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Department of **FINE ARTS**

The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, Canada

Date  **AUGUST 4, 1998**
Abstract

In this dissertation, I chart the conflicting and shifting assertions of meaning for Northwest Coast objects in Canada through a series of representational projects implemented between 1922 and 1961, beginning in January 1922, with the prosecution by the Department of Indian Affairs of participants in the Cranmer potlatch. The intersection between the concept of the 'fatal impact' or death of First Nations societies under European modernization, federal assimilationist policies, the government's exercise of disciplinary control, and the expansion of public museum collections was explicitly illustrated when the Lekwiltok, Mamalillikulla, and the Nimpkish peoples surrendered over seventeen cases of ceremonial objects in exchange for suspended sentences for violating the potlatch ban.

The dissertation concludes by examining the Gitanyow agreement, engineered between 1958 and 1961, in which Gitanyow laws, histories and territories would be published by the government of British Columbia in exchange for the removal and replication of four crest poles. The raising of the poles' replicas in 1961 coincided with Canadian parliament's approval of the enfranchisement of First Nations people, the theoretical end to the era of assimilation in Canada.

These events bookend a period in which representation continued to be entwined with political and social conditions created by the Indian Act that depended on promulgating views that First Nations lifeways were vanishing. However, production of Northwest Coast objects retained significance throughout this period, such objects playing complex and multifaceted roles.
Because of the symbolic and financial value many Euro-Canadians attached to First Nations objects, "art" proved an avenue for communicating First Nations-related social, political and economic issues.

The objects produced or displayed between 1922 and 1961 operated through the projects I describe in the intertwined transformative processes of identity construction and boundary marking among individual First Nations groups and within Canadian national identity. Through these projects, important steps were taken in formulating two major characteristics of the post-1960 period: 1. a burgeoning market in Northwest Coast objects constructed as "traditional;" and 2. First Nations activism for land claims and self-determination using "tradition" and "art" as a platform in activism for land claims and self-determination.
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INTRODUCTION

House posts carved by Charlie James and erected in Stanley Park as touristic symbols of Vancouver (figure 1) once served as props in Edward Curtis's fictionalized Kwakwaka'wakw romance In the Land of the Headhunters. Before that, they stood in the house of Tsa-wee-nok of Kingcome Inlet, powerful symbols inherited through the Kwakwaka'wakw ceremonial cycle that referred to a mythical time when the boundaries between spirit and human realms were fluid - a time, not coincidentally, when the founding ancestors of lineage groups received gifts of access to resource sites and other forms of spiritual and terrestrial wealth. At each moment, in each context, the meanings projected through the house posts by the various patrons had distinctive resonances to their respective audiences. There is not one over-arching narrative that satisfactorily explains and encapsulates the meanings the objects of the Northwest Coast have had.


4. Following the definition put forward by Wayne Suttles, the Northwest Coast "culture area...includes the north Pacific Coast of North America from the Copper River delta on the Gulf of Alaska to the Winchuk River near the Oregon-California border, extending inland to the Chugach and Saint Elias ranges of Alaska, the Coast
In this dissertation, I chart the conflicting and shifting assertions of meaning for Northwest Coast objects in Canada through a series of representational projects implemented between 1922 and 1961. In January 1922, Canadian authorities with the Department of Indian Affairs prosecuted participants in the Cranmer potlatch of late 1921. The Cranmer prosecutions represent the severest implementation of the federal government's potlatch ban and have become a symbol of the systematic attack on First Nations institutions carried out by Canadian government authorities. In 1961, Canadian parliament approved the federal enfranchisement of First Nations people, thus signaling a theoretical end to the era of assimilation in Canada. These events bookend a period perceived in most art historical texts as the "Dark Ages of Northwest Coast art." In contrast, I argue that the functions Northwest Coast objects


5. Anthropologist Wilson Duff, for one, identified the artistic climax of the northern Northwest Coast as occurring between 1850 and 1880 and among the Kwakwaka'wakw between 1890 and 1920. (Wilson Duff, "Contexts of Northwest Coast Art," in Vancouver Art Gallery, Arts of the Raven: Masterworks of the Northwest Coast Indian, Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery 1965.)
played in this era were complex and multifaceted. This period is further important to subsequent developments in Northwest Coast art history.

Neither solely and simply vestiges of an irretrievable past nor symbolic markers of ancestral encounters with the spirit world, the objects produced or displayed between 1922 and 1961 operated significantly through the projects I describe in the intertwined transformative processes of identity construction and boundary marking among individual First Nations groups and within Canadian national identity. Through these projects, important steps were taken in formulating two major characteristics of the post-1960 period: 1. a burgeoning market in Northwest Coast objects constructed as "traditional;" and 2. First Nations activism for land claims and self-determination using "tradition" and "art" as a platform for such assertions.

I will be focusing my discussion of this period on public uses of Northwest Coast objects by conflicting groups for the furtherance of their particular agendas, whether these are First Nations groups, or whether they are local, provincial, or federal governments or institutions. My view is from a different position in the viewing circle around Northwest Coast objects. I will also be producing a narrative and selecting a canon to illustrate it, but with a set of different agendas, including arguing for the political use of objects rather than aesthetic or authenticity judgements.
I. "Fatal Impact:" The Tropes of Decline and Revival

A common academic perception has emerged since the 1950s that sees the history of Northwest Coast art as a nineteenth century climax (often referred to, following European art historical models, as the "classic" period), an early twentieth century decline and mid-twentieth century renaissance. The period following the First World War is deemed in this paradigm as the lowest ebb of the peoples of the coast: swamped by the influence of white assimilation, the people left directionless, confused and sick with newly-introduced diseases, the communities and their modes of symbolic expression being for all intents and purposes dead. This was a time, according to Margaret Blackman, when a visitor on the Northwest Coast, "would have to go to a museum to see an example of good Northwest Coast Indian art"\(^6\) (emphasis mine). As recently as 1993, Peter Macnair, curator at the Royal British Columbia Museum, suggested that among the arts of the Northwest Coast, "...the classic forms either disappeared altogether or were replaced by substitute styles."\(^7\) An artistic hierarchy was set up in which products outside the discursive poles of "tradition" and

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"authenticity" were categorized, in Macnair's words, as "...consistently well-finished charming souvenirs..." that "...lack the vitality of the older school." In the same recent anthology, Martine Reid concurs, suggesting that "post-classic" Northwest Coast art "...has become a pseudo-language shared and produced by an elite because the created objects no longer signify potent cultural messages. They merely reproduce or imitate past objects and concepts that are not culturally relevant to the present society. Art has lost its sign value." 

In the "revival" view, projects aimed at communicating the value of First Nations art to a general non-Native Canadian audience were made possible in the 1950s and 1960s through a greater allocation of public funds. Within this context of institutional interest, the idea of a mid-century renaissance, what Halpin referred to as an "enthusiastic revival," began to emerge. In 1967 a cross-country network of artists ranging in style and geographic origin from George Clutesi on the west coast of Vancouver Island to Norval Morrisseau in Ontario was formed through preparations for the Indian Pavilion at Expo '67 in Montreal. Also in 1967, Bill Reid, Henry Hunt, and other

8. Ibid, p.57.


11. Tom Hill, "Indian Art in Canada: An Historical Perspective," in Norval Morrisseau and the Emergence of the Image
contemporary Northwest Coast artists received recognition through their display next to the work of Charles Edenshaw (who died in 1920)\textsuperscript{12} and other, mostly anonymous, masters of the "classic" nineteenth and early twentieth century Northwest Coast formline style\textsuperscript{13} at the Arts of the Raven exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery.\textsuperscript{14} In 1968, with two-thirds of its funding coming from government grants and other donations, the 'Ksan Historic Indian Village Association proudly opened its museum, reconstructed village and accompanying Kitanmax School of Northwest Coast Indian Art.\textsuperscript{15} Popular support of First Nations art all across Canada was fuelling, according to the new


\textsuperscript{13} The term formline and the system of representation it alludes to was most systematically defined by Bill Holm in Northwest Coast Art: An Analysis of Form, Seattle: University of Washington Press 1965. Holm in turn had considerable influence on the direction followed in the Arts of the Raven show. Holm himself called Northwest Coast Art; An Analysis of Form "a turning point...which became a primer for the artists struggling for an understanding of their ancestors' art." (Bill Holm, "Art," in Suttles, Handbook, p.630.)

\textsuperscript{14} This show had significant influence on the perception of Northwest Coast objects over the next decade. Writing in 1975, for example, Marjorie Halpin dated the consideration of Northwest Coast objects as art specifically to the Arts of the Raven exhibit (Marjorie Halpin, "The Uses of Collections," in University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology, Northwest Coast Indian Artifacts from the H. R. MacMillan Collections in the Museum of Anthropology, University of British Columbia, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press 1975, p.43.)

"revival" myth, the re-emergence of "traditional" Northwest Coast art.

Both Expo '67 and the Arts of the Raven shows received substantial amounts of government and corporate money as part of the centennial celebration. One might therefore suggest that the expansion of Canada's cultural infrastructure in the 1960s and 1970s through a combination of increased public spending and public/private sector cooperation stimulated the "revival;" that "...museum- and government-supported projects for the restoration or recreation of 'traditional' objects that the Indians had largely ceased producing" were successful. 'Ksan and the Kitenmaax art school have been called "satellite museums," part of the federal government's cultural "democratization and decentralization" programme announced in

16. Schafer and Fortier report that several million federal dollars were allocated to national and international artistic events, including Expo '67, which were seen as an adjunct to the Centennial Celebrations. (Paul D. Schafer and Andre Fortier, Review of Federal Policies for the Arts in Canada (1944-1988), Ottawa: Canadian Conference of the Arts 1989.) Both governmental and corporate sponsors were acknowledged in the inside covers of the Arts of the Raven catalogue. These included the Canada Council, the Centennial Commission, the Vancouver Foundation, BC Tel, Canadian Forest Products, Japan External Trade Organization, and MacMillan-Bloedel.


18. George Woodcock writes of 'Ksan as one of the "programs of dissemination that were artistically and ethnographically educative without having any identifiable political intent" begun by the Trudeau administration in the late 1960s. (George Woodcock, Strange Bedfellows: The State and the Arts in Canada, Vancouver and Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre 1985, p.105.)
1968, itself an institutional premonition of Canada's symbolic shift to official state multiculturalism in 1971 and the acknowledgement of non-English and non-French contributions to Canadian national "culture."\(^{20}\)

Exhibitions in public institutions further appear to have encouraged the private acquisitions of contemporary First Nations art. In connecting the impact of large exhibitions on a new audience following 1967, Tom Hill, in his history of Native Canadian art, commented that: "...exhibitions of material culture and contemporary art further enhanced and popularized the ethnic identity for the consumer. Whether out of genuine appreciation, guilt over past sins, or a need to acquire something Canadian, the art-buying public chose to look at the new art emerging from Indian communities as a significant statement from a fellow Canadian."\(^{21}\) An example of the

\(^{19}\) The "democratization and decentralization" was announced by Secretary of State Gerard Pelletier at a seminar organized by the Canadian Conference of the Arts and the United States Associated Council of Arts in 1969. The objectives of the programme as a state cultural policy were to spread cultural institutions and the management of cultural industries outside of Ottawa and central Canada and at the same time foster cultural pluralism in Canada and both federal-provincial and international cooperation in the promotion of Canadian arts. (See Schafer and Fortier, Review of Federal Policies for the Arts in Canada.)

\(^{20}\) In announcing multiculturalism as state policy on October 8, 1971, then Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau stated: "The policy I am announcing today accepts the contention of the other cultural communities that they, too, are essential elements in Canada and deserve government assistance in order to contribute to regional and national life in ways that derive from their heritage and yet are distinctly Canadian." (Quoted in Valerie Knowles, Strangers at Our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540-1990, Toronto and Oxford, Dundurn Press 1992, p.168.)

\(^{21}\) Hill, "Indian Art in Canada", pp.20-21.
principles of state capitalism applied to "cultural products," public funding in essence bolstered a burgeoning private market. In this view, state sponsorship of First Nations production through displays in public cultural institutions allowed for widespread public exposure. The Cultural Affairs Division within the Department of Indian Affairs was established in 1967 and was responsible for publishing articles, producing exhibitions, establishing a permanent collection and undertaking a series of market evaluations on the work of several First Nations artists.

My dissertation shifts the focus of this narrative away from a celebration of the public institutional support for a "revival" of First Nations arts. Even the strongest proponents of the "renaissance" myth admit that certain groups never ceased producing ceremonial objects and the question of why the state

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23. Ibid.

24. Bill Holm singles out the Kwakwaka'wakw (Kwakiutl) as continuing the production of ceremonial objects (Holm, "Art," p.630), which is supported by other texts examining the open flaunting of the potlatch ban by the Kwakwaka'wakw (see, for example, Douglas Cole and Ira Chaikin, An Iron Hand Upon the People: The Law Against the Potlatch on the Northwest Coast, Vancouver and Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre and Seattle: University of Washington Press 1990.) The Gitxsan, as reported by Barbeau, continued to erect and potlatch poles into the 1940s. Spirit dancing among the Coast Salish peoples of southern Vancouver Island was documented by Duff in the 1940s and Nuu-chah-nulth individuals like Ron Hamilton and Joe David have challenged the suggestion that ceremonialism died out among the Nuu-chah-nulth. The supposition that First Nations ceremonies have had to have been revived needs closer, more critical examination.
would first openly ban the *raison-d'etre* of ceremonial First Nations objects in British Columbia and then later invest public funds in the production of the same kinds of objects needs addressing. Both the pre-1950 narrative of "cultural death" and the post-1950 assertion of "decline and revival" have been openly contested by First Nations carvers and painters. In 1948, Kwakwaka'wakw Ellen Neel firmly stated:

This point of mine which I shall endeavour to illustrate deals with an idea that the native art is a dead art and that efforts should be confined to preservation of the old work. To me, this idea is one of the great fallacies where the art of my people is concerned. For if our art is dead, then it is fit only to be mummified, packed into mortuary boxes and tucked away into museums. Whereas to me it is a living symbol.... And our art must continue to live, for not only is it part and parcel of us, but it can be a powerful factor in combining the best of the Indian culture into the fabric of a truly Canadian art form.

...if the art of my people is to take its rightful place alongside other Canadian art, it must be a living medium of expression. We, the Indian artists must be allowed to create! We must be allowed to use new and modern techniques; new and modern tools; new and modern materials....I do not mean that we should discard the old, only that we be allowed to use the new.25

In 1983, another Kwakwaka'wakw carver, Tony Hunt, pointing to the less than altruistic intentions of museum curators, also suggested through his own experiences that the "revival" narrative was false:

It was in the seventies that museum curators

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recognized Northwest Coast art both as public relations and promotion for their own museums and as promotion of themselves. Before that, during the fifties and sixties, curators and ethnologists had a low profile. Mungo Martin who taught and raised me (and with whom I moved to Victoria in 1952) — to say to him there was a "revival" or "renaissance" would be ridiculous. He carved all his life, my father, myself, others like Willie Seaweed, who was one of the finest artists of his time. There was no revival.26

First Nations political leader George Manuel and writer Michael Postums implied in 1974 that both "death" and "revival" views were colonialist in nature, aimed at denigrating the social and political accomplishments of First Nations people from the advent of a European presence in British Columbia:

The renaissance of today is the fruit of the accumulated labour of our grandfathers. If it appears that we are only now awakening and discovering a new strength, it is because the current climate of political, social and economic forces is allowing what was always beneath the surface to emerge into the light of day.

Above all, the appearance that we are only now coming alive is an illusion created by the press and public institutions, who have for so long warped, distorted, and falsified the story of our resistance.27

It is significant that Manuel, once president of the North American Indian Brotherhood, tied the concept of "cultural renaissance" to larger social developments. It is precisely this kind of wider self-conscious contextualization that is


missing in Northwest Coast art history and that this dissertation seeks to address.

In explaining this absence, Aldona Jonaitis underlines "certain central assumptions"\(^\text{28}\) behind some of the early anthropology of the Northwest Coast. It has been commonly assumed "...that Native people had, prior to contact, lived in unified, cohesive communities and shared common values; that the inherent perfection of their culture disintegrated as the overwhelming forces of the dominant society caused first a decline and then the disappearance of their traditions, including art; that on the northern Northwest Coast in particular, the loss of artistic competence was reversed only when individuals from outside the cultures rediscovered earlier stylistic conventions."\(^\text{29}\) Jonaitis then warns that "...by depicting Native peoples as succumbing to the forces of acculturation, such representations implicitly grant...the dominant society a cultural hegemony over those it colonized."\(^\text{30}\)

Nelson Graburn adds that "...even though Fourth World peoples may call themselves nations... they have neither the autonomy nor the institutionalized power to define their own national symbols, arts, and culture."\(^\text{31}\) Bound by the paternalism


\(^{29}\) Ibid, pp.3-4.

\(^{30}\) Ibid, p.4.

of the Indian Act, First Nations peoples have been represented through the inter-related institutionalized discourses of anthropology, museums, and art history. Valda Blundell argues that "...certain representations encoded in anthropological discourse recur in the media...because anthropology has been constructed in the West as the primary producer of knowledge about so-called 'primitive' peoples." Anthropologists and their texts constitute..."accredited sources" and "primary definers" of social phenomena regarding native Canadians."^32 There is a continuum of representation of First Nations arts that also reflects a wide range of interests and concerns in non-Native society. While anthropologists, like social reformers, were frequently sympathetic with the peoples and societies they were studying, their work, as part of this larger totality, was often compromised.

The representation of First Nations societies is and has been disputed territory. The notions of decline, revival, and continuity are thus strategic interventions in the understanding of First Nations peoples and their position in Canadian society. They are statements from a complex polyphony asserting, negotiating, and disputing the various representations and counter-representations of Northwest Coast art and, through it, of First Nations peoples. I agree with Jonaitis' argument that these assumptions of purity and disintegration in First Nations

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culture have created absences in the discourses of art through discussions centred solely on "classic" form and iconography. I want to investigate production and public engagement through the arts and not quality as inappropriately determined by outsiders.

Following Homi Bhabha's connection between stereotyping and colonialisit discourse, I argue that the institutionalization of Northwest Coast objects in Canadian displays between 1922 and 1961 produced First Nations peoples as a visible and knowable other. Part of a larger narrative about First Nations societies, the discourse produced a "concept of fixity" for Northwest Coast peoples in the location of their objects as part of the past. Masks, poles and other objects were thus constructed and contained within the state "culture" system. Bhabha, quoting Fanon, further argues that this enclosed, temporal fixity becomes for the colonized "...a continued agony rather than a total disappearance. The culture once living and open to the future, becomes closed, fixed in the colonial status, caught in the yolk [sic] of oppression." Temporal enclosure contributed to intellectual paternalism. For example, written material promoting the erection of the Charlie James house posts in Stanley Park in 1925 made no mention of the fact that James was still alive at the time. He

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34. Ibid, p.71.

35. Frantz Fanon, quoted in Ibid, p.78.
frequently visited Vancouver and was known to local curio dealers. Instead, the house posts were specifically discussed as objects of antiquity, fixed in the past and thereby denying contemporary First Nations peoples in general, and James in particular, a voice in how these objects were constructed for Euro-Canadian audiences.

This intellectual paternalism confirmed administrative paternalism. Bhabha further explains that the stereotype is bolstered by a continual and repetitive chain of other stereotypes. In response to this chain of stereotypes that together constituted the general ideological understanding of a mythical "Indian problem" - that "the Indian" is superstitious, dirty, idle, and although creative, nonetheless a public burden - a chain of paternalistic governmental strategies could be formulated and justified. These included, among others, the introduction of Christianity and enforced education, government housing, employment, and preservation through the museum. All aimed at solving the "Indian problem" by instilling Anglo-Canadian values as a means of producing docile subjects for Canada's political and economic systems.

The emergence of institutions and of a discourse on Northwest Coast objects in Canada are not coincidental to, but rather integrally a part of the formulation of and response to what was commonly known as the "Indian problem." However,

37. Bhabha, "The Other Question," p.77.
resistance to the concept of the "Indian problem" and to the solutions recommended for it was not passive. Disruption occurred at each link in this discursive chain. Because of non-Native interest in the house posts carved by James and other various forms of visual production, opportunities opened for other people to speak through the objects. Art became a platform for those opposed to the nature of government paternalism, Native and non-Native, and new representations were asserted.
II. Assimilation, Museums, and Nationalist Appropriation

The mythic tropes of decline and revival confirmed the authority of state institutions and those individuals that formulated the discourse of Northwest Coast objects from within them. Continuity and the appropriation of the revival concept could be used to stress or legitimize contemporary First Nations leadership and political claims. Making sense of the contradictions in the discourses around these objects therefore calls for an understanding of the historical specificity of the discourses and their shifts, or as Nicholas Thomas puts it, of the "ruptures...that mark the emergence and displacement of particular ways of constructing others and relating to them."[38]

At the heart of these ruptures are the different ways of understanding, first, Northwest Coast societies, and, second, their relation to _official_ Canadian "culture." As anthropologist Virginia Dominguez notes, culture is so significant socially because we so often make strategic social and political interventions by invoking it.[39] Dominguez further...

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asserts that culture is implicated in "nationalist visions, nationalist ideologies, and national identities...,"\textsuperscript{40} This is exemplified in the state funding for Northwest Coast objects in the 1960s and, as I shall demonstrate, even earlier. In an argument that I believe is borne out by the development of Northwest Coast art discourse in British Columbia, Dominguez suggests that governments assert their say over the shape of their populations' cultures because they link the idea of culture with respectability, unity and the minimization of divisiveness, a link critical to international perception of national images.\textsuperscript{41}

The narratives for Northwest Coast "culture" are thus unstable, at least in part, because of the contested nature of these same nationalist visions, ideologies, and identities. The very notion of "culture" itself is problematic because the term since Boas has commonly suggested "sameness and shared understanding" when applied to non-capitalist societies.\textsuperscript{42} For Northwest Coast objects, discursive conflict demonstrates that sameness cannot be assumed.

For example, the idea of the passing of First Nations societies is the lingering effect of social evolutionary

\textsuperscript{40} Dominguez, "Invoking Culture," p.21.

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.
ideologies popular among Euro-Americans in the late nineteenth century and the belief in the expiration of so-called primitive cultures in the dynamism of a European-derived industrial modernity, the same underlying ideologies that informed assimilationist policies in both Canada and the United States prior to the Great Depression. While totem poles and other indigenous objects could be seen to symbolize a unique Canadian identity, in non-Native contexts they were specifically meant to refer to an imagined Canadian past, to suggest what Canadian culture no longer was - although modern Canada had no place for the indigenous meanings behind the poles' original production.\(^{43}\)

As Walter Benn Michaels argues in relation to the Native American as a nationalist trope in the United States, First Nations objects helped define Canada's uniqueness to other international industrial nations.\(^{44}\) Marvin Cohodas writes: "[t]he modernization paradigm operates here: with homogenized global capitalism and labor relations characterizing the modern present, 'cultures' that distinguish national identities are

\(^{43}\). While the anti-industrial nostalgic tone of the "Vanishing American" paradigm implies a critical stance towards industrial modernity, Jackson Lears argues that such ideology "...unknowingly provided part of the psychological foundation for a streamlined liberal culture appropriate to twentieth century consumer capitalism... by creating an 'evasive banality' of 'official culture'....The common pattern of culture involved a denial of the conflicts in modern capitalist society, an affirmation of continuing harmony and progress." (Jackson Lears, No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920, New York: Pantheon Books, 1981, pp.4-17.

located in 'primitive' or 'traditional' past jeopardized by contact with (read: exploitation by) the modern west.\footnote{45}{Marvin Cohodas, Basketweavers for the California Curio Trade: Elizabeth and Louise Hickox, Tuscon: University of Arizona Press 1997, p.48.} There was thus discussion by the end of the First World War on promoting Northwest Coast objects as a positive aesthetic contribution to the Canadian present from the "Indian" past.

The association between valorizing Northwest Coast objects as historical specimens to be salvaged and preserved in public museums and the out-right attack on First Nations social structures is dramatically exemplified in the potlatch ban. The ban began through an 1884 amendment to the Indian Act and climaxed in the 1922 prosecution of Kwakwaka'wakw participants in the 1921 Cranmer potlatch at Village Island. The ban was part of the administrative policy of assimilation, or Anglo-conformity, in which First Nations social institutions were to be replaced by Victorian British institutional systems. The Cranmer potlatch trial not only resulted in the imprisonment of twenty-two Kwakwaka'wakw individuals, an informal plea bargain further led to the surrender of the potlatch paraphernalia of the Kwakwaka'wakw Lekwiltok, Mamalillikulla, and Nimpkish peoples to the coffers of the National Museum in Ottawa (see figure 2), the Royal Ontario Museum and New York's Heye Foundation.\footnote{46}{See Cole and Chaikin, An Iron Hand Upon the People, and Daisy Sewid-Smith, Persecution or Prosecution, Cape Mudge, B.C.: Nu-Yum-Balees 1979.}
As legal historian Tina Loo points out, the potlatch ban served an important function for Canada, still less than sixty years old in 1922: "Laws express the rules that limit and shape behaviour and expectation, but they are also expressions of ethical norms," writes Loo. "Thus, not only are we ruled by law, but law also embodies and articulates the broad ideas around which we are constituted as a society." While Loo seems here to interpret the ethical norms promoted in public institutional spheres as reflections or expressions of already existing, shared values, the point is that both law and public policy are strategically designed to shape those values. This strategy was particularly important to a people attempting to forge a nation based specifically on British norms but necessarily reliant on non-British indigenous and immigrant labour.

The replacement of indigenous values for the objects with European values reinforced a new social order which favoured British immigrants and which was simultaneously defined in

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Canadian law. There is therefore an intersection between the law as it constructs a collective social identity and the reification of Northwest Coast objects in constructing a collective social memory that confirms that identity. "It is an implicit rule that participants in any social order must presuppose a shared memory...[and] control of a society's memory largely conditions the hierarchy of power," writes Paul Connerton. After the First World War, the construction of a national culture, a unified social memory, became increasingly important as the Canadian government asserted a political independence ultimately leading to a change in its status from a British colony or possession to an independent monarchy under the Statute of Westminster in 1931. Although officials at the National Museum benefited from their reception of the masks and other objects of the Cranmer potlatch, the Cranmer deal also served a larger purpose.

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49. As British Columbia Premier Simon Fraser Tolmie announced in 1928: "We are anxious to keep this a British country. We want British Columbia British and nothing else." (Quoted in Patricia E. Roy, "British Columbia's Fear of Asians 1900-1950," Histoire Social/Social History, Volume XIII, Number 25, p.162.)


51. Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond, and John English, Canada, 1900-1945, Toronto: University of Toronto Press 1987, pp.229-244.
III. Objects, Society, and Resource Ownership on the Northwest Coast

While the justification for the potlatch ban ranged from disease prevention to halting what was perceived to be a regressive "superstitious" ceremony that imprisoned First Nations people in a spiraling cycle of impoverishment, what may have been closer to the point was Marius Barbeau's suggestion that the potlatch was "...in reality the old 'Indian chief' form of government and...that it should not be tolerated by the white man's Government...."52 Furthermore, throughout the coast, the potlatch system was essential to economic and social management. Native lineages had controlled both real and incorporeal property, including the rights to salmon spawning streams, lakes, trapping sites, patches of edible plants, stands of cedar trees, bird rookeries, stretches of coastline, winter village sites, and, according to Niblack and Swanton writing in 1890 and 1905 respectively, halibut banks.53 In other words, the access to the land and resources essential to the colonial development of British Columbia were already vested in indigenous lineage


53. Margaret B. Blackman, "Haida: Traditional Culture," in Handbook, p.248. Although Blackman reports that Masset Haida stated in the 1970s that halibut banks were named but not owned (Ibid, p.249), I think it's important that in the era of the potlatch ban, published accounts reported the ownership of this resource by lineages.
systems. Although clan and lineage hierarchy, descent, and rituals that celebrated or validated the transfer of rights varied from group to group, individual ranking within the lineages was generally accomplished through the inherited rights to a repository of names, dances, songs, stories and crest figures displayed and validated at potlatch and feast occasions. The highest ranking members of the lineage were also lineage trustees, responsible for the management of the lineage-owned resources both real and incorporeal.

The integral relationship between this kinship system, ceremonial objects, and resource utilization was succinctly summarized by Delgamuukw (Ken Muldoe) in the 1987 filing of the Gitxsan-Wet'suwet'en suit in the British Columbia Supreme Court (which also demonstrates the on-going political currency of the

54. The crests were "the most important incorporeal lineage properties..." and "...were the identifying symbols of the lineages and, in cases where an individual claimed exclusive right to a crest, it was indicative of individual rank within the lineage." (Ibid, p.249.) These crests were carved on totem poles, household utensils, boxes, and feast dishes, all of which were the focus of museum collecting beginning in the 1870s (Douglas Cole, Captured Heritage: The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts, Vancouver and Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre 1985), and tattoos and body painting. (Blackman, "Haida," p.249.)

potlatch system among certain First Nations leaders):

My power is carried in my House's histories, songs, dances, and crests. It is recreated at the Feast when the histories are told, the songs and dances performed, and the crests displayed. With the wealth that comes from respectful use of the territory, the House feeds the name of the Chief in the Feast Hall. In this way, the law, the Chief, the territory, and the Feast become one. The unity of the Chief's authority and his House's are witnessed and thus affirmed by the other Chiefs at the Feast.56

On the central coast, indigenous Kwakwaka'wakw social structure differs in that kinship is bilateral rather than strictly matrilineal. However, as in the north, rights to both corporeal and incorporeal resources also resided in kin groups. Each of the thirty autonomous Kwakwaka'wakw groups commonly called tribes consisted of several corporate kin groups termed numayms and claims to resource areas were frequently hereditary and based on numaym membership.57 As the potlatch centres on First Nations ownership of the very resources that non-Natives coveted, the state attempted to circumvent resistance to its own authority through prohibition of the potlatch. Clearly then, the notion that a revival is false put forward by Neel, Hunt, Manuel and others can be interpreted as confirming the authority and rights constituted in these indigenous systems. This assertion is rooted in the earlier refusals to discontinue potlatching and


its consequent construction of localized indigenous authority structures and resource ownership. Objects became powerful symbols in the larger conflict over resources and authority.

In addition, the competitive destruction of property associated with the late nineteenth century Kwakwaka'wakw was exaggerated and constructed as a threat to the Christian/bourgeois system of private property. Anthropologist Helen Codere argues that population decline among the Kwakwaka'wakw in the last quarter of the nineteenth century led to empty numaym positions. This coincided with changes in settlement patterns as tribes congregated around the new trading posts and cannery towns. Participation in the colonial economy in conjunction with these social changes resulted in the elaboration of the potlatch as a means of sorting out multiple claims to the numaym positions. This elaborated form of the potlatch was the focus of the intensified state hostility towards Northwest Coast ceremony around the First World War. One result was the Cranmer potlatch prosecutions in 1922.58

In short, the policy of encouraging settlement and industrial development centred on land expropriation59 and while this served the economic interests of the province's Euro-Canadian industrial and commercial sectors, it directly contradicted the interests of First Nations peoples, since, in


their view, their system of managing access to land and resources had been banned without their consent or even participation in the decision-making. First Nations in British Columbia mounted organized resistance to assimilation and Anglo-conformity, the allocation of reserve land, and the limited definition of aboriginal rights, but these failed to immediately influence governmental policy. First Nations resistance organizations included the Nishga Land Committee, the Indian Rights Association, the Interior Tribes of British Columbia and the Allied Tribes of British Columbia. All were formed between 1900 and 1916 and were active up until the ban on land claims instituted in a 1927 amendment to the Indian Act.⁶⁰

The federal government demonstrated its disdain for First Nations interests through a series of patriarchal amendments to the Indian Act between 1913 and 1927 that gave Indian Agents more leverage in enforcing the potlatch ban and that stripped First Nations peoples not only of the rights to hire legal counsel and lobby for land claims, but also of the right to sell totem poles and other "heritage" objects without the consent of the Department of Indian Affairs.⁶¹ Canadian "cultural" agencies also undertook a number of important programmes that reconfigured meaning for Northwest Coast objects. Poles were turned towards the nation's rail lines and erected in civic


parks. At the same time, masks and other painted and carved objects were exhibited at the National Gallery and written about as part of an earlier heritage. These activities enclosed targeted First Nations peoples within a temporal construction that barred their participation in contemporary decision-making. By extension, state paternalism was necessary to ensure their "evolution" from enclosure in the past to the rights and obligations of "modern" Canadian citizenship.\textsuperscript{62}

\textsuperscript{62}. Because First Nations peoples had been allocated status as wards of the state through the Indian Act, they did not have at that time the rights of citizenship. (See, for example, John Leslie and Ron Maguire, editors, \textit{The Historical Development of the Indian Act}, Ottawa: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada 1978, and Tennant, \textit{Aboriginal Peoples and Politics}.)
IV. Display as Recontextualization

Reversing the common assumption that early artifact collections are useful in reconstructing "transformations of material culture," Thomas argues that rather than "preserving" the concepts or intentions of its makers, the meaning of objects shifts in their new museum context. Display strategies in the 1920s, therefore, can be seen as affirming the specific modes of authority responsible for managing the nation's economic development.

There is thus a fundamental contradiction in the function of totem poles and other objects within indigenous lineage and Euro-Canadian museum systems. "...[O]bjects are not what they were made to be but what they have become," writes Thomas, drawing attention to what he calls a "promiscuity of the object" in which meaning is externally impressed by the


64. Halpin, for example, outlined in 1975 two fundamental categories in which Northwest Coast objects can be considered: art, which she dated to the aesthetic appreciation of ceremonial objects in a gallery context at the 1967 Arts of the Raven show, and anthropology, which she described as "the attempt of Western people, using the tools of science and scholarship, to understand other cultures in their own terms. Thus, the imposition of our category of 'art'...can...be seen as antithetical to the purposes of anthropology." (Halpin, "The Uses of Collections," p.45.) Other, earlier examples of discursive disagreement might include the differing application of the terms "handicraft" and "industry" in relation to First Nations objects.

65. Nicholas Thomas, Entangled Objects, p.4.

66. Ibid.
context in which the object is presented and received. In this sense, then, meaning is not static. Objects are valued and used not for what they are as material forms but for the meanings applied to them. These meanings are not only changing through constant re-negotiation, but also drastically changed when, for example, removed from an indigenous context to a Euro-Canadian museum.

Anthropologist Michael Taussig, who draws a comparison between the fetish and the state as instruments of power for selected elites, suggests the display or utilization of the fetish is in itself a demonstration of power over the forces it represents.67 One can put this as well into the context of modern Canadian nationalism as it emerged from an earlier British colonialism, where the display of indigenous "fetishes," was part of the formation of a new collective, "uniquely Canadian" social memory that celebrated the supersession of an indigenous past by a modern, European present. Although the context shifts, the function of the fetish at a fundamental level continues and "...the representation acquires not just the power of the represented, but power over it as well"68 (emphasis Taussig).

One key issue for this dissertation, then, is generally how things become, and specifically how Northwest Coast things have become "Canadian." This is where a history of objects, what

68. Ibid, p.126.
Kopytoff calls a biography of things,\(^69\) becomes useful because it fleshes out the issues that are at stake in the becoming, in the movement of meaning around a thing or a set of things. It brings into account the idea of multiple audiences and multiple makers of meaning, where a society is not an autonomous group, but rather a collection of competing groups. In this light, knowing who makes "culture," whose interests this "culture" serves, and who represents other "cultures" is crucial to understanding the conflicting assertions of meaning for objects - to understanding what and how objects become.

For example, after the Second World War, the federal government abandoned the Anglo-conformity of the era of the potlatch ban as the paradigm for national culture. Assimilation was replaced with integration and the notion that non-British social groups could simultaneously hold on to aspects of their "native" modes of expression and still be considered "good Canadians."\(^70\) Furthermore, influential politicians, like Lester

\(^69\). "Biographies of things," writes Igor Kopytoff, "can make salient what might otherwise remain obscure. For example, in situations of culture contact, they can show what anthropologists have so often stressed: that what is significant about the adoption of alien objects - as of alien ideas - is not the fact that they are adopted, but the way they are culturally redefined and put to use." (Igor Kopytoff, "The Cultural Biography of Things: Commoditization as Process," in Arjun Appadurai, editor, The Social Life of Things: Commodities in Cultural Perspective, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1986, p.67.)

\(^70\). Paul Litt traces this to the effect of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (the Massey Commission) which sat from 1949 to 1951. The findings of the Massey Commission "...showed that Canadian cultural development would have to come to terms not just with biculturalism, but multiculturalism as well." (Paul Litt, The Muses, the Masses, and the Massey Commission, Toronto: University
Pearson and Brooke Claxton, argued that if Canada were to fulfill a significant international political role in the post-war era, it would be in the government's interest to promote Canadian identity through "culture" both domestically and internationally.\(^{71}\)

In British Columbia, the University of British Columbia and the provincial government joined together with a number of private corporations and their executives to form the Totem Pole Preservation Committee in the early 1950s. The objective of the committee was not only to salvage and preserve totem poles, as was the intention of earlier projects in the 1920s, but to use museum collections in conjunction with living "traditional" pole carvers to establish a carver-training program and resurrect Northwest Coast "art." Indeed, this was the beginning of Halpin's "enthusiastic revival."\(^{72}\) Tsimshian/Haida historian Marcia Crosby succinctly puts this development into the context of the cultural politics of the era of the Massey Commission, suggesting that the recognition of First Nations culture in British Columbia was "...part of a larger strategy to focus on culture as the means for creating a federalist ideology that both contained and encouraged regional diversity."\(^{73}\)

\(^{71}\) Ibid, p.17.

\(^{72}\) Halpin, Totem Poles, p.2.

Both the Cranmer potlatch prosecutions and the activities of the Totem Pole Preservation Committee of the 1950s were tied to efforts at "modernizing" British Columbia. They, however, followed quite different strategies. The potlatch ban was assimilationist, justified by a social evolutionary vision of Canadian society that privileged a particularly British world view. The activities of the Totem Pole Preservation Committee in theory recognized non-British contributions to national culture and allowed for the public expression of non-British forms of identity. They both also implicitly supported a predominantly non-Native social and economic order through their refusal or failure to recognize the contemporary currency of the function of First Nations objects in the lineage and potlatch systems. Taken together, they also support Thomas' view of the use of culture: "In effect, modernity itself can be understood as a colonialist project that both the societies internal to Western nations, and those they possessed, administered and reformed elsewhere were understood as objects to be surveyed, regulated and sanitized...."  

However, Thomas continues by arguing that:

...it is essential at the same time to recognize that government is not a unitary work but heterogenous and partial, and moreover that the meanings engendered by hegemonic codes and narratives do not exist in hermetic domains but are placed at risk, revalued and distorted through being enacted and experienced. In colonial encounters, marked not only by struggle but also by misrecognition and by disingenuous compliance, the risks are very real indeed. It

74. Thomas, Colonialism's Culture, pp.4-5.
is vital, then, to make explicit the efforts to
govern that are present in particular fields of
colonial representation, without ever assuming
that this government is stable and secure.\textsuperscript{75}

In an example of governmental instability from one of the
projects sponsored by the Totem Pole Preservation Committee, the
notion of the poles as "art" championed by committee member
Wilson Duff was altered by negotiations in the Gitxsan village
of Kitwancool (now Gitanyow). In return for the "permanent
preservation" of three poles (figure 3) between 1958 and 1961 in
the provincial museum in Victoria, the people of Gitanyow
secured a contract for the recording, translation, and
publication of the histories, territories, and laws of the
Gitanyow through the Provincial Museum.\textsuperscript{76} This was a move that
forced the implicit recognition of Gitanyow claims to lands that
at the time were being opened to industrial exploitation through
the Crown distribution of timber harvest licenses to private
corporations like MacMillan-Bloedel.\textsuperscript{77}

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{76} Wilson Duff, editor, Histories, Territories, and Laws of
the Kitwancool, Victoria: British Columbia Provincial Museum
Anthropology in British Columbia Memoir Number 4, 1959. As will
be discussed in chapter eight, there are grounds for the
University of British Columbia's dispute over the provincial
museum's claim to jurisdiction over the poles. The contract
published in the 1959 memoir, however, does state that the
agreement for the poles relocation and replication is specifically
between the provincial museum and the people of Gitanyow. (See
Ibid, pp.3-4.)

\textsuperscript{77} Walter G. Hardwick, Geography of the Forest Industry in
Coastal British Columbia, Vancouver: Canadian Association of
Geographers Occasional Papers in Geography Number 5 1963, p.22,
and John Bradbury, "British Columbia: Metropolis and Hinterland in
Microcosm," in L. D. McCann, editor, A Geography of Canada:
Heartland and Hinterland, Scarborough: Prentice-Hall 1982, pp.349-
While certain exhibitions of the inter-war years may share with post-war exhibitions a hidden or even unconscious colonialist intent to reaffirm a social order that privileges one group over another, the suggestion that a people are undergoing a social and artistic "renaissance" was radically different from the notion of complete social collapse. Thus, the Cranmer potlatch prosecutions of 1922 and the Gitanyow project, which was completed in 1961 are symbolic markers of a significant "episode of change" in the conception of national "culture" in Canada. 1961 was also the year of the federal enfranchisement, which shares with the Gitanyow salvage project and Duff's belief in totem poles as "art," a recognition of a position for First Nations peoples in modern Canadian society. The unbending demands of Anglo-conformity were now tempered by a limited and still ethnocentric acknowledgement of the possibility for social difference. Important to this broad shift are transformations in national policy models, including the move from laissez-faire to Keynesian economic theory and from evolutionism to cultural pluralism as the paradigm for national social structure.
V. Accumulated Labours

The dissertation therefore opens in 1922 and closes in 1961, tracing through these years the use of Northwest Coast objects as tropes in the emergence of Canada's national culture through a series of representational projects that articulate some of the different positions on the meaning and uses of Northwest Coast objects, and that are part of the larger struggle determining a social position for First Nations peoples within Canadian society. This is a rich period in many ways. I am not disputing the notion of decline directly through the recitation of what did survive - the spirit dance masks of the Coast Salish groups, the syncretistic gravestones that appear among the northern groups, the masks and poles of the Kwakwaka'wakw, or what Joe David calls the 'rebel masks' of the Nuu-chah-nulth. Rather, I am examining the negotiation of meaning around objects used specifically in public projects to

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76. The Duff Papers at the University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology contain anthropologist Wilson Duff's documentation of Salish spirit dancing in the late 1940s.


80. David reports the use of apple boxes and other temporary, cheap and easily accessible materials to construct wolf masks during the potlatch ban. The idea, according to David, was to make masks that could be quickly discarded with little material loss to the owner in case of a government raid. (Joe David, Fine Arts 369 lecture, Department of Fine Arts, University of British Columbia, January 1994.)
highlight the symbolic uses of such objects during this period. And while formalism and iconography have been the strongest currents in Northwest Coast art discourses, this form of privilege has marginalized works from the period I am discussing and obscured the political relations they engender. My project is indeed partial. There are many ways of approaching this material. I do not intend to preclude these other methodologies as art historical tools and indeed I do use visual analysis when necessary to the discussion, but I use a documentary approach in order to foreground that which has generally been marginalized in these discourses.

I emphasize the objects' uses in public projects for two reasons. First, the stories, songs, and other performances of objects used in potlatch ceremonies are considered the private property of lineage groups and the holders of specific positions within them. I have no status within this structure and do not want to transgress this concept of ownership. Second, I wanted to avoid the tendency to conceive of First Nations cultures as isolated from interaction with non-Native societies. I argue instead that this interaction was the occasion for an expansion of function and especially meaning in Northwest Coast object production. I also chose to limit myself to textual sources. I wanted to rely not only on the objects but also on the publications, newspaper accounts, written objectives, and unpublished memoranda and correspondence as a means of fleshing out the intentions of the time. Although oral history is always valuable, I felt that interviews would have complicated my
reading of these sources, providing reminiscences from a perspective now forty or fifty years on. My strategy is to demonstrate what rich presence First Nations voices have in these archival and published sources. I have thus chosen to emphasize textual history over ethnography.

While it is well known, for example, that Mungo Martin and other carvers participated in museum projects, these have never been examined within this larger, highly contested context of Canadian identity and national "culture." This dissertation does not present a First Nations perspective. Some might argue against confining the dissertation to British Columbia territory in the view that the artistic and spiritual communities transcend borders and there is a constant flow of personnel and ideas across them. However, different government bureaucracies shape the experiences of peoples on either side of the borders.

My project is to see how public display formed an opportunity for negotiation between local, provincial, and federal governments and First Nations peoples. This dissertation therefore explores the historical experiences and the shaping of artistic discourses concerning First Nations and its relation to Canadian identity specifically in British Columbia.

By using archival sources, such as the Hawthorn and Duff Papers in the University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology Archives, the Duff Papers at the Royal British Columbia Museum, the Sapir and Barbeau Correspondence files in the Canadian Museum of Civilization, correspondence and field reports available in microfilm through the Indian Affairs Black
Series, meeting minutes and scrapbooks of the Art Historical, and Scientific Association in the Vancouver City Archives, and the Duff, Raley and British Columbia Indian Art and Welfare Society papers in the Public Archives of British Columbia, I also examine ideologies at the heart of some of Northwest Coast art history's past and current discursive parameters.

The dissertation is structured as a chronological progression. Chapter 1 examines the 1921 Cranmer potlatch, the 1922 prosecution and the transfer of ceremonial objects to the National Museum of Canada. Chapter 2 discusses the relocation of poles by an urban voluntary organization, the Vancouver Art, Historical and Scientific Association, from Kwakwaka'wakw communities on the central coast to Vancouver's Stanley Park between 1921 and 1925. Chapter 3 covers two federal institutional projects: the in situ preservation of Gitxsan poles in the Skeena Valley from 1924 to 1928 and the creation of nationalist artistic affinities through the 1927-28 Exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern. Chapters 4 and 5 both focus on the interest in First Nations "art" as a promotional device in social reform lobbying between the wars. Chapter 4 looks at the activities of George Raley in the 1930s, while Alice Ravenhill and the British Columbia Indian Arts and Welfare Society, who promoted individual artists like Judith Morgan, George Clutesi, and Ellen Neel from 1939 through to the 1950s, form the content for Chapter 5. Chapter 6 provides an analysis of the activities of individual First Nations artists Mathias Joe, Mungo Martin and George Clutesi between 1936 and
1949. Chapter 7 examines the cooperative efforts of the University of British Columbia and the British Columbia Provincial Museum and the formation of the Totem Pole Carver Training Programme. Chapter 8 chronicles the institutional "renaissance" of the 1950s through the projects of the provincial Totem Pole Preservation Committee and its head carver, Mungo Martin, and culminating in the reassertion of totem poles as territorial markers by the residents of Gitanyow in 1958.

My choice of the term "project" in describing these activities stems from Thomas's notion of the necessity for historical specificity in describing colonialist activities, highlighting both assertions made in favour of socially-privileged groups and the responses they stimulated from those in marginalized positions. Thomas writes:

'Project' may be a deceptively simple word, but it has theoretical implications that differ significantly from the terms of reference commonly employed in historical, sociological or anthropological inquiry. It draws attention not towards a totality such as a culture, nor to a period that can be defined independently of people's perceptions and strategies, but rather to a socially transformative endeavour that is localized, politicized and partial, yet also engendered by longer historical developments and ways of narrating them....[I]n colonialist circumstances the interest in creating something new, on the part of settlers or a colonized population or both, is widespread; and even if resistance on the part of the colonized seems to entail merely a return to formal circumstances, of indigenous sovereignty and cultural autonomy, the struggle to recreate such conditions
nevertheless engenders novel perceptions of identity, action and history; even what appears to be simply reactive or retrogressive thus amounts to a project, to a whole transformative endeavour.  

Contrary to primitivist constructions of "traditional" Northwest Coast societies as unchanging, the concept of power and its visual manifestation as transforming and transformative was not alien to Northwest Coast political leaders. That objects may be misrepresented for economic or social gain in indigenous contexts is recognized and limited by the potlatch and lineage systems, where individual and group rights to recite certain histories and display associated images have been both controlled and disputed. The recognition of a complex multiplicity of meaning as well as the utility of objects to assert political objectives that emerge in the projects I describe do not, in other words, necessarily represent some sort of radical conceptual break resulting solely from the circumstances created by Euro-Canadian colonialism, although colonialism created contexts for new shifts in meaning. That First Nations people have participated in the transformative expansion of meaning for Northwest Coast objects in an attempt to assert their own power should surprise no one. Transformation has been long celebrated within their own private and public spaces.

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81. Ibid, p.106.

82. Marjorie Halpin, "The Structure of Tsimshian Totemism," in Jay Miller and Carol M. Eastman, editors, The Tsimshian and Their Neighbors of the North Pacific Coast, Seattle: University
of British Columbia Press 1984, p.35.
CHAPTER 1

The Cranmer Potlatch and Halliday Display

The race has waned and left but tales of ghosts,
That hover in the world like fading smoke
About the lodges: gone are the dusty folk
That once were cunning with the thong and snare
And mighty with the paddle and the bow;
They lured the silver salmon from his lair,
They drove the buffalo in trampling hosts,
And gambled in the tepees until dawn,
But now their vaunted prowess all is gone,
Gone like a moose-track in the April snow.
But all the land is murmurous with the call
Of their wild names that haunt the lovely glens
Where lonely water falls, or where the street
Sounds all day with the tramp of myriad feet;

Duncan Campbell Scott, "Indian Place Names," originally published in New World Lyrics and Ballads, 1905.¹

Although Reverend George Raley would write in 1935 of the objects of the Northwest Coast as "Canada's first contribution to the world of art,"² they had not long been considered as such. The objects' transformation to "art" in Euro-Canada's public understanding was gradual, prompted through a number of projects with sometimes conflicting objectives and motives. And before they were seen as "art," they were presented in non-Native public displays as "antiquity." Duncan Campbell Scott wrote in 1905, summarising public sentiment and the basis for public policy in his poem "Indian Place Names," that "[t]he race has waned ...now

¹. Glenn Clever, Duncan Campbell Scott; Selected Poetry, Ottawa: The Tecumseh Press, 1974, p.36.

their vaunted prowess all is gone."

Because ceremonial objects contributed to the construction of status and the hierarchial organization of access to resources through the potlatch system, the reconfiguration of meaning for the objects as "antiquity," as part of the past, effectively denied the continuing importance of indigenous political structures. Although not all Euro-Canadian projects centred on First Nations objects had this denial as their primary objective, an important early display associated with the Cranmer potlatch prosecutions did so explicitly.

The potlatch ban of the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century was part of a larger policy of assimilating First Nations peoples. The repression of ceremonialism discouraged participation in traditional rites and, at least in theory, thus subverted indigenous modes of leadership. This opened the way to the inculcation of British social customs and values through other strategies, such as Christianization and enforced education. The reconfiguration of objects previously associated with the potlatch as objects of "antiquity" served two purposes: first, it paralleled the overtly repressive strategies of the potlatch ban by suggesting that the objects no longer held a viable role in First Nations societies; and, second, the objects could be appropriated and presented as part of a mythical Canadian past now useful in symbolizing Canadian identity. While normally the connection between the repression of ceremonialism and the appropriation and presentation of the objects as Canadian

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3. Clever, Duncan Campbell Scott, p.36.
was obscured by the fact that officials from different arms of the state were responsible for different aspects of the process, William Halliday, Indian Agent based in Alert Bay, both prosecuted and adjudicated the potlatch ban and then catalogued and displayed seized objects before shipping them to the National Museum in Ottawa. The distance between repression and appropriation was never closer than in the Cranmer potlatch prosecutions, the subject of this chapter.

II. The Kwakwaka'wakw Potlatch and Its Persecution

The research efforts and collecting activities of Franz Boas and the most oppressive implementation of the Canadian government's potlatch ban focused on the same group of people, the Kwakwaka'wakw - commonly referred to prior to the 1980s as the Kwakiutl. While the potlatch had technically been prohibited since 1884, initial prosecution attempts were largely unsuccessful. The Kwakwaka'wakw in particular were perceived as openly resistant to both the ban and the introduction of Christianity and were thus targeted in renewed attempts to stamp

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4. Boas made twelve field trips to the Northwest Coast. He worked exclusively with the Kwakwaka'wakw on five of these and in part with them on three further trips. He also worked with the Kwakwaka'wakw at the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, in New York in 1903 when George Hunt assisted him with exhibits at the American Museum of Natural History and in 1931 when Boas and Dan Cranmer worked on a Kwakwala language project. (Helen Codere, "Introduction," in Franz Boas, Kwakiutl Ethnography, Ed. Helen Codere, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1966, p.xxxi.)

5. The earliest form of the legislated ban was not clear enough in its definition of the potlatch. The first successful prosecution was not until 1896. (Cole and Chaikin, An Iron Hand Upon the People, pp.36-44.)
out the potlatch following the First World War. Duncan Campbell Scott, who had written "Indian Place Names" in 1905, rose to the position of Deputy Superintendent of the Department of Indian Affairs in 1913. He introduced amendments to the Indian Act in 1914 and 1918 to expand the definition of the potlatch and facilitate the successful prosecution of potlatch participants. These led directly to the arrest, conviction and imprisonment of participants in a potlatch hosted by Dan Cranmer at Village Island in 1921.

Arguments both for and against the potlatch were often made in economic terms. George Blenkinsop, an agent with the Indian Reserve Allotment Commission, suggested in 1874 that "[t]hese

8. The most important of these, tabled in the House of Commons by the Minister of the Interior Arthur Meighen in 1918, made the offence of potlatching a summary offence and thus allowed the Indian Agent to act simultaneously as prosecutor and judge. (Ibid, p.102.)
9. A number of successful prosecutions preceded the Cranmer case. What distinguishes the Cranmer case, then, is partly the number of people charged and partly the plea bargain discussed in detail below.
10. As Marjorie Halpin summarizes: "There have been many explanations for the ritual occasion that involved potlatch giftgiving - that it converted wealth into prestige through the principles of conspicuous demonstration (the giver deriving social prestige through the size of his gifts); that it served as an economic investment through the redistribution of resources between groups owning territories of different and variable productivity; that it maintained society by reinforcing social bonds between family groups; and that, through the rivalry of aggressive giftgiving, 'fighting with property' was substituted for 'fighting with weapons.' The scholarly debate [like the popular debate] has gone on for decades and likely will continue." (Halpin, Totem Poles, p.10.)
people are the richest in every respect in British Columbia and were a proper disposal made of their immense gains they could furnish themselves with every comfort they could possibly wish for."\(^{11}\) As Helen Codere demonstrates, the Kwakwaka'wakw participated enthusiastically in the colonial economy. 

"...Kwakiutl economic achievement was motivated by potlatching and sustained and increased potlatching," writes Codere. "The 'stream of wealth' of which the Kwakiutl speak was at once the measure of their successful integration with the new and expanding economy and the motive for their success."\(^{12}\) "The lack of 'progressiveness,'" concludes Codere, "was not a lack of industriousness, but a failure to be industrious for the right reasons, in the context of the values of the whites."\(^{13}\) The economic argument against the potlatch was more deeply rooted in a disjunction between the potlatch's social function and the authority presumed necessary by officials like Scott and Indian Agent William Halliday of the Kwawkewlth Agency for the development of Canadian capitalism.

The potlatch was seen by Scott, Halliday and a number of other officials as a symbol of Kwakwaka'wakw resistance to their

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\(^{11}\) Quoted in Cole and Chaikin, *An Iron Hand Upon the People*, p.15.

\(^{12}\) Helen Codere, *Fighting with Property: A Study of Kwakiutl Potlatching and Warfare 1792-1930*, New York: J. J. Augustin, 1951, p.127. Codere quotes "Kwakiutl statements on fighting with property" in the potlatch system: "When I was young I have seen streams of blood shed in war. But since that time the white man came and stopped up that stream of blood with wealth." (Ibid, p.129.)

\(^{13}\) Ibid, p.10.
authority and therefore "the great stumbling block in the way of progress." Barbeau quotes Mrs. S. Cook, "an educated and shrewd Indian woman:" that "[t]he Kwakiutl will not own allegiance to the government as long as the potlatch prevails: it excludes all other forms of government." Indeed, the various ceremonies referred to under the term potlatch validated the hierarchical ranking of groups and individuals, ordering both social relations and the access to and exchange of resources, both natural and supernatural.

The Kwakwaka'wakw consisted of thirty autonomous groups (termed "tribes" by Codere) when the potlatch ban was first introduced. Each group had its territory, winter village, and several sites occupied seasonally, and each consisted of several corporate kin groups, anglicized as numaym or numayma. The numaym was a social division that traced its crests back to a supernatural ancestor. Through its lineage history, each numaym had claims to physical property, such as house and food resource sites, and to crests and titles which existed in a multitude of forms, from designs on house fronts, poles, posts, and feast dishes to privileges such as the use of certain betrothal ceremonies, songs, house names, and titles. The properties were

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"...not mere names, titles and privileges...[,]"¹⁹ but rather related to a corpus of ancestral myths and therefore "spiritual goods, representing essential spiritual qualities of founders and ultimately of all ancestors."

Myths, writes Halpin:

...tell of a primordial age before the world became as it is now, a time when finite divisions between humans, animals, and spirits had not yet been created and beings could transform themselves from one form to another - humans could become animals by putting on skins, animals could become humans by taking them off, humans could marry animals and spirit beings. All realms of existence (water, earth, sky, and the land of the dead) were interconnected by beings who could pass among them. It was a time when everything was possible, when all boundaries were fluid and forms were plastic; a time when the fundamental opposites of life - natural/supernatural, man/woman, life/death, human/animal, hunter/hunted, eater/eaten - were interchangeable aspects of each other. It was a time when cosmic power accelerated the natural processes of change into miracles of transformation. It was a time now lost but remembered. It was a world now gone, but one that people recreated in art and ritual. Through ceremonial and artistic re-enactment of their heritage, through dance, song, and ritual acting, people maintained continuity with their genesis.²¹

The celebration of interconnectedness, of the fluidity of boundaries, allowed for the acceptance of the possibility of trans-generational transfers of power associated with names and titles. The recreation of myth time was an act that


metaphorically validated the contemporary leadership structure through the re-enactment of mythical histories. An important aspect of potlatching then was the negotiation of social positions, prestige, and authority, the relations they constructed, and the right of access to resources they generated. With recitations of lineage histories and the transfer of social positions, the potlatch was additionally important in expressing and mediating conflict resulting from contradictory claims.

Because of a gender distinction between how the characteristics that contributed to status were conveyed, the alliance between lineage groups through marriage was extremely important to consolidating and expanding both collective and individual spiritual and terrestrial wealth. Halliday in particular objected to traditional Kwakwaka'wakw marriage ceremonies, because they were arranged between numayms to facilitate the transfer of important ceremonial rights, sometimes pairing an older man with a much younger woman. Halliday saw Kwakwaka'wakw weddings and potlatches as closely connected and

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22. Goldman writes: "Basic rank defines a position held in the name of a lineage, and is linked with the particular name known as the 'house name.' All other names held by a person convey special ritual privileges, and represent various ancestral and supernatural beings. Only the house name, which carries the special privileges of distributing property and the office of chief, reifies directly a lineage ancestor. Since all lineage ancestors were men, all ancestral house names are masculine. Thus though women inherit basic rank names through primogeniture, they act as temporary conveyors of a purely male line....The system of descent is dual. Basic rank through male names is but part of the cargo of supernatural treasures carried down the generations by chiefs. Another part is acquired only through marriage and is a matrilineal contribution to a man's children. Each line transmits its own type of powers, and makes its own contribution to the totality of status." (Goldman, Mouth of Heaven, p.51.)
believed that if such marriage ceremonies could be stopped, "...the potlatch would lose its chief feeder."²³

Halliday was at least partially correct. Charles Nowell described his relationship to his father-in-law (Lagius) in potlatch terms, demonstrating how following potlatch etiquette was essential, at least in certain families, to being a "good" Kwakwaka'wakw individual:

Any time I feel like giving a feast or a potlatch after I was married, I get my own money and give it to Lagius, and he give it back to me to give a feast or a potlatch. This for the honour of my children, and most times he add some of his own money to make it more. And when I give the feast or potlatch, I say the money comes from him. After my child was born I did this, and every time a child of mine comes to the time when the baby begins to eat, I do this. Any time the child begins to play and gets hurt, I give money to Lagius and he gives it back to me, and I give it away to wipe the blood of the child's wounds. A good son-in-law would do this to the wife's father....²⁴

It is thus impossible to disengage any of the ceremonial privileges, myths, names, and crests from the overall structure of Kwakwaka'wakw society in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Social status engendered in potlatching was based on Kwakwaka'wakw perceptions of both the structure and inter-relationship of human, natural, and supernatural realms. Part of this included the management of resources and territories according to the numaym system, which in theory reflected a


cosmic order.

The person identified as most responsible for the organized objection by Christianized Kwakwaka'wakw to potlatching in Alert Bay in 1921 was described in a confidential letter to Barbeau as "...a very clever woman, who is a lieutenant of the Church. This woman has no high position in the potlatch, but she is in high power with the Church. It is quite apparent that if the Indians abandon the potlatch and go into the Church, she would be a leader among them."\(^{25}\) State assimilation efforts and the refutation of the potlatch system made by some Christian converts created serious conflict with those who continued to assert rank through potlatching, since the violation of the chiefly hierarchy was perceived, at least by non-Christianized members of the chiefly classes, as a disruption of the natural as well as social order.\(^{26}\)

Despite Halliday's moralistic objections and the in-roads of evangelical Christianity, the establishment of permanent European settlements in British Columbia may have accelerated potlatching.\(^{27}\) The introduction of trade goods and wage labour

\(^{26}\) Goldman, Mouth of Heaven, p.48.  
\(^{27}\) In 1849, the Hudson's Bay Company established a coal mine and trading post at Fort Rupert on Beaver Harbour. Four tribes settled at the site making Fort Rupert the largest Kwakwaka'wakw settlement, a centre of ceremonial activity until its eclipse by the establishment of the salmon cannery at Alert Bay on Queen Charlotte Strait in 1870, and beginning a long tradition of resettlement and tribal amalgamation. Alert Bay, with its Anglican mission, sawmill, residential and industrial schools, and Kwawkewlth Indian Agency office was also at the centre of the many of the social and economic changes introduced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. (Ibid, p.363.)
in combination enabled more people to hold larger potlatches. In conjunction with population depletion due to the spread of infectious diseases, there were empty numaym positions, which encouraged "...a flexible and opportunistic use of every possible means of filling the positions and using them in potlatching."\textsuperscript{28} Drucker and Heizer even report that the "...introduction of the element of outwitting the agent gave an added zest. It is quite clear that the potlatch became even more esteemed and cherished, acquiring overtones of defiance of the unwelcome authority of the agent, defiance of the laws of white civilization that the Indians felt were closing in on them."\textsuperscript{29} And as Scott tabled amendments to facilitate the enforcement of the potlatch ban, many Kwakwaka'wakw continued to assert their right to a ceremonial system because it reproduced their authority. The Cranmer potlatch then, "the largest ever recorded on the coast,"\textsuperscript{30} was a climactic confrontation between two holders of authoritative positions and two modes of constructing authority.

III. The Cranmer Potlatch

The Cranmer potlatch was part of the marriage ceremonial cycle for which Halliday had expressed such dislike and included


\textsuperscript{29} Ibid, pp.33-34.

\textsuperscript{30} Cole and Chaikin, An Iron Hand Upon the People, p.119.
the transfer of rights to Winter Ceremonial dances. As Chaikin and Cole point out, "[t]he potlatch was...Emma Cranmer's 'repurchase,' followed by (Dan) Cranmer's distribution of the goods received from his wife and her family as well as more of his own." With at least three hundred guests, the festivities lasted five days. The first two days consisted of Dan Cranmer's repayment of earlier loans and the transfer of property from Emma Cranmer's side. This included Billy Assu's payment of $2000 in blankets and gift of the rights to a xwexwe (Qwee-qwee in Sewid-Smith's transcription) dance and names. Hanuse, acting for Emma Cranmer, gave Dan Cranmer canoes, furniture and other goods. In addition, a copper changed hands several times before ending up as Dan Cranmer's property along with $3000 cash. He also received sewing machines, bracelets and money. At the conclusion


32. After the initial marriage had been sealed by the distribution of gifts, which "...functioned as a payment to the members of the [groom]'s village who had accompanied him to witness the marriage....The parents of the bride...sought to amass as much wealth as possible. The young couple also accumulated property with the assistance of the groom's father and turned it over to the girl's parents. Three or four years after the wedding, when the bride's family had acquired enough wealth, they brought it in canoes to the groom's family. An important part of this property was a copper, referred to as the 'mast of the canoe,' which was given to the groom. The groom later distributed the property in a potlatch to those tribes who had come to witness the transaction. The amount thus paid by the bride's father was many times the amount originally received by him at the wedding; he attempted to return as much as he could for by his liberality he gained prestige and honour." (Ford, Smoke From Their Fires, pp.37-38.)


34. Copper shields were important symbols of wealth displayed, transferred or sometimes broken in Kwakwaka'wakw potlatches. (Ibid, pp.150-151.)
of this paying back, Herbert Martin danced the *hamatsa* and James Knox the *q'ominoga.*

The next section, what Cole and Chaikin refer to as Cranmer's "giving away," is described by Dan Cranmer himself in *An Iron Hand Upon the People:*

"I started giving out the property," he (Cranmer) recalled. "First the canoes," twenty four of them, "some big ones." He gave pool tables to two chiefs. Such large gifts cast high honour upon Cranmer and incurred a deep obligation upon the recipients to match the gesture in future. "It really hurt them," commented Cranmer; "They said it was the same as breaking a copper," another display of unsparing wealth. Assu received a gas boat and $50 cash. Three more gas boats were given away and another pool table. Dresses, shawls and bracelets went to the women, sweaters and shirts to the young people. For the children, small change: "I threw it away for the kids to get," Cranmer remembered. Then came blankets, gas lights, violins, guitars, basins, glasses, washtubs, teapots, boxes, three hundred oak trunks, sewing machines, gramophones, bedsteads, bureaus, and more cash. Finally on Christmas Day, the fifth and last day of the ceremony, came the sacks of flour. (Angermann recorded "about 400" sacks, Cranmer recalled 1000 at three dollars each.) Moses Alfred handed them down to carriers Kenneth Hunt, Johnson Cook, and Peter and James Knox, while Sam Scow called out the recipients. "Everyone admits," said Cranmer, "that this was the biggest yet."

Daisy Sewid-Smith, in *Prosecution or Persecution* (1979), transcribed her recording of Mecha (Herbert Martin, brother to

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artist Mungo Martin), an important participant, describing the
potlatch and the activities involved, in particular the transfer
of the rights to the ceremonial names and dances:

You will now listen to what happened to Pul-
na-Qwa-Lus Walkus (Dan Cranmer) when he Num-
bun-gil-ha-lud (To do everything together.
Feasting and Potlatching were usually held
separately but because of the continual
threat of imprisonment it was done together).
In that great thing he did. When Zoh-la-lee-
tlee-louq (the late Emma Cranmer) completed
their marriage contract at Village Island....

They invited the Kwakiutl (Fort Rupert),
invited the Mamalillikulla (Village Island),
Tla-wee-jees (Turnour Island), Da-naoq-douk
(New Vancouver), the four clans of the Ja-
wha-da-nooq (Kingcome Inlet). They all came
to Village Island....Zoh-la-lee-tlee-louq
(Emma Cranmer) asked me to go to Hamatsa, so
I went. The people were all gathered at the
house of Hanuse at Village Island. The
dancing began. I went out to dance when they
sang for me. I danced and then everybody
danced. It was finished. The dancing was
finished for the night. Next day we danced
all day and night. Yeh-koo-cla-lus (Emma
Cranmer's other name) completed her marriage
contract to Gwa-gwa-duk-ka-la (Dan Cranmer).
She gave as part of her dowry to him the
Qwee-Qwee dance (the Qwee-Qwee dance was
given as part of her dowry by Chief Billy
Assu of Cape Mudge). Joq-jay-sah (Harry
Glendale) was in one mask and his younger
brother Kum-kah-kaw-weed (George Glendale)
was in the other. Somebody would yell,
Wooee! and they were the people that got
arrested....Without our knowledge Kenneth
Hunt was writing names down....Little did we
know that we were going to be arrested. Gwim-
kah-ness (Sam Matilpi) was paying his
security. High-yahlth-kin (John Whonnock)
was speaking. His wife was the Potlatch
recorder. She was recording securities given
to the women....Recording as they were given
something. They gave things away. Gwa-gwa-
duk-ka-la (Dan Cranmer) gave trunks, pots,
pans. Gave away all kinds of things....That
is what you call Num-bun-gil-ha-la (at the
same time) what he did...  

Royal Canadian Mounted Police sergeant Donald Angermann investigated and charged the principals involved. In the trial, Halliday shared the bench with A. M. Wastell. W. Murray of the McTaggart and Ellis law firm represented the defense. 38 Historian Tina Loo outlines the three 'logics of dispute' in the Kwakwaka'wakw defence. First, they invoked tradition, suggesting that they stood outside Canadian law and could not be legitimately prosecuted. 39 Second, they drew analogies between their ceremony and those practised by the Europeans. The most obvious choice for this was Christmas, which, like the potlatch, was a social and spiritual ceremony, linking the present with the past and celebrated with gift-giving. 40 Finally, and most disingenuously, they argued that the potlatch was an economic transaction and in accordance with Canadian laws of obligation. 41

In the end, Halliday would have none of the complicated arguments against prosecution and the defence altered the four initial pleas to guilty after hearing the strength of Angermann's case. They then presented an agreement to no longer potlatch signed by the defendants and some fifty others. Angermann would not accept such a compromise, claiming that several accused had already signed similar agreements and were now before the court.

37. Sewid-Smith, Persecution or Prosecution, pp.55-57.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid.
again. Instead, Angermann suggested "more tangible evidence of good faith," namely the surrender of potlatch paraphernalia by all members of the Kwawkewlth agency. The decision that now lay with some three hundred audience members present at the Cranmer potlatch was either to go to prison during a time that would infringe on the beginning of fishing season, thus presenting a severe financial test for heads of families (and a possible burden for the government) or surrender the physical embodiments of the encounters of their ancestors with the supernatural world (objects symbolic of contemporary prestige and status), to quit entirely the public practice of transferring, perpetuating, celebrating and legitimizing the powers gained through these ancestral encounters, and to assist Euro-Canadian authorities in suppressing this practice among all their neighbours and family. By March 31, all the decisions had come in. The Lekwiltok of Quadra Island, the Mamalillikulla of Village Island and the Nimpkish of Alert Bay surrendered their coppers and dancing gear. "I guess it was like paying a fine so that they would not go to prison," said Ack-koo (Agnes Alfred). "They paid with their

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42. For example, Johnny Bagwany and Ned Harris had been given suspended sentences in 1914. Cessahollis of Kingcome Inlet was also given a suspended sentence the following year. Likiosa (Johnnie Seaweed) and Kwosteetsas (Japanese Charlie) received the minimum penalty in 1919, but were released after their employers, B.C. Packers, provided bail bonds for $1000 each. The posting of two Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers in Alert Bay late in 1919 resulted in eight imprisonments at Burnaby's Oakalla Prison over the next two years, including Charles Nowell who was released on probation after six weeks. (Cole and Chaikin, An Iron Hand Upon the People, pp.108-118.)

43. Loo, "Dan Cranmer's Potlatch," p.120.
Seven offenders refused to pay this price: Jim Hall of Karlakwees and six more from Fort Rupert. Angermann pressed charges in April against a further seventeen present at the Cranmer potlatch and three active in potlatches on Harbledown Island the previous January and February. Five were given suspended sentences for playing minor roles or signing the agreement. Of the remaining fifteen, all opted for the Oakalla Prison Farm in Burnaby, Vancouver's immediate municipal neighbor to the east. Of the twenty-two that Angermann accompanied south on April 10, 1922, twenty-one had been given two month sentences, with Nimpkish Charlie Hunt receiving six months for his second conviction.  

Emma Cranmer, as a member of the Nimpkish band, had submitted her paraphernalia and signed the agreement. Nonetheless, she was "in a prison of her own for she blamed herself for what happened and continually wept over it."  

"Emma tried to offer herself to go in the place of the women arrested, but she was refused," writes Sewid-Smith. "She took it upon herself to see to the needs of the prisoners out of her own earnings from the cannery. She followed them to Vancouver. She supplied their needs and waited for their release...and she paid

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44. Quoted in Sewid-Smith, Persecution or Prosecution, p.47.
46. Sewid-Smith, Persecution or Prosecution, p.4.
for all their expenses...[,]"\(^{47}\) which included providing food, and covering street car fares, restaurant and hotel bills, and the steamship tickets back to Alert Bay.\(^{48}\) Despite Emma Cranmer's dignified and responsible actions, an event aimed at transferring spiritual and terrestrial property between lineage groups and cementing the social position of the participants involved had turned into a public catastrophe.

IV. The Halliday Display

The surrendered potlatch regalia and coppers were put on exhibit at the Alert Bay parish hall for an admission price of twenty five cents. Halliday charged admission in order to cover the price of the hall,\(^{49}\) but it seems particularly ironic given that Alert Bay was a cannery town in the heart of Kwakwaka'wakw territory and therefore at the heart of the potlatching controversy: one wonders exactly who made up the paying audience.

Two photographs, one of which is attributed to Halliday himself in the Royal British Columbia Museum's (RBCM) Visual Archives, illustrate how his display of the seized objects exemplified Nicholas Thomas's assertion that colonial authorities viewed colonized societies as "objects to be surveyed, regulated and sanitized."\(^{50}\) In Halliday's photograph, an unnamed man identified as a "paid orator" from the Cranmer potlatch poses in

\(^{47}\) Ibid, pp.4-6.

\(^{48}\) Cole and Chaikin, An Iron Hand Upon The People, p.122.

\(^{49}\) Cole, Captured Heritage, p.71.

\(^{50}\) Thomas, Colonialism's Culture, p.4.
front of a white sheet in the parish hall (figure 2). He wears a crest-displaying carved headdress and a button blanket, both normally worn on ceremonial occasions. He holds his coppers in hand slightly away from his body to the front, so the camera audience can see, and two masks lie by his feet. The mask on his right is a thunderbird headdress and on his left, a wolf, both of which appear in the Winter ceremonials. Perhaps intended by Halliday as a record for posterity of the last time such regalia was actually worn, this representation is strikingly eloquent. Although dressed in the symbolic references to the myth-time origins of his numaym, symbols that served to perpetuate ancestral powers, the sanitized absence of the enacting songs, lineage myths, ritualized dance and gesture, the very anonymity of the individual photographed, displaces and disempowers both the objects and the human histories they refer to. While the photograph is silent concerning indigenous views of the potlatch, its practices and paraphernalia, it speaks volumes of Euro-Canadian intentions to recontextualize potlatch objects within a Euro-Canadian environment as touristic/anthropological representations of the past. This silence on indigenous views is significant in the context in which the photograph was taken and the regalia seized. The photograph, its posture and process, constitute an intermediary step in which meaning for the paraphernalia was reconfigured, transformed from sacred tool for the reaffirmation of a cosmic and social structure to a signifier of a past now beyond retrieval. While both Kwakwaka'wakw and

Euro-Canadian understandings of these objects shared a historical orientation, one celebrated the role of the past in the present and the other distanced the past from the present.

The second photograph, by Reverend V.S. Lord, is of Halliday's display inside the church hall (figure 3). Piled on the benches are the various masks and props, including masks of the various supernatural birds of the sky: Huxwhukw and crooked beak masks of the hamatsa dances. In this photograph, the displacement is carried one step further than Halliday's "paid orator" image. All connection to contemporary life is erased with the absence of the owners. In this sterile space, the masks lie as if decapitated. Severed from the enlivening body of ritual, they are now only trophy heads - a premonition of the objects' new life in the National Museum. "Dancing robes and masks without dancers," writes Ki-ke-in (Ron Hamilton) in his recent poem "Box of Darkness." "Symbols without spirits." The two photographs further share the same "indeterminate terrain" that Annie Coombes argues was uncomfortably occupied by early twentieth century anthropology, "...at pains to justify


its existence on a broadly based popular educational level, a rigorous scientific level and on a practical level as the helpmate of the state."\(^{55}\) Since colonized societies and the objects they produced were necessarily destroyed by the process of colonization, it was the duty of those at the forefront of modernity's intrusion into the societies of the "less advanced" to vigorously record what colonialism displaced. The photographs lent scientific support to Halliday's actions, providing a visual record of the objects he seized. While the objects themselves were trophies partly symbolic of Halliday's success in his anti-potlatch campaign, their new metaphorical significance lay in allusions to the displacement of indigenous traditions by Western modernity and their "altruistic" preservation within the spaces of modern science through the photographs and then later their storage on museum shelves.

Halliday had been instructed by his superiors to ship all the material to the National Museum in Ottawa, but before finishing crating, he sold thirty-five pieces for $291 to the American collector George Heye, founder of New York's Museum of the American Indian.\(^{56}\) It is curious that Heye, from New York, would have been in Alert Bay at such a fortuitous moment, in the middle of winter. It is a possibility that he was informed by somebody with inside knowledge in British Columbia. Halliday received a reprimand for this, especially because he sold the material to an American collector. "...[T]he Department is at a

\(^{55}\) Ibid, p.109.

\(^{56}\) Cole, Captured Heritage, p.251.
loss to understand your action in disposing of them without authority, more especially in view of the fact that they are to be taken to the United States, when they should have remained in a Canadian museum," wrote J. D. McLean, Scott's assistant, to Halliday in September 1922. "Your explanation as to obtaining a good value for them is not considered sufficient to justify this unwarranted action. I presume, however, that the articles are now beyond recall, but on no consideration are you to dispose of any of the rest..." The remaining seventeen cases, not including the coppers (figure 4), were appraised in Ottawa by museum anthropologist Edward Sapir at $1456. Many anthropologists, including Harlan I. Smith and Edward Sapir of the National Museum of Canada, Franz Boas of the American Museum of Natural History, C. F. Newcombe from the Provincial Museum in Victoria, and John Swanton of the Smithsonian, were outspoken in their opposition to the potlatch ban, arguing against the economic and moral implications of such a legislation. However, part of Sapir's job was to appraise the objects and then receive them for storage and display at the museum in Ottawa. Caught in Coombes' "indeterminate terrain," Sapir and the others found themselves in the "...ambivalent position as simultaneously critic and advocate of government policies..."

Sapir's valuation was deemed entirely inadequate by the surrendering families, but no compensation at all was paid for

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57. Quoted in Sewid-Smith, Persecution or Prosecution, p.75.
58. See Barbeau, "The Potlatch."
the coppers. Sapir himself, perhaps aiming to depress the prices of the objects given his more limited financial resources than those of private collectors like Heye, said that he considered his own total "a very moderate figure from the standpoint of an ethnological museum" and Halliday responded to Kwakwaka'wakw dissatisfaction in his recollections as Indian Agent, Potlatch and Totem, suggesting that any argument over value rested simply on differences in opinion and the market demands for older objects. He wrote: "Some of the things for which good prices were paid, the ordinary individual would not consider worth anything at all, while some of the things were more or less new and though in many instances were much better looking, they only brought fair to low prices, as to those learned in the antiquities of the Indians they had little historic value."

At the core this contradictory mix of historical and financial valuation was not simply a difference in opinion rooted in market conditions, but the governmental policy of assimilating First Nations. Based on this intent, the implementation of the anti-potlatch sections of the Indian Act affected First Nations object production and its display in a number of ways. First, state officials denied the valuation system of Kwakwaka'wakw

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61. Edward Sapir to Duncan Campbell Scott, January 29, 1923, from Canadian Museum of Civilization Sapir Correspondence Box 429, File 58.

society by refusing any appraisal based on potlatch economics or symbolism. Instead, they provided their own appraiser in anthropologist Sapir, who, as seems clear from Halliday's recollections, in turn valued the potlatch objects on the criteria of the curio/museum commodity market. The seemingly contradictory roles that Euro-Canadian authorities could play within this framework of valuation is further demonstrated by Halliday, who on one hand enforced assimilationist state policy in his position as Indian Agent, and on the other dealt the seized objects on the commodity market through his sale of goods to Heye.

Second, this signalled the active participation of state officials in the reconfiguration of these objects. While the National Museum had been collecting such objects since its inception, nowhere are the political implications of this reconfiguration so clear nor so active as in Halliday's exhibition. What Halliday explicitly demonstrated was that the conditions of display, in particular the motivation informing the display, controlled the acceptance or denial of the ideological value of these objects. Integral with the social systems of the Northwest Coast, these potlatch ceremonies controlled the display of the objects and generated the production and acceptance of social position as validated by a cosmic order. By refusing this ceremonial context, the general effect was the denial of the social positions it generated within First Nations communities. Halliday's display forcibly demonstrated Euro-Canadian ability to appropriate First Nations possessions, whether masks, land, or
labour. The fact that he could easily sell some of them emphasized that what was most at stake was control, implicitly negating any concept of land or resource ownership associated with such status. Further, the physical movement of objects from First Nations to state hands, from British Columbia to Ottawa, was a potent symbol of the movement of First Nations peoples from autonomy to subjugation and dependence. In this movement, the objects took on a different metonymic relationship. Whereas in a First Nations potlatch, they could be symbolic of the inheritance of both tangible and intangible property, in the Euro-Canadian museum they could by metonyms for the peoples as well as the lands brought under Euro-Canadian control.

The reconfiguration of indigenous objects and the potlatch thus contributed to the creation of a new social position for First Nations people within Canada. As either art or antiquity, objects still retained commercial value. First Nations individuals could continue to produce the objects, but only as another commodity. First Nations had produced objects for commodity-exchange at the very least since initial European contact. As commodities, these objects propelled an active and beneficial (especially for the Euro-Canadian dealers) market. But the Halliday display asserted that the symbolic value invested in both the object and its owner through potlatching was now vestigial. This worked to secure their status as a new labour class and, in conjunction with the potlatch ban, to maintain Anglo-Celtic political hegemony by asserting a new law of the land. All this occurred at a time when non-British
immigration was perceived as a threat as well to the interests of Canada's primarily British bourgeoisie.  

Both a poet and an administrator, Indian Affairs Deputy Superintendent Duncan Campbell Scott took a personal interest in the objects. Sapir forwarded a list of the objects seized and shipped to Ottawa directly to Scott in October 1922, complete with indications of which objects were selected by the National Museum. C. T. Currelly of the Royal Ontario Museum had contacted Scott prior to the objects' arrival requesting examples for the "other large Museum of Canada," so it seems Halliday's charge of the objects having "little historic value" was not shared by Currelly, Sapir or Scott. By January 1923, Sapir had further divided the newly indexed collection into three groups: the first for the National Museum, the second for the Ontario Museum, and the third containing, in Sapir's words to Scott, "those that we

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63. Through the 1920s, a number of government actions attacked deviation from the concept of a core British Canadian identity. The federal government enacted the 1923 Chinese Immigration Act to virtually halt Chinese immigration until after the Second World War. The imposition of mandatory schooling saw the burning of nine schools in British Columbia between 1923 and 1925 and the provincial government's invocation of the Infants Act beginning in 1929 to seize Doukhobor children as wards of the state. (John P. S. McLaren, "'New Canadians' or 'Slaves of Satan'? The Law and the Education of Doukhobor Children, 1911-1935," Unpublished Document November 1994.) In an order in council, the federal government also prohibited the entry of Doukhobors, Mennonites, and Hutterites because of the "...peculiar customs, habits, modes of life and method of holding property, and because of their probable inability to become readily assimilated or to assume the duties and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship within a reasonable time after their entry." (Quoted in Knowles, Strangers at Our Gates, p.100.)

64. Duncan Campbell Scott to Edward Sapir, October 9, 1922, from Canadian Museum of Civilization Sapir Correspondence Box 429, File 58.
suggest putting aside for your own use."65 All the masks were valued and invoiced at a total of $74 and sent to Scott at the end of February 1923,66 where they began their new life as trophies in his Department of Indian Affairs office.

Scott was careful in departmental correspondence and took pains to make sure the material he requested personally was properly invoiced and certified "that the prices charged are fair and just, to meet the requirements of the Auditor-General's office."67 A bird mask with four interchangeable mouth-pieces68 owned by J. Kalokwami was added to Scott's request at which time Scott had a voucher issued immediately. However, Cole states that some Kwakwaka'wakw do not remember receiving compensation. Henry Bell, for one, insisted that he packed six masks to Halliday's boat, although Cole suggests only three were inventoried69 and in the list sent to Scott from Sapir now available through the

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65. Edward Sapir to Duncan Campbell Scott, January 29, 1923, from Canadian Museum of Civilization Sapir Correspondence Box 429, File 58.


67. Duncan Campbell Scott to Edward Sapir, March 17, 1923, from Canadian Museum of Civilization, Sapir Correspondence Box 429, File 58.

68. Given this description, it is more likely that this was an echo or Sopali mask. Called "dialogue masks" by Hawthorn, these "...carried on a light banter and humorous conversation with each other and with the spectators....Some of these Sopali masks, and all of the echo masks, were fitted with sets of wooden mouthpieces representing different characters." (Audrey Hawthorn, Art of the Kwakiutl Indians and Other Northwest Coast Tribes, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1967, p.283.)

There seem to be a number of discrepancies associated with the inventory. At points, extras are included, while at others, objects are identified as "not found." There were still other objects for which ownership was in doubt.

There appears to be no uncertainty concerning the coppers. Quite simply, no payment was ever made. Sapir asked Scott about this in May 1923, inquiring whether "the purchase of the Coppers is still pending...or would you instruct me to consider them as already the property of the Victoria Memorial Museum?" Sapir went on to suggest assembling data on the coppers, presumably through interviews with their former owners, although it is hard to imagine why they would co-operate in such a matter. Sapir's ultimate goal was the publication of an associated bulletin. Scott hardly acknowledged this in his secretary's responding letter, ending the correspondence with the ambiguous statement that he "would be glad to discuss the matter...personally..." with Sapir. In the end, Scott must have felt that adequate compensation had already been issued.

Scott exemplifies the ideology of social progress in the 1920s throughout Euro-Canadian society. The notions of a "fatal 70. "List of potlatch paraphernalia surrendered at Alert Bay and shipped to Ottawa," from Canadian Museum of Civilization, Sapir Correspondence Box 429, File 58.

71. Edward Sapir to Duncan Campbell Scott, May 14, 1923, from Canadian Museum of Civilization, Sapir Correspondence Box 429, File 58.

72. Secretary to the Deputy to Edward Sapir, May 16, 1923, from Canadian Museum of Civilization, Sapir Correspondence Box 429, File 58.
impact" and the disappearance of First Nations societies in the
evolution towards European modernism simultaneously appeared in
both Euro-Canadian artistic expression and government strategy.
The nostalgic tone of the myth of the "Vanishing American" in
Scott's poetry contributed to Department of Indian Affairs policy
under his direction. Scott actively suppressed First Nations
ceremonies while poetically implying that the people themselves
were gone, their landscape now empty and ripe for development,
their history now available to legitimate European presence.

Yet, although social progress informed the discourses of
Canadian art and law, its influence was also unstable; its
acceptance increasingly uncertain in Ottawa's growing post-World
War I independence from London. There were growing
contradictions in Euro-Canada's approach to First Nations
peoples. Even Scott was clearly interested in First Nations
societies and their modes of creative expression. As Stan
Dragland writes in his literary history Floating Voice, a
"...difficult puzzle... is... how to reconcile Scott's attractive
and apparently humane poems and stories about Indians... with the
dreadful legacy of his administration of Indian Affairs." The
short solution to Dragland's puzzle is that in further analysis
there is no contradiction. Scott was only interested in First
Nations societies as something of the romanticized past, rather
than of the contested present. His literary construction echoed
his administrative policy by reinforcing the image of colonial

73. Stan Dragland, Floating Voice: Duncan Campbell Scott and
displacement.

Scott's own ambivalence - his desire to study, celebrate and simultaneously suffocate indigenous ways in order to control them or to keep them in the past - mirror larger conflicts in the process of Canada's colonization and the projects of construction that supported it. Scott's activities therefore affirm Thomas's argument that "[c]olonizers have also frequently been divided by strategic interests and differing visions of the civilizing mission;...frequently split...between impulses to define new lands as vacant spaces for European achievement, and a will to define and collect and map the cultures which already possessed them; and in the definition of colonizers' identities, which had to reconcile the civility and values of home with the raw novelty of sites of settlement."^74

Summary

Prosecutions for potlatching continued through the late 1920s. Other groups, notably the Nuu-chah-nulth of Vancouver Island and the Gitksan of the upper Skeena River valley, also saw convictions. Agent G. C. Mortimer charged Gitxsan potlatchers John Smith and Tom Campbell in 1931. Smith received a one month suspended sentence while Campbell received three months later suspended on the condition that he no longer participate in such events. Mortimer's reasoning for the harsher sentence for Campbell was that he was the "I.W.W. type,"^75 referring to the

^74. Thomas, Colonialism's Culture, pp.2-3.

International Woodworkers Union, one of the labour unions to gain prominence with the rise of socialism in British Columbia immediately after the First World War and again in the Great Depression, when over 18,000 men in the province were housed in relief camps.  

The Cranmer potlatch has come to epitomize the enforcement of the potlatch ban. While Halliday and others proclaimed the passing of the potlatch with the Cranmer arrests, this was far from the truth. Upon his release, Mecha (Herbert Martin) gave a grease potlatch at the oolichan fishery in Knight Inlet "...so that I may, as we used to do in ancient times, cleanse those that were put in prison with me..." and then distributed almost four thousand gallons of oolichan oil from Blunden Harbour to Alert Bay to Newitti.

There are numerous other stories of how many people on the coast either adapted the potlatch after 1922 splitting, for example, the giving and dancing portions of the celebrations in order to circumvent the restrictions of the Indian Act, or simply holding smaller potlatches in hidden or more remote locations.

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77. Boas reports that "...grease feasts are given in order to destroy the prestige of the rival..." (Boas, Kwakiutl Ethnography, p.96.)

78. Sewid-Smith, Persecution or Prosecution, p.63.


80. Drucker and Heizer, To Make My Name Good, p.33.
administrative pressures against it and attributed lulls in potlatch activities in the 1930s to economic reasons like the Great Depression and the fishermen's strike of 1936.\textsuperscript{81} The ban did not destroy the potlatch. The production of objects for the potlatch continued and even contributed to the creative development of three of the now best known Kwakwaka'wakw artists in the 1930s and 1940s: Charlie James, Willie Seaweed and Mungo Martin.\textsuperscript{82} Because of socio-political chasm enforced through the Indian Act and its various amendments, the meanings about Northwest Coast objects constructed in museum contexts differed significantly from those constructed in potlatch settings.

When First Nations ceremonies involved Euro-Canadian dignitaries, the threatening and supposedly regressive nature of the potlatch or any other First Nations event dissipated, replaced in public conception by a sense of quaint, colourful nostalgia. The potlatch and the objects used in it were not the issue. Government officials were instead more interested in assuming control over when these kinds of ceremonies could be held and what the intent behind them was to be. The harsher result of the ban was the attempted replacement of Northwest Coast social structure and its methods for controlling and acknowledging social status and resource ownership with British modes of authority, which in turn was part of a larger programme aimed at expropriating and securing the continental land base for development and providing a pliant labour force. Convenient by-

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid, p.147.

\textsuperscript{82} See Nuytten, The Totem Carvers, and Bill Holm, Smoky-Top.
products of the potlatch ban were the encouragement of conversion to Christianity and the intensifying commoditization of Northwest Coast ceremonial objects.

Of course, a vibrant market for First Nations objects already existed; this commodity value may have even saved such objects from large-scale destruction. A number of people participated in the curio market while engaged the enforcement of the potlatch ban. Halliday's sale of goods to Heye after the Lekwiltok, Mamalillikulla and Nimpkish had turned over their paraphernalia is one example. Powell collected for the American Museum of Natural History and Angermann turned up at a meeting of the Vancouver Art, Historical and Scientific Association in 1926, only four years after the Cranmer prosecutions, with $250 worth of Alert Bay objects for sale. And for Scott, whose real passion, Titley suggests, was the arts, so that his position as deputy superintendent was "...a mere source of income," the shipment of seized paraphernalia to Ottawa must have been a day when passion and income coincided.

Halliday's display, an overt example of how Euro-Canadian displays contributed to the displacement of indigenous systems, was the first in a series of public displays following the

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Cranmer prosecutions that valued objects associated with the rituals so ardently opposed by officials with the Department of Indian Affairs. Federal projects after 1922 reconfigured these objects as a quaint aspect of Canada's past, asserting Canadian proprietary rights in the face of American and other foreign museums and continuing the efforts of state officials to control both the meanings of the objects and the contexts in which these meanings could be constructed. Halliday seizing and displaying the Cranmer potlatch objects, like Scott simultaneously negotiating Treaty 9 in northern Ontario and writing poetically "...the race has waned...," also clearly exemplifies the proximity between appropriation and repression.

86. Dragland, Floating Voice.
CHAPTER 2

Totem Poles in Stanley Park

Assimilation strategies and the removal of potlatch paraphernalia and totem poles to museums on the eastern side of the continent all seemed to confirm that the past uses for such objects no longer continued. Instead, the objects could now be used in the construction of a local identity important to the promotion of tourism, immigration and investment. By the 1920s, after four decades of the collecting activities of museums and curio shops, of tourist steamship lines running the Inside Passage from Olympia to Skagway, totem poles had become a pervasive, primitivist symbol closely associated with the region. At the same time that Scott's intensified implementation of the potlatch ban and the National Museum's involvement in the relocation of the seized Cranmer objects represented a heightened interest in the regulation of these objects at a federal level, civic leaders throughout the Pacific Northwest recognized the utility of the totem pole in advertising the success and identity of their new centres. Totem poles in a city setting also suggested how life on the coast had "progressed" from primitive village to urban modernity. With civic growth, more municipal agencies began to explore the possibilities of purchasing and re-erecting crest poles and house posts.

Vancouver had rapidly ascended to the position of western

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Canada's commercial hub by the 1920s. A construction boom, the expansion of commercial services, and an active social life all added to Vancouver's identity as the modern heart of the northwestern section of the continent (despite or through its rivalry with neighbouring Seattle). The first local, permanent memorialization of totem poles outside either museum or indigenous contexts in Canada thus occurred in Vancouver, where the placement of "antique" Kwakwaka'wakw totem poles in Stanley Park, across Coal Harbour from the Canadian Pacific Railway station and at the Burrard Narrows entrance into the harbour, made a highly visible modern/primitive juxtaposition near the heart of the city.

However, this project was additionally significant because of Squamish resistance to initial plans for a full, reconstructed Kwakwaka'wakw village and their demands for the acknowledgement of a living Squamish presence in the park. It also contributed to the regulated federal control of totem poles and other Northwest Coast objects by provoking Ottawa's decision to designate totem poles a Canadian heritage resource in order to prevent other cities from following Vancouver's example.

2. John Oliver, the province's Liberal premier, had built his administration on the expansion of British Columbia's road network emanating outward from Vancouver. Through the early 1920s, the provincial revenues rose through the sale of motor and liquor licenses. The recently-completed South Okanagan irrigation project spurred on increases in fruit revenues, the fisheries and lumber industries were booming through geographic and technological expansion and diversification, (Diane Newell, Tangled Webs of History: Indians and the Law in Canada's Pacific Coast Fisheries, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993, p.98, and Hardwick, Geography of the Forest Industry, pp.1-15.)
I. Totem Poles in Stanley Park

Even before the erection of totem poles in Vancouver, Stanley Park\(^3\) had historical importance for local residents. It was charted by Spanish explorers in the 1790s and was believed to be where George Vancouver met with local Squamish (Halkomelem Salishan-speaking) peoples.\(^4\) It had been declared a Government Reserve in 1859 when war between Britain and the United States appeared imminent and was the site of five small logging operations from the 1860s to the 1880s. One of the earliest monuments in Stanley Park was an imitation classical temple made of cedar and fir, popularly known as Lumberman's Arch (figure 5), that had been originally erected in 1912 at Pender and Hamilton Streets (figure 6) as a tribute to the visiting Duke and Duchess of Connaught and then moved the following year to Stanley Park.\(^5\)

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\(^3\) Originally Government Reserve land, the 1000 acres of parkland was, with the 1886 announcement of Port Moody as the terminus for the transcontinental Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR), considered too far removed from the original town of Granville (centred to the east along Burrard Inlet in what is now the city's Gastown neighbourhood) to be of any value. Steele believes that the City Council's petition for the creation of the park when the area lacked adequate docks, roads, schools, and health facilities was part of a ploy to ensure low land prices until the CPR amended its location of the terminus to Vancouver to the west and adjacent to the park land, thus guaranteeing high profits for the landowners between Granville and the park. Stanley Park was officially opened in September 1888. (Mike Steele, Stanley Park, Surrey: Heritage House Publishing, 1993, pp.12-15.)

\(^4\) While the area north of Point Grey is generally identified as Squamish territory, Wayne Suttles suggests that Capilano, Mission, Seymour Creek, False Creek and Lumberman's Arch may have been Musqueam (who are Downriver Halkomelem) prior to 1850. (Suttles, "Central Coast Salish," Handbook, p.455.) This confusion is exacerbated by the forceable removal of XwayXway residents from Lumberman's Arch in the late 1880s and the consequent probable movement of people along kinship lines both north and south.

\(^5\) Steele, Stanley Park, pp.47-50.
The new site for Lumberman's Arch was located on top of a large shell midden excavated around the turn of the century. It had also been home to an historic Salish village, XwayXway. XwayXway's residents had been relocated during the small pox epidemic between 1888 and 1890, shortly after Stanley Park's official 1887 opening. Most of the houses, including a central lodge called "Tay Hay," were burnt to the ground. The three surviving houses were bought for $25 each and razed in 1900.

Prior to the relocation of Lumberman's Arch, Stanley Park had been left a natural reserve. Grandiose plans for the park's development were drawn up in the two years preceding the First World War, although not all the city's residents agreed on the direction this development should follow or even if the city should develop the park at all. As Robert A. J. MacDonald argues, the public debate that erupted over plans for the park was divided along class lines and played out in the realm of public "culture," where the "upper stratum sought to foster art, music, science, and intellectual discourse as a means to counter the city's 'busy commercialism.'" The re-erection of


7. XwayXway, variously spelt whoi-whoi, sxwaysway, sxwayxwey, xwexwe or qwee-qwee, is an important cleansing ceremony among the Salish peoples, normally the ritual property of a kin group, performed by two or more young men wearing distinctive costumes and masks. (Suttles, "Central Coast Salish," Handbook, p.468.)

8. This likely an anglicized variant of XwayXway.


Lumberman's Arch, a monument imitating classical form in local materials, resulted from local support of the City Beautiful movement just prior to the First World War, which advocated the taming of the park.  

The focus for Vancouver's City Beautiful Movement became Coal Harbour, in close proximity to the growing city centre and plagued by a deteriorating bridge and foul-smelling tidal flats. The Vancouver Board of Park Commissioners hired respected British park designer Thomas Mawson to propose improvements in 1912. Although ultimately hampered by compromises between disagreeing civic groups, Mawson's plan, with its proposed changes to Stanley Park, nonetheless put Coal Harbour and the surrounding periphery at the centre of the city's attention and led to the creation of playing fields and the erection of a number of monuments. The movement continued in spirit after the First World War, when the Art, Historical and Scientific Association, a group described by MacDonald as "more British than the business community as a whole," proposed the erection of more "historic" monuments in Stanley Park on the peninsula at the north side of Coal Harbour.

With its membership interested in the creative expression of

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12. "Mawson offered three plans: one to retain a tree-fringed waterline on the north side of a lagoon at the park entrance; another, far more utilitarian than the first, to create playgrounds for children and playing fields for adults by filling the upper end of Coal Harbour; and a third, designed in the 'Grand Manner,' to feature three majestic neoclassical buildings surrounding a circular pond. At the centre was to be a statue atop a 'great shaft.'" (Ibid, p.170.)

both British Columbia's past and present, the Art, Historical and Scientific Association of Vancouver (AHSAV) maintained a social darwinist understanding of Vancouver's culture. When the organization was founded in 1894, for example, the distinction between art as something European and antiquity as something "Indian" was clear. Its constitution proposed that the primary objectives of the association were:

- To form a collection of paintings and works of art as a nucleus of an Art Gallery;
- To hold from time to time a Loan Exhibition of paintings and works of art;
- To form a Museum of Antiquities, especially of the remains of Indian life in British Columbia and America...14

Through the organization's incorporation under the Benevolent Societies Act in 1901 and its absorption into the city's political system as a quasi-municipal institution in 1903, the local separation between past and present, between "Indian" and "modern," was suggested.

Given the convention combining tourism and the equation of appropriated First Nations "art" with Europe's past, it was thus easy to propose in 1921, without thought to any possible conflicts with contemporary First Nations peoples, that the AHSAV obtain and re-erect "...an original Indian village and Hudson Bay Trading Post in Stanley Park."15 A committee was appointed to sort out any funding problems and arrange the ways and means with various connected public bodies and the Hudson's Bay Company.

14. Art, Historical, and Scientific Association of Vancouver Constitution 1894 (CAV Add. MSS. 336)

Funding was of course a major focus for the committee, but the association enthusiastically instigated the planning procedures confident that "...the scheme, if successfully carried out, would be a great attraction to Stanley Park and of great educational value in illustrating Indian and other early life."16

By January 1923, two freestanding poles and two house posts (figure 7) purchased through an association member, Mrs. Schooley, for $764 arrived in Vancouver.17 The two house posts were carved by Charlie James (Yakutlas)18 (figure 8) and originally belonged to Tsaweenok of Kingcome Inlet, where they served as interior supports for a house cross-beam.19 Both house posts depict a thunderbird with outstretched wings supported by a grizzly bear of equal size holding a smaller female figure. Furthermore, along with a replica of the Wakius pole, Edward

16. Ibid.


18. Charlie James was born Charles Jameson in Port Townsend, Washington around 1867. His father, Thomas Jameson, was an Anglo-American sawmill operator. His mother, 'Kugwisi'la'ogwa, was Kwakwaka'wakw from Fort Rupert. She died when James was ten years old and he was raised by his maternal grandmother in Victoria and Fort Rupert. When he was young, an accidental shotgun discharge left him with only the thumb and the major part of his forefinger on his left hand. This physical impairment prevented his participation in the forestry and fishing industries and he was thus one of the few full-time Kwakwaka'wakw carvers, producing canoes and poles, masks and other work for both the potlatch system and the curio market. Around 1895, he married Sara Nina in a Kwakwaka'wakw ceremony in Fort Rupert. Sara Nina had four sons from a previous marriage to 'Yax'nukwalas,' (known to Euro-Canadians simply as Martin) including Herbert and Spruce Martin, important participants in the Cranmer potlatch, and Mungo Martin, who James taught how to carve. (Nuytten, The Totem Carvers, pp.13-15.)

Curtis used the house posts as set props in his 1914 film *In the Land of the Headhunters.*

One of the two free-standing poles was also carved by James and belonged to Kingcome Inlet chief, Sisaxo'las (also spelt Sisa-kaulas) (figure 9), although Nuytten reports that it originally stood in front of a large communal house in Alert Bay. The pole relates to the story of Se-wid and contains six figures from top to bottom: Qolus, "with her folded wings, ...the sister of Thunderbird...[;]" Chief Tla-Wunum-Qolus, an

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20. Of the three poles used for Curtis' outside set on Deer Island, two are now at the University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology. The third may or may not be in Stanley Park. Holm and Quimby suggest that the pole in the Curtis film was a copy of the one now in the park: "Whether it exists today is not known, but it was a magnificent one, inspired by the great Raven pole of Wakyas, the first fully carved tall pole at Alert bay, which now stands extensively restored in Vancouver's Stanley Park. The Raven frontal pole at Deer Island was probably made for the film (it doesn't appear in any photographs of Fort Rupert or other villages), and it seems to be newly carved and painted in Curtis' pictures." The two house posts appear in a number of interior shots in the film as well. Citing the Hunt ledgers given to George Hunt, Holm and Quimby believe they were purchased on June 16, 1913 by George Hunt for Curtis for $90.50 and $75.00 in Fort Rupert. (Holm and Quimby, Edward S. Curtis.) Nuytten reports that Ellen Neel, James' granddaughter and a well-recognized carver in her own right, had said that the owner of the house posts "...lived in Alert Bay and refused to sell the poles, but offered to rent them out instead...Ellen laughed as she related how 'Old --' had boasted for years of the fine bargain he had made. He not only got the agreed rental payment, but also a brand new paint job - by Charlie James - paid for by the film maker." (Nuytten, Totem Carvers, p.29. Although Nuytten confesses that he cannot remember the name of the house posts' owner, presumably he is referring to Tsa-weenok.)

21. Ibid.


ancestral figure; Killer Whale; Sea-Otter "...shown eating a sea egg..."\(^{24}\) or sea urchin,\(^{25}\) which Gunn writes "...was the symbol of fertility and...usually represented at nuptial ceremonies[;]"\(^{26}\) Sea Bear; and a human head, "the open mouth representing a rival who had spoken against 'Sisaxo'las' - and who had been 'pushed down' - to the bottom of the pole."\(^{27}\)

The second free-standing pole (figure 10) belonged to Wakius (variously spelt Wakyas, Wakiash, or Wakias), was carved by Yurhwayu, and raised as the central front post of a communal house in Alert Bay in 1899 after the potlatch distribution of 350 blankets. It is reputed to be the first, fully carved, large pole erected in Alert Bay\(^{28}\) and was also further immortalized in a painting by Emily Carr. The seven figures from top to bottom are: Thunderbird, Killer Whale, Wolf, an ancestral figure called Nan-wa-kawie (The Wise One),\(^{29}\) Huk-Huk or Hoh-Hox,\(^{30}\) Grizzly Bear, and Raven, which originally had an enormous beak that served as

\(^{24}\) Gunn, Totem Poles, p.19.

\(^{25}\) Nuytten, Totem Carvers, p.30.

\(^{26}\) Gunn supports this by stating that Ellen Neel presented him with a small carved 'sea egg' as a wedding gift. (Gunn, Totem Poles, p.19.)

\(^{27}\) Ibid, p.30.

\(^{28}\) Ibid, p.15.

\(^{29}\) "Great Ancestor of Chief Wakias. In 1893, at a great potlatch...on Turnour Island, Wakias dedicated a miniature model of the mythical Speakers Staff of the Wise Man. Since then the pole has come to be known as Wakias' Talking Stick, telling the legend of Nan-wa-kawie and his sons outwitting the Great Cannibal." (Ibid, p.16.)

\(^{30}\) One of the Kwakwaka'wakw birds of heaven, it is more recently spelt huxwhukw by Bill Holm. (Holm, Smoky-Top, p.94.)
the entrance way to the Wakius house. The pole had been fitted to the facade of the original house in Alert Bay. Giant wings and a tail were also painted on the house front itself, connecting the pole to the house in an integrated composition that combined both two- and three-dimensional form.\textsuperscript{31}

AHS\textsuperscript{3}AV temporarily erected the poles near Lumberman's Arch so "...that visitors and tourists may have the opportunity of inspecting them."\textsuperscript{32} The poles in their original context, like names, stories, and other crests, related to the hierarchial standing of individuals within the numayms. They were indicative of socio-economic rank as determined by the inheritance of rights to ceremonial prerogatives and negotiated through the potlatch system. This is clearly demonstrated in the inclusion of a potlatch rival in the 'Sisaxo'las' pole. Boas wrote that house frontal poles were chiefly prerogatives that included figural carvings relating to ancestral legends,\textsuperscript{33} as exemplified by the Nan-wa-kawie figure on the Wakius pole. He further reported that a "...totem pole with various carvings is described only once and this description was called forth by a totem pole standing in front of the house in which the tale was told."\textsuperscript{34} The poles and house posts purchased for Stanley Park also included crests, like thunderbird, Qolus, and Huk-Huk or huxwhukw, associated with the Winter Ceremonials. Boas states that these particular carvings

\begin{footnotes}
\item[31] Gunn, Totem Poles, pp.15-17.
\item[32] Ibid.
\item[33] Franz Boas, Kwakiutl Culture as Reflected in Mythology, New York; American Folk-lore Society, 1935, p.2
\item[34] Ibid, p.2.
\end{footnotes}
were "...a substitute for carved house dishes."\textsuperscript{35}

Even moved within the Kwakwaka'wakw communities, from Kingcome Inlet to the cannery town of Alert Bay for example, they were still associated with a specific kin group through their attachment to the house structure of a ranking individual of a particular \textit{numaym} (figure 11). As references to lineage histories, they asserted as well the place of origin of these individuals and \textit{numayms} (perhaps even the relationship between \textit{numayms} given the possibility of marriage references in the 'Sisaxo'las' pole and the inclusion of crests associated with the Winter Ceremonials which were frequently transferred from father-in-law to son-in-law as part of the marriage ceremonies), creating some sense of order in the movement from peripheral, outlying villages to the centre of a new economic order at Alert Bay.\textsuperscript{36}

The re-location of the poles to Stanley Park thus separated

\textsuperscript{35} Ibid, p.3.

\textsuperscript{36} Codere writes that "Fort Rupert maintained its central position until about 1900, when it was superseded by Alert Bay as the centre for the people of Queen Charlotte Strait. Alert Bay had its start in 1870, when two White men established a salmon cannery there and sought Indian labour. In 1877, Rev. A. J. Hall began to work at Fort Rupert but soon moved to Alert Bay. By 1881 he had a school there and a home large enough to accommodate several young girls taught 'domestic duties' by his wife, and by 1888 he had built a sawmill to provide employment and lumber for single-family houses. In 1881 the federal government established a Kwawkewlth Agency at Fort Rupert, but this too moved to Alert Bay. In 1894 the Department of Indian Affairs opened an industrial school for boys at Alert Bay....Meanwhile, Mrs. Hall's program had grown into a residential school for girls....The Kwakiutl were also becoming assimilated into the Canadian economy and dependent on money income. This development led to a period of great prosperity between 1900 and the mid-1920s. Wealth became widespread, primarily because the old organization of production, knowledge of local resources, and industrious habits fit the new opportunities offered...." (Codere, "Kwakiutl," Handbook, p.365.)
the objects from specific locational references that related to their role as indicators of rank in kinship groups validated within a specific ceremonial and territorial context. Within the European understanding of First Nations objects as something unique or distinctive from the past, the construction of meaning in the poles' even newer location in Stanley Park obscured the historic geographic and lineage meanings that would have been still apparent to most Kwakwaka'wakw residents at the cannery town.

Although touristic in intention, the relocation of the poles was based on the same ideological understanding of Northwest Coast societies as part of the past evident in much of the anthropological writing from the time. In the popularized context of Stanley Park, the ideological distancing in terms of space and time had significant local implications. The conflation of different societies and linguistic groups into one "totem pole culture" exemplified by the crest poles of the "distant Kwakiutl" of the central coast contributed to the erasure of physical reminders of the local Salish, who did not conventionally raise free-standing poles,\(^{37}\) and their claims to Stanley Park and other parts of the city. This temporal and spatial distance, akin to anthropologist Renato Rosaldo's

\(^{37}\) The most common form of Central Coast Salish monumental sculpture was the housepost depicting "...mythical creatures associated with family history, notable ancestors, events which displayed ancestors' spirit powers, or magical privileges of the family. They faced into the large winter houses declaiming to occupants and guests alike the long history, wealth, and high status of the family." *(J.E. Michael Kew, Sculpture and Engraving of the Central Coast Salish Indians, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology Museum Note Number 9, 1980. n.p.)*
imperialist nostalgia where the colonial "innocent yearning"\textsuperscript{38} for an unaltered colonized society concealed the colonizer's "...complicity with often brutal domination"\textsuperscript{39} (like the razing of XwayXway) provided the groundwork for a pacific, artificial history in which the "Indian" becomes a unique, geographic trope.

Less history than geographic symbol, the poles now became the tangible manifestations of an imagined past in Vancouver's unified social memory, a past that legitimized the association and its existence and established a powerful colonial metaphor and justification for the "modernization" of British Columbia. The original intention of the association to place the poles in a village next to a reconstructed HBC post indicates an interest in inserting the First Nations presence within a tableau of Western historicity. The juxtaposition of the crest posts with the classical "civilized" style of Lumberman's Arch and with downtown Vancouver just across the bay accomplished this on its own.

There were likely a number of reasons for Kwakwaka'wakw decisions to sell the poles, depending on the individuals and families involved. It was then easy to suggest, given the government suppression of the potlatch, that these sorts of objects no longer served a purpose within Kwakwaka'wakw society, that their redundancy made them available for sale. However, although pressures related to Canadian colonialism, like Christianization, contributed to the sale of objects, as we have


\textsuperscript{39} Ibid.
seen throughout the mid-twentieth century potlatching continued, often in a private, rather than public context. Therefore, potlatch-related objects retained symbolic currency in certain First Nations circles. It is possible that certain individuals even re-channeled money from the sale of the poles and other objects back into the potlatches, or given some of the financial strains of the 1920s, into more pressing concerns, like boat purchases or, more simply, tying a family through a financially difficult winter.

Furthermore, as Boas indicates, the recitation of the associated story was only done once and within a controlled context. The material manifestation of the prerogative can then be seen as secondary to the inherited right to the prerogative and its validation through a potlatch, although such objects were indeed vital to acts of social reproduction, fixing relations of inheritance and hierarchy in material form. Codere reports that the "...Kwakiutl are also alleged to have...gone on paying for or trafficking in the coppers deposited in the

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40. Codere writes: "These 'private' potlatches were a relatively late development as a means of continuing potlatching in the face of the law. It is exceptionally interesting that a written record seems to have made 'private' potlatches possible, since one of the functions of publicity in this non-literate society had always been to make important transactions like potlatch distributions a matter of record before many witnesses." (Codere, Fighting With Property, p.88.)

41. Codere reports that "...Kwakiutl prosperity suffered a setback in the 1920s with the difficulty of financing power boats (introduced in 1911). Difficulties lasted through the Depression but prosperity was restored by the boom in the fishing industry during World War II." (Codere, "Kwakiutl," p.364.)

42. Boas, Kwakiutl Culture, p.2
ethnological collections of the museums of North America."

Bill Holm, discussing Willie Seaweed's sale of masks to Charles Newcombe and the Provincial Museum in 1914, argues that "[s]elling masks, which represent noble prerogatives, to outsiders might seem to be a strange act for a conservative chief steeped in the traditions of his people. Yet it seems never to have been really troublesome for the Kwakwaka'wakw. A fine mask was and is prized, especially if it is an heirloom, but it is the right to display it, derived from ancient tradition, that is jealously guarded. Outsiders will not claim that privilege, and new masks can be made."

For some individuals the location of objects was not as important as the right to the associated titles. In addition, there may have been prestige associated with the enshrinement of a family monument in an urban, non-Kwakwaka'wakw setting, thereby extending the awareness of individual and lineage accomplishments to outside the Kwakwaka'wakw communities. Continuing to celebrate and validate crests within the underground Kwakwaka'wakw potlatches after 1922, some individuals may have then seen the sale of a pole as a chance to simultaneously gain economically and assert the importance of their particular numaym history. This is another example of the contestation and negotiation of meaning surrounding Northwest Coast objects in the twentieth century.

AHSAV also demonstrated a certain level of prestige in their

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44. Holm, Smoky-Top, p.29.
re-erection of the poles. The display variation favoured by the association was brought on by the province's vast store of natural resources and its increasing regional economic power. There was no need to commission model replicas, as Boas and Swanton had done for the American Museum of Natural History in New York. The association instead proposed to buy or simply reconstruct an entire village within the vast park land of Stanley Park. And while Aldona Jonaitis suggests that the target audiences in New York for the hegemonic intentions of the American Museum of Natural History were specifically non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants, the Vancouver association sought to construct its life-size tableau in a place frequented by Vancouver's entire resident population and visible to anyone entering or leaving the city's main port. The poles of Stanley Park, erected by a sub-association of the municipality, were to become part of Vancouver's physical profile, as millions of visitors to Vancouver can now attest.

II. Negotiations Between AHSAV and the Squamish Band

The AHSAV Executive's minutes clearly indicate the

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45. Boas and Swanton, writes Jonaitis, "...despite their conscious intentions to celebrate Indian art and promote the equality of all races, nevertheless ended up contributing to the design of an invented culture and reinforcing a process in which the display of Indian art functions in a larger context of major ideological significance that had less to do with Native Americans than with communicating the power, authority, and dominance of the elite class - largely to immigrant workers." (Aldona Jonaitis, "Franz Boas, John Swanton, and the New Haida Sculpture at the American Museum of Natural History," The Early Years of Native American Art History: The Politics of Scholarship and Collecting, Ed. Janet Catherine Berlo, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1992, p.23.)
importance of obtaining unaltered structures. The original intention was to simply manufacture a facsimile village, but this was soon followed by the discussion of a more ambitious plan involving the purchase of the village of Alert Bay in January 1924 (the site only two years earlier of the Cranmer potlatch prosecutions), since at least one of the directors questioned the authenticity of the poles already purchased and argued the facsimile "village as proposed...would be of no real value." However, this was never realized. "It requires little effort of the imagination to satisfy the mind that no single, pure example could now be found standing, and in a fit condition to be removed and re-erected," wrote Reverend John Goodfellow of the association's attempts to remove the entire cannery town to Stanley Park in 1925.

The plan to erect a 'totem pole' village using the notorious Kwakwaka'wakw, whose public reputation as symbolic of the whole coast had been bolstered by Boas's studies, the Curtis film, and the Cranmer potlatch, was sunk in 1925 by Squamish people. Andrew Paull, translator for the McKenna-McBride Commission in Salish territories, current secretary of the Allied Indian Tribes of British Columbia and future president of the North American

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46. Boas' field assistant, George Hunt, was willing to build the facsimile village for a salary of $150 a month. (AHSAV Directors' Meeting Minutes, March 22, 1923, CAV Add. MSS. 336.)

47. AHSAV Annual Meeting Minutes, January 1924, (CAV Add. MSS. 336).

Indian Brotherhood,\(^{49}\) called a meeting with Department of Indian Affairs agent C. C. Perry, and members of the AHSAV Indian village committee.\(^{50}\) After the rise of the pan-Indian political organizations, the circumstance now required a non-Native committee to negotiate and accommodate. According to minutes of the meeting, Paull cited Squamish objections, stating that the proposed spot was where Chief Capilano had welcomed Captain Vancouver, so it therefore was significant to the Squamish people from this historical point, and "...it was here that the Squamish kept their best fighting men, Medicine men and the place where all the Tribal Dance masks were made; in fact, it was far the most important of all their village sites."\(^{51}\) As it was Squamish land, they did not want a Kwakwaka'wakw village. They had no objections to a mixed village or to unattached poles, but they wanted the living Squamish to be recognized.\(^{52}\) It also seems that they leaked news of the meeting to the local media and the AHSAV funding drive dried up. The four poles already purchased were erected and then turned over to the care of the city's Parks Board.\(^{53}\)

While the AHSAV members bickered among themselves over the 'authenticity' of their purchases and proposals, the reference to

\(^{49}\) Tennant, *Aboriginal Peoples and Politics*, pp. 89, 94, and 120.

\(^{50}\) AHSAV Directors' Meeting Minutes, October 9, 1925 (CAV Add. MSS. 336).

\(^{51}\) Ibid.

\(^{52}\) Ibid.

\(^{53}\) Ibid.
a historical Squamish presence had more immediate implications. Through the 1920s there was a problem with squatters in Stanley Park, especially on Deadman's Island on the south side of Brockton Point, in Coal Harbour itself. At the same time, one resident, known popularly as 'Aunt Sally' still remained at the old XwayXway village site on the opposite side of the point, facing out towards Burrard Narrows. When the Parks Board request for a lease to Deadman's Island was approved in January 1929, the park authorities sought eviction notices to clean the park of its 'unwanted' residents. 'Aunt Sally' was the only Stanley Park resident able to establish a legal right to live in the park since she was able to prove she had lived at XwayXway for more than sixteen years. Her property was subsequently purchased on behalf of the Parks Board by philanthropist W.C. Shelley for $15,500.  

In the end, the village idea was never realized, although Vancouver Parks Board has since bought, commissioned and erected a number of other free-standing poles, moving them all south to Brockton Point in 1963.  

Ironically, given the construction of First Nations societies in the Stanley Park project as something of the past, 'Aunt Sally' legally claimed the right to live near Lumberman's Arch and the newly-erected poles. In addition, the two house posts and one of the free-standing poles were carved by famed Kwakwaka'wakw carver Charlie James who died eleven years after their erection in Stanley Park. AHSAV members, who wanted

54. Steele, Stanley Park, pp.32 and 50-51.
"...to make the model Indian Village as much as possible like the original habitations of the Indians in very early days," had erected poles carved by a living, contemporary carver. The AHSAV project is another contribution to the creation of a modernist paradox that "...a culture..." can "...appear to have disappeared while its members continue to exist...[,"] a paradox that by its conceptual instability was destined to implode.

**Summary**

The Stanley Park poles have since become major tourist fixtures and are closely identified with the city's identity. The thunderbirds by Charlie James in particular created an evocative image for the park. Of all the poles eventually erected in Stanley Park, Nuytten argues that these two

...have come to represent a typical northwest totem pole in the minds of many people. These two poles have been used for decades by advertising agencies, television stations, tourist bureaus and postcard printers. Line drawing versions are found on drinking glasses, spoons, paperweights, keychains and the whole gamut of tourist kitsch. It is almost incredible the way that these particular poles have popped up in tourist bureau hand-outs - children's school books, encyclopedias - European guide books - Indian lore and craft books and so on.

Behind their touristic reputation, the poles also constituted a site in which the conflicting claims and agendas of

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56. AHSAV Annual Meeting Minutes, January 1924, (CAV Add. MSS. 336).


Native and non-Native groups were negotiated in the 1920s. The Stanley Park project demonstrates the ways in which the poles represented historical visions used to legitimize claims to territory in a city rapidly expanding through non-Native immigration. The conflation of different First Nations groups into an ancient, homogenous "totem pole culture" symbolized by the material forms of the Kwakwaka'wakw, so recently the subject of federal disciplinary actions, as a means of promoting the industrial progress of the city was brought into question by the Squamish. The Squamish recognized the implications of ASHAV's imaginative display, and forced the organization to accommodate their concerns. What was at stake in these claims was partially illustrated in Shelley's purchase of Aunt Sally's land for the Parks Board: namely, land ownership and financial compensation for its loss.
CHAPTER 3

Northwest Coast "Art" as National Heritage: Two Federal Projects of the Late 1920s

International interest in Northwest Coast objects and the popularity of displays like Stanley Park's cultivated a realization among Euro-Canadians culminating after the Second World War, that the nation indeed possessed a "... resource as important to... Coastal British Columbia as the pyramids are to Egypt or the ruins of ancient Rome to modern Italy." The depletion of a Canadian heritage resource had been a concern to some in the small intellectual community in British Columbia at least since the turn of the century. Douglas Cole quotes archaeologist Charles Hill-Tout, who in 1901 "... counted himself as 'one of those who never cease to regret' at the passing of so many treasures to the United States and felt it 'a serious reflection upon the Province' that anyone wishing to study the region's aborigines 'must go to New York to do it.'"

By the standards of Hill-Tout and his concerned colleagues in British Columbia, Ottawa's participation in museum collecting in the province must have seemed tardy. The National Museum was not established until 1910. However, after the First World War Ottawa's interest in the Northwest Coast heightened. The removal of the Cranmer potlatch paraphernalia to Ottawa bolstered the National Museum's collection significantly, and the museum's

presence in British Columbia increased dramatically from 1924 to the beginning of the Great Depression in 1929. Two of the most important projects from this period, the *in situ* preservation of totem poles along the new Canadian National Railway (CNR) line in the Skeena Valley and an exhibition of traditional Northwest Coast objects alongside the modernist paintings of Emily Carr, A.Y. Jackson and a number of other well known American and Canadian contemporary artists, form the content of this chapter. In promoting Northwest Coast objects not only as antiquity, but also as art and heritage, Marius Barbeau played an important role in both National Museum projects. Continuing the construction of Northwest Coast objects as part of the past, these activities also furthered the federal government's interests by promoting tourism in the west. After the Cranmer potlatch and the unsanctioned removal of poles to Stanley Park, the projects reaffirmed as well government control over the objects' location and meaning.

A comparison of these projects illustrates the ways in which the National Museum sought to balance its roles as scientific and educational resource and helpmate of the state. In addition to promoting Canadian business interests through touristic representations, the construction of First Nations objects as art lent a sense of prestige to the museum's collection and therefore its activities. Coombes argues that at this time the use of the term "curio" or "curiousity" hindered "any effective educational use of ethnographic material" and undermined the museum's

reputation as a knowledge-producing institution. While both railway and gallery projects supported similar ideological constructions of First Nations objects within an evolutionary narrative and both projects were smaller, linked components of a broader based strategy to encourage industrial development, the West Coast exhibition was instrumental in bolstering the public perception of the National Museum, its specialist staff and its programmes by philosophically legitimizing the objects contained within the museum's spaces.

I. The Totem Pole Preservation Project

While there had been some piece-meal collecting done by Canadian museums prior to 1910, with the arrival of three million immigrants in Canada between 1896 and 1914, both federal and provincial government resources were concentrated on more formative colonial issues, like expansion of the transportation infrastructure. Yet, increased immigration and industrial activity meant increases in the funding available to the state. By 1909, British Columbia's Provincial Museum was able to hire C. F. Newcombe to reorganize its ethnological collection and publish his Guide to the Anthropological Collection of the Provincial Museum. Government revenues more than doubled between 1909 and

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4. McLaren, Our Own Master Race, pp.46-47. This growth is exemplified in Vancouver's emerging urbanism. As Ormsby reports, the combination of industrial and agricultural expansion and increased immigration during this period made Vancouver a commercial hub and propelled it from shanty town to Canada's third largest city in the forty years following its founding in 1886. (Ormsby, British Columbia.)
1911. In 1911, the museum provided Newcombe with a $3000 collecting budget. Although Newcombe paid specific attention to acquiring monumental poles for Victoria, this local collecting effort was short lived, collapsing along with the provincial economy, in 1913.

Around the same time, Ottawa's role in assembling museum collections from British Columbia also took a significant turn. In 1910, the Victoria Memorial Museum, which would later become the National Museum of Canada, opened in the nation's capital. One of Boas's doctoral students from Columbia University, Edward Sapir, was hired as the first chief of the museum's anthropological division. Sapir pursued a strong collecting policy and in moves that would directly contribute to the strengthening of the museum's focus on British Columbia especially after the First World War, hired Harlan Smith, Marius Barbeau and Diamond Jenness.

Cole calls Barbeau "...the most aggressive collector" of the three. Born in 1883, Barbeau grew up in rural Quebec and enjoyed a privileged education, studying law at Laval University and then anthropology at Oxford under a Rhodes scholarship. Even while out on National Museum-funded fieldwork, Barbeau collected privately on the side for such competitor institutions as the American Museum of Natural History and the Heye-owned Museum of the American Indian in New York as well as the Royal Ontario

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6. Ibid.
Museum. He also wrote on the use of First Nations subjects and other nationalistic "folk" motifs as the basis for a modern, patriotic Canadian art, an idea that echoes the concept of a mosaic for the post-assimilationist model for modern Canada popularized by John Gibbon in the 1930s. In 1927, the same year as the West Coast exhibition, Barbeau helped organize a festival of French-Canadian folksongs and dances at the Chateau Frontenac in Quebec City. Intensely proud of his accomplishments, Barbeau later wrote: "I say that I had a happy career...because I succeeded in what I thought I should do, and I had the best judgment...because I was a specialist in those subjects."

The emergence of institutions of "culture" at both provincial and federal levels and their shared interest in assembling collections specifically from the Pacific Coast stimulated a competition over Northwest Coast objects as matters of provincial and federal patrimony. In the 1920s, the federal government dominated this informal competition as it sought to not only consolidate its authority in western Canada, but also to assemble a distinctive national identity for both domestic and

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international consumption.

While the First World War interrupted American and Canadian collecting efforts alike, the interest in Northwest Coast objects as examples of Canadian heritage intensified after 1918. In this period, the objects were tied to the growing issues of Canadian political and cultural independence. The federal government demanded the international community's acknowledgment of Canadian nationhood by using the 1919 Treaty of Versailles and the creation of the League of Nations to assert a foreign policy independent from Britain's. At the same time, national identity was still in flux during the 1920s, with many unsure how Canada could simultaneously maintain its imperial connections and forge its own national path.

This uncertainty was exemplified in Anglo-Canada's response to First Nations societies and their objects. On one hand, government policy in the 1920s ruthlessly stressed Anglo-conformity, not only for First Nations peoples, but also for the 800,000 non-Anglo-Saxon immigrants who had come through Minister of the Interior Clifford Sifton's 1896 "open door."


13. McLaren, Our Own Master Race, p.46.

14. Clifford Sifton, Minister of the Interior from 1896 to 1905, announced an "open door" immigration policy that led to the immigration wave ending in 1913. While the federal government sought specifically British agricultural immigrants, their lack of success forced the relaxation of ethnically-based immigration quotas. "Our desire," said Sifton in 1901, "is to promote the immigration of farmers and farm labourers. We have not been disposed to exclude foreigners of any nationality who seemed likely to become successful agriculturalists." (Knowles, Strangers at Our Gates, pp.58-59.)
British Columbia Premier Simon Fraser Tolmie announced in 1928 that: "We want British Columbia British and nothing else."\textsuperscript{15} On the other hand, Northwest Coast objects had already proven to be attractive Canadian symbols; symbols in which American and European museums had expressed an interest and over which officials of the various levels of Canadian government therefore felt obliged to exert control.

Rumours of the purchase and export of five Kwakwaka'wakw poles in 1924 seems to have galvanized the resolve of the federal authorities. Further investigation led to the realization that these poles were to remain in Canada. Two of them had been promised to the Vancouver Parks commissioner and were destined for Stanley Park.\textsuperscript{16} Rebellious potlatchers and avaricious foreign museums were thus not the only threats to Ottawa's control over objects and their meanings.

Charles Stewart, commissioner of the Department of the Interior, in a response to a plea for the poles' preservation from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, an international celebrity sympathetic with the reform of government policy towards First Nations and to whom Stewart must have felt obliged to write directly, equated the efforts of AHSAV with those of the foreign museums and announced the federal government's novel solution:

\begin{quote}
It is true that prohibiting their export destroys the Indians' best market and so helps protect the poles, but a number have
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{15} Quoted in Roy, "British Columbia's Fear of Asians," p.162.

\textsuperscript{16} William Halliday to J. D. McLean, December 8, 1921, from Indian Affairs Black Series, Reel # C-10185, Volume 4086, File 507787.
lately been sold within Canada and placed in public or private parks where they present a more or less incongruous appearance. We have come to the conclusion that the best method will be to try and re-awaken the interest and pride of the Indians in the remains of their former art and to enlist their cooperation in preserving the poles where they are.\textsuperscript{17}

However, while members of the federal government professed a desire to preserve the poles and reawaken an "interest and pride" in a "former art," their reasons were more "utilitarian and pragmatic."\textsuperscript{18} In the mid-1920s, efforts had begun in Ottawa to tie reconfigured poles and other objects to ". . . a wider network of influence that extended across the country through educational, industrial and commercial interests."\textsuperscript{19} As art historian Ann Morrison argues, in this wide-ranging federal project, ". . . native artistic production was... 'redeemed' as part of Canadian art history, and . . . seen as an available source for decorative design motifs that could be used for the production of manufactured and industrial products, made entirely in Canada."\textsuperscript{20}

While Morrison specifically connects the National Gallery's 1927 Exhibition of West Coast Art - Native and Modern to the use of Northwest Coast objects as a source for commercial designs, this connection is farther reaching. It can be seen to include other

\textsuperscript{17}. Charles Stewart to Arthur Conan Doyle, August 29, 1924, from Indian Affairs Black Series, Reel # C-10185, Volume 4086, File 507787.


\textsuperscript{19}. \textit{Ibid}, p.95.

\textsuperscript{20}. \textit{Ibid}, p.94.
federal projects, like the preservation scheme in the Skeena Valley and Harlan Smith's accompanying film, *The Tsimshian Indians of the Skeena River of British Columbia*, and the printing of a stamp bearing the image of a totem pole in 1925. All of these were intended to promote tourism along the CNR line leading through the Skeena Valley to its western terminus in Prince Rupert, also the northern-most, major Canadian port and, not coincidentally, a stop on the steamship line from Olympia, Washington to Skagway, Alaska.

The preservation project began in the fall of 1924 with ethnologist Barbeau sent to survey poles in Kispiox, Hazelton, Hagwelget, Kitsegukla, and Kitwanga by a committee that included Scott in his capacity as Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, Charles Camsell, Deputy Minister of Mines, J. B. Harkin, Commissioner of Canadian National Parks, and Barbeau's senior at the museum, Edward Sapir and Barbeau himself. The museum's Harlan I. Smith was sent to the Skeena Valley the following year to supervise the preservation of poles beginning in Kitwanga. All the costs were paid for by the Department of Indian Affairs and the Canadian National Railway provided materials and a special engineer, T. B. Campbell21 ("Totem Pole" Campbell as he was later referred to by the Victoria newspaper *The British Colonist*).22

Of course, the CNR had a vested interest in the project given that its passenger line ran adjacent to the villages and


poles in question. The Skeena line and its Pacific terminus, Prince Rupert, were originally built in 1913 by the British-owned Grand Trunk Pacific Railway. It went into receivership at the end of the First World War and was taken over by the federal government in the autumn of 1919. The federal government's ability to shape the patterns of tourism and development was an important motivation for the program. Kitwanga had been called by the Montreal Gazette "...the showplace of northern British Columbia and, next to Niagara Falls, the most photographed spot in Canada." Cole quotes Smith's assertions that "steps should be taken to save in situ or guard until that can be done totem poles at Kitwanga, the best on the C.N. line route or they will go as did those at Alert Bay, the best on the steamship lines." Smith's comments illustrate the poles' place in the competition for tourist attention between Ottawa and local municipalities, like Vancouver, and suggest that the poles had an important place in the central government's plans for the over-all development of the province, details of which were not shared with local

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23. When the Grand Trunk Pacific first drew up plans for Prince Rupert and the Skeena rail line, they claimed Prince Rupert as the best natural harbour on the entire Pacific Coast. It was two days closer to the Orient than either Vancouver or San Francisco and thus gave the railway claim to the shortest round-the-world route between its train and steamship lines. Promotional material recounted glowing reports of the possibilities of fishing and logging industries along the coast and farming in the interior. Landscape architects Brett and Hall of Boston were hired to make Prince Rupert the most beautiful city in North America. (Phylis Bowman, Whistling Through the Wind, Prince Rupert: P. Bowman, 1980.)


The federal government was under considerable pressure to turn the now publicly-owned company into a profitable enterprise. Tourism was one component of their plan to do so. The federal government saw the poles as an important attraction in the use of tourism and the development of the transportation infrastructure that connected northern British Columbia overland to Edmonton and the east and along the coast to Vancouver and the mainland United States in the south. Purchases of poles, such as AHSAV's from Alert Bay for Stanley Park and the first sale of a Gitxsan pole in 1923 (to New York's American Museum of Natural History), directly threatened the financial viability of the plan by relocating the attractions away from the steamship and train lines and thus funneling tourists away from the new regional development in the northwest.

It was also important in this development scheme to secure government authority over land distribution and the utilization of natural resources. The potlatch ban served this objective in its attempt to erase indigenous modes of authority and resource control. The reconfiguration of the poles as touristic reminders of a "primitive" past contributed as well through increasing the commodity status of ceremonial objects. As touristic signposts, the poles were removed from fulfilling a function in contemporary life as territorial markers or as indicators of relevant leadership status. In this sense then, the federal display

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projects of the 1920s furthered the intentions of the Cranmer potlatch prosecutions and Halliday's post-trial exhibit. The relocation of the poles to obscure or soften the image of industrialization in British Columbia for tourists emerged as an important government strategy in this earlier period.

The priority given projects securing monumental attractions, namely the poles, for tourist consumption rather than projects that might encourage the production of objects as a source of local employment indicates how much Scott and the others in Ottawa saw or wanted to construct Northwest Coast objects as something of the past and not the present and of leisure rather than commerce. Nonetheless, Smith suggested activities aimed at promoting the contemporary production and marketing of local indigenous "art" during his fieldwork in Kitwanga as early as 1925. He proposed the formation of a national 'totem pole' park in the Skeena Valley called the 'Indian National Park of Temlaham,' coinciding with the 1928 publication of The Downfall of Temlaham, Barbeau's fictionalized account of the so-called 1888 'Skeena River Uprising.' Along with the establishment of the national park, Smith advocated the development of souvenirs as tourist attractions. His suggestions included the sale of miniatures, jewelry, and other curio items, but his passion was his own plaster cast replicas of pole parts. "Anyone wishing to put himself through school or university," he wrote to Scott,

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"with $5.00 worth of tools and $10.00 worth of plaster could turn out one of these plaques per day before breakfast for several weeks."²⁹ And while one of Smith's plaster casts made its way into Scott's departmental art collection,³⁰ the promotion of a contemporary arts industry was discussed only briefly and never in detail. Smith asked Scott, "Should I vigorously encourage manufacture and sale as souvenirs of baskets, blankets, paddles, etc. and all such artistic things as they may make in the future?"³¹ Scott was uninterested in directing departmental resources to this kind of activity, although Smith's suggestions later influenced promotional activists like Alice Ravenhill and George Raley in the 1930s and 1940s, as discussed in chapters 4 and 5.

As for the preservation of the poles themselves, "[t]he initial step was to gain the goodwill and consent of the Indian owners of the poles," wrote Smith in a 1926 project summary published in the National Museum's Annual Report, "This was not easy, for they were unfavourably disposed toward white men in general, and particularly toward Government officials."³² And while Smith failed to mention specific legislation that might

²⁹. Harlan I. Smith to Duncan Campbell Scott, November 11, 1925, from Indian Affairs, Black Series, RG #10, Volume 4086, File 507787-2.

³⁰. Collins to Scott, March 19, 1932.


have displeased the Gitxsan owners, he nonetheless listed a
series of grievances some of which, he suggested, were "no doubteal, some imaginary." 33

The white men had settled on their land and
were pushing the Indians more and more to the
wall; they had built canneries on the coast
that were destroying all the fish; they were
cutting all the best timber in the country so
that within a few years none would remain for
the Indian; they sold whisky in Government
liquor stores and put the Indians in jail
when they drank it. A few years ago, they
had prohibited the erection of totem-poles;
why did they wish now to preserve them? 34

As Smith admitted himself, this was a difficult position to
explain. "Much tact and patience were necessary to answer these
and other objections the Indians raised to any interference with
their poles, but in the end most of the difficulties were happily
overcome." 35

With permission from the pole owners, Smith hired labourers,
found gravel and hauled it to the sites, cut wood poles to
reinforce damaged crest poles, obtained permission to relocate
some of the poles next to the rail lines, and trimmed the tops of
trees that may have obscured the view from passing trains
(figures 12 through 14). He also made plans for the erection of
"show signs so tourists may have chance to see poles at each
place where in sight of trains" 36 and labeled the restored

33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
36. Harlan I. Smith field report, Kitwanga, July 22, 1925,
p.4, Canadian Museum of Civilization, Sapir Correspondence, Box
429, File 83.
poles.\textsuperscript{37} The field seasons of 1925 and 1926 saw the restoration of sixteen poles in the villages of Kispiox and Kitwanga, but Smith's optimism about the situation was short lived.

Two incidents in 1926 contributed to the increasing difficulty of Smith's work and made legislation that in theory echoed the project's preservationist intentions and in practice ensured Ottawa's control appear all the more urgent. The first incident occurred in April 1926, when Wallis A. Olen of Clintonville, Wisconsin contacted first Harlan Smith and then Diamond Jenness, Edward Sapir's replacement as chief of the Anthropology Division at the National Museum, about purchasing a crest pole. Jenness then contacted Scott about the legality of shipping poles outside of Canada without government authorization.\textsuperscript{38} Scott replied that "...unfortunately there is no legal authority preventing the shipping of these totem poles outside of Canada but I do not think it is advisable for Mr. Olen to be made aware of this."\textsuperscript{39}

In the second incident, Chief Seamadaks (variously spelt Semideck or Semidec, and also featured in Smith's film, see figure 15) of Kitwanga, the village in which Harlan Smith was

\textsuperscript{37} Harlan I. Smith field reports, Hazelton, June 15, 1925, pp.1-3 and Kitwanga, July 22, 1925, pp.1-5, Canadian Museum of Civilization, Sapir Correspondence, Box 429, File 83.

\textsuperscript{38} Diamond Jenness to Duncan Campbell Scott, April 8 and 10, 1926; Duncan Campbell Scott to Diamond Jenness, April 9, 1926, from Canadian Museum of Civilization, Sapir Correspondence, Box 432, File 34.

\textsuperscript{39} Duncan Campbell Scott to Diamond Jenness, April 9, 1926, from Canadian Museum of Civilization, Sapir Correspondence, Box 432, File 34.
working, sought to sell a pole for $330 and ten masks for an additional $70 to cover medical expenses. The North West Biscuit Company of Edmonton was the potential buyer and Scott's own direct correspondence to Seamadaks had little effect in dissuading him.\footnote{Chief Seamadaks to Harlan I. Smith, October 7, 1926; Harlan I. Smith to Duncan Campbell Scott, November 10, 1926 and July 21, 1926; Duncan Campbell Scott to Chief Seamadaks, November 15, 1926; and Duncan Campbell Scott to North West Biscuit Company, July 22, 1926, from Indian Affairs Black Series, Reel # C-10186, Volume 4086, File 507787-2.} Jenness and Scott had drafted legislation by the end of the same month that extended government jurisdiction over the poles, making it illegal to tamper in any way with any "Indian grave-house, carved grave-pole, totem-pole, carved house-post or large rock embellished with paintings or carvings"\footnote{Diamond Jenness to Duncan Campbell Scott, April 28, 1926; Duncan Campbell Scott to Diamond Jenness, April 26, 1926 and May 5, 1926, from Canadian Museum of Civilization, Sapir Correspondence, Box 432, File 34.} without government permission. In the various re-writes, Scott and Jenness worded the legislation specifically to include control of First Nations individuals under the amendment.\footnote{Ibid.} This gave the Department of Indian Affairs veto power over the sale of any pole on reserve land and thus, in tandem with the government's ability to declare sites and objects part of Canada's national heritage, the power to control the destination of all poles. Once again the authority of the Department of Indian Affairs under Scott's direction asserted itself and disempowered First Nations peoples. Cole remarks:

Where enforceable, this prevented private
sales, but did not seriously impede sales to public institutions. Nor did it affect exports. Indian Affairs policy — and National Museum advice — was that poles should be preserved in situ where they were potential tourist attractions, but where they stood far of the travel routes, as at Cape Mudge or in the Nass valley, they should be in museums. If Canadian museums could not afford them — and in the 1930s few could — they should be allowed to be sold abroad.  

In both Seamadaks and Olen cases, the government halted initial sales. The Seamadaks pole would come back to haunt Scott, however, and is perhaps indicative of how Smith and the other workers associated with the Totem Pole Preservation Committee failed to gain the trust and cooperation they claimed in their correspondence. Seamadaks first refused to grant permission to touch his two poles in Kitwanga, the one village where Smith had had any semblance of success in the project. Furthermore, despite an ownership dispute internal to Kitwanga and rooted in the intricacies of the Gitxsan potlatch system, Seamadaks went ahead and sold the pole to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1929 for $300. To add insult to injury, the removal of the pole was done under the supervision of the CNR engineer, T. B. Campbell, without the permission of the Department of Indian Affairs. Scott was forced to grant permission for the

43. Cole, Captured Heritage, p.278.


45. Edgar Hyde to Duncan Campbell Scott January 31, 1929, from Indian Affairs Black Series, Reel # C-10186, Volume 4086, File 507787-2.
pole's sale after the fact because of his own employee's failure to notify the department. Scott and the committee were further caught in that if they had themselves bought the pole and preserved it on site, they would have been forced to pay not only for any new poles they wished to conserve, but also for the ones they had already finished.⁴⁶

The amendment to control pole sales coincided with a second amendment to the Indian Act in 1927 aimed at blocking First Nations abilities to further claims to land within the judicial system. First Nations individuals and groups now had to gain written permission from the Department of Indian Affairs before hiring a solicitor. This effectively resulted in a ban on land claims activities and was in direct response to petitions made by the pan-Indian political organization the Allied Tribes of British Columbia under the leadership of Andrew Paull and Peter Kelly and the legal direction of Arthur E. O'Meara, an Ontario lawyer and Anglican minister associated with the primarily Euro-Canadian group, Friends of the Indians. The Allied Tribes were themselves responding to the reneging on the First Nations right to consent to or deny reserve cut-offs in the provincial-federal McKenna-McBride Agreement.⁴⁷ Together, these amendments, along with the Cranmer potlatch prosecutions, represent a multi-pronged federal attack on indigenous leadership structures and an attempt at consolidating federal authority throughout the 1920s. One of

⁴⁶. Duncan Campbell Scott to Edgar Hyde, January 9, 1929, from Indian Affairs Black Series, Reel # C-10186, Volume 4086, File 507787-2.

the results of this was a heightened tension between Native and non-Native groups.

When Smith and the crew moved on to Kitsegukla in 1927, they were handed a protest petition signed by fifteen Kitsegukla chiefs and forbidden to touch any of the poles. The blame for this came back to Tom Campbell of Hazelton (who, when later arrested for potlatching in 1931, was described by Agent Mortimer as the "I.W.W. type"). Campbell, whose portrait was painted by Langdon Kihn (figure 16) and included in the 1927 exhibition, refused to let Smith touch two of his poles, claiming they had been cut down by provincial road crews and that he had not yet received compensation. The blame for this was laid by the local Indian Agent, Edgar Hyde, on "...propaganda spread by Tom Campbell," who alleged that the government intended to move villages and give the old ones to the railway 'and other such nonsense.' In one letter, Hyde wrote that "Tom Campbell is one of the worst agitators in the Agency known as such to both Indians and Whites alike, he is very bitter towards the White people and any kind of government and gives vent to his feelings

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48. W. Langdon Kihn, an American, had twelve canvases, mostly portraits, included in the National Gallery's 1927 Exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art Native and Modern. Kihn had gone to the Skeena in 1924 with Barbeau and stayed in Kitwancool for nine months. Morrison suggests that the original impetus for the exhibition was Barbeau's idea to exhibit Kihn's paintings alongside Northwest Coast objects, an idea that was then expanded to include Canadian painters by Eric Brown and the gallery's board of trustees. (Morrison, Canadian Art and Cultural Appropriation, pp.12-28.)

when opportunity affords." Smith also singled Campbell out as a troublemaker, citing other reasons for the opposition: "too much home brew, the unsettled land question, broken promises by an earlier photographer, white jealousy at not being hired for the work, a missionary's opposition to preservation, and the Indians' fear that the government would own the poles if it spent money preserving them."

When the people in Kitsegukla heard of Seamadaks successful sale, all the poles in Kitsegukla went up for sale. Ironically, the collecting activities of committee member Barbeau undermined the ability of the committee to realize its objectives. In 1927, Barbeau was also collecting for the Royal Ontario Museum. He bought nearly $1000 worth of objects more than the museum had budgeted as he was certain he could sell the surplus at a profit to Heye and the Museum of the American Indian in New York. As Cole writes, Barbeau's career "...was now launched as a collector in 'a purely personal' as well as official capacity." When Barbeau offered $600 for a pole in the Nass River and was turned down, he began negotiating an offer

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50. Edgar Hyde to Duncan Campbell Scott, June 25, 1927, from Indian Affairs Black Series, Reel # C-10186, Volume 4086, File 507787-2.


52. Edgar Hyde to Duncan Campbell Scott, January 31, 1929, from Indian Affairs Black Series, Reel # C-10186, Volume 4086, File 507787-2.


54. Ibid, p.269.
for $1000. The price of each pole in Kitsegukla then went to $1000, a price deemed unacceptable by the federal Totem Pole Preservation Committee especially after they had managed to preserve poles in Kitwanga and Kispiox without any payment at all.

Smith then moved down to Kitselas Canyon, a village not included in Barbeau's initial 1924 report. Barbeau was further opposed to the restoration of the poles at Kitselas, even though Smith noted that all fifteen poles could be seen from the rail line. Cole reports that Barbeau then sought to undermine Smith's work, perhaps in order to secure his own ability to deal independently in poles away from the villages in the 1924 survey, since Barbeau was actively acting as an agent in the sale of totem poles outside his capacity with the National Museum.

As with the Kwakwaka'wakw, Gitxsan reasons for participation in the preservation programme or for selling their poles and other objects varied. Increasing financial difficulty, for example, contributed to certain sales. Barbeau was successful in freelance collecting in 1927 partly because of the "failure of the 1927 fishery." The sale of older poles may have been one strategy as well of funding a cycle of potlatches for the next

55. Marius Barbeau to Duncan Campbell Scott, May 1, 1930, from Indian Affairs Black Series, Reel # C-10186, Volume 4086, File 507787-2.

56. G. C. Mortimer to Duncan Campbell Scott, December 3, 1930, from Indian Affairs Black Series, Reel # C-10186, Volume 4086, File 507787-2.


58. Ibid, p.269.
generation of Gitxsan leaders.

The non-Native perspective for the preservation can be glimpsed in Smith's film (figure 17), The Tsimshian Indians of the Skeena River of British Columbia, made during the preservation field work as one of Smith's responsibilities with the museum and discussed in detail by Rosalind Morris. The opening title reads "The Canadian National Railway speeds through the mountain walled valleys of British Columbia toward the land of the Tsimshian, where totem poles and costumed Indians recall the glories of a vanished past." Morris, although apparently unaware of the film's relationship to Smith's work for the preservation committee, argues that the motif of travel in the film was a device intended to emphasize the distance of the Tsimshian from the film's non-Native audience. Travel in the film operated both spatially and temporally, a process physically replicated in train travel. Through the results of Smith's preservation efforts, traveling through the valley and along the preserved poles was akin to traveling back in time. What the project offered in terms of attracting visitors to the region, then, was a "trope of travel...at one with those accounts of exploration and discovery that so entertained the previous generation." Morris's paradox of simultaneity, "the contradiction...of cultural disappearance and physical

60. Ibid.
61. Ibid, p.69.
survival," that disrupted the narrative of social evolution was mediated by the idea that the past could function within a modernist framework: as heritage resource or a commodity. It was for this reason that Scott and the rest of the committee in Ottawa could brook no challenges from Vancouver, Edmonton, or the American museums. The "inauthentic" erection of these "heritage" monuments outside their place of origin would undermine the ability to control the location and meaning of the objects and their usefulness in constructing a particular vision of "modern" Canada and as a resource for the railway and other tourism industries.

Only two more poles were preserved following the disastrous 1927 field season because owners were demanding $1000 for every pole on the reserve before consenting to preservation work. Cole suggests, I think shortsightedly, that the Gitxsan perspective relates primarily to the sharing of any economic benefit received by the railway. Even in 1927, this would only be a small benefit in comparison to the over-all value of the poles, with their connections to the ownership of inherited territories and resources - especially considering the scope of Euro-Canadian plans for the region between 1904 and the end of the 1920s.

At this point, Gitxsan resistance differed from both Squamish and Kwakwaka'wakw examples discussed in previous chapters. With the Cranmer potlatch, land rights were not so

63. Ibid, p.55.
explicitly at stake as with the Stanley Park and Skeena Valley projects. The suggestion made by government officials that their intention was to preserve the Gitxsan poles for future generations obscured their primary concern for the valley's industrial development through the use of the poles as tourist attractions. Furthermore, the erection of Kwakwaka'wakw poles on land claimed by the Squamish was a kind of intrusion. On the other hand, much of the Gitxsan resistance can be related to the vibrant social significance the poles still served within the Gitxsan communities in conjunction with attempts by federal authorities to control Gitxsan political and social life (and that of the coastal peoples in general) through the potlatch ban, the prohibition of land claims activities, and the prohibition of pole sales. While the demand for such substantial amounts for the poles may have been a symptom, the root problem was the duplicity of Euro-Canadian officials. The most common complaint from the Gitxsan villages was that if the government spent money on the poles, the Gitxsan themselves would no longer own them. State officials argued that they were simply keeping the owners' memories alive and yet repeatedly blocked sales they did not approve of. One might ask what the point of ownership is if the owner has lost the right of disposal, either through sale or transport. What did 'ownership' mean, if anything, under this kind of definition?

III. The National Gallery and the Exhibition of Canadian West Coast art - Native and Modern

The mediation of Morris's paradox of simultaneity was also
fashioned in the realm of "fine art." The success of Canada's modernist contributions to the Colonial art exhibitions in London in the early 1920s led to French requests for a representative exhibition in Paris in March 1927. The French requests resulted in a show in part organized by Eric Brown, director of the National Gallery and held at the Musée du Jeu de Paume. It included modernist paintings by Brown's favoured Group of Seven as well as others like Homer Watson, Maurice Cullen, Clarence Gagnon, Jock MacDonald, and James Morrice. The landscape content was of course inescapable and was supplemented by a selection of Northwest Coast sculpture and fabrics, contributed by National Museum director Collins on the suggestion of Duncan Campbell Scott, again using his position in Indian Affairs to further his passion for the arts. A critic with Figaro Artistique noted that the Northwest Coast objects were "...really unusual and handled with undeniable skill. They will interest the curious...." Furthermore, the exhibition's inclusion of Northwest Coast objects was in line with the government's policy of using the indigenous products of British Columbia to advertise the country.

65. The National Museum's annual report of 1926-27 states that "nine of the best examples of British Columbia native carvings were lent to the National Gallery for exhibition at Paris, France, with the Wembley collection of Canadian paintings."

66. Diamond Jenness to Duncan Campbell Scott, March 25, 1927, from Canadian Museum of Civilization, Jenness Correspondence, Box 432, File 34.

That Primitivism would play an important role in the self-definition of a new, essentially European, industrialized state exemplifies Daniel Miller's assertion that "[s]ince meaning is often defined through oppositions, dominant groups may often be found not only to construct material representations of their own interests, but also to project models of those which they define themselves in opposition to." And while this as an artistic strategy is most closely associated with Paris around the time of the First World War, the specific use of Northwest Coast material in conjunction with the modernist treatment of the Canadian landscape distinguishes the project as distinctively Canadian. Modernism, especially with references to primivistic oppositions, signifies membership in an international capitalist industrial modernity. The premodern operates as the negative defining the positive space, as a geographic trope, and as the foundation on and over which the industrial state is built. To employ such a strategy in the cultural heart of France, claimed by the state as one of Canada's own founding societies, is also a coming-of-age statement. That Canada was asserting itself internationally as culturally distinct coincides with an important shift in its relationship with Britain and the British Empire.

The domestic version of the Paris exhibit opened at the National Gallery in December 1927. In retrospect, it should have been an auspicious opening since it was the first time the

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69. Bothwell et al, Canada, 1900-1945, pp.229-244.
National Gallery of Canada had put Canadian First Nations "art" on display, let alone include a living First Nations painter with a selection of Canada's best known and most critically accepted modern artists. The Canadian West Coast Exhibition Native and Modern\textsuperscript{70} under the cooperative direction of the Gallery's Eric Brown and National Museum ethnologist Barbeau collected together anonymous Northwest Coast ceremonial objects from the museum's shelves, objects borrowed from other Canadian institutions (especially the Royal Ontario Museum), works by the recently deceased Haida carver Charles Edenshaw and living Coast Tsimshian painter Frederick Alexie (a protégé of Barbeau), and paintings by members of the Group of Seven, Langdon Kihn, Peggy Nichol and Emily Carr for a teleological statement about the development of Canadian art. Much of the exhibition's intention centred on creating a visual mosaic through combining ethnic streams into a contemporary expression, giving new painters an artificial historical pedigree for referencing; one that also said something about the spirit of the country. It was not as much about a Northwest Coast "art" as it was about the utility of First Nations objects and the landscape to the construction of a new, unique and wholly Canadian artistic style.

Then again, perhaps it was sadly appropriate to the marginalized position of First Nations peoples that the opening

was poorly advertised and even more poorly attended, despite the National Museum's 1927-28 Annual Report and its suggestion that the exhibit "proved so successful that it was shown later in Toronto and in Montreal."\(^{71}\) "It was horrid," wrote Carr in her diary at the time, "No invitations were sent out except to a few artists and those in the building. Others were angry at getting no cards or notices except the eleventh hour general invitation that came too late to be taken."\(^{72}\)

Carr criticized the general lack of recognition for her nationalistic paintings that she felt the poor organization and sparse attendance suggested. "Dominated by dead England and English traditions," she lamented, "they are decorating their tombstones while living things clamour to be fed."\(^{73}\) And this she took personally, since she had woven her own sense of artistic self so tightly with the leaning, picturesque crest poles, tumbled old villages and forests of the coast. "[T]hey all say I have more of the spirit of the Indian than the others....I loved the country and the people more than the others who have painted her. It was my own country, part of the West and me."\(^{74}\) The inclusion of named First Nations artists like Alexie and Edenshaw, apparently not noticed by Carr in the throes of her own anxieties, has since become an obscure, albeit

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\(^{73}\) *Ibid*, p.12.

\(^{74}\) *Ibid*, pp.9-12.
telling, footnote in the history of Canadian art. Carr showed no recognition, empathy, or identification with the Northwest Coast artists exhibited with her, one of whom was still alive, and yet claimed to "understand" the peoples better than anyone else. The artistic avant-garde use of the local "premodern" was just as appropriative as the state-directed constructions of nationalist identity in projects like the Skeena preservation programme.

In 1927, Canada's Diamond Jubilee seemed entirely the right time to install an exhibition in Ottawa with such historicist references and with such a bold inclusive statement about Canadian artistic identity. It now also seems a chillingly ironic choice for such an exhibit given the then recent adoptions of sections 140 and 141 of the Indian Act and the suppression of both potlatching and land claims. Brown, Barbeau, painters like A. Y. Jackson and Edwin Holgate, Canada's "worthwhiles," in Carr's words, "people who really count and are shaping a nation [...] all so big and broad, ...so proud of the bigness of their country, so anxious to probe its soul and understand it,"75 sought a vehicle for expression in Northwest Coast subject matter and in doing so carved out an artistic metaphor for First Nations people that mirrored the federal government's assimilationist policies. "Enough...remains of the old arts," wrote Brown in the catalogue preface, "to provide an invaluable mine of decorative design which is available to the student for a host of different purposes and possessing for the Canadian artist in particular the unique quality of being entirely national in its origin and

75. Ibid.
character."\textsuperscript{76}

The catalogue illustrates the mechanics of the exhibition's construction. Following Brown's preface, Barbeau sketches a brief introduction establishing the international stature of "West Coast Indian Art," then comments on basic concepts of content and function. The catalogue itself is then divided into two basic sections, seemingly along a loose chronological arrangement with the first providing part explanations of object categories, and the second listing, without explanation, the Euro-Canadian paintings of the Group of Seven and the others. The difference between the two parts is characteristic of the difference between art and anthropological exhibits, with anthropological displays designed to educate and art exhibits assuming prior knowledge appropriate to the connoisseur class. What makes this catalogue special is the juxtaposition of the two modes in a single work.

The installation itself was more integrated, with paintings side by side with ceremonial objects thus implying both stylistic affinities and a hierarchy. The indigenous objects, although prominent, were arranged in display cases and in museum-like groupings that reinforced the sense of the Euro-Canadian depictions as something of the present and the "artifacts" as of the past. In this way, the exhibition's curatorial strategy privileged the modernist paintings.

Affinities on the one hand contributed to the inspiration of

\textsuperscript{76} Eric Brown, in National Gallery of Canada, Exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern, Toronto: Art Gallery of Toronto, 1928, p.3.
modernist painters and on the other legitimized the Northwest Coast objects as "art." The exhibition can then be viewed within the context of early attempts at explaining and institutionalizing "primitive art" and draws immediate comparison with Franz Boas' *Primitive Art,*\(^77\) published the same year. Like Boas, Barbeau chose to emphasize the aesthetic refinement of the northern coastal groups, whose "...artists have left works of art that count among the outstanding creations of mankind in the sphere of plastic or decorative beauty."\(^78\) However, Boas constructed the objects as "art" in order to prove the "equality" or "civilization" of the people who produced it, and thus his text operated on a metonymic level with objects standing for the originating nations. Boas does not seem to have been concerned with using the Native "premodern" to construct American nationalism.

Brown and Barbeau and the way in which they utilize the objects of the Northwest Coast as a source of inspiration for modernist painters echoed the modernist "discovery" of African and other non-Western arts in Europe just prior to the First World War. Marianna Torgovnick describes the process and its implications:

> A group without an 'art' and 'aesthetics' can be thought to lack 'culture' and 'political integrity;' it can then be 'discovered' and 'developed' by 'superior' groups, that is those with both 'art' and 'culture.' Any challenge to the designation of 'art' for African, Oceanic, and Native American pieces thus flirts


\(^78\) Barbeau, in National Gallery, *West Coast Catalogue,* p.80.
dangerously with modes of thought that made the appropriation of land from primitive peoples possible.  

Despite the shared strategies of equating beauty with art, an evolutionary hierarchy was more important to the structure of the West Coast catalogue entries than to Boas's Primitive Art. Within the object categories, a subtext of differing creative sophistication ranks both the objects and their producers. Haida model poles with "...[t]heir refined stylization coupled with a touch of feeling and realism, and the clever grouping of figures along the slender shafts, disclose the outstanding characteristics of Haida art at its best."  

Tsimshian and Haida masks "[a]s both varieties belong to the northern nations...are often from the hands of the best carvers."  

From the north to the south, the hierarchy steps lead downward. Thus, "the southern tribes, on the other hand (the Kwakiutl and the Nootka) could not boast of like refinement," their style, "...is either a degenerate form of the northern art or, else, it represents an early stage, beyond which the southern West Coast tribes did not advance."

Towards the end of the first catalogue listing, Edenshaw

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81. Ibid, p.4.

82. Ibid, p.4.

83. Ibid, p.9.
appears within an introduction to Haida argillite carvings, which according to the text, emerge after 1850, "...when the white strangers showed their interest in native souvenirs." The best of the argillite poles are attributed to Edenshaw and his "faithful Tlingit slave" who "spent much of their lives in friendly rivalry, carving figures of all kinds...." Charles Edenshaw, a Haida carver (circa 1839-1920), lived and worked at Massett, Skidegate, Port Simpson and Kasaan. He was commissioned by Boas and the American Museum of Natural History through John Swanton to prepare a series of model poles and houses which, as Jonaitis argues convincingly, became the stylistic paradigm for "classic" Haida art. Furthermore, Boas makes a number of references to Edenshaw in Primitive Art, either through illustrating Edenshaw's work or through discussing Edenshaw's explanations of specific images. The recognition of Edenshaw, while cursory at best in the catalogue, was essential given this kind of international attention.

The last four entries of the first section cover the gradual bleeding from one group to another. Bracelets, made from

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84. Ibid, p.11.


86. Holm, "Will the Real Charles Edenshaw Please Stand Up?" p.177.


hammered "Mexican" dollar coins, are singled out as an innovation of the nineteenth century. They are followed by the two paintings by Alexie (one of which had been purchased by A. Y. Jackson and then loaned to the exhibit), identified by Barbeau as "...an old Tsimsyan half-breed [sic] of Port Simpson."\(^90\)

Frederick Alexie (figure 18) was born in Port Simpson in 1853.\(^91\) Alexie's father was part of a small group of Iroquois brought to the Pacific coast in the 1830s by the Hudson's Bay Company. His mother was a Coast Tsimshian, thus Alexie belonged to the gispawadwada clan of the Giludzar Tsimshian. According to Barbeau, he was trained as a halait carver responsible for the production of naxnox or secret society paraphernalia\(^92\) but was described by Viola Garfield in a 1934 unpublished manuscript as "...a good natured, highly volatile and imaginative person" with "...little formal training in painting and drawing, either by white or native teachers..." and whose paintings "...are done in a stilted manner with very little regard for perspective...."\(^93\)

\(^89\). National Gallery, West Coast Catalogue, p.13.
\(^92\). Ibid.
\(^93\). Viola Garfield, "Wood Carving and Painting," unpublished
Barbeau writes:

The two paintings by Fred Alexee\(^{94}\) [sic] might be placed among the primitives of Canadian art here exhibited. They are worth special notice. In European countries primitive paintings have been prized for their naivete, their charm and the historical perspective which they confer upon the development of art. In Canada this category has so far eluded search, if we except Indian art pure and simple.\(^{95}\)

Barbeau later added: "The totem-like features and plastic treatment of the figures shown here belong partly to the art of the North West Coast Indians and partly to the conceptions of the white people within the fold of the church. This blend of two cultures...is a rare accident at the frontiers of two worlds. It makes his paintings and carvings exceptional, fascinating, significant..."\(^{96}\)

Through his inclusion of Alexie, Barbeau opens up a new facet to the narrative of social evolution. In this discussion, Alexie's paintings are used to mediate the myth of cultural extinction and the physical survival of First Nations peoples by serving as stepping stone from the old to the new, from "primitivism" to "modernity." Alexie becomes the missing link, bridging the "Native past" with the "Euro-Canadian" present. In

\(^{94}\) Alexie is variously spelt as Alexcee, Alexei, Alexee, or Alexie in both published texts and museum files.

\(^{95}\) National Gallery, West Coast catalogue, p.13.

\(^{96}\) Barbeau, "Frederick Alexie," p.21.
the catalogue text, there is no mistaking the tone and tense of most object descriptions. They are works from the past. Both tense and tone change in the examination of Alexie, who was part of the realm of the present, and thus seemed an appropriate bridge to the next two entries for Carr. Carr's objects other than paintings in turn bridge the first section with the painting list of the second.

The entries on Carr's hooked rugs and pottery begin with the statement: "Miss Carr has spent many years among the Indians and has succeeded in getting them to revive many of their native arts."97 While this endows Carr with an authority and influence that she did not possess, her relationship with the "Indians" is then legitimized with the statement that "[s]he has received the name of Klee Wyck - (She who laughs)."98 This, of course, was a nickname and had nothing to do with the acquisition of a ceremonial name. Yet commercially, identification with the marginalized 'primitive' was good for Carr's modernist image, reinforcing her own position outside of the bourgeois status quo and firmly within Canada's new avant-garde; a position that Morrison argues Barbeau also supported by picking up "...Carr's own statements about her 'discouragement over the utter lack of public interest' in her work in Victoria which resulted in Carr discontinuing after 1914. This was not, in fact, the case, since Carr had been painting and exhibiting since 1924, but the myth of 'discovery' was connected to a Cinderella syndrome in which the

talented woman painter was rescued from oblivion by a member of the patriarchal elite, a myth in which both Carr and Barbeau participated."99

The exhibition was an important one. Not only did its strategy of affiliation legitimize the use of First Nations subjects as a Canadian theme and promote the contemporary Euro-Canadian artists working in this direction, it also raised the profile of Northwest Coast objects from the steamship boardwalk vendors and curio shops to the National Gallery. Barbeau's own interest in Alexie and his inclusion in the exhibit broke the paradigm of First Nations as past and Euro-Canadian as present and signaled a tentative but growing recognition of the possibility of contemporary First Nations art.

IV. Summary

Each of the important participants in these federal projects around Northwest Coast objects during the 1920s had specific, sometimes conflicting, objectives in mind. Scott and the preservation committee used the in situ preservation project as part of a wider strategy for the highly centralized economic development of northwest British Columbia, writing legislation intended to guarantee Ottawa's control of objects and their meanings in the construction of a national identity and touristic draw. Barbeau used his fieldwork to both accumulate documentary information on poles for his later, better known published works and supplemented his museum salary by negotiating independently

for the sale of the poles he documented to other institutions. While asserting his own ethnographic authority through both projects, he was also interested in the increasingly popular concept of the Canadian mosaic, which sought to break down the cultural hegemony of Anglo-Celtic Canada and make way for other ethnic contributions to the fabric of national "culture." Carr tied her rising star to the marginalized status of First Nations arts as a means of reaffirming her own public image as a misunderstood, avant-garde painter aligned with the socially down-trodden against a patriarchal elite - the same elite that ensured her commercial success through their "discovery" of her work.

The two projects also had different audiences in mind. The preservation project addressed railway tourists and the National Gallery show was for the Euro-Canadian "cultural" elite specifically in the main eastern cities of Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal. The preservation project, along with the efforts of competing municipal organizations like AHSAV in Vancouver, contributed to the public perception of First Nations objects as "Canadian" and built on the reconfiguration of meaning for those objects so chillingly exemplified in the display of potlatch goods from the Cranmer potlatch. The understanding of Northwest Coast objects as, first, a national heritage, and second, an historical Canadian art, was part of a colonialist method of

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100. The mosaic was a term that gained widespread popularity in Canada with the 1937 publication of Gibbon's Canadian Mosaic, but the concept can be seen in development in Barbeau's writings from the late 1920s and early 1930s.
101. Gibbon, Canadian Mosaic.
disempowerment that transformed practices constructive of indigenous political power into practices suitable for touristic and nationalistic consumption. In this way, federal officials extended their control over First Nations people.

However, Barbeau, with his interests in folk art and the Canadian mosaic, contributed to a new understanding of First Nations visual production through his participation in the National Gallery show. The fact that Alexie and Edenshaw were not only included but also named in the exhibition undermined the previously unrelenting emphasis on First Nations objects as anonymous products of a distant past, an emphasis all too evident in the preservation project. The acknowledgment of individual First Nations artists opened the possibility of the contemporary expression of "Indianness" in Euro-Canadian public spaces. This was something contrary to the ultimate goal of assimilation and perhaps even heralded assimilation's demise.
CHAPTER 4

The 'New Deals:' George Raley and Depression-era Reform in British Columbia

The Great Depression dramatically influenced the development of Native American touristic industries in both the United States and Canada. During the American presidential administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the social reform ideals of the 1920s became officially entrenched as public policy under the direction of John Collier, Commissioner of Indian Affairs. In Canada, however, the impact of the Great Depression smothered any further major participation on behalf of governmental institutions in the collecting or display of Northwest Coast objects until after the Second World War. Not only did the Great Depression wreak economic havoc on First Nations communities, the cash-strapped federal government could no longer afford the legitimizing programmes of its museums. The perception with which many middle-class non-Native Canadians were left was that the state had abandoned its fiduciary responsibility.

The vacuum in museum activity was filled in Canada by missionaries and educators seeking to extend the reconfiguration of First Nations objects to include the sale of contemporary "Indian art." This chapter examines how the economic crisis of the Great Depression fostered the use of First Nations objects as a primary resource in the social discourses centred on the welfare and education of First Nations people in the United States and then in Canada. Ultimately, this led to a shift in the promotion of Native American and First Nations art as a
product of the past to a concentration on promoting and managing it as an industry of the present - a strategy that had enormous influence on the shape of museum and other institutional activities from 1945 on.

Mandatory industrial training for First Nations boys had been common in residential schools since the 1880s, emphasizing the role of resource-based wage labour in "modern" Canada.¹ British Columbia's resource industries, like logging, mining, and salmon fishing and processing, still provided adequate employment (and investment return) in the 1920s when Scott, the Department of Indian Affairs, and the Canadian National Railway took an active interest in British Columbia's totem poles. Since the pre-First World War collecting craze had passed, more money could be made on the boats or in the canneries, industries that seem to have intersected well with pre-colonial Kwakwaka'wakw economic pursuits anyway,² than in labour-intensive souvenir carving. As with many of his policy decisions, it appeared that Scott preferred financially-prudent bureaucratic administration over the department's direct economic encouragement on the reserves. Titley suggests that his "parsimonious approach was a disaster"³ when it came to such essential human issues as health care. The safety of individuals was sacrificed for the sake of a balanced account book. And so, although Scott was certainly interested in First Nations objects, he never deemed it necessary to promote their current production. For those in Ottawa, 'Indian art' was nothing more than inspiration for the creativity of 'modern'

¹. Titley, A Narrow Vision, pp.78-83.
artists. Scott believed his own poetry, it seems - that "the race has waned and left but tales of ghosts,"4 or, as Marius Barbeau wrote more bluntly, "[t]he art now belongs to the past."5

But the "Vanishing American" paradigm weakened in some circles in the 1920s and the Great Depression demonstrated how much of a failure it had been as the source of policy, both in Canada and the United States. Not only were First Nations peoples social "outcasts,"6 stated Diamond Jenness in 1934, "economically they are an encumbrance."7 With the near financial collapse of the Canadian government and widespread unemployment after 1929, crisis conditions stimulated calls for sweeping systemic reform, suggesting that the Canadian government could relieve itself of an "encumbrance" by overhauling the Department of Indian Affairs. These calls were formulated in terms of state intervention for the sake of the economy and focused, in terms of 'Indian' policy, on First Nations objects, something saleable because of their association with indigenous tradition and pre-modern heritage. The election of liberal governments in North America hastened the adoption of Keynesian theory in a state-managed economy and the rhetorical use of pluralism as a model for national intra-group cooperation. In both Canada and the United States this was a time of transition - a shift from

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assimilation to integration, when the maintenance of indigenous heritage within the framework of state capitalism had become possible and desirable.

Provincial lobbying activities centred on the arts in British Columbia after the on-set of the Great Depression took a tack quite different from Scott's earlier federalist policy directions. Social reformers called first for the provision of encouragement, opportunity and limited training for First Nations practitioners, and second, the creation of "Indian-mindedness" among the art-consuming general public. These programs, like George Raley's efforts at encouraging government support for the arts or the British Columbia Indian Arts and Welfare Society's attempts at systematizing both art consumption and production, have been ignored in the academic discourses surrounding First Nations art. They were nonetheless important in pressuring different levels of government to create programmes that enshrined indigenous history as a continuing, positive force in modern life. In short, they heralded the proclamation of a cultural "renaissance" in the provincial totem pole salvage and carver training programmes of the 1940s and 1950s.

It was in this re-structuring phase that the political nature of contemporary First Nations public art became overt as its ability to attract public attention was recognized and utilized. Not only did the Great Depression affect the ways in which state officials approached indigenous arts, it also indirectly expanded the public uses of these arts, including, for First Nations, resistance to the intent of the Indian Act.
I. Social Reform in the United States and the "Indian New Deal"

The relocation and preservation of poles in Canada in the 1920s were not isolated incidents. In addition to the collecting activities of the large municipal museums from New York and Chicago, a number of local efforts in Alaska focused on the preservation of Tlingit poles prior to the Great Depression. As early as 1890, a public park had been created around a cluster of poles at the village of Kiksadi, where the Russians had won control of Sitka in 1804. This park became the "Sitka National Monument" by executive order of President William Howard Taft in 1910 in order to prevent vandalism.

Another presidential proclamation in 1916 created the National Monument of Old Kasaan, a Haida village on Prince of Wales Island abandoned around the turn of the century. Alaskan judge James Wickersham began a movement to preserve totem poles at Port Tongass in 1920, including most notably the so-called "Abraham Lincoln totem," a pole erected in 1867 and containing a portrait of the American president as its top figure. The same year James Gordon Steese, President of the Alaska Road Commission, was granted $200 to raise and repaint fallen poles at Sitka.

Between 1921 and 1938, organizations and service clubs, like the Wrangell Chamber of Commerce and the Ketchikan American

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10. Ibid, p.119.
12. Keithahn, Monuments in Cedar, p.120.
Legion Post carried out sporadic restoration efforts. Walter Waters of Wrangell purchased and removed a number of poles from villages on the west coast to sit outside his Bear Totem Store in Wrangell. Waters' "preservation" activities included the use of rock salt to prevent dry rot, the removal of rotted wood, refilling of cavities with concrete, and repainting. Although none of these individual projects matched the scale of the Smith-supervised project in the Skeena Valley, collectively they illustrate a shared concern for totem poles specifically and First Nations "art" generally as a regional symbol and hence an attraction for tourists.

These efforts in Alaska echoed earlier activities in the promotion of Native American arts in the Southwest. In his detailed survey of the Indian Arts and Crafts Board, Robert Fay Schrader reports that the American government had been interested in promoting Native American arts and crafts as early as 1863.

The interest, writes Schrader, initially stemmed from "...an increasing concern over the effects of industrialization on the quality of everyday life.... As the years passed, however, the

13. Ibid, p.120.
15. Molly Mullin argues that the Southwest became the focal point of American cultural nationalists because it was where they "...were most apt to encounter Indians, [and because it] held promising possibilities for remapping the geography and aesthetics of American identity - away from Europe and from colonial New England - by virtue of monuments of comparable antiquity and landscapes, commodities, and people appearing startlingly unique." (Molly M. Mullin, "The Patronage of Difference: Making Indian Art 'Art, Not Ethnology,'" The Traffic In Culture: Refiguring Art and Anthropology, Eds. George E. Marcus and Fred R. Myers, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1995, p.169.)
16. Robert Fay Schrader, The Indian Arts and Crafts Board: An Aspect of New Deal Indian Policy, Albuquerque: University of
Indian Office came to emphasize the development of Indian crafts into manufacturing industries. Contrary to the popular emphasis on arts and crafts as an antidote to the effects of industrialization, the motivation behind the federal government's role in Indian arts and crafts was a desire to industrialize the Indians."¹⁷

Pueblo ceramics had gained notice with the westward expansion of Euro-America in the last third of the nineteenth century. The completion of the Santa Fe Railway in 1880 and the military defeat of the southern Plains people contributed to Santa Fe's reputation as a tourist destination. Marketing efforts by J. Walter Fewkes, Hewett and Chapman of the School of American Research, the Museum of New Mexico, the Museum of Northern Arizona, the Fred Harvey hotel chain, and individual traders like C. G. Wallace and Thomas Keam all helped establish craft production, most often for tourists, as an important economic pursuit in the Southwest. By the 1920s, the works of ceramicists like Nampeyo and Maria Martinez were commanding significant prices for their works based on historical or archaeological models, sustained at least in part by the institutional efforts of the School of American Research and the Santa Fe-based Indian Arts Fund.¹⁸ However, good markets had also opened for basketry, Navajo textiles, silver jewellery, Pueblo kachina carving, and easel painting. As an industry,
Southwest Native American art had shown great growth potential. Ruth Roessel, for example, cites the value of Navajo weaving alone in 1930 at $1,000,000, up from its 1890 value of $30,000.\textsuperscript{19}

The vitality of Pueblo and Navajo "cultures" as exemplified in the thriving crafts market was seen to contradict the myth of the Vanishing American. It was here, suggests Brian Dippie, that the "revolutionary idea of Indian continuity and survival"\textsuperscript{20} was best represented. It was also here that the state could simultaneously address two of its primary functions, accumulation and legitimization. The ideas of the Arts and Crafts discourse and the growing anti-assimilationist sentiments of liberal Euro-American social reformers served as sources for a major national policy shift instigated by the inauguration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1933, an event that increased the promotion of Tlingit and other Native American arts and set models for similar programmes in Canada.

The fundamental idea behind Roosevelt's presidential platform, his so-called New Deal, was an increase in state participation in economic management as a way of combating the effects of the stock market crash and the consequent spiral of international responses impacting the American domestic economy. With the financial disarray of the Great Depression, increased state interventions helped facilitate American business, including the business of art, as well as soothe class and ethnic

divisions. The protectionism of the 1920s and early 1930s was replaced under Roosevelt with strategic social expenditures as part of a managed economy - the birth of the welfare state in North America.\textsuperscript{21} The promotion of Native American arts was part of the wider programme of soothing ethnic divisions through the reform of the educational curricula.\textsuperscript{22} The federal government in the United States encouraged art production in the schools as both a means of recognizing Native American "cultures" and of stimulating their economic independence.

John Collier, one of the most outspoken of United States Indian policy opponents, was selected Commissioner of Indian Affairs immediately after Roosevelt's election. In 1934, Collier announced the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs policy agenda as the economic rehabilitation of Native Americans, principally on their own lands; the organization of tribes for managing their own affairs; and civil and cultural freedom and

\textsuperscript{21} Or, as Ellis W. Hawley, explains, one of the legacies of the New Deal "...was the rapid rise of an organizational economy, which brought with it large areas of 'private government,' new bureaucratic-scientific-professional values, and a persistent search for order and stability, primarily through the creation of ever larger associative and hierarchic structures, the infusing of these with a new set of managerial attitudes and group loyalties, and the use of the state, where necessary and expedient, to further the process....The other major aspect of the...New Deal was the expansion and nationalization of social services, exemplified particularly in the Social Security Act, the work relief program, the housing and conservation activities, and the protective labour and rural rehabilitation measures. In one sense now, 'welfare capitalism,' community-centred welfare, and the patronage-oriented welfare were all giving way to a larger and broader 'welfare statism.' Yet again, significant as this change was, the patterns adopted worked in some respects to strengthen rather than displace existing institutions." (Ellis W. Hawley, "The New Deal and Business," The New Deal: The National Level, Eds. John Braeman, Robert H. Bremner, and David Brody, Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1975, p.52 and 87.)

\textsuperscript{22} John Braeman, Robert H. Bremner, and David Brody,
opportunity for Native Americans. These objectives were more or less realized with the introduction of the Wheeler-Howard Indian Rights bill in 1934. Sometimes called the Indian Re-organization Act or the Indian New Deal, it suspended the allotment policy of the 1887 Dawes Act and instituted limited forms of self-government. It advocated the gradual phasing out of boarding schools and the incorporation of a spirit of cultural relativism in the school curriculum. A sub-section entitled "Special Education for Indians" declared it "to be the purpose and policy of Congress to promote the study of Indian civilization and preserve and develop the special cultural contributions and achievements of such civilization, including Indian arts, crafts, skills, and traditions." 

In the Indian New Deal, arts-related education and research and the infrastructure for marketing and distribution came together under state management. Not only did the state continue to encapsulate all aspects of Native American life within its bureaucracy, it sought to market Native American heritage for the first time. This strategy hinged itself on a new understanding of the American nation, one that at least rhetorically sought to include ethnic diversity as part of the American experience. American federal officials encouraged this diversity through education concentrating more directly on what was understood to be Native American "culture" and the call to Euro-America for bi-cultural enjoyment through the consumption of Native American products. These efforts represented an attempt at bridging

"Introduction," New Deal, p.x.

different segments of the United States and in this sense demonstrate a shift away from assimilation towards integration and the maintenance of ethnic identity within the context of loyalty to the American state. The ingredients for the American melting pot were now expected to maintain their distinctive flavours, rather than simply disappear into a homogenous stew dominated by the Anglo-Saxon majority. Consequently, markets could open for unique luxury items produced within these ethnically-distinct pockets for consumption in the rest of "modern" America.

This emphasis on the promotion of Native American "culture" would have significant influence on the development of Native American arts. In conjunction with act's creation of the Indian Arts and Crafts Board in 1935, it institutionalized the production of Native American arts. The Indian Arts and Crafts Board further realized state intervention in the business of "Indian art" in its attempts to manage the problems of production, marketing, distribution, and quality control.

The board co-operated directly in important exhibitions of Native American objects as fine art at the Golden Gate Exposition in San Francisco in 1939 and at the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1941. Under the curatorial direction of Rene d'Harnoncourt, the General Manager of the Indian Arts and Crafts Board hired by Collier, and Frederic Douglas, curator of the Denver Art Museum, these exhibitions went a long way in establishing an understanding of this material as "art" and in promoting contemporary Native American artists like Hopi painter

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Fred Kabotie.

In southeast Alaska, the Indian New Deal resulted in a public works programme under the supervision of Frank Heintzelman of the Forestry Service, whose objectives were to "...salvage, re-carve and relocate at least a selection of the region's disintegrating totem poles into prescribed Totem Parks." The Civilian Conservation Corps made available $127,000 to hire Alaskan Natives for the project. Polly Miller reports:

News of the undertaking first reached the public through the Indian Affairs newssheet, Indians at Work, which explained that old skilled native carvers were employed to give technical direction and to instruct younger Indians in the art, most of whom had no knowledge of it. Clusters of these poles 'restored with faithful accuracy,' now stand in public parks at Saxman, Totem Bight, and Klawock.

The project contributed to a greater non-Native appreciation of the contemporary accomplishments of Native Americans. The Indian Art of the United States exhibition in New York in 1941, "aesthetically dominated by the arts of the Northwest Coast," was especially influential. Sponsored by the United States National Museum and with contributions from the Royal Ontario Museum, d'Harnoncourt and Douglas established their mandate as the improvement of the reception and consumption of "Indian art" and the encouragement of the appreciation of Indian art.

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27. Ibid, p.262.
29. The exhibition is discussed in specific in: W. Jackson Rushing, "Marketing the Affinity of the Primitive and the Modern: Rene d'Harnoncourt and 'Indian Art of the United States,'", The
achievement under New Deal policy. Improving the reception of "Indian art" involved re-iterating the mythic connection between Native Americans and the American landscape within a modern context. "Indian art from coast to coast actually recreates the land, America, in every one of its countless variations," wrote d'Haroncourt and Douglas. "...Indian art not only has a place but actually fills a concrete need in the United States today. Its close relationship to America, the land, and its unexplored wealth of forms offer a valuable contribution to Modern American art and life."30

While Canadians were slow to follow the example of the Indian New Deal, a regulated and controlled market for First Nations art seemed to address two important concerns for social reformers in Canada. First, the promotion of First Nations heritage at least superficially encouraged a more inclusive attitude towards First Nations people and provided a focus around which other issues, such as health and welfare, could be discussed in the public realm. Second, the encouragement of the arts as a viable economic pursuit might provide some alleviation of the numbing poverty associated with reserve life in Canada and thus hasten the economic assimilation of First Nations people. Shortly after Collier's appointment as United States Indian Commissioner, reformers in Canada began citing American policy as a model for new directions, a call that would take First Nations art in British Columbia in a different, but related direction.31

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30 Early Years of Native American Art History, pp.191-238.
II. Reverend George Raley and The Call for a Canadian New Deal

While the early to mid-1920s saw an economic high in British Columbia, the financial collapse of October 1929 paralysed the provincial economy. With the international demand for primary products in severe decline, resource-oriented regions like British Columbia were the hardest hit. The building trade and lumber industries fell into disorganization. Reversals in the mining, lumbering, and fishing industries accompanied a glut in the world wheat market. By 1930, the Okanagan fruit industry suffered serious setbacks and western Canada's unemployed flooded Vancouver, already swollen with 7000 unemployed men, in search of a climate milder than the Prairie winter. In 1931, there were 237 relief camps in British Columbia housing one-third of the

political cliche in both the United States and Canada. T. W. L. MacDermot, writing in 1933, stated that the "principles of political organization and evolution...constitute a real significance of the experiment for a studious Canada...[,]" including specifically its principle of unification. MacDermot writes: "The New Deal is based on a centralized, organic view of the national life, in which all its principal parts are to be organized and integrated for the common task of building a shattered society.... Canada is far from being a genuine national unity as yet, either in constitutional, economic, or political respects, and the utilization of this principle in all these respects could be of profound moment to the Dominion." (T. W. L. MacDermot, "The Significance for Canada of the American 'New Deal,' in Michael Horn, The Dirty Thirties: Canadians in the Great Depression, Toronto: Copp Clark, 1972, p.486.) Canadian Prime Minister R. B. Bennett announced in 1935 the failure of laissez-faire capitalism and a reform package, instantly labelled a New Deal, in an unsuccessful bid for re-election. (Michael Bliss, Right Honourable Men: The Descent of Canadian Politics from MacDonald to Mulroney, Toronto: Harper-Collins, 1994, p.115.) British Columbia Premier T. Dufferin Pattullo also sought re-election in 1933 under a reform package he termed the "Little New Deal." (Margaret Ormsby, "T. Dufferin Pattullo and the Little New Deal," The Dirty Thirties, pp.620-634.)

Michael Horn, The Great Depression of the 1930s in Canada, Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association Historical Booklet Number
“relief men” in Canada. Accusations of government and relief mismanagement flew as the provincial deficit soared to $165 million by 1933 and the ranks of the provincial unemployed numbered 100,000. Ormsby describes Vancouver in the 1930s as a “shabby and battered city, more scarred by the depression than any other city in Canada.” The situation for First Nations in British Columbia was further aggravated by the already limited economic opportunities on most reserves, widespread racism, intra-Canadian emigration and the consequent increase in competition for seasonal work, and an inequity in relief payments.

Of course, the severity of this economic crisis was not limited to British Columbia. The response to the Great Depression became the central political question of the 1930s and has impacted government structure in North America since. The two options open to the Canadian government in 1930 have been characterized as the maintenance of the status quo policy of laissez-faire economics versus the adoption of a Keynesian state-managed economy in a guise similar to Roosevelt's comprehensive New Deal policy in the United States. For Canadians, the American New Deal not only served as a model, it also both legitimized social reform efforts and provided hope. American developments demonstrated that reform could indeed be successfully implemented.

In British Columbia, Reverend George Raley (figure 19) was the first to attempt to follow the Indian New Deal lead. George

39, 1984, pp.4-7.
Raley was born in Barnsley, England in 1864 and came to Canada in 1882. He was appointed Methodist missionary to the Haisla community of Kitamaat in 1893 where he printed and published the periodical Na-na-kwa (Dawn of the West Coast) from 1898 on. From 1904 to 1914 he was the Superintendent of the Port Simpson District which included all the area north of Alert Bay. In 1906, he transferred to Port Simpson and in 1914 he became the principal at Coqualeetza in the Fraser Valley. He retired to Vancouver in 1934 and the bulk of his collection, assembled primarily in Kitamaat and Port Simpson during the collecting craze of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, went to the University of British Columbia in 1948. Raley passed away in 1958.35

As principal of the Coqualeetza Residential School in Sardis in the Fraser Valley, Raley was part of the system, but especially after his retirement in 1934 he also advocated reform of the Department of Indian Affairs and the way in which it managed the "Indian problem." The Coqualeetza School itself was something of an anomaly, a Protestant missionary school in a Catholic zone that would count important future political leaders like George Manuel36 and Peter Kelly37 among its alumni. Raley,

34. Ibid, p.469.
35. UBC MOA Parallel Accession Files.
36. Paul Tennant calls George Manuel "...the pre-eminent leader of the peoples of the interior." (Tennant, Aboriginal Peoples and Politics, p.125.) He helped found the Aboriginal Native Rights Committee of the Interior Tribes of British Columbia in 1959, the North American Indian Brotherhood in 1960, and was an important member of the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia. (Ibid, pp.127-132.)
37. An ordained Methodist and later United Church minister, Peter Kelly was a leader in the Allied Tribes of British Columbia and the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia. (Ibid, pp.77, 94,
like Collier, focused on reforming First Nations education and combined this reform spirit with his own personal interest in First Nations heritage.

Raley is important in a number of different ways. He was well known around Vancouver. His large, comprehensive collection of Northwest Coast material served for a time during the 1930s as Vancouver's de facto municipal museum and provided significant portions of the Northwest Coast collections at the Royal Ontario Museum and the University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology. He also exemplified a growing dissatisfaction with the management of Indian Affairs and articulated the ideological arguments and promotional strategies discussed by Canadian social reformers during the Great Depression. His actions further demonstrate the increasing difficulty of the independent, amateur and volunteer cultural organizations in realizing their objectives in the 1930s. In a cash-strapped society, these organizations looked to the state for reform leadership. However, the state was absorbed by deficit and welfare payments and instigated government restructuring initially only to solve its own financial crises.

a. Raley's 'Canadian Indian Arts and Crafts Board'

Raley combined writing with more practical activities in promoting provincial and national arts programs. He wrote texts centred on his vision of a "revival of Indian art and handicraft as a welfare movement,"\(^{38}\) echoing the earlier calls of Harlan

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\(^{38}\) See G. H. Raley, "Important Considerations Involved in the
Smith in Ottawa in the 1920s and paralleling similar developments in the other provinces,\textsuperscript{39} and was the first major figure to attempt the implementation of a handicraft guild organization in the marketing of First Nations objects in British Columbia. His concern stemmed first from his intimate knowledge of reservation poverty and the social blockade it represented, and second from his dismay at the prejudice-driven unwillingness of Anglo-Saxon Canada to bear what he saw as its paternalistic responsibility for the full economic assimilation of First Nations people.

"[A]part from Government and Church aid in medical, educational and missionary service...," he wrote, "comparatively little has been expended on the economic problems of the Indians."\textsuperscript{40} He contributed his own collection for public displays and his activity with AHSAV saw the confluence of a number of circumstances in the promotion of individual artists, something that would have to lie at the foundation of any successful revival or promotional programme.

Raley began this line of pursuit in the early 1930s, at the height of the Great Depression. Influenced by Roosevelt's developing New Deal Policy in the United States, Raley was also aware of the contemporary state encouragement of arts and crafts associations and other cottage industries in Britain and conceived of adapting these programs as an economic solution for Canadian problems. His choice of words in discussing art, his

\textsuperscript{39} See Gerald McMaster, "Tenuous Lines of Descent: Indian Art and Craft of the Reservation Period," \textit{In the Shadow of the Sun}, pp.93-120.

\textsuperscript{40} Ibid, p.2.
aesthetic sensibilities, and his vision of art as a social tool all derived from well-established usages in the earlier Arts and Crafts discourse.

For Raley, the arts were not simply a historical product, but they were also a solution to what he saw as the "Indian problem." Sometime in the 1930s, Raley summarized the plight of those producing objects for sale cross-culturally within the imagery of Depression-era chaos. Choosing a female basket weaver as the symbol of the vulnerability of the curio producer, he wrote that:

The basket-making woman is often seen on the streets of our villages, towns and cities with a clumsily wrapped bundle of baskets for sale. She naturally wants cash, sometimes difficult to get. Rather than not make a sale, she barteres them for old, second-hand clothes and learns how to haggle. Now, in the eyes of an intending purchaser the goods are cheapened before they are sold and the Indian woman is led to believe her goods are different from those of the whites and not worth cash, so she has to be content to swap them for food, old clothes or anything. It is not an unusual sight to see an aged Indian near a curbstone market or sitting on the sidewalk in all kinds of weather, or in some other public place, trying to effect a sale.

It is neither profitable to the Indian nor creditable to Canadians.... It would be very helpful to the women if this form of labour were organized.\footnote{Ibid, p.36.}

Raley's solution was certainly confined by the colonial vision of First Nations people as lower class labourers. And in this sense, the reform he called for was limited,\footnote{As Schrader demonstrates, Raley had to be careful if he wanted to generate the general public's acceptance of his programmes. Similarly liberal reformers in the United States were dismissed by New Deal opponents as enforcing "...nothing more}
within the system and its ideologies. The pressures he applied in his promotion of change were structured by the bureaucracy of the Department of Indian Affairs. An example of this can be seen in Raley's attempts to confirm funding for an arts program through the Department of Indian Affairs in 1934. The nuances of art versus handicraft versus industry, as can be sensed in correspondence between Raley to Indian Agency officials, took on an urgency during this period in the battleground for limited public funding. Competition for attention stimulated semantic negotiation. Words like "art" or even "handicraft" ignited public interest, while "industrial arts" attracted public funding. Raley wrote to Indian Agent Daunt:

The enclosed copy of the Department's letter...dated Ottawa April 23rd, states the reason why the Department is not disposed to make a grant of $600.00 to continue the teaching of Indian pupils their native handicrafts such as weaving, basketry, etc.

It is evident from the wording of the letter my recommendation did not carry weight enough, neither did I persuade the Department of the vital importance of the undertaking. I hope you will forgive me if I write at length to explain more fully the terms of my letter which appear to be vague, to emphasize the need and renew the request for a grant.

I was unfortunate using the term "handicraft arts." The meaning would have been obvious if I had used the term "Indian industrial arts." However, the term "handicraft arts" generally expresses to me, when applied to the Indians of the Pacific Coast, the whole range of cultural activities and industries. In other words, the washing, carding, spinning, knitting, weaving, carving, and bead work, with symbolic Indian designs are

or less than communism as practiced in Soviet Russia." (Schrader, The Indian Arts and Crafts Board, p.245.)
"Indian industrial arts."  

Canadian social reformers thus faced stiff opposition from both the general public and the administration. Although the Indian Arts and Crafts Board also worked to set up cooperative retail outlets for curios on or near reservations, the American government recognized the general public's resistance to the conception of Native American products as "art" and used the Board for marketing purposes. This is why the exhibitions it co-sponsored included sections on "Indian Art for Modern Living."  

Raley advocated a similar approach, but he first had to convince public bureaucrats who better understood the value of industrial training for a primarily resource-oriented province, especially since industrial training had been one of the goals of Indian Affairs since the 1890s. His option was to form an independent board without public financing, a difficult task during that era.

In his public lectures and writing, Raley was careful to follow the wording of the Arts and Crafts discourse. He had assembled his own collection at the height of the movement's popularity; presumably, he found its rhetoric personally appealing. He suggested, for example, that the "...machine age is ...responsible for the decay of [Indian] handicrafts." His focus on both nature and healing in the arts are also reminiscent of the Arts and Crafts movement. He defined two kinds of "Indian arts and crafts," both involving "...the skilful adaptation and

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44. Douglas and d'Hanoncourt, Indian Art.
application to some purpose and use of knowledge acquired from nature,"\textsuperscript{46} one pre-historic - "[n]atural art in its purity, before any extraneous or foreign influences..." and the other historic, having lost "realistic features" and becoming "conventionalized through Asiatic, Russian, Spanish and other European contacts."\textsuperscript{47} He stated further that any revival of these arts "as a welfare movement...would give a new cultural activity with a sense of accomplishment and improve his [the "Indian's"] social status in the community."\textsuperscript{48}

Raley, cognizant of (and perhaps at least partially in agreement with) open hostility towards traditional First Nations pursuits like the potlatch, framed his argument for the promotion of First Nations art within the concept of historical progression and state rhetoric of 'modernizing' First Nations people through assimilation. "Ignorantly by some, maliciously by others, an undercurrent of propaganda has been maintained to the effect that Indian youth revert to type...upon their return home" from residential school. "It is true the graduates of our schools have not an easy time of it," writes Raley. "He has grown, the people of his village have not. He has advanced intellectually, the people of his village have been intellectually stationary. He finds a conflicting of ideals." But, Raley continues, applying the Arts and Crafts notion that the making of art produces better people, "a revival of primitive arts" would lessen rather than increase "the danger of reversion to

\textsuperscript{45} Raley, "Important Considerations," p.9.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid, p.6.
\textsuperscript{47} Ibid, p.6.
\textsuperscript{48} Ibid, p.13.
objectionable customs....Industries would help socialize the graduate, by a common activity, and re-establish the equilibrium between him and his family and the village group."49

In essence, Raley advocated the disappearance of the ancient social order through the commoditization of its visual trappings. This had been the goal of offering "pre-vocational instruction in weaving, basket making, carving, art designs with Indian motifs"50 at Coqualeetza School under Raley's principalship. Commoditization and the organization of its production on British models served as the two pillars of Raley's argument that such "industries" did not encourage "reversion to objectionable customs." Raley even demonstrated an almost prophetic understanding of how important a marketing tool Northwest Coast design might prove for Canadian business in citing the Prince of Wales' admonition that "Greater attention to the artistic side of industry or design in industry is essential if our manufacturers are to develop their domestic and overseas market."51

Although his primary interest was expanding the Coqualeetza experiment into a national, state-funded organization, as the organization of guilds and other supportive associations was an integral part of the Arts and Crafts movement in Britain and Euro-America in the nineteenth century, Raley focused his efforts on duplicating and adapting the guild structure for the promotion of First Nations objects, particularly in British Columbia.

b. Raley and Public Display in Vancouver

With his personal interest in collecting First Nations objects, one of the earliest moves Raley made after retiring to Vancouver was to arrange for his collection to be put on public display. This was part of his desire to encourage the understanding and aid of First Nations people. In a letter to Vancouver City Archivist J. S. Matthews in October 1934 outlining the history of his collection, Raley demonstrated an understanding of the ways in which the salvage paradigm constructed value and authority in "ethnographic" collections:

Most of the specimens are of ethnological value. Now, ethnology, as you are aware, is a view to understanding their modes of life, their customs, social organizations, ceremonials, psychology, religion; and in general terms, their cultural background. Only through this study can we appreciate the early life of the Indians of the North West Coast of the Pacific, and be fair to them....

The opportunity for first-hand information is passing quickly. We have imposed our civilization upon their primitive culture, and are now dependent for our knowledge on the few remaining aged Indians, the scientific records, and museums. It follows that a collection such as mine is symbolic, on a modest scale, of the arts, handicrafts, ceremonies, social life, religion, culture of a race. In the specimens we read the life history of a vanishing race.52

According to a document written by J.S. Matthews in 1946, Mrs. Raley was negotiating the sale of Raley's collection for $3500 to George Heye of the Heye Foundation in 1934 to cover tax payments, the same "foreign" individual and foundation that had purchased objects from Halliday's Cranmer deal before their shipment to Ottawa. Instead, Matthews arranged for Victor

51. Ibid, p.23.
52. G.H. Raley to G.S. Matthews, correspondence dated October
Spencer, associated with Vancouver's David Spencer Department Store, to purchase the collection at the same price since "...enough 'stuff' has gone out of British Columbia already...."\textsuperscript{53} Raley would provide for suitable display cases out of the $3500 for public display and Matthews arranged for the rotunda of the old Court House on Georgia Street as a the location for this personal museum. It was moved to the tenth floor of the newly constructed City Hall in 1937, presumably as part of the city museum intended in the start of AHSAV some forty years earlier. The collection later provided a sound basis for both the Vancouver Museum and the University of British Columbia's Museum of Anthropology, despite some cloudy disagreement between Spencer and Raley over the amount paid.

While Raley's collection was intended as a cabinet, providing specimens in which we read "the history of a vanishing race," his interest was not limited simply to the display of his career's souvenirs. It is the fulfilment of one aspect of his fiduciary responsibility, an attitude that Virginia Dominguez summarized as part of "the discourse of an educated elite Euro-American community that grew to assume the value of museum collections and the 'civilized world's' duty to develop and maintain them."\textsuperscript{54} His collection was significant in providing first a basis for the city collection and second further symbolically connecting the municipality to First Nations "antecedents" through the objects' display in important public

\textsuperscript{6, 1934.}  
\textsuperscript{53} J. S. Matthews, "A Shameful Repudiation," June 24th, 1945, VCA.  
\textsuperscript{54} Virginia R. Dominguez, "The Marketing of Heritage,"
and official locales. It was the public extension of his private belief, or as Dominguez terms it, fear "...that we will no longer be able to get our hands on these objects, and that this would amount to an irretrievable loss of the means of preserving our own historicity." The ardent belief in the progress of assimilation produced the salvage paradigm in collecting and display. Dominguez calls this a process of "two-fold displacement" where "...objects are collected no longer because of their intrinsic value but as metonymy for the people who produced them. And the people who produced them are the objects of examination not because of their intrinsic value but because of their perceived contribution to our understanding of our own historical trajectory."

And yet Raley seems to have sought to use this self-referential trajectory as a new beginning. He saw public display as a stimulus to sales. Probably due to his experience as an educator and Indian school administrator, Raley entertained a more active role for "art" in the economic development of First Nations people. For Raley, the art of the past then functioned symbolically in the manner of the two-fold displacement, and yet also opened a door of economic opportunity to the mainstream "Canadian" society of the present through the production of a unique, still metonymic, luxury product. Raley's vision is still very much mired in the British class system and its replication in Canada. He was, in essence, advocating arts and crafts as a product which First Nations, as a labour class, could produce for

the consumption of a European, presumably British, managerial elite.

What distinguishes Raley then from other collectors and ethnologists of his time was that, while he accepted the "invention of heritage," that is the formation of this new social memory and its implications for colonial self-legitimization, he pushed it further to an "invention of art" that was not limited to the assignment of value associated with the understanding of First Nations objects simply as historical heritage. The objects had as well a more practical value as a vehicle in his vision, no matter how short-sighted, of a fair and just absorption for First Nations people into Euro-Canadian society.

There are thus two aspects to Raley's collection: 1) its assemblage and use within the Euro-Canadian community as historic metonym; and 2) its utility in the promotion of a contemporary commodity market. Since it was focused on curio production, his commoditization campaign was not intended as one of closure in the way Domínguez refers to ethnological collections where "the separation of objects from their users and the closure imposed on that separation by the act of sale left museums with objects whose relevance to the cultures they presumably embody is...a Euro-American invention."\(^{57}\) Although the value in the objects of the past was, as Domínguez notes, an unequivocally Euro-American invention, Raley, like d'Harnoncourt, hoped to manipulate this metonymic value to produce new value for newly produced objects imitating forms of the past. It is the desire for this

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\(^{56}\) Ibid.

\(^{57}\) Ibid, p.554.
manipulation that makes the commoditization programmes of the 1930s, like Raley's proposals, so utterly distinct from the promotional programmes of the 1920s, like the National Museum projects and AHSAV's Stanley Park village. This was another step in the transformation of the value of First Nations objects. Under state management in the 1920s, objects like crest poles were transformed into props for the construction of national identity and social memory. Raley was advocating the miniaturization and then commoditization of these props, albeit in the superficially altruistic hope of jump-starting an economic outlet for impoverished communities.

c. The Royal Society of Arts Brief

Raley outlined his own revitalization plan nationally in an address to the Royal Society of Arts in Toronto in 1934 during a trip aimed at drumming up support among a number of circles, including the Department of Indian Affairs, museums, and established craft associations. He had toyed with the basic ideas, particularly the use of the school system to instil both skills and desire, in his work at the Coqualeetza Residential School in Sardis and had been developing a national scheme over the previous two or three years.

While praising the stewardship policies of the Canadian Department of Indian Affairs, Raley called for a readjustment of policy based in part on the example of the United States' New Deal and aimed at the improvement of the economic status of First Nations people. He justified his choice of the arts as a focus
for this economic improvement based on four primary reasons: 1) the decline from the nineteenth century zenith was largely due to "...the mistaken zeal of the white man, who overwhelmed primitive ideas and ideals with the so-called superiority of all things white"; 2) First Nations arts and crafts were distinctively Canadian and were "...Canada's first contribution to the world of art..."; 3) the discontentment found among First Nations graduates "...could be remedied by a revival of native arts and regional industries"; and 4) such a revival would solve the economic problem, especially if it could be given "...a commercial value by means of a permanent market for tourists...and...could also be linked with ordinary commercial industries and manufactures, and applied to many commodities of trade both ornamental and useful." Later in his address, he also pointed out that most First Nations people could not compete on equal terms with Euro-Canadians, so the arts would be a perfect beginning for economic revival as there would be no competition from Euro-Canada.

Raley notes that some older artisans were still living and young people continued to be inspired by the "...legends, symbols, and monuments of their forefathers." In fact, in his follow-up draft, "Important Considerations Involved in the Treatise on 'Canadian Indian Art and Industries," he detailed more precisely how many people were still producing what kinds of material in various First Nations communities throughout the

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60. Ibid, p.993.
province, suggesting at least twenty to twenty-five active quality carvers and citing the continuance of a number of different textile techniques. He also stressed in both papers the lack of opportunity on reserves and called for incentives for work in the offer of financial reward. His plan therefore called for the stimulation of interest in the project for the elderly, the de-emphasis of distribution found in the potlatch system, the enlistment of anthropologists and ethnologists "...who know where there is real accomplishment and finished work to be found...," and an educational campaign aimed at day and residential schools. In this sense, he advocated strategies followed by Dorothy Dunn active at the Indian School in Santa Fe from 1932 to 1937 and supported after 1934 by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board.

However, Raley also called for the education of the Euro-Canadian public through various media outlets in an effort to create what he called "...Indian mindedness towards primitive Indian crafts." He further advocated securing the co-operation of railway and steamship lines, suggesting the use of a demonstration car on the main rail transport lines. This could all be accomplished under the formation of the "Canadian Indian Handicraft Arts Association or Guild", which would be organized with an official patron or patroness, a board of directors, an executive with chairman, secretary and treasurer, branches with committees for each province, and life, honorary and annual memberships.

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63. Ibid, p.996.
64. Ibid, p.997.
A fundamental objection raised to Raley's plan, cited by Raley himself, was that the program could be incorporated into the existing structure of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild. As Raley had argued previously that welfare support differed for Euro-Canadians and First Nations, he continued to suggest that the artistic situation was also unique and had to be handled by a second, albeit co-operating, organization. Raley insisted that "Indian arts" be segregated from the mainstream so as to minimize competition and wrote briefs and resolutions calling for the preservation of these handicrafts, frequently citing the 'dangerous' example of the Japanese imitative mass-production of First Nations designs. In addition, Raley had found the Guild's forays into First Nations object marketing and support feeble. In the Guild's efforts, "[t]here was nothing to suggest Canada had in its borders a great zone of primitive culture." He also pointed out that a craft store opened by the Guild in Vancouver was thin in its exposure of First Nations work and closed due to its failure in turning a profit. Raley must have further felt that the necessary start-up funding for his comprehensive vision would come from the Department of Indian Affairs. This government support would dwarf any paltry amount available within the means of the Guild and therefore necessitated a distinct arts and crafts organization.

His plan went beyond these two treatises to the actual writing of a resolution for the Canadian Indian Art and

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67. The call against the Japanese and their 'devious' economic subversion of Canadian industries was oft-cited racist cliché in British Columbia between the wars.
Handicraft Guild, although if it was ever actually formed, its impact was minimal. It did not result in any broad marketing campaign or in any major commissions or sales for individual artists. Alice Ravenhill's British Columbia Indian Arts and Welfare Society, formed only four years after Raley's Royal Arts Society address and following the guild-structure closely enough to indicate an awareness of, or at least a shared vision with, Raley's intentions, was to have a much more significant impact. Raley himself nonetheless made a notable practical impact on Vancouver's own, already established voluntary historical society.

III. Summary

While recent writers like Wayne Suttles and Aldona Jonaitis point to the importance of post-World War II museum and government-supported projects in promoting contemporary artists "...for the restoration or recreation of 'traditional' objects that the Indians had largely ceased producing...[,]" allocating sole responsibility to these public institutional programmes obscures three important facts. First, First Nations peoples continued to potlatch and to produce objects for use within the potlatch as well as for sale. Second, the Great Depression forced the discontinuation of governmental programmes begun in the 1920s, like the Skeena preservation project; in the 1930s, museum budgets were drastically reduced. Third, in the decade and a half that separated major public museum projects, social

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69. Wayne Suttles and Aldona Jonaitis, "History of Research in
reformers, like Raley, were actively lobbying for the creation of promotional programmes and organizations that would support the contemporary production of First Nations objects. Raley himself detailed how many people were still producing what kinds of material in the various First Nations communities throughout the province. The rhetoric that Raley used helped re-shape the public understanding of First Nations objects as a living "art." Raley's ideas also served as a model for his more successful counterpart in Victoria, Alice Ravenhill and the British Columbia Indian Arts and Welfare Society, as well as for the museum-based training and promotion projects that emerged in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

Ethnology," Handbook, p.82.
CHAPTER 5

Alice Ravenhill and the BCIAWS

Although Vancouver had achieved a reputation as British Columbia's commercial centre before the Great Depression, it was not where government policy decisions were made. From this standpoint alone, Raley's lobbying activities had a strike against them. Anyone seeking meaningful change had to somehow align themselves with the circles of political power in either Ottawa or Victoria, centres of government locked in a seemingly endless series of disputes over jurisdiction. Policy disagreements regarding Indian administration dated back to British Columbia's entrance into Confederation.¹

Reform of the system of education was a widespread concern in British Columbia² and provided an avenue in which the provincial government could establish some semblance of control over the policy of Indian administration and the destiny of First Nations people in British Columbia.³ With education a provincial matter and the Department of Indian Affairs a federal ministry, the education of aboriginal children satisfied no one. Once

¹. Tennant, Aboriginal People, pp.39-52.
². The Putnam-Weir Report released in 1925, for example, proposed a far-ranging series of reforms for education in British Columbia, some of which were implemented immediately and some of which took a decade for implementation. (F. Henry Johnson, A History of Public Education in British Columbia, Vancouver: University of British Columbia, 1964, pp.101-115.)
³. Titley writes: "Some of the more critical reinterpretations of Canadian educational history suggest that universal schooling made its appearance, not so much as an adjunct on onward marching democracy, but rather as an instrument of social control. Dominant groups perceived the school as an effective mechanism for fostering loyalty to the prevailing political, economic, and social order..."
again, because First Nations "art" was the one attribute of First Nations societies constructed in a positive light by public institutions like the museums, it proved to be a useful tool in generating non-Native public support for educational reform efforts. The most successful reform lobby that promoted First Nations "art," and the focus of this chapter, occurred in Victoria and can be traced to the organizational efforts of Alice Ravenhill and the British Columbia Indian Arts and Welfare Society (BCIAWS) between 1935 and 1948. In contrast with Raley, who wanted to use the educational system to encourage the production and consumption of First Nations arts as a means of economic integration, Ravenhill sought to use the production and consumption of First Nations arts to better the educational system, making it both more relevant and accessible to First Nations children. This shift in reform direction was a result of a shift in priorities among social reformers as the financial difficulties of the Great Depression waned towards the end of the 1930s.

I. Ravenhill and the Importance of the BCIAWS

Ravenhill was instrumental in forming The Society for the Furtherance of British Columbia Indian Arts and Welfare, later shortened to the British Columbia Indian Arts and Welfare Society (BCIAWS), in December 1939 – January 1940. The BCIAWS is in turn significant because it followed the goals and corporate organization for a voluntary association advocated by Raley in 1935, among less advantaged groups." (Titley, A Narrow Vision, p.92.)
blending by the mid-1940s with some of the objectives then being pursued by the Provincial Museum. The BCIAWS formed an important link in the transition of First Nations arts promotion from voluntary organizations in the 1930s to state institutions in the 1940s. Ultimately, the BCIAWS may have succeeded where Raley (at least in his association with AHSAV) failed partially because of its proximity to the provincial social elite in Victoria.

Ravenhill was thus an important figure in the professionalization of the field of First Nations art, contributing to the definition of an occupation, “Indian artist,” subsequently allocated professional status within public institutions of “culture” in British Columbia in the 1950s. During the 1940s and 1950s, museums and universities sought to establish a monopoly over title and practice for selected “professional” practitioners and to exert control over entry and training. The BCIAWS played a significant role in the development of an infrastructure that would later link the three main components of a formalized art market in the 1950s: producers of objects, consumers of objects, and producers of knowledge about the objects. The BCIAWS's utilization of museum collections and its participation in educational projects simultaneously informed producers and consumers about standards of performance, of form and materials, that served as the basis of promotion and marketing over the next three decades. This in essence established the ability of state officials to define the criteria for what constitutes “Indian” art and therefore who
could be an "Indian" artist. By aligning itself with the Provincial Museum, the BCIAWS supported and legitimized state control over the social distribution of knowledge about First Nations objects, thus also contributing to the on-going attempt to deny indigenous modes of authority and leadership.

II. Ravenhill and Educational Reform

Alice Ravenhill was born in Snaresbrook in Essex, England in 1859 to an upper class family. On the periphery of Britain's royal web, Ravenhill was fluent in the intricacies of a social order accepted and reproduced by the Victorian English upper class.4 "The stream of social life into which I was born has almost petered out," she lamented near the end of her life. And despite the problems created by Victorian industrialization, the problems that were the focus of her professional life, Ravenhill found what she saw as the positive attributes of her generation passing with that stream of Victorian social life. "With it has disappeared to a great degree the atmosphere in which I was reared, with its sense of responsibility for the advantages enjoyed, of the paramount duty of serving others, of self-control and reticence, of dignified endurance of reverses, of respect for authority and law, of cheerful self-sacrifice, and of dogged perseverance to gain desired ends."5 With this idealized British world view, she adapted her training and experience to the social welfare of British Columbian First Nations through the

realization of an association along the lines envisioned by her contemporary, Reverend George Raley.

As a young woman in England, Alice Ravenhill received a Council County Lectureship provided by the National Health Society and in Britain. She participated in a growing government-sponsored infrastructure intended to maintain healthy work and home living conditions, particularly among the lower classes, through the provision of education. This included both basic health practices and domestic technical training, and workplace inspection. The Industrial Revolution had established a path well worn by the last quarter of the nineteenth century and public services were beginning to catch up with many of the changes brought on by rapid urbanization and industrialization. Spurred on by an interest in unorthodox educational methods through her Council County lectureship, Ravenhill became involved as well in British educational reform. Through a succession of positions as secretary to the Royal British Nurses Association, lecturer to the Cooperative Society and the Women's Cooperative Guild, and finally to the West Riding of Yorkshire County Council (described in her memoirs as "ranked among the most progressive of educational authorities"), Ravenhill garnered enough official attention to be sent to the United States to research American methods of handling "home economics," the "...first systematic educational efforts to introduce girls to some of the fundamental problems connected with the home..." and became instrumental in

5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
the formation of a degree course in Social and Household Science at the University of London.\(^8\)

Ravenhill emigrated to Canada in 1910, living first at Shawnigan Lake on southern Vancouver Island before moving to Victoria, with a brief tenure as Director of Home Economics at the Utah State College from 1917 to 1919. She became involved with First Nations arts when she was approached by the provincial Women's Institutes in 1926 to provide guidance on the adaptation of First Nations designs to the making of hooked rugs, a craft pursuit Victoria resident Emily Carr had also been involved with at around the same time. Ravenhill was, by her own admission, ignorant on the subject and turned to her neighbour W. A. Newcombe, a biologist with the Provincial Museum and son of C. F. Newcombe, the man primarily responsible for assembling the indigenous objects collection at the museum. By the time Ravenhill felt confident enough to talk about the subject, the interests of the Women's Institutes had turned elsewhere and she was left with a growing collection of First Nations-based needlework designs for sale through a commercial store in Victoria and a both steadily growing interest in First Nations arts and concern over the failure of the federal system of education for First Nations children.\(^9\)

Ravenhill's official involvement was instigated with the Provincial Museum's receipt of a Carnegie Fund grant for public lectures in 1934. These lectures covered a variety of natural

\(^8\) Ibid.
\(^9\) Ibid.
history topics,\textsuperscript{10} with Ravehill's primary responsibility the "Indian handicrafts of British Columbia" for both adult and children's lectures. The attendance for such lectures, which provides an idea of the program's popularity, hovered around 300 per lecture for children's classes and 80 for adult classes.\textsuperscript{11}

This kind of program was becoming increasingly popular in museums throughout both the United States and Canada. Ravenhill's interest in unconventional educational techniques was particularly suited to the changing interests of museums. Malcolm Knowles suggests that accessibility was becoming an urgent concern for museums with previous museum-based educational programmes tending to "please the staff and reflect their professional interests rather than please the public and take into account their interests."\textsuperscript{12} The public programs, stiff, formal, and organized according to academic principles were not bringing in the operating funds. "This view began to change," continues Knowles, "...as a result of the economic pressure brought on by the depression of the 1930s,"\textsuperscript{13} although it had been a concern of the museums even earlier as indicated by Harlan Smith's similar, popularized public lectures at the National Museum in the 1920s. "As contributions from wealthy patrons

\textsuperscript{10} The tension created historically by a racial hierarchy that privileged European accomplishments is illustrated here in the assignment of First Nations material to the realm of natural, as opposed to human, history.


\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
diminished, museums became increasingly dependent upon public support. Accordingly, the 'curriculum' of the museums began to broaden."\textsuperscript{14} The Provincial Museum then took a more functionalist role. In this new curatorial attitude, it became a repository of knowledge that could be applied socially for the apparent benefit of the larger community. By 1940, the Provincial Museum broadened its display strategy to include the construction of Thunderbird Park adjacent to its main building, making the museum's collection of poles assembled primarily by Newcombe prior to the First World War a highly visible outdoor public landmark in the city's downtown centre.

III. Ravenhill and the BCPM Publications

In 1936, Ravenhill gave an introductory presentation to the Victoria Normal School on First Nations peoples in British Columbia, which turned out to be a stepping stone to a number of larger projects. "I learned...that an eight weeks' course on our B.C. Indians had been recently included in the grade school curriculum, without any authentic guidance being provided for the teachers who had to give it," she wrote in her memoirs. "I ventured to take this up with the Provincial Department of Education and after some months was entrusted with the difficult task of summarizing this unusually intricate subject in a bulletin limited to 30,000 words. To do this was a clear case of 'fools rush in...''\textsuperscript{15} Nonetheless, the result was The Native Tribes of British Columbia, published in 1938 primarily for each

\textsuperscript{14}. Ibid.
grade school in the province but also including an extra run-off of a few hundred copies for sale to the general public. It was the first school text to examine specifically the First Nations of British Columbia and this in itself qualifies the book as a significant step. Furthermore, while Ravenhill culled the elder Newcombe's 1909 Guide to the Anthropological Collection in the Provincial Museum for photographs from the Northwest Coast, her book did not suffer from the same bias towards both the coast and carved coastal objects, normally thought of as men's arts, as did many of the later books on the same subject. Instead, she attempted to give a fuller idea of the "lost cultures" of the entire province, focusing as well on interior peoples and women's textile arts.

Ravenhill's The Native Tribes of British Columbia outlined her position towards First Nations societies and their relationship to "modern" Canada. While this position is indistinguishable from much of either the popular or academic writing of the period, it significantly reinforced the strong hold exercised by the paternalistic sense of fiduciary responsibility held by Euro-Canadian people in all aspects of life related to First Nations people. She states unequivocally that "...these people were three thousand years behind the standard of European culture at the close of the eighteenth century" and that their "backwardness," following the ideas of

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15 Ravenhill, Memoirs, p.211.  
16 Alice Ravenhill, Native Tribes of British Columbia, Victoria: C.R. Banfield, 1938, p.10.  
17 Ibid.  
18 Ibid.
Ravenhill's acquaintance, Diamond Jenness\textsuperscript{19} of the National Museum of Canada, was due to the "physiographic formation of the continent,"\textsuperscript{20} the "unsuitability of flora and fauna for agriculture,"\textsuperscript{21} and perhaps most tellingly, the First Nations peoples' own lack of "mechanic instincts."\textsuperscript{22} This idea, made official by the Ministry of Education's adaptation and widespread dissemination of the book as a school text, also sets up what Ravenhill calls Euro-Canada's "...deeper sense of responsibility towards backward races" and the desire, if not obligation, "...to make amends, when opportunity offers, for previous misunderstandings."\textsuperscript{23} The question of responsibility then led to Ravenhill's primary role in the formation of the BCIAWS.

The BCIAWS and the Provincial Museum's obtainment of a Carnegie grant for Ravenhill's involvement in the mid-1930s formed an institutional intersection for educational reform interests in British Columbia. Ravenhill and the BCIAWS emphasized educational reform as an answer to the "Indian problem." Based on the American Indian New Deal model, their ideas of artistic promotion and the encouragement of cultural pride was intended to enable First Nations children to open the door to an Anglo-Canadian way of life. By the mid-1930s the Provincial Museum was producing materials and displays intended to complement the provincial school curricula. The museum was

\textsuperscript{19} Jenness stayed with Ravenhill at her home at Shawnigan Lake on an early visit to Vancouver Island. (Ravenhill, Memoirs, p. 181.)
\textsuperscript{20} Ravenhill, Native Tribes, p. 10
\textsuperscript{21} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.
attempting to respond to what its administration perceived to be the needs of the society. The salvage paradigm, which guided the accumulation of objects for museum collections as contributions to scientific prosperity, was giving way to a recognition of a farther-reaching educational purpose for the museum. In addition to its participation in education-related projects with the BCIAWS, by the mid-1940s, the museum was thus also exhibiting, for example, selected works from children's Saturday morning art classes at the Vancouver Art Gallery and installing a panel series on "Indian life" in the provincial Legislative Buildings' rotunda.24

Contradicting Raley, Ravenhill asserted that the "...capacities expressed in these arts are to all appearance dormant, if not lost, by the survivors of a formerly numerous people...."25 She further felt that "...the valuable qualities of accuracy, observation, and coordination of hand and eye in manual expression, with all that their exercise means to the individual and his value to the community, are apparently also in abeyance."26 And although she acknowledged the "efforts...being made in some Indian Residential Schools...",27 there is still the question of why Ravenhill was at all interested in First Nations arts, apart from aesthetic appreciation. Quoting Harlan Smith, who was promoting the same idea in Ottawa at various technical and industrial conferences, Ravenhill wrote that "[I]t would seem

25. Ravenhill, Native Tribes, p.11.
26. Ibid.
that the early Indian art of Canada might well serve as a suitable starting point for the manufacturers of distinctively Canadian designs."^{28}

The crux of Ravenhill's call for policy change was that Euro-Canada had not sufficiently understood and exploited the potential contributions First Nations peoples could make to the economy, or how much Euro-Canada could enjoy First Nations products. The line between assimilation, the replacement of indigenous identities with a British world view, and integration, where aspects of First Nations identities could be commoditized for the modern Canadian economy, was a subtle one. Despite tentative opposition to the Department of Indian Affairs policy, Ravenhill, like other social reformers, trusted the authority of state officials, their ability to implement altruistic programs for the government's wards and citizens, and their willingness to fulfill what liberal reformers saw as the government's moral obligations. In addition, she adhered to the myth of historical progress and the inherent superiority of British society. She writes:

It seems timely to arouse greater interest in the people who preceded the present inhabitants of British Columbia, and to make known more widely to their fellow members of the British Empire the ingenuity with which these early pioneers overcame the difficulties of their surroundings. In a period when comfort and convenience are measured by ability to pay for their provision unrelated to the exercise of individual resourcefulness; when every detail of life is supplied on a large scale by mechanized methods; when distance is

^{27} Ibid, p.9
^{28} Ibid.
annihilated by modern devices of transport, the achievements of a people isolated for many centuries from contact with others are apt to be overlooked and depreciated. Yet it is these people who "broke the trail" in many unsuspected ways for their successors, and while doing so exhibited qualities it is advisable to recall.\(^2^9\)

Ravenhill had gained considerable power in shaping public thought about First Nations societies through these school-related projects. Although it may have seemed to non-Native Canadians that her objectives were altruistic, this material demonstrates some of the underlying ideological concerns of both Ravenhill and the BCIAWS. Ravenhill's vision, and that of the BCIAWS, remained paternalistic. While coloured by her own social reformist attitudes, Ravenhill's understanding was further bolstered by a textual reliance on a combination of relatively recent ethnology and anthropological theory (albeit from sometimes quite different streams of thought, as with Otis T. Mason, Franz Boas, Ruth Benedict, and Erna Gunther), and from pioneer accounts and more localized anthropology (including Paul Kane, Captains Cook and Mayne, Father Morice, and C. F. Newcombe).

The main emphasis in much of these texts on the disappearance and anthropological salvage\(^3^0\) of First Nations

\(^2^9\) Ibid.

\(^3^0\) The temporal ranking of non-European societies in social evolutionist thinking and the prevalent view that non-industrial societies were doomed to extinction in the "natural" progression from "primitive" to "modern" informed a Western scientific concern with "salvaging" the remnants of "primitive" peoples within the spaces of anthropology and anthropological museums. This concern is discussed in detail in James Clifford, The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth Century Ethnography, Literature and Art, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988.
peoples in combination with current optimism about the "Changing Indian" forged an acceptance of the possibility of a revival in "modern" terms. The social reformers' "Common sense" solutions to the "Indian problem" entailed economic integration and proper preparatory training. Quality control strategies, such as the provision of museum examples, in combination with promotion of hand-crafted goods as a "modern" luxury item soon formed the BCIAWS's main arts policy.

The objectives of the BCIAWS as drafted by Ravenhill and her associates in 1939 were:

1. To promote the welfare of the Indians, particularly those of British Columbia, by supporting all movements directed towards an improvement in Indian Health, Education and Social Welfare.

2. To bring to notice of the public, the innate merits and deep-rooted artistic talents of the Indian people by means of Exhibitions of their Arts and Crafts, Folklore, Music, Drama and Dance; and through Meetings, Conferences, Publications, Radio Broadcasts, Television and the Press.

3. To arouse the Indians themselves to a realization of their true place in the social organization of this country, and to encourage them to work for, and to take advantage of, the opportunities which are offered under the revised Indian Act, and to prepare themselves for community service.

4. To devote particular attention to the needs of the younger generation of Indian people, and to work in their interest to remove the inequalities of opportunity which still present almost insurmountable handicaps to young Indians trying to enter the occupation of their choice.\(^{31}\)

The executive committee members included Major Bullock-Webster, Director of British Columbia School and Community Drama (and Ravenhill's successor as BCIAWS president), Alma Russell, formerly of the B.C. Archives, representatives from the Victoria and Island Arts and Crafts Society, and Madame Sanderson-Maugin, whom Ravenhill calls "...invaluable for her...wide social connections which enabled her to secure for the young Society sufficient funds to publish..." their first children's book in 1940. Three influential new members joined the committee in 1941: Willard E. Ireland, Provincial Archivist, Clifford Carl, director of the Provincial Museum, who immediately offered the museum as the society's official address, and A. E. Pickford, author of Food Plants Used by the Natives of British Columbia. By 1942, Lieutenant-Governor W. C. Woodward became the Society's honourary patron and a BCIAWS off-shoot was established in Oliver in 1941. Reverend J. C. Goodfellow, formerly with ASHAV and author of the first pamphlet on the Stanley Park poles, became the honourary president in 1942, and through 1943 "...a number of B.C. Indians became Honourary Members." The group is typical of a social reforming ideology popular at the time in British Columbia, emphasizing the use of study groups, cooperation, and citizenship education in an effort to improve impoverished sections of Canadian society. It relied on models from England and the United States, as did the corporate
structure suggested by Raley. It recognized the potential of the popular value of First Nations “art” and sought to gather the various ideological threads and display strategies that had been developing haltingly since AHSAV’s first attempts in the early 1920s in Stanley Park. Following earlier leads, tourism was singled out for its importance, but, not surprisingly given Ravenhill’s background as an educator and the interests of the forming committee in general, the society concentrated initially on educational activities.

The first publication of the organization was not about the Northwest Coast, but was rather a Christmas tale from the interior Okanagan Valley. The Tale of the Nativity was illustrated by children of the Inkameep Reserve in Oliver and based on legends performed by the students at the opening of the Provincial Museum’s Thunderbird Park in 1942. A second Nativity book, illustrated by, Francois Batiste, who signed his name Sis-hu-1k, and Meet Mr. Coyote, an illustrated story book


37. In June 1948, a suggestion was put forward by the society for the sale of Native objects in national parks through the National Parks Service. (see "Recommendations of the B.C. Indian Arts and Welfare Society," The Native Voice, June 1948, p.13).


38. Ravenhill, Memoirs, pp.216-217. Batiste and classmate Johnny Stalkia were singled out by Anthony Walsh as star students. Batiste had attended school in Santa Fe and had exhibitions arranged through Walsh and the Okanagan chapter of the BCIAWS at the Windemere Hotel, the Vancouver Art Gallery, and at an unspecified location in Victoria in the early 1940s. (PABC BCIAWS Papers Add.Mss 2720: Anthony Walsh to Elizabeth Newton, February 18,1940; Brief Statement of the Efforts and Attainments Since Formation December 1939, Victoria: BCIAWS Unpublished, n.d., n.p.; Arthur Lismer to Alice Ravenhill, May 28, 1940; and Alice Ravenhill
from the Indian Residential School at Lytton were also published by the society between 1941 and 1943.

The image of cooperation and kindly paternalism suggested by the BCIAWS in its promotion of art and literature by First Nations children masked the horrific treatment the children themselves all too often faced. The policy of disrupting families by removing First Nations children to either residential schools or to Euro-Canadian foster families is alluded to Sis-hu-lk's illustrations. In one (figure 20), a simple line drawing depicts two of the three Wise Men as First Nations chiefs, thus suggesting these Biblical stories as part of a shared heritage. In another, the character of Joseph is transformed into Jesus's foster-father with whom, according to the caption, "The Child" spends a "Happy Boyhood." This goes to the heart of assimilationist educational policy in the 1920s and 1930s where Christianization through the adaptation of Euro-Christian traditions to a First Nations context, the disintegration of the extended family pattern, and the disruption of the relationship between generations were critical to the remolding of First Nations children as "good" members of Canadian society. 39

Sis-hu-lk's drawings are more a celebration of this policy than they are of his achievements or those of his schoolmates. The emphasis on a "Happy Boyhood" with a "Foster-Father" is typical of the silences of the time. However, "[r]ecent reports dealing with the residential schools focus on the horrendous

physical and sexual abuse many native children suffered while in these institutions. Abuse of this nature follows its victims throughout their lives and colours their relationships with others," writes Ernie Crey in a point particularly relevant to the publications of the BCIAWS. "Those who have written about these institutions emphasize those aspects of the institutions designed to assimilate aboriginal children."40 With what is now known about the sometimes tragic consequences of assimilation through education, the transparent manipulation practised by these publications can sometimes seem obscenely ironic.41

Nonetheless, reformers like Ravenhill and Raley were adamant in their focus on constructing First Nations "art" as part of Canadian "culture," convinced that the failure exemplified by the relatively poor performance of First Nations children in schools and the impoverishment on reserves was due to misdirected paternalism, rather than the concept of paternalism itself and the power imbalances it perpetuated. "Art" was a means of building support for refurbishing outdated institutions and rewriting outdated policy directions.

Following the success of The Native Tribes of British Columbia, the Provincial Museum and the BCIAWS cooperated in the publication of Ravenhill's A Cornerstone of Canadian Culture: An Outline of the Arts and Crafts of the Indian Tribes of British Columbia. This work was first intended as a selection of wall

40. Ibid.
41. Crey quotes a Salish elder, Henry Castle, whose "...classmates were caught speaking their language one day at Colqualeezza [where Raley was principal]...they had their mouths pried open and sewing needles driven through their tongues into the
charts drawn from the Provincial Museum's collection and originally commissioned by the Department of Indian Affairs to show "...examples of the arts and crafts formerly practiced by the Indian tribes..." of British Columbia. Accompanied by a handbook, these were to circulate among First Nations schools to "...provide teachers and students with a record of former tribal decorative arts and crafts which have possibilities of further development and utilization in modern life." The commission fell through and the result was this smaller book version published by the Provincial Museum in 1944. Included were designs drawn for Swanton by Charles Edenshaw, which later served as a design source for Bill Reid's early Haida-style jewelry efforts. In this sense, one might argue that through Reid's earliest Haida work, Ravenhill and the BCIAWS were indeed successful in providing inspirational fodder for the now most widely recognized First Nations artist from British Columbia, a realization that surpassed the implicit aspirations of their published objectives.

IV. BCIAWS Exhibits and Promotional Activities

In addition to the publication of texts on First Nations peoples and arts, the BCIAWS co-sponsored an annual exhibition of First Nations art at the Provincial Museum beginning in 1943.

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43. Ibid.
44. Doris Shadbolt, Bill Reid, Vancouver and Toronto: Douglas
The exhibition was intended primarily to provide exposure for young First Nations artists still in school, like Batiste and Judith Morgan. However, a number of mature artists also gained considerable exposure through the exhibitions, including most notably George Clutesi and Ellen Neel.

As museums had extended their contacts out to other museums and public institutions, objects and paintings in the annual exhibitions were sometimes selected for loan to institutions outside Victoria. Under the auspices of the BCIAWS and shipped through the Provincial Museum, a number of objects were sent in 1943 to the Annual Exhibitions of the Royal Canadian Academy of Arts in Quebec and Montreal resulting in individual prizes for the basketry work of Mrs. Johnny Johnson of Kakawis and the student knitting of Madeline Charlie of St. Catherine's school in Duncan, as well as school prizes for Christie Indian School in Kakawis in design, and to Inkameep School in Oliver and Christie Indian School for applied work. In commemoration of the provincial enfranchisement of First Nations peoples in 1949, the provincial government bought five of Judith Morgan's paintings selected from the annual exhibit. The five, *Morning Mist*, *Hamatcha Dance*, *Bear from Kitwancul*, *The Origin of the Wolf Society* (figure 21), and *The Inheritance Dance*, were then shipped to Ottawa for a solo show at the National Museum funded by the Department of Indian Affairs. Typically, Morgan illustrated Gitxsan myths and ceremonies in an illusionist painting style and

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her work thus draws comparisons with the Southwestern and southern Plains painting associated with Indian schools in New Mexico and Oklahoma in the 1920s and 1930s. Rather than adhering to the indigenous conventions of two-dimensional patterns built of flat black and red lines and shapes common to ceremonial painting from the Skeena Valley, Morgan typically illustrated Gitxsan myths with naturalistic compositions heightened through dramatic chiaroscuro—a potent synthesis that could have potentially challenged the use of First Nations' themes in the work of Carr and other non-Native painters who lacked the intimacy that Morgan would have had as a cultural insider.

Morgan's paintings and other selected works from the annual exhibitions were also shown at the Philbrook Art Centre in Tulsa, Oklahoma and at the Portland Art Gallery in Portland, Oregon. The annual exhibits began to garner considerable attention for both the BCIAWS and young individual artists. And as Anthony Walsh pointed out in his introduction to The Tale of the Nativity, the artistic activity was all part of a larger agenda. Using First Nations art, it was possible to gain media attention, and "...by newspaper publicity and other means, our own citizens are gradually being awakened to their own responsibility to the Indian as an integral unit of Canadian national life."48

As well as attracting public attention through the arts,

46. See Brody, Indian Painters and White Patrons.
these organizations also submitted briefs directly to the government. The Okanagan Society for the Revival of Indian Arts and Crafts submitted a brief to the federal Committee on Reconstruction and Re-establishment in 1943 entitled Native Canadians: A Plan for the Rehabilitation of Indians. The society's two fundamental proposals included a replacement Indian Act modeled on the American Bureau of Indian Affairs New Deal policy and the establishment of a royal commission on Indian affairs. Both the BCIAWS and the Oliver off-shoot lobbied for enhanced educational opportunities. The Okanagan group argued in its 1943 brief for post-secondary education, suggesting that "the balance, judgement, and organizing ability of the leaders of the Native Brotherhood of B.C. with five thousand Indian members compare favorably with that of white executives" and that therefore "there are apparently no more limits to an Indian's capabilities than there are to those of other races, when adequate educational facilities are provided." The BCIAWS also submitted a brief entitled Suggestions on the Encouragement of Arts and Crafts in the Indian Schools of British Columbia to the Department of Indian Affairs in 1942 and Ravenhill prepared a brief to the 1946-48 joint committee on the Indian Act for the BCIAWS.

By the time the Second World War had ended, patriotic rhetoric aimed against European fascism and the eugenic

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principles of Nazi nationalism had brought racism into disrepute. "As a result of the atrocities committed during this war, the world community examined its collective conscience," comments Wet'suwet'en/Carrier writer Shirley Joseph, "and in 1948 produced the United Nations Declaration of Human rights. The government of Canada, in standing with the world community as signator to the Declaration, was forced to examine its treatment of aboriginal people." The BCIAWS and other groups used the new post-war rhetoric of racial tolerance to call for a re-adjustment in Canada's own domestic, racially based policies. Despite her own adherence to a social evolutionary understanding of so-called 'primitive' societies, Ravenhill nonetheless suggested, in terms particularly meaningful to a population now exposed to the realities of German death camps, "certain 'out of date' opinions are clung to tenaciously despite 'up to date' science calling for their revision. Of these what is now described as the 'discarded Myth of Racism' is responsible by its persistence for many misunderstandings among otherwise well intentioned Canadians and their enduring misjudgments of a people over whom Canada assumed jurisdiction nearly two centuries ago." In spite of the widespread pre-war acceptance of eugenic theory in Canada, the state was now caught in a conflict between its wartime condemnation of such theory and practice in Europe and its own

50. Ibid, p.5.
52. Alice Ravenhill, Addressed to the Royal Commission of Senators and Members of the House of Commons Appointed to Inquire into All Phases of the affairs of Canadian Indians in May and October 1946, in University of British Columbia Special
racist legacy in domestic policy. The BCIAWS's most important contribution may have been representing the Anglo-Celtic middle class while at the same time highlighting this contradiction.

So while the role of the arts and of promotional organizations like the BCIAWS need to be understood within the context of conversations around the Indian Act and the on-going "Indian problem," the intersection of various concerns and organizations certainly resulted in greater attention for the arts and the emergence of a new category of contemporary Canadian artist, namely the "Indian" artist. By the late 1940s, the so-called "revival" seemed real enough to demand a marketing agency to ensure the equitable treatment of First Nations artists. It was at this point that the BCIAWS began to surpass Ravenhill's founding vision. Ravenhill and some of her contemporaries had advocated primarily the artistic training of younger children alongside the education of the private corporate sector about the commercial potential of First Nations designs, strategies that seem closely aligned to Dorothy Dunn's work in Santa Fe and the emergence of the Santa Fe and "modern" southern Plains easel painting styles. The apparent realization of an emerging, although fragile market for First Nations objects demanded an institutional infrastructure modeled on the professionalization of the parallel world of non-Native art, also beginning to emerge in Canada. The BCIAWS involvement in institutionalized marketing further coincided with a shift in adult education and other community-support programs from social reform to Collections, SPAM 571A.
professionalization, from the use of art as an exercise in self-help to the maintenance of supportive, professional infrastructure for art producers.

A formal BCIAWS marketing strategy was first prepared in November 1948 by Josephine Godman, four years after Ravenhill's retirement to her new position as the society's president emeritus. The biggest impetus for this strategy was the 1948 Conference on Native Indian Affairs held at the University of British Columbia in April 1948 and co-sponsored by the BCIAWS and the Provincial Museum, although Godman had been actively addressing some of the issues considered in the proposal prior to the UBC meeting. At the conference, she cited sales through the association amounting to $3000 in 1947 with neither a shop nor advertising. Out of this emerged one of Godman's biggest concerns, the fluctuation in quality of the material production available on the market. As an example, in 1947 she wrote: "Some of the dye in baskets have not stood up to sunshine very well and have faded. This has brought complaints from buyers....(W)e must keep the standard high for the best prices." As a result, she acquired information on reliable dyes for vegetable fibers from the Technical Information Service in Ottawa and then obtained a selection directly from a specialty dye company, making these available to any interested basket weavers through a small article in the Native Brotherhood's newspaper, The Native

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53 Discussed in Brody, Indian Painters.
The November 1948 marketing proposal was a response to the BCIAWS own call for a coherent strategy to be submitted to the Department of Indian Affairs. In this proposal, Godman recommended the appointment of a teacher by the Department of Indian Affairs who "...could then visit the likely Reserves with a good exhibit of saleable articles and to show the difference between those and the poor work, also to give patterns of saleable articles and a variety of designs." These patterns would be provided by the British Columbia Provincial Museum. Godman also recommended the establishment of small shops or stalls run by First Nations saleswomen. These shops would be supplied by a central supply depot which would in turn buy from communities with no established market. The combination of high quality maintenance, buying at low prices and operating with a low overhead would enable the BCIAWS to undercut the established craft shops which "...often sell rubbish at a high price."

IV. The Conference on Native Indian Affairs, UBC

The event that both stands as the climax and summary of the arts-centred social reform path was the BCIAWS/UBC conference held in April 1948 and its Report of Conference on Native Indian Affairs at Acadia Camp, University of British Columbia, edited by H. B. (Harry) Hawthorn, professor in the Anthropology Department

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56. Ibid.
at the University of British Columbia. The conference was divided into four sessions: (1) arts and handicrafts, chaired by BCIAWS president A. J. Tullis, and including speeches by A. E. Pickford, Mildred Valley Thornton, Ellen Neel, and Josephine Godman; (2) health and welfare, chaired by M. J. Smith, head of the UBC department of social work, with speeches by Andrew Paull, Mrs. D. Fraser of the Okanagan Society for Arts and Crafts, and the assistant director of welfare for the Provincial Ministry of Health and Welfare, Amy Laugh; (3) education, chaired by Hawthorn and with speeches by R. F. Daley, the provincial inspector of Indian Schools, Father J. L. Bradley, supervisor of Indian missions for the diocese of Victoria, George Raley as former principal of Coqualeetza School, and William Scow, then president of the Native Brotherhood; and (4) training of teachers and other professionals, chaired again by Hawthorn and including addresses by Anthony Walsh, who had been with the BCIAWS, but was identified in the conference publication as “a specialist in teaching Indian children,” R. S. Tennant, regional superintendent of Indian Medical Services, and W. S. Barclay, medical superintendent of Coqualeetza Hospital. Events accompanying the conference included an exhibition of art works by Emily Carr along with the work of such First Nations artists as Judith Morgan, George Clutesi, Leslie John, and Ellen Neel, an exhibition of children's art from the Inkameep School and the Alberni and Christie Residential Schools, an exhibition of literature, the display of antique pieces from private
collections, and a display of needlework by Ravenhill.

This juxtaposition of differing interests and exhibitions demonstrates how art became the rallying point for a patchwork of communities, organizations, views and approaches. Art was a useful rallying point for a variety of reasons. First, it was perceived as essentially apolitical in nature, hence it was not threatening. Second, it brought people sympathetically predisposed to First Nations peoples to meetings where the more pressing problems of education and health could then be discussed. Together these attitudes bridged political alignments and lent the cause of 'Indian' reform a sense of righteousness.

A direct assessment of the role of arts in this varied program came from Walsh, who summarized the fundamental social reformist interest in First Nations arts: "This group wouldn't be meeting today if it weren't for the art of the Indian. It has been the one approach for interpreting the culture of the Indian people to the public." 59

The session on arts and crafts perhaps presented the best microcosm of the uncertain status of First Nations people in Canadian society, of the division of positions regarding this cut along racial lines, and of the basic economic problems faced by First Nations throughout the province - issues that were at the foundation of the problems discussed in the other three sessions.

Tullis opened the proceedings, citing a myriad of telegram greetings from around both the province and the country: including those from W. T. Straith, the provincial minister of

education, from the Edmonton-based Committee of Friends of the Indians, from Bryon Johnson, premier of the province, and from the deputy ministers of welfare and health. Following Manuel's reference to a growing body of concerned, sophisticated, and primarily urban voters, politicians were being forced to at least pay lip service to issues surrounding First Nations affairs.

Tullis then set the tone for the arts and crafts session with comments on the accompanying exhibition, calling it "a galaxy, an inspiration" and quoting a promise made by UBC president, Norman MacKenzie, "that this isn't the last time we are going to have an exhibition of this sort in this seat of learning..." For Tullis, this provided "...hope that an ever increasing number of people will come to know of this art."

The first and most academic of the speakers was A. E. Pickford, an anthropologist with the Provincial Museum in Victoria. Anthropology had been a relatively new university discipline only a generation earlier and there was a public debate flaring over the relevance of universities and other cultural institutions to everyday life in Canada. To this end, she tied the separate discourses of social work and anthropology together with her assertion that "social service is now a science, and, in common with all other sciences, it cannot be conducted without a proper understanding of the basic material involved."

Pickford implied that institutions like the museum were to

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60. Ibid, p.3.
61. Ibid, p.3.
62. Ibid, p.3.
take the responsibility for the provision of this understanding. Here, she sought to legitimize the museum as a knowledge-producing institution through the ideas of professional, scientific inquiry and thus align the state through the museum to the cause of reform. This, however, was associated with the power of the state and the maintenance of its hegemony through the museum and its anthropologists, an extremely important issue at a time when state officials were seeking to regulate and professionalize the arts in Canada. She suggested that efforts from Andrew Paull and the North American Indian Brotherhood, the Native Brotherhood, and, "more humbly," the BCIAWS, were preparing a new page in Canadian history, one "turned ready for our inscription."\textsuperscript{64}

But we want that inscription to be written in the most powerful hand, and I am here to argue that the full power of that accomplishment cannot be achieved unless we transmute public opinion and gain an increasingly insistent demand, from the voice of the people, for fair play for the Indian. In order to do this most effectively, we must be able to show convincingly that we know the subject wherewith we deal; we must show an understanding of the psychology of the human mind as expressed in elementary terms. Further we must understand the racial origin and cultural levels of the aboriginal ancestors of the Indians with whom we have to deal. We must see, and fully sympathize with, the effect on the early culture of the lack of iron, pottery, agriculture and of a written literature. Then we must see the powerful force of transition which, after the impact of European culture and civilization, was accelerated to bring the problem we have in hand to an almost indescribable complexity. After this we must be conversant with the history of the past and seek, in

\textsuperscript{63} Ibid, p.4.
\textsuperscript{64} Ibid, p.5.
this, a most important factor in our present studies, namely the effect of the early attitudes of our own people upon the Indians.\textsuperscript{65}

Pickford then followed this call for a historical consciousness with a summary of First Nations peoples in British Columbia: "the artistic, and, one time, warlike Haida...; the rich traders and highly cultured Tsimshian; ...the dramatic Kwakiutl..."\textsuperscript{66} While she strove for a sense of variation and difference in conjuring up a complex image of cultural diversity modified by historical contingencies, in the end, much of what she said came out as a shopping list of reductive, albeit localized, evolutionary stereotypes. That Pickford and many of the other speakers felt obliged to state the high standard of intelligence of contemporary First Nations children sadly indicates how entrenched negative stereotypes seemed to form both public opinion and public policy. The strategy of many of the conference speakers was thus to reinforce positive characteristics even within the framework of these reductive evolutionary stereotypes.

This was evident in Mildred Valley Thornton's address. Thornton, a painter and illustrator with the \textit{Vancouver Sun} who also wrote art criticism, directed her comments to the positive role art held for the education of First Nations children. Her opening anecdote covered her experiences painting portraits of Blood school children in southern Alberta. "The children came up and looked. They had been taught not to touch things. One

\textsuperscript{65} Ibid, p.6.
\textsuperscript{66} Ibid, p.7.
wouldn't dare leave some children with paints. I have never seen them so animated. They are usually shy and quiet, but became just as noisy and interested as any group of white children. We had touched a hidden spring. They were really in their native element and able to express themselves." Here was the miracle key to reaching and thereby controlling First Nations school children and to instilling a sense of self-worth. "All the children need is the guidance from others to set this spirit, this enthusiasm alight. To create pride, to kindle self-respect, and to present a whole new creative experience in art is the tinder ready, waiting, for someone to apply the torch." The use of art in schools to civilize and pacify, as an instrument that would allow non-Native teachers to exert guidance and authority over the children, was central to the legacy of the Arts and Crafts movement.

Godman followed Pickford and Thornton's solutions to the "Indian problem" with a summary of BCIAWS marketing activities. Godman stated that "if every third person in B.C. bought one small piece of Indian craft a year, there would not be enough to go around." The craft industry held a viable response to economic dire straits. She then outlined her thoughts on how the industry should be structured. "I feel that that will be the answer to our problem: co-operatives for the Indians, and a general market held once or twice a year."

Kwakwaka'wakw carver Ellen Neel (figure 22) spoke last.

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68. Ibid, p.9.
69. Ibid, p.10.
Ellen May Neel (KaKas'o'las), a Kwagiulth Kwakwaka'wakw, was born in 1916 at Alert Bay. She attended St. Michael's Residential School in Alert Bay and learned to carve from her grandfather Charlie James. In 1939 she married Ted Neel and moved to Vancouver in 1943. In 1946, Ted Neel suffered a serious stroke and Ellen turned to the production and sale of objects for the tourist trade on a full-time basis. She worked at restoring poles at the University of British Columbia in the late 1940s before introducing university curators to her uncle, Mungo Martin, and returning her full-time attention to the tourist business. She continued as a well known carver throughout the 1950s and died in 1966. Although she showed a willingness throughout her career to experiment with totem pole forms, including non-traditional figures in her carvings and producing poles in a range of sizes for the tourist market, her work was conceptually much closer to that of her teacher, James, than the work of either George Clutesi or Judith Morgan was to that of previous Nuu-chah-nulth or Gitxsan generations. Neel's painting was most often two-dimensional decoration for her carvings and followed conventional Kwakwaka'wakw colour schemes, relying primarily on black, red and white. Her carving as well typically echoed the shapes and compositions of conventional Kwakwaka'wakw monumental pole carving from earlier in the century (figure 23).

In her address to the 1948 conference, she rebuked the artistic limitations of a temporally located market demand for authenticity and belittled the assumption that First Nations

\[ ^{70} \text{Ibid, p.11.} \]
"culture" had died. Her use of Kwakwaka'wakw conventions related to her training under James and certainly helped contribute to a sense of artistic and thus social continuity. She clearly, however, also accepted the notion of formal and technical innovation in the field of First Nations' art:

To me, this idea is one of the great fallacies where the art of my people is concerned. For if our art is dead, then it is fit only to be mummified, packed into mortuary boxes and tucked away into museums. Whereas to me it is a living symbol of the gaiety, the laughter and love of colour of my people, a day to day reminder to us that even we had something of glory and honour before the white man came.  

She then stressed that this matter of "glory and honour before the white man" still held currency in her own time. "And our art must continue to live, for not only is it part and parcel of us, but it can be a powerful factor in combining the best part of the Indian culture into the fabric of a truly Canadian art form." While establishing her position as one that saw a place for First Nations peoples within the Canadian whole, she demanded the right to extend beyond the parameters of past production.

...if the art of my people is to take its rightful place alongside other Canadian art, it must be a living medium of expression. We, the Indian artists must be allowed to create! We must be allowed to use new and modern techniques; new and modern tools; new and modern materials. For in every instance creative capacity has followed the discovery and use of better material. I do not mean that we should discard the old, only that we be allowed to use the new.

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73. Ibid, p.12.
The general discussion following the more formal presentations further highlights problems arising from the economic situation of First Nations arts and the discrepancy in attitude between the two ethnic camps. Godman points out that in order to maintain a level of quality, (read 'authenticity'), the BCIAWS had developed a trade mark. In order to qualify for this mark, Godman noted that the work had to "...have a true Indian design and must be truly Indian. If it comes in with a rose or a butterfly, or some bird I've never seen, I do not put the trade mark on it." In response, Nanaimo carver Leslie John detailed the tough economic situation faced by most First Nations artists:

The price of totem pole, I make less than $1.00 a day. If lucky make $1.25. The more cheap ones -35 cents- make $2.50 a day. Fishing on the coast was on three weeks last year. Don't make enough money in fishing....I am not feeling well, and my mother is in the hospital. My father is not well. My older brother has a broken back when small. Just my younger brother - seventeen years- who is in the woods, and me, to make a living. You can't make much on totem poles. On good poles you can't make a living and that is the reason we do not make any for the Welfare Society.

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75. Ibid, p.15. This idea had been implemented by the Indian Arts and Crafts Board in the United States. (Schrader, The Indian Arts and Crafts Board, p.133.)

76. Ibid, p.18. Ellen Neel took up carving full-time after her husband suffered from a stroke and could no longer work. Mungo Martin shot himself by accident as a boy and had an injured leg. Charlie James had a mutilated hand. Full-time art production was for those individuals unable to participate in more physically demanding and more financially rewarding employment like forestry or fishing. Curiously, this corresponds to what Graburn reports among the Inuit during the same time period upon interviewing "...most of the adult men about their carving activities and all but one of them...said they loathed the activity as an occupation and that they only carved for the money it brought them, which was very little in terms of the long hours needed to make a carving. Most of the men would rather go hunting even with a smaller return
A second, related point was brought up by Ruth Smith, editor of *The Native Voice*, when she noted the lack of protection for First Nations art designs. This is a particular concern among Northwest Coast peoples because of the ownership of social prerogatives relating to the display and performance of crests, objects, songs, stories, and performances, although in this context the issue of ownership became additionally significant because of economic competition in the curio trade. While Godman expressed concern over the "authenticity" of designs in the Euro-Canadian field of consumption, Smith was concerned over the ownership of the designs in the indigenous field of production. The two solutions emerging from the brief discussion were copyrighting, in the end seen as ineffective since images could be changed slightly thus negating the legality of the copyright, and the stamp of authenticity or trademark. No thought was given to who would establish the criteria for this authenticity. 77 If such a burden fell to the BCIAWS, the criteria, it seems, would be set by museums and implemented by craft societies. Control over knowledge, its distribution and application, would necessarily rest with state officials and public institutions, leaving indigenous modes of authority and leadership out of the loop.

Summary

There was an age difference of only five years between George Raley and Alice Ravenhill. Although both were English, they were born into different classes. Both became involved in the promotion of First Nations art after retirement, but where Raley theorized, Ravenhill networked and organized. Both operated within the conceptual limitations of their social positions and sought to reproduce the class-centred social reform models first pioneered at home in Britain, although from different points of view. Both fixed on the arts as the most positive attributes of First Nations peoples as an entrance strategy for the promotion of a place for First Nations peoples first within an Anglo-Celtic Canada and second within the British Empire. Art may have been the bait, but assimilation under a gentle paternalism was the ultimate prize. While Raley tried to use his status as former principal of Coqualeetza Indian School to wrangle funding for his plan through the Department of Indian Affairs, Ravenhill formed an initially self-sufficient volunteer organization, which, while formed around her central vision, not only outlived her, but also followed a path both independent from and more ambitious than her founding intentions.

What would eventually ensure this organization's success was its relationship with the province's burgeoning public arts institutions - particularly the Provincial Museum under the direction of the Ministry of Education - a circumstance denied for Raley by the economic realities of the Great Depression and by Raley's own involvement in the provincial museum's more
financially strapped municipal equivalent in Vancouver: the Art, Historical and Scientific Association of Vancouver. While Vancouver had grown into its position as the province's industrial and commercial urban centre, Victoria retained its status as the administrative heart of the province.

The structural re-organization that saw the Provincial Museum assigned as the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education drew the BCIAWS and the Provincial Museum closer together, especially since Ravenhill had developed both public lectures and text books through the museum for grade school students and participated in training teachers to present the newly developed curriculum on First Nations history in the schools. This established First Nations "culture" as the almost exclusive preserve of officials with the provincial government since education was a provincial responsibility. When greater funding became available after the Second World War, the re-assignment ensured that projects directed towards the promotion of First Nations art would come from Victoria, and not Ottawa, as had been the case prior to the Great Depression.

Furthermore, the BCIAWS's emphasis on promoting contemporary artistic expression set a path taken up by individuals at both the University of British Columbia and the Provincial Museum in the late 1940s in their use of museum collections as the basis for training and quality control. The strategies of the BCIAWS, along with those suggested by Raley, served as a model for the intensifying role provincial institutions would play in marketing contemporary art and defining what would be a First Nations
artist through the later "museum- and government-supported projects" identified as a "revival" by Jonaitis and Suttles.\textsuperscript{78}

\textsuperscript{78}. Suttles and Jonaitis, "History of Research," p.82.
CHAPTER 6

Mathias Joe, Mungo Martin and George Clutesi: "Art" as Resistance

While Ravenhill and Raley advocated change through the promotion of First Nations art as Canadian, First Nations individuals and groups cultivated the resulting public interest to promote political change from a First Nations perspective. In this chapter, I discuss the more public activities of individual artists Mathias Joe, Mungo Martin and George Clutesi between 1936 and 1949. Although Clutesi exhibited with the BCIAWS and this period overlaps with the two previous chapters and the one following, I am focusing here on the public uses of First Nations art in developments related, but parallel to the campaigns of the non-Native social reform movement. Joe, Martin, and Clutesi were among the First Nations artists who used their art to assert claims to aboriginal rights, gather non-Native support for legislative reform, and instill a sense of pride in First Nations youth. The result of these activities was both an additional pressure for the restructuring of the Indian Act and a higher public profile for individual First Nations artists. First Nations use of art as a lobbying tool was a contributing factor in the re-involvement of the government in art-related promotional programmes at the end of the 1940s and encouraged the 1949 provincial enfranchisement of First Nations peoples.

I. Mathias Joe and the Thunderbird Dynasty Pole
Ironically, the potlatch ban and the draconian Indian Act amendments that followed the Cranmer prosecutions in the 1920s partially fuelled the political manipulation of First Nations monuments and the commemorative events around them. Even though the indigenous ceremonies that conventionally empowered the objects were banned, as I have demonstrated many Euro-Canadians were intent on constructing the objects as integral to national identity. This opened up possibilities overlooked by Euro-Canadian authorities. There were moments when feasts, speeches and other ritual activities, "Indian festivities" in the language of the Indian Act, could simultaneously incorporate Euro-Canadians, assert First Nations identity and political aims. After the 1927 prohibition of organized land claims activities, this further opened the potential for "art" and its accompanying rituals as valuable public vehicles for such expression. The use of public cultural performances within museums and other institutional sites as a stratagem to push forward indigenous political agendas has been termed "ethnodrama" by Robert Paine and Noel Dyck.¹ It was between the conflicting spaces of the potlatch and land claims bans and the Euro-Canadian nostalgic thirst for the pomp and colour of First Nations ceremonies and their objects that such ethnodrama was born.

The ban's acceptance itself was uneven in Euro-Canada. For example, when Governor-General Thomas Freeman, Earl of Willingdon, visited the Nuu-chah-nulth community of Yuquot (also sometimes referred to as Friendly Cove or Nootka) in 1929, "[h]e was welcomed and feted according to West Coast traditions of hospitality" and then presented a free-standing crest pole by Captain Jack (figure 24) "...following a parade of decorated warriors along the beach and a ceremony in the Indian language in one of the many halls in the village." Since Lord Willingdon "engaged" in celebrating an "Indian festival...of which the giving away... of money, goods or articles...is a feature," he was, strictly speaking, "...guilty of an offense and...liable on summary conviction for a term not exceeding six months and not less than two months." Instead, Lord Willingdon immediately returned the pole to the village for safe-keeping, but planned for the arrival two months later of Canadian National Railway engineer, T. B. Campbell, "...known throughout the Dominion as "Totem Pole" Campbell for his work in connection with the restoring of Canada's valuable and historic Indian relics...[,]" to orchestrate the pole's removal to Ottawa.

Plans had been made for the pole to be shipped to Victoria

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5. "Totem Pole to Grace Rideau Hall Gardens: Ancient Relic to be Removed to Ottawa; gift to Governor-General from Indians," Victoria Daily Times, June 24, 1929, p.18.
by way of the Canadian Pacific Railway's steamer **Princess Norah** and then from Victoria, presumably to Vancouver by boat and then to Ottawa on the Canadian National Railway. According to a report from the **Daily Colonist** dating July 19, 1929, no one had informed the people in Yuquot of this decision. The article's source, S. L. Howe, the Provincial Secretary, said: "It appears from the story told me that the chief and the tribe did not expect His Excellency to accept the totem pole outright. In fact it was tendered in the old potlatch sense - a gift to be received and returned. I was told His Excellency so understood it and had in mind having a brass plate planted at the base to commemorate his visit and the good spirit shown by the Indians."[6] This was simply a press release. Departmental correspondence indicates that the final costs for the pole's transportation would reach $3000. There was a further split in the village between Muchalat and Moachat peoples and although Captain Jack did not object to the pole's removal, the Governor-General decided that the dispute provided a suitable excuse for backing out of the pole's proposed move to Rideau Hall in Ottawa and the expenses it would have entailed.[7]

It would not have been unusual for a guest to Nuu-chah-nulth territory of the Governor-General's stature to be treated with such respect. However, the presentation of a gift to the King's representative in Canada was also a highly potent, politically symbolic event. Part of the case for the enshrinement of

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6. **Daily Colonist**, July 19, 1929
7. **Indian Affairs** RG 10 Volume 4086, file 507, 787-2, D. C. Scott to W. E. Ditchburn, July 30, 1929 and Scott to Mieville,
aboriginal rights in British Columbia within the courts has rested traditionally on the Proclamation of 1763. The Royal Proclamation, sometimes referred to as the "Indian" Magna Carta, extended British sovereignty and protection over First Nations west of the British colonies in the eastern continent, but acknowledged continuing First Nations ownership of land used and occupied by First Nations people. For this reason, First Nations political organizations have sought to have their cases brought before the Privy Council in London in the hopes that the council would enshrine aboriginal land title, thereby denying the terms of British Columbia's entrance into Canadian confederation and the jurisdictional authority of both the provincial and federal governments over First Nations affairs.

While correspondence from the Governor-General's office indicates that Lord Willingdon did indeed feel obligated by Captain Jack's gift, a photograph of Lord and Lady Willingdon and a brass plate commemorating their visit was deemed sufficient repayment. When the Governor-General was informed of Captain Jack's disappointment with this, he threw in a watch for good diplomatic measure. The presentation, however, proved totem poles and Euro-Canadian leaders together were a matter of public

August 23, 1929.

6. The Royal Proclamation, as Brian Slattery has suggested, "...has profound significance for modern Canada. Under its terms aboriginal peoples hold continuing rights to their lands except where those rights have been extinguished by voluntary cession...In technical terms, the Indian interest constitutes a legal burden on the Crown's ultimate title until surrendered." (Quoted in Tennant, Aboriginal Peoples, p.11.)

interest and therefore newsworthy. The affair attracted both local and national media, setting a precedent for future events. Similar occasions occurred in Vancouver in 1936 and 1946, although each time, contemporary artists raised or carved a new totem pole specifically for the event.

The first of these was for a celebratory festival in 1936, the Golden Jubilee, which was aimed primarily at drumming up business: local, Dominion, international, or otherwise. American warships, industrial exhibitions, an aviation week, symphonies, choirs, strolling singers, military tattoos and the erection of four crest poles went together to highlight Vancouver as a city of exciting financial and cultural opportunity, “to make known to the world the natural beauty and advantages of Vancouver as a great city and a great port in the British Empire.”

Furthermore, according to the programme outline's telling assertion, “[t]he women of the city are not behind in the march of programme progress.” Tea shows and tea mugs, beach fashion shows and period costume balls thus jockeyed with professional baseball and box lacrosse for public attention. Despite military pageants, the erection of a pole by a contemporary carver still made headlines in the Vancouver newspapers. Once again, Vancouver's business and “cultural” communities sought to use totem poles in the construction of the city's modernity, a tactic well illustrated in the committee's letterhead: an hourglass, the

10. VCA Vancouver Golden Jubilee Committee, VCA AM 177, Volume 1, File 6, G. G. McGeer, Mayor and Chairman, Vancouver Golden Jubilee Committee (VGJC), to Charles E. Thompson, Deputy Chairman, VGJC.
11. "Detailed Outline of Programme for Vancouver Golden
top dated 1886 and showing a Northwest Coast village in a pastoral setting with sand bleeding into the bottom, dated 1936 and depicting a modern city (figure 25).

Not coincidentally, this meant the city Parks Board and individuals from AHSAV, in partnership under the banner Indian Committee of the Golden Jubilee Committee, could respond to the concerns expressed by Andrew Paull and the Squamish band council in 1925. Although when the committee was first formed in 1934 the original proposal called again for the erection of an entire village in Stanley Park, by 1935 it had been scaled down to the erection of a limited number of poles.

Three poles for the 1936 celebration were erected at Lumberman's Arch. Two of the poles were Kwakwaka’wakw and one was Haida. The two Kwakwaka’wakw poles, obtained by AHSAV from Knight Inlet through Dr. Darby and Indian Agent C. C. Perry, were: the Dsookwa-dse pole (figure 25), originally erected at Rivers Inlet in 1893 by Chief Kla-ool-dso-lah (sometimes called the Yahk-dsi pole), and the Nhe-is-bik pole (figure 26) carved by See-wit of Blunden Harbour in 1892 and obtained from Wakius. The Haida monument was a mortuary pole from Skedans (figure 27) purchased from Ske-dans (Henry Moody) of Skidegate. These three were touted as anonymous relics in the tradition of the AHSAV poles at Lumberman's Arch.

In August 1935, although George Raley was on the executive committee, it was another executive, Leander Manley, who

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Jubilee Committee," VCA AM 177, Volume 1, File 6.
12. VCA AM 177, Volume 7.
13. G. H. Raley, Our Totem Poles: A Souvenir of Vancouver,
approached Squamish chief Mathias Joe for his participation in the programme, an important move for the committee.\textsuperscript{14} Mathias Joe (1885-1966) was a Squamish carver from the Capilano Reserve on Vancouver's north shore. He was frequently photographed and featured in the local newspapers and used his status as local celebrity to draw attention to First Nations issues, including, for example, what he considered an unsatisfactory payment ($25,000) by the city of Vancouver for two acres of the Kitsilano Reserve lands on the south end of Burrard Bridge. Vancouver newspapers also reported that he was an official guest at two coronations and, along with his wife, Ellen, the first First Nations people to cast ballots in the 1949 election after provincial enfranchisement.\textsuperscript{15} The fourth pole, (figure 28), intended to symbolize the Squamish's historical significance to the city, was newly carved by Joe and erected separately at Prospect Point (figure 29), also in Stanley Park.

Moved by Denny Paull, the Council of the Squamish Band voted unanimously in April 1936 to accept Joe's pole as "...representing the Squamish Tribe, and commemorative of the meeting of the Squamish people with Captain Vancouver in Burrard Inlet off the Capilano River on June 13th, 1792."\textsuperscript{16} It was useful to the Squamish to reassert themselves on the city's landscape and maintain a historical link that surpassed a

\textsuperscript{14} VCA Vancouver Golden Jubilee Committee, VCA AM 177, Volume 1, File 3.
\textsuperscript{15} Golden Jubilee Committee Clippings Book, VCA Add. Mss. 177, Volume 6.
\textsuperscript{16} F. C. Ball, Indian Agent, to G. H. Raley, Indian Committee, Golden Jubilee Committee, Raley Papers PABC HD R13
European presence, since a number of land claim issues were (and are still) unresolved, including compensation for Stanley Park itself.\textsuperscript{17} Perhaps for this reason, the Golden Jubilee Committee's Managing Board entertained Raley's January 1936 suggestion that the committee request the federal government to officially instruct the officers of the department of Indian Affairs to cooperate with the committee.\textsuperscript{18}

The choice of Joe's pole for Prospect Point was significant to the Squamish for two more immediately tangible reasons. First, Prospect Point, like XwayXway, had been occupied by Squamish people. It was known as "'Chay-thoos,' (the clearing, (meaning 'high bank')."\textsuperscript{19} According to J. S. Matthews, the City Archivist in 1938, Chief Haatsalanogh, "from whom Kitsilano\textsuperscript{20} takes its name,"\textsuperscript{21} had built a house there, which was shown on Royal Engineer field survey notes made in March 1863. His son, Haytulk, or 'Supplejack,' demolished it and replaced with a cottage constructed from milled wood around 1870.\textsuperscript{22} This house, like those at XwayXway, was demolished, when the "Park Road," which encompasses Stanley Park, was built in 1889.\textsuperscript{23} The recognition of Squamish claims to the point was thus asserted through Joe's pole.

\textsuperscript{17} Stanley Park is subject to the over-lapping claims of the Squamish and Musqueam peoples.
\textsuperscript{18} VCA Vancouver Golden Jubilee Committee, VCA AM 177, Volume 1, File 1, Managing Board Meeting, January 16, 1936.
\textsuperscript{19} Major J. S. Matthews, Conversations with Khahtsahlano, 1932-1954, Vancouver: Vancouver City Archives, 1955, p.32.
\textsuperscript{20} Kitsilano is the name of a neighbourhood in Vancouver located on the south side of the mouth to False Creek.
\textsuperscript{21} Matthews, Conversations, p.32.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid, p.32.
Second, the point overlooked Lions Gate, the entrance into Burrard Narrows and the main port facilities and Vancouver harbour. A Squamish pole located there was also a symbolic statement of their historic presence for all passenger and commercial boat traffic in and out of Vancouver. Joe's pole at Prospect Point quickly took on added significance with the construction of the Lions Gate bridge connecting Stanley Park and Vancouver through Squamish land to the Guinness-owned British Pacific Properties housing development on the city's north shore in 1938. Once again, any symbolic reminder of the Squamish claims to lands around Burrard Inlet might contribute to either control over valuable real estate or significant financial compensation.

Despite Squamish interests, the Golden Jubilee was really intended to attract investment to Vancouver. In this context, it was further essential to assert First Nations' land ownership, especially since council member Andrew Paull had such intimate knowledge of the potential for land cut-offs through his participation with the Allied Tribes and their resistance to the McKenna-McBride Agreement. Joe's pole provided such an opportunity and was therefore endorsed by the Squamish band council.

Barbeau, quoting Raley, describes the pole iconography as follows:

The topmost figure is Swi-ve-lus, whose highly

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23. Ibid, p.32.
ornamented body depicts many things. For instance, on his chest is the creator of the world, the wide open eye signifying daylight and work, - the sightless eye, night, moon, stars, rest and sleep. The wing feathers symbolize rain, snow, hail and wind, while fire is seen under the great beak.

The right leg shows the eye of the sea monster, who is both father and mother of all the sea people, or fish, while the eye on the left is that leg of the land monster, who produces human beings, animals and birds.

The left side of the tail shows the water marks of the high and low tides, while the right side symbolizes the flow and drip of mountain water which makes lakes and rivers.

The second figure, Kah-mi, controls the storms of rain, snow, sleet, hail and wind.

The third figure, Tsa-itch, concerns herself especially with the season's growth of grass, herbs and trees.

The fourth, Great Thunderbird, hiding in the clouds, blinks his eye and shoots forth lightning; a gentle shaking of his feathers produces little disturbance, but when he flaps his wings there is violent thunder and forked lightning. When he is angry with the people of the earth he makes the lightning and sets fire to the forests, and at times warns his own crest people of approaching death.

The fifth figure on the pole is somewhat shrouded in mystery. He is called the great dragon or the giant lizard, Tchain-koo. This amphibian is supposed to be the principal food of the Thunderbird. He is of a bright colour and his fins and scales are of gold. The scales are worn as a charm by anybody who has the good fortune to find them when they are shed.25

According to Gunn, the pole, which he calls the "Thunderbird Dynasty Totem,"26 tells the "story of the Creation by Thunderbird."27 Gunn, "[a]s explained...by the carver, Chief Mathias Joe Capilano,"28 also provides other names for some of

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25. Barbeau, Totem Poles, p.163.
27. Ibid, p.22.
the figures identified for him by Joe: Swivelus becomes "the Son of Thunderbird."

Kahmi, "Daughter of Thunderbird, also known as Qulus," Tza-itch, "Mother Thunderbird," Sho-yuh-wa, "Thunderbird the Great, Father of the Great Family and Lord of Creation. Kwing-kwankulegyi in the Kwakiutl tongue, El-Anga in Haida...." Together "[t]hese honoured personalities rule the universe, control the elements and create life. They are supernaturals, but like mortals, they live and eat." In Gunn's version, Tzain-koo "...the Giant Dragon, sea monster and huge lizard in one, is the main food of Thunderbird." Raley characterized the pole in similar romanticized terms as illustrating "...the striving of the primitive imagination to interpret the universe, to solve the problem of life, and to account for natural phenomena."

Gunn continued that "[i]t is appropriate that this totem should tell the story of the Creation. For what it commemorates - the meeting of the Indians and the white man - opened an entirely new world for both." More to the point, "[u]nlike the other totem poles, this is an example of the art of the Indians in our immediate vicinity....Crowning Prospect Point, it is the only pole that stands at the original site it was raised and appropriately constitutes one of the most memorable landmarks of

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32. Ibid, p.23.
33. Ibid, p.23.
34. Ibid, p.23.
35. Raley, Our Totem Poles, p.8.
It was also the first multi-figured, free-standing Squamish pole and therefore an extremely innovative example of Salish "art." Joe's pole immediately recalls the Charlie James house posts; it has avian figures with outstretched wings, and extensive two-dimensional patterns of repeated u-shapes over the flat surfaces. In order to construct a public Salish monument with sufficient political currency, he adapted those Kwakwaka'wakw conventions already recognized as a pan-tribal "Indian" symbol.

Innovative in content as well as form, the pole appeared to operate unconventionally as well. While origin myths of local kin groups or of secret societies frequently referred to ancestral encounters with spirit beings, the depiction of multiple figures, presumably references to the different villages amalgamated after contact and settled on the Squamish reserve (following the explanation that these figures represent the Squamish peoples), did not occur in one composition since they represented distinct social groups. The idea of representing the various origins of the Squamish peoples in one object, like the concept of the Squamish as a united nation, was an innovation partly the result of the external pressures of European and Euro-Canadian assimilationist colonialism.

Wayne Suttles argues that "...while some Central Coast Salish art may have been purely decorative, much of it can be related to four sources of power and prestige - the vision, the

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37. Ibid, p.22.
ritual word, the ancestors and wealth.\textsuperscript{38} In response to Bill Reid's suggestion that the aesthetic accomplishments of the Coast Salish were uneven,\textsuperscript{39} Suttles countered that the representations of visions or guardian spirits were constrained by the notion that "...it was dangerous to reveal too much about it,"\textsuperscript{40} that with "art related to the power of the ritual word,...its efficacy depends not on the private experience of a vision but the private knowledge of ritual words that have inherent power,"\textsuperscript{41} and that ambiguity in "the portrayal of ancestors"\textsuperscript{42} may have been motivated by "fear of ridicule."\textsuperscript{43}

Suttles' characterization of the Central Coast Salish approach to representation in objects as cautious might explain the vagueness in the iconography of Joe's pole. Joe, and the Squamish through him, implied a historical legitimacy to their claims to Stanley Park by referencing a body of stories that were never explicitly explained in the public press. How these "origin" myths may have delineated Squamish history was perhaps tangential to the pole's role as a reminder to visitors and residents alike of the historical Squamish presence in Vancouver and thus to their claims to land, water, and other resources. Joe's pole is not a reconfigured ceremonial object, like the


\textsuperscript{39} Bill Holm and Bill Reid, Form and Freedom: A Dialogue on Northwest Coast Indian Art, Houston: Rice University Press, 1975, pp.58-61.

\textsuperscript{40} Suttles, "Productivity and its Constraints," p.131.

\textsuperscript{41} Ibid, p.132.

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid, p.132.

\textsuperscript{43} Ibid, p.132.
Kwakwaka'wakw poles at Lumberman's Arch, but rather a monument intended to say something of the Squamish directly and specifically to Vancouver's non-Native population. Although the thunderbird is indeed a personage appearing in Salish mythology, Joe's choice of it for the subject of his pole may be, once again, a reference to the popular relocated house posts carved by Charlie James in order to reinforce through formal and iconographic familiarity the Euro-Canadian acceptance of the pole at Prospect Point.

The press releases were predictably filled with fictional references to the erection of the pole as 'ancient tribal custom' with Joe only using 'primitive tools.' "The mighty thunderbird totem whose outstretched wings welcome shipping through the Lions Gate...," went the dramatic description in one of the local papers, calling the pole "...this famous symbolic emblem of the Squamish nation, forerunners of the white man on Burrard Inlet." Andrew Paull, speaking again for the Squamish nation, used this historicist reference to counter the notion that the land was surrendered and to make a specific justification of the Squamish possession of reserve land on the city's north shore: "In the early days the Indians and British made a joint agreement to defend Burrard Inlet. The British were to defend the south side of the Narrows, which later became Stanley Park. The Indians promised to defend the north side, which became the

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45. Ibid.
46. Ibid.
Capilano Reserve. " As for Joe, sometimes referred to in the local press as Joe Capilano or Mathias Capilano, he declared, "I believe that when my totem pole is standing there, I'll be standing with it all the time."  

The commission also partly accomplished for him many of the things that Raley had envisioned on paper for other unnamed artists in his revival scheme. The pole commanded attention by virtue of its location in the city's most important tourist site and was almost immediately seen as a significant city landmark, further identifying totem poles as an aspect of Vancouver's cultural identity. A thunderbird pole in combination with Joe's colourful tendency to dress up for public events in full feather bonnet and buckskin captured the local public imagination. And although he made it into the local newspapers as an expert in 'Indian lore' and carver of model poles as early as 1932, Joe received a number of significant commissions through the 1940s and early 1950s in direct response to the Stanley Park pole. Many of these commissions were from companies cashing in on the post-war natural resource boom that sought publicity evocative of their connection to the natural environment. Joe carved: a thirty-foot pole for a resort in Princess Louise Inlet at the head of Jervis Inlet in 1941; a thirty-foot copy of the Stanley Park pole for presentation to the Governor of Texas plus several more carved during a six-week carving demonstration tour of the state in 1948; twenty poles at $200 each for the distributor of British Columbia shingles in Texas and sponsor of Joe's

47. Ibid.
demonstration tour, Maurice Angly; a twenty-foot pole for Dr. Gerhard Fisher in West Vancouver in 1954; a thirty-foot pole for Davis Lumber Company in St. Catherine's, Ontario in 1955; and an assortment of model poles for various visiting luminaries, including one in 1951 for the then Princess Elizabeth.

Furthermore, Joe used the spotlight in part created by the Stanley Park pole (and in part by his own performances for the media), in a way probably not envisioned by Raley. Joe announced in 1953 that he was setting up a tipi on Marine Drive in North Vancouver to protest the city's offer to purchase more Squamish land for the construction of a second bridge connecting the city centre to its North Vancouver suburb. "I'll build a fire there, do my cooking and the traffic will flow past on either side of me," he was reported as saying in an article accompanied by a photograph of Joe and his tipi with the Lion's Gate Bridge in the background. "From my teepee [sic] headquarters I shall pass out leaflets telling all about the big

48. Ibid.
49. Ibid.
50. An example of what now seems as Joe's campy yet subversive sense of humour appears in a newspaper report dated July 11, 1936 found in a Vancouver City Archives clippings book: "Those who conducted the ceremonies which inducted Mayor G.G. McGeer as a chief of the Squamish tribe may have committed a linguistic faux pas, it was revealed at the city hall this morning." The mayor was given the name Tlassala, translated at the time to "Sun Rising in the East." Typed in the margin next to the clipping by J. S. Matthews, City Archivist and dated Oct. 1936 is: "August Jack Haatsalano [sic] says the name given 'Tlassala' means in the Squamish tongue, 'a cloud,' and in the language of the Fort Rupert Indians a 'mink' (small, furred animal). In narrating the details of the incident of making his Worship a chief, he (August Jack Khatsahlano, a member of the Musqueam nation) was very much amused and said 'don't tell anybody, or it will spoil it all.'" (VCA Add. Mss. 177, Volume 6)
51. Ibid.
steal. We are offered the ridiculous price of $750 an acre when we should be getting at least $5000."  

Raley's ideas about the promotion of First Nations art were intended as a way of further integrating First Nations people into the Euro-Canadian economic and social systems. Joe's public protests added an extra dimension, demonstrating that object producers from within First Nations communities were not always simply seeking economic independence. Both written and oral First Nations discourses around the objects were often related to more controversial issues, specifically land, its value, and its ownership. While Raley did recognize the political imbalance inherent in the Indian Act and the Department of Indian Affairs, he was careful not to directly criticize the founding ideals of this line of state policy. From Raley's point of view, the "assimilation" and therefore "modernization" of the First Nations had to be a priority for members of both church and state as part of their moral obligation. His solution for the political displacement of First Nations people was their absorption into the displacing system. Art, his own passion, would be the absorbing agent.

On the other hand, it was clear that Euro-Canadians expressed a rare interest in First Nations people through the imagined poetic history of progress towards the modern state. It was here then that Euro-Canadians might be spoken to. Paull, Joe and others participated in the discourse about art because the discourse opened up the possibility for asserting a historically-

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52. Ibid.
recognized presence, in part countering the more overt racism of everyday life in Canada, and certainly developing a useful public relations outlet.

II. The Native Brotherhood of B.C.: 'Indian' Culture, 'Indian' Rights

The use of the media to press for reform accelerated after the Second World War, especially in conjunction with the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia, who followed Captain Jack's example and presented a pole to the new Governor-General, Viscount Alexander, in Vancouver's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, ten years after the raising of Mathias Joe's pole. This presentation was part of a larger lobbying campaign whose attention-grabbing tactics were well illustrated in January 1947, when Chief William Scow, president of the Brotherhood, issued the following proclamation to John Hart, Premier of British Columbia:

Whereas the present government of the coast has been established by voting white settlers resident in Indian territory; and
Whereas legal title of the Indian lands has never passed from our hand; and
Whereas the present white chiefs in the village of Victoria have seen fit to deny residents of thousands of years ancestry the right to take part in governing their lands;
We, in the name of all Pacific Coast bands, do hereby declare the white chieftains to immediately surrender their false authority to an all-Indian committee which we will form shortly.
This proclamation will inform you that your government which has not seen fit to permit the owners of Pacific Coast lands a voice in their control, namely by voting, has no longer any standing.  

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The Native Brotherhood had been formed in 1931 shortly after the collapse of the Allied Tribes of British Columbia and the implementation of the federal ban on land claims. The Brotherhood was modelled after the Native Brotherhood of Alaska. It was essentially a 'pan-Indian' political organization, although in the beginning its constituency was primarily Haida and Tsimshian. Organized similarly to Euro-Canadian unions and political parties with a paying membership and an executive leadership committee, it sought to address the whole range of inequalities enshrined in the Indian Act. During the Second World War the Brotherhood began to forge close ties with labour unions, which were enjoying a major expansion.\textsuperscript{54} The Brotherhood amalgamated in 1942 with the Pacific Coast Native Fishermen's Association (PCNFA), appointed Andrew Paull (formerly of the Allied Tribes) as business agent, and presented a petition to the federal government in Ottawa opposing the implementation of an income tax on First Nations people. "No taxation without representation," it asserted, noting that British Columbian First Nations individuals were still denied the right to vote either provincially or federally.\textsuperscript{55}

In 1945, the Brotherhood incorporated itself under the British Columbia Societies Act, a move that established it as a legally chartered organization with specific rights and obligations.\textsuperscript{56} Jacqueline O'Donnell suggests that "...the

\textsuperscript{54} Rae Murphy, The Essentials of Canadian History: Canada Since 1867: The Post-Confederate Nation, Piscataway, New Jersey: Research and Education Association, 1993, pp.70-71.
\textsuperscript{55} O'Donnell, Native Brotherhood, p.46.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid.
organization was utilizing the methods of the majority society for good public relations and to attain recognition as well as respect for its aims and goals from industry and Government officials." Both government and industry officials had indeed moved to recognize the Native Brotherhood as a legitimate and powerful bargaining agent from the mid-1940s on. Cannery officials acknowledged it as a stabilizing force in the industry, an important consideration during the Second World War. Diane Newell points out that the First Nations fishing fleet was more unionized than its Euro-Canadian counterpart at the outbreak of the war and then gained further prominence after 1942 when Japanese-Canadian fishers and cannery workers were interned away from the coast.

After the formation of the Special Joint Committee on the Indian Act in 1946, which sat until 1949 and ultimately led to the passing of a new Indian Act in 1951, the Brotherhood was selected by the federal government as the sole representative of British Columbian First Nations, presenting its brief before the committee on May 1, 1947. A second British Columbian political organization, the Confederacy of Interior Tribes, quickly wrote a petition protesting the preference shown the Brotherhood by the commission and its apparent ignorance of the political diversity within First Nations communities and the differing social

57. Ibid.
58. Paul Tennant states "...the Brotherhood came to play a major role in keeping officials and Indians informed about one another's concerns and in maintaining an atmosphere of some cordiality between the two groups." (Tennant, Aboriginal Peoples and Politics, p.118.)
circumstances of the coastal and interior peoples. Nonetheless, the privileging of the Brotherhood at the expense of other First Nations political associations was a measure of its political ascendancy in the eyes of the Euro-Canadian status quo.

George Manuel and Michael Postums state that the three years in which the Joint Committee sat saw a severe and multi-pronged attack on the Department of Indian Affairs.

Local and provincial organizations were beginning to find their feet. The Canadian Association for Adult Education had given rise some years before to the Indian-Eskimo association as an urban-based, non-Indian support group. The anti-poverty craze produced spokesmen of every political stripe within the non-Indian community who were labelling Indian reserves, based on last summer's visit or a canoe trip in their camping days, as Canada's Apartheid Policy. Indians had always been complaining. Now there were sophisticated, organized urban voters, whose view of the matter may have been entirely different from ours, but who were, nonetheless, pointing at the same problems and the same administration.

This was important to the First Nations reform cause because, as sociologist Nancy Fraser argues, change in state policy hinges on the pressure created through the discursive resources members of government recognize - officially recognized idioms, vocabularies, narrative conventions, paradigms of argumentation, and modes of subjectification. In addition, because of social stratification and its extension to political

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60. Tennant, Aboriginal Peoples and Politics, p.121.
groups and associations it was clear that First Nations voices alone were not enough to sway bureaucratic and political opinion. Despite the efforts of the Native Brotherhood and other organizations to legitimize themselves within the Canadian political system, First Nations issues were all too frequently greeted with inertia and indifference in the state bureaucracy. As early as 1899, Clifford Sifton, in his capacity as Minister of Interior, advised that "while the Department of Indian Affairs would consider Indian views as far as possible, the right of Indians to control the action of the Department would not be recognized 'under any circumstances.'" (Quoted in J. Rick Ponting and Roger Gibbons, Out of Irrelevance: A Socio-Political Introduction to Indian Affairs in Canada, Toronto: Butterworths, 1980, p.17.) This pattern was critical to the maintenance of government authority.

The question for organizations like the Brotherhood was not only how to affect change in state policy, but first how to galvanize public attention and focus it intently enough on the government to stimulate any sort of movement at all, particularly during this time of commissions.

What the activities of the Native Brotherhood and other organizations ultimately did was encourage the increased recognition of First Nations citizenship rights and the promotion of First Nations arts in the late 1940s and early 1950s. These were a partial appeasement essential to maintaining public confidence in state policy and promoting a positive investment

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63 As early as 1899, Clifford Sifton, in his capacity as Minister of Interior, advised that "while the Department of Indian Affairs would consider Indian views as far as possible, the right of Indians to control the action of the Department would not be recognized 'under any circumstances.'" (Quoted in J. Rick Ponting and Roger Gibbons, Out of Irrelevance: A Socio-Political Introduction to Indian Affairs in Canada, Toronto: Butterworths, 1980, p.17.) This pattern was critical to the maintenance of government authority.

64 Mackenzie King was cautiously introducing state intervention along the lines of Roosevelt's American New Deal. Commissions were the main vehicle for enlisting both individual support and input from the vast network of industry, voluntary organizations, and non-governmental interest groups. This led poet Frank Scott to write of King in 1954, "the height of his ambition/ was to pile a Parliamentary Committee on a Royal Commission," (quoted in Bliss, Right Honourable Men, p.125.) a rather unfortunate jibe that even in 1947 seemed to aptly
atmosphere, both important conditions for a province hinging its economic development on natural resource exploitation and resource-based industries in the coastal and northern regions dependent on First Nations labour.  

Additionally, the lesson of Ravenhill and the BCIAWS for the First Nations political organizations was that pressure groups had to attach themselves to the most powerful of the informal and constantly shifting circles of the social elite in that network of voluntary organizations that made up Canadian community, and therefore political, life. It was not enough to rail against the system from the outside, as had the Allied Tribes, despite the pretension of a sympathetic ear emanating from the committees in Ottawa or Victoria. Wartime and post-war economic circumstances raised the value of First Nations labour. The rise in the importance of the First Nations commercial fishery during the war, including an increase in First Nations-owned boats, and the amalgamation of the two strongest organizations provided the Native Brotherhood with enough resources and economic clout to lobby resource industry officials. Furthermore, Harney reports that representatives from industries such as mining, agriculture and forestry had approached the government for help in finding new sources of cheap and pliable workers in 1947. The same year describe state ambitions in general.

65. In 1950, Masset was the home of a large and largely Haida-owned seine boat fleet. (Mary Lee Stearns, "Haida Since 1960," Handbook, p.263.) Important logging operations commenced in the Nass Valley in the late 1940s, long after the impact of World War One had impeded non-Nisga'a settlement in the valley. (Gordon B. Inglis, Douglas R. Hudson, Barbara R. Rigsby and Bruce Rigsby, "The Tsimshian of British Columbia Since 1900," Handbook, p.289.)
King announced a renewal of Canadian growth through mass immigration, declaring "[i]t would be dangerous for a small population to hold so great a heritage as ours." All this added to the value of First Nations labour, already settled and, in many cases, trained.

In a post-war British Columbia set for a natural resources-based economic boom, many in First Nations communities thus felt that the time was ripe for sustained economic growth on the reserves fueled by high labour wages, political enfranchisement for all First Nations people, and perhaps even the complete abolition of the Indian Act, leading to the entrenchment of aboriginal rights as well as to greater control over educational curriculum and other matters. In the end, industry and state officials accepted limited reform as means of placating one of their important labour pools, but the Indian Act revisions fell far short of realizing their initial promise.

The legitimizing role of the Indian Act committee and of an increasingly vocal discourse of a multicultural and inclusive Canada became important to the federal government in the late 1940s. The parliamentary committees and Royal Commissions addressed crucial issues about both the business of government and the constitution of Canadian society at a time when people were particularly sensitive about the issue of a moral state.

Canada, fully engaged in the post-war, United Nations rhetoric of

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66. Tennant, Aboriginal Peoples and Politics, p.121.
universal human rights and the humanitarian obligation of those nations left relatively unscathed by the war itself, was pressured internationally to accept waves of non-Anglo-Celtic refugees, termed displaced persons (DPs).\textsuperscript{68} The acceptance of the DPs was matched by domestic pressure for 'humanitarian' solutions to the existing problem of Canada's impoverished and marginalized communities.

In 1946, the government passed the Canadian Citizenship Act that for the first time created a Canadian citizenship distinct from British subject status. In addition to the issuing of Canada's first passports, awareness of Canadian independence from the Empire heightened privately among government members with the realization of the extent of Britain's financial bankruptcy and publicly in the efforts of authorities in public institutions in constructing a unique identity for itself internationally.\textsuperscript{69} The shifting post-war political alignments and the need for massive reconstruction in both Europe and Asia created new markets for Canadian resource products.\textsuperscript{70} The pressures brought on by this

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\textsuperscript{68}. Even here, despite the pretense of an open door policy, Canadian officials continued an informal hierarchical immigration policy. Robert F. Harney writes: "Canadian Jews and Ukrainians lobbied the government to help their kinsmen who either survived the death camps or were in displaced-person camps. Such lobbies would prove that in a democracy, existing groups must be heard, but immigration officials were often more interested in developing systematic recruitment in Holland, Scandinavia and the United Kingdom." (Ibid, p.232).
\textsuperscript{70}. Canada tried to secure access to these markets through the attempted formation of the International Trading Organization. The Marshall Plan of 1947 eventually established the capital necessary for European reconstruction and contributed
new international image for Canada as well as by the now burgeoning export markets created a demand for adjustments in domestic policies, particularly with regards to race, national "culture" and a common, lingering national self-image as a British derivative.

Canada did indeed overturn laws prohibiting Asian immigration and a ban on the Asian-Canadian vote in 1947, although this was not extended to First Nations peoples because of the on-going dispute over the extinguishment of aboriginal rights through enfranchisement. Yet, the social reform movement aided the cause for First Nations emancipation through working the accepted network of pressure groups and voluntary organizations and through the early use of media. Social reformers, by the end of the Second World War, had managed as well to form cross-discipline relationships through meetings and conferences, like the BCIAWS conference at UBC in 1948. The ongoing professionalization of the social welfare movement had given it a sense of legitimacy in the eyes of state officials and associations such as the BCIAWS, whose interests cut across a number of professional boundaries anyways, sought to extend their organizational contacts. In this respect, the Native Brotherhood was no longer a lone voice in the wilderness.

Although it had forged contacts within First Nations communities and organizations, the social reform movement was still primarily Euro-Canadian. Individuals within the movement

to a boom in the export of Canadian raw materials. (Ibid, pp.65, 71-72.)

Tennant, Aboriginal Peoples and Politics, p.121.
were limited by a continued acceptance of First Nations helplessness as delineated in the mythology of the 'Vanishing American.' This continued to entrench support for Euro-Canadian paternalism. Even when it was seen and accepted that First Nations-based associations like the Native Brotherhood had the skills, resources, and organization to attain the same goals, the news media and therefore the public in general had trouble accepting an updated vision of the place of First Nations peoples in Canadian society.

The Native Brotherhood saw this and sought to correct the situation. The proclamation against Hart and his provincial government was symbolic, but it nonetheless jolted the media, confused and panicked the premier's office, and raised the public profile of Scow and the Brotherhood. Furthermore, it provoked crucial public debate at a time when the more serious business of letters and petitions was failing to sway the provincial government on the issue of provincial enfranchisement. In the era of post-war reconstruction, any number of causes competed for public attention. The Brotherhood sought out ways of attracting that attention through manipulating the media.

It was by and large a successful strategy, at least at a provincial level where the Brotherhood's influence was strongest. From 1947 on, enough pressure was brought to bear on the provincial government by both social reform and First Nations political activism that it was forced to acknowledge the provincial importance of First Nations. Harry Hawthorn was hired at UBC "...with the understanding that the progress of the Native
people would be one of his concerns..." Two years later, in 1949, the First Nations of British Columbia were granted the provincial vote. Nisga'a chief Frank Calder, formerly secretary of the Greenville branch of the Native Brotherhood and president of the Nishga Tribal Council, was elected the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) Member of the Legislative Assembly for Atlin in the 1949 election. The provincial government celebrated the provincial enfranchisement by buying six paintings by the young Gitxsan artist, Judith Morgan. From this time on, government patronage of First Nations arts, along with the restructuring of the Department of Indian Affairs and the revision of the Indian Act, became part of a legitimizing strategy.

The purchase of Morgan's paintings was a fitting acknowledgement of the social reform movement's emphasis on youth, education and art as the vehicles of inclusion for First Nations in contemporary Canadian society. Youth, education and art were also emphasized by the Brotherhood, especially through its own newspaper, The Native Voice. In addition to George Clutesi's editorials extolling the virtues of formal education, students from the residential and day schools were regular contributors. The Native Voice tracked Morgan's early career,

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73. Ibid, p.122.
several times publishing her works on the paper's front cover.\textsuperscript{75} It regularly reported on the activities of George Clutesi, who also painted in a more "westernized," illusionistic style, and the BCIAWS, but the Brotherhood was also aware of the hold more "traditional" art forms had on the public imagination and sought ways of establishing a sense of continuity with tradition while stressing the participation of its membership in the contemporary realms of industry and politics. The best example of this was three years previous to provincial enfranchisement, during Vancouver's Diamond Jubilee of 1946.

For this event, Scow, and Ralph Hiltz, a Vancouver show producer and former reservation teacher, created a temporary "Indian village" in the Kitsilano neighbourhood. The Kitsilano Indian Village featured Kwakwaka'wakw dance performances and an arts and crafts fair during the Diamond Jubilee's two week celebrations beginning in July. The local media appeared ready to follow a predictable pattern in promoting the village, but were led instead by Scow and others associated with the Brotherhood. Thus, while Scow tantalized the public with his statement that "I can assure you the things our people will be bringing down with them have never been seen by white people,\textsuperscript{76}" he also made sure band names like Owakalagalics, Pilnaquwilwakwas, Humchitt, Owad, and Nagaeselaq received top print billing. Scow, as part of the leadership of the Native Brotherhood, was determined to make and control the First Nations presence at the

\textsuperscript{75}. Ibid, and "Portland Art Museum Displays Young Native Art," The Native Voice, October 1947, p.11.
\textsuperscript{76}. Quotes and other material on the Kitsilano Village and
References to contemporary First Nations reality tempered by the rather colourful language of the newspapers indicated a change in journalistic attitude in part stimulated by the Brotherhood's activities as well as by a growing awareness of First Nations issues brought on by the federal joint committee. No longer were non-Natives described as the rightful succeeders to a First Nations past. "At the Indian village now being prepared for them at Kitsilano," the New Herald wrote of the Kwakwaka'wakw performers, "they will spend two weeks under the scrutiny of the pale-face race that jockeyed them off Kitsilano lands." The Vancouver Sun, reporting on their arrival, described the performers as an "urbane, well-mannered fraternity." Scow, waiting to brief them on their arrival from Alert Bay, was "...wearing a fedora at a rakish angle and a natty herringbone suit." The resulting impression, the Sun reporter remarked dryly, was that "their only acquaintance with a tomahawk or pipe of peace is what they've seen in a movie horse opera." This ironic newspaper play between Hollywood stereotype and apparent contemporary reality in conjunction with the suggestion that Vancouver's acquisition of Kitsilano lands was less than rightful marked a promising beginning to the Kwakwaka'wakw entourage's stay. The 1946 federal policy shift to the conception of Canada as a multiethnic state engendered in the

the Diamond Jubilee are from CVA M6141.

77 Ibid.
78 Ibid.
79 Ibid.
80 Ibid.
Canadian Citizenship Bill was alluded to by the head of the Vancouver branch president of the Canadian Folk Society, L. H. Thorlaksson as a reason for this apparent tolerance, and the significance of the celebrations' multicultural components. "We are all Canadians," said Thorlaksson, reciting a now familiar refrain, "but should still foster and preserve the great cultures of our homelands."  

Mungo Martin accompanied the entourage and was billed by Hiltz as "...one of the province's last great totem pole carvers..." demonstrating "...his vanishing art..." in the village's arts and crafts section. Scow and the others then invited Viscount Alexander, British war hero and Governor-General of Canada, who was to visit the celebrations as part of his first tour of western Canada, to receive an honourary chieftainship and an eleven-foot pole carved by Martin at the Kitsilano site.

However, Kwakwaka'wakw dissatisfaction almost shut down the village immediately after their arrival, much to the embarrassment of the city and most particularly the organizing committee. Kwakwaka'wakw complaints included "...that the Indians were taken to Vancouver from coastal points in second class accommodation, that no arrangements were made in advance for their transportation in the city, that a private citizen had to provide a truck for them to take part in Monday's Jubilee parade....They also charged that totem poles decorating Vancouver

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81. Ibid.
82. Ibid.
83. Ibid.
84. Ibid.
85. CVA M6141.
86. The presentation is illustrated in The Native Voice,
streets are what they term 'cheap caricatures' and 'an insult to our people.'

Other newspapers reported that all 37 performers were stranded without pay.

The group threatened to withdraw from the Jubilee celebrations and the story was picked up by newspapers nationally by July 9. Within a day an agreement had been reached and although no specific details were made public, it included the paid return of 17 of the dancers north in time for the fishing season and presumably some variation on the city's previous offer of room and board, an allowance of one dollar a day for incidental expenses and the sharing of some $2000 in profits earned through the village show.

With the settlement, all returned to the next task at hand, namely preparations for the presentations to Viscount Alexander. According to the inaugural issue of The Native Voice, Alexander was greeted by Coast Salish representative Chief August Jack Khatsolano and then made honourary president of the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia at the July ceremony. In addition to accepting the Governor-General into chieftainship, the Native Brotherhood also conferred upon him the name Chief Napapunkim. The name was traced back "...about 150 years...when the original Napapunkim was an outstanding leader of the coast Indians, not only for his ability as a warrior but as a serious thinker of his time that made him the jealous guardian of the

December 1946, p.1.
86. CVA M6141.
87. Ibid.
88. Ibid.
rights of the Native people in a day when the early white companies and settlers were aggressively encroaching upon the lands of the original inhabitants." The physical reminder of the chieftainship and the name was a pole carved by Martin and presented at the ceremony (figure 31). In addition, the name itself was Martin's own prerogative.

Like Joe's pole, Martin's pole was visually reminiscent of the James' house posts. It is even closer formally - not surprising given that Martin was trained under James' tutelage. Similar in size and proportion, the general composition consists of three main figures. The top figure is a thunderbird with outstretched wings. By this time, it had become conventional for totem pole carving for public monuments and curio carvings outside the potlatch cycle. The choice of this composition was perhaps an intentional connection to the older carvings, once again implying a sense of artistic and therefore social continuity.

The dance performances utilized what was increasingly termed

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90. Ibid.  
91. In a speech at the 1953 opening of Martin's reconstructed house at the British Columbia Provincial Museum (translated by Helen Hunt and transcribed by Wilson Duff), Tony Omhid identifies 'naga'penk'em' as the owner of the original house Martin copied for the museum. Audrey Hawthorn also identified Martin as "Chief Nakapenkem of Fort Rupert of the Ma'mtagila clan" in 1967. (Hawthorn, Art of the Kwakiutl, p.vii.) Phil Nuytten, following the orthography developed by the U'mista Cultural Center in Alert Bay, spells this Naka'pankam. (Nuytten, Totem Carvers, p.11) Ironically, the previous holder of the prerogative was Mungo's brother, Spruce, who was imprisoned after the Cranmer potlatch of 1921. (See "Potlatch Transcript: Mungo Martin's Thunderbird Park Potlatch, December 13-15, 1953," in the Duff Files at RBCM). The story of the name was recorded by George Hunt and published in Franz Boas, Contributions to the Ethnology of the Kwakiutl, New York:
art by non-Native Canadians in a decidedly First Nations fashion. This in itself was an expression of power on behalf of the Kwakwaka'wakw participants, particularly since the Indian Act still maintained the potlatch ban and in theory prohibited First Nations people from dancing off their own reservations. Ethnodrama as an activity in itself then was in direct reaction, at least in the case of Northwest Coast dancing, to the shackles of the Indian Act. Secondly, along with the newspaper reports on the dancers' 'modern' and 'urbane' apparel, the performances pointedly asserted both continuity with the traditions of the past and the full participation of First Nations people in "modern" British Columbia life. Through their presence, the dancers suggested that modernity and First Nations integrity were not mutually exclusive and that First Nations identities were more than touristic.

The Native Brotherhood's commission of Martin's pole as part of the presentation ceremony seems to be Martin's first commission outside of the Kwakwaka'wakw communities. While not the central focus of the presentation, the pole was nonetheless part of a carefully manipulated public event intended to raise public awareness and, at least at a symbolic level, obligate an important public figure, indeed the King's representative in Canada, in the same year as the instigation of the federal joint committee on Indian Affairs to live up to a name historically associated with the defense of First Nations rights. The pole also commanded media attention. Newspapers speculated on whether

Columbia University Contributions to Ethnology 3, 1925.
this might be Martin's last pole, perhaps even the last 'authentic' pole from anywhere on the coast.

The political subtlety may have been outshone by the pageantry of the event for most Vancouverites. It was not missed, however, by The Native Voice's target audience and illustrates the use of First Nations "culture," including art, for the promotion of First Nations political concerns. The call for the preservation of the totem pole, as manipulated by the Brotherhood's press releases, was an implicit call for the preservation of First Nations arts, perhaps including traditional leadership structures. Certainly, the local media seemed to position Martin as an adjunct to the Native Brotherhood and its leaders.92

The Brotherhood repeatedly demonstrated that First Nations arts as public access points were not the sole property of the BCIAWS and other non-Native interest groups. In fact, Scow commissioned one of the BCIAWS's emerging stars, Ellen Neel, to carve a large pole for a similar presentation in 1947 to the University of British Columbia, where Scow's son was attending classes.93 Intended in part to sanction the university athletic programme's use of the thunderbird moniker, Scow's ceremony and its targeting of a large body of non-Native youth at a university

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92. "As the eyes of hundreds of citizens at Kitsilano Indian Village Saturday night were fixed on the robed figure of Governor-General Alexander on the chief's dais or the garish masks of native dancers on the giant tom-tom stage," went one report, "a craftsman of a dying art was working within a few yards of them unnoticed....Peering through an ancient pair of wire-rimmed glasses, he worked until gathering darkness called a halt, then he took a mild interest in the proceedings. As usual, he said little." (CVA M6141.)
(a university intensifying its role in First Nations social issues) was also intended to dispel stereotypes and allow access to 'real' First Nations "culture."

The Native Brotherhood had implied this kind of activity as part of general strategy aimed at the media in an opening editorial for the first issue of The Native Voice: "We are prisoners of a controlling power in our own country - a country that has stood under the chaos of two world wars, beneath the guise of democracy and freedom, yet keeping enslaved a Native people in their own home land....The Native Voice, while invading the privileged sanction of the press, heretofore not occupied by our people, does not find it necessary to apologize for its efforts, which will be a long awaited stimulant leading toward a better way of life for all the Native people in Canada."94 The Native Brotherhood's own newspaper was not the only method for manipulating public opinion. The disastrous conditions at the Vancouver jubilee led to the communication of a range of significant issues, including, at a fundamental level, the second class status of First Nations people. The Native Brotherhood, through its focusing of media attention, was also able to address the liberties taken for granted by non-Natives with First Nations peoples and the city's disempowering use of totem poles characterized by Scow and others as crude, insulting caricatures.

The disagreement further resulted in sympathetic, albeit at times condescending, editorials in the main-stream press. An unidentified editorial contained in the AHSAV files on the 1946

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Jubilee stated:

The time has come, indeed it is long overdue, to deal with our Indian population justly and intelligently. They should no longer be regarded as wards of the state and kept in a condition of dependence. They should be given the best education facilities, the best economic opportunities, and the fullest rights to citizenship.

The Indians cannot fail to see the advantages of our way of life as demonstrated at the Jubilee celebrations. The accomplishments of sixty years are truly astonishing. What the Indians need is unmistakable evidence that we are prepared to take them into full partnership. 95

Through both the Kitsilano village and the Native Voice, First Nations art was attached to the Native Brotherhood's strategy of presenting First Nations individuals to the non-Native public as dignified, organized, and professional. The Brotherhood's use of traditional arts and ceremony complemented the pressures brought to bear by the BCIAWS and other reformers. The efforts seemed to have some success. Editorials like this from the mainstream press indicated considerable change in the attitudes of the general non-Native public over a generation.

III. George Clutesi and The Native Voice

Peter Macnair argues that after 1920, with the exception of the Kwakwaka'wakw, traditional Northwest Coast art was in decline. 96 His aesthetic judgement of twentieth century Northwest Coast objects based on comparison with the examples of the last half of the nineteenth century overlooks a growing

95. CVA M6141.
diversity of forms as a response to the changing social conditions resulting from intensive non-Native immigration and consolidation of economic and social control in British Columbia by Euro-Canadian institutional authorities. There were a variety of artistic expressions continuing and emerging in First Nations communities which served different functions, not the least of which was contributing to the fight for land and the entrenchment of aboriginal rights. These different genres of art were informed by different social practices. Some sought to reinforce the social positions validated in the underground potlatches; others reinforced the validity of First Nations identities outside the reservations themselves; still others were intended to speak directly to a dislocated sense of pride among the young.

George Clutesi\textsuperscript{97} used the wider post-war access to mass media afforded by the establishment of the Native Voice and by the growing, more positive public interest in First Nations affairs to speak specifically to this latter audience. While stressing the importance of tradition, he also advocated the embrace of the opportunities potentially available in contemporary Canada to build for the future. Acknowledging the new pan-Indian political leadership, he wrote in January 1947:

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{96} Macnair, "Trends in Northwest Coast Indian Art."
\textsuperscript{97} George Clutesi was born into the Wolf Clan of the Tse-shaht near Port Alberni in 1905. Active as a writer, radio broadcaster, artist, dancer and actor, Clutesi was best known as a painter for his work on the Indian Pavilion at Expo'67 in Montreal. He published a series of children's books, including Son of Raven, Son of Deer (1967), Potlatch (1969), and Stand Tall, My Son (1990). He received an honourary doctorate from the University of Victoria in 1971, the Order of Canada in 1973, and ACTRA award for Best Actor in 1975 for his role in the film Dreamspeaker. He died in 1988. (from George Clutesi, Stand
The ashes of his past have been gathered together, rekindled and they have begun to burn anew. Keep up the fight you brave leaders. In this young hour you have shown your wisdom. With your guidance have we broken the surface of the tide that so nearly engulfed us to its entirety. The under-tow is weakening. The straw that you grabbed proved to be a strong helping and understanding hand. Hang on, fight, your job has just begun.  

His choice of words, "that we have broken the surface of the tide that so nearly engulfed us," reflects a general feeling of optimism sweeping First Nations communities that the Special Joint Committee would scrap the Indian Act and finally address issues around land, self-government and the reservation system.

The inclusion of Clutesi's work here complicates the restrictive modern/traditional (primitive) paradigm of the parallel First Nations art history that emerged after 1950. Clutesi was widely known in British Columbia in the late 1940s and yet his paintings, like the carvings of Mathias Joe, rarely, if ever, show up in contemporary catalogues on Northwest Coast art. His founding of a travelling Nuu-chah-nulth exhibition dance group in the 1940s broke the terms of the Indian Act. First Nations peoples were not to dance off their own reserves, something Clutesi was quick to point out. Like his dance group, Clutesi's articles and radio broadcasts had a dual intention: first, to establish pride in First Nations youth in their heritage and history, and second, to instill respect in a white audience.

His paintings were distinctly "westernized" in their implied narrative and illusionistic three-dimensional space. Yet, neither Morgan nor Clutesi veered from the essentially traditional practice of using painting to refer to the corpus of stories, songs, dances and ceremonies of their particular people. They both appropriated European illusionism to update their manner of depicting this corpus. With Clutesi especially this may have been a conscious decision to make these seem still relevant in what must have seemed to be an increasingly European world. Their work is the coalescence of two visual traditions into a new cultural current.

The paintings clearly served the double intention of instilling pride and respect through the accessibility of the images themselves and the consistent aboriginal content. Much of Clutesi's work illustrates various Nuu-chah-nulth Tse-shaht stories and ceremonies. He said in 1949 that "I've been interested all my life in reviving the past life of my own people on Vancouver Island. I have tried to put on canvas what my people lived for, what they accomplished, the dances they created."99 In short, Clutesi's work was an important complement to the efforts of bands, like the Squamish, and of the political organizations like the Native Brotherhood.

"To live and to survive in this new era," wrote Clutesi, "we must store up for the future."100 Thus, Clutesi's target audience tended to be children or young adults, and in 1947-48 he

100. George C. Clutesi, "The Urge to Create," The Native
wrote a number of inspirational articles for the Native Voice in which he outlined his personal idea of what it would take for First Nations to survive in post-war Canada. On the surface, many of his ideas, and certainly his art, seem to belong to the progressive era of pan-Indianism in the United States, which advocated education, hard work, and the adaptation of attitudes, values and habits of life to those of the larger American society. However, as Tennant points out, "[t]he pattern of politics which emerged among British Columbia Indians was the opposite of the early assimilationist pan-Indianism of the United States. British Columbia Indian leaders dedicated themselves to ensuring a distinct and continuing Indian existence."102

Civilization is an awe-inspiring and soul-tearing culture. It brings wonderful miraculous wonders...but in its very wake, it also brings destruction!...The sooner we realize this the better we shall be prepared to cope with what has engulfed us so efficiently and so completely, the sooner we realize that we must as individuals prepare ourselves to do our bit to meet this overwhelming onslaught of civilization. The only logical solution, I believe, is to learn as quickly and as efficiently as possible the concepts of this new culture. Reach for and acquire higher education. Without it we are lost, we are like chattels. As long as we are useful we are tolerated; become weak, then we are cast aside.

Therefore thirst after wisdom. Reawaken the desire to administer unto your own in this new culture, prepare yourselves to become doctors, nurses, nurses' aids, teachers, ministers of the Gospel, etc. and when you have accomplished these come back to us. We


102 Tennant, Aboriginal Peoples and Politics, p.69.
are in need of you most urgently...

Yes, it is good to adopt our white brothers' mode of life, but I repeat, remain the Native North American Indian that you are, the Great Spirit made you. Be proud of his creation. 103

Of course, much of the concern of the BCIAWS centred on the promotion and acceptance of "Indianness." Their objectives in this respect were arguably part good intentions and part imperialist nostalgia. Although BCIAWS members were often outspoken in their call for pride in First Nations societies and the primary if unspoken objective of the association was the integration of First Nations people into the Canadian mainstream, their insistence on what constituted these societies was often affected by the persistence of the modern/primitive paradigm. Clutesi would later write in a not-so-veiled reference to the kind of social reformist spirit at the heart of the BCIAWS: "What can be done to really help the Indian at this time? One way would be to look for his better qualities. He has some. Meet him halfway. Try harder to become a sincere friend. You cannot fool an Indian with the gushing displays of hypocritical prying of a would-be do-gooder." 104

Although Clutesi may have had objections to the eurocentric perspective of some of its members, there is no doubt that BCIAWS's promotion of his work furthered both his artistic career and his political agenda. Through its exhibitions, conferences, publications and marketing, it opened doors to a wider audience for Clutesi. In 1947, just after the University of British

103. Clutesi, "The Urge to Create."
104. George Clutesi, Son of Raven, Son of Deer, Sidney, B.C.: 
Columbia had hired anthropologist and curator Harry Hawthorn, who purchased seven of Clutesi's paintings for the newly opened university museum. This signaled the progress the dual paths of Native and non-Native reform efforts had achieved. A major public institution had acknowledged a contemporary Northwest Coast artist, an illusionist painter no less. The university, if only briefly, recognized both the existence of contemporary First Nations art and a diversity of creative expression beyond the so-called authentic carvings and paintings of the last century. Along with such recognition went provincial enfranchisement and the optimistic potential of a major overhaul of "Indian" policy under the Joint Commission. In the last years of the 1940s, paternalism seemed to be weakening.

Summary

Joe, Martin, and Clutesi received considerable media attention between 1936 and 1949. All were participating in the public debate over the reform of the Indian Act or in the enshrinement of aboriginal rights. Despite the little (with the exception of Martin) recognition they receive today, collectively, their work indicates a mid-twentieth century adaptability, innovation and a willingness to use tradition to forward their political agenda and to forge an identity for First Nations peoples in modern Canadian society.

Within the context of the post-war rhetoric of universal human rights and the rejection of racism, Native and non-Native
political agitation together contributed to a re-examination of the role of public institutions and their members in First Nations affairs. Government action at the end of the 1940s was provoked by the interest in First Nations societies created through the representational projects of the 1920s and 1930s and by the public campaigns of both the Brotherhood and the BCIAWS through the 1940s. Objects, because of their attraction to the non-Native public, played an important role in these campaigns by galvanizing the attention necessary for stimulating governmental reform. The best known artists of the time were Joe, because of the Thunderbird Dynasty pole, Ellen Neel and Clutesi, because of their independent activities and their involvement with both the BCIAWS and the Native Brotherhood, and Mungo Martin, because of the Diamond Jubilee presentation. Ironically, only Martin's public reputation has endured the post-war emergence of the museums in British Columbia.

Clutesi's paintings, then, like Joe's free-standing Coast Salish totem pole and Martin's 1946 gift of pole and name to the Governor-General, illustrate the innovative range of form and use objects could hold in British Columbia between the advent of the Great Depression and the re-involvement of state institutions in representing First Nations "culture." Far from "substitute styles"105 "...not culturally relevant to the present society,"106 Clutesi's paintings spoke simultaneously of a pride in heritage, of a respect for the past, a contribution to the present, and a direction for the future. Northwest Coast art was alive and

106. Reid, "In Search of Things Past," p. 76.
CHAPTER 7

UBC, the BCPM, and the Totem Pole Carver Training Programme

As the Great Depression had interrupted the institutionalization of national "culture" in Canada in the 1920s, it had been two decades since any major activity on behalf of Canadian public museums in representing Northwest Coast objects as part of the national fabric had occurred. Reform groups like the BCIAWS had tried to bridge the gap, but they lacked the funding to do anything on a large scale. The partnership between the BCIAWS and the British Columbia Provincial Museum (BCPM) had been productive in some respects, but the post-war management trend was towards professionalization and away from a reliance on voluntary arts organizations. Wartime commissions stressed the need for training and the growth of a supportive government infrastructure in order to transform the underdeveloped arts into a viable component of the national economy.¹ This trend translated into a lessening role for the BCIAWS and a growth in state institutions like the BCPM and the University of British Columbia (UBC).

The federal government founded the Massey Commission in 1949 to chart the transformation of the arts into a professional industry. This chapter reviews the motivation for the Massey Commission and its effect on institutions in British Columbia. Central to British Columbia's regional contribution to national "culture," the objects of the Northwest Coast would once again receive institutional attention in the late 1940s. On one hand,
the resulting programmes appeared to answer the calls for change and the recognition of the contemporary contributions of living First Nations artists stemming from both Native and non-Native lobbying campaigns discussed in previous chapters. On the other hand, the privileging of professionally trained museum and university authorities over indigenous assertions of meanings for the objects created a discursive tension played out in the promotional programmes. While the catchword for post-war Canadian society was integration, which in theory allowed for the maintenance of the traditions of non-British Canadians, this entailed a role for First Nations objects as touristic commodities in the national and provincial economies. Such a role for the objects failed to allow for the symbolic role they played within the potlatch system and represented a shift closer to what Halliday had suggested in his Cranmer post-trial display in 1922.

I. The Massey Commission: "Indian Culture," "Canadian Culture"

In response to the on-going post-war debate over Canadian identity and the role of public institutions in its promotion, the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (the Massey Commission) was formed in 1949, the same year the Commission's British Columbia representative, Norman MacKenzie, opened the University of British Columbia's Museum of

Anthropology in his capacity as university president.³

Paul Schafer and Andre Fortier report that the roots of the Massey Commission lay in the 1945 Canadian Arts Council (CAC) brief to the House of Commons Special Committee on Reconstruction and Re-establishment (sometimes referred to as the Turgeon Committee) which sat during the later stages of the Second World War "...to uncover the trouble spots in the Canadian economy and prescribe remedies that the government should adopt."⁴ The CAC, itself a national umbrella organization hastily made up of a number of community arts groups, called for state patronage in the arts. This call became extremely influential in conjunction with the national perception of a crisis in the universities and their post-war role and direction. Emotions of patriotism stimulated by the war itself and the ongoing concern with a Canadian identity independent from both Britain and the United States sensitized the Canadian public to question of public arts funding.⁵

Paul Litt traces the commission's development more precisely to an emerging embarrassment within the ruling Liberal party at Canada's shoddy reputation abroad. Liberal cabinet members like Lester Pearson and Brooke Claxton argued that if Canada was to fulfil its new international political role, it was in the government's interest to promote Canadian identity both domestically and internationally. This all conveniently fit the popular belief that the war and the post-war reconstruction

⁴. Bothwell et al, Canada Since 1945, p.46.
constituted a post-colonial climax in Canadian history. Litt writes:

National confidence was expressed and reinforced by developments ranging from the admission of Newfoundland to Confederation to legislation making the Supreme Court of Canada the court of final appeal in the land. For a generation weaned on the 'colony to nation' theme of progressive national independence, it seemed that Canada had come of age constitutionally, diplomatically, and militarily. A cultural nationalism that cultivated a unique cultural identity was an appropriate capstone for the nation-building process.... Postwar nationalism gave government cultural initiatives a broader base of popular support and a new political relevance.

The commission's final report was made public in June 1951. It issued 146 recommendations on a broad range of inter-related issues, including radio broadcasting, television, the National Film Board, galleries, museums, libraries, archives, historic sites and monuments, universities, the Canadian image abroad and an arm's length granting agency termed the Canada Council but not realized until 1957. While it emphasized a federal structure for the arts, it qualified this in its recognition of provincial authority, particularly in the field of education. Education, defined in the report as "the progressive development of the individual in all his [sic] faculties, physical and intellectual, aesthetic and moral," was central to its vision of Canadian "culture," further defined as "that part of education which enriches the mind and refines the taste. It is the development

of the intelligence through the arts, letters, and sciences."\(^8\)
While it suggested that formal education "...is definitely a provincial matter"\(^9\) and that "...the life-long process of education which the culture of a society, is a matter of national and international interest,"\(^10\) any formal promotion was guaranteed as provincial jurisdiction if it was generated through the provincial ministries of education. Since the BCPM had been shuffled into the Ministry of Education, Northwest Coast "art" became a provincial matter.

Following the release of the 1928 Meriam Report during the Hoover administration in the United States, the Roosevelt Indian New Deal hinged much of its reform on over-hauling the Native American educational system. Canadian Department of Indian Affairs Director Robert Hoey's citation of the Meriam Report as the "most comprehensive and one of the most informative available on the question"\(^11\) of 'Indian' administration in his opening presentation to Canada's Joint Committee on the Indian Act in 1946 foreshadowed the division of wardship responsibility between federal and provincial states through education. In British Columbia, for example, the most important programmes on First Nations arts in the 1950s were instigated by the Massey Commission's own Norman MacKenzie at the University of British Columbia and at the provincial museum under the auspices of the Ministry of Education. The central objective for their

\(^8\) Ibid.
\(^9\) Ibid.
\(^10\) Ibid.
\(^11\) Quoted in Canada, Special Joint Committee of the Indian Act, Minutes of Proceedings and Evidence, Number One, May 28-May
cooperative efforts was promoting the reception of First Nations arts and thus implicitly the recognition of their contribution to Canadian society. An important secondary goal was the stimulation of the contemporary arts market and the strengthening of the arts as employment. These desires had also been at the heart of Collier's efforts in the United States and conveniently intersected with the interests of the Massey Commission. They were both part of a general North American trend towards state regulation and management and the professionalization of the arts.

Despite its initially limited implementation, the Massey Commission's report provided a blueprint for solving the problems faced by the individuals and groups involved with the various aspects of the arts in Canada. It garnered positive attention through popular media and had a broad impact on Canadian identity. Although it stressed the expansion of museum facilities as prevention for the on-going loss of national heritage, it also had a separate section devoted to "Indian arts and crafts."\textsuperscript{12} Noting that indifference on behalf of both First Nations and non-Native Canadians was resulting in the loss of the "traditional skills and arts of the Indians,"\textsuperscript{13} the commission went as far as suggesting a council for First Nations art parallel to the Canada Council. But the popular hierarchy of the arts privileging the primarily male, Euro-Canadian pursuits of painting and sculpture as art and other forms of production as

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid, p.55.
\textsuperscript{13} Ibid, p.55.
folklore or handicrafts meant that the promotion of these other
forms would remain a local and not a national matter.

First Nations art was an issue that the commission had to
grapple with for a number of reasons. First, First Nations art,
particularly of the Northwest Coast, was perceived as a powerful
Canadian symbol, and was deeply associated with British Columbia
tourism. This association was made more formal through its
promotion by the National Museum and the National Gallery in the
1920s, and by its paraphrasing in the paintings of major British
Columbian modernist painters, notably Emily Carr and, beginning
in the 1940s, Jack Shadbolt.\(^\text{14}\)

Secondly, both solicited and unsolicited briefs during the
commission's hearings in western Canada sought to bring the art
to the forefront. In 1950, the Massey Commission called on newly
appointed professor, Harry Hawthorn, to complete a report "...on
whatever measures could be taken to increase a wide Canadian
knowledge of Indian Arts and Crafts, and to make more effective
the present somewhat casual arrangements for the marketing of
these native products."\(^\text{15}\) As Litt suggests, the "Massey
Commission's hearings...showed that Canadian cultural development
would have to come to terms not just with biculturalism, but
multiculturalism as well."\(^\text{16}\) This was what Crosby identifies as
the recognition of First Nations arts as "part of a larger

\(^{14}\) See, for example, Marjorie M. Halpin, Jack Shadbolt and
the Coastal Indian Image, Vancouver: University of British Columbia

\(^{15}\) Archibald A. Day, Secretary of the Commission, to Harry
Hawthorn, March 20, 1950, UBC Archives, Norman MacKenzie Papers Box
194, file 3.

\(^{16}\) Ibid, p.113,
strategy to focus on culture as the means for creating a federalist ideology that both contained and encouraged regional diversity.”17 In this sense then, Northwest Coast art as a symbol of British Columbia had become a regionalist assertion within the fabric of Canadian nationalism.18

Thirdly, there was the perennial problem of extending the logic of the concept of two founding nations to somehow include an acknowledgement of the historical presence of the First Nations. In British Columbia, where treaties were non-existent and the post-war economy centred on natural resources, this historical presence held a problematic and disruptive potential.

II. UBC and the Institutionalization of Contemporary Northwest Coast Art, Vancouver

The war years saw a more integrated, state-managed economy, paralleling the American move away from its more liberal or laissez-faire capitalism to the Keynesian collectivism favoured by Roosevelt earlier in the 1930s. In this Canadian 'New Deal,' Mackenzie King and the federal Liberal government introduced its vision of a post-war 'welfare' state, beginning with national unemployment insurance in 1940 and including through the remainder of the war, an extended old age pension plan, plans for veteran housing, education grants, farm assistance programs, and re-training provisions.19 Government members were keen to

17. Crosby, Indian Art/Aboriginal Title, p.50.
18. Even in 1927, Brown and Barbeau's Exhibition of West Coast Art Native and Modern was partly a response to the accusation that the National Gallery did not speak for all of Canada, but rather was instead dominated by Ontario and Quebec.
maintain a controlled economic growth and avoid the problems of resettlement suffered after the First World War. Money was therefore funnelled towards giving veterans affordable housing and either employment or professional, career-path education.\textsuperscript{20}

Hand in hand with this was the concern for professionalization, not only of those producing arts, but also of those producing knowledge about the arts. This meant an increased role for the universities in the training of "cultural" professionals for the museums and led directly to the hiring of Harry Hawthorn at the UBC in 1947\textsuperscript{21} and of his student, Wilson Duff, at the BCPM in 1949.\textsuperscript{22} By creating a cadre of professionals responsible for the management of provincial "culture," Northwest Coast "art" was institutionalized within the structure of the state, thereby reinforcing the authority of government officials. Control over the distribution of knowledge about First Nations objects by this professional cadre was thus emphasized over the potlatch system, where it rested in First Nations communities. In this way, the Provincial Museum became the center for the preservation and management of First Nations material and the University of British Columbia the centre for its study. With the preservation, study, and, eventually, replication of First Nations objects through this growing state bureaucracy, governments in Canada continued the 1920s assimilationist project of exerting authority over the construction of meaning for First Nations objects. UBC took on a

\textsuperscript{20} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{21} Hawthorn, Labour of Love, p.1.
\textsuperscript{22} Report of the Provincial Museum for the Year 1949,
larger role as the promoter of British Columbian "culture" within this context. Between 1947 and 1950, university officials submitted a brief on the marketing of First Nations arts to the Massey Commission, funded a totem pole salvage project, and hired Mungo Martin to renovate old poles and carve new poles for the university's collection.

Harry Hawthorn had enlisted the help of his wife, Audrey Hawthorn, the museum's honourary curator, to complete the Massey brief.²³ Ironically, both Hawthorns were recent immigrants to Canada and their connections to First Nations communities still developing. "We knew of the peoples of the Northwest Coast, whose great creativity and outstanding arts had been extensively reported," writes Audrey Hawthorn. "We looked forward to further acquaintance with them in their daily lives."²⁴ She further reports her initial impression that markets for craft products from the Great Plains and Eastern Woodlands areas were strong. She then developed an acquisition agenda for assembling "...as representative a Canadian collection..."²⁵ as possible at the UBC Museum of Anthropology after completing the survey.

Consequently, both Hawthorns became increasingly interested in using the museum to stimulate what they saw as an unsatisfactory contemporary arts market in British Columbia.

²³. Audrey Hawthorn outlines her methodology for the preparation of this brief as follows: "With ethnographic atlases I was able to establish the locations of several linguistic groups in what had been the major ethnographic areas....I mailed out lists of items of material culture and I appended questionnaires to find out what was still being made." (Hawthorn, Labour of Love, p.7.)
²⁵. Ibid.
In 1947, English professor Hunter Lewis completed a six-week survey of village sites on the central coast, reporting on his return of a number of salvageable, if decomposing, poles. Hunter was president of the Canadian Federation of Artists and likely contributed the section on First Nations art to the federation's Massey brief. He also chaired the Committee on Indian Citizenship of the Vancouver Civil Liberties Union during the years of the federal joint committee on the Indian Act. His survey ultimately led MacKenzie to appoint the UBC President's Committee on Totem Pole Preservation. In 1947, the committee made the decision to purchase poles for UBC and then to create a 'Totem Pole Park' on the Point Grey campus.

No one at the university at that time had the expertise to actually retrieve the poles and so Lewis and the university administration turned to the most experienced person in the field, namely Marius Barbeau of the National Museum. Barbeau, of course, had been instrumental in the acquisition of poles by foreign and domestic museums through the Great Depression. As Cole notes, Barbeau had received permission from the National Museum to collect in a personal capacity and had frequently taken advantage of his position to improve his own financial standing through dealing in Northwest Coast objects as well as in Quebec church silver and sculpture. He was also careful enough to shield price discrepancies from the institutions paying his way.

Barbeau contracted an in-law, Arthur Price, to purchase the

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26. The brief is contained in UBC Archives, Lewis Family Papers, Box 7, File 9.
27. UBC Archives, Lewis Family Papers, Box 1, files 7-8.
poles for UBC while both he and Price travelled at National Museum expense. In addition, Price received expenses from the university through Hunter Lewis. In return, Price and Barbeau provided the university with eight poles, two carved thunder birds, a house post (originally owned by Spruce Martin), and a food bowl for a total of $3200.\textsuperscript{29} Price collected the objects from the Nass Valley and Alert Bay between September 8 and October 14, 1947, keeping a detailed record of who the objects were bought from as well as the cost per object.\textsuperscript{30} In addition, Price also detailed how much the two charged the university for each of the objects, conveniently totalling the difference in a separate column labeled "total profit." The final profit was just over $1700, with a gouging of up to $300 per object.\textsuperscript{31} If Price and Barbeau had not overcharged the university, they could have purchased an additional 60 foot pole that was deemed too expensive for the project's budget.\textsuperscript{32}

Price's correspondence to Barbeau further indicates a high level of self-consciousness. "My conscience bothers me a bit," he writes on October 14, 1947.\textsuperscript{33} Writing three days later from Vancouver, Price reports to Barbeau on his meeting with university administration: "Yesterday I was very worried that I might run into serious difficulty with the committee here as one of the Publicity made the crack about the fact that U.B.C. might

\textsuperscript{28} Cole, Captured Heritage, p.278.
\textsuperscript{29} Arthur Price to Marius Barbeau, October 14 and 17, 1947, CMC Marius Barbeau's Correspondence, folder: Price, Arthur, Temp. Box: 45.
\textsuperscript{30} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{31} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{32} Ibid.
be considered robbed or jipped [sic] - this particular fellow was afraid that one of the newspapers might take up the matter. I kept my mouth shut and all smoothed over."34 Price's worry seemed to be more a product of his own conscience than any real suspicion on behalf of the university. Mackenzie approached Price after the meeting, asking "if there was much more good enough to buy and restore and wondered if they were sorta [sic] at the bottom of the barrel."35 Although surprised, Price writes, "[t]his suggestion I jumped on as a solid sinch [sic] for us. Yes - I said, we are unfortunately (being Canadian) the last to appreciate Indian art and had to be satisfied and feel fortunate that there is anything left for Canada...."36

On Barbeau's return to Vancouver, he contacted Ellen Neel seeking information on Charlie James.37 Barbeau's attention gave their work academic validation and their reputation quickly spread. Ellen Neel's keynote address at the 1948 UBC conference secured further attention. Hunter, acting as a representative of the university, approached her the same summer to help with the restoration of the poles purchased through Barbeau.38 This was part of a growing plan to make UBC a centre for the study of First Nations culture and complemented Hawthorn's appointment, the Barbeau purchases, the purchase of Clutesi's paintings, and the 1948 conference. It appears to further foreshadow the Massey Commission's suggestion that universities serve as centres for

33. Ibid.  
34. Ibid.  
35. Ibid.  
36. Ibid.  
37. Nuytten, Totem Carvers, pp.51-54.
local culture.

Ellen Neel worked part time on the restoration project during the summer of 1948. Nuytten reports that the objectives of the restoration programme expanded under the influence of Hawthorn, suggesting that it was his idea to address the perennial problem of the owners' reluctance to sell given the "...ever-growing awareness of the fragility of their heritage..." through commissioning contemporary artists to replicate the poles instead of continuing with the patchwork repair of the older poles' rot begun under Neel. The pay was unfortunately even poorer than the curio business, so the following summer when Neel was approached again, she introduced the university committee instead to her uncle, Mungo Martin. Martin worked for the university over the next two years.

Although Martin and Neel were both trained by Charlie James, Martin turned out to be both a public relations bonanza and an academic dream for the university (figure 33). Mungo Martin (Naka'pankam) was born in Fort Rupert in the early 1880s. His step-father was Charlie James, with whom he carved in the first three decades of the twentieth century. He married Sarah Constance (Abaya'a), who accompanied him to Vancouver when he took over as carver for the University of British Columbia's early totem pole restoration program in 1948-49. He became chief carver at the British Columbia Provincial Museum in 1952, where he worked with his son, David Martin, and his son-in-law, Henry Hunt, until shortly after David died in a boating accident in

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38. Ibid, pp.45-52.
1959. His recognition would eclipse all other contemporary artists prior to Bill Reid. Peter Macnair described him in 1980 as "...almost singularly responsible for the revival of Northwest Coast Indian art...." According to the museum officials he worked with, Martin was keen on using the university and the museums as storehouses of knowledge on Kwakwaka'wakw culture, a kind of resource that educated non-Natives and yet could still safeguard information for the Kwakwaka'wakw themselves. Harry and Audrey Hawthorn both relied heavily on Martin for ethnographic information on the collection. Audrey Hawthorn's two important books on Kwakwaka'wakw art published in 1967 and 1979 are based in part on information provided by Martin and his wife, Abaya.

Martin was, in addition, an older man, which fit well with the public image of the "last of the old-time totem pole carvers." The university needed such a figure to attract public attention and justify the necessary funding allocations. While Martin was interested in recording First Nations tradition and promoting it widely through the museum, Neel thought of her work in more modernist terms, and therefore saw herself as an artist creating unique works for sale and circulation outside of the First Nations communities. Martin recorded songs, transcribed stories, explained the meaning of the university's collections

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39. Ibid.
42. Hawthorn, Art of the Kwakiutl, p.vii.
43. Ibid, and Audrey Hawthorn, Kwakiutl Art, Seattle:
within the context of the potlatch, and demonstrated carving and construction techniques on film and in person. Neel took greater liberties with the forms she incorporated in her work. She became more associated with tourist, rather than 'traditional' art, although during the summer of 1949 Neel did assist Martin with his restoration of the poles at UBC. Martin also re-carved sections of two poles, one carved by himself almost forty years earlier, and the other by Charlie James in preparation for the erection of the Barbeau-purchased poles to simulate an 'authentic' village on the UBC campus. The university planned the village park to showcase the different regional artistic styles of the coastal peoples.

In addition to the historical legacy of tourism and Northwest Coast art, by the time of the Massey Commission, First Nations art seemed increasingly important as a physical part of Vancouver and of British Columbia. The Native Brotherhood's Kitsilano Indian Village had garnered local and national attention through both the problems and the presentation to the Governor-General. The Totem Pole Park at UBC was well under way, supplementing the poles standing already in Stanley Park. The Scow-sponsored Ellen Neel pole presented to the UBC students' society was now standing outside Brock Hall in the centre of the university and Neel was visible both in the workshop at Stanley Park and at the Pacific National Exhibition grounds in east


Vancouver's Hastings Park during the summer tourist months.\textsuperscript{45} Within a year, the premier himself was appointed honourary president of the Totemland Society\textsuperscript{46} - a public relations ploy by the society to be sure, but one that nonetheless indicated the widespread acceptance of the importance of First Nations art to British Columbia's identity and touristic economy. Also, in Victoria, the BCPM's Thunderbird Park had become a major tourist destination, located barely a block from the city's inner harbour and across the street from the Canadian Pacific Railway's massive Empress Hotel. Victoria was the main port of call for American and other tourists heading north on the inside passage route to Alaska. The CNR had opened its own totem pole park in Prince Rupert, another port on the way to Alaska, in the mid-1930s.\textsuperscript{47} New poles were also beginning to filter out through North America through Neel's series of Totemland poles as well as through Mathias Joe's corporate commissions in Texas and eastern Canada. A major canning company, BC Packers, had begun making enquiries into the possibility of purchasing and removing old poles to their canneries.\textsuperscript{48} The poles represented a unique and memorable evocation of the province, its geography, its history and, through the oppositional paradigm of primitivism giving way to urban modernity, of its current industrial success.

\textsuperscript{45} Nuytten, Totem Carvers, pp.51-52.  
\textsuperscript{46} The society also included the attorney-general, the mayor of Vancouver, the provincial minister of trade and industry, the commissioner of the Victoria and Island Publicity Bureau, various well-known local businessmen, and Native Brotherhood president William Scow. (Ibid, p.48.)  
\textsuperscript{47} Barbeau, Totem Poles.  
\textsuperscript{48} H.R. Macmillan to K. F. Fraser, August 23, 1949, UBC MOA Hawthorn Papers Box 12, Series 5, File 1.
III. The BCPM and the Institutionalization of Contemporary Northwest Coast Art, Victoria

In 1949, the same year as provincial enfranchisement, the provincial government responded to growing public, institutional, and commercial interest in totem poles. Minister of Education W. T. Straith announced that "both the Provincial and Federal governments were interested in the advancement of Indian crafts, not only to preserve their culture, but also to help the natives make a livelihood." The first step was to hire Wilson Duff, who immediately joined with Hawthorn to complete an ethnographic survey of the Nass and Skeena Rivers. The same year, the BCPM launched its "Anthropology in B.C." series. In 1951, Duff prepared an influential report for Straith, on the possibility of the "permanent preservation" of poles in British Columbia.

When Thunderbird Park was opened in Victoria in 1940, one of the project's goals was to preserve the poles in the museum's collection. A decade of exposure had not achieved this goal, and although efforts had been made in the early 1950s to slow the decay, it was clear that their storage outside was not conducive to preservation. Taking advantage of the politicians' interest in the Totemland Society and its efforts, Duff warned, "[u]nless vigorous steps are taken soon, we'll have a 'Totem Land' with no totem poles." Duff then proposed to follow and expand on Hawthorn's example at UBC and have the old poles stored inside

50 Ibid.
51 Wilson Duff to W. T. Straith, August 16, 1951, RBCM Duff Papers.
and replaced in the park itself with new copies. "Newly-carved wooden poles," wrote Duff, "could last at least a century outdoors if given the proper care." The choice that Duff offered Straith was preservation through copies made from concrete casts and plastic molds or through "having the poles copied by an Indian who is without a doubt the finest carver still alive on the coast," namely Mungo Martin. Duff, unable to hide his enthusiasm for his second option, wrote "...what an unparalleled tourist attraction it would be to have him working in Thunderbird Park!"

Of course, Duff's Martin option fulfilled the provincial government's professed desire of "the advancement of Indian crafts...to help the natives make a livelihood." It was with this interest in promoting First Nations-specific employment and in professionalizing the production end of the market that the museum announced the following year a three-year totem pole restoration programme and appointed Mungo Martin head carver. "The primary purpose of the programme," announced the museum, "is to replace the present badly decaying exhibits in the park with a permanent and more representative collection - in part new poles, in part exact replicas of old ones - so that the fine original carvings can be preserved indefinitely indoors. By employing native carvers and having its operations in the park itself, the programme accomplishes two important secondary aims: to preserve

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52. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid.
the art of totem-carving and to serve as a unique tourist and educational attraction." The museum also hired Martin's son, David Martin, as his assistant, and his granddaughter, Mildred Hunt, as an apprentice carver. The inaugural projects included a memorial figure, two poles, and, most importantly, the construction of a Kwakwaka'wakw house that would be completed and dedicated the following year, 1953.

The museum built a workshop with construction materials donated by British Columbia Forest Products (figure 34). H.R. MacMillan's MacMillan-Bloedel donated and delivered cedar logs for the poles. One of the significant suggestions made by the Massey Commission in the 1951 publication of its findings was the co-operation of industry and government in supporting Canadian "culture," a suggestion apparently well received in British Columbia. The promotional benefits of such projects were obviously not missed by either MacMillan-Bloedel or BC Forest Products. Indeed, the museum almost gleefully reported that in "two eight-hour days during the tourist season...2,375 persons watched the carvers at work. Nine hundred and sixty-two of them took pictures, including 196 with movie cameras." These were numbers that advertised the museum, its programmes, its sponsors, its employee-artists, and the art itself. The museum's functionalist approach equated community good with economic promotion.

57. Ibid.
58. Ibid.
IV. Wa'waditla: Reappropriation and Resistance

Within less than a decade, First Nations art in British Columbia had gone from the publication of Tale of the Nativity to the Native Brotherhood's gift of Martin's pole to Viscount Alexander to an integrated salvage programme that included both restoration and carver training. No longer was this art the preserve of an fractured and obscure social reform movement, destined by the reformers' own estimations to a slow suffocation from lack of interest. Nor was it seen as the exclusive property of the Northwest Coast peoples. Government officials had gathered corporate support and invested in the institutional promotion of indigenous art through the university and the museum. The carver training programme was designed to ensure the continued manufacture of a quality, monumental product, an objective that at least on the surface contradicted the thrust of seventy years of assimilationsist policy. In these new programmes, the contemporary resurgence of the totem pole was projected as something the province could be proud of as a whole. In this way, provincial authorities simultaneously attempted to depoliticize the meaning behind its use by First Nations at contemporary political events while finding a symbol that could be used to market British Columbia, its businesses, its products, and its investment opportunities.

And yet, for all the discussion of First Nations affairs and the emergent programmes aimed at both restoring museum collections and revitalizing First Nations arts as an employment

59. Ibid.
option, the various levels of governments failed to address, let alone settle the problems of land and aboriginal rights. The findings and proposals of the joint committee on the Indian Act were released in 1950 and the government tried to push through its new act immediately. While promising to consult with First Nations leaders and political organizations, the government was soundly criticized for not providing enough time for consultation and the passing of the act was delayed a year.\(^{60}\)

The Indian Act, when it was finally passed, was a bitter disappointment to First Nations peoples and many others. Apart from some administrative restructuring, including the reassignment of Indian Affairs to the Department of Citizenship and Immigration, essentially nothing changed. The Vancouver News Herald announced during the preliminary parliamentary debates on the act that "[t]he mountain has laboured and brought forth a mouse. What was to have been the 'Magna Carta' of the Indians turns out to be little more than a revamping of administrative regulations. The committee's long hours of work have been a waste of time."\(^{61}\) No aboriginal rights were guaranteed. Enfranchisement was not granted. The bans on land claims, dancing off the reserve, and the potlatch were quietly dropped, but not repealed as many had hoped.

In terms of First Nations 'handicrafts,' a small subsection was devised within the department's Welfare section created by the administrative restructuring of Indian Affairs. It was given

\(^{60}\) Vancouver News Herald, June 13, 1950, contained in UBC Archives, Lewis Family Papers, Box 7, File 9.  
\(^{61}\) Ibid.
a small annual budget of about $750, most of which went to encouraging basketry in eastern Canada in the Pierreville, St. Regis, Manitoulin, Lorette and Maniwaki agencies. The provincial government in British Columbia came out of the years following the war looking much more progressive than its federal counterpart. It had granted enfranchisement in 1949, appointed the Indian Inquiry Committee within the Department of Labour in 1951, and had by 1952 begun its totem pole restoration and carver training programme.

If this delegation was meant to appease anyone, it failed. The provincial right to vote, a token committee, and a refurbishing programme for historic objects did not buy favour, nor did it erase the last hundred years of state policy. First Nations groups and individuals continued to press for recognition of aboriginal rights and claims to land and to assert themselves, their identities and their histories in defiant and celebratory terms. The dropping of the potlatch ban from the Indian Act, however, did provide for the 'legal' opportunity to the return of the public celebration of First Nations ethnicity.

Almost thirty years after the Cranmer potlatch and with a new wave of efforts by state officials to control the production and marketing of First Nations art, the first public potlatch since the imprisonment of the Cranmer potlatch participants was held in, of all places, a state institution. Gloria Cranmer Webster writes that although "clandestine potlatches were held

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62. Canada, Department of Mines and Resources, Report of Indian Affairs Branch for the Fiscal Year ended March 1950, Ottawa: King's Printer, 1951, p.73.
before the revision of the Indian Act, it was not until 1953 that the first public 'legal' potlatch was held. It was held in Coast Salish territory, a long way from the homes of the Kwakwaka'wakw."63 It took place in Victoria in celebration of the opening and naming of Mungo Martin's BCPM house in Thunderbird Park (figure 35).

Martin imposed demands on the museum intended to keep the event within the traditional rules of potlatching as much as possible and therefore limiting the input of museum officials. The potlatch was held on three consecutive days, one for family and friends only, one for the museum and other officials, and one open to the general public. Helen Hunt translated and Duff was responsible for recording and transcribing the rehearsal and the first day of potlatching. That all three days were important events for its Kwakwaka'wakw participants caught the curatorial staff off-guard and indicates how little they understood about the Kwakwaka'wakw in 1953, their relationship to the museum, and the power the museum had in representing First Nations peoples. Up until that point, it seems that Wilson Duff believed his and the museum's own rhetoric that they were indeed resuscitating something that had already died. Diane MacEachern Barwick recalls that the "formal presentation ceremony..." was "one of the few occasions on which Wilson [Duff] failed his own exacting standards as historian and ethnographer. He told me not to bother arranging for a recording and was chagrined when Mungo's

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magnificent oratory, ably translated by Helen Hunt, transformed the gathering into a kind of Kwakiutl potlatch.... Wilson ruefully admitted that he had expected a perfunctory handing-over to the Minister; 'but I ought to have known that Mungo would make it real, would make it history.' The presentation ceremony, occurring on the second day, was important to transferring the maintenance of the house to the museum and was not simply a photo opportunity, as Barwick's description indicates it was for the various non-Native museum and government officials present.

Indeed, Cranmer-Webster credits Martin's potlatch at the museum with encouraging similar public demonstrations of pride back at home in Alert Bay. "In all probability," Cranmer-Webster writes, "the success of Mungo Martin's potlatch encouraged people in Alert Bay to think about building their own big house. Various tribes contributed to the design and construction. The big house was completed in 1963 and was opened with a potlatch hosted by Chief James Knox of Fort Rupert. He was one of twenty people who had been imprisoned for two months in 1922, for potlatching." While not the founder of the "renaissance" so often cited, following the revision of the Indian Act Martin was integral to the Kwakwaka'wakw community stepping beyond the limitations of the potlatch ban. The efforts of Scow, Martin and others contributed to an important sense of identity and pride in the face of overwhelming economic and social marginalization. In this sense, Martin's rigorous use of conventional early twentieth

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64. Diane MacEachern Barwick, "'A Grand Old Man at 35': Wilson Duff as Curator," The World Is As Sharp as a Knife, p.25.
century Kwakwaka'wakw two- and three-dimensional form, although a product once again of his training with Charlie James, played an important public role by suggesting a unswerving sense of continuity.

The Wa'waditla potlatch served as a powerful reaffirmation of Kwakwaka'wakw culture both to the Kwakwaka'wakw themselves as well as to the government officials and general public who attended. During one of the rehearsals, Omhid addressed the Kwakwaka'wakw crowd, "I wish to remind our young people to keep away from mischief during these ceremonies...Any wrong move we might make, and these people here might make fun of us."  

Entitled Wa'waditla, the house, as Tony Omhid described, was not an imaginary reconstruction. Omhid owned the right to the name and then 'sold' or transferred the right to Martin during the potlatch. Referring to Martin, Omhid said,

You all recognize this house, chiefs. This house is not just a made up house. Take a look at this, and that and that (the carved house posts). It is a copy of the first house that all you tribes used to gather in; the house that belonged to my chief; the house that belonged naqa'penk'em. That is the reason he can't take just anything up. After all, this house was planned long time ago. This house has a story.

Through the potlatch speeches, the pride for who the Kwakwaka'wakw were and conformity to Kwakwaka'wakw ways emerge as consistent themes. Omhid addressed the rehearsal audience, "We should be proud of the people that we represent," while warning

Mungo Martin, "[b]e careful for the few days that are coming. So, you will respect our gathering here, as it is well respected by our forefathers....This I say because you are all trying out tonight. You are all trying out tonight, my children, so that I will see how you do; to see if there should be any faults in your actions." 68

With regards to this, George Scow asked: "Why should we try to put a different dance from what we are supposed to do? We have to follow the rules of our dances, just as we talk our language, so that we will all understand one another. Because it has been told by our old people that we must never forget." 69 Through the speeches and dances, prerogatives were demonstrated, the house was named. Linking the past with the future, many of Martin's relatives were given names, notably his grandchildren, Ellen Neel, her children and Wilson Duff's daughter. 70 A ceremony of healing and reaffirmation in light of the potlatch ban, the Wa'waditla potlatch became one of hospitality and sharing when the doors were opened on the third night to the blocks-long line of curious Victorians.

An impression of Kwakwaka'wakw strength and solidarity shone through the proceedings. As Omhid said at one point, "We have been successful now, all you tribes...We are the right tribes to perform this. All these dances we would never have seen if our

70. "And now to this," said Martin. "The child of my brother, the child of Wilson Duff. I am going to give a name, as I don't consider us to be two men (rather, as one or related)." (Ibid, n.p.)
children had been weak."  

Neither reduced to a simple commodity or set simplistically within some European historicist tableau, at least for three nights the dances and speeches activated Wa'waditla and Martin's renovated poles. Within a stone's throw from the provincial legislature, Martin appropriated the space of the museum and pushed forward his agenda of maintaining the Kwakwaka'wakw way, despite some seventy years of enforced and systematic assimilation. "You have put strength into me, for I was very weak all by myself away from home...," he said to his Kwakwaka'wakw audience. "And you have come to help, you with your famous names, you chiefs. You have strengthened me. Your fame will spread because you are down here, and brought your big names along with you. So you will finish what I want to do. You have strength, for you know everything."  

"Kinship solidarity and sociability pervade all of life and are the bedrock upon which everything else is built," writes Marjorie Halpin of potlatching on the coast. "Meaning is coeval with memory, or history, and an object's meaning is, so to speak, the sediments of memory that accumulate everytime it is 'brought out' in a potlatch and money distributed to 'memorize' and mark the legitimacy of the event."  

Ironically, given the location of both Wa'waditla and its dedicatory potlatch, this was memory accumulated beyond the grasp of the museum. Despite the intent of the Indian Act and the professionalization of academic

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71. Ibid, p.2.  
72. Ibid, p.4.  
expertise in public institutions, the knowledge of First Nations objects, their histories and functions, still thrived in their communities of origin.

Summary

With a twenty-year lapse in the representation of Northwest Coast objects as Canadian, the Massey Commission called once again in 1949 for state intervention. This time the paradigm for national "culture" emphasized integration over assimilation and called for government support for a market served by contemporary art producers. Whereas the representation of Northwest Coast objects had been dominated by the federal National Museum in the 1920s, with the negotiation of governmental jurisdiction in the Great Depression and the re-location of the BCPM to the provincial Department of Education, this task would fall to the provincial government in the 1950s. From the point of view of post-war politics, this responsibility would allow for the impression that the provincial government was responding to the concerns of both Native and non-Native lobbyists and realizing the support network the BCIAWS and others had advocated.

While jurisdiction may have shifted from one governmental level to another, discursively the provincial authorities picked up where the federal authorities had left off, the connection between the two systems emphasized physically with the UBC hiring Barbeau to assemble its representative collection of totem poles in 1947. What did distinguish the projects of UBC and the BCPM was the involvement of Ellen Neel, and, more influentially, Mungo
Martin, who subverted continuity in the "Vanishing American" mythology by demonstrating an active working knowledge of the potlatch system and the ways in which meaning was constructed for objects within it. Martin continued the agenda of William Scow and the Native Brotherhood by publicizing Kwakwaka'wakw art and using the museum to educate its curators, and through them, the general public, about Kwakwaka'wakw society.

In his move to the BCPM in Victoria in 1951, Martin became the central figure in a carver-training programme, part of the government support for the professionalization of the arts. Martin then made an extraordinary symbolic gesture, holding the first public Kwakwaka'wakw potlatch since the Cranmer prosecutions at the BCPM in 1953, using not only the resources of the museum but also the funding and materials made available by local lumber and logging companies. The Wa'waditla potlatch demonstrated the continuing vitality of Kwakwaka'wakw ways and sought to affirm First Nations identity in the eyes of Victoria's non-Native public.

Martin was the central figure in a government-funded program aimed at "resurrecting" the production of "traditional" totem poles. He personally attended the London presentation ceremony of a pole commissioned by the provincial government as a gift to Queen Elizabeth II in 1958 and when Martin died in 1962, his body was piped aboard the HMCS Ottawa and transferred with a military honour guard to Alert Bay for burial. He was posthumously awarded the Canada Council Medal for his "contribution to
Canada's artistic, cultural and intellectual life."\textsuperscript{74}
CHAPTER 8
The Totem Pole Preservation Committee and the Case of the Gitnayow

The political significance of Mungo Martin's assertion of the continuity of Kwakwaka'wakw authority through the Wa'waditla potlatch was paralleled at the museum by the realization that Martin, as a carver willing to share his deep knowledge of the potlatch system, could almost single-handedly legitimize the museum and its activities. With Martin, the museum in Victoria had something to offer the general public other than weekend and evening lectures and an empty repository space filled with historical odds and ends. Martin's potlatch, the active presence of Martin and the other carvers, enlivened what was otherwise a tomb. The opportunity had existed before since the production of objects associated with the potlatch system had never actually ceased completely. Martin, for one, had been involved with this production. On the other hand, museum involvement was limited by a lack of resources and curatorial interest (or, perhaps even awareness), assimilationist ideology, and the ceremonial restrictions imposed by the Indian Act. Because the museum was a public institution, it would have been difficult for curators to celebrate objects associated with a practice outlawed under Canadian federal law as something that still persisted.

The growth of museum and university-based First Nations studies in British Columbia in the 1950s thus seemed to satisfy a diversity of needs as interpreted by provincial government officials, superficially acknowledging First Nations identities
and addressing the issues of poverty and employment while advertising the activities of the industrial sector and reaffirming the basis of governmental authority through knowledge-producing public institutions. Central to the government's actions in the 1950s, and the focus of this chapter, was the Totem Pole Preservation Committee project, in which older poles were removed from their villages of origin, copied by Martin and his assistants, and re-erected in strategic touristic locations throughout the province. However, Mungo Martin and his Kwakwaka'wakw relations were not alone in their interest in using the professionalizing "western expertise" as a means of enshrining the totem pole symbolism informed by the potlatch system. A more explicit re-appropriation of the spaces of Euro-Canadian authority occurred in the Totem Pole Preservation Committee's activities at the end of the 1950s, this time instigated from within another "totem pole group" who had been the focus of federal attention in the 1920s: the Gitxsan.

I. Industrial Development and the Totem Pole Restoration Programme

After provincial First Nations enfranchisement and the poorly-received Indian Act revisions, provincial public arts institutions concentrated their promotional efforts on Martin, stressing the conformity to 'tradition' evident in his work and therefore the 'authenticity' of both Martin and the institutions' programmes. Ultimately, this led to the marginalization of more "modern" First Nations artistic expression within the discourses around First Nations art. Usurping the BCIAWS with the museum in
the public eye, institutional authorities like Duff and Hawthorn abandoned the residential school cultivation of the easel painting styles pioneered in the Southwest. Judith Morgan went to Cottey College in Missouri,¹ never again to enjoy the public attention in British Columbia she had received as a high school student. Francois Batiste also disappeared from the public realm, and although George Clutesi shared a 1967 commission for the exterior mural at the Indian Pavilion in Montreal's world exposition, his work was not bought by either the museum or the university after the 1940s. A “renaissance” demanded “authentic” form, not the “western-style” illusionistic narratives of these artists. Part of this preference was rooted in the economics of the art market, but it also contributed to the erasure of the era of assimilation from social memory. While it may have not been the intention of either Hawthorn or Duff or of any of the anthropologists and art historians who followed them to contribute to this erasure, the marginalization of Clutesi, Morgan and some of the other modernist painters within the discourses around First Nations objects supports Blundell’s assertion that “...anthropologists [and art historians] can unintentionally reproduce presumptions by employing rhetorical devices and modes of speaking and writing that they have inherited from an earlier generation of disciplinary practitioners.”² (emphasis Blundell)

Echoing the management procedures in the restructured forest

². Blundell, “Speaking the Art of Canada’s Native Peoples,”
industry after the provincial Royal Commission Inquiry into Forest Resources in 1944, the Provincial Museum became a centralized processing plant in a new programme of sustained yield for totem poles. It was part of the new economic cycle of harvest and renewal. Its spin-off benefits included production regulation, a growing private market, growing employment opportunities, and an altruistic appearance that obscured the ongoing denial of treaty negotiation and the parceling off of traditional First Nations lands through Forest Management Licenses and Public Working Circles.³

In 1952, W. A. C. Bennett and the Social Credit party began its twenty years of government in British Columbia. Under Bennett, the province set out to provide "the necessary physical and economic infrastructure for profitable enterprise."⁴ It built "an infrastructure of railways, roads, and electricity through government spending."⁵ It also provided "a fiscal policy, a tax structure, and a legal framework which encouraged

p.28.
³ Walter Hardwick explains the provincial government's regulation of the forest industry during the 1950s as follows: "A series of Forest Management Licenses were issued through which the major companies agreed to administer their private land, timber licenses, and crown land in particular areas. In other areas the Provincial Forest Service administered Public Working Circles on a perpetual yield basis. The result of the sustained-yield programme, insofar as size, numbers, and location of production sites is concerned, was that the large logging operations, whose cut was in excess of the annual increment in forest growth, had to decrease production which would ensure a sustained yield of timber. New sources were tapped in more peripheral regions extending to all sections of Vancouver Island, Queen Charlotte Islands and the northern mainland coast." (Hardwick, Geography of the Forest Industry, p.22).
⁵ Ibid.
multinational corporations to invest in the forest and mining sectors."\(^6\) The relationship between industry and the provincial government was close: up to 95% of the forest was on Crown land, which the government in turn allocated to companies on long-term tenure arrangements, including almost 13% alone to MacMillan-Bloedel.\(^7\) Forestry itself was responsible for 40% of the value of production in British Columbia during the 1950s.\(^8\) Such industries then aided the totem pole programmes through public donations of materials and transportation facilities, and funding through the private philanthropic endeavours of their C.E.O.s.

Technological improvements following the war also changed the range and scope of resource exploitation in the province. Areas previously inaccessible were now open to fishers or to the forestry and mining companies. It became easier as well for both museums to extend their reach to previously 'unharvested' areas, and the curators began to salvage more systematically the older, mostly abandoned villages off the main transportation routes. Museum collections were no longer restricted to the major rail lines or to the occasional opportunistic forage of Barbeau or Heye. Curators like Duff further felt that the poles from these villages were in greater danger as well with the mining and, most particularly, the forest companies dispersing their harvesting operations farther and farther into the provincial hinterlands. In addition to the advancing age and, consequently, advanced deterioration of the poles, many historic objects were more

\(^6\) Ibid.
\(^7\) Ibid, p.351.
\(^8\) Hardwick, Geography, p.2.
vulnerable to unsanctioned removals by private collectors.

Greater accessibility and localized state-industry co-operation also meant that public institutions in British Columbia could for the first time realistically assemble a collection of monumental First Nations sculpture that would dazzle in scale, if not match in quantity, the collections of the eastern American museums. In this way, they also anticipated the federal aspirations of the Massey Commission by first housing and then reproducing a category, perhaps at the time the only category, of Canadian heritage acclaimed internationally.

A provincial Totem Pole Preservation Committee was formed in 1954 around the partnership of UBC's Harry Hawthorn and the BCPM's Wilson Duff. It consisted of former Massey Commissioner and current present of UBC, Norman MacKenzie, as Honourary Chairman, officials from the university and the provincial museum, and representatives from the Department of Indian Affairs and the "general public." Hawthorn chaired the committee and Duff was its field director and secretary. In the preamble to a brief from May 1954, Duff defined for the committee the promotional touristic importance of the totem pole to non-Native British Columbians: "Totem poles are the most distinctive symbols of our coast, extensively used to convey the atmosphere of this region." In addition, Duff noted, "[t]he best totem poles are also outstanding works of primitive art." The corporate community, especially the forest industry, provided


— Ibid.
extensive support for the committee, as Duff said, "...in the interests of public relations and for the general good of the province...."\textsuperscript{11}

Although the museum and the university had been making their own tentative first steps towards an expanded totem pole replacement programme, the more widely-based provincial restoration programme seems to have got its start with inquiries to Hawthorn from H. R. MacMillan in January 1952. MacMillan, who coincidentally cited Barbeau's 1950 book, Totem Poles, wrote that he "...was really upset to see how many of them had been taken by Canadians to various other countries at a time when good ones could be obtained, and also to note that practically none had been saved for British Columbia."\textsuperscript{12} As provincial chief forester prior to the First World War and president of the largest forest company in the province, MacMillan had traveled the coast extensively. He recalled that "I used to see many of them in 1907 to 1918 from about Comox north to the Queen Charlottes....I was at Skidegate last year for the first time since 1918 and noticed that none was in sight...If it is not too late to rescue a few more, and a little money would help you do it," he continued, "I would make a contribution."\textsuperscript{13}

In Hawthorn's response, he outlined the carver training programme at the museum in Victoria, noting that it was the intention of the programme to branch out "into the training of several younger carvers in the various tribal traditions, who can

\textsuperscript{11} Ibid, p.12.
\textsuperscript{12} H. R. MacMillan to H. B. Hawthorn, January 10, 1952, in UBC MOA Archives, Hawthorn Papers,
then replace poles in Alert Bay, Skidegate, and other places."\textsuperscript{14} Hawthorn then coolly promised to take MacMillan's proposition into consideration. MacMillan's inquiry ultimately resulted in the combination of the carver training programme with four salvage expeditions to outlying settlements over the next four years. MacMillan's contribution only partly funded the project, although he did provide the committee a profitable funding lead in suggesting they contact a number of forestry companies and sawmills, including Flavelle Cedar who provided the replication programme with materials. British Columbia Forest Products and the Powell River Company also donated materials. MacMillan-Bloedel continued to donate logs for replication and Union Steamships contributed boats for transportation. MacMillan himself remained more or less a silent partner, contributing major portions of the funding while remaining anonymous in the committee's promotional literature.

Since MacMillan approached the university first, the poles were salvaged cooperatively by the university and the provincial museum. Using the resources of both, the committee then divided the poles evenly between the institutions. This led to the expansion of collections for both Totem Pole Park at UBC in Vancouver and Thunderbird Park in Victoria as well as the hiring of a third full-time artist, Henry Hunt, at the BCPM.

\textit{a. Tanu and Skedans}

\textsuperscript{13} Ibid.
With the assistance of Dr. Peter Kelly, United Church minister, graduate of Raley's Coqualeetza school, and an important leader in both the Allied Tribes and the Native Brotherhood, the committee first targeted the abandoned villages of Tanu (sometimes spelt Tanoo) and Skedans on Haida Gwaii (figures 36 to 38), which had been the sources for Newcombe's collecting for the BCPM prior to the First World War and the CPR park in Prince Rupert during the 1930s. Duff and Hawthorn traced the pole owners through Solomon Wilson and the committee paid a nominal $50 fee per pole section, dramatically less than the peak price of $1000 per pole demanded by Gitxsan and Nisga'a chiefs from Barbeau and Smith in the 1920s. Six poles were collected and delivered south to their new urban destinations.

The expedition also received national attention through the Canadian Broadcast Corporation (CBC), who sent an announcer of Haida descent, Bill Reid.

The hiring of Hunt and the programme's unsuccessful gamble on additional private funding taxed the programme's budget the following year. When no additional funding was found, the museum laid off all three carvers from mid-December to the beginning of the next fiscal year in April 1956. However, the museum's active encouragement of corporate interest in totem poles allowed the carvers to remain working in Victoria for the rest of the winter. From January to April, all three carvers were commissioned to carve the world's tallest totem pole for the city of Victoria.

15. George F. MacDonald, Haida Monumental Art: Villages of the Queen Charlotte Islands, Vancouver and Seattle: University of British Columbia Press and University of Washington Press, 1983,
The touristic publicity stunt was sponsored by a local newspaper, the Victoria Daily Times, who sold public shares and solicited corporate and individual donations. The museum donated space for the carving. Completed by mid-April, the pole was erected in July in another of Victoria's popular tourist spots, Beacon Hill Park, only a few blocks southwest from Thunderbird Park and the museum. Like the Mathias Joe pole in Stanley Park, the 'world's tallest totem pole' (figure 39) spun off a number of private copy commissions for the Martins and Hunt, including a six foot replica for the Victoria and Island Publicity Bureau for $150 in 1956.

In general, 1956 was a busy year for both the carvers and the BCPM officials. Radio announcer and soon-to-turn internationally acclaimed 'Indian' artist, Reid was hired for six weeks to work in the training programme at Thunderbird Park with Mungo Martin. Already an accomplished jeweler, Reid got his first chance to work on the old monumental Haida poles with Mungo Martin, replicating a pole from the Skedans-Tanu expedition of 1954.

Following on the heels of the very popular 'world's tallest totem pole' and reiterating Totemland's tourist agenda, the

pp.79-100.

17. Duff intervened when the Bureau questioned whether or not the pole was worth the price, admonishing the Bureau that "I think it would be unfair to compare a pole of such quality and significance with small poles carved for sale to tourists, and establish a price on that basis." (Wilson Duff to Victoria and Island Publicity Bureau, August 14, 1956, RBCM Duff Papers).
museum programme also set a precedent for re-distributing poles at key tourist sites throughout British Columbia in 1956.\textsuperscript{20} The replicated pole in part carved by Reid was set up at the tourist bureau at Peace Arch Park, which straddles the international boundary at the busy White Rock-Blaine, Canada-U.S. border crossing (figure 40). Since then, one of the first sights greeting tourists driving up from Washington state has been Reid and Martin's Haida pole. While many may have missed this pole as they followed the main highway into Vancouver, the totem pole in general now continued to loom large as the primary symbol of British Columbia.

A second pole replicated from the Tanu-Skedans salvage was erected at Exhibition Park (previously called Hastings Park) in Vancouver and two poles were carved for Riley Park in Comox.\textsuperscript{21} As replicated poles were erected in these various sites, the museum retained title to the works to guarantee their "proper display and maintenance."\textsuperscript{22} As the museum's annual report for 1956 indicates, one of the objectives of this part of the programme was to promote and maintain quality control in the open market. Using a refrain common since the height of the late nineteenth century museum collecting phase, they wrote: "We hope that this programme of putting excellent poles on display in various parts of the Province will increase the public appreciation of native art and counteract the effects of the

\textsuperscript{21} Copies of these posts replaced the Spence posts in the Thunderbird Arch erected in 1940. (See Ibid, p.D21).
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid, p.D21
atrocious totems so frequently seen."\textsuperscript{23}

b. \textit{Hope and Gilford Islands, Rivers Inlet}

The replication aspect of the programme was also extended during bad weather to include a number of masks in the museum collection. Mungo Martin completed a series of eight, two-dimensional paintings for the museum in 1956 as well. His son David, in acknowledgment of the preservation committee's emphasis on promoting poles through their erection in city public parks, attended the American Institute of Park Executives conference in Seattle. David Martin also went on loan to UBC for a month in the spring to help restore some of the poles in its collection and was involved in the annual salvage expedition as he accompanied the museum's recent hiring, Michael Kew, a future professor in the University of British Columbia's Department of Anthropology and Sociology, to Hope Island for a week.\textsuperscript{24}

In addition to Hope Island, the museum used a $3000 donation from H. R. MacMillan to send Kew to other Kwakwaka'wakw sites on Gilford Island and at Rivers Inlet. During the salvage expedition, Kew supervised the purchase and removal of fourteen poles. Of the fourteen poles, eight house posts from two houses came from Gilford Island and five more house posts came from two houses on Hope Island. The final pole was a house frontal pole from Rivers Inlet.\textsuperscript{25}

Early on in the planning for the expedition, Duff had been

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
approached by Charlie Clair of Quatsino about the purchase of some house posts and four small figures. Duff was interested even though initially they hadn't been targeted for purchase by the committee. In January, 1956, he wrote Hawthorn about the possibility of drumming up additional funding. By the time Kew had been sent to the central coast, Clair had not contacted either the museum or the university. The matter had been forgotten until March 1957 when the house posts arrived in Vancouver, sent by Clair via Union Steamships, which he understood would not charge shipping costs due to the "educational purposes" of the project.\textsuperscript{26} The budget already stretched from a $600 overdraft on the Kwakwaka'wakw salvage expedition (paid by MacMillan),\textsuperscript{27} Duff and Hawthorn were left scrambling to cover the additional cost of $1600 for Clair's poles, figures and a transportation bill from Union Steamships. The private and anonymous financier for the committee's unexpected and unsolicited purchase was Czech immigrant lumber baron, art collector, and philanthropist, Walter Koerner.\textsuperscript{28} Koerner's anonymous contributions would ensure the next two seasons of salvage as well. (His patronage of Bill Reid and various donations to the university eventually stimulated the construction of the new, Arthur Erickson-designed Museum of Anthropology, opened in 1976.)\textsuperscript{29}

\textsuperscript{26}. Charlie Clair to Wilson Duff, February 28, 1957, UBC MOA Archives, Hawthorn Papers, Box 12, Series 5, File 5-9.
\textsuperscript{27}. H. R. MacMillan to H. B. Hawthorn, September 10, 1956, UBC MOA Archives, Hawthorn Papers, Box 12, Series 5, File 5-7.
\textsuperscript{28}. Wilson Duff to Walter C. Koerner, April 3, 1957, UBC MOA Archives, Hawthorn Papers, Box 12, Series 5, File 5-9.
\textsuperscript{29}. See Hawthorn, Kwakiutl Art.
Over the next two seasons, business continued as usual for the Totem Pole Preservation Committee. The Martins and Hunt went on loan in 1957 to the municipality of Courtenay in Kwakwaka'wakw territory on northern Vancouver Island, carving a pair of poles for the entrance to the city's Lewis Park. While the city paid $1000 to the British Columbia Totem Preservation Committee for the poles and their erection, the opening ceremony itself was turned over to local Kwakwaka'wakw First Nations. Under the direction of Chief Andrew Frank, the pole-raising shared similarities with Martin's Wa'waditla opening. Both followed a basic potlatch pattern, with the performance of traditional dances and songs, and Frank giving and receiving ceremonial names. Once again, First Nations control over the ceremonial proceedings led to an opening exotic and colourful to non-Native eyes and demonstrated a vital historically continuous presence for First Nations peoples. With the Courtenay ceremony favourably covered by both the local mainstream press and the Native Voice, the preservation committee seemed one step closer to its earlier goal of spreading the restoration programme out through the 'old' centres of First Nations society.

c. Ninstints

Also in 1957, the salvage expedition returned to Haida Gwaii, again it seems on the suggestion of MacMillan, although

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this time funded by a semi-anonymous $2750 donation from Koerner. 33 Eleven poles were removed from Ninstints on Anthony Island. In gratitude for Koerner's financial assistance, the committee presented him with a 'small token' of their appreciation at the end of the salvage in July 1957, namely the six foot long, central watchman from the top of the Beaver House (House Number I) frontal pole at Ninstints. 34 Although this was never made public, the university paid the internal bill for the figure. In presenting Koerner with this ostentatious gift, university officials in particular had other projects in mind. A memorandum from Norman MacKenzie's deputy, G. C. Andrew, to Harry Hawthorn, outlined Koerner's demonstrated interest in the university and hinted at a kind of sub-surface competition between the two primary institutions involved in the preservation committee. Andrew asked Hawthorn to cover the costs of the figure and to "...indicate to Wilson [Duff] that the President and yourself have been in touch with Walter [Koerner] regarding this and other University developments." 35 After delineating Koerner as university territory, Andrew then counseled Hawthorn to show Koerner the university museum. "Walter told me

34. George MacDonald writes: "'People Think of This House Even When They Sleep Because the Master Feeds Everyone Who Calls' belonged to the Striped Town People. According to Duff and Kew, the remains of this house were 11.7 metres wide by 11.85 metres long (centre to centre of corner posts). The frontal pole was badly burned in the village fire of 1892, but the bottom figure of a beaver and one the watchmen at the top survived." (MacDonald, Haida Monumental Art, p.107.) The Striped Town People are one of the lineage groups of the Xa'gi Raven moiety. (Ibid, p.11.)
35. G. C. Andrew to H. B. Hawthorn, July 29, 1957, UBC MOA
incidentally that he has a collection of primitive artifacts which he was thinking of giving to the Provincial Museum," wrote Andrew. "He did not seem to be aware of our range of interests and this is one reason why I want him to visit the museum and see for himself our range of interests."36

The committee also displayed a greater urgency in its negotiations with the pole owners, especially when it came to the 'legal' ownership of the poles. The committee's assertiveness was the direct result of Haida uneasiness at the museum's survey expedition to Ninstints in the summer of 1956. In December of the same year, the Skidegate Council issued a resolution to W. S. Arneil, Indian Commissioner for British Columbia with the Department of Indian Affairs:

...having read of the discovery by an expedition from the Provincial Museum of an ancient Indian village known as Ninstints, on Anthony Island, and of the finding of totem-poles and grave-poles here, we view with alarm the proposal to remove these grave-poles and other objects of our past culture from their present sites, and do request the Indian Department to have any further action in removing such objects immediately stopped. Descendants of the original inhabitants of this village are still living, and we ask that no further action be taken by the Provincial Museum or others until permission is granted by these people.37

The preservation committee's access to the poles was no longer a foregone conclusion. Previous salvage expeditions had called for careful negotiation, although there never seemed a

Archives, Hawthorn Papers, Box 12, Series 5, File 5-9.
36. Ibid.
37. P. P. Henson, Queen Charlotte Agency Superintendent, to W. S. Arneil, December 4, 1956, in RBCM Duff Files.
great urgency to these negotiations. Some pole owners saw payment for these unused objects as an unexpected bonus. As before the war, for some First Nations the ownership of the crests and names themselves was much more important than the ownership of their material manifestation in the frontal poles and house posts. Others, like Charlie Clair who dismantled the old house himself and delivered the four small figures to Vancouver on his own seiner, seemed almost anxious to get the objects off their land so they could re-build. In short, there had not been any organized opposition to the committee's salvage efforts.

Nonetheless, the Skidegate resolution may not have been unexpected for Duff and Hawthorn. In November 1956, they had received via Arneil a letter from Molly Stewart in Ketchikan, Alaska, who claimed a connection to the site and some of the poles through her great, great grandfather, Elijah Ninstints. While she professed a willingness to reach "some mutual satisfactory agreement" with the museum, she also derided the museum for having "...no authority, according to our custom, and what I understand of the law, to go and take things that do not belong to the Museum. There was a lot of hard work involved in making the poles, and they were and are very sacred to myself." In wording that echoed Harlan Smith's problems on the Skeena thirty years earlier, Stewart continued: "This matter is of great concern to myself, and my children, and I would appreciate it

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38. Molly Stewart to Indian Agent Anfield, October 30, 1956, in RBCM Duff Files.
39. Ibid.
very much if you would contact the Museum and advise me if it is going to recognize my right and title to these poles, because if not, I will have to place the matter with legal counsel."

While Duff continued to follow the committee's policy of acknowledging individual ownership of the poles and the payment of a token price per pole unit as symbolic recognition of this ownership, Arneil questioned the legal right of the Skidegate band council to administer payments for the poles. Anthony Island was not on official reserve land so technically the museum held legal title to the poles as an organ of the provincial government. On Arneil's suggestion, Duff contacted the Attorney-General's office, which presented him with some leverage in the negotiations. "We could rephrase the Anthony Island situation as follows," Duff wrote Arneil in May 1957:

> Anything fixed or attached to the land becomes part of the land and the property of the owners of the land. Therefore legally the totem poles are now the property of the Provincial Government. We are under no legal obligation to either the Skidegate band or the individuals who claim ownership of the poles. However we do wish to recognize the Indian ownership. Several individuals have some claim, but not all the claims are equally valid. The best body to judge the validity of the claims is the Skidegate band, acting through its council, and they have consented to do this.

With Duff and the committee symbolically acknowledging individual title to the poles, they managed to appease the Skidegate council. They also slipped out of assuming responsibility for deciding validity of title claims and avoided any legal dispute with individual claimants, including Molly

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40. Ibid.
41. Wilson Duff to W. S. Arneil, UBC MOA Archives, Hawthorn Papers, Box 12, Series 5, File 5-9.
Stewart. The final purchase price was $800 for all eleven poles, at $50 per section.\(^{42}\) The money went into trust while the Skidegate Band council sorted out the individual claims. For the first time, the committee was pressed to solve the jurisdictional problem of ownership creatively while satisfying both the individuals as well as the band as a whole. The Skidegate resolution and the uncertainty it momentarily created served as good preparation for Duff and Hawthorn for their next salvage expedition.

d. Bill Reid and Totem Pole Park

The year 1958 was a climax of sorts for the promotion of First Nations art. The centennial of British Columbia's colonization, it coincided with the federal government's decision to fund universities without infringing on provincial jurisdiction over education. In 1956, the federal government had received $100 million dollars from the estates of Izaak Walton Killam and Sir James Dunn, which it used the following year to finally realize the Massey Commission's most important recommendation - the arm's length federal granting agency, the Canada Council. Under Canada Council structure, significant moneys were freed up for funding university building programmes without dictating any more directly the destination of the grants to the provincial government.

As J. L. Granatstein reports, regionalism has been a fact of Canada Council life (and Canadian political life in general)

\(^{42}\) Ibid.
since its inception. Coincidentally, Norman MacKenzie complained as early as 1957 that "[t]he fact that Toronto has been given the bulk of our grants to date - while not a cent goes west of Winnipeg is well designed to develop instant bitterness and criticism."\(^{43}\) To this end, MacKenzie's University of British Columbia received approval for a Canada Council grant for $700,000 in December 1957.\(^{44}\) A small part of this was used to supplement MacMillan's funding of the 1958 hiring of Bill Reid and Doug Cranmer for the construction of a replica Haida village (figure 41), consisting of seven poles and two houses, in the campus's Totem Pole Park (figure 42).\(^{45}\) With the Canada Council funding the bulk of the university's physical expansion, private donations could then be used to pursue secondary projects, like the reconstructed Haida village, which in turn re-affirmed the position of First Nations objects as one of the primary symbols of British Columbia and thus an important symbol of Canada in general.

The historicist references that placed First Nations arts within the metaphorical social memory of modern industrialism displacing a 'primitive' past continued in the Reid-Cranmer


\(^{44}\) Ibid, pp.449-450; and University of British Columbia internal memorandum to Dean G. F. Curtis and Professor J. Deutsch, December 9, 1957, UBC Archives, Norman Mackenzie Papers Box 137, File 3.

village, especially because 1958 was British Columbia's centennial year. The village became additionally important in establishing Reid's reputation as a contemporary artist. Reid, who was non-status, grew up only vaguely aware of his Haida heritage and had neither the facility nor interest in potlatching the monuments he carved, was nonetheless well versed in the language of modern art and spoke of Haida art in almost purely aesthetic terms. The modernist concept of the universality of human genius reflected in the aesthetic beauty of the object appealed to a generation of scholars who were interested in First Nations art from this perspective and who, with the public and private backing that social reformers like Raley and Ravenhill had earlier lacked, sought to use this as the major access point to Northwest Coast objects for the museum-going and art-buying public. Doris Shadbolt, who worked with Reid, Duff and University of Washington art historian Bill Holm on the 1967 Arts of the Raven exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery, wrote of Reid:

Reid was becoming known in scholarly and journalistic circles as an unusual person, someone who had a root by blood in the Haida culture, but also a critical distance from it; someone knowledgeable, thoughtful, responsible, who could write and speak precise, poetic and eloquent English... In other words, Reid had the pedigree to legitimize his art and the attitude that endeared him to museum and gallery curators

1983, p.27.

46. See, for example, Bill Reid, "The Art - An Appreciation," Arts of the Raven: Masterworks by the Northwest Coast Indian, Vancouver: Vancouver Art Gallery, 1965, written only seven years after the implementation of the UBC Haida village project.
and, through them, to the non-Native art-buying public. Reid's most lasting contribution, then, may have been to personify the realization of three generations of institutional activity; that is, to be a "modern artist" using a technical mastery of Northwest Coast form to create "authentic" looking objects that functioned not as indicators of social status within Northwest Coast societies, but rather as luxury commodities primarily for circulation within non-Native Canada. Furthermore, apart from the village he and Cranmer produced for UBC, the bulk of his early work took the touristic curio production of people like Charles Edenshaw from the 1890s as the basis for its inspiration. In short, Reid, following a trail already blazed in part by Ellen Neel and Mungo Martin, was the first of a new generation of professional artists recognized and promoted by Duff, Hawthorn and their institutions.

Crosby suggests that "...Reid could be described as the perfect model for the successful integration of the Indian. The western values for which he was praised - his education, articulate speech, and successful career - signal the possibility of the successful assimilation of other Canadian Indians into the progressive space of modernity." However, First Nations objects have historically fulfilled a diverse range of functions.

47. Shadbolt, Bill Reid, p.40.
48. Shadbolt writes: "In the mid-sixties he did a series of black-and-white illustrations for Christie Harris's Raven's Cry...a sentimental fictionalized account of the Edenshaw family's journey through acculturation....In a revealing self-view at the time, Reid in the book's last illustration pictures himself in the lower foreground at work on a pole....Lined up behind him loom the gigantic silent ghosts of his ancestors - 'Uncle Charlie' directly at his back." (Ibid.)
The transformation of these objects, through Reid and some of the subsequent generations of artists, into mid-twentieth century modern art is not as much a break with tradition as it is simply an additional facet to an already complex and diverse artistic continuum. The UBC village was the first monumental commission for the artist who would replace Mungo Martin as a public metonym for the Northwest Coast, taking the non-Native reception of Northwest Coast objects yet another step into the mainstream artistic directions of the 1960s and 1970s. Crosby summarizes;

...despite the way in which Reid privileged western values, form and aesthetics in relation to Northwest Coast cultures, his presence as a contemporary Haida artist of masterworks did open up some discourse on contemporary socio-political concerns - albeit in a limited way. At the same time, the experiences of Reid's historical displacement and his position as an 'urban' Haida artist and curator point out the multiplicity of aboriginal communities that were formed not only through acts of colonialism, but through the invisibility of Canadian ideology. Today, Reid's position of cultural authority is not only located in western institutions and knowledge, but supported by representatives of the Haida nation -especially since his involvement in the land question in Haida Gwaii. The public image of him as an aboriginal artist of Haida descent has taken on new meanings according to the circumstances and contexts of various historical moments, blurring the boundaries of what constitutes Haida culture and politics.50

Many have cited the Arts of the Raven show as the birth of Northwest Coast art.51 The catalogue for the exhibition

49. Crosby, Indian Art/Aboriginal Title, p.109.
51. See, for example, Halpin, "The Uses of collections," Coast Indian Artifacts, p.43.
suggested that contemporary Northwest Coast objects "...are arts in a different sense. Though truly enough of Indian descent, they are now Canadian art, modern art, fine art." Essentially, it was restating what Raley, Ravenhill and even Eric Brown had said thirty and forty years earlier. Shadbolt may have thought that the exhibition was a shift, that it was new to make "an explicit and emphatic statement" that Northwest Coast objects are "high art, not ethnoLOGY," but to paraphrase George Manuel, the "renaissance" of Reid and Shadbolt's day was the fruit of the accumulated labour of earlier generations.

And while Bill Reid began his ascent to the heights of artistic recognition, Mungo Martin himself further enhanced his reputation as the totem pole carver in British Columbia in 1957 when he was asked by the provincial Centennial Committee to carve a 100 foot pole as a gift to Queen Elizabeth from the people of British Columbia as part of the centennial celebration. Every step of the process was ritualized by the Centennial Committee. With 300 witnesses, Lieutenant-Governor Frank Ross cut the first chip from the log for the pole and was presented with the name Gwiutalas ("Man of Great Hospitality") and a ceremonial blanket by Martin. Various promotional organizations also used the pole to promote the province in general. Centennial Committee chairman, J. L. Wallace, presented the city of San Francisco with a Mungo Martin pole at a Lions International Meeting in August

54. Ibid.
1957. The Vancouver branch of the Centennial Committee out
muscled competing municipalities in acquiring a 100 foot
duplicate by Martin of the royal pole and erected it along side
the historic Royal Canadian Mounted Police ice breaker, the St.
Roch, to qualify for the federal funding necessary for the pole's
acquisition. The municipal competition building over the poles
even resulted in newspaper reports questioning the authenticity
of rival poles. "Indian experts" in one Vancouver story suggested
that Mungo Martin's pole in Beacon Hill Park was not "the largest
authentic pole in Canada," but was rather "...a 'gimmick'
pole,...and not a genuine Indian pole."56

e. Gitanyow (Kitwancool)

While Martin's contemporary pole was enshrined as the
official symbol of the province in the imperial heart at the
London presentation ceremony and Martin himself heralded as "the
proud Indian who revived world-wide interest in the native crafts
of the west coast...",57 the preservation committee continued
with its harvest of historic poles back in British Columbia. The
Skeena River had long been seen by Euro-Canadians as the most
important pole area in British Columbia. Some of this
recognition was the result of the National Museum's programme in
the 1920s. In addition, Barbeau had already carefully documented
the poles and published the information in Totem Poles of the
Gitksan, Upper Skeena River, British Columbia (1929) and, more

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56. "Canada's Tallest Totem Pole Erected at Haddon Park,"
unidentified newspaper clipping date October 16, 1958 in CAV.
recently, again in *Totem Poles* (1950). Their tempting accessibility in conjunction with the Gitxsan's defiance of Euro-Canadian authority further teased the committee. Duff and Hawthorn had surveyed the Gitxsan villages of the upper Skeena on their earliest cooperative venture in 1949 and were particularly interested in the poles at Gitanyow (most frequently referred to in anthropological and art historical texts prior to 1990 as Kitwancool), a village just north of the Skeena River and therefore away from the main CNR line and out of the range of the federal preservation programme of the 1920s. Subsequent visits by Duff in 1952 and 1958 convinced him of the necessity of purchasing and removing poles before they all fell and completely disappeared.

In 1952, Duff wrote that Gitanyow "contains the largest and by far the finest group of old totem poles to be found in their native setting anywhere," and although he recommended purchasing any poles or pole parts available for indoor storage in Victoria and Vancouver, he also for the first time suggested that "where the natives refuse to part with...poles, they be encouraged and assisted to find or construct adequate storage warehouse for them in the villages." Duff preferred to have the poles housed in the southern museums, ostensibly because of rot and weather erosion.

In 1952, Duff met with Albert and Walter Douse to discuss the possible purchase of their poles. Sometimes referred to as a

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59. Wilson Duff, "Digest of Recommendations," unpublished,
tribe, the Gitanyow are, as Duff would later note, "an amalgamation of several groups of people of different origins... essentially ...made up of two matrilineal exogamous phratries - the Wolves and the Frogs."\textsuperscript{60} Lacking a unifying leadership due to the village's structure of phratries and houses, the Gitanyow created the office of president in 1938 to provide a unified front against outside encroachment, swearing "to protect all the lands and natural resources belonging to the people of Kitwancool."\textsuperscript{61} While Peter Williams was the president in 1958, Walter Douse was the primary chief of the Gwass-lam house of the Wolf phratry and he and his brother Albert were, at that point, representing general Gitanyow views towards the poles in their discussions with museum officials.

According to Albert Douse, what was at issue with the release of the poles was the lands and natural resources of the Gitanyow people. They categorically refused to sell their poles to Duff and the preservation committee because of the poles' connections to house territories and hunting grounds. Duff countered with an explanation of "...the importance of these things as art by telling of books, shows, etc. on NWC (Northwest Coast) art."\textsuperscript{62} But, as Duff noted in his field notes, articulating the sharp split in the objects' understanding that characterizes the history of British Columbia, "[t]hey seemed
unable to divorce the concept of art from its social context. The only meaning of poles to them seems to be as a symbol of social position." (emphasis Duff) According to Duff's notes, Douse responded to Duff's proposal: "Since your plan was not to preserve the poles in the village but to take them away, we have decided that we are unable to sell any poles. If we let one pole go it would be like letting go of everything that is ours."  

Meanwhile for Duff, the only meaning of the poles seemed to be that they were art. Here Duff's use of modernist aesthetic theory, even if unintentionally, severed the objects from their First Nations ownership, justifying the Committee's expropriation of the poles in the greater interest of the province. 

Duff noted six main points for the refusal to sell the crest poles. First, the Gitanyow outlined a "history of resistance to white encroachment" and then noted that this was continuing, citing specifically the "taking of timber licenses." He suggested that the Kitwancool were "still [the] most conservative, isolated, proud group in the area" and that "here, more than elsewhere, totem poles are symbols of [the] whole Indian way of life." With no elaboration, he also cited the "personality and background" of Albert Douse as a factor in the Gitanyow refusal. Finally, reiterating his earlier point, he noted the Gitanyow's "inability to divorce totem poles as art

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63. Ibid.  
64. Ibid.  
66. Ibid.  
67. Ibid.  
68. Ibid.
objects from their social background enough to let us take away the object of art. That would be taking away their crests," and then questioned "whether they have the concept of art as art." Later, in the more formal field report, Duff wrote of Albert Douse: "He agreed that it would be a good thing to preserve the poles, but interprets this as a preservation of the crests, traditions, privileges, rather than as a preservation of an object of art." 

Douse also brought up the question of money in a manner that surprised Duff. Douse asked, "[i]f a clan had gained prestige by giving out large amounts of money when the pole was erected, could it receive money back for the pole without negating some of that prestige?" While Mungo Martin and the Kwakwaka'wakw had had little problem with this, feeling that the prerogatives symbolized in the carvings mattered more than the carvings themselves, clearly the connection between meaning and material was more pronounced among the Gitanyow. The symbolic acknowledgment proffered to the Haida during the Ninstints expedition would not accomplish the preservation committee's objectives; nor would the legal argument that the totem poles off reserve land were provincial crown property. Not only were the poles on reserve land, there was additional sensitivity towards the issue of reserves as the Gitanyow insisted "that they have never been party to any agreement to relinquish any of their

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69. Ibid.  
70. Ibid.  
71. Ibid.  
72. Ibid.  
74. Ibid.
rights over their territories. They have never made a treaty, nor have they been conquered. They have never admitted that the Government has any right to set aside plots of land for them as Indian reserves. In their view, all of their former territories still rightfully belong to them."74 In short, Duff found himself acting as government representative in discussions with people who did not acknowledge the authority of state officials over any of their affairs. This was an unfortunate position. As Halpin notes, this is a common situation for many museum ethnologists who face contradictions between their own research interests and their institution’s administrative needs and are thus forced to adopt a "professional attitude of disloyalty to their employing institutions."75

Duff persevered. In Duff and Kew's April 1958 visit to Gitanyow, they suggested that the copies made from poles removed to Victoria would be returned to Gitanyow and re-erected. In the wording of a later museum press release, the Gitanyow could "...trade copies for the originals."76 After a general meeting, the Gitanyow accepted the offer with one additional condition: "...that their histories, territories, and laws were to be written down, published, and made available to the University for teaching purposes."77 In short, the Gitanyow had decided to use

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77. Duff, Histories, Territories, p.3.
the Euro-Canadian educational system as an outlet for their resistance to non-Native control. As asserted in the same press release, "[t]hrough the years the Kitwancool...have fought to keep their territories intact, using all means short of force. In 1927 and even earlier, they even occasionally resorted to force to keep surveyors and other intruders away. Now they have turned their faith to education - to educate white men by having their history published. The museum is delighted to help out in this because it is exactly our job."  

Museum officials were also delighted that they might finally obtain important Gitxsan poles for their collection. A contract was quickly drawn up for the removal of three poles: "(a) Chief Wiha’s pole now lying beside the house of Mr. Walter Douse. (b) Chief Wiha’s pole now standing in the old village. (c) Chief Guno’s pole showing three frogs and now fallen in the old village." Confusingly, three poles were actually removed and replicated in 1958, a fourth was removed in 1961, and another was removed in 1962. A mistake in rank-related etiquette was made in removing pole C, Gwen-nue’s (also spelt Guno) Nee-gamks pole, and not the pole of Chief Gam-lak-yeltqu (Solomon Marsden) (variously spelt Gamlakyetlque, Gam-lak-yeltk, or Sam-lak-yelth), the senior chief of another house within the Frog phratry. This fourth pole was the Ha-ne-lal-gag pole (figure 43-45), one of a

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78. BCPM Press Release, RBCM Duff Papers.
79. Duff, Histories, Territories, p.3.
81. To complicate matters even further, it was incorrectly identified in a photograph caption published in Histories,
grouping of three poles and considered "...one of the most important in the village and...the pole that ties the other poles together. It holds the power for the other two poles...; in other words, it represents all three poles, and is the pole of the Raven." Although stories concerning Ha-ne-lal-gag and Gamlak-yeltqu had been included in the final text, this oversight delayed the erection of the pole replicas from 1959 to 1961. As Gitanyow president Peter Williams indicated, "the honour of the Great head Chief Gamlakyeltqu" was at stake. Not wanting to contribute to a split in the community and happy to get the opportunity to gain access to more poles, the preservation committee made arrangements for Ha-ne-lal-gag's removal and replication. A fifth pole, another in the Ha-ne-lal-gag grouping and named Thga-belathgum-gak ("Raven Soaring"), was also removed, with a copy going to the new University of Victoria in 1966.

Constance Cox, a former resident of Hazelton fluent in the Gitanyow language, was hired to record and translate the appropriate stories in October 1958. The manuscript for the subsequent publication, Histories, Territories, and Laws of the Kitwancool (1959), was prepared in typewritten form and re-

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**Territories** (plate 6, page 22).

[82] Ibid, p.23.


[85] Cox was given a cash advance of $175 to cover expenses. Despite Cox's apparent understanding that she was to receive remuneration for her work, no wages were paid. Michael Kew, writing on behalf of Duff, stated bluntly, "Our finances were not sufficient to pay more than the expenses of an interpreter." She received the $40.85 left over from the expense advance as "token payment" for her ten days' recording in 1958. (See Michael Kew
submitted to the Gitanyow chiefs in November 1959, who asked that passages omitted from the recorded histories be incorporated into the final text. They also asked that the provincial coat of arms be printed on the outside cover.\(^{66}\)

The three poles covered in the agreement were removed in 1958. The museum paid the costs of replicating the poles and Koerner funded their handling, transportation and erection. The Canadian Navy was enlisted to transport them to Victoria. Koerner, as a condition of his donation, demanded that the poles go to UBC.

The stories of the two Wolf (Gilt-winth) poles, the Skim-sim and Will-a-daugh pole and the Gaa-quk-dik-giat pole, (figure 46), "which belong to the same crest and have the same stories,"\(^{67}\) were told by the then holder of the Wee-kha title, Ernest Smith, and detail the Wee-kha house's "...early home on the sea-coast at the site of the present Prince Rupert, of their travels up the

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\(^{66}\) Peter Williams to Wilson Duff, November 19, 1959, BCPA Duff Papers. According to a letter from Duff to Peter Macnair written in 1976, this pole "...belonged to the house of Guno. At that time the chieftainship of this house was split: old Johnson Williams living at Kispiox had the name, while young Godfrey Good living at Kitwancool had the seat. I [Duff] arranged a straight purchase, and payments were accepted by both Johnson Williams and Godfrey Good." (Quoted in Alan Hoover to Ronald W. Hawker, personal correspondence, January 22, 1998.) The 1966 copy of this pole was made for the University of Victoria without the consent of either Williams or Good. In 1990, Godfrey Good, Chief Guno, approached the Royal British Columbia Museum and claimed that the museum had failed to follow through on an agreement to replicate the pole for re-erection in Gitanyow. The museum’s position was that although it had not agreed to this pole’s replication as condition for its removal, since a replica had been made for Victoria without the family’s consent, the museum should also fund the erection of a pole replica for Gitanyow as well. This pole was completed and raised in 1996. (Ibid.)

\(^{67}\) Duff, Histories, Territories, p.17.
Nass River, and their establishment in their present territory.\textsuperscript{88} The poles relate closely to the political structure of the house, and the accompanying narrative makes note that "[t]his house, unlike other houses, has two seats for the chiefs with the two heads on the pole."\textsuperscript{89} The poles also were indicators of the history of the house's existence at Gitanyow, and thus, presumably, of their rights to house territories and resources in the vicinity. Wee-kha emphasized that the first of the two poles was "...the first erected in Kitwancool by the clan of the Wolves."\textsuperscript{90} He further clarified the social structure these poles alluded to:

When a pole decays (a pole lasts about 200 years), or at the death of a chief, a new pole is always erected in the same place. When these people migrated, they took along duplicates of their totem-poles and erected them in their new permanent villages. When a pole is erected or changed, it is erected at the same place. A feast is always given and the territories are discussed. They tell the people the size of their village, the mountains they own, their hunting and fishing grounds. They tell this so that each generation will know what they own. The new chief and his council divide the land. They tell each clan which mountains they can have, and what areas they can hunt and fish in.\textsuperscript{91}

The story of Nee-gamks pole of the Frog clan (figure 47), of which another copy was made and erected in front of a tourist bureau office in Victoria (figure 48), was told by Chief Gwen-nue (Godrey Good). It also traces a house origin, telling of how "...Gwen-nue and his people tried to find their way back to

\textsuperscript{88} Ibid, p.13.
\textsuperscript{89} Ibid, p.18.
\textsuperscript{90} Ibid, p.18.
their ancestral home of Dam-la-am on the Skeena after the flood had carried them west to Alaska, and of their adventures along the way." The figure holding a frog on her chest at the top of the pole is an ancestral figure, Nee-gamks, who married the chief of the frogs and who, when rising from the lake at the behest of her brother Gwen-nue, sung a funerary song. This song was re-sung each time the pole was re-erected. Below this figure are three smaller frogs representing Nee-gamks's children. According to Gwen-nue's narrative, the house valued "...the pole very highly, as it represents the lost sister and the nieces and nephews of the clan." 

_Ha-ne-lal-gag_ ("On Sleeps the Raven" or "Where the Raven Sleeps with Its Young,") illustrated in the text, but not initially removed, was erected by the Frog phratry in 1910. Part of the lineage history of the house of _Shen-dil_, the right to discuss the history of the pole in 1958 belonged to Chief Lesssay-gu (Mrs. Fred Good). _Ha-ne-lal-gag_ has on its top the nest of the Raven referred to in its name. The pole's story tells of an ancestral chief, Shen-dil, and traces the travels of the chief and his family from their original village to Kitwancool. The story makes very specific reference to where they came from, where they passed, and includes the names of specific places, like Lak-wee-yep, the top of a mountain with a timber stand.

The reason they were traveling so much was that they were making their map, and on each piece of land when

91. Ibid, p.18.  
93. Ibid, p.23.  
94. Ibid, p.22.  
95. Ibid.
they stopped they had left their mark and their power, making it theirs... The poles gave them their power... and gave them the right of ownership of all the lands, mountains, lakes, and streams they had passed through or over and camped or built villages in. The power of these poles goes unto the lands they had discovered and taken as their own.... The power of the pole still goes on and belongs to Shen-dil. 96

The location of the pole is also important. It stood in 1958 in front of the house of Albert Douse, the primary chief of the Gwass-lam house of the Gitanyow Wolf phratry, along with the two other poles originally not to be collected by the Totem Pole Preservation Committee. At the foot of the pole is the mountain eagle, a crest loaned from chiefs Wee-kha and Gwass-lam of the Wolf clan and carved on this particular Frog clan pole to give honour to these chiefs. If the house were to be rebuilt or the pole re-carved, these crests would not be allowed to be represented on the new pole. 97

Also included in the museum booklet was the story of the house of Mah-ley, tracing when and how the house had arrived and been accepted at Gitanyow. The story made specific references to a grizzly bear pole not included the museum's removal plans and not illustrated in the text. As with the other stories, this too referred specifically to hunting grounds and other house lands.

The final text was published in 1959. It is divided into three main parts: Histories of the Kitwancool, consisting of transcriptions from Cox's recordings of the histories of the poles, the main houses, the founding of the village of Git-an-yow, related wars with the Tse-taut and the subsequent peace that

transformed Git-an-yow to Kitwancool; *Territories of the Kitwancool*, which outlines the territories and hunting grounds of the Gitanyow houses; and *Laws and Customs of the Kitwancool*, which chronicles Gitanyow social structure, and its relevant customs and life passages.⁹⁸

Disputes between the provincial museum, renamed the Royal British Columbia Museum in the 1980s, and the University of British Columbia over the ownership of the poles continued through at least to the late 1960s. At one point, Walter Koerner asked for the replication of the Gitnayow poles by carver Gaylord Morrison for presentation to UBC on the basis that Koerner had paid the shipping costs. Although this issue was sidestepped by museum officials in Victoria, Wilson Duff acknowledged the debt owed Koerner for the project funding and addressed Koerner's desire for the poles' display in Vancouver in a letter to Cyril Belshaw of the university's Department of Anthropology in April 1960. Duff states explicitly:

> The idea of preserving the old poles at the University was not part of the original agreement with the Kitwancool and is therefore not mentioned in the memoir. It was stated by Mr. Koerner, and in view of his contribution and our shortage of storage space, I agreed. I have carried on correspondence with Neil Harlow about a suitable place to put them (since I insist that they have proper indoor display space)...I shall hold on to the poles until it become clear whether or not our carving programme is to be continued....⁹⁹

Duff, for his part, did use the Gitanyow histories as the basis for a course, Anthropology 301 in 1970, after he had

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⁹⁸ See Duff, Histories, Territories.
⁹⁹ Wilson Duff to Cyril S. Belshaw, April 21, 1960, RBCM Duff Papers.
obtained a teaching position at UBC in the mid-1960s. His lecture notes tied the preservation committee's Gitanyow project with the continuing Gitanyow struggle to maintain their territories in the face of land expropriation, tracing the history back to the 1880s and placing their protest within a contemporary context.100 Duff understood the Gitanyow strategy of using the Euro-Canadian institutions, in this case Duff himself in his capacities as museum curator and university professor, to publish the case through the museum and disseminate it further through the university. "Are you learning?" he asked his students.101

100. Crosby argues that this contradicted his textual stance, which tends rather to refute indigenous authority and legitimize that of the state cultural institutions (see Crosby, Indian Art/Aboriginal Title, pp.61-64). This argument is based partly on Duff's later discussion of Northwest Coast art and, in particular, on his assertion that "...we don't have any way of 'knowing' what the...sculptures really 'meant' to their makers and users. We have not observed them in use, or known anybody who has. Nor do the present generation of Indian people, their more rightful inheritors, have any better way of knowing their deeper meanings. The best we can do is make surmises, based upon what we know from archaeology, ethnography, and mythology, upon parallels with other objects of better known use and meaning, and upon our own perceptions of the images themselves." (Wilson Duff, Images Stone B.C.: Thirty Centuries of Northwest Coast Indian Sculpture, Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1975, pp.14-15.) Others might argue that Duff's professional relationship with First Nations people evolved over his career to the point that he was actively collaborating as a representative of the museum with First Nations groups. George Clutesi wrote: "Wilson Duff encouraged all those who would listen by simply declaring that the Indian decline is over; that Indian leadership is indeed strengthening and that the present situation should not be used to judge either past Indian cultures or their capabilities for the future." (George Clutesi, "Wilson Duff:A Tribute," The World As Sharp as Knife, p.43.) Peter Williams also eulogized Duff on his death, stating on behalf of the Gitanyow people that "Professor Duff's honour and his faithful work will remain in our memory and go down in our history." (Peter Williams, "Tribute of The Kitwancool," Ibid, p.47.)

101. "Lecture Notes Anthropology 301, 1970," UBC MOA Archives
The three replicated poles included in the contract and the fourth collected and replicated later were re-erected and grouped together (figure 49). The completion of this phase of the project in 1961 coincided with, finally, the federal enfranchisement of First Nations. Breaking the virtual deadlock King and St. Laurent's Liberal Party had maintained over the federal government since the mid-1930s, Prime Minister John Diefenbaker and his Conservative Party had come to power in 1957 at the height of 'totem' fever in British Columbia and its enshrinement as a provincial symbol under the auspices of the provincial government. With rhetorical references to MacDonald's National Policy of almost a century earlier, Diefenbaker offered a program of northern development and 'unhyphenated Canadianism.' In addition to energy commissions and a federal interest in Arctic oil and gas, Diefenbaker took steps towards a more pluralistic Canada through introducing the Bill for the Recognition and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in 1960, an act which officially rejected discrimination by reason of race, colour, national origin, religion or sex. This led to another revision of the Indian Act, passed in 1961, which provided federal voting rights to First Nations individuals. The Charter of Rights also contributed to the elimination of racial discrimination as a major feature of Canada's immigration policy in early 1962. The era of assimilation, at least in theory, was officially over.  

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Duff Papers, Box 8, File 8-24.  
102 As Crosby points out, Canadian legislation coincided with the United Nation's General Assembly's "Declaration on the
post-war growth of the museum and the university and their role in promoting First Nations culture was part of the policy shift from assimilation to integration. In reality, it was a continuation of the depoliticization of First Nations objects and the enclaving of First Nations claims. On an optimistic note, in the face of persistent attempts at erasing or re-working the histories of subjugated classes in Canada, the people of Gitanyow, like Mungo Martin in his Wa'waditla house opening, demonstrated an ability to retake spaces within the system of government institutions in order to reiterate an oppositional discourse.

Summary

In 1954, public institutions expanded their activities around First Nations objects in British Columbia. Following the management models popular in the resources industries, the BCPM in particular became a site of renewal. Martin and the others replicated poles harvested through the Totem Pole Preservation Committee's salvage expeditions and the BCPM redistributed the copies to strategic tourist sites throughout the province, like Riley Park in Courtenay and the Peace Arch border crossing between White Rock and Blaine, Washington. Predicated on using

Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples" aimed at ending colonialism internationally. She further documents throughout her thesis a range of social inequities that continued despite Diefenbaker's public assertions to the contrary. Seen in this context, Crosby suggests, "[w]hile the federal vote would ostensibly provide registered Indians with equal opportunity and access to democratic process, it also provided the Canadian government with an ideal (abstract) international profile in terms of law and policy that did not exist in fact." (Crosby,
the objects of the past as the basis for contemporary production, this renewal cycle displaced the work of non-traditional artists, like that of Clutesi and Morgan, in the public eye. It also suggested that the museums were indeed resurrecting a lost art and implied the necessity of government paternalism in order to ensure artistic authenticity.

The notion that traditional meanings for totem poles were no longer important to the communities who owned the rights to the poles was disrupted on two different occasions. The first was at Ninstints when the Skidegate Council expressed its alarm at the Committee's proposed activities and Molly Stewart of Ketchikan questioned the right of the BCPM to remove Haida poles. The second, which ultimately required the most negotiation, was at Gitanyow and resulted in the publication of the Histories, Territories, and Laws of the Kitwancool (1959), an attempt to legitimize Gitanyow laws and legal title to land within an institution of the state at a time when the state distribution of timber licenses threatened Gitanyow territory. The Gitanyow cited the same complaints offered by the other Gitksan groups involved in the federally-sponsored preservation project of the 1920s: that the sale of the poles meant a denial of the privileges symbolized by them. Since the project offered the chance to re-erect quality copies and publish and disseminate information on Gitanyow laws and territories through a government organ, the proposal was eventually accepted.

The re-erection of the first four poles coincided with the

Indian Art/Aboriginal Title, p.47).
end of assimilation as an official policy in Canada. Four decades separated the Cranmer potlatch seizures from the publication of the laws of the Gitanyow. Within this span, First Nations objects played diverse roles in the various representations and counter-representations of First Nations culture. The conflict over control of this multiplicity of meaning, however, remained constant.
CONCLUSION

For many scholars, Franz Boas was "...the first to analyze Northwest Coast art systematically." Wayne Suttles and Aldona Jonaitis state that in his 1927 publication *Primitive Art*, Boas "...not only provided a key for recognizing the creatures portrayed in all but the most abstract ways,...he also provided alternatives to evolutionist theories of art development, described the psychological dimensions of artistic creativity, and proposed a reconstruction of art history on the Northwest Coast." Boas did not so much propose a reconstruction as define Northwest Coast objects as "art" for the first time academically. He thus contributed to the initial insertion of Northwest Coast masks, totem poles, and other textiles, carvings and paintings within the epistemological framework that informed Western practices of connoisseurship, curating and art history.

*Primitive Art* was the basis for the formalist analysis of later writers like Bill Holm, who popularized the discussion of northern Northwest Coast composition and formal design in the 1965 publication *Northwest Coast Indian Art: An Analysis of Form*.

Suttles and Jonaitis call *Northwest Coast Indian Art* "...a major advance beyond Boas's treatment..." and claim that "...Holm rediscovered the manner in which the northern two-dimensional style was rendered - the formline system - making it possible to recreate Northwest Coast art in traditional fashion." For this reason, *Northwest Coast Indian Art* has been

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2. Ibid.
3. Ibid, p.82.
4. Ibid.
called "[t]he single most influential book on Northwest Coast Indian art,...jokingly refer[red] to as 'the Bible.'"  

The growth of an informal commercial infrastructure for Northwest Coast objects coincided with Boas's fieldwork in British Columbia as early as the 1880s. Jonaitis has also recently demonstrated that *Primitive Art* was the culmination of over two decades of research and writing Boas had done about the Northwest Coast. However, Boas was not alone in his contention that the objects of the Northwest Coast deserved the appellation "art." Three years prior to Boas's publication of "The Decorative Art of the Indians of the North Pacific Coast" in 1897, which served as the basis for the sections on the Northwest Coast in *Primitive Art*, curio dealer John J. Hart had already strategically compared totem poles and other carved and painted objects to the "art" of ancient Egypt and other locales popularly understood by Europeans as part of their own past.

While Boas's understanding of Northwest Coast objects as art may have been in part stimulated by the curio dealers and their sales rhetoric, Holm's work was based on the accumulated curatorial labours of previous generations. Drawing on collections assembled by Boas and his contemporaries, Holm was preceded by four decades of museum programmes intended to communicate the aesthetic value of Northwest Coast visual culture.

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production. From the 1940s on, there was a concerted effort in British Columbia to develop a commercial market for Northwest Coast art through the use of objects from museum collections as the criteria for aesthetic judgment and product quality control. In 1990, Holm called *Northwest Coast Art: An Analysis of Form* "a turning point... which became the primer for the artists struggling for an understanding of their ancestors' art." This overstatement belied the continuing production of objects in First Nations communities and the institutional history of which Holm himself was a part.

Anthropologist Marjorie Halpin recently critiqued the Boasian paradigm for Northwest Coast art and the basis for post-World War II constructions of First Nations art. First, she argues that "...the Boasian Northwest Coast art discourse assumes that Native images are in-accurate attempts to re-present or double the reality of the natural world." Based on the Platonic or representationalist tradition of Western thought, Halpin suggests that the Boasian current in Northwest Coast art discourses "...has the effect of enhancing both the expertise of the scholar and the 'genius' of the artist." Second, she asserts that "...in contrast to the Boasian rule-based paradigm... Northwest Coast Native art is ambiguous, imaginative, unstable, poetic, endlessly variable, changing, and productive of the new, the unexpected."

Furthermore, the use of museum collections as the basis for

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10. Ibid.
a canon for contemporary objects led generations of scholars to reject visual production not conforming to what has come to be known as the “classic formline” design system. Halpin points to the periphery status of traditional Nuu-chah-nulth and Coast Salish objects within the Boasian paradigm.\textsuperscript{12} By using the visual vocabularies discussed specifically by Boas and later Holm, contemporary scholars have privileged, first, nineteenth century objects specifically from the central and northern coasts that reside now almost exclusively in museum collections and, second, the contemporary arts that are based stylistically on these models.

Joan Vastokas, summarizing the thrust of most of the texts on Northwest Coast object production prior to 1990, argued in 1977 that “[d]ecline in general quality as well as quantity may be attributed in large part to the loss of cultural meaning attached to the art works, since, for the most part, they came to serve no internal social purpose...”\textsuperscript{13} If this discursive trend is to be believed, the Northwest Coast peoples and their arts suffered from the 'fatal impact' of European colonialism.

“A 'fatal impact' has...been detected in European historiography far more frequently than it actually occurred,” counters anthropologist Nicholas Thomas, noting that extinction of “primitive” peoples have been reported worldwide. Thomas

\textsuperscript{11}. Ibid, p.6.
pinpoints one of the dangers of this construction: "Though generally sympathetic to the plight of the colonized, such perceptions frequently exaggerate colonial power, diminishing the extent to which colonial histories were shaped by indigenous resistance and accommodation."¹⁴ Such a construction undermines the recognition of resistance, but also contributes to the temporal distancing and enclosure of the achievements of colonized subjects as something of the past and not of the present.

The notion that indigenous traditions could no longer continue was at the heart of government policies of assimilation for First Nations peoples in the 1920s. The intersection between the concept of the 'fatal impact,' assimilationist policies, the government's exercise of disciplinary control, and the expansion of public museum collections was most explicitly illustrated in the 1922 Cranmer persecutions when the Lekwiltok of Quadra Island, the Mamalillikulla of Village Island and the Nimpkish of Alert Bay surrendered over seventeen cases of masks, dance paraphernalia and coppers to Indian Agent William Halliday in exchange for suspended sentences for violating the Indian Act's potlatch ban. The masks and dance accoutrements were assessed based on curio market prices and the Kwakwaka'wakw owners were awarded a total of $1456. No compensation was paid for the coppers. Halliday sold thirty-five pieces to American collector George Heye before displaying the rest in the Alert Bay church hall and then shipping them to the National Museum in Ottawa. In Ottawa, the head of ethnology, Edward Sapir, selected a number

¹⁴. Thomas, Colonialism's Culture, p.16.
for display in Deputy Superintendent Scott's Department of Indian Affairs office.

This sequence of events added urgency to the control over the meaning for Northwest Coast objects housed in increasing numbers in the American, European, and Canadian museums. It was a pivotal point in the public negotiation of the position of First Nations peoples in Canadian society and its national "culture." As Paul Connerton argues, "...the control of a society's memory largely conditions the hierarchy of power."\(^{15}\) By constructing a narrative of displacement in museum displays, the traditional roles of the totem poles, masks, coppers and dance gear in legitimizing lineage and individual uses of terrestrial and spiritual resources, and fixing relations of inheritance and hierarchy in material form were threatened. Displacement through display was a means of affirming governmental authority in the distribution and economic development of land and natural resources and was part of the larger strategy of transforming First Nations peoples into colonial subjects.

Within this general Anglo-Canadian ideological understanding of displacement, of social evolution from "primitive" to "modern," emerged display projects that were further conflicting. The history of institutional displays of Northwest Coast objects affirms Nicholas Thomas' notion that "...meanings engendered by hegemonic codes and narratives do not exist in hermetic domains but are placed at risk, re-valued and distorted through being enacted and experienced."\(^{16}\) Local institutions, for example,

\(^{15}\) Connerton, How Societies Remember, p.1.

\(^{16}\) Thomas, Colonialism's Culture, pp.4-5.
conflicted with the interests of federal institutions. In the Art, Historical and Scientific Association of Vancouver's (AHS AV) 1921 plan to promote an image of the city's progress by reconstructing a Kwakwaka'wakw village in Vancouver's Stanley Park, association members obtained poles without the consent of the Department of Indian Affairs. Their "incongruous appearance" in "public or private parks" was cited in governmental correspondence as justification for later federal intervention in the preservation of totem poles.\footnote{Charles Stewart to Arthur Conan Doyle, August 29, 1924, from Indian Affairs Black Series, Reel # C-10185, Volume 4086,} AHS AV also conflated ethnic divisions on the coast, utilizing Kwakwaka'wakw poles as metonyms for the coastal peoples in their entirety. In 1924, they then raised four free-standing Kwakwaka'wakw poles on a historic village site, XwayXway, claimed by the Squamish people. This provoked Squamish intervention and cut the project short of realizing its final objectives. It also raised the issue of Squamish claims to the park in the local media. The value of this attention was demonstrated by the purchase of land at XwayXway acknowledged by the court as belonging to a Squamish member popularly known as "Aunt Sally" for $15,500 in 1929.

By the 1920s, totem poles were popular tourist attractions on the Inside Passage steamship routes from Washington state to Alaska and were increasingly seen as metonymic symbols of Canada. The federal government hoped to utilize the poles' attraction to promote railway tourism on the newly nationalized Canadian National Railway (CNR) line through the Skeena River Valley in northwestern British Columbia beginning in 1924. To this end, a
committee was formed of members of the Department of Indian Affairs, the CNR, Canadian National Parks, the Ministry of Mines, and the National Museum to supervise the in situ preservation of poles in Gitxsan villages adjacent to the CNR line. Dogged by Gitxsan resistance and market gamesmanship over the prices of poles (in part provoked by the collecting activities of National Museum ethnologist Marius Barbeau), the project nonetheless sought to give the sensation of time travel in its construction of Gitxsan and Tsimshian life as part of the past. The Gitxsan in turn frequently refused to allow project members to touch their poles. Project correspondence explicitly cites the unsettled land question as one major impediment to cooperation.  

"A few years ago," wrote National Museum anthropologist Harlan Smith, summarizing Gitxsan uneasiness with the museum's activities, "[the white men] had prohibited the erection of totem-poles; why did they wish now to preserve them?"

Frustrated by Gitxsan resistance and unable to control the sale of poles to American museums and collectors, private commercial companies, and municipal parks, Deputy Superintendent Scott of Indian Affairs and Sapir's replacement at the National Museum, Diamond Jenness, drew up a 1926 amendment to the Indian Act to prevent tampering with any "Indian grave-house, carved grave-pole, totem pole, carved house-post or large rock embellished with paintings or carvings."  

A measure of the

File 507787.

19. Smith, "Restoration of Totem Poles."
20. Diamond Jenness to Duncan Campbell Scott, April 28, 1926; Duncan Campbell Scott to Diamond Jenness, April 26, 1926 and May 5, 1926, from Canadian Museum of Civilization, Sapir
value these "heritage" objects held for officials in Ottawa, the amendment complemented other Indian Act amendments of the period that sought to suppress the potlatch and limit the ability of First Nations to file land claims.

In conjunction with the preservation project, Barbeau and the National Museum along with curator Eric Brown and the National Gallery held the traveling 1927-28 exhibition, Exhibition of Canadian West Coast Art - Native and Modern in Ottawa, Toronto, and Montreal. The exhibit drew affinities between the paintings of First Nations subjects by Emily Carr, A. Y. Jackson, Langdon Kihn, and a number of other non-Native modernist artists and the "ancient" traditional arts of the Northwest Coast. Further entrenching First Nations artistic expression as something of Canada's past in the general public's imagination and constructing an evolutionary narrative culminating in the accomplishments of the modern, Euro-Canadian artistic community, the inclusion of two named First Nations artists, Frederick Alexie, who was still living, and Charles Edenshaw, who had passed away only seven years earlier, signaled a discursive instability. The inclusion of Alexie in particular legitimized the idea of contemporary First Nations production. It also provided the opportunity for a new category of producer: the living "Indian" artist.

However, federal museum and gallery activities on Pacific Coast collapsed with the global economy in 1929. The severe impact of the Great Depression began a transitional phase in the representation and promotion of Northwest Coast objects. Social
reformers, like Reverend George Raley in Vancouver and Alice Ravenhill in Victoria, advocated the systematic support of contemporary First Nations artists as a means of providing employment during the 1930s. The arts also became a focal point for organizations lobbying for changes to the Indian Act and the Department of Indian Affairs. "If it is an untrodden path we have to travel, - if there is the ghost of a chance of it leading somewhere, - we British pride ourselves upon the spirit of adventure..." wrote Raley in the early 1930s. "[S]urely with our knowledge now is a time we should make it manifest and break away from any past accepted notions and policies which have not led us to a satisfactory condition or as Tennyson says we should 'leap the rotten poles of prejudice' and do something new, adventuring in reviving primitive crafts for the welfare of our own primitive people."21 Raley modeled his proposals after similar developments in the United States under the Roosevelt presidential administration and the "New Deal" policy, but had little direct organizational impact because of his isolation from provincial authorities and the lack of funding available in the first half of the 1930s.

Raley represented as well a new attitude towards Northwest Coast objects, one that conformed to the narratives of the earlier displays, but that had a distinctive agenda. He also saw the objects as metonyms for the people who produced them and valued them partly because of the way in which he understood they contributed to "...our understanding of our own historical

21. George Raley, "Important Considerations Involved in the Treatise on 'Canadian Indian Art and Industries," n.d. (PABC
trajectory...," but he saw this metonymic value as the basis for their exchange value in a contemporary context. In this way, the art of the past was valuable in the present, as a contemporary production. He saw this connection between past and present as the basis for a commodity market in First Nations arts production and advocated the development of programmes that would create a demand through education and marketing and regulate production quality through training. These recommendations became important aspects of later, better-known marketing programmes sponsored by state institutions in the 1950s.

Ravenhill was more directly influential than Raley. She helped develop curriculum materials and training on First Nations issues for the public school system, in the process forming a growing partnership with the British Columbia Provincial Museum (BCPM). In 1939, Ravenhill founded the British Columbia Indian Arts and Welfare Society, which worked closely with the BCPM, holding exhibitions of student art and promoting a number of individual artists, including teenaged Gitxsan painter Judith Morgan, Nuu-chah-nulth writer, actor and painter George Clutesi, and Kwakwaka'wakw carver Ellen Neel.

The strategies of the BCIAWS were paternalistic as well. After the Second World War, they advocated "authenticity" as the basis for quality control in the burgeoning post-war "Indian art" market, suggesting that the museum establish the criteria and the BCIAWS issue a "stamp of authenticity" in order to regulate the fluctuating quality in objects available for sale. Control over

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knowledge, its distribution, and application would in this view rest with government officials and associated or government-recognized organizations, and certainly not with First Nations leaders or artists.

However, the BCIAWS complemented the individual and organized lobbying efforts of political organizations like the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia, who were also pressuring the provincial and federal governments to acknowledge and respond to First Nations issues in the 1930s and 1940s. In the variety of efforts for asserting indigenous histories and claims and affirming pride in First Nations accomplishments, art played a significant role. Since these arts can be perceived as acculturated, or objects resulting from social interaction between non-Native and Native societies, they do not comfortably fall within the Boasian paradigm. "One of the challenges of contemporary anthropology and art history," concludes Jonaitis, "is to seek understanding of the active and affirmative responses that cultures make to their historical conditions in the modern world, and to deconstruct consciously our past biases which blinded us to those Native initiatives."23

In 1936, Squamish member Mathias Joe carved the first freestanding Coast Salish pole as a way of publicizing the historical Squamish presence in Vancouver generally and Prospect Point (or "Chay-thoos) specifically. Located on a high point on the Stanley Park side of the entrance to Burrard Narrows, the Thunderbird Dynasty pole also overlooked the site of the new Lion's Gate Bridge connecting the city to the British Properties,
Guinness-owned subdivision developed in the late 1930s on land in proximity to the Capilano reserve. As the 1929 "Aunt Sally" case had demonstrated, any affirmation of historical presence could potentially contribute to valuable compensation.

The Native Brotherhood also carried on the practice of using art publicly as a symbol of a historical indigenous presence, thereby implying legitimacy to claims to land and aboriginal rights. They followed the earlier 1929 example of Captain Jack in Yuquot on Vancouver Island and presented the Governor-General of Canada with a pole and ceremonial name from Kwakwaka'wakw carver Mungo Martin. William Scow and the Brotherhood used art in educational contexts, presenting a pole carved by Kwakwaka'wakw carver and Martin's niece, Ellen Neel, to the Alma Mater Society of the University of British Columbia (UBC) in 1947. And George Clutesi, who exhibited his illusionary paintings with the BCIAWS and wrote articles for the Brotherhood's newspaper, The Native Voice, addressed First Nations youth, calling simultaneously for pride in heritage and professional training for greater participation in the control over First Nations education and health.

These efforts, Native and non-Native together, were important to pressuring the different levels of government at a time of state restructuring through parliamentary committees and commissions. George Manuel and Michael Postuns wrote in 1974: "Indians had always been complaining. Now there were sophisticated, organized urban voters, whose view of the matter may have been entirely different from ours, but who were, 

nonetheless, pointing at the same problems and the same administration."\(^{24}\) The movement culminated in the Conference on Native Indian Affairs at UBC in April 1948, where teacher and former BCIAWS member Anthony Walsh summarized the powerful role of art in the movement: "This group wouldn't be meeting today if it weren't for the art of the Indian. It has been the one approach for interpreting the culture of the Indian people to the public."\(^{25}\)

But here once again the direction this interpretation should take was an issue of conflict. At the same conference, Neel delivered a memorable speech in which she contradicted the notion that Northwest Coast art needed reviving: "For if our art is dead, then it is fit only to be mummified, packed into mortuary boxes and tucked away into museums."\(^{26}\) She also disagreed with the call for a reliance on the collections of the past. "[I]f the art of people is to take its rightful place alongside other Canadian art," she stated, "it must be a living medium of expression. We, the Indian artists must be allowed to create!"\(^{27}\)

Clutesi and the social reform movement were acknowledged in the first governmental steps back into the representation and promotion of First Nations arts in 1947 when seven of Clutesi's paintings were purchased in commemoration of the opening of UBC's Museum of Anthropology. In 1949, paintings by Judith Morgan were bought by the provincial government in commemoration of provincial enfranchisement. By the end of the 1940s, the

\(^{24}\) Manuel and Postuns, The Fourth World, p.129.
\(^{26}\) Ibid, p.12.
research phase of state restructuring had been completed and officials with the federal government began to implement a new vision of Canada, based in part on the Keynesian economics of Roosevelt's New Deal, but anxious as well to present a Canadian identity independent from its colonial past. Education and professional training, the expansion of a supportive government infrastructure, and the promotion of regional contributions to national "culture" all led to provincial programmes aimed at preserving "traditional" indigenous "culture" as a source of employment in the expanding Canadian economy. These programmes in turn led directly to the hiring of contemporary First Nations artists at public institutions in the province; first, Ellen Neel and then Mungo Martin at UBC, and then Mungo Martin, his son David, and Henry Hunt at the BCPM in Victoria.

By the early 1950s, there was an unprecedented excitement about totem poles in British Columbia. The totem pole was increasingly promoted in Euro-Canada as an abbreviated and encapsulating metonym for the province; their evocation of place and the "primitive" paradoxical counterpoints to the booming industrial expansion of post-war British Columbia. The mythical progress of history still informed the totem pole's symbolism for Euro-Canadians. With public officials openly expressing interest in a resurgence of First Nations 'arts and crafts' as a source of employment, the false and rather wishful suggestion that First Nations societies had expired could no longer be prolonged. The 'Vanishing American' myth clearly was not true demographically

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28. Duff, for example, reported 1963 population levels exceeding the 1885 census counts for the Haida, Tsimshian,
and the public acceptance of Neel and Martin suggested that it was not true artistically. The social reform movement and First Nations political associations made concerted efforts to ensure the public recognition of this through the media. Given the wealth of academic and popular literature attesting to the reality of the 'vanishing Indian' and its long-time acceptance by the Euro-Canadian public, the presence of Martin and the other carvers within the museums thus implied or were read as a rebirth of First Nations society within the arms of the new post-war Canadian state. In short, since state officials had told the Canadian public repeatedly that the First Nations people and their "culture" had disappeared, the only logical way of explaining the new institutional interest was to proclaim a renaissance.

Marcia Crosby argues that the decision to issue this proclamation was not so much a directional shift in government policy as it was a way of consolidating state authority and undermining the seemingly new political power of the 'pan-Indian' associations like the Native Brotherhood. "The position of anthropologists, art historians, curators, and the like was not simply one of supplying an academic analysis," writes Crosby, "but was linked to the authority of western expertise that

continues to be used in the courts of Canada both to establish and extinguish aboriginal land title."²⁹ While this may have been a view at least partly embraced by the new generation of museum anthropologists in the 1950s, it seems the relationship between Duff and his colleagues on one side and the Haida and Gitanyow on the other may have reshaped anthropology in British Columbia. Thomas Berger of the Supreme Court of Canada, for one, wrote: "Wilson Duff played an important role in the development of native claims in British Columbia and in Canada in the 1960s and 1970s [and]...was a key witness in two very important cases that were brought before the courts in support of aboriginal rights."³⁰ This initiative has recently been replicated in a number of high profile court cases related to land claims and aboriginal rights. The cohesiveness and sanctity of the western expertise Crosby describes was and is not secure.

Martin's participation became the basis for a carver training programme. Objects from the BCPM or totem poles salvaged cooperatively by UBC and the BCPM under the auspices of the Totem Pole Preservation Committee were models for replica poles, redistributed by the Committee to tourist sites throughout the province. Martin was constructed as the "last great totem pole carver" in museum promotional materials, responsible for the passing on of traditional carving skills through the museum to the next generation of carvers. This has given the impression that the museum was directly responsible for the continuation of the fragile art of monumental carving in British Columbia, an

²⁹. Crosby, Indian Art/Aboriginal Title, p.113.
impression disrupted in the Totem Pole Preservation Committee's programmes on two important occasions.

First, Mungo Martin and his kin demonstrated the continuing vitality of Kwakwaka'wakw potlatch practices in 1953, only two years after the dropping of the potlatch ban from the newly revised Indian Act. Commissioned to reconstruct a traditional house for the BCPM, Martin illustrated that despite the assimilationist intent of the Indian Act prior to its revision, Kwakwaka'wakw ways persisted. Despite the move towards professionalising First Nations art and emphasizing the academic expertise of institutional authorities, the knowledge of First Nations objects, their histories and functions, still thrived first in their communities of origin. The house was given a ceremonial name and celebrated with three consecutive nights of potlatching, first for Martin's family and invited guests, then for museum and public officials, and finally for the general public. Dan Cranmer's daughter, Gloria Cranmer Webster, retired director of the U'mista Cultural Centre in Alert Bay, states that Martin's Wa'waditla potlatch was the inspiration for the first public potlatch held in Alert Bay since the Cranmer prosecutions in 1963.31

Second, the Totem Pole Preservation Committee approached the Gitxsan community of Gitanyow (Kitwancool) for permission to remove poles for inclusion in the salvage and replication programme. The negotiations between curator Duff and the community illustrated the on-going conflicting understandings of

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why the poles were significant. Part of Duff's argument in
favour of their removal was that they were outstanding examples
of "primitive art." Gitanyow negotiator Albert Douse saw the sale
of poles as linked to the relinquishment of traditional
territories and stated that selling the poles would negate the
prestige associated with their original erection. The final
compromise saw the poles go to the Committee for "permanent
preservation," replication and then re-erection in Gitanyow. In
return, the Committee paid for the recording, transcription,
translation, and publication of Gitanyow histories, laws and
territories, which implied an official endorsement of the
legitimacy of Gitanyow claims. Furthermore, these laws and
histories were to be taught at university, which Duff later did
as an anthropology professor at UBC.

The removal of the first four Gitanyow poles coincided with
the end of assimilation as an official policy in Canada. The four
decades that separated the most intrusive attempt at
assimilation, namely the 1922 Cranmer potlatch prosecutions and
the 1961 federal enfranchisement had seen a growth in political
infrastructures and the implementation of a range of strategies
for asserting political agendas on both Native and non-Native
sides. Art played a significant role in many of these strategies
and articulated different historical perspectives according to
the context of display and the individuals and groups involved.
The conflict over control of this multiplicity of meaning,
however, remained constant.

The project of encouraging contemporary expression further
affected the discourse of Northwest Coast art in a number of
ways. One of the most important was the emphasis on individual artists. The potlatch ban had encouraged caution and distrust in many First Nations individuals. Since museum officials initially only professed interest in the past and lacked the financial and political backing of the government to support and promote the arts as a source of employment, individual First Nations arts practitioners had not been celebrated as individual artists with the same enthusiasm their Euro-Canadian counterparts received prior to the Second World War. Even Euro-Canadian artists felt isolated and unappreciated prior to the CAC brief to the Turgeon Committee, but it is unlikely that they would have been as quickly forgotten as Haida carver Mark Spence. Spence, as an example of the indifference faced by First Nations artists, was a Haida from New Masset commissioned in 1940 to carve entrance posts for the new Thunderbird Park in Victoria. The posts were replaced with carvings by Martin and Hunt in 1956 (figure 50). By the time the Spence posts were removed to the officers' mess at the Naden naval base in Esquimalt in 1963, Wilson Duff had no information on Spence, not even his name, save that he was "an old Haida Indian...living in Victoria."\(^{32}\) Now a photograph of Spence exists in the visual records department of the Royal British Columbia Museum. However, the negative for this has been transferred to either the Public Archives of British Columbia or the Vancouver Tourism Board, neither of which have any record of Spence in their computerized files. This says something of the low status allotted First Nations carvers prior to the 1950s.

\[^{32}\text{Wilson Duff to Cdr. J. W. McDowell, June 14, 1963, in RBCM Duff Files.}\]
Duff was not aware of Spence because the museum's mandate in 1940, the era of his predecessors, was not the promotion of individual artists. Information on Spence has consequently become difficult to find.

The emphasis on describing formal design systems and the achievements of individual artists in Euro-American terms contributed to a post-war tension between the discourses of anthropology and art history. An important discursive question is, to quote Wilson Duff, "whether they have the concept of art as art."33 Some objects do, as Halpin and many others note, "...have as their referents the beaches, rivers, mountains, and other properties whose ownership or transfer is being witnessed[,]" that "[w]hat you and I have labeled art not only is property, it is about property."34 While cognizant of the difficulties of applying Boas's and Holm's universalist, and wholly modernist, formal approaches to Northwest Coast objects, many artists have intentionally made objects to fit within non-Native categorizations of art. The paintings of George Clutesi and Judith Morgan are good examples and should not be dismissed as "inauthentic." To do so is to deny their resonance not only for the times in which they were produced but also for the vast network of kin relations through which property is inherited, asserted, and defended. With the growth in state intervention and industrial development, "fighting with property," as Helen Codere termed it in 1950,35 took on new meaning. The network and the

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35. Codere, Fighting With Property.
properties it contains had to be spoken about in new languages. Therefore, Joe adapted the Kwakwaka'wakw carving style to his 1936 multi-figure pole to reinforce a connection between monuments accepted and celebrated by non-Native Canadians and his claims to the Squamish ownership of park lands. This is also why Morgan and Clutesi may have appropriated European illusionistic painting techniques to the depiction of First Nations stories, as a way of updating the imagery and making it relevant to current issues. Since the legitimacy of the potlatch system was called into question with its legislative ban in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, First Nations people found it necessary to expand the audiences for their claims. The recognition and promotion of Northwest Coast visual production, its institutionalization as "art" in Canada's new public spaces, provided one avenue for doing so, an avenue in which individuals with such diverse interests and intentions as Clutesi, Morgan, Joe, Charlie James, the Martins, Hunt, Neel and a host of others all actively participated.

In response to the dismissal of objects that do not conform to the definitions of "classic" art proffered by the Boasian paradigm, I have offered a different narrative and a canon to illustrate it, arguing for an analysis of the political use of objects rather than aesthetic or authenticity judgements. This dissertation demonstrates the need for a more inclusive understanding of First Nations visual production as a method for examining the profound entanglement of First Nations and non-Native Canadian societies and the consequent range of meaning formulated around objects at specific historical moments in
specific contexts. Far from Duncan Campbell Scott's notion of "tales of ghosts that hang in the world like fading smoke," these objects and images and the ideas they represent continue to exert a strong influence in the world we share. Our motivation for discussing them should not be strictly promotional, nor to enact some sense of closure, but rather to understand the processes that inform the conflicting, and constantly shifting, discourses that speak through and around them.
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Appendix I: Chronology

1921: Potlatch hosted by Dan Cranmer held at Village Island

1922: Indian Agent William Halliday from the Kwawkewlth Agency charged participants in the Cranmer potlatch with violating the Indian Act.

The Lekwiltok of Quadra Island, the Mamalillikulla of Village Island, and the Nimpkish of Alert Bay agreed to an informal plea bargain and surrendered their coppers and dancing gear to Halliday in Alert Bay in return for suspended sentences. Halliday organized a display of this material in the Alert Bay church hall.

Halliday subsequently sold thirty-five pieces to American collector George Heye for $291 and received an official reprimand from his superiors for sending such valuable material to the United States.

Twenty-one potlatchers who had not agreed to the exchange were imprisoned at Oakalla Prison in Burnaby. Twenty served two month sentences. Charlie Hunt, on his second conviction, served six months. The Cranmer Potlatch has now come to epitomize the draconian enforcement of the federal potlatch ban during the period of assimilation.

1923: The Cranmer material was catalogued by ethnologist Edward Sapir of the National Museum of Canada and sent to the National Museum and the Royal Ontario Museum. A selection of masks was also put aside for display in the office of Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs Duncan Campbell Scott.

The Art, Historical and Scientific Association of Vancouver (AHSAV) acquired two freestanding crest poles from Alert Bay and two houseposts carved by Charlie James for Tsaweenok of Kingcombe Inlet. The association relocated them to Stanley Park in Vancouver as part of a plan to recreate an original First Nations village and a Hudson’s Bay Trading Post.

The first recorded sale of a Gitxsan totem pole from the upper Skeena Valley was to New York’s American Museum of Natural History.

1924: AHSAV expanded their plan for the touristic village in Stanley Park to include the possibility of buying and relocating the entire village of Alert Bay.

A federal Totem Pole Preservation Committee was formed of representatives of the Department of Indian Affairs, Ministry of Mines, Canadian National Parks, and the National Museum.

Funded by the Department of Indian Affairs and the Canadian National Railway, the committee’s preservation work began with National Museum ethnologist Marius Barbeau’s survey of totem
poles in Gitxsan villages adjacent to the Canadian National Railway line in the upper Skeena Valley.

1925: Protests by the Coast Salish Squamish people prevented AHSAV from continuing with their plans to reconstruct a First Nations village at Stanley Park's Lumberman's Arch site, previously a Squamish village site known as XwayXway.

1926: Wallis A. Olen of Clintonville, Wisconsin contacted Harlan Smith and then Diamond Jenness, Sapir's replacement at the National Museum, about the possibility of purchasing a totem pole.

Chief Seamadaks of Kitwanga attempted to sell a pole and ten masks to the North West Biscuit Company of Edmonton.

These two incidents alerted Jenness and Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs Scott to the need for protective government control over the sale of totem poles. Together Jenness and Scott drafted legislation that made it illegal to sell poles and other "heritage" objects without the permission of the Department of Indian Affairs.

1927: Canada's Silver Jubilee year.

A show of Canadian modernist paintings curated by National Gallery director Eric Brown opened at the Jeu de Paume museum in Paris and included a selection of Northwest Coast carvings and fabrics.

A domestic version of the Paris exhibition, entitled Canadian West Coast Exhibition Native and Modern, opened at the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa. It included paintings by Langdon Kihn, Emily Carr and A.Y. Jackson, traditional Northwest Coast carvings and textiles, and works by named First Nations artists Frederick Alexie and Charles Edenshaw. The inclusion of Alexie's paintings marked the first time a named, living First Nations artist had been exhibited at the National Gallery.

Marius Barbeau began collecting privately for other institutions, including the Royal Ontario Museum. His negotiations in the Nass River to purchase a pole for $1000 forced an increase in prices in Kitsegukla, where the Totem Pole Preservation Committee was negotiating to preserve poles in situ. The bidding war that Barbeau set off effectively ended the Totem Pole Preservation programme's success in eliciting the cooperation of Gitxsan residents.

Franz Boas published *Primitive Art*.

1928: The Canadian West Coast Exhibition Native and Modern opened in Toronto and Montreal.

The National Museum published Barbeau's *The Downfall of Temlraham*.

The Hoover Administration in the United States released the
Meriam Report, which called for a reform of the Native American education system.

1929: The Great Depression began.

Squamish resident of the XwayXway or Lumberman’s Arch site in Stanley Park, “Aunt Sally,” was the only resident able to establish a legal right to live in the park after parks authorities sought eviction notices to clean the park of “unwanted” residents. Her property was then purchased on behalf of the Parks Board by philanthropist W.C. Shelley for $15,500.

Chief Seamadaks of Kitwanga sold a pole to the Hudson’s Bay Company without the consent of the Department of Indian Affairs for $300. Seamadaks was assisted in the pole’s removal by an engineer with the Canadian National Railway assigned to the Totem Pole Preservation Committee, T. B. Campbell.

Governor-General Lord Willingdon traveled to the Nuu-chah-nulth community of Yuquot on the west coast of Vancouver Island. Chief Captain Jack presented Lord Willingdon with a rare free-standing monumental Nuu-chah-nulth crest pole. T. B. Campbell went to Yuquot to supervise the pole’s removal. After the costs for removing the pole to the Governor-General’s residence, Rideau Hall, in Ottawa proved prohibitive, Lord Willingdon ceremoniously returned the pole to the village of Yuquot for ‘safe-keeping.’

1931: Native Brotherhood of British Columbia founded.

1933: Democrat Franklin Delano Roosevelt was elected president of the United States on his influential New Deal policy platform.

Roosevelt appointed leading social reformer and campaigner for Native rights, John Collier, to the position of Commissioner of Indian Affairs

1934: The Roosevelt administration announced the repeal of the assimilationist 1887 Dawes Act with the Wheeler-Howard Indian Rights Bill, also known as the Indian Re-organization Act or the Indian New Deal. One objective of the bill was to promote Native American culture in the United States.

Vancouver resident and collector of Northwest Coast art, Reverend George Raley, began campaigning for a First Nations arts programme supported by the federal government.

While initially negotiating to sell his collection to George Heye, Raley sold his collection to the city of Vancouver through local businessman, Victor Spencer. This collection later served as the basis for Vancouver’s two important museums, the Vancouver Museum and the University of British Columbia’s Museum of Anthropology.

The Provincial Museum obtained a Carnegie Fund grant to finance public lectures run by Alice Ravenhill.
1935: The Bureau of Indian Affairs in the United States created the Indian Arts and Crafts Board to promote Native American art.

1936: The Vancouver Golden Jubilee Committee commissioned a free-standing monumental crest pole by Squamish carver Mathias Joe and erected it at Prospect Point in Stanley Park. They also erected three older, anonymous poles at the Lumberman’s Arch site.

1938: The Provincial Museum published Alice Ravenhill’s *The Native Tribes of British Columbia* primarily for use in the province’s grade schools.

1939: The Indian Arts and Crafts Board sponsored the exhibition of Native American objects as fine art at the Golden Gate Exposition in San Francisco. The exhibition was curated by Indian Arts and Crafts Board General Manager Rene d’Hanoncourt and Denver Art Museum Curator Frederic Douglas.

The Second World War began.

Victoria resident and educational reformer, Alice Ravenhill, founded the British Columbia Indian Arts and Welfare Society (BCIAWS), which simultaneously campaigned for the reform of the Indian Act, First Nations education and government-supported social programmes while advocating the promotion of First Nations arts as a source of employment.

1940: The Provincial Museum opened Thunderbird Park, an open air totem pole park in the heart of downtown Victoria.

1941: D’Hanoncourt and Douglas organized the influential *Indian Art of the United States* exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

The British Columbia Indian Arts and Welfare Society published *The Tale of the Nativity* and *Meet Mr. Coyote*.

1942: The BCIAWS submitted a brief to the Department of Indian Affairs entitled: *Suggestions on the Encouragement of Arts and Crafts in the Indian Schools of British Columbia*.

The Native Brotherhood of British Columbia amalgamated with the Pacific Coast Fishermen’s Association.

1943: An annual exhibition of First Nations student art at the Provincial Museum in Victoria began. It sometimes included as well the work of mature artists like George Clutesi and Ellen Neel.

The Okanagan Society for the Revival of Indian Arts and Crafts submitted a brief to the federal Committee on Reconstruction and Re-establishment entitled *Native Canadians: A Plan for the Rehabilitation of Indians*. 
1944: The Provincial Museum published Alice Ravenhill's *A Cornerstone of Canadian Culture: An Outline of the Arts and Crafts of the Indian Tribes of British Columbia* "...to provide teachers and students with a record of former tribal decorative arts and crafts which have possibilities of further development and utilization in modern life."

1945: The Second World War ended.

The Native Brotherhood of British Columbia incorporated itself under the British Columbia Societies Act.

1946: The Native Brotherhood of British Columbia commissioned a pole from carver Mungo Martin for presentation to the Governor-General Viscount Alexander at the Kitsilano Indian Village as part of the city's Diamond Jubilee celebrations.

The Native Brotherhood of British Columbia launched its own newspaper, *The Native Voice*.

Federal government created a Canadian citizenship distinct from British subject status for the first time in the passing of the Canadian Citizenship Act.

1946-49: The federal government appointed the Special Joint Committee on Revision of Indian Act.

The federal government selected the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia as the sole representative of British Columbian First Nations.

1947: Harry Hawthorn became the first anthropologist hired at the University of British Columbia.

University of British Columbia (UBC) president and Massey Commissioner Norman Mackenzie appointed a committee to purchase totem poles for UBC. The committee contracted Marius Barbeau and Arthur Price to purchase eight freestanding poles and a house post.

The Native Brotherhood of British Columbia proclaimed the provincial government illegal in not allowing First Nations people to vote.

Federal laws prohibiting Asian immigration and banning Asian-Canadian voting rights were over-turned.

At a collegiate football game, William Scow, president of the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia, presented the Alma Mater Society of the University of British Columbia with a monumental pole carved by Ellen Neel. This presentation was part of a ceremony legitimizing the university sports teams' use of the moniker Thunderbirds.

UBC/BCIAWS co-sponsored a conference on Native Indian Affairs. Ellen Neel delivered the keynote address in the section on the arts.

Josephine Godman prepared a formal marketing strategy for First Nations arts for the BCIAWS.

Hunter Lewis, UBC English professor and national president of the Federation of Canadian Artists, undertook a 6 week research trip along the B.C. coast under a grant from the University Research Committee. He called for government cooperation in pole restoration and copying.

The university hired Mungo Martin to restore the Barbeau poles for re-erection in UBC Totem Pole Park.

In commemoration of the opening of the university’s Museum of Anthropology, UBC bought seven paintings by George Clutesi.

1949: The federal government established the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (Massey Commission) to chart the post-war government role in the promotion and support of post-secondary education, research and the arts in Canada. Its final report was released in 1951.

First Nations peoples won provincial enfranchisement and participated in a provincial election for the first time. From this point on, the provincial government, primarily through the Provincial Museum, but with the cooperation of UBC, dominated the promotion of First Nations arts in the 1950s.

Nisga’a chief Frank Calder, formerly secretary of the Greenville branch of the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia and president of the Nishga Tribal Council, was elected the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) member of the Legislative Assembly for the Atlin riding.

In celebration of provincial enfranchisement, the provincial government purchased five paintings by the young Gitxsan artist Judith Morgan.

BC Packers made inquiries into purchasing Haida crest poles for removal to BC Packers Plants.

Forester H. R. Macmillan was similarly interested in acquiring old crest poles. The UBC President's committee contacted Macmillan for financial/logistical help in recovering and restoring crest poles.

The provincial government announced that "both the Provincial and Federal Governments were interested in the advancement of Indian crafts, not only to preserve their culture, but also to help the natives make a livelihood."

Wilson Duff of the Provincial Museum and Hawthorn of UBC traveled
on an ethnographic survey of the Nass and Skeena valleys.

The Provincial Museum began its "Anthropology in B.C." publication series.


The Massey Commission called on Hawthorn to prepare a report on the status of First Nations arts in Canada.

The Totem-Land Society was launched, adopting the Thunderbird totem pole as its insignia and the slogan 'totem land' to advertise the province. Totem-Land Society officers included Premier Johnson, the attorney-general, the mayor of Vancouver, the Minister of Trade and Industry, William Scow, and the Commissioner of the Victoria and Island Publicity Bureau.

Mayor Thompson of Vancouver gave an Ellen Neel pole to the mayor of Sydney on promotional visit to Australia.

UBC's Totem Pole Park opened in October.

1951: A revised Indian Act that dropped the prohibitions of the potlatch and land claim activities was passed in Parliament.

The Massey Commission released its recommendations, including a need for "arm's length" government funding of both First Nations and mainstream Canadian artistic production.

A totem pole insignia was added to B.C.'s automobile license plates.

1952: W. A. C. Bennett and the Social Credit party began twenty years of government in British Columbia. This administration sought to expand the province's physical infrastructure through large-scale construction projects and to encourage multinational investment in forestry and mining.

Education Minister and Provincial Secretary W.T. Straith announced a totem pole preservation program in the provincial legislature. The plan included totem pole carving taught by Martin through the Ministry of Education in a workshop in Thunderbird Park. Cedar was provided by H. R. Macmillan.

Martin began working on restoration of poles at Thunderbird Park. His wife gave daily weaving demonstrations during the summer.

Duff and University of Washington graduate student George A. Cheney travel to the Gixsan totem pole villages in the upper Skeena to study poles and examine potential problems in preserving them.

1953: Wa'waditla completed and opened in Thunderbird Park with the first open, public potlatch since the Cranmer prosecutions. The event was hosted by Martin.
1954: The joint provincial Totem Pole Preservation Committee formed. The committee immediately purchased and removed six poles from the Haida villages of Skedans and Tanu; 3 each went to the Provincial Museum and UBC.

The poles were reproduced by Martin and his apprentices for erection in Thunderbird Park.

Henry Hunt was hired as apprentice carver.

1955: Funded by H.R. Macmillan, the Preservation Committee surveyed Kwakwaka'wakw villages on the central coast.

Financial restrictions meant the carvers were laid off from December 15 until the beginning of the following fiscal year.

1956: Financed by Macmillan, the Preservation Committee removed 14 poles from the Kwakwaka'wakw villages surveyed in the previous year.

The Preservation Committee also surveyed the Haida village of Ninstints on Anthony Island in Haida Gwaii.

Duff arranged for the carving of the "world's largest totem pole" through a local newspaper to keep Martin and his helpers at work in Victoria during the winter.

Bill Reid spent ten days replicating poles salvaged from Ninstints with Martin in Victoria.

Under "a special financial arrangement," the carvers carved a pair of poles for the entrance to Riley Park in Courtenay. This was the beginning of the project expanding pole copies to areas outside the museum. They also completed poles at the Pacific National Exhibition in Vancouver and at the Tourist Bureau office at Peace Arch park Canada/United States border crossing.

1957: The Preservation Committee removed eleven poles from Ninstints.

Martin and his helpers began work on the centennial pole for presentation to Queen Elizabeth.

Godfrey Hunt was brought on as another apprentice carver.

John Diefenbaker elected Prime Minister of Canada.

The Canada Council was established.

Bill Reid and Doug Cranmer were hired by UBC to reconstruct a Haida village on the university campus.

Martin and his helpers completed the 100 foot pole presented to the Queen. A copy was erected in Vancouver at the site of the St. Roch.

The Preservation Committee removed three poles from Gitanyow in an agreement that resulted in the publication of the Histories, Territories, and Laws of the Kitwancool the following year.

Martin and Hunt carved an eight foot pole for the Canadian Tourist Association Convention in Quebec City.

1960: Diefenbaker administration passed the Bill for the Recognition and Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms in Parliament, an act which official rejected discrimination by reason of race, colour, national origin, religion or sex.

1961: A revised Indian Act that gave First Nations peoples federal voting rights was passed in Parliament.

The fourth pole from Gitanyow was removed for replication in Victoria.
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The two Charlie James houseposts flank the freestanding poles at Lumberman’s Arch in Stanley Park, Vancouver. (CVA ST.PK.P.196, N.284)
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Figure 40  Replica Skedans pole carved by Mungo Martin and Bill Reid at the White Rock-Blaine border crossing. (RBCM PN 15850)
Figure 41  Bill Reid and Doug Cranmer, UBC, 1957. (UBC MOA)
Figure 42    Replica Haida village by Reid and Cranmer,
UBC. (UBC MOA)
Figure 43  

Ha-ne-lal-gag pole, Gitanyow, ca. 1958. (RBCM PN 7031)
Figure 44  Ha-ne-lal-gag, Gitanyow. (RBCM PN 7103)
Figure 45  Detail of *Ha-ne-lal-gag*, Gitanyow. (RBCM PN 7086)
Figure 46  The two Wolf poles, Gitanyow. (RBCM PN 3995)
Figure 47  The Nee-gamks pole, Gitanyow. (RBCM PN 7075)
Figure 48  A replica of the Nee-gamks pole, Victoria.  
(RBCM PN 15840)
Figure 49  The four poles replicated for Gitanyow, ca. 1961.  
(RBCM PN 12985-3)
Figure 50  The Thunderbird Park sign posts by Mungo Martin.  
(BC Archives and Records Service Photo #I-21002)
Figure 51  Map of Northwest Coast groups and communities. (from Peter Macnair, Robert Joseph, and Bruce Grenville, Down from the Shimmering Sky: Masks of the Northwest Coast, Vancouver and Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre 1998, p.13.)