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# ORAL HISTORY AS HISTORY: TUTCHONE ATHAPASKAN IN THE PERIOD 1840-1920

## PART 1

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To the Peoples of the Yukon Territory

## ABSTRACT

Can orally transmitted historical knowledge fairly represent the past? This is, in a nutshell, the main question addressed by this book. It springs from a particular problem. Can we rely on ethnographic interviews from the 1970s to reconstitute what Tutchone indigenous culture was in the nineteenth century? Tutchone elders consulted in the 1970s were then aged seventy and over. They had no direct and personal experience of the previous century. What they recounted about it was what their parents and grand parents told them between 1900 and 1920, well after the Klondike Gold Rush of 1997-98. True enough, these relatives were surely born before 1900. But did the new socio-cultural context brought about by the Klondike events lead the older generations to hide certain aspects of their previous cultural practices? On the other hand, did the new context lead the children (our Tutchone collaborators in the 1970s) to ignore parts of what they were told? What kinds of cultural change could have brought about such inter-generational miscommunication? Had socio-cultural changes occurred even earlier, between 1840 and 1900? Could these eventual changes have also generated other alterations in the oral transmission of knowledge? What would then be the status of the information collected in the 1970s?

The book answers such questions by delineating what sorts of change are likely to foster oral miscommunication and, depending on the transmission context, on what kinds of topics. It then proposes a methodology that charts how to ascertain whether or not, and to what extent, cultural changes may have taken place in a pre- and post-contact context. The methodology rests on the premise that in the absence of external pressures, cultural changes and re-adaptations will occur once techno-ecological structural changes have been set into motion.

With respect to the nineteenth and early twentieth century Tutchone, the application of the method leads into a round about journey through largely uncharted landscapes. What actually happened before 1920, and earlier before 1900? What is the ethnohistory of the region? Not only that of the Tutchone, but also that of their neighbours with whom they interacted: the Pelly River Kaska, the Han, the Yukon River Gwich'in, and the Coast Tlingit who traded in the interior Yukon Territory. Were European epidemics indirectly or directly spread? When? Did they decimate the Yukon native populations? How did first nations react to such eventual demographic disasters? Did it foster cultural changes? When? What characterized the indigenous cultural ecology and productive technologies during the pre-contact period? What impact did the introduction of European implements have on the Tutchone economy, and ultimately, on the culture itself? Did the arrival of thousands of miners during the Klondike Gold Rush alter the ecological balance between caribou and moose resources? Did such an eventual change induce a transformation in collective hunting practices and subsequently a cultural reorganisation? Why? When? Did cultural pressures exerted after 1900 by Euro-Canadian fur-traders, police forces, missionaries, have an impact on Tutchone culture? In what domains? To what extent?

The answer to such historical questions is that almost no changes occurred between 1840 and 1900, whereas some significant alteration of the Tutchone political culture occurred after 1900. The content of the oral tradition collected after 1970 is then assessed taking into consideration the post-1900 socio-cultural context in which it was received by our Tutchone collaborators.

The book will be of interest to first nations, historians and ethnohistorians of the Yukon, archaeologists of Subarctic environments, cultural ecologists, anthropologists focusing on technological and cultural change, and scholars interested in hunting and gathering peoples and the transmission of oral tradition across generations.

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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Off and on, I have visited and worked with the Tutchone Athapaskan of the Yukon Territory since the summer of 1972. Over the years, I have had the chance to share the lives of many elders, in a few cases for too short a time, but in most for long periods.

In Carmacks my main exchanges were with George and Eva Billy; Johnny Mack and Ellen Silverfox; Stanley and Kitty Jonathan; Sam and Jessie Jonathan; Peter Johnny (Little Peter), Cathro and Margaret Peter; Suzie Skookum together with May and Jimmy Roberts; Roddy and Bessie Blackjack; Peter and Sally Silverfox; Celina O'Brien; Lily Washpan; Sam, Bert and Edward Charlie; Taylor McGundy, his wife Mary-Luke and his mother Violet together with David and Irene Johnson; George and Emma Shorty; George and Sarah Charlie; Jack and Rachel Tom; David and Gertie Tom; Jackson and Kitty Bill.

In Pelly Crossing my main teaching came from Mary and Jack Sam; Edward and Margaret Simon together with Harry Baum; David and Martha Silas; Danny and Betty Joe together with Julia Joe; John and Jessie Alfred; Fred Blanchard; Harry and Magdeline McGinty; Sam and Tom Isaac; Johnson and Victoria Edwards; David and Rachel Tom Tom; Tommy and Annie McGinty; and Lizzie Hager.

Other important conversations I had were with Bessie John from Luanne Lake; David and Edwin Hager, Peter and Betty Lucas, David Moses, as well as Lucy and Sam Peter from Mayo on the Stewart river; John and Polly Fraser from Champagne in the southern Yukon Territory.

All my knowledge of Tutchone culture and technology comes from these people. But they gave me something more enduring. The lives they shared with me transformed my own life, my values, and more fundamentally my ideas about what constitutes a viable social organization, my way of relating to ordinary people—the weak as well as the strong—what I disliked and liked in my own French cultural universe, my ways of loving a woman or a man, of sleeping, of relating to wild animals that at times came to visit me at night in my dreams.

Several thousand pages of archival material were reviewed for historical documentation. Archives examined were those of the Anglican College, University of British Columbia; the Anglican Church in Whitehorse, the Catholic Church in Whitehorse; the Yukon Archives; and the Bancroft Library at the University of California at Berkeley. The archives of the Church Missionary Society of London, the Hudson's Bay Company as well as Indian Affairs were consulted in Ottawa in the Public Archives of Canada which are today part of Library and Archives Canada. My thanks to the librarians of these institutions who went oftentimes out of their way to help me find several relevant documents.

Much of the early historical data within the present study comes from the journals that Robert Campbell kept while at the Hudson's Bay Post of Fort Selkirk. These journals (Lewes & Pelly Forks Journals, 1848-1852) were thought to have been destroyed in 1852 when the fort was attacked by Tlingit People and abandoned. In fact, they were saved and, later, given to the Public Archives of Canada. In 1972, I stumbled upon them quite by chance as there was no mention of Campbell's name in the references to these manuscripts that were held in a nondescript box. None of the journals was signed, but the handwriting, which I was able to compare with original works penned by Campbell, leave no doubt as to their authenticity. Some of the journal entries were written by Campbell's assistant, James Stewart.

Finally, my thanks to the Government of Yukon Cultural Services Branch, which funded the translation of this document into English, and to Lina Tzeckas who undertook the translation work itself. My thanks also to Ruth Gotthardt, Philippe Cardinal, and Michaela Knot who edited my final English version.

# 1 INTRODUCTION

Tutchone Athapaskan first nations live in the central Yukon Territory. Their nineteenth century indigenous culture and socio-economic organization, as depicted in the oral tradition, has provided anthropologists with some unexpected and surprising insights into the "traditional" way of life of a subarctic hunter-gatherer people. According to local elders whom I interviewed at different intervals between 1972 and 1991, Tutchone society in the second half of the nineteenth century was characterized by a vertical social division. There was a small number of extended families referred to as *dan noži'*, which translates literally as "high people" or more colloquially as "rich family" or "big shot." In the words of the first European individual to have met some *dan noži'* in 1843, rich Tuchone men were proud and respected chiefs who "spoke in very loud tones" (Campbell in Wilson, 1970: 70).What made the *dan noži'* families different from other Tutchone families was that they controlled the trade with the Pacific Coast Tlingit People, and reserved for themselves some preferential production zones (e.g., sources of native copper, regular sustainable fishing locations, etc.). Moreover, some of the more powerful *dan noži'* owned personal bond servants (*yandye*) taken from among their own people or kidnapped from neighbouring Athapaskan groups. All elders born between 1890 and 1930 that I interviewed invariably translated the word *yandye* as "slaves." However "bond servant" might be preferable to the word "slave," which today conjures up images of an African-American plantation slave, a status which was significantly different from that of the Tutchone *yandye*.

Other independent Tutchone families were subject to the good will of *dan noži'* extended families, as much for Tlingit trade goods as for access to the best production zones. The *dan noži'* called these independent families *čɛkadyɛ.* Members of these families were not servants to the *dan noži'* but nonetheless they were under their indirect control. The precise meaning of the term *čɛkadyɛ* has been lost. In the early 1970s and later, Tutchone elders translated it as "poor people."

After the Klondike Gold Rush of 1898 and the imposition of Euro-Canadian laws throughout the Yukon Territory, Tutchone leaders found it more and more difficult to keep alive this form of societal organization with its efficient chain of command. As a result, people became more socially independent from one another and chiefs lost some of their original clout, authority, and power. By the first decade of the nineteenth century, the former Tutchone authority structure was already well on the wane, soon to be rejected by many

Tutchone and replaced by a mixed or hybrid system dictated in large part by the forced encounter with the Euro-Canadian federal state and its police force. Today, one hundred years later, memory of the division of the Tutchone people into three social layers: rich (*dan noži'*), poor (*čɛkadyɛ*), and bond servants (*yandye*) is almost lost.

This nineteenth century system of economic, political and social domination/ subordination among three social layers may be designated as a system of "socio-economic inequality." I could have used the term social stratification; however, I hesitate to do so across the board as its meaning is poorly defined (König, 1972: 331-341). For instance, Fried (1967: 186) and Service (1975: 44-45) define "stratified society" in relation to an "egalitarian society" and in relation to a "rank society" as follows: "An egalitarian society is one in which there are as many positions of prestige in any given age-sex grade as there are persons capable of filling them" (Fried, 1967: 33). "A rank society is one in which positions of valued status are somewhat limited so that not all of those of sufficient talent to occupy such statuses actually achieve them" (*ibid.*: 109). "A stratified society is one in which members of the same sex and equivalent age status do not have equal access to the basic resources that sustain life" (*ibid.*: 186). In this context, stratification is therefore synonymous with socio-economic inequality.

Other scholars, however, define stratification very differently. Here are a few examples:

> Stratification is the particular type of role differentiation that differentiates higher and lower standings in terms of one or more criteria" (Levy, 1952: 64). "Social stratification means the differentiation of a given population into hierarchically superposed classes. It is manifested in the existence of upper and lower social layers. Its basis and very essence consist in an unequal distribution of rights and privileges, duties and responsibilities, social values and privations, social power and influences among members of a society (Sorokin, [1927], 1959: 11).
>
> The ranking system in terms of esteem is what we may call the system of stratification of the society. It is the general resultant of many particular bases of differential evaluation. Non-relational reward-objects naturally have to be integrated with the prestige system in one aspect of their significance as expressive symbols. Hence, many elements of the "style of life" come to have significance, among other things, as symbols of prestige in the system of stratification (Parsons, 1951: 132).

The last three definitions each possess at least one of the following three elements: 1) The social strata are divided between higher and lower, privileged and unprivileged, prestigious and pedestrian; 2) Determining whether a stratum is superior or inferior to another can be founded on practically any social criterion (e.g., economy, politics, power, privilege, responsibility, duty, etc.); and 3) Whether a stratum is superior or inferior to another is determined by the members of the society to which that particular stratum belongs.

Both groups of definitions create difficulties. For one, Fried and Service totally ignore male-female relationships in their definition. If we were to follow them, a society that offers women as many prestigious female positions as there are women, but which would prohibit them from having access to fundamental resources and distributes this access equitably among men, would be a non-stratified society; an egalitarian society. Their definition also presumes that a society that is very hierarchical in every way, except insofar as concerns access to resources, is not a stratified society. According to Levy, Sorokin and Parsons, all societies are to be defined as stratified societies. Sorokin says so himself: "Any organized social group is always a stratified social body" (*ibid.*: 12). It therefore becomes difficult to

distinguish societies where only male-female relationships are stratified from societies where there are hierarchical strata but also equal access to resources, and societies where there are hierarchical strata and unequal access to resources.

This creates a real dilemma. How then shall the term social stratification be used? It seems to me that in order to resolve this problem, the merits of both groups of definitions must be recognized. The merit of the first group is that they highlight an important difference that separates societies: some are fundamentally socio-culturally egalitarian, while others are not. The merit of the second group is that its varied definitions indicate that, in any given society, individuals accord more or less prestige to various groups or categories. Once this is accepted as fact, the terms inequality or socio-economic inequality can then be used exclusively for the differences that the first group of definitions tries to emphasize. The term social stratification can then be reserved exclusively in reference to the hierarchical classification that individuals establish in a society (regardless of the existence of socio-economic inequalities). The concept of equality versus inequality then becomes an "etic" concept while social stratification becomes an "emic" concept. It is this solution, fairly similar to that of Jérôme Rousseau (1978) that I adopt.

The claims about socio-economic inequalities among the Tutchone Athapaskan relate to a finite period. The Tutchone elders interviewed knew that the socio-economic relations they described already existed at the time of the first two explorations of their lands by the Hudson Bay Company and that they continued to exist until Euro-Canadians settled permanently among them. As the first two explorations of the region took place in 1843 and 1848 (Wilson, 1970) and as the first permanent Euro-Canadians settlers can be traced as far back as 1890 only (Mathews, 1968), the period can therefore be defined broadly as spanning the years 1840 to 1890.

The elders interviewed between 1972 and 1991 reported that their grandparents or great-grandparents lived exclusively from hunting, fishing and gathering. They stated that their society was characterized, at the time, by the following traits. The population was divided into some eleven regional groups or bands,[1] each one consisting of around 100 inhabitants. These were the peoples of the Middle Stewart River, of the Lower Macmillan, the two regional groups of the broad area around Fort Selkirk and the Lower Stewart, the regional groups of Tatlmain lake, of Tatchun lake, of the Little Salmon River, of the Big Salmon River, of Lake Hutshi, of Lake Aishihik and finally of the Copper group on the Upper White River. These eleven groups occupied a territory on the Yukon Plateau the size of England in the restricted sense of the term (Map 1), making for one of the lowest population densities in North America (Kroeber, 1939); and possibly in the world—probably not even one inhabitant per 100 $km^2$. These Tutchone groups were bordered by the Han people to the north, the Upper Pelly/Kasini (Ross River People and Kaska) and Inland Tlingit to the east, the Upper Tanana or Nabesna to the west, and the Tagish and the Southern Tutchone as well as the

[1] The term "band" is often used to designate a small group of nuclear families associated with one another over a number of years. In anthropology, however, the term is also a political concept which is used to designate an egalitarian group of human beings (Steward, 1955; Service, 1962; Fried, 1967; etc.). To the extent that Tutchone groups were not egalitarian groups, the term "band" must be understood in a broader sense or, to avoid all confusion, the term regional group could be used.

Pacific Coast Tlingit to the south. It is to be noted that nine of the regional groups spoke dialects of the Northern Tutchone language, while two of them—Hutshi and Aishihik—spoke the two dialects of the Southern Tutchone language.

In this book, I use the term "Tutchone" to refer to these eleven regional groups. Wherever the context requires more precision, I distinguish between Northern Tutchone and Southern Tutchone. While the study covers the Hutshi and Aishihik Southern Tutchone regional groups alongside those of the Northern Tutchone, it does not attempt to apply either to the other Southern Tutchone (Lake Laberge, Kluane Lake-Burwash Landing, Kloo Lake) or to the Tlingitized Southern Tutchone (Champagne-Neskatahin-Klukshu) who have been well described by McClellan (1975b: 24-34).[2]

Each of the eleven Tutchone regional groups was further subdivided into four, five or six local groups—some composed of between one or two to four nuclear families and one included as many as some ten to twelve nuclear families. For the most part, these local groups, whose composition was more or less permanent, lived several tens of miles away from one another. They would gather only occasionally, for ceremonies or to trade with the Tlingit, but not for the purpose of fishing or hunting together. The gatherings—no more than two or three times each year—would last only a few days and at most a week or two. Even more rarely, a few regional groups would gather to trade or to engage in commemorative funeral ceremonies.

Production was based on the natural resources available in the subarctic environment of the valleys of the Yukon River drainage system. In winter (October to May), the Tutchone hunted moose, lynx, beaver, hare, etc.; engaged in ice fishing (mainly lake whitefish and broad whitefish) and trapped marten, fox and other animals whose furs were valuable goods for either local use or for indigenous trade. In the summer, they devoted most of their time to fishing chinook salmon (locally known as king salmon) while in the fall they focused on fishing keta salmon (or dog salmon) and hunting moose. Woodland caribou were rarely hunted, if at all, as they were few in number and difficult to access. During the second half of the nineteenth century, there were no barren-ground caribou herds migrating in the area (see chapter 5). Production also consisted in quarrying copper nuggets and stone used in tool-making, as well as gathering firewood and cutting birch tree trunks for making tool handles, snowshoe frames, etc. Lastly, the Tutchone also pursued a number of transformation activities, which included making tools, sewing clothes and tanning moose hides and furs, etc. These products were for local use or trade with their *dan nożi'* who, in turn, traded them they with their Tlingit partners. All production and transformation was carried out entirely within the local groups.

What makes the Tutchone social schism between rich families, poor families and bond servants so astonishing to anthropologists is that, elsewhere in the world, most other small-

[2] Northern Tutchone regional groups speak dialects of the Northern Tutchone language and Southern Tutchone regional groups speak dialects of the closely related Southern Tutchone language (see Map 1). The Southern Tutchone are further subdivided into non-Tlingitized Southern Tutchone (Hutshi, Aishihik Lake Laberge, Kluane Lake-Burwash Landing, Kloo Lake) and Tlingitized Southern Tutchone on account of the strong Tlingit cultural influences among the southernmost Southern Tutchone regional groups in the nineteenth century. For further explanation see notes 146 and 147.

scale societies similarly based on hunting and gathering wild products are known for being strictly egalitarian (Service, 1962, 1966; Fried, 1967: 27-101; Lee and Devore, eds., 1968), if not communistic (Testart, 1985).

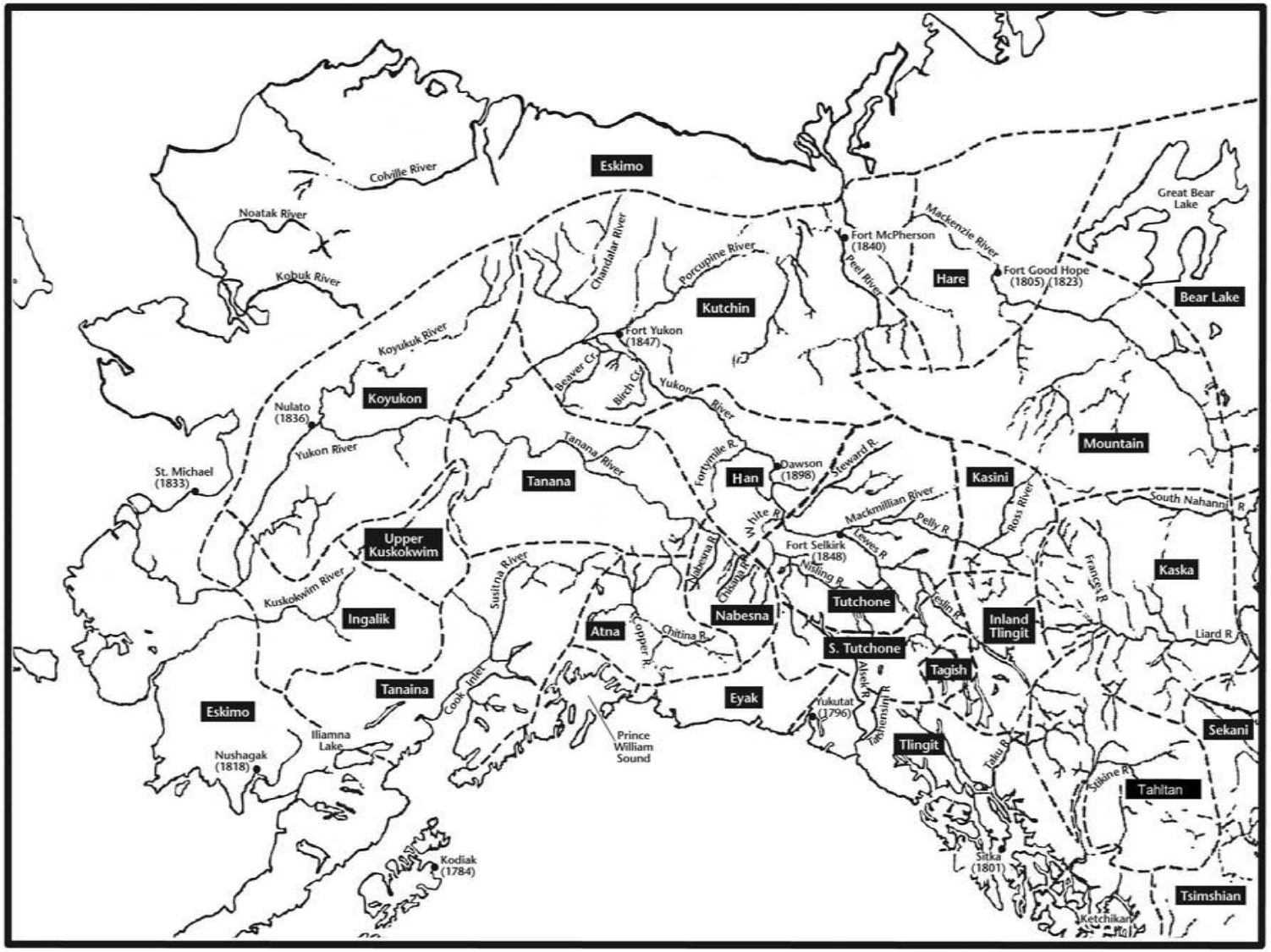
To further complicate matters, the Tutchone social structure was characterized by the existence of two exogamous matrilineal moieties[3]: the Crow people and the Wolf people. Every man and every woman belonged to his or her mother's moiety and not to that of his or her father. No one could marry a member of his or her own moiety, even if that person belonged to a different local group or to a different regional group and even if that person was definitely not, from a Euro-Canadian standpoint, a blood relative. Anyone who breached this rule had to be and was killed by members of his or her own moiety. The entire population was therefore divided into two totally exogamous groups, and each band or regional group, each local group and nuclear family[4] was made up of members of both these groups (e.g., the father belonged to one moiety; the mother and children to the other). All members of the father's moiety were potential spouses for this man's children, regardless of generation.

In the nineteenth century, when feasible, Tutchone men married from among what are called bilateral cross *cousins* in Euro-Canadian academic culture[5] (a so-called cross cousin was a woman such as a father's sister's daughter or mother's brother's daughter or, when not feasible, a second, third or fourth, degree cross cousin, etc.). Even though no more than three marriages out of ten could realistically be between first-degree bilateral cross cousins, most parents favoured this form of matrimonial alliance for their own children. It should go without saying that the cross *cousin* was not recognized at all as a *cousin* in Tutchone cultural terms. In fact, the Tutchone word used to designate such a person (*e lye*)

[3] Exogamy, matrilineal descent, and moiety, are technical terms borrowed from the anthropology of kinship and marriage systems in the world. Exogamy is an obligation to marry outside of one's local, kin, status or other such group. It is opposed to endogamy: the obligation to marry within one's such group. Matrilineal descent is a kinship system in which any individual is assigned to a kinship group or category all of whose members *of both sexes* are connected through real or fictive links consisting only of females. Moieties (singular moiety; from French *moitié* or half) exist when a society is divided into two groups so that every person is necessarily a member of one or the other but not of both. Moieties are sorts of half tribes. If they are based on descent and are exogamous they are like major clans.

[4] A nuclear family consists of a married man and wife with their unmarried offspring's. Average size is usually five persons.

[5] Cross cousin, as opposed to parallel cousin, is a very common distinction made by many cultures in the world (including in some very large states like India) but not by Europeans and Euro-Canadians. One's cross cousin is the child of one's father's sister or of one's mother's brother. One's parallel cousin is the child of one's father's brother or of one's mother's sister. A bilateral cross cousin marriage system is a system according to which *a man* should marry either his father's sister's daughter or his mother's brother daughter. A matrilateral cross cousin marriage system, as it exists in contemporary Southern India and elsewhere, is a system according to which ideally *a man* should marry his mother's brother's daughter but not his father's sister's daughter.




Map 1. Indian groups of Northwestern North America
(Adapted from McClellan, 1975b)

specifically meant "marriageable person" or depending on context "sister-in-law" or "brother-in-law." *Parallel cousins* such as a mother's sister's daughter or a father's brother's daughter could under no circumstances be married. They were not called "cousins"or *e lye* but "brother" (*e nday,* older brother; or *e chaw*: younger brother) or "sister" (*e ndaat*: older sister; or *e djo'*: younger sister). When some had an affair or worse married, they were executed by their respective maternal uncles. Opposite sex parallel cousins as well as actual brother and sisters were not even allowed to talk to each other. A few Tutchone families also practised polygyny (including sororal polygyny), polyandry (including fraternal polyandry), the levirate, the sororate,[6] as well as marriage between generations. Post-nuptial socio-economic alignment[7] was matrilocal, or avunculocal in the case of marriages between first-degree bilateral cross cousins.

Such marriage practices are common the world over among other small scale indigenous civilizations, as well as in large scale cultures such as Southern India among others. While most Euro-Canadians condemn them (probably because they are culturally ignorant and too parochial) these practices were, are, and still would be perfectly legitimate.

Be it as it may, it must be noted that one century after their first permanent contact with Euro-Canadian culture, Tutchone people have now completely abandoned the institution of first degree cross cousin marriages and of polygamy. However, many other aspects of the culture endure. Descent is still matrilineal and it remains prohibited to marry any parallel cousin, even though the old death penalty sanction for breaching this law has disappeared.

Matrilineal descent and matrilocal residence among nineteenth century Tutchone is equally baffling for most anthropologists. If we were to follow the current mainstream theory (Service, 1962, 1966, 1971, 1975, 1979 and several contemporary anthropology textbooks), small scale societies such as hunters and gatherers should be patrilineal[8] and patrilocal in order to keep sons and fathers together in the same hunting territory. As the theory goes, fathers can thus make their married sons benefit from their greater intimate knowledge of the local environment. Furthermore, according to this prevailing theory, pairs of fathers-sons are, by far better and more motivated territorial defenders than local groups of fathers-in-law and sons-in-law resulting from matrilocal residence—in some instances such matrilocal groups would have to fight sons who married away to women belonging to the enemies' group.

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[6] Polygyny is the marriage of one man to two or more women at the same time. Sororal polygyny is the marriage of one man to two or more women who are sisters to each other. Polyandry is the marriage of one woman to two or more men at the same time. Fraternal polyandry is the marriage of one woman to two or more men who are brothers to each other. The levirate is a duty obligating a man to marry and support his dead brother's widow; the sororate is a duty obligating a woman to marry and support her dead sister's widower.

[7] Post-nuptial socio-economic alignment indicates where a new couple will reside and live after being married. It is matrilocal when the couple goes live with, or near, the wife' matrilineal kinswomen; patrilocal when the couple goes reside with, or near, the husband's patrilineal kinsmen; neolocal when the couple establishes a new residence without reference to the kin of either spouses; and avunculocal when the couple go resides with, or near, the husband's male matrilineal kinsmen.

[8] Patrilineal refers to the descent system. Descent is patrilineal when each individual is assigned to a kinship group or category all of whose members *of both sexes* are connected through real or fictive links consisting only of males.

True enough, some other hunting peoples, specially North American Indians,[9] are reported as being bilateral (children are recognised as belonging to mother and father equally) and having composite groups (local groups including relatives of both mother and father and with married sons residing with either mothers' or fathers' relatives). However, this is attributed by the main theory to recent severe depopulation which, following contact with Europeans, has made it impossible for any strict patrilineal/patrilocal system of descent and marriage to remain functional. Apart from a few specialized ethnographers and ethnologists (Aberle, 1961; Dyen and Aberle, 1974; Honigmann, 1954; Cruikshank, 1988; McDonnell,

[9] Most indigenous people in the Arctic refer to themselves as Inuit, and this generic term has become universally accepted. In this book I use the terms *Native* or *Indian* in a positive and supportive manner to designate the Indigenous people of North America living outside of the Arctic. There seems to be no other general term for non-Inuit indigenous people in Canada or in the U.S.A. While most Indigenous people prefer to use their first nation names (Lakota, Gwitch'in, etc.), they all extensively use *Native* or *Indian* between themselves or in reference to themselves, especially when they do not share the same language and when their actual nation name is not widely known. However, both terms have come to be disliked by some indigenous individuals or by writers of European descent. For instance, Russell Means, the Lakota activist and founder of the American Indian Movement (AIM), has strongly rejected *Native American* in favor of *Indian:* "I abhor the term Native American. It is a generic government term used to describe all the indigenous prisoners of the United States These are the American Samoans, the Micronesians, the Aleuts, the original Hawaiians, and the erroneously termed Eskimos, who are actually Upiks and Inupiats. And, of course, the American Indian. I prefer the term American Indian because I know its origins ... As an added distinction the American Indian is the only ethnic group in the United States with the American before our ethnicity ... We were enslaved as American Indians, we were colonized as American Indians, and we will gain our freedom as American Indians, and then we will call ourselves any damn thing we choose" (quoted at http://www. infoplease.com/ spot/aihmterms.html, consulted Jan 19, 2007). John Goddard, a Euro-Canadian writer, used to have an opposite opinion. He writes: "As a reporter in the Northwest Territories years ago, I was careful not to write the word Indian. I would write of native and indigenous and aboriginal peoples, but I considered the term Indian somehow pejorative." He has since changed his position and explains it at follows: "After working for three years on a book about the Lubicon Cree of northern Alberta, I've learned that there are more important distinctions to worry about. At council meetings and annual assemblies, I've heard Indian people refer to themselves unabashedly as Indians. Attitude is all. People uncomfortable with Jewishness tend to say 'the Jewish people' instead of 'the Jews'. And people frightened of disabilities are beginning to say 'physical challenges.' My uneasiness with Indian, I've come to realize, had something to do with feeling awkward around people whose culture and way of life I couldn't immediately understand or appreciate. Using a polite term like 'aboriginal people' seemed a way to display a respect I didn't at first feel. I now use Indian freely" (Goddard, "Speaking of Language: Words We Use Betray Unconscious Biases," *The Montreal Gazette*, Saturday, October 26, 1991, see http://www nisto. com/cree/ Lubicon/1991/19911103.html, consulted Jan 19, 2007). However, the best solution for the time being is probably the one suggested by Marge Bruchac, a New England Indian. She herself uses "Indian,' 'Native' and 'indigenous,' where generic terms are needed." She does so with the caveat that: "The original peoples of the "Americas understand that 'Indian' is a word from a foreign language, just like 'first nations' or 'indigenous' They call their world 'Indian Country', but the bottom line is for outsiders to learn, and respect how people choose to define themselves. Whenever possible, refer to tribal or regional names, Abenaki, Haudenosaunee, Mik'maq, or negotiate a term of common understanding." (Bruchac, *Thoughts on Indian Images, Names, and Respect,* December, 1999. See http://freepages.genealogy.Rootsweb. com/~massasoit/ bruchac htm, consulted January 19, 2007). This is her sensible position that I adopt in the present book.

1975, McClellan 1975b; McClellan *et al.* 1987; Osgood 1936a, 1936b, 1971, Testart, 1981, etc.), who are aware of the particularities of subarctic Athapaskan or Australian cultures, the possibility that some hunters and gatherers may have been matrilineal/matrilocal in aboriginal time is never envisioned

My efforts to correct such theoretical misconstructions have taken the form of a number of articles published in the 30 years since my initial field research with the Northern Tutchone. Questions of socio-economic inequalities among these hunters and gatherers are addressed in: « Réflexions sur l'origine des inégalités sociales à partir du cas des Athapaskan tutchone » (1982); « Commerce entre Tlingits et Athapaskans tutchones au XIXe siècle » (1984) and "Wealth, Poverty, and Slavery among XIXth Century Tutchone Athapaskan" (1985). I dealt with the question of how hunters and gatherers can possibly be matrilineal and matrilocal in « Dualisme de moitiés et stratification sociale parmi les Athapaskan tutchone septentrionaux (Yukon) » (1978); « A propos des bandes patrilocales: illusions théoriques et réalités ethnographiques » (1988) and in « Vendetta et cérémonie de la paix chez les Athapascans tutchones: Pour une critique du lien nature et violence fait par saint Augustin, Hobbes et Lévi-Strauss » (2000). Additional theoretical points based on Tutchone ethnographic data were presented in "Comments on Major Problems in the Social Anthropology of Hunters and Gatherers" (1988) and in "Comments on Headland's Revisionism in Ecological Anthropology" (1997).

The impact of Euro-Canadian society on Tutchone culture has been documented in my « Communautés amérindiennes contemporaines: structure et dynamique autochtones ou coloniales » (1987), « Postmodernité du corbeau dans la tradition tutchone athapascane » (1998), "Crow Reincarnated as Jesus: An Athapaskan Appropriation of Christianity" (1999), "First Nation Postmodern Cultures: (Re)Constructing the (De)Constructed and Celebrating the Changes" (2000), "La celebrazione delle culture autoctone contemporane" (2000) and in "Indigenous Peoples' Self-Determination and The Broken Tin Kettle Music Of Human Rights and Liberal Democracy" (2004). How the Tutchone indigenous foundation myth was affected by Christianity is detailed in a book published in 1999: *Tommy McGinty's Northern Tutchone Story of Crow: A First Nation Elder Recounts the Creation of the World* (later translated into French and published as *L'histoire du corbeau et Monsieur McGinty: Un Indien athapaskan tutchone du Yukon raconte la création du monde* (2003))

The journal articles, now edited and translated into English, with additional chapters on other aspects of Tutchone life will be published as a separate book exclusively devoted to Tutchone culture, past and present. This work will make more widely available the explanation of how hunters and gatherers may develop forms of socio-economic inequalities. Readers will discover how some Tutchone extended families managed to organize themselves into more efficient groups for attack and defence—forms of grouping which enabled them, among other things, to exclude other Tutchone families from the most productive extraction sites as well as from direct access to the existing intertribal trading networks. McClellan's identification of similar inequalities among the Southern Tutchone can be explained by reference to the cultural systems seen among Northern Tutchone. This book will also explain how among this People a matrilineal/matrilocal kinship and marriage system may be fully functional. Readers will note that hunting and warfare imperatives do not necessarily dictate either patrilineal descent or patrilocality. In a matrilineal system, the principal male bond is between the maternal uncle and his uterine nephew (sister's son). Now, if marriage is with a

bilateral first degree cross cousin, as among the ancient Tutchone, a young man marries his maternal uncle's daughter, and as residence is with the bride's parents, he resides with his maternal uncle. Therefore, in a matrilineal/ matrilocal system men who are culturally defined as constituting the closest unit (maternal uncle/uterine nephew) live together in the same territory—just as father and son share a same territory in a patrilineal/patrilocal structure,.

While this forthcoming book addresses many similar misconstructions about cultural alternatives among hunting and gathering peoples, it leaves one major problem unresolved. The fact that socio-economic inequalities or matrilineal descent, and other cultural characteristics can be shown to work in the context of a hunting and gathering economy does not prove that these traits are indigenous to the Tutchone. Many factors could have brought them about in recent time, especially if one considers destabilizing events such as the arrival of Russians on the Pacific Coast in the late 1700s and then, in the mid 1800s, of British fur traders in the Yukon River drainage system itself.

Because the socio-economic organization of the Tutchone is at odds with what anthropologists have long assumed to be the norm for hunter-gatherers, there is considerable appeal for the professional community in considering Tutchone culture as an anomaly of recent origin rather than an example of a type of human organization not previously documented in a hunter-gatherer culture.[10]

Traditional anthropologists would find support for their position in the observation that while matrilineal descent and matrilocal residence are still at the core of contemporary Tutchone society, socio-economic inequalities disappeared after 1890-1900, i.e. after the arrival of the first European settlers in their territory. This could reveal that the system of socio-economic inequalities was an ephemeral event only. Traditionalists might also attempt to bolster their position by undermining the reliability of oral tradition. The bulk of our data on nineteenth century Tutchone culture comes mostly from oral traditions recorded much later (starting in the late 1940s for the Southern Tutchone and in 1972 for the Northern Tutchone). Native informants could have reported on 1900s cultural developments and traits, wrongly believing them to also apply to the period prior to 1890. Historical events themselves might have brought about significant change in the culture and loss or transformation of former modes of social and economic organization. Furthermore, Tlingit people chiefdoms from the Pacific Coast could have possibly transmitted their well-known and well-documented stratified and matrilineal social structure to the Tutchone. Finally, after being transmitted through intertribal trade, European diseases, for which Tutchone had no immunity, could have decimated their population. As a result, their original social organization may have been altered or changed in another direction. Significant technological change with the introduction of European tools and more powerful weapons through intertribal trade may have also had similar impacts on social and economic organization.

[10] Contrary to received wisdom, we know from Kuhn, the great historian of scientific revolutions, that any scientific community must proceed by first clinging to dogma (cf. Kuhn in *The Function of Dogma in Scientific Research,* 1970). When facts contradict an existing theory, the community initially maintains the validity of its theory. The new data are deemed impossible, wrong, or in need of being reinterpreted, and so on.

In as much as the existence of socio-economic inequalities and matriliny is truly surprising in the context of a small-scale subarctic society of hunters and gatherers, obviously, such queries must be settled before any attempt at explaining the presence of these cultural traits can be made. This is the aim of the present volume.

To reach such an objective, we will first turn to the documents written by eye-witnesses in the years 1840-1890. Through these documents we will obtain, among other things, information on the historical Tlingit trade with the Yukon interior, and the unfortunate corollary of the introduction of European diseases which spread first through Tlingit contacts with the Russians; as well as a chronology of the various journeys undertaken by Europeans into the Yukon. The historical documents will then have to be examined to determine if enough data is present to shed light on the way in which Tutchone society functioned during that period, as well as to allow comparison with later oral accounts of nineteenth century Tutchone culture.

To further address the traditionalists' concerns, particular attention will have to be given to determining the exact socio-political status of the Tutchone during the years 1840-1890. Was their society independent and sovereign during that time period? Or was it dominated by the Tlingit? Or indirectly by Europeans living in adjacent territories? Depending on the answer, the non-egalitarian relationships which are said to have existed could have different causes and therefore could call for different explanations. If the Tutchone were sovereign, the explanation would have to be sought within the structure of their society. If they were dependent on others, the explanation would have to be sought in a broader framework, i.e., within the structure of inter-tribal or inter-national relations. It is therefore not only necessary to reconstruct the history of the Tutchone's contacts with the outside world, but to study the nature of those relationships as well. Thus to settle the traditionalists' queries requires the reconstruction and the writing not only of the ethnohistory of the Tutchone people, but also that of the entire central Yukon, and indeed that of the broader surrounding geographical area and its peoples.

This overall task is carried out as follow. The next two chapters (2 and 3) are devoted to establishing the status of Tutchone society from 1840 to 1890 and identifying and evaluating the sources of the information available for reconstructing nineteenth century Tutchone society. Chapter 3 demonstrates that the oral history record is for all practical purposes our main source of information on Tutchone socio-cultural organization from 1840 to 1890. An inventory of oral accounts dating from 1890 to 1972-74 is discussed, identifying the generations to whom the origins of this information could be attributed; establishing when it was acquired by the individuals who were ultimately interviewed; and determining under what circumstances this oral information might have been misinterpreted, either as it was being transmitted or after it had been received.

In terms of a chronology of the oral record, it should be noted that some of the information recounted orally prior to 1940 came directly from Tutchone who lived in the years prior to 1890. Information conveyed orally between 1940 and 1972 is shown to have been told by Tutchone who grew up between 1890 and 1920 and who acquired their knowledge directly from those who lived during the 1840-1890 period. The question then is: Was the informa

tion passed down orally after 1890 altered in some way or lost in part? In other words, what could have caused a loss of knowledge or provoked those who witnessed the years 1840-1890 to have altered facts, or what could have incited those receiving this information to colour it?

An examination of how oral tradition functions leads to the following conclusion: accounts related after 1890 might have been significantly altered depending on whether the 1890-1920 period was characterized by truly major socio-cultural upheavals. To address potential information loss or alteration in the oral history record, it is therefore necessary to establish whether any significant cultural upheavals occurred from 1890 to 1920, as well as in the preceding period. Chapter 3 also attempts to formulate hypotheses as to the types of changes that might have affected Tutchone society. What are the major plausible factors of change? It is possible that indirect factors related to occasional contact with the Tlingit had an impact from 1840 to 1890. Severe epidemics might have decimated the Tutchone as well as neighbouring indigenous groups in the proto-contact and early contact period. Such events could have resulted in a merging of indigenous groups, a blending of cultural traits that were previously specific to different groups, an abandoning of institutions rendered obsolete by the decimation of the population, or all three. Ecological and wildlife population changes as a result of the influence of the Euro-Canadians present on the periphery of Tutchone territory may have been another catalyst of change. For instance, if tundra caribou herds had been supplanted by moose, such a change might have put an end to large cooperative hunting units for corralling caribou herds and, indirectly, to any social systems that promoted large cooperative hunting ventures. The acquisition of new technology from Euro-Canadians is yet another possible factor which might have induced change in Tutchone culture. Such acquisitions might have prompted the Tutchone to stop producing certain objects themselves; using new tools and weapons might have paved the way for new work methods, and ultimately brought about a degree of cultural transformation. Lastly, there is the question of whether the presumed depopulation itself could have led to changes in work methods (and thus indirectly in the cultural realm) by making certain forms of cooperation impossible.

The same hypotheses are applied to the 1890-1920 period, with the added supposition that the Euro-Canadian settlers present in Tutchone territory at that time might have exercised direct cultural pressure on the Tutchone's societal structure. For instance, the presence of a Euro-Canadian police force in Tutchone territory might have mitigated the use of physical force among the rich, poor and servant Tutchone.

The following chapters examine whether or not such indirect factors of change materialized between 1840 and 1890 and then between 1890 and 1920. Chapter 4 is devoted to the identification of the diverse Tutchone regional groups and other peoples present in the interior Yukon in the mid-nineteenth century and to the question of whether factors of disease, warfare or trading opportunities resulted in the amalgamation or realignment of any of these groups, and therefore bringing about socio-cultural change. Chapter 5 examines the ecological environment of the interior Yukon in the nineteenth century to determine if any changes occurred during this period. The assumption here is that a significant change in environment, such as the loss or introduction of a subsistence animal resource, would have brought

about change in Tutchone socio-economic organization. Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9 focus on the economic (and cultural) transformation that occurred once Tutchone people began acquiring new technologies, weaponry and material goods from Euro-Canadian sources. Particular attention is given to changes in the composition and organization of work groups in response to the introduction of new technologies and materials and the effects on social and cultural institutions. The abandonment of some work methods or some socio-cultural institutions as a result of depopulation are considered as well.

From the present examination of the factors affecting the transmission of oral history, it is hoped that a detailed research method will emerge enabling other scholars to ascertain to what extent oral traditions may be approached as history.

In conclusion, all assumptions concerning socio-cultural change between 1840 and 1890, and later between 1890 and 1920, are put to the test. The analysis yields the following results: 1) No socio-cultural change and no fusion of different indigenous populations occurred between 1840 and 1890 and documents from that period (irrespective of their dates) can be safely considered as bearing on a single socio-cultural system, and 2) A few changes, albeit limited in scope, occurred from 1890 to 1920, and the oral tradition was passed down in a socio-cultural environment that had barely changed from that of the 1840-1890 period. The content of the information conveyed orally can therefore be considered to have been minimally altered by information loss or distortion.

Tutchone friends who, from the beginning, have been rightly convinced of the truthfulness of the information passed down by their elders will no doubt find much of this endeavour somewhat baffling. So, here, let me clearly indicate that the book is not in answer to them or to their elders, but foremost to enlighten outside scholars whose responsibility it is to demand proof of the veracity of *any* new claim.

However, this does not mean that the book is of no interest to the Tutchone themselves or to other students of Yukon history. On the contrary, the pages devoted to historic methodology present readers with the first synthesis of the early ethnohistory of the Yukon Territory. The findings exposed here are provided as much to resolve the question of oral history as history as to answer questions concerning the actual historical, cultural, social, technological, and economical conditions that characterized Tutchone society in the nineteenth century. In other words they also constitute an ethnohistory of the indigenous peoples of the Central Yukon prior to 1900.

Thus, this book offers a yearly account of Europeans' direct penetration into the Yukon starting in 1843; an inventory of the various written documents that they have left; a description of the intertribal trading customs and networks existing before the Klondike Gold Rush; a record of epidemics which spread in the area and of the consequent depopulations; a record of all the areas that were occupied and used by the Tutchone in the middle of the nineteenth century; an inventory of the natural resources they exploited for food or otherwise, together with the traditional techniques through which goods were extracted or produced; an analysis of changes or lack of change in game resources and in hunting techniques after the introduction of Europeans weapons, etc.

The necessary reconstruction of nineteenth century ecological resources (tundra or barren-ground caribou *versus* moose), of all goods originally extracted and all artefacts pro

duced, the exhaustive description of the tools and implements used, and of the individual or cooperative labour techniques resorted to is in itself a unique contribution to the ecological and economic anthropology of indigenous life in a subarctic setting. Archaeologists will find it valuable in formulating new hypotheses about the modes of life of past hunters and gatherers who have lived in similar environments. Younger generation Tutchone, it is hoped, will appreciate the detailed depictions of their ancestors' ecological knowledge, technological ingenuity, and sophisticated political and social strategies in the eventful and dynamic proto-contact and contact period of Yukon history.

# 2 THE INTERNATIONAL STATUS OF TUTCHONE SOCIETY FROM 1740 TO 1890

In North America, Indian or Métis middlemen, *coureurs de bois* (fur traders) and gold-seekers, whalers and bootleggers almost always preceded organized companies whose representatives kept journals and exchanged correspondence. Tutchone country was no exception to the rule. While the earliest first-hand observations about the Tutchone date from 1843, the first European-made goods brought into the territory by way of inter-ethnic trade with the Tlingit can probably be traced to 1770-1780 (Helm *et al.,* 1975: 313 and Fig. I). Therefore, in the second half of the nineteenth century, Tutchone people were living a society that certainly had knowledge of the people around it, and particularly of those on the Northwest Coast. Hence, an initial question: what is the point of reconstructing the culture of a subarctic indigenous society whose original structure may have been altered through contact with Tlingit society over a period of some sixty to seventy years?

Supposing for the time being that such a topic could be meaningfully pursued, several other questions must then be raised. Are the documents being studied for the period under consideration in fact congruous? Are there sufficient ethnographic details for that period? Can the structure of Tutchone society in the second half of the nineteenth century be reconstructed accurately enough to shed light on questions such as what formed the basis of the power of rich people (*dan noži'*) in this society?

These types of questions are all valid, but they cannot be answered outright. The most significant findings of the region's historiography must first be brought to the fore. This will be done in two sections. The first will be devoted to the period from the 1700s to 1840; the second section to the 1840 to 1890 period. Only these preliminary considerations can help determine the precise socio-political status of the Tutchone in relation to the rest of the world circa 1840, what became of their status between 1840 and 1890, and, lastly, what makes that period such an interesting one to study. Similarly, these discoveries will help establish an inventory of documents from that period which is necessary in order to answer the second type of question and, subsequently, in the event that these documents prove to be too incomplete, to indicate their shortcomings and what might be done to compensate for them. This will be addressed in the following chapter.

## 2.1 Tutchone Country before the Arrival of Europeans: 1740-1840

Despite the fact that the 1740-1840 phase is not part of the era under scrutiny in the present book, it must nevertheless be examined. In fact, the process by which the Tutchone became a part of the world's fur trading network has not been the focus of any detailed historical research. Moreover, rooted in the uncertainties surrounding the history of this society, there is a tendency to draw hasty conclusions modelled after the results of studies of the indigenous populations adjacent to the Tutchone. For instance, it is known that the Athapaskan people of the Lower Mackenzie Basin were directly incorporated into the international fur trade complex at least as early as 1790 and that this would give rise, in a matter of decades, to an inter-ethnic system[11] of trade between them and the Athapaskan Gwich'in of the Middle Yukon River Basin that did not previously exist. For this reason there is a tendency to presume that the same phenomenon occurred between the indigenous groups of the Middle Mackenzie Basin and the Tutchone which were located on the Upper Yukon River. This seems logical, as the Tutchone were, through the Liard River route, no farther from the Mackenzie River than were the Yukon Gwich'in.

However, nothing could be further from the truth. Anyone collecting and analyzing not just a few pieces of data, but all available data concerning this ethnographic area, would discover, for example, that events in one region cannot simply be transposed to another. From 1770 to 1840, the history of the Tutchone took a vastly different course from that of their Gwich'in neighbours to the north. Now, as these events are crucial in defining the international socio-political status of the Tutchone in the 1840s, and as knowledge of that status is fundamental to understanding Tutchone culture, it is absolutely indispensable to preclude any speculation formulated on the basis of a few tidbits of knowledge concerning the region's history. For this reason, therefore, all data pertaining to the first European forays into north-western North America are presented, and specific conclusions are drawn with respect to the actual involvement of the Tutchone in this history. I begin by examining where the very first explorations took place, then look at which indigenous populations were eventually affected by direct European contact and in what order. This examination concludes in 1848, the year in which the Hudson's Bay Company set up its first outpost among the Tutchone, and is followed by an analysis of what the available data suggest was the probable socio-political situation of the Tutchone shortly before that date, e.g. from the end of the eighteenth century to approximately 1840. It will be shown that this period ushered in virtually nothing important for Tutchone's socio-political independence.

[11] Inter-ethnic trade refers to what is usually called inter-tribal trade. The reason for changing the standard expression is that there were no *tribal* organizations in the interior areas of north-western North-America.

### 2.1.1 The First European Discoveries of Northwestern North America

North-western North America, which includes the coast of Alaska and the basins of the Yukon and Mackenzie rivers (see Map 1), has been inhabited by indigenous Indian, Aleut and Eskimo populations for thousands of years. It was first explored by Europeans during the 18th century. Two different access routes were used. The oldest, first used in 1741, was the Pacific Ocean. The second, travelled as early as 1789, was the inland route made up of various watersheds in what is now Canada. It brought *voyageurs* from the St. Lawrence River to the Mackenzie River, and thereafter to the Yukon River. Boats and supplies were carried overland whenever two watersheds had no direct connection.

The first to use the Pacific route were the Russians. That was the line of travel taken by Vitus Behring and Cherikof in 1741 to go from Kamatchka (Siberia) to the south-western coast of Alaska (Gunther, 1972: 3-4). In subsequent years, small groups of Russians went to trade with the indigenous peoples of the Aleutian Islands (de Laguna, 1972: I, 108). From 1745 to 1770, no fewer than 24 commercial expeditions took place between Siberia and destinations such as Copper Island, Kodiak, or the Aleutian Islands (J.L.S., 1776, quoted by Lantis, 1970: 145-146). Although they were kept secret, word of the Russian discoveries slowly spread through Western Europe, inciting the Spanish and the English to try to get a foothold in a region reported for having an abundance of fine furs (Gunther, 1972: 5).

In 1774, a ship commanded by Juan de Ayala set sail from Mexico to Tlingit country. In 1778, James Cook, an Englishman, took the same direction with two vessels. In 1779, two more Spanish ships, led by Ignacio Arteaga and Francisco de la Botega y Quadra explored the south-western coast of Alaska (de Laguna, 1972: I, 108-112). Throughout the following decade, on hearing rumours of the Spanish and English explorations, the Russians multiplied their own expeditions (Lantis, 1970: 148-150). In 1783, Zaikov and Nagaiev travelled to Yakutat, the northernmost section of the Tlingit's territory. In 1788, Ismailiov and Bocharov followed in their footsteps (de Laguna, 1972: I, 112-114, 132-138). The Russians' determination to establish themselves in the territory did not however quell the curiosity of the Western European powers. A French navy officer, La Pérouse, explored the coastline of Tlingit country in 1786. Three English explorers followed suit: Dixon in 1787, Colnett in 1788, and Douglas the same year. A Spaniard, Malaspina, came in 1791. In the face of looming competition from Western Europe and America, the Siberian Russians asked their Tsarina to create an imperial company with trade monopoly over Alaska. They also asked to be protected by armed forces. Their requests fell on deaf ears. The English and Americans then embarked on more than just exploration; they began to trade with the indigenous groups of this area, though at first only intermittently. The Russians could do no more than compete with them as best they could: they regularly sent boats to ply the coastline as far as the lands inhabited by the Tlingit; from time to time they carried out naval expeditions. This is how Shelikhov and Baranov and, later, Purnov and Kulikalov, ended up visiting Tlingit country in 1792-1793 and 1794, respectively. In 1796, they built a fort at Yakutat and left 80 men behind to defend it. In those days, six to eight American or English boats traded with the Tlingit each year. In 1799, Tsar Paul finally granted his subjects the monopoly for the commercial operations they had sought since the 1880s. Under Baranov's leadership, the Russians established a second fort, at Sitka, right in the middle of Tlingit country. From the Pacific Coast of America where they had finally settled, the Russians were only a few hun-

dred kilometres away from the Upper Yukon River. They were also not very far from the Behring Sea and the mouth of the Yukon River, one of the gateways to the interior of Alaska and the Upper Yukon Basin. One way or another, it became clear that they could establish themselves in this vast region which was as yet unknown to the Europeans (de Laguna, 1972: I, 114-170; Lada-Mocarski, 1969). Now certain that the Russians controlled all the sea access to the interior Northwest, the Spanish and French abandoned their plans on the northern Pacific Coast.

The British, however, were not completely discouraged. They knew, of course, that for the moment they had to keep most of their activities close to the present-day region of southern British Columbia and the American states of Washington and Oregon—away from the northern Pacific coastline occupied by the Russians. Nevertheless, they were also aware that their chances at colonizing the interior of Alaska and of the Yukon Territory were at least equal to those of the Russians. In fact, at that time, they already had firm control over a river network that was part of the second gateway into those lands. This network included the Saskatchewan River, Lake Athabaska, Great Slave Lake and the Mackenzie River. British hegemony on this route had been established as follows.

During the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), England defeated France which then ceded Canada to England, including all the fur trade routes which, at that time, stretched as far as the Saskatchewan River, not very far from the Churchill River. Thereafter, some Englishmen and French Canadian *voyageurs* extended those networks considerably to the north and west. Thus, in 1774, the merchant Joseph Frobisher opened a route from the Saskatchewan River to the Churchill River. In 1778, Peter Pond opened a new trading district around Lake Athabaska. By that time, a few unnamed French Canadians and Métis had already been living around Great Slave Lake for decades. In 1789, Alexander Mackenzie reached the Arctic Ocean by travelling along the waterways linking Lake Athabaska to Great Slave Lake, then along the river draining from that lake, which is today known as the Mackenzie River. Following each of these expeditions, some trading posts were established in each of the regions concerned. In 1800, these fur trade networks stretched all the way from the Saskatchewan River to the headwaters of the Mackenzie River. Only the Middle and Lower Mackenzie were still devoid of trading posts. Everywhere else, particularly along the Upper Mackenzie (the region inhabited by the Slave Indians), the British had depots, trading posts, fleets of canoes, boats and enough manpower to press farther west, i.e., towards the Yukon (Mackenzie, [1801], 1970: 65-159; Stager, 1971; Warkentin, ed., 1964: 16-118).

The British rightly believed therefore that, in contrast to their Spanish and French counterparts, their situation was not too unfavourable compared to that of the Russians. As we will see below, they were correct. There were two ways of travelling from the Mackenzie River's headwaters to the Yukon River. The first route consisted in descending the Mackenzie to close to its delta, then in walking westward across the Rockies, which are rather low at that latitude, then down the Porcupine River, a major tributary of the Middle Yukon. The second way involved ascending the Liard River, portaging after Frances Lake and taking the Pelly River, a major tributary of the Upper Yukon River.

From 1800 to 1842, the British traders established forts in the territories of all the remaining indigenous groups of the Mackenzie Basin. One post was built in Hare country and another in Mountain country in 1804; one among the Gwich'in of the Lower Mackenzie around 1820; one in 1832 among the Kaska along the middle section of the Liard River; one

among the Gwich'in along the Peel River in 1840 and lastly, another one among the Kaska of Frances Lake in 1842 (Stager, 1971; Helm *et al*., 1975: Fig. 1).

From 1800 to 1821, these posts were built by a few Montreal-based small companies that had opened the Saskatchewan-Mackenzie route, and later from 1821 to 1842, by the Hudson's Bay Company (H.B.C.) after it had managed to eliminate the earlier pioneering independent companies. Then, from its own bases, the H.B.C. ventured westward and soon discovered the two main eastern tributaries of the Yukon River (the Pelly and the Porcupine rivers). In 1840, after establishing Glenlyon House at Frances Lake,[12] Robert Campbell arrived at the sources of the Pelly River, which led into Tutchone country. In 1843, he explored the entire length of this river to its junction with the Yukon (Campbell in Wilson, 1970: 22, 41-45, 58); in 1842, John Bell started out from the McKenzie delta, and reached the Porcupine River Basin, which drains into the middle section of Yukon River, home to the Yukon Gwich'in People (Stager, 1971: 57). Shortly thereafter, a fur trading post was opened at the headwaters of each of these major tributaries of the Yukon River: Lapierre House, established by John Bell at the headwaters of the Porcupine River, probably in 1845 (Stager, 1971: 53) and Pelly Banks, established by Robert Campbell, near the sources of the Pelly River, also in 1845.[13] With these trading posts also serving as outposts, two other stores were subsequently established even farther to the west: Fort Yukon, built in 1847 by Alexander Murray at the confluence of the Porcupine and Yukon rivers in Gwich'in territory, and Fort Selkirk, built in 1848 by Robert Campbell at the confluence of the Pelly and Yukon rivers in the heart of Tutchone country (Murray, [1847-1848], 1910; Campbell in Wilson, 1970: 94-110).[14]

British success in interior western North America is easy to explain. During the years 1800-1848, the Tlingit prohibited the Russians from using the passes through the awe-inspiring Cordillera mountain range which separates the Pacific Coastline from the Yukon headwaters. While the Russians could have sought another passage, nothing incited them to do so, for they made such enormous profits between 1800 and 1820 from the work of the many different populations they had colonized along the coastline—Aleut, Kodiak, Tlingit (Mathews, 1968: 10)—that they did not bother to overcome the obstacles imposed on them by the Tlingit. It was not until some time later that they had to revise their policy. At the very end of the 1820s, the quasi-total extermination of the sea otter and the resumption of illegal American competition, which had slowed during and after the War of 1812, put an end to the prosperity of their coastal establishments (Ormsby, 1971: 66; Mathews, 1968: 10; Higginson, [1908], 1919: 185). It was then, starting in the 1830s that they decided to explore

[12] In 1850 and 1851, the post at Frances Lake was still operating. Cf. *Frances Lake Journal*, November 1, 1850-May 9, 1951. Public Archives of Canada, MG 19 D13. One page of the manuscript is signed by MacLean.

[13] Cf. Campbell, *First Journal of Occurrences at Selkirk Pelly Banks*, October 17, 1845 to April 1846; and Campbell, Pelly Banks*, Journal of Occurrences*, May 1, 1846 to Apr. 28, 1847. Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa (MG 19, D13 and MG 19 A25, A28). The date 1846 given by Wilson (1970: 88) is inexact. The title of the first journal should read: *Fort Selkirk at Pelly Banks*. The text leaves no doubt that the first Fort Selkirk is the one which was renamed Pelly Banks Post a year later.

[14] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, 1848-1852, Manuscript in the Public Archives of Canada, MG 19, D 13.

their interior possessions to find a way of circumventing the Tlingit and settling among the Athapaskans of the Yukon Basin. A few explorers were dispatched to the Behring Sea. In 1833, they discovered the mouth of the Yukon River. In 1834 and later in 1838, they proved that trade with the Ingalik and the Koyukon (both Athapaskan groups along the lower course of the Yukon) was more profitable than trade with the Tlingit or any of the other groups along the Pacific coastline. The Russian-American Company therefore offered to sell its Pacific coastline rights. The H.B.C.'s outfit in what is now British Columbia and the states of Washington and Oregon acquired those rights in 1839 (Ormsby, 1971: 76). Once the sale was concluded, the Russian-American Company settled in the Lower Yukon. There, it enjoyed renewed prosperity (Mathews, 1968). But once again, the company's initial success delayed it from forging farther up into the Yukon Basin. From 1840 to 1847, the Russian-American Company only had trading posts on the 800 km stretch from the Yukon Delta to the lands occupied by the Koyukon (Mathews, 1968: 31-42, 301), leaving 2,400 km between the Middle and Upper Yukon free of any colonial establishment. This is how, in 1847-1848, the Hudson's Bay Company was able to build fur trading posts, in each of the two regions before the Russians.

In brief, north-western North America fell under direct European influence in the following order: 1) Aleutian and Kodiak Islands from 1741 onwards; 2) Tlingit lands as early as 1770; 3) the Mackenzie Basin from 1790 on; 4) the lower course of the Yukon beginning in 1833; 5) the middle section of the Yukon River (Gwich'in) as of 1847; and 6) some of the upper part of the Yukon River (Tutchone) as of 1848.

### 2.1.2 Indigenous Groups in the Middle and Upper Yukon Prior to the Arrival of Europeans

While the indigenous groups along the middle course and part of the headwaters of the Yukon River only came to the European world's attention in the middle of the nineteenth century, the establishment of outposts among their Athapaskan neighbours had already begun 50 and, in some cases, 80 years earlier. Thus, an important problem comes to mind. Did the fur trade around Tutchone territory bring the people from the area into a new inter-indigenous trading relationship—a relationship that would have altered their socio-political status vis-à-vis the rest of the world? Knowing the chronological order in which these neighbouring groups became part of Europe's commercial sphere, we can now raise the relevant questions and attempt to answer them. Firstly, what kinds of relationships existed between the groups along the middle course and headwaters of the Yukon River and their neighbours before the latter's initial contact with Europeans? Secondly, what happened after 1770 when European people began visiting the Pacific Coast area inhabited by the Tlingit to the south of the Tutchone and Gwich'in? Thirdly, what were the probable interactions between the groups along the Middle and Upper Yukon, and those living to the east along the Mackenzie River during the time when the British settled among them (1790-1840). By answering these questions we will be able to determine whether the international status of Yukon indigenous societies was altered by the arrival of the Europeans in the regions adjacent to their lands.

### 2.1.3 Inter-Indigenous Relations Prior to the Arrival of Europeans in the Northwest

Most would agree that, since the earliest documents available date from 1780, this is as far back as we can go, and that because these documents concern the periphery of the region being studied, it will be impossible to be absolutely certain of the exact nature of the relationships among the indigenous groups of the Pacific Coast and the Yukon and Mackenzie rivers at the time. As a result, we can only surmise what they must have been like, and only very roughly at that. Not surprisingly, our conclusions will have to be painted with a broad brush. Let us present them now. Firstly, the Tlingit almost certainly traded with the indigenous groups along the headwaters of the Yukon River (Tagish and Tutchone) well before 1770, but the Han and Gwich'in were not part of their direct exchange networks. The second conclusion is that, in 1790, the Mackenzie River Kaska, Slave, Mountain and Hare had absolutely no contact with the groups of the Yukon River and that their dealings with the Mackenzie River Gwich'in were very tenuous. Obviously, our next step is to examine the data on which these conclusions are founded.

Whether the Tlingit had contact with the indigenous groups of the Upper Yukon River (e.g., the Tutchone) before 1770 can be determined by the following facts. The only sources of copper nuggets in the southern region of north-western North America (inhabited by the Eyak, Tlingit, Tagish, Tutchone, Nabesna/Upper Tanana) were located in lands occupied by the Tutchone and Nabesna/Upper Tanana) (Krause, [1885], 1956: 127; McClellan, 1975b: II, 502). When La Pérouse visited the Tlingit in 1786, they owned many articles of personal adornment and numerous knives made of copper (de Laguna, 1972: I, 115-116). It would therefore be reasonable to conjecture that trade had already been established among the Tlingit, Tutchone and Nabesna/Upper Tanana. The Tagish living between the Tlingit and Tutchone would also have been involved in these inter-ethnic exchanges.

The theory that the copper used by the Tlingit must surely have been purchased from Russian traders is very weak. For one thing, why would the Tlingit have bought European copper for their knives instead of iron blades which the Russian had for sale? For another, the articles seen by La Pérouse (including the knives) were elaborately styled, but not at all in patterns like that of their European counterparts. Therefore, even assuming that copper was preferred to iron blades, the Tlingit would have had to have completely mastered the technique of hammering copper before they had met the Russians. Since such a skill cannot be acquired overnight—or even over a few years—it must be presumed that they had long known copper hammering and that they had been importing copper from the Nabesna/Upper Tanana or the Tutchone well before the Europeans' arrival. This argument corroborates assertions made by Krause ([1885], 1956: 126-127), Olson (1936: 211) and McClellan (1975b: II, 501). Although not explicitly mentioned, it is undoubtedly this very same argument that led other specialists (Helm *et al*., 1975: 313 and Fig. 1) to infer that European-made goods must have reached the Tutchone as quickly as the Tlingit acquired them, i.e., circa 1770-1780.

The assumption that the Tlingit did not travel beyond Tutchone lands is supported by the following facts. When Mackenzie visited the Mackenzie River Gwich'in in 1789, there were no articles of European origin in their possession and the Gwich'in were so unaware of the advantage of iron tools that they declined those which Mackenzie presented to them as gifts

(Mackenzie, [1801], 1970: 195, 208). Moreover, the only accounts they had ever heard of the existence of white-skinned men came from the Inuit of the Beaufort Sea.

The journal kept by Mackenzie during his 1789 expedition also leads one to conclude that the Mackenzie River indigenous groups had no contact with the Yukon River groups. Initially, Mackenzie's goal was not to reach the Arctic Ocean as he ultimately did, but to explore a river which, according to Pond, flowed between Great Slave Lake and the section of the Pacific Coast occupied by the Russians (a river that does not exist, as we now know). When Mackenzie realized that the river he had been following was leading him to the Arctic Ocean rather than the Pacific Ocean, he systematically questioned all the indigenous people of the Mackenzie River to find out whether there was another river basin farther to the west, past the Rockies. This was an opportunity for them to reveal whether or not they crossed over the Rockies to meet with and ultimately trade with the groups along the Middle and Upper Yukon. However, only the Hare spoke of the existence of another world to the west (Mackenzie, [1801], 1970: 212, 213), and their accounts could hardly be taken as factual. Of the inhabitants of the country to the west, the Hare stated, "They are very big, have wings but don't fly and that they live upon large birds which they kill with ease, tho' those birds would kill common men if they would approach them…" (*ibid*.: 214). Practically forced by Mackenzie to accompany him into this strange land, they all claimed to have fallen ill. Mackenzie thought that they knew these people, but that they were lying because they were afraid to come face-to-face with them. It is nevertheless difficult to accept Mackenzie's interpretation of their behaviour. The Hare were very frightened of the Inuvialuit Inuit but this did not prevent them from providing Mackenzie with a guide to lead the expedition to Inuit territory. Moreover, they never spoke of the Inuvialuit as mythical beings. They described them as "bloodthirsty" beings (our apologies to their descendants), but also as ordinary humans. That is why Mackenzie's suppositions about winged men hiding actual men seem incorrect. The Hare people's stories undoubtedly did not refer to a real land, but rather one of mythical times. In fact, had this world to the west been peopled by actual enemies—had it been real—there is no reason why they would not have behaved towards them as they did towards the Inuvialuit. Mackenzie in this case had very likely allowed himself to be blinded by his obstinate quest to reach the Pacific Coast (see *ibid*.: 210-218, 225).

The conclusion concerning the nature of the contact between the Mackenzie Gwich'in and the other indigenous groups of the Mackenzie River is supported by the same document. We have seen that in 1789, the Mackenzie Gwich'in were not interested in the iron tools offered them by Mackenzie, as though they had not yet been exposed to them. However, Mackenzie (*ibid*.: 183, 187) noted that the Hare were eager to obtain them; a fact that would suggest that they had surely obtained such tools by way of inter-ethnic trade and that they were already familiar with their usage. As the Hare lived in lands directly adjacent to those of the Gwich'in, they presumably had not yet started trading with them. However, there definitely had to be contact between the two groups. For one thing, the Gwich'in expressed their disdain for Hare accoutrements to Mackenzie (*ibid*.: 194), proving that the two groups did cross paths. For another, Mackenzie found among the Hare a guide who could not only guide him to Gwich'in camps, but also introduce him and his European companions to the Gwich'in and quell the panic caused by their arrival (*ibid*.: 192).

These findings do not constitute absolute proof. But in the absence of any indication to the contrary, it seems reasonable first to suppose that the indigenous groups of the Yukon

River headwaters carried on trade with the Pacific Coast Tlingit even before these Tlingit became part of Europe's commercial realm. Second, is seems more than plausible that no such contacts had existed between the Yukon River groups and the Mackenzie River groups when the latter first came into contact with the British.

Now that we have established the relationships between the various groups of this north-western region as far back as we can conceivably go, the question is whether these relations were maintained until 1848, or whether they were seriously altered by the Russians who settled among the Tlingit and the English who gradually expanded their trading posts among the groups of the Mackenzie River. For this purpose, I will examine what transpired during that period between the Tlingit and the Yukon River groups, and also between the latter and the Mackenzie River groups.

### 2.1.4 From the End of the Eighteenth Century to the 1840s

The main pieces of writing available on the subject of contact between the Tlingit and the indigenous groups of the Yukon consist of observations recorded between 1840 and 1852 when H.B.C. representatives explored Tutchone country. These observations can be used to deduce, in part, what the situation might have been prior to European's explorations. These are supplemented by a few other records and the ethnohistory of both the Tlingit and the Tutchone.

When Campbell first arrived at the confluence of the Pelly and Yukon rivers in 1843, the Tutchone he encountered there had glass beads, adzes and a few flintlock guns which they had acquired from the Tlingit (Campbell in Wilson, 1970: 77). From 1843 to 1848, while residing at Frances Lake among the Kaska or at Pelly Banks on the Upper Pelly, Campbell continued to hear accounts of the Tlingit regularly visiting the Tutchone (*ibid*., 86-87, *passim*). In the journal he kept at Fort Selkirk in Tutchone country from 1848 to 1852, he wrote that small groups of Tlingit passed through each summer.[15]

His journal reveals that the Tlingit never ventured north of Tutchone country.[16] This is supported by a letter from Hardisty (quoted by Anderson),[17] who was stationed at Fort Yukon and who presented the Stewart River (southernmost Han territory) as being located past the northernmost point the Tlingit had ever reached. Although it seems strange, this limit is nevertheless easily explained. Since the Tlingit were obliged to travel through high mountain passes and to carry their own packs, they could only bring small quantities of trade goods into the Yukon Territory—no more than what each man could carry on his back while scaling a mountain (no women traded). The population of the indigenous groups of the Upper Yukon was large enough to completely absorb, in a matter of days, the limited amount of goods delivered, as amply evidenced in Campbell's journal.[18] The same document indicates Tatlmain Lake (Tatl-heen on Map 2, below) as the eastern boundary of Tlingit

[15] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal, passim*.
[16] *Ibid*. August 24, 26, 29, 31; September 3, 6, 1849.
[17] Hardisty, 1854, in *James Anderson Papers*, 6 vols. Public Archives of Canada. MG 19 A29, File 3, pp. 143-149.
[18] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, August 28, 1949, *passim*.

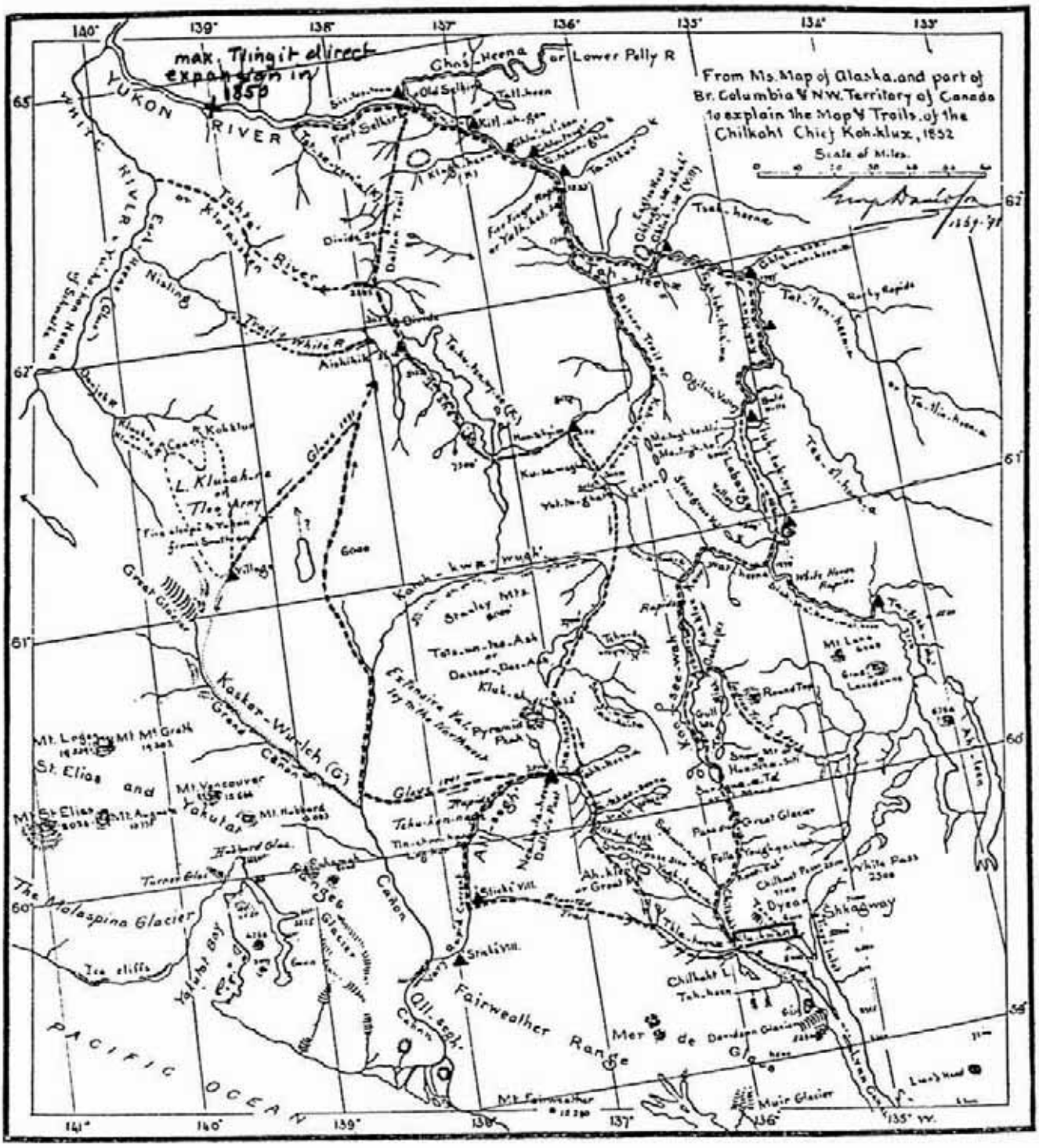
penetration.[19] After a few days trading with a regional group, the Tlingit returned to their territory on the Pacific Coast.

Later observations reveal that certain paths to the west linked the basin of the Yukon headwaters to the basin of the Tanana River (Nabesna/Upper Tanana people). Schwatka (1885a: 93; 1893: 240) tells us that a trail connected Fort Selkirk to Nabesna/Upper Tanana country in 1850. Allen (1887: Map 1), who explored the Upper Tanana in 1885, indicates no fewer than four well-worn trails between the headwaters of the White River (a tributary of the Yukon) and the Nabesna/Upper Tanana area.

For the same period, there is even a map that clearly reveals that the Tlingit were in fact already very familiar with the Upper Yukon Basin circa 1850. This map (Map 2, below) was drawn by a Tlingit chief—Kohklux—who, in 1869, was urged by a detachment of the U.S. army on an expedition through his territory to show just how far the Tlingit had penetrated into the Yukon when Fort Selkirk was in operation (Davidson, 1901). On the map, the place names in Tlingit were provided by Kohklux; the English place names by Davidson. I have added a few notes. The triangles represent places where, according to Kohklux, the Tlingit would meet with Athapaskans of the mapped region: Tagish, Southern Tutchone and Tutchone. While only the main trails appear on the map, it is obvious that the Tlingit were intimately familiar with the Yukon headwaters. The trail along the Klotassin, of which Kohklux had indicated only a section, is very likely the same one that Schwatka claimed extended into Nabesna/Upper Tanana country. The one shown on the map as extending to Kluane Lake was, by all accounts, connected to the trails identified by Allen.

Now if we consider the period (1850), the existence of such trails, the extent of the network of trails and waterways, the intricacy of that network and, lastly, the fact that the Tlingit had place names in their own language, there is no longer much doubt that these lines of communication had existed long before 1850, or even 1843. Of course, it is impossible to pinpoint the exact date when they were established, but chances are that they already existed in 1770. Ethnohistorians specializing in that region (Helm, *et al*., 1975: Fig. 1) tell us that the *Inland* Tlingit who currently live directly adjacent to the Tagish and Tutchone hailed from the Taku River and arrived at their present location around 1805-1810. They had probably visited the area before that. These same authors concur that the Tagish adopted Tlingit as a second language around 1830. Once again, this would indicate that the Tlingit and the indigenous groups of the Upper Yukon maintained regular contact over several decades before 1850. Lastly, the oral tradition of the Tlingit and Tutchone alludes to ongoing trade relations from the start of the eighteenth century to 1850 (Krause [1885], 1956: 126-127; Olson, 1936: 211; McClellan, 1970b: 108; 1975b: II, 501). It would therefore be logical to conclude that the Tlingit continued to regularly visit the indigenous groups of the Upper Yukon between 1770 and 1850 and that the Tutchone did not enter into any new trade relationships until the very last two years of that period (e.g. after the establishment of Fort Selkirk in 1848 at the confluence of the Pelly and Yukon rivers).

[19] *Ibid*. May 18, 1951.




Map 2. Tutchone country drawn in 1869 by a Tlingit chief
(interpreted by Davidson, 1901).
The dotted lines represent the main routes;
the triangles represent the various meeting places where, in 1850, the Tlingit chief traded.

The contact experience between the indigenous groups of the Mackenzie Basin and the native groups of the Yukon Basin differed somewhat. The 1800-1850 ethnohistory of the Yukon Gwich'in reveals the establishment of trade relations with the people of the Mackenzie (Balikci, 1963: 34; Slobodin, 1962: 23), and those exchanges can probably be traced back to 1820, the year in which the H.B.C. set up a trading post among the Mackenzie Gwich'in, or as far back as 1804, the year that the first store was built in Hare country. Moreover, it indicates that between 1840 and 1847 the Gwich'in along the upper and middle sections of the Porcupine River acted as middlemen between Peel River Fort and the Yukon Gwich'in (Murray [1847-48], 1920: 93). In this instance, the trading posts of the Mackenzie gave birth to an inter-ethnic network of trade relations between indigenous nations which did not exist prior to the H.B.C.'s entry into the Lower Mackenzie Basin.

Could the same phenomenon have occurred between the Mackenzie and the Upper Yukon where the Tutchone lived? As reported by the existing records, relations between the Gwich'in of the Peel River, a western tributary of the Mackenzie River, and the northernmost Tutchone along the Stewart River were characterized by outright hostility throughout the nineteenth century (Slobodin, 1961: 85-86; 1962: 16). The same was true for the Mountain Indians of the Mackenzie and their neighbours along the headwaters of the Pelly River (Campbell in Wilson, 1970: 78-79; Field [1913], in MacNeish, 1957). It would appear that the Kaska of Frances Lake (Mackenzie Basin) had contact[20] with the people of the Upper Pelly River (Campbell in Wilson, 1970: 61), but not beyond (*ibid.*: 91). In fact, even when Campbell established a fort at Pelly Banks among the Upper Pelly people, immediately east of the Tutchone, he was unable to attract the latter away from the Tlingit trade network,[21] and this certainly must have been the case between indigenous groups before the arrival of the H.B.C. in the Pelly Banks area. With ethnohistory supported by a handful of period documents, it must be supposed that in the case of contact between the groups of the Upper Yukon such as the Tutchone and the Mackenzie, the arrival of the British into the Mackenzie wrought no change between 1790 and the 1840s; the indigenous groups of the Upper Yukon and the Mackenzie remained isolated from one another and without organized trading relations.

Overall, the characteristics of the Tutchone's "external" contact with their neighbours probably remained unchanged from 1770 to 1848, somewhat beyond our cut-off date of

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[20] In 1850, the Indians of the Upper Pelly were trading at Frances Lake (*Frances Lake Journal*, November 24, 1850. Anonymous manuscript, no title, Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa, MG 19 D13). As Fort Selkirk could be accessed more easily, this suggests that the people of the Upper Pelly undoubtedly had a better rapport with the Kaska of Frances Lake than with the Tutchone of Fort Selkirk. The fact that people have moved around in the Upper Pelly region makes it difficult today to identify its indigenous group (cf. Denniston, 1966; Field [1913] in MacNeish, 1957; McDonnell, 1975: 379-386). However, the two journals kept at Pelly Banks between 1846 and 1847 reveal that in the 1840s the people of the Upper Pelly were a group separate from the Ross River Kasini, from the Frances Lake Kaska and from the Mountain Indians (Campbell, *First Journal of Occurrences at Selkirk Pelly Banks and Pelly Banks, Journal of Occurrences*).

[21] In June 1846, the chief of the Kasini (*Gens des Couteaux*) visited Pelly Banks, but not to trade. He returned in November, but found the prices charged by the H.B.C. too high. See *Pelly Banks, Journal of Occurrences*, June 7, November 23, 1846.

1840. During this period, they continued to trade once a year with the Tlingit but did not establish trade relations with the indigenous groups of the Mackenzie. Only the Yukon Gwich'in were faced with a new reality: trade with the people of the Mackenzie.

This conclusion might be surprising and, considering the fragility of the data on which it is founded, some might even doubt its veracity. However, it is easily explained by trade logistics, the main points of which may be summarized as follows. Entry into the territory from eastern Canada required that merchandise or trade goods bound for the Mackenzie and Yukon first nations and their furs bound for Europe be transported along lengthy water routes composed of numerous watersheds, resulting in a very long turnaround cycle and exorbitant transportation costs. Consequently, merchandise could only be sold (or resold) to Yukon first nations at very much inflated prices. Trading from the north-western Pacific Coast, on the other hand, was much shorter. The Tlingit received their supplies directly from high seas sailing ships. The goods were then packed on the backs of the Tlingit or their slaves and reached their destination only a few hundred kilometres away. Moreover, the Yukon furs bought by the Europeans from their Tlingit middlemen were bound for the Chinese market, relatively close to the place of production. In addition, a number of nationalities involved in this trade competed with one another by selling European goods to the Tlingit at relatively low prices. Thus, the Tlingit came to enjoy the perennial privilege of selling merchandise in the Upper Yukon at lower prices than those that would have had to be charged by Indian middlemen from the Mackenzie (the same being true for the prices that Campbell would have to charge later on in 1848-1852 at Fort Selkirk, as his trade goods were supplied from the east).

From 1796 to 1821, when trade in the Mackenzie Basin was in its infancy but before the Hudson's Bay Company (H.B.C.) could impose its monopoly, the merchandise sold to the Peoples of the Mackenzie came either from Montreal as was the case for the independent traders or from York Factory, the outpost that the H.B.C. had set up on the south-western coast of Hudson Bay in what is today Manitoba.

The first route was by far the longest: up the Ottawa River to Mattawa, up the Mattawa River, three portages to Lake Nipissing in Ontario, down to Georgian Bay on Lake Huron, along the north shore of Lake Huron, through to Lake Superior by way of Sault Ste-Marie, along the north shore of Lake Superior down to Grand Portage (now part of Minnesota in the United States), up the Pidgeon River, overland journey, then down the Rainy and Winnipeg rivers towards Manitoba, across Lake Winnipeg, up the Saskatchewan River, up to Cumberland House in Saskatchewan, up the treacherous Sturgeon-Weir River, another portage, up the Churchill River, followed by a difficult portage to La Loche (Methye), down the Clearwater River to Fort McMurray in Alberta, down the Athabaska River to Lake Athabaska, down the Slave River to Great Slave Lake and across to the Mackenzie River (Morse, 1971). This route was a minimum 4,500 km in length and more like 5,000 km after accounting for turns and detours, which were not noted on the map used to arrive at this estimate.[22]

The course taken by the H.B.C. was shorter: departure from York Factory located on the Hudson Bay, up the Hayes River, overland journey to the Upper Nelson, up the Nelson River to Norway House at the northern tip of Lake Winnipeg; from there, the same route as

[22] *General Map of Canada*, Map No. 9571, American Map Company, Inc. no date.

that described above (Morse, 1971). The distance traveled was only between 2,300 km to 2,500 km.[23] In this way, the H.B.C. could sell its wares for half the price of those sold by the companies operating from Montreal (*ibid.*), and this explains why it managed to absorb those companies in 1821. From that time on, merchandise would no longer reach the Mackenzie from Montreal; the H.B.C.'s river route, remapped and simplified, became the only route used to service that district. While cargo from around the world arrived at lower cost, prices nevertheless remained very high. This was attributable partly to a H.B.C.'s trade monopoly at that time and partly to the great distances covered. Although shorter, the H.B.C. route was still quite long, not to mention onerous. The 2,300-2,500 km estimate above covered only the distance as far as the Upper Mackenzie. From there to the Yukon, there remained great distances to travel. In order to arrive in the heart of Gwich'in country, it was necessary to go down the Mackenzie to its junction with the Peel River near the Beaufort Sea, go up the Peel River a short distance, portage the merchandise across the Rockies, go down the Porcupine River to the Yukon River, all of which added 2,100 km to the trip.[24] The shortest route to the Tutchone was down the Mackenzie to its junction with the Liard River, up the Liard and then up one of its northern tributaries to Frances Lake. From there, it would be necessary to portage 60-80 km overland to the Upper Pelly and then down the Pelly to the Yukon. This last leg of the journey added 1,900 km over and above the initial 2,300-2,500 km for the leg of the journey between York Factory and the Upper Mackenzie.[25] Thus, even after the route from Montreal was abandoned, goods from England could only be delivered to the Gwich'in after being transported some 4,400-4,600 km by river and to the Tutchone after 4,200-4,400 km. From London to the Yukon, via York Factory, the turnaround cycle would take 7 to 10 years (Innis, 1956: 324).

As for the time involved in the trade route from China or Siberia to the interior of the Yukon by way of the southern coast of Alaska, suffice it to say it was very much shorter. Russians and Americans would obtain supplies in Siberia, China or the United States. The furs they obtained were destined for the Chinese market (Ormsby, 1971: 6; Mathews, 1968: 9-10; Krause [1885], 1956: 33-46; Innis, 1956: 242-243). Going to and from Siberia, China or the United States would take only one sailing season (Ormsby, 1971: 15). Merchandise from the Pacific Coast to the Tutchone would then need to be transported 500-600 km,[26] for a total travel time of around three weeks.[27] From start to finish, including a few days for actual trading, a complete round trip could take only one year.

The cost difference between the European goods traded by the Tlingit to the Tutchone and those available to would-be Mackenzie Indian middlemen was considerable. The difference may be calculated from H.B.C. post records dating from 1849 when Fort Selkirk and Fort Yukon had just begun operating. Although prices in this case were set by the H.B.C. and not by our hypothetical Indian middlemen of the Mackenzie, estimates can reasonably

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[23] *Ibid*.

[24] *Transportation Facilities–1969, Northwestern Canada* (1 inch to 50 miles), Sixth Edition, Canada, Energy, Mines and Resources, Survey and Mapping Branch.

[25] *Ibid.*

[26] *Ibid*.

[27] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, July 8, 1848, August 26, 1849.

be made because the prices charged by these would-be Mackenzie Indian traders would necessarily have been at least equal to those charged to them in the Mackenzie Basin by the H.B.C., plus their profit.

Innis (1956: 324) made a few such calculations, while Campbell's records fill in the missing pieces. Aside from production costs, the price of the merchandise entering the Yukon would have included the salaries paid to H.B.C.'s employees, the transportation costs "incurred" over a 7-10 years cycle, and the interest which would have been added to the fixed and variable capital invested over that period. Based on these original documents, Innis indicates that only the most precious furs were profitable as they had high market values in England, were of relatively small size and were easy and thus less costly to transport. As a result, muskrat pelts which had little unitary value were not accepted at Fort Yukon. Only beaver and marten pelts were profitable. It should be noted that Innis was correct only about the marten. One finding demonstrates this well. During the winter of 1851-1852, the barren-ground caribou did not migrate through Gwich'in country. For food the people had to rely on beaver meat as they customarily did in such circumstances. Since they were more preoccupied with finding food during that particular season, they gave up trapping marten. That spring, they showed up at the fort with a great many beaver pelts, but no marten. This influx of beaver dismayed the manager of Fort Yukon, who wondered in his journal whether his district would ever be profitable.[28]

The situation was entirely different for the Tlingit. The competition among the various European nations trading along the Pacific Coast could and did bring down the price of European merchandise for there were no huge transportation costs to cover for any (Innis, 1956: 66, 71, 73, 76-77, 127, 201, 246, 332-334, 357, 364; Ormsby, 1971: 26, 58, 67, 68, 129). Thus, the prices charged to the Tlingit, and in turn to the Tutchone, were rather low compared to those that the H.B.C. had to charge in the Yukon interior. In fact, an implement the H.B.C. had to sell 20 units of furs at Fort Selkirk was sold for only 4 units[29] to the Tlingit on the Pacific Coast, and it is well established that the Tlingit were able to resell that same implement to the Tutchone for less than 20 units.[30] Another example: the Tlingit would give a wool blanket to the Tutchone for a single tanned moose hide while Campbell would have had to ask for 30 marten pelts, if possible, for that same blanket.[31]

Taking all of the above into consideration, it becomes clear why the Yukon Gwich'in could conceivably have been absorbed into a trade network with the Mackenzie nations and why this was not the case for the Tutchone. Because of their limited capacity to transport goods, the Tlingit were never able to meet the Gwich'in's provisioning needs. The Gwich'in therefore had to accept the terms of trade imposed by the Mackenzie Indian middlemen; terms which meant prices at the very least as high as those charged by the H.B.C. in the

[28] Hardisty, *Fort Yukon Journal*, May 31, 1852. Public Archives of Canada, H.B.C. Archives, 1M 166.

[29] *James Anderson Papers*. 6 Vols. National Archives of Canada, MG 19 A29, File 3, pp. 238-250.

[30] Cf. *ibid.*; and Campbell in Wilson, 1970: 109; Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*. June 2, July 8, 1848. The price difference was deduced from the fact that the Tlingit paid five times less on the Pacific Coast and from the fact that they claimed to have resold their goods for less in the Yukon than what Campbell was asking

[31] Cf. Campbell in Wilson, 1970: 109; *James Anderson Papers*, File 3, pp. 238-250.

Mackenzie and if we take into account indigenous middlemen's profits which were probably similar to those that the H.B.C. later on imposed directly in the Yukon. Conversely, as the Tlingit were able to supply the Tutchone with merchandises on a regular basis at prices that could be reliably lower that those that would be charged by would-be Upper Mackenzie Indian traders, it explains why no trade relations developed between the indigenous groups of the Mackenzie and those of the Upper Yukon that lived not far from the Pacific Coast.

Thus our earlier formulations no longer appear surprising. They are in fact in line with the trade logistics of that time. There is therefore no reason to doubt the information inferred from the historical data—i.e., that from 1770 to about 1850, the implantation of European trading posts among the Mackenzie indigenous groups *adjacent* to the Tutchone did not alter the previous international status of Tutchone society.

Now that the pre-1840 situation has been ascertained as best as could be, it is time to answer the initial question inspiring this section: what was the international socio-political status of the Tutchone in the middle of the nineteenth century, i.e., at the beginning of the period chosen for this study? We have seen that each of its regional groups was just as isolated from the indigenous groups of the Mackenzie then as it had been in 1790 and earlier. It engaged in trade exchanges with the Tlingit only once a year, for a period of a few days, just as it had done in the past. It was also noted that, until 1848, no European ever settled among them or traded face to face with them. The answer to our main question then is obvious. Up to 1848, the Tutchone were a politically independent subarctic indigenous people; a society secure in its dealings with the groups inhabiting the surrounding territories. As this society of hunters and gatherers was as yet free of any permanent Tlingit presence and of any direct European interference, while at the same time a matrilineal society with socio-economic inequalities, the relevance of studying the workings of its political structure is becoming increasingly clear. However we must now ascertain whether the situation just described continued to present the same fundamental characteristics throughout the five decades that concern us, between 1840 and 1890.

## 2.2 Tutchone Society and the Outside World from 1840 to 1890

In order to find out what became of Tutchone society between 1840 and 1890, we must first examine the type of relations that existed between the Tutchone and the Europeans and Tlingit. In the first sub-section, we will identify what activities the Europeans were engaged in during that period. The second sub-section will be devoted to the impact of those European activities in Tutchone country, while the third will be a study of the nature of the relations between the Tutchone and the Tlingit. In conclusion, we will determine, based on the data presented, what became of the Tutchone society's socio-political status vis-à-vis the rest of the world during the period in question.

### 2.2.1 Chronology: 1840-1890

The preceding narrative ended at 1848. That year, the Russians occupied the Lower Yukon. The Hudson's Bay Company occupied the northern Pacific coastline (which the Russians had ceded to the Company in 1839), the entire Mackenzie Basin (from 1840 onward), and the Middle and Upper Yukon River where it had just built Fort Yukon in Gwich'in country and Fort Selkirk in Tutchone country. For the sake of convenience, the activities of Europeans during the 50 years under study have been summarized in the form of a chronological table (Table 1). In order to simplify the naming of the various gateways used to enter the territory, I use only one of its major characteristics. Thus, the "Tlingit route" was the route that started in Tlingit country and passed either through the Chilcoot Pass or the Chilcat Pass. The "Pelly route" was the one used by Campbell in 1843 and then on a regular basis in 1848-1852 (Mackenzie, Liard, Pelly/Yukon confluence). The "Fort Yukon route" connected the Mackenzie River to Fort Yukon and Fort Yukon to Fort Selkirk. The "Behring route" consisted of going up the Yukon River from the Yukon Delta on the Behring Sea to Fort Selkirk (a distance of about 2,400 km). Sections of these routes may be followed on Map 1. In Table I, events that occurred *inside* Tutchone territory are preceded by an asterisk (*); all other listed events occurred among their proximate neighbours. The references used in drafting this table include archival documents as well as published documents which are based as much as possible on archival documents.

Contrary to what the establishment of Fort Selkirk seemed to bode, a glance at this table shows that, between 1840 and 1890, European presence amounted to a very slight one, since Fort Selkirk was totally abandoned four years after it had opened. In the next 29 years, i.e., from 1852 to 1881, two European travellers spent a total of three days there. From 1881 to 1890, the Tutchone came into contact with only a handful of explorers, missionaries, gold-seekers and traders. However, none of these individuals spent more than a few weeks of the year in their territory.

Insofar as concerns inter-ethnic relations and contact between the Tutchone and the trading posts that remained open around their territory after Fort Selkirk was closed, the same sources reveal the following findings. From 1848 to 1890, the Tlingit and Tutchone continued to trade on an annual basis, yet the former did not let their Yukon partners go directly trade with the Europeans on the Pacific coastline (Krause [1885], 1956: 134-137; Glave, 1982; Olson, 1936; Mathews, 1968; de Laguna, 1972: I, 350-351; McClellan, 1975b: II, 501-518).

#### TABLE I. CHRONOLOGY 1840-1890

| | |
|---|---|
| 1840 | A trading post is opened among the Gwich'in along the Peel River (Stager, 1971; Helm et al., 1975: Fig. 1). |
| 1842 | John Bell starts out from the Mackenzie delta and reaches the Porcupine River Basin, which drains into the middle section of the Yukon River and was home to the Yukon Gwich'in people (Stager, 1971: 57).<br>A trading post is opened among the Kaska of Frances Lake in (Stager, 1971; Helm et al., 1975: Fig. 1). |

1843 *Robert Campbell explores the Pelly River to its confluence with the Yukon (Campbell in Wilson, 1970).

1845 Robert Campbell opens a trading post at Pelly Banks at the headwaters of the Pelly River, in Kasini and Kaska territory. He stays there until 1847.[32]
Lapierre House is established by John Bell at the headwaters of the Porcupine River, in Gwich'in territory probably in 1845 (Stager, 1971: 53).

1847 Alexander Murray builds Fort Yukon at the confluence of the Porcupine and Yukon rivers in Gwich'in territory (Murray, 1847-1848, 1910).

1848 *Campbell establishes Fort Selkirk at the confluence of the Pelly and Yukon in Tutchone territory (Campbell in Wilson, 1970).

1852 *Tlingit attack Fort Selkirk, immediately followed by the H.B.C. leaving Tutchone country and abandoning the two posts leading to it: Pelly Banks and Frances Lake (Anderson in Wilson, 1970: 126-128; Stager, 1971: 53; Davidson, 1901).

1861 William Kirby, a missionary with the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.) of London, takes the Fort Yukon route to visit the Gwich'in at Fort Yukon.[33]

1862 The C.M.S. builds a permanent mission at Fort Yukon. Contact continues via the Fort Yukon route until 1900. Robert McDonald was the first resident missionary. Attempt to convert the Gwich'in and Northern Han who came to Fort Yukon.[34]

1867 Russia sells Alaska to the United States (Sherwood, 1965: xiii).
The Russian American Company sells its assets to Hutchinson, Kohl and Company of San Francisco. The Alaska Commercial Company is established (Johnston, 1940).
*Using the Behring route, Ketchum and Laberge go up the Yukon River to the site of Fort Selkirk where they stay a few days.[35]

1869 The Alaska Trading Company launches the "Yukon" steamboat on the Behring route (Osgood, 1971: 6).
The "Yukon" travels up the river to Fort Yukon (Raymond, 1900; Sherwood, 1965: 91).
The United States expels the H.B.C. from its Fort Yukon site at the confluence of the Porcupine and the Yukon;[36] the H.B.C. re-establishes new Fort Yukon

[32] Cf. Campbell, *First Journal of Occurrences at Selkirk Pelly Banks*, October 17, 1845 to April 1846; and Campbell, *Pelly Banks, Journal of Occurrences*, May 1, 1846 to April 28, 1847 (Public Archives of Canada, Ottawa, MG 19, D13 and MG 19 A25, A28).

[33] *Kirby to the Secretaries of the Church Missionary Society*. November 30, 1861 (Public Archives of Canada, C.M.S. Archives, Film A93).

[34] Reverend McDonald, *Report for December 1862 to June 1863* (C.M.S. Archives, Film A93).

[35] *Ketchum to Bulkley*, July 25, 1867. In C. S. Bulkley, *Journal of the U.S. Russo-American Telegraph Expedition, 1865-1867* (U.S. National Museum Library, Washington, D.C. pp. 224-226).

[36] *Reverend R. McDonald's Journal*, December [18]69 (C.M.S. Archives, Film A99).

1869 posts on the Porcupine River in what it believes should be Canadian lands (in succession: Rampart House I, II and III).

1871 Robert McDonald begins visiting the Northern Han of Eagle or Hung Koocheen[37] once a year. His point of origin is Fort Yukon.[38]

1873 Trading post established at Belle Isle, near Eagle in Han country. Supplies are brought to the trading post via the Behring route (Osgood, 1971: 8).
Four gold-seekers spend the winter of 1873-1874 in the Lower White River Basin, probably in Han country (Mathews, 1968: 87-88).

1874 The steamboat "Yukon" travels past Fort Yukon into Han country for the first time (Mathews, 1968: 89).
Fort Reliance trading post established near the current site of Dawson City, in Han country. Supplies are brought in on the steamboat "Yukon."

1877 Fort Reliance is abandoned after a dispute between the Han and the storeowner (Mathews, 1968: 91).

1878 George Holt, a solitary prospector, is given permission by the Tlingit to go through Chilcoot Pass. He probably explored the lands of the Tagish. Brooks (in McClellan, 1975b: I, 6) estimates that this occurred in 1875, but it was more likely in 1878 (Mathews, 1968: 102).

1879 The Alaska Commercial Company has a new competitor: the newly established Western Trading and Fur Company which launches its own steamboat—the "St. Michael"—on the Behring route (Osgood, 1971: 7).
Fort Reliance in Han country is re-opened (Mathews, 1968: 94-95).

1880 The American army forcefully breaks the Tlingit monopoly at the Chilcoot Pass. Twenty-five gold-seekers prospect in the territories of the Tlingit and Southern Tutchone. They leave at the end of the summer without having crossed north of the lands of the Southern Tutchone (McClellan, 1975b: I, 6; II, 504-505; Berton, 1972: 14; Mathews, 1968: 96, 103).

1881 *A half dozen gold-seekers travel across the lands of the Northern Tutchone (deduced from Mathews, 1968: 96 vs. 103).

1882 Aurel Krause, a German anthropologist of the Tlingit, does not manage to persuade the Chilcat Tlingit to allow him entry into the Upper Yukon (cf. Krause [1885], 1956: 6; McClellan, 1975b: II, 504-505).
There are now eleven Europeans living in Han country; none in Tutchone country (Mathews, 1968: 102-104).

1883 Two independent merchants launch a third steamboat on the Behring route: the "New Racket" (Osgood, 1971: 6).[39]

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[37] The "*Gens des fous*" or "*Hung koocheen*" or "*Han kwitchin*" which means "River Tribe." *Journal of the Reverend R. McDonald*, June 26, 1866 (C.M.S., Film A93); *Journal of K. M. McDonald*, December 15, 1875 (C.M.S. A102).

[38] *Journal of the Reverend R. McDonald*, July 6-24, 1871 (C.M.S. Archives, A100).

[39] V. C. Sim, *Journal of a Journey on the Yukon River*, June 15-August 25, 1883 (C.M.S. A112).

1883 A C.M.S. missionary, V. Sim,[40] taking the Fort Yukon route, begins visiting the Southern Han or Trotsik Kutchin[41] of Fort Reliance

Between six and eight prospectors spend the summer in the Southern Tutchone area (Schwatka, 1893: 187).

*Four gold-seekers, who came to the territory via the Tlingit route, prospect on the Stewart River during the summer (Mathews, 1968: 103).

*The American army commissions Schwatka to explore and map the Yukon. He travels along the Tlingit route and crosses the lands of the Tutchone in about 10 days (Schwatka, 1885a, 1885b, 1893).

1884 *The "New Racket" travels up to Fort Selkirk for the first time. Fur trading occurs with the Tutchone (Mathews, 1968: 105).

*The C.M.S. mandates a Christian Gwich'in from Rampart House to go convert the indigenous people of the Upper Yukon. From the summer of 1883 to the summer of 1884, he explores the Stewart River.[42]

*Four gold-seekers prospect along the Stewart River during the summer (Osgood, 1971: 10; Mathews, 1968: 104).

1885 One prospector by the name of Carmacks explores Tagish country (Hamilton, 1964: 69).

*Eleven gold-seekers spend the summer toiling along the Stewart River (Mathews, 1968: 104-105).

*After the 1885 season, the "New Racket" stops dealing in furs and is used exclusively for selling prospecting equipment (*ibid*.: 106).

1886 *At the beginning of the summer, some 100 gold-seekers prospect the Stewart River (Osgood, 1971: 109; Mathews, 1968: 106).

*A storehouse for food provisions, intended for gold-seekers, is built at the confluence of the Stewart and Yukon rivers. It stays open for one summer only (Ogilvie, 1913: 66; Mathews, 1968: 106) as the discovery of gold on the Fortymile, near Eagle, in Han country (cf. Osgood, 1971: 10), prompts the 100 or so prospectors to leave the Stewart in October (Mathews, 1968: 109).

1887 *Between 100 and 200 gold-seekers—probably 150—take the Tlingit route to go to Fortymile and thus cross the section of Tutchone territory that is drained by the Yukon River (deduced from Mathews, 1968: 109, 111; Hamilton, 1964: 65; McClellan, 1975b, I, 6; Berton, 1972: 14).

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[40] *Ibid*.

[41] *Trotsik Kutchin*, or *Trotskik Kutchin*, or *Tchotsyik Kutchin*, or *Truthtsykk Kutchin*, or *Trurhtsyik Kutchin,* or *Trooth tsik Kuitchin* which means "Stone-Hammer River Tribe." *Journal of the Reverend R. McDonald*, May 26, 1875 (C.M.S. A101); *Journal of the Reverend R. McDonald*, July 30, 1875 (C.M.S. A102); *Journal of K. M. McDonald*, December 15, 1875 (C.M.S. A102); *Journal of the Reverend R. McDonald*, March 19, 1877 (C.M.S. A103); V. Sim*, Rampart House,* January 9, 1885 (C.M.S. A113, #689); Bompas*, Buxton,* November 18, 1896 (C.M.S. A119, #2534); Bompas*, Selkirk, On Board Steamship, Upper Yukon River,* September 3, 1896 (C.M.S. 119, #2479).

[42] *R. McDonald to Edgar Dewdney, Commissioner of Indian Affairs,* June 2, 1884 (C.M.S. A113).

1887 *Robert McDonald, a C.M.S. missionary, travels to the mouth of the Stewart and up this river to the present site of Mayo (Tutchone territory).[43]
*Two Catholic priests, travelling via the Pelly route, cross the lands of the Tutchone.[44]
*Two Canadian geologists (Dawson and Ogilvie) and an American explorer (Redmond) explore Tutchone territory. Dawson arrives via the Pelly route and leaves using the Tlingit route; Ogilvie arrives via the Tlingit route and leaves using the Fort Yukon route; and Redmond arrives via the Tlingit route and leaves using the Behring route (Dawson, 1888; Ogilvie, 1913; Redmond, 1891).

1888 At the gold streaks at Fortymile there are only 30-40 gold-seekers left (Osgood, 1971: 10).
Buxton House mission is established at Fortymile in Han country.[45]
The steamboat "The Arctic" is launched on the Behring route to ferry supplies to Fortymile (Mathews, 1968: 111).
*J.W. Ellington, a missionary, travels up the Yukon from Buxton House to the confluence of the Stewart and Yukon rivers where he stays a few days.[46]
*McConnell, a Canadian geologist, enters via the Fort Yukon route and leaves via the Tlingit route after having passed through Tutchone country (Bostock, 1957: 1).

1889 *J.W. Ellington repeats the voyage to the Stewart River that he had undertaken a year earlier.[47]
*I.C. Russell, an American, travels the Fort Yukon route and leaves via the Tlingit route just like McConnell had done the year before (Sherwood, 1965: 139-140).

1890 There are approximately 150 gold-seekers in Han and Gwich'in territories.[48] No indication of any in Tutchone country.
Ellington, the missionary, becomes mentally disturbed and is expelled by the Han.[49]

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[43] R. McDonald, *St. Mathews,* February 6, 1890 (C.M.S. A116, #1519); Anonymous, *"The Venerable Robert McDonald,*" typed copy of a manuscript in the Anglican Old Log Church, Whitehorse, Y.T., no date, 6 pp.; J.W. Ellington, *Forty Miles Creek,* June 13, 1888 (C.M.S. A115, #1176).

[44] Bompas, *Fort Simpson*, March 22, 1888 (C.M.S. A115, #1172). The study by G. Carrière (1971) *Fondation et développement des missions catholiques dans la Terre de Rupert et les Territoires du Nord-Ouest* [Foundation and development of the Catholic missions in Rupert's Land and the Northwest Territories]. Only covers the period 1845-1861 and, of course, makes no mention of the expedition into Tutchone country in 1867. The relevant documents may be in the Deschâtelets Archives (Ottawa). However, I have been unable to investigate.

[45] Bompas, *Fort Simpson*, March 8, 1888 (C.M.S. A115, #1172).

[46] J. Ellington, *Fort Reliance*, July 1888 (C.M.S. A115).

[47] *Ibid*.

[48] T. H. Canham, *Tanana Station,* June 13, 1890 (C.M.S. A115 #1357).

[49] *Ibid.*

1890 *The Tlingit monopoly on the Chilcat Pass is finally broken 10 years after the Chilcoot Pass monopoly was broken. An expedition group from the Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper travels through the pass. Two members of this group penetrate into Tutchone lands: Glave travel to the Alsek River (in Southern Tutchone territory) and Dalton to the Yukon River (Northern Tutchone country) (Schanz, 1890: 262; Wells, 1900: 513).

*An independent merchant–Harper-opens a new trading post on the former site of Fort Selkirk, situated in the middle of Tutchone country (Osgood, 1971: 11; McClellan, 1975b: II, 509).

The H.B.C.'s trading posts located along the Upper Mackenzie (Fort Halkett, Fort Liard and Fort Simpson) and the middle course of the Yukon (Fort Yukon) did not attract the Tutchone any more than they had before 1848,[50] and the other Athapaskan groups living in proximity to these five posts found it no more advantageous to become middlemen in the trade with the Tutchone than they had in the past.

The failed operation at Fort Selkirk, the Tutchone's stable trade relations with the Tlingit, and the delayed re-entry of Europeans into Tutchone country may be attributed to the following facts. During the first two decades of this period, merchandise brought to the Tutchone by the Tlingit continued to be less costly than merchandise transported by rivers from York Factory on the Hudson Bay to the Mackenzie or Yukon (see reasons cited in the previous section). As a result, trade with the Tlingit in the Upper Yukon led to the failure of the H.B.C.'s attempts to establish trade relations with the Tutchone through its Fort Selkirk outpost (1848-1852), and the fort was subsequently abandoned. This decision to leave was all the easier to make because in 1839, the H.B.C. had purchased the right to trade with the Tlingit via the Pacific coastline and it therefore already obtained a portion of the Tutchone and Upper Yukon furs through Tlingit middlemen. After Fort Selkirk was abandoned, two H.B.C. trading posts—Fort Yukon in Gwich'in country and Fort Halkett in Kaska country—continued to operate in proximity of the Tutchone (only several hundred kilometres away). However, as both of these forts were being provisioned via the costly river routes mentioned above, their managers were advised not to waste time or resources in trying to establish trade relations with the Tutchone. They therefore sent no members of their personnel into Tutchone country. As a result, missionaries who wanted to visit the Tutchone were deprived of the logistical support they needed, and the Tlingit were left with no commercial or cultural competitors. The high profits these Coast People earned from their exchanges with the Tutchone depended on the latter's ignorance of the prices being charged along the Pacific Coast. Consequently, the Tlingit continued to prohibit their Athapaskan partners from trading directly with the Europeans who had settled on the Pacific Coast, and for as long as possible, they kept the Europeans from visiting the Tutchone in the Upper Yukon. As for the

[50] From the time it was established, Fort Yukon attracted the Northern Han who continued to go to that post during the subsequent decades. However, the Southern Han and Tutchone hardly ever went there to trade (see Murray, *Fort Yukon Journals*, June 1, 1848 to June 30, 1849; July 1, 1849-May 31, 1850; June 1, 1850-May 31, 1851; Hardisty, Fort Yukon Journals, June 1, 1851 through May 31, 1856 (H.B.C. Archives 1M 166); *Fort Yukon Accounts Books* 1851 through 1870 (*ibid*., 1M775) and in particular Hardisty, *Fort Yukon Journal*, May 21, 1853.

Tutchone, they continued to be supplied at relatively good prices and had no interest in trading with either Fort Yukon down river or Fort Halkett up the Pelly and Frances Lake, or with the indigenous groups who were supplied by those forts.

The Europeans remained uninterested in the Tutchone's territory until the problem of mercantile logistics was radically transformed, i.e., until a number of steamboats began travelling up and down the Yukon from the mouth of that river in the Behring Straits. Europeans, and more precisely Euro-Americans, were then able to travel the river's entire length (or almost) in a single season. This happened only in the early 1880s when a steamer began provisioning a trading post recently established in southern Han country (Fort Reliance). Thanks to this outpost, merchants and missionaries could seriously consider forging farther south towards Tutchone territory, and gold-seekers in Tlingit territory could set their sights on prospecting north in the Northern Tutchone and Han regions without running the risk of spending the winter without supplies.

Given the situation, it appears perfectly normal that Fort Selkirk was only kept open for four years; that, with one exception, no Europeans travelled to Tutchone territory between 1852 and 1881; and finally that some gradually resumed travel to the area only after 1881. As a result, we may consider that the various archival documents and references used to establish the chronology for that period have no serious shortcomings and that the absence of Europeans between 1852 and 1881 is not the result of some unknown documents having fallen by the wayside. For, indeed, the surviving literature from that period provides a chronology that fits in with the logistical difficulties of that era. Now that we have compiled this "as complete as humanly feasible" historical inventory, we can proceed to determine the socio-political status of Tutchone society during that period.

### 2.2.2 Nature of Relations between Tutchone and Europeans Societies from 1840 to 1890

In 1840-1848, the geopolitical situation of the Tutchone was that of an independent society which traded a few days a year with the Tlingit people. What is meant by "independent society," is simply that no foreign groups of people were able to subject the Tutchone to their will and that, consequently, the Tutchone, within the confines of their own rules, could still act and react freely among themselves. The question we must now answer is this: in the four subsequent decades, did the explorations of a few Europeans over a certain number of years bring about a change in this status? The particular years in question are 1848-1852, during which the H.B.C. operated out of Fort Selkirk, and the decade 1880-1890, during which gold-seekers, a few explorers, two or three missionaries, and a merchant briefly visited Tutchone country at one time or another. Let us now examine each of these events separately.

The existence of Fort Selkirk poses a twofold problem: did the Tutchone's desire to obtain European goods enable the H.B.C. to impose its own rules on the Tutchone's economy and on their culture? To answer this question, the purpose and operation of this fort should first be detailed.

One ambiguity that must be addressed is what the word "fort" suggests. Fort Selkirk was not a real fort in the common sense of the word, but a group of small log cabins without any fortification (Schwatka, 1893: 205). There was one general store, including a few outbuild-

ings and the trader's house in which one room was used for meeting with prospective indigenous clients. Two Scots lived there alone. They were salaried employees of the H.B.C. Reporting to them were a dozen francophone subordinates, recruited from among the Métis of the Mackenzie, who did not live at Fort Selkirk, but instead in the woods where they fished and hunted to supply the two Scots with staples (Innis, 1956: 299-302).[51] The Scots and Métis had to be self-sufficient in terms of their food supply; for, because of the cost of transportation, they were sent only a small supply of pemmican and tea. If they ran out, they could only count on any surplus that the indigenous peoples could spare from time to time. The Métis' other function was to provide the manpower required to export bundles of furs by canoe in one direction, and to import loads of beads, tobacco, flintlock guns, balls, gunpowder, iron bars, knives, adze blades, blankets and vermilion.[52]

To grasp how Fort Selkirk operated is to look at the reasons why it failed. The event that directly led to its abandonment was the attack on and pillaging of the store by a small group of 27 Tlingit in August 1852 (Campbell in Wilson, 1970: 121). Yet, the other reason that led to the decision to close it runs deeper and is attributed to the problems related to trade logistics, which were previously cited as the reason for the absence of trade networks between the Athapaskan of the Mackenzie and those of the Upper Yukon. The problem was not limited solely to the price of goods. First of all, trade goods from York Factory were not only expensive but also delivered irregularly. At the same time the Tlingit were able to buy all manner of goods that the Tutchone wanted to sell. It thus made it impossible for the British company to force the Tutchone to concentrate exclusively on the sole activity of producing luxury furs—something it should have instituted in order to have any chance of success.

The records left by Campbell leave no room for doubt as to the serious difficulties encountered in provisioning Fort Selkirk with trade goods (Campbell in Wilson, 1970: 105-110). For example, Campbell wrote in his journal that "9 Indians brought nothing as usual; no wonder, we have nothing to trade with them."[53] This leitmotiv is echoed throughout the entire journal. At times, the staff of Fort Selkirk even faced famine when the small quantity of pemmican sent from the Mackenzie failed to arrive on time. And so Campbell complained on a number of occasions of not having any food to eat, or of being reduced to "eating rotten fish."[54]

Items which formed the basis of the Tutchone trade with the Tlingit are clearly documented. Campbell's journal proves beyond a doubt that the Tlingit wanted tanned moose hides as much as furs. A few lines written in 1848 specify that a Tutchone group sold noth-

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[51] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, June 29, October 24, 1848.

[52] Campbell, *Account Book 1851-52, Requisition for Fort Selkirk* (Hudson's Bay Archives, 1M 582, Public Archives of Canada). The same rule applied to Fort Yukon (Murray, [1847-1848], 1910: *passim*); *Fort Yukon Journals, 1849-1956*; *Account Books 1850-1870* (Hudson's Bay Archives, Film 1M166 and 1M775, Public Archives of Canada). See also *Church Missionary Society's Archives 1865-1900* (Public Archives of Canada, Film C1/0 A93, A94, A98, A99, A100, A101, A102, C1/C1/0 A103, C1 to C1M A80; G1 series C1-C1/0, A111, A112, A113; C1/0, A114, A115; G1/ C1/ C1/0, A116; C1/0, A117, A118, A119, A120).

[53] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, May 11, 1849. See also October 13, 17, 1848, *passim*.

[54] *Ibid*. November 1, 1849, *passim*.

ing (or next to nothing) but moose hides to its Tlingit partners. There were so many that the latter, unable to transport them, stored a portion in a cache.[55] Elsewhere in his journal, he writes that the Tlingit "have already taken up about a boat load of fur and *leather*."[56] Based on other documents belonging to the H.B.C., Innis (1956: 325) even felt it was valid to conclude that the Tlingit "preferred *leather par dressed*." They used these hides to make their own clothing (de Laguna, 1972: I, 432-433, 436) and perhaps also as currency, just as they used caribou skins imported from elsewhere for the same purposes (Krause, [1885], 1956: 132).

As for the furs, it is also very clear that the Tlingit did not have to limit themselves to marten. They also bought beaver, muskrat, gopher (a ground squirrel whose fur was not at that time marketed by any European company in the world) (de Laguna, 1972: I, 436), black bear, grizzly and wolverine. Some of these pelts (marten, beaver) were resold to Europeans who traded along the Pacific Coast, while others, such as gopher or bear, for instance, were used by the Tlingit to make robes or capes.

Fort Selkirk had virtually no chance of success in such a context. For one thing, because of the slow turnaround cycle and irregular deliveries, the specific needs of the Tutchone could not be met on time (e.g., preference for one type of knife or bead). For another, even when a shipment arrived at Fort Selkirk, the goods did not necessarily sell. For instance, during the summer of 1848, Campbell kept goods to sell to the Tutchone of the Lower Pelly. However the latter went to trade with travelling Tlingit.[57] The same occurred in 1849, when Campbell wrote, for example, that in one week the Tlingit "have already taken up about a boat load of fur and leather and the servant of the Co. has not yet the 20th part of a packet since."[58] He also wrote: "Seven Wood Indians [Tutchone] arrived […]. They have some beaver in their camp, but they find [our] tariff too high for them." Similar comments recur throughout his journal.[59] For the same reason, the Tutchone also never took an interest in selling food to the staff of Fort Selkirk. As Campbell wrote: "It is evident that the Indians have plenty large meat caches, though they are not inclined to bring any meat in the fort," and "Indians have large caches all over the country but won't give any to the fort nor allow those few that would to do so," and "I believe that all the Indians have entered a combination to bring neither furs nor meat to the fort, although they have plenty of both in caches."[60]

These complaints were not unfounded. According to the *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal,* here is an example of what the Tutchone brought to the fort in 1848-1849:

Although not all the skins bought were listed by Campbell, it is clear that he had great difficulty obtaining not only the specific furs he wanted but even more ordinary Tutchone products. Reading his journal, one has the impression that the local indigenous people traded with the H.B.C. only when the Tlingit were going to be absent for months on end and only if they had a truly pressing need for European goods.

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[55] *Ibid*. August 17, September 19, 1848.
[56] *Ibid*. August 31, 1849.
[57] *Ibid*. August 17, September 19, 1848.
[58] *Ibid*. August 31, 1849.
[59] *Ibid*. July 16, 1848, June 2, 1849, *passim*.
[60] *Ibid*. October 10, 11, 1848; September 30, 1849.

| Date | Furs | Leather |
|---|---|---|
| 6/4/1848 | “a few furs” | - |
| 6/7 | “1 fur” | - |
| 6/27 | - | “1 skin” |
| 7/18 | “a few furs” | “leather” |
| 7/19 | - | “a little leather” |
| 8/6 | “some furs” | “a large quantity of leather” |
| 8/18 | “a few furs” | - |
| 9/25 | “2 beavers” | “1 moose skin” |
| 9/25 | “5 furs” | - |
| 9/27 | - | “10 skins” |
| 9/30 | - | “3 skins” |
| 10/20 | “30 martens” | - |
| 1/10/1849 | “1 fur” | - |
| 5/14 | “a few furs” | - |
| 5/17 | “a few beavers” | - |
| 5/18 | “beaver skin” | - |
| 5/19 | “a few furs” | - |

Lastly, because the Tlingit bought leather and ordinary fur, the H.B.C. had to do the same when the Tutchone deigned to trade at Fort Selkirk (Innis, 1956: 325). The above list of pelts bought shows this quite clearly. From it, it is obvious that the Tutchone sought to satisfy their immediate needs by trying to sell leather and furs from animals such as moose and beaver which were hunted more for their flesh than for their skins rather than fur from marten, an animal defined as non-edible. This fact is further evidenced by the “*List of furs traded at the Forks of Pelly and Lewes* (August 31, 1848-June 30, 1851).”[61]

The result of all these events was catastrophic. The H.B.C. could only buy a small quantity of furs and this small quantity was not sufficient to make Fort Selkirk economically viable. Thus, it should come as no surprise that Anderson, the “chief factor” of the H.B.C., who was responsible for this district, “reported a loss for Frances Lake, Pelly Banks and Fort Selkirk for the outfit of 1848-49-50 of £1,467 and of the 1851 outfit for Fort Selkirk of £383.10.2” (Innis, 1956: 324). In 1852, Fort Selkirk alone lost £730 (Anderson in Wilson, 1970: 127). To put this in perspective, the *annual* salary of the workers and subordinate employees of the H.B.C. varied then between £15 and £27.[62] One wonders why the management of the H.B.C. agreed to sustain this deficit-producing district for four years. Since 1839, the H.B.C. had acquired a trade monopoly with the Tlingit on the Pacific coast, and

[61] Hudson’s Bay Archives, Film 1M893.

[62] Campbell, *Pack from Fort Selkirk, Account 1851* (Hudson’s Bay Archives, Public Archives of Canada, Film 1M582).

since 1848 or 1849 it had known from Campbell's accounts that the Tlingit resold to the H.B.C. some of the furs they were buying from the Tutchone. The answer is quite simple. Campbell relentlessly sought to prove that Fort Selkirk could become profitable. H.B.C. management gave him the benefit of the doubt. When the Tlingit attacked Fort Selkirk in 1852, however, it became clear that the fort would have to be protected by armed force, an operation that would be very costly and that would increase the fort's overall deficit. As it was known that the Tutchone pelts would anyway be brought in by the Tlingit to the H.B.C. trader on the Pacific Coast, it was decided that Fort Selkirk should closed definitely (Innis, 1956: 324-325).

In brief, due to a series of constraints, the H.B.C. was not only unable to re-orient the Tutchone's traditional fur production towards a type of luxury output that would have been profitable, but it was also unable to even obtain most of what these People were producing at the time. Herein lies the answer to the first part of the question concerning the presence of a store in Tutchone country between 1848 and 1852. Clearly, during that brief period, the Europeans were not able to subject the Tutchone people to the cultural demands or economic imperatives of European society.

Now to solve the second part of the question: as bearers of a different culture, were the officers and employees of the H.B.C. able to affect Tutchone culture? The two managers—Campbell and Stewart—were Scotsmen. We noted that they lived most of the year in total isolation from the Tutchone, who were dispersed throughout a territory 520 km long and 345 km wide. To understand the profound solitude they faced one needs only to evoke how they celebrated St. Andrew's Day—St. Andrew being the patron saint of Scots. They had none of the special Scottish foods needed and neither the attendant drinks or music. Sometimes one of the two men would celebrate on a "rotten" fish all alone at the fort whereas the other one had to go visit the distant Métis's camp in search of food supplies. Reading the Fort journals, one has the impression that they latched on to such a symbol only in order not to lose their own identity.

In fact, had there been any risk of cultural influence, it would have involved the two Scotsmen being absorbed by the Tutchone and not the reverse. This is particularly obvious when they came face to face with a few of these Athapaskan for a few days of the year. For example, from his journals, it seems that Campbell formed an attachment to a Tutchone woman. She was, however, probably already married to a Tutchone man with whom she lived. In desperation, Campbell made the following type of comments: "Bad luck to the beloved! She left sorrow behind her."[63]

The dozen or so francophone Métis Indians of the Mackenzie who hunted and fished for the two Scotsmen were susceptible to the same pressures. As they very likely also spoke one or more of the Athapaskan languages of the Mackenzie Basin it was easier for them to learn Tutchone and to integrate. At least one or two of them married Tutchone women and stayed in the country after Fort Selkirk was closed. Their presence has left some clear signs. For example, Tutchone *contemporary* vocabulary now contains two French words: "le sel" (salt) and "le bol" (bowl). The Tutchone, who have dealt only with Anglophones since 1852, mistakenly believe these words to be Athapaskan.

[63] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, October 2, 1848.

But is all this surprising? The two Scotsmen and the dozen Métis were lost in a vast space and far outnumbered by the Tutchone.

The men of the H.B.C. did expose the Tutchone to some new ideas, such as building permanent log dwellings, but the nomadic Tutchone showed little interest in such things. It can therefore be concluded that the cultural impact of the H.B.C. episode was practically nil. This should come as no surprise considering that the presence of the H.B.C. amounted to no more than that of two Scotsmen and a dozen or so Métis Indians in a territory measuring 180,000 $km^{2,}$ all this during only four years. In 1852, the Tutchone were still a subarctic indigenous society untransformed by European culture.

Did this condition persist up to 1890? We know that for all intents and purposes, the Tutchone had no contact with Europeans from 1852 to 1881. But what about 1881-1890? From 1881 to 1886, some were exposed in the summer to small groups of gold-seekers. From 1883 on, a few were visited by a handful of explorers (government emissaries and missionaries). In 1884 and 1885, those of the Selkirk district had opportunity to trade with the captain of a small steamboat. Did any of these events have a greater impact than that of Fort Selkirk between 1848 and 1852? Before answering, it would help to first specify what exactly those different groups of Europeans were doing in Tutchone country.

A reconnaissance expedition would take one week if the explorer left from the Pacific Coast and went down the Yukon River to Fort Selkirk by canoe or raft (Schwatka, 1893: 183-242; Dawson, 1888; Redmond, 1890), and two to four weeks if travelling upriver by canoe from Fort Yukon.[64] Explorers would only use the main water courses or the Yukon River itself. They would never stop for more than a day or two at any given location, if at all.

As for the gold-seekers, the number of those who sojourned into Tutchone country should be noted: no more than five or six in 1881; about a dozen in 1882; four individuals along the middle section of the Stewart River in the summer of 1883 and 1884; six men prospected the same area in 1885; and about 100 men were present in the same region in the summer of 1886. In 1887, 1888, 1889 and 1890, all these gold-seekers went instead to the gold veins of the Fortymile River in Han country. It took them only two or three days to cross through Tutchone country on the Yukon River (Osgood, 1971: 10). While some 150 prospectors passed through this territory in 1887, a dozen in 1888 and a few dozen in 1889 and 1890, their activities, for all intents and purposes, must have appeared to the Tutchone identical to that of other transient explorers and travellers.

Another fact requires clarifying. The gold-seekers generally had no goods to trade with the native people. They travelled to Alaska by buying their passage on a ship. Added to the cost of transportation was the cost of their prospecting equipment, the cost of their food supplies and the cost of the portage they had to pay to the Tlingit who helped them cross the Chilcoot Pass. Once in the Upper Yukon, they only had a short three-month summer season to prospect the main rivers (even less after factoring in their travel time). The small teams of three or four partners they formed remained quite dispersed. They toiled as long as the endless summer days permitted. If the venture failed, as was the case more often than not, the members of the team would leave the Yukon, never to return. Only a handful of hardy indi-

[64] Cf. V. C. Sim, *Journey on the Yukon River*, June 15-August 25, 1883. (C.M.S., A112, C1/0).

viduals remained in the Subarctic through the winter, though not in Tutchone country. By summer's end, their food supplies would be depleted and they would have to return either to Fort Reliance or to Belle Isle in Han country where, with a little luck, the manager would still have some flour, beans and lard to spare—for the price of the little bit of gold dust they had panned in the summer and a loan to be repaid at the end of the following season (Mathews, 1968: 115-116). Rare exceptions aside, the presence of prospectors in Tutchone country was therefore limited to the summer. Moreover, the number of those who used the Chilcoot Pass each year did not increase over the years. Each year, only some Tutchone saw such parties, and only a few of them, and those that they did encounter were not the same from one year to the next.

It should also be noted that the gold-seekers could not bring with them any merchandise that they could trade. Not only did the Tlingit prohibit them from doing so by checking the contents of their packs (Krause in McClellan, 1975b: I, 5-6), but the route they used and the weight of their own baggage made this unthinkable. The Chilcoot Pass, which they had to cross, was 43 km long. They had to scale 1,250 metres and then descend 520 metres. The slopes were often so steep as to make the climb almost vertical (Mathews, 1968: 132). It was therefore impossible for them to engage in fur trading with the Tutchone.

Now for a look at the two expeditions of the steamboat "New Racket" up to the abandoned site of Fort Selkirk. The captain of the boat, Napoleon McQuesten, loaded his goods (tobacco, glass beads, flintlock guns, gunpowder and balls) (Mathews, 1968: 106) at St. Michael, at the mouth of the Yukon River. From there to Fort Reliance (some 2,000 km upriver), McQuesten traded with all the Athapaskan groups he chanced to meet along the way. His sales technique was patterned after that used by the native people themselves: tireless banter, reciprocal gift-giving, etc. He undoubtedly did the same with the Tutchone at Selkirk in 1884 and 1885. Although it must be pointed out that these exchanges ended in 1886. From that summer on, McQuesten used his steamboat exclusively to supply the gold-seekers at Fortymile River (Han territory) with prospecting equipment and food staples. He was paid for these items in gold dust or nuggets, making this a far more profitable enterprise than fur trading (*ibid.*: 106).

The Tutchone people, in whose midst the above events took place, occupied a territory of about 180,000 $km^2$. The population was divided into more than 10 regional groups and, most of the time the members of those groups were dispersed. For the most part, it would take several days to walk from one camp to another. In July and August, people would fish salmon, not in the main rivers used by explorers, missionaries and gold-seekers, but often far from there, in smaller tributaries where the terrain made it possible to build fish weirs (fish dams). In September, many men hunted moose high up in the hills. Infrequently, they camped together in large groups of 150 to 200 people on the banks of a major water course to wait for expected parties of Tlingit traders. Such large camps were located at customary places where people traditionally met. Tutchone and Tlingit would spend a few days together and then everyone would again go their separate ways (cf. Chapters 4, 7, 8 and Legros, 1984).

As the Tutchone rarely camped on the banks of the major water courses, most of them never saw or met with the outsiders that canoed their way through their lands. Consequently, many of the European or American explorations undertaken were non-events from the Tutchone's standpoint. Thus, the Tutchone of Selkirk saw the six men in Schwatka's

team—an encounter that lasted less than 24 hours—while those at Big Salmon, Little Salmon, the Nordenskiold River, Tatchun Lake and the Stewart River did not even have an opportunity to catch sight of the raft on which the men travelled (Schwatka, 1893: 188-189, 224-234, 409). This is particularly true for those living in the parts of Tutchone territory not traversed by the Yukon River. Similarly, none of the Tutchone along the lengthy and winding Pelly River saw George Dawson descending that river in 1887 (Dawson, 1888), and no one encountered the Anglican missionary, Robert McDonald, ascending the Stewart River up to what is the current site of Mayo.[65]

The same was true for the gold-seekers who crossed Tutchone lands on their way to Han country after 1886. Many were not even spotted by the Tutchone as is well illustrated in the following anecdote. In the 1890s, two Tutchone adults came face to face with Europeans. They were so distressed by the existence of such strange beings that they plotted to kill them. It was their first ever encounter with such people. Yet, around that time, numerous gold-seekers had already made their way along the Yukon River, which was located a mere three kilometres from the lake that served as these two individuals' base camp. Aside from the occasional surprise of crossing paths with some Tutchone people, it can be concluded that none had an impact on their economy or culture.

A different situation arose, however, when the Gwich'in missionary travelled through the Stewart Basin in 1883-1884; when Ellington did the same (albeit for only two weeks in the summer of 1888 and 1889); when the group of between 4 and 11 prospectors camped along the Stewart in the summers of 1883, 1884 and 1885; and, most importantly, when the hundred or so gold-seekers followed in succession at the beginning of the summer of 1886. Of course, as was the case with those who simply passed through, no significant exchange of goods took place between those Europeans and the Tutchone. However, the two Church Missionary Society missionaries went there with the express intention of converting the Tutchone, and the prospectors spent not just a few hours, but part of the summer there. It is therefore legitimate to ask whether the presence of these people and their culture could have affected the culture of the Stewart River Tutchone.

In this respect, let us first note that neither the Gwich'in missionary, nor his European successor understood the Tutchone language, which is very different from the Gwich'in language which both men knew, and that the two complained that they were completely unable to communicate with their "flocks."[66] As for Ellington, his stays were very brief, lasting only a week or two. For their part, the gold-seekers prospecting on the sandbars of the Stewart River spent the entire day panning for gold particles, while the Tutchone had to spend most of their time fishing salmon and hunting moose far from the main riverbeds. Meetings might have conceivably taken place, but contact must have been minimal, especially as there were no goods to exchange between them. It therefore stands to reason that,

[65] Reference to R. McDonald's journey up the Stewart comes from R. McDonald*, St. Mathews,* February 6, 1890 (C.M.S. A116, #1519); Anonymous, *"The Venerable Robert McDonald,"* typed copy of a manuscript in the Anglican Old Log Church, Whitehorse, Y.T., no date, 6 pp.; J. W. Ellington*, Forty Miles Creek,* June 13, 1888 (C.M.S. A115, #1176).

[66] The missionaries of the C.M.S. learned Gwich'in. However, by their own admission, their knowledge of that language was completely useless in communicating with the Tutchone. (Cf. Ellington*, Fort Reliance,* July 1888; Bompas*, Fortymile,* May 22, 1893. (C.M.S. A115 and A118).

at that time, missionaries and prospectors were not particularly important to the economic, social, cultural or political life of the Tutchone.

And what of the two voyages undertaken by the "New Racket"? It would have undoubtedly had serious repercussions in the long run, but, in fact, it made only two voyages to Fort Selkirk, staying over only a few days each time. Its captain was competing with the Tlingit, conducting business in the same way as the Tlingit, selling the same kind of goods, which the Tutchone could buy in exchange for a product with which they had long been familiar: furs. As a result, the two occasions on which the "New Racket" "docked" at Fort Selkirk surely could not have destabilized Tutchone society, an indigenous society which, up until then had been free of any direct economic or political interference from European people.

These conclusions, of course, are based on common sense. However, I do believe they are correct because if one were to make claims to the contrary, it would be necessary to formulate a hypothesis that would be quite difficult to defend: In eight summers, an ancient society could have changed as a result of a few chance encounters between groups of between two to five Europeans and small groups of Tutchone—encounters which lasted as little as a few hours or as long as one or two days at most; encounters which, with the exception of two, did not involve any trade; encounters which took place with different passers-by from one summer to the next; and lastly, encounters which occurred only with the Stewart River and Fort Selkirk Tutchone, leaving eight or nine other Tutchone regional groups without any such contact. As such a hypothesis can hardly be defended; the *events* that made up the mini gold rush of the summer of 1886, the visit of two or three missionaries and the arrival of a small steamboat at Fort Selkirk must be treated as having had no immediate impact. As suggested by the great French historian Fernand Braudel, the word "*event*" should be "imprisoned" within the short time span: an event is an explosion—a "*nouvelle sonnante*" as they said in the sixteenth century. Its smoke screen fills the minds of the actors, but it does not really last; its flame can scarcely ever be discerned (1969: 45),

Overall, during the period 1848-1890, the passage of explorers, gold-seekers, and missionaries through Tutchone territory only mask the principal external relationship that the Tutchone people had at that time—i.e., the relationship that linked them to the Tlingit people—and it is this relationship that must now be examined in depth if we are to define what the Tutchone's international socio-political status was during that era.

### 2.2.3 The International Status of Tutchone Society between 1840 and 1890

Here, the analysis will rest on the work of the ethnographers and ethnohistorians of the northern portion of the Northwest Coast, who have proposed a reconstruction of relations between the Tlingit and their immediate Athapaskan neighbours in the Upper Yukon (Tagish, Tlingitized Southern Tutchone and non-Tlingitized Southern Tutchone). The applicability of this reconstruction to the other Tutchone can be verified by resorting to Robert Campbell's journal from his days at Fort Selkirk (1848-1852). In addition to Campbell's journal, we will also refer to the work of Krause ([1885], 1956: 134-137), Glave (1892), Olson (1936), Mathews (1968), de Laguna (1972: I, 350-351, *passim*) and McClellan (1975b: II, 501-518, I and II, *passim*). Most important at this stage is to determine the fre-

quency of meetings between the Tlingit and the Tutchone as well as the type of goods they exchanged. A brief summary will suffice, and will be annotated only where facts might appear to be contentious or surprising.

The sites where the Tlingit met with the Athapaskan of the Upper Yukon are shown on Map 2. Nine sites are indicated for the Tutchone: one to the south of Kluane (Klu-ah-ne or Tloo Arny) Lake; one to the north of Aishihik (I-she-ik) Lake; one to the south of Hutshi (Hoo-tchy'ee) Lake; one at the mouth of Big Salmon River (Tat-'len-heen-a); one at the mouth of Little Salmon River (Tsak-heen e); one at the mouth of the stream that flows out of Tatchun Lake (Ta-tchun); another probably at the mouth of the McGregor River (Ghlutul-san); one at the site currently known as Minto (Kitl-ah-gon); and lastly, one near the site of Fort Selkirk.

Once or twice a year, small trading parties of Tlingit men would travel to these established meeting places. The round trip would take between three and four weeks (and up to eight weeks with a stay among different Tutchone regional groups).[67] When passing through either the Chilcoot or Chilcat pass, the Tlingit group consisted of about a hundred men (Olson, 1936: 12), but would then undoubtedly splinter into many smaller groups once they arrived at the Upper Yukon as the trading parties that showed up at Fort Selkirk never numbered more than 45 persons; and more often than not, had only 20 to 30 in a given group.[68] Like the meeting place, the approximate meeting date would be set by convention. Campbell reports that the Tutchone of Tatlmain Lake (Tatl-een on Map 2) travelled up the Yukon, upstream from Fort Selkirk (very certainly at Kitl'ah-gon) even before any Tlingit had ever been sighted in the region. He writes that "all the Indians went up the Lewes with large packs of Leather and Beaver to await the Chilcat."[69] If, for one reason or another, the rendezvous had been missed by either party, the leader of the Tlingit trading party would light a large and smoky fire at the planned meeting spot. On sighting the smoke, the Tutchone would then reply in the same fashion to signal their various camp sites. The Tlingit would then go and meet them, spreading out in different directions. According to Campbell's account, a regional group would host its Tlingit guests no more than one day or two.[70] The goods provided by the local Tutchone would be placed in a cache by the Tlingit who would then trade with other local Tutchone groups.[71] Before setting out on their return trip, they

[67] The 3-4 week period required for the Tlingit to travel from Klukwan to Fort Selkirk and back again is an estimate based on information provided by Campbell. In his journal, he wrote that it would take two weeks on foot to return to the coast from Fort Selkirk (cf. Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, August 26, 1849). In the same passage and in many others, Campbell showed that the Chilcat Tlingit used rafts and even boats made of seal skins similar to the umiat (singular *umiak*) used by the Inuit. This would explain the shorter travel time for the trip from the Pacific Coast to the interior. He mentioned (*ibid*., July 8, 1848) that they only needed 12 days to go from Lynn Canal to Fort Selkirk.

[68] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, August 31, 1849, July 11, 1851, *passim*.

[69] *Ibid.* August 18-20, 1850. See also October 1, 1848. October 2, 11, 1849. For the Ross River Kasini, see August 2-4, 1850.

[70] *Ibid*. July 12-15, 1848; August 24-31, 1849, *passim*.

[71] *Ibid*. October 11, 1849.

would recover any Tutchone furs and leathers they had purchased and cached here and there.

McClellan (1975b: II, 508) pointed out that the Tlingit married Tutchone women. This is probably true, depending on how marriage is defined. Now, on the basis of this fact, some would be tempted to conjecture that some Tlingit men were living among the Tutchone. This, however, was not the case. In four years, Campbell did not witness a single Tlingit living year round in Tutchone country. If there appears to exist a contradiction between this observation and the claim that intermarriage existed between the two groups it can easily be dispelled. The Tutchone practised polygyny as well as polyandry. When a married woman took a new sexual partner (Tlingit or other)—even on a slightly regular basis—that man was very quickly designated as her husband, a title conferred on him by the woman, her parents and the other regional group members. But this liaison, which for the Tutchone would be what we would call a marriage, did not necessarily involve cohabitation. The Tlingit husbands would thus "see" their Tutchone wives only during the annual trading pilgrimages. This should come as no surprise. The Tlingit would travel to the Upper Yukon fundamentally to trade, not to settle there. The fact that they harboured a profound disdain for the Tutchone way of life and even for the Tutchone themselves (Glave, 1892), together with the fact that they kept co-habiting with their Tlingit wives despite any marriage with one or more Tutchone women, is ample evidence of this. From the Tlingit's standpoint, these were simply arrangements through which they could better secure their trade with the Tutchone (McClellan, 1975b: II, 508). In fact, most Tlingit husbands would have been quite displeased at the idea of spending the winter away from the Pacific Coast and living with their Tutchone mates in a land where the climate was infinitely more rigorous than in their own country. Furthermore, remaining in the Upper Yukon would have run counter to the reason for taking Tutchone "wives," and creating pseudo-familial alliances, which was to wrangle as many Tutchone trade goods as possible to be brought back to the Pacific Coast. It therefore stands to reason that neither archival documents nor the region's ethnohistory contain references to any Tlingit born on the Pacific Coast settling permanently among the Tutchone, despite the existence of matrimonial ties between the two groups. It can thus be supposed that physical contact between a Tutchone regional group and its Tlingit purveyors was limited to one (or, on rare occasions, two) annual gathering lasting no more than a few days. Also worthy of note is the obverse of this relationship: from 1848 to 1890, except for a few days each year, the Tutchone had no contact with the Tlingit.

As brief and infrequent as these meetings were, we must now examine the types of exchange to which they gave rise. Through them Tutchone society gained a certain number of European goods and this phenomenon must be taken into consideration when determining what the Tutchone socio-political status was during the period selected for study. Our findings will be based on the same sources as those cited above.

The first noteworthy finding is that the two groups did not trade food staples. The Tlingit who travelled to Tutchone country did not rely on the Tutchone for their daily sustenance; they brought basic provisions for their needs with them. They cached such food at different locations in the woods for their return trip and would hunt and fish on their way to supplement their food provisions. In light of the travelling conditions, not to mention difficulties in transporting any goods for trade, the notion that food supplies could have circulated from one region to the other on a systemic basis or that these two groups of people could have

depended on one another for essential food supplies is unthinkable. Yet, some ethnographers (Krause, [1885], 1956: 134-135; Olson, 1936: 211) have written that "food items" were traded. However, after analyzing what they report, it becomes evident that the "food items" they refer to were exotic stuff rather than staples. A more appropriate name for this type of exchange would be "spice trade".

Another finding must be noted. Despite the fact that food was not exchanged, a rather wide variety of goods did change hands. Aside from "spices," there were narcotics, personal adornments and varied other items. The Tlingit provided the Tutchone with the following luxury items: from the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century, *dentalia* shell, mother-of-pearl (*haliotis*), abalone shells, Tlingit hand-made blankets (McClellan, 1975b: II, 502); throughout the nineteenth century, vermilion, small Chinese boxes in which to store the ashes of deceased loved ones (Schwatka, 1885a: 82) and wool blankets decorated with mother-of-pearl buttons; and from 1870 to 1890, some coloured fabrics and European clothing. In exchange for these types of goods, the Tutchone would give skins from lynx, fox, beaver, marten, etc., robes made of marten fur or weasel, chamois leather vests trimmed with trade beads or with porcupine quills coloured with natural dyes. All these goods were as highly prized by the Tutchone as they were by the Tlingit (Olson, 1936: 213; de Laguna, 1972: I, 436). Marten and beaver skins were examples of what the Athapaskans of the Mackenzie and the Yukon considered personal luxury goods well before the Europeans ever set foot into those regions (Bompas, 1888: 90).[72] The type of narcotics originally exported by the Tlingit was a sort of chewing tobacco that grew in their region (Krause, [1885], 1956: 108). Once they began trading with the Europeans, the Tlingit gave up gathering this plant in favour of selling commercial tobacco. The Tlingit "spices" of which the Tutchone were fond included dried clams, certain types of seaweed, a mixture of rancid fish oil, fish and berries delivered in skin bags (Olson, 1936: 211; McClellan, 1975b: II, 502; Mathews, 1968: 102), kelp leaves pressed into patties (Krause, [1885], 1956: 127), and certain medicinal plants and roots. The Tutchone, in turn, would sell certain varieties of lichens (e.g., *Letharia vulpina*), which were used to dye Tlingit blankets made of wild goat's wool or sheep's wool, as well as a chewing gum made of fir tree resin (Olson, 1936: 214).

The goods exchanged also included some raw materials, as well as commonly used finished goods and tools. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Tlingit traders who set out for the Upper Yukon would bring along obsidian and baskets. In the nineteenth century, they introduced, in addition, iron knives, iron adze blades, bars of iron, flintlock guns (with gunpowder and balls), kettles and wool blankets. The Tutchone provided them with tanned moose hides or moose leather, fur pelts from bear and wolf, etc. (which the Tlingit used to make clothing), cloaks made of gopher or groundhog (marmot) skins, moccasins, copper nuggets to make tips for implements and for personal adornments, moose sinew to be used

[72] Bompas came to the Mackenzie in 1865 and to the Yukon in 1869. He stayed in the region until his death in 1905. He spoke a number of Athapaskan languages fluently. Informed by the missionaries who came before him, his data can hardly be contested (Cf. Bompas, 1888: 37; R. McDonald, *Fort Yukon Annual Letter*, June 30, 1869 (C.M.S. A98).

as sewing thread, mountain sheep wool or mountain goat wool which was used in making Tlingit traditional blankets.

Three important facts about this trade have yet to be noted: 1) far from clamouring for any European goods offered to them, the Tutchone found only a few of them useful and rejected the rest; 2) the Tutchone could acquire the goods they wanted not only with luxury furs but also with the furs of animals such as gopher, hare, groundhog, and bear, etc., as well as with other products such as moose hides, which were in high demand among the Tlingit and yet not marketable in Europe; 3) the Tutchone's interest in European implements they deemed useful seems to have been superseded by their passion for ornaments and tobacco.

The sources on which these assertions are based are reviewed in Chapter 6. For now, a few examples will suffice. The first point is shown by the following data. In 1852, four years after the founding of Fort Selkirk, Campbell ordered his superiors to stop sending him a type of knife and certain types of scrapers that the Tutchone rarely bought as they considered them "of no use."[73] In 1883, Schwatka (1893: 129) offered the Tagish some rope which they declined since their own rope served their needs quite nicely. Although this incident occurred with one of the Tutchone's southern neighbours, there is every reason to believe that the Tutchone would have done the same. The documents cited immediately above clearly show, however, that demand for flintlock guns and gunpowder was strong indeed. For the second point, we must refer to the documents already cited in the section about the difficulties in operating Fort Selkirk—documents which show, for example, that the Tlingit valued tanned moose hides as much as they valued fur, if not more. The third point is perfectly illustrated by a "Requisition for Fort Selkirk" sent on June 21, 1852, from the journal kept at Fort Selkirk between 1848 and 1852, and by an account related by Schwatka in 1883. In the requisition dating from 1852,[74] Campbell recorded beads as the item in greatest demand, even more in demand than flintlock guns. But the beads in question were not the glass variety from Europe, but those made of sea shells which were used by the Indian groups along the north-western coast of the Pacific. Murray ([1847-1848], 1910: 32, 105-106) observed the same phenomenon among the Gwich'in. One of the types of shells used for these beads—*hy-qua* or *dentalia*—was used not only for jewellery, but also as currency, much the same, according to Murray, as cowry shells were used in Africa.[75] This item is what most interested both the Gwich'in and Tutchone, thereby forcing Murray and Campbell to demand that their common superior do his utmost to obtain them.[76] Between 1840 and 1890, the penchant for such objects was no less intense in the Upper Yukon. Schwatka (1893: 127-129) provides an excellent example. In 1883, in order to obtain an abalone shell earring worn by a young Indian, he first offered a knife, to which he added a double-barrel musket and 1,000 cartridges of shells, then a gold watch, followed by two sacks of his own flour, and finally an iron shovel. The purpose of bidding up the price of the earring was to test how much the young Indian valued it. Even with all that he was offered, the Indian still

[73] Campbell, *Requisition for Fort Selkirk*, June 21, 1852 (H.B.C. 1M582).

[74] *Ibid.*

[75] *James Anderson to Eden Colville, Fort Simpson,* March 16, 1852 (In *James Anderson Papers*, Public Archives of Canada, MG 19 A29, File I, pp. 76-100).

[76] *Ibid*.

refused to part with the jewellery he was wearing. Although he was Tagish, there is reason to believe that a *Tutchone* would have reacted the same way.

The same sources reveal the great importance of tobacco. In his requisition of 1852, Campbell listed tobacco as one of the items in greatest demand and even underlined the word twice. In his journal, he indicated, on more than one occasion, that he was running low on tobacco and was consequently unable to trade with the Tutchone.[77] In a passage in which he noted that a delivery of this narcotic had finally arrived, he underlined the word "tobacco" four times.[78] No other word in his journal was so highlighted. Interest in this item did not wane over time. In 1881, Glave (1892) noted, for instance, that the Southern Tutchone—men, women and children—were still "thoroughly addicted to tobacco." If the indigenous oral tradition can be considered reliable, the same was true for the Northern Tutchone. Krause ([1885], 1956: 108) made a similar remark in reference to the Tlingit for the same period. He writes that they were "passionately addicted." The fascination with this product may be explained as follows. As Kirby reported in 1862,[79] tobacco had a much stronger effect on the natives of that region than it does today (possibly it was much stronger then). When taking several successive puffs, they would behave in the same way that some react to hashish or marijuana today. It could be noted in passing that seventeenth century Europeans also tended to react to tobacco as though it were a potent drug. Its narcotic effect was undoubtedly what made tobacco so popular then. One good example is that of Sganarelle's outpouring over the benefits of tobacco in the opening of Molière's *Don Juan* play:

> Whatever Aristotle and the whole body of philosophers may say, there's nothing comparable to tobacco: 'tis the reigning passion of your better sort of people, and he who lives without tobacco deserves not to live; it not only exhilarates and purges human brains; it also trains the mind to virtue, and by this one learns to become well bred. Don't you see plainly, from the time one takes it, in what an obliging manner one uses it with all the world, and how one is delighted to give it right and left wherever one comes? One doesn't even wait to be asked for it, but anticipates people's wishes; so true it is that tobacco inspires all who take it with sentiments of honour and virtue.[80] [Notice that at the time it seems to have been passed around like marijuana is shared today during a party].

One general conclusion can be drawn from all these findings. Between 1840 and 1890, the Tutchone had not been absorbed in the conventional European fur trade system in which pelts were traded for food and tools which allowed Indians to further concentrate on furs trapping and in which foreign traders living among the Indians directed which animal species had to be trapped for trade. Europeans never managed to exercise control over the Tutchone, and had little success when meddling with the established Tutchone/Tlingit relations. The Tutchone would buy Tlingit and Euro-Canadian goods with furs that could be marketed in Europe as well as with furs and hides that could not, and with semi-finished products of their own making: tanned moose hides, gopher skins, lynx skins, groundhog skins, etc. In

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[77] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, August 9, October18, 1850, *passim*.
[78] *Ibid*. November 29, 1848.
[79] Kirby*, Journal from May 25, 1861 to May 1862* (C.M.S. A93).
[80] Molière, *Don Juan*, 1665.

exchange they did not receive any food staples that would have enabled them to devote more time to trapping more furs for exchange with the Tlingit. In addition, none of the foreign merchandise they purchased could be used to improve techniques for catching fur-bearing animals. They were showy consumer goods: tobacco, beads, flintlock guns (useless for trapping), exotic Tlingit prestige items, and the like. Finally there were no foreigners among them either to help them reduce the time spent on producing food staples or to entice them to increase their overall time spent on productive work.

As a result we may say that between 1840 and 1990 no outside economic policy was imposed on the Tutchone and that their political economy remained authentically indigenous. By indigenous I mean that considerations whether to purchase goods or produce them for sale, the weight given to producing staples over goods that could be traded, the types of production chosen, the organization of labour and the social distribution of the proceeds were all determined solely by the Tutchone living in a society. I specify "in a society" as we should not be so naïve as to believe that the above societal system resulted from democratic or individual choices, and to highlight that it was the result of the relations between the different Tutchone social layers at that time. In short, the socio-political status of the Tutchone people in the years 1840-1890 was still that of a sovereign society. In spite of mercantile links to the outside world, this Athapaskan group had not yet been subjected to any foreign social body; its status was still akin to what it had been in 1840-1848.

In 1890, as in 1848 or 1840, there were a few rich people, a larger segment of the population which was poor and even some individuals who had the status of bond servant. We have already noted in the introduction some of the key theoretical questions it raises for cultural and social anthropology. How could a rich family, for example, manage to subject certain individuals to servitude and confine them to that status day after day? However, we have also indicated that prior to answering such queries we must reconstruct the details of Tutchone society and culture during that period. At the present stage we are still examining whether this can be done. Are there sources which will provide the necessary details? As will be seen, our efforts to answer such questions will take us on a long but ultimately rewarding roundabout course.

# 3 THE PROBLEM WITH THE HISTORICAL MATERIALS

Here, our main questions are: (1) What documents are available for the period 1840 to 1890? (2) Are these documents sufficiently informative to allow us to reconstruct the details of Tutchone society and culture during that period? (3) If not, are there other sources that could provide the required information? And a secondary but no less critical set of questions is: Despite remaining independent between 1840 and 1890, did Tutchone society change in crucial ways during that 50 year time span? Did it borrow from Tlingit culture, or did the introduction of new working tools lead to the restructuring of production groups and, eventually, of socio-cultural groups?

This last point is quite important. Let us suppose, for example, (1) that a description of the Tutchone family system in 1850 was all that was available to reconstruct the structure of Tutchone society during the period 1840-1890; (2) that information about its system governing the distribution of property dated back to 1883; (3) that the information about trade relations was based entirely on a single document from 1867, a year for which there would be a conspicuous absence of information on other sub-systems; and lastly, (4) that those were the only existing documents for that era. First, we would be tempted to place the descriptions of each system (family, property distribution and trade relations) all on in one single time frame and consider them as sub-systems *co-existing* under a single overarching system. Yet nothing would be more inappropriate if the society had been dramatically altered between the year when the initial data were gathered (1840) and the year when the most recent ones were collected (say 1890). It would only be legitimate to use all the data if it could be shown that the society remained unchanged between the beginning and the end of the period from which information had been gathered.

However, this necessary analysis has not yet been done. Only two very simple points were established in the previous chapter. In as much as the Tlingit engaged in trade from the end of the eighteenth century until at least 1890, and in as much as their trading *methods* remained the same, the fact that trade existed between 1840 and 1890 cannot be considered a change from years prior to 1840. As a *societal practice* such an exchange pattern could not have effected a change in the structure of Tutchone society between 1840 and 1890. This does not preclude the possibility that they might have had an impact when trade was first initiated, but as this occurred well before 1840, it is not relevant here. Moreover, as Europeans failed in their attempt to “corner” the “Tutchone fur market,” and as they were scarcely

even seen during the first forty years of the second half of the nineteenth century, their endeavours to change the Tutchone either economically or culturally must also be dismissed as having been ineffective.

This does not however exhaust the list of possible factors that might have caused this society to change. Some factors might have had an indirect effect on its internal workings and led the Tutchone to change their structures themselves without any external pressures. Four phenomena in particular might have played such a role. First, new diseases transmitted directly or indirectly by Europeans might have decimated this indigenous population. Secondly, the introduction of flintlock guns by the Tlingit might have spurred hostilities between neighbouring groups, and as a result sub-groups of people might have migrated out of their local territory, only to be replaced by others. If these last two possibilities did in fact occur, then the population of the 1890s could well have been either formed out of the surviving members of the population or be composed of indigenous groups that were distinct in 1840. Either of these scenarios would mean that Tutchone society would have necessarily been modified between 1840 and 1890. Thirdly, the presence of European outposts around Tutchone country and the distribution of flintlock guns throughout the neighbouring regions might have resulted in the over-hunting of some long range migratory species on which the Tutchone could have depended (barren-ground caribou for example). In turn, this might have prompted these people to completely reorganize their hunting groups and resulted in changes to their societal organization. The fourth and last possibility is that the spread of European implements and weapons by way of Tlingit middlemen might have gradually created phenomena similar to those brought about by ecological change, resulting in adjustments in Tutchone society. If the 1840-1890 corpus of data was too disparate and fragmented, forcing us to raise the question about societal stability, we would have to determine whether all these possibilities actually occurred, and if so, when. Only in this way would we be able to determine which pieces of information could legitimately be considered to be related to one overall societal system.

The task at hand now stands out clearly: we must initially: (1) create an inventory of available contemporary factual documents; then (2) describe them to determine, first, if the data they contain are sufficiently detailed and, secondly, whether or not those data were collected in a way that compel us to address the issue of social and cultural stability in the years 1840-1890. The ultimate procedure to be taken will be determined by the results of these examinations.

## 3.1 Firsthand Ethnographic Observations: 1840-1890

The period between 1840 and 1890 was not selected arbitrarily. In contrast to the preceding period, it has the tremendous advantage of having been observed by Europeans whose comings and goings had no direct cultural or societal consequences. Yet, can the study of Tutchone culture be based solely on descriptions written back then? What is the nature of the information available?

Starting in 1843, Campbell religiously maintained his journal and wrote numerous letters about his activities in the Yukon. His personal archives were destroyed by fire in 1882. While certain documents were undoubtedly lost forever, not everything was destroyed. In

fact, the Hudson's Bay Company had many of Campbell's original letters and account ledgers in its possession, and these can be read on microfilm at the Public Archives of Canada. Moreover, after the fire of 1882, Campbell wrote, from memory, an account of his activities in the Yukon. A first version—*The Discovery and Exploration of the Pelly (Yukon) River*—was published in 1883 (Campbell, 1883). A second, more detailed version was written around the early 1890s and finally published in 1958 in a limited edition (Campbell, 1958), then largely reprinted by Wilson (1970) who annotated it after having studied Campbell's original correspondence with his superiors at H.B.C. headquarters. Lastly, in 1972, while browsing through collections of manuscripts in the Public Archives of Canada, I chanced upon the original journal that Campbell had kept at Fort Selkirk from May 23, 1848 to August 20, 1852, when the post was abandoned: it was the journal believed to have been lost when the fort was pillaged by the Chilcat Tlingit. It covers each day of that four year period, from the day Fort Selkirk was established to the day it was abandoned. None of the books are signed, but the title (*Lewes & Pelly Forks Journal*, 1848-1852), the places described and the handwriting which I was able to compare with that in Campbell's original correspondence leave no doubt as to the authenticity of this document. Whenever Campbell was absent from the fort, the journal was kept by his assistant, Stewart.

For that time period, we also have the H.B.C.'s archives on Fort Yukon (1847-1870), the archives of the Church Missionary Society for 1861-1890 as well as the H.B.C.'s archives on Frances Lake (November 1850 to May 1851) and Pelly Banks (October 1845 to April 1847). As the first two concern essentially the regions occupied by the Gwich'in and the Han while the other two concern the Kaska and Kasini-Kaska (around Ross River), their bearing on the Tutchone is not as great as the Fort Selkirk documents. Nevertheless, they cannot be entirely dismissed as they provide information on the contacts between the Tutchone and their neighbours to the north and east, not to mention epidemics in the broader region of the interior Northwest and the historiography of foreign penetration into Tutchone country. Except for Murray's journal ([1847-1848], published in 1910), everything written about Fort Yukon by the men of the H.B.C. for the period 1847-1870 has been put on microfilm by the Public Archives of Canada. The Church Missionary Society's archives are also available on microfilm at the Public Archives of Canada. These documents, culled from the four corners of the world, had been centralized in London for more than a century. I sifted through 144 available microfilms, and it is possible that some documents about the Yukon (from 1862 to 1905) escaped my perusal—but not many. The journals from Frances Lake and Pelly Banks are originals and in the possession of the Public Archives of Canada (PAC). Despite research carried out at the PAC and at the Bancroft Library (Berkeley, California), not to mention various libraries in Washington D.C., I was unable to find—assuming it even exists—a report on the exploration activities by Ketchum and Laberge at Fort Selkirk in 1867. Other handwritten documents include material published by Davidson (1901), Schwatka (1885a, 1885b, and 1893), Dawson (1888), and Redmond (1891). Each of these documents describes expeditions undertaken in various areas of Tutchone country prior to 1890. The list of period documents available ends there however.

Overall, there are a few thousands of pages of archived documents and a few publications. What do they contain? In general, each one provides, for one year or another, some accounts of certain aspects of the Tutchone's way of life; in particular, their economy as well as the socio-cultural traits which appeared spectacular or exotic to the Europeans who

recorded them. On the whole, however, they present two major problems, already alluded to above: none of the literature about any given year paints a complete picture of all the societal sub-systems then in existence. Directly or indirectly, documents for a given year provide interesting information about certain aspects of the social life of the Tutchone, but lack information about many other topics. In an effort to fill in the gaps, we must resort to the documents for all the other years; documents which often focus on topics other than those covered in the year that is the starting point of our study. As a result, if we are to use them all as bearing on a culturally homogenous period, the problem of Tutchone social and cultural stability between 1840 and 1890 must be addressed and resolved.

Aside from the fact that the information about a given date does not provide a complete picture of Tutchone society, the tidbits of information they do provide are often too vague. Each one of the H.B.C. managers, missionaries and explorers focused on what struck *him* as most interesting about the Tutchone's behaviour; consequently, their descriptions are often nothing short of extraordinary. The multiple other facets of Tutchone cultural institutions are not presented. Of course, we know by its rough outline that a given hunting or fishing pattern was for example in place at a given time, but it still remains difficult to use only these documents as a basis for a *detailed* analysis of the structure of Tutchone society in the period under study. In addition to finding a solution to the question of socio-cultural stability, we must then find the means to fill in the gaps in the ethnographic data collected at different times between 1840 and 1890. Which of the two problems should be addressed first? Quite clearly the question of augmenting firsthand period data! Once this is solved, then we can determine whether it is worthwhile to ascertain the extent to which Tutchone culture was altered or not between 1840 and 1890—i.e., whether or not the documents produced at that time satisfy the methodological requirements of a culturally homogenous period.

As a rule, firsthand 1840-1890 written data can only be fleshed out by turning to post 1890 accounts about the nineteenth century: be they observations or texts written between 1890 and 1972 (the year of the first systematic fieldwork), or the Tutchone's memories or stories conveyed orally and collected through systematic ethnographic research starting in 1972. What documents are available? To what extent can they be used to make up for the shortcomings of the 1840-1890 documents?

To answer these questions, we must first chronicle the post 1890s period and then establish an inventory of documents produced on the occasions of the various events listed. After that, we will determine the conditions that must be fulfilled in order to make valid use of the data they contain. While establishing a chronicle might seem like a step backward, it is absolutely necessary. For one thing, it will serve as a guide for finding documents that were written at that time. For another, it will be necessary to turn to it when analyzing the context in which ethnohistorical information was transmitted after 1890 so as to evaluate whether the documents may reliably be meshed with those of the 1840-1890 phase.

## 3.2 After 1890

Eighteen-ninety was the year in which a store was re-established at Fort Selkirk by an independent trader, as well as the year that the Tlingit blockade of the mountain passes leading from the Pacific coastline to the Yukon interior was totally overcome by Euro-Americans. The subsequent history of the Yukon was closely linked to both of these facts. Starting in 1890 and each year thereafter, steamboats journeyed along the 3,000 km stretch of water that separated the Yukon Delta and the new Fort Selkirk. Certain to find a supply centre nearby, more and more gold-seekers crossed over the Cordilleran range and then passed through Tutchone country to their destination in Han country where, in the 1880s, gold veins had been discovered. This influx of Euro-Americans into Han country led to the construction of a new store—Ogilvie—at the confluence of the Sixtymile and Yukon rivers (Berton, 1972: 4-47).

For the period 1890-1900, I refer to Euro-Americans and not Europeans because the great majority of the gold prospectors and traders were from the United States. After 1900 most newcomers were from Canada, and I shall therefore refer to Euro-Canadians.

Created for gold-seekers, this network of trading posts and these means of travel also facilitated the task of a variety of explorers. Thus, in 1891, Glave and Dalton travelled on behalf of an American newspaper up to the area of Aishihik Lake and then to Kluane Lake, one of the sources of the White River (Glave, 1892). That same year, Schwatka returned to the Yukon. Together with Hayes, he explored the region between the new Fort Selkirk and the sources of the White River (Sherwood, 1965: 143). In 1892, a Gwich'in Christian leader was sent to Fort Selkirk where he was joined later that year by Robert Canham, a missionary from the Church Missionary Society.[81] Warburton Pike explored the Pelly River in 1893 (Pike, 1896). Canham and the Gwich'in missionary left Fort Selkirk in 1894, but the mission continued to operate, albeit somewhat intermittently under B. Totty[82] until 1897. Starting in 1896, Oglivie, a land surveyor with the Canadian government, undertook a number of explorations of the Yukon Territory.[83]

An ever-growing number of gold-seekers passed through the territory during this time. Finally, in 1897, a prospector discovered the very rich gold veins of the Klondike River. The news spread around the world and gave rise to what came to be known as the Klondike Gold Rush. In 1898, some 20,000 to 30,000 individuals joined in this "rush." One detachment of the North West Mounted Police was dispatched to the Yukon to maintain order. Almost all the gold-seekers went to and settled in Han country, at the confluence of the Klondike and Yukon rivers where a city—dubbed Dawson City—mushroomed overnight.

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[81] T. H. Canham*, Fort Selkirk,* February 17, 1893 (C.M.S. A118, #1989); Bompas*, Selkirk, Forty Miles,* August 2, 1892 (C.M.S. A117, #1930).

[82] Bompas*, 40 Miles,* July 26, 1895; Totty, B. *Fort Selkirk,* January 1896 (C.M.S. A119, #2300, #2372); Bompas, *Buxton,* May 4, 1898.

[83] Ogilvie, W., *Wm. Ogilvie's Note Book 1896*. Public Archives of Canada, pp. 84-87; W. D. MacBride, *The Story of the Dalton Trail*. Newspaper clipping in the Yukon Archives, Whitehorse (no date).

Yet a few prospectors stayed in Tutchone country panning the riverbeds that drained the territory to uncover any hidden precious metals.

The exact number of those who remained in Tutchone country is not known. Duerden (1971: 39) estimates that in 1898-1899, 5,000 miners had gathered at Fort Selkirk and 3,500 in the Stewart Basin. However this is very doubtful. The missionary assigned to Fort Selkirk at that time would certainly have taken note of such numbers and shared this information with his superiors, yet nothing to this effect was ever recorded by him. Aside from the 150 police officers charged with keeping an eye on the prospectors travelling to Han country,[84] the correspondence of the missionaries assigned to the Yukon suggests instead that there were only a few hundred Euro-American people at Fort Selkirk and the Stewart Basin. This figure is undoubtedly closer to reality than the figures suggested by Duerden.

After the gold rush, the Euro-American population of the Yukon shrank considerably. In Han country, where Dawson City had become internationally renowned for its Klondike gold deposits, mining companies had replaced manual labour with heavy machinery as early as 1899, and people fled the region in droves. In 1900, Dawson City and the surrounding area was home to no more than 9,000 to 10,000 Euro-American people.[85] The same phenomenon was repeated in Tutchone country. In 1900, only a handful of Euro-Americans remained at Fort Selkirk; the 150 Canadian police officers posted there in 1898-1899 had all been withdrawn.[86]

The Klondike Gold Rush nevertheless had significant repercussions on the history of the Yukon and its native peoples. In 1899, Klondike mine owners began looking for a shorter route to transport their ore than the one along the Yukon to the delta on the Behring Sea. Their solution was to build a railway from Skagway on the Pacific Coast to a point on the uppermost extremity of the Yukon River where a small city—Whitehorse—would be established expressly as a transfer point for merchandise passing through. The plan was to make the Yukon River between Whitehorse and Dawson City navigable by steamboat and to build a road that could be used by large horse-drawn sleighs in winter. This project was quickly undertaken and completed in 1902. Concurrently, or shortly thereafter, four other corridors of travel opened: a steamboat was launched on the Stewart to service silver mines at Mayo; another was launched on the White River to transport supplies to the prospectors in the Upper White River area and the Tutchone at Kluane Lake; a third was launched on the Pelly to provision the Kasini/Kaska (Ross River and Upper Pelly People), who lived on the upper part of the Pelly; and lastly, a trail was opened between Whitehorse and Kluane Lake, thus enabling Euro-Canadians to enter Southern Tutchone country.

As a result of the establishment of these routes, the Tutchone's position vis-à-vis the European sphere (Canadian arm now) was significantly altered. The number of stores in their territory rose, a small police force was stationed among them, and the Anglicans were

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[84] T. H. Canham, *Fort Selkirk*, December 20, 1898 (C.M.S. A120, #2767); Bompas, *Caribou Crossing,* August 2, 1900 (C.M.S. A123, #2905).

[85] Bompas, *Forty Miles,* December 9, 1898; Canham, *Fort Selkirk,* November 1899*;* Bompas, *Caribou Crossing,* August 2, 1900 (C.M.S. A120, #2772, #2846).

[86] T. H. Canham, *Fort Selkirk,* December 20, 1898 (C.M.S. A120, #2767); Bompas, *Caribou Crossing,* August 2, 1900 (C.M.S. A123, #2905).

able to set up a few more missions. When, in 1902, posts were established at Big Salmon and Little Salmon on the Yukon River, and Mayo on the Stewart, Fort Selkirk stopped being the only place where the Tutchone could encounter Euro-Canadians on a regular basis. The process continued with the construction of a store at Burwash Landing on the banks of Kluane Lake in 1904, followed by the establishment, in 1910, of a detachment of the North West Mounted Police at Fort Selkirk to which two men were permanently assigned, and the creation of a river patrol consisting of two men whose job was to inspect all Indian and prospector camp sites along the banks of the Yukon and its tributaries in the summer.[87] Euro-Canadian penetration continued with the opening of two new stores—at Carmacks and Coffee Creek—in the Yukon Valley in 1910 and 1915, respectively, but tapered off between 1915 and 1920, after three new missions were built: at Carmacks, Little Salmon and Mayo—the first two shared a single missionary, the third had a Native Christian leader who was succeeded by a Euro-Canadian missionary.[88] From 1898 to 1915, the mission at Fort Selkirk had been the only one in continuous operation in Tutchone territory.

From then on until 1950, only two or three events were worthy of note. In 1919 an influenza epidemic (Spanish flu) took a heavy toll among the Tutchone at Little Salmon and Big Salmon.[89] From 1920 on, the population there became smaller, and both villages were eventually abandoned after 1950. In the 1930s, two trading posts operated intermittently in the region along the middle sections of the Pelly and Macmillan rivers. They were run by fortune-seeking gold prospectors who could not earn a living through gold panning alone. In June 1942, a Catholic mission was established next to the Anglican mission at Fort Selkirk.

The importance of Euro-Canadian influence from 1902 to 1950 must not be exaggerated, especially in light of the steady exodus of Euro-Canadians from all over the Yukon Territory. In 1911, Dawson City—in Han country—had only 5,500 inhabitants; and that number fell to 1,600 in 1921. Fort Selkirk had no more than a dozen Euro-Canadians in 1915 and in 1931. New localities like Burwash never attracted more than about 10.[90] Almost no Euro-Canadians ever set foot in a number of Tutchone districts such as Aishihik, Tatlmain, Tejra, Tatchun, Macmillan,[91] etc. Most of the trading posts in Tutchone country were, more often than not, located about 100 km from one another. A trading post consisted of a few log cabins. The smaller posts, such as the one at Coffee Creek, accommodated only one Euro-Canadian, while the largest, such as Fort Selkirk, had between 10 and 12. Aside from the merchant and his assistants, there were one or two employees of the White Pass transportation company, a police officer and his wife, and an Anglican missionary, occasionally accompanied by his wife.

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[87] *Distribution of Force. Report of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police*, 1909, 1910, 1911, 1916, 1917.

[88] Cf. *Reports of the Synod of the Diocese of the Yukon held at St. Paul's Cathedral, Dawson, Y.T.*, August 3-7, 1911; July 14-19, 1915; July 29-31, 1923.

[89] Alan Innes-Taylor, *A Comprehensive Inventory of Sites and Areas of Historic Significance in the Y.T.*, ms. in the Yukon Archives, Whitehorse (circa 1970).

[90] Cf. *Reports of the Third, Fourth, Sixth and Seventh Synods of the Diocese of Yukon, Held at St. Paul's Cathedral, Dawson, Y.T.*, 1915, 1920, 1928, 1931.

[91] In 1943, the Tutchone of the Macmillan would see Euro-Canadians only once or twice a year. Bobillet, *Journal d'un missionnaire au Yukon*, p. 526.

Similarly, the Euro-Canadian economy between 1902 and 1950 must not be portrayed as particularly impressive. After the Klondike Gold Rush, Tutchone country languished in a mild inertia, interrupted by a few short-lived mineral discoveries. Apart from some wood camps meant to feed steamboat boilers, trapping activities pursued by some 20 Euro-Canadians, geological exploration and land surveying (Bostock, 1957)—which was quite minimal—there was no new activity, not even commercial fishing. Tutchone country was a land used by boats rushing upstream to Whitehorse or downstream to Dawson, stopping only to pick up a supply of wood for their boilers or to make the requisite deliveries to the trading posts. The government never even entertained the idea of creating Indian reserves. In short, no colonist ever asked the Federal Government to make room for Euro-Canadian settlers.

Only after 1950 did some Euro-Canadian influx resume. At that time a dirt road, usable in winter and summer, was built between Dawson City and Whitehorse. It spanned the Tutchone's territory from one end to the other on a north-south axis. Since Whitehorse was connected to northern Alberta and southern Alaska by the Alaska Highway (built during the Second World War), from then on Tutchone country was located in the middle of a transnational road network and the Yukon River ceased to be used for transporting merchandise. This event had immediate repercussions (Cruikshank, 1977: 1-42) and over the following 25 years, the Tutchone's way of life was changed dramatically.

To begin with, the abandoning of the river route resulted in stores and missions being relocated along the new roads, giving birth to Pelly Crossing on the Dawson-Whitehorse road; Snag (a village), and Haines Junction on the Alaska Highway, slightly past the southern border of Northern Tutchone territory. Only Burwash, Carmacks and Mayo, through which the new roads passed, continued to exist. The White River Tutchone who previously went to the store at Coffee Creek on the Yukon now began going to Snag. Those who lived around Aishihik and Hutshi lakes and traded at Carmacks, gradually deserted this trading post in favour of Champagne and later Haines Junction in Southern Tutchone country. Those at Big Salmon and Little Salmon went to Carmacks. The Fort Selkirk, Macmillan and Tatlmain Tutchone concentrated at Pelly Crossing.

Towards the end of the 1950s, public school which, until then did not allow native children, became compulsory for all indigenous children. The language of instruction was English. Around that time, all Canadian Indians were given the right to purchase alcohol and patronize taverns and bars. Sanitation and police services were offered and, after 1970, the government decided to give each family a permanent dwelling. Catholics and Baptists established new churches. In a few localities, the Euro-Canadian population grew significantly.

By the 1970s, most villages had at least a few prefabricated homes, a general store, a tavern, a public works garage, a nursing station, a mission, a small police station and a school. The Indian population of Mayo (179 adults and children in 1971) made up approximately 35 percent of the town's population (500 total). There were one or two tavern-bars, an inn, several stores, Anglican, Catholic and Baptist churches, a primary school and police station, a number of automotive garages, a post office and a small hospital. The community also had radio and television service. At Carmacks, the number of status Indians (228 in 1971) represented about 75 percent of the village. Only three Tutchone families continued to live in canvas tents year-round. This hamlet had a number of churches, two tavern-bars, a motel, a hotel and restaurant, two garages, a nursing station, two general stores, a police sta-

tion that housed two men, and a primary school. A generator supplied electricity to the entire community. Discussions on the subject of installing a television station were under way. At Pelly Crossing, where 95 percent of the population was Tutchone (283 in 1971), there was less of a Euro-Canadian influence. There was no police station or operational mission, but the village did have a tavern, a general store, electricity and a laundromat for the Tutchone. Carmacks was located 105 km south of Pelly Crossing, Mayo 125 km northeast of Pelly Crossing by road, and the Tutchone of these three villages who had automobiles visited one another frequently. Dawson City, 235 km north of Mayo, and Whitehorse, the capital of the Yukon, 175 km south of Carmacks were also popular destinations by pick-up trucks.

In each village, the Department of Indian Affairs provided every Tutchone with fish nets and tents at very little cost. The *Old Age Pension Act* of 1927, which had excluded Indians, was amended and all Tutchone aged 65 and over began receiving a monthly allowance. All were eligible for the public assistance programs administered by the Department of Health and Welfare. Provided that they sent their children to school, Tutchone mothers would receive the same family allowances given to mothers elsewhere in Canada. Each village elected a band council and those elected officials received a salary from the Department of Indian Affairs. In addition, a variety of government subsidies led to the creation of a few seasonal jobs. Although only four or five people in each village held a permanent job, the combination of family allowances and public assistance granted as a general rule transformed the Tutchone into a semi-sedentary people.

While the children went to school, men and women would strive to produce what they could without being away from the village for more than a day or two at a time; rarely far or long enough to go to the best hunting and fishing zones. On weekends and during school holidays, most would leave the village and resume the type of activities that were typical in the years 1900-1950. This was often enough to stock up an adequate supply of dried fish and meat. Some families would even manage to satisfy more than 50 percent of their dietary needs. Yet, there was no denying that living in a village was not conducive to matching the level of production achieved in the years 1900-1950; hence, to add to family allowance income, old age pensions and gifts from salaried friends and family, those who knew where to apply would sign up for public assistance, while those who did not would find themselves in dire straits.

Aside from the moccasins worn in winter, the Tutchone dressed like all other Canadians. Young people wore blue jeans, with the kind of embroidery and patches that were then fashionable from California right up to Alaska. Although they had no jobs or money, boys and girls alike were more resourceful than their Euro-Canadian peers. One of the “in” things to do was to buy an old second-hand car and proudly drive along the dusty road to Whitehorse.

In about 50 percent of all Tutchone families, one or more members suffered from alcoholism. Although no more rampant than among Euro-Canadian labouring families in the same villages, the effects were much more devastating because of the racist climate created by Yukon rednecks. The severe alcoholism of a few Tutchone was enough for an entire indigenous community to be slandered as “bunch of drunks.” For many Euro-Canadians, any Tutchone was nothing but a “drunken Indian.”

Among the itinerant Pentecostal preachers and faith healers, the Tutchone had discovered the only effective ideological system to combat alcoholism which they, the Tutchone,

also considered to be a scourge. Every evening in each community, a group of families would meet either in the new laundromat built by the Department of Indian Affairs, or in the home of one family or another. They prayed in English, sang syncopated hymns and confessed their sins in front of others. They spoke mainly about alcoholism, disease and the many demons each of them harboured. One winter evening, a man was delivered from 41 of his demons. The next day, the faith healer exorcised the remaining six.

At Carmacks, aside from two or three elderly people, everyone spoke at least an elementary level of English in the presence of Euro-Canadians. But among themselves, many still spoke mainly Athapaskan. At first, most teenagers pretended that they had forgotten it, but they all understood the language of their ancestors and some even spoke it fluently. Certainly, those who had been away at school for several years were no longer as fluent as their younger brothers and sisters who were still "hanging on to their mothers' skirts."

Outsiders visiting a Tutchone community for the first time were first struck by the impression of cultural chaos. Picture, for example, a Tutchone man setting off for his summer fishing camp in a brand new GMC truck. At his fish camp, he sets his canvas tents like the double lean-to brush camps of days gone by (the tent of his eldest married daughter facing his and a camp fire lit between the two). Those aged 40 or over strictly adhered to the principles of adult brother and sister not speaking to one another and of moiety exogamy. However, one marriage between two young people of the same moiety had already taken place. One young girl dressed in embroidered blue jeans could be seen listening to a transistor radio while spending her afternoons removing hair and fat from a moose hide, then wringing, scraping and stretching it; some of her tools were made of stone or bone. A typical breakfast consisted of moose tripe washed down with a mug of Maxwell House instant coffee. Much had changed, even for the dogs, which were transported by truck and then tied with steel chains to the trees surrounding the camp. They were being given less meat and fish ever since stores in the Yukon started selling Gaines, a commercial brand of dog food.

It should be specified that this "transculturation," a term coined by the Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz and taken over by Malinowski (1940) to describe this appearance of chaos, was not an assimilation to Euro-Canadian culture.[92] The changes corresponded to a process by which Tutchone society incessantly updated the characteristics by which it differed from the invading culture of Euro-Canadian Yukoners. For example, on the surface, religious gatherings headed by an American or a Canadian Pentecostal leader seemed to indicate that the values of the Yukon Territory dominant culture were being adopted to an extent. After all, weren't half of the Tutchone people of Carmacks followers of this Christian movement? Indeed, but this would underestimate two important facts: for one, there was no Euro-Canadian Pentecostal community in the Tutchone territory. The Tutchone had

[92] Transculturation is a concept coined by Cuban anthropologist Fernando Ortiz. It refers to a process in which "members of subordinated or marginal groups select and invent from materials transmitted by a dominant culture." Transculturation emphasizes the agency involved in cultural change, as well as the loss that accompanies cultural acquisition. In these ways, "transculturation" differs from the older terms "assimilation" and "acculturation," which emphasize a more one-way transmission of culture from the colonizer to the colonized, from the dominant to the marginalized. For Ortiz, transculturation was a necessary concept for understanding Cuban and Spanish American culture more generally. See Davies (2000).

sought reverends of this faith either from the United States or from southern Canada. And, in Carmacks, the invited leader was given free room and board in the village and was protected by the Tutchone from the taunting remarks of the local Euro-Canadians. For another, the Tutchone in Carmacks had no shortage of conventional churches. A Catholic priest lived there, and the Baptist and Anglican churches both had congregations—all for an aggregate population of about 300, children included. If a large number of Tutchone deliberately chose the Pentecostal faith it may be read as a protest against the local Euro-Canadians around them. Yet, this choice was not entirely arbitrary. The Pentecostal belief that demons are responsible for both physical disease and psychological disorders diverged little from Tutchone shamanistic beliefs. The old practices were therefore continuing covertly under a new guise.

That having been noted, our conclusion remains that Tutchone society in the years 1950-1975 was far different from what it had been in 1900-1950. Through compulsory schooling, family allowances and public assistance, the people were relegated to living in small permanent villages for most of the year; the nomadic lifestyle and economic autonomy of prior generations had been seriously compromised. After 1950, the Tutchone ways of behaving also became constantly exposed to the application of Euro-Canadian laws and to the moral-cultural judgment of Euro-Canadian people. This historical account has shed light on two distinct periods in history subsequent to 1890: 1) the years 1890-1950, which were characterized by a minimum amount of Euro-Canadian influence on the Tutchone; and 2) the next 20 to 30 years, which transformed them into a group of people with much less work to do and who became partly dependent on federal government subsidies for housing, clothing and food.

### 3.2.1 Ethnographic Data Gathered from 1890 to the 1970s

As we did for our initial inquiry, we will now examine the ethnohistorical documents that have been gathered between 1890 and the 1970s and then address the problems of using them to fill in missing pieces of information for the period 1840-1890.

Paradoxically, unpublished archival documents available for the period 1890-1950, are scarcer than those for the preceding period. The notebooks kept by William Ogilvie in 1886 (Public Archives of Canada) include an interview with Jack Dalton about the trails in the Yukon Territory southwest of Fort Selkirk. Two lengthy newspaper clips (*Dawson Daily News*, July 21, 1909, Yukon Archives, Whitehorse) contain valuable information about the ecological environment and the Tutchone of the Stewart River. The Yukon Archives (*ibid.*) contain essentially demographic data. The journals kept by the Anglican missionaries were not to be found. I only had access to their correspondence between 1890 and 1900 and to the reports of their synods, which were held irregularly from 1900 to 1954 (Church Missionary Society Archives, Public Archives of Canada and the archives of the theological college at the University of British Columbia). In the Department of Indian Affairs archives, I was more fortunate in that I found two reports dated respectively 1894 and 1908, as well as a

newspaper excerpt on the subject of a feud[93] among the Pelly River people. Lastly, this inventory would be incomplete without mentioning Father Bobillet's journal—a 3,627 typed pages document covering the period 1939-1969 which he spent in the Yukon. The author himself presented me with a copy for which I am ever grateful.

However, there are many more published books and articles than for the pre-1890 era. For the pre-Klondike Gold Rush period, we have the accounts of explorations by Glave (1890, 1891, 1892), Pike (1896), and Schwatka and Hayes (Hayes, 1892). Given that the Klondike Gold Rush fired the imagination of Western people the world over, the Yukon was the subject of numerous publications after 1898. It would be pointless to try to list them all here. Those that are of any ethnohistorical interest can be divided into two categories: government reports and accounts of trappers and hunters who spent time in the Yukon over a number of years. The first category contains predominantly geological reports, many of which include a few pages about the Tutchone encountered on each expedition. Many were compiled in a single volume by Bostock (1957). Relevant information obtained through documents of the second category is cited in the body of the present work, and a list of these appears in the bibliography. None of the documents taken into consideration here represent, it must be specified, an anthropological study in the strict sense. In fact, few authors have been able to summarize, even in a few pages, all the knowledge they acquired over many long years in the Yukon. Those most likely to have done so are those who only explored the territory without having lived there. While access to the Yukon was relatively easy at that time, the territory attracted few ethnologists. The only work of this type which was carried out before 1950 is that by McClellan in 1948, but it was only exploratory and most of her research was focused on the Inland Tlingit, the Tagish and the Southern Tutchone.

After 1950, McClellan patiently devoted more than 30 years to the task she had undertaken (Lévi-Strauss, 1977: 139-140). In addition to a number of articles published over the years (1950a, 1950b, 1953, 1954, 1956, 1961, 1963, 1964, 1970a, 1970b, 1975a), the essential information she gathered about the Southern Tutchone, some Northern Tutchone regional groups, and the Inland Tlingit are now contained in two volumes (1975b). Seventeen years after McClellan's first interviews with a few members of one or two regional groups of Northern Tutchone, another Tutchone band received a visit from an anthropologist: Bernard Arcand. The data he collected at Carmacks during the summer of 1965 appear in his Master's thesis (Arcand, 1966). In 1972, at 26 years of age, I followed in his footsteps and started to add to his body of research concerning the Northern Tutchone regional groups residing at Carmacks, Pelly Crossing and Mayo.

The four months of field work in 1972 were spent visiting almost all the localities now inhabited by Southern and Northern Tutchone: Kluane, Kloo Lake, Haines Junction, Aishihik, Champagne, Whitehorse, Carmacks, Pelly Crossing and Mayo. I was unable to go to Snag, but I did briefly visit the Han of Dawson City. In each locality, I spent an average of

[93] "Feud" is used here in its Middle English meaning of *fede* from Old French *faide*, of Germanic origin (see Bloch, 1968: 182). *Faide* does not exist anymore in contemporary French. This term is preferable to the expressions "blood feud" or "vendetta" to translate the notion of obligation or duty in these matters and the possibilities of repayment in kind entailed in the Tutchone's practices (see also F. Lot, 1968: 426-427).

10-12 days interviewing local authorities, such as elected band leaders, religious leaders, store-keepers, as well as any Tutchone citizens willing to speak. I tape-recorded a basic vocabulary of 100 words (Hoijer, 1956: 219-220) for each of the dialects spoken in all these villages. Ethnohistorical information about the composition of each locality and ethnographic materials of a social and cultural nature were recorded in notebooks. After many hesitations, I decided to include the Tutchone of Aishihik and Hutshi in my "Tutchone" zone of research. This strays from the classification proposed by McClellan, but I felt it was justified on a geopolitical level as the dialects of both these groups are intelligible to the Tutchone from Carmacks and Pelly Crossing, and especially as the people of Aishihik and Hutshi used to be related through a number of matrimonial exchanges with the Tutchone living in the regions of Fort Selkirk and Tatchun.

During the 16 months of the second stage of my field work, I lived in a rented log cabin in Carmacks. Some of the information obtained at Carmacks on the subject of women and children was collected by my companion Jacqueline Rouah. At Frenchman Lake, I enjoyed the hospitality of George Billy—the elected chief of Carmacks—in a tent where I spent one month during the winter of 1973-1974. That same season, at Pelly Crossing, Mrs. Eileen Silverfox welcomed me into her home for three weeks. Fifteen days were spent at Mayo. The largest portion of social and cultural data were culled from Carmacks where I met with members of the old Tutchone groups of Fort Selkirk, Aishihik, Tatchun Lake, Carmacks, Hutshi Lake, Little Salmon and Big Salmon. Since the data I collected in the early 1970s are the most critical for methodological reasons, I leave aside other field researches I conducted in 1984, in 1987 and in 1990-1991 at Pelly Crossing.

On-site ethnohistorical research presented two main challenges: a great deal of patience and perseverance was required before the Tutchone consented to discuss their collective past, and a constant effort was required to separate facts from each of the different periods of the history of their society. The first stumbling block was that, in the presence of Euro-Canadians, a few Tutchone presented what they wanted to be known for in the present, rather than a realistic portrait of their social life in the past (a memory which they tried to suppress somewhat in public). A concrete example will give a better understanding of the problem. I described above how half of the Tutchone turned to Pentecostal ideology as a way of helping some members cope with their alcohol addiction. The movement was effective. Those who believed were proud of their new faith. They listened closely to the advice dispensed by the American born leader they had hired. The Tutchone saw to providing him and his family with everything they needed. In brief, the new rituals that the followers had adopted were taken seriously and, understandably, with enthusiasm. Thus, an old man would spend afternoons on end with an open Bible in his lap just as the reverend had instructed him to do. Yet this man did not know how to read. Nevertheless, he was one of the more knowledgeable ones about shamanistic practices. In such cases, I found it inhumane to ask questions about this subject that interested me but which aroused in him a sense of distress at not being able to be what he had once been and doubt as to what he was striving to become. I felt as though I would have been peeling and plucking away at a person whose scars, now healed, were being re-opened. During formal interviews, some would sadly, hesitantly answer "I don't know." As consolation, some would tell me "maybe so and so, he knows." Once a closer bond had developed, they would be more frank. They would say, "You know, it's way back" or "I can't talk about this; maybe I'll cry." Not everyone was

quite so sensitive and not all subjects were too delicate to discuss, but there were enough cases to create difficulties.

This was resolved by administering all questionnaires and conducting formal interviews on difficult subjects with only to those who agreed to these methods. No information was explicitly requested of the others. They were interviewed indirectly and were free to answer whichever questions they pleased, as they pleased. When a topic seemed to evoke strong emotions in someone, I would then avoid asking that person anything about that topic. Meeting with those willing to be interviewed entailed, for instance, sitting down to a cup of tea with George, or Johnny, or Emma, doing favours here and there, begging for two months on end for an interview with an elderly man at a fishing camp, going moose hunting for two or three weeks with Taylor and his son-in-law, and then with George, inviting Mary-Luke and her husband, Taylor, to dinner at my cabin, attending funerals and potlatches with my companion and her son—me as a member of the Crow people and they as members of the Wolf people. The Tutchone having been informed of my purpose, everything that was said and which was of ethnohistorical interest was jotted down in a notebook. When necessary, delicate subjects were approached using a technique akin to open-end interviewing. This would entail interjecting, in the middle of a conversation about disciplining children, phrases like: "I heard, a long time ago, his uncle takes care of that!" or "Someone told me this about long time ago people. Is he right?" Or even, "I read this in an old book! Could it be true?" Some answers would consist of a simple "Yes" or "No," in which case I would not pursue the matter any further. Other answers were long commentaries that seemed to be addressed to the children around us rather than to me. Information offered during conversations about day-to-day life and answers to questions asked were all noted summarily. At the end of the day, after organizing a plan of the various subjects covered that day, I would tape-record the details of what I had heard and synthesize the information provided by different people, older notes and results of interviews and formal questionnaires. This procedure made it possible, during the last six months, to tackle extremely delicate questions, and even tape-record accounts related by the Tutchone. In this manner, I managed to build up a substantial body of relatively detailed data over the course of 16 months on my second sojourn.

The second problem posed by the field research concerned having to date facts reported about one institution and continuing all the while to collect information. This difficulty was resolved in the following way. For each institution described, I would obtain background information so as to understand what period the informant was talking about. As they did not have calendars, this was accomplished by speaking of generations. With decreasing accuracy, we were able to go as far back as about 1880. To describe facts prior to that year, the Tutchone used expressions like "way back" and "before the White man."

For the most part, people's sentiments were still rooted in the past. Elders remembered being surrounded in childhood by men and women who had been born in the mid-nineteenth century. Those born between 1860 and 1870 lived at least until the 1930s. The arrival of Euro-American and Euro-Canadian people did not result in wholesale overnight change. An old man born near Fort Selkirk around 1895 clearly remembered having seen his mother boiling meat using red-hot stones from a campfire. She would then quickly transfer them to a watertight basket that contained water and pieces of moose meat. In those days (around 1905), most people had metal pots which could be placed directly on the fire, but some peo-

ple still preferred traditional cooking methods, which imparted a distinctive flavour to the meat. Another man whose mother was born around 1880 remembered that he was not completely weaned until the age of eight or nine. That was the tradition. From time to time older brothers and sisters had the privilege of sharing with newborns. This custom was carried on until 1920-1930. Another example: the man who told me this killed his first caribou at the age of 10 or 11. He remembered how his *tsi'* (grandfather) had tears in his eyes when he, the boy, feigning indifference, hinted that there might be fresh meat not far from the camp. Respectfully deferring to tradition, he had left the best pieces he had carried back to camp a few hundred metres away, adjusted his clothing and returned to his family as if nothing had happened. Based on memories of the past, assisted by qualitative information of this type, only broad sketches of Tutchone institutions can be drawn. It was difficult to obtain more precise figures (the size of groups, volume of production or trade, etc.). Yet, it was possible to draw a picture in half-tones and sometimes better.

In summary, in addition to the data from the period 1840-1890, we have only archival documents and publications of general interest written between 1890 and 1950 and ethnohistorical, as well as ethnographic documents collected from 1950 to the 1970s. We will now look at the particular problems that arise with respect to the combined use of these different sources of information and see if they can be utilised to reconstruct Tutchone society and culture as it was in the years 1840-1890.

### 3.2.2 Ethnohistorical Status of the Data Gathered from 1890 to the 1970s.

Regardless of the type of document—archival, published material or research notes taken on site—and regardless of the date they were written, ethnohistoric information obtained after 1890 can be classified into one of two slightly different categories. The first consists of data based on the author's observations on certain aspects of the Tutchone culture after 1890, aspects which the author states are, and that the Tutchone concur to be, similar to what prevailed prior to 1890. The second category consists of the Tutchone recounting their personal recollections to some Euro-Canadian. The writers who relate those accounts, me included, often did not have the opportunity to see firsthand the institutions described by these indigenous people.

A book written by a nurse (Wilson, 1965) who spent 10 years working with the Tutchone in the 1950s is an example of the first type of data. She mentions, for example, the existence of an old custom:

> These Indians are superstitious about multiple births[94]. It is considered a stigma for a woman to present her husband with two babies. If twins are born, invariably only one child survives, and quite often, that surviving twin is neglected to the extent that he dies within a few weeks. To bury them in the graveyard would bring catastrophe to the entire band (Wilson, 1965: 63).

94 Note that "superstitious" is an ethnocentric term here. Wilson could have said "These Indians have a particular belief about multiple births" instead.

This age-old practice was related to her orally. But in this case, the author indicates that she herself had witnessed in the 1950s the systematic suppression of twins and the fact that their tombstones were erected outside the cemetery (*ibid.*).

The second category of information is presented as follows:

> Normally, the Indians [of Fort Selkirk] dispose of their cadavers by cremating them, but the chiefs and the shamans or doctors have the privilege of choosing their burial place and the placement of their tombstone (translation of Boillot, 1899: 88).

Although the above document dates from 1899, and despite the fact that it was written in the present tense, in this case, the context reveals that the author did not personally observe the custom and that he is only reporting what the Tutchone had told him. This type of data is very common in later-period literature. Such is the case for my own notes from my field research concerning the relationship between a maternal uncle and his nephews and nieces. I simply report what a number of Tutchone people told me without having personally witnessed all the aspects of what that relationship was like.

The difference between these two categories of data is obvious. However, it is worth noting that, from our standpoint, they are subject to the same circumspection. What is important in the first category of information is not the fact that descriptions of customs were observed, but the fact that they are said to have also taken place in the nineteenth century. In each case, this exact point can only be based on indigenous oral tradition. However, even the fact that a Tutchone custom could be totally foreign to Euro-Canadian culture does not necessarily prove that the custom is old. Both categories of data therefore raise the same sort of doubt: how representative of the past is the information transcribed by outsiders from oral accounts? Not all aspects of the problem related to the use of oral tradition for ethnohistoric purposes can possibly be covered here. A separate volume would be required for such an undertaking. The research conducted by Vansina (1961) demonstrates this well. The presentation of the problem will therefore be limited to an outline of its essential terms.

Among people who do not communicate in writing, collective knowledge is passed on orally. Repetition is used to a great extent. Stories, anecdotes and accounts about the past are repeated over and over in groups. Each member of the group is extremely careful to then relate these accounts just as he or she heard them. The Tutchone followed this general practice. Thus, it often happened when I was interviewing them that one would correct another in front of everyone present if they thought the story was not being related accurately. Facts had to be related according to a certain standard. Having a knack of embellishing stories was not much valued, but telling and retelling details in exactly the way they were related by another, without omitting any details was. Given this general attitude, it is normal to expect that the process of transmitting collective knowledge would contain only a minimum of distortion. This concern for reliability is without a doubt a valuable asset for ethnohistorians.

Nevertheless, will outsiders automatically assume that the content of the knowledge passed down years ago to one old Tutchone man still alive in 1974 accurately reflects the nineteenth century? Will they take for granted what he says about the past, which he refers to as “way back”? Just how far back in time depends on who is telling the story! Have accounts passed down through generations been altered over time? The same questions, although to a lesser extent, will be asked about the information related orally and noted in archival documents and literature written or published between 1890 and 1950.

To answer, let us first consider what general factors could alter knowledge when it is conveyed orally from one generation to the next. Whether the facts related or the reality experienced in the past are related faithfully or not hinges on types of consideration: the individual and the group levels. The individual level is hardly important here. The method used in our inquiry consisted in talking to all available Tutchone and comparing what each one said against other testimonials, and against information found in archival documents. Idiosyncratic memory gaps were filled in this way. What is available to us is the collective memory obtained through the artifice of inquiry; a body of data more vast than the total knowledge of each of the individuals interviewed. What is at issue is not the purported memory lapses of individuals, but the sum of the data that makes up the collective memory. Filling in the gaps through a methodical examination of everyone's memories does not guarantee that all the facts have been transmitted from one generation to another, or that they have all been accurately recalled. Inevitably, therefore, we have no choice but to query why one type of information is transmitted or memorized while another is not. Given the limited space available for this topic, only a few points may be brought out here.

First of all, the following premise is logically necessary: if the socio-cultural environment has remained the same from generation L to generation M, then all the knowledge and social practices of generation L have by definition been transmitted to generation M. In such a case, information about the socio-cultural life of generation L passed down by generation M through oral account is, also by definition, faithful to historical truth. In other words, oral literature is most trustworthy if and when no important socio-cultural change occurred between the period to which the oral accounts refer and the period in which they are related.

Next, everyone will agree to the following. If, at the time when generation M receives the oral knowledge from generation L, the sociological environment of generation M is different from that in which L lived in its youth, then one of two things might occur: (1) either, L might *not* convey to M certain old social or cultural practices that have become embarrassing in the context of the new social arrangements; (2) or M might refuse to memorize and pass on to the next generations the information provided by L, especially if that information can threaten the stability of the new structure of M. This in no way implies that all of the social values and practices from L's time that have been abandoned by the time of generation M cease to be communicated, memorized and passed on to M. A generation always speaks about the way things were in its time and about what no longer exists. However, not everything can be included if the context does not lend itself to the situation. As a result, any oral accounts transmitted once or more in environments where the social and cultural situation has been modified should be accepted with some caution.

Expressed in this manner, the problem is highly simplified. Its multiple facets are relegated to the shadows. Nevertheless, these two premises are essential and make it possible to isolate the two prerequisite studies which must be undertaken before we can determine any changes to the oral tradition of a group of people. The first consists in counting how many generations were involved in the transmission of the oral tradition from the time the events were experienced to the time they were recorded. The second requires determining for each transmission from one generation to the next, whether, at the time of transmission, the socio-cultural environment was different from what it was before. In some cases, such an inquiry suggests that a modification of oral history may have occurred. In other cases, the continuity of the knowledge may be affirmed.

What can we hope to find out about the Tutchone case? The society of the latter half of the nineteenth century existed at a time that was not that far removed from the 1970s Tutchone society and from the time I started my first fieldwork. Therefore, chances are good that their oral tradition is credible. Consequently, it is worth undertaking the necessary validation tasks one by one: specifying the number of generations involved in transmitting oral accounts that were retold between 1890 and the 1970s; determining the key periods for which the possibility of socio-cultural change must be studied; circumscribing which cultural changes might have occurred during the period, or periods, and which will have been defined as critical.

For the first task, ethnohistorical information related in the early 1970s by a Tutchone who was then 70 years of age will serve as a point of reference. This will ultimately make it easier to resolve the matter of oral tradition transmitted through the younger generations as well as the data contained in books, archival documents and field notes written between 1890 and the early 1970s. As for the example of a person aged 70 in, say, 1974, let us consider the three main types of information that they provided: descriptions of events dating from "way back"; descriptions of institutions like the system of marriage in the 1920s, which was purportedly practised before the arrival of Europeans; and, lastly, the behavioural traits of the 1970s provided as tinctures of nineteenth century practices.

In general, whenever anyone gave the first type of information, I was told that it came from parents and grandparents. An informant aged 70 in 1974—i.e., born in 1904—would have heard such accounts between 1910 and 1920, a period when he would have developed his first vivid memories. In 1910, this informant would have been surrounded by parents, grandparents and other relatives in their forties and sixties, or even seventies and eighties. For all intents and purposes, information thus passed down to him between 1910 and 1920 was provided by his relatives who were born as far back as 1870, 1850 or even 1830.

Descriptions gained during fieldwork were often obtained by presenting the people being interviewed with facts reported in books or archival documents or by other Tutchone. We can well imagine that each informant was prevented, albeit indirectly, from presenting too fancy or embellished versions of the information they had received early in their life. As a result, data of this type, reported in 1974 by a 70-year-old, must be taken as handed down by a generation which had been eyewitness to the nineteenth century. And it can be legitimately presumed that these data underwent minimal distortion between the 1910–1920 period and 1974. The 70-year-old informant provided a portrait of the nineteenth century culture which he was able to recreate thanks to accounts that were related to him by those who lived in the century in question. For now, let us leave aside the question of whether the 1910-1920 cultural context lent itself to the transmission of unaltered knowledge. At this point, it still remains to evaluate the nature of the second and third type of information: e.g. what historical status should be assigned to a given custom or ritual eye-witnessed in the 1920s; or to certain 1974 cultural practises that were presented by an informant as those prevailing before 1890? If we keep in mind that in such a case our 1974 informant judged what he had witnessed in the 1920s or what he still practices with the yardstick of his knowledge of the nineteenth century, the answer is easy to provide. His judgements rest on the knowledge of the nineteenth century he received from his elders between 1910 and 1920. Thus, these judgements have the same historical value as the first type of information just discussed, and the question about its reliability has to be raised in the same terms.

Now for a look at the value of accounts on the nineteenth century provided by younger informants: the information provided by a woman aged 40 in 1974, for example. Like most people, when asked, she would state that she had acquired knowledge from her grandparents, who were most likely born circa 1880-1890. This information was therefore passed down through two generations (hers and her grandparents') that had not been firsthand adult witnesses to the facts reported. In such cases, the time factor and the passing of two generations may have resulted in some information loss. Informants of this generation were generally less able to provide details, particularly on historical matters, than those in their seventies. If their personal integrity is not to be called into question, we must however question ourselves for a moment about the status of the information they volunteered. To do so, it must be borne in mind that, more often than not, inadvertent divergences from the truth was most often rapidly revealed as no elder listening to such an account would let it pass without commenting on it. In other cases, involuntary discrepancies would be uncovered by the inquiry method used. It will be remembered that one of the techniques consisted in reporting each Tutchone's claim to the oldest people around: "Someone says this about long time ago people! How did it work really? Is it really true?" As a result, what was said by people in their forties was subjected either directly or indirectly to the critique of the elders. As only the corrected narratives were recorded, initial errors are irrelevant. Yet, interviewing the generation of 40-year-olds remained useful in that it reduced the number of detailed explanations which would have otherwise been expected of the older ones. In the end, as the elders defined what was to be retained or rejected from the younger generation's statements, the question about the validity of the latter is posed in similar terms as for the 70 years old. Thus, overall, with respect to data gathered on site, one must consider whether in the cultural context of 1890-1910, the old witnesses to the nineteenth century might have forgotten or concealed how the Tutchone actually lived during the 1840-1890 period or that those who were young in 1910-1920 or even in 1930 might have incorrectly interpreted, or inaccurately relayed what they had been told.

The matter of validating 1890-1970 data from archival documents and books is no different. These documents were culled from different periods: 1900, 1915, 1930, 1940 and 1950. When authors of the most recent works claim to have obtained their facts from elders, we are obliged to ask whether the information might have been truncated when it was being passed down by these elders (1890-1950). The earliest texts arouse the same suspicions. Might the socio-cultural context at the time of narration (1890-1920) have encouraged the Tutchone narrators, born between 1830 and 1860, to hide certain facts from the Euro-Canadian person to whom they were relating their recollections? Regardless of their date of publication, we see that for the sources published after 1890 on which we are relying, the question of their veracity keeps bringing us back to the critical period of 1890-1920 and, in each case, we are reduced to answering the following question: did any social upheaval occur in those three decades that would have affected or compromised the reliability of testimonies given by Tutchone who lived between 1840 and 1890 and prevented them from accurately transmitting to their children and grandchildren any information about the socio-cultural organization during the second half of the nineteenth century?

### 3.2.3 1890-1920 as the Critical Period for the Transmission of Oral Knowledge

The question is straightforward. Answering it, however, is not. A direct approach would consist in comparing social life as it was between 1840 and 1890 with what it became from 1890 to 1920. However, this is not possible without sufficient knowledge of what prevailed from 1840 to 1890. The only way to proceed in such conditions then would be to borrow the "upstreaming" approach used by historians.[95]

In the absence of sufficient material for the years 1840-1890, we must go against the grain and ask the only question we can ask: what phenomena could have been responsible for making the 1890-1920 socio-cultural organization of the Tutchone different from that of the 1840-1890 periods? The answer lies in the brief chronology above and in the knowledge acquired by others on the subject of social change brought about by the contact between first nations and Europeans. Two main categories of possible factors immediately emerge: on the one hand, demographic, ecological and technological factors, i.e., factors of a material nature; and on the other hand, factors of a socio-cultural nature.

The material factors might have come into play during two distinct periods. First, there are events that might have occurred before 1890, but which had not had any consequence until after 1890. We have in mind the notion that change could have resulted from epidemics or migration of the population, the notion that social change could have come about as a result of ecological change and therefore techniques of production, and lastly the notion that European-made tools acquired through trade with the Tlingit could have had similar effects. Not only must we check whether these factors came into play before 1890, but also whether they had a delayed effect. Next, there are events that might have occurred at the technologi-

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[95] Fenton (1978: 296) who faced extremely complex methodological problems with the Iroquois society concisely summarizes the general principle of the historic method:

> The time perspective in [such] reconstruction is essentially a continuum running from twentieth-century observations and those of ethnologists in the nineteenth-century backward to the contact period. To cite the legacy of Bloch (the French philosopher of history), the great problems of historical inquiry derive from the antithesis of continuity and perpetual change. Those patterns that persisted for the observation of ethnologists and are not demonstrably European but can be identified in the early sources represent the Iroquois cultural heritage. Some of these may well be pre-Columbian. Wherever possible, the earliest manifestation is indicated. Elements that represent a response to European contact are so denominated. The process is ongoing and regenerative. For the Hurons the time perspective is largely the seventeenth century. For the Iroquois proper, the drama opened in the century before Samuel de Champlain and Henry Hudson's arrived for the second act, and is still ongoing.
>
> For one who arrives at the end of a time span of three centuries to observe the contemporary Iroquois scene, the logical progression of research is to proceed from what is best known to what is most obscure (cf. Bloch). This approach, sometimes called "upstreaming" or reading history backwards, is often beneficial before restoring time to its true direction.

In the 1970s the Tutchone situation was scarcely more complicated than that in which a 17th century ethnologist studying the pre-Columbian Iroquois would have found himself or herself. Barely one century separates me from the period isolated for this study. The differences were far less noticeable than those encountered by Fenton.

cal, economic and demographic levels between 1890 and 1920. A small Euro-Canadian population settled in the region. It might have transmitted new epidemics to the indigenous population. It extracted resources for its own sustenance. It facilitated the adoption of Euro-Canadian goods and means of production. In theory, each of these phenomena might have been equally responsible for having transformed Tutchone society.

The socio-cultural factors stem from the presence, between 1890 and 1920, of a Euro-Canadian population that was locally heading towards political hegemony. Aside from the material factors—demographics, ecology and technology—one has thus to wonder whether the socio-cultural demands of Euro-Canadians (respect of "the law of the land", etc.) caused the Tutchone to change. The demands would have included pressure by store managers on economic performance, reprimands and the physical constraints used by the police when enforcing national or territorial laws and policies, not to mention the admonitions of Christian missionaries on the ideological level. All combined, these actions could have had a direct impact on the Tutchone, body and soul, and need to be verified.

These are the two major aspects of the problem that must be resolved in order to be able to determine whether the oral tradition transmitted between 1890 and 1920 can be relied on to round out the data gathered during the period 1840-1890. Let us approach each one separately. As the socio-cultural impact exerted by Euro-Canadians on the Tutchone between 1890 and 1920 and beyond is a simpler matter to resolve it may be examined at this point in time; the material factors will be studied more easily in the ensuing chapters.

### 3.2.4 The Impact of Direct Euro-Canadian Socio-Cultural Pressures

The sociological pressures exerted by the store managers were intended to steer as many Tutchone as possible towards the production of furs and, in addition, after 1900, towards wood cutting for the steamers. Between 1890 and 1902, these pressures came from a single trading post (Fort Selkirk); between 1902 and 1915 from five posts (Fort Selkirk, Little Salmon, Big Salmon, Mayo and Burwash); between 1915 and 1920 from seven posts (the previous ones plus Carmacks and Coffee Creek). Did their pressures succeed?

R. S. Knight, the superintendent of the Mounted Police in 1917, was the first to discuss the problem of trapping. He noticed that the Indians were not working in view of satisfying the demands of the fur traders. In comparing the conduct of Euro-Canadian trappers with that of the Tutchone, he expressed the following:

> The Whiteman [the few local trappers] go into the business in a systematic manner, while the Indian is very haphazard in his method of trapping and will not take the trouble to set out his lines at the distances the Whiteman goes.[96]

This difference is easily explained. The Euro-Canadian trapper would set out without his wife or children (more often than not he was a bachelor). He had the money or credit he needed to buy enough provisions to last through the winter. The Tutchone trapper, in contrast, was accompanied by his entire family. While he should have started out with more

[96] R. S. Knight, Commanding Dawson, *Report for the Year ended September 30, 1916. Report of the R.N.M.P., 1916, Sessional Paper No. 28*. Ottawa, 1917.

funds or credit, he instead had less. Moreover, had he been offered credit, he might not necessarily have used it to buy flour, beans and bacon as his indigenous dietary habits would have been quite different. In any case, he could not possibly have transported all the food required for all his family for an entire winter. Consequently, he camped with other Tutchone in zones that were propitious for fishing and hunting, and he spent most of his time acquiring food. In addition, those regions where food was to be found were not necessarily as abundant in fur-bearing animals and he would therefore obtain only a small quantity of furs. Once he sold his furs at the trading post and bought what he needed the most, and as long as the price of furs was on the high end, he had enough money left to spend a few weeks pursuing leisure activities around the post. Otherwise, he would immediately return to some regular hunting grounds.

From 1900 to 1950, this vicious circle was never broken, as witnessed by the following comment, made in 1928 by a missionary visiting Little Salmon:

> If furs are plentiful and prices fairly high, the Indians have plenty of money for food during the summer, but if not they are compelled to hunt moose to furnish the larder. A moose hunt usually involves the whole family for a period varying from two to six days.[97]

By the same token, his comment also reveals that even the income earned by the best Tutchone trapper who sold at high prices was only enough to feed a family on store food for just about two months (May and June).

Abandoning hunting or trapping entirely for a paid job was impossible not just for most, but for all. First, salaried jobs were only available in the Yukon River valley where most of the Euro-Canadian activities took place. Secondly, companies gave priority to the few Euro-Canadians living in the area. Generally, no more than four or five jobs per trading post were available for the Tutchone. Lastly, these jobs were temporary and even in the 1940s they only lasted one or two months.[98] It is hard to imagine that the few Tutchone who did take these positions could have ever dispensed with hunting and fishing.

The post 1890 subsistence economy underwent a yearly cycle whereby the people would alternately disperse and then concentrate around a trading post. The Tutchone lived more than nine months of the year in the woods, returning to their trading posts only during certain predetermined periods, such as Christmas, a brief period after the spring thaw in May, and then again in summer (i.e., as of June). During the summer period, they would fish king salmon not far from a trading post for anywhere between 30 and 80 days.[99] However, this was only because the general stores had been built near their ancient salmon fishing site, and not because they depended on Euro-Canadian food. During those decades, the aboriginal economy fared well. Several written accounts attest to this. In 1909, the assistant chief

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[97] Cf. *Report of the Sixth Synod of the Diocese of Yukon, held at St. Paul's Cathedral, Dawson, Y.T.*, July 29-August 2, 1928, p. 37.

[98] Bobillet, *Journal d'un missionnaire au Yukon*, p. 504, *passim*.

[99] Green, *Report to the Secretary of Indian Affairs Department*, August 1908. Indian Affairs Archives R.G.10, Vol. 4037, Black Series, File 317050. See also Bobillet, *Journal d'un missionnaire au Yukon*, namely, the years 1939-1950.

of the Yukon police noted: "The Indians are as a rule self-sustaining, especially those who live any distance from Whitehorse and Dawson."[100]

In 1928, speaking in part about the Tutchone of Aishihik, a missionary noted that "they are well-to-do and most of them quite independent."[101] Father Bobillet who lived among the Tutchone in the 1940s and 1950s made similar comments.[102] It is therefore not surprising that minimal use was made of public assistance at that time. Here are two indications provided by police officers in charge of overseeing the well-being of the indigenous population:

> Relief has been furnished to families of destitute Indians for the most part widows with families of young children dependent on them, or men or women incapacitated from age or infirmity.[103] A few old people, and occasionally a sick and destitute native, receive help in the way of food, but as a rule they make a fair living, hunting and trapping and fishing.[104]

Obviously, just as in most traditional societies; able-bodied people did not have to resort to public assistance.

A provisional conclusion emerges. For socio-technical reasons, the Euro-Canadians did not manage to entice the Tutchone into devoting more of their time to trapping fur-bearing animals. From 1890 to well past 1920 (i.e., up to 1950), the Tutchone fed themselves essentially from their traditional branches of production in the same order of priority as before 1890 (i.e., hunting, fishing, gathering and trapping). Pressures exerted by Euro-Canadians in this area must therefore be considered to have had no effect. We must now examine whether the same can be said about the other demands made by Euro-Canadians.

The behaviour of the Tutchone that was most subject to the control, censure or moral admonitions of the Euro-Canadians was their lack of respect for Euro-Canadian laws which prohibited them from: 1) consuming alcohol; 2) using private force to resolve internal conflicts (e.g., blood feuds, taking hostages for a peace ceremony, keeping some individuals in domestic servitude, etc.); and 3) maintaining certain matrimonial customs such as polygyny and polyandry, marriage between first cross-cousins (*e lye*), etc. These pressures were designed to force the Tutchone to: 1) settle their internal conflicts through recourse to the Euro-Canadian justice system; 2) adopt Euro-Canadian matrimonial customs; 3) adopt the English language and Christian ideology; and 4) adopt Canadian special laws governing all Canadian status Indians.

Police officers enforced these values among Tutchone whenever the latter resided in the vicinity of a trading post. For the most crucial matters such as the use of private physical force between indigenous people, they went out of their way to try to impose "the law" even when Tutchone lived far off in the woods. Once again, existing testimonials must be examined one by one to see the results of these measures.

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[100] Z. T. Wood, *Report of the Assistant Commissioner. In Report of the R.N.M.P.*, 1909, Sessional Paper No. 28, Ottawa, 1909, p. 217.

[101] *Report of the Sixth Synod of the Diocese of Yukon, held at St. Paul's Cathedral, Dawson, Y.T.*, July 29-August 2, 1928, p. 39.

[102] Bobillet, *Journal d'un missionnaire au Yukon, passim*.

[103] Z. T. Wood, *Report of the Assistant Commissioner, In Report of the R.N.M.P.*, 1909, Sessional Paper No. 28, Ottawa, p. 217.

[104] A. E. Snyder, *Report of Superintendent for Whitehorse*, 1909, *ibid*.

Police intervention was used exclusively for dealing with civil and criminal offences as well as offences to the federal *Indian Act*. The police were powerless to intervene in the matrimonial domain as the Tutchone did not marry before Canadian authorities, and so, their practices, whatever they were, were not offences under common law. In areas where the police had authority, officers would resort to using physical force (arrests, incarceration, etc.).

However, the force exercised in Tutchone country could only be geographically limited. With the exception of 1898, no police officer lived there between 1890 and 1910. From 1910 until 1920, there were only two police officers and one patrol boat for the entire vast territory. Nevertheless, throughout the period from 1898 to 1920, the police could be dispatched from Dawson City whenever they caught wind that their services were required. Although the first police intervention in aboriginal affairs occurred among the Tagish, it must be reported as its outcome had an impact on Tutchone conduct.

In 1898, a group of Tagish from March Lake found a can of white powder that had been discarded by a Euro-Canadian. Assuming it to be baking powder, they used it to make bannock, a type of pan-fried bread that had been newly introduced to them. Unfortunately, it turned out to be poison and three Tagish men died from it. Immediately after, four brothers—Frank, Jim, Joe and Dawson Nantuck—decided to avenge the fallen men, as was their duty. They attacked two Euro-Canadian prospectors—Meeham and Fox—who were travelling down McClintock Creek by boat, about 18 km upstream from where the creek met the Yukon River. One of the Euro-Canadian men was killed on the spot; the other, wounded, pretended to be dead and let the boat drift. He survived and reported the murder of his friend to the police who then organized a manhunt, found the Nantuck brothers and brought them to Dawson City in chains. They were judged, sentenced to death and swiftly hanged.[105] According to the Tutchone, this brutal act of punishment had a strong impact on their community and prompted many of them to be either more moderate in their use of private justice or to act in great secrecy.

Evidence can be found in archival documents and testimonials from the Tutchone themselves. The moderating effect is illustrated by an incident among the Tutchone which was similar to the one in Tagish country. In 1905, a Tutchone man of the Stewart River group fell seriously ill. In desperation, his people took him to a Euro-Canadian prospector who tried a number of different remedies in an attempt to save his life. The sick man died nevertheless, and the Tutchone's companions believed that the prospector had poisoned him. However, instead of taking revenge as the Nantuck brothers had done, they went to see another Euro-Canadian man, dictated a message—"My brother died, Stuart [Stewart] river, White man kill him, poison"—and then dispatched the Euro-Canadian man to the police at Fort Selkirk, more than 150 km away from the place where the incident had occurred (Tollemache, 1912: 272).

Naturally, acts carried out in secrecy are more difficult to uncover. Yet, some indications do exist. After an in-depth inquiry, I discovered in 1974 the case of an involuntary homicide, circa 1917, that had never been reported to the police. While playing with a rifle, a

[105] *Northwest Mounted Police Report*, 1898, p.41. Supplementary information was provided by a Tutchone of Little Salmon.

young two-year-old boy killed a seven-year-old boy who belonged to the opposite moiety. There ensued considerable commotion, but the Tutchone decided to keep quiet about the event. The problem was resolved a year later with a very complex four-day ceremony, involving an exchange of hostages, attended by some 200 people. The ceremony was held only a few kilometres from a general store, but Euro-Canadians never found out the reason for it. The neglect of twins, a custom that was upheld until the 1950s, is another extremely important example of how the Tutchone managed to follow their own laws and act outside the parameters of Canadian law. The same situation can be observed in other areas, although less violent, involving laws governing Indians. On the one hand, the police regularly incarcerated people for drunkenness (the most common offence).[106] On the other hand, the Tutchone organized countless drinking festivities in the bush of which Euro-Canadians never had any knowledge whatsoever.

Overall, unlike the traders, the police did some of its objectives. Most facets of Tutchone life remained outside their influence inasmuch as they were not contravening Canadian laws, but from 1898 to 1920, the existence of the police made it increasingly difficult for the natives to use private physical violence to assert their authority over other natives or over the work of others, and more crucially, they offered the Tutchone, who were eventually subjected to the abuse of other Tutchone, an institution that could attempt to defend them. Considering that there were no restrictions on the use of violence before 1898, this necessarily constituted, as the Tutchone have affirmed, a change in the internal relationships of force within their society. The Tutchone who had been rich and powerful (*dan nożi'*) lost one of the means of maintaining their clout. And in the opinion of the Tutchone, over time, no one was held captive (*yandye*) any more, and the social inequities lessened.

At this point, we could question whether this change in the societal structure created an unfavourable climate for adequately transmitting knowledge about nineteenth century Tutchone culture. However, this question must be left unanswered for the time being, for there still remains to examine the results of other cultural pressures that were exerted, such as those by the missionaries.

The goals of the Anglican missionary were: (1) to uproot the indigenous shamanistic religion (wrongly deemed superstitious by ignorant Christians); (2) to eliminate matrimonial practices deemed immoral for not being in line with the canon of the Anglican Church; (3) to teach the English language; and (4) Christian ideology or beliefs. To that end, the Church began with a single mission and then, after 1915, added three more. Moreover, starting in 1900, it opened a boarding school outside Tutchone country where it could house and teach a few Tutchone children each year: the Chooutla School. This situation continued until 1950.

In Tutchone country, the missionaries' work consisted in inviting the adults to religious services and the children to Sunday school at the mission. When the Tutchone lived away in the bush and apart from one another, they were simply visited from time to time. The missionary's discourse took the form of admonition and exhortation. At the Chooutla School, discipline was used to reinforce the above techniques. To determine the effects of such ac-

[106] Z. T. Wood, *Report of the Assistant Commissioner, Report of the R.N.M.P., 1909, Sessional Paper No. 28*; All the *Reports of the Synod of the Diocese of Yukon*.

tions, let us first examine the difficulties encountered, analyze the results, and then take a look at the years after 1920.

The missionary's task was complicated by the Tutchone's comings and goings, their minimal knowledge of English, not to mention the missionaries' own ignorance of the Tutchone language. On the one hand, the Tutchone were expected to attend service regularly and to volunteer in organized activities at the mission. This was impossible because of the nature of their economic activities. As the minister at Little Salmon noted in 1915:

> Attendance at church and school is very irregular, owing to the nomadic life of the Indians: with few exceptions they stay most of the time in the hills, hunting and trapping, only making occasional visits to the posts.[107]

The same observations were made by all the other missionaries until the end of the 1940s.[108]

On the other hand, as the Tutchone spent most of their time away from Euro-Canadians, very few really understood their language. Even in 1931, the missionary at Carmacks made the following remark about his nomadic flock:

> I find that only one or two that know English better than their fellows really understand what is said, even if one speaks in the simplest words as possible. This is discouraging.[109]

Combined with the very low turnout and erratic attendance at Sunday school and mass, the language barrier would take up much of a missionary's energy and resources. A few solutions were devised, but they were all equally absurd and quickly dismissed. For example, in 1915, the missionary at Fort Selkirk proposed to simply prohibit the Tutchone from hunting and confine them to a reserve near his mission. Thus he wrote:

> I have no hesitation in saying that pressure should be put upon the parents, by a system of rewards or punishments. I have frequently suggested compulsory attendance of children, as obtains among White people. If it is objected that hunting is necessary, and to leave the little ones behind impracticable, I reply, hunting is not now the main end of an Indian's life.[110]

Fortunately, his words went unheeded by both his colleagues and the government which he pressured but which would have had to meet the needs of the impounded Tutchone.

The Chooutla School was a more practical solution. English was the only authorized language, even during play. The pupils boarded and stayed there anywhere from four to six years. The curriculum was the following:

> The girls learn laundry work, sewing, cooking, and other things pertaining to housework; the boys have practice in farming, gardening, care of stock, carpentering, etc.[111]

However, the school created as many problems as it aimed to resolve. At the end of their schooling, the children were repatriated to their families. Back at home, they were completely unprepared to undertake the tasks required of them: hunting, fishing, etc. As a result,

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[107] *Report of the Third Synod of the Diocese of Yukon*, 1915, p. 36.

[108] All the *Reports of the Synod of the Diocese of Yukon*, 1923, 1928, 1931, 1936, 1948, 1954; Bobillet*, Journal d'un missionnaire au Yukon, passim*.

[109] *Report of the Synod of the Diocese of Yukon*, 1931, p. 45.

[110] *Report of the Third Synod of the Diocese of Yukon*, 1915, p. 38.

[111] *Report of the Synod of the Diocese of Yukon*, 1931, p. 43.

parents were quite reticent about sending their children away to that boarding school. The missionary at Carmacks and Little Salmon remarked, again in 1931:

> With respect to sending their children to Chooutla School the constantly recurring note of discontent is that when they return home the children are no good as trappers and are not content to live under the ancestral roof (it is often unsavoury). As can easily be seen there are two sides to this question—the young people have greatly benefited in one direction while losing in another.[112]

Given that what the missionary considered to be positive was in fact a serious handicap for the Tutchone in their adult life, it is not surprising, as some Tutchone explained to me, that only families in a difficult situation would send one or two of their children to the Chooutla Residential School. While this enabled some of them to avoid a temporary disaster, they would have to re-educate their children when they returned home a few years later. That is why they systematically married such "Chooutla children" to young or even old members of the community who could teach them how to be productive on the land.

In light of the small number of children that were sent from each regional group to Chooutla, and in light of the re-education and nomadic way of life that they would necessarily face upon returning home, the pupils of Chooutla did not attend the mission at home any more than their parents or friends did; they even rejected what they had learned at the residential school and displayed a general apathy towards their so-called benefactors. An observation made by the principal of Chooutla in 1936 is enlightening in this respect:

> It seems that when a pupil leaves school a reaction sets in which I suppose is only natural and that the conduct arising from such a reaction is not always of the best. A solution to the problem of the ex-pupil does not altogether rest in the truth of the assertion that early training asserts itself. There must be follow-up work and in this field much needs to be done.[113]

Was any solution adopted?

> An effort on the part of the school has been made to keep in touch with ex-pupils. When a boy or girl leaves the school each is presented with a Bible and a Prayer book with Hymns […]. Each month to the boys and girls who have left school during the past five and one half years suitable religious magazines have been sent. At the beginning of each year each of these ex-pupils is the recipient of a Scripture Union Card and at Xmas time they are not forgotten (*ibid.)*.

Once we understand the difficulties facing the recipients of these missives, it is not hard to imagine that they had no effect, and the principal's final observation is not surprising: "Except in a very few isolated cases none of the pupils write to the school to express their thanks for the magazines or cards (*ibid.*)." Frankly, anything to the contrary would have been astonishing!

Did the Church's ideology and culture succeed in having an impact on Tutchone's ways despite the operational difficulties experienced? Let the facts speak for themselves. When the first missionary arrived at Fort Selkirk in 1892, he described the situation with the following words:

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[112] *Ibid*., p. 46.

[113] *Report of the Eighth Synod of the Diocese of Yukon,* July 12-13, 1936, pp. 34-35.

> We landed […] amidst the most uncivilized looking Indians I have seen yet. They are, we find, wretchedly poor, very dark, and superstitious and more or less indifferent about matters of [Christian] religion.[114]

For 1910-1915, we have the testimony of the Christianized Han chief at Dawson City who did not understand Tutchone:

> One time I go to Selkirk. He talk all time, ch, ch, ch, ch. Indians there he talk all time like that. Indians there he don't know nothing, he hear of Jesus, that's all. I see Bishop Stringer that time. I see some children, I ask them if they know Jesus, they say "No," so I teach them.[115]

For 1928 and 1931, we have the following comments:

> The efficacy of the medicine man is still believed in although, as they seem to sense that it is contrary to Christian principles to be superstitious, this cult is carried on somewhat furtively.[116] They have their backward side, however; some cling to their medicine man with his incantations and prophesies. They stick rigidly to the law of the wolf and the crow; the children belong automatically to the same clan as the mother; a wolf must not marry a wolf nor a crow a crow—in fact a man must not speak to a woman of the same clan […]. This custom is strictly adhered to. Their story of the creation is both weird and lengthy. It took four long evenings in front of a flickering campfire […] before an old man finished telling the story.[117]

From 1900 to 1945, polygyny, sororal polygyny, polyandry, marriage between cross cousins (*e lye*) continued to be practised.[118] Even after the Second World War, comments continued to be made about the powerlessness of the Church in these matters:

> Paul [born 1926], son of Grace and Richard […] went to war [in Europe]. When he returned, still unmarried, he immediately gratified the dream of his mother and others in the family by marrying his mother's brother's first daughter, Loraine […]. Paul and Loraine had both attended the mission residential school. Paul hated it and was grateful to the war for having rescued him from further schooling (King: 1967: 19).

In 1972-74, one polyandrous family resided in Pelly Crossing (a man and his uterine nephew married to the same woman; the nephew may have been classificatory), and two quasi polygynous families in another village (both cases of sororal polygyny). Obviously, the Anglican Church's efforts had had little effect between 1890 and 1920, and even well beyond.

In summary, when we gauge the force with which the Euro-Canadian socio-cultural pressures were exerted on the Tutchone between 1890 and 1920 (and even after), we notice that: 1) the number of institutions at work was extremely limited; 2) the personnel they employed was reduced to a handful of individuals; and 3) their actions led to problems which were, for the most part, if not totally, irresolvable. When determining whether these pres-

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[114] Canham, *Ft. Selkirk,* February 17, 1893 (C.M.S., A118, #1989). Note Canham's ethnocentrism towards the Tutchone indigenous religion, which was then quite alive.

[115] *Synopsis of Addresses of Natives to Synod, Sixth Synod, Diocese of Yukon*, July 31, 1928, p. 51.

[116] Cf. *Report of the Synod of the Diocese of Yukon,* July 5-8, 1931, p. 45.

[117] *Report of the Sixth Synod, Diocese of Yukon*, July 29-August 2, 1928, pp. 39-40.

[118] Bobillet, *Journal d'un missionnaire au Yukon*, August 4, 1945 (p. 684). The assertion is also based on firsthand accounts related by the Tutchone in the 1970s.

sures, which were exercised with little force in an unfavourable spatial context, had achieved their essential goals, we note that only the pressure designed to suppress the use of private physical violence between Tutchone (internal conflicts) achieved any results—and even then, only partially. The domination of certain Tutchone over other Tutchone, ultimately through physical force, largely ceased after 1898. We therefore conclude that Euro-Canadian socio-cultural pressures brought about only one change to Tutchone culture: its social schism could no longer be as efficiently maintained after 1898 as it was feasible before.

Does this mean that this change was all that distinguished the society of the period 1890-1920 from the society of the second half of the nineteenth century? If that were the case, it would mean that the Tutchone customs described above (matriliny, moieties, etc.) would have existed in the nineteenth century! Can this be accepted as true? It would be premature to do so. Before an answer can be given, it is first necessary to resolve the other facets of the problem raised in this chapter. Let us recapitulate them and isolate the tasks that lie ahead.

In Chapter 2, we asked the following question: Did Tutchone society remain sovereign during the period 1840-1890? This was answered in the affirmative. Between these two dates, no foreign state or individual physically intervened in the internal affairs of the Tutchone. Tlingit traders came among the Tutchone as guests not as overlords, just as they had done since at least the end of the eighteenth century.

In the present chapter, we then asked whether the details of Tutchone culture in the second half of the nineteenth could be reconstructed. As reconstructing a past culture implies an in-depth knowledge of how that society's institutions functioned at the time, two subsequent questions emerge. Can all the necessary period documents be gathered? Are they exhaustive enough? Examinations of period documents show that they are unsatisfactory on two levels. For one, between 1840 and 1890, they were collected at different dates, documents for each date are fragmentary and the fragments often focus on different subjects depending upon the year in question. The most complete picture possible can be obtained only by gathering all available data. However, it has been established that compiling documents from different years and mining them for information about *one* society is based on the assumption that no social change occurred between the dates of the earliest documents and the most recent ones. As a result, we had to wonder if we should entertain the assumption that Tutchone society underwent change between 1840 and 1890.

To this end, we took stock of the factors of change that might have played a role in those days. For different reasons, Tlingit and European visitors were dismissed as agents of *new* socio-cultural pressures. However, the distribution of firearms in the region, the possibility of European epidemics that possibly decimated the population, the hypothesis of migrations and amalgamation with other groups of people were all kept in mind as possible catalysts of change to Tutchone social structure. Similarly, the question arose whether the Tutchone's neighbours, newly armed with European weapons, could have indirectly altered certain aspects of the Tutchone's ecological environment (migratory species of game animals), the type of activities in which they engaged and, in turn, some of their institutions. Lastly, it was accepted that the Tutchone's acquisition of European tools and implements could have resulted in similar phenomena. We temporarily put off till later the task of checking necessitated by the relevance of these assumptions. Next, we examined the second level on which the period documents are unsatisfactory: even when combined, the sum of the information is

too sketchy. We noted that it was necessary to compensate for deficiencies by resorting to other sources. As those additional sources could only be accounts given after the relevant period, and since many of them were passed down orally by people born after 1890, we queried the extent to which this supplemental information could be relied upon. Based on past experience, we supposed that it can be regarded as valid, but only if the socio-cultural reality of the generations through which the memorized information was passed along had not radically changed from the generation from which the information originated. Consequently, we questioned the socio-cultural context in which the information collected after 1890 was passed along. In light of both the time period in which field data were collected and the methods used to collect them, we concluded that the social environment between 1890 and 1920 was the one on which to focus. We pondered what could have made it different from the previous one. Three factors of change were considered: 1) occurrences and events between 1840 and 1890 in terms of ecology, technology and demography which could have had a delayed impact after 1890; 2) occurrences and events between 1890 and 1920 for the same aspects as above; and 3) the socio-cultural pressures exerted by Euro-Canadians between 1890 and 1920. Only one of these was approached: the impact of direct socio-cultural pressures (from traders, missionaries, police force, etc.).

It is therefore still impossible to assert that from 1890 to 1920 cultural change amounted only to what Euro-Canadian socio-cultural pressures managed to achieve. By the same token, it is just as impossible to claim that the distinctive cultural traits of the Tutchone between 1890 and 1920, or later still (e.g., matrilineal descent, etc.) were nineteenth century institutions that had been preserved into the twentieth century.

In order to be in a position to make a final claim about the actual extent of cultural transformation, the other factors that might have caused Tutchone society to change either between 1840 and 1890 or between 1890 and 1920 must be evaluated one by one (impact of firearms, of the use of European tools, of animal population declines, etc.). These analyses, it will be recalled, will make it possible to: 1) verify whether Tutchone society changed between 1840 and 1890 in order to find out if it would be appropriate to collect all the documents produced in that period and consider them as coming from one single homogenous culture; and 2) determine whether between 1890 and 1920 Tutchone society changed beyond what Euro-Canadian socio-cultural pressures imposed. The purpose here would be to evaluate the credibility of the accounts about the nineteenth century, which were collected only after 1890.

# 4 FROM WOOD INDIANS TO TUTCHONE

In 1843, Campbell noted that some Tutchone men:

> [H]ad belts or bands of [H.B.C.] beads of at least 4 to 5 pounds [weight] and some yards long, and thrown loose around the necks and reaching the ground as trappings to decorate their persons for their festive dances, of which those at the forks [of the Lewes-Yukon and Pelly rivers] showed us a specimen (Campbell in Wilson, 1970: 77).

When Campbell made this observation, he was the very first European to ever set foot in Tutchone territory. H.B.C. beads had first become available to the Tutchone after 1839 through the Tlingit. Before that date Russian beads had been in circulation. In an excerpt of a report written during the summer of 1843, Campbell (in Wilson, 1970: 71-79) adds:

> Their dress is all leather, similar, I am told, to that worn by the Louchoux Indians, say trousers en boot [boots and trousers all in one piece] reaching to the band, the upper garment shirt-like but tipping to a point behind and in front and reaching down near the knees. The hair very large tied behind and reaching down near the girdle like a bushy tail and abominably mixed up and closed together with red earth.

Of the foreign-made items, Campbell noted that the Tutchone also had "dentalium shell beads," "buttons of abalone shell and walrus ivory," a few ceremonial blankets and tobacco and also that they all had their noses "pierced and generally ornamented with a ring." The Tutchone also had steel adzes, and Russian knives. Furthermore, four of the twenty-four men of the regional group encountered near the confluence of the Yukon and Pelly rivers had flintlock guns, "two of which were fine twist barrels." This trade between the Tutchone and Tlingit continued on until 1890 and, according to a man from Little Salmon, until about 1905.

These facts, in addition to those about the penetration of Europeans into the Yukon, immediately suggest the possible presence of a problem which could well impede our planned study of Tutchone culture. Can we be sure that the people observed by Campbell in 1843 or in 1848-1852, then by Schwatka in 1883, are in fact the ancestors of the Tutchone of the early twentieth century? It is well known that the fur trade in other parts of America, even the trade carried on by Indian middlemen, often resulted in major population movements. We also know that the introduction of European diseases via the inter-regional indigenous trade networks tragically caused a number of groups to disappear, and this completely changed the geographic distribution of indigenous groups. The contact history of the Cree,

Chippewa, Dogrib and Yellowknife (cf. Patterson, 1972: 102-105) offers a striking example. Would it not be logical therefore for similar events to have occurred among the indigenous people of the Upper Yukon? This is the problem raised in this chapter. It is an important question to resolve.

The information contained in the literature dating from 1840 to 1890 can be used only if no major socio-cultural upheaval occurred between those two dates. Moreover, we have seen in Chapter 3 that the data about the second half of the nineteenth century provided by the Tutchone from the 1890s to the 1970s would only be credible if the years 1890-1920 were not marked by overly profound social change. However, relocation or a demographic decline would be important factors of such cultural upheaval. A simple migration could mean that the indigenous people observed in 1843 or 1848 were of a different ethnic group from those observed a few decades later or that the latter were an amalgamation of the original ethnic group and members of other ethnic groups. Alternatively, a demographic decline might also have led to a regrouping of members of various ethnic groups (with the same consequences as those cited above) or made it impossible for the surviving members to maintain the workings of their original societal structure, inevitably resulting in change (Aberle *et al*, 1950: 103). Of course, such possibilities are not necessary outcomes of each and every demographic decline. Everything depends on the nature of the societal structure and way of life at the outset. Nevertheless, it is necessary to check whether such factors of change existed and, if so, whether they brought about profound social change.

There is good reason to bring up this issue. Campbell states that in 1848 there were *Gens des Bois* or Wood Indians, Knife Indians, Tuhin Tatinnat Indians, Lewes River Indians, and Ayonias visiting Fort Selkirk in what is today Tutchone country. In 1883, in that same Upper Yukon region, Schwatka identified Takh-Heesh, Netch-on'-dees and A-yans. But the geographic location of Schwatka's A-yans did not correspond to that of Campbell's Ayonias. In 1887, Dawson placed his Klo-a-tsul-tshik' (o-tin?), To-tshik-o-tin and Espā-to-ti-na Indians in the same territory as the indigenous people identified by Campbell and Schwatka. In the 1970s, Tutchone provided completely different names for their various regional groups. Were these name variations the result of migration or, on the contrary, were these multiple terms simply made up by Europeans who were not particularly familiar with these indigenous people and their language? This question must be resolved before approaching the matter of cultural continuity, but cannot be resolved before first presenting the raw data.

We will proceed by first examining the geographic distribution of the groups sighted around the year 1850 by Campbell and then between 1880 and 1890 by Schwatka, Dawson and the Anglican missionaries: people who visited what is today's Tutchone territory. The geographic distribution at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century described by the contemporary Tutchone will be presented immediately after the analysis of the archival documents. We will then take stock of the events that might have resulted in changes in the geographic distribution of the various ethnic groups in the region or in merging various formerly independent groups of people: war between different ethnic groups and territorial intrusions; epidemics and decimation.

From an examination of all this material we will determine whether or not significant population movement occurred between 1840 and 1920, whether or not the people encountered at various dates between 1840 and 1890 were members of a single cultural group and

the parents and grandparents of the early twentieth century Tutchone. This is an important point as it will enable us to ascertain (1) whether the archival data and post-1890 data pertain to one single group of people, and (2) whether or not the possibility of change that might have resulted in an amalgamation of groups materialized.

However, we have to point out that the outcome of this preliminary analysis will necessarily be limited. Even if it were shown that decimation through epidemics did not result in amalgamation of various groups, we would not be able at that point to rule out that the epidemics wrought social change via other factors than amalgamation—e.g. either (1) by making the original societal structure unworkable for lack of a sufficiently numerous population, or (2) by rendering some of its collective ways of producing demographically unviable. In order to make an assertion one way or the other, we will have to wait until the economic and demographic contexts in which the epidemics occurred have been fully presented, i.e., until the end of Chapter 9. In the present chapter our conclusion will therefore be relative to the amalgamation and migration hypothesis exclusively.

## 4.1 Distribution of Groups around Fort Selkirk (1848-1852)

The ethnic groups present in the Upper Yukon around 1850 can be determined from the journal kept by Campbell and Stewart at Fort Selkirk.[119] This journal offers no real synthesis, however. It is in no way comparable to the journal kept by Murray ([1847-1848], 1910), which was written during the same period at Fort Yukon. Campbell and his assistant were content to take note on the day-to-day minutiae of life at the fur trading post—e.g., which native individual or group of natives came to the fort on such and such a date; debts of the *coureurs de bois*, diseases or famines, to the extent that they affected the Indians' trapping activities, and the occasional brief remarks of ethnographic interest. The value of the journal lies in the fact that it contains the first data ever collected among the Tutchone.

For lack of a better document, the task of interpreting what it offers, even if only an approximation, is unavoidable. Let us point out, however, that only a summary may be provided here. This summary is formulated after having read the journal nine times from cover to cover and having developed a direct in-depth understanding of the geography of the places described by Campbell.

Campbell and Stewart identified six main groups: 1) the Ayans; 2) the Lewes River Indians; 3) the Tuhin Tatinnat or Wood Indians; 4) the Stewart River Indians; 5) the Knife Indians; and 6) a "Tribe from Far Inland" (see Map 3). The Lewes River Indians were explicitly affiliated with the Wood Indians. The Stewart River Indians seemed also to be a sub-group of the Wood Indians. This classification and the group names do not appear anywhere in the form of a list—still less in that of a list specifying the regions occupied by each group. However, they are terms that keep coming up regularly from Stewart's or Campbell's pen, starting in May or June, when the Indians came to Fort Selkirk either to trade with the

[119] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal, 1848-1852*, Original manuscript, Public Archives of Canada (MG 19 D13).

Tlingit, or to purchase goods from the two H.B.C. officers who managed the store. The difficulty of analyzing the journal may be illustrated with one example. On August 26, 1849, Campbell was at Fort Selkirk and wrote:[120]

> 27 Chilcats who arrived at Belle aw [*sic*] last night were crossed this morning. With the leader here [they] make 28. They were fortunately unsuccessful on their trip below. They met but few Indians and but few of them have got a skin of any kind. Consequently, they are not in the best cheer. However they have been very peaceable. About noon 14 of them took their departure light for the coast which they say they will reach in 15 days. Soon after the departure of the above 2 Ayannas arrived en canoe from Thlinkets' Camp [*sic*] and those that had remained made rafts in double quick time and proceeded downward with their merchandize [*sic*]. The chief and another Chilcat are still here.

This excerpt is representative of the entire journal. In and of itself, it is unintelligible. Campbell mentions a group of Indians—the Ayannas—who live "below." We do not know whether this refers to a regular place of residence or how far away "below" is. To be interpreted, this particular passage must be compared against all data provided in the journal as well as other archival documents about the fort. Moreover, all information must be constantly compared with other information.

After reading the journal a number of times, it becomes clear that "below" is always used to designate the region of the Yukon down the river from Fort Selkirk. However, the same study reveals that "some Indians came down the river" is constantly used to mean "down the Pelly" (the Pelly River). What is today known as the Yukon River and upriver from Fort Selkirk was then referred to as "Lewes River," and downriver from Selkirk as the Pelly. Some terms from that period have been kept in modern-day place names: the Macmillan River (a tributary of the Pelly), Tatlmain Lake (connected to the Pelly via Mica Creek) and the Stewart River, a tributary of the Yukon downriver from Fort Selkirk and parallel to the Pelly.

Arrowsmith's map of British North America, published in 1854, and drawn for the Upper Yukon area solely on the basis of data provided by Campbell (cf. Wilson, 1970: map 8 between p. 118 and p. 119) shows a few names not contained in the journal. The *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal* can then be read using Campbell's knowledge of the area so as to prevent anachronistic interpretations of the text. The 1854 map shows Kelzas Lake in the Macmillan Basin; Gauches Lakes (known today as Ethel Lake and Frances Lake), Reid Lakes (sic) and Beaver River (known today as the McQuesten River), all of which drain into the Stewart River; and finally the White River, a western tributary of the Yukon River. The Donjek River, Kluane Lake (tributary and source of the White River) and the Nisling River are sketched but not named. The same is true for the Nordenskiold River and Hutshi Lake, as well as Tatchun and Frenchman lakes which, according to the Tutchone in the 1970s had always been inhabited. In the case of the last two bodies of water, the interpretation is based on the fact that the map shows two lakes linked to one another. Their placement suggests that these must be Frenchman and Tatchun lakes which are linked and empty into the Yukon River 20 km and 30 km downstream from the Nordenskiold River. The map also shows the small Tatchun River flowing out of both these lakes to the Yukon (then named the Lewes).

[120] *Ibid*., August 26, 1849.

Read with Campbell's habits in mind and taking care to interpret the data in relation to the names he would have used, the journal starts to make more sense.

Thus, we can resolve the enigma described in the preceding paragraph. First, it must be specified that the Ayannas are interchangeably referred to as Aunas,[121] Aunai's,[122] Ayonias,[123] Ayanes, Ayanies, Ayauns, Ayonies, Ayans, etc. For simplicity, the name Ayan was chosen for this text. From Campbell's journal, we know that they lived somewhere along the Yukon River downstream from Fort Selkirk. To pinpoint the precise location, we must follow the movement of the Tlingit (Chilcat) who traveled down the river by raft on August 26 to meet with the Ayans. On August 29, Campbell wrote that eight of them returned "with their loads of leather and furs."[124] On August 30, he noted that the Chilcat's packages weighed 90-100 pounds; some even more. If it took only three days round trip for the Chilcat to meet with the Ayans, we can presume that their meeting point was located 40 km or 50 km downstream from Fort Selkirk. The short time it would take for them to go down the river on a raft, trade and return with loads weighing some 100 pounds would indicate a short travel distance.

The context however suggests that the Tlingit did not rendezvous where the Ayans lived. As reported in Campbell's journal, the Tlingit returned empty-handed on August 26 from a trip on which they had set out on August 24. The possibility that they might not have met with the Ayans at the rendezvous and that two forerunners might have come to warn them that the main part of the group would be finally arriving indicates that the Ayans lived well beyond the rendezvous point. Campbell confirmed this interpretation when he complained that their interception by the Chilcat prevented him from seeing the Ayans and that he would have no way to communicate with Murray at Fort Yukon[125] that year. We know furthermore that the Ayans visited Campbell every year. We also know that the Ayans always came by canoe, in contrast to the other Indian people from the Upper Yukon Basin. For example, on August 6, 1848, a single "party arrived in twenty-two canoes."[126] We can therefore conclude with certainty that the Ayans lived quite a distance downstream from Fort Selkirk. This type of analysis applied to each "event" helps to form a fairly clear picture of the region inhabited by the Ayans. By analyzing each case related to a member or a party from one of the six groups mentioned as regular visitors to Fort Selkirk, we obtain an ethnographic map that is probably a fairly accurate view of the actual geographic distribution in 1850.

However, the stages of this task cannot be detailed point by point for lack of space. The above example was provided simply to give an idea of how Map 3 was established (Distribution of Athapaskan ethnic groups around Fort Selkirk (1850)." The region inhabited by each of the six groups was circumscribed in accordance with the above procedure.

[121] *Ibid,* June 29, 1848.
[122] *Ibid.,* May 30, 1848.
[123] *Ibid.*, October 4, 1848.
[124] *Ibid*., August 29, 1849.
[125] *Ibid*., August 31, 1849.
[126] *Ibid*., August 6, 1848.

### 4.1.1 Ayans

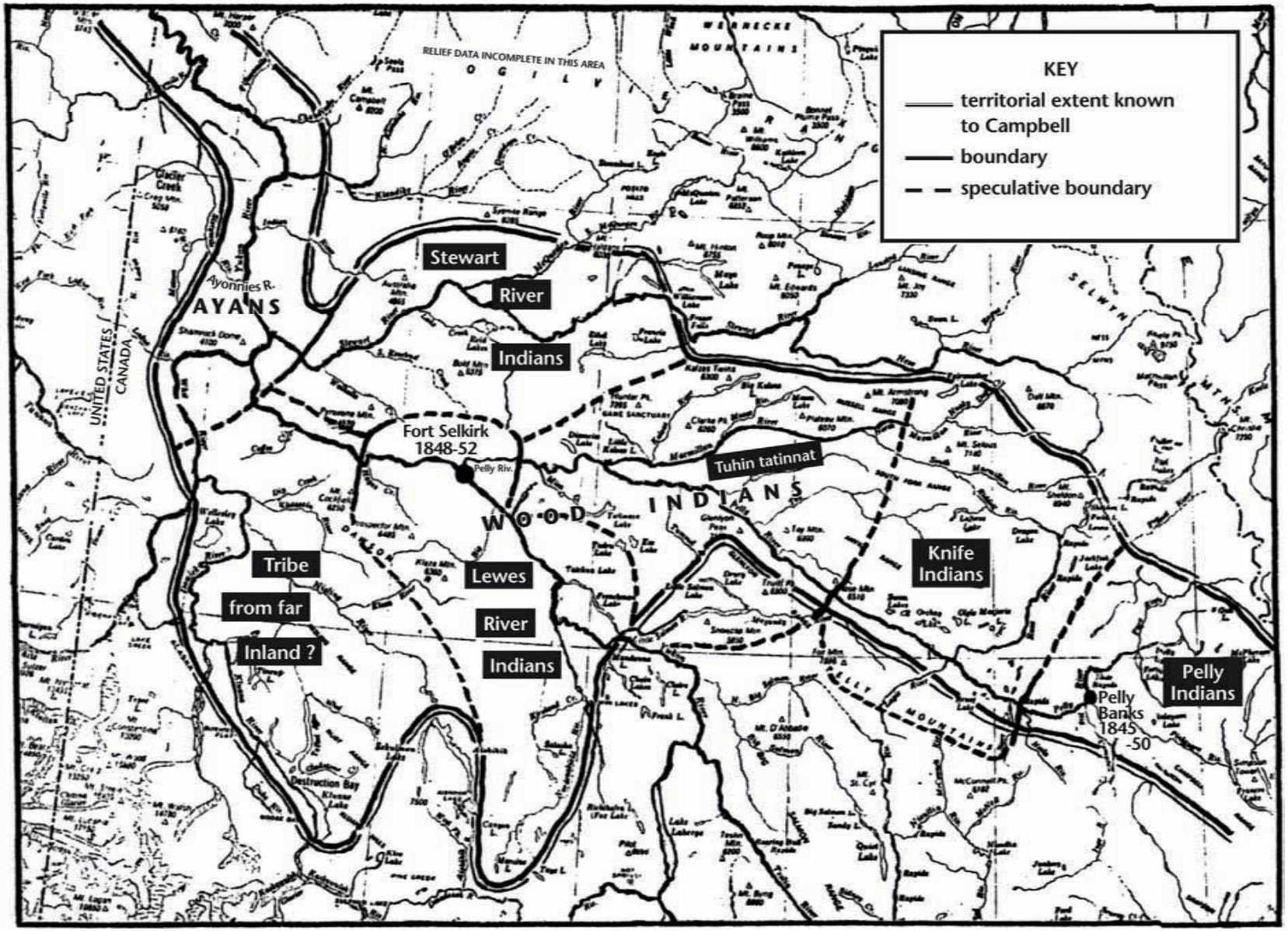
The conclusion that the Ayans lived along the shores of the Yukon River more than 40 or 50 km from Fort Selkirk was derived from the above overview. The content of the journal and other documents left by Campbell help delineate the southern portion of the Ayans' territory, which undoubtedly stretched as far as the mouth of the Stewart River and the lower course of the White River. On the British North America map of 1854, the Sixtymile River, which appears as the Ayonnies River, was certainly the Ayans' main salmon fishing site.

In 1848, the Ayans seen at Fort Selkirk already had contact with Fort Yukon, established by Murray in 1847. On June 29, 1848, for example, Campbell wrote: "[…] four Aunas arrived […]. They report that there are European people building on this river about 10 days march from here" (670 km). On July 8, he reiterated: "Three Aunas arrived from below. They report Ft. McMurray (Fort Yukon) and know the price of nearly everything." This also suggests that contact between the Ayans and Gwich'in already existed before the arrival of European people.

A clarification must be made for anyone reading the journal. During the first month of his stay at Selkirk, Campbell used the terms "Ayonnais" or "Aunas" to refer to the natives that fished salmon on the Pelly River between the mouth of the river and that of its tributary, the Macmillan, as well as for the local people who did the same some 10 miles downstream from Fort Selkirk. Aunas was the name used by the Wood Indians or Tuhin Tatinnat encountered on the Pelly between Rose Mountain and the Tay River. Aunas and Ayan seem to be names used to designate a group located farther down the river. But at Fort Selkirk, the terms Aunas, Ayans or other permutations were also undoubtedly used by the Tutchone around Fort Selkirk, not for themselves, but in reference to the group downstream from them. At Selkirk, Campbell started by differentiating between the Fort Selkirk Aunas and the Lower Aunas or Ayans—the people in question here. Logically, after a few months, Campbell ceased to use the name Aunas to mean the natives around Fort Selkirk and the Lower Pelly River, and included them instead with the Wood Indians whom he occasionally called Lewes River Indians. The Lower Aunas gradually came to be known as Ayauns, Ayonnies, Ayans, etc. This clarification is necessary as anyone reading the journal could get the impression that the Ayans occupied the lands along the Pelly River right up to the Macmillan, which is precisely what I thought the first few times I read the journal. In fact, the southern limits of their territory were almost certainly those indicated above: e.g. the lower portion of the White River and the mouth of the Stewart River.

### 4.1.2 Lewes River Indians

This group was comprised of a number of regional groups, including: (1) those of Hutshi Lake, Tatchun Lake and Frenchman Lake south of Fort Selkirk; and (2) those along the Lower Pelly and a section along the Yukon, about 20 to 30 km downstream from Fort Selkirk. As Campbell did not often see the Hutshi Lake Indians, it can be supposed that they procured their provisions mainly from the Tlingit. Campbell nevertheless seems to have




Map 3. Distribution of Athapaskan ethnic groups around Fort Selkirk (1850)

included the Hutshi region in his category of Lewes River (cf. Wilson, 1979: Map 8) and mentioned many chiefs[127] among the Lewes River Indians which would imply that there were many different regional groups.

Of all the natives, one group of Lewes River Indians went most frequently to Fort Selkirk. This regional group fished salmon each year a few miles downstream from Fort Selkirk. Other smaller groups fished on the Pelly between the mouth of the Macmillan and the Yukon. Each year in autumn, they apparently retreated to an area in the Yukon Basin south of Fort Selkirk.

These Lewes Indian groups are the ones that Campbell called Auna's in the early pages of his journal, a name he borrowed from the Wood Indians living along the middle section of the Pelly. There must not have been very great difference between the Lewes River Indians and the Wood Indians in terms of cultural traits since Campbell, in his memoirs, included the Lewes Indians in the category of Wood Indians (Campbell in Wilson, 1970: 71). Judging by the multiple connections between the Wood Indians and Lewes River Indians revealed in the journal, it only seems logical to group them together.

In his memoirs, Campbell seems to imply that the Lewes Indians had no contact with the Ayans before the arrival of the Europeans. He wrote the following about the people he encountered in 1843 near Fort Selkirk:

> When we gave them to understand as best we could that we proposed going on down the river, they all raised their voices against it. They said that inhabiting the banks of the lower river were many tribes of bad Indians, who would not only kill us but eat us (Campbell in Wilson, 1970: 70).

This entry, written some 40 years after the events was grossly exaggerated. In a letter written one month after that expedition, he reported the following to his superiors:

> Unfortunately, none of my party understood their language except with a few among them who spoke and understood a few words of the dialect in use towards that quarter. They however did everything they could by words and signs to dissuade us from going farther down, representing the tribes beyond them to be very numerous and a more ferocious people with whom there was no parlay, but slaughter at sight, so much so that they themselves hold no intercourse with them (*ibid.*: 71).

Both excerpts clearly reflect tensions between the Ayans and Wood Indians at the site where Fort Selkirk would later be erected. But such tensions would not necessarily rule out the possibility that they had some contacts. It is difficult to believe that the Selkirk people did not trade with the Ayans some of the goods they procured from the Tlingit. Recourse to violence between different groups does not imply a total absence of contact. Although each group may be wary of the other, they do actually meet. For example, between 1848 and 1851, the journal clearly reveals that the Wood and Ayans traded with one another. Then, in 1851 the same journal tells us that many Wood Indians were killed by the Ayans.[128] Yet, reading the journal further, we discover that relations between the Ayans and other Wood Indians established prior to 1851 survived despite the incident. Campbell must have cer-

[127] *Ibid*., October 15, 1849.
[128] *Ibid*., April 24, 1851.

tainly misunderstood his informants when he concluded in 1843 that "they themselves hold no intercourse with them."

While the Ayans and Wood might have had minimal contact with one another in the remote past, trade relations had probably already been established by the proto-contact period.

### 4.1.3 Tuhin Tatinnat

In addition to the Lewes River Indians, the Wood Indians included a number of regional groups distributed over a territory encompassing Lake Tatlmain, the Lower Macmillan and the middle section of the Pelly between Rose Mountain and the mouth of the Macmillan. Although this was not mentioned specifically, some indications in Campbell's journal suggest that this second group of Wood Indians also occupied Drury Lake and Little Salmon Lake. Campbell gave many versions of this name: Tichnitah Tinna,[129] Tuhinitatatenna,[130] Tuhin Tatinnat,[131] etc. The suffix (tinna, tenna, etc.) indicates that the expression is derived from the dialects of the Mackenzie where *tinne* means "people" and, consequently, that the designation perhaps was coined by Campbell's métis *coureurs de bois*. The journal reveals the existence of two important centres for these Wood Indians: the Lower Macmillan and Tatlmain Lake of which Campbell says, "There are a great number of Indians at that lake."[132] On this point, the journal confirms the information provided by Tutchone in the 1970s.

Like the people of the Lewes River, those of the Stewart River must have regularly visited the Tuhin Tatinnat. It was probably not uncommon for one or more families of one group to travel to the lands of other groups, and this even for extended periods. The Tuhin Tatinnat seem to have had similar relations with the Knife Indians to the east (Ross River). In fact, there is mention of a family of Knife Indians living with a family of Wood Indians at Tatlmain Lake.[133] Overall, however, it seems that their relations with this group may have been more strained than their relations with their neighbours to the west.

### 4.1.4 Stewart River Indians

The only direct information furnished by the journal concerns the first thorough exploration of the Stewart River:

> Marcette and Peter went off this morning. They are to pass at the fisheries, hence to proceed to the bank of the Stewart River and make a canoe in which they are to explore it to its junction with the Pelly [Yukon] and ascend the river to the Fort [Selkirk].[134]

The report about this expedition can be summarized in two sentences written ten days later:

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[129] *Ibid*., May 28, 1848.
[130] *Ibid*., July 2, 1848.
[131] *Ibid*., August 17, 1848.
[132] *Ibid*., October 31, 1848.
[133] *Ibid*., January 3, 1851.
[134] *Ibid*., June 22, 1850.

> Marcette and Peter arrived en canoe up the Pelly [Yukon] having made their circuit, descended Mr. Stewart River and up this one. Rivers are rich in moose and deers along their Banks and there are plenty of Indians also.[135]

H.B.C. trade with the inhabitants of the Stewart was carried out with *coureurs de bois* acting as middlemen (Reid; Gauchés, etc.). They would set out from Little Kalzas Lake (on the Macmillan) for Francis Lake, Ethel Lake and Reid's Lakes, all in close proximity to the Stewart. It seems that the Wood Indians of the Lower Macmillan did the same.

The people of the Lower Stewart are said to have been Ayans. No distinction is made between those of the middle section of the Stewart River and the Wood Indians of the Macmillan or the Tuhin Tatinnat. Therefore, these inhabitants of the Stewart may very well have been Wood Indians. This finding would resolve part of a long standing problem. Until now, the existence of the Stewart and Macmillan groups could only be presumed, thus explaining the dearth of information provided by Tanner (1965: 13) about the subject:

> It should be noted that this survey of information on early Tutchone contains a gap with respect to the inhabitants of the Stewart and Macmillan rivers […].

The question is now resolved and the Stewart River group was undoubtedly the same group of Tutchone whom Slobodin (1962: 16) stated were at war with the Peel River nation(s) in the nineteenth century. Numerous passes in the Wernecke Mountains lead to the sources of the Peel River and they were still used in the 1950s by the Tutchone of Mayo on the Stewart River.

### 4.1.5 Knife Indians

Discussion of this group is intended simply to indicate that in 1846 the Pelly Banks Journal[136] made a distinction between the Mountain Indians—some 20 men led by a "little chief" who traded at Pelly Banks—and the Pelly Banks Indians proper. The journals kept at Fort Selkirk and Pelly Banks show, moreover, that the Knife Indians occupied the Ross River region. They could therefore be ancestors of the group of Kasini (Northern Tutchone and Kaska), a first nation studied by McDonnell (1975: 379-386).

Unfortunately, there is no way of identifying where their dialect fits in the Ross River-Pelly Banks-Frances Lake chain. It is also not possible to assert that the linguistic rupture that currently separates the Ross River Kaska (cf. Denniston, 1966) from the Tutchone spoken at Pelly Crossing and by the descendants of the inhabitants of Little Salmon Lake parallels an earlier separation between the Knife Indians and the Tuhin Tatinnat identified by Campbell. All we know for certain is that the Knife Indians visited Pelly Banks as often as they did Fort Selkirk, and that they sometimes stayed with the Indian people who lived in the areas surrounding each of the two Hudson Bay trading posts.

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[135] *Ibid*., July 2, 1850. The caribou were those of the Han herd (cf. Chap. 5).

[136] *Pelly Banks Journal of Occurrences*, June 7, November 10, 13, 1846. Original manuscript, Public Archives of Canada (MG 19 A25 A28).

### 4.1.6 Tribe from Far Inland

Only one comment exists for this group:

> A chief with two young men arrived. He comes from a tribe of Indians who live far Inland. He brought a few skins, but did not trade with them as he found the tariff too low being accustomed to get paid at prices far beyond our abilities.[137]

On Map 3, the Donjek and Nisling rivers are shown as the region where this group resides. Otherwise, there is no other way to explain how Campbell obtained such rather precise information concerning the path of these two rivers (cf. Arrowsmith map, 1954). None of the *coureurs de bois* were sent there. Just as Murray did at Fort Yukon, Campbell undoubtedly must have asked any new Indian acquaintance to draw a map in the sand of the water ways of the region from which he came.

Only one group of "foreigners" could have provided this information, but Campbell says of them: "from beyond the Lewes 12 Indians arrived."[138] Transposed to the Arrowsmith map, this information points in the direction of the Dezadeash River in the southern Yukon Territory.

Fortunately, the information contained in Campbell's journal about the five other groups does not require such acts of contortion. Map 3 was drawn based on the 1854 Arrowsmith map and on the basis of the possible interpretations regarding the geographic distribution of these five groups. The solid double line around the Yukon Basin represents the precise extent of territory Campbell would have known directly or indirectly. Except for the portion of the Yukon River upstream from Fort Selkirk and the White and Donjek rivers, Campbell's markings are unusually precise for maps of that era. It is interesting to note that Frances Lake, Tatchun Lake, Hutshi Lake and the Nisling River appear on the 1854 map despite their limited geographic importance. Today's Tutchone, however, assert that they are the sites of old settlements. We can therefore conjecture that the 1854 map was drawn from information provided to Campbell either by the *coureurs de bois* who visited the various Tutchone and other Athapaskan groups in their respective trading regions, or directly by the indigenous peoples themselves. On the map, inside the boundaries of Campbell Upper Yukon, the solid lines separating the groups represent zones where the borders between two groups are somewhat certain. The dotted lines were drawn using logical deduction, and might need to be corrected if and when new information becomes available. For example, Campbell's journal indicates that the Wood Indians of Tatlmain Lake traded along the Yukon River, upstream from Fort Selkirk. Considering the region's topography (mountains, valleys, etc.), the most logical route to the Yukon was through the territory inhabited by the Tuhin Tatinnat as shown on the map. This is not however confirmed by Campbell's writings.

Despite the limited scope of this research, we can nevertheless state with certainty that the following regions were inhabited when the first Europeans travelled to the territory: 1) Sixtymile River, the lower course of the White River and the mouth of the Stewart River by the Ayans; 2) the middle section of the Stewart River probably by a sub-group of the Wood

[137] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, 1848-1852. June 2, 1849. *Ibid.*
[138] *Ibid*., May 21, 1850.

Indians (of which Marcette and Peter said that they were numerous; see above); 3) the middle and lower sections of the Macmillan River, the middle section of the Pelly and Lake Tatlmain by a group of Wood Indians known as Tuhin Tatinnat; 4) Frenchman and Tatchun lakes, the Nordenskiold River and Hutshi Lake, and the section of the Yukon River between the mouth of the Nordenskiold and Hayes rivers, as well as the Lower Pelly by a group of Wood Indians called the Lewes River Indians. It must also be mentioned that the Lewes River Indians permitted the Donjek River Indians to cross their lands to get to Fort Selkirk. Details will be provided below regarding the ease or difficulty of travel through each of the regions. The boundaries indicated on the map must in no way be interpreted as borders that separated the groups culturally, linguistically or politically.

## 4.2 Distribution of Ethnic Groups in 1880-1890

As Ketchum and Laberge apparently left no written account of their expedition to Fort Selkirk in 1867, we have no choice but to skip from 1852, the year that Fort Selkirk was abandoned, directly to 1883, the year of Schwatka's expedition and the year when the first gold-seekers arrived in the Upper Yukon. We stop at 1890 when a store was once again in operation at Fort Selkirk. For that period, only the documents pertaining to Schwatka's expedition in 1883 (cf. 1885a, 1885b, 1893), Dawson's documents dating from 1887 (cf. 1888), and those written by the Anglican missionaries in 1887 and 1888 contain any data about indigenous peoples.

If we transfer Schwatka's observations onto a map, the geographic distribution of the groups in the Upper Yukon (Map 4) differs somewhat from the map we were able to draw with the help of Campbell's journal. Schwatka (1885a: 78, 80) used the name Takh-Heesh to refer to the people living between the village settled by the Tlingit at Chilcoot Inlet on the Pacific Coast and the trading place of Kitl-ah'-gon[139] at the mouth of the little river located at the outskirts of the lands occupied by Campbell's Tuhin-Tatinnat (see Maps 3 and 4).

The group of Campbell's Lewes River Indians living around Fort Selkirk—the Tuhin Tatinnat, the Knife and the people of the Upper Pelly—are all called A-yans or I-yans. Of them, Schwatka (1893: 327-228) wrote:

> These Indians call themselves the A-yans—with an occasional leaning of the pronunciation towards I-yan; and this village [Kah-tung, a few miles below Fort Selkirk], so they said, contained the majority of the tribe, although from their understanding of the question they may have meant that it was the largest village of the tribe. Their country, as they claim it, extends

[139] In the case of Kit[l]-ah-gon and also of Kah-tung, Schwatka spoke of a Tahk-heesh *village* and an Ayan *village*. But in the ethnographic context of the Yukon, the notion of village is misleading as these locales were inhabited only for brief periods and not year round. The various Indians who gathered there did so for trading purposes. They built temporary shelters made of branches and lived in them for no longer than one or two weeks. For lack of a better term, we could have used *oppidum*, the term for a market place where people gather periodically, but where they do not live. The term comes from Julius Caesar's *Tres Galliae* in which he so designates the meeting places of the Gallic people, places which were not normally inhabited. (cf. Lot, 1968: 126-127). However, as some *oppida* were fortified and as the Tutchone places never were, this term is not perfectly suitable either.

> up the Pelly—the Indian name of which is *Ayan*—to the lakes up the Yukon from this point to the village of *Kitl-ah-gon*, and down the stream to near the mouth of the White and Stewart rivers, where they are succeeded by a tribe called the *Netch-on'-dees* or *Na-chon'des*—the Indian name of the Stewart River being Na-chon'-de. They […] define their country only as it extends along the principal streams. From the river as a home or base, however, they make frequent hunting excursions to the interior in the winter time for moose […].

In the region of Campbell's Ayans, Schwatka identified a group of Tahk-ong (1893: 242) or Takon (1885a: 84-86). This group was made up of three regional groups: 1) the Takon proper whose trading place was called Noo-klak-ō (near the present site of Dawson City) and whose territory extended upstream towards the mouth of the White River; 2) the Klak-ol-Klin (near Eagle, Alaska); and 3) the Tadoosh, or Charley's Indians, (near Circle City, Alaska). Schwatka grouped all three regional groups as one ethnic unit. He wrote (1885a: 89) that the Tadoosh "undoubtedly belong to the same tribe as those living at Belle Isle [Klat-ol-Lin] and Reliance [Noo-klak-ō]. For his part, Osgood (1971: 26-28) reports these three regional groups formed the group we now know as the Han people.

Schwatka was fairly vague about the group or groups of the White River Basin. He simply mentioned the existence of Indians "from the White River" (1885a: 93) and a group living "towards the headwaters of the Tananah River" (1885a: 84). However, as the White River had not yet been explored, a section of the White River Basin and of the Tanana headwaters could have very easily been occupied by one single group. In fact, the sources of both these tributaries of the Yukon are only a few dozen kilometres from one another (see Map 4). Where Schwatka mentions the existence of a second group, he also makes an interesting remark about the socio-political relations between the groups of the White and Tanana rivers and the Tahk-ong or Han people. He wrote that "in the event of difficulties arising with the [Tahk-ong], the only allies liable to unite with them is a band of this same tribe […] who number about sixty and live over towards the headwaters of the Tanana River." He added: "Allies against them would be very difficult to secure in this section of country" (1885a: 85). This information, which came directly from McQuesten himself (the European man who in 1874 established Fort Reliance adjacent to Noo-klak-ō) can be considered reliable. Schwatka specifies moreover (1893: 240) that a trail connected the Tanana to Noo-klak-ō and that an offshoot of that same trail had at one time led to Fort Selkirk. The trail crossed the White River some 75 km upstream from its junction with the Yukon. Towards 1850, he said, the Indians near the headwaters of the Tanana were using it frequently to go trade with Campbell while those of the White River used it to travel towards the Tanana (1885a: 93). We will see below that other facts tend to confirm the existence of this socio-territorial osmosis between the Han, the people around Fort Selkirk, and the natives of the White River.

Among the data pertaining to the period 1880-1890 is a distinction, penned by Dawson, but first brought out by Schwatka, between Selkirk and Netch-on'dees—i.e., the distinction between the Indians around Selkirk and the Pelly on the one hand and the natives of the Stewart River. However, in contrast to other authors, Dawson (1888: 202B-205B) made the Ai-yans out to be a large group of seven sub-groups: the Kutcha Kutchin [Gwich'in]

(O-til'-tin); two Han groups (Tsit-o-Klin-otin and Ka-tshik-o-tin); [140] the inhabitants of the middle and upper sections of the Tanana (Sa-tshi-o-tin' and San-to-tin' respectively) and lastly, two groups residing in current-day Tutchone territory (the Klo-a-tsul-tshik' (o-tin?) and the To-tshik-o-tin). Dawson excluded from his Ai-yan the native groups of the Middle and Upper Pelly which, together with those of the Macmillan and the middle section of the Stewart, he referred to as the Knife Indians or Es-pā-to-ti-na. He acknowledged that the term Es-pā-to-ti-na is of Kaska origin, but the indigenous people he met at Fort Selkirk called this group Na-ai. He wrote (1888: 201B-202B) that the lands of the Es-pā-to-ti-na included the Upper Pelly and "also the basin of the Macmillan and that of the Stewart River as far down as the mouth of the Beaver," (McQuesten River: see Maps 4 and 5 for topographical details).

In the above excerpt, Dawson contradicts the data found in Campbell's journal. If we follow the Fort Selkirk diary, the people of the Macmillan and middle section of the Stewart were almost certainly Wood Indians. Campbell reserved the name Knife Indians for a rather small group living near the Ross River. Including the groups of the Macmillan and Stewart rivers with the Knife Indians is all the more astonishing considering that Campbell had already informed Dawson that the Knife Indian group was made up of only "very few families" living in the Upper Pelly region (Dawson, 1888: 202B, note).

In the opinion of the indigenous people "interviewed" at Fort Selkirk:

> [The Klo-a-tsul-tshik' (o-tin?) group of Ai-yans] ranges from Rink Rapid and its vicinity on the Lewes [Tatchun and Frenchman lakes] to the head of the east branch of the White River [Donjek River], where they go at during the salmon-fishing season. These people [specifies Dawson], also range down the river as far as the mouth of the Lewes [Fort Selkirk], or further. They are the *Gens des Bois* or Wood Indians of the fur-traders (1888: 202B).

Of the To-tshik-o-tin, Dawson wrote that they lived "about the mouth of the Stewart River, and […] extend up the Stewart as far as the Beaver River [McQuesten], meeting there the Es-pā-to-ti-na to whom they are or were hostile" (*ibid*).[141]

Insofar as concerns the Tagish (or Tahk-Keesh), Dawson diverges considerably from Schwatka. For Schwatka, the Tahk-Keesh territory extended almost up to Fort Selkirk whereas for Dawson (1888: 192B, 203B-204B), they occupied only "the greater part of the valley of the Lewes [Upper Yukon] above the mouth of the Teslin-Too [Teslin River]." By excluding the people of Tatchun Lake (Klo-a-tsul-tshik') from the group of Tagish and including them instead with the Wood Indians, Dawson nevertheless proposed a classification

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[140] Dawson (1888: 203B) also mentioned a group of Ai-yans, a regional group in this case, located between the Kutcha Gwich'in and the Han. But when he summarized his information, he raised doubts as to the existence of this group. For this reason, it has not been included either on any map or in the present discussion.

[141] Osgood (1971: 23) includes Dawson's To-tsik-o-tin with Dall's group of Tutchone (1877). It could be that To-tsik-o-tin is a variation on the spelling of Trooth-tsik-Kuitchin, in which case this group would be the Han group along the Klondike River. The Ayonias (or Han) occupied the mouth of the Stewart River in 1850 (cf. Hardisty, 1854, in *James Anderson Papers*, 6 Vols. Public Archives of Canada, MG 19 A29, File 3, pp. 143-149). But documents in the C.M.S. archives suggest that they had withdrawn from this region in 1887.

that more closely reflected Campbell's (as it unfolded in the journal dating from 1848-1852) than Schwatka's classification.

What is most surprising in Dawson's data, however, is the agreement between Dawson and Schwatka concerning the existence of a division between the Wood Indians (Schwatka's A-yans and Dawson's Klo-a-tsul-tshik') and the people of the Lower Stewart (Netch-on'-dees for Schwatka and To-tshick-o-tin for Dawson). This fact is particularly interesting in that Dawson also suggests the existence of a strong antagonism between his To-tshick-o-tin and the people of the Middle Stewart, which he seems to link to the people of the Macmillan and Pelly. Although Dawson distinguishes between the Wood Indians of Fort Selkirk and Tatchun Lake from the people of the Pelly and the Macmillan, we know from Campbell and Schwatka that there was a certain unity between both groups. Now, since the Reverend Robert McDonald indicated[142] that in 1887 the local people around Fort Selkirk went fishing on the Stewart, should we accept as fact that a branch of a group of Wood Indians had friendly ties with a third party—the To-tshik-o-tin—and that another branch of the Wood Indians (Middle Stewart) was in conflict with that same group of To-tshik-o-tin? The most plausible interpretation, however, is that Dawson had situated the To-tshik-o-tin on the wrong river.

The relocation of the people of Fort Selkirk, alleged by McDonald, was indirectly confirmed in Dawson's writings. Dawson, who was in the Yukon the same year as McDonald, met only a few native people travelling in the company of miners in and around Fort Selkirk. Nowhere does he mention Kah-tung, the trading place sighted by Schwatka a few miles downstream from Fort Selkirk and known to both Campbell and McDonald (see Map 4). The ethnohistory of the formation of the band at Mayo, told by a local Tutchone, also tends to reinforce the notion that part of the group at Fort Selkirk migrated to the lower part of the Stewart. More will be said below about the error that Dawson seems to have made.

At this point, let us complete this section about the decade 1880-1890 by reproducing the demographic data available in the writings of the time. Dawson (1888: 201B) admitted that he met virtually no aboriginal people and that he did not travel far enough down the river to meet fur traders from whom he surely would have learned something more precise about the indigenous people of the area. For Schwatka, we must rely on the abilities of his trilingual Tutchone-Tagish-Tlingit interpreter who communicated with him through a second interpreter who spoke Tlingit and some English.

Dawson (1888: 204B) asserted that the Tagish were a group of about 15 families—70 to 80 people in all. Schwatka gave similar figures. He even estimated (1885a: 82) that there were no more than 50 people in this group "[…] unless there are numerous families of this tribe, living elsewhere than along the headwaters of the Yukon River which is not very probable." Schwatka did not however explain why he felt that was improbable. He might actually have been wrong. At the end of June, the native people at the headwaters of the Yukon were usually busy building salmon fish-weirs on small waterways far from the main rivers.

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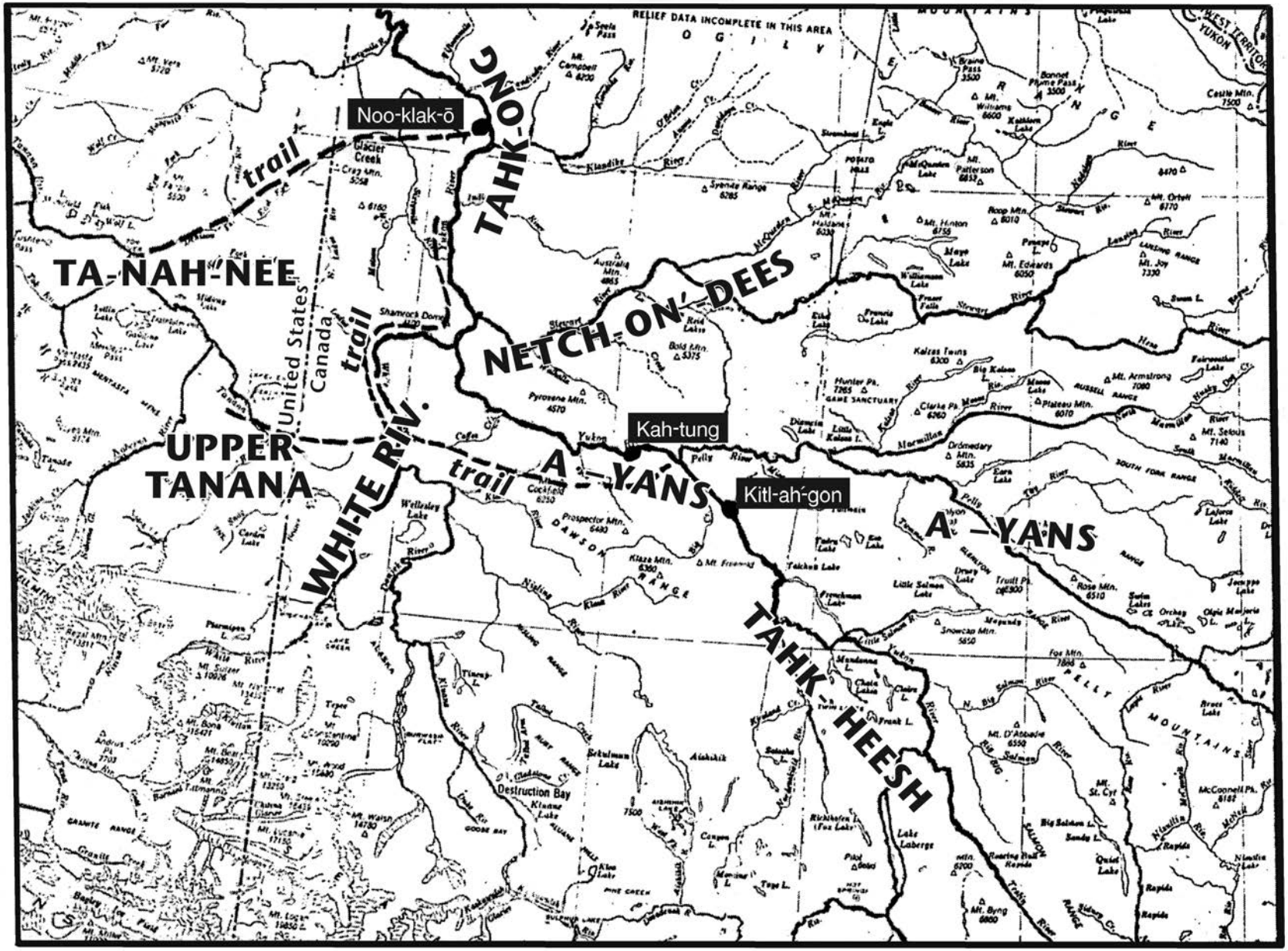
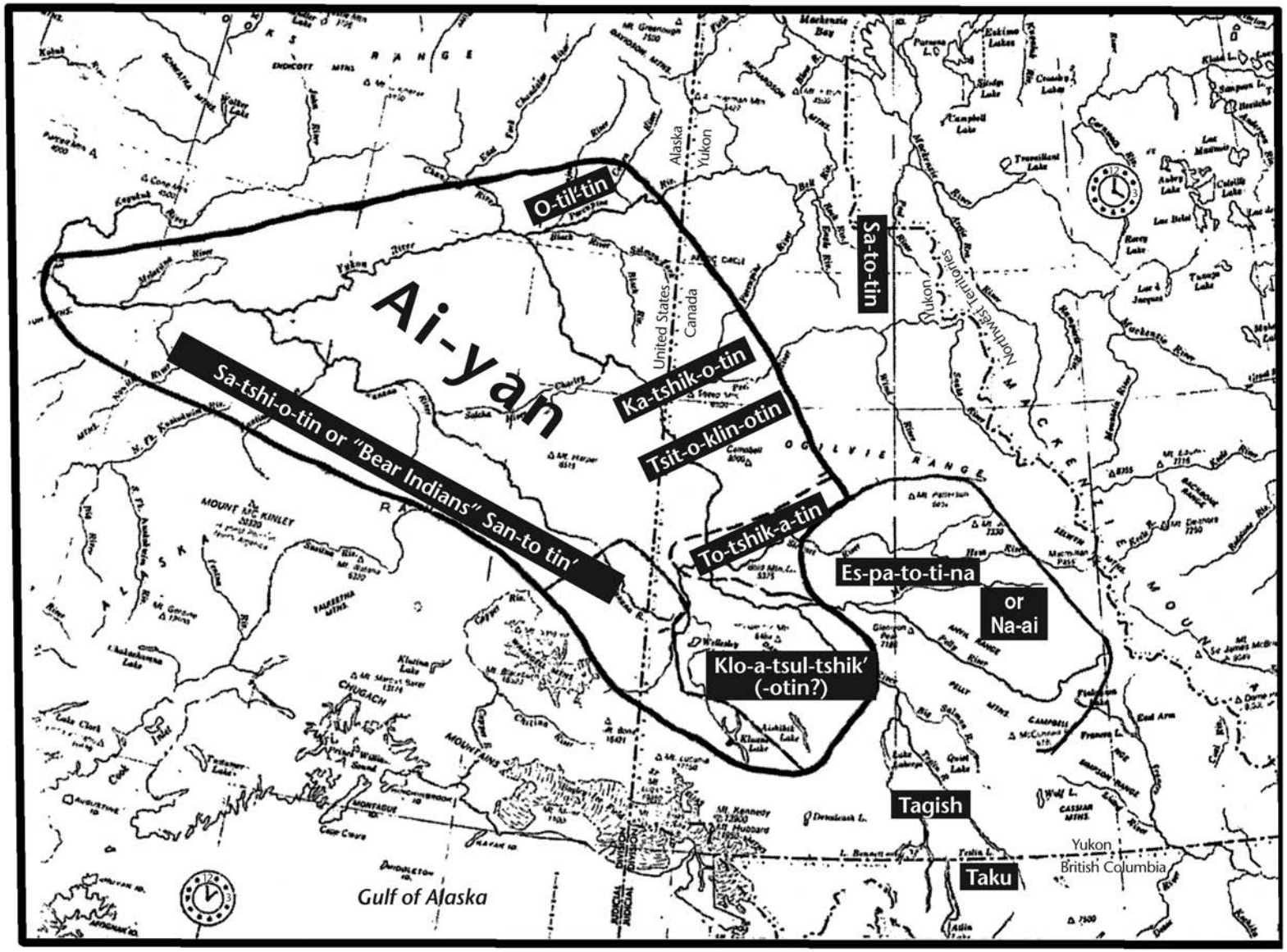
[142] Anonymous, "*The Venerable Robert McDonald*." Typed copy of a manuscript in the Anglican Old Log Church, Whitehorse, Y.T., no date, 6 pp.




Map 4. Geographic distribution in 1883 according to Schwatka.




Map 5. Geographic distribution in 1887 according to Dawson.

The group of between 175 and 200 Ayans—men, women and children—seen at Kah-tung poses another problem. Schwatka (1893: 227) did not know whether most Ai-yans lived there together or whether it was simply their most usual meeting place. He did not even consider the possibility that Kah-tung might have been a place where a number of different groups went to wait for Tlingit trading parties. Resolving this question is important since that was the site used as a trading place as much by a group of Lewes River Indians (Wood Indians) as it was by the Athapaskan of the Sixtymile River (Ayonnies River: see Map 3) who seem to be Schwatka's Tahk-ong.

With respect to the group of the White River or of the headwaters of the Tanana, Schwatka (1885a: 85) did not specify whether the 60 people he mentioned included adults and children or just adults). As for his Netch-on'-dees of the Stewart River, he admitted frankly (1893: 241) never having seen any and even wrote that he almost missed the mouth of the Stewart River. J. W. Ellington, the Anglican missionary who went to the Stewart circa 1888 wrote that the people of the Stewart, Pelly and White rivers formed a group of about 200 people.[143] This information however cannot be used to fill in the gaps of Schwatka's data as it is not known whether Ellington had counted all the groups of the Pelly or just the local groups that gathered at Kah-tung. Therefore, these questions about demography must be deferred for the time being. After presenting the data about the period 1890-1920 and those concerning the epidemics, we will see that the population figures were much higher in 1850 than the limited observations and estimates provided by Schwatka and Dawson would suggest.

## 4.3 Distribution of Ethnic Groups in 1890-1920

Assertions for this period are based essentially on data provided by the Tutchone during my initial field research in 1972-1974. Since these data represent the distribution of the groups, without taking into consideration dialectical and language divisions, a few introductory remarks might be useful.

First, in the 1970s the indigenous people who were called Tutchone in ethnological literature were then totally unaware of this name. Second, they were also unaware of the terms Han, Kaska, Mountain Indians, etc.—names that ethnographers had been using to classify the indigenous people of the Yukon Territory into different cultural and linguistic units (see Map 1). Consequently, I quickly discovered that there was no point in asking the members of each of the Southern and Northern Tutchone regional groups about the meaning of the names Tutchone, Han, etc. Even when pronounced in different ways, these terms remained foreign to their respective vocabularies.[144] In their culture, there is no categories equivalent

[143] W. Ellington, *Fort Reliance,* July 1888 (C.M.S. A115).

[144] In another study, I hope to be able to show that Tutchone is a term that Dall borrowed from a manuscript by Ross, written before the Yukon Territory had been explored. In old documents "Han" was applied to only one of the sub-groups of the group known today as Han, i.e. the people trading at the site of present day Eagle also called "*Gens des fous*" or "*Hung koocheen*" or "*Han kwitchin*" which mean "River Tribe." *Journal of the Reverend R. McDonald*, June 26, 1866 (C.M.S., Film A93); *Journal of K. M. McDonald*, Dec, 15, 1875 (C.M.S. A102).

to those which ethnologists use to distinguish for instance the Han linguistic group from the Tutchone linguistic group. When asked about the name of their group, the Tutchone replied that they call themselves *dan* (human beings). With a little more prodding, they classified the people around them into *huč'an* (people) of such and such a place. In the past, the term *huč'an*, accompanied by its geographic qualifier, designated a regional group that would meet at least once a year at a predetermined trading place. The 4 to 6 local groups of a regional group had no proper name. They were referred to as "bunch" descended from "so-and-so," generally a grandmother. A local group consisted of two to a maximum of around 10 to 12 nuclear families whose female members were matrilineally related and formed one moiety. To designate their own local group, a woman or man would use the word *'eh yaa' dlant'* which English-speaking Tutchone translate as "my friends." In keeping with Tutchone practice, the term "people of" is used to designate a grouping of several local groups which the Tutchone called *huč'an.* The expression "people of," a literal translation of the Tutchone term, thus always designates a regional group. Exceptionally, a regional group had only five or six nuclear families, but such a small regional group was probably a group that had been decimated by the many epidemics that ran rampant through Tutchone country between 1840 and 1910; epidemics which we will review in detail below. We will later consider the problems of applying the notions of regional group and local group to a nomadic people.

As each regional group that occupied a part of a valley or the vicinity of a lake had its own distinct way of speaking or sub-dialect (vocabulary, sounds of vowels and consonants, cadence of speech, type of elision, intonation,[145] etc.), a person's place of origin could always be identified through a particular way of speaking which was often particular only to some 40 individuals, or fewer; in fact, in some regions language would fragment into family dialects. Today, sharp linguistic differences can sometimes be noted between groups living side by side, as is the case for the people of the Stewart River (Tutchone) and those of the Klondike River (Han), or between the people of the Ross River (Kaska) and the local group of Drury Lake (Tutchone). In other cases, a series of regional dialects form a continuum. This seems to be the case for the groups classified under the name Tutchone (see Map 1). McClellan (1975b: I, 20-21) distinguishes between Northern Tutchone and Southern Tutchone, but admits that the regional dialects of the first group are "fairly close to, but not exactly like" those of the three contemporary Northern Tutchone groups directly adjacent to them (Carmacks, Little Salmon, Fort Selkirk). After having been a witness to some conversations between some Tutchone of Little Salmon and some from Aishihik, my impression is that these two ways of speaking are mutually intelligible as far as native speakers are concerned. For this reason, I would like to step away from McClellan's proposal and limit our distinction between Northern and Southern Tutchone strictly to geographical criteria. After reading McDonnell's work (1974), the Kasini language (Ross River), which is not intelligible to Tutchone speakers, can be reclassified with the group of Kaska dialects which makes up the Kaska language. In light of these corrections, it seems that separating the Han, Tut-

[145] Nancy McRoy, a linguist at the University of Alaska (Fairbanks), who had the opportunity to compare certain terms from Mayo, Carmacks and Kluane (Burwash Landing), found only a few cases of tonal inversions; the order of consonants and vowels remaining the same for the same word.

chone, Kaska and Nabesna/Upper Tanana into different language entities is proper and that the regional groups included in each of these units are relatively homogeneous from a linguistic standpoint.

Osgood grouped together Tutchone, Han, Tanana and Koyukuk, while pointing out that the Han-Tutchone grouping could be quite different from the Tanana-Koyukuk grouping (cf. Voegelin, 1941: 20, n. 40; quoted by McClellan, 1975b: I, 21). However, the division between the two groupings was blurred when Hoijer grouped together the Tutchone and Nabesna/Upper Tanana (1963: 27; quoted by McClellan, *ibid*.). For a few years now, a team led by M. Krauss has been working on a detailed study of the local dialects of the Upper Yukon. However, no new research has yielded data warranting reclassification. At a seminar held at the University of Wisconsin, W. Elmendorf and McClellan arrived at the conclusion that the dialects of the Upper Yukon diverge from those of the adjacent regions of Alaska along dialectical lines (cf. McClellan, 1975b: I, 21). For his part, M. Krauss (1964: 411-412; 1972: 947) believes that the traditional methods of classifying by dialect and by language have no heuristic value for the Athapaskan linguistic phenomenon.[146] I am therefore compelled to present the distribution of groups that go by the name of Tutchone and neighbouring peoples while ignoring the *exact nature* of the linguistic differences and relationships between regional dialects, which were the basis for creating the Tutchone entity and the entities of the neighbouring linguistic groups.

The classification method used by indigenous peoples presents yet another problem. As their system is based entirely on notions indicating relative geographic position defined in relation to the place where the speaker lives, the people of the same linguistic group as the speaker can be designated by a term that other Tutchone groups use to distinguish a regional

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[146] In his review of Harry Hoijer and others, *Studies in the Athapaskan Languages*, Michael Krauss (1964: 411-412) wrote:

> It is high time that we began to see Athapaskan as a dialect complex (structured very differently from modern Indo-European with its clear-cut branches or sub-stocks). In this way Apachean and PCA [Pacific Coast Athapaskan] are also dialect complexes, differentiated from each other and the North by the last millennium, but at that depth also belonging in a single dialect complex which remains as such in the North… I consider it very doubtful, after among other things, my own survey of the Alaskan situation, that we shall ever be able to realize Hoijer's persistent hopes that a family tree will some day account in more than a minor way for the differentiation to be found in Athapaskan. We shall have far more success, it seems to me, in describing Athapaskan, mapped with isoglosses, as a dialect complex, or complex of dialect complexes, all of which, we fortunately still can hope, will eventually be reasonably charted.

Eight years later, and after many other complementary works, Krauss (1972: 947) wrote:

> [My] blanket survey of the whole of Alaska for (at least) the (surface) phonology of stems proved beyond any doubt that even in this area of deepest Athapaskan divergences, Athapaskan relationships must still be viewed as those of a dialect complex (emphasis added).

The complexity of what Krauss considers to be "a classic instance of a dialect complex" (*ibid*.) prevents me from contributing anything to his undertaking. My field research convinced me, just as McClellan was (1975b: I, 21), of the appropriateness of the following warning: "Bewildered and linguistically naïve anthropologists, who are especially prone to grasp at such linguistic straws [Hoijer's typological classification], should be emphatically warned against assigning serious genetic implications to this classification" (Krauss, 1964: 411).

group from a different linguistic group. For example, the Tutchone of Aishihik apply the term *ežan* ("people from far below" or "people from far away") to the Tutchone of Carmacks and Fort Selkirk. Asked about the validity of this term, a Tutchone from Carmacks objected, stating that *ežan* (same phonetics) are the indigenous people of Dawson City-Moosehide, meaning the Han. The Tutchone who were originally from the Fort Selkirk area used the term *tatla huč'an* when referring to the regional group of Han from Eagle (Alaska), downstream from Dawson City and some 400 km from Fort Selkirk. In English, *tatla* corresponds to "this side, the side of a given area closest to us;" *tatla huč'an* therefore simply means "people from this side of that distant area" (gestured). The classification derived from these geographic concepts—with one group always at the centre—is therefore not in keeping with the linguistic classification founded on the use of a criterion—language—that intrinsically sets each group apart from the others. Thus, *tatla* also plays a role in the creation of phrases which, in this case, the Tutchone of Fort Selkirk used to designate, not the Han, but the Tutchone living in the vicinity of Lake Tatlmain, the lake that flows into the Pelly River no more than 90 km from the fort. The phrase they use—*tatla man huč'an*—simply means "people living on the side of the lake—on the side that is nearest to us." *Tatla man* (Tatlmain on modern-day maps), the name of the lake today, lent substance to the first part of the phrase *tatla man huč'an*, which then became the name of the lake (*tatla*: from this side here; *man*: big lake). Theoretically, each regional group can have as many names as it has neighbours. The ideal solution would have been to ask a member of each of the regional groups to give the name of his or her own group. But this method proved to be impractical as the dividing lines between groups are sometimes blurred. Old designations have been lost, and all the more easily so as they were strictly descriptive. For this reason, I limit myself to the description provided by a woman of approximately 85 years of age in the early 1970s who was originally from Little Salmon. Whenever she began using expressions like *ežan*, I gave the designated regional group the name of the region—or place within the region—where the group lived. Using this procedure, I was able to identify eleven regional groups that were interconnected through marital ties and trade between 1890 and 1920.[147]

[147] This is not to say that the eleven regional groups formed a face to face cultural community and a totally homogeneous linguistic entity. My stance in the previous footnote prevents me from taking a position on questions of linguistic classification. I merely state that the eleven groups taken into consideration formed a cultural group that was homogeneous enough to be studied as a single entity, even if that implies separating the groups from outside neighbouring groups with whom they might have had contact. There is in fact no rigid ethnic clustering of the northern Athapaskans. The overall ethnic situation in the Yukon Territory and adjacent regions of Alaska can be visualized by imagining the distribution of the Athapaskan peoples as a piece of fabric woven over millennia. Some parts woven under special circumstances have a particular texture and look of their own. Others, worn over the centuries were mended and the portions of the fabric they form also appear as very distinct from the others. Taking a look at eleven regional groups is a little like cutting out a swatch in order to examine the special texture which characterizes it. The operation is valid as this part of the fabric is different from the rest. However, by cutting out only a swatch, we also cut the weft of the fabric which holds the swatch together. At its edges, the swatch immediately frays and we realize just how the periphery, which seemed to be one with the centre, depended on the threads to attach it to the rest of the fabric. We still have the swatch that first caught our attention and which we can still analyze to find its particular character. A metaphor is never perfectly satisfactory, but for lack of an adequate

These eleven groups are as follows: I) Tatchun Lake; II) Little Salmon; III) Big Salmon; IV) Braeburn Lake; V) Hutshi Lake; VI) Aishihik Lake; VII) White River; VIII) Middle Stewart; IX) Lower Macmillan; X) Tatlmain Lake; and XI) Fort Selkirk (see Map 6).

### 4.3.1 Tatchun Lake (I)

This regional group was called *tačan-gio'-huč'an*, which translates literally as "see salmon's backs in shallow water people." The small river that flows into the Yukon downstream from Five Finger Rapids and flows from Tatchun Lake (*tačan man*) was their main salmon fishing centre. It was also one of the main trading places where the Tutchone from the region met to trade with the Tlingit. This fact seems to be confirmed in work carried out by de Laguna (1972: I, 248-249), who placed one of the Athapaskan groups that traded with the Tlingit downstream from Five Finger Rapids. If we trust the Tutchone interviewed, Tatchun had long been a central gathering spot. This is evidenced by the fact that, all around the lake, there are tree stumps that have been cut with stone adzes. From 1910 until about 1937, the Tutchone had access, north of Tatchun Creek, to a herd of caribou living in the mountain range that separated Tatchun Lake from Lake Tatlmain to the west, and to the western section of the Dawson Mountains where another herd of caribou grazed, and to the south, to the lower course of the Nordenskiold River where salmon was fished 800 metres upstream from the mouth of that river. A local group of *tačan-gio'-huč'an* occupied the southern portion of Lake Tadru located at the perimeter of the territory inhabited by the people of Tatlmain Lake (X). Between 1890 and 1920, a group of *tačan-gio'-huč'an* had only a few nuclear families. Nevertheless, all the Tutchone consulted agreed that this was the largest and strongest group in the region during the nineteenth century. Most of the descendants of this group of people now live at Carmacks. [148]

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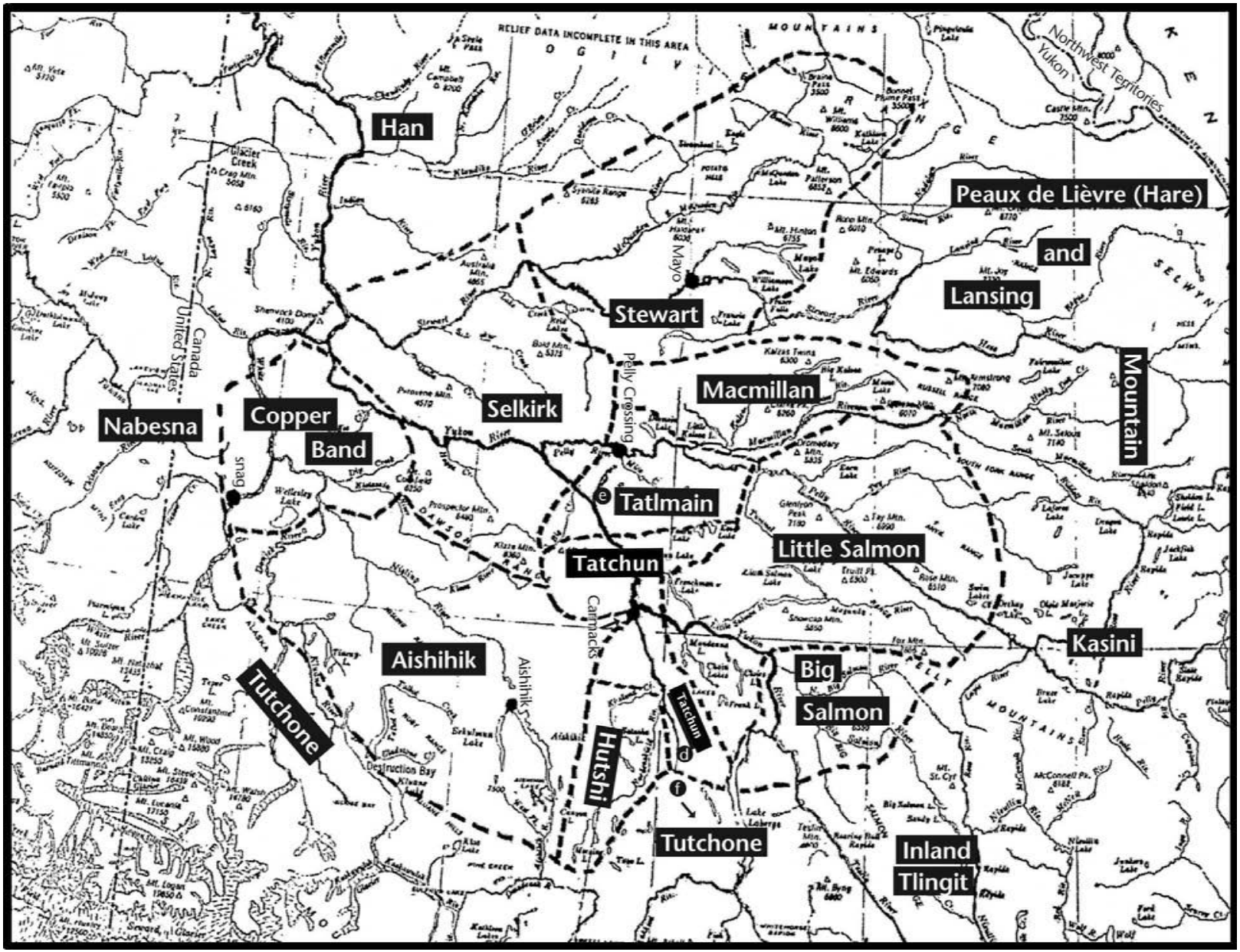
conceptual model, it at least provides an approximate illustration of the operation undertaken in this study

[148] The information on the Tlingit at Five Finger Rapids refers to an accident that occurred when the Tlingit went to rendezvous with the people of Fort Selkirk or Tatchun Creek. De Laguna (1972: 248-242) identified the Aiyan-'ani who had invited the Tlingit as the people of Fort Selkirk and the rapids where some Tlingit drowned ("the place that Raven cracked" or "Raven's crevasse") as Five Finger Rapids. She is undoubtedly correct, as Five Finger Rapids is referred to by the Tutchone by a name designating a mythical time when Crow was married to Lady Fog. She had built a salmon weir across the Yukon River at the location of Five Finger Rapids. The salmon weir was destroyed following a conjugal dispute between Crow and Lady Fog. Crow would mock Lady Fog whenever she raised her arms to catch her salmon and reveal the hair of her underarms. Five Finger Rapids with its huge rocks jutting out from the water is all that is left of the salmon weir. According to the Tutchone, it was not the group at Selkirk that had invited the Tlingit, but the people of Tatchun Lake whose trading place was located two kilometres downstream from Five Finger Rapids.




Map 6. The eleven Tutchone regional groups (1890-1920)

### 4.3.2 Little Salmon and Big Salmon (II and III)

The first group, called *tan'-sie-gio'-huč'an* ("lot of fish people"), had built a large salmon weir on the Little Salmon River about two kilometres upstream from the mouth of that river. This group's trading place was situated at the mouth of the same river. Its local groups were scattered across a vast territory ranging from Mandana Lake and the Chain Lakes in the south up to the Tay River to the north where they collected stones for lighting fires. Sheldon (1911: 92) included a portion of the Macmillan that is outlined on Map 6 by a dotted line as part of the territory occupied by the people of Little Salmon. But these lands must have been abandoned or left to fallow quite early in the twentieth century as my contacts from Little Salmon denied that the Macmillan had ever been used by the *tan'-sie-gio'-huč'an*. In 1908, this group numbered 102 individuals, not including young children (see Table II, below). Its members were closely linked to the members of Tatchun Lake group and to the people of Big Salmon known as *gio'-čo-ču-huč'an* (salmon-big-water-people).

The people of Big Salmon occupied much of the Big Salmon River Basin, the mouth of the Teslin River and, by all accounts, the northern tip of Lake Laberge. Between 1890 and 1900, the Athapaskan of the Ross River area (Kaska speaking Kasini) would go to the mouth of the Big Salmon River to trade with the *gio'-čo-ču-huč'an* (cf. Sheldon, 1911: 92). Today, the village of Carmacks is made up primarily of the people from Little Salmon, whereas most of the people of Big Salmon moved to Whitehorse around 1940.

### 4.3.3 Braeburn Lake (IV)

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, a group known as the *tatla-učo-huč'an* (end of lake-big-people) lived near Braeburn Lake (see letter *d* on Map 6). Early on this group was decimated by an epidemic (unspecified) and around 1902, the members of a Little Salmon local group living in Carmacks moved into the deserted lake area. The *tatla-učo-huč'an* must not be confused with a neighbouring regional group—the *łu-čo-huč'an* (fish-big-people)—who lived near Mile 52 along the Dawson Road (see f on Map 6) and, by extension, near Braeburn Lake. The *łu-čo-huč'an* migrated to Whitehorse after 1930.

### 4.3.4 Hutshi (V)

McClellan considers the Hutshi regional group (Moraine Lake on Map 6) to be part of the Southern Tutchone. Here, they are integrated to our more general Tutchone category. At the age of 30, the grandson of the former Hutshi chief moved to Carmacks (Northern Tutchone area). His speech is barely different from that of the Tatchun along the lower course of the Nordenskiold. The Hutshi's main salmon weir was also located on this river no more than 30 km from Carmacks. Hunde-aelth, the man who was chief of the people of Lake Laberge

around 1900, reported that there were approximately 200 people living at Hutshi in 1902.[149] According to the man from Hutshi who now lives at Carmacks, the hunting grounds of his ancestors consisted primarily of the lands in the Nordenskiold Valley; Hutshi Lake was nothing more than a trading place and wintering location. In the first decades of the twentieth century, most of the Hutshi adopted Champagne as their village. For McClellan (1975b: I, 29), the Hutshi Indians had close ties with the Champagne band[150] and with the Aishihik band, but they still thought of themselves as a distinct band.

### 4.3.5 Aishihik (VI)

This group is included among the eleven regional groups because the Aishihik had more matrimonial ties with the people of Fort Selkirk than with any other regional group. In this respect, McClellan's data (1975b: I, 30) match mine. In contrast to the societal structure of the Champagne Indians, the Aishihik societal structure does not seem to have succumbed to Tlingit influences like that of the southernmost Tutchone. The Aishihik have absolutely no connection with the Tlingit clan groupings adopted by the Champagne Tutchone, making them no different from the 10 other regional groups which, together, form the Tutchone group under study. The Aishihik regional group is designated by the term *łu-č'an* ("fish-people"). My informants in Carmacks, Little Salmon and Aishihik, who were consulted separately, all agreed on this name. In 1902, Hunde-aelth, the leader of the people of Lake Laberge, estimated the number of *łu-č'an* to be 250.[151] Based on the information I collected on site and on McClellan's work (1975b: I, 30), the local groups of Aishihik people scattered each year over the territory stretching from the eastern shores of Kluane Lake to the Nisling River—a territory where they hunted beaver. To the east, some local groups would go to Carmacks where they shared the salmon that had been fished by the people of Tatchun Lake. From the 1890s onwards, their western lands were used as a crossing by a large herd of tundra caribou, which disappeared from the region around 1937.

### 4.3.6 White River (VII)

Glave (1892: 682) called the inhabitants of this river "Yookay Donner" without translating the term. At that time, they were at war with the Southern Tutchone. In a report sent to the Secretary of the Department of Indian Affairs[152] on August 14, 1908, Mr. Green used the name "Copper Band" in reference to the group living in the basin of the "Klotesandinak [Klotassin] River, a tributary of the White River some 130 km west of Coffee Creek. The

[149] *Jim Boss or Hunde-aelth to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, Whitehorse,* June 13, 1902 (Indian Affairs Archives, Public Archives of Canada, RG10, Vol. 4037, File 317,050).

[150] The Champagne band now largely resides at Haines-Junctions, 42 miles to the west. Nomadic groups definitely present difficulties in determining their spatial distribution.

[151] *Jim Boss or Hunde-aelth to Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, Whitehorse,* June 13, 1902 (Indian Affairs Archives, Public Archives of Canada, RG10, Vol. 4037, File 317,050).

[152] *Mr. Green to the Secretary of Indian Affairs*, Indian Affairs Archives, Public Archives of Canada (RG10, Vol. 4037, Black series File 317050; see also File 147654-1).

"Copper" went to the mouth of Coffee Creek to trade. The journal kept by Father Bobillet clearly shows that this group went to Coffee Creek each year between 1942 and 1949.[153] As reported in a text written by J. L. Coudert, the Catholic archbishop of the Yukon between 1955 and 1965, the Copper people occupied the marshy regions of Snag and Wellesley Lake.[154] Mr. Green stated that the Copper group consisted of about 15 adults and 15 children in 1907. This figure might have included only those who were present at Coffee Creek at the time, because a Han from Dawson claims to have encountered 175 of these Indians in 1922.

Hayes and Schwatka visited the White River in 1891 and were guided by Tutchone from Fort Selkirk who showed them where to find copper deposits. The area known to the Selkirk People—Kletsan Creek—was a small stream that started at the Natazhat Glacier near the Alaskan border in Nabesna/Upper Tanana country, far beyond that of the White River (quoted in Cairnes, 1915: 33). This fact suggests that the people of Fort Selkirk, the White River, and the Nabesna/Upper Tanana had long had contact with one another. The existence of such relations is confirmed by the fact that around the end of the nineteenth century, the White River chief married a woman from Selkirk (cf. McClellan, 1975b: I, 30-31).

Other sources also indicate a link between the Han of the Klondike River and the people of the White River. As indicated above, this was confirmed by Schwatka. In the same source (1885a: 85), Schwatka mentioned a very powerful shaman named Ee-nuk among the Dawson Han. The shaman's existence is confirmed by Sim[155] who called him by the same name. But according to Innes-Taylor, Ee-nuk (Enoch) was buried in the Copper Indians' old cemetery at Coffee Creek,[156] which more than likely makes him a Copper Indian.

In terms of linguistics, the paltry indicators available seem to contradict one another. Judging by his language, the old Copper chief might easily have been Han, Tutchone, or Nabesna/Upper Tanana (cf. McClellan, 1975b: 30-31). The speculation of a connection between the Han and the people of the White River appears to be confirmed by the fact that Ee-nuk, the shaman of the White River, could easily communicate with his Han hosts. At least, this is what Sim's journal suggests. And J. L. Coudert wrote the following about the Copper Indians: "I could not ascertain why their language is identically the same as the Dawson or Klondike Indians." He crossed out that sentence and replaced with: "I could not ascertain whether their language is identically the same as […] the Klondike Indians [Han]."[157] But this does not preclude the possibility of close linguistic proximity between the White River Indians and the Tutchone. I have to take into account the thoughts of a Tutchone from Little Salmon who claimed to more easily understand the people of Snag, where

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[153] Bobillet, *Journal d'un missionnaire au Yukon*. The author writes that it is the same band of Indians that traveled between Carmacks, Coffee Creek, Snag and Burwash, p. 580.

[154] J. L. Coudert, *Indian tribes with which our missionaries come into contact in the vicariate of the Yukon and Prince Rupert (circa 1955-1965),* manuscript in the presbytery of the Oblates, Whitehorse, Y.T.

[155] C. V. Sim, *Journal of a Journey on the Yukon River*, July 26, 1883 (C.M.S. A112).

[156] A. Innes-Taylor, *A Comprehensive Inventory of Sites and Areas of Historic Significance in the Yukon Territory*. Typed manuscript in the Yukon Archives, Whitehorse (circa 1970) pp. 1-21.

[157] J. L. Coudert, *Indian tribes with which our missionaries come into contact in the vicariate of the Yukon and Prince Rupert (circa 1955-1965)*, manuscript in the presbytery of the Oblates, Whitehorse, Y.T.

the White River people now live, than the Tutchone of Kluane Lake. He appeared to be familiar with the group living at Snag because he knew them by their indigenous name which translated into "Rat people," a term confirmed by a young woman from White River who told me that it was the name by which the people of Snag called themselves. And they could very well have been affiliated with the Nabesna/Upper Tanana since the Tutchone of Kluane find dialect of the Snag inhabitants similar to that of the Alaskan Nabesna/Upper Tanana. McClellan also placed the Snag group in the same category as the Nabesna (cf. 1975b: Map 1). These facts lead to the conclusion that the dialect of the White River people could be a transitional dialect between the Han, Nabesna/Upper Tanana, and Tutchone. The people of White River would then be different from the 10 other groups from a linguistic standpoint. It must be recalled, however, that they have been included here with the 10 others because of their socio-cultural ties with the Tutchone rather than linguistic considerations. For example, all four sons of the former Copper chief married Tutchone women from Aishihik, Selkirk and Little Salmon, etc., just as their father had done.

### 4.3.7 Lower and Middle Stewart (VIII)

It is not certain whether the division between the lower course of the Stewart River (Selkirk Tutchone new migrants) and its middle section (Stewart Tutchone) continued through to the end of the period 1890-1920. Towards 1905 or 1910, the native people of both these sections of the Stewart amalgamated in the vicinity of Mayo, and in the early 1970s it was impossible to differentiate between the two groups. Nevertheless, certain clues tend to indicate that in 1900, the middle and lower sections of the Stewart were still inhabited by two distinct Tutchone regional groups. At that time, the Yukon territorial government was planning to create a reserve along the Lower Stewart, a short distance upstream from the mouth of the river.[158] The commissioner of the Yukon had specified in his project that most of the Indians fished and hunted in that section of the Stewart River Basin. In 1973, a man from Mayo, aged about 70, stated that at that time, the Lower Stewart, between the mouth of the McQuesten and Yukon rivers, was occupied by a group originally from Selkirk. The group would presumably have relocated to the Stewart around 1870 following a quarrel that prompted the Selkirk group to break up. This schism was allegedly spearheaded by his grandfather. The second group, which consisted of a handful of individuals, lived on the Stewart upstream from the mouth of the McQuesten River. In 1900, the two groups combined had no more than about 50 members.[159]

It should be pointed out that for all intents and purposes, the ethnological data provided by the current members of the Mayo group must thus be treated as information about the culture of a sub-group of people from Fort Selkirk. The linguistic notes taken by J. Ritter at

[158] *Letter from the Commissioner's Office*, *Dawson City,* July 17, 1900, Yukon Archives, Whitehorse (AG91, Vol. 7, File 13-31). I have 55 people for the Stewart River from a *Memo for the Minister. Re: Yukon Indians* (n.d. circa 1907?). Indian Affairs Archives, Public Archives of Canada. RG 10, Vol. 3906, Black series, File 105378).

[159] *Ibid*.

Mayo[160] from different sources than mine, and my own notes as well, reveal no significant heterogeneity. The Mayo way of speaking differs from that of Selkirk, Tatlmain, or Little Salmon within the limits of dialectical variations of a single language.

In 1900, the area around the headwaters of the Stewart River was occupied by a third group that gathered each year at the mouth of the Lansing River. The trading post located there was also visited by the Mackenzie River *Peaux de Lièvre* (Hare Athapaskan) from Fort Good Hope (Keele [1905]: 166). This fact was confirmed by Father Bobillet of Dawson City who had been a missionary at Mayo among other places. Of the native people who used to gather at Lansing, only a few *Peaux de Lièvre* are left, and in the 1970s they lived in Mayo. The others perished when an epidemic broke out between 1910 and 1930 (possibly the 1918 Spanish influenza). But I do not know whether the "small band" of which Keele spoke (*ibid*.) was made up exclusively of *Peaux de Lièvre*. A historical account (Armstrong 1936:266) documents a somewhat unexpected case of cooperation between the people of the Macmillan and the people of Lansing, which could suggest that that this regional group was composed in part of indigenous people from the Yukon River basin. Between 1900 and 1910, a man from the Macmillan was seriously injured by a bear. Instead of going to Fort Selkirk, the people of the Macmillan called for and received assistance from the Lansing Indians. Such a gesture is indicative of a strong relationship between the two groups and lends credence to the possibility that some of the Lansing people and the Macmillan people were one and the same, or had been related in the recent past. This assumption cannot however be validated by such a flimsy example and we will never know the exact nature of their relationship. For this reason, the Lansing group was excluded from this study.

### 4.3.8 Lower Macmillan (IX)

The Lower Macmillan and Tatlmain pose a similar problem to that of the middle and lower courses of the Stewart. It is impossible to determine with absolute certainty whether the people of these two areas were one or two regional groups between 1890 and 1920. Sheldon (1911: 92) wrote that "the Lower part of the [Macmillan] river is included in the hunting territory of the tribe at Tatlmain […]. Beyond, as far as the forks, the territory belongs to the Indians living at the mouth of the Little Salmon River." Selous (1907: 312) and Armstrong (1937: 238) provide support with respect to a portion of the Macmillan being used by the people of Little Salmon, but as seen above, they left the area quite early on.

This leaves one group which Sheldon associates with the Tatlmain group, and it is on this point that the data become contradictory. Armstrong, who trapped in the Macmillan Basin from 1900 to 1930, considered the indigenous inhabitants of that river a separate group and called them Moose Creek Indians (1937: 215, 251-252). Father Bobillet, who travelled many times on the Macmillan between 1943 and 1946, also considered this group to be distinct from the Tatlmain. He stated that at that time they were five or six families—some 30 people—living year-round in the woods and that they were still wary of "White

[160] John Ritter, "*Mayo Athapaskan Notes*," November 1973, Manuscript at the Alaska Native Language Center, Fairbanks, 77 pages.

people." A few individuals from Fort Norman—in all likelihood Mountain Indians—lived among them. Numerous vestiges of campsites were found near the mouth of Moose Creek. An old cemetery also bore testimony to a long-standing presence of Indians in that area.[161] Since Armstrong and Bobillet were more familiar than any other writers with the people of the region, I accept the distinction they made between the people of the Macmillan and the people of Tatlmain. It must however be noted that there were close matrimonial ties between the two groups, and that in the 1970s their members who lived at Pelly Crossing no longer thought of themselves as two separate groups, with the exception of the very oldest.

### 4.3.9 Tatlmain (X)

For the Tutchone, the Tatlmain were a large group in the nineteenth century that was decimated towards the end of the last century. The exact date of this devastating event cannot be determined, and the earliest documents I have are certainly not numerous. Tollemache (1912: 154-175), who lived in their midst around 1900, gave the impression that this group consisted of a small number of nuclear families. In 1908, the total population—children included—was little more than 30 people (see Table II). Around that time, some of the families of this group established a tiny hamlet, called High Bank, on the Pelly River only a few miles upstream from what is known today as Pelly Crossing. The remains of a small cemetery still exiting at the site indicate years of occupation. Tatlmain Lake, Tawata Lake and the northern half of Tadru Lake, the three lakes south of Pelly Crossing and the lower portion of Big Creek formed the hub of their hunting and fishing grounds.

Between 1940 and 1950, the families that continued to use Tatlmain Lake preferred to gather at Minto, on the Yukon River, at the mouth of the small river that flowed from the series of three lakes mentioned in the preceding paragraph (e on Map 6).[162] The Tutchone state that this site, known by the name of *łutso* or *łutso dačak'* was the trading place where the people of Tatlmain met to trade with the Tlingit in the nineteenth century.

Other families also fished on the Pelly between the Tummel and Tay rivers. Bobillet[163] wrote that they were known under the names of "Pelly Indians." They were very likely descendants of the Tatlmain people who had migrated to High Bank at the beginning of the century. We cannot be absolutely certain that the Tatlmain people had not previously hunted or fished along this section of the Pelly in the nineteenth century. Tollemache (1912: 167-168) indicated that in 1900 a well-maintained Indian trail linked Tatlmain Lake through the mountains to that portion of the Pelly.

If the Tatlmain people had really hunted and fished in this territory, then it would have been a territory used by two different groups. We do know that the people of Little Salmon hunted in the region at that time. Such a scenario would not be impossible as the people of Tatlmain had regular, even frequent, contact with the people of Tatchun to the south who, in turn, had close ties to the people of Little Salmon.

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161 Bobillet, *Journal d'un missionnaire au Yukon*, pp. 526-527; 529-530; 816-820.
[162] *Ibid*., December 10, 1945; July 7, 1946.
[163] *Ibid*., pp. 416-418; 521-532.

## TABLE II. COMPOSITION OF THE INDIAN POPULATION OF THE YUKON BY GENERATION IN 1910

| Groups | Sources | Above 18 | Under 18 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Northern Tutchone and Hutshi and Aishihik Bands** | | | | |
| Little Salmon | Direct observation | 58 | 44+ | 102+ |
| Tatlmain Lake | 1 sub-group seen at Black Lake (15 people) | 18+ | 12 | 30+ |
| Copper Band [White River] | Trader seen at Coffee Creek | 15± | 15± | 30± |
| Yukon Crossing [down-stream from Tatchun Lake] | Direct observation | 4 | 5 | 9 |
| Fort Selkirk | Direct observation | 45 | 25 | 70 |
| Mayo [Stewart] | Direct observation | 43 | 12 | 55 |
| Big Lake Band [Aishihik Lake] | Hearsay | 28 | 12 | 40 |
| Hoota-link-Qua [Big Salmon River Band] | Direct observation | 14 | 12 | 26 |
| **Other Southern Tutchone** | | | | |
| Lake Laberge | Direct observation | 55 | 33 | 88 |
| Champagne Landing [recent merging] | Mr. Chambers, Trader for 8 years | --<br>[40] | --<br>20+ | 60 (winter)<br>20 families |
| Dalton House | From Indians and traders | 45 | 25 | 70 |
| **Inland Tlingit** | | | | |
| Teslin Lake Band | Chief Teslin Billy | 31 | 17 | 48 |
| **Kasini** (Ross river kaska) | | | | |
| Upper Pelly River Band [Ross River and Pelly Banks] | Indians seen on the Stewart and fur trader | 70 | 30 | 100 |
| **Han** | | | | |
| Moosehide Band [Dawson City] | Direct observation | 47 | 37 | 84 |
| **GWICH'IN** | | | | |
| Peel River Band | Hearsay | 34 | 36 | 70 |
| Rampart House [Porcu-pine River] | Hearsay | 70± | 30± | 100± |
| **Totals** | | **617** | **365** | **982** |

Based on a report by Mr. Green concerning the creation of schools for Indian children in the Yukon Territory, sent to the "Secretary of Indian Department (Ottawa)" on August 14, 1908. In Indian Affairs' Archives, RG 10, Vol. #3962, File 147 654-1, Public Archives of Canada.

### 4.3.10 Fort Selkirk (XI)

I was told that the regional group of Fort Selkirk was called *Otsane-ču-huč'an* by a source from Little Salmon. Unable to provide the exact meaning of the name, she simply "translated" it as "Pelly River People." Between 1890 and 1920, this group hunted between the eastern flank of the Dawson Range and the Yukon River, and also to the north of Fort Selkirk. The salmon fishing camps were spread out between the Lower Pelly and the Yukon River, a short distance upstream and downstream from Fort Selkirk. Data on the number of people belonging to this group are contradictory.

Fort Selkirk is said to have had 70 Indians in 1908 (See Table II) and 65 in 1915.[164] The *Annual Reports* of the Church Missionary Society give the impression that the population declined from 300 inhabitants[165] in 1894 to only 150[166] in 1908-1909. Green's report which cites 70 Indians for Fort Selkirk in 1908 (see Table II) is quite credible as Green conducted his census right at Fort Selkirk. However, the C.M.S. figures might also be accurate as they were provided by a missionary living at Fort Selkirk.

Perhaps the discrepancy between the two figures can be explained as the total number of indigenous people trading at Fort Selkirk (150) and the number of members of the Fort Selkirk group proper (70). This interpretation is supported by at least two indicators. In 1906, the C.M.S. also counted 150 members of the Fort Selkirk group, but its report also specified that this figure included the people of Tattlumum [Tatlmain] and Big Lake [Aishihik].[167] In 1901, the figure of 200 inhabitants was accompanied by the following remark: "A large number of Indians, representing at one time six different tribes, each speaking a different dialect, were encamped near the station […]."[168] If the figure of 300 people cited in 1894 also corresponded to the number of indigenous people who would meet at Fort Selkirk rather than the number of the members of the Fort Selkirk group proper, then this group did not experience as catastrophic a population decline as the C.M.S.'s *Annual Reports* would have suggested.

Incidentally, the comment about the linguistic characteristics of the "six different tribes" gathered at Fort Selkirk in 1901 should not be taken at face value. Missionaries in those days commonly referred to the regional groups as tribes. The "six tribes" almost certainly included the Tatlmain people, the members of the Aishihik group and other regional Tutchone groups. Far from precluding communication, their linguistic regionalisms were in

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[164] *Report of the Third Synod of the Diocese of Yukon held at St. Paul's Cathedral, Dawson, Y.T.*, July 14-19, 1915.

[165] *Proceeding of the C.M.S., The Annual Report (1894)*, p. 251. See also *The Annual Report (1897)*, p. 419 where the figure of 300 people also appears.

[166] *Ibid*., See *The Annual Report (1910)*, p. 246 where the figures for 1908 appear and *The Annual Report (1909)*, p. 237.

[167] *Ibid*., *The Annual Report* (1906), p.383.

[168] *Ibid., The Annual Report (1901),* p. 519.

most cases only dialectical and the "languages" were mutually intelligible,[169] and it is these variations that would undoubtedly explain the missionary's report. These regional variations still existed into the 1970s.

This study of the distribution of the eleven regional groups which, between 1890 and 1920, differs somewhat from the groupings depicted in the historical archival records for the period 1880-1890, and also from the groupings implicitly made by Campbell in 1850. For instance, the relations in 1850 between the Wood Indians of Tatlmain and Selkirk and the Knife Indians of Ross River no longer existed between the two groups that respectively occupied the two regions in 1890-1920, explaining why the Ross River group (after 1900) is excluded from the present inventory. Similarly, Minto (e on Map 6), which was Schwatka's site of Kitl-ah-gon no longer belonged to the Tagish, if it ever did (there is every reason to believe that Schwatka was wrong on this point). The distinction made by Schwatka and by Dawson between the people of the Stewart and the people of Selkirk cannot be retraced. But what do these changes really indicate? Are they actually the result of people having relocated or are they only illusions owing to faulty classifications made by the first explorers?

In order to find an answer to this question, we will examine the factors that might have led to a spatial redistribution of ethnic groups of the Upper Yukon: 1) epidemics and depopulation; 2) relocation closer to remote fur trading posts; and 3) wars between different ethnic groups.

## 4.4 Factors of Population Changes

### 4.4.1 Epidemics

A series of epidemics decimating a population can spur various types of spatial redistribution. If it creates a complete vacuum in a given territory and if that territory is left to lie fallow, it may attract members of a neighbouring regional group. If there are survivors, certain regional groups of different cultural backgrounds may band together to form a new demographically viable group with a mixed culture. We must now take a look at what occurred in the area of the Yukon that is today's Tutchone country.

The precise chronological inventory of epidemics that struck the indigenous people of the Upper Yukon is nevertheless a delicate issue. Only epidemics between 1848 and 1852 and after 1883 were witnessed firsthand by people who kept a diary. The absence of Euro-

[169] For example, I became aware of a minor difference between the dialect spoken at Selkirk and that spoken at Tatlmain early on in my field research. I tried, with difficulty, to transcribe terms dictated to me by a man from Tatlmain who was born around 1900. A man from Selkirk offered to help by slowly repeating what the old man was saying. The Selkirk man's pronunciation was slightly different. The old man then disputed what the Selkirk man was saying. Then the two began speaking very quickly in Tutchone. In the end, the Selkirk man leaned towards me and confided, in English, that the old man from Tatlmain spoke differently and that I should not listen to him. Nevetheless, this difference, which they both acknowledged, in no way impeded their communication with one another.

peans during the first half of the nineteenth century and then from 1852 to about 1880 does not mean that the Athapaskan people of the region were spared of European diseases during those periods. In fact, in North America, such diseases were often transmitted from one indigenous group to another without their necessarily having any direct contact with European people.

In order to supplement the data from the observations of Campbell in 1843 and from 1848 to 1852 and again after 1883 by other explorers, we are obliged to extrapolate from what is known about the epidemics that spread throughout the Athapaskan regions of the Yukon. For the period prior to 1843, we can rely only on the historiography of the Northwest Coast as European inroads had not yet been made into the interior of the Yukon Territory. For the period between 1852 and 1880, there are documents concerning the Tlingit as well as documents of the H.B.C. and C.M.S. regarding the Gwich'in and Han. As the period leading up to 1848 does not fully tie in with our 1840-1890 time-line, only the most significant events for that period will be mentioned.

Between the date when first contact was made between the Europeans and the Tlingit and the year 1848, Helm *et al.* (1975: Synoptic Chart of Contact Events) have documented only one major epidemic on the Northwest Coast, smallpox, which, in 1835, killed between 24 and 50 percent of the Tlingit population. Had this epidemic been transmitted throughout the interior of the southern Yukon—not an entirely impossible event considering the period—then the people encountered by Campbell at the forks of the Lewes and Pelly rivers in 1843 would have been severely affected by the disease in the years preceding any first contact with Europeans. However, it is also possible that the catastrophic effects of the smallpox epidemic caused the Tlingit to temporarily suspend their trading expeditions to the interior Yukon, thereby sparing their Yukon partners the effects of the disease. We will never know for certain. Be it as it may, this is not crucial for our purpose here. It must be recalled that our main aim is to determine whether or not there was cultural continuity between 1840 and 1890. The impact of an event that could have occurred in 1835 would already be part of the 1840s "ethnoscape," our point of departure.

The inventory compiled by Helm *et al.* does not mention any major epidemic among the Tlingit during the period following 1840. As a cautionary note, however, Dall and Krause (quoted by McClellan (1975a: 24), directly observed that the Tlingit were in fact affected by a number of diseases in the late nineteenth century. These may have been communicated to some Tutchone. Moreover, we also have to considerer that other epidemics may have spread through the H.B.C.'s northern connection between the Mackenzie and Yukon river basins. In fact, the existing archival data of the Hudson Bay Company and the Church Missionary Society reveal that such events occurred several times. Table III presents a synopsis of what is most likely to have occurred between the Tutchone's northern neighbours and the Tutchone.

The period 1848-1852 is covered in the *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*. From 1852 to 1883, the only available data concern the Han and the Gwich'in since the few merchants and prospectors who went through Tutchone territory left no written records. Based on what the archival documents reveal about contact between the different people at the time of each

## TABLE III. EPIDEMICS (1848-1910).

BASED ON THE ARCHIVES OF THE HUDSON BAY COMPANY AND THE CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY

| Date | Non-Tutchone Groups | Tutchone |
|---|---|---|
| 1848 Summer | Han (Aynonias) who died after visiting Fort Selkirk[170] Han (Gens des Fous): many deaths after visiting Fort Yukon.[171] | Many men fell ill and at least one woman died.[172] |
| Winter 1849-1850 | Very severe famine among the Han (Gens des Fous).[173] | Very severe famine and many deaths as a result.[174] |
| Winter 1850-1851 | Many Han died during the winter.[175] | Very severe famine.[176] Diarrhea among the children with numerous deaths in May (adults spared).[177] Lung infection in June resulting in at least 1 death.[178] |
| Winter 1851-1852 | Epidemic, many deaths, famine among the Fort Yukon Indians.[179] | Epidemic and very severe famine among all Indian groups. 1/3 of the population died.[180] |
| Winter 1852-1853 | Disease among the Fort Yukon Indians and Han,[181] 4% of adults at Fort Yukon died.[182] | Documents on the Tutchone stop after this date. We can only infer from documents about Fort Yukon. |
| October 1853 | Violent epidemic at Rat River and Fort Yukon. Several deaths among the Han who had come to Fort Yukon.[183] 17 men, 4 women and 4 children died at Fort Yukon.[184] | Likely transmitted to the Tutchone by the Han with whom the Tutchone traded. |

[170] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, November 4, 1848.
[171] Murray, *Fort Yukon Journal*, July 1, 1849 (1M 166).
[172] Campbell, Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal, July 22, 1848.
[173] Murray, *Fort Yukon Journal*, June 6, 1850.
[174] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, December 7, 1849, February 4-9, 16-27, March 23, 25, 27-29, April 26, May 11, 19, 1850.
[175] Murray, *Fort Yukon Journal*, May 1851.
[176] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, January 3-7, 25, May 21, 1851.
[177] Campbell, *ibid*., May 24, 29, 31, June 2, 1851.
[178] Campbell, *ibid*., June 26, August 8, 1851.
[179] Hardisty, *Fort Yukon Journal*, May 31, 1852.
[180] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, November 24, December 13, 1851, January 2-22, March 18, April 2, May 10, 1852; Campbell in Wilson (1970: 119).
[181] Hardisty, Fort Yukon Journal, May 1853, Conclusion for 1852-53.
[182] *Account Book 1852-53, Fort Yukon* (1M 775). Rate calculated based on a register listing 104 adults (mainly men) and five dead, two of whom were old chiefs.
[183] Hardisty, *Fort Yukon Journal*, October 7, 9, 1853.
[184] Account Book 1853-1854, Fort Yukon.

| Date | Non-Tutchone Groups | Tutchone |
|---|---|---|
| Winter 1854-1855 | Population decimated at Fort Yukon (12%).[185] | As the Han continued to go to Fort Yukon, the epidemic likely spread amongst the Tutchone. |
| 1856-1862 | No documents. | No documents. |
| Winter 1862-1863 | Type of influenza. Several deaths at Fort Yukon.[186] | Possibly transmitted by the Han, but not certain. |
| Winter 1865-1866 | Scarlet fever affected Peel River Fort Indians (3 groups): La Pierre House (1 group), Fort Yukon (8 groups). 300 deaths among the 12 groups, or 1/3 of the adult population.[187] | Scarlet fever affected the Gens du large (Niādse Gwich'in), Inuit, Han, and the Tutchone were probably not spared. |
| Winter 1866-1867 | Unspecified epidemic among the Rat Indians (La Pierre House), 15 deaths.[188] | The epidemic was probably not transmitted to the Tutchone. |
| Autumn 1868 | Unspecified epidemic at Fort Yukon. 6 adults died.[189] | Disease possibly transmitted to the Tutchone by the Han who were at Fort Yukon at the time of the outbreak. |
| Summer 1873 | Dysentery. Many Han children died.[190] | The epidemic probably affected the Tutchone as well. |
| Autumn 1874 | Dysentery and influenza at Peel River Fort, 3 deaths recorded.[191] | Epidemic not likely to have been transmitted to the Tutchone. |
| Summer 1883 | Measles and diphtheria. "Mortality has been terrible" among the Black River Gwich'in, "a tribe reduced to 10 men and few women."[192] | Possibly transmitted to the Tutchone through the Han who received a visit from the Fort Yukon Indians in their territory and the Tutchone visited the Han (cf. Sim, Redmond). |

[185] *Fort Yukon Journal*, *Outfit 1855*; 12 of the 101 people with debts and listed in the Fort Yukon ledger died that year.

[186] *McDonald to Reverend & Dear Sir*, Fort Yukon, June 1st, 1863 (C.M.S. A93).

[187] *McDonald to the Secretary, Fort Yukon,* October 24, 1866 (C.M.S. A93). *Journal of the Reverend McDonald*, June 26, October 14, December 20-26, 1866 (C.M.S. A93). Quoting Dall, McClellan (1975a: 24) gave 1860 as the year for this particular epidemic. Dall's induction was certainly incorrect. In the accounts ledger at Fort Yukon, only four deaths were recorded that year. *Fort Yukon Account Books 1860-1861, 1861-1862* (1M 775).

[188] *Journal of the Reverend R. McDonald*, September 18, 1868 (C.M.S. A94).

[189] *Ibid*., September 10 through October 28, 1868.

[190] *Bompas to Mr. Wright*, Fort Yukon, July 17, 1873 (C.M.S. A100); K. McDonald to Bompas, Peel River, April 24, 1874 (C.M.S. A101).

[191] *K. McDonald to Bompas, Rampart House,* December 30, 1874 (C.M.S. A101); *Journal of K. McDonald*, September 12, 1874 (C.M.S. A101).

[192] V. C. Sim, *Journal of a Journey on the Yukon River*, August 5, 7, 8, 1883 (C.M.S. A112); Schwatka (1893: 292-293).

| Date | Non-Tutchone Groups | Tutchone |
|---|---|---|
| Winter 1886-1887 | "Unusual high mortality" among the Peel River Fort Indians.[193] | Outbreak probably did not affect the Tutchone. |
| Winter 1887-1888 | "Many dead" among the Han and the Stewart River Indians.[194] | The Tutchone were probably all affected. |
| 1890 | "Many sickness" among the Indians of the mouth of the Tanana River.[195] | Very unlikely that this disease was contracted by the Tutchone. |
| (Gold Rush) 1897-1898 | New epidemics, namely the flu, spread among all the Indian groups of the Yukon, which prevented them from hunting and left them starving. "15 starved to death" at La Pierre House, several died at Rampart House.[196] | "Selkirk Indians are dying off fast." "Same elsewhere" (*ibid.)*. |
| 1898-1899 | Many diseases and deaths among all the Indian groups of the Yukon.[197] | The Tutchone were affected to the same extent as all the others *(ibid.)*. |
| 1901 | Unspecified epidemic. "Quite a number died" at Peel River; 2 deaths in a group of the Tanana River.[198] | Mortality rate probably as high among the Tutchone. |
| 1905 | Whooping cough and chicken pox spread among the Han. No mention of cases among Euro-Canadian children at Dawson City.[199] | Unspecified epidemic: "great mortality among children" at Fort Selkirk (same source as for the 1905 Han whooping cough). |
| 1907 | Tuberculosis and diphtheria "carried off several of the Indians" at Dawson City.[200] | Probably affected the entire Yukon, including the Tutchone. |

outbreak and on the direction each disease seemed to be spreading,[201] I have nevertheless determined which epidemics likely affected the Tutchone as well in the interval. Between 1887 and 1910, more and more data became available as a result of on-site observation.

[193] R. McDonald, *St. Mathews (Peel River),* February 1887 (C.M.S. A114, #1020).

[194] Ellington, J. W., *Fortymile,* June 20, 1888 (C.M.S. A115, #1212).

[195] T. H. Canham, *Tanana Station,* August 30, 1890 (C.M.S. A116, #1519).

[196] Bompas, *Fortymile,* December 19, 1898 (C.M.S. A120 #2772); Bompas, *Fort Yukon,* July 30, 1897 (C.M.S. A120, #2614); Bompas, *Buxton,* July 29, 1898 (C.M.S. A120).

[197] Bompas, *Dawson City,* June 9, 1899 (C.M.S. A120, #2806); Bompas, *Moosehide,* August 23, 1899 (C.M.S. A120, #2813); Canham, *Fort Selkirk,* November 1899 (C.M.S. A120, #2846).

[198] *Proceeding of the C.M.S., The Annual Report* (1902), pp. 453-454.

[199] *Proceeding of the C.M.S., The Annual Report* (1906), p. 381.

[200] *Proceeding of the C.M.S.*, *The Annual Report (1908)*, p. 244. Mention of tuberculosis appears in the handwritten notes I took while researching the C.M.S. archives. Precise reference lost.

[201] According to Schwatka (1893: 292-293): "The Yukon River […] is a great thoroughfare for contagious disease, and maladies raging among the Chilcats [Tlingit] have been known to travel its whole course as rapidly as we have done [two months], and from the river as a base had spread right and left among the native tribes." There is no doubt that the "Chilcat" who were always in contact with the merchant boats played an important role in propagating epidemics in the Yukon Territory. However, Schwatka was not always well informed. For instance, he states (*ibid.*): "I have never heard of any [epidemics] returning against the stream. Now, the "mild form of measles" of which he speaks

During Campbell's four years at Fort Selkirk, not a single year passed in which the Indian people were not affected by one disease or another. For example, the first victim of European disease among the Wood Indians died barely one month after the arrival in 1848 of European people with their Mackenzie Métis employees. During the same period the Ayonias visited Fort Selkirk in July. Two weeks after their departure, some returned to the fort complaining that some of their members were dying. During the winter of 1849-1850, another epidemic apparently prevented all the natives in the Fort Selkirk area from hunting. On May 11, 1850, the "fort hunters gave news of many [Tatlmain] Indians that had died or are dying of starvation."[202] The same occurred at Pelly Banks.[203] At Fort Yukon, the Han told Murray[204] that many of their people had also perished that winter. There are no exact figures on the number of deaths caused by this epidemic, yet it certainly was no fabrication. Murray (*ibid*.) mentioned one group—the Tchukooche (linguistic identity unknown)—whose members all perished save two men. Campbell[205] wrote that he saw a widow with three children arrive, destitute, at Fort Selkirk. Over the winter, i.e., in a matter of a few months, she had lost her father, her mother, her husband and a number of family members.

More of the same occurred throughout the winter of 1850-1851. Then in May 1851, the children fell ill with diarrhea and many of them died. The chief of the Knife Indians, for example, lost all his children except for one of his daughters.[206] Murray indicated the existence of the same state of affairs among the Han (*Gens des Fous*).[207]

The situation worsened through the winter of 1851-1852. Campbell[208] wrote laconically: "News of starvation everywhere this year." One of the best fort hunters died of starvation that winter.[209] The Gwich'in and Han were just as devastated.[210] Campbell, who travelled from Fort Selkirk to Fort Yukon in May, stated that the groups located between the two sites lost one-third of their members "by some virulent contagious disease which had raged among them the preceding winter" (Campbell in Wilson, 1970: 119). Helm *et al*. (1975), suspect it was scarlet fever.

Over the 31 years that followed (1852-1883)—the period for which there are no direct data—the indigenous nations who had traded with Campbell were undoubtedly affected by the epidemics that struck the Han and the Gwich'in. We cannot be absolutely certain, but some indications help to narrow the possibilities. These include what is known about the speed with which a disease could spread from group to group through simple contact be-

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and which reduced a "tribe" down stream from Fort Yukon to just 10 men and women, had not affected the Han that summer (cf. V. C. Sim, *Journal of a Journey on the Yukon River*, August 5, 7, 8, 1883 (C.M.S. A112).

[202] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, May 11, 1850.

[203] *Ibid*., May 19, 1850.

[204] Murray, *Fort Yukon Journal*, June 6, 1850.

[205] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*
, May 25, 1850.

[206] *Ibid*., June 2, 1851.

[207] Murray, *Fort Yukon Journal*, May 1851.

[208] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, April, 18, 1852.

[209] *Ibid*., April 2, 1852.

[210] Hardisty, *Fort Yukon Journal*, May 31, 1852.

tween a few people on the one hand, and the chain of contact between Gwich'in, Han and Tutchone on the other.

An example will illustrate how easily the epidemics spread among the Yukon population. History has taught us about relations between the Peel River Gwich'in and the Peel River Mountain Indians. Until they disappeared around 1870, a regional group of Mountain Indians occupied a region near the sources of the Peel River. According to the oldest documents available, these Athapaskan were called *Utakoocheen* or *Attakuchin*[211] and they clearly specify that "the *Utākutchin*, otherwise Mountain Indians, are distinct from the Peel and the Mackenzie Rivers Gwich'in."[212]

> The entire number of Indians that trade at Peel River Fort may be about 300. There are three bands of them: the Peel River band [Ta-tlit; about 50 men]; the Mackenzie River band [Nugoochonjyet-Kutchin; 30 men]; the Mountain Indians. The Mountain Indians are of the Chippewyan or Tinne race.[213]

This group of Mountain Indians was probably different from the Mountain Indians who traded at Fort Norman and Fort Liard,[214] though they may have been linguistically related.

Before the scarlet fever epidemic in 1865, which will be discussed in detail below, only a few of the men of that regional group or band would travel as far as Peel River Fort. They apparently went on behalf of all the other members of their group.[215] During the autumn of 1865, scarlet fever had taken 16 lives among them.[216] After the tragedy, the survivors—men, women and children—began visiting the Peel River Fort in groups.[217] They visited again in 1868.[218] Then in 1871, McDonald's journal contained the following remark: "The Mountain Indians are now reduced to 4 men, 4 women and 3 children."[219] Consequently, we see that linguistic barriers did not preclude contact between groups and that these contacts, even if short-lived and extremely limited, could, through a sort of chain reaction, lead to the near extermination of an entire group of people.

These details lead us to conclude that at least four types of epidemics spread from the Gwich'in and Han into the territory occupied by the Tutchone. From Campbell's writings we know that since 1848 the Ayans or southern Han, living around the lower White and Stewart rivers, would trade near the site of Fort Selkirk as well as at Fort Yukon. These Athapaskan were the people that Murray and Hardisty called the *Gens des Fous*, or Han Kutchin. From 1852 (shutting down of Fort Selkirk) to 1869 (the year that the original Fort Yukon was closed and a new one built at Rampart House on the Porcupine River) the Han continued to go to Fort Yukon. The diaries and the correspondences of the Anglican mis-

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[211] *Journal of the Reverend R. McDonald*, April 13, 1866, May 11, 1867 (C.M.S. A93).
[212] R. McDonald, *Fort Yukon, Annual Letter,* October 28, 1868 (C.M.S. A94).
[213] *McDonald to Mr. Long, Peel River Fort*, January 21, 1865; *Journal of the Reverend R. McDonald*, May 11, June 9, 1867 (C.M.S. A93). Kirby, *Journal from May 25, 1861 to May 1862* (C.M.S. A93).
[214] Kirby, *Fort Norman,* June 1863 (C.M.S. A93).
[215] *McDonald to Mr. Long, Peel River Fort*, January 31, 1865 (C.M.S. A93).
[216] *Journal of the Reverend R. McDonald*, April 13, 1866 (A93).
[217] *Ibid*., May 11, June 12, 1867.
[218] *Journal of the Reverend R. McDonald*, March 2, 1868 (C.M.S. A94).
[219] *Journal of the Reverend R. McDonald*, January 23, 1871 (C.M.S. A99).

sionaries show that they contracted practically every disease that affected the Fort Yukon Gwich'in. But these Han would have certainly continued to obtain some of their supplies from the Fort Selkirk nation. Certain prestigious items—beads, ivory from sea-lions, abalone shells—were not sold in sufficient quantity by the Hudson Bay Company at Fort Yukon, but could fortunately be acquired from the Tlingit. If this was the case, then there is little reason to believe that the diseases contracted by the Han at Fort Yukon would not have been transmitted to the indigenous people that Campbell left behind in 1852. The four epidemics that we will look at were the most virulent ones to have affected the Gwich'in and Han.

The first dates back to the winter of 1854-1855 (see Table III). The nature of the disease was not specified in the documents. It took the lives of 12 percent of the adult population of Fort Yukon. This estimate is based, not so much on knowledge of the entire native population who went to Fort Yukon, but on the number of men who were registered in the Fort Yukon accounts ledger as having debts. The managers of the H.B.C. habitually prepared such a list each year. For that time, the Fort Yukon journal reveals that the Han and also the "*Gens de Couttou*" [*Gens des Couteaux*, or Knife Indians] of Ross River and the Pelly would go to the fort to trade.[220] The epidemic therefore probably spread throughout the Upper Yukon when the Knife returned home.

The second major epidemic came in the winter of 1865-1866. It was scarlet fever. Wherever precise records were kept, the disease claimed the lives of one-third of the population. The fact that the proportion was one-third in 1865 just as it had been in 1852 seemed somewhat suspect to me, so I checked McDonald's assertion with the figures in his journal which he meticulously updated each day. As stated in one of his letters dated September 5, 1866, the epidemic supposedly took more than 100 lives at Lapierre House and at Peel River Fort and 170 lives among the Gwich'in who went to Fort Yukon. Another letter[221] estimates the total number of deaths at all three forts at 300. I was able to cross-check these accounts only for the Kutcha Gwich'in and the Black River Gwich'in. On November 25, 1865, McDonald wrote that these two groups lost 60 members (almost all were adults). He added:

> It is our knowledge that more than a third of the whole of their two tribes died. […]. The Koocha Koochen tribe used to be regarded as the head tribe of the Tukuth or Koocheen, but I expect will scarcely hold its place much longer, being so much reduced in number [that] there are at present only about 12 men in the tribe.[222]

The figure of 60 deaths is somewhat exaggerated if compared to his diary's entries. A specific account concerning the period from November 14 to December 15, 1865 indicated 18 deaths among the Black River Indians and 20 deaths among the Koocha koocheen between October 27 and November 25, 1865: 38 deaths in all. However, if we base ourselves on this revised account, the mortality *rate* calculated by McDonald would have been underestimated rather than overestimated. In his journal, the total population (adults only?) of both groups before the epidemic was 40 for the Koocha Koochin camp and 55 for the Black

[220] Hardisty, *Fort Yukon Journal*, May 26, 1854.
[221] *R. McDonald to Colonel Dawes,* September 5, 1866 (C.M.S. A93).
[222] *Journal of the Reverend R. McDonald*, November 25, 1865 (C.M.S. A93).

River camp.[223] That makes 38 dead out of 95 individuals, which in fact works out to a mortality *rate* of 40 percent *in one single month*. With this kind of evidence before us, a mortality rate of between one quarter and one third would thus be a realistic figure for one serious epidemic alone. Let us note also that the 1865 scarlet fever epidemic spread very quickly from the Mackenzie Basin, where it ran rampant throughout the month of August, to the Yukon Basin by the end of September.

When the Han went to Fort Yukon on September 28 and October 1 and then left a few days later, it had not as yet claimed any victims.[224] But this brief visit had a disastrous outcome for the Han. News of numerous deaths among them came only one year later. The Hung Koocheen band or regional group—one of the three Han groups—lost 22 adults in a matter of months during the winter of 1865-1866.[225] I do not know exactly which other groups were affected, but considering how quickly the epidemic spread from the Mackenzie Basin to the Yukon, and from the Gwich'in to the Han, I have every reason to believe that the indigenous people of the Fort Selkirk region were affected to the same extent.

The third epidemic—dysentery—occurred during the summer of 1873 and killed many Han children. Without sufficiently detailed data, however, the mortality rate cannot be estimated. Similarly for the diphtheria epidemic 10 years later (1883), which took an especially heavy toll on the adults. We know that it reduced an entire tribe of Gwich'in to only 10 men and a few women,[226] and that it might have been transmitted to the Han since four members of that group (two from the Klondike River) went to visit the Fort Yukon Gwich'in and at least one Indian from the Tanana River met at Fort Yukon visited Han country[227] at a time when the epidemic was running rampant. For lack of any specific evidence, it is impossible to determine whether it was as devastating for the Han and the Tutchone as it was for the Gwich'in.

While it is not known just how many epidemics might have been transmitted through the Upper Yukon by the Han, the four virulent diseases described above most certainly reached the Tutchone and can explain the dire demographic observations made in February 6, 1890 by McDonald, the first missionary to go to the region in 1887:

> To give you an idea of the character of the poverty stricken land: White River […], when I visited the Upper Yukon in 1887 was totally uninhabited; Stewart […] was also uninhabited. They had not always been so.[228]

In his letter, McDonald exaggerated the situation somewhat so as to alarm the authorities to whom the letter was addressed. In a previous letter, an excerpt of which was discovered in a manuscript found in Whitehorse,[229] he wrote of his exploration of the Stewart: "My intention was to go to Fort Selkirk, but [I] heard that all the Indians had come to the Stewart

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[223] *Ibid*., November 10, 14, 19, 25, 1865; December 15, 1865; November 22, 1866.
[224] *Ibid*., August, September and October 1865.
[225] *Ibid*., June 26, 1866 (C.M.S. A93).
[226] V. C. Sim, *Journal of a Journey on the Yukon River*, August 5, 7, 8, 1883 (C.M.S. A112).
[227] *Ibid*., June 28, 1883.
[228] R. McDonald, *St. Mathews,* February 6, 1890 (C.M.S. A116).
[229] Anonymous, "*The Venerable Robert McDonald*," typed copy of a manuscript in the Anglican Old Log Church, Whitehorse, Y.T., no date, 6 pages

River for salmon fishing." Now, the native salmon fishing practices would take people far from the main rivers. This might explain why McDonald did not encounter any Indian people that particular year, but it does not mean that the Stewart and White rivers had been totally deserted. Moreover, a document written by Ellington[230] in 1888 contradicts McDonald's account. He wrote that there were about 200 people living along the White River, the Stewart River and the Pelly River, thereby demonstrating that the groups along the Stewart and White rivers had not been entirely annihilated between 1852 and 1887. Subsequent visits to the region confirm this.[231] Yet, it does not rule out the probability that they were significantly affected during that period by epidemics as virulent as those that raged among the Han and Gwich'in, who were unwitting participants in their transmission.

Without a doubt, the people whom the missionaries encountered after 1887 had been reduced in number. From the documents left by the missionaries, it would appear that no scourge of the same magnitude as the 1865 scarlet fever epidemic was repeated between 1887 and 1910. Table III lists them all. One unspecified disease in particular took many lives among the Han and, apparently, the survivors of the Stewart River people in the winter of 1887-1888. During the Klondike Gold Rush (1897-1901), the Selkirk Indians, and most certainly all the others as well, were severely stricken with influenza. Many perished. In 1905, the child mortality rate at Fort Selkirk rose significantly. Diphtheria re-surfaced in the Yukon in 1907. During that period, the population of the Indian groups was diminished gradually as opposed to many lives being taken at once. Deaths far outnumbered births, and the figures provided by Bompas[232] for the Hung Gwich'in on the Fortymile River—30 deaths for 12 births in 1897 and 1898—were certainly representative of the entire Yukon Territory for that period. However, as this demographic trend subsequently underwent a correction, none of the surviving groups disappeared altogether.

Overall, between 1840 and 1920, the population declined significantly, but even the hardest hit regions—the White River and the Stewart River—were not completely depopulated. Let us now examine whether other factors—trade and war—might have resulted in these partially decimated groups relocating.

### 4.4.2 Trading Posts

One of the factors that could have led to the exodus of Campbell's Wood Indians was the closing of Fort Selkirk and the fact that three trading posts in the vicinity continued to operate: Fort Yukon, at the mouth of the Porcupine River (succeeded by Rampart House on the Porcupine near the Alaskan-Canadian border); Lapierre House on the Bell River (one of the sources of the Porcupine); and Fort McPherson on the lower course of the Peel River near

[230] J. W. Ellington, *Fort Reliance,* July 1888 (C.M.S. A115).

[231] For the Stewart and Pelly rivers, see Totty, B., *Wolverhampton, England,* February 28, 1900 (C.M.S. A120); for Fort Selkirk, see Canham, *Fort Selkirk,* February 17, 1893 (C.M.S. A118, #1989); for the Southern Tutchone, see Bompas, *Dawson,* July 1899 (C.M.S. A120, #2809). For the White River, see Bompas, *Selkirk, On Board Steamship, Upper Yukon River,* September 3, 1896 (C.M.S. A119, #2479).

[232] Bompas, *Fortymile,* December 19, 1898 (C.M.S. A120, #2772).

the Mackenzie Delta in the Northwest Territories. The word "vicinity" is relative. By river, Fort Yukon was 670 km away from Fort Selkirk. As straight as the crow flies, Lapierre House and Fort McPherson were about 510 km and 530 km, respectively, from Selkirk. Having to cross the Ogilvie and Wernecke Mountain ranges made these distances considerably longer.

None of the archival documents regarding the three forts ever mentions the people of the Upper Yukon moving closer to these trading posts. Only Fort Yukon, thanks to the river, was easily accessible. The people it attracted were primarily Han. Even after Fort Selkirk was destroyed in 1852, few of the Indians with whom Campbell had contact went to Fort Yukon. Hardisty's journal mentions Fort Selkirk people visiting once or twice,[233] and also the *Gens des Couteaux*, or Knife Indians, (Upper Pelly)[234] in 1853 and 1854. After that date, no one from either group went to Fort Yukon. The documents of the Church Missionary Society reveal the same state of affairs.

Readers should not find this too surprising. As noted above, the prices charged by the H.B.C. at Fort Selkirk were higher than those charged by the Tlingit. Even the Han, who often had to go through middlemen, continued to obtain trade goods from the Tlingit for less than they would have paid in furs at Fort Yukon. Murray[235] reported, for example, that one of the chiefs of the *Gens des Fous* had bitterly complained about prices at Fort Yukon being higher than those charged by the Pacific Coast Tlingit. Based on these facts, it can be concluded that if no mention was made of Upper Yukon Athapaskan at the three Gwich'in forts it is because they did not in fact go there and that these remote posts did not attract the Athapaskans who used to trade directly with the Tlingit or with Campbell at Fort Selkirk.

A trading post—Fort Reliance—was built in 1874 in the Han's southern territory, near present-day Tutchone lands. No information has been found on the post's operations, but in light of the competition it faced from the Tlingit, it seems reasonable to suppose that Fort Reliance only had a minor effect on the indigenous people of the Pelly River and around Fort Selkirk.

As highlighted in Chapter 3, some Tutchone who were youths or young adults in 1880, were still living in the 1940s. The Tutchone elders with whom I spoke in 1972 and subsequent years had known those people, yet they had told them nothing of any major population displacements, except for the move of part of the Selkirk groups to the Stewart River mentioned above. As nothing to the contrary emerged in the archival documents, it is likely that their assertions essentially comprise the historical record.

### 4.4.3 Intrusions and War

Considerable difficulty was encountered in documenting episodes of warfare or incursion by hostile strangers in the lands of the Wood Indians in the period 1850-1880. Essentially the recollections of the Tutchone are the only available sources of information.

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[233] Hardisty, *Fort Yukon Journal,* October 17, 1852; May 21, 1853.
[234] *Ibid*., April 10, 11, 1853; May 26, 1854.
[235] Murray, *Fort Yukon Journal*, August 4, 1848.

In the period 1850 to 1880, two wars could be recalled by Tutchone informants. One involved the people of the White River and the Tlingitized Southern Tutchone of Neskatahin in the Alsek River Basin in the southern Yukon. It took place a few decades before 1890. Another, more of a skirmish than a war, pitted the people of Selkirk against the Tlingit. We could not establish a date for it, but McClellan (1975b: I, 213) pinpoints it to a few years prior to 1848, the year in which the first trading post was built in the Upper Yukon River.

The first war resulted in the extermination of the members of the Neskatahin band. However, the people of the White River then returned to their country (cf. McClellan, 1975a: 26; 1975b: I, 204-205). The second claimed a few lives on both sides and then, after four of five years, trade relations were re-established between the Tlingit and the people of Selkirk. There is no record or recollection of Tlingit ever occupying Selkirk people's territory. This war seems to have only taken the form of seasonal raiding activities.

The only indications of population change in our area of interest concern the Stewart River and the White River. As seen above, the Tutchone claim that the Stewart was occupied by a sub-group of the Selkirk people around 1870. This assertion seems to be confirmed by the fact that in 1887 McDonald, who was planning to go to Fort Selkirk, changed course and went instead to the Stewart where, he had been told, the people of Fort Selkirk tended to go salmon fishing. No field research yielded data about the White River, but in the letter in which McDonald wrote about the devastating epidemics, he added:

> I was told that formerly the inhabitants were numerous, but that through diseases and hard times the inhabitants had either wholly died off or some of them had joined other tribes further down the Yukon. Among the Trurth-syik Kwitchin [Han from the Klondike], I found two or three families who at one time had occupied the country of White River. I asked one of them to tell me of that river. He declined to do it from a feeling of superstition [religious beliefs] or from a feeling of sadness at the thought of his tribe and his relations that had all passed away.[236]

The presence of White River native families among the Klondike Han corresponds to what Schwatka described as socio-political alliances between the two groups. However, McDonald was mistaken when he implied that the White River had been completely depopulated before 1887. Ellington's contradictory comments on this matter have been reported above. Furthermore, it is difficult to grasp how Green could have identified a band of Copper Indians in the area in 1908. It should be mentioned here that the families of the White River seen in the midst of the Klondike Han refused to speak with McDonald. It is therefore probable that his interpretation was incorrect and that those families had simply been separated from the rest of their band or regional group for whatever reason.

Now for the case of the Stewart River peoples: Campbell's journal cites the lower course of the Stewart River as having been inhabited by the Ayans and the middle section by the Wood Indians. Schwatka and Dawson used the names Netch-on'-dees and To-tshik-o-tin to refer to the Lower Stewart in the years 1880-1890. The second name appears to be what the Klondike River Han were called; a name which the missionaries in the 1880s wrote

[236] R. McDonald, *St. Mathews,* February 6, 1890 (C.M.S. A116, #1519).

alternately as Trotsik Kutchin, Tchotsyik Kutchin, and Trooth tsik Kuitchin, etc.[237] The "o-tin" used by Dawson could be attributed to the fact that he obtained his information from the Tutchone rather than from the Gwich'in, as the missionaries had done. The term used by the Tutchone—huč'an—can in fact be heard as sounding like "o-tin." Schwatka's term, Netch-on'-dees, was undoubtedly the term used by his Tagish interpreter to mean To-tschik-o-tin. If that was the case, the explanation is quite simple. The people of the Stewart River, who after having been decimated joined the Klondike Han, were most likely Han to start with (i.e. the people of the Lower Stewart whom Campbell called Ayans). The area abandoned by the Han was subsequently occupied by some of the Wood Indians of Selkirk who then became the neighbours of the Wood Indians of the middle section of the Stewart River.

At this point, let us note that this migration of part of the Selkirk Wood Indians and their amalgamation with another sub-group of Wood Indians on the Stewart does not pose problems for our purpose. Our aim, it must be remembered, is to find out whether the Tutchone of the twentieth century (those of Selkirk and the Stewart) are direct descendants of the Wood Indians observed by Campbell in 1848-1852. From our standpoint, the presence of some people originally from Fort Selkirk on the Stewart does not create any methodological difficulty. Together with the Tutchone who are concentrated today at Pelly Crossing, they are the best candidates to be the direct descendants of the group of Wood Indians depicted in the Fort Selkirk journals of Robert Campbell.

## 4.5 Conclusion

The above discussion suggests no significant source of cultural discontinuity as a direct result of epidemics, followed by population movement, or warfare among the Tutchone in the period 1840-1890. Apart from one minor event that does not affect these conclusions, the Wood Indians that Campbell saw remained where they had been living in 1850. Despite several epidemics, the people never completely died out and no strangers from distant indigenous groups infiltrated their territory or replaced them. Nothing in the oral histories or in any of the reference documents indicates any major population displacement or migration in this region in the nineteenth century.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the Tutchone were able to provide McClellan with information about Campbell and about the operations of Fort Selkirk (McClellan, 1970b: 107-114). At the time she was collecting these data, no popular literature had yet been disseminated among Yukon Athapaskan on the subject of the H.B.C. making inroads into their region of

[237] *Trotsik Kutchin*, or *Trotskik Kutchin*, or *Tchotsyik Kutchin*, or *Truthtsykk Kutchin*, or *Trurhtsyik Kutchin*, or *Trooth tsik Kuitchin*, which means "Stone-Hammer River Tribe." *Journal of the Reverend R. McDonald*, May 26, 1875 (C.M.S. A101); *Journal of the Reverend R. McDonald*, July 30, 1875 (C.M.S. A102); *Journal of K. M. McDonald*, December 15, 1875 (C.M.S. A102); *Journal of the Reverend R. McDonald*, March 19, 1877 (C.M.S. A103); V. Sim*, Rampart House,* January 9, 1885 (C.M.S. A113, #689); Bompas*, Buxton,* November 18, 1896 (C.M.S. A119, #2534); Bompas*, Selkirk, On Board Steamship, Upper Yukon River,* September 3, 1896 (C.M.S. 119, #2479).

the Yukon. The Tutchone repeated what had been passed down to them through their parents or grandparents. Incidentally, the Southern Tutchone also knew Campbell, and this tends to prove, as this man's journal would suggest, that they too were coming to Fort Selkirk at least from time to time. McClellan's sources had even retained the name of one of the main chiefs who, shortly before Campbell's arrival, had been involved in a quarrel with the Tlingit. McClellan (1970b: 109; 1975a: 213) transcribed his name as ɬingIt tɬEn and Tɬingit Tɬen. Proof that Campbell faced difficulties with respect to Tutchone phonetics is evident in the orthographic variations he left behind: Thlinkit, Clingit-this, Thlinekit, Thlinkeling, Thlinikit-thling.[238] McClellan (1970b: 109) believes that the name is Tlingit (Tlingit: man, big). However, nothing could be less certain. If Campbell and McClellan hesitated as much as they did in transcribing the first letter "tɬ", there is no apparent reason why McClellan would have rendered it as "tl" in order to translate it as man. Thlinikit-thling, as spelled by Campbell, could very well be a Tutchone term in which the term dog (tliɳ) is represented in the first and last parts. Use of the word "dog" applied to a person should not come as a surprise considering that the Dogrib who are Mackenzie Athapaskan call themselves Thlingchadinne, for example (cf. Yerbury, 1977: 351). Moreover, Thlinikit-thling cannot be regarded as a vague term designating any Tlingit man (thus making the Thlinikit-thling of the Southern Tutchone a different man from the chief who lived in Campbell's time). First, Thlinikit-thling was a man whom Campbell saw frequently and knew well. Secondly, he was not a Tlingit. Campbell would call all Indians from the Pacific Coast "Tchilcat," not Tlingit, a term which apparently did not exist at that time. Even in the 1970s, no Tutchone used this word yet. They referred to the Tlingit exclusively as the Coast or Salt Water Indians. Finally, Thlinikit-thling is a name that is quite distinct from the half dozen or so chiefs named in Campbell's journal, and in the 1970s my informants still recognized the name given by Campbell in reference to the son of that chief—Hahnin or Hanan[239] (cf. McClellan, 1970b: 109). The son, who was also a chief during Campbell's stay in the region, seems to have been buried at Fort Selkirk. Boillot (1898: 88) transcribed his name as Harnan and stated that his grave was still being well maintained in 1898. This shows that, regardless of the year in which Harnan died, the group remained in the Fort Selkirk area from 1850 to 1900. Otherwise, his grave would have most likely been left unattended.

Still other facts support the thesis of ethnic continuity. One of the Tatchun women with whom I spoke was familiar with the name Kon-it'l, the chief of the Selkirk people at the time of Schwatka's visit (1883). When I showed her a drawing of him made by Schwatka, she expressed great joy to finally see, she said, the face of the man about whom she had heard so much. After 1900, Enoch, the name given to the shaman seen by Schwatka and Sim, became a surname among the people of the White River. It will be recalled that Enoch was encountered among the Han but that the place where he was buried—Coffee Creek—reveals that he was a White River Indian. In addition, Lake Tatlmain, which Campbell spelled "Tatlamain,"[240] was a descriptive term in Tutchone and the Tutchone still call it that

[238] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, September 28, 1848; June 29; August 31; October 31, 1849— Campbell in Wilson (1970: 70).
[239] *Ibid*., September 30, 1848; Campbell in Wilson (1970: 70).
[240] *Ibid*., May 27, 1850.

today. A man from Pelly Crossing even pointed out that modern maps do not spell it the way that it is pronounced. In his opinion, it should be spelled Tatlamain, like Campbell had it. How then can we explain Campbell's perfect transcription without validating that he had heard the name directly from the mouths of the Tutchone?

And lastly, as evidence for population continuity, there is the term "Ayans" which has been transcribed a number of ways by Campbell, Schwatka and Dawson and which was still part of the Tutchone vocabulary in the 1970s. The apparent inconsistency with which it is used in archival documents is in fact very consistent with the way the Tutchone used it in the 1970s. The term is meant to designate a group that lives away. As the "far away people" to one group are most often different from those that are the "far away people" to another group, it is to be expected that European explorers would have used it to designate three different groups. Had they not in fact been informed by individuals belonging to different groups? As the name Ayan was not encountered anywhere else among the Athapaskans, and as the common usage of the term by Europeans reflects the usage by the Tutchone, we can only conclude that the three authors mentioned were in contact with regional groups of the larger Tutchone group. This then is yet another indicator that the Tutchone have occupied this region of the Yukon continuously since at least the 1840s. While each indication in itself might be considered weak, together they form an intrinsic body of evidence and support the thesis of ethnic continuity. There is no apparent basis for anything to the contrary.

The regional group was regarded by the indigenous people as the largest sociological community. No single term existed in the indigenous vocabulary to designate a grouping made up of a number of regional groups. Thus, those who believed they had found one were inevitably mistaken. It is therefore not too surprising that each of the Indian names and territorial delineations proposed by explorers in the nineteenth century are wrong in some important respect.

For example, some of the terms used by Dawson seem to belong to indigenous nomenclature. They share the suffix "*o-tin*" which could be an approximate transcription of one of the dialectical versions of "*huč'an*." But Dawson uses these names as proper names and not with the meaning that they have for the Tutchone. In this way, *Klo-a-tsul-tshik' (otin?)* might have been a descriptive expression to designate a regional group. And by applying it as a proper name to all of the natives living between Rink Rapids, the Donjek River and the junction of the Pelly and Yukon rivers, Dawson (1888: 202B) inevitably made a gross cultural misinterpretation. The group which he took to be one large unit was certainly made up of the people that informants in the 1970s listed as those of Tatchun Lake (*tačan-gio'huč'an*), of Aishihik Lake (*łu-č'an*), of the White River (Copper Band), and of the people of Fort Selkirk (*otsane-ču-huč'an*).

Who, in this group of *dan*, which means "people," would have claimed to be a member of the *Klo-a-tsuk-tshik' (o-tin)*? Certainly not the *tačan-gio'-huč'an*! Surely not the *łu-č'an*! Nor even the *otsane-ču-huč'an*! Supposing that the term once designated a regional group that has since disappeared, only the members of that group would have claimed membership in the *Klo-a-tsul-tshik' (o-tin?)*. If we suppose that *Klo-a-tsul-tshik' (o-tin?)* was a term coined by the members of a group to designate people of another region—which is a more likely scenario—no local native would recognize the designation *Klo-a-tsul-tshik' (o-tin?)* as it own proper name. As was the case for the term Ayan, this would explain why the Tutchone classification makes it impossible to establish an ethnographic map and why the maps

drawn from information gathered from individuals belonging to different groups are bound to be at odds. The multitude of names and changes in the territorial boundaries do not betray any real movement of population.

Not the fur trade, nor regular commercial exchanges with the Tlingit, nor even the numerous epidemics, led to a population migration in the Upper Yukon in the mid- to late nineteenth century. Thus, the Wood Indians (Lewes River Indians and *Tuhin Tatinnat*), Campbell's "Tribe from Far Inland," Schwatka's Ayans, the *Klo-a-tsul-tshik' (o-tin?)* and Dawson's *Es-pā-to-ti-na* are all terms that conceal but a single population: the nineteenth century ancestors of the Tutchone. The details about these Wood Indians, the details about Schwatka's A-yans and those which the Tutchone provided in the 1970s and later about the culture of their grandparents and great-grandparents in the years 1890-1920 can therefore be considered to be information about a single ethnic and cultural group. *Tuhin Tatinnat, A-yans, Na-ai, Klo-a-tsul-tshik' (o-tin?)*, *To-tshik-o-tin*, *Ayonias* were all answers to European culture-bound questions that would inevitably collide and bounce back on the building blocks of the indigenous way of thinking. They were only echoes!

# 5 MOOSE AND CARIBOU IN TUTCHONE COUNTRY: 1840-1920

One part of the puzzle has now been pieced together. The history of Euro-Canadian penetration in what is today the southern half of the Yukon Territory was presented in Chapter 2. We also saw how some of the early chroniclers had different—at times even contradictory—methods of classifying the various indigenous peoples they encountered.

At first glance, the profusion of names given to each group would seem to suggest that the many different names might have designated an equal number of groups or perhaps might have indicated major population shifts. After studying the ethnohistoric context and the archival and historical records of the 1840-1920 period, it is clear that neither interpretation is correct. The Wood Indians, the *Netch-on'dees*, etc. were a single people who today are called the Tutchone. Further, no evidence can be found to suggest that Tutchone culture is a merging of traits from different cultures as a result of an amalgamation of different ethnic groups.

Although important, the scope of this point is nevertheless limited. To be in a position to reconstruct what Tutchone society and culture were between 1840 and 1890 we still must determine whether the society was altered from within, either between 1840 and 1890 or between 1890 and 1920. Examination of the first period is necessary to define the extent to which the period documents can be merged to provide a description of one overall structure. The second period will inform us of the extent to which Tutchone oral tradition actually reflects social organization before 1890. Let us recap what we have learned thus far.

In Chapter 2, we noted that the Tlingit had been coming to the Yukon since the eighteenth century. Any influence they might have had on Tutchone culture would have dated from well before 1840. For this reason, annual contact with the Tlingit during the second half of the nineteenth century was not considered a new factor of change. We also saw that, in the same period, the presence of a few Europeans could not have had any significant cultural impact on the societal structure of these Athapaskans. Lastly, it was shown that the socio-cultural pressures exerted by Euro-Canadian people between 1890 and 1920 had only one direct effect (the resolution of internal problems among Tutchone through the use of force became illegal and difficult). However, in the same chapter, we saw that a number of other factors also could have played a role in transforming the socio-cultural structure of the Tutchone group. Chapter 4 was devoted to only one of those factors (possible population

displacements and amalgamation) and the effects of other potential factors identified in Chapter 3 remain to be discussed.

Among the factors potentially affecting socio-cultural transformation, I noted the possibility of ecological change, the possibility of changes in production techniques—either through the introduction of European implements or as a result of having access, after 1890, to consumer goods which led to the disappearance of some indigenous branches of production—and lastly, the possibility that the potential for cooperative labour or for some other forms of social grouping might have been modified because of a population decline.

## 5.1 Basic Concepts for the Study of Economic and Socio-Cultural Changes

To explain how such phenomena could have effected socio-cultural change, a distinction must be made between a society's work or labour *patterns of appropriating materials* (a concept also known in Marx's writing as *"forms of appropriating nature"*), its *social sub-systems* and its *cultural sub-systems*. In the expression "labour patterns of appropriating materials," the word "patterns" refers to the *kind of labour and division of labour* required for a given productive task to be successfully carried out (can it be done by a single individual, or should it be carried out through a group of individuals working together at the same time towards a single end; what kind of cooperative group, etc.?); "appropriation" refers to the action of *making a productive use* of something *through one's labour*; "material" is used in the Latin sense of *materia* or physical *matter* and refers to *any substance or substances* out of which a product is or can be made (a material may be a natural object such as a rock to make an arrow point, a live game animal to kill for a meal, or a semi-finished product such as a plank of wood out of which to make a ski, etc.). In other words, a society's patterns of appropriating materials are embedded in its work and production processes, their various steps or labour phases, their cycles, the rate at which they are carried out and the physical conditions under which they are performed (Balibar, 1965). They are the various types of work patterns (individual work, restricted cooperation, enlarged simultaneous cooperation) through which a society is able to extract and transform its natural resources into semi-finished and then finished products. These patterns define so to speak frameworks of dependence and/or independence between a society's individuals—frameworks which must be accepted if regular production is to be carried out. *Social system* refers to all the relationships that define access to resources and instruments or implements of production; the relationships through which the work force represented by the population is assigned one task or another; and, lastly, the relationships through which the product of individual or collective work is distributed. *Social system* here is the equivalent to what Godelier (1977: 42) termed after Marx the *social relations of production*. The term *cultural sub-systems* designates the systems of standards and values to which the population in question subscribes: "Culture is socially transmitted behaviour conceived as an abstraction from concrete social groups" (Aberle *et al*., 1950: 102).

Had the hypothetical factors mentioned earlier (demographic decline, ecological change, introduction of European implements, etc.) been there, this clearly could account for changes in the structure of the *organization of labour* which is ascribed to the concept *patterns of appropriating materials*. Among the aspects of this structure are the cycles of pro-

duction, the size of the production groups, the patterns of cooperation required by different work processes—or the absence of such cooperative patterns. As a result of modifications or curtailments in the organization of labour, a social system and its dependent cultural subsystems may have had to be restructured. This comes from the fact that the work or labour patterns used in a *given environment*, with a *given set of techniques*, give shape to some of the ways in which a society organizes itself socially and culturally (Murphy, 1970: 55). Changes of a social or cultural nature occur when new methods of segmenting and organizing the population into production units make it impossible to perpetuate or reproduce the social standards and cultural values that existed at the outset.

To avoid unnecessary debate, two important points must be made. One is that a society presumably maintains and reproduces its structures as long as it is not forced to change them. If certain changes to the organization of labour are compatible with the existing socio-cultural structures, then obviously, these structures undergo no change. Here the premise is that only those changes to the organization of labour (and thus to the ways of surviving) that are incompatible with a given socio-cultural order lead to a restructuring of the socio-cultural order, and not that all changes in the labour structures bring about such a restructuring. The other point is that there is no need to find out what prompted the initial forms of the socio-cultural order. Resolving this issue is not required for the purpose of this study. It should be reiterated that the intention here is to simply discover whether, between 1840 and 1920, there might have been reasons for Tutchone society to have changed from its 1840s social and cultural characteristics. These reasons for change must be plausible and based on the region's socio-historic context. For the purposes of this discussion, it is not necessary to understand what shaped the social and cultural systems prior to 1840. Plausible reasons of change, refers to a series of hypothetical events that might have actually occurred. Three such potential factors will now be considered in detail.

First, in the culture of Tutchone regional groups, as for their neighbours (Han, Kaska, Southern Tutchone and Upper Tanana/Nabesna), in the 1970s, moose was the principal focus of subsistence hunting. However, Poole Field ([1913] in MacNeish, 1957: 52-53), Honigmann (1954: 14-15) and McClellan (1975b: (I, 96) report that this had not always been the case throughout the territory. At the eastern and southern extremities of the lands occupied by the Tutchone, the moose apparently supplanted the caribou at the end of the nineteenth century. Would not the same phenomenon have occurred inside Northern Tutchone country as well? Perhaps, and McClellan (*ibid*.) demonstrates the importance of addressing this matter as follows: "The effective hunting of caribou involves a different pattern of social cooperation than that for hunting moose, even though the technological equipment remains much the same." Whereas moose live isolated from one another, caribou travel in herds and can be captured and killed in great number thanks to hunters' use of "fences" set in a V shape.[241]

[241] The Mackenzie Métis French-speaking employees of the Hudson's Bay Company used the term "barrière" (fence) to designate, at Lapierre House (YT), the enclosure used by the Gwich'in to capture herds of of caribou along their migratory route. Cf. *Journal of R. McDonald*, September 7, 1868 (C.M.S. A94); November 1869, (C.M.S. A99). For a description of the fences used in forest areas, see the section 5.4.4 of the present chapter.

In the nineteenth century, the operation of caribou fences called for a great many individuals to cooperate and for one of them to coordinate the work of various hunting subteams. Fifteen or so persons were needed to drive the herd towards the capture zone, between the two open arms of the V fence, many more to stand at the entry of the V to prevent the animals from going around it, and some 20 hunters were required around the apex of the V to quickly kill the caribou before they could attempt to escape. Meticulous coordination among the various teams was involved every step of the way (Legros, 1970, 1978). Had these activities been part of Tutchone subsistence in pre-contact times, this might explain the phenomenon of socio-economic inequalities alluded to in the introductory chapter. A cooperative hunt involving a large group requires a skilled coordinator (i.e. technologically and socially skilled). Such a position could very well have formed the springboard of a hierarchical socio-political structure (see Terray, 1969: 101). However, had production within large cooperative groups been absent among the Tutchone, we would have to look elsewhere for the source of power enjoyed by the Tutchone chiefs and their leading families.

In Chapter 4, we learnt from Campbell that the Tutchone already had a few flintlock guns, adzes and other European goods in 1843. They acquired more such merchandise from the Tlingit between 1843 and 1890, even though during that period we noted that in fact, only very few Tutchone possessed European-made implements and tools. The re-opening of Fort Selkirk in 1890 (after its brief existence between 1848 and 1852), combined with the gold rush of 1898, multiplied the opportunities for acquiring more such goods. After 1898, most Tutchone had access to axes, files, metal wire, rifles, metal points and blades, spring-loaded traps, kettles, matches, and needles, as well as consumables, such as tea, flour, lard, etc. Some indigenous tools were replaced by imported ones. Dogs were used in greater numbers. One must wonder then whether the introduction of these new technologies and improved means of transportation resulted in a restructuring of labour, and whether the fact that clothing and food staples could be readily purchased prompted the Tutchone to abandon some of their branches of production (e.g., the making of clothes, etc.). Lastly, it would be appropriate to reflect on the impact that epidemics might have had on the population and ultimately on its aboriginal way of making a living.

The present chapter will be devoted exclusively to the assumption that ecological and zoological change might have occurred and might have been a factor effecting change in Tutchone culture. In Chapter 6 we will focus on the inventory of new implements of production introduced to the Tutchone and identify those that might have had an impact on the organization of labour. Thereafter, Chapters 7 through 9 will analyze (1) the branches of production that benefited from new technologies that could transform labour patterns; (2) identify which, if any, indigenous products and attendant branches of production were abandoned as a result of finished foreign-made goods being readily available; and, lastly, (3) determine whether the socio-cultural order had to be restructured as a result of a population decline between 1840 and 1920. This will enable us to determine the extent to which we can mesh period documents with oral accounts dating from 1890 to the early 1970s.

The assumption of an ecological change requires a chapter of its own as it is very complex. Few, if any, of the hypotheses briefly summarized above have actually been verified by their authors. This shortcoming is true both for the regions inhabited by the Tutchone as well as those of their neighbours. Moreover, we will first have to describe the ecological environment of the Tutchone and their neighbours, both then and in the 1970s (section 2).

We will see that the environment is hospitable both to moose and to caribou. As this lends credence to the assumption that one species might have been supplanted by the other, assertions to this effect are established early on. We will note that the claims made by the Tutchone's neighbours on this subject are well-founded (section 3) and that this raises a problem the amplitude of which will be verified before establishing and dating the changes that occurred in Tutchone country between 1840 and 1920 (section 4).

To anticipate the events that affected the lands of the Tutchone's neighbours, taken together with the archival documents about Tutchone country will lead us to the following conclusions for the entire region. From 1843 to about 1910, almost all the Northern Tutchone hunted virtually no other big game than moose. Woodland caribou, which might have been present here and there in small numbers, were barely hunted at all. With the exception of the Donjek River area (where the Tutchone of Aishihik hunted; see Map 6), it was only around 1910 that huge herds of barren-ground caribou from the Fortymile River (Han country) began migrating into Northern Tutchone country and that its inhabitants began hunting caribou as much if not more than moose. As an important ecological change did actually take place, we will examine its main implications for this study: for example did it lead to a revolution in the work or labour patterns and thus affect the Tutchone culture? In turn, did this have an impact on the socio-economic inequalities in existence between 1843 and 1890?

As this may not be the only change that occurred, the following chapters focus on reconstructing the initial patterns of appropriating material and examine whether or not other changes also took place because of the importation of European-made implements and commodities. The description of the environment provided in the present chapter contains all the main ecological characteristics necessary for understanding the labour processes to be examined further on.

## 5.2 Geographical and Ecological Settings

Sitka, a small town in the Alexander Archipelago will serve to geographically situate the Tutchone territory. East of Sitka, on the mainland, the Pacific Cordillera and the Rocky Mountains form a single mass. Just to the north, the two mountain ranges diverge. The Pacific Cordillera initially describe a broad arc to the northwest through southern Alaska, and then sweep southwest to subside into the Pacific Ocean, where the peaks of its submerged mountains form the Aleutian Islands. The Rockies run due north to about the central Yukon before turning northwest to parallel more or less the Pacific Cordillera right up to the Alaska-Yukon border. At that point, the Rockies are roughly equidistant from the Beaufort Sea (Arctic Ocean) and the Gulf of Alaska (Pacific Ocean). Between the two mountain ranges is a high plateau drained by the Upper Yukon River. This plateau, the Yukon Plateau, whose elevation ranges between 1,000 and 1,300 metres (3,281 to 4,265 feet), is the

home of the Tutchone and their neighbours, the Southern Tutchone, Tagish, and Kasini/Kaska, to name a few.[242]

The Mackenzie Mountains, a subdivision of the Rockies, border the eastern and northern sides of the Yukon Plateau. This mountain range is divided into a number of massifs. From the south, near the northern British Columbia border, to the north, where the arc reaches its apex, are the Cassiar Mountains, Logan Mountains and Selwyn Mountains.[243] From the apex of the arc to the Alaskan border, the Wernecke Mountains and Ogilvie Range continue more or less in an east-west axis.[244] The waterways that flow from these mountain ranges are distributed between the two large river basins of north-western North America. Precipitation on the flanks that form ledges over the plateau are drained by the Yukon River while those opposite are drained by the Liard, Keele and Peel rivers towards the Mackenzie River and ultimately towards the Arctic Ocean.[245] These mountain ranges are not particularly high. Only some 40 peaks rise above 2,000 metres (6,562 feet). The highest peak of the Selwyn Mountains attains an elevation of 2,956 metres above sea level (9,700 feet); that of the Wernecke Mountains, 2,514 metres (8,250 feet); and that of the Ogilvie Range, 2,362 metres (7,750 feet). Because of their numerous passes, these ranges do not really obstruct entry to the Mackenzie Basin from the Yukon Plateau or vice versa.

To the south, however, a formidable wall of granite isolates the plateau from the Pacific Coast. This is the Pacific Cordillera which, at this latitude, is comprised of the Coast Mountains, the Saint Elias Mountains and the Wrangell Mountains. Between Juneau and Copper Center, these mountains stretch along a distance of about 700 km (435 miles). Three of their peaks rise to an altitude of between 4,500 and 5,000 metres (14,763 and 16,404 feet); three others, between 5,000 and 5,500 metres (16,404 and 18,044 feet). The entire region is dominated by Mt. Logan which at an elevation 6,050 metres (19,849 feet), is the highest mountain in Canada.

A few passes, at heights of less than 1,500 metres (4,921 feet), or even lower than 1,000 metres (3,280 feet) lead through this natural fortress.[246] From the summit of the pass known as White Pass, it is less than 800 metres (2,624 feet) straight down to the Pacific Ocean which here occupies a fiord extending far inland, known as Lynn Canal. This fiord was home to the Chilcoot and Chilcat Tlingit. Another pass—the Chilcat Pass (1,064 metres; 3,493 feet)—is about 70 km (44 miles) north of Klukwan, one of the two northernmost Tlingit villages (the other being the village on Yakutat Bay).[247] It was through these natural gateways that the Tlingit traded into Interior Yukon. Former meeting places such as Carmacks and Fort Selkirk were located approximately 250 and 325 km (156 and 203 miles),

[242] The main data provided come from the analysis of the map titled *Alaska, Northern Canada and Greenland* (1:500,000), compiled and drawn by the American Geographical Society of New York, 1948. (Sheet 10, Series 1106).

[243] *Ibid*.

[244] Cf. *Geological Map of the Yukon Territory* (1:1,267,000). Canada, Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, 1957 (Map 1048A).

[245] Cf. *World Aeronautical Chart: Peel River* (1CAO, 1:1,000,000), Canada, Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, 1964 (2068).

[246] Cf. *Alaska, Northern Canada and Greenland* (1:1,500,000), *op. cit*.

[247] Cf. *Ibid*.

respectively, from the Chilcat Pass. For the Tlingit at Klukwan, it would take one week and a few days to travel as far as Fort Selkirk and about twice that to return with their huge bundles of leather and furs.[248]

### 5.2.1 Topography

Despite its name, the Yukon Plateau is far from being a flat expanse of highlands stretching as far as the eye can see. At ground level, one has the feeling of being in a land that looks more like a mountainous region than the image conjured up by the word "plateau." It is actually made up of a series of rolling hills and high slopes that are tiring to climb up and down. Even at the plateau's highest elevation (about 1,500 metres; 4,921 feet), one's gaze is drawn to new obstructions: isolated mountainous massifs here and there block the horizon.[249]

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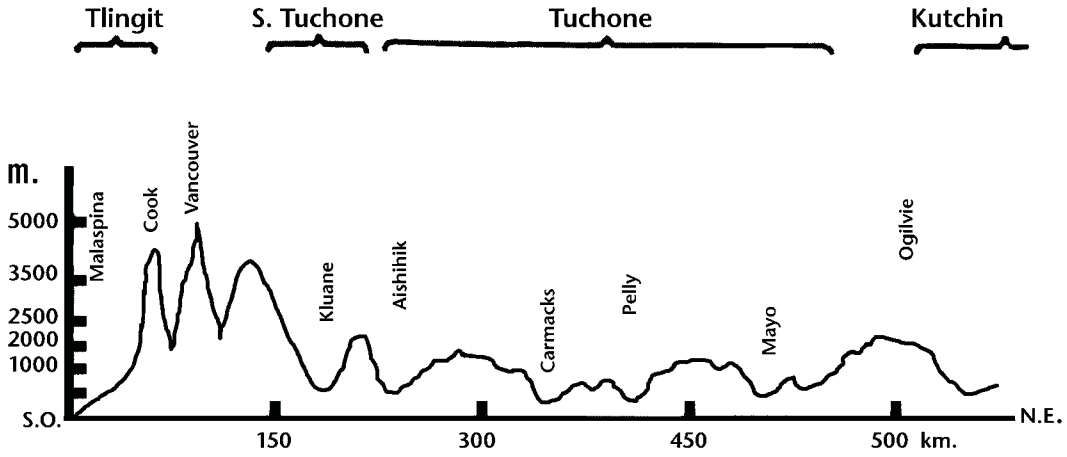
[248] The 3-4 week period required for the Tlingit to travel from Klukwan to Fort Selkirk and back again is an estimate based on information provided by Campbell. In his journal, he wrote that it would take two weeks on foot to return to the coast from Fort Selkirk (cf. Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, August 26, 1849). In the same passage and in many others, Campbell showed that the Chilcat used rafts and even boats made of seal skins comparable to the *umiat* used by the Inuit. This would explain the shorter travel time for the trip from the Pacific Coast to the interior. He mentioned (*ibid*., July 8, 1848) that they only needed 12 days to go from Lynn Canal to Fort Selkirk. Incidentally, Campbell's journal is useful in resolving a problem concerning the ethnography of the Tlingit. Although the Tlingit had long recounted stories of having used enormous skin-boats made of a bone frame and covered in seal skins (cf. de Laguna, 1972: 330), there is no proof that they existed. The first and only type of boat of this sort observed in Tlingit country was sighted by La Pérouse (*ibid*., 123, 331, Plate 36) at Lituya Bay, in 1786. But he attributed the sighting of this type of boat at that place to Eskimo [*sic*] visitors who had lost their way far from their territory. De Laguna (*ibid*., 331) showed that the comments made by La Pérouse were contradictory, that his speculation could be erroneous, and that the Tlingit possibly possessed, and even made, these types of skin-boats. She nevertheless admits that the data, on the whole, are not conclusive. Campbell's data help dispel the doubts shrouding this question. At Fort Selkirk, on September 19, 1848, Campbell wrote: "A party of Coast Indians (7), with the beloved's brother arrived this morning […] down the Lewes. This canoe is of seal skins, about 30 of them. Soon after, they loosed it up and put the skeleton or frame in the woods… One of them, said to be a Chilcat Indian, produced a note written on board the Beaver steamer 26th August, 1848, by Mr. Charles Dodd […]." In light of the Tlingit's zealous control over their trade routes in the interior, this could not in any way have been a group of Inuit or Aleut. It is certain that it was an exclusively Tlingit group. This would be the proof that de Laguna lacked. The Tlingit seem to have stopped using skin-boats only between 1850 and 1900.

[249] This description is a generalization based on three long expeditions on the Yukon Plateau: the first 80 km (50 miles) west of Carmacks, the second 15 km east of Braeburn Lake and the third about 35 km (22 miles) north of Frenchman Lake. Thanks to the staff of the Carmacks Department of Water and Forests, I was also able to view the entire region between Carmacks, Big Salmon and Tatchun Lake from the vantage point of a helicopter. This convinced me that the plateau is indeed a plateau, something I had difficulty believing given all the climbing in which I had engaged during my three previous expeditions. The figures here are taken from the following maps: *Alaska, Northern Canada and Greenland* (1:1,500,000), *op. cit*.; and *Geological Map of the Yukon Territory* (1:1,267,000), *op. cit*.

DIAGRAM I. CROSS-SECTION OF THE TOPOGRAPHICAL
Distribution of indigenous groups in the Yukon Territory




In the troughs are numerous marshy lakes and valleys. The portion of the plateau occupied by the Tutchone, taken alone, has no fewer than 24 large lakes, each one no less than 10 km (6.2 miles) in length. Some, like Mayo Lake and Little Salmon Lake are as long as 35 km (21.7 miles). Aishihik Lake is close to 55 km long (34 miles). Most of these large lakes are between 600 metres (1,968 feet) and 900 metres (2,952 feet) above sea level. In addition to these are innumerable little lakes and ponds in the valleys which, although less spectacular, were certainly very important for the Tutchone, either because they were abundant in fish, or because they were home to beavers and muskrats, or because they regularly attracted moose, which would make it relatively easy to find this elusive animal. It is impossible to count all the little lakes throughout the territory, but a fair idea of their number can be extrapolated from a small section. A small rectangular region measuring 15 km (9.3 miles) by 23 km (14.2 miles), with the town of Carmacks at its centre, has 235 lakes, ponds and pools large enough to have been indicated on a map drawn on a scale of 1:50,000.[250] Many of them support no life, but those that do offer an abundance of different species.

The main rivers—Pelly, White, Stewart and Yukon—flow through the lowlands. Over thousands of years all these waterways have become deeply entrenched in their valleys. At Carmacks, for example, from the right bank of the Yukon River to the ledge of the plateau one rises from 500 metres (1,640 feet) to 1,219 metres (4,000 feet) over a distance of 5 to 7 km (3-4 miles).[251] Elsewhere, alluvial terraces have formed, some wider than 10 km (6.2

[250] This rectangle corresponds roughly to the following coordinates: between 136° 07' and 136° 25' longitude west and between 62° 00' and 62° 12' latitude north. Cf. *Carmacks, Yukon Territory* (1:50,000), Canada Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, 1965 (115-I/1, Ed. 2 ASE, Series A 722).

[251] *Carmacks, Yukon Territory* (1:50,000), op. cit.

miles). Such is the case at Pelly Crossing,[252] where the river meanders widely in its valley. Where the rivers flow through compacted silt deposits in the valleys, these rivers' beds are very deeply entrenched. While canoeing, it is often necessary to climb a 50 metre bluff (164 feet) before setting foot on the alluvial plains properly speaking. Only from there may one glimpse between the treetops of the valley, the escarpments of the plateau.

To the South, invisible from the valley plains, lies the impressive Pacific Cordillera which dictates the climate in Tutchone country.

### 5.2.2 Climate

While passes in the Pacific Cordillera allow travellers to penetrate into the Yukon Plateau via the Pacific Coast, it is no less a formidable natural barrier from a climatic standpoint. Despite their geographic proximity to one another, the Tlingit and Tutchone lived in two completely different worlds. Because the coastal mountain range blocks the warm air mass generated by ocean currents originating in the Sea of Japan, the climate of the entire Pacific Coast is comparatively temperate, whereas that of the Yukon Plateau is very harsh. On Lynn Canal, the temperature very rarely falls below -30° C (-22°F). But on the Yukon Plateau, Snag, which is home to the descendants of the Copper regional group of the Tutchone, is one of the coldest places in all of North America. Records show that in February 1947, the temperature dropped as low as -63°C (-81°F). The inhabitants of Mayo, which is home to the northernmost Tutchone band, and those of Dawson City, in Han country, have seen the mercury fall during brief cold spells to -65°C (-84°F) and -68°C (-90°F), respectively.

Temperatures I noted in various places in the winter of 1973-1974 reveal no significant difference from the temperatures at Snag, Aishihik or Mayo, villages for which there are detailed meteorological tables (see Kendrew and Kerr, 1955: 145-222). These records can thus be safely generalized to describe the climate of Tutchone country on the whole.

From October through April, precipitation falls in the form of snow. Typically, total accumulations are 99 cm (39 in.) at Aishihik, 104 cm (41 in.) at Mayo and 142 cm (56 in.) at Snag. Yet, the depth of the snow rarely exceeds, on average, 20 to 50 cm (10 to 20 in.). Basically, the first layers of snow slowly compact and transform into ice crystals roughly the size of sea salt crystals. It is this under-layer of granular snow—not ice blocks—that is melted for drinking water in winter. Until mid-November, one can manage without snowshoes as the snow rarely exceeds depths of 15 cm (6 in.) during that period, but from December through April, they are indispensable. Even with rounded tip snowshoes—an excellent traditional design made by the Tutchone—one tends to sink in snow deeper than 20 cm (8 in.) whether on *terra firma* or on lakes and rivers that are frozen but covered in snow.

In January, the coldest month of the year, the average temperature is -18°C (-1°F) at Aishihik, -25°C (-14°F) at Snag, and -23°C (-11°F) at Mayo. The lowest temperatures—below -51°C (-60°F)—come abruptly in January and February. As the air is extremely dry, temperatures down to -40°C are easily tolerable. However, even the Tutchone find it difficult to

[252] Cf. Hand-drawn map, showing the boundaries of the individual trap lines established after the Second World War. Native Yukon Brotherhood, Whitehorse.

go hunting when the temperature drops below -45°C (-49°F). Assuming one, two or even three cold spells per winter, between 10 and 20 days are thus lost for hunting purposes, not to mention seven to 10 days lost for snowfall, and three to six days each month lost on account of fog that reduces visibility to less that one kilometre (3,280 feet). At Snag, for example, out of a total of 210 days of winter, it might be impossible to hunt for up to 80 of those days, i.e., about four days out of 10. It must also be added that in January, there is only 3-4 hours of daylight. Archival documents confirm that rationing in winter was more often the result of poor weather conditions than the lack of game. Thus, the following remark made by Campbell in February 1850: "Blind fellow's party arrived starving. Wolverines have eaten all their caches and the important cold weather has prevented them from hunting."[253]

The Tutchone must not, however, be thought of as a people obsessed, overcome or tormented by winter. Generation after generation, they experienced no more and no less hardship than people living at lower latitudes. Contemporary Euro-Canadian views of the extreme harshness and danger of the Yukon climate are in error, and tend to disproportionately emphasise the effects of the cold on day-to-day lives. In this climate, which is as dry as that of the Great Basin inhabited by the Shoshone Indians in the U.S.A.,[254] and with the proper clothing, which need not be cumbersome, one feels comfortable down to -40°C. A pair of moose hide moccasin boots lined with squirrel fur, for example, provides sufficient warmth for the feet. Even for a Frenchman from a temperate climate such as myself, sleeping outdoors without a fire at -30°C is only a little more uncomfortable than having to spend a winter night inside a damp room in an old French farmhouse. In both sorts of places, one wakes up because of the cold on one's forehead. However, the Tutchone, who are used to sleeping with their heads under their blankets, do not feel this discomfort at all. In the old days, when they slept in traditional bedding and clothing made of Dall sheep skins or moose hides with the hair kept on, the cold was even less of a concern.[255] Newborn and children slept besides their parents under the same skin-blankets and shared their warmth. In fact, the thought of spending the winter outdoors in the Subarctic should elicit no self-pity trepidation. Winter is

[253] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, February 4, 1850.

[254] When snow is converted to water, Snag receives a total annual accumulation of 36 cm (14 in.) of precipitation; Aishihik 25 cm (10.1 in.); and Mayo 28 cm (11.2 in.). These data are compared with the 12.7 to 63 cm (5-25 in.) stated by Steward (1955: 103) for the Great Basin in the Southwestern U.S.A.

[255] It is possible that, like the Inuit, the Tutchone are physiologically better adapted to the cold than people of European stock. This adaptation would include having twice the rate of blood circulation in the hands in low ambient temperatures. This possibility alone would provide a general resistance to the cold. Brown and Page (1952) who drew these conclusions about the Inuit of Southampton Island (NWT) remarked that the ambient temperature required for an Inuit to feel comfortable is lower than that required by people of European stock. The same phenomenon was observed among the Nunamiut Inuit of Alaska (cf. Gubser, 1965: 236). No comparable research was ever done for the Tutchone, but the fact that they allow their children to go out dressed in sweaters at temperatures of -25°C, the fact that men sometimes go out hunting dressed in jean jackets at temperatures of minus 20°C, and the fact that they find temperatures of -15°C too warm would suggest the same type of adaptation. If this assumption is valid, the climate of the plateau would be even more tolerable for the Tutchone than suggested in this text.

not dire. While there are many beauties in the world, I will never forget the fine spectacle I witnessed one full-moon-lit night in the taiga: a white hare bounding amid silent shadows cast by the trees and the blue hues of the palely lit snow. These moments are often the source of a great delight that cannot possibly be imagined. After experiencing them, one feels foolish to have thought of winter as an interminable bother and one better comprehends the Tutchone's excitement in October or November in anticipation of the security that comes with the arrival of winter's white mantle, silence and peace. This is why, in the fall—September—when alternating snow and rain makes travel most unpleasant, the threshold of winter is greatly anticipated.

Paradoxically, the arrival of summer does not elicit the same enthusiasm. In May, snow and ice melt quickly. In one month, one is transported from winter into summer which, from early June until the end of August, brings relatively mild weather and long days when, in June, dusk is immediately followed by dawn, but which also brings lengthy downpours and myriad mosquitoes and black flies.

In summer, at Aishihik, Snag and Mayo, the monthly average temperature is 10°C (50°F), 13°C (57°F) and 13°C (57°F), respectively. In July the highs can reach 30°C (86°F), and yet there is always the risk of overnight frost. Between 60 and 65 percent of yearly precipitation falls in the three summer months in the form of a fine mist that can last days on end. The hide clothing, made and worn by the Tutchone in the past, would quickly become soaked, making every movement difficult.From what they said, it was the advantageous properties of fabric—shorter drying time, no need to reshape—that prompted them to quickly adopt European clothing in place of those made of animal skins. As early as 1880, the most fortunate acquired such clothing any which way they could, buying from the Tlingit or other Athapaskans, previously worn clothes, even clothes that had been worn by numerous others (see Schwatka, 1893: 228; Allen, 1887: 138-139 for such exchanges among Han, Tutchone, Nabesna/Upper Tanana and Atna).

Only the notion that summer is the source of all life could temper the Tutchone's indifference towards this season. In fact, without the sudden release of huge amounts of water at spring thaw and without the summer drizzles, the Yukon Plateau would be practically a desert comparable to the Great Basin, which it most definitely is not.

### 5.2.3 Flora

On the plateau, fertile soil is only a few centimetres deep. But in the deepest recesses of the valleys, it can reach depths of as much as one metre. In other words, the Yukon Plateau offers vegetation-sustaining soils of varying degrees of richness. Together with a number of other factors, this reality makes the flora a veritable complex of different ecological niches. For example, Porsild (1951: 27-34) identified in a detailed study as many as seven distinct botanical communities on the plateau's eastern sector alone. It is likely that this observed variability is applicable to the entire region. Porsild's work will therefore serve as a reference.

The valleys are undoubtedly the most complex zones. On their alluvial flats and gentle slopes, copses of dwarf birch and willows, meadows and groves of white birch and poplars in pastel hues stand in contrast to the dark green conifers of the dense taiga. Hidden amidst

these forests are vast bogs. The taiga is composed primarily of white spruce (*Picea glauca*), black spruce (*Picea mariana*), lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*, var. *latifolia*), alpine fir (*Alies lasiocarpa*), cottonwood (*Populus balsamifera*), trembling aspen (*Populus tremuloides*) and white birch (*Betula papyrifera*).[256] Depending on the soils, drainage, elevation and humidity, these varieties of trees grow in different combinations to form four to five different types of forest (see Porsild, 1951: 28). Noteworthy among these is the combination of white birch with black spruce on loose stony soil mixed with clay, which remains waterlogged all summer long since the permafrost is close to the surface. Only in such places do white birch tree trunks grow straight and without side branches and knots. In traditional times, these birches were the only good raw material for manufacturing planks and wooden implements. As places where all of these conditions converge were very rare, the Tutchone had to make special trips to obtain the kind of birch they absolutely needed for making many parts of their work instruments.

The second type of flora found in the valleys is made up of vast stretches of dense thickets of small willow and dwarf birch rarely more than two metres tall (*Betula occidentalis* and *Betula glandulosa*).[257] In winter, hare feed on the bark of these trees.

Between the taiga and the thickets of the valleys are meadows of *Fetusca altaica* and *Delphinium glaucum*. They seem to be vestiges of a vast ancient prairie. Aside from the fact that these grasslands make for easier travel, their main advantage for the Tutchone was that they were home to colonies of gophers (a kind of ground squirrel) that fed there, and which were a portion of the Tutchone's larder.

The fourth type of flora, found in bogs, forms around lakes, in stagnant branches of rivers, in pools and in ponds. But the floral wealth of these water tables varies considerably depending on the water's acidity. The higher the acidity level, the more sterile the water is (see Porsild, 1951: 32). Moreover, the lakeside flora at large lakes varies considerably from one area to another depending on the underground springs and streams that pour into them at various points. The importance of these facts will become evident in the discussion about fish resources.

With their forests, prairies and thickets—zones abundant in berries and edible roots—their marshes and lakeside zones, the valleys are home to a great variety of resources concentrated in relatively small areas. And that is where the Tutchone spent the greater part of their time (see Schwatka, 1893: 227-228). It will be recalled, however, that the valleys were a tiny portion of the Tutchone's territory and that the sloping hillsides and plateau were also part of their vast hinterland. More than 150 km of highlands extend from Carmacks to the White River; similarly, between Carmacks and Mayo where there are three distinct botanical environments: (1) an immense brush covering an area that is larger than the valley forests; (2) bogs and mires; and, (3) here and there, small alpine meadows.

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[256] Cf. Indian and Northern Affairs, *Land Use Information Map Series*, 1:250,000 (*Laberge*, map 105 E; *Aishihik*, map 115 H; *Quiet Lake*, map 105 F; *Tay River*, map 105 K; *Glenlyon*, map 105 L; *Carmacks*, map 115 I; *Mayo*, map 105 M; *McQuesten*, map 115 P; *Stewart River*, map 115-O, 115-N (E ½); *Snag*, map 115 J, 115 K (E ½); *Kluane Lake*, map 115 G & 115 F).

[257] The presence of vast expanses of *Betula occidentalis* in no way changes the fact that birch, without knots, and suitable to make indigenous implements was very rare. *B. occidentalis* in no way resembles *Betula papyrifera*. The *B. occidentalis* are shrubs, not trees.

Most of the fertile lands at an elevation of between 900 metres and 1,700 metres (2,953 to 5,577 feet) are covered in brush composed primarily of dwarf birch (*Betula occidentalis*) and dwarf willow (*Salix barclayi*). Some particularly well-watered regions—passes, valleys of streams and brooks—are propitious to the growth of yet other varieties of birch. The brush areas were important for the Tutchone as it was there that they would find moose at certain times of the year. Alpine meadows exist mainly in such brush zones, between 1,400 and 1,700 metres (4,595 to 5,577 feet) above sea level, but it does not appear that the Tutchone paid them any special attention.

Quite a wide variety of botanical species grow up to an altitude of 1,700 metres. There, as anywhere else, depending in part on the altitude, the species encountered are quite numerous. Stunted bushes (30 cm), perennials, grasses and sedge cover is extensive in these settings. At an altitude of 2,000 metres (6,561 feet), expanses of gravel and rock are carpeted with lichens such as *Alectoria ochroleuca*, *Cetraria islandica* (see Porsild, 1951: 44) which are grazed by caribou. Cornices, ravines, masses of gravel, and eroded soil give life to four or five types of vegetation that thrive in semi-barren conditions. Dall sheep are attracted to such terrain, but not all such areas appear to have the plant life needed to sustain these animals, and they are therefore confined to specific zones—a fact which made the locating of this game species relatively straightforward.

In summary, the climate of the Yukon Plateau is harsh, but far from entirely hostile to life. Precipitation is low, but water flows freely during the three summer months and allows for the growth of an expanse of organic matter that can support a variety of birds, mammals and fish, and even attract a great many migratory birds. Even agriculture is possible in certain privileged areas.[258] Because the Subarctic is often thought of as a barren environment, these points have to be underscored, without however giving the impression that it is a lush environment. From an ecological standpoint, the plateau appears relatively poor compared to any environment in more moderate climates. To grasp to what extent, suffice it to say that plants there[259] receive and synthesize 2.3 times less solar energy than plant life in Vancouver (see Wolforth, 1969: Fig. 1-11).

If we consider that the useful surface area of the Yukon Plateau cannot sustain as dense an animal population as one would find in milder climates, that the plateau is just a little smaller than England and Wales combined, and that those countries have been estimated

[258] Gardening and agricultural experiments have been attempted by Euro-Canadians since 1900. The results are surprising each time. Oats grow better than in certain temperate climates. Vegetables (e.g., lettuce, green peas, etc.) reach gigantic sizes. The risk of frost is ever-present, but the agricultural potential appears to be comparable to that of Norway, Sweden, Finland and certain regions of Russia (cf. Hamilton, 1964: 142).

[259] The comparison is in terms of degree-days. This unit of measurement is based on the fact that 5.5°C (42°F) is the temperature at which plants begin to grow. As long as the soil is fertile and there is enough water, growth then depends mainly on the number of thermal units received in excess of what is needed to raise the temperature above 5.5°C. This estimate is calculated by subtracting 5.5°C from the average daily temperature. An average temperature of 18°C results in 12.5 degree-days. Degree-days are calculated only for the growing season. This measurement provides a fairly accurate comparison with the resources available to flora in different regions (cf. Wolforth, 1969: 13-14, Fig. 1.11).

(see Clark quoted by Davis, 1945: 1) to have probably sustained no more than 3,000 to 4,000 people during the Mesolithic period (perhaps too conservative an estimate), we get a good idea of what the plant and animal life on the plateau represent in terms of indigenous food resources. The variety of species must not under any circumstances be interpreted as a sign of great abundance.

## 5.3 A Puzzle: Moose and Caribou between 1840 and 1920

Though it may seem legitimate to describe the ecological setting of the mid-nineteenth century using data from the 1970s as neither the climate nor the terrain changed radically over this period, it would be hazardous to make a similar extrapolation for certain animal species, namely *cervidae*: moose, woodland caribou, and barren-ground caribou.

An inventory drawn up using 1970s data would consist only of moose and a few relatively small sedentary herds of woodland caribou dispersed here and there among the various bare, eroded mountains that add interest to the plateau.[260] The 1970s distribution would also indicate a slightly higher presence of caribou in the parts of the plateau occupied by the Southern Tutchone, Tagish and Upper Pelly Kaska/Kasini. But the number and the size of herds would still be unimpressive (cf. Burt and Grossenheifer, 1952: 233). For all these lands and for Tutchone country itself, significant wildlife migration has been noted in ethnographic literature, most of which was based on information collected from Athapaskan sources between 1930 and 1975. According to those sources (detailed references provided below), caribou—probably the woodland variety—were replaced by moose in the southern and eastern regions of Tutchone country. Most likely, the Upper Pelly River Kaska/Kasini, the Kaska, Tagish and Southern Tutchone were affected by this migration. To the west, and in Northern Tutchone country, there must at one time been vast herds of caribou numbering in the tens of thousands. Such figures are immediately associated with the barren-ground caribou.

This information is plausible. Thanks to its terraced levels and the diversity of its botanical environments, the Yukon Plateau could just as easily satisfy the needs of moose, woodland caribou and barren-ground caribou. Moose are happiest in a habitat comprised of valleys, while the carpet of lichens on the plateau and surrounding mountains can meet the dietary needs of both types of caribou.

Since it is plausible, this information must be examined in detail. We will then look at the historical problem it poses and see why it is necessary for the moment to postpone the reconstruction of the labour or work patterns through which people appropriated their natural resources and other materials.

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[260] Cf. Indian and Northern Affairs, *Land Use Information Map Series*, 1:250,000 (*Laberge*, map 105 E; *Aishihik*, map 115 H; *Quiet Lake*, map 105 F; *Tay River*, map 105 K; *Glenlyon*, map 105 L; *Carmacks*, map 115 I; *Mayo*, map 105 M; *McQuesten*, map 115 P; *Stewart River*, map 115-O, 115-N (E ½); *Snag*, map 115 J, 115 K (E ½); *Kluane Lake*, map 115 G & 115 F).

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### 5.3.1 Kaska

Pike (1896: 89), who crossed Kaska country in 1892, noted that moose had previously been "unknown to the Indians hunting to the westward of Dease Lake." More recently, a Kaska man told Honigmann (1954: 14-15) that moose that had in fact been present long ago, apparently disappeared and then reappeared in the Cassiar Mountains during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. It should be noted right away that if moose had been present in Kaska country, it must have been prior to 1840. Campbell, who lived at Frances Lake in the 1840s, made no mention of moose in his correspondence to his superiors at the H.B.C., but he did say: "caribou are said to be unusually abundant all around us…" (in Wilson, 1970: 90). In the journal kept at Frances Lake in 1850-1851 by another H.B.C. factor, only caribou hunting is mentioned.[261]

### 5.3.2 Upper Pelly River Kaska/Kasini (Ross River)

Upper Pelly River Kaska/Kasini country presents a different set of problems. Encompassing the Ross River Basin and the Upper Pelly Basin upstream from its junction with the Ross River, Poole Field ([1913] in MacNeish, 1957: 52-53) wrote the following about this region:

> Years ago when some of the oldest men alive were young men [probably 1850], they claim there were no moose in this part of the country, but caribou were plentiful […]. Whenever a herd was sighted they would try to surround them and drive them through their fences.

Things were not as clear-cut between 1840 and 1850. In the Pelly Banks region (extreme Upper Pelly), moose were probably very rare. In the journal he kept from October 1845 to April 1847, Campbell never mentioned moose whereas the word caribou is constantly at the tip of his pen.[262] However, the Pelly Basin, 50 km downriver from Pelly Banks—Upper Pelly River Kaska/Kasini country—seems to have been full of moose in 1843 (Campbell, 1883: 443, Campbell in Wilson, 1970: 76).

### 5.3.3 Tagish and Southern Tutchone

McClellan (1975b: I, 108-109) reports that the lands inhabited by the Tagish and Southern Tutchone were essentially full of caribou in the nineteenth century rather than moose, as was the case in the 1960s. This is confirmed by Schwatka who travelled through those lands in 1883 (1885a: 25; 1885b: 751; 1893: 109). He described the current site of Carcross as being called by the native of the country "The place where the caribou cross." He added that

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[261] *Frances Lake Journal* November 1, 1850–May 8, 1851 (One page is signed by a McLean). Original manuscript in the Public Archives of Canada.

[262] Campbell, *1st Journal of Occurrences at Ft Selkirk, Pelly Banks*,October 17, 1845–April 21, 1846; *2nd Pelly Banks Journal of Occurrences*, May 1, 1846–April 28, 1847 (Public Archives of Canada. Box MG 19, A25, A28).

the local Indians "subsist mostly on these animals […] with now and then a wandering moose." The animal in question was most likely woodland caribou, for it was hunted as it migrated from one mountain to another. In Southern Tutchone country, the presence of fences placed high in the mountains of the valley of the Dezadeash River attest to the validity of McClellan's assertions. The earliest references to an abundance of moose in Tagish country and Southern Tutchone country date only as far back as 1907-1909 (cf. Cairnes, [1907]: 248; [1909]: 329).

### 5.3.4. Nabesna/Upper Tanana

The same situation prevailed in Nabesna/Upper Tanana country: "Moose […] were not too frequently found" (Guédon, 1974: 30). In the north, in the valley of the headwaters of the Fortymile River, lived a huge herd of barren-ground caribou. In this region, Rice (1900: 786) saw a fence many miles long. It is difficult to determine whether it had been built by the Nabesna or the Han, but the latter are less likely (Guédon, *ibid.*). However, it must be noted that this herd rarely ventured into the middle of Nabesna country around the end of the nineteenth century and the early part of the twentieth century. According to Allen (1887: 138), there were only woodland caribou there in 1885, and the rather small fences (cf. Guédon, *ibid.*) used in this region would tend to confirm this. The Nabesna themselves tend to validate this interpretation. When asked by McKennan (1959: 47) around 1930, they stated that a herd of between 60 and 70 thousand heads recently seen by McKennan was something new; that in the past, barren-ground caribou would spend the winter in the basin of the White and Donjek rivers (Tutchone country used by the Aishihik) rather than that of the Nabesna.

### 5.3.5 Han

Just before Euro-Canadians and Americans moved into the basins of the Fortymile and Klondike rivers, the Han hunted both moose and barren-ground caribou (cf. Rice, 1900: 786 and Griffith, 1900: 727, 731 re: the Fortymile; Adney, 1902: 633; Keele [1908]: 296 re: the Fortymile and Upper Klondike). This was no longer the case in the 1970s (cf. Berger, 1977: 41). Caribou hunting before 1900 was observed by Ellington[263] who in 1888 saw Han people dressed in the skins of this animal. Even further back in time, the records kept by Campbell at Fort Selkirk between 1848 and 1852 show that caribou were hunted by the Han as far south as the Sixtymile River (Ayannies River on Map 3). These documents will be examined below.

[263] Ellington, J. W., *Forty Miles Creek,* June 13, 1888; *Buxton Mission; Forty Miles, Upper Yukon,* July 29, 1888 (C.M.S., A115 #1176, #1249).

### 5.3.6 Tutchone: Disconcerting Initial Data

Early field data for Northern Tutchone country are confusing because they appear to be contradictory. Statements made by Tutchone in the 1970s reveal that moose and at least woodland caribou—the only species present then—had long been in their territory.

Contemporary Southern Tutchone mentioned the existence in the past of huge herds migrating in the Kluane-Donjek region (cf. McClellan, 1975b: I, 108)—the region in which the Tutchone at Aishihik (see Map 3) hunted. The size of the herds mentioned suggests the presence of barren-ground caribou. This would then confirm, to a certain extent, the claims made by the Nabesna/Upper Tanana about the White River. Oral tradition, therefore, must not be dismissed. McClellan (1975b: I, 109) recently learned that the Tutchone of Aishihik once used fences for hunting, although details were scant, and there were no indications of the location of the fences.

The region can however be pinpointed. In 1914, Auer (1916: 34, *passim*) had the opportunity to view a recently abandoned fence. Its shape and the way it was used would suggest that the cooperative work of many would have been needed. This will be reported below. Auer does not specify where he spotted the fence, but this can be resolved. Auer was hunting Dall sheep in the mountains overlooking the Donjek and the upper extremity of the White River. His hunting guide, the son of the chief of Aishihik led him along a dirt path across the Dezadeash valley, from Whitehorse to the Donjek. For Auer to have seen the fence, he must have gone into the mountains, to the edge of the tree line because that is where the barren-ground caribou live. The map in his book indicates that all his campsites were set up in the mountains along the Donjek and White rivers and that he did not hunt in the Dezadeash valley. The fence he saw would have been located in the basin of those rivers. As it was the son of the chief of Aishihik who, in 1914, showed Auer the site of the recently abandoned fence, in all likelihood, it is the very same fence that the people of Aishihik described to McClellan in the 1950s. It will be recalled that the Donjek had been traditionally used by the people of Aishihik and that the son of the chief of Aishihik on many occasions showed a desire to explain to Auer the past techniques and customs of his people (cf. Auer, 1916: 132-143, 154).

If this interpretation is valid, the Tutchone of Aishihik would have been alone among their Tutchone kindred in adapting to group cooperative hunting strategies for pursuit of caribou. However, it is likely that this strategy was on the wane among them, for once they and other Athapaskans had acquired an adequate supply of ammunition and flintlock guns or rifles, they generally abandoned such hunting methods fairly quickly. Such was the case, for example in 1875, for the *Gens du Large* (Gwich'in).[264] To conclude from this that woodland caribou and barren-ground caribou had been hunted since olden times, and that this was practised by all the Tutchone, is only one step. It is even more tempting to go a further step, since the Tutchone of Carmacks and Fort Selkirk also claim to have hunted barren-ground caribou in addition to woodland caribou and moose. It was these very large herds, which disappeared in 1937, to which we alluded in Chapter 4 (see the paragraphs about Tatchun in

[264] *Journal of Kenneth McDonald*, September 2, 1874 – August 5, 1875 (C.M.S. A101).

Section 4.3 “Distribution of indigenous groups 1890-1920”). This, however, is where it gets complicated.

The Tutchone of Fort Selkirk and Carmacks claim that they never used fences, either for hunting woodland caribou or barren-ground caribou. Despite the fact that I queried many different people on this matter, they maintained that it would only take five or six men to hunt caribou. Arcand (1966: 22), who dates the hunting of these herds to the period of 1840-1900, seems to have garnered similar responses. The hunting group he described was composed of the men from a small keta or dog salmon fishing camp. In Chapter 8, we will see that these camps generally consisted of one to six nuclear families. Such numbers suggest that the hunt would not have involved fences—that technique would have required the cooperation of at least one hundred people (women and children included)—but instead hunters outfitted with guns.

The information provided by Tutchone in the 1970s cannot be rejected outright for one simple reason. While the remains of fences that existed in the southern Yukon could still be seen in the 1950s (McClellan 1975b: I, 108-109), the Tutchone of Carmacks, Fort Selkirk, Little Salmon, the Pelly and the Stewart, who also knew their country like the back of their hand, had never seen these structures in their territory. They must therefore be believed when they say that they never used caribou fences. From this standpoint, we would be tempted to conclude that the caribou arrived (and were hunted) only after the use of guns had become widespread, i.e., 1898.

To be meticulous in our inquiry, however, we should perhaps consider also woodland caribou. The woodland caribou is a more sedentary animal than the barren-ground variety and ranges only between local mountains. A sudden invasion of this species is unlikely to have occurred. The Northern Tutchone indeed state that woodland caribou have been present in their country since very ancient times. As seen above, the Southern Tutchone and the Tagish probably hunted this animal by constructing fences for their capture, the remains of which were seen by McClellan. Does that mean that the Tutchone, who did not construct fences, did not hunt woodland caribou? Or that at some point in the past, the technology of fence construction/operation was abandoned or lost and there is no collective memory of this strategy?

We saw that the observations by the Athapaskans who were interviewed after 1930 were well-founded. Archival documents and certain firsthand accounts also record that moose gradually settled in the lands occupied by the Kaska, the Tagish and the Southern Tutchone towards the end of the second half of the nineteenth century while, at the same time, woodland caribou became increasingly rare. There is evidence that barren-ground caribou had long been present among the Han. We showed that barren-ground caribou did not likely migrate to the central and eastern lands occupied by the Northern Tutchone before the 1920s or 1930s. Of all the Tutchone groups, only the Aishihik group seems to have used fences, which would tend to indicate that caribou hunting among them dated much further back in time. The Fort Selkirk and Carmacks groups did not apparently use fences, which suggest no long history of caribou hunting for this region. Lack of, or unpredictable access to barren-ground caribou may be a factor. That small fences for hunting woodland caribou were not employed by the Fort Selkirk and Carmacks groups remains to be explained.

These data truly are pieces of a puzzle. In order to put it together, I shall resort to the archival documents of the 1840 to 1920 period. Only the hints they contain—sometimes well

supported—can shed any light on whether some Northern Tutchone hunted woodland caribou, barren-ground caribou, or both, and when they might have done so. The facts related about the Tutchone's neighbours will also be useful in this task. Before embarking on this arduous undertaking, its importance must be underscored in a more concrete manner than that articulated earlier in section 1 of the present chapter.

## 5.4 Theoretical importance of establishing the distribution of *cervidae*

Thus far, we have only briefly touched on why determining whether the Tutchone hunted moose, either species of caribou, or even moose and both species of caribou between 1840 and 1890 or between 1890 and 1920 is crucial for our efforts to ultimately address the questions of cultural stability/continuity. More details are now becoming necessary.

Without rifles or flintlock guns, both caribou species are hunted more effectively when a group of beaters drives a herd towards fences where a second group of hunters is lying in wait for the animals. To be most effective, this technique requires the cooperation of a minimum of about a hundred people. A leadership position must also be created, filled and assumed in order to coordinate the technical and social aspects of the hunt (timing the movements of the different teams, distributing the collective product, etc.). Moose hunting does not require any such social engineering, for moose are essentially solitary animals and never form herds in the Yukon. A hunter can best carry out this task on his own.

Since an economy based in whole or in part on caribou hunting suggests the existence of a position of *leader* within a relatively large group, and since a production system based entirely on moose hunting suggests the opposite, does it not, therefore, stands to reason that the form of *leadership* within a community must be explained differently depending on the type of hunting method upon which the economy is founded? Hunting barren-ground caribou is a relevant question not only for the period 1840-1890 but also for our critical 1890-1920 period inasmuch as the introduction of such an activity at that time could have altered the patterns of labour. Some details on the behaviour of these animals will help to clarify these points.

### 5.4.1 Barren-ground Caribou

The variety of barren-ground caribou that occupies the Arctic and Subarctic west of the Mackenzie Delta is the *Rangifer tarandus granti* (males weigh 98 kg on average; females 80 kg; cf. Banfield, 1974: 285, 387). These animals are divided into different populations. A zoologist estimated the population at Fortymile (Han country) to be 568,000 heads in 1920 (cf. Berger, 1977: 41). These populations were made up of several herds of between 50 and 80 thousand heads. They all migrated in compact groups, from south to north in the spring and north to south in the fall (cf. Banfield, 1961, 1974; Gubser, 1965: 295-333; Kelsall, 1968). The huge herd that McKennan saw in Upper Tanana country was this type of herd. Other herds of this kind were also spotted in the Kluane-Donjek region as well as the Car-

macks-Fort Selkirk region in the 1930s. If attacked by a few hunters armed only with bows and arrows, these herds bolt as soon as a few animals are brought down.

### 5.4.2 Woodland Caribou

Woodland caribou—*Rangifer tarandus caribou*—are larger (weighing up to 270 kg), but as a resource, they cannot be placed on an equal footing with the barren-ground caribou. In the Yukon this variety normally occupies upland zones or lower elevation mountains at some 2,000 metres above sea level (6,561 feet; cf. Porsild, 1951: 44). A lone woodland caribou might venture into the forests in the valleys, albeit only rarely. Each herd—about 250 to 300 heads—remains within a small range of a few mountains. In general, a herd only leaves a mountain for a neighbouring mountain that is part of the area it occupies.

> [Woodland caribou] select mountains of a subdued type having large expanses of table land, and as long as their favourite moss [lichen] is plentiful do not leave that neighbourhood unless forced to (Keele, [1908]: 206).

Even when migrating, the herd moves in small groups of two or three animals or, more rarely, in troops of 30 or so. As a result, construction of a fence on a trail used regularly by the migrating animals (at locations such as Carcross or Caribou Crossing in what was formerly Tagish country, or in the Campbell River area in Kasini/Kaska country in the 1970s) did not in itself guarantee that many animals would be captured. In former times, smaller groups of animals were 'herded' into larger groups into fenced enclosures to attempt to increase the return from a given hunt. These remarks are based on personal observations and on the writings of Keele ([1904]: 143; [1905]: 159, 166; [1908]: 296, Cairnes ([1908]: 283; 1910), George (1909: 27), Sheldon (1911: 140, 188, 245, 255, 279, 292, 322-324), Armstrong (1937: 31) and Hamilton (1964: 197).

### 5.4.3 Moose

The variety of moose in the Yukon—*Alces alces gigas*—is the largest of the entire species. A male can weigh as much as 720 kg. It can stand over 2 m (6.5 ft) in height, with a span across the antlers of 1.8 m (6 ft). In comparison, in Ontario the average weight is generally only over 450 kg for males and 350 kg for females (cf. Banfield, 1974: 395-398). "Moose appear to be the least sociable of our ungulates; they are basically solitary animals" (*ibid.*: 395). Contrary to the southern parts of Canada where a thick cover of snow in winter sometimes forces these animals to gather in one place known as a moose yard, in the Yukon the snow is too powdery and not thick enough to impede their movements. There they roam, in winter as in summer, at the bottom of valleys and on their slopes (cf. Adney, 1900: 505), never conforming to any regular seasonal migration route.

For example, in summer, in the region of the McQuesten, they disperse in a large swampy zone, while at Little Salmon River they are dispersed along the Little Salmon and McGundy rivers. The situation is different again at Aishihik. There, they are spread out throughout the lowlands. In winter, each of the three regions presents a different picture yet again. While most of the moose in the McQuesten region remain in the vicinity of the swamps, at Aishihik they tend to scatter in the bush at higher altitudes; and habitat at Little

Salmon remains un-demarcated; no doubt because it cannot be demarcated.[265] It is true that these animals are attracted to mineral licks and ponds and that they can be counted on to appear there from time to time, but they almost always come alone. It is very unusual to encounter two or three together. When this occurs, it is usually a female and her young born that year or, more rarely, a young one in the company of a male (cf. Burt and Grossenheider, 1952: 232). In light of the behaviour of the two species of caribou and the moose, it now becomes clearer why it was advantageous to hunt caribou, but not moose, by forming large cooperative groups.

### 5.4.4 Hunting Caribou in Groups

If a group of individuals each working on their own, with no coordinated effort, were to approach a herd of caribou, their catch would be quite small compared to what they would get by encircling all or part of the herd and killing every animal within the circle. Moreover, encircling is a technique that enormously increases the productivity of the group as a great number of animals can be killed in a relatively short period of time. A description of the technique will illustrate this point.

In the Subarctic and Arctic, the technique varies only a little (cf. Ingstad, 1954: 46-581; Gubser, 1965: 172-180; McKennan, 1959: 40). I will limit myself only to the remarks left by Auer (1916: 34, *passim*) about the fence that was probably used in the basin of the Donjek and White rivers by the people of Aishihik. It is worth quoting Auer *in extenso* as his work is difficult to come by. To my knowledge, no one has ever provided as precise a description as Auer for the Upper Yukon (*ibid*.). He wrote:

> Indian fences were utilized in making a drive for cariboos. The method was certainly simple, and to the writer a novel one, for slaughtering game that once infested this region. The Indians decided on a course to build the fence, and then, went through the timber along the predetermined line, chopping the trees at the height of three or five feet, but only cutting sufficiently deep to enable them to push the trees over in the direction of the line, with the trunk still held at the three or five foot cutting; thus making two fairly good rails or barriers, the other end of the tree being held nearly level by reason of the spreading top branches. Other trees along the line would be felled in the same manner, one slightly overlapping the other, and so on for many miles, etc., until an effective continuous barrier or fence was erected, oftimes fifteen miles long. Another fence was similarly constructed at some considerable distance, sometimes two miles from the first fence, running in the same general direction, but always converging with the other fence at an apex which was generally at a draw or pocket in the mountain with high bluffs. At the proper time the entire tribe would gather, and the hunters, with bows and arrows, would post themselves in force at the apex of the two fences in the pocket or blind canyon in the mountain. The remainder of the tribe, men, women and children in great numbers would go out where the cariboos were ranging, and formed an im-

[265] Cf. Indian and Northern Affairs, *Land Use Information Map Series*, 1:250,000 (*Laberge*, map 105 E; *Aishihik*, map 115 H; *Quiet Lake*, map 105 F; *Tay River*, map 105 K; *Glenlyon*, map 105 L; *Carmacks*, map 115 I; *Mayo*, map 105 M; *McQuesten*, map 115 P; *Stewart River*, map 115-O, 115-N (E ½); *Snag*, map 115 J, 115 K (E ½); *Kluane Lake*, map 115 G & 115 F).

> mense circle opened only on the side that lay between the two fences. Then, with much noise and even igniting trees, they would close slowly on the cariboo herds which inevitably took the apparently easiest course between the fences and were driven to be slaughtered by the hunters in the blind canyon. These fences were in such condition as to indicate that they had been made at not a very remote period, but they are no longer used in this locality as the cariboo has been exterminated on this particular range.

Auer's fences were probably placed near the edge of the tree line.

In a study on the Inuit of the Alaskan interior (Legros, 1970; 1978), I showed that a similar technique required a minimum of a hundred individuals, women and children included. The maximum observed was generally linked only to the maximum number of animals that could be killed without having the herd changing its migration route the next season. For the size of the cooperative group, readers can also refer to Adney (1902: 633), Field ([1913], in MacNeish, 1957: 52-53), Osgood (1936b: 25; 1940: 251-152), Honigmann (1954: 37); McKennan (1959: 47-48), and McDonnell (1975: 74).

Of course, although a fairly large group would have to concentrate its efforts on only one activity, the results would nevertheless be spectacular. Adney (1902: 633) notes that between 400 and 500 barren-ground caribou could be killed in a single slaughter. If the group consisted of 20 nuclear families (100 individuals), each family would receive 20 to 25 caribou in the time span of a week by applying this method of hunting. A herd attacked by individual hunters equipped with bow and arrow and not working together would never produce such results. Woodland caribou were not as worthwhile to hunt, but here again the number slaughtered depended on whether they were hunted by a cooperative group or by hunters who had not coordinated their efforts.

The group hunting technique has an important social correlate. This was briefly alluded to above. Group efforts needed to be meticulously organized as much for building the fences as for coordinating the actions of the various hunting teams. First, the location of the fences had to be accurately calculated in relation to the migratory habits of the animals, not to mention the reactions of the caribou being corralled in a given terrain. Then, far from the fences, a team of beaters had to direct the movement of the caribou, driving them towards the huge waiting "trap". Winds had to be taken into account for the scent of humans could be detected from a great distance, and if detected too early, the herd would change direction and effectively reduce the utility of the fences to nil. Another team of beaters was also needed near the entrance of the "V" which was the trap. Lastly, the hunters at the apex would form a third team whose actions had to be coordinated with those of the other two groups so that all the beaters could also participate in the final dispatch of the animals, maximizing the number that could be killed. At each phase, from fence-building to the hunt itself, it was crucial that each and every participant receive the best possible instructions—instructions that were part of a coordinated plan.

This in turn promoted the emergence of a position of a permanent *leader* within the community. After many successes, the incumbent—logically not just a very good hunter but also a good leader insofar as concerns inter-personal relations—was inevitably held in high regard. In effect, the group's overall successes had necessarily been at the very least a partial product of its leader's technical advice and his social wisdom. This lead in turn to granting him privileges or favours—a sort of natural redistribution for valuable guidance lent in a highly productive activity for the benefit of all the members in the cooperative group.

In this context, the presence of a chief such as the "rich" Tutchone could be explained by the existence of technical and social constraints stemming from the collective harvesting of a natural product. An "explanation" of this type could at least be advanced (cf. Terray, 1969: 101). The premise of this assumption is classic. As summarized by Godelier, it is Engel's *Anti-Dürhing* formula according to which:

> It is always the exercise of social *functions* that is at the basis of political supremacy. The fundamental change that leads to the emergence of social classes consists of a gradual transformation of the power attached to a function held by a minority into an exploitative power and into the domination of an exploitative class (Godelier, 1969: 50).

Engel's point of view has taken on different shades of meaning over time (cf. Krader, 1975: 271-285), but its foundations have remained unchanged. The thesis is part of the corpus of ideas accepted in anthropology as evidenced by Harris' textbook (1975), in which socio-economic inequalities are presented as being linked to the fact that "a ruling class can perform a number of functions that enhance the adaptive capacity of the entire population" (*ibid.*: 373; see also 199-200, 373-380).

### 5.4.5 Hunting Moose

As seen above, moose are essentially solitary animals. Their movements can be predicted only near certain salt-rich lands or mineral licks. Two techniques are possible: 1) trapping by placing a vertical snare where they can be expected to pass; and, 2) making a direct hit with a bow and arrow (or a gun). The first method was commonly practised in the northwestern Subarctic (cf. Osgood, 1936b: 26, 1971: 110; McKennan, 1959: 48-49; McClellan, 1975b: I, 110). A sketch (Diagram II), made on the strength of a description by a Tutchone man, illustrates the procedure. The vertical snare, made of braided babiche, was attached with blades of grass to small bushes to keep it open (see points A, B and C): As soon as the animal walked into the snare, the supporting stick was tripped and the counterweight fell, closing the snare and preventing it from opening. Vertical snares were used near mineral licks normally frequented by moose. Over the years, hunters adopted the practice of piling brush perpendicular to the paths and multiplied the number of places where they would hang their snares. Hunters could wait for days, even more than a week, but they would check their snares every morning. And sooner or later, a moose would walk into one snare of theirs or another.

A man from Carmacks stated that if a moose happened to be spotted in the woods close enough to a line of snares, one or two hunters, using dogs, would attempt to drive the animal towards the vertical snares.[266] This practice was very rare, however, as choosing to imple-

[266] In an unfortunate sentence, McClellan (1975b: I, 109) speaks of caribou and moose interchangeably, and the reader has the impression that moose would be driven into these fence enclosures by a cooperative group, just as was done with the caribou. This impression is reinforced by the fact that despite what she was told by her informant (i.e., that the moose fence was built by a single man), she claimed that this was impossible and preferred to think of the builder as one large cooperative group. But she contradicts a statement made a few pages earlier: "The effective hunting of caribou

ment this plan depended on whether or not an animal was spotted in an appropriate terrain; and even then, on whether or not there was enough time to round up dogs, etc. Most of the time, in such a situation, a second and more efficient method consisted in tracking the animal as it wound its way through the woods.

Diagram III illustrates the general procedure. Since moose are very sensitive to even barely perceptible sounds and scents, the hunter sometimes removes his footwear in order to better control the sound of branches and even dead leaves crackling underfoot. To foil the wind, he positions himself so that the moose is not able to pick up his scent as the slightest hint of a human being is a cue for the animal to flee. The hunter stalks the animal cautiously from afar until mid-afternoon, the time of day when moose defecate and then settle down to sleep. The hunter then approaches the moose at point A while the animal is at rest. In this scenario, the animal hears him and flees. The process repeats the following afternoon at point C.[267] Before approaching again, the hunter now takes long breaths of air through his nose, smells carefully, and makes absolutely sure that the animal "has done his business" (defecated). He then waits until the animal lies down and falls asleep. Once certain that it is fast asleep, he approaches, under cover, as silently as possible. As soon as he is located as close as the terrain and vegetation permits, he gets ready for a long period of lying in wait, until the moose wakens, rises and eventually positions itself in such a way that he can take aim just below the left shoulder and shoot. When that moment finally comes, the hunter draws his bow and sends the arrow flying with all his might, straight towards the heart. When the arrow hits the animal, the shaft detaches and falls away. As the animal attempts to escape, the arrow head works its way into the body thanks to its barbs until it reaches the vital organ. The animal is pursued until it falls (cf. Schwatka, 1893: 232). If the moose is hit in the wrong spot, it becomes difficult to get close to it again and ultimately the animal gets away.

Whenever a hunter successfully took down a moose in this fashion but was too far from his camp, he set an entire green tree on fire. The smoke would send a signal to the members of his local group. Depending on what they were doing, some or all of them would go meet him and pitch camp close to the carcass. Some of the meat was eaten there and the rest was dried and cached for the later use. This way, people did not have to carry excess weight.

There were a few variations of the stalking technique. In March and April, the snow on the surface melts in the afternoon sun and refreezes at night and in the morning there is a crust of ice on top of the snow that greatly facilitates the direct pursuit of the animal. The crust is too thin to support the weight of a moose, but a hunter wearing snowshoes can run easily on it without sinking even a millimetre. I have been told that a hunter will thus take the animal at top speed and kill it either with the use of a bow and arrow or, more rarely,

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involves a different pattern of social cooperation than that for hunting moose" (*ibid.*: I, 96). The Nabesna in the Upper Tanana also used fences in "V" formation to capture caribou but not for moose. They, like the Tutchone, used dogs to drive them into an angled fence (cf. McKennan, 1959: 49). At no time does McKennan state that the slaughter was carried out by a large group.

[267] The meandering path taken by a moose involves going in circles and taking turns and detours that are far more complex than shown in the illustration, but they cannot be detailed here.

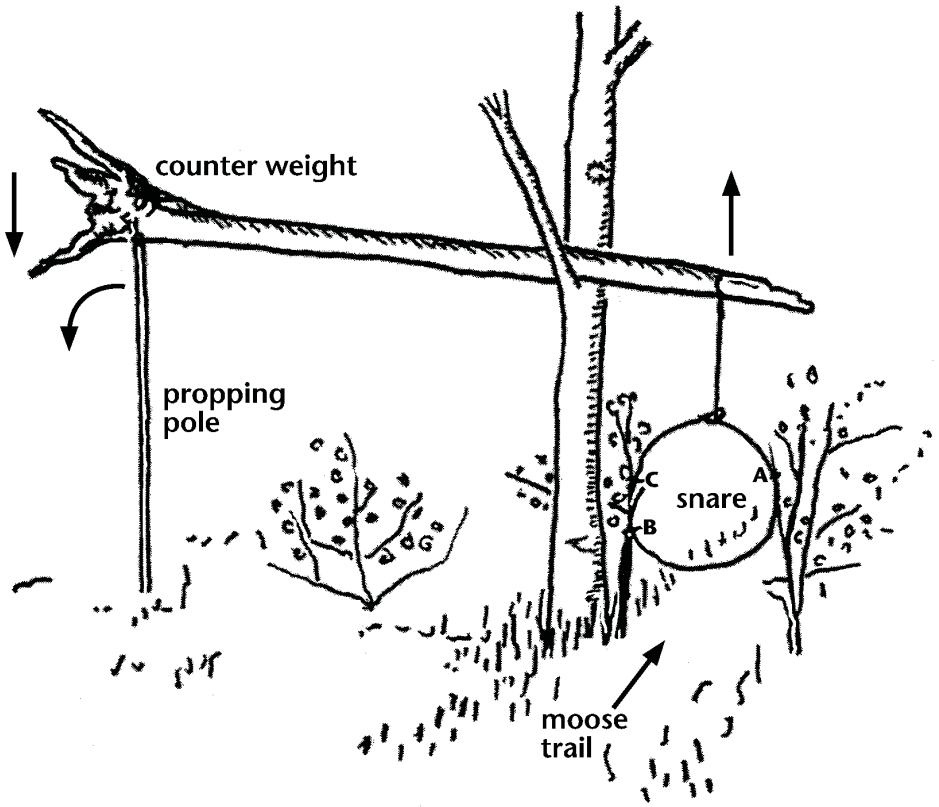


DIAGRAM II. MOOSE SNARE

Based on description by Jack Tom, Carmacks

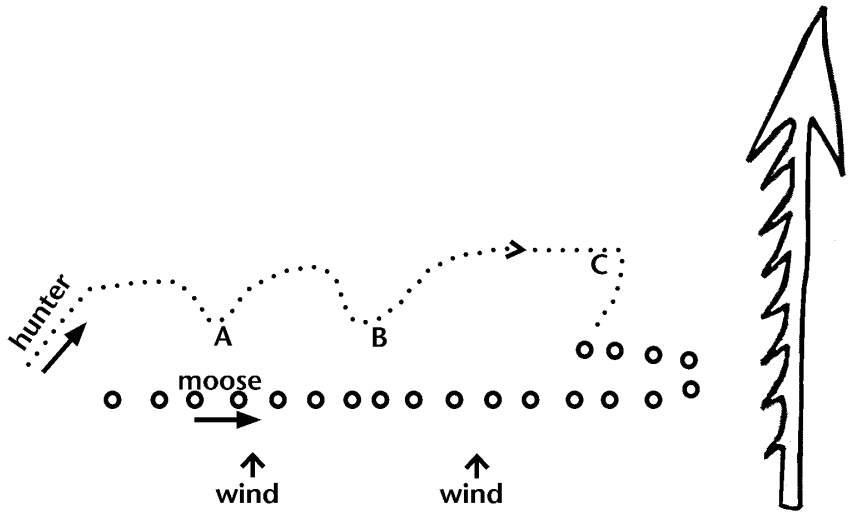


DIAGRAM III. PATH TAKEN BY A MEANDERING MOOSE

Based on personal observations and explanations from Edward Charlie, Carmacks. Arrowhead used to hunt moose, according to Schwatka (1893: 231)

with an adze, a club or a knife, whatever he happens to carry with him. In addition, Schwatka (1893: 232) also ventures that moose could also be hunted from a canoe from which the hunter could jump off and slit the animal's throat with a knife.

In September and October—the mating season—the males can be provoked to charge at or approach a hunter. The technique consists in imitating the noise made by another male scratching its antlers against a tree. This is accomplished by scraping the dried shoulder blade of a moose against the bark of a tree. Males could also be attracted by imitating the sounds made by a female in heat. In either case, the moose was killed by bow and arrow or by gun as soon as it approached. None of these variations of the basic stalking technique call for any form of cooperation among hunters.

While moose hunting techniques, including the use of the vertical snare, were described to me by Tutchone, it has been duly established that their ancestors actually used them in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century (cf. Tollemache, 1912: 198-200; Auer, 1916: 150-153).

Some authors—Adney (1900: 505; 1902: 628, 631) on the Han, Auer (1916: 132-135) on the Tutchone and Osgood (1936b: 26) on the Peel River Gwich'in—mention that one moose could be effectively encircled by a small group of hunters. The technique consisted in slowly closing in on the animal which, overcome with panic, would escape to one side or another passing close to one of the hunters. The Tutchone variation of this circle was replaced by a gully. A man set trees ablaze at one end of it, forcing the moose to head for the other end, where three or four hunters were waiting for it. However, these techniques where no fences were used were probably recent and made possible by the flintlock gun or the rifle. An example will illustrate how. For lack of a detailed description for the moose, I will use a description of the same technique used on a herd of caribou by the *Gens du Large* (Gwich'in) in 1874. K. McDonald, who observed this practice, noted in his journal the context in which it took place:

> Provisions are scarce so that after morning prayers all set out to hunt […]. About two miles from the camp was [seen] a herd of deer [caribou] quietly feeding on the side of the mountain. There being another mountain opposite the one the deer were on, the Indians decided on trying to drive them. Accordingly, the young men set out, several to the right, and several to the left, and by making a long detour, succeeded in getting in the rear as well as on the sides of the herd. The elderly men then took up positions at one end of the valley about 100 yards distant from each other. Three or four pieces of crusted snow placed upright formed a place of concealment and a mark of respect I supposed. I was placed among the elderly men behind a bank of snow. When all was ready the young men behind the deer showed themselves on the mountains, and immediately the whole herd made a furious stampede down the side of the mountain, and whenever the deer showed any inclination to take to the mountains, the men on the side and rear commenced howling in imitation of wolves. It had the desired effect. The deer came straight for us and when they were about fifty yards off, Peter and the chief fired and missed it. Then took up a flint-lock gun, bent me in the snow; and snapped several times at them. The deer escaped unhunt [*sic*] as no one else

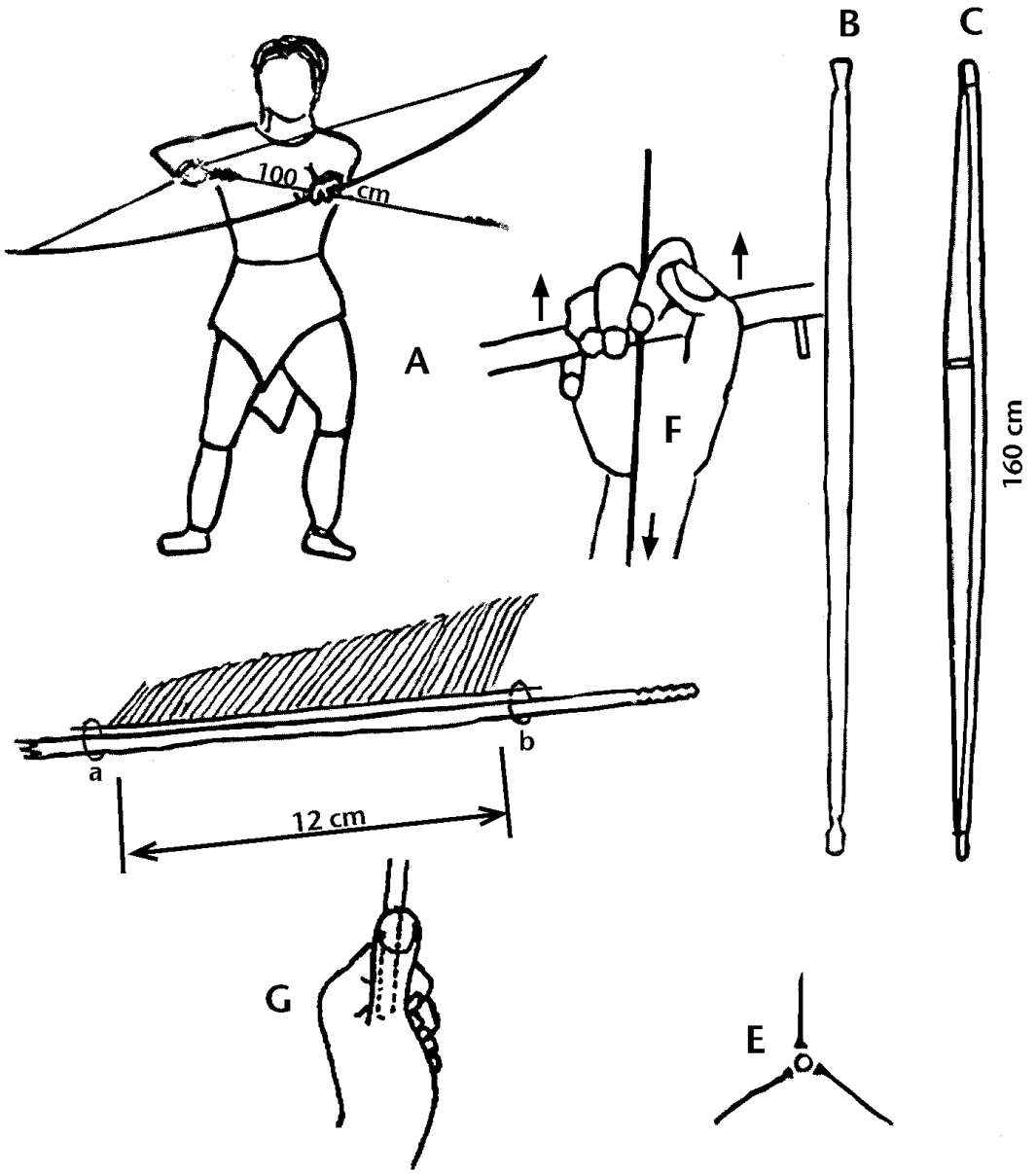


DIAGRAM IV. BOW AND ARROW TECHNIQUE.

A: Position of the archer

B and C: The bow used by the Tutchone (front and side views)

D and E: Arrow shaft (a and b: point of attachment and fletching)

F: Position of the arrow and of the hand on the bow

G: Grip on the arrow

(according to Johnny Mack and Jack Tom, Carmacks, 1973)

> was within shooting range. I returned to the camp in not the best of humour at the disgraceful result of a whole day's sitting shivering behind an embankment of snow.[268]

Based on this description, it is doubtful that this technique could have been effective with bows and arrows. In the opinion of Birket-Smith (1955: 108), bow hunting is efficient for large game only if the bow is drawn at a distance of not more than 20 steps (7 metres). One Tutchone man claimed that this distance could be stretched to 30-60 metres if the hunter was exceptionally strong to draw an extremely resistant bow (this was in fact witnessed by a prospector in 1932 who watched a man take aim with an arrow armed with a native copper point and miss a telegraph wire by only 2 cm.). Bow hunting, moreover, requires precision. As the Tutchone stipulated, it is effective only if the arrow strikes the animal's heart. It is close to impossible to hit the right spot with a circling pursuit technique that causes the caribou or moose to take flight, and which forces the hunters to be some 100 yards away from one another. At top speed, a caribou can run 60-70 km per hour; moose 50 km per hour (cf. Banfield, 1974: 385, 395). In contrast, a flintlock gun can quite accurately hit a target 70 metres away and less accurately a target between 70 and 120 metres away (cf. Schwatka, 1893: 129-130). Even though this weapon would not have guaranteed success, no other could have been used with the encircling pursuit technique described above. I therefore believe that this practice is new and linked to the introduction of firearms. Furthermore, it was probably most useful for hunting caribou herds sighted in areas where fences could not be built, for lack of time or lack of trees.[269]

Moreover, encircling moose armed with guns can only benefit mediocre hunters. It was pointed out above that moose cannot be found with certainty except near mineral licks and ponds, and that, unlike caribou, they do not live in herds. And in areas where it can be counted on to pass through at some time or another it is more effective to set snares than to try to surround a lone moose. If necessary, specially trained hunting dogs can be instrumental in the hunt by driving the moose, but wise is the hunter who acts alone. If some men were to band together they would be leaving unattended other mineral licks or marshes where other moose might eventually show up.

As moose do not follow any regular pattern of movement in the forests, they must be flushed and stalked. Equipped with flintlock guns, a group of inexperienced hunters might benefit from working together and surrounding a lone animal. Of course, success is even less assured than with a herd of caribou, but chances of success in a group are greater than the sum of chances of each poor hunter working independently. Hunters with some degree of competence however have something to lose in proceeding in this fashion. Success in following an animal's winding path rests entirely on keeping noise at an absolute minimum (cf. Schwatka, 1893: 129-130; Bompas, 1888: 60-61; Auer, 1916: 150-153). A group's abil-

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[268] *Journal of Kenneth McDonald*, December 4, 1874 (C.M.S. A101).

[269] Today, Euro-Canadians using industrially manufactured bows and steel-pointed arrows will bring down a moose with a "gut shot." The animal will travel some distance, but with skill and patience may be tracked to its final resting place after some hours of work. It is not known if a "gut shot" would have had the same effect with bone-tipped arrows. If so, tracking patience must increase in direct proportion to the degree by which starvation threatens (Philippe Cardinal, personal communication).

ity is always based on the lowest common denominator (the noisiest man) rather than the highest (cf. Adney, 1902: 631). Therefore, for the most part, a competent hunter gains nothing by joining a group. That is why even those with guns still preferred hunting moose on their own (cf. Adney, 1900: 507), and why contemporary Tutchone, armed with automatic rifles, still insist on hunting alone, and most definitely not with an anthropologist around. They would only ever agree to be accompanied by a hunter whom they know to be very skilled.

What applied to guns applies all the more so to bows and arrows as hunters armed only with a bow an arrow cannot be more than a few tens of steps from their prey. Thus, aside from exceptions made possible by the advent of the flintlock gun, we see that hunting moose is, by virtue of this animal's behaviour, an extractive industry in which the work must be carried out individually, rather than in the company of others, and decidedly not in a large group working together.[270]

The empirical truth of this can be seen in the following facts. Campbell furnished only a few references to moose hunts but, significantly, he never once referred to a large cooperative group. The maximum number cited is four hunters leaving Fort Selkirk together, but we do not know if they went their separate ways during their six-day absence. In any case, they returned empty-handed. He did make note of a few individual hunts, all of which were successful. All this took place between 1848 and 1852, a time when the vast majority of Tutchone still used bows and arrows.[271] A similar conclusion can be drawn from Han materials. In 1900, two elderly men of this group who had long hunted caribou and moose with bows and arrows told Adney that it was always preferable to hunt moose alone:

> […] a few years ago they had no guns at all, but stalked and killed the moose with bow and arrow alone (Adney, 1900: 505). The best hunters prefer to hunt alone […] (Adney, 1902: 631).

As a result, knowing what type of game was hunted, when and with what weapons, has an importance that cannot be overlooked. If caribou were hunted only in recent times and if moose had long been one of the mainstay of Tutchone subsistence, or if the situation was the reverse, some change in the patterns of appropriating materials and in the social groupings may have taken place and would affect the way oral traditions may be meshed with period documents. Furthermore, hunting barren-ground caribou between 1840 and 1890 would imply that a collective pattern of appropriating natural material had existed alongside the system of socio-economic inequalities. This would have implications for the interpretation of the culture of that period and would need, therefore, to be verified.

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[270] Today, among both Euro-Canadian hunters and Aboriginal hunters, the preferred practice is having one or two partners, though actual hunting is *always* done alone. The partner(s) come in very handy when it comes time to carry the meat back to camp (Philippe Cardinal, personal communication). However, in the past, it was simpler to move the camp to the kill site.

[271] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, November 5, 1848, February 11-16, July 20, 1850 and June 14, 1848, July 5, 1849 for individual hunts.

## 5.5 Establishing the Distribution of *Cervidae* between 1840 and 1920

In order to solve the puzzle laid out in Section 8.3, the archival and published documents left by Campbell will be analyzed carefully. The period 1843-1852 having been covered, we will examine the existing documents that cover the period prior to the Klondike Gold Rush. We will then have an overview of prevailing conditions during the years 1883-1898. The documents covering the period 1898-1920 will then be put to the same scrutiny.

### 5.5.1 1843-1852

Campbell's published accounts are difficult to interpret, but merit discussion nonetheless. During his first exploration of the Pelly in 1843, Campbell wrote a letter in which he stated that moose tracks were abundant 50 km (30 miles) downriver from the site where Pelly Banks was later to be established. In this letter and in a memoir written 30 years after these events (Campbell, 1883: 443), he also indicated the presence of caribou. A closer look at the letter and memo clearly reveals that the comment about caribou could just as easily have referred to the Upper Pelly Kasini/Kaska territory (which would not be surprising as the journal kept at Pelly Banks attested to the caribou presence there), as to the middle and lower courses of the Pelly (Tutchone territory).

A second memoir (in Wilson, 1970: *passim*), written 40 years after the events, is just as ambiguous. Of the native people met during a journey in 1851 between Fort Selkirk and Fort Yukon, Campbell recalled that their clothing was made "of the skin of the moose or the reindeer, principally the latter" (*ibid.*: 112). The Indians between the two forts were either Tutchone or, starting from the Stewart River, Han and other Gwich'in. He stated that those described had never before seen European people. Since the Han living around the mouth of the Stewart River had already been visiting him for two years at Fort Selkirk,[272] and since the Kutcha Gwich'in and Han of the Charley River had been going to Fort Yukon for four years (cf. Murray, [1847-1848], 1910: 56, 66, 85, 108, *passim*), it is reasonable to suppose that the Athapaskans, clad mainly in caribou skins, were Han from the Fortymile region, halfway between Fort Selkirk and Fort Yukon (cf. Osgood, 1971: Fig. 4).

While the above analysis rules out that this reference could have been connected to the Tutchone, it reveals nothing of the status of the caribou among the Tutchone. Overall, earlier pieces of information prove that moose were abundant, but this does not preclude the possibility that caribou, too, were plentiful and harvested as well. So which was it? Before answering this question, we must first take a detailed look at the handwritten documents kept at Fort Selkirk between 1848 and 1852.

Campbell's journal is, of course, among these documents, but there are also the *Pack and Recapitulation* reports detailing skins bought at Fort Selkirk in periods from June 1 to De-

[272] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, June 29, August 6, 1848, May 19-20, June 16, July 7, August 9, 1850, April 3, May 24, June 8, 1851.

cember 31, 1848 and from April 9, 1850 to April 8, 1851.[273] First, we will look at the remarks contained in Campbell's journal which indicates who killed or sold moose and caribou so that the catch could be attributed to one group or another that traded at Fort Selkirk. Secondly, we will examine the recapitulations of purchases of skins. Those for 1848 do not give the date they were acquired but those for 1850-1851 do, and the dates given for that period can be compared with the journal entries with a view to finding out which group visited Campbell's post on the date of each purchase entered in the post recapitulation.

There are 22 entries in the journal for who killed or sold moose or caribou: 16 are for moose, three for caribou, and three for caribou and moose. The 16 references to moose are linked to the Tutchone. Some are for one or two moose that had been killed recently; others for leather that was sold to Campbell.[274] Other entries refer to more substantial quantities: 29 moose killed one autumn by one Tutchone; a bundle of moose skins bought from the Tutchone by a Tlingit man, but left at Fort Selkirk because the Tlingit was too laden with other skins; seven moose killed in over two weeks by Tutchone and, lastly, a mention of Chilkat who "traded many moose skins" with the Tutchone of Tatlmain Lake.[275] The 6 references to the combination of caribou and moose or to caribou only are linked to the Upper Pelly River Kasini/Kaska, the Han and, apparently, in two cases to the Tutchone. For the Kasini from the Upper Pelly River, there is a reference to one caribou caught during a time of starvation but the precise location of the shooting site is not clear.[276] The group is identified based on the name of the one who brought the news: José. The Fort Selkirk journal does not specify the ethnic origins of José, but the Pelly Banks journal clearly indicates that he was an Athapaskan from Pelly Banks–Ross River where there were caribou.[277] The other references to the existence of caribou are clearly associated with the activities of the Han. The first refers to a caribou skin sold by a Han; the second to 25 caribou skins and 6 moose skins sold by 15 Han; and the third to an abundance of moose and caribou on the lower course of the Stewart, which was brought out in Chapter 4 as the southernmost border of Han country.[278]

The data concerning the Tutchone consist of a note indicating that a group of two families who had come to Fort Selkirk were preparing to sell "50 skins, moose and deer [caribou]" to the Tlingit and another mentioning the sale of one caribou skin. With respect to the first case, it is difficult to establish the relationship with the Tutchone with absolute certainty. On the one hand, the journal gives the impression that the two families could have been Upper Pelly River Kasini/Kaska. On the other hand, they are said to have been led by two Tutchone middlemen who normally traded with the Tlingit, and for this reason, I would tend to believe that they were affiliated with the Tutchone group. The matter of the sale of

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[273] Campbell, *Packing and Recapitulation: Account of Furs forwarded to Pelly Banks*. Outfit 1848. *List of Furs traded at Forks Pelly & Lewes [Fort Selkirk].* Outfit 1850 (H.B.C. 1M 893). *Pack from Fort Selkirk,* Account 1851 (H.B.C. 1M 582).

[274] *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, June 14, 24, September 25, November 5, 1848, March 1-31, July 4-5, September 15, 1849, July 23, 1850, May 24, 25, October 6, 1851, March 29, 1852.

[275] *Ibid*. October 10, 1848, October 11, 22, 1849, May 18, 1851.

[276] *Ibid*. March 7, 1852.

[277] Campbell, *1st and 2nd Journal of Occurrences at Fort Selkirk, Pelly Banks*, February 8, May 9, July 4, 1846, March 2, 9, 1847

[278] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, September 25, 1848, April 5, 1849, July 2, 1850.

one skin is less of a problem. Campbell himself wrote that the selling group was "I believe, from the vicinity of the fishery [Tatlmain Lake] as Young Polson is among them."[279]

A few data, however, prevent us from stating with certainty that caribou were hunted in Tutchone country. On the one hand, the 50 moose and caribou skins could have been acquired by the middlemen from groups other than the Tutchone. On the other hand, Campbell himself informed Dawson (1888: 138, Note) that, during the famine in the winter of 1849, the Indian people of Tatlmain Lake ventured to hunt north of the Stewart River—perhaps as far as the Upper Klondike, in Han country. Yet, it was precisely in January 1849 that "young Polson" brought the caribou skin.

A preliminary conclusion may be drawn from these data. Campbell's journal reveals that the Tutchone produced principally moose skins, as attested by the number of these animals they killed and the quantity of full bundles of moose skins that they sold. Comparable figures for caribou skins exist only for the Han. In the case of the Tutchone it is thus evident that moose was more important than caribou. Before arriving at a final conclusion, let us now look at the data contained in the two recapitulations of skins bought at Fort Selkirk while keeping in mind that most Tutchone skins went to the Tlingit, and that the ones bought by Campbell represent only a fraction of the total sold by the Han and the Tutchone. On the basis of the journal's content, however, I am convinced that the fraction acquired by Campbell is a representative sample.

The recapitulation for 1848 indicates a total of 88 moose hides and 19 caribou skins purchased—a ratio of about 4 to1. Ideally, we would now be able to reveal which group sold the caribou. Unfortunately, this is impossible for lack of details. The journal does mention that numerous Han visited the fort during the period covered by the recapitulation. While it is true that the only sale of a caribou skin noted in the journal—a single piece of leather—was sold by a Han Indian, this does not prove that the 18 others were sold by other Han who came to the fort.[280]

The recapitulation for 1850-1851 is more interesting. For one thing, it spans one full year and therefore cannot be dismissed as covering only one season which some might have argued was not a caribou hunting season. For another, the purchases are dated and, except for one case, the journal is revealing of who came to the fort just before the date recorded in the recapitulation. There, the totals of 119 moose hides and 22 caribou skins appear with moose accounting for 85 percent of the total and caribou 15 percent.

The caribou skins purchased were recorded in the recapitulation on May 31 (5 skins), June 17 (12 skins), June 29 (2 skins) and August 10, 1850 (2 skins).[281] There is no way of telling from the journal who brought the five skins entered for May 31. Han people came to the fort on May 19 and 20, but some Tutchone people also went to Fort Selkirk between May 20 and 31. No sales were recorded in the journal for either group; the five caribou

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[279] *Ibid.* October 11, 1849, June 20, 1851, October 3, 1851 for the first case; January 9-10, 1849 for the second.

[280] Cf. *Ibid*. June 29, August 6, September 25, 1848.

[281] Campbell, *Packing and Recapitulation: Account of Furs forwarded to Pelly Banks*. Outfit 1848. *List of Furs traded at Forks Pelly & Lewes*. Outfit 1850 (H.B.C. 1M 893). *Pack from Fort Selkirk,* Account 1851 (H.B.C. 1M 582).

skins therefore could have been sold by either. The three other sales were more informative: all must be clearly attributed to the Han. As reported in the journal, the purchase of the 12 skins was recorded on June 17 only after the visit by the Han who had come to sell "leather and furs." The two skins registered for June 29 also were preceded by a visit on June 25 from five Han who sold "furs and leather." Between June 20 and 25, no other Indians came to Fort Selkirk. An entry for two caribou skins purchased on August 10, 1850 corresponds to a mention in the journal of a visit from three Han on August 9. Thus, the only recapitulation that contains a full year of statistics definitely reveals that 17 caribou skins of a total of 22 were provided by the Han; the remaining five cannot be attributed to the Tutchone and may therefore also have come from the Han.

Since most of the people who traded at Fort Selkirk were Tutchone, and since Campbell bought 119 moose skins that year, it would be reasonable to state that the Tutchone probably only brought moose hides. These Tutchone would have included not just the groups at Fort Selkirk and Tatlmain, but also the clusters of people at Tatchun, Aishihik and the White-Donjek junction. Entries in the journal[282] and the existence of the trails discussed in Chapter 2 and Chapter 6 (section 6.3) prove that they had been trading at Fort Selkirk for some time.

A conclusion may be drawn from the percentage of moose hides sold by the Tutchone versus caribou skins. Of the 119 moose hides, a few were sold by the Han, although the exact number cannot be determined. However, if we estimate that the Han were responsible for 15 percent of trade at Fort Selkirk, then that figure could be pegged at 18 moose hides. The remaining 101 skins would therefore have been brought by Tutchone (the Upper Pelly River Kasini/Kaska were infrequent visitors that year). Considering that there were five skins whose origin cannot be pinpointed, the percentage of caribou skins brought in by Tutchone hunters might have been as high as 5 percent or as low as 0 percent if they had in fact been sold by the Han. Zero is certainly too low a figure. After all, "young Polson" was credited with one. And 5 percent is probably too high a figure. In fact, after four years, the case of "young Polson" is the only one that can be attributed without a doubt to a Tutchone. (The contribution of middlemen is too problematic to ever be solved). At any rate, the very small number of caribou skins brought to the fort by Tutchone allows us to rule out exploitation of *migrating barren-ground caribou* as a subsistence activity.

Considering that one skin sold at the fort could have been acquired through inter-ethnic trade, it would seem that the Tutchone might not have hunted caribou at all. Yet, since woodland caribou are sedentary in their ranges, and since their presence has been reported in Tutchone country from 1883 onwards, it is also possible that this species was hunted. In light of the above figures, however, one would be inclined to suggest that the Tutchone hunted them only very rarely. Further, the small number of animals caught and recorded—a dubious figure moreover—implies that fences were not used. Any caribou ever captured in Tutchone country would have been captured by chance and not as a result of a planned hunt.

In summary, a detailed examination of Campbell's journal and his recapitulations proves that the few caribou purchased at Fort Selkirk (15-20 percent as against 80-85 percent of moose) came primarily from the Han. Only two entries link the Tutchone to caribou. One

[282] Cf. Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, June 2, October 11, 1849.

was sold by a Tutchone man and the other was attributed to middlemen who may have obtained the caribou skins anywhere mixed in among their bundles of moose hides. At this point, let us also highlight the fact that Campbell does not mention even one personal sighting of caribou *in Tutchone country*. Moose, on the other hand, were definitely seen, proven to have been hunted and their skins sold to the H.B.C. and to the Tlingit. It is therefore reasonable to conclude that, between 1848 and 1852, moose certainly was pre-eminent in Tutchone production of *cervidae*.

### 5.5.2 1883-1898

The H.B.C.'s decision to close Fort Selkirk in 1852 leaves us without data until 1883, the year in which Schwatka travelled through the lands occupied by the Tagish, Southern and Northern Tutchone, Han, Gwich'in and others, and recorded some of his observations on paper. He produced two reports (1885a and 1885b) which he wrote immediately after his expedition, and one book of adventures written nine or ten years after the events (1893). In the latter, he remarked on the abundance of moose from immediately past Tagish country (1893: 199, 232) to as far as Han country and beyond. The Tutchone who lived between the two regions therefore enjoyed a plentiful supply of them. Only woodland caribou, as noted above, were sighted in Tagish country. Schwatka also mentioned (1893: 200, 220, 228, 233) the presence of caribou in the mountains in Tutchone country and Han country together with moose. He wrote that the Tutchone used either caribou or moose hides to cover the roof of their lean-tos. This would immediately suggest a change from the period 1843-1852, but a close look at the reports that were published right after his exploration shows otherwise. In his 1893 book, Schwatka must have been confused.

The first reports confirmed the presence of caribou among the Tagish (cf. 1885a: 25, 81, *passim*). The reports also describe barren-ground caribou in the territory of the Han. Schwatka, in fact, wrote of a "large number of caribou that congregate in [the Deer River (Fortymile)] valley during certain seasons of the year" (1885b: 823; see also 1885a: 85, 87; 1893: 247). Ellington, the Anglican missionary, also observed that the Han of those regions at that time hunted caribou herds in addition to moose, and that most of their clothing was made of caribou skins.[283]

Schwatka in his early reports also referred to the presence of caribou in Tutchone country. As no mention was made of migration he was likely referring to woodland caribou such as those found among the Tagish. In contrast to the assertions presented in his 1893 book, these early reports describe the use of caribou skins as a roof covering among the Tagish but not the Tutchone (1885b: 751). The roof coverings of the Tutchone that Schwatka actually observed at Fort Selkirk were identified as moose hide (*ibid.*: 820, 821). In his report to the American army (1885a: 83), he also commented that pants worn by the people of Fort Selkirk were made of moose skin. The 1893 book indicated that the handles of knives used by Fort Selkirk people had been covered in moose skin (1893: 232). Lastly, he noted in the of-

[283] Ellington, J. W., *Forty Miles Creek,* June 13, 1888; *Buxton Mission; Forty Miles, Upper Yukon,* July 29, 1888 (C.M.S., A115 #1176, #1249).

ficial reports (1885a: 83) that the "moose furnishes almost all meat that is eaten by these Indians."

The fact that the Tutchone wore moose hide pants in summer is particularly significant. Of all skins, caribou is the best for both summer and winter use. Worn in summer in the form of tanned leather, it is thinner and therefore less heavy and less warm than moose. In winter, hides with the hair left on and worn on the inside of the garment provide the best insulation in the world. The hair of a caribou is hollow and shaped like a baseball bat: wider at the end than at the follicle. On the surface of the fur, the ends of the hairs are so dense as to form a surface that is impermeable to drafts. As the diameter of each hair decreases the closer to the surface of the skin, a cushion of warm air can circulate between the skin and the top of the fur (cf. Wilkinson, 1970: 102). The hair of moose and Dall sheep fleece are structured in much the same way, except that moose hair is coarse and not as good an insulator, and sheep skin is fragile. Therefore, whenever caribou, moose and Dall sheep are all available, caribou hides are preferred. The Han and Gwich'in had both caribou and moose and yet they used caribou exclusively for their clothing. That the Tutchone wore moose hide pants reveals that very few caribou were captured in their region. It follows that even if woodland caribou had been present—this is the species that is believed to have been available—we must nevertheless conclude that it played a minor role in Tutchone production as the big game hunted by them was primarily moose.

This conclusion is supported by observations made by Ogilvie's (in his travels down the Yukon River in 1887), by Dawson, who also journeyed along the Pelly, and by Redmond (1891). Ogilvie's writings (1897), contain no mention of caribou hunting in Tutchone country (*ibid.*: 47), whereas they specifically note that the Han hunted this animal (*ibid.*: 45). Dawson (1888: 25B) spoke of the abundance of moose and, like Schwatka, specified the presence of caribou in parts of the plateau or mountains. Such scattered distribution suggests that these were woodland caribou. When offering advice to future pioneers, Redmond (1891: 626) indicated that barren-ground caribou could only be found in the area of the Fortymile River in Han country and the Upper Porcupine River in Gwich'in country. For the Tutchone region, he warned them against counting on this type of game. There was moose—he knew this for a fact as he had bought some in dried form from the Tutchone at Fort Selkirk (*ibid.*: 621)—but he wrote that it is a very difficult animal to hunt. He did not refer to the possibility of hunting caribou or even woodland caribou.

The same situation seems to have prevailed around the same time at Aishihik and Hutshi. The writings of Glave (1892: 876), who explored this territory in 1891, include a vague reference to the utilization of caribou. However, how can this be reconciled with the fact that all the objects of indigenous manufacture he described were made of moose hide (*ibid.*: 876, 877)? Wells (1900: 514), who explored the same region in 1890 never even mentioned caribou—only moose. Yet Wells was certainly interested by caribou as he did not neglect to mention the presence of this animal in Han country.

Only in the White River Basin do circumstances seem to have changed. Around 1890, there were barren-ground caribou in that area. This indication comes from Hayes (1892: 123), who killed a few in 1891 in the uplands near the junction of the Nisling and Donjek rivers. Although this confirms assertions made by the Tutchone and Upper Tanana/Nabesna in the 1960s and 1970s, it is nevertheless astonishing. According to Dawson (1888: 25B), in 1887, the White River Basin was mainly inhabited by moose. We will return to these con-

flicting data after looking at other details about the presence of barren-ground caribou. What is most interesting at this stage is that Hayes (*ibid*.: 122) wrote that the Tutchone encamped along the Nisling did not hunt this animal. Despite the presence of caribou above the tree line, they focused on drying and storing salmon and moose for the winter (*ibid*.).

Overall, the archival documents for the period 1880-1898 make a few references to the presence of caribou here and there on certain mountains in Tutchone territory. Descriptions of their habitat and distribution within that habitat suggest that they were woodland caribou. Only the White River area had started attracting barren-ground caribou in the final decade of the nineteenth century. The same documents reveal that up until 1890, both species of caribou nevertheless continued to play virtually no role in Tutchone economy. This was undoubtedly the case for the barren-ground caribou because its arrival in White River country was still very recent. And perhaps the woodland caribou were far rarer than the explorers supposed. Their error is however understandable. After all, with the exception of Hayes, they all travelled through valleys and they had no opportunity to observe this animal that lives near or above the tree line. Robert McDonald's observation made in 1890 is of relevance in this regard:

> There are no deer in the region to which I just referred [Yukon above Klondike up to Selkirk, Lower White River, and Stewart River] but moose abound. It is more difficult to hunt them, and when hunting is unsuccessful if there be nothing else to depend on, hard time is the result, and not only widespread distress, but starvation and death follows.[284]

When McDonald made this comment, he had spent 38 years as a missionary among the Athapaskans of the Yukon and was already familiar with the Tutchone. He is probably right on the essentials, but he might also be somewhat extreme in the matter of caribou in Tutchone country. There had to have been woodland caribou! However, he must undoubtedly have been referring to the absence of barren-ground caribou only and to the fact, noted also by Keele ([1904]:143), that woodland caribou "[cannot] be depended on for regular food supply…"

### 5.5.3 1898-1920

After the Klondike Gold Rush in 1898, the distribution of woodland caribou and moose did not change in Tutchone country. However, barren-ground caribou arrived shortly thereafter, not only along the Upper White River, but also throughout all of the Dawson Range which, south of Fort Selkirk, extends towards Carmacks and Aishihik (see Map 6).

Insofar as concerns the proportion of *woodland* caribou to moose, the corpus of archival documents indicates that the former was "scarce," "very scarce," "in small bands on some of the mountains," "scanty," etc. while the latter was "the chief animal," "plentiful," "prolific," "numerous," etc. The main references are contained in geological reports and in books about hunting which were written by people who, either because of their work or purely out of personal interest, were obliged to explore not only the valleys, but also the Yukon Plateau. Their comments about moose and caribou are therefore the most credible of

[284] Robert McDonald, *St. Mathews,* February 6, 1890 (C.M.S. A116 G1/01/C1/0, #1519).

all. For data on the Stewart Basin, see Keele ([1904]: 143; [1905]: 159, 166) and George (1909: 27); for data on the Pelly River, see Selous (1907: 304), Keele ([1908]: 293), Sheldon (1911: 140, 188, 255, 279, 292, 322-324), Tollemache (1912: 186, 198) and Armstrong (1937: 3-32, *passim*) who was a forest ranger in this region from 1899 to 1927; for data on Little Salmon, see the *Report of the Sixth Synod*.[285] The Nordenskiold Basin was covered by Cairnes ([1908]: 283; 1910: 22-23); the White River by Brooks (1900: 387-388); Auer (1916: 195) and Cairnes ([1916]: 439) covered the Klotassin, a tributary of the White River.

Barren-ground caribou remained in the White River Basin after 1898. Sheldon (1911: 322-344) who regularly hunted in the Yukon between 1904 and 1908, noted a species of caribou which was different from the woodland variety and which lived around the sources of the Donjek and White rivers. He thought it to be *Rangifer stonei*, which at that time was classified as a type of barren-ground caribou (cf. *Classification of Caribou in the Upper Yukon*, in Armstrong, 1937: 261-266) and is now classified as the *R. granti* variety of barren-ground caribou (cf. Banfield, 1961). Brooks (1900: 387, 388) notes the existence of migratory herds which "in some years are very abundant, while in others almost wanting." He also write that the Indians used the skins for clothing and the meat for food. These resources appear in addition to moose, which continued to be hunted, and woodland caribou.

In the spring of 1909 the change in distribution of barren-ground caribou became more significant. The *Dawson Daily News*[286] reported that a herd of an estimated 1,000,000 head had been seen crossing the White River. The caribou had undoubtedly come from the Dawson Range as they were later sighted north of the White River, near the source of the Sixtymile River (called the "Ayannies river" in Campbell's time, meaning the river of the Han).[287] Some caribou were spotted crossing the Yukon River near Fort Selkirk (Kitto, 1929: 21). That herd was probably migrating from the Dawson Range to the mountains located between Tatchun Lake and the Pelly River.

Barren-ground caribou nevertheless seem to have migrated into Tutchone country with unpredictable frequency. Brooks' observation for the White River has already been noted. Armstrong (1937: 265) remarked that in the 1920s the migration of barren-ground caribou from the source of the Fortymile River (Han country) towards Tutchone country was an occurrence that happened only from time to time. Bostock (1936: 4) summarized the situation the best:

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[285] *Report of the Sixth Synod, Diocese of Yukon*, held in Dawson, YT, July 29-August 2, 1928. p. 37.

[286] "*Game in the Yukon by Jack Lee (Nine years exclusively a hunter in the Yukon)*." *Dawson Daily News*, July 21, 1901.

[287] During the same period (1898-1920), herds from the Porcupine and Peel rivers also changed their migratory route towards the south. Between 1898 and 1900, 20,000 to 40,000 heads of caribou were spotted at the upper extremity of the Klondike River (cf. Adney, 1902: 633). They repeated their migration in this zone (cf. Keele, [1908]: 296). In the early decades of the twentieth century, the same herd (probably) would venture across the Yukon River around Dawson City every fall (cf. Hamilton, 1964: 96). In the 1920s, Armstrong (1937: 148) noted the presence of barren-ground caribou north of the Russell Range (territory inhabited by the Peaux de Lièvre and Lansing Indians, see Map 6). These movements did not however lead these particular barren-ground caribou herds into Tutchone country.

> The small barren ground or migratory caribou wander in winter over the country, particularly the south-western part of the district. *Some years* they appear in large numbers along the Lewes River from Selkirk to Carmacks, and as far East as Willow Creek on Pelly river, but usually they do not frequent the eastern parts of the district in large numbers. The caribou migrate northwest in the spring, return in great herds of many thousands for a short period in July, and then turn back north to reappear for the winter in October. The sight of these vast herds in July is an experience never to be forgotten [emphasis added].

The fact that their movements were unpredictable seems to be well documented. For example, the barren-ground caribou sighted on the Upper White and Donjek rivers between 1890 and 1908 were not seen again in subsequent years. Cairnes (1915) and Auer (1916), who explored the territory in 1911-1912 and 1914, respectively, made no further reference to them. The Tutchone at Carmacks and Pelly Crossing (new village of the former Selkirk, Tatlman and Macmillan regional groups) reported that the huge herds they hunted in the Dawson Range—in the Freegold and Prospector Mountains areas—did not come back after 1937 and started to reappear only in the late 1980s in the Fort Selkirk area This may be why the Tutchone hold the view that the barren-ground caribou had been ordered at the time of creation to travel all over the world, never to stay in one place only. This might also explain why in Tutchone language, this species is called the "travelling caribou." Notwithstanding, we now know that the Northern Tutchone did in fact have access to barren-ground caribou and hunted it as well during one of the two periods that concern us here (i.e. 1890-1920).

## 5.6 Conclusion: Solving the Puzzle

The Yukon Plateau offers a good habitat for moose, woodland caribou and barren-ground caribou alike. A multitude of bogs, ponds, muskegs and lakes lie concealed in the dark green forests of the valleys, which are brightened up by the delicate green stands of cottonwood, white birch and willows, and meadows of *delphinium*. Near bodies of water, moose, the largest of the *cervidae*, meander alone and silently on top of the mossy carpet. In the uplands, far above the valley floor, dwarf willows and shrub birch grow, seemingly crouched against the wind and the cold on the exposed hillsides. Above tree-line, the view over the rolling uplands stretches in a flood of sunshine as far as the eye can see, illuminating the immensity of open tundra of grasses, sedge and lichen on which barren-ground caribou like to graze. And just visible in places on the distant horizon are the ramparts of far away mountain ranges on the edges of the Plateau.

Woodland caribou, first documented in the mid-nineteenth century journals of the H.B.C. post at Fort Selkirk, are undoubtedly longstanding inhabitants of the Yukon Plateau wooded areas. Without their presence, we could explain neither the small numbers of caribou captured nor the tiny proportion they represented in relation to the number of moose captured. Correlatively, we can now assert that the moose/caribou ratio would have been in inverse proportions if barren-ground caribou had been present at that time in the region.

East of the Yukon River, in the valley of the Stewart River, around the Pelly, the Macmillan, the Tay, the Little Salmon and the Big Salmon rivers, around Tatlmain Lake, Drury Lake and Little Salmon Lake, archival documents and oral history accounts indicate nothing changed until 1920—even up until the 1970s—except that there were probably fewer moose

and woodland caribou than in 1850. The same is true for both species of animal in Northern Tutchone country west of the Yukon River.

Using the same sources, we established that the barren-ground caribou first appeared in the basin of the Upper White River, at about 1890. It was probably after 1890 that the Tutchone of Aishihik began hunting this animal by erecting fences. Between 1908 and 1911-1912, the large migratory herds left the region once again. Beginning about 1909, the large herds of barren-ground caribou had spread out to the Dawson Range and become accessible to the Northern Tutchone of Fort Selkirk and Tatchun-Carmacks, although these groups claim never to have used fences to hunt them. Barren-ground caribou, which were an additional resource to the moose and woodland caribou throughout most of the Tutchone territory west of the Yukon River, stayed in the region only from 1910 to 1937. After 1936, they moved out from the Dawson Range and returned to the headwaters of the White River. Only in the late 1980s did they return to Tutchone country, and then only sporadically. This historical reconstruction, which rests on a meticulous examination of all available documents covering the period 1843-1920 and later, raises a number of new questions.

For instance, how do we explain the arrival of barren-ground caribou in the White River area, their sudden disappearance, and their reappearance in the Dawson Range and subsequent disappearance again in 1937? Why did the Tutchone of Aishihik build fences to hunt barren-ground caribou in the White River Basin, while the Tutchone of Fort Selkirk and Carmacks did not? All the more puzzling: Why did the Northern Tutchone not use fences to hunt woodland caribou before the arrival of barren-ground caribou? This question is particularly relevant as the Southern Tutchone, and probably the Tagish as well, did use this technique for the woodland species.

The first question can be answered straightaway. The barren-ground caribou were part of the large herd that normally ranged in the mountains at the headwaters of the Fortymile and Sixtymile rivers (Upper Tanana and Han country)—halfway between the Yukon and Tanana rivers. The existence of this huge herd—568,000 heads by the count of a zoologist in 1920 (cf. Berger, 1977: 41)—came to be known by Europeans rather late (cf. Rice, 1900: 786; Griffith, 1900: 727, 731). It is certainly thanks to this herd that the Han traditionally had so many caribou skins, as revealed by Campbell's purchases in 1848-1852 and by Ellington in 1888.[288] When the number of gold-seekers prospecting the Fortymile River increased dramatically around 1887, large numbers of barren-ground caribou were killed to feed these newcomers. As a result, the species became scarcer in the region, and the Han suffered for it. Robert McDonald noted this for the years 1888-1889 and 1889-1890,[289] and Adney (1902: 633) for the 1890s. We may thus assume that the barren-ground caribou moved out of the area on account of the prospecting activities and migrated towards south-western Tutchone country. After all, did this animal not arrive in the White River area just after the time that gold was first discovered on the Fortymile? As for the later southerly migratory shifts (Upper White River vs. Dawson Ranges) these might be explained by characteristics pecu-

[288] See above and Ellington, J. W., *Forty Miles Creek,* June 13, 1888; *Buxton Mission; Forty Miles, Upper Yukon,* July 29, 1888 (C.M.S., A115 #1176, #1249).

[289] R. McDonald, *St. Mathews,* February 6, 1890 (C.M.S. A116 G1/01/C1/0 #1539).

liar to this species, or by changes in habitat (lichen resources) in the southern reaches of their range.

Barren-ground caribou "seem to cover a large territory in their movements, and are not always to be found in the same districts during the same seasons in successive years" (Richardson, 1900: 750). Adney (19092: 633) made remarks to the same effect. Their disappearance from the White River area between 1908 and 1911 could therefore legitimately be explained by a change of course in their migratory route, starting in 1909, towards the Dawson Range. The same type of reasoning could explain their departure from the Dawson Range in 1937. It will be recalled that McKennan noted in the 1930s the very recent arrival of barren-ground caribou in Upper Tanana/Nabesna country: a herd of between 60,000 and 70,000 heads which he himself witnessed. That is undoubtedly where part of the Fortymile herd would regularly go after it left the Dawson Range. However, we must not suppose that their migration to the southern parts of the Yukon Territory and Alaska was an entirely natural phenomenon. Much more certainly, the movement was dictated by the destruction of the caribou's environment and by intensified hunting. These pressures were strong: the herd of 1,000,000 heads in 1909 (still a questionable figure) was reduced to 568,000 heads in 1920 and only about 6,000 in the 1970s (cf. Berger, 1977: 41).

The timeframe during which barren-ground caribou were forced to leave their wintering range in the Upper Fortymile and then change their migratory route helps to explain why the people of Aishihik used fences and why the people of Fort Selkirk and Carmacks-Tatchun did not. Barren-ground caribou appeared on the Donjek and White rivers, where the people of Aishihik hunted and fished, around 1890. At that time, only a few Tutchone had guns and these were still flintlock guns. Many hunters still used only bows and arrows. Throughout the region gunpowder and balls were rare. In 1891, the Tutchone encountered along the Donjek were often reduced to making their own bullets with bits of copper nuggets—a metal they valued as highly as silver and gold is among Euro-Canadians (cf. Hayes, 1892: 143-144). Under such conditions, and at that time, it was thus more advantageous for the Aishihik to form large groups and cooperatively build fences and capture all the caribou they needed. Of course, we are still only in the realm of the plausible. But all these plausible assertions are anchored in data taken from that time for that geographic area. The "invention" of fences by the Aishihik Tutchone is not surprising, and is very likely an idea borrowed from their Southern Tutchone neighbours who were using fences to hunt woodland caribou.

Barren-ground caribou appeared in the country of the Fort Selkirk and Carmacks-Tatchun Tutchone in 1909, by which time most Tutchone had repeating rifles, for which ammunition was readily available at the stores in Fort Selkirk, Little Salmon, and other localities. Such merchandises were regularly delivered in summer by the steamboats travelling between Whitehorse and Dawson City, or in winter, by horse-drawn sleighs that had been assuring transportation between these two cities since 1902 (see Chapter 3). The availability of repeating rifles, with their capacity for rapid fire and long range, obviated the need for extensive cooperation groups in the hunting of large herds of barren-ground caribou. Adney (1902: 633) described a hunt during which two Euro-Canadians or Americans slaughtered 47 caribou on their own in the very brief time it took to use up all their ammunition. As a result, it should come as no surprise that both Arcand (1966: 21-22) and I learned from the people of Carmacks that it only took a few men to hunt this animal.

In answer to the third question, while today's distribution of woodland caribou (cf. Burt and Grossenheider, 1952: 233) suggests a greater number of woodland caribou among the Southern Tutchone, it is nonetheless certain that the Northern Tutchone had at least a few in their midst from 1840 onwards. How is it that they did not hunt them as their neighbours to the south did?

I believe the answer lies in the following facts. The archival documents—essentially Campbell's journals—indicate that moose were very plentiful in Northern Tutchone country. Other sources reveal that moose was, on the other hand, very rare in the southern portion of the Yukon Territory (Tagish and Southern Tutchone country). Consequently, a focus on moose hunting tended to net better returns for the Northern Tutchone. Why would the Athapaskans of this region have devoted themselves to organizing vast cooperative efforts to hunt a rare species in the mountains when moose were available in great numbers in the valleys near their fishing zones? The importance of these facts will be seen in Chapters 7 and 9. As for the Tagish and Southern Tutchone, their use of fences to hunt woodland caribou can be explained by the shortage of moose in their territory. They therefore had to make the most of hunting woodland caribou. To quote a Tagish woman speaking to McClellan (1975b: I, 108-109): "There was not much game then, only sheep and caribou—no moose. Sometimes it used to be hard to get enough. Now they get some moose."

In summary, it may be said that only the arrival of barren-ground caribou in Northern Tutchone country elicited an interest in caribou hunting. The great numbers that could be captured—400 or more in a single hunt—easily explain the change of attitude. Like the Han, their neighbours to the north, the Tutchone then divided their efforts between caribou and moose. All this is a late adaptation, however. Apart from the people of Aishihik, the 10 other Tutchone regional groups were content, until 1910, to limit their hunt essentially to moose hunting. Barren-ground caribou hunting, therefore, can be excluded from the 1840-1890 inventory of labour or work patterns in the following chapters. We saw in Campbell's journals that woodland caribou was apparently hunted only by chance when the opportunity arose. The hunt did not require the organization or planning of any special work pattern. Barren-ground caribou arrived too late in the region to be taken into account as a factor of change in this study for by then repeating rifles made recourse to collective hunting obsolete. The 1840-1890 system of socio-economic inequalities which was part of Tutchone culture in Campbell's time considerably pre-dates barren-ground caribou hunting, making it impossible to draw a relationship between the two. Moreover, around 1910, when barren-ground caribou first arrived in the Dawson Range in such great numbers that, to quote a Tutchone man at Carmacks, the Freegold Mountains "were all black with them," the system of socio-economic inequalities of this society had begun to wane, chiefly because of Euro-Canadian police interferences in the use of force among Tutchone as mentioned earlier in Chapter 3.

# 6 INDIGENOUS TECHNOLOGIES AND THE IMPACT OF NEW EUROPEAN IMPLEMENTS

Had the Tutchone continued hunting with only bows and arrows and flintlock guns, the arrival of the barren-ground caribou around 1910 would have probably given rise to a new form of collective hunting. Ironically, it was the introduction of the long-range rifle around 1900 that spared them the large scale social re-adaptation which this environmental change would normally have brought about.

However, this does not entail that European contributions in the way of technical implements were all without consequence. First of all, the two hunting activities discussed in the preceding chapter—moose hunting and caribou hunting—were only two branches of production in which the Tutchone engaged. And before generalizing that the introduction of the rifle did not transform the methods of appropriating raw materials, we must determine the effects of the rifle on other hunting activities to which it was also introduced. Moreover, the rifle was but one of many Euro-Canadian instruments that came to be adopted by the Tutchone. We might well wonder about the effects of the change from stone to iron-blade adzes as well as of the introduction of iron-blade axes, and also about the use of metal pots, steel wire, iron arrowheads, steel traps, and other implements. As for the impact of consumer goods imported for personal consumption, this phenomenon might have encouraged indigenous people to abandon some of their age-old transformation branches and related work patterns.

Results of the analysis of the work patterns in moose hunting and caribou hunting does not diminish the relevance of the second problem raised at the beginning of the preceding chapter. *In other words, we have yet to evaluate the impact of Euro-Canadian imports on the organization of labour peculiar to each of the branches of indigenous production which have yet to be discussed.* Only on this condition will we be able to determine, first, if the techno-social ways of appropriating natural resources were transformed and, secondly, if the Tutchone's social and cultural systems in the years 1890-1920, for which a relatively rich body of information exists, could be mapped onto the systems in existence in 1840-1890.

This is the objective of this chapter and of those that follow. The present one is devoted to examining the indigenous means and instruments or implements of labour or work together with those that were later imported and that came to replace the former. The purpose here is twofold: to identify the indigenous branches of production that disappeared on account of imports; and to examine the manner in which indigenous tools were used as com-

pared with the Euro-Canadian counterparts which replaced them so as to identify the potential social consequences of using the latter. The next chapter will be specifically reserved for discussing the forms of appropriating natural resources and other materials, properly speaking. That examination will entail looking at the forms of appropriation in each of the various indigenous branches of production, what became of these forms when Euro-Canadian means of labour replaced indigenous ones. After that, we will focus on what happened when imported consumer goods brought about the disappearance of some Tutchone finished goods.

In order to explain the reasons for such a working plan, the inventory of the indigenous and imported implements is preceded by a clarification on what is meant by the forms of appropriating natural resources and other materials. The examination of the ways in which moose and caribou were appropriated only gave a glimpse of what this concept entails. It is now necessary to define how it is to be understood when the analysis focuses on all branches of a society's production, not merely two. On the strength of this definition, we will have a clearer idea of the kind of impact Euro-Canadian tools may have had on this society and why the approach proposed is necessary.

## 6.1 Forms of Appropriating Natural Resources and Other Materials: Working Definitions

The concept of forms of appropriating materials is defined here as all the aspects of a society that are determined by the use of a given environment with a set body of technological implements and knowledge. Among the numerous societal traits determined in this way is the size of the production groups and the patterns of cooperative work required or prohibited in order to carry out the multiple tasks to which the members of a society have to devote themselves.

This statement, adequate for dealing with the matter of the work patterns in two or three branches of industry, nevertheless requires some further clarification. In particular, the terms "environment" and "body of technological implement," also termed "body of techniques" must be defined since the analysis of the organization of labour or work must include, on the one hand, all transformation industries and, on the other hand, the aspect of labour which entails parcelling out specific tasks. These clarifications are necessary for the following reasons.

From one perspective, a society's economy is an ongoing process that is repeated over and over and which results in the creation of a broad range of finished goods.[290] These goods are either used or consumed to satisfy the biological, physical, moral, religious or other

[290] This is a paraphrase of Polanyi's formula (1957: 248) which established that the economy is "an instituted process of interaction between man and his environment, which results in a continuous supply of want satisfying material means." Formulated in this way, this definition gives rise to a few problems. In particular, the distinction between the needs of people and the needs of the production apparatus is not clear, but it does link the definition of needs to the definition of available material means.

needs of the society's members (e.g., food, clothing, shelter, ritualistic objects, objects of symbolic importance, etc.; in this case we will speak of *individual consumption*) or to satisfy the demands of production processes (e.g., means of transportation, communication, storage, tools, weapons, etc.; in such cases we will speak of *productive consumption*).

All finished products are the result of prior labour through which materials that were originally unusable either for direct consumption or for transformation are modified into something for which there is a use. This labour might consist only of a single work phase such as hand-gathering fresh berries which are then ready to eat. In other cases—for example, making pants from moose hide—labour is broken down into several work phases: killing, skinning and then butchering the animal; fleshing the hide; performing a series of tanning operations; cutting the skin into the pieces that will make up the pants; extracting sinew from the animal; transforming the sinew into "thread"; and, finally, assembling and sewing the pieces of skin using the sinew.

Whether one phase or many, *each work phase* is an action carried out on the material with the means of labour or implements appropriate to the raw materials (i.e. to transform them into a semi-finished or finished product). In this way, gathering wild blueberries would not be possible without at least one container in which to carry the fruits gathered by hand; an animal cannot be quartered without at least a cutting implement; and skins cannot be sewn together without at least an awl or a needle, and so on. To the extent that each phase constitutes a specific relationship between the material undergoing transformation and the means of labour or implements used to transform it, the way in which tools are manipulated may vary, and by the same token, the organization of labour between workers is apt to vary from one phase to another. This is true even when the same tools are used. Comparing the initial phase of killing caribous so as to have (among other things) skins to be made into pants by the Han with the same initial killing phase for moose so as to obtain moose skins among the Tutchone is a case in point. Whether employing bows and arrows or flintlock guns, caribou require a group effort whereas the latter is carried out individually though with the same instruments of labour (bows and arrows or flintlock guns). Conversely, work phases with completely different purposes can result in the same type of organization of labour. To catch fish by casting a line or to hunt hare by waiting for one to pass by and then using a bow and bunting arrow, the work must be divided among individuals, each acting independently of the others. Thus, each work phase is characterized by a form of labour organization and the pattern of this form is not solely determined by the tools used, but by the combination of the type of tools used, the type of material being transformed (including wild animals) and the type of transformation that the material undergoes (from living to dead animals). This applies even if the work phase entails the further transformation of a material that had already been transformed during a previous phase (a dead animal's hide into a tanned skin).

Since the form of labour organization in any work phase is a part of the forms of appropriating materials by the society that performs the particular phase, it is impossible to simply define the forms of appropriation as 'all the aspects determined by the use of a given environment' with a .body of 'given techniques'. To do so would leave out the forms of labour carried out during the work phases leading to the transformation of an already semi-finished product into another one (for example a tanned skin into cut panels for making pants), etc., until an eventual finished product is completed (the pants). Or else we have to define 'envi-

ronment' in a very broad sense so as to include all natural resources, raw and semi-finished materials on which work is carried out.

The other source of confusion is the expression "body of techniques." This term is normally used to mean "all tools." Yet, it is not difficult to establish that certain aspects of the organization of labour, and therefore the manner in which men and women are organized into a society, are not determined by the tools at their disposal. We will begin by examining why this is so and then proceed to clarify the meaning of the word "technique."

Thus far, I have looked at how work patterns can vary in relation to the different phases through which most goods must pass before they can be consumed (individual consumption in the broad sense of the word) or used productively (productive consumption). But I have left aside that the sequence in which the work phases are carried out can also be organized in a variety of ways. In an extreme example, we could say that the various phases or steps involved in making moose-skin pants can be carried out in sequence by a single individual[291] if no group effort is needed in any of the work phases, or that each phase may be assigned to different people, each one specializing in one task. In the first case, the pants are produced by a single individual, while in the second the pants are produced by a group of people in such a way that the division of labour makes them mutually interdependent.

To paraphrase Durkheim's famous conclusion ([1893], 1966: 256-263, 266-282) about the organic division of labour, this aspect of the organization of labour is not determined as that of each work phase. The degree of division of labour between specialized individuals depends on the number of individuals who are able to act and react upon one another on the basis of their spatial distribution (*ibid.*: 257). And the societal concentration, which determines the degree to which tasks may be parcelled out, in turn varies in direct proportion to the number of individuals within the society (*ibid.*: 260), the number, type and effectiveness of the means of transportation and communication (*ibid.*: 259), as well as the type of the primary industries in that society. As the activities of hunter-gatherer societies necessarily imply a nomadic way of life and ordinarily the broadest possible geographic dispersal, these activities are the types of primary industries that are the least conducive to societal concentration and, by extension, the least conducive to a high degree of organic division of labour (*ibid.*: 257-258).[292]

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[291] This assumption is illustrated in what Robinson Crusoe did with the skins of mountain goats in Michel Tournier's novel, *Vendredi ou les limbes du Pacifique*. Paris: Gallimard, 1967.

[292] Durkheim's *The Division of Labour in Society* focuses on the overall division of social functions in relation to specialized functions rather than only on productive tasks. Yet, when he answers the question about what causes differentiation in society, he simultaneously answers the question about what causes productive labour to be differentiated into specialized occupations. After devoting a number of pages ([1893], 1966: 233-255) to showing that the cause behind the progress of the division of labour in society—in which he includes the division of productive labour—can be neither boredom, nor the quest for happiness, nor the search for greater pleasure, nor the desire to increase the output of collective work, he explains that the cause is another social phenomenon. Differentiation is the result of a combination of a society's "volume," and material density and moral density. Volume and material density can be summed up as population density, which is immediately accompanied by a moral density that varies in relation to the means of transportation (*ibid.*: 257).

When we say that the forms of appropriating materials are determined by the use of a given environment (in the broadest sense) and a corpus of given techniques, the term "technique" must thus also be interpreted in the broadest sense. Techniques consist of more than available tools or work implements. They also include the type of primary industry in effect; the types of means of transportation and, lastly, the type of working population available.

### 6.1.1 Forms of Appropriating Materials

With these clarifications, a more meaningful definition of a society's forms of appropriating materials can now be advanced. It was noted above that a society's production work is always organized simultaneously on two levels. On the one hand, as long as production continues to involve a number of work phases that form a whole, each phase gives rise to one form of labour organization or another. On the other hand, as long as production is made up of a series of work phases, the workers must also be organized (one way or another) in such a manner that the succession of the phases is carried out in good order. Here, a complete absence of division of labour would be considered as one of the possible forms of labour organization. While the former level involves the *synchronic* aspect of the organisation of labour, the latter bears on its *diachronic* aspect. As the concept of the forms of appropriation is linked to the organization of labour, it must therefore be defined in relation to both *synchrony* and *diachrony*.

On the synchronic plane, a given form of appropriation is a particular type of *labourer* or *labour force* whose existence is determined by the subject of labour (i.e., the material being transformed), the means used to transform that material and the purpose of the transformation. Whether a type of labour organization is resorted to in several of the different work phases known to a society, or in the context of only one such phase, that form of labour organization is to be counted as one of the forms of appropriating material particular to that society. On this synchronic level, the number of forms of appropriation possessed by a society is therefore equal to, but not greater than, the *structurally different* forms of labour organization it resorts to during the multitude of its work phases. As many different work phases determine the existence of similar forms of appropriating materials (individual work, restricted cooperative work, enlarged cooperative work, etc.), the number of forms of appropriating materials are, fortunately, far less numerous than the work phases carried out in a society.

On the diachronic level, a form of appropriation is a given degree of distribution, between specialized teams, of the work phases required to produce one or more finished products. A team may be made up of one or more people and, each team may specialize in one or more work phases of the production cycle of one or more finished products. The diachronic form of appropriating a material peculiar to a finished product is therefore, not the number of phases needed to produce it, but the number and types of specialized teams through which the material passed en route to becoming a finished product. When several finished products are made conforming to the same form of distribution of work phases in specialized teams, they correspond to a single diachronic form of appropriation. On this level, the number of forms of appropriation characterizing a society is equal to but not

greater than the number of *structurally different* forms of division of labour and distribution of work phases required for the completion of all its finished products.

Together, all the *structurally different* synchronic and diachronic methods of producing constitute the forms of appropriating materials peculiar to a society.

### 6.1.2 Terminology

In order to avoid any misunderstanding, the meaning assigned to a few of the terms used to establish this definition must be stated carefully. The terms in questions are: production, labour, product, consumption, productive use, finished product, work phase, subject of labour, means of labour, labourer or labour force. To define these terms, we must first resort to a group of important sub-categories. We will then be better able to describe what comprises the forms of appropriating materials, and determine the exact impact of indirect, and later, direct contact with the Euro-Canadian economy on the indigenous forms of appropriating materials.

#### 6.1.2.1 Production, labour, product

Producing is the act of appropriating materials from nature (a moose) or semi-finished materials (a raw hide). *Production* is made possible by *labour* through which objects are transformed into items that are different from their original form. Hunting moose or gathering snow to make water, or creating a hairstyle for the chief all involve production and all three constitute labour. A slaughtered moose, snow melted into drinking water, or a hairdo are all *products*, i.e., materials transformed through labour.

Not all goods that satisfy human needs are products; some can be appropriated without the intervention of labour and, consequently, involve no production. Examples include the air we breathe and the water we drink directly from a stream.

#### 6.1.2.2 Products and their functions: means of consumption, objects with a productive use, finished product, semi-finished product

Every economy has three main categories of products: 1) products for individual consumption; 2) products with a productive use; 3) products used neither for human consumption nor to transform other materials and which constitute semi-finished products.[293]

[293] Many of the concepts and sub-concepts used in this section are borrowed from Marx's famous *Capital*, without specific page references cited. The reasons are as follows: First, almost all formulas come from the third section, Chapter III, Section I of *Capital*, which is only 8 pages long (1948: I, 180-187) while the rest is taken from the fourth section of Chapter XII, which is 10 pages in length (1948: II, 16-26). Any accusation of plagiarism would be ill-intentioned as these definitions are well known, and Marx's signature style would never be mistaken for mine. Secondly, and more importantly, I have tried now and again to make Marx's vocabulary more precise by infusing it with my own reflections and with the work of Leroi-Gourhan ([1943], 1971; 1945; 1964; 1965), Balibar (1965), Terray (1969, 1970-1971) and Godelier (1977) on the same subject. I therefore do not quote Marx word for word. For example, Marx uses the expression "means of production" in two ways. He uses it to designate both "the means of labour" and "work implements" and also all that is included in the notion of "subject of labour," "work implement" and "means of working." For the first category, I

The notion of *personal or individual consumption* refers to the consumption of finished products by individual human beings, exclusively to satisfy their biological, physical, moral, spiritual, political and other such needs. As noted above, this type of consumption is called *individual consumption* (even when it gives rise to a collective act such as a banquet). The products that are ultimately consumed by people include more than just food; they also include clothing, shelter, ritualistic objects, goods that symbolize status, and so on. Individual consumption is therefore all consumption that does not involve productive work.

Tools and all means of labour are *finished products intended for productive use* and truly do not enter into individual consumption as defined immediately above. However, they are consumed (worn out, etc.) and must eventually be replaced and thus reproduced. For example, a rawhide snare used to capture moose is exposed to Nature's elements and disintegrates after a few years of use. But such a product is not consumed by people. In such cases, consumption results instead from the needs of production work, and the pace at which these objects are worn out, is determined by the way in which they are used. As we have seen, this form of consumption, in contrast to individual consumption, is referred to as *productive consumption.* We will speak of products intended for individual or personal consumption and products intended for productive consumption. By definition, the products used in one form of consumption or another are all *finished products*.

Since most finished products, such as moose hide pants for example, require the use of several previously transformed materials, the term *semi-finished products* is reserved for the second category of product.

#### 6.1.2.3 Work phase

Every product, whether finished or semi-finished, involves at least one work phase or *labour process*—in other words, a period of time during which work is used to transform materials through the use of technical means. From the work process standpoint, the resource to be transformed is the *subject of labour*; the technical means used to transform it is referred to as the *means of appropriation*; and the *labourer* or *labourers* make up the *labour force*.

#### 6.1.2.4 Subjects of labour

Subjects of labour can be *natural goods*, i.e., things which, through labour, are detached from their immediate connection to Nature. All work processes applied to natural goods are *extractive industries*. As a result, collecting wild berries, hunting, fishing, harvesting naturally occurring minerals and forest products are classified as extractive industries.

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coined the term "means of appropriation," and for the second I retained "means of production" with a view to avoiding the confusion that arises from reading Marx. The other authors mentioned above are not quoted directly either. In fact, if any of them should recognize their work in any of the formulas used, I am not sure that any one of them would agree with the overall rephrasing I propose. While acknowledging my debt to all of them, I have chosen not to disclose the origin of the sources used so as to prevent any interpretation that any one of them endorses my proposals. The definitions I have advanced must be taken as a set of axiomatic proposals specific to this volume.

Not all natural goods however are subjects of labour. Free goods, such as air to breathe, are a case in point. Moreover, *in a given economy*, a number of elements that are available in the *locus standi* compliments of Nature are not used at all. More often than not, it is not because they cannot be used. If we were to take stock of all experiences of all cultures past and present, we would discover that all, or almost all, can be used either for material purposes or at least for ceremonial or ritualistic purposes. As an example of edible food goods, the otter was considered a delicacy in ancient China (Chang, 1977: 101). Although present in their *locus standi*, the Tutchone excluded this animal from the corpus of natural goods defined as food or fur bearing animal. Considering the relative sparseness of food sources in the Tutchone region compared to China, the weight of an otter (female: 7.2 kg; male: 7.5 kg), the quality of its flesh and fur, it should have been harvested! Yet it never was. Another example: in the Lingnan dynasty, baby rats were dipped in honey and eaten alive (Chang, 1977: 101). The Tutchone could have done the same or harvested shrews, mice and other small game, albeit without the luxury of honey. Yet they never did. We could assume that they had an aversion to eating live animals, but once they had access to caribou after 1910, they, like their neighbours, developed a taste for the sweet larvae of an insect that would lay their eggs in the epidermis of caribou. Arguing that baby rats were a delicacy and that the Tutchone economy was unable to support the work phases involved does not stand up to scrutiny either. To obtain eagle feathers, which were highly prized, the Tutchone would spend a considerable amount of time hunting eagles despite the fact that they never consumed the bird meat itself.

Obviously, the definition of a corpus of subjects of labour present in nature implies an arbitrary system of values. We could try to shed light on the origin or define the properties of the system governing the delineation of each corpus, but the specificity of each corpus would still be a given. As a result, when we look at the production of a group of individuals culturally distinct from another group, its *locus standi* must be evaluated in relation to its goals and values rather than in relation to what other peoples could have extracted from its environment using the same tools. Thus, when we undertake the study of extractive industries among the Tutchone, we will have to distinguish between natural goods that were used and objective resources, such as otter, which could have been used but were not.

Subjects of labour also include *all semi-finished products* that are to be transformed into finished goods through *transformation industries*. Semi-finished products are distinct from natural goods in that they are the result of prior work. Examples of such products include copper nuggets already extracted from the ground and placed on a rock to be hammered into a knife blade, or pieces of meat placed in a pot to be cooked. Domestic animals, such as dogs, do not constitute natural goods but, aside from being the product of years of labour to their owner (feeding, training, etc.); they are the product of a lengthy transformation over the centuries under the watchful care and through the intervention of past human labour. As animal husbandry is a type of production, dogs must be considered, as Marx proposed for other domestic animals, a raw material of their own production. Similarly, for the fish which are fed to dogs and which are classified as auxiliary raw materials. It may seem odd to call a dog a raw material, but we have yet to find a way of producing dogs without the implication of other dogs (even when cloning dogs). This basically covers the concept of subject of labour.

### 6.1.2.5 Means of Appropriation

The concept of the *means of appropriation*, which designates all means used in labour, leads to a category of objects with a completely different function within the labour process. These are either the *instruments* or *implements* that come directly between the worker's hand or body and his or her subject of labour or the *means* that facilitate either the work process or the preservation of the product. For the first type of object, we use the expression *work instruments* or *implements*; for the second, *means of labour*. The distinction essentially makes it possible to differentiate between the objects used to "attack" animals or a given material—bows, knives, vertical snares, adzes, awls, etc.—from objects like caches and baskets whose use is limited to storing the products of labour. Also included among the *means* of labour are all material conditions which, without serving directly in the labour process, are nonetheless indispensable or would be missed if they did not exist. Decoys, trails, means of transportation, etc. fall into this category. Together, the subjects of labour and the means of appropriation make up the *means of production*.

Inasmuch as the statuses of subject of labour, work instruments (or implements) or means of labour are, by definition, conferred by a given labour process, an important comment is called for about the above examples. Given that anything can have multiple uses, the same object—be it a raw material or a product—can take on different functions. Thus moose hides with their fur removed, residual meat scrapped and degreased can be either a *subject of labour* in the making of a moose-skin boat, or a *work instrument* in the form of a strap being used to temporarily hold the frame of a snowshoe into shape. A product which, like freshly gathered berries, exists in forms directly usable in individual consumption can also become a semi-finished product of another product. The Tutchone consumed berries raw, and also used them as a *raw material* in making a delicacy composed of berries and salmon oil. Fish, cut into bite-size morsels, can be considered a *means of labour* when used as bait in a deadfall and whole fish given as dog food as an *auxiliary raw material* in dog rearing.

While there is no point in listing further examples, one observation nevertheless stands out: things are not intrinsically raw materials, work instruments, means of labour, semi-finished products or finished products. This is determined by the different ways in which they are used and the different purposes they serve. The material factors of the labour process are therefore not headings under which we can classify empirical objects. Only labour processes can be used to determine the various functions to which different materials lend themselves in production.

### 6.1.2.6 Labour or labour power

The last of the factors present in any labour process is *labour* or *labour power*—the force of an individual or group of individuals who use the means of appropriation to transform a subject of labour into a product. It cannot be emphasised enough that, whether on a synchronic or diachronic level, the labour power used is not necessarily that of a single individual. For one, certain phases, like hunting caribou with bows and arrows, for example, require the coordinated efforts of many individuals all at once. In such a case, the labour process is made of *simultaneous cooperation* and the *work* done is that of a *collective labourer*. This then is more than the simple addition of the individuals. For another, when the division of labour and specialization of tasks requires that an object be handled in succession by several

specialized teams, each of which will transform it into different stages of a semi-finished product, it is called *deferred cooperation*. And in this case, we use the expression *collective producer (as opposed to collective labourer)* to designate the set of teams used as a unit responsible for producing the final product.

Two types of interaction that are sometimes referred to as cooperation are excluded from the meaning of this term for our purposes here. To take the example of gathering berries, when individuals work side by side, independently of one another, in a labour process that does not requires their simultaneous presence, it is preferable to use expressions like *work done in company* or in *a social group* over *cooperative* or *collective labour*. The assistance that some offer others—a bit of food during shortages, used clothing, a gift, etc.—will be referred to as *assistance, mutual assistance* or *generalized reciprocity.*

The term *cooperation* is then reserved exclusively for two types of social situations: 1) synchronic situations that require the simultaneous presence of several people performing a single work phase; 2) diachronic situations that result in a predetermined division of labour and require the deferred involvement of several specialists in order to produce a finished product.

### 6.1.3 Change in the Forms of Appropriation

The methods by which a society appropriates materials at any given time are constituted by the number of *types of labourers* (individuals or groups) and the number of *types of producers* (individuals or groups) on which it counts for all its *labour phases* and final *production processes*. *The terms labourer and producer must be interpreted in accordance with the meaning ascribed to them above.* We can identify the different types of labourers by examining how the labour power manifests itself throughout the society's various work phases or labour processes. The different types of producers, on the other hand, can be identified by analyzing the various degrees of specialized labour which result in the totality of finished products and, in turn, the processes of production. When this is analyzed, we obtain a fairly clear picture of the degrees of labour division that is required by production, at a given time, in terms of spatial grouping and temporal dependence-independence among human beings. To the extent that the characteristics of social and cultural organization cannot conflict too much with these labour and production prerequisites without affecting the production process, we gain a better understanding of why a change in what is involved in production during a given period could bring about a change in social and cultural organization.

If, for example, the type of work or production that traditionally required simultaneous cooperation now requires dispersed individual labourers or more individual final producers, the *cultural* mechanisms that tended to promote the society's amalgamation and interdependence between human beings will tend to give way to new *cultural* mechanisms promoting dispersion and individualism. In contrast, if the change tends towards more collective work or collective production, the previous *cultural* mechanisms will become inadequate and tend to reformulate themselves to satisfy collective work imperatives. *This does not mean that social and cultural organization will be affected or modified in every respect, but that social or cultural traits that are interlinked with production will be prone to transformation.*

Let us now look at how this matter can be applied to Tutchone society. Around 1840-50, this society produced a set number of finished products which we will represent with the variable "*x*." These products required an even greater number of work phases which we will represent with the variable "*y*." Thus it is normal to expect that the many work phases resulted in the existence of various types of *labourers* (individual or varying degrees of group work). Now, since each finished product resulted in a certain degree of division of labour—whether nil, minimal or extensive is of little importance here—a few different types of *producers* (individual or varying degrees of group production) can legitimately be expected to have existed in that society.

In a situation of direct or indirect contact, four main factors are apt to change the number of types of labourers or producers of such a society, and consequently, its forms of appropriating materials.

The *first factor* consists of everything that leads to spatio-demographic change and therefore to the conditions for any organic division of labour: the introduction of primary industries that demand an increasingly dispersed or increasingly concentrated population; change in the means of communication and transportation which, in turn, modify the opportunities for individuals to act and interact with one another; significant changes in the overall size of the population and therefore its potential to create specialized production teams or units.

The *second factor* is comprised of the demands to produce new types of finished products. In fact, if a new item is to be produced through one or more work phases, it might then be necessary to create a new type of labourer that did not previously exist.

The introduction of foreign-made goods constitutes the *third factor*. For the time being, no distinction will be made between foreign products intended for individual consumption and foreign products intended for productive consumption; instead I shall focus solely on the fact that these imports presented competition for indigenous branches of production. For either type of goods, two different scenarios are possible: (1) either the imported product did not supplant the concurrent indigenous product because it was not imported in sufficient quantity; or (2) the imported product did supplant an indigenous finished product. In the first scenario, the indigenous product is made in smaller quantities, but this does not lead to any change in the forms of appropriating materials as the indigenous product continues to be produced. It is of no concern here that the imported product may be acquired through the sale of products that the society did not make in the past as this factor is embedded in the definition of the second factor. In the second scenario, where the indigenous product ceases to be produced in lieu of the imported product, the work phases and division of labour involved in making the locally produced article are simply no longer implemented in producing that article. Thus far, the society's forms of appropriating materials are not necessarily modified although they could be in such a case. In fact, they will not be altered if the same division of labour used in producing the defunct product continues to be used in producing one of the many other indigenous finished products or if the types of labourers, similar to those which disappeared on account of the indigenous product being abandoned, are involved in the many other work phases that are still performed. However, if the disappearance of a product induces the elimination of a *type of labourer* or a *type of producer* that cannot be found in any of the other remaining branches of production, the forms of appropriation will no longer be the same.

The *fourth factor* includes, among the foreign goods introduced, semi-finished products or finished products intended for use in the local sphere of production. The potential impact of introducing such goods is much greater than that of introducing goods intended for individual consumption. New tools are apt to modify a society's forms of appropriation not only by supplanting the production cycles of indigenous finished products, but also by creating types of labourers that either previously did not exist or eliminating types of labourers that existed until the advent of imports (collective caribou hunting when repeating rifles were introduced is an example). As in the case of the other three factors, such changes are not automatic. Many imported tools may be integrated without any change to the society's previous particular forms of appropriating materials. However, the potential for change must always be kept in mind.

Overall, the four factors identified can change the forms of appropriating materials in only two ways: 1) when they lead to the disappearance of not just any labour phase or product, but of those which once eliminated result in the final obsolescence of a type of *labourer* or *producer* that used to be part of the forms of appropriation; and 2) when they result in the emergence of not just any new labour process or product, but labour phase or products that also give rise to a new type of *labourer* or *producer*.

Such changes impact on the size of groupings and on the degrees of individuals' interdependence required in order for production to continue smoothly; and these are the elements that are likely to provoke changes in the socio-cultural system. Of course, in situations where coercion is exerted by a colonizing power or where ideological pressures are exercised, the changes in the forms of appropriating materials appears to be a factor of socio-cultural upheaval among many others rather than one single factor. However, it must not be left out of the study as this factor nevertheless constitutes an important impetus of change.

For example, Hickerson (1966: 1-26; 1970: 13-17, 37-50, *passim*) showed how among the Chippewa the shift from a fishing and hunting-based economy to one that focused on hunting and trapping was one of the main reasons why its clan-based organization disappeared and was replaced by a bilateral organization. With admirable conciseness, Kroeber (1939: 78) described a similar phenomenon for the Great Plains:

> […] not only ritual complexes, but indeed all sorts of cultural patterns, quickly blossomed out in the plains after the introduction of the horse had converted a strugglingly precarious or seasonal mode of subsistence into one normally assured, abundant, and productive of wealth and leisure.

Whether similar phenomena occurred among the Tutchone between 1840 and 1920 is a matter that must be addressed.

### 6.1.4 The Stages of Analysis

The first step is to decide on the procedure. Logically, we would have to identify the existing forms of appropriation at the beginning of the period under consideration. However, this is nearly impossible for the historical data are far from complete. For most of these activities, we only have oral accounts related by generations of Tutchone after 1970. As useful as it may be, it would nevertheless not be wise to rely entirely on this oral tradition for information concerning a date as far back as 1840.

It seems preferable to reconstruct the forms of appropriation using relatively objective criteria: the *types of labourers* may be reconstituted by examining the ways in which indigenous tools were used on the materials undergoing transformation whereas the *types of producers* may be reconstructed by analyzing what was feasible under particular spatio-demographic conditions. This task however requires completing a number of prerequisites. What means of appropriation were available? What materials were transformed? What exactly were the primary industries? Hickerson's work reveals how activities that seem similar on the surface—hunting and fishing *versus* hunting and trapping—do not have the same impact on the way people are dispersed or concentrated in a given region. What were the available means of communication? In what order should these stages be addressed?

It must be noted, first of all, that the possible types of producers cannot be known without first understanding, among other things, the conditions of transportation, the size of the population and its primary industries. Next, the effects of the primary industries on the dispersal/concentration of the population cannot be determined without first knowing what means of appropriation were used. The example of the impact of the replacement of the bow with the rifle among the neighbours of the Tutchone is a case in point. A conclusion begins to take shape.

There is no other way than to begin by examining the indigenous means of appropriation, even though I admit that the undertaking may sound tedious indeed. Now, if I add that a similar inventory will be needed for imported instruments, sighs of despair will be heard. Yet there is a way to liven up this stage of the study.

The reason for this is that the analysis of indigenous tools can be paired with the analysis of the imported tools that ultimately replaced them: bone-tip awls versus steel-tip awls; deadfalls versus steel traps; etc. First, this will help to identify which indigenous branches of production and which means of production were eliminated and around what time. Secondly and most importantly, if, aside from differences in durability and other such considerations, the imported tool was by all accounts handled in the same way as the tool it replaced, there will be no need to further ponder what type of *labourer* was required for one material or another. Just like with the indigenous tool, the type of *labourer* could differ depending on the material transformed, but it would be logical to suppose that the type of *labourer* would differ to the same extent as with the indigenous tool. This will therefore entirely eliminate the need to reiterate in the following chapter details of the type of *labourer* for each type of material transformed in relation to the imported tool. We will only need to be concerned with the Euro-Canadian instruments that could have modified the types of *labourers*.

Yet, the results we can expect to obtain in the present chapter will be limited in relation to our main query. For certain imported instruments, we will discover that the way they were used versus the way in which indigenous tools were used could not transform work patterns. But for those that held the potential to do so, no conclusion will be possible before we look at the materials on which they were used, as the material undergoing transformation might have been more of a determining factor on the work patterns than the tool used. Hunting moose individually with a bow or rifle is a case in point. We will discover which branches disappeared because of imported tools. But until we isolate the work patterns then in existence, it will be impossible to conclude anything whatsoever about the forms of appropriation. Since means of transportation belong to the category of the means of appropria-

tion, they are included in the present chapter. We will see if they were altered during the years 1840-1920.

Once again, no definitive conclusion will be drawn as to the presence or absence of change as a result of changes in the spatial conditions afforded for action and interaction among people and, by extension, the conditions for the division of labour. In this respect, other factors—locations of primary industries, and population size—might have played a role, either in neutralizing or amplifying the impact of the changes in the conditions of transportation.

The only consolation is that at the end of this chapter the goal will be well within reach.

## 6.2 Taking Stock of the Means of Appropriation: Methodological Problems

The task at hand seems easy. After all, it first seems to be a simple matter of producing a list of categories of indigenous means of appropriation and those that were eventually introduced, and then dating those acquisitions and determining whether they alone could have revolutionized work patterns. This, in fact, is how we shall proceed. But first, a few preliminary comments are in order. The categorization of means of appropriation *by type* does not constitute an *exhaustive inventory* of these means. It would therefore be a good time to distinguish between the two to explain why we categorize by type, and what to expect of the outcome. Moreover, we have to specify the type of information used to generate the categorization by type.

Drawing up an inventory of means of appropriation requires a meticulous study of every work instrument or implement and all means of labour. This entails providing a detailed description of the moose snare, and the types of snare used to capture lynx, gophers, ptarmigan and grouse (both game birds), and so on, and distinguishing between the types of stone hammers used to drive stakes into the ground, those used to drive in wedges, etc. Simply listing implements by type will show only the major categories like snares, hammers, etc. To a certain extent, if based on broad categories, an inventory of the means and instruments used by a given society sums up that society's fundamental techniques for harvesting its natural environment.

The reason for choosing to categorize implements by type is quite simple. Contrary to what Terray (1969: 105) posited, not all means of appropriation in hunting-fishing-gathering economies are multi-purpose implements. In fact, implements are quite numerous and varied. For example, it took no fewer than 500 pages of small print to draw an inventory of only the material culture of the Ingalik Athapaskans of Alaska (cf. Osgood, 1940). A complete report on the Tutchone would require as much, plus as many pages as required to describe the European means acquired: various axes, knives, flintlock guns, rifles, and so on. Clearly, such a task would require a separate book. We, therefore, have to be content with an inventory by types of means of labour and types of work instruments used.

Such an inventory cannot however be drawn up haphazardly. A distinction has to be made between types of means of labour and types of work instruments, which will then each be subdivided into sub-categories. Thus, the different means of labour will be separated into "land developments/adaptations," "means of transportation," "means of storage," etc.; work

instruments will be classified either as "automatic capture mechanisms" (traps, deadfalls, snares, nets, etc.), "manual capture/extraction instruments," "manual percussion instruments," and so on.

This method, inspired in part by Leroi-Gourhan ([1943], 1971: 43-311; 1945: 13-149; 1965: 35-62) is not only concise, but lays down the framework for a systematic comparison of indigenous and imported instruments. Indigenous instruments will be presented first; imported ones thereafter. Later, we will see whether indigenous means and Euro-Canadian means belonging to the same category were used in the same fashion; whether similar labour force strategies and deployment were required for the same task; and whether the imported implements were able to change the indigenous techno-social frameworks of production.

For each class of means of labour or work instruments, the comments concerning the implications of each one in relation to work patterns can only be general. In most cases, however, the operation of one class of instruments is more than familiar. It should be easy to show the features common to each means and each instrument as well as the particulars of each. Some are not commonly used by Euro-Canadians, moose-skin boats, dog packs, salmon weirs with fish-boxes, to name a few. Exceptionally, these specific cases will be illustrated.

This inventory of means of action on materials by class presupposes, of course, that an exhaustive inventory of the means of labour and work instruments has already been drawn, even though it is not presented in this study. Insofar as concerns the indigenous means, we have no other choice than to use what we have learned from the 1970s Tutchone. Five individuals in particular served as informants: two from Little Salmon-Carmacks, one from Fort Selkirk, one from Big Salmon, and one from Mayo. Without a doubt, information provided by people living in the 1970s about a period going back as far as 1840-1890 seems unreliable. Despite the fact that the inquiry was conducted methodically, it is possible that some means of appropriation may have been completely forgotten. As the inventory cannot be guaranteed to be exhaustive, a similar doubt is cast about the exhaustiveness of the *class* of means of action on materials. Although theoretically well-founded, this doubt is not a cause for concern. What kinds of facts might have been forgotten? Certainly, information about mechanized tools, if any, could not have slipped from the collective memory. At the very most, there might have been memory lapses about a type of instrument commonly used or found in that part of North America.

Mindful of this problem, I carefully examined the inventories for the Kaska (cf. Honigmann, 1954: 27-69) and the Han (cf. Osgood, 1971: 57-115) as well as McClellan's (1975b: I, 95-324) impressive study of the material culture of the Tlingit of Teslin, the Tagish, and the Southern Tutchone. Aside from the fences used to surround caribou—a problem which has already been addressed—and birchbark canoes, nothing in the corpus of technological means that were used by the Tutchone's neighbours and also available to the Tutchone could have affected the proposed types of categories. As a result, we can at least be confident about the proposed categorization.

## 6.3 Means of Labour

### 6.3.1 Means of Communication and Travel

Let us first take a quick look at communication across long distances. We saw earlier how the Tutchone would burn an entire tree to create columns of smoke. Communicating one's position with this type of signal is certainly not something they learned from European people. When Campbell visited the Tutchone for the first time in 1843, they were using this method to communicate their respective positions to attack him (Campbell in Wilson, 1970: 72). In his Fort Selkirk journal, Campbell also noted that the same method was used to set rendezvous points to trade with the Tlingit.[294] It should be noted here that they also left signs on trails by breaking branches in different patterns (Olson, 1936; Krause [1885], 1956; and personal observation).

Now we should examine how the lay of the land facilitated travel from one work centre to another or from one campsite to another. One would suspect that, in a hunting, fishing and gathering-based economy, travel would be minimal and limited to a network of trails. Nevertheless, it is important to reflect for a moment to fully understand the material conditions in which the annual production cycle unfolded. There were two different categories of trails: 1) trails that led from one work centre to another—with some from Tutchone country to regions inhabited by other Athapaskan peoples; and, 2) trails that branched out from a given work centre. The Tutchone referred to the first type as *dan tan*, which they translated into English by the expression "Indian road." They stated that these "roads" existed before the arrival of European people. The earliest archival data about Tutchone country contain nothing on this subject and cannot be used to either support or refute these assertions. Since we know from historic documents however that their Gwich'in neighbours had such "roads"[295] before the arrival of Europeans, there are few grounds for doubt. Some of these so-called Indian roads are shown on Map 2 in Chapter 2. They led towards the Upper Tanana/Nabesna. Others, we were told, went from the sources of the Macmillan towards the Gravel River, a tributary of the Mackenzie, and from the Little Salmon River towards the Upper Pelly River/Kasini country, and so on. They generally followed the great valleys—sometimes near the water courses that drained them, sometimes along the slopes.

Let us take the example of Frenchman Lake (Map 1). In winter, it is a good place to fish whitefish and northern pike through the ice. One of these roads led to an arctic greyling fishing zone on a stream that branched off Mandana Lake, 30 km away. From there, another

[294] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, May 20, 1850.

[295] The information comes from Bompas (1888: 93). This missionary who came to the basin of the Mackenzie and Yukon rivers in 1869 was already fluent in the languages and dialects spoken in these districts. On the subject of trails, he distinguished "Tukudh" (Gwich'in) from "Tenni" (Mackenzie Athapaskans). Of the former, he wrote: "The Tukudh Indians had formerly regular tracks or roads cut through the forests throughout their country for communication between the different tribes [regional and ethnic groups]."

trail led to a salmon fishing site at the mouth of the Little Salmon River. The Little Salmon site was, in turn, linked by a well-worn trail along the north shore of Little Salmon Lake where one could find good-quality birch for making tools and other wooden items. The distance? Sixty kilometres. From Little Salmon Lake, another trail turned north, cut across the mid-point of Drury Lake—a good place to fish broad whitefish—and curved towards the Tay River where there was a pyrite deposit which the Tutchone had always considered to be one of the best. Little Salmon Lake and the Tay River are some 80 km apart. These are just a few examples.

Most of these trails, including some that are no longer used, are still discernible. In unconsolidated ground, trails measuring 30-40 cm across may be entrenched 5 – 10 cm below the ground surface. On steep hills and terraces, side-hill trails are visibly worn into the face of the slope. In the bush, new paths were opened to circumvent dead trees that had fallen in the way of existing paths. Small water courses were crossed by tossing a couple of tree trunks between two banks. Maintaining these Indigenous roads required minimum time or effort. They existed for generations, and given the slow growth of vegetation in the Yukon Territory,[296] keeping them in good condition was simply a matter of using them and maintaining them as one went along. Even today, these trails are kept open in places by the movement of large animals such as moose.

The ease with which these "roads" were preserved does not diminish their economic importance. In its natural state, the Yukon Plateau is hardly suited to human travel or for the transportation of materials. During the short summers, the water courses are easily navigable downstream, but their currents are so strong that the return trip is best undertaken on foot. During the seven or eight months of winter, contrary to all expectations, the frozen rivers are impassable. In the fall, they carry enormous chunks of ice. As rain precipitation tapers off and changes to snow, their water level drops considerably. Channelled and crammed into an increasingly narrowing riverbed, the blocks of ice finally fuse together. But instead of forming a smooth surface, most of the frozen river is transformed into an indescribable chaotic formation of huge ice blocks heaped atop one another. Pieces of ice measuring between one and two metres in length remain transfixed: vertically, horizontally, or diagonally. A layer of snow eventually softens the contours and conceals the treacherous confusion of ice. Even then, one does not venture out onto such uncertain terrain unless forced to cross over to the other side. It is infinitely preferable to continue to walk on *terra firma*; particularly if one has the benefit of snowshoes or if one is pulling a toboggan. And like it or not, the Tutchone had to cross the thickets, brush and forests of the valleys to go from one work centre to another.

Without careful planning, walking through these wooded areas can be very challenging: spruce tree boughs that scratch the face, rotted tree trunks that must be crossed without placing too much weight on them for fear of breaking them (and one's leg in the process—a fre-

[296] As noted earlier, the growth period for plants and trees is very short in the Yukon as it is linked to the number of hours during which the temperature is above 5.5°C (cf. Wolforth, 1969: 13-14, Fig. 1.11). A sixty year old tree trunk that had grown over the site of an old brush camp measured only 4 cm in diameter (observed at Tatchun Lake; age calculated on the basis of the number of its concentric striation).

quent occurrence); carpets of moss that conceal water which infiltrates indigenous leather boots if one should take a wrong step; in winter, shrub branches that get stuck in the lacing of snowshoes; dead branches buried under snow that catch the tip of the snowshoe and cause one to stumble. Walking through such terrain alone without pulling or carrying a load is manageable, but in order to pull a toboggan or have dogs pulling it, the path must first be cleared somewhat and the navigable paths clearly marked. Such were the "Indian roads." Going back in time, all the main work centres were only linked by such paths.

The trails that led out from a given work centre—the second type—were much shorter and less well blazed: paths leading to bird snares, circuits for hare snares, passageways leading to berry shrubs, access ways for trappers and moose hunters, and such. The rest of the territory being less hospitable, it was also less traveled. In general, those parts would be crossed only with a specific purpose in mind: to take a shortcut from one valley to another in an emergency or to collect rarely used medicinal herbs, etc.

From 1840 to 1900, these networks remained as they had always been. They were used by the Tlingit and, after 1880, by gold-seekers. The famous Dalton trail (see Map 2, Chapter 2), for example, simply follows an age-old trail that was first used by the Tutchone and later by the Tutchone and Tlingit. After 1900, Euro-Canadians opened up a few larger roads: a major winter road from Whitehorse to Dawson City in 1902 (cf. Duerden, 1971: 18); a narrow dirt road from the White River to Coffee Creek on the Yukon circa 1910 (cf. Cairnes, 1915: 11); a path from Little Salmon to Ross River circa 1905;[297] another one from Dawson to Mayo circa 1910 (cf. Cairnes in Bostock, 1957: 382). Apart from the Whitehorse-Dawson connection which was traveled via large horse-drawn sleighs, all these routes were simply trails that had been sufficiently cleared to allow caravans of pack-saddle horses to pass from the banks of a river to a mineral prospecting zone, and nothing more. Throughout the territory, these "new" paths ran more or less parallel to the old Indigenous roads, intersecting them now and again at various points.

From the standpoint of the Tutchone economy, these additions improved only a small fraction of their traditional network—options for travelling between most production centres remained the same as ever. The amount the Tutchone could transport depended not on the prevailing conditions along the best sections, but instead on paths that were not as well-cleared—the longest stretches by far. As for travel times, they too were limited to what each family could manage with children: about 15 to 20 km in a day.[298]

We can therefore suppose that from 1840 to at least 1920 nothing dramatically changed the Tutchone's land travel networks.

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[297] The year 1905 was provided by a Tutchone man as the date when the Little Salmon-Ross River path was opened. Its existence in 1915 was confirmed in the *Report of the Third Synod of the Diocese of* Yukon. Dawson, YT, July 14-19, 1915 (see *Report for Little Salmon and Carmacks*).

[298] The 15-20 km travelled daily by a family moving to a new location are estimates provided by the Tutchone. Examination of a journal kept by a Tutchone man during 1930-1940 proves these estimates to be accurate. Bompas (1888: 95) gives similar figures—10 to 12 miles—for the Gwich'in in the years 1870-1890.

### 6.3.2 Means of Transportation

If land trails and river routes were the vascular system for production activities, the means of transportation constituted the blood flow.

Depending on the amount of cargo that is transported, the products of labour may or may not be brought to a central location, and the people will either gather or be forced to disperse, or, also possible, be compelled to travel from one production centre to another. It is therefore important to examine what the Tutchone had at their disposal as means of transportation.

Some of the means used on trails have already been mentioned: snowshoes, toboggans drawn by humans or dogs. Also worth noting were pack-saddles that would be placed on the backs of dogs as well as various loads carried by people (pack-goods, backpacks, baskets, etc.), and as a number of different means of transportation along water routes: moose-skin boats, rafts and dug-outs.

This list, compiled from information provided by the Tutchone themselves, poses a few problems on a historical level which must be addressed before the capabilities of each can even begin to be described. For example, do we know if all the means of transportation listed were in use from 1840 on? There is little doubt that instruments existed to carry or pull cargo. These means of transportation are universal (cf. Leroi-Gourhan [1943], 1971: 119-123). Snowshoes also certainly existed at that time; they were used throughout the North American Subarctic (cf. Davidson, 1937). We cannot be so certain however about rafts, moose-skin boats, dug-outs, and dog-drawn toboggans. Moreover, the above list does not include birchbark canoes because the Tutchone never mentioned them. Yet Schwatka (1893: 220-221) saw some in the vicinity of Fort Selkirk in 1883. This omission calls for an explanation. The case of the raft is quite simple: Its use was clearly attested in 1848-1852 by Campbell who saw the Tutchone travel to his store on such craft. For example, six men once arrived on a single raft; on another occasion, three rafts brought 11 men, 180 pounds of meat, a number of skins, and more.[299] The findings about moose-skin boats and dug-outs are more ambiguous. Campbell mentions a Northern Tutchone canoe in his journal, but it is impossible to determine whether it was a skin boat or a dug-out. Only the type of canoe used by the Tlingit was explicitly called a skin boat.[300] The first explicit mention of a skin boat being used by the Tutchone dates from 1883;[301] the first mention of dug-outs being used by the Tutchone dates from 1887 (cf. Dawson, 1888: 129B).

Nevertheless, they can be dated to much earlier times for a number of reasons. Dug-outs and moose-skin boats, as opposed to seal skins for the Tlingit, as will be seen below, were

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[299] It should be noted that journeying overland remained important as rafts were never towed against the current. Cf. Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, June 5, October 2, 3, 13, 1848; June 20, August 22, 24, 1849: May 17, 22, July 17, 20, August 2, October 26, 1850; June 13, 1851.

[300] *Ibid.* September 25, 1848, September 19, 1848. Without a doubt, Campbell made an explicit reference to the Tlingit's seal-skin boat because it made a great impression on him. In fact, it showed him that he was not far from the ocean, something of which he had previously been unaware.

[301] Two skin boats were used by the Tutchone to go visit the Han (the visit being an exceptional event). Cf. Sim, V. C. *Journal of a Journey on the Yukon River*, June 15-August 25, 1883 (C.M.S. Film A112 – see July 23)

unsuitable for long-distance travel and were used primarily on lakes and secondary water courses. Rafts were more effective on large, fast-flowing rivers. Since Campbell recorded only observations made at Fort Selkirk, which was located at the junction of two major waterways in Tutchone country, it makes sense that he would have noted, aside from one exception, only the passage of rafts. However, this in no way implies that dug-outs and moose-skin boats were not being used at that time. The Han, Kaska, Southern Tutchone and Upper Tanana/Nabesna are said to have traditionally had skin boats (cf. Osgood, 1971: 88; Honigmann, 1954: 150; McClellan, 1975b: I, 268-270; McKennan, 1959: 93). The Northern Tutchone could not have been an exception. Similarly, for dug-outs which were used by the Kaska, Tagish and Southern Tutchone (cf. Honigmann, *ibid.*, for the Kaska; McClellan, 1975b: I, 270 for the Tagish and Southern Tutchone).

Determining whether or not dogs were used to pull toboggans in the Yukon Basin before 1840 is more difficult. Archival data show that dogs were already domestic animals at the time. They also indicate that toboggans were used. The first mention of toboggans being used by the Gwich'in dates as far back as 1850,[302] but the same sources do not explicitly state whether dogs were used to pull them; hence, the speculation that this idea was introduced by the people of the Hudson's Bay Company, first at Fort Yukon and later at Fort Selkirk. McClellan (1975b: I, 271), accredited for this assumption, acknowledged that "the matter needs thorough investigation" and was far from being resolved (*ibid.*). No more successful than McClellan, I did not uncover any formal proof of dog-drawn toboggans being used. A few indicators, however, reveal that they were certainly used for transportation purposes in the Yukon prior to 1850.

As seen earlier, after coming frequently in contact with the Gwich'in between 1869 and 1887—people with whom he fluently spoke many different dialects and with whom, as a missionary he shared his day-to-day life, Bompas was compelled to affirm that the Gwich'in, in contrast to the Mackenzie Athapaskans, had long been using toboggan trails.[303] Other indicators, even earlier, reveal that dogs were certainly used for pulling loads. In 1847, when the British traders first settled at Fort Yukon and the Russians first arrived at the confluence of the Tanana and Yukon rivers, the Indians sold pulling dogs to the Russians (cf. Murray [1847-1848], 1910: 81). Campbell himself used a "small Indian Dog (*sic*)" on one occasion in 1849 to pull his empty "sleigh."[304] Since dogs must be trained to pull and be part of a team, since training takes at least a year, and since young dogs must be placed in a team already accustomed to this type of work, it must be concluded that the Athapaskans of the middle and upper sections of the Yukon River had been using dogs to some extent to draw their toboggans since at least the 1840s.

The fact that archival documents pertaining to the two H.B.C. forts do not explicitly mention the arrival of dog teams may be the result of merchandises arriving at either fort after the rivers thawed, in late spring. The shipment of supplies received being small (cf. Chapter 2), everything was generally sold by mid-August. For this reason, indigenous peo-

[302] *Fort Yukon Post Journal*, April 19, 1850 (H.B.C., Film 1M 166).
[303] See Bompas (1888: 93).
[304] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, February 21, 1849.

ple almost never visited the store in winter to sell their furs, the season during which they would have used toboggans for transportation.

It was impossible to deduce the number of dogs among the Tutchone or their neighbours based on archival documents for 1850. Data from subsequent years however contain some interesting comments. In February 1874, McDonald went to visit a Han campsite in the bush. There were 26 nuclear families living in 13 different tents. The group decided to follow McDonald, and set off with 25 toboggans. The context suggests that dog traction may have been used.[305] In 1883, Schwatka (1893: 228, 230) commented that the floors of houses at Fort Selkirk were covered with a "carpeting of live dogs" and that this made "the outside of the house the most pleasant part of it;" and that "scattered around in every direction, was a horde of dogs that defied computation." He added, "It must be an immense drain on their commissariat to keep the animals alive let alone in good condition."[306] This proves the proliferation of dogs at that time. Before these dates, no store had been opened in either Tutchone or Han country with the exception of Fort Selkirk during 1848-1852. Only the Tlingit were trading in this part of the Yukon. As nothing would have prompted these Athapaskans to own more dogs than in 1850, we might therefore have to accept that the findings for 1874 and 1883 would have been partly applicable to 1850.

The number of dogs *maintained by each family* could well have increased over the last few decades of the nineteenth century and in the early twentieth century. The figures provided to McClellan (1975b: I, 274) for the southern Yukon suggest an increase from an average of two dogs per family to five or six dogs. A Northern Tutchone man from Little Salmon provided me with roughly similar estimates. According to him, the change occurred in the 1900s. In my opinion, this sudden affluence could be related to the depopulation which took place from 1850 to 1920. As a matter of fact, this undoubtedly led the Tutchone to again band together in the richest areas of the Yukon Plateau and made it possible to allot a greater portion of fish catches to feed a larger dog population.[307] It should be noted that a team of five or six dogs would require approximately 1,200 fish each winter (Bompas, 1888: 101). However, this issue must be treated independently of the issue of the period in which dogs first came to be used in transportation. I will return to this matter later.

I must now raise the second question concerning the means of transportation, i.e., whether or not the Tutchone used birchbark canoes. McClellan (1975b: I, 268) asserted that the Southern Tutchone made a few, but that because of the scarcity of birch in their territory, they instead used spruce bark (*ibid*.: 237). She speculated that the canoes, especially those made of birch bark were more commonly used north of the territories inhabited by the

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[305] Reverend Robert McDonald, *Journal, September 1, 1873 to September 1, 1874* (C.M.S. A 101 – see February 22-28, 1874).

[306] I had long wondered how it was possible to keep dogs without using iron chains. It seems that this was no great feat. Two of the dog's paws would be tied in a way that the dog could not bite through the babiche cord that held it. The dog could only crawl about the camp without being able to leave it.

[307] As deplorable as it may be, it is now known that the average standard of living improves after a major epidemic. More on this subject, albeit mitigated, can be found in the conclusions drawn by Fourquin (1969: 334-349) on the fate of the peasantry after the Black Plague took its toll in Europe from 1348 to 1350.

Southern Tutchone and Tagish, meaning Northern Tutchone country. Considering that Schwatka (1893: 220-223) saw some around Fort Selkirk (see Illustration F, Plate 2), there is every indication that the Tutchone did in fact use them. However, a detailed examination of archival documents refutes this hypothesis.

Campbell's journal is particularly insightful in this respect. Between 1848 and 1852, Campbell saw natives arrive in birchbark canoes on five different occasions. Each one of those canoes carried Han people.[308] The Tutchone were familiar with this type of canoe since the Han would visit them using such watercraft. Campbell relates an example of a Tutchone chief who, during his stay among the Han, traveled in one with them.[309] However, when the same chief traveled with his own people, he used a raft or simply traveled on foot.[310] Moreover, in the 14 cases in which the precise means of water transportation used by Tutchone was noted, not one mention was made of birchbark canoes. The Tutchone are reported to have traveled either by raft or by foot.[311]

Not one archival document, aside from Schwatka's account, mentions the Tutchone using such canoes, and since the Tutchone themselves did not speak of their existence, there is every reason to believe that the canoes sighted by Schwatka near Fort Selkirk in 1883 were not Tutchone boats. They probably belonged to the Han who had come, as they did during Campbell's time, to visit with the Tutchone and the Tlingit. Moreover, the group of between 170 and 200 people that met Schwatka (cf. 1893: 224) was too large to have consisted solely of the Tutchone people living around the Fort Selkirk area.

It is possible to explain why the Han used this type of canoe and why the Tutchone did not. The birchbark canoe was the only craft that could be regularly used against the current in the mountainous basin of the Upper Yukon. A pole was used to push it upstream (cf. Schwatka, 1893: 220-223). However, this type of craft would break quite easily and its load capacity was quite low. Thus, McDonald wrote that the canoe used by the Yukon Gwich'in could not carry more than "2 gulls, 8 geese, 4 goslings" and a bit of dried moose. He had to abandon the lion's share of the moose he had just killed to whatever carnivores were around.[312] Furthermore, a closer look at archival documents shows that canoes were crucial for the Han or the Yukon Gwich'in, not because they could be used for transportation against the current, but because they could be easily manoeuvred on water—an essential feature for their salmon fishing techniques, but not so important for the Tutchone technique. We will see later that salmon would go up the Yukon River to their spawning grounds at the river's most remote sources: the tributaries of the Porcupine, tributaries of the White, tributaries of the Stewart and Pelly, and tributaries of the Yukon upstream from Fort Selkirk. They were generally situated in the riverbeds of smaller waterways. In these narrow rivers, salmon could be captured in fish weirs or caught by salmon spears or gaffs. There was no

[308] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, July 6, 1848; August 24, 1849; May 19, 1850; July 13, August 24, 1851.

[309] *Ibid*., August 24, 1851.

[310] *Ibid*., August 24, 1849; May 17, 22, 1850.

[311] *Ibid*., June 5, October 2, 3, 12, 1848; June 20, August 22, 24, 1849; May 17, 22, July 17, 20, August 2, October 26, 1850; June 13, 1851.

[312] McDonald, *Journal from September 9, 1876 to February 5, 1878*: cf. June 30, 1877 (C.M.S., A 103)

need for boats. However, for the indigenous people living near the river downstream from Fort Selkirk, i.e., starting in Han country, much of their salmon had to be captured in the riverbed of the Yukon River en route to their spawning grounds in Tutchone country or elsewhere, such as the Upper Porcupine. The technique used was described by Schwatka (1893: 256-258) from his observations among the Han in the Klondike area:

> The Salmon I saw them take were caught about two hundred or two hundred and fifty yards directly out from the shore in front of the houses. Standing in front of this row of cabins, some person, generally an old man, squaw or child, possibly on duty for that purpose, would announce, in a loud voice, that a salmon was coming up the river, perhaps from a quarter to a third of a mile away. This news would stir up some young man from the cabins, who from his elevated position in front of them would identify the salmon's position and then run down to the beach, pick up his canoe, paddle and net, launch the former and start rapidly out into the river; the net lying on the canoe's birch deck in front of him, his movements being guided by his own sight and that of a half dozen others on the high bank, all shouting advice to him at the same time. Evidently, in the canoe he could not judge well of the fish's position, especially at a distance; for he seemed to rely on the advice from the shore to direct his movements until the fish was near him, when with two or three dexterous and powerful strokes with both hands, he shot the little canoe to a point near the position he wished to take up, regulating its finer movements by the paddle used as a sculling oar in his left hand, while with his right he grasped the net at the end of its handle and plunged it into the water the whole length of its pole to the bottom of the river (some nine or ten feet); often leaning far over and thrusting the arm deep into the water, so as to adjust the mouth of the net, covering about two square feet, directly over the course of the salmon so as to entrap him. Of seven attempts, at intervals covering three hours, two were successful (and in two others salmon were caught but escaped while the nets were being raised), salmon being taken that weighed from fifteen to twenty pounds…
>
> Their success depends of course in some way on the motion of the fish. In vain they attempted to show members of my party the coming fish […]. My interpreters told me […] that the motion of the fish was communicated from the deep water to the surface, often when the fish was quite at the bottom.

From this description, it is easy to grasp the importance of owning a canoe for those that fished salmon directly from the Yukon riverbed. In the beginning, I thought that the Tutchone would have also used this technique, but a Tutchone man from Little Salmon to whom I mentioned this quickly set me straight. This fishing technique could only be practised in silty waters, otherwise the canoe would cast a shadow and be noticed by the salmon. The water of the Yukon River is turbid only downstream from the White River mouth (in Han country) which carries a large quantity of volcanic ash into the Yukon. Upstream from this point, i.e., in Tutchone country, or on the tributaries of the Yukon, such as the Porcupine, the waters of the Yukon River Basin are too clear. Considering the canoe's limited usefulness for transportation, this would explain why the Tutchone who were familiar with rafts, moose-skin boats and dug-outs, almost never used the fragile birchbark canoes and no doubt why, as Bompas explains (1888: 44), the Gwich'in of the Porcupine, unlike the Gwich'in of the Yukon, "did not make many canoes but travelled mostly on rafts, which they constructed and managed with a good deal of skill."

#### 6.3.2.1 Snowshoes

Let us now have a look at the other Tutchone means of transportation. Tutchone *snowshoes*, still in use, were the same as those used by the Southern Tutchone (cf. McClellan, 1975b: I, 275-278), the Upper Tanana/Nabesna (cf. McKennan, 1959: 53), the Han (cf. Osgood, 1971: 81-82) and the Gwich'in (cf. Osgood, 1936b: 77-82): rounded and raised at the front, long narrow frame and fine babiche lacing. They were made in two lengths. Short ones were used on Indigenous roads on which the snow had been packed by frequent travel while long ones were used to open trails that had been abandoned for several months, or else to leave the beaten path in order to pursue or flush out game. With practice, walking with snowshoes becomes second nature. One can pick up the pace, do a 180 degree turn, take mincing steps like a wolf or sprint over distances of 400-500 metres. Snowshoes do have one drawback however: Since snow in the Yukon is very powdery, they cannot be used to climb very steep slopes. In winter, the escarpments along the valleys of the plateau and, even more so, the mountains were all but off limits.

#### 6.3.2.2 Skin toboggan

*Skin toboggans* can be used to drag objects that would otherwise have to be carried. They were nothing more than moose lower leg skins sewn together into a long blanket. The fur side was face down on the snow and the hair oriented so that the vehicle would not slip backwards. The technique was similar to that of the seals skins formerly used by Euro-Canadians on their cross-country skis. The cargo was wrapped in the skin blanket and the skin tied with babiche that was laced through eyelets pierced all around the side of the skin. An adult woman could pull a load of 50 kg over fairly long distances. The description provided by a man from Little Salmon indicates that the Tutchone skin toboggan was like the kind used by the Tagish (cf. McClellan, 1975b: I, 271). It is to be noted that the skin toboggan was preferred to the wooden toboggan because it did not freeze to the ground when pulled over an ice surface which had been overflowed with the water of melting snow.

#### 6.3.2.3 Wooden toboggan

*Wooden toboggans* consisted of a large composite plank, 50-60 cm wide and 1.5-2 metres long, made of five or six boards curved at the front in the shape of a "C" (compare Photo J with diagram on Diagram XI). An adult would have been able to pull no more that 60-80 kg by hand. It must be borne in mind that a person pulling a toboggan would have to simultaneously move forward while wearing snowshoes. Toboggans pulled by dogs could be laden with 30 to 45 kg of cargo per animal, all depending on the strength of each dog. A team of two or three dogs could pull a load of between 80 kg and 120 kg. Because of the narrow Tutchone trails and the dense thickets and forests, the dogs were harnessed in single file rather than by pairs as was practiced by the Alaskan Athapaskans or in fan formation, as favoured by the Inuit.

The daily distance run by dog teams would vary considerably and was not entirely dependent on the terrain. As a matter of fact, at least one person on snowshoes would have to walk ahead of the dogs and flatten the snow in order for them to advance. Those travelling on trails that had fallen into disuse or trails off the main routes would be limited to the pace of the one individual walking on soft snow—no more than 15 km to 20 km per day. On frequently used trails, on the other hand, a team of two or three dogs could pull 100 kg of cargo

over a distance of 30-40 km in a day. These would be top speeds traveled only in emergencies. A family was limited to travelling only as fast as the slowest members could trot alongside.

After the snow had melted, people most often traveled on land; wide water courses and lakes were crossed in the types of crafts described above. Major rivers, navigated on raft, were less frequently used.

On land, loads were divided among dogs, men, women and children. The load packed by dogs—about 10-15 kg each—was placed on a saddle harnessed around their chests (see Photo A, Plate 1). The rest of the bundles had to be carried on human backs or by hand. Photo C shows how bundles were tied to the back with a strap tied around the chest. To determine what a normal load was we must turn to archival documents. Campbell provides the most detailed figures. After having weighed bundles transported in this manner, he noticed that a man could carry a load of 40-45 kg and for a number of days over hundreds of kilometres.[313] Campbell did not provide details on the loads carried by women or children, but they were plausibly equal to the loads carried by Han women and children—75 lbs (cf. Adney quoted by McClellan, 1965b: I, 279). On photo C, note the woman shown at the far left and the young boy just left of centre. Glave (1892: 873) who traveled with the Tutchone of Aishihik gave 50 lbs as the weight shouldered by a young boy and 80 lbs for an adult male.

Photo C shows that people even used pails to transport goods by hand. The women in this photograph are carrying iron pails. The Tutchone women to whom this photo was shown specified that in the old days, small objects were carried in square-top birch bark baskets of variable sizes. They said that the baskets were the same as those held by the two women in Photo B. Also included in the category of loads carried by people were arrow quivers, hunting bags for detachable arrowheads or ammunition for flintlock guns, etc., as well as numerous pouches and bags made either of leather or intestinal membrane.

Of all the means of transportation used to navigate the main rivers, rafts were the easiest to construct. A raft would be built of two layers of 4-5 m lengths of straight dry tree trunks. The Tutchone elder who is shown in Photo D (taken in 1974, Plate 2) with his daughter and dogs confirmed that his craft, made without a single nail, was similar to the kind used by his grandparents during the second half of the nineteenth century. Apart from dogs—used to transport goods in one direction—the raft was used to transport this man, his daughter, his wife and two moose carcasses over a distance of 150 km. In the old days, these rafts would have been abandoned as soon as the trip had been completed or the body of water had been crossed (cf. Dawson, 1888: 128B).

Moose-skin boats were made of a wood frame (see Photo E, Plate 2) and covered in moose skins. They varied in size but were generally five metres long and called for three moose skins, although some required 12 moose skins to cover the frame. Armstrong (1937:

[313] In his memoirs, Campbell exaggerated somewhat. He estimates loads at between 45 kg and 90 kg ("100 lbs to nearly 200 lbs" in Wilson, 1970: 98). In the *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, after he just had them weighed, he wrote "90 to 100 lbs and upward (August 30, 1849), "between 80 to 100 lbs each" (August 31, 1949).

## PLATE 1

Photo A. Southern Tutchone in the vicinity of Whitehorse with a pack-saddle dog, between 1902 and 1908
(taken from the Report of International Boundary Commission, Washington).

The Tutchone used the same style of saddle. Note the metal pail that the dog must also carry. The phenomenon of Euro-Canadian imports forced the Tutchone to acquire more dogs without however increasing transportation capabilities vis-à-vis production.

Photo B. Northern Tutchone women showing specimens of their birchbark baskets, circa 1920
(reprinted from an old photograph belonging to a Tutchone man).

From left to right, *tsao'ka' djana* (good gopher hunter) and *gu'dia* (meaning lost). The father of the first belonged to the White River group while the father of the second was part of the Fort Selkirk group. Both women were married to the same man.

Photo C. An extended family of the White River group, or perhaps Lake Mentasta, moving to a new camp, circa 1900
(from the collection of A. D. Powell, 1909).

Note the young boy at the far right carrying a bundle and behind the women on the far left, a pack-saddle dog. Also note the dense forest in the background. Comments made by present-day Tutchone on seeing this photo are interesting. Perhaps a mistake or perhaps a revelation, they took the man in the background and the older woman (second from the right) to be parents of the two young women (far left and far right) and the young man in the centre as the husband of the woman at the far right carrying a baby on her back.

Photo A

Photo B

Photo C

## PLATE 2

Photo D. A family from Carmacks returning from a moose hunting trip around Big Salmon
(1974).

The father, mother and a daughter had made the trip from Carmacks to Big Salmon (150 km) on foot, accompanied by two dogs laden with pack-saddles. The photograph was taken along the Yukon River on their return trip to Carmacks with two moose carcasses.

Photo E. Photograph of the frame of a moose-skin boat to be covered by three hides
(Carmacks, 1974).

This frame was between 15 and 30 years old and had been abandoned near one of the trading posts in the village.

Photo F. Birchbark canoes seen at Fort Selkirk in 1883, but probably belonging to visiting Han people
(from Schwatka, 1893).

Photo D

Photo E

Photo F

26) saw such a specimen made by the Upper Pelly River Kaska or Kasini. A moose-skin boat could transport a fairly heavy load, including four or five people. However, as a means of navigating major rivers, it was much less effective than a raft. A few hours after being launched in the water, the skins would be completely soaked. The craft would have to be taken out of the water and left to dry (cf. McClellan, 1975b: I, 269). This made it better suited to travelling short distances on lakes or across narrow rivers, either for fishing or for hunting beaver or muskrat.

The Tutchone dug-out was a hollowed trunk of cottonwood about three metres long. According to Schwatka (1893: 156) who noted a similar style of dug-out among the Tagish, the craft could accommodate no more than two adults, three children and a few packages. Because of its weight, it was impossible to navigate this type of boat against the current of a fast-flowing river using a paddle; consequently, the boat would have to be pulled or tracked from the shore. This could sometimes be very complicated. In Chapter 5, Section 5.2, we saw that rivers sometimes flowed through cliffs 40-50 m high. In such places, the boat would have to be hauled upstream by walking at the foot of a $45^{o}$ to $60^{o}$ slope of loose soil and scree. The Tutchone never seem to have found any advantage in using this technique. Their reaction to Euro-Canadians who urged them to carry out such a task speaks volumes. They quickly became discouraged and, by all accounts, decided that what was asked of them was sheer lunacy (cf. Tollemache, 1912: 271). The task was extremely arduous and slow, and as the cargo had to be lightweight, this means offered little advantage on major river routes. It was better to use a raft to go downstream and return by land. Like the moose-skin boat, the dug-out was above all a craft limited to travel on lakes and minor rivers.

From 1900 to 1920, the size of dog teams increased. Allusions to this change were made above. The horse-drawn sleighs and steamboats that assured transportation between Whitehorse and Dawson City in the winter were not used by the Tutchone. The traditional raft was still used in the 1970s (Plate 2, Photo D). It was only around 1930 that a few natives acquired a limited number horses and Euro-Canadian wooden row boats. It should be added that *moose-skin boats* made without nails as well as dug-outs were used at least until the mid 1940s just as Father Bobillet observed for the Macmillan Basin.[314]

As seen from the preceding, the principal change in travel and transportation in the late nineteenth century was an increase in the size of dog teams. What then were the effects of this change? Were the products of labour more easily transported from one place to another? Were larger quantities stored in a single place? By the same token, could the size of settlements and the rate at which people moved have been prone to change?

We know that the size of dog teams increased from two dogs to five or six dogs during that period and that, consequently, the weight that could be transported by this means increased from between 80 kg and 120 kg to between 200 kg and 240 kg. Thus, at first, the last two above questions seem to require affirmative responses. Deeper reflection, however, reveals the opposite. After the 1900s, the Tutchone had to carry all of the new Euro-Canadian goods they bought: tents, metal sheet stoves, iron pots and a variety of metal containers, etc. These items, available in limited numbers, had to be transported from one camp to the next. The weight of all these new goods could be as much as 100 kg to 120 kg and

[314] Cf. Bobillet, *Journal d'un missionnaire au Yukon*, p. 526.

thus require three additional dogs to pull it. To transport food supplies, there remained only two to three dogs on average; as many as were used during the second half of the nineteenth century. The relationship between production and transportation of food supplies must therefore be regarded as having been relatively stable between 1840 and 1920.

This relationship could essentially be summarized as follows: (1) during the four months of *summer,* transportation on the plateau was manageable only by packing (dogs and humans); (2) in the valleys, one could choose between travelling overland and rafting downriver. But people were not as free to choose between the two options as one might imagine. First, rafts could only be used to travel downstream, leaving overland packing the only option for the return trip. Moreover, not all production centres were linked by navigable routes. In the summer, Indigenous roads remained undeniably important, so much so that even some of the earliest explorers like Pike (1896: 203-204) misinterpreted the practices of the Tutchone and believed that they did not travel by water at all:

> In this stretch of river [Middle and Lower Pelly] we often noticed rafts tied up to the banks, evidently used by the Indians for crossing the Pelly […]. It is curious that they do not use canoes on such an easily navigable stream, but prefer to pack a load on their backs and make a straight course for their hunting-grounds, crossing and recrossing the main stream to cut off a detour, and only camping on its banks when they know that the salmons are running.

Dawson (1888: 122B, 128B) made similar remarks. However, thanks to the data in Campbell's journal, we know that the facts were not as clear cut and that rafts were used for long-distance transportation whenever a river could be used.

During the eight months of *winter,* when the snow was thick enough—normally from November to early May—the Tutchone could transport the products of their labour by toboggan, which would be pulled by people or dogs. Given the density of the forest however, this form of transportation did not allow for much flexibility. All cargo, regardless of size, had to pass through established and relatively well maintained but narrow trails unless there was just cause to take another route and unless one was prepared to put in the effort to open a new path in the fresh snow.

To recap the types of loads that would be transported and to determine the capacity of the transportation system in relation to the volume of production, I will use as an example a nuclear family consisting of a father, a mother, an adolescent—boy or girl—and two children. Figures to be presented later will show that from June to October, a family of this size could easily produce between 1,200 kg and 2,000 kg of dried moose, dried salmon, frozen whitefish, gopher, etc. At some point in October, the Tutchone would have to leave the riverbanks where keta salmon was gaffed and head towards fishing grounds on lakes. The major water courses would not have frozen over by that time.

Based on the rafts I saw being built and used and based on what the Tutchone told me about them, a fully loaded raft could transport between 300 kg and 500 kg along water routes. The two moose carcasses on the raft shown in Photo D easily support this estimate. If necessary, the load could be increased by making some family members and dogs walk alongside on the riverbank—a common practice. Being able to transport such a load was not insignificant, but this was only possible along the major river networks. In between this network, it was necessary to portage.

As long as everyone, except for the youngest of the children, could carry a bundle, the nuclear family in our example could carry only an aggregate weight of between 165 kg and

210 kg (45 kg carried by the man, 30 kg each by the woman and the adolescent, 20 kg by the older of the two children and 15 kg by the dog). These, of course, are maximum weights. Normally, as shown in Photo D, the male leader carried no weight. Newborns had to be carried, leaving one less adult to help shoulder the burden.

In winter, the single team of two or three dogs that would have been used in the latter half of the nineteenth century (or the remaining two or three dogs that could be used to transport food staples during the first two decades of the twentieth century), could pull loads weighing anywhere from 80 kg to 120 kg. However, it took one person to guide such a dog-team, and that person could pull no weight at all. The other adult and the adolescent could undoubtedly pull 50 kg each on skin-toboggans. As the two younger children would have had enough with learning to keep up on snowshoes, I doubt they could have transported anything over a long distance. We can then conclude that, in winter, a nuclear family of five people could transport between 180 kg and 220 kg at the very most from one place to another, just slightly more than would be possible in summer.

Considering that the above figures would have been the maxima for both summer and winter and, as will be seen in greater detail below, that most was harvested in summer and fall when toboggans could not be of use, it becomes clear that the Tutchone had no choice but to cache most of their food production on site, at their work centres and, later on, over the course of their annual cycle, to travel back through their territory from one of their "pantries" to another. We must therefore look at what means they had at their disposal to preserve these food stores and protect them against predators.

### 6.3.3 Means of Preservation and Storage

From October to May, food preservation was not an issue. The ambient temperature on the Yukon Plateau could freeze food stores in a matter of hours, but from June to September, temperatures were much too high—even in the shade—for fish and meat to remain edible more than a few days. Fish and meat reserved for storage had to be processed to prevent them from rotting.

The Tutchone claim that they were not familiar with salting. These claims are supported by a number of findings. For one thing, they had no word in their language for salt. Unfamiliar with French, they believe that "le sel" (article and noun making one single word-base) was an Athapaskan word, but it was more likely borrowed from French-speaking Métis from the Mackenzie who accompanied Campbell in 1848.From what they reported, drying—the means used to preserve foods then as now—was the only method known to their forebears in the nineteenth century. Plenty of archival data supports this. From 1848 to 1920, there are many references to fish and meat being simply dried.[315] No other procedure is mentioned.

Drying salmons consisted in cutting fillets approximately 1 cm thick, and slitting each fillet in parallel lines one and a half centimetres apart. The fillet was held together by the

[315] For the earliest references to preservation through drying, see Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, January 10, April 1, 1849, *passim*.

skin which was notched to allow for air circulation (see Photos G and H, Plate 3). The rest of the flesh was dried on the bones of the fish. As for the meat of large game, the Tutchone would cut the flesh into thin strips about 3-4 mm thick. Like the fish, the meat strips were hung on a rack and dried in the open air. Small game, like gopher and muskrat, were skinned and dried whole. To shelter the drying meat and fish from rain, the rack was covered with one or two moose skins. Beneath the products hung out to dry, a small fire was kept stoked not so much to smoke them as to simply keep away the flies and mosquitoes. Food dried in this manner would keep for at least one year if stored in a dry place. It would be eaten as such, either raw or boiled. Berries gathered in summer were also dried in the open air: a technique that required one person (adult or child) to constantly chase away the birds tempted by such a spread. The journal kept at Fort Selkirk in 1848-1852 indicates that, even then, the Tutchone stored berries for the winter.[316] This practice was therefore not acquired recently.

Once prepared in this fashion, these foods could be stored either in shelters or in caches which had to be protected against predators—bears, foxes, wolverines, weasels and others—likely to visit the production centre after the Tutchone had left. Campbell's journal mentions the existence of many such food caches,[317] however, he unfortunately does not describe them. Here again, we must rely on the Tutchone's memories. Before 1900, it seems that only two types of caches were in style: pit caches or ground caches and elevated caches. After 1900, another type was introduced: the storehouse on piles which resembled a small log cabin built on top of four posts with a sloped roof and door.

The ground cache measured 3-4 m x 1-1.5 m and was barely 50 cm deep. Around the periphery, the edges were raised up by two or three logs carefully placed on top of one another.[318] The food stores were deposited into this cellar which was then covered with heavy fresh-cut tree trunks. In general, these ground cache houses were built on very dry, well-drained soil. The salmon ground cache house at the mouth of the Nordenskiold River, for example, was built on a hillside 1 km from the weir where fish was captured; the cache adjacent to the salmon weir used by a group of Hutshi people was, for lack of a more suitable place closer by, 2-3 km from the fishing grounds. The same was true for ground caches used to store moose or other types of meat. If an appropriate site could not be found nearby, the Tutchone would resort to the second type of storage. In almost all cases, caches were located away from treed areas so as to protect them from forest fires.

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[316] *Ibid*., August 16, 1848.

[317] *Ibid*. "It is evident that the Indians have plenty large meat caches though they are not inclined to bring any meat to the fort" (October 10, 1848). "I believe all the Indians have entered a combination to bring neither furs nor meat to the fort although they have plenty in caches" (September 30, 1849).

[318] The description of the ground cache is based on observations I made at Minto (Yukon Territory) of vestiges of one of these old types of storehouse or cache.

## PLATE 3

### Photo G. A woman from Carmacks preparing salmon for drying
(Carmacks 1974).

Salmon must be sliced at the latest within 24 hours of capture. All through the fishing season, she and her sister would devote two two-hour periods a day—in the morning between 10 o'clock and noon and in the afternoon between 4 o'clock and 6 o'clock—to cutting up the approximately 15 to 25 fish from each catch. This task constituted the lion's share of the work in this process. In the old days, women worked all night without being able to keep up with all the salmon caught in the weirs. And the weirs were left open to let surplus fish pass through.

### Photo H. Sliced salmon hung up to dry
(Carmacks, 1974).

Note the notches in both the skin and the flesh. The notches help dry the fish more quickly and thoroughly.

### Photo I. A Northern Tutchone camp circa 1900
(reprinted from an old photograph belonging to a Tutchone man).

The rack is similar to the kind one still sees in non-wooded areas. The meat and fish were arranged on the rack. The photograph also shows a Hudson's Bay blanket and other items which, together with the tent and a wood stove, even in those days had to be transported from one camp site to another, thus reducing the amount of food that could be transported despite the fact that dog teams had grown in size. In the forefront is a toboggan similar to the kind still made by the Tutchone in the 1970s and later.

Photo G

Photo H

Photo I

This second method consisted in setting up a scaffold or platform between a cluster of trees, generally at a height of between 5 m and 8 m. The food stores were placed on the platform that could be accessed via a ladder which was essentially a notched tree trunk. They were protected by a skin and held in place by several tree trunks. In sparsely wooded areas, the platform was set up on scaffolding (see Photo I, Plate 3). Over the course of their annual cycle, as they would move from one site to another, a portion of the food would be transported while the remainder—the largest portion—would be left behind so that it could be eaten on the return trip. These means of protecting food stores do not seem to have always been very effective. In his journal, Campbell wrote of at least one instance in winter when the Tutchone were reduced to rationing their food because some wolverines had destroyed their caches.[319] During the month I spent at Frenchman Lake in early 1974, one family lost its entire food supply which had been placed on a platform to a wolverine. Nonetheless, these were the only methods the Tutchone had to protect food they amassed through their very ingenious work techniques.

## 6.4 Indigenous Work Instruments (Tools and Implements)

### 6.4.1 Traps

Let us begin by examining instruments designed for the automatic capture of fish and game, such as traps, snares, deadfalls and nets. They dominated and continue to dominate many extractive work processes, but, as pointed out by McKennan (1959: 48), all too often the sociological effects of their use "in the Athapaskan culture pattern is not fully appreciated."

Babiche snares were the most common type of automated trap. Chapter 5 described how moose were captured with this means of appropriation. But it was not the only animal captured in this way. *Snares* of different shapes and sizes were used to capture black bear, hare, gopher, red squirrel, and other types of animals. For certain game like moose or hare, the snare had to be used with a counter-weight (a branch or a log) positioned to act like a spring and hoist the animal up; others, such as lynx, were captured with a snare that was simply stretched across a path on which they routinely travelled. Aside from gophers which were caught at the entrance to their burrows, a makeshift barrier often had to be set up on each side of the path where the snare had been set.

Birds that were part of the regular diet—spruce grouse, ruffed grouse, willow ptarmigan, geese, swan, duck—were most often caught with ground snares that were slip-knotted and placed on the ground where birds would step into them (occasionally, they could also be killed with the use of bunting arrows or hit with a rock)

The other type of trap commonly used was the deadfall. Animals captured in this manner included brown bear, marmot, wolverine, wolf, fox, marten, ermine, mink and weasel. Diagram V illustrates the way in which a deadfall was used to capture a bear. A structure similar to the one shown in Diagram II was set up around the trap in a way that the animal was

[319] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, February 4, 1850.

forced to enter through point M to reach the bait C. The deadfalls intended to break the animal's lower back (K and J) were propped up with a counterweight E which was connected to the bait at point D. As soon as the bait was touched, the weight would be loosened, thus releasing the deadfalls and killing the animal. Diagram VI illustrates another type of deadfall used to kill smaller animals such as marten. Since the release mechanism is similar in all deadfalls, the illustration is simplified only to show how an animal is caught when the trap is shut. The structure around the bait is also shown. This type of trap continued to be used long after 1900.

The inventory of Tutchone traps will be rounded out by a look at nets, funnel-shaped or conical fish traps and fish weirs with fish-boxes. Many Tutchone mentioned the use of two types of fish nets. The first type was fairly large and used to capture all kinds of lake fish that are not easily caught with a line and hook: broad whitefish, lake whitefish, round whitefish, etc. A Tagish specimen dating from 1900-1905 was on display at the museum in Whitehorse. It is a square-link net about 30 metres long and one metre wide and made of braided sinew. The museum's explanatory note indicates that it took two women four years to make this net. The Northern Tutchone to whom I described the net affirmed that theirs was similar.

In winter, the net would be stretched across part of the lake, under the ice, through an ingenious system which entailed boring a number of holes in the ice. Technically, the task of setting and pulling up the net could be done by one or two people (cf. McClellan, 1975b: I, 190-191). In summer, some precautions had to be taken as the material used in making the net decomposed quickly in the tepid water. According to McClellan (*ibid.*), to keep the net from "cooking" over the course of the day, it had to be taken out before dawn and repositioned after sunset. This bit of information was gathered from among the Tagish, but the Tutchone who used the same material were certainly held to the same constraints. When some species migrated to their spawning grounds, net fishing was so effective that 150-200 fish could be caught in a day.

Few details exist for the second type of net. I simply learned that it was used to capture beaver as they would leave their underwater home and that it was much smaller and much stronger than the fish net.

Although few of the rare archival documents dating from before 1890 specifically mention[320] the use of nets, there is little reason to believe that they were unknown between 1850 and 1890. The Peel River Gwich'in (cf. Osgood, 1936b: 67, 68-70), the Yukon River Gwich'in (McKennan, 1959: 63), the Kaska (cf. Honigmann, 1954: 38), the Han (cf. Osgood, 1971: 66, 68), the Tagish (McClellan, 1975b: I, 189, 190-192) are said to have used them during that period.

Two variations on the fish weir traps are documented among the Tutchone. The funnel-shaped or conical fish traps (or fish baskets) and fish weirs documented archaeologically at a site near Fort Selkirk are likely a smaller-capacity precursor of the weirs described to me

[320] In 1849, Campbell spoke of using a net, but it is impossible, based on the context, to ascertain whether he was referring to a Tutchone net or to his own net. Cf. *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, September 23, 1849. The earliest reference to a Tutchone net dates from 1891 (cf. Glave, 1892: 672).

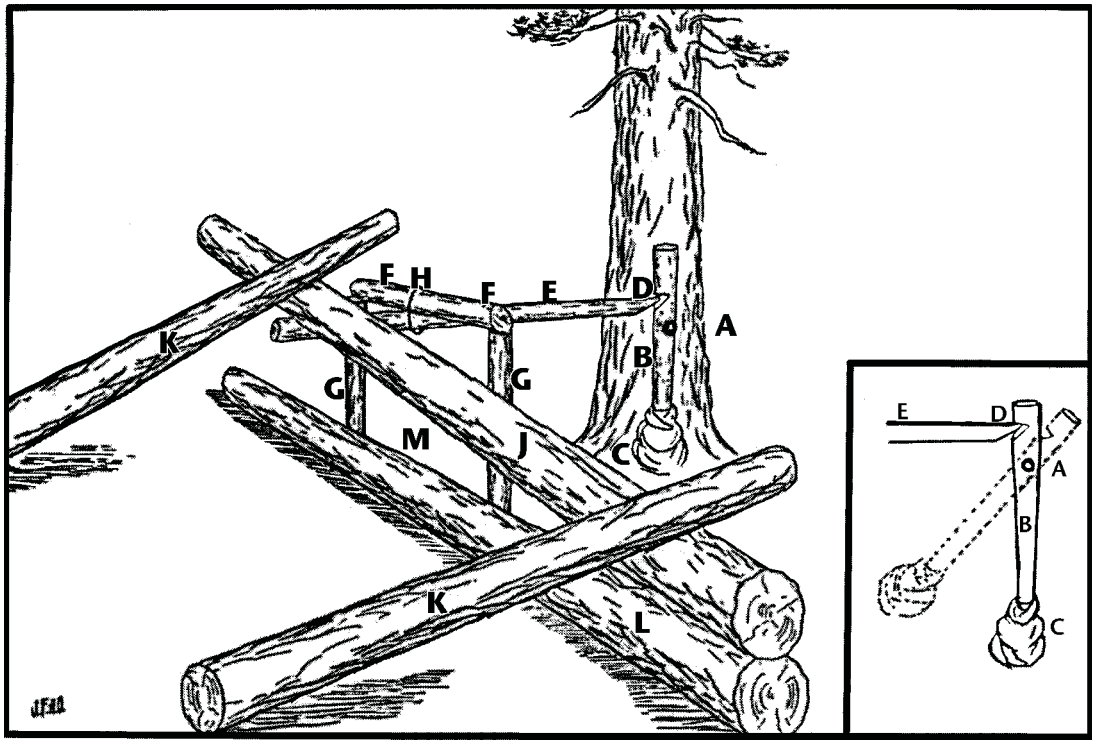



DIAGRAM V. DEADFALL FOR CAPTURING BEAR

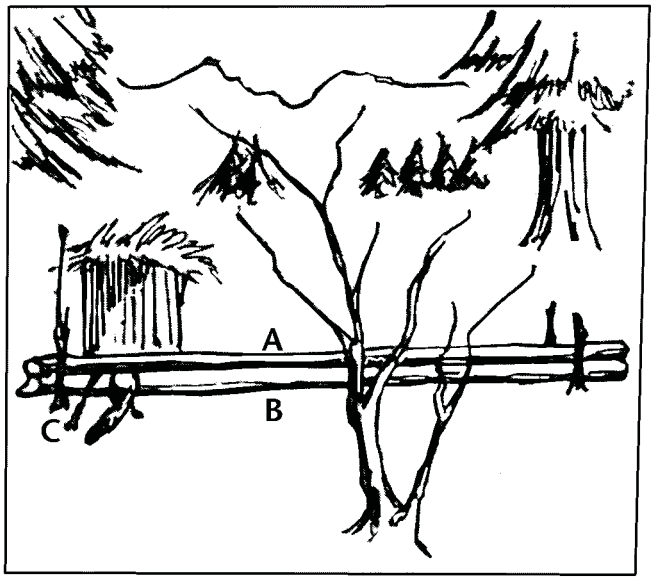



DIAGRAM VI. DEADFALL FOR CAPTURING MARTEN

DIAGRAM VII. STEEL TRAP FOR CAPTURING MARTEN

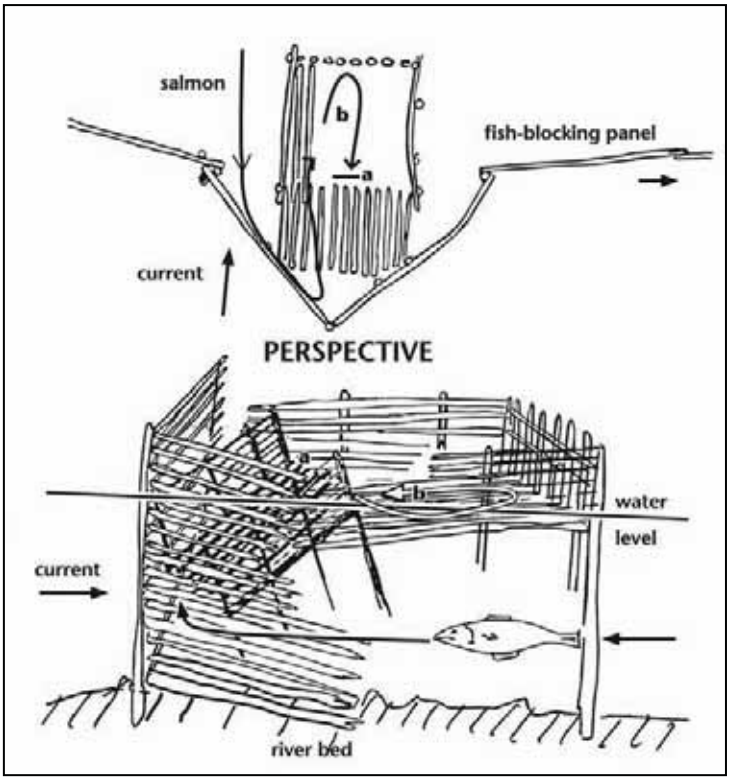



DIAGRAM VIII. SALMON WEIR

by informants, and were set up and operated in a similar fashion (see Gotthardt and Easton 1989; Gotthardt 1990). Similar traps are described by Osgood for the Gwich'in and Han as well (Osgood 1936b: 73; 1971:68-69). The only specimen I saw (at the site of the deserted village of Big Salmon) was made of metal chain link.

Recollections about the construction and use of fish weirs with fish-boxes are vivid, however. Thanks to information provided by a Tutchone man from Little Salmon, I was able to sketch the workings of the salmon weir that some of his relatives used when he was an adolescent. First, a dam made of spruce poles was built to block the river (see cross-section (A) of Diagram VIII). Then two or three fish-trap boxes were set in place (see Diagram VIII for a birds-eye view). The salmon followed the sloped ramp of the fish-trap box to the point where it was halfway out of the water (Point b) and could not turn back to Point a. Under normal conditions, as many as 40, 50 or even 60 salmon could be caught in each of the fish-trap boxes. The boxes were emptied at regular intervals throughout the day. It took only a few people to do this task which, for the most part, was relatively easy. It should be noted that this technique was prone to failure if the water level rose too high above or fell too far below the bottom of the box. A similar instrument was used to take advantage of the migration of certain freshwater fish like arctic greylings. Depending on the species being captured, fish weirs could vary slightly from one another.

Between 1900 and 1920, fish weirs (with conical traps or with fish-boxes) were in no way affected by any technological offerings from the European world. In fact, they were so efficient that their use was prohibited by the Canadian government. However, as reported by Tutchone elders and old Euro-Canadian settlers at Carmacks, this prohibition was not enforced until the mid 1920's or later in some cases.

After having seen three sites where fish weirs had once been set up, I estimated that such a structure could be built by three or four individuals in less than a week. I asked my informant from Little Salmon several questions to see if my estimates were accurate. Our conversation was interesting, particularly as it revealed just how difficult it is to conduct research among the Athapaskans who are quite reserved (this man was one of the most open) and also how a seemingly simple estimate can be ethnocentric:

D.L.—How long do you think it takes to build the whole fish-trap?
T.M.—I don't know…
D.L.—Maybe one day?
T.M. —No… more than that.
D.L. —Two or three days?
T.M. —More than that…
D.L. —Do you think it could take up to a week?
T.M.—No… more than that. You don't understand. See, in the old days, people would come a month before the date king salmon was due to come. In those days, nobody worked like now. There is no 8 hours a day. Maybe they worked 2 or 3 hours a day, that's all. One man go in the river. There is only one hammer… stone hammer. The other ones cheer him up from the bank. Then another man goes in the water. Then another one. After that they enjoyed themselves. They would go walk around.

As a matter of fact, they would go hunting to make sure they had enough food until the salmon arrived; thus, the importance of setting up one month in advance. My estimate of one week was accurate, but it was made with the assumption that the men worked 10 to 12

hours a day. It becomes obvious that the time required for one task or another, in terms of man-hours or man-days, cannot be directly translated into actual days. This is an important observation and it must be kept in mind when we look at the annual cycle and transformation activities.

We must now turn our attention to the non-automatic work instruments. Of these, there were three categories: 1) general procedures; 2) manual gripping or holding devices (for capture or extraction); and 3) percussion implements.

### 6.4.2 General Procedures

Among the general procedures known to the Tutchone were a number of chemical or physical phenomena: 1) fire started by striking together flint stones (flint or pyrite?); the bow drill used with burning tinder, which served the same purpose; 2) softening and removing fat from green hide in a tanning solution made of moose brain and water; and 3) shaping wood with the use of steam or water. They were also familiar with the chemical properties of a number of preserving agents: animal fat, ochre mixed with fat to protect wood against the effects of snow and water and intense smoking of leather to prevent skins from rotting. Their knowledge of cooking food in boiling water or over an open flame must also be brought up, if only to point out that under normal circumstances, the Tutchone never ate their meat or fish raw (except in a dried state). Moreover, we have seen that they obtained water in winter by melting ice crystals that formed beneath layers of snow (cf. Chapter 5, Section 5.2). Included in this category of general production implements are: wood pegs, babiche, willow and spruce roots, and willow twigs to tie things together, sinew used in sewing, etc. These all played a role in Tutchone production. Today, they have been replaced by nails, spikes, screws, soldering, cotton and nylon thread, etc.

### 6.4.3 Manual Prehension Instruments

The Tutchone also had manual prehension instruments. Among these were gaffs with hooks made of native copper, fish spears or leisters, salmon gaffs or salmon leisters, and fish hooks made of bone or antler. A type of snare used to catch arctic greyling, as well as all containers that were essential to the job of cooking must also be included in this category.

Gaffs, fish spears, salmon gaffs and fish hooks completed the technology of fishing. They were used to fish in open water and also through holes in the ice in winter. A hook on a line and a pole driven in the ground or held by a heavy stone could even be used as an automatic trap. Migrating arctic greyling could also be caught through a hole bored in the melting springtime ice, holding a snare underwater and pulling the snare when a fish swam through its loop.

Included among containers were snowshoes used as a trap for small birds, all baskets made of birch bark which were used for cooking and even the stomachs of certain animals were also used for the purpose of cooking.

A snowshoe could be turned into a trap simply by propping it up at one end with a short stick. Bait was placed on the ground, under the laced part of the snowshoe. As soon as a bird walked under the trap, the stick was withdrawn using a rope and the snowshoe fell on top of

the prey. Birchbark baskets used for cooking were identical to those used to transport goods. Of course, they could not be placed over direct heat. They would be filled with water, meat or fish and then placed not too far from the fire. Stones were heated until they turned red and then picked up with two sticks and dropped into the water, which started to boil. This operation was repeated at regular intervals to keep the water boiling. Cooking a meal for five or six people in this manner required one or two hours of work by one person. When an animal stomach was used for cooking, it was simply hung next to the flames (but not over it) and turned from time to time.

### 6.4.4 Manual Percussion Tools and Implements

This category of instruments consisted of various types of tools which could be divided among four classes: 1) hand-held implements; 2) hammering implements; 3) thrown implements; and 4) projected implements.

Common to all *hand-held percussion implements* is that the portion of the tool used to transform the material is in direct contact with the material and activated simply by applying pressure (cf. Leroi-Gourhan, [1943], 1971: 48). This group of tools included copper knives, crooked knives whose cutting edge was made of a beaver tooth or a small copper blade, various types of awls, fur scrapers made of wood, skin or hide scrapers (made of a tabular piece of schist and shaped like a half-moon) and bow drills which were used to bore holes in bone or wood and lighting a fire through the use of friction. Depending on their intended use, bow drills tips would be made of copper, bone, antler or wood.

#### 6.4.4.1 Hammering on direct contact percussion instrument.

These implements are used precisely placing the tool on the material and applying to it, with the other hand, the might of a hammer whose force increases with acceleration (*ibid.*). This technique has been widely used by people worldwide to produced a fairly rich repertoire of arts and crafts (*ibid.*: 50) and the Tutchone were also familiar with it. They used this procedure to split tree trunks into rough pieces that were ultimately transformed into planks, bows, snowshoe frames, and so on. Tree trunk splitting was achieved by striking hardwood or antler wedges with the force of a hafted stone maul.

#### 6.4.4.2 Thrown instruments

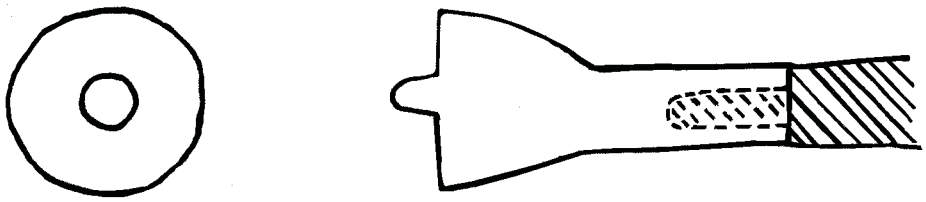
Thrown implements are thrown or cast in the direction of the material and which are retained in the hand during their use. The arm (and often an extension of the arm or handle) amplifies the movement and force of the striking part of the tool before it reaches the material (*ibid.*: 48). Implements of this type used by the Tutchone included stone adzes, stone or moose antler clubs, bear spears (which could be transformed into war weapons as well), ice chisels, beaver spears with detachable bone spearheads, a variety of other spears, hammers, stone mauls, as well as fish clubs and digging sticks.

#### 6.4.4.3 Projected instruments

These tools involve using one's body to give a precise direction to a projectile before the force to be given to this projectile is applied—either directly (spear, rock-thrower or catapult, etc.), through the use of a spring (bow, crossbow, etc.), or through explosion (gun)—

and forcefully project it in the direction of the quarry. Of this category of means of appropriation, the Tutchone traditionally used only the catapult and bow (see Diagram IV in Chapter 5 for a description of bows and arrows). The catapult was only a child's toy. No further details are necessary at this point aside from one technical aspect of capturing small game with bow and arrows. Muskrat, hare, birds had to be stunned with a bunting arrow, rather than a shot with conventional pointed arrowhead which would go though and exit the body of the prey. This was to address the risk the animal or bird escaping if wounded and to avoid time consuming and possibly futile efforts at retrieval. Bunting arrowheads are shown in Diagram IX.

DIAGRAM IX. BUNTING BONE OR ANTLER ARROWHEAD
(as per Jack Tom, Carmacks)



McClellan (personal communication and 1975b: I, 283-284) noted the existence of a wide variety of bunting arrowheads. It is possible that each was designed for a specific type of game. However, these details are of little importance here, except that they indicate that even arrowheads did not always serve a multitude of purposes and, consequently, that the branch of production responsible for their creation was not as marginal as it might first appear to a Euro-Canadian. This is just one of many points to be borne in mind later when we proceed to analyze the effects that the imported European implements had on indigenous industries.

## 6.5 Work Instruments and Implements Borrowed from the European World

The above inventory must surely have been altered between the years 1840-1920. To determine precisely how, I will draw up a list of indigenous implements that were (1) not supplanted by Euro-Canadian counterparts, (2) altered thanks to the introduction of steel points and, (3) supplanted, in part or in whole, by European tools or weapons. The quantities introduced must also be taken into account. Since the year 1900 more or less[321] marks the transi-

[321] Overall, the year 1900 must be considered as the approximate date on which, thanks to the establishment of a number of stores, all Tutchone had access to Euro-Canadian goods on an entirely new scale. It should be noted that the Tutchone in the Selkirk area had access to such goods as of 1890, the year when the Fort Selkirk store was re-opened by an independent trader, not belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company.

tion from itinerant trade carried on by Tlingit people transporting trade goods on their backs (and limited as a result) to distribution through fixed points of sale (trading posts) where supplies were delivered by steamboat on a regular basis, the data pertaining to 1850-1900 will be examined separately from data for 1900-1920.

### 6.5.1 1840-1900

The most striking aspect of the latter half of the nineteenth century was the great number of indigenous tools and techniques that continued to be used despite competition from European ones. Of those retained: the means for starting a fire, *all* traps, *all* types of ties (including sewing thread), *all* hammers (stone and wood), tanning solutions, procedures for bending wood, *all* means of protecting and preserving materials (oil, ochre, smoke), cooking methods, fish clubs, half-moon shaped schist knives, fur scrapers, digging sticks, wedges, snowshoes used to trap birds.

The above information is based in part on archival data. The amazement of the Tagish and the people of Selkirk to whom Schwatka (1893: 114, 129) presented a few matches and steel fish hooks betrayed that the Tlingit most definitely did not trade in this merchandise. It is also very improbable that the Tlingit introduced rope, fishing line or wire, which the Tutchone could have used in place of babiche for their snares, and other ties. Limited to carrying packs on their backs, they could transport only what was most profitable. Euro-Canadian counterparts of babiche or sinew lines did not fall into this category. Schwatka (1893: 129), who offered some rope to the Tagish, reported the following for 1883: "lines they were not so eager to obtain, the common ones of sinew sufficiently serving [their] purpose." This would undoubtedly have also applied to the Tutchone. With respect to other procedures and instruments, my findings are based on the fact that they remained in use well past 1920; either because the European counterpart introduced after 1900 offered little advantage or because the European world had nothing similar to offer. This matter will be dealt with in more detail below.

The group of instruments whose bone, antler and copper points were replaced with iron included gaffs, spears, salmon gaffs, crooked knives, awls, adzes, drills, beaver spears and ice chisels. The Tutchone quickly took notice of the advantage of iron points and, as of the year 1850, Campbell began importing iron bars for sale.[322] After the Tlingit expelled the H.B.C. in 1852, the Tutchone completely demolished the buildings that made up Fort Selkirk in order to scavenge all the metal used in their construction.[323] Between 1852 and 1900, the Tlingit probably continued to supply them with metal: nails, bars and files which the Tutchone transformed into points for their tools. It should however be noted that the Tutchone's needs were never fully satisfied as revealed by their behaviour in 1852 after Fort

[322] Cf. Campbell in Wilson (1970: 108-109) and *Requisition for Fort Selkirk* (H.B.C. film 1M 582).

[323] "The buildings […] were all but demolished by the Wood Indians [Tutchone] to get the iron works and nails." *J. Anderson to G. Simpson, Fort Simpson*, November 24, 1853, "Private and confidential," *James Anderson's papers*, 6 volumes, Public Archives of Canada, MG 19 A29, File 3, pp. 124-142.

Selkirk was abandoned and throughout the last decades of the nineteenth century. In fact, in 1883, Schwatka (1893: 231) found that the people of Selkirk were still using indigenous arrowheads. Hayes (1892: 143-144) affirmed that they continued to extract copper from 1890 to 1892 from a faraway vein (200-300 km from their region) to make arrowheads and musket balls for the few flintlock guns they possessed. Glave noted in 1891 (1892: 877) that the arrowheads used by the Aishihik people were still produced from native copper or, at best, a mixture of scraps of iron and native copper. Points made of bone remained in widespread use.

Indigenous tools that were threatened instantly by Euro-Canadian implements were far fewer: bows, containers for boiling water and a tool used to shape copper nuggets (mentioned but not described). Flintlock guns, European copper kettles and files were avidly sought. These were provided between 1840 and 1852 by the Tlingit and Campbell.[324] Between 1852 and 1900, the Tlingit probably continued to satisfy the Tutchone's needs for these implements as these goods were precisely those they themselves tried to acquire every time merchant ships paid them a visit on the Pacific Coast (cf. Krause, [1885], 1956: 132).

The Tutchone from Mayo indicated that two types of flintlock guns were sold:

> First time, you know, that shotgun, that's the one he hits rock here. [It makes] a spark about that big. [The] whole spark goes in there. That spark falls into that powder. That powder starts to make psssss… People say it stays there a long time. That spark goes down into the barrel. Then he shoots. That kind of gun they bring in first. Then after that he got a different kind. No more hole. Just a little bit. That much the little hole. A cap on there. You see that hammer there he goes over. He didn't wait. Just soon the hammer goes he shoots. Not like a rock. Start better than a rock with the cap on it. I have seen that; my grandpa used it [judging by the age of my informant, probably seen between 1910 and 1920].

Despite the fact that these instruments were eagerly sought, their use was far from widespread. The flintlock gun is a case in point. In Chapter 4, it was noted that in 1843, four of the 24 men at Fort Selkirk had guns. In 1852, the same group had 10.[325] In 1883, a little downstream from Selkirk, Schwatka (1893: 224, 231) encountered a group of between 170 and 200 people consisting of people from Selkirk as well as from other regions. Schwatka remarked that this group possessed an exceptional number of guns, which had been acquired through inter-tribal trade after Fort Selkirk was abandoned. However, he also noted that most of the men—young men in particular—still hunted with bows and arrows. The same

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[324] Cf. Campbell in Wilson (1970: 108-109) and *Requisition for Fort Selkirk* (H.B.C. Film 1M 582).

[325] The passage regarding 1843 cited by Wilson refers to the group led by "father and son named Thlin-ikik-thling and Hanan," Campbell in Wilson (1970: 70). The excerpt from Campbell's memoirs about 1852 mentions a group named "Honin's [?] party" (Campbell in Wilson, 1970: 124). It did not occur to Wilson that Honin and Hanan could be one and the same. But the fact is aptly demonstrated in the *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal* where the name Hanan is interchangeably spelled Hahnin, Hanin, Hunnin, Aunni (September 30, October 19, 1848; August 18, 27, 28, 1850; May 12, August 24, 25, 1851). In the journal, the father's group is often presented as being distinct from the son's group. Yet, in a passage quoted by Wilson (1970: 124), it is my impression that he is referring to one group composed of both father and son.

was observed among other groups. Glave (1892: 877) said this about a group of Aishihik people he encountered in 1891:

> There were a few musquets among the Indians we met in the interior, but they killed a great deal of their game with bows and arrows, some of which were pointed with iron and copper, and other with bone.

I do not have precise information for European kettles and files, but on the basis of Glave's observation, I suppose that these items too were not traded in sufficient quantity to be used in every single family.

In light of this study, the years 1840-1900 should therefore be considered a period during which only a small number of indigenous means of appropriation started to be put at risk by the importation of Euro-Canadian implements. Most means of appropriation characteristic of Tutchone society in fact were maintained in this period as the only means or instruments of labour. Moreover, it should be highlighted that the threat posed by tools from the European world was minimal and that weapons such as bows and implements such as birchbark containers continued to be very important.

### 6.5.2 1900-1920

Did the same hold true for the years 1900-1920? To answer this question, I shall first identify what types of indigenous instruments resisted replacement by European offerings between 1900 and 1920, then which ones were threatened and, lastly, which ones were for all intents and purposes eliminated through the introduction of substitutes manufactured in the industrial world.

As seen earlier, the use of funnel-shaped fish traps and fish weirs persisted at least until 1920, their disappearance having been accelerated after 1930 by federal legislation. Sinew used for sewing hides, all types of wood and stone hammers, tanning solution, wood-shaping procedures, food preservation methods, game clubs, stone skin scrapers, bone scrapers for scraping fur from hide and bone fleshers for cleaning hides, digging sticks and wooden wedges, all continued to be used until the 1950s and some were still used in the 1970s.

Also to be included in this group: gaffs, spears, salmon gaffs, crooked knives, awls, drills, beaver spears and ice chisels which, from 1900, were simply improved with metal points. While it is true that the Tutchone have not been seen using spears, gaffs or salmons gaffs since 1920-1930, their obsolescence, like that of fish weirs, can be attributed to the Canadian government prohibiting their use.

Additional Euro-Canadian implements and goods became widely available in this period and offered further competition for indigenous means of appropriation: fish line, wire and nails, which in some cases replaced babiche in the making of snares, and ties, as well as cotton thread which replaced braided sinew in making fish nets. Fish hooks made of bone or antler were gradually replaced by steel hooks. Steel traps gained popularity and became a component of deadfalls. Bow drills and pyrite competed poorly with matches and lighters, and birchbark pails were rivalled by metal pails and pots. Small-calibre rifles (.22) reduced the need to use bunting arrows for hunting small game (small mammals and birds).

Despite the adoption of these Euro-Canadian products, the need to resort to the types of indigenous instruments that they replaced was not altogether eliminated. For example, traditional deadfalls were still used as late as the 1970s. By all accounts, braided babiche and sinew continued to be the most popular material in making snares (because it was the strongest). Information on using pyrite and drills for making fire came from a Tutchone man from Little Salmon who saw his parents use them throughout the period 1916-1925, when short on matches. Roots continued to be used to bind birchbark into pails. Sinew was still used in sewing moccasins in 1973-1974. In 1944, Father Bobillet witnessed the Tutchone along the Macmillan River make the frames for their moose-skin boats using moose hides and not a single nail.[326] A Tutchone man from Selkirk told me that, right up to 1910, his mother continued to cook on a regular basis by heating stones and adding them to birchbark pails filled with water and meat. Even after she adopted cast iron pots, she did not totally abandon this traditional method for she liked the taste it gave to the meat better. In the early 1970s, the Tutchone elders of Little Salmon, Carmacks, Selkirk and Mayo told me that in their youth they sometimes used bows and bunting arrows to hunt small game. A White River Tutchone made similar claims to MacNeish (1964: 194): "The present Indians can remember using bow and arrows especially for small game." In 1973, a Tutchone man from Tatchun was hunting small game with these traditional instruments on occasion.

Now, there remains to discuss Euro-Canadian tools which, either after they were first introduced or after they appeared in large enough numbers, eliminated certain indigenous implements that had been traditionally used by the Tutchone. These include cotton nets which replaced the traditional ones made of animal sinew. (Yet, net making did not disappear as the Tutchone had to purchase cotton thread and then make the nets themselves, a practice maintained until at least 1950 (cf. Wilson, 1965: 76). Iron-blade *axes* altogether replaced *adzes*, even metal tipped ones.[327] Saws and files were adopted by and large and enhanced the Tutchone's arsenal of tools for transforming raw materials. As soon as they became widely available, long-range repeating rifles caused bows and arrows essentially to be abandoned in hunting big game. Flintlock guns were abandoned as well, although more gradually.

It is true that a few men kept on using the bow. For example, a Tutchone from Little Salmon, still alive in the 1970s, was renowned, far and wide, for having killed a moose with a bow and arrow. Yet, he was also said to be the last one to have done so. In 1932, a Tutchone man from the White River showed an Alsatian prospector—Louis Jacquot—that a bow and arrow could still be used to hunt large game. With an arrow measuring 1.5 m in length and pointed with native copper, he took aim at an electrical wire at a distance of

[326] « Leurs bateaux sont faits de peaux d'orignal tendues sur de légères lamelles de bois fixées sans un clou ». Bobillet, *Journal d'un missionnaire au Yukon*, pp. 526-530.

[327] The original stone adze was mainly used to fell trees. The stone blade was pointed and the motion of the stroke was different from that used with an axe. The user had to move round and round the tree that he was cutting down, pulling off slivers of wood at each stroke as he went along. When the tree had fallen, the stump looked as if it had been chewed by a beaver. The fact that adzes were mainly used to fell trees may explain why they were eventually replaced by imported axes, instruments that work faster. As it took time to adjust the motor habits linked to the use of the adze into those linked to the use of the axe, stone adzes were first replaced by imported steel adzes before, some time later, axes were adopted wholesale.

about 30 metres. His arrow missed the wire by only 2 cm. The Alsatian took his turn. The bow string proved so hard to draw that the arrow fell at his feet. Nevertheless, facts like this were presented as exceptional cases, and we can presume that all Tutchone, including those in the above examples, used guns almost exclusively in hunting large game. As a White River Tutchone told MacNeish (1964: 194) in 1946: the time when "they did not trust guns and so always carried bows and arrows" dates back to their fathers' generation, i.e., the end of the nineteenth century. For all intents and purposes, the bow ceased to be of any importance in capturing large game after 1900.

Although the number of tools added or eliminated was limited, their widespread use must be presumed to have had some impact. In chapter 5, we saw for example that the replacement of bows and arrows, and even flintlock guns, by rifles would have been enough to completely alter collective methods of hunting entire herds of barren-ground caribou. Before concluding our present study of what remained in use and what was replaced, it would be appropriate to consider how, from 1840 to 1920, work patterns may have been gradually transformed through the combined use of indigenous tools and foreign-made implements as well as through the abandonment of the production of certain indigenous tools.

However, since the above inventory was drawn up on the basis of oral histories, archival research, and a certain amount of logical deduction, the data are not nearly as reliable as might be hoped. It seems appropriate, therefore, to first explain why so many traditional techniques and implements were retained, and, in the process, lay some queries to rest.

## 6.6 Reasons for the Survival of Indigenous Tools and Implements

Let us first look at the reasons why many indigenous techniques were wholly retained. The explanation is relatively simple. In the case of tanning solutions, hide scrapers, bone scrapers, gaffs, spears, salmon gaffs, fish weirs and many others, the European world did not offer any procedure or implements that could satisfactorily replace the indigenous tools. This issue is as old as that of the arrival of Europeans in the area. Campbell was the first to have taken note of this. In one of his requisitions, he indicated that the supply depot from which he ordered should no longer send him any "saw knife" or "skin scrapers" as these tools were of no use to the Tutchone.[328] Judging by my findings, this technical question has yet to be resolved. For lack of appropriate objects to purchase, the Tutchone instead tried to improve their traditional skin scrapers, but without any great success. In 1972, one scraper was forged from the barrel of an old rifle. It was given the same shape, size and appearance as a traditional scraper (*ta*$^{n}$*gwat*) made of the metatarsal bones of a moose. Upon using the metal scraper, however, the man's wife, to her dismay, quickly discovered that the tool was too sharp and perforated the skins instead of scraping them. She asked her husband to make her a new one of bone in the traditional way. Similar reasons apply to the survival of the semi-lunar schist scraper and the tanning solution. As for gaffs, spears and salmon gaffs, Euro-

[328] Robert Campbell, *Requisition for Fort Selkirk, La Pierre House*, June 21, 1852, *Account book 1851-1852* (H.B.C., film 1M 582).

Canadians could not respond with more suitable means than those being used by the Tutchone and, in light of transportation costs, they could not compete with these locally produced implements.

The second reason for maintaining certain indigenous techniques is somewhat more complex. It can be attributed to the fact that the Tutchone were accustomed to their own implements and were therefore initially resistant to Euro-Canadian goods such as metal pots and axes, for example. According to a Fort Selkirk man born in 1895 and quoted above, food cooked in an iron pot does not have the same flavour as food cooked with hot stones in birchbark pails or watertight baskets. For this reason, as he put it, "old time Indians didn't care much cooking with [metal] pots." This is the same man who told me that his own mother continued to cook in the traditional way, heating stones until they became red-hot and tossing them into pails of water despite the fact that she was living near Fort Selkirk at the time and could have easily procured Dutch ovens or pots.

In other cases, Euro-Canadian implements called for a modification of the Tutchone's acquired motor skills—a change which, for a time, might have reduced these people's efficiency at work. While it might have been worth the time to adapt to new ways and means in the interest of future generations, daily circumstances were such that it was not done for a long time. This can explain why the adze continued to be used and why it was replaced with the axe only after 1900. In fact, axes, (tools that are struck against objects with a *longitudinal* impact) are not easily adopted by people who are accustomed to working with adzes (tools that are struck against objects with a *transversal* impact). A notable example of this was provided by the Tlingit of the Yukon Plateau (Inland Tlingit). When they obtained their first metal axes, they tested one against an adze with a stone blade by having two people compete for the fastest time. The one with the stone adze won the wager (cf. McClellan, 1975b: I, 254). Not only was the axe then less efficient than the adze, but it also presented all the dangers inherent in handling a new tool. Old archival documents attest, for example, that the Kaska frequently cut themselves using axes which were sold to them without instructions for using them. They even turned files and axe blades into adze blades (*ibid.*). By all accounts, the Tutchone reacted to this problem in the same way, which might explain why it took some fifty years or so before they adopted iron axes.[329]

The third reason why indigenous tools continued to be used stems from economic consideration. Theoretically, implements like deadfall, stone hammers, wooden wedges, snares, ties, etc. could have been replaced by some Euro-Canadian counterparts. However, this would have been costly. For logistical reasons, the Tutchone were in the habit of caching their heaviest tools, such as stone hammers or stone adzes, at the various seasonal camps they used in the course of their seasonal round. On the one hand, over the long term, replacing a tool would have meant purchasing many units of the same tool. On the other hand, all the work sites had already been equipped with traditional tools (stone hammers, deadfalls, etc.). The cost of replacing them all would then had to be weighed against the benefits of doing so. For the Tutchone, Euro-Canadian tools such as iron hammers or steel traps, for

[329] According to Campbell (in Wilson, 1970: 77), the Tlingit provided the Tutchone with Russian axes ("haches russes"). According to Murray ([1847-1848], 1910: 80; the "haches russes" were actually adzes tipped with iron blades.

example, offered no greater advantage than the tools they made locally which were already available at their respective sites. Consequently, they continued to use their traditional tools for quite some time. Thus, in 1920, at Carmacks, one kilometre away from a general store, a Tutchone man by the name of Jim Crow, who was responsible for overseeing the construction of a salmon weir in the bed of the Nordenskiold River, used a heavy stone hammer to drive in the stakes of the weir. The hammer had been left there by his wife's parents and grandparents. The hammer was still there in 1973 and one afternoon a Tutchone man near the site needed a hammer and simply went over to borrow it. Apart from a few technical problems associated with using rope and wire, the reason for continuing to use rawhide babiche for so long was similar. Substituting their traditional implements with European ones was not as profitable as it might first appeared to Euro-Canadians; at least not until their costs represented an amount of labour time (in fur trapping) inferior to that which was required for making the traditional implements.

The reasons why bows continued to be used long after firearms had first been introduced, that native copper tips kept on being used when iron tips could be made, are different. In these cases, the three key factors were: 1) the volume of trade before 1900; 2) the monopolistic prices charged by the Tlingit and later by Euro-Canadians; and 3) the Tutchone's funereal customs.

As seen above, before 1898, the labour of human packers was the only way to transport goods from the Pacific Coast or the Mackenzie Basin to the Yukon Basin. The two or three steamboats launched in gradual succession at the mouth of the Yukon River starting in 1869 did not regularly travel as far as Han country until the 1880s or as far as Tutchone country before 1898. The lion's share of trade having been left to the Tlingit, trade goods were imported into Tutchone country by human portage between 1840 and 1898. The limited volume of goods that could be brought into the territory in this manner could not satisfy the demands expressed each year by all the Tutchone. It is partly for this reason that many of them had to make do with their traditional means such as the bow, for as long as they did.

Furthermore, during this period and even between 1900 and 1920, general trade conditions were conducive to monopolistic pricing policies. From 1852 to 1898, for example, it is clear that the Tlingit were monopolistic in this respect. Between 1848 and 1852, when Fort Selkirk was in operation, they seemed to have wanted to compete with the Hudson's Bay Company. Prices are not provided, but they can be estimated. The merchant ships that plied the Pacific Coast sold them a flintlock gun in exchange for four "Made Beavers."[330] Campbell sold his to the Tutchone for 20 "Made Beavers." Since Campbell complained that the Tutchone found his "tariffs too high for them"[331] "being accustomed [by the Tlingit] to get paid at prices far beyond [his] abilities,"[332] there is every reason to believe that the Tlingit were charging somewhere between the equivalent of just over 4 and just under 20 beaver

[330] Cf. *James Anderson's papers*. 6 vols. *Notes on Frances Lake and Pelly*, Public Archives of Canada. MG 19 A29, File 4, pp. 238-250. "Made Beaver" (MB) referred to an accounting unit used by the H.B.C. It was equal to either one beaver pelt, or three marten furs, or one lynx skin, or one red fox skin. A cross fox was worth 2 MB, while a silver fox was worth 4 MB.

[331] Campbell, *Lewes and Pelly Forks Journal*, July 16, 1848.

[332] *Ibid*., June 2, 1848.

pelts. (We say "equivalent" since, as we have already seen, they were as interested in moose skins at that time as in beaver pelts.) They put up with competition from the H.B.C. for four years and then decided to attack Fort Selkirk and succeeded. Yet, if we are to believe the Tutchone, prices increased more than tenfold after that date. The man from Mayo cited above reported that:

> For the gun, people say that they stand him up first. It's a long gun [shows five feet]. Then they [Tlingit traders] ask [the Tutchone] to pile up beaver skins flat until they come to the level of that barrel. Then the man takes the gun against the beaver skins.

Independently of one another, several Tutchone described the same pricing procedure in a convincing way. It is therefore easy to understand why the flintlock gun could not be in general use throughout the second half of the nineteenth century.

After 1900, the conditions for importing goods changed considerably, but the terms of purchase of these items did not keep pace with the improvement in the conditions of transportation. The changes made to the delivery system were undertaken by the White Pass and Yukon Route Company. It had a railway built from Skagway along the Pacific Coast to Whitehorse. Around the same time, Whitehorse was connected to Dawson City in Han country by a fleet of steamboats that regularly travelled across Tutchone country during the summer months. Another fleet regularly went up the Stewart River as far as Mayo and Gordon Landing. Moreover, a winter route was opened between Dawson City and Whitehorse and between Whitehorse and the southern tip of Kluane Lake (cf. Duerden, 1971: 17-28). Most of the fur trading posts in Tutchone country were established between 1900 and 1915 along these transportation routes which were regularly serviced by the White Pass: Big Salmon, Little Salmon, Carmacks, Fort Selkirk, and Mayo Landing. These points of sale, it should be noted, could not cover the entire territory occupied by the various Tutchone regional groups. Thus, the production zones of the people of Aishihik, White River and Macmillan River remained more than 100 km from the nearest general store. The Tutchone were therefore divided into two categories. Those who fished and hunted far from these routes had to trade either with middlemen or with Euro-Canadian prospectors who would occasionally open up small supply depots in their respective regions. Those who lived near the White Pass transport routes, on the other hand, had regular access to stores that were supplied and even visited by small groups of fur traders from Vancouver (cf. Tollemache, 1912: 258).

The far away groups of Tutchone were charged prohibitive prices in exchange for their products. Thus, in the years 1900-1920, in a remote part of Tutchone territory, i.e., in the MacMillan River Basin, a package of needles was traded for a "splendid prime marten skin"; 15 dollars of ammunition, tea and sugar for 200 dollars worth of furs (cf. Armstrong, 1937: 54). We can now understand that, like it or not, many Tutchone decided to make do without needles, wire and other wares and instead use their furs to acquire items, such as repeating rifles that were obviously more effective than anything they could have made themselves. Apparently, the group of Tutchone located close to trading posts should have been favoured for the most part. Yet this was not the case. While they did not have to pay such exorbitant prices as their neighbours, or the kind of prices that they themselves would have had to pay to the Tlingit in the past, they still had to deal with real monopolistic practices, which were the result of a number of tariff policies. For one thing, the White Pass and Yukon Route charged very high tariffs to transport all merchandise into the Yukon. In this

way, the price of a sack of flour would double from Vancouver to Fort Selkirk. For another, as recounted by one store owner at Fort Selkirk, the trading posts would sell tools (for which they already paid "White Pass" handsomely) for a mark-up of between 60 and 100 percent of their cost at delivery (cf. Tollemache, 1912: 280). In contrast, the trading posts systematically bought furs from the Tutchone for 30 percent below their real value (*ibid.*: 282). This was made possible thanks to the credit system. A native to whom an advance in kind had been made was forced to surrender his skins and leave the trader free to decide the price. Some stores like Taylor and Drury even tied the Tutchone more closely to them by paying them in T & D tokens (instead of legal cash) which were redeemable only at the issuing store.[333] When the travelling buyers from Vancouver went to the Yukon, another stratagem was used though it served the same purpose. The Tutchone's pack-goods were sold through a most peculiar type of auction. Buyers wrote a price on a sheet of paper and the pack-goods went the person who had offered the highest amount; the price could not be bid up any higher. Of course, prices remained very low (*ibid.*: 258) and, by extension, so did the Tutchone's purchasing power. Prices were raised only as a result of the general increase in fur prices after the First World War (cf. Tanner, 1965: 60), but this happened only after the reference period of this study.

The third factor that left the Tutchone relatively deprived of European goods is cultural in nature. Whenever someone died, the personal effects of the deceased were placed on his grave or hung within his grave enclosure. Several old photographs of graves held at the Yukon Archives attest to this ancient custom. This practise never allowed flintlock guns, kettles, guns and other items purchased from the Tlingit or from Euro-Canadians to be passed down from generation to generation. Each generation had to buy everything anew.

Overall, if we consider the combined effects of the Tutchone's funereal customs, the tariffs charged by the Tlingit for goods they offered in limited quantities, the direct trade conditions between the Tutchone and the Euro-Canadians after 1900, we realize why it took so long for Tutchone technology to become "westernized" even if European offerings should have normally led to a rapid disappearance of certain indigenous tools (but not all). This knowledge provides a better understanding of why the inventory of the indigenous means of appropriation was left largely intact between 1840 and 1920 and, conversely, why real innovations were limited and slow to be embraced.

These findings are summarized in Table IV. The first column shows the indigenous procedure or implement; the last column shows the Euro-Canadian implement that rivalled or eventually supplanted the indigenous one. A double line is used to indicate cases where tools were used concurrently. The upper line designates the European implement while the lower line designates the indigenous one. A dotted line indicates an instrument or procedure used rarely while a long dash indicates that the implement or procedure was the predominant one used.

Clearly, the second half of the nineteenth century, including the last two decades (1880-1900) was simply characterized by a commingling of technologies. Not only did many purely indigenous procedures and tools co-exist with a few tools of Euro-Canadian origin,

[333] The information about the use of tokens which could be redeemed only at the trading post where they were issued comes from the Tutchone.

but the indigenous version of each imported implement or procedure continued to be used and produced.

From 1900 to 1920, a fair portion of indigenous implements continued to be used as they had always been, but this period was marked by the quasi-total disappearance of traditional points on many implements and by the elimination, for all practical purposes, of a few indigenous tools such as bows and arrows, adzes and sinew fish nets. Inasmuch as some changes took place, we must now determine the possible impact of the introduction of Euro-Canadian tools on individuals' dependence/independence in production endeavours.

### 6.6.1 Impact of Adopting Euro-Canadian Work Implements on the Social Patterns of Appropriating Natural Resources and Other Materials

Our objective here is to determine whether various factors that had the potential to modify indigenous forms of appropriating raw materials actually did so. This is the necessary first step to verifying in the next chapters whether such changes might also have, in turn, altered the Tutchone societal and cultural structure or organization.

Two questions may be asked with respect to the impact of each imported work implement, and they should be discussed separately. Using the advent of cotton thread nets as an example, let us explain why. We have noted that its widespread use after 1900 resulted in the elimination of indigenous sinew nets. We must then ask whether the disappearance of indigenous nets led to the disappearance of some particular forms or structure of indigenous labour (for producing sinew nets). Secondly, it is just as important to verify whether fishing with cotton nets (handling and setting such nets) instead of with sinew nets gave rise to a work pattern that previously had not existed in the repertoire of traditional work patterns. This twofold problem arises for each raw material or indigenous implement supplanted by a finished or semi-finished product of Euro-Canadian origin.

Let us begin by addressing the questions concerning the disappearance of local branches of production as a result of Euro-Canadian imports. We must first focus on the impact of the introduction of iron points, the concurrent use of indigenous tools and Euro-Canadian equivalents, and on the exclusive use of certain European tools after 1900.

### 6.6.2 Impact on the Traditional Branches of Industry

Three phenomena are to be noted with regards to the introduction of iron points during the period 1840-1900. First, the advent of iron in the form of semi-finished goods (bars, nails, etc.) gave rise to a small iron forging industry for the production of finished tools. Since the Tutchone continued to work with copper even after the introduction of iron, the most plausible assumption is that the new metal was forged in the same way as native copper was. We may therefore safely conclude that no new work patterns were introduced by this activity.

Secondly, it must be supposed that the volume of points made of copper, bone and antler would have logically decreased as would have the time spent on each of the corresponding branches of indigenous production. The amount of time saved in each branch should theoretically be directly proportional to the quantity of traditional points that were no longer being made as they could be purchased instead. Thus, if the annual need for bone, stone and

copper was *x*, then once the Tutchone had procured a quantity *n* of iron, then the volume of local materials transformed into points would probably have gone from *x* to *x-n*. The time savings probably varied from one branch of production to another. For example, it was probably minor for native copper extraction since even after the Tutchone began using imported iron, they still experienced metal shortages until the late 1890s. In the case of stone implements, however, the time savings would have been directly proportional to the quantity of iron introduced to replace stone tips. Archival documents do not allow for even a rough estimate of how much time might have been saved, but there is no denying that time was indeed saved.

Lastly, and most importantly, we can see from Table IV that traditional points were still made throughout the period 1840-1900 (albeit in smaller quantities). In concrete terms, this means that the processes for extracting primary materials used in making points for implements (e.g., stone, copper, antler, pyrite, etc.) and the procedures for transforming these primary materials into working tools were all preserved. The matter of the other Euro-Canadian tools can be analysed in similar terms, the only difference being that finished Euro-Canadian goods did not lead to any new transformation industry as they arrived ready-made. On balance, they undoubtedly resulted in fewer indigenous equivalents being produced without however spelling the end for indigenous industries. We can therefore conclude that all branches of indigenous production were maintained during the second half of the nineteenth century and that the only new industry introduced—ironwork—simply diversified an existing branch of metallurgy: copper work.

The period 1900-1920 sees the beginning of change. Just as for the previous period, a number of indigenous industries continued to be maintained, but others were, for all practical purposes, eliminated as the products of those branches of industry were entirely abandoned. Such was the case for the extraction of stone and copper and the making of knives, adzes, bows and arrows, as well as the tying of nets from sinew and the making of fish hooks from antler. It is impossible to state at this point that the disappearance of the related work processes altered the various Tutchone work patterns. In fact, we still do not know which forms of appropriation were predominantly used in these work processes. As this was underscored in the Introduction, the identification of the branches of production that were eliminated will have to suffice for now. In Chapter 7 and 9, which focus on the forms of labour, we will be able to determine whether the eliminated work processes had any effect on the number of different forms through which Tutchone appropriated materials.

### 6.6.3 Incidence of the Use of Imported Tools

Here, all that remains is to determine which Euro-Canadian tools could have modified, through the manner in which they were used, the work patterns in the various branches of production. To this end, we will compare the ways in which imported implements were used with that of the indigenous tools that they supplanted.

Let us begin with traps. These work implements are specialized enough that each type may be treated separately. McKennan, quoted above, raised the issue, but did not settle it. Because they are automatic, traps are exceptional in the way they determine work patterns. In each of the labour processes in which they are used, the worker must leave the implement

to act on the subject of labour without getting involved in their mutual interaction. As the worker is absent from the capture itself, a comparison of the work patterns in indigenous and Euro-Canadian trapping methods must deal with the measures taken to build and set the traps rather than the capture process.

In some cases, using a trapping technique consists of nothing more than setting a single trap. In other cases, however, multiple traps are set. This depends directly on the habits of the various species exploited: whether they travel in groups or lead a solitary existence, their particular spatial distribution, behaviour towards bait, and so on. In this way, the salmon weir—a single work implement—provides such a large quantity of fish that one person alone would not be able to keep up with the daily volume of production. In contrast, moose, bear, wolverine and marten, to name a few, live isolated and dispersed from other members of their species. Consequently, many deadfalls and snares have to be set up just to ensure adequate production.

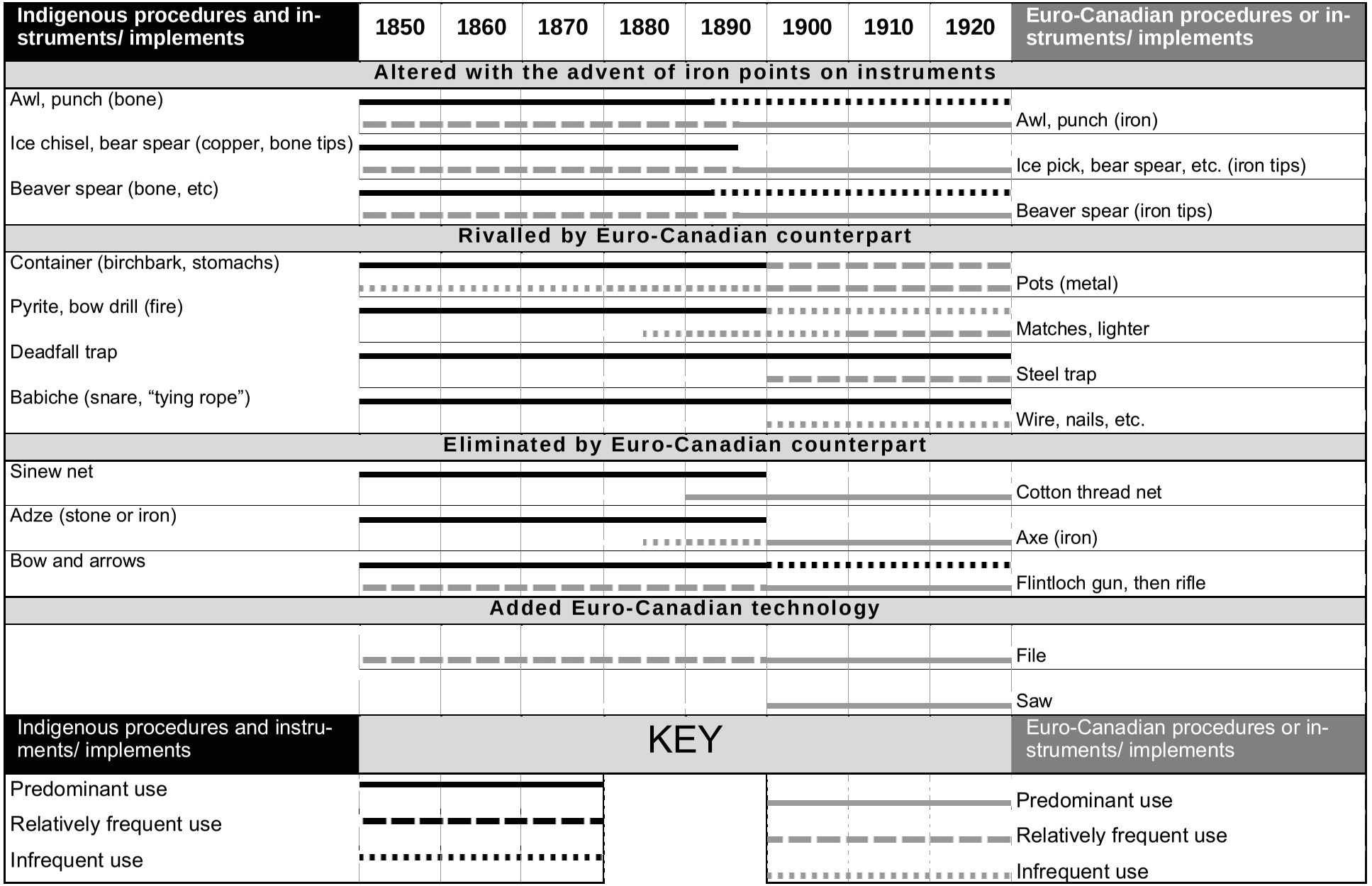
The number of traps that could be set was limited to the number that could be checked regularly. *In summer*, fish and game spoil if they are not eviscerated within 24 hours of capture. *In winter*, nets must be brought up at least every other day to ensure that the layer of ice does not have time to build up more than 40-60 cm between catches. The leeway for land animals is greater as they freeze quickly. However, to make sure that catches are not poached by carnivorous animals, the traps must be checked at least every three or four days. As a result, the number of traps used by a given individual depends on how many he can set in a given area; he must be able to cover the area in a day in summer and no more than three or four days in winter. Whether this logistical constraint was modified by the use of Euro-Canadian traps is a matter that will certainly have to be resolved.

Lastly, the third feature of automatic traps is that they leave the worker free to carry on other activities between catches. While snares and deadfalls are being checked in turn, other animals can be killed there and then with weapons. Once the boxes of the fish weir are emptied of fish, the task of cutting and drying the fish can be left to a few people while others are free, for a time, to make tools or other durable goods, or even to undertake to extract materials that require active involvement. The automatic nature of traps requires nothing more than a remote presence, but does not prevent other activities from being taken up during the same day. The impact of the introduction of Euro-Canadian traps must therefore also be gauged in relation to this particular feature. The post 1900 changes noted were the commingling of wire snares with babiche snares, of steel traps with native deadfalls and the replacement of nets made of animal sinew with cotton nets.

Obviously, setting up a wire snare requires the same kind of effort as setting up a snare made of babiche. Without dwelling on this matter, we will assume that, on this level, the introduction of metal had no effect on work patterns. As regards the use of deadfalls even after steel traps were adopted, a few details are necessary. Diagrams IV and V show how the traditional trap and the imported trap are set up when the prey is the same for both. Clearly, in either case, a covered structure must be set up so that the animal is forced to pass either under a “club” (Diagram VI) or into a steel trap (indicated with a “+” in Diagram VII). Between the traditional procedure and the European style one, there is undoubtedly a slight reduction in work time, but as this is truly negligible, we must conclude that the steel trap did not significantly alter the work patterns involved in setting up traps and that its effects

TABLE IV. CHRONOLOGY OF ADOPTION OF WORK IMPLEMENTS AND PRIMARY MATERIALS OF EUROPEAN ORIGIN

| Indigenous procedures and instruments/ implements | 1850 | 1860 | 1870 | 1880 | 1890 | 1900 | 1910 | 1920 | Euro-Canadian procedures or instruments/ implements |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Unchanged** | | | | | | | | | |
| Tanning solution | | | | | | | | | No competitor |
| Wood shaping (steam) | | | | | | | | | No competitor |
| Preserving agent | | | | | | | | | No competitor |
| Snowshoe trap | | | | | | | | | No competitor |
| Schist Scraper | | | | | | | | | No competitor |
| Scraper (bone) | | | | | | | | | No competitor |
| Wooden wedge | | | | | | | | | No competitor |
| Hammer, maul, club | | | | | | | | | No competitor |
| Digging stick | | | | | | | | | No competitor |
| Funnel-shaped fish trap; fish weirs | | | | | | | | | No competitor |
| **Altered with the advent of iron points on instruments** | | | | | | | | | |
| Adze (stone blade) | | | | | | | | | Adze (iron blade) |
| Gaff, fish spear, salmon gaff (bone tips) | | | | | | | | | Gaff, fish spear, salmon gaff (iron tips) |
| Fish hook (bone) | | | | | | | | | Fish, hook (metal) |
| Bow drill (copper, bone, etc.) | | | | | | | | | Bow drill (iron tip) |
| Copper knife | | | | | | | | | Knife (iron) |
| Crooked knife (copper, beaver tooth) | | | | | | | | | Crooked knife (iron) |


Indigenous procedures and instruments/ implements
1850
1860
1870
1880
1890
1900
1910
1920
Euro-Canadian procedures or instruments/ implements
Altered with the advent of iron points on instruments
Awl, punch (bone)
Awl, punch (iron)
Ice chisel, bear spear (copper, bone tips)
Ice pick, bear spear, etc. (iron tips)
Beaver spear (bone, etc)
Beaver spear (iron tips)
Rivalled by Euro-Canadian counterpart
Container (birchbark, stomachs)
Pots (metal)
Pyrite, bow drill (fire)
Matches, lighter
Deadfall trap
Steel trap
Babiche (snare, "tying rope")
Wire, nails, etc.
Eliminated by Euro-Canadian counterpart
Sinew net
Cotton thread net
Adze (stone or iron)
Axe (iron)
Bow and arrows
Flintloch gun, then rifle
Added Euro-Canadian technology
File
Saw
Indigenous procedures and instruments/ implements
KEY
Euro-Canadian procedures or instruments/ implements
Predominant use
Relatively frequent use
Infrequent use
Predominant use
Relatively frequent use
Infrequent use

on the forms of appropriating primary materials might also be considered to have been nil. The same conclusion applies to cotton nets. Those that were made by the Tutchone were exactly the same shape as their traditional counterparts—square-link netting—and were installed in exactly the same way. The best example was provided by a Euro-Canadian trapper at the beginning of the century who described how these cotton nets were set:

> Setting a net through the ice involves a considerable amount of trouble […] when the ice has attained a thickness of several feet. A pole about 20 feet long, and attached to a rope, is conveyed to the locality where the net is required to be set, and several holes are cut through the ice at the same distance apart as the length of the pole […].
>
> The pole with a long rope attached to it is then inserted through the first hole, and pushed under the ice in the direction of the second hole. The man then walks to the second hole, and as the holes are the same distance apart as the length of the pole, he will there find the end of the pole, which he works along under the ice in the direction of the third hole. This process is repeated from hole to hole, so that the pole is gradually worked along under the ice until it eventually arrives at the last hole, and it is then drawn out of the water and the rope secured.
>
> A man at the first hole then attaches one end of the net to his end of the rope, care being taken that the net does not become entangled when being inserted through the ice, while at the same time the man at the last hole, by pulling the other end of the rope, gradually draws the net under the ice towards him.
>
> When the net has once been set, only the end holes are required to be opened for raising the net and extracting the fish, so that the intermediate holes, being no longer required, are allowed to freeze up and become covered with snow.
>
> In the morning, when the net is being raised, the end holes are cleared with an axe of the ice which has formed in them during the night, and the ends of the rope, which have been attached to two poles partly inserted through the holes, are then secured. One end of the net is then pulled up and drawn through the hole in the ice, while the fish are extracted and thrown on the snow, where they quickly freeze solid. When all the fish have been extracted the net is re-inserted through the ice, while the man at the further hole pulls at the rope and draws the net under the ice towards him, and it is then reset as before (Tollemache, 1912: 172-174).

For the second and third predominant features of automatic traps, it should be all the more evident that Euro-Canadian traps could not have modified them. In fact, it is clear that the work area and the number of traps set for a given species necessarily stayed the same as when only indigenous traps were used. For one, the territory to be covered still had to be small enough for trappers to be able to check them all at regular intervals. For another, the number of traps set in a given area for a given species continued to be determined by the habits of the species in question. The practice of carrying out other production activities while checking traps was continued for the same reason.

The productivity differences between indigenous traps and imported traps need not be addressed here as we are purely interested in work patterns. These more than anything create patterns of dependence/independence between individuals. What concerns us is not so much the quantity of goods produced, but how people had to organize themselves spatially to produce and survive. Still, to satisfy a natural curiosity, let us take a quick look at the aspect of productivity.

It should be noted that neither wire snares nor steel traps increased the number of animals captured in any material way. Babiche was every bit as resistant as wire for the pur-

poses for which it was used. The same holds true for sinew nets versus cotton nets. According to the Tutchone, the risk of not catching an animal with a deadfall trap is only slightly greater than with a steel trap, for animals caught in a steel trap can free themselves by severing their trapped paw with their teeth. In addition, the number of animals caught with either type of trap was roughly the same. Steel traps and wire are used today not because they are more effective, but because they preclude the need to spend long hours braiding babiche for making snares or learning how to build deadfalls and then actually building them. However, this advantage is real only as long as the cost of purchasing the imported traps (basically with time spent in fur trapping) does not outweigh the time needed to make the indigenous implements. Moreover, there is no advantage unless the means of purchasing these items are proportional to needs. As seen earlier, between 1900 and 1920, any time saved by purchasing steel traps was considerably offset by the exorbitant prices charged by Euro-Canadians at their stores. Therefore, without sufficient wherewithal, the decision to purchase a steel trap had to be carefully weighed against other purchases that might have been economically more advantageous than locally-made implements: repeating rifles are a case in point. This explains both the limited popularity of wire and steel traps on the one hand, and the widespread enthusiasm for cotton nets on the other. Doing away with babiche in the making of snares, or with the clubbing part in the making of deadfalls, only reduced the work time by a few days at the most. Although prohibitively expensive, cotton nets were nevertheless worthwhile acquisitions. If the data provided earlier for the Tagish is any indication, let us remember that it would take two people four years of work to produce one traditional-style net.

We will see that it was not because of their higher output that Euro-Canadian traps and nets were adopted gradually or rapidly after 1900, but because they made it possible to eliminate branches of labour-intensive production. We will also bear in mind that the impact of these branches disappearing should not be confused with the impact that the imported traps or nets could have had simply through the ways in which they had to be used, and that this does not contradict our conclusion that *the ways in which the new traps were used* did not have any consequence on the Tutchone social forms of appropriating materials.

Again from the standpoint of work or labour patterns, let us now see whether any imported *manual* implements might have wrought major changes. The first issue to be addressed is that of the repercussions of iron points on work patterns; the second concerns the impact of finished European implements that were used concurrently with traditional ones; and the third concerns the exclusive use, after 1900, of certain European implements (rifles) in place of indigenous ones, or in addition to them (files and saws)

As regards blades and points made of iron, we will first note that they surely must have improved each Tutchone's work efficiency. Manual prehension implements (e.g., fish spears, gaffs, fish hooks) were undoubtedly less likely to let prey slip through and escape. Yet, this is not absolutely certain as antler points seem to be quite efficient for the purpose (Gotthardt, personal communication, 2005). The use of iron in place of copper, stone or bone in percussion implements (e.g., crooked knives, drills, adzes, awls, chisels, etc.) could have only improved the quality of the work and saved time. If other studies on the subject are reliable, the time it took to cut wood with an iron-blade adze would have been three times shorter than with an adze outfitted with a stone blade (cf. Salisbury quoted by Godelier, 1964: 126). However, it will also be noted—and this is key—that the iron used for

blades could not in itself change the work patterns. The individual labourer, or work group if any, for a given task acts in the same way regardless of the material used for the point—iron versus bone, stone, etc. This is obviously so for fish hooks, ice chisels and all other indigenous tools with iron points or not. Thus, it must be assumed that the concurrent use of traditional and imported points in the nineteenth century did not result in different work patterns for the same type of task and that the near exclusive use of iron points after 1900 did not give rise to work forms that would not have existed in the nineteenth century.

The same observations may be made for implements such as wire, cast iron pots and matches. It is hard to imagine that binding something with wire could require a different work pattern than performing the same task with babiche. Cooking with cast iron pots would have been no different than cooking with birchbark baskets or watertight root baskets insofar as concerns the general form of work. In the same vein, the *type of labour* involved in lighting a fire with matches is similar to lighting a fire with pyrite and tinder.

Now let us turn to the group of tools that were added (files and saws) and those (axes, flintlock guns, rifles) that eliminated certain indigenous ones (adzes, bows and arrows). Given the individual work carried out with a file, a saw or an axe, neither of these two implements could have plausibly altered work patterns. These are manual tools used to attack various materials (wood, bone, antler, etc.) and carrying out the task with these would have been the same as doing so with the indigenous implements they replaced. Thus, to cut trees either with an axe or a saw, a worker would not be any more dependent on others than if he were using an adze. The same holds true for iron files vis-à-vis coarse-grained stone which likely had been used before. The only noteworthy fact, it must be reiterated, was that time was almost certainly saved in the branches of industry in which these implements were introduced (e.g., metalwork, cutting and shaping of wood).

The use of flintlock guns and rifles must be tackled from a different angle. Like the bow, both these tools are work implements that function with a projectile. But it is legitimate to wonder whether or not the differences in the shooting range of bows and firearms had, for the purpose of hunting certain species, serious consequences on the way people had to organize themselves to kill the animals. Certain preliminary technical considerations for the three tools in question must be specified. We will then see what their actual differences are.

Firing ranges can be calculated for bows, flintlock guns as well as rifles. To kill an animal with a bow, one would have to advance to 7-70 m of the prey. With a flintlock gun, the distance can be as much as 70-120 m and stretched to 400 m if using a rifle that allows for successive rounds of rapid fire (see Chapter 5). Some claim that the noise produced by firearms made them no more effective than bows as they would scare game, but there is no basis to this. Whether a hunter uses a bow, a flintlock gun or a rifle, it is always the first shot that counts. A moose grazed by an arrow runs for cover just as quickly as one alarmed by gunfire. Moreover, during the long winter months, the bow is not as silent as one might imagine. The bowstring makes a loud crack when the arrow is launched (cf. McKennan, 1959: 48),[334] and at a distance of only 7-10 m, the sound will certainly be heard. All three implements were used on a very peculiar "subjects of labour": intelligent animals that would

[334] It is perhaps to muffle the noise of the bowstring that most Athapaskan bows have a string guard (see drawing IV, Chapter 5).

become alarmed and flee if approached too closely. Hence, there really was a technical advantage to using firearms and specially repeating rifles. There could be no other reason why the Tutchone sought them so enthusiastically.

Let us now see what effects firearms might have had on work patterns that made use of projectile. It would be helpful at this point to recap elements of the discussion on moose and caribou hunting presented in Chapter 5. We saw that it was more productive to hunt entire herds of migrating caribou with bows and arrows when many individuals organized themselves in such a way as to surround the herd and drive it towards fences erected for the purpose of entrapping or impeding the animals. This brought the game to within the shooting range of a killing team who could then shoot its arrows. In contrast, working in groups was not advised when hunting moose. It was better for a hunter to approach his prey on his own with his bow and arrow. Flintlock guns, once introduced, changed little in the way either of these species was hunted. Moose continued to be tracked by lone hunters, and while it became no longer necessary to erect fences to capture caribou, they still had to be encircled by a group. Lastly, we saw that the use of rifles had no impact on the work pattern required for moose hunting—which had to remain an independent endeavour—but that rifles would have completely altered the normal collective organization of labour involved in hunting herds of caribou with bows and arrows. Thanks to the long range of this weapon and the fact that it could be reloaded quickly, it was no longer necessary to surround the herd to bring down a great many caribou. The following conclusions may be drawn from the above.

First, the use of the bow does not dictate only one work pattern. Depending on how a species of animal moves within an area and depending on the way it reacts to being stalked or pursued, hunters must either go their separate ways to hunt in isolation or unite and hunt in cooperation. Secondly, *flintlock guns* and *rifles* facilitated the act of hunting which had been *carried out as an individual endeavour with bows*, but did not bring about any change in the work patterns required for *those particular hunting activities.* Of course, it is easier to kill a moose if one can shoot it from a distance of 400 m with a rifle or even a distance of 70-120 m with a flintlock gun than it is from a distance of anywhere from 7 m to 60 m as required with a bow. It is equally obvious that, when hunting solitary animals, people did not need to change the way they organized themselves for *their work* when they switched from bows to either flintlock guns or rifles. Thirdly, the short range and long reloading time of the *flintlock gun* did not eliminate *the need to cooperate in hunting activities which required a collective effort when bows were used.* Consequently, we can rightfully state that, for this type of game, the work patterns were not prone to change when flintlock guns were added to the arsenal together with bows. Lastly, only *repeating rifles* were apt to change work patterns, but in light of the conclusions reached in the second point, this applied *only to hunting activities that had to be carried out in cooperative groups whether they were using bows or flintlock guns.*

Considering that only flintlock guns were sold to the Tutchone between 1840 and 1900, it is reasonable to presume that work patterns were not prone to change during that period on their account. In other words, it is legitimate to suppose that what could be accomplished collectively with bows was accomplished in the same way with flintlock guns and that what could be accomplished by one individual equipped with a bow was accomplished in a similar fashion with a flintlock gun. The only potential problem presented by the introduction of

firearms is the detrimental effect of rifles on work patterns previously carried out by groups when only bows and flintlock guns were available.

We must therefore consider whether certain forms of hunting, which had been group activities between 1850 and 1900, might have disappeared once rifles were introduced in 1900. To grasp the full relevance of this matter, we must delve further than in the preceding chapter where it was established that the Tutchone did not hunt caribou between 1850 and 1900 and that barren-ground caribou herds came too late to their region (except in the White River) for cooperative work to have ever existed. Although the Tutchone hunted neither woodland caribou nor barren-ground caribou during the latter half of the nineteenth century, they did not hunt moose exclusively. In order to shed light on whether or not rifles brought about a change in work patterns after 1900, we must try to see if hunters might have hunted other species of animals in groups when they had only bows and flintlock guns at their disposal. Although merely speculative at this point, the possibility of this must nevertheless be considered. But before this question can be answered, we must first study the traditional forms of hunting of various species of mammals that inhabited the Yukon Plateau. This will be the subject of the next chapter

## 6.7 Conclusion

We have fulfilled the objective set out at the beginning of this chapter; a limited objective which was based on the definition of the concept of forms of appropriating materials and the sequence of stages of research needed to identify the forms of appropriation used by a society such as that of the Tutchone in 1840-1920.

The forms of appropriation were defined as all the different types of *labourers* (individual or collective) and *producers* (organic division of labour) in a given society during a given period. *Labourer* or type of labour force was defined as a pattern that emerges in the organization of the labour force in one or several distinct work phases in relation to (1) the means of appropriation used and, (2) the type of materials being transformed and the specific purpose of the transformation. *Producer* was defined as a specific degree in the division of labour involved in the process of making one or more finished products. The degrees of the division of labour were shown to depend first and foremost on the conditions of transportation, the nature and locations of the primary industries and the overall size and density of the population that makes up the working force of the society.

To identify the indigenous forms of *labourer* and *producer,* and also to shed light on whether these forms were transformed as a result of elements borrowed from the European world, it became clear that we first needed to determine the means of appropriation in use at the beginning of the period studied (1840) and identify those that were imported thereafter. We surmised that fulfilling this prerequisite would require a chapter of its own and that here we could only expect to resolve fairly limited matters: (1) identification of the branches of production of the means of appropriation that were present in 1840 but totally eliminated at some point during the period 1840-1920 and update of the tool industries that cropped up in the Tutchone economy in chronological order; 2) identification of the Euro-Canadian means of appropriation that did not likely transform the forms of appropriating materials, and, 3) identification of the imported implements that in their use could theoretically have re-

sulted in these patterns being altered. Furthermore, as the study on the means of appropriation included the study of the means of transportation, it was stated that we would be able to hypothesize on what happened to them and what became of one of the factors that defined the conditions of the division of labour.

In order to summarize the results obtained, the periods 1840-1900 and 1900-1920 may be evaluated separately. The first corresponds to a period of indirect contact with European people; the second to a time of direct contact.

Our study of the latter half of the nineteenth century first revealed that no indigenous branch of tool/implement production was eliminated. Insofar as concerns dog rearing, production volume increased without leading to a higher capacity in the means of transportation vis-à-vis food products. For most branches of tool production, the output per inhabitant remained similar to 1840-1850 levels since no European product came to compete with the locally produced indigenous implements. These branches of production included the extraction of pyrite and copper (only marginally threatened by iron); the production of toboggans and the systems for carrying and storing goods; and the production of funnel fish traps, fish weirs, fish hooks, hammers, wedges, scrapers made of bone, schist skin scrapers, snowshoes, preservatives, tanning solutions, deadfall traps, babiche, fish nets, and so on. If the industry of producing points for implements is treated separately, we can expand the list of branches that were unaffected in terms of production volume to include the assembly of adzes, gaffs, fish spears, salmon spears, drills, knives, crooked knives, awls, chisels and harpoons.

For other branches, including those involving products that were rivalled by European goods, the production volume certainly declined appreciably. However, there were few such branches. The production of points for tools using traditional, non-metallic materials—horn, antler, wood, stone—as well as stone quarrying activities are to be included here, as well as branches involving birchbark or root baskets (in competition with metal pots) and bows and arrows (in competition with flintlock guns). There were no others. The decline in the production volume in these branches, however, in no way meant that such indigenous products ceased to be produced. As a result, since no branch was completely eliminated, all the work phases (and their type of labourer) related to each branch in existence in 1840 certainly continued to exist until 1900. During this period, only cold iron forging (likely modelled on traditional copper forging) was added to the list of branches involved in producing the means of production

A second question was raised for all traditional work phases as well as for the work phase ushered in by the iron industry. This time, we pondered whether *the use* of imported implements could have affected the diversity of the types of *labourers* that had previously existed in Tutchone society. Insofar as concerns the use of iron points on tools, we saw how they could not have modified the work patterns in and of themselves. The tools to which they were affixed were indigenous tools and, depending on how they were used, they, by all accounts, continued to be used by the same types of workers. What remained to be resolved were examples of means of appropriation that had been entirely manufactured outside the territory and imported during this period: metal containers, files and flintlock guns. In light of the use to which metal pots were put—storage, cooking, etc.—it seemed reasonable to presume that they did not require any different work patterns than did the handling of birchbark baskets and other indigenous containers in use at that time. The same is true for files.

As for flintlock guns, despite the fact that they facilitated hunting, it was noted that the work patterns associated with this implement were the same as those for bows and arrows. Consequently, the second half of the nineteenth century was characterized as an era in which imported Euro-Canadian means of production had no meaningful impact on indigenous work patterns.

Our study of the period 1900-1920 revealed a somewhat different trend. As in the nineteenth century, many indigenous industries—aside from the manufacture of native knives and adzes—remained unaffected: all tool-assembly industries; dog rearing; and the making of food caches, dug-out canoes, moose-skin boats, rafts, wooden toboggans, funnel-shaped fish traps, fish weirs, snowshoes, hammers, etc. Other types of production, such as that of birchbark or watertight root baskets, traditional deadfalls, vertical snares and babiche cord, were matched by goods that could be purchased at the trading post. Nevertheless, indigenous products continued to be manufactured, and the stages and forms of labour involved in making these products were maintained.

However, we identified a few other events that could potentially alter the forms of appropriating materials long known to the Tutchone. First, the old indigenous industries dedicated to producing points for tools saw their volumes reduced to such a level that, by the early 1900s, they were essentially gone. Necessarily, this also led to the demise of stone and copper quarrying. Next, the extraction of pyrite became irrelevant with the introduction of matches and lighters. The sale of European knives and axes caused the disappearance of the branches of production that had been dedicated to producing both these means of appropriation. Lastly, the sale of rifles all but ended the production of bows and arrows. In the chapters ahead, we will have to see whether the extinction of these branches of production entailed the elimination of certain types of *labour forms* and, as a result, whether the forms of appropriating materials were altered in consequence.

For the period 1900-1920, a second problem arose concerning the production means imported from the Euro-Canadian world. On the one hand, we saw that almost all the production means imported at that time were handled in the same way as the indigenous tools with which they competed, and that these probably had little effect on the work for which they were used. On the other hand, it was noted that rifles which replaced bows and flintlock guns might have modified some labour patterns. We must therefore ask what became of the hunting activities into which these rifles were introduced.

On the whole, we must keep in mind that the first two decades of the twentieth century were marked by imported means of production which could have transformed work patterns, either by eliminating certain branches of indigenous industries, or—as in the case of the rifle—through the use of an implement which, by virtue of its operation, was capable of requiring new ways of organizing labour power and rendering old ones obsolete.

Lastly, we saw that the capacity of the traditional means of transportation remained unchanged *in relation to food production requirements, and to the necessity to store food in caches*. This eliminated one of the factors that could have played a role in altering the conditions possible through the division of labour. However, a final conclusion about what became of these conditions between 1840 and 1920 cannot be drawn solely on the basis of this observation. We must still examine what happened to indigenous industries and the size of the Tutchone population. Where these paths lead is explored in the second volume of this book.