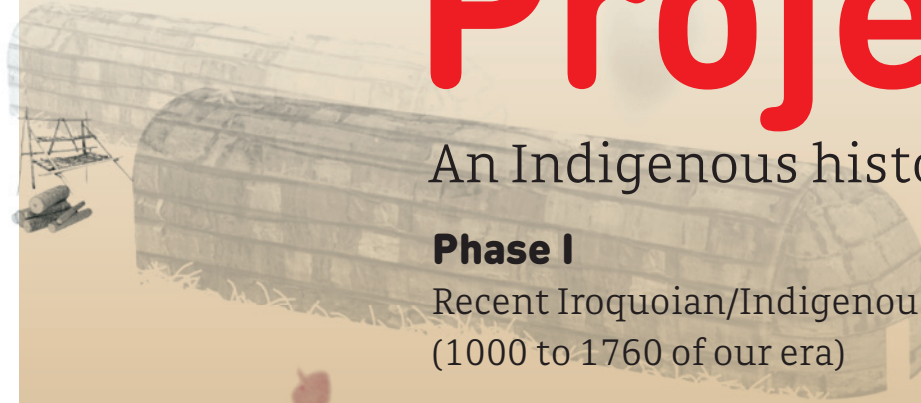


Tiohtià:ke Project

An Indigenous history of Montreal

Phase I

Recent Iroquoian/Indigenous occupation
(1000 to 1760 of our era)



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Project 2019–2022 October 2018



POINTE-À-CALLIÈRE
Montréal Archaeology
and History Complex
Montréal



Université 
de Montréal

Introduction

Within the framework of this project, Pointe-à-Callière in partnership with Montreal University and the Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke wishes to increase our knowledge on a rather unknown aspect of Montreal's heritage, the greater St-Lawrence Valley and the Adirondacks (Kanièn:ke): The indigenous presence over the last four millenniums. It is through the lens of the various encounters and the imprints that these have left throughout history that the partners wish to develop this unique project characterized by openness towards one another.

In this era where the notion of «reconciliation» is frequently discussed and where the Council of the City of Montreal has recognized the indigenous contribution to the history of Montreal through the acceptance of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples followed by a major change to the coat of arms and the city flag, the partners view it as particularly pertinent to allow archaeology to develop new perspectives in this field. We also wish that these new perspectives contribute to innovative reflections and discussions between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples on hot current news subjects such as the recognition of Montreal (Tiohtià:ke) as traditional Indigenous Territory.

The Montreal Indigenous Heritage is largely unknown to the general population which is a phenomenon rooted in various causes. First, a feeling of “otherness” between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples allowing the latter group to often ignore the indigenous group; secondly, the relatively recent development of Quebec professional archaeology with the first archaeological sites being started in the 1960s, compared with much earlier archaeological research in Ontario and the United States. Indeed, it is only in the early 1980s that we started to preoccupy ourselves with Indigenous artefacts and their documentation. Unfortunately, urban development before then has altered many of the archaeological footprints left by the first inhabitants of the region.

Recently, important discoveries have been made by archaeologists through research and heritage management projects. However, no in-depth analysis or synthesis has been made on the historicity of these indigenous establishments for the Montreal archipelago, the greater St-Lawrence Valley and the south region of the Adirondacks despite the facts that these regions were important meeting places between different groups.

Front page:

Illustration: TKNL

1. Iroquoian vase, Canadian Museum of History collection, VIII-E-13 (Luskville, Outaouais), photo Harry Forster

2 and 6. Iroquoian pipes, Canadian Museum of History collection, BeFv-4 and BgFp-5-89, (Roebuck and Glenbrook, Ontario), photos Harry Forster

3. Iroquoian vase collar, collection City of Montreal, BfJ-03-1477 (place Royale, Montreal), photo François Gignac

4. Arrowhead from European chert, Pointe-à-Callière Collection, BiFj-101 (Foundation site of Montreal).

5. Iroquoian vase, Quebec Department of Culture and Communications collection, CaFg-01-29 (Mandeville site, Richelieu Valley), photo Jacques Beardsell

RIVER

Indeed, the St-Lawrence Valley watershed connects many waterways including James Bay, the Gulf of St-Lawrence, the heart of the continent through the Great Lakes and the Atlantic Ocean via the Hudson River. An abundant partly domesticated flora and wildlife have developed in this southern and relatively temperate environment. We perceive firsthand that this region was, for millennia, of great importance to First Nations just as it has been subsequently for Euro-Canadians and other populations up to now.

Collaborative, inclusive and sustainable

The approach follows an archaeological perspective which is collaborative, inclusive, sustainable and community-based where different positions unite towards the building of science. It accepts nuances, uncertainties and contradictions in a spirit of advancement of knowledge and documentation of the scientific evidence and traditions that exist. It is also a path towards opening the archaeological practice to new horizons.

The project is divided into two phases of realization. The first phase (2019-2021) will consist of the recent Iroquoian and Indigenous presence from 1000 A.D. to 1760 A.D. The second phase (2021-2025) will consist of the peripheral time zones of the first phase i.e. from 2000 B.C. to 1000 A.D. and then to the 18th to 21th centuries.

The Phase I research and information dissemination project is based on archaeological data and oral tradition originating from the Montreal region, the St-Lawrence Valley, and the south region of the Adirondacks. These regions have yet to be studied and compared from a global and inter-regional point of view. In addition to the three identified partners, we propose to realize the project within the framework of an enlarged partnership which will include the City of Montreal and the Quebec Department of Culture and Communications. Researchers and Indigenous teams will be integrated in the research and discussion process for the construction of a rich, plural and open knowledge base. We wish that other major collaborators such as, the Canadian Museum of History, the State Museum of New-York and Parks Canada, also join the project.

Beside the funding support hoped from the City of Montreal and the Quebec Department of Culture and Communications, a funding request will be submitted to Heritage Canada for certain aspects of the project. It is also the intent to apply for a partnership development grant to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

Scientific process and research goals

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This research project is based on a scientific investigative approach sourced by archaeological, ethnographic, linguistic, toponymical, historical and oral tradition data and information. By compiling, organizing and analyzing the available data for the territory under study, we are pursuing the following double research problematic: 1) document and understand the diachronic evolution of the indigenous occupation for the area under study, and then 2) answer contemporary questions from this data by, for example, presenting possible answers to the general population as to the correctness of considering Montreal (Tiohtià:ke) as traditional territory of currently existing indigenous communities.

The first aspect aims to provide the necessary data to feed an enlightened social discussion on the question raised by the second aspect of the project. It is an approach aimed at producing pertinent and useful knowledge that can be used both for scientific and social purposes, for researchers and society as a whole including indigenous communities (Mohawks and others). Finally, it is hoped that this truly collaborative project conceived and directed equally and jointly with an interested indigenous group will be able to contribute to the current reconciliation efforts now under way.

Traditional territory

2.1 Specific objectives

- Conduct research on known archaeological sites and collections for the area under study.
- Establish a working platform where indigenous communities, anthropologists, archaeologists, historians and linguists can work together to develop research problematics enabling them to confront and compare their visions and respective interpretations in a mutually respectful environment.
- Realize a synthesis of archaeological, historical, ethnographic and oral tradition data of the occupation and frequentation of the area under study by indigenous populations.
- Create a meeting place where different perspectives can be shared respectfully and underline the diversity of criteria contributing to the historical account.
- Complete and add to the Hart-Engelbrecht database on Iroquoian archaeological collections for Ontario and New York through the inclusion of the Quebec Iroquoian collections.
- Promote research and university education training through proposals aimed at this specified applied research project.
- Regroup the most important archaeological data of the area under study from the beginning of the Late Woodland period (around 1000 A. D. of our era) up to the British Conquest of 1760 to explore the human-territorial occupation throughout time.
- Regroup existing and create new databases (digital photography of artefacts collections, PDF documents, Master degree theses and others) and make them available to all.
- Among the new databases to be developed must be the digital photography of Iroquoian artefacts collections.
- Create a digital research tool available to the general public for access to the data generated by the project.
- Enrich the history of Montreal, the St-Lawrence Valley and the Adirondacks region through a long term Indigenous perspective reaching beyond the Euro-Canadian occupation.
- Document major changes and continuities in the landscape perception and construction of this territory by its inhabitants.

2.2 Research Themes

- Territory occupation resource utilization models from 1000 A.D. to 1760 of our era
- Material culture, ethnicity and populations movements
- 16th and 17th century history of the Montreal region from an oral tradition account and missionary/explorers writings
- Indigenous oral tradition: Accounts from elders and current community culture
- Toponymy and indigenous languages
- Cross-cultural accounts
- Decolonization of archaeology (through joint construction of knowledge and promotion of knowledge re-appropriation of the archaeological heritage)
- Collaborative and community-based archeology

Sites

Examples of archaeological sites to be studied within the Tiohtià:ke project

Montreal Area	St-Lawrence Valley	South Adirondacks
Sites du Vieux-Montréal	Pine Hill	Ganada
Sépultures du mont Royal	Roebuck	Ostungo
Sites de la région de St-Anicet	McIvor	Klock
Pointe-du-Buisson	Crystal Rock	Garoga
Île aux Tourtres	Beckstead	Cayadutta
Maison Nivard	Grays Creek	Rice's Wood
Site Dawson	Glenbrook	Schenk 1
Île St-Bernard	Summerstown Station	Getman
Maison des Marins	Droulers et Mailhot C.	Cleary
Îles de Boucherville et Ste-Thérèse	Mandeville	Atwell
Fort de la Montagne	Lanoraie	Temperance
Saut-aux-Récollets	Beaumier	Diable
Carrière du Mont-Royal	Bourassa	Bach
Pointe-aux-Trembles	Masson	Goff
Lachine (Lemoyne-LeBer)	Cap Rouge	Whitford
La Prairie	Place Royale (Québec)	Durham
Oka	Royarnois	Camp Drum
Fort Senneville	Cap Tourmente	Durfee
Îles aux Chèvres et aux Hérons	Région du Bas-du-Fleuve	Nohle

2.3 Approach

The approach is interregional: the Montreal archipelago, the St-Lawrence Valley and the southern region of the Adirondacks within a perspective of human occupation. It is also diachronic: from the available collected data, understand how human occupation of the territory was developed including how migration movements of the populations took place, the location of indigenous establishments and the relationships with the first Europeans.

We want to analyze and digitize the archaeological collections using digital photography, cartography and geolocations systems (ArcGIS for researchers, SCHEMA for the general population and Traditional Knowledge Systems for First Nations communities). This approach will enable the establishment of an interactive cartography of human activities for the area under study and will allow reflections on the cultural and ethnical relationships, population mobility and territory utilization throughout time. For the first time, we will find under the same umbrella an overview of object diversity, material used and their variation in stylistic design along with the types of activities that occurred within the Montreal, St-Lawrence Valley and Adirondacks region.

The digitization of hundreds of collections (thousands of artefacts) allows not only to preserve information for the long term but also renders research more economical and ecological (eliminating time of transport, collection manipulation and consultation, etc.). Furthermore, it promotes access to researchers, indigenous communities and the general public to large amounts of information. Therefore, digitization meets the objectives of archaeology in terms of sustainability, openness and collaboration. Far from being a herculean task, it constitutes a very realistic approach for well-planned projects, some which have already started and can be integrated into this larger project (for instance, the Hochelaga project, initiated by Montreal University archaeologists).

Analyzing existing collections rather than proceed to new field research is also an integral part of a sustainable approach. Indeed, museums, laboratories, and other archaeological inventories contain a multitude of collections that have never or hardly been analyzed by researchers. These existing collections constitute knowledge reservoirs which we want to take advantage of and assess.

Partners and collaborators

3.1 Core Partners:

Montreal University: Christian Gates St-Pierre, Katherine Cook, Isabelle Ribot

Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke: Christine Zachary-Deom and Gaétan Nolet

Pointe-à-Callière Museum: Louise Pothier and Hendrik Van Gijseghem

3.2 Potential Collaborators:

Independant researchers: Denys Delâge, Gilles Havard, John Steckley, Roland Tremblay, Lisa Phillips, Roland Viau, Sylvie Vincent, etc.

The Droulers-Tsi Ionhiakwa:tha Interpretation Center: Pascal Perron

Quebec Department of Culture and Communications: Bernard Hébert, Isabelle Lemieux and Jean-Jacques Adjizian

Canadian Museum of History: Jonathan Lainey/Eastern Canada Ethnological Division

New York State Museum: John P. Hart

Abenakis Museum: Mathieu O'Bomsawin

Parcs Canada: Martin Perron

Pointe-du-Buisson/Quebec Archaeological Museum: Caroline Nantel

Recherches amérindiennes au Québec: Éric Chalifoux

City of Montreal: François C. Bélanger

Huronne-Wendat (Wendake) Council: Louis Lesage and Jean-François Richard

McGill University: Lisa Overholtzer

UQAM: Alain Beaulieu

3.3 Collaborations for dissemination and education projects:

Archéo-Québec network (Thérèse Gabos)

Terres en vues (André Dudemaine)

Project « DestiNATIONS » (Marie-Josée Parent)

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Project realization milestones

Year 1 (2019–2020):

- Research project elaboration and work organization with the partners
- Development of a solicitation plan for potential research collaborators
- Establishment of sub-research committees: archaeology, (including geography and architecture), history, oral tradition, linguistics
- Elaboration of work plans for research sub-committees
- Setting up general coordination of the project
- Research on archaeological collections and sites and integration into the Hart-Engelbrecht database
- Development of digital database
- Development of a material culture workshop for undergraduate students in anthropology and archaeology and research projects for graduate students

Year 2 (2020–2021):

- Research on existing collections (cont'd)
- Georeferenced compilations
- Written accounts of oral tradition and ethno historical analysis
- Development of an interactive map
- Development of digital database (cont'd)
- Pedagogical activities for undergraduate and graduate programs
- Conferences

Year 3 (2021–2022):

- Archaeological collections research (cont'd)
- Georeferenced compilations
- Development of digital database (completion)
- Written accounts of research on archaeological collections
- Conferences for the scientific community and the general public
- Articles in scientific journals and to the general public
- Online interactive map
- Pedagogical activities for undergraduate and graduate programs
- Itinerant exposition, (concept and design, if financing is available)

Years 4 and 5 (2022–2024):

- Synthesis and final report
- Final interactive map online
- Final digital database online
- Setting up of itinerant exhibition (if financing is available)
- Development of an educational curriculum for school environments (primary and secondary)

Year 6 (2024–2025):

- Publications to the general public
- Itinerant exhibition (if financing is available)

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Financing

Funding requests to major collaborators:

\$450,000

Maximum allowable from Heritage Canada (Aboriginal Heritage, Museums Assistance Programs):

\$ 200,000

Maximum allowable from SSHRC (Partnership Development Program, 2 years):

\$ 200,000

Maximum allowable from SSHRC (Partnership Program, 4 years):

\$ 2,500,000

Realization