

Exactly in the Right Place

Ways of Making and Maintaining a Crow Indian Landscape

Av

Nicholas Waller

Akademisk avhandling för filosofie doktorsexamen i socialantropologi,
Institution för globala studier, Göteborgs universitet, som med tillstånd av
Samhällsvetenskapliga fakultetsnämnden läggs fram för offentlig granskning
fredagen den 4e december 2015, klockan 13.15 i sal 326, Annedalsseminariet,
Campus Linné, Seminariegatan 1.



UNIVERSITY OF
GOTHENBURG

SCHOOL OF GLOBAL STUDIES

Abstract

Exactly in the Right Place: Ways of Making and Maintaining a Crow Indian Landscape. By Nicholas Waller, doctoral dissertation 2015 in Social Anthropology. School of Global Studies, University of Gothenburg, Box 700, 405 30 Göteborg, Sweden. Language: English with a summary in Swedish.
ISBN 978-91-628-9563-1
<http://hdl.handle.net/2077/40882>

‘Exactly in the Right Place’ refers to how Crow people identify themselves within a collective narrative as a chosen people in a chosen place, centered in the Bighorn Mountains of Wyoming and Montana in the United States. This identity defines a worldview that connects them to a specific place with specific meaning, thus making the Crow different from others. The Crow as a nation meet challenges to their beliefs, social organization and sovereignty by continuing to position their identity as a people belonging to the land. Crow secure a way of life and of knowing the world through being in exactly the right place.

The main objective of this dissertation is to explore and interpret how Crows position themselves as a chosen people in a chosen place. I approach this through examining ways Crow landscape is shaped and determined by how Crow people perceive themselves in the world. The questions I ask are what does it mean to be a chosen people in exactly the right place and how is a landscape of the Crow manifested in Crow identity? Furthermore what are the strengths and strategies available to Crow people for shaping identity attached to place when challenged by the demands and norms from a majority society? I suggest that Crow people meet social, political, and economic challenges to the collective identity by asserting specifically Crow expressions and experiences of worldview to negotiate within a Crow landscape.

What I have come to understand from my research is that the inter-relatedness of place, history and spirituality mean everything when you are Crow. Life has changed in many ways for Crow and other Native American peoples in the wake of colonialism. Yet Crows have always shaped their identity attached to places informed through generations of knowledge and experience, and the process continues to be important for orientating their worldviews.

Key words: *Crow, Native American, Landscape, land, place-making, dwelling, identity, worldview, narrative, stories, colonialism, sovereignty, health, well-being, anthropology, American history, Bighorn, Montana, indigenous strategy, cosmology.*