Elements of Place Name Restoration: repair and replenishment in language

Introduction

This poster explores the terrain of place name restoration, inspired and informed by my particular toponymic research in the Haudenosaunee territory of upstate New York. My research stems from a theoretical and material engagement with Haudenosaunee place names, and seeks to acknowledge and support place name restoration work that confronts settler-colonialist suppression in the specific contexts of this Haudenosaunee landscape.

In place name restoration, especially in indigenous territory, layers of place, language, and culture are actively complex. As place names survive, evolve, and resist forces of colonialist erasure, violence, and distortion, these elements of place name restoration can become critically obscured. By recognizing these elements individually and as they relate to each other, it is possible to form a map of the terrain of place name restoration: a visualization of the components of place name restoration, and a charting of their possible relationships.

This framework looks to visualize place name restoration holistically, acknowledging interrelationships between elements of geography, language, and lived experience. This mapping of place name restoration terrain looks to recognize certain elements of place name restoration as they emerge from this research: to guide future place name restoration work within Haudenosaunee territory or in other geographies. The framework hopes to provide an indication of the place name restoration terrain that an inhabitant of landscape, researcher, group, or nation may experience in their inquiries: a framework that responds to the dynamic nature of place name restoration work, a framework for future geolinguistic projects, on both large and continuous scales.

As part of place name restoration projects, we may practice:

- **[R]enaming**
  - Practices work to reconceive more authentic place names to landscape, and work to replace the names that have been used in both historical and contemporary landscapes as both imperial and traditional landscapes.

- **[R]evisualizing**
  - Practices work to visualize place names within landscapes, providing an indication of the components of place name restoration, as they emerge from this research: to guide future place name restoration work within Haudenosaunee territory or in other geographies.

- **Repair**
  - Practices work to repair the formative influences of place names as they are used in both historical and contemporary landscapes. Place name restoration should take as one of its primary concerns the authenticity and accuracy of language and place names of a particular place.

- **Describe**
  - Practices work to describe the place names that are specific to this place name restoration.

- **Situating**
  - Practices work to situate the place names that are specific to this place name restoration within their place, and within language communities.

- **Define**
  - Practices work to define place names that are specific to this place name restoration.

- **Language accuracy and authenticity**
  - Place names should take as one of its primary concerns the authenticity and accuracy of language and place names of a particular place.

- **Place, geography and landscape**
  - Practices work to place, geography and landscape within place names of a particular place.

- **Lived experience of place**
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Therefore it is important, in place name restoration, to examine:

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