

Bridging Rituals: *A Daughter's Song*

Ronald L. Grimes

Abstract: *A Daughter's Song* is a short film that I made about a Condolence Ceremony enacted in 2014 by Mobawks among artists, Jews, and Muslims. It was an inter-ritual event, challenging popular and scholarly assumptions about ritual, for instance, that it is primarily backward-looking or that it necessarily consolidates an in-group against an out-group. The Mobawk Condolence Ceremony, which has a long and venerable history, provides the central gestures of this film. The ceremony is not only traditional but also forward-looking, and it constructs bridges across chasms dividing groups. *A Daughter's Song* illustrates how commemoration and death rituals are not only about remembering the past but also about re-framing the present and envisioning the future.

"Interrituality" is the term ritual studies scholars use to describe rituals that transpire in the "spaces" between traditions.¹ Since such spaces lie in the interstices, they are, by Victor Turner's definition, liminal. In Latin *limen* means threshold, so for Turner, liminality is a mediating space located "betwixt and between." However, a bridge is perhaps more apt in the case of interrituality.

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¹As far as I know, the earliest use of the term "interrituality" was in 1992 by performance studies scholar, Margaret Thompson Drewal in her book *Yoruba Ritual: Performers, Play, Agency* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1992), xvii. Marianne Moyaert has made prominent use of the concept since then. See, for example, Marianne Moyaert and Joris Geldhof, *Ritual Participation and Interreligious Dialogue: Boundaries, Transgressions and Innovations* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015)). Jens Kreinath has also begun to talk about interrituality. See his "Inter-Rituality as a Framework of Analysis: A New Approach to the Study of Interreligious Encounters and the Economies of Ritual," <http://blog.uio.no/prosjekter/plurel/content/inter-rituality-as-a-framework-of-analysis-a-new-approach-to-the-study-of-interreligious-enc>, 2014.

Unlike a threshold, a bridge is not domestic. It connects two non-adjointing spaces, and flowing often transpires beneath it. I have studied rituals on or around four actual bridges: Charles Bridge in Prague, the Czech Republic (fig. 1); the Crossing in Nijmegen, the Netherlands (fig. 2); and the Living Bridge in Limerick, Ireland (fig. 3). All of these are beautiful enough to warrant adoption as a symbol for the generative and conflictual space between rituals.

But the bridge I want to talk about is not quite so beautiful. It is the Mercier Bridge, which traffics in and out of Montreal. These are the only slightly romantic images (figs. 4, 5) I could find of the bridge. Many Montrealers think of the Mercier as a crumbling infrastructure bearing a log jam of traffic, (fig. 6) or as the scene of conflict (fig. 7).



fig. 1: Charles Bridge in Prague, Czech Republic. (Photo Ronald L. Grimes)



fig. 2: The Crossing in Nijmegen, The Netherlands. (Photo public domain)



fig. 3: Living Bridge in Limerick, Ireland. (Photo public domain)



fig. 4: Mercier Bridge in Montreal, Canada. (Photo public domain)



fig. 5: The Algoma Discovery under the Mercier Bridge. (photo public domain)



fig. 6: Crumbling infrastructure and traffic jams on Mercier Bridge.
(Photos public domain)



fig. 7: Protests on Mercier Bridge. (Photos public domain)

The city of Montreal lies across the St. Lawrence River from land that is home to the Mohawks of Kahnawake. The Mohawks are one of the six nations that make up the Haudenosaunee (or Iroquois Confederacy). The land along the river has a complex and contentious history. In 1961 the city of Oka, an hour west of the Mercier Bridge, built a golf course on land contested by the Mohawks of Kanesatake. Then in 1989 the city proposed to double the size of the golf course and add luxury condominiums. The land's ownership had been contested by Mohawks since 1717, and it contained a burial ground.

In 1990 Mohawks from Kahnawake and Akwesasne joined those from Kanesatake to erect blockades. From across North America native and non-native people joined the protest. Eventually, protestors blocked the Mercier Bridge, a key commuter artery connecting Montreal with Kahnawake and the suburbs. Local residents retaliated by throwing stones and bottles and burning native people in effigy (fig. 8). The emerging media images of guns and tanks shocked Canadians. The second image (fig. 9) became iconic and was broadcast around the world. Some read it as an image of peace-loving, fearless Canadian soldiers. Others read it as an image of fearless Mohawks declaring: you are on our land.



fig. 8: News photos from the Oka Crisis. (top left: Tom Hanson, The Canadian Press; bottom left: Red Power Media; Right: public domain)



fig. 9: Iconic photo from the Oka Crisis. (Photo by Shaney Komulainen)

On July 11, 1990, Quebec police fired tear gas. In the confrontation that followed, an SQ (*Sûreté du Québec*) corporal was killed. For 78 days the Quebec police, and later the Canadian army, occupied First Nations reserves with guns, tanks, and aerial surveillance, while Mohawks resisted with weapons and overturned cars to block roads.

As *A Daughter's Song* opens, it is the autumn of 2014, almost twenty-five years after the Oka crisis. I am walking through Centennial Park with Stephane Azoulay, a Jewish father and husband who has lost his wife Myriam to leukemia.² She had converted from Islam to marry him, and soon they had a child named Aaliyah. Even though I have just met Stephane, he and I are soon telling stories about the deaths of loved ones. Walking with us is his mother-in-law, Fatiha, who is looking after his daughter. It is now three months after Myriam's death, so tomorrow's ritual will not be a funeral but a Mohawk Condolence Ceremony.

Francis Boots, a Mohawk spiritual leader from Akwesasne, who had been active in the events of 1990, has never enacted this ceremony among non-natives. Invited to lead it, he consulted the Longhouse leadership. As he tells the story, he was met with silence. The message, he says: he must himself decide for himself. His willingness to cross the rusty, highly symbolic Mercier Bridge for an interritual event is remarkable.³ The event was facilitated by Native-Immigrant, a group that facilitates cooperation between immigrants to Canada and First Nations people. The founder and artistic director of Native-Immigrant is Carolina Echeverria, a Chilean immigrant to Canada, and a friend of Miriam.

Please watch *A Daughter's Song*⁴.

² William Cosgrove Centennial Park.

³ The journey was facilitated by his friend Philip Deering Philip, a Mohawk educator and cultural interpreter from Khanawake.

There is no adequate term. "Interfaith" is questionable because of its Christian heritage. "Cross-cultural" carries the baggage of anthropology. Among the other candidates are: "interbelief" and "interpath" dialogue. The *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, once devoted to intrachristian (or interdenominational) dialogue, is now dedicated to the study of interreligious dialogue and practice.

⁴ View the video at <http://liminalities.net/13-2/bridging.html> or at <https://vimeo.com/ronaldgrimes/daughters-song>

Rituals make the most sense if we understand some of the backstories that reveal the contexts and motivations of participants. If we know rituals only as front-of-house performances, or only as the official texts that sometimes underwrite those performances, we will have only a shallow understanding of the ritual. If we do not know a ritual's social context and the associations that people bring to the event, we cannot understand how it interfaces with the mess of ordinary human life. Contextualizing a ritual then should humanize rather than exoticize it by linking what happens *in* the ritual with what happens *around* the ritual, by connecting its front, idealized side with its back, messy side.

The film wraps the most distinctive gestures of the Condolence Ceremony around a conversation from the preceding day. Like the story of the Oka crisis, this walking conversation with Stephane is part of the ritual's backstory. Some of the participants would know this part of the story only by seeing the film. Stephane's intention was to show me the place where he and Myriam had many of their most important conversations, because on the next day the Condolence was going to be performed there for his family.⁵ My intention that afternoon was to scout the location and test borrowed video equipment; it was not to make a film of the walk or to discuss the death of Myriam.

When I returned home to edit, I reviewed the scrambled test footage and almost dumped it because of its technical problems. So the camera work in the finished film is partly deliberate, partly accidental, the result of equipment issues and conflicting intentions. During the editing, I decided to use the remnants of disoriented footage to suggest disoriented spirits. Only late in the editing process did I decide that the film was a gift for Aaliyah, the daughter.

Carolina, Myriam's friend, had asked me to film the ceremony. She had written the poem that is sung by her own daughter, Isabella. The lyrics express how Carolina imagined that her father experienced her immigration to Canada:

⁵ There is no adequate, shared terminology. Mohawks, like Navajos, often prefer the term "ceremony" over "ritual," because they associate "ritual" with the church. However, church folks frequently use "ceremony" to refer to "mere externals," and scholars tend to regard "ceremony" as connoting "political ritual" or "ritual in service of the status quo." Here, I use "ceremony" and "ritual" synonymously.

"Performance" too is a problem, since some native people, like many religious people, hear the term as connoting "mere show." Scholars, however, often follow Richard Schechner in defining performance as "the showing of a doing." They do not use it as a synonym for "pretending" but as a way of speaking about any event that happens in front of other people.

The term "religion" is no less troublesome, but I will refrain from discussing it here. For clarification of the terms see my "Religion, Ritual, and Performance," in *Religion, Theatre, and Performance: Acts of Faith*, edited by Lance Gharavi (New York: Routledge, 2012), 27-41.

as a death. Rituals can simultaneously accomplish several tasks, not merely the official one; one action can often piggyback multiple intentions. One intention of the rite was to memorialize Myriam's death, but Carolina and other participants were recalling other events as well. For instance, stories about Myriam's death would sometimes lead people to tell stories about her wedding, even among people who had not attended but only seen the wedding pictures posted online.

This film is part of an online album of Native-Immigrant videos, and it contains interviews with Francis.⁶ In one of them, he retells the story of this Condolence. After that interview he asked, you teach a course on ritual? What do you do? Who takes it? I replied that university students took it. Most of them felt they had little or no ritual tradition. He asked how it is possible to have a ceremony without a tradition; the idea made little sense to him. I told him about natural burials in the UK, weddings constructed by the Celebrants Foundation, and spontaneous rituals that emerged in Oslo after the shootings. We both agreed that lighting candles, processing through streets, gathering in sacred spots, singing songs, offering flowers, and making speeches were parts of many traditions. Then he began talking about how he adapted the Condolence Ceremony to each new situation. Adapting, like inventing, requires choice and creativity.

A film, like a ritual, is an exercise in creativity, but, of course, a film about a ritual *is not* a ritual. What I have shown you is not *quite* a ritual. Although I hesitate to use the term, this film is in some sense a music video. For most of it, the rhythms and refrains of the song animate the images. Without the music, the video would sag, losing some its emotional drive. People at the Condolence Ceremony were deeply moved, but few would have the attention span to watch "A Native-Immigrant Condolence Ceremony,"⁷ the full-length account of the ceremony. However dramatic rituals are, they are not performances, designed to entertain audiences.

The music also complicates the video, since its words are about a border-crossing and a father's loss of his daughter to immigration. Some viewers say they enjoy the surprise of discovering that the song is a part of the actual ritual event rather than an imported soundtrack.⁸

A Daughter's Song is one in an album of twelve videos. Filming for online viewing allows scholar-filmmakers to deploy multiple approaches simultaneously. Depending upon your identity or intentions, someone else could frame the

⁶ "Native-Immigrant," <https://vimeo.com/album/3524030>

⁷ "A Native-Immigrant Condolence Ceremony," <https://vimeo.com/ronaldlgrimes/native-immigrant-condolence>

⁸ The moment occurs 7 minutes, 40 seconds into the film. To my eye and ear, the song fits more aptly into the video than the ritual, so in this respect the film serves not only as documentation but as implicit ritual criticism. The film has a scholarly as well as a memorializing purpose. See Ronald L. Grimes, *Ritual Criticism: Case Studies in Its Practice, Essays on Its Theory*, second ed. Waterloo, Canada: Ritual Studies International, 2010.

ceremony with quite a different backstory. If I were a Mohawk, Quebecker, historian, or a professional filmmaker, you might have seen a different or no backstory. In the other two other online versions I cut the backstory. One shows the entire ritual. The other shows it framed by Carolina's introduction and conclusion. These two films, both about this particular Condolence, are more ethnographic and descriptive.⁹ They are in color, longer, linear, and more informative but also less engaging. *A Daughter's Song* is aimed more at evocation than information. It slows down, replays, displaces, and overlays actions, and the sound is often non-synchronous. Using these techniques shifts the treatment away from an ethnographic style toward an artistic one.

Transposing other people's ritual into either scholarship or art is risky for both First Nations people and filmmakers. This film omits much of the ceremony. It makes the ceremony public. And it does so in a more or less permanent medium.¹⁰ Although Mohawks themselves pick and choose every time they perform the Condolence, I am an outsider; my people are the historic oppressors of indigenous people. In this instance, the risk, I hope, is mitigated by the Mohawks' own desire to use these films to teach Mohawk language and ritual.

Francis Boots, the ceremony's lead celebrant from Akwesasne, is a war chief and traditional spiritual leader. A war chief's commission is not, as one might imagine, to beat the drums of war but "to bear the burden of peace."¹¹ If you do not understand this role, if all you know are the media images of masked, armed warriors from 1990, the tenderness and compassion of Francis's actions may surprise you. "A Daughter's Song" focuses on, but does not explain, the Condo-

⁹ "A Mohawk Condolence Ceremony for Myriam," <https://vimeo.com/album/3524030/video/111301903>. "A Native-Immigrant Condolence Ceremony," <https://vimeo.com/113338510>.

¹⁰ On taking such risks see my "This May Be a Feud, but It Is Not a War: An Electronic, Interdisciplinary Dialogue on Teaching Native Religions," in *Native American Spirituality: A Critical Reader*, edited by Lee Irwin (Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press, 2000)78-94.

The Native Spirituality Guide of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police says, "Ceremonies are the primary vehicles of religious expression. A ceremonial leader or Elder assures authenticity and integrity of religious observances. Nothing is written down, as the very writing would negate the significance of the ceremony. Teachings are therefore passed on from Elder to Elder in a strictly oral tradition." Available at <http://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/pubs/abo-aut/spirit-spiritualite-eng.htm>.

¹¹ "Contrary to the militaristic and soldierly associations of the term in European languages—and in common usage—the words translated from indigenous languages as "warrior" generally have deep and spiritual meaning. This deeper sense is exemplified, to use one example, in the English-Kanienkeha translation *rotiskenhakete*, which literally means, carrying the burden of peace." Taiaiake Alfred and Lana Lowe, "Warrior Societies in Contemporary Indigenous Communities," https://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/inquiries/ipperwash/policy_part/research/pdf/Alfred_and_Lowe.pdf (2005), p. 5.

lence Ceremony's most poignant, care-giving gestures. I am hoping that viewers will intuitively understand wiping away tears with a soft doeskin, opening the ears with the feather of an eagle, stroking the hair with a bone comb, and cleansing the throat with pure water.

The Condolence Ceremony has a long and venerable oral history. It is a core expression of the Great Law of Peace, which links together the six nations of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, and which contributed key ideas to the Constitution of the United States.¹² Originally, the law was oral, a narrative codified ritually and mnemonically in wampum belts (see fig. 10). Currently, it is also written into 117 articles. Similar to biblical narratives, it was oral before being written down. It is the nature of all performative events, including rituals, to disappear in the doing, but rituals often leave residues: if not films, then texts; if not texts, then stone memorials; if not stone memorials then wampum belts of laced shell. No matter what people say, such objects do not speak for themselves. Someone must continually storify or ritualize them; otherwise, they grow mute. If people care about the material residues of ritual, they must continually reanimate them or entropy takes its toll.¹³

Early versions of the ritual had multiple phases and took several days to perform. It also had more than one function: to comfort the families of deceased chiefs; to install new leaders; and to negotiate the arrival of outsiders. In 1535 the ceremony was used to greet Jacques Cartier, the French colonizer. In 1614, the Condolence was enacted to frame the Two-Row Wampum Treaty between the Dutch and the Iroquois (fig. 11).¹⁴

One part of the ceremony required strangers to bide their time at the edge of the woods.¹⁵ Then they were invited in and offered food and shelter. Condolences were offered by the Iroquois to immigrants who had left their homes. Then the ritual articulated the political and geographical parameters by which the newly arrived were expected to live.¹⁶

¹² This is the usual way of putting it, but another possibility is that the Condolence Ceremony is the core performance that generated the Great Law. The ritual may well be the cause rather than the effect. Or, of course, it may be that they co-evolved; neither was chicken, neither was egg.

¹³ "The Emergence of the Chief," <https://vimeo.com/ronaldlgrimes/chief>

¹⁴ Also called the Tawagonshi document or kaswentha tradition. Francis Boots offers an interpretation of this statue in "The Emergence of the Chief," <https://vimeo.com/ronaldlgrimes/chief>.

¹⁵ So it is sometimes called the Edge of the Woods Ceremony.

¹⁶ The Condolence Ceremony is sometimes accompanied by giving, showing, or exchanging beaded panels referred to as wampum "belts" (not actually worn as belts). According to the imagery of the beaded Two-Row Wampum, immigrants, having hauled themselves across the Atlantic in large ships, were not being invited to climb into small indigenous canoes. Rather, they were expected to paddle along in their own boats, with

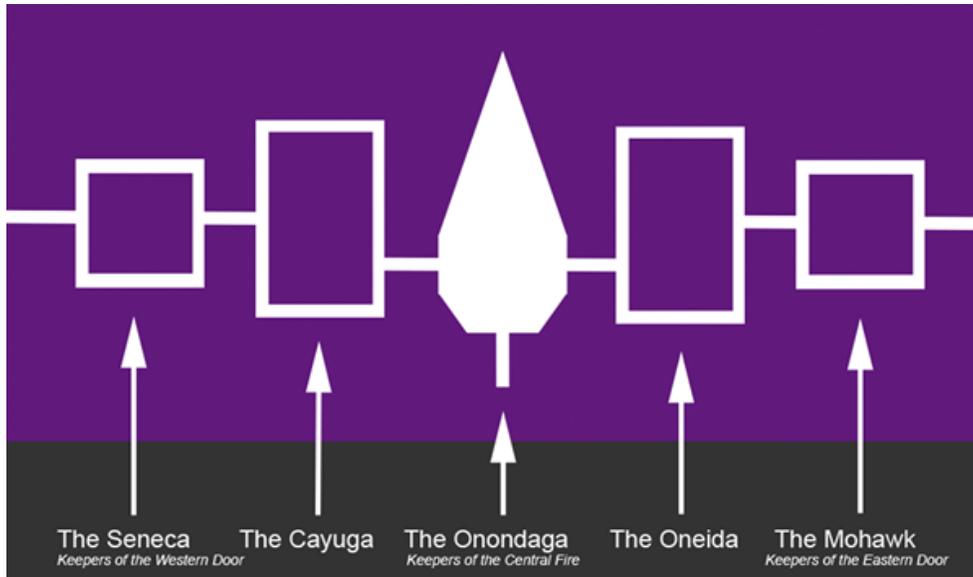


fig. 10: the Hiawatha Wampum



fig. 11: Emergence of the Chief with clan mother holding Two-Row Wampum.
(photo by Ronald L. Grimes)

neither party interfering in the religious and political lives of the other. Natives and the immigrants were to live parallel rather than convergent lives.

Today, the Condolence is still an all-purpose ritual complex with many variants. Its design is, you might say, modular, or adaptive. Parts of it can be extracted and adapted to fit a wide variety of occasions. The ceremony is usually performed among First Nations people, so the social make-up of the participants in *A Daughter's Song* is unusual, having developed out of collaboration between Mohawks and Native-Immigrant. In 2016 Native-Immigrant facilitated using the Condolence to welcome new immigrants from Syria to Canada.¹⁷

The identity questions in this ritual are pervasive and complex. The usual sociological way to think of identity is that it is a function of group, or category, membership. But memberships are multiple. I am who I am because of the groups that I am born into or join: I am a woman. I am a Muslim. I am Canadian. I am a Mohawk. However, since many of us carry multiple passports, we may have memberships in multiple, sometimes conflicting, groups. If you are a Jew and marry a Muslim, who are you? If you are a Muslim and marry a Jew, who are you. If you are the daughter of a Jewish father and a Muslim mother, who are you? If you are a Mohawk conducting a ritual for Jewish and Muslim family members, who are you? If the language of the ceremony is Mohawk and English in Francophone Quebec, who are you? If you are a Mohawk who lives on the American side of the border and you celebrate a ritual on the Canadian side, who do the border guards think you are if you hand them a Mohawk passport? If you think identity is linguistically or nationally constituted, you will assume one perspective. If you think it is ritually or religiously grounded, another perspective. If you think it is rooted in all of these—religion, ritual, language, geography, gender, and nationality—multiple perspectives.

Identity is often coupled not only with group membership but with memory: we are who we are because we remember. To memorize the Condolence requires considerable personal memory, and it requires a reaching back into traditional, collective memory. It exercises many functions. It welcomes. It condoles. It gives thanks. It establishes ways of interacting with each other and with the planet. Even when it memorializes it does more than memorialize. You can hear in the English words, “*memorial*” and “*commemoration*,” the root notion of memory. Both terms imply ritualized activity. Popular conceptions of ritual often construe it as traditional, or backward-looking, mainly about origins or the past. In this view, *all* rituals, not just public memorials, are performed “lest we forget.”¹⁸

¹⁷ Tom Fennario, “Mohawks Welcome Syrian Refugees with Special Ceremony,” April 22, <http://aptn.ca/news/2016/04/22/mohawks-welcome-syrian-refugees-with-special-ceremony/>

¹⁸ This is the refrain from Rudyard Kipling’s poem “Recessional” (1897), which is often engraved on military tombstones. However, in the poem the source of recollection is

If your memory is gone, well, maybe you are not yourself. Prior to the rise of cognitive theories of religion and ritual in the 1980s, scholars were not thinking systematically about how memory and ritual interact. If, for instance, you were studying Christian ritual and you thought rituals more effectively engender muscle memory than verbal memory, you would worry less about participants' inability to recall the words of the homily and more about whether people's legs could find their way to the sanctuary or their spines could remain erect for an hour.

If we want to reflect on the ways rituals create human identity by mobilizing memory, we need to take into account some basic theoretical distinctions, for instance, short- and long-term memory; muscle, or sensory, memory; emotional and intellectual memory. When we say that someone has a good memory, we usually mean that he or she is quick at retrieving stored information such as names and faces, directions to work, or the contents of grocery lists. But when we memorialize, is that what we're doing: recalling information we are at risk of forgetting? In ritualized memorials such as the one enacted for Myriam's family, who or what is doing the remembering? Each individual? The group? The ritual itself? And what about forgetting—is it always bad and remembering always good? Alzheimer's patients cannot remember, and that is bad. But PTSD patients cannot *stop* remembering, and that too is bad. So we might want to distinguish functional from dysfunctional forgetting, functional from dysfunctional remembering.

That communities and individuals utilize their memories during and after ritual events is obvious enough. After all, memory is required for almost every human activity. But rituals are not *exclusively* about remembering. They are also about *envisioning*. (This is the less than perfect word I use to signal ritual's capacity to look toward the future.)¹⁹ We are who we are not only because we remember but also because we anticipate. We humans often treat as memories things that we never knew in the first place. I cannot, literally speaking, *remember* the sacrifices made in the Great War. (In case you have forgotten, that was WWI.) Why? Because I was not there. I experienced both world wars vicariously—by hearing stories, seeing films, and reading books. What I *actually* remember (or forget) are old photos, war stories, newsreels, and memorial ceremonies. Even though commemorations may be *indirectly* about ancestors, they are *directly* about representations. Even if names remain engraved on tombstones forever (and many do not), the dead will, eventually and inevitably, be forgotten as individuals. Someday, in the future, no one will be alive who remembers the

God rather than ritual: "Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet, / Lest we forget—lest we forget!"

¹⁹ The label is less than perfect because effective rituals mobilize all the senses, not just vision.

names of those who died while negotiating the Great Peace of Montreal in 1701, the young people who died in Norway on the 22nd of July 2011, those who fell with the Twin Towers in the United States on the 11th of September 2001. Even if people, declaring that they will never forget, continue to memorialize these historic events, they will forget. We have memorials not only because we remember, but also because we forget. We are who we are because we forget and because we project. Most of us, most of the time, are actually imagining rather than remembering, the dead. Eventually, all that remains are the collective dead, the ancestors, whom we know retrospectively by deploying our ritualistic and artistic imaginations. I am not claiming that we invent the dead, but we do imagine and then utilize them for purposes they could not possibly have anticipated. Even though the dead *once were*, they are *now made up*, fictive personages whom we deploy in the present to help us wade into the deep waters of the future.

To return to the ritual that grounds these reflections, the enactment of the Mohawk Condolence for Aaliyah's family, it invoked the past insofar as it memorialized Miriam's death and continued the tradition of the Condolence Ceremony.²⁰ The ceremony also looks to the present by consoling Myriam's family here and now and by providing a new context for the Condolence.

The ritual will have a future function among Mohawks who persist in learning it, but also among Jews. Stephane says he will show the film to Aaliyah when she comes of age. The video will be used by her family to help her grieve and reimagine the loss of her mother. Whether or not Aaliyah remembers either her mother's actual death or the actual Mohawk Condolence, she will probably remember the film, because it is infinitely repeatable. The film of the ritual will become a stand-in for an event long faded from the child's memory.²¹ Eventually, Aaliyah may emotionally and intellectually comprehend what she only sensed in the ritual: the water trickling down her mouth, the feather tickling her ear.

In addition to the commemoration for the family, the ceremony also anticipates a future in which Muslims and Jews, Natives and non-Natives interact amicably rather than with hostility and suspicion. It also hints at a future in which artists and ritual-makers collaborate without the supervision of religious institutions. And it implies that there is no inherent contradiction among traditional, borrowed, and invented rituals. The Mohawk Condolence for Myriam's family shows that interrituality, the space between rituals, where their symbols and gestures attract and repel, is an extraordinarily generative nest.

¹⁹ For a few participants it points even further back. The myth that charts the Condolence refers to its first enactment by Deganawida (the Peacemaker) and Hiawatha, who was grieving the loss of his family.

²¹ In *Hold Still* (New York: Little, Brown, and Co., 2015), the photographer Sally Mann is quite ambivalent about the way photos can displace actual memories. "Because of the many pictures I have of my father, he eludes me completely" (301). "I don't have a memory of the man; I have a memory of a photograph" (302).

Whatever risks that participants or filmmakers may take in documenting a ritual, the film also has its own ritualistic dynamics. Film excels at storytelling, scene-painting, sense-enhancement, and mood-evocation. If you felt the comb running through your hair, if Aaliyah was momentarily your child, if you felt the wind, heard the river, or tasted the water, the film did a kind of work that argumentative scholarly prose cannot.



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