

Making Space for North Fork Mono (Nium) Narrative: Land, Learning, Parataxis, Policy, and Water in Central California

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“WE HAVE TO HAVE A LESSON,” announced the Honorable Ron W. Goode, chairman of the North Fork Mono Tribe, to his audience of water-agency officials and tribal representatives. The occasion was the first-ever California State Tribal Water Summit, which was held at the Sacramento Radisson Hotel in October 2009. The stated purpose of the summit was to incorporate tribal perspectives into the 2009 Update of the California Water Plan, and Goode was suggesting that doing so required a form of education. Incorporating tribal perspectives required new approaches to the planning process and new formats and forums for discussion and discourse, and over the course of the summit, tribal representatives offered many lessons to the state officials in attendance. Goode followed his assertion of the need for a lesson with a story, and many of the summit’s lessons took the form of narratives.

In this essay I explore the style and content of the stories of the North Fork Mono Tribe (in their own language, the Nium, “the People”) as told in 1918 and more recently. I also examine

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the significance of these narratives for education and policy making. The stories operate on multiple levels, but by reading or listening to them in part as expository texts, audiences like Goode's water summit audience can learn much about, for instance, the pervasiveness of water in North Fork Mono homelands and fire as a tool for working with the land's resources.

Let us begin with the telling of one of the tribe's creation stories by the North Fork Mono elder Singing Jack, as recorded in 1918, translated from the Mono language to English by a young North Fork Mono man, Daniel Harris, and revised and then published in 1923 by the Berkeley anthropologist Edward Winslow Gifford:

They belonged here [North Fork], the people who were hunting at Pakadidikwe, a place near the headwaters of the San Joaquin river. They hunted, hunted deer for five days. After they had hunted five days, they ate the deer meat with acorn soup. After they had eaten, they told Coyote to get water. "When we drink water, we shall fly, all of us," they said.

So Coyote got water in a basket. He went over the hills for it. They flew and they named themselves: eagle, prairie falcon, and all sorts of birds. When Coyote returned, he saw his friends flying. He threw down his basket. He started to fly. He was going to be an eagle, he said. He fell to the ground. Then he climbed a tree and started to fly from the top, but fell again.

He saw a gopher coming from under some leaves. He thought he would catch that gopher. He said to himself, "This is a very fine life. This is what I shall do all the time. I'll catch all the gophers. I'll never get hungry. This is my meat."¹

Coyote may fall from a tree during the course of this creation story, but it describes no fall from grace. Rather, the narrative relates the genesis of the tribe's Eagle and Coyote moieties, or the "sides" of the North Fork Mono Tribe, as Tribal Chair Goode has clarified for me during my recent collaborations with him. The story follows a seriated, paratactic compositional scheme, in which one sentence follows another without subordination to an overarching argument or theme. Translation and transcription may distort the original performance, but it may also be fair to state that the paratactic scheme survives these distortions to distribute equal narrative weight to each of its segments. In sequence, each portion—each sentence or discrete thought—contributes nearly equally to the whole. In the story as published, Singing Jack does not synthesize these discrete narrative elements; perceptions of cause and effect are largely left up to the listener or reader, and the paratactic narrative style, combined with that of other stories in the Nium repertoire, helps to build a sense of balance in the roles of the Eagle and Coyote sides in the life of the tribe.

Singing Jack also helps to provide context and scale for a Nium history of land and water in this story by, for example, sketching a broad expanse of homeland. People who "belonged" in the foothills around present-day North Fork, California—people closely identified and associated with animals in the area—were hunting in the high reaches of the Sierra Nevada. By telling of the origin of distinct roles for various people within the tribe, the story describes an ancient "straightening out of things," to borrow a phrase from Dell Hymes.² Teaching lessons about how to live on the land, storytellers recount this tale and others in the Nium repertoire to provoke not the longing for a lost paradise or hope for salvation from evil powers but the desire to sustain a proper order, arranged long ago.

¹ Edward W. Gifford, "Western Mono Myths," *Journal of American Folklore* 36 (1923): 355.

² Dell Hymes, *"In Vain I Tried to Tell You": Essays in Native American Ethnopoetics* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004), 21.

Below I enumerate historical disruptions of this socioecological order and describe the North Fork Mono Tribe's national narratives as responses to these historical disruptions and as affirmations of tribal land and water tenure. My field of study is sustainability education and my interest is in narrative as an educational method, as a method of increasing the capacity for thought and action by individuals and communities to sustain land and water. Here I analyze Gifford's early twentieth-century English translations of Mono narratives and stories told in English by North Fork Mono people more recently to elucidate the application of paratactic compositional schemes and their visual analogues to pedagogy and polemics.

My interest in parataxis originated in my reading of the work on Native American narrative by Karl Kroeber³ and others, but in this essay I also draw on the work of several scholars who have concerned themselves with European writers, including Theodor W. Adorno's analysis of Friedrich Hölderlin's poetry⁴ and Carolyn Dewald's studies of the historical writing of Herodotus⁵ and Thucydides.⁶ These scholars write of parataxis as a method of constructing an open narrative, of evading the constraints of finely honed but limited scholarly arguments, and of encouraging each reader or listener to actively interconnect the ideas that a narrator presents. In building on these ideas, on the planning and sustainability theories of Seymour Mandelbaum⁷ and Barbara Eckstein,⁸ and on the cross-cultural educational theories of the comparative scholar and critic of literature Mihai I. Spariosu,⁹ I have come to regard North Fork Mono narratives and their parataxes as essential elements of a cross-cultural curriculum in *liminal learning spaces* that include the policy-making forums represented by collaborative forest-planning groups and the process of the California Water Plan update.

Nium stories interlink humans, land, and water, and as they envision a balanced, straightened-out world, the stories comprise both pedagogy and polemics. A key component of the pedagogy is the narrative device of parataxis. North Fork Mono storytellers employ their pedagogical techniques in educational venues and political forums as the tribe seeks sovereignty and jurisdiction over its homelands. As Barbara Eckstein reminds us, the ability to learn from stories requires education in how stories work.¹⁰ One must learn *to* listen before one can learn *from* listening. In this spirit, in an appendix to this essay I offer the outlines of a rubric to assess what

³ See, e.g., Karl Kroeber, *Native American Storytelling: A Reader of Myths and Legends* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publications, 2004).

⁴ Theodor W. Adorno, "Parataxis: On Hölderlin's Late Poetry," in *Notes to Literature*, vol. 2, by Theodor W. Adorno, ed. Rolf Tiedemann, trans. S. W. Nicholson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), 109–49.

⁵ Carolyn Dewald, introduction to Herodotus, *The Histories*, ed. C. DeWald, trans. R. Waterfield (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), ix–xli.

⁶ Carolyn Dewald, *Thucydides' War Narrative: A Structural Study* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2005).

⁷ Seymour J. Mandelbaum, "Telling Stories," *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 10, no. 3 (1991): 209–14; and Seymour J. Mandelbaum, "Narrative and Other Tools," in *Story and Sustainability: Planning, Practice, and Possibility for American Cities*, ed. B. J. Eckstein and J. A. Throgmorton (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2003), 185–91.

⁸ Barbara J. Eckstein, "Making Spaces: Stories in the Practice of Planning," in Eckstein and Throgmorton, *Story and Sustainability*, 13–36.

⁹ Mihai I. Spariosu, *Global Intelligence and Human Development: Toward an Ecology of Global Learning* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2004); Mihai I. Spariosu, *Remapping Knowledge: Intercultural Studies for a Global Age* (New York: Berghahn, 2006).

¹⁰ Eckstein, "Making Spaces."

members of the public, agency staff members, policy makers, and students from kindergarten to graduate school can learn about land and water from North Fork Mono narratives.

A VERY BRIEF HISTORY OF NIUM LAND

The traditional homeland of the Nium stretches over a vast section of the upper watershed of the San Joaquin River in the Sierra Nevada, from the western rim of the Owens Valley and the crest of the Sierra through the upper watershed of the San Joaquin River to the Central Valley floor (see the map).¹¹ Before the arrival of Europeans and Euroamericans, the Nium regularly traveled on a complex set of trails from their permanent homes near the present-day town of North Fork throughout their lands (and even as far as the Pacific coast) to procure foods and materials; to conduct burns that opened the forest canopy and increased the infiltration of precipitation, ensuring the continuing supply of these foods and materials; to trade and celebrate with neighbors; and to fulfill spiritual obligations.

The year 1918—when Gifford recorded Singing Jack and several other North Fork Mono storytellers—marked the height of a time of great change for the Nium. By that year a number of forces had converged on them and on their land and water, including the expropriation of traditional lands, waters, and trails by the US government, private landowners, and corporations; official suppression of the traditional fire regime; persistent overgrazing of montane meadows by cattle, sheep, horses, and pack animals; hydroelectric power development, with its dams, reservoirs, flumes, tunnels, penstocks, transmission lines, and roads; and increasing recreational use of the Sierra National Forest. These invasions and socioeconomic forces obliterated many traditional trails and disrupted the land and water tenure that the Nium had sustained since the time of their creation.

¹¹ For examples of more detailed histories, see Jared Dahl Aldern, “Native Sustainment: The North Fork Mono Tribe's Stories, History, and Teaching of Its Land and Water Tenure in 1918 and 2009” (PhD diss., Prescott College, 2010), www.jareddahldern.net; Ron W. Goode, “North Fork Mono Tribe: Chronology of Land Tenure” (undated, typescript in the author's possession), available online at www.jareddahldern.net/lessons/GoodeLandTenureHistory.pdf; Gaylen D. Lee, *Walking Where We Lived: Memoirs of a Mono Indian Family* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1998); and Jim Snyder, “Indian Trails on the Sierra National Forest” (report on file at the Bass Lake District Headquarters, Sierra National Forest, North Fork, CA, 2001).



PARATAXIS AND ITS USES

¹³ This essay capitalizes the term “Indigenous” throughout. This practice is a growing trend in scholarly publications and announcements, including the announcement for the 2012 Comparative Wests conference at Stanford University, the original forum for this essay. Capitalization of “Indigenous” helps to emphasize that Indigenous groups share specific kinds of historical experiences, cultural expressions, and political struggles against dominant interests in “Wests” around the world.

velopment. The narrative device of parataxis helps to create the open-ended, multivalent quality of the stories.

Karl Kroeber discussed the tendency of many Indigenous narratives to employ broad parallelism and parataxis. These compositional schemes help to build a narrative structure that presents “actions, scenes, characters, and speeches that have no direct causal connection.”¹⁴ Kroeber noted that instead of connecting cause and effect directly within sentences like “Because it becomes cold, bears hibernate,” the Native paratactic style of narrative is more along the lines of “Bears hibernate. It snows.”¹⁵ Such parataxis makes the relationship between events equivocal and the story open-ended. “The paratactic style leaves more to listeners’ imaginations—they are not *told* what the relation of two events is; they are encouraged to imagine different possibilities and implications.”¹⁶

Parataxis proceeds by the direct juxtaposition of clauses, sentences, or larger narrative structures. Hypotaxis, on the other hand, entails syntactic or semantic subordination that synthesizes ideas and identifies causality. Prominent mid-twentieth-century philologists looked at historical transitions from oral, paratactic narrative to literate, hypotactic arguments as hallmarks of human progress. Eric Havelock argued, for example, that Platonic rationality displaced a “pathological” identification of Greek audiences with the content of paratactic, Homeric poetry.¹⁷ Earlier, Erich Auerbach wrote of the “paratactic bluntness” of medieval European literature, which avoided “rationally organized condensations” in favor of a “method in which causal, modal, and even temporal relations are obscured.”¹⁸

By 1998, however, the classicist Carolyn Dewald was extolling the advantages of paratactic structure in Herodotus’s *Histories*. “We do not know why Herodotus chose to write his *Histories* in this way, but we should beware of assuming that he simply didn’t know any better.”¹⁹ Dewald notes that a paratactic scheme enables an author to maintain connections to a whole network of ideas and to represent reciprocal relationships sustained over long periods of time. With parataxis, she writes, “Many more different kinds of interpretive patterns can simultaneously be sustained, interwoven in various ways with one another, since the author is not constrained to define one theme as dominant or to follow one overall topic or logical train of thought throughout.”²⁰ To assert that a narrative does not “follow one overall logical train of thought” is not to say that it is illogical; instead, paratactic compositions allow for multiple logical connections among a whole set of episodes. What Dewald notes of the diverse interconnections among the histories written by an individual, Herodotus, may apply as well to the multiple storytellers and multiple versions of stories among Native American groups such as the North Fork Mono.

Writers who followed Herodotus, such as Thucydides, were trained in the intellectual milieu of the Greek enlightenment of the fifth century BCE. Among these authors’ innovations was their tendency to organize their work “so that the author remains firmly and conspicuously in control at all times of the overall argumentative direction; this still forms the basis of a good non-

¹⁴ Kroeber, *Native American Storytelling*, 4–5.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 5.

¹⁶ *Ibid.* (emphasis in original).

¹⁷ Eric Havelock, *Preface to Plato* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 1982), 45.

¹⁸ Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature*, 50th anniversary ed., trans. W. Trask (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2003), 101, 105.

¹⁹ Dewald, introduction to Herodotus, *The Histories*, xxvi.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, xix.

fictional prose style.”²¹ Dewald identifies a transition from parataxis to hypotaxis in Thucydides’s *History of the Peloponnesian War*. Thucydides applied a paratactic scheme to his narration of the early events of the war, but as his narrative progresses he establishes more authorial control—and his authority as a historian—by more deeply weaving his own voice into the unfolding history and explaining the context and causes of events. Dewald writes that in doing so Thucydides “presents himself as using the same kind of thinking . . . as do the most competent, intelligent actors within the account.”²²

The choice to move to hypotactic prose is not inevitable, however, nor is it an infallible indicator of intellectual progress. If modern Nium storytellers were to abandon paratactic arrangement of their stories, they might more firmly establish themselves as authorities, but they would simultaneously risk the loss of connections to the stories and storytellers that preceded them. Moreover, paratactic form communicates ideas that hypotaxis cannot. In his essay on parataxis in Hölderlin’s poetry, Theodor W. Adorno urged, “one must ask what form itself, as sedimented content, does.”²³ And paratactic form, with its resistance to synthesized, overarching ideas, communicates ideas of its own in Hölderlin’s work. “The formal principle of parataxis, an anti-principle, is commensurable as a whole with the intelligible content of Hölderlin’s late lyric poetry.”²⁴

EXPLICATION WITHOUT DEDUCTION: PARATAXIS AS PEDAGOGY AND POLEMIC

To paraphrase and extend Adorno, then, the style and structure of story can be commensurable with its content. And stories sit at the core of education in many Indigenous cultures. Residing in the minds of storytellers, narratives are portable devices that can make multiple connections in a virtually unlimited number of places. As Gaylen D. Lee writes of his early childhood, “My classroom was everywhere, all the time. I learned my ancestors’ songs and stories that have been shared from generation to generation; they taught, among other things, how to care for and share with everyone and everything.”²⁵ Rather than seeking to explain causes and effects, Nium storytelling links local places into a regional whole in playful and plentiful ways. “By accepting the possibility of a relationship of all things to each other, there are no boundaries,” Lee writes. “As Grandma said, ‘Everything is just the way it is. Just accept it, don’t ask why.’”²⁶

In contrast, a focus on causality is closely tied to the desire for power and control. Technocrats uncover cause-effect relationships in order to better control processes. On the other hand, *disinterest* in causality generally corresponds to a disinterest in controlling the system at hand. North Fork Mono Tribal Chair Ron W. Goode’s distaste for the terms “land management” and “water management”—more about which below—is tied to his view of kinship and reciprocal relationship with land and water. A healthy relationship with one’s kin does not usually entail seeking absolute control over the causes and effects of behaviors within the family.

Paratactic style helps to sustain themes of reciprocity and balance within a story, and the employment of such a narrative structure may indicate that a storyteller chooses not to evaluate

²¹ Ibid., xviii.

²² Dewald, *Thucydides’ War Narrative*, 15.

²³ Adorno, “Parataxis,” 128.

²⁴ Ibid., 140.

²⁵ Lee, *Walking Where We Lived*, 5.

²⁶ Ibid., 11.

the motivations of characters within the story or to seek to explain causes and effects within the plot. In his work on early Greek narrative prior to Herodotus, Havelock noted its lack of causal analysis: "The causative type of thinking presupposes that the effect is more important than the cause. . . . This reverses what we may call the . . . natural order, in which the doings are linked in that series in which they occur in sensual experience, and are each in turn appreciated or savoured before the next one occurs."²⁷

Adorno wrote that by using parataxis and seriation, "Hölderlin gently suspends the traditional logic of synthesis. . . . Hölderlin's technique, which is tempered by Greek, is not lacking in boldly formed hypotactic constructions, still the parataxes are striking—artificial disturbances that evade the logical hierarchy of a subordinating syntax."²⁸ Adorno describes the view of the world that emerges from paratactic narrative as "explication without deduction."²⁹ Indeed, "the narrative moment in language inherently eludes subsumption under ideas."³⁰ And by eluding subordination, the poet refuses to take control; knowledge is no longer power: "Hölderlin's serial technique . . . is his docility. . . . [S]upreme passivity . . . found its formal correlative in the technique of seriation."³¹ Hölderlin equates paratactic poetry, in fact, with the holy: "The logic of tightly bounded periods, each moving rigourously on to the next, is characterized by precisely that compulsive and violent quality for which poetry is to provide healing and which Hölderlin's poetry unambiguously negates."³² In contrast, Adorno writes, "In terms of the content, synthesis . . . is equivalent to the domination of nature."³³

To relinquish control and domination, to discount arguments from first principles and sequences of cause and effect, is to locate power in each sentence, each idea that a narrative presents. Each character, each setting, described in such a story has its own efficacy, as the reader or listener follows the wide-ranging conversations and pathways between these persons and places. Thus, North Fork Mono stories, by describing places in the tribe's homelands one after another as they would be encountered along a traditional trail, can crosscut³⁴ the boundaries of official maps and reconfigure Western categories of time, space, objects, causality, and agency.

Theorist Josephine Donovan emphasizes an intrinsic political stance in choices of style: "literature exists in a political context and therefore literary devices reflect and refract the power differentials of the author's society." "Style in this view is not innocent or neutral."³⁵ Of paratactic narrative's inherent disregard for logical argument and causality, Adorno wrote, "This incalculably portentous change in the linguistic gesture must . . . be understood polemically."³⁶ One might adapt Adorno's claim that "Hölderlin takes the side of a fallen nature against a dominating

²⁷ Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, 185.

²⁸ Adorno, "Parataxis," 130.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 132.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 134.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 134–35.

³² *Ibid.*, 135.

³³ *Ibid.*, 140.

³⁴ I am indebted to Julie Cruikshank's writings for the notion that stories can "crosscut" maps. See Julie Cruikshank, *The Social Life of Stories: Narrative and Knowledge in the Yukon Territory* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998).

³⁵ Josephine Donovan, "Style and Power," in *Feminism, Bakhtin, and the Dialogic*, ed. D. M. Bauer and S. J. McKinstry (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 85.

³⁶ Adorno, "Parataxis," 137.

Logos”³⁷ to say that, polemically, North Fork Mono storytellers take the side of a paratactically ordered, straightened-out nature, with which they maintain reciprocal relations, against the dominating logics of both industrial resource exploitation and wilderness preservation that hold nature in isolation from humans.

HOW NORTH FORK MONO STORIES WORK

Stories in the Nium repertoire operate together—there is no one prime narrative to which all others are subordinate, but instead a gathering of stories³⁸ that refer to each other through the mechanisms of parallelism and parataxis. Repeated and embedded in the parallelism, parataxis, and seriation of Nium narrative, the names of places, animals, and plants are devices—links within an informational structure that in practice functions much like digital hypertext³⁹ and that sustains a worldview of equivalence, reciprocity, and balance. As Akan writes, “Repetition in text is made for refocusing in (an)other context(s). A ‘good talk’ has lots of repetition to help us draw verbal circles of existence.”⁴⁰

Parallel and paratactic constructions reinforce themes such as the transformative power of water throughout all thirty-four stories that Gifford recorded in 1918. The episode of Coyote deciding to catch gophers, with its allusions to the power of water and the promise of flight, recurs in three stories told to and published by Gifford. Gaylen Lee provides a transcription of the same episode in his book eight decades later, and I listened to Leona Chepo tell the story at the North Fork Mono Spring Gathering in 2011.⁴¹ Thematic reinforcement leads to cultural persistence.

Other stories recorded by Gifford that have persisted over time include the narrative of Haininu and Baumegwesu, two brothers who traveled throughout Nium lands in ancient times, putting relationships right as they went, relationships with such relatives as bear, the winds, bodies of water, salmon, rattlesnakes, deer, water snakes, and elk. The California Indian Library Collection at the public library in Auberry, California, includes a 1980s recording of Nium elder Rosalie Bethel extemporaneously retelling the story of Haininu and Baumegwesu, and Nium elder Melvin Carmen launched into an enthusiastic recounting when I asked him about it in 2009.

Singing Jack’s use of place-names and directionals in the 1918 stories is elaborate and detailed, and they constitute a strong assertion of Nium autochthony and an extensive claim to land. “They belonged here,” he tells us in the story reproduced above, and as already noted, his use of a place-name (Pakadidikwe) and directional terms (e.g., “near the headwaters” and “over the hills”) sketches out part of Nium territory. In his telling of the tale of Haininu and Baumegwesu,⁴² Singing Jack details numerous Nium place-names and their locations throughout the central Sierra Nevada, tracing a sinuous line of travel from just east of the Sierra crest to the Cen-

³⁷ Ibid., 140.

³⁸ For elaboration of the trope of story gatherings, see Lisa Brooks, “Afterword: At the Gathering Place,” in *American Indian Literary Nationalism*, by J. Weaver, C. S. Womack, and R. Warrior (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), 225–52.

³⁹ For a development of the hypertext simile in the context of wampum, see Angela M. Haas, “Wampum as Hypertext: An American Indian Intellectual Tradition of Multimedia Theory and Practice,” *Studies in American Indian Literatures* 19, no. 4 (2008): 77–100.

⁴⁰ Akan, “Pimosatamowin,” 17.

⁴¹ Leona Chepo is a direct descendant of “Old Man” Chepo, one of Gifford’s narrators in 1918. Gifford spelled the name “Chipo,” but all other contemporary and subsequent sources have it as “Chepo,” a name derived from *chee-pah* or *tsee-pah*, the Mono word for “bird.”

⁴² In Gifford, “Western Mono Myths,” 326–33.

tral Valley floor, through the extensive area that lies between what are now Yosemite National Park and Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks.

Spoken in the Nium language or read aloud in English, the brief, strung-in-series nature of Singing Jack's sentences results in a cadence that emulates walking over the mountainous terrain. Thus, Nium narrators double as cartographers, and the seriation and parataxis of their travel narratives become cartographic tools to produce oral maps. In the face of the challenges of physical displacement and the allotment of small parcels of land to the North Fork Mono, the Nium stories told to Gifford in 1918 trace out and link hunting grounds and gathering sites while expressing reciprocal relations with animals and plants. The stories thus portray both the physical extent of the tribe's land and the extent of the community's membership.

The stories also testify to the potent, intertwined forces of fire and water. Fire resurrects the dead, for example, and it makes groundwater rise and springs flow. Water percolates as a narrative theme throughout the thirty-four stories that Gifford recorded, and the substance is shown to have great power for both ill and good. There have been massive floods, according to the stories, and water once covered the world, but powerful animals dammed the water and continue to hold it back from the land. Various players in the stories participate in sweat ceremonies, bathe in creeks, or employ the transformative power of water, wishing it to rise up and surround their foes—or water, as torrential rain and hail, kills them. Coyote and his daughter are scalded to death in a spring, as are Salamander, Rattlesnake, and Bluebird. Crow drowns in a lake. When Walking Skeleton comes to a creek, he falls to pieces, and in another story Haininu dies by a stream, though he is later resurrected. Water babies attack Haininu, and rising water chases him to the sky, but the winds advise him to drink water with *posita*, a kind of seed. Baumegwesu puts his leg across a creek for bears to cross and then withdraws it, drowning one of the bears. In another story Measuring Worm stretches across a creek for Bear but pulls the same trick on him in the end, and Bear drowns. Rainbow Trout and Sucker Fish travel up the San Joaquin but find too little water in the canyon, and Water Snake swallows Rainbow Trout. Prairie Falcon saves the day by creating more water in the river. In another story, when hornets attack Prairie Falcon, he tries to escape by plunging into cold water, diving through snow, and standing in the rain, and eventually he is successful when he jumps into a hot spring. Water holds the promise of flight for its drinkers, and Measuring Worm uses a rising wall of water to rescue Prairie Falcon from a great rock.

Water physically pervades Nium land, too, flowing from the highest peaks through the uplands to the meadows, springs, and wetlands of the San Joaquin River's watershed. The persistent view of all-pervading, cross-connecting water in Nium story as powerful and sacred asserts the sovereignty of the North Fork Mono Tribe and its relationship to and jurisdiction over its land as an intact whole. The paratactic relationships among North Fork Mono stories and the themes that run through them are like the relationships among the places and pathways of a watershed. As the traveler or teller passes through, she or he reports on the power of each place and of various members of the community.

In these stories, the trope of walking is not simply a rhetorical device or analogy. The use of parataxis, seriation, and the metaphor of the walk, as Akan wrote of *Saulteaux* stories, is "precisely gauged as a referential maxim"⁴³ in Nium stories. The narrative structure directly reflects the seriated nature of sensual experience. Many Nium stories have the feel of a description of a walk along a winding trail during which, to use Havelock's words, each experience is "in turn appreciated or

⁴³ Akan, "Pimosatamowin," 33.

savoured before the next one occurs.”⁴⁴ Each experience, each surprising sentence, helps to build multiple connections in the listener’s mind rather than one overarching causal explanation. Contemporary Nium stories often reflect the same feeling; with these ideas in mind it is easy to believe that the first word in the title of Gaylen D. Lee’s elegantly composed book *Walking Where We Lived: Memoirs of a Mono Indian Family* (1998) was not a merely casual choice.

TOWARD BROAD APPLICATIONS OF NIUM NARRATIVE

Josephine Donovan compares paratactic writing to knitting, one narrative stitch at a time, with the author sometimes retracing and restitching whole rows, until the piece is finished.⁴⁵ For Nium story design, a useful comparison is that of basket making. Paratactic sentences in narratives are like the long, straight sourberry and buckthorn stems in Mono baskets (fig. 1)—stems that can grow so straight only when the plants are periodically burned (figs. 2 and 3).⁴⁶ As the basket materials are connected side by side with cross-stitching in a basket, so the strung-along sentences in stories are connected by the repetition and themes that cross-weave among them.



Fig. 1. Baby basket made by Ulysses Goode (North Fork Mono). Private collection, Fresno, California.

⁴⁴ Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, 185.

⁴⁵ Donovan, “Style and Power.”

⁴⁶ M. Kat Anderson, “The Fire, Pruning, and Coppice Management of Temperate Ecosystems for Basketry Material by California Indian Tribes,” *Human Ecology* 27, no. 1 (1999): 79–113. See also M. Kat Anderson, *Tending the Wild: Native American Knowledge and the Management of California’s Natural Resources* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006).



Fig. 2. Unburned sourberry (*Rhus trilobata*) patch in the Sierra Nevada foothills.



Fig. 3. Sourberry patch two years after a cultural burn conducted by Ron Goode.

The acoustic patterning of the narratives and its visual parallels in basketry design evoke the ordered landscape from which these cultural expressions spring, echoing the fluid visual rhythms of the parklike, straightened-out vegetation of a properly burned forest (figs. 4 and 5). Thus, the

aesthetic forms transmit content to listeners, readers, or viewers, expressing relationship to land and portraying an ordered, expansive cultural landscape. As Nium artists weave the cultural materials of Sierra hills and meadows into an extraordinary order, so do storytellers entwine land and water into intricate narratives.

Scientists have recently begun to see paratactic, seriated narrative as an important tool in building understandings of the ecology of landscapes. The book *Supply-Side Sustainability*, written by two ecologists and an anthropologist, includes an extended discussion of the suitable physical scales for studying the natural environment and the appropriate tools for analysis at each scale. The authors identify narrative as a particularly appropriate analytical tool to apply at the scale of landscapes, and they assert that seriation—the paratactic organization of a series of events, one after another like beads on a string—can lead to a view of land as consisting of intricate interrelationships: “Narratives . . . make equivalent otherwise disparate relationships, and equivalence follows seriation.”⁴⁷ As with Herodotus and Native American story, in the science of landscape ecology, impressions of equivalence, interconnection, and balance flow from the use of seriation and parataxis.



Fig. 4. View of a stand of trees in a section of the Sierra National Forest near Shaver Lake, California, where fire has been suppressed for several decades. Note the dense vegetation and closed canopy.

⁴⁷ T. F. H. Allen, Joseph A. Tainter, and T. W. Hoekstra, *Supply-Side Sustainability* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003), 232.



Fig 5. A stand of trees on private property a few miles from the scene shown in figure 4. The owner conducted a prescribed burn on this property about five years prior to the time of this photograph. Note the spacing among the trees and the sunlight reaching the forest floor through the open canopy.

CALLS, RESPONSES, AND PLANNING

Theorists of planning have also begun to grapple with the contributions that community storytelling can make to land and water plans. Seymour J. Mandelbaum, for instance, describes narrative as a “technical support” tool for planners on an equal basis with other technical systems and tools, such as planning theory, models, and information technology systems. Mandelbaum argues that local narratives can provide critical insight into the historical development of a city or region, but that stories are sometimes “incomplete until we bring them to a new conclusion.” It is then that “narrative gives way to action and history to planning.”⁴⁸

Mandelbaum stresses that for stories to be useful for planners, they must come in a recognizable form, with recognizable content, but Barbara Eckstein argues that planners must also learn to recognize “story truths” that some narratives pack in unfamiliar forms: “hope for sustainability, whether it means preservation or change, may reside in a planner’s ability to distinguish story truth from data truth and to recognize, interpret, and defamiliarize the use of duration, frequency of repetition, voice, chronotope, scale, spatial perspective, and remoteness in the stories they hear and tell.”⁴⁹ For non-Native policymakers and other outsiders interested in working across cultures, then, to hear and understand Indigenous story requires education in how to listen to it.

⁴⁸ Mandelbaum, “Narrative and Other Tools,” 191.

⁴⁹ Eckstein, “Making Spaces,” 30.

An increasing capacity to learn from Indigenous narratives may also require the development of what the comparative scholar and critic of literature Mihai I. Spariosu calls “global intelligence,” which he ties to “intercultural responsive understanding”: “I define global intelligence as the ability to understand, respond to, and work toward what is in the best interest of and will benefit all human beings and all other life on our planet. This kind of responsive understanding can only emerge from continuing intercultural research, dialogue, negotiation, and mutual co-operation.”⁵⁰ Global intelligence, in Spariosu’s characterization, requires lifelong learning and is an emergent phenomenon, beyond any individual agent’s ability to contain it.

With active Native American participation, the collaborative process of writing the 2009 Update of the California Water Plan made space for intercultural dialogue and negotiation. The Tribal Water Summit provided a model of how to foster responsive understanding and how to start building global intelligence from a regional scale. In January 2008 Tribal Chair Ron Goode and North Fork Mono elder Melvin Carmen began collaborating with the California State University, Sacramento’s Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP), and the California State Department of Water Resources (DWR) on the 2009 update and the organization of the Tribal Water Summit. The California Water Plan, updated every five years, provides “basic data and information on California’s water resources including water supply evaluations and assessments of agricultural, urban, and environmental water uses to quantify the gap between water supplies and uses. The Plan also identifies and evaluates existing and proposed statewide demand management and water supply augmentation programs and projects to address the State’s water needs.”⁵¹ The California Water Plan is intended as a resource for policy makers at the local, county, regional, and state levels as they formulate regulations. As such, the actual authority of the document is limited, and DWR’s goal (and the goal of many planning agencies, as Mandelbaum notes)⁵² appears to be not so much to resolve conflicts over policy and public options as to manage those conflicts. The water plan is not a regulatory document and does not focus on a single project (as would, for example, an environmental impact statement), but Indigenous people have made space within the plan for stories so that policy makers can begin to listen and learn from them.

Melvin Carmen became particularly involved in the water plan update’s forest management strategies documents, and he insisted on making space for his tribe’s stories within them, advocating for watershed restoration with careful reestablishment of the Native fire regime as an essential piece of the effort. The 2009 documents marked the first time that forest management has been included in a water plan update, and according to personal communications I have had with DWR and CCP staff members, it is doubtful that forest strategies would have made it into the document without Carmen’s advocacy. As Lisa Beutler of CCP wrote to me, “Melvin attended all the workshops we had on the topic. He brought an element of common sense grounded in his historic perspective of changes he had personally seen in the watershed.”⁵³ Carmen passed away in September 2009, before the completion of the update, but his efforts to educate state officials about the interconnections of forests and water were successful, and DWR dedicated its 2009 forest strategies document to his memory.

⁵⁰ Spariosu, *Global Intelligence*, 6.

⁵¹ California Department of Water Resources (2009), www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/ (last accessed July 21, 2011).

⁵² Mandelbaum, “Telling Stories.”

⁵³ Email received March 8, 2010.

Tribal members shared many topical, historical, and traditional narratives during the water summit's general session, and an associated Tribal Water Stories Project gathered stories outside of the general session. Dorian Fougères, the lead facilitator from CCP for the summit, explained to me that the idea for the Tribal Water Stories Project originated with the telling of a story at a 2007 meeting of DWR's Tribal Communications Committee. At this meeting, Bradley Marshall of the Hoopa Valley Tribe told a creation story—a story of his people's emergence from the mud along the banks of the Trinity River—that clearly articulated a sacred kinship with land, water, plants, and animals. DWR representatives at that meeting said that they had never heard such a story and that it helped them to understand Native views and practices in a way that, previously, they had not. This experience led DWR, in consultation with members of the Tribal Communications Committee, to create a Tribal Water Stories Project to integrate narratives into the 2009 water plan update. The Tribal Communications Committee and DWR sent a letter to all California tribes, inviting them to submit stories for inclusion in the water plan: "Your story will be included in a special section of the CWP Reference Guide, and help to educate thousands of State agency officials, water district managers, non-profit organizers, and members of the public throughout California. . . . Stories were identified as a particularly powerful and effective tool for accomplishing this objective because they are about real people and places and histories."⁵⁴

Over two dozen water stories were submitted to the project before, during, and after the Tribal Water Summit. Some of these stories came in written form, and storytellers recorded others on video in a designated area adjoining the main summit session room. One of the stories that Goode submitted was a Nium creation story, modified from a version that Mollie Kinsman Pimona told to Gifford in 1918:

The Making of the World

The world was made by Prairie Falcon (yayu), Crow (sebitim) and Coyote (esha) damming the waters in the east and allowing this world to appear. The valleys were washed out by the water before it was held back. Prairie Falcon, Crow and Coyote made the creeks. These three are in the east now, watching the dam that they made, to see that it does not break and release the waters that would once again destroy the world.

For the Tribal Water Stories Project, Goode added his own commentary on the story and speculated on a new ending for it—thus beginning the move that Mandelbaum suggests is necessary for stories to become planning tools, the move from narrative to action, from history to planning:

This is a creation story. . . . The early storytellers were telling of the great flood. Prairie Falcon, Crow and Coyote are all connected to Creator spiritually: Prairie Falcon with his healing powers; Crow with his power to cross over, and Coyote, Creator's mischievous pet.

The story not only tells of the power of water, the power of Creator, and the power of these three, but the respect one must give to all. Disrespect to water, to Creator, to the animals, birds and reptiles will change the habitat, and the environment, maybe one day releasing the dams and the water back to the land.⁵⁵

⁵⁴ Tribal Communications Committee, Tribal Water Stories Sub-committee, and the California Department of Water Resources to Tribal Leaders, October 10, 2008, www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/docs/tws/CWP_WaterStoriesInvite_AllSigs_10-17-08.pdf (last accessed December 4, 2012).

⁵⁵ California Tribal Water Summit Planning Team, *Tribal Water Stories: California Tribal Stories, Position Papers, and Briefing Papers* (2010), 13, www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/docs/tws/TribalWaterStories_FullBooklet_07-13-10.pdf (last accessed December 4, 2012).

Goode also incorporated stories into his summit position paper on tribal water rights. In this paper Goode argued that Native peoples had reserved the water rights on all their lands within their aboriginal territory from an ancient time beyond the reach of legal records. The only records we have of this ancient time, in the case of the North Fork Mono Tribe, are the old stories, some of which Singing Jack, Mollie Kinsman Pomona, and others told to Gifford in 1918 and that Nium narrators continue to tell today. He asserted that the North Fork Mono Tribe holds senior water rights in the entire watershed of the upper San Joaquin River. Goode draws specifically on his tribe's stories to make his case: "Tribal water rights start with our creation stories, water stories, animal stories, and old stories. Our storytellers, recorded by early researchers, tell of our existence at the water heads to the creeks and rivers. They tell how our land was formed with water by Creator with coyote, falcon and crow in charge."⁵⁶

Goode puts his advocacy for watershed restoration and his assertion of reserved rights in the context of the relationships among humans, land, and water that Nium stories describe. He includes in his position paper his own story of his uncle making offerings to black water snakes at the San Joaquin River to ensure his safe passage on a fishing trip in a treacherous part of the river canyon.

My Uncle John and Aunt Daisy used to tell a story about fishing down in the hole (canyon) of the San Joaquin River where the confluence of the stream's forks come to a head on the river. To get there, was steep and treacherous. The bear-man had his cave shelter along the canyon wall. Eight and ten foot rattlers were commonly seen and encountered. Fishing down in the hole meant lots and lots of large tasty native trout.

My uncle was told by his elders that when you go there, you have to give fish to the black snakes. They come up out of the water and if you don't make an offering, they will eat you; there is no escape. If you want a successful fishing trip and to get out safely, you better make your offering. So Uncle John and Aunt Daisy made their offering. Out came the black snakes for the offering. Uncle John said it was the best fishing he ever did. He always told the story and lived to be almost 90 years old.

Today, our water and water ways are in trouble. What offerings are our non-Indian water users making back to the river? They cry about their lack of water, but what are they doing about the mismanagement of our collective watersheds?⁵⁷

Ending in this plea to reciprocate the gifts of the river, just as his uncle was instructed by his elders, Goode's historical story echoes stories told by Mollie Kinsman Pimona in 1918 about dangerous water snakes in the depths of the canyon of the San Joaquin River.⁵⁸ Thus, Goode's story stands in a chronologically paratactic, anamnestic relationship with the older narratives.

Emphasizing the guidance that stories provide for autochthonous, Native peoples, Goode urges Native Americans to lead by example and to educate non-Natives: "You as the descendants of this land and water, don't forget your stories. Don't forget to make your offerings because those black snakes are real not mythological, only their appearances may very well be in another form. By our example, our brothers in the agencies may come to have a better understanding of the land and water."⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Ibid., 39.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 42.

⁵⁸ Gifford, *Western Mono Myths*, 359–62, 367.

⁵⁹ California Tribal Water Summit Planning Team, *Tribal Water Stories*, 43.

Goode offered other stories during his verbal comments and within a written comment, submitted on the summit's first day, criticizing the pervasive use of economic metaphors and of terms such as "management" in official land policies and plans:

We have to have a lesson. The word "manage" is OUT! The Native peoples of this land "lived on the land," they did not survive from it. What does that mean? It means they prepared for 3–5 years and they thought in terms of 3–7 generations. So what they did today had to be good for their grandchildren's grandchildren. We do not manage, no one manages me, I manage no one. Creator gave all things life, with the same breath as he gave us. So therefore we all have the same spirit. This means the animals, plants, elements, rocks, grass, water etc. We live to care for the land and the land will take care of us. When Mother Earth is happy, we are happy. Food is plentiful for the animals, the animals and plants and herbs are healthy. When koch the pig is big and fat and the apple is big and fat and they look delicious over our fire, we are dancing and celebrating fruits of our harvest and giving thanks to our Father Creator and our Mother Earth. No one manages that.⁶⁰

The vision of plenitude that Goode expressed and associated calls to care for the land were consistent themes for Native speakers at the summit, as was the need for state agencies to learn about tribes' relationships with water as expressed by their stories. These stories were integrated with pleas for acknowledgment in policy of the daily lives of Indigenous people and their multiple interactions with water.

Nium and other Native American storytellers offer an alternative to the heroic epic of progress that underlies history textbooks in use in schools today. They provide narratives that describe unique geographic, intellectual, and spiritual territories. In 1918, few, if any, outsiders listened carefully to the stories of the Nium who spoke with E. W. Gifford, and many in our current educational system still refuse to hear them. However, Melvin Carmen, Ron Goode, and other Nium have recently offered lessons to California natural resource agencies, and agency personnel have begun to hear and understand these lessons. As members of the North Fork Mono Tribe share their stories, experiences, and hopes with more outsiders, they strengthen their ecological legitimacy and sovereignty, but people from outside the tribe can also benefit from the strengthening of the Nium community, as these outsiders begin to see new ways to enter into relationships with a great community that consists of people of both the present and the past, of other living things, and of land and water.

The water plan update ties restoration—including montane meadow restoration—to sustainability and to the idea of working with land and water rather than trying to control them. And although the water plan does not go as far as saying so, I would summarize one of the principal lessons of the Tribal Water Summit by noting that restoration of tribal water rights and of the opportunity for tribes to fulfill their cosmic responsibilities to land and water, responsibilities that their stories tell them were given to them at the time of creation, may yet turn out to be a most sustainable water "management" strategy.

PROSPECTS FOR EDUCATION AND POLICY

The Tribal Water Summit provides a case study of first steps in the development of global intelligence and intercultural responsive understanding. Mihai Spariosu makes many productive sug-

⁶⁰ California Department of Water Resources, *California Tribal Water Summit Brief Highlights: Day 1 Discussions* (2009), 3, www.waterplan.water.ca.gov/tribal2/docs/tws/CTWS_Day1Highlights_v4df_01-15-10.pdf (last accessed December 4, 2012).

gestions—suggestions that may apply well to California and to “Wests” around the world—for similar collaborations across cultures. First, he notes that it is *not* usually productive to adhere to the famous maxim that “knowledge is power.” Instead of equating knowledge with power or control, Spariosu argues that “power produces certain forms of knowledge, which may become irrelevant or transfigured in other, non-power oriented, reference frames.”⁶¹ He suggests that, as a way of shifting perspectives in cross-cultural projects, instead of looking for linear causes and effects during their investigations (for “linear causal thinking is a form of hierarchical thinking, proper to a mentality of power”),⁶² scholars might find it more fruitful to search for social and natural relationships characterized by “mutual causality or causal reciprocity.”⁶³

Spariosu adds that the basic evaluative question should be “How productive is any particular theoretical blueprint for sustainable human development?”⁶⁴ I would suggest that during inquiries into causal reciprocity another relevant question could be “How productive is any particular narrative for sustainable human development?” In other words, what sort of narrative is open-ended enough to encourage readers or listeners to continually make new connections along their educational journeys? It may be that traditional, multilayered, paratactic Indigenous narratives could prove quite valuable for such a journey.

As we collaborate across cultures and nations, Spariosu urges us to aspire to responsive understanding, a term that “conveys the idea of responsibility, understood not as the thou-shalts and shalt-nots of conventional morality, but rather as a free and generous response to the calling of the other.”⁶⁵ To find common ground, these calls and responses should move over the broad, humanistic fields of story, literature, and art. Before attempting to garner political support for sustainability, conservation of ecosystem goods and services, and a host of environmental issues, one first needs to learn how to listen to, learn from, and appreciate the aesthetic order of varied, multifarious stories.

Spariosu suggests that scholars, and humanists in particular, can contribute to greater intercultural responsive understanding by creating *liminal universities* that operate in the cultural thresholds between nations and that aim to break down disciplinary and institutional boundaries. “The project of a liminal university would require going beyond . . . the disciplinary paradigm as a whole, in all its academic and nonacademic aspects.”⁶⁶ This disciplinary paradigm, the division of intellectual labor that arose ultimately from positivistic notions of science, says Spariosu, discounts aesthetics and discounts storytelling, either for its own sake or for the unique knowledge that only stories can convey. Native narratives do not conform easily to accepted “divisions of academic labor, disciplinary specialization, analytic languages and standards, and distinctive methodologies.”⁶⁷ Spariosu asserts that engaging in intercultural studies requires “intercultural responsive understanding, communication, and cooperation . . . and learning experiences at the liminal intersections of various cultures.”⁶⁸

⁶¹ Spariosu, *Global Intelligence*, 15.

⁶² Ibid., 137. In Spariosu’s connection of “linear causal thinking” to a “mentality of power,” I note parallels to Adorno’s earlier characterization of Hölderlin’s connection of logic and synthesis to the “domination of nature.”

⁶³ Ibid., 31.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 58.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 191.

⁶⁷ Spariosu, *Remapping Knowledge*, 8.

⁶⁸ Ibid., x.

Dipesh Chakrabarty notes that up to now the learning at these cultural thresholds around the globe has tended toward only one side of the threshold. Chakrabarty characterizes much historical scholarship as the “process of translation of diverse life-worlds . . . into the categories of Enlightenment thought.”⁶⁹ He calls traditional Western historical inquiry “History 1,” an analytical approach that tends to characterize all encounters between cultures as exchanges within abstract categories such as labor and capital, categories that “eventually tend to make all places exchangeable with one another.”⁷⁰ Chakrabarty also posits the existence of another genre of history, “History 2,” the sort of history that might concern itself “with more *affective* narratives of human belonging.”⁷¹ Chakrabarty writes that a history of the arts and of the development of differences in individuals’ responses to art could provide an example of History 2, a genre of history that has to do with discernment, with delineating places rather than making them exchangeable, with a “bartering” of understanding across cultural thresholds. The participants in such processes do not labor for or sell intellectual property to one another so much as swap stories. The paratactic juxtapositions of much Indigenous art resist its incorporation into the overarching categories of Enlightenment thought, so these cultural expressions encourage learning in interactive conversations and narratives that break barriers among previously insulated groups.

The first significant steps toward intercultural responsive understanding may be taken outside academia. When the California DWR sponsored the Tribal Water Summit in 2009 and tribal representatives began to build a new, liminal learning space for the interpretation of Native stories, the state of California was able to approach a more dynamic relationship with the Other. Spariosu, drawing on the work of the feminist theorist Gabriele Schwab, writes of cultures moving toward a “different form of inner coherence, based not on domination, but on flexibility and openness to change.”⁷² Spariosu adds that “the radical question is to change the mentality that makes ‘survival’ an overriding value in human communities and to put this value in its proper place within the reference frame of a mentality of peace.”⁷³ Survival, in the sense of ensuring the sustainability of limited water supplies, is surely an overriding concern for state officials, but with the summit, Ron Goode made the discursive space to assert, as quoted above, that his ancestors “lived on the land” and “did not survive from it.” Academics interested in designing research programs and curricula in intercultural studies or sustainability education would find a rich archive in the proceedings of the Tribal Water Summit if they were to focus, as Spariosu urges, on “emergent phenomena of reciprocal causalities and . . . ways in which one could engage in positive action to achieve mutually enriching relations and world conditions.”⁷⁴

To achieve these enriching relations and conditions, cross-cultural researchers should emphasize the very distinctions that may at first seem incommensurable. “The question would be . . . of allowing cultural and literary differences to enrich us mutually and to delight us with their overflowing, generous abundance.”⁷⁵ We can access the generous abundance of these differences by allowing varied stories to stand side by side—paratactically—and thus contribute to

⁶⁹ Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000), 71.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid. (emphasis in original).

⁷² Spariosu, *Remapping Knowledge*, 24.

⁷³ Ibid., 55.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 44.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 72.

the sort of cognitive, interpretive view that Joe Kincheloe and Shirley Steinberg have called “cubist.”⁷⁶ To do so will require attention to fostering reciprocal relationships: “What we need to learn or relearn in the first place is how to relate to each other and to our environment in mutually beneficial ways.”⁷⁷

For schools, universities, and natural resource agencies to become truly liminal institutions, academics and agency personnel must be ready to fully engage in narratives and activities that do not distribute themselves neatly into the Enlightenment’s categories of analysis. Scholars and managers must call to members of cultural groups outside the academy and outside the mainstream, and they must be prepared for the diverse responses they receive. Some of the tribal stories that the California DWR received in response to its call were sharply and passionately delivered, but they all offered lessons about the nations that Native peoples represent. The knowledge gained from these lessons may not align well with scientific positivism, academic content standards, or disciplinary specialization but it may well be consistent with Native views of kinship with and responsibility to land and water.

The Tribal Water Summit offered tribes a chance to recount and teach about their interconnections with water and land. Appended to the end of this paper is a draft of a rubric for use in the assessment of how a land or water plan (or an educational curriculum) has integrated Indigenous narrative. Using this rubric, I would rate the 2009 Update of the California Water Plan at a level of 1 or 2. The state government of California has taken only the first few steps in its participation in a process of global intelligence and intercultural responsive understanding. The next steps are up to those who would continue to listen to and learn from the stories.

CONCLUSION

In the face of continuing assaults on the Nium economy and land, early twentieth-century Nium storytellers asserted the North Fork Mono Tribe’s land tenure. Stories form images of land and community, shared among tellers and audiences. Early twenty-first-century narrators take the stories yet further, recognizing in them the moral force to guide the treatment and restoration of land as a community to which people belong. For uncountable years these narratives have sustained Nium communities and detailed their jurisdiction, and as expressions of sovereignty the stories have legal, political, and economic implications. Today, North Fork Mono people continue to apply their stories’ lessons to restore land and human kinship with the land.

The stories do not always contain the familiar, Aristotelian beginnings, middles, and ends or the causally driven plots—including character development, action, and denouement—that many Western readers expect from a narrative. Whether we encounter them in spoken or written form, however, Nium stories await us, with their expansive parataxis and their portrayals of an interconnected cultural landscape, as living narratives and learning opportunities, not simply as artifacts to be interpreted, analyzed, sorted, and explained. Over the past few years, my reading of the Nium stories that Gifford recorded in 1918 and my collaborations with living Nium storytellers have sparked and kindled many conversations and exchanges of ideas. We can come to know one another not alone—as insulated, bounded groups—but in the calls and responses of interactive conversation and story. Nium narratives will reward many more repeated hearings

⁷⁶ Joe Kincheloe and Shirley Steinberg, “Indigenous Knowledges in Education: Complexities, Dangers, and Profound Benefits,” in *Handbook of Critical and Indigenous Methodologies*, ed. N. K. Denzin, Y. S. Lincoln, and L. T. Smith (Newbury Park, CA: SAGE, 2008), 135–56.

⁷⁷ Spairosu, *Remapping Knowledge*, 115.

and readings. As listeners and readers we are in the position of a child bound into a Nium baby basket (fig. 6). We have much to learn by viewing the world through paratactic forms.



Fig. 6. The baby's-eye view from under the shade of the basket in figure 1.

APPENDIX: A RUBRIC FOR ASSESSMENT OF THE INTEGRATION OF INDIGENOUS NARRATIVE INTO LAND AND WATER PLANS

Note: This rubric could easily be adapted to assess the integration of narratives into school and university curricula.

| LEVEL | DESCRIPTION |
|-------|--|
| 1 | Stories are present in the main text of a planning document or in an appendix. |
| 2 | Stories are present in sufficient number to present the opportunity for readers to make interconnections among stories, the places they describe, and the objectives of the planning document. |
| 3 | Planning documents fully incorporate numerous stories in the main text as significant components of the plan. |
| 4 | Planning documents incorporate various stories in multiple ways, showing that planners have listened to or read the stories many times and have acknowledged diverse ways to enact the knowledge within the stories. |
| 5 | Stories are so central to the plan that without the stories, there would be no plan. |