

From Matrilineal Kinship to Matriculture: Establishing a Canadian Agenda

25 – 28 April 2017

InterCulture research group, University of Ottawa

Introduction

We have found that throughout the world unexamined ideas inherited from early (nineteenth century) theoretical literature on matrilineal and matriarchal societies are inaccurate and misleading, with sometimes destructive consequences. Among these ideas, the criteria for matrilineal societies are too vague and too narrow for an adequate identification of the societies in question, even in Canada, where they are remarkably diverse in their social structure and in their cultural expressions.

Moreover, a central problem has emerged from preliminary discussions. That is, matrilineality (and the related matrilines and matriclans) appeared less and less as a simple kinship system, albeit one with social consequences, and more and more as the expression of a larger cultural system. Therefore we propose to anchor our programme in an exploration of a shift in perspective from matrilineal kinship to the matricultural system that supports it.

In order to continue developing our project and before we take it to an international scale, we have to identify fundamental questions pertaining to the defining features of matricultural communities, as well as a suitable methodology for understanding them, and to make this knowledge available to members of matricultural communities for their benefit. These are the main goals of our proposed workshop.

In the workshop, we will explore the conceptual shift in perspective from matrilineal kinship systems to cultural systems where matrilineality or matrifocality are only features of *matriculture*, a new term for these societies. We will review previous research and introduce selected matricultures in Canada. We will develop appropriate methodological tools for identifying and addressing unique challenges which face matricultures today, tools which can be shared by all participants (matricultural community members and academic researchers), and conduct a stakeholder analysis.

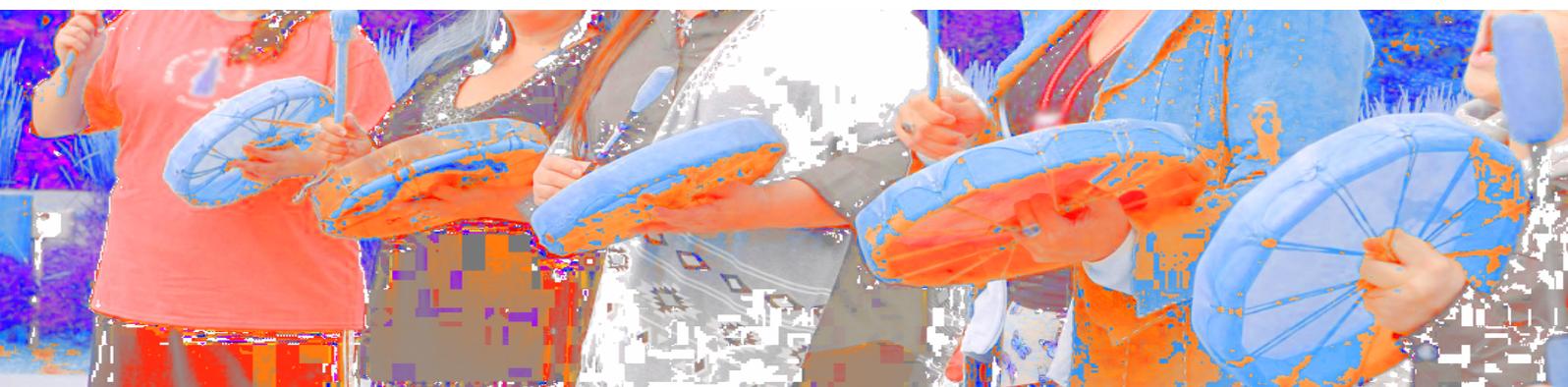
Preliminary Programme (as of 1 September 2016)

Day One: Past Research, Historical Problems

9:00 am Welcome and Introduction of the workshop – *Marie-Françoise Guédon (UOttawa)*



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- 9:30 am First Panel of Paper Presentations: For a new vocabulary: Introducing Matrilineal, Matriarchal/Matricentric Societies and Cultures in Indigenous Contexts (two papers and discussion) – *Chair: Georges Sioui (UOttawa)*
- 10:30 am Break
- 11:00 am Second Panel of Paper Presentations: Survey of Previous Research into Matrilineal Kinship Systems in Canada's Pacific Coast and North-Western regions (three papers and discussion) – *chair: (TBC)*
- 12:30 pm Lunch / Poster presentations
- 2:00 pm Action Learning / facilitated session 1: Introduction of Problems Facing Canadian Matrilineal Societies Today, with discussions led by Shirley Muldon (Gitksan) and Mavis Erikson (Sekani) – *facilitated by Daniel Buckles (SAS²)*
- 3:15 pm Break
- 3:30 pm Action Learning / facilitated session 2: Problems Facing Canadian Matrilineal Societies Today (con't) – *facilitated by Daniel Buckles (SAS²)*
- 5:00 pm Conclude Day One

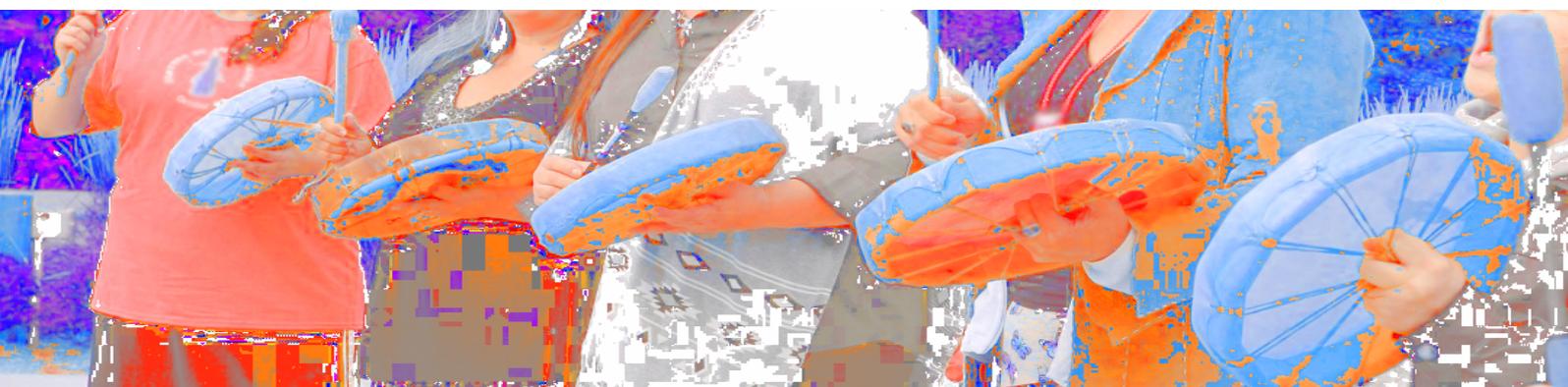
(optional evening activity: films about matrilineal societies)

Day Two: Problems Facing Matrilineal Communities Today

- 9:00 am Third Panel of Paper Presentations: Introducing Eastern Canadian Matrilineal Societies, Past and Present (three papers and discussion) – *Chair: (TBC)*
- 10:30 am Break
- 11:00 am Keynote address – Peggy Reeves Sanday (UPenn)
- 12:30 pm Lunch / poster presentations by Undergraduate participants
- 2:00 pm Action Learning / facilitated session 3: Further development of Problems Facing Canadian Matrilineal Societies Today – *facilitated by Daniel Buckles (SAS²)*
- 3:15 pm Break



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3:30 pm Action Learning / facilitated session 4: Final development of Problems Facing Canadian Matricultural Societies Today– *facilitated by Daniel Buckles (SAS²)*

5:00 pm Conclude Day Two

(optional evening activity: public talk on matriculture)

Day Three: Matriculture? Definitions and Theories

9:00 am Fourth Panel of Paper Presentations: The Implications of a Shift from Matrilineal Societies to Matricultures: A look at myths and rituals as expressions of matriculture (three papers and discussion) – *Chair: (TBC)*

10:30 am Break

11:00 am Round Table: Defining Matriculture as a Cultural System: Theory and Practice (three papers and discussion) – *Chair TBC*

12:30 pm Lunch / poster presentations on research projects in Indigenous matricultural communities outside of Canada

2:00 pm Action Learning / facilitated session 5: Stakeholder Analysis – *facilitated by Daniel Buckles (SAS²)*

3:15 pm Break

3:30 pm Action Learning / facilitated session 6: Further development of Stakeholder Analysis - *facilitated by Daniel Buckles (SAS²)*

5:00 pm Conclude Day Three

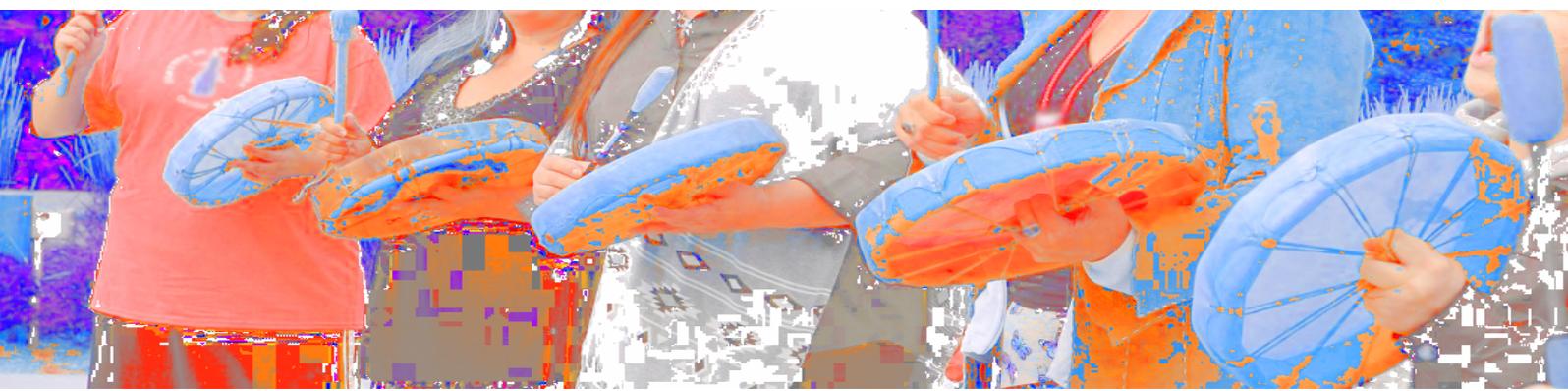
(optional evening activity: films about matricultural societies)

Day Four: Being Matricultural: Social Manifestations of Matricultural Communities

9:00 am Sixth Panel of Paper Presentations: Introducing Matricultural Aspects of Indigenous Societies Previously Unrecognized: The case of the Salish and Cree peoples (three papers and discussion) – *Chair TBC*



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- 10:30 am Break
- 11:00 am Seventh Panel of Paper Presentations: Identifying Principles of Matriculture in the Political Agendas of Canadian Indigenous Women (two papers and discussion) – *Chair: Marc Fonda (Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada; InterCulture affiliate member)*
- 12 noon: Group Discussion: Commenting on the Paper Presentations – *Chair TBC*
- 12:30 pm Lunch / posters
- 2:00 pm Action Learning / facilitated session 7: Final Development of Stakeholder Analysis – *facilitated by Daniel Buckles (SAS²)*
- 3:15 pm Break
- 3:30 pm Final Discussion and planning
- 4:30 pm Thank you and Summary of Workshop – *Marie-Françoise Guédon*
- 5:00 pm End of Workshop

(optional evening activity: celebratory supper at a restaurant)



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