Discourses, Legitimization, and the Construction of Acadianité

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ABSTRACT

This article examines how a discourse of nationhood has developed and evolved in Acadie since the nineteenth century. It describes the important role played by language ideologies in the construction of competing discourses in the Francophone world. The discursive changes that have occurred since the 1960s in relation to the distribution of material and symbolic resources will be explored, with a specific focus on the resemioticization of French vernaculars in artistic creation and tourism. Finally, the authors will illustrate how the Acadians have transformed a discourse of stigmatization into a discourse of differentiation by rejecting the standard language ideology that has traditionally defined the Franco-Canadian community. The examples of artistic production and tourism will be used to illustrate how Acadians have profited from the adoption of this discourse in national and international markets.

The construction of a nation, as Anne-Marie Thiesse (1999) suggests, relies on the identification of elements—predominantly of cultural nature—that distinguish a group from any other. These elements take part in a narrative that builds national identity: "continuity with great ancestors, a series of heroes paragon of national virtues, a language, cultural monuments, folklore, symbolic places and typical landscape, a particular mentality, official representations—anthem and flag—and picturesque characteristics" (Thiesse 1999, 14).[1]

Milan Kundera (1993), for his part, focuses on *small nations* and pinpoints the fact that their members are constantly preoccupied with their own existence (in their eyes and in the eyes of others), since it is their mere existence

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1. Translations are ours unless otherwise noted.

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that is continually called in question: "small nations haven't the comfortable sense of being there always, past and future; they have all, at some point or another in their history, passed through the antechamber of death; always faced with the arrogant ignorance of the large nations, they see their existence perpetually threatened or called into question; for their very existence *is* a question" (Kundera 1993, 225; 1995, 192).[2]

Edouard Glissant (1997) continues in this line of thought by saying that no social group or collectivity can live in a constant state of dispossession and therefore engage in visible or invisible strategies to resist domination. This follows Pierre Bourdieu's assertion that "stigma produces revolt against the stigma, which begins with the public staging of the stigma" (1980, 69). Glissant goes even further in his analysis of the creole language. He states that the slave takes hold of the master's language (in this context, French) and deliberately confiscates and oversimplifies it: "You want to reduce me to a state of stutterness; I will stutter so much that you will be lost" (Glissant 1997, 49).

In this article, we will focus on the Acadian community, the French-speaking minority in the Canadian Maritime provinces, whose French language has been at the center of discourses on nation building and recognition, both in the Canadian context and in the Francophone world. Acadians were among the first French settlers of America, who established a colony, Acadie, on the shores of what is now known as the province of Nova Scotia, on Canada's east coast. Because of political circumstances that we will later explain, the territory was lost, and the Acadians were scattered. Acadie as we know it today spans the Maritime provinces, without fixed geopolitical boundaries. As they do not belong to a nation-state, Acadians exercise their political power through community and civil society governance, working in collaboration with provincial and federal governments.

In the Canadian context, Acadians were always and still are considered a small "nation" living first in the margins of an imagined Francophone space (French Canada) in the nineteenth century, and later on at the periphery of the Francophone center that became the province of Québec (from the 1960s). They were—and still are—also evolving in the shadow of the Anglophone majority, with whom they share a troubled past. The Acadian community therefore con-

2. Kundera points out that small nations function as a (big or small) family with its advantages (usually rich and various cultural productions) and its disadvantages (difficulty for its members to differ from the mass or the norm) (1993, 226–29). Deconstruction of (national) ideologies of a small group does not carry the same consequences as that of an affirmed nation such as France, England, the United States, and so on. The notion of *small nation* that we mobilize here is precisely one that has never enjoyed the status of a legitimate group.

stantly has to justify its existence to the dominant other: the Anglophone majority, and other Francophones in the country and beyond.

Building Acadie has been about comparative positioning of the group in relation to the other: French-speaking Québec. From the beginning, there has been a conscious effort on the part of the elite—for lack of an Acadian government—to create and promote, within and beyond the community, a single version of national identity. The Acadian elite, in constructing nationalist discourse and practices in the late 1800s, was already in a logic of consciously managing a new image of Acadie to be exported (mainly to Québec and the rest of Canada). But this image was not developed with economic objectives in mind, although "industrial interests" were mentioned as early as 1881.[3] In more recent developments and transformations of the Acadian community in a now globalized world, we see that nationalist discourse and symbols that were created in the nineteenth century are now maintained and featured as an added value in the global economy.

In this article, we will discuss how a discourse surrounding the legitimacy of the Acadian community has been shaped from the nineteenth century onward. We believe it is important to favor a historical approach to the linguistic ideologies that started to construct Acadie as a distinct Francophone space at the end of the nineteenth century, in order to show how recurrent discourses have amplified this distinctiveness, especially in the last twenty years. To explain the processes at work, we will rely on Irvine and Gal's model of semiotic ideologization, iconization, fractal recursivity, and erasure (Irvine and Gal 2000).[4] *Iconization* refers to the process by which linguistic features become iconic representations of social groups, that is to say that "by picking out qualities shared by the social image and the linguistic image, the ideological representation—itself a sign—binds them together in a linkage that appears to be inherent" (2000, 38). *Fractal recursivity* "involves the projection of an opposition, salient at some level of relationship, onto some other level" (38), that is, the creation of subcategories or supercategories that serve the process of identity reproduction. The "other" is created using differences that are made to be iconic through the iconization process. Finally, *erasure* refers to the process through which peoples, activities, or sociolinguistic phenomena are rendered invisible (38). But as the authors caution: "Erasure in ideological representation does not, however, mean actual eradication of the awkward element, whose very existence may be unobserved or unattended to. It is probably only when the 'problematic' element is seen as fitting some alternative, threatening picture that the semiotic process

3. Speech by the honorable Pierre-Armand Landry, 1881, published in Bourque and Richard (2013).
4. See also Gal and Irvine (1995).

involved in erasure might translate into some kind of practical action to remove from the threat" (38–39).

The three elements were at work during the last century, with each occupying the dominant role during different periods of time. Iconization has always been (and remains) present in legitimation processes, while erasure has become a less and less prominent factor.

Understanding the Acadian Context

Some contextual information is needed in order to understand the discourses we are about to examine. Acadians are considered part of the official linguistic minority group in Canada, where the English-speaking population is the majority and where Francophones make up around 21 percent of the population.[5] The vast majority of French-speaking Canadians live in the province of Québec (over 85 percent of them), while the other Francophones are unequally distributed among the nine remaining provinces. Acadians live mainly in the Maritime provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island), and they represent respectively 32 percent of the population in New Brunswick[6] and close to 4 percent in the two other provinces.[7] French and English are official languages in Canada, and most Acadians are bilingual.[8] Minority French-speaking communities outside Québec define their *francité*, or "Frenchness," through their various relationships with the Anglophone-dominant society, Québécois, and other Canadian Francophone minority communities.

Acadians are descendants of the first French settlers in North America. This in an important element in the building of an Acadian national narrative. The French established their first permanent colony between 1604 and 1608 in Port-Royal, on the coast of what is now the province of Nova Scotia. The territory was then known as Acadie and spread approximately across the Maritime provinces. Because of its strategic location for fishing and trade, Acadie was sought after. For over a century, France and Britain fought over possession of the territory. In fact, between 1604 and 1710, ownership of Acadie changed hands seven times between France and Britain. This political instability slowed the immigration of new French settlers and limited contact with France or New France, a colony farther to the north (today's Québec area). French-speaking and Catholic, Aca-

5. Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-314-XCB2011025.

6. In 1969, the province of New Brunswick became the only official bilingual province in Canada; it still is the only bilingual province.

7. Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-314-XCB.

8. In New Brunswick, 71 percent of Francophones are bilingual (vs. 15 percent of bilingual Anglophones); in Nova Scotia, 90 percent of Francophones are bilingual (vs. 7 percent of bilingual Anglophones); in Prince Edward Island, 87 percent of Francophones are bilingual (vs. 9 percent of bilingual Anglophones). Statistics Canada, 2011 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-314-XCB2011035.

dians therefore developed somewhat independently from New France, which had longer and stronger ties to France, and from the English-speaking New England Puritans. In 1713, the Treaty of Utrecht sealed the ownership of Acadie by the British: from there, the Acadian territory no longer existed officially, and Acadians fell under British rule and therefore English-speaking authority.

Between 1755 and 1758, tragic events took place, which marked the Acadian collective memory and to this day act as an identity icon or symbol: the Déportation, a forceful expulsion of thousands of Acadians from their land.[9] A long period followed where Acadians were, to all intents and purposes, invisible. From 1763, they were allowed to return, but it took decades for the Acadians to get back on their feet. They reorganized themselves into small communities that were often geographically isolated from one another but were unified by language and culture. The maintenance of a shared identity explains the continued cohesion of the group today and the collective effort toward recognition. The iconization of the French language fortified the connection between the various members of Acadie and increased its importance as a principal feature of the Acadian identity. From the end of the nineteenth century, on the material front, Acadians put in place institutions—schools, colleges, newspapers—in order to create Francophone environments in which they could continue to develop separately from the dominant majority, even though most Acadians were bilingual (French-English). They also established the Société nationale de l'Assomption,[10] as an advocate of Acadian rights. This was a conscious effort by the Acadian elite to perpetuate Acadian identity (*acadianité*, or Acadianness). However, the question of French variation and legitimation was strongly present from the very moment the Acadian "nation" came into being through its official narrative in the nineteenth century and continues to play a central role today in the building of Acadianness.

The structure of this text is threefold. First, we examine dominant discourses in the late 1800s. These discourses focused on building a "small nation" of Acadians based on religious, rural, and linguistic values, which, until recently, were considered to be fundamental elements (the "essence") of Acadian culture; we shall also examine the role played by the figure of Evangeline in the process. Second, we explore discursive changes occurring from the 1960s onward related to the distribution of linguistic resources for both material and symbolic profit—

9. This deportation is also referred to as the "great upheaval." For a comprehensive description, see Faragher (2005).

10. Since 1992, it has been called Société nationale de l'Acadie, and it serves as an international nongovernmental organization to promote national identity, ensure networking between Acadian organizations in the Maritime provinces, and represent Acadie and Acadians in Canada and abroad.

specifically, how French vernaculars began to be resemioticized in artistic creation. We take a closer look at today's Acadian artists, who perform outside of Acadie's borders and are becoming more and more visible. These artists are moving away from their previous tendency to neutralize perceptible linguistic differences (i.e., erase themselves or become invisible) in front of other French-speaking groups; instead, they showcase language resources that expressly mark their difference. Finally, we turn our attention to cultural tourism to illustrate how these discourses were turned into an economic advantage for Acadian communities through their ability to offer original "authentic" cultural experiences to tourists.[11] We describe how the public display of stigmatized traits prompted new practices and discourses to emerge.

The First Narrative: Building an Acadian "Nation"

Beginning in 1881, large gatherings called the *Conventions nationales acadiennes* (Acadian National Conventions) were held, bringing together several thousand Acadians.[12] These conventions provided an opportunity for the Acadians to discuss important issues of general interest for the Acadian population, such as equality and recognition, and would become a new tradition (Hobsbawm [1983] 2000). It is during those conventions that the Acadian elite adopted signs (e.g., a flag, a national anthem, a national holiday), marking the group as distinct from other Canadian Francophones.

From that period, Acadians have worked to construct a discourse of nationhood, thus creating a conscious "political" narrative, rooted in the past but breaking from its negative elements. This period has been referred to as the Renaissance acadienne (or Acadian revival) and is characterized by a shift away from a discourse of loss and suffering toward one of survival, hope, and emancipation.

The following extract from a speech delivered during the first Acadian National Conventions in 1881 illustrates this well:

11. We will draw on ethnographic fieldwork conducted within different research projects between 1998 and 2015: Prise de parole: la construction discursive de l'espace francophone en Amérique du Nord (lead researchers: Normand Labrie and Monica Heller; SSHRC funded 1997–2000); Prise de parole II: la francophonie canadienne et la nouvelle économie mondialisée (lead researchers: Monica Heller and Normand Labrie; SSHRC funded 2001–4); La francité transnationale: pour une sociolinguistique de la mouvance (lead researcher: Monica Heller; SSHRC funded 2004–7); Idéologies et représentations linguistiques dans les textes écrits sur l'Acadie de la fin du 19e siècle à la période contemporaine (lead researcher: Annette Boudreau; SSHRC funded 2007–10; Les "Voix d'autorité" et le français parlé en Acadie: Analyse de textes savants parus dans la francophonie de 1970 à nos jours (lead researcher: Annette Boudreau; 2013–16); Langue et productions culturelles depuis 2000: Construction discursive de la variation linguistique autour des arts en Acadie (lead researcher: Mélanie LeBlanc; CRFM funded 2015–17).

12. From 1881 to 1937, ten Acadian National Conventions were held.

> We are a small people who have been defeated, dispersed, and dispossessed in a heinous and shameful manner; as a conquered race, we have become accustomed to doubting our capabilities and our resources, to walking with our heads bowed and to thinking ourselves incapable of contesting our talent and worth with our more fortunate neighbours. . . . We want to develop the patriotic feeling which is the most attractive inheritance to a French heart, the best kind of legacy. We want to affirm and better appreciate the good character of the Acadian family. . . . It's through unity that our influence will be felt and that we will be able to expand, by legitimate means, our national, industrial and social interests. And gentlemen, I ask you, isn't it a legitimate ambition, for our race that has been ignored for so long, to want to pull ourselves out of this oblivion and be seen to take our place as equals among the populations who surround us? Isn't it a goal that deserves our attention as much as that of improving the condition of the good Acadian people? Yes, a thousand times yes![13]

During the first national convention held in Acadie in 1881, many members of the elite took the stand to speak of the building of a distinct Acadian nation. Here is an extract of a speech by Reverend Stanislas Doucet, a member of the Catholic Church, who argues for a national holiday, distinct from that of Québec's: "It's another thing, gentlemen, that we can't lose sight of if we intend to make a choice that supports our nationality. It embodies the idea of nationality itself. We want to choose a national holiday, right? Okay, so choosing one that distinguishes our nationality, one that our people don't share with anyone else, would make it dearer and more precious to us than to the Canadian people. The preservation of our nationality, that is what is important. . . . Let's have our own holiday, as our Canadian brothers have theirs."[14]

After heated discussions, August 15 was the date adopted for the Acadian national holiday and is still today Acadie's official date for the celebration of its people. In 1884, the Acadian flag was adopted: the French flag with a yellow star. Yet again, a member of the Catholic Church sees the flag as a statement of the distinctiveness of the Acadian people from other French-speaking Canadians: "The red, white and blue flag shall be the flag of the French Acadians. As a distinctive mark of Acadian nationality, there will be a star, as a representation of

13. Speech delivered by the honorable Pierre-Armand Landry in 1881 at the first Acadian National Conventions, published in Bourque and Richard (2013, 115).

14. Rev. Stanislas-Joseph Doucet, speech delivered at the first Acadian National Conventions, 1881, published in Bourque and Richard (2013, 135).

Mary, placed in the blue section, which is the symbolic color of people who are devoted to the Blessed Virgin. This star, Stella Maris, which must guide the little Acadian colony through storms and pitfalls, will be in the papal color to show our unbreakable attachment to our Holy Mother the Church."[15] The same motivation will bring people to adopt a national anthem ("Ave Maris Stella") and a patron saint (Notre-Dame-de-l'Assomption).

It is important to state that this very idea of differentiation from other Francophones in Canada, mainly Québécois (or French Canadians) at that time, is in itself an important piece of data, since most scholars focus on the 1960s as the beginning of the distancing or split between Francophones in Québec and other Francophones in Canada; we will comment on that period later on.

The Press as Vehicle of the Nationalist Discourse

It was in 1867 that the Acadian elite decided to establish a newspaper called *Le Moniteur acadien*, just a few years after they had founded an institution where young men[16] could get a college education (Le Collège Saint-Joseph in New Brunswick).[17] This was a crucial step toward the construction of an Acadian nation, as imagined by the leaders. Indeed, in order to be effective, a national narrative has to be accepted and interiorized by the people, a process that can only be possible by means of mass communication (education systems, songs, national costumes, literature, etc.) (Anderson 1983; Gellner 1983).

The first articles published in *Le Moniteur acadien* put forth the French language as the foundation of a national Acadian identity and, together with Catholicism, as the driving force of a French-speaking nation at that time, different from the Québec nation. Articles revolve around these two elements, which are constantly celebrated as being the grounds on which to build a future. The French language is presented as a unique and almost superior language, and Acadians are urged to preserve its purity, as shown in this letter from 1885: "To conclude, dear readers, I ask that you remind yourself that the French language is not inferior to other spoken languages, as it is perceived to be one of the most beautiful languages, if not *the* most beautiful, and that if we want to keep our religious and national traditions intact, and if we want to remain Acadians, through both language and morals, we must surpass our best efforts to maintain it in all its purity."[18]

15. Speech by Rev. André-David Cormier delivered at the second Acadian National Conventions, 1884, published in Bourque and Richard (2013, 244).

16. It would take almost 100 years for women to have access to the same institutions. The first college for women was established in 1943 (McKee 1995, 211). We thank Isabelle LeBlanc for this information.

17. Founded in 1864. In 1891, a similar institution, the Collège Sainte-Anne, was founded in Nova Scotia.

18. *Le Moniteur acadien*, 1885.

The language, essentialized on the basis of its inner qualities (beauty and purity), is clearly linked to the maintenance of the Catholic religion; to speak the language is to save the Catholic "nation." The group had survived after a century of hardship and had managed to keep both its language and its religion, two elements that were problematic for the British Empire: "In the minds of government ministers and colonial authorities, the Acadian suffered the 'double flaw' (*le double tort*) of being both French and Catholic. It marked them as alien others, as *étrangers*" (Faragher 2005, 467). These two features would then become, in the nineteenth century, the main identity markers of the Acadians.

Evangeline as a Symbol of Acadianness

Another element that can be considered to be important in Acadian recognition is the publication in 1847 of the poem "Evangeline, A Tale of Acadie" by the American Harvard language professor Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. The poem portrays a young Acadian girl called Evangéline, who, during the Deportation, was separated from her lover, Gabriel; she spends the rest of her life searching for him only to be reunited with him as he is dying in a hospital in Philadelphia.[19] According to the historian Naomi Griffiths, "[The poem] was an instant success. During the next 12 months five editions, each of 1000 copies, sold out. In the 100 years which followed its first appearance, the poem went through at least 270 editions and some 130 translations" (1982, 28). A French version of the poem was published in 1853,[20] and John Faragher states that as early as 1850, "parents in both l'Acadie north and south were christening daughters in honour of their heroine" (2005, 459). At least three important movies were made from Longfellow's epic poem.[21] The production of these movies surely played a role in popularizing the figure of Evangeline and forging a romanticized image of Acadians. In 1867, another French translation of "Évangéline" was also published in *Le Moniteur acadien*;[22] the rewriting of the

19. Another version of the story tells of Evangeline being reunited with Gabriel in front of an oak tree in Louisiana. The tree is a major tourist attraction (see Le Menestrel 1999, 279).

20. Faragher (2005), 458; Griffiths (1982), 28. The first North American French translation was published in Québec in 1865 by Pamphile Le May.

21. In 1913, *Evangeline* was the first Canadian feature film; it was filmed in Nova Scotia and directed by Edward P. Sullivan and William H. Cavanaugh, featuring Laura Lyman as Evangeline. The movie was a commercial and artistic success in both Canada and the United States. In 1919, Fox Film Corporation produced a film named *Evangeline*, directed by Raoul A. Walsh, and featured Miriam Cooper as Evangeline. Unfortunately, both these silent films are today considered lost films. A third *Evangeline* silent film was made in 1929, perhaps better known (a mastered DVD of the film was released in 2001), featuring Dolores del Rio as Evangeline; it was produced and directed by Edwin Carewe.

22. On August 22, 1867, the French translation was published in part in the *feuilleton* section. Although the author of the translation is not mentioned in the newspaper, it is known to be Pamphile Le May. This translation, dated 1865, would be his first of three translations of Longfellow's poem (Morency 2005).

Deportation was being recognized by Acadian institutions and elite and inscribed in the new national narrative.

The epic poem played a central role in overturning the negative representations of the tragic events of the Deportation in the collective memory of Acadians; instead of being portrayed as losers or traitors (Basque 1996, 2004; Faragher 2005; Caron 2007), they could identify with the Evangeline figure as a symbol of courage, resistance, and endurance: "Other writers had depicted the Acadians as villains or as victims, but through the character of Evangeline Longfellow reimagined them as a people of culture, grievously wronged, yet enduring with dignity" (Faragher 2005, 459). The story and its heroine very quickly became the symbol of Acadian survival and strength, an icon of Acadianness (Caron 2007).

The Acadian elite embraced the mythical figure of Evangeline, as she represented the core values of the Acadian identity: purity, faith, loyalty, perseverance, devotion, and so on—all of which could also be considered to be Catholic values. The importance of Evangeline in nation-building is manifest in the naming of a second newspaper launched in 1888, *L'Évangéline*—it became the "national" newspaper in Acadie, until its closure in 1982—testifying to the symbolic strength of the name and the wish of the Acadian leaders to perpetuate the values evoked by Longfellow's heroine.[23]

In 1910, the *Moniteur acadien* published a song titled "Evangéline (Chant d'Acadie)."[24] The song recalls the importance of the "memory" of Evangeline for Acadians and Acadie, by evoking the nobility of character of the Acadian people:

> Evangéline, Evangéline!
> Tout chante ici ton noble nom, [Everything here sings your noble name,]
> Dans le vallon, sur la colline, [In the valley, on the hill,]
> L'écho répète at nous répond: [The echo repeats and answers us:]
> Evangéline, Evangéline![25]

23. Moreover, the header of the newspaper, from the first edition of November 23, 1887, features a quote from "Evangeline" by Longfellow. Evangeline is such a powerful figure in Acadie, and it was circulating in such a way that many Acadians adopted her as a real-life character. Griffiths (1982, 36–37) recalls the historian Rumilly saying in 1955 that Acadians tend to forget Longfellow and focus on Evangeline. For them, he states "*Evangeline* . . . is not a legend or a symbol. She is a historical figure who has actually lived, who has actually suffered and embodies Acadie" (Rumilly [1955], 715, quoted in Griffiths [1982], 37).

24. The song first appears in *Le Moniteur acadien* on May 12, 1910, and was also printed in *L'Évangéline* on May 19, 1910. The author of the song, André-Thaddée Bourque, published the song in 1911, along with three others, in a book titled *Chez les anciens Canadiens*.

25. *Le Moniteur Acadien*, May 12, 1910, 6.

The author, André-Thaddée Bourque, a member of the Acadian elite, considered the song—along with two others: "Plainte et Pardon" and "La Marseillaise Acadienne"—as part of an effort to construct an Acadian "nation." In the *L'Evangéline* newspaper in 1910, he writes:

> I hope that my songs may be a humble beginning of a repertoire of national songs which will not fail to expand, as we have among us renowned poets and musicians who will give to the Homeland, in due course, productions that are worthy of their genius and of the national cause.
>
> As we know, patriotic songs are powerful factors that can be used to encourage and revive patriotism among people: I dare say that national songs are to the Nation what religious songs are to the Church.[26]

If drawing on the patriotic image of Evangeline served Acadian leaders and institutions well in their efforts to construct Acadian identity, the figure of the young Acadian girl—sweet, innocent, but also strong, and so on—quickly became a brand that could be capitalized on. The commercial interest of the Evangeline phenomenon was soon exploited by the Dominion Atlantic Railway, which, as early as the 1860s, organized tours to Grand-Pré, the "land of Evangeline." Companies were quick to recognize the value of the name and of the image of Evangeline as a potential for profit, and shops and products—especially, but not exclusively, food products—adopted it. It was sometimes used to show Acadian ownership, but Anglophones also benefited from the symbol, as the image could evoke the geographical origin of a company (the Maritime provinces, or the Bay of Fundy area) or allude to the quality of a product.[27] From the beginning of the 1900s, an impressive number of products carried the symbol (either the name or an image): flour, eggs, milk, apples, sodas, chocolate, syrup, even bicycles and toothpaste, to give just a few examples. This was the story base for a song in 1977 by Acadian singer-songwriter Angèle Arseneault, where she tells the story of a somewhat feminist Evangeline going back to Acadie after Gabriel's death, so she can invest in businesses and take over Acadie:

> Asteure que t'es enterré [Now that you are buried]
> J'vais pouvoir m'en retourner [I'll be able to go back]

26. *L'Évangéline*, August 31, 1910, 4.

27. According to the McCord Museum website (http://www.mccord-museum.qc.ca/), the confectionery company Gagong Brothers, established in St. Stephen (New Brunswick), adopted Evangeline as a trademark in 1904. The already well-known name identified the company as part of the Maritime provinces, but more importantly, linked the qualities of their chocolate product to those of Evangeline: purity, excellence, constancy, romance, and sweetness.

Je m'en vais pour investir [I'm leaving in order to invest]
Dans les compagnies de l'avenir [In the companies of the future]
Afin que l'nom d'Évangéline [So that the name Evangeline]
Soit connu en câline [Will be darned known]

Évangéline Fried Clams
Évangéline Salon Bar
Évangéline Sexy Ladies Wear
Évangéline Comfortable Running Shoes
Évangéline Automobile Springs
Évangéline Regional High School
Évangéline Savings Mortgage and Loans
Évangéline The only French newspaper in New Brunswick

Évangéline Évangéline Acadian Queen[28]

The last ten verses are in English in the song, a nod and a wink to mixed linguistic practices and to the commodification of Evangeline and of the French language.

The image of "la bonne Acadienne soumise" (a submissive representation of Acadian women) as a symbol of Acadian identity was called into question in the 1970s and gave place to new models (see Thériault 2013). But in the construction of the group, Evangeline remains the first (even if merely imagined by Longfellow) great ancestor.

Acadianness Defined through Language

If the story of Évangéline played an important role in bonding together Acadians from different parts of America and by rewriting the Deportation, it also played a role in portraying Acadie as a distinct group or nation with an "authentic" romanticized and essentialized identity[29] in French Canada, an identity different from the Québec neighbor. This differentiation process relied on two main factors: the historical narrative of the deportation and specific linguistic features of Acadian French.[30] In 1868, Pascal Poirier—then a young scholar who would later become the first Acadian federal government senator—wrote lengthy articles that were published in *Le Moniteur acadien* and stressed

28. Translation in brackets by Heller (2011, 174–75). Angèle Arsenault, "Évangéline Acadian Queen," 1971.

29. The essentialism stems from the fact that to be an Acadian was linked to having ancestors that had gone through the Deportation. Mary Bucholtz argues that "essentialism is, among other things, a tool for redressing power imbalances, as when the group under study is seen by the dominant group as illegitimate or trivial, or when a stigmatized group forms an oppositional identity to counter negative ideologies" (Bucholtz 2003, 401).

30. These features were constructed as part of an "authentic community language" (Coupland 2003) and are still playing a role today in the branding of Acadianness (as we discuss later on).

the similarities between the French spoken in Acadie and the one spoken in France. This argument was very important at the time since the main discourses in the Québec press negatively compared the French spoken in Québec to continental French (Bouchard 2011). Pascal Poirier, who was a member of the small but dynamic Acadian elite, stated rightly in different articles (some published in part in newspapers for the general public) that based on his own research, the lexical and morpho-syntactic forms found in Acadian French could easily be traced to the forms spoken in France. Poirier argued that though archaic, these forms deserved respect, as they had endured throughout all the years of hardship of the Acadian people: "Most of the Acadian words can be found, albeit slightly modified in some cases, in the Académie's dictionary; others have retained the old French meaning and have not changed; a few added new applications to the original sense that still remains; some, that have appeared more recently, come from English but have been fully assimilated to French, in such a way that their original components have disappeared entirely."[31]

Archaic structures were thus legitimated in discourse while borrowing was condemned because it was linked to the disappearance of the French language:

> Never has our language been in greater danger of deterioration, and therefore of gradually disappearing. Modern progress has removed the distance, and we are in direct contact with the foreign element. In arts, commerce, industry, English phrases strike our ears at any given moment, and gradually, slowly but surely, seep into our language. That is the danger against which we must react. Let's speak French, let's be proud to speak French, in commerce, in industry, everywhere![32]

> Acadians, let us be on our guard. . . . It is a shameful thing for an Acadian to not know or speak his mother tongue, and it is much more shameful to neglect it to the point of forgetting it completely. Without his mother tongue one cannot be a true Acadian. . . . Our language is the ally and the safeguarding of our faith, but even if it were not, it is something that belongs to us, a sacred heritage, and no one has the right to take it away from us, on any account whatsoever.[33]

This procedure is very much linked to nation-building processes in the Western world (Crépon 1996). To be able to connect the roots of one's language to

31. Pascal Poirier, *Le Moniteur acadien*, March 13 1884. Note that "Académie" here refers to the Académie française.

32. Speech by Adjutor Rivard, parts of which have been published in *L'Évangéline*, April 16, 1896.

33. *Le Moniteur acadien*, May 19, 1910.

a powerful founding nation, even though these structures may have been altered, constitutes an important process of legitimation. Crépon recalls that Leibniz listed three phases linking language and nation (in this case, Germany serving as an example): "save from oblivion the words that are no longer in use; naturalize foreign words as much as possible; forge from German roots new words for the purpose of science" (Crépon 1996, 129). This discourse, although it dates back to the eighteenth century, was very present in French Canada and in Acadie, especially the first phase, which focused on saving forgotten words. Starting with Poirier, scholars followed in the same path of discursive legitimation[34] of Acadian French. For example, the Acadian writer Antonine Maillet, the only Canadian winner of the prestigious Goncourt prize,[35] stresses in her books that the Acadian language is rich or richer than other French vernaculars because Acadians preserved the expressions of their ancestors and revitalized them. In an interview with Lise Gauvin, Antonine Maillet says that reading the French author Rabelais made her discover her roots: "While reading Rabelais, I recognized myself: I recognized my language, my cultural background. He was part of my family, of my relatives. This is why I discovered the Acadian language in Rabelais" (Gauvin 1997, 102–3).

To legitimize the Acadian vernacular was seen as a way to counter Anglicization and also to make Acadians proud of their legacy, as it would give a new value to language-identity markers that were devalued by other Francophones in Québec and in France, by showing that they had "authenticity,"[36] even greater than contemporary French in France, since its roots could be traced to the sixteenth century. This argumentation was very present in Poirier's essays published in the newspapers at the end of the nineteenth century (Boudreau and Urbain 2013) and is still used to legitimize varieties of French in all parts of Acadie to this day.

The 1960s Onward: Linguistic "Authenticity" in Artistic Production

In the 1960s, Francophone leaders of Québec consider they could better serve and protect their identity by turning to provincial institutions and state as new tools for civil action, and in so doing, catalyzed a renewal of the French Canadian identity discourse. In 1967, the province of Québec was recognized as the national territory of French Canada. Where beforehand, two equal na-

34. See Flikeid (1994) and Boudreau (2011) for a discussion on the subject.
35. Antonine Maillet won the Goncourt award in 1979 for *Pélagie-la-Charrette*.
36. See Coupland (2003) for a detailed analysis on language authenticities.

tions[37] resided within one national state, French Canada was now being redefined as Québec, and French Canadians as Québécois, leaving the rest of the Francophones without a national identity. For many, as Monica Heller argues, "the experience was one of going to bed as a *Canadien français* (French Canadian) and waking up to find that that term no longer applied, since most of the members of the category had decided, seemingly overnight, to become Québécois" (2011, 94). Outside of Québec, many leaders perceived this as Québec's abandonment of French Canada and of Francophones outside its territory: as the fragmentation of the French Canadian identity. French speakers outside of Québec could no longer define themselves as French Canadians, nor could they call themselves Québécois, and were forced to reorganize and redefine themselves as local, often provincial, entities: Franco-Ontariens, Fransaskois, Franco-Manitobains, and so on.

The federal government, in an effort to calm down Québec's growing dissatisfaction regarding their rights to manage their affairs in French, instituted the 1969 Canadian Official Languages Act (two official languages in the country).[38] It is hard to say whether political decisions affected language discourses and language practices or vice versa, but from the 1960s onward, discourses surrounding French vernaculars started to change, especially with respect to the Québec vernacular, called Joual, and the Acadian ones, called *français acadien* or Chiac.[39] The labeling of the French language went hand in hand with a desire to achieve a certain independence regarding language.[40]

In Québec, a well-documented literary movement (La querelle du joual) sparked a debate in Québec newspapers with the publishing of *Les Belles-Soeurs*, written in joual by Michel Tremblay (Bouchard 1998). The same phenomena occurred in Acadie with the publishing of *La Sagouine*, a play written by Antonine Maillet (1971), where a heated debate was launched on *le français acadien* (Acadian French). Some readers were proud and hailed the initiative, while others deplored the staging of its "archaic" features in the public sphere, saying that they folklorized and essentialized the Acadians in an archaic image

37. Acadian narrative was centered around the frictions between the French and the English people (the English being portrayed as the villain). The native people are mostly ignored in the official narrative as if erased from space.

38. The official language act was meant to provide services in both official languages in federal government offices.

39. In an article on language labeling and the discourses surrounding them, Boudreau (2012) shows that the naming of the French vernacular in Acadie differs according to speakers and depends on its status and values attributed to the language.

40. It is at that time that the Québec government invested large sums to modernize and give a certain autonomy to the Québec standard French. The branding of the vernacular and of the standard Québécois served the same idea.

(Boudreau 2011, 2012). The piece, however, was widely acclaimed in Canada and in Europe. The success of the play and the worldwide recognition of its author contributed to the acceptance of the Acadian "popular" French (*le français populaire*). The play contained mostly lexical and morpho-syntactical archaisms, echoing one of the dominant discourses of the late nineteenth century that attributed positive values to the French constructed here as an ancestor of "authentic" French. English borrowings were very scarcely used and if so, took a French pronunciation. The success of the play invested what is called "traditional Acadian French" with new values and signification—from object of shame, it (very gradually) started to transform into an object of pride, a cultural resource to shift negative social and linguistic representations. It became a strong identity marker, both within the community (to identify with the community) and within Francophone Canada (to differentiate from others). During fieldwork conducted in 1999[41] in Acadian communities, a community leader clearly illustrates this as he states: "the more differences from [normative or standard] French I can put forward, the stronger my identity."[42]

The movement of acceptance continued to grow, and artists began writing and signing in Chiac, a still stigmatized vernacular (Boudreau 2011) that mixes French and English forms and lexicons.[43] Chiac was becoming the urban vernacular,[44] while "le français acadien"[45] was mostly associated with rural Acadie.

Chiac as a Mark of Acadianness on Global Markets

Chiac became increasingly branded as a display of a certain kind of authentic language and began to provide material and symbolic profits in national and international markets (Bourdieu 1982; Duchêne and Heller 2012). The Chiac variety was recognized, especially on the Québec artistic scene, as a mark of Acadianness. It has been perceived in Québec as such a strong identification marker since the 1990s that it makes it difficult for Acadian artists who do not identify with Chiac, or those who do not use a very Anglicized mixed form, to break away from it. For example, there is the case of artists, such as the group Radio Radio, who perform in an Acadian vernacular distinct from Chiac, called Acadjonne,[46] but are constantly designated as Chiac. Bilodeau, former member

41. Prise de parole: la construction discursive de l'espace francophone en Amérique du Nord (1997–2000).

42. Interview with Léo-Paul, 1999.

43. The group 1755, formed in the 1970s (and still popular today), was the first to sing in Chiac. For example, here are the first lyrics of "CB Budd": "Chu parti de Waltham, avec une load dedans ma van. J'ai arrêté ouère ma mère le long du chemin" (I left Waltham with a load in my van. Stopped to see my mother along the way.)

44. Linked to the city of Moncton (New Brunswick) and its surroundings.

45. Associated with archaic forms.

46. Acadjonne is the name given to the Acadian French variety spoken in southwestern Nova Scotia.

or the group, explains: "I don't know how many years we'd been in Montreal, and I was saying to our manager, all the time: "Man, we don't speak Chiac, we speak Acadjonne, and Chiac."[47] And like, my grandmother didn't speak Chiac. I respect the Chiacs. I've had Chiac influence. But if you're going to promote something, promote what we actually are. . . . I didn't have a problem with Chiac, but for about five years now, there's something bugging me about it, and that's it: our roots weren't Chiac."[48] Bilodeau, who now performs as Arthur Comeau, is still labelled as Chiac: "with his Chiac written and delivered without compromise."[49] The same goes with other groups, such as the Hay Babies (two members are not from the New Brunswick region where Chiac is spoken), who are characterized in the press as displaying "their Chiac outspokenness."[50] Nevertheless, whereas Chiac has long been linked to a picturesque or even exotic representation of Acadie ("charming accent,"[51] "the curiosity that is the accent,"[52] etc.), it is now being reinvested in artistic production with new values (hybridity, inclusion, multilingualism) that are a commodity on global markets (see McLaughlin 2013).

In April 2012, in a televised interview on the national network CBC, the host asked Radio Radio: "How is Acadian French different than Québec French?" The reply was clear, albeit given in a joking manner: "It's better." Asked to elaborate, the group evoked the constant need to justify certain forms or words that are not "standard French":

> I think it's assumed that because it's a . . . we're not questioning if it's right to say this [particular word of phrasing] or not, we're just saying it. It might be wrong, but I mean, who are you to say I'm wrong if I told you this. "Oh it's not a word." No, it's like, I'm sorry, I said it, it's a word. I put it in a song. . . . A teacher in French said, "ah you can't say that, it's not a word." So I wrote it down, and then I put it in a song, and then it's published, so. . . . So it's a word now.[53]

Earlier, in 2010, they would also defend a use of language that challenges the idea of French as prescribed by the Office québécois de la langue française,

47. The two founding members are from Baie Sainte-Marie (Nova Scotia) and speak Acadjonne. The third member is from Moncton (New Brunswick) and speaks Chiac.

48. Interview with Alexandre Bilodeau, 2015.

49. "avec son chiac écrit et livré sans compromis" (*Le Devoir*, May 2, 2014, B5).

50. "leur franc-parler chiac" (*La Presse*, April 13, 2014, http://www.lapresse.ca).

51. Host of *Dans tes oreilles* (http://www.danstesoreilles.tv), during an interview with Acadian hip-hop group Radio Radio on August 12, 2010.

52. Host of a radio roundtable, while talking with Acadian folk group Les Hay Babies on November 9, 2014.

53. *Q*, season 5, "A chat with Acadian hip-hop trio Radio Radio at the East Coast Music Awards"; original in English.

which they say they "respect enormously, but just don't always apply."[54] Using Chiac, Acadjonne, or other forms of Acadian French (that may or may not include English) may be seen as a way of contesting the norm, but it is also a way to point out differences between French as it is being used in Acadie, and French as it is being used elsewhere—a strategy deployed to show belonging in a local (Acadian) market, and authenticity in globalized markets.

Artists, in a somewhat derisory fashion, break away from discourses held by the elite on the importance of protecting the "purity" of the language. With her novel *Pour sûr*, for example, Acadian writer France Daigle[55] parodies the grammatical form "right into its structure, the organization of the novel in numbered entries . . . reminding of the one used in the Bescherelle grammar which is read in the text" (Cormier 2014, 135). She even imagines a Chiac Academy, the "GIRAFE (Grande instance rastafarienne-acadienne pour une français éventuel)"—which loosely translates to "Great Rastafarian-Acadian Authority for a Potential French." Dano LeBlanc created what he calls the first Acadian superhero, Acadieman: a guy who hangs out in cafés, works in a call center, and, most importantly for our discussion, speaks Chiac. He also invents linguistic tools with Acadieman, such as a daily column called *Chiac word du jour* (Chiac word of the day), the *New Bescherelle Updaté, l'art de conjuguer en chiac* (New and updated Bescherelle,[56] the art of conjugating in Chiac) or *Le Chiac pour les Dummies* (Chiac for dummies) (Perrot 2010). As a last example, singer-songwriter Alexandre Bilodeau, performing as Arthur Comeau, adds this note to accompany his lyrics: "capital letters pi ortographe officielle, ne pas modifier, office nationale de langue du royaume de Meteghan" (which can be translated as: official capitalization and spelling, do not modify, National Language Board of the Kingdom of Meteghan—Meteghan being a rural Acadian community of Nova Scotia where Acadjonne is spoken). On the music scene, since the mid-2000s, commercial success has been achieved by Acadian artists that mix French and English forms. As McLaughlin states, "this multilingualism, born out of marginalization, policed by nationalist prescriptivism, is now mobilized to construct the type of counter-cultural claims valued in the globalized media-scape and cultural markets" (2013, 41).

54. Radio interview with Radio Radio after the release of their album *Belmundo Regal*, *C'est l'fun de bonne heure*, Radio Énergie Mauricie, NRJ 102.3, March 30, 2010.

55. France Daigle was awarded the prestigious Canadian award Prix du Gouverneur général in 2012 for her novel *Pour Sûr*. Daigle proposes a written form of Chiac that demonstrates that it is a variety of French, choosing French-like forms ("wé" for "way," which focuses on the English borrowing). She also uses the tilde to mark words or syllables that would be pronounced in English; this way of presenting Chiac latinizes English. The author comments on the form within the novel, where metadiscourse plays an important role.

56. *Bescherelle, l'art de conjuguer* is one of the most used French conjugation manuals.

Language Authenticity in Tourism: The Heart of *L'Acadie* Brand

Through artistic productions in the 1970s–90s, the Acadian community took its rightful place in the public sphere. The discourse of stigmatization of nonstandard varieties transformed into a discourse of differentiation greater than the one promoted by the elite in the 1960s.

Since the late 1980s, economic transformations occurred[57] that affected the perception of language in Acadian communities. The downward course of the economy in the Maritime provinces, largely based on natural-resources industries, pushed government officials to rethink their economic plans in order to react to higher unemployment rates and at the same time open up to globalized economic markets. This coincided with the neoliberal turn of the Canadian federal government,[58] which drastically changed the way in which the Acadian institutions were supported. Indeed, it became clear that the welfare-state role that Canada had been assuming since the late 1960s (especially since the 1969 Official Languages Act) was no longer a viable option. The federal government had to find new ways to support the Francophone community, including the network of Acadian institutions, which had been almost exclusively financed by federal government programs.

As Heller et al. clearly explain, "the State came up with economic redevelopment plans in which tourism was highlighted, and in which local identity appeared as potential 'assets' or forms of added-value'" (2014, 546). Acadian communities quickly turned to cultural tourism in order to get access to program funding and to diversify their economy in a period where other traditional industries were failing, especially in rural areas where the potential for attracting or establishing new industries was limited.[59] In 1992, *Le Pays de la Sagouine* was created in Bouctouche (New Brunswick) to give life to Antonine Maillet's characters, in the author's home village. The employees are not interpreters as much as actors that impersonate the main characters of Maillet's work, for both performance (theater, music, dance, comedy) and interaction with visitors. According to its official website,[60] the nonprofit cultural organization has welcomed over 1.5 million guests. Also notable is the Village historique acadien in Caraquet (New Brunswick), an open-air museum where in-

57. For a detailed description of these transformations in the Canadian Francophonie, including Acadie, see Heller (2011).

58. The policies adopted were very similar to the ones put in place by other countries.

59. The provincial government of New Brunswick had attracted call centers in Moncton by promoting a large and readily available bilingual workforce (see LeBlanc 2014), but it was more challenging for rural communities with small populations.

60. See http://www.sagouine.com.

terpreters wear period costumes and act out day-to-day activities. Since the late 1970s, it has portrayed the Acadian way of life of the eighteenth century; in the 1980s and 1990s, it expanded to reflect other periods. The mission of the enterprise is "to keep, preserve and promote the Acadian culture and heritage."[61] A similar project was elaborated in Pubnico (Nova Scotia) at the end of the 1980s, which made possible the opening of the Village historique acadien de la Nouvelle-Écosse in 1999. Their mission "asserts the richness of the culture and history, the customs and traditions of the Acadians to the visitors."[62] Many other similar Acadian tourism experiences have been developed across the Canadian Maritime provinces, as individual (or community) projects.

But in 2001, Acadian communities from all Atlantic provinces[63] joined to create the Commission du tourisme acadien du Canada atlantique (CTACA)[64]—or Atlantic Canada Acadian Tourism Commission. The commission became a very important tool for developing the Acadian tourism product and establishing an "Acadian brand," L'Acadie, in the tourism industry.[65]

> The CTACA aims to develop a fully diversified Acadian tourism industry in Atlantic Canada by offering its members specialized support and consulting services so that they are able to increasingly develop their products. Formed in 2001, the Commission du tourisme acadien du Canada atlantique (CTACA) is recognized as a "Product Club" by the Canadian Tourism Commission. It operates in partnership with the tourism department in three of the Atlantic Provinces, the Société nationale de l'Acadie, the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency (ACOA) and Parks Canada.
>
> Also, the CTACA intends to develop the Acadian tourism product and, more precisely, the L'Acadie brand. Atlantic Canada, Québec, France and New England are the target markets. This complements the efforts of the Atlantic governments.[66]

The brand evidently highlights French as a distinctive trait of Acadian communities, putting it at the heart of the Acadian tourism product as defined by

61. See http://www.villagehistoriqueacadien.com.

62. Nova Scotia Museum, 2015, http://levillage.novascotia.ca.

63. The Atlantic provinces includes all three Maritime provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island) and Newfoundland and Labrador. The Francophones of the latter are also considered Acadians.

64. Since 2013 it has operated under the name Expérience Acadie.

65. The CTACA works in partnership with other entities, such as the provincial tourism department or the Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse (CDENE), an economic development board created in 1999 whose mission is to improve the economic well-being and quality of life of Acadians and Acadian communities in Nova Scotia. One of the roles of the CDENE is to help create new tourism products or perfect those already in place.

66. CTACA, 2014, http://experienceacadie.com.

the CTACA. Language is perceived as one of the only tangible elements that distinguishes Acadian culture from the English-speaking majority, and interaction with (French-speaking) Acadians is one of the most important components of the Acadian tourism experience. CTACA therefore draws a distinction between two Acadian experiences that it tries to include in the cultural product. The first is a territorial experience, what the CTACA refers to as "Acadie patrimoniale": it encompasses, among other elements, the predeportation narrative, genealogy, and historic sites such as Grand-Pré, Fort Sainte-Anne, and others—most of which are no longer "Acadian" destinations as they are no longer Acadian communities. The second Acadian experience is referred to as "Acadie contemporaine": it focuses on the reality of today's Acadian communities (artistic production, institutions, etc.) and identifies interaction with Acadians as the key element of the experience, as a CTACA employee explains: "What we sell is an experience. The Acadian tourism product is really an experience in which the tourist will have the opportunity to know the Acadian culture through its language, its culture, its food, its music, its history. And a very, very important element is the interaction with Acadians. Because frankly, to eat lobster, somewhere . . . without having a service and a welcoming that are Acadian, is not really an Acadian experience. So it is very important for us, in the definition of the Acadian tourism product, that interaction with Acadians be central."[67] Seen as culture-based economic development, cultural tourism would both diversify the economy and contribute to revitalizing Acadian culture in communities greatly affected by high acculturation rates. According to Le Menestrel, cultural tourism "is perceived by those who promote it as a means to save the culture, from which it draws its resources" (1999, 258). This type of industry banks on the demonstration and staging of cultural authenticity, for a public in search of unique experiences.

We will take a closer look at one Acadian community that decided to focus on their linguistic authenticity to add value to tourist experience. Located in the province of Nova Scotia, less than 100 kilometers west of Grand-Pré, the municipality of Clare started attracting tourists with a play adaptation of Longfellow's "Evangeline"; the play was presented for the first time in 1994 and attracted tens of thousands of tourists from Canada and the United States during a period of over a decade. The project was able to get government grants, as officials saw in it a potential for community development, both economic and

67. Interview with André, CTACA employee, 2003.

cultural,[68] and it helped put in place infrastructures to start developing tourism more aggressively.

Although the province had already established an economic development board (the CDENÉ—Conseil de développement économique de la Nouvelle-Écosse) in 1999 to help develop tourism in Acadian communities in Nova Scotia, it is with the creation of the CTACA that the industry got all the support it needed to promote its products.

Acadian cultural tourism is primarily focused on the Francophone element, which is what gives it access to markets that Anglophone Nova Scotia struggle to penetrate. The distinction through language therefore is a major attraction for Acadian communities, as defined by tourism bodies. This has significant importance for the Acadian community as it serves as a demonstration of the ability of the community to contribute to the provincial economic well-being, instead of being perceived as solely an expense for the province (and majority group taxpayers). According to Acadian tourism agents and leaders, this contributes to overcoming (at least some) negative representations of French language and Acadians. Branding the community for tourism, in this case, therefore serves both economic interests and a legitimation process of the community.

In Nova Scotia, highway signage in French (from the early 2000s) directs tourists to Acadian regions—these also showcase highly recognizable Acadian symbols: Acadian flag, traditional (Evangeline-like) costumes, churches, and so on. The almost 200-mile long scenic route going through the Annapolis Valley (Grand-Pré area and Acadian region of Baie Sainte-Marie) was given the name "Evangeline Trail" by the tourism department of the province as early as the 1990s, calling on a traditional symbol of Acadianness to promote the region. The province presented initiatives in the late 1990s/early 2000s to maximize the economic potential of its Acadian regions, one of which was the Acadian Tourism Strategy, proposed for "the long term development and enhancement of Acadian tourism experiences,"[69] which included market-readiness programs delivered to Acadian regions, such as Ici on parle français. The program ensured that businesses providing high-quality services in French at all times were promoted as such, increasing their ability to attract Francophone tourists. Businesses that complied with these requirements could display the Ici

68. Many similar theatrical productions came into being in the early to mid-2000s (see Malaborza and McLaughlin 2006), following important grant opportunities from governments to promote cultural and economic development in Canadian Francophone minority communities, through a national network created to support community-based economic development in Francophone minority communities across the country.

69. Nova Scotia Department of Tourism and Culture, "2002–03 Business Plan," http://0-fs01.cito.gov.ns.ca.legcat.gov.ns.ca/deposit/b10149946.pdf.

on parle français logo, which showcased a fleur-de-lys (representing French) and a yellow star (representing Acadie) in a blue, white, and red (colors of the flag) "speech bubble."[70] (In 2009, the program was renamed Bienvenue, and the logo was changed to drop the fleur-de-lys, since it is more of a Québec symbol in the Canadian context.) An employee of the CDENÉ explains that further efforts have to be made in order to, on the one hand, promote the use of French by Acadians in tourist establishments (restaurants, hotels, etc.) and, on the other, raise awareness about the value of local French in the tourism industry, as it participates in the uniqueness or authenticity of the area. His anecdote of visiting his home region during a business trip is evocative:[71]

> I stopped in a restaurant for breakfast in Meteghan, which is in the Baie Sainte-Marie area, and the server came and I ordered in French, and she replied in English. The menu was bilingual, and I thought maybe she was a young Anglophone who had recently moved to the area. . . . Later I heard her speak Acadjonne with another server, so when she came back, I asked why she refused to serve me in French. She asked where I was from, I said Wedgeport. She said: 'I thought you were Québécois.' That said a lot because she was ashamed to talk to me in French. And we have a lot of this in Acadian regions. We have a lot of people like this. And they should not be ashamed. It is their language, and that's what makes them distinct or different. And tourists come to see something different. Not what they experience every day.[72]

To attract tourists, the community decided to represent itself, not only as a Francophone or Acadian destination, but as a destination distinct from any other Acadian community, by showcasing the local vernacular, Acadjonne.

If the goal of cultural tourism is to offer visitors a unique cultural experience, focusing on linguistic authenticity seems advantageous from an economic standpoint. Because of a privileged history (the Baie Sainte-Marie region is the closest to Grand-Pré and former Port-Royal and was founded by the same families) and long isolation from other Francophone communities, the area has been said to have kept the oldest forms of Acadian French (see Flikeid 1994). Furthermore, the desire for a distinct linguistic identity in this community verges on a language ideology that Watts (1999) describes as the ideology of the dialect (see Boudreau and Dubois 2007).

70. See http://www.pch.gc.ca/eng/1357840184030/1357840313617 for more details or a picture of the logo.

71. Linguistic insecurity in Acadian speakers has been the object of many studies, as in Boudreau and Dubois (1993, 2008).

72. Interview with William, employee of the CDENÉ, 2003.

In Baie Sainte-Marie, Acadjonne is used as a mark of distinctiveness, a way for the community to brand itself as a unique tourist destination.

> Our way of speaking, it's an old speech. If we could just get rid of anglicisms and replace them with old French words, pronounced in the Baie Sainte-Marie accent, we'd become a world attraction.[73]

> [Our local Acadian French], it's our strength. It's our distinctive feature. We'd be stupid not to take advantage of it.[74]

In a broader perspective, the staging of a local French that is perceived to have historical significance ("la langue des ancêtres," "la langue de l'ancienne capitale") participates in constructing/reinforcing the identity of the community. The staging of linguistic differences is not unique to this specific part of Acadian Nova Scotia. In Chéticamp, on the other side of the province, a tourism worker specifically explained the meaning of certain words when we visited the interpretation center where she worked.[75] Other tourism sites (such as Le pays de la Sagouine or historic villages) also stage some aspects of language, usually older words or particular expressions, that mark them as Acadian. "Language had previously been largely hailed as a cultural asset and an emblem to build community solidarity; but now it is also used to represent the community to tourists and to brand commercial products. In short, language, together with its accompanying identity ingredients, is being turned into a commodity" (Heller et al. 2014, 546–47). A few "language products" have been developed in Baie Sainte-Marie for the purpose of tourism sales. It is the case of local singers who recorded albums in the local variety with the help of the community radio; the radio itself promotes Acadjonne on the air, contributing to the establishment of a language environment for tourists that is perceived by the community as being authentic.[76]

Conclusion

In this article, we have attempted to show that the legitimating processes in Acadie started in the nineteenth century, when it tried to distinguish itself from neighboring Francophone communities that were demographically, politically, and economically stronger. By focusing on its history, Acadie wanted to equip

73. Interview with Robert, 1999.
74. Interview with Bernard, 1999.
75. On tourism in Chéticamp, see White (2006) and Moïse et al. (2006).
76. On the role of community radio in Baie Sainte-Marie, see LeBlanc (2012) and Dubois (2003).

itself with a unique identity through a process linked to nation building. We found that a historical approach to these processes in Acadie was necessary in order to demonstrate the social reproduction and transformation that occurred in a society marked by shifting and contradictory language ideologies. It was important to illustrate the material and symbolic aspects that transformed the discourses throughout the years: the material dimension including the mobilization of associations and organizations, such as the press, and the symbolic dimension including the implementation of Irvine and Gal's model of semiotic ideologization. Our study falls within the scope of what Kelly-Holmes and Pietikaïnen call "the peripheral multilingualism lens," that is, the "relationship between language (multilingualism) and space/place (the periphery), by focusing on sites of peripheral multilingualism" (2013, 222), namely, Acadie.

The ideological construct of the notion of "authenticity" was of particular interest to us, since it allowed us to pinpoint the thread that has served to brand Acadianness throughout history. The Acadians have been portrayed as authentic French people, strongly linked to their ancestors, since the end of the nineteenth century, but they have simultaneously been presented as backward in some ways. The nationalist ideology of language homogeneity prevailed, and the Acadian elite tried to increase the value of Acadian French by legitimizing archaic forms that became progressively commodified and branded as authentic features of the Acadian culture.

With the political and economic changes that were being felt in Canada in the 1960s–70s, and then again in the 1980s–90s, speakers challenged this public image of the "authentic" Acadie by giving new value to stigmatized features of Acadian French and by publicly performing them. The most stigmatized varieties of the language, Chiac and Acadjonne, which were originally denounced due to the type of multilingualism they represent, were now reclaimed as a strategy of distinction and identification, especially in the artistic and tourism industries.

The semioticizing processes were very much linked to the material conditions that facilitated their arrival on the scene. Discourses on particular French-language practices were repeated over the years, with the result of distinguishing French Acadians from other Francophone communities. The motivation of the Acadians to be seen as a group distinct from the Québécois is evidenced by their willingness to display their differences, instead of erasing them.

Furthermore, the process of displaying new practices instead of erasing them seems to be gaining popularity in peripheral sites (Kelly-Holmes and Pietikaï-

nen 2013, 223). Although the performance of language practices has intensified in Acadie throughout the last ten years, it in fact began in the 1970s, and the emphasis on the distinctiveness of Acadian French was already a part of the discourses taking place at the end of the nineteenth century (Boudreau and Urbain 2013). Today, Acadian social actors want to position themselves in the Francophone world and establish a difference or distinctiveness that allows for their recognition as a group, a nation although not as a nation-state, since the lack of a territorial state means that Acadie does not meet the conditions of nationhood. As Monica Heller states: "Under current conditions, however, not having that apparatus [territorial state] may allow greater freedom to plug into the trajectories of resources and people and ideas that are the hallmark of our time" (Heller 2011, 191).

Finally, we have tried to show how the Acadians, a small group of bilingual speakers who are often essentialized as a uniform group, make sense of their peripheral status as Francophones, navigate language resources to mark identity boundaries, and position themselves on the national and international markets. The study of language ideologies and their construction helps us to understand the shaping and reshaping of values and discourses surrounding language issues that affect people in different ways. It is important to take economic and political factors into account and to illustrate the significance of historical processes in the evolution of these issues.

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