**ON- AND OFF-RESERVATION LIFE:**

**A REEXAMINATION OF CROW-FLIES-HIGH VILLAGE**

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**Introduction**

After the second World War, development projects threatened archaeological sites across the country prompting the creation of the Interagency Archaeological Salvage Program. Within the program, the River Basin Surveys were responsible for the salvaging archaeological data from soon-to-be flooded areas. In the Missouri River basin, the reports produced by the Surveys contributed to an increased interest in the historical archaeology of the Plains (Lees 2014). However, the reports and their ongoing use as foundations for present-day archaeological analysis are problematic. This research offers a reexamination of the excavated materials from Crow-Flies-High Village (32MZ1), excavated as part of the River Basin Surveys in 1952. Using theoretical concepts such as survivance, residence, practice, memory, and futurity, this research provides a more comprehensive and complex understanding of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara past.

**Plains Historical Archaeology and the River Basin Surveys**

Few connections have been made between settler colonialism and the River Basin Surveys Papers in Plains historical archaeology, though scholars have increasingly situated the reports as historical documents. Despite this, many archaeologists dismiss their outdated findings as products of their time (see Lees in Banks and Czaplicki 2014). Some even argue that it is “unfair” to “complain that those working then did not share current predispositions” (Lees 2014:161). This may be so, but what is more unfair, especially to descendent communities, is that after accepting the reports as problematic, archaeologists continue to regard them as essential to current work and leave them alone. This cannot continue. We have a responsibility to keep interrogating them, especially when we draw on their data.

For example, the River Basin Survey’s contribution to the scholarly knowledge on Crow-Flies-High Village (32MZ1), a Native historic site, is underexplained and dismissive. Still, for over fifty years, the 1963 report was the only study of the site and its community. Thankfully, Michael Barthelemy Jr., a descendent of the Crow-Flies-High community, added his Master’s thesis to the literature (Barthelemy 2016). It directly challenges many of the 1963 report’s findings. Most notably, Barthelemy argues for a continuance of Native American religious and cultural practice whereas Malouf argues for their absence, using what he identifies as Euro-American objects as proof (Barthelemy 2016; Malouf 1963).

Barthelemy’s conclusions demonstrate how oral histories and Indigenous knowledge add complexity and nuance to stories that were previously flattened by historians and archaeologists. I view a reexamination of Malouf’s excavated materials along the same lines: the use of contemporary theory regarding concepts such as Native survivance, residence, practice, memory, and futurity within the framework of settler colonialism can only provide more complexity and nuance. Furthermore, these objects are the only materials from the site that remain, therefore, we continue the harm done by the Garrison Dam when we leave these problematic representations of the past as our contribution to Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara history.

The importance of our contributions can be summed up in the words of Gerard Baker:

“We look at that archaeological work today and understand that those excavations are part of our history and the tribal members born after the dam see these reports as a partial view into our past, one that will be complete with the addition of our oral history.” (Baker 2014:204)

In this instance it is the opposite; the oral history has provided a more complete history, but now is the opportunity to amend the archaeological information and produce a more complete understanding of the past.

**Mid-to-Late Nineteenth Century Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Life**

 In 1845, the Hidatsa and Mandan left the Knife River region due to external hardships and jointly established *Mua-Iruckphe-Hisha-Adiish*, Like-A-Fishhook Village (32ML2), near Fort James, later known as Fort Berthold (Gilman and Schneider 1987; Smith 1972). Around 1860-1861, the Arikara abandoned their village, originally established by the Mandan called *Mitu'tahakto's*, meaning First Village or East Village, but known to archaeologists as Fort Clark (32ME2), and established Star Village (32ME16) directly across the river from Like-A-Fishhook (Gilman and Schneider 1987; Metcalf 1963). They moved into Like-A-Fishhook the following year after an attack by the Hunkpapa and Oglala Lakota (Barthelemy 2016:42; Gilman and Schneider 1987; Metcalf 1963). The resulting settlement was comprised of the three tribal entities and their subgroups. Though culturally similar, the groups’ distinct identities created a complicated social environment that was exacerbated by changes to village life. The two most important were decreased mobility and increased government involvement.

 Prior to the 1860s, the Hidatsa and Mandan mainly wintered in separate winter villages, but in 1866, Like-A-Fishhook became a year-round settlement (Gilman and Schneider 1987; Smith 1972). The relentless Lakota and Dakota raids prompted the arrival of the military in 1864 and their permanent residence in 1867, marking the beginning of overt government paternalism (Smith 1972). The establishment of the Office of Indian Affairs agency at Fort Berthold II in 1868 led to even greater supervision and governmental control of payments. In 1870, President Ulysses S. Grant signed an executive order establishing the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation (Felter 1972:30; Senate Committee on Indian Affairs 1870:883). Henceforth the reservation system impacted daily life more than ever before.

 As these external events unfolded, internally, traditional Hidatsa and Mandan forms of leadership were at odds. Among the Hidatsa-proper and Awaxawi Hidatsa, the owner of the Earthnaming Bundle is the peacekeeping civil leader who chooses a war leader as their second in command (Barthelemy 2016:50). According to Barthelemy 2016, when the Hidatsa consolidated, two Earthnaming bundles were present at Like-A-Fishhook: one owned by the older Poor Wolf (Awaxawi) and the other by the younger Bobtail Bull (Hidatsa-proper) (Barthelemy 2016:50-51).

 In addition, the Hidatsa-proper moved away from formalized bundle rites, and instead, made personal bundles from vision quests and did not officially pay for rites (Barthelemy 2016:47-48). Crow-Flies-High, a Hidatsa-proper man, made his own personal bundle, and despite being young, not having paid proper dues, and not having acquired proper credibility to lead, Bobtail Bull appointed him as war leader (Barthelemy 2016:49-51). This led to a split amongst the three Hidatsa subgroups and the two Mandan Nuptadi and Nuitadi subgroups (Barthelemy 2016:53). The Nuitadi Mandan preferred Poor Wolf because he owned the rites to one of the Corn Ceremony Bundles, one of similar importance to the Earthnaming Bundle (Barthelemy 2016:51).

 The situation reached a breaking point when Crow-Flies-High publicly accused Poor Wolf and his war leader, Paunch, of giving unequal shares of meat rations to members of their faction (Barthelemy 2016:54). Due to Crow-Flies-High’s blatant disregard for age-grade norms, there was a plan to assassinate him, but before they could, Bobtail Bull and Crow-Flies-High left with between 120 to 140 Hidatsa-proper and Nuitadi Mandan who were similarly disrespected by the Nuptadi, and disillusioned Awatixa and Awaxawi (Barthemely 2016:54, 56).

**Settlements Established by Crow-Flies-High**

Before settling at Crow-Flies-High Village, or *Hushgah-eeda-Adiish,* Stream of the Badlands Band, the group settled near the confluence of the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers in close proximity to Fort Buford (Barthelemy 2016:86; Fox 1988). This first settlement is known to archaeologists as Garden Coulee (32WI18) and to descendants as *Hushgah-Adiish,* Badlands Lodge or Badlands Village (Barthelemy 2016:57). Little is known about the relationship between the sites, but Garden Coulee was occupied between 1868-1884 and Crow-Flies-High Village from 1884-1893 (Barthelemy 2016:2; Fox 1988; Malouf 1963).

Gregory Fox excavated and conducted geophysical investigations at Garden Coulee in the 1980s and published his 1988 Master’s thesis on the site (Fox 1988). The site is located on National Parks Service land and the collections are housed at Fort Union. Garden Coulee was not reviewed for this project, mainly due to time constraints and accessibility issues, but the site is said to have had twenty-three earthlodges and seven log cabins, housing around one-hundred-fifty people consistently throughout the village’s history (Barthelemy 2016:71).

After the surrender of Sitting Bull at Fort Buford in 1881, all Plains tribes were confined to reservations, except the followers of Crow-Flies-High (Barthelemy 2016:86). They were eventually pressured by the military to leave the Fort Buford area in 1884, and subsequently established Crow-Flies-High Village near the mouth of the Little Knife River (Barthelemy 2016:87). Barthelemy suggests the Crow-Flies-High Village site’s gardens were farmed by women while the group still lived at Garden Coulee, and that Garden Coulee was a winter encampment for hunting and eagle trapping (Barthelemy 2016:87).

**Theoretical Foundation**

Archaeology of the reservation is a growing area of interest in historical archaeology (see D. Rae Gould et al. 2020; Cipolla et al. 2007; Kretzler and Gonzalez 2021; Kretzler 2019; Law Pezzarossi 2014; Silliman 2009, 2010). Archaeologists define reservations as a “means of maintaining power over Native American groups” by limiting access to outside traditional resources and thereby making self-sufficiency increasingly difficult (Cipolla et al. 2007:43).

It is important to establish reservations as oppressive systems, but it is also important to note they often failed in completely eradicating Native culture and identity. For example, survivance, one of the most influential concepts to emerge from Indigenous critiques, exemplifies Native longevity. Gerald Vizenor defines survivance as an active sense of presence, or the continuance of Native stories (Vizenor 2008). Archaeologist Stephen Silliman applies this idea archaeologically. Building on Vizenor, he defines survivance in the archaeological record as “creative responses to difficult times,” and “agentive actions through struggle” (Silliman 2014:59). He challenges archaeological conceptions about change and continuity, causing others to challenge the tendency to argue any evidence of change as inauthentic Indigeneity (Cipolla 2013).

Another concept both similar to and intertwined with survivance is what Silliman describes as residence. It assumes past peoples’ daily lives were conducted “in ways that enabled them to go on, to adapt, and to survive in oppressive situations” (Silliman 2014:62). Evidence for residence can be found in community organization, as people tend to organize themselves around how they live and how their ancestors lived (Silliman 2014:63). The deliberate planning of a community serves as a reflection of how the community positions themselves within the larger world (Preucel 2000). Residence also allows us to analyze changes for how they added to community values instead of how they prove or disprove a loss of culture (Cipolla 2013:16-17).

I also incorporate aspects of practice into my analysis. Objects are embodiments and products of practice, and practice is active points of human connection, contextualization, and existence, all with deeper meanings (Silliman 2009:216). These deeper meanings draw on social memory, the wealth of knowledge agents use and situate themselves within their worlds (Silliman 2009:222). Thus, practice is the actions done in the past, and social memory is the explanation behind how and why those actions are done and what they meant for an individual in a specific place and time (Silliman 2009).

The last concept comprising my theoretical framework is futurity. Futurity is rooted in understanding the archaeological record as the lived experiences of historical subjects (Voss 2018:289). The goal of archaeology is to make sense of how past peoples understood their lived experiences, which most humans, past and present, usually do “in reference to their pasts and their anticipated futures” (Voss 2018:289). Feelings about the future combine with knowledge drawn from past experiences to help us make decisions and assess possible outcomes, and these decisions are what generate the archaeological record (Voss 2018:291). So, archaeologists study a future that has already happened, enabling us to reconstruct the futures experienced by past peoples (Voss 2018: 299).

The above concepts comprise my theoretical framework for analyzing the artifacts from Crow-Flies-High Village. Additionally, I understand the reservation system as a restrictive institution which the Crow-Flies-High community were operating neither within nor completely outside of—they were on the fringes and moved between.

**Overview of Site and Spatial Considerations**

Crow-Flies-High Village (32MZ1) or Stream of the Badlands Band, was located on the southern bank of the Missouri River across from the mouth of the Little Knife River within a few miles of the reservation. It was identified in 1947 by a River Basin Survey party led by Marvin F. Kivett and was mentioned in a 1948 publication by Waldo Wedel, where he described it as “another earth-lodge village (32MZ1), opposite the mouth of the Little Knife River. Known as Crow-Flies-High Village…Metal, glass, and other recent materials were plentiful, but there was little of native origin” (Wedel 1948:23 in Malouf 1963). In 1952, Carling Malouf was only able to locate two cabins and a few cache pits that were undisturbed by plowing (Malouf 1963:142). Using surface artifact densities he was able to map where he believed cabins were located (Malouf 1963:149). His map was supported by one drawn by Bear-In-The-Water or Adlai Stevenson, a former village resident (Malouf 1963:149).

The village was oriented on an east-west axis, and cabins formed a semi-circle around the central earthlodge, leaving space for a plaza. Malouf noted the earthlodge “had been so badly disturbed that excavation was regarded as fruitless” (Malouf 1963:147). The dwellings were located on the terrace above the Missouri, and there were gardens one mile north in the bottomlands along the Missouri and a half-mile south around Antelope Creek (Malouf 1963:149).

Though Malouf describes the spatial layout of the village, he does not connect it to earlier sites on because of the Euro-American style cabins. In doing so, he assumed assimilation where there were material signatures of resilience. As mentioned above, the deliberate planning and organization communities serves as a reflection of how the community sees itself and their place within the larger world (Preucel 2000). Mandan life is centered around their most sacred ceremony, the Okipa, which takes place annually in the summer (Bowers 2004). For example, Mandan earthlodges traditionally circle around a central plaza: lodges of families “intimately connected with the Okipa ceremony selected lodge sites adjacent to the open circle,” while the rest radiated outwards (Bowers 2004:25). Mandan Clans split between east and west moieties, which directly reflected where clans sat during the Okipa (Bowers 2004:29). The Hidatsa were not known to have central ceremonial lodges or plazas within their villages (Bowers 1992). Instead, they appointed “four ‘protectors of the people’ representing the four sacred directions” (Bowers 1992:275).

Crow-Flies-High Village’s plaza and central lodge are obvious from the map, but the relationship between the clustering of the houses is less obvious. The densest cluster of cabins contains Crow-Flies-High’s cabin, and this cluster is very close to the central lodge. The proximity to the central lodge and plaza could reflect the earlier Mandan organization of important religious figures, who were often sociopolitical leaders as well, immediately adjacent to the central lodge with all others radiating outwards (Bowers 2004:25).

Oral histories say the central lodge was a communal effort supervised by the Grass Dance Society (Barthelemy 2016). The Grass Dance Society were responsible for its maintenance, since they had purchased the rights to the Grass Dance from the Santee Sioux (Barthelemy 2016). Regardless, the Okipa ceremony and the Sun Dance were both vehemently persecuted during this time, so the Grass Dance, a warrior’s dance, may have represented a compromise (Barthelemy 2016; Gilman and Schneider 1987).

**The Collection and My Findings**

The excavated materials from Crow-Flies-High Village are located at the University of Montana’s Anthropological Collection Facility in Missoula, Montana. Malouf’s field notes were not among the documents housed at the University of Montana.

In total there were over 1400 artifacts; around half were faunal materials, the rest were comprised of lithics, ceramics, glass, leather, and metal objects. Only 340 artifacts had explicit provenience information written on tags associated with them, and 174 lacked a catalog number. But the missing catalog numbers were irrelevant because there was no catalog explaining the numbers, the artifacts, and their contexts. Regardless, Malouf’s report mentions artifacts within excavation areas, and from these descriptions, I was able to place quite a few objects into specific locations. Due to the sheer amount of data, I will only focus on a few artifact types, mostly what Malouf did not include or what I interpret differently.

**Ceramics and Lithics**

For reasons unknown, Malouf omitted the presence of seventy Plains Village pot sherds from his report. Malouf states: “No pottery from either the prehistoric level, or the historical Hidatsa was found here. The Hidatsa by this time discontinued pottery making” (Malouf 1963:141). Whether Malouf willingly excluded the sherds from his analysis is unclear, but they complicate his analysis, which may have factored into their omission.

Unfortunately, the sherds were too fragmentary to visually determine their wares. A few exhibited simple stamped decoration, and there was a wide range of colors, with the majority being dark brown or gray, a few oxidized sherds (unknown at this time if this is due to paste or clay oxidation), and a few buff. Additionally, 4 rims were present, but they lacked the distinctive elements that could differentiate them as straight or S-rims.

 Due to the small size of the sherds, I was unable to draw firm conclusions about them. However, ceramics from contemporary sites such as Like-A-Fishhook, are known to have been poorly compacted with larger pieces of temper and lower firing temperatures (Hollenback 2012). The sherds found at Crow-Flies-High Village, if they are indeed from the site, are better compacted and have finely ground temper. Some even resemble pre-1837 epidemic vessels. Therefore, though I cannot conclusively say, the sherds may pre-date the occupation of Crow-Flies-High Village. Because the sherds appear to be older, and there was no evidence of pottery making at the site, one of the explanations I propose is that these sherds are from vessels that were passed down generationally, like heirlooms, or acquired when visiting traditional sites and brought back (see Silliman 2003).

This speculation is inspired by Stephen Silliman’s work among the Eastern Pequot (Silliman 2003). To briefly summarize, Middle Woodland projectile points were found amongst 19th century material on the Eastern Pequot reservation (Silliman 2003:221-224). Because the context was an undisturbed 19th century space, the “simple notion of change and continuity” was turned on its head (Silliman 2003:224). Their presence could not be dismissed by archaeologists or forced to fit into a change/continuity framework; archaeologists had to think critically about these finds in their contexts (Silliman 2003). He hypothesized that possibly, “these items were reincorporated into Eastern Pequot practices that summoned deeper social memories and that brought them back into discourse and visibility (Silliman 2003:224).

If these sherds were indeed collected from earlier sites or passed down, their presence at Crow-Flies-High are an example of reincorporation and social memory. Without provenience information there is no way to confirm the context of these sherds. Additionally, with older collections such as those from the River Basin Surveys, especially those that were hurried due to rising waters, it is not uncommon for artifacts from completely different sites to be thrown into one box and put away. These sherds, found in a plastic bag, with no other accompanying information, could very well be from an older Plains Village site somewhere else along the Missouri River, and were with the Crow-Flies-High Village collection by accident. The exact meaning of these sherds is only speculative; however, their presence certainly complicates acculturative narratives.

Malouf also found a significant amount of lithic materials, some of which were found inside cabins, that can be reevaluated in a similar manner. The majority of lithic materials either had no provenience or were surface finds deemed “evidently from a prehistoric level.” In this instance I do not disagree, the various flakes and two projectile points were disturbed along with other artifacts when the site was plowed (Malouf 1963). However, a few of the lithic artifacts were found inside Cabin 1, Cache 2, and Cache 4. Malouf makes several confusing and sometimes contradictory statements throughout the report about possible disturbances to the cabins and caches. Overall, it seems that the excavation took place in an unplowed area, but there was some evidence for looters, especially in Cabin 1 (Malouf 1963:142, 146).

More comprehensive analyses will be possible once I have access to Malouf’s notes, but the provenience of these lithics in the report raises interesting questions. To begin, a large patinated flake of Knife River Flint was in Cabin 1 Level 2. There were also five large flakes of heavily patinated Knife River Flint found with a tag that read: “burned area in the southside of the southeast wing of Cabin 1.” In Cache 2, rocks were said to have been laid atop “a cover [that] had been placed in the neck,” beneath the cover, there was evidence of a fire due to oxidized earth, and a partially dismembered calf (Malouf 1963:146). The only rocks that were specifically provenienced by their tags to Cache 2 were an incredibly smooth river rock and a piece of sandstone. The river rock resembles burnishing stones and whetstones, both used by women in the creation of traditional pottery and hide preparation (Gilman and Schneider 1987).

Finally, the most compelling find was a broken projectile point in Cache 4 amongst porcelain doll legs, white, blue, and red glass beads, and tin cans. This prompted Malouf to conclude: “The single projectile point in the midst of such recent material must have come from an older occupational level through which the pit had been dug” (Malouf 1963:146). Again, without Malouf’s fieldnotes, there is no way to confirm the context of these lithics. However, his immediate dismissal “runs the risk of swamping the complexity of the context and the historicity of material practices and misrepresenting the nature of cultural traditions, persistence, and survival” (Silliman 2003:222).

**The Presence of Children**

There were many artifacts which likely belonged to children living at Crow-Flies-High Village. The preservation of leather was remarkable, and as such, there were soles of shoes and parts of boots, all barely larger than the 10 cm scale photographed alongside them. These included typical American-style footwear, but there appeared to be at least two partial moccasins with stitch marks still visible. There were also toys, including a Stevens 5" VOLUNTEER cast iron cap pistol first patented in 1873, porcelain doll legs found in Cabin 1 Level 2, and a white ball that is a little smaller than the size of a modern lacrosse ball.

 In addition to the manufactured toys, there were quite a few examples of modified artifacts that could have been created for and used by children. Multiple large buttons, around 4.5 cm in diameter, cut from tin can lids and punctured with two holes were found. One of which was painted bright red. Another modified tin can lid with its lip still intact and a singular puncture resembles artifacts found at Like-A-Fishhook that were used as wheels on a toy cart (Gilman and Schneider 1987). Finally, there was a brass button engraved with “Horstmann Bros & Co. Philadelphia” with four areas cut out resembling a wheel with spokes. Horstmann Bros & Co. were a company which produced military uniforms, and buttons with this engraving date between 1867 and 189. It is unknown if this company was contracted to produce uniforms for Indian Scouts, but there are a few known members of the Crow-Flies-High community, including Malouf’s informant, Adlai Stevenson or Bear-In-The-Water, who served as Indian Scouts and made up part of the military escort that brought the band back to the reservation (Barthelemy 2016; Malouf 1963). The button-wheel is a small example of resistance, whether intentional or not, and is worth further inquiry.

 Though these artifacts are mundane, their presence at Crow-Flies-High Village, especially during the late 1880s and early 1890s, is compelling when contextualized alongside federal assimilationist policies. Christian and government day schools were established near Like-A-Fishhook in 1876 and 1877. The Crow-Flies-High community avoided the United States education system at both settlements, until 1890, when the Bureau for Catholic Indians established a school near Crow-Flies-High Village (Barthelemy 2016). However, the community refused to send their children, successfully keeping them at home until they returned to the reservation the same year school attendance became mandatory (Barthelemy 2016). These children were socialized, enculturated, and educated within their community, away from the reservation and government schooling.

 Children are incredibly important when examining evidence of futurity in the archaeological record. The children at Crow-Flies-High Village bridge the generations having grown up without the constraints of the reservation system and those having known no other way of life. The adults at Crow-Flies-High Village did not envision their children attending any formalized school; they were raising them away from the settler colonial and Anglo-Christian world. This is reflected in the toys—their purpose was to keep the children entertained and fulfilled at home. Their futures included modern mass-produced toys, but also included toys of the community’s own creation, a testament to the creativity and will of the community to persist.

**Faunal Analysis**

Malouf provides minimal interpretation on the enormous amount of faunal remains, including one complete and another nearly complete calf found in the bottom of Caches 1 and 2 (Malouf 1963:144-146). The cow found in Cache 1 was “a large calf, complete and unbutchered,” and “a heavy green canvas had been wrapped around the animal before it was deposited” (Malouf 1963:144). From the position of the bones, he concluded that the pit filled with earth after the community was forcibly removed, and that it took quite a long time to fill with dirt (Malouf 1963:144).

Cache 2 contained “a skeleton of a partially dismembered calf” (Malouf 1963:146). From the faunal remains with provenience information, I was able to discern that the majority of the calf is present, but it is notably missing its skull. Additionally, although not mentioned in the report, there was an incredibly fragile bison horn with a tag indicating it was found on the surface of Cache 2. By surface it is unclear whether it was the ground surface or the occupational surface approximately one foot below. The horn and a few samples of hair were the only evidence of bison in the excavated materials, but their presence, despite the near extinction of bison in this area in the early 1880s, demonstrates the continued importance of bison in Mandan and Hidatsa lives.

The calf burials are intriguing, and similar burials of bison in cache pits have been noted at the Late Woodland site of Menoken (32BL2), occupied by the Hidatsa between 1400-1700 AD, (Personal communication) and Greenshield (32OL17), a Plains Village site established by the Mandan, but taken over by the Arikara in the 1790s (Nicholas and Johnson 1986). Site reports for Menoken are not readily accessible, but I was able to locate an excavation report from Greenshield (Nicholas and Johnson 1986). The report describes:

“A partially articulated bison skeleton was near the floor of Feature 1, the bell-shaped pit in Test 2… The entire mass rested on several large branches or small logs, laid on or near the floor of the pit…It is hypothesized that the legs were removed by the Indians to facilitate placing the animal in the pit… The rationale for interring the bison may be that the occupants of the site shared the Mandan fondness for ‘aged meat.’” (Nicholas and Johnson 1986:196)

 Malouf argues the calf in Cache 1 was placed in the cache and decomposed due to the presence of maggot larvae and no signs of butchering (Malouf 1963:144). The cow remains from Cache 2 showed no signs of burning, indicating the fire in Cache 2 which oxidized the soil must have taken place before the calf was deposited. This supports the idea that the cows were placed in the caches while ‘raw,’ possibly indicating a practice similar to that of the Greenshield burial regarding a preference for aged meat.

Furthermore, the presence of cattle at the site itself indicate ongoing trade relationships with kin and clan members on the reservation. Residents of Fort Berthold received cattle in 1891, and though it is unclear whether the Crow-Flies-High Village received annuities and rations that included cattle or they obtained the animals through their social networks, calves were present at the site (Felter 1972:81). Additionally, if the burials at Crow-Flies-High Village are in fact evidence of aging meat, this indicates the continuance of traditional food preparation methods indicative of social memory and survivance. The cow burials indicate that before their removal and return to the reservation in the winter of 1893, they were incorporating new source material into a past practice; both a reference to the past and to an anticipated new future without bison, making do with cattle.

In addition to the two complete calves, there was a considerable amount of deer and/or antelope bone. The presence of deer and antelope is significant because it indicates a continuance of hunting, a practice that became increasingly difficult for those living on the reservation when game moved westward in the 1870s and 1880s (Barthelemy 2016; Gilman and Schneider 1987). Following allotment, which began in 1885 at Like-A-Fishhook and was official in 1889, the issuing of cattle in 1891 prompted the construction of fences, limiting movement across private properties (Barthelemy 2016; Gilman and Schneider 1987). In addition to those factors, the portions of cattle not sold were for personal consumption (Felter 1972). Therefore, the likelihood of deer hunting on the reservation dramatically decreased after the mid-1880s. But Crow-Flies-High Village was not on the reservation; they were close, but still far enough away, positioned near the Missouri River, the Little Knife River, and Antelope Creek, allowing access to more game than any area on the reservation (Malouf 1963).

The hunting of antelope and deer was not only a continuation of cultural practice indicative of survivance, but oral histories also mention men living at Crow-Flies-High Village engaged in trade with local American rancher, John Goodall, exchanging hides for other materials (Barthelemy 2016; Malouf 1963:138). The participation in an economy outside of government regulation and oversight also speaks to survivance and social memory. The Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara had traded with Euro Americans for over a century to acquire goods, and the trade with John Goodall was no different.

**Discussion**

In this paper, I approached the materials from Crow-Flies-High Village from a very different point of view and with very different goals than Carling Malouf did back in the 1950s. He examined the archaeological record for change and interpreted the change as a loss of Indigeneity (Cipolla 2013:12; Silliman 2009:214). I also looked for change, but instead of considering change as a rejection of past traditions, I conceptualized it as an essential part of keeping traditions alive. No society can endure without changing, and it does not make Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Indigeneity any less authentic (Cipolla 2013). After reexamining the collection, I suggest a different narrative of life at the site. The following sentences summarize my findings.

To begin, instead of earthlodges there were rectangular cabins, which could be for any number of practical and material reasons. But more importantly, they organized their community in the same way they had done for centuries. Though location of the village was off the reservation and away from Like-A-Fishhook, it was still within traditional Hidatsa territory. Next, even if the ceramic and lithic materials were not from the Crow-Flies-High Village’s 19th century occupation, they were beneath the ground while it was occupied, demonstrating the presence of the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara in this area from time immemorial into the 20th century when Malouf found them. The Crow-Flies-High Village community refused to send their children to school, and from all accounts, children grew up, played, and assisted the community in their maintenance of autonomy until the very end. Finally, though the bison were essentially extinct in North Dakota by the time the site was occupied, the faunal data show hunting continued nonetheless. The culturally specific taste for aged bovine may have persisted, and although the source changed from bison to domestic cattle, the community continued the practice.

Malouf’s goal was to excavate and salvage the materials as fast as he could, racing against the rising Missouri waters. My goals were to take another look at the only remaining evidence of a site that had sat on a shelf for far too long. My goal was also to interrogate the archaeological interpretations made by Malouf and offer new ones. And finally, my goal was to acknowledge the ongoing process of settler colonialism and to think critically about how the historical archaeology of the more recent past on the Plains can move forward with the River Basin Survey Papers to generate new narratives of the past.

**Conclusion**

In this paper I demonstrated how approaching old archaeological work with new ideas and theoretical frameworks can provide a far more nuanced view of the past. Though the majority of my analyses are possible explanations, by allowing different interpretations, I leave room for complexity and break free from settler colonial biases and conclusions. The Crow-Flies-High Village report is one of many River Basin Survey reports that remain fundamental to the historic archaeology of the Plains that remain unquestioned. However, they must be questioned. Archaeological writing has serious consequences for the present, and it is a disservice to descendent communities who lost their heritage to the Garrison Dam, when all that is left is a report like Malouf’s.

Ideally, future research on the site will include analysis of Malouf’s fieldnotes to hopefully glean more provenience information and context for the artifacts. A reexamination of Garden Coulee’s materials is necessary to paint a full picture of life among the Crow-Flies-High community across their two-decade span of off-reservation life. And finally, more collaboration is necessary. I will be honest, a multitude of factors contributed to my lack of communication with the MHA community and Michael Barthelemy Jr., but they are excuses. Moving forward, I will prioritize collaboration and communication. Learning what they know about the site, what they think of Malouf’s report, and the contemporary significance of Crow-Flies-High are all critical to overcoming the injustices suffered at the hands of the Garrison Dam and ongoing cultural erasure.

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