# Intralingual Translations & Multimodal Registers of English: N. Scott Momaday's *The Way to Rainy Mountain* (1969) and Multitudes of Space and Time

MOMADAY, N. S. (2019). *The Way to Rainy Mountain*. University of New Mexico Press. (Original work published 1969)

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## Introduction

There is something deeply intriguing about the typographical structure of N. Scott Momaday's *The Way to Rainy Mountain* (1969, *WRM* for brevity throughout this article), in which three narratives in three different genres interweave with one another to shape an intricate retelling of the emergence of the Kiowa peoples and the continued impact of dominating American culture on Indigenous and Native American cultures and languages. Despite the exposition of this continued American (cultural) domination in the text and outside of it, Momaday's work actively resists the acceptance of its completion through the typography and diction used in the work. The work is in English, aside from a few words in the Kiowa language, yet the registers of English differ according to the narrative and genre. This review argues for the multimodality of Englishes as a mode of resistance against American hegemony by exploring the complexities of *WRM's* language in the tripart structure on the pages.

Jacki Thompson Rand has explored the practices of exploitation and domination of the Kiowa tribe since the 1850s in detail in *Kiowa Humanity and the Invasion of the State* (2008), practices she shows also impeded onto the cultural heritage of the tribe: "Native people, from an American capitalist perspective, were communal and nonproductive and organized into tribes lacking self-governance, social organization, systems of law, and economies" (Rand 2008, 4). As such, the state would employ policies that sought to restrain the expression of tribal culture, and thus the nefarious extermination of



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their cultural ways emerges through colonisation. Related, then, to cultural and epistemological ways of being is language. In posing English as a lingua franca whilst simultaneously hierarchising the Kiowa culture below the American one, the slow decline of the Kiowa language emerges as a consequence. Additionally, Bernard C. Perley has examined the entanglement of language and politics in Native American and Indigenous contexts more broadly in the *Annual Review of Anthropology* (2024). In the article, he designates three stages of cultural existence of Native American and Indigenous peoples, which are not chronological or mutually exclusive: peril, which refers to colonial encounters in the early years of conquest; persistence, which is how Perley characterizes the ways communities have preserved and adapted cultures and languages in the face of this peril; and praxis of possibility, the innovations and possibilities of language preservation and revival in Native American and Indigenous communities. This review primarily focuses on the praxis of possibility, reading the innovative uses of Englishes in *WRM* as such a praxis that simultaneously acknowledges peril and persistence through both the content and the form, including its typography.

The typography of each section follows the same pattern: a section occupies two pages, marked by a Roman numeral, occasionally followed by Al Momaday's paintings, the author's father. The left-hand side/page conveys a mythological account that recounts the emergence of the Kiowa peoples in the distant past. The right-hand side contains two narratives and thus two genres. The top of the page conveys an ethnographic account of Western observations of the tribe, which frequently quotes the 19$^{th}$-century anthropologist James Mooney (e.g. Momaday, 1969, p. 23), whilst the bottom of the page offers testimonies of Kiowa peoples alive during the time of writing. Entirely in italics, they testify to recent cultural shifts within and with effects on the Kiowa tribe. As such, the western account is continually sandwiched between two non-western, Kiowa ones. Additionally, each of the narratives within a single section is to some extent thematically related to one another. In this manner, a tripart presentation of stories emerges.

This typography has been commented on extensively and in multiple extremely interesting ways by scholars in the decades since *WRM's* publication in 1969. An older article by Arlene A. Elder in *Narrative* (1999) explores the relation between the pages' typography and the implications of orature on the composition of Momaday's text. Titled '"Dancing the Page": Orature in N. Scott Momaday's "The Way to Rainy Mountain,"' it explores the blank spaces on the pages in relation to oration and intertextuality. She argues that the blank spaces represent an oral retelling, illustrating the process of weaving together different stories of different origins into a particular performance. The notion of intertextual elements is also present in Anna M. Brígido-Corachán's article 'Kiowa Images, Stories and Human/More-Than Human Relations in Alfred and N. Scott Momaday's *The Way to Rainy Mountain*' (Miscelánea, 2022). This more recent article explores the entanglement of the images and the textual elements more explicitly, especially in relation to 'more-than-human' actants as well as to Kiowa cultural heritage. She argues that the entanglement of artistry between father and son (Alfred and N. Scott Momaday), as well as the connection to Kiowa oral culture and subsequent images, enables a mode of meaning-making that questions colonial frameworks about Indigenous Americans, paving the way for the rise in Indigenous American literatures in the second half of the twentieth century. In *Selves in Dialogue: a Transethnic Approach to American Life Writing* (2011), a chapter by Brígido-Corachán on Momaday's *WRM* and Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera* (1987) focuses on the role of self-fashioning and self-figuration. She argues for the multivocality I have described above through the typography and emphasises how the entanglement of the stories enables the preservation of communal selves through the different genres. She uses the neologism "survivance" (Brígido-Corachán, 2011, 130 cf. Sherman Alexie) to refer to the way imagination and cultural products are a powerful, and at times sole, way to preserve Native American and Indigenous cultures and languages from erasure.

The erasure or eradication of Indigenous American cultures and languages is, however, not final, as my analysis of *WRM* shall illustrate throughout this project. The voices presented in the

typography are written in English, yet the way the language is used is distinct in each part, and as such, multiple kinds of English emerge. In this review, I refer to this as modes of English, thus arguing for a multimodality of meaning-making within the bounds of English grammar and vocabulary. Because of this aspect, I will read *WRM* through a theoretical framework that draws on translation studies. More specifically, I take on the complexities of intralingual translation to explore the multimodalities of English in the work to illustrate the way form and content entangle to resist the idea of a final, homogenous, American culture dominated, English language. In this manner, this review aims to show how this work by an Indigenous American author actively destabilises hegemonic Americanism by pointing to the specific uses of Englishes within the context of the mythology, ethnography and testimony surrounding the Kiowa tribe.

To do this, this review answers a two-fold research question. First of all, how does N. Scott Momaday's *The Way to Rainy Mountain* uses different intralingual registers of English to resist the idea of a homogenous English through the construction of temporality and spatiality in the Kiowa tribe across different genres and cultural positions. And secondly, how this broadens the idea of translation studies beyond language borders in a situation where little of a minority language remains due to historical processes of systematic extermination of Indigenous languages. To do this, I will first outline a theoretical framework on intralingual translation, its potential in studying the nuances of speaking positions and its position in the field of translation studies. Then I turn to analyse the text, focusing first of all on the minimal use of the Kiowa language. Then I examine temporality and spatiality across the narratives to illustrate in what ways the work resists a fixed understanding of language and, in turn, questions the truth claims of Western language use and ideology.

## Theoretical Framework: Intralingualism and Multimodality

The field of translation studies (TS) is rich and diverse in theoretical approaches. Yet only recently, critical discourse on intralingual translation has emerged more prevalently, despite it always having been part of Roman Jakobson's infamous tripart structure in "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation" (1959). Interlingual translation, the translation between languages, has been the focus of TS, which has left intersemiotic, the meaning that arises when verbal and nonverbal signs combine, and intralingual translation, translation within one language, insufficiently examined[1].

Karen Korning Zethsen and Aage Hill-Madsen (2009; 2016; 2019), two (intralingual) translation scholars, have eloquently offered reasons for this long aversion to including intralingual translation into TS. In their article "Intralingual Translation and its Place within Translation Studies – A Theoretical Discussion" (Zethsen & Hill-Madsen, 2016), they observe the position of interlingual translation as "translation proper (TRP), a supreme status" (Zethsen & Hill-Madsen, 2016, 694-5), which implicitly demotes the other two to 'improper' or incomplete translations. This is demonstrated by the use of inverted commas around intralingual translation in Hill-Madsen's 2019 article (Hill-Madsen, 2019, 540, cf. Umberto Eco, 2003, pp. 127-130). Yet as "Intralingual Translation: An Attempt at Description" (2009) by Zethsen illustrates, the inclusion of intralingual translation (as well as intersemiotic translation) would not only complicate the idea of translation as a fixed process, but it would also offer new, fruitful ways of exploring linguistic difference. Not only does Zethsen argue for the productiveness of studying similarities and differences between intra- and interlingual translation, but she also offers four aspects in which intralingual translation may be used: knowledge, culture, time and space. These aspects are as much found in intralingual as interlingual translation. Importantly, she notes that the

[1] In Jakobson's terminology, the tripart translation typology as presented in the article is described as translation proper, transmutation, and rewording, respectively.

difference between inter- and intralingual translation strategies is "[a] question of degree and motivation rather than kind" (Zethsen, 2009, p. 809). She seeks to bridge the theoretical gap by exploring these proximities of strategies, which this project, in part, also contributes to.

In his article "The Heterogeneity of Intralingual Translation" (Hill-Madsen, 2019) which expands onto the previous discussion, Hill-Madsen argues that "the perspective [of translation studies] should be expanded to *mediated semiosis*, irrespective of the particular type of semiotic resource deployed […], irrespective of any particular type of semiotic *difference* that constitutes the ST-TT [source text – target text] divide" (Hill-Madsen, 2019, p. 540). [little in between part that bridges this] This would seek to breach comprehension gaps between different varieties of the same language, or, as Hill-Madsen refers to it, "language-*internal"* barriers of comprehension (2019, p. 540). Like Zethsen, he reiterates particular contextual uses of language within the same 'base' language. I would argue that one could speak of instances of multimodality in such cases.

I take a brief step outside of the discussion of intralingualism to turn to intersemiotic translation and multimodality as explored by Aba-Carina Pârlog in *Intersemiotic Translation: Literary and Linguistic Multimodality* (2019). Intersemiotic translation is part of the aforementioned triple translation divide theorised by Roman Jakobson and examines verbal and nonverbal signs that together shape communication through sign sets; a particular repetition of verbal and nonverbal signs to create meaning. However, Pârlog first of all explores the "arbitrary connection with [the signifier] the object proper" (Pârlog, 2019, p. 3) to note the plurality of meaning-making which is implicated by the "*linguistic and cultural permissibility* of the target codification" (Pârlog, 2019, p. 4). In other words, she argues that the specific meaning of a sign or sign set depends on the contextual position of those involved in communication.

I would, in fact, go as far as to argue that this process is also present in the same base language, intertwining intralingual and

intersemiotic translation strategies: Frames of reference on different scales emerge and play large roles in communication intralingually, as shown by the theoretical insights above. This suggests that the speaker is not alone in creating meaning, but that the receiver of the message produces a further mediated meaning through their own frame of reference. This thus incites that a single language is multimodal in its making of meaning and manifests different linguistic registers based on the speaker's positionality, which echoes the discussions of Hill-Madsen and Zethsen. The contextual cues of interpretation within sign sets are not neutral but embedded in histories of marginalisation and domination.

## *Translation as Relational: Potential Postcolonial Aspects of Translation*

"Translation as relation" is an application of Edouard Glissant's "poetics of relation" through an analysis of translation as a space of opacity by Sandra Bermann (2014). Her work enables a deeper exploration of the positionality of and implications of systems of power on language registers I aim to foreground in my analysis of Momaday's work. She argues that translation as relational and culturally embedded may strive toward "equivalence […] that does not aspire to identity, to a sameness. It would deal in similarities that communicate, but without suppressing difference" (Bremann, 2014, p. 3). As such, Bremann emphasises the importance of acknowledging and respecting differences in communication rather than imposing homogeneity of meaning. Translating can, in this way, be a culturally and politically significant act. Rather than universalising language and communication, "translation as relation" becomes a way to preserve and acknowledge difference whilst simultaneously emphasising tolerance of said difference. This is significant in the study of hierarchies of language and in the study of the cultural, as well as the physical domination associated with settler colonialism. Additionally, it may offer ways to celebrate and foreground dominated cultures and languages as an act of anticolonial resistance.

Regarding settler colonialism, the policies imposed by the American state onto the Kiowa tribe – as well as various other

Indigenous tribes – resemble what I have outlined so far, as shown by Thompson Rand's work above. As such, the state would employ policies that sought to restrain the expression of tribal culture, and thus, the nefarious extermination of their cultural ways would emerge. Related to cultural and epistemological ways is language. In posing English as a lingua franca whilst simultaneously hierarchizing the Kiowa culture below the American one, the slow decline of the Kiowa language emerges as a consequence.

Yet, cultural products may offer a resistance to this erasure by celebrating the ways Englishes are used by marginalised groups and, as such, reflect cultural and linguistic differences that the systemic domination of a lingua franca cannot completely erase. Throughout this article, I argue that *The Way to Rainy Mountain* is a wonderful example of this resistance to the implication of a homogenous American culture and a specific Western register of English. Its typography and the various positionalities from which the three genres emerge offer such an insight into this use of multimodal Englishes as a way of resistance to the continued erasure of Native American, and in particular, Kiowa cultures and language expressions.

## In the Absence of Language: The Use of the Kiowa Language

The minimal use of the Kiowa language in Momaday's text offers an intriguing insight into the dominating power of imposed and universalised language systems like English in the Great Plains, but also into the manner in which its deployment in *WRM* offers another layer of multimodal resistance to this system. Additionally, it enables a brief examination of instances of interlingual translation based on the plurality of remaining knowledges of the Kiowa language and its cultural heritage. As Perley has explored in the article mentioned above, there is a particular kind of "praxis of possibility" (2024, p. 256) that the remaining knowledge and the understanding of English as multimodal enables, as Momaday's work aptly illustrates. It can, as such, function as a mode of resistance to erasure. The use of the Kiowa language is significant exactly because so few words of it are used throughout the different

genres employed in the structure of the text, alluding to the historical (and forceful) processes of English being established as lingua franca in the United States. The relationship of the positionalities of the genres and the Kiowa language adds a layer of interlingual translation that entangles with intralingual translations, offering a way to explore the complexities of translation as an open concept, as also argued above by Zethsen. This shall be illustrated through examinations of section VIII, especially.

## *Affectively Translating: The Kiowa Language in Three Parts*

Section VIII's mythology part follows the story of the sons of the sun, a pair of twins who have arrived on the plains of Earth and are taken in by an elderly (spider) woman who functions as their grandmother. If the twins find themselves in a precarious situation, which they do when they enter the cave their grandmother specifically told them not to enter, they have to say the word "*thain-mom* 'above my eyes'" (Momaday, 1969, p. 30) to scare off the giant and his wife who inhabit that exact cave. The word is embedded into the dialogue of the story, italicised and followed by its meaning in single quotation marks. It becomes a functioning word within the story and the grammar of the text that furthers the narrative, which does not feature in the same way within the documentative use of the Kiowa language in the ethnographic accounts, as will be seen below.

The ethnographic accounts use italics as well as the in-quotation-marks translation to document the language, a typography that follows the other two genres, yet they seek to compare them to other observations that ethnographic accounts may have documented, often using "like" (Momaday, 1969, p. 33) as an indicator of similes to draw comparisons between different cultural concepts of the Kiowa people as well as to cultural concepts of entirely different tribes. Simultaneously, the similes function as a way to group words in the Kiowa language under western categories, like religion in the case of section VIII: "*talyi-da-i,* 'boy-medicine,' are like the Tai-me, chief objects of religious veneration" (Momaday, 1969, p. 33). Rather than offering a mythological background of the religious concepts, the ethnographic account instead seeks to translate and

categorise them into the realm of "religious veneration." In turn, a sense of wanting to 'know' and document the tribe's cultural practices emerges, which functions as a way to typologise them within Western frameworks rather than taking them as is, or in other words, without acknowledging the opacity of language concepts. This is a theme that underscores the ethnographic accounts throughout the work. Its typographical presence between two Kiowa accounts offers an intriguing kind of resistance through exposition that shall also be shown prevalently throughout this article.

Finally, the testimony part in section VIII uses another Kiowa phrase: "*zei-dl-bei*, 'frightful'" (Momaday, 1969, p.31), which functions effectively for the shifting Kiowa narrators due to the personal and familial relations to the language and the tribe. Typographically, the already italicised text of the testimony emphasises the Kiowa phrases by instead presenting them without italics. He notes that "I [he] liked her [the narrator's grandmother] to say it, for she screwed up her face in a wonderful look of displeasure" (Momaday, 1969, p. 31) whilst he did not speak Kiowan fluently, and thus did not know what she actually said unless translated afterwards, as in this passage. Instead, he "liked" it when she spoke Kiowan, including the nonverbal signs like her facial expressions. Similar to the mythological use of the Kiowa language, the word is a part of the story that is told, rather than an explicit observation of the language and subsequent translation, as in the ethnographic accounts. There is an affective element to the word and specifically the gestures whilst speaking, when placed in relation to the speaker's grandmother and thus marks a part of his narration that moves the testimony forward.

As such, the affective relation to the Kiowa language within each of the genres presented in the work illustrates a particular positionality toward it, despite the language being less commonly spoken already in the time of Momaday's writing, meaning that the text works with the "praxis of possibility" (Perley, 2024) of the fragments of the texts and the multimodality of Englishes. By exposing this most literally on the page, the work questions and resists the dominance of Western knowledge and accounts of the Kiowa language by offering different voices with different affective relations to the language in its proximity in the typography.

## *Ethnographically Documenting Language: Or, What it "Can Be Taken" to Mean*

Although I will discuss the imposed objective distance implied through the genre and the use of related diction in the ethnographic accounts in the final section of this review, the attitude toward the Kiowa language is heavily entwined with this notion of distance that the genre seeks to impose and thus relates to the documentation of the Kiowa language. Section I of *WRM* recounts a genealogy of names the Kiowa tribe has been referred to, yet the lack of actual consultation or self-representation of the Kiowa peoples themselves within these ethnographic parts cannot be stressed enough and must thus be examined here, as their deliberate presentation in the text exposes the incredulous guesswork of meaning as a mode of resistance to the truth-value of the Western ethnographic representation:

> "They called themselves *Kwuda* and later *Tepda,* both of which mean 'coming out.' And later still they took the name *Gaigwu*, a name which can be taken to indicate something of which the two halves differ from each other in appearance. […] *Kiowa* is thought to derive from the softened Comanche form of *Gaigwu*" (Momaday, 1969, p. 15).

Rather than tracing an origin story, the ethnographic account traces the changes in the tribe name and seeks to document and translate them to an English that is legible for a Western context and positionality. In making the meaning of the tribe's name "known," the ethnographic accounts that follow take the meaning of the names as characteristics of the tribe, especially because no Kiowa people are actually consulted. Yet these translations, multiple and heterogeneous even in the ethnographic account, do have to adhere to the "*cultural and linguistic permissibilit[ies]*" (Pârlog, 2019, p. 4) of the ethnographic position to remain legible to the western audience the text's genre is most usually intended for, meaning that in translating, cultural particularities encased in the Kiowan phrase are lost. Yet in the phrasing of the above passage, the emphasis on "can be taken" and "is thought" suggests a particular empirical and

observing aspect to the findings documented. This empirical aspect is solely found within the ethnographic parts, sketching the distance between the Western spectator and the Indigenous-spectated. Not only does the attempted translation to understandable, western-codified English aim to systematically Other the Kiowa language, it also disregards the opacity of cultural difference in the shape of language use as argued by Bremann's "translation as relation" (2014).

Instead of offering a space where differences of meaning may exist, the ethnographic parts try to make the presumed essence of the tribe known, which is, in turn, negated by the strong Kiowan presence in the work that resists this essentialising through the same 'base' language as the oppressors, yet within a strongly different kind of modality. By this, I particularly refer to the ways characteristics are assigned based on documentation. In trying to know and document the meaning of the tribe's name within the permissibility of its English (western) translations, particular characteristics and biases are assigned to the tribe. This assigning and continued connotation that leads to hierarchisation shall be shown to echo through the attempted cultural and 'objective' distance from the Kiowa peoples in the ethnographic sections later on in this review.

These three, contextually embedded uses of the Kiowa language suggest different relationships to the language and in turn, different kinds of knowledge about the language are produced. Where the words in the mythology section function as parts of the story, and the testimony section attaches familial affect to them, the ethnographic account analyses, compares and categorises the words to 'know' the Kiowa 'Other.' As such, interlingual translation entangles with intralingual translation practices, showing how translating from one language into another is implicated in the intralingual differences and multimodalities of English. And in the work, this functions as an exposition of resistance to the idea of a fixed translation and a fixed, homogeneous 'English.' A similar pattern can be read in the distinct uses of time and space, which the rest of the review examines.

## Experiencing Time: Reading for Multiple Temporalities within Intralingual Englishes

The text's multiple understandings of temporality are constructed in distinct ways that follow the three genre-marked narratives in *WRM.* The types of narratives – myth, ethnography, and testimony – indicate a sense of time regulation in themselves as media already. Where myths are generally characterised as taking place in the faraway past that has in some way shaped the present, the ethnographical parts seek to document the Kiowa tribe within the western method of tracking time, which includes definite dating within the Gregorian calendar. The testimonial parts of the work are embedded into the recounting of (often eye-witnessed) past events, by using words and phrases of remembrance. This section seeks to trace three temporal modes in the semiotic patterns of each of the narratives to examine intralingual translation of time and temporality across the three different registers of positionality. This temporal focus shall be seen to overlap with space, culture and knowledge, akin to Zethsen's four domains of intralingual translation.

The determinacy of time functions as one of the most prominent differences between the ethnographic and mythological sections. On the one hand, the ethnographic accounts are strongly characterised by the pattern of Western timekeeping and definite dates. The dates are mostly found in the 19th century and map interactions with the Kiowa people, indicating a desire to 'know' and document the Indigenous populations by ethnographers, like "the anthropologist Mooney" in 1896 (Momaday, 1969, p. 23). The linguistic register of the ethnographic accounts is thus strongly centred around the permissibility of the Western mode of time as linear and starting within Christian religious events like the birth of Christ. The tone of these accounts is also telling here; the Western chronology is supported by comparisons between acts of the Kiowa tribe and those of other Indigenous American tribes, which not only creates a notion of wanting to 'know' the Indigenous population within a Western framework. It also foregrounds the manner in which Western time has worked since the Enlightenment period; progress-oriented and linear, heading toward a teleological point. In turn, it becomes apparent that the temporality of the Kiowa peoples is not

naturalisable into this framework, playing a part in what Thompson Rand has noted as the US perspective of being "communal and nonproductive" (Rand, 2008, p. 4).

The mythology sections, on the other hand, are narrated through indeterminate time indicators, such as "after that" (Momaday, 1969, p. 22) and "a long time ago" (Momaday, 1969, p. 36), rather than specific years. In turn, there is a disconnect from notions of Western temporality, because this does not appear in the linguistic register of the mythological narrative, emphasising that whilst English is used in each account, its uses are drastically positional. In turn, it evokes the way the text uses multiple modalities of English to signify cultural resistance despite systemic oppression.

A similar trend of undetermined time keeping emerges in the testimonial parts, which do not mention dates except for a specific section I will examine in detail below. Instead, they often start with "when" such as sections VIII and IX, which both discuss a memory of a family member of Momaday's: "*When Aho saw or heard or thought of something bad*" and "*When he* [the speaker's father] *was a boy*" (Momaday, 1969, pp. 31- 33) both introduce the testimonial section without including exact dates on the Gregorian calendar. The testimonial aspect of the text implies transmission by recounting memories and thus relies on remembering. As such, exact dates are not part of the remembered narrative; instead, the affective impact of the witnessed events is. This aligns with the mythological sections, and intriguingly, section IX's testimony testifies to seeing a shrine and feeling a particular "*holiness"* (Momaday, 1969, p. 33) in witnessing a ceremony for "*one of the talyi-da-i"* (Momaday, 1969, p. 33), which is a part of the myth of the twins briefly touched upon above. Through this, the mythological and testimonial parts of this section explicitly intertwine, which is mirrored in the lack of Western-determined dates being used. Both excerpts draw on a cultural practice that does not adhere to the Western-imposed dating system, which *WRM* illustrates to be a part of the diction of both the myth and the Kiowan speakers' testimony of the past that encompasses the ethnographical accounts typographically. In doing so, the affective translations frame and resist the assumptions of the Western translatory lens.

## Colliding Registers: Constructing Time Contextually and Relationally

Interestingly, a further intralingual tension is created by the collision of the Western and Kiowan temporalities in the seventeenth section of the work. The left, myth-based page is marked by the use of "once" and "after that" (Momaday, 1969, p. 56), following the pattern of this narrative as explored above. The right page of the section centres events found in "the Kiowa calendars" (Momaday, 1969, p. 57), a time system that functions outside of the rules of dating of Western temporality, as the linguistic register of the mythology section has suggested as well. The undetermined temporal indications are not used in this ethnographic account; instead, definite dates like "1843" and "1851-1852" (Momaday, 1969, p. 57) are used. The text uses its three-part typography to draw attention to this conceptual difference of temporality by the proximity on the page, acknowledging their continued and unproblematic co-existence despite the Western pressure to conform to the dominant manner of time keeping. Multimodality as such perseveres prominently through time-related diction. In this manner, the typography evokes a sense of resistance to the idea that one mode, the Western mode, of timekeeping is superior and dominating.

In section XVII, another instance of collision can be found in the form of a gravestone. Kau-au-ointy, Mammedaty's grandmother's grave is marked with Western dating. This is the only instance of defined time within the testimonial sections: "Born 1834 / Died 1929 / At Rest" (Momaday, 1969, p. 57). It interestingly marks a death within a temporal context that resembles the ethnographic time stamps in using defined dates of birth and death. Whilst this shows that the two temporalities presented so far are not as separate as they may seem and, in fact, allow for a hybrid conception of time through the movement of time, leading to a transcultural perception of temporality, it also points to the dominance of the Western mode of time in documenting the dead. Yet despite this dominance, the usage of multiple modes of temporality in the text suggests how its use is not only intralingually translated, but it also illustrates how conceptions of time simultaneously adapt, transform and resist

complete erasure throughout repressive historical contexts of the United States.

## Creating Distance: How Meanings of Space function Intralingually

The temporal multimodality of *WRM* coexists with continuous and experience-based references to distance and space, inciting, both implicitly and explicitly, the presence of first-hand experienced spatiality in the text. Empirical observation is presented in the ethnographic accounts, meaning that a witness is implied. Similarly, the mythological accounts imply an oral tradition, or in other words, a hearing witness. The testimony sections do, in fact, offer direct evidence of first-hand experience in the form of the first-person narrator. Which, yet again, signals an eyewitness. Yet akin to diction used to describe temporality, the use of space and distance varies across these three genres of writing, inciting different frames of reference whilst being written in English. Again, multimodal uses of English to describe space and distance emerge. This section of the review will discuss these intralingual depictions of space and distance by firstly turning back to temporality for a brief moment, discussing temporal distance in relation to the genres of writing. Then, I shall turn to distance and space in affective relations, which will be followed by a discussion of migration and movement in space as part of the Kiowa cultural heritage, whose representation serves to undermine the essentialist ethnographic accounts. Finally, I will discuss the proclamation of 'objective' distance as found primarily in the ethnographic accounts.

Yet before I do, an explicit interconnection of time and space has to be described. The former has been explored at length throughout the previous section, yet the genre-specific emphases on temporal distance must be briefly expanded upon here to encapsulate the different kinds of distance and space that exist within the intralingual uses of English in Momaday's text. Temporal distance is implicated in the genres in the text: myth, as shown, takes on a 'once upon a time' narrative, whilst testimony and the ethnographic account are explicitly noted as written down retrospectively, recounting events witnessed in an earlier moment. In this manner, temporal distance is

a type of distance and space that appears in the work in relation to its genre, yet the use of spatiality is not limited to this, as this section shall illustrate.

## Affective Space: Relations to the Landscape

Space and distance function effectively in the testimonial and, to an extent, the mythological accounts in *WRM*. This mirrors the affective implications of the minimally used Kiowa language discussed in the first section of this review. Akin to the language use reflecting the relation to cultural heritage, space and distance are related to memories that refer to the direct surroundings. Not only does the English used in the testimonial parts sketch an image of the ancestral landscape of the Kiowa tribe, but it also exhibits a relation of respect between human and nonhuman actants. This aspect of the text has been explored intermedially by Brígido-Corachán's article discussed earlier (2022). The first section of *WRM* illustrates the origin myth of the Kiowa, an ethnographic account of the naming of the tribe and a testimony that recounts the speaker's arrival to the northern Great Plains – the ancestral land inhabited by the Kiowa tribe.

According to the origin myth given on the left-hand page of the first section, the Kiowa people "came one by one into the world through a hollow log" and "looked all around and saw the world. It made them glad to see so many things." Due to this origin, "They called themselves *Kwuda*, 'coming out'" (Momaday, 1969, p. 14). This passage firstly illustrates a visual experience of the surroundings after coming into the world. Secondly, it illustrates a sense of content, through the use of 'glad,' with the surroundings and the 'many things' they could see. Although the mythological part does not expand on what is seen, the testimonial part of the section recounts a visual image of the Plains:

> "*I remember coming out upon the northern Great Plains in the late spring. There were meadows of blue and yellow wildflowers on the slopes, and I could see the still, sunlit plain below, reaching away out of sight. At first there is no discrimination in the eye, nothing but the land itself, whole and impenetrable. But then smallest things begin to stand*

> *out of the depths – herds and rivers and groves – and each of these has perfect being in terms of distance and of silence and of age*" (Momaday, 1969, p. 15).

Not only does this testimonial passage open with 'coming out,' verbatim echoing the entrance of the Kiowa people into the world as described by the origin story. It also offers a detailed description of what could be seen the moment the narrator saw 'the northern Great Plains in the late spring,' or in other words, the image that may have been similar to that of the Kiowas in the origin myth when they came out of the 'hollow log.' This more expansive exploration of the surroundings ties in with the position of the speaker as well. Whilst the origin myth features those who just left a log, coming into the world for the first time, the testimony's narrator is instead positioned as a descendant of those first people. As such, the narrator has had experience seeing the surroundings, meaning that various things can be described in detail that may have been new and thus, not fully defined, in the mythology section.

The imagery moves across the plains, illustrating various levels of detail of the descriptions of the environment in the brief testimonial part of this section. This ranges from the flowers to the actual slopes of the Great Plains over which the narrator looks. A transition takes place from the first glance to the further investigation. The text shifts from a static "at first" to a more dynamic "stand[ing] out" of small details at closer and longer inspection of the Kiowas' ancestral land – illustrating that through observing, the narrator can assign meaning and, in turn, affect, to the space around them. Throughout the passage, the different images on the different levels are connected through an enumeration of polysyndeta: "*herds and rivers and groves – and each of these has perfect being in terms of distance and of silence and of age"* (Momaday, 1969, p. 15). Two enumerations follow one another, the first being visible elements, the second being an affective attribution to these visual elements. The latter three offer an insight into the connection of the tribe to the space they have inhabited for a long period of time, inciting the relation to it, as well as the narrator's personal experience with the actual space.

## *Migratory Pathways: Reading the Sovereignty over Ancestral Lands*

Connected to affective notions of space and distance is the prominent exploration of the migratory pathways of the Kiowa tribe throughout the work. Yet the tone in which movement is discussed is embedded in the aspects of the different genres. The connection to the ancestral land examined in the previous paragraph is simultaneously also a connection to movement and migration through space. The most direct reference to this is the title of the work itself, *The Way to Rainy Mountain,* indicating a journey toward "an old landmark, […] Rainy Mountain" (Momaday, 1969, p. 3) to which the narrator returns to visit their grandmother's grave. This journeying is, however, historically significant beyond the narrator's – and in this case, author's – personal and subsequently affective experience of space and travel in the introduction:

> "The Kiowas are a summer people; they abide the cold and keep to themselves, but when the season turns and the land becomes warm and vital they cannot hold still; *an old love of going returns upon them*" (Momaday, 1969, p. 10).

This passage not only illustrates a relation to space as determined by the seasons and the conditions those bring to the movement in synchronisation with the shifting seasonal environmental aspects, but it also explicitly refers to the "old love of going" that is found throughout the three different genres in which the sections of the work are written. Section XVIII explores the seasonal aspect and the travel related to it across the typography of the page. The mythology part, firstly, explores the question of the sun's disappearance in the winter explicitly. The young men of the Kiowa tribe would ride "for days and weeks and months, farther south than any Kiowa had ever gone before" (Momaday, 1969, p. 58), where they would eventually find "the sun's home" (Momaday, 1969, p. 58) before journeying back for a similar amount of time. In other words, space in the mythology part is traversed through a seasonal cycle, moving to and from with the sun's patterns. These seasonal movements in the myth take place at the scale of the whole tribe, unlike the testimony part.

This testimony section recalls memories of "*summers on Rainy Mountain Creek,*" a period in which the speaker lived "*in the arbor, on the north side of my grandmother's house."* Yet "*when the season turned",* and winter arrived, the narrator moved "*back into the house"* to stay warm. Although at times he was reminded of summer during the wintertime, "*when [he] passed by the arbor on [his] way to draw water at the well*" (Momaday, 1969, p. 59). As such, the narrator traces a migratory pathway akin to the mythological young men from north to south on a small scale. The narrator follows a similar seasonal cycle explored above, echoing the "old love of going" (Momaday, 1969, p. 10) in the introduction to the text. A similar register of English is present in both sections, showing an intricate connection to seasonality in the way the world around the Kiowa tribe is understood.

On the contrary, the ethnographic part, which quotes Mooney once more, seeks to justify the Kiowas' success by attributing their migratory pathways and subsequent survivability to the presence of horses rather than the tribe's understanding of the seasonal cycle:

> "The revolution made in the life of the Indian by the possession of the horse" opens the ethnographic part, suggesting that the horses are what made the Kiowa tribe thrive, rather than being "a half-starved skulker in the timber, […] seldom venturing more than a few days' journey from home" (Momaday, 1969, p. 59).

This passage, firstly, suggests that the use of horses for the Kiowa peoples, as well as generally for the "Indians," came as a sudden gift, rather than as the result of developing the necessary skills to ride horses for long periods of time. Additionally, the implication that without the horses, they would be "half-starved" indicates that without the horses, the tribes would not have flourished in the way they did. By posing these different accounts typographically in proximity, the text resists a single understanding of the Kiowan past, a hegemonic past that is based on the systemic erasure of the tribe. Instead, the different modalities in the work enable an assertion of Kiowan agency in their own survival.

This use of "revolution" in the passage incites a quick and sudden change, which refuses to acknowledge the presence within the tribes of the time and knowledge necessary to build the skills. By refusing to acknowledge this, the ethnographic part of this section effectively aims to take away the cultural and epistemological agency of Indigenous Americans to enforce a primitivity and immutable distance from the so-called civilised West. I now turn to these notions of tone and diction in the ethnographic accounts specifically.

## Imposing Difference: Creating 'Objective' Distance in Cultural Space

Finally, the ethnographic accounts in Momaday's work take on a distance in cultural space, using diction that seeks to evoke an 'objective' distance from the cultural space of the Kiowa people. The tone used in these accounts suggests an attitude of difference and superiority, as well as one of seeming objectivity, presenting Kiowa culture as primitive compared to the cultural perspective of the Western anthropologist-spectator. This is an aspect of tone present throughout the entirety of the work's ethnographic sections, indicating a particular use of English to enforce cultural difference and thus distance from Western cultural practices. Importantly, these accounts do not let the Kiowa people themselves speak, but instead speak for them through a Western lens. Yet they are sandwiched in between two accounts of Kiowan people, exposing the existence of multiple knowledges in multiple modalities of the English language. As such, resistance to homogeny is once more presented.

Section IV contains three iterations of the Great Plains as an environment, yet for the purpose of this part of the review, I focus specifically on the ethnography part. Rather than describing what is seen, the ethnographic part instead evokes a value judgement onto the names of the environment: The mountains "arise out of the last North American wilderness, and they have wilderness names: Wasatch, Bitterroot, Bighorn, Wind River" (Momaday, 1969, p. 21). Wilderness, a concept long equated with irrationality and as the opposite of the civilised West, is imposed onto the Great Plains within this ethnographic section. Not only that, but this is the "last North American wilderness," suggesting that this is an area that is

uncultivated to the European settlers' standards. Beyond characterising the space as a wilderness, the names given to the space by the Indigenous Americans are as well. The connotations of the register of English thus equate the wilderness of space to the wilderness of culture, whilst posing this under the supposedly objective genre of ethnography. As such, the text's strategic employment of this multimodal use of English sketches distinct modes of interacting with and valuing the environment, which reflects on the way the people inhabiting those spaces are represented as well. It offers a collection of representations which lets the Kiowan voices speak and resist the single representation of wilderness and otherness.

Similarly, section V seeks to create objective distance through the use of syntax – as seen in the first section of this review on the translations of the Kiowa language – as well as comparing the characteristics of various Indigenous American tribes. Once more, this ethnography part draws on the anthropologist Mooney. Akin to the name of the Kiowa tribe, a source of carbohydrates that naturally grows is discussed as something that could have had many different names: "The plant is said to have been the pomme blanche, or pomme de prairie, of the voyageurs, whose chronicles refer time and time again to its use by the Indians" (Momaday, 1969, p. 23). The tone implied by "is said" mirrors that of the name Kiowa, "which can be taken to indicate [a particular meaning]" (Momaday, 1969, p. 15). In presenting ethnographic findings as potentially meaning something, it incites a consultation of various sources, indicating a sense of objectivity whilst also creating distance. This distance is further reinforced in the second part of the ethnographic section, which discusses the lack of farming. The Kiowa people do not farm, a hallmark of Western civilisation, meaning that they have never been "anything but a tribe of hunters" (Momaday, 1969, p. 23). Again, a distance is created between the speaking westerner and the silenced Indigenous American, noting that they had never done anything but hunting, something that is not done regularly in the West anymore and is thus seen as cultural inferiority.

As such, the tone and diction used in the ethnographic accounts of the work create a particular distance in cultural space by imposing

Western paradigms, whilst writing from a similar geographic space, this being the Great Plains, as the mythological and testimonial parts. Not only does the language used in these ethnographic accounts adhere to a Western paradigm, but it also imposes a particular superiority of Western civilisation over the deemed wilderness of the Kiowa peoples. Yet by its positioning in close proximity to the myth and testimony, different knowledges of the Great Plains emerge through multimodal uses of English emerge and interact, resisting the space as presented as homogenous.

## Conclusion

This analysis of *The Way to Rainy Mountain* (Momaday, 1969) has offered deep analyses of the ways time and space are inhabited through the language registers used within the boundaries of a multimodal conception of Englishes by drawing on intralingual translation theory in the context of Kiowa culture. In turn, the analyses of *WRM* have exposed how the notion of homogenous languages and cultures within Native American and Indigenous contexts is constructed rather than neutral. The work resists this homogeneity specifically through the culture and remnants of the language of the Kiowa peoples through a tripart structure of myth, ethnography and testimony. Through the typographic proximity on the pages of the work, this review has explored how English is used positionally in *WRM.* This has yielded intriguing results in regard to the diction used to describe kinds of time and space, which expose how, within the imagined boundaries of a language, multiple modes and registers emerge nonetheless. Throughout the course of this review, I have focused on three distinct aspects of the text that illustrate this multimodality within the boundaries of Englishes as a mode of resistance to linguistic and cultural erasure in the Kiowa context.

The first of these has been the minimal usage of the language of the Kiowa peoples throughout the three genres within the sections in the text. The remnants are presented in quotation marks across the genres, yet the ways they approach meaning have been illustrated to be vastly different depending on the genre observed. Whilst the mythological and testimonial accounts both create an affective

relationship due to familial and cultural proximity, the ethnographic account pathologises and seeks to document what the words could mean rather than offering an affective closeness as seen in the other two genres. The second and third aspects are deeply intertwined, yet separately also offer insights into the construction of worldviews through diction and positionality. Time and temporality, first of all, take on various representations in *WRM* that align with ideas about time and teleology. This is especially true for the ethnographic account, where the usage of Western dating is in stark contrast to the lack thereof in the other two genres. Secondly, space and spatiality are intertwined with one's relation to the described space. Together, these have illustrated the ways Englishes function positionally, arguing for the resistance to colonial domination within the available linguistic and cultural means.

As a result, these analyses have illustrated how Momaday's text is inhabited by multiple registers of English, to which I have referred as multimodal Englishes within a theoretical lens of intralingual translation. In doing this, the text has come forth as a cultural product that resists the erasure of the Kiowa people's culture despite the language being fragmented. In turn, the work offers itself as a kind of future orientation to Native American and Indigenous cultures that take on the remnants of the past and use these in what Perley has referred to as a "praxis of possibility" (Perley, 2024). I want to conclude this perhaps somewhat experimental article on intralingualism with the enthusiastic encouragement of further research in exploring Native American and Indigenous works of literature in this manner to offer insights into the complex and succinct ways authors use aesthetics and diction to resist erasure and domination of their cultures within an American, settler colonial context.

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