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‘Qu’il est question d’une langue sauvage’: Phrasebooks for European Travellers in Eighteenth-Century North America

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Abstract
This article explores the vocabularies of Amerindian languages published as part of the travel accounts written by explorers, traders and colonial policymakers in North America over the eighteenth century. Starting with the renowned *Voyages* by the Baron de Lahontan, the analysis takes as its endpoint the journals of the famous expedition led by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark at the beginning of the nineteenth century. The aim of this study is to foreground what these lexicographic compilations reveal about European encounters with societies categorised as radically different from – and less civilised than – the traveller’s own: an ‘otherness’ sometimes exploited as a mirror and term of comparison that challenged the observer’s ethnocentrism. Drawing on existing scholarship about the cultural history of Euro-American encounters in the modern age, this study puts forward an original analysis of the temporal conceptualisations underpinning vocabularies of ‘savage languages’, in terms of both historical diachronicity and time as a culturally constructed frame of human experience.

This focus on the lists of words and phrases included in travel accounts, journals and relations makes it possible to question the relationship between the recording of linguistic evidence and travel narratives, and explore the complex negotiations between empirical observation and pre-existing cultural categories and stereotypes. A close reading of these often-neglected primary sources helps us to identify recurrent conceptual tropes and assign a central role to the historicisation of the Amerindian within wider processes of cultural construction of a global Europeanness.

I

Ever since their first contacts with the peoples of North America, the accounts of European travellers included vocabularies, dictionaries, and lists of words and/or phrases of common use as sections within the text, or as appendices.[1] Whether they were explorers, missionaries, traders, colonial administrators, surveyors or policymakers, from Jacques

[1] For general background on European cultural encounters with the ‘new world’: Guido Abbattista, ‘European encounters in the Age of Expansion’, in *EGO – European History Online*, <http://www.ieg-ego.eu/en>; Guido Abbattista (ed.), *Encountering Otherness: Diversities and Transcultural Experiences in Early Modern European Culture* (Trieste, 2011); John Elliott, *The Old World and the New: 1491–1650* (1970; Cambridge, 1992); Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American*

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Cartier's *Relations* (published from 1545) and Gabriel Sagard's *Grand Voyage* (1632), the habit of including in travelogues a vocabulary of 'savage languages' was continued in the following centuries.[2] Eighteenth-century examples range from Lahontan's *Nouveaux Voyages* (1703), John Lawson's *New Voyage* (1709), Cadwallader Colden's *History of the Five Indian Nations* (1727) and Jonathan Carver's *Three Years Travels* (1778), to the account of James Cook's third voyage (1784), George Dixon's *A Voyage Round the World* (1789) and John Long's *Voyages and Travels* (1791). The lists of French or English words they included, with their respective translations in languages such as Huron, Iroquois, Tuscarora or Woccon, under a typographic presentation designed to project an idea of objective registration, eloquently revealed the cultural attitudes with which European observers perceived and portrayed their Native American interlocutors. The primary aim of this article is to consider what these compilations tell us about the nature of European encounters with individuals and societies seen as less civilised than the writers and how such texts could present a fascinating Other to travellers that might encourage the observer to problematise their own culture.

In this article I argue that the choices that our writers made to include or exclude specific terms and semantic spheres work as epiphenomena of a conception of historical time in which societies were hierarchised. New ideas of time emerging in the eighteenth-century European mind led to the 'savage' being considered as an example of a universal humanity, though distinct from the more refined, 'civilised' European. This article analyses the temporal conceptualisations underpinning vocabularies of 'savage languages', looking at time both in terms of a frame in which historical and diachronic gaps and differences were located, and as a cultural construct framing human experience. These vocabularies offer insights into communicative exchanges which are less mediated than the ones presented by narrative accounts, particularly when phrases and expressions accompanied the list of words, where a more conscious thematisation of the writer's subjectivity and a more controlled self-representation are usually to be found. Furthermore, they throw light

Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology, 2nd edn (London and New York, 1986); Joan-Pau Rubiés, 'Texts, images, and the perception of "savages" in early modern Europe: what we can learn from White and Harriot', in Kim Sloan (ed.), *European Visions: American Voices* (London, 2009), pp. 120–30; Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, foreword by Anthony Pagden (Norman, OK, 2005).

[2] Terms such as 'savage', as well as exonyms used later in this article and characteristic of colonial practices, are used to conform to primary sources. In so doing, I will retain a historical perspective and challenge the cultural agencies and categories they imply. On the linguistic and conceptual history of the 'savage', see Sergio Landucci, *I filosofi e i selvaggi* (Turin, 2014); J. G. A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion*, IV: *Barbarians, Savages and Empires* (Cambridge, 2005), pp. 2–3, 157–228; Pagden, *The Fall*; Silvia Sebastiani, *The Scottish Enlightenment: Race, Gender, and the Limits of Progress* (New York, 2013). On the linguistic confusion in Anglophone and Francophone sources as regards Canadian nations, see Michèle Duchet, *Anthropologie et histoire au siècle des Lumières* (Paris, 1995), pp. 26–9.

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on translation practices and cultural mediation processes, whereas in accounts and letters an effective interpreter is usually invisible.[3]

My focus is on a selection of texts written in English by colonial administrators and policymakers, explorers and traders in eighteenth-century North America. These were produced against a cultural backdrop in which secondary sources written in other languages, such as Lahontan's *Nouveaux Voyages*, were widely known to (and sometimes borrowed by) British and American-British writers, in the original versions or through English translations. The article's source base is shaped by a primary interest in a secularised culture, considered as a vantage point from which to observe the functioning of ideas of historical time increasingly far from biblical eschatological and parousistic perspectives.[4] Thus, the following pages leave aside a discussion of the intellectual background and the cultural strategies and aims that an inclusion of the writings of Christian missionaries would have required, important though these were for eighteenth-century Euro-American encounters. Even so, religious themes run through the primary corpus considered here, and precedents such as Sagard's *Grand Voyage* are crucial to any investigation into the history of European linguistic curiosity towards the American world. Accounts and annexed vocabularies considered in the present study follow yet another methodological choice: rather than aiming at a systematic inventory, this analysis draws on the close reading of selected sources, placing at centre stage the relationships between travel relations and linguistic compilations, and devoting specific attention to intertextual genealogies and connections. Indeed, this article shows how eighteenth-century testimonies richly illustrate the interaction between pre-existent cultural notions and first-hand observations. In turn this allows for a better understanding of how ideas about history and time work in cultural practices different from antiquarian-historical and philosophical-historical writing.

Linguistic and traductological aspects sat at the intersection of a multitude of issues characterising European contact with North America from its early days. Scholars have called attention to the role of interpreters as cultural brokers; have traced the debates regarding the problematic translation of Christian faith and doctrine in cultural-linguistic contexts far from the European one; and have highlighted the gradual exclusion of Central and Meso-American languages by the

[3] James Merrell, *Into the American Woods: Negotiations on the Pennsylvania Frontier* (New York, 2000), especially pp. 27–32; Lawrence Venuti, *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (London and New York, 1995); William F. Hanks and Carlo Severi, 'Translating worlds: the epistemological space of translation', *Hau: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 4/2 (2014), pp. 1–16.

[4] Anthony Grafton, 'Joseph Scaliger and historical chronology: the rise and fall of a discipline', *History and Theory*, 14/2 (1975), pp. 156–85; Paolo Rossi, *I segni del tempo: storia della terra e storia delle nazioni da Hooke a Vico* (Milan, 1979); Edoardo Tortarolo, 'L'eutanasia della cronologia biblica', in Camilla Hermanin and Luisa Simonutti (eds), *La centralità del dubbio: un progetto di Antonio Rotondò*, I.3: *Scritture, ragione e storia* (Florence, 2010), pp. 339–59.

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Castilian and Portuguese monarchic authorities.[5] Along with studies interested in language and rhetoric in relation to the construction and projection of imperial power, linguistic aspects of the European encounter with the New World have been subjects of inquiry especially as regards the historical debates surrounding the admissibility of native languages and systems for tracing and registering the past – for example Inca quipus, and logogrammatic-syllabic writing systems or systems based on glyphs – as legitimate tools for transmitting knowledge of the past and of the 'new' continent's inhabitants, and for evangelising.[6] The relationship between language and civilisation processes, as well as conjectural histories of languages, and the role played by languages in disputes over the origins of humanity in America, have also received much scholarly attention in recent years.[7] Existing studies have investigated how travel accounts were used in treatises about the origins of language by Rousseau and Lord Monboddo, or in John Locke's natural history of man.

Vocabularies themselves, however, have received far less consideration.[8] Historical linguistics has produced some useful analysis of these lists of words and expressions, regarded not so much as trustworthy samples of the languages they were supposed to be recording, but as testimonies of contacts, often documenting borrowings, trade jargons, pidgins and short-term accommodations.[9] By focusing on the vocabularies in North American travel accounts, leaving aside those present in other kind of

[5] Nancy L. Hagedorn, '"A friend to go between them": the interpreter as cultural broker during Anglo-Iroquois councils, 1740–70', *Ethnohistory*, 35/1 (1988), pp. 60–80; Milton W. Hamilton, 'Sir William Johnson: interpreter of the Iroquois', *Ethnohistory*, 10/3 (1963), pp. 270–86; Eric Cheyfitz, *The Poetics of Imperialism: Translation and Colonization from 'The Tempest' to Tarzan* (New York, 1991); Pagden, *The Fall*, pp. 127–8, 183–92, 202–9; Todorov, *The Conquest*; on translation of the Christian doctrine, see Sangkeun Kim, *Strange Names of God: The Missionary Translation of the Divine Name and the Chinese Responses to Matteo Ricci's 'Shangti' in Late Ming China, 1583–1644* (New York, 2004); Victor Egon Hanzeli, *Missionary Linguistics in New France: A Study of Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Descriptions of American Indian Languages* (The Hague and Paris, 1969).

[6] Peter Burke, 'America and the rewriting of world history', in Karen Ordahl Kupperman (ed.), *America in European Consciousness* (Chapel Hill and London, 1995), pp. 33–51; Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *How to Write the History of the New World: Histories, Epistemologies and Identities in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World* (Stanford, 2001), pp. 60–129; Peter Mason, *The Lives of Images* (London, 2001) on Mexican *codices* in Europe see p. 101, and in general chs 4 and 5; Giuseppe Marcocci, *Indios, cinesi, falsari: le storie del mondo nel Rinascimento* (Rome-Bari, 2016), pp. 38–46.

[7] Saul Jarcho, 'Origin of the American Indian as suggested by fray Joseph De Acosta (1589)', *Isis*, 50/4 (1959), pp. 430–8; Rüdiger Schreyer, '"Savage" languages in the eighteenth-century theoretical history of language', in Edward G. Gray and Norman Fiering (eds), *The Language Encounter in the Americas, 1492–1800: A Collection of Essays* (New York and Oxford, 2000), pp. 310–26.

[8] On Gabriel Sagard's account in Monboddo: Rüdiger Schreyer, 'Gabriel Sagard's "Dictionary of the Huron tongue" (1632)', in Elke Nowak (ed.), *Languages Different in All Their Sounds … Descriptive Approaches to Indigenous Languages of America 1500 to 1800* (Münster, 1999), pp. 101–15; on Locke: Daniel Carey, *Locke, Shaftesbury, and Hutcheson: Contesting Diversity in the Enlightenment and Beyond* (Cambridge, 2006), especially pp. 17, 88.

[9] Gray and Fiering (eds), *The Language Encounter*, here especially Ives Goddard, 'The use of pidgins and jargons on the east coast of North America', pp. 61–80; Michael Silverstein, 'Dynamics of linguistic contact', in Ives Goddard (ed.), *Handbook of North American Indians*, XVII: *Languages* (Washington, DC, 1996), pp. 117–36; Agnete Nesse, 'Trade and language: how did traders

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writings which are beyond the range of this article, such as grammars or linguistics treatises, the following pages should throw new light on the relationship(s) between them and the accounts of which they are a part. This narrower focus should make it possible to gain a clearer understanding of the complex negotiations which often took place in journals and travel accounts between empirical observation and pre-existing cultural categories and stereotypes, between experience and written sources of knowledge, and between scientific ambitions, and colonial and imperial cultural agencies interacting in a specific political-geographical context. While a comprehensive discussion of the rich theoretical and methodological background outlined above lies beyond the scope of this article, the close reading of a number of 'savage vocabularies' scarcely considered by existing scholarship will take place against this backdrop.[10]

II

Vocabularies of American languages and lists of words in translation are to be found in travel literature from the time of Jacques Cartier's sixteenth-century journey to Canada, or Jean de Lery's roughly contemporaneous one to Brazil. The transcribed word gave a name to an object unknown in Europe, for which there was no word available in the writer's mother tongue. In so doing, it attested to the truthfulness of the account, presenting a notion that the author would have been unable to learn about without actually visiting the places described. The exotic unfamiliarity of the transcribed sounds might also have appealed to the reader's sense of wonder and fascination.[11] Since they were discrete appendices which supplemented the main text while also being relatively distinct in typographical terms, often coming at the end and marked by a stand-alone title page, vocabularies also indicate that different agencies were involved in the construction of the book. We can see this in the French–Indian lexicon included in Cartier's first relation on Canada (1534), probably the first to be written in French in the age of explorations after the French translation of fifty Brazilian and Patagonian words in Pigafetta (1525). Cartier included Onondaga, Mohawk and Huron words, while some terms not belonging to any of these groups seem to point to the existence of the variety of 'iroquoien laurentien' mentioned by the author.[12] The list

communicate across language borders?', in Wim Blockmans, Mikhail Krom and Justyna Wubs-Mrozewicz (eds), *The Routledge Handbook of Maritime Trade around Europe 1300–1600* (London and New York, 2017), pp. 86–100, at pp. 92–3.

[10] Some noteworthy exceptions are: Laura J. Murray, 'Vocabularies of native American languages: a literary and historical approach to an elusive genre', *American Quarterly*, 53/4 (2001), pp. 590–623; H. Christoph Wolfart, 'The beginnings of Algonquian lexicography', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 132/1 (1988), pp. 119–27; Schreyer, 'Gabriel Sagard's "Dictionary"'.

[11] Murray, 'Vocabularies', pp. 593 and 617 n. 4.

[12] Bruce G. Trigger (ed.), *Handbook of North American Indians*, XV: *Northeast* (Washington, DC, 1978), pp. 334–43. On Cartier: Fernand Braudel (ed.), *Le monde de Jacques Cartier: l'aventure au*

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was not always included in coeval copies: it was first added in Giovanni Battista Ramusio's Italian version.[13]

It will come as no surprise that a list such as Cartier's carried a preponderant majority of words related to spheres of the physical world (i.e. body parts, objects tied to the physical surroundings, and food). His list was structured around semantic clusters, which seem almost to have been organised on the basis of free association. Of the two words in the list referring to a temporal dimension – *giorno* (day) and *notte* (night) – only the second was translated into Huron (*Aiagla*).[14] Also, the word *Iddio* (God), despite being the first in the list, recorded a blank in the Huron column. Cartier's list contained no words for abstract semantic fields, an omission which, while in all likelihood derived from the practical circumstances of elicitation and collection of linguistic evidence, also served to confirm the long-term prejudice that Native Americans were incapable of abstract thought.[15]

We find a similar absence in Gabriel Sagard's *Dictionnaire de la langue huronne* appended in 1632 to *Le Grand voyage du pays des Hurons* (Figure 1). This text is a fine example of proto-ethnographic curiosity written after the author had been a Franciscan missionary in Canada between 1623 and 1624.[16] Containing around 2,500 words and expressions, with a separate title-page and preface, Sagard's *Dictionnaire* explicitly presented the Huron language not only as rich in local varieties, but also constantly fluid and changing, a feature seen as typical of imperfect languages just beginning on their path towards refinement:[17]

XVIe siècle (Montreal and Paris, 1984); Bruce G. Trigger, *Children of Aataentsic: A History of the Huron People to 1660* (Kingston and Montreal, 1976), pp. 177–207; on linguistic issues and for a comparison with later sources: Marius Barbeau, *The Language of Canada in the Voyages of Jacques Cartier (1534–1538)* (part of National Museum of Canada, *Bulletin 173* (Ottawa, 1959), pp. 108–229).

[13] Jacques Cartier, *Relations* (Montreal, 1986), p. 224.

[14] Entries in Italian according to Ramusio's version reproduced in Cartier, *Relations*, pp. 225–6.

[15] Murray, 'Vocabularies', p. 598. On translation and religion during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries: Kim, *Strange Names of God*; Martin Mulsow, 'An "Our Father" for the Hottentots: religion, language, and the consensus gentium', in Carlo Ginzburg and Lucio Biasiori (eds), *A Historical Approach to Casuistry: Norms and Exceptions in a Comparative Perspective* (London and New York, 2019), pp. 239–61, esp. pp. 246–7 on the *question de la raison* and the *consensus gentium*. On the connection between the ability to use language, the ability to reason, and civil society: Pagden, *The Fall*, pp. 15–16; Pocock, *Savages and Empires*, pp. 2–3, 158–71; Landucci, *I filosofi e i selvaggi*, p. 4.

[16] Gabriel Sagard, *Le Grand voyage du pays des Hurons suivi du Dictionnaire de la langue huronne* (Montreal, QC, 1998); *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, I: *1000–1700* (Toronto, 1966), electronic ed. 2019, <http://www.biographi.ca/>, s.v. 'Sagard, Gabriel', by Jean de la Croix Rioux. On proto-ethnography: Rolando Minuti, 'L'anthropologie dans l'*Encyclopédie méthodique*: les sauvages de Jean-Nicolas Démeunier', in Martine Groult and Luigi Delia (eds), *Panckoucke et l'Encyclopédie méthodique: ordre de matières et transversalité* (Paris, 2019), pp. 367–81, esp. pp. 367–9. See also Christopher Fox, Roy Porter and Robert Wokler (eds), *Inventing Human Science: Eighteenth-Century Domains* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1995).

[17] For a discussion of Sagard's *Dictionnaire* from a linguistic standpoint see John L. Steckley, 'Trade goods and nations in Sagard's dictionary: a St. Lawrence Iroquoian perspective', *Ontario History*, 104/2 (2012), pp. 139–54. It is probably the title-page that causes the *Dictionnaire* to be sometimes listed as an autonomous work, but the reference to it in the *Voyage*'s main title leaves no doubt as to

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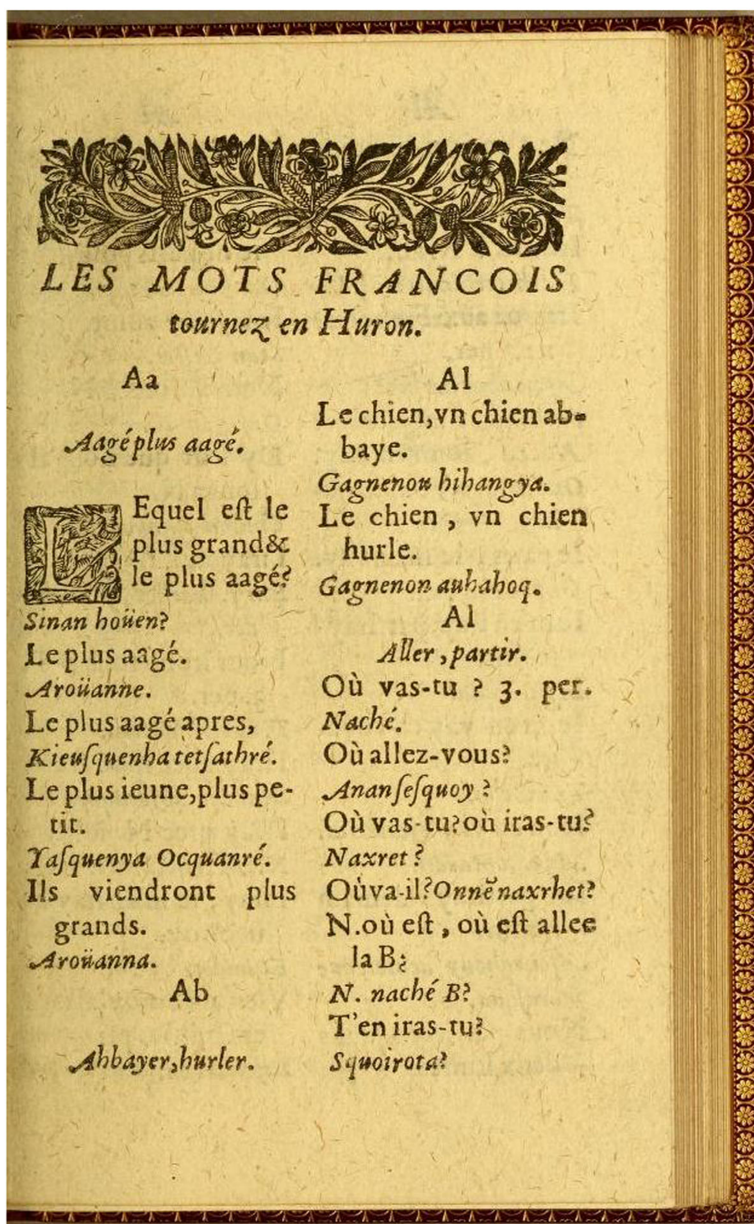

LES MOTS FRANCOIS
tournez en Huron.

Aa

Aagé plus aagé.

LEquel eſt le plus grand & le plus aagé?
Sinan hoüen?
Le plus aagé.
Aroüanne.
Le plus aagé apres,
Kieuſquenha tetſathré.
Le plus ieune, plus petit.
Yaſquenya Ocquanré.
Ils viendront plus grands.
Aroüanna.

Ab

Abbayer, hurler.

Al

Le chien, vn chien abbaye.
Gagnenon hihangya.
Le chien, vn chien hurle.
Gagnenon auhahoq.

Al

Aller, partir.

Où vas-tu ? 3. per.
Naché.
Où allez-vous?
Ananſeſquoy ?
Où vas-tu? où iras-tu?
Naxret ?
Où va-il? *Onnẽ naxrhet?*
N. où eſt, où eſt allee la B?
N. naché B?
T'en iras-tu?
Squoirota?

Figure 1 Sagard, *Grand voyage*, first page of the *Dictionnaire*. Courtesy of the John Carter Brown Library. Italics and punctuation set apart the two linguistic codes. The list divides the semantic fields in alphabetical order. Within each entry the order of sub-entries – words and expressions – follows semantic associations rather than alphabetical order. [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

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> Our Hurons, and generally all the other Nations, present the same instability of language, and change their words so much that, with the passing of time, the old Huron is almost entirely different from that of the present, and it is still changing, according to what I was able to conjecture and learn by talking to them: for the mind becomes more subtle, and growing older corrects things and brings them to their perfection.[18]

Thus it was the very savage nature of the Huron language that prevented the author from compiling a definite set of grammar rules: '[I]t is an issue of savage language, almost without rules, and so imperfect that even someone more competent than me would have had a hard time … doing any better'.[19] Apparent Huron confusion over tenses was seen as a sign of intellectual infancy, for while Sagard recorded words and expressions which placed events in a familiar temporal dimension, he could discern no sense of historical stratification.[20] Similarly his vocabulary represented no other abstract sphere, except those connected to missionary work, such as teaching and learning and the Christian religion; and linguistic curiosity, with expressions for asking the meaning of words, or the French and/or Huron equivalent of terms. Sagard's dictionary thus reinforced a conceptualisation of Indigenous Americans as being at the beginning of a process of refinement. What was implicit in his vocabulary was made explicit in his narrative, where, for example, he drew parallels between the Hurons and the ancient Spartans, or suggested the Hurons' simple mode of dressing was reminiscent of that of Franciscan friars, so that today's reader might conclude that the missionary felt in some respects closer to them than to many of his fellow French.[21] While the main narrative body of Sagard's *Voyage* was highly indebted to previous written sources such as the works by Samuel de Champlain and Marc Lescarbot, the dictionary shows greater originality and reveals the author's proto-ethnographic curiosity and his ability to observe his interlocutors with a fresh eye.[22]

Is it possible to individuate an eighteenth-century phase within the longer history of the textual genre linguistic collections annexed to

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it being the author's intention to include it in the account. See Thomas W. Field, *An Essay towards an Indian Bibliography* (New York, 1873), p. 342.

18 Sagard, *Le Grand voyage*, p. 346, translations by the author.

19 Ibid., pp. 347, 148.

20 Ibid., p. 345.

21 Ibid., pp. 199–200 and 233–4. On the 'well-established sixteenth-century literary genre, which traced the resemblances between a modern language and an ancient to prove the nobility of the former', see Carlo Ginzburg, 'Provincializing the world: Europeans, Indians, Jews (1704)', *Postcolonial Studies*, 14/2 (2011), pp. 135–50; quote on p. 136.

22 Samuel de Champlain, *Œuvres complètes de Champlain* (2 vols; Quebec, 2019); Marc Lescarbot, *Histoire de la Nouvelle France, édition augmentée* (Paris, 1617). For a discussion of de Champlain and Lescarbot in Sagard see the notes by Jack Warwick in the aforementioned edition of Sagard's *Le Grand voyage*, and the footnotes by Ugo Piscopo in Gabriel Sagard, *Grande viaggio nel paese degli Uroni 1623–1624* (Milan, 1972). On Sagard's *Voyage* as the attainment of a collective experience, see Jack Warwick, 'Introduction', in Sagard, *Le Grand voyage*, pp. 7–72, at pp. 35–40. For the dictionary, the existence of unpublished sources cannot be ruled out, but as of today this remains a hypothesis, and possible sources have not yet been identified.

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travelogues? Between the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, vocabularies began to portray an expanding variety of contact situations, bearing witness to the increasing diversity of European actors and their objectives in North America.[23] While the wordlists still served to reinforce the credibility of the account and pique the reader's interest, more practical aims started to become prominent. They gradually became stores of useful expressions, toolboxes for the readers should they become travellers themselves, and they often contained ready-to-use formulaic expressions recording typical conversational exchanges. The increasing presence of a proto-ethnographical curiosity shaped the recording of the language as part of a broader cognitive project as regards the American otherness. Vocabularies embody the coming together of a whole range of different objectives, scientific and communicative, religious and commercial. They lay bare the ties that bind the systematisation of knowledge as regards the customs and manners of peoples across the globe and projects of colonial dominance and expansion. While the partitioning of disciplinary-academic knowledge – including linguistics and ethno-anthropological sciences – would come to full fruition in the nineteenth century, the curiosity about North American languages of eighteenth-century explorers, traders and administrators needs to be seen against the backdrop of broader reflections on human diversity and attempts to systematise it. 'The discussion over the languages of the "primitive", the "savage", the "barbarian", became a key register in which theories of evolution and development were established'.[24] In the North American context, hopes of tracing back the obscure origins of the American populations and identifying affinities between different nations often rested upon linguistic genealogies. Those who compiled vocabularies based on first-hand experiences of contact were often aware that their contribution might have an impact on on-going debates on the origins and nature of the American societies by bringing new evidence to light. In a system of knowledge in which there was still no clear-cut distinction between scholars and amateurs, it was not uncommon for authors of travel accounts to put forward opinions regarding the possible history of languages, and, on the basis of linguistic similarities, argue for example that the origin of the indigenous American nations lay in China or Israel.

From the end of the eighteenth century onwards, several wide-ranging initiatives were set in motion, such as that of the St Petersburg Academy of Sciences, in particular during Catherine II's reign (1762–96), and with specific regard to the geographical area of interest here, the one by Thomas Jefferson, Stephen DuPonceau and Albert Gallatin.[25] The latter, with its recording of Native American languages

[23] See Mulsow, 'An "Our Father" for the Hottentots'.

[24] Anthony Pagden, *European Encounters in the New World* (New Haven and London, 1993), p. 120.

[25] Peter Simon Pallas [Hartwig L. C. Bacmeister, and Christian G. Arndt], *Linguarum totius orbis vocabularia comparativa* (Petropoli, 1786); Harriet E. Manelis Klein and Herbert S. Klein, 'The

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using a uniform standard of written registration, called for a network of correspondents and administrators to cooperate in the initiative, fundamentally contributing to the rise of North American comparative linguistics.[26] In making a point of separating the lexicographical aspects from the narration of personal experience, Jefferson's project exemplifies the role of linguistics in the making of a Euro-American identity. In response to Buffon's denigrations of the 'New World', an American culture was being forged which, while appropriating and transposing native cultures, at the same time exploited linguistic facts as a further basis for cultural hierarchisation.[27] Compared to previous examples such as Cartier's vocabulary, later eighteenth-century compilations retained a conceptual and typographical structure which places two (or more) languages facing each other, divided by punctuation marks, or by the empty space in their respective columns. As Laura J. Murray has argued in what is still one of the most informative contributions on this topic, the visual appearance of the page suggests the existence of two different codes, between which semantic equivalence (or the lack of it) was recorded.[28] Of course, what might be more revealing is what lies in the blank spaces between the columns. Along with the first-hand observations by writers lamenting the difficulties involved in collecting and transcribing samples of languages, historical linguistics has shown how vocabularies and lists of terms and expressions are produced through a cultural and linguistic contact, often unwittingly documenting the finding of some common linguistic ground, including the birth and development of trade jargons and pidgins.[29]

III

In 1703, the second volume of Lahontan's *Nouveaux voyages dans l'Amerique Septentrionale* – a work destined to immediate wide circulation – featured a 'Petit Dictionnaire de la langue des sauvages' based on the Algonquin language which, thanks to references made to it and numerous

"Russian collection" of Amerindian languages in Spanish archives', *International Journal of American Linguistics*, 44/2 (1978), pp. 137–44.

[26] Sarah Rivett, *Unscripted America: Indigenous Languages and the Origins of a Literary Nation* (Oxford, 2017), esp. pp. 182, 223. Jefferson's project is dealt with in the following pages in connection with the Lewis and Clark expedition.

[27] Antonello Gerbi, *La disputa del nuovo mondo: storia di una polemica: 1750–1900* (new edn, Milan, 2000); Regna Darnell, 'Language typology and ethnology in nineteenth-century North America: Gallantin, Brinton, Powell', in Sylvain Auroux, E. F. K. Koerner, Hans-Josef Niederehe and Kees Versteegh (eds), *History of the Language Sciences/Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaften*, II (Berlin and New York, 2001), pp. 1443–52; Regna Darnell, 'Anthropological linguistics: early history in North America', in William Frawley (ed.), *International Encyclopaedia of Linguistics* (2nd edn; Oxford, 2003), I, *AAVE-Esperanto*, pp. 95–8. See also Sean P. Harvey, '"Must not their languages be savage and barbarous like them?": philology, Indian removal, and race science', *Journal of the Early Republic*, 30/4 (2010), pp. 505–32.

[28] Murray, 'Vocabularies', p. 600.

[29] Goddard, 'The use of pidgins', p. 62.

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cases of plagiarism, enjoyed some success in its own right.[30] According to Lahontan, all the other Canadian languages resembled Algonquin just as Italian resembles Spanish. The title page of the first English edition (printed in London in 1703) emphasised the idea of Algonquin being a vehicular language, describing the vocabulary as 'a dictionary of the Algonkine language, which is generally spoken in North-America' and 'A short dictionary of the most universal language of the savages'.[31] We see this idea being further reinforced by passages comparing the role of the Algonquin language in North America to that of Latin and Greek in Europe.[32] Current scholarship has read this hierarchisation both as the result of applying European classification criteria to the American context – thereby serving the purpose of cultural domination – as well as the Baron's attempt to show off his knowledge of linguistic derivation theories.[33] As for its content, Lahontan's 'Petit Dictionnaire' included words of frequent usage, with particular attention devoted to the fields of commerce and trade, military life, and the exploration and surveying of lands.[34] Elsewhere, in his *Mémoires de l'Amérique septentrionale*, Lahontan foregrounded the language's simplicity, claiming it had no stress or accents, and that its limited vocabulary regarding the arts and sciences reflected the speakers' ignorance of such subjects – an assumption already made by earlier commentators, including the authors of the Jesuit relations.[35] The absence of any of the rhetorical ceremonial speech and flowery compliments, so common in European languages, was, as far as Lahontan was concerned, a function of the speakers' simplicity of customs and manners.

We see a similar approach adopted a few years later by John Lawson, explorer and founder of two of the oldest European settlements in

[30] Louis Armand de Lom d'Arce, baron de Lahontan, *Nouveaux voyages de Mr. Le Baron de Lahontan dans l'Amérique Septentrionale* (2 vols; À La Haye, 1703). On Lahontan: Réal Ouellet (ed.), *Sur Lahontan: comptes rendus et critiques (1702–1711)* (Quebec, 1983); on the *Voyages'* circulation: Claudio De Boni, 'Viaggio alla scoperta del buon selvaggio, ovvero l'immaginario utopico del barone di Lahontan', *Morus: Utopia e Renascimento*, 7 (2010), pp. 145–56, at p. 148; on Lahontan's vocabulary: Wolfart, 'The beginnings of Algonquian lexicography', esp. pp. 120–1.

[31] Baron Lahontan, *New Voyages to North America* (2 vols; London, 1703), vol. I, title-page; vol. II, p. 287.

[32] Lahontan, *Nouveaux voyages*, II, p. 198.

[33] Ursula Haskins Gonthier, 'Une colonisation linguistique? Les *Mémoires de l'Amérique septentrionale* de Lahontan', *Études françaises*, 45/2 (2009), pp. 115–29, at p. 119; H. Christoph Wolfart, 'Lahontan's bestseller', *Historiographia Linguistica*, 16/1–2 (1989), pp. 1–24, at pp. 4–5.

[34] Lahontan, *Nouveaux voyages*, II, p. 197; Gonthier, 'Une colonisation linguistique?'; see the critical edition in Lahontan, *OEuvres completes* (2 vols; Montreal, 1990), I, pp. 735–62 for a comparison with Jean-André Cuoq's *Etudes philologiques sur quelques langues sauvages de L'Amérique* (1866) and Georges Lemoine's *Dictionnaire Français-Algonquin* (1911).

[35] Lahontan, *Nouveaux voyages*, II, p. 199; Denise Cloutier, 'Lahontan et les langues amérindiennes', in Lahontan, *Œuvres complètes*, II, pp. 1271–7 ; see p. 1274 for a comparison with Lejeune's *Relation* (1634). By 'Jesuit relations' I mean the correspondence sent by Jesuits engaged in evangelising missions in various parts of the world between the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, generally addressed to their superiors to report on the progress of their apostolic activities. They are an exceptionally valuable source for the study of the modern age, in particular the European exploration of the globe and cultural connections and exchanges.

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North Carolina, who had strong interests in medicine, botany and natural history.[36] In his *Voyage to North Carolina* Lawson inserted a brief vocabulary giving the English translation of words in *Tuskeruro* (Tuscarora), *Pampticough* (Pamlico) and Woccon (Figure 2).[37] The first of these, belonging to the Iroquois family, is a widespread trade language, while the second, part of the Algonquin family, is now extinct, meaning that Lawson's testimony is one of the very few ever transcribed before the speakers' community was decimated by smallpox and wars against the British, before being absorbed by the Tuscarora. As for Woccon, which belongs to the Siouan-Catawban family of languages, Lawson's is still today the only surviving testimony.[38] Along with numerals, and goods and objects in everyday use, Lawson's vocabulary included expressions such as 'I will sell you goods very cheap', or '[a]ll the Indians are drunk', which gives a more vivid idea of the context of his contacts with them. Of course, as current scholarship has pointed out, it also gives us a sense of the writer's mixture of appreciation and contempt for his interlocutors.[39] While Lawson paid no systematic attention to linguistic genealogies and/or translation problems, his comments on Indigenous American language skills were dismissive:[40]

> To repeat more of this *Indian* Jargon, would be to trouble the Reader; and as an Account how imperfect they are in their Moods and Tenses, has been given by several already, I shall only add, that their Languages or Tongues are so deficient, that you cannot suppose the *Indians* ever could express themselves in such a Flight of Stile, as Authors would have you believe. They are so far from it, that they are but just able to make one another understand readily what they talk about.[41]

According to Lawson, the notable difference in the languages used by neighbours caused 'Jealousies and Fears amongst them, which bring wars, wherein they destroy one another', a process which ultimately favoured the Europeans.[42] The language Lawson recorded also bore witness to the influence that the European presence had already had, with him claiming

[36] Little is known of Lawson's biography before 1700; see Hugh Talmage Lefler, 'Introduction', in Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina* (Chapel Hill, 1967), pp. xi–liv, esp. pp. xv–xxxix.
[37] John Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina: Containing the Exact Description and Natural History of that Country* (London, 1709), pp. 225–30.
[38] On Tuscarora: Lyle Campbell, *American Indian Languages: The Historical Linguistics of Native America* (Oxford and New York, 2000), p. 24, see also p. 151; Marianne Mithun, *A Grammar of Tuscarora* (New York, 1976); Marianne Mithun, *The Languages of Native North America* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 16, 44–6, 100, 189, 199, 253, 388, 467, 532–4, 603, 605; on Pamlico and Woccon: Marianne Mithun, *The Languages of Native North America* (Cambridge, 1999), pp. 319, 327, 333, 501, 506. On Tuscarora and Woccon see also Harald Hammarström, Robert Forkel, Martin Haspelmath, *Glottolog 3.3*, <http://www.glottolog.org>.
[39] Murray, 'Vocabularies', p. 601.
[40] On 'Indian': Elizabeth Prine Pauls, 'Tribal nomenclature: American Indian, Native American, and First Nation', *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 17 Jan. 2008, <https://www.britannica.com>; Michael Yellow Bird, 'What we want to be called: indigenous peoples' perspectives on racial and ethnic identity labels', *American Indian Quarterly*, 23/2 (1999), pp. 1–21.
[41] Lawson, *A New Voyage*, p. 230.
[42] Ibid.

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of North-Carolina. 225

that meaſures it, and if he happens to ſwallow any down, either through Wilfulneſs or otherwiſe, the Merchant or ſome of his Party, does not ſcruple to knock the Fellow down, exclaiming againſt him for falſe Meaſure. Thereupon, the Buyer finds another Mouthpiece to meaſure the Rum by; ſo that this Trading is very agreeable to the Spectators, to ſee ſuch a deal of Quarrelling and Controverſy, as often happens, about it, and is very diverting.

Another Deſtroyer of them, is, the Art they have, and often practiſe, of poiſoning one another; which is done by a large, white, ſpungy Root, that grows in the Freſh-Marſhes, which is one of their Poiſons; not but that they have many other Drugs, which they poiſon one another withal. *Poiſoning of Taylor.*

Laſtly, the continual Wars theſe Savages maintain, one Nation againſt another, which ſometimes hold for ſome Ages, killing and making Captives, till they become ſo weak thereby, that they are forced to make Peace for want of Recruits, to ſupply their Wars; and the Difference of Languages, that is found amongſt theſe Heathens, ſeems altogether ſtrange. For it often appears, that every dozen Miles, you meet with an *Indian* Town, that is quite different from the others you laſt parted withal; and what a little ſupplies this Defect is, that the moſt powerful Nation of theſe Savages ſcorns to treat or trade with any others (of fewer Numbers and leſs Power) in any other Tongue but their own, which ſerves for the *Lingua* of the Country, with which we travel and deal; as for Example, we ſee that the *Tuskeruro's* are moſt numerous in *North-Carolina*, therefore their Tongue is underſtood by ſome in every Town of all the *Indians* near us. And here I ſhall inſert a ſmall Dictionary of every Tongue, though not Alphabetically digeſted. *How the Indians war.*

Engliſh.	Tuskeruro.	Pampticough.	Woccon.
One	*Unche*	*Weembot*	*Tonne*
Two	*Necte*	*Neſhinnauh*	*Num-perre*
Three	*Ohſ-ſah*	*Niſh-wonner*	*Nam-mee*
Four	*Untoc*	*Yau-Ooner*	*Punnum-punne*
Five	*Ouch-whe*	*Umperren*	*Webtau*
Six	*Houeyoc*	*Who-yeoc*	*Iſ-ſto*
Seven	*Chauh-noc*	*Top-po-oſh*	*Nommis-ſau*
Eight	*Nec-kara*	*Nau-hauſh-ſhoo*	*Nupſau*

Engliſh

Figure 2 Lawson, *A New Voyage to Carolina* (1709), 225, '… here I shall insert a small dictionary of every Tongue, though not Alphabetically digested'. [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

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that swearing was the first thing that natives pick up from the English, and how they had no term for sodomy before Europeans introduced the practice along with the word. Thus, we see how observation of language helped to build the idea of the Indigenous American as a 'good savage', on the one hand to be pitied for being unpolished, uncivilised and incapable of abstraction; on the other, held up as an example of a man less corrupt than the European, possessing a pristine innocence.

Lawson also made an explicit connection between knowledge of the American languages and European plans to peacefully assimilate Indigenous American cultures. In this frame of thinking an enlightened colonial government could seek alliances with Native Americans by presenting the European – or, rather, the English – as a positive model:

> [W]e should be let into a better Understanding of the Indian Tongue, by our new Converts; and the whole Body of these People would arrive to the Knowledge of our Religion and Customs, and become as one People with us … we might civilize a great many other Nations of the Savages, and daily add to our Strength in Trade, and Interest; so that we might be sufficiently enabled to conquer, or maintain our Ground, against all the Enemies to the Crown of England in America, both Christian and Savage.[43]

A similar connection between apprehension of the Indian nations' customs and languages, and colonial administration and policies can be found in Cadwallader Colden's *History of the Five Indian Nations*, partly based on written sources, and partly on the author's first-hand experience as surveyor general of the New York province.[44] Colden's text was preceded by a short vocabulary of French names, with the English and/or Iroquois translation. His aim was to enable his readers 'to read the French Accounts or compare them with the Accounts now published'.[45] In Colden's work the linguistic viewpoint was, in a sense, similar to the geographical one, and just as important in forming a knowledge of the territory and its history: they were both deemed essential to the success of the colonial project. His vocabulary included names of nations, tribes, areas, villages and settlements, with footnotes reserved for objects and activities pertaining to the everyday life, system of government and customs of the Five Nations. Subsequent reflections on Indian eloquence – from Cornelius de Pauw to Hugh Blair – did not usually devote much attention to Colden's small vocabulary, borrowing rather from the transcriptions of speeches he included in the main body of his *History*. The eloquence of Native Americans was the subject of much debate back

[43] Ibid., p. 237.
[44] Cadwallader Colden, *The History of the Five Indian Nations of Canada, which are dependent on the province of New-York in America* (London, 1747), p. xi (first part privately published in New York in 1727). On Colden: John M. Dixon, *The Enlightenment of Cadwallader Colden: Empire, Science, and Intellectual Culture in British New York* (Ithaca and London, 2016); on the correspondence with Benjamin Franklin as regards American Indian nations in New York and Albany: Timothy J. Shannon, *Indians and Colonists at the Crossroads of Empire: The Albany Congress of 1754* (Ithaca and London, 2002), pp. 110–11.
[45] Colden, *The History*, p. xv.

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in the 'Old World', eliciting both fascination and scepticism.[46] Colden's comparison of Native American powerful and sublime speeches to those of ancient Romans and Greeks was part of a broader employment of tropes intertwining geographical and chronological distance which drew analogies between Native American costumes, manners, character, and virtues and those of the Europeans' ancestors.[47]

After the Seven Year War, Jonathan Carver offered another example. A soldier and explorer born in Weymouth (in modern-day Massachusetts), Carver published his *Three Years Travels through the Interior Parts of North-America* in 1778.[48] The appendices to the travel book include short vocabularies of 'the Chipeway Language' and 'the Naudowessie Language'. As regards the former, it seems likely that Carver borrowed heavily from Lahontan, although the slight differences between the two compilations in a few instances might indicate the insertion of features from other sources and corrections based on first-hand knowledge.[49] In this respect, Carver's Chippeway vocabulary is emblematic of his relationship with his Francophone sources: notwithstanding an open dislike for the French, he drew upon them when needed.[50] His vocabulary of the Naudowessie, on the other hand, is the first – however short – vocabulary of the Dakota language ever to appear in print.[51] Carver documents a Dakota pidgin, learned according to an elementary process, as a set of 'labels' to be applied to 'things'. Entries include the common names of natural resources, terms to describe the environment, body parts, family names and social functions, and simple everyday activities.[52] In these eighteenth-century journals and travel accounts, the linguistic repertoires do not necessarily indicate that their authors engaged in an

[46] Mr. de P*** [Cornelius de Pauw], *Recherches philosophiques sur les Américains* (Berlin, 1771), tome I, p. 121; Hugh Blair, *Essays on Rhetoric* (Dublin, 1784), pp. 49–50. As regards Iroquois polity, see also Adam Ferguson's use of Colden's *History* in *An Essay on the History of Civil Society* (London, 1767), pp. 141–3.

[47] Helen Cowie and Kathryn Gray, 'Nature, nation and nostalgia: narratives of natural history in Spanish and British America (1750-1800)', *Journal of Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 36 (2013), pp. 545–58, at p. 555; Guillaume-Thomas-François Raynal, *Histoire philosophique et politique des établissemens et du commerce des Européens dans les deux Indes* (5 vols; Geneva, 1780), see for example IV, chapter VI 'Gouvernement, habitudes, vertus, vices, guerres des sauvages, qui habitoient le Canada'. For general reference on *conformité*, resemblance between the ancients and distant people, between the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, see Ginzburg, 'Provincializing the world'.

[48] Jonathan Carver, *Three Years Travels through the Interior Parts of North-America* (Philadelphia, 1796); on the publication's success, see Edward Gaylord Bourne, 'The travels of Jonathan Carver', *The American Historical Review*, 11/2 (1906), pp. 287–302.

[49] Percy G. Adams, *Travelers & Travel Liars 1600–1800* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1962), p. 84; Bourne, 'The Travels of Jonathan Carver'; John Parker, 'Introduction', in Jonathan Carver, *The Journals of Jonathan Carver and Related Documents, 1766–1770* (St. Paul, 1976), pp. 1–56.

[50] Carver, *Three Years Travels*, pp. i–ii.

[51] Raymond J. DeMallie, 'Appendix II: Carver's Dakota dictionary', in Carver, *The Journals*, pp. 210–21, at p. 210. Naudowessies are also known as Sioux, a shortened version of 'Nadouessioux', possibly a French variant of an Ojibwe term; Robert Sayre, *Modernity and its Other: The Encounter with North American Indians in the Eighteenth Century* (Lincoln, NB and London, 2017), p. 350 n. 34; Campbell, *American Indian Languages*, pp. 88, 399 n. 106.

[52] DeMallie, 'Appendix', p. 212.

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in-depth study of Indigenous American cultures. Even so, they reveal a growing interest in kinship systems, social organisation and forms of government, which could all be useful to colonial policymakers for building alliances and gaining a foothold in a territory to make the European presence more secure. The compilations reflected the ongoing consolidation of trade, commerce and the exchange of goods, and the extension of the spaces of social interaction. There was an increasing awareness on the part of the British that good relations with Indigenous American nations was a key factor in gaining the upper hand against competitors from different imperial structures.

The references to French texts in the writings of British or British-American authors show that there was a dual shift occurring as regards cultural identity: writers like Colden and Carver, despite their dislike and mistrust of French sources, and despite testifying to the open competition existing between imperial projects, still referred to their rivals to supplement their knowledge of American history and geography. The contact with American radical otherness, and the exclusion of Indigenous American intelligence from the European system of knowledge gave impetus to the perception of a closeness between cultures of the Old World and ultimately to a sense of Europeanness. Ideas of a European identity also underpinned the practice of using the 'good savage' as a mirror in which the defects and shortcomings of the observer's home society could be reflected. While the 'Indian' might be seen as trapped in an infant's stage of development,[53] the abuses, vices and wrongs perpetrated by colonisers, as described by Lawson for example, challenged the European example as a desirable point of arrival in the process of civilisation.

IV

The end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries saw a phase of increasing activity in the systematic compilation of vocabularies appended to travel accounts. The aims of scientific inquiry and commercial and colonial interests remained closely intertwined. This was the case, for example, with James Cook's third voyage, and with the expedition led by George Dixon and Nathaniel Portlock who followed the route that had been opened up by him (Figure 3). Leaving England in 1785, Dixon and Portlock aimed to explore the region of the Great Lakes, Quebec and the Pacific coast and then continue on to China to sell American furs and buy tea in Macau. Exploiting the recently established North-Pacific routes to China for the fur trade was combined with objectives in exploration and scientific research.[54] In

[53] Alexander Cook, Ned Curthoys and Shino Konishi, 'The science and politics of humanity in the eighteenth century: An introduction', in Cook, Curthoys, and Konishi (eds), *Representing Humanity in the Age of Enlightenment* (2013; London, 2015), pp. 1–14.

[54] *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, IV: *1771–1800* (Toronto, 1979) and V: *1801–1820* (Toronto, 1983), electronic edn 2003, <http://www.biographi.ca/>, s.v. respectively 'Dixon, George' and

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Figure 3 Portlock, *A Voyage*, plate at p. 358. Portrait of Tyaana (Kaneena), Hawaii. A similar mirror print accompanies the account of Cook’s third voyage in 1785. Copy at British Museum. [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

Cook’s journal, prepared for the press by John Douglas and published in 1784, the comparative tables of languages, part of the appendices, reveal the composite and complex nature of the official account as a collective artefact. Composed by Douglas, they merged information recorded in the field by Cook and by the *Resolution*’s surgeon William Anderson with

‘Portlock, Nathaniel’, by Barry M. Gough. On the expedition: Stephen Haycox, James K. Barnett and Caedmon A. Liburd, *Enlightenment and Exploration in the North Pacific, 1741–1805* (Seattle and London, 1997), pp. 13, 41–2, 122–3; Barry M. Gough, *The Northwest Coast: British Navigation, Trade, and Discoveries to 1812* (Vancouver, 1992), pp. 75–7. Dixon, who had been on board the Discovery with Cook, looked for support for the new expedition from the Royal Society by seeking the endorsement of Joseph Banks. The voyage was organised by Richard Cadman Etches and Company (also known as King George’s Sound Company), and before leaving, a licence was purchased from the South Sea Company.

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knowledge from other sources, and were explicitly offered as linguistic proof of the relationships connecting the history of different populations, such as the common origins of Esquimaux (Inuit) and Greenlanders.[55]

Both Dixon and Portlock published accounts as soon as they returned.[56] Dixon himself wrote the introduction and appendix of his text, while the main body – in epistolary form – is attributed to the trader William Beresford.[57] The mission resulted in a number of areas being mapped for the first time (including Port Mulgrave, Port Banks and Norfolk Sound – present-day Sitka Sound), and in materials documenting location, languages, manners and customs of the local populations. Dixon (or, in fact, Beresford) described the difficulty he met with while acquiring samples of the languages, both because of trouble finding common ground in the course of initial contacts, and because of other commitments interfering in the schedule, leaving too little a time for study and research.

> I often endeavoured to gain some knowledge of their language, but I never could so much as learn the numerals: every attempt I made of the kind either caused a sarcastic laugh amongst the Indians or was treated by them with silent contempt; indeed many of the tribes who visited us, were busied in trading the moment they came along side, and hurried away as soon as their traffic was over; others, again, who staid with us for any length of time, were never of a communicative disposition.[58]

For Dixon/Beresford, words to indicate numbers offered the ideal raw material with which to write a short comparative summary of the languages spoken in 'Prince William's Sound and Cook's River', 'Norfolk Sound' and 'King George's Sound'. Meanwhile methodological issues raised by the transcription encouraged Dixon to reflect on the absence of objective criteria for spelling native words as well as on his own linguistic notions and skills.[59] When it came to pronunciation he noted how Indigenous Americans were better at picking up English than languages from many other 'European' countries. This comparison actually led to the category of 'European' being used, a category which appears very

[55] James Cook and James King, *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean* (3 vols; London, 1784), III, pp. 531–55 for the comparative tables; [John Douglas], 'Introduction', in Cook and King, *A Voyage*, I, pp. i–lxxxvi, at pp. lxxiii–lxxiv, lxxxv. On Douglas's role: J. C. Beaglehole, 'Textual Introduction', *The Journals of Captain James Cook on his Voyages of Discovery*, ed. Beaglehole (4 vols; Cambridge, 1955–67; electronic reprint, 2017), III: *The Voyage of the Resolution and Discovery 1776–1780*, tome I, pp. cxcviii–ccx; on Anderson: Glyn Williams, *Naturalists at Sea: Scientific Travellers from Dampier to Darwin* (New Haven and London, 2013), pp. 124–5.

[56] George Dixon [and William Beresford], *A Voyage round the World, but More Particularly to the North-West Coast of America* (London, 1789). Dixon's account was translated into French the following year.

[57] For this attribution: Philip Edwards, *The Story of the Voyage: Sea-Narratives in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 127; *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, s.v. 'Dixon'; Albert J. Schütz, *The Voices of Eden: A History of Hawaiian Language Studies* (Honolulu, 1994), p. 36; Dan L. Thrapp, *Encyclopedia of Frontier Biography*, I: *A–F* (Lincoln, NB and London, 1991), p. 406.

[58] Dixon, *A Voyage*, pp. 227–8.

[59] Ibid., p. 241; similar remarks accompany the vocabulary of the Sandwich Islands: p. 270.

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rarely in other parts of the account. Elsewhere Dixon/Beresford noted that the Indigenous Americans' skin colour was slightly darker than the Europeans', and that the Europeans had already wreaked havoc in the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) by bringing new diseases with them.[60] An idea of Europeanness was taking shape in connection to a system of knowledge – represented by the linguistic problem – as well as to a construction of the body as a differential space.

In the essential vocabulary of the language spoken on the Sandwich Islands that Beresford managed to write down in September 1787, despite the almost total absence of abstract concepts, the word *taboo* stands out. It was a term of Polynesian origin already noted by Cook and here translated with the English *interdiction*.[61] In August 1787, Portlock (whose account shows comparatively less interest in the language of the populations he encountered) wrote down a list of words from the language spoken by the inhabitants of Montague Island (Alaska).[62] He prefaced it by remarking that '[t]heir language is harsh and unpleasant to hear', and that he was transcribing it 'spelled as near the manner of their pronunciation as I could give'. Of the fourteen entries, what stands out is the peremptory nature of the opening sequence: 'Give or hand me / sea-otter / bring', and the central position occupied by the objects and goods important for trading – 'sea otter', 'beads', 'iron', 'blanket', 'young sea-otter', 'a box', 'marmot or ermine skin'. What emerges frequently in these accounts by Cook's followers are the problems posed by a flow of oral production which proves difficult to document in writing. In this respect, illuminating comparisons can be made with how these travellers described music. Often used to mark key moments in the political and social life of the populations encountered, singing and musical performances heightened the impression that the aural dimension could only ever be partially and imperfectly conveyed by written registrations, and it often brings to light particularly interesting examples of cultural ethnocentrism on the part of the Europeans.[63] While it was unclear whether the 'Indians' made use of 'any hieroglyphics to perpetuate the memory of events', a primacy was implicitly granted to writing in documenting the past, giving support to a hierarchisation that relegated Indigenous American forms of communication to the realm of 'uncultivated barbarism'.[64]

[60] Ibid., pp. 241, 238, 276–7.
[61] Cook and King, *A Voyage*, III, pp. 10, 537, 553; Dixon, *A Voyage*, pp. 269–70.
[62] Nathaniel Portlock, *A Voyage Round the World but more Particularly to the North-West Coast of America: Performed in 1785, 1786, 1787, and 1788, in the King George and Queen Charlotte, Captains Portlock and Dixon* (London, 1789), p. 293, also for subsequent quotes in the text. This list possibly documents a language belonging to the ample stock of Athabaskan-Eyak-Tingit, to which some forty varieties belong today, between Alaska and Hudson Bay, and along the Pacific coast, from British Columbia to the South-West; Mithun, *The Languages*, pp. 1, 26, 307, 346.
[63] Dixon, *A Voyage*, pp. 160, 189, 190, 228, 242–3 and subsequent table, 259, 269, 277, 313 (here on China).
[64] Ibid., p. 243 on 'hieroglyphics', p. 245 on the 'uncultivated barbarism'; on coeval claims that there could be no history without writing, see Ann Thomson, 'Thinking about the history of Africa in the eighteenth century', in Abbattista (ed.), *Encountering Otherness*, pp. 253–66.

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Near the end of the century, another very interesting example of vocabulary relatively neglected by scholars is the one compiled by John Long in his *Voyages and Travels of an Indian Interpreter and Trader*. Relating the author's adventures between the 1770s and the 1780s, the *Voyages* were published in London in 1791, possibly in the wake of the success of Carver's account.[65] Notwithstanding translations appearing in French and German the very same year of the English first edition, and two twentieth-century editions in English, the limited attention paid to Long's *Voyages* by scholars is perhaps due to it being the only known work by the author, whose life remains obscure in many respects.[66] The title, together with the vocabularies in the appendix and the dedication to Joseph Banks (who is also listed among the subscribers of the first edition), makes it clear that Long hoped to offer a systematic contribution to current knowledge of the Indigenous American languages. In Long's work cognisance and proficiency in Native American matters contributed to sustaining the author's advocacy in favour of political alliances with the First Nations in order to strengthen British interests north of the Great Lakes after the American War of Independence.[67] Long's role in the War of Independence, leading an irregular British-Native American troop, would scandalise the author of the preface to the Chicago 1922 edition.[68] Whether Long had a formal education in England is unknown, but the impression gained from his account is that the most important part of his education (and certainly his language learning) took place in Canada, in the field, and was shaped by mercantile interests:

> On my arrival at Montreal, I was placed under the care of a very respectable merchant to learn the Indian trade, which is the chief support of the town. I soon acquired the names of every article of commerce in the Iroquois and French languages, and being at once prepossessed in favour of the savages, improved daily in their tongue, to the satisfaction of my employer, who approving my assiduity, and wishing me to be completely qualified in the Mohawk language to enable me to traffic with the Indians in his absence, sent me to a village called Cahnuaga, or Cocknawaga, situated about nine miles from Montreal … where I lived with a chief whose name was Assenegetbter, until I was sufficiently instructed in the language, and then returned to my master's store, to improve myself in French, which is not only universally spoken in Canada, but is absolutely necessary in the commercial intercourse with the natives, and without which it would be

[65] J[ohn] Long, *Voyages and Travels of an Indian Interpreter and Trader* (London, 1791). On Carver's fortune possibly favouring the publication: *John Long's Voyages and Travels in the Years 1768–1788*, ed. Milo Milton Quaife (Chicago, 1922), pp. xviii–xix.

[66] Subsequent editions are: *Early Western Travels, 1748–1846*, II: *John Long's Journal*, ed. Reuben Gold Thwaites (Cleveland, OH, 1904); *John Long's Voyages*, ed. Quaife; German and French translations were published in 1791 and 1792 respectively; on Long's biography: Michael Blanar, 'Long's *Voyages and Travels*: fact and fiction', in Jennifer S. H. Brown, W. J. Eccles and Donald P. Heldman (eds), *The Fur Trade Revisited: Selected Papers of the Sixth North American Fur Trade Conference* (Mackinac Island, 1994), pp. 447–63.

[67] Long, *Voyages*, pp. 9–10.

[68] *John Long's Voyages*, pp. xii–xiii.

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> impossible to enjoy the society of the most respectable families, who are in general ignorant of the English language.[69]

This passage reveals quite clearly not only the author's favourable attitude towards the Native Americans, as the vocabularies further attested, but also the presence of an embedded plurilingualism in eighteenth-century Montreal, where a command of French was essential, both to do any trade at all and to be a part of polite society. While the vocabularies in Long's *Voyages* were still appendices tacked on to the narrative, there is a noticeable shift in their emphasis compared to the vocabularies described thus far. The presence of the vocabularies takes centre stage in the title page, as well as in how the book was organised, occupying as they did around a third of the total pages and having a complex inner organisation of their own. They were meant not only to translate English terms into Esquimeaux (Inuit), for example, or into Iroquois (Mohawk), but also aimed to enable the reader to make comparisons between different native languages. They included synoptic tables placing side by side English, Iroquois, Algonquin and Chippeway; English, Mohegan and Shawanee; English, Mohegan, Algonquin and Chippeway. Long's linguistic evidence integrated credited secondary sources (Lahontan, Carver, Jonathan Edwards), uncredited ones (Pehr Kalm) and original materials.[70] Kalm's *Travels into North America* were referenced as source of an anecdote proving 'that the Indians possess strong natural abilities, and are even capable of receiving improvement from the pursuits of learning'.[71] Other authors known and discussed by Long included at various points in the narrative are James Adair and Robert Rogers.[72]

Only for Chippeway (an Algonquin language also known as Ojibwa and used as a vehicular trade language in the area north of the Great Lakes) was the list translating *from* the English accompanied by a list translating *into* English.[73] Most of the space was devoted to vocabularies meant to be used by European speakers, while the compilation's fundamental connection to trade activities was made clear by the number of words related to the typical merchandise, and by a vocabulary particularly

[69] Long, *Voyages*, p. 4.

[70] Ibid., pp. viii, ix, 4, 10, 62, 83, 84, 130–1. For a detailed listing of Long's linguistic materials and their sources, see Peter Bakker, 'Is John Long's Chippeway (1791) an Ojibwe pidgin?', in William Cowan (ed.), *Actes du vingt-cinquième congrès del Algonquinistes* (Ottawa, 1995), pp. 13–31, esp. pp. 14–16; at p. 14 n. 2. Bakker differs from Gille, who defines Long 'the most cunning plagiarist of the *Petit Dictionnaire*', Johannes Gille, 'Zur Lexikologie des Alt-Algonkin', *Zeitschrift fur Ethnologie*, 71 (1940), pp. 71–86, at p. 75. Jonathan Edwards, *Observations on the Language of the Muhhekaneew Indians* (New Haven, 1788).

[71] Pehr Kalm, *Travels into North America* (3 vols; Warrington and London, 1770–1); Long, *Voyages*, pp. 28–9.

[72] Long, *Voyages*, pp. 29, 31, 71–2, 149, 155 for references to James Adair, and p. 155 for a mention of Robert Rogers.

[73] Campbell, *American Indian Languages*, pp. 29, 401 n. 135, 153. On Chippeway as a vehicular and inter-tribal language during the nineteenth century: Richard A. Rhodes, 'Algonquian trade languages revisited', in Karl S. Hele and J. Randolph Valentine (eds), *Papers of the 40th Algonquian Conference* (Albany, 2010), pp. 358–69. Bakker, 'Is John Long's Chippeway (1791) an Ojibwe pidgin?', p. 30.

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devoted to the names of furs and skins in English and French. Some entries inadvertently documented pidgins and borrowings, such as *tomahawk*, clearly a borrowing from an Algonquin language, which was given as the English translation for the Algonquin *Agackwetons* and the Chippeway *Warcockquoite*.[74] Long's interest was almost exclusively directed at words in common use, and so abstract notions were excluded. Thus, the temporal expressions he recorded related to the ordinary and the everyday (such as 'again, or yet', 'always, wherever', 'day, or days'), while the presence of a word such as 'késhpin', 'if', did not necessarily imply the hypothetical construction of probable or unreal scenarios.[75] Its use might well be limited to expressions of uncertainty or desire, as in the only occurrence reported by Long in a speech.[76]

The contexts, aims, scope and manners of communication were perfectly exemplified by the section 'Familiar phrases in the English and Chippeway languages', which illustrated what ethnolinguists today would call 'speech acts'.[77] These phrases read in many instances like the simulation of a typical communicative exchange, with an opening exchange marked by a tone of friendly familiarity:

> How do you do, friend?
>
> In good health, I thank you.
>
> What news?
>
> I have none.

The two anonymous speakers exchange news and insights regarding the territory, the hunting and fishing seasons, and their respective families and personal experiences, before going on to discuss business. They call each other 'friend'. The end of the phrasebook contains a series of expressions for paying personal respects. The content and general tone of the exchange suggest that perhaps Long's adoption by the Ojibwa chief Madjeckewiss around the end of the 1790s was more than just a ruse to gain confidence and favourable trading conditions, as the practice was often exploited by European traders eager to become part of Indigenous American kinship systems.[78] For Long, it might have marked a significant

[74] Campbell, *American Indian Languages*, p. 11.
[75] Long, *Voyages*, pp. 196–208: 'A table of words shewing, in a variety of instances, the difference as well as analogy between the Algonkin and Chippeway languages, with the English explanation'; ibid., pp. 227–52: 'Table of words: English: Chippeway'; ibid., pp. 253–82: 'Table of words: Chippeway: English'.
[76] Long, *Voyages*, pp. 134, 234. For usage in hypothetical scenarios: John Horden, *A Grammar of the Cree language* (London, 1913), p. 33; John Summerfield, alias Sahgahjewagahbahweh, *Sketch of Grammar of the Chippeway Languages* (Cazenovia, 1834), pp. 11–13, 16–17.
[77] Long, *Voyages*, pp. 283–95, also quoted below in the text.
[78] Theda Perdue and Michael D. Green, *North American Indians: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2010), pp. 99–109, 162.

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stage in a process regarding how the trader perceived and represented himself.[79]

I love you.

Your health, friend.

I do not understand you.[80]

Revealingly, the final expression on this list is a statement of incomprehension, an idea missing from Long's previous lists, perhaps indicating an awareness of the length still to be travelled along the path of intercultural comprehension.

V

The end point of this survey is one of the most significant collections of Indigenous American languages made at the end of the long eighteenth century. It was also the prelude to a whole series of systematic studies, grammars, and dictionaries that would go hand in hand with the establishment of linguistics and lexicography as autonomous academic-scientific disciplines in the nineteenth century. This end point was the collection of vocabularies prepared as part of the expedition west of the Mississippi led by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark between 1804 and 1806. Promoted by Thomas Jefferson immediately after the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, the symbolic significance of the Lewis and Clark expedition in North American history can hardly be overestimated.[81] Paradoxically, the historical noteworthiness of Lewis and Clark's vocabularies is undiminished by the fact that they were lost before being published with the account. However, what can be gleaned from related sources place these vocabularies at the very crossroads of ethnographic curiosity, geographical and scientific exploration, colonial and commercial projects, and the temporal hierarchisation of the Indigenous American other. The vocabularies were not included in the first edition of the account.[82] An edition was planned under the supervision of Benjamin Smith Barton, naturalist and vice-president of

[79] The linguistic analysis of the vocabularies and of the Chippeway texts scattered through the narrative leads Bakker to believe that 'it is likely that the vocabularies, the dialogues and the speeches were all put together independently by the same person, most probably Long … not the publisher or an editor', Bakker, 'Is John Long's Chippeway (1791) an Ojibwe pidgin?', p. 30.

[80] Long, *Voyages*, p. 294.

[81] Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, *Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1804–1806* (7 vols; New York, 1904). In this edition see Reuben Gold Thwaites, 'Introduction', I, pp. xvii–lviii, and Victor Hugo Paltsits, 'Bibliographical Data', I, pp. lxi–lxxxiv. On Jefferson's role: 'Appendix' in Lewis and Clark, *Original Journals*, VII, pp. 193–287, especially 'Jefferson's instructions to Lewis', 20 June 1803, pp. 347–52; and 'Ethnological information desired', n.p., n.d., pp. 283–7; see also Thwaites, 'Introduction', pp. xxxiii–xxxiv.

[82] *History of the Exploration under the Command of Captains Lewis and Clark, to the Sources of the Missouri* (Philadelphia, 1814). Paul Russell Cutright, *A History of the Lewis and Clark Journals* (Norman, OK, 1976); Paltsits, 'Bibliographical Data', pp. lxvi–xciii; Gary E. Moulton, 'Provenance and description of the journals', in *The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, ed. Moulton

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the American Philosophical Society. After Barton's premature death, Jefferson tried to gather together all the manuscript materials, but by then the vocabularies had been lost.[83]

Having passed through Nicholas Biddle's and/or Barton's hands, then, or perhaps having remained in Clark's possession, the twenty-three vocabularies collected during the expedition were never to arrive at the archives of the American Philosophical Society.[84] What has survived is the empty form with lists of words in English which Jefferson designed to be filled in with the various native languages, the tantalising ghost of those 'blank vocabularies' (Figure 4) mentioned in the 'Documents relating to the equipment of the expedition'.[85] The journals, correspondence, and prospectus for the edition prepared by Lewis all mention their being compiled in various locations during the journey.[86] Jefferson had planned to publish the Lewis and Clark vocabularies along with others he had compiled.[87] But his collection too was lost in 1809, on his trip back to Monticello after the end of his presidency.[88]

The Lewis and Clark vocabularies were part of a broader project of systematic documentation which Jefferson had been promoting since the 1780s.[89] Within this framework, he also gradually perfected the above-mentioned blank form comprising around 280 commonly used English words, with empty spaces alongside for their translation, which was used by numerous collaborators of the American Philosophical Society.[90] On the one hand, linguistic knowledge was essential for the republican government's penetration into those territories, which had seemingly become ripe for colonisation in the wake of the Louisiana Purchase. But this extensive knowledge was also meant to facilitate studies of the Indigenous American historical past and of the genealogical relationships between languages (and nations) to 'search for affinities between these

(13 vols; Lincoln, 1983–2001), II, Appendix B, digital edn: *Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition*, <https://www.lewisandclarkjournals.unl.edu/>, section *Journals*.

[83] Letter from Nicholas Biddle to William Tilghman, 6 April 1818, in Lewis and Clark, *Original Journals*, VII, pp. 408–10, quote on p. 409; see also Jefferson to Abbé Correa da Serra, 26 April 1816, pp. 394–6, at p. 395; Jefferson to John Vaughan, 28 June 1817, pp. 400–1; Jefferson to Peter S. Duponceau, 7 November 1817, pp. 402–4, at p. 402.

[84] Cutright, *A History*, p. 88 n. 33; Megan Snyder-Camp, '"No general use can ever be made of the wrecks of my loss": a reconsidered history of the Indian vocabularies collected on the Lewis and Clark expedition', *Wicazo Sa Review*, 30/2 (2015), pp. 129–39.

[85] Lewis and Clark, *Original Journals*, VII, p. 232.

[86] Ibid., I, pp. 132, 277; IV, pp. 12, 273, 275, 363; VII, pp. 212, 337, 365 (here for the prospectus), 394–5, 397 (here Clark to Jefferson).

[87] Jefferson to Abbé Correa da Serra, 26 April 1816, in Lewis and Clark, *Original Journals*, VII, pp. 394–6, quote on pp. 394–5.

[88] Jefferson to Peter S. Duponceau, 7 Nov. 1817, in Lewis and Clark, *Original Journals*, VII, pp. 402–4, quote on p. 403; see also Rivett, *Unscripted America*, p. 209.

[89] Rivett, *Unscripted America*, pp. 209–37.

[90] American Philosophical Society Historical and Literary Committee, American Indian Vocabulary Collection, a description can be found on the Society's website: <https://www.search.amphilsoc.org/collections/search>.

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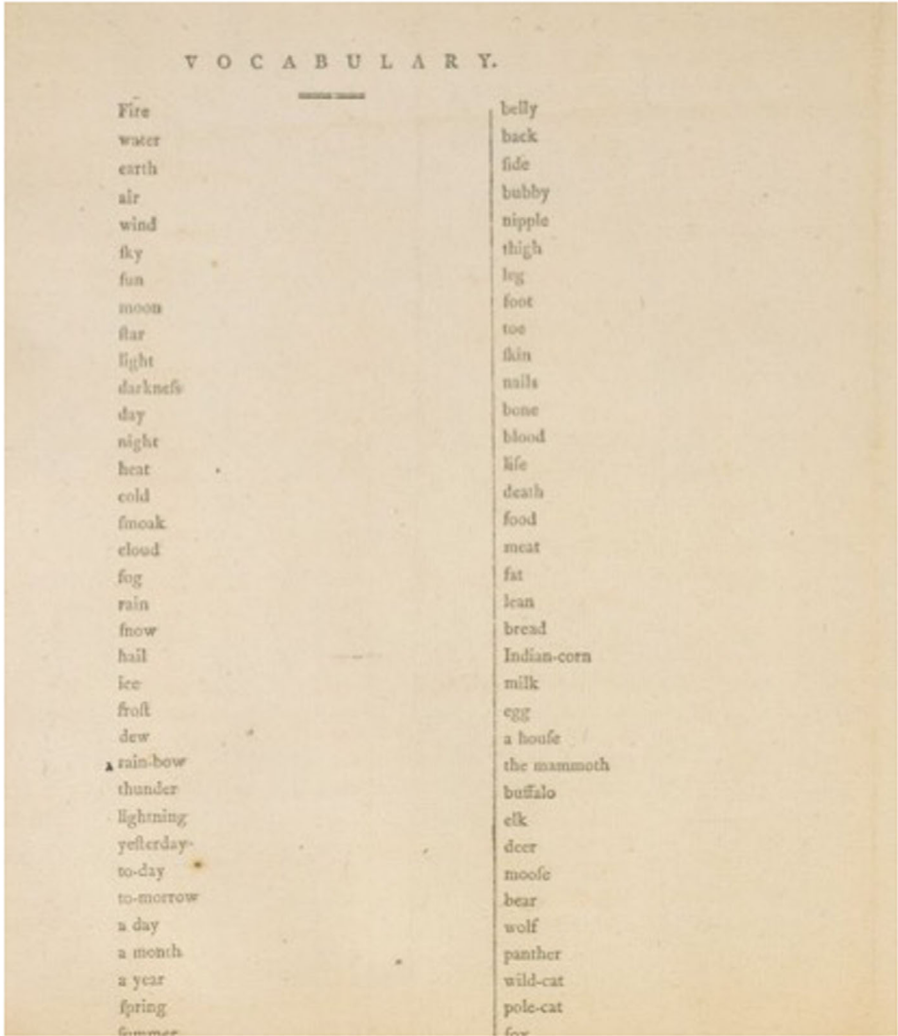

VOCABULARY.

Fire
water
earth
air
wind
ſky
ſun
moon
ſtar
light
darkneſs
day
night
heat
cold
ſmoak
cloud
fog
rain
ſnow
hail
ice
froſt
dew
rain-bow
thunder
lightning
yeſterday
to-day
to-morrow
a day
a month
a year
ſpring

belly
back
ſide
bubby
nipple
thigh
leg
foot
toe
ſkin
nails
bone
blood
life
death
food
meat
fat
lean
bread
Indian-corn
milk
egg
a houſe
the mammoth
buffalo
elk
deer
mooſe
bear
wolf
panther
wild-cat
pole-cat

Figure 4 Jefferson, blank version of printed vocabulary form, broadside, detail. Copy at American Philosophical Society Historical and Literary Committee, American Indian Vocabulary Collection, Mss.497.V85, digital object: https://www.diglib.amphilsoc.org/islandora/object/islandora%3A7067%23page/1/mode/1up. [Colour figure can be viewed at wileyonlinelibrary.com]

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and the languages of Europe and Asia'.[91] As Jefferson argued, 'I have long believed we can never get any information of the ancient history of the Indians, of their descent and filiation, but from a knowledge and comparative view of their languages'.[92] At the same time, the urgency of documenting these languages comes from the realisation of their speakers' possible – indeed probable – extinction, given the processes set in motion by European expansion:

> It is to be lamented then, very much to be lamented, that we have suffered so many of the Indian tribes already to extinguish …, it would furnish opportunities to those skilled in the languages of the old world to compare them with these, *now, or at a future time*, and hence to construct the best evidence of the derivation of this part of the human race.[93]

In point of fact, concluded Jefferson, an archive of Indigenous American languages would make future research possible.[94] What emerges from Jefferson's project was thus a dual historical location of Native American languages: glotto-genealogical – designed to trace the origin of the first American societies through their languages – and programmatical – to be used at some point in the future for documentation and research. The role of linguistic compilers assigned to Lewis and Clark was thus the embodiment of that close connection between linguistics as natural history and new ideas of imperial expansion. The relatively independent status as texts of the expedition vocabularies, and the plan to publish them separately, was indicative of a trend towards lexicographical collections being increasingly detached from the immediate context in which they were drawn up – the journey and its account – at the same time they were also, incidentally, the cause of the vocabularies' loss.

VI

By paying close attention to the relationship between the vocabularies and the narrative accounts in travel journals, it is possible to trace the subtle changes gradually taking place in the relationship between the use of written sources and the value placed on direct observation. Writings such as Sagard and Carver's represented different stages in a process of complex negotiation between first-hand experience as a validating factor of knowledge and pre-existing cultural notions. Far from being a linear process, this negotiation produced different outcomes in each case, making it necessary for an in-depth analysis

[91] Jefferson to Abbé Correa da Serra, 26 April 1816, in Lewis and Clark, *Original Journals*, VII, pp. 394–396, quote on pp. 394–5.

[92] Jefferson to Colonel Hawkins, 14 March 1800, in *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson: Being his Autobiography, Correspondence, Reports, Messages, Addresses, and Other Writings, Official and Private*, ed. H. A. Washington (Cambridge, 2011), pp. 325–7, quote on p. 326.

[93] Thomas Jefferson, *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1783) (Chapel Hill and London, 1982), p. 101, emphasis added.

[94] Gordon M. Sayre, 'Jefferson and Native Americans: policy and archive', in Frank Shuffelton (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Thomas Jefferson* (Cambridge, 2009), pp. 61–72.

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of each source within its specific cultural and historical context. These early vocabularies are a fascinating example of the thematisation of issues connected to how orality is documented, and of the axiological and temporal hierarchisation of linguistic forms and media, as the Dixon/Beresford account makes particularly evident. Vocabularies also reflected the gradual definition of a system of scientific disciplines from which Indigenous American forms of knowledge were excluded. As made plain by Colden and Carver's reluctant use of French sources, this, in turn, helped to consolidate the idea of a distinct European – and, later, Euro-American – cultural identity and civilisation, notwithstanding the existence of competing imperial projects.

Words and expressions in translation represent a type of source material which needs to be approached with caution. While the way these lists were presented indicates a certain degree of objectivity in the way they were compiled, they are also evidence of the communicative common ground which the writer wished and/or was able to construct. They reveal the traveller's interests and they faithfully reflect the specific circumstances of the encounters which occurred. These encounters might or might not have fulfilled the writer's professed ambitions, as was particularly evident in the widely differing experiences of Long and Dixon. In other words, the range and content of each vocabulary reflected the specific nature of the setting in which the collection was made – whether it was a fleeting encounter, kept short by other commitments, or a prolonged sojourn, with the purpose of talking about the soul and winning the savages over to Christianity, or a meeting designed to create stable networks for trading and political alliances. Until the end of the eighteenth century, many of these encounters were the very first contacts between Euro-Americans and Native Americans. From Lawson's trip to North Carolina and the travels of Carver, to Cook and Portlock and Dixon's North Pacific coast expeditions and the exploration of the surrounding areas by Lewis and Clark, the compilers of these lists often had no European precedents to which to refer.

Through what appeared in them and, above all, through what did not appear, these vocabularies represent the linguistic companion piece to the conceptualisation of the Indigenous Americans as 'primitives'. As Lahontan and Lawson made quite clear with their remarks, the language of these 'savages', still to be civilised, was interpreted as a reflection of their extraneousness to the arts and sciences, of their inability to think in abstract terms, and of an ability to reason as yet uncultivated. From this perspective, during the eighteenth century, the vocabularies were simply the continuation of long-lasting, pre-existing stereotypes which led to the temporal collocation of the First Peoples of America in a stage of development located in the past with respect to the European one. Of course, these linguistic compilations were also the result of increasing curiosity about human diversity around the world and of fresh attempts to study and classify this diversity. Whether these efforts to take a systematic approach resulted in a destabilisation of the ethnocentric point of view

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of the Old World or in a hierarchy that reinforced European primacy are not mutually exclusive options: nor were they always clearly distinct – as Lahontan's 'good savage' and his romanticised descendants make clear.[95] In conclusion, while a close reading of the primary sources makes clear the importance of avoiding any over-simplified reading of these processes, it also makes it possible to identify recurrent conceptual tropes and assign a central role to the historicisation of the Native American within the wider process of cultural construction of a global Europeanness.[96]

PEER REVIEW

The peer review history for this article is available at https://publons.com/publon/10.1111/1468-229X.13138

[95] Tim Fulford, *Romantic Indians: Native Americans, British Literature, and Transatlantic Culture 1756–1830* (Oxford, 2006).

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