



# Hybridization at the Neutral Iroquoian Walker Site (AgHa-9)

**Melissa Wallace**  
URS Canada

*This paper is written with the intention of exploring the approaches used to study Indigenous and European contact through discussion of the Iroquoian Neutral Walker site. The Neutral, a northern Iroquoian group, were culturally similar to other Northern Iroquoian groups in Ontario. Their settlement in the first half of the 17th century is believed to have been focused in what is now Southern Ontario, from the north of Lake Erie, to the west of Lake Ontario. Based on their placement in southern Ontario between other Indigenous groups, they were in an excellent position for trade. In an attempt to understand the ways in which Indigenous people incorporated European material culture the new concept of hybridization is proposed. Hybridization is the incorporation of European materials into Indigenous society by creating what would be considered 'traditional' forms of artifacts. In studies of culture contact and colonialism the goal has been to determine whether Indigenous people retained their material culture by rejecting European material culture, embraced European customs and material culture, or incorporated European ideas and objects to create something new. Understanding the type of response seen from the Neutral at the Walker site offers potential explanations, while also undermining arguments that privilege European motivations and allow the identification of the motives of the Neutral people. An in-depth analysis of each European trade item excavated from the site, followed by analysis of the collected data, shows that the Neutral population at the site were incorporating European items into their material culture, supporting the notion that they were hybridizing these materials, rather than simply acculturating them.*

## Introduction

In North American archaeology there has long been a fascination with the ways in which Indigenous people reacted to the sudden and rapidly increased European presence (Spicer, 1961; Trigger, 1991; White, 1974). Researchers have attempted to understand the colonial events of the 15<sup>th</sup> through 18<sup>th</sup> centuries in northeastern North America in order to create a well-defined picture of European-Indigenous interactions. The interactions that occurred between these peoples affected all cultures concerned; however, archaeological interest in culture change has especially been directed toward the effects that these encounters had on Indigenous groups

(Quimby, 1966; White, 1974). The resulting evidence was therefore skewed, as it focused primarily on European domination with little value placed on Indigenous response.

In this paper, the theoretical framework of hybridization is used in the analysis of the European trade goods located at the Neutral Iroquoian Walker site (AgHa-9) with the intention of furthering the knowledge of similar culture contact situations in Ontario. A description of hybridization theory and its origins are presented first. This is followed by description of the Walker site and its contents. Finally, the methods and results of the analysis are reported and interpreted. The results are discussed and related

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Author correspondence should be directed to [Melissa.wallace@urs.com](mailto:Melissa.wallace@urs.com) (URS Canada, Richmond Hill, Ontario L4B 3N6)

to the Neutral people's world views, including cosmological, ideological, and symbolical understandings as well as their political and social constructs. The goal of this paper is to examine the kind of response seen at the Walker site by structuring the analysis within a hybridization framework and searching for modifications constructed using traditional techniques. All of the European trade goods found at the site, including metal items and and glass trade beads, will be analyzed and discussed.

### **Culture Contact**

Culture contact must be recognized as a diverse entity. Indigenous communities in the 17<sup>th</sup> century were in a rapidly changing world of warfare, disease, and strange newcomers. For decades it was generally concluded that contact with Europeans lead to one of two scenarios: resistance or acculturation (Schurr, 2010). Resistance refers to Indigenous perseverance in retaining their way of life despite European contact, while acculturation denotes the loss of lifeways and acceptance of European culture. The frequency of European material culture found at Indigenous sites was often used to interpret how Indigenous culture has reacted (Kraus, 1944; Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits 1936; Trigger, 2006). However, dichotomous interpretations like these were limited in their assumption that a culture will fall neatly into one of two categories. They hindered interpretations of Indigenous material culture, impeding the use of intermediate stages. The mere presence of European items may not represent either resistance or acculturation. To accommodate new understandings of culture contact, an intermediate theory must be utilized. Interpretations must include the possibility of the resistance and rejection of European trade goods and material culture, complete acceptance, or a hybridization of the culture and material items. Rather than proceeding with the assumption that all Indigenous groups acculturated and adopted European items and culture, more recent studies focus on the interactions between cultures, along with the resulting mosaic, syncretism, or reformulation of the cultures in contact

(Scaramelli & Scaramelli, 2005). These studies deal with accommodation, resistance, and cultural practices of Indigenous peoples (Silliman, 2005). How foreign materials are used and integrated into Indigenous contexts and social systems are now seen as historically, culturally, and cosmologically conditioned (Ehrhardt, 2005). Indigenous people are no longer seen as becoming 'better' or 'European' through adaptive, need-driven appropriation of European items, or transforming into Europeans with their increasing consumption. They are rather recognized as creative and innovative in their integration of European materials. Therefore, approaches that simply measure quantities of trade goods are not as informative as modern approaches that take into account how material things are attached to Indigenous people (Rubertone, 2000).

### **Hybridization**

Hybridization in this particular study is defined as the incorporation of European materials into Indigenous society by creating what would be considered 'traditional' forms of artifacts. Modification to European artifacts indicates the possibility of hybridization. For the purpose of this article, modification will be defined as alterations to the material so that the artifact is purposefully changed in some way from the original form. For example, traditional techniques were often applied to European materials, especially metals such as copper and brass (Bradley, 2007). These alterations are the physical manifestation of the Indigenous culture on European trade goods. They are the result of symbolic meanings, cosmology, and other socio-political facets of Indigenous people, and can be found archaeologically.

As Hamell (2007) observes, many artifacts in Indigenous material culture had ideological and cosmological significance, including light, bright, and white objects; white marine shell; and red Indigenous copper. European trade goods were included among these significant items, especially glazed ceramic, glass, metal, baubles, tinkling cones, and beads (Hamell, 2007). These goods are found among Indigenous material culture and

their inclusion alone can speak volumes about the Indigenous culture. We can gain even more information by deciphering how these materials are hybridized between Indigenous and European culture.

European material items obtained by Indigenous populations must also be noted for their significance as objects that come from far away places. Helms (1988) proposes that space and distance are given sociological, political, and ideological significance (Spielmann, 2002). Thus, when European peoples began to infiltrate North America it was easy to place these people into existing cosmological frameworks and understandings of distant places and things (Helms, 1988). The goods coming from Europeans and their correspondingly distant places are thus accorded the same magical and symbolic potency.

The increasing acquisition and use of European goods by Indigenous populations may also be explained by a need for ceremonial garments, ornaments, and other socially valuable objects. These objects become in demand and were met with economic intensification (Spielmann, 2002). As well, any surplus can be used in exchange, furthering their importance. They are seen as unique from other material items, as well as relatively inaccessible and any burnishing, polishing, or decoration could be enhanced with modification as the item travels (Spielmann, 2002).

Hybridization, along with other approaches such as creolization and syncretism, developed in a period of post-processual thinking. A movement away from processual approaches, which emphasized quantitative studies, allowed for qualitative studies such as the one conducted on the Walker site materials. These approaches highlight that the construction of identity is not simply a response to colonialism and European culture contact, but a complex and varied process (Rubertone, 2000). Colonialism resulted in a variety of outcomes. Hybridization seeks to represent the diversity of Indigenous peoples in North America, in this case, specifically the Neutral at the Walker site. Hybridization has also

be described as "the profound ambivalence inherent in colonial situations, emphasizing the simultaneous desire for and repulsion from an object, person, or action" (Liebmann, 2013, p. 31), as well as the reworking of existing elements rather than the combination of distinct cultural forms. In other words, the hybridization of material culture may even demonstrate both the need for and rejection of European trade items occurring at the same time.

Material transformations were taking place at the same time as the historical, political, economic, and demographic conditions were changing in indigenous societies in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Rogers, 1990). Connections between artifact modification and culture contact are easy to recognize, although difficult to distinguish without more modern approaches. With the analysis of material assemblages using hybridization, it is possible to see the material manifestation of the earliest phases of alteration, innovation, and change in European trade goods (Ehrhardt, 2005). As Jordan and Schrire state, "artifacts are not merely products but also instruments used by actors in the social system" (2002, p. 241). By analyzing each artifact, it may be possible to understand the multiple intentions, actions, and social signals that an object can possess.

While some researchers have criticized or suggested caution with the use of hybridization and other theoretical frameworks such as creolization or syncretism (Beaudoin, 2013; Palmé, 2006), they are actually opposed to the use of hybridization as a way to perceive how people or culture have been changed, or hybridized, by colonialism. Hybridization in this paper is not used to identify hybridized Indigenous people. Instead, it is used to understand the ways in which material culture has been utilized, and possibly altered, in relation to the subject population, allowing for variation in culture contact situations. This is accomplished by incorporating broader concepts, including the cosmology, political and social structure, history, and interactions, perhaps altered in the turbulent times of the early to mid 17<sup>th</sup> century, of the people that

are being studied into the analysis of artifacts. It is not an attempt to understand what parts of the Neutral culture remained Indigenous and which became European, but to understand how European trade items were incorporated into their world.

European material culture need not have been incorporated at a site. When Indigenous sites with few or no European artifacts are examined, they are usually labelled as having little to no European contact. In cases such as these, unless there are historic documents detailing contact, there would be no way to distinguish the precise nature of this contact. Often sites with many European artifacts are considered to reveal the total adoption of European material culture by an Indigenous culture, and consequently, the European culture as well. These items would be found in a state that is considered unmodified, thus suggesting their acceptance without the need to alter the items. However, this notion does not take into account the Indigenous trade networks that were likely used to transport European trade goods.

In order to understand how the Neutral Iroquoian peoples may have approached the material culture becoming available to them during the time of European contact, the theoretical framework of hybridization is used to analyze the European materials recovered from the Walker site, a European contact period Neutral site, in search of modifications to these materials. In doing so, it may be possible to understand how they perceived these materials and how their own culture affected their modification and incorporation, if at all.

### **The Walker Site**

The Walker site (AgHa-9) was first investigated beginning in the late 1800s. The first systematic archaeological investigations of the Walker site were carried out by David Boyle and Frank Waugh (Lennox & Fitzgerald, 1990). In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century William J. Wintemberg continued with more detailed excavations (Lennox & Fitzgerald, 1990). John Steele further excavated the disturbed ossuary areas in 1944,

and Frank Ridley (1961) published some of the data recovered during Steele's excavations (Wright, 1981). W.C. Noble conducted an excavation of the site beginning in 1974 with the assistance of McMaster University and the Canada Council in an effort to prevent the loss of Walker's archaeological knowledge as a result of ploughing and destruction (Wright, 1981).

The Walker site (AgHa-9) is approximately 4.05 hectares and is detailed in a 1981 Master's thesis from McMaster University by Milton J. Wright (1981) (Figure 1). The site is located on a sand knoll 198.12 meters above sea level and consists of twelve longhouses of heavier construction than those found on other Neutral sites, including one remarkably large structure (Wright, 1981). Of special note is the lack of a defensible palisade, as is commonly found in other investigated Neutral sites, especially those of similar large size (Jamieson, 1996; Lennox & Fitzgerald, 1990). M.J. Wright (1981) suggests that this is likely because there was a large enough population for defence if necessary, as well as the fact that the Neutrals had few problems with the League Iroquois at this time.

The bulk of the artifacts excavated at Walker were found in the seven excavated middens. Over 9,000 artifacts were found at Walker, including lithics, ceramics, worked bone and shell, European trade goods, cultigens, and pipes (Table 1) (Wright, 1981, p. 52). The European trade goods (n=323) found during excavations and donated by outside parties include: glass beads and tubes, modified and unmodified copper/brass and iron pieces, rolled brass tubes and blanks, strung brass beads, iron axes and portions, iron knives, copper/brass kettles and portions, metal awls, finger rings, copper/brass wire chain, metal projectile points, brass tinkling cones, metal saws, metal punches, coiled copper/brass wire pieces, and iron spears. Based on the amount of interaction the Neutral had with Europeans, if few European artifacts had been recovered from this site it would have suggested that, despite limited contact, site inhabitants were rejecting the European trade items to which they had direct or indirect access. The moderate numbers of

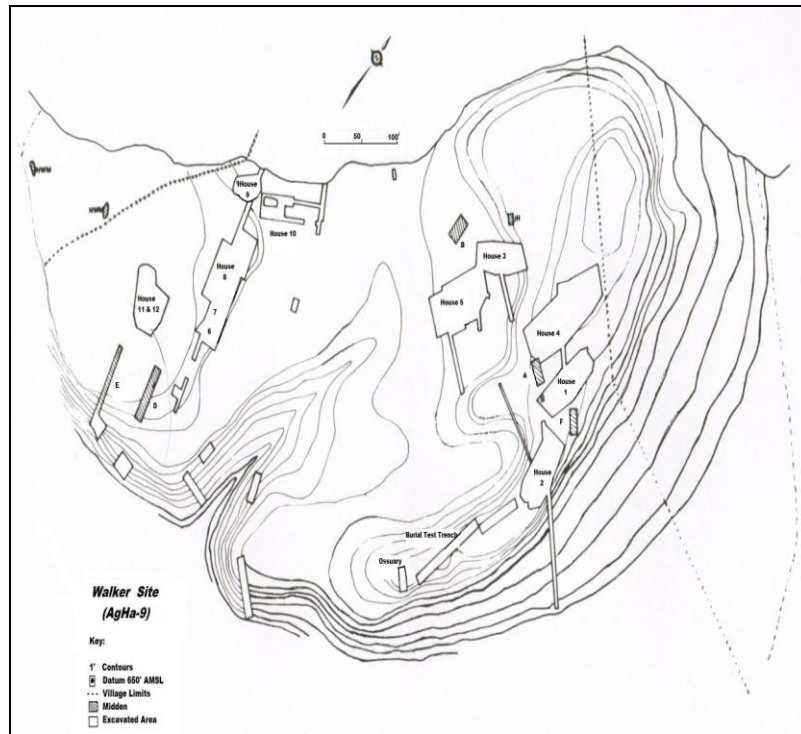


Figure 1. The Walker Site. After M.J. Wright (1981, p. 5).

European artifacts found at the Walker site implies that its Indigenous population may have adopted material culture as well as European customs and lifestyle. While these two options have been applied to other Indigenous sites, there are intermediate explanations and theories that must be considered. Hybridization of European trade goods is an alternative approach to the material culture at the Walker site.

### Hybridization at the Walker site - Methods and Results

In order to examine the ways in which European trade goods from the Walker site were

used by the Neutral population, several qualitative and quantitative techniques were employed. The ways in which the Neutral people at the Walker site incorporated European items and materials was built upon their perception of these items and their own world. Thus, by extrapolating these responses from the material culture it is possible to deduce why the Neutral people included these items at the Walker site. The first step in understanding involves a detailed visual analysis of material. When analyzing different categories of trade goods (e.g., glass beads versus metal knives) the type of recorded information varies. The basic

Table 1. Walker Site Artifacts

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Lithics	4155	44.3
Ceramics	3994	42.6
Worked Bone	336	3.6
Historic Trade Goods	323	3.4
Cultigens	305	3.3
Worked Shell	155	1.7
Pipes and Portions	113	1.2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>9381</b>	<b>100.1</b>

Data from M.J. Wright (1981, p. 52).

analysis is as follows. Using low-power magnification each object was placed into an artifact category, primarily using basic morphology. Next, measurements of each artifact, including maximum length, width, diameter (beads), and thickness were recorded. Weight was also noted for the majority of the artifacts. During my visual examination any manufacturing techniques, use-wear, or other distinguishing characteristics were recorded; these include scoring, chiselling, bending, hammering/flattening, grinding, folding, rolling, and perforating.

Lastly, a decision was made as to whether the piece was purposefully transformed from its original European form. Delineating purposeful modification requires an understanding of the original form of the objects, as well as the types of alterations the Indigenous people undertook on their own items prior to European contact. By combining this information, one can uncover whether or not changes were intentional, examine potential manufacturing techniques that were used to create new items, and determine whether changes were modifications, or simply resulted from use (i.e., use-wear). Use-wear is characterized by degradation, deterioration, or abrasion, which usually appears as damage to the object. This was especially clear on the glass beads found in the collection, and was seen on occasion where beads may have been strung beside others causing damage to the ends. Also, when a blade edge was examined, there were sometimes signs of use-wear such as polish. Modifications are alterations to the original object; whether modifications were purposeful is reflected in the types of changes seen on the material. If an object appeared to have been broken, rather than purposefully dismantled as signs of scoring and folding may suggest, it was designated as broken.

Some of the pieces described and analyzed by Milton J. Wright were not found during my re-examination of the material, such as the modified copper/brass fish pictured in his thesis (1981, p. 207). In total, 220 artifacts were

identified and studied. Ninety-one glass beads and tubes, 16 trade axes, and seven axe portions were analyzed from the collection. As well, four coiled copper/brass wire pieces were found and studied, along with 11 strung copper/brass beads, and 11 copper/brass tubes. Twelve copper/brass blanks, 11 pieces of copper/brass, and 10 modified copper/brass pieces were examined. Seven iron knives and fragments were analyzed. Finally, two finger rings, one complete kettle, 21 kettle pieces, one copper/brass wire chain, three metal awls or punches, three metal projectile points, and eight copper/brass tinkling cones were investigated.

Analysis revealed that 15.38% of the glass beads from the Walker site were modified in some fashion from their original form. The types of modifications I encountered include grinding of the sides and ends of the beads, removing the complete outer colour, bevelling, faceting, scoring, and perforating. One excellent example of the removal of colour, as well as the bevelling of several sides is seen with artifact number 10 (Figure 2). Red was the most frequently revealed colour in instances of colour removal. Among the glass beads in the collection, grinding was by far the most common type of alteration. Seventeen percent of the glass beads had evidence of grinding, a process used to create facets on the sides of the bead, or remove a layer of colour. Damage was also frequently encountered on the surface of the beads, mostly as a result of taphonomy. Lastly, use-wear is found on a number of the glass beads, namely, on the ends of the beads. This would have resulted from stringing the beads together, to form a necklace or some other type of decorative item.

European metal made up the majority of artifacts studied in the Walker collection, totalling 58.64% of the materials analyzed. Most of the pieces in this portion of the Walker assemblage have been altered in some way, mostly through cold-working manufacturing techniques. The most frequently observed techniques on the Walker site assemblage included grinding, chiselling, scoring, bending,



Figure 2. Glass Bead. Identification number 10.



Figure 3. Iron Axe, Identification Number 51, with evidence of scoring.

rolling, hammering, folding, perforating, and polishing. These techniques were used likely because they were effective and familiar, having roots in technologies used on earlier items such as lithics, shell, indigenous copper, and bone materials. The most common manufacturing techniques visible on the European pieces were scoring and folding, followed by chiselling (see Figure 3 for evidence of scoring).

The metal appears to have been made primarily into tools, along with a few decorative objects. For example, some of the modified copper/brass and iron pieces have punched holes, presumed by M. J. Wright (1981, p. 105) to serve as pendants or breast plates. Some of the

copper/brass was also used to create rolled brass tubes, the blanks likely coming from kettles. Finger rings were also fashioned out of copper/brass and iron, from kettles and an iron knife blade fragment, respectively. Iron knives were also used to create projectile points, saws, and punches. Other recorded alterations to the material include use-wear and polishing, which change the shape and appearance of metal objects. Figure 4 shows the number of modified pieces in each metal category, although it does not take into account the level of modification, as each piece may represent modifications ranging from a single score line to complete transformation of the piece into a new artifact.

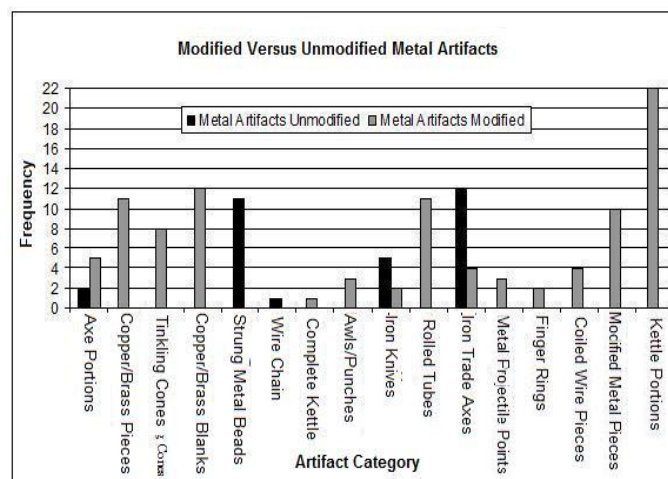


Figure 4. Modified and unmodified metal artifacts.

Thus, the frequencies of modified goods in each category may appear larger than they actually are.

Overall within the Walker site collection, 51.36% of the European trade goods demonstrated evidence of manufacturing techniques. This percentage is slightly skewed by the high frequency of glass beads in the assemblage, as they accounted for 41.36%. The beads received fewer modifications than the metal artifacts, with modified beads totaling 16.48%, and modified metal 75.97%.

It is important to note that form and use may not have been synonymous. An artifact may have had several uses related to function. If an object does not show evidence of modification that suggests it functioned in an Indigenous manner, then it cannot be classified as being European in function. For example, trade axes that have not been modified, either by cutting or perforating, are presumed European in function because there are no distinguishing

characteristics to show otherwise. While it is possible that axes were used in other ways, including being worn, unless there are demonstrable modifications, European function is inferred. As well, if there are no Indigenous counterparts for a European artifact, and it is unmodified, then it is again deemed European. This includes ornamental items, such as modified pieces of copper/brass and iron. On the other hand, if there are two possible functions for an object, the Indigenous function takes precedence. This makes it possible to better understand how the Walker site inhabitants utilized and integrated European artifacts (Mandzy, 1994).

To assess the number of modified goods, cross tabulation matrices that follow Evans' (2002) are utilized in the last step (see Tables 2, 3, and 4). The origin of each object material, current form, and inferred function is placed into a table.

*Table 2. Cross Tabulation Matrix Category 1*

<b>Material</b>	<b>Form</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>European</b>	<b>European</b>	<b>European</b>	
Unmodified Axes and Portions			14
Unmodified broken and Complete Knives			5
Unmodified Glass Beads			76
<b>Total</b>			<b>95</b>

*Table 3. Cross Tabulation Matrix Category 2*

<b>Material</b>	<b>Form</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>European</b>	<b>European</b>	<b>Indigenous</b>	
Modified Axes			4
Copper/Brass Wire Chain			1
Copper/Brass Beads			12
Modified Knives			2
Complete Kettle			1
Unmodified Copper/Brass Pieces			11
<b>Total</b>			<b>31</b>

## Discussion

There are many possible reasons for the differing incorporation of European trade goods at the Walker site. For instance, the Neutral, although similar in some respects to other Iroquoian people, were unlike the Wendat or the

Petun in subsistence and mortuary behaviour, and are suggested to have a more varied social, economic and political structure (Jamieson, 2011; Noble, 1978). Also, the Neutral had less direct contact with Europeans as compared to other Indigenous groups (Kenyon & Fox, 1982;



*Table 4. Cross Tabulation Matrix Category 3*

<b>Material</b>	<b>Form</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>European</b>	<b>Indigenous</b>	<b>Indigenous</b>	
Modified Glass Beads			15
Copper/Brass Coiled Pieces			4
Copper/Brass Rolled Tubes			10
Copper/Brass Blanks			12
Copper/Brass Finger Rings			2
Metal Awls/Punches			3
Kettle Portions			22
Modified Copper/Brass Pieces			10
Axe Portions			5
Metal Projectile Points			3
Copper/Brass Tinkling cones			8
<b>Total</b>			<b>94</b>

All cross tabulation matrices are based on Evans (2002).

Noble, 1994), and instead worked as middle men in trade systems (Jamieson, 1981; Noble, 1994). The Neutral may have been inclined to trade with the Europeans they encountered because of their prior trading relationships with other Indigenous groups. As well, trade was asocial mediator and was used to create relationships (Scaramelli & Scaramelli, 2005).

Just as southern trade goods were integrated into Neutral culture, it is likely that European goods were as well. Thus, the changes and alterations made to the European trade goods at the Walker site were a result of the Neutral's understanding of their world, and a way to create valuable relationships and trading partners. The discovery of European trade items at the Walker site in both modified and unmodified states suggests that the Neutral were indeed incorporating and altering these items into their material culture, and probably their overall culture as well.

The types of trade goods that were found at the Walker site tend to correlate with the types of artifacts one would expect to find at a site of this date and placement. Indigenous peoples in southeastern Ontario, such as those represented the Walker site collection, were in a position to obtain a variety of European objects, including trade axes, kettles, iron knives, and glass beads. One reason for these acquisitions, as well as for the modifications that they undertook on these pieces, is the importance placed on the cosmological significance of trade goods.

Many of the European artifacts introduced at this time had traditional counterparts, making their integration easier. For example, European glass beads could be substituted for Indigenous copper, quartz, and shell, while imported copper was assimilated into traditional ideological systems alongside Indigenous copper (Miller & Hamell, 1986). Of particular importance, it appears that these items also tended to have great ideological value, making them more attractive. The lustre and reflective quality of crystal and shell were highly valued by the Indigenous population as well, partially because of the belief in their otherworldly origin. Beyond luminosity and brightness, colour was also important in the acquisition of glass beads. Colours were often chosen to express certain values (Turgeon, 2004). White, sky blue-green, black, and red are colours that Hamell identifies as connected to physical, spiritual, and social well-being (Miller & Hamell, 1986-87). Corresponding to Hamell's suppositions regarding colour, the beads recovered from the Walker site were predominantly red and blue, totalling 90% of the bead assemblage.

Glass beads were occasionally modified as well. Turgeon (1997) suggests that to make European-acquired beads more familiar they were reworked to specific shapes and colours. This is evidenced by the grinding of outer layers to expose preferred colours in polychrome beads. Beads were sometimes ground to create a tapered shape for use in necklaces (Sempowski,

1989). Fifteen of the beads in the collection were modified, primarily through grinding, as suggested by the manufacturing techniques discussed above. This grinding revealed red layers. With the exception of two beads, the modified beads were red or blue. The types of manufacturing techniques used to modify these beads, and the colours of those beads, are consistent with the ways in which Indigenous groups incorporated and utilized these European trade goods.

In addition to glass beads, metal was considered a cosmologically significant exchange item. Copper is a particularly symbolic item in some Indigenous cultures in the Northeast (Hancock et al., 2007). As one of the earliest introduced European trade items, it has been extensively studied (Fitzgerald & Ramsden, 1988). It is thought that Indigenous people found European copper attractive because of its brilliant red colour and working properties, rather than simply for the economic worth (Turgeon, 1997). Copper is a reflective metal and thus, like other European artifacts, was thought to be otherworldly and cosmologically significant. The red colour was deemed by Indigenous cultures to be representative of fertility, vitality, and high emotion and power (Ehrhardt, Nash, & Swann, 2000).

A few of the artifacts found in the Walker site collection correspond to the theory of copper-type metals as symbolic items. Ninety-six of the European trade items in the collection are made from copper/brass. Many of these items are modified and show a variety of manufacturing techniques. Some items in the assemblage were altered into apparent decorative items as well.

The percentage of modified artifacts in the collection indicates that the Neutral population at the Walker site had their own unique views regarding these items and their place in their culture. The types of modifications suggest that the Neutral population at the site were incorporating European items into their material culture, supporting the notion that they were

hybridizing these materials. Examining the cross tabulation matrices one, two, and three presented above (Table 2, 3, and 4), it is possible to see that some artifact categories received different kinds of modifications. Matrix Three, which depicts artifacts that are of European material but Indigenous form and function, as well as Matrix Two (European material and form but Indigenous function) imply that the Walker site population preferred to alter their trade materials in some way. Table 3 shows that 13.64% of the European material was exploited in an Indigenous function. The European material in Table 4 was altered to Indigenous form and function, totalling 43.18%. These matrices indicate whether the artifact was modified from its original form and function, and show that it was utilized by the Neutral people at the Walker site.

The percentage of European artifacts that were European in material, form, and function is 43.18% (Table 2). The items included in this matrix are those that present little to no modification or manufacturing techniques, and thus have no indication of Indigenous form or function. There are also several broken artifacts, including knives and axes; it is difficult to determine with any degree of confidence whether these breaks are intentional, and therefore what their functions may have been. Those items in Matrix Two are placed there because preference is given to Indigenous function, rather than European (Mandzy, 1994). It must be noted however, that these items could have functioned in a European or an Indigenous manner. This is true of items like metal and glass beads or knives and axes where the function of the item may not differ culturally. Interpretation of these items as having an Indigenous function is based on the hybridization model, which assumes that all European items were incorporated from an Indigenous perspective. Other artifacts fit into Indigenous functions despite their European material and form, such as the metal awls and punches, as well as the copper/brass pieces. Matrix Three, presenting European materials in

Indigenous form and function, includes items that have been modified to indigenous form via alterations to the material. Glass beads, for example, have been altered through faceting to change the appearance of the item. The rest of the artifacts in this category are those that are completely remade from European material into Indigenous forms and functions.

Modifying European trade goods may have been a way for the Walker site people to renegotiate their position in their world (Cobb, 2003). Technology is used in this way to negotiate the changes that are occurring around them, to redefine and reorient themselves at the time of European contact to find a new “equilibrium” (Ehrhardt, 2005, p. 9). Using traditional techniques on cosmologically significant items makes sense when the Walker site and its people are situated in a way that highlights their own history and culture. As well, greater variation in the social, economic, and political structures among the Neutral may have reinforced the need for traditional forms to be continued, as integrating unmodified European objects may have been considered aberrant behaviour. Lastly, it is also possible that the Walker site occupants were exploiting these items because they were seen as rare, yet convenient sources of raw materials in some instances.

Utilizing hybridization as an approach to the analysis of the European materials recovered from the Walker site allows for a more holistic understanding of these items. Searching for modifications and alterations that suggest the creation of traditional artifacts, rather than analyzing the material as solely European, highlights the views of the Walker site inhabitants. As well, by acknowledging the cosmological, ideological, and symbolical importance of many of the trade goods, it is possible to realize their potential as items important to their culture without European connotations.

### **Conclusions and Future Steps**

Cusick defines culture contact as “a predisposition for groups to interact with ‘outsiders’ – a necessity created through human diversity, settlement pattern and desire for exchange – and to want to control that interaction” (1998, p. 4). Culture contact, a range of human social and geographical relationships, occurs in an array of situations and takes a variety of forms, including exchange, borrowing, culture conflict, and violent encounters (Cusick, 1998). Cobb notes that there is a common point in all the variability: “a concern with how contact situations transformed the material culture of the societies involved and in turn, how those transformations were linked with the reproduction of those societies in new ways” (2003, p. 1).

For archaeologists, the key evidence for studying past people lies in their material remains. In studies of culture contact and colonialism, the artifacts found on post-European contact sites have held the key to understanding those relationships. The way that these materials are examined differs from study to study, but there is a common link in earlier research. Quantitative analyses that focus on documenting European and Indigenous artifact ratios at a site have been common avenues in the past and are still seen in more recent work, although less frequently. This is partly because newer approaches have begun to focus on how modifications of the European material can be utilized to gain a greater understanding of how, or if, contact with colonizing people influenced Indigenous groups and their material culture.

The theoretical framework employed to study colonial encounters or culture contact is connected to the interpretation that it creates. In analyzing material culture from periods of culture contact, approaches such as the one presented here should be utilized, moving away from goals that aim to determine culture change. Rather, focus should be placed on the ways in which the material culture itself may be changed, and how this is reflected by the context of the culture modifying and creating new

artifacts. Hybridization of artifacts suggests an agency that has previously been ignored by past research in culture contact situations.

It is clear from this analysis that a greater understanding of material culture can be gained by utilizing a theoretical approach like hybridization, which takes into account the cultural background of a people when analyzing the incorporation and modification of foreign items into their everyday lives. The European trade goods found at the Walker site were heavily modified, suggesting that they were in fact altering and integrating many of these artifacts into their own. The hybridization of a large percentage of the material artifacts advances the idea that neither resistance nor acculturation was happening at the site, but rather that these items were being reworked and occasionally transformed into items that were compatible with their own perspective. This

approach moves away from older theories that fail to utilize Indigenous populations' perspectives and further establishes that not all culture contact situations resulted in either resistance or acculturation. Hybridization as a theoretical framework, and others like it, are necessary for studying the ways in which Indigenous people reacted to the introduction of European trade goods and the social interactions that inevitably occurred as a result.

#### **Acknowledgements**

The data used to write this article stems from the work completed in my Master's Thesis, entitled *Modification, Mixture or Metamorphosis: An Analysis of European Trade Goods at the 17<sup>th</sup> Century Neutral Walker site, Ontario*, with the help of my supervisor, Dr. Susan Jamieson.

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