A Linguistic Analysis of Iroquoian Place Names
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According to Warrick (2007), the St. Lawrence River valley and north shore of Lake Ontario was inhabited by an Iroquoian population numbering approximately 60,000 comprised of 50-60 villages. This area was mapped extensively by the major colonial entities throughout the process of colonization; subsequently, the resulting maps included many of the original indigenous place names. Despite this documentation, as of yet these maps have not been used to reconstruct the historical Iroquoian place names within the indigenous languages themselves.

This paper examines French and English representations of indigenous place names in cartographic discourse and attempts to filter out layers of colonization by exploring the underlying linguistic structure of these names in the source languages. Through the systematic examination of their representations on these maps, an approximation of the original forms in which they were transmitted to non-indigenous peoples can be reconstructed.

It will also be demonstrated that 1) these morphemes were recorded with relative accuracy in French due to the overlap in phonemic inventory of the languages, 2) an anglicized reading of the French names is mainly responsible for present-day pronunciations, and 3) these factors have led to confusion arising from the similarity between several place-based morphemes.

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