CHAPTER EIGHT

FURTHER RESEARCH

There are several areas where further research can have fruitful results, especially for historical and comparative Iroquoian. Phonological, grammatical, and lexical material is now available that can shed light on Iroquoian diachrony, especially the status of Wyandot vis-à-vis Wendat.

Wyandot is traditionally referred to as either a dialect or descendant of Wendat: in other words, simply modern Wendat. As discussed in chapter 1: *Introduction*, however, the ancestors of the Wyandot did not consist solely of Wendat speakers, but were rather a refugee group that included many speakers of a variety of Huronian languages. It is possible, due to large numbers of Tionontati in the refugee group, that Wyandot may be more modern Tionontati than modern Wendat (Lounsbury 1978; Steckley 1993, 1996). Barton (1797) goes so far as to call the Wyandots Junúndats. If true, this would mean that an Iroquoian language thought entirely unattested actually has much documentation available. With the prerequisites of descriptions of both Wendat and Wyandot satisfied, a position has been reached where the two can begin to be adequately compared.

Such a comparison would run into several problems, however. The first involves the original documentation of Wendat. With the exception of Lagarde (1980) and Steckley (various), there has been little in-depth modern examination of the language, so that the old

missionary manuscripts mostly still need interpretation.[107] Additionally, there were several

dialects of Wendat, with varying degrees of difference between them (Steckley 1996).

Distinguishing between Wyandot and Wendat would also involve distinguishing the varieties

of Wendat. That is, are differences between Wyandot and Wendat simply due to Wyandot

descending from dialects other than those usually recorded by the missionaries?

There is a significant disparity in time as well, with most Wendat work from the 17th

century, and Barbeau's work at the beginning of the 20th. Do the differences imply three

centuries of further sound changes on the part of Wyandot, or are there phonological

differences that cannot be descended from Wendat?

Since the other languages that could be ancestral to Wyandot are essentially

unattested, they cannot themselves be used in comparison. What little documentation is

available are references by missionaries that the languages were similar, but to what degree

is unclear: Père Paul Le Jeune "classified Neutral, Seneca, Onondaga, and Andaste as Huron"

(Mithun 1979:144), a statement which may mean that the classificatory term *Huron* was

merely used equivalently to *Iroquoian* today.

8.1 Phonology

Extensive lists of sound changes in Wendat, or Wendat and Wyandot, can be found

in Barbeau (1915a), Lagarde (1972), Lounsbury (1978), Mithun (1979), and Lagarde (1980).

There are a small number of differences between the changes given for Wendat and Wyandot,

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[107]Pearson (2001) provides an interlinearization of Barbeau (1960). However, it was
not available in time for comparison with the analysis presented here.

but many of these can be postulated as additional changes to Wyandot over the centuries since dispersal.

For instance, whereas Wendat can have either *o* or *u*, Wyandot has only *u*. Wyandot also has echoed vowels after *ʔ*, unlike Wendat. These features can be explained as further development in Wyandot, and need not require Wyandot to be Tionontati (although they do not contradict that hypothesis either).

Mithun (1979) and Lagarde (1980) both give the following diachronic rule for Wendat (and thus Wyandot):

(441)   *w > Ø / #_

However, this is not always the case in Barbeau's Wyandot. In example 442 the feminine-zoic agent has the form *w-* before an A-stem verb:

(442)   wátǫtarę́ʼ
        wátǫtarę́ʔ
        w-atǫtarę-ʔ
        FEM.ZOIC,sg,AGT-glad-STAT
        'she very glad was' ('she was very glad')
        TN:28:252:35

No equivalent form is given in Lagarde (1980). On the other hand, the Wendat cognate of the feminine-zoic agent can appear non-initially with *w*:

(443) i8atonk[108]
i-w-atǫ-k
PROTH-FEM.ZOIC,sg,AGT-say-HAB
'elle dit' ('she said')
Lagarde 1980:145

This instance of glide retention also occurs in Wyandot:

(444) ïwá·tǫᶜ
iwá:tǫh
i-w-atǫ-h
PROTH-FEM.ZOIC,sg,AGT-say-HAB
'she said'
TN:22:167:09

In 443 and 444 both Wendat and Wyandot have non-initial *w*.

When Lagarde does give an example of an appropriate prefix, the non-masculine

plural agent *ati-*, in initial position, it is different from the Wyandot cognate. In Wendat the

non-masculine plural agent is *ati-* initially, as in 445:

(445) atiroch
ati-raʔo-š
NON.MASC,pl,AGT-rough.hew-HAB
'elles bûchent' ('they rough-hew')
Lagarde 1980:147

In Wyandot, however, the *w* can be retained initially, giving the form *wati-*:

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[108]Wendat form and French gloss from Lagarde (1980). Morphological breakdown
mine, based on Lagarde's analysis.

(446) watité⟩ʿt
watité?t
wati‑te?t
NON.MASC,pl,AGT‑pound.corn
'they pound corn'
TN:04:078:01

In other Wyandot examples, however, the glide does disappear:

(447) ...ătìⁿdăré⟩
atìdaré?
ati‑dare‑?
NON.MASC,pl,AGT‑live‑STAT
they inhabit

kwắtījà⟩tŭtę̀hǫ⟩
kwátižà?tu?tę̀hǫ?
CISLOC‑NON.MASC,pl,AGT‑body‑kind‑DISTR‑STAT
several animal‑kinds there are found

yę·ríc	yą̆ⁿda·ré⟩
yę:rìš	yada:ré?
yę‑iriš	ya‑dare‑?
FEM.ZOIC,sg,AGT‑lion	FEM.ZOIC,sg,AGT‑live‑STAT
lion	it lives

narìˤskwa	ⁿdătìwá·nę̆ˤs...
narìhskwa	datìwá:nę̆hs
	d‑ati‑wanę̆‑hs
	SUBST‑NON.MASC,pl,AGT‑large‑STAT.PL
wolf	they are large

it was haunted by many kinds of large, vicious animals, such as lions and wolves.
TN:13:118:11‑17

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The discrepancy between loss of initial *w* in Wendat and its optional retention in Wyandot is not confined to Agent pronominal prefixes. In 448 the 1,sg,PAT is *aye-* in Wendat when initial:

(448)   aₜeₜete
        aye-yeht-e
        1,sg,PAT-carry-STAT
        'je porte' ('I carry')
        Lagarde 1980:138

In Wyandot the same prefix is *waye-*:

(449)   wăyèmɛⁿgériᶜ
        wayèwędyérih
        waye-wędyeri-h
        1,sg,PAT-willing-STAT
        'I am willing'
        TN:02:071:36

On rare occasions *aye-* also occurs in Wyandot initially, but *waye-* is more frequent.

The cluster *kw generally became *w* in Wyandot, so it can be argued that these instances of initial *w* are descended from initial *kw. However, cognates in the other Iroquoian languages which did not share this change clearly indicate that the Wyandot *w*-initial forms do not descend from *kw. The remaining possibilities are a) Wyandot is modern Wendat, and regained the initial *w* that Wendat had lost; b) Wyandot is modern Wendat, but descended from dialects other than those described in the missionary manuscripts, that lost

initial *w*; and c) Wyandot is not modern Wendat, but another related Iroquoian language, such as Tionontati.

Another area of difference lies in the reflexes of **y*, but this contrast may be unresolvable due to limitations of Jesuit orthography. Recall that in Wyandot *Y* alternates with *w* after *u* and *ǫ* (see section 2.15 *Further Notes on* y). After *ǫ* this *w* has a nasal allophone, [m], as shown in 450:

(450)   dayǫ̌(m)ɛdá·ǫ'
        dayǫwedá:ǫ?
        d-a-yǫ-Yeda-ǫ?
        PART-FACT-1,sg:2,sg-catch-PUNC
        'I thee take hold off' ('I take hold of you')
        TN:25:195:29-30

Lagarde (1980) gives an example of the verb 'cut', based on ** -ya?k-*, after the same pronominal prefix:

(451)   e‚oñasen
        e-yǫ-Ya?k-?s-ę̨
        FUT-1,sg:2,sg-cut-BEN-PUNC
        'je couperai pour toi' ('I will cut for you')
        Lagarde (1980:192)

Note that where Wyandot has *w* (realized as [m]), the Wendat form is transcribed with *ñ*. What sound does this symbol represent? Lagarde (1980:26) gives this description:

(452) ñ   son appartenant à la syllabe précédente
         oñ   pour [õ] ou [on]
         eñ   pour [ẽ] ou [ɔ̃], ou [en]

That is, *ñ* is a "sound belonging to the preceding syllable", either indicating nasalization of the preceding vowel, or being simply *n*, such that *oñ* is pronounced as either [õ] or [on].

If *ñ* is just *n*, with *oñ* being [on], then the Wendat form could be rewritten as *eyonasę*. Thus *y would have two different reflexes in Wendat and Wyandot, [n] in Wendat versus [m] in Wyandot. The difference could be seen as a further shift in Wyandot, with this [n] becoming [m] after a back rounded nasal vowel. This interpretation of *ñ* leaves out nasalization on the vowel, however, which causes the nasalization of *y in the first place.

The other interpretation of *ñ*, as indicating nasalization, such that *oñ* is pronounced [õ], results in the Wendat form as *eyǫasę*. Although this allows nasalization on the vowel, necessary for the change to [m] in Wyandot, the result precludes Wyandot being descended from Wendat. That is, *y became Ø in Wendat, but [m] in Wyandot. Wyandot could not innovate a change to [m] in just those instances descending from *y, when Wendat had already lost *y*, if Wyandot is just modern Wendat.

There is another possibility of interpretation unmentioned in 452, that *ñ* represents both a nasal and preceding nasalization, so that *oñ* represents *ǫn*. Thus, 451 could be rewritten as *eyǫnasę*. This, however, is inconsistent with transcriptions of *ǫny* as *onni*, in 453:

(453) e̜echonniahai
       'je continuerai d'accommoder'
       Lagarde (1980: 110)

A further discrepancy with the *n̈* symbol is its use with pronominal prefixes. It appears in Wendat pronominal prefixes where other Iroquoian languages have Vw (pronounced Vm in Wyandot). This is shown in 454 with the pronominal prefix for third person non-singular acting on masculine singular in Wendat, Wyandot, and Oneida:

(454) *Wendat*   *Wyandot*   *Oneida*
       hoïa -   ho̜wa -   hu̜wa -
                     <ho̜ma->

Note that if the Wendat form were pronounced as in Wyandot, the expected spelling would have an *m*, as in **homa*. If the pronunciation had *w* instead, the expected spelling would be **hon̈a* or **hon̈a*, neither of which is the case.

Thus, there are some differences in the Wendat and Wyandot reflexes of **y* that do not reflect Wyandot as descendent from Wendat, but rather as parallel. However, this evidence is only circumstantial, in that the Wendat orthography is deficient.

8.2 Pronominal Prefixes

There are extensive categorical differences in the pronominal prefix systems of Wendat and Wyandot, especially among the transitive prefixes dealing with speech-act participants (SAPs) acting on third persons (non-SAPs), and non-SAPs acting on SAPs. In both instances Wendat has more finely detailed categories than Wyandot.

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When SAPs are the agents and non-SAPs are the patients, there are three primary differences. First, in Wendat transitives with a feminine-indefinite singular patient (SAP:FEM.IND,sg,PAT) are distinct from transitives with a third person non-singular patient (SAP:3,non.sg,PAT). Other than Cayuga, in all of the other Lake Iroquoian languages these transitives are not distinguished from each other. Even in Cayuga the distinction only holds in transitives with first singular agent and second singular agent.

Second, in Wendat transitives with a non-masculine non-singular patient (SAP:NON.MASC,non.sg,PAT) and those with a masculine non-singular patient (SAP:MASC,non.sg,PAT) are distinct. None of the other Lake Iroquoian languages, including Wyandot, have this distinction.

Third, in Wendat transitives with dual and plural agents are distinct. None of the other languages have this distinction.

These differences between Wendat and Wyandot are shown in the following table.[109] Each distinction is represented by a separate cell. The dotted line in the Wyandot chart indicates the additional categories found in Cayuga. Since Seneca, Onondaga, Oneida, and Mohawk all follow the Wyandot pattern, it can be inferred that Wendat is innovative here.

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[109]For considerations of space, the following additional abbreviations are used in these charts: F.I feminine-indefinite; F.Z feminine-zoic; I inclusive; M masculine; N.M non-masculine; ns non-singular; X exclusive.

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Wendat	F.I sg	N.M ns	M ns
1,sg			
1,X,dl			
1,X,pl			
1,I,dl			
1,I,pl			
2,sg			
2,dl			
2,pl			

Wyandot	F.I sg	N.M ns	M ns
1,sg			
1,X,dl			
1,X,pl			
1,I,dl			
1,I,pl			
2,sg			
2,dl			
2,pl			

Chart 100: Wendat vs Wyandot: SAP:non-SAP Pronominal Categories

In transitives where non-SAPs are the agents and SAPs the patients, there are again three primary differences. First, in Wendat transitives with a feminine-indefinite agent (FEM.IND,sg:SAP) are always distinct, whereas in the other languages only Wyandot, Seneca and Cayuga have a distinct transitive feminine-indefinite agent here. However, in the latter three languages this is only with first singular (FEM.IND,sg:1,sg) and second singular (FEM.IND,sg:2,sg) patients.

Second, in Wendat transitives with a non-masculine non-singular agent (NON.MASC,non.sg:SAP) are distinct from those with a masculine non-singular agent (MASC,non.sg:SAP). In the other languages, including Wyandot, there is no such distinction.

Third, in Wendat transitives with dual patients (non-SAP:1,dl and non-SAP:2,dl) are distinct from those with plural patients (non-SAP:1,pl and non-SAP:2,pl). The other Lake languages have no such distinction.

These differences are shown in chart 101. Each distinction is again represented in a separate cell. The dotted lines in the Wyandot chart indicate categories found in Wyandot, Seneca, and Cayuga, but not Onondaga, Oneida, or Mohawk. The categories in the various languages again indicate that Wendat is innovative while Wyandot is conservative.

We	1 sg	1 dl	1 pl	2 sg	2 dl	2 pl
F.Z sg						
M sg						
F.I sg						
N.M dl						
N.M pl						
M dl						
M pl						

Wy	1 sg	1 dl	1 pl	2 sg	2 dl	2 pl
F.Z sg						
M sg						
F.I sg						
N.M dl						
N.M pl						
M dl						
M pl						

Chart 101: Wendat vs Wyandot: non-SAP:SAP Pronominal Categories

With the additional pronominal categories of Wendat being so much more extensive than those of Wyandot, which is quite close to proto-Lake Iroquoian, the differences need to be explained. One possibility is, assuming Wyandot to be modern Wendat, that Wendat innovated the extra categories and then Wyandot lost just those categories, returning to the Lake Iroquoian system. This is extremely unlikely. A second possibility is that the recordings of Wendat only dealt with innovating dialects, and that Wyandot is descended only from non-innovating dialects. As with using this explanation for the other differences between Wendat and Wyandot, a clearer and more extensive picture of the old Wendat dialect differences is necessary (but in progress, due to the work of Steckley). A fourth possibility is that the Wendat extentions are an artifact of fieldwork, not indicators of actual use, perhaps created merely to satisfy the inquisitive missionary. However, this does not explain why related languages, having undergone more intensive work, show no such parallels, or why the extentions show regular patterns instead of being ad hoc. The final possibility is that Wyandot is parallel to Wendat, not a descendant, both inheriting the Lake Iroquoian pronominal system. While Wyandot maintained the original categories, Wendat innovated.

On a final note about differences in pronominal categories, Barbeau (n.d), as well as his notes, indicate a distinction that does not appear in any other Iroquoian language, nor in the texts themselves. He indicates a dual versus plural patient distinction among the non-SAPs with the following agents: exclusive plural (1,EX,pl:non-SAP), inclusive plural (1,IN,pl:non-SAP), second dual (2,dl:non-SAP), second plural (2,pl:non-SAP), feminine-indefinite (FEM.IND:non-SAP), masculine non-singular (MASC,non.sg:non-SAP).

8.3 Lexicon

A valuable area for future research is a comparison of the Wendat and Wyandot lexicons. In some instances Wendat and Wyandot share a morpheme both with each other and with other Iroquoian languages:

(455) -nǫhš-
       'house'

The root for 'house' is cognate in all Iroquoian languages, including Cherokee (where it has the meaning 'room').

Sometimes Wendat and Wyandot share a morpheme with each other that is not used in the other Lake Iroquoian languages.

(456) 'cook':
       Wendat: -yanhi-
       Wyandot: -yanyǫ-
       Mohawk: -khw-ųni-
       Seneca: -khw-ǫni-
       Cayuga: -khw-ǫni-

Here Wendat and Wyandot have monomorphemic cognates for 'cook', while Mohawk, Seneca, and Cayuga use a different construction, literally meaning 'make a meal'. Comparison of such examples between the Huronian and Five Nations branches of Northern Iroquoian can lead to a fuller understanding of the proto-language by revealing forms lost in one or the other branch.

There are also instances where Wendat and Wyandot do not share cognate forms.

(457) 'sick':
    Wendat: -iheyǫ-
    Wyandot: -hšatur-
    Seneca: -heyǫʔta-yę-
    Seneca: -nǫhsotaiy-

The Wendat form for 'sick', *-iheyǫ-*, is not cognate with the Wyandot form, *-hšatur-*.[110]

However, cognates for both may be found in Seneca. The first Seneca example given is cognate with Wendat, while the second is cognate with Wyandot.

There are examples where more common Wendat and Wyandot terms are not cognate, but less common ones are. The Wendat root *-tsar-* and the Wyandot root *-Yęʔw-*, both meaning 'tobacco', are not cognate:

(458) Wendat: ˌatsara
                    'tobacco'
                    Potier 1751:454

(459) Wyandot: ŏmęˀmęˤ
                    uwęʔwah
                    u-Yęʔw-ah
                    FEM.ZOIC,sg,PAT-tobacco-NOUN
                    'tobacco'
                    WD:NR:89

However, Wendat also shows a cognate word:

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[110]The Wyandot cognate, *-ihe-*, does share another meaning of the Wendat term: 'die, dead'.

(460) Wendat: 8en8a[111]
                     'tobacco'

This less common form is cognate with Wyandot. More detailed lexical comparison can

retrieve more cognates when the languages are assumed to lack them.

Finally, there are roots which differ between Wendat and Wyandot, but which have

cognates elsewhere. The morphemes for 'hunt' are clearly unrelated:

(461) 'hunt':
       Wendat: -ator-
       Wyandot: -nęrǫti-

The Wendat form has cognates in the other Northern Iroquoian languages:

(462) 'hunt':
       Mohawk: -atorat-
       Oneida: -atolat-
       Cayuga: -atowat-
       Seneca: -atowæt-
       Tuscarora: -aturat-[112]

None of these sheds any light on the Wyandot term. However, a cognate can be found in

Cherokee, the most distantly related language:

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[111]This Wendat form supplied by Blair Rudes (p.c.).

[112]According to Rudes (1987), a partly-assimilated borrowing from one of the other
languages.

(463) Cherokee: -nóhliːtoʔ
                    'hunt'
                    King 1975:250

The sound changes involved indicate that neither Cherokee nor Wyandot borrowed the term from the other. Thus, Wyandot inherited from Proto-Iroquoian a form lost in Wendat, without the adoption of the Wendat term.

A possible counter to the Wyandot and Cherokee forms being cognate is the ending of the Wyandot form -nęrǫti- looking suspiciously like the verb -ǫti- 'pitch; throw'. That is, the verb looks as if it could be analyzed as -nęr-ǫti- 'throw a -nęr-'. However, there is no example of a noun containing -nęr-. Even if -nęrǫti- is diachronically -nęr-ǫti-, that is, the verb -ǫti- 'pitch' incorporating a lost noun root, this does not affect the Cherokee cognate.

8.4 Conclusion

With the various discrepancies between Wyandot and Wendat in diachronic phonology, pronominal prefixes, and lexicon, it is clear that the traditional assertion that Wyandot is descended from Wendat needs modification. Further work needs to be done comparing Wyandot with Wendat, as well as sorting out the Wendat dialects themselves. With more information it may be possible to decide whether Wyandot is truly modern Wendat (and explain the inconsistencies), or if Wyandot is descended from Wendat dialects unexamined by the Jesuit missionaries (and discover what they were), or if Wyandot is not Wendat at all, but Tionontati.