

Beyond Academia: Indigenous media as an intercultural resource to unlearn nation-state history

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Abstract

This article proposes that settler communities cannot teach or understand our shared intercultural history without listening to ideas presented by Indigenous communities about their own history in lands currently occupied by modern nation-states. This history enables us to understand the power of the ethnographic gaze and its relation to The Doctrine of Discovery (1493), which extinguished Indigenous rights to lands and resources, rights later transferred to the modern nation-states through the legal notion of “*eminent domain*”. These rights include the ownership of intangibles such as the image and storytelling through photography and film. Maori scholars Linda Tuhiwai Smith, Barry Barclay and Merata Mita are cited on knowledge production, copyright and image sovereignty to decolonise our understanding of the right to self-representation. The study includes a brief analysis of films that help decolonise an ethnographic gaze at these relationships, particularly the Brazilian documentary “*O Mestre e o Divino*” by Tiago Campos Torre (2013).

Keywords: Indigenous peoples. Nation-state history. Film. Self-determination.

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Além da academia: mídia indígena como um recurso intercultural para desaprender a história do estado nacional

Resumo

Este artigo propõe que as comunidades de descendentes Europeias não podem compreender ou ensinar nossa história cultural compartilhada, sem analisar as ideias apresentadas pelas comunidades indígenas sobre a sua própria história nestas terras ocupadas pelo moderno Estado-nação. Esta história nos permite compreender o poder do olhar etnográfico e sua relação com A Doutrina da *Discovery* (1493) que anula o direito dos povos indígenas às suas terras e recursos, direitos posteriormente transferidos aos estados modernos através do conceito legal de “domínio público». Esta definido neste processo o direito de ser proprietário da imagem, da fotografia e narrativa cinematográfica como formas de propriedade intangível. Descolonizar a ideia do direito à auto-representação, compreende algumas ideias sobre direitos de autor e da soberania da imagem de intelectuais Maori como Linda Smith Tuhiwai, sobre a produção de conhecimento, e Barry Barclay e Merata Mita, sobre o direitos de autor e a soberania da imagem. Ele também inclui uma análise de alguns filmes que conseguem descolonizar o ponto de vista etnográfico dessas relações, incluindo o filme brasileiro “*O Mestre e o Divino*”, de Tiago Campos Torre (2013).

Palavras-chave: Povos indígenas. História do Estado-nação. Filme. Auto-determinação.

Más allá de la academia: medios indígenas como recursos interculturales para desaprender la historia del estado nacional

Resumen

Este artículo propone que las comunidades europeo-descendientes no pueden entender ni enseñar nuestra historia intercultural compartida sin analizar las ideas presentadas por las comunidades indígenas sobre su propia historia en estas tierras ocupadas por el estado-nación moderno. Esta historia nos permite entender el poder de la mirada etnográfica y su relación con La Doctrina del *Descubrimiento* (1493), la cual anuló el derecho de los pueblos indígenas a sus tierras y recursos, derechos posteriormente transferidos a los estados modernos por medio del concepto legal de “dominio público”. Se incluye en este proceso el derecho de ser propietario de la imagen, la fotografía, y la narrativa cinematográfica como formas de propiedad intangible. Para descolonizar la idea del derecho a la auto-representación, se citan algunas ideas de intelectuales maori, como Linda Tuhiwai Smith sobre la producción de conocimientos, y de Barry Barclay y Merata Mita sobre el derecho de autor y la soberanía de la imagen. Se incluye también un análisis de algunas películas que logran descolonizar la mirada etnográfica de estas relaciones, inclusive el documental brasileño “*O Mestre e o Divino*” de Tiago Campos Torre (2013).

Palabras clave: Pueblos indígenas. Historia del estado nación. Cine. Autodeterminación

Introduction

Recent events in Europe (Brexit) and the United States (Trump) suggest that a small and well-funded conglomerate in the English-speaking world has shifted national discourse to the right and extreme right, normalising the dominance of self-declared patriotic groups promoting nation-state orthodoxy against internal and external “others” who are blamed for the economic recession. Right-leaning governments have also taken power in Argentina and Brazil, reversing more than a decade of redistributive policies promoted in a regional context of relative stability and economic growth led by left-leaning governments, the only region in the world to have enjoyed economic growth while reducing economic disparities during this time (CORNEA, 2014, p. 32-33). Interstate integration promoted by Venezuela with others under the ALBA (Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América), which led to enhanced educational collaboration among Latin American countries, the creation of the regional television channel Telesur, and Unasur’s Bank of the South, among other initiatives, has also slowed, as President Maduro faces intense economic and political pressure by the right-wing opposition, who have vowed to oust him before his term ends in 2018.

These changes suggest a return to a radically conservative control over the nation-state, where those in power define national citizenship by excluding targeted groups of people (who together form the majority, since women are one of the most targeted) from participating in decision-making or gaining access to resources mediated by the state. When teaching students about these global trends, we must remind them that the nation-state is not ancient or sacred or eternal, but is instead a creation of the 19th century by specific groups of people who defined citizens’ rights in particular ways, which change throughout history. In analysing how film contributes to our understanding of these shared historical trends, I will focus on ways all of us must unlearn some aspects of orthodox nation-state histories to learn a more accurate shared intercultural history that enables those who identify with the dominant culture to understand perspecti-

ves from marginalised (often majority) positions, and I will highlight the role of film in this process.

These ideas cross national borders because they form part of the history of imperialism, colonialism and nationalism across the world. I will focus on ways Indigenous peoples teach rest of us about the unique history of European Christian property rights under imperialism and colonialism, relationships which deny non-Europeans access to their own resources, otherwise known as capitalism. Most surprising is that these rights extend to the image and to representation itself, as they continue to define who is allowed to hold the camera and who controls images of others; in short, who tells a story through photography and film. There are several levels at which stark asymmetries of power and privilege limit the ability of marginalised groups (often the majority of people) to participate in telling their own stories: from access to communication technologies to participation in research that benefits one’s own communities; and from participation in the production of news to the concentration of ownership of media conglomerates. Unlearning nation-state orthodoxy is beneficial when we share this unlearning process across languages and cultures, in this case, knowledge production from Aotearoa New Zealand and Abya Yala the Americas, for readers in Brazil and other locations.

Nation-State Theory

Three decades ago, Benedict Anderson gave theorists a straightforward description of the guiding fictions promoted by print capitalism in the early 19th century, as newly independent nation-states identified their uniqueness vis-à-vis Europe. His 1983 *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* explained how the creole elite in the American nation-states drew on new *national* ideas of time and space in newspapers and novels to consolidate a sense of nationhood, at least among the creole or settler communities (p. 6-7). Details on his major ideas have been challenged by specialists in different disciplines, and an entire volume was dedicated to both dismantling the importance of print capitalism in Latin America and describing other

social formations relating the nation to the state and to *la ciudad letrada* as they brokered power with various national bourgeoisies (Chasteen). Yet the basic thesis stands: the 19th century creation of national identity defined citizens' rights before the state and focused attention on social, political and economic affairs within the boundaries of the state to attenuate the strong pull of colonial thinking. This process created citizens (from *believers*) to look to the capital of the country (rather than *high imperial centres*) for guidance, to find their identity through print media (rather than *rituals*) that encouraged a sense of belonging to the daily life of the nation-state (rather than to the *eternal religious community of Christianity centred in Rome*).

The nation, according to Anderson, was essentially a fiction because it presented the image of an *imagined* community that was nothing of the sort; it was conceived as *limited* by the new national borders rather than having a diffuse frontier around a high imperial centre; the nation was *sovereign* because it responded to the needs of its own citizens rather than to those of Europe; and it was promoted as a *horizontal comradeship* when in fact it continued to function under conditions of exploitation, just as colonialism had done (p. 6-7 and see Hague for an excellent summary of Anderson's ideas and later revisions).

Anderson rightly believed that the anti-imperialist and anti-capitalist thrust of Marxism had not seriously challenged much orthodox thinking on the nation-state, and his study attempted to identify the ways Marxists had overlooked the strength of nationalism because it was caught within nation-state orthodoxy itself. This debate has taken place in Latin America at least since the Peruvian intellectual José Carlos Mariátegui proposed a properly Latin American approach to socialism in a paper for the one and only continental congress of Latin American Communist parties organised by the Comintern in Buenos Aires in 1929. Just a few months before Mariátegui died, the congress coincided with the continental crackdown on communism that sent these parties underground for the next three decades. Writing from Peru, estimated at 80% Indigenous, Mariátegui ar-

gued that the issue of imperialism and social class could not be dissociated from "race" in Latin America because Indigenous peoples had already lived in far more socialist ways than the unions, rural peasants or other forms imagined by Marxist theorists. Mariátegui proposed that the avant-garde would work with Indigenous peoples to form strategies to overthrow the bourgeoisie (SELFA, 2015). He was one of the few intellectuals to acknowledge the contemporary value of prior social relations of Indigenous peoples for understanding socialism.

When combined with Angel Rama's thesis on the lettered city's use of literature to establish its hegemony over the national body, these Latin American approaches to the analysis of nation-state, among others, enable us to historicise its existence and systems of social control in specific contexts in order to identify ways in which they encourage us to overlook other important social relations.

In this chapter, I will posit that the most serious challenge to nation-state orthodoxy today comes not from Anderson, Rama, Mariátegui or the academic theorists after them who have analysed nation-state theory. In my experience, this challenge comes from outside academia altogether, through Indigenous histories and stories produced by Indigenous communities and with others sharing the power involved in storytelling in an equitable way. This process opens a pathway to a more participatory society and social-democratic future where the nation-state no longer divides peoples with border disciplines and excludes citizens internally while privileging an internal elite connected to centres of capitalist accumulation, but instead enables us to begin to rewrite our shared intercultural history together. This process tends to take place outside of the academic community because there is not yet a critical mass of Indigenous intellectuals with close connections to their communities able to challenge nation-state orthodoxy in ways that are heard and acknowledged within the academic community. But those of us interested in the relations between film and education share these experiences.

Furthermore, as neoliberalism strengthens its control over the production of knowledge in universities, (in a

framework of knowledge hierarchies often privileging knowledge published in English in private journals with copyright protection), universities become further distanced from the issues that communities face in their own nation-states, especially Indigenous communities. Alliances between university and non-university collectives can offset this distance.

Property Relations in the Doctrine of Discovery and their Relation to Representation

One of the most highly publicised conflicts faced by Indigenous peoples today centres on the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL), which has drawn Indigenous groups from across the US, Canada, Latin America, Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand among other locations to North Dakota to support the Sioux people of the land who are protecting their territory at Standing Rock from the Energy Transfer Partners oil company claiming the right of “*eminent domain*” to build this pipeline. Citizens in the US are learning, some for the first time, that Indigenous Peoples continue to live as a community and claim rights in the nation-state that occupies their territory. They should also be learning that there were nations who named and belonged to that land before the recent arrival of European immigrants, and these First Nations have rights prior to those established by the nation-state, rights which are now recognised in International Law. Of all Indigenous groups across the world, those in the US often face the most difficult challenges because the major media and popular culture so routinely make their histories and claims invisible to the larger society. Indigenous peoples are almost never cited as authorities on their own culture and history, and while popular culture trivialises their cultural heritage through Halloween and Thanksgiving, sports mascots appropriate visual and verbal references to Indigenous peoples, from the most traumatic moments of their history, as in the Washington DC sport icon, the “Redskins”, a term so grotesque that it has led to a twenty-year protest and the cancellation of copyright (DIAMOND, 2016). Often, these are the few references US citizens have to understanding the Indigenous peoples who gave names to their own lands, and such appropriations deny the Indigenous control over their own self-representation.

When we study statistics on Indigenous movements in other parts of the world, the facts are arguably even more sobering. For example, the United Nations Rapporteur for Indigenous Peoples, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, released a report in October, 2016 that verified that 40% of the 137 environmental and human rights activists murdered this year across the world were from Indigenous communities, and that this statistic had remained constant over the last several years. Peru, Brazil and Honduras were specifically cited as locations where the extractive industries had placed Indigenous communities in the most vulnerable positions because national and local governments were not defending their human rights and often sided with those committing violations.

The fact that these vulnerable peoples are powerfully defending the environment for all is a reality that should be acknowledged by citizens and governments alike, but these statistics are often buried in UN archives. In the DAPL case, it was the peaceful acknowledgement of and respect for sacred land that galvanised the movement beyond discussion about rights, an Indigenous approach to social relations that is usually not communicated through the major media. In the Americas more generally, the most important Indigenous led movement of the last two decades, the presidency of Evo Morales, is the most overlooked story in the world, because economic growth has taken place by reducing economic disparities, guided by the new constitutionally protected Andean concept of *Suma Qamaña* or living well, which directly challenges capitalist relations. All indicators of social wellbeing have improved during this time.

As part of the protest in North Dakota, Indigenous and other allied groups have burned copies of the Doctrine of Discovery to symbolically identify the origin of the legal concept of “*eminent domain*” that allows for the state to extinguish Indigenous rights to their lands and resources with the claim that the government is doing so in the public interest. The Doctrine of Discovery refers to a series of fifteenth and sixteenth-century Papal Bulls, primarily the 1493 Bull *Inter Caetera*, issued by Pope Alexander VI that granted to specifically named European Christians such as Christopher Columbus the right to conquer lands

“discovered” by those holding the document in the name of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain. (See United Nations, 2010 for a brief summary of the history of Indigenous attempts to rescind the Doctrine).

In fact, International Law was created in Valladolid and Salamanca, Spain, as part of the process of imperialist expansion through colonisation in the 15th and 16th centuries to divide the world among European Christian monarchs, who claimed the divine right to settle lands that belonged to others as part of their responsibility to evangelise. This legal precedent continued throughout the following four centuries, including after Independence was achieved in the Americas throughout the 19th century, when rights of ownership were transferred to the nation-state as a form of “dominion”. In the US case, the 1823 legal case referred to as *Johnson v. McIntosh* extinguished Native American rights to their land, based on the Doctrine of Discovery, and as recently as 2005, the Doctrine of Discovery was once again cited in the US Supreme Court decision *City of Sherrill v. Oneida Nation of Indians* to limit the Oneida Nation’s sovereignty.

When the United Nations was created, the definition of a nation-state excluded Indigenous nations, and for this reason, Indigenous groups across the world formed alliances to press for a change in International Law that would acknowledge their collective rights. In 2007, the United Nations formally approved the *Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which established a number of collective rights and placed obligations on national governments to find legal ways of addressing historical grievances relating to the loss of land and resources. There were only four countries that voted against the Declaration, the US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, all former British colonies holding rights of eminent domain over Indigenous territories with forms of reservations that they claimed address historical grievances. All four have subsequently approved the Declaration, although it is not binding.

The fundamental legal premise securing nation-states their right to extinguish Indigenous rights, then, is in the Doctrine of Discovery, and Indigenous groups across the

world have petitioned Pope Francis to rescind the Doctrine, to send a strong message to national governments that the fundamental basis of their allocation of rights should be challenged. The latest development is the decision by the UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD) Committee to call on the Pope to rescind the Doctrine (Apache-Ndé-Nneé Working Group, 2015).

Although visible resources such as land, waters, minerals, oil and timber are the most obvious material assets sought and claimed by states and transnational corporations, in fact the Doctrine of Discovery defines both possession itself and the nature of the possessor because Indigenous peoples were defined through this process as being incapable of ownership: they were allowed to occupy land but not own it. Since at least 1999, when Maori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith identified the reasons that Western history had locked Indigenous peoples out of history as it was defined by Europeans, Indigenous thinkers have explained the unique nature of Western thought, not as universal and totalising but as provincial and beneficial largely for Europeans. Smith explains how writing, research and the production of knowledge as understood today in modern universities took place in the age of European Imperialism and reflects the worldview of Europeans, which imposed their own unique view of history upon the rest of the world as if it were universal, coherent, apolitical, and totalising (see Smith, Chapter 1 in particular). She then described ways in which Indigenous peoples were reclaiming their rights through storytelling, renaming, celebrating survival and 22 other projects, many of which remain invisible to the dominant cultures (see Smith, Chapter 8).

For my purposes here, it is necessary to acknowledge the ways in which intangible goods such as the image were also allocated as property to European Christians as part of this history. When the nation-state began to consolidate its hold over the citizenry in the late 19th century, the introduction of photography and filmmaking coincided with the establishment of museums in a process that reified European domination over Indigenous peoples as the natural evolution of progress. For most nation-states

in the Americas, (many of which had, and some of which continue to have majority Indigenous populations), historical paintings and artefacts in museums continue to teach school children that Indigenous peoples were destined to disappear as part of an inevitable march of modernity, and these artefacts place the viewer on the side of the cowboys, gauchos and other soldiers as they defeat Indigenous warriors. (See Andermann for a summary of this history in Brazil and Argentina and Huinca Piutrin for an important moment in the European gaze at Mapuche people).

Ethnographic photography and film were framed as an attempt to rescue the remaining visible aspects of Indigenous culture for the good of science and, by extension, the good of humanity, even though the human beings filmed were finding it increasingly difficult to survive as a people. When we assume that European Christian descendants have a natural right to film others, we assume the ethnographic gaze established through European imperialism as it transitioned to the nation-state. By challenging a Euro-descendant person's right to hold the camera and film Indigenous peoples, we begin to unlearn this form of gaze. By challenging the Euro-descendant person's ability to tell the story of the other in ways that enable us to understand history, we begin to decolonise the concept of self-determination.

Unlearning History through Film

One of the films that most successfully challenges the Doctrine of Discovery is Icíar Bollaín's *También la lluvia* (2010) because it foregrounds the constructed nature of conquest film and the ethnographic gaze more generally, by following two major characters as they attempt to make a new conquest film that highlights the role of the Spanish Priest Bartolomé de las Casas, known as the Defender of the Indians, as he collects evidence for the historical debates that established International Law in Valladolid and Salamanca. By choosing Bolivia as their film location and Daniel, an Aymara leader of the Water Wars (2000), as the main historical character Hatuey for their new film, the director offers the viewer a clear allegorical identification between colonialism of the past and neo-

liberalism in the present. I have analysed secondary narrative threads throughout the film that allow the viewer to understand the processes by which Indigenous peoples historically and currently defend their sovereignty in both cases, and the protagonism of two Indigenous characters, Daniel and his daughter Belén, as actors and major characters with a personal and professional life beyond the main story line, is new, in my experience. The film website also serves as a pedagogical resource for visitors to connect current struggles of Indigenous peoples to the ideas presented in the film, and I argue that the director could not have made these aspects visible without having become educated through her work with current ideas of Indigenous resistance from the movements themselves, and it is no coincidence that this happened in Bolivia.

Elsewhere, I have identified this film as major critique of residual colonialism in the contemporary nation-state, and I follow this analysis by contrasting the critique of colonialism with the ways Mapuche writers, filmmakers, historians and journalists have critiqued the nation-states of Chile and Argentina by drawing on their own historical knowledge (LEHMAN, 2016).

A recent film that directly addresses a community's right to control their image and representation in Brazil is the 2013 documentary *O Mestre e o Divino*, by Tiago Campos Torre, produced by Video nas Aldeias. The opening sequence establishes a pact with the viewer by foregrounding the agreement made to film the documentary we are watching. In these early scenes, Xavante filmmaker Divino Tserewahu (filming since 1990), German missionary Adalbert Heide, and Brazilian documentary maker Tiago Campos Torre discuss the details of the agreement among the three to create the documentary. The focus will be on Adalbert Heide, who arrived in this mission in Sangradouro, Mato Grosso in 1957 as a Salesian missionary. Adalbert brought a camera with him and spent the next 60 years filming the Xavante people's daily life, and he edited these films into his own series of videos, some of which were broadcast on German television, in which he frames himself as a white tribal leader saving Indigenous souls and educating them into modernity through

his own form of political, economic and religious evangelism. There are several scenes in which we view his homemade videos, and he comments with great pride about his role in this history, as we hear Andean music that forms his soundtrack.

It is clear from the first scenes that Divino will have a major role in assisting Tiago Campos to film the major characters, himself included, and there are several scenes throughout the documentary in which Tiago and Divino discuss what they will film and what will be off limits. It is not clear that Tiago follows through on these agreements. At one point, Adalbert asks Tiago to include in Tiago's final cut a 10-minute segment of his own film, of which he is very proud. As viewers, we suspect after 2 minutes that Tiago decided not to honour his request (although he may have used other parts of the original sequence as fillers in other parts of the film), and the ethics of this decision then become a site for us to reflect on ways that the power over editing is made visible.

The context in which Tiago makes this decision is very important. Adalbert still retains total control over a vast archive of the original footage for his films, which he houses in the mission and in Europe and he refuses to share with Divino or any of the people he filmed and their descendants. Repeatedly, the viewer has access to candid conversations between Divino and Adalbert about gaining access to Adalbert's film archive, and we are faced with these starkly asymmetrical power relations as they are foregrounded in many of these conversations.

The documentary adopts a focus on the European subject, a questioning, exploratory and ethnographic gaze that is normally reserved for Indigenous peoples because we must ask ourselves how this form of thinking arose: who are these Europeans? What is the history of European property relations over the image that allows them to control the image of others with such openly unethical principles? When Adalbert explains his role in transforming the community to modernise and Christianise them, this is done both in the presence of Divino, who challenges many of Adalbert's assertions, and in scenes in which Tiago and Divino discuss how they will film sub-

sequent scenes and which questions they will pose to Adalbert. Here, the ethics underlying property relations as they relate to the image are repeatedly made visible.

Perhaps the most emotional moments are those in which the Xavante community observe rituals that they used to carry out. We view their excitement at seeing their ancestors and their sadness at the changes that have taken place since those years as they attempt to decipher the meaning behind their own rituals.

Adalbert frequently attempts to educate the viewer on what he perceives as the most appropriate behaviours and locations to film, assuring us of his long experience. His criteria for filming restrict what should be in front of the camera as only those "beautiful" (Eurocentric-ethnographic) aspects of life. He also laments that fact that the Xavante no longer practice many of their traditional customs, and Divino expresses his exhaustion at trying to maintain cultural practices in a context that has made it nearly impossible for young people to understand or appreciate the cultural principles of their people.

The viewer is unable to escape the contradiction between Adalbert's pride in having imposed his cultural norms over the Xavante people and his sadness that the Xavante have abandoned their traditional cultural practices, which he so admired, misunderstood and sometimes adopted.

There are many ways in which the documentary avoids simplistic binaries, however, because Divino and Adalbert have spent a lifetime together, and while colonial relations structure and frame this personal and social history, the two individuals also express tremendous humour, respect and goodwill toward each other, despite the gross injustice that protects Adalbert's right to the archive and his protests that Divino now has more power than he does. As observers, we acknowledge that Adalbert no longer enjoys the authority over the mission that he once had, and he expresses his envy and resentment at this loss of political power. He is frequently framed as a person belonging to the past, and yet he still asserts his power not only by controlling the archive, but by prou-

dly proclaiming his role as the vehicle that forced a genocidal form of modernity into their cultural domain. It is never clear whether Divino will eventually gain control over these treasured images, but there is no doubt that the major characters in the film value the images for different reasons.

The Importance of Image Sovereignty

Maori scholars have made significant contributions to thinking about how and why control over self-representation is so critical to wellbeing. The first Maori filmmaker to direct a feature length film with a Maori story and actors, Barry Barclay, dedicated his life to thinking about how Indigenous film would most appropriately tell the stories of Indigenous people, in his case, stories of the Maori people. His last book, *Mana Tutura* (2005) is dedicated to an analysis of copyright, and his participation in creating a legal agreement to give authority to Maori communities to determine how their images would be accessed and used in future.

Barclay speaks from his experience as a filmmaker, who worked with Michael King, a highly esteemed non-Indigenous filmmaker respected by many Maori communities whom he filmed. In spite of their efforts, Barclay states that “when outsiders such as researchers, authors, photographers, filmmakers like myself and others collect material from elders and others within the Maori world, it is a form of theft, no matter how sensitively the terms about use and future access are drawn up” (BARCLAY, p. 97). By using terms such as “theft” directly, and highlighting a Maori filmmaker’s inadvertent theft of images, the reader understands the relation between the Doctrine of Discovery and current film conventions.

Unlike traditional film, which has the greatest material value upon release and loses its value as time progresses, for Indigenous peoples, it is precisely the opposite: modernity tends to strip Indigenous communities of their historical traditions and when they have access to images of the past, they are a treasure of immense emotional and spiritual value (p. 101) because of very specific reasons, known exclusively to these communi-

ties. Barclay cites another highly respected filmmaker, Merata Mita, about what images of her “departed old people” meant for her:

At home in Aotearoa, I greet the images of my ancestors verbally and speak to them as they come forth on screen. For I know that while they have passed on, their images still live and are very much alive to me. They reply in subtle and not so subtle ways; through the clothes they are wearing, the work they are doing, the ceremonies they are performing, the body language, facial expression, and elements of their style. They have much to relate to me, and I and my children have much to learn still from them. And in that journey, from darkness into light, another life lives, short resurrections are made, at often strange times and even stranger places... Foremost, and all pervasive throughout this connection, is the acknowledgement of our creator and our implacable link to the earth, its creatures, the elements and seasons, the stars, the planets and the entire universe because that is what I have been taught and that is what those images continue to teach (p. 103-104).

While in European cultures images are made of light and celluloid or digital technology and tell stories, for Indigenous peoples in particular, these images have a concrete and material impact on the lives of their communities as they move into the future and hand on knowledge for the next generations. These images are sacred, a concept modernity has also attempted to extinguish. Time itself has a much longer span for many Indigenous cultures and these affect ways of thinking of their and our relation to time, space and land. In this framework, European arrival was very recent, destruction is intrinsic to their way of being, and memory of genocide is so relevant because it is ongoing in so many ways.

Merata Mita explains why outsiders’ images are forms of theft that legitimate Indigenous peoples’ anger when she states:

You may well ask why is anger part of the range of emotions I feel. Anger is felt particularly in situations where the audience is made up of outsiders, those outside of family, tribe, culture

and ethnic culture. What is brought sharply into focus, is who the collectors are and for what purpose. Too often, the collection becomes a process of selecting and arranging my ancestors' images to validate what is occurring, what the latest train of modern thought is in various academic fields of anthropology, history, sociology and so on. To take it further, the collecting, selecting and arranging of preserved material assumes the cultural dominance that the archive in question (or the institution) represents. The institution and not the living member of the family or tribe makes the decision according to its own cultural values, what it thinks will be the most important and appropriate. This leads to what has unfortunately become a norm where indigenous culture is mythologized and becomes another vehicle of cultural oppression alienated from genuine indigenous experience (BARCLAY, p. 105).

As a researcher and teacher, we academics and our students cite texts by European and US intellectuals as authorities who write about Indigenous peoples, far more than writings and film produced by Indigenous peoples. The two films I have briefly mentioned above are both under the control of non-Indigenous direction, and were not the direct expression of Indigenous worldviews. Although they do indicate some ways in which national history can be unlearned by taking direction from the Indigenous subjects with whom the films were made, these films continue to use Indigenous images for the purposes of the directors, which may coincide with Indigenous self-determination, and in my view do so to a limited extent.

For those of us who wish to understand nation-state history, it is only by reading work written by Indigenous authors and viewing film produced and under the control of Indigenous filmmakers that we understand how non-Indigenous peoples, academics and the educational system are implicated in this history. There are many ways of participating with Indigenous peoples in their own self-determination that enable them to communicate effectively with others. Yet we will only understand our shared intercultural history when we listen to and cite the ideas of the Indigenous communities who first be-

longed to the lands where our non-Indigenous ancestors later settled, who have been filmed, whose images were stolen and are now archived, and who are struggling to survive as communities into the next decade and century by telling their stories to their children and to the rest of us. Their stories enable us to locate ourselves and our own history as settler communities in these lands.

As we move into the next phase of neoliberal capitalism, local cultures will increasingly face the same forces of dispossession that have been imposed on Indigenous peoples for centuries. The films described above could not have adopted the perspective given without mentoring by the Indigenous peoples filmed, and while this process foregrounds the process of unlearning history, only Indigenous controlled film and theory indicate strategies used by Indigenous nations that have enabled them to survive as peoples.

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