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The institutionalization of art within two internal colonies a comparative study of the Inuit and Navajo.

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THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF ART WITHIN TWO INTERNAL COLONIES: 
A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE INUIT AND THE NAVAJO

by

Kathleen Anne Cross M'Closkey

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research through the Department of Sociology and Anthropology in Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Social Science at the University of Windsor

Windsor, Ontario, Canada

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ABSTRACT

THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF ART WITHIN TWO INTERNAL COLONIES: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE INUIT AND THE NAVAJO

by

Kathleen Anne Cross McCluskey

This thesis explores the idea that the art/craft distinction plays a dominant but little understood role concerning the perception and subsequent exploitation of items produced by native peoples. The growth and development of weaving as an "art" form and marketable commodity is surveyed in two indigenous Fourth World societies: the Inuit of northern Canada and the Navajo of the southwestern United States. Both groups currently share similar characteristics regarding social conditions including a marginal environment, high unemployment, and difficulty maintaining a traditional lifestyle due to factors outside their control. Economic and aesthetic subservience came about in both societies during colonization. The rise of capitalism with its profit rationale coupled with the genesis of the art/craft distinction during the Renaissance have played a dual role in the global manipulation of native hand-made production.

In his Critique of Judgement, philosopher and aesthetician Immanuel Kant postulated an absolute opposition between labour and art. Only "play" (art) acted as mediator to reconcile the formal dichotomy between mind/body, reason and emotion. Kant's dualism is an extension
of the division of mental and manual labour originating in Greek philosophy — a preserve of intellectuals for intellectuals. Reconciliation of the dichotomy (via art) is itself an intellectual process. The primacy of visual values intrinsic to Western art history and aesthetics has conditioned anthropologists' appreciation of non-Western 'artifacts.' Artistic activity was denied to indigenous peoples because they did not work within the fine arts medium as narrowly defined by aestheticians. Native artisans have recently achieved recognition as artists only when they began producing in media recognized as fine arts by Western standards.

The impact of Kant's dualism in association with the rise of capitalism is examined in relation to the organization of production among the Inuit (as artists) and the Navajo (as craftswomen). Ethnographic evidence from the southwest United States and the Arctic is surveyed to elicit information pertaining to an inherent paradox: the emergence of editioned textiles as fine art from a hinterland area in which the "tradition" is less than twenty years old. The aesthetic subservience intrinsic to the Arctic producers provides a dramatic contrast to the economic subservience borne by Navajo weavers. Traders marketed Navajo weaving by the pound for nearly a century. Many textiles woven during this period currently sell to collectors for thousands of dollars. Navajo weavers suffer dual exploitation: as female producers from a hinterland area working in a craft medium, and from competition engendered by hundreds of textiles woven by their ancestors. Thus the art/craft distinction remains an implicit aspect of our colonial heritage.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Many people have contributed to the development of the ideas presented in this thesis. Special tribute goes to my committee chairman, Dr. Ham Hedges, for his patience, insight and constructive criticism through all phases of thesis preparation. Dr. Barry Adam rendered invaluable assistance in many areas, especially concerning the essential revision of Chapter I. The ideas presented in this thesis would be insufficiently explored without their suggestions.

Dr. John Jacobs offered useful suggestions which were subsequently incorporated in Chapter III. Helpful comments on an earlier draft were provided by Professor Veronica Mogorody. Diana Kulisek edited a portion of Chapter I, and early discussion with Marge Lawrence helped crystallize my thoughts concerning the production of Inuit art.

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Finally, I owe a vote of thanks to my family (especially my husband Bob), for their patience, understanding, and resigned acceptance of our typewriter as a permanent fixture on the diningroom table.
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INTRODUCTION

This thesis highlights the growth and development of weaving as an "art" form and marketable commodity among two indigenous Fourth World societies: the Inuit of northern Canada and the Navajo of the southwestern United States. Both groups currently share similar characteristics regarding social conditions including a marginal environment, high unemployment, and difficulty maintaining a traditional lifestyle due to factors outside their control. Economic and aesthetic subservience came about in both societies during colonization. The rise of capitalism with its profit rationale coupled with the genesis of the art/craft distinction during the Renaissance have played a dual role in the global manipulation of native hand-made production.

According to recent work by ethnohistorians (see Axtell 1981; Berkhofer 1979; and Jennings 1975), the Indian epitomized antithesis of the European gentleman: lacking "parliament" he had no government, lacking Christianity, he had no religion, without currency he had no economy, without paint and sculpture he had no art. The art/craft distinction emerged in Europe during the time that Europeans were colonizing the rest of the world. The eventual development of the discipline of Western aesthetics, focusing on the study of beauty, is an outgrowth of this distinction. Only beauty as expressed within painting and sculpture (based on Greek realism) became worthy of study and praise. Artistic activity was denied to indigenous peoples because they did not work within the fine arts medium as narrowly defined by aestheticians. Native artisans have
achieved recognition as artists only when they began producing in media recognized as fine arts by Western standards. This is a very recent phenomena, occurring within the last fifty years. The division between arts and crafts is a Western phenomenon. Non-Western peoples including Oriental societies have not created this distinction. It has played a critical but little-understood role in the perception and subsequent exploitation of items produced by native peoples.

Artistic imperialism, in which western art is placed in a privileged position and the art of other cultures is since it is treated not by art history but by anthropology or ethnology (Parker and Pollock 1981:15), precluded an appreciation of and coloured the judgement of the colonizing forces. Fine art was juxtaposed to craft—art was everything that craft was not: cerebral, creative, intellectual, individual, non-utilitarian, and European. Crafts were repetitious, mundane, inexpensive and functional. Kant's dictum "the necessary cannot be judged beautiful but only right or consistent" (Kubler 1962:16), severed the appreciation of good design as necessary for both art and craft. For nearly three centuries, European fine art tradition stood as the apex of human achievement. Its position was legitimized and reinforced by the upper classes. Eventually the elevation of aesthetics as a branch of philosophy signaled the "kiss of death" for crafts. Under the guise of Western aesthetics, artistic imperialism overshadowed the silent and unrecognized transformation when native production became overwhelmed by colonial
merchants. Capitalism was the means by which the value of indigenous goods was extracted, and the art/craft distinction served to legitimize it. The assumption that fine art encompasses few media, the emphasis on formal drawing, and the institutionalization of art in Europe during a critical period, all provided justification for dismissing native creativity. The economic activities of colonial merchants interested only in profits, served to crush the exercise of collective expression among non-Western peoples.

Underdevelopment

In order to appreciate fully the extent of the economic exploitation, I will utilize the concept of underdevelopment devised by Andre Gunder Frank and others in examining the extraction of hand-made items, especially weaving, as renewable resources in the Arctic and the southwestern United States. Today both the Inuit and the Navajo are referred to as "Fourth World" peoples, marginal societies occupying their ancestral lands encompassed by world powers. Like their Third World counterparts, uneven exchange has occurred over centuries. In his model, Frank focuses on the relationship of groups in societies, especially the interrelations of societies within world structures. A few metropolitan centres govern, hinder, and distort the development of a rather large number of 'satellite' economies situated in the hinterlands. As a result of their involvement in a world capitalist economy, hinterland regions undergo a process of "underdevelopment." This
process involves a flow of commodities and capital out of the region and the transformation of economic and social organizations to facilitate this movement. Frank's paradigm has suffered criticism for a number of reasons. Laclau (O'Brien 1975:27) criticizes Frank for using a market-oriented definition of capitalism rather than one based on a mode of production. Jan Roxborough (1979) states that Frank's model is a) deficient since it explores only spatial relations (the metropole/hinterland dyad), and not the organization of production or relations of production, and b) too generalized since it assumes that all of Latin America is capitalist. The relations of production in much of Latin America are non-capitalist, but exploitation occurs under various types of production. Frank's approach has spawned much research (Booth 1975:51) and provides a useful vehicle for my investigation into the nature of underdevelopment in two Fourth World societies. The information contained in this thesis addresses that process within two indigenous societies and its articulation with the development of the art/craft distinction in the West.

In order to comprehend the impact of capitalism on native creativity, the organization of artistic production in pre- and post-contact periods will be examined for both the Inuit and the Navajo. In many native societies, weavers continue to own the means of production even today. Weaving is a labour intensive activity. The extraction of textiles from hinterland areas as finished products coupled with the expansion of merchant capital greatly
accelerated the underdevelopment of many textile-producing regions. Merchants maintained a virtual monopoly on the amount of money or goods (primarily perishables) that were exchanged for textile products. The fact that weavers continued to own the means of production greatly simplified the trader's role; he consistently reaped the benefits of this unequal relationship. In general, traders had no capital invested in weaving per se, yet they controlled the amount of goods exchanged and access to distant markets (Bernstein 1982, Lamphere 1976).

The visible aspect of the underdevelopment process is manifest in the unequal native/trader relationship which has been discussed in the literature. The hidden aspect concerns the decrease in creative input regarding the production of hand-made items. The economic aspect can be understood without reference to the hidden, aesthetic aspect, but the reverse is not possible. One must understand the dynamics of the capitalist marketplace and the necessity for channeling creative effort to attract the targeted market. Both the Navajo and the Inuit situations provide fertile ground for such an examination. Terms such as "arts of acculturation" mask the restrictive nature of much art production. For many native societies the transformation of native creativity and subsequent aesthetic subservience (reflected in the division of labour), remains tragically irreversible. The emphasis on particular aspects of hand-made work echoes their position in Western history. Writers
on Indian art emphasize the technical aspects of basketry, pottery or weaving (Pericot-Garcia 1967). These media are considered to be functional, and this aspect remains the overriding factor when it is discussed in the literature. In contrast, native painting, sculptures and prints are discussed in a manner identical to that used by art critics—the emphasis is on symbolism and artistry.

Sculpture and printmaking recently introduced in the Arctic are currently marketed as art, whereas the textiles produced by Navajo weavers were extracted from the reservation as craft (functional rugs) and sold by weight for nearly a century. Organization of production among the Navajo remained virtually unaffected by the traders' appearance; but the eventual use of the textiles by an outside market changed dramatically. Although weaving does not play a dominant role in Inuit art production, it provides a useful and intriguing comparison concerning the application of the art/craft distinction and how it has channeled the public's perception of hand-made items since it emerged. Today the Inuit are probably the only minority in the Western hemisphere to benefit economically from the art/craft distinction. The position of Inuit artists producing within a highly organized marketing structure provides an intriguing contrast to the Navajo. Prior to colonization the Inuit carved small amulets in ivory, bone or wood. After the Hudson Bay organized a trade network in the North, hunters occasionally traded these small pieces for supplies. The current art phenomenon emerged after 1948, and today the
organization of all Arctic workshops including those producing
prints and weaving, involves a division of labour which greatly
curtails individual expression. Because the entire art phenomenon
was introduced by outsiders who brought their own conceptions of art
it can be argued that the whole 'aesthetic aspect' of Inuit
production has been imposed. The introduction of govern-
ment funded cooperatives and workshops provided the infrastructure
to dominate and control the production of Inuit art.

Many publications extoll the development and triumph of the
fine arts in Europe. Another large body of work concerns the impact
of industrialization on craftsmanship. But the twin themes
concerning the extraction of hand-made items as renewable resources
coupled with the impact of aesthetic subservience remains to be
explored. An examination of the escalation of the fine arts
phenomenon in Europe associated with the demotion of the
craftperson's status (particularly as it affected women), is
essential in order to understand the impact that the art/craft
distinction has had on the perception and subsequent exploitation
of native work.

Scholars debate the development of capitalism in Europe and its
intrusion into other sectors (Frank 1967; Roxborough 1979;
Wallerstein 1979). A similar case is suggested for the art/craft
distinction. Although not fully developed by the time that Columbus
"discovered" America, it was emerging and coloured the attitude of
the colonizers for centuries regarding native production. Berkofer
(1976), Wolf (1982); and others have documented the ethnocentric
attitude of Europeans. The art/craft distinction remains another example of the extensive disregard and retarded global appreciation of native hand-made production. The art/craft distinction perpetuates the (intellectual) superiority of art (done by men) over the (manual) inferiority of craft (produced by women and minorities).

Three major questions are addressed in the following chapters:

1. In terms of creative expression, a blank warp and a blank canvas are analogous; why has the one been elevated to the status of fine art and the other trivialized and demoted to craft in Western history?

2. Many textiles woven by indigenous groups centuries ago are today viewed as "art" and avidly purchased by dealers and collectors. Yet when these items were originally produced they were treated as renewable resources and sold by the pound. Given the nature of the art/craft distinction and its location historically, what role did it play in regard to the perception of native work by the colonizing forces and how did a portion of it come to be redefined as art?

3. The weaving tradition currently extant in the Arctic is less than 15 years old, yet the tapestries produced by a handful of women are marketed as "fine art." Given the position of the Inuit as a Fourth World society, and the historical position of weaving, how does one explain this recent success?
Chapter I presents an overview of the origin and development of the art/craft distinction in Europe at the beginning of the Renaissance and the eventual institutionalization of art as reflected in the organization of the Art Academies. This development reflects the continued opposition between mental and manual labour that originated in Greek philosophy (Sohn-Rethel 1977:66). Classical aestheticians have focused on beauty in fine art and its non-utilitarian nature. Recent critiques concerning the ideological nature of the construction of art history and aesthetics are reviewed regarding the relevance of this research to "crafts" including native hand-made production.

Chapter II concerns the early history of the Navajo, the importance of weaving in Navajo society and the impact of traders on the indigenous markets. The expansion of the railroad as reflected in the growth of the Fred Harvey Company, facilitated the commodification of weaving. The final portion of Chapter II concerns the inimical aspects of modern trading practices and the continued importance of weaving for Navajo self-esteem.

Chapter III concerns the genesis of the recent art phenomenon in the Arctic with emphasis on the organization of its production and the similarities and differences inherent in that production as compared to the Navajo situation. The role of the cooperatives in modern Inuit communities, the impact of policies initiated by various government agencies and the publications concerning various aspects of Inuit art are reviewed. The last portion of Chapter III
focuses on the organization of the only weaving workshop in the
Arctic, located in Pangnirtung on Baffin Island.

The Conclusions summarize the historical impact of the
art/craft distinction on both groups, and the paradox inherent in
the social division of labour in all Arctic workshops even those in
which "art" is produced.

Methodology and Personal History

My interest in this area has grown over the past ten years
for several reasons. As a weaver, I am familiar with the looms,
materials, and techniques used in both the southwest and the
Arctic. Weaving for the most part occupies a nebulous zone in
today's art market. Old rare pieces are revered as art and sought
after by collectors. Contemporary ethnic weaving, when exhibited, is
displayed in "folk art" galleries or ethnic museums. Only a small
percentage of contemporary weaving would be exhibited in an art
gallery as art, especially contemporary weaving by a minority group.
I became intrigued with the differences evident in the growth and
development of the "tradition" in both the Arctic and the southwest.
Although the art/craft distinction is blurring somewhat in certain
art circles today, generally it has not been reflected in the
marketing of weaving from the hinterlands. For this reason the
Arctic situation is highly exceptional. Tapestries produced by
Pangnirtung weavers are marketed as "art" and displayed as wall
hangings, whereas weaving produced by the Navajo was marketed by the
pound for nearly a century. The Navajo weaver was completely
responsible for the entire production, including executing the design from her head. As a weaver, recognizing the importance of design as the key element in any art work regardless of media, I was struck by the contradictions evident in the production of weaving from both areas. I felt that terminology played an important role concerning how these items were perceived by the general public. Research into the origin and development of the art/craft distinction provided a foundation for my subsequent investigation of the impact of that distinction on work produced by non-Western peoples. Few people question the distinction between "art" and "craft." It is taken as a given, embedded within our cultural matrix, but as my research demonstrates, that distinction has had a catastrophic impact on work produced by people such as the Navajo. In terms of creative expression, there really is little difference between a blank warp and a blank canvas, but the one has been elevated to the status of fine art in the West, and the other trivialized and demeaned. I have woven on a Navajo-style loom, and I recognize the tremendous hurdles that must be overcome in designing a textile without a drawing, one that is properly balanced, colour-coordinated and symmetrical - one that meets with the many criteria concerning the principles of good design. After examining several hundred textiles in ethnographic museums and private collections, I was greatly impressed with the range and depth of skill and aesthetic competence reflected in the work by Navajo women. Weaving Navajo-style on an upright loom presents a number of challenges that floor-loom weavers never encounter. Very
few Anglo weavers ever bother to do this, but I felt it was mandatory that I understand the complete process, and by weaving three 'Navajo' style textiles, I gained an understanding of the process and an appreciation for the abilities of these nameless talented women.

My research regarding the impact of the art/craft distinction on weaving produced by both groups involved archival and field investigations in both the Arctic and the southwestern United States. Nearly six weeks were spent on Baffin Island (September 1981 and September 1982), interviewing administrators with the Office of Economic Development (OED) and workshop managers, and doing library research in Frobisher Bay. As the administrative centre for the Eastern Arctic, government personnel in Frobisher Bay formulate economic and social policies that affect the native population. Archives containing information on the growth and development of the co-operatives are located at the OED. Two field trips to Pangnirtung, an Arctic hamlet located 300 km. north of Frobisher Bay, resulted in additional interviews with government employees. Interviews were held with workshop managers at the print-shop located within the co-op, the Misivik, or sewing centre, and especially the weave shop. Discussions concerning the socio-economic impact of the workshops on the community were held with the mangers. Informal discussions concerning the co-ops and the workshops took place with the local OED administrator, several elementary school teachers and Anglican Church personnel. Daily
visits to the weaver shop familiarized me with the social division of labour and I spoke with several of the weavers through an interpreter.

The research undertaken in the southwestern United States during the summers of 1981 and 1982, consisted primarily of archival work at the Museum of Northern Arizona, which contains extensive reference material on all native peoples occupying the Colorado Plateau area, including the Navajo. The most revealing material concerning the economics of Navajo weaving is located at the Special Collections Library, University of Arizona, Tucson. This library has recently catalogued 80 years of documents, ledgers and correspondence donated by the Lorenzo Hubbell family concerning his trading empire. As the most powerful trader on the Navajo reservation, Hubbell actively influenced the growth and development of Navajo commerce from 1885-1930, which his sons continued after his death. Extensive correspondence between Hubbell and executives of the Fred Harvey Company reveal their attitude toward the Navajo and their role as primary producers of functional items, especially weaving.
CHAPTER 1

THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ART/CRAFT DISTINCTION IN EUROPE DURING THE RENAISSANCE

Introduction

The increasing intellectualization of the production of art in Europe during the Renaissance parallels the ascendency of intellectual over manual labour originating in Greek philosophy. However, the bifurcation of mental and manual labour did not extend to the production of art until the Renaissance. The Greek term for "art" (and its Latin equivalent) did not denote the "Fine Arts" but was applied to all kinds of human activity which could be classified as crafts or science. Painting and sculpture were two of the imitative arts, a distinct group within the larger class of "arts" which included sophistry and magic tricks (Kristeller 1951:504).

During the Middle Ages, painting and sculpture were classified as mechanical arts and the concept of art paralleled that of the ancients -- art was teachable. But the intellectual/manual bifurcation was incipient regarding the organization of the medieval guilds because painters were responsible for designing everything since they alone were trained in drawing skills. After the formation of the Art Academies during the
Renaissance (headed by nobility), art became a commodity and speculative asset. The development of aesthetics as a branch of philosophy further legitimized the intellectualization of art in Western thought. The diminution of craft at this time was extended to the attitude Europeans held toward non-Western artifacts (Greenhalgh, 1978).

Recent critiques by feminist art historians have located the art/craft dichotomy historically and furthered the dismantling of fine arts as the ultimate in creativity (Parker and Pollock 1981). Crafts suffered a dual punishment, first because they were equated with manual/functional activities and needs juxtaposed to art, which symbolized the intellectual and non-utilitarian and, secondly, because craftsperson's status was further diminished when a major portion of manual activity was replaced by machines. In the West, "artistic literacy" (the ability to draw and design) formed the focal point of the artist's training, but it also provided the mechanism for dictating to others what would be produced.

The following chapter demonstrates that the art/craft distinction has played a dominant role concerning the perception and subsequent exploitation of items produced by native peoples globally.
The Genesis of the Art/Craft Distinction

The intellectualization and institutionalization of art, juxtaposed with the diminution of craft during the Renaissance, reflect the continued opposition between mental and manual labour that originated in Greek philosophy (Sohn-Rethel 1978:66). In his treatise explicating the origins of this division (between intellectual and manual labour), Sohn-Rethel (1977:103) theorizes that the development of mathematics, a purely intellectual activity initiated by the Greeks, grew to be an unbridgeable dividing-line between mental and manual labour in the West. He notes that the great Renaissance craftsmen of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries lacked a key qualification—they had no training in mathematics. Only painters, because of the increasing importance of perspective, were taught mathematical concepts. Renaissance painters, through their studies of perspective, laid the foundations of projective geometry in math, mapmaking and draftsmanship used by architects and engineers (Mathematics and Civilization 1977:1445).

In his treatise on art, disseminated during the 16th century, DaVinci defined painting as a science by emphasizing its close relationship to math (Kristeller 1951:514). He likened the painter to the Creator, for
he was able to reproduce on canvas what God had created on earth (Clark 1967:74-5). The concept of the artist as “genius” developed during the Renaissance, and differs substantially from the view that a craftsman, using only technical ability, executes the designs of either a patron or artist. Hence fine art becomes primarily an intellectual exercise whereas the essence of craft production resides in the technical excellence of the completed piece. This demarcation between art and craft coincides with the birth of modern capitalism and the emergence of art as a commodity and speculative asset (Hauser 1965).

The Egalitarian Guilds

Artisan guilds functioned as viable institutions in Europe for more than 500 years (1100–1700). They were powerful organizations for they controlled entrance into and progress through the trades. No distinction was made regarding the technical ability of those working in different media (i.e., painters were not recognized as having more talent than scabbard makers). All guilds required a compulsory period of apprenticeship which, regardless of medium, began around age twelve. European tradition dictated that the painter design everything because he alone was capable of “designare” — the ability to draw, compose and create. Painters spent
years perfecting their ability to imitate nature and to reproduce the classical ideal in statuary and paintings inspired by the Greeks and Romans (Hauser 1965, Kristeller 1951, and Pevsner 1940). During the Renaissance the ability to "designare" increasingly emphasized a thorough knowledge of architecture, geometry, perspective, arithmetic and anatomy (Pevsner 1940:84). These subjects were taught only to painters and sculptors. Burdened by guild restrictions, painters and sculptors severed their association with the guilds and joined the Art Academies beginning in the mid-sixteenth century (Kristeller 1952:54). An Art Academy member held a social position higher than his former guild colleagues. An artist would not be worthy of universal recognition if he were to remain a craftsman (Pevsner 1940:137; Wittkower 1963).

The institutional separation of art from craft reflects the duality concerning mental and manual labour enshrined in Western thought. Although the Greeks initiated the separation of intellectual from manual labour, they did not perceive it in relation to art. Painting and sculpture involved manual labour only. Poetry and music were esteemed by the Greeks, presumably because they were purely intellectual (Kristeller 1951:504).
The Weavers

The results of the institutional separation of art and craft are apparent in examining the diminution of the weavers' status. Tapestry weaving was a widely practised activity across Europe during the Middle Ages and Renaissance (Candee 1935). Prior to the fifteenth century, master tapestry weavers had a great deal of autonomy, for they were free to design and choose the colours for the background of all commissioned tapestries. Usually, a painter drew the main figures on the "cartoon." During the Renaissance, master weavers began to lose their autonomy and eventually their ability to design. Every aspect of a tapestry was rendered in minute detail by a painter; all design and colour were provided. If a painter's rendering could not be copied in the usual tapestry techniques, he was summoned, the problem explained and he made the necessary changes in the cartoon (Ackerman 1933:104).

Weaving as a profession degenerated to the point where even orphans and prisoners were hired to weave if they had a shred of manual dexterity. By the end of the eighteenth century, the weaver was simply a pair of hands.

Pevsner (1940:244) notes that when craftsmen were given drawing lessons, they consisted primarily of
copying designs produced by painters. "The tendency was evident to deprive the craftsman of all creative work."

Ultimately this led to degeneration in applied art standards. Artists gave no thought to the designs churned out for craftsmen to produce. Academicians were too concerned with overseeing the production of fine art to take an interest in craft (Peusner, 1940:245).

By the late eighteenth century the accelerating forces of mechanization coupled with the demotion of craftsmen to robot-like repetition precipitated a crisis. Trade schools were overburdened in trying to accommodate to structural changes brought on by industrialization, and no guilds existed to uphold previous standards (Peusner, 1940:245-6). Peusner summarizes:

No authority watched workmanship, the early development of machine industry completed the destruction of the crafts. Machines were invented to imitate what had been the dignity of handwork; speed was the only standard that counted.

The history of craft in Europe from the end of the eighteenth century is the history of loss of status, atomization of work, de-skilling, degeneration of working environment, regimentation and intense competition which ensured the lowest prices for owners of productive means and less than living wages for the
workers. Case histories in Landes (1966), Thompson (1968), and Yeo and Thompson (1971) document the thousands of people working at debased rates as outworkers. The phrase "the decline of the handloom weavers" masks a great tragedy since textile production was the staple industry of the Industrial Revolution (Thompson 1968:343). More than 800,000 people were wholly dependent upon weaving by 1834 in Britain. The beginning of the industrial revolution first multiplied bandworkers with the invention of the spinning-jenny which flooded the market with tons of extra yarn.

Dispossessed peasants took up weaving shortly before the invention of the power loom which subsequently decreased the need for thousands of weavers. Technical innovation and the superabundance of cheap labor greatly weakened the worker's position (Thompson 1968:345). Mayhew (Yeo and Thompson 1971:291) demonstrates that under-pay makes for over-work and for less work for everyone. Little is known about the unskilled workers for they had no unions and no representation in Parliament. Nearly every technological innovation during the Industrial Revolution displaced adult skilled labor. There is no doubt that textile production as with all other practical "crafts" was little respected as a vocation by the general public. As an avocation (the gentlewoman and her
needlework) it was acceptable. This was the background upon which native textile production was viewed. Ultimately handweavers could be perceived as participating in an archaic process compared to powerloom weavers. During this period of the proletarianization of craftpersons, artists rebelled against the rigid training of the art academies. The younger artists or "Romantics" criticized the "mechanical" attitude in art which emphasized the construction of a totality with perfectly drawn parts. Romanticism in art stressed the importance of the senses, the emotions and nature over rationalism and classical form.

The emergence of this movement coincides with the increasing importance of aesthetics, the study of beauty and the standards of value in judging beauty, especially in art. Although Romanticism stressed the primacy of emotion in art, its intellectual foundation was secured, and the division between intellectual artists and manual craftsmen became enshrined when aesthetics was elevated to a branch of philosophy.

Aesthetics

The modern discipline of aesthetics reinforced the art/craft distinction, since it focused on beauty as expressed in non-utilitarian objects. Abbe Batteaux codified the modern system of the fine arts in his
treatise published in 1746 (Kristeller 1952:20). He
divided the five fine arts of painting, sculpture and
architecture (the visual arts) and poetry and music
(including dance) from the mechanical arts. The
principle common to all arts involved the "imitation of
beautiful nature." By the beginning of the nineteenth
century a number of influential German philosophers
including Goethe, Hegel and Kant had written or
published important treatises on aesthetics.

Many aestheticians have tried to demonstrate the
continuity from the classical period to the development
of beauty and aesthetics in the West, by interpreting
the Greeks' feelings about art. Since Kant, aesthetics
has occupied a permanent place among the major philosop-
hical disciplines, and the core of the system of the
fine arts fixed in the early nineteenth century has been
accepted as a matter of course by most later writers on
the subject (Kristeller 1952:42-3).²

According to Sohn-Rethel (1977:7), Kant and many of
his contemporaries "presented the division of head and
hand as a transcendental necessity." In his Critique of
Judgement, Kant postulated an absolute opposition
between labour and art. He saw labour as a forced,
unpleasant activity. Art, on the other hand, was "pro-
duction through freedom." Only "play" (art) could act
as mediator to reconcile the formal dichotomy between mind/body, reason and emotion. Otherwise, the two impulses were irreconcilable. In contrast, Marx viewed art and labour as different manifestations of the creative essence of man. The dualism presented by Kant remains a faithful reflection of the realities of modern capitalism (Sohn-Rethel 1977:15). "The philosophical tradition inherited by Kant and his contemporaries is itself a production of the division between mental and manual labour originating in Greek philosophy—a preserve of intellectuals for intellectuals. The reconciliation of the dichotomy (via art) is itself an intellectual process."

The field of aesthetics in relation to the visual arts emphasized the subjective impression that a work of art produced on the observer. Art was observed and preserved. Art was perceived as the highest form of one's expressive ability (Podro 1972:81). Artists seldom wrote about aesthetics and consequently the creative act involving the conceptualization and subsequent production of a work of art was neglected, or it was only considered in relation to painting and sculpture.

As recently as 1967, aesthetics in the classical tradition reinforced the notion that the highest achievements in the arts were only accessible to a small
elite of connoisseurs and professional artists (Earl of Listowel 1967:20). In his book Modern Aesthetics, An Historical Introduction, the Earl of Listowel reveals the positive values of modern art by contrasting them with primitive art. He claims that ethnologists and anthropologists have provided information from which the following conclusions may be drawn: a) all primitive art is dominated by severely practical motives; b) monotonous repetition of the same themes displays a lack of imagination and inventiveness on the part of the primitive artists; c) primitive art is a result of a communal effort and d) it can be compared to the play activity of children.

For three hundred years the medium has dictated what has constituted art. All of the artifacts shipped back from the New World had no affect whatsoever on European art (Greenhaigh 1978). During the nineteenth century, Indians may have appeared as subjects in paintings, but New World artifacts made no impact on the fine arts produced in Europe or America -- they were mere curiosities. During this time museums were established which housed masses of material usually divided into three categories: art, history and science. Art collections were confined to European cultures and those historically antecedent to them (Vaillant 1939:1). Because everything native people produced seemed to have
a function, their artifacts were automatically excluded from the category of art, since according to Kant's dictum, "the necessary cannot be judged beautiful, but only right or consistent" (Kubler 1962:16).

Not until the academic tradition of European art was rejected by artists in the early twentieth century did aestheticians and art critics begin to explore the "art-forms" of the so-called "primitive cultures." The African masks and wood carvings had a revolutionary effect on European artists such as Picasso, and revitalized their art; at the same time they became less significant in their own realm due to the influence of technological civilization. This expansive attitude toward "primitive art" is summarized by Henry Moore (1957:xxxvi):

"primitive art makes a straightforward statement, its primary concern is with the elemental, and its simplicity comes from direct and strong feelings. The most striking quality common to all primitive art is its intense vitality. It is something made by people with a direct and immediate response to life."

The anthropologist Edmund Carpenter responds to Moore's comment (Williams 1983):

"such statements are wrong. No matter how naked a people, no matter how tormented their situation, no one lives an 'elemental', 'simple', 'direct', 'immediate', life. People everywhere are pattern-makers and pattern perceivers, they live in symbolic worlds of their own creation."
Moore's comments seem complimentary to the primitive's artistic ability, since he views art as a 'universal continuous activity' undivided by past and present, but he recognizes their art as represented only within their sculpture and painting traditions. More importantly, he perceives their talent as due to a combination of technical ability and instinct (Moore 1957:xxxvii). Therefore, this inborn ability does not reflect a conscious manipulation of materials resulting from past experience and so necessary for the emergence of genuine creativity. Instead, it is an elemental means of expressing powerful beliefs, hopes and fears. Moore's statement reflects the attitude of many of his contemporaries concerned with art and art history: the fact that African wood carvings were the first type of primitive "art" to influence artists and affect Westerners is not a coincidence, for they readily conformed to the Western art category of "sculpture."

Art History, Aesthetics and Anthropology

Although there has been an avoidance of philosophy by anthropologists who deal with art (Cordwell 1979:40), they have availed themselves of the categories and definitions that have been applied by aestheticians which have shaped interpretation and "understanding" and consequently influenced the perception of native art by Westerners. A common tendency in the literature of
anthropology concerning art is that the processes of art are obscured by an emphasis upon the formal products and their value as a source of information (i.e., African masks and wood carvings). Until twenty years ago, museum-based research continued to focus on documentation and stylistic comparison (Schapiro 1953). But the use of style mimics the use of techniques developed by art historians -- it's a taxonomic category that classifies rather than explains.

Clifford Geertz (1983:98) expresses the futility of utilizing classical aesthetics as a research tool:

the approach to art from the side of western aesthetics from any sort of prior formalism, blinds us to the very existence of the data upon which a comparative understanding of it could be built. And we are left, as we used to be in studies of totemism, caste, or bridewealth -- and still are in structuralist ones -- with an externalized conception of the phenomenon supposedly under intense inspection but actually not even in our line of sight.

The fundamental acceptance in Western philosophy of the formal dichotomy between mind and body reflects the ascendancy of the visual over other senses. One of the most fundamental divisions in anthropology concerns the separation between literate and non-literate peoples. Literacy (including mathematics) is a major hallmark of civilization. Edmund Carpenter (1970:n p) notes:

When a dominant sense comes into play, the other senses become junk. Visual values become the mark of civilized man. Literacy ushered man
into the world of the divided sense. Sight is the only sense that offers detachment. This detachment gave literate man enormous power over his environment, but led to a corresponding unwillingness to get involved.

The primacy of visual values associated with artistic imperialism inherent in Western art history and aesthetics have shaped and conditioned anthropologists’ appreciation of non-Western artifacts. Until recently, textiles have been collected by museum personnel as anthropological remnants of the past. Oversized books depicting “Indian Arts” have appeared in the last thirty years, but textiles are often ignored. In his book Prehistoric and Primitive Art, Luis Pericot-Garcia notes (1967:190):

The North American Indian’s most distinctive arts are those which are traditional to all are those which are traditional to all great Western civilizations; sculpture, painting, and architecture. His contribution to each of these branches of expression was strong...the Indian was also a superb craftsman or technologist in such decorative or utilitarian mediums as weaving, basketry, ceramics, and tool or weapon making.

His distinction represents an unconscious capitulation to the Western art/craft dichotomy. Only sculpture, painting and architecture are means of expression. Basketry and weaving involve technological expertise divorced from expressive and artistic intent.

Textiles as an art form have been ignored by nearly all anthropologists, archaeologists, aestheticians and
art critics who could not reconcile the inclusion of functional textiles as fine art. Yet in non-Western societies, the individual who wove the textile almost always designed it. The exception would occur in a highly stratified society such as the Incas in which a class of weavers produced textiles designed by a master weaver for royalty. Nearly all weaving techniques currently in use today were practised in prehistoric times by various societies. Textile production in one form or another was practically a global phenomenon—surely the antithesis of the production of rare art. According to the archaeologist and textile expert Junius Bird (1963:47):

Peruvian textiles provide a sequence of structural design spanning over four thousand years. There is abundant material containing many variations of nearly all textile techniques... it precedes all other known artistic endeavors in all other fields including ceramics, metals, wood and stone.

Bird is an archaeologist who speaks of art as "something we could live without yet do not choose to do so, it is a thing of the spirit."

Anthropologists working among textile-producing societies, or archaeologists working with old materials, seldom realized the complexity of construction of woven pieces because they lacked an intimate working knowledge of weaving. They often lumped a variety of techniques together under a common heading, not recognizing the
diversity of textile production represented within one
culture. Or they emphasized the traditional role that
textiles played in a particular society. Textile pat-
terns were usually seen as conservative elements in
simple societies, i.e., patterns, colours and techniques
rarely deviated from those produced in the past. Often
the changes could be subtle and easily missed by an
individual unfamiliar with weaving techniques. Terms
such as "primitive" have been applied to the looms and
techniques used by pre-historic and contemporary non-
literate societies. The term carries a pejorative tone,
yet only an individual lacking knowledge of weaving
technology would use the term "primitive." Much weaving
of non-literate peoples requires a unique combination
and coordination of conceptual and manual skills, espec-
ially since neither drawings nor other preliminaries
are created before weaving begins. Bird (1963:50) also
notes:

It is worth pointing out that when precise re-
sults are desired it is necessary to count the number of
yarns or yarn turns in each unit. This has been
done from earliest times to the present day. The
same is true in the more complex structural products.
It thus seems possible that counting, beyond the
minimal figures used by non-fabric producing primitive
peoples, developed as a result of early artists' efforts
in the textile field.

Bird discusses how fabrics have been used as artistic
expressions for thousands of years, that they are more
than simply functional and "the recognition of art in textiles is perhaps obscured by the great volume of past and present production" (Bird 1963:49).

Critique of Aesthetics and Significance for Craft

The most abrasive and cogent critique of the philosophy of aesthetics and the construction of traditional art history has emerged recently from the sociologist, Janet Wolff (Aesthetics and the Sociology of Art 1983), and Rozika Parker and Griselda Pollock (Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology 1981). The latter authors note the pervasiveness of "western artistic imperialism" in which Western art is placed in a privileged position and the art of other cultures is dismissed since it is treated not by art history, but by ethnography or anthropology. They note (1981:157):

Art is neither pure nor neutral. It is an ideological practice secured with power structures—institutions which work to exclude certain artists and art forms.

Traditional art history has reproduced the ideologies of Western society and hence shaped and limited the very picture of the history of art (Parker and Pollock 1981:45):

myths about creativity and the limiting, distorting way art historians write about the past have deep roots in our social structure and ideologies.

The authors note that the art/craft division can be read
on class lines, and that the sex of the maker was an
important factor too; (Men became artists, women merely
artisans or craftspeople). 5

Feminist anthropologists (Leacock, Mariotti, Rohrlich-
Leavitt and Schoepf), have focused on the status of
women in pre-class egalitarian societies. The slighting
of the social and economic roles of indigenous women by
androcentric anthropologists parallels the consignment
of "crafts" produced in non-European societies. Such
items were trivialized because they were produced for
functional purposes by individuals untrained in institu-
tions—such production was seen as mundane and simple.

Just as Parker and Pollock provide an enlightened
critique of the ideology of art history which had posi-
tive consequences for the (male) artist and catastrophic
consequences for women and craftspersons, so Janet Wolff
provides a corresponding critique of the field of
aesthetics. Most aestheticians with the exception of
those in the Marxist camp, fail to recognize the supra-
historical nature of their discipline. Hauser (1965),
Hadjinicoluau (1973) and Williams (1958, 1961) have
helped to demystify art by exposing the myth of the
artist as genius since they demonstrate the historical
particularity of both art and artist and the
ideologies and interests implicated in the production
and assessment of the arts. Wolff (1983:16) comments:

"Aesthetics can take no reassurance from criticism that the 'great tradition' is really great. The great tradition is the product of the history of art, the history of art history, and the history of art criticism, each of which, in its turn is the social history of groups, power relations, institutions, and established practices and conventions. To the extent that aesthetics itself accepts the false and the universalizing claims of traditional criticism, its very project is thrown open to question."

The French writer Pierre Bourdieu (1980) has demonstrated that differentiation of taste is intimately connected with social and cultural power relations. He reveals how the dominant theories of art in Western society reinforce the social division of society by being part of the 'cultural capital' deployed by the intellectuals of the dominant class to emphasize the distinction between itself and the dominated class......

"The very possibility of the aesthetic disposition as 'disinterested' and separated from practical concerns, depends on the privileged conditions of the dominant class which secures it (Bourdieu 1980:40).

The following pages demonstrate that the art/craft distinction remains a dominant way of categorizing handmade objects. In addition, the bifurcation of mental versus manual labour epitomized in Kantian aesthetics 'legitimized' the economic exploitation of native
peoples globally. Anthropologists have worked within the framework of this conceptual dualism. Thus the deterioration in quality which occurred in post-contact situations when indigenous trade networks were disrupted or destroyed by colonial merchants failed to trigger a response by anthropologists and others because natives produced only functional "crafts." Descriptions of native "crafts" by anthropologists substituted for a fundamental understanding of the conceptual processes involved in their production. Influenced by Western philosophical tradition, anthropologists' intellectual endeavors superseded the necessity of learning even the 'rudiments' of manual production. Recognition of the necessary interrelation between head and hands as the critical component concerning handmade production was obscured by the weight of art history, aesthetics and the structural components concerning the organization of art and craft production in the West. The bifurcation between intellectual and manual labour is deeply embedded in Western history. Indeed, it has its origins in the earliest speculations of Greek philosophers.
FOOTNOTES

1. Pevsner (1940:205-6) summarizes: 'It seems a strange whim of history that all those denunciations—trade, not-art; compulsion; not-freedom; routine, not genius—which the first academicians and their forerunners had poured out over the guilds were now heaped on the academies. For the second time in the history of European art, the artists condemned his ancestors and his native soil in order to obtain full emancipation. He had first denounced the relation of art to craft; he now also parted with service to the State, the ruling class, the public in general—and the last roots connecting his work with actual needs were cut. Proud of his feat, no forebodings made him see its pernicious effects, from which we are still suffering today.'

2. Kristeller (1951:506) comments: 'A number of scattered notions (regarding aesthetics).... that exercised a lasting influence down to modern times but had to be carefully selected, taken out of their context, rearranged, reemphasized, and reinterpreted or misinterpreted before they could be utilized as building materials for aesthetic systems. We have to admit the conclusion, distasteful to many historians of aesthetics but grudgingly admitted by most of them, that ancient writers and thinkers, though confronted with excellent works of art and quite susceptible to their charm, were neither able nor eager to detach the aesthetic quality of these works from their intellectual, moral, religious and practical function or content, or to use such an aesthetic quality as a standard for grouping the fine arts together or for making them the subject of a comprehensive philosophical interpretation.'

3. The work of genius on account of its originality and complexity the style of contemporary art on account of its obscurity and abstraction, have widened the gulf that separates the artist from the ordinary man. Primitive art is as essentially an anonymous and social product as the art of ancient Greece or modern Europe is the product of the vision of individual artists. It belongs as exclusively to the people as modern art does to a cultural elite (Earl of Listowel 1967:172).
4. Anthony Forge (1973:xv) comments: "purely stylistic studies have so far failed to find any new theoretical framework. They seem often to be concerned with reducing the material on primitive art to the terms made familiar by art historians in western European civilization, by using categories such as sculpture, masks, painting, etc., as if these were automatically the categories which all artists must use.

5. Crafts were described in the nineteenth century as being manually dexterous, decorative and intellectually demanding. They note the decreasing importance of needlework as an art form. Both monks and nuns practiced needlework in the Middle Ages. "Embroidery was one of a number of arts and crafts which all served the same function: the glorification of the ruling institutions, church, monarchy and the nobility" (Parker and Pollock 1981:59). Crucial changes occurred in needlework production which ultimately led to the degeneration of the medium as a recognized art form. Eventually, only women practiced needlework and it was only recognized as an art form when it copied fine art prints and oil paintings and was exhibited as framed pictures."
CHAPTER II

THE NAVADO

Introduction

The first portion of Chapter II presents a short summary of early Navajo history including the impact of Anglo-American policies as carried out by Indian agents and the disruptive effect of trading posts to indigenous exchange on the newly-created reservation. Bureau of Indian Affairs policies involved regulations that facilitated trading, grazing and ultimately mineral monopolies by non-native interests. Prior to the advent of trading posts during the 1880's, Navajo textiles formed the basis of inter- and intra-tribal barter. Once trading commenced, as independent commodity producers the Navajo provided a far greater percentage of their support than other reservation Indians, which decreased the financial responsibility of the BIA. The building of the railroad made it possible for traders to funnel Navajo textiles, hides and wool to distant markets. Lamphere (1976:9) notes that the BIA through its agents:

in institutionalized a system of internal political control and supported the establishment of schools and missions while at the same time assuring that local business interests (e.g., traders) had access to Navajo purchasing power and goods and that the railroad, ranchers and mining interests were not impeded.

The little industrial development that has occurred on the reservation has benefited private enterprise more than the Indians. The development of coal and gas reserves illustrates the way in which the Navajo reservation is still an exploited sector of a
satellite economy in the service of the expanding metropolis. The government position aided business in expanding the metropolis at the expense of rural satellite areas (Lamphere 1976:14). This parallels the role of the Canadian government in "taming" the North in the mid-twentieth century. Today manufactured goods produced outside the colonies are sold at inflated prices. A new colonialism, which relies on technologically-oriented resource extraction run by multi-national corporations has been active in the southwest and increasingly threatens the North (Davis and Zannis 1973:Ch.4).

Berkhofer (1979:191) notes that American politics and leadership operate within limits imposed by white attitudes and government. This statement could certainly include the production of "art" in both areas. Although the United States government has been minimally involved in the "production" of southwest Indian art, in contrast to the Artic situation, there are obvious parallels because of the relationship of the colonized natives in both areas to the metropoles. The most important distinction relative to the production of art concerns the differences between the organization of production in both areas. From the inception of weaving among the Navajo, nearly all weavers have continued to own the means of production associated with creating a Navajo textile. In contrast, the Canadian government controls the means of production via loans and grants to co-ops and workshops employing Inuit to create Inuit art.

The treatment of the Navajo blanket or rug as a functional commodity extracted for nearly a century from a hinterland area
accelerated the underdevelopment of the reservation economy. Although the Navajo borrowed the loom and weaving tools from the Pueblo Indians during the seventeenth century, weaving was a fully integrated tradition in Navajo culture nearly a century before the traders appeared; weaving was part of the cycle of life for Navajo women. Since religious sanctions were not applied to the weaving tradition, weavers freely borrowed motifs, expanded their colour palettes, and incorporated new design elements. The appearance of the traders rapidly incorporated the weavers as commodity producers of functional rugs. Expansion of textile production in the form of rugs shipped to distant markets increasingly bound weavers to individual traders and their posts. Large accounts were drawn against weavers' production, thus assuring a continuing supply of rugs while destroying their bargaining position. For nearly 80 years, the vast number of rugs were marketed by the pound. Since these were not "raw resources" but finished products often involving hundreds of hours of work, the extraction of surplus was intense. By 1950, the acceptance of rugs at many posts had become "an unavoidable nuisance" (Adams 1963:172) — a dramatic contrast from their importance in the early years of this century. But because Navajo weavers continued to own the means of production and weave at home (often many miles from the nearest post), they continued to maintain a great deal of artistic control over the textiles they produced. This artistic control was periodically noted by both traders and authors, yet its importance was trivialized, because weaving was only a "craft." The involvement of Navajo weavers as independent
commodity producers, and their weaver/trader relationship is best exemplified by the information contained in the Hubbell papers. As scion of Navajo commerce for more than forty years, Lorenzo Hubbell controlled a major portion of Navajo trade, especially during the years in which rug weaving was at its height.

Current marketing practices offer a number of options for Navajo weavers. Many trading posts continue to purchase rugs, and the Navajo have had their own native-run guilds for forty years. Several ethnographic museums in the southwest sponsor annual Indian arts and craft shows. A small percentage of weavers are recognized "artists" and sell only to select museums and galleries. Weavers may sell direct to the public (less 10%) at the quarterly rug auctions held at Crownpoint, New Mexico. These options provide a graphic contrast to the marketing constraints placed upon Inuit art producers in the North (Chapter III).

Early History

The Navajo Indians, the largest indigenous group in North America, currently occupy an 18 million acre reservation in the southwest United States. Approximately 150,000 Navajo share an area diverse in geographical features but agriculturally unproductive.

Overgrazing remains a serious and chronic problem on the reservation because of increasing population growth of both the Navajo and their flocks. Recent extraction of coal and uranium has augmented tribal coffers, but the Dine (as they call themselves) remain impoverished (Lamphere 1976:7). The Navajo are related to the Athabaskan-speaking peoples including the Dene of northwestern Canada.
Archaeologists date their arrival in what is now the southwest United States between 1000-1500. (Vogt 1961:288). Prior to the appearance of the Spanish in the 16th century, the Dine were nomadic hunter/gatherers who eventually borrowed a number of farming techniques and religious ceremonies from their sedentary Pueblo neighbours. Terrell (1967:45) documents the importance of widespread intertribal trade prior to colonization. He notes that native economy was:

...simple only in the sense that it was founded on barter. There were too many products and too many varieties of them, and they represented too many cultures, and they were transported over distances too great to permit usage of the words 'a simple economy'.

Excellent quality, fine craftsmanship and creativity were a potent combination that stimulated trade networks.

Spicer (1962:546) notes that the introduction of livestock (via Spanish colonization) to band people was revolutionary. Lands, fields and herds were closely identified with women (Underhill 1956:156). Grazing land became an integral part of family property. The amount of land a family claimed was based on the size of their flocks. Children received lambs in the spring to start their herds. The Impact of Spanish and Mexican Policies

In his book Cycles of Conquest: The Impact of Spain, Mexico and the United States on the Indians of the Southwest 1533-1960, Spicer (1962:282) notes that each of the consecutive colonizing forces viewed all Indians as barbarians. The Spanish clergy played a central role in attempting to civilize the Indians:
Thus the Spanish view in respect to the process of civilizing was not that they were replacing existing functional institutions and culture traits, but rather that they were giving the Indians things which the latter did not have. Lacking government, religion, and decencies, the Indians were being given the opportunity to know these things and should be grateful for them.

Father Neuring, a Catholic priest who worked among the Opata and Upper Pima Indians from 1751 to 1763, noted that (Spicer 1962:322): "the disposition of the Indians rests on four foundations, each one worse than the other, and they are: ignorance, ingratitude, inconstancy and laziness." The last trait was a universal complaint of Europeans about the Indians.

Military garrisons and the missions provided important contacts between the Indians and the colonizers (Spicer 1962:301). In 1680, the normally autonomous Pueblo villages along the Rio Grande River (in New Mexico) united and expelled the Spanish from the area. By 1692, the Spaniards had successfully repressed the revolt. Vicious and sustained retaliation by the victors drove many Pueblo Indians westward into Navajo country. During this period the Navajo adopted many Pueblo ceremonies, farming practices and arts, including pottery and weaving (Underhill 1956, Kluckhohn and Leighton 1974). The latter skill altered the lives of the Dine and forms the basis for this thesis.

Anglo-American Policies

When the United States assumed control of the area in 1846, the Navajo had become the most aggressive raiders in the southwest, making forays into Mexico and raiding Pueblo villages and Anglo
settlements. Vogt (1961:296) states that Navajo raiders stole over 400,000 sheep between 1846 and 1850. The United States cavalry increased the number of troops in Navajo country in an attempt to curtail the raids. The Pueblos to the east were armed by the government (Spicer 1962:170). Because the Navajo had never developed political unity on a tribal basis, any agreement made with a local band to stop raiding had no impact on other active bands.

Colonel Kit Carson was dispatched to Navajo country with orders to kill all men resisting arrest and to capture all women and children. Carson scattered flocks, burned peach orchards and cornfields. Eventually, 8,000 Navajo were driven 300 miles into eastern New Mexico and incarcerated at Bosque Redondo. During their four year confinement, Colonel Carleton and his men tried to turn them into farmers and "civilized citizens";

To collect them together, little by little, on a reservation, away from the haunts and the hills and the hiding places of their country; there to be kind to them; there to teach their children how to read and write; teach them the arts of peace, teach them the truths of Christianity. Soon they will acquire new habits, new ideas, new modes of life; and the old Indians will die off; and carry with them all latent belongings for murdering and robbing. The young ones will take their place without these belongings, and thus, little by little, they will become a happy and contented people; and Navajo wars will be remembered only as something that belongs entirely to the past (Vogt 1961:313).

Officially the Navajo were prisoners of war; they had to be fed, clothed and housed by the United States government. Bosque Redondo, a forty-mile treeless plain, proved to be a most unlikely place for successful farming. Floods, insect infestation, hail and
drought plagued the area. Polluted water killed at least 25% of the prisoners. Finally, the Indians refused to plant (McNitt 1972:155). Frustrated government officials extracted promises from eight "tribal leaders" who agreed never to raid again if they could return to their beloved canyon country. Fewer than 6,000 Navajo were released to travel home on foot.

The Department of the Interior created a 3,500,000 acre reservation for the Navajo (Vogt 1961:315), far less land than they had occupied traditionally. Approximately 1500 Navajo had escaped Carson's scorched earth policy because they lived further west.

These free Navajo helped their relatives rebuild their lives. The government issued some basic household goods and eventually provided 15,000 sheep to regenerate their flocks. The flocks quickly increased, numbering 30,000 animals in 1870 (Bailey 1980:21) and 700,000 animals in 1880 (Underhill 1956:163). Poor crops and drought continued to plague the southwest and the Dine were compelled to accept government rations to augment their meager food supply.

Weaving

Spider Woman instructed the Navajo women how to weave on a loom which Spider Man told them how to make. The crosspoles were made of sky and earth cords, the warp sticks of sun rays, the heddles of rock crystal and sheet lightening. The batten was a sun halo, white shell made the comb. There were four spindles: one a stick of zigzag lightening with a whorl of cannel coal; one a stick of flash lightening with a whorl of turquoise; a third had a stick of sheet lightening with a whorl of abalone; a rainbow streamer formed the stick of the fourth, and its whorl was white shell.

Navajo legend

(Plateau 52 4, 33)
It seems anomalous to me that a nation living in such miserably constructed mud lodges should, at the same time, be capable of making probably the best blankets in the world (Lieutenant James H. Simpson, Navajo Expedition of 1849).

Navajo sheep not only represented a source of food and prestige for the people, they also provided the primary staple for their clothing, the Navajo blanket woven of wool (Lamphere 1977). Archaeologists have documented that Navajo women learned weaving during the 17th century, probably after the Pueblo Revolt when Spanish reprisals drove many Pueblo People westward to Navajo country. Pueblo men had woven since around 400. Intermarriage with Navajo women would provide ample opportunity for acquiring weaving knowledge, especially since the Navajo had acquired large flocks of sheep. The first reference to Navajo weaving appears in a Spanish document dated 1780:

The Navajo, who although of Apache kinship have a fixed home, sow, raise herds, and weave their blankets and clothes of wool, might follow the good example of the Moqui (Amsden 1975:130).

By 1795, Spanish documents note that the Navajo wove with more delicacy and taste than their Indian neighbours, their textiles being desired by Spaniards, Mexicans and many other Indian tribes (Amsden 1975:133). In the early nineteenth century, the products of the Navajo loom were the single most valuable commodity produced in the Southwest. The Spaniards, resenting the economic impact of the Navajo weavers imported two Spanish master weavers from Mexico City to Santa Fe in 1807. The Bazan brothers introduced the designs of sharp-angled zig-zags and tiny diamonds woven by the
Saltillo Mexicans for their serapes. (Dockstader 1978:99). But they failed to affect the popularity of the Navajo product which remained superior. The impact of the Saltillo designs was augmented when the government issued 4,000 old and new Mexican blankets to the impoverished Navajo during their incarceration at Bosque Redondo. When the Navajo women returned home they began to incorporate many of these new dynamic motifs into their blankets. By 1850, Navajo weavers had far surpassed their Pueblo teachers in their dynamic use of colour and geometric designs. Their Pueblo counterparts had remained faithful to their long-standing weaving tradition strongly influenced by religious sanctions (Fox 1978). Navajo women, under no such restrictions, freely borrowed from their increasingly enriched environment.

All weaving produced between 1800-1870, prior to the appearance of the traders on the reservation, falls into the category of the Classic Period, considered by ‘purists’ as representing the finest and most dynamic period in the 300 year Navajo weaving history. In order to augment their colour palette, initially limited to vegetal dyed yarns and natural wool, Navajo weavers painstakingly unravelled the bayeta cloth imported from Spain (but manufactured in England). Bayeta was a fine wool flannel manufactured in several colours, including a beautiful red shade, highly desired by the weavers (Amsden 1975:144). Vegetal dyed Saxony yarns imported by Jewish merchants from Germany eventually reached a few weavers and were utilized to further augment their colour palette (Amsden 1975:183). The textile that further increased Navajo fame was titled a ‘Chief
Blanket" and appeared around A.D. 1830. The Navajo never had any "chiefs", but men of various Indian tribes from Mexico to North Dakota coveted the beautifully designed and woven textiles and wore them proudly (Rodee 1981:2). Chief Blankets are classified into five phases of increasing design complexity and were produced from 1830 - 1880 (Berkait and Kahlenberg 1977). They overlapped with the serape style and the borrowed satillo elements from the Bosque Redondo period. The spring wool clip and the autumn lamb sales, seasonally augmented Navajo material well-being. The textiles from Navajo looms became an increasingly important economic resource for them since a weaver could produce a blanket at any time during the year. Her labour became an important contribution to her family's continued well-being.

The last quarter of the nineteenth century initiated critical changes in Navajo life, with repercussions that still reverberate today. The appearance of the traders and Indian agents on the Navajo reservation altered Navajo material culture including their weaving.
The Bureau of Indian Affairs

When responsibility for the Navajo was transferred from the military to the Department of the Interior in 1866, Indian agents became increasingly involved with the Dine, issuing rations, distributing sheep and seeds and inducing parents to send their children to school (Vogt 1961:316). Appointment as an Indian Agent often involved payment for political favors.¹

Corruption continued until well into the twentieth century. D. H. Mitchell wrote President Roosevelt in 1906, requesting an investigation into the behavior of the Indian agents to the Hopi and the Navajo (Mitchell 1972:242). Regarding Mr. Perry, the current agent who sometimes jailed Navajo on fictitious charges:

Especially does he lack the qualities most essential to an Indian agent. He is neither a diplomat, nor a man of even mind, but being unable to separate his own dignity from the dignity of his office, and holding the first much greater than the last, he is prone to meddle with things which, if not beyond his jurisdiction, are at least beyond the bounds of common sense. Yet his official sins are often not his own, but have their source in the heads of his petty superiors in Washington, few of whom have ever seen an Indian and none of whom have ever tried to comprehend an Indian's attitude of mind, an attitude much broader than their own.

Agent Crane, who served the Navajo in the early part of this century, saw the Indians as children who needed much guidance and conceived of his own role of superintendent as that of fatherly counselor, working against the barbaric influence of their old village organization and religion (Spicer 1962:362).

Shortly after the formation of the Navajo Reservation, the Secretary of the Interior focused on homesteading policies.
Various incentives were used to attract easterners to "settle the West." In addition, wealthy sheep ranchers continually impinged on Indian grazing land. F. D. Reeve (1964:124) documents the political and economic power of a number of these ranchers, and the extent of their holdings. At one time four Anglo ranchers had flocks of 40-50,000 animals on the western edge of the reservation. They often influenced wool and pelt prices and affected how much Navajo wool reached eastern markets (Reeve 1964:139).

Sheep ranching was risky, for animals could be lost to inclement weather, poisonous vegetation, or predators. Anglo ranchers favored the use of shearing machines which increased the wool yield; Anglo breeds gave nearly four times as much wool as the Navajo churro. Reeve (1964:140) has estimated the Navajo population at around 20,000 in 1906, with over 300,000 sheep.

Agent Crane continually sought ways to improve Navajo subsistence to relieve the government's financial responsibility. In a letter to the Commissioner dated March 14, 1913, (p 7), he suggested: "having at each Navajo school a competent weaver on salary, maintained the year round, ... and have a class in weaving... The recommendation that a competent Navajo weaver be employed presents the difficulty of securing such a weaver at the small salaries believed to satisfy Indians. (!) To hold a Navajo woman constantly at weaving would mean that a teacher's salary must be paid her.
Laura Thompson (1951:Forward) summarizes the role of the government in the lives of the Navajo from the initial encounter during the nineteenth century: in the first stage, military threat and action deprived the Indians of vast areas of land, but left their internal affairs alone. In the second stage, once the reservation was formed, the government became actively involved with the internal life of the tribes. Land ownership (via the Dawes Act) and "individualization" of Indians is stressed. Acculturation and assimilation became the dominant government policy. During this stage, the native/land relationship is disrupted, natural resources are wasted, and environmental deterioration is accelerated. When John Collier became Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1930, he reversed government policy and sought to restore Indian cooperative forms, and to forgo repression of the Indian personality (Thompson 1951:Forward). Collier was probably the most controversial Commissioner in Navajo history. His policies are still debated today, by both Navajo and Anglos. Thompson (1951:10) says that Collier's policies:

attempts to treat the Indians like normal human beings, capable of working out for themselves, by means of their own natural and human resources, a satisfying adjustment to life within the framework of the American nation and the world community.

According to Thompson (1951:11) powerful pressure groups and lobbies in Congress opposed Collier's policies because of their interests in Indian holdings and wealth. He sought to provide the Indians with effective means to protect their own lands and rights.
and to reverse the assimilation process. Congress had voted funds for costly institutional services like schools and hospitals, while money for land-acquisition, capital goods, credit, adult education and community services decreased. Collier's plan differed from Commissioners who served before and after him - Secretary Krug, in his 1948 report on Navajo rehabilitation noted (Thompson 1951:12): "in a real sense, the work with the Indians cannot be considered completed until they have been assimilated into the general population." Anthropologists, too, saw assimilation of the Indian populations as an inevitable process. Julian Steward (Thompson 1951:5) noted in the late 1940's that "Anthropologists are in general agreement that it is purely a question of time before all Indians lose their identity and that both laymen and social scientists no longer advocate assimilation by physical force; rather, "implementing it by scientific procedures has gained strength."

In retrospect, many of Collier's policies are recognized as being enlightened. But the most controversial policy concerned his sheep reduction program during the Depression. Until that time the Navajo had suffered periodic drought and famine, but their sheep population had doubled many times since Bosque Redondo. Bailey (1980:21) notes the Navajo had 1,297,589 sheep and goats, 80,000 horses and 27,000 cattle by 1930, with a resident population of 42,000 (Underhill 1956:223). The sheep reduction plan proved a drastic "solution" to the increasing erosion
of Navajo grazing lands. Ruth Roessel, Navajo weaver and education
director, summarizes the Navajo feelings in her book, *Navajo
Livestock Reduction* published in 1974. She notes that government
surveys completed in 1935 determined that the reservation was 100%
overgrazed (Roessel 1974:21). For two years voluntary stock
reduction resulted in the removal of 315,836 sheep and goats. The
Indian Service had wanted 400,000 animals eliminated and therefore
instituted forced reduction in 1935. By 1937, the government had
divided the reservation into 18 land management districts.

Government range experts determined the carrying capacity of each
district which meant the Navajo could no longer move themselves or
their stock into another district. Those owners with too many sheep
were forced to reduce their flocks. Those with fewer animals were
issued permits for the number that they had. Navajo unwilling to
comply with government orders voluntarily were jailed and their
livestock reduced by force (Roessel 1974:221).

By 1952, the Navajo had 36% remaining of their 1930 stock. At
that point the neophyte tribal government voiced opposition to
continued reduction; gradually the number of animals began to
increase. Roessel (1974:223) notes the decreasing percentage of
families owning sheep:
Total Number of Navajo Families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of families</th>
<th>Number of families owning sheep</th>
<th>Percentage of families owning sheep</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>5,516</td>
<td>4,192</td>
<td>75.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>10,389</td>
<td>7,688</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>16,387</td>
<td>7,538</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>21,650</td>
<td>8,972</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Roessel (1974:224) notes that livestock enjoy both a sacred and privileged role in Navajo culture:

The animals were gifts from the Holy People themselves and form one of the important cornerstones of Navajo life. The reduction or elimination of something that is measured in spiritual as well as material value is filled with danger, particularly when those responsible are exclusively concerned with resource management (material) rather than the emotional (spiritual) values.

The enormous gulf that existed between Navajo values and Anglo values triggered a tragedy which is still remembered with sorrow by the elderly members of the tribe for (Roessel 1974:223):

the government was concerned, almost exclusively, with the preservation of the range and the land-animal balance which, in its opinion, meant massive stock reduction...the cause and effect relationship between over-grazing and erosion of the land was unmistakably clear and irrefutable.

Most Navajo felt almost exactly the opposite (Roessel 1974:224):

They believed that livestock was a gift from the Holy People. The Holy People watched with pleasure and bestowed their blessings -- rain and vegetation -- upon the increasing flocks of animals. They were glad to see the Navajos care for these gifts and to see the livestock multiply. Reduction in itself, and particularly when combined with the cruel and inhumane slaughter of these sacred gifts, repelled and shocked all Navajo. To them
stock reduction resulted in the Holy People holding back the rain and moisture. This caused the lack of vegetation, which, in turn, resulted in the erosion of the land and the formation of gullies (Roessel 1974:224).

The tragedy is compounded when one learns that prior to Collier's program, the government had strongly advocated the increase of Navajo stock holdings, thereby reducing its responsibility for supplying rations to the Navajo as it has to do on many of the Plains Indian reservations (Downs 1964:18). As late as 1947, Navajo men were serving jail sentences resulting from the stock reduction program initiated in the thirties (Downs 1964:19). Collier's controversial policy becomes increasingly suspect with information revealed after Thompson's published report on the Indian Service in 1951. Southwestern historian Bernard Fontana (1970) interviewed Sam Day, longtime trader to the Navajo born on the Reservation in 1877. Day stated that Collier lied to the Indians regarding the stock reduction program because he was an active supporter of the Boulder Dam. It could not be built if silt continued from erosion. Day also states that the government gave the Navajo from $1.20 to $2.20 per animal, which agents then sold in Denver at $10.50 each. Eventually the government took nine million dollars worth of sheep. Many animals were slaughtered if rail cars were unavailable to move them to market. The Navajo sadly noted this senseless slaughter and waste of meat (Manuscript, Special Collections; University of Arizona).
The Traders

The first Navajo traders had been sutlers, frontier individuals who supplied the army with food and clothing. When Navajo Flocks began to increase after Bosque Redondo, some sutlers bought the excess Navajo wool. A few sutlers abandoned army trade for the increasingly lucrative Indian commerce. The first license was issued in 1868 at Fort Defiance but primarily served a white clientele associated with the fort (Utley 1961:15). Gradually the Indian agent encouraged the Navajo to sell their excess wool and by 1889, there were nine posts on the reservation with 30 posts surrounding it, outside government control (McNitt 1962:51). Patronage and politics often determined who received a trading license. Competition for licenses, obtained from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for an annual fee, was spurred by the knowledge of the fortunes made by western entrepreneurs. During their imprisonment at Bosque Redondo, the government had issued rations of flour, sugar, coffee, and tobacco to the Navajo. They had acquired a taste for these things, and bartering for staples with blankets and wool became the basis for the symbiotic relationship between the Navajo and the trader that still exists today.

The Navajo trader, always a white man until recently, occupies an ambivalent place in Navajo history. Numerous authors (Adams 1963, Reichard 1968, Utley 1961, Underhill 1956) see him as an individual who aided the Navajos' transition into the modern world. Others (Lamphere 1976, Ruffing 1977 and FTC hearings 1972) picture him as often unscrupulous and profit-oriented. Some traders truly
befriended the Navajo, acting as interpreter, doctor, lawyer, banker, and sometimes mortician (Underhill 1956). But many were unscrupulous and casually justified a number of inimical trading practices. Navajo killed more than 20 traders between 1901 and 1924 (McNitt 1962:322). Underhill (1956:184) calls the trader the "Navajo Shogun".

He had the touchstone of friendly personal contact which opened the hearts of the Navajos. While the government was striving to civilize the Navajos by issuing orders that they should cut their hair and cease their heathen dances, and while the missionary was trying to convince them of their errors, the trader simply laid before them the possibilities of the new life. The author notes that trading was doubly profitable, because of the mark-up on staples sold to the Navajo, and the handsome profit gained by selling Navajo products. The reservation continued to increase in size and most government officials had little contact with the Indians. The trader and his post filled a role (p. 1901:319).

Lorenzo Hubbel

"Probably the most famous trader associated with the Navajos was Lorenzo Hubbel," son of a Connecticut Yankee father and Spanish mother, whose family had been given one of the original land grants from the King of Spain (Underhill 1956:183). Over a fifty-year period, Hubbel owned or held interest in more than thirty businesses on the Navajo Reservation (personal notes, Special Collections, University of Arizona, library). To Hubbel, the trader was "everything from merchant to father confessor, justice of the peace, ..."
Judge, jury, court of appeals, chief medicine man and de facto czar of the domain over which he presides” (Underhill 1956:184). Hubbell entertained the Roosevelts, government officials, artists, actors, and everyone who appeared at Ganado for nearly fifty years. After his death in 1930, his two sons Roman and Lorenzo, Jr., continued actively trading with the Navajo for another twenty-five years. By 1949, there were over one hundred trading posts on the reservation. The seven Hubbell posts controlled one-seventh of the Navajo trade (Utley 1961:31). Hubbell’s hospitality at Ganado was legendary, and he entertained on a lavish scale. But he was above, all a businessman (Utley 1961:32-33):

The first duty of an Indian trader, in my belief, is to look after the material welfare of his neighbors; to advise them to produce that which their natural inclinations and talent best adapts them; to treat them honestly and insist upon getting the same treatment from them; … to find a market for their products and vigilantly watch that they keep improving in the production of same, and advise them which commands the best price. This does not mean that the trader should forget that he is to see that he makes a fair profit for himself, for whatever would injure him would naturally injure those with whom he comes in contact.

From Blanket to Rug

Hubbell and a few of his contemporaries played a pivotal role in Navajo weaving history. They succeeded in destroying the blanket weaving (except for saddle blankets) by bartering cloth which the Navajo quickly adopted, in addition to importing the well-known Pendleton blanket, which replaced the native product since “rugs” were too heavy to wear. In addition, they sold string which the weavers began to use as warp, instead of their own laboriously spun
wool warp, and garnish aniline dyes. Germantown yarns could be purchased already dyed, allowing the weaver to dispense with the entire preparation of weft yarns if she so wished (and if she could afford it). A number of traders initially encouraged the women to weave "fast and loose" in their haste to establish a viable market. In the early 1890s, borders began to appear and the Navajo blanket became a rug, sold to tourists or shipped to eastern cities. The arrival of the railroad in 1882 facilitated the removal of Navajo weaving from the reservation.

Clinton Cotton became a partner in the Hubbell enterprise in 1885. Within two years he left Ganado and became a major wholesaler of Navajo products in Gallup. Cotton preferred quantity to quality in order to increase sales. He published a little catalogue illustrating Navajo dyrugs (coarsely woven textiles) and pound blankets. In contrast, Hubbell discouraged both cotton twine for warp and aniline-dyed rugs, with the exception of red. He pressed the weavers for larger rugs with refined colors. Today, many rugs from that area of the reservation still use "Ganado red."

Dockstader (1978:100) notes that 1,370,000 pounds of raw wool, 2,900 sheep pelts, 12,000 sheep, and approximately 2,500 woven textiles left the reservation in 1890. Utley (1961:24) quotes the Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1890: "Navajo population numbered between 14,000 and 15,000 persons... in addition to the wool and sheep the Indians sold 29,000 pelts (principally sheep, but probably including goatskins and the pelts of wild animals), 117,000 pounds of pinyon nuts, and 1,110,000 pounds of
corn." The weavers received $24,000 for their textiles. This money was not received in cash, however, for the reservation traders utilized the credit system, advancing groceries to the Indians until the wool clip appeared in the spring, or lamb sales occurred in the fall. Many traders issued tokens with the name of the post stamped on the back, redeemable only at their store (Hubbell Papers, Special Collections, University of Arizona Library).

Within twenty years of the traders’ appearance on the reservation, the Navajo had nearly ceased weaving for intertribal trade and no longer wove bed coverings, body shawls, doorway closures or blankets for themselves. Instead, nearly all products of the loom left the reservation as rugs. Only saddle blankets and belts continued to be used by the Navajo. By 1920, Navajo weaving had reached its lowest level of quality (Dockstader 1978:101). At one time textiles averaging sixty to eighty weft threads per inch were common; the weft count decreased ten-fold and the weavers were paid strictly by the pound and averaged five cents an hour for their labour. According to Utley (1961:23), $50,000 worth of Navajo blankets passed through Gallup in 1899, $500,000 in 1913, and $1 million in 1921. These totals reflect the dollar amounts reported by the wholesalers. The weavers continued to receive credit for groceries and dry goods at the trading posts.

Several traders including Hubbell published "catalogues" illustrating hand-made Indian items for sale. The largest catalogue was published by J. B. Moore around 1911, who traded at
Crystal, New Mexico. Moore writes in the forward to his catalogue:

In the beginning I had stubborn and conservative workers in these Navajo women, and a discredited product to contend with; resistance, stubborn, hurtful; and senseless opposition on the part of the weavers, has given place to cheerful co-operation, good natured rivalry and friendly strife for excellence in their work.

...I saw, in their dormant skill and patience a business opportunity provided they could be aroused, encouraged and led on to do their best; and a market for their product could be established.

Moore had rugs priced as to grades or classes based on quality and size. He traded with many weavers, and weavers who were not good designers were shown patterns favored by Moore, but:

Each (weaver) will add some touch of individuality to her work and there is never any danger of monotony, no matter how many we have weaving out designs that others have originated. There is always some difference between any two rugs (p 4).

A 45" x 75" rug at 90 cents a square foot retailed at $21.00.

Moore specialized in rugs sold by the piece, but he also sold rugs for $1.00 - 2.00 a pound. Moore notes in his catalogue that some of his weavers will "never weave after a pattern designed by another nor be induced to duplicate one woven by herself once she has done it" (p 23). On page 25 of his catalogue Moore notes that rugs are the main thing in his business and:

Our first thought is to get them to weave for us and for us only, all the fine rugs they possibly can, and then find a buyer for these. But it is also our mission here to buy any and everything the Navajo has to sell; his wool and pelts, his farm produce when he has any, the surplus of his flocks, herds of cattle and horses—all and everything that he has which he wants to turn into cash; and then it is up to us to find a market for it in turn. And, it is also our purpose to sell him in turn, all his supplies, groceries, dry goods, clothing, wagons, for and the money to buy with; or as much as we possibly can. Nor is there room for failure in any of these
things for the man who would make a success of Indian trading. He must be on his job all the time and see to it that he is not outmatched by as clever a people as ever worked their way up from savagery.

Traders like Moore and Hubbell pushed for quantity AND quality. Moore shipped the raw wool east to be cleaned and it came back to the reservation ready for spinning. New breeds of sheep had been introduced which provided more meat per animal, but the wool had a long greasy staple which was difficult for the native weaver to clean with yucca suds in the traditional manner. The wool from the original Spanish churro was far superior.

McNitt (1962:254) notes that Moore had sixteen excellent weavers "working for him," and that most still cleaned, carded, spun and dyed the wool from their animals for their rugs. Moore was responsible for introducing a number of new design elements to Navajo weavers including variants of the Greek fret. McNitt notes that with only slight variations in design, Moore's weavers departed from the usual practice and turned out the same rug patterns again and again. In a response to an inquiry from the Indian Office, Moore wrote that he paid his weavers $13,000 for their rugs in the year 1910-11. It is impossible to determine whether this amount reflected exchange for trade goods, credit, or actual cash. Two years later the Commissioner of Indian Affairs noted that $500,000 worth of rugs left the entire reservation (McNitt 1962:254). Scott and Tilly (1975) have noted the importance of British women's labour regarding the family's economic survival. Although unacknowledged, the same case can undoubtedly be made for the textile production of Navajo women.
The Fred Harvey Company

One of the most remarkable relationships in Navajo trading history involved Lorenzo Hubbell and Fred Harvey Sr., founder of the famous "Harvey Houses." Harvey founded the company in 1876, to manage the eating houses and later the dining cars for the Santa Fe Railway.2

Eventually over 70 hotels dotted the landscape from Chicago, St. Louis, westward through Kansas to San Francisco, Los Angeles, Arizona and New Mexico. Henderson (1969:33) notes that "Harvey helped to populate and civilize the West." Over 65,000 Indian blankets and rugs were purchased from traders, their assistants and the Indians. Most of these were woven by the Navajo, and Lorenzo Hubbell was Harvey's major supplier from 1907 to 1920 (B. Harvey 1965:37). Tourists travelling by railroad were treated to a visual ethnographic feast since baskets, pottery, rugs, and jewelry adorned the walls, floors and tables of the impressive "Indian Rooms" located in many of the hotels. To augment the attraction Harvey arranged for Hubbell to send him reliable Indians who would weave and practice silversmithing at the railroad station and the larger hotels at the Grand Canyon, Santa Fe, Albuquerque, etc. The Harvey family eventually acquired over 4,000 items currently valued at hundreds of thousands of dollars as part of their personal collection. Their unique position enabled them to acquire valuable ethnological material, including many items sacred to Hopi religious ceremonies. Byron Harvey (1963:35-6) notes:
Serving as a source of supply for the East, in the early years the company had a virtually insured profit in their sales of Indian craft. Freight rates, moreover were by contract extremely advantageous; empty boxcars or their equivalent could easily be loaded with collection material. The company's agents, present the year round, frequently were able to purchase items never offered to summer visitors. Winter brings hard times to the Indian or Spanish American farmer and consequently whole wagon loads of irreplaceable Santos and Indian arts were brought in for sale.

In this way the Harvey Houses were stocked with native artifacts and the family's valuable collection continually increased in size. Herman Schweizer, Harvey's buyer for Indian goods, continually pulled the best and most unusual items that crossed his path. Major museums in the United States, including the Chicago Natural History Museum, Columbia, and the Carnegie Museum owe the nucleus of their ethnographic collections from the southwest to Schweizer and the Harvey family. The Berlin Museum also benefited, and the kachina doll collection at the Weve Foundation was originally compiled by Schweizer (Harvey 1963:37). 3

Schweizer, reputed to be a patient and persistent collector, bitterly opposed the Leavitt Bill, which recommended the creation of an Indian Arts and Crafts Board. He conducted a one-man lobby from coast to coast, stating the Bill would create a government monopoly. 4 The Bill was initially defeated but eventually became a reality in 1937. Adair (Harvey 1963:49) credits Schweizer with implementing commercial Navajo silversmithing. He was the earliest large scale purchaser. But rugs remained the backbone of the Indian craft business (Harvey 1963). Portions of the Harvey family's
personal collection were sold after Schweizer's death in the early 1940's. However, over 4,000 items remain and are currently housed at the Heard Museum in Phoenix. During a recent exhibition of 600 articles from the collection, the Museum noted: "that the Fred Harvey Company played a decisive role in directing public attention to the native cultures of the southwest."

Hubbell often provided Hopi and Navajo Indians to demonstrate their talents at the larger hotels scattered across the country. When the company opened their new outlet in Chicago, Harvey promised not to "let the Navajo demonstrators get spoiled." He wanted them to stay two to three months (Letter dated March 6, 1903). Schweizer requested that Indian demonstrators work from 7:30 a.m. to noon and an hour or so after dinner. He furnished silver and paid the Indians 50 cents "for every dollar they made up." At that time, Hubbell was retailing Hopi bowls for 75 cents and ollas (water jars) for $1.25. In a letter dated July 6, 1903, Hubbell asked the Harvey Company not to pay the demonstrators all their money because they owed him on account.

In 1905, the Pueblo potter Nampeyo demonstrated at the Grand Canyon along with four men, two women and five children. According to the correspondence, the Hopi Indians at Hopi House were "creating a good market for their goods." In a letter dated September 30, 1905, J. F. Huckle, a Harvey son-in-law in charge of the Indian Department, wrote to Hubbell stating that Nampeyo's party was
"pretty independent and pretty much spoiled when they were at the Canyon last spring"...

They did not want to do anything unless they were paid for it...on the other hand, Nampeyo and her daughter are excellent pottery makers...the Indian children are the greatest attraction at the Canyon.

Today Nampeyo is recognized as the 'matriarch of Pueblo potters' and her work sells for thousands of dollars at auctions.

By 1906, Schweizer was paying Hubbell $2.50 a pound for good Germantowns. Schweizer wrote Hubbell stating that the company was buying fine blankets at the Grand Canyon from the Tuba City Indians for 70 cents to $1.00 a pound. (Tuba City is on the western edge of the reservation and not too far from the Grand Canyon. In a letter dated February 10, 1909, Harvey requested blankets nearly seven by nine feet that would cost him between $25 and $30. The markup on the smaller rugs was often 100%. More than 15 years later Harvey was still obtaining four by six foot rugs for $25.00. Small pieces usually cost between $5.00 to $8.00 each. In 1923, most large rugs still sold by the pound. Year after year the huge inventory of Navajo rugs owned by Hubbell was noted in separate ledger books. All notations were as follows: Stock #, measurement, weight and price. Hubbell wholesaled baskets to Harvey for $1.50 each, plaques cost 50 cents each (in 1913).

During the years of their prolific correspondence, a number of letters noted the Company's displeasure at the price that Hubbell charged for Navajo rugs. Since the Company bought all of Hubbell's
inventory from 1907 to 1920, they often discounted the amount he
requested! In a letter from Schweizer to Hubbell, dated February 19,
1908, Schweizer notes:

I just returned from a little trip out in the country; and as a whole I don't think you have come down to earth yet on the blanket business. I carefully compared your last blankets with blankets I am able to buy, and have positively concluded that either you charged me too much compared to present conditions, or else you are still paying too much. There are lots of good blankets out in the country which I can buy a good deal cheaper.

... I appreciate your contention that good blankets are not nearly as plentiful as common ones, but nevertheless I am satisfied now that I will be able to get all the good blankets I want at a very reasonable price, for this season at least.

Schweizer continues by warning Hubbell about buying too many
blankets and charging too much. In his P. S. he says:

I saw the Indian at Fort Defiance who sold you the large blanket you sent me; and I think you ought to be satisfied with a little smaller profit than you charge on the same. ... I note you raised the price of bowls to 75 cents, I am afraid you are getting to be like the Indians raising prices on things wanted....

Much of the correspondence over the years concerned the Indian families supplied by Hubbell to the various Harvey Houses. The Company placed implicit trust in Hubbell's judgement regarding appropriate individuals. Few traders were as proficient in the Navajo language as Hubbell. Often families were away from the reservation for months at a time. The Harvey Company was reluctant to release any of the natives until their replacements arrived. If one of the native women became pregnant, or if one of the men proved extremely troublesome, only then would an individual be sent home.
without an immediate replacement. In a letter dated May 19, 1910, from the Grand Canyon, Huckel noted his displeasure with a Navajo silversmith Charley, who was attempting to sell his wares directly to tourists. Another Navajo smith had been kept as a demonstrator for over a year. Huckel notes: "These Indians seem to think they can come and go as they please and the only way to handle them is to be firm with them."

Harvey’s Indian Department sponsored the construction of a full-size Hopi village in San Diego during 1915. Many Indians lived there for well over a year and attracted many tourists. Schweizer requested five Navajo families for the San Diego village, and five additional families for an Exhibition in San Francisco. The Indians were paid cash and received free room and board (letter dated September 8, 1914). The silversmiths received from $20–$25 per month and they earned extra money for dancing. The weavers were paid a "good price for their blankets." Henderson (1969:29) noted that to the credit of the Company its buyers "never consciously took advantage of the Indians." By the 1930's, Harvey was serving 15 million meals per year on the trains. In 1965, the Harvey Houses became the sixth largest restaurant retailer in the United States (1969:37).

After the senior Hubbell passed away, Schweizer continued business transactions with Hubbell's two sons. In another letter dated April 4, 1933, Schweizer wrote to Lorenzo, Jr.,
I appreciate the trouble with the Indians when you want them to make something according to your own ideas and they want more money. Also, as you say, they don't know when to stop.

Schweizer then ordered two dozen kachinas at 30 cents apiece.

Lorenzo Hubbell was recognized by those who knew him as "the premier Indian trader of them all" (Herman Schweizer). In 1915, Agnes Laut (Utley 1961:32) wrote:

Lorenzo Hubbell has been to the Indians of the desert—friend, guard, counselor, with a strong hand to punish when they required it but a stronger hand to befriend when help was needed.

In a letter that A. F. Whiting (Museum of Northern Arizona) wrote to Rene d'Harnoncourt on March 15, 1942, he quotes a Mr. Pratt, Superintendent of Schools who knew Hubbell well:

Hubbell would take anything they bring. He had a way with him. He made them content with what he paid them, but he paid whatever he happened to feel like. The traders' prices varied with the seasons. Prices fluctuated quite a bit. (Personal notes, Museum of Northern Arizona).

Reminiscing about his life as a trader, Hubbell noted: "I've spent tens of thousands of dollars feeding and entertaining people, and never charged a cent." He probably enjoyed the role of host more than any other. Utley (1961:32) continues:

That he was motivated by an ambition for even greater profits also seems evident from the rapid and successful expansion of his trade network. Robert E. Karigan, one of his associates pictured him as brilliant, shrewd, and ambitious to control the Navajo trade. Cozy McSparron added that the ambition stemmed from a desire to have enough money to give things away, to make people happy, and, above all, to take care of the Indians who depended upon him.
In "The History and Genealogy of the Hubbell Family (1980:36), Phyllis Hubbell Holbrook noted that by the time Hubbell was twenty-seven he had "acquired seven more trading posts, and his business of wool and hides alone would grow to more than a million dollars annually." According to Dennis Boyd (M.A. thesis, 1979) by 1900, Hubbell had over 300 weavers "working for him." The older traders told McNitt (1962:81) that their greatest profits were in wool, but that sometimes it was a gamble. He notes that Hubbell sold $60,000 worth of Navajo blankets as the leading dealer in 1913. Utley (1961:16) states that trading on the Navajo Reservation was still largely controlled by the old families that got their start in the 1880's.

In an article that appeared in the December 1953 issue of Sunset Magazine, the author noted average prices of Navajo rugs from a trader as follows:

- 3 x 4-5 feet - $25.00 - $40.00
- 5-6 feet x 6-8 feet - $40.00 - $75.00
- 6 feet x 10 feet - $75.00 - $125.00
- 9 feet x 12 feet - $80.00 - $1250.00

The total reservation income from rugs and jewelry had amounted to $364,000 in 1945 (Krug 1948:23). By this time the population was around 12,000 families (Roessell 1974:223). Lorenzo Hubbell, Jr., was still marketing large rugs by the pound from Oraibi trading post in 1941. In his inventory of large rugs at the store, he lists the
stock number, measurements, weight, and price (in code) of each rug. From a partial decipher of the code, I determined that a 6 foot by 11 foot rug weighing 20 pounds was wholesaled at $75.00. Single saddle blankets were wholesaled by the Hubbells for $2.25 in 1940. Amsden (1975:236) notes that for awhile raw wool prices were higher during World War I than rug prices per pound during the Depression. 5

Spicer (1962:224) states that per family income began a gradual decline from 1900 to 1930. He says that Navajo income from weaving was more than one-half million dollars annually, whereas another source (McNitt 1962:254) states that $500,000 of weaving left the Reservation. According to Roessel's Table (reproduced on page 48), there were approximately 5,500 families on the reservation in 1915. That would mean each family averaged $100.00 in weaving "income" annually.

Spicer (1962:548) notes that the Navajo were probably reached more systematically by such outposts of Anglo material culture than any other Southwestern tribe from the 1880's through the 1920's. The trade was geared to what they were producing and so they became more integrated into the general American economy than any other group. After the stock reduction of the 1930's, the Navajo suffered further decline in their standard of living. Until the income of the majority of Navajo families was extremely low as compared with Anglos, perhaps the lowest of any Indian tribe and far lower than any other group in the Southwest. Thus the trans-
formation of Navajo into sheepmen and their integration on this basis into the general American economy had not brought an economic adjustment which compared so far as income went with the pastoral economy of the region generally. Sheep raising could provide income for only a little over a third of the tribe at a standard of living comparable to that of most rural families of New Mexico and Arizona, but this income was distributed among two-thirds of the population, who were forced to add to their income through other means including wage work off the reservation and the small returns from very small-scale subsistence agriculture (Spicer 1962:549).

Part of the above problem lay with the allocation of reservation lands. When the railroad arrived in 1880, all the odd-numbered sections to a depth of forty miles on each side of the right of way were granted to the Santa Fe Railroad (Vogt 1961:315). This occurred in areas with heavy Navajo occupation and they lost some of their best winter rangeland and finest watering places. Again, in 1908, when 3,500,000 acres were added to the reservation, American ranchers pressured Congress and the same amount of land was returned to "the public domain" in 1911 (1961:316).

On the western edge of the reservation, influential sheep ranchers continually impinged on Navajo grazing land. Euler (manuscript, n.d.) has excellent photographs illustrating prime grazing land owned by Anglo ranchers (cf. the Babbitt case) and the poor quality Navajo rangeland. Yet livestock grazing was the
principal means of subsistence for the Wupatki Basin Navajo. Most traders admit that their greatest profits lay in the wool clip. Euler notes that at one small post in a remote area of the reservation, the owner netted $3500 from the purchase and resale of the 1948 wool clip. The author purchased a 3 by 5 foot vegetal dyed rug at that time. The weaver admitted that the trader would have given her approximately $6.00 for it (equal in value to 100 pounds of potatoes). She advised Euler not to mention the rug purchase to the trader because he had warned her against selling rugs to anyone but him. This woman wove an average of thirteen 3 x 5-foot rugs each year for which she usually received about $9.00 worth of groceries. Euler (51) summarizes:

Thus we see that income derived from the arts and crafts, as is that obtained from other sources, is highly sporadic, not to the effort and skill of the workers, but to the whims and thoughts of the employer -- trader, farmer, gas-station operator.

A. Littell, in his "Notes of a Tribal Attorney" (manuscript, Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff), notes that trading posts occupied over 75 strategic economic and geographic positions throughout the reservation:

The traders rendered great service to the Navajos and held dominating economic influence in their lives, virtually without exercise of disciplinary regulatory power by the Commissioner. They paid $25 a year for a permit and no rental. From $6-10 million in business was for many years, and still is, transacted each year with the Navajo in wool, sheep, pinon nuts, and goods needed by the Navajo. Fortunes had been made. Some traders charged 200% to 300% write-ups on the prices of basic staple commodities sold to Navajo in the remote areas of the Reservation...the traders were too powerful.
Shonto

The most powerful indictment of Navajo/trader relations remains William Adams's thorough study (1963) titled "Shonto, a study of the role of the trader in a modern Navajo community." Adams's field investigations for his doctoral research took place between 1954-56. He chose to research Indian/trader relations because the trader had a paramount influence in Navajo life, which was underestimated in the literature. Neither Adams's employer (who lived in Flagstaff, Arizona), nor any Navajo knew that he was actually doing anthropological research. Adams (1963:24) notes that he:

engaged in credit saturation, delaying checks, tampering with the mail, misrepresenting the outside world, and all other devious devices by which the trader maintains his position in the community... if I had not done these things I would not have been a trader—and this study could never have been made.

Adams (1963:182) notes that people from outside Shonto paid less for groceries because they bought for cash; credit was advanced against all predictable earnings by the Indians in order to profit from "credit saturation." The trader at Shonto was basically a budget director and financial manager for the whole community, since he was fully informed about the financial situation of all the Navajo families who traded at his post. Adams noted that a really alert and experienced trader would be able to estimate community earnings with such accuracy as to be able to tie up 75% of them in advance credit. Because of credit saturation, no more than 1% of all welfare income was returned to the Navajo as cash in any one
year (1963:137). The trader often acted as a retirement claims agent for the railroad; the post itself housed the Post Office where government pension and welfare checks (instituted in the 1930s) were "inspected" to determine the amount destined for the non-literate Navajo. Mail was kept behind the trading post counter and only delivered to the addressee on demand. The amount of any check was always applied to the ever-present bill (1963:138):

"underlying all book transactions is the implicit threat of forfeiture of credit unless accounts are paid on the trader's terms. Even if the trader's recipient owes nothing on account he may be required to make substantial purchases before it is 'his' check will be cashed."

The trader's long-term sustained profit was ensured by perpetuating Navajo dependence. Credit saturation increased as territorial monopoly declined with the increasing use ofelled trucks by the Indians. Shonto's owner actively discouraged many of his clientele who could shop for less in town by or take a jingle truck ownership as too expensive, too cumbersome and too far demanding cash for gasoline. He actually removed mail order catalogues listing cheaper prices available just off the reservation, and he refused to play the Navajo radio station which featured advertisements of 'cheaper goods' in town (1963:275).

Adams describes the trader-Navajo association as one analogous to that of a parent/child relationship. The trader, not the government, epitomizes a paternalistic attitude. Adams (1963:287) summarizes Shonto's owner as an individual who:
is sincerely convinced that he is the truest advocate and practitioner of the American ideal in the Navajo community. That ideal, as he himself interprets it, and as he exemplifies it to his Navajo clientele, is simply the individual pursuit of material well-being. In all other matters, spiritual, moral, and aesthetic, individual taste and individual judgment must be respected and no uniform ideal should be enforced. Right and wrong are, in the last analysis, measurable only in dollars and cents; this is the only legitimate yardstick by which the white man's part in Navajo life and influence on Navajo behavior can be justified.

Thus he remains a member of the vast army of private entrepreneurs who have penetrated beyond the limits of their own societies in search of profit in every part of the globe. Their impact has been felt wherever European and tribal societies interact—Adams (1963:297). For the Navajo, expansion of their economy has not benefited them financially since they have acquired neither capital nor wealth; instead, "the economy of Shonto...remains a vast, redistribution system in which the trader is the direct or indirect source and also the ultimate recipient of all of the financial benefits derived from contact with the white world"—Adams (1963:295). Adams's own feelings are reflected in the following statement (1963:26):

I have never favored preservation of Navajo ways of life for their own sake, or because I felt there was anything intrinsically superior...I believe the Navajo must adapt themselves...to the white world around them...

As welfare and social security checks increased, weaving decreased dramatically in importance as a trade item. Adams (1963:154) notes that by 1910 large accounts were built up against
rugs (this assured the traders of a continual supply). By 1955, no credit was allowed against rugs at Shonto. In fact, they were considered to be an "unavoidable nuisance." Because of fluctuations of wool prices globally, prices paid for Navajo wool varied drastically. The Navajo received 80 cents per pound for their wool in 1950, and 25 cents per pound in 1956 (Adams 1963:121). During that decade Shonto weavers averaged 4 cents per hour for their labor (Adams 1963:124).

The tribal commissioner estimated Navajo income from crafts at around $2 million dollars or 5% of the tribe's total earnings in 1955. Adams (1963:146) thinks this figure is too high. Thus weaving has declined from its position as the backbone of the native economy at the turn of the century, to a peripheral income source, or intermittent "windfall" for the weavers.

Although Adams's monograph on Shonto was published in 1963, and the government had received numerous complaints from reservation residents for decades regarding trader abuses, nothing was done until an investigation was initiated by the Federal Trade Commission in 1971 (Akwasasne Notes, 1972:5). A federal panel investigating the abuses interviewed hundreds of reservation Navajo. The National Federation of Independent Businessmen came to the defense of the trader saying he just operated in the "American Way." In the above article, the writer noted:
Three Anglo traders were asked at the hearings what their incomes were last year. They had gross incomes of about $300,000 each, with net incomes ranging between $17,000 and $40,000. Most of them belong to a group, the United Traders Association, which recently bought 30 educational kits to teach the "free enterprise system" and distributed them to the schools on the reservation, hoping that would enable the Navajos to understand their true position in the system, and to better accept their own poverty and the trader's wealth.

One of the most flagrant examples of abuse concerned the pawn practices at many posts. Since the appearance of the trader on the reservation a century ago, Navajo would often "pawn" valuable jewelry, rugs or saddles in exchange for small loans. Typically the pawned item was placed in a special room and held for six months until the owner redeemed it. Incidents of abuse concerning the selling of native goods by the trader before the pawn date, or the "loss" of the goods without adequate compensation, were revealed during the BIA hearings in 1972. New regulations have been drafted which limit the interest on pawned items at 24%. In the past interest had been as high as 80%. When "dead" pawn is sold, the excess amount must now be paid to the pawn owner ("Interest rates lowered in trader regulations" (1975:37).

The perilous financial status of Navajo Indians is reflected in the miniscule numbers of Navajo involved in small businesses on the reservation. According to an article in the Navajo Times (1980 Vol 22:4), less than 5% of the businesses on the reservation were owned by native entrepreneurs. The reservation itself contains abundant non-renewable resources in the form of coal, uranium, natural gas
In visual power and force of statement, Navajo blankets represent a high point in the history of American Indian art. The expressive use of color and energy, controlled in a two-dimensional surface, is remarkable, and the great number of individual examples surviving indicates that the general level of quality during the period discussed is very high, in terms of both visual expression and weaving technique. Within the tradition, the preoccupation with individual creation and artistic choice is even more notable.

The above comments refer to the Chief blankets produced prior to the traders' appearance (circa 1885). Additional evidence regarding weavers' artistic freedom is noted in Lowell Anderson's thesis (1951), concerning factors influencing design. Anderson interviewed thirty-one weavers and they all maintained they had a complete mental image of the rug before they wove it and they wove whatever size they felt like. The author noted that nearly all weavers showed remarkable design sense in that they limited pattern in their rugs to one to three themes, and made variations of these throughout. The only moderator of design was the weaver, and she never duplicated a pattern. Weavers said the design would be "wrong" if it were crowded, unrelated, out of scale, or harmonious in color combinations. Creativity is expressed in many ways and plays a central role in Navajo culture. A Navajo weaver solves problems concerning design, symmetry, and color simultaneously without benefit of sketching beforehand. Weaving in this manner requires a unique combination of conceptual and manual skills which takes years to develop. Although weavers had to accommodate traders' suggestions, and were somewhat constrained by trader relations, they
maintained a great deal of freedom regarding the work process since they continued to own the means of production.

Feminist anthropologists have examined the impact of colonization on women in egalitarian societies and their subsequent loss of autonomy (Leacock and Etienne 1980). In twelve ethnographic studies contained in Women and Colonization, the authors noted women’s decrease in status (in ranked societies), loss of access to means of production, and differential accommodation to the patriarchal model imposed by the colonizers. In some ways the Navajo provide an interesting exception. Navajo weavers were originally autonomous producers, free to use or dispose of their loom production. Pastoralism was not imposed on them. Women’s ownership and control of animals was not undermined by the traders.

The impact of the trader on the transformation of the wearable blanket to functional floor rug is overemphasized in the literature. Passive acculturation of native craftswomen has remained unquestioned until recently because of inequality in male/female, relations in contemporary Western societies.

Anthropologist Gary Witherspoon is the most recent spokesman concerning the aesthetics of weaving in Navajo culture. A linguist, Witherspoon is married to a Navajo weaver and he has enriched the literature on the Navajo through his writings on Navajo aesthetics and creativity. He notes that weaving has occurred regardless of financial compensation; economics is not the primary motivation. He comments (1981 52:31) that the dominant
style in Navajo aesthetics, "creative synthesis" and in their weaving.

Navajo women seek to bring together the world of the animal (wool), the world of plants (dye), and the world of humans. On the loom, the weaver seeks to blend both fine and bold contrasts - in color, feature and design - into a single whole that is harmonious and beautiful. I believe this is the essence of Navajo creativity as it is reflected in weaving. It is not an easy task but its achievement is satisfying and rewarding. In each rug the weaver seeks a personal and unique expression of a universal theme. The Navajo essence of beauty is an aesthetic concept which is simultaneously moral, physiological, philosophical and emotional.

Witherspoon (1977:154) then articulates the fundamental problem concerning Western aesthetics and contrasts it with the Navajo concept of hozho:

The separation of mind and body -- or, in the popular idiom, mind and heart -- in Western metaphysics has led aesthetic analysis and interpretation into confusion as to what it is that the artist expresses in his work. Experience is divided into fragments which relate to the intellectual realm, the emotional realm and the aesthetic realm. A major question, then, is whether a particular work expresses an "idea," whether it expresses the emotions and feelings of the artist who created it, or whether it expresses nothing in the way of ideas or emotion; and simply possesses significant and aesthetic form, a pure expression of beauty.

...In the Western world, beauty as a quality of things to be perceived is, in essence static. Anglo society consists primarily of nonartists who view art (art consumers).

In contrast, in Navajo society (1977:151):

Art is not divorced from everyday life, for the creation of beauty and the incorporation of oneself in beauty represent the highest attainment and ultimate destiny of man. Man experiences beauty by creating it. Navajo society is one of artists (art creators).
This theme is best expressed by the Navajo concept of 'hozho' (1977:154):

Hozo expresses the intellectual concept of order, the emotional state of happiness, the moral notion of good, the biological condition of health and well-being, and the aesthetic dimension of balance, harmony and beauty ... In Navajo art we find all these concepts, states and conditions expressed.

Yet there are still a number of critics who are unable to consider even the greatest works as more than craft, because the blankets are woven rather than painted. In an article written for "Art and Artist" magazine (1974:30) concerning a traveling collection of Chief Blankets, London art critic Ralph Farnery wrote:

I am going to forget, in order to really see them, that a group of Navajo blankets are not only that. In order to consider them as I feel they ought to be considered as ART with a capital 'A', --- I am going to look at them as paintings -- created with dye instead of pigment, on unstretched fabric instead of canvas -- by several nameless masters of abstract art.

As Parker and Pollock (1981:48) note regarding the above critique:

Several manoeuvres are necessary in order to see these works as art. The geometric becomes abstract, woven blankets become paintings and women weavers become nameless masters ... In art history the status of an art work is inextricably tied to the status of the maker.

These blankets and Navajo sand paintings influenced the development of colour field painting popular in the 1960's. Some specialists note that the Navajo weavers did a better job with colour than the painters inspired by their work. Berlant and Kahlenberg (1977:146) note that many contemporary artists have
Navajo blankets in their personal collections:

Abstraction was not a special "artist's" vocabulary for the Navajo who wove these blankets; rather, it was a valid means of personal expression in their society. The Navajo weaver dealt with many of the same concerns as contemporary artists, but in the more integral Navajo culture these concerns were central and shared by all members of the tribe. Weaving was part of the cycle of life for the Navajo women. This widespread practice of weaving did not lead to mediocre amateurism; rather, it became an important aspect of society in which every woman functioned as an artist. The blankets have a dynamic force and consistently aggressive quality, traits that our culture has not considered feminine. The creative independence within the blanket tradition points to important freedoms for women in Navajo society.

Colour-field painters were directly influenced by Navajo textiles and sand paintings. Therefore, art critics and historians have broadened their perspective and begun to discuss these and other textiles as "art." In 1984, a Navajo satillo serape was auctioned at Sotheby's for $115,000, the highest price ever paid for an American Indian artifact (Johnson 1984:17). Such auction activity reflects a dual exploitation: that which began a century ago, and the fact that contemporary weavers must "compete" with textiles woven by their ancestors.

Although a number of professionals in different disciplines (an art critic, an anthropologist and an artist), are using terminology formerly reserved in the discussion of fine art, Navajo weaving has become an "art" form by association or by métamorphosis (Graburn 1976). The impact of Navajo textiles on colour field painters parallels (in a less spectacular way) the impact of African masks on early twentieth century artists. Pictures of rugs painted by Navajo
artist R.C. Gorman were exhibited at the Heard Museum in Phoenix in 1967. Five years later the first travelling exhibit of old Navajo blankets toured the United States. To date, no travelling exhibit of contemporary Navajo weaving has been organized. Gorman says:

I have been using the design motifs of Indian rugs and pottery for my paintings because one day these things are going to be no more. They are getting to be lost, and it is going to happen soon. It will be a white America by 2000. The Indian art that people are enjoying now—the rugs and pottery—are no longer going to be there. It’s inevitable: complete integration. I am amused that I sell my rug paintings for more than the actual rug sells for; perhaps the paintings are worth more in the long run. Moths don’t like polymers.

In the Introduction to Women and Colonization, Eleanor Leacock (1980) notes that:

The Victorians saw women in non-Western societies as oppressed and servile creatures, beasts of burden, chattels who could be bought and sold, eventually to be liberated by “civilization” or “progress,” thus attaining the enviable position of women in Western society. With the development of anthropology as a science in the first half of the 20th century, the Victorian attitude gradually gave way to what appeared to be a less biased view, exhibiting a new respect for other cultures but, in fact, reflecting a similar bias in a more sophisticated form.

This analogy holds for the art/craft distinction also. For the majority of anthropologists, natives remained craftpersons until they began to produce in media recognized as fine arts in the Western world. Such is the case for the Inuit, whose story is related in Chapter III.
1. W. F. M. Arny became Navajo agent in 1873. As one time acting
governor of New Mexico, Arny was sympathetic to Anglo sheep
ranchers. He conspired to substituted a poor strip of land on the
eastern edge of the reservation for a portion of Navajo land that
comprised some of the richest agricultural land in the southwest.
His scheme was foiled by Thomas Keam, a trader who had worked for
Arny as a translator (McNitt 1962:142).

2. The Harvey papers are currently housed at the Special
Collections Library of the University of Arizona, Tucson. Seventeen
boxes and six volumes of material cover the period from 1896 to
1945. The Hubbell papers, containing over 4,000 pounds of material
including personal and business documents, correspondence, ledgers
and day books from approximately 1885 to 1950 are also housed at
this library. Correspondence with the Free Harvey Company is
contained in Boxes 36 through 38. Letters from Harvey and/or
Schweizer to Hubbell over a 25-year period provide valuable
information concerning wholesale and retail business activity.
Correspondence between Hubbell and the Harvey Company began in 1902.
After Lorenzo Hubbell’s death in 1930, Schweizer continued
purchasing Indian artifacts from either Lorenzo Jr., or Roman
Hubbell.

3. The Harveys’ fortunate position was recognized at an early date.
They received a letter from an English Fellow of the Royal
Geological Society in 1902 noting, “You have an opportunity far
exceeding that of any private individual” (Harvey 1963:37).

4. In a letter to Hubbell dated March 10, 1930, Schweizer noted
that traders had written him stating that if they spoke put against
it, it “would be accepted as the selfish point of view of an Indian
trader...personally I believe the Indian stands a better chance in
the hands of the traders than in the hands of three or four
theorists.” (He was criticizing John Collier).

5. From other information on Lorenzo’s business at the time, he
almost always took 100% markup on the textiles. But I was unable to
determine whether the number in code is actually what the weaver
received in trade items, or that he Hubbell would have charged a
bulk buyer.

6. Gladys Reichard, an anthropologist from Columbia University,
lived with a Navajo family during the summers of 1930 through 1934,
and learned the entire weaving process from the beginning. Her
three books, Spider Woman (1934), Navajo Shepherd and Weave (1936),
and Dezba, Woman of the Desert (1939), remain classics concerning
Navajo weaving.
7. A recent reference to their creativity appeared in the New York Times, October 24, 1976. Mary Gray notes: "With a mental image of the pattern, she starts the rug from the bottom and weaves up, performing all the intricate manoeuvres by hand... despite a lack of computation and measured blueprints she works with precision. The design of her rug emerges with absolute symmetry, whether folded vertically or horizontally."
CHAPTER III

THE INUIT

Introduction

The socio-political position of the Inuit today parallels that of the Navajo. Both groups exist as Fourth World peoples—occupying traditional territory administered by powerful governments. The intrusion of merchant capital beginning with the whalers and expanded by the trading companies, initiated the process of Inuit underdevelopment. Traditional Inuit subsistence was undermined by periodic scarcity of land animals, canine disease (which affected hunting success), and increasing dependence upon traders (Jensen 1975). The shift to fur trapping which occurred at the end of the nineteenth century was a short-lived financial success for most Inuit. After the collapse of the fur market in the late 1940’s, the Canadian government expanded its presence in the north to affirm its sovereignty and administer welfare to native populations. The impact of its presence supersedes that of the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC), the Church and the whalers (Berger 1977, Paine 1977).

More importantly, it financed the development of the current basis of the Inuit economy: the co-operative system which sustains the production of Inuit art. These Arctic dwellers never produced carvings for indigenous trade. Whalers bartered with the Inuit for many items including small carvings which became popular souvenirs. Prior to 1948, carvings played a peripheral role in trading activity.
In visual power and force of statement Navajo blankets represent a high point in the history of American Indian art. The expressive use of color and energy controlled in a two dimensional surface is remarkable, and the great number of individual examples surviving indicates that the general level of quality during the period discussed is very high, in terms of both visual expression and weaving technique. Within the tradition, the preoccupation with individual creation and artistic choice is even more notable.

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Style in Navajo aesthetics is "creative synthesis" and in their weaving:
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These blankets and Navajo sand paintings influenced the development of colour field painting popular in the 1960's. Some specialists note that the Navajo weavers did a better job with colour than the painters inspired by their work. Berlant and Kahlenberg (1977:146) note that many contemporary artists have
Navajo blankets in their personal collections:

Abstraction was not a special "artist's" vocabulary for the Navajo who wove these blankets; rather it was a valid means of personal expression in their society. The Navajo weaver dealt with many of the same concerns as contemporary artists, but in the more integrative Navajo culture these concerns were central and shared by all members of the tribe. Weaving was part of the cycle of life for the Navajo women. This widespread practice of weaving did not lead to mediocre amateurism, rather, it became an important aspect of a society in which every woman functioned as an artist. The blankets have a dynamic force and consistently aggressive quality, traits that our culture has not considered feminine. The creative independence within the blanket tradition points to important freedoms for women in Navajo society.

Colour-field painters were directly influenced by Navajo textiles and sand paintings. Therefore, art critics and historians have broadened their perspective and begun to discuss these and other textiles as "art,". In 1984, a Navajo satillo serape was auctioned at Sotheby's for $115,000, the highest price ever paid for an American Indian artifact (Johnson 1984:17). Such auction activity reflects a dual exploitation: that which began a century ago, and the fact that contemporary weavers must "compete" with textiles woven by their ancestors.

Although a number of professionals in different disciplines (an art critic, an anthropologist and an artist), are using terminology formerly reserved in the discussion of fine art, Navajo weaving has become an "art" form by association or by métamorphosis (Graburn 1976). The impact of Navajo textiles on colour field painters parallels (in a less spectacular way) the impact of African masks on early twentieth century artists. Pictures of rugs painted by Navajo
artist R.C. Gorman were exhibited at the Heard Museum in Phoenix in 1967. Five years later the first travelling exhibit of old Navajo blankets toured the United States. To date, no travelling exhibit of contemporary Navajo weaving has been organized. Gorman says:

'I have been using the design motifs of Indian rugs and pottery for my paintings because one day these things are going to be no more. They are going to be lost, and it is going to happen soon. It will be a white America by 2000. The Indian art that people are enjoying now—the rugs and pottery—are no longer going to be there. It's inevitable: complete integration.' I am amused that I sell my rug paintings for more than the actual rug sells for; perhaps the paintings are worth more in the long run. Moths don't like polymers.

In the Introduction to Women and Colonization, Eleanor Leacock (1980) notes that:

The Victorians saw women in non-Western societies as oppressed and servile creatures, beasts of burden, chattels who could be bought and sold, eventually to be 'liberated by civilization' or "progress," thus attaining the enviable position of women in Western society. With the development of anthropology as a science in the first half of the 20th century, the Victorian attitude gradually gave way to what appeared to be a less biased view, exhibiting a new respect for other cultures but, in fact, reflecting a similar bias in a more sophisticated form.

This analogy holds for the art/craft distinction also. For the majority of anthropologists, natives remained craftspersons until they began to produce in media recognized as fine arts in the Western world. Such is the case for the Inuit, whose story is related in Chapter III.
FOOTNOTES

1. W. F. M. Arny became Navajo agent in 1873. As one time acting governor of New Mexico, Arny was sympathetic to Anglo sheep ranchers. He conspired to substitute a poor strip of land on the eastern edge of the reservation for a portion of Navajo land that comprised some of the richest agricultural land in the southwest. His scheme was foiled by Thomas Keam, a trader who had worked for Arny as a translator. (McNitt 1962:142).

2. The Harvey papers are currently housed at the Special Collections Library of the University of Arizona, Tucson. Seventeen boxes and six volumes of material cover the period from 1896 to 1945. The Hubbell papers, containing over 4,000 pounds of material including personal and business documents, correspondence, ledgers and day books from approximately 1885 to 1950 are also housed at this library. Correspondence with the Free Harvey Company is contained in Boxes 36 through 38. Letters from Harvey and/or Schweizer to Hubbell over a 25 year period provide valuable information concerning wholesale and retail business activity. Correspondence between Hubbell and the Harvey Company began in 1902. After Lorenzo Hubbell's death in 1930, Schweizer continued purchasing Indian artifacts from either Lorenzo Jr., or Roman Hubbell.

3. The Harveys' fortunate position was recognized at an early date. They received a letter from an English Fellow of the Royal Geological Society in 1902 noting: "You have an opportunity far exceeding that of any private individual (Harvey 1963:37)."

4. In a letter to Hubbell dated March 10, 1930, Schweizer noted that traders had written him stating that if they spoke out against it, it "would be accepted as the selfish point of view of an Indian trader... Personally I believe the Indian stands a better chance in the hands of the traders than in the hands of three or four theorists." (He was criticizing John Collier).

5. From other information on Lorenzo's business at the time, he almost always took 100% mark up on the textiles. But I was unable to determine whether the number in code is actually what the weaver received in trade, items, or the fee Hubbell would have charged a bulk buyer.

6. Gladys Reichard, an anthropologist from Columbia University, lived with a Navajo family during the summers of 1930 through 1934, and learned the entire weaving process from the beginning. Her three books, "Spider Woman" (1934), "Navajo Shepherd and Weave" (1935), and "Desba, Woman of the Desert" (1939), remain classics concerning Navajo weaving.
7. A recent reference to their creativity appeared in the New York Times, October 24, 1976. Mary Gray notes: "With a mental image of the pattern, she starts the rug from the bottom and weaves up, performing all the intricate maneuvers by hand...despite a lack of computation and measured blueprints she works with precision. The design of her rug emerges with absolute symmetry, whether folded vertically or horizontally."
CHAPTER III

THE INUIT

Introduction

The socio-political position of the Inuit today parallels that of the Navajo. Both groups exist as Fourth World peoples occupying traditional territory administered by powerful governments. The intrusion of merchant capital beginning with the whalers and expanded by the trading companies, initiated the process of Inuit underdevelopment. Traditional Inuit subsistence was undermined by periodic scarcity of land animals, canine disease (which affected hunting success), and increasing dependence upon traders (Jensen 1975). The shift to fur trapping which occurred at the end of the nineteenth century was a short-lived financial success for most Inuit. After the collapse of the fur market in the late 1940's, the Canadian government expanded its presence in the north to affirm its sovereignty and administer welfare to native populations. The impact of its presence supersedes that of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), the Church and the whalers (Berger 1977, Paine 1977).

More importantly, it financed the development of the current basis of the Inuit economy: the co-operative system which sustains the production of Inuit art. These Arctic dwellers never produced carvings for indigenous trade. Whalers bartered with the Inuit for many items including small carvings which became popular souvenirs. Prior to 1948, carvings played a peripheral role in trading activity.
with both whaling crews and the HBC. As we have seen in Chapter II, the Navajo situation provides a dramatic contrast - weaving and wool production provided the backbone of their trading economy in pre- and post-contact periods until the Depression.

The explosion of art objects emerging from the Arctic since 1949 is indeed a unique phenomenon. The Inuit are currently the only indigenous minority in the western hemisphere to benefit economically from the art/craft distinction. Canadian Inuit soapstone carvings and prints are displayed and sold as art in internationally recognized museums in Europe and North America (Fry 1971:101). The economic success of Inuit production involves a specific strategy that hinges on the public's perception of it as art. Through the introduction of media in the north that were widely recognized by the potential southern market as art, the individuals involved avoided the economic exploitation of native populations that has occurred elsewhere. Thus, one constantly sees references to "Inuit art" (and not to "Inuit craft"). The perception and development of Inuit art has been constantly reinforced because of the implicit nature of the art/craft distinction as cultivated historically in the West. The recent introduction of tapestry weaving in the Arctic coupled with a marketing strategy which parallels that of the sculpture and prints provides a provocative contrast to the usual position of weaving from the hinterlands - as functional craft. The paradox concerning
the social division of labour involved in the production of Inuit art (especially the prints and tapestries) becomes evident when one recalls the genesis of the art/craft distinction itself (Chapter I).

This chapter surveys the origin of the contemporary art tradition in 1948, and the critical role played by artist James Houston in initiating carving and printmaking activities in the North. The organization of the co-operatives managed by southern advisors to facilitate the marketing of Inuit art will be reviewed. The introduction of co-operatives as a non-colonial venture in the North was done with the best of intentions. The subsequent development of co-ops resulted in a number of problems which will be cited. The role of southern advisors in covertly dictating the production of Inuit art will be presented when the organization of the workshops and the policies of various government agencies are examined. Statements from Inuit artists are reviewed regarding their feelings about their work. Finally, a description of the organization and social division of labour at the Pangnirtung Weave Shop is presented and the contrasts concerning ownership and control of production become apparent in recalling the Navajo situation.

The Birth of the Inuit Art Phenomenon

Probably no other art form produced by a minority group has generated as much controversy and been subject to so many myths as
Inuit art. It is true that the Inuit have carved for hundreds of years, producing items for either magical-religious purposes, toys and/or games, or incising decorative designs on functional objects. (Martin 1967:5). Myths attesting to the 'unspoiled and spontaneous nature' of Inuit carving, or the slow, gradual development of a unique art form over centuries are still widely circulated. Martin (1967:9) notes that by the 16th century, because of deteriorating environmental conditions, the production of carved artifacts actually decreased. After the appearance of the whalers and the HBC, small carvings became increasingly popular as souvenirs. The HBC actively traded ivory carvings until the Depression (Martin 1967:11). As independent commodity producers, Inuit hunters sold or traded furs and small carvings to the HBC in exchange for goods. This situation existed prior to 1948.

The contemporary Inuit art tradition was born in 1948, when James Houston, artist and lecturer, traveled north to Baffin Island on a painting and sketching trip. He collected some small carvings produced by local Inuit and displayed them in Montreal to members of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild (Martin 1967:12; Thomas 1979:3). The Guild encouraged Houston to return north and funded him to purchase as many carvings as possible. By 1952, Houston reported that over 20,000 pieces were sold by the Guild to the Canadian public (Thomas 1979:4). Initial involvement by both the HBC and the government...
resulted in the production of souvenirs for an outside market. The HBC actually used hundreds of carvings as ballast in outgoing ships (Jack Ferguson, personal communication). Carving increasingly began to provide a supplementary income for the majority of Inuit devastated by the collapse of the fox pelt market due to production of synthetic furs, fur farms, and Russian competition (Jensen 1975:91).

Shortly after initiating a southern market for carvings, Houston returned north and began to teach the Inuit at Cape Dorset how to produce prints. Printmaking eventually spread to other northern communities and currently six villages have active printmaking facilities. In an article published in the Beaver, Charles Martijn (1967) discusses Houston's complex and controversial role in implementing this new art phenomenon. Prior to his trip north, Houston had scant knowledge of Eskimo culture and history (Houston 1952:102). His art education was steeped in Western tradition. The Handicraft Guild wanted Houston to find out whether the Eskimo could produce carvings in quantity and of a quality that would be saleable. In short the carvings would have to appeal to the taste of Western purchasers whose approach to and appreciation of art does not necessarily coincide with that of the "primitive" maker (Martijn 1967:13).

In order to increase their supplemental income, every carver was encouraged to use better materials and to work skillfully. The HBC managers were coached on "values" by Houston because, with the government's blessing, he visited settlements in Baffin Island and
the Hudson Bay area to organize carving projects in co-operation with the HBC. In the communities involved, eventually 75% of the villagers began to carve (Houston 1952:104). Consequently, HBC managers traded or purchased carvings and influenced the Eskimo by paying more for the "best work" (Houston 1952:104).

Martijn (1967:13) succinctly notes that:

...use of the term "best work" is revealing for it heralds a subjective approach to Eskimo art. The latter was to be judged solely by Western standards. Not Eskimo but Euro-Canadian canons would determine what was good or bad—a crucial point indeed. Small wonder that under such subtle economic pressure the Eskimo carver began to introduce an even greater number of "alien" concepts into his art. In this way his work became more and more tailored to the tastes of southern Canadian buyers.

So, Inuit carvers invariably produced representations which depicted traditional hunting or family scenes, or wild animals—things the "outside world" pictured as distinctly "Eskimo.

Martijn (1967:1) comments:

A fairly routine occupation involving the manufacture of souvenirs was taken in hand and refurbished with aesthetic concepts and standards of artistic workmanship compatible to Western tastes. Posters, movies, and illustrated guide manuals containing suggestions on what to carve, were used to promote this campaign. The resultant output in turn was widely publicized as "primitive" art and rigorously guarded against any exploitative practices that could have reduced it to a slick, repetitive, trinket industry.

Within two years of his initial trip, Houston reported that the quality of the pieces had "greatly improved." Martijn (1967:14) suggests that Houston unconsciously imposed his Euro-Canadian art
concepts on receptive carvers who, anxious to accommodate a growing market, responded to his advice. Houston's attitude is reflected in the following comment made during this period:

"the process of the Eskimo mind in thinking about art must be one of the most primitive in the world. Perhaps here and now we have a chance to study and at last, partly understand what is behind this basic urge to create and what determines the artist's selection of a subject" (Houston 1956:224).

Due to Houston's influence, a number of physical changes have occurred in the carvings. For example, traditional carvings were small (they would easily fit in your hand). Today a large piece may weigh hundreds of pounds. Although Houston has stated that traditionally the Inuit carved steatite, most prehistoric carvings were in ivory, bone, antler, wood or horn (Martin 1967:15). In contrast, after Houston's first trip, the Inuit were discouraged from carving in wood because (Martin 1967:16):

"the available material is usually not of a quality judged to be in keeping with the high object d'art standards of appearance demanded from Eskimo handicraft by southern outlets and customers.

Prehistoric and early historic carvings usually depicted a single subject in a static manner. Contemporary carvings often consist of:

multiple associations portraying interaction between people, animals, or people and animals. Such episodes were seldom...the theme of traditional carvings which moved on altogether different levels of meaning and communication (Martin 1967:11).

Probably the most outspoken critic of contemporary Inuit art is the anthropologist and cinematographer, Edmund Carpenter. In his
book *Eskimo*, co-authored by Flaherty and Varley (1959), Carpenter
gives a perceptive overview of the covert changes that have occurred
in Inuit life that are consequently manifested in their art. He
notes that the Inuit have a different space/time orientation than
Westerners. They don’t conceptually separate space and time. The
importance we lavish on time, the Eskimo accords to space, and this
concept is reflected in their language. The small pieces carved
traditionally reflect this attitude because they have multiple
perspectives with no single favoured view (no base which
grounded the object spatially). Carpenter noted that every adult
Aiviilik (the Inuit from Southampton Island) was an accomplished
carver who did not divide his products into works of art and
utilitarian objects. Like the Navajo (Witherspoon 1977), the
importance for these Inuit was the act of creating, the process or
the doing; the significance of the object did not lie in its use as
a potential commodity (Carpenter 1959).

Linear perspective, so dear to the Western art world, is
totally foreign to the Inuit. Carpenter encountered the welfare
officer teaching drawing to the Aiviilik and encouraging the students
to abandon multiple perspective and to imitate the "object-optimal
image" of the three-dimensional world. This type of perspective
tries to produce a scene perceived by the eye at a given moment. It
eliminates time and confines itself solely to space. Carpenter
(1959) summarizes:
Clearly, the introduction of the three dimensional perspective along with other Western concepts of individualism has led to changes in the manner in which the Aivilik's perceive their world and in the way they conceive of themselves in it.

The above quote was written prior to 1980. Since that time the Inuit art market has become a multi-million dollar business. A number of artists, critics, dealers and a few anthropologists have gained notoriety in their association with Inuit art. Generally, their comments are most favourable in reviewing its success. Carpenter's comments represent those of a distinct but vocal minority. In 1983, he wrote the Introduction for a book titled *In The Middle* by photographer Stephen Williams. His words remain a powerful indictment of the manufacturing of this new phenomenon:

> Imaginary Inuit are now enobled in the media; but the process of grinding real Inuit into a state of living non-existence goes on unchanged. Bureaucrats learned from advertisers how to achieve effects without products...In the end it's not romantics who destroy people by their irresponsibility and ignorance but bureaucrats who translate fiction into propaganda, propaganda into power...Central to this propaganda is what passes for 'Eskimo art.' A truly objective study of this souvenir industry would deal with conquest and exploitation, media manipulation and academic corruption.

Carpenter's angry words are extremely disturbing. An analysis of how the Inuit art market is structured, the pivotal role played by non-Inuit and the emphasis on their art for investment purposes helps one to understand his scathing criticism.
The Role of the Co-ops

Initially, the Inuit co-operatives in the Northwest Territories and Arctic Quebec began as local cottage industries or resource-harvesting projects, supervised by development officers in a few settlements. The first Arctic co-op was incorporated in George River in April 1959 (Iglauer 1979:xx). As self-help organizations, formed to market carvings, the co-ops seemed an ideal way to bypass the monopoly of the Hudson Bay Company by offering the carver a higher price for his work and selling him material necessities for less. The two Arctic co-op movements were separated by white-imposed boundaries when the Federal Government turned over responsibility for the co-ops to the Northwest Territories and Quebec in 1967 (Jensen 1975:150).

La Fédération des Coopératives du Nouveau Québec (FCNQ), provides its eleven co-ops with technical and developmental services, centralized buying and distribution, Canadian and foreign marketing of fine art and craft, northern construction and tourist facilities, auditing, promotion and development (Inuktitut 1979:67).

The NWT Confederation (CACFL) with head offices in Yellowknife, offers many similar services and currently owns six exclusive retail stores called "Northern Images" to market Inuit arts and crafts. Canadian Arctic Producers (CAP), based in Ottawa, is the marketing arm of CACFL which wholesales sculptures, fine arts and crafts to over 700 dealers in 11 countries (Jensen 1975:160). In 1959, two co-operatives sold $15,000 worth of goods. By 1978, 52 Arctic co-
ops sold $24 million worth of goods and generated $6.5 million in income as the single largest employer of native people in the north (Arctic Co-ops Celebrate HapY 20th 1979:11). The main source of funding for co-ops is the Eskimo Loan Fund. Co-ops can borrow up to $50,000 for ten years at 5% interest (in 1975) (Jensen 1975:146). Jensen notes that this is a miniscule amount compared to government subsidy of big business interests including $80 million to Canadian Pacific Railroad for building the Great Slave Railroad to Pine Point area, and Baffinland Iron Mines received $25 million.

Because of their economic and organizational structure, co-ops form the basis of the modern Inuit community in the Arctic. Nearly all co-ops in the NWT are managed by imported personnel. Quebec has had native managers since the early 1960's, and the entire administration is comprised of Inuit or Indian personnel (FCNO pamphlet information). A number of co-ops have suffered intermittently from lack of funds and/or mismanagement. Sheila Meldrum (1975) documents the origin and development of the Ikaluit Co-operative in Frobisher Bay. Formed as a fishing co-op in 1961, to harvest char it expanded to include a DNA handicraft project for the rehabilitation of TB patients returning north. After the rehabilitation centre closed in 1965, a few carvers formed their own co-operative, which purchased carvings outright without regard to "market potential." Two problems quickly emerged. Lack of "quality control" and slow processing of carvings in the south meant the co-
op quickly depleted its cash reserves. Within one year the co-op
collapsed and only resumed purchasing carvings after receiving a
government loan. (The fishing co-op had to close in 1964, due to
depletion of Arctic char). During this period Canadian Arctic
Producers was in the process of becoming organized and it was unable
to help the fledgling co-op with its problems because CAP itself was
understaffed. Meldrum (1975:105) notes that CAP's functions:
were to provide advice and direction to the co-operative
on quality control, market demand for certain types and
sizes of products, and quantities of items which the co-
operative should send out for sale, and to serve as a
marketing agent or distribution centre between the co-
operatives and retailers.

A number of workshops associated with the co-ops may produce a craft
for awhile and then lose their funding. The only workshop that
operates consistently "in the black" is the Inuvik Parka Factory.
The rest of the workshops in the Arctic are heavily subsidised by
Canadian taxpayers, yet produce many items that are financially out
of reach for the majority of Canadians.

A chronic problem for many co-ops involves acquisition of
quality soapstone for their carvers. If co-ops are unable to obtain
quality stone their carvers cannot carve; therefore they have
nothing to sell and cannot buy the co-op's goods! A number of co-
ops have failed for various reasons. In some areas they are 'make-
work' projects, actually welfare in disguise. Language and
translation errors have caused major problems in running the co-ops.
Over-extension of credit has caused serious economic difficulties.
among Inuit who were unfamiliar with Western economics (personal notes, 1982 Baffin Island field trip). The increase of red
ink on the balance sheets triggered the NWT to encourage
the "privatization" of commercial enterprises in the
Arctic. In 1981, the Department of Economic Development and Tourism
offered 24 workshops (laundry, knitwear, jewellery, furniture, etc.)
for sale. Although the workshops fulfill important
social needs, they will be closed if they aren't viable
within five years. Their viability is directly related to
the success of sales in the south (Marcia Fenn, personal
communication). Whether sponsored by the Federal Govern-
ment or NWT agencies, nearly all workshops are managed
by accomplished artisans from southern Canada. All
techniques introduced to the Inuit have been taught by
southern specialists. All printshops are managed by southern
printmakers who direct printmaking activities that conform to
Western traditions. Printmaking involves a social division of
labour in the Arctic. The drawings by natives from the local
community are purchased by the shop and a few are chosen every year
to be incised in stone or on copper plates and "pulled." Then the
Eskimo Arts Council judges the artist's proof. Each print is
editioned fifty times and signed by both the artist (the person who
did the drawing) and the printmaker. Then the stone is broken or
the copper plate destroyed.
Workshops are run on a business-like basis. They are usually open forty hours a week but shut down during the summer months so employees may go to "camp" (live off the land with their families). Southern managers often leave for an extended vacation. When recognized artists in the south move northward to manage workshops, they play a central role in the origin of an art or craft "phenomenon." They become educators, administrators, and (hopefully) sensitive to marketing trends. All workshops in the Arctic fulfill a social need, but high overhead coupled with consumer fickleness leave them in a vulnerable position.

Because of the expense involved in organization and staffing workshops, coupled with transportation and marketing costs, it is virtually impossible for any Inuit to attempt the creation of a new workshop. One exception remains the Pangnirtung Misuvik, or sewing centre. Begun by five Inuit women to make duffel coats for northern residents, it expanded through LEAP funding and currently operates as the only Inuit-run Misuvik in the Arctic. However, southern consultants are brought in periodically to assist with marketing procedures, etc. The Canadian government owns patents on all of the embroidered designs on the coat covers (Marcia Fenn, personal communication, 1982 Baffin Island Field Trip).

During the past thirty years southern advisors have introduced many new media to the Inuit, utilizing a number of unfamiliar techniques. Most natives hired by the workshops are trained as
"specialists", not "generalists"; that is, the labour process is divided and every individual has one or two duties. Artistic control is exercised by the (southern) overseer via outside imposed standards. This social division of labour mitigates against individual Inuit expression. Soapstone carving remains the only media in which one individual is responsible for artistic control. Even then market conditions often dictate or modify what the carver will produce. From its inception, carving has been greatly influenced by foreign tastes. Carpenter (Williams 1977) notes that Houston greatly admired Henry Moore, and that many Inuit carvings are reminiscent of his sculpture.
The Role of Government Agencies in the South

The Social and Cultural Development Division of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development administers programs concerning native people which include the Inuit Art Section. This Section prepares exhibits from the Department's extensive collection of arts and crafts for museums and universities in Canada and elsewhere, and curates an extensive slide library of native art. It publishes information concerning issues relating to Inuit art in its newsletter "About Arts and Crafts" three times a year. News regarding conferences, exhibitions, and workshops, dealer news, marketing organizations and the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council are all included in the publication.

Canadian Arctic Producers (CAP) also publishes a newsletter in addition to several volumes containing the biographies of over 700 Inuit artists from most northern communities.

The Canadian Eskimo Arts Council

Probably the most controversial organization associated with Inuit art concerns the role played by the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council. Information published in the Artists' Supplement, Art and Culture of the North, Spring, 1978, defines the role and policies of the CEAC. The organization is currently comprised of three Inuit and twelve southern advisers including gallery owners and artists. Activated in the early 1960's, the Eskimo Arts Council defines itself as...
an advisory group which recommends policies and helps projects to assist the local government, NWT government, northern co-ops, and other organizations to achieve orderly development of Eskimo Arts and crafts. It gives advice on topics like maintaining high standards of quality, promotion in present and future markets, introduction of new techniques, and copyright protection compensation to Inuit artists and craftsmen. The CEAC annually juries all Inuit prints produced in the workshops. Prints may be rejected because they are not standard technically or aesthetically, and if released would damage the collection and market for Inuit prints as a whole and seriously impair the reputation of the co-op and the artist. The Council advises the co-op not to market a rejected print (Eskimo Arts Council News 1978:23).

The other category concerns withheld prints:

It is almost always a print which does not fit into one work cohesively for the entire collection, i.e., a print by a well-known artist which does not live up to the artist's established reputation. However, this print could be important historically within a collection of the artist's work, i.e., a print that is important because of the theme but within a given collection it causes the collection to be uneven and detracts from the body of the work. Withheld prints may be considered for future submission to the Council (Eskimo Arts Council News 1978:23).

Quality is not the only consideration concerning prints. In order to keep prices high, prints are pulled in limited editions. This greatly increases their attraction as investments. The CEAC examines the artist's proof of each image in a collection several months before the prints are officially launched. Very often the editions are not completed at this time. The Co-op requires considerable time to prepare and publish a catalogue which can only be accomplished after the CEAC's advice has been received (Barz II:4). Prints are displayed and offered for sale
simultaneously in a number of prestigious North American galleries once a year. In an article published in the HBC’s Beaver (1975:23), Mary Craig (associated with the Fine Arts Section of CBAP), reviewed the history of prints from Cape Dorset. Between 1959 and 1974, 48,000 prints under 1,058 titles appeared in 15 editions. The first sale of Cape Dorset prints (13 images) occurred in the Winnipeg Hudson Bay in 1958, and prices ranged from $5.00 to $12.50 each. The next year 41 prints were offered. This set ultimately changed hands in Vancouver for $74,000 in 1974. Artists whose names are legendary today were among the first Cape Dorset printmakers. The well-known “Enchanted Owl” by Kenojuak produced in 1960, sold in Calgary during 1974 for $35,000. When first issued, the print cost $75.00. Craig (1975:25) makes a revealing statement after tracing the escalation in price for Kenojuak’s work when she says:

It has to be noted that these high prices are not realized by the Eskimo artist or the co-operative, but by fortunate or astute collectors. This is the name of the game and it is in no way peculiar to Eskimo art.

The CBAC has looked after the official certification of prints too (Eskimo Arts Council News 1978:23):

The embossed symbol of the Council appears on all prints approved by a committee of the Council from the co-operatives’ yearly output. The symbol not only certifies that a print is a genuine work of art but that in their opinion it has artistic merit and meets technical standards. No consideration is given to saleability. That is the business of the marketing arm of the individual cooperative.
Behind all of the overt promotion and investment activity lie some genuine problems that are becoming increasingly serious for the co-ops. An example is provided by an episode that occurred in 1980 at the Pangnirtung co-op's print shop. In 1979, the CEAC juried in all prints produced by the co-op that year -- a cause for celebration since the print shop was only six years old. The next year, in anticipation of another success, the co-op purchased $60,000 worth of paper, inks, paid salaries, etc., and editioned all prints before the CEAC had seen the artists' proofs. The Council rejected all but five prints. Their action seriously jeopardized the financial health of the Pangnirtung co-op, which until that time, had been one of the most financially successful co-operatives in the eastern Arctic. The print shop closed for a while, then another new manager (from the south) re-opened to try again (personal notes, Baffin Island field trip 1982).

Investors

An important publication from New York City plays a pivotal role in this "game." The journal Art and Culture of the North (published quarterly) lists calendar events concerning Inuit art shows, gallery openings, conferences and northern tours for collectors and curators of Inuit art. Within the last three years the Newsletter has published lists of auctions with prices of Inuit artifacts, sculptures and prints. Commentary relating to an auction of the Eccles Collection held in Toronto, February 1978, and attended by 300 buyers stated that:
The significance of the sale is that it establishes prices for fine Eskimo art that will be internationally recognized. Eccles purchased a piece at an auction in Toronto in 1962, for $125 which sold for $7000.

One year later the Frederick Ellis collection was offered at auction. A native of Ontario, Ellis taught in the Arctic for over years. As part of his professional duties, Ellis flew into nearly every Arctic community (and added to his extensive collection of Inuit art). In the forward to the catalogue issued at the sale is a comment by his father:

In 1974 Fred Ellis, tired of Canada's barren north moved permanently to Australia's tropical 'Gold Coast' where he is now teaching. He left his sizable and comprehensive collection of Eskimo art in Canada and has now decided to offer it for sale through the Waddington, McLean and Co., auction rooms.

Total proceeds from the sale amounted to $265,000 (ACN 1979 III).

To aid collectors and investors, the New York newsletter has also published "Inuit Artists' Print Workbook" with information on 3,600 prints produced by 275 artists. Information includes the artist's name, location, title of print, type of technique used, price at issue, and price realized at auction.

In addition to advertising auction sales, ACN has also published articles concerning the "Aesthetics of Inuit Art," "Care of Fine Prints," "Appraising Eskimo Art," "Art and Taxes (Canada)." Articles have appeared in major newspapers with provocative titles: "Eskimo Art: Gold Cash for Hot Item" (Meisler...
1983:17). Other magazines have published articles concerning topics such as "Would You Sleep All Night On A Toronto Street To Buy A Dorset Print?" (Kenyon 1976:22). Concerning issuing of new prints by artists who recently passed away, the following comment appeared in the Spring 1975 issue of "Beaver": "The 'Hunters of Old' by Parr was issued posthumously in 1974 for $800, an unprecedented price for a new release. Within hours it traded for $1600. In CAP's newsletter (November 1972), Mary Craig mentions the speed in which the 1972 collection of prints sold. She reports:

Just over a month ago we had at CAP 2,550 prints of the Cape Dorset Collection. Today there are fewer than 400 on hand. We knew that they were going to be popular but we had not expected such a fantastic response. We felt sorry for the hundreds of collectors who were disappointed when they couldn't get Pitalouisa's Bird of Sango, or Kananginak's Ooj, among many others.

With this kind of promotional commentary continually published coupled with the emphasis on "investment quality" art, it's not difficult to understand why people like Carpenter are antagonistic to the "unique Inuit art phenomenon."

During my first trip to Baffin Island in 1981, I met six "professional couples" (i.e., both employed as teachers, medical personnel, airline employees, etc.). Of the six, five couples had been in the Arctic from five to fifteen years and were heavily investing in Inuit art. One teacher admitted that he owned more than 70 large soapstone sculptures (he flew free of charge to all Arctic communities because his wife was a stewardess). Most of
these people were quite vocal in admitting that they will sell the art "when the time is right." In his book The People's Land (1977), Hugh Brody discusses at length the transience of many southerners who go north to "save a bundle." With government housing and travel subsidies (and no need for a car), it's quite possible to save well over 50% of one's salary annually.

During the Circumpolar Conference held in Frobisher Bay during July, 1983, DINE Minister John Munro told delegates that about $5 million will be put into the Ungava and NWT co-ops to develop a native management trainee program (suggested years ago). This is the federal response to a 40% decrease in art (mostly carving) sales in the past three years. After years of white-run expertise, can native administrators manage to rescue the co-ops? Such actions reflect on the hinterland position of native artists. Whether it's sugar cane or fine art, as primary producers their economic health depends upon an unstable market subject to outside control. But the collectors' and investors' market couldn't be healthier.

Many of Carpenter's criticisms seem to be justified. He quotes Bill Reid, the Haida carver who wrote (Williams 1983):

In the early days of printmaking and soapstone carving a few truly gifted individuals accepted the new media as another challenge to be confronted with the same eagerness and courage that they brought to other pursuits. I think they brought in from the ice a fund of genius and delight in accomplishment that far transcends the limited vision of the southern instigators of the new means of expression and for a brief magical moment let us share something of their view of the world, something of what it is to be the product of those long centuries of fine tuning which enabled them to live such marvelously
human lives in such inhuman circumstances. After a quarter of a century, some of these old images are still fresh and vivid in my mind. Most of the hundreds of thousands of pieces of "Eskimo art" produced since the 50's is junk although compared to similar exploitations, it's quite remarkable junk. Imbedded in this rough matrix are an unlikely number of artistic gems and a few masterpieces.

In continuing his commentary, Carpenter says:

In the past a few; today none. In May 1982, I visited an "Eskimo art" gallery in New York; carvings and prints were uniformly depressing; literature and promotion were explicitly dishonest. Subjects and styles didn't derive from the Inuit, but from buyers' fictions and fashions... Art and poetry are channels whereby passions reveal themselves. Increasingly this souvenir industry reveals subservience. It's not the art of a free people, but merely a means of exploitation and manipulation.

Based on the way the workshops are run, especially with the autocratic power of the CEAC, how could "this souvenir industry" be anything but subservient? Reid was not the only individual to comment on the vigor and freshness of the first art pieces (before the CEAC became active). One collector interviewed in Kenyon's article (1976:2) noted: "Especially in the early ones (prints) there was so much imagination, creativity, innovative talent and simplicity that I find them irresistible. I wouldn't sell mine for any price." In the Spring issue of Art and Culture of the North (1980:235), Dorothy Eber discusses the early history of the Povungnituk Print workshop. The first year (1962) a set of editioned prints achieved CEAC approval. In 1963, all prints were rejected. Upset by the decision, the print shop manager Victor Tinkl severed the shop's association with CEAC. Tinkl left the
Arctic the following year. A decade later, Povungnituk resumed relations with CEAC and the southern advisors returned. Ironically, there's a fresh awareness regarding the value in the Povungnituk prints of the 1960's. In a revealing statement Eber (1980:235) comments:

Now with our wide-open eyes we ask how we could have missed the power, the force, the vitality and often the elegance of these works...Those from Povungnituk were not always technically perfect prints. But the images they bring us from the minds and hands of men and women for whom the old Eskimo way of life was still the true reality are the most immediate, the most untutored in Eskimo graphics.

Those traditional images recede quickly. In Williams' book (1983), there's a photograph of an Inuit hunter building a kayak. When questioned regarding their grandfather's activities, two young boys said they didn't know what a kayak was for.

Inuit Artists Respond

With all of the controversy and public relations swirling around this recent phenomenon, how do the artists themselves feel about their work? One of the first references to carvers' feelings appeared in Martinez's (1967:5) article. He mentions a field-researcher who interviewed more than twenty artists from an Ungava village:

with the exception of a seventeen year old boy who had made only three figures in his life, and didn't mind it, all the others stated that they didn't like, or that they hated, carving. They went ahead at it in the realization that if they wanted extra money this was one of the few methods at hand for earning it. In this sense carving happened to be a necessary occupation, with the result
that the majority of them looked on it as a boring and mechanical activity.

Carving was still in the "souvenir stage" at the time. In CAP's publication concerning statements from Arctic Bay residents, several note how they feel about their work. Imaryutq Akumalik echoes the above statement when she admits (Cowan 1976:123) she began carving out of financial necessity after her husband lost his leg in a hunting accident:

I started selling my pieces to the co-op to help. I don't like carving very much; I prefer to sew. But this household has not been eating very well....Lack of food is the only reason I carve....It's very difficult, and tiresome at times, to make your livelihood--pay your rent and buy your food--by carving.

Simeonie Allurut, who carves only muskoxen (Cowan 1976:127):

I carved because we didn't get enough money for our furs...the muskox is an animal of our land where flowers don't grow and there are no trees. We used to hunt them a long time ago; now we aren't allowed to. When you see a carving of a muskox you get the feeling of the land of the Inuit--the north--where the animals have to grow thick, black fur. It's more the government's land now. We hear that the muskoxen die of starvation and we are not allowed to kill them. They seem to represent the people of the north, and for that reason I keep on carving them.

In contrast, Swinton (1978:75) quotes a number of carvers and printmakers from several Arctic communities who state that they genuinely enjoy what they are doing--it has meaning for them.

Nelson Graburn (1976) has published several articles on how carving has been accepted as a compensatory male activity,
attacking the soapstone is analogous to traditional hunting activities.

Some Inuit seem unsure of their role and their success. Ruby Angna'naaq, the Manager of the Sanavik Cooperative writes of her feelings in the foreword to *The People Within, Art from Baker Lake* (Art Gallery of Ontario 1976):

First of all I apologize for not being able to write about "What it is like Being an Eskimo Artist" with firsthand knowledge. I am only a printmaker, one who makes copies of drawings that would make good prints. I cannot even make good carvings. Therefore all I can do is try to tell you what I think it is like being an Eskimo artist.

She then comments on the global changes that have occurred recently in Inuit life:

To many the past exists in memories, memories of a way of life that only shows itself now on paper, wall hangings, and carvings....Some Inuit are now on boards and councils, trying their best to cope with the problems of today and the future they didn't form or plan. They must think of economics and problems that arise from the needs of the Southern Taxpayers and their government.

Unfortunately they must also take into account the needs of the Southern investors. At the Pan Arctic Co-op Conference held in George River in 1980, Inuit members of various cooperatives voted to increase control over the market so that consistently high prices of Inuit art could be encouraged "to the benefit of investors who expected the prices of their investment in Inuit art to rise" (Co-op North Magazine:55).
The Pangnirtung Weave Shop

The organization of production involving the social division of labour evident in the only weave shop in the Arctic presents a graphic comparison to the Navajo situation presented in Chapter II. The weaving tradition at Pangnirtung is less than 15 years old, it involves the use of borrowed techniques and materials, yet all Inuit tapestries are sold as art in a few select galleries in North America. How did a handful of weavers on Baffin Island achieve this kind of recognition in less than a generation? Their success parallels that of Inuit soapstone carvers and printmakers whose works have appeared in major art museums in Europe and North America. Information concerning the history of the weave shop and the role played by acknowledged textile experts is surveyed below to provide a startling contrast to the Navajo situation.

The weave shop in Pangnirtung, which employs a dozen Inuit women, is one of the most successful workshops in the Arctic. Government-sponsored weaving shops were once located in Broughton Island and Cape Dorset, but currently the Pangnirtung shop remains the only one in operation. Canadian weaver Don Stuart began managing the shop under government funding in 1969. Twelve Inuit women work forty hours a week and half of them weave warm items reminiscent of the north: scarves, blankets, throws, ties and the "Akujulik" or "parka with the little tail" patterned after the
traditional amautik, or women's winter parka with a roomy back pouch in which the child is carried.

Novices begin by weaving the "Pang braid" on an inkle loom, and then graduate to the floor loom and weave the larger items. When a weaver feels she is ready to try tapestry weaving, she will begin on a small piece (1 x 1.5 m). All tapestries currently woven are figurative, representing Inuit people in traditional clothing engaged in various activities "on the land." Some tapestries depict birds or animals (real or imaginary). Most drawings for the designs (or cartoons) have been supplied by Malaya Akulukjuk, a woman in her sixties who lived in camp until fifteen years ago. In addition, any Inuit member of the community who brings a drawing to the shop will receive $5.00. If that drawing is chosen to be woven, the artist receives $20.00. Each time the drawing is editioned (up to twenty times), the artist receives an additional fee. The cost for an editioned tapestry escalates $50.00 every time it is woven. Only the finest wool yarns are used, imported from eastern Canada and Iceland (the latter is used in the scarves and blankets). Every tapestry is "signed" by the weaver in Inuktitut.

A tapestry weaver can make approximately $700.00 a month weaving full-time. The more experienced weavers usually manage two tapestries a month and receive about 50% of the final price of the piece. Approximately 90 tapestries in various sizes are woven
annually. CAP (Canadian Arctic Producers) used to market all Pangnirtung weaving, but now all tapestries are marketed directly to twelve Inuit art galleries in North America located in large cities. The functional items go to various gift shops. Special requests often take up to one year to complete because of the backlog of orders. Sizes range from 1 m x 1.5 m ($600-800) to 2 m x 2 m ($1800-2000); costs vary depending upon the difficulty of the piece.

A few large rugs (designed by an Ottawa weaver) have been woven, and cost around $4400.00 (2 m x 3 m).

Non-tapestry weavers make $5.00 per hour. The women do not spin or dye the wool. Spinning is extremely time consuming and would add considerable cost to each item. Water is rather scarce (especially in the early spring) and the lichen growth so fragile, that dyeing with native plants would be environmentally detrimental.

Although the items produced by the Pangnirtung weave shop are "in demand", and a customer must wait nearly a year for a tapestry, the weave shop still runs a deficit of over $50,000 annually. High overhead including salaries coupled with materials and transportation costs contribute to the chronic deficits of even the most successful workshops. All workshops in the Arctic fulfill social needs, but the government ultimately measures success in economic terms which jeopardizes their future.

The Organization of the Weave Shop

Like all other workshops, weaving is a totally imported
activity. Nothing remotely similar was ever done pre-historically because loom materials and appropriate fibres were simply not available. The looms used at Pangnirtung are totally unlike the portable backstrap and upright looms used by indigenous peoples in many parts of the world (Mexico, Central and South America, India, Indonesia and Africa). Pangnirtung weavers use floor looms made in Quebec that are fashioned after European models invented during the Middle Ages. The European floor loom is the most expensive type of loom available but it greatly speeds up the weaving process because foot treadles replace a great portion of the work done by the weaver's hands on more traditional looms. In addition, a 20-25 yard warp may be put on the loom and a number of pieces woven on it before another warp is necessary. In contrast, when one weaves on a more traditional type of hand-operated loom, usually only one item can be woven per warp. Indeed, the more "primitive" the loom, the slower the process. Weaving is a slow process under ideal conditions, but weaving time could be cut by as much as 50% by using floor looms.

The production of each tapestry involves a social division of labour since any local Inuit may sell a drawing to the weave shop. Piles of drawings including the 'rejects' from the print shop provide possibilities for a weaving. The "artist" is not consulted. Nearly all drawings are in black and white. The pattern for the design is made by photographing the drawing, projecting the negative
and tracing the image on paper. The image is then placed beneath the warp threads on the loom, so it is an exact replica of the drawing. Minor changes may be made to facilitate the weaving process (Personal notes, Baffin Island field trip 1981).

According to several articles (Beaver 1981:36) the choice of drawings and colours involves "collective decision-making." Don Stuart, the first manager of the weaver shop, published an article in 1972 (The Beaver:61) and he stated that the ten weavers he first trained:

designed the articles, choose the colours and set up the looms. Their inherent skill in use of colour and design is such that one must be careful not to influence it but just show how it can be used to best advantage by giving technical advice.

But since its inception, the success of the weaver shop has greatly fluctuated. A succession of managers over a five year period failed to maintain the standards initiated by Don Stuart. Because the Inuit women had no traditional background in this area, the quality of the work varies directly with the professional training and standards of the current manager. There was a period in the mid-1970's when piece after piece piled up in CAP's warehouse--technically there was nothing wrong with the weaving, but the designs were poorly chosen, colours unsuitable and the edges finished in long macrame fringe. Currently, the weaver shop manager imports all wool (therefore she pre-selects all colours since she does all the ordering). The edges are currently finished in a
Swedish braid technique that is much more suitable to the pieces; consequently the finished tapestries look very "slick" and "professional." Once the fortunes of the weave shop changed, with well-known professionals guiding its achievements, a decision was made to opt out of CAP marketing; twelve galleries were hand-picked in North America to handle ONLY the tapestries. Such action greatly facilitated their acceptance as "fine art." In nearly every article written subsequently on the weave shop, the tapestries are referred to as just that. Yet the social division of labour involves the weaver acting as technician - as the hands reproducing the artist's drawing.

All items marketed from the Arctic must conform to the highest artistic standards, otherwise the targeted market will not be interested. Because of such high overhead coupled with transportation costs, and to avoid exploiting the Inuit economically, prices remain high for these "unique" art objects. Terminology is very important and it has played a critical role in the Arctic. Craft items, including handsewn pieces, have never returned a decent amount to the producer. Only by working in a "protected shop" producing the finest quality items, can individuals make any money at all. But, because of the structure of the workshops, experimentation is impossible for the tapestry weaver to initiate on her own. Experimentation is expensive, time consuming and initially no financial return can be realized. All workshops
are under extreme pressure, and closure remains an imminent possibility in nearly every case. Until three years ago, each tapestry was "sent south" to be juried by professionals. Since a number of them are currently being editioned, outside jurying is no longer necessary.

Summary

A number of contradictions become apparent in the process of analyzing the production of Inuit art. For example, in order to avoid economic exploitation endemic to other native populations as commodity producers, the Canadian government has inadvertently instituted nearly total aesthetic subservience among Inuit weavers and printmakers. The stringent control exercised by the CEAC over print production keeps quality high while inducing scarcity, which attracts collectors and investors. This results in few Inuit being involved in the creation of prints or benefiting economically from their production. The same critique applies to the marketing of weaving.

However, little control exists over the number of carvers. Anyone may sell a carving to the co-op or a visiting entrepreneur. Therefore, carvings that vary in size and quality periodically flood CAP headquarters. In his evaluation study of the co-ops for DIAND, Stager (1982:4-6) comments upon the financial problems faced by CAP concerning the marketing of Inuit sculpture. He notes that Inuit carvers have increased their production because of chronic job
shortages. The number of quality pieces has declined, but natives need cash so prices paid for sculptures at the source are inflated! Buyer discrimination has resulted in large carving inventories for both the FCNO ($2 million) and CAP ($1.6 million) in 1981. Stager suggests a thorough study concerning the inventory, quality and marketing of Inuit carvings. He also notes that (1982:6):

the problems associated with carving do not apply at this time to prints....Quality control is maintained through the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council, with supply-market conditions well controlled.

Only by patterning the perception and marketing of these exotic works by a minority group, on past procedures, can the "developers" hope to attract a particular market. Paine (1977) has commented that "white tutelage is so intrusive that it is difficult for Inuit to maintain a perception of self which is independent of the white man and his culture." The administrative organization of the workshops coupled with the policies of the CEAC support Paine's statement. His critique of white tutelage expressed in his metaphor of the English nanny can be applied to CEAC activity: "We jury your prints; those that pass get printed (rewarded) for people will buy them." The colonizers imposed their aesthetics from the beginning of the Inuit-art phenomenon, sometimes overtly, often covertly.

Art of any kind tends to be a rarity in Western society. Yet the entire socio-economic health of Arctic residents currently depends upon many individuals producing "rare" items. The burden of Western art tradition weighs heavily on the Inuit. Interest in the
development of the Inuit art phenomenon conceals a dual tragedy: the first pieces produced are now appearing at auctions as the most precious and valuable (the artists who produced them are dead). These old pieces compete with work by living artisans. Only collectors, investors and auction house owners continue to reap the benefits of native productivity. The descendents of the producers cannot possibly benefit economically from works sold for high prices at art auctions. The auctions themselves reduce native heritage to a crass commercial enterprise. The emphasis on Inuit art for investment purposes (ACN Journal) epitomizes the dehumanization of the creative process. A high price is being extracted for the "economic" success of Inuit art. This new phenomenon may represent a new phase of "underdevelopment" for the Inuit. The Canadian government provides economic support to northern co-ops and workshops in the form of long-term loans at low or nil interest rates. Many articles produced in a number of workshops and printshops are financially out of reach for the average Canadian taxpayer. Thus, Miliband's (1969:Ch 3) supposition concerning state subsidy for an elite market is realized in the Canadian market.
Comparison Between the Organization of Production Among the Inuit and the Navajo

The information contained in Chapter III has provided a review of the Canadian government’s role in developing the Inuit art phenomenon. The following paragraphs summarize and compare the organization of artistic production among the Navajo and the Inuit in pre- and post-contact periods.

Prior to colonization, textile production among the Navajo and amulet carving for the Inuit involved production for use-value. During the nineteenth century, Navajo blankets became an important medium of exchange and Inuit traded amulets periodically with visiting European whalers. The intrusion of merchant capital via the Hudson Bay Company in the North, and independent traders in the southwest involved monopolistic pricing and eventually a “reproduction squeeze” which facilitated the extraction of surplus in both areas. Merchants seldom incurred costs regarding management and supervision of the production process since both trappers and weavers continued to own the means of production. Commodity production eventually became a necessity for both groups in order to acquire the traders’ goods and to discharge indebtedness. Intensification of both trapping and weaving activity was essential in order to acquire the “necessities.” The reproduction squeeze resulted in the devaluation of native production which meant reduction in the level of consumption of traders’ goods by native families or intensification of production activity (Bernstein 1977, Jensen 1975, Ruffing 1977).
This phenomenon occurred in both areas and ultimately led to local scarcity of fur-bearing animals in many parts of the North, over-grazing of land by Navajo sheep in the southwest, and diminution of quality in Navajo weaving in some areas. By 1930, weaving was of marginal economic importance to Navajo women (weavers averaged five cents an hour). Native-run guilds funded by the Navajo tribal government were organized in the 1950's to purchase and market rugs, silver jewelry and baskets while providing a fairer return to the producer. Five of seven outlets have closed in the last decade due to financial and administrative problems. Today, Navajo artisans may sell to their own guild, Indian art/craft galleries, at pow-wows, Indian artists' markets held annually in Santa Fe, New Mexico and Flagstaff, Arizona, trading posts or individual tourists. Most Navajo weavers remain independent producers who own the means of production and control working conditions. Yet the freedom Navajo weavers have retained concerning ownership of productive means has been curtailed by a) their lack of control over market forces and b) the public's perception of textile production as craft. Both aspects greatly reduce the amount of money received by the weaver.

In contrast, the introduction of government funded cooperatives and workshops in the Arctic provides an infrastructure to dominate and control Inuit art production. The distribution of Inuit prints:
and tapestries, and much soapstone is tightly controlled by either the CEAC, CAP, or select Inuit art galleries. There are no marketing alternatives for tapestry weavers and printmakers in the Arctic since the government controls the means of production and distribution. "Censorship" occurs at origin and final points of production since workshop managers make the final decisions regarding which drawings will be used for prints or tapestries. Initial print production is always curated by the CEAC prior to editioning limited numbers of prints.

Induced scarcity attracts investors and collectors while making most Inuit art unaffordable to many Canadians. Because of the high costs associated with production in the Arctic for a southern market (transportation, marketing, administrative salaries, etc.), all workshops and printshops must be subsidized by Canadian taxpayers. Milliband's (1998:Ch 3) thesis concerning state subsidy for an elite market is realized in the Canadian Arctic.

Carving in the North and weaving in the southwest were authentic activities for both groups since they were indigenous to each area prior to colonization. The degree of control over the productive process was altered somewhat in the southwest but not to the extent that is emphasized in the literature for two reasons: 1) No formal workshops were organized as in the Arctic. In general, weavers continued to own the means of production and control working conditions although many had to accelerate production.
2) More importantly, there was no infrastructure in place to dictate the design process (as in the Arctic). No full-size drawings or sketches were provided by merchants. Although a few weavers might have been shown a small sketch of a potential piece, the "blueprints" for its production were never provided by the trader (with the exception of J. B. Moore for a short time). Without continual weaving activity involving both conceptual and manual aspects, Navajo women would have lost the ability to "design in their heads." "Artistic literacy" plays a critical role here since drawing is the vehicle by which design is dictated. All drawings (purchased from local residents for $5.00), are provided to weavers and printmakers in the North. The success of workshops has greatly fluctuated depending upon the competence and ability of current imported managers. Navajo weavers stubbornly resisted changing their textiles -- it took a full generation for the Navajo blanket to become a rug. The imposition of borders on woven pieces was the least important aspect of design. Without providing life-size drawings, traders were unable to dominate the finished product. In addition, even after the appearance of the traders on the reservation, Navajo weavers introduced a number of new techniques which increased the types of rugs produced including two-faced rugs (an extremely difficult technique attempted only by the most experienced weavers), pulled warp textiles, raised outline rugs, and numerous variations on twill weaves for their saddle blankets (Amsden 1975).
FOOTNOTES

1. There were 24 exhibitions of Inuit sculptures and prints in 1982, including locations such as West Germany, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C.
CHAPTER IV:

CONCLUSIONS

In this thesis I have probed a number of areas concerning the origin and development of the art/craft distinction to illuminate the paradox concerning the perception of native hand-made production, specifically in the southwest United States and the Canadian Arctic. Since the medium has determined what has constituted fine art for more than 300 years; most Westerners have sought art in other parts of the world in terms of its manifestations found within their own culture. For this reason the emphasis has been on the search for painting and sculpture and when discovered, they are often described in terms used by art critics. As a result, Westerners have failed to recognize the artistic accomplishments of native artisans who worked primarily in other media.

Drawing formed the basis of the European painter's training, first within the Guilds and later the Academies. Because of the emphasis on the painter's status and ability, craftsmanship has been divorced from the cerebral aspects of creativity. Crafts subsequently became trivialized in Europe because the craftsman need only be "good with his hands" in order to execute the pieces sketched by the painter/designer. In contrast to the development of the social division of labour in Europe, all creative output produced by native individuals was conceived without sketching beforehand. It is an order of magnitude more difficult to create in
this manner. This ability, achieved after years of conscious
manipulation of materials, has been trivialized and dismissed in the
literature. A survey of over one hundred papers on art and
anthropology revealed three articles referring to this unique
ability (Weftfish 1967, Witherspoon 1977, 1981). As a result, the
realities of colonization (and its impact on handmade production)
have received insufficient attention by anthropologists. Even
today, the art/craft distinction remains an implicit
aspect of our colonial heritage. An example of the tenacity
and pervasiveness of this distinction and its acceptance even by
native painters is reflected in the comment by Sioux artist Oscar
Howe (Dunn 1960:24-5):

"Attempts have been made to convince us that Indian
artists should become just another European Artist and
to have us abolish the only true American Art there is...
(native ease: painting)...Indian art was just
in its infant shoes and it has a right to be as
advanced as any other art."

The strength and vitality of native art was first recognized by
artists, not art critics and aestheticians (p 24, Ch 1). When the
aesthetics of "primitive art" were finally addressed, it was done
within the context of the development of Western aesthetics which
had triggered the rise of "art for art's sake." In retrospect the
aesthetics that first emerged in Europe are very parochial, yet its
its canons were presented as universal and applied as such
(Wolff 1983). The sexual inequality of women in Western,
patriarchal societies parallels the artistic inequality of craft.
This bias is underscored by androcentric anthropologists and is reflected in the cultural hegemony in the West in which art dominates craft.

Although weaving as a commodity is currently exported from the two hinterland areas, it has played a different role historically within both Navajo and Inuit societies. The aesthetic subservience involved in the production of Inuit art, especially their weaving, was examined to illuminate the paradox in contrast to Navajo weaving. Although the traders instigated changes, the control of the work process remained intact for the Navajo, and each aspect of production was charged with meaning. Both Toelken (1976) and Witherspoon (1977, 1981), discuss the association evident in a three-way partnership between plant (for dyes), animal (for wool) and the weaver. Creative interaction with nature, and not the final product remains the most important aspect of the Navajo weaving process (Witherspoon 1981:331). Most writers, including anthropologists who discuss Navajo weaving, have concentrated on the finished product. Because of the implicit bias concerning the art/craft dichotomy, they failed to recognize the creative ability necessary to solve problems concerning design, colour and symmetry simultaneously, without benefit of sketching beforehand. Individual expression remains an essential ingredient in terms of producing a work of art—it is a dynamic process. As weaver Miriam Gilbay (1976) notes in the Forward to her book Free Weaving.
It is no longer possible for weavers who wish to live from the proceeds of their work in the western world to spin all their own wool, but where this is done, as in the early Navajo Chief blankets, the resulting harmony between the woven elements is so exciting as to be almost overpowering. Complete harmony of rhythm of this order is only possible where excellence is the only criterion; time and economics being unimportant.

The pervasive split between art and craft in the West meant that although a Navajo weaver may have spent 400 hours designing and weaving a textile, its functional aspect far outweighed any consideration of its overriding aesthetic. Navajo "dexterity" was recognized and noted in the literature, but it was never accorded the status of art because it was represented in textiles (functional) and not on a canvas (non-functional). Yet the hundreds of paintings made during the first five years by native students at the Santa Fe School of Indian Arts went immediately into private and museum collections (Dunn 1960). During that period (the early 1930's), Navajo weavers averaged five cents an hour for their "craft." Today weaving income is peripheral to the Navajo economy primarily because it is still considered as a craft, and most of it sells at that level. Weavers who leave the reservation and move to border towns or cities encounter problems in continuing to weave. Hamamsy (1957) noted the decline in women's status when this happens, especially if divorce occurs. Unlike earlier times, Navajo women have become far more dependent on their husbands for social and economic security, especially when living in nuclear households off the reservation.
The current Arctic situation stands in stark contrast to the southwest. Only the end product is important—the weaver has no input concerning design since she is not responsible for that aspect, nor for spinning or dyeing the yarns. Her hands execute the tapestry, drawn by another and woven with imported machine-spun yarns. When informed that Navajo weavers averaged less than 50 cents an hour for their labour, the Inuit weavers simply could not understand why they would continue to weave (Field notes, Baffin Island field trip 1981). Weaving for the Inuit is a job. Weaving for many Navajo women still remains a visible representation of many invisible but extremely important relationships still extant in Navajo society (Berlant and Kahnenberg 1976, Toelken 1972, and Witherspoon 1977, 1981). And although Navajo weavers have had to alter somewhat the exercise of a personal aesthetic, it is still evident in much of their weaving today (Witherspoon 1977, 1981). But for the Inuit, it is difficult to build upon something that never existed, and is not likely to develop given the constraints of workshop organization.

Old textiles produced prior to capitalist intrusion appear to be most valued by collectors and investors today. Why is this so? Since they were not recognized as "art" when initially produced, many were ill-treated or destroyed in the process of being used. Those that survived which predate merchant intrusion emerged from indigenous expression unshaped by colonial forces. Traditional productivity in this area is increasingly recognized as being of

A deterioration of quality and design appears after intrusion of
outside economic forces. In preliterate societies, knowledge of a
tradition dies with the last producer. It is difficult if not
impossible to resurrect these old valued traditions. If they are
re-introduced, their production often assumes new forms and
relationships (e.g., Inuit carvings).

Perhaps the words of the Mali historian Amadou Hampate Ba
(1977) poignantly summarize the position of indigenous artisans,
everywhere:

"We live in a very curious age. The amazing development
of science and technology goes hand in hand, contrary
to all expectations, with a worsening of living condi-
tions. Along with the conquest of space has come a
sort of shrinking of our world, which has been reduced
to its material and visible dimensions alone, whereas
the traditional African craftsman, who had never moved
from his little village, had the feeling of participating
in a world of infinite dimensions and being linked with
the whole of the living Universe."

The exportation of artistic imperialism via the art/craft
distinction by European colonizers has led to global destruction of
indigenous creativity. In many areas of the world today, native
hand-work has been reduced to a trinket industry (Hirsch-
man 1976). Textile production in many small societies will continue to
deteriorate as they are brought under direct capitalist control.

Even if co-ops are organized, diminution of individual expression is
bound to occur with a social division of labour. Because of the
strength of painting, sculpture, and prints as the only legitimate
art forms in the West, individual artists from a few minority groups may enjoy financial success in catering to an elitist market, while their native associates continue to weave, pot, and make baskets to supply the ubiquitous craft markets.

The conditions that gave rise to the origin and development of the art/craft distinction during the Renaissance are no longer operative because painters no longer exclusively design. Yet the myths associated with the production of fine art persist. The biases produced by the fundamental structures of language and philosophical traditions dating back to the origins of Western civilization have undermined the recognition and appreciation of indigenous creativity and aesthetic traditions globally. Many of the world's most valuable textiles were produced by the ancestors of some of the poorest people on earth. Thus aesthetics and economics remain inextricably linked.
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