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Chief Seattle's speech(es): Ambivalent idealizations and emplacing the uprooted 'origin'

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*Chief Seattle's Speech(es):
Ambivalent Idealizations
and Emplacing
the Uprooted 'Origin'*

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The Faculty of Arts
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USE OF THESIS

The Use of Thesis statement is not included in this version of the thesis.

ABSTRACT

This thesis traces the narcissistic dynamics behind mounting idealizations of a Native American Indian, Chief Seattle, and his renowned speech of 1854. In my work I draw from psychoanalytic, poststructuralist, 'post-colonial', and translation theories, as well as from contemporary Indian scholarship. I develop my own provisional model of what I term "Narcissistic Drift", providing a means of charting the intertextual dynamics driving colonial representations of otherness to converge progressively with stereotypical norms. Where previous Seattle studies have tended to concern themselves with issues of textual 'authenticity', I build on such work to consider how an indigenous speech 'uprooted' from its Native American contexts by the written word, has become vulnerable to fetishistic uses by colonial producers, as well as to growing universalist idealization in written and visual media. I resist such trends by re-positioning H.A. Smith's Seattle speech version of 1887, relative to traces of the 1854 oration's political and cultural contexts and codes of interpretation. I find that in Smith's speech version - despite its aestheticizing frame - there is a sense of agency and sophistication in the Salishan elder's rhetorical manoeuvrings. I argue that Seattle's dynamic position in judgement of the colonizers, located in-between absolute denial and unqualified acceptance of 'Red'/'White' brotherhood, becomes erased by subsequent, increasingly assimilationist portrayals. I locate these idealizations of Seattle and his speech at a disempowering site placed across the West's most profound 'excluded middle' - between 'Nature' and 'Culture'.

I certify that this thesis does not incorporate without acknowledgement any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any institution of higher education; and that to the best of my knowledge and belief it does not contain any material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text.

Signature

Date 11/11/96

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INTRODUCTION: PHANTASMS OF THE WHITE MAN'S INDIAN

Fergus Bordewich writes how the Campo Indians, living on a tiny reservation east of San Diego, plan to gain jobs and financial independence by leasing 300 acres of their lands to Mid-American Waste Systems as a landfill refuse dump (130). As the Campos' hilltop reservation is above the water table, environmental groups and local non-Indians are deeply disturbed at the possibility of toxins leaching into the groundwater through fissures in the rock. Bordewich tells how a rancher living below the reservation displays a poster entitled "Chief Seattle Speaks" on her trailer wall, complete with the accusatory words "HOW CAN YOU BUY OR SELL THE SKY, THE WARMTH OF THE LAND?" (131). The rancher is both perplexed and angry at the Campos' intentions, "before all this, I had this *ideal* [my emphasis] about Indian people ... I used to think that they had this special feeling about the land". There is reproach here, both from the disillusioned rancher and from her phantasmic two-dimensional Chief on the wall behind, uprooted from indigenous realities and penned into his own tiny reservation of white-bounded paper. It might be tempting to add my own voice to such reproaches, as I have myself taken part in ecological "direct action" opposing the opening of a landfill site situated over a vulnerable watertable.¹ However, despite my thoroughly interested, ecologically affiliated position I follow Spivak, whose phrase advises to "develop a certain degree of rage against the history that has written such an abject script for" ... me that I seem forced to side *either* with Indians seeking economic self-determination *or* with a pollution-threatened environment (1990:62). Such an "abject script" of excluded middles and "either/or" dichotomies risks reinforcement and further dissemination when these "how can you buy or sell the sky" lines are "becoming as familiar to American schoolchildren as those of the Gettysburg Address once were" (Bordewich 131). If Bordewich is correct, the formative influence of these words must be

huge, and suggests the breadth of impact even a single romanticizing, colonial representation may have upon the attitudes non-Indians hold toward Native Americans.

The above scenario prompts three key questions which closely foreshadow the themes structuring this thesis. First, from where do such posters' representations of `Indian Ecological Wisdom` under Seattle's name originate, and do they correspond to any historic oration? In response, in Chapter One I précis and briefly critique the textual and critical histories of Seattle's testimony, not to `pin-down` definitive textual origins and truths, but to ground an informed discursive space in which such `origins` and `truths` may be meaningfully interrogated.

Second, to what degree do such depictions idealize the Salishan elder, and how have they evolved into stereotypical representations so uprooted from indigenous realities that they may be allied *with* non-Indians, and *against* the contemporary Campos? In Chapter Two I use a Lacanian psychoanalytic perspective to help address this question. I argue that once Seattle's speech was deracinated or uprooted from the contexts of `traditional` oratory by the written word, it became vulnerable both to interested, fetishistic positionings of Seattle as a `Noble Savage`, and to a trend of compounding idealization which may usefully be figured as what I term "Narcissistic drift". This `Narcissistic drift` will be developed as a tool to help chart the intertextual dynamics driving cumulative representations of a colonial `object` to converge progressively with stereotypical norms.

Using a multi-media perspective, I then consider the metonymic idealization of `the Chief` over his speech by assessing photographic and pictorial depictions of Seattle himself. I particularly focus on cover images and text from Susan Jeffers' popular 1992 picturebook for children, Brother Eagle, Sister Sky, contending that such universalist depictions are never `innocent`, driven by narcissistic dynamics in which aggressivity can never be completely separated from erotic, ultimately assimilative identifications with the colonial other.

Finally, I ask how strategies might be developed which permit a re-positioning of any textual traces from Chief Seattle's speech, in a way more closely contexted to the historic elder's possible interests and concerns than this ethereal 'Every-Indian's' demands for ecological purity? In Chapter Three I assess the implications for the colonized of deconstructive strategies used by many cultural critics to subvert the dichotomies of colonial discourse. I then consider the possible effects of nineteenth century translation practices, specifically figurings of the 'noble purity' and 'natural eloquence' of Indian languages and orators. I identify *form* as one of the most important, yet least recoverable keys to deep understanding of Lushootseed language orations in written translation.

Maintaining my engagement with these fraught theoretical and translation issues, I make culturally and historically contexted interventions with the first written version of Seattle's speech. I contend that this text still bears traces of the elder's creative, empowered alignments of both parties with truth-binding cosmological guarantors. I then go on to trace the tripartite structure of the text's negotiations of the *possible* brotherhood between Seattle's people and the whites. From here, I focus my thesis to a key proposition. I argue that over time, drifts in idealization of Seattle and his speech toward increasingly passive, universalist portrayals have erased his carefully manoeuvred qualifications to statements of fraternity between 'Red' and 'White' peoples. Such erasures eject Seattle out of a dynamic, equivocal site in-between statements of absolute *cultural* difference, and allusions to a common *natural* destiny in the ubiquitous cycle of birth/life/death. In these idealizational drifts we witness a birth of the West's greatest, arguably most damaging 'excluded middle' - between the catachretic terms 'Nature' and 'Culture'.

At this stage, the term "Indian", and its use in this thesis must be clarified. Michael Dorris (*Modoc*) makes a strong case against this 'homogenizing misnomer' which "was born in the myopic minds of a few culturally traumatized and

geographically disoriented individuals" (148). Kenneth Lincoln (*Lakota*), however, observes that the misnomer "ironically so, now binds many native peoples" (1983:8). My position is, after Lincoln, to make general use of the term `Indian`, but with references to individuals always qualified by (*tribal names*) as anti-homogenist reminders of diversity. This approach wishes to privilege Indians' trickster-style comic impiousness towards the label, over some hypotragic `Western` over-propriety. As this joke of Vine Deloria Jr. (*Yankton Sioux*) reminds, "Columbus didn't know where he was going, didn't know where he had been, and did it all on someone else's money. And the white man has been following Columbus ever since" (in Swann 1983:49).

Elaborate, nuanced self-locatory gestures are becoming almost *de rigueur* within critiques of colonial discourse falling under the banner of `post-colonial studies`. But are they adequate? The Chicago Cultural Studies Group (CCSG)² proposes an act of `affiliation` which "describes the possibility of thematizing one's position and turning it into a site of conflict" (548). I write as an Anglo-Celtic, lower middle-class male, working on a thesis to achieve academic graduation at "Honours" level. Such a gloss, while not completely unhelpful, does indeed `gloss` or glaze over my cracks and fissures of multiple affiliation. My own theoretical position, for example, draws significantly on Derridian strategies, yet my first encounter with any version of Chief Seattle's speech was as a subscriber to `Beshara`, a 1980s British magazine "concerned with unity". While I do not find my deconstructivist and holistic affiliations mutually exclusive, they do inevitably generate strong positional tensions and torsions which must play through any theorized textual engagements I make. I also have a certain complicity in the dissemination of a heavily re-written 1970s speech version by Ted Perry, having excerpted it (before hearing of its dubious authenticity), to conclude an anti-nuclear article for `Harambe` magazine. In addition, I have worked for several years as an environmental activist engaging in direct actions for

Greenpeace, and thus cannot completely sever my critique of Indian ecological idealizations from my own deep-seated pro-environment agenda.

Such auto-biographical affiliative gestures are to some degree necessary in developing a writing position which does not transparently wield the 'view from nowhere' of the Author-Expert-God. They also carry their own peculiar risks. What the CCSG term "the self-congratulatory tone of much postmodern ethnography" (549) may easily creep into such manoeuvrings, and if at odds with the larger rhetoric of the paper, can become a disingenuous tokenism. The CCSG also warns that "neither in identity politics nor in an academic discourse such as anthropology can the affiliations of knowledge be reduced to the self-reflexive affiliations of its individual producers" (548). It continues by stating that "affiliation ... requires ... foregrounding one's own pedagogical authority as the present arbiter of normativity" (549). Risks abound here too. Rather than accept a somewhat onerous position as the 'present arbiter of normativity', I might rely on a redeployment of Indians' words as if these might somehow constitute a self-organizing, free-standing self-representation. As Gayatri Spivak phrases it, this would be the disingenuous act of "the first-world intellectual masquerading as the absent nonrepresenter who lets the oppressed speak for themselves" (1988a:87). This risk is not so much one of 'ventriloquism' (Brewster 7), where there is tacitly *understood* to be separation between (academic) voice-thrower and (native) 'dummy'. More closely, I figure this risk as an insidious inversion of Frantz Fanon's title Black Skin, White Masks; a risk, that is, of writing from behind 'White Skin, (Red) Masks'.

In this thesis the goal of my knowledge production is to map-out possible co-ordinates for a representational middle-ground *between* the dualities which Western thought tends to impose on the (colonial) objects it construes. In terms of discursive strategy, I see this as a process of finding a dynamic space in-between on the one hand, the utter relativism of those for whom the other is a sublimely unknowable phantasm of discourse, and on the other, the

transparent `knowability` underlying a tacitly assimilationist imposition of `what the Indian really said` onto a colonized figure who may no longer reply. My belief is that Chief Seattle's oration had to be `uprooted` from its multiple contexts by the written word, before it could be redeployed in colonial interests. My political interest, then, is to `re-politicize` the first written version of Seattle's speech, attempting to reveal it as a site of semantic conflict in which a sense of the agency and sophistication of Seattle's negotiations with the powerful white colonizers may displace more recent, disempowering idealizations of `Chief Seattle`, his speech, and by extension, contemporary Native Americans.

1 SPEECH(ES), TEXTS AND INTERROGATIONS

That which we now call the world is the result of a host of errors and fantasies which have gradually arisen in the course of the total evolution of organic nature, have become entwined with one another and are now inherited by us as the accumulated treasure of the entire past - as a treasure: for the value of our humanity depends on it.

Frederick Nietzsche, 1878

The December 1854 oration of "Chief Seattle" (*Suquamish/Duwamish*)³, is subject to much historical debate, not least because there exists no verbatim transcript. The speech was delivered in the Salishan elder's Lushootseed language (Kaiser 511), at a reception staged for Isaac I. Stevens, the first governor of Washington Territory⁴. It was translated into the Chinook trade 'jargon' by an Indian interpreter, and possibly to English by George Gibbs, Stevens' ethnologist (Buerge 1991:28). The speech was in response to Stevens' preliminaries to the Point Elliott land-transfer treaty, signed the following month by Seattle and other key elders. The first print version of the oration was published thirty-three years later, on October 29th 1887 by the 'Seattle Sunday Star', a middle-class literary weekly. The text was reconstructed from notes taken at the speech occasion by pioneer/doctor and friend of Seattle, H.A. Smith, and is enframed by Smith's own romanticizing comments (Appendix E). This version is the only known source of all later variants, and shall be critically interrogated, re-contexted and strategically re-read during this thesis. The first addition to Smith's text occurred when C.B. Bagley reprinted it in 1931, altering some wording and adding as a coda the dramatic phrases, "Dead - did I say? There is no death. Only a change of worlds" (255). As Rudolf Kaiser speculates, the addition "may have opened up the way for a very free and wilful [sic] handling of the original text by other editors" (513). This coda was also printed in a 1932 version of Smith's text by J.M. Rich, with comments stressing the tragic universality of the speech as a "mighty oration of farewell" (8).

The first major changes to Smith's 1887 text occur in Dr. William Arrowsmith's version of 1969. This adopts simplified wording, based on Arrowsmith's belief that `Indian language` was more "down to earth" than Smith's florid prose (in Krenmayr 6). Such reductive approaches are resisted by Toby Langen, a translator of classical Lushootseed narrations, who believes a similar "devaluation of form and ... privileging of plot in past translation practice" has generated shame amongst contemporary Lushootseed speakers concerning the formal `peculiarities` of traditional oratory (196). Krenmayr further resists Arrowsmith's approach with the question "who is to know, without being fluent in Seattle's native tongue, that it, too, was not more like a native `Victorian` style?" (6). Considering that H.A. Smith settled in Seattle town in 1853, and that he "mastered the Duwamish language in about two years" (Vanderwerth in Kaiser 511), it seems reasonable to speculate that he had at least basic competence in the chief's language by December 1854. If one adds to this the tendency of political oratory within traditional authority structures to use formalized speech acts, creating a certain "archaism of ... language" (Bloch 17), then Smith's Victorianisms may well be more apt than Arrowsmith allows.

Far more radical changes occurred when white film scriptwriter Ted Perry made a substantial and free-ranging re-write in 1971, inspired by Arrowsmith's 1969 `translation` (Buerge 1991:29 - see Appendix A for timeline). It is Perry's *new* lines that were quoted by the rancher's Seattle poster in my opening example. His version, commissioned by the Southern Baptists as a filmscript on pollution, was circulated apocryphally under Seattle's name and has since gained worldwide popularity, especially in ecological and `New Age` circles. For Perry, his crucial slip was "the mistake of using Chief Seattle's name in the body of the text In writing a fictional speech I should have used a fictional name" (in Kaiser 520). The text contains factual errors, such as names of fauna not found in the Northwest, and mention of the "smoking, iron horse" (Perry in Young 17), fourteen years before Union Pacific

completed the railroad to the West coast. It also portrays Seattle as a prophetic 'proto-ecologist', a position encouraging romanticizing parallelisms between the Indian/White, and Nature/Culture oppositions. Perry's Seattle maintains the syncretic, universalist vision that, despite the two races' conflicting ecological attitudes, "our God is the same God" (in Young 17). This erases the import of the 1887 lines of Smith's Seattle, "your God loves your people and hates mine" (IV),⁵ an assertion of theological *incompatibility* I later argue is a peripeteia, or sudden change, in the course of Seattle's negotiations of possible 'brotherhood' between his people and the colonizers. Despite these profound reservations, and the following lines' androcentrism, it is hard for me to criticize Perry's ecological ethos:

Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of the earth This we know - the earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth. This we know. All things are connected, like the blood which unites one family Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web he does to himself. (in Young 17)⁶

A burgeoning variety of Seattle testimony versions appeared after, and drew freely from Ted Perry's filmscript, once it entered international markets in the 1970s. Such free-playing, postmodern narrative circulations have been celebrated by some Indian scholars as a route out of the 'hypotragic' representationalism of much Western ethnography. Gerald Vizenor (*tribe unnamed*) suggests "postmodernism liberates imagination and widens audiences for tribal literatures" (6). This may well be so, but at what price wider audiences? Krenmayr reports how an animated statue of Chief Seattle at Spokane's Expo '74 World's Fair, mouthed parts of a popular Perry-text variant, including the "Earth is our mother" Arrowsmith attributes to Spokane Garry (*Spokane* - Krenmayr 6). In terms of the heterogeneous discourses of postmodernity, this Animatronic Indian, electronically resuscitating the re-moulded words of dead orators, is a "metastable, programmatic, perfect descriptive machine" of the type which Baudrillard describes as "[providing] all the signs of the real and [short-circuiting] all its vicissitudes" (4). The 'Seattle' of The

Expo '74 World's Fair dramatically illustrates Baudrillard's dystopic scenario, bringing into the world a robotic transfixion of the universal Indian which haunts the colonial Imaginary. This physical manifestation of such decontexted and disempowering fantasies surely represents the nadir of the speech's exhibition history.

Greater reinforcement of such idealizations of both Chief Seattle and his testimony may occur, however, through less spectacularly artificial, more widely circulated textual presentations. Examples of such a populist diaspora would have to include mythologist Joseph Campbell's version of 1988. In the interests of Campbell's own universalist message, lines from Smith's Seattle such as "we are two distinct races and must ever remain so Day and night cannot dwell together" (IV), are uprooted and inverted to become the syncretic "no man, be he Red Man or White Man, can be apart" (35). Susan Jeffers, explicitly acknowledging Campbell's influence (23),⁷ has produced yet another version, this time a 1992 book listed as "juvenile literature", complete with romantic pictures spliced with a simplified and abridged, Campbell-derived text. This presentation reached number five in the "New York Times" best-seller list (Bordewich 132), and in 1996 has been translated for spanish markets. In Chapter Two of this thesis I consider Jeffers' idealizations of Seattle more closely, motivated by the picturebook's great popularity, and its potential to inculcate universalist stereotypes of "The Indian" at early, impressionable ages.

There has been steady growth in the critical attention Seattle's testimony has received, paralleling the diaspora of new speech versions in the 1970s. In 1975, Seattle journalist Janice Krenmayr wrote the article "The Earth is our Mother" - Who really said that? Krenmayr raises crucial questions about the speeches' spurious or compromised authenticities. Armed with her local knowledge, she foregrounds many of the factual inaccuracies in the 1971 version, but, for all her insightful "sleuthing", is unable to unearth the roots of this apocryphal text, now known to

have been planted by Ted Perry and the Southern Baptists.

Krenmayr's local groundwork was taken up years later by German scholar Rudolf Kaiser, who delivered a benchmark paper in the study of Chief Seattle's testimony to the 1984 Rome conference of the European Association for American Studies. His paper, "A Fifth Gospel, Almost" Chief Seattle's Speech(es): American Origins and European Reception, has proven highly influential in matters of Seattle speech authenticity, and my own thesis would not have been possible without it. Kaiser gives examples of the 1971 film script's incredibly popular reception within European ecological circles, critiques the text itself, and makes exhaustive efforts to uncover who wrote this seminal version. Such detective-work has had direct material repercussions, with anthologies such as The Indigenous Voice replacing their 1971 Perry text versions (in Moody 1988), with the more authentic 1887 Smith text (in Moody 1993). What Kaiser's work does not explore - its focus lying with more classical textual scholarship and questions of authenticity - is the fundamental *ambivalence*, as well as disempowering apoliticality, of romantic idealizations such as Perry's. It is this discursive void within Seattle scholarship, that creates the need for the type of theorized interrogations of Chief Seattle's speech(es) and their idealizational drifts that I attempt in this thesis.

A more recent critique based on the sorts of local knowledges Krenmayr drew from in 1975, is David Buerge's pithily-entitled 1991 essay "Seattle's King Arthur - How Chief Seattle continues to inspire his many admirers to put words in his mouth". Buerge draws from Kaiser's work, putting forward two arguments concerning nineteenth century cultural and sociopolitical contexts. The first is in support of the cultural authenticity of Smith's 1887 version, in which Seattle's purported references to ghosts in December of 1854 are shown to correspond closely with the timing of the winter ceremonials of the Salish, in which commerce between the living and dead reached its climax. Buerge's second thesis offers a sociopolitical motive for Smith publishing his first print version of Seattle's

testimony thirty-three years after the speech's delivery. In Chapter Two I develop and extend Buerge's argument, using Kayden White's concept of the Noble Savage figure as Fetish.

The latest engagement with Seattle scholarship is a chapter entitled 'The Shadow of Chief Seattle', in F.M. Bordewich's 1996 Killing the White Man's Indian. There are a few minor inaccuracies in Bordewich's gloss of events, and his approval of Arrowsmith's simplified 1969 version as supposedly 'having the ring of accuracy', and as according "with the actual syntax of the mid-nineteenth century Duwamish" (161) errs, I believe, towards the simplistic. However, Bordewich's work has the critical value of a sustained scepticism, and of cogently emphasizing how romanticized representations of Indians negatively impact upon contemporary Indian realities.

The range and diversity of enframings, additions, erasures and metamorphoses of Chief Seattle's testimony has already begun to become apparent from my précis of the speech's textual history: H.A. Smith overdetermines his 1887 publication of the notes he took at the 1854 speech event, with his own aggrandizing comments. C.B. Bagley's coda added to his 1931 text opens the way for ever more free-handed translations and re-writes. William Arrowsmith's 1969 'simplifications' of Smith's text lead to a ethnocentric privileging of plot or 'content' over form. Ted Perry performs a massive, pro-ecological re-write in 1971 which is mistakenly circulated internationally under Seattle's name. Perry's 1971 and Joseph Campbell's 1988 texts invert Seattle's expressions of cultural and theological difference into affirmations of universal commonality. The list of warps, shifts and drifts in idealization of Seattle's testimony is great and seemingly ever-growing. In Chapter Two of this thesis I address the relative lack of theoretically and politically-engaged work in Seattle scholarship, by looking more closely at how and why these compounding idealizations may have occurred, and at some of the implications such de-contexted, phantasmic portrayals of 'The Chief' have for living Native Americans.

2 THE AMBIVALENCE OF IDEALIZATION

The desire to extirpate the Indian. And the contradictory desire to glorify him. Both are rampant still, to-day.

D.H. Lawrence, 1923

Nec nihi mors gravis est, posituro morte dolores
(Death is nothing to me, for in death I leave my troubles)

Narcissus in Ovid's Metamorphoses

At the corner between Fifth Avenue and Denny Way in Seattle city, Washington State, stands a great bronze statue of its eponymous Chief, cloaked in gold leaf, arm hailing the heavens (Appendix B). The size of this figure is "heroic", (co-erector C.B. Bagley's description, 268), heralding its nobility as it towers higher than any *living* man ("noble" denotes "impressive proportions" - Friedrichsen:1407).⁸ Historian/doctor H.A. Smith's 1887 publication of Seattle's testimony is positioned and overdetermined for a white readership by the four hundred words prefacing the oration itself (Appendix E - I-II), as well as Smith's concluding comments (VI). In these enframing notes he performs the written equivalent of the city's monumentalization of Seattle. Traits of `The Noble Savage` figure haunting colonial discourse are projected onto traces of the Salishan elder and his oration, producing the grandly ambivalent phantasm labelled "Chief Seattle". This is achieved in part by emphasis that Seattle "was the largest Indian I ever saw", standing "six feet full" (I), and by the explicit terming of Seattle "as *noble* [my emphasis] as ... the most cultivated military chieftain" (I). Smith goes on to reinforce and expand this theme of nobility with a set of aggrandizing personal modifiers collocated across his first two paragraphs, including "broad", "deep", "large", "great", "Titian [Titan]", and "magnificent".

The key question of colonial representers' motivating drives is raised here, as glorifications of the Salishan elder by both Smith's words and the city's statue, stand in deeply *ambivalent* relation to the stereotypical `truth`

regimes forced upon local Indians. The label applied to all tribes of the Northwest coastal Salish - for this is a homogenizing stereotype - is "Siwash", from the early French colonizers' *sauvage* or "wild", warping into English as the pejorative "savage" (Webster 238). The Siwash stereotype portrays the Salishan peoples as "fish-eating, dirty, lazy, ignorant" (Marian Smith 6). This metonymic chaining of the Siwashes' supposed lack of carnivorous appetite, lack of cleanliness, lack of work ethic, and lack of knowledge would seem to correspond with an aggressive, diminutive impulse behind the evolution of colonial stereotypes. When not literally edified and raised on a pedestal like Chief Seattle, the Salish are abjected as culture-lacking, tacitly ignoble savages or "wild men"; a bestializing motif deeply ingrained in European art and folklore. In the light of such abject depictions, it is hardly surprising that Marian Smith reported in 1949 "this stereotype has affected Indian-White relations throughout the Northwest" (6). I question how such radically ambivalent metamorphoses toward the glorified "Noble Savage" or the disparaged `ignoble savage` of colonial imag[in]ings might be modelled? Opening such considerations, I turn to the literary `Metamorphoses` wrought by the Roman poet, Ovid.

Ovid's statuesque yet starving Narcissus, enraptured with his own reflection in a strange, lifeless pool, is "stretched on the shaded grass ... [and] gazes on [his own] false image with eyes that cannot look their fill and through his own eyes perishes" (Ovid translated by Knoespel, 13). Cleaved between the eroticism of his mirrored self-love and the auto-aggression of his pining self-denial of food, the figure of Narcissus personifies the ambivalence of erotic enthrallment. But of what relevance could this mythic figure be, both to representations of an American Indian's oration, and to metonymic depictions of the orator himself?

Jacques Lacan revisits Ovid's mythic pool (via Freud),⁹ and rereads narcissism as "the central imaginary relation of interhuman relationships" (1993:92). This "primary narcissism" marks the point at which Lacan's formative Mirror Stage - characterised by "the jubilant assumption of

his specular image by the [6-18 month-old] child" (1977:2) - comes to an end with an identification between the infant and ideal image or *imago* of the counterpart (5). For Lacan, *ambiguity* is the determining characteristic of such a "seizing of the other in an image in a relationship of erotic captivation ... also the basis of aggressive tension" (1993:92). This 'seizing' feeds a drama of primordial jealousy and aggressivity in which the spatial field explored by the visually-captivated infant becomes *socialized*. The corollary to this spatial socialization is that this "either me or the other" response, this so-called "instinct of self-preservation", ultimately "[deflects] into the vertigo of the domination of space" (1977:28).

What common element is there to all the varied histories of colonizer/colonized relations, if it is not these basic acts of the "seizing of the other" - whether "in an image", or corporeally - and the aggressive "domination of space"? And if these acts of seizure and domination are acts driven by Western psyches - in all their diversities - then might not Western psychoanalytic theory be a highly appropriate tool with which to assess such dynamics, as they play through colonizers' representations of colonial others? My use of "narcissism" here centres on the thesis that in any dealing with others - at interpersonal and/or intercultural levels - a primal ambivalence cleaves glorifying or eroticizing identifications against an "aggressivity that underlies the activity of the philanthropist, the idealist, the pedagogue, and even the reformer" (Lacan, 7). After discussing how the written word may have opened Seattle's speech to such idealizations, I hope to show how such an erotic/aggressive splitting at the heart of Western psychical constitution may be expressed in comparably ambivalent projections of colonizers' fantasies onto changing depictions of Chief Seattle and his oration.

Kenneth Lincoln (*Lakota*) writes that:

Indian traditions place words organically in the world as animate, generative beings. Words are the roots of continuing tribal origins, genetic cultural sources within nature. Indian literatures are then grounded in words that focus being within a setting, detail by detail. (1983:45)

Using a lexical set which includes the words "beings", "roots", "origins", "sources", and "grounded", Lincoln's statement appears wide open to a deconstructive critique of its metaphysics of presence. I consider that this would be an entirely inappropriate importation of strategies originally developed to critique the fundamentals of Western metaphysics, into a site of indigenous oral tradition. I therefore accept Gayatri Spivak's invitation to break my theory "in a scrupulously delineated 'political interest'" (Spivak 1988b:207), my political interest being to emphasize how the medium of writing may have facilitated the disempowering de-politicization, then fetishistic re-deployment of Chief Seattle's speech.

I contend that the general economy of alphabetic writing - 'facilitating an infinite circulation of signs' (Derrida 1976:300) - uproots traditional political oratory not from some sovereign 'soil' of direct referentiality, but from its formalized context of a *relatively* restricted linguistic economy. As Maurice Bloch notes in comparison with traditional political oratory, "in ideal intellectual discourse the contextual associations of meaning are continuously being sheared off as the units are being re-used in different contexts; but in formalized contexts these are allowed to grow and intertwine with each other" (18). It must be stressed that for all these vegetal metaphors, such 'growth' and 'intertwining' between semantic and contextual 'roots' is *culturally*-mediated, not based on some Rousseauesque notion of a natural, autochthonous language. The theme of an ideal, intellectual discourse shearing meanings between contexts is emphasized by Vine Deloria (Yankton Sioux), who notes how an old Crow chief distinguished between the comprehensive, active "visions" of Indians, as opposed to the sometimes limited relevance of whites' abstracted "ideas" (1996:114). I contend that the key moment for Seattle's speech, opening its way to growing universalist idealization and fetishistic use was, then, the very moment it was sheared from its grounding traditional contexts and recorded for posterity by H.A. Smith's pen. Just as Lévi-Strauss recognizes that writing "seems to

favour rather the exploitation than the enlightenment of mankind" (in Derrida 1976:101), it must be acknowledged that this thesis' written medium tempts similar exploitative abstractions. However, it is this capacity of the written word to uproot and transmit some sort of meaning between generations, across continents and cultures, that allows this thesis on an 1854 Native American's speech to be researched and written by a white man in Western Australia, in 1996. The irony is biting.

An example of how the theme of uprooting may itself be deployed in white ecological interests, lies in depictions of the uprooting and removal of tribal peoples such as Seattle's Suquamish and Duwamish. These removals were orchestrated as part of the self-fulfilling prophecies of Indian extinction integral to the American myth of evident, inevitable, and onward penetration to The West: 'Manifest Destiny' (it is not by chance that "uprooting" or "deracination" is etymologically associated both to "eradication" and "extirpation"). Resistance to such uprooting and removal is reflected by *Lakota* elder Black Elk's lamentation that Indians are penned up on 'islands' of land (Lincoln 1983:59). Such Native American dismay at the separation then enclosure of their peoples and their country, appears to be resisted by the thematic 'grain' of both Ted Perry's 1971 and Susan Jeffers' 1992 Seattle speech versions. In these texts Seattle is made to take a conservationist stance, asking that his people's open lands be sealed-off as a pocket of unspoilt nature, "as a place where one can go to taste the wind that is sweetened by the meadow flowers" (Jeffers 12). In Perry's version, this would be a place of seemingly universal edification "where even the whiteman can go" (in Young 17). This might superficially seem a commendable request - at least to white nature-lovers' ears - but it has serious implications. For Perry and Jeffers, both 'the traditional Indian' and a pristine Nature are to be penned-in (by fence, by ink) as limited and bounded reserves of authenticity, produced by a deeply ambivalent movement both to preserve/protect and to split/separate. Ironically, this movement actually furthers

the "general dualism of [Western] culture" which german scholar Rudolf Kaiser believes scriptwriter Ted Perry was worried about (530). The "perfect unison" of word and purpose Kaiser credited Perry's 1971 text with is *radically* unstable, then, as a speech uprooted from its cultural, political and historical contexts by the printed word, ultimately reinforces precisely the dualisms its reviser apparently aimed to combat.

Richard White notes that with the arrival of popular environmentalism in the late 1960s and 1970s, "Indians had become synonymous for most whites with conservation" (180). He continues by issuing the challenge "scholars have yet to really explain the *evolution* [my emphasis] of the popular image of the Indian into that of a conservationist". I wish to broaden the frame of reference of White's challenge beyond the ecological idealizations already touched-upon, considering ways of figuring the "evolution" of potentially any colonial imag[in]ings of `The Indian` over time. The first point to consider in such a modelling, is the tacit source or origin upon which any notion of an evolutionary "distortion" must be based. Jacques Derrida suggests that "a meditation upon the trace should undoubtedly teach us that there is no origin, that is to say simple origin" (1976:74). I understand this to mean that any apparently pure, unified or coherent origin is always already predicated upon innumerable other discursive threads, which themselves endlessly defer their predicating presences *en abyme*. All origins are for Derrida, then, *complex*, to some degree impure and only *relatively* `ordinary`. For the concerns I now address, Smith's 1887 publication is no exception, carrying with it not only the inevitable complications of multiple translation, but also the complex idealizational `charge` of Smith's own enframing romanticisms and fetishistic deployments of his speech text.

A question troubling scholars of Chief Seattle for some time is why did H.A. Smith publish his Seattle testimony version in 1887, almost thirty-three years after the speech's delivery in 1854? David Buerge argues that Smith's `Early

Reminiscences` series was motivated by growing antagonism between the radical populists of "New Seattle" - who came to power in the municipal elections of 1886 - and Smith's propertied "Old Seattle" elite. For Buerge, "Smith and his pioneer colleagues felt themselves to be in much the same situation as the one they had put the Indians in in the 1850s" (1991:29). Such colonizer/colonized parallels were encouraged by Smith's inclusion of the reconstructed Indian oration in his nostalgic series, amidst the weekly celebrations of the pioneers' early exploits.

Possible implications of such a positioning are suggested by David Murray's work, in which he notes that written versions of Indian speeches "have been produced for, and shaped by, the cultural expectations of a white *readership*, but the Indian speech is presented in a dramatic context which has the effect of making it already overdetermined for the white reader" (36). My contention is that Smith's editorial positioning of, and enframing comments to Seattle's testimony establish an overdetermining context which encourages the chief to function fetishistically, as symbolic proxy for Smith's "Old Seattle" pioneers. Consider Smith's seemingly self-deprecatory "SCRAPS FROM A DIARY" sub-heading to his October 1887 literary column:

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Figure 1 - Titles from H.A. Smith's 'Seattle Sunday Star' column, October 29, 1887

This `scraps` phrase would seem to suggest a casual, fragmentary attitude towards transcription. However, a 1930s solicitor's letter formally attests that Smith said he "made extended notes of the address at the time it was given and

from those notes ... reconstructed the entire address" (Belknap in Rich 45). Why this apparent contradiction between `diary scraps` and a "reconstituted entire address"? I contend that both the `scraps` reference, as well as Smith's concluding "the above is but a fragment of his speech, and lacks all the charm" (VI), do not indicate a blasé approach to transcription. Rather, as Murray contends concerning "the fragment or relic.., the aesthetic power of the speeches is dependent on our being told that this is only a pale imitation, so that the frame, the context, is crucial in determining our response" (43). For the white, bourgeois reader of Smith's literary column, this emphasis on `fragments` or `scraps` would tend to generate a gratifying aesthetic `glow` across the speech's surface, reinforced by the frame of Smith's ennobling romanticisms. This would tend to divert attention away from Seattle's sophisticated rhetorical negotiations of cultural difference, which I argue in Chapter Three may still be traced in Smith's 1887 speech version. Smith's aestheticisms, then, through encouraging further `uprooting` of his Seattle speech text from its specific cultural and political contexts of 1854, make a newly apolitical "Chief" all the more easily fetishized and redeployable for Smith's own interests three decades after the speech occasion itself.

For Homi Bhabha, the fetish within colonial discourse represents "the simultaneous play between metaphor as substitution (masking absence and difference) and metonymy (which contiguously registers the perceived lack)" (74). In Smith's enframing comments, this translates to a play between Chief Seattle speaking "with all the dignity of a senator", as noble metaphor for "Old Seattle" (II), and the metonymic chaining of the chief's cultural lack (note Seattle's `democratic instincts`, his "*instincts* of a gentleman", and his `[unacquired] eloquence and dignity` - Smith I,II - my emphases). While risking reinforcement of the monumentalizing idealizations discussed earlier, Smith's raising of Chief Seattle to the metaphoric status of "Senator" does neatly raise Seattle's titular power to equal

or above that of the other negotiating party, "governor" Stevens (II). Lawrence Wroth noted how many east coast Indians of the eighteenth century spoke in their negotiations with the whites "as free men to free men, or often indeed as kings speaking to kings" (327). The political and historical context may be different, but Wroth's observations do suggest a certain ethnohistoric aptness to Smith's analogy. While this assertion of symbolic equality must not be allowed to act as a tokenistic 'cover' to the real power gradients of the colonizer/colonized hierarchy, the "senator" epithet does encourage Seattle to be seen - despite Smith's aestheticizing frame - as a negotiating party with real status and agency, not merely as some passive, hypotragic victim.

The *interested* nature of Smith's multiple reinforcement of Seattle's symbolic status as Noble (Savage), takes on a new twist with Hayden White's thesis that in late eighteenth-century Europe "the idea of the Noble Savage [was] used, not to dignify the native, but rather to undermine the idea of nobility itself" (129). Murray extends White's ideas to nineteenth century America, claiming that in the genre of surrender speeches, the Indian as Noble performed a "double duty", representing "both the savage who had to give way to civilization and a European aristocratic order which also needed to be dispensed with in the new bourgeois and democratic society" (36). In the city of Seattle in 1887, however, such a 'doubly doomed' scenario for the Noble Savage was *already* more or less a *fait accompli*. The radical democrats had won their election, the 'savages' had already 'ebbed away' before civilization¹⁰, and the disparaged "dog-salmon aristocrats" of "Old Seattle" had already lost power to the incoming flood of democratic populism.

I contend that Smith's fetishistic use of the Noble Savage *topos* was an anxiety-driven attempt to recoup the losses being suffered by his "Old Seattle" peers, to retain their political credibility, and to ensure their safe treatment. Smith's line, "[Seattle] might have been an emperor, but all his instincts were democratic" (I), proves

most revealing to such a reading, as it discourages any simple identification between Seattle and an imperious nobility. Through situating Seattle's *instincts* as democratic, Smith cleverly re-centres the politically ascendant forces of democracy as an innate, instinctual core to his symbolic proxy, 'The Chief'. Smith must have hoped that by his substitution of noble, yet democratically-instinctual native for elite pioneers, Seattle's egalitarian qualities might be linked with the chief's colonial namesake, "Old Seattle" itself. In Smith's timely 1887 publication of Seattle's testimony, then, there is the tacit suggestion not only that the new populists were "not exempt from the common destiny" of cyclical rise and fall of fortune (Seattle in Smith - V), but that the "Old Seattle" pioneers, and their symbolic proxy Chief Seattle were, at root, agents of democracy long before the supposedly 'radical' newcomers. In this way, Smith's deployments of his Seattle speech version bring new resonances to the famous lines "we *may* be brothers after all. We shall see" (Smith - V), as they become re-positioned as a potentially re-unifying challenge to see who has the deeper, more innate democratic instincts - the "New Seattle" populists or the "Old Seattle" pioneers.

While H.A. Smith does appear to have fetishized 'The Chief' and used Seattle's speech for his own interests, his 1887 speech text is still the only version that can claim a certain 'authenticity', reconstructed from notes taken at the speech event, and as ultimate source for all later versions (Kaiser 521). At the opposite extreme from such notions of (relative) authenticity and self-sameness at the 'origin', major, conscious distortions occur, such as the ecological slants and universalist agendas of Ted Perry's heavy re-write of Smith, or Susan Jeffers' own 1992 picturebook 'adaptation' of Seattle's speech. The idealizations of Jeffers' book in particular will be examined in some detail at the end of this chapter, but first, we must not forget the challenge developed from Richard White's question, a challenge of how to figure the more gradual, 'evolutionary' changes affecting potentially

any such colonial imag[in]ing of the `Indian` over time. Such a method of modelling and revealing motivational drives behind the more insidious, possibly subconscious `drifts` in colonial idealizations must surely be a first step in developing strategies of resistance against these trends. In response to this challenge, I now wish to provisionally outline an intertextual dynamic I term "narcissistic drift", operating across the spaces between different texts attributed to Chief Seattle. I bring Lacan's previously-discussed conception of Primary Narcissism into such a model, as a way of taking into account the operation of the erotic/aggressive forces characterizing the split Western subject, whose fantasies and fears must to some degree be implicated in colonizers' changing depictions of the colonized.

"Narcissistic drift" names the fantastic component of the blend of factors (including ideological and market forces) driving cumulative representations of an event, person or object, to converge progressively with stereotypical norms. When successive representations have decreasing access to the `source` object, misreadings will tend to accumulate and amplify; almost an intertextual "Chinese Whispers". This occurs particularly across widening time spans when representers draw on each others' gradually mutating versions rather than a `grounding` source. Broadly, this is the type of process Frederick Nietzsche referred to in 1878:

That which we now call the world is the result of a host of errors and *fantasies* [my emphasis] which have gradually arisen in the course of the total evolution of organic nature, have become entwined with one another and are now inherited by us. (197)

I italicize "fantasies" here because in colonial relationships with the other, superimposing representational `errors` do not simply produce a `White Noise` of more-or-less random misreadings.¹¹ Rather, representations will tend to drift incrementally towards the stereotypical norms which most strongly agree with the narcissistic identifications of the mediator (author, anthropologist, photographer, painter..), and with such identifications and fantasies as dominate the mediator's discipline. For example, in nineteenth century anthropology, this would typically be a

drift towards romanticist and/or savagist fantasies, or within the mythologist's discourse, a drift towards universalist identifications. Such a process leads to growingly ambivalent shapings of colonized `others`, who become progressively reduced to, and dichotomized by, the narcissisms most generalized across colonial psyches.

I now consider specific textual examples of narcissistic drift between representations both of Chief Seattle himself, and of the print versions of his testimony. To do this, a phrase or line common to the range of texts being assessed must be chosen, and its changes across time charted and checked for convergence with the most frequently occurring colonial idealizations. Perhaps the toughest test of my concept of "narcissistic drift" might be found in tracing the paths of the *least* varying lines and phrases across the textual history of Chief Seattle speech versions (see Appendix A). The phrase most minimally changed between H.A. Smith's text and the more modern versions is "Every part of this country is sacred to my people" (1887 - VI). Bagley's 1931 rendition of this line deviates the most from Smith's, becoming a rather forced "every part of this soil is sacred, in the estimation of my people" (255). These changes were overlooked or ignored by future variants, demonstrating that in even the most gradual intertextual `drift`, unpredictable crosscurrents may briefly appear. An enduring change occurs thirty-eight years later, as William Arrowsmith's 1969 `simplifying translation` globalizes Smith's "country" into "earth" (463), a change adopted by all later versions. The most recent alteration occurs twenty-three years later still, as Seattle's first person singular possessive, "my", is broadened to the plural possessive pronoun "our", in the line which becomes "every part of this *earth* is sacred to *our* people" (Jeffers 1992:3 - both changes from 1887 text emphasized). These micro-changes may well be interesting enough to the connoisseur of minutiae, but what overall significance could they possibly have for a phrase which has, after all, maintained a good degree of lexical stability across its 105 years of publication? If I may take these two gradually mutating words from their line and

willfully realign them into single phrases, the narcissistic drift foregrounds as a drift from "my ... country" to "our ... earth". This is precisely the type of `universalization by inches` where the local and personal is transmuted little by little to the global and communal. This movement towards a synecdochic function for Seattle and his metonyms - acting as parts for the greater global whole¹² - tends also to generate an erasure of difference between indigenous subject and Western readers, through its emphasis of universals. Such appeals to commonality may seem overtly aligned with the erotic idealizations of colonial representation, rather than an aggressive abjection or lowering of others. However, given the unequal power balances between colonizer/colonized, denial of native difference ultimately leads towards assimilation to the most powerful cultural norms operating amongst presumed `equals`, and must in no way be seen as separable from the aggressive, `extirpative` aspects of narcissism. Chinua Achebe strongly resists such uneven power flows within universalist discourses, writing "I should like to see the word *universal* banned altogether from discussions of African literature until such a time as people cease to use it as a synonym for the narrow, self-serving parochialism of Europe" (in Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin 127).

My "narcissistic drift" concept is by no means a complete model - let alone theory - of intertextual changes in idealization. With a somewhat artificial focus on only the narcissistic component of these drifts, individual representers' ideological affiliations, for example, risk elision (and perhaps should not even be figured separately from psychoanalytic factors). Market factors may also drive the pen of the less scrupulous colonial representer of the colonized; the difficult, heterogeneous depiction is far harder to sell than the idealized and unequivocal. These qualifications noted, "narcissistic drift" may well have potential for further development as a tool in the charting of more gradual intertextual shifts in idealization, and, indeed, will prove utile to such an end later in this thesis. Crucially, the concept has the advantage of

emphasizing the Imaginary ambivalence theorists such as Homi Bhabha construe as "one of the most significant discursive and psychical strategies of discriminatory power" (66).

A common theme amongst Indian scholars and writers is a strong sense of the interrelatedness of all elements in a creation regarded as both sensible and powerful. For Kenneth Lincoln (*Lakota*), this sense of *relatedness* is the very fulcrum of "grounded Indian [tribal] literature" (1983:8). Focusing Lincoln's emphasis to the realm of representational media, this thesis must actively foreground the interconnectedness between both the varied media used to portray figures such as Chief Seattle (written, pictorial, photographic, sculptural..), and between the multiple academic disciplines used to interrogate such portrayals. Only then may I hope to develop a discursive approach not artificially abstracted to analysis of solely one medium of Seattle portrayal (the written), or operating strictly within the discursive domains of one academic discipline ('English Studies'). In this way I hope to resist the boundedness of the ways of thought the written word may encourage through its capacity for both the trans-generational sedimentation, and the disciplinary specialization of knowledges. I therefore embrace a multi-media approach, used to interrogate metonymic idealizations of 'the Chief' over his speech by assessing the photographic and pictorial depictions of Seattle himself, which so often accompany and overdetermine his testimony versions.

Photographic representations of Seattle are particularly worthy of interrogation, but the medium - like any representational medium - has its own attendant capabilities and weaknesses. For Roland Barthes, photographs have the ability to act as seemingly 'perfect *analogons*' to the reality they portray (196). This representationalist 'transparency' may lure its observers into, for my purposes, a decidedly useful, double-edged movement. On the one hand, the images may eidetically 'evoke' Seattle's past existence as a living, grounded human being, beyond the realms of the deracinated (uprooted) print that we read. Such a move

foregrounds the ethical and political imperative to avoid "textualizing the Indians out of existence" (Murray 3). On the other hand, these images also provide the opportunity to foreground the selective, 'frozen' and mute mediation of the two-dimensional photographic plane, as well as the imperious position into which we, as observers, are projected through our swift and endlessly repeatable mastery of the frame's contents. The risk here - as Frantz Fanon wrote of the continued agony of the colonized - is of "the culture once living and open to the future, [becoming] closed, fixed in the colonial status ... both present and mummified" (1970:44). It is just such a danger of cultural mummification - in the colonial Imaginary, and from there, to the political reality - that may as easily arise from cropped and retouched photographs or paintings of Seattle, as from the written codes of his testimony. I, too, cannot assume any immunity against the tendency to embalm the objects of knowledge I construe through the written words and pictorial appendices I use. However, both through a certain self-reflexivity, and through juxtaposition of clearly differing versions of a supposedly single Seattle speech or photograph, the master discourse of a fixed 'Truth' may be split-open to reveal new and multiple spaces for the contestation of colonial 'truths' and realities.

At the level of visual depictions of Seattle himself - where it is reasonable to expect Imaginary operations to be most apparent - my concept of 'Narcissistic drift' may be of particular use. The complex 'opening' to this drift in colonial portraiture may be found in two thoroughly ambivalent cropped, retouched and/or repainted versions of the only photograph of "Chief Seattle", taken by E.M. Sammis in August, 1864 (as Bagley relates, 259 - see Appendix C). The images generate radically contrasting impressions, yet clearly draw line and form and face from some common photographic root. In the first, an alert, wide-eyed Seattle wears an unadorned, 'Western'-style shirt (as Bagley reports, 259). His eyes are, as H.A. Smith describes, "large, intelligent" (*I*), their highlights corresponding with lighting in the rest of the image-plane, suggesting

that they may be unaltered. Seattle's collar has been retouched, however, opening the possibility that other parts of the image may have more expertly received similar treatment. A white frame crops the black and white image to a medium shot, in a modernizing exclusion of Seattle's traditional staff and basketry hat or fan. The impression generated is of alertness, presence, vitality, and relative youthfulness. In startling contrast, the second image's long-shot portrays a decrepit, 'distant' Seattle; his eyes heavy-lidded to a point of semi-closure, weighed downwards as if by the burden of some tragic vision. This Seattle does appear, however, to be 'sitting very quietly', just as Bagley reports he was asked to do by Sammis (259). The image appears to have been repainted, and nature-motifs have been added to Seattle's hat or fan, creating an overall impression of an old, deeply 'traditional', rather poorly Indian of the "exhausted and defeated" variety (Susan Jeffers' uncritical descriptor, 1992:23). This traditionalized image, published as the cover to a magazine featuring Perry's ecological speech version of 1971, might seem to exemplify the "hypotragic" mode of ethnographic representation critiqued by Gerald Vizenor (*tribe unnamed* - 9). However, both the fact that Seattle did gradually waste away and die less than two years after Sammis' photograph was taken (Bagley 266), and that the more youthful former image (i) has clearly been retouched, leave any representationalist 'truth' value of this complex origin thoroughly open to question.

The chronology of the production of the two images discussed above is not known, resisting any close-reading of their drifts in idealization. However, the narcissistic shifts that are opened by their radical ambivalence, undoubtedly approach their 130 year climax in Susan Jeffers' almost 'perfectly' idealizing cover painting. Scanning down Jeffers' cover, and beneath the blood-red title 'Brother Eagle, Sister Sky' (Appendix D), the observer meets finely cross-hatched cumulous clouds merging in and out of the full headdress of a grand old Indian Chief. Any naturalistic interpretation of this image - whether by child or adult -

is clearly compromised by these tresses of cloud, as clouds are learnt early to be indices of dreaming, ethereal or mythic ontological status. The lower face of the chief corresponds closely to Seattle's features frozen by Sammis' camera. This is where the commonalities end, however. Jeffers paints Seattle's eyes in a fashion dissimilar to both photograph-derived versions. She either chooses not to adopt, is sceptical of, or is unaware of the wide-open, alert nature of Seattle's stare in the photograph C/i). Her brush seems more influenced by the more widely available photograph C/ii), in which Seattle's eyes are a narrowed squint. Yet Jeffers' Seattle no longer has image ii)'s downcast eyes of a living, but broken Indian. The tribal elder now enjoys the dubious privilege of depiction as uprooted ('extirpated') yet transcendent ('glorified'), with clouds woven deftly through his hair, and eyes squinting inscrutably towards some heavenly vision. This 130 year drift in depiction from an ambiguous sick-tragic / alive-alert nexus to an unambiguous deathly transcendence for 'The Chief', accords with the morbid/aggressive component of colonial narcissistic dynamics, extirpating as it glorifies. Jeffers' pictorial Seattle has become the archetypal every-Indian, "resplendent in its anthropological headdress, yet ... [having] no bearing on contemporary Indian existence or struggles" (Moody 1993 xviii). Small wonder that Vine Deloria Jr. (*Yankton Sioux*) experiences that "to be an Indian in modern American society is in a very real sense to be unreal and ahistorical" (1970:2).

The title of Jeffers' book should have already primed the implied reader for the theme of escape from the terrestrial world, with its promise of an "Eagle" who may tacitly fly in "Sister Sky". Having scanned past the hyperreal visage of Seattle, this theme is reinforced by the chief's diaphanous, ghostly hands, drawn thinly over the shoulders of the non-Indian child before him. The theme of escape is further developed by pictorial elements such as the dragonfly hovering before the wide-eyed boy. The mysterious, ephemeral nature of this insect - always just out of reach - is metonymic, for this reader, of the whole wilderness/

fragility/ethereality complex Jeffers aligns with Seattle and tacitly, all Indians. This complex is further evoked by such lines as:

When the last Red Man and Woman have *vanished* with
 their *wilderness*,
 and their memory is only the *shadow of a cloud*
 moving across
 the prairie, will the shores and forest still be
 here? (1992:14 - my emphases).

With Seattle depicted inseparable from his headdress of cumulus, Jeffers' "shadow of a cloud" phrase becomes strangely reminiscent of what Vine Deloria (*Yankton Sioux*) has called the "shadows of a mythical super-Indian" which Native Americans live under (1970:82). This shadow is by no means an innocent one. On no page of Jeffers' book, in none of her sixteen rich illustrations, will the reader find *living* Indians represented with the young white family - or here, single white child - she depicts. Indeed, the cover painting's old Indian phantasm behind young white boy, encourages the drawing of a 'progressive' time-line from former to latter, by its use of perspective positionings (respectively background/foreground), its subjects' developmental stages (old/young), and their ontological statuses (dead/living). In synecdochic projection, this binarism risks becoming a progressive, almost evolutionary movement from the Indians of a (natural) past, to the Whites of a (cultural) future. The sociopolitical implications for living Native Americans must be great when their symbolically-'proper' place has in this way been multiply assigned as a dead and tragic past, and the cultural and political specificity of their realities sublimed to the gloriously apolitical heavens. When these Indian dead are not specifically sent to the clouds, Jeffers deftly uses devices such as the Romantic face-making trope of prosopopoeia in her depiction of rock and scree outcrops forming craggy Indian features (Jeffers 1992:12,13). Under the cover of Seattle's name, Jeffers' laudable enough universals "we are part of the earth and it is part of us" (4) become projected into an anthropomorphic petrification of Indians into an emotionally satisfying and threat-free stasis. While powerful in affect, and overtly ennobling in

effect this is, ultimately, a book about dead Indians and living Whites - a fundamentally aggressive relation. As Lacan observes, aggressivity is released "in any relation to the other, even in a relation involving the most Samaritan aid" (1977:6). Jeffers' approach may indeed be motivated by 'Samaritan' intent, but this does not prevent her Seattle from expressing belief in a 'fatal impact' destiny including "When [my emphasis] the last Red Man and Woman have vanished with their wilderness" (14). For all its tragic solemnity, this style of "*après moi le déluge*" (Clifford 1987:121), in no way escapes or exceeds the erotic/aggressive captivation with the other which underwrites 'Manifest Destiny', the doctrine whose "prophecies of extinction made the wish for white conquest and domination into a cosmic inevitability" (Sayre 8).

In this chapter I have developed and applied a psychoanalytic perspective to the glorifying/extirpative ambivalences driving colonial portrayals of the colonized. I have argued that Smith's written translation of Seattle's speech opened the now relatively 'uprooted', de-contexted words both to his own fetishistic enframings, and to future idealizing re-writes and re-translations. Having seen the evolution of increasingly universalist depictions of Seattle and his speech reach their climax in Susan Jeffers' disingenuous "Message from Chief Seattle", in Chapter Three I revisit Smith's complex textual 'origin' of 1887. From there I try to develop ethically and theoretically sound strategies to move beyond Smith's enframing comments and to strategically engage with and re-politicize the text he actually attributes to Seattle. I attempt this through addressing both the implications of the oral form or texture of traditional oratory, and the cultural and political contexts of Seattle's speech event. In this way I aim to reveal Smith's text as a site of semantic conflict in which a sense of the agency, negotiating power, and rhetorical sophistication of Seattle may start to displace the hypotragic laments of universalizing texts such as Susan Jeffers' Brother Eagle, Sister Sky.

3 EMPLACING THE UPROOTED 'ORIGIN'

Beseeching the breath of the divine one,
 His life-giving breath,
 His breath of old age,
 His breath of waters,
 His breath of seeds,
 His breath of riches,
 His breath of fecundity,
 His breath of power,
 His breath of strong spirit,
 His breath of all good fortune whatsoever,
 Asking for his breath
 And into my warm body drawing his breath,
 I add to your breath
 That happily you may always live

-Zuni, 47th Annual BAE Report, 1929-1930
 Ruth Bunzel, Translator

One Hundred years after Chief Seattle's famous oration, Suquamish elder Amelia Sneatlum wrote in her autobiography, "Chief Seattle had Thunderbird power Thunderbird was the greatest power. When Seattle would be angry at someone, he would shout angrily at him. The one he was angry at would shake. It was a big power, that power of Seattle" (in Buerge 1992). This "big power" of Seattle's voice¹³, this century-spanning rumble of great Thunderbird spirit, seems a long way away from the dry, lifeless mouthings of the Expo '74 robotic 'Seattle', or the phantasmic transfixions of Seattle in Susan Jeffers' 1992 picturebook. That presence of the Salishan elder, of his voicing Thunderbird spirit, can only ever be eidetically imag[in]ed now in the late twentieth century, when all that is left of Seattle's oration is the textual traces made by H.A. Smith at the 1854 speech occasion. The fraught question I ask in this chapter is whether this gap between Smith's uprooted, decontexted 1887 text, and the ethnohistoric and political emplacements of Seattle's thunderous speech may be renegotiated - even contingently 'bridged' - using the textual and contextual traces available.

Michael Dorris (*Modoc*), stresses the need of "an awareness of a larger cultural context" (150), for a culturally-meaningful reading of Indian speech representations. Jay

Miller, studying interior Salishan orality, also argues that "Native American literature, at this stage, cannot be strictly approached in terms of `text`. Too much is lost or garbled by this approach. `Context` is everything in a cross-cultural perspective" (65). My own engagements with Smith's text consider issues of its form and texture, before interrogating it in terms of traces from the cultural and political contexts of Seattle's 1854 speech event. It is these two key dimensions of texture and context which, together with the speech version itself, constitute the "trinity of dimensions" which the ethnography of speaking requires (Dundes in Clements 34).

How might this text/texture/context `trinity` actually be used by a twentieth century white man to re-position words attributed by a colonist to a long-dead Native American? In a colonial situation of real and lasting sociopolitical inequity, it may be argued that as a white Anglo-Celt I have no right to take any step beyond critiquing `Western` psychological and ideological investments in the representation of Seattle and his speech. Gayatri Spivak terms such a self-limitation by skin-colour "chromatism", an attitude which in her view is a way of "salving your conscience, and allowing you not to do any homework" (1990:62). But having accepted Spivak's challenge to do my (cultural) homework, what is to prevent me from slipping towards exploitations of, and narcissistic identifications with Seattle's testimony, similar to those made by other re-interpreters of Smith's 1887 text?

One major risk arises somewhat paradoxically from the `side-effects` or epi-phenomenon of the very poststructuralist strategies many cultural critics have found so helpful in revealing the dichotomizing and idealizing deep structures behind colonial discourse. The question I ask here is "what effect for the colonized may result from the denial of the very possibility of `true` representation, of `authentic` origins, by such theoretical approaches?" I believe that poststructuralist strategies, for all their legitimacy in the destabilization of *hegemonic* truth regimes, risk subliming the indigenous other to a position "outside representation,

unrepresentable except as a phantasm masquerading under the misnomer 'Indian'" (Durham in Hoffmann 509). Implicit behind such rendering of Indians as "unrepresentable" is the reversal of an ethnocentric Universalism - arguably the mirror image of white racism. Such strategic reversals are common in the field of 'postcolonial' or cultural studies, and are an opening move (but not *complete* strategy) much needed to destabilize Arrowsmith's, Perry's, Campbell's and Jeffers' drifts towards increasingly universalist identifications with the Indian other.

As early as 1967, Jacques Derrida noted the risk of an "interested blindness" working "each time that ethnocentrism is precipitately and ostentatiously reversed" (1976:80). When the easy certainties of universalist approaches are overturned by radical poststructuralist critiques, Derrida's warning of "interested blindness" comes to mind as theories of heterogeneous 'subject effects' appear to undermine subjective sovereignty, while providing 'covers' to such positions of potential discursive mastery (Spivak 1988a:66). Echoes of such dangerous dynamics resound through Susan Jeffers' comments when she replied to a 'New York Times' reporter questioning her picturebook's authenticity, "Basically, I don't know what he [Chief Seattle] said" (in Bordewich 133). Considering that in Brother Eagle, Sister Sky Jeffers demonstrates good knowledge of the speech's textual history from Smith's 1880s onwards, this self-confessed ignorance of 'what Seattle said' seems to tacitly acknowledge the 'unknowability' of textual origins and/or an awareness of the fraught nature of intercultural translation. However, Jeffers' seemingly anti-universalist denial of transparent intelligibility *does* 'provide a cover' for her universalist portrayals of Seattle, as she "[masquerades] as the absent nonrepresenter who lets the oppressed speak for themselves" (Spivak 1988a:87). This is clear from the front cover of Brother Eagle, Sister Sky (Appendix D), as well as from its title pages in which she acknowledges herself as its painter, *but not as its writer*, disingenuously sub-titling the book "A message from Chief Seattle".

Jeffers' 'interested blindness', squinting myopically from behind the painted visage of her front cover *Seattle*, literally puts a face to the problem of what may happen after the dislocation of unified 'subaltern' subjectivities. Such awarenesses clarify my need to question how I might tentatively frame my re-readings of Smith's text in terms of some sense of positivist subjectivity for *Seattle*, after destabilizing idealizations of the chief using my Lacan-derived 'narcissistic drift'. In her critique of the 'Subaltern Studies' group, Gayatri Spivak concludes that a *strategic* use of "positivist essentialism" may reasonably be deployed to such ends "in a scrupulously visible political interest" (1988b:205). I do not consider it to be ethically or methodologically viable or even desirable to 'pin-down' what *Seattle* may have said or thought. However, I shall attempt to move beyond a critique completely limited to Western psychological and/or ideological investments in *Seattle*'s testimony, as such paths effectively lead toward a covertly apolitical, solipsistic Western academy, hermetically sealed-off from engagement with other cultures by its own sense of theoretical propriety. The political implications of such an approach are that it all too easily leads to the opening of a representational vacuum with scrupulously averted gaze, a vacuum filled swiftly by the works of the less ethical, such as the disingenuous "message from Chief *Seattle*" Susan Jeffers parades.

One of the themes I consider in my engagements with Smith's text, is how the issue of the two cultures' differing relationships to their dead's emplacement in 'country' is crucial to *Seattle*'s statement of radical 'Red'/'White' cultural difference. As the dead are inconceivable without the predicating presence of the living, the corporeal, I must acknowledge my position of 'inescapable bad faith' (CCSG 541), as I adopt Spivak's 'strategic use of positivist essentialism' to at least consider the sense of subject position and agency for *Seattle* evoked by a contexted reading of Smith's text. My interventions make no claims to stable truth values, nor will they attempt to limit the play of meanings in, through

or across Smith's text. Rather, I hope these conflictual negotiations between text, texture and context may be a step towards what Gerald Vizenor (tribe unnamed) sees as a criticism "which would liberate tribal narratives in a most 'pleasurable misreading'" (5).

I now reconsider Smith's 1887 text in terms of how its texture relates to the possible formal qualities of Salishan political oratory. Understanding a "text" to be a lexically-"woven tissue", perhaps the most evocative of several definitions of "texture" is as the "character of a textile fabric, as to its being fine, close, coarse, ribbed, twilled, etc., resulting from the way in which it is woven" (Friedrichsen 2273). Certainly H.A. Smith's 'textual fabric' had its distinctive character woven-in through the warp and weft of his own translation and aesthetic practices. Consider the line "even the rocks that seem to lie dumb as they swelter in the sun along the silent seashore in solemn grandeur thrill with memories of past events connected with the fate of my people" (Smith - VI). Here the use of extended (and somewhat overblown) sibilance is reminiscent of what W.M. Clements sees as the eurocentric tendency of nineteenth century translators to try to "convert the product of Native American oral performances into full-fledged literature [sic]... extending metaphors and other figures to a more complete realization than the Native performers had been wont to do" (39). Smith's vocabulary also appears to correspond with what J.M. Cohen calls 'a fundamental error' of Victorian translation, namely "conveying remoteness of time and place through the use of a mock antique language" (Bassnett-McGuire 72). Such a 'mock antique' texture is woven by words termed "archaic" by the dictionary, such as "yonder", "fell", and "eventide", in addition to ornate locodescriptive phrases such as "sequestered vales" (V), "vast solitudes" (V) and "deep fastnesses" (VI). However, specialist translator Toby Langen speculates that, judging by the somewhat archaic lexicon of at least one classical Lushootseed source, there may possibly have been an archaic storytelling diction (196). It

seems reasonable to speculate that in Salishan political oratory similar archaisms may have dominated speech form, suggesting the texture created by Smith's Victorian lexis may well be quite appropriate.

Critical views of the texture of Smith's translation include local historian C.B. Bagley's 1931 comments, "doubtless Chief Seattle and the other chiefs present expressed [the speech's] thoughts and sentiments in their own language forming the thread of the speech, but to Doctor Smith belongs the credit for its beautiful wording and delightful imagery" (255). I resist Bagley's tone, which connotes a certain threadbare poverty of expression on the Indians' side, made up for by a rich aesthetic weave in Smith's text. In response to such seemingly deficit-based attitudes to indigenous languages, I wish to suggest a complex of colonial ideas and myths circulating around Indian languages in the nineteenth century. I contend that these attitudes have encouraged the contradictory tendencies both to devalue *and* to glorify the 'naturally eloquent' form and texture of Indian speeches, and hold the key to how much Smith's attitudes towards these aspects of translation may have helped facilitate future processes of idealization.

The first clue to this complex of ideas I wish to trace, lies in the symbolic resonance of the gold leaf covering Seattle's statue (Appendix B). This is another tacit link between Chief Seattle and the figure of the *Noble Savage*. The Noble was "an ancient coin, so called on account of the superior *excellency of its gold* [my emphasis]" (Brewer 894). This 'excellency of the Noble's gold' is associatively linked to nineteenth century metaphors for the purity of Indian languages, where "in the ever-shifting state of a nomadic society *no debased coin* can be tolerated in language, no obscure legend accepted on trust. The *metal must be pure* [my emphases] and the legend distinct" (Trumbull, 1881 in Murray 17). This "noble" modifier then, aligned with Seattle both by Smith's words and the city's monument, is associatively linked to a racinating purity, clarity, and semantic stability of Indian language; a kind of linguistic 'gold standard'. On face value, such figures

of a grounding purity of language seem to correspond with what contemporary Native Americans such as Kenneth Lincoln (*Lakota*) have termed traditional words' roles as "the roots [my emphasis] of continuing tribal origins" (1983:45). However, I contend that nineteenth century critics confused Indian languages' *culturally*-mediated `racinating function` with an enrooting `radical essence` of *natural* language.

For Derrida's Rousseau, such natural languages are "without discourse, a speech without sentence, without syntax, without parts, without grammar, a language of pure effusion" (1976:279). H.A. Smith clearly wishes to align Chief Seattle with just such a "pure effusion" of natural eloquence, as expressed by his romanticizing comments on Seattle's "deep-toned, sonorous and eloquent sentences [which] rolled from his lips like the ceaseless thunders of cataracts flowing from exhaustless fountains" (I). Smith further reinforces this natural flow of Seattle's eloquence with vegetal similes in "neither his eloquence, his dignity or his grace were acquired. They were as native to his manhood as leaves and blossoms are to a flowering almond tree" (I). Brian Swann observes that in the case of the Iroquois, such assumptions of `naturalness` were made due to ignorance of orators' rhetorical *training*; the `culturedness` of their speech (1983 xi). Toby Langen similarly reveals rigorous interpretive codes to be implicated with the classical Lushootseed storytelling of Seattle's language group. From elders' testimony Langen considers that storytelling was "an occasion for the exercise of a disciplined, practiced attention directed to connoisseurship of performance and decipherment codes", and was "a means of training for hermeneutic activity" (195). Unfortunately, there is no data available on classical Lushootseed *political* oratory - as Marian Smith noted of availability of general information in 1949, "in assessing Coast Salish personality we are thwarted at every turn by the paucity of material" (16). However, the importance of political speech-making would make a similar, *acquired* `connoisseurship of performance and decipherment codes` a highly likely prerequisite for the intimate understanding of

orations such as Chief Seattle's.

One result of nineteenth century figurings of Indian `language` as natural, is to position `it` beyond any specific culture, and hence *before* the mythic Babel diaspora of tongues. This tends to encourage a universalist emphasis of the transparency of communication between `natives` and colonizers, often surfacing in tropes or explicit mentions of native legibility. I draw one such example from 1836, when an anonymous writer in The Knickerbocker wrote:

The iron encasement of apparent apathy in which the savage had fortified himself, impenetrable at ordinary moments, is laid aside in the council-room. The genius of eloquence bursts the swathing bands of custom, and the Indian stands forth accessible, natural, and legible [my emphases]. (cited by Clements in Murray 41).

Such statements are tantamount to claiming ability to `read the Indian like a book` from `his`¹⁴ flow of natural eloquence, as the "swathing bands of custom" or for Smith, Seattle's `usual solemnity, silence and dignity` (*I*), drive a frustrated colonial desire for complete native legibility.

I believe that gaps may have frequently arisen between understandings of a supposedly form-separable `content` of Indian speeches, and the culturally-specific meanings coded by rhetorical patterns and paralinguistic features which simply *should not exist* in a `natural` language, and would therefore be overlooked in common translation practice. This may provide a partial explanation for what Toby Langen has identified as the damaging "devaluation of form and the privileging of plot in past translation practice" of classical Lushootseed narratives (196). This gap opened between a `raw` denotative content and glamourized-elided oral form would have generated a space of interpretive unclarity and misreading, into which claims of naturally effusive eloquence such as Smith's "His Native Eloquence. Etc., Etc." might move. Here, "etcetera", derived from Latin "and the rest" (Friedrichsen 684) is repeated, giving a doubled invitation for the implied reader to insert their own set of (ethnocentric) associations with `Indian Eloquence`. From such an *inaccessibility* of the formal and paralinguistic codes of Indian oratory there paradoxically

arose the tendency to stress the charismatic, the expressive, the accessible, and to encourage bodies and surfaces to be interpreted more surely than the speaker's words. This is exemplified in Smith's description of Chief Seattle's eyes as "large, intelligent, *expressive*, and friendly when in repose, and [that they] *faithfully mirrored* [my emphases] the varying moods of the great soul that looked through them" (I). Seattle's eyes are made to faithfully express and mirror(-out) essential intangibles from inside the Salishan elder, onto a face of legibility which Smith seems to feel he can understand directly.¹⁵ As an accessible corporeal text, Seattle's "soul" becomes transparently *knowable* to Smith - encouraging the tacit universalist assumption that "deep down" "they're just like us". Smith may now confidently "translate" these essential truths of the native soul to his white readership, using the romanticizing comments which, as we have seen, work most effectively in his own interests.

In balance to this critique of how translation of culturally-specific meanings in Indian orations was affected by assumptions of the speaker's "natural eloquence", at least two figures within Smith's most ornate phrases seem strongly sympathetic with Seattle's totemic affiliations¹⁶. The common link between these two figures - one in Smith's enframing comments, and one in the attributed speech text - is Chief Seattle's totem of the Thunder-bird spirit. According to Haeberlin and Gunther, "a person possessing this spirit could make it thunder at any time" (75). This would appear to make Smith's simile that after the elder first spoke "silence became as instantaneous and perfect as that which follows a clap of *thunder from a clear sky* [my emphasis]" (II), less a romantic hyperbole, and more a figurative evocation of the totemic power by which Seattle thundered to his audience. A further, somewhat more tenuous link is that the local Nisqually tribe believed the thunder spirit to live in a rock, giving a whole new appropriateness to the line Smith ascribes to Seattle, in which sentient rocks "thrill with memories of past events connected with the fate of my people" (VI).

It may be, then, that Smith was well aware of the problems of translating the culturally-specific form of Salishan political oratory to his written text, and attempted to recoup some of these cultural meanings through the tropes his language allowed him. As we have seen, this did not, however, prevent him from falling into the trap of ascribing an acultural, 'natural eloquence' and accompanying legibility to Seattle. This can only have opened Smith's aestheticized, relatively 'uprooted' speech version to future idealizational drifts towards the transparent intercultural legibilities of twentieth century speech versions. In the following emplacing or 're-rooting' engagements with Smith's text, I attempt to move beyond presumptions of naturally expressive legibility for Seattle, and to recoup some of the 'covert', rhetorically-coded cultural meanings which silently interact with more 'overt' significances.

In Chapter Two I considered how, once Chief Seattle's speech was deracinated or uprooted from its traditional oral contexts by the written word, it became vulnerable to the trend of compounding idealization I model as "Narcissistic drift". This century-spanning 'drift' in idealization culminated in Susan Jeffers' literally 'head in the clouds' portrayal of an ethereal, phantasmic Chief, trapped in the up-rooted, un-grounded space of the colonial Imaginary. But how may the exotic lure of such glorifying yet deadening portrayals be subverted? I contend that a re-grounding, emplacing resistance to such depictions may be begun by actively cross-referring H.A. Smith's 1887 testimony version against the cultural and political contexts of Seattle's 1854 speech occasion itself.

To open this process of emplacement, we need go no further than the expository lines and gestures attributed to Seattle by Smith. The Salishan elder opens his famous oration with the lines "yonder sky that has wept tears of compassion on our fathers for centuries untold, and which, to us, looks eternal, may change My words are like the stars that never set" (Appendix E - II). The opening use of

the deictic "yonder" for Seattle's pointing to the sky, corresponds well with Smith's recollection that the chief opened his address "placing one hand on the governor's head, and slowly pointing heavenward with the index finger of the other" (II - a gesture half-captured by Seattle's monument). For Kenneth Lincoln (*Lakota*), this forging of links between words and place is common to Native American practice, as "Indian literatures are ... grounded in words that focus being within a setting, detail by detail" (1983:45). I contend that through Seattle's reported gesture and opening lines, the elder is shown to be performing such a 'grounding within a setting' which, in the context of political oratory, would serve to positionally stabilize the truth value of the speaker's otherwise evanescent oral discourse. For Seattle, such constancy is invoked partly in the name of the tribal patriline of "centuries untold", and partly through the tacit nexus between Seattle's voicing Thunderbird totem, and his explicit acknowledgments of the enduring yet changeable sky. Such voice/sky linkages are clearly reinforced by Seattle's stellar simile of oral stability, "my words are like the stars that never set" (Smith II).

As holder of Thunderbird power, Seattle was understood to be able to make those he shouted at shake with the power of his words. For Lincoln (*Lakota*), this regard for the power of the spoken word is pan-Indian (1983:2), as is an understanding of the sacred animating force in the world, (for the Lakotas *Taku Skanskan*, translating as 'What Moves-moves'), which is "as vast as the sky itself, [and] can still be petitioned through *Tate*, or the wind, in a person's own voice" (1). Such sky-voice linkages implicitly sacramented by animating principles such as 'What Moves-moves', become still more thoroughly bound by natural guarantors as Seattle goes on to declare that the president can rely on his words as surely as "the return of the seasons" (III). Both through explicit references, and through tacit invocation of Seattle's totemic voice/sky nexus of the Thunderbird, the Seattle of Smith's text links both parties into what his people would most likely have

regarded as an *utterly* binding agreement, bringing into the place and time of the elder's thundering oration enduring guarantors no less than the cycles and animating powers behind nature itself. With such cosmological 'weight' established so early for Seattle's words, the sophisticated rhetorical negotiations I now trace through Smith's text can hardly be regarded as 'mere rhetoric'; it is no romantic hyperbole to say they are bound to Seattle's lasting truths by all the predicating forces of his existence.

I now wish to interrogate the dynamic rhetorical negotiations the Seattle of H.A. Smith's text makes between colonizer and colonized. These negotiations are made by the Salishan elder in terms of kinship and, more specifically, in terms of the possible fraternity between the two cultures. The line most synecdochic of this whole theme is the famous "We *may* be brothers after all" (Smith V - his emphasis), which, despite some insidious changes, appears in most versions of 'Seattle's testimony'. This line's political and ideological import has been recognized by at least one Western holistic publication, in which it was adopted as heading to Ted Perry's ecological speech version of 1971 (Young 17). In this case, Ted Perry's prior lifting of the line from its Salishan rhetorical context, allows it to be redeployed 'uncomplicatedly' in Young's own monotheistic interests for the "One God", whose 'eternal and undying very special message' is seen to lie "at the heart of true brotherhood" (16).

In resistance to the warping effect of such decontexted uses, the rhetorical structure Smith grants Seattle in the 1887 speech version must now be considered. I read these complex and astute negotiations as a kind of intercultural 'commutation test' (a test involving the substitution of one thing for another) for the colonizer/colonized relation. I contend that this qualified and continually renegotiated rhetorical alignment between the two cultures is largely performed in terms of kinship hierarchies, and takes on a tripartite structure. The preliminaries to this 'commutation test' involve substituting the colonizers' positions in

their political and theistic hierarchies, for the more openly patriarchal kinship terms of a single son/father/grandfather patriline. Seattle opens by addressing governor Stevens as "the son of the white chief [who] says his father sends us greetings of friendship and good will" (Smith *III*). In this way Seattle establishes a son/father line between governor Stevens and the president, later completed through extension up to the colonizers' god with the simile, "your God ... folds his strong arms lovingly around the white man and leads him as a *father* leads his infant *son* [my emphases]" (*IV*). Starting at the lower levels of this hierarchy, the extended 'family' of the Whites is now progressively tested for possible affiliation with Seattle's people.

The first stage of Seattle's three-part negotiation opens as his own tribal lineage is affiliated to the Stevens/'Washington'/Jehovah hierarchy with the line, "Our great father Washington, for I presume he is now our father as well as yours" (*III*). This seemingly self-conscious "presumption" of presidential 'paternity' also becomes figured in terms of brotherhood with, "let us hope that hostilities between the red man and his pale-face brothers may never return. We would have everything to lose and nothing to gain" (*III*). Here, in the midst of growing anti-White unrest amongst the Coastal Salish in 1854 (Marino 169), Smith's Seattle temporarily establishes a unifying and unqualified link between these two contingently 'brother' cultures, as war between them is characterized as a lose/lose situation for Seattle's people. Strong reinforcement of this theme is provided, I argue, through use of cogent rhetorical strategies. An example of such reinforcement is where Seattle is assigned the lines "we will dwell apart and in peace, for the words of the great white chief seem to be *the voice of nature* [my emphasis] speaking to my people" (*V*). This alignment of the president with *nature*, as in the text's preceding comparison of the colonizers to "the blazing morning sun" (*V*), correlates strongly with what Maurice Bloch identifies as a trend in 'traditional' political speech-making to deploy fixed, often

naturalistic examples and tropes (16)¹⁷. For Bloch, this results in a situation where "the order in which things are arranged is not seen as the result or acts of anybody in particular, but of a state which has always existed and is therefore *of the same kind as the order of nature* [my emphasis]" (16). Thus Smith's Seattle not only makes explicit calls to his 'young braves' not to war against their 'white brothers', but persuasively aligns the whites in general and their president in particular with an eternal, and utterly irresistible natural order.

The second stage of Seattle's negotiations of possible colonizer/colonized fraternity is developed as he asks the rhetorical "BUT CAN THIS EVER BE?" (Smith IV), in response to governor Stevens' offer to provide paternalistic protection to Seattle's people. The elder's answer to his own question partly reflects the dwindling numbers of Lushootseed speakers, reduced by smallpox epidemics from an estimated pre-contact 12,600, to some 5000 by the 1850s (Suttles & Lane 501). Seattle says that:

Your God loves your people and hates mine ... my people are ebbing away like a fast-receding tide The white man's God cannot love His red children or he would protect them/.... How then can we become brothers?" (Smith IV)

Seattle then goes on to crystallize these theological uncertainties into an unequivocal statement of radical cultural difference and separation:

No, we are two distinct races and must ever remain so [my emphasis]. There is little in common between us. The ashes of our ancestors are sacred and their final resting place is hallowed ground, while you wander away from the tombs of your fathers seemingly without regret. (Smith IV)

Seattle's 'inter-cultural commutation test' comes to a peripeteia here, as previous statements of unqualified fraternity founder - perhaps a little strangely to Western eyes - on the radically differing level of importance the Salish and the colonizers ascribe to the sanctity of, and their movements beyond the places of rest of their dead. Such unexpected emphases suggest that closer examination of these differences may provide further insight to the nature of the 'Red'/'White' divide stated so absolutely here.

Derrida observes that a 'genealogical anxiety' very

commonly underlies the memory and oral tradition of generations (1976:124), and that death "shapes the interior of speech, as its trace, its reserve" (315). Speech - rooted in the physical body - clearly has the death of its human vessel as its limit and reserve. The implication of this for oral-based societies is that the intergenerational `chaining` of oral knowledges, traditions and Law is inextricably linked with the genetic `chaining` of bodily presence across time. Perhaps this is the type of relation Lincoln (*Lakota*) alludes to when he writes, "words are the roots of continuing tribal origins, genetic cultural sources within nature" (1983:45). Smith's Seattle, through invocation of his tribal origins extending back "for centuries untold" (II), appears to use his words to invoke the generational roots of the tribe's dead fathers in order to bind and give force of law to his spoken words, as a response to the threat of radical colonial change. This secured status as law for Seattle's oration, is supported by the elder's setting-down within the speech of a specific condition for acceptance of the whites' treaty, "here and now" (V). It is hardly by coincidence that the only overt, formal condition Seattle makes to governor Stevens in all of Smith's text is that "we will not be denied the privilege, without molestation, of visiting at will the graves of our ancestors and friends" (V). The bonds between the living and the emplaced dead were of this much importance to Seattle.

The link between traditional Law and the dead who are the reserve to that Law's oral transmission, resurfaces in Smith's text through the recurrent theme of ghosts and their return to local `haunts`. For the Salish, commerce between the living and dead reached its peak in the mid-winter of Seattle's December oration (Buerge 1991:28), as emphasized by Smith's lines, "Our dead often return to visit and comfort [their living]" (V), and "these shores shall swarm with the invisible dead of my tribe" (VI). The attendant threat of soul-stealing by these lonely ghosts would have brought no small force to Seattle's concluding words, warning the colonizers to "be *just* [my emphasis] and deal kindly with my people, for the dead are not altogether

powerless" (Smith VI). If, then, the elder's speech was not *justly* abided by, the intergenerational power of the dead -- as the deathly reserve and patrilineal guarantors to his oration -- would be expected to swarm back as the "returning hosts that once filled and still love this beautiful land" (VI).

Having moved swiftly from an opening brotherly alignment between `Red` and `White` peoples to declarations of absolute cultural difference, the third and final stage of Seattle's `commutation test` is announced by the lines:

Why should I murmur at the fate of my people? A tear, a tamanawus, a dirge [my emphasis], and they are gone from our longing eyes forever. Even the white man ... is not exempt from the common destiny. We may [original emphasis] be brothers after all. We shall see. (Smith V)

Seattle now emphasizes the *natural*, common destiny shared by all in the ubiquitous cycle of birth/life/death. This cycle is alluded to in the line "A tear, a tamanawus, a dirge" (V). I suggest that the first noun, "tear", may evoke a mother's tears of pain and/or joy in giving birth. The third word, "dirge", less speculatively relates to death; birth's complement and corollary. The middle word, "tamanawus", is a Chinook jargon term approximating "spirit dancing" (Kew 476), and referring to the times of initiation that mark stages in-between birth and death.¹⁸ The natural flood and ebb of such life cycles is emphasized by the preceding line's simile, "men come and go like the waves of the sea" (V). Having reminded his audience of this common human fate beyond any cultural specificity, Smith's Seattle uses it to open an equivocal space for active negotiation between his earlier, effectively `anti-universalist` assertion of cultural difference, and this seemingly more `universalist` emphasis on common life-cycle destinies. At this point, my concept of "narcissistic drift" may prove useful in demonstrating the polarizing effect universalist idealizations may have on such dynamic negotiations and `in-between` spaces.

The most oft-quoted and emphasized line from any speech version is the equivocal "we *may* be brothers after all", discussed earlier. In the dynamic space of negotiation

Smith's Seattle has established, closure is deferred, and a sense of confidence and agency is evoked for an orator who adds a thoughtful "We shall see" qualifier to the `may be brothers` line (V). Such a dynamic space evoking subaltern agency and even judgment of the colonizers, does not last long under the processes of Narcissistic drift. By 1931, and Bagley's speech version, the drift towards statement of explicit, unqualified fraternity between colonized and colonizers has started. Bagley's innocent-looking alteration is to remove italics from the qualifier "*may*" in the first phrase (254). It might seem at least a little pedantic to cite the type-style used for a single word as a significant factor within a century-long intertextual process. However, italicization remains one of the few means available to indicate paralinguistic emphasis within written (English) language. Considering classical Lushootseed's probable privileging of oral form over content (Langen 196), Bagley's elision greatly reduces the qualification which may be given Seattle's phrases through evoking tonal emphasis. Once these italics are lost (and stay so), the two phrases remain remarkably constant, even after Ted Perry's ninety per-cent re-write of 1971. This is until popular mythologist Joseph Campbell writes his blatantly universalist version of 1988, in which any gradual narcissistic `drift` transforms to a far more dramatic current, as he erases any qualification whatsoever to intercultural fraternity, force-feeding Seattle the unequivocal affirmation "we are brothers after all" (35). Note that Campbell reinstates italics, using this paralinguistic marker to emphasize the *lack* of, rather than *strength* of qualification against the case for brotherhood. He also completely erases the abiding judgement of the colonizer by the colonized, implicit in the "we shall see" phrase. For Campbell's Seattle, the fraternal status of the colonial relationship is not to be bargained with or patiently assessed, and the question of universal brotherhood is an almost palpable *fait accompli*.

The overall effect of these erasures of doubt over `Red`/`White` brotherhood, is to eject Smith's Seattle out of his carefully negotiated rhetorical position *in-between*

radical cultural difference concerning respect for the tombs of the dead, and biological commonalities in the universal human destiny of birth/life/death. In these idealizational drifts, then, the subtleties and sense of dynamic agency in Seattle's `intercultural commutation test`, become reduced and polarized into static universalist identifications. This abject script of `either/or` splittings between *cultural* difference and *natural* commonalities can only propagate and reinforce the West's greatest, perhaps most damaging `excluded middle` - between the catachretic terms, `Nature` and `Culture`.

I resist finishing this intervention with Chief Seattle's speech(es) through some `loose end`-tying gesture of closure, for good reason. The customary heading of "Conclusion", encourages foreclosure of a discursive mobility and transgressiveness which politically must not, and indeed cannot afford to end `cleanly` and definitively at the edges of the academic submission. The intimate interweavings between text and context are simply too important to sustain such stark divisions. Rather, I wish to open my `disengagement` from this thesis by revisiting my goal of knowledge production as stated in my introductory positionings. This goal was to map-out possible co-ordinates for a representational middle-ground *between* the dualities which Western thought tends to impose on the (colonial) objects it construes. Through an engagement with Smith's 1887 speech version which has paid attention both to culturally-specific contexts and codings, and to narcissistic drifts in idealization, I hope to have demonstrated that the Salishan elder plausibly evoked by Smith's text was already perfectly `at home` in a subtle, dynamic, even playful `middle ground`. Yet such notions of a `middle` in-between non-fraternity and brotherhood, the specific and the universal, the cultural and the natural, is in no way separable from the Western metaphysical binarisms

such talk of `middles` and `in-between` spaces seeks to resist. It would appear that a new use of language, a re-thinking of thought, is needed to reduce the likelihood of polar erotic/aggressive identifications with others, yet paradoxically this can only be achieved by the Western writer from within the domain of inherited "errors and fantasies", that Nietzsche has alerted us to.

I have contended that in the universalist re-write Joseph Campbell performs in his 1988 speech version, the elision of the "may" in "we *may* be brothers", as well as the "we shall see" qualifier (V), erase the challenge of Seattle's *ongoing* judgement on the possibility of meaningful fraternity between colonizers and colonized. Challenges were an important aspect of traditional Coastal Salishan practice through the challenge contest (Collins in M. Smith 150), as alluded to by J.M. Rich's 1932 publication, fittingly entitled Chief Seattle's Unanswered Challenge. Considering that Seattle's cosmologically-guaranteed words are "like the stars that never set" (Smith II), and that "the dead are not altogether powerless" (VI), I suggest that Seattle's challenge to, and judgement of the colonizers should be regarded, in many respects, as *still* ongoing.

Historically, the 1855 Point Elliott treaty Seattle signed just months after his speech - that "paper of our hearts" (in Bagley 249) - had not yet been ratified in 1858 by governor Stevens, and Seattle's now landless and impoverished people had been denied any of the one hundred and fifty thousand dollars promised them for their lands. Considering this cynical breach of promise and law - along with the 389 Indian treaties broken by the colonizers to date (Lincoln 1992:6) - Seattle's challenge must be respected as a challenge not only to work unremittingly to combat *past* hypotragic portrayals of a manifestly-doomed `Indian`, but to "maintain the rage" against the *ongoing* disempowerment of Native Americans through the eco-lore `smoothies` of mythic Super-Chiefs such as the one hung on the rancher's wall, in my opening example of the Campo Indians of San Diego.

Notes (Pages 7-23)

- 1 A 1992 Greenpeace direct action protesting the official opening of the "Tamala Park" landfill waste site adjoining the Marine Park near Mindarie, Western Australia. The action was in support of local residents who had been protesting outside the tip which is unlined, dug in porous, sandy soil, and intersects with the water table.
- 2 The Chicago Cultural Studies Group began meeting in 1990. Its members are drawn "from departments not only in the humanities but also in area studies and the social sciences; from cultural backgrounds in India, China, and Africa, as well as North America; from kinds of praxis that range from 'field work' to 'identity politics'" (530). All further references to the group use the label "CCSG".
- 3 The title "Chief Seattle" is doubly misleading. First, "chiefs" *per se* were a white invention, "head chiefs and subchiefs [being appointed] to create an authority structure" to aid the treaty process (Suttles & Lane 485). "Sie'm" was the correct term of address, meaning "gentleman" or "lady" (Suttles 1966:169). Second, "Seattle" is an Anglicization of what has been variously recorded as "Sealth, See Yat, See Yalt, Saw At, Se Alh, Stahlil, See Alt, Tslakum, or Tslalacom" (Metcalf in Krenmayr 5).
- 4 Governor Stevens was "A believer in Manifest Destiny and a strong proponent of westward expansion" (Marino 169). He was criticized by General J.E. Wool for his pursuit of an Indian policy which was instrumental in triggering the Puget Sound uprising, occurring one year after Seattle's speech.
- 5 All further references to Smith's text draw from his October 29th, 1887 'Seattle Sunday Star' publication, reprinted in full in Appendix E. I have labelled my columns I to VI for convenience of reference, not to indicate the precise 'Sunday Star' columnar format.
- 6 For a more detailed review of the complex and obscure trajectory Perry's text has taken to international popularity, see Kaiser's thorough exposé in Feest's Indians and Europe, 1989, pp.505-526, or in Swann & Krupat's Recovering the Word: Essays on Native American Literature, 1987, pp.497-536.
- 7 Jeffers does not use page numbers; I count starting from the first words after the title page.
- 8 The importance of statue size to symbolic resonance was well known to Thomas Jefferson. In 1788 he instructed Jean Antoin Oudon to sculpt a figure of George Washington for the statehouse in Richmond, Virginia. In marked contrast to the "heroic" dimensions of Seattle's statue, Jefferson specified that Washington's size should be *precisely that of a man*. "In so far as a single figure can, this expresses an idea about democracy. It shows the statesman as citizen. Not a king. Not a God, but first among equals" ("The Republic of Virtue").
- 9 Lacan returns to Ovid's Narcissus via Freud's paper 'On narcissism: an introduction', 1914, Vol. XIV, pp.163-90. In Sigmund Freud's 1953 The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works (24 Vols).

Notes (Pages 24-56)

- 10 Lushootseed speakers' numbers were decimated from an estimated 11,800 pre-contact to less than 2,000 by 1885; mostly through smallpox epidemics. However, after a population nadir in the early 1900's, by the mid-1980's numbers in the Lushootseed area were back up to some 15,963 (Suttles & Lane 501).
- 11 "Fantasy", or in German "phantasie", is etymologically derived from the Latin "*phantasia*" meaning appearance; the faculty of [*imag/ination*] (Friedrichsen 725). Nietzsche's use of this word, then, opens the way to figuring this process in terms of the narcissistic relations arising from the *Imagos* or ideal image of Lacan's mirror stage (1977:2).
- 12 A modern imposition which echoes the Salishan elder's assignment as synecdochic 'Chief' by government officials in the 1850s (see note three).
- 13 Bagley comments on the "resonance and carrying power" of Seattle's voice, understood by his people over a near half-mile distance (264).
- 14 Murray writes that eloquence seems to be an exclusively male attribute in both 'Indian', as well as white cultures (36). As Diane Bell points-out for an Australian Aboriginal context, such descriptions of male dominance are due more to the changes in women's status wrought by the shift from a hunter-gatherer mode of subsistence to a more sedentary lifestyle, than from some supposed eternal order (239).
- 15 There has even been a 1985 publication somewhat fetishistically entitled The Eyes of Chief Seattle (Slemmons), based on a 1983 *exhibition* - that is, a making publicly visible and legible - held at the Suquamish museum.
- 16 For the remainder of this dissertation, when I use the signifier "Seattle", I am adopting Spivak's recommended strategy of "positivist essentialism" (1988b:250) in making an assignment of positivist subjectivity to the Salishan elder. This must in no way be seen as an elision of the ethical or political problems, and position of 'inescapably bad faith' (CCSG 541) involved in making any such attribution to a human-being spatially, temporally, culturally, and ontologically separated (by death) from my situation as an Anglo-Celtic academic in 1990s Australia.
- 17 The work of Bloch's summative introduction is based partly on the Merina people of Madagascar, as well as on observations of other 'traditional' oral societies made by the contributors to his compilation. Any transparent application of Bloch's observations onto some 'synonymous' Indian oral society clearly risks a universalist elision of difference. However, in foregrounding such risks the mistake should not be made of erasing the common trends that may well develop in different societies using the oral medium for their social, cultural and political lives.
- 18 William Arrowsmith imports his own monotheistic revision of "*tamanawus*" in his 1969 'simplifying translation' of Seattle's testimony. He renders Smith's previously untranslated term - effectively a marker of otherness to the non-Chinook speaker - as a misleadingly intelligible and familiar "prayer to the Great Spirit" (463). Such an ethnocentric gloss elides the culturally-specific meaning of "spirit dancing" as a key initiatory life stage for the Salishan peoples, and collapses Seattle's rhetorically strategic birth/life/death analogy completely.

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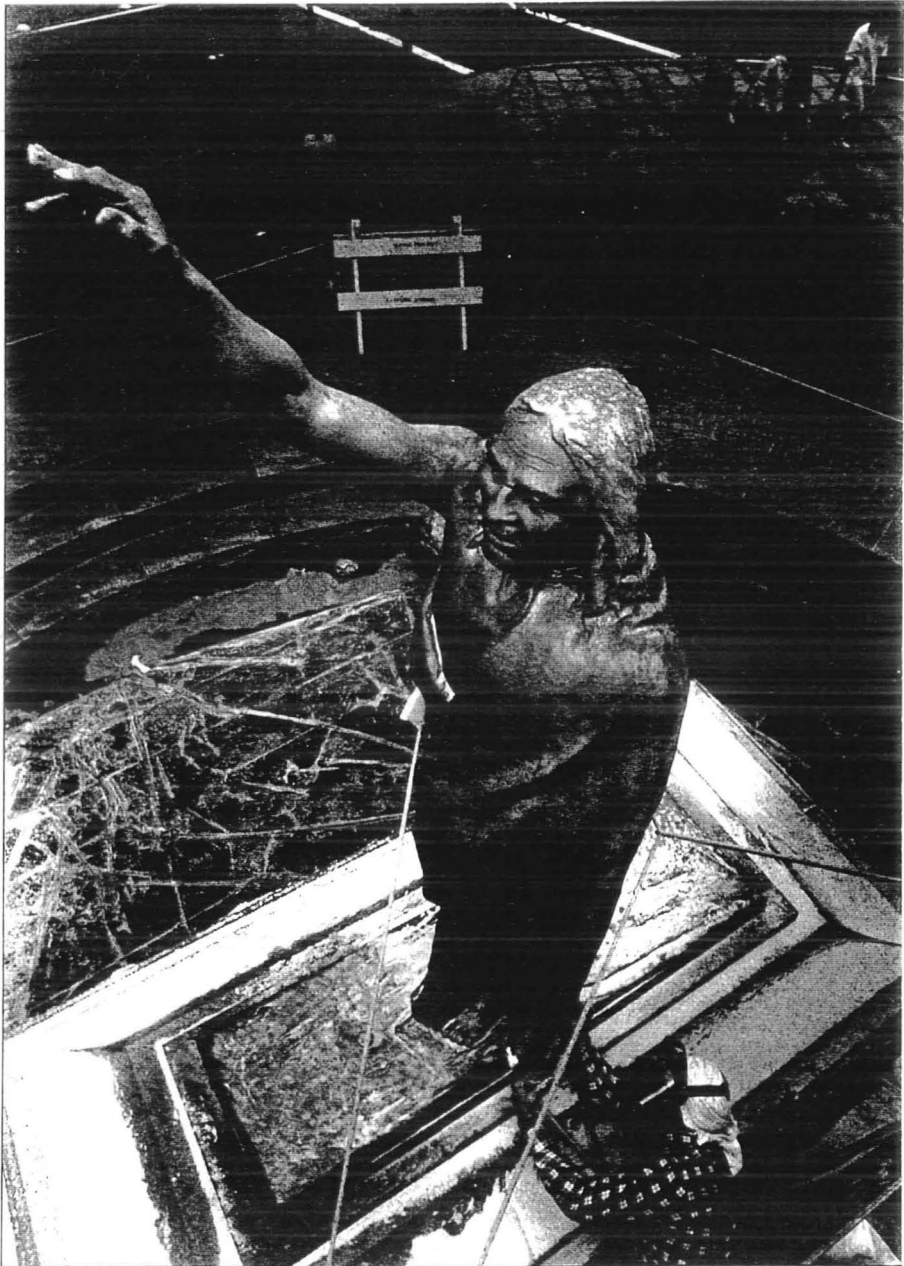
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APPENDIX A

TIMELINE TO KEY SEATTLE TESTIMONY VERSIONS

Producer	Year	Comments
<i>Sie'm Seathl</i>	1854	Lushootseed language oration, no verbatim transcript
H.A. Smith	1887	Reconstructed from "extended notes" of speech occasion taken by Smith
F.J. Grant	1891	Near-exact reprint of Smith text
C.B. Bagley	1931	Mostly minor wording changes, added coda
J.M. Rich	1932	Minor wording changes to Smith text. Hypotragic, universalizing comments
W. Arrowsmith	1969	'Simplifying' translation of Smith text
T. Perry	1971	90% re-write of Arrowsmith, ecological bias
(Spokane Expo)	1974	Animated statue mouths Perry text variant
J. Campbell	1988	Condensed, universalist, Perry text variant
S. Jeffers	1992	Further condensed Campbell text variant, Universalizing paintings
S. Jeffers	1996	Spanish translation of 1992 text

APPENDIX B



Chief Seattle's monument in Seattle has recently been renovated. Here, the finishing touches are being put on the gold leaf which covers him. Photograph by Phil H. Webber.

Source - *Beshara Magazine* (9), 1989

APPENDIX C

i)



THE CHIEF — Photo 1860

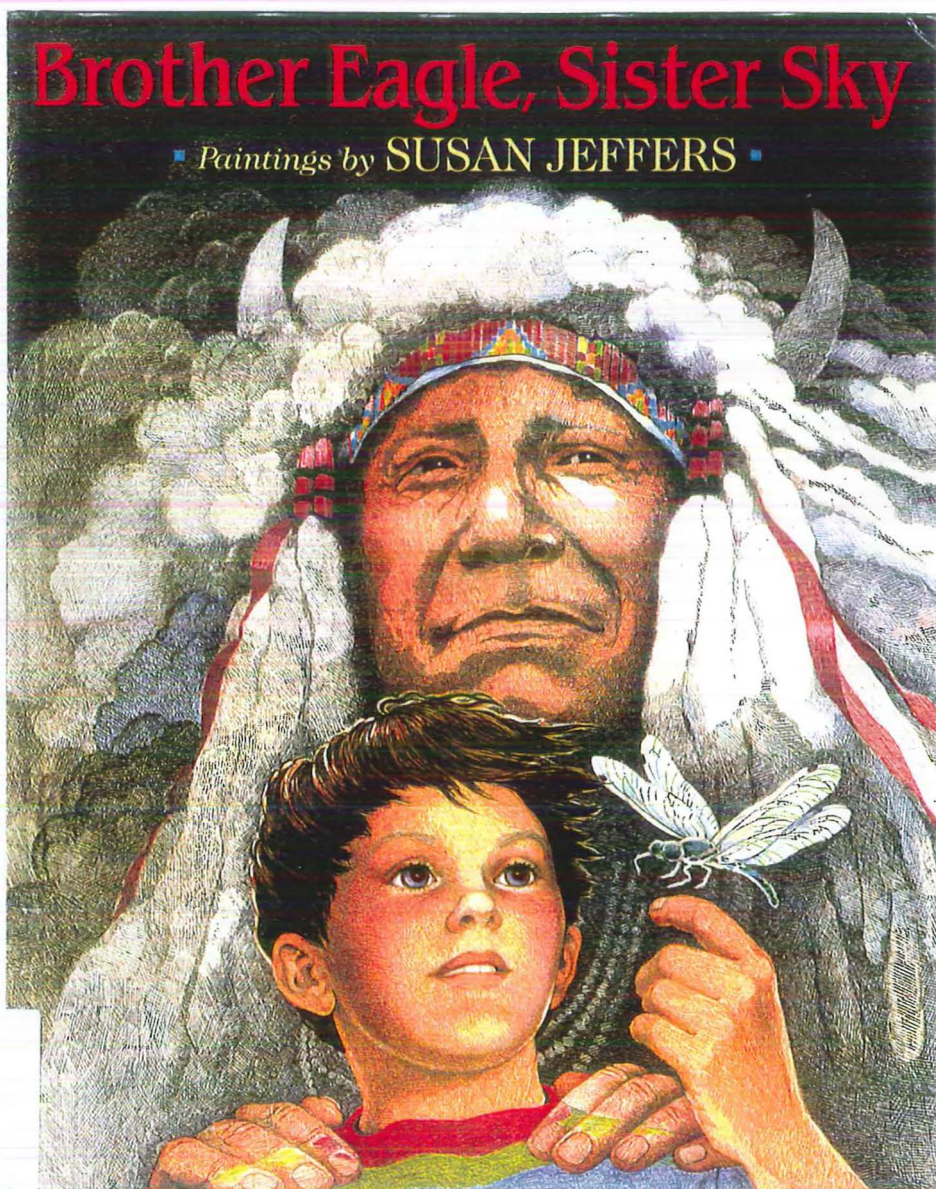
Source - J.M. Rich. *Chief Seattle's Unanswered Challenge*, 1947.

ii)



Source - *Beshara Magazine* (9), 1989

APPENDIX D



APPENDIX E

Published in *Seattle Sunday Star*, October 29, 1887.

I

EARLY REMINISCENCES

Number Ten.

SCRAPS FROM A DIARY.

Chief Seattle - A Gentleman by
Instinct- His Native Elo-
quence. Etc., Etc.

Old Chief Seattle was the largest Indian I ever saw, and by far the noblest looking. He stood six feet full in his moccasins, was broad shouldered, deep chested, and finely proportioned. His eyes were large, intelligent, expressive, and friendly when in repose, and faithfully mirrored the varying moods of the great soul that looked through them. He was usually solemn, silent and dignified, but on great occasions moved among assembled multitudes like a Titian among Lilliputians, and his lightest word was law.

When rising to speak in council or to tender advice, all eyes were turned upon him, and deep-toned, sonorous and eloquent sentences rolled from his lips like the ceaseless thunders of cataracts flowing from exhaustless fountains, and

HIS MAGNIFICENT BEARING

was as noble as that of the most cultivated military chieftain in command of the forces of a continent. Neither his eloquence, his dignity or his grace were acquired. They were as native to his manhood as leaves and blossoms are to a flowering almond.

His influence was marvelous. He might have been an emperor but all his instincts were democratic, and he ruled his loyal subjects with kindness and paternal benignity.

He was always flattered by marked

II

attention from white men, and never so much as when seated at their tables, and on such occasions he manifested more than anywhere else the genuine instincts of a gentleman.

When Governor Stevens first arrived in Seattle and told the natives he had been appointed commissioner of Indian affairs for Washington Territory, they gave him a demonstrative reception in front of Dr. Maynard's office, near the water front on Main Street. The Bay swarmed with canoes and the shore was lined with a living mass of swaying, writhing, dusky humanity, until

OLD CHIEF SEATTLE'S

trumpet toned voice rolled over the immense multitude, like the startling reveille of a bass drum, when silence became as instantaneous and perfect as that which follows a clap of thunder from a clear sky.

The governor was then introduced to the native multitude by Dr. Maynard, and at once commenced, in a conversational, plain and straightforward style, an explanation of his mission among them, which is too well understood to require recapitulation.

When he sat down, Chief Seattle arose with all the dignity of a senator, who carries the responsibilities of a great nation on his shoulders. Placing one hand on the governor's head, and slowly pointing heavenward with the index finger of the other, he commenced his memorable address in solemn and impressive tones.

"Yonder sky that has wept tears of compassion on our fathers for centuries untold, and which, to us, looks eternal, may change. Today it is fair, tomorrow it may be overcast with clouds. My words are like the stars that never set. What Seattle says, the great chief, Washington, (The Indians in early times thought that Washington was still alive. They knew the name to be that of a president, and when they heard of the president at Washington they mistook the name of the city for the name of

III

the reigning chief. They thought, also, that King George was still England's monarch, because the Hudson bay traders called themselves "King George men." This innocent deception the company was shrewd enough not to explain away for the Indians had more respect for them than they would have had, had they known England was ruled by a woman. Some of us have learned better.) can rely upon, with as much certainty as our pale-face brothers can rely upon the return of the seasons.

The son of the white chief says his father sends us greetings of friendship and good will. This is kind, for we know he has little need of our friendship in return, because his people are many. They are like the grass that covers the vast prairies, while my people are few, and resemble the scattering trees of a storm-swept plain.

The great, and I presume also good, white chief sends us word that he wants to buy our lands but is willing to allow us to reserve enough to live on comfortably. This indeed appears generous, for the red man no longer has rights that he need respect, and the offer may be wise, also, for we are no longer in need of a great country.

THERE WAS A TIME

when our people covered the whole land, as the waves of a wind-ruffled sea cover its shell-paved floor. But that time has long since passed away with the greatness of tribes now almost forgotten. I will not mourn over our untimely decay, nor reproach my pale-face brothers for hastening it, for we, too, may have been somewhat to blame.

When our young men grow angry at some real or imaginary wrong, and disfigure their faces with black paint, their hearts, also, are disfigured and turn black, and then their cruelty is relentless and knows no bounds, and our old men are not able to restrain them.

But let us hope that hostilities between the red man and his pale-face brothers may never return. We would have everything to lose and nothing to gain.

True it is, that revenge, with our young braves, is considered gain, even at the cost of their own lives, but old men who stay at home in times of war, and old women, who have sons to lose, know better.

Our great father Washington, for I presume he is now our father as well

IV

as yours, since George has moved his boundaries to the north; our great and good father, I say, sends us word by his son, who, no doubt, is a great chief among his people, that if we do as he desires, he will protect us. His brave armies will be to us a bristling wall of strength, and his great ships of war will fill our harbors so that our ancient enemies far to the northward, the Simsians and Hydas, will no longer frighten our women and old men. Then he will be our father and we will be his children.

BUT CAN THIS EVER BE?

Your God loves your people and hates mine; he folds his strong arms lovingly around the white man and leads him as a father leads his infant son, but he has forsaken his red children; he makes your people wax strong every day, and soon they will fill the land; while my people are ebbing away like a fast-receding tide, that will never flow again. The white man's God cannot love his red children or he would protect them. They seem to be orphans and can look nowhere for help. How then can we become brothers? How can your father become our father and bring us prosperity and awaken in us dreams of returning greatness?

Your God seems to us to be partial. He came to the white man. We never saw Him; never even heard His voice; He gave the white man laws but He had no word for His red children whose teeming millions filled this vast continent as the stars fill the firmament. No, we are two distinct races and must ever remain so. There is little in common between us. The ashes of our ancestors are sacred and their final resting place is hallowed ground, while you wander away from the tombs of your fathers seemingly without regret.

Your religion was written on tables of stone by the iron finger of an angry God, lest you might forget it. The red man could never remember nor comprehend it.

Our religion is the traditions of our ancestors, the dreams of our old men, given them by the great Spirit, and visions of our sachems, and is written in the hearts of our people.

Your dead cease to love you and the homes of their nativity as soon as they pass the portals of the tomb. They wander far off beyond the stars, are soon forgotten, and never return. Our dead never forget the beautiful world that gave them being. They

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still love its winding rivers, its great mountains and its sequestered vales, and they ever yearn in tenderest affection over the lonely hearted living and often return to visit and comfort them.

Day and night cannot dwell together. The red man has ever fled the approach of the white man, as the changing mists on the mountain side flee before the blazing morning sun.

However, your proposition seems a just one, and I think my folks will accept it and will retire to the reservation you offer them, and we will dwell apart and in peace, for the words of the great white chief seem to be the voice of nature speaking to my people out of the thick darkness that is fast gathering around them like a dense fog floating inward from a midnight sea.

It matters but little where we pass the remainder of our days.

THEY ARE NOT MANY

The Indian's night promises to be dark. No bright star hovers about the horizon. Sad-voiced winds moan in the distance. Some grim Nemesis of our race is on the red man's trail, and wherever he goes he will still hear the sure approaching footsteps of the fell destroyer and prepare to meet his doom, as the wounded doe that hears the approaching footsteps of the hunter. A few more moons, a few more winters, and not one of all the mighty hosts that once filled this broad land or that now roam in fragmentary bands through these vast solitudes will remain to weep over the tombs of a people once as powerful and as hopeful as your own.

But why should we repine? Why should I murmur at the fate of my people? Tribes are made up of individuals and are no better than they. Men come and go like the waves of the sea. A tear, a tamanawus, a dirge, and they are gone from our longing eyes forever. Even the white man, whose God walked and talked with him, as friend to friend, is not exempt from the common destiny. We may be brothers after all. We shall see.

We will ponder your proposition, and when we have decided we will tell you. But should we accept it, I here and now make this the first condition: That we will not be denied the privilege, without molestation, of visiting at will the graves of our

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ancestors and friends. Every part of this country is sacred to my people. Every hill-side, every valley, every plain and grove has been hallowed by some fond memory or some sad experience of my tribe.

EVEN THE ROCKS

that seem to lie dumb as they swelter in the sun along the silent seashore in solemn grandeur thrill with memories of past events connected with the fate of my people, and the very dust under your feet responds more lovingly to our footsteps than to yours, because it is the ashes of our ancestors, and our bare feet are conscious of the sympathetic touch, for the soil is rich with the life of our kindred.

The sable braves, and fond mothers, and glad-hearted maidens, and the little children who lived and rejoiced here, and whose very names are now forgotten, still love these solitudes, and their deep fastnesses at eventide grow shadowy with the presence of dusky spirits. And when the last red man shall have perished from the earth and his memory among white men shall have become a myth, these shores shall swarm with the invisible dead of my tribe, and when your children's children shall think themselves alone in the field, the store, the shop, upon the highway or in the silence of the woods they will not be alone. In all the earth there is no place dedicated to solitude. At night, when the streets of your cities and villages shall be silent, and you think them deserted, they will throng with the returning hosts that once filled and still love this beautiful land. The white man will never be alone. Let him be just and deal kindly with my people, for the dead are not altogether powerless.

Other speakers followed, but I took no notes. Governor Stevens' reply was brief. He merely promised to meet them in general council on some future occasion to discuss the proposed treaty. Chief Seattle's promise to adhere to the treaty, should one be ratified, was observed to the letter, for he was ever the unswerving and faithful friend of the white man. The above is but a fragment of his speech, and lacks all the charm lent by the grace and earnestness of the sable old orator, and the occasion. H.A. SMITH.