



**University
of Victoria**

Graduate Studies

PROGRAMME

The Final Oral Examination
for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
Indigenous Governance

Adam Gaudry

2009 Queen's University MA
2007 Queen's University BA (Honours)

*"Kaa-tipeyimishoyaahk, 'we are those who own ourselves':
A Political History of Métis Self-Determination in the North- West,
1830-1870."*

January 15th, 2014
10:00 am
HSD A373

Supervisory Committee:

Dr. Jeff Corntassel, Indigenous Governance, UVic (Supervisor)
Dr. Taiaiake Alfred, Indigenous Governance, UVic
Dr. Christine O'Bonsawin, Department of History, UVic

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Dr. Brenda Macdougall, Chair of Métis Research, Department
of Geography, University of Ottawa

Chair of Oral Examination:

Dr. Jeannine Carriere, School of Social Work, UVic

Community Member:

Ms. Victoria Pruden, Métis Nation of Greater Victoria

Abstract

This dissertation offers an analysis of the history of Métis political thought in the nineteenth century and its role in the anti-colonial resistances to Canada's and Hudson's Bay Company governance. Utilizing the buffalo hunt-derived Michif concepts of *kaa- tipeyimishoyaahk* (independence and self-ownership) and *wahkohtowin* (the responsibilities of family), this work argues that the Métis people had established themselves as an independent Indigenous people in the nineteenth century North West. By use of a common language of prairie diplomacy, Métis had situated themselves as a close "relation" of the Hudson's Bay Company, but still politically independent of it. Nineteenth century Métis had repeatedly demonstrated their independence from British institutions of justice and politics, and were equally insistent that Canadian institutions had no authority over them. When they did choose to form a diplomatic relationship with Canada, it was decidedly on Métis terms. In 1869-1870, after repelling a Canadian official who was intended to establish Canadian authority over the North-West, the Métis formed a provisional government with their Halfbreed cousins to enter into negotiations with Canada to establish a confederal treaty relationship. The Provisional Government of Assiniboia then sent delegates to Ottawa to negotiate "the Manitoba Treaty," a bilateral constitutional document that created a new province of Manitoba, that would contain a Métis majority, as well as very specific territorial, political, social, cultural, and economic protections that would safeguard the Métis future of Manitoba. This agreement was embodied only partially in the oft-cited Manitoba Act, as several key elements of the agreement were oral negotiations that were later to be institutionalized by the Canadian cabinet, although were only ever partially implemented. These protections included of restrictions on the sale of the 1.4 million acre Métis/Halfbreed land reserve, a commitment to establish a Métis controlled upper-house in the new Manitoba legislature, a temporary limitation of the franchise to current residents of the North West, and restrictions on Canadian immigration to the new province until Métis lands were properly distributed. While these key components of the Manitoba Treaty were not included in the Manitoba Act, they remain a binding part of the agreement, and thus, an unfulfilled obligation borne by the contemporary government of Canada. Without adhering to Canada's treaty with the Métis people, its presence on Métis lands, and jurisdiction over Métis people is highly suspect. Only by returning to the original agreement embodied by the Manitoba Act can Canada claim any legitimacy on Métis territories or any functional political relationship with the Métis people.

Awards, Scholarships, Fellowships

Henry Roe Cloud Dissertation Writing Fellowship, Yale University, 2012-2013

□ Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarship, Social Science and Humanities Research Council, 2009-2012

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□ Graduate Dean's Scholarship for Aboriginal Students, Queen's University, 2007-2008

Presentations

1. "'Peace and friendship, which has so long knit our hearts together': Wahkohtowin, Family-making and the Métis Diplomatic Tradition" at the *Native American and Indigenous Studies Association*, 13-15 June 2013, University of Saskatchewan.
2. "'That Government to Which We Had Subjected Ourselves Through Necessity': Reimagining Métis Governance in Red River during the Hudson's Bay Company Era," at the *Competing Visions: Changing Landscapes in the Past, Present, and Future Conference*, 9 March 2013 University of Massachusetts, Amherst.
3. "The Manitoba Treaty: Envisioning, Negotiating, and Violating an International Treaty between the Peoples of Red River and the People of Canada." *Yale Group for the Study of Native America*, 4 December 2012, Yale University.
4. "The Indigenization of Canada: Louis Riel, the Métis, and the Inversion of Colonialism," at the *Native American and Indigenous Studies Association Fourth Annual Conference 2012*, 3-6 June 2012, Mohegan Sun Conference Center, Uncasville Connecticut.
5. "How and When Did Louis Riel become a Canadian: Métis Canadianization and Canadian Métis-ization," at the *in/coherence: expression, translation, violence conference*, 21-22 April 2012, University of Victoria.
6. "Thinking {the Colonial} Politically," at *Thinking Politically: A Cultural, Social and Political Thought Symposium*, 15-17 April 2011, University of Victoria.
7. "Being Indigenous on Campus: Organizing Against and Resisting Racism at Two Universities," at *Critical Conversations: The Art and Science of Diversity*, 9-11 February 2011, University of Victoria.
8. "Métis Family Governance as a Strategy of Resistance," at the *Native American and Indigenous Studies Association Annual Conference 2010*. 20-22 May 2010, University of Arizona.
9. "Creating Métis Cultural Spaces: Tactics of Resistance on the Red River," at the *Native American and Indigenous Studies Association Annual Conference*. 21-23 May 2009, University of Minnesota.

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