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A. Irving Hallowell's research on the Ojibwe animism

Introduction

In contemporary research on animism, few works have proved as influential as Alfred Irving Hallowell's essay published in 1960 in a volume honoring Paul Radin (Diamond 1960).¹ Several decades after writing about the behavior, worldview, and ontology of the Ojibwe,² Hallowell came to be dubbed the forefather of the anthropological approach to what Graham Harvey (2005) has termed the "new animism". However, the sixty-year-old text based on research completed eighty years ago tends to be just mentioned (e.g., Viveiros de Castro 1998; Bird-David 1999; Willerslev 2007; Costa, Fausto 2010; Descola 2013; Kohn 2015; Holbraad, Pedersen 2017) rather than extensively discussed (e.g., Ingold 2000), and the biography-, history-, fieldwork-, methodology-, and theory-related context that influenced its creation is almost always ignored. The paper is an attempt to present Hallowell's biographical profile and to situate his achievements within

¹ This important collection of essays was first assembled in 1957 as a *Festschrift* celebrating Radin's seventy-fifth birthday, but it was not published until after his death. It should be emphasized that Hallowell's (1960a) paper *Ojibwa Ontology, Behavior, and World View*, so widely read today, contains significant excerpts from his own text entitled *Ojibwa Metaphysics of Being and the Perception of Persons* (Hallowell 1958).

² This exoethnonym is commonly used today to refer to the people (endoethnonym: *Anishinaabe*, pl. *Anishinaabeg*) speaking the Ojibwe language (endoglossonym: *Anishinaabemowin*), which belongs to the Algonquian language family. The name "Ojibwe" is sometimes anglicized as "Ojibwa" or "Ojibway". Excluding quotations, in the article, I use the Ojibwe orthography presented in John D. Nichols's and Earl Nyholm's (1995) dictionary.

the history of cultural anthropology. It also aims to review Hallowell's ethnographic material and to discuss ideas presented in his seminal essay – the ideas with their own genealogies resulting from the aforementioned elaborate context in which they originated.

Biographical and intellectual context

“I was born in 1892 here in Philadelphia and have lived here all my life” (as cited in Stocking 2004: 198), said Alfred Irving “Pete” Hallowell in a 1950 interview. His parents (mother – a former schoolteacher, father – a supervisor in a shipyard) were Baptists. Hallowell, a rebellious teenager, graduated from manual training high school in 1911 – as he said, he had chosen that school because “it was a new building and they had a swell mandolin club” (as cited in Brown 1992: xiv) – and entered the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce at the University of Pennsylvania. However, by the time he graduated in 1914, he had abandoned all plans for a business career and soon began attending courses in sociology, while earning his living as a social worker. The experience gained during his work proved to be formative; visits to Polish, Italian, and African-American households made him familiar with cultural differences and taught him how to conduct interviews (Hallowell 1972: 51–52).

At that time Hallowell began to discover psychoanalysis. He met Franz Boas's students – Alexander Goldenweiser, who lectured psychoanalytic theory at the Pennsylvania School of Social Work, and Frank G. Speck, who was a member of the same fraternity as Hallowell, and whose courses Hallowell decided to attend.³ Hallowell's interest, which so far had focused on sociology, begun to drift towards cultural anthropology. In 1922–1923, having obtained (with Speck's help) the Harrison Fellowship, Hallowell took a semester of Boas's courses at Columbia University. It was at that time that he started attending weekly meetings held privately by Goldenweiser and a group of students, including Ruth Benedict and Melville Herskovits (Hallowell 1972: 52; Stocking 2004: 203–204).

Years later Hallowell (1972: 53) would recall:

With my interests ranging over broad social problems, it may seem paradoxical that the people in whom I became most interested were the American Indians. But these were the primitive, aboriginal people of America – and they were Frank Speck's pets. At this time, he was engaged in “salvage anthropology” among the Indians of the eastern United States. Speck's self-involvement with the study

³ It is worth noting that Speck and Goldenweiser were almost each other's antitheses in terms of biography and professional work. Not only did the former not belong to the social circle of *Kleindeutschland* (German American community of New York City and neighboring area), but he also gained recognition for being an outstanding field researcher. The latter was, to quote William Y. Adams (2016: 214), “[a] polished, urban sophisticate with no taste for «rouging it,» he did as little fieldwork as he could get away with. (...) Boas considered him one of his brightest students.”

people and their problems was perhaps greater than that of other anthropologists of the period. He was always extolling the sovereign virtues of the Indians and proclaiming the intrinsic values of their culture. (...) Speck was about as detached from American culture as one could be. He would not, for instance, buy a car, and he never read newspapers. In a sense, he was also detached from the university and its affairs. I never remember his serving on a committee; his thoughts and energies were entirely devoted to his research among Indians. And I imitated my mentor for a long while.

Hallowell's first short field research took place among the bilingual (French and Algonquian-speaking) Abenaki from the banks of Saint-François River. Although he collected some material during this trip and those that followed, his Ph.D. dissertation from 1924, a monograph on bear ceremonialism, was of comparative, Frazerian nature. Published in 1926, the dissertation, along with its concluding, Boasian-style hypothesis "that a bear cult was one of the characteristic features of an ancient Boreal culture, Old World in origin and closely associated with the pursuit of the reindeer" (Hallowell 1926: 161), proved interesting to the associates of the Kulturkreis school, Soviet ethnography, and comparative study of religions (Hallowell 1972: 55). Hallowell's monograph also included remarks adumbrating his future works on culturally constituted worldviews and psychologically studied individual behaviors expressed, among other ways, in the context of animistic thinking. In this particular aspect, his dissertation turned out to be a transition from the Boasian program to future interpretations, both related to and transcending the postulates and methodology of the culture and personality school (Darnell 1977). Years later, Hallowell (1966: 12, as cited in Darnell 1977: 28) recapitulated his ideas of the time:

Not only bear ceremonialism is boreal in its scope. What we have to consider is a generalized conception of the nature of the animal world in relation to man. At the root of this relationship there appears to lie a generalized belief that animals by their essential nature are not so different from human beings and that animals are *sent* to hunters by controlling "spirit masters." This is a conception common among the peoples of Eurasia and America. My conclusion is that bear ceremonialism was only an introduction to a much wider range of problems. Man and animals instead of being separate categories of being are deeply rooted in a world of nature that is unified. Perhaps the approach of ethnoscience or ethnosemantics can help us here.

As early as the late 1920s, his interest in the relationship between kinship patterns and social behavior led Hallowell to focus on the ethnography of the Cree, and ultimately - on the ethnography of the Ojibwe.⁴ In 1930, having obtained a grant from the Social Science Research Council, he made his first trip to the Lake

⁴ The most recent anthropological work on the Cree and the Ojibwe (Skinner 1911) that he may have read at that time had been published in the same year as he graduated from high school.

Winnipeg region, where among the Ojibwe (known as *Saulteaux*)⁵ of Berens River, he met his most important collaborator, guide, translator, and eventually friend – William Berens (Hallowell 1992: 6).

However, for Hallowell, the 1930s were not only the period of fieldwork crucial to the development of his theory, but also the time marked by the emergence of psychological anthropology, to which he finally contributed with a panoply of topics, including the concept of the self, perception and cognition, acculturation and related personality changes, mental health,⁶ projective techniques, behavioral evolution, etc. (Bourguignon 2018: 17). At the beginning of the decade, he met Edward Sapir (a close friend of Speck) – the person who would later be considered not only “the founder of culture and personality studies” (La Barre 1980: 264) and one of the most notable representatives of American structuralism (Hymes, Fought 1981), but also a prominent figure in the institutional world of nascent American psychological anthropology. When Sapir became the chairman of the Division of Anthropology and Psychology of the National Research Council, he invited Hallowell to join the newly formed Committee on Personality in Relation to Culture, whose members included Ruth Benedict, as well as the most influential figures in psychiatry and psychoanalysis (both Freudian and neo-Freudian): Adolf Meyer, Abraham Arden Brill, and Harry Stack Sullivan (Hallowell 1972: 56). Hallowell became the chairman of one of the two subcommittees, which was entrusted with the task of drafting a “handbook of psychological leads for ethnological fieldwork” (as cited in Darnell 1986: 175). The resulting text included one of the most relativist statements by Hallowell (1956 [1937]: 355), i.e., the claim “that the very existence of varying culture patterns carries with it the psychological implication that the individuals of these societies actually live in different orders of reality.” However, Hallowell was referring to a reality understood “ethno-metaphysically” and practically, not phenomenally. Human mental response to the physical phenomena and objects of the world external to him/her is therefore culturally dependent in the sense that it concerns perception (understood as the organization, identification, and interpretation of sensory

⁵ It should be noted that the Ojibwe, who live near Lake Winnipeg and its rivers, and who are locally called “*Saulteaux*” (Steinberg 1981), are often referred to as “Northern Ojibwa” in Hallowell’s works, but should not be confused with the proper Northern Ojibwe “that live along the upper courses of the rivers that flow generally northeast into Hudson and James bays, from Island Lake, Manitoba, to Ogoki, Ontario” (Rogers, Taylor 1981: 231). Hallowell himself wrote: “Their early association with the Sault is the source of an Indian name for them – *People of the Falls or Rapids* – from which was derived the name given them by the French – *Saulteurs*. This name has persisted in anglicized form in parts of Canada down to the present time, alongside their alternative self-designation, *Anishinabek*. *Outchibouec* is an equally early designation which later took the English form *Ojibwa*. (...) *Chippewa* is actually a corrupted form of Ojibwa, but has received wide currency in the United States after having been officially adopted by the Bureau of American Ethnology” (Hallowell 1992: 5).

⁶ The answer to the question of whether Hallowell’s (1955b [1940], 1955d [1938]) research interests in fear, anxiety, and aggression in the Ojibwe culture and personality were related to his tragic family history (Hallowell’s adopted son, William Kern Hallowell, was a notorious felon and the murderer of two policemen, as well as his own stepmother, Hallowell’s ex-wife Dorothy Kern), can only be speculative (Stocking 2004: 221–232).

data) and cognition. "Consequently, the objects of the external world *as meaningfully defined* in a traditional ideology constitute the reality to which the individuals habituated to a particular system of beliefs actually respond" (Hallowell 1956 [1937]: 356). In practical terms (related to acting in the world), "[t]he physical objects of the environment only enter the reality-order of the human population as a function of specific culture patterns" (Hallowell 1956 [1937]: 356). However, Hallowell only referred to the relativity of classification (e.g., a culturally conditioned perception or lack of perception of specific objects as useful, valuable, etc.) and to some extent foreshadowed James J. Gibson's (1966) concept of affordance. It should be added that at this stage, Hallowell spoke of "reality-orders" rather than "world views", and the "traditional ideologies" mentioned above were later replaced by "metaphysics of being" or "ontologies".

As a Guggenheim Fellowship holder in the academic year 1940-1941, Hallowell wrote a monograph on Ojibwe conjuring, in which he stated: "Neither animism in its classical formulation nor animatism is the unequivocal foundation of Saulteaux belief" (Hallowell 1971 [1942]: 7). The monograph was dedicated to William Berens, and Hallowell himself concluded its introduction with the remark that "even at best our comprehension of the belief system of a primitive people remains on the intellectual level. We never learn to feel and act as they do. Consequently we never fully penetrate their behavioral world. We never *wear* their culturally tinted spectacles; the best we can do is to try them on" (Hallowell 1971 [1942]: 3).

As a person involved neither with the government nor with military activities, Hallowell spent the early years of World War II in Philadelphia, working as a chairman of the University of Pennsylvania Department of Anthropology. Freshly divorced, having his parents as dependents, he was invited by Herskovits to work at Northwestern University. He took the position but returned to the University of Pennsylvania in spring 1947, where he taught until his retirement in 1963 (Stocking 2004: 211-212).

The post-war period in Hallowell's academic writing was defined by the universalism of the evolutionary approach, which he had postulated as early as 1949 in his presidential address to the American Anthropological Association (Hallowell 1950). In the late 1970s, Jerome H. Barkow (1978: 99) referred to it with one of his characteristic remarks stating that had the anthropologists listened carefully to Hallowell's speech, "they would not have had to wait for biologists to invent sociobiology." Even if Barkow's statement was marked with some rhetorical exaggeration, Hallowell's address to the AAA, as well as his subsequent texts (e.g., Hallowell 1960b, 1965, 1976 [1963]), drew attention to the pressing need for research not only on the evolution of human morphology, or changes in material products of human activity, but also on the evolution of human mind and social behavior, in which personality, society, and culture will not be subject to separate types of analysis, and will not be treated as independent variables. According to the interdisciplinarily inclined Hallowell (1960b: 313-318), for the evolution-oriented researchers of *homo sapiens'* behavior, it was necessary to reach for new data provided by paleontology, primatology, and psychoanalysis

(today we would probably replace the last one with a different set of psychological theories), but also for a precise, anthropologically defined concept of culture.⁷ In his later semiautobiographical remarks, Hallowell (1972: 59) stated that “investigations in psychology and culture inevitably led to a general consideration of the psychological dimension of human evolution”. He continued, embedding the phenomenology of culturally constituted worldviews in the broader field of evolutionary explanatory approach: “Man is an animal who has been able to survive by making cultural adaptations in which his own imaginative interpretations of the world have been fed back into his personal adjustment to it” (Hallowell 1972: 60).⁸

After Hallowell’s death in 1974, one of his most prominent students and the founder of the anthropology department (and also an influential center for psychological anthropology) at the University of California, San Diego, Melford E. Spiro (1976: 610), shared the following thought, so typical of his anti-relativistic stance:

[I]n his teaching and writing, Hallowell focused his vision on one big thing – the nature of man. Hence, although much of his teaching was concerned with the ethnography of American Indians, his approach to the uniquely Indian was based on and informed by a conception of the generically human; and the latter conception projected a vision of what anthropology could be, a vision that most of his students found exciting and captivating.

Fieldwork among the Ojibwe

Eventually, between 1930 and 1940, Hallowell conducted seven summer field studies (each sojourn lasted between one and eight weeks) on the patrilineal Berens River Ojibwe (communities: Berens River, Little Grand Rapids, Pauingassi, Poplar Hill, and Pikangikum), who were “able to maintain a high degree of cultural conservatism” (Hallowell 1955e: 119). Their population stood at over 900 people, and their economy was still based almost entirely on hunting and fishing supplemented by plant gathering (Hallowell 1955e; Steinberg 1981: 247–248; Brown 1987: 17, 1989: 218, 1992: xi). In his reflective essay, *On Being an Anthropologist*, written towards the end of his life, Hallowell (1972: 58) admitted: “I deeply identified myself with the Berens River Ojibwa. To the small number of white people in the area I paid practically no attention.”

⁷ He himself proposed the term “«protoculture» as a means of identifying the necessary, but not sufficient, conditions which appear to be the evolutionary prerequisites of the fully developed phase of cultural adaptation as represented in *Homo sapiens*” (Hallowell 1976 [1963]: 291).

⁸ This idea was already outlined in his 1949 speech, in which he stated that human “adjustment is not a simple function of organic structure but of personal experience and behavioral environment as well” (Hallowell 1950: 165).

On July 1, 1930, while cruising through Lake Winnipeg aboard S.S. Keenora steamboat on his way to Norway House and the Cree reserve, near the mouth of the Berens River, Hallowell met Chief William Berens.⁹ Born in 1865 – after the death of his father, Chief Jacob Berens¹⁰ – William became the leader of the local Ojibwe community in 1917 and held this position until his death in 1947 (Brown 1989: 205; Brown, Gray 2009a: 9). In mid-August 1930, while returning from the Cree reserve, Hallowell visited the Berens River community again. As a result of a weeklong stay and many hours spent talking to Berens, Hallowell (1992: 8) decided to visit the Ojibwe living east of Lake Winnipeg: “I was particularly impressed by the fact that there were still un-Christianized Indians 250 miles up the river in the Pikangikum band. I knew of no other Algonquian group where this was the case.” Berens offered to help, although the last time he had been in the Pikangikum area was in 1888 (Berens, Hallowell 2009: 54, 94–95). Eventually, they both went to Lake Pikangikum in the summer of 1932:

In many respects it was an excursion into the living past. When I tried to engage Indian canoemen at the mouth of the river to make the trip, I ran into difficulty because practically none of the Indians in this locality had any knowledge whatever of the country to the east for more than 100 miles at most. (...) After we left what my friend Chief Berens called “civilization” at the mouth of the river, I also discovered that we had entered a more primitive world of temporal orientation. (...) The inland Indians were still living in birchbark-covered dwellings and except for their clothing, utensils, and canvas canoes, one could easily imagine oneself in an encampment of a century or more before. (...) Evidence of the importance of fish at this season was everywhere. Nets were in the water or being mended continually. (...) Berries were being picked by the women and children. As for the men, they were relatively idle but some, as at Island Lake, were to be seen making snowshoe frames or canoe paddles. There was frequent dancing on specially prepared ground, sometimes within a cagelike superstructure such as that used for the *Wabanowiwin*, although the Grand Medicine Lodge (*Midewiwin*) had died out. (...) Although it is true that aboriginal culture as a fully rounded

⁹ The name of the river, and consequently, the name of Hallowell's collaborator, comes from the name of the governor of the Hudson's Bay Company in the second decade of the 19th century, Joseph Berens Jr. (Hallowell 1992: 6). William Berens's family belonged to the Moose clan. His paternal great-grandfather was Yellow Legs (*Ozaawashkogaad*), whose son's (William's grandfather's) indigenous name was *Makwa* (Bear). William's father, in turn, “an Indian of the «new order»” (Hallowell 1992: 13), was the first to take the last name Berens and to be baptized, nominally becoming a Methodist; he learned English and started working for the Hudson's Bay Company on a casual basis. After signing the Lake Winnipeg Treaty 5 in 1875, Jacob Berens became the first “chief” of the Berens River Ojibwe. At this point, it is worth noting Hallowell's (1992: 12–13) observation that “[i]n the native system, a personal name was derived from a dream of the namer – an old man in the «grandfather» category. With the name were transferred «blessings» which the namer had received from other than human persons.”

¹⁰ William's mother, Marry (née McKay), as a person of Algonquian and Scottish descent (her Scottish-born father was the manager of the Hudson's Bay Company post), was perceived by the Ojibwe as “white” (Brown 1989: 209–210; Hallowell 1992: 13).

and comprehensive scheme of life had disappeared, a continuity with the past was obvious, along with a persistence of attitudes, values, beliefs, and behavior which had their roots in an aboriginal sociocultural system. This interpretation was thrown into sharper relief when I returned to the mouth of the river (Hallowell 1992: 8–10).

For Berens himself, the trip to the east was also a journey in time, because there “was the kind of life he once had led. Like the Indians in these inland bands, he too had seen the Midewiwin, only at a much earlier period than they had. As a child, he remembered his grandfather in the Midewiwin when it was last given at the mouth of the Berens River just before the latter’s death. (...) On the other hand, from childhood he was raised as a member of a Christian household” (Hallowell 1992: 14). Undoubtedly, the uniqueness of Berens’s biography and character, combined with his position as a political leader and an entrepreneur, proved to be the key to the success of Hallowell’s ethnographic venture, and the latter’s openness and curiosity,¹¹ thanks to Berens, could be understood and appreciated. In 1994, Percy Earl Berens, the eldest of William’s living sons, stressed that “[t]here was *very high mutual respect* between the two of them, and because Hallowell would write them down and *understand* them” (Brown, Gray 2009b: xxiii).

To this day the main dichotomy organizing the Ojibwe oral narratives is the division into *aadizookaanag* (sg. *aadizookaan*) and *dibaaJimowinan* (sg. *dibaaJimowin*). The former are sacred stories, traditionally told only on late autumn and winter evenings (this involved a ritual prohibition on passing them on at other times of the year), regarding the activities of powerful nonhuman beings (these entities are polysemous with the *aadizookaanag* stories and are treated as persons).¹² The latter are secular stories, anecdotes from everyday life, which tell of people’s personal experiences, and in which “other-than-human persons”

¹¹ For example, Hallowell is famous for his interest in ceremonies of *Midewiwin*, that is Grand Medicine Society, due to which the people at Little Grand Rapids and Pauingassi call him by the nickname *Midewigima*, i.e., “*Mide* master” (Brown, Gray 2009b: xxii). One of William Berens’s sons, Gordon (who, as a young man, on two occasions accompanied Hallowell on his trip to Little Grand Rapids), when asked years later whether Hallowell had danced in the ceremonies he had attended, replied: “Oh, he was in it! ... he was crazy dancing at the Indian dance. He can do it too. He could do it good. Just as good as the Indians did. Oh, he sure enjoyed that” (Brown, Gray 2009b: xxii).

¹² “A striking fact furnishes a direct linguistic cue to the attitude of the Ojibwa towards these personages. When they use the term *ātiso’kanak*, they are not referring to what I have called a «body of narratives.» The term refers to what we would call the characters in these stories; to the Ojibwa they are living «persons» of an other-than-human class. As William Jones said many years ago, «Myths are thought of as conscious beings, with powers of thought and action.» A synonym for this class of persons is «our grandfathers.» The *ātiso’kanak*, or «our grandfathers,» are never «talked about» casually by the Ojibwa. But when the myths are narrated on long winter nights, the occasion is a kind of invocation: «Our grandfathers» like it and often come to listen to what is being said” (Hallowell 1960a: 27; see also Smith 2012: 52, 82). “Certain stories were reserved for the very coldest portions of winter when it was thought to be less likely that potentially mischievous or negatively inclined «persons» would choose to travel from the Atisokanak World to the Now-World of the story teller” (Boatman 1992: 13).

such as *wiindigoo* (an anthropomorphic cannibal monster), *binesi* (a Thunderbird), etc., may appear (Hallowell 1960a: 26–27). However, during his conversations with Hallowell, Berens was inclined to transgress cultural taboos, thus becoming an invaluable source of information. Living at the crossroads of two worlds, he was able to transcend the limitations imposed by both the traditional Ojibwe culture and the Christian culture of the modern West. This does not mean, however, that he did not have close contact with both of the cultures (Brown 1989: 207–208). As a Christian, he never took the blessing received in his dream from the *memegwesiwag* (bank-dwelling dwarfs), which would have enabled him to receive medicine from them, and become a curer (*mina'o*) as his great-grandfather Yellow Legs once did (Hallowell 1955j [1954]: 97–99). On the other hand, the devotion to the Ojibwe culture and immersion in its ontological categories resulted in such incidents as the one during the joint trip with Hallowell, when a presence of a toad in the tent was interpreted by Berens as a punishment for breaking the taboo by telling the *aadizookaanag* in the summer, that is, out of season, according to the ritual rules (Hallowell 1955d [1938]: 253–254).

From the point of view of the methodology of psychologically oriented ethnographic research, the following question arose quite early: “From what sources were psychological data, apart from ethnological data, to be derived?” (Hallowell 1972: 57). The answer was not uncontroversial – the projective tests and in particular – the Rorschach test. Developed by Herman Rorschach in Switzerland in 1921 (Tibon-Czopp, Weiner 2016: 3) the inkblot test was supposed to determine personality traits and mental disorders. Psychological anthropologists perceived it as a promise of a field-functional, culturally unbiased, scientifically reliable and verifiable tool, providing access to basic data on the mental states of informants. Although pinning hopes on these tests eventually proved ineffective (Lilienfeld et al. 2000), Hallowell was one of the first cultural anthropologists to have used the Rorschach projective technique in a non-Western society.¹³ Margaret Mead (1932, 1949) was the only person to have applied it earlier. She did so in her research on the Manus people of the Admiralty Islands and the Arapesh people of New Guinea at the turn of the 1920s and 1930s, albeit not always successfully. Significantly, the research on the children of Manus Island ethnographically refuted Jean Piaget’s (1928, 1966 [1930], 1971 [1929]) recapitulationist hypothesis that postulated the universality of spontaneous animistic thinking in children, which was considered to be characteristic of the preoperational stage of cognitive development.¹⁴

¹³ He first heard about the test from Benedict during Sapir’s committee meeting (Stocking 2004: 209).

¹⁴ It should be noted that today, evolutionarily informed cognitive anthropology is dominated by the view that while the prevalence of animistic (and anthropomorphic) cultural representations is related to universal cognitive dispositions, intuitive ontology, which delivers psychological, biological, and physical expectations about the surrounding reality (and which is present even in the early stages of human cognitive development), as presented by numerous empirical psychological studies, is not determined by animistic or anthropomorphic assumptions. However, “[p]rojections of intuitive intentional psychology make use of the richest domain of inferences

Hallowell first applied the Rorschach test during the fieldwork among the Berens River Ojibwe in 1937. On his return from the trip, he met Bruno Klopfer, Carl Gustav Jung's student who pioneered projective techniques and was most known for his work on the inkblot test. Following Mead, Hallowell (1955g [1939]) criticized the recapitulation theory and the concept of child animism in the 1939 article (originally entitled *The Child, the Savage and Human Experience*), at the very end of which he reached for his own ethnographic material on the children of the Berens River. Eventually, Hallowell gained recognition in the "Rorschach movement" in American anthropology, as he produced a series of articles on the personality distinctions observed in the Ojibwe populations with different levels of acculturation,¹⁵ and on the possibilities of anthropological research using the inkblot test (Hallowell 1941, 1945, 1946, 1955a [1951], 1955h, 1955j [1942], 1955k [1950]). Moreover, he organized a Rorschach training seminar for cultural anthropologists, and after World War II, he became the president of the Society for Projective Techniques (Stocking 2004: 209).

Hallowell (1955c) made his last field trip in the summer of 1946, at the end of his second year at Northwestern University (and a year before William Berens's death). This time, however, he did not visit the Berens River community but, accompanied by a team of students, went to the Ojibwe reservation of Lac du Flambeau, in Wisconsin, where a series of projective tests were also conducted. The cultural and psychological realities of this Ojibwe group put Hallowell's previous field experience in a new light. Years later, he admitted:

Here I found myself in the position of being an authority for these highly acculturated Ojibwa on the really old-fashioned Ojibwa "up north."

It was the gradual realization of this broader acculturation problem that led me in the end to attempt to interpret and expound the world view of the most conservative Ojibwa (...). This became an excursion into ethnoscience – or ethno-semantics, if you will – for I became aware of how sharply different the Ojibwa

available to human minds, whilst violating central aspects of intuitive ontology. Anthropomorphism, then, is «natural» and widespread mainly because it is counter-intuitive" (Boyer 1996: 95). This view turns out to be close to Mead's (1932: 186–187) own intuition: "It may, however, be argued that the human mind possesses a tendency towards animistic thought, and also a tendency towards non-animistic practical observations of cause and effect relationships." Finally, it is worth noting that among contemporary cognitively oriented researchers there are voices skeptical about the concept of three intuitive ontological domains as a universal feature of human (and not only Western) cognition (Ojalehto mays, Seligman, Medin 2020).

¹⁵ One of Hallowell's most controversial ideas was the concept of the "atomistic" character of the Ojibwe modal personality structure. It was based on projective testing, among other things, and was partly related to Speck's hypothesis assuming the aboriginality of family- or individually-owned hunting territories among the Northern Algonquian peoples (Hickerson 1967). The problem of the impact of acculturation on personality was described by Hallowell (1955k [1950]: 366) in psychoanalytic terms: "At Flambeau it is a striking fact that the protocols of adults are so much like those of the children. (...) Thus the Flambeau Indian represents what is, in effect, a *regressive version* of the personality structure of the Northern Ojibwa. So far as I have been able to analyze the situation, it does not seem to me that there is any positive resolution of this psychological impasse in sight."

world was from our own and of the necessity for testing the meaningfulness of familiar conceptual dichotomies, such as natural-supernatural, for example (Hallowell 1972: 58).

Ojibwe epistemology and ontology: the concepts of the behavioral environment and the person

In 1954, Hallowell (1955i [1954]: 109) stated that an individual Ojibwe “is not an «animist» in the classical sense”, by which he meant that the Ojibwe beliefs are not related to Edward B. Tylor’s (1871: I, 258) “doctrine of universal vitality”, nor do their beliefs fall within the framework of a conventionally defined religion, i.e., one characterized in the Tylorian way in terms of spirituality, supernaturalism, and worship (Hallowell 1992: 81). As a result, Hallowell reached for the concept of worldview, using Robert Redfield’s (1952: 30) anthropological explication, according to which a worldview is an “outlook upon the universe that is characteristic of a people”¹⁶:

“World view” differs from culture, ethos, mode of thought, and national character. It is the picture the members of a society have of the properties and characters upon their stage of action. (...) “world view” attends especially to the way a man, in a particular society, sees himself in relation to all else. It is the properties of existence as distinguished from and related to the self. It is, in short, a man’s idea of the universe. It is that organization of ideas which answers to a man the questions: Where am I? Among what do I move? What are my relations to these things? (...) Self is the axis of world view (Redfield 1952: 30).

Importantly, Redfield (1952: 30) continues that “[o]utside of self, every man separates other human beings one from another, accords the property of self to them too, and looks upon other human beings as significantly different from all else that is not human”, although “to primitive man the distinction between persons and things is not sharply made: all objects, not only man, are regarded somewhat as if they were persons” (Redfield 1952: 34), and therefore in a theoretical sense does not distinguish the worldview from the ontology understood as a set of assumptions about the fundamental categories of being, which constitute an inventory of the entities perceived as existing in the world. Perhaps this is why in Hallowell’s 1960 essay *Ojibwa Ontology, Behavior, and World View*, the term “ontology” appears only once and is not defined – contrary to what the title might suggest. Instead, on two occasions Hallowell (1960a: 21, 43) mentions the culturally constituted “metaphysics of being”, the elements of which shape the worldview and are the key to understanding it. Moreover, the aspects of thus conceptualized ethnoontology of the group members (or “ethno-metaphysics” as he called it)

¹⁶ In this case, Redfield was more inspired by Bronislaw Malinowski than by Boas (Hiebert 2008: 18).

permeate “the content of their cognitive processes: perceiving, remembering, imagining, conceiving, judging, and reasoning” (Hallowell 1960a: 43).

It was possible for Hallowell to understand the local ontology of the Ojibwe because he adopted in his research methodology an approach that would later be called “emic”, and because he used concepts that enabled him to work with their worldview analytically. One of such concepts was the “behavioral environment” (Hallowell 1955f [1954], 1955h, 1955i [1954]), which in a modernist fashion embedded Hallowellian discussion on ontology within epistemology.

Hallowell took a step towards phenomenological ecology (Schwartz 2018: 186) or ecological psychology by assuming that the human awareness of self (“self” as a concept is distinguished here from the psychoanalytic term “ego”),¹⁷ and the awareness of empirical objects of the outside world that differ from the self, emerge from maturation, socialization, and personal experience – and for this reason both are inevitably products of culture. He uses the term “behavioral environment” – a concept borrowed from the Gestalt psychology of Kurt Koffka (1936), who proposed an explanatory division into the geographical and behavioral environment. The geographical environment is the physical environment surrounding a person. Behavioral environment, although not fully independent from the geographical one (Gestalt psychology is not mentalistic – a common critique from partisans of behaviorism), is the environment that is perceived, and as such, it constitutes a direct cause of one’s behavior. In other words, the behavioral environment is “a mediating link between geographical environment and behaviour, between stimulus and response” (Koffka 1936: 32).¹⁸

According to Hallowell, the behavioral environment is formed by culture, which provides basic cognitive orientations (self-orientation, object orientation, spatiotemporal orientation, motivational orientation, and normative orientation) important in the psychological adjustment of an individual to the surrounding world, and enabling him or her to act effectively in it. Instead of perceiving human as an entity living in a social or cultural environment, Hallowell (1955i [1954]: 87) stated that the environment in which human functions is a “culturally constituted behavioral environment”. Thus, when it comes to reacting to the surrounding world, it always means reacting to the environment that is perceived. At this point, it is worth recalling the problem of perception – which has already been mentioned in the discussion of the *Psychological Leads for Ethnological Field Workers* handbook – and emphasizing that what is meant by the culturally shaped perception of the environment is not the cultural determination of sensations (sense data), but the immediate organization, identification, and interpretation of sensations

¹⁷ In Hallowell’s (1955i [1954]: 80) view, “[t]he term «self,» in short, does seem to connote a concept that remains closer to the phenomenological facts that reflect man’s self-awareness as a generic psychological attribute. It retains the reflexive connotation that is indicated when we say that a human individual becomes an object to himself, that he identifies himself as an object among other objects in his world, that he can conceive himself not only as a whole but in terms of different parts, that he can converse with himself, and so on.”

¹⁸ Koffka’s idea has its ethological equivalent in Jakob von Uexküll’s (1926) concepts of *Umwelt* and *Umgebung*, of which Hallowell was fully aware.

in order to form mental representations. This is the foundation of the problem of perception seen as an active process and as the occurrence of perceptual sets, which are to be treated as “readinesses” (Allport 1955: 65) to perceive specific features of a stimulus. According to Margaret D. Vernon (1955: 186), this kind of schemata operate in perception in two ways: “(a) They produce a condition of expectation in which the observer is not merely on the *qui vive*, but also knows what to look for – what particular sensory data to select from the incoming flood, (b) He then knows how to deal with these data – how to classify, understand, and name them, and draw from them the inferences that give the meaning to the percepts.”

While perceptual content may be influenced by factors such as physiological needs, expectations of rewards and punishments, personal values, assigned value of an object, personality, or the emotionally disturbing nature of a stimulus (Allport 1955: 309–319), the influence of purely cultural determinants has also been empirically demonstrated (Hudson 1960; Deregowski et al. 1972; Deregowski 1993). A good example of how, in addition to motivations, emotions, and past experiences, “cultural variables are inevitably constituents of human perception” (Hallowell 1951: 166) is an anecdote repeatedly told by Hallowell (1951: 181, 1955d [1938]: 254–255, 1955h: 41–42, 1992: 61) about an Ojibwe party who found some fresh tracks not far from the shore of Birch Island, which they interpreted as prints left by the Giant Frog. Since this entity is a dangerous figure within the Ojibwe behavioral environment, perceiving the tracks as having been left by the creature forced the entire group “to depart at once, although they had expected to camp there for the night” (Hallowell: 1955h: 41).

In his analyses, Hallowell aptly raised the issue of the influence of individual personality factors on perception; the case of Adam (Samuel) Bigmouth (Brown 2018), one of Hallowell's consultants, being an example (Hallowell 1951: 181–186, 1955d [1938]: 257–259). During one spring hunt, Adam saw a stick being thrown at him and heard a series of different kinds of sounds, which he automatically interpreted as being caused (cracking branches and ice on a frozen lake) or emitted (loud yell) by a *wiindigoo*, a cannibalistic monster. According to Hallowell (1951: 184), it was particularly interesting that Bigmouth “himself was responsible for the perceptual structuralization of *this particular situation*. Another Indian in the same objective situation and belonging to the same cultural group may, or may not, have perceived *wiindigo*.” The factors that determined Adam's experience were largely individual and idiosyncratic. His father, Northern Barred Owl (*Ochiibaamaansiins*), was an influential medicine man who claimed to have killed *wiindigoog* (plural of *wiindigoo*) in the past. Adam knew many stories about horrible cannibals and was interested in them. As a child, he saw a *wiindigoo* and told his father about it. Although he also became a conjurer and a medicine man, Adam never earned a reputation that would match that of his father. Furthermore, Adam's results in the Rorschach test were extraordinary – unlike others, he gave one whole and quick answer to each card, but at the same time his “whole answers” (the so-called “whole response” relates to the overall view of the image

and may indicate the intellectual and leadership abilities of the testee) “were not particularly good ones” (Hallowell 1951: 185). Thus, Hallowell (1951: 185) reasoned that the behavioral environment of an individual is not simply the result of cultural determinism; it links the individual’s personal situation to “culturally constituted factors in perception”.

Ontologically, Adam Bigmouth’s encounter with *wiindigoo* is instructive in the sense that it illustrates a situation in which the Ojibwe self “is not oriented to a behavioral environment in which a distinction between human beings and supernatural beings is stressed. The fundamental differentiation of primary concern to the self is how other selves rank in order of power” (Hallowell 1955f [1954]: 181). To Hallowell, the key to understanding the ontology and worldview of the Ojibwe is, consequently, the concept of the person, although from an ethnoscientific perspective it should be considered a covert category (Berlin et al. 1968) just like the “self”, which was identified with the “person” by Hallowell (1955f [1954]: 172) at some point: “Although there is no single term in Ojibwa speech that can be satisfactorily rendered into English as «self,» nevertheless, by means of personal and possessive pronouns, the use of kinship terms, and so on, the Ojibwa Indian constantly identifies himself as a person.”

On the one hand, Hallowell does not refer to the Maussian tradition¹⁹ that historicizes the “self”, and on the other hand, he rejects those psychological positions that tend to define “person” as “human being”, or, as Howard C. Warren’s (1934: 197) dictionary states, “a human organism regarded as having distinctive characteristics and social relations”. The reason lies in the very ontology of the Ojibwe, where the category of “person” includes both humans (*anishinaabeg*) and non-humans, for whom Hallowell reserved the term “other-than-human persons”. The importance of this distinctive categorical perspective is visible in the way the kinship term “grandfather” is used: “It is not only applied to human persons but to spiritual beings who are persons of a category other than human. In fact, when the collective plural «our grandfathers» is used, the reference is primarily to persons of this latter class” (Hallowell 1960a: 21–22).²⁰ The already mentioned *wiindigoog* are also an example of the inclusiveness of the “person” category. They cannot be considered spiritual beings in the Western sense,²¹ and the Ojibwe ontology classifies them either as giants wandering through the woods in winter and spring, as creatures created by a sorcerer “out of a dream”, or as people transformed into cannibals by sorcery (Hallowell 1955d [1938]: 256). Hallowell (1958: 81, 1960a: 23), calling for a review of the culturally constituted notion of “social relations”, came close to Hans Kelsen’s (1943: 24–48) understanding of animism as a personalistic interpretation of nature, as well as to David Krech’s and Richard S. Crutchfield’s (1948: 9–11) psychological concept of social “person objects” (which don’t have to

¹⁹ Marcel Mauss’s (1985) famous essay was not translated into English until 1979.

²⁰ There is no unambiguous equivalent for the noun “grandfather” in the Ojibwe language because a personal prefix (“my”, “your”, “our”) always goes with the dependent word stem *mishoomis-* (Nichols, Nyholm 1995).

²¹ This problem refigures Istvan Praet’s (2009) “Monster” concept.

be human, whose "psychological presence" is as important as a physical one, and which – as the perceived loci of causality, power, and reciprocal reactivity – are endowed with mobility, capriciousness, and sensitivity). Historically, the impact of these ideas on the Hallowellian theory of the person cannot be overestimated.

Hallowell set the discussion on the problem of personhood in the context of linguistic anthropology, which at the time was marked by analyses based on a set of assumptions that Sapir's student, Harry Hoijer (1954), called the "Sapir-Whorf hypothesis". Hallowell drew attention to the interplay of perception and cognition with the obligatory grammatical categories of the Ojibwe language. From the linguistic point of view, numerous nouns describing plants and abiotic objects in *Anishinaabemowin* and other Algonquian languages can be classified as animate. Hallowell (1960a: 24), however, was far from embracing linguistic determinism and emphasized that "[m]ore important than the linguistic classification of objects is the kind of vital functions attributed to them in the belief system and the conditions under which these functions are observed or tested in experience." In his opinion, this can explain "the fact that what we view as material, inanimate objects – such as shells and stones – are placed in an «animate» category along with «persons» which have no physical existence in our world view" (Hallowell 1960a: 24). For example, to assign shells called *miigisag* to the linguistic category of "inanimate" would be, according to Hallowell (1960a: 24), inconsistent with the context of the Ojibwe worldview and ceremonial practices, because of the role these shells played in the *Midewiwin* (Grand Medicine Society).

Hallowell (1955g [1939]: 28, 1955i [1954]: 109, 1958: 65, 1960a: 24) repeatedly quoted an anecdote about a conversation he had with one of his consultants. Elderly Alex ("Alec") Keeper, aka *Giiwiich* (Hallowell's second most important interlocutor after William Berens), when asked if all stones are alive, answered: "Some are" (Hallowell 2010: 44). As early as in the 1930s, this experience made Hallowell aware of the trap of excessive generalizations about animism. In the 1960 article, he stated: "The Ojibwa do not perceive stones, in general, as animate, any more than we do. The crucial test is experience. Is there any personal testimony available?" (Hallowell 1960a: 25). And further: "If, then, stones are not only grammatically animate, but, in particular cases, have been observed to manifest animate properties, such as movement in space and opening of a mouth, why should they not on occasion be conceived as possessing animate properties of a «higher» order?" (Hallowell 1960a: 25–26).

In the culturally constituted Ojibwe worldview, the notion of the impersonal course of nature, as well as the division between natural and supernatural, makes no sense, and therefore the claim that the Ojibwe personify natural objects is groundless (Hallowell 1960a: 28–30). Thus, to Hallowell, the idea that personification is the result of socialization (Bird-David 1999: 578) would have been difficult to accept. What can be said is that the Ojibwe social relationships "are correlative with their more comprehensive categorization of «persons»"

(Hallowell 1960a: 23), and that the latter is related to culturally formed cognitive orientation and the presence of a specific psychological set.

Sometimes entities belonging to the “other-than-human persons” class who are *aadizookaanag* (beings present in sacred seasonal narratives, with which, as we recall, they are polysemous) or *bawaaganag* (dream visitors bestowing blessings), or entities that are also encountered in everyday life, such as the sun and the moon (*giizis*), are not anthropomorphic by nature (anthropomorphism is understood here as human appearance). Thus Hallowell (1960a: 30) asked: “What constant attributes do unify the concept of «person»? What is the essential meaningful core of the concept of person in Ojibwa thinking?” He offered the answer in a series of anecdotes. What is revealed in their light is an image of a person’s constitutive traits that includes: cognitive abilities, autonomy, and teleology of action (related to the self), the ability to metamorphose (related to the body and the possessed power), and, in certain cases, incorporation into an independent sociofamilial order, the structure of which is represented by the social reality of the Ojibwe themselves (this trait concerns, for example, the world of Thunderbirds).

The person’s external form can be transformed but his or her soul, or the spirit within (*ojichaagwan*), constituting the core of the self is “uniform, constant, visually imperceptible and vital” (Hallowell 1955f [1954]: 177). External manifestations do not define “categorical differences in the core of being” (Hallowell 1960a: 35). Moreover, in special circumstances, not only the exteriority of being may change, but so may (at least to some extent) the perspectival perception of the surrounding world. Both of these issues are well illustrated in the sacred story mentioned by Hallowell (1960a: 32–33, 1992: 66) about a man who went to the land above the earth inhabited by the Thunderbirds (*binesiwag*), following his murdered wife, who was in fact an immortal Thunderbird transformed into a woman. In the celestial world “[h]e finds himself brother-in-law to beings who are the «masters» of the duck hawks, sparrow hawks, and other species of this category of birds he has known on earth. He cannot relish the food eaten, since what the Thunder Birds call «beaver» are to him like the frogs and snakes on this earth (a genuinely naturalistic touch since the sparrow hawk, for example, feeds on batrachians and reptiles)” (Hallowell 1960a: 33). This example is not only ontological, but truly cosmological. In its light, it is not difficult to guess why both Phillippe Descola (2013) and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro (1998, 2015) referred to Hallowell’s article: the former’s vision of animism based on an ontological model of subjects’ similar “interiorities” and different “physicalities”, and the latter’s perspectivism based on the concepts of “multinaturalism” and ontologically shifting subjective viewpoints are both complementary to the given example and may constitute a theoretical formulation of its specific aspects.

One of the distinctive attributes of a “person” in both the “other-than-human” and “human” (e.g., sorcerer) categories is the ability to physically metamorphose. Having quoted Stith Thompson (1946: 258) stating that the transformation belongs to the repertoire of folk tales all over the world – although “[m]any of such motifs

are frankly fictitious, but a large number represent persistent beliefs and living tradition" – Hallowell (1960a: 35) emphasized that in the case of the Ojibwe, one deals with the latter situation. A living or deceased human being under certain circumstances can take the form of an animal, but not every animal can take the form of a human, because only some animals belong to the class "other-than-human persons" and only "persons" are capable of metamorphosis (Hallowell 1992: 67). Additionally, the Ojibwe "believe that a human being consists of a vital part, or *soul*, which, under certain circumstances may become detached from the body, so that it is not necessary to assume that the body part, in all cases, literally undergoes transformation into an animal form" (Hallowell 1960a: 38). Therefore, the body of a dangerous sorcerer may remain in a wigwam, but his soul in the eyes of another person may take the form of a bear, the soul of the deceased child may reveal itself to her grandfather in the form of a little bird, etc. (Hallowell 1960a: 38).

The ability to metamorphose, according to Hallowell (1960a: 39), unites people and other-than-human persons in a single behavioral environment, but what separates them is the power that is determined by the very ability to transform. Since the obtained and retained power is gradable and of varied types, within the Ojibwe worldview – or, more precisely, in the Ojibwe "power-control belief system" (Black 1977a) – there is an ontological hierarchy of power, at the top of which there are the other-than-human persons of the *aadizookaanag* category. People occupy lower positions and are not equal to one another. They can search for means of increasing their power among other-than-human persons such as the *aadizookaanag* or the "masters" of animal species.

The contact with powerful other-than-human persons is possible during conjuring, when they can be heard outside the ceremonial lodge, or in a dream, when they are both heard and seen. Significantly, the experiences gained in a dream are not ontologically different from those experienced in reality, and thus dreams are an integral part of the Ojibwe biography. The *bawaaganag* (sg. *bawaagan*) – visitors to a sleeping person – address him or her as "grandchild". People may "receive important revelations that are the source of assistance to them in the daily round of life, and, besides this, of «blessings» that enable them to exercise exceptional powers of various kinds" (Hallowell 1960a: 41). The details of such dreams are taboo, as is telling the *aadizookaanag* out of season. All beings belonging to the "person" category are a part of the same axiological and moral system: "This is why moral obligations can arise between the Ojibwa and «our grandfathers,» as in the case of hunters and the «owners» of animal species" (Hallowell 1992: 67). Moreover, "it is assumed by any Ojibwa individual that, with the cooperation of both human and other-than-human persons, it is possible to achieve a good life" (Hallowell 1963: 293), i.e., *bimaadiziwin*, "life in the fullest sense, life in the sense of longevity, health and freedom from misfortune" (Hallowell 1960a: 45; see also Gross 2014: 205–224).

According to Hallowell (1960a: 43), the category of "person" is a key aspect of the Ojibwe ontology, one that guarantees the psychological coherence of their

worldview, and “permeates the content of their cognitive processes”. Consequently, the existence of the persons themselves is inextricably linked with the Ojibwe notion of causality: “*Who* did it, *who* is responsible, is always the crucial question to be answered” (Hallowell 1960a: 45). The culturally structured cognitive set inevitably leads to a search for explanations in personalistic terms, and may concern such diverse problems as cosmogony (explained by the activity of trickster *Wiisakejaak*), illness (explained by the activity of a sorcerer or one’s own wrongful act in the past), or even the case of the 1940 forest fire, which was explained by the acculturated Ojibwe as the result of a diversion carried out by a German spy (Hallowell 1958: 80, 1960a: 45). Answering the question of what a person is, Hallowell (1960a: 43) wrote:

Speaking as an Ojibwa, one might say: all other “persons” – human or other than human – are structured the same as I am. There is a vital part which is enduring and an outward appearance that may be transformed under certain conditions. All other “persons,” too, have such attributes as self-awareness and understanding. I can talk with them. Like myself, they have personal identity, autonomy, and volition. I cannot always predict exactly how they will act, although most of the time their behavior meets my expectations. In relation to myself, other “persons” vary in power. Many of them have more power than I have, but some have less. They may be friendly and help me when I need them but, at the same time, I have to be prepared for hostile acts, too. I must be cautious in my relations with other “persons” because appearances may be deceptive.

Mary B. Black (1977b: 91), aka Mary Black Rogers, who conducted her own fieldwork among the Ojibwe of Minnesota and Ontario in the 1960s and 1970s, pointed out that “[i]ndividuals of both groups of Ojibwa displayed the typical tendency to speak only for themselves and of the things they had known through experience. The experience of each individual being different, and also private, they explicitly anticipated that others’ accounts would differ from their own, even on factual and cognitive matters.” In her opinion, the Ojibwe categories are unstable and “empirically antitaxonomic” (Black 1977b: 99).

Black (1977b: 101) emphasized the importance of power attributed to certain beings when classifying them (power itself is understood as the ability to change the external form, to appear in someone’s dream or vision, and to control events concerning both the world and people). There is a general agreement that certain beings are more powerful than others, but it is also assumed that appearances can be dramatically unreliable: “A poor forlorn Indian dressed in rags might have great power; a smiling, amiable woman, or a pleasant old man, might be a sorcerer”, as Hallowell (1960a: 40) wrote.

Although ontological categorizations of the Ojibwe mark their presence already at the level of perception, the cultural structuring of the outlook on the world concerns the conceptual analysis of past events to the same extent. Such a reflection may be influenced by the ideology of power, as well as the idea of the deceptiveness

of appearances that result in uncertainty with regard to the power balance in a given situation. As Black (1977b: 103) suggested: "For the essence (the only stable aspect) of the objects one is encountering at a given moment is often *not expected to be known until some later moment* – sometimes after a considerable period of time. It is quite satisfactory, and the better part of caution, to leave the matter ambiguous until then." The constituent of the behavioral environment presented in this way, Black (1977b: 104) named a "«wait-and-see» component" – once a dead pelican was found and a storm came a person knew that he had met a Thunderbird, it is known that an old man had heard the *wiindigoo* because he died the following spring, it becomes obvious that someone had seen a sorcerer turned into a bear because that someone got sick and died, someone's fishing trip didn't go well, so probably *memegwesiwag* had been involved (Black 1977b: 102–103).

Black (1977b: 92), who saw Hallowell as "among many other things, an early ethnoscientist", took it upon herself to organize the Ojibwe folk taxonomy, which was presented in Hallowell's writings solely in anecdotal form. Her own cognitively oriented field research problematized the categorization proposed by Hallowell. In light of that research, not only the taxonomic subclass of "other-than-human persons" (unsurprisingly), but also the "persons" class itself is not ethnographically obvious.

The animate participle *bemaadiziwaad*, which Black (1969: 175, 1977a: 143) translated as "those who are living", "those who continue in the state of being alive" (or even "those who have power"), is a head-term in the Ojibwe taxonomy on living things.²² Within this taxonomic set, the animate noun *anishinaabeg* means "Ojibwe", but also "Indigenous people" when it is juxtaposed with the words signifying non-Indigenous people. However, semantically it can also function as "«people» or «human beings» when contrasted with «large animals,» «small animals,» «insects,» «birds,» etc." (Black 1969: 175). The crucial issue here is that the word *bemaadiziwaad* is also used contextually – sometimes it only refers to people, sometimes it refers to all living things. The question Black (1969: 178) raised is whether the Ojibwe speakers "do in fact hold a concept of *people* distinct from that of «Indians» and from that of «living things.»" The answer involves taking the context into account. That is why one of Black's bilingual interlocutors, when asked about the kinds of people there are, replied by enumerating representatives of successive racially classified human groups, using the animate noun *inini*, which means "man". In a later conversation, however, the same consultant changed the word *inini* to *bemaadizid* (singular of *bemaadiziwaad*), which he translated into English "person", adding that "[t]his was a better word since it did not specify man, woman, or child, but covered them all" (Black 1969: 180).

Considering the above, it would be a mistake to extend the meaning of *bemaadizid* as a "person" (which should be read as contextually appropriate when *bemaadizid* is used to name a human or other being because of its specific characteristics)

²² The most powerful representatives of the *bemaadiziwaad* category are known as "*bemaaji'iwe-magak*, «those who bring life into something» (and naturally they can also take life out of someone, *onisaan*)" (Matthews, Roulette 2018: 183).

to the category *bemaadiziwaad* understood as “all living things”. Consequently, the mere introduction of the classificatory term “person” may raise reasonable doubts. According to Black (1977b: 95–96), such a measure can only be structurally explained as a result of Hallowell’s taxonomic needs:

One of his continuing arguments was that the Ojibwa do not necessarily share our Western dichotomies of natural and supernatural, human and other-than-human, dreams and waking experience – dichotomies that we sometimes mistakenly extend to our ethnographic descriptions. If the Ojibwa recognize a class of beings who are not “human beings” but are closer to human beings than to other classes of the animate world, this calls for the union of the “human beings” class and the entities who are close to human beings. Hallowell therefore introduced a superordinate class “persons,” allowing this unlabeled group of entities to be simply “other-than-human persons,” that is, all members of the “person” class that are not “human beings.” This makes complete sense, taxonomically, with the inferred category validated by its presumed possession of common attributes that distinguish it from other classes of “living things.” (Black 1969a [Black 1969] validates an unlabeled category in similar manner. My analysis, however, did not support the introduction of a class such as Hallowell’s “persons.”)

Thus we see how far Hallowell went in following the structural requisites of ethnoscience, albeit embedded and almost disguised in his reports and lacking methodological specification.

Conclusions: Hallowell and the “new animism”

At the beginning of the 21st century, Graham Harvey (2005) coined, or rather recast (Bouissac 1989; see also Bird-David 1999: S79), the term “new animism” to describe a new anthropological understanding of animism that derived from a set of ethnography-based interpretations that were not rooted in Edward B. Tylor’s (1871) approach. According to Harvey (2005: xi), “[a]nimists are people who recognize that the world is full of persons, only some of whom are human, and that life is always lived in relationship with others”, and thus the new explanations are to emphasize the issue of “relationality: the notion that personhood is not the possession of a certain sort of non-relational, interior property (e.g. being self-conscious, or having a spirit or mind), but is instead constituted by interactions between beings. That is, rather than think in terms of individuality or selfhood, animist ontologies view persons as constituted by the shifting interactions of continuously negotiable relational acts” (Harvey 2019: 80). This approach is close to the theses of Nurit Bird-David (1999) but not to the ones formulated by Hallowell, who focused on the notions of selfhood and *ojichaagwan* present in Ojibwe thought. In addition, according to Hallowell (1963: 273, 281), indeed “from the Ojibwa point of view, «social interaction» with persons of the other-than-human class is not metaphorical”, but at the same time there are

“two basic categories of «social» relationship that are implicit in the Ojibwa world view: (a) interpersonal relations between human beings and other-than-human persons; (b) interpersonal relations between human beings.” There are some similarities between these two types of relationships that stem from the fact that all persons belong to the same moral system, but there are also certain differences.

Regardless of these issues, Harvey (2005: 3, 17–20) considered Hallowell the foundational figure of the “new animism” theory, and with these words he concluded the first edition of his influential book:

We have never been separate, unique or alone and it is time to stop deluding ourselves. Human cultures are not surrounded by “nature” or “resources”, but by “a world full of cacophonous agencies”, i.e. many other vociferous persons. We are at home and our relations are all around us. The liberatory “good life” begins with the respectful acknowledgement of the presence of persons, human and other than-human, who make up the community of life. It continues with yet more respect and relating (Harvey 2005: 212).

It should be noted here that Harvey’s “new animism” is not only a proposal in the field of history of ideas, or even an attempt to describe the nature of animism more accurately – it is a moral and ideological project that ought to be treated as such.

By the time the collection of essays *Culture and Experience* was published in 1955, Hallowell’s position in post-war American anthropology started losing prominence. His work, highly regarded primarily among the “Algonquianists who may be considered in one way or another «Hallowellian»” (Stocking 2004: 243), was eventually noticed by non-American scholars. It is thanks to them that Hallowell’s concepts still have their place within the framework of world anthropology, and their “fingerprints” can be seen, for example, in Bird-David’s (1999, 2018) notions of “superpersons” and “relatives”, in Descola’s (1996, 2013) typology of ontological combinations, or in Viveiros de Castro’s (1998, 2004) formulation of an ethnotheory of exchangeable subjective perspectives and predator-prey power dynamics. In recent decades, the essay *Ojibwa Ontology, Behavior, and World View* has become the subject of the greatest, if not sole, interest, despite the specific problems associated with its reception. Tim Ingold’s (2000: 89–110) analysis of Hallowell’s essay may serve as a good example, as both the analysis itself and the conclusions drawn from it should be considered deceptive. In his text, Ingold (2000: 103–104) wrote, for instance, that the Ojibwe self is relational in Bird-David’s terms and is processual in nature. He contrasted the Western and the Ojibwe models of the person, postulating that both center on different notions of the self. In doing so, Ingold referred to Hallowell, taking the latter’s claims out of context: “Any inner-outer dichotomy, with the human skin as a boundary, is psychologically irrelevant” (Hallowell 1955i [1954]: 88, as cited in Ingold 2000: 103). These words, however, come from the paper *The Self and Its Behavioral Environment* and concern two key psychological concepts present in the title, which (in contrast to Ingold’s

dichotomous and speculative schema) allow to address the universal problem of human cognitive organization and experience. The lack of contextualization of the phenomenological aspect of Hallowell's analyses with the broader theoretical and methodological scope to which these analyses belong is probably the biggest wrongdoing on the part of his current interpreters.

Hallowell was a complex figure and his concepts are equally elaborate – not because of the style in which they are presented (which is remarkably intelligible), but because of their paradigmatic setting and its consequences. Leaving aside Hallowell's interest in the cultural definition of the person (which predated the emergence of interpretive anthropology), a large part of his work allows us to see him as a pioneer of sociobiology (and thus indirectly of evolutionary psychology) and of ethnoscience (and indirectly of cognitive anthropology); a representative of the theory of cultural evolution and a supporter of the psychodynamic approach in cultural research, who despite applying psychoanalytic concepts and methods was usually inclined to distance himself from Freudian orthodoxy. This scientific profile makes Hallowell an ambiguous figure, and the “tension in Hallowell's work between cultural relativism and evolutionary universalism” suggested by George W. Stocking Jr. (2004: 246) is, without doubt, one of the most interesting aspects of his legacy.

Two years before his death, Hallowell (1972: 60) wrote: “Reliable knowledge of reality in any scientific sense need not be assumed to be a necessary condition for either biological adaptation or cultural adjustment to the actualities of human existence. Man is an animal who has been able to survive by making cultural adaptations in which his own imaginative interpretations of the world have been fed back into his personal adjustment to it.” This striking statement deserves special praise since such an idea – theorizing a situation where the goal of the evolutionary processes is not so much to increase cognitive competence in order to discover objective truths about the world but to perceive the world in a way that brings the greatest adaptive benefits – has only just begun to gain a major foothold (Tooby, Cosmides 2001; Hoffman 2019).

The terms “person” and “other-than-human person” are still the most popular of Hallowellian concepts, although researchers and commentators using and abusing them are not always fully aware of their ethnographic origins and the theoretical context in which they should be understood. No less important are the terms “behavioral environment” and “behavioral evolution” (to Hallowell they were part of the same anthropological project) that are still waiting for both recognition and re-introduction into the mainstream of cultural anthropology. Perhaps those who will put them back in the academic spotlight will be evolutionarily and cognitively oriented anthropologists.

Today the anthropological theory of the “new animism” comprises a variety of concepts including Bird-David's (1999) relational epistemology, Descola's (1992, 1996) animic system, Hornborg's (2006) “relational” ontology, Ingold's (2000, 2006) animic ontology, Kohn's (2013) ecology of selves, and Viveiros de Castro's (1998, 2004, 2015) perspectivism. What has been a powerful force of intellectual

inspiration for their authors and what can still be considered one of the markers of their conventional identity is the Hallowellian concept of the person, which, paradoxically, should be seen as a product of anthropological heuristics. Most probably the “new animism”, at least the anthropological one, is also a product of heuristics – but a metatheoretical one.

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SUMMARY

A. Irving Hallowell's research on the Ojibwe animism

Alfred Irving Hallowell (1892–1974), a seasoned researcher of the Ojibwe culture, is known today primarily as a precursor of the anthropological theory of the “new animism”. A student of Franz Boas and a friend of Edward Sapir, he was not only a prominent figure of the culture and personality school, but also proved to be one of the most interesting psychological anthropologists of the 20th century. His works on the Ojibwe indigenous taxonomy prefigured the achievements of ethnoscience, and those on the evolution of human behavior adumbrated the development of sociobiology. Conducted in the 1930s, Hallowell's fieldwork among the Berens River Ojibwe resulted in numerous academic papers, one of which – the 1960 *Ojibwa Ontology, Behavior, and World View* – years later became particularly influential in anthropological research on animism. This article presents Hallowell's intellectual biography and discusses his research on the Ojibwe culture along with the concepts he used or developed, concepts that for many researchers became the key to unlocking new conceptualizations of the problem of animism.

Keywords: animism, behavioral environment, Ojibwe, ontology, person, psychological anthropology