DISSERTATION

WOLAKOTA: THE FACE OF REZILIENCE IN "POST"-COLONIAL AMERICA

Submitted by

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ABSTRACT

WOLAKOTA: THE FACE OF REZILIENCE IN "POST"-COLONIAL AMERICA

This research aims at exploring the features of sustainable social change in Lakota country. More specifically, it uses the concept of resilience to analyze local expressions of social change and challenge the colonial framework and discourse. It focuses on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and Cheyenne River Indian Reservation in South Dakota, and compares two scales of social change at the grassroots and larger organizational level. This research's project follows a participatory and decolonial approach and emerged from a specific local need formulated by local grassroots projects managers to bring attention to the lack of resources and visibility they encounter. Reservations are historically defined territories embedded in colonial power dynamics that create socio-economic vulnerability and multi-dimensional hardships in tribal members' everyday life. What they face remains perceived and defined primarily by an etic/outsider perspective, which hinders expressions of local resilience. Ground observations indicate that creative sustainable projects with unique features actually emerge in response to local stress. Yet, by western definitions, these projects are not visible and do not qualify as resilient. This research questions the western hegemonic use of resilience in Lakota country and explores endogenous expressions of social change that shape alternative definitions and challenge the colonial discourse.

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I want to dedicate this work to the Lakota grassroots projects managers of the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River Indian Reservations and to all who struggle to bring social change to their territories and to this world. The process of this dissertation was a human experience way more than an academic endeavor. It took me to the depths of myself and my certainties and the way I see the world. I would never have walked this journey without the life changing influence of the people I have been around for six years. Some of you may have just given me five minutes of your time whereas others are now deep friends. I have witnessed the birth and growth of your projects along with your children's. You have trusted me beyond words; you have stepped beyond the fears that your trust might be broken once more and have allowed me to understand part of your world. Patiently, you have allowed me to reach out and create meaningful relationships that are central to our lives as social beings and are also the only way to generate more accurate representations of reality and positively impactful collaborations. You have made me a more humble, complete and better human being. I really hope that my work reflects your expectations.

I now would like to thank two amazing women without which I could not have completed this work. First and foremost, I want to thank my advisor and friend Kathleen Pickering. I can still remember the day where I ordered from France a copy of your book. I had never met you then and yet I was hoping that our paths would meet. Your words and thoughts had conquered my mind. Then I met you and fell for your spirit and your heart. You are an extraordinary woman and scholar and my life will never be the same thanks to you. You have opened and channeled my mind and energy to see the unseen and think the

unthought-of. I will never thank you enough for being my mentor and patiently supporting me through this long process. I am looking forward to continue working with you in the future.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Prologue

> "Summer 2014, at a local ranch on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, SD. The place opens up to vast horizons of prairie and hills in the background. The entrance of a driveway sits between two tractor wheels. Upon arrival, eyes are caught by small and locally made wind turbines looking over a piece of land designed to be a garden. Horses run freely between pieces of metal and wood, on what will soon be the site of a fully functioning sawmill; latest idea of the manager to create new on-site opportunities while managing the otherwise rotting reserves of wood from the nearby Black Hills forests. With a closer look, one can notice the underground shelter now serving horses more than men, along with the outdoor kitchen made for volunteer workers, who regularly come from outside the reservation to "help" with the ongoing initiatives of the project. A deep hole has been dug in the ground, and garnished with used tires all over. There stands what a couple of months later would become a prototype "aquaponic" greenhouse, designed to produce food year-around. In the back sits a visibly used house, which contrary to local trends is not overcrowded. Bryan, the owner of the place, could be seen as a visionary. He talks about his particular use of the land as being the first steps toward a seven hundred-year plan for his people to achieve sustainability and self-determination. In order to win this battle against local and global corruption and a fundamentally unsustainable model of living for the human species, man must refocus on the "seven" tenets; food, water, fire, shelter, earth, spirit, self. Man must take a pledge to serve these tenets equally, so that it may find balance and ensure the survival of its livelihood and its own. To fulfill this vision, every "human being" must join the struggle, and take part at every local level in a change of consciousness that must occur globally. Bryan pauses, his dream demands energy and focus. Sometimes, it collapses under the weight of reality, logistical needs and everyday hardships; but it always gets reborn, in an infinite cycle of hope and despair punctuated by small successes and failures and carried by a powerful dream of a better and healthier future".

This struggle is shared at large by similar initiatives blooming on Indian land, yet going silent and unnoticed in the scheme of tribal politics and their large federally or privately-funded efforts to "alleviate poverty" on the reservations. Program managers in charge of the latter shine in official meetings, display colorful reports to funders and

advocate to the "outside world" as "representatives" of Indigenous sovereignty. The "Firsts" struggle for survival, political determination and self-sufficiency, and strive to exogenously convince of their local capacity to counteract the alarming trends that account for the obvious failure of developmentalist approaches coerced into Indian country. This above extract summarizes in itself the essence of my research. While challenging exogenous definitions and the status quo of the construction of knowledge in Indian country, it chooses to reveal the back of the coin, and will strive to portray as accurately as possible the complex reality of "makers of change" in the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River Indian Reservations, SD.

Pine Ridge reservation and social change: a Lakota paradox?

The "identity document" of Pine Ridge "could" simply be presented as such: a geographical space of 3,468.86 square miles encompassing 28000 to 40000 people[1], divided up by 2 rectilinear axes, 4 counties, 9 districts and several poorly indicated towns, home of the Oglala Lakota Nation. For charities, "third-worldists", missionaries, most outsider activists and scholars, this list expands to show evidence of inequality, wealth disparities and "everything else that Pine Ridge is missing" so that it continues earning its title of "poorest place in the Northern Hemisphere"[2]. As such, when outsiders talk about Pine Ridge, they ceaselessly react to "alarming" numbers: the 70-80% of people

[1]Approximately 28 000 as established in 2010 by Village Earth from the data of Dr. Kathleen Pickering Sherman to challenge the census data, which was then claiming the presence of 15 000 people. This had a huge impact on the amount of funding and grants made available locally. The Oglala Sioux Lakota Housing office claims that the actual population could in fact reach 40 000.

[2]Beyond the conversations with locals, a quick look up of the key "Pine Ridge" on any web browser will bring up videos, texts and photos carrying these types of comments. The 2000 census data actually states it as the third poorest place in the US.

unemployed[3], the 48 year-old life expectancy for men, the 71% of people with dietary diseases (Jewell, 2008), etc.

No doubt that these are actual risks faced by the Pine Ridge inhabitants every day; they should be acknowledged as such and added to other lasting consequences of colonial history such as: 1) endogenous segregation due to blood quantum (Brydge, 2010), 2) intergenerational transposition of domestic violence and unhealthy social behaviors as a direct result of PTSD induced by boarding schools (Little Moon, 2009), 3) Tribal institutions' dependency on federal funding and subsequent corruption, 4) withdrawal of resources from outside corporations that maintains a one-sided capital flow and benefit, and last but not least, 5) land-tenure issues (Village Earth, 2009). Most people own inherited land and 70% would like to utilize it (Pickering and Jewell, 2008). Yet, 60% of that land is leased out by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), often times to non-tribal members, and less than a third of the agricultural income is going to Native American producers (US Census, 2007). Additionally, people have been alienated from their collective and holistic connection to the land as a result of land privatization, which has methodically deconstructed, with the help of stepwise laws[4], the relevance of their economic and social practices. We could also highlight the numerous endogenous and exogenous incentives implemented to "deculturate" the "Indian" and assimilate him/her as a productive member of society, such as boarding schools as mentioned earlier (Adams, 1995; Little Moon, 2009), but also evangelization, coerced developmentalism and western way of life and other "ethnocidal" propositions (Jaulin, 1970). As a result, the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation has

[3]Although controversial, this number appears as the most realistic among sources. (65% according to Pickering's 2005 study of Work Force, 73% in 1989 from the BIA, 80% for outsider NGOs such as Village Earth or Remember, 85% and up for local NGOs such as Lakota Solar Enterprises, Earth tipi, etc.)

[4]Such as the Fort Laramy Treaty, 1851, 1868. Dawes Act, 1887, etc.

been continuously labeled as problematic; first as the "Indian problem", as shown by early federal efforts to get rid of the "wild" Indians (Ross, 1998), secondly because of tribal members' resistance to colonization observed in places like Pine Ridge since the beginning of the Reservation era[5] (Chesnais 2010; Haaken 2088; Kurkiala 2002; Ostler 2009; Pickering 2004). These structural occurrences have located Pine Ridge in a dichotomist definition, bouncing back and forth between the "Noble Savage" and another neocolonial versions of the "wild Indian"; the poor, dependent and victimized Indian (Ross, 1998). With such a ranking, this reservation would rank high in the top list of examples of "development failures" within the western hemisphere, especially since it is nested within the territory of the United States of America. Subsequently, it also does not appear as a model of resilient territories.

Yet, Pine Ridge is full of people who developed a capacity to cope with the everyday risks they face locally while implementing highly creative and innovative ideas (Pickering-Sherman, 2000; Chesnais, 2010)[6]. Those are people who talk with passion about their culture and dream of a time when their nation will truly be self-sufficient. Following a long-lasting personal interest, I have been working on the Pine Ridge Reservation for the past five years. I first developed a network of contacts within food and housing projects while working for the NGO Village Earth, and wrote my subsequent Master's thesis on food self-sufficiency in Pine Ridge (Chesnais, 2010). During this process, I became aware of the fundamental contradictions existing between the heavy socio-economic and historical

[5]The Fort Laramy Treaty 1851 first set up the Great Sioux Reservation, successively modified by additional treaties reducing the land or the terms for its uses. The Wounded Knee massacre 1890 and 1973 respectively symbolize acts of Indian martyr and resistance, which inspired collective consciousness and the rise for a pan-indian movement.

[6]This trend is consistent with Pickering's concept of "informal economy" (2000). Also see the analysis of projects components in Chesnais, (2010).

structural barriers preventing endogenous change, and the numerous alternative and creative propositions expressed by locals to resist and overcome these barriers. As I discovered the work of the French psychiatrist Boris Cyrulnik (1999, 2001) on the concept of "resilience", I started to correlate his work with the happenings on the Reservation. I found some striking similarities between the psychiatric definition of a resilient behavior defined as the capacity to "bounce" from a difficult situation and develop coping strategies (Cyrulnik, 1999) and what could be observed on an individual and on more collective level on Pine Ridge. As I show below, the concept is now used in ecology, psychology and sociology with some nuances. However, regardless of which definition is used, resilience is often assessed or measured in terms of "visible" results, i.e a demonstrated (often quantitative) basis upon which resilience is either granted or dismissed as a relevant "quality" to differentiate local success from adversity. Throughout this research, I argue that this particular definition of resilience does not apply to the Pine Ridge reservation as stated, or to examples of Lakota initiatives of social change. However, by dismissing local activity from being "resilient" in that etic perspective, it may demonstrate how Pine Ridge is further stigmatized and maintain its existence within the colonial framework. I explore whether the western definition of resilience and its application in the field of local development and social change prevents local definitions of success and coping responses to hardships from showing. One of the persistent themes of this research is therefore this of visibility and how it ties to a unilateral colonial construction of knowledge. It aims at explaining the status quo of apparent "immobility" and socio-economic impasse on Pine Ridge, whereas local evidence seems to show otherwise. People talk and struggle to implement holistic housing and food production, buffalo restoration projects, children and

elders care, rehab programs, rehabilitate old ceremonies, revitalize language, etc. These projects represent economic, ecological, social and cultural assets, as they arise from people's capacity to mobilize resources and combine them within holistic projects, which was a recurrent observation. From my experience, these projects serve both a personal purpose by increasing the project's leader economic security, but also a collective purpose, as they strive to realize a vision of a better future for the Lakota people and more broadly the rest of humanity. My research's enquiry is a direct result of these observations.

It explores "resilient" behaviors within the cultural specificities of local action, and questions the western-centric construction and use of the concept of resilience itself, thereby giving a voice to local forms of reactions to adversity and social change in the Lakota context. I use local case studies of grassroots versus larger organizational level of social change initiatives and compare their long-term efficiency in creating change and/or resilience. While Pine Ridge remains my primary fieldwork location, I also use the Cheyenne River Reservation as a control location to compare and contrast my findings (see chapter 3). While acknowledging the struggles of reservation residents against inter-generational post-colonial trauma and their everyday struggles for sustenance, this research focuses and sheds lights on the extremely enduring behaviors of parts of the local population and attempted to find the determining factors of these mechanisms. More specifically, it looks at the heart of grassroots initiatives for change, gives evidence of their socio-cultural strength and creativity, and enables their side of the story to be told.

Lifting the veil on the resilience of Pine Ridge (PR) and Cheyenne River (CR) reservations is a journey into the construction of knowledge and the struggle to legitimize discourse in "post-colonial" contexts. This struggle entails socio-economic, cultural, and

political tenets and involved a deep contextualization to allow local perspectives to emerge and show as valid ontological constructs. To that end, I engaged in a locally appropriate methodology dedicated to elicit issues of colonization in indigenous contexts and let local voices prevail while aiming at completing a thorough academic analysis. I used decolonizing and indigenous methodologies (Kovach 2010; Tuhiwai Smith 1999), which forced me to engage in constant reflexivity and deconstruct research as a western paradigm to erect it as what it ought to be in such contexts; a thorough sociocultural translation between conflicting worldviews.

Research questions

Following the rationale induced by Indigenous methodologies and Participatory Action Research (Tuhiwai-Smith, Novak, West et.al, Bacon et. al), research questions emerged from the ground-up as a result of a four-year process of following key grassroots projects through their successes and failures and understanding the complete picture of local dynamics. These questions along with the arguments claimed in this manuscript are a direct result of consistent exchanges and trust relationships with Lakota grassroots managers and other local practitioners. Their inputs are more than invaluable. They have progressively unveiled over the years local reality to me and allowed this dissertation to take shape. The set of grassroots projects case studies forms the core of this dissertation research, and a base upon which lays the previously stated issue of visibility and definition of resilience in Pine Ridge contemporary initiatives of social change. This work explores grassroots social change and the way it is defined locally in regards to western constructs of the concept of resilience. That overall enquiry can be divided into the following research questions:

1. Based on current definitions of resilience, can the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation grassroots initiatives be considered resilient?
2. If not, what is the contemporary face of resilience on the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River Indian reservations? How does it tie to issues of sustainability?
3. What role do issues of misconception, representation and visibility of social change play in the reproduction of colonial patterns and socio-economic vulnerability?
4. Finally, what can local grassroots leaders, the scientific community and sustainability practitioners learn from locally defined Resilience in this context?

This set of questions sets the skeleton of the dissertation format. To answer those, I use my collaboration with key grassroots projects in Pine Ridge as my main primary dataset, along with supplementary case studies in Cheyenne River to account for the efficiency of different scales of local action and intra-cultural differences. Local projects managers encouraged me to pursue research to define and explain the success and failures of their projects and failures in PR and CR. In partnership with them, I collected data to explore the emergence of sustainable local initiatives. I analyzed these in the light of western-defined versus locally defined resilience. I particularly explored the sustainability and holistic elements characterizing these projects and compare it to outside definitions of resilient action. This set the basis for an in-depth endogenous characterization of resilience as it applies to this particular type of projects and how the local traits differ from outside/western factors of success in front of adversity when it comes to grassroots social change. By diving into the depth of these projects and their initiators, I also had access to information about what pushes people to engage in this type of projects and how they react to challenges and change. This accounted for a more individual exploration of "resilience".

Epistemological and methodological overview

As I was attending a local powwow, an elder Native woman once told me: "If you are going to work with our people, you will need to learn how to listen. Your ears will become your best ally". At the time, I appreciated the advice and felt it was well-intended, yet could not help being puzzled by the fact that it implied a judgment on my capacity to listen, from someone I did not even know. What she said resonating in me for a while. After years engaging repeatedly in discussions with Lakota people, I now measure the immense self-centeredness of my emotion of the time. In that moment, it was neither she nor I exchanging over some inter-personal qualities, but the voices of our respective ethos and the ghosts of historical relations between Whites and Natives. Some might just say that I was just having a conversation and dismiss the heaviness of these words. Others might see it quite correctly as an expression of individualistic white privilege. Because they refuse to acknowledge the embodiment of our cultural histories within ourselves, such dismissive statements conduce to reifying power issues and exemplify the core issue of coloniality. Therefore, because of my commitment to applied sociology and locally useful research and my acknowledgement of the non-neutrality of such a project, it appeared clear that a very proactive epistemology and subsequent methodology should be used.

To address these issues while practicing research, decolonizing methodologies must be employed (Ashcroft, 2006; Griffiths, & Tiffin, n.d.; Freire, 2000; Kovach, 2010; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999). The employment of the term decolonizing here is not to be taken lightly. It is not a "metaphor", but rather fosters a proactive response against the real issue posed by the still dominant colonial structure (Tuck and Yang 2012). Tuhiwai Smith's does an excellent job in showing the opportunities for non-indigenous researchers to work with

indigenous communities (1999: 176). The guiding principle of humility, which is imposed by both our condition as outsiders and being ourselves products of the colonial power, highlights the most important criteria of such research: the necessity of the project to be designed with and serving the community, which makes it clearly interact to the later mentioned participatory action research and Decolonizing The Mind literature (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999; Bopp and Bopp, 2006). This overarching concept highly influenced my methodology. I particularly appreciate Smith's use of the term "culturally appropriate", a concept that goes beyond being culturally sensitive. The particularity of doing research in indigenous context imposes researchers to push this concept further into a full community-driven research agenda, which is attempted in this research via the more applied approach taken to construct the Grassroots projects mapping initiative[7].

This also explains my choice for engaging in the framework offered by the emerging epistemology of Decolonizing The Mind (DTM). As I explain later, DTM is a decolonial current breaching through academia and local activism to elicit colonial dynamics on the ground. Far from introducing biases into my research, it helps correlates my findings with similar ones found in colonial contexts via comparing patterns of colonial dynamics. It also serves my commitment to validity of data and ethics in research and exemplifies how, once the illusion of neutrality in research is dismissed, research can prove a great tool to help "see the change we want to see in the world".

Dissertation overview

Chapter 2 offers a comprehensive literature review to help provide a cohesive analytical frame for the research. It first introduces the concept of resilience as dealt with

[7] see description of chapter 6

in the literature, and exposes "what is wrong in resilience" as currently exposed. But the need for literature in a complex historical and socio-economic environment such as the reservation calls for crossing boundaries and a trans-disciplinary review that adapts to the research needs. A decolonial knowledge production should not run away from making the appropriate connections, may it be challenging. Discussing resilience is a lens through which express cultural, historical, social, political-economic issues, and how these tie to another is of uttermost importance to accurately shed light on local reality. I thus provide a review of community-based development and Participatory Action Research (PAR) and discuss how it helps frame and analyze social change at the grassroots level. Then, I present three seemingly distinct and yet strongly complementary reviews. I first review the notion of identity construction, how it ties to my research, to the construction of Lakota/Whites relationships and what it entails. I then present the "development project" and currents of postdevelopmentalism, which bring a necessary background to understanding some of my findings, especially as it ties to world economic relations. The third corpus presents the debates of postcolonial studies and the construction of coloniality, which operates thoughout contemporary reservation relations and power dynamics. I then detail the use of these three reviews in my discussion of local resilience. This chapter concludes by the introduction of Decolonizing The Mind (DTM) as an emerging epistemology and how it helps frame and structure this dissertation.

Chapter 3 reviews the methodological construction of this work. It first explains my rationale and epistemology and how it shaped this dissertation. It presents the issues inherent in "assessing resilience" to exemplify the need for a flexible methodology. It then presents the location, population and sampling strategy in the light of my epistemological

commitment. It dives into data collection to explain how my choices there reflect my quest for local usefulness of this work and to use this opportunity to show alternative local knowledge. I explain my coding and analysis strategies using ATLAS.ti ; a commonly used computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS). I discuss how the software offers possibility to connect the dots of complex systemic links. I finally discuss issues of identity in the field, research timeline, the importance of data feedbacks and my study limitations.

Chapter 4 presents contextual elements that came out from the data as fundamental keys to understand the emergence and efficiency of local projects. Among other themes, I explore the presence of coloniality, the nature of Whites/Lakotas relations and the structural results of colonization such as the commodification of land, labor and money. This chapter is a prelude to the following.

Chapter 5 presents the specificities of local social change. It looks at two levels of initiatives of social change currently competing on the reservation and shows how local data supports the hypothesis of strong grassroots development happening on both Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River Indian Reservation. It clearly presents the grassroots projects and debates the construction of a comprehensive typology for them. By giving numerous practical examples, it will help the reader to mentally project into the local realities of change and what this dissertation is trying to accomplish. It also discusses the difficulties faced by grassroots projects. For the sake of objectivity and data triangulation, I provide an analysis of two scales working actively towards bringing social change. I then contrast my findings at the grassroots level with what I observed at a more organized bureaucratic level of initiation of change and project management.

Chapter 6 aims at answering one of the questions asked by this research's enquiry by exploring the local definition of resilience in Lakota country. It uses local inputs given by the analysis, and then dive into the explanatory factors of local ReZilience as a terminological memo to indicate its nuance from resilience. I first show how the expression "Wolakota" entails deep socio-economic, cultural and personal stakes nested within struggles of coloniality. In the light of the latter, I then expose the different stakes and principles of ReZilience and engage into each of those to show how they tie to the bigger picture of projected versus accomplished social change in the reservation. Without extrapolating from local inputs, I then attempt to connect the dots of the complex web of the local expression of resilience in regards to decolonial struggles and indigenous resurgence. Last but not least, I discuss the analytical process of the "vacuum of change", which is an attempt to summarize and explain the processes of social change on the reservation.

Chapter 7 aims at concluding and broadening this research's spectrum. It recalls first how this research contributes to redefine resilience and its uses or misuses in the academic world, and question the construction of knowledge as it relates to underlying colonial dynamics. It then dives into the contributions brought by this work at different levels. It shows the implications and use of this work for local grassroots development and helps summarize the key elements of grassroots success on Lakota land. Last but not least, it elaborates on my findings to discuss issues of decoloniality and provide some tracks to support long-term sustainability in Indian country and in other settings where power and issues of perception hinders local development. It concludes by developing a deeper

systemic critique called by this work and the need for DTM as a broader tool for engaging in a sustainable world-system.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW; WHAT IS WRONG WITH RESILIENCE?

What is resilience?

The term resilience is presented in academic and policy discourse as a necessary component for individuals and systems to adjust to change (W.N. Adger, 2000; Brackenreed, 2010; Brien, 2009; Charney, 2004; Clauss-Ehlers, 2008; Coastal Community Resilience (CCR) Program, 2006; Cyrulnik, 2001b; Ferdinand et al., 2012; Holling, 1973; Kirmayer et al., 2009; Norris et al., 2008; Resilience Alliance, 2010; Rutter, 2010; Sherrieb et al., 2010; Simeon et al., 2007; Ungar & Liebenberg, 2011). It has become trendy to use and often mistakenly serves as a criteria suggesting successful outcomes to social and environmental pressures. The importance of the term in mainstream discourse now makes it a fundamental component to define success or failures in front of hardships. The term originated in the western academic literature with disciplinary and epistemological nuances. As I previously indicated, I was first introduced to the concept via the French psychology literature of Dr. Boris Cyrulnik (1999, 2001a, 2001b), and it is via this micro-analytical approach that I observed striking correlations with local behaviors in Lakota country. However, the term takes a myriad of nuances, which are also used differently in US versus French Academia.

The ecological literature introduced resilience to describe ecosystems as constantly fluctuating entities, thereby acknowledging change of states as a natural process in contrast to previous analyses that considered ecosystems as stable. According to Holling (1973), resilience is "a measure of the persistence of systems and of their ability to absorb change and disturbance and still maintain the same relationships between populations or state

variables." Adger sees it as "the ability to persist and to adapt (Adger 2003). One of the positive takes of the ecological literature on resilience is that it sets "uncertainty as a permanent condition", although it usually refers to environmental changes and is limited to explore this property in other contexts than this of our research. Scholars have adapted this definition to social, psychological and social-ecological models, constructing the idea that resilience is the capacity of an individual or a community to persist and endure after a traumatic, external event.

In the recent disaster literature (Cutter et al., 2008; Norris et al., 2008), resilience is described as the capacity of individuals or communities to "bounce back" from a disaster to a functioning state. It brings the interesting concept of the "chronic disaster syndrome" which qualifies the long-term effects of trauma in regards to a disaster event along with the entire socio-economic conditions that create and maintain disaster-prone conditions and impede on resilience (Adams, VAN Hattum, and English 2009). However, this literature is solely used for the purpose of natural disasters and poses a number of issues. First, colonial trauma is never considered as a chronic disaster, then that perspective follows a binary categorization where specific conditions create resilience or do not. Thus, looking at Pine Ridge conditions through that lens would automatically dismiss local responses as being non-resilient.

Psychological research now considers resilience as a dynamic process; "resilience is an inference based on evidence that some individuals have a better outcome of adversity experiences than others. In addition, negative experiences may have either a sensitizing or a 'steeling" effect to subsequent events" (Rutter 2012). This literature introduces a myriad of different responses observed in reaction to various difficulties. However, regardless of

the scale considered, it often frames these difficulties or the sense of adversity as risks (Ahmed, Ratele, and Bawa 2009; Brackenreed 2010).

Risk, trauma and resilience

When resilience is defined as coping despite adversity, it automatically locates it within a risk spectrum. Rutter (1987) more clearly defines the relationship between risk and resilience. Indeed, for him, risk does not automatically trigger resilient responses, but it takes risk for resilience to become operative. It then helps mediate negative outcomes. This claim is not neutral. It renders the effects of risks and resilience hard to see and subjects them to considerations of visibility. The fact of considering the existence of risk is not problematic in itself; the stake becomes about how those risks are defined and who defines them. That is why in this work, I seek to demonstrate how the dismissal of power issues in considering resilience can further reify local power dynamics.

One aspect of risk that is often debated in the psychosocial literature is individual trauma (Adams et al., 2009; Charney, 2004; Evans-Campbell, 2008; Simeon et al., 2007; Yehuda et al., 2001) or the "relationship between vulnerability, resilience, and psychopathology"(Simeon et al. 2007). Problematization of trauma aims at explaining it from biological perspective. One interesting example is this recent article linking the expression of PTSD to intergenerational genetic transfer. Yehuda has been studying holocaust survivors and their descendants for years to establish a genetic proof for the intergenerational transfer of trauma (Yehuda et al. 2015). This opens new doors in understanding trauma and its consequences. Indeed, despite the neuroscientific attempts to naturalize psychopathologies, the impact of trauma has often been best understood as a

social mechanism. Here, we learn that its transfer is not limited to socio-cultural capital but inscribes genetic markers that get transferred to offspring.

Due to the traumatic treatment of entire generations of Lakota children in American Boarding schools, PTSD is a common affection in the reservation and residents know by experience how it transfers to the next generations (Littlemoon 2009; Yellow Horse Brave heart and DeBruyn 1998). Unfortunately, such trauma is dismissed on the account of the politics and the denial of the United States to have deliberately caused the "ethnocide" (Jaulin 1970). This example shows how the use of mainstream disciplines such as neuropsychology in the resilience literature cannot be dismissed altogether. The fact that it is itself a product of a systemic epistemological understanding of reality does not preclude it from discovering useful relationships. It can help confirming doubts or facts previously established by the experimental level of cultural trials and errors, and can thus be useful, as seen in the case of demonstrating intergenerational trauma. Yet, it is just not sufficient to fully explain phenomenon as complex as resilience.

In the literature, we can see how definitions of resilience are flexible and vague (Brand and Jax 2007), which leaves it to authors to define it according to their objects. It becomes problematic when it solidifies and starts using quantitative arbitrary criteria to define the success or failure of behaviors, policies or initiatives. Therefore, one has to keep in mind while reading this literature that resilience can only be useful as a conceptual/heuristic paradigm, and should not be sought as a criteria-based assessment of success in front of adversity, or as a recipe for success.

Individual resilience and culture

The concept of individual resilience has evolved conceptually from "a move away from illness, vulnerability and stigma" towards a "focus on strengths and assets" (Barton, 2005). Barton argues that resilience is a culture-bound concept grounded in Euro-American and neoliberal discourses of choice, agency and flexibility. The account of socio-cultural relativism in resilience is poorly treated in the literature. Some believe that variations in factors of resilience must be pondered in terms of the prevalence of certain "cultural" variables over others on different "cultural" groups that affect coping mechanisms. We learn that "culture" is found to impact "resilience" via an assessment of factors defined as "positive behaviors" as opposed to engaging in "risky behaviors" (Clauss-Ehlers 2008). Here, all terms are essentialized causing any interpretation to be merely a contextually blind generalization, which cannot and should not be transposed across studies.

Yet, researchers studying resilience must come up with a culturally specific framework, at the risk of proposing a totally non-adapted analysis, which not only falsifies data, but also adds to the history of top-down colonial dynamics enforced by white researchers in native communities (Belcourt-Dittloff 2006a; Kirmayer et al. 2009; Norris et al. 2008). As I have presented, the most common definition of individual resilience across the literature entails a " positive adaptation in the context of significant adversity", or in other words situations that are characterized by individual "successful outcomes", rather than the negative reactions that would otherwise be expected by "common sense" (Rutter, 2007: 205).

The relevance of a culturally appropriate framework may be justified by findings in Native American contexts as described by the Native participant of a study:

> *"The word resiliency describes Native North Americans. They have had to adapt over and over. They laugh, smile, and joke even though they come from generational alcoholism, poverty, violence, and many other hardships. They bounce back from trauma with resilience. They endure. They are tolerant, even though they get no justice in life. I believe the creator is carrying them. He knows what they have been through. He hears their sorrows and prayers"(Belcourt-Dittloff, 2006: 88)*

Her assessment of resilience uses cultural claims that may be valuable, but she also narrows down her analysis to quantitative variables, thereby looking at resilience as a set of outcome variables, instead of exploring its local definitions and surrounding discourse.

Community resilience literature: General and Native American-specific

From the main epistemological conflicts surrounding resilience such as ecological vs. psychiatric, individual vs. collective arise the notion of Community Resilience and the need to define it (Kirmayer et al. 2009; Magis 2010; Sherrieb et al. 2010). Kirmayer, et.al (2009) develops this concept from a socio-cultural standpoint, expanding its definition to the adaptive capacity of a community to face a chronic trauma (62-74). In this recent paradigm, resilient behaviors are not seen as exclusively individual, but as a reactionary defense mechanism to risks and vulnerability, which induces collective outcomes.

Resilience is here understood as a multi-dimensional process, under which tradeoffs to overcome trauma might occur, showing "proofs of resilience" in certain domains and not others. Interestingly, community resilience is at the same time often presented as a goal, a process leading to a result to reach and strive for. To "achieve" community resilience, "communities must develop economic resources, reduce risks and resource inequalities and consciously attend to their areas of greatest social vulnerability (Norris et al., 2008). This type of literature specifically suggests that community resilience literature

particularly pertains to the study of post-colonial trauma in indigenous communities (Kirmayer, et. al, 2009). Yet, factors of community resilience can be hard to assess[8] and require a culturally relevant framework that cannot be narrowed down to culturally sensitive quantitative indicators. So far, such an analytical framework has been experimented with in two First Nations Reserves in Canada, but still calls for further initiatives to move beyond a quantitative variable-based analysis of cultural traits that therefore still exists within a western model of thought and knowledge production. Nonetheless, here are some interesting findings of community resilience.

According to Kirmayer (Kirmayer et al. 2009, 2011), community resilience can be "assessed" through different criteria, whether the research evaluates economic, social resilience or "overcoming capacities". Resilience is often a broad concept, "encompassing risk and vulnerability, growth and transformation, culture and community, social structure and personality, and power and agency" (Kirmayer, et.al, 2009:102), which is why it needs to be explored through culturally specific subgroups. From multiple sources and communities, Kirmayer et.al (2009) identified traits of community resilience distinctive to Aboriginal communities, which include:

1) Connections to family and community (to be considered from the indigenous concepts of interdependence and caregiving across the life cycle)
2) Oral tradition and storytelling (transmission of cultural values and humor, and creative problem-solving)
3) Connection to the land and the environment (indigenous reference of personhood)

[8] Having been able to meet with a member of that Canadian resilience team, it seemed obvious that far from a homogenous protocol, resilience was not assessed using a much more nuanced terminology and not the word resilience itself. Locally, it broadly took the form of asking First Nations communities "what they do to get by" and "how they make it".

4) Healing traditions (paths for personal transformations, and interpersonal conflict resolution)
5) Ceremony and spirituality (access to collective wisdom, sense of interconnectedness)
6) Cultural knowledge and identity (connection of the self to a valorized history, cultural continuity, maintenance of meaning and past-present-future-connection)
7) Collective agency and political activism (tools to challenge oppression).

He also found that Native American specific factors of resilience involve "cultural practices, tradition, spirituality, interconnectedness, and respect for land" (Kirmayer, et.al, 2009: 96). A recent work on the Blackfeet Indian Reservation, MN explored psychosocial factors of resilience using mixed methods and confirmed this hypothesis (Belcourt-Dittloff, 2006). The variables included social support, hope scale, communal mastery, coping style, spiritual involvement, enculturation scale, brief resiliency coping scale, ethic, culture and religion scale. They were confronted with stressors and historical trauma variables, and evaluated with the following dependent variables: outcome questionnaire, quality of life inventory, adversarial growth, historical trauma affect, positive and negative affect schedule (Belcourt-Dittloff, 2006: 59).

This work does confirm the presence of a certain type of resilience in Native American contexts, and locates it in terms of local significance. Social support, hope, general resilient coping abilities, traditional cultural and spiritual practices, ethnic pride/enculturation and communal mastery were respectively shown to be the most relevant resilient factors. This seems more consistent with what I could observe on "the Rez". Yet, it would be extrapolating to consider it as locally valid, and it calls instead for

local definitions, endogenous to Pine Ridge. Furthermore, this type of assessment also remains nested within a dominant western discourse in the literature, whether it is debated in academic sources or local development initiatives.

Other studies by Native American scholars and social workers use or discuss the resilience framework in Native American contexts (Fleming and Ledogar 2008). It is usually used to describe initiatives of change tying to health and wellbeing (Anderson & Whyte, 2008; Gray et al., 2008) or families (Goodluck and Willeto 2009). It is very informative about individual processes of change in Native communities and uses resilience to describe psychological phenomena and their repercussions in local communities. It does describe cultural and spiritual components as determinants to native issues and to develop adaptation in front of risks. However, it barely touches the deeper questions of the construction process of the colonial discourse and its participation to maintaining the status quo. This suggests that Native American scholars seemingly see the interest of the resilience concept as a marker of individual strength but dismiss its relevance to debate issues of social change, resource management and development, as in non native literature.

Resilience and emancipation

Some resilience literature attempts to develop culturally and locally specific frameworks. In post-colonial contexts, these are often found to be contingent upon local liberation struggles. In Ahmed et al. (2009), resilience is used heuristically to debate violence prevention and conflict resolution in the Indian post-colonial context. The term is used as a proxy to debate the actual underlying subject, which is post-colonial self-determination. The discussion even yields a more appropriate local terminology;

"Satyagraha" to better illustrate conflict resolution from a culturally-appropriate terminology (Ahmed et al. 2009). Others endeavor to find key elements from indigenous knowledge designing the capacity to survive difficulties and grow, and define it in terms of resilience (Goodluck and Willeto 2009). Again, although many use the word, differences of understanding greatly vary. There is thus a distinction between thinking resilience as a system property, or as a goal towards a better society. The first conduces to binary assessment and dismissal of local efforts, the second to potentially find means to engage in social change.

Indeed, resilience is also found as a proxy for political emancipatory struggle, where it is then presented as a goal that should be promoted (Resilience Alliance 2007). Authors from the Resilience Alliance argue that resilience is a means to reach systemic sustainability and should be advocated, not for ecosystems or for social institutions per se, but for social and ecological system interactions (Adger 2003; Brand and Jax 2007; Resilience Alliance 2007). In these types of definitions, resilience becomes an operational extension of sustainability.

However, outside of literature of Native authorship, it carefully gets framed as such. For Adger (2003), "Resilience is not about promoting growth or change for its own sake. It is about promoting the ability to absorb shocks and stresses and still maintain the functioning of society and the integrity of the ecological systems" (Adger 2003). This nonetheless opens the definition to a wider consideration of what qualifies as hardship. Here, there is no need for natural disaster or extreme economic poverty to qualify as difficulty, resilience can be found in more subtle systemic functions: "coping with the vagaries of a variable and unpredictable physical environment requires resilience, but so

does coping with the vagaries of market instability that inevitably come with globalization" (Adger, 2003:3).

This is interesting for us because it locates resilience as a resistance to global capitalism and hence possibly allows for the expression of systemic alternatives. Here, economic growth is put back in place as a simple means to an end instead of the systemic immutability in which it is usually presented; on such grounds, resilience can then take the shape of political resistance and can thus include new forms of governance (Adger 2003), as for instance a grassroots level of operation. This perspective is noteworthy because it seems to caution a definition of resilience as the capacity to create alternatives. However, it does not fairly represent the literature.

What is wrong with resilience?

First, in the literature, resilience is rarely considered holistically and usually targets a particular "issue", such as resilience to mental trauma, environmental disasters, education, poverty, etc. Yet, in indigenous contexts, stakes are not just about socio-economic, psychological or ecological conditions; they are projections of peoples' present and future, which entails inter-mingled socio-economic, environmental, cultural and political claims at all societal levels. It also takes place on a space and time spectrum that is entirely dismissed by resilience literature.

Secondly, as a by-product of usual post-positivist scientific enquiry, resilience is often sought to be assessed and measured, especially in psychological research. In practice, it results in defining and instrumentalizing the capacity to "do well" in spite of adversity. Often time, resilience research thus becomes framed and conceptualized from observation measures implicitly erecting one model of success above all others (Ungar and Liebenberg

2011). Any essentialized assessment of resilience already predefines resilience as being what is socially recognized as "positive behaviors". It thus becomes a tool that labels entities as either resilient or failing. This seems problematic, because it possibly undermines local success. These "assessments" of resilience automatically erase from actual local behaviors the possibility to create alternative systems of knowing and doing than this of the dominant model.

Most importantly, it also overlooks the possibility that resilience as an objectifying construct reifies colonial dynamics. This is a particularly important point, as it constitutes one of the reasons why this research work is needed. However, the essentialization of terminology is not just one-sided. This dissertation will show how the specificities of "lakotaness" involve a certain essentialized projection of the capacity to "endure" or "survive", locally considered as a cultural trait. Here it is less the substance of resilience that is problematic than the acknowledgement of the way it is theorized and instrumentalized as endorsing power dynamics.

Last but not least, the word "resilience" is frequently used throughout the literature as a multi-tasking "name it all" formulation, which results in a myriad of etymological nuances that become clustered within academic disciplines. This not only holds "resilience" within an academic definition but it also possibly threatens the emergence of local meaning and the local legitimacy to label it. Yet, the concept may have some conceptual relevance, especially the notion of "community resilience" as defined by the psychological literature. It can build a consensual intuition on what is being focused on or analyzed, as I demonstrate in this research.

Thus, the resilience terminology shares the strengths and weaknesses of overused concepts; it induces a large but vague understanding of any contemporary issues. In order to avoid this trap, this research needed two fundamental elements; 1) let local perceptions define possible expressions of resilience and 2) a solid inter-disciplinary literature review to contextualize the representations of these expressions. This approach is also consistent with my commitment to participatory research (Bacon et. al., 2005: 5). From the beginning of the research, emerging field data showed that some concepts could be more appropriate to use than this of western-defined resilience. In early interviews, the word "wolakota" emerged as a relevant concept by a project manager who attempted to put a word on the strength and spirit of endurance of local people, even despite the constant structural stress, which I also heard from so many mouths. According to the respondent, "wolakota" means "being a Lakota", "living in a good way" and "being a good relative" (to be understood in a broad sense and related to the broad spiritual meaning of relative), but living in a good way seems to be correlated with particular values fostering inner strength, which this research unfolds.

To conclude with, most of the literature commits the mistake of alternatively treating resilience as a process and as a quality. On the one hand, conceptualizing resilience as a process might help describe processes of adversity and the local responses they yield. On the other hand, the instrumentalization of resilience as an acquired trait opens the door for the manipulation and reification of the colonial discourse, as discussed previously. The word resilience itself can only be used as a heuristic principle, not as a criteria or a quality assessed to be present or absent from institutional policies. Terms inherent to resilience as exposed in the literature such as "coping mechanisms" or "trauma" can prove relevant to

express specific local phenomenon. Yet, it is the instrumentalization and generalization of these terms to “explain resilience” that renders the use of the word perilous in Native country. Finally, the lack of exploration of the processes of resilience in context of post-colonial socio-economic struggles calls for this interdisciplinary review and mirrors the interest of this entire dissertation research.

The rest of this chapter draws a complementary inter-disciplinary literature review. While clarifying terminology and concepts, it identifies missing links and sets the necessary bases foundations to understand in depth the processes of grassroots social change in Pine Ridge and the argument of this dissertation. To build an inter-disciplinary literature review, the community-based development literature proves useful in assessing grassroots projects, understanding local action and the perspectives of outsider/insider actors. It explores research within community-based projects, and gives practical ideas to remain close to the community's interests. However, the community development literature generally fails to incorporate the colonial history of a place and people.

This is why this review needed a solid overview of postcolonial studies. However, these rarely include Native American cultural nuances, and at the exception of a few authors, barely on the practical implementation of social change. Understanding local dynamics of change induce to tie relations of power to practical subsistence and local to global economies. A significant literature on the development project and postdevelopmentalism serve this purpose and will better contextualize and strengthen our study’s findings. Since identity issues are prevalent in the way people articulate their responses to local hardships and social change, questions of identity and ethnicity needed to be incorporated in the literature review and add a solid element to understanding the

process of identity formation on the reservation. Logically, I also use Native American literature pertaining to Pine Ridge, the Lakota history, or more generally native vs. western relationships such as treaties and exchanges throughout this work as a contextualization tool. Finally, a review of Decolonizing methodologies makes explicit my epistemological and methodological commitment.

Community-based development and Participatory Action Research (PAR)

Alternative community-based development literature (Bopp and Bopp; 2010, Estrella, 2006; Chambers, 2009) fills a gap in this research, and provides an interesting framework to work with Native American communities. Indeed, overcoming the lacks of traditional local development literature, it moves beyond a developmentalist approach to allow real sustainable typologies to emerge. Contrasting with failing recipes of "economic development", Bopp and Bopp (2010) provide a useful principle-based conception of local development, which emphasize 16 guiding principles that should encourage locally relevant and sustainable projects and guarantee their ethical consistency in the meantime.

I also use specific literature specifically addressing grassroots dynamics, such as Willie, Ridini and Willard (2008) to address the stepwise components of the implementation of grassroots movements. Their acknowledgment of different stages of projects developments such as 1) Initiation, 2) Legitimation and 3) Implementation can be useful to analyze local projects processes, providing it fits into local definitions. The dimensions of empowerment (through "asset-based" initiatives using the concept of social capital), holistic thinking, fair governance and social sustainability are now integrated into the formulation of grassroots or small-scale projects throughout the world. These key concepts are conceptualized in local development literature under the appellation of

Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) (Estrella, 2006), which induces a necessary link to the importance of the concept of participation, in grassroots practice as in research. Practically, it is also a useful tool to enquire about the self-professed and applied ethics of any project. This type of community-based development literature encourages a proactive understanding of development and provides many case studies of which to bounce off what can be observed locally.

Bridging action to research, Participatory Action Research (PAR) is research that "generates both research results and change, or actions" and promotes broad participation in the process, leading to a fairer situation for all stakeholders (Bacon, et.al, 2005). The PAR cycle intends to create a direct link between the research outcomes and the research topic. "PAR is designed to work toward practical and community-valued solutions to community problems as well as to aid in the creation of mutual understanding among partners" (West et.al, 2008: 47). The combined association of empowerment and social sustainability is clearly forming a bridge with the resilience literature. Indeed, according to West et.al (2008), "PAR creates resilience; therefore, it behooves us to approach a community resilience enhancement project with a participatory action model" (47). Along with DTM (see below), it embodies the basis of my epistemology.

Defining indigenous identity

In the course of four years of research on the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River Indian Reservations, the issue of identity formation gradually became a fundamental theme. Although it was not included as an object of study in the original project, it imposed itself as the "elephant in the room" in any type of social interactions locally taking place. Generally

speaking, my local encounters could simply not address any type of local development issue without uncovering cultural and ethnic claims.

In an effort to increase my understanding of these dynamics, I produced a review of the key features of the existing literature on identity formation. For clarity purposes I follow the outline given by the themes of my research project. I thus use the problematic of indigenous identity formation as the main enquiry and dive more in depth in the broader literature whenever deemed necessary to fill the gaps. This review attempts to navigate the complexity of the processes underlying identity formation in indigenous contexts, and lay a solid base to elucidate questions pertaining to identity negotiation in the practice of local social change.

What is identity?

To begin with, the term "indigenous" identity already implies a statement that the aspect of identity that we are concerned with is "indigeneity". It already indicates an essentializing statement because we are qualifying identity with an attribute, "a type of" identity, here the qualification of "indigenous". Thus the term "indigenous identity" might have its limits to explain the processes underlying identity construction because it is constrained within a rigid category. That is why I complement this review with more general "identity" terms. Literature on identity processes and more specifically on the construction of ethnicity is very fruitful and will efficiently inform my discussion. Adjusting the lens of analysis will help me elucidate the key issues of indigenous identity as it ties to social change, not only as an essentialized and instrumental category, but also as the process of negotiation of the self within the concept of the group.

It is important to notice that however useful, the actual definition of ethnicity or ethnic identity is in itself problematic, as it was created as an etic western tool to differentiate western group features in opposition to the "other". The latin "ethnicus" semantically refers to heathens, or those who were neither Christian or Jew (Cornell & Hartmann, 2007:16). Thus, it was primarily concerned with a differentiation of religious nature, but significantly asserting an ethnic exceptionalist claim. "Identity" was then first expressed sociologically by Erikson in the context of an emerging postmodern "identity crisis", which clearly refers to identities politicized to enforce social change and acts of resistance (Brubaker and Cooper, 2010). Moving through time to more encompassing sociological definitions, the term took an entirely different value, and became more concerned with perceptions of common belonging than actual arbitrary grouping. It progressively moved from an exogenous assertion of inter-group difference to a subjective acknowledgement of intra-group similarities. Weber interestingly defines ethnicity as: "those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or custom or both, or because of the memories of colonization and migration; this belief must be important for the propagation of group formation; conversely, it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists" (Weber, 1978: 389).

This sets the path of considering ethnicity as a projected community, in Anderson's sense (1983) however based on members' representations. It does not preclude these internal assertions from being based on external judgment or insiders/outsiders relationships, but it does switch the analytical lens of group-making on group members themselves. It also clearly opens the door for group definitions shaped by colonial

relationships, which makes it particularly salient for our context. Unlike later reductionist definitions limiting ethnicity to "shared culture", thus disregarding the formation process of culture, Weber's allows for the relationship between individual group assertion and historical context to be represented. However, this definition remains imprecise as it can potentially categorize any type of group identities. I am here concerned with ethnic types of identities.

Cornell and Hartmann (2007) reify that common culture is linked but does not equate with common ethnicity and point at a nuance which links ethnicity to the idea of peoplehood. It is consistent with the definition given by Schermerhorn (1970), which states that an ethnic group is "a collectivity within a larger society having real or putative common ancestry, memories of a shared historical past, and a cultural focus on one or more symbolic elements defined as the epitome of their peoplehood" (1970:12). Here, key features of "peoplehood" include kinship, geographical concentration, religious affiliation, language and physical differences. This entails obvious concordances with the concept of peoplehood (that was defined to understand the "uniqueness" of indigenous identity (Holm, Pearson, & Chavis, 2003), as I will explain further. But any specific categories supposed to embody the specific traits of one "type of people" run the risk of essentialization.

For Anthias (2001), the naturalization of values, norms and social locations such as *ethnicity* is problematic, because it leads to an illusionary homogenization of the potential outcomes of individuals' unique combinations and potentially reifies lateral oppression. Thus, when *ethnicity* includes discriminatory practices towards the cultural specificities of an ethnic group, it can potentially reproduce discrimination. In other words, it reifies the

construction of an "ethnic issue" (Anthias, 2001:848). Rather, Anthias calls for a definition of social practices and outcomes contingent upon time and space. Instead, one can focus on more objective or neutral terminology. As such, as I will show, talking about "boundaries" or "differentiation" processes appear to be more consistent with a dynamic notion of identity.

Brubaker and Cooper (2000) warn against the overuse and misunderstanding of the word "identity" itself, deemed dismissive of both essentialist and processual accounts. Under the pretext of de-essentializing identities, "fluid" definitions also seem to prevent relevant analysis of actual categories impacting self-constructions. How can identity be multiple, constructed and yet singularly expressed? While critically exposing the different uses of the terminology, the authors advocate the use of alternative focuses, such as processes of grouping and group making, boundary-making, differentiation, etc. I defend the idea that the term of "identity" is not useful as a definition, although it might serve as a heuristic category to represent phenomenon tying to the constructions of selves and groups within social interaction.

Poststructuralist approaches consider the setting of fixed categories of ascription as conceptually wrong (Barth, 1967; Isaacs, 1989; Brubaker & Cooper, 2000). Instead, there should be no "neat boxes" in the study of identity (Isaacs, 1989: 45). According to Barth (1967), the fixed categorization of culture in patterns and customs impeded on anthropology's (and other social sciences) capacity to adequately portray social change, itself narrowed down to a fixed category of investigation.

With the development of "identity politics" in postmodernism, identity becomes both instrumental and more dynamic, yet still ignoring social context to study the fabric of

identity (Davis 2000). Following the epistemologically liberating movement initiated by this shift, the concept of identity gradually freed from its essentialist cage to represent more accurately the fluctuations it entails both as an ontological and processual term. In the 1960s and 1970s, the discourse became increasingly politicized and studies focused on the definition of difference and its recognition on the public stage. Authors such as Bauman, Harvey and Nagel shaped this rising current (Davis, 2000). That changing landscape of identity studies slowly moved towards micro-studies and from inter- towards intra-personal relationships. The new focus involved the discovery of the processes shaping the construction of the self.

These approaches should not be seen as mutually exclusive definitions of a concept of identity but rather as complementary explanations shedding light on different aspects of identity construction. On the one hand, essentialist perspectives enlighten our understanding of the instrumentalization and capitalization of identity in the indigenous context, either as a part of the quest for individuals' self-definition or as part of the political economic struggle for sovereignty and self-determination. On the other hand, processual approaches look into the processes underlying the construction of identities. When put down simply, the first looks at the function of identities, then considered as a vehicle whereas the second investigates its mechanisms, then looking at the engine of identity production.

Indigenous identity: dichotomization and politicization of group claims

When addressing "indigenous identity" one enters a very "slippery slope", without first realizing it. Layers of complexity are gradually uncovered. One reality is that indigenous identity entails specificities, both in terms of cultural environment and in

perceptions. The novice eye will only perceive "objective" differences. It will "see" that:

Native identity shows through different symbolic expressions, of all types:

- *Visual*: Skin color, eye/ hair color, size of hair, dresscode, wearing traditional symbols (such as medicine wheels, sage burning, beadwork…)

Yet, any quality time spent within local social interactions and careful observations will notice the presence of other identity elements:

- *Geographical/Time and place*: place of birth, upbringing, living (on rez/outside rez), family trees tying to the same land for generations, etc.
- *Verbo-linguistic*: Via the knowledge and use of Lakota language, people's naming
- *Ontological/spiritual*: religion, knowledge of traditional myths, beliefs system, moral codes
- *Metaphorical:* Iyeska/Native dichotomy becomes an expression of alternative identity to "being white", and can involve assumptions such as productivist vs. sustainable ethos (see chapter 5).

One can now realize that indigeneity is not just about ethnicity but above all about complex systems of ethos, models of livelihood and representations of existence. Yet, the attention given to native identity in research and policy remains on problematizing indigenous identity as political action and act of cultural resurgence or defiance. Indeed, "indigenous identity politics" usually dominate the discourse. This can be partially explained by the historical process of indigenous identity early created and maintained within a dichotomous and colonial relationship with white settlers, as I will further develop.

To this day, indigenous identity tends to be considered, studied and analyzed through the lens of the colonial differentiation history of the construction of this country, i.e. through the lens of the Other, as seen in postcolonial studies. This history built a fairly thick narrative of indigenous identity existing "in opposition" or in regards to colonial white identity, setting the latter as the referential. Worse, "logics of assimilation" (Wolfe, 2006) and boarding schools (Littlemoon 2009) that enforced the idea of "killing the Indian,

saving the child", are the evidence of the overt goal of Indian Affairs policies to have aimed at destroying Native Identity at the time (Freeman 2012). Fitzgerald (2007) refers to this process of differential post-colonial existence the "racialization of institutional powers", making Native Identity only exist exogenously within this dichotomy.

Pan Indianism

The unexpected rise of the relevance of ethnicity occurred despite post-world war assumptions about the supposed incremental homogenization of humanity due to the spread of global culture. Although questioned by authors such as Burgess, this hypothesis was confirmed widely as research showed that exposure to ethnic diversity did not necessarily mean a change of people's norms (Geerts, 1963). Barth (1967) attempts to show that cultural encounters do not result in the homogenization of all cultures. He states that ethnic distinctions are not maintained due to a lack of inter-ethnic contact, which has tremendous theoretical consequences. It implies that ethnicity may endure on different grounds than through a mechanical and inevitable process of cultural encounters. It also considers that group differences are not solely based on isolated responses to geographical and environmental factors but instead heavily relies on the history of inter-groups relations, as I will further elaborate on.

What is interesting to notice is the strong development of a pan-Indian social movement, widely inspired from the civil rights movements in the United States (Nagel 1997; Roos et al. 1980; Weaver 2001). Cornell (1988) identifies the birth of a "supratribal indigenous consciousness". He takes a constructivist stand by studying indigenous identity through the lens of colonial history and in terms of the mobilization of power occurring through identity negotiation. Indigenous identity is envisioned as synonym to native

political activism. Cornell navigates through variations of power mobilization since conquest time to determine the factors of the "resurgence" of indigenous identity, located around sovereignty claims.

Niezen (2000; 2004) presents a concept referred to as "indigenism" and defined as: "the international movement that aspires to promote and protect the rights of the world's 'first peoples.'" (Niezen, 2004:Chapter 1; Niezen & Maybury-lewis, 2000). He makes a case for the global political awareness of Indigenous peoples throughout the world, identifying geographical patterns, along with a difficulty for indigenous groups to be heard and organize politically in "postcolonial" and developing countries. The assumption is that since "postcolonial" countries already defined their ethnic categorization in contrast with the western white colonizer (British, French, Portuguese, etc.) or in the case of third world countries in regards to western white developmentalism, a strong dichotomization of identity prevails on the geopolitical stage.

In *At the Risk of Being Heard: Identity, Indigenous Rights, and Postcolonial States* (2003), identity is also clearly envisioned through the prism of indigenous empowerment in the form of conflict over land control, economic development, cultural definitions, etc. The indigenous struggle is presented as paradoxical because nested within a clear exposure to higher risks than their non-indigenous counterparts when exposed on the public stage, yet risking worse by non-appearing at all, as it subsequently would erase their voice from the international stage.

This lens considers indigenous identity via their visibility in the eyes of influential international entities from an exogenous perspective shaped by external macro-conditions (Cohen 2000; Cornell 1988; Cornell and Hartmann 2007; Nagel 1997, 2012b). In this type

of claim, identity becomes significant if considered so by the main discourse shareholders. Other authors look at identity from this perspective, such as Corntassel (2003), who focuses on the ethnonationalist approaches to rearticulating Indigenous identity and more generally in the interaction between nationalism and ethnic politics.

Following a more constructivist approach, Havard (2007) tries to understand attempts to redefine collective identity in the aftermath of colonization, especially following the stakes of redefining the "us". He notices people's attachments to identity narratives and how it plays out in their mobilization/politicization. (Geertz 1963) elaborates on the notion of "primordial attachments". Here, the process of identity-making through differentiation is presented as a political divide between nationalist versus regionalist or local claims when underlying claims actually demand 1) identity to be publically acknowledged within national territories (which can be explained by the distortion that the creation of nation-states provoked in territories initially shared by different groups) and 2) social justice and improvement of living conditions in the light of obvious inter-ethnic discrepancies. Challenges of such minorities often fall into how to partake and foster a real pluralist political communication even within the "same" group.

In that vein, Nagel (2012), who looks at the historical and structural context of the Native identity renewal, is concerned with Native population self-ascription. She attempts to explain the trend of growing Indian demographics, which somewhat diverts the focus from reservations' identities to the benefit of off reservations urban Natives in quest for identification. A sound example of that trend is the rise of the AIM (American Indian Movement) in the 1970s. Made up of mostly urban non-enrolled Natives, this movement actively participated into creating the pan-Indian consciousness because of members' use

of media coverage. It symbolically culminated at the occupation of Wounded Knee in 1973 as an ultimate claim for sovereignty and treaty rights (Demallie 1982; Nagel 2012a, 2012b; Roos et al. 1980; Weaver 2001). Yet, the untold part of the story remains that local residents of Wounded mostly disagreed with the long siege that took hold of their community and made irreparable damages, which symbolizes the recurrent dismissal of local voices in the operationalization of Lakota voices.

Negotiating identity in indigenous contexts

Asserting "sameness"

This leaves us with many questions left unanswered by the historical politicization of indigenous identity. Among those are: who is indigenous? What does being indigenous entail? How are these boundaries created and maintained or challenged? Here I look at the theoretical concepts brought in by the literature. First, I explore the idea of the assertion of the group. Consensus upon the definition of the group seems to be a key component of collective identity formation, which also dynamically interacts with individual identity, as I will explain. The idea of the group "thrives" on a joint feeling of social belonging, of "agreement of spirits" (Alfred and Corntassel 2005). This level of cohesion, similar to a Durkheimian "collective conscience", relies on the creation of the idea of community around communal ethos, symbolically constructed through history and mythology (Gergen and Gergen 1983; Havard 2007; Nagel 2012b). The use of symbolic repertoires (Lamont 2002; Lamont and Molnar 2002) crystallizes cultural projections, validating the assertion of "the group".

The title of my research, "Wolakota", which refers to the group self-ascribed name in its native tongue, also forms a strong cultural repertoire. It is a positive endogenous

assertion of collective ethos in and of itself. Part of the consensual power of the group enables it to perceive itself as having its own existence, constructed separately from others. It exists while ignoring the mechanisms inherent in its formation, such as the concept of differentiation. The heavy reliance on cultural repertoires (Lamont 2002) such as creation myths embodies that phenomenon. Indeed, a creation myth, such as this attributing the birth of the Lakota people to an emergence from the ground of the Black Hills (Sundstrom 1996) marks the people's existence in an absolute framework, as if it was not defined by anything else than itself.

In indigenous contexts, such group assertions are theorized by authors such as Holm et al. (2003) via constructed matrixes that exemplify it, such as the term of *peoplehood*. The term *peoplehood* focuses on the interconnectedness of Land, language, sacred history and religion as a methodology to study structural features of Indigenous groups. The *peoplehood* matrix illustrates the paradigm by representing each factor by a circle, linked together by dialectical arrows, forming a "medicine wheel". This paradigm underlines the creation of collective ethos and social cohesion in indigenous groups within these four features. Interestingly for this review, it nests the concept of indigenous identity within environmental features such as land and language. However, this focus on endogenous sense of "groupness" does not address change and does not explain why identity is modified at the contact of the other. It loses focus on the mechanism of the construction of the group, and therefore fails to account for the complexity of nuances present within Lakota and more broadly indigenous context.

Inter-group relations

Cultural unity is a result of social group organization and interactions (Barth, 1969). This statement allows for a variety of nuances of cultural definitions and could provide an explanation for the diversity of strength and forms of cultural models relative to the context in which they are produced. It looks at the meaning and importance of ethnic features to members. "To the extent that actors use ethnic identities to categorize themselves and others for purposes of interaction, they form ethnic groups in this organizational sense" (Barth, 1969:13). Considering only the definition through a model of "ascription", ethnic units are maintained through the relevance of ethnic boundaries. In this theory, the focus is not on group recruitment and change but on the continual validation of group norms.

Beyond socio-economic conditions and pressures within and between groups, the most influential for the group maintenance is its political status in regard to other groups and how likely is this status to be able to change (Isaacs, 1989:40). This perspective accounts for power structure inherent to inter-groups dynamics. Focusing on the power aspect of the relationship avoids the trap of narrowing down group formations to the products of either economic dynamics, religious divides, cultural habits etc., that are but local manifestations of larger groups processes tying to power exchanges. In indigenous contexts where identity is often a complex product of different aspects (economic, religious, colonial, social, environmental, etc.), such focus on power can provide a framework of expression of these nuances and their intersection and envisions group relations through a Foucauldian lens of analysis.

Castile (1996) insists on how Indianity was constructed as an economic subordinate to the United States: "The key problem is the special relationship of Native Americans to the federal government, which is for better or for worse unlike that of any other ethnic group" (Castile, 1996:747), which makes it both special and more subject to its definition by outsiders. Alfred and Corntassel (2005) highlight that the simple appellation of "Indigenous" refers to a place-based consideration of identity, inherently built in opposition/dichotomy with the people who come to invade, colonize that same place. Consequently, Indigenous struggle for identity recognition are fundamentally nested within an opposition to colonial forces, a struggle against cultural assimilation and "to survive as their own people" (Taylor 2002). Ethnic group norms thus become pushed within this dichotomization process, resulting into indigenous individuals often asserting a feeling of having to choose between incompatible identities (Eastman 2009), as "being made of a white and red wolf fighting", translating into a choice between assimilation and traditionalism.

Because of the absence of equal inter-ethnic exchange between indigenous groups and the countries that come to "hold them" as they take over the land, they can be considered as what Barth (1969) refers to as "pariah". Most indigenous groups have been subordinated to dominant colonial entities, now setting the acceptable cultural norms within specific geographical boundaries, i.e the US. The legitimacy of these dominant groups became solely based on their undisputable claim to land. Then, integrating indigenous groups within fair inter-ethnic communication with the dominant groups inherently endangers the legitimacy of the dominance of the latter. Consequently indigenous groups are instead deprived on the long-term from participation on the stage of

the country's cultural diversity. It is salient in the United States, where other ethnic groups have more public recognition and opportunities for expression (although not necessarily equality) than Native Americans. Unlike the latter, other ethnic groups do not endanger the legitimacy of dominant western white hegemony to the same degree, which is here a clear result of inter-group colonial history.

Additionally, the still prevalent reign of nation states as the only relevant entity on the international stage hinders serious discussion on the recognition of Indigenous sovereignty claims. In reaction, indigenous claims generally revolve around the affirmation of Indigenous cultural difference and political claims of self-determination and its acknowledgement by the international community. Since the goal here is global recognition, these claims remain performed with the same symbols and codes as these used by states, thus reflecting upon Foucault's theory on the operationalization of the response of oppressed groups within the mainstream ethos (Kurkiala 2002). The limits of such an approach to identity is 1) a purely constructivist approach and 2) a reification of the definition of identity from the outsider perspective and in the terms that the colonizer imposed on the "colonized". Thus, in opposition to the previous section on endogenous sameness, it points at a "reactionary" sense of the group.

Cohen (2000) takes issue with the construction of the group from an assumed unilateral definition. Instead, groups follow cross-boundary transaction contingent upon "which side they are on". The expression "one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter" takes all its meaning. Regardless of notions of righteousness, ach "side" sees different issues as being at stake. Beyond simple dichotomies such as powerful/powerless, central versus peripheral etc., each group can have distinct targets regarding the other

(Cohen 2000). Thus, missionaries would clearly embody their religious mission while for the Natives, survival or cultural protection would be at stake. This can help explain various group interests among the diverse actors who participate in grassroots social change, and it also opens the framework to more processual considerations of identity mechanisms, such as boundaries.

Us, them and boundary-making

Cornell and Hartmann (2007) focus on the elements within ethnicity construction that defines the "we" vs. "they", otherwise called the "us" versus "them", or the process of differentiation. What it considers is the gap between the self and the Other. First, how "us" is different from "them"? What is the purpose of this differentiation/distantiation from what/who appears different? Why do we come to understand identities as objective constructs with clear-cut boundaries? Lamont (2002) explains that differentiation comes from the "meaning-making" inferences made by people to define sameness as opposed to otherness and with the relative salience of structural (cultural, socioeconomic, moral) characteristics. These processes can be based on assumptions about characteristics of value or worth of otherness compared to sameness or to "people like us" versus others. The process of differentiation allows for identity formation and reification through self and group validation. Social psychologists such as Brewer (1986) and Tajfel and Turner (1985) analyzed the differentiation process as one attributing in-group/out-group comparison to the pressure of individuals to reify one's own group superiority to others.

The study of the differentiation process is best answered through the lens of boundary-work (Lamont & Fournier, 1992; Lamont & Molnar, 2002; Tilly, 2004; Barth, 1969; Wimmer, 2008). The interest of boundary work is that it focuses on the property of

boundaries and their effects, while having integrated the need for "groupness" and the changes of properties. It also allows for the recognition of the effect of power and inequality. Boundaries fluctuate; they construct mobile dichotomies instead of reifying fixed binary categories. This work also allows for cross-disciplinary analysis and reconciles micro and macro-level analyses. Boundaries can be looked at from many different angles.

Lamont & Fournier (1992) were concerned with the power of culture in maintaining boundaries and subsequent inequality. Specifically, looking at processes of inclusion/exclusion in particular boundaries shaping race and gender, their work shows the endurance of boundaries through the institutionalization and the legitimation of discourse and symbols. Lamont and Molnar (2002) states that group identification must be internally defined and establish sameness but also being sanctified by otherness as being different in order to fully exist (2002:170).

Nagel (2014) also focuses on a dynamic processual account of identity formation and transformation, acknowledging structure and agency to reciprocally express, yet considering culture as a tool for the creation of collective meaning. Issues of boundaries, and more generally ethnic identity is created and recreated around projected rewards or sanctions. The process can be internal, when groups self-ascribe themselves around projected meanings and goals. Group definitions also come from outside judgments socially ascribing identities.

Ethnic identity is here perceived as a "habitus", both constructed and constructing specific behaviors. This definition is particularly salient to indigenous context. It exemplifies the dynamic aspect of the perception of Lakota identity in the Pine Ridge

reservation, and allows for its flexible definition, as a grouping both endogenously defined and exogenously constrained, enabling and debilitating.

Wimmer (2008) is even more concerned with boundary changes. He assumes that actors have to react to existing boundaries, to overcome or reinforce them, shift them, promote them, etc. He offers a brilliant demonstration of how these boundaries changes allow for the modification of individual and collective identities, at different scales and within different social contexts. Similarly, Tilly (2004) studies within boundary support and cross-boundary transactions. It usefully distinguishes between what causes social boundaries to change such as encounters or impositions, and the nature of that change such as activation or deactivation of specific traits. This description goes deep into the property of boundaries.

Thus, it seems that ethnic boundaries are maintained or challenged through the reification of ethnic dichotomizations via the mediation of group norms inter-personal validation (Barth, 1969). Within this dichotomization, the individual adoption of norms associated with "otherness" becomes perceived as an intrinsic violation of intra-group norms, which in turn encourages or discourages types of personal behaviors. Dichotomization does not mean always mean violation of group norms and violation of group norms does not necessarily mean inter-group enmity or rejection.

In practical terms, if the boundary is inclusive, such as the environmental consciousness found in grassroots projects in Pine Ridge, then the adoption of norms of otherness such as non-native green energy or exogenously designed sustainable housing does not threaten the group boundary itself. However, the nature of the same boundary can become exclusive if adoption of "otherness" norms clearly opposes the group norms. For

instance, the same boundary of environmental consciousness becomes a clear cut rejection if the individual adopts norms clearly annihilating the collective assumption held by that norm, such as working for the KLX keystone pipeline.

Therefore, boundaries are truly flexible, which illustrates the fact that the nature of the group relations resulting of boundary-making depends on the nature of the boundary rather than the presence of a boundary itself. Additionally, research has shown that boundaries can enable communication across communities (Lamont & Molnar, 2002:180), because they shape the coherence of relational aspects. Lamont and Molnar hereby point out that ethnic stratification is not only concerned with positionality, but also with relationality. Social boundaries inherit symbolic boundaries to create not only social exclusion, but also feelings of membership. One of the advantages of studying boundaries is the recognition that these boundaries are factors of disadvantages and opportunities.

We are therefore I am

Tajfel & Turner, (1979) defined the concept of "social identity theory" assessing how identity ties to processes of self-categorization. This analysis can be used for a wide range of social interactions. Howard (2000) sees identity as social cognition taking place within symbolic interaction. Hence, her conception states identity as multiple and ever changing, although she has a tendency to reify essentialized categories in here work. She also studies how the group member fits is and maintains its individuality.

At the individual level, basic group identity performs two functions; it gives a sense of belongingness and builds self-esteem (Isaacs, 1989: 42). Consequently, the likelihood of individuals to challenge group norms in behaviors depends on how it affects their personal sense of belongingness and builds self-esteem. Yet, these measures do not require a higher

order of consideration. Isaacs claims: “there have been happy slaves”. However, the idea of “the basic group” is that it represents “the safe place”, the home, where despite an individual’s will to change inside norms or abandon it, it nonetheless remains a place of automatic belonging, that no-one can take away from you. The process of self-esteem is often overlooked as an external process. By looking at individuals’ constructions of meaning and how it defines inner self-esteem and belongingness, one must truly account for inward identity dynamics. Eventually the very micro-level is where the process of the creation and reification of group boundaries operate. Isaacs advocates the “inwardness of group identity” (Isaacs, 1989: 45) to provide further insights into group and group boundaries dynamics and the human experience of social life in general. It also sets the tone for the primordialist approach, which remains one of the most influential in the literature.

Some key insights pertaining to the micro level and this paper’s topic also come from looking at the challenges faced by particular types of people. In *identity and social change*, Davis (2000) uses the example of individuals going through therapy to exemplify some of the challenges faced by people having encountered traumatic events and how it challenges their self-construction. This particularly applies to our context. Indeed, adult survivors undertake therapy in order to heal the self feeling left out from mainstream society. Davis (2000) shows how healing occurs through 1) resocialization, 2) storytelling to appropriate one’s own self-definitions, in other words to rebuilding of how to relate to oneself and to others. In this conscious process alone can occur real reempowerment of the self. He quotes Calhoun to describe the human need to relate to others; “We are not simply aware of ourselves, we matter to ourselves in very basic ways” (Calhoun, 1991:237). This

analysis obviously reminds me of the notion of community resilience in indigenous contexts (Belcourt-Dittloff 2006b; Kirmayer et al. 2009).

Finally, the idea of belonging is further explored when by Meinhof and Galasinski (2005) in a discourse analysis of narratives in post-war Polish/German relations. Language is found salient in creating identification, even though oftentimes confusing and sometimes presenting self-contradictions. This idea is reified by Gergen & Gergen (1983), who present the powerful idea of micro versus macro-narratives. They consider how identities are reflected through narratives carried by the self and how these narratives can be micro or macro, progressive or negative (meaning participating into positive vs. negative perception of the self). The general view of that perspective states that people enter social relationships with a variety of narratives at their disposal but there are no fixed temporal parameters. This means that behaviors/personal narratives can relate to long periods of time or to very short, succinct events. This is what these authors call micronarratives and macronarratives. This proves a very interesting framework to link identity negotiation with social action enabling social change. Narratives become vectors of projected change in multiple contexts and scales.

Identity as political mobilization

Schouls, (2011) look at aboriginal identity in Canada and how it is intrinsically constructed around a claim for self-governance, denouncing the essentialization of aboriginal identity on the political stage and how this focus on the national stage allows Canada to never really integrate First Nations within their ideal of the pluralist state. The book defines self-governance as tying to groups' rights to define themselves. Canadian's strategy to reduce indigenous claims to some fixed cultural traits to protect for the sake of

the country's ethnic diversity obviously diverts the public discourse away from the real political issue behind First Nations/Canadian relationships. The effect is a diversion trick avoiding nation-states governments to tackle the accountability they owe to Indigenous nations in regards to their colonial history. This phenomenon, highly present in most Indigenous contexts, leaves a lingering impression of non-political existence to Indigenous groups. This, in turn, impacts groups' presentation (of selves) and forces the need for instrumental cultural display as the only mean to mark differentiation and therefore distinct existence from the dominant group. The reification of us versus them therefore serves as a tool for mobilization (Simon 2011).

Although deploring the need for the instrumentalization/politicization of identity in this particular framework, I must acknowledge that theoretical debates have little relevance when the negotiation of identity becomes a social issue, with real life consequences. Indigenous identity is inherently political due to colonial history. It thereby imposes itself as a highly essentializing statement, instrumentalizing the construction of indigenous identity as a tool to redefine power structure. This becomes both its strength and weakness; 1) weakness because it essentializes and therefore reduces the complexity of identity dynamics and 2) strength because it enables it as an action category. This acknowledgment highlights the endless debate between 1) theoretically relevant yet impractical poststructuralist definitions of identity and 2) very useful constructs to connect indigenous identity formation to collective action. As a researcher fundamentally attached to Participatory Action Research and Public Sociology, I consider it an ethical responsibility to attempt to bridge that gap.

Isaacs (Isaacs 1989) provides a quote from Francis Bacon defining human understanding as a false mirror distorting the nature of things via its own nature. While tying to misrepresentation and its influence on inter-group relationships, I believe this claim applies to academic approaches in general. The remedy prescribed against the "ethnocentrism of the scientist"- is reflexivity in the sense of awareness (Wacquant, 1989: 35) and Bourdieu's recommendation (Wacquant 1989) to 1) uncover truths of this world while 2) acknowledging and acting upon ongoing social struggles. Once the myth of scientific objectivity is fully overcome, the researcher can truly develop reflexivity and commit to a sociology-for-action, which both considers theoretical constructs and solutions for inequality struggles.

From the "development project" to Postdevelopmentalism

Initiating the development project

The 20th century witnessed the progressive rise of capitalism as the new economic and ideological world order (Hoogvelt 2001; McMichael 2012; Peet and Hartwick 2009). In the beginning of the century, Keynesian Fordism and the spread of mass production strengthened industrialization in Europe and initiated the construction of the "development project" (McMichael 2012); a comprehensive societal model based upon prerequisite beliefs: 1) that Man is Homo Oeconomicus; a species whose nature is based upon individual interest and a natural desire for economic production and capital accumulation (Mill 1901) and 2) that the world we live in is but one step in the constant stepwise evolution of humanity (Rostow 1959). Accompanied by social darwinism, this belief system erected the idea that human progress is a by-product of economic development.

The "development project" thus started as an ideology relying upon the progressive expansion of industrialization and modernization throughout the world as the "best human system possible" alias mode of production. Indeed, that very project was nested within a deep "belief in the viability and desirability of economic progress" (Peet and Hartwick, 2009:3). This conception was informed by the idea of an unlimited access to world resources and the necessity for human beings to exploit them for his prosperity. It organized world power dynamics around the capacity of nation-states to reach different levels of economic "development", the leaders of which thus being considered as guides to be followed to reach the ultimate stage of human progress (Hoogvelt 2001; McMichael 2012); this of Western societies.

The system was reified by European knowledge production, which created a culture of highly functional bureaucracies around the use of reason and economic rationality (Zimmerman 2006), while dismissing traditional knowledge and epistemologies. Modernization and development theories emerged to legitimize that movement. The post-world war II era witnessed the weakening of European economic leverage and the subsequent birth of the United States as the new world economic leader -or as I explain below world-system hegemon (Taylor 1996)-, which materialized the "development project" as the foundation of the new world order (McMichael 2012). Mass communication spread and fostered a global culture of development (Castells 2000).

Modernization theory considers world power distribution as a by-product of economic development, thereby legitimizing global inequalities. Indeed, as a good neo-classical economic theory, it assumes nation-states position on the global market as subsequent to how hard they manage to create comparative advantages for themselves.

Global inequalities are thus perceived as unfortunate misjudgments from states that all had a fair shot at the competition, thereby also dichotomizing international world relations between the righteous "developed" vs. the others (Hoogvelt 2001; McMichael 2012). The "development project" as a self-justifying ideology temporarily managed to switch focus from colonial history to economic development as the most valid explanation for systemic inequalities. In the 1950s and 1960s, modernization theory remained the dominant paradigm as a justification for the post-Marshallization/Americanization of the world economy. It was accompanied by a strong belief in the "natural" association of economic developmentalism and democratization, where the existence of one was seen as paramount to the existence of the other.

The rise of anti-imperialist thought

Critiques arose under the form of "dependency theories", that were first in the Western literature to point out the systemic inequalities in countries' access to development and repartition of wealth (Hoogvelt, 2001:37). They introduced the notions of "core" and "peripheries" -which would later be appropriated by world-system theorists- in reference to wealthy states exploiting resources from the poorer. It above all initiated the development of an anti-imperialist critique and brought the realization that international relations of power take roots within external ties between colonial states and colonies that redefined the nature of world trade (McMichael, 2012). The "development project" started to be recognized and subsequently theorized as a historical process that set the international division of labor and the benefits of economic production within a binary construction of the world embedded in colonial dynamics. What followed yielded different disciplinary sub-branches and epistemologies.

World-system theory (WST) became a popular political economic worldview that uses historical materialism and imperialism to explain world power relations. Here, blocks of countries form relatively culturally homogenous platforms engaging in economic exchange that give birth to distinct "world-systems". These world-systems solidify and create evolving relations of power contingent upon economic flows between a "core", its peripheries and semi-peripheries. The historian Fernand Braudel (Braudel 1979) focused on the survival needs of world-systems and how it pushed them to either practice intensive (cf. China) or expansive (cf. Europe) agriculture. He thus discussed the emergence of the European world-system as a dominating hegemon due to its internal competition for expansion and land grab, which in turn provided an explanation for colonizing and exploiting resources of America and Africa. Here appeared the first direct analytical link between European accumulation of wealth and the theft of other countries' resources, which greatly contradicted the myth installed by the development project that wealth and growth was a result of fair market competition.

Wallerstein (1979), whose name is often associated with WST, pushed the analysis further by analyzing global capitalism as a direct consequence of the post-war installation of the US as the world hegemon. The latter is thought to be declining, but nonetheless responsible for crystallizing economic flows within monopolies and unequal relations of power. Taylor (1996) provides a more modern account of WST by studying the rise and fall of hegemons and using patterns to identify the US as a falling hegemon, yet expectedly acknowledging that it remains in denial until new power dynamics take place. In this configuration, though, the phenomenon of globalization breaks the original pattern of

cycles and might maintain the US hegemon through the reification of its most powerful ideology; global capitalism.

Other authors aimed at critically understanding the nature of global capitalism. Polanyi created an interesting framework, which will later serve my analysis in this dissertation. Through The Great Transformation (Polanyi 2001), Polanyi aims at presenting capitalism as a systemic anomaly, which occurred because of the "disembeddedness" of society. Turning away from a materialist determinism for capitalism, he accounted more for the meaning and process of societal production within the frame of the market. He claims that the impasse reached by liberal economy is less due to the market in itself than to the emphasis put on it: "The true criticism of market society is not that it was based on economics- in a sense, every and any society must be based on it- but that its economy was based-on self interest" (Polanyi, 2001: 257).

Whereas Polanyi's work newly places the neoclassical "dreamers" expecting the market to self-regulate itself in a utopian position, it also desacralizes the economy by reestablishing its purpose; no more than a means given to human societies to progress. In that frame, "industrial civilization will last long after capitalism has failed" (Polanyi, 2001:258), and is no longer regarded as a path to a market-centric economy. The way to challenge power dynamics is for Polanyi to take the means of production out of the market, or, in other terms, to "reembedd" economy within society. To that end, we need to take the three pillars of capitalism, namely land, work and money "out of the market", and reset them within a human-based societal project (Polanyi, 2001:259-266).

Postdevelopmentalism

In the 1970s, the world is characterized by a general delusion about the development project, and the recognition by third-world areas that they do not occupy a transitional space but rather the "structural position of irrelevance" (Hoogvelt, 2001:92). It led to the emergence of deeper critiques, later characterized under the overarching appellation of "postdevelopmentalism", as opposed to epistemologies praising or not questioning the "development project". They entail practically and theoretically different epistemologies, but converge in a belief in the fundamental contradictions and unsustainability of the development project. They consider that "the core assumption of both liberal and neo-Marxist theories was that the capitalist system, or the world market system, was inherently expansive in character" (Hoogvelt, 2001:63), and that the debate for both parties consequently revolved around the more or less fair redistribution of wealth. Instead, postdevelopmentalist theories aim at searching for a new societal paradigm (McMichael 2012).

The 1980s and 1990s first witnessed academic discussions around alternatives to the development project (McMichael 2012). The creation of think tanks such as the Club or Rome in 1968 was meant to gather concerned academics to theorize alternatives to capitalism. Authors such as Sachs (1992) and Latouche (1991) famously question the notion of utilitarian development and its practical failure to offer a cohesive better world for all humanity. Development as a systemically unjust and socially constructed ideology is debated and alternatives aim at replacing notions of rational interest with those of solidarity to base a new economic model around collective well-being in replacement of individual consumerism.

Latouche is considered one of the prominent members of the Degrowth movement and also highlights the responsibility of social sciences by supporting the "Anti-utilitarian movement in social sciences". Strong post-developmentalist claims indeed show incompatibility with "armchair" social science and entail activist ramifications for authors. They illustrate the concept of holistic social change, where it is not purely envisioned as an analytic category or an object of study but rather as a way to "enact" an alternative future (Law and Urry 2011).

Less extreme paradigms yet critical of utilitarian economics envision alternatives to be a "sustainable" kind of development, giving birth to the term that we know today and to movements such as Social and Solidarity Economics (SSE). Barely theorized in the United States, it is however a thriving sector in Europe, Canada, Latin America and North Africa for its ability to palliate to the defects of the capitalist market. It comprises a wide variety of activities embodying alternative values and practices to mainstream profit-based capitalism. Made of a combination of Social Economics and Solidarity Economics, it builds on the 1987 Brundtland report's (1987) definition of sustainable development to create a future based on the balance of the three pillars of sustainability: Economy, Environment and Society.

SSE entails many definitions but as a truly pluralistic paradigm, these mostly revolve around principle-based approaches rather than a single recipe and therefore exemplify a true poststructuralist approach. Recalling from a Polanyian perspective, where the issue is not the market itself but rather the condition of the market as "disembedded" from the rest of society, it aims at "putting the human back at the center" of economy, especially for marginalized populations (Bélanger & Fournier, 1997:148). It recalls from a deep

Polanyian perspective (Polanyi 2001). SSE bases its rationale on principles of action, directed towards social change and through the decommodification of labor, land and money (Burawoy, 2007) to reverse the current trend and create a better future for humanity.

Despite an increasing consensus upon the fundamentally unsustainable nature of global capitalism as we know it, development theories endure, because of its inherent capacities to recycle itself and blame its failures to adjustable variables instead of its foundations, thus perpetually self-reifying itself (Boltanski and Thévenot 1998). What Schuurman (2009) calls the "twilight zone" embodies this theoretical space where new development theory remains stuck in constant reiteration of new ways to adapt neoliberalism to emerging challenges, whereas critical theories argue towards an anti-systemic critique targeting eurocentric appropriations of power and wealth (Schuurman, 2009:835, Corbridge, 2007). On the one hand, neoliberal theories work on reinforcing old ideas with new apparatus and hold on to US hegemonic power, which reified ideological functional disparities. On the other hand, critical postdevelopment theories advocate change in theory and practice, which entails reflexivity, the acknowledgement that "knowledge is power" and "decentering" to allow marginalized and creative perspectives to be expressed (Schuurman, 2009: 836).

I have presented development theories and their alternatives, and the existence of distinct ontological models that greatly affect world and local economies. In this dissertation, I show how these build paradoxes that have direct consequences in the field as observed in the struggles of grassroots projects. Yet, this literature review remains incomplete. Indeed, in the aforementioned theories, whereas colonialism is sometimes

identified as one of the reasons for the construction and maintenance of European capitalist hegemon, responses are not really envisioned from a colonized's perspective. When acknowledged, the colonial relationship remains analyzed from a macro structural framework. Yet, "postcolonial is no longer structural but discursive. That is to say, it is the participation in the discourse that defines the postcolonial" (Hoogvelt, 2001: 168). This indicates political and identity issues that go way beyond the economic factor. Additionally, understanding local development, social change and local responses to colonial relations calls for pluralistic answers because it must not only be macro-theorized, but nested within all its social, economic and environmental components.

Postcolonial studies and coloniality

Postcolonial studies appeared in the end of the 20th century as a response to the conceptual lack left by the physical decolonization of European colonies. It designates the critical discourse which "thematize issues emerging from colonial relations and their aftermath" (Hoogvelt, 2001:167). It engages in "a radical rethink and reformulation of forms of knowledge and social identities" that were till then "authored and authorized by colonialism and Western domination" (Hoogvelt, 2001:170). Moving beyond anti-colonial nationalist theories, the postcolonial movement inscribes itself in an emancipatory struggle.

Arif Dirlik locates its beginning to "when third-world intellectuals have arrived in First World academe" (Dirlik 1994). This statement embodies the struggle nature of postcolonial studies, and underlines the importance given to challenging power dynamics and giving "a voice to the oppressed". It also aims at deconstructing words, labels and texts over which dominant groups had a monopoly, thus rewriting historicism. Led by Third-

world authors (Fanon 2008; Fanon, Sartre, and Chaliand 1991; Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o 1986; Said 1979; Spivak 1994), it permeated Western academia and opened the door for new paradigms of knowledge production.

It was partially influenced by postructuralism; a growing epistemological shift that started to challenge the idea that positivist knowledge production was the only valid way of knowing (Derrida 1967; Foucault 1984). By doing so and defying the post-Enlightenment idea that truth was one, knowable and quantifiable, it allowed questioning the tangibility of accumulated scientific knowledge in all disciplines. It thus pushed the door to alternative projects of knowledge production than this led by the mainstream Eurocentric paradigm that had until then remained unchallenged.

The birth of Postcolonial studies as an academic discipline is attributed to Edward Said, a Palestinian-American who signed the beginning of new lenses of analysis on Eurocentric tales with his most acclaimed *Orientalism* (Said 1979). Himself educated in the West, a wide range of authors influenced his work including Foucault, Gramsci, Fanon, etc. *Orientalism* offers an endogenous understanding of Western-Eastern dynamics and marks the first comprehensive effort to dismantle Eurocentric construction of the Eastern/Other.

Another significant author is Frantz Fanon, a Caribbean French Intellectual who took pro-independentist position in the Algeria War of Independence and supported diverse political liberation movements including in Palestine. In *Black Skin, White Masks* (Fanon 2008), he puts forth a psychoanalysis of the oppressed, which exposes and exemplifies the feelings of the colonized having to function in the colonial -here white-world. He describes deep feelings of dependency and inadequacies felt by Blacks forced to endorse white masks to cope with the White system. Similar mechanisms can be found

throughout the colonial world, including in Pine Ridge (Eastman 2009). In *Wretched of the Earth* (Fanon, 1991), his most famous yet controversial piece, Fanon deconstructs the mechanisms underlying the construction of imperialist identities that create and reify the colonizer/colonized dichotomy. He also presents the use of force as a legitimate means for the colonized to regain independence of body and mind. His continuous friendship with existentialists such as Sartre can help explain his insistence on understanding colonial dynamics via the sensory experience of the colonized.

Authors such as Indian Scholar Gayatri Spivak (Spivak 1994) further theorized this notion of the colonized positionality in regards to the colonizer and termed it the Subaltern's efforts to widen his margin for expression within the colonial space. I will particularly focus on her concept of "strategic essentialism", which qualifies to express aspects of Lakota negotiation of identity. In the line of Fanon, authors such as Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o (1986) advocate a rupture from the model of the colonizer on the path to liberation. Encouraging a practical post-colonialism of the everyday life, he himself abandons English as his language of writing and other aspects of his identity that he deemed inherited from the colonizer and aims at reinventing the place of the Other and revalidating his self-given attributes.

Other postcolonial authors such as Ashcroft (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2003) argue that the post-colonial discourse must use the colonial space of expression to affirm itself and dismantle the relevance of the colonial arguments from within rather than creating counter-hegemonic discourses or creating separate spaces of expression that are inefficient to redefine power dynamics. Native American authors such as Deloria (1969) similarly attempt to deconstruct the subaltern image of the "Indian" to White America.

A useful concept for my work is this of coloniality, as distinct from colonialism. Maldonado-Torres (2007) interestingly differentiates them as follows: "Coloniality is different from colonialism. Colonialism denotes a political and economic relation in which the sovereignty of a nation or a people rests on the power of another nation, which makes such nation an empire. Coloniality, instead, refers to long-standing patterns of power that emerged as a result of colonialism, but that define culture, labor, intersubjective relations, and knowledge production well beyond the strict limits of colonial administrations. Thus, coloniality survives colonialism. It is maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience" (Maldonado-Torres, 2007:243).

Coloniality, resilience and power in Lakota country

The contemporary struggle of the Lakotas takes place within the broader framework of Indigenous resurgence against the oppressive colonial framework, and subsequently against the western hegemonic discourse (Alfred and Corntassel 2005; Corntassel 2012; Rigney 2014; Waziyatawin 2012). This statement builds the need for integrating the relation between coloniality and power into the resilience debate. Indeed, although presenting an interesting conceptual framework, the literature on resilience completely overlooks the impact of colonial trauma as a significant risk or hardship.

The case could be made that colonial heritage and discourse is a permanent condition of uncertainty, and could even been thought of as a chronic disaster, although disaster literature never considers coloniality as such and therefore dismisses it as well from disaster resilience literature. Yet, the colonial history of Pine Ridge and more broadly

of Indian Reservations still pertains today and manifests in forms affecting both personal and collective behaviors and capacity (Anderson, 2002; Brydge, 2010; Eastman, 2010; Evans-Campbell, 2008; Fanon, 2004; Havard, 2009; Jewell, 2008; Kalter, 2001; Moore and Deloria, 2003; Pickering-Sherman, 2000 and 2004; Said, 1978; Ross, 1998; Price, 1994).

> *"The overriding social realities of indigenous peoples include their historical rootedness to a specific place (with traditional land, communities, and transactions with the environment) and the profound displacements caused by colonization and subsequent loss of autonomy, political oppression, and bureaucratic control" (Kirmayer, et.al, 2011:84).*

We can see here how coloniality ties to enduring expressions of power that get reproduced and reinforced through patterns of control over local resources. Subsequently, indigenous people also face issues of political self-determination, representation, and visibility. In the colonial framework, it becomes difficult for the colonized to exist and express outside the sole "legitimate" aka western discourse (Spivak 1994). They are rather encouraged to fit within it or remain ignored. In the Lakota context, the use of the word "post-colonial" therefore sounds like an oxymoron. Mainstream knowledge production and academic research can sometimes participate in reinforcing colonial oppression.

The paradox of visibility is interestingly brought out by Thésée & Carr (2012), who write about the paradox of the colonized' "invisibility" within the promise of mainstream visibility. In other terms, it addresses how colonized nations are left with only one choice to exist, which is this of existing and showing oneself within the colonizer paradigm (Spivak 1994; Thésée and Carr 2012). This clearly uncovers how the issue of coloniality is contingent upon this of the colonized's very struggle for existence, which needs space and temporality to express. How this space of existence is negotiated between or mostly enforced from the colonizer/oppressor to the colonized/oppressed crystallizes

endogenous arrangements of power dynamics and maintain colonial dominion (Deloria 1969; Fanon 2008; Jefferess 2008), for example through the mind and actions of the colonized's elite (Hoogvelt, 2001:89). These configurations of power take particular social economic, cultural and political shapes according to the specificities of each colonial context.

This space of existence of the colonized is often negotiated through political assertions and liberation struggles of the colonized to be heard and represented, which is addressed in postcolonial literature. It is also negotiated through social movements and social resistance, i.e. by enforcing economic pressure via the means of labor and production, of which exploitation is a tenet of the stability of the capitalist/colonial system. The latter remains the discussion of post-Marxist and post-developmentalist theories. Economy and coloniality are intermingled concepts yet their theorization often remains dichotomized within either the economic or post-colonial literature (Bartolovich 2002).

As I have shown previously, it is widely acknowledged that the "development project" is a historically constructed system built off colonial dynamics (McMichael 2012). Many authors have exposed the link between western colonialism, the development of modern capitalism and the installation of a reproducible exploitative global order. But this association is mostly studied at the macro-level and either analyzes state level or global/international level dynamics (Braudel 1979; Hoogvelt 2001; McMichael 2012). Few go beyond the historical materialist analysis of colonially induced capitalist empires to analyze contemporary systems of oppression.

Literature that accounts for coloniality in local relations of economy and power in specific areas remains sparse and altogether unpopular. It often takes specialized literature

conducting fieldwork in particular places to clearly relate the economy to the colonial system, and attribute the relation of the colonized to the means of production in regards to the colonial history (Pickering, 2000). Western knowledge production still follows the hegemonic "decline" stage of its "core", and thus remains trapped within ontological paradoxes that, if acknowledged, would threaten its very existence. I would go even further saying that a wide acceptation of the contemporary intermingling of global economy and coloniality goes against the interests of most contemporary Western geopolitical interests, thus slowing down considerably its emergence in Academia and in the public debate.

Yet, everything in Pine Ridge relates to both coloniality and capitalism as inseparable means of oppression (Pickering, 2000; Pickering, 2004) and paradoxically of liberation. This dissertation focuses on grassroots social change as it challenges the colonial/capitalist system. Across the literature, I have shown that postdevelopmentalism debates alternatives to capitalism while postcolonialism is focused on liberation struggles. World-system theories and other political economic theories articulate power in the forms of hegemon and discuss colonial dominion but do not address its local ramifications. Although I have searched for a multi-disciplinary approach, I concluded that the literature is lacking a comprehensive argument that neither separates issues of coloniality with economic issues, nor prevents the emergence of a theory of action. This fosters the need for a bridging literature.

Few authors acknowledge that exacerbated systemic economic patterns in these oppressed "peripheral" spaces can "paradoxically" metamorphose into systemic alternatives (Manier 2015). Even fewer authors have taken the risk to link the emergence of alternatives to mainstream capitalism with colonial oppression. C.L.R James is such a

person (James 1989). While he particularly focuses on Black struggles in the Caribbean, his work also constructs a world historicism of revolutionary struggles and resistance to oppression, thereby erecting an innovative way to study coloniality systemically. His post-marxist background combined with his activism for an decolonial Black-Caribbean consciousness might have fostered this ability to experiment the use of historical materialism within colonial contexts, which was crucially lacking in Marxist analyses.

In work such as the "Black Jacobins" (James 1989), or in "The Negro in the Caribbean" (Williams 2012), the "colonial space" is presented not just as a field where colonial dynamics operate but as a space where capitalist effects become exacerbated. Spaces occupied by colonial patterns, whether community or region wide, become proxies for broader patterns of the global economy, and function as magnifying glasses that amplify patterns of oppression in the mainstream economy. These spaces represent "interfaces" between worlds, epidermal reactions to the decline of western hegemony. This reflection will prove extremely useful to my analysis. It also introduces the following paradigm, on which my bridging literature can build.

Decolonizing the Mind (DTM)

Decolonizing literature is an emerging corpus that built from postcolonialism and poststructuralism to put forth new epistemologies and methodologies to entice and replace "colonial ways of knowing and doing" while giving a voice to the victims of colonial oppression. It represents an epistemological shift and the theorization of coloniality; what happens in contexts that had been colonized and endure colonial oppression although they are considered politically as "liberated". Authors such as Tuhiwai Smith or Kovach (Kovach 2010; Tuhiwai Smith 1999) specifically address coloniality in the research context and

foster decolonizing methodologies applying particularly to indigenous peoples and the support of indigenous knowledge as a relevant decolonial form of knowledge production.

In a similar vein, Decolonizing The Mind or DTM, is an emerging epistemology intended to create new frameworks to holistically analyze the overlapping barriers resulting from colonialism and imperialism. By allowing economic, social and cultural struggles to be tied back to colonial relations of power, it provides a lens of analysis that can strongly tackle complex intersectional dynamics in the field, particularly these of race, identity and class, and see them in the light of their broader constructive environment. It convincingly presents colonial dynamics as a superstructure from which derives modes of domination responsible for current social economic and intra/intercultural struggles. It also entails a proactive approach by allowing the mind to increasingly free itself from structural barriers and be able to envision systemic alternatives.

Current scholars of DTM (also called decoloniality) such as Hira and Grosfoguel (Grosfoguel 2011; Hira 2012) are also activists and partake the struggle to negotiate the existence of decolonial voices in academia and in public policy. The movement takes roots within post-structuralist and post-colonial studies and demarcates itself by pushing the analysis further to develop an alternative epistemology for and by the "colonized" that can be used as a tool of emancipation and a theory of action.

The term "decolonizing" in itself has become within the past ten years a catch word for scholars intending to put colonial dynamics at the center of their analyzes. "Decolonizing" various objects becomes a trendy habit in articles titles, which might show 1) an certain interest by scholars to use catch words to increase their chances of publishing but above all 2) the proactive/activist call followed by scholars who commit to produce

"socially useful" academic work and are ready to acknowledge the weight of coloniality within their own mind and worldviews. This is why it is not limited to use by "colonized" people, but instead intends to track the colonial discourse that might construct each of our knowledge product.

DTM is useful to work on issues of liberation struggles because of both its academic and its grassroots dimension. Although the relation between decoloniality and alternatives modes of production is currently under theorized, the epistemology itself calls for such a bridge. Grosfoguel mentioned in a seminar I attended that DTM does not aim at deconstructing the "colonial" model but the "colonial, white, western, capitalist, paternalistic, imperialist ideology". In DTM indeed, these terms are not dissociable and issues are to be analyzed into a holistic framework where social reality is thought of as a movement between indistinct and permeable boundaries.

The originality of this dissertation is greatly due to the way it problematizes colonial issues in Pine Ridge with alternatives to mainstream development projects and social change. It thus seems relevant to use this literature and epistemology to analyze my data under this overarching concept. DTM fulfills the function of considering all aspects as a by-product of coloniality envisioned as a relationship of power, and additionally gives room for potential contributions to uncover emerging alternatives. It thus fits my object of enquiry, while suiting its strive for relevant holistic analysis and practically useful/applied sociology.

Why such a diverse literature?

I fully acknowledge that the literature I hereby present might seem disproportionately dense for this manuscript. However, this breadth is useful for the

progression of this work; it sets the premise of the complementary levels that comprises local forms of resilience. These entail mechanisms of identity, are influenced by and influence political economic dynamics, the developmentalist model and quest for alternatives. They are nested within issues of coloniality and stakes of DTM, which the compartmentalization of knowledge and subsequent linearity of issues greatly participates. The latter confirms the need for a holistic and transdisciplinary approach to Lakota grassroots resilience.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS

Rationale/epistemology: PAR and DTM as a key to "decolonize"

Kovack describes the "journey into indigenous methodologies" as a "story of coming to know" (Kovach, 2010: 4). Working in a Native American context induces to be aware of the multidimensional colonial stress that continues to affect the population. Indeed, as explained in Chapter 2, "indigenous peoples represent the unfinished business of decolonization" (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999: 7). Additionally, research in indigenous communities is often assimilated with colonial history and it became a heavy word within locals: "research is probably one of the dirtiest words in the indigenous world's vocabulary" (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999:1). As stated by West et al. (2008), "the history of the dominance of Western epistemologies within the social sciences is widely acknowledged (Smith, 1999; Trouillot, 2003; Wolf, 1983)" (50). Our compliance to constructing western elite knowledge has depreciated the perceived value of alternative ways of knowing. This project aims at presenting these alternative ways of knowing as legitimate. The research methodology must therefore be consistent with that overall purpose.

Engaging in this process induces a reflection of our own complicity in colonial dynamics, as researchers and practitioners, but also simply as participants of intercultural interactions (Nakata et al. 2012). As previously stated, because research must be undertaken as a tool to foster empowerment and not the colonial status quo, it becomes vital to work within "decolonizing" methods (Tuhiwai Smith 1999). As I will explain, methodologically, it translates into using Participatory Action Research (PAR) in the field and Decolonizing the Mind (DTM) tools during the analysis.

I use DTM as a sociologist conscious of the social impact of my work and wishing to contribute to knowledge production in a way that I believe useful and that serves my value system. Using DTM in colonial setting additionally ensures more validity in research. Although advocating DTM could be considered as an ideological bias because of its commitment to decoloniality, it is to my knowledge the only valid response in colonial contexts to elicit the academic illusion of neutrality, which I think is detrimental to our quest for truthful account of realities. Indeed the very spirit of objectivity is inherited from the construction of positivist research, itself entangled within a deeply colonial epistemological history. Using DTM is therefore not simply a critical epistemology to be used in the field, but an embodiment of a deeper societal critique targeting the entire way we manufacture, validate and transfer knowledge to society, via academic production.

DTM is an epistemology for understanding and producing knowledge systems. As such, many frameworks can serve a DTM approach. Some appropriate tools proper to DTM, such as "the list of colonizing the mind mechanisms" (see Appendix V) can be used for data analysis, but there are no particular methodology assigned to DTM when it comes to data collection, first because it is an emerging epistemology, and second because part of that movement is about creating new ways of knowing providing it serves to elicit colonial power dynamics. It has been established after consultation with DTM scholars[9] that PAR thoughtfully employed could benefit a DTM approach, due to its potentials to elicit power dynamics.

According to Kemmis and McTaggert (2003), PAR is a critical and reflexive social process that aids people in breaking out of oppressive and unjust social structures,

[9] During DTM 2015 summer school held in Amsterdam, I was able to confront PAR as a potential methods and epistemology compatible with DTM, with positive insights

including the positivist discourse underlying most social research methodologies. "PAR is designed to work toward practical and community valued solutions to community problems as well as to aid in the creation of mutual understanding among partners (Bradbury & Reason, 2001). It is a unique research method for this project because it brings the holistic thinking discussed in the decolonizing literature and crosses the bridge towards useful community action. In most literature, PAR is closely assimilated into community-based development, through the idea of getting back to the community (Bergold, 2012; Bacon et.al, 2009; West, 2008; Tuhiwai Smith, 1999; Bopp and Bopp, 2010). From a methodological standpoint, this desire to build local capacity and empowerment translates into applying participatory approaches throughout the research process (Marshall and Rossman, 2011: 23). It also defines different levels of local interaction and participation.

According to Bacon et.al' (2005) terminology, my level of participation is considered "consultative" to "collegial". The specific product of this dissertation is more consultative, because it is based off local inputs, yet remains a one-person production. Other parallel projects such as the GPMI (see Appendix VIII) exemplifies a more applied piece of my efforts in the reservation, where I "work with local actors to develop and strengthen their autonomous research and development capacities and practice" (Bacon et al., 2009: 3). My project also fits into three of presented models for incorporating non-indigenous collaboration to indigenous issues (Tuhiwai Smith, 1999:177), such as 1) the "power sharing model" that seeks the assistance of the community throughout the research process, 2) the "empowering outcomes model", which has beneficial outcomes to address locally relevant questions, and eventually, on a more personal level, and 3) the "adoption

model", where the researcher is developing long-lasting ties in the community extending beyond the realm of the research question[10].

DTM does not just present itself as an overarching epistemology taking into account coloniality and capitalism when studying local change in Pine Ridge. It is also an emerging methodology that aims at providing tools to analyze colonial power dynamics from recognizable patterns. From different colonial framework, academics and activists of DTM have observed a series of patterns of colonial oppression often found in colonial settings. This observation translates into a list of DTM principles (see Appendix V) where patterns of colonially-induced behaviors, thoughts and processes are made visible.

This list is by definition flexible and adjustable to any context. Indeed, the methods does not require you to find these patterns, it just offers you a frame to identify them systemically if you do find these patterns. For instance, principle No6 states: "Linking color to superiority/inferiority". Therefore, whenever I encounter similar dynamics in my data, I can recognize it as part of the colonial framework. Inversely, these findings will also validate the principles in their application to colonial constructs and thus participate in the ongoing work of building a DTM literature. As I later explain, as a white researcher, it also pushes me to deoncstruct white privilege and to that tend to address the western audience with these specific issues in my work.

Assessing resilience

As I clearly demonstrated in the review, considering resilience as an outcome is problematic. This entails tremendous methodological consequences. Indeed, if resilience cannot be counted as an outcome, how can it be measured? An example might clarify this

[10]Also fits within Adler and Adler's conception of membership-role taking (1987), as will be further explored with my role in the setting.

question. Simeon (Simeon et al. 2007) establishes a complex biopsychological assessment of resilience by compiling self-report measures of what is thought of as resilient behaviors plugged with stress factors, here treated as situations inductive to an increase in patients cortisol (stress hormone) levels. In such a problematization, "measures of resilience" can only speak for the analytical model that led to their compilation. They used a self-report questionnaire in the hope that it would provide a more accurate account of resilience. But, in practice, If they aim to show signs of "novelty thinking" from a self-report questionnaire, then all they represent is what novelty thinking means for the researchers who made the test and how for them, it correlates with resilience. In other words it remains prisoner of a unilateral systemic model of knowing, which anticipates results based on self-justifying means of investigation.

Thus here, results represent more a way to legitimize this way of doing research than they indicate the actual "resilient" reality of the real life of that research's participants. In fact, by looking closely to the "measures", one quickly realizes that the only generalizing results might be the reminder of the importance of quality relations to others in order to cope with challenging situations. In other words, it links the nature of positive change to positive human interpersonal relations, which has always been understood as central to the development of healthy human civilizations and is therefore no more scientifically innovative.

This issue of materialization asks a more fundamental question of how to translate epistemology into methods enabling quality data collection. Thus, proofs invalidating the use of common research methods should already be striking for the researcher. In quantitative research, it seems clearer and with less consequences to question methods

validity. For instance, (Simeon et al. 2007) and many resilience researchers (Belcourt-Dittloff 2006a) use and overuse likert scales to assess what they assume to be the question from the way they frame it. First how do they create these scales? How did they ask the questions? Were they trusted for such intimate matters? Such questions and reflexivity are fundamental to reach a better more accurate sense of local reality. Research already dismisses the random character of such scales (Alwin 2013). In indigenous contexts, such trends are exacerbated. Indeed, confusion might be shown when a question seems "too framed" to actually deliver what a person feels about an issue. Most of my participants would have remained silent or speechless if interrogated on a "scale from 1 to 5".

Here, for simple methods that aim at exploring one or several variables, it is already hard to reach any type of validity. How can we get to know what we are really looking for and ensure that it represents the underlying issue and not just our methodological framework? For qualitative information, similar dilemma occurs but the margin for errors drastically increases, as the exchange of information is bilateral and in constant flux, making the transmission of messages back and forth harder to account for. This justifies the use of rich sensory details in fieldnotes (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw 2011) and the need to contextualize every information. From my experience, I will explain how it entails further consequences when working in colonial context.

Indeed, in the case of resilience, the literature shows that it is often assessed as a set of outcomes, evaluated from variables of coping mechanisms. For example in education, resilience is mostly considered as "school success" or hardiness (Brackenreed 2010; Calarco 2011; Clauss-Ehlers 2008). It thus starts from the assumption that resilience in the educational model fosters adaptive capacity to excel. Except that excelling here is not

neutral but reflects one particular construct of "being successful". Here, instead of reflecting "resilience", the data collected mostly translates into which factors foster a capacity of adaption/integration within the white world and to submit to western-centric perceptions of considering endurance, strength or success.

The fact that we are more used to consider outcomes to assess any effect comes more from our scientific doxa than it does out of strict necessity. It is because the scientific enquiry has revolved around the tradition to look at effects from end results that it now appears as the only technique to reveal the existence of "markers of resilience". This, to me, demonstrates the expression of a constructed way of knowing, nested within western scientific tradition and scientific colonialism (Connell, 2007).

The only way to solve this methodological riddle is to be open to alternative ways of knowing and acknowledge their validity in our context. This explains why I specifically discuss epistemologies such as DTM and chose complementary tools for each step of this research regardless of traditional consistency or disciplinary compartmentalization.

Locations

The research primarily takes place on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, a "federally-recognized" tribal territory of 3,468 square miles located in the West Southern corner of South Dakota across the Shannon, Jackson, Bennett and Sheridan counties. The territory is home to the Oglala Lakota Sioux Tribe, encompassing 28,000 to 40,000 tribal members[11]. The primary dataset concerning grassroots-level initiatives is collected at different sites in this reservation. The research also includes a second location, as a complementary site.

[11] See introduction section

In Northern Eastern South Dakota across the Dewey, Ziebach, Stanley, Haakon and Meade counties sits the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation, which its 4,267 square miles large territory makes it both a larger land base than Pine Ridge, and the 4th largest reservation in the United States. However, it encompasses only 8,470 tribal members[12] and is home to the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, a slightly different population than Pine Ridge that is made up of four distinct Lakota sub-bands (called Minnecoujou, Oohenunpa, Itazipco and Si Sapa). The second primary dataset looking at larger organizational level data on local social change and resilience is collected from this reservation.

Comparing both reservations allows for cross-cultural and cross-action scale analysis. Both territories have a lot in common; the Lakota language (with minor differences), a general history against colonial oppression and notably the issue of boarding schools, a generally similar complex relation with outsiders and federal entities, commonalities of local socio-economic struggles and land-tenure issues. They also entail some differences, such as reservation characteristics, history, management and sub-bands cultural nuances. These yield different responses affecting local resilience.

Some structural nuances can already be noticed. The Pine Ridge reservation is made up of one tribe and while having experienced movements of population, it maintained a population fairly spread out across the reservation with Pine Ridge town as its primary urban center and other peripheral towns. But a significant amount of people still live "on the land", whether it is theirs or rented. This fair consistency appears to have allowed for the maintenance of the Tiyospaye system; an extended-family based or clanic organization that used to form the main structure of Lakota livelihood and governance in pre-

[12] According to 2000 Census. Similarly to Pine Ridge, Federal Census numbers are being challenged and numbers keep fluctuating according to when they were collected and by whom. This number can only be considered as indicative.

reservation era. There, it is still relevant today, especially when it comes to social and family support but also for spiritual and cultural reasons. On the other hand, the Cheyenne River reservation suffered increased population displacement due to floods and the construction of a damn and concentrates most of its population within three urban centers. It is also made up of four distinct bands, instead of one historically coherent socio-cultural unit. This overall process faded away the traditional Tiyospaye system to the point of non-contemporary relevance. Such nuances promise interesting within and between groups comparison in my analysis. If not showing significant differences, using Cheyenne River as a control location might nonetheless strengthen the validity of the research and the results found on Pine Ridge, especially when for making arguments about the Lakota ethos beyond that particular reservation boundaries.

Populations

This research is looking at one population split within two different scales. The population includes all local projects "self-defining" as working towards sustainable social change. Although seemingly arbitrary, the component of "self-defining" is here of primarily importance. Indeed, it allows local perceptions of change to express, instead of falling into a local definition of change induced by Western typology. Indeed, when referring to sustainable projects, one might wonder of which legal status are we talking about? Are we talking about 501(c)(3)? Can those be incorporated businesses? What about those with no legal status at all? Then, how can I define whether these qualify as "sustainable" projects? Can I arbitrarily define a type of activities qualifying as such? Should I instead inspire from broader definitions such as the Brundtland report (1987)? Should I instead follow a

"resilience" approach by selecting samples only fitting to western definitions of resilience, thereby biasing my sampling strategy?

My answer is unequivocal; defining my population as "self-defining sustainable projects" allows for a sampling strategy wide enough to include a diversity of projects and represent local nuances and narrow enough to target local definitions of sustainability and resilience. This terminological nuance ensures the consistency between the topic and questions asked by this research and its methodological format. It also avoids the trap of characterizing levels of change within boxed criteria that privileges outsiders' definitions of qualifying local action and the actors that move it. This criteria of projects self-defining as fostering sustainable change allows defining the population on the ground, from the bottom-up and via local interactions and observations. It will also allow me to consider both levels of local action, i.e. grassroots versus larger organizations, and accounts for these structural differences in projects efficiency and emerging definitions of resilience.

The larger organizational scale encompasses virtually any projects officially supported by significant organizations, i.e. often entailing tribally/federally/foundation supported initiatives. Comparing this level of analysis to the Grassroots can be hugely significant. Indeed, in the actual configuration, visible projects are those officially recognized by tribal institutions. Whether they are private businesses or tribal/federal funded programs, these are the ones to officially account for Pine Ridge's creativity, innovation and economic dynamism. According to the Pine Ridge Chamber of Commerce[13], the reservation totals 416 businesses (including 57 tribal programs, 36 churches, and all other types of service). The Cheyenne River shows a similar dynamic with a total of 44

[13] http://lakotamall.com/business-categories

reported businesses[14], 28 tribal programs and services[15] and about 30 Non-profits[16]. Out of these, very few self-identify as vectors of sustainable social change. In regards to the data available[17], the number of projects qualifying to these criteria and carried out by tribally-recognized or supported organizations totals 12 in Pine Ridge and 8 in Cheyenne River (when counting health and youth programs). These projects in both reservations constitute the population for this research. I will now further detail the specificities of the sample and datasets aimed to be collected.

The grassroots level analysis is extremely interesting because it exemplifies the paradox of resilience as it is usually conceived and discussed in the local level. On the one hand, it represents a population counter-intuitively likely to engage in risk-taking activities, based on a rational choice model. On the other hand, it seems to demonstrate the highest level of ingenuity and innovation when it comes to projects initiation and management. Data clearly shows a case to be argued in favor of the strength of these projects and their potential to challenge existing conditions and larger organizations projects. This makes it the primary study population of this research. These projects can be divided into different focuses as described below, although they usually take up more than one:

- Sustainable and affordable housing
- Local food production
- Green energy
- Cultural and spiritual revitalization-Lakota ways
- Learning by doing and self-determination

[14] http://www.crchamber.org/membershiplisting.htm
[15] http://www.sioux.org/index.php/main/inner/sioux/programs_services
[16] information resulted from documents acquired during my work with " the Voices"
[17] from a first assessment of programs presentations and whether they state aiming at bringing sustainable change on the reservation

However, in chapter 4, for the sake of the analysis, I also chose to locate these projects within one of the local typologies that does not resemble the descriptive categorical one stated above.

The people I work with are entrepreneurs of sustainable micro-projects of which scale varies from the individual or family-based to the immediate community level. They are managers of alternative food-systems projects, sustainable housing projects, working in programs fostering social change or local healing, language revitalization projects, and elders and children care projects with several of these components often interacting with one another. Some of them have developed ideas of implementing such projects, but have not yet succeeded or did not yet acquire the resources to implement them. Most of them have had several experiences with projects, and persevered. All are adults, with a fair gender representation.

I was first introduced to some of these project leaders while working for the Fort Collins-based Non-profit organization *Village Earth*, which aims at supporting local individual and community projects. I have used this network for snowball chain sampling to get access to other similar initiatives. The fact that I have worked for a while within the setting of my research, along with the strong ties of the research purposes and the community outcomes will protect me from most of the potential problems associated with snowball sampling, such as issues with starting referral chains, verifying the eligibility, controlling the types of chains (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981: 144). The actual population approximately encompasses 10 projects on Pine Ridge that I have maintained contact with for the past five years.

Sampling strategy

According to Miles and Huberman (1984), sampling should: 1) be relevant to the conceptual framework and the research questions, 2) likely to generate rich information, 3) enhance the generalizability of the findings, 4) produce believable descriptions/explanations, 5) be ethical and 6) be feasible.

Case studies

Given the extremely complex and culturally specific, yet heterogeneous context, it would be hard and arguably irrelevant to implement any kind of random sampling. According to Marshall (1996), studying a random sample provides the best opportunity to generalize the results to the population but is not the most effective way of developing an understanding of complex issues relating to human behavior. Additionally, my pre-existing community-based projects network opens up a very interesting opportunity to analyze resilience and social change from the community initiatives. This both defined my sampling strategy along with my rationale for collecting the following case studies. As defined by Charmaz (2006), theoretical sampling represents the step towards "seeking pertinent data to develop the emerging theory" (96). The sampling plan was therefore both "project-based", similarly to a snowball/chain sampling (Marshall, et al, 2011: 111). In formal terms, this sampling strategy allowed me to develop a main sample and control cases.

Independently to this research, I was given the great opportunity to continuously work with the organization Tribal Ventures in the Cheyenne River reservation. I participated in implementing "the Voices research"; a first locally owned mixed methods survey-based research about local conditions and activities in the Cheyenne River reservation. Because of my collaborative experience with both grassroots projects on Pine

Ridge and with a larger organization initiative on Cheyenne River, I grew aware of the significant differences of their functioning due mostly to their scale of action and managerial organization. I thus knew that I would need to compare grassroots versus larger-scale initiatives in this present research. Therefore I had to define two levels of analysis representing the two main levels of action, i.e grassroots vs. large organization. I also had encountered similar grassroots projects on Cheyenne River than these on Pine Ridge. Thus, I believed that it would be useful to contrast my findings on grassroots and large-scale institution level on Pine Ridge with similar actions and scales of Cheyenne River. This could also account for intra-cultural and inter-band similarities and nuances in regards to key issues such as coloniality. The primary dataset was thus constituted as such:

- Main sample:
    - Diverse grassroots projects in Pine Ridge (up to 15 projects)
    - Large organizations projects in Pine Ridge
- "Control" cases
    - One grassroots-level case in Cheyenne River
    - Large scale organizations projects in Cheyenne River

Data collection

The quality and credibility of the study depend upon my choices to choose appropriate methods to gather rich data (Charmaz, 2006:chapter 2). Appropriate methods and triangulation of data shed light on a richer local reality (Bacon, et.al, 2005), especially in such a complex context. The first step of this research is exploratory. Through participant observation and unstructured responsive interviews (Rubin and Rubin, 2012) with the members of the local development network, I have opened or partaken in an

existing reflection around the concept and definition of resilience on Pine Ridge. This discussion has been taking place around locally meaningful actions, or how my work can meet their need. It has helped me grow a social network, build trust, and helped me justify the research part of the work locally. I set my key interactions as partnerships, where relationships are established around the principle of reciprocity (Wax, 1952).

Therefore, the research inquiry is locally justified by how much the outcomes will potentially give back to the community. It implies that the design of the research include methods that can be helpful to local micro-projects. Another part focuses on collecting data from the subsequently established framework and partnerships. This phase mostly included participant observation, in-depth responsive interviews and document analysis with a particular culturally appropriate shape that I later discuss. Interviews were cross-cultural (Rubin and Rubin, 2012: chapter 11), and therefore needed to be carefully administered especially as they touched sensitive issues. Talking to Lakotas involve stepping in a different conception of time and social relations, as I later explain. This highly influenced the process of interviewing.

In another phase, I collected documents and social media posts from grassroots and large-scale organizations alike. A third phase analyzed this data. Originally I did not exclude to have to collect more data if required by the need for "saturation" (Charmaz, 2006). However, the triangulation of data satisfied that requirement along with data validity.

Triangulation as validity

One thing that I learned working on the reservations is that 1) local dynamics are complex and anchored in micro-politics, 2) as an outsider, it is hard to have access to reliable and accurate information and get the "whole picture" and it is commonplace to get

mislead or biased because of a lack of alternatives sources. Because so much can be found behind the curtains, I am committed to treat every type of information as data. In order to establish validity and consistency with the epistemology and spirit of the project, triangulation becomes my best tool to give a more accurate representation of local realities, and a more comprehensive answer to my enquiry. It also reflects my own journey on the Rez, where I had to personally start from a time of having sporadic access to partial pieces of the puzzle and being mislead to a more complete and objective perspective. Practically speaking, I strive to enforce triangulation throughout the process, starting with my sampling strategy and choices of cases studies and in the various forms and shapes of the datasets.

Four data sets

Primary data

In-depth interviews of key actors

As described by Warren et.al, (2003), the interview defines a specific space and time that can enforce power dynamics. Given the historical relationship between white researchers and Lakota, formal structured interviews are not desirable. Rather, informality should define the interview format. Additionally, the concept of "Indian time" already provides a framework for the interview scheduling and pace; accepting the interview to unfold following the local rhythm can seem constraining, but it is the only way to rebalance power relationships, particularly in colonial settings where they are omnipresent. It also makes the moment more natural and ensures a provision of "rich data". Interviews appear to be extremely relevant for the qualitative nature of this research. They reveal components of the projects through the perspectives of their managers. Some of these

elements are practical and descriptive, and others profound and ontological. Among emerging themes, I was already finding during data collection: predominant elements of "healing" (economic, environmental, social) and cultural revitalization, spontaneous metaphors, local definitions and meanings for resilience (such as "wolakota"), the recurrent upbringing of governance issues, systematic inclusions of reconnection with the land as part of the healing process, etc.

During phase 1 of the project and the first formulation of the research question and thread, I collected information from very informal non-recorded interviews. Consistent to local format, these were more debates with grassroots projects managers, although they revolved around the locally relevant themes of the interview guide enclosed. During the second phase, I conducted systematic interviews of most of the key managers I have worked with, although these also followed a culturally appropriate model, such as the practice of Indian Time. I was careful to add interviews of several actors per project, including unpaid volunteers and volunteer groups, for which I dedicated a section of the analysis in chapter 5, as the information collected was so informative about colonial tensions and work issues in the emergence of grassroots social change. I collected approximately 32 interviews following this process. Often times, when local situations yielded more information, I tried to convince local actors to let me record it as complementary information to their interview. Following Charmaz (2006), I did not predetermine any set numbers of interviews to be conducted but instead let local rhythm and the need for a satisfactory "saturation" of the data to be reached. I did not exclude going back after the first interviews' analysis to collect more data if required, although

saturation was reached satisfactorily as an effect of the amount of accumulative knowledge that I had developed with the grassroots managers.

One of the striking observations of the interviewing process was the length of the interviews according to who is talking. On the one hand, non-Lakota usually go right into the talk, they just run the task as if they were used to it, its code, etc. They are just ready to answer questions, just the questions and nothing more. Lakota speakers are quite amazing, especially the elders. If there is no trust relationship, they will just not talk, they will close off like there is not much to say or pretend they do not know. However, whenever there is that trust and they feel comfortable with you, they will talk for as long as they please; their interviews last about thrice other ones and they elaborate on anything they wish. There is no constraint or structure and it can be even hard to get them back to a particular topic sometimes. However, some of the best narratives come from these uncalled for moments of interviews, when the researcher stops controlling the field and the field takes over the research.

Participant observation- four years of notes

This method has been continuously used throughout the research. I gathered notes of most events attended for the particular purpose of this research, additionally to the notes I took during my work as a community worker (2009-2011), that can be still be used as useful contextualization. However, the focused notes I was collecting when I knew my dissertation topic were more consistent, and detailed, and I tried to have them written down within 24 hours of the event to avoid confusion and focus on rich details rather than interpretations, as advised by Lareau (1996). I acknowledged that the space and time constraints of working on the reservation could potentially impede on that crucial task.

Therefore, I used helpful device to help me recall the happenings, such as consistent jottings once alone or while stepping aside of an event, a tape recorder when appropriate and the collection of any useful documents available during my meetings and social gatherings.

Emerson et.al (Emerson et al., 2011:86) attempts to help the researcher find a way through the complex and subtle task of field-notes writing. The authors advise to compose them in two distinct times; a writing and reading times. The first allows getting the text down, focusing more on details than analysis (but leaving tracks for later analysis on the side), while the second allows for self-reflexive treatment of the data, unfolding the "ways they create" (86).

Additionally, I kept track of the observations description in an excel sheet, including their status, whether they were written down or not, etc. The ethnographer should provide "concrete sensory details" to describe "the basic scenes, settings, objects, peoples and actions observed" (Emerson, et. al. 2011:58). I tried to follow Emerson, et.al (2011: 59-73) suggestions for depicting a scene more accurately, namely the following steps: description, dialogue characterization, to focus respectively on 1) the setting, 2) the social interactions and 3) the action processes. Finally, a careful reflexivity on the tone and emphasis of the words allowed me to track the messages carried by the fieldnotes. I also kept a personal journal to express and release my emotional stages throughout the stages of this research.

Secondary data

Document analysis of projects and their web representations

This step was crucial and had a great potential to enhance the meaning of my primary data. Following the document analysis guide enclosed[18], I aimed at gathering documents produced, if any, by the projects organizations, and cross-compared them using Atlas.TI. This also included their social media main pages and websites if available. The purpose was to observe the recurrence of resilient themes and compare them to those found in the interviews. It also allowed comparisons between the actual realizations of the projects and the way they presented themselves, and enabled me to better understand discourse continuities and discontinuities. I knew from my work as a community facilitator on the reservation that these documents represent incredibly rich data. They can be a great indicator of a project's mission, underlying meanings and potential for success through the information they give about how it is presented by project managers.

It also constituted my main database for large-scale organizations. Indeed, although I had information about those from local interactions, conversations and formal interviews with grassroots managers, I needed a more overall picture of large-scale organizations and their narratives and knowledge productions about their own projects. This was easy to collect via their published paper and online information.

Additionally, this secondary data allowed me to observe the recurrent local themes adverting to resilience. Indeed, some seemed to be exclusive to Lakota projects, as compared to similar non-Lakota grassroots projects. For instance, when a project displayed information about restoring the buffalo, the discourse was not limited to economic or

[18]See appendices

ecological outcomes, it seemed to touch to a culturally specific framework: a certain perception of spirituality, a collectively-praised value of interconnectedness (land, animal, people) and a desire to design all-inclusive projects that are going to solve the local problems along with symbolically "bringing back the life to the people". Finally, it also shaped the way of framing the documents in a format understood by Lakota people. This additional research method was not only useful, it added depth by contrast with the data primarily collected with the interviews and the participant observation.

Pine Ridge Longitudinal Household survey

The Pine Ridge longitudinal Household survey is a long-term research completed by Dr. Kathleen Pickering over subsequent years from 2000 to 2008. Although some of the survey questions slightly changed over the years, they followed over 600 households in the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, acquiring information about subjects as complex as housing, food systems, formal and informal economy, local governance, social organization, traditional and modern culture, etc. It includes precious information about coping mechanisms used by Pine Ridge residents to overcome local difficulties. I wished to use this amazing source of data to complement my analysis of local grassroots projects mechanisms. I focused more on specific tables that I used to cross patterns with those I observed. This database did not directly shape the arguments but was used to find corroborative elements in the collected narratives to confirm or infirm explanatory directions.

Alternative ways of knowing

In relation to what I already discussed about the dilemma of discovering data from an academic perspective and of "white research" in colonial setting, I keep defending the

creation of alternative ways of knowing. In this crucial step of analysis and interpreting data, such claim takes on practical meaning. It is clear; in order to avoid participating into the colonization of knowledge, one must immerge into the world that produces the data. This means that people control what you know, that the environment gives you cues, that silence tells you more than words.

For some researchers, this might imply that even interviews should not be directed and rather launch a topic instead of asking specific questions. Grounded theorists Brayboy and Deyhle (2010) recall their work in indigenous contexts: “Don't ask questions! We’ll tell you what you need to know” (Brayboy & Deyhle, 2010: 167). Academically speaking, it seems very unsettling as traditionally, the less structured the research seems and the less meaningful the point is considered. Despite how qualitative and post-positivist, academic research still considers the control of words as being the core of research data, impacting epistemology, data collection, analysis and of course culminating in the production of a massive dissertation. I am not exempt from that functioning. However, I can decide to open as valid ways of expressions that are locally considered as valid, instead of abiding by academic deontology.

To make it simple; Voices are data. Silence is data. Situations are data. Lack or rush of time for a respondent to answer is data. Refusal to answer is data. Emotion is data. Cries and laughter is data. Eye contact is data. Who I get to meet is data. Who I do not get to meet is data. Storytelling is data. Time and space is data. One of the most precious lessons of my time on the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River Indian Reservation is that when you let events unfold, subsequent events occur that reveal information you would never have accessed otherwise. The more controlling you are in the field, the more you events and people close

off to you. Your best ally for meaningful data becomes your "capacity to listen" (cf. Chapter 1) as a metaphor to remain you open to the natural flow of events. Time and openness is the only way to truly grasp drastically different ontological realities.

Data coding and analysis

Generating theory

The conflict between generating genuine theory and verifying existing theory or preconceived ideas is an ongoing process in many sociologists' research(Glaser & Strauss, 1981; Barney, 2012). Verification of theory (or premises) is too often considered as a prerequisite for excellence research, which relegate generating theory at a second ground in a researcher's analysis. In the meantime, we also hear of generating theory as a necessary contribution to meaningful research. Barney et. al (2012) describe the role of theory in sociology as being: "1) to enable prediction and explanation of behavior; 2) to be useful in theoretical advance in sociology, 3) to be usable in practical applications-prediction and explanation should be able to give the practitioner understanding and some control of the situation; 4) to provide a perspective on behavior-a stance to be taken toward data; and 5) to guide and provide a style for research on particular areas of behavior."

Theory can only meet these requirements if it was revealed from the data. This seems quite obvious for all of us but is unfortunately often lost in the way we deal with and analyze data, where data falls into the risk to fit theory instead of the other way around. I feel very much concerned by this struggle, especially as an applied scientist, as my value commitments may run the risk of influencing my research in the sense of assumptions I am trying to verify. One might for instance say that because I am so committed to show

positive outcomes for grassroots projects on the Rez, I might during the analysis unconsciously over-emphasize the positive aspects to these projects while minimizing their downsides. To me, such risk is mitigated by the fact that my entire research is designed around flexibility and adaptability, in the spirit of PAR and DTM, which allows me to pick and choose whichever methods serve the best the genesis of valid information. For example, one methodological trick to avoid this bias is to make use of grounded theory in the first phase of the research analysis process, devoid of all theoretical assumptions. During the coding phase, it translates into avoiding primarily searching for themes, and instead explore "actions", "participant processes", "emotions" and values.

The stakes of Coding

The act of coding is all but neutral. It greatly impacts the breadth and depth of an analysis, as from the same paragraph can be extracted different levels of information into various segments, themselves coded at various depth. Saldana (2009) reminds us Coding IS the analysis. It gives life to the analysis by linking and connecting the dots. Merriam (1997) states that "our analysis and interpretation-our study's findings- will reflect the constructs, concepts, models, and theories that structured the study in the first place (1998:48). But Saldana reminds us that: "it is not only your approach to qualitative enquiry and ontological, epistemological, and methodological issues that influence and affect your coding decisions" (Saldana, 2009:7). It also reflects the coder's subjectivity and judgment call, along with how we handle decision-making in the coding process. Realizing this is the first step towards liberating ourselves from the illusion of mechanistic systematization of research. The latter creates more of a disservice to the validity of data than the contrary. This also precludes from "looking for evidence" in the data. Indeed, Barney (Barney et.al,

2012) justly points out that when the example was chosen for its "confirming power", the researcher "receives the image of a proof when there is none, and the theory obtains a richness of detail that it did not earn" (2012:5).

Charmaz (2006) qualifies coding as "generating the bones of your analysis", leaving the researcher with the responsibility of putting these bones together to reconstitute the skeleton. The species to which it belongs is suspected but not fully measured until the end. This makes the process of uncovering the bones a delicate and meticulous step, upon which potentially rests the quality of the final result. Coding is not the result in itself but it lays the foundations for a plausible end. To such end, there are no recipes neither straight lines to follow. Coding is an "exploratory problem-solving technique without specific formulas to follow" (Saldana, 2009:8). Epistemological trends and disciplinary schools have favored different coding techniques to better suit their analytical needs. I do not believe that remaining "faithful" to one coding practice serves data relevance or consistency. My approach acknowledges several coding techniques deemed interesting from the information they uncover. Far from being random, this practice imposed itself du to the nature of the work that I am trying to accomplish, for which using neither one or two techniques could truly satisfy. Instead coding practices are better used as technical alliances to unfold the "best set of bones".

Whereas descriptive coding prove useful to account for patterns of the environment surrounding the action, it is not sufficient when exploring data that expresses controversial issues and power dynamics. For that purpose and in the line of respecting my commitment towards DTM, coding also involved Grounded Coding and Values Coding. Grounded coding is usually useful for getting a feel for emerging themes. It uses in-vivo code creation and

affectation to “let the data unfolds”. In-vivo coding is useful to “get a feel” for emerging themes while value-coding is required to unravel stakes of power as needed by DTM. In order to keep the analysis “rooted in the participant’s language”, grounded theorists use a coding technique consisting in coding key words from the segment itself (Saldana 2009). I have used this technique along with others to allow participants endogenous definitions or concepts to enrich the data. "Moving across substantive areas," says Charmaz, "fosters developing conceptual power, depth, and comprehensiveness" (1990:1163).

Other times, absences may indicate primal assumptions made by respondents. As I previously explained, not all information can be extracted from interviews words alone. Spradley (1987:314) noted that when people tell stories, they assume that their listeners share many assumptions about how the world works and so they leave out information that "everyone knows." He called this process *abbreviating*. Price (1987) takes this observation and builds on it. Thus, she looks for what is *not* said in order to identify underlying cultural assumptions. Price finds the missing pieces by trying to translate what people say in the stories into something that the general public would understand, which induces to first clearly identify what we ought to say.

Contexts are complex and so is a subject such as analyzing resilience in Indian Country. It is only after years of being around “the Rez” and its inhabitants that I started to fully realize the extent of local issues and their potential solutions. My perception has evolved and so did my thinking process as I grew further beyond the simple acquaintance of Indian issues. It is because understanding of the problematic requires long-term relationships and reflexivity that grounded coding presents limitations. Value-coding gives room for subjective perspectives and analyses to participate in the characterization of a

datum. Critical race theorists had understood that because the nature of their enquiry was already biased by the very power relations and discrimination that sparkled the interest to research the subject, then one might only recognize the need for value-coding in highly colonial settings, especially when these analyses can participate in struggles of liberation.

To this day, there is no specific coding method tying to DTM. I believe that the inherent flexibility required from this epistemology along with critical treatment of power struggles also requires a more engaged coding system than grounded theory. This is why Values Coding can be useful. Borrowed from Critical race theory, which shares with DTM its goal of exposing unequal power relations and considers scientific enquiry as a means to redefine new power dynamics, Values Coding exposes participants' subjective perspectives. By labeling information appropriately, it allows for locals' perspectives to be expressed.

Coding and Data analysis strategy with ATLAS.Ti

Generating codes with ATLAS.Ti

Atlas. Ti constitutes a very powerful tool for investigating data and building theory. However, it is rarely used up to its full potential. Brent & Slusarz, (2003) advocate "feeling the beat" as a metaphor to point on the necessity to use the software as a proxy to build metaknowledge that powerfully informs theory-building. On the use of CAQDAS, Saldana(2009: 22) concludes that whereas research projects involving a few documents can be handled manually, it is preferable for a project involving multiple sites and participants such as a PhD dissertation to use CAQDAS (22). I do not claim to know the extension of ATLAS. Ti's functionalities, but this enquiry definitely pushed me to explore tools that would best demonstrate the validity of my analysis (ex see Appendix VI and VII).

I first transcribed the collected interviews into .doc documents. I was helped by a team of undergraduate and thus had to elaborate a confidentiality agreement along with a protocol to protect the integrity of the data and the anonymity of the participants. I determined a systematic nomenclature to transcribe the interviews uniformly. I kept the most sensitive interviews to translate myself. I then transferred these files to ATLAS.Ti along with the pdf versions of the secondary supporting document of the projects. I thus created a single hermeneutic unit for the entire project and listed the documents in the same reference list to keep the integrity of the project and because I was expecting similar codes to overlap both types of documents. However, during the analysis phase, I sorted the two types of documents into distinct queries. ATLAS.ti is useful to combine all types of data into one analytical project, allowing data on social media, projects documents, interviews and fieldnotes to be available in one location and coded systematically. As advised by Saldana (2009), I ran two cycles of coding. In the first cycle, my analysis included in-vivo and value coding (see figure 1). The second cycle focused on narrowing down codes, categorize and find patterns and themes. In ATLAS.ti, one cannot conduct a second coding cycles by breaking down codes directly into narrower codes. Instead, a technique allows the coder to create families for sets of codes, that plays the role of conceptual narrowing sought by a second cycle of coding. The analysis of these families, including their memos and associated quotations leads to a few concepts forming the center of the analysis.

One of the issues I encountered was the level of analysis that should or not be present in my coding process. For example, because of my lasting experience in the Reservation, I had come to consider *Historical Trauma* as an overwhelming factor affecting local resilience. I thus came to add it to my initial set of codes, preliminary defined from my

fieldwork, although I was not set on using them. Instead I created this set to compare it to emerging codes. I quickly realized that *historical trauma* would not appear as an initial code qualifying a quotation, but instead entailed a broader analytical concept. In one quotation, for instance, the interviewee explained how people were skeptical of their outsider organization and the local projects they were supporting, and were looking to check the validity and legitimacy of their action. The best fitting code was here *fear of abuse*, although I knew from the field that this fear of abuse comes from *historical trauma* and a habit of abuse installed over the length of colonial contact. Yet, naming it directly as *historical trauma* would have been an extrapolation. This stage was a little unsettling.

Initial coding (Charmaz, 2006: 48) aims to be provisional, comparative and grounded in the data, trying to let themes, processes and people' meaning emerge. Focus coding then allows the conceptualization of the previously found codes, trying to identify the most significant ones. I was careful to avoid decontextualization, overlooking processes and being too general, as should be so in grounded coding (Charmaz, 2006). In general, coding and recoding must ensure that theory emerges from data rather than data fitting theory (Charmaz, 2006). The cycle of 1) collecting locally meaningful data, 2) analyze it systematically and 3) refine what is meaningful was meant to ensure that the local definition of community resilience remained grounded, and validated by both the participants and the method (Charmaz, 2006: chapter 3). But how could I organize codes to reflect that process?

Codes were first numerous and expressed various nuances of the same theme. This is because I kept creating new codes for variation of a similar event in order to account for comprehensive reactions in the field. For instance, *need for group unity* might seem the

same as *collectivism*. Yet, the first code introduces the notion of need, and it adds another dimension to *collectivism*. Rapidly, I went over a hundred codes (see Initial codes cloud in Appendix VI) and thought about creating an arch of themes to see clearer. I waited till the coding process was no more generating new codes, or what theorists call theoretical saturation (Strauss and Corbin 1990:188) to start compiling them under themes. For clarity purposes, I added colors to the codes so to see in a glance what they were about or what category they belonged to. These were classified as such:

- Light green: Sustainability
- Yellow: Resources
- Purple: Challenges and risks
- Light blue: Values/feelings/behaviors
- Black: Governance
- Orange: Media/communication
- Pink: Ideology
- Dark blue: Identity issues
- Red: Action scale and organization
- Brown: Important quotes
- Gray: Data organization

By this point, the coding list had reached 174 and I thought that it would be complex to organize it coherently. For the complete list of codes, see Appendix VII. Then, I decided to organize my codes into code groups, into which the same code can appear as needed. As such, one code can belong to several code groups. This proves useful when running queries to retrieve the data.

Then, instead of using code groups to create code themes or "supercodes", I preferred to use broader codes that I call "thematic" along with more descriptive codes of a same quotation. For instance, a quote referring clearly to sustainability issues that would debate ecological housing as an alternative would be coded both *ecological housing* and *economic alternatives,* but also *sustainability* so I can later easily find all codes and

quotations related to the theme of sustainability. I therefore had laid out different layers of codes with different explanatory purposes for a given quotation. By retrieving their co-occurrence, I could thus better observe all the stakes of a particular theme.

Sometimes in my code system, a code will also reflect what the quotation is trying to answer. For instance, I created the code *why people participate in the rez* (projects) to qualify all segments that debates reasons for people to get involved locally, whether they are outsiders or locals. The interest of such a code is that it can retrieve all quotations debating this quotation at a later time, enabling to make careful observations of each of the themes that serve as direct input in the dissertation. I would also look at the co-occurrent themes to better qualify these "questioning". That is if *why people participate in the rez* co-occurs regularly with *Want to be helpful*, there might be a pattern worth noticing for the analysis. Some codes are still explanatory codes but more descriptive and they are there to qualify or look for particular answers to questions. For instances, code *challenges to success* can be analyzed through the code manager as a stand alone to find a list of challenges and help answer the question. Codes that describe behaviors or emotions are harder to transcribe because they only exist in relation to contexts and therefore in relation to other codes. To analyze those, one must dig into the quotations to figure out what the behavior pattern is exactly and into interactions with more descriptive codes to help qualify the behavior code. Relation via ATLAS. Ti. network view might be more useful to explore all the connected dots to a specific code. Sometimes, I would re-read my list of codes to ensure that I was not forgetting any for analytical purposes. I would go through my codes and merge redundancies, sometimes modifying a code name to extend or reduce its inclusivity.

Practical process of generating decolonial and grounded theory

Analysis was conducted at different levels of data. I would isolate groups of documents if I wanted to explain codes relations only among certain participants. This allowed me to structure my distinct analysis of Grassroots projects managers, Large local organizations projects and volunteers participation. Qualitative analysis is a tedious, extremely excruciating, yet wonderful process. Wishing to comprehend a complex issue within a sensitive context can feel like walking on eggs. Throughout the process of my analysis, I have often felt that I was facing an immense thick wall that could not be pierced as I kept digging. The process of the mind in front of such a dilemma is either of eviction, or strategy. For months, I practiced the first, unconsciously postponing what I knew to be a brainteaser. I was also feeling the heaviness of years of emotional attachment to the topic, which was increasing the pressure I could feel to provide a thoughtful analysis. Somehow I knew that my task was not only of performing a personal academic challenge, but of not failing all the people who had, at some point trusted that I could be of use, and that I would not use their information for personal gain, but instead to tell a coherent story of what they wanted to transpire from their local realities. Once I past that stage and started attacking "the beast", I realized that the process would be like opening Russian dolls, of which shape I would increasingly discover with work, time and patience. I had to submit to this constant uncertainty and the emotional rollercoaster that went with it. I also had to find a way to keep the key narrative visible for the reader while not loosing in depth.

ATLAS.Ti has been an incredibly useful support in this massive endeavor. It allowed me to experience my data in multiple dimensions and angles, and adjust the tools to my questions as they arose. I must say that I first thought that my commitment to grounded

theory as the only way to limit my biases and increase the trustworthiness of my data would prove incredibly hard to find and interpret. By coding all the data and letting all themes express, I soon owned so many nuances to overlapping themes that I thought would be extremely complicated to render clear. I knew I could not give in to reductionist conclusions, but I also aimed at showing a clear picture of the complex layers of local realities.

Codes were numerous and diverse. I quickly had a feeling, though, that by crossing codes, I could perhaps better visualize some patterns and pile up partial conclusions. With this entire project, I had to let go of the idea that one method, technique or tool would be enough. I discovered that some of the software tools could help me tackle issues from different and complementary angles, and that all these would form pieces of a puzzle that together might give out coherence to the analysis, at various levels: local, global, grassroots, academic, methodological, epistemological and ontological. Because I was careful to code segments at all these levels, codes were indeed numerous. But they were expressing different trends that were forming a database of local patterns with unique telling combinations.

I just had to make sure that these combinations would faithfully represent local perspectives. For instance, if a quotation coded *vision* and *belief in developmentalism* was also coded with *cultural tradition* and *hope for a better future*, that this association was found regularly and that it was found within groups of documents of *large-scale organizations* but not for those of *grassroots managers*, I could confirm what the data had been saying that organizations projects' visions do hope for a better future and tend to assume that mainstream economic ideologies with distinctivey Lakota strong cultural

components will lead towards it. I could also attempt to better explain phenomenon by contrasting codes.

I could therefore find commonly associated patterns of ideologies with behaviors and practices, and tie them back to levels of intervention (grassroots, organizations, volunteers, etc.). The interest to have these different types of codes was that representations, power dynamics and action could be analyzed together strengthen and reify ground observation. Then, as I explained before, descriptive codes served to qualify behaviors. I would run simple and complex queries to go further in the data itself and explore themes or associations. I would for instance run a simple query if I was looking for explanations for coded themes such as *sustainability*, or better understand motives for events such as *projects failures from locals' perspectives*. I would complexity the query to reach more specific questions.

For example, when I was looking for what *white guilt* looks like amongst volunteers, I would adjust my query to reflect this combination and would access the remaining selection of quotations. Finally, associations between codes and the nature of their relationship could be best expressed and shown on visual maps via the network view, which could help grasp complex phenomenon such as what ReZilience or grassroots sustainability looks like. Honestly I feel that the potential of the software could be exploited even further with practice and time, but overall the experience of using it for purpose of this research allowed me to undertake methodological experiments that led to a better and more thorough understanding of my data and presentation of my research.

Usefulness and limits of ATLAS.Ti

All these organizational tips proved very useful when I started my analysis. They allowed me to code very complex interacting phenomena and yet to be able to tailor them to be able to clearly answers different types of questions. The diversity of ATLAS.ti analytical tools facilitated that process since the same type of question can be answered using different tools and the same effect can be obtained via different means. For instance the *network view* provides the possibility to create links between nodes (for instance codes). The same action can be performed using the *code relation manager* and superpose codes to create a link. This is useful because links can be created as soon as the relation appears clearly from the data. However, the network view provides a more visual tool to be able to clearly link two codes of which relation has become to obvious over data processing. These means are therefore complementary and they reinforce each other.

The linking tool also offers great analytical advantages. It basically functions as mindmap builder and renders explicit the connections between the dots that your brain performs while attempting to understand complex local realities. Once you identify a relevant and recurrent connection, you can link a code to another following various properties such as: "is part of, is cause of, is associated with" etc. or even create your own link property, as I did with "influences" and "encourages". Once you coded enough documents and you start to clearly "connect the dots", you can safely start mapping those out with this tool, knowing that it greatly enhances the breadth of your analysis.

Indeed, your brain can by itself perform multiple connections, but only by small increments and unless you find ways to map it out, it remains clustered in your brain and enables the big picture only through words, which might make it hard to digest and fully

grasp. The linking tool allows these small connecting increments performed naturally by your brain as it explores the data and solidify it for further uses. Of course, the link remains modifiable and should be done so as the analysis progresses as the link or its properties changes. But the process of linking then allows in ATLAS.ti the construction of summarizing maps that enable readers to better visualize the relations between the dots, as I provided for each complex local phenomenon in this dissertation. Thus it is a powerful tool as a complement of words and strengthens the clarity of the point across in the final analysis. It allows to grasp concepts that might be clear and obvious to Lakota projects managers, but not to outsiders eyes.

Doing PAR in Lakota country

The process of involvement in research induces a constant self-reflexivity, even more so in a PAR project. Arguably, "self-reflection is not enhanced by objective detachment, but is a trait that occurs naturally in some people and that can be cultivated by others" (Adler and Alder (1987:23). I personally think that my passion for the setting constitutes a tangible proof of my dedication to carry on this project as locally respectful as possible. Additionally, because of my parallel involvement within local projects, my responsibilities towards this role reach beyond the purpose of this research. Not only is this responsibility professional, and towards all the partners I have worked with in the past, but it is also personal, as this involvement greatly defines my ability to continue working on Pine Ridge.

Secondly, my past involvement in the setting impacts my current role in the research. In such confined settings, the simple evocation of names and organizations does affect people according to their perceptions of that organization. It is particularly hard to

get rid of such labels. People assimilate you with who you work with/for. Fortunately, my work with a well-perceived organization such as Village Earth and then with my locally-respected advisor Dr. Pickering, who both have a reputation of honesty, local usefulness, and of commitment to decolonial methods, positively impacted my introduction to some participants, and my ability to carry on this research.

Identity in the field

Being a White, French woman working in a colonial context highlights some difficulties, especially my positionality as a researcher. Not only is the context anchored in a very specific cultural framework of which I am not a part, but my presence also embodies in itself the same "post"colonial trauma that I am trying to explore. Furthermore, my historical passion for the Great Plains culture has shaped my motives to even undertake this specific research, and it would be lying to not admit that my interest for post-colonial resilience takes place in my very hope for indigenous resurgence and not just out of pure rational-based interests. It is foolish to think that complete objectivity can be obtained in research, would it be desirable. Indeed, no matter who we are, we always enter social interactions within the social differentiation that separates the "Self" from the "Other". What varies is the magnitude of this dichotomy. In fact, once we acknowledge that, "positionality confers distinct sets of narratives that we use to make sense of the world" (McCorkel and Myers, 2003: 226), which seems more adapted to aim for relevant and quality research. In difference we can also find commonalities, and the ability to truly connect with people, which also affects data quality.

In this specific context, being French rather than American actually helped me interact with people, as the Lakota have a totally different shared history with the French,

which was mostly set in fur trade and commercial exchanges and therefore does not trigger the same memory about the theft of land and culture. That is not to say that French interactions have not also greatly been colonially coercive, but with mostly Eastern and North Eastern tribes, not Lakota bands. As a result, I was surprised enough to have encountered people's reactions to my "Frenchness" in a very positive way. People would even often "recall" distant French relatives in a visible effort to create some bonding. They would also by themselves bring up the difference between American/Lakota vs. French/Lakota interactions. As a result, I noticed early on that interactions slightly differed once my nationality had been discovered.

More generally, distinct aspects of my ethnicity would play out very specifically within a different time and space frame. The pattern would be as such. At first, before discovering my Frenchness, my color would prime over other categorizations. As a visible criteria from a distance, my whiteness would automatically predispose each new interaction. I would be assumed to be American, and definitely as a passing by outsider. When I would go to the grocery store, talk to people I just met or be pulled over by the police (yes, it did happen), I would be first addressed as if it was my first time on the "Rez".

People would also wonder if I was part of a church group or a volunteer in some charities. This shows the extent of historical relations between Whites and Lakotas inside the reservation territory. On a second time, people would discover my Frenchness and find ourselves commonality through distant names or stories tying to Frenchness or French people. This is quite significant because it was visibly accomplishing an identity negotiation; this of inter-group inclusion and a redefinition of "us" versus "them". All of the sudden, they felt that they could talk to me about "them", when addressing outside

Americans. This was particularly important as it instantly modified power dynamics through the sole impact of historicity.

Sometimes even more significant grouping would take place. I come from Brittany, a small North-Western France region bordering the channel, that is distinctively known to be the last bastion of Celtic culture in France and one of the few in Western Europe. This is interesting because Bretons are still considered as the "indigenous" people of France[19]. Amazingly, some local people actually possessed that information and used it again as yet another tool of "grouping". I was told that "indigenous" people everywhere needed to stand in solidarity with one another struggles, or I was asked details about culturally specific celtic traditions. Once, I was even asked in a sweat lodge to sing a song in the Breton gaelic as a token of my "ethnic identity". Ironically, I now know via a DNA testing that my biological "ethnicity" in fact reaches as far as North Africa and Scandinavia. What is striking is the impact of local people perceptions on one's identity and how it reified specific aspects of my identity at different times.

Finally, another visible pattern developed in the span of my local interactions. Often times, after having reached a level of proximity and familiarity with local individuals, my whiteness would slowly dissipate in our interactions to the point where I would become exempt of the category *wasicu* (wa-shee-tshu), or "white" in Lakota. I will detail this phenomenon more in depth in chapter 5. Although the sole reflection of my positionality, this succession of perceptions reflects local patterns, which take roots within colonial dynamics and play out a significant role in social change initiatives, as I will show in this

[19] Not to be confused with the term "Indigènes", which in French refers specifically to the population of ancient French colonies of North Africa. This term, which originally was derogatory is now used as an empowerment tool by French of North African descent in their political struggle for recognition and against discrimination.

work. These perceptions developed independently of my personal perceptions, which is always a by-product of doing fieldwork in inter-cultural/ethnic context. Overall, I was counting on flexibility and self-reflexivity to guide me throughout this process and tried and develop this awareness between commonalities and differences, which eventually lead me to develop strength out of this positionality, instead of carrying it as burden in the field. Wax's (1952) emphasis on reciprocity reminds us that the researcher is not the only one to have agency, but is also subordinate to the setting and to the interests of the participants. The fluctuation of my perception endogenously convincingly supports this claim.

Local access, Indian time, ethics and validity

From the beginning of the research process, I have been aware of the specific Lakota conceptions of time and space referred to as "Indian time", which influences the access to the setting and has drastic consequences in the way I can interact with locals. Additionally, the socio-economic conditions impact field access, as people need means of transportation and gas money to fuel up the cars to cross the long distances shaping the reservation. Consequently, people face difficulties being "on time" and their conception of being "late" is to be counted in hours rather than minutes. This makes the process of planning research complicated. For instance it would seem difficult to set up formal interviews as we conceive them from a western academic perspective. I must remain aware of this local phenomenon in order to create an efficient schedule. I must be flexible and accept a high probability of the event being postponed or not happening at all. Trying to enforce a tight schedule upon people would not only certainly fail, but it would also strengthen the colonial paradigm along with people's feeling "studied" once more as "exotic topics of interest", in turn affecting the sincerity of peoples responses and therefore data quality. The respect of local

management of time and space is therefore crucial to contrast with local stereotypes directed towards greedy and "rushy" outsider researchers. That means not only being extremely flexible concerning the time plan of the research itself, as suggested by Rubin and Rubin (2012), but also redefining priorities.

Indeed, as encountered in my experience helping with the local projects, time is flexible on the "Rez", and so are people's schedules. If I have to stay hours at someone's house before they feel comfortable talking about the topic, I do so. If I must restrain from doing an extra interview because such or such event is happening, I do so. If a collaborator cannot come because of logistical problems, so be it. In this context, the solution seems to take place within the local codes of social appropriateness. "Trust building" appears to be the only relevant way to access and share accurate and rich information (West, et. All, 2008. Bacon, et. al. 2005). The goal is to "establish friendly and trusting relations with members to maximize…access to insiders' position and information to be able to build (or cultivate) a strong intuition about a reality" (Adler and Adler, 1987: 21). However, this type of relationship cannot be forced upon participants, and must therefore occur out of genuine care for the research field and the people involved. Caring for the topic and for genuine interactions shapes long-lasting ties and also ensures the validity of data. As I encountered situations where the presence of careless and speedy outsiders was hindering people's responses, I can tell that it makes a huge difference. People will give you more information if you take the time to listen and if they also feel a genuine connection between two human beings, as defined by the cultural norms regulating social interactions. An old Native woman once told me: "if you are going to work with our people, your ears are going to be your best allies".

In the meantime, increasing close level of confidence in the partnerships can also increase the chance of living "ethically important moments" (Guillemin and Guillam, 2004), which entail precious information and have to be dealt with appropriately. This advocates for an extreme reflexivity throughout the research, and for the principle of openness and honesty found in West, et.al (2008) (see Appendix IV for a list of PAR principles). Only through an ongoing reflexive and careful process can I "potentially decrease the violation of participants' rights and increase our accountability and true obligation to them, to self and to the professional community" (Karnieli-Miller et.al, 2009). Nonetheless, caution in the field also varies across space and time, as the tasks of the research evolves: A participant observation task might be granted more easily than an interview at a certain time, some circumstances might allow for picture-taking, or social interactions (public events, or sometimes powwow), and some others not (ceremonies, sundances, burials, etc.). It also greatly impacts the interview process, as main questions and follow-ups can be performed within an informal setting, at the convenience and within the time and space conceptions of the participant. In practice, "talk to" and "ask opinions about" seems preferable, more respectful and therefore more efficient than setting up "meetings" and "interviews".

In Native American research specifically, the concept of ethics is a holistic process. Regardless of IRB requirements, ethical and political considerations should be explored at all stages of the research (West, et al, 2008: 55). This project was validated by CSU IRB protocol No 14-5082H. Yet, IRB protocol does not protect from doing harm in research. This responsibility is left to the research and is present at all times in the process. In such sensitive contexts, one has to take serious attempts at de-colonizing the mind, and deconstruct prejudices and biases as well as academic privilege. The application of PAR

principles can greatly help accomplish this broader goal, and principle-centered approaches shall be used to evaluate the potentiality of harm in addition to constant evaluation of the research/project (Bopp and Bopp, 2006). The enclosed declaration of principles will be used as a guideline to maintain ethical balance throughout my research. However, it is also an unfinished document and must not be taken for granted; rather it can serve as a basis for good research reflexivity. A tip that I find particularly useful is this of Duneier's (2011) concept of the "ethnographic trial", that consists into projecting oneself into standing in front of the concerned members of the community where the research takes place and be able to articulate a convincing plead for such or such decisions. It is one useful mental trick ensuring that my ego and colonial self does not overlook local expectations.

Research timeline

According to grounded theory, the time and space of my research has started as soon as I entered the Rez in summer 2009, as it encompasses all the empirical experiences that led me to define and modify my framework (Charmaz, 2006) with the help of Lakota local practitioners. In the spring 2012, I conducted two preliminary interviews, had talked informally to locals about the project, and started to gather local thoughts about its feasibility, appropriateness and validity. Due to academic constraints, I was not able to travel there much during the academic year, but spent consequent cumulative time on both the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River reservation. Over the course of the summers 2012, 2013 and 2014, I spent a total of seven weeks in Cheyenne River and eight weeks in Pine Ridge, dedicated respectively to my work with the organization Tribal Ventures in Cheyenne River and to my work on the different grassroots projects on the reservation.

I have used the rest of the year to maintain and improve networks and relationships, to collect the online social media data and to plan for further research logistics. Let us keep in mind that the timeline of the research has been and continue being affected by the required adaptation to the local conception of time, also referred to locally as "Indian time", that is also consistent with the time requirements of PAR. This timeline does not actually depend on the sole will of the researcher and is unfolding progressively, in a dialogue with people in the field. As I have explained, this is also a criterion for acquiring meaningful data. After transcribing collected interviews in 2015, I finished the data analysis by the end of summer 2016 and the dissertation document in the end of Fall 2016.

Data feedbacks

Researchers, particularly within PAR projects, "should have an understanding of the power implications inherent in a proclivity for representational knowledge, which values technical expertise while disregarding local relational forms of knowledge. Such comprehension allows decolonization to take place" (Bacon, et.al, 2005; West, et.al, 2008). Therefore, my project must commit to put forward local forms of knowledge and share outcomes and results with all partakers. This implies transparency and the communication of the research outcomes to participants at all stages, not merely as a final report presentation, but as a way to get constant feedback. This regular exchange with local collaborators allows them to have some control over the information; it starts not just by asking participants' permission to use and display it, but shapes the research at all stages. It means communicating with projects managers and bounce ideas of them to collect regular feedbacks. More importantly, it gives the local input back to those who produced it, a sort

of “giving back” the knowledge upon which they can build or use as they see fit to improve their projects.

Study limitations

I have grown fully aware of the limitations and difficulties in this project, the first of which concerns sampling strategies and prioritizing projects over others out of convenience sampling. Allowing the voice of a fairly comprehensive list of community-based projects to express themselves seems hardly feasible to implement, due to three factors: the huge number of these projects across the reservation, the difficulty to gather an exhaustive list of these projects and finally the micro-politics that play out in between projects and stakeholders. Rather, a selection of key projects appeared more accomplishable, yet causes difficulties inherent in respecting the participatory paradigm. Because I select some projects over others, I have to justify my criteria for doing so. At first glance, it might seem quite inappropriate within the “decolonizing” approaches discussed throughout this proposal. The latter induces to make contradictory voices heard, so that each one-sided voice over time constitutes a tangible representation of a setting's reality (Becker, 1967: 3). I also have to focus on feasibility and local relevance. I know that project selection operates by itself through the willingness and interests of the participants, confirming the use of a convenience sample as the most locally appropriate and suitable for the research topic.

Secondly, I have come to learn that contradictory voices are visible when one becomes acquainted with micro-dynamics, especially micro-politics. It is hard to “hear” them before. An objective synthesis then starts developing via data triangulation, through the overlapping of stories and networks. Although it is often presented as a key element of

substantive sociological research, I do not aim at coming up with generalizable data, due to the cultural specificities of this research; my goal lies instead in gathering information about the participants' actions, perceptions and meaning that either enforce or impede locally-defined resilience (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981: 145) to help make a useful knowledge product. As such, "local knowledge about the community and its surrounding areas is invaluable to the process of developing a resiliency index that will reflect and meet the needs of the community" (West, et al., 2008: 46). However, it does not prevent me from engaging in relevant macro-discussion and implications of this research as is relevant in decolonial knowledge production. I still need to reflect upon the most useful ways in which this dissertation can be useful to Pine Ridge social change projects managers and their aspirations. This will require another collaborative exchange with them.

CHAPTER 4: BEHIND THE CURTAINS OF REZILIENCE: KEY ELEMENTS IMPACTING LOCAL PROJECTS

Before I dive into the actual characteristics of the projects themselves and their typology, I expose some of the key dimensions that influence the emergence of projects on the reservation. This chapter formed out of necessity. Originally, I believed that contextualizing would not require a full chapter. In fact, contextual elements are at best often considered to be useful extra information to better give sense to data. It is rarely considered as fully integrated within the data. The following elements constitute important indications of the specificities of the fabric underlying local action, which is significantly different from outside the reservation. They create a unique combination of economic, social and political characteristics that permeate people's narratives, discourses, projections and behaviors and truly set a mold for local representations. All of the themes detailed in this chapter directly relate to occurrences in the following chapters. They set up the premise to understanding chapter 5 and 6, i.e; they provide the elements necessary to understand the functioning of local projects at all scales, the negotiation of safe spaces and local political resurgence.

Understanding how the background of local action is formed and informs local reality is a legitimate part of decolonial research. Dismissing or overlooking its influence reversely reifies one set of representations and participates in colonizing the mind. Any attempt to truly get a sense of the emergence of local projects without a deep understanding of these aspects and their specificities would only apply western colonial projections on my observations. Years of work with grassroots managers and subsequent

countless conversations had already pointed out these elements to my attention, but the data analysis revealed them more specifically. The grounded analysis allowed for all endogenous themes to emerge progressively; a simple look at codes frequency shows that the primary issues of projects managers concern 1) work relations and partnerships, 2) Lakotas/Whites relations and 3) sustainability. These themes were coded in more than 40 quotations each. In this chapter, I strive to clarify the background of social change projects, which helps understand the prevalence of these themes. The following elements rely on primary and secondary data for explanations. However, what affected the most my understanding of these elements were the build-ups exchanges that I have had with grassroots managers over the years. Although I here use interviews and fieldnotes to explain what happens behind the curtains as "data", I owe the extent and depth of my understanding of the social fabric to my local Lakota collaborators.

"All my relatives": Lakota questions of relationality

"Mitakuye Oyasin"

This might be the most commonly heard Lakota sentence on the reservation. Literally "all my relatives" or "all my relations", this sentence is called for as a prayer that extends beyond a consideration for someone's closed ones. What "all my relatives" entails is an interconnection between all living things and therefore the respective responsibilities due to that relation. "Relatives" does not only mean family, extended family or even tribe; it entails the human species, other living species and the earth itself. In that framework, water becomes a relative; mountain is a relative, a plant, a buffalo, a horse, and any living entity, close by or on the other side of the world. Grassroots managers consistently describe it as such:

"One of the first things that we all learn as Lakota and that we hear every day in our lives is 'Mitakuye Oyasin', which means, "we are all related". It means everything is connected…not just the people, not just the animals, not just the plants, but the rocks and the sky and the clouds and ...that is so much apart of who we are is that understanding you know…and we say 'Unci Maka' (Grandmother Earth)…and we mean it. And we know as Lakota people that everything we get comes from our mother the earth, and that we're not living on side walks you know and never seeing grass and never understanding how dependent we are on nature…"

This particular relation to the world is found consensually among grassroots projects managers' participants. On an everyday basis, such phrases and concepts come in conversations about the smallest resource management situation. In the data, quotations were coded with corroborative concepts such as *special relationship to place* and *care for the earth* at least once per document and more commonly more than three times in each interview. Interestingly, these quotations were found to interact consistently primarily with two other codes, respectively (by number of co-occurrences); 1) *holistic thinking and interconnectedness* and 2) *care for humanity.* This shows that the concept of "Mitakuye oyasin" reflects a far deeper ontological statement than simply setting social relations. It describes a worldview in which one's position and action is not confined to the self and its immediate family or friend relations but extends to relations with the environment and all species. It thereby challenges representations of what "relatives" mean by western standards:

"It's not about this little project here, micro-project. Or this little family here, or this little 'Tiyospaye' (extended family) here, you know. We're out to take care of all of our relatives. And that includes the Earth, 'Unci Maka'…and our dear, sweet relative 'Mní' (water) in everything that exists upon this Earth because we understand that we're all, not only related, but we're interdependent, you know…"

Far from being an essentialized explanation of Lakota worldview, this manager's quote crystallizes the particularities of a Lakota ontological understanding and projection of the world consistently observed on the ground, and constructs it as a counter-narrative

to a utilitarian perception of natural resources and life. The latter is used to strengthen and position a distinct Lakota identity within the power struggles it is confronted with in regards to the non-Lakota cultural, social-economic and political hegemonic world. I will further explain this phenomenon and how this ontological distinction influences local expressions of resilience. Here, I am concerned with explaining the nature of local relations and whether it fosters or impedes on local projects.

Complexified social relations

The reservation forms a small microcosm, where families have lived and evolved for more than a hundred years. Here, relations take a more practical meaning that directly impact people's social interactions. Current families belong to branches of families present from the treaty era. One way to realize that phenomenon on the reservation comes from the peculiar practice that westernized Lakota names when they settled on the reservation. Whereas the idea of family name was inexistent till then, the Bureau of Indian Affairs took down the first name of every (male) head of household and turned it into a family name. These names were passed down till now and allow for some recognition of migrations and evolution of family structures over the last century. Above all, it allows the striking observation that most families are still present within reservation territory. It also means that they directly descend from people, who together fought, lived and survived through colonization, massacres, deep lifestyles changes and ethnocide.

Coloniality is before everything based upon traumatic modifications of sociality. These heavy historical backgrounds are not just dates on paper; they are living on the continuum of the social relations that witnessed and participated in them (from both sides). Additionally, profound changes occurred over a relatively short term; less than 150

years, which corresponds to more or less five generations. This "tightness" of the time frame with the small local demographics have greatly complexified relationships on the reservation, which have to oscillate between cultural ideals and local survival struggles. It also fosters social intelligence and a deep commitment to the collective, but these that have to coexist with rivalries, resentments and competitions. The gap between the concept of "Mitakuye Oyasin" as a societal wish and the reality of social relations sometimes appears as one that cannot be filled.

As I dived over the years within the complexity of the web of relations on Pine Ridge, I was led to understand more precisely how it affects work and family relations and the overall social fabric on the reservation. Pine Ridge residents just "know these things", but it takes the outsider's eyes years of active listening to trustworthy relations' words to grasp. Some of these elements are still very sensitive and hard to express, especially towards a white outsider, often unconsciously associated with the source of the trauma (see further section on Whites/Lakotas relations). People will only talk to you about their sentiments on these issues if they feel trust, and that trust is not easily earned when it comes to discussing colonial oppression, trauma, fear of abuse, local relations to others or to the tribal government. Talking about those issues remains uneasy locally because local people still suffer from them. The "colonial situation" as described by Balandier (1951) shatters and remodels economic, social and political relations of power and the expression

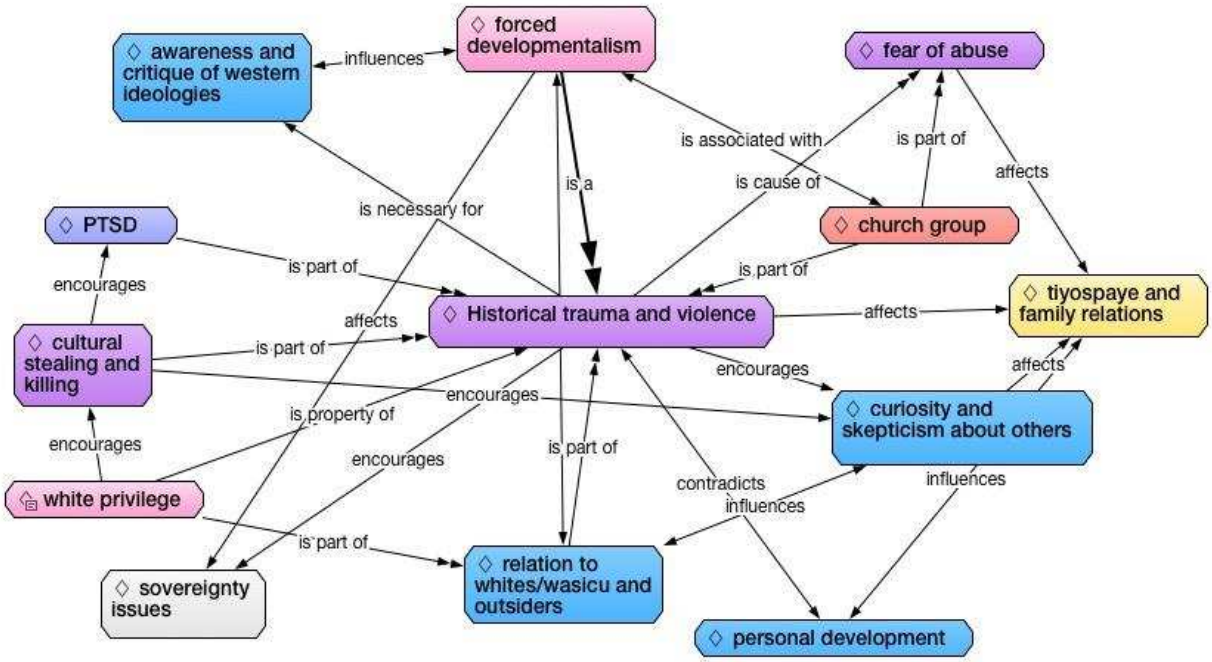

Figure 4.1 Model of local relationships related to historical trauma

of colonizer-colonized relationship continues to express within the resulting tension. The following model (4.1) helps visualizing some of the profound shifts and enduring relationships that exist in relation to historical trauma and coloniality.

This model displays the influence of historical trauma on the reservation and helps visualizing the links that tie elements together. These links are not rigid relationships; they come from data patterns itself informed by local knowledge. It thus represents my somewhat inevitably partial labeling of local phenomena. I linked such factors together using my linking typology, but relations are not radically set. I just wanted to render these elements more visible. Thus, *historical trauma* affects *tiyospaye and family relations*; it develops a local *curiosity and skepticism about others,* a local *fear of abuse* and is responsible for past and current *sovereignty issues*. It affects *personal development* and fosters a *local awareness and critique of western ideologies*. It resulted from *cultural stealing*

and killing, which *causes PTSD* and is a result of the exercise of *white privilege*. It was also enforced through *forced developmentalism*. The latter also imported church *groups* that participated to *colonial trauma* and *fear of abuse*, especially via evangelization boarding school policies. Colonial trauma is greatly impacted by and impacts relations to Whites.

The influence of coloniality on local governance

Colonization profoundly shattered and remodeled Lakota power relations. First, it disregarded endogenous practices of power and replaced it by a model of centralization of power with elected representatives. Traditionally, decision-making was a small-scale, consensus-based practice where "leaders" could eventually be appointed, to guide practical events, without the right to constrain will and exercise coercion. The appointment was structured by experience and not by gender, and did not last in time. It additionally could not coerce an individual's will into doing something he/she disagreed with, and therefore could not possibly erect one man into making decision "in the name of his people". Additionally, if there was something such as "a Lakota people", it was guided by traditional notions of Lakota "peoplehood", or what it means to be Lakota (see sections tying to Lakota identity), and did not include notions of centralized power such as national or tribal democratic representativeness (Holm et al. 2003).

Logically, such conception came as a construct in total violation of traditional modes of governance such as the *tiyospaye* structure; the extended family of several households that made up a clan and constituted the most common everyday living unit (Fenelon 2006; Pickering and Jewell 2008). Centralized power was exercised –and has been since- by the mode of governance of the United States, and therefore required by any "negotiation" of treaties. Decision-making encounters with Lakotas occurred via the assumption that the

present Lakota "chiefs" somehow represented and could speak in the name of an entire nation (Alfred and Corntassel 2005; Biolsi 1995; Fenelon 2006). The colonial element in here is double. First, it used a hegemonic projection of power and established it as the only legitimate source of decision, thereby erasing any alternative mode of decision-making. Secondly, it allowed the physical taking of land and territories that resulted from the spoliation of Lakota governance. Coloniality is thus constructed upon issues of sovereignty, but also of visibility, because these representations are only valid and existing today because they were told and presented as such by unilateral participation in the discourse, which is always a privilege of the colonizer (Cook-Lynn 1993).

Today, the traditional kinship *tiyospaye* model remains an existing underground network. While partaking a project tying to *tiyospaye* mapping by local people of each district on Pine Ridge, I was surprised to realize that people could exactly point out to the geographical boundaries of their *tiyospaye*, and that those did not coincide with colonial artificial district boundaries. The *tiyospaye* is still a valid existing structure, yet it is not invested of any important tribal decision-making process, which is instead held by a tribal government functioning as a western representativeness model. Still pertaining to Pine Ridge, where it remained strong since reservation era, the *tiyospaye* is less present in Cheyenne River, where four Lakota bands were artificially assembled, further dismantling the traditional enlarged family units. The fact that the traditional structure was spared in Pine Ridge and destroyed in Cheyenne River still has effects today, with a prevalent importance of traditional kinship social relations in Pine Ridge, and a more important focus on the notion of "the tribe" in Cheyenne River. A Lakota man from Cheyenne River

explained that the Oglalas (Pine Ridge band) were considered to "care too much about their family and their status", and not enough about their tribe and tribal welfare.

Replacing the practical relevance of the *tiyospaye* by a centralized mode of governance had effects beyond politics: "These Indian agencies based institutions regulated all Lakota social life with pernicious and particularly aggressive attempts to annihilate most religious practices…and the tribally controlled land tenure systems based on a local *tiyospaye* leadership and on participatory council governance"(Fenelon, 1998: 334). It modeled Lakota exercise of governance into "need-based" sovereignty (Cattelino 2010), or the practice of a conditional sovereignty that must conform to western models and take a similar shape of leadership along with similar goals of community economic growth, wealth gain and personal advancement, which resonates within our data and distinctions observed between large scale versus grassroots projects (see chapter 5). Yet the legitimacy of this western-shaped and imposed need-based sovereignty is questioned by western perceptions when 1) it starts distancing the colonizer in gaining wealth (i.e as in gaming gains on reservation) or 2) it starts taking too much freedom from the original framework (Cattelino 2010). Colonial administration and contemporary tribal governance is historically both an oxymoron and a continuum. This paradox reflects in contemporary perceptions of local governance and the mistrust expressed towards tribal exercise of power:

> *People have all been victims of all sorts of new ideas. You know…hahaha…like the houses. You know, here's an idea! Uhm, why don't we just, build you all these little crappy houses and then we're not going to give you any other sort of houses for 40 years you know. "Here is a new idea. Instead of living next to your extended family, we're going to make a rule where we're going to build 20 houses that are grouped together, and only because there's so many families…each house can only have one family, you know, and no family can have more than one house" and so that was a new idea that didn't work out very well! Uhm, people hate the cluster houses. They want to live with their family, they want to live*

with their extended family and be around their grand children and their great grandchildren! There are plenty of ideas that are flashed in the pan that LaKota people on Pine Ridge have been left holding the bag! They are left will all the environmental fall out of ideas of, you know; "hey! Lets dig up some uranium" or "Hey! you guys have gold you know under ground"! "Why don't we just move you over here" or "here's an idea, why don't we just move you to a place where you have to live and you can't leave it, beginning with the reservations". So native people by large and especially on Pine Ridge have been burnt too many times. So uhm it is a manner of practicality uhm but it is also that continuation of historical trauma

They also clearly link contemporary issues with historical ties between local governance and US administration:

When you look around here, people now own this so these houses are all lined out and things. The US government, this is an old age home. Look at that roof. The US government is a frisking slumlord here…

It does not come surprisingly, then that data shows that tribal administration is associated on the ground with colonial administration, itself often associated with 1) maintenance of dependency, 2) corruption, 3) local work relations, 4) awareness of western ideologies, 5) challenges preventing success, 6) part of the functioning of large organizations and 7) the overall lack of benefit (that people experience) from the capitalist model. The history of colonial tribal administration is also strongly nested within a belief in developmentalism, which structured legal issues and continues influencing local sovereignty issues. I will show how it impacts local projects. The appropriateness of local governance is also hindered by the rampant corruption exercised by some tribal leaders, who are clearly perceived as working for their personal advancement and "funneling money to the same people, the same families". This participant describes the intellectual theft of ideas and puts in question the process of tribal funding attribution:

Then the Bureaucracy flared up at that point and the directors said "oh this one looks like it could be funded" so what they would do is take those good ideas and those good writings and get them funded at the local level and get them turned down at the top level would turn it in as its own. They would fund it and put in their own bureaucratic leaders

for where those businesses were. They owned it and controlled it and people got disgruntled with it because hum…they put in good ideas and management gets them funded and they start a program. There was no dishing of funds. It became another federal program with no ownership. They stole Ideas. I turned in several of these and the same thing happened. They had the audacity to use it and only change the cover page of it for funding".

The lack of people's involvement in electing local officials and more generally in tribal management is often interpreted as a pattern of Lakota people's disregard for politics. Instead, the issue seems to clearly come from people's feelings of disassociation from tribal politics and the feeling to be dispossessed from the power and appropriate means of truly governing themselves:

They all come from the same factors and they all have to do with historical trauma and sometimes it is intergenerational trauma and, you know, why we live the ways that we do…the political influences that effect our ability to access good quality health care and good education and issues of poverty…that we're not always in control of the very basic needs of our lives. Where we live, what food we eat, what the quality of our water is, and whom we can have relationships with. A lot of it has been out of our control for so very long.

Despite this clear disassociation with local forms of governance, it seems that people still crave for alternative and culturally appropriate forms of governance. This grassroots project's manager was showing me a chart that he elaborated to reflect on power issues on the Rez:

Right now, it's kind of interesting because one of the partners on this (project) one here is having some ego issues and he was raised away and he is Lakota blood. He's having some issues with laying down the power. I'm actually working on this right now because in order for this to really reach things the structure looks like this (showing a pyramid drawing). You know top down, and when we painted that lens image we inverted. The people are up here and leadership down here and…the way it is now with western culture it's like this; the power up here, the people down here and it trickles down with hardly anything getting to the people. Part of that when you do the inversion is that the power is actually up here and (person name) is having problems laying down the power but he doesn't realize that you're extremely powerful down here. As a servant of the people…I mean those are invisible trophies because you make a difference in all of the people up here…

Traditional concepts of leadership greatly differ from bureaucratic exercise of political power. As a result, locals often consider tribal leaders not to be leaders, and reversely traditional leaders are not recognized by modern tribal bureaucracy. This clearly prevents effective local governance and the emergence of culturally appropriate initiatives. Instead, the system is permeated by personal-level and collective power issues that participate in coloniality by fostering a climate of skepticism and fear of abuse, which impacts people's relations. A native consultant who has experience working with many tribes was summarizing his findings that "all native people" have issues with seven points: Trust, communication, leadership, governance, lateral oppression, equality and racism and historical trauma. Yet, he also found them to be "very resourceful". The next section broaches the issues of ethnicity that took shape within Lakota vs White relations from the reservation era.

Lakotas and Wasicus: of White and non-White relations

Wasicu, Iyeska, Lakota! These three common adjectives attributed to a person or behavior respectively can translate into "White", "Half-breed", "Lakota" and their use demonstrate the obvious importance of the concept of race in Lakota country. Yet, current debates in US media such as the "Baby Veronica" case, or whether or not "Red Skins" should be an appropriate name for a football team and how Native Americans should "get over it" along with a plethora of similar remarks shows contemporary efforts to downplay the importance of the race factor in people's life chances. These debates exemplify by themselves the enduring existence of white versus non-white relations, especially in contexts where such issues are so loudly expressive as the Pine Ridge Reservation.

Yes, stereotypes have a very great psychological affect on people, I mean that has been shown again and again by so many studies that it continues to be that way, and historical trauma continues to work it's way through ourselves in ways that we're not even conscious of and that goes for people who are kind of the quote unquote the winning side of history and those that are not.

Recalling the history of race

In western assessments of local development initiatives, there is a tendency to overlook the representations of race or present an "acolonial" understanding of human history and action. When assessed, it is merely considered as a relevant concept to explain disparities in acquiring white privilege: an impossible goal that further maintains inequality. When it is ignored, it is done so in the name of supposedly more important factors of success. The process has a long history. White universalism tends to reify the existence of a merit-based society where claims of race as having important impact on a person's life are dismissed on the account of their desire to find excuses for their lack of opportunities. In the view of universalist progressists, race does not even exist; it faded away with the rise of "universal" human rights that carry on the projection of a world where "all" would be equal. However, the "existence" of race still feeds public debate, as witnessed in current political debates. As commonly seen in times of economic crisis, we are now facing the slow return of essentialized statements generalizing entire groups of people based on racial criteria as being socially acceptable. Early on, racial essentialization was used as a tool to justify colonization or segregationist systems, which greatly impacted the operationalization of race in Pine Ridge. In mid-20th century, the biological idea of race got dismissed via civil rights movements and the dismissal of racial science, which was ideologically supporting racial social-economic orders such as slaverist America.

Today remains the debate around the social construct of race. Some claim that the concept of race itself is outdated, invalid, inexistent, and that in order to truly realize a raceless society, one united by skills and aptitudes instead of skin color, the latter should be ignored, banalyzed, silenced, in order to normalize racial variations and therefore their perceptions in the public landscape. This concept seemingly stems from the death of biological race, and politicizes the absence of race as a social ideal. It is mostly reified publicly by the white Left of Western nations, notably in the US and France, where racial issues are (not so) paradoxically rampant.

The "racialized" other, however, knows reality to be different and it is from front encountered racism that he/she can deny the non-existence of race. Whether wished as a societal ideal or worn as a mask to protect status quo, the negation of the existence of race as a social issue is problematic because it prevents solutions from emerging. Indeed, pretending to write on a blank slate and equalize people's chances dismisses the psycho-social-cultural-economic components of the reproduction of race and the nature of the systemic power relations that produce it (ex: colonial systems and subsequent traumas). In Lakota country, the history of race permeates reality, and people have to cope with it.

Blood quantum

As mentioned before, on the reservation, the concept of race is contingent upon this of blood quantum which traces back to a colonial attempt to index local socio-economic development on the "whitening" of Lakota people. Officially designed as a way to protect and track the degrees of Indian blood of tribal members, this highly racialized and racializing construct demonstrates colonial oppression in a way that is as clear as a curve. 51% of people claim that blood quantum affects one's economic opportunities (Pickering et

al. 2005). Michael Brydge (2010) finds in his study of the impact of blood quantum on socio-economic opportunity in Pine Ridge that the variable of Indian Blood and this of local income in dollars are negatively correlated in straight lines (Brydge, 2010). This result links race to issues of or representation of development.

Now the real question would ask: what does that tell us exactly? From the statistics alone, classic scientific and political interpretations would deduce that: the more "Indian" you are, i.e. the browner you are, the poorer you are. However, this explanation still functions within the colonial scientific framework. Indeed, whereas there is enough consensus on the incapacity of income to represent the reality of life conditions, we still often make such claims as a short cut, especially while considering "developing" territories' conditions. However, this would be ignoring the characteristics of Pine Ridge economy, which is considered as failing from all developmentalist standpoints. The presented 70-80% unemployment is often flagged as a vivid witness of Pine Ridge extreme poverty. The premise of such a statement corroborates that "the browner you are, the poorer you are". This type of statements implies that the solution to racial discrimination is to be found in equalizing economic opportunities via typical White universalist measures, such as creating jobs and positive discrimination. This type of solutions can be greatly found in local large organizations' plans to bring in change to the Rez (see chapter 5). As I later demonstrate, although these organizations might have the best intentions at heart, their operationalization of social change entails and reifies colonial oppression because it presents solutions from the western developmentalist framework and fails to present alternatives.

But coming back to the concept of race in the Lakota context; let us not extrapolate beyond the numbers for now and look at what they can possibly mean from a decolonial standpoint, which requires to be terminologically very precise. If the higher the blood quantum, the lower the income, then the number alone allows to say that whiter Lakotas get more income than browner Lakotas. Although it does not allow projections on development, wealth or well being, it does allow to say that disparities are present, and that these associate local constructions of race to western measures of socio-economic disadvantage.

Of course, the concept of race entails issues of identity and self that go way beyond ethnic and materialistic considerations. These "categories" are not as transparent as it seems and all entail levels of complexity that are not rendered visible by the English translation. Indeed, a descriptive language such as English understands "*Wasicu, Iyeska* and *Lakota*" as "White, Half-breed and Lakota". Yet, in the original language their semantic origin and current use entail other dimensions than ethnicity such as cultural, ideological or geographical statements. As I further develop later, according to the setting, *Lakota* can mean "full-blood", but also "traditional", "local", or "authentic". *Iyeska* can go from "half-breed" to "white-acting Indian" or "hybrid" and *Wasicu* from "white" to "outsider" or even "capitalist", "colonizer" and "western". Such a myriad of nuances corroborates Erikson (1968) idea that ethnicity is a result of contextual negotiation within a particular social configuration, thus within power structures and dynamics. In this study, the concept of race also appears as intrinsically linked with local action and how it is nested within representations of identity.

Being a Lakota

This section does not aim at being exhaustive. Lakota identity belongs only to Lakotas to really define. The following arguments are a direct result of Lakotas perceptions and years of exchange with Pine Ridge residents on the matter. Yet, I acknowledge my limits in grasping the full extent of its meaning. Lakota identity entails endogenous particularities such as language, cultural practices and values. However, because of its struggle to exist and survive, it is intertwined within relations to whites and also developed within the Lakota/non-Lakota dichotomy and struggle. In all cases, being a Lakota involves way more than ethnic considerations. Of course it entails physical traits, such as a more or less dark skin, and visual characteristics that are or not cultivated. For instance, braided hair is associated to being traditional or "looking Lakota" and is therefore worn as a cultural distinction. Other practices tie to Lakota cultural and spiritual ceremonies, such as sweat-lodges-*Inipi,* sundances, powwows and associated Lakota dances and drumming styles, naming ceremonies where traditional Lakota names are given, or first-kill ceremonies where young men hunt game as a rite of passage.

Cultural and spiritual practices were banned from the reservation early on as part of assimilation policies. Until the 1980's, sundances were still a forbidden practice. Since then, these ceremonies have gone through an increasing revitalization trend. Old songs and ceremonies are remembered and practiced again. In the meantime, cultural tradition is also updated and recycled, and gives birth to hybrid practices, such as the recent appearance of the "chicken dance" as a legitimate powwow competing category. One of the most relevant categories of being a Lakota revolved around the language.

The 5th component in our community is culture because it is just something that you need. You need to have culture and…as Lakota people, I think that we are very lucky in that we have retained a lot of our culture but…we have lost a lot too. And our language is in danger and that is something that we hope to restore as much as possible. We aren't fluent speakers but it something that we are focusing on is to try and relearn our language and try to practice our culture and try to revitalize a culture that is ours.

Speaking Lakota is an important part of being Lakota, especially since language ban and the way it was forced, notably through boarding schools policies (Littlemoon 2009) is a living part of historical trauma:

It was bad for me to speak Lakota when I was a kid, and it was my first language, so I created a mental block. So that creates weird situations, because I know what the word means and I translate it to English and then back

Part of being a Lakota is about sharing and committing to a set of Lakota values. The following were displayed by a Lakota large-scale organization but overlap with grassroots people's narratives. Traditional values entail:

- Woc'ekiya: Praying
- Wa o' hola: Respect
- Wa on' sila: Caring
- Wowijake: Honesty
- Wacantognka: Generosity
- Wah'wala: Humility
- Woksape: Wisdom
- Wowacintnka: Fortitude
- Woohitika: Bravery

Lakotas traditionally believe that people are born with some of these values and must spend the rest of their lives acquiring them. Some of these might be hard to practice given local hardships, but they are definitely displayed by people as part of being a Lakota. They influence particular practices and behaviors that extend to the social sphere through events such as the give-aways; an enduring practice that still entails traditional notions of wealth redistribution:

The Lakotas traditionally don't value possessions. And....they (elders) tell us that the chief gave away the most and that's even today, as poor as we are. That's how you...show your honor. If there is something that you honor then you give away in their honor. You know, I have a party and people bring things and you give away and that's how you demonstrate the things that matter to us. Generosity, Honest, Compassion, you know, those kinds of things. So I think that's why you maybe see a different perspective in Lakota country cause even though we have come so far from our original teachings, we still know them…we still know them and still honor them even if we don't practice them. You know so you know if you told you know some rich white man that if he wanted to show his love that he should give away to people he doesn't know it would just seem like a crazy idea you know but that's what we do. And we give away not to the most impressive among us. We give away to the poorest. You know, that's what you do. You give away to the orphans and the elders and like that you know. That's who we are…

But being a Lakota also strongly entails ontological statements about being in the world and people's relationship to the world, which is also meant to define Lakotas' specificities in regard to other cultures:

Well the Lakota you know, they (elders) tell us that, a long time ago, that the different races of people were given different elements to care for. And the Lakotas were given the earth. And like I said, we live close to the earth here because we are so dependent (on it) you know…

Being a Lakota is therefore not about embodying a standalone set of cultural traits. It entails outward practices that have to do with reacting and adjusting to others' perceptions, particularly to hardships that Lakotas have faced to feel free to "be Lakota". Being a Lakota starts to be about how to face these hardships strong. And that strength becomes an embedded factor of that identity. This is even perceived by outsiders, such as this volunteer's comment about Lakota identity:

Volunteer*: Like have resilience…to be able to have the resilience…a lot of the customs were illegal up to not that long ago and come back and teach the young people how to appreciate them…those things are really neat.*
Interviewer*: And what do you think influences this resilience?*
Volunteer: *a part of it is human...the beauty of life...haha...and pride. I mean, I guess being proud people. They are very proud of where they came from.*

Such resistance to hardships is described and pointed out more specifically by Lakota people, and it often defines being Lakota as a way of life, and therefore positions itself on a spectrum of different lifestyles projections and ideologies:

> *You know, it's hard to be poor...They talk about the "Great American dream," or I don't know what you want to call it. Anybody can live that life, it's easy. It's easy to go through life without caring about anything but yourself or your own, you know -and I mean anything else, even the Earth and the plant life and the animal life- without taking 'that' into consideration, without respecting that. It's easy. It's hard to be poor. It's hard to be Lakota. That's what my people say. It's hard to be Lakota because you can't…you can't live without that respect if you're Lakota…respect for yourself and for everything around you because you understand that we're all related. We all come from that oneness that is 'tunkasila' (Grandfather/Great Spirit). So, then we have to live our lives in a way that we manifest that respect".*

Being a Lakota entails therefore an ontological dimension and positions itself as not sharing another ideology; here the American dream as a value system and behavior referential. Reversed statements confirm this, while tying it back to an ethnic claim:

> *I am saying that there is this thing called the American Dream. This myth that is called the American dream. And some LaKota seek it out and some LaKota are real successful and not just LaKota but 'red people' everywhere are real successful in assimilating and good at accepting change. We are good at adapting. And some people…have been incredibly successful at that, you know, at basically wiping all the browness out of them…*

Clearly while entailing strong endogenous characteristics, being a Lakota seems to entail a dimension of not being a "wasicu" or "white American". This means that the sense of identity here seemingly includes a distinct separation from another identity trait presented as antithetical. But what does "being a wasicu" entail?

Being a Wasicu

"Wasicu", pronounced [Wa-shee-tshu], traditionally refers to White people. Etymologically, however, it seems to be related to historical encounters, as it means "takes the fat", as a reference to white colonizers to always take the best of everything while leaving the bad for Natives. With time, one of the senses of "being a wasicu" has been

reduced to being White, but also being Non-Native American, and can therefore be considered as a race-related statement. The expression of "takes the fat" though, indicates early associations from Lakota perspectives of Whites engaging in behaviors considered unfair and involving the practice of advantageous behaviors that is not without recalling the concept of white privilege. Although "Wasicu" comes from a Lakota terminology, the fact that it associates with white privilege reifies the existence of white privilege as a coercive factor in American colonization and indicates how a specific type of ethnic relations developed around the dominant framework of whiteness. Here, the actual skin color matters less than the expectations associated to it on the reservation space. For instance, it is less about being White-colored than local representations that White people have money, and behave in certain ways. Whites perceive it, however as an ethnic statement and are quite surprised by it at first, as this white volunteer:

> *I came to Pine Ridge and people see me as a white girl and come to me and try and sell me things…so they try to sell me touristy things you know. So they expect me to buy from them. It was kind of surprising to see that here, and I was like; "Oh wow! This seems like...Haiti" or, you know, it feels like another country. So that was kind of weird.*

The fact of not being used to racial considerations is also property of the privilege of Whites, often never confronted to it in their immediate environment unless they live or go in a non-white majority place. Except that "being White" also entails projections about "having money" or "having status", as seen in many "developing" countries. Such associations between race and money are present throughout the developmentalist "post"-colonized world. Locally, "being a Wasicu" from a Lakota perspective also entails projections of behaviors, such as a tendency to want to dominate conversations or projects, which can cause further tensions in the Wasicu/Lakota relationship:

We're actually confronting that directly because, we have some white guys and, I don't want to sound like a big head, but the ones that have the biggest problems on the structures I'm putting together are the white guys. I don't know if it's a genetic predisposition or what. Maybe they were just raised so much different but there's something there that I don't know. I don't know what it is exactly…

There is some kind of awareness in the Lakota perception of Whites that somehow they follow different guidelines, worldviews and lifestyles:

I think that turning towards a life of less is just so contrary to everything that they've been taught. That is why you don't see it off the reservation you know…

"Being a Wasicu" in the Lakota framework is not just an ethnic statement but entails historically constructed behavioral, ontological and ideological expectations that reflect upon the way that Wasicus are considered and treated on the reservation. Definitions of "being white" from a non-white perspective therefore entails dimensions of criticism of expressions of white privilege. Interestingly, the ethnic component can become entirely void in regards to the other dimensions. As such, an ethnically Lakota person can be called a "Wasicu" as a way to characterize him/her as someone partaking expected/projected "White behavior". As I later show, reversely and more recently, an ethnically White person can cease to "being a Wasicu" or being displayed as such by demonstrating behavior that deconstructs White privilege or engage in considered Lakota values such as protecting the earth. Although these social constructions of identity occur within a racial spectrum and reify race-based discriminations, Lakota specific constructions of identity and phenomena of categorization rather focus on behavior-based differentiation.

Being a Iyeska

The Iyeska, or [Ee-yeh-shka] is a junction between being Lakota and being White. Iyeskas are Lakotas in the sense that they are usually enrolled members of the tribe. It literally means "translator". Originally, it could refer to people who worked as translators

for white groups such as the US army or other institutions. This job was often this of mixed-blood Lakotas and hence became used as an equivalent of "half-blood" to define Lakotas who have mixed origins. Today, it is of course extremely rare to find "pure blood" Lakotas who never had any white or mixed-blood ancestry. Yet, the term "full-blood" still persists although it does not necessarily reflect the actual "blood quantum" of people. Some "full-blood" individuals sometimes make it something to be proud of and to protect from mixing that can be perceived as threatening for the durability of "being a Lakota". By contrast, the Iyeska becomes the one who either does not have the full-bloodline, or clearly does not look "full-blood". This can apply to Lakotas with whiter skins, facial hair, or who simply do not reflect the "native" look. However, Iyeska entails a myriad of other nuances.

Still as "the translator", Iyeska can refer to a medicine person who is said to travel in both the earthly and spiritual world. Historically, it is also linked to those who had more privileges and better considerations and treatments from the Whites. To this day, Iyeskas are perceived as those who get more benefit from the colonial economic system. As this Lakota man suggests: "the Iyeska are the ones to get the land here". They are also associated with higher income and better job opportunities. Consequently, being an Iyeska has a history of being associated with "being a traitor" and treating with the Whites. Today, they can also represent the "modern", or what is not "traditional". But they are also those who can navigate both systems and reconcile the apparently irreconcilable identities of "being a Lakota" and "being a wasicu". Thus, it also refers to people who are cultural bridges. This project manager gives the following definition of his claimed Iyeska identity:

> *The literal translation of it is "translator" and it can be in both worlds. My family calls me a chameleon…*

Iyeskas reinvent hybridity between all the nuances that characterize each of these distinct ways of being.

Decolonial stakes of Lakota identity

The definition of the nuances of Lakota identity reflects upon inward and outward dynamics specific to both local political economic history and colonial historicity and constructions of ethnic relations. Ignoring the effect of historical determinism in the construction of local identity might false any conclusion attempting to analyze contextual configurations observed in Pine Ridge. What is interesting here is that my analysis of these nuances clearly shows how different groups of identity belongings are defined in regards to specific relations of power to others. Wallerstein focused on the term of "peoplehood" as a framework of analysis to study stratified dynamics between groups. Here, there is a strong belief that although reified by the actors, differentiation is a product of dominant discourse and normativity (Wallerstein 1987).

The term peoplehood refers in other literature to an analytical tool of indigenous identity construction contingent upon social, cultural, economic and religious indigenous specificities (Holm et al. 2003), that allows the flexible study of complex context specific traits such as oppression, colonialism, cultural dualism, cultural and religious revival, etc. Wallerstein uses the same terminology to grasp identities in regards to power dynamics. However, he restricts it within race, nation and class. For him, groups such as "colored" or "non-white" are fundamentally nested within the dominant vs. subordinate groups' dichotomy. Wallerstein resets these constructs within imperialist/colonial and core/periphery dynamics and more generally the course of history, which partially

explains how associations between ethnic traits and ideological, behavioral and economic projections are made.

Categories serve the purpose of individuals' identity but also of the structures influencing them. Racial categorization is used to maintain core/periphery status quo. It is nested within the systemic needs for the reproduction of inequalities and therefore more broadly within a functionalist approach to social differentiation. However, these definitions originate from the Lakota framework and history itself, and although it is expressed in regards to historical domination, it entails more than just a subordinate relationship: it is shaped through the appropriation of recognition and pride linked to these categories -here by the minority group-, which take place within inter-personal negotiation. We clearly see through Lakota representations of identity that individual perceptions greatly influence the matter of identity categorization, and contextually define nuances of being a Lakota, a Wasicu or an Iyeska.

However, although what it means to be a Lakota evolved over time, its current definition is definitely nested in regards to the hegemonic concept of whiteness, which impedes on endogenous definition of identity. The omnipresence of whiteness as the standard defining category is not simply symbolical but institutional. An example can be found in the concept of "federally-recognized tribe", where one's contemporary tribal ethnic status is conditioned by external and Non-Lakota assessment. What should be depending upon endogenous constructs remains influenced by exogenous barriers. This complicates the actual definition of decolonial definitions of being a Lakota. In her effort to define Indigenous identity, Weaver, a Lakota woman (Weaver 2001) recalls a poignant local story of which source remains uncertain:

The day had come for the championship game in the all-Native basketball tournament. Many teams had played valiantly, but on the last day the competition came down to the highly competitive Lakota and Navajo teams. The tension was high as all waited to see which would be the best team. Prior to the game, some of the Lakota players went to watch the Navajos practice. They were awed and somewhat intimidated by the Navajos' impressive display of skills. One Lakota who was particularly anxious and insecure pointed out to his teammates that some of the Navajo players had facial hair. "Everyone knows that Indians don't have facial hair," he stated. Another Lakota added that some of the Navajos also had suspiciously dark skin. They concluded, disdainfully, that clearly these were not Native people and, in fact, were probably a "bunch of Mexicans." The so-called Navajos should be disqualified from the tournament, leaving the Lakota team the winner by default. That same afternoon, some Navajo players went to watch the Lakota team practice. The Lakotas had a lot of skillful moves that made the Navajos worry. One Navajo observed, "That guy's skin sure looks awful light." Another added, "Yeah, and most of them have short hair." They concluded, disdainfully, that clearly these were not Native people and, in fact, were probably a "bunch of white guys." The so-called Lakotas should be disqualified from the tournament, leaving the Navajos the winners by default. The captains from both teams brought their accusations to the referee just before game time. Both teams agreed that Native identity must be established before the game could be played and that whichever team could not establish Native identity to everyone's satisfaction must forfeit. The Lakota captain suggested that everyone show his tribal enrollment card as proof of identity. The Lakotas promptly displayed their "red cards," but some of the Navajos did not have enrollment cards. The Lakotas were ready to celebrate their victory when the Navajo captain protested that carrying an enrollment card was a product of colonization and not an indicator of true identity. He suggested that the real proof would be a display of indigenous language skills, and each Navajo proceeded to recite his clan affiliations in the traditional way of introducing him- self in the Navajo language. Some of the Lakotas were able to speak their language, but others were not. The teams went back and forth proposing standards of proof of identity, but each proposed standard was self-serving and could not be met by the other team. As the sun began to set, the frustrated referees canceled the championship game. Because of the accusations and disagreements that could not be resolved there would be no champion in the indigenous tournament.

Weaver concludes that: "sometimes we are our own worst enemies. Our divisions should be reconcilable, but internalized colonization and oppression just lead to deeper divisions. Features of internalized oppression and colonization can be found in many oppressed communities in addition to the indigenous communities discussed here. Actions and reactions born of internalized oppression and colonization are themselves acts of colonization that mirror the oppressors' acts. Until we are able to put aside our own

insecurities that lead us to accuse others, there will be no winners among indigenous people".

In summary, Lakota identity is a product of social interaction and negotiation as well as the product of global patterns of racial inequality, fostered by global racialized systems. This claim is visible alongside this dissertation and discussion of how ethnic identity plays out in how local actors carry out their projects. Here, DTM efficiently complements ethnic identity theories; firstly because it centers ethnic identity formation on racialized systems off white hegemony. Thus, it can efficiently account for the origin and effect of racial power dynamics in the reservation and help understand its predominance in local discourse. This is fundamental, but it only represents the "outward" part of ethnic relations (see chapter 5) or the "anti-colonial". Focusing on that sphere only can reify oppressive frameworks if it dismisses its complementary account. A decolonial approach will consider "inward" identity dynamics and further explain the role of Lakota identity in developing local alternatives from what is associated with "white hegemony", not just as a reactionary process, but as a truly liberating and empowering projection of identity. As explained in the next chapter, the element of "ethnic" identity might play a key role in developing local expressions of decolonial resilience.

Land, labor and money

Unsurprisingly, the key elements for projects to get started appear to be consistently about finding resources in terms of land, labor and money. They represent the basic means of production necessary to put any project together. These coherently coincide with the fundamental elements corresponding to Polanyi's societal critique (Polanyi 2001). The organization of land, labor and money represents complementary capital upon which

societal progress can operate and also be measured. Their commodification participates in creating a societal dysfunction called the "disembeddedness" of society. I argue that colonial dynamics imposing a specific reorganization of these elements further precipitated the effect of "disembeddedness". Indeed, the reservation history is dependent upon a stepwise destruction of the traditional use of land, labor and money and its replacement with the western commodified organization and its accompanying ideology. This constitutes the initial part of colonial trauma, and the material base upon which it is still experienced today.

Perceptions of land, work and money and the continuous reproduction of these among societies shape their representations and eventually institutionalize a systemic model, of one form or another. The modification of one of these features, as claimed by Polanyi, is correlated to socio-economic and cultural changes, whether positive or negative. Beyond the economic critique, the debate here revolves around individual and collective meaning of society. Because of the fundamental distinctions between these representations in the original Lakota versus White American model and the coercion exercised by the latter on the first, the impact of "disembeddement" appears to be multiplied within current Lakota territories. This provides an alternative explanatory framework to explain the apparent "failure" of the development model in the reservation by western standards. In this framework, attempts to regain power over land, labor and money as those debated hereafter can be thought of as "reembedding".

Disembedding Lakota Land

The Pine Ridge Reservation is located in one of the latest colonized territories in the history of the United States. From 1492 to the 1850s, the Lakotas experienced little change

in their lifestyles, except perhaps the introduction of the horse in their everyday economy. They also had been pushed further West, although these points are strongly debated (Sundstrom 1996). Nonetheless, consensus can be established to claim that until then, the Lakotas remained a fully sovereign people who was following its lifestyle and organizing its society in a relative freedom of movements. By 1850, the "conquest of the West" had progressively shrunk the hunting territory of the Lakotas, progressively growing tensions in struggle for resources with other tribes and in fighting off the advancement of white colonization.

In 1851, The first Fort Laramie Treaty was ratified between the Lakotas, other neighboring tribes and the United States government, in which Natives were conceded respective territories while allowing "roads, military and other posts" to be built and giving safe passage to white settlers. The US would engage to protect Indian nations from aggressions from individual or groups of people, and reserved itself the right to suspend annuities and cancel the treaty would any party or member of the said tribes violate any of the aforementioned articles. It failed the first condition and easily found a case to justify the suspension of part of the payment. The failure of this treaty further escalated settlers versus Natives tensions. The "Red Cloud wars" marked the resistance attempt made by the Lakotas against white colonization. It also leveraged their power against the US government to negotiate the second Fort Laramie Treaty, which established in 1868 the Great Sioux Reservation.

The latter kept the western half of present-day South Dakota to be a reserved and collective Lakota territory, and provisioned for the use of "wild" land west of South Dakota to be used for hunting. The treaty planned for the establishment of agencies and schools on

the reservation and the provision of rations and material. This initiated a first US effort to "civilize" the Lakotas, having understood that it would be cheaper and possibly more efficient in fostering complete Americanization than constant warfare. Yet, the great Sioux Reservation still formed a collective land entity where Lakota social-economic relevance could be somewhat maintained.

In 1877, the illegal grab of the Black Hills west of the reservation by white settlers for gold mining further exemplified the incapacity of the US government to hold on to treaty conditions. The grab was simply considered an unfortunate turn of events by the US government, which in turn precipitated the decision of the US government to solve the "Indian Issue" via strong assimilation policies. To this day, the Black Hills remain illegally detained territory in complete violation of the 1868 treaty that is still in use for the legal management of US vs. Lakota legal relations.

The Dawes Act of 1887 or allotment act planned for the division of tribal land into private allotments of 80 acre for a single person to 160 acre per household. The remaining land post-allotment was sold to white settlers by the US department of Interior as allotted surplus, which reduced considerably the size of Indian land. The Great Sioux Reservation was split into five distinct reservations. The system first distributed citizenship to individuals who would take the allotments and then protect their title "in trust" for a period of 25 years. Yet, after that period, the land would move to a patent-in-fee status where the owner would need to pay taxes in order to keep the land. Many Natives lost their land by default of fee payments. This further precipitated the grab of Indian land and the fragmentation of tribal territories. Indian land went from 138 million acres in 1887 down to 48 million in 1934 (see Appendix IX for map of land grab evolution).

The overt goals of the Dawes Act were not hidden:

> *"It has become the settled policy of the Government to break up reservations, destroy tribal relations, settle Indians upon their own homesteads, incorporate them into the national life, and deal with them not as nations or tribes or bands, but as individual citizens." Commissioner of Indian Affairs Thomas J. Morgan, 1890*

The Act changed property relations and destroyed the very relevance of the cultural, religious and social practices of the Lakota model (Fenelon 1998; Rifkin 2011; Schmidt 2015). "Allotment policies for alienating Sioux land from tribal trust, intensified the losses for Lakota social integrity and gains for the US and American Society" (Fenelon, 1998: 334). Polanyi states that: "the forced Land allotment made to American Indians in 1887, benefited them individually, according to our financial scale of reckoning. Yet the measure all but destroyed the race in its physical existence-the outstanding case of cultural degeneration on record." (Polanyi, 2001: 168).

Intentions of civilizing the Natives served as the moral and ideological justification for land grab and theft, and for the micro-management of cultural shift needed to move from a collective-based into an individual profit-based societal organization. The BIA then overtly states:

> *The Indians must conform to the "white man's ways" peaceably if they will, forcibly if they must. They must adjust themselves to their environment, and conform their mode of living substantially to our civilization. This civilization may not be the best possible but it is the best the Indians can get. (BIA Report, 1889)*

However, the task proved harder than planned when colonizers were faced with the fact that collectivism was a deeply nested foundation of Lakota culture. Switching economic mode of production proves to be strongly correlated with modifying social-cultural constructions. In 1896, the Pine Ridge commissioner of Indian Affair reports:

> *"A serious drawback in the work of civilizing these or any Indians ... is found in the universal custom of relatives and connections by marriage considering that what one has*

belongs to all. As such relations are usually very numerous and for the most part idle and improvident, no one family can accumulate anything. Let a man be in receipt of a salary, no matter how large, or let him by industry raise a crop, and he gets no real benefit from it. His own relations and those of his wife swarm down upon him and consume everything, so that he has nothing for his industry. This is not only discourages any attempt to be industrious and to accumulate property, especially things that can be used for food, but it puts a premium on idleness and unthrift, for he who idles not only saves his muscle, but fares as well as does he who works. [Commissioner of Indian Affairs 1896:291]".

Lakotas had been coerced onto "the path of civilization", which from the colonizer's perspective represented the only framework within which they could have an existence at all. Rejoicing upon the civilizing effects of the allotment act, Commissioner Collier was also proclaiming the newly acquired rights of property of the Lakota and incorporating those into the legal protection of the United States, where "any laws must protect these individual property rights in living allottees and their heirs". The Lakotas' "guardian" had spoken, and because his voice was the only one through which Lakotas could exist in the eyes of the western society, issues quietly became about "how Lakotas should and cannot assimilate into capitalist mode of production" instead of "how we coerced and still are coercing different cultural models into one hegemonic lifestyle and worldview". And this nuance produces distinctively different answers.

Indeed, the first consideration implies that the consequences of the *Dawes Act* manifest today as a structural barrier to social change on the reservation through socio-economic and symbolic oppression. Practically speaking, it is true that the inheritance of this colonial history of land has left the reservation with extremely complex Land-use issues, for instance to change from one allotment status to another. Therefore, the inhabitants of Pine Ridge experience huge trouble using the land as they wish, rendering them not being able to benefit from the promise implied by the Dawes Act that the allotment would allow tribal members to "make the most of their land". But the obvious

solution to this problematization considers only what can be done to catch up or compete with western mode of production.

The second consideration, however, realizes that ideological and cultural resistance to colonial coercion has occurred since then in Pine Ridge, and that it manifests today at the heart of the current dynamics of local development. The first part of this resistance is ideological; it can be seen in the surprising endurance of specific cultural worldviews towards the land. A continuous reference to "Indian land", or "Indian country" shows the prevalence of the concept today. Beyond its geographical and socio-economic implications, it above all things encompasses a symbolical use, as demonstrated above. As such, "Indian land" appears as a process, a motion, along with most of what is left of the Lakota culture. Seemingly, we can see that, despite a territory that was reshaped through land privatization, the land is still referred, and therefore appropriated, as a collective notion. The relation to land is central because it constitutes the base upon which cultural specificities can thrive or die. An interesting observation is related by Cook-Lynn (1993):

> *"The Sioux or Lakota... often spoke of the disappearance of their people. When I answered that census figures showed their population increasing, they countered that parts of their reservations were continually being lost. They concluded there could be no more Indians when there was no more Indian land. Several older men told me that the original Sacred Pipe given the Lakota in the Beginning was getting smaller. The Pipe shrank with the loss of land. When the land and Pipe disappeared, the Lakota would be gone." (Schusky, 1981)*

This demonstrates how these cultural land conceptions are linked to colonization and the survival of the people. But they are above all linked to reaction to an economic mode of production against which they try to produce alternatives, as I show in chapter 5 and 6.

A last but not least point about land that I wanted to point out concerns water issues. Soil degradation due to overgrazing and desertification has rendered access to

water difficult. Additionally, the lasting effects of 19-20th century allotment can again be felt. Whereas water sources were a common good on a once commonly shared land, they are now dispatched onto privately owned parcels and require rights for tribal members to access. Finally, the pollution of tribal water sources with dangerous components such as uranium renders its consumption a risky practice. Uranium pollution occurs through a combination of multiple factors; it is partially due to 1) upstream old uranium mining leaks in several regional aquifers, 2) land pollution linked to military nuclear trials that are still hidden and covered from public discovery, and thus extremely hard to expose and 3) leaking of naturally present uranium in the soil revealed by manmade action such as soil erosion. On reservations such as Cheyenne River, one has to add the detour of natural water stream via the construction of dams that flooded important areas of the reservation and desertified others. People are not only aware of these facts but also realistic about the long-term consequences of consumption on their health. Consequently, water is an important issue on the reservation, which manifests in local projects (see chapter 5).

Local labor, wage work and white privilege

From a western socio-economic perspective, the reservation is "plagued" by labor issues. Figures of unemployment are "skyrocketing". According to a report that emerged from longitudinal local research, only 30% of employable people are indeed employed with a significant number of unemployed people reporting they did not have the intention to work (Pickering et al. 2005). Contrary to western preconceived stereotypes, alcohol and drugs consumption represents less than 10% of the reasons why people have trouble going to work (Pickering et al. 2005). More than 30% point at feeling inadequate education, lack of childcare, lack of transportation and family issues as reasons impeding on work

satisfaction. Despite displaying an average household income three times inferior to national average, 70% report being satisfied with how much they are paid. 57% of people keep the same job between 1-5 years. This data suggests that there is way more to labor issues on the reservation than a lack of jobs or a lack of training.

First, there is a specific issue linked to the previously explained complex nature of social relations on the reservation. In Dr. Pickering's longitudinal Pine Ridge study, people report that there is inequality in jobs access and that: "what gets you jobs is who you know", "if you are related to the president you can get a job easily" and that "it's not what you know it's who you know". Family relations are quoted as number one criteria to get a job on the reservation. Secondly, again race and Lakota blood quantum significantly impacts who gets employed; "Half bloods get all the jobs". "Dark skins don't get jobs". Race and family relations appear to be significant factors in job access. That is one possible interpretation. Again, it is based on the premise that wage-work is a compulsory wanted advantage to compete for in a modern society. The responsibility of labor issues is also endorsed by making individuals guilty for not succeeding by wage-work standards. The following staff member of an outside organization who employs natives was providing the following comment to labor issues on the Rez:

> *This was the fourth time just without a call. So, she's...we fired her. And the...and unfortunately, every Lakota person -not every- but most we've hired have either -especially cooks- have just stopped showing up, or stole, or...you know...done something where they've been fired...or quit. And every [pause]...all of 'em. And it's really sad. So, we're...we've...we are constantly on the lookout for Lakota staff members. So, if you see any, let us know.*

This type of discourse is extremely recurrent. Because people cannot fit wage-work expectations of time or labor-intensiveness, individuals are pointed at as inadapted; an enduring technique that is not without recalling practices of reservation era time. This is

not to undermine the possible personal issues that people face rendering it hard for them to comply with work demands. But the simple fact that this model is unquestionably imposed and coerced upon locals without critical reasoning points at the deeper issue of the construct of labor as partaking the colonial construct. By considering only inequality of job access or personal competence inappropriateness as the main issue of labor on the Rez, it undermines both the presence of coloniality in labor issues and the possibility that alternative explanations might exist to explain such discrepancy. It also discards the idea that equally competing for jobs is not the only thinkable outcome for oppressed people struggles.

Instead, might this trend possibly be related to ideological beliefs supporting or not regular wage-work as an appropriate way to earn a living? Might it be linked to a cultural resistance to individual wage-work and profit making as the only means to sustain life? Partial answer to that question can already be found in previous work. Imposing a conception of labor as strictly related to wage generating employment is found dismissive of local realities and real economy (Pickering and Mushinski 2000). The ideological imposition of colonial constructions of labor can be observed within the forms of welfare policies: “by placing sole emphasis on individual "personal responsibility," TANF appears to be the latest in a line of recurring policies promoting cultural assimilation as the hidden solution to poverty” (Pickering and Mushinski 2000:149). I will show in next chapters how endogenous labor conceptions envision and construct a decolonial approach to labor.

A last aspect attached to colonized labor is the formatting enforced through schooling as a fabric for wageworkers. Although distinct in methods from inhuman whitening boarding schools (see Littlemoon 2009), and having integrated Lakota cultural

knowledge to its curriculum, contemporary education on the reservation remains tied to enhancing employability and assimilation of students within a wage-labor/western capitalist mode of production, i.e, in the line of a continuum to the goal of "civilizing the Indian" through the child. Local education is described as such by one participant:

> *I think it's all part of the assimilation system really. I mean, assimilation mentality. Education was never a formal thing. I don't wanna say formal, but I wanna say institutionalized education was never a value for (old) Lakota people. Education was engaged in part of their lifestyle, it was like, they brought their kids to everything and kids where expected to learn how to do things. And um, western outside culture don't value those things and instead places high value on things like math and reading. And so, in some of the schools where the kids are really behind, all they do all day long is math and reading. They don't get recess. If they do they get 15 minutes. There's a bunch of schools I know, they get 15 minutes of recess a day and that's not enough time for a kid to go outside.*

In summary, data points out to reasons for high unemployment, lack of labor and work issues to not just being limited to lack of job opportunities or the structure and inequality of the job market but instead to the inadequacy of conceptions of labor induced by western standards. Lakotas seem to manifest a detachment from western work ethics and the idea of continued wage-work as a life goal. This has negative and positive impediments on local projects.

Imposing Money and the western economic model

In 2016, "the Bureau of Indian Affairs' mission is to enhance the quality of life, to promote economic opportunity, and to carry out the responsibility to protect and improve the trust assets of American Indians, Indian tribes and Alaska Natives". The history of the Pine Ridge Indian reservation is not just one of genocide, ethnocide and ecocide, but also one of econocide, or the progressive replacement of one economic model and relevance by another. 70% of the population seems to be alienated from the job market and yet manages to continue being a growing population with a high fertility rate. The riddle of Pine Ridge

extremely low figures of capitalist standards of development yet growing population should be an eye-opener for decision-makers who mostly ignore real economy and local realities to instead fantasize on projections such as income and employment to assess local economic vitality.

According to Pickering (2000), "because of the peripheral position of the Pine Ridge and Rosebud Reservations within the U.S. economy, Lakotas have difficulty finding access to market-based forms of production" (Pickering, 2000: 14). Yet, the actual local economy relies on alternative practices (Pickering, 2000: 44-61). For instance, more than half Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River residents engage in Lakota cultural craftsmanship as a way to provide more income. Such a figure has no visibility from a classical income assessment. Seemingly, how do you account for the numerous trade-based exchanges of goods and services that people use to get by despite the "alarming" classical median incomes? Another figure points out that 72% of people make use of natural resources for subsistence, a figure literally absent from classical production and consumption assessment. The underground economy is a very well-known fact by local tribal members who have to cope to palliate to the failure of the capitalist model:

> *I mean the thing is that our people here start out from nothing because we don't have any small banks, no small businesses no financial back grounding at least in the western stance because it hasn't been tracked our whole lives. So when our young people get school and they go take out student loans to go through secondary education, they don't have an established network you know, through the bank, or their parents, relatives and things like that who have money to get them started. Buy a home and all that stuff. That's completely and totally lacking so I mean if you're going to do a grassroots movement, you're going to have to find a way to translate because I mean most of our economy is underground. I mean when I was a kid I wanted a car. Well I couldn't just go out and buy one so I went out and I found one that I could get cheap. The motor was blown out, emission missing, but I saw my other uncles and took them some tobacco and coffee and talked with them about finding a motor and transmission, and I grew my skills. Then I built my first car when I was 13.*

A classical western critical approach to Lakota economy would analyze it from a "political economy" framework, as described by Popkin (1979), that is to say that it considers Lakota economy in relation to the world economy and thereby only in terms of relative inequality to others' "share of the cake", which is needed but reductionist. Such a reduction has two main negative impacts. First it coercively constrains and narrows down economic ideology while ignoring actual vectors of local economic vitality, and secondly it prevents alternatives from emerging.

World market forces impacted the Lakota local economy and froze it within the reservation territory. Yet, following Popkin's political economy view, individuals should be able to overcome the spatial structure and fit within the "opportunities" given by the global economy, providing it is locally wished, as reified by Collier's management of the BIA and comments of Indian development progress (see land section). Although valid to express inequality, such analysis still functions from the dominant's normative framework of what economy is and should be. A better assessment would analyze Lakota economic "subversion" through Deloria's dialectic of temporal vs. spatial conception of social practices (Deloria, 2003: 61-76). As a by-product of colonialism, temporal practices took over a spatially based system, collapsing its social coherence within a constraint territory. It is still widely reified today by outsiders and some local actors on Lakota people. Today framed through the will to help, advices from outsiders always entail money statements, which in fact are reminiscences of western constructs around the concept of money and money distribution. In fact, it is less about money as a means of exchange than about economic ideology, as this white outsider environmental activist states:

> *I mean...I think wind and solar energy would be great…Cause there's so much wind and energy and sun here that if there was some sort of self-sufficient, like...not...not even self-*

sufficient but like...money-making system like...like what (grassroots project manager name) is doing...and then more people could utilize. And maybe just giving the farmland back to the Lakota instead of, you know...the white farmers. I think those are two things that could be JOBS, that could be great jobs out here...you know...I think as far as stores, or like big towns, I don't think that that would work on the Rez. But...there needs to be something, some sort of income.
Why do you think income is important? *Because I think income will...stimulate morale more. I think when people have income and they can feed their family and they're not worried about it, you know...that exhaustion goes away at least a little bit. And you can start focusing on other things like...like getting the trash out of your yard, or doing things like that because that...that poverty, that exhaustion of poverty, is not there anymore. And it...it sucks! But it does, it all runs on money...right now at least, you know...and...it's a bummer*

This quote expresses the frustration to depend on an economic system and ideology that is known to be destructive but yet still constitutes the basis of solutions within jobs and money as a moral stimulation. The struggle for equality replaces a deeper critical systemic questioning, and fosters a system in which getting a share of the cake appears as the only feasible reparation for colonization.

Instead, an endogenous analysis must emerge to deconstruct coloniality, which starts analytically. One has to first acknowledge the relative nature of economic considerations and accept that economy has no "truthful" or righteous shape that is not constructed and enforced. And subsequent economic disparities arise before everything via the domination of an economic ethos over another. Therefore a change in economic representations and the relocation of Lakota economic assessment with the reservation as the center might have more profound and lasting impacts than enforcing exogenous measures of "economic development", as is still the case today. I will explain how grassroots projects offer alternatives to change the use and representations of land, labor and money.

CHAPTER 5: SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS ON "THE REZ": TYPOLOGY, SUCCESS AND SCALE

This chapter looks at the local data supporting the hypothesis of strong grassroots development happening on the two reservations. More specifically, it presents the specificities of projects aiming locally at social change and sustainability. For the sake of objectivity and data triangulation, I attempt to present all sides involved in these projects. I provide an analysis of the two different scales actively working towards bringing social change. I also debate the impact of volunteering, church groups and outside organizations on local dynamics. Consistently with my commitment to no harm and to protecting identities of all involved in this research, I do not disclaim any names of organizations or people.

I focus on describing the projects and make sure that I expose accurately local initiatives. Because some projects managers were not opposed to their names being divulged, I hesitated whether including just a few of those would benefit them all and the purpose of this research. However, I am fully aware that sensitive information was given to me only because of the trust relationships that I would not expose them in any harmful ways. Indeed, because of the sensitive social relations and their impact in the reservation as seen in chapter 4, I do not want this work to further alienate their efforts. Instead, I strive to shed light and visibility on local innovation, which requires details about the projects and their efficiency, along with associated issues and struggles.

I present them as three distinct parties/scales of action involved: 1) local grassroots initiatives, 2) local large organizations initiatives and 3) outsiders contributions and volunteering. The first two categories allow me to discuss in depth the similarities and

differences of both scales of action, while providing a full description of the characteristics of all projects involved in the research. Although I could not possibly include all groups working on the ground, I am quite confident from local inputs that most major types of local projects aiming at sustainable change are hereby represented. I describe each scale of action, their project and their characteristics.

For each one I portray the rationale, emergence, operationalization of projects and specific issues. For clarity purposes for the reader, I first itemize the types of projects to present what types of activities are occurring and their characteristics. The itemized typology is a brief presentation of the shape of projects. However, I later reorganize them from a more culturally appropriate typology, as the projects leaders themselves usually present them. I demonstrate how these levels of action are intermingled in action. For objectivity purposes, whenever a point entails power dynamics, I present emic versus etic perceptions. I hope that this chapter allows the reader to grasp the nuances of local representations.

Grassroots-level projects

Projects typology

Here, I aim at describing as accurately as possible the specificities of grassroots projects observed on the ground. The typology shows types of projects, and does not include a typology by sites from grassroots projects sites names. Whenever, I was granted permission to display projects initiatives names, I do so to respect the desire for visibility of some of the grassroots managers. Most remain anonymous as they specified. Projects data comes directly from projects managers' perceptions and is highlighted by volunteers'

interviews, fieldnotes, and projects' documents, reports and websites. I also identify the main themes tying to the long-term development and outcomes of these projects.

In order to provide a relatively comprehensive and clear representation of local reality, even to a novice eye, I use a diversity of presentation and analytical tools, such as codes and data segments queries, charts, and also include projects pictures from their public pages or from projects managers who did not mind being identified. Grassroots projects usually occur on family land or leased land but the total site including all initiatives can be as small as five hundred square yards and usually does not extend beyond one acre, except when it includes ranching activities, such as buffalo raising.

Itemized typology

Water projects

Grassroots projects managers along with indigenous groups involved in environmental struggles claim it: "Water is life", one of the essential components of human subsistence, and thus of any project aiming at self-sufficiency. It is needed for direct consumption, growing food, and replenishing the soils suffering from desertification. Most grassroots projects occur on remote land isolated from main roads and from easy water access via the tribal water system. Tribal water can also take a while to hook up isolated areas and they do so only after housing foundations are built. Issues of mistrust can also influence decisions. If they can find alternatives to tribal water, some people choose to not access tribal water for the sake of water independence. This grassroots project manager had applied for water on his land and finally decided to give it up:

> *And, after that about two years, three years later then, they was turning the water. (They) Came over to hook me up and then we was undecided about it because we thought they was going to tap into out wells and (my daughter in law) said no. And the lady calls*

back and says how come we don't want water? So I said, because my daughter in law says you gonna tap into my well and we don't want that.

Picture 1- Landscaping for water restoration project

Consequently, most water projects aim at ensuring sustainable water supply on one's land. When water is an issue on a particular land, water-catchment and n projects become part of projects according to priorities. Water-catchments entail devices and mechanisms put into place to collect water and carry it to the housing or food production site.

Water restoration projects aim at restoring water moisture in the soil and transform the immediate livelihood of the project to enhance its capacity to provide a sustainable life supportive environment. It basically entails landscaping of particular areas of the land to attract natural water flows such as rain into replenishing the soil moisture and the local water cycle instead of running off the land. Techniques are improvised from a combination of personal research of the project leader and the know-hows of the volunteers and partners who can be gathered to help. One of the techniques I observed was the installation of sets of parallel disposed wood trunks at different heights of a slope in order to retain rain moisture. This technology has proven effective in restoring local water cycles in

desertified sites throughout the world and in other native reservations such as in the Hopi reservation[20]. It has proven effective in one grassroots project on Pine Ridge over the years, and is underway in another. Grassroots managers' goal is usually double: 1) restoring small-scale water cycles to allow the soil to retain moisture and enhance food production and self-sufficiency and 2) participating in restoring the larger water cycles of the earth.

These water projects are gaining attention as awareness of the global water crisis increases. They use techniques that are shared on social media and form worldwide networks of practices exchange and awareness. The momentum around water issues allows the federation of non-locals to the cause, which is why this particular type of projects might benefit from an increased visibility compared to other grassroots initiatives. The organization of local workshops allows the spread of appropriate technology (See the later Lakota typology for more details).

[20] See the work of groups such as Hopi RainCatchers and Waterock, L3C at http://www.waterockl3c.com

Food production

Picture 2- Veggies picked from local garden

Picture 3- More veggies from other site

Bison cooperative

Bison cooperative projects aim at starting or increasing grass-fed buffalo ranching on reservation land. The model that I am most familiar with included several producers who had independent herds, but where following a business model that put in common animal processing and distribution to ensure small-scale production while following a participatory governance process. A collective financing tool was also engineered[21] to help palliate to the initiatives' economic needs. For producers, the underpinning reasons for raising bison were usually double: 1) provide buffalo meat for human consumption and ceremony and 2) restore the native buffalo unto native land. The first point highlights a specific cultural and spiritual use of the buffalo by Lakotas that goes beyond meat consumption. The buffalo, or *Tatanka*, used to be central to Lakota diet and culture, and influenced tribal bands seasonal movements. The actual presence of the buffalo slowly disappeared from everyday Lakota life, but did not loose its symbolic cultural significance.

[21] With the help of the Fort Collins-based NGO Village Earth

The second point suggests an environmental conservation and political stake into bringing back a species that was near extinct by White outsiders and replaced by Whites' cattle ranching. The overall purpose of this cooperative was to improve direct local food consumption, but not at any price. The model was not following a regular bison ranching economic and practical model for specific local reasons. The shapes that the project took reflected particular Lakota cultural, spiritual and economic values that were deemed more important than the individual producer's profitability per se, as would a classical hegemonic economic model. Attempts to "bring back the buffalo" are increasingly commonplace in Plains Natives reservations. The tribes also often own a tribal herd. Their economic model and management varies and is still searching for a sustainable model that would accommodate land issues with cultural and spiritual features of the buffalo while making it easily and affordably available for consumption by local people.

Permaculture gardening

Picture 4-Permaculture circular garden with innovative irrigation

Gardening projects are a key component of most grassroots projects I encountered. They are present on the reservation at all shapes and sizes and degrees of completion. Some never leave the conceptual stage and remains a brilliant idea to palliate to food

access in a food desert. All start from a desire to increase fresh produce access, at the scale of the family or to broader distribute to the neighborhood. Regardless of the total size of their land, people usually keep a workable garden size depending on how much they can manage. It ranges from a hundred square yards to a few hundreds. In all of those, the sparkling intention was to produce food with respect to the long-term yielding and conservation of the land. By effect of word to mouth and self-instruction, projects leaders hear and develop techniques that seem to work that answer these requirements.

Consequently, the principles and technology of permaculture, or forms of holistic gardening, have spread throughout these projects. They plant mutually beneficial crops, build mounds to direct soil moisture, use piles of hay and cardboards as garden beds to increase soil richness and facilitate soil management. They carve shapes on the ground to maximize irrigation, and combine water catchments devices to thoughtfully improvised irrigation systems. Most gardens are quickly producing food the first year of set up, but quantity varies from providing for a household to distributing extra vegetables to nearby neighbors or schools. Among planted crops, there are different types of squash, peppers and greens. A lot of the volunteering labor force is used for garden maintenance, and projects always involve side outreach and education such as involving local kids and schools to sensitize them to fresh food production and consumption. These gardens aim at producing organic produce and are extremely aware of the negative impact of industrial pesticide on the environment. Some also try to revitalize ancient unmodified seeds.

Gardening remains one of the first initiatives that projects managers wish to put in place, to palliate to the shortage of access of "real food" on the reservation. Increasing yield becomes a matter of survival, yet their awareness of environmental and economic issues of

global food production pushes projects managers to innovate to find ways to increase productivity in a sustainable way. Vegetables have to grow but not at any costs. The omnipresence of this consciousness among all projects managers creates a space for learning alternative techniques while efficiency is driven by access to food and not by economic interests. As I later explain, growing food also takes place within a larger struggle for taking back the land.

Fruit trees

Picture 5-Fruit tree campaign

Access to fresh fruits on the reservation is a dream for many families who cannot afford the outrageously expansive fruits available in the few grocery stores and gas stations. Pine Ridge natural landscape includes creeks where trees grow. Lakotas used to collect wild fruits and berries as part of their diet, which is now lacking and induce vitamins deficiencies. Therefore, some projects wish to grow fruits as part of their self-sufficiency rationale. However, these are expansive to buy and long to grow so only few such initiatives have "taken roots" yet. They require people to find innovative solutions to get trees and ensure their growth. So far, I have witnessed only three of those initiatives.

One of them used a very innovative way to access fruit trees, by identifying an online campaign led by a world fruit distribution leader. The campaign offered projects an opportunity to register and advertise their projects to collect “likes” in their own social media contacts. Voting had to be effected every day to be counted. The campaign lasted a few months, in which the project manager was online everyday to collect votes from people. Eventually, whereas other projects in different places in the United States had taken the lead, the endurance of this project manager got them to win by the deadline, and they were delivered on their land with a hundred immature fruits trees, that are still growing and barely start giving fruits. This project is representative of the long-term rationale that guides these projects.

Aquaponic greenhouses

Picture 6- "Walipini" ground greenhouse construction

As part of the permaculture framework, aquaponic greenhouses combine fish production and gardening into a sustainable year round food producing greenhouse. The principle is that fish water gets evacuated onto plant soil and fish dejection feeds growing plants. This type of project requires some more technicalities and is still experimental. The single prototype present in one of the sites has been slowly progressing for the past couple of years and it almost complete. The climate is harsh in South Dakota with burning sun in

the summer and freezing wind and snow in the winter; the greenhouse is a half-buried structure made with recycled tires and earth and covered with a steep wooden roof.

Other greenhouses flourish on the reservation, out of desire to produce food year long in the dry and extreme climate of the Plains. Buried greenhouses are a trendy process because it allows to conserve a more stable temperature; i.e colder in the summer and warmer in the winter. Such greenhouses are usually a timely process and take a few years to complete. They are sometimes dismissed for more classical plastic soil-level greenhouses that allow a faster food production and are less heavy in equipment and labor requirements.

Beehive

Beehives developed in two projects as part of the self-sufficiency process, to yield honey but also out of awareness for the role of bees to encourage local pollination of wild plants. Protection equipment is rudimentary and the hives are not overexploited. Here the purpose is to get fresh local honey for the household instead of seeking a maximization of profit.

Herbs and wild plants gathering

All projects entail elements of cultural revitalization. Restoring old traditional knowledge and practices becomes nested within projects' goals. Whereas some wild crops are still harvested by families on the reservation such as a potato-like wild root called *timsila*, knowledge of other herbs greatly disappeared with increasing reservation food insecurity and coerced food reliance on federal commodities and later on corporate fast food and supermarkets. As a response, there is a growing movement to awaken local

knowledge. Projects often include some level of wild food harvesting and revitalizing of forgotten plants harvest, harvesting and storage -such as drying- techniques.

Knowledge of traditional plants has been dormant but still exists, especially from elders. Some projects try to revitalize this knowledge by calling on elders' knowledge of plants. They will deliberately look for such knowledge while "visiting" with elders' relatives or friends and enquire about such knowledge, before experimenting it on their own land. They can also find help in contemporary books recalling plants and their traditional Lakota usages. Such processes remaining at the grassroots level, revitalizing plant knowledge takes time and its effect of people's diet and on projects efficiency might not be visible before a few years.

Renewable energy

One of the most important elements of projects is this of energy access and reliance. Geographical isolation and a difficulty to access energy combine with an awareness of climate change and a desire to break free from fossil fuels into a clear desire to use alternative self-reliant sources of energy. Consequently, all projects include elements of renewable energy. The most common involved solar and wind power, but also a consideration for saving energy via building energy passive structures.

Solar heaters

Sun is proficient on the reservation. It shines hard and strong. And it inspired local people to use it for energy. Again, access to what we call solar panels is limited and is way out of range for the average Lakota family. That is why a local organization adapted a 1970's lost technology to build cheap and efficient house solar heaters. They collect

through layers of glass and wood, the warmth of the sun, and direct it via a metal pipe into the housing structure or building it is plugged into.

The genius of this technique is that is cheap and fast to build and reliable. It has known a tremendous success and has now spread beyond the Pine Ridge reservation into other Lakota and other tribes' reservations. The particularity of this initiative is that it combines solar heaters production and –sometimes charitable- distribution with training youth to spread this technology. Although it is part of a wider project that qualifies as a grassroots project, the solar heater activity is also an enterprise that differs from other grassroots in that it has now evolved into a commercial activity that generates profit, receives regular substantial funding from a sponsoring organization and also benefits from a visibility on and off the reservation.

Wind turbines

Picture 7- Wooden homemade wind turbines

When looking up at various grassroots projects, you will find artisanal looking wind turbines looking down the project's land, and collecting wind to generate energy for small devices, such as water pumps or small generators. These wind turbines are made of wood and/or metal, and remain generally in small sizes, not superior to a few feet long. One

particular individual has acquired a local reputation for building those. Industrial turbines are not present on the reservation if not for one that feeds the local radio station. Such technology needs more development to fully respond to local energy needs, especially since the Great Plains provide the adequate environment for wind-generated energy.

Ecological houses

Picture 8- Prototype of round strawbale house

Probably the most significant component of local initiatives, the construction of ecological houses is a central part of most projects and probably weighs as the most time, energy and resource consuming of them all. The most common forms include the following.

Strawbale houses

Strawbale houses combine a structure of straw bales with earth mix plaster. Models and sizes vary but remain inferior to five hundred square feet. They can be round or square, and the foundations differ. But they usually are made of one main room with smaller areas for a bathroom. The finish can be extremely well-done according to the skills of the labor force and its length of involvement. One of the most successful models includes lime floor, colored earth paint and carpenter-finish furniture, dry toilets and kitchen. The key element seems to be about the quality of the earth plaster applied on the bales on which relies the durability and strength of walls.

Pallet houses

Pallet houses are a variation of the previous. It is built on the idea that industrial leftover pallets represent great and cheap building material. The house foundation is built using two side layers of discarded pallets that are first filled and on which is applied a similar plaster than for straw bales.

Compressed block construction

A more recent variation is the compressed-block house, which is made of assembled bricks or blocks of earth that are first made by compression using a special tool. These look more like a regular house, although it remains more cost effective. At present it is less accessible for the more modest families.

Cal-earth dome houses

A few projects have taken on a technology that comes from Iranian-American architect Nader Khalili. The process is called Cal-earth and is described as such by the architect's website itself: "SuperAdobe is a form of earth bag architecture...Using long sandbags ("SuperAdobe Bags"), barbed wire, on-site earth and a few tools, Khalili devised a revolutionary building system that integrates traditional earth architecture with contemporary global safety requirements, and passes severe earthquake code tests in California". This technology inspired a few projects on the reservation:

> *Of course as a community we need homes to live in. So the method for building that we have chosen is called Super Adobe Building method. It was developed at Cal Earth as a way to house people with minimal materials and uh something that is available everywhere which is earth, because a lot of places don't have trees and a lot of places don't have other building materials, but everywhere you go has some form of earth there. And another reason that we chose that kind of building method is because it is something that doesn't require a lot of expertise…and you know we aren't architects, we aren't carpenters and it something that we feel that we can accomplish on our own with limited education.*

However, the few projects that used this technique have not been very successful. First, the building method proves in fact labor-intensive and requires physical strength. Secondly, contextual issues precipitated relative failures. One of the sites' houses was abandoned by the outsider group in charge of building one of them. The second one was built in a location where it was exposed to humidity and flooding and was therefore dismissed as the only construction method intended to be used on that site and replaced with wood alternatives.

Picture 9- Decision-making standing by cal-earth dome construction

Other components of projects

Ex-convicts reinsertion

Criminality and incarceration rates reach high among young Native Americans. Present in only one of the projects, this initiative was interesting by the transversality of its component. The goal was here to reinsert ex-convicts by bringing back a traditional Lakota responsibilizing social unit: the men societies. That society's goal was to engage the soul and body of these men by having them partake grassroots projects activities such as housing projects, while being given an opportunity to bond with other men and commit to

traditional values. They had to commit to "bonding" contract containing elements as follows:

> *Uhm…it's Native American principles. Rise with the sun. Pray along the trails. The Great Spirit won't listen if you only speak. Be tolerant of those who are lost in their path. Ignorance can see anger and jealousy agrees to stem from a lost soul. Pray they will fight and get peace.*

Live a healthier life while feeling useful constitutes the underpinning of this initiative that is still limited to one particular project. The status of this project is currently on stand-by.

Youth involvement

Youth involvement is as crucial as hard on the reservation. Projects are fully aware of the importance of *Wakanyeja*, the sacred ones in changing their present and future. One of the trends I observed is the tendency of home-schooled and traditionally risen children to be way more aware and proactive individuals in bringing change to the community. Youth like to participate in these projects and enjoy learning by doing on projects sites. Applying earth plaster, harvesting plants, feeding animals are as many activities that children perceive as "fun", which fosters proactive and long-term learning. Being involved in these projects reconnect youth to their environment and to positive constructive solutions to the problems that witness in their own neighborhood and lifestyle. However, since most kids and teenagers are schooled, middle ground solution must be found to get them involved beyond curriculum within the local projects from which there is much for them to learn.

Picture 10- Children learning to apply clay on strawbale house wall

Training

Some projects have decided to use the existing education system and involve youth training as part of their projects. The solar heater project for instance, has built entire facilities to house youth trainees from Pine Ridge and other reservations to come learn about building solar heaters. It teaches skills that are then transferred to other Native American reservations where they can grow into their own local projects. This important component highlights the importance of knowledge transmission in defining systemic alternatives. Via transmission, the alternative practice integrates other territories as a new mainstream. In the case of Pine Ridge, these solar heaters are now common knowledge for most neighborhoods, and people know very well who produces them, etc. From a small-recuperated technology, these solar heaters have now passed to general knowledge and functioning solution against winter cold in Lakota households. Transferring these skills is key to spread that technology elsewhere.

Traditional summer camps

Summer camps are increasingly developing on Pine Ridge as a way to establish an alternative to tribal and western style education and restore traditional networks and ways of transmission of Lakota knowledge. One of these camps has become increasingly popular over the last couple of years, and attracts more and more girls and boys who dispose of their separate camp where they gather for a few days and learn about general and gender specific aspects of traditional Lakota culture and way of life. Teachers can be well-educated by western standards or have no degree except the endogenous recognition of their traditional knowledge in particular cultural areas.

The rationale also aims at grounding the youth and increasing their sense of purpose and self-esteem, to give them strength and the courage to overcome very harsh living environments and find other alternatives to it than isolation, abuse or suicide. Traditional values are taught via specific activities such as craft making or wild plant picking. These camps display youth progress via posting pictures on social media, and give visibility to their initiative. One picture showed a man checking out the craft of a boy. The picture was titled: “Success through generosity”. At present, these projects are entirely relying on donations for functioning. They are however, very appreciated by the local population and are growing in number and praise as a viable way to transmit Lakota knowledge.

Ceremonies revitalizations

Most people incorporate a level of cultural revival to their projects. It can go from reviving traditional knowledge tying to food or lifestyle to a complete revival of lost ceremonies. One significant example is this of the “first kill”, a ceremony used as a rite of

passage in which a teenage boy must kill a buffalo to rise in the society as a man. The rite is procedural and solemnly, and preceded and followed by spiritual preparation (three days of fasting and praying in a sweat lodge) and social and symbolical recognition. The boy is given an eagle feather that he wear as he emotionally takes down the massive animal.

Another includes the revitalization of traditional gender exclusive circles or "societies" that creates a social bond and sense of commitment amongst members. Such initiatives can have tremendous long-term effects in building social link and fostering individual healing, sense of purpose and a belief in a better future, which is necessary for the grassroots level to thrive. Cultural revitalization lies at the heart of providing ideas for a systemic alternative and forms a base upon which alternatives can grow (see chapter 6).

Sawmill

One of the interesting side projects I saw involved building a sawmill on the reservation. While appearing insignificant from outsiders' ears, such a project has the potential to challenge white monopolies on wood technologies and thus on building material. It is thus not only meant to provide building material and generate income, but also entails strong elements of empowerment and independentization.

Lakota typology by "seven pillars"

The previous typology aimed at clarifying the details of various initiatives that can be found within grassroots projects in linear terms. However, projects display a strong level of interconnectedness and are always constituted by at least several of the previous components, with clear basic patterns that I later explain. The exercise of itemizing is thus one implied by the academic framework in order to clarify local observations. However, limiting the presentation of projects to such disserve the integrity of these projects. Each

Lakota project leader likes to present his/her project as a long-term vision. These visions are presented using endogenous typologies that never itemize or isolate detailed initiatives. They fall instead under of vision of long-term sustainability under which major pillars articulate. Consistently to this dissertation decolonial rationale, I will now give an example of the type of endogenous typologies under which these projects are presented locally.

I use the example of one typology, developed by one of the managers, which describes seven tenets of sustainability under which his projects must fall and which represent ideals that mankind must serve to reach a balanced lifestyle. He developed particular meaning for each of those, which are shared by other typologies. Interestingly, these pillars refer to some kind of representation of human subsistence needs, a sort of different version of a Maslow pyramid where the elements would be equally important in the balance. Another particularity is how these pillars are visually vivid and anchored within practicality and immediate usefulness. This grassroots manager says:

> *I'm stilling trying to disseminate what it really means as a whole but I mean, we still have to have a quality life. I mean that's really what you're working for…for a quality life. If you cover the basics, food, water, shelter, spirit, self. If you can get all those things you have a good quality of life.*

Food

The importance of food is increased due to the factors fostering the need for food sovereignty on the reservation as previously explained, such as being in a food desert, limited access to healthy food, the heavy reliance on external commodities and market and the historical rupture with a more culturally appropriate food system. Consequently, in the projects, food is evoked as more than a means to feed the people:

it's not just food. It's more "How do you use that food?" And…and educating about where it comes from and all that.

Water/Mní

In Lakota, water is Mní, pronounced [me-nee]. Mní is not just water as the liquid configuration of H_2O that is physically present in most forms of life. Mní is the source of life, materially and symbolically. Mní is the liquid that holds babies and feed them, before and after birth. Mní is both a provider and a guardian of life, the acknowledgment of which is written in human beings' unconsciousness:

> *And I…try to live my life where the truth is not something that I want to hide. So, I'm here to speak for mní as I know it. And mní is water…Mní is Lakota word for "water." And what it means is mní: "I live" or "we live." So, from the time that my people first uttered words, they understood that water is life and we've always respected it as such. We've always tried to give thanks and ask for health and life…when we drink from mní, so that…it'll always be there for us…be there for us to live, for healing. Mní…is our first home. When we're in our Ina, our mother's (earth) stomach, we live in water. Mní is our first medicine. We're told when we're born…our mother puts the mní to our lips. It's our first medicine…So, this is something as Lakota, we're born with that knowledge. We all are, whether we're Lakota or what race, or nationality we are.*

This quote is very representative of local perceptions of what water is and means, and it is nested within typical Lakota spirituality, of which similar holistic traits can be found in other indigenous groups. Western spirituality is not devoid of matrix allegory for water, which can be found in biblical mythology under the form of healing, with the water that purifies the newborn at baptism and the believer upon entering a church, or heals people in particular holy places such as Lourdes. Water is also considered as a purifier in a more divine sense, where, as a weapon of God it may flood upon villages and destroy civilization to the ground. In both these notions, however, water is considered as external to the source of life, which I believe might have influenced its ideological consideration as a commodity in western development.

With the commodification of land, water has been mostly reduced down to only one form: as a resource for human consumption and use, of which rights can be sold. Such trade authorizes the spoliation or pollution of water under legal jurisdiction, which can only occur if water is considered to be a material good to be privatized and owned. This fact frames the ontological debate concerning mní. Indeed, in the Lakota conception, mní cannot be sold because it does not exist solely under a material form.

Therefore, it is all the more logical that mní under its multidimensional form be part of the seven pillars of Lakota conception of sustainability. In practical terms, this means that projects must hold mní to its endogenous correct translation, and not limited to its western developmentalist translation. As a result, water as a relative and not as a resource is a fundamental part of the durability of all local projects. It manifests as water restoration projects but also as a concern that people talk about, keep in mind and for which they are ready to fight. Unsurprisingly, many grassroots projects managers on Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River are currently engaged in support of the protest against the DAPL pipeline in Standing Rock reservation, ND.

Fire

What's the fire part of it? This tenet of local projects might sound strange to outsiders' ears. Here is what it means as described by a manager:

> *It's energy, heat, cooling...food storage, those kinda things. Um...and those are VERY doable things, a small amount of inputs will fix those things. And (the follow-up part is) how do we distribute that out to our peoples?*

Fire can therefore entail initiatives of renewable energy, but we see here how it cannot be narrowed down to the latter, hence the usefulness of the "fire" terminology. Similarly to other pillars, "fire" becomes a visual tool that allows people to project unto

their collective representations of the underlying meaning of fire. It is what warms, what protects, what cooks, what comforts, what can also burnt if misused. It entails a very nuanced symbolical and metaphorical projection, which categorizes initiatives and empowers them beyond their simple descriptive tags. It indicates the power of terminology in categorizing projects, and how the latter can be cognitively restrictive or stimulant.

Shelter

Shelter can be extrapolated as human housing from non-Lakota perspective. It does include housing projects, but is not limited by it as a type of project. Again here, shelter can be physical but also emotional. It means safety and comfort, but also the presence of family, support and comforting living environment. Therefore, any component that fits or improves the notion of "shelter" becomes a rightful part of the holistic framework of grassroots projects. It is nested within a long-term projection of safety for future generations, which feeds from Lakota cosmology, as suggested by another grassroots manager:

> *We come here to make a life of future for ourselves and for our* Omaka tokatakiya*, or our future generations. [pause] So that they can live in freedom, live in an environment where we can care for ourselves, we…can depend on ourselves for life. So, we have…been in here for a few years. [pause] I'm trying to [pause] make a home for ourselves in a way that we will, -what they call environmental footprint-…in a way that our environmental footprint will be as easy as possible on our Uncimaka, Inamaka, our mother Earth here. So that we can help her to heal because we understand that today our Ina (mother), she's also struggling for life and for our future with us because the way that we have been living up on her has brought destruction to…her and to our relatives who are represented in everything you see. Everything you see here, everything you see upon this Earth, above, below…we're relatives with all. [pause] We are relatives with all and all things exist upon this Earth have a spirit. And we must learn to respect that spirit that dwells within all things.*

This quote shows the interconnectedness of lakota typologies, with an indistinctive incorporation of shelter with the following elements of earth and spirit.

Earth/Uncimaka

As described above and abundantly in this work, Earth is referred to indistinctively as *Uncimaka* the Grandmother Earth and *Inamaka* the Mother Earth. In both expressions, Earth is referred to as the provider of life in the sense of motherhood, and is compared to a womb in which humans grow and develop. This representation has been mistakenly confused as some kind of deity worshipping, especially at a time where Christian colonizers aimed at justifying conquest over the evangelization of heathens. It is more correct to align its meaning to the concept of interconnectedness implied by *mitakuye oyasin* and the spiritual and cultural underpinnings of the world being a network of interlinked relatives.

Therefore, the concept of *Uncimaka* in projects cannot be narrowed down to earth as an amount of dirt, a piece of land or a land resource in any form. It is a reflection of Lakota cultural perceptions of land as a relative, and therefore engages a greater responsibility from grassroots managers than if land is treated as a parcel of individual property. The consideration and typological forms reflect Lakota worldviews and impact the practical forms of projects.

Spirit

Spirit here represents the connection with the higher self and entails following the Red road, or the Lakota way of life and spirituality. It therefore embodies cultural and spiritual components deemed necessary for the long-term vision of projects to be fulfilled in accordance with Lakota values. Cultural revitalizations initiatives can therefore fall into this pillar, although again it permeates all spheres beyond linear descriptions. The need for itemization and categorization is really a relative and constructed "way of knowing". Spirit, however, gives an existence to projects beyond their material status. Such project is not

anymore a “housing project”, but is a statement of existence of Lakota way of being. Spirit also gives a more sacred meaning to grassroots projects.

Self

Self is an individual but also a collective pillar. It is about embodying a present and intentional way of being in the world and associate action with intentions. It is also about personal leadership, not to be mistaken for individual competition for power, but leadership as the capacity to mobilize knowledge and people to implement collective projects. Therefore, self is about how the grassroots manager positions itself within what he/she has constructed. It entails notions of personal responsibility, engagement, word of honor and relations to others, and therefore projects the quest for a higher standard of self through the realization of these projects, along with working on improving local relations and sociability.

Although these make sense locally in implied ways as they tie to Lakota values and cosmology, they are not always used as stated tenets for their projects. Another one that was clearly presenting a similar endogenous typology presented other pillars, this time limited to five, which clearly overlap with the above. These were labeled homes, power, water, food and culture and were even more straightforward, although maybe more descriptive and less informative on the underlying rationale and cosmology behind grassroots projects development.

Grassroots projects specificities

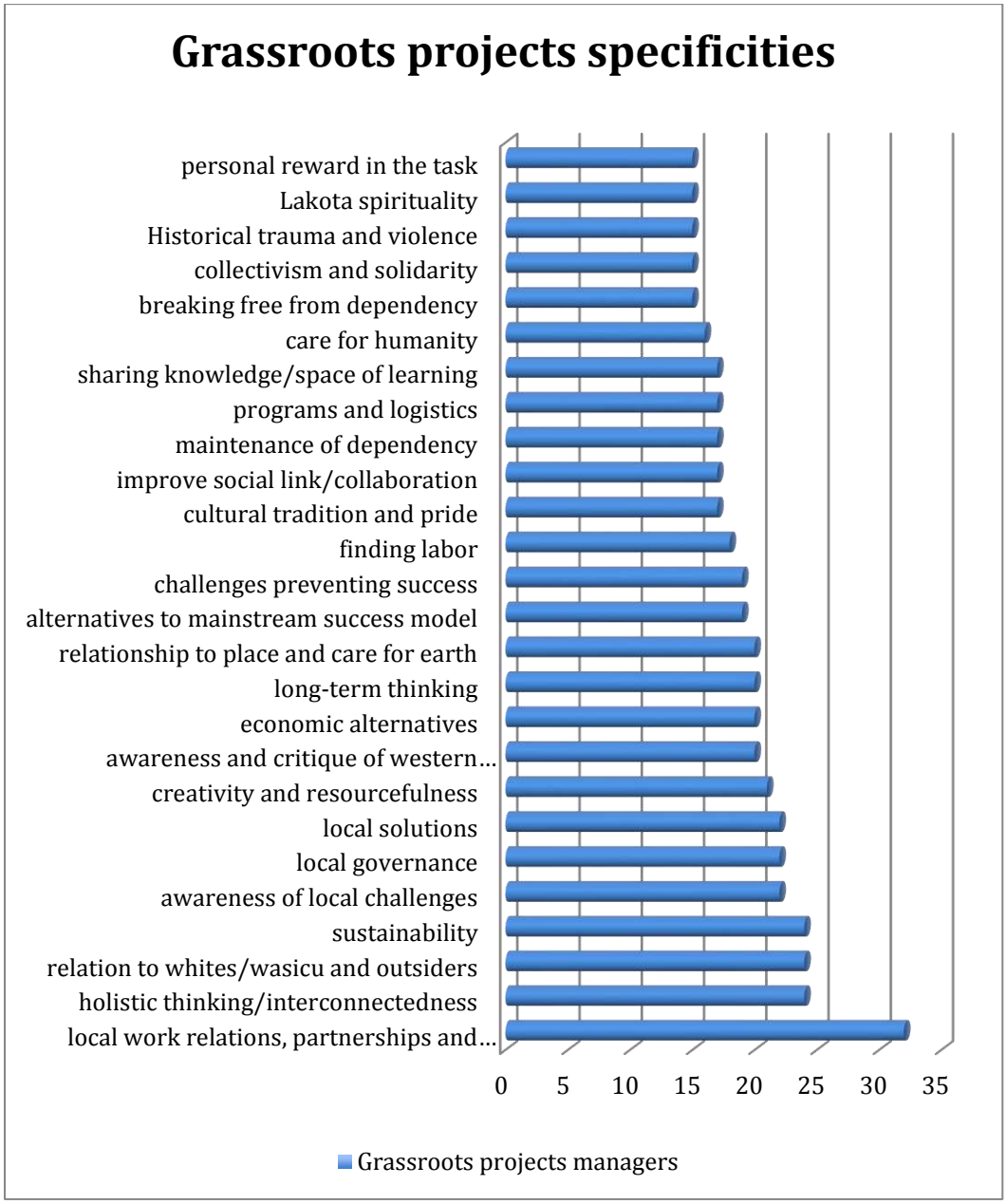

Figure 5.1 Grassroots projects specificities

Specific elements of grassroots projects are represented in the chart above (Figure 5.1). It represents the codes that are most used in coding grassroots projects material and therefore issues or themes most salient for grassroots projects leaders or that affect the

most grassroots projects. Among predominant codes are 1) *local work relations, 2) holistic thinking, 3) relation to whites, 4) sustainability, 5) awareness of local challenges, 6) local governance, 7) local solutions, 8) creativity and resourcefulness, 9) long-term thinking, 10) relationship to place and care for earth and 11) alternatives to mainstream success model*. Given the diversity of the nature of codes, these specificities can give us a first sense of prevalent themes and patterns associated with grassroots projects and help visualize and complement the following deeper analysis. I withdrew these codes from codes occurrence per documents focusing on the grassroots managers' group. I then kept only the most significant ones and put them in a chart to help visualize them. The most significant codes above can be seen in the bottom of the chart, as defined by the highest number of occurrences in the horizontal axis. Reading past *alternatives to mainstream success model* gives a more extensive preview of the relevant phenomena in grassroots projects managers, as I later develop in this chapter section.

Defining vision

Grassroots projects all rely on an underlying vision that overarches their long-term development and evolution. The further emergence of distinct initiatives span from this lasting vision and the latter often constitutes the base upon which the communication of the project will be based. One project leader states:

> *Our vision for this small project is a part of our bigger vision that we have for the world. And that vision is…to bring, to restore the balance upon this Earth by healing the hydrological cycle, the water cycle, the worldwide water cycle. And we understand that in order to do that, to heal the worldwide water cycle, we must reestablish the small water cycle. And the reason we want to heal…repair the water cycle is because the water cycle is a life cycle.*

Another project leaders sees it as such:

And we need a clear, concise...vision statement that says: Three hundred years from now we'll have clean water, free, exhaustible food, uh…energy, clean...uh...abundant energy, you know...Good homes, good shelter, available, you know...We want a clean environment but...(one in which) we can all live. We breathe the air. We can...do things outside. We have an ozone. So, [chuckles] we don't have to worry about getting fried, you know!

Visions follow a pattern, they all associate different elements that I hereby describe.

Holistic thinking, care for Earth and humanity

We know as LaKota people…that everything we get comes from our mother the Earth and that you know, we're not living on side walks and never seeing grass and never understanding how dependent we are on nature. And I think as people who understand that…that this appeals to a lot of people, the idea of not harming the Earth because everything we do does (harm the earth)…You know…Homes harm the earth, you know…the food we eat causes harm to the earth. Driving cars causes harm to the earth. So I think that if we can minimize that damage and minimize that burden that we place on the earth. I think it appeals, I know it appeals to a lot of people. I talk to people. I talk to people from here. I talk to people from all over. They understand that the earth can only give for so long and the rate that we are taking now and that there is going to be a point where we can't continue to exist and continue to take the way we are now.

It always gets back to cultural spiritual foundations:

As I said, the truth is…we're part of that oneness that is tunkasila (Grandfather; oneness of God)…and tunkasila is everything. So, we never lose…that connection that we have to tunkasila, to unci maka, inamaka, -grandmother Earth, mother Earth-, to mní wakan, the sacred waters. We never lose that connection but…what we lose is respect that we should have for the source of life. So, that is why we're here today, is to reestablish that connection that we have to the Earth.

Visions do not limit themselves to vague philosophical statements but point at very specific issues of social and environmental nature based in factual knowledge, for which different terminology than western scientific might be used:

And then, um...the water, you know. We have to ask, uh...how do we replenish the aquifer? I mean...it's AMAZING what people haven't even thought about how water TRULY goes into the aquifers to replenish it and how our grazing practices or environmental things are affecting that, why they're not replenishing, cleaning themselves, you know...Why does this blood not flow on...the Earth like it used to? I mean...it's clearly a circulatory problem created in the last two hundred years. And, you know...how do the animals affect that environment? And I was telling you about the buffalo. But what I didn't tell you, was the about the prairie dogs. Those two were vital to our environmental care and don't reflect what we give the earth right now. I mean...our rangeland practices on those particular

things and the way we use it, like fencing is…it was not right, you know. It needs to be addressed and understood by the officials who have administered and the programs, so that we can, uh...approach big things to this two-hundred-year-old problem.

Visions are also very practical, anchored in reality and directly linked to multi-scales solutions:

We work with sustainable environmentally responsible housing. We work with renewable energy project and sun and wind and we also work with food sovereignty. It's not just getting healthy food on the table, but it's helping build their ability to say where and by whom and how their food comes to them and have that control over what kind of food, and uhm have more choices about, you know, that very basic necessity of life.

Awareness of local and global challenges

A striking observation in these visions is the level of awareness of both local and global challenges they reflect. Knowledge of this is very specific, detailed and factual, especially coming from people who usually did not have access to education by western standards of knowledge:

Our land is right on the pipeline, the Tri-county pipeline…that is the water that is available throughout the reservation, and that is a big bonus because you can't live without water and people generally don't take well water because the water table fluctuates so much so you never know if they are going to hit water in 10 feet or have to drill down 1000 ft. But, unfortunately the water that is available to us through Tri-county is poison. It comes out of the...mouth of the Cheyenne river where it empties into Missouri and it is poisoned and on the reservation we have a lot of occurrences with…normally rare diseases that on our reservation are just common place and we believe that it is because of the water so what we would like to do is…to start rainwater harvesting.

This local awareness pairs with global awareness and participants locate their issues within the global scale and global stakes of sustainability:

*Well you asked me yesterday, you know "do you want credit on this"? I don't. I just want it to be because nobody owns this. This is Indian shit. We think we are so much above how it used to be; how do you survive? It's no different. I mean, now we are at a global scale. We are all gonna f****** die if we continue this path. My next generation is scared now.*

Another states:

My interest in sustainability came from about…through a series of events including…learning about water shortage on our planet, and I read about (a place called) Cadillac Desert. And learning about natural house building, and learning about food issues and…how food nourishes our bodies, and things like that and really I just…I see a lot of environmentalists who talk about saving the planet, and I'm not as much concerned about saving the planet because the planet can take care of itself. I'm sure that in a thousand years, the planet will still be here, whether we are or not, but what needs protecting is the environment that can sustain humans.

Criticism of western model of development and the American Dream

Developments of projects visions are accompanied by a high level of awareness of and criticism of the western capitalist model of development and the projections of the American dream as suggested by these three quotations:

Living that American Dream is never going to happen for us, you know, so without leaving the reservation the chances of you succeeding in the eyes of the white man are very minimal here. And those of us who choose to live on the reservation know that we're not, that's not something that is important to us. If it was, we would leave. We would leave and go to a place to obtain those things.

I think that for other people living outside of the reservation, even poor people living outside of the reservation live a very different life from poor people living on the reservation. And I think that if you're talking to somebody who's you know, middle class American and saying 'lets dig a hole and build an earth home there and we are going to live in a 600 sq ft home", that would be just a culture shock to them. I think that there's just a few crazies out there thinking that (the same as us) you know, because Americans are sold in the American dream, that is the measure of success. That's what you're measured up against when it's determined whether or not you've lived a decent life… You might wear the clothes of the European, but you don't hold the same value. You might go to the white mans church but you don't necessarily believe all those things uh There's there are many different approaches to that physical threat, and you know there are many tribes that were threatened

If you really think about it, it is kind of nuts. I mean, you have to fuel it and waste all these resources for the whole planet, store it up in cash and then you sit on it in the bank so no one does anything with it. It's just crazy.

This awareness is a key element of projects because it reflects a long history of not benefiting from the capitalist system and what that history triggers in people's minds,

which plays a huge role in imagining alternatives (see chapter 6 and section on vacuum of change).

Creativity and resourcefulness

The previous trait is clearly associated with another trait that characterizes all projects observed on the ground; this of creativity and resourcefulness that is displayed by all grassroots projects regardless of, types, goals and means. This trait relates to the local existence of a D-system and the capacity to develop innovative solutions to local hardships. Therefore, it influences the development of viable alternatives because of the innovation it generates.

From vision to programs

From the initial vision sprouts a myriad of different projects usually undertaken gradually although sometimes carried side by side. Despite the diversity of initiatives described above, all of them entail at least 1) a sustainable food production and 2) an eco-house initiative. Projects then seem to follow patterns of emergence and development of these initiatives, described in this section. Connections between different elements of grassroots projects might be represented visually as such:

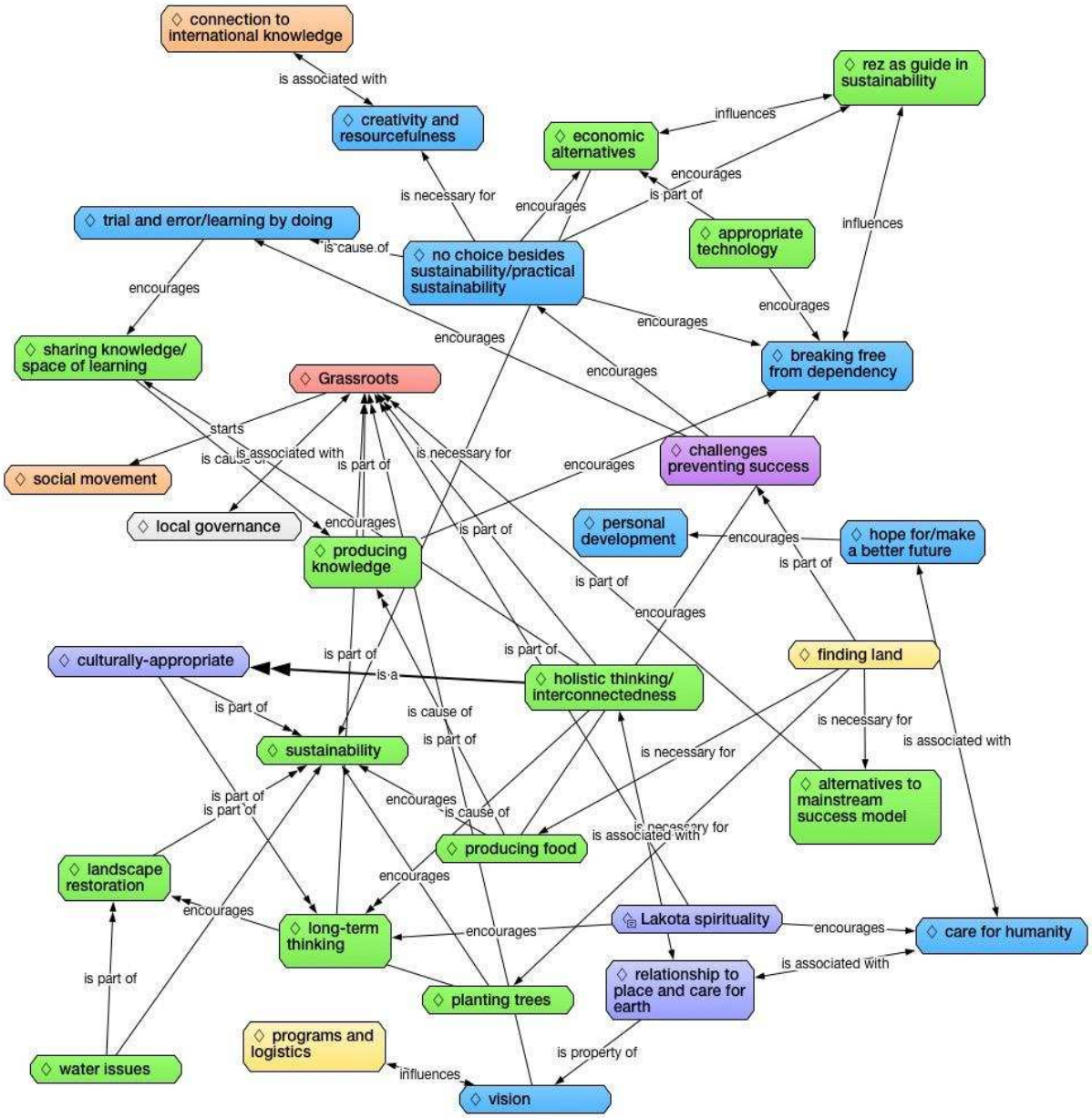

Figure 5.2 Representation of patterns of grassroots projects

In this figure (5.2), the links between key elements of grassroots projects' characteristics are represented. Long-term thinking is is a key factor to foster sustainability and projects success. It is encouraged by holistic thinking which results from Lakota relationship to place and care for the earth. The latter is associated with care for humanity which encourages the hope in a better future and personal development. It also influences

projects' visions which in turn shapes particular programs and logistics. Projects face hardships finding resources and experience challenges that push them to engage in creative solutions and trial and error mechanisms because they have no choice besides sustainability to live decently. This creates a pull of innovation which enhances the production and sharing of knowledge. Such innovation allows the emergence of practical solutions to local issues and encourages breaking free from dependency, which ties back to sustainability.

Trial and errors: a modus operandi

Whenever the idea of a new initiative arises, it does so out of practicality, regardless of the presence or absence of the necessary skill to lead it to completion. The modus operandi of grassroots projects is therefore a local version of "trial and error". Most people who start a new initiative in their project are doing so for the first time, or if not, they already used the method in the past and update it as necessary. In case of failure, the plan gets delayed for a varying amount of time, until new resources and opportunity arise again.

There seems to be little mental constraint to do different than "what has always been done", as if getting out in the unknown and pushing boundaries to find original solutions was not an issue for grassroots projects leaders. There even seems to be an excitement component associated with trying something new. Projects leaders developing ideas will push them and acquire in a short time the most information that they can about a specific technique or skill. It does not matter where it comes from. It might be inspired by an old Lakota tradition or an outside technology like the solar heaters or the Cal-Earth house building. What matters is that it needs to fit the new initiative goals and impediments. If it does, the technique always ends up being recycled from a culturally

appropriate standpoint and becomes presented as fully integrated within the local rationale. This mix of pulling technologies and inventing local solutions from trials and errors yields a very interesting lab for innovative ideas. This might appear both surprising and interesting to anyone not used to so much concentrated D-System knowledge and systemic alternative solutions at once. Yet, on the reservation, it can be explained by a long training in finding emergency solutions and having to live in a constant state of survival.

Finding resources

Projects emergence and efficiency relies upon finding resources. As I have exposed before, finding capital such as land, labor and money can prove difficult. Yet, some forms of resources are needed, starting with a piece of land to use to build a site on. Decoloniality is not intellectual but practical here, and success often relies upon the capacity of projects leaders to show innovation to complex local hardships. Finding land is hard, but very circumstantial. When people are lucky and own a divided lot, this does not apply but it is rarely the case. When they live on an undivided lot, they need to get the signatures of most of the owners to be able to use even part of it. Some turn to leasing a piece of land, on the condition that they can afford it. Often times the landsite is related to family land holdings, providing they have authorization to use it if they are not the sole owner.

Once the site is found, projects need to raise some capital to get started. Although they aim at making things happen for cheap, they still depend partially or have to function within a market based economy. Funding can be required to buy material, buy food for volunteers, lease out equipment, etc.

> *You risk everything at any given point and so I'm just regrouping again to try yet again but uhm the ideas are still there. We know how to do certain pieces of it. We know we need the resources in this western financial base we need to make it happen. The ideas*

are big enough that they are needed all over the world. If we can figure out a way to really share them it gives us a way to organize it.

Then the key becomes about creativity to call for funding. One of the approaches can be to ask for local and tribal organizations grants, or outsider organizations grants. These are often small amounts for grassroots projects, i.e. less than $ 5000, which is way less than local funding allocated to large-scale organizations projects. Larger grants may be attributed towards the development of regular businesses. In general, it is way easier to get money to build a profit-generating project than a sustainable local homestead. Bank loans and banking system is not a reliable source of funding for these projects and I did not encounter any that funds themselves as such. This can be explained by the discriminatory practices of local banks towards Native Americans and the fact that getting bank loans is not part of local economic culture. Last but not least, the most growing source of funding comes from crowdsourcing and private calls for donations, which highlights the importance of communication for projects success.

Finding local labor can be problematic for grassroots projects, because people in need of income will not necessarily agree to partake projects and work full days if they do not get immediate gains, whether economic, or other types of benefits. Although their ideal projection might lean towards a money-free society, their immediate concerns go towards finding food and sustaining themselves in a system still run by commercial services. Local people are mobilized by local projects on a small fee basis. For instance, people coming to tell stories in a traditional camp or for specific tasks might be given $20 or $50, or at the very least free food. Additionally, the rampant fear of abuse and complexity of local social relations as previously explained renders difficult to convince people to partake. However, once people have participated in projects and that trust relationships are built, then it

becomes easy to mobilize labor in further instances and sites. Once they learn about sites, laborers often rotate between several sites. The most common way to get labor is through volunteers (see specific section at end of chapter).

Culture and spirituality are resources on the projects and are mobilized usually through people who "are known to know". When their own cultural knowledge reaches limits, projects leaders look for knowledgeable local people to revive cultural practices. Time is perhaps the most important resource on the reservation, because it defines not only projects timelines, but also its associated perceptions. It is specifically useful to grasp when contrasting results to western notions of projects time and time management. Time impacts the success of projects and morale of local actors and provides the necessary temporal window for appropriate knowledge to develop. On the reservation, summer is the time of manual work, or building season. Original deadlines often get challenged as time consumes projects emergence:

> *Well we are very optimistic in planning two years. Two years of building, and you know the building season is so unpredictable. The weather is so unpredictable. Like for instance we were going to start at the end of May and things have gotten in the way of our first building and it is just been so wet that there is no getting back into that hole that we dug yet you. Of course a person can't complain when it's raining because we are in a middle of a drought and the earth needs it and we need it. We need that water. So we keep praying for rain, but at the same time it is really hindering our progress. So we're planning this summer that our main goal is to build our community-use center which will be the center of our community. It will be the place where we go to have meetings and to have ceremonies and the place where we all cook and eat and clean up you know. And the place where we spend our time together as a tiyospaye, and doing things that tiyospaye do…If we could also build a small emergency shelter out of earth and earth dome to house the batteries bank to accommodate the energy that we are going to produce with the three wind generators we are going to put up very soon I hope. And so that's our goal for the summer. If we could put a home also that would incredible. That would be so happy for that, but like I said, maybe we're being too optimistic but we are hoping to have a 2-year project start which will result in this community use center that I described, our wind energy system, our garden which I guess just got tilled today so we will be planting very soon, and five eco dome homes to start. Of course, our community is always expanding because our kids are always growing.*

Building and Sharing knowledge

Knowledge is power, and a very practical resource, which grows over time via trial and error in these micro-scale community projects. Material and knowledge or know-how is collected over time through producing innovative knowledge and in collaboration with a whole sociality of networking. Sites attract all kinds of individuals usually animated with both a strong desire to learn and come bring their own experiences to the pot. Grassroots sites become collectors and platforms of knowledge exchange. From conversations with local people and international emerge interesting mixes of ideas themselves conducing to more ingeniousness in developing local answers.

> *I had a pretty long conversation with her (project collaborator) about my ideas with the prairie dogs and the buffalo and direct relationship to the reason why our aquifers aren't replenishing. And that was a couple three years ago. The prairie dogs dig down in those spots, which rapidly helps replenishing the aquifer. In the soil, that's the only way to pore deep into those places and create a kind of connecting hollow galleries ... then the other pieces, the buffalo trails change the soils because of the way they move on the prairie. We can recreate that with equipment rapidly but we have to do large design segments to do it and we have to have people who are properly educated in all aspects.*

The knowledge created must not be underestimated and is assessable in the projects leaders discourses and in the gradual evolution of this knowledge as years and projects networking and social exchange grow.

Projects reputations and perceptions by others

An important issue that can affect a project is external perceptions. This can include the kind of reputation acquired by a project or project leader and therefore the amount of tacit support that they get, which might impede on their capacity to find resources as well. In general, other local people' information about grassroots projects is rather limited to word to mouth information. The tendency is to remain skeptical until proven harmless. The

following comes from an outside organization that has been working there for years and it is revealing aspects of reputation and careful relation to others:

> *But really, there is kind of a skepticism, there is a curiosity. Well "are you another bunch of people do-gooders and coming here to do something that you want to do and then no indian person benefits from it"? You know…"What is this compress earth block thing you're doing", "what is that all about?" So there is a lot of curiosity, I think we have a lot of good will built on that. We work with all of the other non-profits. We're always willing to donate things and to make things happen; you know it's not always profitable for us. There is not always something in it for us. So I think that's the reputation that we have and I think that it is hard earned just from being persistent, honest, being transparent, being just consistent really and that's building that trust relationship with the community.*

The power of social media

Unsurprisingly from projects managers who often operate on remote areas, Internet quickly became a very useful operational tool, especially social media. Platforms such as Facebook allow people to communicate easily on their projects without professional communication skills. They use it for various purposes such as campaigning for funding, getting recognition, posting pictures, looking for labor, advertising for workshop they organize, informing of projects' progress and networking. It increases projects visibility and becomes the primary window of their project to the rest of the world. Most projects do have their own site or web pages, usually put together by volunteers from their social network. However, most publicity occurs through social media, where their web page is also available to check for more details. Facebook thus operates as the first encounter between projects and the rest of the world, where people can then access projects pages if necessary. The use of social media is quite interesting in regards to the possibilities it opens for these projects' development.

It pushes them to be creative in how to present initiatives in original and fun ways that attract a lot of people. Some will post pictures and videos, and provoke emotional

reactions from the (invisible) audience, i.e. by showing their kids participating in the tasks. It requires them to spend time and energy to maintain the campaigns active. But these efforts tend to pay off on the long run. Indeed, displaying their project and making it available for all to see pushes projects managers to be accountable to the outcomes, especially if their communication includes any kind of campaign for funding or labor.

Logically, I observed that projects with very active facebook pages were usually successful in obtaining the object of the particular campaign. For example, one project gathered volunteers for the summer to work on the overall site via advertising for a water workshop that served as a base to attract people during particular days. Another project acquired a hundred fruit trees by participating in a game organized online by a famous fruit-related manufacturing brand, where projects leaders had to get the most "likes" to receive the trees donation. A picture with local kids holding a sign saying "we want fresh fruits" was used and the project leader was keeping followers accountable and doing some deep networking for "likes" to raise. Ingenuity is fostered by the use of social media along with opening possibilities and resources that projects managers would not get access to otherwise.

Visibility

Visibility is a key issue for grassroots projects development. Indeed, one of the major challenges that they face is the seemingly invisibility of their local existence. The issue is complex and multi-dimensional. Indeed, in spite of their relative geographic proximity, projects know very little about each other. They usually have heard of other projects or people's names and vaguely about what they are doing. But one would expect that with such a small population, people would know similar initiatives and automatically

network and exchange with them. The enduring weakening and mistrust of social relations as a byproduct of coloniality, along with difficulties linked to the absence of reliable transportation to cover the distances between relatively remote areas on remote private lands makes it hard for people to exchange on a regular physical basis. This leads to apparently incomprehensible situations. From the beginning of my fieldwork, when I started talking to different projects managers, they made me realize that some possessed the skills, knowledge or resources that others needed a few miles down without necessarily connecting to each other. This notably initiated the emergence of the Grassroots Projects Mapping Initiative (see Appendix VIII).

Social media is becoming a game changer. At least, by opening an international window to very local projects that suffer from local invisibility, it brings them a recognition that is needed not just in terms of resources, but also in terms of identity. Indeed, getting positive feedbacks and realizing that their projects interest other people at the other side of the world increases their feeling of being accomplished and "on the right track". Social media recognition instills confidence in projects managers. Social networking and connecting with people with similar ideas and projects also fosters a sense of global unity and strength, which in turn encourages them to endure local challenges. Finally, increasing their visibility on the international stage might divert the lack of visibility that they face on the ground. It has a tremendously important political and sovereignty component, which expresses in several ways.

First, the ownership and display of information about their project challenges colonial pattern of outsiders owning and determining the narrative of what is happening in Lakota country. Because these projects are so much entangled with holistic thinking and

worldviews, they also represent an extension and projection of who they are. Thus, practically and symbolically, it allows them to regain levels of ownership of their identity and its international –or inter-group from an identity analytical standpoint- recognition. This increase in visibility also validates their existence at the local level and challenges reservation time colonial dynamics and the "power of visibility" until then only exercised hegemonically by tribal or tribally-recognized institutions. Their participation in the network society also allows their contribution to the global discourse and to formation of counter-power narratives (Castells 2007), which enhances Lakota political existence (see chapter 6) and fosters the emergence of a decolonial world-system (see chapter 8). For further visibility

Grassroots projects efficiency

Projects Completion

Although it is difficult to determine what completion entails from local standards and I will refrain from proposing a recipe for completion, there are patterns of elements that conduce to a particular initiative to be successful:

First, successful collaboration seems to be a good indicator that an initiative will grow and evolve over time:

> *Will they carry it on? Will they steal from you? All these things that are big motivator because these projects are so hard to modelize. To get started. To get completed that you have to have some level of reliability and after this it's really hard to get.*

Similarly:

> *I think to have term success you have to have good combination of the right kind of people with that shared passion for achieving something. But I think it all hinges down to trust and respect. That if things become one sided at any point that will topple that balance and that program will not succeed and it will not be sustainable... I think that's the bottom line*

Other major elements impeding on an initiative success is the capacity to acquire resources and thus the creativity and resourcefulness mobilized to acquire resources. This points out to the more individual aspect of projects success, which is dependent upon the project leader, and their inner strength and perseverance. Individual strength of leader is therefore a requirement for projects success on the ground.

Projects Failure

> *This project it was done like that…Somebody came in and said they needed a house and that we are going to build them the house. So then they decided they were going to do this earth shit and try to bring the earth back. Well dirt is heavy and very intense to build and they came in with no equipment, no supplies, not enough money…they came in and were just going to build a house. They didn't have any qualified builders to do it but they started recruiting money as if they did. Well then they started talking about insulation. Someone suggested these rice holes and they were going to give them to him and ship them to him so they took them and that's that big pile of garbage over there. Well nobody had actually figured out how to use it so they started with the dirt and that weekend the structure and there's not enough (of material) there. So then they got too far and ran out of money and that's when they contacted me. So I went and looked and the structure was knocked down. I just told them I couldn't take this project. I couldn't complete it. I can't waste my resources, and I felt really bad about it but at the same time I had no other alternatives.*

This project leader explains how he was called to help on another eco-house project. Projects failure (abandon, or delay) usually involves issues with finding resources and broken work relationships, which is unsurprisingly mirrored by contrary effect factoring success. Mostly failures start with abuse and deception from third parties (broken promises, fallen projects, embezzlement of funds, etc.). Other issues involve lack of funding, deception of partnerships, top-down pressure or threats of different sorts from organizations or various government institutions, absence of labor, change of priorities, demotivation of main leader. These combined elements often precipitate the latter. Indeed, they cause the exhaustion of projects managers, which is often misinterpreted as a lack of perseverance. This is amplified by the long-term element of grassroots vision:

Those of us that are actively on the ground doing and making things happen, we're too busy doing it. [sigh].... There's few people that have...the ability to jump into the long-term, ...macro to it, and back to the short-term, micro. Even I struggle very much in it...If I spent too much time out here, when I come back here my life fell apart. It's cost me a couple of relationships...

However, failure is a very relative concept that needs to be placed within proper time and space considerations. The failure of one particular initiative is very common due to a combination of the easily encountered challenges. In such cases, the entire grassroots project does not fail accordingly. Projects failures usually mean the delay or postponing of singular initiatives. These get reborn in time under different shapes and circumstance when opportunities and success factors are assembled again. For instance, the failure of a housing project, whether it was never constructed, or it broke down, is usually postponed until new opportunities arise. Issues are more severe when the beneficiaries of housing projects are not grassroots projects managers themselves but only recipients.

Picture 11- Example of failed project

This occurs particularly when the project is carried by a third party outsider organization and that the future house occupants are only beneficiaries to the project. These cases are already problematic in themselves because their organization further maintains dependency dynamics. Furthermore, failure can have drastic effect because it can causes an entire local family to be left down and having to face the consequences of the

project's failure. In the case of housing projects for instance, a family with children can be left facing winter without a proper house to live in. It has dreadful consequences where the family is further victimized and left with a stronger feeling of deception towards white/outsider organizations. Local Lakota "beneficiaries" report experiencing frustration and resentment, and a confirmation of feeling of mistrust against Whites' unfulfilled promises, which amplifies existing inter-ethnic tensions and maintains coloniality.

Factors of long-term efficiency

Projects patterns can help us identify and understand factors of long-term efficiency and endurance of projects of the grassroots level. Data shows that the most prevalent factors for projects efficiency include: 1) a supportive local governance, 2) the presence of economic alternatives, 3) the presence of a space for learning and sharing knowledge, 4) a belief in alternatives to mainstream success, 5) awareness and critique of western development, 6) awareness of local challenges, 7) a culturally-appropriate framework, 8) local solutions, 9) no benefit from the capitalist model of development, 10) a strong personality to tie the project together and finally 11) a strong long-term vision. Relations involved in long-term efficiency can be presented as such (figure 5.3). They entail elements that tie to further analysis but already give an interesting complementary visualization to what I just exposed.

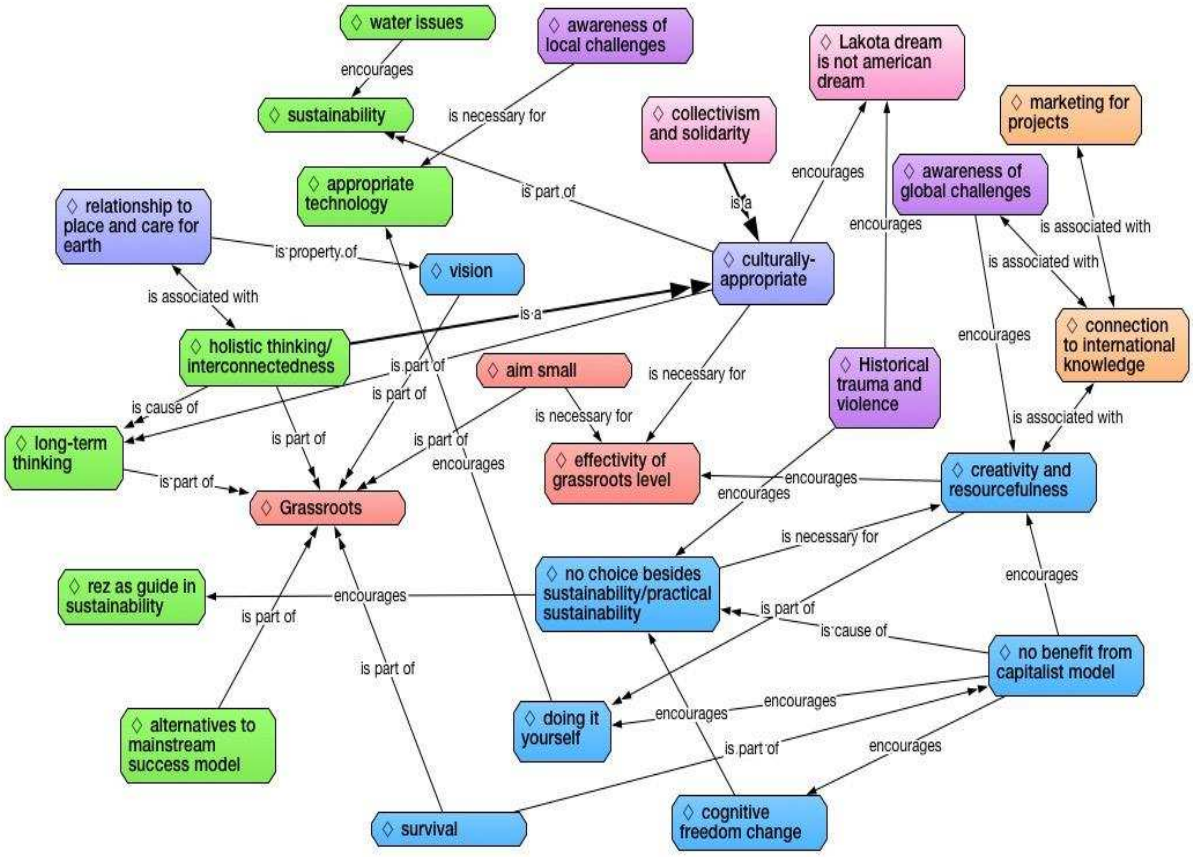

Figure 5.3 Factors of long-term grassroots efficiency

In the figure above (5.3), -beyond the connections that we have established in the previous figure (figure 5.2)- effectiveness of the grassroots level clearly ties to its ability to aim small and produce both 1) creative and resourceful and 2) culturally appropriate responses to local issues. Local awareness of global challenges encourages creativity and connects projects to international knowledge via projects marketing. Awareness of local challenges and the practice of "doing it yourself" fosters appropriate technology as an response to local issues. Historical trauma induces the belief that the Lakota Dream is not the American Dream. As I later show, alternative values to that model such as solidarity and holistic thinking emerge as a distinct culturally appropriate answer, upon which grassroots projects feel safe to build alternatives.

Individual resilience of projects leaders

Findings clearly express the existence of particular traits characterizing grassroots projects leaders, their resistance to challenges, capacity to adapt and to "make things happen". First and foremost, all enduring projects, those that have been standing for years and others that are still evolving possess common characteristics, the first of which is the presence of a strong leader to hold it together, as suggested by this manager:

> *It takes very specific...mind, mental skills to be able to project...Well, first to envision all the possible courses and then project your result on a whole thing and then make it happen. You gotta be able to jump forward and back. [pause] It's not something that's taught. I think it's something that is genetically (occurring) in people…I think so. Because, I mean...great leaders don't just happen, uh...It's situation, it's training, and it's the personal dynamics in which it happen. [pause] That all has to come together in one person with the right opportunity.*

The data shows that these leaders display 1) creativity and resourcefulness, 2) cognitive freedom towards the idea of change, 3) the art of "keep going", 4) the ability to find resources, 5) no direct benefit from the capitalist model (different reasons), 6) a strong long-term vision, 7) high levels of personal hardships and trauma. There is also a pattern of people who tried different scales of action before, and more conventional leadership position and got frustrated by it and by that scale. Grassroots level embodies that other scale of action. Usually, they all have some enemies or hard relations with some reservation officials and or other tribal members. This shows that the politics of wanting to befriend people and a will to conform does not play a role in long-term projects efficiency. Contrary to mainstream definitions, it is the relative mental and physical freedom from previous frames that allows systemic transformation to occur. Since there is no possible adaptation of these people within the mainstream framework of action, they bend the framework off their systemic critique:

That's my passion; working in small ways and in large ways whatever way I can contribute to helping other native people to make a better life for themselves and have that long range vision for the success of not only our people but the success to share what we know our knowledge and understanding of the way the world works so that everybody benefits from that

Large-scale organizations-level projects

Data for this section originated mostly from organizations' reports, documents and social media, and narratives from interviews and fieldwork. It describes observations from both the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River Indian Reservation, where similar entities and projects can be observed. From comparing both the organizations and the grassroots sources, I attempted to fill the gap of silence that often surrounds the actual efficiency of organizations projects on the reservation. Although I am not from the reservation and might not seem legitimate to some to do so, the precious insights from diverse local actors along with years of fieldwork contrasting information about projects efficiency can hopefully shed light on some of the key dynamics occurring at the organization level of social change. The purpose of this section is not to target any particular initiatives, nor dismiss the efforts of well-intentioned organizations staff members. That is why I chose not to disclose any names of organizations, plans, and projects, and any recognizable material. I will therefore refrain from direct identifiable quotes, unless they were found in organizations material, and rather describe their patterns. My sole purpose here is to uncover useful information from ground people that may foster a decolonial analysis of local social change projects.

From existing reports, the only levels of action that are (visibly) occurring on the reservation are the initiatives carried by large organization. From such definition and by western standards, levels of local resilience should be assessed via formal large initiatives

and tribal policies. Although possibly animated from the best intentions and most straightforward programs, this level of change dismisses the entire existence of the grassroots level, which goes against local efficiency of both scales and impedes on long-term social change on the reservation.

In this complex context, tribal initiatives dispose of the "power of doing something", yet their plans often get implemented without much local consultation, or with protocol of consultation that do not ensure a fair representativeness (cf see section on coloniality and governance in chapter 4).

> *There's different degrees of that...macro, micro because you got societal stuff, immediate societal stuff. Your short-term...long-term. But short-term, five year projects, ten year projects, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five, a hundred, two hundred year...projects. You have to define that -and that's kinda done in those (tribal) research projects- but what isn't done is how do we go start it? [pause] And...I mean...the guys that can do it are not the guys that are gettin' promoted into the positions can make it happen. Because we (grassroots leaders) are doers, you know...those that can do. So, those bureaucrats in there are tallying, or teaching other people how to do stuff and they haven't actually done it.*

In fact, the major risk of large-scale projects is that they often go against the interest of the majority of local residents. An example can be drawn from the current project of creation of a tribal national park in the Southern part of the Badlands, located in the Northern part of the Pine Ridge reservation, where consultancy was indeed established between tribal leaders and leaders of the national park, but however without much public Lakota consultation. The result is that a tribal park was co-created and the only visibility here showed this as an example of the exercise of native sovereignty. However, on the ground, people were neither much consulted nor seemed to feel concerned by the project. Worse, some whose land was located on the margins of the park were dispossessed illegally of their land through land theft and means of pressure to set this park boundaries. Of course, not all projects are equivalent and some have positive impacts locally, however

issues tying to the scale and therefore leverage of these projects, combined with a centralization of means and power does not facilitate transparency and affects this scale's efficiency.

Projects typology

By themes

Economic development and support

About half of large-scale organizations' projects aim at fostering economic development and support. This involves initiatives to aid people in carrying a business plan, training people in financial literacy, empowerment, administration and business management, financially helping people's business ideas through trainings or grants. Sometimes, grassroots projects can benefit from some of these grants when they have a stated sustainability goal. These projects focus much on creating jobs on the reservation, and entail workforce development plans. Economic projects also entail the development of banking and financial tools on the reservation to open local people' access to the market. Other "development funds" overarch ramifications of projects whose purpose is to foster local "community development" and encourage the reservation to thrive economically. Chambers of commerce were also created in both reservations to a similar end goal. The theme of economic development is central to the very existence of these organizations, who make it part of their founding statement to:

> *Foster business networking opportunities, help strengthen the local economy, and promote the communities of the…Reservation. Our mission is to promote a vibrant regional economy and provide opportunities and valuable services…for the purpose of enhancing the quality of life in the communities*

Promote economic sustainability on the Reservation and geographic service area, through business loans, technical assistance, and wealth building education for families and businesses.

Providing services for the people

The second mission that large-scale organizations projects fulfill is that they provide services for the people. These span from education, childcare and healthcare, developing communal infrastructure to developing housing programs. They also provide useful services to individuals and promote individual wellbeing such as mental illness and suicide prevention programs, youth internship and personal development initiatives. These services are useful as they palliate for the inefficiency of market services and complete lacking tribal services, although it still does not match local demand for basic requirements of safety, health, and personal care.

Cultural events

Large-scale organizations organize cultural events such as powwow, giveaways, cultural values and language teaching programs. Their programs emphasize the cultural aspect and culturally appropriate aspect of their project, and organization. They often display elements of Lakota symbols in projects and use language to display a certain commitment to the culture. They give projects Lakota names or endorse them with Lakota values, to appeal to tribal members and present their projects as culturally appropriate. In presentations and documents, Lakota words are present at all levels and an emphasis is made on the stake of protecting culture.

Local Research

Most projects remain first timers, and therefore require levels of experimentation. Amounts of funding are always allocated to "investigating phases" and research stage prior

to the implementation of a project. The time of these experimentations vary given the size of the project but often reaches a year. Projects are flourishing on both reservations and new programs are created as funding comes and goes. It also creates jobs to hire local managers for such projects and associated staff. This stimulation of emergent projects yields some very interesting hybrid initiatives to develop ecological housing, for instance. The purpose is a combination of sustainability and cost-efficiency, but the amount allocated allows for beautiful looking projects to be discussed, elaborated and presented.

Another type of project currently blossoming is the launch of complete data research projects implemented on the one hand to challenge US led data collection such as the census, and on the other hand to develop local qualitative and quantitative databases. They both span under the overarching movement that information about Natives must be discovered, presented and controlled by Native people, which very much develops as a response to outsiders' colonial habits to produce exogenous unilateral knowledge about Lakotas and produce the information useful to the management of reservation life. These projects are very successful in this regard as they do manage to challenge US census numbers and affirm the presence of reservation knowledge in the outside world.

Defining vision

Similarly to other scales of action, large local organizations projects present identifiable patterns, starting with elements found in their projects' vision. The communication around these projects systematically presents them as 1) helping the people, 2) maintaining Lakota culture and sovereignty and 3) embodying the people's voice. The first element manifests through the shape of programs, of which role is to "help the people out", whether it means out of poverty, or to provide education, healthcare, or

different kind of support. The second element shows via the omnipresence of cultural symbols. Projects include Lakota words for every project and even translate some content of the reports' and presentations in the Lakota language. There is a particular commitment to protect Lakota language and cultural events. The third expresses through the use of specific terminology indicating a level of representativeness towards other Lakotas such as the numerous use of the possessive determiner "our" with inclusive group statements such as "the people"; for instance "our youth", or "our people". "The process captured the voices and the spirit of the reservation people". This statement of representativeness shows how much these organizations seek validation as "the voice of the people". The question to ask becomes then towards whom this request is addressed.

> *The…Oyate and their relatives are beginning a healing journey of mind, body and spirit that will strengthen the Oyate, so our families and future generations will be nurtured and secure with their cultural values; ready to connect to economic, social and educational opportunities. The Oyate will emerge from this journey with collective wisdom that supports individual and community wellness; in unity we will take on life's challenges and strive to create and sustain a stable, diverse and prosperous economy.*

A very noteworthy observation from organizations' projects statements is the contrast that they show by displaying an ambitious long-term vision in holistic terms similar to those found in grassroots projects, yet in the same time making a claim, sometimes in the same sentence, that capitalist economic developmentalism is the key to make it happen.

Large-scale projects specificities

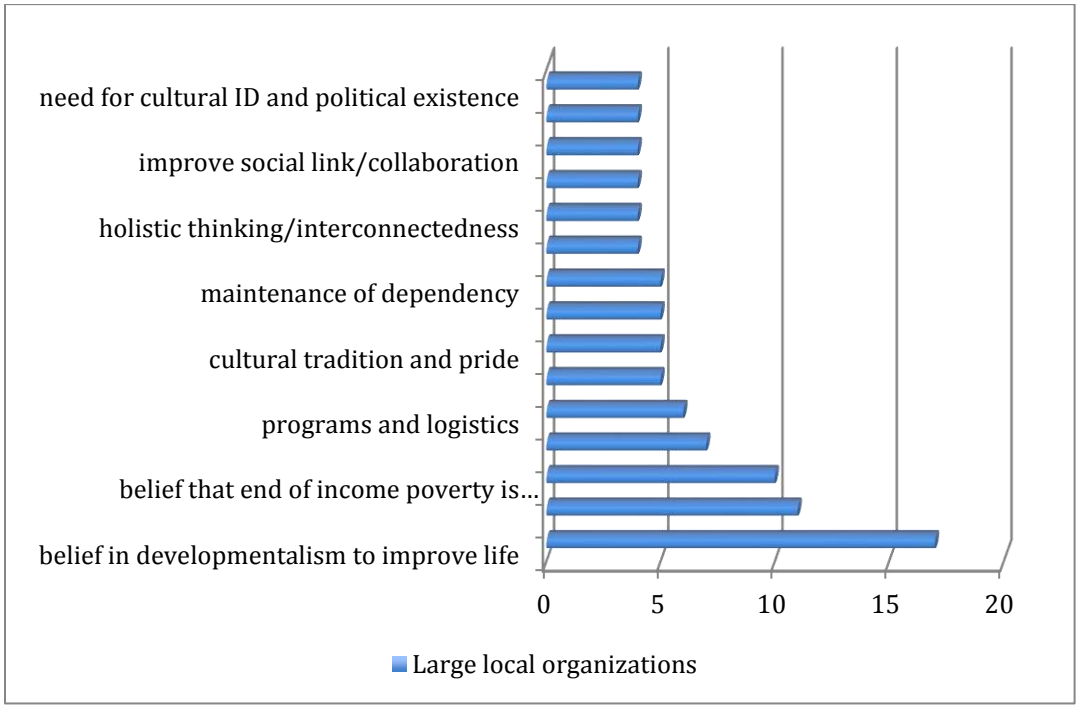

Figure 5.4 Large scale projects specificities

Large scale projects specificities revolve in order of significance around 1) the belief in developmentalism to improve life, 2) the belief that the end of poverty is resilience, 3) many programs and logistics, 4) cultural tradition and pride, 5) the maintenance of dependency, 6) holistic thinking, 7) a need to improve social link, 8) the need for cultural identity and political existence. These associations summarize the paradoxical characteristics of large-scale organization social change. I will now further explain.

Projects operationalization

Carrying the legacy of capitalist ideology

Projects specificities start with a general belief in developmentalism as a viable ideology to improve living conditions. Underlying these projects, there is a fundamental belief that the end of economic poverty will lead to a happier community. This is seemingly

reminiscent of colonial administration ideology and of the countless efforts that were made towards making economic developmentalism as the only viable project for the survival of the Lakota people. Projects display features of capitalist projects while dismissing its colonial coercive origin:

> *Since utilizing banks and other financial institutions is largely foreign to Lakota culture, [our organization] recognizes that limited financial expertise and inadequate financial education resources are huge impediments to the economic health of reservation residents. We offer a variety of personal growth and asset building programs designed to build the skills of our people.*
>
> *[We] believe investing in our Lakota youth is one of the most important steps we can take in developing a thriving economy on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Our youth programs plant seeds of wise resource management in our younger generation to help build a brighter future for all of our people.*

Interestingly, what this organization is saying is that although this skill is foreign to Lakota culture, Lakota people have to learn it to have a better future. The discourse sounds very similar to assimilation narratives of the reservation era. Western financial terminology is present in all large-scale organizations at a different pace. Words such as "build", "career", "economic opportunity", "education and training", "thrive economically", "develop financial literacy", "eradicate poverty", "create jobs", "develop infrastructure" come back as a pattern throughout their projects, and is interestingly juxtaposed with visions of community sovereignty and long-term sustainability. I will show how this pattern embodies a colonial paradox.

Fighting for culture

Another trait is that cultural tradition and pride is always present in the development of projects, and omnipresent in projects' documents. It is accompanied by a need for cultural identity and political existence beyond the realm of the reservation. The scheme of cultural display is usually limited to language and cultural events, which is quite

limited compared to the diversity and richness of the Lakota culture, which allows us to ask the question of towards whom the message is meant? However, contrary to the lack of critical approach towards economic development ideology, organizations hereby clearly denounce colonial oppression and historical trauma, to which they refer and oppose a revival of their cultural tradition. Learning these traditions becomes nested within issues of indigenous sovereignty and political existence, which explains why both traits are found salient in these projects' specificities.

Holistic thinking and sustainability

Overt goals of projects entail similar elements to grassroots', with a deep care for humanity and interconnectedness with living beings:

> *Movements for positive change aren't about institutions, organizations, governments or jurisdictions. They are about people…about people coming together for the benefit of each other and the willingness to sacrifice in order to lift each other up. As human beings, we can accomplish anything we put our minds to.*

Such holistic thinking is not as intense as those found in grassroots projects. It usually does not include such intense relation to worldwide issues and limits its action to reservation or native people; it does not aim at elaborating world-changing projects as grassroots projects' visions entail. However, it does include levels of care for the earth and the environment via a few projects aiming at sustainability such as sustainable housing, or through publically supporting other projects that are focused on protecting the earth and Lakota ways.

Belief in Lakota strength and survival

There is an overall displayed belief in Lakota strength and the survival capacity of the Lakota people, although it usually tie back to projecting how well they can adapt to the programs offered by these organizations:

We have found the people have a strong will not only to survive, but to bring a better future for their children and grandchildren. Aspiring entrepreneurs become highly motivated when they find meaningful work that respects their culture and provides hope for the future.

Desire to bring social change

The previous belief is associated with an underlying goal to bring social change on the reservation. However, such beliefs are again always followed by statements about eradicating poverty and empower the Lakotas to compete within the market:

[our organization] is intentionally disrupting the status quo by creating models of change that will overpower intergenerational poverty and build momentum to regional equity.

Maintenance of dependency

Another specificity is the maintenance of dependency. This trait comes from a qualifying code. This means that the dependency might not be expressed or desired, but is found structurally through the visible centralization of power and decision-making along with models of governance based on hierarchical power, as follows:

Centralization of power and decision

Staff of organizations often finds that they could benefit from more delegation and responsibilities:

Well, I think there needs to be more organization here as far as…not all the responsibilities being taken apron one person, and that person can't always be available to everything that is going on around. You know…There needs to be some more delegating of responsibilities or partnerships instead of just one person handling everything. When they're so busy that nothing is moving. Nothing is getting done because they're so swamped with everything else.

This shows how much the hierarchical organization of these organizations slows down the process of action and makes it rely upon the decision of one "representative" individual or select group of individuals. This also resonates with coerced modes of governance that deconstructed local decision-making. It also plays out an important role in

regards to the amount of the allocation of funding for which one person or a few are made responsible:

> *So, I told...they got hundred thousand dollars start-up cause, and [the manager] were asking what to...do with that money...[Manager] then turned around and paid for every councilman and every tribal director of programs and yeah, I don't know how many there are, but there's a lot, A lot of programs! And you know...to go for a three day retreat at the Holiday Inn in Rapid City, so that they could get together out there and figure out what to do about...with this money...to bring us out of poverty. That's how those poverty...monies were handled from the very beginning and that's the way I see 'em being handled now. They got about...I hear about $6 million dollars. And you know...the poor people are in worse shape than when the tribe received that money or those people. It's a...it's a board of directors who makes those decisions.*

The particular issue with this type of governance is that it concerns particularly consequent amounts of funding, which are among the few important blocks of resources on the reservation. This makes the stakes of their allocation particularly important and the feeling of mistrust and betrayal that some people can feel when they have the impression that huge amounts of money were spent with little visible improvement on the ground. The reason why it is hard to break from this type of functioning can be partially explained by the heavy reliance on outside funding, as I later explain.

Finding resources

Accessing capital

Finding resources for large organizations is mostly about accessing capital and hiring personal. The functioning and type of management follows a business type organization with a board to overlook decisions, a director, and hierarchically subordinate positions. At its source, funding comes from tribal government, federal government, or outside foundations. The latter is quite interesting because it is often the contemporary embodiment of white saviorism, although framed differently. One example comes from a local organization of which existence was funded through a foundation directed by a

descendant of a rich American dynasty that built its success at time of conquest upon building infrastructure on Indian land. He now put millions at the disposal of Native American projects to foster endogenous economic development. Plans are to be developed by the people, but following six foundational criteria imposed by the foundation.

Organizations answer to call for projects and compete to elaborate a local plan using a mix of Lakota and western terminology, and receive millions of dollars to implement these "in the name of" the people. However, because of the top-down nature of such a process, organizations tied to outside foundations are also accountable to them. More in fact than to the "beneficiaries" that the money was "given for". This sets the tone for the internal capacity of such organizations to lead the massive change they were endorsed to implement. It also yields a structural lack of transparency. Some organizations do commit to straightforwardness and transparency in terms of spending, budgeting, etc. But others are very well known by local people to have special talents for making dollars evaporate in the air. Notwithstanding, transparency is not the rule and the accountability stops at whom the reports are destined towards. The consequence is that tribal members are usually not the recipients and judges of these reports that account for projects' progress.

Organizations find labor through regular hiring process than western management standards. Labor is hired after selection of fitting applicants, and they are expected to perform task-based wage-work in the organization office or where their task takes them. Staff turnover is usually important following the trend of local labor.

Large-scale local action; a colonial paradox?

Looking outward

First of all, one of the traits that is most apparent in local large organizations' projects is the fact that their projects' management and functioning looks outward rather than inward. This means that a lot of the observed patterns, i.e, being accountable to outside sources, using western terminology and projecting developmentalist ideology, focusing on existing politically, etc. point outward the reservation. This means that although they are aware of the responsibility they carry towards "their" people, organizations still base their existence upon constructing and justifying local action to fit western standards, which points outward rather than inward reservation dynamics. This defines a biased set of priorities of action.

Worse, the ideological dependency that comes from the reliance on outside sources of funding also precipitates the phenomenon of looking outward. It further maintains dependency practices that have taken place since reservation era:

> *Today we have poverty as Lakota people, but we still have our pride, we involve ourselves in our language, culture, and ceremonial duties. We are encouraged by our parents and grandparents to carry on these duties and be alcohol and drug free. I say wopila for the tremendous amount that the [outside] Foundation has done to contribute to our future.*

This quote is quite telling of the paradox of change taking place at that scale of action. On the one hand, there is a strong reliance on Lakota cultural values as a way to revalorize people's self-esteem. One the other hand, such values are limited to remain sober and people's future depends on an outside organization's donation. Such a quote embodies the deep internal conflict that operates within tribal members as a by-product of coloniality, and the role that large-scale and outside organizations play in reifying it.

Maintenance of the capitalist model

Although projects might proudly display their specific cultural background and traits and disassociate from colonial narratives, their practice of action still manifest colonial traits, and unconsciously aim at fitting within the western framework through competing with it. They exist within two worlds and their allegiances are dual. But they have somehow integrated that there is no viable alternative model of existence that this of the colonizer or that the Lakota model must exist within the colonizer's. They display some kind of double consciousness as Dubois theorized it, where the challenges and struggles of existing within these two worlds provokes an internal pull in which memory of colonial trauma is conflicting with internalized colonial mode of existence that first developed as a defense mechanism.

This is particularly salient for the "educated elite" that constitutes the managers of these projects, even to the point where managers are Lakotas who did not grow up on the reservation but come back to integrate these leadership positions. Additionally, they still benefit personally from these projects and subordinate arrangements with the western model. This conditions their only choice for specific Lakota existence as competitor within the mainstream market. Such a situation suppresses the possibility to challenge the hegemonic use of power on the reservation, and impedes on real systemic alternative propositions at the large organizations scale. This explains the contradictions observed at that scale of action. The issue is thus structural. The presence of that double-consciousness in the emergence of projects on the ground further maintains and confirms the presence of the capitalist model as a viable system, although it is nested within the structural destruction of the base of subsistence of the Lakota culture.

Whose sovereignty?

The entire tribal system is nested within a complex history of power dynamics. Although sovereignty is supposed to be exercise by tribal members today, I have explained how the structure of exercising power remains intensely colonial. Unfortunately, this model gives power to and validates hierarchical structures such as large-scale organizations, which in turn exercise a power that does not necessarily represent people's will, and is still an infraction to Lakota traditional mode of governance. "They" represent "the people" and this gives them leverage in using capital and implementing large-scale action.

Additionally, following the model of western governance, they become the only legitimate ones to be able to exercise political existence and Lakota sovereignty, especially in regards to the outside. This self-validated exercise of power channels and concentrates more power as partnerships and individual advancements progress, which postpones even further the rise of alternative models. It also concentrates and restrains the issues of Lakota governance to the political negotiation of Whites/Lakotas relations. This has two effects; first it reifies the importance and predominance of Lakota/White relations in local action on the reservation, and secondly it limits Lakota sovereignty to an outward expression, while dismissing its invisible yet existing local expressions. Of course, although the latter might negatively impede on local action, it also has positive effects on Lakota political existence, and plays an important role in positioning Lakota sovereignty-in the eyes of the outsider.

A colonial paradox?

These observations of large-scale organizations action conduce to highlight the existence of a practical paradox. The consistent belief in developmentalism is present as both a by-product of coloniality, and yet a trait of projects carried by organizations otherwise very much aware of colonial trauma. What are conceived as projects to "get out of poverty" become counterproductive because despite their cultural claims, they rely on the very principles and scheme of action that precipitated the current social-economic hardships of the people, and perpetuate the same oppressive elements of coloniality. This is maintained through ideological dependency and outward thinking, which pushes the colonized to compete with the colonizer. Resentment towards the history of white involvement is juxtaposed with a tolerance of white capitalist ideology and white saviorism as a practice, although dreams might lean towards a sovereign Lakota model.

This bears resemblance with Fanon's concept of Black Skin, White Masks, where the colonized is pushed to operate within the colonizer framework as a defense mechanism to an inferiority complex (Fanon 2008). To the risk of sounding extrapolating, here this phenomenon could be termed Red Dreams, White Schemes. By operating and competing within the western framework, the Lakota elite unconsciously craves for recognition within that framework. However, this prevents the emergence of large-scale endogenous alternatives to develop. Thus, this educated elite, itself looking outward because lateral oppression participates in reifying colonial dynamics and becomes the oppressor of its own people. The insistence on cultural tradition, pride and political existence inscribes itself within that scheme, as long as those claims do not challenge mainstream western systemic model, they are given the space to exist. Culture is not considered dangerous by the

western model, as long it does not challenge hegemonic ideology, which mainstream large-scale organizations do not do in terms of projects and structures functioning.

This shows how much large-scale organizations differ from grassroots' projects, in the sense that the pull in which they are caught prevents them from connecting systemic change with colonial oppression, which occurs through practical mechanisms of survival at the grassroots level (see chapter 6). Their answer to colonial oppression is to compete within the same framework, which is often found in peripheral areas that still have stakes within the hegemon. It is the case here, since there are so many economic and ideological ties to the western framework.

In other words, it is because of their benefit from the outside framework that these organizations cannot truly bring systemic change. By default of being able to offer a systemic challenge as an answer to historical lateral oppression, they find themselves struggling for political and cultural existence within that outside framework. Here, the criticism of colonial oppression and strong desire to exist as Lakota comes in conflict with the systemic reality. Existing as Lakota becomes only valid within that outward sphere and becomes disconnected from local realities, which has impacts on local people.

Large-scale organizations projects efficiency

It becomes hard to see lasting results past the reports produced by the organizations themselves. I based my analysis on contrasting both accounts of the organizations themselves and of ground people information about effects of organizations projects. To produce a complete assessment of lasting results, it would be needed to investigate the locally felt results of each implemented project, which would be quite a timely undertaking. However, large-scale organizations do have positive effects on the

ground. First, they have clearly helped individuals to start projects, funding local businesses, and increased individuals' capacity and market skills:

> *I do know that my own individual development has come a long way just being here. And [manager] has put me in situations that I've never been in before as far as public speaking and stuff. And I've had to evolve and I'm sure you know there's other things like we said remember at the thing with [colleague] and how far they've watched her evolve into this person and that's just basically rising to meet new challenges and this place has done that for me. Just personally.*

One of the positive lasting results is the development of individual skills and capacity, which they are mostly grateful for. People involved in these projects usually grow significantly personally and can measure the impact it had on their overall professional evolution and prospects. However, the promise and vision of large-scale organizations, which is proportional to the amount of funding that they manage, should be assessable beyond individuals' progress. In that regard, visible results might be accounted through the installation of new infrastructures, and social-cultural events, but not in terms of visible impact on people's community wellbeing and economic livelihood. They have demonstrated a capacity to implement little local leverage but despite their efforts to yield local data and improve consultation, their action remains disconnected from local realities and deeper aspirations for systemic change.

Volunteers and outside organizations; the missing link

"Are you church group or researcher"? Why people come to the Rez

One of the most common questions a non-Lakota can hear is whether he/she came with a church group or to perform research. Such a remark speaks for itself as to describe the pattern of the coming of outsiders on the reservation and their reason for doing so. If it is true that factors such as the lack of tourism might account for the relatively few numbers of tourists or passers-by on the reservation, the fact that precisely church group or researcher constitutes known identified populations among coming outsiders is very telling. I interviewed only groups who come to work on the different grassroots projects, so I did not account for the width and depth of the researchers coming into the reservation. However, having myself partaken research "parties"/missions on the reservation, I have at least personally witnessed the phenomena several times.

When it comes to outsiders coming to provide labor for the different local projects, the code "why people come to the rez" was found in strong cooccurrence (≥5) with the following codes: *Church group, white privilege, white guilt, personal development, personal reward in the task, volunteering, want to be helpful, youthcamp*. These codes strongly indicate that the reasons for outsiders to come in are related with task-oriented missions of different nature that engages outsiders on a personal level to participate in local action while feeling useful and encouraging self-growth. The strong presence of codes of *white privilege* and *white guilt* ties to the colonially induced identity dynamics occurring in the process. The code *volunteering* is found to interact most strongly with the code *relation to whites and outsiders*, suggesting that volunteering involves specific issue with

White/Lakota relations, which reifies what I have been describing about the prevalence of ethnic issues and its impact of work relations on the reservation.

Logically, people perceptions about the patterns of outsiders coming and going highly depends on the nature of the project's activities and can vary from one place to another. Non-Lakota locals who are working within outside organizations to help foster and develop local projects activities might perceive this pattern only partially. For instance, the following quote describes the opinion of one of the outsiders working sustainably in support of one local grassroots project about "why people come" to this specific project:

> *There is the volunteer groups that come and they come to experience res life and some of them come when they think they are going to help us…some of them come to learn so there are different reasons to come. And then we have the…lodge that people rent and it is almost like a hostel and they come for lodging and they come to rest and some of them are researching and they are just here to rest. And some of them are here for volunteer stuff.*

Volunteering specificities

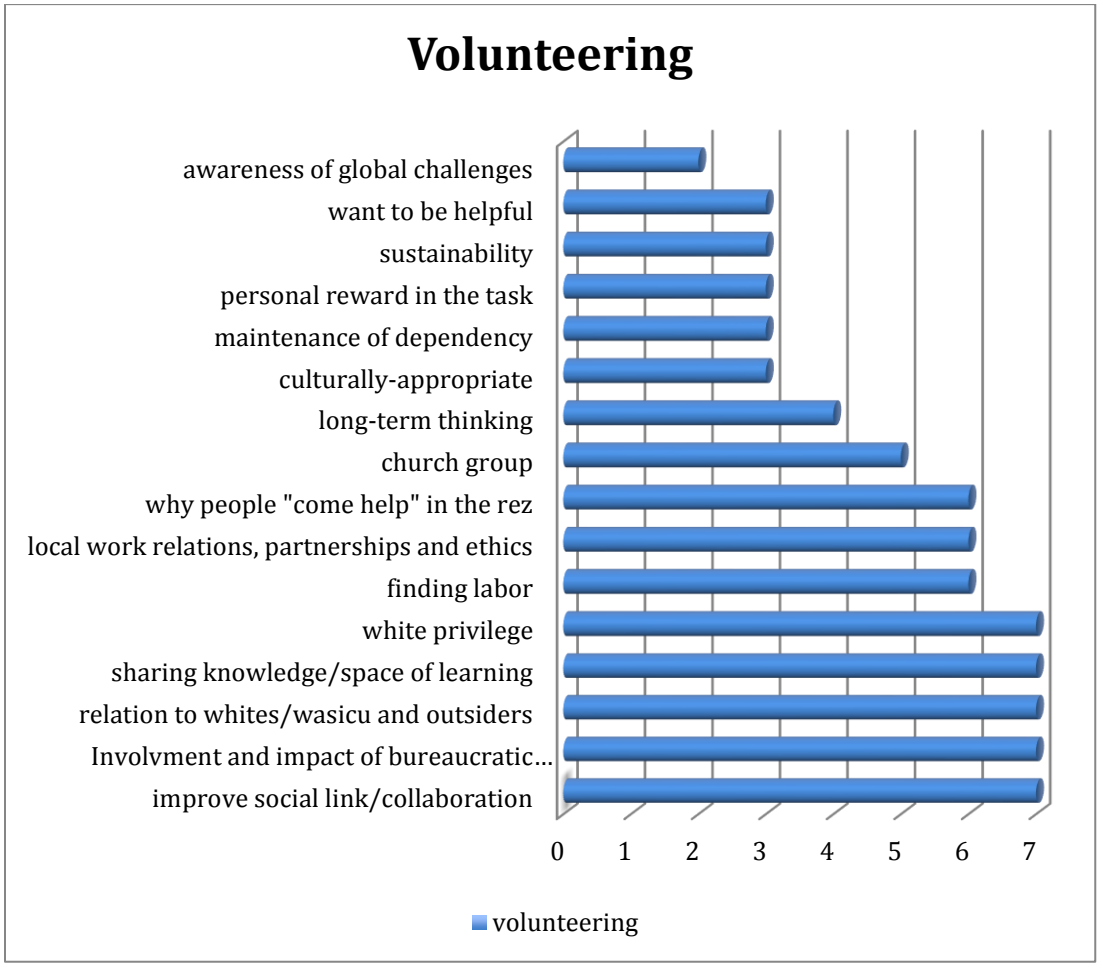

Figure 5.5 Specificities of volunteering

The patterns associated with volunteering are related to improving social link and collaboration, they are most impacted by bureaucratic and large organizations, relations to whites and outsiders, volunteers' participation in sharing knowledge, the expression of white privilege, church groups, long-term thinking, wanting to be culturally appropriate, participating in the maintenance of dependency, finding a personal reward in the task, their interest in sustainability, the desire to be helpful and their awareness of global challenges.

Two levels of outside "help"

Self-organized outsiders

One of the two primary categories of outsiders who come to the Rez to work on the projects are either self-organized such as outside organizations, or individual volunteers, although these are intertwined because outside organizations usually use and drag in volunteers as part of their functioning. However, I made a distinction between organizations staff and the temporary volunteers they pull in, who I accounted as a sum of individual volunteers. These two groups themselves entail specificities. Within outside organizations, two subcategories might be distinguished between church groups and development support, although both these groups usually entail levels of charity work, regardless of whether their primary mission is associated with religious motives. The following organization does not do any mission related work and provides services to the community by getting volunteers in and giving them a cultural experience while putting them to "fix things" for people for a fee. Talking about its funding, this outside organization manager says:

> *(We get our funding from)...private donations. And right now a lot of those are churches because, (group name) started from a church and they had a lot of church friends. So, we still have a lot of church donations, private people donations and whatever money we get from...from private people, you know...we haven't hit corporations, yet. I would love to start doing that 'cause I think we could grab a lot money from them. And yeah, just private donations right now.*

Although these statements are not sufficient to show the possible relation existing between these funds and the actions of these groups, it does show the entanglement of church groups with local development history, consistently mirroring the historical context earlier described, and its link to colonial trauma.

Church groups influence has evolved over time. It is no more following a coercive approach to missions. However, a tie to evangelization remains:

> *the contemporary Christian, uh...mission is the same as it's always been, um...and that is rooted in the Bible. And it says to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them, um...But the thing is a lot of times, we mess up. And um...Christians don't take the rap for that and we're really sucky at apologizing, um...and saying, "Hey, we have made mistakes," um...that we've really misinterpreted what that looks like. Um...and I think in a lot of instances nowadays, we're getting closer to what that means. [pause] Um...for now. Um...and that...I think that a lot of that means this aspect of love first, tell me about Jesus later. Um...because if I just walk up to you and be like, "Hey! Believe in Jesus, He's great!" you're gonna be like, "Whatever. Walk...I'm gonna walk away. You're just a weirdo." Um...but if we build relationships, if we help and serve and love people without expectation, um...that is something completely unique to the Christian faith.*

Regardless of the amount of good intention associated with such endeavors, two characteristics remain: first, there is still a premise on which these groups operate that involves some form of proselytism. Secondly, these groups still follow an "invasive" approach, where they enter and leave the place as they wish. The latter corroborates that church groups behaviors is still strongly associated with traits of white privilege, no matter how nice and open-minded goups' leaders are, or regardless of their intention or good will.

Demanded labor

The second group of outsiders involved in local projects is primarily constituted of individual volunteers, either domestic or international, who engage in the projects via outside organizations or via the direct advertising of individual grassroots projects. The profile of these volunteers vary, but one manager describes it as such:

> *I hate to generalize but it's usually, um...it's usually middle-aged, um...fairly wealthy, White people from churches that come with children, kids, teenagers, um...to try to teach them about poverty, you know...about things like this. But they don't come just here. Usually...they usually go a lot of different places, like Honduras or other. And then they're just like, "Oh! Why not here?" So, a lot of it is just...that. It is probably the stereotypical volunteer...but not everybody. Not everybody.*

The volunteers who come from direct advertising from the projects are usually loners and often-international individual attracted to travelling while being useful, or committed to learning specific skills, such as permaculture or ecological housing. Those are rarely related to any kind of religious groups.

Volunteers' personal motives

There are two primary reasons why people state coming to the reservation to volunteer. The first one is the desire to "be helpful" (cf code *want to be helpful*). This translates into statements about altruistic motives, where the volunteer clearly identify his local role as "helping" others through donating time and energy to projects perceived as meaningful. The altruistic component is increased by the presence of a strong environmental consciousness. In such case, volunteers feel that their participation in projects that they believe to be cutting-edge and interesting from an ecological-social point of view participates into growing a more global environmental consciousness. Some of these are consciously looking for systemic alternatives and believe "the Rez" to entail working examples of possible solutions to a global ecocidal economic model. This pattern is accompanied by the presence of hope that volunteers report feeling while engaging in local projects:

> *And we just kind of like to partner up with (project leader name) because he is an example of, um…HOPE on the Rez, you know...that not everybody is unemployed and...dealing with alcoholism. There are people that are successful and smart and that they can change, um...they can change the Rez, or they can...they can change the world, you know...And I think that's why we like to come here because it's a different type of project than the other projects we do, which are...which are usually just physical labor like roofing, or skirting. And I told a few people today -we've been coming to this garden for the last three weeks- and I told 'em, you know..."There's two reasons why we're going here. One is because there's a lack of adequate housing on the Rez. And (project leader name) is really good at experimenting with earthen materials, sustainable housing and then teaching people so that they can maybe solve this housing crisis. And the second*

reason is the lack of fresh food here and you know...this also kinda helps teach people how to plant...We'll solve some of the problems that are here...without income…

This altruistic motive is contrasted with the desire to get personal reward or personal development from the task, of which corresponding codes were found as major themes around volunteering. People report the feeling of satisfaction associated with learning something useful for one self that participates in self-development. Overall both these reasons for participating in local projects tie to volunteers' desire to feel good about oneself, first through an altruistic motive, secondly through a more conscious gain for self-development. However, the altruistic motive might be pondered by the effect of another phenomenon expressed greatly by volunteers, which is the process of *white guilt*, which a lot of outsiders feel to a certain degree, as I will explain shortly.

Volunteers expectations

People who come for the first time often exemplify polarized assumptions about what they are going to find. They often display components of either the "myth of the good savage" or bittersweet paternalistic projections about helping "alcoholic" Indians. They often go through stages of realization along their stay, usually lasting between a week and a month. Discrepancies between their primary expectations and what they do find pushes them to either re-evaluate their perceptions or sometimes shorten their stay and leave the reservation. Volunteers usually describe an eye-opening experience in terms of discovery of Lakota culture and a special relationship to the land, but time constraint usually limits the nuances they can catch from the complexity of the local dynamics.

I think a lot people know nothing about it when they come. They don't know what to expect. They think that people still live in tipis probably, you know...I think there's just not enough knowledge out there for them to really expect anything. But I think once they get here, they do realize a little bit more. It takes a few times to come back to understand fully what's going on around here 'cause there's so much, you know...There is that

poverty, that despair but there's also so much happiness still and family ties. And then there's stuff like this, where...you know (these projects contain)...so much hope for the future and hopefully for the Rez. So, I think it depends on the maturity of the volunteer. But I think there are different stages of realizing what's going on here. And I think for those people that never get past that first stage and they just think, "Oh! It's just another poor place, like...nothing special." Then, they never come back. They don't come back, usually. But the people that get it, they come back here year after year and they learn a little bit more every time.

Volunteers' connection to their personal goal and self-development ultimately influences the decisions they make about staying on or leaving a project. Feelings described are always associated alternatively with *white guilt* and *white privilege*, which tend to have a reverse relationship. White guilt tends to trigger the desire to engage in local work while white privilege encompasses 1) the denial of the impact of self's whiteness as a social construct in maintaining local hardships and 2) the capacity to leave the place physically and emotionally and return to one's "normal life". This reverse relationship has a double effect. First, it triggers the involvement of volunteers and inter-ethnic exchange, which participates in deconstructing stereotypes. On the other hand, the denial or underestimation of the impact of white privilege in spite of obvious ground embodiments described hereafter further maintains White/Lakota inequalities and power dynamics, which impedes on the possibility of long-term reconciliation.

One of the enduring issues related to outside organizations comes from the fact that they maintain economic and symbolic dependency via the system of donation. Whether they provide services for free or deliver money to local projects, these organizations rely on outside sources of funding usually themselves based on a donation system. Regardless of where the money comes from and whether or not it is accompanied with private agendas from the funding sources, the simple fact that the economic power –so central in the dominant society- flows in one direction determines and continues patterns of dependency

dating back from the reservation era measures that coerced Lakotas to progressively abandon their subsistence model and become entirely dependent on outsiders for living. The practice of giveaway was quite abundant and still is among Lakota societies. First used as a way to balance and redistribute resources, it is now maintained as part of the informal economy to palliate for the absence of goods and services(Pickering & Jewell, 2008:138). However, the practice of donation performed at present by outsider organizations might further reify feelings of inferiority, encourage money theft and abuse and maintain colonial relationships. From the outsider perspective, representations oscillate between feeling right about donating to Lakotas while developing some satisfactory sense of value judgment while doing it:

> Interviewer*: Why do you think people keep asking for donations?*
> Interviewee*: Because they know that we'll give it. 'Cause they know that we always have donations and that we always have work and that that we'll say yes, probably.*
> Interviewer*: And why do you think that…some people rely on donations, or rely on this type of relationships?*
> Interviewee*: Because they have nowhere else to turn. Or because they have...or because they're lazy, maybe. Not everybody but, there...I think laziness is a factor. I think that having nowhere else to turn is a factor.*

Dependency relations create feelings of inadequacy that might further withdraw local people from participating into local projects when they are "done" for them. A local grassroots project leader comments:

> *The problematic thing is that a lot of groups come in and…it creates an inferiority problem, or complex and it basically helps perpetuate the cycle of poverty because people think that they need outsiders to come in and do things for them. And the people who really, actually deserve some of the help, who work really hard themselves, they don't want that help usually because they're humble and they don't want to…in a way "lower themselves" to having these groups come in. But actually I would try to encourage those people to accept the help because people who come here need to see competent people. And give help to competent people because those competent people, getting help to improve their projects, in the long run serve the community better, when they can get set up and going.*

This dependency critique applies mostly for volunteers and outside orgs that provide free goods and services for people, not so much for grassroots projects who call these volunteers in. Here the importance component relies upon who calls the outsiders in. Did they "invite themselves" via regular self-organized outsider groups who collect money to come and spend it on local projects? Or did they come at the request of specific grassroots projects who self-advertise their plan and needs? Both approaches entail a nuance of sovereignty of decision and control over the flow of outsiders, which is fundamental for long-term alleviation of White outsiders/Lakota relationships.

The damages of some outside groups are not limited to bringing volunteers and maintaining power dynamics, but also entail components of abuse that go beyond ethnic and ideological oppression. As debated in chapter 4, fear of abuse is rampant on the reservation and accounts for the history of numerous spoliations of which Lakotas have been the victims since time of conquest. This fear also increases people's sensitivity to such issues, and multiplies the attention they seem to carry to how other people and organizations collect and use their funds. The leader of an outside organization had raised money to fund a local housing project. The comment of another grassroots project leader suggests the misappropriation of some of the money raised for private purposes:

> *I talked to the recipient family and the president of the community who both told me the exact same story. And as far as they know, they aren't exact friends with each other. That there was $76,000. The house did not get built. The president of that community told me that they went to her house in…to visit her and she always talks about how much poverty she lives in. But she had a nice ranch house and 5 cars sitting out. Her son was up here bragging about how his mom paid off $5,000 in student loans for him and he was supposed to be working it off to her by helping lead the project, but he was partying and drinking the whole time he was here. And she also had a new laptop and she also was quoted as saying that "momma gets paid first". So, you asked me what are the barriers (to projects success)? Well, (lack of) straight up honesty and I don't know, I guess respect for the people to who you got the money from and who you raised the money in the name of; to follow through on your promises that you made. So, me personally I have the opposite*

problem. I have the ability, I seem to have the ability to get projects done but I am not very good at getting money to pay for them. But I have the willingness to stick with it and be creative and find ways to get things done, even when there's not enough money to go buy things.

Similar acts are also reported about tribal organizations. It is very hard to verify local acts of abuse and theft, whereas committed by locals or outsiders. Expenses are often partially put to use and hard to check, stakes are relatively small and operate under a lack of scrutiny, and there is no significant corporate or public interest to target the issue and invest in identifying such embezzlements. People who use donation money for private interest have various profiles, but they often use a technique that I heard consistently termed "poverty porn". The term of poverty porn is used to embody practices that use and instrumentalize local suffering to collect money in its name while using it for suspect and partially effective initiatives. Usually, practices of poverty porn involve self-indulgence and some degree of private interest of the organizer. However, it remains quite taboo in organizations and charity settings.

Lakota perceptions of outsiders perspectives

The evocation of such words as "poverty porn", is usually limited to trustworthy circles and rarely understood by outsiders "coming to help", unless they can exclude themselves from these "accusation". From Lakotas perspectives, their public perceptions by White outsiders and the way their struggles are instrumentalized and used to channel money down to their organizations are known and way more straightforward and sometimes cynical, as expressed below:

Public perception of Indians is…"dirty, drunk, poor"…"unable to take care of themselves" and "helpless". And…"moochies off of the government"! And into that stereotype comes a lot of white guilt, but they recognize that, well the poverty does exist and the dependence upon public welfare certainly does exist and the dependence, you know, the dependence…! And instead of taking a hostile sort of total rejection, then you do it yourself. Do for

yourself, you're going to be a drunken and that's your choice. The more liberal, or politically correct approach is to have a compassion for that person but it never changes the fact that…you still see them as basically helpless people and so you have to be steppin' in as a white savior and help them. So part of the imaging of them, part of the media coverage and part of the images that sell -and by that I mean charitable organizations- post pictures of children in distress because they hope that gets money in the door.

Examples are numerous. From BBC documentaries essentializing culture and photographs displaying youth living in the dirt to pulling in alarming numbers about poverty, they all attempt to present a Pine Ridge Reservation similarly to a campaign for a war-torn or third-world country in need, thereby attempting to touch the heart of individual doners and provoke an emotional reaction conducive to donating money while relieving white guilt conscience. This type of funds can also be called "heart money", because it embodies a model in which people can buy out their conscience and continue their everyday life via watching a detached instrumentalization of the suffering of "the Other". No worldview shift, no profound life reflexivity is necessary, as long as the relief occurs. To add to the process, which also incarnates traits of white privilege, one also gets tax relief in the process of donating for poverty porn projects.

This shows how traits of behavior such as poverty porn exemplify and speak for colonial patterns of dragging money in via instrumentalizing physical poverty. However this mechanism, that is widely known and understood by Lakotas, seems to be undervalued and under debated in White outsiders' local interventions. No one likes to be "accused" of acting as a "White savior", and this denial subsequently allows "white saviorism" to endure. This indicates how such concepts as poverty porn manifest, not just in terms of macro-levels oppression, but also how it is nested within individual identity-based relationships. These create emotional individual responses that both push outsider volunteers to undermine their potential participation in reifying colonial oppressive dynamics, and also

create frustrations from the Lakota side that such real mechanisms such as poverty porn are still used to strengthen the socio-economic advantage of white privilege. It is clearly noted by tribal members:

> *Poverty porn does perpetuate the stereotypes and those influence both the people who view it from the outside and those people who see their lives reflected in these ways…that are not accurate.*

Yet, as long as no synchronized effort and proactive reflexivity from outsider volunteers will be put in place, colonially-induced relations of power between Lakotas and Whites will continue to impact local development on the reservation. As one of the grassroots managers noted:

> *But that's how people continue to want to see native people as weak as helpless as recipients only and that we have really nothing of value to make a reciprocal respective hand shake relationship.*

Volunteering efficiency

The effect of volunteers on local projects is mitigated. On the one hand, they provide a needed and demanded labor force unavailable locally, and allow some exogenous visibility on the projects, which eventually detour local power dynamics and potentially enable projects to find resources outside the reach of endogenous colonial oppression. It also seems to provide projects with confidence associated with the ability to find resources on their own. This also fosters creativity because it forces projects to improvise and become resourceful to attract the corresponding resources. On the other end, volunteering and the intervention of outside organizations have been shown to further maintain dependency dynamics initiated in the reservation era. Long-term results of volunteering as an important labor source on local projects are uncertain and would require further investigation.

Conclusions

Contrasting results

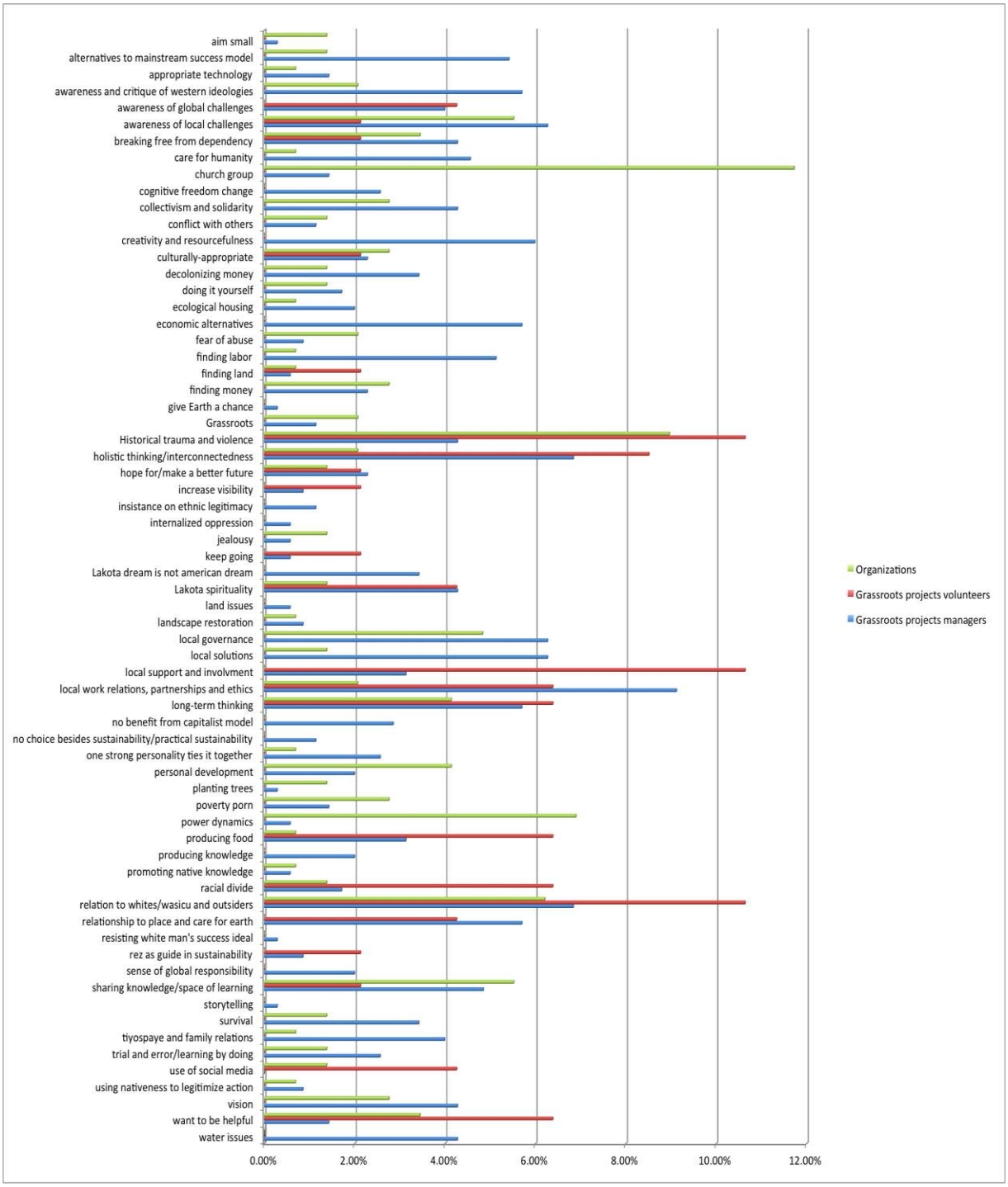

Figure 5.6 Code prevalence by three scales of action

Comparison is always a risky task, especially when comparing numbers or figures can be done so easily with so little apparent ground consequences. For instance, a quick comparison of the total codes of all levels of projects' specificities (totals of traits represented in above figure 5.6) are found respectively at 78% for grassroots projects managers, 71% for Grassroots projects volunteers, and 68% for Local organizations. An overlook of these results would show that the different parties involved mostly share the specificities of Lakota projects, that they all possess some strong specific contextual and cultural traits that shape projects in a way that might differ from non-reservation projects (although this last point would require a different analysis). However, a closer look at the above graph confirms a great disparity in terms of distribution of these traits, as suggested by the results of this chapter.

For example, the belief in *alternatives to mainstream model* is three times more present in grassroots projects than in large organizations. *Care for humanity* is a significant code for grassroots projects and almost insignificant for large organizations. *Breaking free from dependency* seems to be a huge stake for grassroots projects, a third less for large organizations and twice as less for (mostly outsiders) volunteers. *Racial divide* seems to be more significantly felt by volunteers than other local actors. *Power dynamics* and stakes of *personal development* are more prevalent in large organizations.

Although these results express and reify the trends and patterns I have attempted to point out during this chapter, they only make sense now because an in-depth analysis and representation of these three levels of local action has been previously completed. Additionally, this analysis was carried out using a decolonial framework that was highly focused on eliciting power dynamics, which is why they are prevalently apparent in these

codes. However, a whole different framework with pre-defined notions of local development success would have yielded completely different results because codes would have been generated from developmentalist assumptions and perceptions of the data. What can be said then about comparing and contrasting results is that there the validity of comparison can only be maintained if the objects of analysis operate in the same framework, which is be the case for different levels of action. Here is why.

Impact of scale

On worldview

Issues of visibility, vision, programs and worldviews are impacted by projects' scale. First by the size of the project, which defines how it will come to realization. Projects might have similar vision to others from a different scale but their operationalization is most impacted by the means and stakes at their disposal, which is defined by scale. Secondly, projects' scale also constrains the behavior and overall impact of the people who make them happen. People's private interests and prioritization intermingle with scale and complexify projects' completion. One example is this of the impact of outside volunteers coming to help. The volunteers often finds themselves within a learning process where they come and learn but it is eventually more about their personal development than about local trust building, or long-term thinking, and it is not subject to the stake of practical survival. They have different priorities of commitment than the local grassroots manager for which they came to work.

Commitments and allegiances are multiple and overlap across scales, which impacts work relations. For instance, some local managers are committed to a grassroots project yet also participate in a large-scale organization, which might occasion conflicts of interest

and intra-personal dilemmas. Sometimes the contrary occurs and social relations transform the scale of action. A grassroots project can slowly start to take traits of a large-scale organization as much funding comes through with new attached allegiances. These mechanisms are complex, but can be interestingly analyzed as identity allegiances (Maalouf 2001), because as I showed, they are attached to different worldviews, and form entire ethos of action that define distinct ways of being on the reservation.

On leadership

Issues of scale also entail consequences about leadership and management. Indeed, where a degree of centralization of power through the presence of a strong leading personality can tie a small scale grassroots project together, and actually serve a strengthening purpose, it can also have a totally opposite effect at the size of an organization. Indeed, at a larger scale, a strong personality may monopolize the decision-making and enforce coercive top-down governance, which has been found in some local large-scale organizations. Scale also greatly impacts projects' visibility.

Projects visibility and Strategic essentialism

Through the use of social media and the way that projects leaders choose to display information, one can observe a level of essentialization of local issues and culture for the sake of project marketing. This phenomenon can be found in both grassroots and organizations projects, with some nuances. Thus, they both make communication choices that display inspiring vision statements tying Lakota culture and expect emotional reactions. For instance, projects pages often like to display what is considered as Lakota cultural capital, among which the most common are people setting up teepees, children

dancing at powwow, wild buffalos, to encourage the social media audience to "like" them, donate money or contribute to their projects.

The principle of strategic essentialism famously coined by postcolonial theorist Spivak (2012) can shed light on this practice. It embodies ways in which the "marginalized" temporarily hold and use identity projections to organize, mobilize politically, and impose a narrative within the hegemonic space (Spivak, 2012). This particular concept does not reflect a fixed identity category neither does it foster the need for the oppressed to adopt the mainstream standards. Here, it simply represents a certain awareness or level of realization by Lakota projects managers that they wish to have a voice, and that this voice cannot exist without being both distinct from the mainstream cultural model, and presented to it in such a way that it is understood. The strategic essentialist task does not reduce Lakota identity to it, but instead constitute a temporal and spatial presentation of features that are self-identified by users as distinctively particular to Lakota identity so that they can be comprehended and understood as such by outsiders, for the sake of obtaining a space of expression and associated advantages. Here, such advantages can be present under the form of resources for projects or simply visibility.

Organizations tend to display more impersonal cultural features and along with pictures displaying people working in office settings, for instance writing on white boards, whereas grassroots pictures like to display personal situations such as children at play, and sustainability or nature-related features. This distinction suggests that the strategic use of identity is consciously designed to serve different audiences. On the one hand, organizations look to appeal to and make their work look "professional" by western professional model standards. They also want to position themselves as the guardian of

cultural sovereignty on the political stage. On the other hand, grassroots projects want to attract a crowd of philanthropists, international volunteers and environmental activists. And they both seem to perfectly master what would seem appealing to each of these audiences.

Issues of space

Space plays a crucial role in projects developments. First it is important to note that within their spatial framework, both levels of action have impacts. Both scales are efficient on their levels of action, except one is about integration within the broader economy while the other tends towards challenging that model altogether. Seen as such, the issue of local efficiency of levels of action becomes about relativizing spatial conceptions and their effects. Large-scale projects prove relatively efficient and increasingly competitive within the western framework. However, it is because of its assumption to dominate other spatial representations such as the grassroots level that it negates the efficiency and impedes on the development of systemic alternatives.

It is not so much the coexistence of two levels of action that is problematic than the coercion and dominion exercised by one over the other. It is also because grassroots projects embody spatially different notions of projects action and success than the colonial that it entails promises for a true alternative systemic proposition.

Issues of time

> *Many native tribes had, as part of their planning, talked about how their decisions would affect the next seven generations and the ideas being that you're not thinking about who's here now you're thinking about who's gonna be here much after you. I think all of these things fit in with the traditional culture of the Lakota. But because of the reservation system and the fact that it was previously a prison or war camp, and because of the influences of other cultures, some of those beliefs have been forgotten so much as*

put into the background. And so I'm interested in helping to revitalize belief system that already exists

This quote summarizes the issue at present. Contemporary large-scale projects' impact is only measured in short-term scales, which is also the only measure that mainstream western projects understand. As seen in the vision section of grassroots projects, traditional visions of seven hundred years cannot be narrowed down to the temporary failure of one project. This contrast shows how the ontological nature of time considerations can influence projects' representations of success and failures; it also fosters the need for a decolonized time analysis. Planning on a few years scale entails colonial perceptions of development that cannot be applied on territories where projects historically do not get successfully build with a timed input of economic and social capital. These lead to the very issue brought in by this dissertation where attempts to "develop Indian Country" get labeled as failing for not fitting into the boxes of western local development. As I demonstrated in the section on large local organizations, injecting capitals into Lakota country and expecting similar results than in non-native settings can be both counterproductive and participating in reifying white privilege and coloniality. This clearly shows how measuring the effect and efficiency of local projects is dependent on "who is looking" and from which worldview. It also does not represent what grassroots projects and organizations alike envision.

At the grassroots level, it becomes easier to escape the pressure of western financial timeline because of the size and impact size of the project. However, for larger organizations, this pressure is occurring from depending on western model funding and business model, and I have shown how it creates internal identity contradictions and inherent inefficiencies. This both conduce to support the claim that social change in Lakota

country is nested within stakes of systemic resistance to western development and associated lifestyle, which is as much about material struggles than struggles of representations, knowledge construction, and existence. One stated goal of this research has been to demonstrate the relativity of representations when looked at from a different angle, which will now be explored by the further problematization of resilience.

CHAPTER 6: "WOLAKOTA"; WHAT IS REZILIENCE?

This chapter answers the problem posed by this research enquiry by further problematizing, exploring and explaining the local definition of resilience in Lakota country. Thanks to local inputs from grassroots projects managers, the "face" of resilience on the Rez, otherwise called here ReZilience appears clearly through their appropriate terminology; the concept of *Wolakota*. Based on its complex definition and with the participation of my Lakota collaborators, I was able to put together this chapter that dives into the descriptive and explanatory aspect of local ReZilience.

After recalling the issues with the concept of resilience and replacing it in the context, I first elaborate on the stakes of local ReZilience. I notably present how "wolakota" entails deep stakes of identity nested within both struggles of coloniality and right for survival. I then expose the different tenets of ReZilience, such as building 1) "safe spaces" and 2) political resurgence. I engage into each of those and show how they tie to the larger picture of projected versus accomplished social change in the reservation. Without extrapolating, I attempt to connect the dots of the complex web of the local expression of resilience, in regards to local, national and more global challenges. From a comprehensive analysis of research observations, I discuss the analytical tool of the "vacuum of change"; an attempt to explain the local emergence of social change through the individual disassociation from western ideology, allegiance to an existing alternative framework and the potentially subsequent leverage for constructing local alternatives.

Problematizing resilience in Lakota country

Resilience as a hegemonic epistemology

Definitions of resilience maintain western hegemonic discourse while preventing alternative measures of endogenous success to emerge. To quickly recall the literature, western definitions of resilience do vary greatly. The psychiatric and psychosocial definitions focus on micro dynamics and intra-personal responses to trauma and individual ways of coping with risks (Charney, 2004; Cyrulnik, 2001a, 2001b). The disaster literature regards resilience in terms of adaptability and preparedness to natural risks (Adams et al. 2009; Cutter et al. 2008; Ferdinand et al. 2012; Norris et al. 2008). Community resilience looks at community's responses to risks in terms of development capacity (Kirmayer et al., 2009; Magis, 2010). Social-ecological definitions look at responses and negotiations of risks between the environment and human communities (Adger 2000, 2003; Holling 1973). Some are a mix of different definitions and include nuances. The resilience literature is diverse indeed and even introduces culturally-specific and indigenous definitions (Belcourt-Dittloff 2006a; Clauss-Ehlers 2008; Fleming and Ledogar 2008; Kirmayer et al. 2011) that mostly limit the notion of resilience to its psychological definition as a mechanism to cope with trauma. Resilience is often presented in the literature as negotiating risks (Brackenreed 2010), human adjustments to disturbances and reaching forms of stability. This in itself is not the problem.

The real question underlying resilience is about who defines these terms and their associated measures. Throughout the literature and along my observations in Lakota country, I have pointed that resilience is by default associated with levels of assimilation and economic integration. The "measures of worth" that serve as the base for resilience

discussions are often indistinctively switched with terminology applying to local development. What is more, these conceptions are nested within exogenous and colonially coerced western societal values. As corroborated in the literature, resilience is framed in terms of education success, punctuality and employability, individual capacity for savings, community capacity to make money and start profitable businesses, office conception of punctuality, mastering materialist language codes and terminological proficiency. Individual resilience follows western allopathic medicinal measures of mental health; social-ecological resilience follows western projections of conservation. Resilience is assessed from measures of worth that are in fact about fitting into US work culture, materialism and lifestyle. Interestingly, the data showed that large-scale organizations plans and projects greatly use these same measures of worth in designing and operationalizing initiative of social change. I already demonstrated how these stand at odds with ground Lakota demands and practices.

To the exception of a few scholars (Ahmed et al. 2009; Fleming and Ledogar 2008), most of resilience problematization remain constructed within scientific colonialism, or the process under which the western construction of knowledge developed unilaterally and remains for the great part hegemonic (Connell 2007), which permeates in peripheral areas via the colonized elite (Fanon et al. 1991; Memmi 1991). Of course, in the literature as in practice, dissident discourse is allowed, and accepted as scholarly valid when its contribution aims at expressing cultural variations and adaptations capacity of indigenous people. It is valid as long as it follows western scientific epistemological codes. It is allowed as long as dissident indigenous frameworks exist within the broader western cosmology and relation to materiality such as land, labor, money or time.

Therefore, the voices of systemic alternatives such as those observed on Pine Ridge have no choice but to exist both in parallel with and in silence from that valid model, particularly because it debates concurrent systemic alternatives in terms of human livelihood, epistemology, and global power dynamics. From the hegemonic standpoint, local expressions of change can only be resilient if they comply with etic expectations of measures of worth. By these standards then, the reservation cannot be defined as resilient and is condemned not to be so, because it cannot equally compete within that framework. What is more, the presence of grassroots projects entailing struggles against coloniality demonstrates the still vivid presence of endogenous resistance to these plans, therefore further increasing the dismissal of the reservation as resilient from these standards, while it also confirms the contemporary presence of coloniality. Employing these measures of worth academically or in practice reifies dependency, poverty porn and coloniality. Instead, looking at resilience becomes about looking into the collective representations that shape these measures of worth.

Whose resilience?

Analyzing resilience within the effect of colonial representations clearly points out the discrepancy between the tangible existence of local alternatives to western narratives of worth and their marginal presence within mainstream visibility. It is clear now that reflecting upon resilience in local expressions of change offers an angle to deconstruct and challenge the colonial discourse. The question then becomes "from whose perspective are we envisioning resilience"? It implies to look at the assumptions underlying diverse perspectives on resilience. When do outsiders' perspectives manifest themselves and when do endogenous expressions truly arise?

There is no clear-cut boundary but we might get insights from the patterns found in the actions of the different local actors or when looking at the shape of projects that I described with much detail. Patterns seem to be related to projects' operationalization and the articulation between projects' vision and action, time conceptions and individual openness to systemic change. First, predefining a project's vision in a western constructed notion of resilience and development further prevents the emergence of systemic alternatives. It constrains innovative responses to local challenges. Chomsky pointed out that imperialist ideology creates and reinforces the TINA (There Is No Alternative) syndrome (Jean Bricmont 2010), an expression inherited from a Thatcherian slogan. For Chomsky, TINA expresses as a cognitive syndrome that establishes global capitalism as the only societal model possible, and subsequently dismisses systemic alternatives as cognitively inefficient. My argument is that projects' visions, definitions and worldviews, carry in themselves the opportunity for alternative or maintenance of systemic status quo. This shows in a side pattern I witnessed.

While I was facilitating the training of groups of young adults in France about international solidarity, I conducted several times an interested experiment tying to Pine Ridge. After describing the situation of the Rez and various strengths and issues, I offered two groups two different scenarios in which "alleviating poverty" and "self-sufficiency" where the stakes. They were supposed to conceptually design projects that would fulfill these goals. In the first one, answers were systematically the same. "Get them educated, find them jobs, and build hospitals, schools and housing complex, interestingly reflecting the exact same pattern as witnessed on the reservation large scale management and in outsiders' projects.

When stakes are about "alleviating poverty", they already mirror representations about what solutions are. Alleviating poverty is a predefined framework that carries systemic ideological representations, such as what poverty means and in regards to whose standards it is developed, assessed, treated. On the other hand, when stakes were clearly defined as being about self-sufficiency, people would start considering power dynamics and systemic pressure, thus attempting to "solve the problem" from a grassroots perspective, getting increasingly inventive through emerging group discussions. This occurred in a non-Lakota framework, indicating that systemic alternatives are not necessarily culture-bound. Instead, it is more the recurrence of exposure to patterns of envisioning projects of change that might further influence the development and perspective of either maintenance or rupture from systemic coercion.

Another influential component to better understand how worldviews impact resilience is the concept of time. Adger (2003) advices to distinguish between stability and resilience, that are often mistaken. Short-term initiatives might promote short-term stability, which is often mistaken for resilience. In this conception, actual resilience requires high standards of justice, equity and sustainability within a long-term vision. In fact, short-term stability promotes the endurance of systemic functioning, instead of allowing the changes necessary to achieve these high societal standards. At term, chronic stress makes it extremely hard to change societal functioning (Adger 2003).

Although Adger does not consider the effect of coloniality and is using the resilience terminology in his work, it is nonetheless quite reflexive upon the oppressive nature of the globalized capitalist economy and envisions resilience only via grassroots empowerment, self-sufficiency and detachment from dependency. It exposes the short-term stability state

as being an illusionary goal that becomes a chronic stress, reifies oppressive power dynamics and prevents the emergence of alternatives. The extreme endurance of mainstream ideology is also explained by the inherent capacity of global neoliberalism to self-reify itself and strengthens from its own questioning and constant adjustment without challenging the status quo (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005). From this perspective, short-term conceptions of "resilience" are therefore clearly conducive to systemic maintenance. In the terms and operationalization of resilience as discussed before, it is therefore the resilience of capitalist neoliberalism that is aimed at and debated, instead of the long-term resilience of populations within the environments and practices that best suit them.

The issue with such a heavily constructed and self-justifying ideology is that it undermines the existence and visibility of alternatives and prevents their emergence via the cognitive barriers it causes in mainstream social interactions. Such a system qualifies as a doxa, here understood as a system of procedures so unquestionable that it holds as the truth (Chopra 2003). Therefore the stakes underlying the definitions and uses of resilience are also of cognitive nature. Without first acknowledging the existence of other representations and then enquiring into them there is no possible awareness of oppression and struggle for alternatives. Chomsky often says: "one cannot understand the structure of a house with a different plan than this it was built from".

Thus I showed that resilience as a terminology carries heavy colonial weight that maintains oppression. Although it is sometimes used to express grassroots empowerment and vulnerable groups liberation, it mostly projects western constructs of worth and ideological ideals further stigmatizing reservation life and preventing the emergence of local systemic alternatives. Its use must therefore only occur through careful analysis of

local representations and power dynamics. The real issues of resilience lie within who defines them and for what purpose. The stakes of defining local resilience are thus stakes of perception towards decolonization and self-sufficiency. In Lakota country, resilience is way more than a "capacity to rebound"; it is an alternative way of being that occurs as a liberating process of existence and a Lakota attempt to free from a coercive cosmological and ontological framework. It therefore better stands as its own terminology, and will be referred to as ReZilience, or applying to the local characteristics of Lakota reservations that they call "The Rez". As I explain, the local expressions of resilience are highly informed by local terminology such as "Wolakota". I only use the word ReZilience when I refer to local forms of resilience, in order to establish it as a distinct construct from western definitions.

Key local elements of ReZilience

Figure 6.1: The face of ReZilience

The chart above (Figure 6.1) is a visual representation of data-induced elements composing Lakota ReZilience. They represent data co-occurrences of all quotations that were coded respectively under the thematic code *ReZilience specificities-local responses to harsdhips* in combination with other codes. In other words they represent patterns that are found throughout the interviews of elements, behaviors or traits that are consistently

found along with the code *ReZilience*. Together they form the spectrum of the elements found in local ReZilience. What is striking at first is the relative balance that all these elements form when added together. In ascending order of number of co-occurences, relevant codes are: *1) Awareness and critique of western ideologies, 2) Facing local hardships, 3) Cultural tradition and pride, 4) Being in survival mode, 5) Engaging in alternatives to mainstream success, 6) Facing historical trauma and violence, 7) Holistic thinking and interconnectedness, 8) Practicing Lakota spirituality, 9) Sharing knowledge and space of learning, 10) Breaking free from dependency, 11) Cognitive freedom for change, 12) Creativity and resourcefulness, 13) Using the Lakota language, 14) Not benefiting from the capitalist model* and *15) Engaging in tiyospaye and family relations*.

These codes are diverse and their meanings overlapping. Yet, they together form a thematic map of ReZilience that only represents reality when looked at as a whole. These themes tie to Lakota representations within a particular history and set of practices, which form specific local conceptions of development, identity and subsistence struggles. ReZilience shows as a local project for sustainable existence both in itself and in response to global oppression. I will now attempt to analyze the dots that construct it.

These codes cannot be analyzed separately, but they are best understood as patterns of local ReZilience. The analytical work consists in organizing those into readable blocks, to better understand what these patterns mean. Some are part of the stakes and goals of ReZilience, others part of the mechanisms underlying ReZilience while others can be understood as outcomes conducive to social change. There is no one right way to organize the analytical framework of ReZilience. I simply tried to do so respectfully of what my Lakota collaborators made me understand.

The following sections are thematic blocks constructed around the aforementioned themes and my understanding of the shapes of local projects from local inputs. Each point does not aim at being exhaustive but instead at presenting a different angle of these complementary pieces of the big puzzle of local ReZilience. The analytical blocks explore Lakota ReZilience from the ground up, by first exploring the direct stakes and phenomenon as observed on the ground to then dive into analytical mechanisms. The first block explains the stakes of ReZilience, the second dives into analytical mechanisms by positioning ReZilience endogenously as a process of "building safe spaces". The third theorizes the process of change that operates within individuals and allows ReZilience to reach out the collective. Finally, the fourth section connects dots of ReZilience beyond the local scales and looks outward towards the elements that relate to political resurgence. A concluding section summarizes key chapter findings.

The stakes of Lakota ReZilience

Building the future

One of the most fundamental components expressed in grassroots and large-scale organizations alike is this of building the future. Means, methods and results might differ but as shown repeatedly in chapter 5, the idea of being invested with a mission to build a better future for the next generations is predominant in local projects' visions. Consistently with both a long-term perspective and cultural features, such visions consider the sustainable management of local and global resources as a priority to ensure the 7th generation's future.

Getting means via appropriate technology

As a result, getting means to achieve the above vision becomes a primary goal for all projects alike, regardless if the amounts are significant or not or how hard it is to find these resources. When getting means is particularly hard and crucial because it has to respond to immediate needs, a combination of ingeniousness and knowledge has to be employed. At the grassroots level particularly, getting means is essential because it defines people's everyday comfort and step forward toward self-sufficient living. It thus needs effective tools and methods. Being critical of capitalist ideology does not mean precluding the use of modern means. These are still necessary for bringing change about and develop what is called "appropriate technology". This grassroots manager explains his vision of it. While acknowledging that using modern technology may sometimes mean using the same polluting methods, his argument is that it also increases the leverage of change and transition towards alternatives:

> *Appropriate technology is that we use bobcats on a permaculture projects now, because it's not practical for us to bring three hundred people in here to help pull the soil. It's just too expensive. It's just too far apart. We can use the same method all year to do this large-scale project with bobcats but governments systems are actively fighting, you know. They don't understand the larger scale things, and they don't want to know. They only want to know that DC is shoving them money to enmesh this stuff, and I'm a F*** up because I'm not living in the same financial realm as they are…But they're doing it for the money. Oh I mean that's the deal with the oil fields. I'm not helping shit by going out and turning up more bio fuel, but I need the resources to use it appropriately. Yeah, it's better than digging up an old f****** fossilized tar pit, and dumping it into our atmosphere.*

Getting means to build the future may cause internal tensions that are clearly related to complementary stakes. Participants are faced with immediate choices and compromises between present efficiency and long-term goals. They negotiate those by making decisions that impede the least on their values commitments while "getting the job done". However, the background use of *holistic thinking* interfering in most project-related

decisions constitutes a type of guardrail that keep technological decisions within the realm of low environmental impact.

Existing beyond the colonial

Another fundamental stake presents itself as a logical response to previous enquiries into local effects of coloniality; it manifests as a strong will to exist beyond the colonial framework and under one's own norms. It contains elements of self-sufficience, empowerment and off-grid living, but remains nested within a broader anti-colonial struggle. However, the completion of this particular stake of ReZilience also remains caught and limited by local hardships.

An inward-outward struggle

As I pointed out in my observations of local projects in chapter 5, large-scale organizations versus grassroots' discourses and projects communication and discourses greatly differ in their relationship to the outside. Indeed, grassroots projects address the outside in search for resources but that relationship is not a subordinate one: individuals are in control of their image, they do not feel pressurized to conform to mainstream development model. They are able to navigate the system via social media to ally with the communities that corroborate their views of the world, namely those supporting a long-term sustainable alternative vision. Lakota identity here might be used as strategic essentialism but only to fulfill a practical goal that does not denature the self-image and definition of local actors' identity. It is a practical struggle. Their public displays stem from inward considerations towards theirs and their own self-sufficient future, which allows them to maintain a relatively free relation to the outside, at least in terms of ideas, ideology and identity displays and projects management.

In contrast, large-scale organizations and tribally supported organizations are pressurized to conform to funders' expectations. While they put forward cultural features and elements of cultural tradition and pride, such as language, and use Lakota terminology in their communication, these nonetheless abide by an image of life and human development consistent with mainstream developmentalist models. The simultaneous use of cultural pride as a means of differentiation from western culture yet comes with a constant reification of economic development as being projects' goals, which entails all the signs of conformity with the process of local development from a western perspective. As described in chapter 5, the latter include projects aiming at individual-based optimization of insertion in the job market and capital accumulation, while sharing features of the American dream.

Because of its stakes to exist in regards to the outside world due to financial and colonially induced identity struggles, large-scale projects maintain themselves in an outward perspective, rendering "existing beyond the colonial" more challenging than for grassroots scale, despite the fact that the latter might struggle to get appropriate means. Here, we find ourselves in the depth of a truly colonial issue where the colonized remains caught in a constant definition of him/herself because its legitimacy of existence is considered to be still laying in the colonizer's world, although he/she refuses to see it laying in the colonizer's hands. In this process, existing becomes a political struggle. The identity question for large-scale organizations looks outwards and becomes located on the public stage. This indicates that the underlying struggle is not economic development per se but instead one for existence and the freedom to negotiate identity and ideology identification freely from coercive factors.

This inward/outward relationship to the outside and colonially induced negotiation of outward relations can be expressed as a sort of double consciousness of the local elite, where the latter gets caught between existing both within and against the colonial system, which is discussed in the decolonial literature. Albert Memmi (1991) states that the colonial elite, that he calls "the little colonizer", is generally compliant to the colonizers, and defender of colonial privileges. "Yet, if it defends the colonial system so bitterly, it is because he is little benefiting from it" (Memmi, 1991). Although not competing equally and having integrated a critique of the colonial system, the local elite can hardly exist beyond the colonial.

By contrast, grassroots projects carry strong visions that are often consistent and follow through the operationalization of their projects. Grassroots leaders' projections and values negotiations regarding projects are more directed inward and therefore manage to maintain internal integrity with their stated visions. However, what becomes critical then to understand the process of existing beyond the colonial is the issue of visibility.

Visibility and operationalization of change

Resilience from western standards is visible exogenously. This is because it operates in the hegemonic framework of change, and exists within. Despite its efforts to distinguish itself from western ideology in culture, its use of similar terminology and processes of change gives it etic existence. By contrast, ReZilience is not visible exogenously. It is both its weakness and strength. It is its strength because by remaining hidden and underground, grassroots projects manage to escape the realm of colonial ideological subordination to western developmentalism and can therefore continue existing in the margins. It is its weakness because visibility is important to increase social support and foster the growth of

local projects. As we saw, projects success requires the use of social media and communication. It takes the shape of strategic essentialism and entails elements of cultural pride and Lakota tradition. It is essential to strengthen local initiatives and therefore foster community sustainability. Consciously or unconsciously, visibility enables action.

However, when exogenous visibility increases and manages to strengthen grassroots initiatives, it also opens them to greater risks. The first risk is for them to start being seen as a disturbance for the mainstream system. One example can be found in how a grassroots project started realizing that impediments on its functioning were being conducted by tribal entities themselves, for instance by purposefully not facilitating access to water and energy supply. Another example can be found in how this project leader saw himself dispossessed of a herd of horses because a few council members perceived him as a nuisance. In clear, visibility strengthens but also exposes grassroots projects to the outside, and therefore exposes them to coercive and sometimes impeding power dynamics. Because of the hegemonic nature of the global developmentalist project that is defended by local governance, grassroots change is permitted by governing structures when it does not impede on or challenge their monopoly on sovereignty.

Visibility is also essential to truly account for decolonial knowledge production. Since visibility is dependent upon power struggles more than actual states of projects existence, giving visibility to local projects becomes a stake of decoloniality. Lazarus (2005) formulates a critique of Fanon's tendency to dismiss the existence of significant projects from the decolonized majority as distinct from the colonized elite: "I do not find Fanon's formulation of the distinction between elite and masses convincing. What is at issue, for me is not merely whether Fanon recognizes that what is true of the colonized elite is not

necessarily true of the majority of the colonized population. Rather, it is a matter of the way in which, on the basis on this recognition, he then proceeds to think about the social existence and the forms of consciousness of this colonized majority: ”For inasmuch as he severely underestimates the resilience and vitality of inherited cultural forms and practices in the colonial era, Fanon renders himself incapable of understanding exactly what is at stake for the subaltern classes in their involvement in anticolonial nationalism” (Lazarus 2005:174). Dismissal of local efforts of “the subaltern classes” and “their involvement in anticolonial nationalism” start with visibility issues.

Lakota grassroots social change might produce sustainable alternatives and practices, and these might express anticolonial voices, but they remain inexistent from the world insofar as they remain hidden. Additionally, visible initiatives are the ones that represent the breadth of anticolonial struggles to the outside and therefore impact the range of colonial/decolonial discourse. From local projects specificities, let us add that it also limits the range of the discourse on sustainability and systemic alternatives to global capitalism. Therefore, visibility issues become about whose visibility expresses for what purpose and the effects of the presence or absence of actors in the public discourse. In response to the risks of subordination and recuperation that come along with an increased visibility towards the outside, the local solution might lie into producing more reflexive type of visibility such as seen in projects efforts to display their efforts on social media. Such a process should not directly aim at recognition or its existence should not greatly depend on outside recognition as in large-scale organizations, but it should simply carry the voices of inward-oriented local initiatives to foster the broader acknowledgement of the existence of systemic alternatives.

Wolakota: the power of being

I have tried to define with the help of my Lakota collaborators the complexity of Lakota identity and the role it plays on the reservation everyday life and power dynamics at the grassroots and organization levels. Lakota grassroots managers brought to me the significance of the expression of *Wolakota,* which represents individual and collective identity, a sense of collective existence, but not in the sense of ethnic identity, which is too narrow here. Consistently with the complexity of Lakota terminology, *Wolakota* is less about ethnicity than about a local "power of being", and as such simultaneously synonym to: being oneself, being whole, being secure, being safe from oppression, being confident in the future of Lakota ways, being able to project a Lakota future.

> Interviewer*: I looked over the Internet webpage you have for (project name) and I saw that you use the word: "resilience". I was wondering if there was any lakota concepts or words that could represent that idea more accurately*
> Interviewee*: (interrupting): Wolakota!!*
> Interviewer*: this? just that? I mean, the fact to be lakota?*
> Interviewee*: yes, but that can mean: "live in a good way", or it could mean "to be a good relative". And then it really gets into the deep deep history of the Lakota people and culture because the medicine wheel (Lakota cosmological symbol) is actually a symbol...that wasn't originally a "round" one, but it was a spiral. What that spiral is...huh...if you stood it on hand, it looks like a piece of DNA. And the Lakota sentence "mitakuye oyasin" means "we are all related" but another translation might be "all things inwardly and outwardly". That means what we pull out, we take in and vice versa. There is a lot of translations. Wolakota is also a many translation thing and that is really where our job and thing (project) really is. And I think I'm really prime for it cause I'm a hybrid. Most of the guys (participants) are sort of hybrid, and its a big translation job, and there is a lot in the language.*

Here, from the mouth of this grassroots manager, *Wolakota* clearly entails feelings of belonging and group membership, and a sense of ethnic pride that must be felt as secure and lasting. But how is this sense of identity constructed?

As described along this work, defining identity in Lakota country has been hijacked by two trends; firstly by exogenous accounts and outsiders' interpretations, who regardless

of potential efforts for accuracy, maintain the definition of "being Lakota" in regards to the dominant "Other". Secondly by essentialist and constructivist definitions that pushes identity politics because of the necessity to counteract colonial oppression. The latter are useful when addressing issues of political resurgence, but do not have the monopoly on Lakota identity.

When we look beyond the question of strategic indigenous identity, how can we frame an endogenous conception of Lakota identity? I could here draw on theories of identity such as communication of identity theory (Jung and Hecht 2004), which suggests appropriately that identity is constructed around communicative practices and entails interpreting spheres that together define identity. Projects' data points out that communication conveys in-group negotiation of cultural capital via the programing and reprograming of Lakota knowledge, values and what it means to be a Lakota. But can it be used as an analytical frame? Of all theories of identity negotiation, this of peoplehood might be the most appropriate since it looks at how indigenous identity specifically constructs around ties to land, spiritual practices and use of language(Corntassel 2003; Holm et al. 2003). This might be consistent because we locally find the same features that resonate with the specific Lakota cosmology.

However, *Wolakota* seems to carry in itself a more appropriate response to describe Lakota power of being and there seems to be no need to call here for extra external analytical models. As the quote above suggests, the process occurs inwardly and outwardly, in the sense that endogenous expressions of identity interact with differentiation as an identity process. The sense of "us" vs. "them", though particularly political in our context, is also framed in a more endogenous framework, where differentiation does not occur

exclusively in the Outsiders/Lakota dichotomy. Believing differently would be reifying a colonial myth and enduring fallacious conception of local identity. It is not because Whites have been dominating the discourse to define "them", that identity definition is limited endogenously to political struggles and existence from "the Other". A more emic definition has to consider differentiation processes within their emic representations.

Firstly, in this of "mitakuye oyasin", differentiation occurs with all relatives and even the definition of within and between groups has to be pondered through the entire realm of life. Thus, the Lakota "Oyate" or People encompasses several social subunits, and is bot related and distinct with other tribes, and more broadly part of the whole of Mankind. Consistently with the model, it is also related to other natural groups, such as the *Pte Oyate*, or Buffalo People, but also to *Mni*, the Water and *UnciMaka*, the Earth, etc. All of creation is contained in the universe that constitutes the endogenous base for identity differentiation; quite a leap from traditional differentiation or boundary-work frames.

Looking at it endogenously within the framework that produces it allows me to decenter local identity positioning to an analytical place where local understanding defines the primary identity and its referential. Decentering from being peripheral to central also produces the effect to decolonize the process of Identity negotiation and render local perceptions in control of what they locally entails. This is how the boundaries of what it means to be *Lakota, White* or *Iyeska* evolve from a purely ethnic struggle towards a more accurate conception of what *Wolakota* really means on the reservation.

Through the process of grassroots empowerment and the emergence of new practices that engrain local projections beyond colonial existence into a desirable Lakota future, *Wolakota* imposes itself, not just as "being Lakota" but as a contemporary "way of

being Lakota". It operates as a re-appropriation of identity from within and from the bottom up because a stronger definition of what it means superseded the colonial version.

In identity terms, this also means moving away from an ascribed notion of being Lakota to an achieved notion. Lakota identity overcomes the ethnic separation created by colonial divide and a new meaning of Lakota identity starts occurring. In this frame, being a Lakota or a *Wasicu* is not really about being brown or white or about bloodlines, but truly about associated projected behaviors and ethos and what they entail. Unsurprisingly, these "new" endogenous definitions are in fact very consistent with old Lakota expressions of identity that according to Walker and DeMallie (1982) revolved around practices and behaviors more than blood for in-group belonging and association.

An important element of that endogenous reconstruction is the set of values associated with Lakota identity. One of these primary values is logically the specific Lakota vision of stewardship of the earth, which comes in direct implication of the "mitakuye oyasin" ontological world understanding. Logically, all grassroots projects entail particularly strong elements of relativity and sense of responsibility to caring for the land and natural resources at both a local and global scale, in their vision along with the projects' design. Data also consistently formalizes this responsibility and sense of stewardship under form of myths where local stories talk about the Lakota Oyate/People as being of all people entrusted with the responsibility of the stewardship and safekeeping of earth's land for all species.

Another prime value in Lakota identity is spirituality. Constant reference to "the creator" in projects' narratives accompanies everyday practices that still regulate Lakota life around prayer and traditional spirituality. Has anyone ever partaken a Lakota event

without some prayer and blessings talked in Lakota before it starts? Or stepped into a room before an important day without smelling the smudge of sage to keep ill spirits away? Lakota spirituality is a holistic example of the permeability and transcendent nature of religious practices on the ReZ. Of course, I do not count here individuals who are allegiant to other faiths, including a few Christian denominations, although some of those have over time yielded hybrid practices as is common in colonized settings where religion was imposed.

Nonetheless, smudging sage and saying Lakota prayers are common everyday practices in the reservation, and seem to help maintain and fosters the holistic nature of Lakota projects' design. More broadly, repositioning Lakota spirituality in the heart of their grassroots initiatives also challenges developmentalist assumptions that local development is devoid of emotional attachment and occurs through rational thinking. Here, it is replaced by a different form of rational thinking, a holistic rational framework that accounts for all aspects of human connections, including the emotional and spiritual bond between the natural world and the human world.

Therefore, *Wolakota* represents a stronger scale of identity that ethnicity struggles. In simple terms, it embodies a Lakota version of "being human". At the grassroots level, it is also felt as commitments that serve as primary factor for cognitive change towards an alternative global project. Here, it seems useful to drag in Maalouf's (2001) concept of "allegiances" as best representing identities, because whether ascribed or achieved, the diversity of an individual's identities forms a spectrum of personal and political allegiances that he develops with other set of individuals, regardless of how numerous or seemingly

contradictory they are (Maalouf 2001). Here, these commitments represent allegiances that together enable the existence of *Wolakota*.

Such allegiances include: 1) a practice of cultural Lakota norms, 2) a practice of spiritual connection to all relatives, 3) a resulting holistic thinking, which itself induces 4) a commitment to local and global environmental protection. It is complemented by an allegiance to 5) existing beyond the colonial. Such allegiances form the base for practical action that takes the shape of activism. They set the stage for organizing collective resistance, envisioned not as an essentialist reduction of Lakota identity but instead as a practical continuity to the ramifications of *Wolakota*, which I will later develop. What is interesting to realize here is that *Wolakota* reframes identity under issues of behaviors and allegiances to what are then considered Lakota causes to fight for.

Capitalist and colonial struggles become a manifestation of identity struggles. The association of capitalist oppression with colonial history creates bonds and sympathies between those suffering from one or both, which in turns modifies boundaries of *Wolakota*. Of course, the Native environmentalist connection and struggle includes an element of ethnicity and cultural pride, but the interesting thing is that under the yoke of colonial/capitalist oppression, association develops and new allegiances are being defined. Coloniality maintains a barrier between red and white "skins", but allegiances to sustainability and common goals to "give the earth a chance" abolish this barrier. Interestingly then, as I showed previously, *Wasicu* then becomes a proxy for capitalist behavior and *Wolakota* for a sustainable way of being in the world. Under such boundary changes, ethnical *Lakotas* can be considered *Wasicus* and ethnical Whites can become allied against *Wasicus*. A common goal redefines skin color and ethnicity. Although not

completely overcoming these, the process shows that Lakotas and Wasicus are way more than dichotomies and that only the careful scrutiny of the meaning of *Wolakota* can shed the light on complex local identity as a process of ReZilience. From insiders' perspective, the social construction of race represents a colonial heritage whereas identity best traditionally defines as behavior-based traits. In the midst of post-colonial struggle, the coerced ethnic differentiation process gets redefined around culturally appropriate forms and ethnic boundaries dissolve to generate behavior-based definitions of "us versus them".

All identity representations entail inward and outward projections, that is to say elements that are endogenous and form inward/within the group, and others that form in relation to others and within the nature of outward relations. Within-group differences at the individual level and the negotiation of this inward-outward balance vary through social interaction and individual particularities. Within that struggle, some people might still remain caught within a colonial projection of being Lakota, while others display a more holistic sense of *Wolakota*, which constitutes a key stake of "existing beyond the colonial" and builds ReZilience as a decolonial reconstruction of identity boundaries.

ReZilience as building "safe spaces"

In the light of local inputs, I have presented how grassroots projects entail strong elements of sustainability and aim at self-sufficiency. From locals' narratives, these goals clearly come along with a desire to exist beyond the colonial and palliate to colonially induced risks by local solutions to form an alternative livelihood system. All these points seem to translate in peoples' discourse into an effort to build "safe spaces", or spaces devoid of risk and oppression. The word space here is chosen particularly because it is not limited to the physical world. A grassroots manager speaks about ReZilience and local

projects as being a spiral; some kind of a process where action evolves on a continuum yet is subject to transformations. The term "safe space" also speaks for emotional, spiritual, ideological, political and economic spaces.

A protection from risks

In the literature, resilience is most often considered as a possible response to risks faced by an individual or community. Rutter (1987) more clearly defines the relationship between risk and resilience. Although risk does not automatically trigger resilient responses, it takes "risk" for resilience to become operative, as resilient behaviors develop from coping mechanisms that help mediate the risk and mediate negative outcomes. Similarly to my critique of the resilience concept, the idea might be useful but the important point is the proper definition of what is risk.

If what is seen as risk remains nested within the developmentalist framework, then risk might be seen as "low income", "high unemployment", "unbalanced financial flow that leaves the reservation", etc. Some risks might seem "obvious" such as health issues, domestic violence linked to intergenerational trauma, etc. Again, it is a matter of local definitions. Indeed, too often projections of risks come from outsiders' projections of wellbeing. The point is not to deny the severity of local hardships, but instead to look at them from local representations. As usual, if risks are assessed from outsiders' projections of supposedly universalist notions of wellbeing, then assessing the response to these risks equally reproduce the colonization of knowledge. If risk is pondered with locally expressed struggles of coloniality and the contextual elements of oppression in the reservation such as defined in chapter 4, then we might find an interesting relation to discuss between risks and ReZilience.

First of all, Lakota projects tell us that one important aspect to consider is the scale of risks and coping magnitude that are truly lived locally. Questions such as: "what is risk"? "What is an emergency situation"? "When does a situation become serious"? are truly dependent on local perspectives. An outsider volunteer was surprised of the following:

> *There is something called post tramatic stress disorder, and I have heard that a couple of places that a lot of people in the res have complex post traumatic disorder or whatever it is called.. and it is like going to someone house and hearing...a mom talk about saving her brother who was committing suicide and taking him down...and doing CPR and bringing him back and then only a few days after or before had done the same thing to her son…And then leaving that conversation was like 'oh my goodness'! 'How could anyone live through that'? Then the people I am with saying she is doing better than normal. Stuff like that and then for it to be 'better than normal'. Hearing a lot of stories like that kind of makes me...less (full of) trauma if you ask me.*

I have often times been confronted to situations like this on the reservation. I would start discussing local events with people and realize that their perceptions of the event would downplay the traumatizing scale of it. Most people witnessed violence first hand, most people are acquainted fairly young with what might seem as dangerous situations; seeing a relative die, experiencing abuse, experiencing hunger, overcrowded living spaces and other hard living conditions. Yet, their reactions seem to reflect the same emotional magnitude that a non-native who grew up in an average US town discussing everyday issues such as a broken down car. I am not a psychologist and this is not a psychological enquiry. However, there seems to be an interesting phenomenon occurring at the cognitive level that deserves attention in what it indicates concerning risks and representations. In an attempt to visualize this process, I drew a scheme that might help clarify my point.

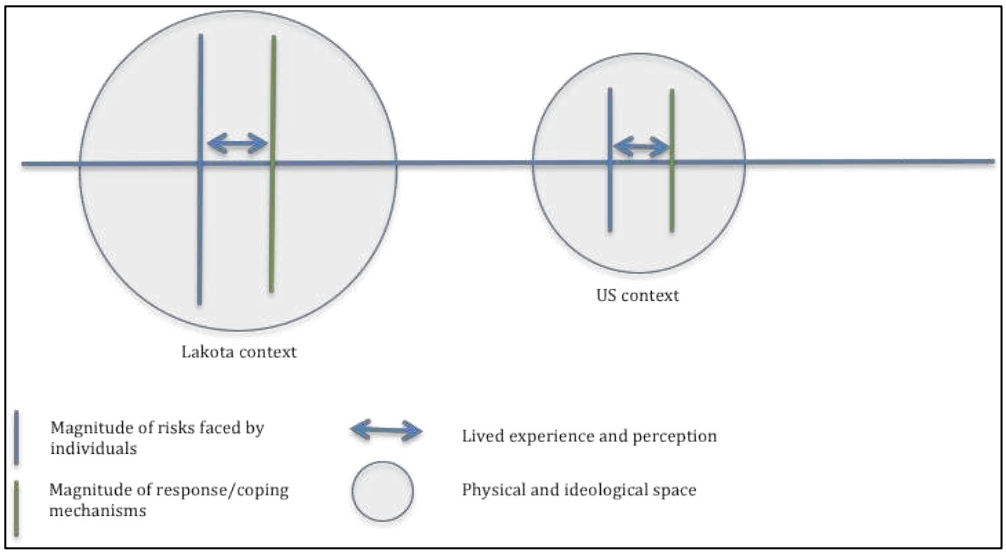

Figure 6.2 Magnitude of risk, coping mechanisms and perceptions

In the scheme above (figure 6.2), the magnitude of faced risks (in number of occurrences and quality) might be objectively wider in the Lakota context than outside the reservation. This fosters an appropriate response to these risks, reflecting the same magnitude. However, the perception of these risks might appear similar in both contexts, since coping mechanisms reflect the magnitude of risk and therefore the distance or ratio between risks and responses might look alike.

This remains a theoretical projection but it does echo local representations of risks and might explain some of the discrepancies between locals and outsiders perspectives. Indeed, it might on the one hand trigger outsiders' miserabilist and patronizing reactions towards Natives' realities. On the other hand, it might foster the invisibility of the magnitude of Lakota coping mechanisms because outsiders cannot see past the magnitude of their own average coping mechanisms. Such a topic would deserve its own research but it is nonetheless important to notice the impossibility of transfer of the representations of local risks and responses and the subsequent misunderstanding and misrepresentation of

knowledge it can engender. It also helps understand the need for "safe spaces" and the role they play in ReZilience.

Sustainability: A safer life project

The System-D: A response to local hardships

System-D refers to the sum of practices used by individuals to provide for themselves when the market-economy defects, either because of a lack of access, or because of a lack of appropriate response to local needs. System-D is also called "resourcefulness" and was coded as such in my data. It represents the informal or underground economy, which is omnipresent on the reservation (Pickering 2000; Pickering and Mushinski 2000) and is increasingly theorized as a relevant concept on the margins of the global market economy (Manier 2015; Neuwirth 2012). Authors aim at assessing its weight and thus challenge neoclassical perceptions of wealth production and resource management. Indeed, resourcefulness, found among the key elements of ReZilience can be found in everyday local activities. People develop special skills to "fix things":

> *If their car is broken they fix it with whatever they have on hand to keep their car running. It's not a matter of you know "Oh I'm doing this in the holy way" or the natural way or something like that…There is nothing mystical about it where as you'll see a lot of people who don't have or haven't grown up in poverty say or grown up on a reservation…they wait for somebody to fix it. They don't know how to fix their own cars or their own televisions or they throw it away, and so everybody that I know of and who has been a volunteer up here has learned and experienced that kind of self determination and it goes against all of the stereotypes that we've been fed off of the reservation about people who live here*

The practice to "fix things" comes as a response to unanswered needs, thereby reflecting another key element of reZilience, which is the "experience of limited benefits from the capitalist economy". This poses a number of questions that will be explored in the

section on the "vacuum of change", but it affirms the presence of resourcefulness as a response to stress and risks. Hence, the responses offered by the System-D present themselves as practical ways to overweight the issues and stress caused by being excluded from the market economy. It also by the same token creates alternatives to the offers of the market economy. The presence of resourcefulness as a coping mechanisms in Indian country is corroborated in the resilience literature (Belcourt-Dittloff 2006b; Kirmayer et al. 2011).

However, what is under theorized, are the effect of living under the System-D. Few authors have yet focused on the mechanisms under which the D-system fosters paradigm shifts. In her work in marginalized communities in India, Manier (Manier 2015) recently compiled these skills and the innovative solutions to local issues they foster, and call the sum of these occurrences a "quiet revolution", because occurring in the margin of the market economy. This speaks a lot to our context. The system-D is not just about "fixing things". It develops an entire set of capabilities, such as resourcefulness and problem solving, and also subsequently pushes system boundaries and fosters change. Through using the System-D as a practical answer to marginal access to subsistence as observed in the innovations of grassroots initiatives, Lakotas need and create innovation, and practical problem solving behaviors. This encourages the practice of trials and errors and learning by doing in local grassroots projects. It also deconstructs cognitive barriers associated with the fear of change and therefore opens people to systemic alternatives.

Sustainability: A right for survival

Sustainability is increasingly tied to issues of human survival. Environmental movements frame the stakes of sustainability and shifting paradigms as the necessary step

to make it through the Anthropocene (McMichael 2012). The focus on survival ranges from protecting endangered species, conserving ecosystems and biodiversity and ask the broader question of human adaptation to change and the more long-term question of "what can we do to survive as a species"? A sudden interest in human resilience comes as an attempt to palliate to the upcoming social and environmental disaster. It presents an apolitical understanding of the world with an acknowledgement of the decisions that need to be made, but no real deconstruction of the systemic reasons why they cannot be made. Beyond this point, here, survival is posed as an analytical concept. The reality of survival on the reservation is quite different. The question "how can we survive?" comes as an everyday issue, which anchors the survival debate in practical reality:

> *A galvanized layer that's in there is just survival. You're asking me about plastic and then why do we do it? Because it's easy. It's convenient. It's easier than washing dishes. It's kind of the same thing. We're already at a survival level. Most of our survival is trait-based. We have some memories that are ancient that have carried over through the last three generations and we kind of know how to do it so we're not working from a baseline 0 like western culture is. They don't remember how to do it that way (in survival mode). We do it to a degree, so we can share it. But it's being lost. I think it's even our responsibility to share it and I mean there's no way with everything that's going on outside beyond natives (climate change, economic crisis, etc.)…they (outsiders) are trying to recognize that this place, this thing we're on, Uncimaka is a living breathing entity, and we are just kind of a disease and we have to figure out how to be a beneficial thing cause its not really the planet we're killing. The planet will do what it needs to survive and it will kick us off at any given point. We better stand against ourselves, and that's really our mistake. We polluted a section of the earth, it will evolve and species will evolve to deal with that, but we won't. We're just gonna die.*

The conception of survival comes as a practical sense, linked to a Lakota understanding of the world and to the hardships of local reality. Survival is experienced "first hand", and not conceptually. It ties back to resourcefulness and answering risks. And the most practical way to survive seems to engage into sustainability practices, or practices that enable the self-sufficient provision of food, shelter and the safety of being, as found in

grassroots projects. A sustainable paradigm takes over and replaces the unsuited/unbeneficial market capitalist model, slowly and informally, via the need for practical change and survival. Sustainability does not come in as a necessary step towards human survival but before everything as a safer life project for grassroots leaders. It is a practical not ideological change.

Decolonizing land, labor, money and time

Polanyi (2001) claimed that in order to "heal the world's impasse" and initiate a sustainable alternative to global capitalism, steps have to be taken to reembed land, labor and money, or decommodify them to nest them back into small-scale real economy exchanges. As seen in chapter 5, all these elements were part of the deep changes operating at the grassroots level of social change. However, on Pine Ridge, they have to be looked at and analyzed through the lens of coloniality.

The efforts of Whites to colonize Lakota relations with western notions of work and property (see chapter 4) has not worked as the civilizational tool that American colonizers had set it to be. On the contrary, the physical and symbolical resistance encountered then is still found today in the particularities of local projects. These materialize how resistance to coloniality also unconventionally challenges capitalist notions of land, labor and money.

Reshaping Ina Maka; decolonizing land

Resistance to western commodification ideology has always been present and crystallized in local struggles since the Dawes Act application. Despite legal efforts to disembed the concept of land, they were met with different levels of resistance and oppositional forces. Decolonial practices started as cultural opposition to outsiders' invasive conceptions of land as an exploitable resource; the same that led BIA

administrators skeptical as to the "capacities" of Lakotas to adopt western individualized agricultural practices. Yet, enduring holistic conceptions of the land endured through cultural ideologies such as "mitakuye oyasin", that fosters a family relation with the land as a space of living. However, since economic opportunities are linked to the local use of land, enduring colonial pushes for a commodified use of the land through the exchange of private property and western types of activities such as ranching, individual profit-making businesses, etc, have negatively impacted locals' material land relations. Social frustrations exist due to local barriers that prevent ever reaching the promised dream of individualized land profits while ideologically keeping it the only accessible dream. These combine with enduring cultural knowledge of family relation to resources and the perception that it might contain an inherent knowledge of possible alternatives:

> *Pine Ridge has been a place of high contention and a lot of fears and vicious physical battles, and I think that some people when they are threatened and their lives are threatened and it comes right down to it, what do you choose? Do you choose to reach deep inside you and deep inside the past of your people? And call upon that knowledge and that strength? Or do you appease the person that threatens you? Or do you only appease that person until you can get a foothold but inside yourself you still hold this other thing to be true? You might wear the clothes of the European, but you don't hold the same value. You might go to the white mans' church but you don't necessarily believe all those things.*

This quote particularly explains the nature of this struggle. Generations of abused people inherited this duality of "appeasing" what threatens you while holding this other thing to be true. This is what allows local jealousies and skepticism about others to coexist with collaborative solidarity statements carried by cultural ideals and promises such as "mitakuye oyasin". This is also what allows the development of alternative land uses than these prescribed by western land-use models. This can be seen through the significant number and parallel development of grassroots projects nested in a sustainable self-

sufficient use of land and the existence of numerous patterns in the shape and design of these projects despite prior consultation.

I argue that the structural differences between Lakota versus Western practices on key fields constituting its ethos such as land, now eases the process of "taking the land out of the market", or "taking back" as often heard on the reservation. This can theoretically be explained through a shift of focus. When Pine Ridge is maintained and represented as peripheral within western standard of land development, its space is perceived as dysfunctional, either by outsiders or insiders affected by the colonial dual struggle.

But where these standards are questioned and an alternative use and meaning of land occurs, Pine Ridge ceases to be narrowed down to a peripheral entity to the western core and can center on its own characteristics to form a new core to those who perceive it as such. Thus, the fact to be considered by hegemonic standards as "outside the system" can be then envisioned as a strength; not benefiting much from the system empowers the "outside" entity and puts it endogenously to a central status, promoting alternative functioning.

Thus, the complex land-use components of these grassroots projects such as low-cost ecological constructions, permaculture gardening, sustainable management of wild harvest not only deal with a new economic use of land, but rather deconstruct and reconstruct the land paradigm. By envisioning and planning land management and use holistically and over seven generations and nest it within spiritual practices, these projects "enact" a change of consideration of land as a resource to one where land is a relative. Moving away from land as a resource to land as a relative is found throughout Indian country as a practice of resistance (Corntassel 2012). Through physical reappropriation,

land also allows the validity of alternative ontological frameworks. The physical decolonization of land use becomes tantamount to reappropriating land ethos. Decolonizing the land as a physical space fosters the decolonization of land relations and allows for land to express a more ontological statement. It becomes a space of alternative existence to coloniality. From a piece of exchangeable acreages, it becomes a new access to the Lakota relation to the land as a providing mother, *Ina maka* that needs human protection and care to carry on its function and existence.

Wages out; decolonizing labor

Beyond being a key means of production, the division of labor also allows the ideology of economic models to take shape and endure. It thus plays a central role in the rise and fall of societal models. As shown in chapter 5, two models of labor come in conflict on the reservation; one in which labor is a commodity that buys human labor through wage work to serve an external project's goal and the other where labor is a necessary means to build a self-reliant community and is performed by locals and outside volunteers alike as a practice of personal involvement and a way to exchange knowledge. Of course, the distinction is not that dichotomous. Personal reward and learning is also achieved through wage work in large-scale organizations. The main distinction occurs in the ownership of labor and labor-related decisions, i.e. in the everyday managerial practices of labor and also to the ultimate goal of labor. Grassroots labor includes a notion of collective welfare and purpose that is not as much found in wage-work, as corroborated by the strong presence of *care for humanity*, *holistic thinking* and *awareness of local and global challenges* as traits of grassroots projects.

By contrast, wage-work is still the dominant advertised model on the reservation, despite its obvious failures. Large organizations foster projects that encourage and promote labor as wage-work as a means to increase local development and locally thrive. Such a view is representative of hegemonic conceptions of labor that is also dominant in the literature about Indian country development. Kirmayer et al. (2011) think of full employment as a means of culturally appropriate resilience by "developing full employment and to actively preserving and enhancing community and cultural esteem. The most obvious and direct way of doing this is by political and social empowerment". Such view is for them consistent with the importance to "find and promote images and activities representative of the vitality, renewal and rebirth of Aboriginal communities and traditions (Kirmayer et al., 2001:56). However, the inherent paradox with reconciling wage-work with the renewal of Lakota communities is rendered clear when looking at how colonial oppression still operates through the pressure to conform to the wage-work ethos:

> *We would LOVE to have more Lakota people involved! And it's...it's a bummer, you know...actually, just today our cook didn't show up...We hired her two weeks ago and she didn't show up. This was the fourth time just without a call. So, she's...we fired her. And...and unfortunately, every Lakota person -not every- but most we've hired have either -especially cooks- have just stopped showing up, or stole, or...you know...done something where they've been fired...or quit. And every one, all of 'em! And it's really sad. So, we're...we are constantly on the lookout for Lakota staff members. So, if you see any, let us know. [chuckles] 'Cause we would love to have more Lakota on staff! We have one right now. He's (name) grandson. But we've been having a hard time with him 'cause it's just...I think people are used to just "doke-shy," you know...doing things their time, their way. But I remember, you know...with these volunteers we have a schedule. And it's just...it's kinda hard for some Lakota people to stick to a schedule 'cause usually there is none. I think it is negative in (organization name) sense, like...we need a cook there at a certain time every day, you know... 'cause we have...we have people to feed, you know...and dinner's at five o'clock. We have a very tight schedule…but just anywhere else...it doesn't matter as much. It's just kind of like more open and more kind of like "go with the flow." But when we try to do that at (organization name), it just...it gets chaotic. [chuckles] It's just very...one thing after another, after another, after another. Like we have...we have one of the volunteers we have with us today, offered to cook today. So, I was like, "OK. As soon as we leave this work site, we gotta go get gas, and then we gotta start cooking," you know...And*

then we have craft night and then we got, you know...this and this and this. So, if we had no cook, there'd be no food for craft night…

In this quote, an outsider organization staff claims that it is impossible to find a reliable Lakota worker, and wish that they could find someone to comply with time constraints and schedule of the organization. The organization demands the Lakota worker to comply with acknowledged outsiders' working standards although the organization operates on Lakota land. Yet, it accommodates volunteers that need the comfort and schedule that they are used of having outside the reservation. The staff acknowledges that these are not the local ways of working by saying local work concepts "go with the flow", yet its demands pressurize local workers into complying to exogenous definitions, which remains the dominant form of division of labor in the formal economy.

Yet, when locals attempt to comply to wage-work constraints, they place themselves within the outsider's framework and at the mercy of exogenous assessment. There, endogenous and culturally appropriate concepts of time and social relations become subordinate to the western work ethos, therefore preventing endogenous expressions to be expressed and formally validated. Western division of labor still operates coercively on Indian land and condemns people to failure for not fitting into that framework. Enduring stereotypes accompany these "failures", one of which is a supposed "laziness" of Lakota workers. This non-native staff working on the rez states:

I think sometimes, people just give up. They just, you know...they see no way to improve. So, you get lazy. I mean...I do it sometimes, you know...Like I'll be having a hard day just...like, if my mom died in a car accident. I'm gonna be a little lazy that day, you know...and I think things happen a lot here that...that people live. Maybe "laziness" isn't the correct word. Maybe it's just...lack of energy? Um...exhaustion! I think exhaustion is a good word to use because there's just so many other things going on. And I think...I think what it is…is exhaustion. I think what it looks from the outside is laziness. And that's a good way to put it. It looks like laziness from people coming...people ask us all the time, "Well, why don't they just...? Why don't they just...?" And it's SO hard to explain, you know.

They...they can't! They don't have the energy maybe. There's so many reasons why. But I think it's more exhaustion than laziness

Here, we clearly see that what is considered laziness can in fact come from different causes and interpreted differently when looked at the light of local realities. Laziness might in fact demonstrate exhaustion. It demonstrates anyhow that again work ethics is more a matter of representations and social relations than a matter of actual skills or professional capacities.

It is a complex issue, as when they comply and do take on western type wage work and succeed by western standards, Lakotas also expose themselves to local judgments. An individual following the dominant/US practices and accepting a job taking him "closer to the core" values is subsequently exposed to both the community and the outsiders' judgment, being recognized as a "white man Indian" on the one hand, and as successful and assimilating on the other hand (Thomas, R. K, 1969). This long lasting phenomenon illustrates the hegemon empowered through colonialism to force people into what is considered acceptable behavior and work ethics, which here entails a duality. Such a process condemns workers to be failing when succeeding by either one of the double standard.

The only solution is to look at the division of labor from a locally appropriate perspective and in terms of what model seems to make the most sense to Lakotas through their local efforts and expressed worldviews. Although that might be an individual choice, patterns are showing what seems to prevail; the skyrocketing unemployment off the formal economy contrasts with a distinct work ethics that exists underground as it permeates every aspect of the informal economy, on which people rely for living. More than half the people practice some kind of craftsmanship and most people exchange services and make

use of natural resources to survive. Although in a survival mode, as exemplified in the data, these practices carry their own work ethos that is nested within contemporary Lakota social norms.

In this model, the division of labor is first determined by Lakota specific concepts of time. Things happen at their own pace and stepwise, as the day unfolds and its lot of unexpected challenges comes along. People will plan to "work on the straw-bale house walls", "till the garden", "have volunteers come in", or simply "run errands". The plan is made day by day and subject to change under time constraints. Whether driven by moneymaking or ultimately by personal development, the work schedule adjusts to the worker and not the other way around. The simple idea of it seems rather unsettling by western standards and its evocation or suggestion in a professional environment would automatically lead a classic business to lay off its employees or call them "lazy". Here we touch at the heart of the issue. Indeed, markers or success and efficiency are norms and not objective concepts. Their shape varies and thus does its assessment. In the western model, too much emphasis is put on individual accountability in what are considered important work responsibilities such as being on time every day. By contrast, accountability as a marker of collective responsibility is often dismissed, allowing leaders to not uphold their commitment to the common good.

In the Lakota model, great expectations towards the collective are implied by taking on leadership positions, while individuals missing on work might not be considered such an issue. This variation of expectations and transfer of accountability to the collective might partially explain the exacerbated social frustrations towards what is perceived as leadership betrayal while individuals continue not being reliable at maintaining wage-work

schedules. More than the simplistic explanation or ongoing stereotypes that people are simply inadequate for wage jobs because of their personal issues, a different understanding of the work ethics and standards might more convincingly explain the failing individualist model of division of labor applied to a traditionally collectivist population. A local project leader worries over the fact that funding too often privilege wage-work over what he presents as potential locally appropriate work opportunities:

> *So, you know...if what we could do and what I propose is that we, you know...make these jobs (where) we're not pushing paper jobs, jobs where we were actually helping the people PHYSICALLY, whether it be, you know...through helping the earth or through helping them, helping the elders, the children, or whatever actual physical work...Or whether it be something like this; building dams, restoring dams, and restoring the environment. Those are the kinds of jobs that we could do you know...where people can see the results of their work, the physical results of their work. And then, you know...they could go to work one day and if...somehow the next day they didn't have a babysitter, or they wanted to get drunk or they were hung-over, or you know...they had an emergency or they didn't feel like working, they could do that. But they've always that opportunity to take care of themselves and I feel like, well...once people understand that there's a way, you know...to sustain themselves and that it's constant, that they will, you know...return to...taking care of themselves. So, anyway those are kind of things we could do with that money and it's not happening.*

Here, the idea behind such jobs replaces the importance of labor below the importance of man welfare. The jobs have to fit people schedule and wellbeing. They also have to fulfill local aspirations and head towards long-term sustainable development. Labor is no longer an end in itself neither a uttermost priority in itself but instead must serve people's needs in a more nuanced way that simply providing income. It is a completely different notion of what work is and how it should regulate society. As a consequence, the importance of contract-based work is most often dismissed in grassroots projects and replaced with a notion of labor as benefiting the projects and the social relations around them. Labor is not about "finding a job"; it is about enacting projects realities and instilling hope via personal achievement:

Labor is NEEDED for hope to be maintained. It's like...hope is like…fed through achievement. So, little achievements really bring people lots of joy and they have to maintain this level of achievement to be able to continue on their projects, which is a pattern that we've seen, um...throughout the place and other micro-projects, as well

Labor here could be compared with a Marxist approach to the ideal fulfillment of creative labor. However, it is problematized within colonial instead of class relations of labor and its characteristics are unique to the Lakota model.

A cashless economy; decolonizing money

The failure of the western economic model on the reservation is contingent upon structural inequalities that prevent fair access to world-markets and colonial power relations that discourage Lakotas from wanting so in the first place. Duffy and Stubben (1998) confirm that the failure of developmentalism in Indian country is more related to issues of existence within the colonial frame than simply about unfair competition. They point at development discourse as involving "the presumption that economic growth and increased income are valuable because they lead to increased purchasing power and the ability to acquire material things. But, it is this very presumption that disturbs many people in Indian country because it seems to mean a further walk down that non-Indian road that leads to assimilation and 'civilisation.' In other words, to many Indians it is to cultural ruin"(Duffy & Stubben, 1998:213). Thus, the western concept of economic wealth "restricts the Indian sense of 'exchange' and strips it of its psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions".

Here we start to understand more clearly the relation between coloniality and capitalism. Logically, this association continues to exist in the emergence of local solutions. Money and wealth production and exchange systems contain symbolic violence. The stakes of a decolonial approach seek a detachment from money as a commodity that oversees

systems of exchange to replace it with alternatives that decommodify economic relations. Such phenomenon is inherently present in grassroots initiatives. This is why the themes of *not benefiting from the capitalist model*, *breaking free from dependency* and *alternative economic initiatives* consistently appeared in grassroots projects narratives. Such themes resulted as much from the structural barriers that prevented access to the western model than from the distinct beliefs and values locally attributed to the Lakota ethos.

First, there is this enduring idea that money and the use of currency to regulate economic exchange is not "natural" to Lakota culture:

> *Money is a pretty new idea. 300 years maybe 400 years if you count Europe but our culture is 6800 years old, at least. So we've been around a whole lot longer than the money system that's breaking the world now. There's only 40,000 of us left in this council fire (Oglala Lakota). There's only about 680,000 of us left over the nation. So pretty small demographic. There's not a lot of us but..uhm…we did have something that is needed really big in the world I think*

The result is that locals have a tendency to be cognitively more open to the idea of a moneyless society, to the point of stating that "the cash system is our problem". The belief that wealth and societal relations are not necessarily correlated with a need for individual income changes the nature of local economic relations. Indeed, as much as it does not free people from the challenges posed by living in a system strongly dependent on an income-based model, it does make it easier for people to project themselves in a life without money or with very little income. Instead, wealth takes on a more nuanced definition. Therefore, while performing tasks on grassroots projects, people can more easily appreciate what they do as a form of wealth production. On sustainable gardening initiatives, I often heard the motto that "planting food is like planting money".

To a degree, such diversification of the concepts of wealth creation also frees people from the common developmentalist association between having income as money and the

development of one's self-esteem. Having cash is narrowed down to a practical need, enabling one to fulfill everyday tasks or affording services, but is less related to personal prestige and importance. It also encourages people to foresee alternatives to an income-based society. Consistently with the *holistic thinking* pattern, there is a realization that a world less reliant on money is feasible and desirable for humans to thrive in a more equitable reality. Discussions about ways to initiate global changes and spread economic alternatives are plentiful. Yet, they remain aware of economic dependency realities and acknowledge the need to use some of the resources monopolized by the western world model:

> *We know how to do certain pieces of it. We know we need the resources in this western financial base we need to make it happen. The ideas are big enough that they are needed all over the world. If we can figure out a way to really share them it gives us a way to organize it.*

Decolonizing money is a local and a global stake that manifests through practical struggles for subsistence on the reservation. The following quote summarizes the situation very well:

> *I mean the thing is that our people here start out (from nothing) because we don't have any small banks, no small businesses no financial back grounding at least in the western stance because it hasn't been tracked our whole lives. So when our young people get to school and they go take out student loans to go through secondary education but they don't have an established network, you know through the bank or their parents, relatives and things like that who have money to get them started. Buy a home and all that stuff. That's completely and totally lacking so I mean if you're going to do a grassroots movement, you're going to have to find a way to translate because I mean most of our economy is underground. I mean when I was a kid I wanted a car. Well I couldn't just go out and buy one so I went out and I found one that I could get cheap. The motor was blown out, emission missing, but I saw my other uncles and took them some tobacco and coffee (as respect gifts for asking help) and talked with them about finding a motor and transmission, and I grew my skills. Then I built my first car when I was 13. By the time I was 15, I had 4 cars because I continued to do the same thing. I built my network and didn't realize I was doing it but it's a base of this economy here. It's a trade-borrow system and we are lacking cash there was a certain amount of cash that exchanged hands but it wasn't anything like you know going out and paying thousands of dollars for a car.*

I've traded horses and different things. I worked for my uncles and things like that so I could get what I needed or wanted and created that. What we need to be able to do is translate that to a western numbers system which really isn't' that hard. You can assess a value on ever it is that you've done and kind of make it up you know. The income contribution for whatever (you need money for). I've done it on grants it's just, I mean the people that we are putting into these positions are very number orientated and western trained things and then we are missing pieces of the puzzles. I think it is (a good thing) because I mean when you're looking at an economy that's failing because of currency and belief in currency, we still know how to survive. We have always grown so that cash and lack of value to cash means very little to us. But how do we turn that into a living and breathing vibrant economy? That's the struggle that we are really looking at…you know…Like right now I have the capability to produce and build homes but how do I get the labor interested enough to do it? There's some translate pieces that I haven't been able to figure out…I've been working on it all the time and how do I get enough of a baseline cash?...Because I got my fuel and hard ware and the raw products -- the bulk of it, timber and things like that, it just exists all around us. Same with any of these green buildings on the land. Use dirt, straw, local resources to build but we're just far enough into the western economy that people have to get aid to get a job. I think if the money system actually completely collapses and no one has any money, then it actually makes it easier for me to implement things because people are willing to take trade.

This great quote summarizes in itself the issue of decolonizing money on the reservation. Despite less reliance on money and more on a trade-barter system due to existing in the underground economy, part of any project still need cash because of their parallel existence with the hegemonic model which sells goods and services and coerce people into finding at least some of the needed cash to navigate at minima within the system. Here, the existence of practical dependency to one economic system prevents real systemic alternatives.

Such an issue pushes grassroots managers to dive even more into an off-grid project, because they practically cannot afford to realize their goals within the global market economy. The coercive dominance of the western economic model does not encourage collaboration with an emerging Lakota economic model. Instead, because one is so reliant on money-based exchange while the other seeks to free itself from that dependency, it creates an ideological clash to pushes grassroots leaders to dive even more

into separate alternatives to market economy. Reversely, what can be observed in large-scale organization projects is the desire to develop Lakota skills for competing within the dominant market ideology. Two local trends come in conflict. Both develop from an exclusion from western market practices yet one is seeking existence within while the other is seeking existence outside of that global economic system.

Decolonizing time

The last element of building "safe spaces" manifests through decolonizing time. The latter is not expressed in Polanyi's project to reembed economy. Yet, it might be one of the key spaces where decolonial stakes might be the most salient. Indeed, schedules, time zones, cycles, are spaces within which develop land, labor and money, and upon which the rhythm of society takes a particular shape. What is more, in an era where overworked modern rythms slowly kill people by endangering their health, where time constraints occasion skyrocketing stress levels and depression, where Harvard studies show that working more than six hours a day has disastrous effects on brain activity, the stakes of decolonizing times might step beyond reservation boundaries.

I have explained how time schedules are coerced onto work in reservation life. Here is how resistance locally operates. Despite efforts to colonize time, the concept of "Indian time" remains an enduring reality for Lakota people, and influence their everyday rhythm more significantly than outsiders' time constraints. For Lakotas, Indian Time is about schedules, priorities and errands run at a slower pace than off the rez. It is about one task taking all day long because one has been caught in a storm, one's car broke down, one's relative is not home yet, and one's journey to the washing machine takes 4 hours back and

forth. It is about constantly adapting and adjusting to the unknown occurrences of the day. It is about patience.

For outsiders, it is about complying with that overwhelming concept of time. It is about taking the time to "visit with" people, sit down with them upon arrival to a place and listen to whatever they feel like talking about, despite your own agenda. It is about putting backward your agenda. For an outsider, stepping in "Indian time" is a truly humbling experience. It is as if you enter a different time zone. It might participate in creating that impression often narrated by visitors that they have "entered a different country".

One specific example of that can be found through one of my research analytical processes; I was coding a video where a Lakota elder was speaking and storytelling. Since it was taking time, which was flying as I was writing my dissertation, I speeded his voice until I realized something. While speeding his voice times 1.25, I was under the impression of hearing a non-Lakota English speaking old man. This needs further inquiry but it could mean that the notion of speech speed by Lakota standards is 1.25 times ours. Yet, I felt the need to comply with our standards by speeding up the voice by 1.25. The contrary, i.e, slowing him down by 0.75 for analysis purposes would seem irrational or at least unpractical to western understanding. Yet, it might profoundly resemble the effort that Lakota people must undertake when operating in the western framework. What it tells us is a profoundly humbling lesson about the potential effects of decolonizing time.

Another stake of decolonizing time lies in projects timeline and the short/long-term dilemma exposed previously. It does not just affect representations and reify colonial dynamics but also has practical consequences on the type of alternatives that locals build:

> *Uh...in this case...you know...(Other organization than interviewee) came up with like nine points that they want to address…(sigh)…Reduce that to seven to clearly define*

what...we're after. And each one of those create sub-set programs that we're gonna use to reach for those. And [pause]...your..."wavy" stick is, you know...is this gonna clean the environment? And what are the long-term effects? Three hundred years from now, if we frack in Slim Buttes and we don't clearly know how that explosives going on-and-off underground are gonna affect our...aquifers and we end up poisoning the entire region...this is clearly out of the bounds for three hundred year planning. Um...you know...there's lots and lots of things like that...And on a macro-scale, we can tackle the food, fire, water, shelter, and Earth. Those things are all tangible things, right now we could go after. And the food programs, we can create gardens and greenhouses and...food forestry and things like that. We can definitely tackle that stuff.

As we have seen through grassroots projects, timelines of three hundred years potentially disables long-term negative impacts of human activity. This manifestation of appropriateness by Indian Time standards might function as a "precautionary principle". In practice through the emergence of alternative timelines to usual five-year budget timelines, decolonizing time forces the short-term only practice to expand to a multidimensional process where consequences are thought out all along as the project develops and adjusts to new needs. Decolonizing time thereby fosters sustainability, which again renders visible the practical link between decoloniality and sustainability.

Building safe spaces

I have shown throughout this section how ReZilience expresses through local practical responses to risks. Sustainability emerges as a practical solution and a safer project than capitalism to palliate to the failures of coerced developmentalism. It takes a locally appropriate form that expresses via survival skills and a capacity to adjust and cope with risky situations. Local implications of building "safe-spaces" might be to regain self-esteem, a sense of security, hope and social utility. In other terms, it might reverse dysfunctional practices induced by the mainstream economic model to locally functional patterns and eventually help enforce a Lakota sustainable project. Here, risk-taking capacity can be seen as a "culturally relevant vehicle" of social change because it frees

individuals from structural oppression through the creation of "safe spaces" and breaks (or go around) dependency cycles. It allows the redefinition and reappropriation of spaces through the decommodification and decolonization of land, labor, money and time.

ReZilience as political resurgence

Inward and outward resurgence

The final aspect of ReZilience concerns political resurgence. Two distinct struggles can be identified. The first is a local fight for outward political existence, or existence on the political stage, and the worldwide recognition and protection of Lakota rights. The second represents the struggle for inward political resurgence or culturally appropriate sovereignty. However, the boundary between both inward and outward political stakes is not clear-cut. Indeed, as much as there is a thrive for sovereign and independent existence displayed by locals on the reservation, I have demonstrated that all stakes of existence tie to forms of identity negotiation and entail inward and outward mechanisms. That is, truly independent in-group identity definition is an illusionary process that could only occur if Lakota struggles had at all times developed outside of any contact with other groups.

Projects aiming at self-sufficiency inherently contain political struggle due to a desire to exist off-system, i.e to define distinct system boundaries than those regulating group practices within the mainstream economy. Stakes of self-sufficiency within a colonial setting exacerbate such a political component due to lingering difficulties for the colonized to exist in a world mostly controlled by the colonizer. The struggle for Lakota existence thus automatically also takes place off ReZ on the broader geopolitical stage. In such terms, Lakota identity ought to be thought from a constructivist perspective in its capacity to

mobilize tools to compete for Lakota visibility and political recognition in regards to world hegemonic identities.

Although minimally present within grassroots projects, the component of visible outward political resurgence is mostly monopolized by large-scale organization as shown in their narratives due to both 1) the predominance of their dual financial dependency and competition with the outside and 2) the larger means that increases their leverage for action and renders them more easily visible off the reservation. They own the means and the professional positions that give them legitimacy in the US or international stage. As such it is easier for them to negotiate with other tribal and governmental entities as representatives of the tribe. However, I have shown how that legitimacy is dismissed by most Lakotas as not representative and not culturally appropriate.

In the meantime, grassroots projects entail components of political resurgence that express more as civil engagement. The form is not a formal representative or hierarchical based system but might prove more culturally appropriate. It articulates in practical ways such as associations and alliances with worldwide causes, or alternative forms of governance that in fact reproduce Lakota appropriate concepts of the exercise of power. These clearly constitute a form of political resurgence. They display information and raise awareness on crucial issues of current interests, but also communicate about colonial struggle, Lakota struggles, oppression, etc. (for an example of such communication, see Appendix XI).

Alternative local governance

Grassroots political resurgence aims at practically reaching goals towards a sustainable livelihood. They exist in the shadows of the informal economy and therefore do

not include mainstream positions of power. Project leaders are indeed invested with some sense of decision-making, but tying practically to the scale of their project. Additionally, due to the scarcity of resources, their success is contingent upon their capacity to fairly and friendly collaborate with others. These components limit individual opportunity for ego-based sense of leadership. In their effort towards finding alternatives, defining alternatives to that individualist model of leadership might be part of a political project to challenge colonial ideology. Additionally, Lakota leaders of the past were said to possess a sense of generosity and selfless service and these remain qualities that Lakotas refer to as ideal qualities of a leader in contemporary surveys (as in the recent Voices survey conducted in the Lakota Cheyenne River reservation). The latter creates a bitterness and nostalgia over projected Lakota values that they do rarely find in their current leaders. All these combined foster an environment conducive to reappropriating a sense of leadership that is not ego based:

> *I don't know if that inter story there and how they came up with it, but I was working with (name) at the time, and we were pitching to a permaculture training thing. We had a conference room in rapid city. We had the big conference room and (a large Pine Ridge organization meeting) had a small conference room and they had more guests than we did so we were supposed to swap our rooms and we had already gone in and set up. So we had some time to set up before things started so we were tearing down our stuff, and then I could hear this conversation going on in the background where they're talking about my shit -- stuff I wrote. So I'm sitting there…and uh so I waited until break and I walked up and introduced myself and the guy -his eyes kind of went somehow (widens eyes) you know- and he just started. He knew or he recognized my name from the writing and we just released this stuff, and then they wanted to do a research program based on these ideas. It's ok though, I didn't want them to cite me because, I don't know how to put it but when you start talking about how do you shift the power base from one trench government officials to you know, a people based thing…I didn't want. So I sat down with (name) and they invited me to come and help fill in some of the other things. So we had a very basic conversation and it was very upfront. We want this to happen. I agree with what you wrote to begin with and I want to research it so we can get new resources. Okay, I agree with that but we don't know a lot of things here. I wrote that 10 years before and it was on hold for ten years basically. And so I told him, look, I'm quite a way further on for implementation of the ideas. I've extrapolated a lot of things over time and*

I'll help you with that to bring it up further up from where we are at. But at the end of it, I don't want any credit. I don't want anything. I want the plan done. I want the research you get out of this 'cause this is just my opinion, and this is what I think and I want other to think it. I want to know what it is they think most importantly and how to go about that. So that was our talk.
[interviewer]: So what did they do?
[interviewee]: So they went in and pulled all of the people and all these things. They got a little over a million dollars for this research and he built his (organization) thing up out of it, things like that but they didn't put it together. The funding's available but they never really, all he did was put the opinion to the rest of the people at this point and still don't know how to execute the implementation. In the mean time I continued to do the work I was doing…and that gave me a tool and that's cultural mapping and its how you use the spiritual base of the people and the language to implement this long term planning for the three hundred years of prime. It helps to identify what everybody wants and move the herd closer. That's what I have now.

In this quote, the expected frustration of having a local organization manager having taken over his ideas push this grassroots manager to engage in a differentiation process where his frustration over spoliation of intellectual property becomes an occasion to create a momentum for reinventing more "selfless" ways of leading. He is not concerned about receiving credits for his work but instead about sharing it widely and discussing its points further to advance the collective knowledge and increase the chance of the project itself to grow and thrive through collaboration. Such initiatives are not merely talks but real management and governance practices. It points to a different conception of leadership that shows the way for larger organizations to incorporate more locally appropriate governance in decision-making and calls for increased local theorization and implementation of "selfless" leadership.

Grassroots resurgence and managing the commons

Holistic thinking and a strong connection to land perceived as a relative lead to considering land, labor and money as collective sources of livelihood instead of commodified resources. In the grassroots projects, this translates as a conscious realization

of the stakes of appropriately managing these to reach the holistic vision of a sustainable future over seven generations. Yet, the underlying knowledge that these commons are currently tradable commodities frames the struggle as political. It thus expresses as political resurgence and a will to unify with groups of similar interests:

> *So, as far as micro-project, you know...like I said, our vision is for the world and for...all indigenous nations of the western hemisphere to unite. And the reason we feel like this would be ideal...an ideal situation is because we have...all the sovereignty, we are independent nations and we have all the sovereignty that we want to assert and all...[pause]...all the sovereignty that we want to exercise. We also have these large landholdings. Many indigenous nations have large landholdings. And we also have many indigenous nations, you know...that do not have...or have very few water regulations; you know...laws or regulations. It opens possibilities (for alternatives).*

Because they have fewer land regulations and they share a common ideal, indigenous nations land base is thought at as appropriate to fulfill the more global stakes of ReZilience. Sovereignty becomes a proxy for sharing a land base with other groups thought to "fight on the same side" towards culturally appropriate grassroots sustainable projects. The practical stakes of sustainability are very well known by local projects managers to be nested in struggles for land and resource use subsequent to colonial commodification. This awareness precipitates the mobilization of grassroots movements beyond the scale of their own land. Sharma and Wright (2014) claim that "decolonization projects must challenge capitalist social relations and those organized through the national state, such as sovereignty. Crucially, their goal must be the gaining of a global commons" (Sharma & Wright, 2014:12).

Indigenous Identity and political mobilization

We have seen that the sense of local identity is historically nested within coloniality, and as such challenging coloniality becomes a stake of sovereignty and social change. In the case of Wolakota, the stakes of outward existence from a culturally appropriate perspective

come from a practical interest in guaranteeing rights historically spoiled by voluntary or involuntary absence of political voice. Whether absent or deformed in the process of ethnocide and assimilation, grassroots Lakota voices are now expressing in ways that put their contemporary needs forward, regardless of outside expectations. The stakes of existence of a Lakota cosmology are not fixed in the past, in Lakota legends, tales or historical dramas, they are about local representations to find a means of visibility despite what these voices carry. Therefore the purpose of any research respectful of the decolonial stakes of such endeavor would commit to particular carefulness in regards to make voices hearable and visible as they speak. "There is a conscious fusion of old and new as people are not so much 'revisiting the past' as they are negotiating and constructing a contemporary sense of themselves as aboriginal people. It is for this reason that we must not…strip away the invented portions of culture as inauthentic, but understand the process by which they acquire authenticity" (Adelson, 2001:28).

Lakota grassroots voices are multi-faceted, anchored in reality and practical survival yet looking up to make use of appropriate technology and fulfill a prospective better vision for themselves and the world. New allegiances form, first and foremost with other indigenous groups, under the banner of collective resistance. Currently, thousands of people are camped by the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation in North Dakota, in an unprecedented unified stand between indigenous groups and others throughout the world against the DAPL pipeline; a project threatening the access to potable water to 18 million people downstream the Missouri river. Historical enemies to the Lakotas such as Crows, other tribes and Whites joined the struggle in a conscious awareness of the global stakes of this local fight. This case sets the tone for future struggles between peoples' rights to access

clean water and fundamental life sustaining resources and the bought rights of private corporations to risk the spoilage of such resources. "Water protectors" as they name themselves are now facing an aggressive repression from hired security forces that use war engines, attack dogs and rubber bullets in peaceful protests. They also conduct hundreds of illegal arrests of protesters put in criminal detention conditions. Such a worldwide indigenous collaboration is unprecedented and speaks to the emergence of hybrid grassroots collaboration that I observed on the ground.

The techniques of mobilization also evolve. Lakota projects across scales connect to worldwide issues and solutions through the use of social media. First, they get to associate and sympathize with these issues. Secondly, it partially abolishes or alters ethnic barriers, and negotiates distinct boundaries based on 1) Lakota endogenous identity and 2) behavior-based relationality and association with grassroots projects goals.

Lakota political resurgence and struggle for identity is also so salient because of the leading role it has played in reviving an "Indian identity" that serve other tribal traditions by giving them a sense of Indian existence, despite what they might have lost of their own culture. This non-Lakota native from another tribe was partaking grassroots projects and states:

> *You know when you have unity there's going to be something that strikes a core that brings people together and I think things like powwows and not necessarily a spiritual thing but powwows and those traditions of dances and all the great plains, and sweat lodges…not just sweat lodges but those ceremonies, those ways of, you know, smoking pipe or the church. They bring about a type of unity and for those tribes and cultures who lost a great deal of their older traditions and ceremonies and even their languages…In order to persist with other native people and feel a solidarity, they are drawn to those things. So you know I myself may participate in a lot of...a lot of ceremonies that were you know that are not necessarily part of my tribe.*

Lakota political resurgence entails issues of indigenous identity that reach beyond its own. It also captures and enables the endurance of a "Native" spirit despite the destruction of distinct tribal cultures. It functions therefore as a substitute for lost cultural capital for other Native American groups.

Resurgence, sustainability and the "moral project"

ReZilience has shown us that grassroots Lakota projects engage in collectivist narratives that rely on a belief in a sustainable world for humanity. Such a belief grows from a decolonial practices of association with other worldwide human oppression and a realization that local and global are related, and that bounding efforts will at term yield more effective results. The emulation created in the idea of the "power of the group" can be associated with some kind of a "moral project" as opposed to a universalist notion. Indeed, although the latter claims a unified struggle for universal equal rights, it historically relies on maintaining frameworks of domination and human hierarchy. In contrario, the "moral project" defined by the operationalization of Lakota and other groups' struggle relies on a practical belief in the fundamentally equal rights of all groups to access and live on a sustainable planet. It is inherently sustainable and decolonial, and intersects with issues of morality, and the processes of groups' identity negotiation.

Boundary-work clarified that if the essentialization of groups' identity can reify a sense of oneness, it thereby also fosters the sense of otherness and subsequent exclusive behaviors. Barth (1969) claims that the "itemization" of cultural characteristics in itself fosters the negative perceptions of other groups. However, his focus inaccurately puts the strength of boundaries as causing closure, when in reality, it is the property of boundaries that need to be looked at. Indeed, some dichotomizations are enabling; when

differentiation is not pronounced as threatening to the "us" it can approve or at least tolerate the formation of the "us". This is what occurs when grassroots projects leaders support outside causes through online communication or practical exchanges and enable sympathy for others' oppression, which ranges as wide as the nearby water protestors in Standing Rock to the refugee situation in Europe, or the occupation of the Gaza banks (such a process is also reversed, as seen in the emerging campaign of "Muslims for Standing Rock"). It also occurs via the local exchanges with white volunteers on their projects.

All these ideological alliances translate into crossing identity boundaries, to the point previously exposed of changing the historical meaning of Lakota terminology such as *wasicu* (see chapter 5). The belief in a greater cause for human wellbeing supersedes the traditional dichotomization process. The latter still exists, and it defines local identity, but so does an overarching project that does not negate but co-exist with differentiation at a group identity level. In other words, associating with an overarching "moral sustainability project" creates synergy and a new sense of "us", while still supporting the existence of sub-groups of "us" and "them". In other words, it is not the existence of boundaries that is at stake in defining the moral project but in fact the property of these boundaries.

Reversely, other boundaries are disabling; when the differentiation is defined as threatening to the "us", it tends to disprove and endanger the existence of "us", as is the case for all the groups identified by grassroots managers as impeding on either their leverage for action, or strongly opposing it at the local and global scale.

The emergence of a "moral sustainability project" carried by Lakota grassroots projects can also be found more broadly in indigenous groups, oppressed groups and groups living "in the margins". Such a trend corroborates the idea that innovation and

practical solutions to systemic inequalities might be found in the areas most neglected from it. A strong encompassing moral project strengthens inter and intra-group knowledge and solidarity (Davis, 2000). By contrast, the post-modern self is largely preoccupied with surface and individual performance, which in turn negatively affects collective solidarity.

Identity and moral subjectivity are highly interrelated (Davis, 2000). This relation develops a new rationale of the need for relatedness -which identity fosters- and how it develops deeper, more meaningful selves that relate to each other in communities. It explains the strong existence and development of awareness of local and global issues in Lakota projects, and strong alliances that oppose the individualistic ideology carried by what they are struggling against under the form of coloniality and the western developmentalist project. This problematization brings into the definition of Lakota political resurgence a profound questioning of the essence of existence, of "coming into being". Hence, cultural identity is not just about being, but also about becoming (Hall, 1990:223). The idea of a common "moral project" for Lakota projects managers thus constitutes a new projection of humanity, that transcends the colonial condition and enacts the desired outcome of a sustainable future devoid of human suffering and subordination.

The Vacuum of Change: a key mechanism of ReZilience

A cognitive threshold

While diving into the practical forms of social change on the reservation and focusing heavily on representations, I was led to understand some of the processes upon which grassroots managers come to break free from developmentalist initiatives, and instead engage and commit to systemic alternatives under the form of grassroots projects. What causes the transformations that allow people to engage in alternatives? It seems to

first lie at the cognitive level, where individual constructs either impede or foster the belief in alternatives. But it affects people worldviews and actions to the point of building alternatives. This way of problematizing grassroots projects focuses on individual processes, which are add another layer to understanding ReZilience.

Because of its characteristics, I have thought best suited to name this particular process "the vacuum of change", because a set of factors creates the synergy that enables stepping out of a system to create alternatives. In short, patterns observed in the data and people narratives show that under some circumstances, people are more likely to detach themselves from existing frameworks, ignore the fear of the unknown and engage in enterprises conducive to radical social change. This phenomenon entails a set of stepwise and complementary elements present in individuals that seem to foster that type of change, which first occurs cognitively at the micro-scale but then fosters collective consequences.

Although they might not intuitively be considered as partaking identity, the factors that I present below are impacted by coloniality. The latter impacts identity allegiances, individual existence and locally specific senses of self, and creates a salience for acute differentiation as part of the colonial struggle. Such an acute differentiation is not limited to ethnic issues and can express in other allegiances such as lifestyles, radical life projects, etc. According to Howard (2000), cognitive and interactional processes are intimately intertwined in the production and change of identity.

In-group positive reaction towards in-group attitudes and dismissal of out-groups practices increase as the polarization between groups widens due to reified opposite identifications. This occurs through an enduring recognition of the salience of in-groups and out-groups oppositions, as explained by social identity theory. These processes occur

within social interaction and communication, which form and modify the knowledge structures upon which such identifications operate (Augoustinos & Innes 1990). The in-group and out-group negotiation of Lakota grassroots managers summarizes precisely how the boundaries of the following factors come to be defined, and how new allegiances to systemic alternatives come to emerge.

Edge areas

Because of its particular position in regard to the colonizer and the world economy, Pine Ridge is regarded as a peripheral zone when looked at from the hegemonic perspective. Such a perspective even follows locally as lateral oppression and pushes some reservation residents to still maintain existence outward, in competition or against the western model. Either way, the formidable characteristics of being on the "edge" were clearly revealed by locals as possessing specific qualities. This quote refers to these areas as key to bringing change through land metaphors and the example of displaced men and men reinserting into Lakota communities after withdrawal (due to prison, drugs, etc.):

> *Have you ever noticed that around like a shelterbelt on the end of the field you have the most diverse strip and plant structures…the most vibrant social plant structures…They're called edge areas or fringe areas. And it's based on energy…Those edge areas are (also) places where good soil is below the top soil, which is actually the best soils to grow plants and things like that. So any disturbances that happen out on the big flats, the good soil blows to the edge and that accumulates. So if you look at it that way, the men who have been displaced out of the families or the Tiwahe, have their Nahe, which is the inner self, that's also displaced. And historically, the men that have been pulled out of the families, (when) the men were pulled out, the society had lost its identity. So the way to put the strength back into the peoples is to focus on those men and putting them back into the families. But you got to have a well person first and then you have to have a well family. And then you got to have a financial structure that will support that. It's got to be a wide enough vision to tackle all those things at once because you're talking about personal poverty and family poverty and then actually physical poverty. We got the tools. And if you don't tackle all those things at the same time…Lots of guys go to extreme measures and they go back to the dirty bad messed up situations. They send a clean person back into them, and they're looking at just a shit way to live. And then they fall off and then the*

cycle starts all over again. Same was as if you got muddy on the other side of things. If you go get the first one it gets dirty also. So you got to have both with support structures that way when people do fall off we can pick them back up and put them back into society. And I've tried for a long time just to create jobs, create programs and add work but it doesn't work. But then I've seen some really good people come and train them and wanting to do good and just their situation causes them to go south…they get dirty and they're back in the same position. And reacting with more incarceration things like that doesn't help anything because you're treating the symptom and not the disease. (The disease) Which is self-poverty, family poverty, and actual poverty.

What is particularly striking is the way margins are presented and perceived as holistically part of the whole and potentially yielding positive outcomes, although they are often displayed as useless from a pure agricultural stance. This example metaphorically transposes the key usefulness of margins in transforming society, which is exactly what occurs in the vacuum of change. Indeed, although peripheries are traditionally looked down upon as socially and economically backward zones of which purpose is to catch up with the core's development, the peripheral position of Pine Ridge in regard to the dominant core is precisely what presets it for manufacturing social change. Indeed, it is precisely that positioning that encourages the following individual reactions, which are a premise for thinking alternatives.

Not benefiting from the western model

One of the first elements impacting the "vacuum of change" is the enduring belief carried by grassroots projects that they do not currently benefit from the western model. This belief is confirmed by individual confrontation in a world struggling to operate by western standards while visibly in distress by western norms. This leads Lakotas to dismiss western ideals as beneficial:

Living that American Dream is never going to happen for us you know and and so without leaving the reservation uhm without leaving the reservation the chances of you know uh succeeding in the eyes of the white man are are very minimal here. And those of us who choose to live on the reservation know that we know that we're not that's not something

that is important to us. If it was, we would leave. We would leave and go to a place to obtain those things.

This process operates either as lifetime frustration or as some kind of closure. It might first lead to the feeling of "wanting to catch up" with the western model, as seen in large organizations, but also in some individuals:

I am saying that there is this thing called the American Dream. This myth that is called the american dream. And some LaKota seek it out and some LaKota are real successful - and not just in La Kota but red people everywhere- in assimilating and good at accepting change. We are good at adapting. And some people have been incredibly successful at that you know at basically wiping all the browness out of them you know.

This first reaction observed is consistent with previous decolonial work that denounced the self-assimilation operated by some colonized to compete with the colonizer as a defense mechanism (Fanon 2008; Memmi 1991). However, the most common reaction to the lack of benefit from the system is most referred to as the feeling of having "nothing left to lose".

Nothing left to lose

The feeling of frustration of not benefiting from the system leaves Lakotas with the constant experience of "having nothing left to lose". Although potentially destructive, this feeling creates a powerful void upon which mechanisms of change may transplant and grow. The void it creates is practical and ideological. It starts with a pragmatic relativism in regards to the everyday consequences of the failures of the system:

For the people who are on the reservation, it (developmentalist system failure) is not going to be. It's not that big of a step because, you know, we're not living the American dream here.

Another grassroots manager states:

The thing is that...to some people it (living off grid) might seem drastic but to people on our reservation we haven't been living in the conditions that we find ourselves now for very many generations. It was just a 100 years ago that we were still living in teepees you

know and so many of our people who are alive now will say...'my grandma had a house but she lived in a tent'...and so it is not that far removed from who we are you know and even those of us that live in houses, the conditions that we live in are so poor that this is really going to be a step up for a lot of families.

Therefore, the feeling of "nothing to lose" creates an emotional and practical disassociation with the American Dream or developmentalist ideology. This disassociation from the status quo can lead individuals to a higher risk-taking capacity resulting in innovative solutions to reach safer environments, which is triggered by the grassroots scale of action. In that scheme, micro-projects embody safe spaces, as they barely depend on the mainstream structure. Their scale and invisibility somehow "protects" them from being dismantled by the superstructure because they seem not endanger the superstructure; i.e. they do not visibly seem to affect the mainstream economic balance or use of resources in regards to the generation of economic profits.

But the disassociation from the western model alone and the existence of "safe spaces" is not enough to create these alternatives. Otherwise, we would witness such inertia of innovative alternatives everywhere people lack benefit from the mainstream model. The ideological disassociation creates a void, a feeling of not belonging, that needs to be filled; it can either be coped with by social frustration of having to survive in that void, or it can initiate change under the condition that there is a safer project to replace the current model. This is where the colonial aspect and cultural identity takes a key role in determining the "vacuum of change".

Wolakota and enabling alternative frameworks

Indeed, the specificities of strong existence such as Wolakota constitute more than cultural identity but truly an alternative way of being functioning in its own cosmology. Such a framework contains enough elements to feed the social need to belong. It enables

the cognitive ability to project into new system possibilities. The following quotes all express the similar projection into an alternative societal project:

> *You know, the thing is we are not seeking the American dream here. That is not our dream. It doesn't fit with us!*
>
> *See the idea behind this whole thing. You know the Occupy movement? They're looking for the same thing that we have. I need a way to go and translate it to give it away. My theory behind it is that we were the last tribe to give up against federal government so we are the closest to what was, so we still have it. It's fractionated but it's still there.*
>
> *You know and I think that in order to be happy we need to go back. We need to go back to a more natural way, where we are living in harmony with the earth and the animals you know and the elements.*
>
> *So I think that as a people we're not really afraid of change and the idea of changing back is so appealing you know because we still want those things. We still want to live that life. Our people didn't give up you know. They fought for what they wanted to stay free…We get jobs we get cars so what we can travel or whatever it is. I don't think that we accept that this is the best we can be, and like I said I think that as far as change and interpreting your question I think that the LaKota have poise for change. We are ready for change and we are ready to face it head on. You know because it is not something that's new to us. We change all the time. We do what we have to and right now it's coming very quickly that this is what we have to do to survive and we are going to do it.*

As a result, the disassociation from the existing model from a lack of benefits, added to the projection in an existing safer ideology fosters the individual cognitive change necessary to free oneself from the TINA syndrome and seek viable alternatives. This is the mechanism of the "vacuum of change". The metaphor of the "vacuum" seeks to represent metaphorically the void left by the absence of systemic benefits and the following pull initiated by existing ideological frameworks such as *Wolakota* to form viable alternatives.

Viable alternatives

The foresight of viable alternatives occurs as a result of this cognitive liberation. The human mind is practically capable of innovation and adjustments of all kind, and once the mental barriers open, it can adopt a problem-solving attitude, as this observed in the

practical sustainability practices imagined and shared on the reservation (see chapter 5). The "vacuum of change" enables the type of holistic thinking and systemic critiques that I observed in local projects, as in the following:

> *You know I'm stilling trying to disseminate what it really means as a whole but we still have to have a quality life. I mean that's really what you're working for a quality life. If you cover the basics, food, water, shelter, spirit, self. If you can get all those things, you have a good quality of life. It doesn't have to be cash based. If you really think about it, it is kind of nuts. I mean you have to fuel it and waste all these resources for the whole planet stored up in cash and then you sit on it in the bank so no one does anything with it. It's just crazy*

Visual mapping of the "vacuum of change"

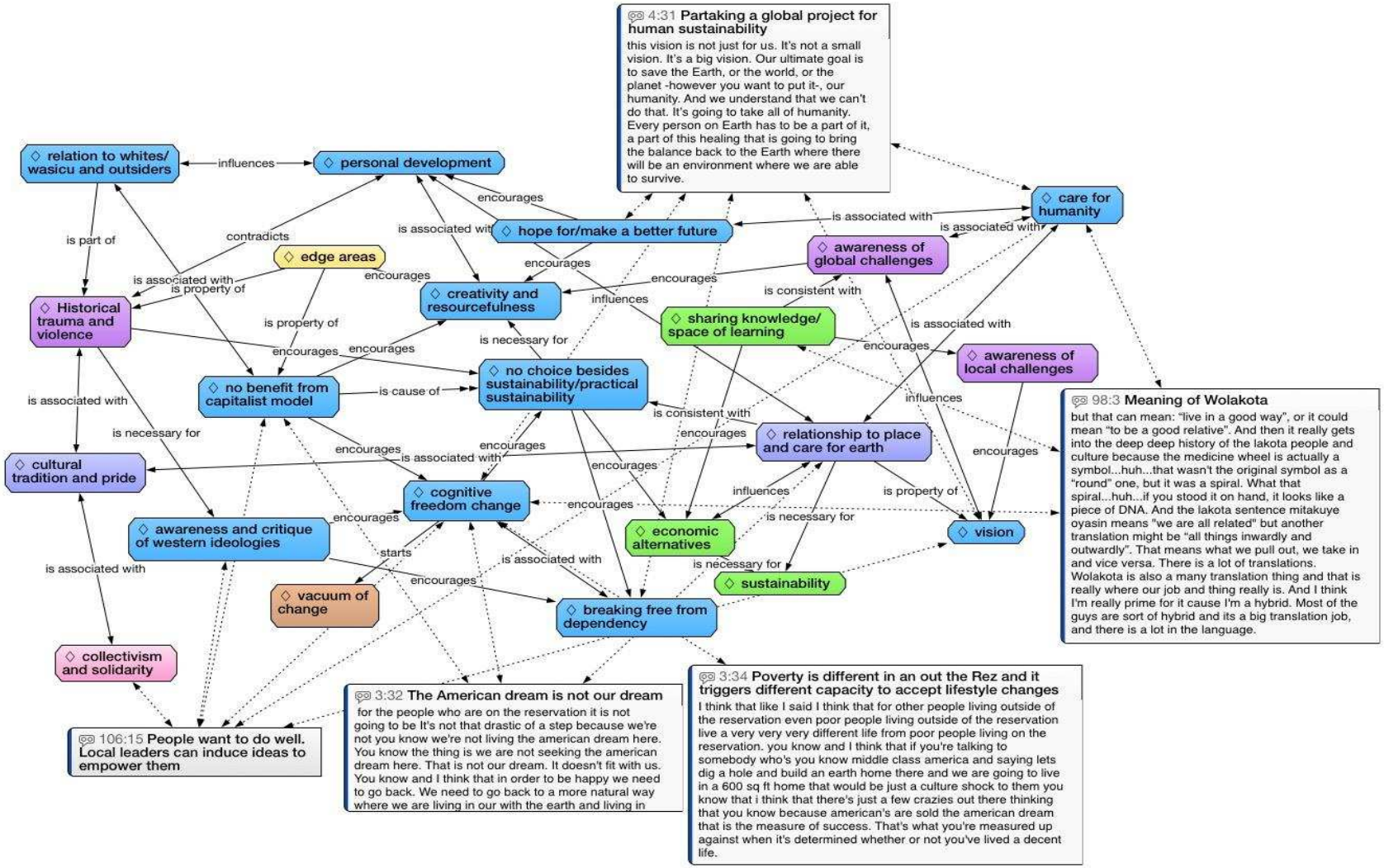

Figure 6.3 Visual mapping of the vacuum of change

The figure above visually represents the different processes that operate within the "vacuum of change". It was constructed from the data and helps identify the dynamics previously explained. Here the fact to be on the margins, on edge areas, along with conflictual relations with western whites precipitates the feeling of not benefiting from the western model. This creates the feeling of having not choice besides sustainability, and nests into practical sustainable projects the stake of breaking free from dependency and detaching oneself from western capitalist ideology. Awareness of local and global challenges fosters projects creativity and visions. The latter along with the shape of alternatives is based within a belief in a special relationship to place and a profound care for the earth that is a property of a distinct Lakota ethos. It relies on cultural tradition and pride to function and fosters long-term thinking and care for humanity, which also strengthens projects by giving hope in a better future. The vacuum of change thus expressed then relies on a unique combination of these elements in the Lakota grassroots contexts.

Supplementary individual factors

Evidently, the mechanism of the "vacuum of change" might need further exploration and I do not claim that disassociation from the mainstream and reconnection to alternative cultural frameworks might be exhaustive factors to explain the process of change. They simply fit into the individual process of emergence of Lakota grassroots projects. Other factors also might play a role at the individual level, particularly tying to individual resilience and individual variation of response to trauma and abuses. One of the tracks that I also observed on the ground was the presence of family support and the element of family

love despite the experience of suffering. Another refers back to Wolakota. They all tie into individual expressions of ReZilience:

> *You were loved. Because, no matter what happened, if I didn't have food, my mom would make sure that...she brought me food somehow. [clears throat] If I didn't have money, she would give me her last dollar. That's love. And it doesn't have to be spoken because it's...it's shown. Um...and then, of course, hearing about your...where you come from, who you are, how strong your people were, to still be surviving after everything that they've been through and this...you're a part of that nation, you are a part of the greatest Indian nation on Earth. You are a Lakota, y'know...THOSE things. So, you can laugh in the face of adversity. You can laugh in the face of whatever else is going on. And I did what…did what other children did when they're raped, I'm sure, and that's to split off. And so, but I've been through the ceremony where they do the calling back of the spirit, y'know...And, so it's...it's that. And....I think everybody has it but some have it...more than others.*
> *[Interviewer]: You mean...the healing part? Or the strengthening part?*
> *[Interviewee]: [overlapping] The strength. And...[pause] and, uh....I think it comes from having a strong sense of your history. It comes from having a strong sense of knowing that this has gone ON...for hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of years. And still, we survive. And that makes you feel strong. It gives you strength...*

The idea of survival and overcoming personal trauma is very present in Lakota narratives, and is presented as a quest for individual existence that once overcome needs to be spoken off with pride. It becomes a trait of character. Healing and aspiring to loving and caring relations also become part of that challenge.

Nonetheless, the process of individual survival, the art of "keep going" demonstrated by Lakotas over generations might serve as the base upon which the disassociation from hegemonic ideology and replacement with a more functioning framework can occur.

Beyond the TINA syndrome: Disassociation from hegemonic ideology and allowing change

The literature mentions similar disassociation processes in colonial contexts. C.L.R James (1989) identify "outside/peripheral spaces" as "interfaces" exposing the dysfunctions of the main system that also enable responses that can vary from the main message. James uses Trotsky's model of the "Law of unequal and combined development"

and claims that these "leftover" spaces become "retarded" compared to the mainstream entity. Although controversial, this term can be explained by the vocabulary norms of the time, but mostly in James's usage, which is not meant to establish statements of superiority or civilizational advancement, but simply the fact that these spaces cannot compete with the economic advancement considered so by the norm. What is interesting for us though is not this terminological debate.

For James, indeed, this system or retardation can be applied globally anywhere regions do not benefit from the same advantages as the heart of western economic activities. Thus, these spaces, wrongly dismissed as "behind", in parallel also enable themselves to create alternative tools to become "ahead". One cannot ignore the inherently neo-classical economic nature of such argument. However, it nonetheless resonates in contexts such as the Rez, as I attempt to demonstrate in this work. James's hypothesis here is that in order to change retardation into cutting-edge, the colonial myth needs to be reversed (demystified I guess), in order to initiate a movement towards alternatives. It is this process of demystification that provides the necessary energy to move around the mainstream proposition. Therefore, it is not only the fact to be considered "outside the system" that fosters change but the latter forms a baseline upon which a process of decolonial demystification must occur.

He points out the interesting notion of the *threshold of irreversibility* (1989: 88) a sort of amount of collective history after which boundaries are written within people' ethos, which therefore impedes on the apparition of any alternatives (which reminds us of Chomsky's TINA syndrome). The activation of a common history and narratives of collective identity ensure the reproduction of the status quo. The lack of benefit from the

system by the margins cannot be enough to trigger change specifically because it remains marginal. Thus, the system might be indeed failing and unsustainable, but transformation cannot occur unless it is considered as failing by agents. This means that representations and beliefs hold a particularly important space in allowing any alternative to occur.

From the process of the "vacuum of change" observed in Lakota grassroots projects, we can see that the realization of system failures is not even enough to trigger systemic change, only to initiative in individuals the first step of cognitive disassociation from the hegemonic ideology. The latter must be accompanied by a belief in a safer alternative, which in colonial contexts can be found if local cultural values endure and contain strong ideological alternatives to western developmentalism. The implications of understanding the "vacuum of change" (discussed in chapter 7) are essential to explain and foster individual detachment from western capitalist ideology and their potential participation in alternatives.

Conclusion: What is ReZilience?

In summary, the problematization of resilience in Lakota country highly depends on local and global representations of coloniality. Clearly, the existence of resilience on Pine Ridge is less related to an objective criteria of local success than it is by the framework that produces these criteria. The real issue behind the problematization of resilience on Pine Ridge is therefore to realize whose resilience we are talking about. If we are addressing resilience as Lakotas' capacity to adjust to western norms of development, i.e to western work ethics, capitalist relations to materiality, conceptions of space and time, etc., then we automatically condemn Lakotas to being non-resilient, because their non-adjustments to

these norms are both inherent to continuing systemic oppression and to their struggle for self-determination and distinct existence.

However, because western developmentalism has been imposed coercively, it nonetheless crystallized aspects of its ideology that permeate local layers and still operate within local large-scale organizations. Such a conditioning has two main effects: firstly, it condemns Lakota attempts to fail within that imposed normative framework, and maintains the reservation in a constant perceived state of non-resilience. Secondly, it condemns them to keep trying fitting into these norms, because the local governance and economy nonetheless functions within these western dynamics. Resilience from that framework therefore condemns Lakotas' attempts of self-determination to remain non-adapted, non-adaptable and yet caught in trying.

Now, if we are addressing resilience within the broader framework of long-term adaptation of Lakotas to their environment, then the analysis takes a whole different shape. Within the broader framework of their adaptation to a changing livelihood, Lakotas have not ceased to fight for their own expressions of living since the reservation era, as exemplified through the specificities of contemporary grassroots initiatives. This alternative framework of reference is broader than western definitions of appropriate lifestyle and ties back to long-term species survival into the broader natural ecosystem.

I acknowledge that this conception might seem close to a certain western definition of social-ecological resilience, although the latter is completely incognizant of coloniality, which does not fit in our analysis. In that broader framework, Lakotas' resistance towards western assimilation and capitalist ideology therefore demonstrates their resistance

against non-sustainability and towards group and species sustainability. By these standards, therefore, Lakota grassroots projects are resilient and inscribed on a continuum.

Since the resilience terminology is nested within the western definition, I use the term of reZilience to better separate the concepts. The stakes and shapes of reZilience show endogenous expressions nested within the broader Lakota ontological framework. ReZilience is multi-faceted and include traits such as *1) Awareness and critique of western ideologies, 2) Facing local hardships, 3) Cultural tradition and pride, 4) Being in survival mode, 5) Engaging in alternatives to mainstream success, 6) Facing historical trauma and violence, 7) Holistic thinking and interconnectedness, 8) Practicing Lakota spirituality, 9) Sharing knowledge and space of learning, 10) Breaking free from dependency, 11) Cognitive freedom for change, 12) Creativity and resourcefulness, 13) Using the Lakota language, 14) Not benefiting from the capitalist model* and *15) Engaging in tiyospaye and family relations*.

These traits and their relation are represented visually in the figure 6.4 (see below). Substantively, they translate into a form of practical sustainability that pushes innovative change through creative solutions to complex local issues due to the effects of the "vacuum of change". Care for humanity, long-term practices, specific relation and reconnection to the land and holistic thinking frame these solutions into a model of change that is in the same time a decolonial project. It seeks to distinguish itself from the individualist resource based and profit-oriented model of capitalist developmentalism, associated with the colonizer ideology. These "sustainable" traits thus emerge as "safe spaces", both as practical survival practices to engage in a "safer" project than capitalism, and also as a way to assert a distinct Lakota way of being, as *Wolakota*. As such, ReZilience also expresses as political resurgence, not seen as an outward effort to compete within the mainstream model

ideology but as an attempt to exist distinctly and yet visibly to the outside world. To that effect, alliances with "compatible" causes occur as both a factor of solidarity and to strengthen the leverage of action of Lakota sustainable practices.

In summary, Lakota ReZilience might be expressed as a protection from risks, a set of safe spaces, a safer life alternative and finally as a way of existing independently from hegemonic ideology and the developmentalist colonial project. As such, the relation between coloniality and sustainability clearly appears as a continuum that also links decolonial struggles to sustainability.

CHAPTER 7: WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM LAKOTA REZILIENCE?

This final chapter discusses the lessons we can learn from research findings into contributions at the reservation level and beyond and concludes this dissertation. It summarizes key outcomes of this research such as the typology of grassroots social change and sustainability in the Pine Ridge Reservation, how grassroots development shapes systemic alternatives as practical solutions to local issues, increases local knowledge and further strengthens other indigenous groups' initiatives. Consistently with my epistemological commitment to bridge research and action, this chapter yields a discussion of what the outside world can learn from the Lakota context and from local ReZilience in the implementation of grassroots and larger-scale social change.

I then engage into a constructive abstraction aiming at exposing the academic insights of this work. More specifically, I demonstrate how this research contributes to redefine resilience and its uses or misuses in the academic world. I also question the construction of knowledge as it relates to underlying colonial dynamics and lay the basis for a decolonial understanding of grassroots development and community resilience, along with world-systems sustainability. I finally expand beyond this research to express potential contributions to implement sustainable change locally and at a broader scale, in the light of increasing socio-economic and environmental pressures. Last but not least, I provide a conclusion for the entire dissertation.

Contributions to the Rez

That is to say what contributions this work can have on the ground. What does it say and what can it bring to social change on the reservation?

New Typologies: the Rez as a lab for local innovative sustainability

First of all, the contribution of this work starts with providing a locally informed typology of sustainable social change. This dissertation devoid of its analytical claims is before everything a display of local grassroots projects, voices and the diversity of their activities. Although this work remains my interpretation of local realities, I have strived to present these projects under a local typology informed by the shape and visions of the grassroots projects and their managers. From ecological housing to permaculture gardening, local technology, cheap renewable energy, ceremony revitalization and youth camps, these projects all fit within a uniquely Lakota framework of social change, that incorporates cultural values into a holistic vision for a sustainable future for themselves as well as for mankind. These visions are part of a specific Lakota worldview.

Small projects to increase families and tiyospaye self-sufficiency take place within 7th generation deadlines, and are described by their managers' narratives as fulfilling five or seven tenets of sustainability, such as food, water, fire, earth, shelter, spirit and self. This endogenous Lakota typology is thought at holistically as a spiritual commitment to living by "mitakuye oyasin" or in respect with the relations that tie humans, living and natural things together. That is, all projects include awareness of and commitment to such a cosmology. Hence, resources and all capital needed for projects management cannot be thought at as such but instead as partaking this Lakota conception of the world.

This reality embeds the definition of local typology within colonial struggles. The grassroots typology is invisible locally because local large-scale organizations on the reservation still operate within the developmentalist western epistemology despite their expressed desires to abide by Lakota norms whereas these have the monopoly of

"representing" reservation activity. Large-scale projects exemplify a paradox of willing to heal from colonial trauma and ethnocide by applying developmentalist methods to Lakota country; a counterproductive action caused by lateral oppression and the will to be seen as equals and competitive in the western model. It condemns these initiatives to mimic developmentalist projects and limit the leverage of change to incorporating cultural elements. These consequently fail to really compete equally in the western framework and to develop real viable systemic alternatives in the reservation.

By contrast, grassroots projects are "last chance" local initiatives aiming at reaching self-sufficient existence. They are led by people who have given up on the western model of success because: 1) they did not benefit from it, 2) historical trauma freed them from ideological attachment to the American Dream and 3) they cultivate an alternative ideological vision for the future. In these projects, I found that it is both their material and ideological detachment from the western epistemology and development model that frees them to experience and define alternatives.

These operate through the working mechanisms of the "survival economy". Local people are the ones to have the creative ideas because of the System-D thinking that pushes them to innovate, and connect to issues bigger than their own project. They show resourcefulness; developing innovative ideas for tribal development, and yet are not involved in the official tribal decision-making. Consultancy is not operated successfully, and creative ideas remain untold and only visible at a ground level. Yet, they could greatly benefit the local economy but a gap remains between local ideas and tribal funding. Instead, western solutions are imitated in large-scale projects in the hope to reach for "economic prosperity".

For instance, one of the grassroots projects' manager was debating the specificity of labor on the reservation and the inadequacy of the classical western wage work model. In response to that, the manager proposes to use tribal level funding to fund day-job positions that would be used to fix and help local projects on the Rez, from helping people build something to fixing roads and damns, and work on land restoration projects. The all idea is incorporated within that underlying vision of collective usefulness and practical thinking typical to grassroots level entrepreneurs. Such ideas are very practical and show local resourcefulness, yet they remain unheard of at the large-scale organizations and tribal level. Grassroots ideas are nested within practical sustainability and represent grounded local solutions to local problems, along with challenging coloniality.

For Corntassel (2012), native resurgence needs "1) the restoration of indigenous presence on the land and the revitalization of land-based practices, 2)an increased reliance on traditional diet among Indigenous people, 3) the transmission of indigenous culture, spiritual teachings and knowledge of the land between Elders and youth, 4) the strengthening of familial activities and re-emergence of indigenous cultural and social institutions as governing authorities within First Nations; and 5) short-term and long-term initiatives and improvements in sustainable land-based economies as the primary economies of reserve-based First Nations communities". Grassroots projects on the Pine Ridge reservation demonstrate these and more. They constitute a laboratory of initiatives that need to be taken into account in reservation decision-making. They have the power to offset local economic, social and environmental challenges and offer viable alternatives for a sustainable and culturally appropriate Lakota future.

ReZilience strengthens local knowledge production

Grassroots resourcefulness is rooted in safe spaces that enable the creation of a space for Lakota knowledge that has local and global applications and political ramifications. Locally, although still suffering from the colonial yoke that is still lived everyday and imprinted in the struggles of *Wolakota*, there is a conglomerate of wills and energy directed towards change under the form of trials and errors and appropriate technology. The path is long and failures and delays are a common occurrence. This is an individually tiring process, but it also creates a vacuum for practical sustainable knowledge.

Indeed, Lakota grassroots actors exchange information and practices about success and failures -regardless of actual achievement status of project- such as "whether straw-bale is a viable housing construction technique, and how it resists cold and heat", "how small scale restoration projects best restore moisture in the soil", "how long it takes to build an aquaponic greenhouse", etc. Due to this informal local practice of exchange, a knowledge base exponentially grows. This increases the long-term chance of implementing change and creates 1) useful knowledge towards sustainability and 2) a base for hope that encourages projects managers.

This knowledge base exists informally as a practical space to strengthen local projects, but it also builds a space for Lakota knowledge production. As such, this knowledge production also challenges in itself hegemonic epistemological frameworks. By occupying a virtual space and piercing through western knowledge, it allows the development of decolonial indigenous knowledge, increasing its legitimacy and leverage to enforce systemic alternatives to developmentalism. The effect of Lakota knowledge

production can extend beyond the reach of the reservation if it is recognized legitimate knowledge by the outside. If so, it can also enhance decoloniality within the western production of knowledge and bring valuable inputs to the western sustainability paradigm.

ReZilience shows the way for other indigenous groups resurgence

The mechanisms of ReZilience uniquely apply to the Lakota context of primordially the Pine Ridge reservation. That being said, it yields patterns that can impact other indigenous groups and the broader movement of indigenous resurgence. These are already on the rise as they bind with environmental justice movements and take on land-based rights via the angle of land and environmental exploitation. Thanks to local inputs, I have shown the relation between indigenous identity and colonial resurgence, and the way that indigenous groups bound in the colonial struggle in regards to the common identity allegiances that they project onto other indigenous groups in differentiation to white majority colonial societies. Alliances are therefore already existing and opportunities of collaboration occur across Indian Country, and share technology such as the cost-effective solar heaters or the know-how concerning water restoration and permaculture, etc. They also allow the social networking that enables social movements such as the present gathering in Standing Rock.

Local grassroots initiatives participate in indigenous resurgence and amplify existing movements. Via local communication and global social media, they share local knowledge and network for similar initiatives, and call to increase such collaboration, with the hope that grassroots work can impact indigenous land through a ripple effect:

> *Our hope was when we establish this…when we planned and proposed this camp…that we would have [pause]…we invited all peoples here. But we especially invited our relatives from what they call the native, our indigenous nations, to come here to not only*

reestablish…to take this opportunity to reestablish their connection to the Earth and to mní, to understand those things but to [pause]…take that understanding home with them. And then…so that they could do these works among their own people

Participation in these projects builds 1) the Lakota grassroots sustainable movement and increase its visibility, 2) practical knowledge for sustainable indigenous communities and 3) indigenous solidarity and political resurgence. Simpson (2009:75) encourages indigenous solidarity as a path towards decolonization and the sustainability of indigenous existence. She outlines a four-part strategy to focus on the revitalization of Indigenous communities: "1) confront "funding" mentality – It is time to admit that colonizing governments and private corporations are not going to fund our decolonization, 2) confront linguistic genocide – there is little recognition or glory attached to it, but without it, we will lose ourselves; 3) visioning resurgence – The importance of visioning and dreaming a better future based on our own Indigenous traditions cannot be underestimated and 4) the need to awaken ancient treaty and diplomatic mechanisms – Renewing our pre-colonial treaty relationships with contemporary neighboring Indigenous Nations". Grassroots indigenous collaboration enables indigenous resurgence to thrive and also enables the formation of grassroots leadership and a potential alternative to unrepresentative tribal politics. I can affirm that all these issues are present at the heart of indigenous networking beyond the reservation scale.

Beyond research: The Grassroots Projects Mapping Initiative

As an integrated part of my commitment to applied sociology, I have conducted an initiative from a need expressed by Lakota grassroots managers to increase the visibility and knowledge sharing capacity of their projects. This is how the Pine Ridge Grassroots Projects Mapping Initiative (GPMI) was born (see Appendix VIII). The document presents

the GPMI as an online tool destined to projects managers to help make their contributions visible and increase the exchange of knowledge. I first thought of this project in 2011, at the sight of the flourishing number of projects and discussions with their managers. This project is one example of the numerous ways researchers can engage in public sociology and use ground information to provide support to expressed needs. It also stands as an example of Participatory Action Research by its grassroots and collaborative form. I discuss the stages of the project and the difficulties encountered to make it a reality, in the light of previously exposed conditions in Lakota country. Notwithstanding, the GPMI grew from the local observations that fed this dissertation, and is meant as a local contribution to Lakota grassroots sustainability and a token of my commitment to applied sociology.

Contributions beyond the Rez

This work is important because it participates in the visibility of Lakota grassroots initiatives. However, it also entails etic contributions that reach beyond the space and stakes of the reservation. ReZilience carries decolonial stakes of that play in and outside the reservation. Beyond the stake of learning "from the people of southern knowledge and not about it" (Kemple and Mawani 2010), which I have tried to exemplify in this work, applying decolonial methods is also about what the western epistemology and developmentalist framework can learn from ReZilience. There is much to learn from it in regards to identity and decoloniality, processes of social change, and mechanisms of systemic transformation towards sustainability. The apparent paradox and complexity of ReZilience reveals an intrinsic capacity to change, as confirmed by Fenelon and Hall (2008): "Indigenous peoples are especially problematic and salient to our understanding of social processes in the world-system because: 1) by their very continued existence, they pose a major challenge to

neoliberal capitalism on the ground, politically, and ideologically. 2) they offer a variety of models of how societies or groups might participate in the world-system while remaining distinct within it. 3) they may point to ways in which the current system might be transformed into something more humane".

The Vacuum of Change: a theoretical contribution to understanding social change

First, one of my most significant etic contributions stems from the theorization of the "vacuum of change" that shed light on the cognitive thresholds that push individuals to engage in radical social change. Although this mechanism was elaborated from patterns in the grassroots projects and applies to the Lakota context, it can also inform discussions on the mechanisms of change, which is of current scientific interest. It also highlights the role of the colonial struggle in the implementation of change. In summary, "vacuum of change" represents a cognitive shift necessary to engage in radical systemic projects that foster creative thinking to establish off grid self-sufficiency.

Such a shift operates with the joint action of 1) not benefiting from the capitalist model of development, 2) suffering from colonial oppression and 3) possessing an ideological base to build a systemic alternative. Particularly, the presence of coloniality (seemingly paradoxically) increases the effect of the "vacuum of change" via the vector of the identity question. Indeed, the limits of the benefits of the capitalist model are often not enough to foster the emergence of a comprehensive model shift, otherwise the increasing world population left aside from capitalist success would have been enough a trigger to start the ground revolution predicted by Marx. The addition of colonially induced identity issues seems to precipitate "feeling of not belonging" and an inherent cognitive shift by provoking a disassociation from the western colonial ideology. It is the material and

ideological systemic disassociation combined that forms a base, upon which an existing ideological alternative such as *Wolakota* can grow and enables alternative projects. Such an alternative develops on the material/subsistance void left by colonial oppression, under the form of survival shaped and practical sustainable projects. In other words, the struggle for material survival and social existence is what bases the premises for the development of the "vacuum of change".

Vacuum of change and systemic transformation

Now, how can this theory of the "vacuum of change" inform conversation about systemic, i.e ,macro transformation in colonial contexts? Following C.L.R James theory, and using world-systems theory to explain why novelty occurs, one could argue that it is because hegemons inherently experience growth and decline that "leftover" spaces start developing choices to embody alternative and novel ways of functioning, thereby leaving the mainstream in slow decay.

On the other hand, fallen hegemons and failing systems still maintain the ideological system that makes them feel they are still on the top, which precipitates their downfall while other spaces have no other choices for survival than finding alternatives (Taylor 1996). This process makes the alternatives of the margin best suited to adjust to new risks as they take place in the need for survival, which fosters practical innovation. Inevitably, the ideas of the margins come to represent the new, the novelty in what is actually in decline, while the mainstream remains static and convinced of its intrinsic superiority. If that is true, then signs of this "alternative production" can be found local projects and their narratives, as is the case in Pine Ridge.

What remains is the necessity to study the mechanisms by which the demystification of the mainstream system occurs and how it creates alternative beliefs conducive to alternative action. I did my best to explore "the vacuum of change" from local data, but it might require further enquiry to produce more generalizable data regarding beliefs in mainstream models and changes of "worldview allegiances" in spaces experiencing lack of benefits from the mainstream. The need for this topic will inevitably grow as the polarization of wealth increases worldwide and pushes social economic margins to increase in width and depth.

Indeed, what this research seems to suggest beyond colonial contexts is that it is not because capitalism is objectively failing and that average Americans are suffering from it everyday that they are likely to engage in modifying these conditions. I have shown that the fact of not benefitting from the model fosters one's feeling to no belonging without necessarily disassociate enough from it to envision alternatives. It does foster ingeniousness to cope with difficulties and the System-D economy functions as a laboratory for initiatives. However, it takes a greater pull than the lack of benefits to conclude the ideological disassociation required to free oneself from the cognitive attachment to the system. It also takes an alternative ideological framework to enable and grow alternatives; otherwise disassociated individuals might just oscillate between models without feeling any belonging. This might foster feelings of being lost and radical detachment from the model, however not directed towards building alternatives.

This is where identity formation plays a crucial role. For Lakotas, it is the fact of belonging and cultivating belonging to *Wolakota* as an alternative ideological framework that enables individuals to engage in safe and constructive alternatives. This theory differs

from Marxist accounts of social change, where material disassociation is assumed to perform the ideological detachment and enhance a radical grassroots transformation. As proven by history, the collective project envisioned as alternative did not provide a solid enough basis to engage in radical systemic transformation and to lead that transformation sustainably. This argument exemplifies the key role of "marginal" territories to play in offering a sustainable alternative to global developmentalism. The millions of "quiet revolutions" that are currently taking place in various peripheries such as India (see Manier 2015) support this claim. The following figure (7.1) visualizes what I just explained of the specificities of systemic transformation via the "vacuum of change".

Capitalist development itself relies on colonial exploitation and the progressive global commodification of land, labor and money. As a result, some groups benefit while others remain on the margins of the global world system. This exclusion occasions social frustrations associated with material hardships and lack of belonging. The effects of identity issues via the direct experience of coloniality allows the disassociation to the current model to be substituted to a more cognitively and existentially efficient model. The latter fosters creativity and innovation and hope in a better future, along with the cultural specificities of the identity ethos; here the Lakota context on two reservations. This combination fosters the emergence of alternative shaped projects with distinct systemic challenging features such as decolonial thinking and the decommodification of land, labor and money. As a result, systemic alternatives may emerge while developing a sense of collective solidarity and responsibility.

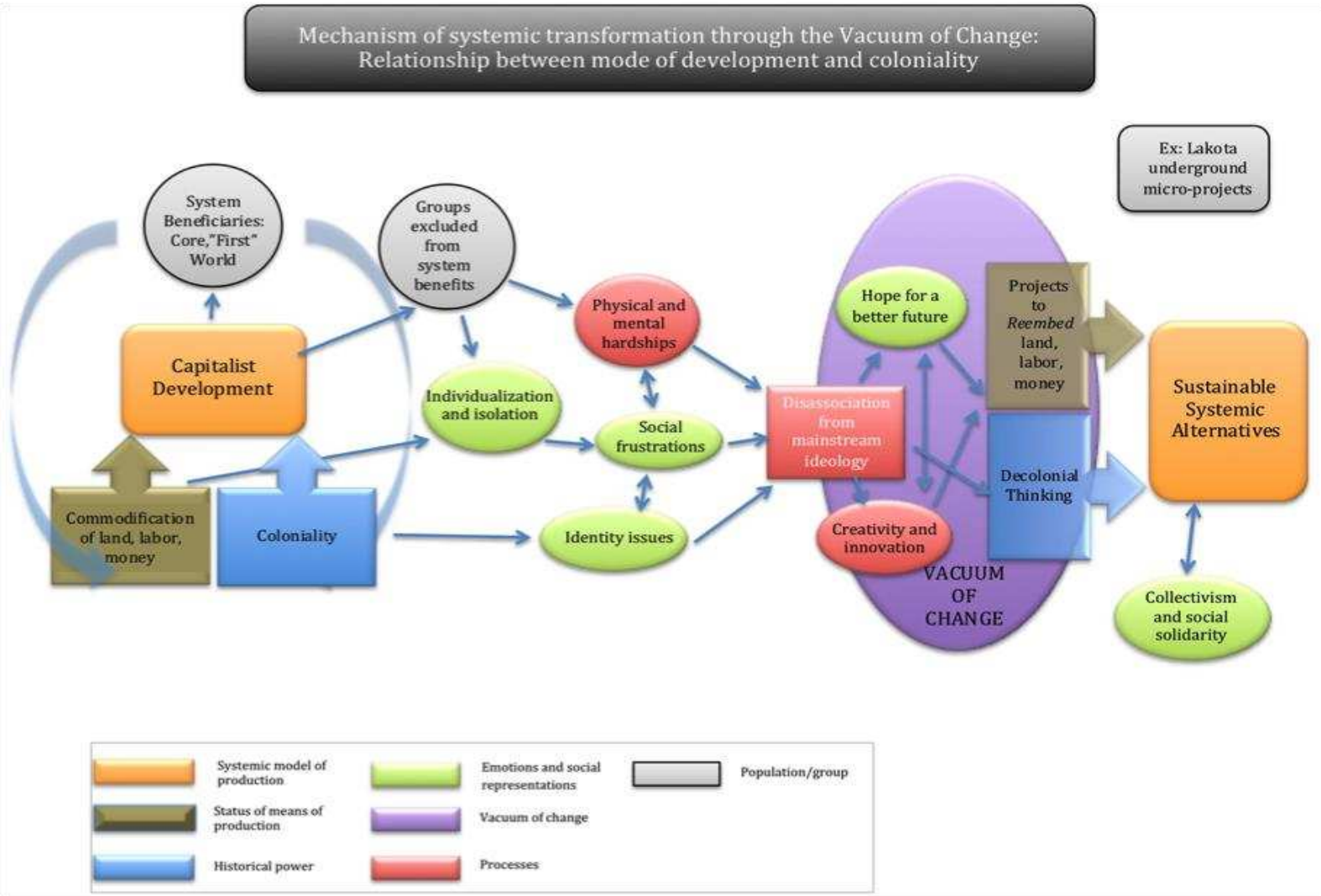

Figure 7.1 Collective effects of the vacuum of change

No sustainability without decoloniality: the missing link

Another significant statement of this work is that it brings up clearly the existing link between sustainability and decoloniality. This link suggests that attempts to bring in sustainable change will fail globally if they miss on the deconstruction of the colonial patterns that structure the world's power dynamics. Locally and globally, the exercise of coloniality is precisely what enabled ideologically and materially the global developmentalist project and its inherent unsustainability. Logically, local projects of sustainable social change on the reservation were nested in struggle of decoloniality and vice-versa.

The implications of such a statement are important. Firs they suggest that decolonial practices should be generalized for global sustainability to work. But pointing at colonial issues also points at issues of responsibility. Indeed, because of the 500 years time frame of the process under which this colonial economic order took place, it becomes complicated, unpractical and even unreasonable to point at fingers individually and keep scores of responsibilities to undertake the decolonial deconstruction and reconstruction work. Here we touch at the very sensitive string of the issue. Because we live in a legal bureaucracy, we are to "find people to pay for that". Or not. As I later explain, in this scheme, the commitment to a stronger ethical global project might have a way more effective impact than pointing finger in endless bureaucratic trials.

Still, there remains the issue of responsibility. Stating that sustainability goes in pair with coloniality automatically broaden and dilute the pool of guilt. Can we hold millions of white Americans responsible for discrepancies in Indian Country? What about non-White and non-Native Americans? Other descendants of colonized groups such as African

Americans? Tribal leaders? Contemporary leaders of corporations that maintain the global economic status quo? Leaders of companies that pollute indigenous and American land? In the case we cannot, can we all together dismiss the question of responsibility because of the impracticality and irrationality of holding essentialized groups responsible? The answer here is not a either/or type. Yet, it is nested within responsibility, identity and reparation.

First, acknowledging once positioning within the scheme of oppression does not put oppression in itself on one's shoulder. It is not because you are a White American that recognizing White privilege and the reasons why it occurs demeans you as a person. In the same time, it is not because you are a Lakota that you are not entitled to reparation and equal rights. Trigger and Axtell (1993) point that: "Few colonists personally may have killed Indians or driven them from their lands, but many were prepared to support governments that did. Most colonists also were prepared to subscribe to myths that denigrated and dehumanized Indians…Moreover, to a large extent, non-native Americans continue to benefit from the encounter, while Native Americans continue to suffer from its politically, economically and culturally"(Trigger and Axtell 1993).

Therefore, although forms of reparation need to occur, here it is collective responsibility that we are targeting, although it lives through individual expression and action. It does not mean that individuals need to pay for actions of the past. It does mean that some kind of a collective project needs to have the authority to take on collective responsibility and reparation work to colonized communities throughout the world; the idea of an overarching moral commitment to the sustainability of the human species might serve this role, whatever its shape might be. It would hold all accountable in the name of a

global decolonial project collectively recognized as vital for the species. Such a project would indeed require a deep remolding of power dynamics, which might be hard to enforce. However, such an overarching human sustainable project is currently taking place off the political stage and onto the grassroots level of action.

Contribution to scientific knowledge production and the DTM epistemology

Scientific knowledge production has a fundamental role to play in Decolonizing The Mind. By producing and diffusing knowledge we fully partake the "enactment" (Law and Urry, 2004) of reality, either sustaining the status quo, or participating to a more sustainable and decolonial future. The conscious performative production of knowledge to "make it happen" forces us to reflect upon our impact, avoid the paranoid stance of thinking the capitalist system all-mighty and immutable (Gibson-Graham, 2008:618) and integrate our work within the living community. This kind of knowledge can take its righteous place within the poststructuralist production of alternative and discourse.

It pushes us continuously to social innovation because it is nested around the notion of "social utility", thus keeping it anchored within present issues and future challenges and therefore pushing it to permanent evolution (Rodet, 2008). We are part of the ongoing construction of a sustainable global project and new paradigm for humanity. In practice, scholarship must reorient towards the new territorialization of inequalities (McMichael, 2012) and the global management of the Commons (Burawoy, 2007). To face these challenges, the notion of space must cease to be dismantled between social, environmental and economic spaces and bridge them into a contemporary theory of social action, and "subaltern" knowledge production must find its place as equally valid ways of knowing.

Informing Decolonizing The Mind epistemology

Applying DTM epistemology pushes me to a reflexive scrutiny of my work to try to "lift the imperialist shadows of sociological knowledge" (Kemple and Mawani 2010). I do not claim to be fully successful, but that is my commitment as a scientist. It implies decentering knowledge production to reframe power dynamics. As I strived to achieve throughout this dissertation, this means looking at narratives and representations and the symbolic violence they contain and let local voices express on local issues.

I am an outsider who conducted research work in Lakota country. I am aware of the symbolic violence inherent in that, and I did my best to find my place within this reality. As such, I have deliberately aimed at using white privilege for the purpose of informing outsiders of the face of Lakota ReZilience, with the hope that it best represent local realities and might participate in Lakota grassroots decolonial efforts. This process was tedious and perhaps impeded on the clarity of my work, because it entails crossing methodology and disciplines and drag in issues of sensitive complexity. Ignoring those as effected in most white research in Indian Country would have in fact been much easier and probably yielded a clearer more concise stepwise framework. I have attempted to give an account of ReZilience in all its complexity and nuances.

As for the shape of this dissertation, it had to cope with countless reflexivity points, although I do believe that to be inherent to dissertation writing. Yet, issues such as "Am I using predefined measures?" "Am I projecting on what measures mean?" "Am I representing the data accurately?" "How does my position within the colonial spectrum influence my perceptions?" were structuring the building of this work and weighted heavily on its arguments. As a white researcher, I was trying to recount Lakota initiatives

from first account Lakota perspectives. I used the discussion of resilience to structure the colonial debate, and showing how depending on the framework, Lakota grassroots initiatives are perceived as resilient. Since I present this analysis within a non-Lakota framework, Lakota grassroots initiatives seem to stand out as an ideological and normative rupture. Yet, from a Lakota endogenous framework, these initiatives are presented and lived as a resilience continuum to the framework of long-term sustainability. So positionality matters, and such positionality is inherent to colonial dynamics, not to objective criteria for applying Eurocentric concepts such as resilience.

Instead, understanding ReZilience challenges western cosmologies and ways of being, from social relations to means of production, and so on, which also take on different terminology from a Lakota perspective. These projects testify of the endurance of the Lakota cosmology, and of the vivid expressions of Lakota ontological norms into grassroots forms of change. That is why, Lakota grassroots sustainability is nested within Lakota spirituality and completely different relations to the earth and all things, which defines entirely distinct conceptions of the land, of work, of the economy and of timelines. In essence, ReZilience challenges "the secular self-understanding of modernity that is constitutive of the social sciences" (Casanova 2006: 20) and therefore participates into the decolonial project. Yet, beyond recalling local accounts, I can also draw from my analysis concrete contributions to DTM as a growing epistemology.

Theorizing white privilege in DTM

Here, I must specify what often confuses people and scholars alike. In a recent video, decolonial scholar Sandew Hira described decolonial thinking, not a struggle against the "West" as a place on the map, against Whites or whiteness as a race or skin color, but

against racially constructed historical materialist systems of oppression that must be named. The same way that "Lakota" means way more than an ethnic background and embodies a entire epistemology, so does the term "White", that is used along with the term "western" to describe these systems of oppression in regards to colonial history. The use of these words is meant not as a racial statement but as critical and analytical terminology for a lack of more explicit terms, and because the use of these words took a vital place in defining these systems of oppression.

Following DTM epistemology and reflecting upon how this work in Lakota country could help deconstruct white privilege and western hegemony, I relaized that white privilege and white saviorism function as a protective mechanism that prevents Whites from engaging in a DTM epistemology and instead protect epistemologies that help them conserve white privilege. Indeed, as I showed, Lakota relations to the outside are nested within integrated mechanisms of white supremacy and white saviorism that function as cognitive barriers against effective decoloniality.

To begin with, non-Lakota outsiders exercise their first white privilege on the reservation by entering and exiting the reservation as they please, whereas most Lakotas cannot afford to travel past a few miles. Then, they come as volunteers to offer or even pay to partake local camps to give hours of their time to local projects. Such labor is used precisely because Lakota workers struggle with making ends meet and cannot afford to work for free for weeks at someone else's place. Then, most outsiders talk of their mission on the reservation as one helping poor Lakotas, displaying clear features of white saviorism, where the volunteering experience is described as one providing help and rarely as one receiving help, whereas all came to either learn skills or feel good about their work.

The lack of reflexivity on the true nature of White/Lakota relationships is also a pattern of white saviorism. When historical trauma is discussed by White Outsiders, it is thought of as a past history of tense or abusive relations between the US and the Lakotas, but rarely as a continuum in which individuals still play a major role. When the latter is acknowledged, it never reaches back to impact positioniality, where the outsider thinks of his/her position as embodying white privilege and reifying colonial patterns and wishes to modify it. Reflexivity stops at the level of cultural curiosity and a desire to respect cultural norms, but the perceptions of volunteers on positionality is usually consistent with universalist white discourse.

Such patterns and lack of reflexivity towards race and privilege issues come from the universalist framework of white privilege, that sets the positionality of Whites as supposedly neutral; a privilege that they believe awarded to them by the epistemological superiority that the Enlightement as a model for mankind fostered in western societies. The latter moved the ideological center of western society from a mystified God to a mystified Man with God-like attributes (Grosfoguel 2011). Implicitly believed white superiority empowers them with the impression of neutrality and objectivity and the illusion of speaking as an "unsituated self" (Grosfoguel 2011). It is easy to realize how unsettling the issue of white privilege is for Whites. When asked to reflect upon "white privilege", they often react as if facing an accusation, of which they can be nothing but innocent. On this account, the very existence of "white privilege" is relegated to a matter of "white" racism by western narratives, as if such thing existed. Since there is no system of oppression that based an entire world-system and division of labor on a claimed inferiority of Whites in regard to another group over a significant period of time that still pertains to

today's world power dynamics, there can be no such thing as white racism from a DTM perspective.

Thus, benefiting from "white privilege" is not a personal demeaning statement; it is a fact tying to a person's objective privileges due to the simple color of his/her skin, the symbolic violence it entails and the privileges associated with it by subsequent positionality within the aforementioned systems of oppression. However, if white privilege does not impute motives, clearly the denial of it participates in maintaining colonial oppression. Yet, denial of power dynamics is part of a "white veil", which prevents Whites from realizing the oppressive nature of their positionality and passivity towards experiences of the racialized and the colonized. "Part of the Eurocentric myth is that we live in a so-called "post"-colonial era and that the world and, in particular, metropolitan centers, are in no need of decolonization" (Grosfoguel 2011). This ties to the very reason why deconstructing white privilege is so essential to the decolonial project.

Part of the process of deconstructing white privilege first comes through the acknowledgement of its very existence and how it affects one's positionality in the world, including myself: "I am White. This gives me privileges, challenges and responsibilities. I believe it to be one of them to realize and apprehend the effect of white privilege; first to my life and to this of others". Such a commitment yields from that realization and this of passivity in maintaining systems of oppression. However, it comes with an acceptance of a different place in the world. Lifting the veil on white privilege is an unsettling journey in one's identity process. As a white scientist who has experienced that process, I can say that it forces you to step up against your internalized oppressive mechanisms, i.e. 1) learn when to step down, 2) develop a sense for situations where you just need to listen to others'

narrative, 3) accept to be confronted with your own privileges, 4) acknowledge that white privilege still lives in your unconsciousness and 5) accept that you will never be non-white. Argument number 4 highlights the fact that fighting white privilege is a process that has a start, a wake up point, but no clear end boundaries or deadlines. Argument 5 is also particularly troubling, because it ties to one's desire to socially belong and the complexities of identity formation. As such, a decolonial white individual will always feel estranged from both non-whites and also whites who have not lifted or acknowledged the veil of "white privilege". That is an aspect of identity to consider and face as a white researcher engaged in DTM epistemology, but it also ties precisely to the role of white researchers in eliciting white privilege. As white researchers we should step out of the white veil and not being afraid out of conformity or allegiance to colonial universalism to use appropriate terminology such as coloniality, white privilege or for that matter, western developmentalist ideology.

In postcolonial studies literature, there remains a lot of debate of whether or not the debate is geo-political because expressed within the north/south dichotomy. This causes a lot of confusion because "it is important here to distinguish the 'epistemic location' from the 'social location'". The fact that an individual, community or people are "socially located in the oppressed side of power relations does not automatically mean that they will think from a subaltern epistemic location. Precisely, the success of the modern/colonial world-system consists in making subjects that are socially located in the oppressed side of the colonial difference, to think epistemically like the ones on the dominant positions" (Grosfoguel 2011).

The solution to such a dilemma is to look beyond narrow essentialized territorial or cultural statements into the ramifications of colonial dynamics, as I have tried to show with the complexity and evolution of being Lakota. The key to a epistemic and social decolonial system lies in the existence of a pluriverse, that deconstructs the hegemony of western epistemology and put Lakota and other subaltern epistemologies and knowledge production as equally valid and participating into the global management of the Commons.

The ReZ as a guide to global sustainability

"Unfortunately, colonization and the false premise that there are no legitimate alternatives to the market system serve to weaken the confidence of Indigenous people and challenge one's ability to imagine anything other than economic development as a viable pathway to resurgence"(Corntassel 2012). However, expressions of ReZilience as practical solutions to local issues embody a larger sustainable project for mankind that is not nested in ideological but rather in practical, survival type of sustainability. The systemic transformation here is not conceptual but presents itself as the only viable alternative to unacceptable conditions of living, as testifies this grassroots project manager:

> *We're already at a survival level. Most of our survival is trait based. We have some memories that are ancient that have carried over through the last three generations and we kind of know how to do it so we're not working from a baseline 0 like western culture is. They don't remember how to do it that way. We do to a degree so we can share it. But it's being lost. I think it's even our responsibility to share it and I mean there's no way with everything that's going on outside beyond natives, with the hidden issues and climate change, etc…they're trying to recognize it that this place, this thing we're on, Uncimaka is a living breathing entity and we are just kind of a disease and we have to figure out how to be a beneficial thing cause' (in fact) we are not killing the planet. The planet will do what it needs to survive and it will kick us off at any given point. We better stand against us, and that's our mistake because even with the nuclear stuff…We polluted a section of the earth, it will evolve and species will evolve to deal with that, but we won't. We're just gonna die.*

This survival-based environmental consciousness and care and practices of sustainability testify of the prime position for Lakotas, along with systemic "margins" with similar practices, to lead us in the needed transition towards a sustainable future. Because these projects take place as a grassroots response to systemic risks, their entire organization and innovation revolves around sustainability and effectiveness. They are not concerned with selling goods, marketing technology or patents, and conserving a status in the market economy. They are concerned with self-sufficiency and sustainability only, which gives them a tremendous comparative advantage; their innovation is only concerned with effective sustainability, which explains the profusion of grassroots responses and projects. They are working and engaging human creativity beyond the need of capitalist enterprises; they are to a great extent free from the system and therefore the best suited to guide a transition towards an alternative global sustainable project.

"Native perspective has been a key to opposition of the exploitation ethic since the beginning remains so today. The native reverence for and interaction with the environment gains popularity as the ecological crisis become more acute. The environmental movement often seeks to replace a logic of exploitation with one of reciprocity" (Corntassel, 2012). Of course, the issue of means puts in question the large-scale applicability of such a process. But that is not the point. What we can learn from Lakota sustainability is not just a recipe to build cheap houses or get better garden yields. Of course, some of the local technology offers interesting ideas for cheap out of market sustainable solutions. But beyond, Lakota ReZilience shows the possibility for alternative frameworks than capitalist developmentalism as a world model. It shows how the revalidation of indigenous knowledge can point to viable paths to sustainability.

Discussions of alternative economic projects; epistemology, scale, limits

The discussion around social change and alternatives to the capitalist developmentalist model is blooming in scientific and applied knowledge production and often takes place within post-marxist epistemologies. One common perspective encourages the emergence of alternative economic models implying the respect of the three pillars of sustainability discussed in the Brundtland report (United Nations Brundtland Commission 1987), i.e, economy, environment and people in all market related activities. Such models are often discussed within the growing paradigm of Social and Solidarity Economics, that fosters an economic model that places the human at the center, and decenter the importance of economy as a means to serve the common good, which connects to a thriving environment.

Wright's (2010) definition attributes to social economy the potential to move beyond capitalist economies and values by subordinating and undermining capitalism as action and thinking. Social and Solidarity Economics entail nuances. Indeed, Social Economy tends to represents the status-based alternative to mainstream Economy whereas Solidarity Economy represents the activity-based alternative. A bank formed as a cooperative might qualify as partaking social economy whereas it in fact contributes to reifying the economic status quo equally to a regular for-profit status company. Initiatives of solidarity economy are preoccupied with the quality of the activity performed and its impact on the three pillars on the long run. Projects often coincide with grassroots, small-scale, low-funding initiatives that share some of the particularities exposed in chapter 5. Traditional forms of Social Economy can include CSAs, social projects reinserting marginalized populations within professionally active populations, etc. But it can also

include enterprises with a traditional business status which activity is dedicated to the "social good".

The risk of social economy projects lies within its integration within the system. That scale of action can be appropriated by actors aiming at new profits rather than participating in the responsible search for real alternatives, that can be found in structures such as 1) green-washing industries, for instance biofuels, etc. (Bonds and Downey, 2012), 2) some highly capitalist branches of social economy looking alike capitalist structures, for example "mutual" banking, "cooperative" supermarket chains, etc. In general, we can say that this risk occurs anytime an alternative project grows in side and needs more capital assets (Evans, 2012) and therefore might slip to "the other side". However, the bare of this risk is also the sign of the takeoff of alternative economy as a viable option; indeed, as it grows, it comes to compete and threatens mainstream economy, the latter therefore fighting back by incorporating it within.

Within this post-marxist epistemology, one might point at that social economy can metaphorically represent large-scale projects on the Rez because they initiate projects guided by strong ideals of change with local particularities. And grassroots projects could fit into a solidarity economics initiative. We can debate whether solidarity economics is a useful framework to discuss global systemic change. It can gather projects from around the world under the assessment of the participation of their activity to the long-term common good, therefore potentially fostering a pluralist economy, or the "pluriverse" advocated by McMichael (2012) and Grosfoguel (2011) for a sustainable world system.

Such projects participate in the creation of viable socially and culturally appropriate alternatives, yet also partake the global "sustainability project". They also show how

geographically apart actors can produce local responses to global issues, and be united under the goal of producing "social utility". However, similar to other post-marxist critiques, the emergence of paradigms such as solidarity economics under-theorize the effect and impact of power dynamics in initiatives. It remains a western paradigm that internalized "universalist colonial neutrality". It can only be useful if it is applied within a decolonial analysis.

Towards a decolonial sustainable world-system

In the wake of increasing polarizations and crisis within the capitalist world-system, such the effects of climate change, increased social-economic vulnerability and the resulting growing instability of the world political and economic structure, so will increase the stakes of the emergence of a sustainable world-system. Such a global phenomenon will increasingly require strong real economies nested in localized production and distribution systems. For Adger (2003), "coping with the vagaries of a variable and unpredictable physical environment requires resilience, but so does coping with the vagaries of market instability that inevitably come with globalization" (Adger, 2003:3). Here, globalized capitalism is clearly stated as a disturbance. I will go further and claim that this very disturbance also keeps people cognitively dependent to it and prevents the emergence of real systemic alternatives.

The stakes will set primarily about food, water and energy reliance, therefore redefining priorities over protecting land rights from environmental destruction, fighting land grab, protecting access to the Commons and redefining a mode of production that does not alienate its capitals. Such a change will require the concurrent involvement of policy-making, civic engagement, and social-economic revolutions. The key debate lies in the

process upon which such changes actually take place. Postmodernist, postdevelopmentalist and environmentalist theories agree that unsustainability is caused by an unsustainable human societal paradigm of resources management and consumption that precipitated the anthropocene. Such views give precedence to economic oppression over other forms that come as collateral to relations of production.

From a decolonial perspective, economic oppression is but one element in the larger frame of the coloniality of power; an entanglement of political, sexual, epistemic, economic, spiritual, linguistic and racial forms of domination that together form the current world-system (Grosfoguel 2011). This perspective clearly speaks to the complexity of levels of oppression observed on the reservation. There land, labor and money commodifications form the material base of oppression upon which hegemonic ways of being are being coerced onto Lakota people, such as: western notions of time, work, family, private property, education, success, personal accomplishment, governance, etc.

On the other hand, findings clearly show that local expressions of social change consistently address these issues holistically as if they were inseparable. Projects of practical sustainability are nested within decoloniality, as assertions of alternative ways of being. Lakotas experience coloniality as a package and express ontological alternatives as a package. They do not need to theorize the link between decoloniality and sustainability; it clearly appears under the form of *Wolakota*. Current attempts to initiate change in Indian country emerge from a colonial experience of the world. Unsustainable capitalism is but one face of the colonial experience of the world. Therefore liberation schemes take place within decoloniality. And emerging alternatives to capitalism come to life on the reservation as a decolonial project.

This has valuable implication for understanding the mechanisms and effectiveness of social change and systemic transformation, as well as for the transition towards a sustainable world-system. Indeed, the experience of coloniality may be exacerbated in peripheral areas, yet it sets relations of power at the heart of the system's function. Despite the growing understanding of the need to transition to a sustainable human way of life that will drastically transform the way we produce and consume, there is a crucial omission of considering coloniality as a relevant systemic engine, and therefore a link missing in theorizing global systemic transition towards a sustainable future. Indeed, from this analysis it becomes clear that shifting colonial power dynamics will be a preceding factor to the reorganization of world resources in redefining a sustainable world-system. The decommodification of land, labor and money cannot occur without a deep decolonization of the world-system ethos.

This consists first in challenging what Grosfoguel (2011) calls the capitalist/patriarchal western-centric/christian-centric modern/colonial world-system and secondly in replacing it with a decolonial pluriverse where multiple ways of "understanding and being in the world" cohabit while adhering to a paramount project of sustainable management of the Commons. Such a shift requires that capitalist hegemony and its accompanying sense of immutability is deconstructed and that cosmologies such as the Lakotas' find a place in the global production of knowledge. The first issue is complex because nested in the irrationality of the capitalist ethos and its enduring protective mechanism that convinces its actors that "there is no way out" and no alternatives, despite systemic dysfunction. The more efforts tend to intensify, the more resistance to change occurs because actors remain too dependent on the benefits and power dynamics of the

mainstream capitalist economy. This is why understanding the mechanism of paradigm shift in individuals is very crucial to this issue.

The "vacuum of change" informs us that the disassociation from the capitalist ideology only occurs when material distress is accompanied with 1) a feeling of rejection, of not belonging and 2) a solid ideological alternative to base alternative projects on. Although observed in the off-grid movements growing inside the western ideology and often led by whites that is perceived as radicals by systemic standards and representations. In order to firmly operate that shift into further disassociation and reattachment to an alternative ethos, people need to feel that they will benefit more from the alternative than the existing capitalist ideology. Such a cognitive shift cannot occur while western developmentalism remains the world hegemonic model.

This is why practices of Decolonizing The Mind are required as a first step to allow the graft of a sustainable global project for humanity. This can be fostered by the systemic deconstruction of white privilege (see previous section on scientific and DTM contributions). By decentering and shifting focus of the world-system ideology, decolonial practices might challenge the status quo and the very existence of hegemonic world system. This is why the recognition of alternatives needs to operate beyond marginal spaces such as the reservation and within the western world. Or in other words, the focus needs to be shifted epistemically from western ideology to marginal systemic production. This process also fosters the need for decolonized white/non white international relations.

Decolonizing international relations

The decolonization of international relations is primordial to the success of a sustainable decolonial world-system and requires not only a deconstruction of unequal

relations of power and wealth but its ideological foundation; the representations of colonial capitalism. This occurs under two main forms: 1) how the colonized perceives the colonizer and 2) how the colonizer perceives the colonized. The relevance of such stakes is confirmed by their omnipresence in the definition and operationalization of Lakota/Whites relations and how it impacts ReZilience. Of course, group perceptions of themselves are equally important in building alternatives but might not greatly add to the present argument.

Thus, how the West perceives the colonized remains nested in beliefs of cultural and ideological supremacy as exposed in the previous section on decolonizing white privilege. This not only establishes and maintains unequal access to world resources but also sets the ethos that validates and legitimizes such discrepancies to western ears. Relying alternatively on the developmentalist and universalist projects and their philosophical, religious and economic tenets, that ethos reifies the existence of white exceptionalism. It also maintains colonizers relations to the rest of the world under the yoke of white saviorism; or the belief entertained by western norms that their countries indeed use their greater power and material ascendance to serve others/subordinates. Such a belief must be deconstructed and such relations challenged.

Deconstructing white saviorism must occur ideologically, materially and systemically. We must come to replace these biased views of the Other with alternative endogenous perceptions of people by themselves and accept them as equally valid to others. Such a massive endeavor has mostly ideological, political and economic tenets. Through education and concerted effort, western hegemonic ideology might be replaced by a pluriverse. Some of the steps entail: 1) challenge western historical narrative, 2) systematically deconstruct poverty porn and white saviorism, 3) foster equal political

participation and consideration of all nations and/or peoples, 4) set alternative epistemic frameworks in the political conversation that would combine different ethos. However, due to the effect of white double consciousness, such as process might take long and not go smoothly.

Individually, resistance often takes the shape of growing white supremacy and the defense of imperialist ideology, as a way for the colonizer to maintain the status quo that defines his/her place in the geopolitical order. Alternatives should be able to stand against such resistance, yet a coercive stand would continue on the path of reacting to colonial relations. Instead, such a stand should seek to work on ways to offer a better alternative to the colonizer and make individuals realize that their present and future is better off in a sustainable decolonial world-system. This effort should be part of decolonial researchers and activists' agenda. It needs to constitute globally a visible enterprise of demystification of the ideological narratives of western colonial developmentalism.

Additionally, there shall be no possible decolonization of international relations without some form of material restorative justice. That is to find ways for western core nations or groups to be held accountable for what can truly be identified as their responsibility, i.e. spoliation of land resulting from a violation of treaty. Reconciliation will come from a massive western political move towards restoring land-based rights (Corntassel 2012:95). As for responsibilities that cannot be clearly identified, they need to be narrowed down as much as possible to identified tasks that can be performed towards reparation and taken onto collective responsibility. As I later explain, such an alternative implies a shift in levels and forms of governance and territories management.

The other flip of the coin of decolonizing international relations stems from how the colonized perceives the colonizer. The reservation does not escape the trend found in colonial contexts where the colonized' struggle to affirm existence induces the paradox of existing in two worlds, resulting in experiences of ill fitting in both. In some instances, the urge to exist pushes the colonized to become a "little colonizer" (Memmi 1991) and compete with the colonizer. Such competition first condemns the "little colonizer" to fail but also participates in legitimizing the hegemonic framework by the scare presence and sometimes pride of colonized "assimilated" who praise the colonizer ethos. This dual struggle and colonial double consciousness manifests in some peripheries by a deification of the white western model, personified in the white man, who still receives favorable treatment and consideration as he ventures in colonized territory. In the reservation, such deification does not occur because of the heaviness and cultural demystification of the *wasicu* ethos. However, in both cases, demystifying the core is needed to restore an accurate vision of what the western world-system actually currently looks like.

Although still thought of as set of ruling nations, as a byproduct of globalization, the current world economy is not anymore representative of a pyramidal, core-periphery hierarchy defined by its geographical lines (Hoogvelt, 2001:63-119). The word "development" itself has changed to a definition of "participation in the world-market" (McMichael, 2012:113). Reflecting the new international division of labor, the world geopolitical status is now determined through the realm of transnational corporations (Hoogvelt, 2001: 43-62, McMichael, 2012:126), new financial flows and information networks required to master the rules of the trade, etc. These changes have set a new mode of international trade that overtook the role of the state and is characterized by a lack of

visibility of the trade flows and real-time information, which renders the making of an international mode of regulation extremely difficult (Hoogvelt, 2001:119). This new economy is therefore faced by the necessity to provide economic regulation to a world of which boundaries are more flexible and changeable than ever.

Today's world is one of internal conflicts between international flows, while, in the meantime, entities -not necessarily countries- realize not only their "absence in the game" but increasingly the "absurdity of the game". Along with the modification of the world economy, the transformation of power dynamics under colonial capitalist oppression has also highlighted the fundamental contradictions of the capitalist model, and has faded the hope that the subordinates would ever access that "promised land" of accumulative wealth/happiness. We find that pattern reflected in the experience of the absence of benefit from the system and the resulting disillusion felt in the reservation, and by other peripheral entities. Once demystification of the core is established and not longer deified or accepted as sole systemic model, decolonial perceptions of the colonizer by the colonized can start taking place.

Changes of respective perceptions would therefore challenge perceptions and long-lasting constructions of power relations to the other. Then, decolonial international relations could set in with drastically different centers. Indeed, the last but not least element of decolonizing international relations relies on challenging the very idea of core and peripheries so dear to world-systems analyses. If they may be useful to show unequal relations of power, such categorizations also unfortunately take place within the western supremacist ethos and reaffirm epistemically its very existence. The more it is thought as a core, the more it maintains grassroots systemic alternatives in the shadows of marginal

existence. Instead, what needs to happen is a decentering from the core, materially, ideologically and epistemically. This also relates to groups' perception and dipslay of themselves. The question to ask is formulated by Grosfoguel (2011) as such: "How would the world-system look like if we moved the locus of enunciation from the European man to an Indigenous woman in the America?".

Or in other words, how does the world look like from a Lakota perspective? This does not just mean decentering of worldview but also deconstructing ontological truths. How is history lived and felt, how is Lakota experience listened to and displayed in the scheme of competing worldviews? This research provides key elements in explaining the process of empowerment it requires. First it must allow endogenous expressions of existence to express such as Wolakota. This research showed us that Lakota conceptions of race were forged within colonial relations and thus had to position themselves for survival. However, recent reinterpretation of race, notably the modification of the local meanings of *Wasicu* and *Lakota* to be based in behavior and value-systems show us a redefinition of claimed ethnic identity; Lakotas stand against the racialized self and introduce alternative ways of defining "us" versus "them". The differentiation process thus disassociates from colonial struggle and exists within its own epistemology. This challenges colonial perceptions of Lakotas by themselves but also sets their ontological framework as valid.

Finally, after the modification of colonizer/colonized perceptions and the emergence of visible ontological alternatives, the final step to decolonize international relations is to allow these expressions to set legitimately and recognized by a pluriverse of worldviews. As a result, the hegemonic construction of the current world-system is challenged and transforms international relations as a set of global exchanges between

multiple cores that are not narrowed down to the definition of few nations, but organizes a real interaction between equally valid and recognized worldviews. The bounding point of such a complex worldwide organization need to gather these worldviews around a common and federating global project.

Defining a viable systemic alternative: forming new allegiances

Beyond the challenge of coloniality, the last step needs to foster the adherence to a collective project of sustainable management of the Commons while respecting the decolonial pluriverse. This in itself forbids the definition of the answer into centralized forms of governance. One of the keys of the "sustainability project" is said to be democratic participation (McMichael, 2012), or expressions of radical democracy (Peet and Hartwick, 2009). It arises at the corner of the conscientization of the civil society and its engagement into global action. This induces a "sustainability project" that makes actors accountable for their actions, and highlights the long-term responsibility of human action towards the social, the economic and the environmental (McMichael, 2012). Such stakes are still valid within a decolonial frame.

Indeed, particularly in the reservation, the key to shifting paradigms takes place at the grassroots level, and in the local capacity to increase participation in manufacturing social change. Such participation is encouraged via regaining control over land, labor and money as resources but also as an epistemological battle. The stakes here are to avoid the further hijacking of our planet resources by the increasing destitution of the power that we conceded via centralized decision-making to transnational corporations. Such stakes are now about protecting land from global land grab, pressing regulations to protect grassroots access to air, water, etc.

This research locates the emergence of systemic alternatives in the grassroots. This is where social change is the most viable because it can be anchored in local capacity and local cultures. In fact, this research also showed how large scale initiatives cannot truly reach systemic alternatives, because they inherently divert their focus to levels of change that are not anymore representative of the interest of the local level. That level is reached on the other hand by grassroots organizations without necessarily having the means to enable it. Therefore, the stake of this new sustainable project is to disempower pyramidal centralized institutions and empower the local level.

It has no predefined shape but it involves the deconstruction of boundaries between civil society and governing structures. Indeed, in our modern democracies, the governance of civil society is limited to a structurally narrowly defined voting power. Other ways to engage require considering a new social contract of rights, duties and responsibilities. To tackle effectively global issues, responsibilities must be reunited to address the collective issues and not these of separate entities (McMichael, 2012; Wright, 2010). The state can be conceived as a partner to civic engagement holding rights and duties to civil society. In return, this collaboration is seen as the only empowering possibility for civil society to engage within social change (Evans and Heller, 2015) and therefore partake both global consciousness and its enactment.

As I explain, engagement in change is related to the existence of a strong and safer ideological basis for alternative. This can be made possible by creating a new belief in a sustainable societal project. It "enacts" the future (Law and Urry, 2004) by establishing a "new social contract" based off a system of new social regulations. Such a contract could for instance be set around a Polanyian response to global distress, with an underlying

commitment to decommodifying land, labor and money, while engaging in a collective responsibility to protect them as Commons. This is where alternative epistemologies such as the grassroots Lakota projects' can serve the global systemic transition. This new social contract would be intrinsically holistic and could not be narrowed down to one or two aspects of sustainability, and abolish the current practice of offsetting negative impacts on some parts of the global ecosystem with monetary contributions to other parts. If the Commons are not longer thought as separable, such practices can no longer exist. This shows one of the possibilities of allowing non-capitalist ideologies to inform the conversation on the face of global sustainability.

This research suggests that in order to be effective, a constructive alliance towards global sustainability must combine with the decolonial task of breaking historical power dynamics. No global sustainability without human alliance and there is not human alliance without processes of reconciliation, which start with that global acknowledgement of protecting the Commons. Yet, decoloniality imposes the respectful validity of different functional ontological frameworks and the non-imposition of one above the other, while the common good overarches. The same question can translate into the acceptance versus rejection of difference and therefore ties to identity issues. In "Wolakota…"I have shown that to a degree, the formalization of group boundaries is essential for individuals to maintain a sense of belonging and self-esteem. In other words, differentiation is essential to strong identity maintenance. This is itself is a statement that some degree of essentialization is necessary to facilitate the differentiation process. Then, how does group diversity coincide with a non-hegemonic unifying project?

As I discussed, identity boundaries can be enabling or disabling. Both types are defining the identity process but one allows collaboration whereas the other fosters violent confrontation or ignorance. It is clear though, that whether groups tolerate each other or not is not based on the boundaries themselves but on how they are mutually perceived and thus on their properties instead of their strength. Identity is envisioned in terms of a quest for self-discovery and fulfillment, where concepts such as the search for a sense of belonging and a strong self-esteem become primordial concerns of the self (Taylor 2002). The latter are vital for the emergence of a global sustainability project that is also a pluriverse of solid distinct and yet compatible worldviews and identity allegiances.

It is the role of scientific knowledge to actively participate into shifting boundaries properties from disabling inter-group communication to enabling it. Instead of attempting to minimize the strength of difference, work must be directed towards the mutual acceptance of strong identity assertions, which occurs through two types of public sociology actions: 1) fostering the tolerance of groups specificities and 2) encouraging a superseding interest in partaking a global "sustainable project" based on protecting the Commons. It is only with the concurrent effort of the grassroots, academic and political levels that we can potentially succeed towards building a decolonial sustainable world-system, which is without a doubt the greatest challenge of our time.

Conclusion: From Pine Ridge ReZilience to World sustainability

This dissertation endeavored to problematize the concept of resilience, and use it as an angle to explore Lakota grassroots social change from a decolonial framework, on the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River Indian Reservations, SD. It is based on local demand for further exploring the factors of success and failures of grassroots projects in Lakota

country. This work's arguments result from years of collaboration with local grassroots projects managers to further understand the mechanisms of emergence and durability of these projects. I owe this work only to their inputs and the lasting relationships that have developed in the field.

A transdisciplinary literature served the sensitive task to address the complexity of local realities in the midst of colonial struggles. After eliciting epistemological issues with the concept of resilience and demonstrating the need for a decolonial knowledge framework, I have shown how endogenous representations such as the local concept of *Wolakota* embody an alternative way of being that permeates into grassroots projects, and structure what could be called local ReZilience. It entails specific criteria that uniquely shape grassroots Lakota projects. These projects demonstrate innovative and creative responses to local problems under practical forms of self-sufficiency targeting food, water, shelter, energy, etc.

For Lakota grassroots actors, ReZilience is about answering local risks in a unique and culturally appropriate way. It is about creating safe spaces that decommodify land, labor, money and time as an answer to coloniality and the result of survival practices that shape the local System-D economy. Both establish what can be called a practical sustainability, where sustainability is not an intellectual project, but presents itself as the safest viable project against the risks posed by the colonial capitalist model. By contrast, local large-scale organizations aim at similar visions but their efforts remain caught within structural dependency to the latter, which prevents them from developing systemic alternatives.

Problematizing Lakota grassroots sustainability within a critical read of resilience allows the address of epistemological issues of coloniality. In the literature, community resilience is in fact presented as the capacity to adjust to traumatic stress to come back to a functional state of society. In decolonial analytical terms, it locates the "appropriate" response to systemic trauma in the capacity to integrate in the very system producing this trauma. This is doubly problematic because it condemns Lakota initiatives to be measured against a western framework and also because it epistemically closes the door to systemic alternatives. This is why local defining ReZilience is in fact a colonial issue.

Colonial trauma and its subsequent socioeconomic vulnerability also hide the scale and depth of social change as it operates in Lakota country, particularly at the scale of small grassroots "bringers of change". Therefore, individuals and groups demonstrating tremendous strength and persistence in the implementation of local sustainable projects as an attempt to decolonize their reality might not see or display the visible outcomes of change and success than western standards. The colonial framework that still operates on the Rez, along with the mainstream discourse giving power to external and misconstrued definitions of local reality plays the role of a suppressor of the visibility of local ReZilience. This is what this dissertation is partially intended to offset.

When the concept of resilience serves to promote economic integration and place the Rez within the western developmentalist scale, it is but an additional colonial tool that further maintains the inability of the Rez inhabitants to function in a modern western framework. When it is used to frame a locally appropriate expression of grassroots sustainability, it helps describing complex social-ecological-economic dynamics and the necessary processes involved in implementing sustainable living. The concept of resilience

is then only useful heuristically and if properly defined by local voices. This is why this work offers a more realist reflection of the reasons for enduring failure of the development model in the Rez, which is revealed by the decolonial analysis of resilience.

On a broader spectrum, this research contributes to redefine resilience and its uses or misuses in the academic world, and questions the construction of knowledge as it relates to underlying colonial dynamics. It also helps define the key elements of grassroots success on Lakota land. It provides some tracks to support long-term sustainability in Indian country and in a larger scale, because it questions issues of power and representations in local development. ReZilience is also an expression of local emancipation from coloniality, and this work can be seen as a tool to support Lakota political resurgence.

Additionally, one of the key findings of this research is the revelation and articulation of the intricate link between sustainability and decoloniality. In other words, local grassroots initiatives show that in the present western-white-patriarchal-developmentalist world-system, sustainability projects fail to offer a sustainable alternative if they are not the product of a decolonial approach. This particular link informs most of our theoretical argument on the cognitive thresholds that push locals to engage in systemic alternatives. This mechanism, metaphorically labeled the "vacuum of change", operates as a joint result of a material and ideological disassociation from the capitalist ideology and the cultivation of an alternative ideological framework on which systemic alternatives can emerge and thrive.

Subsequently, the dissertation uses the findings from the Lakota context to broaden the discussion to the conditions of emergence of collective social change, and come to a healthy living alternative to global capitalism via the adhesion to a sustainable global

project for humanity. Such a project must be based on a decolonial pluriverse and an overarching binding project while maintaining cosmological and epistemological group differences. Practically, decoloniality can be enforced through the systematic deconstruction of white privilege, Eurocentric and ego-centered epistemologies. This sets the base for the practical role of social scientists in the decolonial project.

In summary, this work participates in: 1) supporting the efforts of grassroots efforts of social change on the Pine Ridge and Cheyenne River Indian reservation, 2) advancing knowledge about Lakota grassroots sustainability and ReZilience, which can be used locally and in the West, 3) establishing links between decoloniality and sustainability and their expressions in the Lakota context, 4) creating tools to better understand mechanisms of change such as the "vacuum of change" and 5) advancing decolonizing methodologies, sociological knowledge, the reliability of complex field qualitative methodology and alternative ways of knowing.

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APPENDICES

I. IRB APPROVED VERBAL RECRUITMENT/CONSENT (WITH IDENTIFIERS)

(In conversational style, included in interactions provided by the GPMI mapping project)

"As a side project of the GPMI, I (Aude Chesnais, researcher at Colorado State University) am conducting a research study on the efficiency of grassroots development on the Reservation. The Principal Investigator is Dr. Kathleen Pickering from the administration of Colorado State University (as you may know, she has worked on the "Rez" with local people for more than 20 years) and I am the Co-Principal Investigator as part of my PhD in Sociology at Colorado State University. This research is not funded by any source but my own, and I choose to conduct it as part of my dedication for supporting grassroots projects on the Reservation. It will also help me complete my dissertation on resilience and the vectors of social change on the Pine Ridge Reservation.

If you are interested, I would like to discuss with you the evolution of your project and the achievements and obstacles that you are meeting as you carry it on. This interview will last approximately an hour, although we may shorten or extend it, as you feel comfortable. Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may change your mind, withdraw your consent and stop participation at any time.

I will be collecting information about your project's characteristics along with contact information. This information might result in others being able to identify you in the study. I am aware that while you may want to advertise your project, you might not

want anyone to be able to associate you with some comments that emerged out of the interview. You can decide which part of your information you wish to remain confidential. Please be certain that my priority is to follow your decisions about your own information. Your data will be kept in my private computer and not to be shared with anyone but you, the PI and myself. Before I report and share the data with others, I will combine it from all participants. During that process, I will be able to keep your identifiers (names, identifying information, etc.) or delete them from the data, so that nobody but me will be able to know who said what. Whatever your preference might be, please let me know. There are no known risks to you in this research. I hope that your participation in this research will increase the visibility, communication and interconnection of grassroots projects and therefore positively impact local sustainable development and maybe open new opportunities for your project.

Would you like to participate?"

If no: "Thank you for your time."

If yes: Proceed to interview guidelines

You may contact me anytime if you have any questions about this research, its process, findings, etc; Aude Chesnais, 970-214-2673, audechesnais@hotmail.fr. If you have questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, you can also contact Janell Barker, Human Research Administrator, Colorado State University: 970-491-1655.

II. GENERAL MICRO-PROJECTS, RESILIENCE AND SOCIAL CHANGE INTERVIEW GUIDES

Introduction:

1. Pre-requisite: The participant has agreed to partake an approximate hour interview as part of my research project on the efficiency of grassroots projects in implementing social change on the Reservation.
2. Proceed interview at a convenient time for the participant: respect of Indian time and interview rhythm.

Interviewer:

1. "Before we start this interview, do you agree to be tape-recorded?"
    a. If no, take notes on interview
    b. If yes, proceed:
2. "Would you like to have access to the interview tape and/or transcript?"
    a. If yes: express that wish in the beginning of tape
    b. If no: specify on tape/notes

Interviewer: "This is Aude Chesnais on (date), interviewing (name of participant) who agreed to partake the study on the efficiency of grassroots development on the Pine Ridge Reservation. He/she will be known as participant number (1,2,3, etc.). He/she has (agreed/disagreed) to be audiotaped and has (requested/not requested) to have access to the tape and/or transcript of the interview. He/she wishes to have her data made anonymous in regards to (project-specific data/location/both)".

Interview guide ReZilience research:

The following questions are general guidelines and follow the process of open-ended responsive interviewing where participants' responses trigger the questions. These are to be considered as themes that will be sought throughout.

About engagement and the role of grassroots development in local social change

1) Please introduce yourself and your project

2) What is the main goal of your project? Other goals?

3) How long have you been working at it?

4) What have you accomplished?

5) Did you encounter any obstacles? Disappointments? Explain

6) What are the specificities of small-scale/grassroots projects like yours?

7) Why did you choose to engage in this kind of projects?

8) Why do you think people engage in this kind of projects?

9) What is the long-term vision that you have for PR/CR?

10) What could help accomplish this vision?

11) Outsiders often depict a negative view of Pine Ridge and focus only on the challenges faced by the people. What do you think about it?

12) Are there words in Lakota or local words that best express the vision expressed by your project?

About the GPMI: Mapping project

1) What do you think about this idea of the map?
2) How does it answer a local need?
3) Why did you want to be part of it?
4) Will you actively participate in this platform?
5) Do you think creating a mobile device application for the map would be useful?

Interviewing facesheet:

Interview ID:_____(Participant number-interview number)_____

Interviewee English

Name:_____

Interviewee Lakota

Name:_____

Tribal member (circle): yes no

Mailing address:_____

City_____State:_____Zip code:_____

District:_____

Tiyospaye (if applicable):_____

Location of meeting:_____

Name of grassroots project:_____

Mailing address (if different): _____

Email address(es):_____

Phone number(s): _____

_____

Reminders to find the house/project

location:_____

Confidentiality status: ☐ Agrees for project-specific data to be identified

☐ Agrees for location to be identified

☐Agrees for both location and project-data to be identified

☐Identity to remain confidential in both

Additional comments:

III. DOCUMENT ANALYSIS PROTOCOL

Name	Organization 1	Organization 2	Organization 3	Organization 4
Contact				
Type				
Size				
Organization Rationale				
Document type				
Length				
Purpose				
Description Projects				
Main themes				
Discourse key points				
Resilience elements				

IV. DECLARATION OF PAR PRINCIPLES (WEST, ET.AL, 2008)

Table 1
Declaration of Principles

These principles of Participatory Action Research (PAR) are based upon the underlying concept that such research is a dynamic process in which all participants possess the courage to engage in collaboration, a goal of which is to balance the power differentiation between and promote the self-actualization of collaborating parties. Essential to the success of such collaborations is a commitment by the large partner organizations to engage the community in ethical, equitable, respectful, and socially responsible ways.

- **Openness and Honesty -** We attempt to be transparent about our abilities and aims and encourage input and advice from the community.
- **Clear Communication -** Clear and inclusive communication among all participants is of the utmost importance throughout our collaboration.
- **Commitment against Harm to the Community -** No harm should ever come to the community as a result of this collaborative research process or its findings.
- **Commitment to Resources -** We are committed to helping the community with any available resources at our disposal and locating other partners in community enhancement and resilience.
- **Valuing of Local Knowledge and Input -** Local knowledge, reciprocal input, and a sharing of an understanding of each participating groups' respective values are the foundations upon which this research is built.
- **Inclusion of the Entire Community -** We aim to be inclusive of all parts of the community, and to assist in enhancing personal/collaborative capacity among all collaborators.
- **Flexibility -** We aim to be flexible in all of our collaboration, not only with the time and scheduling of meetings, but also with the approach of the work we are collaborating to do.
- **Consideration of Time -** Research and other activities must be conducted in a manner that complies with the time schedule and needs of the community.
- **Placing the Vision of the Community First -** The highest priority will always be placed upon the needs and concerns of the community. We recognize that the community's willingness to collaborate with us is a privilege, and not a right, and will do everything in our power to continually earn the privilege of working with the community.
- **Reflection -** Ongoing participatory evaluation is critical. The PAR process is one of nearly constant reflection, and we are committed to continual and collaborative evaluation of the research.
- **Sharing of Research -** All information gathered in our collaborations will be available to the community to use as it deems appropriate. With the concurrence of the community we will seek to benefit other communities experiencing similar challenges by sharing outcomes of the partnerships.

V. LIST OF DTM PRINCIPLES

List of mechanisms of colonizing the mind

Mechanisms

1. Producing knowledge that "proves" superiority of whites and inferiority of blacks: white supremacy is not KKK or fascist but embedded in western culture (contrary to Patterson and Davis Brion Davis)
2. Thanking colonialism for things it has not done
3. Blaming the victim for the crime
4. Promoting self-humiliation, shame of yourself, self-hate (who taught you to hate the color of your skin, the texture of your hair etc), putting collaboration on the shoulder of the victim
5. Promoting self-glorification of whites
6. Linking color to superiority/inferiority
7. Delete the memory of oppression and exploitation: amnesia forms 1
8. Delete the memory of non-white contribution to humanity: amnesia forms 2
9. Breaking black identity
10. Promoting "divide and rule", "divide and conquer"
11. Promoting "Uncle Tom"
12. Installing taboos, what can you not say
13. Using hypocrisy as an instrument of "colonizing the mind"
14. Promoting authority of knowledge of SC
15. Identifying with white suffering while neglecting black suffering and manipulating emotions
16. promoting a small part (colonial or friendly leaders) as speaking on behalf on everybody, ex: the "international" community
17. promoting the illusion of joint responsibility in oppression: shared history, common history
18. manipulating terminology: "Sepoy mutiny" instead of "Liberation war", translate kalifaat as Empire. We say "British India" and "Dutch Guinea" because it sounds glorious but we omit to say "Nazi Holland", or "German-France". We say "white culture" but "wild coast, black wilderness". We create links to race or religion following the same terminological adjustment: we say "Arab slave trade" but not "White slave trade".
19. Promoting the concept of rise of civilization but denying decline of civilization. Weber; positioning the rise of the West as the rise of human civilization (from white perspective including Marx)
20. Determining the righteousness of killing (whose lives matter when)
21. Accentuating the "bad" traits of the colonized and leaving the contradictions out
22. Producing and spreading lies and fantasies: "fairy tales of Mayflower", "land without people for people without land"
23. Repression of freedom of thought, especially DTM thinking, ex: DTM thinkers are "interested", "politicized" or "fanatics", "exaggerating victims"
24. Encouraging the diversion of research and information (keeping people busy with non-relevant questions)
25. Blurring the distinction between form and essence: violence is the form but repressing or liberation violence are different when perpetuated by the colonizer but not different for the colonizer
26. bagatellizing: compare a serious colonial fact to something less serious and detour the terminology, which makes it sound less serious, ex: "modern slavery"
27. Techniques of legitimizing colonialism: Don't ask the question who asked you to come, pose questions like why people revolt, plural society etc.
28. White savior complex
29. presenting conquest as a right (indigenous peple did not cultivate their land) or a duty: invading Iraq saving mankind
30. racism as joke, anti-racism as serious
31. put a framework (black are uncivilized) and then put forward (yes/no) propositions within that framework: hamas is terrorist. Only question left is: yes or no? Only answers are superficial
32. The selected few blacks as good, ex: we like Oprah or Michael Jordan

VI. INITIAL CODES CLOUD

atlas.ti XML

XSL Stylesheet: **HU Tag Cloud with Code Colors** - A simple tag cloud viewer browser for HU entities

Description: A tag cloud is a visual depiction of content tags used in your HU. More frequently used tags are depicted in a larger font; display order is alphabetical. This lets you find a tag both by alphabet and by frequency. Codes can also show their assigned colors (both in the code selection and the result box).

HU: **Wolakota-the face of Rezilience** by **aude chesnais**

HU Tag Cloud with Code Colors

[Break from success from western definition] [Breaking free from dependency] [Bureaucratic organization] [Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe] [Conflict with others] [Creativity] [Family relations] [Grassroots] [Hardship] [Historical trauma] [Is Lakota] [Is Native] [Key for success] [Lakota and the American Dream] [Lakota spirituality] [Landscape restoration] [Learn from the Rez] [Legal issues] [Maintenance of dependency] [Measures of success] [Pine Ridge] [Project leader] [Promoting native knowledge] [Reciprocity] [Role of the organizations] [Survival] [Sustainability] [adjusting to challenge] [aim small] [alternatives to mainstream model] [anonymous] [appropriate technology] [awareness of global challenges] [awareness of local challenges] [awareness of western ideologies] [big impact] [care for humanity] [challenges to success] [christianity] [collectivism] [colonial administration] [corruption] [critical of charity model] [cultural stealing] [cultural tradition] [culturally-appropriate] [curiosity and skepticism] [decolonizing money] [decolonizing the mind] [doing it yourself] [donating] [ecological housing] [economic alternatives] [exchange of services] [exploiting suffering] [fear of abuse] [finding labor] [finding money] [finding resources] [forced developmentalism] [governance] [health issues] [heart money] [history of violence] [holistic thinking] [hope in a better future] [housing issues] [importance of kinship and

social link] [improve social link/collaboration] [insistance on ethnic legitimacy] [jealousy] [key quotes] [lack of mainstream economic opportunity] [lack of perseverance] [linking geographical distance] [local impact] [local solutions] [local support] [local work relations] [long-term responsibility] [long-term thinking] [make a better life] [marketing] [need for cultural ID] [need for group unity] [need for healing] [need for nature] [no benefit from capitalist model] [non-native] [not giving up] [pan-indian ID] [people are very sensitive] [people's caution] [people's reaction to challenges] [personal development] [personal reward in the task] [planting trees] [positive thinking] [poverty and harsh conditions] [poverty porn] [power dynamics] [probing question] [producing agricultural goods] [producing knowledge] [projects failures] [projects timeline] [promoting an individual] [racial divide] [reaction to new ideas] [relation to whites/wasicu] [relations to outsiders] [relationship between lakotaness and capitalism] [relationship to place] [renewable energy] [reputation] [resources and land theft] [rezilience-direct response to trauma] [sense of global responsibility] [sharing food] [sharing knowledge] [showing the good] [social change] [social movement] [solar pannels] [solidarity] [sovereignty issues] [transportation issues] [trust building] [universalism] [uranium mining] [use of social media] [using nativeness to legitimize action] [value system] [vision] [volunteering] [want to be helpful] [water issues] [why they participate in the rez] [work ethics] [youth]

VII. LIST OF CODES ATLAS TI

ATLAS.ti Report

Wolakota-the face of Rezilience

Codes

Report created by aude chesnais on Nov 13, 2016

- *"universal" message with limited effects*
- *accountability*
- *aim small*
- *alternatives to mainstream success model*
- *anonymous*
- *appropriate technology*
- *awareness and critique of western ideologies*
- *awareness of global challenges*
- *awareness of local challenges*
- *away from real impact*
- *belief in developmentalism to improve life*
- *belief that end of income poverty is resilience and happiness*
- *breaking free from dependency*
- *care for humanity*
- *challenges preventing success*
- *Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe*
- *christianity*
- *church group*
- *coding 1 completed*
- *cognitive freedom change*
- *collaborating with same operational level*
- *collectivism and solidarity*
- *colonial administration*
- *conflict with others*
- *connection to international knowledge*
- *controversial project or paradox*
- *corruption*
- *creativity and resourcefulness*
- *critical of charity model*
- *cultural stealing and killing*
- *cultural tradition and pride*
- *culturally-appropriate*
- *curiosity and skepticism about others*
- *decolonizing money*
- *decolonizing the mind*
- *desire to increase transparency*
- *developing financial literacy and wealth*
- *doing it yourself*
- *DOL*
- *donating*
- *ecological housing*
- *economic alternatives*
- *edge areas*
- *effectivity of grassroots level*
- *effectivity of org level*
- *essentializing nature, wilderness and culture themes*
- *exchange of services*
- *exploiting suffering*
- *fear of abuse*
- *fighting for freedom*
- *finding labor*
- *finding land*
- *finding money*
- *forced developmentalism*
- *give Earth a chance*
- *Grassroots*
- *health issues*
- *heart money*

- *help people help themselves*
- *Historical trauma and violence*
- *holistic thinking/interconnectedness*
- *hope for/make a better future*
- *housing issues*
- *improve social link/collaboration*
- *increase visibility*
- *insistance on ethnic legitimacy*
- *internalized oppression*
- *Involvment and impact of bureaucratic organizations*
- *Is Lakota*
- *Is Native/other than Lakota*
- *Is non-Native*
- *Is Outside org*
- *Is project beneficiary*
- *Is project leader*
- *jealousy*
- *keep going*
- *keep the org alive*
- *Key for success from locals*
- *key quotes*
- *lack of mainstream economic opportunity*
- *Lakota dream is not american dream*
- *Lakota spirituality*
- *land issues*
- *landscape restoration*
- *language*
- *laziness or exhaustion*
- *legal issues*
- *limited access to local knowledge*
- *limits economic benefits to members*
- *linking geographical distance*
- *local governance*
- *local hardships*
- *local solutions*
- *local support and involvment*
- *local work relations, partnerships and ethics*
- *long-term thinking*
- *looking outward*
- *maintenance of dependency*
- *marketing for projects*
- *measures of success*
- *modern day warriors*
- *need for cultural ID and political existence*
- *need for group unity*
- *need for healing*
- *need for social change*
- *no benefit from capitalist model*
- *no choice besides sustainability/practical sustainability*
- *one strong personality ties it together*
- *Outsiders' perceptions of Natives*
- *pan-indian ID*
- *people are very sensitive*
- *perceptions of org on selves*
- *personal development*
- *personal reward in the task*
- *Pine Ridge*
- *planting trees*
- *positioning in research*
- *positive thinking*
- *poverty and harsh conditions*
- *poverty porn*
- *power dynamics*
- *priority of committment*
- *producing food*
- *producing knowledge*
- *programs and logistics*
- *projects failures from locals perspectives*
- *projects timeline*
- *promoting an individual to represent change*
- *promoting native knowledge*
- *PTSD*
- *racial divide*
- *reacting to challenge*
- *reaction to new ideas*
- *reciprocity*
- *relation to whites/wasicu and outsiders*
- *relationship to place and care for earth*
- *renewable energy*
- *reputation*
- *resisting white man's success ideal*

- *rethorical words*
- *rez as guide in sustainability*
- *rez as youthcamp*
- *ReZilience-local response to hardships*
- *sense of global responsibility*
- *sharing food*
- *sharing knowledge/space of learning*
- *short term action*
- *showing the good*
- *social movement*
- *solar pannels*
- *sovereignty issues*
- *storytelling*
- *survival*
- *sustainability*
- *tiyospaye and family relations*
- *transportation issues*
- *trial and error/learning by doing*
- *trust building*
- *uranium mining*
- *use of social media*
- *use of stereotypes*
- *using nativeness to legitimize action*
- *vacuum of change*
- *value system*
- *vision*
- *volunteering*
- *want to be helpful*
- *water issues*
- *western financial terminology and economic model*
- *white guilt*
- *white privilege*
- *why people "come help" in the rez*
- *wiping the browness out*
- *youth*

VIII. THE "GRASSROOTS PROJECTS MAPPING INITIATIVE"

The GPMI: growing the grassroots

The Pine Ridge Grassroots Projects Mapping Initiative or GPMI constructs an online interactive map of grassroots projects achieved or currently in progress on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, SD. Designed to be self-operating at terms, this project fits within the PRLIS or *Pine Ridge Land Information system*, a GIS tool developed by the Fort Collins-based organization *Village Earth*. The PRLIS is a "an easy to use tool for Lakota land owners to access information about their lands and resources[22]." The GPMI project primarily encompasses two stakes: 1) the improvement of the practical exchange of information to better inform residents about local grassroots opportunities and their evolution, 2) the challenge of political status quo and stereotypes about local creativity and socio-economic capacity.

It takes the form of a website joining projects social media features and geolocated data about participating projects. It works as a server where projects managers log in and share whatever they deem appropriate about their work. When I started the project in 2011, I first laid the dots myself on a google map log. The project required a real developer's skills and took a more professional turn in 2015; when I was joined by CSU computer science intern Lauren Dittman. She handled the practical aspect the site and developed an online platform for it from the needs that we previously discussed. The site it still in progress.

22 See http://lakotalands.net/prlis/ and http://villageearth.org/pages/global-affiliate-network/projects-pineridge-reservation/learning-about-our-lands-a-lesson-plan-for-youth-on-the-pine-ridge-reservation. Village Earth's reliability in terms of accurate information about Pine Ridge and community-based development was underlined in this August's *National Geographic* journal, which consecrates its pages to the reservation. See http://villageearth.org/pages/global-affiliate-network/projects-pineridge-reservation/village-earth-contributes-to-latest-national-geographic-on-lakota

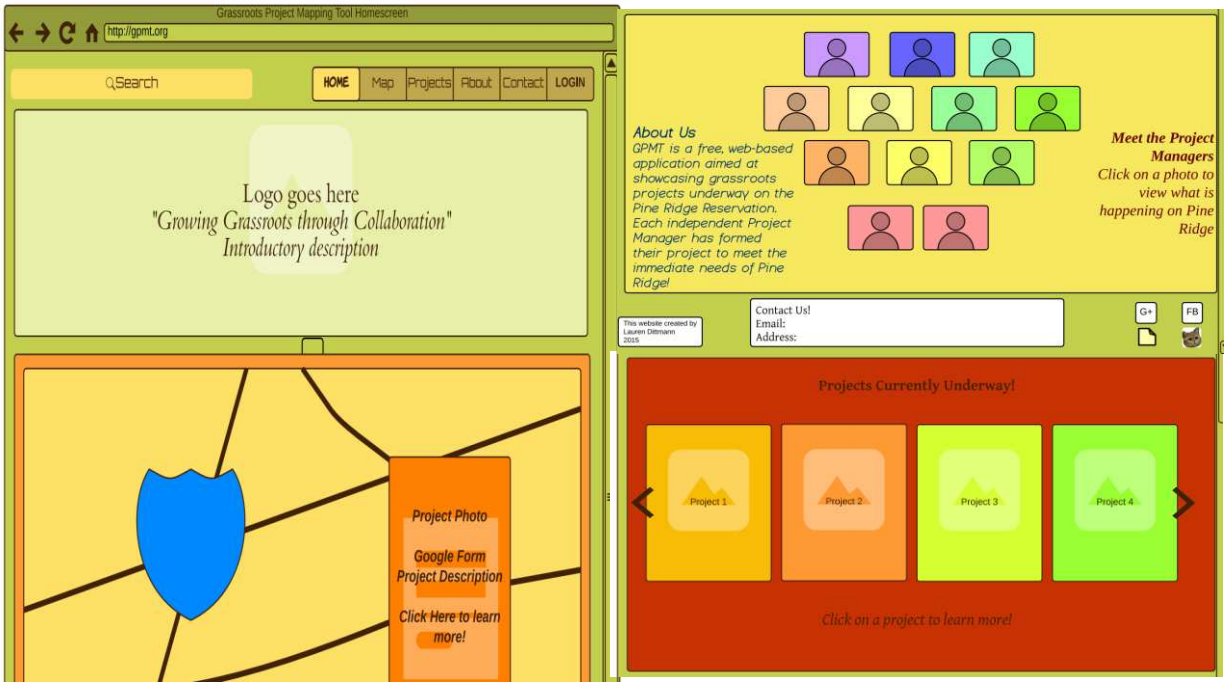
At terms, the tool is to be handed to grassroots managers for regulation, although it still works autonomously with site's members owning and controlling their information. it is our hope that it will 1) enhance the visibility of local projects, 2) increase the existing knowledge exchange occurring through grassroots projects operationalization, 3) serve as an additional source for finding resources and finally 4) encourage further local initiatives.

The configuration of local development is primarily focusing on the exchange between the centralized tribal government and outside sources of investment, funding or trade. This scheme tends to ignore grassroots projects, leaving them in the dark while stereotypes about "inactive" residents and "inexistent" local development are perpetuated. This project is based on the principle of "making the invisible visible", where thanks to mapping technology, the highly colonial process of "selective visibility" can be challenged, and real local activity can be shown and shared. This process is unique, as a geographical tool allows to work towards the strengthening of communities and the implementation of social change from within while focusing on practical projects, fostering sustainable growth, and post-colonial healing.

As a fervent defender of the usefulness of sociology in practice, I also believe, as others do, that since the production of knowledge is never neutral, it should aim at supporting the greater good. The following project emerged out of a direct local need for a better representation of local creativity and will hopefully serve as a booster for the development of grassroots sustainability on Pine Ridge.

GPMI Project's details:

<u>Visuals</u>



Who is concerned? Grassroots, visibility and scale

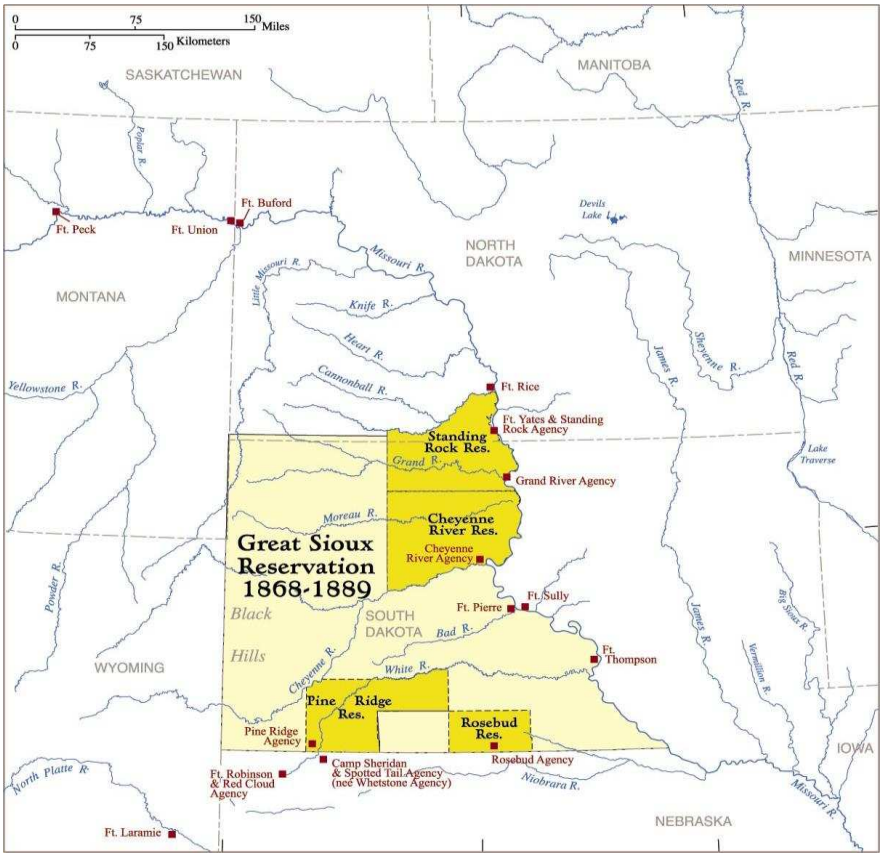
The project lists up and is open to grassroots projects, here understood as local projects aiming at improving residents' life conditions and implemented by individuals or groups of individuals, families or small organizations. The term has been determined according to two criteria. First, it had to be differentiated from small businesses, for which such a map was already created by the *Pine Ridge Chamber of Commerce* (see Appendix X). Secondly, a distinction must be made between the grassroots projects and the structures that support them because: 1) some complete more than one micro-project, 2) some structures do have a legal status, others are more informal and 3) the legal status of the structure supporting the project cannot by itself determine the qualification of a project as grassroots, because non-for profit structures do not necessarily serve the residents' interests, whereas for-profit structures do not necessarily go against their interests either. Therefore, what matters is the project's small size and local scale, along with its impact

towards social change and local sustainability and the map specifically distinguishes between the structures and the projects while ensuring the presence of both of them for clarity purposes.

One key component for success

To be fully complete and remain true to its rationale, this project requires a key component: the local ownership and management of data. Failure in doing so results in the biased selection of projects among others, dismissing the entire empowerment process. Even following a specific protocol, this bias would impose a new scheme of boundaries on the reservation, recreating a “selective visibility” of local capacity. Therefore, the map needs to be available to all for adding, modification, and control over the data concerning their projects. Although I started this map with projects I was aware of, which is useful for the construction of the map's format and data organization, it should be made public and advertised as a primary way to share information about local projects based on Pine Ridge.

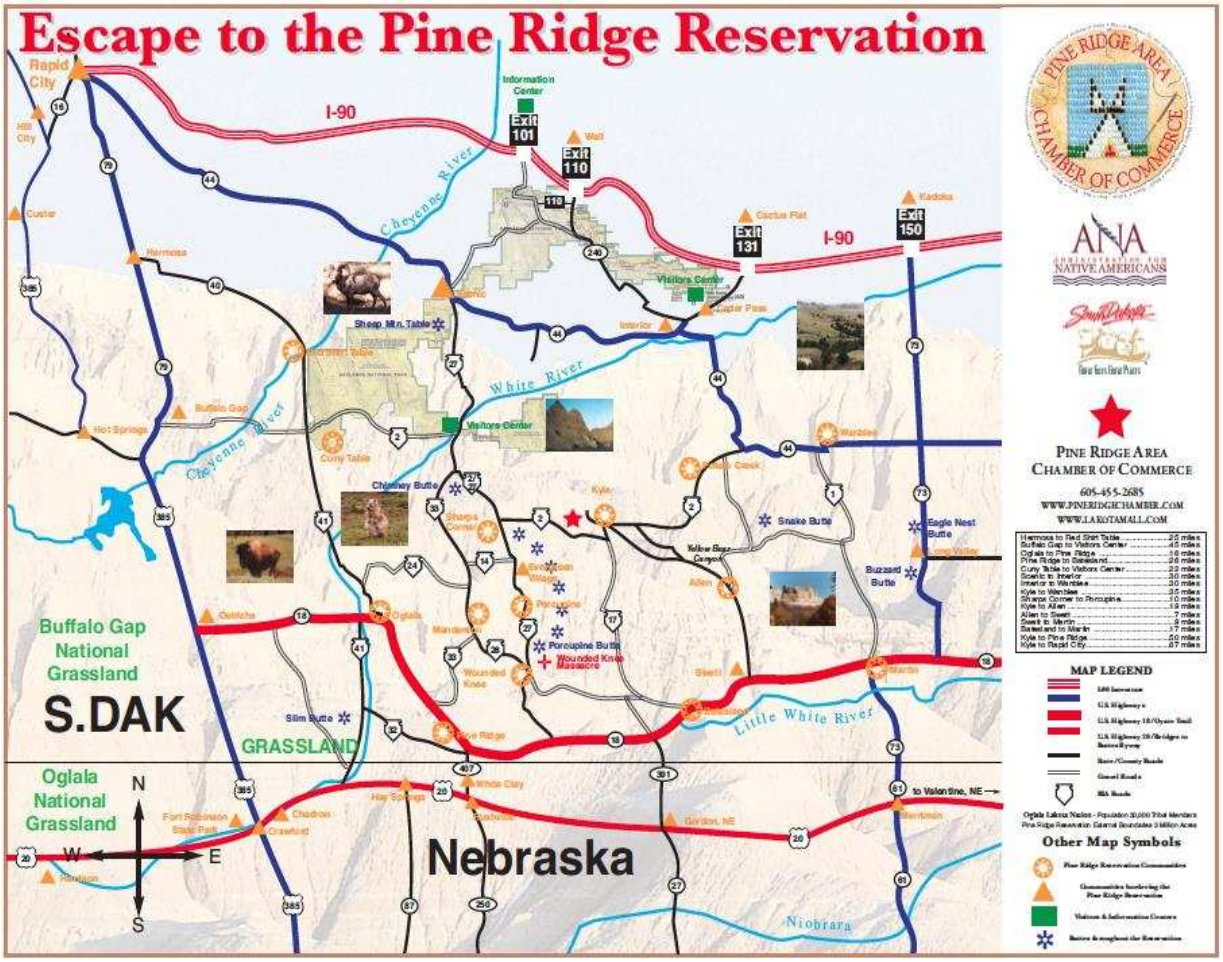
IX. MAP OF LAKOTA RESERVATIONS BOUNDARIES FROM 1868-1889



MAP OF THE GREAT SIOUX RESERVATION & SURROUNDING AREAS (1868-1889)

Map adapted from the Handbook of North American Indians, Plains vol. 13, Smithsonian Institution.

X. ASSET-BASED MAP OF THE PINE RIDGE RESERVATION FROM PINE RIDGE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (PRACC)



XI. VISUALIZATION OF THE EXPERIENCE OF COLONIALITY BY LAKOTA ACTIVISTS