

The Native American Entrepreneur and the Mohawk Civil War

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Abstract

Since the 1980s a number of private native entrepreneurs from both the Longhouse and the elective factions have been involved in legal as well as illegal activities, politically justified on the basis of notions of sovereignty and self-sufficiency. Ideological differences have had a civil war in Mohawk land as an outcome, complicated by relationships with state, provincial, and federal authorities. This paper explores Indian entrepreneurship and its embodiment in Mohawk land.

Introduction

Akwesasne St. Regis is considered the capital of Native American organized crime, even more than its twin Canadian reserves, Kahnawake and Kanasatake. In order to understand the roots of this phenomenon, I will explore in brief the historical and ideological background, as well as the political and economical causes which enhanced illegal activities from the 1980s up to date. A very important notion to understand what happens in Mohawk country is that of “borderland”, which has been until recently skipped by anthropological and ethnohistorical literature on the Mohawks. The notion of borderland, together with that of “patronage”, allows the comparison of both legal and illegal Mohawk activities with similar situations elsewhere and helps to explain the contradictory, complex relationships among Mohawk political factions and the American and Canadian states.

Another useful theoretical tool is Elizabeth Rata’s concept of “neotribal capitalism”, that is the formation of neotribal bureaucratic elites beneath the shade of federal, state and provincial authorities. For centuries the process of proletarianization of part of the Mohawks has led to an uneasy political balance, interrupted by the outburst of periodical crises. In the late decades of the 20th century, modernizing factors, economical slump, political militancy, and the possibilities offered by border economy coalesced into a neotribalist, ethnonationalist movement known as the Warrior Society which, allied to maverick entrepreneurs, has strained the Mohawk body politic to the extreme in at least three reservations. I am also going to deal with the Six Nations/Grand River reserve which, although populated both by members of the Iroquois Confederacy and other tribal entities, has historically seen its Mohawk population politically very active.

What I am going to explore, moreover, is whether we can speak of the rise of a local working class, specific to Mohawk land, and not simply part of a more general American/Canadian working class, created by the economical activities within the Mohawk country. I am also going to analyse whether these economic activities have given origin to a middle class which, however petty, is both alternative to the corporate neotribal management and is aware of itself.

Firstly, I am going to shortly outline the making of the modern Mohawks following Graymont (1988), Snow (1994), Johansen (1993) and York and Pindera (1991). I am using the terms Indian, Native American, American Indian, Aboriginal and Native, reservation and reserve as interchangeable; Aboriginal and reserve, however, are mostly used in Canada.

The Making of an Ethnic Identity

Before 20th century western movies made the Sioux the most known and fashionable Indian tribe, the Iroquois and particularly the Mohawk were considered the prototype of the fierce American warrior. They struck British imagination more than any other tribe: after the visit of the so called Four Kings in 1710, splendidly portrayed at Queen Anne’s court, a group of wild libertines were

called the Mohocs after them. Just before the American Revolution a visit of the famous Mohawk war chief Joseph Brant to London gave birth to a new haircut that centuries later would become known as a Mohawk roach among the Punks. At the end of the 18th century, the American colonists chose the Mohawk icon in order to stress their American identity at the Boston Tea Party, after hundreds of satirical prints had shown them in Tupinambised Indian garments. But the ancestors of these Mohawks, the Warden of the Eastern Door of the Confederacy of the Five (later Six) Nations (or League of the Iroquois as Morgan called them), who were staunch allies of the British during the French-Indian wars, are actually not the very same of the Mohawk Warriors belonging to the pro-casino faction besieged at Oka, Quebec in 1990. In fact, the latter's forefathers worked for the enemy, they were pro-French "praying Indians", members of the Confederacy of the Seven Nations, and so were their archenemies, the Anti (casino) faction's great-grandfathers. During the three centuries since the French-Indian wars things had changed so much that two Leagues of the Six Nations sprang up, and these stray Mohawks were returned to the bosom of the competing Leagues in the early 20th century. Some time before they had begun to manufacture a new identity: no more pro French Catholic "praying" Indians, they created a brand new identity for themselves as the heirs of the British fierce allies' empire invented by British politicians and popularised by American historian Francis Parkman. Under this new ethnic identity they spoke later in the international forums, propagandised the revitalised theory of the Iroquois contribution to the American Constitution, attitudinised as the most aristocratic sector of the new Indian Movement, and competed with the Sioux for leadership in the Red Power of the 1970s-80s. Nevertheless, they were the late 20th century version of the factions that began to split the Confederacy in the 17th century, and keep on stating their socio-political differences by means of a religious ideology.

According to the archaeological record, the Iroquois (or Onkwehonwe, the "real human beings") had come from the Appalachian Mountains of Pennsylvania to the fertile lands south of Lake Ontario around 900 AD, pushing aside or absorbing their Algonquinian speaking predecessors. The more eastern tribe will call itself Kanyenkehaka or the people from the place of the flint, but will be known by the name Mohawk, "cannibals", given them by the Narragansett. They were the first to accept the word of Deganawida the Peacemaker, the Great Law of Peace that was to end the war among brothers and were one of the three Older Brothers or Uncles of the League of the Five Nations, that represented the "male" activities in warfare and politics, that is the paternal side of the family of tribes that saw their confederacy as a metaphorical Longhouse. The Great Law regulated the relationship between the five tribes, their representation in the council of the League, the tasks of the clans, and the ceremonies. The position of the fifty League chiefs had to be filled by certain clans, which in each tribe were assigned to one of the two moieties. The Great Law also defined the relationship to other peoples who were offered to join as long as they acknowledged the superiority of the five founding nations; a refusal to join, however, was cause of "just" war and destruction. The vital first century of Indian-European contact in eastern North America inspired the formation of factions that severely tested Mohawk political structures. The bridgehead was represented by captive adoptees from other Indian nations, particularly Huron and Northern Algonquinian prisoners of war that had been exposed to French Catholicism and Jesuit religious militantism. Political and economical considerations convinced the Mohawks to vie with Senecas and Onondagas in order to have Jesuit missionaries for a period. All over Iroquoia perhaps 20 per cent of the total population, and well over 20 per cent of Mohawks may have been Catholic. Three sets of personal connections swelled the ranks of the Catholic factions in the villages: networks of adopted captives (especially women), members of the lineages and clans of converted headmen, and close kin of baptised people. Factional alignments cut across the lineages, clans and moieties that defined Mohawk political structures, therefore the formation of Christian factions could severely disrupt village politics. As a result traditionalist factions assumed coherent form and violent persecutions followed. Christian factionalists were encouraged to move to such Canadian reserves such as the Jesuit Seigneurie of Sault Saint Louis (Caughnawaga or Kahnawake) or the multiethnic Sulpician Seigneurie of Oka/Kanesatake. Particularly affected by the migration were the Mohawks, who lost a

lot of “galvanized” Mohawks (former Huron, Abnaki and other Algonquian people) in the process. The effect of migration to Canada, however, neither divorced one community of factionalists from another nor healed factional wounds. By the early 1680s migration had ensured that traditionalists had gained the upper hand; in the late 1680s the League resumed war with New France and its Indian allies, among them the Catholic Mohawks (though a lot of smuggling continued). In the 1690s, as the fortunes of war turned against the Five Nations, Christian factionalists resurfaced at the core of the new francophile parties, whose struggle with anglophile and neutralist groups dominated politics in the Five Nations until the end of the 18th century.

In the 18th century, thanks to famous chiefs such as Theyanoguin (Hendrick) and Joseph Brant the Anglican brand of Christianity spread among the Mohawks. By now most Iroquois were living in European style cabins and houses; families were much smaller and the continuous wars had empowered Indian women through trade and men’s long absence in war and hunting. Talented men became chiefs irrespective of their lineage, and traditional League sachems as well as clan matrons no longer commanded as much respect. We can say that they were the heirs of a new class born the century before: warriors and women not belonging to the aristocratic families, who had access to politics through a new religion (Catholic or Protestant) and had found new ways to earn money and control the flow of European goods. The American revolution, that shattered the League, can be seen also as a religious civil war: pro-British Anglican Mohawks attacking Calvinist Oneidas, and Catholic Mohawks from Akwesasne signing a treaty with the Americans. The religious reform promoted by Handsome Lake, the Longhouse religion, did not touch the Mohawks until late. At Grand River (Six Nations) reserve Mohawks dominated local politics blending Anglicanism with the Longhouse circuit of preaching and also organising themselves along the fraternal lines of Freemasonry and the Order of Orange. In Canaughwaga (Kahnawake) and St. Regis (Akwesasne) the Longhouse arrived only in the 1920s and 1930s; in Oka/Kanesatake in the 19th century most Mohawks switched to Protestantism to displease their Sulpician seigneurs.

The Mohawks on top

Things were complicated by the different relationships with two new countries: Canada and the USA. The Canadian government recognised the Six Nations Confederacy Council as the appropriate group to speak for all the Iroquois until 1924, but the same did not happen in New York. Neither the state nor the federal government had had recognised the Grand Council for formal purposes since the late 18th century and treaties were conducted largely without any League chiefs. A new series of chiefs were added to the old ones: the elected chiefs of the (more or less) democratic councils imposed by the Canadian and American federal governments. These elected chiefs have spiced up local politics since their beginning, opening a new political route to success to common people, though women were again set aside, depriving them of the right to vote until the 1950s.

A new figure rose to prominence amid the debate over government, Seth Newhouse, who wrote a heavily pro-Mohawk version of the Great Law, which served as the basis to the famous Iroquois Constitution edited by Arthur Parker, currently read among the traditionalist factions. At Six Nations, however, the traditional chiefs had a different version written by Gibson and other chiefs. While even the traditional chiefs began to adopt systems similar to those of the elected chiefs, a Grand River reserve a new faction was born: the Warriors, that favoured nativistic arguments to promote innovative policies, but were also expression of the new, market oriented class of Mohawk commoners.

In the 1880s the Mohawks entered ironwork, a job that has become the common denominator of the Iroquois people of the modern era. Until that time they were noted for their skill as boatmen and fur trappers, though many earned a living as quarriers providing stone for Canadian construction boom and railway labourers. Though ironwork was very dangerous and badly paid (but better than farming) in economically and socially backward Quebec, it became a road to success and legend.

Part of Mohawk ironworkers' reputation came from the stereotype of the Indian as a fearless "warrior" of the heights. Indian ironworkers account only for a small percentage of the whole union, but their lifestyles and ideology affected deeply Mohawk self image. They are builders of the triumphant symbols of progress, the skyscraper and the expansive bridge, which are not only giant technological wonders of the urban society, but also contributing to the manifest destiny of Euroamerican continental expansion. This way the Mohawk ironworkers parallel the Iroquois League chiefs that supposedly inspired the Founding Fathers of the American Constitution, according to a political myth. It is the Iroquois contribution to America. The ironworker became a symbol of Indian manhood, that can compete with the white man in the marketplace and has originated a lore about rites of passage and travel adventures. Ironwork has also given the Mohawks, contrary to most Indians, a work ethic; top wages and immediate recognition of one's skill, the pride to belong to a special fraternity, and membership in the working class aristocracy, are the awards of hard work. On the other hand, ironworkers have a tradition of recklessness and violence, carry a macho exterior and the very conservative mentality of their working class white mates. We must add to it a militarist tradition, connected with a traditional pattern of voluntary service in the United States military since the Civil War, Canadian Mohawks comprised. The militarist tradition is represented not only by Warrior machismo, but by their pride in being mostly veterans of the U.S. special forces and by the flag of the Vietnam veterans on their barricades in the 1990s. Beginning in the 1970s, much of the resistance to the Canadian and American police was organised by the Longhouse and the Warrior Society. From the 1970s to the 1990s, economical slump periods and transformations in the job eroded the economical strength of the Mohawks, even if the Iroquois are still on the top of Indian tribes for wealth. After the elected councils' police were disbanded and the various Warrior Societies began policing the reservations/reserves, cigarette and gasoline smuggling flourished and bingo palaces began to appear. Bingo palaces evolved from innocuous church-like institutions to high stakes casinos. The traditionalists split into Antis (casinos, speakeasies and smuggling), and pro-gaming Warriors, but also the Christians took sides and factions mixed up again.

Speaking of "invented traditions" E. J. Hobsbawm writes that they may be either actually "invented" or emerging in a fast way, but their common feature is that their continuity with the past is largely fictional. This is also the case with Warrior ideology: they pose as the heirs of the Confederacy and their true interpreters and declare the Longhouse religion as "tepid", their members "traitors" of the Mohawk nation, proposing to come back to the Old Religion, before the reform of Handsome Lake. They put on their flags a head that represents the War God, and a sun in red field.

Old time Iroquois, as well as other Indian societies, had few if any device to manage dissent: consent was unanimous because either the dissenters gave up or moved away or did as they liked since there were no enforcing institutions. Situation worsened after the reservation period, though some group succeeded in founding a new village (Ganienkeh, N.Y) in the 1970s. The clumsy efforts of Canadian and American governments to impose democracy on the Mohawks only created more factions and political turmoil, paralysing the decision making process and bringing more often than not the reserves on the brink of a civil war. The Oka crisis can be well interpreted, therefore, as a civil war between a modernising political group, the Warrior movement, that pushed original capitalist accumulation by the means of smuggling and gaming, and that was, occasional police and FBI raids notwithstanding, most time benignly ignored.

To survive in the 21st century Mohawks would have to reinvent themselves once again and at the same time convince the larger society that their cultural reinvention is itself a legitimate course of action. In the early 1970s the traditionalist factions, led by the Warriors, successfully evicted the white residents from Kahnawake: this ethnic cleansing went unnoticed as well as that of Kahnasatake and Akwesasne Mohawks who did not agree with Warrior pro-gambling policy in 1990. In fact, before former Yugoslavia broke down, the same notion of ethnic cleansing was not clearly focused. Writing mostly in 1984, Louis Hall, the theoretician of the Kahnawake and

Akwasne Warriors, called for the Mafia-like execution of traditional league Chiefs, rejection of the Longhouse religion and the Peacemaker Deganawida, and ethnic cleansing of Euro-Americans (other races were not even taken into consideration). Though Warrior thought was influenced by New Right theories, they still used the leftist jargon they had learned in the union lodges, in the cosmopolitan world of European support groups and in the United Nations corridors, so did not make sensation until 1990s.

The Mohawk Body Politic

The Ritual of Condolence is the ritual performed by the Iroquois Confederacy or Rotinohshonni to install a new hereditary chief when the predecessor has passed away. This funeral ritual originated in the cultural context of the mourning wars and developed as an important part of the Kainerekowa, the Great Law of Peace, Power and Righteousness. By this ceremony, mourners overcome their grief, and their fear that death has assaulted the health and peace of the community; the focus is on the community and the renewal of kinship ties. The grieving people «used the occasion to recite their history, rehearse social and political principles and renew their commitment to order and reason» (Dennis 1993:79).

The Condolence ceremony was so foundational for the Iroquois, that it became the ritual model for diplomatic relations. Gerald Taiaiake Alfred has therefore chosen the Condolence ritual as the metaphorical framework for his Indigenous Manifesto, *Peace, Power and Righteousness* (1999). The ritual, with its special metaphors, has its heart in the so called Requickening, «with the rhetorical gestures that we call the “rare words”: wiping the eyes, cleansing the throat, and unblocking the ears. These are symbolic gestures to pacify grieving people, or the former adversary in a treaty process» (1999:xx). It is obvious that the ancient founders of the Iroquois Confederacy, and Alfred with them in his neotraditional nationalist manifesto, conceptualize Iroquois society in general, and Mohawk communities in particular, according to the analogy of the **body politic**. This analogy is the perception and elaboration of correspondences between society or the state and the individual human body.

In its simplest form, a “natural” society is one which functions in a manner similar to the human body. The earliest, fragmentary examples of this analogy in the Old World came from India, in the Rig-Veda and the Mahabharata, but its two principles were articulated by the Greeks. The first principle is the doctrine of hylozoism, which asserts that mind or life permeates the natural world. This “mind” is the source of regularity in nature; this concept permits the discussion of the relative health or sickness of the body politic and the suggestion of political cures (Hale 2003). In the Condolence ceremony a person “deformed by grief” is treated with a dose of soft drink (medicine) which restores him to a perfect form of man (Parker 1916:100).

The second basic principle asserts that one simple pattern, most perfectly manifested by the human body, exists at many levels of being. Plato, Aristotle, Aristophanes, Demosthenes, and Socrates, among the others, used the analogy, as well as Aesopus in his famous fable of the belly and the members. The fable became explicitly political in Roman times, and later it was applied to Christian doctrine by St. Paul. In the Middle Ages the analogy of the body was developed substantially: the Church became the *corpus mysticum* and *politicum* of which the Pope is the head, kings and emperors but members. Organic analogies buttress all the political controversies and in the late Middle Ages an extension of the idea of a “mystical body” conveniently illustrated the growing self-consciousness of the national state, especially in England. In the 16th and 17th centuries the analogy persisted and, in many cases, it became a vehicle for social criticism. Increasing general scepticism, however, together with the widespread materialism and the success of the idea of the **social contract**, destroyed this traditional analogy. For Calvin, the Church as a mystical body was supplemented by the emphasis on the covenant; typical is the *Mayflower Compact*, “We ... covenant and combine ourselves in a Civil Body Politike”, where the main point is “combine” and “body politic” has become a synonym for “political entity” (Hale 2003). The phrase “body politic”

persisted in the 19th century, but as a dead metaphor, until positivism began to apply biological evolution to political institutions.

The organic analogy is widely used in Iroquois cosmology, from the notion of Turtle Island to the genesis of this world from the body of the Woman Fallen From the Sky. It also pervades the imagery of the Kainerekowa, the Great Law or Great Tidings of Peace and Power: the Onondaga wizard, Adodarhoh, has the body «distorted by seven crooks and his long tangled locks were adorned by writhing living serpents» (Parker 1916:17), that identify him as an «evil-minded man». Dekanawida rubs his body to straighten him and make his mind healthy. A Royaner's skin has to be seven spans thick in order to be patient, and Royaner Skanawateh «must have an ear to hear and a hand to feel the coming of wars» (Parker 1916:29). A large bunch of shell strings «shall symbolize the completeness of the union and certify the pledge of the nations represented by the Confederated lords ... that are all united and formed into a body or union called the Union of the Great Law» (Parker 1916:44, Wampum 55). Five arrows «shall symbolize the complete union of the nations. Thus are the Five Nations united completely and enfolded together, united into one head, one body and one mind» (Parker 1916:45, wampum 57). Wampum 59 repeats the same idea: it «shall be a token that the men have combined themselves in one head, one body and one thought» (Parker 1916:46).

The spatial analogy of the Confederacy as a Longhouse, with its *Axis Mundi* represented by the Great Tree planted in Onondaga by the Peacemaker, combines with the organic analogy in wampum 60, which describes the Hiawatha Belt: two white squares on each side are connected with the heart in the middle, which represents Onondaga, «and also means the heart of the Five Nations» (Parker 1916:47). The so called traditionalist Iroquois perceive, therefore, «people and land as spiritually and politically integrated» (Venables 1980:81), and according to the principle of hylozoism, we may add; moreover, sovereignty as «based on moral precepts [was] revealed during their history by leaders who were inspired by the Creator (God) » (ibidem). As Oren Lyons puts it: «We are a government that is intertwined with spiritual guidance ... So you can see the separation of spiritual, religious ways from political ways does not exist within the structure of the Haudenasaunee» (1980:172). The history of the Confederacy «deals in the principles of peace: basically peace and the power to keep the peace», and «It has to deal with government, power, and people and force» (Lyons 1980:171). What the Great Immutable Law, as Parker calls it, means for “peace”, can be read in the part called Skanawatih's Laws of Peace and War, where extermination or absorption are prescribed for rebellious tribes or nations which refused to join the Confederacy. Iroquois Peace was an offer one could not refuse. As Venables points out, however, «an actual sovereign authority has never emerged from within the Confederacy structure. Rather each nation ... has maintained its individual sovereignty, while contributing its power and influence to the Confederacy» (1980:83).

Indian spokespersons, tribal representatives, and academic intellectuals, «argue strongly for exactly this exotic view of Indian reality, [and] propagate the notion that despite centuries of oppression, Native culture today is still shaped by strong ties to the traditional past» (Schröder 2003:436), but this is not the case. In fact, as this scholar points out, «the traditionalist discourse has very little to do with these historical experiences, but rather with a strategy of political legitimization.» He also adds: «This construction of tradition ... is a strategy of creating identity out of making history and as such it must not be judged by the criteria of authenticity, but rather by the present political interest involved in its creation» Schröder 2003:438). Indeed, tradition is primarily a political instrument for regulating relationship both within the internal constituency and the external actors, from the courts to the state and federal authorities, to the media (see Mauzé 1997:12). In this context, for example, the resurgence of the canoe in the Northwest Coast allows the tribes to negotiate their identity among themselves and in front of the non Indian world (Harkin 1997).

Making the Past Through the Present

History, Friedman writes, «is very much a mythical construction, in the sense that it is a representation of the past linked to the establishment of an identity in the present» (1992:195). Speaking of the formation of Greek national identity, as well as Polynesian mythologized histories, the same scholar remarks: «Fantasies take on a durable reality when they are successfully communicated. And that communication is a constitutive act of cultural identity» (Friedman 1992:196). Sahlins (1985:155) has defined culture as «the organization of the current situation in terms of a past.» Friedman, almost making a pun, adds that, if this is the case, then culture is «the organization of the present in terms of a past that is already organized by the present» (1992:155). Furthermore, history, generally speaking, is largely mythical, because the politics of identity consists in anchoring the present in a viable past. From this point of view, therefore, tradition is considered as something that is continually being produced and renewed. As Jean Pouillon puts it: «Tradition is often “retroprojection”. We pick and choose ... from a reconstructed past. We want to appear as if we were the successors of those whom we made our fore-fathers. Tradition, then, works backwards from biological heredity while basing itself on its model. It is actually reverse filiation. The son begets the father, and he may claim to have several of them» (1997:18).

Scholars have debated whether we can know the past and the problem of the relation between history and memory. Lowenthal titled his book *The Past is a Foreign Country* (1985) from L. P. Hartley's novel *The Go-Between*, whose memorable opening line reads: «The past is a foreign country: they do things differently there.» According to Lowenthal, «Time's erosions and accretions are bound to alter viewers' perceptual frameworks as well as the object themselves ... by gone times lack the uncertainty of our own, because they are *over*. The past makes a better narrative than the present because it ends ... the view that the past has a pattern, evident in our much edited memories, is an illusion bred and bolstered by historians» (1996:210-211).

Consciousness that the past was unlike the present was a discovery of post-Enlightenment Western progressive thought. This stance, however, is neither widely shared among other cultures nor even in Western culture. Academics and the general public alike continue to explain the past in terms of the present: «Heritage jettisons the past's cultural distance» (Lowenthal 1996:209). Culturalist scholars tinsel popular notions of cultural heritage by biological means, museums, historic sites, movies and docu-fiction support the notion that human beings are essentially always the same: «selective oblivion, hindsight, and narrative necessity lend it anachronistic coherence ... The past is a sanctuary for whatever versions of reality we seek to promote» (Lowenthal 1996:211).

The notion of “invention of tradition” is, according to Harkin (1997:97), «a useful one to the extent that it draws our attention to the ways in which key cultural symbols may be deployed and manipulated through time for political ends.» Symbols are selected for their perlocutionary potential, but, to be effective, they must be drawn out of a limited repertoire, which is already present within the culture. Moreover, as Harkin stresses, «symbolic re-framing of obsolete symbols inevitably changes their meaning» (1997:98), and such re-framing is always political. Authority, however, is constantly challenged by competitive discourses, and one of the most powerful of these “corrosive discourses”, as Harkin calls them following Lincoln (1994), is the challenge to the authenticity of the symbols and the legitimacy of their wielders (1997:99).

This is the case in Mohawk country, where old symbols such as the Confederacy represented by the ubiquitous logos of the Hiawatha Belt and the Guswenta (Anderson 1991), one can see everywhere from gas station pumps to cigarette packets to key rings, car plates and flags, are re-framed according to current political agendas. The legitimacy and authenticity of the Longhouse version of history, however, are not only challenged by mainstream scholars, such as Fenton and Tooker, but also by the alternative versions of both the supporters of the Tribal/Band Councils and the Warrior militants belonging to the different sub-factions.

Competing Pasts in Kahnawake

Traditions, as Pouillon argues, are discriminating. «That is their basic function. They work like totems» (1997:18). He half-jokingly suggests that, if various traditions could be put into a system, the result would surely be a Lévi-Straussian totemic system. The fact that beliefs, representations and behaviours are passed down through generations does not contradict what above stated. In fact, when «a group maintains beliefs and behaviours, the purpose is precisely to characterize itself for others.» What is transmitted, through speech and writing, even using other peoples' books, such as historical accounts and ethnographies, is everything believed to confer an enduring identity. While tradition, as Pouillon points out, is never as strong as when it is unknown and subconscious as it happens in Europe, tradition can be consciously claimed. This is the case of formerly colonized peoples, who are searching for themselves in a past they have rearranged or even in part reinvented. As a matter of fact, tradition, continuity, and invention, according to this scholar, are three terms that come together to form a single reality. «Perhaps, we are never more the same as when we believe we are making a clear break with the past. Conversely, perhaps it is when we claim to be preserving or recovering our heritage that a reconstructed past is invented» (1997:20).

Political struggle of different factions in Mohawk villages, defending different interests, probably did not appear first with the Catholic converts in the 17th century, but preceded this first documented factionalism. As Dickson-Gilmore (1999:432) points out, what is intriguing about Mohawk factional history is that its earliest theme appears to have persisted over time. At first opposition was conceived in terms of pagans and converts, later the fundamental dichotomy of Mohawk politics had moved to one of conservatives versus progressives and, more recently it has become a competition between those associated with the elective tribal/band councils and those belonging to the Longhouse, respectively. As a matter of fact, it exists a “third man” in Mohawk politics, the reality of those who prefer to remain as far outside local politics as possible or to keep their preference private, or shift their preference according to their interests.

The factions that appear dominant in Kahnawake in the 1990s, for example, are the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake (MCK, the band council), and the 207 Longhouse (from its location on Highway 207), affiliated to the Mohawk Nation Office. This is the Warrior Longhouse and the largest, but there are other, smaller competitive Longhouses: the Healed Ones, most of whom were among the few last diehard at Oka in 1990. While these have stepped away from the dominant Warrior Longhouse, the so called Good Minds became estranged from the MCK in the same period, and claim to favour a “democratization” of decision making. The largest counterpart of the 297 Longhouse is the Mohawk Trail Longhouse, which is said to be an offshoot of the 207 Longhouse, when the Warriors got the upper hand over the “Handsome Lakers”. The latter, however, are the founders of the “mother” Longhouse and can claim a much earlier vintage: Christine Deom told Dickson-Gilmore (1999:437) that in the 1940s his uncle's longhouse was located on the same highway where the modern 297 Longhouse currently stands. The 207 Longhouse and the Mohawk Trail Longhouse remain a dominant presence in Kahnawake traditionalist politics, but the former and the MCK are the more powerful factions.

In this context the terms “traditionalists” and “progressives”, traditionally used in anthropological literature for the Longhouse people and the tribal/band council supporters respectively are consciously reversed. According to Brian Deer (in Dickson-Gilmore 1999), the terms need rethinking and renaming, because the so called traditionalists are actually the progressive ones moving forward to the 21st century, while the conservatives are actually those who try to preserve their position within the Canadian mainstream, that is the supporters of the MCK.

The past is one of the battlefields of Kahnawake politics, as it is elsewhere in Mohawk country. Competing groups define competing pasts and a primary frame of reference resides within the chronicle of the 1889 arrival of the elective system of government. Dickson-Gilmore remarks that «all factions appear to agree in one aspect: namely, that the elective system of government by band council was imposed on the Kanienehaka [Mohawks] without their support or consultation»

(1999:440). This belief is an important source of moral fuel and it represents «the prima facie wrong that an independent, self-determining future can correct. Second, an assumption of imposition lends a purity to the traditionalist-activist movement insofar it denies Kanienkehaka [Mohawk] complicity in the acculturation» (ibidem).

It can be demonstrated, however, that a shift from traditional government by hereditary sachems appointed by senior clan matrons to a majority vote election occurred as early as the mid-17th century, according to the Jesuit Relations which chronicled the political life of the various villages that preceded today's Kahnawake (and Akwesasne, which was born as a split off rib of Kahnawake in the 18th century). Furthermore, according to primary reports, the band council system was supported by a substantial number of tribal members, who sent a series of seven petitions to the Canadian Indian Department authorities in order to be allowed to hold elections according to the Canadian system. Modern reminiscences refer to this group as The Fourteen, that is a group of fourteen families which were instrumental in promoting the band system in Kahnawake. While the betrayal is a common theme, there is some question as to whether current resentment against The Fourteen, and the general self-pitying attitude are justified. Today «history is the trump card that all factions play in their political competition. In this way, not only do we witness the emergence of “traditions” and “histories” that appear to have more to do with modern politics than the past, but we see also that history, like policy, is often less a matter of “facts” than of factionalism» (Dickson-Gilmore 1999:446).

A similar story is told by Sally Weaver (1972, 1978) for Six Nations. Here in the last quarter of the 19th century and the early 20th century a group of “progressives” called the Warriors' Association, or the Dehorners, promoted with determination the removal of the hereditary chiefs (whose authority was symbolized by a particular head-piece featuring elk horns). These Warriors or Dehorners were men who had accumulated a certain amount of wealth and had experienced considerable contact with Canadians. They were opposed by the Mohawk Workers, a political group which included predominantly Christians and some Longhouse adherents; they promoted the continuance of the Confederacy as political sovereign entity. To what extent the Dehorners were instrumental to the replacement of the Confederacy government with a band government in 1924 remains to be assessed, according to Weaver, but undoubtedly they influenced Canadian federal authorities.

The Past as a Finite Symbolic Resource

In his critique of the assumption that the past is an infinite and plastic symbolic resource, wholly susceptible to contemporary purposes, Arjun Appadurai (1981) argues that culturally variable sets of norms exist and their function is to regulate the inherent debatability of the past. Such norms are subject to certain universal constraints, that is to say the past as a symbolic resource has certain cultural limits. He proposes, then, that there is a definable cultural framework with which the debates concerning meaning must take place. Appadurai suggests that there are «four minimal dimensions concerning which all cultures must make some substantive provision» (1981:203). These four dimensions are: «1) authority: this dimension involves some cultural consensus as to the kinds of source, origin or guarantor of “pasts” which are required for their credibility. 2) continuity: involves some cultural consensus as to the nature of the linkage with the source of authority which is required for the minimal credibility of a “past”. 3) depth: involves cultural consensus as to the relative values of different time-depths in the mutual evaluation of “pasts” in a given society. 4) interdependence: implies the necessity of some convention about how closely any past must be interdependent with other “pasts” to ensure minimal credibility.»

Appadurai's point is that «no culture can manage the on-going collective debate among “pasts” without *some* substantive provisions concerning these four dimensions. These dimensions may therefore be taken as constituting a minimal universal structure for the cultural construction of pasts» (1981:203, emphasis in original). Appadurai studied political struggles in a temple in south

India and discovered that five norms served to provide the cultural framework within which the charters of specific subgroups are constructed, defended and mutually evaluated: 1) *textual evidence* for the authority of any charter; 2) the ratification of a *credible external authoritative figure*; 3) the charter should be based on an authoritative document that encodes the claims of the group in question as well as the privileges of a maximum number of *other relevant groups*; 4) the evidence for the charter should be reflected *continuously* in the documented past, and 5) the greater *antiquity* of the referents of the charter in question, the better for the rights in question. In the case of the south Indian temple the above five norms are indigenously conceived in an order of decreasing power: thus the first is the least dispensable and the last, the most (1981:204).

In the case of the Mohawks one could adjust these five norms and conceive them in this order: 1) although the Great Law was oral, since the early 20th century it has been written; also Handsome Lake's Code was written in the 19th century. These texts constitute the textual evidence for the authority of any charter, like the deity or the Tamil Vedas of the temple in India. 2) the external authoritative figure is represented by the different colonial authorities and their heirs, the USA and Canada. 3) the document that encodes the privileges of a maximum number of actors can be seen in a specific treaty or group of treaties. 4) the continuous political, and diplomatic relationship between the Mohawks and the Euro-Americans document continuous past relations. 5) the source of the rights, the original Iroquois Confederacy, is pushed farther and farther into an immemorial past, by means of archaeology as well as by both nationalist Iroquois and sympathetic non- Iroquois writers.

The Source of Legality and Power

Using Tönnies' distinction between **Gemeinschaft** and **Gesellschaft**, Venables stresses the similarity between medieval Europe and the Iroquois Confederacy: «both the Europeans and the Iroquois buttressed their claims with medieval concepts, that is with ideas which preceded the current systems of political order» (1980:97). Both peoples momentarily shared on terms of equality, a medieval concept which linked them conceptually as well as politically, that is the Chain of Friendship. «This Chain of friendship or covenant was a concept not unlike the medieval chain of being, in which parts of the universe were linked and interdependent, and although the medieval and the Iroquois chains have distinct differences as well as a common element, both are also concepts in Gemeinschaft. The Chain of Friendship, however, soon deteriorated ...» (ibidem). Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft are better seen, according to this scholar, as a continuum rather than as a contrast: the European settlers were moving to the extreme of the Gesellschaft end of the continuum from the 18th century onwards, filling the words “treaty”, “nation”, and “sovereignty” with a Gesellschaft stance (Venables 1980). The Iroquois that followed them, Christian converts and refugees in the pro-French Mohawk-ized multiethnic villages in Quebec, Anglican modernizers such as Joseph Brant and reverend Williams, even religious reformers like Handsome Lake, accompanied the Mohawks along the path from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft. As Venables puts it: «Sovereignty in Haudenosaunee-Iroquois affairs is not simply an issue of Indians versus non-Indians, however, because of the internal debates going on within each political structure. Individual Iroquois viewpoints range from those held by traditional people who follow the Iroquois religion as reformed by the prophet Handsome Lake (ca. 1735-1815) to those of assimilationist, Christian Indians» (1980:82).

A set of both religious prescriptions and legalistic provisions, the Great Law, like the Koran and the Torah, today is subject to modernizing interpretations even by the traditionalists of the Anti faction. Doug George-Kanentiio, for example, looking for the source of power and law, writes: «Authority in Iroquois society sprang not from the government, but from the people and through the clans. The clans served as extended family, social services agency, religious body, and court of justice. ... The clans controlled immigration, residency, names, and marriages» (2000:113), and: «The Confederacy had exclusive authority over the waterways of the Mohawk and St. Lawrence

rivers» (page 116), and assessed a tax (trade goods) to outsiders who wished to use these rivers. The Confederacy, we are told, could never have survived «without consistent management practices monitored by an inclusive bureaucracy». According to this anachronistic interpretation, the Confederacy had also provisions for the raising of a militia (page 124) in the Great Law. Indeed, the Great Law is equalized to a Constitution by the traditionalists (and by the tribal/band managers who wink to traditional ideology), and considered at the origin of the American Constitution by the supporters of the thesis of the influence (cfr. Johansen 1982, Swamp and Schaaf 2004).

However anachronistic the interpretation of a set of rules and religious prescriptions originated from a relatively hierarchical theocratic society with fifty aristocratic families owners of the hereditary chiefly titles may seem, it has its reason to exist. The entrenchment of the Great Law within the tradition, actually at the birth, of the American Constitution, indeed interprets the relationship between the Confederacy and the US federal government as that of the Older Brother (the Mohawks) and the Younger Brother (the USA), that is a relationship of reciprocity and shared responsibilities. The thesis of the Iroquois Influence on the American Constitution, which most scholars refuse as baseless, has a political value, because it tries to reconstruct the atmosphere of the Covenant Chain, by offering the young American republic an immemorial past anchored on the American soil in exchange. It is not a surprise, therefore, that in the Second Bicentenary, a Reagan era Congress was quick to recognize this “invention of tradition” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1992) as political truth, when polemic against “tepid Europe” was becoming a neo-Puritan, neoconservative ideological pillar.

There is no contradiction between the political myth of the Iroquois origin of the American Constitution and the other foundational myth of modern Mohawk nationalism: the Two Rows Wampum. I use the word “myth” in the sense of a story used to explain the origins, with a kind of sacred halo and an ethic goal, such as the epic of the American Revolution or the Italian Risorgimento. According to it Guswenta or Two Rows Wampum represents the original treaty: all Iroquois treaties with the Europeans would be based on a formal agreement entered into between the Mohawk Nation and the Netherlands in the second decade of the 17th century (George-Kanentiio 2000:118). It is not important in this context that, according to mainstream historians, the so-called Tawagonchi Treaty, «a document used as evidence to support claims of a treaty made in 1613 between the Dutch and Mohawks has been shown to be a forgery» (Brandão 1997:335 n. 8; cfr. Gehring, Starna and Fenton 1987:373-93). What counts here is that the Guswenta symbolizes the ideology of “equal but separate”, which both the Warriors and the Antis advocate, more often than not opportunistically backed by the tribal/band Grand Chiefs. As George-Kanentiio puts it: «The paths never intersect, meaning the Europeans pledge never to force their customs and laws upon the Iroquois less the vessels collide and both are capsized. The Iroquois also cite Guswenta as a warning to those who would try the impossible and keep a foot in either craft» (2000:119). Guswenta was passed from the Dutch to the English when they acquired New Holland, according to this version, and later to the American and Canadian states respectively. Guswenta, therefore, is also a weapon against the tribal/band councillors and the Christian factions, who try “the impossible”, and who are considered by George-Kanentiio, as “ethnic Mohawks”, not as “true Mohawks”, lumped together with “renegade” Warrior entrepreneurs.

The substantial weakness of this political stance lies in the fact that, although theoretically Mohawk ideologues may connect Guswenta to the colonial and American/Canadian treaties and agreements, by any means they cannot tailor the story of the Iroquois origin of the new state’s Constitution also for Canada, whose constitutional origin is firmly moored in Medieval England.

Today in most Mohawk reserves there are three competitive sources of legality, legitimacy, and political power: the tribal/band council, whose source of legality and power rests on the Euro-American tradition. Theoretically, at least, this is a democratic system based on the social contract between elected governors and governed voters. The source of power is therefore the people, an immanent non religious abstraction. The second option, on the other hand, is bifurcated: in fact, since the 1980s a more fundamentalist point of view, whose origin can be traced in Louis Hall’s

writings, and that we can call the Warriors' Great Law, has been opposed to the Handsome Lake Longhouse (or "old" Confederacy) 's interpretation of the Great Law. Both the Handsome Lake Longhouse's and the Warriors' interpretations of the Kainerekowa, however, are based on a transcendent source of power, the Great Law as it was dictated by the Creator. The divine origin of legitimacy permeates the community as a body politic: hence, the rhetoric of consensus in the decisional process, because it is obvious that the members of the body cannot decide according to a majority rule in order to make the organism work smoothly.

During the last two decades, however, tribal/band managers have more and more adopted an ethnonationalist, neotraditionalist slant, eroding classic traditionalist political pool. This fact has caused protests from those who base legitimate power on the Great Law: an editorial on the *Eastern Door* (18 April 2003) contested the right of the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake (MCK) to appeal to treaty rights, wampums and other traditionalist terms as a grab of traditional power structures: «In Kahnawake the MCK has done exactly that, they have stolen all of the social structures and moved them outside the confines and control of the Traditional people with exception (sic) of cultural events. The MCK has legitimized all political structures by breaking down the traditional structures through events such as the cigarette trade, cigarettes and other illegal activities in accordance with Canada's Law. Now which are controlled (sic) by the MCK's political forces that are in line with colonial ideology in regard to assimilation (sic). The final straw in full legitimization of the MCK in a structure power now lies in the hands of Membership. In that the MCK lays claim that it has the right to determine who their people are. When explicitly the Mohawk Nation and the laws that govern the Mohawk Nation have sole right to determine who is a member of the Nation/State.»

Neo-tribal Capitalists and Class Stratification

Following Elizabeth Rata's analysis on recent relationships between the Maoris and New Zealand, one may wonder whether society should be organized according to kinship or contract, that is non-kinship association (Rata 2004). That being said, one should also remember Schneider's opinion on kinship as a cultural construct, whose relations with biology have been set *a priori* by anthropologists since Morgan's times, and more recently by tribal bureaucracies. Biologization of culture in neotraditionalist as well as culturalist approaches has –as Rata points out – many undemocratic consequences.

Although historical circumstances are different, Rata's (1999, 2000, 2004) concept of "neotribal capitalism" may be usefully applied to Mohawk country (as well as to Indian country at large). While this is true that tribal members are descendants of traditional kin groups, and therefore some form of continuity exists between the traditional tribe and the "neotribe", what has changed in a fundamental way is the meaning of relations among persons and between persons and things in a gift economy as opposite to a commodity economy (Mauss 1925 ; Appadurai 1986 ; Strathern 1988; Weiner 1992; Gregory 1982). «Traditional tribes are redistributive economies with hierarchical status-based social relationships; in contrast, capitalist neotribes are like all capitalist corporations, accumulative economies» (Rata 2004:2). As to Mohawk kinship, Handsome Lake's reform, together with both Canadian and American modernizing efforts resulted in the almost complete destruction of traditional clans and moieties. Mohawk clan system is incredibly eroded in most Mohawk communities and few Mohawk can state with certainty their clan membership (Dickson-Gilmore 2000). Furthermore, this clan membership has lost most of its socio-economical meaning.

According to Shimony, who spent his fieldwork period in Six Nations-Grand River between 1953 and 1960, «a number of functions historically assigned to the clans are now performed by the Longhouse, thereby diminishing the importance of the clans» (1994:16), although the Longhouse helps to perpetuate the clan and moiety divisions by giving them roles in the Longhouse ceremonials. The Longhouse has, in fact, emerged as the central social institution of the conservative culture (neotraditional), which can rely on the 20-25 % of the tribal population in

Mohawk country. For example, «each of the four Longhouses in Six Nations functions not only as a religious organization, but as a pulpit for moral education, an irredentist society for defending Indian rights, a cooperative for mutual aid, a medical center, and a social club» (1994:16). Furthermore, as Shimony remarks (1994:27), even the Longhouse participants often do not know their lineage and clan affiliation, due to the central role of the nuclear family. When they are asked their clan affiliation, «they simply name the leading clan on their moiety side, assuming that to be their own clan.» Surveying clan rights, privileges and obligations in the lists presented by Morgan (1877) and Goldenwiser (1914), Shimony concludes that most, if not all, do not exist any longer, and if they do, their meaning is different now: in the 1950s the clan «has become perhaps the least important social unit» (1994:34). Clans never meet as a body, have no peculiar function and are never invited as a group to any Longhouse event. The important functioning units were (and still are for the Longhouse people), “my family”, “my relatives”, and “my Longhouse”. Although the Longhouse has appropriated many of the functions of the clan, it has reinterpreted the social groupings and has used them in its frame of reference (1994:34). The old clans were part of a society organized according to a gift economy; the Longhouse is one of the modernizing efforts to cope with a commodity economy. For the non neotraditional Mohawks, who elect the Tribal/Band Councils and belong to various Christian denominations, clan affiliation do not even have a ceremonial meaning, of course.

The picture is similar in Kahnawake, Akwesasne and Kanesatake. In addition, the Longhouse arrived in the 192s and 1930s; the multiethnic origins (Mohawks, Mohawk-ized Onondagas, Oneidas, non Confederacy Iroquoians, Algonquians, Europeans) of their population has introduced new clans in addition to the traditional Mohawk clans (Bear, Wolf, and Turtle). The situation is made even more confused by today’s racial laws such as the relatively new Kahnawake Mohawk Membership Law, where a tribal committee, which we can better call a “Blood Police”, is manipulating politically people’s “blood quantum” (Kirby 2002; Johns 2005). The historical ties between tribes and neotribes, therefore, are flimsy at best, especially in Mohawk reservations.

According to Rata, Maori neotribal capitalists, basing themselves on neotraditionalism as ideology, claim a historical continuity with the traditional tribe, expressed in the 19th century’s Treaty of Waitangi. The historical context is very different in Canada and in the United States, in that there are two competitive bodies claiming inheritance rights to traditional tribes: the elective/band council and the revitalized “traditional” Confederacy Council (now split into the Warrior and “old” Confederacy parallel political structures).

Since the late 1960s the relationship between the federal government and the tribal/band councils has changed, both in the USA and in Canada. The various wars against poverty, together with the changes in the relations between the more and more ethnicized BIA and DIAND and the new generation of educated tribal managers, have transformed the tribal elites. If in the early 1970s a typical tribal chief was the Lakota Dick Wilson, a redneck type of Indian leader, in the late 1980s and in the 1990s tribal/band ruling elites were managers similar to the pro-gambling Akwesasne elected chief Leo David Jacobs, who earned a doctorate and taught at university for some time (Hornung 1991). Both types of tribal managers, however, handle often opaquely millions in programs and grants. In addition, they usually control tribal courts and police, as well as most media such as newspapers and radios. Since the 1980s, the adoption of a neotraditional ideology, which has brought to support, and win, substantial land claims, has reinforced the elective tribal/band councils’ position within the community. Furthermore, the re-positioning of factional alliances during the 1989-91 crisis with pro and anti-gaming supporters and cigarette smuggling in both elective and “traditional” sides, has given the elective chiefs the legitimization of “tradition” they lacked before. One cannot doubt that the most experienced politicians – and ultimate winners – in the 1989-91 crisis have been Kahnawake Grand Chief Joseph Norton and Akwesasne Band Grand Chief (Canadian side) Mike Mitchell. At present in Kahnawake and Akwesasne, an interested, uneasy marriage has been consumed between the elective elite and the Longhouse “Ancient Regime” members together with sectors of the moderate Warriors. The elective leaders

control considerable economic resources and an all pervading patronage system within the reservation; their brokerage role, enhanced by the concepts of government-to-government relationship and sovereignty, has promoted socially many new professional Mohawks.

The mechanism of neotribal capitalism described by Rata, that is an all-powerful oligarchy which controls production, redistribution and social environment, cannot be applied uniformly onto the Mohawk scenario, because of the peculiar geographical location of the Mohawk reservations/reserves. In contrast with Pine Ridge and many other reservations, the Mohawk homeland lies mostly in the metropolitan areas of Montreal and Hamilton, and very near New York, Buffalo and Toronto, and its inhabitants can rely historically on a range of jobs superior to other, less fortunate hinterland Indian lands. Although a substantial number of Mohawks, especially, but not only, women are employed by the tribal/band councils, many men work in the nearby factories, such as Alcoa, Reynolds and General Motors, and as ironworkers around the continent. A survey by Carol La Prairie (2001) about aboriginal over representation in the criminal justice system on nine Canadian cities reveals that in the eastern cities such as Halifax, Montreal and Toronto the aboriginal populations experience «the least amount of deprivation in relation to their non-aboriginal neighbours» (p. 14) in comparison with the western Canadian cities, and therefore are low contributors to the justice system. La Prairie confirms class stratification in the reserves: «while most of the reserve is part of the working class (52%) or the unemployed, non participating group (44%), there is a “new class” that sits at the top of the social hierarchy on reserves and has a controlling influence over much of the community’s economic life. Aboriginal men are more likely than women to be part of this new class (politicians and senior managers), especially on reserves and women are more likely to be non-participants» (2001:20). Unfortunately, this analysis does not disaggregate data.

George and Kuhn (1994, in Bernier 1997), on the other hand, point out that, while the earnings of Aboriginal full time full year workers are 11% lower than Canadian workers as a whole, and there are wage gaps between Aboriginal groups, the wage gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal men and Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women is around 35%. This means that «the Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal gap in Canada is considerably smaller for women than for men» (Bernier 1997:2).

According to Richard Hill in mid-1980s in Kahnawake people thought « that nearly 60 per cent of the working men are ironworkers today» (1987:31). Although structural ironworkers are only a part of the profession, because, in addition to them, there are also ornamental ironworkers, reinforcing ironworkers, riggers and shop ironworkers, ironwork has brought respect to Indians, not only because Indian ironworkers are competing with the white man, but also because they are at the top of their profession. The situation is similar in the rest of Mohawk country; as a consequence, Mohawk men belong to the top layers of the working class aristocracy. This means that many people do not depend completely on tribal bosses’ favour and can rely on an alternative source of income outside the reserve. Another, important source of wealth comes from the so called border economy, ranging from cross-border shopping, to gambling and smuggling in a continuum which goes from an end felt as legal by most Mohawks to crime at the other end.

US-Canada Border Management

Managing the US-Canada border is not an easy task, and the number of agencies involved on the US side alone is outstanding, with consequent overlapping jurisdiction and tasks, bureaucratic competition and in-fighting. Moreover, the two countries have complex federal systems with multiple agencies involving border matters, not to speak of the political and legal systems, which are also different. Finally, the central issues are perceived in a different way in each country: for example, Canadians tend to see drug traffic as a law enforcement issue and drug abuse as a public health issue, but Americans see it more as a problem of crime and morality. In many ways Canadians are more similar to Europeans as to the perceiving of central issues.

Following Cottam (2003), I will try to summarily outline the most recent treaties and agreements affecting border issues. The track record of cooperation and coordination in the northern border, however complex it may be, is the opposite of that along the USA-Mexico border and there are programs to facilitate the transit of tourists, business people and frequent border crossers. In addition, in Canada conspiring to violate US laws is a crime. As a matter of fact, the collaboration and cooperation between the United States and Canada is intense and it has a long history. Among the examples of treaties and agreements facilitating this cooperation in the 1990s there is the Canada United States Accord on Our Shared Border (1995), which promotes international trade, facilitates border crossing by individuals, prevents drug trafficking, smuggling and illegal immigration, and reduces costs for the government and the general public. In 1990 the two countries signed a mutual legal assistance treaty and in 1994 an asset sharing agreement about assets from criminals. The Shared Border Accord in 1997 was followed by the Canada-US Cross Border Crime Forum, which has met since then. In 1999 the Canada-US Partnership Forum (CUSP) promoted high-level dialogue among governments, border communities, and stakeholders on border management and expanded cooperation in customs, immigration, law enforcement, and environmental protection at and beyond the border. Additional agreements designed to accomplish these and related goals were the USINS-CIC Border Vision and Cross-Border Crime Forum, the Integrated Border Enforcement Teams (IBETs), and the Integrated Marine Enforcement Teams. Despite the strains in the US-Canada relationship caused by American accusations that Canada is “weak” with terrorism, especially after September 11, cooperation between these two NAFTA partners in regard to border management is stronger than ever, although Canadians are often resentful of US imperial-like behaviour and bossiness.

Border Economy and Treaty Rights

Following the American Revolution, in 1794 the United States and Great Britain signed the Treaty of Amity, Commerce, and Navigation, known as Jay Treaty from the name of the American negotiator. Among the other things this treaty extended and acknowledged various rights of Native American peoples occupying areas on or near the US-Canada border. In particular, it stated that Indians retained the “free passage right”, that is they could move freely back and forth across the border. This provision has survived in both American and Canadian law, albeit differently: in the US the Jay Treaty provision had been incorporated in Section 289 of the Immigration and Naturalization Act (INA), and there have been relatively few judicial disputes over the years. In Canada, in contrast, the Jay Treaty has never been truly incorporated into permanent statutory law and Canadian courts have been sustaining the Treaty provision through common law treatment under the “aboriginal rights” doctrine (Nickels 2004). In the last ten years Canadian courts have appeared to undermine Indian free passage rights, connecting them to a cultural or historical nexus to specific Canadian geographical areas. Moreover, as the *Regina v. Vincent* case has shown, the tobacco transported by a Lorette Huron band member was not exempted from duty according to the Ontario Court of Appeals, which examined the issue under the language of the Jay Treaty: «The decision of the court was predicated on the idea of fair commercial competition between Indians and US/Canadian citizens, as well as the fact that Indians did not enjoy the right of transporting duty-free commercial items across the US-Canadian border at the time of the signing of the Jay Treaty» (Nickels 2004:308). Even more significantly, the court found that the Treaty conferred no individual rights on members of any Canadian tribe, as the treaty had never been enacted into legislation by the Canadian government (Nickels, *ibidem*).

In the case of *Mitchell v. Canada (Minister of National Revenue)*, the Akwesasne (Canadian side) Grand Chief Mike Mitchell had claimed immunity from duties per the provisions of the Jay Treaty, attempting entrance into British Columbia carrying a number of goods. The court «opted to view the right as an aboriginal right, restricted, through historical evidence, by a discernable geographical scope. The court concluded that the evidence presented by the Mohawk tribal member

“whether it is in the form of oral history, expert or documentary evidence of past practices, customs and traditions, does not support the existence nor warrant the granting of an aboriginal right free of clear specific geographical limitations”. ... Thus, the court held that the free passage of goods right claimed by the Mohawk only extended to those goods bought in New York State. Similarly, the court held that Mohawk goods used for non-commercial uses (here trading) would be limited only to those groups that were historically trading partners of the Mohawk» (Nickels 2004:330-331). This case dragged through the Canadian courts for thirteen years; according to Darren Bonaparte the 2001 Supreme Court adverse decision «is a major blow: it is still being analyzed by legal and political minds» (2002), with important legal consequences on Mohawk trading.

According to Doug-Kanentiio George, «the past decade has been a bad one for ancestral Iroquois values. On every Iroquois reservation there has risen a so-called “business” class determined to use any and all means to secure maximum monetary profit ... An example of the evisceration of Iroquois traditions is the proliferation of gas stations» (2000:110). As a matter of fact, Akwesasne is not very different from many other border places all over the world, although bureaucratically and legally unusually entangled. Furthermore, Catholic Canadian Mohawks have traditionally traded across the border with Anglo-Dutch Albany traders since the 17th century (Richter 1992). They lived on the outskirts of Montreal, in the village of Caughnawaga, in the 1960s re-named Kahnawake; later this Mohawk-ized multiethnic village split, and in 1755 it gave origin to Akwesasne, straddling on the St. Lawrence River on the USA-Canada border. Shawn Brant, a Tyendinaga Mohawk and an organizer with the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP) describes the border as a barrier, where people must submit to car searches and ID checks at Customs in order to visit relatives who live in the same territory, but across the border: «The border is a barrier to community life in Akwesasne. It is the right of the Mohawk Nation to determine who can cross the border.» According to Darren Bonaparte, a former Akwesasne tribal chief, however, the Mohawks have had a love-hate relationship with the border over the years. During the Prohibition Era it provided opportunity for illegal profit through alcohol trading, and more recently cigarettes and foreign nationals have illicitly travelled north and south respectively. «Mohawk elders recount that border patrol agents used deadly force to combat the smugglers: the bodies of Mohawk suspects were found floating in the river the next day, riddled with bullets. It is said that even Al Capone had a hand in the alcohol trade in Akwesasne» (2002:2). Actually, the situation is much less wild and bloody today, but the smuggling corridor continues to be used for other cargos: «Hundreds of foreign nationals have been taken across the border in the trunk of the cars, tractor trailers, and leaky fishing boats. Many are abandoned on the shores of the Saint Lawrence and left wandering the roads of Akwesasne» Bonaparte argues.

Indeed, Akwesasne is «subject to a remarkable array of provincial, state, Canadian and US federal laws and policed by at least seven different law enforcement agencies» (Dickson-Gilmore 2002:12). While the border is a source of inconvenience and contributes to the fervent ethnonationalist ideology currently prevailing in Mohawk country, it is also an important source of internal prosperity. «While they rail against the borders, these boundaries have provided a significant source of illicit economic activity and relative prosperity in a context where legitimate options are often blocked and sometimes non-existent», argues Dickson-Gilmore (2002:14). Bonaparte concurs: «Eventually, some savvy individuals began to look at the international border and decided to turn what had always been a hindrance into an opportunity. With a nod to those who snuck through the border with alcohol in the days of Prohibition, these aggressive entrepreneurs saw the rise in Canadian tobacco taxes as an opportunity in disguise. Small on-reserve tobacco shops sprang up selling tax-free cigarettes supplied by runners who were able to get them from the United States into Canada, often in the trunks of their cars. »

In a grim picture of out-migration in search of education and employment, as well as in-reservation political patronage with its class, gender and power contests, participation in smuggling economy is rewarding in monetary terms and politically justified in terms of native activism. «You also have to recognize that many in Akwesasne consider smuggling the exercise of their

sovereignty» says Chief Angela Barnes, with the Akwesasne Band Council (CBC 2005). Notwithstanding factional conflicts, in fact, «there are remarkable consistencies among Mohawk citizens, concerning sovereignty and aboriginal rights» (Dickson-Gilmore 2002:14).

As to cigarettes, while the Mohawks base their rights of free passage and free trade on a series of colonial treaties, and specifically the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713, the Jay Treaty of 1794 and the Treaty of Ghent of 1815, at least some of them argue they reserve the right to transport and trade duty-free tobacco as part of «First Nations' spiritual ownership of tobacco» (Jamieson 1991:263). The Supreme Court of Canada, however, as we have seen, has denied cross-border rights as part of Aboriginal rights in a test case brought by the former Akwesasne Grand Chief (Canadian side) Mike Mitchell. As a matter of fact, factions clash more on the means than on the ends of border economy and cross-border rights. As Jamieson (1999) puts it, local involvement in “free trade” or buttlegging has been pervasive in Akwesasne, Kahnawake and Kanasatake, as well as Six Nations/Grand River at least since 1950s, but liquor smuggling was also flourishing in the Prohibition era. The scale of the activity ranges from the spur of the moment to a well organized enterprise (Hornung 1991:22).

In general buttlegging involves transporting cigarettes over relatively short distances, for example between neighbouring countries. As with the legal activities, significant price differentials between jurisdictions create incentives for buttlegging. In addition, greater corruption reduces the risks associated with this activity. Buttlegging is a relatively “low tech” type of smuggling; it requires relatively little investment and is often organized by small gangs, although profits may amount to thousand of dollars per day. Nevertheless, given its small scale, buttlegging accounts for a relatively small share of illegal cigarette smuggling (Joossens and Raw 1995; 1998).

Wilson (1999:64) writes that borders are liminal zones where residents, wayfarers and the state are continually contesting their roles and their natures. International borders, moreover, «are places of extremely complicated and contesting political forces, which might be perceived to be simultaneously centrifugal and centripetal» (1999:66). Smuggling and border may be considered two faces of the same coin because without the imposition of tariffs on the free movement of goods, the smuggling of otherwise legally marketable commodities would not exist. Ambivalence about smuggling is based on the protection smugglers find among border guards, citizen-customers and, in the case of cigarettes, tobacco multinationals.

Smuggling takes place because of the discrepancies between states laws and regulations. This is also true for gaming; in fact, Canadian citizens loaded on buses to Akwesasne gaming facilities were similar to cross border shoppers of gasoline, cigarettes and high tech from Italy to Switzerland. Not everybody in Mohawk land as well as in Italy, consider smuggling in different “commodities” the same thing. «People make their own choices about what is morally appropriate ... Some will do cigarettes, but not drugs» (Harold Tarbell, former Akwesasne elective chief, 1996, in Jamieson 1999). Indeed, an important source of factional conflict lies in the struggle over markets as well as over what goods and services can be traded under the rubric of the sovereignty of the Mohawk Nation (Jamieson 1999:167).

Smuggled cigarettes and alcohol, however, today are often used as forms of currency in more insidious criminal activities, such as drug dealing. If smuggled cigarettes and alcohol occupy an end of the continuum of illegal activities, and are perceived as quasi legal even by law enforcers, not to speak of the average Canadian/American and Mohawk citizens, smuggling of drugs, weapons or human beings, with the accompanying threat of terrorism, does not leave one indifferent. Although the crime dimension in Mohawk country involves only a minority of opportunistic people, which pay lip service to sovereignty rhetoric, their exploitative practices of the community may have serious consequences for the social tissue. As Bonaparte (2002) puts it: «The profits from this trade [cigarettes] created quick and easy wealth, but eventually began to undermine the value system of the participants. The smuggling networks began to expand into drugs, alcohol, and guns.» According to Jake Swamp, «Young people on the reserve are being lured into smuggling with promises of riches in exchange for very little work. Once they have a wad of bills in their pocket,

it's hard to sell them on the concept of an honest day's work for less cash» (*Ottawa Sun*, Feb. 7, 2005). As to that, they are very similar to the young people in the so-called "risk-areas" in Italy, for example.

Contrary to Dickson-Gilmore (2002), however, I think that the "organized" dimension of Mohawk crime has been exaggerated: I do not see any mafia-like dimension in Mohawk land, although Mohawk criminal gangs working with non Indian crime cannot be denied. (On the Sicilian Mafia, its social function and social basis see, for example, Blok 1968, Dalla Chiesa 1976, Arlacchi 1983, Gambetta 1993). On the other hand, authors acknowledge the difficulty of defining "organized crime", and are divided between the corporate structure model and the network model (Dickson-Gilmore 2002). Albin defines the organized or syndicated crime groups more as «a loosely-knit system of patron-client relationship than as the manifestation of a rigidly organized, bureaucratic one» (1998:350, in Dickson-Gilmore 2002:4). As a matter of fact, as we have seen, most activities are carried out by small gangs. Nevertheless, when Mohawk ringleader Tony Laughing was arrested together with former Longhouse sub-chief Loran Thompson, he revealed both heavy tobacco industry involvement in the illegal trade and the size of the operations. «Laughing said he and his underlings transported about seven cases a day across the St. Lawrence River to the Canadian side of the Mohawk Nation starting in the mid-1980s. Police called it smuggling, but Laughing called it free trade to which his native sovereignty entitled him. By 1993, Laughing was moving 240 cases a day and was having a hard time keeping up with the increasing supply. The supply in 1993 amounted to 12,000 cartons, or 2.4 million cigarettes a day – up to 70,000 cigarettes a day in the mid-1980s» (O'Brien, *Herald American*, Syracuse, June 7, 1998). The difference between the mid-1980s and early 1990s was that the Mohawk buttleggers were backed by tobacco company executives and the number of Canadian-brand cigarettes exported to New York State rose from 500,000 in 1989 to 20 billion in 1993. In 1994 Laughing went to Winston-Salem, N.C., the headquarters of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco and given the royal treatment: «A private tour, promotional products. T-shirts, hats – boxfuls of them to pass out on the reservation. They accommodated us by getting more of their product into this country,» Laughing said (*ibidem*).

In Mohawk country, everybody agrees about the existence of smuggling, but they disagree about the size and connected dangers. Kahntineta Horn from Kahnawake rails at Dickson-Gilmore's picture of "Aboriginal organized crime": «Then she makes it sound as if Aboriginal people in Canada consist of smugglers in Akwesasne and urban poor in western cities – a phenomenal misrepresentation» and argues about her right to do so: «People who study Indigenous peoples have to get their consent. Dickson-Gilmore didn't. Her project would not get approved. She knows the protocols. It's hard to understand why she didn't follow them» (*Mohawk Nation News*, March 2005). Jake Swamp states: «We are just like any other community. Any community has a certain element of people who don't want to play by the rules,» Akwesasne Mohawk police Chief Lewis Mitchell refuses the notion that everyone is a smuggler: «We have doctors, we have lawyers, we have teachers in our community and all of a sudden everybody is a smuggler. That's not the case. There is a small percentage of people who involved in this activity. It doesn't speak to the 90 to 95% of the people who are law-abiding citizens just like anybody else» (*Ottawa Sun*, Feb. 7, 2005). Yet the young students interviewed by the *Ottawa Sun* confirm that smuggling is a taboo subject, and that people do not speak for fear of retaliation.

A Smoking Buffalo in Mohawk Country

In the 1980s and the following decades the Mohawks had to cope with two distinct but contemporary crisis: a slump cycle in the building sector coupled with drastic cuts in federal programs on the American side of the border. They were offered a pro Indian gambling legislation and jumped on this chance of economic development.

In the Indian landscape, the Mohawks are different for many reasons, and especially because of their geographical location, but they are also peculiar in that at first gaming was not a tribal

enterprise, but a private business. Even in the utopian experiment of Ganieneh, after a short time, they threw the plough among the nettles and opened an illegal high stakes bingo hall. The hot issue, in the brief civil war in Akwesasne, was that profits from the seven reservation casinos and bingo halls were going exclusively to hall owners and their non Indian management teams. Some participants in the smuggling trade and gambling business, however, «were known to be very generous with their profits, providing cars and homes to those in need, and earning thereby a special place in the hearts of many community members» (Dickson-Gilmore 2002:24), building up a patron-client system of their own.

The peculiar political situation in Mohawk country has led to parallel sources of income: that coming from the tribal/band system and that originating from illegal activities, both of them with their systems of patronage, and appealing to different sources of power and legality. In the models of Mediterranean patronage developed in anthropological literature, according to Gilmore (1982) three ingredients stand out. First, patron-client ties are always characterized by clear-cut asymmetry in terms of wealth and power. Secondly, there is some element of reciprocity, because the patron needs something from the client, usually labour or votes in exchange of favours and protection. Thirdly, there is an element of informality, a “lop-sided friendship” (Pitt-Rivers 1971:140), but also a strong element of deference or “submission” (Davis 1977:132). Patronage relations, therefore, «provide a consistent ideological support for social inequality and dependency» (Gilmore 1982:193). Hornung’s (1991) interviews of the Warriors in 1989-91, describing their relationships with the “Silk-shirts”, that is the casino owners and smuggling kingpins, such as the notorious and infamous Tony Laughing, are a good example of their client relations with the Silk-shirts. Silk-shirts is a derogatory term used by former Mohawk activists to describe a certain type of entrepreneur, such as the Tuscarora “Smokin’ Joe” Anderson or Tony Laughing.

It is indubitable that illegal activities have brought unprecedented wealth into the community: smugglers contribute to legitimate economic development in Akwesasne, Kahnawake, Kanesatake as well as Six Nations/Grand River. As Dickson-Gilmore remembers, in Kawhnewake in particular, «a “levy” was paid by all but a single smuggling family into a central fund which was administered by one of the local Longhouses in the form of interest-free loans to start businesses or build homes» (2002:24), although in Akwesasne the situation appeared somewhat different. In fact, even if a similar tithing system exists, apparently «much of the money “went into somebody’s purse” and when attempts were made to access the funds, it had disappeared and could not be accounted for in acceptable terms» (ibidem).

Smuggling, moreover, has enhanced social differences and in many cases it has also «contributed to a severely skewed socioeconomic structure. While some Mohawks have experienced almost obscene levels of personal wealth, others remain mired in desperate poverty» (Dickson-Gilmore 2002:27), even incapable to access to “contraband charities”, due to lack of personal connections to a business network where “patronage” family and friendship ties count. As a reward to their “honesty” they suffer from the general social harms connected with illegal generalized activities without enjoying the advantages.

For simplicity’s sake I have dealt with two different sets of people controlling different sources of income, but things are not that simple. Actually, in many cases, there is a coincidence or, at least, a relation between what I call a “public system of patronage and business”, that is the corporate tribe and the private system of patronage and business. For example, Leo David Jacobs, the pro-gaming St. Regis Tribal Council chief during the 1989 crisis in Akwesasne was convicted as a member of an international smuggling ring together with former Haudenosaunee (Confederacy) sub-chief and Warrior leader Loran Thompson (George 2000:195). As a second example we can remember that, when a group of maverick Warriors built up the first barricade on the Mercier Bridge during the Oka crisis, Kahnawake Grand Chief Joe Norton and the Kahnawake Warrior Society were puzzled, if not outraged, according to Hornung (1991:202), because they had worked out a loose, but reliable system of coordinating business and politics. As the recent (2004) and ongoing crisis at Kanesatake/Oka demonstrates, however, the balance may be pretty unstable,

especially if the Band Council's strong man does not like maverick competitors challenging his economical and political power, or he does not agree on the type of commodity to be traded (for example, cultivation and sale of valuable Canadian BC Bud marijuana).

Silk-shirts, Warriors, Strong Men and Capitalist "Animal Spirits"

Beginning in early 1980s and especially since 1987, Canadian and provincial governments imposed "sin taxes" on cigarettes, which amounted to a 400 percent tax, aimed at both curbing smoking habits and raising tax revenue. It also made cheaper for Canadian manufacturers to export cigarettes than sell them domestically. The classic North American experiment in forcing social change through legislation came out of the Prohibition Era, when the United States added middle class anti-alcohol values to its Constitution in 1919. As a result, it taught millions of citizens to casually break the law and turned poorly organized criminal gangs into a powerful syndicate, the Mafia. Some 13 years later the experiment was called off. Unfortunately lessons are shortly forgotten after they are learned, and various Canadian provinces flirted with temperance laws and prohibitions of their own, to be added to the federal ones, usually to find that ordinary Canadians, like their American counterparts, can be remarkably subversive when it comes to government regulation of their private affairs (The Mackenzie Institute 1997). Authorities also disregarded the bitter experience of millions of Catholics simply setting aside anathemas and apocalypses railed at from Popish Bulls and pulpits about the flock's sexual behaviour. As a net result of Canadian sin taxes, ordinary citizens turned to the black market and, by January 1994, 40 percent of Canadian cigarette sales were untaxed contraband. In parts of Quebec and Ontario near Indian reserves, almost no legal cigarettes were being smoked at all. Abetted by the situation, Canadian cigarette manufacturers, and especially R.J. Reynolds-MacDonald, through its Northern Brands International, fed the smugglers. The "feather business" in upstate New York worked this way: the Canadian brands were shipped into the US for sale to Native Americans at untaxed prices; these were either smuggled back into Canada into the hands of organized criminals or were sent on to native hucksters on the Kanasatake Reserve near Montreal or the Six Nations Reserve near Hamilton.

In the 1980s high stakes bingo halls and casinos were proliferating in the Mohawk country as well as Iroquoia at large, together with smoke shops and speakeasies. Those who succeeded in the gambling and smoke business were known as Silk-shirts, and their relationship with the Warrior militias has been contradictory since then, in that they have used Warrior military might, but their business sometimes suffered from Warrior proclivity to get in a flap, and therefore the Silk-shirts have tried, when it was advantageous, to come to terms with the tribal/band councils. Cigarette business was so lucrative that even Jake Swamp and other Antis were involved in it in 1986, although they had in vain tried to regulate it in some way. According to York and Pindera (1991) the Warriors were given a total of about \$350,000 in payment by cigarette retailers over a period of two years, and at its most profitable peak in 1990 the tax free industry contributed \$75 million only to Kanawake economy. According to Darren Bonaparte (2002), Akwesasne traditional economy based on agriculture and fishing was destroyed by pollution, «an alphabet soup of toxic chemicals»; Mohawk left home for high steel, or the college. Others became entrepreneurs: « Soon they were moving contraband with boats and tractor trailers.»

In 1993-94 Six Nations reserve had 85 smoke shops, Akwesasne about 70; trailers and plywood shacks mushroomed all over the Mohawk country. Most cigarettes went back and forth, from Canada to the US and back again, through Akwesasne, transported by Mohawks. In early 1994 the government of Canada, joined by Ontario and Quebec, hoisted the white flag and slashed taxes to undercut the black market, and after the tax cut came investigation and prosecution.

The 1993-94 period was also crucial for the tribal/band councils control over the cigarette trade. In the aftermath of the Oka crisis the various Warrior Societies were very weak, frayed by internal bickering and troubles with the law. Tribal electorate, in the meanwhile, tired of years of strife, elected moderate strong men, who promised to bring some order to their reserves. Chief Steve

Williams, for example, was re-elected at Six Nations in 1993 on a political program of regulation of the smoke business: «At some point Six Nations will have control of the industry. We are not going to let a handful of din-a-lings out there says “We’re going to control this. This is our jurisdiction.” That’s baloney as far as I’m concerned. It’s a minority who are the problem, who don’t recognize our police, who don’t believe in our laws, who act on their own behalf. That’s the faction we’re going to try to strengthen out» he told to *Indian Time* (Dec. 3, 1993). It appears that Chief Steve Williams, as well as Tribal/Band Council Chiefs in Kahnawake and Akwesasne succeeded in the governance of the smoke business. Now Chief Williams is also the president of Grand River Enterprises. Only Chief Gabriel in Kanesatake has failed so far. Kenneth Deer of the *Eastern Door* said «you talk to James Gabriel and he says this is about law enforcement and drugs, and you talk to the other side and they say that it is not about that, it’s about a power play by James Gabriel to control the local trade in [Mohawk made] cigarettes» (*The Eastern Door*, Feb.4, 2005).

The chiefs have been helped by the changes in the market, however; in fact, Ottawa has imposed a strict quota of law taxed cigarettes on Canadian reserves and has enforced the sin tax strategy again. Meanwhile, in Akwesasne, private as well as tribal casinos did not fare as good as it was expected, because of mismanagement, relative remoteness of the reservation and competition from non Indian Canadian casinos. In Kahnawake the proposal of a referendum on a casino was rejected by the voters. New York State, as well as other states, in the same years has raised taxes on cigarettes so much that buying “American” cigarettes is no longer a bargain for Canadian smokers. During the slump period some Indian smugglers stayed in business by concentrating more and more upon distilled spirits; the traditional smuggling routes into Ontario come through the Akwesasne Reserve near Cornwall, the Walpole Island Reserve near Sarnia, and through the Niagara Peninsula. The Niagara route often uses the Tuscarora Reservation near Buffalo and the Six Nations Reserve near Brantford as marshalling and distribution points. This was not as profitable as tobacco smuggling used to be, however, because alcohol takes up more space, is far heavier and subject to breakage. Yet, in 1995, some police estimated that 95% of all smuggled liquor came through the reserves, with the bulk of traffic flowing through Akwesasne, but later the different police forces made a great progress in arresting Indian smugglers (The Mackenzie Institute, Oct. 1997).

The Mohawks found also a loophole to continue with the tobacco business: they began to manufacture native cigarettes and, although according to Thompson of the MacKenzie Institute «only the most desperate smokers are buying these unknown and untested products ...[they] are occasionally spotted in Toronto, so somebody is puffing away at them» (2002).

As a matter of fact, the Iroquois, together with the Montagnais have taken the lead (in 1993 ADL Tobacco was founded by three Montagnais brothers at Lac-St.-Jean near Roberval and employs 175 people; it pays both federal and provincial taxes). The Mohawks, the Cattaraugus Senecas, the Tuscaroras and the Seneca-Cayuga of Oklahoma, all manufacture native cigarettes. Grand River Enterprises (GRE) was founded by Ken Hillard and Jerry Montour, Six Nations Mohawks, and it is the largest private business on the reserve, employing over 200 people. In 1997 GRE got a federal licence to manufacture cigarettes. The plant occupies 200.000 square metres, and produces 17 million cigarettes a day, of which Seneca and Opal brands are the most known. In order to get the licence GRE accepted to pay the federal tax, made a deal with the Band Council to have the political flank covered against Ontario, and deposited 2 million dollars as financial warrant. Since GRE accepted to play according to the rules, its budget has soared more and more. GRE has probably become the fourth biggest tobacco industry in Canada. Jerry Montour said that GRE is a good corporate citizen even launching a trust fund to help Native American communities, sponsoring everything from the arts to sports. «History has shown us that GRE cannot operate at the size we are competing at without paying [federal] excise taxes» he said to his critics who question why they pay taxes when they are situated on reserves. «The only reason we are able to sell across Ontario without legal ramifications is because we paid applicable federal taxes and are challenging the provincial taxation at the court level» (Linda Powless, *Turtle Island News/The Eastern Door*, Feb. 4, 2005). GRE has recently expanded operations to a tribally owned plant located in the

Omaha reservation in the USA, of which Jerry Montour is the general manager, are expanding to Germany, and is planning to establish a plant in South Africa. According to figures provided by the company at the 2004 trade fair in the Dortmund Westfallenhallen, Grand River Enterprises has an annual turnover of 300 million dollars on the US market. During the three days of the fair actor Rodney Grant (Wind-in-his-Hair in *Dances with Wolves*) was present at the GRE stand. Grand River Enterprises seems to be the first Native American transnational corporation in the world; it capitalizes on the expertise (together with ADL Tobacco) of retired Imperial Tobacco technicians. Cigarettes and other tobacco products made by GRE are imported into the USA by Native Wholesale Supply, stored in a bonded warehouse, the US excise tax is paid, and the products are delivered by distributors to other Indian reservations, and especially to the Seneca Nation at Cattaraugus, NY.

Under federal law, both Canadian and American provinces and states lack the authority to impose excise taxes on commodities purchased on a reserve/reservation by enrolled members of an Indian tribe. In the USA this tax exemption also applies to the resale of these commodities by Native Americans to Native Americans on a reservation. Although the US Supreme Court has stated that states may seek to impose the excise tax on non Indian purchases by assessing the tax on the wholesalers for the amount of commodity sales the state predicts will go to non Indians, this has not been enforced so far, and every effort to do so has failed. In 2000 the Appellate Division, Third Department, unanimously held that New York's tax statutes cannot be effectively enforced without the cooperation of Indian tribes, and that there is essentially nothing that New York can do to get the Indians to cooperate. The Court also found that immunity extends to retailers (*New York Law Journal*, Aug. 4, 2000). This is also true for the about 147 Indian e-tailers selling native cigarettes on line, even if various states, together with economically damaged non Indian tobacco dealers, are currently planning a counterattack.

Six Nations Reserve and the Montagnais are the largest, but there are other Indian manufacturers: at Kahnawake, for example, Ottawa granted nine permits to manufacture cigarettes, mostly in 2004. According to a survey made by a Canadian TV there are about 150 smoke shops and 600 Mohawk workers in the industry there (SRC/CBOFT TV Jan. 12, 2005; in 2002 Catherine Solymon of the *Montreal Gazette* counted only 15 smoke shops, but numbers vary according to the source). In Oka/Kanesatake the same TV journalists, Alain Picard and François Mouton, counted 23 smoke shops along Rt. 344, which employ about 100 people in a community of about 1000 people living in the village (more 750 live outside). While in Kanesatake Band Grand Chief Gabriel has tried to oppose the trade, in Kahnawake the Band Council is more flexible: «I would say at this point that there is no official position. It's done in the community, and there is no enforcement within the community by our police force» said Timmy Norton, public relations officer for the Mohawk Council of Kahnawake to Chris Paré, *Montreal Mirror* (2002). However, attempts to regulate tobacco trade in Kahnawake have not succeeded completely yet. The Band Council wanted to impose a band tax both on the manufacturers and the retailers, in a very detailed Tobacco Regulatory Law, regulating all the activities connected with the industry, from the transformation to the transport and even including pricing harmonization. The draft of the Regulatory Law, however, was rejected by the cigarette dealers in 2003. Warrior Dan Kirby railed at it as "A Path to Communism" (*Mohawk Nation News* Nov. 14, 2003).

In Akwesasne three cigarette companies have sprung up on the US side of the community, producing known local brands such as Native, Mohawk Blend, and DK's. Two of the plants are licensed by the St. Regis Mohawk Tribal Council: Native Trading, owned by Stewart White, which produces Native brand, and King Enterprises, owned by Wendell King, which produces the DK's brand. The two plants are licensed by the Tribal Council to sell their products in Akwesasne and the US market only and the permits are exclusive of Canada; the operations are monitored by the St. Regis licensing compliance office. Yet, you can buy DK's, Native and other Akwesasne brands as far as Toronto and beyond. Wesley Benedict, manager of the licenses department is not surprised to learn that: «There are some people who aren't licensed with us that are acting on that. They seem to

be doing what they want». The sales of cigarettes, gasoline from the 17 gas stations along Rt. 37, and alcohol (the only licensed establishment is the American Legion Branch), have generated nice fees. All manufacturers and wholesalers pay a fee to the Tribal government for the licence and a percentage of their finished product. They can only sell to tribally licensed retail stores; all Akwesasne business are registered at the tribal Office, but retailers are simply issued a certificate. Tobacco products generate about \$ 3.6 million a year to the tribal Council. A greatly different situation from the anarchy of the 1980s. According to Rowena General, chief of staff at the Akwesasne Tribal Council (and one of the leading Warriors in the late 1980s), it is all perfectly legal: for the Mohawks making cigarettes is a question of sovereignty and the Mohawks' tax free status. «We're fiercely protective of what we believe is ours» said General at CBC.CA News (Aug. 7, 2002).

One of the results of tighter border controls since the September 11 terrorist attacks is that Canadian fine cut tobacco is now more difficult to import from the American side of Akwesasne and is being produced by a growing number of clandestine manufacturers in Kahnawake and Kanesatake. According to a RCMP intelligence report, whose content was published by the *National Post* and by the *Eastern Door* (Greg Horn, 29 April 2003), however, despite the increased security measures put in place following the attack to the Twin Towers, large amounts of tobacco are smuggled from Akwesasne and are destined for Kahnawake. The report also states that in 2002, for example, Akwesasne made Native brand cigarettes were available on the roadside in Kahnawake and Kanesatake for \$20 per carton. According the report Kahnawake and Kahnawake have been ideal locations to warehouse tobacco products illegally manufactured on the US side of the Akwesasne reservation; tobacco products originating from Kahnawake continue to dominate Quebec's illicit tobacco market, selling not only Indian manufactured cigarettes, but also popular Canadian brands. Kahnawake, however, partly in response to the curtailment of cross-border activity, is becoming a primary manufacturing centre for counterfeit fine-cut tobacco. Moreover, according to the same report, it seems that also alcohol is being manufactured illicitly, and not only smuggled.

Smuggled (American side) Akwesasne cigarettes to Canada, mostly by boat from Raquette Road landing, annoy not only Canadian authorities, but also Canadian Indian manufacturers: «They're coming from Akwesasne. They also have a lot of contraband cigarettes coming into ... through Quebec, through the States. We have a lot here as well that you can go almost to any store and find them ... There's no taxes paid whatsoever. The health warnings aren't on the packaging and they're sold here. We've told the government over and over the last four, five, six years. Why aren't you doing something about this? Why aren't you stopping them at the border?» (Steve Williams, president of Grand River Enterprises, Six Nations, to Picard for SRC/CBOFT TV, *Le Point: Native Cigarettes Industry*, 12 Jan., 2005). A customer can even save money if he/she buys Akwesasne cigarettes loose in Ziploc plastic bags, without their manufactured packets.

Smoking Buffaloes and Health Hazards

Together with winning packets and evoking names such as Seneca, Skydancer, Red Rock and Native, and exhibiting logos such as the Hiawatha Belt and the warbonneted chief, Indian manufacturers advertise their products with articles on line. In an Indian e-tailers' website an article titles "Native American Cigarettes Offer Pure Tobacco". According to the author, «Now the Native American people have chosen to reclaim their tobacco heritage as well as their piece of its economic pie. ... Native American people believe in the sacredness of the tobacco plant. To them chemicals are contaminants to be avoided. In this regard, the desires of modern smokers coincides [sic] with the traditions of the native people. The tribes and companies which produce Native American cigarettes today proudly claim their cigarettes are made from pure, natural tobacco». Environmentalist New Age rhetoric is summoned to promote the product, coupled with the notion of thrifty management: «The manufacturer does not have to buy the chemicals to add to the tobacco

and does not have to spend a lot of money for laboratory testing to those chemicals. Consequently Native American cigarettes can be sold for a lower price than popular brands» (Alexander 23/3/05).

Indeed, the article skips the fact that in this multimillion dollars industry people work in Third World workplaces, without health hazards regulations enforced by the tribal/band authorities and very scarce workers' sensitivity on this issue. It is also ironic that communities where strong ironworkers' union locals exist, protecting native workers' rights, have no unionized tobacco workers. An explanation is that the workers employed in this kind of sweatshops around the world are typically mostly women, who trade unions have historically disregarded, and this is also the case in Indian country. At Grand River Enterprises, for example, there are about 200 people, most of them single mothers. In 2005 their average wage was \$ 14 per hour, non taxed, against a \$ 44 per hour wage in the non Indian tobacco industry (SRC/CBOFT TV, *Le Point: Native Tobacco Industry*, 12 Jan. 2005). In Kahnawake (and probably also in the other Mohawk communities) the operations range from cutting edge manufacturing facilities to cottage industry tobacco drying and cutting in residential homes.

As early as 1713 Ramazzini wrote about the diseases of tobacco workers: the health effects that the workers complained of were associated with their workplace, and in particular the ill-ventilated and damp conditions, and with the dust resulting from the grinding of tobacco leaves in the mill. These complaints included headache, cough, nausea, and vomiting. A series of surveys about tobacco workers' occupational and environmental diseases in Zagreb (Croatia), Plovdiv (Bulgaria) and in Turkey may help to highlight the issue. In the Croatian plant (Mustajbegovic et al. 2003), which we may consider as typical, workers worked in alternatively dry and humid environments with exposure to tobacco dust, mould and mildew. The industrial operations were only partially mechanized and considerable manual handling of the leaves was required; all steps from the tobacco bales to the cigarettes were performed without hoods or other engineering controls, while protective masks were provided but worn only occasionally. The Croatian as well as the other studies suggest that employment in the tobacco industry may be responsible of acute and chronic respiratory symptoms, increased eye irritation as well as irritation of lips and upper airways, work-related headaches, nausea and vomiting. «Finally, our long experience with respiratory findings in tobacco workers shows that harmless tobacco dust does not exist» (Yanev 2004). Moreover, the Turkish survey states: «These results suggest that chronic exposure to tobacco dust results in harmful changes in the serum lipid profile, which could increase the incidence of cardiovascular diseases» (Adam et al. 1999). Furthermore, the Croatian study adds: «Finally, since smoking is clearly an additional risk factor affecting the respiratory system in this setting tobacco workers should be strongly discouraged from smoking» (Mustajbegovic et al. 2003).

Nationally, lung cancer, together with cardiovascular diseases, is the leading cause of death among the Native Americans and Alaskans. Data from the 1997 US National Health Interview Survey show that, among the five major racial and ethnic populations, adult smoking prevalence was highest among Native Americans and Alaskans (34.1%) and that, while general cigarette smoking has declined since 1978, this is not true for Native Americans and Alaskans. In addition, Native American and Alaskan lands are sovereign nations and are not subject to state laws prohibiting the sale and promotion of tobacco products to minors. As a result, native young people have access to cigarettes at a very young age. The tobacco industry, on the other hand, to build its image in the community, funds cultural events such as powwows and rodeos. The tobacco industry also uses cultural symbols and designs to target racial/ethnic populations and Indian manufactured tobacco products are not an exception, as we have seen. The situation is very similar in Canada: «The high prevalence of smoking among Aboriginal peoples is evident to the casual observer and confirmed in regional surveys» (Waldram, Herring and Young 1995:84).

It is obvious, therefore, that Mohawk workers are subject to serious dangers for their health, because of smoking habits as well as workplace environment. The semi-illegal status of part of the industry increases the risks for the workers. «Factor in the ever growing number of manufacturers and the lack of regulations and you have a potential recipe for disaster», writes Brendan Johns in the

Eastern Door (Dec. 17, 2004). The Kahnawake Environmental Health Office, has begun a voluntary safety program with two manufacturers: according to technicians David Montour and Mark Horne, these two facilities had high tech air filtration systems and employees were provided with comprehensive protective clothing, but these plants were only two out of the possible ten or more manufacturers in the community. In fact, as Horne emphasized, the actual number of manufacturers in Kahnawake is unknown. From the article it is clear that the lack of regulations, widespread hostility for rules, and scarce sensitivity are major obstacles to the enforcing of a serious health hazards program, which currently focuses only on case-by-case basis (Johns 2004).

The Discreet Charm of the Tribal Bourgeoisie

Generally speaking, American Indians own private businesses at a much lower rate per capita and the business they own produce less income on average than all other American and Canadian groups. The majority of the federal efforts to create and sustain economic development on Indian reservations/reserves have dealt with tribal governments. Today tribal technocrats organize, fund and, in most cases, operate and direct the majority of the economic activity in Indian country. This situation is the result of centuries old federal Indian law and policy. «It has resulted to a large degree in the formation of what looks to the untrained eye to be socialistic economies in Indian country, because the federal and tribal governments control most of the economic activity and jobs» (Miller 2002:760-761). Moreover, most Indians lack access to family money and normal credit avenues «due to the absence of mortgage home ownership in Indian country and a nearly non-existent appreciating private housing market» (Miller 2002:841). As a matter of fact, tribal economies in Indian country are dominated by what Rata calls Neotribal Capitalism, which is firstly «characterized by the absence of private ownership of the means of production. The corporate tribe, rather than the individual, is the legal owner of the lands, waters and knowledge. Economic control of tribal resources is located in the groups who use the resources for commodity production. Secondly, class relations of production are reified as communal social relations within a neotribalist ideology» (2000:33).

In Mohawk country, on the other hand, because of the peculiar borderland economy of the reservations/reserves, access to financial capital has also been possible out of the traditional tribally controlled avenues. If a comparison can be made, given the due proportions, in Indian country, the capitalist neotribe, moored as it is in the Canadian Indian Act and the American Indian Law, is somewhat similar to Chinese socialist capitalism, while Mohawk land, at least during the last 30 years, because of its geo-economical location, has been more similar to a post Soviet Union republic at the boundary of the former Soviet Empire, for example Georgia or one of the “-Stan countries”.

Gaming legislation and sin-taxes have favoured the hoarding of important wealth resources, privately owned by Mohawk maverick entrepreneurs, who have abandoned their working class status to join the capitalist middle class. Only a part of them has reached that status, however, that is the well-off tribal elites competing for the control of the tribal/band councils and the profits these bureaucracies allow. A number, in contrast, has become a permanent member of the illegal underclass, and probably will have to wait at least a generation to make its wealth respectable (the fact that these two sectors of well off people may have obscure and unmentionable relationships does not change the rules of the game).

Schröder (2003:450) wonders «if social stratification among American Indians is sufficiently stable to speak of classes in an orthodox Marxian sense (or if it makes more sense to stick with the phrase of an “emergent class system” ...).» I believe that the convulsions of the Mohawk body politic during these thirty years have given birth to a more complex, stratified capitalist society than in most reservations/reserves. In fact, in Mohawk country, tribally owned enterprises such as casinos as well as federal funded services, are not the only economic activities of some relevance. I think that Mohawk country is currently undergoing a “classic” Industrial Revolution, due to the

outsourcing of cigarette manufacturing into the reservations/reserves. Until recently, the Mohawks were members of a generic Canadian/American working class, mostly thanks to their ironworking as well as other factory jobs outside the reservations/reserves. In-reservation social stratification was made up of the new middle class technocrats and a mostly white collar working class employed in tribal services. With the investment of profits from private casinos and bingo halls as well as smuggling, from cigarettes to illegal aliens, into the tobacco sweatshops, I see the birth of a local working class.

These last thirty years have seen a new turn in globalization; as Friedman (2001) puts it, globalisation is a process of local transformation, the packing in of global events, products and frameworks into the local: the rise of indigenous movements is part of this larger systemic process. The combination of tribal organization and capital accumulation and transfer, as Friedman adds following Rata (1997, 2000), is important to understand the way a local movement can become reorganised into the global system. The class structure that seems to be emergent in capitalist neotribes is one in which those who control capital within the tribes introduce wage labour among lower ranked kin, tending to turn them into a subordinate class if these relations are reproduced. In the Mohawk case, this process of fragmentation within the neotribe is further forwarded by the class formation in the tobacco sweatshops.

The second class division that emerges, following Rata's model, that is the division between those with and those without access to tribal property is still in force, and excludes the Mohawks who still inhabit urban working class neighbourhoods, although some of those tribal citizens have come back to the reservations/reserves because of the new opportunities offered by the black market. Others, however, tend to be excluded permanently (for example C-31 women and their children in Canada), or are being expelled by the manipulations of "blood quantum" citizenship rules from Kahnawake, the community which seems to lead the current political shifts.

Another class aspect of this native movement is related to the extreme decentralization of capital accumulation and the shift from real investment to fictitious accumulation. We can rubric under this item not only casino profits, but also illegal money: in fact, as it is argued by Friedman (2001), in fictitious accumulation a lot of money is transferred in the form of pork barrels to firms dealing with all kinds of non-productive activities. Friedman cites the so-called consultancies and NGOs that have developed explosively in the past decade, but we can add also illegal money from contraband. As I see it, what may look as almost pre-modern forms of class exploitation in the cigarette manufacturing plants or in the tobacco cottage industry in the Mohawk and Iroquois reservations, have actually been generated by post-modern processes of globalization.

Conclusion

The current situation in Mohawk country stimulates discussion on at least two issues: class struggle and industrial "monoculture". Although it is still unstable, a pattern of a double system of clientelism is currently perceivable: the "public", tribal/band council patronage, and the private entrepreneurial one. The two systems, however, tend to intermingle, because, after the "Wild West" beginnings, many private, maverick entrepreneurs are finding advantageous to respect some rules under the protective political umbrella of the Councils, which push as far as they can sovereignty notions. The neotraditionalist stance of most tribal/band Mohawk officials has also helped to rely on political personnel who finds the source of legitimate power not on social contract style institutions, but on a Great Law of heavenly origin. This way the low degree of legitimacy accorded by many tribal members to the tribal/band councils, as the result of the imposition of a foreign political system, is overcome through the traditionalization of the tribal/band councils, especially if the strong man who is the President or Grand Chief is a wordly-wise politician. Local class relations, therefore, are both legitimized and clouded through a discourse of "tradition".

While it is possible that class struggle episodes will outburst in the future, as they did in the past, I do think they will speak neither the language of the Left nor that of democracy, the thesis of the

influence notwithstanding; indeed, they will still use the language of religion and ethnicity, and factional rivalry will remain within the patronage system rail tracks. Tradition may even serve as a resource not only to militant fundamentalists who brand as traitors all non traditional tribal members (Alfred 1995), but also to tribal/band councils to banish and evict political opponents as well as “outsiders”. Neotraditionalist ideology also clouds gender issues, and as far as I know a gendered political discourse is currently almost non existent, after the courageous struggle of a group of Mohawk and other native women in the 1980s, resulting in the C-31 legislation. Garneau argues that: «Significant differences between Aboriginal women and men exist on the Aboriginal national question. Many First Nations women do not share the national project proposed by the official leadership of the main Aboriginal groups because they feel excluded as status members but also because they could easily lose their status if they divorce an Aboriginal man who owns a house in the reserve. Without any home, these women cannot stay within the community. Being out of the community also means that they would lose their band membership and cannot get involved within activities of the community: no services, no education, no housing, etc. The issue of violence against women, children and elders makes it also difficult for many women to stay within the community/reserve. ... Self-determination of Aboriginal peoples and democratic liberal values seem at first sight to be contradictory about the concept of equality between the sexes within the membership of an Aboriginal community. ... Gender relations and national relations often translate, indeed, as an exclusion of women» (2001:1-2). Furthermore, as Friedman (2001) points out, indigeneity and neotraditionalism in certain conditions produce extreme nationalism within the state, and this accounts for the strange fact that the ideology of the European New Right is so similar to that of some indigenous movement. This is also the case of many Mohawk ideologues.

In Mohawk country, however, although gambling and smoking are useful to the formation of local stratified class structure, they cannot be viewed as the New Buffalo. In fact, it has been demonstrated that only a small percentage of casinos are economically viable and in Akwesasne the Mohawk Casino is not among them. If the new off reservation Catskill Casino project (as part of the land claim deal with New York State) will succeed, it will only strengthen the St. Regis (American) tribal council power structure. As to the economical fall-out, it has been also demonstrated that 85% of casino generated jobs occupy non Indians: the new off reservation casino will confirm the trend.

Although cigarette manufacturing and/or smuggling offer a differentiated source of income, I do not think these activities will last for long as they are now. The industry is in decline in the Western world, and even Grand River Enterprises is looking for an even lower wage location in South Africa. Furthermore, when the integration processes of the NAFTA harmonize tariffs north and south of the St. Lawrence River border, probably cigarette smuggling will not be as profitable as it is now, an event which has already happened within the European Union. Indeed, the Mohawks are basing their Industrial Revolution on a low tech cigarette “monoculture”, which elsewhere in the West is being outsourced to the Third World.

In Mohawk land during more than two decades the opportunity of consolidating an entrepreneurial class different from tribal managers has risen, although recently it appears waning. Private bingo halls and casinos as well as private cigarettes manufacturing plants represent the effort of a sector of Mohawk society to join the ranks of the middle class on the basis of the private means of production, in contrast with corporate tribal control. The competition of these new actors in the tribal power game has been replied to with different answers, from factional civil war first in Akwesasne, later in Kanesatake to political agreements in Kahnawake. Most of those who have been challenging the corporate tribal managers, however, are not well equipped ideologically, and the economic fabric of Mohawk society seems currently to be too shaky and primitive and its private entrepreneurs too petty to give origin to a real industrial middle class, independent from the corporate neotribe, competing with it and aware of its role. Moreover, although hegemonic (in Gramscian sense) during these years, the traditionalist ideology resting on the Great Law and the notion of Mohawk body politic has been ineffective in elaborating a national stance, and is still

stuck in a day to day village politics. Even the most articulate Mohawk ideologue, Gerald Alfred (1995, 1997) has not yet been able to make proposals beyond the polity of Kahnawake.

In this paper I have tried to explore whether we can speak of a local Mohawk working class, specific to the reservation economic conditions and different from the general American/Canadian working class. As a matter of fact, there is a great difference between the Mohawk working class, which is member of the top layer of the unionized American/Canadian working class, and the Mohawk reservation working class. The latter, in fact, works in old, non unionized sweatshops, manufacturing cigarettes or doing some tobacco processing as a cottage industry. The working conditions and bargaining power of this reservation working class is similar to those of the Mexican *maquiladoras*, if not to those of the Chinese and other illegal immigrants.

I have also tried to understand whether we can speak of a middle class layer distinct from or alternative to the corporate tribal management of the capitalist neotribe. Although the peculiar borderland situation in the Mohawk country created economic opportunities, allowed by the (both legal and illegal) underground economy, those who are not still stuck to the illegal or criminal underclass, are not numerous enough or aware of their role to coalesce into a real industrial middle class. Probably the population of the three Mohawk reserves (it would be interesting to study the other Mohawk reserves I left out of this paper), plus Six Nations Reserve, is not numerous enough to allow the consolidation of a middle class layer independent from or alternative to the neotribal capitalists. Moreover, even if most Mohawk country lies in Canada, which is a unifying factor, the different legal situation of each reserve has not favoured the formation of a “national” awareness or political coordination. The Three Councils meetings in Akwesasne are the only current effort to achieve this goal. At the political and economical micro level, all the reserve leaders have bargained with the outside world in open order, often in competition, and mostly winking to their village constituencies and clientele. We may say, therefore, that the Mohawks are still within a *Gemeinschaft* dimension of politics, although they are immersed in a *Gesellschaft* world, and also their economy is on the *Gesellschaft* end of the continuum.

Furthermore, even if the Warriors’ version of the Great Law may be considered as a rudimentary stage of a “Calvinist-like” religious-political reformation, after Louis Hall’s death no Warrior thinker has stepped forward yet. Therefore, there is no theoretically alternative notion of sovereignty to those of the neotribalist tribal/band Councils’ (Hornung 1991; Pertusati 1997; Alfred 1995, 1999) or to the Longhouse traditionalists’ (George-Kanentio 2000; Swamp and Schaaf 2004). In conclusion, at the moment this embryonic industrial middle class is still either mired in the underground economy (legal and illegal), or is being co-opted by the tribal corporate system and merging with it. As to the reservation Mohawk working class, its status is more similar to that of Mexican *maquiladora* workers than that of General Motors’ ones.

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