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„Changing Culture, Changing World: A Gramscian Approach to Ontologies in Radical Environmental Movements"

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Msit No'kmaq.

ABSTRACT

Auf Grundlage Antonio Gramscis kultureller und gegen-hegemonischer Theorie in Kombination mit der ontologischen Wende in der Anthropologie, erkundet diese wissenschaftliche Arbeit, wie Ontologien bei radikalen Umwelt-Protestcamps die hegemonische Ontologie durch die Trennung von Natur und Kultur streitig machen. Die Ontologie der Mi'kmaq bei der Blockade gegen einen unterirdischen Gasspeicher wird hierbei der Ontologie bei einem nicht-indigenen Protestcamp gegen Fracking im Vereinigten Königreich gegenübergestellt. Obwohl beide Gegen-Hegemonien die dominante Struktur und die Superstruktur durch ihre Praktiken, Argumente und Ideen infrage stellen, unterscheiden sie sich voneinander. Beide betonen die Verflechtung von Menschen, anderen Lebewesen und Gemeingütern wie Wasser, aber das Wasser als Selbst und die Welt als lebend zu betrachten, ist im englischen Kontext weniger verbreitet. Jedoch basiert die Liebe der Mi'kmaq für das beseelte Wasser auch auf einer tiefen Sorge um zukünftige Generationen und die eigene Welt. Aufgrund der besonderen Bedeutung von Geschichten für die Entstehung von Ontologien werden beide Camps zunächst mit einer ortsgebundenen Erzählung vorgestellt.

Combining Antonio Gramsci's cultural and counter-hegemonic theory with the ontological turn in anthropology, this thesis explores how the ontologies at radical environmental protest camps challenge the hegemonic ontology based on the division of nature and culture. The Mi'kmaq ontology at a blockade against an underground gas storage in Nova Scotia is juxtaposed with the ontology at a non-Indigenous protest camp against fracking in the United Kingdom. Although both counter-hegemonies challenge the dominant structure and superstructure through their practices, arguments and ideas, they retain distinctions. Both emphasise the entanglement of humans, other critters and commons like water, but seeing water as a self or the world as alive is less established in the English context. Yet the love for spirit water in the Mi'kmaq context is also based on a deep caring for future generations and the own world. Because of the important role stories play in the making of ontologies, both camps are introduced with a story from the site.

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LIST OF ABREVIATIONS

EC	Environment Canada
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KMKNO	Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office
NSUARB	Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board
PNR	Preston New Road (frack-free action camp)
SWAGR	Solidarity with Alton Gas Resistance
TTH	Treaty Truckhouse (against Alton Gas Storage)
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
US	United States
WTO	World Trade Organization

LIST OF MI'KMAQ WORDS

L'nu	The people
Msit No'kmaq	All my relations
Nujjinen	Grandfather
Taqamkuk	Newfoundland
Unama'kik	Cape Breton
Wa'so'q	Heaven
Wela'lin	Thanks

1 INTRODUCTION

"The solution for the environmental crisis will be Indigenous or will not be" is something that is often heard in Canada when involved in Indigenous and environmental issues. Both scholars and environmentalists are increasingly convinced that Indigenous peoples will play a key-role in facing the current world-ecological crisis. At the core of this crisis, thus environmental historian and geographer Jason W. Moore (2016) argues, are the thought structures of Cartesian dualism, the dichotomy between nature and culture. According to Moore the dichotomy is not only philosophically problematic, but it is also "practically bound up with a way of thinking the world" (Moore, 2016, p. 84). Dividing the human from nature has created a nature that can easily (cheaply) be appropriated. Yet, nature is never cheap and the price is paid through contaminated water, air pollution, climate change and all the bodily, psychological and cultural harm that comes forth out of these.

There are three main arguments to support the contention that "the solution" for this world-ecological crisis will be Indigenous. A first reason is that the histories of environmental problems and that of Indigenous dispossession are deeply entangled, going back to the start of their dispossession that coincided with the prerequisites of the industrial revolution.

A second argument for the opening statement is the recent alliances between Indigenous peoples, local activists and environmental movements that have proven to be powerful. The protests against Keystone XL and the Dakota Access Pipeline in the United States and the Trans Mountain Pipeline in Canada have achieved considerable successes in delaying construction work on the pipelines – possibly indefinitely – by direct actions and court cases.

While the well-funded, predominantly white environmental movements provide considerable media-attention, political cloud and funds, Indigenous peoples – experienced through a long history of protest – contribute strong moral and judicial arguments, based on their particular land rights (Klein, 2014, p. 384-387). The alliances are not always smooth sailing, but they are a relief after the years that conservation organisations were positioned opposite to Indigenous movements, expelling them from their traditional territories in an effort to demonstrate and protect wild and empty nature from any human appropriation.

The last and for many anthropologists most promising argument is that Indigenous peoples might have a different (way of looking at the) world, a different ontology, that is constitutive of more

sustainable practices. Indigenous ontologies should not be conflated with ideas of Noble Savages or with a religious perspective, as it has been portrayed by twentieth century white environmentalists. It is another conception of the world, just as legitimate as the dominant one, one that is rooted in a life-style close to nature, in which cultural practices, stories, ceremonies, language and life itself are entangled with the surrounding. In such an ontology, the struggle against assimilation coalesces with environmental protection and vice-versa. Today's Indigenous resurgence is, besides being a continued reaction on centuries of assimilative policies, also an answer to the world-ecological crisis, challenging the capitalist hegemony and its mode of production.

Ontologies that challenge the hegemonic conception of the world constitute the topic of this thesis. For a researcher who is non-Indigenous and who has only conducted a limited amount of fieldwork at one Indigenous group, it is not possible, nor ethical to try to give the full picture of an Indigenous ontology. Claiming to describe an ontology would be as absurd as claiming to describe a whole world or a cultural group. What can be done, is to study how particular aspects of a certain ontology implicitly or explicitly pursue a counter-hegemonic purpose.

More specifically, while carrying out fieldwork in an Indigenous environmental protest camp on the Canadian east coast, I wondered about where the opening statement ("the solution for the environmental crisis will be Indigenous or will not be") leaves Europe, the cradle of modernity, where First Nations are less prominent than on other continents? Therefore, I conducted research at a second field site, in a non-Indigenous context, to pursue if similar ontological challenges have also emerged there.

By combining a Gramscian and an anthropological approach, I explore how the Indigenous ontology pursue a counter-hegemonical purpose in protest camps and I juxtapose this with a non-Indigenous protest camp to examine if similar ontological elements can be found in that context.[1] Or if at least they challenge the hegemonic ontology in similar ways.

Gramsci's cultural theory, explaining how a change in the minds of the people (a "war of position") is necessary next to a physical revolution (the "war of manoeuvre"), gets new meaning in the light of the ontological turn. Hence the title of this thesis: "changing culture, changing worlds," refers

[1] For the anthropological approach I draw on authors from the ontological turn. Most noteworthy are Donna Haraway, Eduardo Kohn, Marisol de la Cadena and Anna Tsing. The writings of Martin Holbraad and Paolo Heywood are of great help in the theoretical considerations. See also Morten Axel Pedersen (2012) for a basic introduction to the ontological turn.

on the one hand to the fact that a change in the minds is necessary to create a change in the underlying world, and on the other hand to the ontological turn which posits that changes in the minds *are* changes in worlds, because (perceivable) worlds only exist through minds.
Working with Indigenous peoples, I take up the lessons and the methodology of the ontological turn to take my informants seriously. However, because of my background in natural sciences (geography) and my interest in the seemingly radically opposing claims on nature and safety between the environmental protectors and the industry, I am also critical of its caveats.

In this thesis, I will try to uphold the utmost respect for all my informants and be aware of my white, privileged and masculine status. Especially in the Indigenous case, a researcher must be attentive to avoid repeating mistakes from the past. For example, in accordance with the United Nations Permanent Council of Indigenous Issues (UNPFII, *s.d.*, p. 1), I will not try to define Indigeneity, because it is more fruitful to identify than to define Indigenous peoples. The most important criteria for this identification are self-identification, strong links with territories and surrounding natural resources, cultural features distinct from the rest of the nation and particular social, economic or political systems.
Indigenous and First Nations are spelled with capital letters both in their generic and specific usage. This follows the broader Canadian spelling trend and conveys respect to First Nations. Writing Indigenous with a capital 'I' is also a way of characterising Indigenous peoples as particular groups with specific political claims (Department of Justice, 2015). The plural of peoples refers to the variety inter Indigenous Nations, whose practices and ideas cannot all be unified – neither can they intra a particular First Nation. Nevertheless, they share certain core perspectives, especially within a geographical area like Turtle Island.[2] These similarities and shared histories have formed the basis for political, social and activist cooperation across borders. Thus, although I start from a specific field site, I will also use sources from other Indigenous groups, with the disclosure of the particular First Nation.

[2] Turtle Island is an Indigenous term for North America, derived from various creation stories in which the continent grew on the shell of a turtle.

1.1 Structure

This study is structured as follows. The state of the art is divided into three parts. The first part explores the concept of ontology in anthropology. Of particular interest is how the concept of ontology can be more than a method, without becoming "foundationless" (Blaser, 2013, p. 554). A foundation is necessary to make the ontological turn acceptable to natural scientists and modernity's common sense conception. The second part explores Gramsci's ontological vision and how his conception of culture and "conception of the world" might be close to anthropologists' interpretation of ontology, to allow the application of Gramscian concepts to ontologies. Once Gramsci and the ontological turn are brought at peace with each other, the third part identifies key ontological elements of the hegemonic superstructure that create consent with the current global capitalist structure.

Subsequently, the Indigenous field site, the Treaty Truckhouse Against Alton Gas, is described and introduced by a story from the key-informant, water protector Dale Andrew Poulette. After his story, the historical roots and the way to understand the spiritualism present in the story are explained. The following chapters (3.4 and 3.5) elucidate how the movement is counter-hegemonic and how its superstructure affects the structural elements of the hegemony, while chapter 3.6 shows how the protectors react to the hegemonic assumption that nature is empty. Chapter 3.7 looks at the rearticulation of democracy and chapter 3.8 at the sources of inspiration and the role of the intellectual. Finally, chapter 3.9 uses the knowledge about the ontology from the previous chapters to explain the specific role and over-proportional presence of women in the protectors movement.

After the counter-hegemonic ontology in the Indigenous site has been described, this is contrasted with the field site in a non-Indigenous context, the Preston New Road fracking resistance. The part on PNR is structured in the same way as the analysis of the Treaty Truckhouse to make the contrasting clear and avoid a complete repetition of the theory used.

Finally, the conclusion elaborates the main findings and suggestions for further research.

1.2 Field sites

My first field site is located in Mi'kma'ki, the traditional territory of the Mi'kmaw Nation.[3] The Mi'kmaq live traditionally in what is today called Nova Scotia, Prince Edwards Island and large parts of New-Brunswick, but the territory stretches until the most northern part of Maine in the United States, the east of Quebec (Gaspésie) and *Taqamkuk* (Newfoundland) – although it is unclear if there was a permanent Mi'kmaq settlement in *Taqamkuk* before the British gained permanent control over Nova Scotia from France with the Treaty of Utrecht (1713). In the previous two centuries, the semi-nomadic Mi'kmaq had developed a close relationship with the French through trading pelts. After the Treaty, the British speeded up the encroachment on the Mi'kmaq lands and even started an outright genocidal policy, granting rewards for every Mi'kmaq killed or captured, fully disrupting the traditional lifestyle of the Mi'kmaq. Many Mi'kmaq fled north to *Unama'kik* (Cape-Breton) and *Taqamkuk*. Some Mi'kmaq still speak French as a remnant of the French presence. Most Mi'kmaq however speak English, especially since the residential schools beat the Mi'kmaq language out of young children in the twentieth century. Nevertheless, the language survived, and many Mi'kmaq still speak it (partially). Predominantly older people and Mi'kmaq raised on the reserves know their original Algonquian language. With the rise of neo-traditionalism since the 1990s, the language has regained popularity.

From October to December 2019, while studying at Dalhousie University in Halifax, I spent many weekends at a Mi'kmaq protest site near Stewiacke, halfway between Halifax and Truro. I have always been interested in environmental struggles, so when I heard about a near-by camp against underground gas caverns, it immediately attracted my attention.

The Treaty Truckhouse Against Alton Gas (TTH) was constructed to protest against the development of an underground gas storage in Brentwood (Colchester County, Nova Scotia) by Alton Natural Gas Storage Limited, as subsidiary from the multinational Alta Gas. A salt formation between 800 and 1000 metre underground has to be dissolved in order to make room for hydrocarbons, which would be bought in summer and sold in winter for a profit. The water in which to dissolve the salt will be brought from the Shubenacadie tidal river near Stewiacke through

[3] The most common spelling of Mi'kmaw is used here, this is also an older spelling than the anglicised "Micmac." The plural form of the singular word Mi'kmaw is Mi'kmaq, which is also used as adjective in most phrases.

a twelve kilometre long pipeline. At peak brine generation, 10 000 cubic metres of brine are planned to be dissolved and released into the river every day.[4] Depending on future market demand between four and eighteen caverns will be excavated, discharging brine in the river for up to ten years (Hubley, 2016).[5] The protests against Alton Gas emerged in 2014 to protect the water and the people living *with* it against the potential ecological effects. Especially the effect of the brine release on fishes and possible cavern collapses or leakages are of high concern to the Mi'kmaq protectors.[6] The Treaty Truckhouse is located at the spot where Alton Gas wants to retrieve and discharge the water used to excavate the salt, 10 kilometres away from Indian brook, the reserve of Sip'eknatik First Nation.

I contrast the TTH with a site in a non-Indigenous context. To find the second, non-Indigenous field site, I took three main criteria into account. First, the type of protest had to be similar to the one in Canada, a full-time presence next to a gas-development over a longer period of time. The second criterium was the distance, since at that time I was back in Belgium. Last, my knowledge of the language spoken was important. When taking an ethnographic approach of participant observation and long informal conversation, being fluent in the language at the field site is commended. Consequently, I arrived at the Frack Free Lancashire protest in northern England of which the actions at Preston New Road (PNR) get the most attention. The PNR camp differs from the TTH in the fact that there are more people permanently present. This is an element to keep in mind while contrasting both cases, but it is not insurmountable and it illustrates well the great diversity of people at PNR, each with different sources of inspiration. The protectors at the TTH are also diverse, but they have a common unifier in Mi'kmaq spirituality which gives them a larger degree of coherence.

Hydraulic fracturing or fracking of shale gas formations on a mass scale is an industrial process that was made possible by technical innovations like horizontal drilling and 3-D seismic imaging in the last decades. In the United States in 2000 there were 26 000 wells that sent water, sand and chemicals under high pressure in the underground to frack open little pockets of gas (less than 7%

[4] Brine is a high-concentrated solution of salt in water. 10 000 cubic metres of brine contains 3170 tonnes of hard salt.
[5] For a detailed schema on brine release see Martec Limited (2007).
[6] Protectors is the term with which both people at the TTH and at PNR refer to themselves. Activists sounds for many people aggressive, while protectors shows that the reasons for their actions are defensive.

of total marketed US gas). In 2015 the number of wells had risen to 300 000 (67%) (EIA, 2016, para. 3). However, with the boom came also the controversies. Especially in the period from 2010 to 2012, the protests entered the American spotlights due to the documentary *Gasland*, which shows footage of a Colorado man igniting water coming out of his faucet (Mazur, 2014, pp. 7-9). The fairly new industry was poorly regulated in many American states, which lead to a wave of examples of chemical leakages contaminating ground and drinking water, rigs in residential neighbourhoods, sensible seismic activity and all health effects associated with these (from eye-irritation and nosebleeds to leukaemia and other cancers) (Castelli, 2015; Vogel, 2016). In 2011, after the launch of another documentary, *Drilling Down* by The New York Times, the attention spread to other fracking countries like Australia and the United Kingdom (Mazur, 2014, pp. 10-13). The latter had its first onshore fracking licenses granted in 2008, amongst those were the licenses for Cuadrilla Resources' operations along the coast of Lancashire. Cuadrilla Resources is a British company that was created in 2007. In 2011, Cuadrilla performed its first high-volume hydraulic fracturing job at Preese Hall, four kilometres north of Preston New Road (PNR), which triggered seismic events of 2.0 and 2.3 (M_L) on the scale of Richter.[7] This led to damage to the well and eventually to the abandonment of the Preese Hall site (Harvey, Carrington & Macalister, 2013), but it also worked as a wake-up call for local residents. Many of the people active today in the anti-fracking movement declare that this was the moment they first became aware of (the dangers of) fracking. The second fracking job in the UK would only take place seven years later: in October 2018 at Preston New Road, although drilling and other preparational activities had been carried out at other sites during those seven years of fracking absence. Westby in Lancashire was decommissioned after a drilling tool got stuck. In Singleton, Lancashire Cuadrilla drilled but did not apply for a hydraulic fracturing permission and at the Balcombe site in South East England fracking is not necessary because limestone, the target rock, is fractured by its nature. However, operations were postponed because priority was given to Lancashire (Cuadrilla Resources, 2019). Elsewhere Cuadrilla stated that it had suspended drilling after threats of direct action against the site. There had been intense protests against the site in 2013 (Reed, 2013).

The first occupation of public space at Preston New Road, dates back to 2014 ("Cuadrilla fracking protest," 2014). In January 2017, the actual construction works began and since the summer of

[7] Cuadrilla does have an operating vertical well at Elswick in a sandstone formation, which was fractured in 1993 by Independent Energy. This is a conventional well and thus of another calibre than horizontal fracking in shale gas (Radix, 2011).

2017 there is a 24/7 presence at the “gate camp” on the other side of Preston New Road from the construction site. Opposition grew tremendously in 2016 after the decision of Communities Secretary Sajid Javid to overturn Lancashire county council’s rejection of Cuadrilla’s application.

2 STATE OF THE ART

Before some of the characteristics of an ontology in anthropology can be identified, an exploration of the concept ontology must be made. Especially, because I will be talking about an Indigenous ontology, that of the grassroot Mi'kmaq water protectors, it is useful to situate my approach in anthropology's ontological turn to take difference seriously.

The state of the art starts with a short exploration of the ontological turn and one of its most pertinent problems, its lack of foundation, which makes it difficult for modern science to accept. I turn to Eduardo Kohn and Charles S. Peirce for help and propose an underlying elusive world in addition to the ontological turn's multiple interpreted worlds. I explain how in this approach the fundamentals of the ontological turn are kept upright and why making a meta-ontology explicit, helps to consider the ontological turn in the realm of modern science. The second sub-chapter explores similarities between Antonio Gramsci's view and the ontological turn. Drawing parallels between the philosophical background of both theories allows for Gramscian concepts (hegemony, counter-hegemony, war of position) to be applied on ontologies, as proceeded in chapter three. The third sub-chapter introduces some key elements of the hegemonic ontology against which the counter-hegemonic protest camp reacts. This is done on the basis of political economist Karl Polanyi and environmental geographer Jason Moore.

2.1 Life is constitutively semiotic: the ontological turn

The ontological turn came up in the last decades as a critique on the 1980s cultural turn (Horton, 2013, p. 1). It criticises the metaphysical claims implicit in scholarly writings on culture. Specifically, it points out that the term culture implies different viewpoints and ideas on the world and materiality, but that it does not question the objects themselves. "'Cultures' may differ, but nature does not" (Heywood, 2017, para. 1). Proponents of the ontological turn argue that by relativizing perspectives on the world, the cultural turn refers to a single nature of the world as if it were universal (Heywood, 2017, para. 4). Thus, cultural relativism is not relativist enough. With the ontological turn some scholars claim to go beyond epistemology and culture and propose to focus on different worlds in addition to different worldviews. It takes a radical constructivist

approach in which the distinction between the real and the constructed has collapsed (Henare, Holbraad & Wastell, 2006, pp. 13-14). Paolo Heywood (2016), author of the article on the ontological turn in the Cambridge Encyclopedia of Anthropology, sums up the foundational ideas of the ontological turn:

> the notion of a stable and universal 'nature' viewed through various 'cultural' perspectives is not shared by many of the people we study; that it would be a remarkable coincidence if concepts whose radical difference we acknowledge turned out to be as easily translatable into our own as we often assume; and that presupposing commensurability and a single ontology makes us unfaithful both to our own intellectual project of investigating difference and to our subjects as we fail to 'take seriously' what they tell us (Heywood, 2016, p. 143).

According to the London professor of social anthropology, Martin Holbraad (2012), one of the most important methods of the ontological turn is recursivity, the notion of having ethnographic concepts feed back into and affect analytical ones. A good example of what this means can be found in Holbraad's (2012) work in Cuba, where he studied truth by looking at unfalsifiable statements by the oracular diviners, who are incapable of error. Instead of describing an unfalsifiable statement – for instance, "you are bewitched" – as a belief, Holbraad searches what truth must mean to fit the statement. Truth cannot mean 'accurately representing the world,' as modernists think, but if it means 'transforming the world,' then, by saying "you are bewitched," the meaning of 'you' and 'bewitched' can both be altered so that the statement becomes plausible. The recursivity of this example is that by describing a different conception of truth as it functions in the oracular statement, Holbraad is also changing the meaning of truth in anthropology. Holbraad's description resembles the prophecies it describes.

The growing popularity of the ontological turn has given rise to sceptic reactions (Pedersen, 2012). A relevant question comes from Cambridge professor of anthropology Paolo Heywood (2016). He asks if the ontological turn is methodological or if it is in itself a meta-ontology. In other words: does it propose a space and consequently an ontology in which these multiple ontologies exist? It seems like the ontological turn does not want to answer this question. The pluriverse, a recent invention of ontological scholars based on a Zapatista concept, sheds extra light on the matter. The pluriverse refers to a cosmos in which multiple ontologies exist, as opposed to a *uni*-verse, where

there is only one reality (Escobar, 2018; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018; Rojas, 2016; Blaser & de la Cadena, 2018).

The Canadian decolonial geographer and archaeologist Mario Blaser (2013) writes that "the pluriverse (or multiple ontologies) is not concerned with presenting itself as a more 'accurate' picture of how things are 'in reality' (a sort of meta-ontology); it is concerned with the possibilities that this claim may open to address emergent (and urgent) intellectual/political problems" (p. 554). Thus, the true value of the pluriverse and the ontological turn lays in its ability to radically challenge our ways of thinking about difference, not in the creation of a meta-ontology. It is a "foundationless foundational claim" (Blaser, 2013, p. 554).

Consequently, we could think the ontological approach is a purely methodological move, but this would imply that the ontological turn would be no more than a beauty patch on the ugliness of the cultural turn. Scholars would not believe in multiple ontologies, but only use this term to pay respect to the other culture. In other words, ontology would be just another name for culture (Carrithers, Candea, Sykes, Holbraad & Venkatesen, 2010). Accepting the ontological turn as methodological delegitimises ontologies of other peoples, just like the cultural turn had the problem that "calling it a belief […] is both to mislabel it and to call it mistaken without actually saying so" (Heywood, 2017, para. 15).

On the one hand, if the ontological turn is only a method, this relieves the natural sciences from its responsibilities as a constructed field which is influenced by power relations, paving the way for oppressive representations in which there is no place for other (entangled, Indigenous) knowledge systems (Stengers, 1997). On the other hand, the foundational foundationalism makes the ontological turn difficult to conceptualise for natural scientists, because they often assume one reality out there which can be studied. The relativist French philosopher of science Bruno Latour noted that "showing the 'social construction of scientific fact' [is] met with such fury by the actors themselves" (Latour, 2005, p. 92).

To solve this problem, I apply the concept of recursivity on a meta-level and look at how the meaning of ontology must change in order to be acceptable for both natural scientists, building on a material interpretation of the world as for anthropologists interested in interpretations of worlds. In the following paragraphs, I propose an approach that is inspired by the ideas of philosophers

from Plato to Henri Lefebvre.[8] This alternative approach consists of recognizing one underlying reality out there, while in one breath emphasizing its fundamentally elusive, to say unreachable, unknowable, transcendent character.

To help me in the struggle of reconciling the ontological turn with that of a single reality, I will use Eduardo Kohn's (2013) book *How Forests Think: Toward an Anthropology beyond the Human* and his interpretation of Charles S. Peirce's semiotics. Peirce (1839-1914) was an American philosopher and mathematician who is best known for his contributions on logic, pragmatism and semiotics, the study of sign processes.

In *How Forests Think* Eduardo Kohn, professor of Anthropology at McGill University, starts from the building blocks of worlding in order to let his readers feel the ontology of the *Runa* ['person' in Quechua] in a village in Ecuador's Upper Amazon. These building blocks are signs. A sign is according to Peirce "something which stands to somebody for something in some aspect or capacity" (Peirce, 1931, vol. 2 p. 228). Peirce categorises signs in three types: icons, which mimic the object it represents; indices, signs that do not mimic but correlate what it represents (like smoke for fire); and symbols, signs that are based on convention. Symbols are based on complex layered interactions of indices and are best known in its most common form: language (Kohn, 2013, p. 53).[9] According to Peirce, symbols are the only form of these three types of signs specific to humans. Other signs however, as Kohn illustrates with the title of his book (*How Forests Think*), are not limited to humans. Other "critters," a term I adopt from feminist sociologist Donna Haraway, also interpret signs.[10] They are also "interpreters" as Peirce would call them, or "selves" in Kohn's diction.

We understand the world through signs, signs "re-present" (Kohn, 2013, p. 30) the world. They evoke something that is not "immediately present" (p. 30). Notwithstanding, communicating

[8] In the Theory of Forms, the Old Greek philosopher Plato distinguishes between a phenomenal world in which objects and ideas are imperfect and a perfect, absolute, transcendent world of Ideas.
In 1991 the French philosopher Henri Lefebvre proposed a theory of space in which he distinguishes between perceived, conceived and lived space. The perceived space is the underlying, abstract material space, which is interpreted by people as the conceived space. The lived space is the everyday socially produced space.

[9] Nonetheless, not all words are symbols, onomatopes are icons (Kohn, 2013, p. 27-29).

[10] I use the term "critters" in accordance with Donna Haraway (2016) to refer to human and to non-human selves such as microbes, plants, animals and perhaps even machines, mountains and Gaia as a whole. "Critters" is an especially useful term because it does not have the stain of "creatures" and "creation" (p. 169).

through signs brings a "radical discontinuity" with it. Listening to someone talking about a wounded pig plunging in the water, is not the same as being present at that event.[11]

Before going further, it must be marked that Kohn does recognise an underlying material reality.

> Whether or not someone was there to hear [the falling of a palm], whether or not the monkey, or anyone else for that matter, took this occurrence to be significant, the palm, itself, still came crashing down (Kohn, 2013, p. 32).

Thus, Kohn recognises an underlying reality, but he also notes that there is a radical discontinuity in every interpretation of this reality through signs. When we go a step further in thinking about signs and radical discontinuity, everything we experience, everything we read, think and see is immanent in signs and as to all these signs a radical discontinuity exists. A tree exists independently. The material thing exists in the underlying reality, yet the interpretation of it as a tree comes about through signs. If we interpret everything through signs, and every sign has a radical discontinuity, then the underlying world is unknowable in perfect, absolute terms. It is elusive.

Looking at the immense differences between the worlds of humans and those of non-humans might help to understand the radical discontinuity between the underlying reality and signs. The biologist Jakob von Uexküll (1982) introduced the most famous example. He describes the relations between a wood tick and the mammals it parasitizes. All critters are involved in making worlds, even small ones like ticks (Tsing, 2015, p. 156-158). However, the world of a tick is completely different to that of a human or a pig. A tick's world consists of only three carriers of significance: the butyric acid contained in the sweat of mammals, the temperature of thirty-seven degrees (corresponding to mammal blood temperature) and the typology of skin characteristics of mammals. According to the contemporary Italian philosopher, Giorgio Agamben (2004) the tick is immediately, intensely and passionately united to these three elements. "The tick *is* this relationship; she lives only in and for it" (2004, p. 47, original emphasis). Thus, for a tick no difference exists between a palm and a table. The only difference that matters to a tick is between a pig and a palm tree, between the mammal and the non-mammal. Taking such reflections into account, no epistemological foundation can be established on which to argue that our conception of the world, our categorisation, is exact and that of others is not. Therefore, I call the underlying reality elusive.

[11] The seemingly random examples I use in this part are the same as those Kohn (2013) uses.

By starting at the very beginning of what constitutes world(view)s, Kohn introduces the reader to the spirituality of the Runa and demystifies it. The recursive move exists in the fact that Kohn changes our conception of what thinking is by exploring the thought of non-humans. To be a self or to think becomes an activity that non-humans like forests are also capable of. The condition of thinking is being able to interpret signs and all life-forms in the world do so. Kohn's thesis could even be stretched further to include critters not commonly perceived by non-Indigenous peoples as life-forms. Peruvian Marisol de la Cadena (2010, 2015), situated in the same field of thought as Kohn, Haraway and Blaser, writes about the Ausangate, a caring mountain, and the importance of this "earth being" as a political actor. "Earth being" is de la Cadena's (2015, p. xxiii) translation of the Andean word *tirakuna* (a contraction of the Quechua words for earths and persons). It is a hard to translate concept that *is* – not that is referring to – non-human and even non-animal selves with whom humans live in relationship. A mountain also interprets signs, it interprets climate, land use and respect (taking care of the mountain) and responds with water and crops or with landslides and drought.

Although Kohn fosters some belief in an underlying reality out there, and in bare facts which are facts by themselves without the interpretation of an interpretant/a self, he also aligns himself with the Brazilian Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, proponent of the ontological turn, who prominently contributed to the anthropological development of the idea of Amerindian perspectivism. But Kohn adds:

> The recognition of multiple realities only side steps the question: Can anthropology make general claims about the way the world is? Despite the many problems that making general claims raises – problems that our various forms of relativism struggle to keep at bay – I think anthropology can. And I think anthropology, to be true to the world, must find ways of making such claims, in part because, as I will argue, generality itself is a property of the world and not just something we humans impose on it (Kohn, 2013, p. 10).

Kohn illustrates that, while taking the lessons from the ontological turn to heart, he also finds it necessary to recognise the existence of an underlying reality. This is possible when the underlying world/reality is elusive, meaning there will always be a radical discontinuity in its interpretation and that there thus also exist many constructed worlds/realities on top of the underlying elusive one. Before explaining the consequences of this approach for modern science (the systematic

description of the underlying world), the similitude with the ontological turn will be further explained.

In line with the collapse of the distinction between the real and the constructed in the ontological turn (Henare *et al*., 2006, pp. 13-14), the conceptualisation of an elusive underlying world also denies the difference between ontology and epistemology, nature and culture, matter and ideas, worlds and worldviews. The real does not become constructed, nor does the constructed become real, because such a statement would place one conceptualisation above the other, but the distinctions between the dichotomies fall away. In this way a convergence can be made between multinaturalists and cultural relativists, between people that do not only differ "at the level of the content of their worldview, but also regarding the very question of whether difference is to be located at the level of worldviews or not" (Heywood, 2017, para. 10).[12] If it is impossible to perceive the underlying reality in an abstract absolute sense, then everything that is perceived is constructed. However, it might also be correct to call the constructed real, because it is all that someone can conceive. In other words, one could argue that the proposed approach of a fundamentally elusive underlying world only shifts the problem, because there still is an underlying reality and that the nature-culture binary is replaced by a deeper level, to all that is knowable (culture/epistemology/ideas/worldviews) and the elusive, unknowable natural/material underlying world. But since the underlying world is elusive, it could just as well be ideal. In fact, since the difference between materialism and idealism in the constructed worlds is obsolete, the question of the essential character of the underlying world turns void.

The point is not so much to consider other worldviews as representing a true reality out there, as it is to provincialize all ontologies/worldviews, including that of modern science, which must acknowledge its own premises, namely that the meaning of its words and word-relations are not derived from any kind of absolute truth in the underlying reality, but from a long historical dialectical process. For example, the concept of species and its categories are very much a social construct. The modernist idea of well-demarcated species has led to a gap in the knowledge on "interspecies entanglements" (Tsing, 2015, p. vii). These relations once seemed the subject of fables but are now the topic of prestigious research. Only when we know that our own ontology is

[12] The Brazilian anthropologist Eduardo Viveiros de Castro describes a range of Amazonian societies as "multinaturalist," because they do not perceive difference as a variation in culture of people with a similar nature, but as a variation in nature. A similar nature always leads to the same perspective of the world. Therefore, if someone perceives something differently, it means he is perceiving with a different nature.

constructed, we will be able to perceive the realities of others (people and critters), respect them and learn from them.

The recognition of an underlying world, although elusive, makes the approach acceptable to natural scientists. The fact that this underlying world is elusive, does not mean it is impossible to make claims about it. All ontologies are built upon an image of this world. The important contribution of the proposed view is that our interpretation of that world is not the only possible one. There is no reason to assume one interpretation (a world in the meaning of the ontological turn) as more valuable than the other, so now multiple truths (claims about the underlying world, which are coherent with the used assumptions) are possible and scientists must be critical about their rationalization based on single signifiers anchored by definitions. The constructedness of concepts like mass and gravity does not imply that they cannot be used to describe a fall movement (the fall movement is of course also a construct). The constructedness does however reveal the need for scientists to critically reflect on the concepts they use. The geometrist who has been working in 2-D must realise that its 'truth' does not work in an n-D world and that she might have missed out on formulas that work in worlds with more dimensions.

For many scientists, the mathematician for example, who has a clear set of axioms and creates a whole universe based on these axioms, the constructivist thesis will not change much. For other scientists, the biologist for example, who works with many contingent concepts it is important that 'life' and 'species' are constructed concepts. Life, as de la Cadena (2015) has shown with her caring mountain, does not have the same meaning in every ontology. The taxidermist must be very aware that the concept of species, with its subcategories and clear limits is constructed and that the way that some species are classified is influenced by prevalent power-relations (see Latour, 2005; Stengers, 1997).

I have shown that in essence ontology is epistemology, that nature is culture, objects are thoughts[13] and worlds are worldviews. Nevertheless, it might be useful to keep the difference of the terms in use. The concept culture has been vulgarised and exists in many minds as the more superficial form of social construction. The same applies to epistemology and ideas. Thus, the term ontology makes sense in order to distinguish between the superficial and the deeper level of the social construct.

[13] In Kohn's sense of thinking, where thinking is the interpretation of signs.

Once acknowledged and having found a place in the ontological turn, the term ontology is used to affiliate myself with the ontological turn and its progressive position without having to worry that it might imply multiple underlying worlds or only a methodological term.

The re-evaluation of the difference between worldview and ontology, also allows me to use the term ontology in other contexts than indigenous studies, where the term sprouted. The ontology of a white activist will by most scholars not be described as an ontology, but as a worldview. Yet, as I show in this thesis, also in non-Indigenous contexts different understandings of the world come into existence as a counterreaction to the hegemonic ontology. Hence, from here on forth I use the term ontology instead of worldview and culture in both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous context. Nevertheless, 'culture' and 'worldview' also appear because these terms are used by Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) in his publications decades before the ontological turn. The meaning of these terms for Gramsci is comparable to the meaning of ontology and world in the ontological turn, as will become clear in the following chapter.

Further, ontology carries the connotation of a homogenous understanding by a social group, while worldview refers to a more personal perception/reality of the world. Everyone has a slightly different worldview, meaning that the whole of our conceptions is unique to every person and her history. Yet, at a deeper level, for instance when considering the earth as alive or dead, similarities in the worldviews within a large social group are evident. I name these similar worldviews within a cultural group an ontology or a "hegemonic worldview" (in Gramscian terms). Since the protectors at Preston New Road form a very diverse group, in which some use Indigenous knowledge to look at the world (e.g. calling the world "Mother Earth"), while others are more leaning towards the modernist ontology, the plural of ontology, ontologies, would be a better fit. Yet, this would create a situation in which I homogenise the Mi'kmaq ontology and make an exception for the PNR ontologies. To avoid this, I will use ontology of a group always in singular, while it is important to keep the heterogeneity of these groups in mind. For creating homogenous groups would be reductionist and would create an essentialist mythology that keeps hegemony in place and rewrites the inferior position of the subaltern ontology. Jacques Derrida (1974) and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) insisted on this fact by using the Gramscian term "subaltern." In this light it also matters that I do not describe a full ontology in this thesis. Such an attempt would be reductionist and reaffirm power relations. In this thesis I merely point out some striking

aspects of Mi'kmaq and radical environmentalist ontologies and show how they are counter-hegemonic.

2.2 Antonio Gramsci and the ontological turn

The approach outlined above, to find a place in between materialism and idealism by accepting an underlying reality, but as well to accept the constructedness of all knowable worlds is not too far from Gramsci's ideas in the *Prison Notebooks* [*Quaderni del Carcere*]. Both approaches condemn reductionism, but the similarities go deeper. A short look into these similarities, will allow for the application of Gramscian concepts on the ontologies of the studied field sites.

In his *Prison Notebooks* Gramsci (1971) comments extensively on Benedetto Croce, Niccolò Machiavelli and Nikolai Bukharin. Out of this critique arises a particular form of dialectical historicism that leads to a critique on both idealism and on what Gramsci calls "vulgar materialism." Gramsci finds a middle ground between abstract structuralism and idealism (Gill, 1993). The Gramsci specialist, Canadian philosopher Esteve Morera (1990) characterises Gramsci's non-structuralist historicism by four main components. The first is "transience" (pp. 36-37), although Gramsci often uses the term "historicity" to refer to the same dynamic property. The term is most prominently used by Karl Marx and Gramsci to rebel against the pure economists view of the market as an automata ruled by Adam Smith's invisible hand. Here we can see similarities between Gramsci and his contemporary from the other side of the Alps, Karl Polanyi (see Burawoy, 2003 for a comparison). Polanyi (2001), also a founder of the theory of civil society, traces the emergence of the modern market design based on self-regulation and individualism back to the enlightenment, its philosophies and its political economy. Thus, it is not only the market that must be seen as transience, but the whole concept of the *homo oeconomicus* who acts according to the market as if it was natural. The "historicity of every conception of the world and of life" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 406), also applies to our own ideologies (for Gramsci "the philosophy of praxis") and what I have called above ontologies. In chapter 2.3 some of the elements of the hegemonic modernist ontology are described and shown to have emerged out of a dialectic history.

Also the Indigenous ontology is transient. To deny this would risk creating an essentialist and romanticised image (Hornborg, 2008). Ethnographer and professor of history of religions Anne-Christine Hornborg traces changes in the Mi'kmaq lifeworld from the 1850s until the twenty-first century through Kluskap-stories and the fight for the protection of Kluskap's (or Kelly's) Mountain in Cape Breton.[14] In broad lines, she describes how the Mi'kmaq perception of the landscape originates from a specific hunter-gatherer lifeworld, but shows many of these practices were lost during colonisation and especially in the middle of the twentieth century. Today however, the environmental struggle and the continuation of the battle for land rights have sparked a revival of former concepts and rituals and an integration of these practices into modern life. This cultural revival and neo-traditionalism create meaning for the subaltern group. The fact that worldviews (which I have characterised as the more personal upper layer of an ontology) vary in the course of time and also between Mi'kmaq, does not prevent that there have been core ontological elements that have persisted over time. For the Mi'kmaq at the camp, the fact that their way of life still exists after five hundred years of colonisation is a source of pride and strength.

The second aspect of Gramsci's historicism is historical necessity (Morera, 1990, pp. 37-38). Here, Gramsci's historicist position vis-a-vis idealism and structuralism becomes clear:

> It is surprising that there has been no proper affirmation and development of the connection between the idealist assertion of the reality of the world as a creation of the human spirit and the affirmation made by the philosophy of praxis of the historicity and transience of ideologies on the grounds that ideologies are expressions of the structure and are modified by modifications of the structure (Gramsci, 1971, p. 442).

Gramsci argues that social and political change takes place within particular limits. These limits, however, are by themselves a function of the historical dialectics of a social structure. Thus, historical necessity in itself is dialectic and challenges the subject-object dichotomy of positivism (Gill, 1993, p. 23), just like the ontological turn does. Gramsci is non-structuralist in the sense that he also recognises a human aspect, he conceptualises historical change to a large extent as the

[14] Kluskap is an an important more-than-human figure in Mi'kmaq stories. The figure exists in many different forms and spellings (Glooscap, Glooskap, Kulóskap, Gluskap, Gloskap, Kluskap, Kloskomba). I follow Hornborg (2008) in her choice for the most phonetic spelling.

consequence of collective human activity. By taking into account the post-humanist turn, this conception of historical change can be broadened to the accumulated activity of all selves.[15]

Third, Morera (1990, pp. 38-53) identifies in Gramsci's work a dialectical variant of realism, where further likeness with the proposed reading of the ontological turn can be found. Gramsci criticises idealism by writing that if phenomena "cannot be considered as existing independently of the subject that observes them, they are not observed but created" (Gramsci, 1975, vol. 2, p. 1048, p. 1454, as cited by Morera, 2002, p. 218). Such a conception of idealism is not only "solipsism," but "witchcraft" (*ibid.*, p. 1454). Further, he also argues that scientific theories are "the reflection of an unchanging reality" (*ibid.*, p. 1445). The meaning of "unchanging" in the last statement must be understood in an essentialist way, not to deny that selves modify the underlying world. In these quotes Gramsci recognises "that objects of knowledge exist independently of the beliefs of knowing subjects and that it is possible for the latter to discover truths about such objects" (Morera, 1990, p. 40). Morera also suggests that Gramsci's argument is similar to the *reduction-ad-absurdum*-argument from the founder of critical realism Roy Bhaskar (1979) and thus to the earlier raised question of a meta-ontology: the perception of a world is contingent on the existence of an underlying world.

It must be noted that Gramsci often makes seemingly contradictory statements, even inside one paragraph, which has led to an interpretation of many scholars of Gramsci as an idealist. Morera (1990) tries to identify the reasons for Gramsci's confusion in being both realist and idealist, but he dismisses too soon the option that Gramsci, by combining seemingly oppositional statements, might have tried to find a middle position between realism and idealism.

Last, ignored by Gill (1993), but over-emphasised by most other authors is historicism as humanism (Morera, 1990, pp. 54-58), Gramsci rejects both the divine origin of history and an ultra-materialist or biological determinist origin of history. Instead, history must be understood as a human process (or one of selves) and human nature as the transient ensemble of social relations. This approach does not lead to a denial of structures. His approach is supplementary to that of

[15] Post-humanism is the most commonly used term for the discipline that researches non-humans as selves. However, I agree with one of its most known proponents, Donna Haraway (2016), that it is an unfortunate term, because it implies that it would be less human than humanism, which is not the case.

classical political economy. Gramsci has a clear interest in the "general structures that condition human activity" (Morera, 1990, p. 58) and especially in the "catharsis", which is the

> passage from the purely economic (or egoistic-passional) to the ethico-political moment, that is the superior elaboration of the structure into superstructure in the minds of men. This also means the passage from 'objective to subjective' and from 'necessity to freedom' (Gramsci, 1971, pp. 366-367).

At this point, the structure (*i.a.* the mode of production and the institutions manufacturing consent) is no longer perceived as an external force, physically dominating people. It assimilates the people and makes them acceptive and passive. People start looking at the structure as a means of freedom instead of as a means of domination.

2.3 Hegemonic ontology

One of Gramsci's most influential contributions to the social sciences is his theory on hegemony and counter-hegemony. Gramsci expanded Lenin's concept of hegemony by analysing how the capitalist bourgeoise establishes control. The ruling class exercises constraint not only through physical and economic coercion, but also through ideology. Hegemony operates through culture, inserting values, norms, beliefs, symbols and practices in the common sense conception. At the core of these cultures is a conception of the world – or as elaborated before, an ontology – that is developed through a dialectic relationship between the intellectuals and the people.

> Rejecting the traditional division between philosophy and common sense, Gramsci shows that both express, at different levels, the same 'conception of the world' which is always the function of a given hegemonic system expressed in the whole culture of a society. In effect, what is involved here is a certain 'definition of reality' of which philosophy constitutes the highest level of elaboration and through which the intellectual and moral leadership of the hegemonic class is exercised. This is what gives it its political nature and indicates the necessity for any class which wants to become hegemonic to struggle on the philosophical front in order to modify the common sense of the masses and realise an intellectual and moral reform (Mouffe, 1979, p. 8).

The socialist revolution, which Marx deemed inevitable did not spontaneously emerge because in order to challenge the ruling class, its cultural/ideological hegemony must be challenged. Gramsci calls for the establishment of an alternative "historical bloc," a union of social forces with moral and intellectual leadership. The ideological persuasion towards the founding of an alternative conception of reality, Gramsci calls the "war of position." A historical bloc extracts consent from a social group by producing and reproducing the hegemony of the dominant class through culture, ideas, institutions, economic and social relations. Thus, "the 'war of position' once won, is decisively definitively" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 239).

Before studying how environmental movements challenge the hegemonic historical bloc, this historical bloc itself must be shortly described. More specifically, what ontology lays at the basis of the superstructure (the whole of ideas, culture, morals and worldviews) that defends today's dominant class?

Today's hegemonic historical bloc can hardly be characterised as one system, some have called it capitalism, others neoliberalism, individualism or modernity – and even inside these systems we can identify different types, e.g. multiple types of capitalism (*cf.* Rossi, 2012). Nevertheless, some elements of these systems have been developing since the late fifteenth century in Europe and stayed relatively constant since the seventeenth century. From Europe they were exported to the rest of the world (globalisation). These elements are a way of looking at the world, an ontology, based on clear demarcations. I will characterise the current hegemonic ontology by the theories of two authors already mentioned. First, Hungarian economist and contemporary of Gramsci, Karl Polanyi, who studied how economy had been disembedded from its political and social context and second, environmental historian and geographer Jason Moore, who argues that Cartesian dualisms are at the core of capital accumulation and legitimise it.

In *the Great Transformation* Polanyi (2001) traces the transience of the modern market and the nation-state, which he calls together the "market society." The market society is not a spontaneous universal condition, as it presents itself, but it was constructed and has replaced "traditional societies" based on other motivations like reciprocity, redistribution and householding. The *homo oeconomicus*, the caricature Polanyi uses to refer to the rational man making decisions on the basis

of economic self-interest, is a human invention, therefore it does not reflect human nature. Instead, behaviour is socially motivated.

Polanyi traces the origins of this idea back to the seventeenth century – this being at least the moment when it developed into a hegemonic view, because Polanyi does recognise older forms of capitalist production inside traditional societies. Nevertheless, the liberal idea of a self-regulating market acquired a hegemonic position through the onto-epistemic separation of society in an economic and a political sphere. Through this separation, capitalism presents itself as the only politico-economic arrangement viable and it resolves the paradox between political cooperation and economic competition (Carroll, 2006; Reed, 2012). The implementation of this ideological transformation happened in two related phases. Note that implementation and transformation are connected, because also through the implementation the transformation came about. To identify the first phase of implementation Polanyi agrees with Marx: the establishment of a 'free' labour market by the enclosures, which corresponds to the destruction of those institutions (and ways of thinking, ontologies) that functioned on other forms of exchange like reciprocity and redistribution. Further, Polanyi looks at the protective measures against the rapid change brought about by the transformation into a self-regulated market economy and how they even further imposed the new conditions on the population (specifically the Speenhamland treaty in Britain). However, this second phase is more contested (*cf.* Bregman, 2016).

Not unrelated to Polanyi's theory on the market society is the idea that Cartesian dualisms are at the core of capitalist accumulation. Between the fifteenth- and eighteenth-century nature was organised in a new way (Moore, 2016, p. 84). The separation of mind and body, and consequently of culture and nature, was vital to legitimise the accumulation of nature.

Jason W. Moore (2016, pp. 85-86) recognises, analogous to Polanyi, three "entwined historical processes [that] were fundamental" (p. 85). They can also be seen as three intertwined aspects (economic, social and philosophical) of one process. The first is dubbed primitive accumulation by Karl Marx. It is a group of processes with many forms that made humans dependent on monetary operations like wages for their survival, the creation of the "'free' labour market" in Polanyi's terms. This process of enclosures and dispossessions is also known as proletarianization.

Second, Moore notes that the proletarianization was never purely economic, it was based on new forms of territorial power, one linked to the "generalization of private property" (p. 86). The

strategies of enclosures and dispossessions were just as diverse as the states employing them. States received as a new core function the "internal maintenance and external defence of a private property regime" (Teschke, 2006, p. 51).

The last "great historical process turned on new ways of knowing the world" (Moore, 2016, p. 86). By following Carolyn Merchant's ecofeminist insights from *The Death of Nature* (1990), Moore summarises:

> Let us think of the new knowledge regime as a series of "scientific revolutions" in the broadest sense of the term. This regime made it possible to launch and sustain a process that threatens us all today: putting the whole of nature to work for capital. The job of 'science' was to make nature legible to capital accumulation—transforming it into units of Nature and counterpoised to the forces of capital and empire. The job of "the economy" was to channel this alienation through the cash nexus. The job of "the state" was to enforce that cash nexus. To be sure, that "separation from nature" was illusory: humans could never escape nature. But the terms of the relation did change (Moore, 2016, p. 86).

The quote illustrates that "ways of knowing the world" (ontologies) are intrinsically tied to economic and state practices. The conditions of capital accumulation are socially secured through political and cultural ideas and ontologies, which Gramsci calls the superstructure.

In *We Have Never Been Modern* (1991) Bruno Latour also criticises that the modern sciences since the enlightenment have emphasised the subject-object and nature-culture dichotomies. Latour argues that modernity makes hybridity (being part of both nature and culture, object and subject) invisible, unthinkable and unrepresentable (p. 34). I adopt the term modernity and modernist to refer to the hegemonic superstructure, based on dichotomies, underlying the continuous capital accumulation.

3 THE TREATY TRUCKHOUSE AGAINST ALTON GAS

The plans for a natural gas storage in Brentwood date back to at least 2006, when the first consultation took place between the Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office (KMKNO) and Alta Gas. *Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn* means "searching for consensus." The KMKNO grew out of the in 1998 established Made-in-Nova Scotia process, a meeting between chiefs, politicians and the presidents of gas companies to clarify rights to lands and resources, to ensure that Indigenous interests were recognised and that "claimants share in the benefit of development." (KMKNO, *s.d.*). The meetings had gone unnoticed by the grassroots Mi'kmaq and also for the non-Indigenous locals was the consultation time short (Hubley, 2016). Possibly because in March 2013 Sipekne'katik, the second biggest Indigenous community in Nova Scotia and located ten kilometres from the place where Alton plans to dumb the brine, had left the KMKNO to develop its own consultation process in which band members would have better opportunities to participate and access information (Googoo, 2016).

Many people were surprised when the construction started in 2014. This surprise induced the first protests. A first action took place along the nearby Highway 102, where Mi'kmaq community members slowed down traffic to ask attention for the important cultural and political value of the Shubenacadie River ("Mi'kmaq groups protest," 2014). From there the protest evolved and received support from *i.a.* the Shubenacadie River Commercial Association (SRCFA), the Striped Bass Association, East Hants Fracking Opposition Group, Ecology Action Centre, Council of Canadians, Amnesty International and many others ("About," *s.d.*).

The most important concerns of the protestors – water protectors – are linked to water, which is of particular importance to the Mi'kmaq, because they live on a territory surrounded by the sea on all sides and covered with rivers. A first concern is that the dumping of the brine, which should be considered a deleterious substance, will affect the fish in the Shubenacadie. The tidal river is the last spawning pond for striped bars in Nova Scotia and of political and cultural value to the Mi'kmaq. The water is also threatened by possible collapses or leakages of gas caverns and indirectly, because the Alton Gas Storage project could be the opener for overturning the fracking moratorium in Nova Scotia. Further, opponents are also frustrated by the lack of meaningful public consultation.

After a series of actions to defend "water as life" and legal appeals, Sipekne'katik, Millbrook (First Nation in Truro) and other Mi'kmaq mobilised on a large scale along the Shubenacadie in the summer of 2016. In September 2016, the Mi'kmaq water protectors erected a Truckhouse at the banks of the Shubenacadie near the mixing channel for the brine discharge (Gobby, 2019). From there, they could observe the Alton development site. The legitimation for the Truckhouse comes from the 1752 Peace and Friendship Treaty which states in paragraph four that

> It is agreed that the said Tribe of Indians shall not be hindered from, but have free liberty of Hunting and Fishing as usual and that if they shall think a Truck house needful at the River Chibenaccadie, or any other place of their resort they shall have the same built and proper Merchandize, lodged therein to be exchanged for what the Indians shall have to dispose of and that in the mean time the Indians shall have free liberty to being to Sale to Halifax or any other Settlement within this Province, Skins, feathers, fowl, fish or any other thing they shall have to sell, where they shall have liberty to dispose thereof to the best Advantage (Hopson, 1999).

In 2017, some of the protectors moved to the entrance of the worksite at the river to prevent Alton Gas from bigger construction works. They blocked the entrance on 'private land' with a caravan and a tent. 'Private land' is between brackets because it is also traditional Mi'kmaq territory. The original Truckhouse of 2016, closer to the water, was on Crown land (land under supervision of the Canadian state).

In the fall, Dale Andrew Poulette proposed to stay and keep ground during the winter. In what he described as "an incredible wave of solidarity and initiative," (October 7, 2018) a strawbale house was constructed at the entrance to stay during the cold winter. The strawbale house was razed in April 2019 by Alton Gas. The original Truckhouse along the water however, still stands. The strawbale house had a little woodstove to cook and warm up, a solar panel for charging phones and a tiny portable DVD-player and in addition to the two beds which also function as seats, it had a wooden construction on the roof that created a second floor where four extra mattresses easily fitted. Later, a vegetable garden was added in front – blocking the remaining part of the entrance to Alton's brine diluting ponds – which made it even more into a Truckhouse, a place to trade foodstuffs.

The camp runs completely on donations. Passers-by bring coffee, meals, dogfood and firewood. Every week students come together on the Dalhousie campus to cook for the camp or collect money

by selling self-made goods. Another example of a fund-raising event is the silent auction, where Mi'kmaq art, objects, books, experiences and other donations are sold to raise money for the legal fees.

Dale, the protector staying permanently at the camp, is a Mi'kmaw father from Eskasoni, a Mi'kmaq band on Cape Breton, the largest of Nova Scotia. His two children live in Eskasoni with their mother. Dale joined the water protectors at Alton Gas in 2017, when he heard the call of the Grassroots Grandmothers – a group of female Elders who coordinated many of the first actions. Dale had previous experience from the anti-fracking protests at Rexton in New Brunswick, but after those protests had turned violent, he abstained from partaking in other camps until 2017. Once involved in the protests, he offered to overwinter to prevent any major construction works.

In October 2018, during the fieldwork, Dale was preparing for his second winter in the strawbale house. In the previous year he got company from a younger friend in his late teens, but he was now working up north. His partner, Rachael Greenland Smith, a mid-thirties woman from Ontario, often accompanies him at the Truckhouse, but she also has a job at a local care-centre for disabled people. Besides, she also works as an artists and photographer of the Nova Scotian scenery. Together, Dale and Rachael make sure there is always someone at the camp and they do research on the Alton Gas permits. At the end pf 2018, they were particularly concerned about the noncompliance of the company with section 2.1b of the Environmental Assessment Approval. The approval stated the condition that a program to monitor discharge salinity levels had to be developed in consultation with Environment Canada (EC). However, upon repeated requests from Rachael and Dale, both Alton Gas and EC were unable to provide proof of this consultation. They were also worried about changes in the discharge plan, in which they seem to have had a point, because in March 2019, the federal government stepped in to regulate the brine release. Whereas the federal Environment Department calls this "setting regulation," for the protectors it means making an exception to the existing regulation. They note that the mother company, AltaGas, met with federal officials 22 times in 2018 to lobby for the project (Jones, 2019).

Another frequent visitor is Dorene Bernard, the founder of the Grassroots Grandmothers and involved in the Alton Gas resistance since the beginning. She is an active member of the Indian Brook (reserve of Sipekne'katik) community and is also involved in many other organisations and community projects. She performs many water ceremonies and is a spiritual guidance for many of

the protectors. Nonetheless, she is far from the only spiritual Elder at Indian Brook, many Elders perform ceremonies and they have diverging practices. Dorene finds inspiration in other Indigenous Nations, whereas some Mi'kmaq prefer to limit their spiritual practices to only those of their Mi'kmaq ancestors.

These are some of the most prominent actors at the TTH, yet there is almost never a day without visitors. Sipekne'katik Mi'kmaq, white neighbours, activists from Halifax, allies from other struggles, all drop by to show their support and inform about recent developments. Further, the Truckhouse has also served as a location for teaching about Mi'kmaq culture and their relationship with water and for a little festival with poetry and music.

During my visits at the Treaty Truckhouse, from October until December 2018, I spoke with visitors, helped in the daily chores (Dale taught me his technique of stacking the winter stock of wood) and observed the daily life (participant observation). Additionally, I interviewed Dale (October 21, 22), Dorene (December 17) and two non-Indigenous allies: Doug Neil (October 29), a business consultant who is very involved in the legal issues and Robin Tress (December 18), working for the council of Canadians on the Atlantic region and in her free-time one of the organisers of SWAGR (Solidarity with Alton Gas Resistance).[16] Most informative for the Gramscian and ontological analysis were my long talks and interviews with Dale. He was mostly present, and he has been the person I got to know best. Additionally, for my analysis I will use other sources, like Facebook posts, experiences on solidarity events and news articles – and also Indigenous scholars from other First Nations in Canada, because although they are diverse peoples, there are similarities both in their histories and in their ontologies. With this enlargement, I hope to circumvent the caveat of writing only about a single men's ontology instead of about ontological elements of a broader group, the Mi'kmaq water protectors or even a wider group of Indigenous protectors. News articles and Facebook posts also help to fact-check and to follow-up on the most recent events, because a lot happened since my initial fieldwork in 2018. In March 2019, three months after my last visit, the Utility and Review Board (UARB) granted an extension to the Approval to Construct until 2023 (NSUARB, 2019). A month before that, Alton Gas had applied for an injunction against the water protectors and in April, the strawbale house in which Dale has

[16] SWAGR raises awareness in Halifax and is the main organiser of the silent auction. It consists of members of the Council of Canadians, Ecology Action Centre, Solidarity Halifax and the general community.

been living for almost two years, was razed to the ground. Instead, a fenced area was assigned to the protectors, but they are not happy with this "play pen." Water protector Michelle Paul wrote on Twitter, "there is no cage big enough to contain our treaty spirit" (Tutton, 2019).

I start my analysis with a story Dale told me and which serves as a fitting illustration for my thesis that the Indigenous ontology has a counter-hegemonic purpose. Further, I identify some Gramscian and ontological concepts and how they are found at the Treaty Truckhouse. The second part of the thesis, dealing with the Preston New Road anti-fracking activism in the United Kingdom, will follow the same structure.

3.1 Story one: a Kluskap prophecy

I present the story as Dale told it to me. Another person might tell the story differently. The skill of delivering a story elegantly has always been highly valued in Mi'kmaw society (Hornborg, 2008, p. 69). Dale is a passionate storyteller, with a captivating way of speaking. Yet, I am uncertain if he would have told me the story if an Elder had been present. In that case, he might have left it to the person who knows the story best. Honouring and respecting the wisdom of the Elders is an important social rule – which motivates the use of the capital letter 'E' for Elder.
However, what is of importance for this thesis, is not how a Mi'kmaq Elder or storyteller would tell the story, but how a water protector understands it. Consequently, to avoid changes in the nuances, the story is not summarised, neither are the grammatical structures changed. I give a full transcription of the tape-recorded story. I did however write some expressions in full to make it read more fluently; like "gonna" is replaced with going to. After all, reading a story is very different then hearing it, subtilities as intonation and body language are lost in transcription (Vuntut Gwitchin & Smith, 2010, p. xv). A secure transcription writes these subtilities down, but this would interrupt the fluidity of the story, which was present in Dale's captivating way of speaking.

In the story, Dale speaks about a prophecy on the basis of a painting on the wall of the strawbale house. The drawing on the wall is a copy of the petroglyph found in the Bedford Basin in

Kejimkujik in the 1980s, when the land around the Bedford Barrens was zoned for development. The petroglyphs on the site exist out of an abstract figure (see figure 1) and an eight-pointed star.

Figure 1: Painting on the Treaty Camp mirroring a petroglyph at the Bedford site in Kejimkujik. © (2018) Anton Vandevoorde

That symbol there, that is the prophecy. That is big part of the prophecy. That talks about when I said Kluskap first came they had a ceremony. They had a star lodge made. This is the star lodge [pointing at the lower left corner]. These are all the Wabanaki, all the confederacy, all the Abenaki, the Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, all that nations coming together. There are eight of them. They pull out their bundle, which is this long bundle of all these sacred items, pipes, Waltes board, Wampum belts, Wampum beads and so forth. And they were told at that time – I am talking like ten thousand years ago, maybe five. But they were told that these things are going to happen. It was confirmed in a vision quest, it was confirmed through shape tents, it was confirmed through medicine man, that what Kluskap said is going to happen, so they had an only plan to send out a medicine bundle out west. And how they did it was with these two otters. These two otters – because you couldn't fly things back in the day, there was no such thing as airplanes. And you couldn't go across the land because there are white people out there that will kill you and so how they did it was pretty unique, they did it underwater, through the water and they got these two otters to send them out West. Which they have.

And then the whole purpose of these lines [pointing towards central body], these are directions. Some of our people end up going this direction, following the Catholics. You know, a lot of my people go to church now and they believe in the church more than in their own culture because of assimilation and oppression and all of that. There is time for them to go back on the main roads. A lot of our spiritualists end up going this way, the longer way. This is the long way [pointing to the left line]. These are shortcuts, these are for people who understand both worlds and sometimes they get more connected to their cultures, so they can find another way, I guess. So here we are today [horizontal line with two points on the left]. This is probably five or ten thousand years ago [two points at the bottom], this [upper corner of the triangles] is probably today or maybe fifty years ago or maybe a hundred years from now, but this is when these two waters come back. They bring that medicine bundle back and they teach us how to use them again and when we get to this point, we have almost done this journey and when we have done that journey, this whole

world will go back into harmony, with all of their sacred objects, their sacred spirit helpers and all…

How did that last part go? Something about the nations, the four strong nations, the black, red, yellow and white and they will all come together. Our medicine bundles would be back in the same [order] as it started at. And they call this circle Wa'so'q, *means heaven in Mi'kmaq, so heaven in other words is you know peace on earth and – this is to me is heaven. No one is bothering me, so I am in heaven, so it doesn't mean like the spirit world, it just means heaven on earth. And these are just paths, so this path here is the Christianity path and when you look at it, it doesn't connect. It stops. It comes to an end. And that is linked to the eight sacred fires teaching or seven sacred fires teaching. There was this teaching about these fires being lit up and each fire is to tell you what time of place you are, and you only get seven fires, so if we come to a time when the seventh fire is lit, it is too late. The world is not going to be able to save itself. But they found a Wampum that told them about this eighth sacred fire. Which is linked to… mostly white people. And the eighth sacred fire explains that the white people – this is how I was told – they are going to start freaking out about the environment, they're going to get worried. They're going to get scared. And when they start to show signs of that, they'll start coming to the First Nations people for help, they'll start helping First Nations people to help them, and we're actually living in it today. So that's that eight sacred fire. When it's lit, that's the only chance the white people have. They call it a fork in the road. So that fork in the road. That would probably be – I am guessing it's this. Right now, white people that want to join us, they only got that one chance. After that it's just greed, greed, greed, greed, greed. Right until we come up to the end of this world. It does not mean this world is going to blow up or anything, it just means that maybe all electronics are going to stop working or maybe the government is going to collapse. Democracy is going to collapse, whatever. Maybe we'll have a third world war or something, but in any way, the way I feel about it is: yeah, something major is going to happen soon. And it probably will be in our lifetime. And if it does happen there's only these few roads that will take us to happy hunting grounds and Christianity is not part of our culture. That's why, that's why they tell us to stay on this side of the road. The left-hand side and our people that follow their culture more, it's kind of a longer road, but it's an easier way. It's an easier way. How do I say it is? It's like when you're a parent and you're raising kids; your kids may be good or may be bad. And when they're good they listen to you and if they're bad, they won't listen to you, so it is like a parent telling his kid 'son, if you don't want to get in trouble or if you do not want to get hurt, I need you to listen to me. You can learn things the hard way, or you can learn things the easy way. The hard way is, is not listening to me and you're going to figure it out on your own and you are going to go through a lot of fucking hard times.' The easy way is you listen to your parents and your life will be a lot easier. That's what that road pretty much says, that life will be easier if you just listen to your parents. If your parents tell you to go to school, go to school. If your parents tell you to go to sweat lodge, go to sweat lodge. Don't hang out with those bad boys, don't listen to them. And if you do that and you get older you will understand that my*

life is pretty easy in comparison to all my other friends that are drug users, committing suicide, getting into prison, and so forth.

Figure 2: Painting on the Treaty Camp. © (2018) Anton Vandevoorde

This symbol here [Dale turns towards a symbol on the other wall, figure 2] you know, that's like nobody could depict that, nobody was able to understand that until the last fifty years when it was people that had visions of that and it came to them in a dream or a vision or whatever and they explained it to them in their dream or their vision that is what that means and then all the other symbols too. Like the letterings, the words, the language, alphabet, numbers. That word Msit No'kmaq *means "All my relations," they explained to them that all - that everything you're related to, the dirt, the germs, the air, the cloud, the minerals, the rocks, the stars, the moon, the galaxy, Milky Way. Everything, the sun, everything. We're all related, and you should respect all living things. And if you do it like that, you'll have no problem on earth. Your time on earth. I guess our – we all got a job to do on earth. Either we could have been extinct and then we would all be in the happy hunting grounds anyway, after their lives, but for some reason,* Nujjinen *or grandfathers or spirit, great spirit, wants this world to continue in peace and harmony. And for that to happen we have jobs to do on earth, to protect our water, to protect our culture, to protect our language, our ceremonies and so forth. And our people knew this ten thousand, fourteen thousand years ago. They knew it so far back that they drew it on stones, knowing that you cannot easily erase the stones and they put them in places where white people or settlers are not easily going to find them for 500 years after they put them there. Because they only just started finding these things. And so, yeah, a lot of those symbols, a lot of these petroglyphs, hieroglyphs, it is important to understand it, but most people don't understand it yet because they're still wakening up from this nightmare, they call colonialism, that hey call oppression, assimilation. And the ones that didn't wake up are the corrupted ones like the chief and counsel that brought Alton Gas here. Hit behind the peoples backs, took the money, stuff like that. And they say that too if you're part of the Catholic church and your money is more important than your people, you're going to be stuck on this road. And when it's going to get to here, you're not going to be able to enjoy it. I guess that means hell or another place for purgatory. Or I couldn't tell you what happens after that, but it doesn't sound good. So, we're living in the eighth sacred fire now, that was a new prophecy that was revealed by kids and grandparents, that had the same dream and vision of this new prophecy after the seventh.*

– Dale Andrew Poulette, October 22, 2018

Telling a story, storying, as Donna Haraway (2016, pp. 13, 87, 119) calls it, is a practice of worlding, of making and reproducing worlds (ontologies). Worlding is more than a process of socialisation, which nevertheless is also present in the story, e.g. when Dale talks about the necessity of listening to your parents and their spiritual education. Worlding is the process of making you look at the critters and concepts of the world in specific ways. Mi'kmaq storying worlds (verb) the Mi'kmaq world (ontology) by attributing agency to critters and concepts that do not get agency in the modernist ontology, for example otters and ancestors as present actors.

Dale's stories are useful to gain insight in Mi'kmaq ontology and the processes of worlding and storying, because Dale, walking in multiple worlds, fluent in multiple languages, often translates the Mi'kmaq ontology to a wording that I, a white European with modernist background, can understand. A straight-forward example of translation is found in another story Dale told me, explaining how the Minas Basin (Bay of Fundy) was created. It is well-known because it featured in Nova Scotian schoolbooks (Hornborg, 120), although the details might differ:

> *Our language is based off of this land. The land is based off of these legends, Kluskap legends, which are … no one can proof them true or false, but the story goes that this was once dammed by a giant beaver. A giant beaver owned all of this water. The Mik'maq wanted fish to come in here. The beaver didn't want the fish to come in here, so they called upon Kluskap, this giant, giant Indian to go and talk to the beaver tell him give the fish passage here. He said "no," the beaver said "no." Kluskap got mad and with his mighty hatchet and he smacked the beaver dam and to this day if you go to cape split, you will see the big v-shaped split into the rocks and satellite imagery can proof that there was once a dam there. There was giant fucking logs. And they're still there today, it's just there not in that way anymore, they're on the side and also there is giant fucking beaver prints, moulded into the ground. Like castings – they call them dinosaurs, but they're fucking beaver footprints. They even look exactly like the beaver footprints, like the small ones, but the giants they're big.*
>
> – Dale Andrew Poulette, October 22, 2018

Dale says: "they call them dinosaurs." He does not say: they *think* they are dinosaurs. The critters, the same in the underlying elusive reality, are in the human worlds both dinosaurs and beavers.
I do not wish to suggest that everything can be translated and that there are no mystical elements in ontologies. Mystical here referring to those elements that cannot be translated with a recursive

method. I for example, cannot translate the happy hunting grounds. Yet, what I wish to illustrate is that when we start to recursively translate other ontologies, the demarcations between the dogmatic, the spiritual and underlying elusive world become fluid. While I struggle with understanding "happy hunting grounds," because I immediately link it to the Christian heaven and hell, *Wa'so'q* is easily translated by Dale as "heaven on earth." Also "spirit world" is understandable to a certain extend for someone coming from a modernist ontology as a memorial world, as living *on* in the minds and through the past interpretations of all selves.

A prominent concept in the story is prophecy. Through my conversations with Dale and Dorene, I have come to understand prophecy not in its modernist sense as a mystical prediction of someone pre-seeing an unconnected event in the future, but instead as a responsive, organic interpretation of the past, present and future. Prophecies and visions are intellectual experiences. Ceremonies like Sweat Lodge help to order thoughts, to connect to history and to ancestors (to the spirit world as described above), which helps to interpret questions and dreams. Visions and prophecies are spiritual, but spirituality must be understood as an entanglement to everything, everything that lives (including trees, stones and orbs), but also everything from the past that lives on through the present (ancestors). A certain kind of agency in the present is given to past things and persons, because they still live on in the present.

Mi'kmaq stories are full of references to historical and present events. The sending of the medicine bundles out west and its return refer to the Indian Act prohibition of many cultural practices in 1876. Many practices got lost but were revived in the late twentieth century by a booming neo-traditionalism. Ceremonies that had continued underground in more shielded First Nations in the west of Turtle Island served as an inspiration for some of these neo-traditionalists (Hornborg, 2008, p. 138-139). The three waterways to the future and the coming crisis could refer to the world-ecological crisis and the pathways out. Similar to the opening statement in the introduction, "the solution will be Indigenous or will not be."

Mi'kmaq stories are continuously reinterpreted to fit contemporary issues. New elements and themes are drawn into old material (Hornborg, 2008, p. 121). Today, this is especially the case for environmental issues. During a flag printing event with Métis artist Christi Belcourt, we all made a circle and Christi Belcourt told a story about the porcupine, the otter and the beaver, but the story no longer only explained how the landscape came into being, why the beaver has a flat tail and the

porcupine spines but it was linked to climate change and present landscape changes (November 18, 2019).

The repurposing of old stories with new themes is not an attempt to salvage oral heritage, it is very much part of the technique of storytelling. The fact that the stories stay relevant in the course of time in different contexts proves the strength and the truth of these stories for the Mi'kmaq. Just like the relevance of the petroglyphs in Kejimkujik today demonstrates the wisdom of the ancestors.

Another striking aspect in Dale's story is the use of Mi'kmaq language for certain terms. Language is ontologically grounded. *Msit No'kmaq* for a Mi'kmaq does not evoke the same feelings as "all my relations." Similarly, de la Cadena (2015, p. 30) notes how translating the Quechua *pukara* to "earth-beings" implies a movement from one world to a different one. Lost in translation is the earth-being itself and its worlding practice. Words are no simple representations of an underlying reality out there. They are specific types of signs; symbols. Language is made possible by relating symbols (words), signs that are based on convention, with other (non-symbolic and not exclusively human) semiotic modalities of representation like icons and indices (Kohn, 2015, p. 8). It is also at this level of icons and indices that ontologies emerge. Thus, it is not surprising that Mi'kmaq consider their language sacred, for it is a tool to connect to their ontology, to nature and the spiritual world. Without language, ceremonies, stories and songs the Mi'kmaq "cease to exist as a separate People" (Berneshawi, 1997, p. 136). Many of the Mi'kmaq have, though forced assimilation and through the spread of popular North American culture lost the competence to speak the Mi'kmaq language, but with the Indigenous resurgence comes a cultural revival and a boosted popularity of the old language is part of the neo-traditionalist wave. Dale speaks the language with his dog to practice. For most other conversations English is used, but certain words like *Msit No'kmaq*, *L'nu* ("the people"), spiritual words like *Wa'so'q* and *Nujjinen* and certain names of plants and animals are always in Mi'kmaq or in Mi'kmaq followed by the English translation.

3.2 Rooted in history

It is not surprising that history plays an important role in Mi'kmaq stories and in the worlding, the making of ontologies. Gramsci explains that a counter-hegemonic superstructure, a worldview or – as it is called here – an ontology, does not emerge out of nowhere. It should already be present in the common sense. A short history of the Mi'kmaq and their relations with the land, provide good insight in their ontology.

Before the arrival of the Europeans, the Mi'kmaq were semi-nomadic. In the fall, they would divide into small groups to hunt moose and caribou, in spring, groups joined together and fished the rivers and shores (Hornborg, 2008, p. 4). As elsewhere on the continent, the arrival of Europeans and the diseases they carried decimated the Indigenous population. Estimates are highly variable, but some assume a proportion as high as ninety per cent of the Mi'kmaq died (Prins, 1996, p. 27). In the seventeenth century trade relations intensified and the Mi'kmaq exchanged furs in return for food, weapons and hardware. Slowly they developed a dependency on trade goods while the population of important species like moose and beaver crashed. These demographic and material challenges as well as the missionaries' cultural project challenged the traditional ontology (Hornborg, 2008, p. 6-7). After the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, the British gained control of most of Nova Scotia and planned a genocide against the Mi'kmaq, promising bounties for every Mi'kmaq taken or killed. Many Mi'kmaq fled to the island of Cape Breton, which was still under French control, their allies. Yet, the real deathblow came after the American Independence when many British loyalist moved to Canada and settled on Indigenous hunting grounds, almost tripling the population in 1782 to 42 000. In Nova Scotia, they were joined by 40 000 Scots between 1815 and 1838 (Hornborg, 2008, p. 7-8; Prins, 1996, p. 163). The new settlers encroached on the common hunting grounds of the Mi'kmaq and the wildlife population was further decimated. The fishing rivers, which used to be shared were polluted by sawmills or blocked. As the Mi'kmaq were deprived of their former means of subsistence and starved, a proposal for reserves was worked out and the Indian Act of 1842 promised economic aid for Mi'kmaq starting to farm on the poor-quality land. By the end of the nineteenth century, most Mi'kmaq had settled on the reserves. Although there has been an increasing cry for land rights and political participation in the second half of the twentieth century, the conditions on the reserve only improved slowly and today there are still many problems like

low education standards, unemployment, high suicide rate, poverty and drugs. However, the separation from the hegemony has also led to the preservation of the Mi'kmaq language and pride for being Mi'kmaq (Hornborg, 2008, p. 10-11).

Professor of Religious Studies in New Brunswick Thomas Parkhill (1997) poses the thesis that the image of the "Indian" as connected to the land and as ecologically wise is produced through popular and academic literature of environmental activists and hippies. Parkhill makes an important point, namely that we should be aware of the appropriation of Indigenous knowledge and Indian Romanticism in order not to portray Indigenous peoples as environmental gurus or as if they perceive themselves to be part of nature. The Mi'kmaq connection to the land should be placed in its historical context: it is partly a product of its hunter-gatherer history and an answer on the destruction of their land and the related cultural loss. Nevertheless, missionary statements and today's anthropological evidence suggest that Indigenous peoples do have a different "ontology of dwelling" (Ingold, 2000, p. 42). This different ontology of place is connected to the fact that they don't restrict the qualification of being a self to humans, they do not make the human-culture and related dichotomies.

Interlude: the ambiguity of intentionality

For the Mi'kmaq water protectors, the waterways are the veins of the land, the Shubenacadie's tidal system is the pulse of the land, the saltwater brings in salmon and life twice a day and flushes out the bad materials. The pollution of this essential part of life by projects like Alton Natural Gas Storage, the pulp mill discharge-pipeline at Pictou landing, the goldmine in Guysborough County (both projects threatening other parts of Nova Scotia's extensive water-network) and planned gas pipelines, are seen as yet another step in a continuing genocide. Genocide here includes cultural genocide or assimilation. Indigenous peoples are right to worry about the continuation of assimilative forces. Geographer and Impact Award winner Jeremy J. Schmidt (2018) gives an overview of the ways in which Canadian bureaucracy still attempts to insert private property regimes on lands reserved for First Nations. In a panel discussion on Schmidt's paper, leading Indigenous experts and land/water protectors Dr. Sherry Pictou (Mi'kmaw) and Mr. Russell Diabo

(Mohawk) (September 20, 2018) expressed their concern that the destruction of the common land of the Mi'kmaq would be another devastating blow for Mi'kmaq culture.

Using the word genocide to describe assimilation provokes a discussion on intentionality. Genocide is a planned act, yet if genocide is an intrinsic consequence of a certain mode of production, are those actively stimulating that system therefore part of a planned act? In the stories at the TTH, intentionality was sometimes ambiguous. When Dale told me about what happened with a security guard, intentionality changed when he told me the story a second time – maybe he perceived some scepticism on my behalf. In 2016, Dale and two others helped to save a security guard from monoxide poisoning after workmen had moved a generator too close to his cabin. Dale has worked in construction and knows the safety regulations and what to do in these circumstances. He called 911 and helped taking down the fence for the paramedics, because the ambulance was denied entrance through the main gate. According to a press-release of Alton Gas the day after, the young man had a flu and Alton Gas employees called 911. For Dale, this was another "smear campaign," an event to blame the protesters. He compared it to an earlier experience during the 2013 Rexton protests in New Brunswick. After months of peaceful protests, the RCMP closed in on a group of warriors, which had become more militant. The events turned violent and five police cars were put on fire. Mainstream media eagerly showed the images of flaming cars and the weapons found at the site and showed a one-sided story (Simpson, 2013). Some attendees have claimed these weapons and the burning cars could have been staged by agents provocateur or the RCMP. According to Dale, the cars were mysteriously empty.

The first time Dale told the story about the monoxide poisoning, it seemed as if the generator had been moved in order to poison the guard and make the water protectors look bad, the second time it seemed more an accident and an example of Alton Gas's lack of proper regulations. The first time could be an exaggeration caused by overenthusiasm and a deep distrust against the company, but it is also useful to consider that Dale translated the event the second time into my language. Could it be that the company's negligence in safety regulations (they also moved the generator without the necessary clothing) is interpreted as intentional in the ontology of the critical protester? When the braking of rules is a regular thing, omissions become actions, not caring about the life of an employee becomes murder.

3.3 Spiritualism as recognizing the entanglement with other selves

If water is entangled with the rest of life, including oneself and future generations, environmental reports get a different meaning. The argument that environmental destruction is kept at a minimum and that chances of failure are low, sounds a lot like someone offering you a balloon of poison to swallow, while the person argues that it will only poison you a little bit and that chances on the full rupture of the balloon are kept as low as possible. In exchange, you are promised that gas-expenses in the province will drop, but who cares about money if it goes at the expense of life itself?

A fundamental understanding of land and water being intrinsically related with life explains Dale's statement that protecting the water is for him a "spiritual quest" (October 8, 2018). Another time – it was a rainy day and Dale and Rachael were disappointed that the green MP could not pose their questions about non-compliance issues in parliament (she was thrown out due to hackling) – Dale talked gloomily about how many people were active in the struggle against Alton Gas only when there was an event or because they had friends who were involved, but that they forgot that ultimately it all is for the water. At times, living in a strawbale house, 300 kilometres from where you grow up, without your children, can be hard and lead to an offday once in a while. Thus, a strong conviction about the land and water being essential to your life and the life of everything you care about, is a necessary condition to commit full-time to a protest camp.

The entanglement is also shown by the word *Msit No'kmaq*. It is translated as "all my relations," but through the translation the deep spiritual meaning is lost. In Mi'kmaq language *Msit No'kmaq* evokes a strong connection with all people and all living spirits around, with the plants, insects and the water. Not only those alive, but also the ancestors that live on in the land and in spirit. Everything on earth has a living spirit and they should be respected equally to our own. The phrase is used at the end of a monologue, for example when you have shared your opinion in a talking circle. It emphasises a person's positionality by situating her within the relations that shaped her. After all, people are the result of a long historical dialectic between the components of nature. Mi'kmaq entrepreneur Glenn Knockwood writes on his Facebook page:

> Literally for thousands of years our ancestors have walked and breathed and died on this land they then became part of the land, the trees, the animals, the air and water. So in every

way you are related to all things they deserve the same respect you would give your family (Glenn Knockwood, 2017).

Coming from the modernist ontology, this spiritualism does not have to be mystical. It is the recognition that our ancestors and all animals and spirits before us, have shaped the world that allow us to live today. These relations should be respected, so we can continue to live and give the same to future generations. Nevertheless, being entangled with nature, does not mean that they see themselves as part of animal life. Contrary to the modernist romantic depiction of Indigenous peoples, Mi'kmaq do and did perceive a clear difference between themselves and the rest of nature (Hornborg, 2008). The difference with the modernist ontology lies in the absence of a hierarchical order on the basis of personhood.

Ceremonies and prayers are regularly held at the TTH: for special occasions like a solstice, for the recovery of grandmother Josephine Mandamin, for the remembrance of Colton Boushie, but also frequently for the water (the other occasions are always also for the water).[17] These ceremonies reaffirm the relationship with the land, water and all spirits. Hunting and gathering might no longer be an essential part of Mi'kmaq subsistence, yet – as Dale and Dorene repeatedly told me – nature is still essential for the survival of all critters. Animals drink water, water makes plants grow, we consist for the most part out of water and during a pregnancy water protects us in the mother womb. Thus, it remains important to keep honouring water and learn how and why to protect it.

Apart from through ceremony, the connection with the water and spiritualism are also reaffirmed through stories. As stated earlier, in the Mi'kmaq stories, animals are contributed their own agency, they are selves. These stories are more than anthropomorphisms like modernist fables. In fables animals only stay symbol for humans. Mi'kmaq animal stories conversely are interpretations of other worlds. Stories also contribute to the connection between human and non-humans by linking histories to the landscape. So, the explanation for the high tides of the Minas basin is linked to a giant beaver dam broken and rebuilt every day (Hornborg, 2008, p. 86).

[17] Grandmother Josephine Mandamin was a Anishinaabe water activist who started the water walk movement, an initiative that took off after a prophecy to protect the water. Grandmothers lead other women in praying and protecting water, they walked around many of the Great Lakes to raise awareness and they also made a walk along the Shubenacadie in 2017.
The killing of the 22-year-old Cree Colton Boushie in 2016 and the acquittal of his killer claiming it was an accident, sparked a debate about racism in Canada.

"The dirt, the germs, the air, the cloud, the minerals, the rocks, the stars, the moon, the galaxy, [the] Milky Way [and the] sun" are not only seen as intrinsically entangled with each other, they are also selves or persons. They are alive, they have a spirit. They are critters capable of interpreting their surroundings and they give and take.

This is not the same as anthropomorphising animals. Just as it is not naturalistic to compare humans to animals. In the hegemonic modernist ontology "humans are both persons *and* organisms, animals are all organism" (Ingold, 2000, p. 48, original emphasis). Thus, nature becomes something unpersonal that is out there and that can be used, modified and destroyed for the one species that is a self: humans. Modernist people can also be close to the land or a landscape, but this is more like the caring for a material or dead being. Land has the meaning of abstract space, a territory marked by coordinates. For many Indigenous peoples, land is a self and it is inseparable from all other selves. Land is entangled with the water, with trees, plants, animals, with culture and with the existence and future of all humans. Hunting and gathering are/were done in interaction with the environment, as dialogue between persons, instead of a mere technical manipulation. In order to take, one must have respect, one must care for the land. It is a reciprocal relationship in which respect is expressed through prayers and ceremonies (Burow, Browk & Dove, 2001, p. 60). It is important not to regard this ontology as a belief. The best example to illustrate how certain aspects of a different ontology are not beyond the understanding of a modernist person raised with a dichotomised ontology is by the Gaia hypothesis. Chemist James Lovelock and microbiologist Lynn Margulis developed in the 1960s the argument that the biotic and a-biotic ecosphere and all systems of life are together self-organising and self-sustaining, meaning they regulate the atmosphere and temperature to sustain life. The theory was named Gaia hypothesis because the ancient Greeks also believed the earth was alive and they took the living earth to be a goddess; Gaia (Tully, 2018, p. 97). There is nothing a-scientific about this theory. The self-sustaining Gaia is not a purposeful organism like some animals are, but it is an emergent property of a system of systems that composes the ecosphere (Margulis, 1999). The earth is a system of system, a symbiosis, a system of "living-with each other in complex interdependent ways" (Tully, 2018, p. 15). The property of a self-organising, self-sustaining earth is also apparent in the notion of "*Nujjinen*, or grandfathers or spirit, great spirit" Dale talks about. Dale says that *Nujjinen* "wants this world to continue in peace and harmony." It aspires a balance of the system of systems.

When Dale tells me that everything is alive, the world, water and even rocks, he does not mean that rocks are conscious the way he is himself. Life should be understood here through the recursive method. The semiotic symbol life has a different meaning here than it has for most Canadian settlers or other persons with modernist ontologies. Life is not the property reserved for things that grow, transform energy, reproduce and respond. Instead, something is alive because it moves ("a stone moves," Dale [October 22, 2018] told me, referring to plate tectonics, "even if it is very slowly") and because it has relationships with other beings. In brief, because it is a self.

3.4 Counter-hegemony

As the history of the Mi'kmaq ontology and its spiritualism have been introduced, the following chapters introduce how the movement and its ontology are counter-hegemonic.

Philosophically, Gramsci searched an intermediary position between structuralism, materialism and idealism. Such an intermediary position can also be recognised in his position on the Marxist revolution. He rejects economic determinism and draws the attention to the superstructure as a whole of ideas, culture, morals and worldviews that produce consent for the hegemony. "Class struggle is therefore more than economic struggle. It necessarily involves struggling over the hearts and minds of people, their attitudes, beliefs, and conceptions of the world" (Reed, 2012, p. 562). Gramsci argues that a counter-hegemony should establish a rival historical bloc by sustaining a long war of position, which is a long term, active and interventionist strategy that challenges and modifies the common sense conceptions, because the hegemon does not only hold power through material dominance, but also through ideas. The state produces these ideas through institutions, but this is not the only way how consent is created.

> The school as a positive educative function, and the courts as a repressive and negative educative function, are the most important State activities in this sense: but, in reality, a multitude of other so-called private initiatives and activities tend to the same end – initiatives and activities which form the apparatus of the political and cultural hegemony of the ruling classes (Gramsci, 1971, p. 258).

Thus, a war of position is necessary, in addition to the war of manoeuvre, which can be understood in the more classical sense of overthrowing a regime by force (of the masses). "Movement, however, is never just a physical act; it is intellectual as well. Indeed, it is always intellectual before becoming physical – except for puppets on a string" (Gramsci, 2000, p. 44). In a war of position, a counter-hegemony tries to challenge the mainstream ideas by exploring internal contradictions inside the common-sense conception.

Indigenous movements present a special form of counter-hegemony, because in the contrary to Gramsci's workers with a common sense conception that is presumed relatively homogenous throughout the whole country, the Mi'kmaq have their separate common sense conception, different from the hegemonic one. Mi'kmaq no longer need to learn the "positive educative function" of the school and the "repressive and negative educative function" of the courts. They have experienced both and they have felt how schools can be repressive too and have a negative violent function. School was made compulsory in 1920 for Mi'kmaq children between seven and sixteen years old. The idea behind it was to "kill the Indian in the child" by taking control of the knowledge transmission to the children (Hornborg, 2008, p. 121).[18] Children would be forced to leave home and attend residential school, sometimes parents had no possibilities of visiting their children. Children were subjected to a harsh discipline with physical punishments and they were forbidden to speak their language. One such residential school was the Shubenacadie. Two thousand young people would be "White-washed" there between 1929 to 1967 (Hornborg, 2008, p. 121-127; Prins, 1996, p. 185). Mi'kmaw Isabelle Knockwood (1992) describes in her autobiography how as a child she was educated by stories that portrayed how children should behave and how older kids took care of the younger ones, but with the residential schools, these types of education were broken up. Dorene at the TTH is also a survivor of the residential school system.[19]

In case of the courts, like African Americans, Indigenous peoples are over-represented in the correction system. While Indigenous peoples make up only 4.9% of the Canadian population, they comprise 22.8% of the total incarcerated population (Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security & McKay, 2018, p. 9; Statistics Canada, 2017). Moreover, not only personally

[18] "Killing the Indian in the Child" is an often used phrase to describe the residential schools, yet its origin is unclear.
[19] The stories of the racism and violence at the residential schools are many, it would take too long to give the stories here the place they deserve. See the residential school reports of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. The commonly used expression "survivor," also gives an indication of the hardship at the schools.

they have experienced the courts as a hegemonic tool. Also the meaning of their treaties is fought out in the supreme court (see chapter 3.5.1).

The fact that Canada's Indigenous population presents a particular group in the wider society, might make the Gramscian concept of counter-hegemony seem ill-fit. Yet, the Indigenous separation is far from absolute. Indigenous lives are just as much shaped by the history and present of the Canadian state and society as settlers are. Not only through Indian Affairs, which regulates many of the services on the reserves, but also in daily practices, through visits to a shop, through work, through movies and books, Indigenous peoples are also very much part of the hegemonic society.[20] A special connection is formed by the land and water. Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples share the land they live on and they bear the consequences of its destruction together. The "organic crisis" (see chapter 4.2) caused by the destruction of the land and water, serves as a moment for advancing the own ontology, which has been resisting assimilation and destruction by the hegemony for five hundred years.

Nevertheless, the protector's ontology also has some anti-hegemonic tendencies. While a counter-hegemony tries to build a consensus with the resisting fragments of society, an anti-hegemony does not strive for this unity, it aspires a separate singularity (Carroll, p. 30; Carroll & Ratner, p. 13). Similarly to the anti-hegemony, Indigenous Nations aspire independence and self-control, an equal "nation-to-nation" relationship, but on the other hand they are counter-hegemonic in the sense that they build alliances across cultural differences with other resisting fragments of society (environmental and social groups) and because they aspire also a change in the settler's ontologies in order to live in harmony. Thus, counter-hegemony can be an appropriate term, but Gramsci's ideas must often be placed in a new light. For example, the Mi'kmaq do not seek for all people to become Indigenous, they do not want their knowledge appropriated and stolen, there has been enough of biopiracy and appropriation of Indigenous knowledge. They merely ask for the hegemonic ontology to recognise certain aspects of and to be open for multiple ontologies, so they can understand and respect each other on equal footing and only through this understanding will they be able to see the importance of nature and the necessity of going about it with more respect.

[20] Census results of 2016 revealed 44.2 % of the Indigenous population in Canada lived on reserve in 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2017).

Counter-hegemony does not mean that the movement is offensive. Most social movements are rather defensive than offensive (Frank & Fuentes, 1987, p. 158-159). “Even when they appear triumphant, the subaltern groups are merely anxious to defend themselves” (Gramsci, 1971, p. 55). The character of environmental movements might seem offensive, trying to ban an industry and, as I argue, implicitly putting forward a new ontology. However, it is merely the result of the earlier attack by the system of capital accumulation on the lived worlds of people connected to the land.

3.5 Challenging the hegemony’s structure

Gramsci argues that the structure and superstructure are in a dialectical relationship. Thus, it is impossible to limit the scope of this thesis to a description of the counter-hegemonic ontology. The superstructure, including its ontology, emerges in relationship with and in opposition to the structural elements of the counter-hegemony. This chapter looks at the structural components of the current hegemony and demonstrates how these structural characteristics are related with the superstructure.

In a critical realist approach, sociologist William K. Carroll (2006) identifies three elements that support the current hegemonic “assemblage.” The first element of this hegemony, which is “integrally linked to capital accumulation – modern society’s driving force” (p. 11) is “postmodern fragmentation” (pp. 12-13). Capitalism’s superstructure organises consent. Yet, “consent” here does not mean consensus. The fragmented and polymorphous character of the current hegemony is at the basis of its power. This tactic divide and rule is useful for the second element of the current hegemony, the “neo-liberal insulation and dispossession” (pp. 13-14), basically “accumulation by dispossession” (Harvey, 2003) or new and ongoing enclosures of the commons, based on the separation between the economic and the political (Carroll, 2006, p. 14). As a third element Carroll considers “globalization (from above)” (pp. 16-18) a type of hegemonic crisis management that reproduces the economy as inviolable or natural. Globalisation involves as structural (financial) urge to streamline and to follow the neoliberal project of the market rule, advanced by institutions like the IMF, WTO and World Bank (Carroll, 2006, p. 17; Harvey, 2003, pp. 132-136).

For a counter-hegemony to be successful, it should resist these three structural elements of the hegemony. This is explored in the next sub-chapters.

3.5.1 Fragmentation

Resistance has to be holistic, or it reproduces the polymorphous characteristic of the hegemony. Consequently, a counter-hegemony does not merely alter a state of affair on one of the fragments, but it inspires a deeper transformative change, a change that does not only tackle one type of "power over." Power over, according to Carroll (2006), is sustained "through an effective blending of persuasion and coercion" (p. 19), for example racial or gendered power. The objective of a transformative change in the counter-hegemony is to "liberate power to from power over" (p. 19).

In Indigenous Canada, this deeper transformation can be explained with the metaphor of the table. Mohawk scholar Taiaiake Alfred explains how Indigenous peoples, who are seated at the kid's table, should not strive for a place at the big table, because the big table in itself "is set by people who destroy the land, crushed all creatures that were there, including our ancestors and out of their bones built that table" (Alfred, 2015, 40:10). Alfred's quote displays, besides the desire for a deep transformative change, also the aspiration for a destruction of the table of the hegemony, instead of only gaining equal footing or taking over the hegemony at the table. Yet, at the same time it also illustrates that the aspirations are not purely anti-hegemonic, because they urge a change (a counter) of the hegemony in general rather than a turn away from the hegemonic group. The ambition is unitary in its anti-hegemonic desires, giving it more of a counter-hegemonic tendency.
At environmental rallies, the idea of a deep transformative change is present in the slogan "system change, not climate change." Also the growing attention for environmental justice – which has been primarily the result of grassroots activism – points to the increasing integration between multiple counter-hegemonic struggles.

For Gramsci, the essential fragments to connect were the farmers in the south of Italy and the factory workers in the north. Today, combining different classes in society is still as important as during the *interbellum* for a counter-hegemony to succeed.[21]

[21] The *interbellum,* 1918 until 1939, was the period of most of Gramsci's writing.

> Without class politics, ecology gets framed as wilderness preservation and green consumerism, losing its critically transformative edge; without an ecological perspective, unions can be co-opted into capital's unsustainable, grow-or-die logic, and reduced to interest groups chasing after ever-higher volumes of commodity consumption (Carroll, 2006, p. 26).

In Canada there is a growing awareness in the labour unions and amongst Indigenous peoples that they are fighting the same fight (Fernandez & Silver, 2018), so the flags of the unions waved above the Treaty Truckhouse. Nevertheless, while most Indigenous peoples I met at the site were poor – in money, as they would say – most of the white settlers at solidarity events were educated middle class. Yet, the topic of class was never explicitly present at the TTH, but this could be due to the fact that Indigenous protests are intrinsically always about a broad socio-cultural, political and economic unity, connected with the impoverishment by the loss and destruction of their lands.

The integration of different social movements and the war of position – the war on the level of superstructures – becomes even more essential in the wake of globalisation, where the dominant states are less and less capable of exercising hegemony through material means (Brand, 2005, p. 250). In this situation, it is increasingly a transnational class and not the state that wields power. The counter-hegemony, in return, Carroll (2006, p. 25) argues, does not need to be a global movement in the sense of a global network. The counter-hegemony can also be a "movement of movements" (Mertes, 2004) that together challenges the underlying ontological assumptions that the hegemony produces. Yet, all movements should aspire to make transformative changes to the hegemonic system, not just changing the state of affairs. The strength of the movement as a whole would come out of the fact that site-specific local contexts can open opportunities for activists elsewhere to make similar claims and not purely out of inter-organisational networks (Carroll, 2006, p. 25).

Transnational and trans-movement connections were obvious at the TTH.[22] Above the strawbale house, there hung many flags of Indigenous, labour and social movements in Canada, but also of the Kurdish YPG and Mexican EZLN. The YPG or People Protection Units [Yekîneyên Parastina Gel] fight in Rojava, northern Syria for a decentralised radical democracy with values of gender

[22] I also became part of a transnational network myself. I brought flags made with Métis artist Christi Belcourt at a solidarity event in Halifax to Preston New Road in the United Kingdom, where I talked with interested activist about my experiences in Canada.

equality, environmental sustainability and tolerance. The EZLN [Ejército Zapatista de Libéracion Nacional] or Zapatistas are a primarily Indigenous organisation in Chiapas, southern Mexico. Their egalitarian and anti-authoritarian ideology is mixed with Mayan elements. These flags were donated during visits to the camp. These visits are moments to compare struggles and tactics and they give the supportive feeling that they are part of a global movement.

Cross-movement and transnational linkages also have a judicial purpose. Canada has a Common Legal System. A Common Legal system attaches more importance to precedent than a Continental Legal System. Court cases in one province have influence on the rest of the country. Thus, the court cases of *Calder v British Columbia* in 1973 and *Delgamuukw v British Columbia*, in which Aboriginal tile was claimed over land in the Supreme Court, carried the seeds for recognition of Indigenous title elsewhere (Manuel, 2015). Similarly, the case of Donald Marshall, claiming fishing rights under the 1760 and 1761 treaties between the Mi'kmaq and Great Britain has direct influence on the recognition of the right to build a truckhouse under a similar treaty and had consequences for Indigenous peoples in other provinces. Additionally, judicial power is also influenced by changes in the common sense conception. The continuous challenging of a hegemon alters the conceptions in an institution. Dale at the TTH put it as follows:

> Probably a hundred years ago they wouldn't honour that [the Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1752]. Probably fifty years ago they wouldn't honour that. I'm talking about the government and the police. Fifteen years ago, they wouldn't honour that. Ten years ago, they wouldn't honour that. But because of all the peoples fights, from […] South Dakota to OKA to Burned Church to Rexton to here. Because of all of those peoples commitments and their struggles and their sacrifices. Donald Marshall taking on the Supreme Court. Because of all of those guys we're here and now the government has to honour that. The United Nations made them do it. Truth and Reconciliation is making them do it (Dale Andrew Poulette, personal communication, October 21, 2018).

Dale is not a theoretician and he has definitely not read Gramsci, but nevertheless this statement illustrates his awareness of the connections between struggling on the structural and superstructural levels and the material outcomes.

3.5.2 Commons and accumulation by dispossession

Indigenous means of subsistence have been a source of accumulation for settlers since the arrival of Europeans to America. Glen Coulthard, professor of First Nations and Indigenous Studies in British Colombia, shows in the introduction (pp. 6-15) of his book *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* and proves with the history of the First Nation to which he belongs, the Dene people (pp. 51-78), that the Marxian concept of "primitive accumulation" should be reframed from a first stage in capitalism to an ongoing process (*cf.* Harvey, 2003). Today, the resources of Indigenous peoples are no longer extracted through direct violence, but through more subtle colonial structures. Not only the land, but also other common goods (knowledge, water, clean air) are increasingly privatised and commodified, further dispossessing Indigenous peoples.

In the Mi'kmaq ontology, land is more than a dead surface, Mi'kmaq stories recollect how the land was formed by their ancestors, how the Grandmother Rock is the petrification of an old woman that took care of Kluskap's tent, how the huge tidal difference at the Minas Basin was caused by Kluskap breaking the giant beaver's dam and how Kluskap would return to his cave on Kluskap mountain (Hornborg, 2008, p. 88-90).[23] The land carries Mi'kmaq experiences and history and all their relations with the water, the trees, the birds, the stones, the humans and the insects. It is life itself. To take something from it, must happen thoughtfully and reciprocally. The land is needed and cared for and the land needs and cares. Many of the Kluskap-stories had lost their prominent position in society in the twentieth century, but neo-traditionalists are regenerating them as a force in Indigenous resurgence, because spirituality is a powerful source of meaning and motivation to protect land, water, culture and one selves (Hornborg, 2008, p. 135-179). The other way around, it is noted in a report for the World Bank:

> Secure land and resource rights are also essential for the maintenance of their worldviews and spirituality and, in short, to their very survival as viable territorial and distinct cultural collectivities … the close ties of Indigenous people with the land must be recognized and understood as the fundamental basis of their cultures, their spiritual life, their integrity, and their economic survival. For Indigenous communities, relations to the land are not merely

[23] Which he did, because the struggle against the mine sparked a cultural revival (Hornborg, 2008).

> a matter of possession and production but a material and spiritual element that they must fully enjoy, even to preserve their cultural legacy and transmit it to future generations (MacKay 2004, p. 17).

Since land is involved in a complex entanglement with family, culture, economy and identity, property rights are also complex and multi-layered. It would be absurd and romanticizing to suggest that the Mi'kmaq and other Indigenous Nations have or had no perception of private property – they surely have and had. Nevertheless, property in many of their ontologies does not fit the modernist cookie-cutter approach in which everything is owned by a single person or institution. An example of Dalhousie professor of ethnography, Brian Noble (2018) illustrates this complex, multi-layered approach to property. He recalls a story of Piikani (part of the Blackfoot Confederacy in Alberta) and Ktunaxa (Kootenay, south-west of the Piikani) friends from before settlers' property-imposing practices. Around 200 years ago, a Ktunaxa hunting party tracked a herd of deer onto the hunting territory of the Piikani. Deer are not bothered by human's mental borders and the Ktunaxa have a special obligation to the black tail deer through the Black-Tail Deer Ceremony. The black tail deer is a medicine that works through the hunted, the ceremony and the hunting practice. Respect made the hunters follow the deer in their responsive and attentive practice until they encountered a Piikani hunting party. To set relations right with the Piikani, a tipi was set up, where a ceremony was held to transfer to the Piikani certain of the rights of the powerful Black-Tail Deer ceremony. The story shows how the border was neither delineated, nor defended (as in the Hobbesian state). Instead, the borders were marked by reciprocal transaction and ceremony between selves (humans and deer). This story does not serve to prove that Indigenous relations have always been peaceful. During the same period of the good relations with the Ktunaxa, the Piikani had at times difficult relations with the Cree to the north and also the Mi'kmaq have had wars and conflicts with neighbouring Nations. It also has to be taken into account that colonialism has severely altered these relations and that also internal property disputes exist and have always existed, as they do in every society. Nevertheless, the story illustrates that ownership can be multi-layered and complex.

A more contemporary example on Mi'kma'ki is the acknowledgement of staying on "unceded and unsurrendered Mi'kmaq territory." To acknowledging that a university, theatre or city is located on traditional territory has become a trend in Canada and has led to the critique that the acknowledgment is only a lip-service. The actual meaning of the acknowledgment erodes and

becomes an appeasement for non-Indigenous guilt (Mascoe, 2018). For Mi'kmaq themselves however, the sentence can serve a difference purpose. It reaffirms Mi'kmaq land-rights and the legitimacy of peace and friendship treaties. "Unceded and unsurrendered" refers to the absence of ownership transferal in those treaties. As explained earlier, the recognition of these treaties has happened through court cases. For the Mi'kmaq the court case of 1999 *R v Marshall (No 1),* in which Donald Marshall defended his right to catch and sell eels without a license, affirmed the legitimacy of eighteenth-century treaties. In the first decision the Supreme Court granted the Mi'kmaq fishing rights under the 1760 and 1761 treaties**.** The decision was highly controversial in the non-Indigenous fishing community, because it seemingly gave the Mi'kmaq the right to fish unrestrictedly. The second decision, an "elaboration," stated that they are still subject to Canadian law (Coates, 2000). The case illustrates the awkward position of the Canadian state. On the one hand, the supreme court recognises Indigenous rights, but on the other hand it tries to accommodate them under Canadian law. *All rights are recognised, but some are more recognised than others.* From the court decisions emerges a regime in which Indigenous peoples have some rights on Crown land (public land), but not on private land. On the eighteenth of March 2019, the Supreme Court Justice granted an injunction to force the protectors out the strawbale house. The original Treaty Truckhouse, three hundred metre further, directly adjacent to the Shubenacadie and positioned on Crown land, was not included in the injunction. The protectors argue that this is a violation of their sacred right to protect the water. In June, while defending three Grassroots Grandmothers that got arrested after the injunction, Michael McDonald, Sipekne'katik lawyer, announced he would file for an injunction against Alton Gas. "Our argument is those lands were never ceded or sold by the Mi'kmaq people so Alton Gas has no treaty claim to those lands along the Shubenacadie River" (McDonald, cited by Campbell, 2019, para. 2). For Indigenous peoples, the land and its resources cannot be *owned* in its modernist meaning, so the treaties were never a transfer of ownership. Rather, it was a basis for sharing (Anderson, Schneider, Kayseas, 2008, p. 29).

3.5.3 Avoiding hegemonic crisis management: revealing alternatives

To counter globalization and other forms of hegemonic crisis management, the counter-hegemony must show there is a viable alternative to the system of consumerism and jobs based on continuous

accumulation, otherwise the hegemony might swoop in and define solutions according to its own terms (*e.g.* green consumerism) (Carroll, 2006, p. 26). Studying the alternative economic systems aspired by Indigenous activists is beyond the scope of this thesis. Besides, such discussions were not a common topic in the local struggle. Nevertheless, some relevant remarks must be made here.

Central in Indigenous struggles is the control over their resources. For example, the right to fish and to log and the control over their forests and rivers. Thus, the key-aspiration of Indigenous peoples might be a change in control, rather than a drastic change in the organization of the economy. Yet, control in an ontology true to precolonial practices would also mean a more sustainable management, harvesting that what is necessary for the present needs, while also taking into account the needs of the next seven generations.[24] Taking control implies a change in the drivers behind the economic system. The selfish *homo oeconomicus* would be replaced with a revaluing of reciprocity and redistribution. Similarly, Gramsci is also barely interested in the organization of the economic practice, but the more with the control over the system, how the proletariat could gain control over the means of production instead of the rich few.

Nevertheless, because of their impoverishment through colonialism and the effects of climate change on their means of subsistence, many First Nations are forced into making quick and dirty deals with the industry to acquire some short-term improvements in their living conditions (Klein, 2014, p. 384). Even Dale has worked as a steam- and pipefitter for oilsands companies in Alberta. The fact that Dale has worked in one of the most polluting industries on earth, could be interpreted as proof that Indigenous ontologies are no panacea for the world-ecological crisis. Indeed, they are not. Hornborg (2008, p. 26-28) discusses how to interpret the slaughter on fur bearing animals in the seventeenth century in which the Mi'kmaq partook. The explanation is linked to the new technologies, ontologies and changes in society that were brought by colonization. The explicit conservationism and sustainable practices in modernist terms, might have only developed later as a reaction on the European arrival.

Thus, Dale's history as an oil-industry worker can also be interpreted as a sign of the strength of neo-traditionalist water protector's ontology. The fact that Dale has decided despite his previous employment to spend almost two years of his life protecting the water – what he calls a "spiritual

[24] Seven is a sacred number for the Mi'kmaq. Each generation is responsible to ensure the survival of the next seven generations.

quest" – illustrates the power in the ontology to give meaning to environmentalist and counter-hegemonic struggles.

At the TTH, there was never a lot of bad-talk against individual company workers or security guards. They had an understanding for the people "just doing their jobs." Instead, the rhetoric is very much against an unidentified upper class: "the company," "the industry," or "white people" – with the remark that there are exceptions. As Dale notes in the story, settlers can choose to align themselves with Indigenous peoples. Contrary to the rhetoric against individual people, the wording versus the unidentified groups sounds a lot harder. Dale even called it a "biological-chemical warfare" (October 22, 2018).

3.6 Nature is not empty

The structural elements of the hegemony as described by Carroll (2006) are chaired on the modernist superstructure and ontology. For accumulation by dispossession to take place, a particular conception of the resource to appropriate is produced. Nature is perceived as unconnected, separate and empty. Chapter 3.3 already explained that Mi'kmaq spirituality can be understood through an ontological understanding of nature as entangled and alive. Chapter 3.6.2 displayed that nature, because of its entanglement and because it is alive, is a shared good in the Mi'kmaq ontology. The present chapter explores how the perception of nature as empty is implicitly combatted through the actions of Indigenous activists at the Treaty Truckhouse.

If nature is wild and unconnected its features can be turned into a commodity unimpeded. The incorporation of a frontier, an area (not necessarily physical) that is on the border of the capitalist mode of production and is in the process of becoming commodified, "asks participants to see a landscape that doesn't exist, at least not yet. It must continually erase old residents' rights to create its wild and empty spaces where discovering resources, not stealing them, is possible" (Tsing, 2005, p. 68).

Indigenous peoples know a long history in which they are denied the same humanity as settlers. When nature was denied the qualities of a self, many humans were put into the category of nature (Moore, 2016, p. 79). Lands were depicted as empty and the lands, as well as the people living *with*

it, were up for grabs. Although today dying humanity or being a self to Indigenous peoples should spark outrage, they still carry – like Afro-Americans and other groups that were denied personhood – a smaller political relevance.

Medical sociologist Ingrid Waldron (2018) uses the opposition of the Sipekne'katik First Nation against Alton Gas as an example in her book on environmental racism in Nova Scotia. Environmental racism is the placement of environmentally hazardous industries near low-income or community environments – or vice-versa, the placement of vulnerable communities near these environments. The phenomenon is closely linked to class, although it cannot be reduced to class, for "race makes class hurt more" (Waldron, 2018, p. 2). Environmental racism develops through the lower political importance attached to the other's voice, through the fewer means and connections these peoples have to voice their opposition, through the fact that they have other more direct needs that require attention and through the countless subtle ways in which the voice of the other is supressed by the hegemonic group. Yet, environmental racism requires attention, because it makes those communities that are already vulnerable more prone to physical and mental diseases, creating a vicious cycle of poverty and racism (Waldron, 2018).

Dorene noted that the alliance with white upper middle-class environmental groups in Halifax brought – besides financial and organisational support – also welcome political power. These organisations have often a broad, financially strong base with an interest in politics. This increases the chance of actions to be picked-up by media and thus enhances the pressure on the company and politicians. In the other direction, Indigenous peoples have legal claims and rights which provide useful ways to block or slow down environmentally destructive projects via the judicial path.

The first actions against Alton Gas were a spontaneous outcry to be heard, after a project that had remained under the radar for many years suddenly became tangible. Because consultation took place with the KMKNO but barely with the Sipekne'katik people, many Mi'kmaq an locals only heard from the developments when forest was being cut for the pipeline between the river and the caverns (Dorene Bernard, personal communication, October 22, 2018). In the second week of the autumn of 2014, protesters lighted a ceremonial fire and set up a tepee on Highway 102 near Stewiacke. The Mi'kmaq, joined by fishermen and other concerned residents put up protest placards and slowed down traffic during one day to distribute leaflets ("First Nations, Residents," 2014). Protesting along the highway is not a new method of asking for attention for the Mi'kmaq.

In 2012, there was a similar protest as part of the Idle No More movement against changes in the Indian Act and more recently, in 2019, protesters met in solidarity with the Wet'suwet'en First Nation, where the Unist'ot'en protest camp against a natural gas pipeline was violently broken up. Indian Brook, the main reserve of the Sipekne'katik First Nation is located close to the highway, in the middle between Halifax and the third biggest settlement of the province, Truro. Thus, they don't have one particular political centre where to base their protests, the highway is a symbol of the thousands of white people passing the reserve every day, while almost no-one has actually been at the reserve. These protests are also an outcry to show that the lands politicians in the cities are selling to multinational corporations are not empty. The Mi'kmaq and locals are there, they are feeling those developments and they will fight back.

3.7 Rearticulation of democracy

In the battle against a hegemonic ontology, one should try to form an alternative historical bloc, a crystallisation of the structures and superstructures that forms the basis of consent. Yet, it is not easy to create a new conception of the world (a basis for both structure and superstructure) out of thin air. Therefore, an alternative articulation of already existing values, beliefs, symbols and practices is required (Reed, 2012, p. 566). The American sociologists Michael Omi and Howard Winant write rearticulation is

> a practice of discursive reorganization or interpretation of ideological themes and interests already present in the subjects' consciousness, such that these elements obtain new meanings or coherence. This practice is ordinarily the work of 'intellectuals' … [It is] a process of recombination of familiar ideas and values in hitherto unrecognized ways…. [During the civil-rights movement preachers rearticulated] familiar [Christian] vocabulary and textual reference-point[s] for freedom struggle … [making] the movements' political agenda possible, especially its challenge to the existing racial state (Omi & Winant, 1994, p. 195 n. 11, p. 168 n. 8, pp. 99–101, as cited in Reed, 2012, p. 566).

Rearticulation describes perfectly what happens with democracy at protest camps. Democracy as an abstract value – not per se its execution – is shared by the overwhelming majority of people in Canada (and the United Kingdom). Yet, there is no consensus about what the term implies. Through

their struggles, the activists at the TTH (and PNR) challenge and modify the hegemonic meaning of democracy.

For Indigenous peoples, it is specifically the duty to consult that attracts attention. Arthur Manuel, international activist and political leader of the Secwepemc First Nation in British Colombia, wrote about the principle:

> We are still just a fairly meaningless add-on expense under the fairly meaningless legal "duty to consult" with Indigenous peoples. […] They are merely procedures put to agree to economic plans put forward by the settlers, because Indigenous peoples normally do not have the money to invest in our own land nor do we know the process by which we can borrow the money to do so (Manuel, 2017, p. 149).

The duty to consult has arrived out of Section 35 of *The Constitution Act* (1982) of Canada, which states "the existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal peoples of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed." [25] The actual meaning of this article, however, would only be established afterwards through a series of court cases (Manuel, 2015; Morellato, 2008). Canada has – contrary to continental Europe which has a civil law system – a common law system that attributes considerable importance to precedent and judicial opinions besides codified statutes. After three decades of court cases, Indigenous rights and the duty to consult are still surrounded by uncertainty. Different judicial interpretations often stand opposite each other. Since the decision is ultimately dependent on the judges – who are selected on advice from the government – Indigenous rights are partly a result of their position on the hegemonic ladder. Thus, the actions of Indigenous peoples have had undeniable positive effects: their position in society has slowly improved since the twentieth century and through judicial action they have been able to anchor some in the judicial apparatus. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) only provides slightly more clarity. Article 19 states:

> States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them (UN, 2008, Article 19).

[25] Section 35 was only included in the constitution after a considerable countrywide Indigenous mobilisation known as the Constitution Express (see Manuel, 2015).

UNDRIP was only accepted completely in 2016 by the Canadian government, because of concerns with amongst other Article 19 and the compatibility with the Canadian constitutional framework. Today, the Canadian government has dropped the footnote that the declaration is only aspirational, but there is still disagreement about what this free, prior and informed consent actually means.

On its website (http://altonnaturalgasstorage.ca), Alton Gas speaks the language of reconciliation and cooperation and provides a list of community initiatives. "Since 2006 we have been developing relationships on a foundation of respect for the languages, customs, and political, social and cultural institutions of Indigenous peoples" (Alton Gas, *s.d.*, para. 2). It mentions the created factsheets, a third-party review of the science behind the project and the support for a monitoring project together with IKANAWTIKET.

Nonetheless, the third-party review of the environmental assessment still fails to mediate some concerns. For example, Dale scorned to me that the original researchers might have installed their traps in the wrong direction, because he knows from his own experience that there are more species of fish in the river than the environmental assessment claims, he feels they should have listened to Indigenous knowledge. The scientific cooperation is often questionable. The company calls IKANAWTIKET, which was selected by the KMKNO, an "aboriginal environmental educational charity" (Alton Gas, *s.d.*, para. 7), however, in a first report (Doble & Mitchell, 2016), neither of the authors are Mi'kmaq. On the TTH Facebook page, the report of IKANWTIKET is criticized for stating that the river has always been "exploited" (Low, 2016).

In 2017, the Nova Scotia Supreme Court ruled in favour of the Sipekne'katik First Nation and squashed the decision of Environmental Minister, Margaret Miller to dismiss the First Nation's appeal to the province's industrial approval. Nevertheless, in March 2019 construction could go on after the Environmental Minister decided anew that the duty to consult had been fulfilled (Vaughan, 2019b). A month earlier, when the NSUARB gave green light to the extension of the Approval to Construct, Elizabeth Marshall, grandmother and Mi'kmaq knowledge holder had declared:

> The white consultants at KMKNO [Kwilmu'kw Maw-klusuaqn Negotiation Office] and the Mi'kmaq Rights Initiative and government representatives at Indian Affairs, that's not us. So don't be tricked. We have not been consulted one bit, and that's why I am here (Marshall cited in Devet, 2019, para. 8).

At the TTH, some dream of a duty to consult that would mean that free, prior and informed consent for big infrastructural projects must be acquired through a referendum, for others consent does not

let itself be translated in the technical terms of one side. They want a consensus process that resembles precolonial decision structures, where decisions are made through an organic process that does not let itself be written down in straight-cut rules, a process where capable, spiritual people gather consensus through rounds of meaningful and respectful consultation at the grass-roots level by traditional methodologies (e.g. sharing circles and ceremonies). These methods of consultation would not be in the hand of the settler-state, but of those consulted, the Indigenous peoples.

In any case, the Mi'kmaq at the camp agree that the government's interpretation of consent as a green signal from the technical KMKNO is not enough**.** A parallel can be drawn with Arthur Manuel's (2017) comments on hereditary and Indian Act chiefs. Since the Indian Act of 1876, chiefs are elected. With the election come financial responsibilities and chiefs are tied to financing of the Canadian state, which implies limits on what you can say and do. Thus, they become executioners of Indian Affairs programs and services. It is hard to blame them for playing this role, Manuel argues. However, more problematic are "hang-around-the-fort Indians" (p. 135) who build lucrative careers off-reserve with negotiating jobs. Manuel shows that – with some notable exceptions – real leadership comes from the grassroots level. He speaks more favourable of hereditary chiefs, an unofficial continuation of precolonial forms of chieftaincy. While the Indian Act chief is often occupied with economic issues, hereditary chiefs perform a more holistic function and have a spiritual role to protect the land. With the imposition of the Indian Act, the coloniser acquired weak-hegemony through the imposition of an institutionalised leadership structure. By incorporating a few powerful members of the group, consent is extracted, whereas this might not be felt by the majority. Also Mohawk scholar Taiaiake Alfred (1999) calls on Indigenous leaders to return to traditional modes of governance because settler-state regimes of recognition re-inscribe settler-hegemony.

In the Mi'kmaq case, although they too used to have hereditary chiefs,[26] I didn't hear any referral to the hereditary system. Nonetheless, there are spiritual leaders who emerge through a less institutionalised, more organic process. Activists at the TTH often refer to the grandmothers and sometimes to male Elders too as a source of guidance. In this context, where leadership is not prescribed by a simple election process, but emerges through age, wisdom and spirituality,

[26] Leadership was established through kinship, but also through custom and example. Respected individuals, knowledgeable and admirable, could also be chosen to lead (Prins, 1996).

"consent" cannot be written down in a law or a court case as some boxes that need to be checked off. If meaningful consultation is to be meaningful to both sides, new consultations practices will have to be developed – or old consultation practices will have to be adapted to the contemporary reality. These new strategies will weaken the settler-state's hegemony, because they are practices that are principally in the hands of local communities.

3.8 Sources of inspiration and the organic intellectual

A recurrent theme in Gramsci's prison notebooks is the dialectic relationship between popular and high culture. A counter-hegemonic ontology cannot simply "supersed[e] the existing mode of thinking and existing concrete thought (the existing cultural world)" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 330). First, the existing commons sense (the hegemonic ontology) must be criticised, but this criticism is itself initially based on the common sense (Gramsci, 1971, p. 326-343). The new (or reviving) ontology must already be embryonically present in people's minds. The dynamic contact between theory and common sense, two sides only seemingly antagonistic, helps to develop and transform the embryonic ideas into a full ontology (Reed, 2012, p. 569). For Gramsci, theory is linked to the ratio, while he associates common sense rather with emotion (Reed, 2012, p. 571). Emotion, however, is a powerful tool. It is through love for the future generations and the people and culture around them, that water protectors are mobilised. The intellectual (theory, ratio) helps the emotional to become a cohesive project, both in its counter-hegemonic purpose and in its internal collective identity that is necessary to sustain the counter-hegemonic struggle (Reed, 2012, p. 570). Gramsci's theory on the role of the intellectual has to be placed in its historical context.

Before his time in prison, Gramsci had been a main theorist of the factory council movement in a series of articles (1919-20) in the *Ordine Nuovo*, a weekly newspaper to review socialist culture, co-founded by Gramsci in Turin.[27] The factory council had to become the Italian version of the Russian *soviets*. Councils of the proletariat were established all over Turin, they had to be the

[27] Gramsci was arrested in 1926 after Mussolini made an end to the final scrambles of bourgeois democracy and banned all opposition. In 1928, at Gramsci's trial the prosecutor declared: "we must stop this brain from working for twenty years!" (quoted in Gramsci, 1971, p. xviii). Nevertheless, Gramsci produced his most influential writings (the *Prison Notebooks*) during his imprisonment. He wrote until he was transferred to the prison clinic in 1933. Eventually, he would die in 1937, age 46, in a hospital in Rome. His sister-in-law smuggled the books out the hospital to Moscow (Gramsci, 1971).

embryos of the future socialist state (Hoare & Nowell Smith in Gramsci, 1971, pp. xxv-xxix). In the autumn of 1919, Gramsci helped to organise more than 30 000 Turin workers in factory councils by endless meetings, speeches and personal dialogues. The other way around, the workers taught Gramsci their needs and desires (Vlasblom, 1979, p. 15). In this context, there was a clearer distinction and more hierarchical relation between the intellectual and the worker, yet Gramsci notes that the dichotomy between the teacher and the student must be overcome, because the teacher is also a student and the student also a teacher (reciprocal learning). Next to the traditional professional intellectuals, Gramsci identifies "organic intellectuals." These individuals are less distinguished by their profession but by their function in directing the ideas and aspirations of the class to which they organically belong. The following paragraphs examine who fulfils the role of the intellectual at the TTH.

Mi'kmaq leadership has already been touched upon in previous chapters. There is growing discontent with the institutionalised forms of leadership, created by the colonial settler-state (Alfred, 1999; Manuel, 2017).

For many Mi'kmaq the key organic intellectuals are the Elders. These men and women – in the case of environmental protests like at the TTH mostly women – give spiritual guidance, are contact persons and organise protests and ceremonies. With the ceremonies, they spread and strengthen the reciprocal relationship with water, which challenges the modernist ontology looking at nature as a purely economic resource. As in the case of Dale, it was upon the request of the Grassroots Grandmothers, who had organised the first actions against Alton Gas, that he stayed at the Treaty Camp.

The importance of the revival of spiritualism, ceremonies, dances, music, language, etcetera can also be observed in Dale's story. "If you listen to your parents," Dale says, "life will be easier." There is an easy and a hard way. Parents provide the key to the easy way. "Parents" here, should not only be understood in a purely disciplinary way, as the source of order and discipline, but as Elder, as the source of Mi'kmaq knowledge and spiritual guidance. For Dale, becoming a water protector has been a transformative experience. He was one of the many Indigenous youngsters that struggled and was drawn into a harmful spiral, *e.g.* sniffing glue. Protecting the water at Rexton and the TTH has been an experience that gave purpose and set him on the rails. Dale is not the only one to say that spiritualism is an important source of meaning, a medicine against the contemporary

problems of Indigenous societies, coming forth out of their marginalisation in the hegemony, like the plague of suicides, alcoholism and depression. The revival of spiritualism puts Indigenous cultures back on the map. Protecting the water, land, culture and Indigenous rights gives a purpose and pride to be Indigenous.

Thus, neo-traditionalism is an important source of inspiration at the TTH and spiritual Elders are organic intellectuals. To be sure, organic-leadership role does not mean that Elders are in charge of all planning and organising. As Gramsci (1971, p. 8) argued, "all men are intellectuals."[28] Dale and Rachael have considerable own initiatives and ties. Because of their physical presence at the heart of the struggle, they also perform a central position in the non-spatial politics. They are the contact persons for passers-by, for the non-Indigenous community, for press and they have their own lawyers and ties with NDP politician Leonore Zann. During the end of 2018 and beginning of 2019 most of their efforts were focussed on bringing to light the non-compliance of the brine discharge with federal regulation (section 2.1b of the environmental assessment).[29] An effort which partly succeeded, because in 2019 Alton Gas' earlier method became untenable. To the detriment of the protectors, however, they have since lobbied Environment Canada to rush through new regulations that would allow the release of brine in the river (Jones, 2019).

3.9 Gender

Since the relevant counter-hegemonic ontological properties of the water protectors at the TTH have been identified, it is possible to look at a last interesting aspect of the movement: the over-proportional presence of female water protectors. The most obvious explanation for this gendered demographic is linked to an ethics of care. Ethics are part of the superstructure, which is chaired on an ontology. Since the health of nature and water are intrinsically linked with future generations and because caring for children and for future generations are values that are in the common sense stronger associated with women, also the caring for nature and water becomes predominantly a female matter. It is no surprise that the groups of elderly women at both sites are referred to as

[28] Mid-nineteenth century it was still fashionable to write men instead of people.
[29] As of June 2019, Lenore Zann left the New Democratic Party (NDP) to run federally for the Liberal Party.

"grandmothers," even though some might not have children. Grandmothers evoke relations wisdom and care.

Moreover, women have always played a special role in Mi'kmaw society – especially in a spiritual way. Dorene and Dale explained how women are the traditional carriers of medicine bundles and how this spiritual function provides women an equal position in society:

> Before the first arrivals came. Before the first ceremonies came: Sweatlodge, Waltas, all of these ceremonies. The women were powerful enough, they didn't need no ceremony. They knew things ahead of time. Because the women – that is why women have their menstrual time, they are more connected to the earth and sacred things around us and before the Europeans arrived they had to surrender their power, because if the Europeans knew who were the most powerful people, they would have killed them right there and then. So what ended up happening was the Mi'kmaq were gifted from the spirits these ceremonies: the Sweatlodge, the Sundance and all of these other ceremonies and they were told to use them to look into the future. To help them understand the future and to prepare for the future (Dale Andrew Poulette, personal communication, October 22, 2019).

Unlike in European cultures, the sexual labour-division contributed to complementarity and egalitarianism among men and women (Loppie, 2004, p. 28). Dorene Bernard started the Grassroots Grandmothers Circle after asking how to help her people and community in a Shake Tent ceremony. The Grassroots Grandmothers became a community action group of mostly female Elders, gathering every two weeks since 2008. The women play a front-stage spiritual and organising role in the Stop-Alton-Gas movement but are also involved in other healing projects. In its Facebook description, Dorene writes:

> It is said, "the Women are the backbone of a people, they are the givers of life; Grandmothers are the protectors of families, and teachers of children, our communities, our Nations. This is our responsibility. […]
>
> Grassroots Grandmothers Circle is a Community Action group, Women-Grandmothers, mothers, men and youth, in our community and anyone that supports our group, that want to help our people, our children, grandchildren, our community to heal (Bernard, *s.d.*, para. 3, para. 1).

Summarizing, the fact that so many women are water protectors can be explained because of the fact that caring for future generations is a value mostly attributed to women and because in the Mi'kmaq ontology all selves, all spirits, therefore also water and land, are entangled. This ontology is counter-hegemonic and perhaps even anti-hegemonic, which through the war of position is essential to change both the superstructural and the structural aspects of the hegemonic society that have created today's word-ecological crisis. Nevertheless, through mirroring the Treaty Truckhouse with Preston New Road (PNR) and by talking with activists at PNR, other explanations for the female over-representation have emerged.

4 PRESTON NEW ROAD

Although both field sites are located in very different contexts, there are interesting similarities in the stories at the two camps. The Indigenous worldview, which has been well studied and for which the term ontology has already been accepted, helps to identify similar strains of thought in the non-Indigenous context, where the ontological basis, the perception of the surroundings is less distinct from the hegemonic one. The fact that examples of anti-hegemonic practices and ideas, challenging the modernist ontology can also be found at Preston New Road, suggests that a more environmentally connected ontology is emerging in the modernist world as a counter-reaction to the dominant mode of production.

The analysis of the counter-hegemonic ontology at Preston New Road is structured in the same way as the part on the Treaty Truckhouse, to make it simple to refer back when contrasting one with the other.

The first occupation at Preston New Road dates back to 2014, when Reclaim The Power came to support community resistance ("Cuadrilla fracking protest camp," 2014). Reclaim The Power is a UK based direct action network struggling for environmental, social and economic justice. They helped starting off the protests by spreading information and giving action trainings to local citizens and also later they helped drawing many new followers for the local struggles by helping the organisation of events like the mini festival in front of the gates *Block Around the Clock.*

Local people have organised themselves in different groups like the Preston New Road Action Group, the Nanas (a group of mothers and grandmothers), PNR Community Protection Camp. Further, Frack Free Lancashire forms an umbrella organisation for the frack-free groups in the entire Lancashire region (Cuadrilla's appeal for fracking at Roseacre Wood has been denied in February 2019; Aurora Resources submitted a scoping request in 2018 for Altcar Moss, but not yet any formal construction applications) and also broader organisations like the Green Party and Friends of the Earth are involved at PNR. Membership structures are flexible however and many of the activists at the gate do not affiliate with one group in particular.

In January 2017, Cuadrilla started construction, which was directly followed by a series of actions and in June 2017, a twenty-four seven presence before the gates started. First, tents were put at the roadside, but these all got evicted until they found the current spot in August 2017, a gateway on

the side of the road, exactly opposite of where the rig stood. From October, a little shack for shelter was built at that spot, just big enough for a couch, some chairs, a little stove and a bit of storage room. From then on, a formal type of rotation started so that at least two people were always present at the gate camp (Barbara Cookson, personal communication, July 2, 2019).

Permanent presence is necessary, because it legally prevents the shack from being demolished (the same holds for all squatted areas). Yet, in the first place, gate camp serves as a post to observe all proceedings at the construction site in order to fact-check Cuadrilla's statements. Day time is divided into three day shifts of four hours and one night shift of twelve hours.

During my visit in February 2019 there were mostly more than two people present during the day. People come by to drop food or firewood off, to show their support, stand in front of the incoming lorries (until the police pushes them away), to wave placards at the passing cars, to inform about the latest developments or just to drink a brew and see familiar faces. During a normal day there would be easily up to ten people at the gate at the same time, but often, during special events the number could be much higher. Every Monday a group of locals with support of environmental and political organisations organises a Green Monday with speeches before the gate and every Wednesday, the Nanas organise a slow walk from nearby Maple Farm to the gates to delay the incoming deliveries to the fracking site and to raise awareness among the passing drivers.

The people at gate camp are both locals and full-time activists. I use the term "locals" and "full-time activists," but these are no exclusive categories, most full-time activists have roots in the north-west and some locals are full-time involved. I use 'locals' mainly to refer to those activists who have a house or apartment nearby, while I use 'full-time activists' for those who often come from other camps in the UK and commit their whole life to environmental struggles. Sometimes working short jobs in between protests to get around.

The first camping site for such activists was the Maple Farm community hub, a tree nursery one kilometre from the fracking site, providing a piece of land for some caravans and tents, where also passers-by can camp. In 2017 the New Hope Resistance Camp was created, a squatted field some 500 metres further with self-built shacks. New Hope has grown into a small community, equipped with a self-built kitchen, shower, sanitary block and a communal with solar and wind energy. In the winter of 2018-2019 around fifteen people lived at the camp but in the previous summer the number sometimes reached over fifty.

All three camps rely on support by the local community. Regular shipments of wood, tea, milk and crumpets are dropped by passing drivers and meals for the nightshift people are brought on a rotating basis. Water, electricity and building materials at New Hope come from neighbours and at the gate cars hoot to show support to the watch.

At the time of my research, in February 2019, the flow-back tankers were being moved off the site.[30] All fracking stages of the first well had been completed – a lot less than originally planned – but the permissions for the second well weren't settled yet (Hayhurst, 2018c). Another problem for Cuadrilla is the traffic light system installed after the earthquakes in 2011. In an effort to appease the local population with "golden standard" regulation, the company and government agreed upon a system that would allow injection with intensified monitoring in case of tremors until 0.5 M_L (orange light), but would prohibit further injection in case of graver seismic events (red light). A red light also raises a break of 18 hours (Hayhurst, 2018a). Between October and December 2018 Cuadrilla paused its operations five times due to a red light event. In total 56 small events were recorded during that period (Hayhurst, 2018b). Since the activists felt that it was not worth getting arrested for climbing or blocking outgoing trucks of what could be a finished operation site, they limited themselves to standing in front of the juggernauts until the police pushed them away. This illustrates that the protectors would not back down and that the industry would face the same delays if it tried to restart the site. Furthermore, this kept the police busy and extracted resources. Raising the costs of repression is hoped to put further pressure on the government and indeed, the 10.3 million pounds in police costs in 2017-2018 (Grunshaw, *s.d.*) have led to requests by the Lancashire Police for special government grand funding. After all, the permission to frack was borne in Whitehall, when Sajid David overturned the county council at that time ("Lancashire PCC calls," 2018). Next to earthquakes, water pollution, loss of property value, noise and traffic, the overturn of the Lancashire county council's rejection to fracking, which was seen as a major victory by the frack free movement, is a concern that has motivated local residents to join the protests.

At the time of writing this thesis, in June 2019, gate camp is still manned, but only with a minimal presence of two people. Only small works occur at the construction site, but during a community

[30] Flow-back tankers are used to capture the back-flow of the fracking fluid. Many parts of the specialized fracking equipment is rented by Cuadrilla and is shipped to other sites during a period of inactivity.

liaison meeting Cuadrilla insisted work at PNR would commence soon. In the meantime, the people remaining at Maple Farm and New Hope use these camps as a base for visiting other nearby protests of Extinction Rebellion, High Speed 2 and the fracking site at West Newton (Barbara Cookson, personal communication, July 2, 2019).[31]

My stay at Preston New Road was shorter than at the Treaty Truckhouse. At PNR there were also more people, who often had very different ideas. Moreover, I did not spend as much time with one or two particular persons as I did at TTH. Therefore, I have relied more on participant observation at PNR and less on open interviews. I spent most of my time at the gates, meeting the different people coming for shifts, Green Mondays or slow walks. Additionally, I visited a community gathering at Ribby Hall (February 9, 2019), where the dangers of fracking for around three hundred fifty Lancashire residents were explained, and a meeting of Friends of the Earth Blackpool (February 11, 2019). As in the study on the TTH, my observations are complemented with information from Facebook and news articles.

4.1 Story two: Anjie – "Nanna Inappropriate"

The story that illustrate the counter-hegemonic ontology at PNR is written by Jo Catlow-Morris on the basis of interviews with Nanas.[32] Jo is a mother living in Kirkham at four kilometres from the fracking site. She has worked as Programme Leader in Performing Arts and Art & Design at Lytham Sixth Form College. In November 2017 Jo created Mad Mother Productions and wrote a theatre play called *Nannas with Banners*. The play consists of multiple testimonies of Nanas, bound by a choreography. It was performed for the first time in November 2018 in Blackpool and retaken in May 2019 at the Lancashire Fringe Festival. Seven of the actual Nanas performed the play next to trained actors.

The Nanas, mothers and grandmothers who found each other around the fracking issue, organise actions all over the UK to raise awareness about the risks of unconventional energy. They

[31] High Speed 2 is a planned high-speed rail network, controversial for its price and its impact on local communities and the environment.

[32] Jo Catlow-Morris writes Nanas with double 'n' for the symmetry with the word banners in the title. The most accepted spelling is with one 'n.'

emphasise how they are normal women, who organise safe and accessible actions. For example, they have organised occupations in the form of a tea-party on the field before the site. Their appearance during protests is conspicuous, since they wear similar clothes like a yellow tabard with the Frack Free Lancashire symbol. In the summer of 2015, they started with *The Nanas Talk Fracking Tour* and travelled nationwide to partake in demonstrations, residents' meetings and community actions (Talkfracking, 2016).

All the Nana-stories illustrate how the Nanas are diverse, "normal" women, who did not consider themselves activists until they had a transformative experience due to fracking. I have chosen the story of Anjie Mosher, because it illustrates particularly well the dynamics inside the fracking movement. Nevertheless, it was difficult to make a choice because also the other stories illustrate interesting anti-hegemonic transforming experiences. Some shorter fragments of those stories serve as further examples in this chapter on PNR. One story is presented in its entirety in order to give an as complete as possible image of the Nana's motives and of the full theatre play. I here present the script of one story exactly as Jo sent it to me with her permission.

Me name's Anjie. (beat)
Anjie Mosher. (beat)
I'm 47, soon to be 48. (beat)
I was born in Michigan, Grand Rapids. (beat)
As I'm sure you can tell from me accent. (beat)
I'm the mother of two adopted boys. (beat)
And I'm a barber. (beat)
Now more conversational;
I've been a hairdresser, but barbering's my passion. I love it. Nothing I like more than wielding a cut throat!
I opened me current shop in 2016., two weeks after I'd finished me cancer treatment.
For the five weeks building up to the opening, I'd been back and forwards to Preston for my chemo, and to the shop to get it decorated and set up. By the time we opened, I'd just finished my appointments at Preston, and I was bald as a coot. Which as you can imagine is a great look for a barber!
All in all, I was in treatment for about a year. (beat)
One time when I was in hospital I got a call from a someone telling me they'd got some information about an action we were planning. Now I didn't want to talk about stuff like that on the phone, so I got in touch with Bernard.
"Look, I've got this information and I need to talk to you about it immediately, but I can't get to you, so you'll have to come to me!"

And that's the time we had a nanna meeting in the chemo ward up the Vic. I'm hooked up with all this bloody devil's juice pumping into me. And like I said, I was on the ward, so I sez to all the other patients in there; "This is a secret meeting ladies; don't say anything to anyone or we'll have to come and find you….So, if the cancer don't get you first, we will!!!!" (laughs to self) ….Only kidding!
Yea, that's how important it is for me to stop this fracking.
Cancer, chemo, hospital beds….Nothing will stand in my way.
You see, this isn't just some nonsense, it's not some fad so that we can all hang around together.
It's a disgusting, toxic industry.
It's destroying communities.
It's not the sort of thing to have you laughing and joking in the aisles.
We've found a way of laughing our way through it though.
Well we're northern aren't we.
You've got to have a laugh.
Sort yerself out. Get on wi' it.
And that's exactly what we've done.
I suppose that's how the nannas started really.
And everyone was like "Arrgh, they're activists!"
No! (beat)
None of us were yer 'crusty juggler' types.
We weren't for fitting into any bugger's stereotypical box of tricks.
We're all different, from different walks of life.
But you're met all the time with;
"Get a job!"
"Have a wash!"
"Do something useful!""
"You've got too much time on yer hands!"
No!
No!
You're wrong!
I'm bringing up my two wayward lads. (beat)
I'm running a business. (beat)
I'm on chemo. (beat)
I'm a mother, a barber, a beater of cancer!
And at the same time, in between all of that, I am fighting to stop this industry.
That's how important this is.
And they keep saying; "Winter'll come, and you'll all be gone"
Well we're not.
We're here.
Come wind, come rain, come snow, come ice. (beat)

There's times though, when it feels like there's no hope; and I feel, just for a moment like I should have kept my head in the sand.
But I didn't. (beat)
I felt that earthquake. I heard that word "fracking". (beat)
I knew it wasn't right. (beat beat)
Now, I'd known "Party Nanna" since I was about 15. She'd added me on facebook ages ago. It popped up that she'd invited me to this meeting at the steamer in Fleetwood. Her and "No Shit" had set up this anti-fracking group and they were getting together that week.
So, I thought; I'll just go along and see what it's all about. Nothing more.
To be honest, I didn't think I had the time for all that stuff.
Anyway, a couple of hours later I walked out of there with all these jobs they'd given me!
I was an anti-fracker!
Me! (beat)
I wasn't expecting that! (beat)
I think it was shortly after the meeting that "Frack Free Lancashire" was set up, and we started spreading the word.
Outreach. Door knocking, standing in the middle of Cleveleys handing out leaflets, talking to people, getting them to sign objection letters.
We were joining marches and standing strong with kindred souls.
It was full on. Full throttle. A fulltime job on top of everything else.
But once you find out about it all; about what fracking does.
There's no going back. (beat)
I've got two kids. It's on their doorstep.
Look at the harm it's causing.
The evidence is there.
Why is it being allowed to happen?
People are like "the government won't hurt us".
WHAT?
Take a look at the history books.
Us lot, we're the cannon fodder. The puppets being manipulated.
It's all about them in power.
The money that's in it for them.
It's always about greed. (beat beat)
At a meeting, way back for FFL, we were talking about how activists have such a bad image.
We needed to find a way of engaging with the public in a none threatening way.
Queenie came up with summat like 'crochet sunflower bikinis'…and getting our nellies out!
I said "Not on yer bloody nelly. I'm not getting my nellies out, fracking or no fracking"
They'd probably start signing petitions for me to keep them in! (laughing with the audience)
Then we talked about 'Pussy Riot' – But I thought balaclavas; pink, yellow or otherwise weren't exactly the most un-threatening thing we could wear!

We were to toing and froing with ideas…then; Hilda Ogden, she cropped up into the conversation!
The Northern matriarch, in her battle dress.
When summat needs doing. Get yer tabard on. Roll yer sleeves up and crack on.
And that's basically what we do. (beat)
Yer nanna isn't a threat. (beat)
Unless she knows someone's threatening her young.
Then she becomes fearless.
Resolute.
A force to be reckoned with.
You don't mess with a nanna on a mission! (beat)
For me to be rockin' a yellow tabard and a matching headscarf, it's got to be something bloody serious.
I went round all the charity shops, and I found meself these brown nanna slacks with an elastic waistband, made out of that material that if you rub yer knees together it sets yer minge on fire.
I looked a proper bobby dazzler. (beat)
Planning the action, it was like trying to explain the offside rule wi' pepper pots and beer mats. Nigh on impossible!
We were no criminal masterminds, I tell yer that. (beat)
The morning of the first action arrived, I looked around and realised and I only really knew one or two of the nannas properly; "Party" and "No Shit".
It was a bit daunting actually, being involved in something like that when you're not a seasoned activist.
You're thinking all sorts;
Will the police lift yer?
Will you end up with a criminal record?
Will yer get beat up by security?
Can yer trust the people that you're doing this with?
But, do you know what?
We never had to question our trust.
Although we didn't know each other very well, we trusted each other completely.
Because it was the right thing to do. (beat)
We all had the same goal, and that made us stronger.
We were a solidarity of nanna-hood.
It's a beautiful thing, that from such an ugly industry has grown this band of warriors.
Shoulder to shoulder.
It's a wonderful movement, and I think the world needs more of that.
I look at myself, and I think about how all this has affected me.
To be fair, I've never been all that trusting of the powers that be, and that mistrust has only grown.

I'm much more conscious about what we put into our bodies, and what comes out of the taps.
I don't sleep as well as I used to.
I worry a lot now.
About my kid's futures, and what the local environment will be like for them if the frackers win.
I need my kids to feel safe;
"Who's gonna protect us mam?"
"That'll be my job son"
My name is Anjie. (beat)
I am mother and protector of my two boys. (beat)
I am keeping my head up and out of the sand. (beat)
I am rolling up my sleeves and I am cracking on. (beat)
I am "Nanna Inappropriate. (beat)
And I am an Activist.
(end)

– Jo M. Catlow-Morris, 2018, *Nannas with Banners*

The theatre play clearly presents a type of story different from the prophecy at the Treaty Truckhouse. *Nannas with Banners* does not affect the ontology of nature, yet it does explain changes in the perception of the superstructure by the protestors. The Nana-stories explain how the "elaboration of the structure into superstructure in the minds of men" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 366) becomes visible for the protestors and how the "passage from 'objective to subjective' and from 'necessity to freedom'" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 367) is reversed. The state emerges as a coercive apparatus on both the structural and the superstructural level. This was evident for the Mi'kmaq, because they have been resisting assimilative efforts like residential schools for decades, but for people who had adopted the capitalist superstructure, this means a mental transformation, a change in the 'ontology of the state.'[33]

Before explaining the transformative experience, which will be extensively discussed in the following chapters (see especially chapter 4.4), I elaborate on the purpose of stories and art at protest sites in general. This subject I discussed with a group of women at gate camp (February 7,

[33] I use the term ontology of the state to show how there is more to ontology than how to look at natural elements, yet if the word ontology fits in this context would be a separate discussion I will not engage in here.

2019) in connection to the Facebook page of Rusty the Rig, written by two full time protesters. From August 2017 to January 2018, they kept a fictitious Facebook profile for the drilling rig. To illustrate this, I copy one of Rusty's stories:

> *The Hard Hats are not happy with me at all. Overnight the men in Clive the Cherry Picker became so cross with me not working one of them kicked my top drive. I hadn't been well for days. I was trying my hardest to swallow the pipes but my throat was still sore. Eventually I managed to eat a few thin drill pipes but it was a struggle.*
> *I've not felt any better today. It's been raining, I'm cold and wet . I've got a bit of a cold too and a couple of times I ve sneezed some drill mud up and covered the workers. That made the Hard Hats even more vexed.*
> *I ve only managed to eat one drill pipe since 8.28am this morning .*
>
> – Rusty the Rig [Public Facebook page], September 22, 2017

When discussing the purpose of these stories, the first reason that was given for writing them was that they help against boredom. It is a fun occupation during the shifts at gate camp.
Second, the protectors noticed how fracking is a complicated industrial process. That makes it difficult for the protestors coming from very different backgrounds to find their way through the technical terms. Giving simple and funny names to appliances helps to streamline the writing down of the observations on the fracking site in the logbook in gate camp. Besides Clive the Cherry Picker and Rusty the Rig, there is also Connor the Shady Crane and another piece of equipment, a big white box part of the drilling rig, is referred to as "the fridge."
Last, humour helps against the stress. While the rig was up, reporting at the gates was a stressful affair. There regularly were injunctions against protestors, there was a lot to report day and night, and in the meantime blockades and other actions had to be planned. Giving funny names makes everything less threatening and stressful.

Language plays also an important part in the Nana-stories. At the beginning Anjie jokes about her Michigan accent. The other stories use expressions in the Lancashire dialect. Speaking in the local dialect creates a feeling of togetherness and belonging (Simons, 2014, p. 85). This dialect, however, does not express a different ontology behind it as the Mi'kmaq language does. Yet, new words are invented at PNR, with an emotional and motivational purpose. "Hedged," "fenced" and "grounded"

respectively refer to a police-officer having pushed someone against the hedge, the fence or the ground. Creating an own word for it diminishes the seriousness of the event. The event is more bearable when the name for it is an everyday-verb. Moreover, creativity displays independence and a moral high ground. It affirms that the independent spirit has not been beaten. Last of all, wielding the same words creates a sense of belonging to the group. The security guards at the gates are referred to as "Gatees" and the workers as "Hard Hats." The "Gatees" are positioned at the "bellmouth," the entrance to the construction site, which is a side street of the Preston New Road that at the junction has the shape of a bell. The rare word "bustle" is often used, it both means a group of people delaying the flatbed deliveries by walking in front of them until the police pushes them away and the action itself (personal communication, February 7, 2019).

4.2 Rooted in history

Anjie refers to history in her answer to the question why fracking is allowed to happen. She argues it is due to greed that the government aligns with big capital. The local people have no real democracy, they are manipulated in giving consent while they are "cannon fodder," they suffer the effects of the greed. It is unclear if she refers to a specific historical event, but some signs at PNR do. A three by five metre placard at Maple Farm displays pictures of the 1984 strikes and police violence and immediately beneath that are similar pictures of 2017 at PNR. The inscription runs: "Lancashire Constabulary's (Very own) Orgreave. Remember 1984 – Nothings [*sic*] Changed! 2017 DAILY RE-ENACTMENTS AT P.N.R. SAME GOVERNMENT! SAME ARROGANCE! SAME CONTEMPT & ABUSE OF POWER!" The Battle of Orgreave was one of the most violent and pivoting clashes of the 1984-85 UK miners' strike, a strike to prevent the closures of the collieries during the government of Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher. It is remarkable that the anti-fracking movement compares itself with a movement that tried to keep the coal mines open, but it proves that the anti-fracking struggle is about much more than climate change. Local democracy and the future of the next Lancashire generations are the essential concerns.

The miners' strike is but one example illustrating how the state chose the side of the richest class in the Lancashire region. For my analysis of the movement at PNR, another history is important; the history of the commons.

It is hard to imagine today, but also in Europe there used to be different ontological conceptions of land and private property. These ontologies were violently disrupted through the enclosure process that started in the thirteenth century and reached a peak in the eighteenth century. The enclosures have been well studied for the Midlands and East Anglia, while historical attention for Lancashire has focused on the nineteenth century with its rapidly growing textile and mine industry. Historian Graham Rogers (1993) proves in his study on Croston, a village seventeen kilometres south-east of PNR, that also Lancashire has experienced the economic transformation and social unrest associated with enclosures.

In the midst of the sixteenth century, Lancashire was poor, scarcely populated and had a large proportion of barren waste land. Waste land is a confusing expression, because these lands were of high importance to the subsistence peasantry. The majority of the peasants were cottager-farmers, who had small holdings and depended on the right of common access to the waste lands for their life stock. Linked to the commons, a complex social network of support existed, including small loans to the poorest. Payments were still made by boon work and "pursuit of monetary gain probably did not reach far beyond the immediate community" (Rogers, 1993, p. 144). The encroachments on common waste land and its disappearance in the first half of the eighteenth century, did not only destroy the economic subsistence system, but also drastically altered the social map of the villages. Many small farmers had difficulties to keep their head above water and eventually had to sell their small plots, which created opportunities for more powerful actors to acquire more land. A local elite emerged, and earlier social relations were destroyed (Rogers, 1993, p. 150).

The enclosures induced a rural proletariat, which would later be important for the emergence of an industrialised coal and textile corridor in the southern and eastern parts of the county. Yet, there was another less studied consequence of this transformation. The Austrian philosopher Ivan Illich (1983), points out that the enclosure of the commons started off a new ecological order in which society changed its attitudes towards the environment. This was part of an ontological transformation in which nature and environment transformed from a commons in which peoples subsistence was embedded to a resource in the process of capital accumulation. Illich argues that there were specific forms of unwritten customary law and community respect that "humanized" (1983, para. 6) the commons. The customary law was usually unwritten "because what it protected

was a reality much too complex to fit into paragraphs" (para. 6). The collective The Ecologist notes that the commons are not so much complex, but they require "open-endedness, receptiveness and adaptability" (1994, p. 111), qualities that got lost with the creation of the phantom of the rational *homo oeconomicus*.

Commons lay beyond people's own possessions, yet they had claims of usage. It was the "aspect of the environment that was limited, that was necessary for the community's survival, that was necessary for different groups in different ways, but which, in a strictly economic sense, was *not perceived as scarce*" (Illich, 1983, para. 7, original emphasis).

Furthermore, the enclosures also increased the hegemony of the state, because commons thrived on regulations and practices decided upon at the local level (The Ecologist, 1994, p. 111). The disappearance of commons redefines the community by undermining the local autonomy. The community is defined as impotent and "people become economic individuals that depend for their survival on commodities that are produced *for them*" (Illich, 1983, para. 14, original emphasis). During the enclosure process itself, however, citizen movements rebel against their redefinition as consumers. They strengthen the community and make it visible.

Commons are not native to the eighteenth century. Also today there are commons that are being enclosed. Writing on capitalist "frontiers," Santa Cruz professor of anthropology Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing (2005) describes how forests in Kalimantan, Indonesia, are made empty and wild so that their resources can be discovered, not stolen. "Confusions between legal and illegal, public and private, disciplined and wild" (Tsing, 2005, p. 41) are productive in erasing old residents' rights and subsistence livelihoods and the production of men driven by profits.

These contemporary commons do not only include lands. Also other commons are being encroached upon, like the information commons (Bollier, 2004), culture (Hyde, 2010), water (Mattei, 2013) and sound (Franklin, 1994). Essential elements of our subsistence, previously taken for granted, like access to seeds and clean air are increasingly under pressure through commodification and pollution (The Ecologist, 1994, p. 111).

The shock of the alienation and privatization of these commons have formed the spark for environmental movements to challenge the hegemony, behold the defensive character of environmental movements. Many of the resources under pressure today are in the common sense perception still a common. The modernist ontologies have been unsuccessful in fully separating

humans from the environment**.** The internal contradiction between structure and superstructure is what Gramsci calls an "organic crisis" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 210). An organic crisis occurs when the structure, economy's mode of production, breaks with the superstructure, ideas and beliefs (Butko, 2006, p. 93). The environmental crisis is such an organic crisis. The modernist hegemonic conception of nature as cheap, as a commodity that can be appropriated because it is empty, wild and unconnected, is losing traction because we experience daily that this idea (superstructure) does not fit the structure. Climate change, asthma and other air-pollution induced diseases, water pollution, climate refugees, etcetera. They all reveal the contradictions in the modernist conception of nature. In the meantime, the capitalist mode of production spreads to those commons (water, air, sound) that even for people with modernist ontologies have not yet been disconnected from humans. This organic crisis provides a chance to strike, an opportunity for a counter-hegemony to emerge and establish itself as an alternative historical bloc.[34] When the hegemonic ideas and beliefs become void and meaningless, a moment of crisis with a power vacuum occurs when the ruling class is still dominant (through force and coercion), but no longer hegemonic (through ideas and consent) (Butko, 2006, pp. 93-95).

The activists at PNR experience such a moment now. Their consent has got lost. What is left for them to see is the coercive functioning of the state in cooperation with the industry.

4.3 Spiritualism in a non-Indigenous context

It is not so evident to see at PNR if the protectors also challenge the modernist hegemony at an ontological level by representing nature (including humans) to be entangled and considering all critters as a self. Evidence is scarcer than at the TTH. Examples are less obvious, and the actors are less conscious about the ontological power their statements and practices might have, yet there are some remarkable trends to be identified. Protectors talk about the plants, the trees and the birds. They are not attempted to name them or study them as hobby-biologists, but nature is spoken of with respect. Even the mice scrambling around on the floor of Gate camp, are greeted with curious affection. There is speculative wonder (or SF, speculative fabulation as Donna Haraway dubs it) in

[34] One of Gramsci's definitions of a historical bloc is the "unity between nature and spirit (structure and superstructure), unity of opposites and of distincts" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 137)

the interpretation of the ontologies of other critters. It is still part of the common sense to wonder speculatively about the thoughts of dogs (often denigratingly put away as anthropomorphising). This aspect of the common sense can be broadened to open human-thought to other-than-human ontologies, allowing speculation about how a mouse or a bird interprets gate camp.

On the Facebook page of PNR (Gates) Community Protection Camp [Public group], Sue Underwood, a retired pharmacist and hobby weatherwoman, gives regular updates of the air trajectory and the weather forecast. In case of flaring, the forecast predicts the trajectory of the emissions, yet the updates continue regardless of the inactivity on the site. A possible explanation is that it is a way to feel engaged with the movement or that they are scared of emissions from the minor operations still occurring. It could also serve an unconscious aim, namely, to teach how to understand the elements (wind) and how they affect people. There are also pictures of beautiful sunsets, landscapes and grass cracking through the asphalt posted on the PNR Facebook pages. They show the beauty of nature and how nature surrounds us everywhere. Another post explains the "Three Sisters," a planting technique of Native Americans. Corn, bean and squash are planted close to each other, because the corn provides a supporting structure for the beans, the beans give nitrogen to the soil and the squash prevents weeds from growing by covering the ground. The accompanying picture shows three women in the plants holding hands (Jacques, 2019). It is not the only sign of Indigenous inspiration. A quick search on the term Mother Earth on the Facebook pages shows that the term has been used more than fifty times in posts during the last two years. The group of protectors at PNR is extremely divers, so the implications should not be stretched to the entire group, yet it becomes clear that a closer connection to nature is sought as a remedy for the destruction of local spaces.

Nevertheless, again most spiritual practices at PNR are ceremonies. Like at the TTH, these ceremonies do not necessarily have a mystical nature. For an activist who passed away in the first days of 2019, a fire ceremony was held, as a moment of reflection and remembrance to be connected in thoughts with the diseased. Other ceremonies, like the healing ceremony for mother earth (another clear example of Indigenous inspiration) and the ceremonies of the Nanas should be understood in the same way. After their weekly slow walk, the Nanas of Lancashire hold fifteen minutes silence at the gates, a practice in which I as a man was not allowed. The silence (a commons) is a moment to spiritually connect with the northern landscape and it counters the loud, disruptive and "masculine" industry (see chapter 4.9).

4.4 Counter-hegemony

PNR can be less ambiguously classified as a counter-hegemony and not an anti-hegemony. The people at PNR are fully part of the society they want to change. As the Nanas emphasise, they are "from all walks of life." Their aspirations are to replace the hegemonic system in which they live with a more sustainable, local democracy. They do not experience a divide between settlers and whites as the Mi'kmaq do.

In the effort to change the hegemony, the war of position on the ontological level is less pronounced than at the TTH. Instead, the war of manoeuvre is more prominent.

The war of position, the war on the ideological level, aiming to transform the common sense conception by challenging standard interpretations and ontologies of civil society, has already been introduced extensively, but Gramsci also recognises a more explicit level.

Referring to respectively civil society and political society, Gramsci writes: [35]

> These two levels correspond on the one hand to the function of 'hegemony' which the dominant group exercises throughout society and on the other hand to that of 'direct domination' or command exercised through the State and 'juridical' government (Gramsci, 1971, p. 12).

The "direct domination" is often invisible, the hegemony turns "necessity and coercion into 'freedom'" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 242). Part of the strategy of the counter-hegemony is to make the invisible visible by temporary wars of manoeuvre. This strategy is similar to that of Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. A peaceful action evokes a response by the authorities that exposes the authorities' implicit violence. Thus, short periods of war of manoeuvre do not only challenge the hegemony structurally, but also create a transformative change in the minds of participants and observers, exposing and delegitimising the hegemonic superstructure.

The police both at the TTH and PNR claims to be an independent intermediary between the company and the activists, but this "so-called neutrality only means support for the reactionary side" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 212). At PNR, activists stand in front of the gate every time a delivery

[35] "Political society + civil society" (1971, p. 263) is one of Gramsci's definitions of the state. Elsewhere he describes it as "dictatorship + hegemony" (1971, p. 239). Nevertheless, in both cases he stresses hegemony as based on ideas that manufacture consent (Butko, 2006, p. 88).

comes on or off the site, forcing the police to get out of their van (which is always parked hundred metres from the gate) and push the protesters aside. More severe responses are provoked by lock-ons (activists chaining themselves to a piece of equipment) and by lorry-surfing (climbing on top of a lorry to prevent it from moving). Making police - and by extension state involvement - visible is a transformative act. For activists and for people following the protests via media, it is an instance in which "feeling-passion becomes understanding and thence knowledge (not mechanically but in a way that is alive)" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 418). This transformation can also be noted in the Anjiie's story: "To be fair, I've never been all that trusting of the powers that be, and that mistrust has only grown." But it becomes even clearer in a passage of the story *Beccy – "Nanna Filthy Poppins*."

> *And I was just like…Well up until that point…I'd never had any issue with the police. (beat)*
> *I'm a mother. (beat)*
> *A mentor. (beat)*
> *A teacher. (beat)*
> *I never saw them, you know, as being the opposite of what we were doing. (beat)*
> *But I know that it was that time.*
> *At Balcombe.*[36]
> *That was so utterly life changing for me. And for my children too.*
> *Up until that point I had always found the police to be friendly. The kids only knew of the police from talks at school, the local bobby.*
> *But they saw (beat)*
> *(Whilst we were there. And it was only a couple of days, the weekend!)*
> *How the police treated people. (beat)*
> *DRAGGING them off the side of the road. (beat)*
> *SHOUTING and getting into people's faces. (beat)*
> *KETTLING them. (beat)*
> *I didn't understand. My children didn't understand.*
> *I saw the fear on their little faces.*
> *I felt the fear in the grip of their hands*
> *How was I going to manage this? The distress that my children had been witness to and that they now felt themselves.*
> *How was I going to explain to them that these police weren't the police that came into their school to give them talks? These police weren't the police that they could trust if they were in danger and needed protection.*

[36] The Battle of Balcombe in 2012 in West Sussex was one of the largest protests against fracking and has drastically raised the profile of fracking in the UK (Bomberg, 2015, p. 4; Williams, Macnaghten, Davies & Curtis, 2017 p. 101).

That is a difficult comparison for a child to make. (beat)

– Jo M. Catlow-Morris, 2018, *Nannas with Banners*

While I sat at the gates in PNR, I was often startled by the loud swearing whenever a police car passed by. While the swearing mostly came from the full-time activists, I noticed that the well-dressed middle-class ladies were not the least surprised by these outbursts. I spoke to a woman in her fifties sitting next to me (February 7, 2019), who explained that she used to – and still does – think that the police's purpose is to protect people, but that they had been so "nasty" that she and many of her friends had lost all regard towards them. Especially the fact that they had repeatedly thrown an activist in a wheelchair on the ground, a particularly humiliating experience for someone who is branded to prove to himself his self-reliance, was an experience that had altered her perspective. She no longer thinks that the police has a place protecting the company's property. A similar transformative interaction is experienced with the judicial arm. Because of the continuous experience with court, the court no longer is the objective institution that decides right from wrong but transforms into a state-mechanism of coercion.

At least two persons that I met at PNR (from more than sixty) had gotten so sceptical of the state that they became susceptible to theories about chemtrails, halos and energy producing pyramids. This is definitely not a characteristic of the whole group and they received a large amount of scepticism by other participants. Katrina, a particularly well experienced activist and key-figure at PNR said that unfounded claims often spread like wildfire. For example, not knowing what happened to a water-tanker could lead to the whisper that it was dumped in the nearby stream. Katrina was well aware of these claims and made sure they would not end up in the communication to the wider public, "because all we have is each other and our integrity" (Katrina, personal communication, February 10, 2019).

These short periods of war of manoeuvre also perform some other functions besides a mental transformation. The strategy is useful for the extraction of resources through raising the costs of repression. Carroll (2006) doubts if this strategy in itself can lead to a viable alternative to the hegemony. Indeed, the amount of resources extracted is insignificant compared to the power of the whole hegemon. On the other hand, however, professors of Energy, Resources and Environment, Andrew Cheon and Johannes Urpelainen (2018), argue that blockades, the construction of

contemporary autonomous zones and other stalling strategies – also judicial – have already led to considerable local victories for fossil free movements. The most notable example is given by the continuous and possible indefinitely delay of the Keystone XL Pipeline in the United States. They also remark that social movements dependend on these small and partial wins to maintain their momentum and dynamism. "A resistance too long prolonged in a besieged camp is demoralising in itself. It implies suffering, fatigue, loss of rest, illness and the continual presence not of the acute danger which tempers but of the chronic danger which destroys" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 239). Similarly, to the full-time activists at the TTH and PNR every delay in the construction process, every scaling down of ambition of the industry, every permit denied is interpreted as a small win, a step in the direction of a ban on the whole industry and eventually of the creation of a more sustainable society. While the primary motive for participating in the movement was local for many protectors at PNR, their experiences make them aware of global issues and provide them with aspirations for other environmental and social justice struggles.

4.5 Challenging the hegemony's structure

4.5.1 Fragmentation

The protests at PNR are clearly about more than just the environmental effects. They also touch upon democracy and class. Thus, the protests make inherently the combination of class and environmentalism that Carroll (2006) deems necessary.

Class is an explicit topic in discussion at PNR. I even heard a protester scream "class traitor" at a truckdriver taking a water tanker off the site. Lancashire was a major economic centre during the Industrial Revolution, but it impoverished with the rapid shrinking of the manufacturing and textile industry in the second half of the twentieth century. Cuadrilla promises a new economic boom with high rates of employment in the fracking industry. One of the fact-checking functions of the permanent watch in front of the gates is to contest claims of employment figures. It is remarkable that many of the people involved in Frack Free Lancashire grew up on farms. Implicit in yelling class traitor to a truckdriver is that by fracking, land and water are poisoned and thus also the future of the working class depending on the land – not only economically but also for their health.

Like the TTH, PNR is also part of a global movement of movements. There are contacts with similar struggles in the rest of Europe. Some activists had taken part in big international actions like *Code Rood* in the Netherlands against the gas industry or an occupation of *Ende Gelände* in Germany against coalmines. Further it became clear that a minority of the activists are not British. During my stay, an Irish activist who visited the camp for a week had done many one-man campaigns in Dublin around the pollution of airplanes. He told me that he comes over frequently because he likes the atmosphere and being with like-minded people gave him energy to continue his actions. A Greek activist who had studied anthropology in London and after a visit north had stayed at PNR, said that "I just ended up here, but it could have been any struggle against this system" (February 5, 2019). Other transnational connections are built via educative events. A Sioux water protector from Standing Rock spoke at a Green Monday and the Texan Sharon Wilson was invited at an event for local residents in the Ribby Hall community centre (February 9, 2019). She used to work for the oil and gas sector, but now she campaigns for the US environmental group Earthworks,

As at the TTH, there are people with transnational contacts at PNR, but compared to the whole movement, their number is limited. It would be an overstatement to speak of a transnational community. Thus, as Carroll (2006, p. 25) remarks, the function of these connections is not per se the network itself, but how these connections open up opportunities to make similar claims. In most of Europe, the images of the environmental destruction by fracking in North America and Australia have arrived before the industry could be implemented on a commercial scale. Especially since 2012, due to the documentaries *Gasland* and *Drilling Down*, proponents have had to compete with the image of an unregulated, environmental destructive industry like in Texas (Mazur, 2014; Williams *et al.*, 2017). The counter-strategy of the industry and government has been to argue that the context is quite different in the UK and the proponents promised a "golden standard" regulation (Bomberg, 2015). In return, part of the frack free strategy has been to show Cuadrilla's incompetence in monitoring and research.

A close ally of the movement is the emeritus professor of geophysics at the University of Glasgow, David Smythe, who regularly writes reports on the technical mistakes and incompetence of Cuadrilla's engineers. The fact that the government claimed "golden standard" regulation has also

made it difficult to come back on the traffic light system, which (and this is emphasised by the fracking opponents) is part of this "golden standard" regulation.
Another example to challenge the claim of golden standard regulation by international connections is how both on the TTH and PNR Facebook pages a lot of news stories are being posted about industrial disasters worldwide. Images of industrial fires, water pollution, cave collapses (TTH), etcetera fixate the dangers for the local site.

4.5.2 Commons and accumulation by dispossession

The history of the commons has already been introduced in chapter 4.2. In the narrow historic perception, the word commons evokes the idea of a piece of land, yet there also exist other commons. Water, silence, knowledge and accessibility for example have not completed the same ontological transformation as land has, developing from a common, entangled element to a resource of capital accumulation (Illich, 1983, para. 8). Although modernist people do not experience water and wind as a self, they still do recognise these elements as inherently connected with the conditions of life and thus as commons. The modernist common sense predicts that everyone has a right to live, so everyone has a right to water, clean air and silence. An industry like fracking threatens these commons, not directly through accumulation but through the appropriation of resources not or no longer perceived a commons (land and gas). It is in defence of these commons that activist movements like those at PNR come into existence. They have in the first place a defensive character. They are based on common sense ideas: the right to live and a right to the commons. They make the organic crisis visible by showing the inconsistency in the modernist superstructure: a resource like shale gas cannot be appropriated independently, unconnected, without endangering the commons.
In this chapter I will first discuss water as a common, then air and lastly accessibility and sound as commons. The view on these elements as commons can retrospectively also inform the ontology at the Treaty Truckhouse.

In the modernist ontology, land can be separated from the rest of nature (including humans). It is defined by its coordinates and can be sold as a piece of fabric to the highest bidder. This mental

separation has not been entirely accomplished for other 'resources.'[37] Some 'resources' are still perceived as commons and attempts to commodify and privatize them meet with resistance. Water is commodified in many instances. It is sold in bottles, tankers or through the tap. Nevertheless, water is still seen as a common. The water network of a municipality or state is often (partially) in the hands of the government to avoid a "tragedy of the commons" (as elaborated by Hardin, 1968). Although people must pay for this water, the government is expected to manage it and is in many cases not allowed to make profit of the sale. An example from Italy illustrates how water has not yet entirely lost its ontological character as a common. In Italy, attempts to privatise water have sparked the successful *beni comuni* [common goods or commons] campaign. Local water committees successfully gathered 1.6 million signatures (three times the required amount) to request a referendum. The referendum that took place in 2011, had a 56% turn-out and 90% voted against[38] privatization (Mattei, 2013).

Besides its (partly) commodified form, water also exists in a less controlled version, closer to the original conception of the commons. Ground water and river water for example, fulfil many functions that we do not pay for. Ground water moves under our feet, making the ground fertile, influencing local temperature, feeding plants and rivers, the latter in its turn brings fish and algae, refreshment and disposes of waste products. It is, as Dale described it: the artery of the land, it is constitutively entangled with all life forms. The water is (in)directly used by everyone, yet it is not under someone's full control – although there exists some legislation to avoid pollution and over-extraction. For most of its applications one does not have to pay (with some exceptions like extracting large quantities, fishing licenses, etcetera). In comparison to water, the destruction of land can be devastating, but it does not – because of its alienated character – affect our subsistence. Food is bought in the supermarket, its connection to the land where it grows has disappeared. Yet when water is poisoned, it affects the life of all people around. The same holds for air. Clean air, although beyond direct control, is a necessary condition for life. A common does not need to be a tangible resource, also the absence of pollution can be a common.

With a map of Nova Scotia in front of him, Dale explains that he worries about the threat that a gas cavern collapse could poison everything downstream - not only the water and the fish, but also the people and the whole Mi'kmaq culture.

[37] I put 'resources' between brackets because it is a term that in the modernist ontology is associated with emptiness and separation. I do not use it in this sense, but in the meaning of a natural element.

[38] The pro-privatization camp used a silencing strategy, because the Italian constitution requires a 50% turn-out.

The concerns about groundwater at PNR are similar. Hydraulic fracturing is based on inserting a mixture of water, sand and toxic chemicals in the ground under high pressure. Only part of the water flows back, and pollution of the deeper ground and water layers is inevitable. The question is when – not if – the chemicals will reach the surface. According to proponents of fracking, the amount of chemicals coming through are negligible and this would only occur after a long period of time, when most active particles have broken down. The protectors shed doubt over this assumption. They wonder how much pollution is 'acceptable' and they find it unjust to burden future generations by poisoning the water today for a short-term profit. Moreover, the reports of David Smythe strengthen their case. On his blog, the emeritus professor of geophysics publishes a series of instances of Cuadrilla's incompetence: the absence of 300 metres of Millstone Grit at PNR-1 in the geological prognosis, major faults missing and a stuck bore during milling (Smythe, 2019). The information of the gate watch is useful for Smythe's reports. It helps him to point out the information that lacks in Cuadrilla's press releases. He accuses Cuadrilla of purposely keeping silent many of the problems encountered during the drilling. The Fylde in the northern UK is an area of many faults, more than the United States or Australia, increasing the chances of earthquakes and polluted groundwater leaking to the surface.

Clean air is another shared good that is under pressure by possible hydrocarbon fumes, ozone pollution and methane leaks from fracking. Pollution and its health effects have been extensively reported on in the United States.[39] However, since there has not yet been large-scale fracking in the UK it is hard to determine if the gold standard regulation for fracking in the UK fulfils its promises and if health effects going from headaches, breathing difficulties, nosebleeds to cancer and neurological disabilities will be avoided. In addition to the company's monitoring schemes, local residents also take samples. Texan former oil and gas worker, now protector, Sharon Wilson emphasized during a community gathering at Ribby Hall (February 9, 2019) that it is important to carry out your own baseline tests in order to be able to proof in court that the contamination comes from the fracking site. Tim Thornton, a retired general practitioner from Ryedale, a district in North East where fracking is planned, agreed with her and argued that especially young people and

[39] Frack-off UK, a nationwide protector organisation gives an overview with both scientific and newspaper articles on their website (https://frack-off.org.uk/mounting-evidence-the-harm-caused-by-fracking/#health).

disadvantaged were at risk because the government does not intend to carry out baseline monitoring.

Two last types of commons that have led to successful results in the UK are sound and accessibility. In 2015, the planning application for Roseacre Wood, a second fracking site in Lancashire, was denied on the grounds of noise and traffic impact and also the appeal in 2019 was turned down for road safety issues (Vaughan, 2019a). The rejection of the original application for PNR in 2015 was based on similar arguments: "unacceptable noise impact" and an "adverse urbanising effect" ("Council blocks," 2015, para. 3).
Sound, accessibility and clean air were of lesser importance at the TTH. This can be explained by the lower population density in the vicinity of the construction sites, the reasonable accessibility of the construction sites from the highway and the different type of industry. To excavate caverns demands less chemicals, decreasing the chance of air pollution. The main concern about air is methane leakages, but this is more a global warming issue than a local health issue. Methane that contaminates ground water and the disposal of the salt (a deleterious substance) in the river are direct concerns.

Not all reasons for opposing the environmentally destructive industries are seen as commons. PNR protectors fence with the argument that fracking decreases property value to convince those people not yet involved in the movement. Data from Pennsylvania show severe decreases, until fourteen per cent of property value – this is especially true for those houses closest to the wells and groundwater-dependent (Muehlenbachs, Spiller & Timmins, 2015). In the UK, the earthquakes of 2011 decreased property prices in the plot around Preese Hall, Blackpool up to five per cent (Gibbons, Heblich, Lho & Timmins, 2016).

Like the enclosures from the 13th to the 18th century had an effect on the ontology of land, the destruction of contemporary commons by fracking has also repercussions on the ontology and identity of residents. Psychologist Darrick Evenson and resource conflict-scholar Rich Stedman (2018) found that rapid industrial developments like fracking threaten place meanings and place attachment, due to the threats to the landscape (visual and through pollution) and due to fractures inside communities between supporters and opponents. As Nana Anjie says in the play: "it's

destroying communities." Evenson and Stedman note that people who see their local environment as the source of wellbeing (who see beauty, quietness, a vibrant community and the rural character as essential to the good life) will probably oppose fracking and their response is to actually increase their attachment to place. Thus, an entangled-ontology is strengthened as a counter-reaction to the attack on that ontology through the destruction of the commons.

4.5.3 Avoiding hegemonic crisis management: revealing alternatives

The main form of hegemonic crisis management of the pro-frackers is the argument that gas is essential for the UK's energy security and climate goals. Claire Perry, Minister of State for Energy and Clean Growth and supporter of fracking states on her website, which clarifies the government's position in a series of myth busters to explain why fracking is necessary (Perry, 2019). The first myth she busts is that "we no longer need gas" (para. 1). The second myth she confutes is that "using gas is incompatible with our climate change commitments" (para. 3), because gas is essential in every scenario proposed by the Committee on Climate Change. Proponents of fracking eagerly create an image in which a fracking boom could start an economic growth spurt in the UK, similarly to the euphoric reports during the start of the shale gas boom in the United States.

Activists at PNR have repeatedly uttered their discontent with these arguments of Cuadrilla and the government. In a letter pinned to the fence at the gate of the fracking site, they react on the myths. The letter states that myth one and two are no myths, because Perry conflates gas with shale gas. Gas is necessary, yet shale gas could become locked-in beyond the date when gas needs to be faded out according to the climate policy. Moreover, the UK is more fault ridden and more densely populated than the United States, which makes extraction harder and less profitable than in the US. Geologist David Smythe included in his presentation at the Ribby Hall community centre (February 9, 2019) a rudimentary study to prove that in fact fracking is an economic bubble ready to collapse. Further, also the positive effects of fracking on the economy through job creation and lower gas prices are challenged. Protectors argue that the effects of the industry on farming through water pollution and on tourism through landscape pollution will outweigh the economic benefits.

An economic alternative proposed at PNR is a Green New Deal. As Roosevelt pulled the United States out of the Great Depression in the 1930s with economic reforms and public works, so a Green New Deal should pull the world out of the environmental crisis and level inequality by a

new economic stimulus package. A first Green New Deal for the United Kingdom was created during the economic crisis in 2008 by the New Economics Foundation and revised in 2019 (New Economics Foundation, 2019).
Nevertheless, alternatives must not only be proven for the economic system. Also democratic alternatives are necessary. At PNR new democratic aspirations with more local control are apparent (see chapter 4.7). Not surprisingly, this is a move in a different direction than the hegemony's crisis management globalizing strategy.

As at the TTH, at PNR the alternatives proposed for an economic and democratic system are dispersed and not always clearly articulated. This is not surprising, as these are questions the whole society is struggling with. It is not for these local movements to come up with all-encompassing new global economic and democratic alternatives, yet they follow the news and they get inspired and strengthened in their beliefs by the positive alternatives presented in the news, in internal conversations, transnational contacts and on social media. Their purpose is to show how the current system is incompatible with the common sense understanding of caring for the people around us and with a future perspective. In their ways of protest, different ways of organising come forth, in which reciprocity, gifts and caring are placed back on the front stage. Relations that cannot be anchored into paragraphs, but grow organically and need "open-endedness, receptiveness and adaptability" (cfr. Illich, 1994, p. 111) organise their world.

4.6 Nature is not empty

In the United Kingdom too, although denser populated than Canada, the protectors have to battle a conception of an empty countryside. Lord Howell, Tory peer from Guildford, described the North East as the "desolate north" in the House of Lords.[40] Afterwards, Lord Howell was extensively reprimanded for this judgement. Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Reverend Justin Welby, defended the North East on Twitter by calling it "beautiful, rugged, welcoming, inspiring, historic, advancing, [and] not 'desolate'" ("Fracking OK," 2013). After the criticisms, Howell apologised and expressed that he did not mean North East England, but Lancashire, where Cuadrilla was

[40] Guildford is located in southern England.

exploratorily drilling (McTague, 2013). The protectors at PNR carry the "desolate north" as a badge of honour, with British irony. When I arrived for the first time at the gate camp, I was greeted with by the women around the fire with "welcome to the desolate north."

Catching the eye of the media by protesting is one of the means the protectors use to show the large and vibrant community in the region. Comparisons are often made with Australia and the United States by both sides, for the possible economic benefits and for the environmental destruction. Opponents argue that Lancashire is more densely populated than Australia and the US. Further, as at the TTH, the close proximity to the nearest home (350 metres) is emphasised. Francis Rugman, retired consultant haematologist and co-author of *Health & Fracking: The impacts and Opportunity Costs* (2005), sent a letter to the Lancashire planning officer in 2018 requesting a minimum precautionary perimeter in which fracking would not be allowed within one kilometre around any dwelling.

4.7 Rearticulation of democracy

Just as in the Treaty Truck House, there is also a rearticulation of democracy at Preston New Road. In 2015, the Lancashire county council rejected a planning application by Cuadrilla to frack at PNR on the grounds of visual and sound impact. One year later, Sajid David, Communities Secretary, overturned the decision of the county and accepted Cuadrilla's appeal. Even though the current conservative majority is rather in favour of fracking, some of the protesters still name this powerplay of the UK government as the main reason they have become involved. Statistics on the attitudes of the Lancashire residents are followed closely by the activists, a placard at the gate informs passers-by that "Lancashire said no to fracking." The fact that a majority of residents opposes fracking is motivating for two reasons, because it feels good to have the communities support and because it strengthens the anger and argument about a democratic deficit. A survey by YouGov issued by Friends of the Earth in 2017 showed that 66% of Lancashire residents opposed fracking within five miles of their home, while only 21% supported it. The survey also included some other questions like: "who should have the final say on fracking in Lancashire?" (73% said Lancashire County Council) and "how safe is fracking for shale gas?" 54% thought it fairly unsafe to very unsafe, only 6% found it very safe and 22% found it fairly safe (Hayhurst, 2017). Since

2012, the *Energy and Climate Change Public Attitude Tracker* measured the opinions on fracking in the whole UK. The surveys laid bare a continuous trend of growing opposition and falling support. The latest 2018 poll found 32% opposed and only 18% in support (Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, 2018). Since August 2018, however, the government no longer includes the question on fracking in the survey. A Friends of the Earth campaigner suggested that this might have something to do with the government's efforts to change planning rules so drilling would become easier (Vaughan, 2018).

The transformative action that exposes how the hegemonic superstructure creates consensus is strengthened by the experience of a democratic deficit. Democratic concerns further deepen the critical stand towards the state. Once these concerns have been incorporated by the protesters, they are elaborated further with examples of not only the own local struggle, but similar or aligned fights everywhere. During the first week of February 2019, the Stansted 15 were a major topic of conversation and a bus of PNR activists attended the sentencing. In 2017, a group of fifteen activists locked themselves on a Boeing to prevent the deportation of sixty vulnerable migrants to Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. The Stansted 15 were allowed by the attorney general to be prosecuted under the 1990 Aviation and Maritime Security Act, a law issued after the terrorist attacks on Lockerbie. Usually, the court would accuse activists of a relatively minor offence like aggravated trespass in cases of civil disobedience (Casciani, 2019). Amnesty International called it a "crushing blow for human rights in the UK" (Amnesty International UK, 2018, para. 9). Eventually, none of the activists were imprisoned, but human rights lawyers are still concerned about the use of 'terrorist'-laws[41] to charge peaceful protesters. Fracking activists had gone through a similar court-case for a blockade at PNR. In 2017, three protesters climbed on lorries entering the drill site. They became the first environmental protesters to be imprisoned since 1932. During appeal Kirsty Brimelow, one of the UK's top human rights barristers who would later mitigate in the Stansted 15 case, acted on behalf of the activists. Afterwards, the court of appeal quashed their sentences and called them "manifestly excessive" (Gayle, 2018, para. 1). The protesters were freed immediately. On top of these experiences, the more general concerns in society about the loss of democracy through technology and social media, like the Cambridge Analytica scandal and the disinformation campaign during the Brexit referendum revealed, enhance the scepticism. Together, these

[41] Terrorist is written between brackets, because the law does not actually mention terrorism in the law, consequently the were not branded terrorists during the trial, but the law was inspired by terrorist attacks.

experiences and concerns make the activists critical about the state and the democratic self-acclamation of the state. That is why the protesters try to prove that the state they are part of is not democratic. Like in the Indigenous struggle, protestors want control over their commons through a direct and local democracy. While they get more and more sceptical of the state through their actions, the organisation and planning of these actions create new social relationships and practices that give hope for a more democratic future.

Again, what emerges here are non-institutionalised practices that are hard to write down, as they have existed for the protection of the common lands before the enclosures. Now, with the enclosure of other commons like water, health, sound and air, similar types of interactions emerge that unconsciously promote an ontology based on entanglement with and dependency on nature. While this leads in the Indigenous context to a revival of the still undefeated anti-dualistic Indigenous ontologies, in the British context, there is a need for a rearticulation of existing values, accompanied by inspirations from other and older ontologies.

4.8 Sources of inspiration and the role of the intellectual

At the Preston New Road camp, there are more people than at the Treaty Truckhouse. This makes it more difficult to identify the quintessential example of organic-intellectuals at PNR as was possible at the TTH. Besides this, PNR is distinctive by its mixture of classes and the absence of a shared source of inspiration like the neo-traditionalism at the TTH. It is impossible to give a full depiction of the role of the intellectual at PNR, yet some interesting aspects can be observed.

First, it should be pointed out that, as everywhere, there are people who play a more central role than others. They stand out through experience gathered at other environmental struggles, continued presence and particular or just charismatic appearance.

Second, education does not only take place through talking and sharing with each other, and through practical experiences, but also in a more classical sense. After the *Rolling Resistance* campaign, a month full of actions against fracking in Lancashire coordinated by Reclaim The Power during July 2017, a group of local residents decided to extend the series of actions with weekly Green Mondays. Every Monday, another speaker gives a speech before the gates at PNR.

Speakers are members from environmental groups, including the Green Party, Greenpeace, Friends of the Earth, divestment, transition and renewable organisations, but also individuals involved in other related struggles (Rothery, 2019).

When I spoke about the Treaty Truckhouse to the protectors of Preston New Road, they told me about the Sioux activist who had taught them the importance of speaking of "protectors" instead of "protesters" and the sacredness of Mother Earth during a Green Monday gathering. In 2019, many speeches of green party leaders were on the agenda, as well as political economy, sustainability, media and politics professors, Kate Hudson (an anti-nuclear campaigner), John Ashton (ex-UK Special Representative on Climate Change) and Lindsey German (political activist and founding member or the Stop the War Coalition).

Third, the intellectual should not only be thought of as a person, but also as an inspiration. A variety of sources for intellectual inspiration exist for the protectors at PNR. Anarchist symbols can be found all around New Hope Resistance Camp. Anarchist ideas seem to be most popular with the younger generation activists, living in the squatting camp. It is not surprising to find anarchist traces in a movement with a claim for more local democracy, where the central government is criticised for ignoring the will of the local people and for protecting the interests of the capitalist class (profit) over the interests of the local residents (safety).

Another interesting source of inspiration are the suffragettes. Suffragettes were women at the beginning of the twentieth century who militantly fought for voting rights, in particular members of the British Women's Social and Political Union, founded by Emmeline Pankhurst. The Nanas frequently wear clothing that refers to the suffragettes like purple, white and green sashes or white dresses for the weekly slow walk in front of the gates. The suffragettes have become a symbol of women's power, of the capability to make change happen for their children and grandchildren, because caring for the next generation is their task in our common sense. Like the suffragettes, gender – and especially mother- and grandmotherhood, linked with age – makes the women into a powerful agent that makes men uneasy. As the Nanas are aware and cleverly make use of, the security guards and policemen (almost all men) are hesitant to drag an old lady over the street. Moreover, the Nanas are a mediagenic group, because of their similar outfits. Most importantly however, the suffragettes are a prime example of how everyday women become aware of their suffering position through the transformative experience of participating in mass-actions. The Nanas are conscious of the negative stigma attached to activism and it is through humorous non-

threatening actions and through emphasizing their motherhood and normality that they draw people in from all "walks of life," as is made clear by the Nana-stories.

4.9 Gender

To finish the part on Preston New Road, the over-proportional representation of women at both protection sites is further explored. In the chapter on the Treaty Truckhouse, it has already been argued that the value of caring is closer associated with women, a cultural value that is also valid at Preston New Road. "Yer nanna isn't a threat. (beat) Unless she knows someone's threatening her young. Then she becomes fearless. Resolute. A force to be reckoned with," says Anjie in *Nannas with Banners*. As an older Nana declared light-heartedly, many will not be around in twenty years when fracking has taken over the countryside and the most severe effects of global warming play out, but their children and grandchildren will.

Nevertheless, there is a difference between PNR and the TTH on this point. In the Indigenous ontology, caring for water is synonymous with caring for the future, children and culture. Thus, it is said that the water is sacred, and people have spiritual obligations towards the water. At PNR, water and other commons are also intrinsically linked with the future of the younger generations, but water is not seen as a self. That is why relations of care are expressed towards the children, identity and culture, but not directly towards the water. The entanglement is present at both sites, but the absence of water as a self obstructs the transferal of water as an entangled resource to a spiritual entity.

When I brought up the gender balance with protectors at PNR (February 8, 2019), they came up with the caring argument and three additional reasons. First, they compared organising and running a protest camp with running a family. There are many tasks that come with a protest: providing food and materials, organising activities, filling up shifts and coordinating people and organisations, etcetera. The management of such a unhierarchical organisation is much like running a family. Moreover, protectors of all ages expressed that the relations with other people at the camp felt like family ties. Two full-time protectors at PNR, a mother and her son told me the story of how the mother did not have to worry about her son who had been arrested, because another lady

was there to await his release and would take care of him “as if he was her son.” It is not all roses at PNR, a lot of bad-talk happens at gate camp, but as the protectors remarked themselves, this is mostly due to boredom from the eventless days in front of the frack site and this is not unlike a family. They actively try to counter it by keeping people standing watch busy by playing games or reading. Since March 2019, there is only a minimal presence at the gate, while protectors staying at New Hope and Maple farm, visit other, more active struggles.

A second additional explanation for the majority of women could be that it is more socially accepted for women to move aside their job to protest. Men are expected to execute a full-time job and provide for their family. This explanation would primarily hold for the prevalence of women in the middle-aged category and not for retired people, although there could be a continuation of role-patterns established in earlier life. For the generation under 35, men were more prominently present at PNR, probably because if younger people were involved, they were mostly living on New Hope or Maple farm. The adventurous life at a squatting camp is closer associated with ‘masculine’ values. Similarly, the few people who stayed at the TTH for a longer period were men, women were in the majority at shorter events.

A last explanation brought forth by the women at PNR was that the “industry is masculine.” The gas-industry is perceived as loud, intrusive, uncaring for the environment and future generations, physical and unconcerned with local democracy, while women are expected to be more consensus-building persons. The security guards at the gate are broad, macho men and also the workers and board-members are mostly men. The presence of women could be a counter-reaction to these masculine worlds.

5 CONCLUSION & FURTHER RESEARCH

This thesis started with the question: if Indigenous ontologies are the solution to the world ecological crisis, what does this mean for Europe, where Indigenous Nations are less prominent? Through contrasting an Indigenous with a non-Indigenous protest camp, it has become clear that in both camps the hegemonic ontology is challenged. Yet, since both protests have different histories and different contexts, the new ontology emerging is different in both camps.

While the Mi'kmaq ontology recognises other critters as a self, only a few people from the diverse group at Preston New Road consider the whole world as alive. The entanglement of human life with nature, however, is emphasised in both cases. This illustrates that a new historical bloc in the terms of Gramsci (including an ontology) must already be embryonically present in the hegemonic common sense, before it can lead to a change in the superstructure. The protectors at PNR emphasise caring for future generations and underline how their future is entangled with the rest of nature, which is very much in line with the findings of natural sciences. In this way, they expose an inconsistency in the hegemonic superstructure (which perceives nature as empty and separated from humans, who are considered *homines oeconomici*) and structure (fragmented, with a continuous accumulation by dispossession and solving problems through the same hegemonic crisis-management). The Mi'kmaq water protectors act according to a similar implicit strategy to counter the hegemonic ontology, but since their ontology is further removed from the hegemonic one (e.g. they do see other critters and water as selves), their world is more easily discounted by the hegemonic ontology as a belief or a culture. On the other hand, once accepted, the protector's ontology is immensely meaningful, powerful and stimulating to care for nature and thus for all life – future, present and past – on this planet.

Besides bringing about a transformed view upon nature, protesting at a radical environmental site also creates a change in the perception of the state. Protectors become conscious about how the state extracts consent (through both direct domination and through ideas and ideology) and they become more sceptical towards it. This process was plain at the PNR site and is vividly illustrated by the Nana-stories. At the Treaty Truckhouse the transformative experience was less of a topic because they have kept this awareness through resisting genocide and assimilation by the settler-state for five hundred years.

History and stories function as an essential tool in the making of worlds. Not only are they important in socialising human behaviour, they also determine the way in which a person looks upon the building blocks of her world. This makes storying into a quintessential tool in the war of position, a war about the superstructure (the ideas, culture and morals) at which core is an ontology. Antonio Gramsci considered this change in the superstructure necessary before a war of manoeuvre, a change in the structural organisation of the world, can succeed.

Sciences and technology have provided many improvements in our standard of living during the last centuries, yet techno-fixes alone are not capable of solving the ecological crises at hand. Since unsustainable capital accumulation is supported by the hegemonic superstructure, a war of position and a change in the ontology of the common sense conception are necessary to tackle the thinking that has caused the world ecological crisis in the first place. Counter-hegemonic ontologies are being developed in multiple places along the globe. Although protest camps are targeting local issues, the sum of their efforts challenges the hegemonic ontology globally. While Indigenous peoples draw on neo-traditionalism, non-Indigenous protectors draw on many sources of inspiration and emphasise the contradictions in the common sense to make the organic crisis – the contradiction of capital accumulation with the good life – visible. These new ontologies are diverse and not always explicit, but they are advanced through the actions, arguments and practices at protest camps.

While many have studied the problems issuing from the Cartesian divide, the study of how the current global problems can be overcome is still in an early phase. I have shown how the practices at resistance camps implicitly challenge this divide and how a 'new' ontology is being developed – 'new' between brackets, because it is historically grounded and for example in the Mi'kmaq case it is merely the revival of an ontology that has never completely disappeared. Yet, many questions remain about these 'new' ontologies. Does the fact that at PNR the entanglement is emphasised without the same degree of selfhood attributed to other critters affect its political power? While the protectors at the TTH protect the water out of a love for the water, at PNR the protestors do it for the children. Essentially this might be the same, because the water in the Mi'kmaq ontology includes culture and future generations. Yet, does this missing step at PNR make these protectors more susceptible to compromises on the water's wellbeing? It could also make the new ontology

more accessible to the wider public, if we follow Gramsci's assertion that a new superstructure should not be too dissimilar to the common sense.

Other follow-up questions could be: can we find similar ontological challenges in more mainstream environmental movements or in counter-hegemonic movements that are not commonly seen as environmental? What is the impact of the ontology in these small-scale counter-hegemonies on the ontology of the broader society? Does a movement of movements exist, a totality of local struggles that together forms a viable threat for the hegemonic ontology? What role do individual global networks play in the ontological counter-hegemonic challenge?

This thesis has opened a pathway of thinking about these questions through combining a Gramscian approach with anthropologists' ontological turn. The ontological turn provides a framework that helps to translate and understand different worlds, while Gramsci's cultural theory is useful to understand how these worlds change and interact. The compatibility of both bodies of literature is confirmed in this thesis by the mutual importance attached to language, worldviews and cultural practices like ceremonies and storytelling.

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