due to their

nomadic lifestyle, and the anchoring affect reserves would have on it. In

particular, at this early point, it differentiated McLeod Lake from the other "Tse

Keh Nay" communities by beginning this anchoring affect of reserves earlier

among them.[394] The third was the decision to have no set acreage formula for

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[393] LAC, RG 10, Volume 3611, File 3756-11, Gilbert Malcolm Sproats' Summarized Report of the Indian Reserve Commission in British Columbia 1877, British Columbia Indian Reserve Commission: Summarized Report, 12.

[394] Indeed it appears from the annual reports of Indian Affairs that the fact they had a reserve, while the Tse Keh Nay at Fort Grahame and Bear Lake did not, led to them being categorized differently. For example in the 1893 annual report they are categorized as the McLeod Lake Band, while the Bear Lake Tse Keh Nay are categorized as a nomadic Sicanee Band. And what is interesting is that while the Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay are not mentioned at all, a nomadic group of Tse Keh Nay that winters at Stuart Lake is. This nomadic group disappears in 1895 annual report, presumably either joining the Bear Lake Tse Keh Nay, based on the sudden population increase seen there, or mistakenly being the Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay, who suddenly appear in the annual report with exactly the same population size. In addition to this change, the McLeod Lake, Fort Grahame and Bear Lake Tse Keh Nay are all categorized as Sikanees, which itself changes in the 1897 annual report, where the three are categorized as the McLeod's Lake Reserve and two outlying bands of Sikanees respectively. In 1899 this has changed to the McLeod's Lake Band compared to two outlying bands of Sikanees, while in 1903 it has changed again to the McLeod's Lake Band compared to Fort Grahame and Lake Connelly Band Sikanees. Despite this difference in categorization it is clear they are all Tse Keh Nay as was seen in 1895 where all three bands are categorized as such. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, (INAC) "Dominion of Canada Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the Year Ended 30th June 1893," http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/indianaffairs/001074-119.03-e.php?page_id_nbr=8936&PHPSESSID=3ke65al7aaent4f6ijcnk6o813 (accessed 14 August, 2009), 122-123; INAC, "Dominion of Canada Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the Year Ended 30th June 1895," http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/indianaffairs/001074-119.03-e.php?page_id_nbr=9977&PHPSESSID=gn7ucb418rvsddqp8oqehr3nq1 (accessed 14 August, 2009), 158-160; ; INAC, "Dominion of Canada Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the Year Ended 30th June, 1897," http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/indianaffairs/001074-119.03-e.php?page_id_nbr=11150&PHPSESSID=3ke65al7aaent4f6ijcnk6o813 (accessed 14 August, 2009), 74-78; INAC, "Dominion of Canada Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the Year Ended June 30 1899," http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/indianaffairs/001074-119.03-e.php?page_id_nbr=12721&PHPSESSID=3ke65al7aaent4f6ijcnk6o813 (accessed 14 August, 2009), 215-219. INAC, "Dominion of Canada Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the Year Ended June 30 1903," http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/indianaffairs/001074-119.03-e.php?page_id_nbr=16350&PHPSESSID=3ke65al7aaent4f6ijcnk6o813 (accessed 14 August, 2009), 250-253.

reserves, and instead treat each Indian Nation separately.[395] This is interesting as they defined an Indian Nation as "all Indian Tribes speaking the same language."[396] This definition is similar to Adrien Gabriel Morice's definition of ethnicity by language, and in regards to the Tse Keh Nay would logically lead to the same conclusion Morice reached, namely that the Tse Keh Nay, Dunneza (Beaver), and indeed Tsuu T'ina (Sarcee) were one in the same. Despite this policy the Tse Keh Nay, (let alone the Dunneza) were not all granted reserves at the same time or as a whole, but rather as individual bands. In fact it was not until the McKenna-McBride Commission that the majority of the Tse Keh Nay would receive reserves, with Fort Ware/Kwadacha receiving a reserve in 1942 and Fort Nelson in 1961.[397]   Whether this individual treatment of Tse Keh Nay communities was due to the government not seeing them as being Tse Keh Nay seems unlikely. For example, in 1895 the Department of Indian Affairs Annual Report had stated the Tse Keh Nay lived at "McLeod's Lake, Fort Grahame and

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[395] LAC, RG 10, Volume 3611, File 3756-2, General Correspondence Regarding the Handling of the Land Question in British Columbia 1875-1888, Memorandum by R.W. Scott acting Minister of the Interior; LAC, RG 10, Volume 3611, File 3756-2, General Correspondence Regarding the Handling of the Land Question in British Columbia 1875-1888, Memorandum by Department of the Interior, Ottawa, 5 November, 1875.

[396] LAC, RG 10, Volume 3611, File 3756-2, General Correspondence Regarding the Handling of the Land Question in British Columbia 1876-1888, Memorandum by R.W. Scott acting Minister of the Interior.

[397] Please note that for Kwadacha I used the date the land was purchased from the province by the federal government, while with the others I use the date the reserve was allotted. BCA, GR 0672 Royal Commission on Indian Affairs Draft Report 1913-1916, Box 4, File 4 Stuart Lake Agency, Additional Lands Applications, A23-23, A32-33; David Madill, *British Columbia Indian Treaties in Historical Perspective* (Ottawa: Research Branch, Corporate Policy Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1981), 59; INAC, "Schedule of Indian Reserves in the Dominion of Canada Part 2 Reserves in the Province of British Columbia Recompiled and Corrected up to March 31, 1943," http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/indianaffairs/001074-119.01-e.php?page_id_nbr=33559&PHPSESSID=cbvji8an191b4o4lsgqanmg7o5 (accessed 6 August, 2009), 159.

Lake Connelly."[398] Rather it seems it was a result of demands on the ground, or rather the decision to deal only with Aboriginal land issues and reserves where there were points of contention or extensive non-aboriginal settlement. What is clear is that by treating these Tse Keh Nay bands differently during the reserve granting process, the government reinforced local identities at the expense of a wider Tse Keh Nay identity.

The British Columbia Reserve Commission did not put an end to the issues regarding Aboriginal reserve policy in British Columbia. This in turn led to the establishment of the Royal Commission on Indians Affairs for the Province of British Columbia (or the McKenna-McBride Commission) "for the adjustment of the acreage of Indian Reserves in British Columbia."[399] Running for three years between 1913 and 1916 the commission not only adjusted existing reserves, including the confirmation of ones found adequate, but created new reserves where they were needed. One exception to this was the area covered by Treaty No. 8. According to the Commission this area was too remote and too little was known of the Aboriginals there. As the commissioners noted in "Interim Report No. 91:"

> It was found that the country wherein these Indians are found is so
> difficult of access, and information as to the location of the Indians
> so indefinite that visitation of the territory by the Commission
> would not, under existing circumstances, have resulted in the
> obtaining of detailed and specific information that would enable

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[398] INAC, "Dominion of Canada Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for the Year Ended 30th June 1895," http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/indianaffairs/001074-119.03-e.php?page_id_nbr=9977&PHPSESSID=gn7ucb418rvsddqp8oqehr3nq1 (accessed 14 August, 2009), 160.

[399] BCA, GR 0672 Royal Commission on Indian Affairs Draft Report 1913-1916, Box 2, File 44 (104) Rescuing Lands in Accordance with Treaty #8, Certified Copy of a Report of the Committee of the Privy Council, approved by His Royal Highness the Governor General on the 22nd February, 1916, P.C. 371.

the Commission to make definite findings as to the location, suitability and areas of lands to be set aside as reserves for such Indians; it was, indeed, found that even the Department of Indian Affairs is not possessed of dependable and particularized information requisite.[400]

Based on this the commissioners proposed that British Columbia set aside Crown Lands in the area covered by Treaty No. 8, which could then be used when the resident First Nations, who did not yet have reserves, needed them.[401] This was approved by the Department of Indian Affairs on 25 February 1916, although not by British Columbia until 26 July 1923 when they ratified the final report.[402] This is why the Fort Nelson Indians, who were comprised of both the Dene Tha (Slave) and Tse Keh Nay, did not have a reserve established for them during the McKenna-McBride Commission, a fact which distinguished the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay from all other existing "Tse Keh Nay" communities at the time. It is possible this distinction, combined with their being the only Tse Keh Nay in Treaty No. 8 at the time, and the reinforcement of Fort Nelson's mixed Tse Keh Nay-Dene Tha regional identity caused by Treaty No. 8, contributed to them amalgamating with the Dene Tha. Similarly, it is possible that if they had received their own reserve during the McKenna-McBride Commission, separate from the Dene Tha, that they would have remained Tse Keh Nay.

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[400] BC Archives, GR 0672 Royal Commission on Indian Affairs Draft Report 1913-1916, Box 2, File 44 (104) Rescuing Lands in Accordance with Treaty #8, Interim Report No. 91 of the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of British Columbia, 1.

[401] Ibid., 2-3.

[402] Cole Harris, *Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance, and Reserves in British Columbia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2002), 254, 383, note 147; LAC, RG 10, Volume 4042, File 336,887-2 General Correspondence and Text of the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of British Columbia 1916, Letter to C.M. Gibbons, Esq., Secretary, Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for B.C., Belmont House, Victoria, B.C. from Duncan Scott, Deputy Superintendent General, Department of Indian Affairs, February 25, 1916.

While the commissioners did not visit the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay they did visit those at Bear Lake, Fort Grahame and McLeod Lake and allot reserves for them. In a letter to N.W. White, the Chairman of the Royal Commission from October 1914, Commissioners J.P. Shaw and Saumarez Carmichael recounted how they visited McLeod Lake and Fort Grahame and asked the local Aboriginals where they wanted their reserve.[403] In doing so, they referred to them as Sicanees attached to a particular trading post. For example they refer to them as the "Sicanees Band at Fort McLeod… [or] the Sicanees Indians from Fort Grahame."[404] Similarly, in the confirmation schedule of the reserves established by the commissioners, they are referred to as the "Sicanees Tribe, Fort McLeod Band [and] "Sicanees Tribe, Fort Fraham (sic) Band."[405] This implied that the commissioners saw these two Tse Keh Nay communities as parts of a united whole. It fails to explain, however, why the Bear Lake Tse Keh Nay were not named in this way (Fort Nelson was excluded due to its location in Treaty No. 8 and Kwadacha because it did not exist yet).[406] Instead the Bear Lake Tse Keh Nay appear as their own group, the Bear Lake Tribe.[407] This would seem to suggest the Commissioners saw the Bear Lake Tribe as not being Tse Keh Nay. However, in an interview with the Indian Agent for the Stuart Lake Agency, W.J. McAllan, McAllan told the Commissioners that the Bear Lake Indians were also

[403] LAC, RG 10, Volume 11025, File AH12 Stuart Lake Agency – Evidence from the Hearings 1914-1915, Report of Commissioner Shaw and Carmichael to N.W. White, Esq., K.C., Chairman of the Royal Commission on Indian Affairs for the Province of British Columbia, Victoria, B.C., October, 1914, 123-125.
[404] Ibid., 123-124.
[405] BCA, GR 2039 Provincial Secretary, B00085, New Reserves – Stuart Lake Agency, 3-4.
[406] Kwadacha was apparently established in the 1920s although no one is sure exactly when. Guy Lanoue, *Brothers: The Politics of Violence among the Sekani of Northern British Columbia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 3.
[407] BCA, GR 2039 Provincial Secretary, B00085, New Reserves – Stuart Lake Agency, 1-2.

Tse Keh Nay.[408] Given this statement it is unclear why the Commissioners

differentiated the Bear Lake Tribe from those at McLeod Lake and Fort Grahame.

One reason might be because the community of old Fort Connelly was a mixture

of Tse Keh Nay, Gitxsan and Dakelh (Carrier), as missionary Adrien Gabriel

Morice had pointed out.[409] Nevertheless, by doing this the McKenna-McBride

Commission reinforced Bear Lake's local identity at the expense of a wider Tse

Keh Nay identity and encouraged the modern view that the Tse Keh Nay only

lived in the Rocky Mountain Trench and only had three communities: McLeod

Lake, Kwadacha, and Tsay Keh Dene, excluding Bear Lake, or its successor First

Nation of Takla Lake.[410]

This categorizing of Tse Keh Nay bands and reserves by locality was

continued in the schedules of Indian reserves produced by the Department of

Indian Affairs to the present. For example, the 1943 *Schedule of Indian Reserves*

lists Bear Lake as the Bear Lake (Fort Connelly) Tribe, while McLeod Lake and

Fort Grahame are listed as the Siccanees Tribe from the Fort Graham or McLeod

Lake Tribe respectively.[411] It is in this schedule that Fort Ware/Kwadacha is

included for the first time, although it should be noted that they are listed not as

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[408] BCA, MS 1056 Royal Commission of Indian Affairs in British Columbia (1913-1916) Transcripts 1914-1915, Box 3, File 4 Stuart Lake Agency, Examination of W.J. McAllan, Indian Agent for the Stuart Lake Agency at the Board Room, Victoria, November 15th, 1915, 166, 262.

[409] Adrien Gabriel Morice, "Notes Archaeological, Industrial and Sociological, on the Western Dene: With an Ethnographic Sketch of the Same," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada* 4 (1893): 26-27.

[410] Indeed, as early as 1937 Diamond Jenness in his book *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia* argues the Tse Keh Nay had left the Bear Lake area in 1890, leaving it and its adjacent territory to be taken over by the Gitxsan and Dakelh. Jenness, *The Sekani Indians of British Columbia*, 11-12.

[411] INAC, "Schedule of Indian Reserves in the Dominion of Canada Part 2: Reserves in the Province of British Columbia Recompiled and Corrected up to March 31, 1943," 144, 155.

Tse Keh Nay, but as the Whitewater Tribe.[412] This seems to contradict

Kwadacha's common inclusion as a Tse Keh Nay community and indeed Robert

Irwin points out in his unpublished paper "Canadian Federalism and Treaty Land

Entitlements," that when Kwadacha's reserves were established, the resident First

Nation was eventually identified as the Fort Grahame Nomads, a Tse Keh Nay

group, led by Aatse Davie.[413] Given that the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay had

apparently amalgamated with the Kaska and Dene Tha by this time, Fort Nelson

first appears in the 1966 *Schedule of Indian Reserves* as the Fort Nelson Band.[414]

Furthermore, by this time the Bear Lake Band had become part of the Dakelh

Takla Lake Band, while the Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay and Fort Ware

Whitewater Band had apparently formed the Finlay River Band, excluding the

McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay, who were now known in Indian Affairs and Northern

Development records as the McLeod Lake Band.[415] Thus by 1966 the Tse Keh

Nay as a tribal or band category had disappeared from the reserve schedules,

coinciding with the division created between the Fort Grahame and McLeod Lake

bands which were no longer considered two parts of one First Nation. In its

stead a union between the Fort Ware and Fort Grahame bands had been

established, (Wilson Duff states it happened in 1959) which makes sense

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[412] This is interesting as the Whitewater River is also known as the Kwadacha River. Ibid., 159.
[413] Duff, 49; Bob Irwin, "Canadian Federalism and Treaty Land Entitlements: New Perspectives on BC and Treaty Eight," paper presented at the Canadian Historical Association Conference May 2009, 23.
[414] INAC, "Schedule of Indian Reserves and Settlements Part II: Province of British Columbia [1966]," http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/indianaffairs/001074-119.03-e.php?page_id_nbr=35216&PHPSESSID=gn7ucb4l8rvsddqp8oqehr3nq1 (accessed 11 August, 2009), 37.
[415] Ibid., 12, 36, 37, 79, 98.

considering the original inhabitants of the Fort Ware were Fort Grahame

Nomads.[416]

Moving ahead to the 1972 *Schedule of Indian Reserves* we find that the

Fort Ware and Fort Grahame were again separated, presumably as a result of the

destruction of Fort Grahame in 1968 by the creation of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam

and Williston Lake Reservoir. In place of the Finlay River Band we find the Fort

Ware Band and the Ingenika Band. Furthermore, the Ingenika Band now has two

new reserves, one at Tutu Creek and another at the Parsnip River, with their old

reserve at Finlay Forks gone from the record, although not their one at Police

Meadow.[417] All of the other three communities (Fort Nelson, Bear Lake, and

McLeod Lake) retained the same tribal affiliation as the 1966 schedule.[418] In the

1982 schedule we find little change except that the Ingenika Band is recognized

as settled at Ingenika Point.[419] In the 1990 schedule the only change is the

addition of a new community for the Ingenika Band called Mesilinka, also known

as Black Pine, which was apparently established in 1986 to protect the western

boundary of the Ingenika Band's traditional territory.[420] Presumably it is because

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[416] BCA, GR 2809 Research Notes of Wilson Duff 1950-1978, File 77 Athapaskan: Sekani, "Fort Graham Nomads," "Sikani;" Duff, 49.

[417] INAC, "Schedule of Indian Reserves and Settlements [1972]," http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/indianaffairs/001074-119.03-e.php?page_id_nbr=36820&PHPSESSID=gn7ucb4l8rvsddqp8oqehr3nq1 (accessed 11 August, 2009), 48, 124, 128, 174.

[418] Ibid., 16, 48, 104.

[419] INAC, "Schedule of Indian Bands, Reserves and Settlements including Membership and Population June 30, 1982," http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/indianaffairs/001074-119.03-e.php?page_id_nbr=38512&PHPSESSID=gn7ucb4l8rvsddqp8oqehr3nq1 (accessed 11 August, 2009), 81, 103-105, 108.

[420] INAC, "Schedule of Indian Bands, Reserves and Settlements including Membership and Population, Location and Area in Hectares December 1990," http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/indianaffairs/001074-119.03-e.php?page_id_nbr=40403&PHPSESSID=gn7ucb4l8rvsddqp8oqehr3nq1 (accessed 11 August, 2009), 122- 124, 126; Jean Isaac, "Sekani History," unpublished paper, 2.

of this affirmation of the Ingenika Band's regional identity and their traditional

territories that in the 1992 reserve schedule the Ingenika Band becomes the Tsay

Keh Dene Band, their present designation.[421] Furthermore, their flooded reserve

at Finlay Forks reappears on the schedule with zero for the number of hectares,

while the community at Mesilinka disappears from the official list of settlements

altogether.[422] From all of these changes we can see that from the establishment of

the first McLeod Lake reserve, each Tse Keh Nay community became "officially"

separate groups or bands on the schedule for reserves, with Bear Lake being

separated during the McKenna-McBride Royal Commission, Fort Nelson and Fort

Ware from the time their reserves were laid out, (although Fort Ware and Fort

Grahame were apparently united briefly between 1959 and 1972) and Fort

Grahame and McLeod Lake being separated with the 1966 schedule. This

separation has reinforced local post identities and resulted in none of these

communities being categorized as "Tse Key Nay" as late as the 1992 schedule.

Of particular note regarding these naming or categorization practices is the

impact of the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, which created the Williston Lake Reservoir

and submerged the Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay communities of Fort Grahame,

Finlay Forks and Ingenika, has had on the Tse Keh Nay in general and Fort

Grahame Tse Keh Nay in particular. [423] As mentioned, it ended government

classification of the Fort Ware and Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay as the Finlay

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[421] INAC, "Schedule of Indian Bands, Reserves and Settlements including Membership and Population Location and Area in Hectares December 1992," http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/indianaffairs/001074-119.03-e.php?page_id_nbr=40626&PHPSESSID=gn7ucb4l8rvsddqp8oqehr3nq1 (accessed 11 August, 2009), 120-123, 126.

[422] Ibid., 123.

[423] Bernard McKay, *Crooked River Rats: The Adventures of Pioneer Rivermen* (Surrey: Hancock House Publishers Ltd., 2000), 174-175.

River Band. In addition to this official split between the Fort Ware and Fort

Grahame Tse Keh Nay, in a region where the Finlay River was the main means of

north-south transportation, the new debris filled reservoir effectively ended it,

cutting off Fort Ware from McLeod Lake to the south.[424] As anthropologist Guy

Lanoue has pointed out the creation of the Williston Lake Reservoir, and the

development that followed it, further separated the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay

from the northern Tse Keh Nay due to McLeod Lake's close proximity to the new

town of MacKenzie and the European population there.[425]

The biggest affects of the creation of the Williston Lake Reservoir,

however, were felt by the Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay. Although "officially"

warned and compensated by the provincial government it is apparent from the

oral tradition of those who lived through it, that the Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay

were not properly informed, or indeed compensated at the time.[426] Indeed Ray

Williston, the BC Minister of Lands and Forests claimed the area that was

flooded, "was an absolute wilderness and there were no people there, no nothing.

Outside of Fort Ware, where there were a few Indians and so on, there was

nothing in the whole area."[427] He later added in regards to Finlay Forks that "no

tribe regarded or occupied the area as its 'headquarters' or permanent place of

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[424] McKay, 7, 173-175; Earl K. Pollon and Shirlee Smith Matheson, *This Was Our Valley* (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd., 1989), 333, 345; Elsie Pierre, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 10 November, 2008; Albert Poole, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 6 November, 2008; Mabel Troendle, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 16 September, 2008.
[425] Lanoue, *Brothers*, 4.
[426] Phillip Charlie, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 6 November, 2008; Seymour Isaac, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 7 November, 2008; McKay, 174-175; Pollon and Shirlee, 331-346; Gordon Pierre, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 17 September, 2008; Albert Poole, 6 November, 2008; Bill Poole, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 8 September, 2008.
[427] Pollon and Matheson, 334.

residence."[428] Both statements seem ill informed, or purposely deceptive, as the

two reserves of the resident Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay had been in government

records since the McKenna-McBride Commission, namely one at Police

Meadows and one at Finlay Forks, both of which were a part of the Fort Grahame

Tse Keh Nay.[429] In compensation the Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay were given two

new reserves near MacKenzie at Tutu Creek, and on the Parsnip River. It is

unclear, however, why their territory was not simply expanded in the vicinity of

their reserve at Police Meadows, which apparently had not lost land with the

flood, particularly in light of the fact that both of the new reserves were outside

their traditional territory.[430]

In the end both new reserves were abandoned by the Fort Grahame Tse

Keh Nay, who moved north to Ingenika Point, where they re-established their old

village of Ingenika as squatters on their own traditional territory.[431] Not being a

reserve, however, the Tse Keh Nay at the Point were "unable to borrow money to

build adequate housing and a sewage and a safe water supply for the

community."[432] With the election of a new chief in 1986 the Tse Keh Nay at

Ingenika began to publicize the problems caused by the creation of the Williston

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[428] Ibid., 334.

[429] BCA, GR 2039 Provincial Secretary, B00085, New Reserves – Stuart Lake Agency, 4; Pollon and Matheson, 334.

[430] The Finlay Forks Reserve was reduced from 149.2 acres to 0 acres, while the Police Meadows Reserve remained the same. BCA, GR 2039 Provincial Secretary, B00085, New Reserves – Stuart Lake Agency, 4; Bev Christensen, "New Community Proposed: Indians Still Waiting," *The Prince George Citizen*, March 27, 1989; INAC, "Schedule of Indian Bands, Reserves and Settlements including Membership and Population Location and Area in Hectares December 1992," 123; Pollon and Matheson, 334.

[431] Bev Christensen, "New Community Proposed: Indians Still Waiting," *The Prince George Citizen*, March 27, 1989; Malcolm Curtis, "$12 Million Proposal: Ingenika Picture Brightens," *The Prince George Citizen*, June 23, 1989; Jean Isaac, "Sekani History," unpublished paper, 2; Mabel Troendle.

[432] Bev Christensen, "New Community Proposed: Indians Still Waiting," *The Prince George Citizen*, March 27, 1989.

Lake Reservoir.[433] Eventually, they would begin to pressure the government for

the creation of three new reserves: at Ingenika Point, at the north end of Williston

Lake and at Black Pine along the Mesilinka River.[434] This prompted the

provincial government to enter into negotiations with the Tse Keh Nay at

Ingenika, eventually leading the construction of a new community (Tsay Keh

Dene) at Hydro Lake on the north end of the Williston Lake Reservoir in 1990.[435]

Finally, in 1999 they began negotiations with the provincial government and BC

Hydro over the impact the Williston Lake Reservoir had on them, leading to a

final settlement in 2009 of "a one-time payment of $20.9 million and annual

payments of $2 million."[436] It was this community that entered the modern

comprehensive treaty process on its own accord, rather than in tandem with

McLeod Lake or Kwadacha Tse Keh Nay, two groups with whom the Fort

Grahame Tse Keh Nay had previously been affiliated with.

A significant part of this new comprehensive treaty process, however, is

land claims. This is because the new treaties do not include "blanket

extinguishment of First Nations' rights, title and privileges."[437] Rather the aim is

"treaties which state precisely each party's rights, duties and jurisdiction."[438] It is

this last aspect, "jurisdiction," that has led to land claims, as each Tse Keh Nay

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[433] Jean Isaac, "Sekani History," in *Collected Writings of the Tsay Keh Dene*, ed. Kaya Minogue, unpublished article, 67.
[434] Bev Christensen, "Housing, Land Problems: Politicians to Visit Village," *The Prince George Citizen*, June 8, 1987.
[435] Jean Isaac, "Sekani History," in *Collected Writings of the Tsay Keh Dene*, 67.
[436] Gordon Hoekstra, "Dam Impact Deal Made," *The Prince George Citizen*, July 3, 2009.
[437] BC Treaty Commission, *What's the Deal with Treaties? A Lay Person's Guide to Treaty Making in British Columbia*, 2nd ed. (Vancouver: BC Treaty Commission, 2002), 24.
[438] Ibid., 24.

community assert which part of Tse Keh Nay traditional territory they make claim

to. (See Appendix B)

Given that they are dividing up a shared traditional territory there are

overlaps in territorial claims. As the BC Treaty Commission has stated:

> Overlaps result from a variety of situations, including a tradition of
> sharing territories for resources, movements of families or tribes
> and boundary disputes.[439]

This seems to have been the case with the Tse Keh Nay who seem in both fur

trade and missionary records to have existed as regional and/or post bands within

a larger Tse Keh Nay identity. Of particular note is the overlap that exists

between the southern three Tse Keh Nay communities: McLeod Lake, Tsay Keh

Dene and Takla Lake. For example both Takla Lake and Tsay Keh Dene claim

Thutade Lake as part of their traditional territory. Similarly, much of Tsay Keh

Dene western territory overlaps with Takla Lake eastern territory. While to the

south the area west of Williston Lake and between the Manson and Nation Rivers

is claimed by both Tsay Keh Dene and Takla Lake, as well as McLeod Lake

communities. Both McLeod Lake and Takla Lake claim the area around Tsayta

Lake as much of McLeod Lake's west territory overlaps with Takla Lake's

southeast territory. What is perhaps more interesting is the apparent symmetry

between the northern boundary of Tsay Keh Dene and the southern boundary of

the Kaska Dena Council (which includes Kwadacha). This would seem to

suggest that although involved in the treaty process separately, the two Tse Keh

Nay First Nations have been able to coordinate their territorial claims. Similarly,

east of Williston Lake the boundary between McLeod Lake and Tsay Keh Dene's

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[439] Ibid., 23.

claimed traditional territory does not overlap, although this could simply be because the border for each is the Peace River and corresponding Peace Reach of the Williston Lake Reservoir. Nevertheless, it is only west of Williston Lake that overlap occurs, and then mainly between Takla Lake and other Tse Keh Nay communities. Whether this is a result of Takla Lake's predecessor Tse Keh Nay community of Bear Lake being so early set apart from other Tse Keh Nay is unclear. Nevertheless, it would appear that whereas the territorial division between the Takla Lake Tse Keh Nay, and the Tsay Keh Dene and McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay is not well defined, the other three Tse Keh Nay communities, which at various points were apparently associated, have defined the territorial division between themselves well. Given that territory overlap is the norm in the modern comprehensive treaty process, this ability to clearly define the division seems to suggest that although taking part in the modern comprehensive treaty process separately, the Tse Keh Nay are able at some level to coordinate their claims over their traditional territory. This in turn suggests that the local identities that were reified during the treaty and reserve era have not destroyed a wider Tse Keh Nay identity.

This is also seen in the general correspondence of the land claimed by the four Tse Keh Nay communities and wider Tse Keh Nay territory found in the fur trade period, which suggests a continuance with the past. It is problematic to compare these recent land claims with the fur trade record of traditional territories, however, because to the north Kwadacha has not produced a separate traditional territory map from the wider Kaska Dena Council, while to the west

the Takla Lake claim, being a mixed Dakelh and Tse Keh Nay community, it is impossible to tell where the traditional Tse Keh Nay territory is said to end and the traditional Dakelh territory begins. Nevertheless, fur trade records seem to indicate that the western boundary of the Tse Keh Nay (Bear and Thutade Lake) are close to the boundary claimed today by Takla Lake, although being a mixed Dakelh-Tse Keh Nay First Nation it now it extends further south along Takla Lake to around Tsitsutl Mountain and east to the continental divide, which McLeod Lake apparently claims as the southern boundary of their traditional territory and corresponds with the Parsnip-McGregor Divide. Indeed McLeod Lake claims as its traditional territory all of British Columbia east of Williston Lake between the Peace River and the continental divide. This differs from the claimed territory of Tsay Keh Dene, which only extends a little east of the central range of the Rocky Mountains. It extends Tse Keh Nay eastern territory far beyond the Rockies, which from the time of Sir Alexander MacKenzie had served as the perceived boundary between the Tse Keh Nay and their eastern neighbors, the Rocky Mountain Indians and the Dunneza. Whether this is a result of a claimed affiliation with the Rocky Mountain Indians and Dunneza, or is claimed to be Tse Keh Nay territory prior to the Tse Keh Nay being driven west by the Rocky Mountain Indians and Dunneza is unclear.[440] Apart from these changes, however, it, would appear that the combined claimed traditional territory of the

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[440] Apparently some Tse Keh Nay claim the Rocky Mountain Indians were Tse Keh Nay. Given, however, that Sir Alexander MacKenzie distinguishes them from the unnamed Indians he encounters on the Parsnip River, a tradition which is carried on by all his successors in the fur trade record, and that fact later fur trade records state the Rocky Mountain Indians and Dunneza are amalgamating, I argue that today's descendents of the Rocky Mountain Indians are the Dunneza, and not the Tse Keh Nay. Although if the difference between the Tse Keh Nay and Dunneza is only a result of outsider perceptions of both, or Treaty No. 8, this would be moot point.

four Tse Keh Nay communities correspond with the boundaries identified by fur trade records.

It is clear that like treaty making, the reserve taking process reinforced local post identities at the expense of a wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity. As early as the British Columbia Indian Reserve Commission it was established that reserves would be established as needed and that First Nations (based on language) would be treated uniformly. Due to isolated location of most of the Tse Keh Nay these two policies came into conflict, and rather than creating reserves for all Tse Keh Nay, the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay alone received a reserve in 1892, rather than all Tse Keh Nay at the same time. This was the first step in reinforcing local identities as opposed to wider Tse Keh Nay identity. Indeed, the vast majority of the Tse Keh Nay would have to wait until the Royal Commission on Indians Affairs in British Columbia (the McKenna-McBride Commission) to receive reserves. Even then, however, the decision was made to categorize the Bear Lake band as not being Tse Keh Nay, despite evidence to the contrary. This contributed to the mistaken view that Bear Lake and its successor First Nation of Takla Lake were not Tse Keh Nay. This emphasis of local identities by classification would continue as Fort Ware was first included in the 1943 *Schedule of Indian Reserves* as the Whitewater First Nation and not as Tse Keh Nay. Similarly, in the 1966 schedule, Fort Nelson would first appear as the Fort Nelson Band (although this might be expected as by then they had apparently ceased to be Tse Keh Nay). However, in the same schedule McLeod Lake and Fort Grahame were no longer identified as being Tse Keh Nay, with Fort

Grahame forming part of the Finlay River Band with Fort Ware. This union of Fort Ware and Fort Grahame would end with creation of Williston Lake Reservoir, which would split the Finlay River Band into the Fort Ware and the Ingenika Bands. It is not surprising therefore that when the new comprehensive treaty process began, each modern Tse Keh Nay community would taken an independent approach, and claim jurisdiction over parts of wider Tse Keh Nay traditional territory.

These separate approaches, however, have not entirely erased a common Tse Keh Nay identity, as seen by the claiming of traditional lands. This seems to suggest some coordination despite the different approaches taken by the communities. Similarly, the claimed territory of the four communities, when taken as whole reflects the territorial boundaries of the Tse Keh Nay found in the fur trade record west of the Rockies. East of the Rockies and South of the Peace, however, the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay have claimed all of British Columbia to the continental divide, a claim that can only be justified by claiming territory lost to the Rocky Mountain Indians and Dunneza prior to written records, or an assertion that the Rocky Mountain Indians and even the Dunneza were Tse Keh Nay. All of this shows that while reserve taking reinforced local identities, it did not mean the destruction of a wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity. Most importantly, however from the perspective of my wider thesis it appears that just as the missionary and fur trader perspective reinforced a perception of Tse Keh Nay ethnic unity, the treaty and reserve era reinforced local Tse Keh Nay identities.

Conclusion

Fredrik Barth in his introduction to *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* states that "ethnic groups are… a form of social organization."[441] Accordingly, they "are categories of ascription and identification by the actors themselves, and thus have the characteristic of organizing interaction between people."[442] Their critical feature is "the characteristic of self-ascription and ascription by others."[443] What is critical to this self-ascription and ascription are socially significant cultural traits and differences, which form ethnic boundaries that separate and maintain ethnic groups.[444] Continuity is maintained by the persistence of these ethnic boundaries, and not the cultural traits and differences, which may change over time as they cease to be socially relevant.[445] Therefore, in order for ethnic identity to change, the ethnic boundaries must cease to exist, which means the cultural traits and differences they are based on cease to be socially relevant and do not find a replacement to maintain the ethnic boundary.[446]

These dynamics can be seen among the Tse Keh Nay (Sekani), particularly in regards to their relations with the European newcomers. From the late 18th century to the late 20th century the Tse Keh Nay found themselves in different circumstances and interactions with Europeans, all of which have had different affects on Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity and boundaries. All of this proves that Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity is both dynamic and situational in nature.

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[441] Fredrik Barth, "Introduction," in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*, ed. Fredrik Barth (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1969), 13.

[442] Ibid., 10.

[443] Ibid., 13.

[444] Ibid., 14-16.

[445] Ibid., 14.

[446] Ibid., 25.

During the fur trade and missionary periods the Tse Keh Nay were conceptualized as a single First Nation (albeit with constituent subgroups), while during the treaty and reserve period the Tse Keh Nay were treated in an ad hoc and often localized manner, which reinforced local identities, often at the expense of a wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity. Nevertheless, this shift in emphasis has not destroyed wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity.

During the fur trade period, when social interaction with Europeans first began fur traders came to see the various proto-Tse Keh Nay (Sekani) groups as a single ethnicity. This perception was based on their trading patterns, their relations to each other are, their relations with other First Nations. These three aspects are what emerge from the fur trade records to suggest the ethnic boundaries which separated the Tse Keh Nay from other ethnic groups. For the most part they are instrumentalist in nature, although the "relations to each other" aspect contained primordial characteristics, such as familial ties and language. Fur trader perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay set the stage for all later perceptions of them, with those following either agreeing or disagreeing with them. Fur trade records note three key perceptions of the Tse Keh Nay. One was the emergence of a wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity layered on top of more local or regional identities, often centered on fur trade posts. This dual or layered identity was not an issue for the Tse Keh Nay, however, as ethnic identity often contains this element. For example, one can identify as being English and a Liverpudlian, without necessarily diminishing either identity. The second fur trader perception was that the Tse Keh Nay were often in conflict with neighboring First Nations

like the Rocky Mountain Indians, the Dunneza (Beaver), the Dakelh and

Secwepemc (Shuswap), although apparently not with the Kaska or the Tahltan to

the northwest. And thirdly, from the fur trade records one can extrapolate that

Tse Keh Nay territory roughly extended from the Chukachida and Dease Rivers to

the northwest, north along the Liard River, to the Fort Nelson and Sikanni Chief

Rivers to the northeast, east along the Rocky Mountains to the continental divide

in the southeast, south, and southwest, (although extending to Stuart Lake) and

then around Bear and Thutade Lake to the west.

During the missionary period these fur trader views perceptions were

supplemented by the perceptions of missionaries like Adrien Gabriel Morice. In

particular, Morice analyzed Tse Keh Nay ethnicity on linguistic grounds. On this

basis the perceived ethnic boundaries of the Tse Keh Nay moved from the largely

instrumentalist basis found in the fur trade to a purely primordial one, language.

While Morice tried to promote his views as superior to those of fur traders, he,

more often then not, agreed with, supported, or supplemented fur trader

perceptions, particularly in regards to a wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity.

Morice based his observations on linguistics and his knowledge of Tse Keh Nay,

a trait he argued made these observations superior to those of the fur traders.

Morice's claims regarding Tse Keh Nay ethnicity are problematic, however, given

that he apparently had limited contact with the Tse Keh Nay even though he

apparently understood their language. Because of his emphasis on language

Morice included the Dunneza and Tsuu T'ina (Sarcee) as Tse Keh Nay stretching

Tse Keh Nay ethnicity beyond what is credible, particularly in regards to the

latter. Nevertheless, he is also among the first to provide population estimates of all Tse Keh Nay groups. And finally, despite identifying Tse Keh Nay subgroups, Morice generally refers to the Tse Keh Nay as whole, a fact that reinforced the fur trade perception of a larger Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity.

During the treaty and reserve period the emphasis on wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity shifted as government agents dealt with the Tse Keh Nay on regional and local levels. In regards to treaties, this period was one of a reinforcement of regional Tse Keh Nay identities. Under Treaty No. 8 the Tse Keh Nay and Dunneza east of the Rockies were differentiated from those Tse Keh Nay west of the Rockies, thereby reinforcing east-west regional divisions. This reinforcement of regional Tse Keh Nay identities continued with the McLeod Lake adhesion which differentiated the "southern" McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay from the other three "northern" Tse Keh Nay communities west of the Rockies. This regionalization of Tse Keh Nay identity did not destroy Tse Keh Nay ethnic boundaries, but did represent a shift away Morice's perception of language as the central characteristic underlining these boundaries, to those found in the fur trade: their relations to each other, relations to other First Nations, and their local territorial range. This shift meant the end of any suggestion that the Dunneza and Tsuu T'ina were Tse Keh Nay. It also led to the disappearance of the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay. In Barthian terms the Fort Nelson Tse Keh Nay found themselves in a situation where it was no longer viable for them to retain their Tse Keh Nay ethnic affiliation; a situation no doubt resulting from the reinforcement of their

regional identity.[447] This reinforcement of regional Tse Keh Nay identity,

combined with the precedent of Crown-Tse Keh Nay treaty relations being

conducted on a regional basis, resulted in each of the four modern Tse Keh Nay

communities taking separate approaches in the modern comprehensive treaty

process, as well as Takla Lake and Kwadacha's (Fort Ware's) inclusion in largely

non-Tse Keh Nay regional tables.

During the reserve taking process local, often post based, Tse Keh Nay

identities were reinforced at the expense of a wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity.

As such, it represents the re-emergence of the Tse Keh Nay ethnic boundaries

based on trading patterns in the fur trade, along with those found in the treaty

process. This reinforcement of local identities was begun with the establishment

reserves during the British Columbia Indian Reserve Commission in the later

nineteenth century, which differentiated the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay from

other Tse Keh Nay by giving only them a reserve in 1892. It was continued in the

McKenna-McBride Royal Commission (1913-1916) which differentiated the Bear

Lake Tse Keh Nay from those at McLeod Lake and Fort Grahame by categorizing

them on a local band level and not on a wider Tse Keh Nay level. This

classification on the local band level would continue in succeeding reserve

schedules until 1966 when the category Tse Keh Nay disappeared from the

reserve schedule altogether to be replaced by exclusively local designations.

Nevertheless affiliation between the emerging modern Tse Keh Nay communities

continued with the Finlay River Band, which united Fort Ware/Kwadacha and

Fort Grahame. This was ended with the creation of the Williston Lake Reservoir,

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[447] Ibid., 24-25.

displaced the Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay from their traditional territory onto two new reserves, and then later into two communities, the first illegal and the second legal. Like the treaty process (and indeed supported and supportive of it) this reinforcement of local Tse Keh Nay identities, combined with the precedent of Crown-Tse Keh Nay reserve relations being on a local level, made it almost a forgone conclusion that the four modern Tse Keh Nay communities would take separate approaches in the land claims aspect of the modern comprehensive treaty process.

The changes between the first two and last two periods regarding Tse Keh Nay communities are dramatic. Of the four Tse Keh Nay communities found in the fur trade and missionary records: Fort Connelly/Bear Lake, Fort McLeod/McLeod Lake, Fort Grahame and Fort Nelson, only McLeod Lake has remained at the same location, and entirely Tse Keh Nay. Fort Connelly/Bear Lake merged with the Dakelh Takla Lake First Nation forming a new Dakelh-Tse Keh Nay First Nation. Fort Grahame gave rise to a new community, Fort Ware/Kwadacha, only to be destroyed by the creation of the Williston Lake Reservoir. The Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay home was replaced first by a reserve on the Parsnip River south of its inhabitant's traditional territory, (although still in Tse Keh Nay territory) then by an illegal squatter community at the Ingenika Point, called Ingenika, and then by a new community (but not a reserve) at the north end of the Williston Lake Reservoir, called Tsay Keh Dene. And finally, Fort Nelson has entirely disappeared as Tse Keh Nay community with its inhabitants apparently self-identifying as Dene Tha (Slave) or Nehiyawak (Cree).

All of this has resulted in a new list of Tse Keh Nay communities: McLeod Lake, Takla Lake, Kwadacha, and Tsay Keh Dene, all of which have chosen to enter the modern comprehensive treaty period independent of each other, with Kwadacha doing so as part of the Kaska Dena Council and Takla Lake as part of the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council.

This localization of Tse Keh Nay identities, however, has not erased a larger Tse Keh Nay identity that can be glimpsed in other ways. As mentioned in the fourth chapter, because of the separate land claims of the four Tse Keh Nay communities there is understandably overlap. What is interesting is that most of it occurs west of the Williston Lake Reservoir and involves the Takla Lake Tse Key Nay, whose predecessor community, Bear Lake, was differentiated from the other three Tse Key Nay communities in the reserve taking process. For the other three communities, however, there is evidence of cooperation in making land claims. For example, there is surprisingly little overlap found in the land claims of Tsay Keh Dene and Kwadacha and Tsay Keh Dene and McLeod Lake east of the Williston Lake Reservoir. This lack of overlap suggests some kind of joint planning given that territory overlap is the norm in the modern comprehensive treaty process. The ability to clearly define the division seems to suggest that although taking part in the modern comprehensive treaty process separately, the Tse Keh Nay are able at some level to coordinate their claims over their traditional territory.

This is supported by the fact each community still identifies as Tse Keh Nay, and acknowledge other Tse Keh Nay communities. This is seen on the

websites produced by the communities. For example, the McLeod Lake website

lists the Tse Keh Nay communities as McLeod Lake, Kwadacha and Tsay Keh

Dene.[448] Meanwhile at the Tse Keh Nay website, established to save Amazay

Lake from Northgate Minerals, the three northern communities (Kwadacha, Tsay

Keh Dene, and Takla Lake) present themselves as a single Tse Keh Nay First

Nation, despite their different approaches to the comprehensive treaty process,

and the fact the Canadian state had reinforced local identities by choosing to deal

with them separately with regarding reserves, and ultimately categorizing them as

different from each other since at least the McKenna-McBride Commission.[449]

This is supported by oral tradition. As seen in the movement to save

Amazay Lake, the three northern Tse Keh Nay communities have come together

as a single First Nation. This coming together, however, has excluded McLeod

Lake. Nevertheless, no fewer than seven of the nine individuals interviewed from

Tsay Keh Dene stated that the McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay were not only Tse Keh

Nay, but that they had familial ties to the Tsay Keh Dene.[450] Indeed, Grand Chief

Gordon Pierre prefaced it by stating they were like Kwadacha when it came to the

relationship between McLeod Lake and Tsay Keh Dene.[451] This is significant

because as the successor communities of Fort Grahame, Kwadacha and Tsay Keh

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[448] McLeod Lake Indian Band, "McLeod Lake's History," www.mlib.ca/about_us.htm (accessed 8 March, 2009; site now discontinued).

[449] Tse Keh Nay, "Our Communities," http://tsekehnay.net/index.php?/communities (accessed 8 March, 2009).

[450] Jean Isaac, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 9 September, 2008; Seymour Isaac, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 7 November, 2008; Ray Izony, interviewed by author, Prince George, BC, 23 September, 2008; Elsie Pierre, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 10 November, 2008; Gordon Pierre, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 17 September, 2008; Albert Poole, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 8 September, 2008; Albert Poole, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 6 November, 2008; Bill Poole, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 8 September, 2008.

[451] Gordon Pierre.

Dene have a common ancestry group, (many of whom appear in the fur trade

journals for Fort Grahame) and continue to have extensive familial ties right to

the present, with families like the Abous, Charlies, Davies, Massettoes, Pierres,

Pooles, Porters, and Tomah/Izonys[452] living in both communities. And indeed,

individuals change residence between these communities during their lifetime,

depending on various factors, including a simple preference for the politics and

bylaws of one community over the other.   Because of this common ancestry and

extensive familial ties, to state McLeod Lake is like Kwadacha in its relationship

to Tsay Keh Dene implies Tsay Keh Dene, Kwadacha, and McLeod Lake also

have a common ancestry and extensive familial ties. This is seen in the list of

significant Tse Keh Nay surnames associated with Tse Keh Nay communities

found in Appendix A where the Toodicks are in both Kwadacha and McLeod

Lake, and the Pierres are in Kwadacha, McLeod Lake and Tsay Keh Dene. (See

Appendix A, Tables A-1 & A-2) Similar connections exist with Takla Lake. As

with Tsay Keh Dene and Kwadacha this is explained at Takla Lake by the fact

Fort Grahame was the successor to Fort Connelly/Bear Lake and a 2007 Tse Keh

Nay report states, "Many Kwadacha families maintain that they came from the

Fort Grahame and Bear Lake regions."[453] Being more specific the report then

goes on to cite a connection between the Massettoe families of Kwadacha to

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[452] As I explain in Appendix A my grandfather chose to use his father's first name (Tomah) as his
surname, while his brother Isadore ultimately chose to use his father's surname (Izony) as his
surname. As such, the Tomahs and Izonys, although having a different surname, are actually one
family.

[453] Lorraine Littlefield, Linda Dorricott, and Deidre Cullon, "Tse Keh Nay Traditional and
Contemporary Use and Occupation at Amazay (Duncan Lake): A Draft Report,"
http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/050/documents_staticpost/cearref_3394/hearings/SM01.pdf (accessed 16
November 2009), 9.

Takla Lake, and reversing this connection, the Patrick family of Takla Lake claim descent from Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay.[454]

Beyond these familial ties between the four communities there are other connections among them. For example, there are gatherings of Tse Keh Nay elders from multiple communities, and involvement by non-local Tse Keh Nay in local band meetings by virtue of the fact that they are Tse Keh Nay.   Although McLeod was not included in the movement to save Amazay Lake, Grand Chief Gordon Pierre's predecessor as chief, Ray Izony, included McLeod Lake in a list of Tse Keh Nay communities that includes Takla Lake to the west, Kwadacha to the north, Halfway River to the east, McLeod Lake to the south, and Tsay Keh Dene in the center.[455] Indeed, he mentioned it was his goal to bring each community together into a wider Tse Keh Nay First Nation.[456] The inclusion of Halfway River, generally regarded as a Dunneza community raises an interesting point of how the Tse Keh Nay define themselves. Eight of the nine individuals interviewed stressed the importance of language as an ethnic identifier.[457] In this instance, however, it does not necessarily mean a knowledge of the Tse Keh Nay language, but rather a historic affiliation with it and its speakers. As mentioned in the third chapter this focus on language has meant the Tse Keh Nay see themselves as being related to the Dunneza, if not the same ethnic group. All of this suggests that despite the shift from the wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity

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[454] Ibid., 9-10.
[455] Ray Izony.
[456] Ibid.
[457] Phillip Charlie, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 6 November, 2008; Jean Isaac, Ray Izony, Elsie Pierre, Gordon Pierre, Albert Poole, 6 November, 2008, Bill Poole; Mabel Troendle, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, 16 September, BC, 2008.

found in the fur trade and missionary periods, to the localized identities in the treaty and reserve period, a wider Tse Keh Nay ethnicity remains.

This is possible because Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity is dynamic and situational. It is a dynamic identity because it is layered. There is no single dimension to Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity, rather there are several. My own situation illustrates this. I am a Tse Keh Nay from Tsay Keh Dene, the successor community of Ingenika and Fort Grahame. More specifically, I am a Tse Keh Nay from the Tomah family, descended from Oliver Tomah, Thomas Tomah, Tomah Izony and Izony; the last two appearing in the fur trade journals for Fort Grahame.[458] This identity is situational because it responds to the situation the individual, community or First Nation finds it in. As one layer of Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity is challenged, another is strengthened holding the identity together. This is why the shift in emphasis from wider Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity to local and regional Tse Keh ethnic identities did not result in the erasure of the Tse Keh Nay.

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[458] Hudson's Bay Company Archives, (HBCA) B.249/a/2, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1893-1895, 13 October, 1894, folio 16d; HBCA, B.249/a/9, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1908-1917, 15 May 1912, page 175.

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Appendix A
Using Fur Trade Records and Naming practices to establish Tse Keh Nay
Territory 1891-1922

Identifying individuals by ethnicity in the fur trade records for McLeod

Lake and Fort Grahame is difficult. This is because like the Fort Nelson journals

these journals rarely identify individuals according to ethnic or indeed even

geographic terms unless they are not local.[459] To further confuse matters some

individuals, such as Challus, are referred to in either ethnic or geographic terms

when they first appear in the journal but are later referred to by a single name

without any ethnic or geographic definers after presumably taking up residence

around the post.[460]

One way to overcome some of these problems is by taking the surnames

of the present Tse Keh Nay (Sekani) and using them as guidelines for identifying

the ethnicity of individuals named in the fur trader records. This method is not

foolproof, however. This is because many families cross ethnic lines through

intermarriage.[461] For example, if one were to claim that just because there are

currently individuals at McLeod Lake, who are named Prince and identify as

being Tse Keh Nay, that all individuals in the fur trade records named Prince are

definitely Tse Keh Nay one would have to ignore the most famous Prince, Rose

Prince, who was clearly Dakelh (Carrier). Nevertheless by defining those who are

named Prince in the fur trade journals as being potentially Tse Keh Nay, or the

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[459] Hudson's Bay Company Archives, (HBCA) B.119/a/12, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1905-1911, 13 December 1905, page 8.

[460] HBCA, B.119/a/5, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1891-1893, 16 December 1892, folio 20d, 1 March 1893, folio 26d; HBCA, B.119/a/8, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1896-1898, 13 January 1897, folio 5d, 19 June 1898, page folio 16; HBCA, B.119/a/10, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1901-1902, 17 October 1902, folio 25d.

[461] Gordon Pierre, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, B.C., 8 September, 2008.

ancestors of modern day Tse Keh Nay, (proto Tse Keh Nay) one can begin to

examine how the presumably Dakelh Prince in this era eventually become the Tse

Keh Nay Princes of our own era. Furthermore, it is less problematic with names

like Tomah, Poole, Solonas, Chingee and others that are commonly held to be Tse

Keh Nay.

Problems, however, remain in determining ancestry and familial

connections. This is because names as we now know them came with the arrival

of Europeans.[462] In the case of the Tse Keh Nay, surnames were taken from great

ancestors.[463] The handing down of these surnames, however, did not always

happened according to European norms of father to son. As Wilson Duff states:

> Sometimes a man was given a first name; for example, Tom. This
> would then become the surname of his children; for example, Sam
> Tom or Lizzie Tom (which might become Samuel Thomas and
> Elizabeth Thomas). Grandchildren usually kept the same surname
> (Jack Tom), but in some cases they chose to continue the custom
> of using the father's first name (Jack Sam).[464]

This practice of adopting the first name of the father as the surname of the child is

seen in the fur trade records at both Fort Grahame and McLeod Lake.[465] For

example, it is seen in my own family where my great great grandfather's name

[462] Wilson Duff, *The Indian History of British Columbia: The Impact of the White Man*, new ed. (Victoria: Royal British Columbia Museum, 1997), 151; Jean Isaac, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, B.C. 9 September, 2008.
[463] Jean Isaac.
[464] Duff, 151.
[465] The most obvious example in the journals is the case of Simon and his son Charlie Simon. HBCA, B.249/a/7, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1902-1905, 12 August 1903, page 37, 29 November 1903, page 46-47; A less obvious example is when an individual's children are identified by first name only, and the same first names appears in the journals with name of the individual as the last name. For example take Charley the son of Chingee who is mentioned on 9 November 1900 in the McLeod Lake journals and who presumably is Charley Chingee mentioned five days later in the same journal. HBCA, B.119/a/9, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1898-1901, 9 November 1900, folio 34d, 14 November 1900, folio 35.

(Izony) became my great grandfather's surname (Tomah Izony).[466] This practice

continued with my grandfather (Thomas Tomah), who took his father's first name

as his surname.[467] It appears to have ended sometime in the mid-twentieth

century as my father used my grandfather's surname (Oliver Tomah). Further

complicating the matter, however, is that names were not standardized until

recently. For example, although my great grandfather appears as Tomah Izony on

my grandfather's death record in 1966, he appears as Thomas Izony on his own

death record in 1974.[468] Furthermore, my grandfather's brother, Isadore Izony,

appears as Isadore Toma in 1949 Finlay Forks voter's list.[469] An additional

problem with this method is how the fur trade journals record names. Although

they occasionally use complete names, often all that is included is the first name.

Once again this presents problems as there is no absolute guarantee that Stephen

from one entry is the same Stephen Solonas found in succeeding and preceding

entries. For that reason when identifying someone as Tse Keh Nay using this

method I keep in mind the context in which the name appears, namely in this

instance how many Stephen X's there are in the journals at the time where the

name appears without X as a last name. With this in mind, Guy Lanoue's

*Brothers: The Politics of Violence among the Sekani of Northern British

Columbia*, as well as my interview with Elsie Pierre and personal knowledge of

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[466] Jean Isaac.

[467] Jean Isaac.

[468] BC Archives, (BCA) GR 2951, Vital Statistics Agency Death Registrations 1872-1986, Volume 017A, British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency: Death Registrations 017001 to 017399, 1966, 66-09-017364; BCA, GR 2951, Vital Statistics Agency Death Registrations 1872-1986, Volume 020A, British Columbia Vital Statistics Agency: Death Registrations 020001 to 020381, 1974, 74-09-020137.

[469] Bernard McKay, *Crooked River Rats: The Adventures of Pioneer Rivermen* (Surrey: Hancock House Publishers Ltd., 2000), 46

the families of Tsay Keh Dene, I have compiled a list of names of both definite

and hybrid Tse Keh Nay surnames. They are as follows:

Table A-1		
Guy Lanoue's List of Tse Keh Nay Surnames (Historic & Variations in Italics)		
Fort Ware / Kwadacha	McLeod Lake	Fort Grahame
Abou Boya Charlie Davie Egnell Massettoe McCook Pierre Poole Porter Seymour Toodick	Alexis Chingee Fisher Frank Inyallie/*High Yaller*/*High Yallie* Isadore Lebrun *Pierre* Prince Solonas Tylee	*Davie* *Hunter* *Izony /Azony* *Pool* *Toomah*
Table A-2		
Elsie Pierre's List of Tse Keh Nay Surnames with Tsay Keh Dene Surnames Added by the Author		
Fort Ware / Kwadacha	McLeod Lake	Tsay Keh Dene
Abou Egnell Massettoe McCook Pierre Poole Seymour	Inyallie Isadore Solonas Toodick Tylee	Abou Hunter Isaac Izony Pierre Poole Tomah

[470]

Based on this list I was able to identify individuals in the fur trade

journals, who although perhaps not identifying as Tse Keh Nay in their own time

would be considered Tse Keh Nay, or ancestors of today's Tse Keh Nay. While

not an ideal way of assigning ethnic identity in the fur trade journals, it is the most

reliable method I can devise. Using this method, not only does the list of names

[470] BCA, MS 2273, Guy Lanoue, "Continuity and Change: The Development of Political Self-Definition Among the Sekani of Northern British Columbia" (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 1983), 116-119; Guy Lanoue, *Brothers: The Politics of Violence among the Sekani of Northern British Columbia* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992), 47; Elsie Pierre, interviewed by author, Tsay Keh Dene, BC, 10 November, 2008.

found in the Fort Grahame and McLeod Lake journals suddenly contain identifiable Tse Keh Nay individuals, but I am able to use these names to make some general observations regarding Tse Keh Nay territoriality based on departures to and arrivals from these posts. This is important to determine Tse Keh Nay ethnic identity. For although Fredrik Barth argues for the importance of studying ethnic boundaries, which are by their nature social, these ethnic boundaries can have territorial counterparts as well.[471]

Taking the names found in these journals, I have used the previously mentioned criteria to determine who is or is likely to be Tse Keh Nay. I next identified the locations these individuals were said to have arrived from or departed to. I then refined the data for the posts, excluding the destinations and arrivals from the only appear once in the entire time of the journals with the exception of non-local potentially Tse Keh Nay groups found in the journals. This gives me an indication of where the progenitors of today's Tse Keh Nay traveled to and presumably lived prior to the settlement on reserve or in the case of Tsay Keh Dene in a community.

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[471] Fredrik Barth, "Introduction," in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*, ed. Fredrik Barth (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1969), 15.

Table A-3
McLeod Lake Post Journal Arrivals and Departures:
Fort Grahame and McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay

	1891-1911	1891-1911	1891-1911	1891-1911
	Arrivals	Departures	Arrivals	Departures
	Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay	Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay	McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay	McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay
Carp Lake				3
Crooked River			2	
Down River			6	3
Finlay River	1		2	
Fish Lake			9	4
Fort Grahame	3	1	11	7
Giscome Portage			2	
Parsnip River	1		17	19
Pine River			2	
Pine River Pass				2
Robinson Creek			3	3
Rocky Mountain Portage			2	
Stuart Lake / Ft St James			59	54
Tudyah Lake			12	8
War Lake (Long Lake)[472]			5	8

Notes: HBCA, B.119/a/5; HBCA, B.119/a/6, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1893-1895; HBCA, B.119/a/7, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1895-1896; HBCA, B.119/a/8; HBCA, B.119/a/9; HBCA, B.119/a/10; HBCA, B.119/a/11, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1902-1905; HBCA, B.119/a/12.

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[472] According Adrien Gabriel Morice's Map and the *British Columbia Recreational Atlas* Long Lake is now known as War Lake with Long River now known as McLeod River. Adrien Gabriel Morice, "Map of the Northern Interior of British Columbia," in *The History of the Northern Interior of British Columbia* (Smithers: Interior Stationery Ltd., 1978); British Columbia Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, *British Columbia Recreational Atlas*, 3rd ed. (Victoria: P.T.C. Phototype Composing Ltd., 1993), 48 B2.
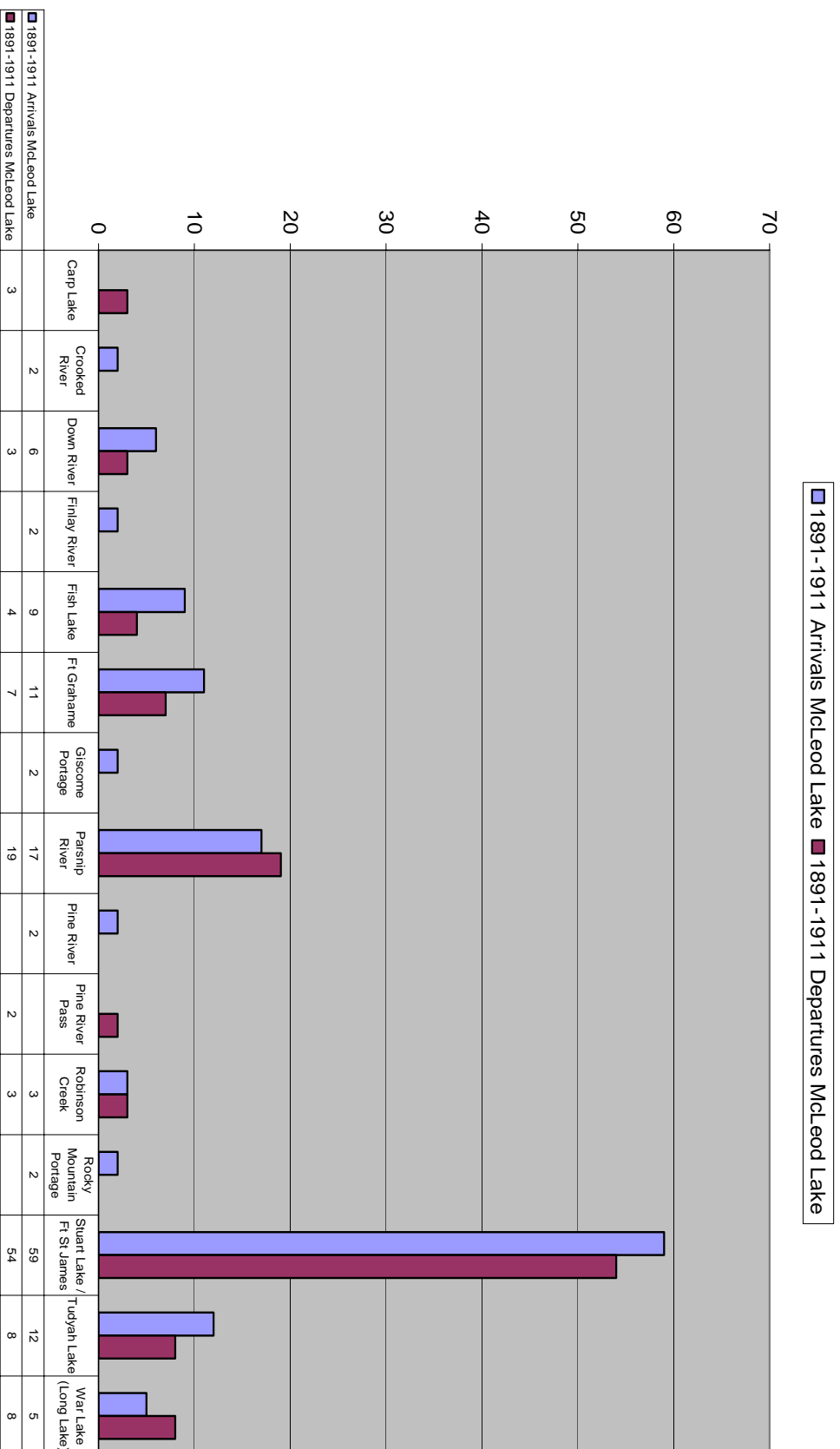
Figure A-1 - McLeod Lake Arrivals and Departures - McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay Alone

	Carp Lake	Crooked River	Down River	Finlay River	Fish Lake	Ft Grahame	Giscome Portage	Parsnip River	Pine River	Pine River Pass	Robinson Creek	Rocky Mountain Portage	Stuart Lake / Ft St James	Tudyah Lake	War Lake (Long Lake)
1891-1911 Arrivals McLeod Lake		2	6	2	9	11	2	17	2		3	2	59	12	5
1891-1911 Departures McLeod Lake	3		3		4	7		19		2	3		54	8	8

Table A-4
Fort Grahame Post Journal Arrivals and Departures:
Bear Lake and Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay

	1892-1922	1892-1922	1892-1922	1892-1922
	Arrivals	Departures	Arrivals	Departures
	Bear Lake Tse Keh Nay	Bear Lake Tse Keh Nay	Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay	Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay
Akie River			8	4
Bear Lake	2		3	3
Big Creek / Deep Creek			9	2
Big Lake	1			
Collin's Creek / Collin's House			3	2
Davie's Camp @ Big River			2	
Davis River / Davie's Creek	1		4	5
Deadman's Creek			5	2
Down River	3		24	32
Finlay Forks	1	1	12	15
Fish Lake	1		4	
Fox River			2	
Head of Finlay			4	
Head of Ingenika			2	
Horn Creek				6
Ingenika River			10	5
Kwadacha River			2	2
Lake	2		7	12
McDame/Sylvester Landing[473]				2
McLeod Lake			5	19
Manson Creek			2	2
Mesilinka River			2	
Omineca River			3	
Ospika River			5	12
Up River			32	16

Notes: HBCA, B.249/a/1, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1891-1893; HBCA, B.249/a/2, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1893-1895; HBCA, B.249/a/3, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1895-1896; HBCA, B.249/a/4, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1896-1899; HBCA, B.249/a/5, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1899; HBCA, B.249/a/6, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1899-1902; HBCA, B.249/a/7; HBCA, B.249/a/8, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1905-1908; HBCA, B.249/a/9, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1908-1917; HBCA, B.249/a/10 ,Post Journals – Bear Lake 1917-1922.
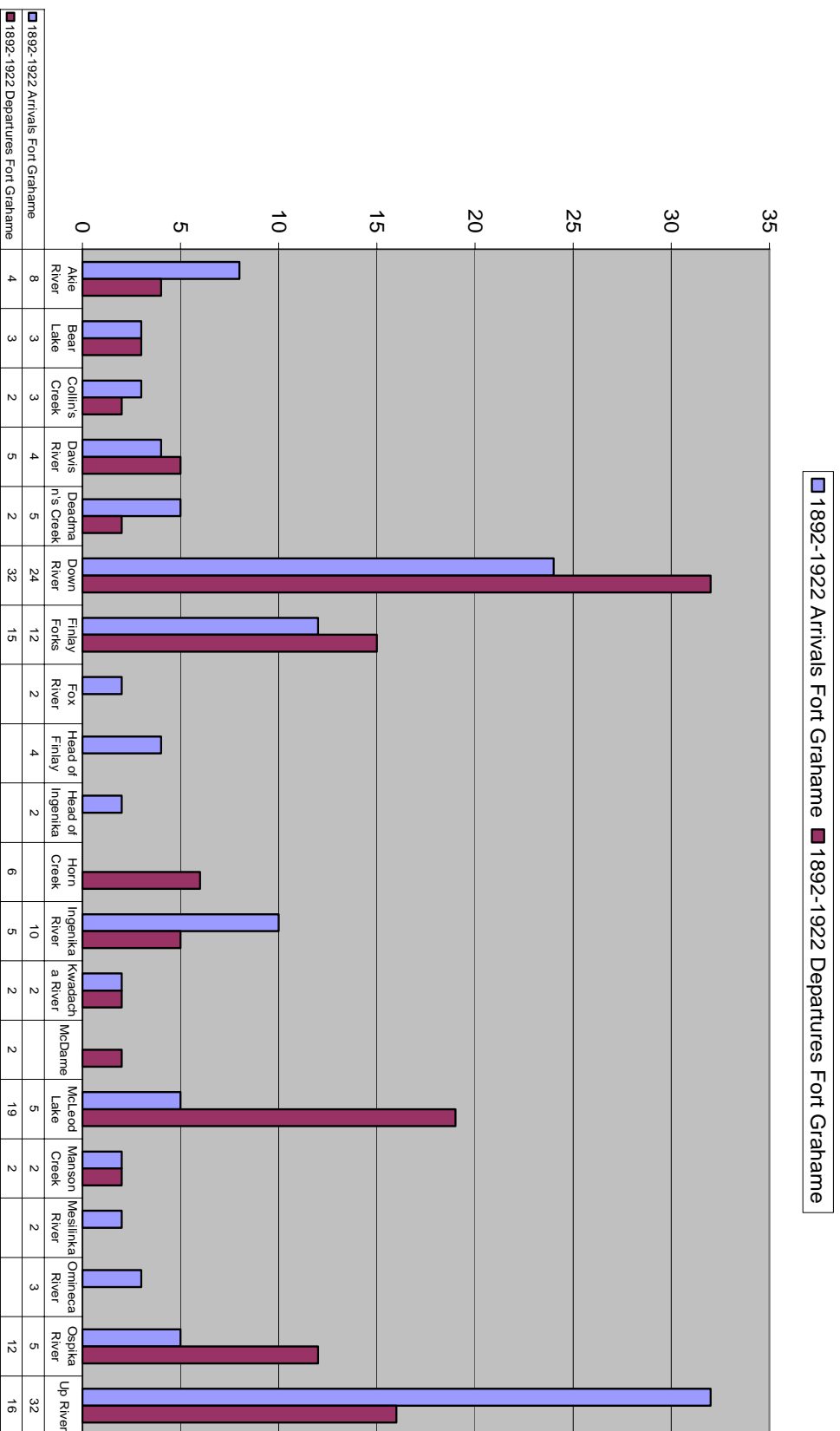
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[473] According to the Hudson's Bay Company Archives biographical sheet on Albert Egnell McDame is the same places as Sylvester Landing. HBCA, "Albert Egnell," in *Biographical Sheets*, http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/hbca/biographical/e/egnell_albert.pdf (accessed 7 July, 2009).

Table A-5
Fort Grahame Post Journal Arrivals and Departures:
Fort Nelson Indians and McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay

| | 1892-1922 | 1892-1922 | 1892-1922 | 1892-1922 |
| | Arrivals | Departures | Arrivals | Departures |
	Fort Nelson "Indians"	Fort Nelson "Indians"	McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay	McLeod Lake Tse Keh Nay
Akie River				
Bear Lake				
Big Creek / Deep Creek				
Big Lake				
Collin's Creek / Collin's House				
Davie's Camp @ Big River				
Davis River / Davie's Creek				
Deadman's Creek				
Down River				
Finlay Forks				
Fish Lake				
Fox River				
Head of Finlay				
Head of Ingenika				
Horn Creek				
Ingenika River				
Kwadacha River				
Lake				
McDame / Sylvester Landing				
McLeod Lake			1	4
Manson Creek				
Mesilinka River				
Nelson River	1			
Omineca River				
Ospika River				
Up River				

Notes: HBCA, B.249/a/1; HBCA, B.249/a/2; HBCA, B.249/a/3; HBCA, B.249/a/4; HBCA, B.249/a/5; HBCA, B.249/a/6; HBCA, B.249/a/7; HBCA, B.249/a/8; HBCA, B.249/a/9; HBCA, B.249/a/10.

Figure A-2 - Fort Grahame Arrivals and Departures - Fort Grahame Tse Keh Nay Alone

Legend:
- 1892-1922 Arrivals Fort Grahame
- 1892-1922 Departures Fort Grahame

Location	1892-1922 Arrivals Fort Grahame	1892-1922 Departures Fort Grahame
Akie River	8	4
Bear Lake	3	3
Collin's Creek	3	2
Davis River	4	5
Deadma n's Creek	5	2
Down River	24	32
Finlay Forks	12	15
Fox River	2	
Head of Finlay	4	
Head of Ingenika	2	
Horn Creek		6
Ingenika River	10	5
Kwadach a River	2	2
McDame		2
McLeod Lake	5	19
Manson Creek	2	2
Mesilinka River	2	
Omineca River	3	
Ospika River	5	12
Up River	32	16

Appendix B – Tse Keh Nay Statement of Intent Maps

Map B-1: Carrier Sekani Tribal Council Statement of Intent Map
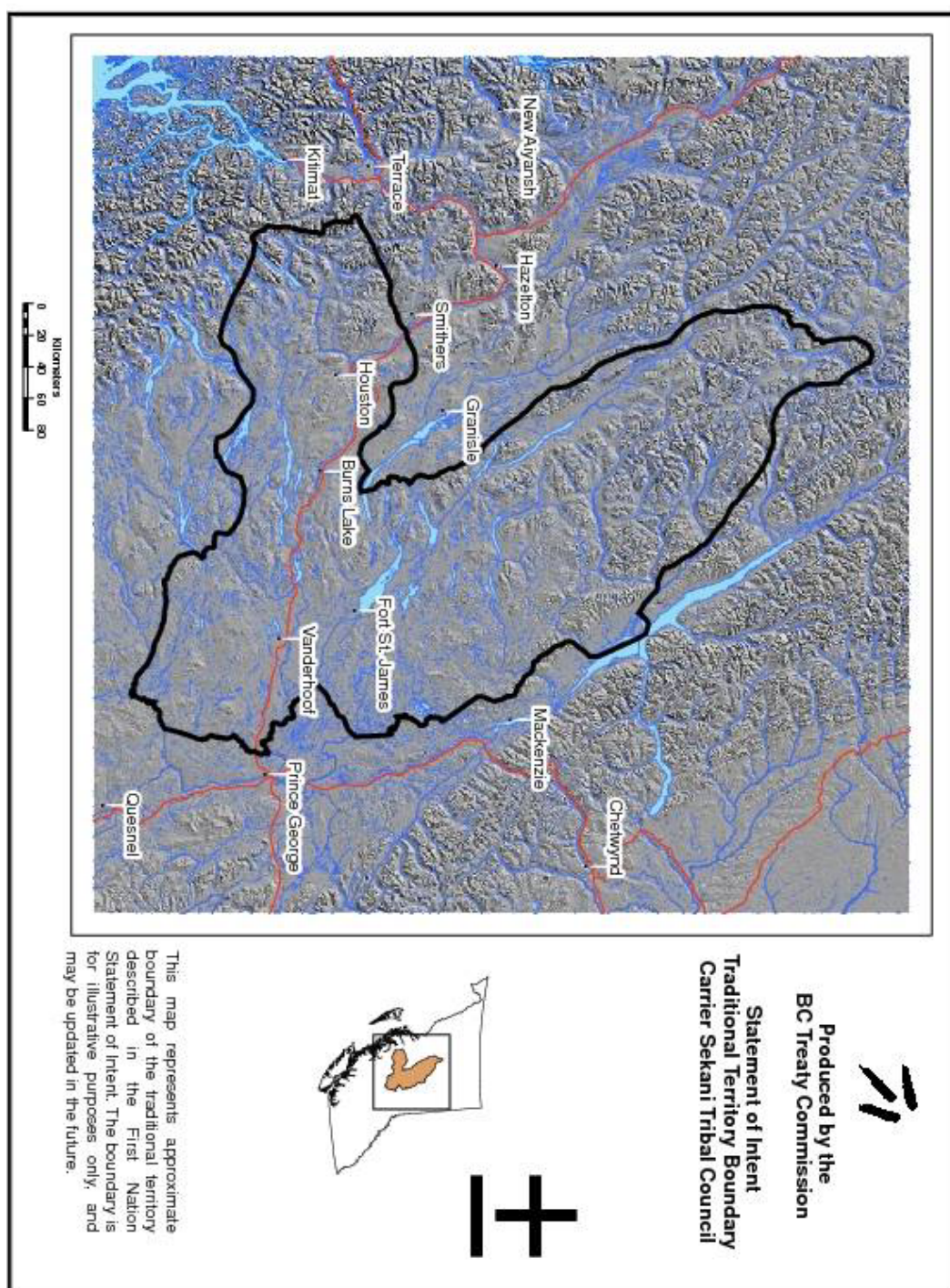
BC Treaty Commission, "Statement of Intent: Traditional Territory Boundary: Carrier Sekani Tribal Council," http://bctreaty.net/nations/soi_maps/Carrier_Sekani_SOI_Map.pdf (accessed 8 March, 2009).
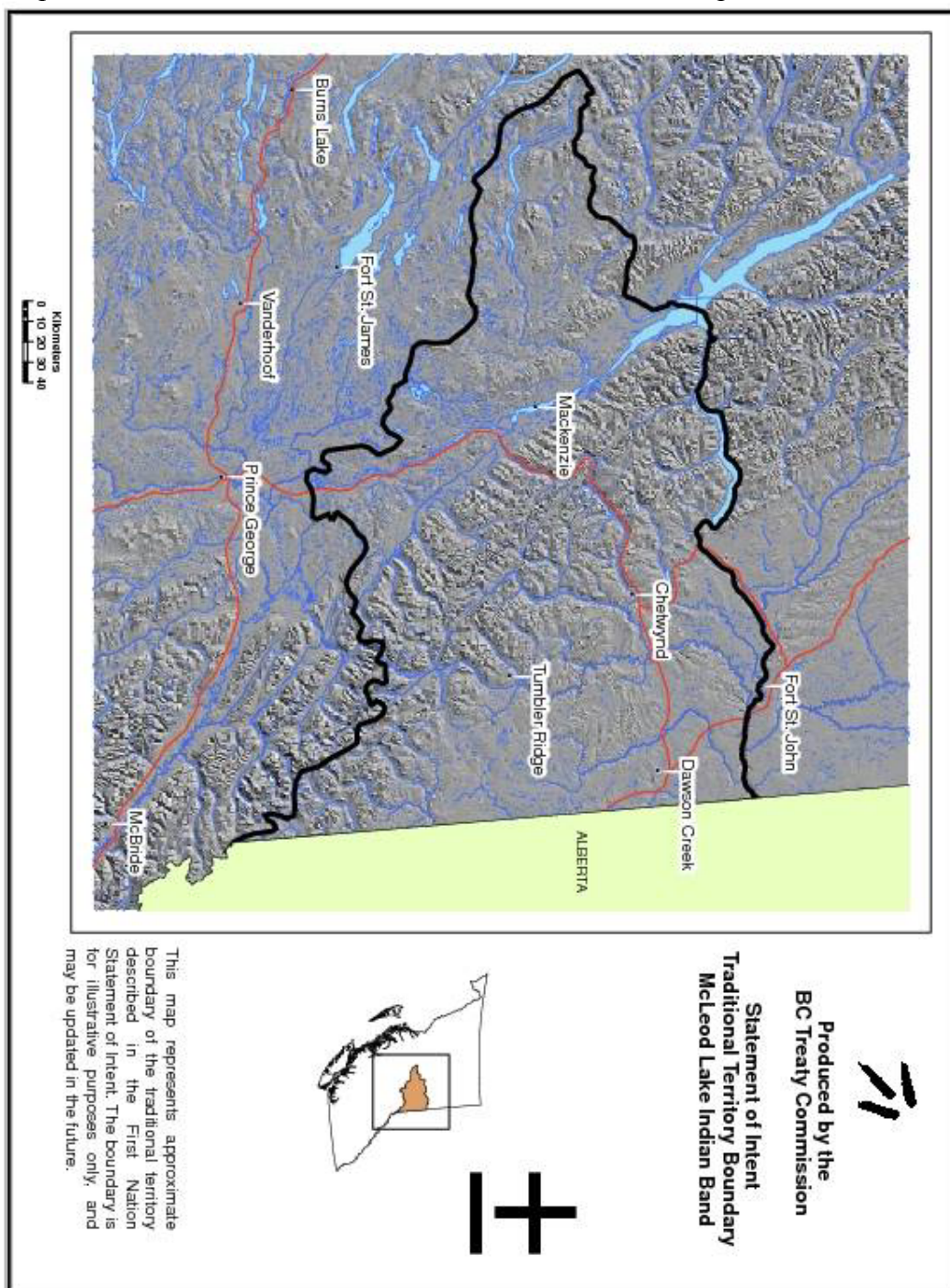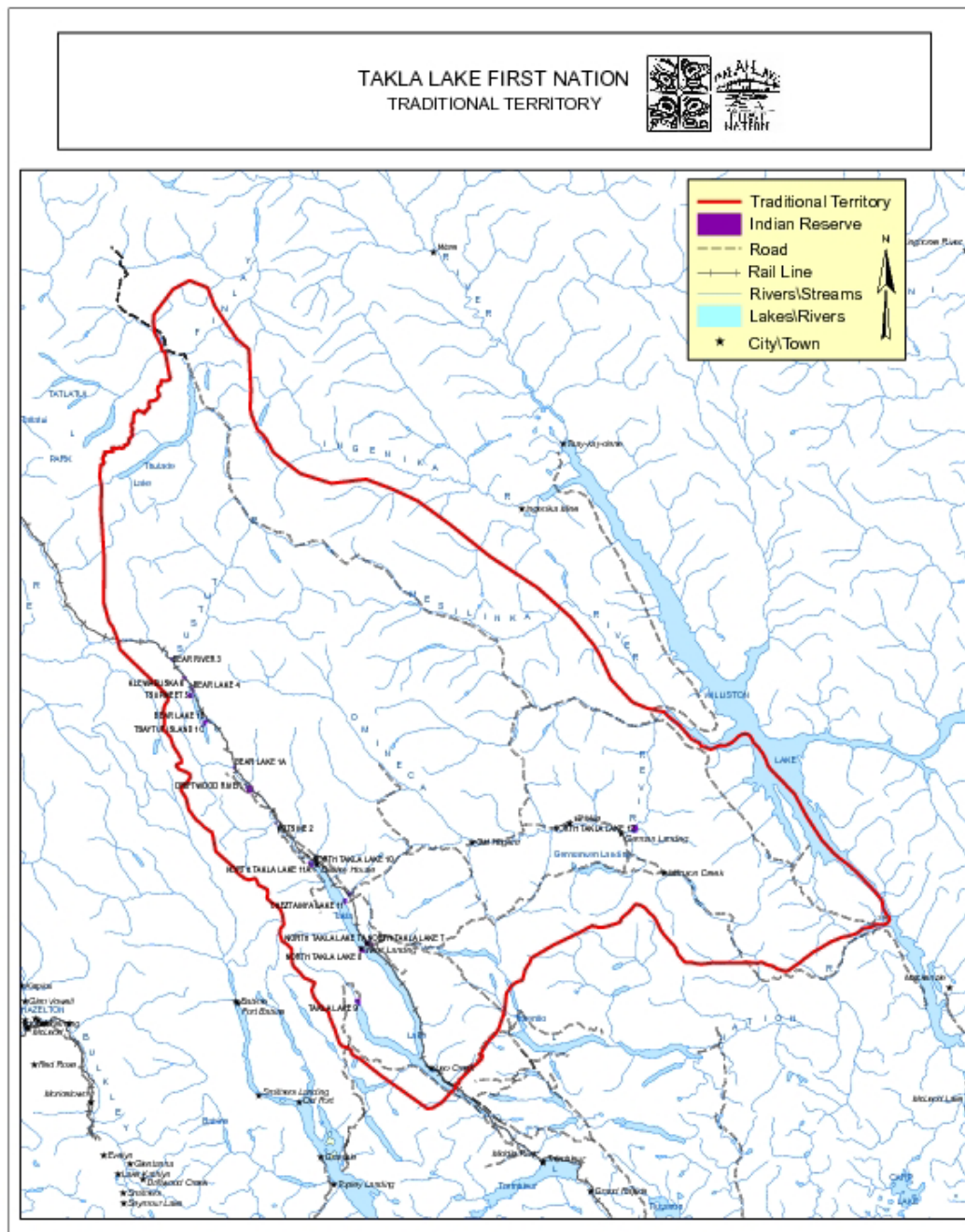
Map B-2: Kaska Dena Council Statement of Intent Map
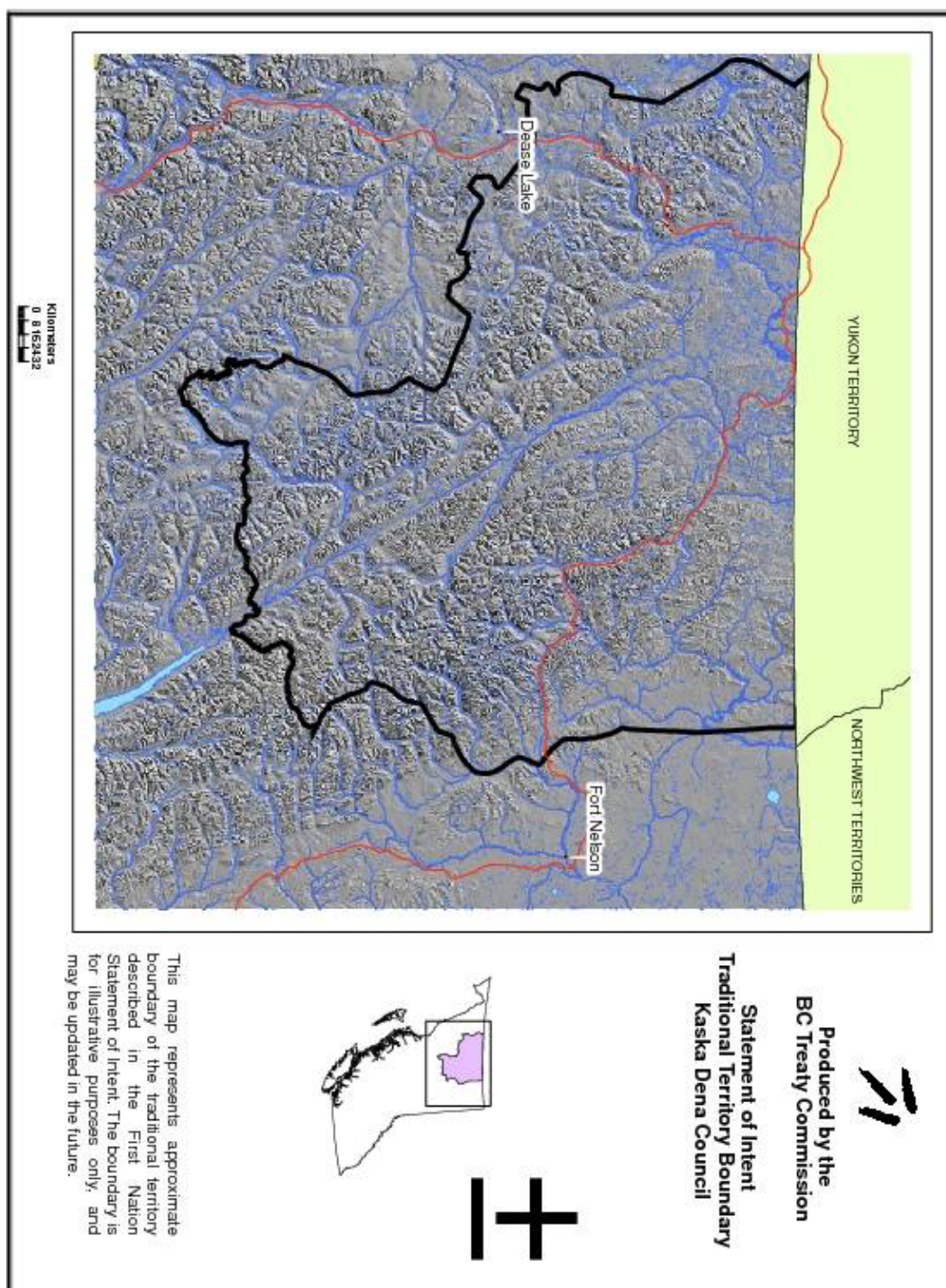
BC Treaty Commission, "Statement of Intent: Traditional Territory Boundary: Kaska Dene Council,"
http://www.bctreaty.net/nations/soi_maps/Kaska_Dena_Council_SOI_Map.pdf
(accessed 8 March, 2009).

Map B-3: McLeod Lake Indian Band Statement of Intent Map

BC Treaty Commission, "Statement of Intent: Traditional Territory Boundary: McLeod Lake Indian Band,"
http://www.bctreaty.net/nations/soi_maps/McLeod_Lake_SOI_Map.pdf (accessed 8 March, 2009).

Map B-4: Takla Lake First Nation Traditional Territory Map

Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, "Takla Lake First Nation: Traditional Territory,"
http://www.cstc.bc.ca/downloads/Takla_Lake.pdf (accessed 12 August, 2009).

Map B-5: Tsay Keh Dene Statement of Intent Map
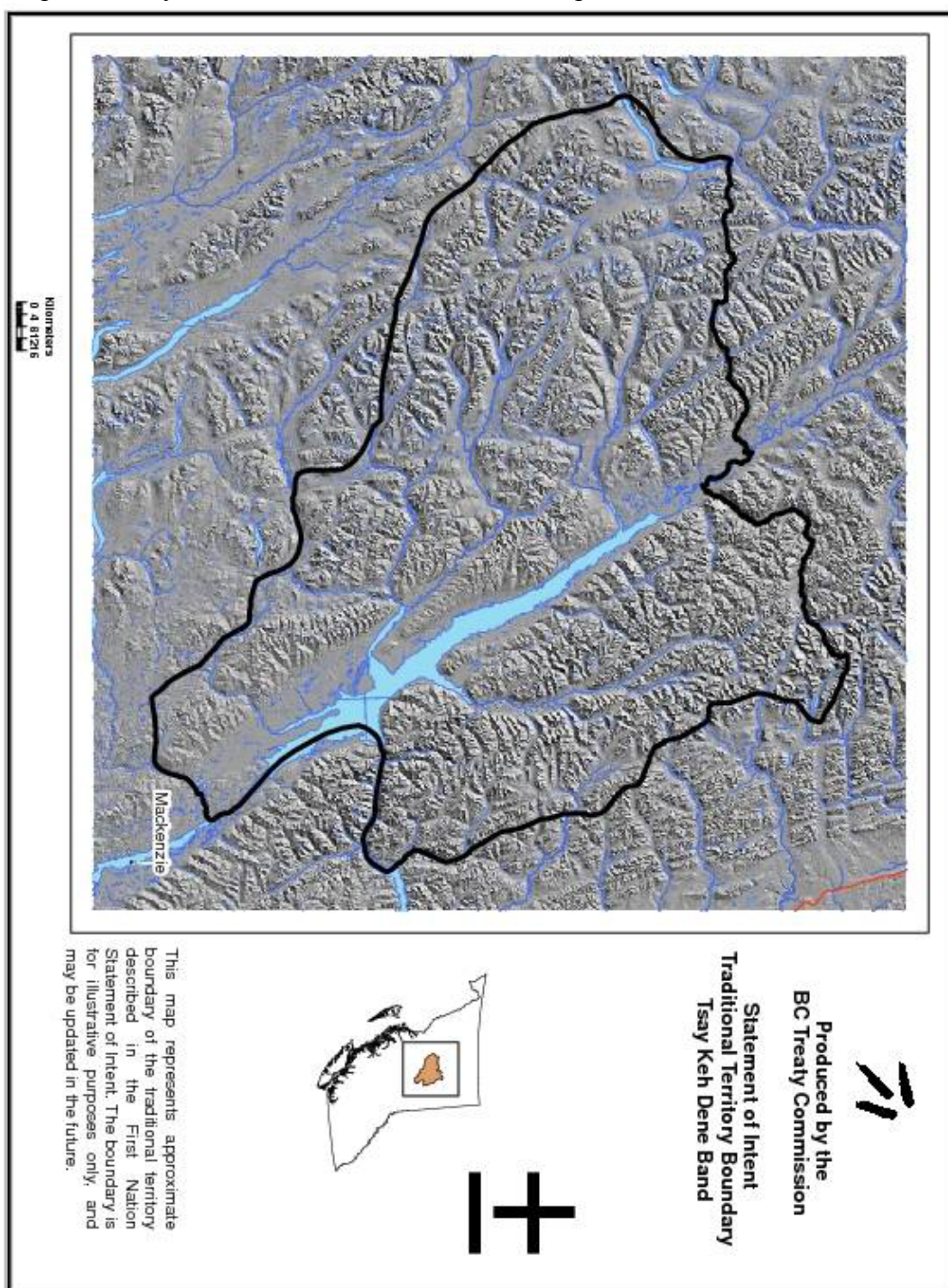
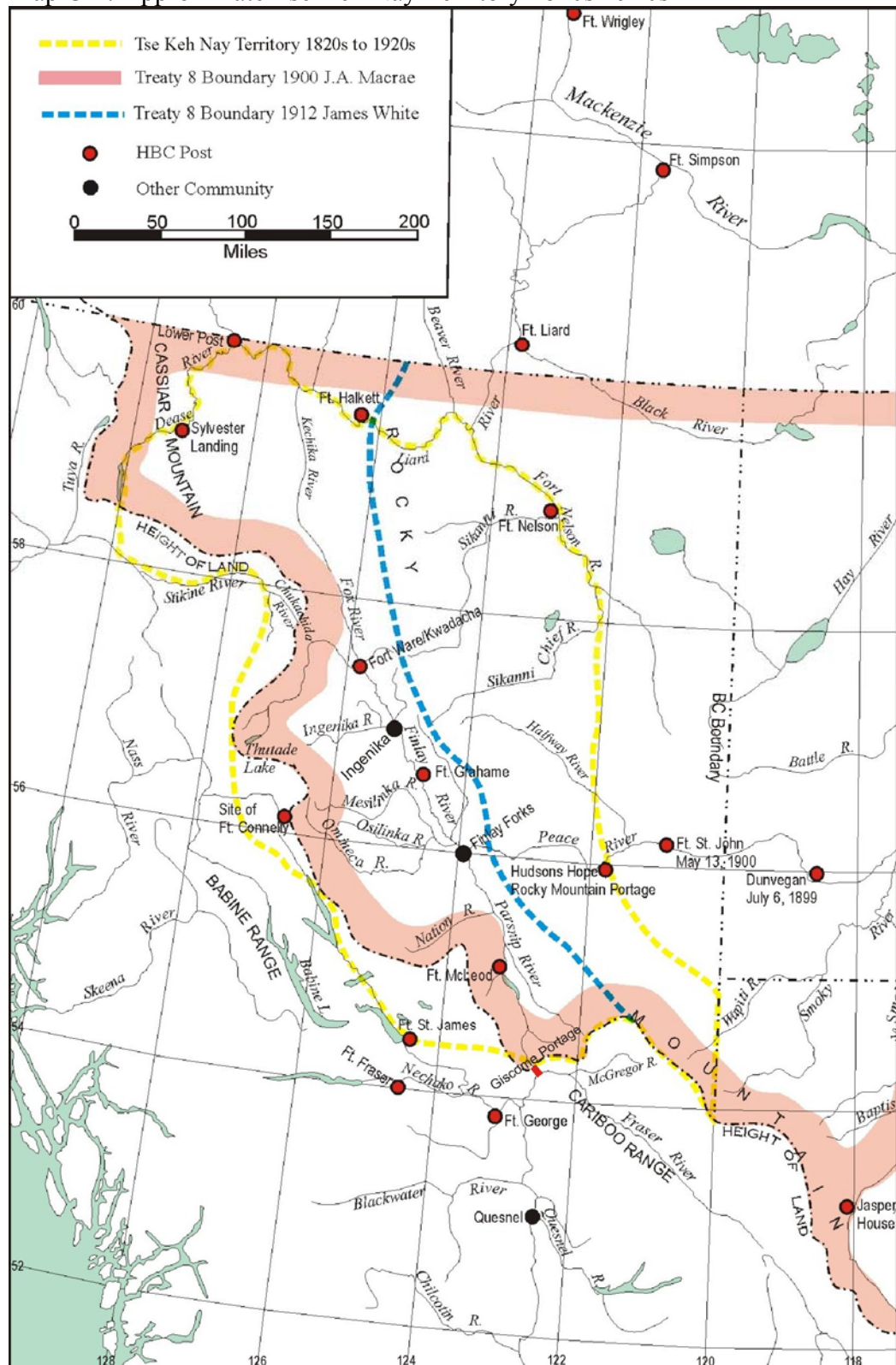BC Treaty Commission, "Statement of Intent: Traditional Territory Boundary: Tsay Keh Dene Band," http://www.bctreaty.net/nations/soi_maps/Tsay_Keh_Dene_SOI_Map.pdf (accessed 8 March, 2009).

Appendix C
Miscellaneous Maps
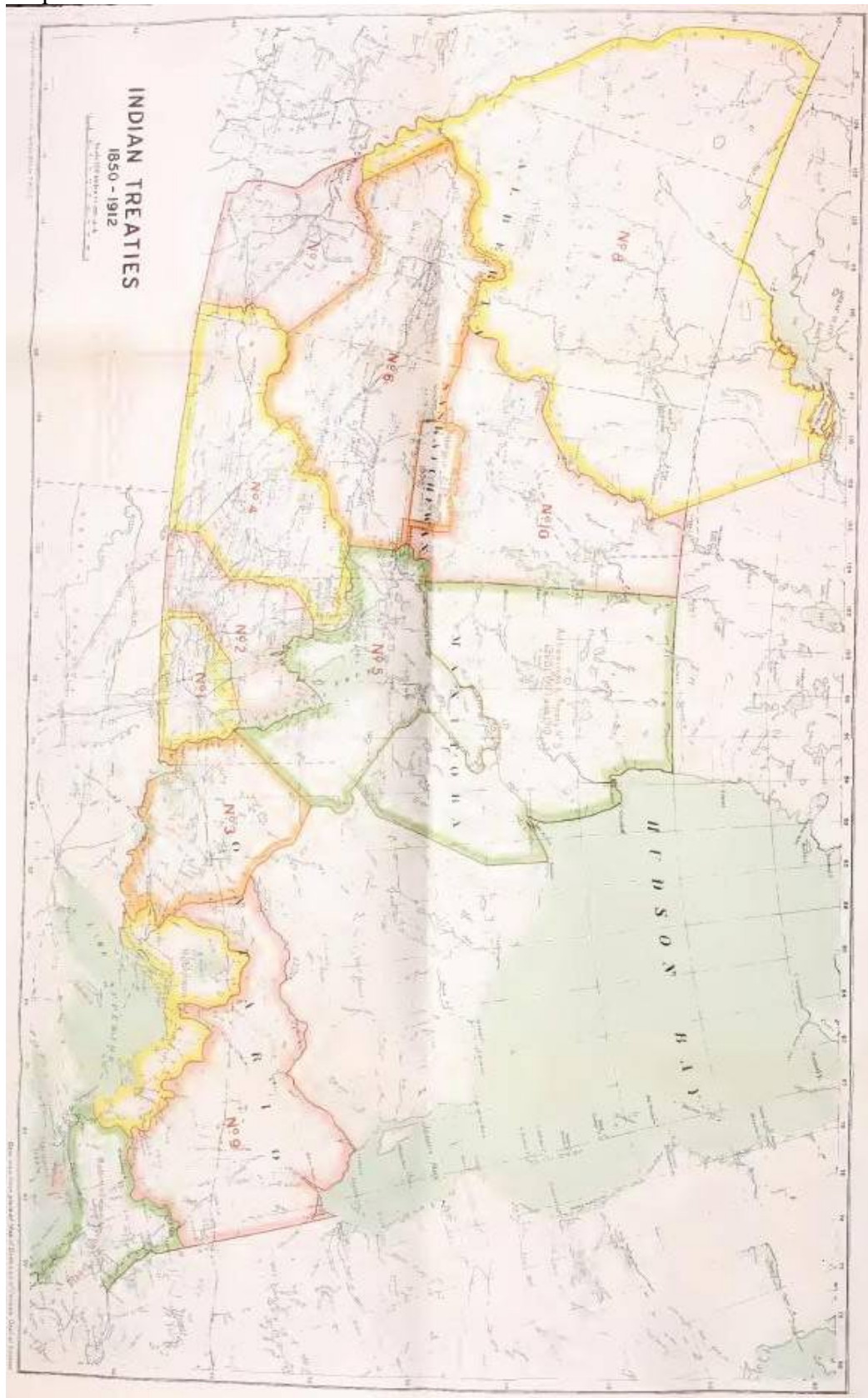Map C-1: Approximate Tse Keh Nay Territory 1820s-1920s

Notes: Base map is from Charles Mair's *Through the MacKenzie Basin* with
hand drawn additions made by author and rendered by Gerhard Ens. The 1900
boundary is from a Department of Indian Affairs Memo dated 30 December 1909,
which corresponds with the base map. The 1912 boundary is from James White's
map "Indian Treaties 1850-1912" in *Handbook of Indians of Canada*. BC
Archives, (BCA) GR 2809 Research Notes of Wilson Duff 1950-1978, File 77
Athapaskan: Sekani, Milligan 1913-14; Samuel Black, *A Journal of a Voyage
from Rocky Mountain Portage in Peace River to the Sources of Finlays Branch
and North West Ward in Summer 1824*, ed. E.E. Rich (London: The Hudson's
Bay Record Society, 1955); The Department of Indians Affairs, "Map Showing
the Territory Ceded Under Treaty No. 8," in *Through the MacKenzie Basin: An
Account of the Signing of Treaty No. 8 and the Scrip Commission, 1899*
(Edmonton: The University of Alberta Press, 1999); Simon Fraser, "First Journal
of Simon Fraser from April 12th to July 18th, 1806," in *Letters and Journals of
Simon Fraser 1806-1808*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2007);
Daniel William Harmon, *Harmon's Journal 1800-1819*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb
(Victoria: New Caledonia House Publishing, 2006); Hudson's Bay Company
Archives, (HBCA) "Albert Egnell," in *Biographical Sheets*
http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/hbca/biographical/e/egnell_albert.pdf
(accessed 7 July 2009); HBCA, B.119/a/5, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1891-
1893; HBCA, B.119/a/6, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1893-1895; HBCA,
B.119/a/7, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1895-1896; HBCA, B.119/a/8, Post
Journals – McLeod Lake 1896-1898; HBCA, B.119/a/9, Post Journals – McLeod
Lake 1898-1901; HBCA, B.119/a/10, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1901-1902;
HBCA, B.119/a/11, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1902-1905; HBCA,
B.119/a/12, Post Journals – McLeod Lake 1905-1911; HBCA, B.249/a/1, Post
Journals – Bear Lake 1891-1893; HBCA, B.249/a/2, Post Journals – Bear Lake
1893-1895; HBCA, B.249/a/3, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1895-1896; HBCA,
B.249/a/4, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1896-1899; HBCA, B.249/a/5, Post Journals
– Bear Lake 1899; HBCA, B.249/a/6, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1899-1902;
HBCA, B.249/a/7, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1902-1905; HBCA, B.249/a/8, Post
Journals – Bear Lake 1905-1908; HBCA, B.249/a/9, Post Journals – Bear Lake
1908-1917; HBCA, B.249/a/10, Post Journals – Bear Lake 1917-1922; Library
and Archives Canada, (LAC) RG 10, Volume 8595, File 1/1-11-5-1, Indian
Treaties – Correspondence Regarding Western Treaty No. 8 and the Fort Nelson
Adhesion 1909-1972, Memorandum for the Deputy Minister, Ottawa, December
30 1909; Sir Alexander MacKenzie, "Journal of a Voyage to the Pacific Ocean,"
in *The Journals and Letters of Sir Alexander MacKenzie*, ed. W. Kaye Lamb
(Toronto: MacMillan Canada, 1970); James White, Map of "Indian Treaties 1850-
1912," in *Handbook of Indians of Canada*, in the "Tenth Report of the
Geographic Board of Canada for Year Ending 30th June, 1911," in *First Session of
the Twelfth Parliament of the Dominion of Canada*, vol. 15, no. 21a, *Sessional
Papers*, vol. XLVI (Ottawa: C.H. Parmelee, 1913), following page 632.

Map C-2: "J.A. Macrae" 1900 Map of Treaty No. 8
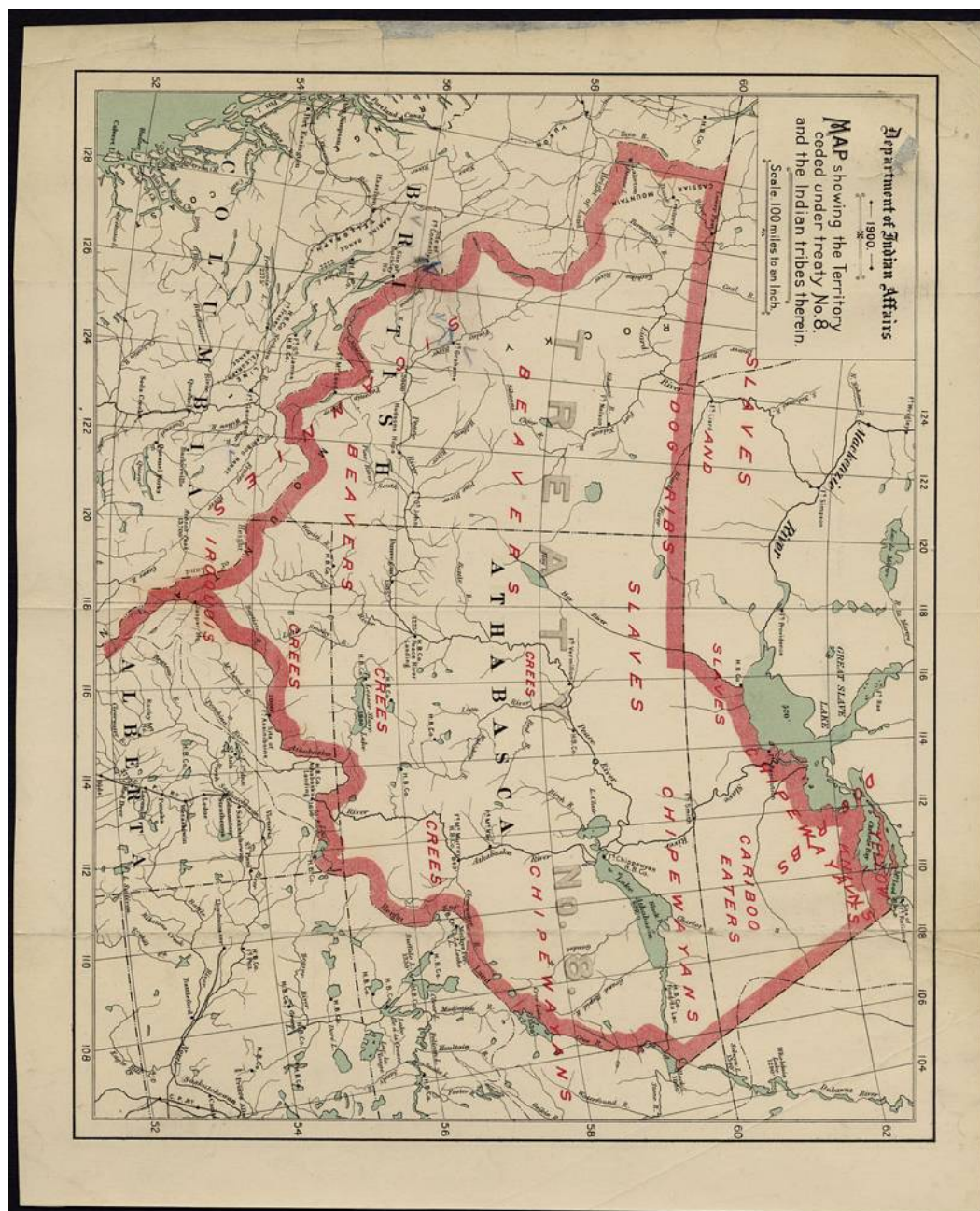
Notes: This is the map J.A. Macrae refers to as causing the confusion over the western boundary of Treaty No. 8, although he states that in his opinion it does not follow either the central range of the Rockies or the actual continental divide. LAC, RG 10, Volume 8595, File 1/1-11-5-1, Indian Treaties – Correspondence Regarding Western Treaty No. 8 and the Fort Nelson Adhesion 1909-1972, Memorandum fro the Deputy Minister, Ottawa, December 30 1909; LAC, RG 10M 78903/45, "Map Showing the Territory Ceded under Treaty No. 8 and the Indian Tribes Therein."

Map C-3: Indian Treaties 1850-1912

INDIAN TREATIES
1850-1912

Notes: James White, Map of "Indian Treaties 1850-1912," in *Handbook of Indians of Canada*, in the "Tenth Report of the Geographic Board of Canada for Year Ending 30th June, 1911," in *First Session of the Twelfth Parliament of the Dominion of Canada*, vol. 15, no. 21a, *Sessional Papers*, vol. XLVI (Ottawa: C.H. Parmelee, 1913), following page 632.