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**MUSÉE NATIONAL
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**CANADIAN ETHNOLOGY SERVICE
PAPER No. 91**

**LE SERVICE CANADIEN D'ETHNOLOGIE
DOSSIER No. 91**

MICMAC LEXICON

**ALBERT D. DeBLOIS
ALPHONSE METALLIC**

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OBJECT OF THE MERCURY SERIES

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ABSTRACT

The Micmac Lexicon is derived from texts and anecdotes collected over the past twenty-five years from speakers of Micmac in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Québec. The Micmac-English section consists of nearly 5500 Micmac entries with their English equivalents. The exhaustive English keyword index should render the Lexicon more accessible to both native speakers and non-speakers alike.

RESUME

Le Lexique micmac est tiré de textes et d'anecdotes recueillis au cours des vingt-cinq dernières années auprès d'interlocuteurs de langue micmaque en Nouvelle-Écosse, au Nouveau-Brunswick et au Québec. La section micmac-anglais se compose de près de 5500 entrées en micmac accompagnées de leurs équivalents anglais. Constitué de mots-clés, l'index anglais est particulièrement exhaustif ; il se prête ainsi à une consultation plus facile, aussi bien par les autochtones qui parlent cette langue, que par tous ceux à qui elle est étrangère.

Les personnes désireuses de recevoir en français de plus amples renseignements sur cette publication sont priées d'adresser leurs demandes à:

Service canadien d'Ethnologie
Musée national de l'Homme
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INTRODUCTION

The **Micmac Lexicon** is a corrected, revised and expanded version of one first printed in 1979, under the auspices of the Department of Indian Affairs, for the use of the Micmac people in Restigouche (Québec) and other Micmac communities. A bilingual (Micmac-English) lexicon, its primary purpose is to provide, as accurately as possible, one or more English equivalents for each Micmac entry. It is hoped that teachers, students, writers, and any others who may have occasion to utilize the Micmac language will find the lexicon useful. It should be of particular practical use to interpreters and translators. A new feature of the present lexicon is the inclusion of an English-Micmac key-word index, which should make it more useful and accessible to student and native speaker alike.

SCOPE. A few words must be said about the limitations of the lexicon. The compilers have no illusions as to its completeness; they are all too aware of the many semantic areas that have barely been touched upon, if at all. The inclusion or the exclusion of a lexical entry has largely been a matter of circumstance, depending for the most part on the kind of source material available and, to a lesser degree, on the personal interests of the individuals involved in the compilation of the lexicon. It is expected that the number of entries in future editions will be expanded several fold.

Nonetheless, the source material for the present volume does encompass a variety of topics, and includes texts from such widely dispersed localities as Red Bank, N.B., Bear River and Shubenacadie, N.S., and Membertou and Eskasoni in Cape Breton, in addition to the tape recordings collected and transcribed in Restigouche itself.

DIALECT VARIATION. In general, vocabulary items obtained in other communities have much the same pronunciation and usage as in Restigouche. In many instances, however, either the meaning or the pronunciation, or both, have been found to differ noticeably from one region to the other. Whenever this has been observed, the alternate forms or meanings, together with an indication of their provenance, have been included in the lexicon.

Again, it has been noted that there are often considerable differences in the speech of older and younger speakers of Micmac. In fact, there is growing evidence for positing a three-level dialect distinction, depending upon the age of the speaker: elderly vs. middle aged vs. young. One might say that, as a general rule, the younger the speaker, the greater the possibility that the word has been shortened or has undergone assimilation (cf. **angaptm...aggattm**: I look at it). Since the longer, less assimilated forms are still widely used and recognized, the decision has been taken to select these forms for inclusion in the lexicon.

ORTHOGRAPHY. The symbols used to transcribe the Micmac words and expressions in this lexicon may seem at first glance to involve a complete change over from the traditional thirteen (13) letter alphabet used by those among the elders who are literate in the Micmac language. As explained elsewhere, the modifications were made in order to facilitate the acquisition of reading and writing skills by children and adults alike. Moreover, a closer examination of the symbols used will reveal that the changes are not as drastic as they first appear; they are based, in large part, on modifications introduced by Father Pacifique himself in his *Leçons grammaticales*.

The most far-reaching modification is the use of the grave accent to indicate vowel length. Other important changes are the use of the apostrophe, the circumflex accent, and the letters **w** and **u** to mark other basic but heretofore ignored contrastive sound features.

The apostrophe, as used here, represents two distinct features of pronunciation. Within the word, it indicates that a following consonant or vowel is pronounced as if it were the onset of a new word. Before words that begin with a consonant cluster, it marks the very slight presence of a back unrounded vowel, represented elsewhere by the letter **ê**. In practice, this initial apostrophe might well be eliminated once the reader has adjusted to how clusters of this type are to be pronounced.

Another change is the systematic exclusion of the letter **ê** wherever it might occur before a following **l**, **m** or **n**, except when one of these same letters, or a **w**, precedes. Thus, we write **tmìgn**, **smtug**, **pnèsugwati**, **glusgap**, **pm'tn**, but **nêmèj**, **mên'tu**, **mêlagej(g)**, **lêntug** [NS].

The modified list of symbols used to transcribe Micmac forms in the lexicon is as follows:

Symbols	Examples
a	atgitemit, tami, mēta
à	àpi, wàw, alà
ê	pêtewei, ntêp, temtmên
e	epit, nepat, je
è	èpit, nèpàt, nigè
g	gopit, tegèg, mên'tuàgi
ġ	ġopisun, aptêsġèg, nàġi, soġġwat
i	igàġ, wituit, nipi, waiopsgw, eigig, tewiei
ì	ìg, wìg, gutputìl
j	jìhêm, gejjìg, nujjajġ, gigjju, n'mùj
l	lusgnign, pilei, witapal
m	mesgìg, tmìgn, temtèm
n	nepg, menàtu, gun'tew, wen
o	oġwàt, soġtm, getloġo
ò	òplatu, gòpign
p	patliàs, nusapun, tepgig, putêp
s	sipu, wastew, pusit, wapus
t	tiàm, amatpàt, matues, mijjit
u	utan, gelusit, gulgwis, sisgu
ù	ùn, gelùsit, nemitùn, nugù
w	wow, gewtèm, gawigsaw, gwithn, ngwis, siggw, moġwa
'	'pgu, mal'tew, tel'tètm, mên'tu, tm'tè'èn, l'pàtuj

ORDER OF ENTRIES. Dependent forms (noun forms that always occur with a possessive prefix) are listed separately at the beginning. Otherwise the arrangement is alphabetical: a long vowel follows the corresponding short one, *ê* precedes *e*, and *ġ* follows *g*.

FORM OF ENTRIES. All Micmac main entries are given as whole words, not as abstracted stems or roots. On the other hand, English glosses are usually not given for the whole word, but rather are restricted to the bare stem, stripped of all inflectional affixes. Brackets mark explanatory material, comments and queries from the compilers of the lexicon. Micmac words between [...] indicate other dialectal forms.

Dependent stems are usually entered with the first person singular prefix: **n-** (**nê-**), **nt-**, occasionally instead with the third person prefix: **u-** (**w-**), **ug-**, **ugt-**.

Nouns are listed in singular form unless that form is not used.

With the same proviso, verbs are entered in the independent order form for third person singular actor if intransitive (**nepat** *aʔ*: sleep), and for first person singular actor with a third singular object if transitive (**nutm** *ʔ*: hear). Animate intransitive verbs used only with a plural actor are listed in the form for third person "dual" actor (**agnutmajig** (pl) *aʔ*: negotiate), or, where required, "plural" actor (**gittoġopultiġig** (pl) *aʔ*: sit around in a circle).

Paired verbs (animate intransitive [*aʔ*] and inanimate intransitive [*ʔ*], or transitive animate [*ʔa*] and transitive inanimate [*ʔ*]) are presented usually in a single entry. If the shapes are very different, they are listed separately for ease of search.

Information about unpredictable inflectional formations is often given in parentheses after the main entry. In the case of a noun, such information concerns the plural unless there is a specific indication otherwise. Thus <**muìn** (**muìnaġ**) *aʔ*: bear> tells us that the unpredictable plural formation of <**muìn**> is <**muìnaġ**>. On the other hand, in the case of an intransitive verb, a bracketed entry gives us the form of the verb with a first person singular subject, as this reveals the verb stem in its fullest form: <**alaġamìġ** (**alaġamìn**) *aʔ*: snowshoe>.

INDICATION OF THE PART OF SPEECH. All verbs in the lexicon are overtly marked as such by the presence of one or another of the abbreviations *a'*, *ti*, *ta*, *ti* (see below).

The gender of animate nouns is overtly marked by the abbreviation *an*. Inanimate nouns and the various sorts of particles are marked as such only when there might otherwise be uncertainty or doubt.

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>aɪ</i>	animate intransitive verb
<i>an</i>	animate noun
BR	Bear River, N.S.
CB	Cape Breton
dim	diminutive
Esk	Eskasoni, C.B.
Fr.	French
<i>ɪɪ</i>	inanimate intransitive verb
<i>in</i>	inanimate noun
loc	local form
M	Maillard
Mem	Membertou
NB	New Brunswick
NS	Nova Scotia
pl	plural
poss	possessed form
SH	Shubenacadie
<i>ta</i>	transitive animate verb
<i>tɪ</i>	transitive inanimate verb
voc	vocative form of noun

- POSSESSED NOUNS -

- nàŋi:** (my) flesh
nêligsi: (my) gut
nêlis an: (my) aunt; (my) grandmother (BR)
nêlug an: (my) gland; (my) swelling
nêmaŋjigeweim: (my) toe
nêmaŋtam an: (my) brother or sister-in-law [**nêmaŋtem**] (NS)
nêmal'tem: (my) blood
nêmas an: (my) vulva
nêmiŋgamiŋ an: (my) grandfather [**niŋgamiŋ**] (NS) [**nêniŋgamiŋ**] (NB)
nêmis an: (my) older sister
nêmiŋan an: (my) feces
nêmiŋsigwan an: (my) eyebrow
nêmsegun an: (my) eyelash (NS)
nêmi'tesan an: (my) last-born
nêmuŋsn an: (my) shoe
nêmusti: (my) belly; (my) pouch
nênaŋapem an: (my) chum; (my) partner; (my) housekeeper; (my) servant (M)
nên'gìgŋw (nên'gìgug) an: (my) parent
nênigamiŋjêsgw, nêniŋgamiŋjêsgw an: (my) grandmother; (my) mother-in-law (NS)
nên'jan an: (my) child [**nêniŋan, niŋan**] (NS)
nêtuŋ an: (my) eyelash
ngajìgn: (my) lower part of the leg
ngamlamun: (my) heart
ngamlamuti: (my) breath [**ngamlamuti(m)**] (SH)
ngat: (my) foot
ngatàlaw (ngatàlaŋ) an: (my) calf (of the leg) (NS)
ngegguni an: (my) godparent (NB)
ngeggusg an: (my) godparent
ngègwatpan: (my) pate (top of the head)
ngij an: (my) mother
ngijùem an: (my) mother (term of endearment)

ngisiguìsgum *an*: (my) dear old woman (term of affection for a wife)
ngisigum *an*: (my) dear old man (term of affection, wife to husband)
nglamuǵsis *an*: (my) uncle (also, a term of respect for an older man (NS))
ngn'nign *an*: (my) godchild
ngoǵìǵ *an*: (my) nephew or niece; (my) stepdaughter (my) granddaughter (BR)
nguǵinuan: (my) cheek (NS)
ngwèǵìǵ *an*: (my) younger sister
ngwis *an*: (my) son
ngwitǵìǵ *an*: (my) little son (dim)
ngon *an*: (my) heel
ngosi *an*: (my) fingernail; (my) hoof
ngotaǵan: (my) throat
nigmaǵ *an*: (my) immediate family; (my) relative; (my) chum (NS)
nigmàǵ *an*: (my) spouse (housemate (NS))
nijan *an*: (my) child [**niǵing**] (pl) (NS)
nijapòti: (my) purse (NS)
nijǵigm, n'nijǵigm: (my) wart [**nuǵǵigm**] (NS)
nijimiǵ: (my) buttock; (my) anus
nijinj (niǵinjǵ) *an*: (my) meat (of a nut or seed); (my) fish roe
nijinuan: (my) cheek [**ngèǵinuan**] (NS)
nijjus *an*: (my) stepchild
niǵi: (my) penis (NS)
nili: (my) navel; (my) belly button
niligsi: (my) gut
nilisǵi *an*: (my) wing
nilmus *an*: (my) sister-in-law
ninnu: (my) tongue [**niǵnu**] (NS)
ninoǵwei: (my) rump
ninu: (my) food; (my) provisions; (my) larder; (my) game (BR)
nipit: (my) tooth
nipitogom: (my) gum
nitap (nitapaǵ) *an*: (my) male friend
nitapèsǵw (nitapèsǵwaǵ) *an*: (my) female friend
niǵu *an*: (my) eyelash
nitn: (my) nostril
nitu: (my) whisker

nìg: (my) house; (my) dwelling
nìna.jìj an: (my) little one (dim) (NS)
nìp: (my) penis
n.jignam an: (my) younger brother
n.jigun an: (my) knee
n.jijaḡami.j an: (my) spirit; (my) soul; (my) shadow
n.jijaḡami.jùei: (my) shadow [n.jijaḡami.jùei] (SH)
n.jil.j an: (my) father-in-law
n.jinênum an: (my) man; (my) husband
n.jinênum.têp: (my) ex-husband
n.jitaḡan: (my) neck
n.joḡ.jètègn: (my) palate
n.joḡolḡotègnêm: (my) palate
n.jug.wì.jìj an: (my) mother-in-law [n.jig.wì.jì.j] (NS)
n'lusgunignêm an: (my) elbow
n'maggupèlêm an: (my) partner (the godparent of my child (NS))
n'maḡaḡ.jigeweim: (my) big toe
n'mapom: (my) pocket [n'mappom] (NS) (Fr. ma poche)
n'màtletm: (my) gown
n'mêlagejm an: (my) mammary (SH)
n'mì: (my) old woman (voc) (a term of affection and respect)
n'nêснаḡanêm: (my) foster (adopted) child (SH)
nowign: (my) backbone (NS)
nògumav (nògumaḡ) an: (my) cousin; (my) relative (NS)
nògumà.j(ì.j) an: (my) distant cousin (elder to youth)
nògwin: (my) backbone; (my) spinal cord
npaḡam: (my) back
npaḡamiptn: (my) back of the hand
npên an: (my) lung
npêsigtiem: (my) anus
npêssan: (my) sleeve; (my) forearm; forelimb (NS)
npêssanigat: (my) foreleg (NS)
npêtnogom: (my) arm (NS)
npitn: (my) hand [npêtn] (BR)
npinem: (my) opinion (SH)
npłaḡan: (my) lap; (my) groin

npɪ'gogom *an*: (my) steady (girl or boyfriend); (my) fiancée
npògòn: (my) bed
npugugw: (my) eye [npêgigw] (NS)
npusgun: (my) chest; (my) breast [npêsgun] (NS)
npusgunei: (my) brassiere; (my) chest protector (in baseball)
npùgweil, npugugweil (pl): (my) glasses; (my) specs
nsaḡatp: (my) skull (NS)
nsaḡtaḡan *an*: (my) testicle
nsêgun: (my) hip; (my) rump
nsêguti: (my) urine
nsêm, nsêmjìj *an*: (my) niece
nsêtuḡan: (my) ear
nsi: (my) lip
nsi *an*: (my) hoof (NS)
nsis *an*: (my) older brother
nsisḡw: (my) face
nsisḡon: (my) nose
nsit *an*: (my) fetlock (NS)
nsitun: (my) voice; (my) voice box; (my) windpipe
nsitunapil (pl): (my) vocal cords
nsmu *an*: (my) (animal) horn
nsugun: (my) hip; (my) rump (NS)
nsuguni: (my) tail
nsuguti: (my) urine
nsugwis *an*: (my) aunt
ntaḡam *an*: (my) snowshoe
ntaligam: (my) belonging; (my) possession [ntaligem] (NS)
ntalsuign: (my) indigestion; (my) liver (NB)
ntalsutaḡan: (my) possession
ntaposm: (my) pocket [n'naposm] (NS)
ntaptùn: (my) cane; (my) crutch
ntatḡalam *an*: (my) calf (of the leg)
ntàpim *an*: (my) net [ntàpi] [nutàpi] (NS)
ntàsutmaḡanêm: (my) religion
ntêgsitêtaḡan: (my) treasure; (my) valuable [ngêsitêtaḡan] (NS)
ntêp: (my) brain

ntêpi: (my) root (a fine root used for stitching quill basket covers)
ntêpun: (my) place; (my) seat
ntelgw: (my) inner fat (around the kidneys)
ntettuoḡonêm: (my) bill; (my) debt
ntèpitem *an*: (my) wife
ntèpitemtêp *an*: (my) ex-wife
ntèpitès *an*: (my) girlfriend; (my) fiancée
nti *an*: (my) dog
ntijin: (my) thumb
ntijinigat: (my) big toe (BR)
ntinin: (my) flesh
ntisign: (my) stocking
ntlamilu: (my) stomach; (my) innards
ntlaw (ntlaḡ) *an*: (my) shoulder blade
ntl'maḡan: (my) shoulder
ntl'maḡanatgw: (my) shoulder blade
ntl'pàtum: (my) boyfriend *an* (NS)
ntluign: (my) finger
ntluignigat: (my) toe (BR)
ntlùsuèsḡum *an*: (my) daughter-in-law
ntlùsug *an*: (my) son-in-law
ntnuan *an*: (my) vein; (my) tendon (NS)
ntoḡon: (my) dress [ntoḡwan] (BR)
ntòjm: (my) toe
ntuaḡan: (my) knife
ntuèm *an*: (my) domestic animal (e.g. a horse, cat, etc.); (my) pet
ntugvapèḡn: (my) jaw
ntugwejan: (my) forehead
ntul: (my) means of transportation (boat, car, etc.)
ntun: (my) mouth
ntuowm *an*: (my) pot
ntus *an*: (my) daughter
ntusḡunêm: (my) liver
ntutjìj *an*: (my) little daughter (dim.)
ntuttem *an*: (my) totem; (my) gentleman friend (NS)
ntuttemìsgw *an*: (my) lady friend (SH)

ntuttemìsgwèj *an*: (my) young lady friend (SH)
ntuttemjìj *an*: (my) young gentleman friend (SH)
ntùtaḡan: (my) paddle; (my) oar [**ntaḡan**] (NS)
nugumiḡ *an*: (my) grandmother; (my) mother-in-law (SH) (my) aunt (BR)
nujàlam *an*: (my) nasal mucus
nujḡim: (my) sore; (my) scab (SH)
nujìj *an*: (my) grandchild
nujj *an*: (my) father
nujjìjìj *an*: (my) daddy (SH)
nulsu *an*: (my) testicle
nulugs, nulugsêjìj *an*: (my) nephew (BR)
nulugun: (my) thigh
nulugw *an*: (my) abscess; (my) tonsil (NS)
nun'ji: (my) head [**nênuji**] (NS)
nusaḡatp: (my) skull (NS)
nusapun: (my) head hair
nutapsun: (my) clothing; (my) belonging
nutepaḡan: (my) sleigh; (my) car; (my) team (of horses) [**nutapaḡan**] (NS)
nutmaḡan *an*: (my) pipe
nutmawei: (my) tobacco
nutmìgn: (my) axe
nutumòtaḡanêḡ: (my) property
n'wigewêḡ: (my) fat (outer layer)
n'wisawòḡ: (my) appendix [**n'wisawêḡ**] (NS)
unisḡi: (his) wing (BR)
upmepigaḡ: (his) hip (NS)
wilḡi: (his) penis (animal)

- No. 69 PERSISTENT CEREMONIALISM: The Plains Cree and Saulteaux.
O.P. Koozma J. Tarasoff. 247 p., 5 diagrams, 92 plates.

This monograph contains transcripts of taped interviews, participant observations and sketches and photographs collected in the mid-1960s on the Rain Dance and Sweat Bath Feast of the Plains Cree and Saulteaux. It illustrates how the social group (the ritual elders in particular) contribute to the identity, stability and survival of the native culture.

1981

- No. 70 ANALYSE LINGUISTIQUE ET ETHNOCENTRISME: Essai sur la Structure du Mot en Inuktitut. Ronald Lowe. 126 p.

L'analyse que propose la présente étude de la structure du mot inuit, dans le cadre de la psychomécanique du langage, remet en cause la vision nettement indo-européenne du langage à laquelle conduisent la plupart des modèles, anciens et récents, de la linguistique.

- No. 71 THE IDENTITY OF THE SAINT FRANCIS INDIANS: Gordon M. Day. 157 p.,
O.P. 2 maps, 4 figures.

This study attempts to identify the contemporary language and culture of the Saint Francis Indians by tracing their origins in the written record, genealogies, oral tradition and in language. The purpose is to assign the linguistics and ethnographic data obtained from the Saint Francis Indians in the twentieth century to the tribes known at the time of white contact in the seventeenth century.

- No. 72 CHANGING ECONOMIC ROLES FOR MICMAC MEN AND WOMEN: An Ethnohistorical
O.P. Analysis. Ellice B. Gonzalez. 157 p., 7 maps, 8 figures, 12 tables.

This study examines the alteration and adaptation of Micmac male and female roles in Nova Scotia over a period of four hundred years in the context of the broader changes which their society experienced as it interacted with the dominant European culture.

- No. 73 THREE STORIES IN ONEIDA. Edited by Karin Michelson. Told and
translated by Georgina Nicholas. 77 p.

Three stories in Oneida, a Northern Iroquoian language, and an introduction, also in Oneida, are given with an interlinear translation and a morpheme-by-morpheme analysis.

- No. 74 WINDOW ON THE PAST: The Photographic Ethnohistory of the Northern and O.P. Kaigani Haida. Margaret B. Blackman. 236 p., 20 figures, 15 tables, 30 plates.

This is a study of Northern and Kaigani Haida ethnohistory as viewed through a visual medium. The author attempts to demonstrate the utility and significance of early photographs by detailing several approaches to the analysis of over 200 photographs of late 19th century Northern and Kaigani Haida villages and people.

- No. 75 A PRACTICAL HEILTSUK-ENGLISH DICTIONARY with a Gramatical Introduction, Volumes I and II. John Rath. 768 p.

This dictionary contains approximately 9500 Heiltsuk entries which, in selected cases, feature grammatical derivatives and/or examples of usage in addition to their English glosses. The Heiltsuk practical orthography is used and a grammatical introduction is included relating the orthography to the phonetics and the phonemics of the language and outlining the essentials of morphology and syntax.

- No. 76 SOURCES FOR THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF NORTHEASTERN NORTH AMERICA TO 1611. David B. Quinn. 93 p.

This guide attempts to enumerate the printed and manuscript sources for northeastern North American ethnography from the earliest discoveries by Europeans down to the time of the effective establishment of European settlements in the area and also to indicate briefly the content of these sources and the features of the Amerindian societies which they record.

- No. 77 CLYDE INUIT ADAPTION AND ECOLOGY: The Organization of Subsistence. George W. Wenzel. 179 p., 17 tables, 31 figures.

This monograph examines the position of Inuit kinship and its associated behavioral concomitants as they effect the patterning of Inuit ecological relations. It demonstrates the role such features, functioning as one component within the cultural ecological system, play in organizing and maintaining the observed pattern of man-land interactions.

- No. 78 PAPERS FROM THE SIXTH ANNUAL CONGRESS, 1979. CANADIAN ETHNOLOGY O.P. SOCIETY. Edited by Marie-Françoise Guédon and D.G. Hatt. 265 p.

This volume contains a selection of symposia, papers, and abstracts of papers presented at the Sixth Annual Congress of the Canadian Ethnology Society in 1979, and reflects something of the variety of perspectives and approaches current in Canadian anthropology at the present time.