

history contains semiotic grounds that emerge from, including and not limited to, the Treaty of Easton 1758, the Royal Proclamation of 1763, and the Treaty of Fort Pitt 1778. A chronotopic analysis of their communicative features through a diachronic lens can aid one in tracking select elements that inform certain aspects of political continuity, traditional valuation systems and governance models, as well as significant socio-political events as they evolved over time.

Chapter II

A Political History of the Sand Hill Band of Raritan Lenape and Cherokee Indians: Jurisdiction and Continuity

Introduction:

The formation and communication of foreign-jurisdictions that interact with the United States remains grounded in a broad range of diversity among a variety of inter-political American Indian systems. The concept “[j]urisdiction’ refers broadly to the scope of legal authority—over persons, places, or categories of activity” (Benton & Clulow 2024, 201) and includes the normative modes of interpretation/actions that drive the nature of different social potentials related to legal paradigms. The evolution of ethnocentric Euro-colonial practices interfered with all of the American Indian arrangements of jurisdictional authority, social boundaries, and cultural legitimacy in specific ways. Among those jurisdictions that became jeopardized through colonial enterprise is that of the Delaware Nation (also referred to as the Lenape) and Sand Hill Band of Raritan Lenape and Cherokee Indians. Jurisdictional tensions arose from an economic, political, and religious expansionist policy by different crowns such as the French and British- and ultimately the federated United States- and clashed with the Delaware Nation through a plethora of different scenarios. As Benton and Clulow (2024,

200) explain, “the effects of conflicts over jurisdiction left clear archival and institutional traces”. The main objective of this chapter is to analyze a political history of the Sand Hill Band through archival and institutional traces in the form of primary and secondary documentation. Some oral histories by Sand Hill Band and Federation Citizens are included to delineate important historical and social connections that influence their polity today. Still, it is important to include, in line with what Davis (2018, 8) wrote, whereas “my goal is not to fetishize the ‘origins’ of Indigenous peoples, nor is it an attempt to limit the spaces and places where ‘authentic’ indigeneity is found”. Therefore through this chapter, I outline significant relationships between symbols and power as they relate to agency. These elements are peripherally situated in connection to federal recognition criteria 83.11 to provide a frame to clarify the inclusion of certain practices that the federal government contemporarily considers as legitimate political precedents. It is relevant to restate that a tribal body may be eligible for recognition through these recognition criteria upon passing all legal tests and choose *not* to opt-in to federal recognition (“Excluding Indians Not Taxed”/Federal Common Law Indian Tribes). However, the 83.11 criteria provide a recognized systematic frame of reference to place social interactions within. Such practices and contextual orientation include and are not limited to 83.11 (a) *Indian Entity Identification*; (b) *Community*; and (c) *Political Influence or Authority*. To this extent, this chapter outlines some key social and political trajectories that impact Lënapehòking’s contribution towards a pluri-political region with multi-jurisdictional frames that are grounded in certain ontological and epistemic orders. A pluri-political region refers to multiple foreign-jurisdictions that interact through

different levels of engagement, including and not limited to, treaties, commerce, and other forms of economic and socio-political boundary coordination.

Lënapehòking refers to the traditional jurisdiction of the Lenape people in the Unami dialect of the Algonquian language family. As Kraft (2001, 9) clarifies, “Lënapehòking mean[s] “Land of the Lenape”, a reconstructed term provided by Nora Thompson Dean³⁴ at the request of the author [Herbert C. Kraft in 1984] to obviate the need of constantly specifying all of New Jersey, eastern Pennsylvania, Delaware, Southeastern New York State including Staten Island and parts of western Long Island, and a small portion of southwestern Connecticut” as features of Lenape territory. Lënapehòking is one of many stages saturated with stark political competition, evolving international relations, and potentially deleterious cultural tensions. In this sense, politics refers to processes of a diverse array of social practices through which individuals and collectives negotiate power relations and social arrangements. Social practices- including normative values in codes of conduct, rituals, and ways of life- serve as some modes by which competing interests shape power relations in the pursuit of settlement, development, and social evolution. An interplay of social practices founded in differing ontological orders can influence the stability of both Indigenous and colonial jurisdictions. In this way, a political history for the purpose of the current study surveys interactions of ideology, social movements, and modes of communication present among the Sand Hill Bands political relations with evolving social domains. To that degree, key aspects of the Sand Hill Band’s history are both symbolically and politically

³⁴ Nora Thompson Dean was a citizen of the Delaware Nation, traditionalist, and one of the last fluent speakers of the southern Unami dialect of the Lenape Language. She won many awards from Houses of Representatives and Governors from Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, and Delaware for her efforts in promoting traditional ways of life (see generally [New Jersey Women's History](#) 2025).

connected to major events like the Treaty of Easton 1758, the Royal Proclamation of 1763, and the Treaty of Fort Pitt 1778. As I discuss through this chapter, particular rejections and modifications of etic social and religious norms by the Delaware Nation, and Raritan Indians, challenged levels of colonial political authority. In my observation, these exercises of agency gave way for a diverse political landscape that maintains a distinct relevance to the political continuity of the Sand Hill Band as they operate today.

A Return to a Traditional

The destabilization of Lenape systems of value, behavioral and organizational norms, as well as rituals that mediate the creation, maintenance, and transformation of accepted membership boundaries is a detailed subject by different scholars³⁵, authors, and cultural practitioners. However, contemporary analytical manifestations of the Sand Hill Band's systems of value, behavioral and organizational norms, and rituals that mediate the lived experiences of the Sand Hill Band still contain gaps. An ontological and epistemic lens can assist in narrowing the gap of analysis into how the Sand Hill Band's political ontology is both maintained and transformed. Since the days of the Brotherton Reservation (1758-1801) the Sand Hill Band of Raritan Lenape and Cherokee Indians have enforced different levels of their politico-legal status in their

³⁵ See e.g., Penn Treaty Museum (2025). <https://penntreatymuseum.org/history-2/> ; Also, e.g., Garland, Claire. (2023). Indian Summer at Sand Hill: The Revey and Richardson Families at the New Jersey Shore. NJS: An Interdisciplinary Journal. Also e.g., Bial, Raymond. (2015). The People and Culture of the Delaware. Also e.g., Hoffmann, Maureen. (2009). Endangered Languages, Linguistics, and Culture: Reviving the Unami Language of the Lenape. Thesis: Bryn Mawr College. Also e.g., Whritenour, Raymond (2005). Documentary Evidence of the Sand Hill Indians. Also e.g., Dalton Anne. (2004). The Lenape of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Delaware, Wisconsin, Oklahoma, and Ontario.; Also e.g., Herbert C. Kraft include *The Lenape-Delaware Indian Heritage: 10,000 B.C.-A.D. 2000* (2001); *The Lenape: Archaeology, History, & Ethnography* (1986); *Indians of Lenapehoking* (1985); *The Lenape or Delaware Indians: The Original People of New Jersey, Southeastern New York State, Eastern Pennsylvania* (1991); & *The Dutch, the Indians & the Quest for Copper: Pahaquarry & the Old Mine Road* (1996). Also e.g., Verrill, Hyatt (1954). The Real Americans.

pursuit of self-determination. These features of political and cultural maintenance and renovation are important to identify because cultures shift over time, while legal statuses may remain the same. In different circumstances leading up to what would become the Treaty of Easton (1758), Kraft (2001, 476) writes that “[m]issionaries of several denominations tried to convert the Delaware.... [for example] The Presbyterian David Brainerd preached fervently to the Indians at Cross wicks and Cranbury, New Jersey, and in the Forks of the Delaware [river] from June 1744 until his untimely death in October 1747, when he was succeeded for a while by his brother John”. As many of the Delaware's rejected settlers attempts towards religious conversion through the 18th century, some others were acculturated into the growing settler population systems of value on different scales. These ideological differences advanced the alteration of the Delaware's political systems. Yet, different performances of adjusted traditional Delaware rituals, norms, and modes of communication surged at crucial points and catalyzed significant levels of change. Importantly, the modes by which rejections of settler-norms were communicated are salient to note. The performance of different levels of emic cultural chronotopes mediated rejections of settlers' attempts to convert the Delaware. A facet of these cultural chronotopes (i.e. a specific expression of time-

space arrangements that engenders one's form of communication), expressed through the meaning-making (semiotic) orders of traditional Delaware practices is revealed through a report from Brainerd in May of 1745. Kraft (2001, 476) recounts that:

Along the upper Susquehanna River in May 1745, Brainerd encountered an Indian prophet attired in what appears to have been the regalia of a *Mesinghòlikàn*. Noting that his people had drifted from the ways of their ancestors and grown very degenerate, this unnamed prophet railed against strong liquor and stated his belief that the Delaware's present sad condition was due to the corrupting influence of the Europeans. His message advocated a return to the traditional ways of the past (see also C. Hunter 1972, 40).

Signified in figure 2.1, the regalia of a *Mesinghòlikàn*³⁶ signifies "the impersonator" (see Kraft 2001, 322-3), or the person wearing the mask of the Mësingw spirit, the "Masked Being". The Mësingw spirit is of "singular importance to the well-being of every Lenape Indian, for it was his responsibility to look after the animals in the forest and ensure their health and safety" (Ibid, 322) as well as the maintenance of discipline and social controls among humans (see Kraft 2001, 324). Grounding the rejection of settler colonial natures of existence in a scope of traditional ontology provided one mode for the solidarity of inter-phratry (clan) based organization, both within the Lenape, and across other tribes to

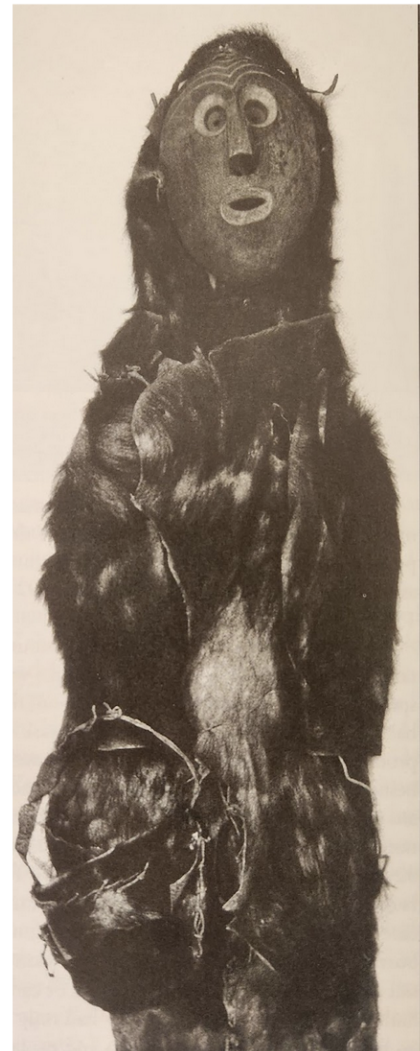


Figure 2.1: The Mesinghòlikàn.

³⁶ Kraft (2001, 323) explains that "[t]he Mesinghòlikàn [is] the impersonator of the Mësingw wearing the mask [and] was completely enclosed in a bear skin garment. This attire, including the bag, snapping turtle shell, staff, and skin bag are now in the collection of the National Museum of the American Indian, Washington DC. It was used at the Big House Ritual at Copan, Oklahoma". Figure from Kraft (2001).

organize around, as demonstrated through Pontiac's Rebellion discussed below. Another prominent feature of the "Masked Beings" rites involves instruction and guidance on how to hold the sacred Big House Ceremony; a ceremony to annually honor the Great and Lesser Manitou (spirits and/or deities) who are honored by Lenape traditionalists and form some of the foundations of the Delawares' identities. The Big House "known by its Delaware name Xingwikaon was the special church or meeting place" (Ibid, 519) for the ceremony that represented a "link with a more glorious past" (Ibid, 521) for the traditionalists. The Big House signifies concepts of cultural purity and a more robust ecological connection to both spirit systems and the general environment. Thus, the performance of crucial features of traditional Lenape systems of value signified in these cases by different prophets marks both a symbolic and political rejection of many European norms, values, and cosmological principles that served to highlight an exponentially growing trend. Around 1753, another prophet "Papounan by name, arose among a band of Munsees living in and about Lackawanna, Pennsylvania" (Ibid, 476). Papounan's messages and teachings also promoted a return to a traditional through specific practices, namely through support for Lenape rites such as dream-recitation rituals which occupy an important role in Big House ceremonies. To the Lenape, dreams and dream-recitation rituals retain a significant position/truth-value in their social organization and meaning-making or social semiotic systems. As Zeisberger (1910, 25) describes:

To the dreams they appeal, for in them they have much faith. Thus, one may in a dream see a fierce animal. Upon this [s/]he will ponder much, believing that it was not by chance but rather that it signifies a gift of special power, marking him [or her] out a favored man [or woman].

The social legitimacy recognized through the performance of dream rituals permeated expressions of political agency in significant ways. Neolin, another prominent Delaware prophet, conveyed a catalyzing dream-recitation in 1762 that would ultimately invigorate a political movement against the British powers. Neolin's "dreaming" [aligns with other and later iterations of] ('dreamers' or prophets [who] introduced ceremonial procedures and the religious doctrines). The Bole Maru [for example, also] stressed the ideas of an 'afterlife' and [importantly for the present context,] of a supreme being" (Beck & Walters 1977, 176). Neolin learned through an individual rite of intensification signified through communications within his dreams (dream rites/recitations) that he must visit a supreme being- the Master of Life (see e.g., Cave 1999). Neolin's rite of intensification is important on multiple fronts, namely through a symbolic interaction with a traditional Delaware episteme that places dream rites at a powerful position in their ontological structure. Further, part of the political importance of this circumstance stems from the consistent attacks by settlers on a broad range of the Delawares' cosmological systems, signifying Neolin's range of rejection towards colonial-semiotic systems. Accordingly, Neolin set off on an eight day journey towards the celestial realm depicted in the 'Heavenly Map'³⁷ designed by Neolin in figure 2.2, below. This map served as a mnemonic device and was disseminated among select individuals like Pontiac, among many others. In the course of his semiotic journey through which the natural forces of dreaming influenced relations between interpretation and action, Neolin halted at the first sunset to establish shelter and cook a meal. Cave (1999, 271) writes that "as he cooked his meal in the gathering twilight, he

³⁷ The "Heavenly Map" designed by Neolin has survived. Figure 2 is borrowed from McCoullough (in Loudon 1808).

was astounded to see that the three roads [in front of him] became all the brighter the darker it grew, a thing that surprised him to the point of fear. But as he reflected on that strange apparition, he came to realize that one of those roads must lead to the Master of Life, the object of his quest". Neolin would recount experiencing the presence of the Master of Life, who told him of different offences that must be rectified. Of these etic offences, the "toleration of European intruders" (Cave 1999, 272) by the Delaware and other nations was the most egregious. In harmony with the traditional norms, rites,



Figure 2.2: "Heavenly Map" designed by Neolin

and duties in performing rituals to uphold favorable relations with the Mësingw spirit- the "Masked Being" for example, Neolin was told "that to regain his favor [The Master of Life] and restore the game animals that once sustained his people, the Indians must resist further European incursion" (Cave 1999, 273). Further, Cave (1999, 273) recounts that Neolin was informed that:

As to those who come to trouble your lands, -drive them out, make war upon them. I [The Master of Life] do not love them at all; they know me not, and are my enemies.... Send them back to the lands which I have created and let them stay there. Indians must also pray only to the Master of Life, using a set prayer he had given Neolin, and abandon their practice of calling upon other deities and spirit protectors, because in 'making medicine' one talks with the evil spirit. Finally, the

creator called for Indian unity and assured his children that when ye shall have need of anything, address yourselves to me; and as to your brothers, I shall give it to you as to them; do not sell to your brothers what I have put on earth for food. In short, be good and ye shall receive your needs. When ye meet one another exchange greetings and proffer the left hand which is nearest the heart.

The transmission Neolin received is significant both symbolically and politically in a ritually transformative sense. To a certain symbolic degree, Neolin's experience drew on a powerful, legitimate, and accepted Delaware spiritual feature of lore/code in a rapidly shifting ideological sphere. Although, it is clear that his depiction of the Delaware cosmology contains elements that are a byproduct of a mutating semiosphere or shifting system of meanings that mediates one's experience in the world. To this regard, Beck and Walters (1977, 186) maintain that "[i]n the aboriginal sacred systems there had been no concept of "good" or "evil", "heaven" or "hell"". Clarifying this point, Cave (1999, 279) postulates that:

At one level, Neolin's condemnation of certain shamanic practices made eminent good sense to traditionalists who believed that shamanic power, being morally neutral, and subject to manipulation, could be used malevolently. Neolin lived in a time of heightened witchcraft anxiety within Native American communities. Those anxieties were the product of the deprivation and demoralization that followed in the wake of epidemics, military defeats, loss of land, and forced migrations. But Neolin departs from the traditional understanding of witchcraft. He does not denounce medicine men for their abuse of their power; he charges that they are in collusion with the "Evil One." We have here a vision of a dualistic spirit world with the Master of Life in opposition to a hated "evil spirit."

Alongside what Beck and Walters (1977, 187) write where "the individual dreamer was a new development", the above mentioned mode of Neolin's adaptation to cosmological norms contributed to a space whereby "social [and cultural] capital is restructured and adapted to specific circumstances" (Stiglitz 2000, 65). In that way, "[w]hen there is no longer this fit (between world-view and religion, between reality as it

is defined and as it is lived) we have reactions ranging from millennial dreams to violent revolution, all designed to reestablish a reasonable integrated life” (Ortiz 1972, 136). Further, one may identify intersections of emic and etic chronotopic functions- a sort of fusion of two worlds that yield ontologically brackish tensions and transformation (see generally Stoller 1989) as they emerge through traditional Delaware references to dream rites and the ritualistic process to fulfill the rite of intensification. To that extent, influences from Christianity enforce a tension and form situated dichotomous powers, or a moral binary, between sacred and profane regarding norms of cosmological interpretation/expression. However, Neolin’s readiness to share these experiences with his wider community served to reify, or concretize features of lived cosmological experience, both in their traditional and modified sense. The enforcement of these mutated codes aided in the maintenance of requisite truth-values among his community to engage political agency. These recognized levels of situated truth among individuals like Pontiac would serve to promote and drive violent social and political change. The truth-values of Neolin’s experience held more sway as an emic, or internal, function. To this regard, Kraft (2001, 477) points out that “Neolin preached a message of transformation- and that exhorted the Delaware and their allies to return to their ancestral ways- to conditions that prevailed before the coming of the white man. [In that way, Neolin was] called “The Enlightened” by his followers”. However, upon the British hearing of these developments, the British referred to Neolin as “The Imposter” (Kraft 2001, 477) as a rhetorical mode that seems to attempt to undermine his legitimacy and hopefully stave off any political action Neolin’s followers may be inspired to take. Additionally, it is important to note that Neolin's message was channeled through a

semiotic artifact utilized to disseminate his teachings as noted above. Depicted in figure 2.2 above, the “Heavenly Map” created by Neolin was a mnemonic (or memory) device reproduced at a fixed rate of one buckskin or two doeskins each (see e.g., Kraft 2001, 477) and made available to various Indigenous traditionalists.

Neolin’s teachings, or prophetic communications and register, contained enough of the Delaware’s system of values to influence a broad range of traditionalists at the time. For example, Kraft (2001, 477) explains that “[a]mong those who came under the influence of Neolin’s teaching was Pontiac, a war chief of the Ottawa, and one of the French’s staunchest allies”. Concurrently, the Royal Proclamation of 1763 was a significant legal, political, and social boundary marker that served the purpose to “consolidate British sovereignty after the defeat of the French on the ‘Plains of Abraham’” (Greymorning 1992, 150) in Quebec. In doing so, the British secured an “enormous territorial gain” ([Department of State](#) 2025). Yet, the British managed to make the situation much worse as they proceeded to take over the conquered French fortresses. Moreover, the Office of the Historian ([Department of State](#) 2025) writes that:

British officials made the situation worse by alienating American Indians who had been allied with France during the Seven Years’ War. The French Government had devoted significant resources to furnishing gifts to their Indian allies. When British forces arrived to take over former French forts, they halted the gift-giving practice, not realizing that doing so undercut the authority of any pro-British leaders within indigenous communities and antagonized the Indian leaders.

To this regard, Pontiac provided his own semiotic artifacts, in the form of encoded wampum belts, to other communities to coordinate an attack on the newly occupied British forts (see e.g., [Department of State](#) 2025). Here, a relationship between power and symbolic interaction from a traditionalist ontology, even through its

adapted forms, can be argued to drive features of Pontiac's response to the incoming British forces. These concrete political actions undermined the British forces' hold over those territories to an extent and would serve to inform further, and diplomatically defensive maneuvers by the British- through treaties as are discussed below.

Importantly, Dr. Greymorning (1992, 152) explains that "[t]he fact that the effects of this resistance have largely gone uncredited as having any significant impact upon the final drafting of the Royal Proclamation of October 17, 1763, further illustrates how ethnocentrism has colored the writing of history to further perpetuate a myth of dominion and superiority of Anglo-European culture". Despite an ethnocentrically engendered history that blurs the scope of influence these circumstances had for social boundaries and jurisdictions, the Treaties of Easton (1758) and of Fort Pitt (1778)³⁸ validate a de jure orientation of power distribution. By de jure orientation of power distribution, I refer to the formal enumeration of powers, rights, and duties in a treaty agreement that retains the requisite legal standing in a legitimate institution of law such as the U.S. Supreme Court.

Therefore, great importance lies in the modification of traditional rituals, norms, and modes of communication that signify an immersion of Delaware and other cosmological systems that aided in the Delaware's social conventional evolution. These select exercises of agency emphasize the interdependent nature in which semiotic systems progressively develop. Further, they underscore a significant Peircean

³⁸ Further, the Treaty of Wyandot (1785) also contains signification of jurisdictional demarcation related to the Delaware Nation as is iterated through ARTICLE V. where it states that "If any citizen of the United States, or other person not being an Indian, shall attempt to settle on any of the lands allotted to the Wiandot and Delaware nations in this treaty, except on the lands reserved to the United States in the preceding article, such person shall forfeit the protection of the United States, and the Indians may punish him as they please."

concept- the synechism (CP 1931-1958) - or circumstances in which meaningful features of interaction have a substantial implication as combinational units that may help drive a continuity in making meaning. The modes through which these features of membership are communicated, recognized, and accepted as legitimate are a key facet in relationships between symbols and power. Thus, one can understand the importance of “the rights and responsibilities of belonging to community, informed by spiritual epistemologies” (Castor 2017, 6). In the following section, I suggest why these modified norms, rituals, and concomitant social actions are significant to account for as jurisdictions were formally enumerated through treaty agreements- themselves containing normative political adaptations.

Enumerating Jurisdictions

For a long time, indigenous politics has been confined to the controversial idea of non-modern primitivism, essentialism and elopement into culturalism. Indigenous politics indeed has been systematically depoliticized and pushed towards questionable culturalist frames and temporal forms of distancing that prevent us from understanding the fact that Indigenous peoples are also bearers of the political.

-Arango (2021, 414)

The Delaware Nation is composed of different familial systems who converge through various bands and clans, themselves invigorating autonomous political bodies- “a condition that can be substantiated archaeologically [and ethnographically]” (Kraft & Mounier 1974, 139; see e.g., Kraft 2001; also Kraft 1978). The Sand Hill Band of Raritan Lenape and Cherokee Indians are currently composed of twelve clan structures that emerge from Lenape lines and a Cherokee line- the Richardsons, discussed below. To this regard, an important social, political, and linguistic boundary marker was established through the Treaty of Easton in October 1758. This contracted boundary

marker, between about thirteen³⁹ tribal bodies and the “lieutenant governor of Pennsylvania and the governor of New Jersey [NJ’s colonial governor was appointed by King George II]” (see the Minutes of a treaty held at Easton, accessed 1/13/2026)

established territorial bounds for

a variety of peoples including

the Unami’s, also locally

referred to as the Raritans.

Depicted in figure 2.3⁴⁰, the

social, political, and linguistic

boundary marker delineates

marked differences between the

historic Munsee Delaware, to

the North, and historic Unami

Delaware Indians to the South.

Both Unami and Munsee refer

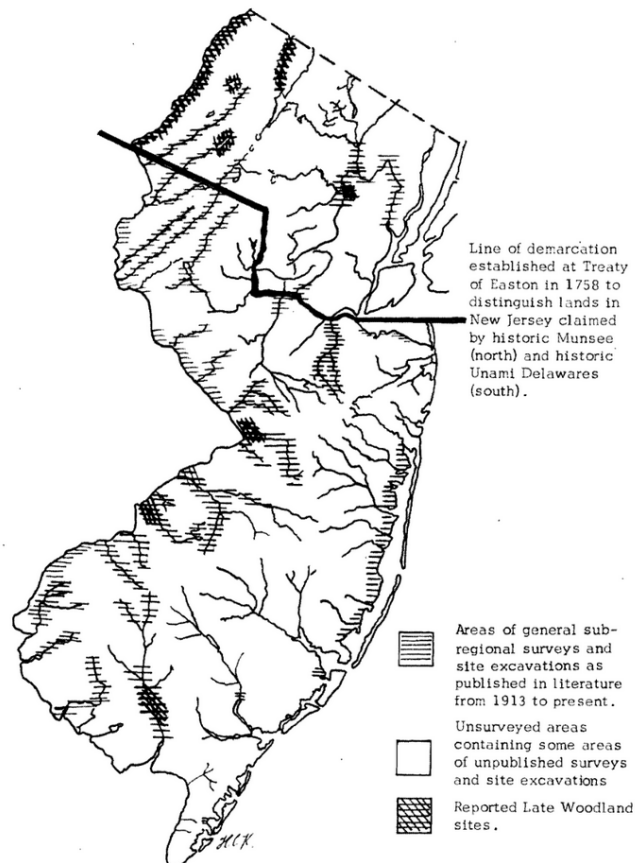
to differences in dialect

emerging from the Algonquian

language family alongside

differences in band and clan arrangements. Part of the factual background of the civil

action case numbered 09-683 (KSH)- which is primary legal literature- points out that



Map 1. Areas in N.J. reported in past surveys and/or excavations. It is important to note that most surveys only rarely attributed sites to specific periods. Those sites with reported Late Woodland manifestations are indicated.

Figure 2.3: Treaty of Easton 1758 social and political boundary marker

³⁹ See e.g., “The Minutes of a treaty held at Easton, in Pennsylvania, in October, 1758. By the lieutenant governor of Pennsylvania, and the governor of New-Jersey; with the chief sachems and warriors of the Mohawks, Oneydos, Onondagas, Cayugas, Senecas, Tuscaroras, Tuteloes, Nanticokes and Conoys, Chugnuts, Delawares, *Unamies [emphasis mine]*, Mohickons, Minisinks, and Wapings” (the Minutes of a treaty held at Easton, accessed 1/13/2026).

⁴⁰ Figure borrowed from Kraft & Mounier 1974, 140.

the “Sand Hill Band is a Native American tribal family descending from the Delaware, Raritan, and Unami Indians” (Sandhill Band v. Corzine et al 2010, 2). Therefore, the Unami’s participation in the Treaty of Easton is a significant social and political boundary marker as well as jurisdictional claim. Kraft (2001, 468) explains that to “ratify the Treaty of Easton, wampum belts were exchanged and gifts were given”. Despite many of the Munsee’s moving northwest after the Treaty of Easton (see e.g., Kraft 2001), different bands and clans of the Raritan and Unami remained, thus influencing the establishment of the Brotherton Reservation (1758-1801), in New Jersey. The Brotherton Reservation was “located on the road between Medford and Hamonton in Evesham Township, now Indian Mills, Shamong Township, Burlington County, New Jersey” (Kraft 2001, 469). Some Delaware Indians chose to move onto the reservation while others still remained off the reservation, living south of the Raritan River as they maintained a distrust for the colonists and did not wish to be concentrated into one place “where they may be easily confined or killed” (Ibid, 469). To this regard, Kraft (2001, 471) further points out that “[n]on-reservation Indians continued to live in their own small communities, frequently as freeholders, craftsmen, or farm workers”.

Importantly, the Treaty of Easton helped to establish an early example of communal aboriginal property rights, called the Brotherton reservation, and included a tax-exemption element for the lands under question. Although, these lands would, arguably, become illegally allotted by the newly formed New Jersey government in 1801 and parcelled off to individuals such as Wilson, who was party to *New Jersey v. Wilson* 1812. In *New Jersey v. Wilson* (1812, 11 U.S. 165-66), Chief Justice John Marshall opined that:

the Indians continued in peaceable possession of the lands thus conveyed to them until sometime in the year 1801, when, having become desirous of migrating from the State of New Jersey and of joining their brethren at Stockbridge in the State of New York, they applied for, and obtained an act of the Legislature of New Jersey authorizing a sale of their land in that state.

Notwithstanding the fact that the State of New Jersey may not authorize such a land sale because of the Nonintercourse Act (25 U.S.C § 177), which directly provides that the federal government is the only entity authorized to conduct land purchases, leases, grants, or other land conveyances with tribes, the Raritan Unamis expressed their own rejection of said transaction. In that sense, it is clear that those inhabitants did not “become desirous of migrating”, but rather, faced further encroachment by settler populations in that area of New Jersey and “decided to stay in New Jersey, and in 1798 signed a “publick expression” affirming that decision” (The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, 2014). In

The image shows a handwritten document on aged paper. At the top left, it says 'Gentlemen' and at the top right, 'Brotherton Jan 20th 1798'. The main body of text is written in cursive and discusses the Indians' decision to stay in New Jersey. It mentions a meeting on Saturday the 26th Jan 1798 and expresses their refusal to leave. The document is signed by several individuals, including Jacob Shickel, Ruth Conner, Benjamin White, Mary Shickel, and others. The signatures are written in a cursive hand, some with 'Mark' or 'Writ' written below them.

**Figure 2.4: January 20th, 1798
Brotherton Writ of Refusal to Leave**

figure 2.4, the image depicts the formal Writ of Refusal to leave the Brotherton lands (The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, 2014) on January 20th, 1798, by Raritan Unami Indians. They specifically wrote that:

Be it known by this, that it has been in our consideration of late about settling of White People on the Indian Lands, And we have concluded that it is a thing which ought not to be, & a thing that will not be allowed by us, that of Renting or giving Leases for said Lands, hereafter, no, not by the proprietors themselves without the consent of the rest much more by those who has no Claim or Rite here, & we have further resolved, that all Leases given heretofore by those who

have no rite shall be accounted as Reasons Null & Void & of none effect,—We have come upon those resolutions we hope for our better living in friendship among one another, it may be that there is some which does not like white people for their Neighbours, for fear of their not agreeing as they ought to do.

However, the lands at Brotherton would ultimately be appropriated through extralegal actions and in 1804, New Jersey attempted to revoke the tax-exemption status of the lands. Yet, Chief Justice John Marshall would uphold that tax-exemption status, but not for the Raritan Unami Indians. By only questioning a U.S. Constitutional Contract Clause (Article I, Section 10), Marshall did not consider the Nonintercourse Act and set the precedent that “[i]t is for their advantage [i.e., Wilson and other settlers who bought Brotherton lands] that it [i.e., tax-exemption] should be annexed to the land, because, in the event of a sale, on which alone the question could become material, the value would be enhanced by it” (*New Jersey v. Wilson* 1812, 11 U. S. 167). So, in my observation, the fact that other Raritan Unami “Indians continued to live in their own small communities, frequently as freeholders” (Kraft 2001, 471) is very important for continuity because the Raritan at that moment in time had very limited opportunities to organize a legal response to this taking as they were not yet considered (dual status) American citizens until the 1924 Act (i.e., precarious or unstable legal standing) and would have to engage the federal government to potentially enforce the Nonintercourse Act violation.

Notably, some of the Raritan family names connected to these socio-political worlds (cultural semiosphere) are, for example, the Holloway’s, Davis’s, Revey’s, Richardson’s, and Rock’s. Further, to demonstrate continuity among the Sand Hill today (i.e. in the 21st century), the factual background of the civil action case numbered 09-

683 (KSH) (Sandhill Band v. Corzine et al 2010, 3) clarifies that Principal Sachem of the Sand Hill Band, Dr. Ronald Yonaguska “Holloway is a member of the Sand Hill Band and a descendant from its original landowners”. Thus, one may understand the significance of the Treaty of Easton (1758) in demarcating intra-political conditions and jurisdiction within the broader Delaware Nation as features of the Delaware polity remained in their ancestral territories despite an evolving geopolitical context that reshaped different aspects of social worlds. In this sense, the ensuing Treaty of Fort Pitt, of September 17th, 1778 signifies a major political relationship struck between the Delaware Nation and nascent United States.

In addition to being the first treaty between the United States and a ‘foreign’ power (see e.g., Greymorning 1992, 30; Kappler 1904; Israel 1967; Kraft 2001), there are particular points of interest that signify an evolution in the establishment of international norms that mark a shift in political relations up to that point. Namely, the acts of violence and general hostilities between the contracting parties- the Delaware Nation and the United States (and prior colonists)- “be mutually forgiven, and buried in the depth of oblivion, never more to be had in remembrance” (Treaty of Fort Pitt 1778, Article 1). The United States, as Dr. Greymorning (1992, 30-31) points out, “embraced a strategy which sought to either draw the Delaware Nation into an alliance with themselves or, at the very least, insure that the Delaware would remain neutral” in any coming conflicts that may arise with the English crown. These measures point out the fact that the Delaware retained the political sovereignty, or potential to channel different social powers necessary, to enact significant influences towards the United States. However, the trajectory, or chain, of treaties entered into from the Treaty of Easton

(1758) to the Treaty of Fort Pitt (1778) is a significant one to account for with regard to the specific language of enumeration and signification of jurisdictions. Article VI of the Treaty of Fort Pitt (1778) provides that:

Whereas the enemies of the United States have endeavored, by every artifice of their power, to possess the Indians in general with an opinion, that it is the design of the States aforesaid, to extirpate the Indians and take possession of their country: *to obviate such false suggestion [emphasis mine]*, the United States do engage to guarantee to the aforesaid nation of Delawares, and all their heirs, all their territorial rights in the fullest and most ample manner, *as it hath been bounded by former treaties [emphasis mine]*, as long as they the said Delaware nation shall abide by, and hold fast the chain of friendship now entered into.

To this extent, one feature of the Unami, Raritan, and Sand Hill Band's communication of political, legal, and social status marked through the Treaty of Fort Pitt (1778) is signified through peacefully remaining in their territories within Scheyichbi, an Algonquian term for a region that is now also referred to as New Jersey. In that sense, Lënapehòking is actively contributing towards a pluri-political region with multi-jurisdictional frames that are grounded in these particular treaties and ontological frames. Though, it is important to account for different modes through which jurisdictional continuity has been communicated over the centuries, and by whom. While Raritan and Unami Delaware clans remained in their ancestral territories, Garland (2023, 168-9) points out that "Cherokee Indian inhabitants migrated to the area during the 1700s.... In the late 1700s, the Cherokee Richardsons migrated to New Jersey and New York to live with their Lenape cousins, the Reveys" (see also e.g., Kraft 2001, 551) thus configuring the Sand Hill Band of Raritan Lenape and Cherokee Indians. And from the federal government's position, I have observed that the enumeration of jurisdiction and the recognition of the Treaty of Fort Pitts (1778) status was recognized through the

early and mid 20th century. For example, Charles J. Kappler, primarily known for his work with Indian affairs, specifically through the formal compilation of different treaties and laws, worked as a staff member of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs.

The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs is tasked with the organization of matters related to American Indian relations with the United States such as treaties, educational development, and economic development- to name a few areas of importance that are also not limited to the federal recognition relationship and domestic trust system. In that way, Indian ‘affairs’

communicatively relates to all of the diverse affairs between American Indians and the federal government. More specifically, the National Archives (2025) notes that

“[b]eginning with the first Federal Congress in 1789... various select committees were established in the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives to assess and

debate legislative matters related to

American Indian tribes and interactions

between tribal governments and the U.S. government”. To this extent, Kappler’s 1904

Volume II on *Indian Affairs: Laws and Treaties* is an important semiotic artifact that

signifies the jurisdictional continuity of the Treaty of Fort Pitt. Published through the

federal Government Printing Office in 1904, figure 2.5 is an example of the Treaty of

Fort Pitt’s formal recognition and codification into ‘Indian Affairs’, within the government

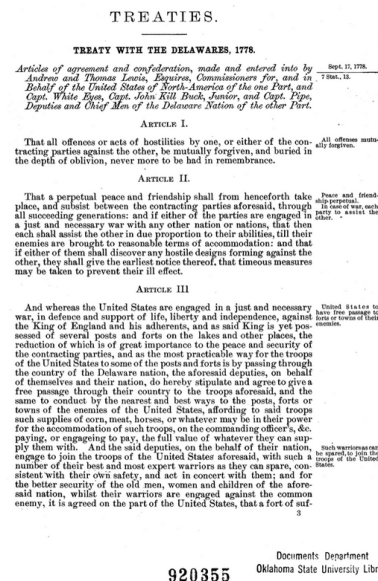
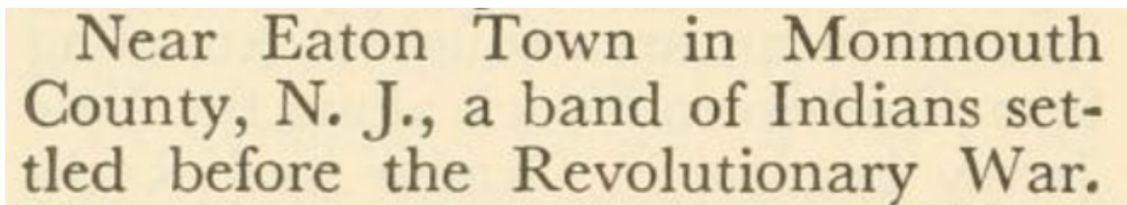


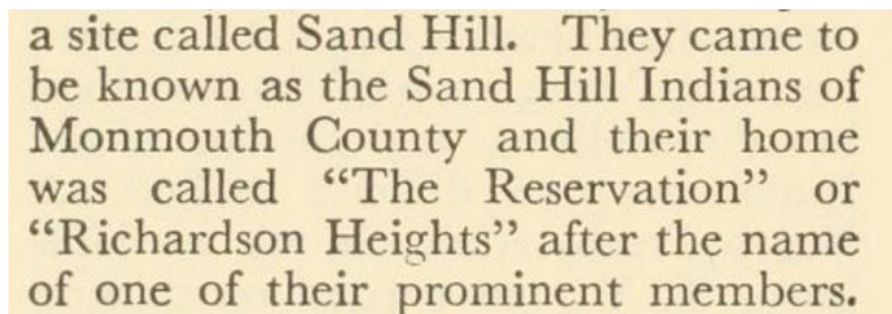
Figure 2.5: Treaty of Fort Pitt with formal documentation serial number

documents department of the Oklahoma State university library. Therefore, although the de facto, or on the ground/ in reality conditions have substantially blurred the meaning of these de jure elements of legal and political infrastructure, there still remains the Supreme Courts and Congressional recognition of the enforceability of the Treaty of Fort Pitt- ratified as treaty number 8 with a National Archives ID of NAID: 176316991. Just as the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs formally logged the Treaty of Fort Pitt as still being an active feature of Indian affairs (ratified), the Smithsonian institution duly recognized the Sand Hill Band's continuity in their ancestral homelands, Lënapehòking. In 1948, the Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution (1948, 414) published the following document, depicted in figures 2.6 and 2.7, which acknowledges the Sand Hill Band's historic habitation in their ancestral territories.



Near Eaton Town in Monmouth County, N. J., a band of Indians settled before the Revolutionary War.

Figure 2.6: 1948 Smithsonian documentation of the Sand Hill Band



a site called Sand Hill. They came to be known as the Sand Hill Indians of Monmouth County and their home was called “The Reservation” or “Richardson Heights” after the name of one of their prominent members.

Figure 2.7: 1948 Smithsonian documentation of the Sand Hill Band

These features of primary and secondary documentation as legitimate historic representation are important to codify with respect to the Sand Hill Band's jurisdiction and political continuity. Beyond cases like *Agua Caliente* (2019), *Elk v. Wilkins* (1884), and the state recognition criteria brought into focus through the MonteVideo Convention of 1933 (reaffirmed by the US in 1936), among others, that ground criteria for political recognition; these *de jure* components must be reflected through *de facto*, or in reality conditions. These formally codified features of potential social practice may be a quite nebulous process to ascertain without context. Thus, for the purpose of applied anthropological analysis, grounding *de jure* precedents into concrete social practices and norms with a temporal scope may be focalized through 83.11 federal recognition criteria to ensure that nation-to-nation standards are upheld. As I have noted, these criteria may be exercised to assess the legitimacy of a governing body without that polity further petitioning or accepting an offer of federal recognition. To this regard, the following section is composed of oral histories- both previously compiled by Kraft (2001)- alongside contemporary iterations from my interviews with Principal Sachem of the Sand Hill Band, Dr. Ronald Yonaguska Holloway, Norris Francis War Turtle Branham⁴¹, a current Sand Hill Band Council Member, as well as some primary documentation from Red Chief of the Sand Hill Band, Chief Lance Towodi Ge Shauger and an associated Federation Sachem that orient, including and not limited to, "(b)(1)(ii) 'Social relationships connecting individual members [of a tribe]; (iii) Rates or patterns of informal social interaction that exist broadly among the members of the entity;

⁴¹ Norris told me in an interview that he "received the traditional name of War Turtle through a traditional naming ceremony by respected elders.... [he] was blessed with this title because I speak for our people; what I have been told is there has not been a named War Turtle here in the East for over 300 years".

83.11(a)(6) [that there is] Identification as an Indian entity in relationships with Indian tribes or with national, regional, or state Indian organizations.; [and that] (viii) There is a continuous line of entity leaders and a means of selection or acquiescence by a significant number of the entity's members" (C.F.R 83.11).

Pùkuwàнкуwàk: Turtle Clan of the Sand Hill Band and elements of continuity

From time immemorial, it [The Sand Hill Band] has owned and occupied approximately 2,000,000 acres of land constituting the present-day State of New Jersey, within which formerly lay the Brotherton Indian Reservation, and which presently constitutes Shamong Township, Burlington County, New Jersey.

-(Sandhill Band v. Corzine et al 2010, p. 2-3)

The late “Mr. [James Lone Bear] Revey, who belongs to the Sand Hill band of the Lenape [and headed the New Jersey Indian Office, said in a New York Times article in 1994 that]... For too long we have been New Jersey's forgotten citizens” (Schumacher 1994). James Lone Bear Revey was

also the Spokesperson for the federally recognized Delaware Nation in Oklahoma from circa 1963-1998. Indeed, from time immemorial, the Raritan Unami Delaware who merged with the Richardsons of the Cherokee have always remained in

Filter by type: Treaty Search				
Year	Title	Signatories	Type	Tags
1722	Great Treaty Of 1722	Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Seneca, Mahican	treaty	ratified
1726	Deed In Trust From Three Of The Five Nations Of Indians To The King, 1726	Cayuga, Onondaga, Seneca	treaty	ratified
1744	Treaty Of Lancaster, 1744	Six Nations of New York, Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Seneca, Tuscarora	treaty	ratified
1752	Treaty Of Logstown, 1752	Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Seneca, Tuscarora	treaty	ratified
1754	Albany Plan Of Union, 1754	Cayuga, Mohawk, Oneida, Onondaga, Seneca, Tuscarora	treaty	ratified
1768	Treaty Of Fort Stanwix, 1768	Cayuga, Onondaga, Mohawk, Tuscarora, Seneca, Oneida, Shawnee, Delaware, Six Nations of New York	treaty	ratified
1778	Treaty With The Delawares, 1778	Delaware	treaty	right of way, ratified
1784	Treaty With The Six Nations, 1784	Mohawk, Onondaga, Seneca, Oneida, Cayuga, Seneca Abenaki, Tuscarora	treaty	ratified
1785	Treaty With The Cherokee, 1785	Cherokee	treaty	crimes against Indian country, ratified
1785	Treaty With The Wyandot, Etc., 1785	Wyandot, Delaware, Chippewa, Ottawa	treaty	ratified

Figure 2.8: Oklahoma State University Tribal Treaty Database & Government Document Depository depicts Treaty of Fort Pitt (Ratified)

their ancestral territories. Accordingly, they have continued to uphold a commitment to treaty agreements that are ratified to this day. Depicted in figure 2.8, is a snapshot from the Oklahoma State University Tribal Treaty and Government Documents depository (2025) that indicates the de jure status of the treaty of Fort Pitt (1778) as ratified treaty

number 8. Ratification represents an obligation by the United States that contains pathways for the enforceability of all treaties engaged in by the United States. Through diverse practices of comity, the Pùkuwàнкуwàк (Turtle clan of Sand Hill Band) have upheld continuous signifiers that the federal government requires for their recognition of the legitimate status of an inherently sovereign political body. The examples of comity, or mutual benefit among engaging parties that are described in this section, are situated with respect to some of the CFR 83.11 federal criteria for acknowledgement to provide a systemized frame to ground these social practices within. These shared social practices contain substantial levels of shared and cooperative labor that influence the cultural and economic domains among the Sand Hill and The Federation of Aboriginal Nations of the Americas (FANA) at large. To that regard, (25 CFR 83.11(b)(1)(iv) recognition refers to the “[s]hared or cooperative labor or other economic activity among members”. Chartering a confederation entails a host of formal processes that can serve to signify formal status and at a level is communicatively constituted. The Federation of Aboriginal Nations of the Americas (FANA) as an institution, materially and symbolically, is a major signifier of the Sand Hill Band’s political continuity. Neesu Wushuwunoag (2015) writes in a Constructive and Public Notice prepared on December 7th, 2015 that:

The institution was founded by FANA Superior Chief William Winds of Thunder Guy, Sagamore of the Pokanoket Nation, and FANA National Director Neesu Wushuwunoag, Pomham Sachem of the Mashapaug Nahaganset Tribe, and through development in concert with Principal Chief Ron Holloway of the Sand Hill Lenape Nation.

In figure 2.9, the public constructive notice, containing the Providence Recorder of Deeds stamp, signifies a material reflection of the shared or cooperative labor that the Sand Hill contributes towards as they “[d]eal with a county, parish, or other local

government in a relationship based on the group's Indian identity" (25 CFR 83.11(a)(3). Additionally, criteria (a)(6) provides that features of recognition are legitimized through "[i]dentification as an Indian entity in

relationships with Indian tribes or with

national, regional, or state Indian

organizations" (25 CFR 83.11(a)(6). These

elements may be arranged with criteria

(b)(vi) whereas practices of "[s]hared

sacred or secular ritual activity" (25 CFR

83.11(b)(1)(vi) meets (b)(v) through "[s]trong patterns of discrimination or other social

distinctions by non-members" (25 CFR 83.11(b)(1)(v). Formally, these patterns of

continuity can be identified through the shared secular and ritual activity of demarcating

socio-political boundaries among the Federation of Aboriginal Nations of the Americas

(FANA) member Nations, and those who may claim elements of indigeneity but do not

retain, maintain, or have any socio-legal connections (i.e., through treaty) to FANA

member Nations such as the Sand Hill Band and Skarure Woccon Band of Cape Fear

Indians. The axis of socio-political boundary demarcation between FANA Nations (i.e.,

federal common law Indian tribes) and federally recognized tribes- and those pursuing

that status, in one sense, is marked through differences between governance processes

and legitimacy frameworks. Federally recognized tribal electoral processes are typically

limited to defined periods of leadership status and are dependent upon the Secretary's

recognition/approval in many cases- especially with regard to those tribes who have

voted-for the governance structures provided through the Indian Reorganization Act

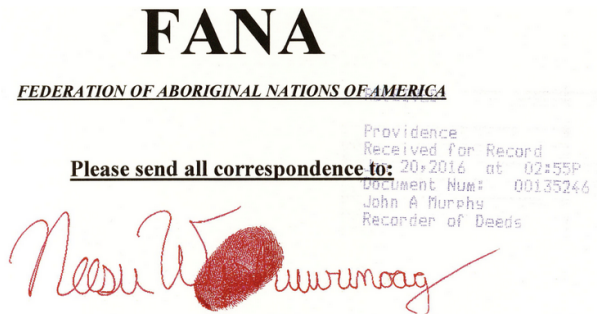


Figure 2.9: FANA's signed and stamped Public Constructive Notice

(Wheeler-Howard act of 1934) and the domestic trust system. Conversely, traditionally condoled chiefs, such as those appointed from FANA Nations by their respective Clan Mothers (see e.g., Jacobs 1991), serve life terms in leadership positions unless

otherwise removed from their roles

specifically through ritual processes

initiated by the Clan Mothers (Jacobs

1991, 500), not just by voting or

lobbying interests as is prevalent

among federally recognized tribal

politics. Depicted in figure 2.10 is a

formal communication provided by the

Skarure Woccon in relationship with

Red Chief Lance Towodi Ge Shauger

of the Sand Hill. This secular ritual of

communication serves the purpose of

bringing awareness to established

social bonds among FANA member Nations who embody characteristics of traditional

governing structures. Traditional governance structures, like the authority of Clan

Mothers who “hold the highest positions of authority” (Jacobs 1991, 500) differ from

those who operate through iterations of the United States electoral system which seems

to point out rigid social boundaries between Federation Nations and those who are not

FANA member Nations. In an oral history interview (2025) to inquire about Chief

Lovell’s (i.e. Principal Chief of the Skarure Woccon) intent behind establishing this



Figure 2.10: Semiotic artifact depicting strong socio-political boundary setting among the Sand Hill Band and Skarure Woccon Indians

document and subsequently reaching out to Towodi Ge for thoughts on the matter- as the Skarure and Sand Hill are both FANA Nations- Chief Lovell told me that in representing one level of a commitment to the future:

That document was basically showing that we respect our family communities- our Tuscarora folks; we have maybe four or five distinct Tuscarora communities and we don't interfere in one another's politics. Some communities don't even get along, that is something that we are working on in North Carolina- trying to get everybody to at least sit at a Council Fire and have discussions. Some communities are still fighting over colorism. So there's one community in Maxton that is part of the Tuscarora Nation and are wanting state recognition and I don't think that any of the local communities are supporting them because of the way they came in with support from representative Goodwin- and they have the Lumbee⁴² somehow attached to this- the Lumbee are about 30 min away, so we deal with a lot of the politics around here with regard to differences in status; the Cherokee have been fighting the Lumbee every step of the way in their federal recognition process⁴³; the Lumbee have claimed to be Cherokee and now are misappropriating Tuscarora culture- our culture and language; they will not recognize us, but will take our information to use for themselves. So we see the Lumbee attached to this new community that has popped up and none of us support it. I don't police people who claim to be indigenous- I try to build bridges- but with this push for federal recognition they are trying to include all the Tuscarora clans and we are not interested in that- we are standing on our treaty and sustaining our international presence [i.e., with FANA] because what they are doing could potentially overshadow us locally and through our local business practices and we had to draw a line on that.

With that in mind, Red Chief of the Sand Hill Band, Towodi Ge, told me in an oral history interview (2025) about his reasons for supporting this action when he said that:

I see people with levels of federal recognition as a tier and state recognition as yet another tier of a loss of rights, and so when I saw that the Tuscarora here in NC were fighting, some for state recognition, some for federal- we had Chief

⁴² See e.g., "January 23, 2025 MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR SUBJECT: Federal Recognition of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina [FR Doc. 2025-02124 Filed: 1/30/2025 8:45 am; Publication Date: 1/31/2025]"- the directive to establish a *plan* for the Lumbee's federal acknowledgment. The Lumbee are now the 575th federally recognized tribe (in 2026).

⁴³ Knoepp (2024) writes that "The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians' chief expressed disappointment in the U.S. House passing a bill that would extend federal recognition and sovereignty to the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina. "This bill [i.e., H.R. 1101], if enacted, would establish a dangerous precedent for federal recognition, abandoning the requirement of historical, genealogical, and cultural evidence," Eastern Cherokee Principal Chief Michell Hicks said in a statement this week [December 19th, 2024]".

Lovell reaching out because they were trying to eliminate his people from discussions and to take away his people completely from written record. So I felt compelled to lend him my support not only as the Sand Hills Red Chief but also as an ambassador from FANA- to me I felt like there was a line in the sand that was being crossed so I felt that I can help try to divert yet another tragic erasure of our people and our peoples cultures... I know it is a necessary evil in this day and age to deal with elected chiefs and the corruption that accompanies that, but I feel it was never our customary traditions, beliefs, or ways and it sets a potential lynch pin that can be pulled to topple an entire nation; as a control mechanism it is something I can never support.

A potential point of tension introduced by electoral systems can be marked through the way they contrast with traditional governance structures, such as those led by condoled chiefs who are often appointed through hereditary lines and the authority of clan mothers. These authoritative tensions present a fundamental dichotomy between the norms of electoral politics and long-standing Indigenous forms of leadership and communal decision-making processes. To that extent, Towodi Ge (2025) told me that:

Once a tribe goes into federal recognition accepted status- accepting the deal and are wrapped in the federal trust of the United States... they [i.e., the federal government] impose a different mode of governance than traditionally condoled chiefs. They couldn't interfere with condoled chiefs in the same way- because the women selected those chiefs; many of them were cultivated from the time they were children. A chief is not someone who is superior to the members of their nations, a chief is a servant of their people- in other words, you are there to represent your family and you're going to that vigorously and passionately because that is your family, your clan you end up representing at the grand council. So the women having the status they have, select the chiefs; but if chiefs- if they were to become corrupt for some reason-, or if the government is leaning on them to do something, like you need to sign this land away because we want it; the women go to them first and they would warn them. And if the chief did not return to the path of the people the women would strip them of their position as a condoled chief and if they still refused to give up the position, the men's council would go to them. And if they refused yet again for a third time a final warning would occur in grand council and the whole chamber [historically] would be flooded with warriors, it used to be two warriors for every chief that was corrupt and the war chief [Red Chief] would stand up and hold out strands of black wampum and basically he would say if you do not return back to the ways of your clan and your people, righteously, and do their will- when this black wampum hits the floor in a second when I let go of it, you're going to be killed

[historically, literally; contemporarily, potentially symbolically] and they will select a new chief. If they did not rescind their corruption before the wampum hit the floor, they are taken out of the position and the Clan Mothers are urged to make a better selection next time to save the nation from such grief; an elected chief system you cannot do that with and if you try to fight them in the court system, you've seen what happens, they try to write your entire existence out of the rolls...

Wampum has been utilized as a semiotic or meaning-making device in numerous and diverse circumstances. The colors of wampum are significant as they serve, in part, as living documents and mnemonic or memory devices. The Black Wampum ritual- though the wampum is actually a very dark purple- has been utilized in times of both external conflict such as in declarations of war, and internal conflict like a corrupt Sachem (i.e., Chief) to signify a certain course of action be it complete removal or a fair warning. As Towodi Ge points out, there are three warnings proffered to induce a behavioral shift that would hopefully result with the selected individual heeding the voices of their community, and Clan Mothers. However, “[a]fter three warnings by the Clan Mothers who nominated him, a Sachem would be removed” (Jacobs 1991, 502). A contemporary iteration of the Black Wampum ritual of status removal is discussed later in this section with regard to internal conflicts over the goals and policies active among the Sand Hill Band.

Still, the textual circumstance between Towodi Ge and Chief Lovell (i.e. Principal Chief of the Skarure Woccon) highlights relationships between Indian tribes via shared secular (nonreligious/ political) activity that serves to pattern strong practices of social discrimination between who are members and those who are non-members of the group. Further, social boundaries are demarcated between those federally recognized tribes and FANA member Nations, who do not seek to establish that level of the federal

recognition relationship with the federal government. In my observation, the Federation seems to perceive the administrative oversight installed into the recognition relationship as a limiting factor that adds more etic 'red tape' to relationships that they otherwise would be directly engaging the other polity's in from an emic standpoint, rather than submitting to federal oversight. With that in mind, socio-political boundary demarcation is also channeled through avenues of the Sand Hill's inter-political arrangements such as through the establishment of embassies. In the case of establishing an embassy in foreign territories, social boundary demarcation is necessary to identify the stakeholders in the agreements. In such a case, the 83.11 criteria (c)(1)(i) acknowledges social practices that involve circumstances whereby the "entity is able to mobilize significant numbers of members and significant resources from its members for entity purposes" (25 CFR 83.11(c)(1)(i)). Entity purposes, initiated in this case by Dr. Ronald Yonaguska Holloway, Principal Sachem of the Sand Hill, reflects the mobilization of significant numbers of Sand Hill and FANA Citizens to collectively channel significant resources towards the institution of an embassy in the State of Hidalgo within the Republic of Mexico. Therein, political continuity as exercised through the form of international relations is performed across social boundaries to advance processes of comity between those stakeholders involved. Depicted in figure 2.11, is the Official Proclamation, announced by the Minister of International Affairs of FANA, Dr. Ronald Yonaguska Holloway. Beyond 83.11 criteria (c)(1)(i), or the mobilization of citizens and resources, 83.11 (c)(1)(iii) is also signified through this textual semiotic, or meaning-making, medium whereby "[t]here is widespread knowledge, communication, or involvement in political processes by many of the entity's members" (25 CFR

83.11(c)(1)(iii). This Official Proclamation serves as a point of communication to inform the saturation of knowledge for Sand Hill Band Citizens, as well as all the FANA member Nations Citizens, that they are involved with, or party to, international political processes. International political processes necessitate the widespread diffusion of knowledge relationships that inform social practices. Moreover, such knowledge relationships are communicatively constituted for different purposes, signified in this particular instance to effectively realize, promote, and protect FANA's infrastructures, be they legal, social, economic or otherwise, with those who FANA seeks to conduct cultural exchanges with. Yet, the widespread orientation of knowledge, communication, and/or involvement in political processes is by no means limited to circumstances to develop embassies.

Communication and involvement in political processes also entails political rituals of renewal through which normative codes of conduct can become temporarily reversed to promote different frames for the representation of interpolity relations. In this sense, the Sand Hill's political continuity is further signified by a ritual to renew relationships, with the hopes of those relations becoming a more concrete and broadly accepted, or fixed norm. The ritual of renewal in this particular instance refers to the Buffalo Soldiers

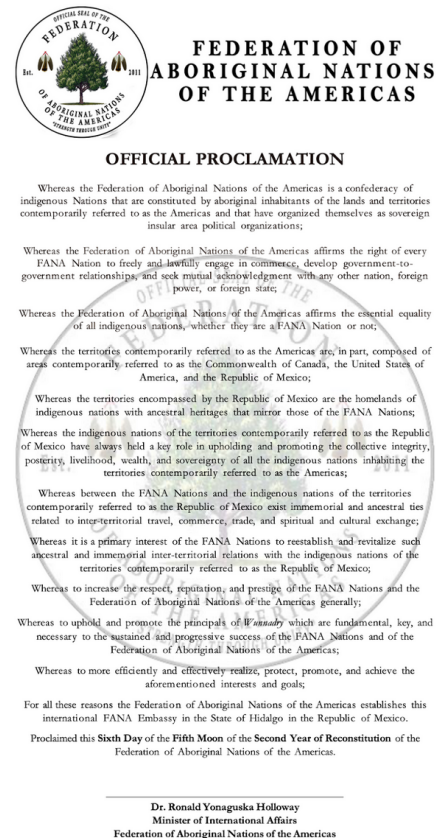


Figure 2.11: Semiotic artifact depicting the Official Proclamation of FANA's international embassy in the Republic of Mexico

Association at West Point Military Academy's Good Medicine Award/Ceremony, presented to Dr. Ronald Yonaguska Holloway, specifically recognizing the Sand Hill Lenape and Cherokee Nation; depicted in figure 2.12. Although the Buffalo Soldiers have more to do with the western 'frontier', West Points award serves a representational function of developing relations between the Sand Hill and themselves. A Federation Cacique (i.e., Taino Chief) was involved in this Good Medicine Award process and is included in a later chapter. Notification of this award was disseminated through news outlets, online blogs, and other communications mediums that informed both Sand Hill members who were not present at the Ceremony, and the general American public as well as active military members as to the significance of these political proceedings.



Figure 2.12: The Good Medicine Award presented to Sachem Yonaguska

Widespread communication of political proceedings (i.e. 25 CFR 83.11(c)(1)(iii) and developments within and across the social boundaries of the Sand Hill are often effectively mediated through different news and media platforms. Importantly, 25 CFR 83.11(a)(5) accounts for the “[i]dentification [of a group] as an Indian entity in newspapers and books”. In our day and age of interconnected and multi-media platforms for news and information

transmission, the evolution of social domains and access to information has taken a turn towards hyper-development afforded through an increase in communicative interfaces. To that regard, coverage of the Sand Hill's status, developments, and efforts are diverse. News outlets covering the Sand Hill include and are not limited to entities such as the New Jersey Commission on Indian Affairs, the TAPinto neighborhood online news platform, the TwoRiverTimes, and TurtleGangNYC- a multimedia news platform run by a Council Member of the Sand Hill, Norris Francis War Turtle Branham. In an interview, Norris Francis War Turtle Branham and I discussed numerous topics related to the continuity of the Sand Hill today, "[s]ocial relationships connecting individual members" (25 CFR 83.11(b)(1)(ii), and shared cooperative efforts (25 CFR 83.11(b)(1)(iv) that signify, for example, activities that promote the maintenance of records, ceremonies, and other social practices.

A relationship between multimedia digital spaces and the maintenance of social and political records contains a variety of opportunities to empower a community. For example, Norris explained that "in 1972, James Lone Bear Revey wrote that the youth had become disinterested and started to move away from engaging the culture and traditions, but I think that over the past 15-20 years we have reinvigorated the youth and have moved them back into this [i.e. traditional cultural practices]; these actions have empowered the youth by providing the elders with a pathway to actualize their visions- through the participation in cultural practices by the youth" (Oral History interview 2025). In a certain sense, if cultural practices and traditions may be referred to as a process of home building, then as Norris describes, reinvigorating connections between the youth and elders are constituted through a process whereby "now, you're building your home

with the kids helping you, and that I think is the most beautiful thing, where the most potential lies- which brings us to ideas of participation, and of inclusion, and I think that we are part of the generations and the movements that have brought that back” [i.e. connections between the youth and elders] (Oral History interview 2025). A semiotic system that has aided in these social evolutions is the multimedia news and information platform initiated by Norris Francis War Turtle Branham called TurtleGangNYC.

Depicted in figure 2.13 is an image from the homepage of TurtleGangNYC. Additionally, on the homepage of this site, TurtleGangNYC (2025) provides that through this platform, one may:

Discover truth at the edge of transparency. TurtleGang once again takes you on an informative journey into the life and history of an Eastern Woodland Lenape Family that has overcome the pitfalls of genocide. We survived the burning of our villages, the reclassification of our status and the theft of our lands. We are a remnant of the Navasink [& Raritan] Lenape and despite all the hardship we have faced we are still here. We share our story to inspire others to dig up their truth. Despite the slander and opposition from those who know us and even those who don't we move forward. Slow and Steady, we are still here. STILL TURTLE.



Figure 2.13: Semiotic artifact from TurtleGangNYC's homepage of multimedia news, documents repository, and socio-political histories platform

This platform, afforded as a digital space, serves multiple functions including the creation of spaces to share stories of lived experiences, to perform elements of togetherness mediated through participation in this technological medium, as well as access to over 350 different stories, digital media, and podcast episodes. For example,

this digital space allows for the reversal of historic representations of particular experiences, perspectives, and expressions of historical and contemporary precedents as it communicates emic dispositions of history, politics, and social practices widely within and beyond the social boundaries of the Sand Hill. Norris (Oral History interview 2025) explained to me what has been made possible through the responsible use of technology and social media when he told me that:

Social media and technology has made possible the recreation of relationships that had been washed away for hundreds of years; I feel like not only Sand Hill, but TurtleGang in the name of Sand Hill was a part of a resurrection of conversations amongst younger generations that brought an interest back into our heritage and our responsibilities, and that empowered the older generations, which now has infused the Sand Hill with a new energy, a new group of people to power that [i.e. the youth].

To that regard, TurtleGangNYC is an example by which globalized systems are approached through an Indigenous lens (see e.g., Yunkaporta 2019). In this way, digital spaces emerge as a location to disseminate particular knowledge relationships from the viewpoint of those individuals and collectives who actively generate these perspectives and ways of being. With over 80,000 individuals who have interfaced with TurtleGangNYC, as depicted through their subscriptions/traffic tracker, TurtleGangNYC reaches diverse audiences while simultaneously covering “Social relationships connecting individual members” (25 CFR 83.11(b)(1)(ii) of the Sand Hill Band. In an example that also provides widespread knowledge and communication (i.e. 25 CFR 83.11(c)(1)(iii) of relationships “connecting individual members” of the same tribal body, Norris’ involvement with a film called Diligence is highly relevant to include. Diligence is a film directed by Brooklyn Demme⁴⁴ and was produced by “a veteran of hip hop culture

⁴⁴ The [HarlemFilmHouse.org](https://www.harlemfilmhouse.org/) (accessed 1/14/2026) explains that “Brooklyn Demme began learning filmmaking from his father Jonathan Demme in Childhood”.

named Norris War Turtle Branham” (HarlemFilmHouse.org accessed 1/14/2026).

Notably, “[t]his year [i.e., 2025] they are pleased to present a documentary feature film entitled Diligence, which shows Carrie Jones’ [i.e., a Sand Hill Band Councilwoman’s] precious victory of protecting her family’s Afro-Indigenous cemetery in New Jersey”

(ibid). Depicted in figure 2.14, is one of the posters for the film. The cemetery that Carries Jones protected, through pro se (i.e., self representative) legal action, is

referred to as the Pine Brook

Cemetery in Tinton Falls, New

Jersey. The cemetery under question

is a historic burial ground for,

including but not limited to, Lenape

individuals and was unlawfully

encroached upon and desecrated by

an individual named Mr. Cicalese

over “six months with the help of

Governor Phil Murphy, and The N.J.

Board of Cemeteries Acting Director Cari Fais” (see Echo Press 6/20/2023, accessed

1/14/2026). As the film Diligence depicts, literally in the court proceedings at different

moments through the film, as shown in figure 2.15, fraud and other unlawful activities

were propagated by Mr. Cicalese and others at the cost of the Pine Brook Cemetery’s

state and quality of existence. Because Carrie Jones’ relatives historically maintained

positions on the Cemetery’s board, for example, elements of fraud materialized as other

board members performed certain actions such as the redaction of Sand Hill Band



Figure 2.14: Screenshot of the poster for Diligence. Produced by Norris Francis War Turtle Branham. Directed by Brooklyn Demme.

members words from meeting minutes. When the NJ Board of Cemeteries acting director sought to facilitate certain actions at different points, like claiming the burial ground, certain members of the Cemetery board silenced the voices of Sand Hill Band members- Carrie Jones' relatives- who rejected certain actions. Despite their rejections, the positions they articulated were outright redacted from the



Figure 2.15: Sand Hill Band Councilwoman Carrie Jones bringing her Pro Se case in front of a NJ Judge. (Photo by Brooklyn Demme)

minutes to fraudulently narrativize fabricated consent to alter the Pine Brook Cemetery. However, through diligent efforts, Carrie Jones unveiled the fraud by going date-by-date, minute-by-meeting-minute to show a local judge precisely what unlawful actions transpired. In my observation, Carrie Jones' actions echo an ethos encoded by those who rejected settler impositions on the Brotherton reservation centuries earlier; that the Raritan Unami Sand Hill Band of Lenape and Cherokee Indians will fight for what they see and know is right- to respect their traditions, honor the work that has effectuated the continuity of their politico-legal status, and importantly, to honor the traditions of where and who they come from, even if it has to be pro se (i.e., self representative). The film also acted as a site to support other Sand Hill Band Citizens as well by including music produced by Tribal members Obadiah Townes Bey Fallou and Kai Shomo who create tracks that utilize the Algonquian language family and Lenape dialects. In my observation, the circulation of the film has been very successful and has also conveyed

signals of other 83.11 criteria in the process. Namely, “Identification as an Indian entity in relationships with Indian tribes or with national, regional, or state Indian organizations” (25 CFR 83.11(a)(6) is identifiable as the film was screened by the Aundeck Omni Kaning First Nation at the Weengushk International Film Festival held in Ontario, Canada between July 18-20 of 2025. Interestingly as well, these legal circumstances unfolded in the years following the State of New Jersey’s 218th Legislature, introduced in February of 2019, which established the “NJ Native American Burial Ground Preservation Task Force” sponsored by NJ Assemblywoman Valerie Vaineri Huttel. Furthermore, representatives of this task force have provisions that include that “one shall be a member of the SandHill Band of Lenape and Cherokee Indians” (Assembly No. 5039 2019, 2, lines 10-11).

The revival of tradition in contemporary proceedings is another significant feature that was communicated in the interview between Norris and I. In this case, naming ceremonies and the associated responsibility of holding a specific name was an important feature of one of Norris’s points. As Kraft (2001, 247) writes, “[n]ew names were bestowed when individuals got married, became leaders, or underwent some profound spiritual experience. Occasionally, too, people exchanged names with one another when establishing important economic or political ties [among the Lenape]”. With that in mind, being appointed a Seat on the Sand Hill’s Council is one feature of political participation that comes with different responsibilities such as building or reproducing “traditions of fellowship and intertribal relationships” (Oral History interview 2025). Norris explained that:

I received the traditional name of War Turtle through a traditional naming ceremony by respected elders.... I was blessed with this title because I speak for

our people; what I have been told is there has not been a named War Turtle here in the East for over 300 years.

Honorific practices that signify socio-political obligations and ideological values, such as the maintenance of social advocacy and intertribal relations across different platforms like TurtleGangNYC, are important features that highlight elements of systematic mobilization through uniquely developed mandates. To that extent, the increase in frequency of cultural participation and representation by the Sand Hill's youth is tied to performances by older generations of Sand Hill members who set specific standards and codes for conduct. With an increase in socio-political proceedings such as ritual/ceremonial naming, coming generations have diverse potentials to participate in the shaping and evolution of the ritual practices that define their broader social identities. These elements of semiotic, or meaning-making, interfaces are just one area to contribute to collective cultural memories. In this way, naming practices contribute towards a language of social identity, just like wampum historically has had in times-past.

Kraft (2001, 543) includes a segment of an oral history regarding the language of wampum, originally documented in (Agnello 1986) as he recounts that Revey explained:

There were originally three ceremonial groupings of the Delaware Tribe... and each of these [three] diamonds [in the wampum belt] represents a ceremonial grouping. When the Delaware people left the east coast they went west, and the dark side [of the wampum belt] is where the setting sun is, they represent the Delaware that went west, and this [the light side of the belt] represents the few Delaware that stayed here in the east. The belt is joined together so we don't forget our brothers and sisters. We remember them [through these semiotic mediums].

To that regard, Norris and I spoke about standing on top of James Lone Bear Revey's work, advancing what Lone Bear generated because "he is the one who had [initiated many] connections with the state" (Oral History Interview 2025) of New Jersey. As such, Norris explained more about what that particular wampum belt signified as the original three ceremonial and political groupings of the Delaware. Specifically, Norris indicates that "structurally, New Jersey should consist of three groups; the Turtle, the Turkey and the Wolf. Sand Hill are Turtle; Ramapough are Wolf; and Nanticoke are Turkey- that's the correct political structure where we can place ourselves back into the original political structure" (Oral History Interview 2025) of the broader Delaware Nation. However, in contemporary times, there have been particular internal conflicts among the Sand Hill that generated levels of controversy as to the goals, policies, and decisions that drive the Sand Hill's continuity. Accordingly, (25 CFR 83.11(c)(1)(v) provides that elements of recognition are influenced by demonstrating that "[t]here are internal conflicts that show controversy over valued entity goals, properties, policies, processes, or decisions". To an extent, these elements of intra-political controversy stem from the treaty agreements that established jurisdictions, rights, powers, and duties of the inter-political arrangements between the Sand Hill and the United States (i.e Fort Pitt & Easton). Yet, "[t]reaties incorporating jurisdictional clauses did not map neatly onto distributions of power" (Benton & Clulow 2024, 202). Thus, the identification of a continuous line of entity leaders through which processes of leadership selection or "acquiescence by a significant number of the entity's members" (25 CFR 83.11(c)(1)(viii) becomes a relevant and important feature of socio-political organization to substantiate- and specifically as it relates to internal conflicts over different interests active in a

political system. Part of the 25 CFR 83.11 criteria entails identification as an Indian “entity on a substantially continuous basis since 1900” (25 CFR 83.11 (a)). To this regard, it is salient to note the line of Sand Hill Band Sachems (i.e., Chiefs) dating from approximately 1850 until today. With that in mind, Isaac Richardson held the position as Sachem between about 1850-1904. Sachem Ryers Crummel succeeded Richardson, serving from 1904-1963.

Figure 2.16 is an example of Sachem Ryers Crummel appointing a symbolic title of honorary Chief to the late governor of New Jersey Alfred E. Driscoll on September 30, 1949 (see e.g., 25 CFR 83.11 (a)(2)).



Figure 2.16: Chief Ryers Crummel of the Sand Hill Band appoints New Jersey's 1949 governor Driscoll an honorary chief (Photo from Ancestry newspapers)

From 1963 to 1998, Sachem James Lone Bear Revey

served the Sand Hill Band and significantly advanced the Tribes' relations with the state of New Jersey as well as the federal government through the pursuit of the federal recognition process- that was ultimately not opted-into to retain specific powers of treaty provisions (i.e., Treaties of Easton and Fort Pitt). However, the governor of New Jersey in 1990, Thomas H. Kean signed a proclamation- signified in figure 2.17, below- recognizing Lenape/ Delaware Indians of New Jersey over at least the past one-

thousand years- by archaeological, ethnographic, and Native American tradition as is demonstrated through the Sand Hill's government for example- in accordance with actions performed by Lone Bear and the New Jersey Indian Commission. Sachem James Lone Bear Revey appointed Sachem Sam Beeler to succeed him from 1998-2007 due to Beeler's matrilineal line (see also for e.g., on typical Eastern Woodlands leadership organization in Metcalf 1974, 654).

Sachem Sam Beeler continued the

process of fulfilling the requirements for federal recognition criteria as he worked to compile genealogical records, administered community surveys, and advanced the solidification of the Sand Hill Band's master list of Citizens. However, Sachem Beeler resigned in 2007 and appointed Sachem Medicine Crow Holloway to succeed him as the Sand Hill Band's Principal Sachem. At that time (i.e., circa 2007), Sachem Medicine Crow Holloway appointed Dr. Ronald Yonaguska Holloway as the Chairman of the Sand Hill to manage the business side and other secular elements of the Tribes affairs in the process of finalizing the sufficient materials to petition for federal recognition and access into the domestic trust system. And yet, like many tribal bodies who have pursued the federal recognition relationship through the domestic trust system, layers of

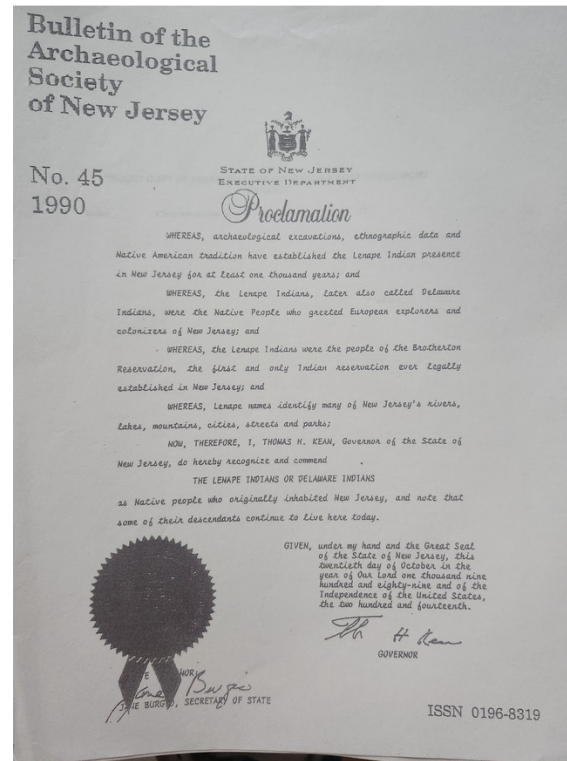


Figure 2.17: New Jersey Governor Thomas H. Kean (1990) Proclamation recognizing the Lenape/ Delaware of NJ

internal-tribal tensions came to a head that connect to 25 CFR 83.11 (c)(1)(v) or “internal conflicts that show controversy over valued entity goals, properties, policies, processes, or decisions”.

To that extent, Sachem Yonaguska told me (Oral History interview 2025) that Medicine Crow:

Wanted to get the tribe through at all costs [i.e., into federal recognition status]... he felt it was necessary that we took our position as federally recognized. But, at that particular time, he was not aware at all, and I was beginning to become aware of what would happen if we did opt-into federal recognition because through the process of federal recognition you sign away substantial elements of your sovereignty; you are put into the federal trust. It's almost as if you sign away features of history for a paycheck... At first I went along with it, but as I was doing the research- I was the one charged with preparing everything. And prior to the run [i.e., petition for federal recognition], I began to voice concerns to the Chief- you know, pops- and I said this does not look good. Because once we're in the trust- like all those tribes who have casinos and everything, they can't spend their own money, it goes to the trust- we are not the one's managing everything⁴⁵... But Medicine Crow wouldn't let go of it. So, I proceeded to go to the White House four times, we met in the senior staff conference room in the west wing of the White House and I took a number of our Tribal members like Laura and Darius.

The process of petitioning to the federal government for domestic trust status recognition, and therefore access to the levels of associated special programs and services, culminated into a letter of intention to petition numbered 308 for the New Jersey Sand Hill Band of Lenape and Cherokee Indians in January of 2007, depicted in figure 2.18. For reference, the eligibility criteria (e.g., such as performances by acts of Congress through treaty or 83.11 criteria fulfilment) and the emergent representations that signify institutional legitimacy are codified and stored through the Federal Acknowledgement Process. Therein, petitions may result in a range of eligibility

⁴⁵ It is important to include that the class action Cobell v. Salazar case was first filed in 1996 on the very issue of individual Indian money accounts and their mismanagement by the federal government. The class action case Cobell v. Salazar was settled in 2012 and distributed approximately 3.4 billion dollars of mismanaged funds into individual Indian money accounts held in trust by the federal government.

outcomes the federal government expresses through the signifiers “unsuccessful petitioner”, in other words, when “an entity was denied Federal acknowledgment after petitioning under the acknowledgment regulations” (see 25 CFR 83.1 “Unsuccessful petitioner”). Some petitioners are determined to be entirely *ineligible* for submissions altogether (see e.g., Petition #34 by the Hatteras Tuscarora Indians on ineligibility to petition). Cases whereby regulations are met and federal acknowledgement is conferred are represented as “Acknowledged... [for e.g.,] 75 FR [i.e. Federal Register] 34760, effective on...” (see e.g., petition # 4 Shinnecock Indian Nation, 2010) the date of approval. And, petitions may also result in conditions through which the tribe/nations eligibility is determined to remain open for different reasons. Figure 2.18 reflects the current open status of the Sand Hill Band’s petition for federal recognition which directly connects to the outcome of the Sand Hills internal conflicts around “entity goals, properties, policies, processes, or decisions” (see 25 CFR 83.11 (c)(1)(v). Alongside Sachem Yonaguska’s concerns over how assets are managed within the domestic trust system, the blood quantum membership qualification was another imposition he did not

308 New Jersey Sand Hill Band of Lenape and Cherokee Indians
 c/o Mr. Ronald Stacey Holloway
 P.O. Box 1012
 Montague, NJ 07827
Letter of Intent to Petition 01/09/2007

**Figure 2.18: The Sand Hill Band's official petition for federal
recognition in 2007**

seek to adopt for his people⁴⁶. In the interim between 2007-2008, Sachem Yonaguska (2025) told me that:

I felt the tribe was attempting to be too pan-American Indian and I sought to reestablish our Traditional governing structure. I didn't like the pan-orientation of political structure.. Everyone seemed to be more interested in fitting in with the other natives and going along with the club and having everybody's blessing and showing up at the White House once a year for the photo op and the regalia.... I was not about that- I didn't like the Chairman-Chief position; I was good at performing the duties of the Chairman because that's what I do, its business, but, I didn't like Chairman-Chief. I needed to have the White Chief and the Red Chief and our Traditional Council with the right people in the right seats, because those are hereditary seats. They're not political like 'oh you took me out to dinner five times, here's a spot'- they are not mine to give- they belong to the correct bloodlines... Our traditions indicate that if you have a drop of Raritan, SandHill, or Unami blood- you are Family. And the conceptualization that my second cousin is okay, but my third is not family- how dare you, you do not get to tell me who family is...

A substantial element of traditional governing procedures was ritually enacted to navigate the conflict between a push for federal recognition, the perceived negative implications that the federal trust system and blood quantum entail, and the desire to maintain the Sand Hill Band's treaty status (i.e., Easton 1758 & Fort Pitt 1778). Therein, a contemporary and hybridized materialization of the Black Wampum ritual was performed in an attempt to guide Medicine Crow back into a more focused reflection of the broader Sand Hill Band's vision for achieving their goals, policies, and decisions (see 25 CFR 83.11 (c)(1)(v). By doing so, Sachem Yonaguska (2025) explained that "we [i.e., the Sand Hill's Clan Mothers and Council] did the perfunctory warning letters

⁴⁶ At the time in 2007, the broader Delaware Nation utilized blood quantum in the federally recognized relationship wherein they are beneficiaries for federally held trust assets- which may have influenced Medicine Crows interest in going with the federally recognized route and blood quantum qualifications. Interestingly, "In 2019, [the] Delaware Nation became the first Tribal Nation on the western side of Oklahoma to remove BIA oversight from their constitution, strengthening their sovereignty and self-governance. In 2019 with a majority vote from Citizens, they also eliminated blood quantum as a requirement for enrollment in favor of lineal descentance, ensuring the longevity of the Nation" (Delawarenation-nsn.gov, 2025).

and he [i.e., Medicine Crow] kept trying, so at a certain point after back and forths, we just called him on everything- our Chiefs Council, Clan Mothers etc. and we tried him for sedition". Thus in 2008, the Sand Hill's Clan Mothers appointed Sachem Yonaguska the Principal Sachem, a position he still continues to serve. And yet, despite the traditional ritual procedure of chief removal and replacement, Medicine Crow made another attempt to subvert the legal status of the Sand Hill- an action that is seemingly a byproduct of the modernized iteration of the Black Wampum because historically as Towodi Ge recounts, the ritual typically resulted in the death of the offending agent- a norm which seems to be no longer applicable in contemporary political proceedings. To that regard, Sachem Yonaguska (2025) recounts that:

Pops [i.e., Medicine Crow] went to Australia to retire as he was getting older; he decided that I was not pushing us through federal recognition like he wanted and I said I'm not going to do it because I believe we need to be a stand alone sovereign, we don't need to be in their trust. The lands are ours- legally they are clearly so. There are Delaware who left and took the walk with the Cherokee, but we didn't, we stayed. So pops gave me an ultimatum, he said I want you to put us in the trust [i.e. federal domestic trust], and I said no. I'm not doing it- I am Chief. He turned around and tried to form a group he called the *Certified Sandhill* which was the portion of the tribe that we were able to quantify and qualify that we knew could get through [i.e., the federal petition process], so he tried to skim them off, reform them, and do a BIA run himself- taking them through. And I cut him off at the pass. He decided he was going to try to split the tribe formally into those who wanted to go through and those who didn't under his new roof even though he wasn't chief. He tried to go around the Council- have everybody removed- to have himself reinstated as chief so he could do the certified portion as he told me: "we'll just double back and get the others later; we'll get the money on the front side", and I said but you can't just cut out half the Tribe because you want to make a money run. So he challenged my chief position and I told him you are not in the position to tell anybody anything- we tried him on sedition- Council found him guilty, Clan Mothers found him guilty and so I asked, what does everyone want to do? What are we going to do?- and it turned out that since I am chief that I have to be the one to remove him fully from the tribe- so I drew up the papers and signed everything.

With that in mind, Sachem Yonaguska points out that historically the Raritans and Unami's who merged with the Richardsons of the Cherokee Nation have never yielded on their treaty rights as they have habitually performed the provisions of their treaty agreements through the centuries (i.e., from 1758-contemporary times). Moreover, it is made clear that the internal actions Medicine Crow attempted to leverage do not align with the historical policy of the Sand Hill Band in upholding their treaty rights- that of upholding comity and accountability in their actions. Substantiating that point, Sachem Yonaguska (2025) told me that:

You will never see a Raritan, Unami, or Sand Hill Chief's signature on any document relinquishing our treaty rights- the Sand Hill has never broken any of our treaty provisions; if you go into the federal trust you lose access to managing resources, treaty provisions, and you don't manage the money in the trust- and the federal government terminates tribes when they want⁴⁷.

Thus, tensions between condoled chiefs grounded in traditional structures- however hybridized they may have become in our current political landscapes- and those who seek the special benefits and programs provided through the domestic trust and federal recognition occupy an axis of differentiation in the cultural semiosphere of American Indian politics. And these tensions between traditional practices of social ordering and federal models imposed by the United States are present among other tribes and nations as well. To this extent, Sachem Yonaguska (2025) explained that:

Within the Ondondoga, for example, because I was very good friends with William 'Bill' Lazore- who was the condoled chief of the Onondaga; condoled which means he held the Wampum- that means the Clan Mothers have said

⁴⁷ Senate reports in the 83rd Congress in September of 1953 (Termination Era) provide at 15778, 794, that "Expressing sense of Congress that certain tribes of Indians should be freed from Federal supervision. Report from committee on Interior and Insular affairs to accompany H. Con. Res. 108 July 30th 1953" For reference H. Con. Res 108 July 30th 1953 provides: "Whereas it is the policy of Congress, as rapidly as possible, to make the Indians within the territorial limits of the United States subject to the same laws and entitled to the same privileges and responsibilities as are applicable to other citizens of the United States, to end their status as wards of the United States, and to grant them all of the rights and prerogatives pertaining to American citizenship".

'you're the dude', okay, well because of the imposition of a constitution on the Iroquois it created a split in their tribe where you had a traditional body and you had an elected body. And the elected body means you get paid, you get driven around in cars, you get something like 3,000 dollars a month- you know, they're big doggin'. And it got so bad there that when Bill would come down and talk to us in Milford [PA], he would say 'I come into a meeting to hold a meeting and the entire elected body would get up and walk out; that's how bad the split was'. And then Lorena and I at the United Nations had an opportunity to talk to Mary Lyons, who is one of their Clan Mothers, and she sat and told us at the UN that it has gotten so bad that the elected body does not even listen to the Clan Mothers anymore and under tradition the Clan Mothers are the only ones who can remove a chief. So what they did [i.e., the elected body] is just got rid of the condoled chiefs, basically closeted them, threw the Clan Mothers away, and just went with their constitutionally elected system whereby if those individuals were not malleable, the federal government would just put money into another family, have them run and that person would be out. So in order to keep levels of power with this elected structure, they got rid of the core traditional aspects which destroys tribes and organizations internally.

One of the ways Neolin's teachings reverberates today pertains to the 'most egregious' of offences emerging from socio-political interactions between the Sand Hill Band and the emergent United States. The colonial incursions Neolin spoke of may be positioned ideologically with respect to how imposed epistemology and practices engenders the nature of contemporary strategies for social ordering and asset management. Specifically, the tensions between traditional governing structures- which are more inclined to uphold treaty commitments- and the electorate leadership models shaped by the federal recognition system reveals a contemporary echo of colonial incursion into ideological structures around processes of tribal governance. It is a clear persistence of an ideological legacy that, to a limited but significant extent, is enacted through the policies, procedures, and decision-making codes that now shape federal trust associated tribal governance models such as the negation of Clan Mother authority and legitimacy. With that in mind, and in a political anthropological context, the rituals

that mediate cultural continuity within negotiations of social ordering are an important feature to account for, at a level, to make sense of the diverse ways settler colonial natures of management are rejected- materially and ideologically. Moreover, like the significance of Neolin's dream-recitation ritual that influenced Pontiac's Rebellion as well as the prior expression of the *Mesinghòlikàn*- that at a point in time strategically occurred outside the Big House Ceremony thus signifying a level of urgency in informational transmission; the modified and modernized iteration of the Black Wampum ritual signifies one example of a hybridity in political existence among the Sand Hill Band today⁴⁸. Moreover, the retention of these ritual practices for social ordering among rapid external socio-political shifts, with certain limits, signals what Yunkaporta (2019) may refer to as a brackish form of hybridity that engenders a refusal of absolute cultural and political assimilation. These emic forms of social ordering seem to seek to facilitate, to different degrees, the pursuit of a reasonable and integrated life for Sand Hill Band Citizens with the evolving social worlds around the metropolitan Northeast while not abandoning cultural practices in the face of these increasing population bases and the urbanization of Lënapehòking. Thus, from one perspective, the interplay between textual relationships that emerge through treaties, for example, as they relate to the rules governing concrete social practices of agency are crucial to account for and also retain diverse qualitative possibilities for anthropological assessment as they may connect to the concepts of jurisdiction and continuity.

Conclusions:

The forms of an Indian society were always in flux, and the balance of forces within society [are] always shifting. When the white man intruded upon the

⁴⁸ The Black Wampum ritual also serves to demonstrate 25 CFR 83.11 (b)(1)(ii) and 83.11 (c)(2)(c) for example.

situation, he simply became another issue to be dealt with in the context of a continuing internal struggle over public goals and the distribution of power. Thus the confrontation between Indians and whites was for the Indians always, to borrow Carl Becker's famous phrase, as much a struggle over who should rule at home as over home rule.

-Metcalf (1974, 665)

One of the goals of political anthropology is to understand how systems of meaning generate contests for power, how authority is legitimized, and how both ideological and material influences are negotiated among populations in specific cultural milieus. Through the course of this chapter, I have sought to exemplify some elements of how the concepts of jurisdiction and political continuity emerge from dense socio-historical matrices of the Delaware that are saturated with ideological and material negotiations of power relations. Through the consideration of how the use of symbols, communication, and agency relate to power negotiations, I aim to demonstrate some levels of how a ratified treaty may be characterized as an example of socio-political hybridity. In that sense, it is important to qualify elements of how ritual practices may shape the scopes of political interactions. To an extent, ritual practices in a political environment, when habitually undertaken, serve to create, shape, and transform the boundaries of social ordering as cultural continuity and exchanges engender pluri-political orders. With that in mind, the pluri-political region, or interplay of multiple foreign-jurisdictions, associated with Lënapehòking, NJ, NY, and PA encompasses a unique international legal relationship that is rooted in the inception of the United States (i.e., the Treaty of Fort Pitt 1778). In Table A is a select compilation of thirteen points of inter-political recognition between the United States federal and state governments alongside the foreign Sand Hill Band's (Raritan Unami & Keetoowah Cherokee)

government over a period from 1758-2025. These features of socio-political and legal legitimacy, i.e., through the maintenance of ratified treaties and their concomitant relations that are enacted between the Sand Hill Band and the federal government, as well the Sand Hill Band and the Federation of Aboriginal Nations of the Americas (FANA) contribute towards the performance of Fort Pitts (1778) provision (i.e., article VI) accounting for the confederation potential of the Sand Hill Band and other sovereign systems. Thus, in the following chapter, I analyze some outcomes of the pathway that the Sand Hill Band contributed towards as they co-founded the Federation of Aboriginal Nations of the Americas (FANA). By doing so, there are detailed accounts of how FANA is growing in membership through an account of three of its member Nations with respect to substantiating their “pre-colonial status, standing and jurisdiction of the FANA Member Nations [as are] substantiated by six (6) key criteria:

1. Aboriginal and historic ties to specific ancestral territories;
2. A tribal body comprised of Tribal Citizens with direct blood heritage to their respective and specific Tribal Nation;
3. Leadership (a) with a direct blood lineage to a prominent Chief acknowledged during the colonial era; or (b) with a maintained presence in and relationship with their ancestral lands;
4. International commercial viability;
5. An organized and functioning tribal governance structure;
6. Acknowledgement from other pre-colonial status American Indian Tribes” (see FANA.global 2025, Status and Standing).

Table A:

Elements of continuity (*Including but not limited to)	
Treaty of Easton 1758	Raritan Unami Clan boundary (South of Raritan river).
Treaty of Fort Pitt 1778	Includes provisions about state formation, congressional representation, reciprocal legal process.
Senate Committee on Indian Affairs 1904	Charles J. Kappler in <i>Laws and Treaties</i> codified the Treaty of Fort Pitt as ratified and active.
1939 Chief Crummel & Governor Driscoll	Chief Ryers Crummel gifts a “pan-Indian headdress” to Governor Driscoll at the 1939 World Fair, themed “A World of Tomorrow” in NYC.
Smithsonian Board of Regents Report 6/30/1948	Annual Report documents Sand Hill Band’s habitation in their territory page 414, 432 for reference. Pre-revolutionary war recognition.
9/30/1949 Chief Crummel & Governor Driscoll	Chief Ryers Crummel appoints NJ Governor Alfred E. Driscoll first honorary chief on Sand Hill’s Council.
1990 Governor Thomas H. Kean Proclamation	Board of Archaeological Society of NJ alongside Governor Kean (1990) recognizes NJ Indians for at least past 1,000 years- Archaeologically, Ethnographically, Traditionally through governance structure
August 7th 2004 Monmouth Proclamation	Board of Freeholders Proclaims Sand Hill Band of Indians Day in Monmouth County, recognizes Raritan-Lenape connection to Sand Hill Band prior to 1711.
01/09/2007 Letter of intent to petition for federal acknowledgement process	Letter of Intent to Petition #308 submitted and remains open as the process was left open (not opted-into) so that no ceding of treaty rights was enacted.
Sachem Yonaguska Advisory Committee member for BOEMRE (Department of Energy under President Obama) 2009-2017.	Sachem Yonaguska served as a member of President Obama’s Renewable Energy Task Force as the Chief of Record from 2009-2017.

Elements of continuity (*Including but not limited to)	
Civil Action 09-683 (KSH) filed 06/30/10	One of the opinions of the case was: “And so it is here. This Court is ill-equipped to assess the anthropological, political, geographical, genealogical, and cultural minutiae necessary to determine whether the plaintiff Sand Hill Band qualifies as a tribe under the NIA, whether it deserves federal acknowledgment, and whether the plaintiffs are in fact the rightful successors of the Brotherton Indians.” “And, as noted, still other groups have laid claim to the land now at issue”.
Assembly , No. 5039 State of NJ 218th Legislature, 2019	Introduced February 14th, 2019 in the 218th NJ Legislature. “Establishes “NJ Native American Burial Ground Preservation Task Force.” Sand Hill Band representative among the Task Force.
September 1, 2024 West Point Military Academy Awards Sachem Yonaguska Good Medicine Award	Good Medicine Award presented to Sachem Yonaguska- therein it recognizes Sand Hill Lenape and Cherokee Nation; Chief Tuerygua also invited and recognized.

Chapter III

Conceptualizing a Political Ontology of the Federation of Aboriginal Nations of the Americas

Introduction:

There are a myriad of possibilities: Some [Indian tribes] might choose full sovereign, independent status; some might choose confederation with one or more other native nations; some might choose alliance with the United States, either individually or in confederation with other native nations; some might choose to keep their current status; some might choose termination of their tribal status and assimilation into the United States; some might choose other options. Along a continuum that proceeds from fully dependent or subjugated states on