CEMETERY SPACES OF SHXWÕWHÁMEL STÓ:LÕ AND THE ÎLE-À-LA-CROSSE MÉTIS

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Abstract

The cemeteries of the Stó:lõ of Shxwõwhámél and the Métis of Île-à-la-Crosse manifest aspects of kinship, local memorialisations, and identity. When analysed in reference to oral histories and spatial analysis, these cemeteries tell a story of space and Aboriginal values. Often in conflict with Oblate doctrine, these spaces nonetheless, also represent syncretism and Aboriginal agency. The Île-à-la-Crosse cemetery spatially pronounces stories of kinship, or wahkootowin, as discussed by Brenda Macdougall, as well as local memorialisations highlighting the local Ste. Mary adoration of the area. In Shxwõwhámél, kinship and status are represented in the cemeteries, as well as stories of burnings and hanging trees, underlining these values in the Stó:lõ community. Together these cemeteries tell similar stories of Oblate control, exclusion, and syncretism as well as Aboriginal identity and agency in their respective spaces of the dead.

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