'KSAN: MUSEUM, CULTURAL AND ARTISTIC ACTIVITY AMONG THE GITKSAN INDIANS OF THE UPPER SKEENA, 1920-1973

by

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ABSTRACT

The opening of 'Ksan and the Kitanmax Northwest Coast Indian Art School at Hazelton in 1970 established new parameters in the development of museum principles and practices on the northwest coast. It also ushered in a new stage in the scope and context of Gitksan art. An historical analysis of the interaction between museological evolution and Gitksan artistic production demonstrates 'Ksan's unique relationship and contribution to both.

Recent studies on the history and formation of 'Ksan, however, tend to neglect one significant component--Gitksan culture itself. The origins of this neglect may be found in the precepts which directed museum activity in the first decades of this century, when it was widely believed that native culture was on the verge of extinction. Museums saw, as their principal purpose, the study, collection and preservation of what remained. These precepts formed the basis for many precedents for 'Ksan, and provided a point of contrast. They still persist, albeit to a lesser degree, and continue to prejudice observations on Gitksan cultural activity prior to the formation of 'Ksan. Although little material exists on this period, it is generally seen as encompassing a continued decline.

In contradistinction, new information presented here documents a cultural resurgence among the Gitksan throughout the 1930s and 1940s, when museum activity in the area was at a minimum. This resurgence

reshapes the perception of both the vitality and continuity of Gitksan traditions and the formal and social qualities of the art produced at this time. More importantly, it redefines the actual relationship of these factors to subsequent museum activity. Furthermore, it cast into relief the so-called "revival" program undertaken by various government and private agencies after 1950 to resusitate what were seen as the lost or nearly lost Indian arts in a museum context, as tourist attractions, or for sale. Although the "revival" contributed much to 'Ksan and the Kitanmax School, its effect was tempered by the strength of pre-existing Gitksan traditions which it encountered. The interaction of these two forces is visible in the development and operation of two projects which form the immediate, local precedents for 'Ksan. It is also evident in the expanded Indian village museum itself.

Consequently, this interaction is also contained in the nature of the art produced by those who worked at the Kitanmax School. It is here that 'Ksan differs from its early predecessors. 'Ksan does not so much collect as produce art, for itself, other museums and for sale as part of the "revival." But beyond this, art created at 'Ksan is also used to validate living Gitksan traditions on their home ground in present time. By comprehending the forces which contributed to this virtual reversal in museum priorities, the unique arts of 'Ksan can be understood in their cultural and historic context, and a measure of the distance museums have come in their relationship with the Indian cultures of the northwest coast can be made.

Examiners: [redacted]

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ARDA	Agriculture and Rural Development Act
BCPM	British Columbia Provincial Museum
CNR	Canadian National Railways
GTPR	Grand Trunk Pacific Railway
NV	*Native Voice*
OH	*Omineca Herald*
PRDN	*Prince Rupert Daily News*
SIN	*Smithers Interior News*
STH	Skeena Treasure House
STPRS	Skeena Totem Pole Restoration Society
TOH	*Terrace Omineca Herald*
UBC	University of British Columbia

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, both scholarly and popular attention has been directed to the contemporary artistic expression of the Indians of the northwest coast of North America. While research of the highest calibre into its historic and cultural context among specific groups is growing, many areas remain untouched. Such is the case with the Indian museum of 'Ksan and the associated Kitanmax Northwest Coast Indian Arts School which opened at Hazelton, British Columbia, in 1970. Although internationally famous both for the open-air reconstructed Indian village display and for the work of the artists, little of a scholarly nature has been written on the forces and ideas which shaped its evolution. This study undertakes partially to fill this lucuna by examining in historical perspective, both the formation and development of the museum complex, and the cultural, aesthetic and marketing context of the art produced there.

It was originally intended to investigate the history of these two institutions in the context of parallel developments in folk and open-air museum concepts in Europe and third-world countries during the last fifty years. Lack of summary material made this goal untenable. As research progressed, it became increasingly evident that such a comparative study had to await an examination of the distinct history of the evolution of museum activity on the northwest coast, and its effect on the production of Indian art.

Such an examination must, of necessity, go beyond art historical sources and draw upon museological and ethnological material. Indeed, for a time, even the masterpieces of Indian art were viewed by many as artifacts and curios, to be best studied and appreciated by anthropologists. As a consequence, ethnographic sources form the only extant records of much essential information. They are, however, limited. To borrow terms from structural linguistics, they tend to be, for the main part, synchronic rather than diachronic. As Viola Garfield and Paul Wingert point out in their excellent study of the Tsimsian and their arts, "There is little historical depth to our data."[1] Art history's contribution lies in its ability to place this material into a broader cultural and historic context, and to supply an adequate methodology for a specific analysis of the aesthetic qualities of the art forms themselves.

The focus of this study shall be centred on the art and culture of the Gitksan of the Upper Skeena River, and the evolving museum concepts which interacted with them and resulted in 'Ksan. The Gitksan are related linguistically to the Nishga of the Nass River and the Tsimsian (Tsimshian) of the coast and Lower Skeena. The language group is collectively known as Tsimsian, although here the word will be used specifically to designate the coastal people. The Gitksan reside largely in five villages: Kitwanga, Kitsegucla (Kitsegukla), Kitanmax or Hazelton, Kispiox and Kitwancool.[2] They are justly famous for their totem poles as are their inhabitants for staunchly maintaining many of the cultural traditions to the present day. Both poles and traditions have affected, and been affected by, the course of museum development

in the area. Together, all three formed the foundation for 'Ksan.

Source material for the documentation and analysis of the foregoing is scattered and unevenly recorded. The first restoration project in the Skeena area, undertaken during the 1920s and a major precedent for 'Ksan, is fortunately well documented in published sources. Likewise, much information on Gitksan totem poles appeared in various ethnographic sources throughout the same decade, as well as earlier. The remainder of the period under study, that is from 1930 to 1973, is less well served.

With the exception of one generally neglected article and other unpublished material, there is a dearth of material on Gitksan cultural and artistic activity for the crucial period of 1930 to 1950. Similarly, no systematic study of what is termed the "revival" of Indian art on the northwest coast nor of the use of reconstructed native villages as open air museum displays has yet appeared. As a result, much of what is written on these subjects is incomplete or erroneous. Little primary or secondary source material also exists on the museum activity centred in Hazelton during the 1950s and 1960s which forms the immediate precedents for 'Ksan. Current published material on 'Ksan itself is, for the most part, promotional rather than scholarly in nature and therefore, although containing some valuable information, is fairly general and far from being comprehensive.

The lack of precise and comprehensive cultural and historical information has led to several misconceptions about the formation of 'Ksan as well as about the cultural context and contemporary significance of the art produced at the Kitanmax School. Consequently, in

order to place 'Ksan and the school in their proper context, the research for the present study has relied heavily on such primary sources as newspapers, unpublished museum reports, unpublished papers, museum and government files within the public realm, and some audio-visual material to supplement available published sources. Local newspapers were particularly revealing and indicated an extensive cultural resurgence in Gitksan villages throughout the 1930s and 1940s. It was previously believed that little traditional ceremonial and artistic activity occurred in the area at the time. The implications for 'Ksan and for the museum activity which led up to its formation are discussed here but a more thorough investigation and reassessment of Gitksan cultural history remains to be done.

Two possible sources of information were omitted. A field trip to the Hazelton area and the surrounding villages, as well as informal conversations with people associated with 'Ksan were undertaken in 1978. However, interviews such as form part of ethnographic methodology, were not. Oral histories, although important in their own right, are problematic when historical accuracy is crucial. In addition, the Gitksan are engaged at 'Ksan in compiling their own history and ethnographic records and could understandably query outside intrusion into this area. Secondly, no attempt was made to gain access to the internal records at 'Ksan or in the possession of Mrs. Margaret (Polly) Sargent. Reports of annual meetings, including lists of officers and various transactions, as well as current developments throughout the years, with some exceptions, were well documented in newspaper reports and confirmed by other sources.

Thus, while this study makes no claim to being the definitive work on 'Ksan or the Kitanmax School, it does incorporate a broad range of original research and supplies a contextual framework for a subject until now neglected and perhaps misunderstood. Hopefully, it will point in the direction of work yet to be accomplished.

Certain terms used in the course of this study require some clarification. The designation of the monumental sculpture of the Indians of the west coast as totem poles is, for example, inaccurate. The images represented are not totems but hereditary crest figures. The concept of totemism is, in fact, undergoing revision and may even disappear. It is doubtful, however, if the term totem pole will follow suit. Deeply entrenched and accepted, it has acquired a specific significance which obviates possible confusion. Because of this and as no other term has been offered, it will be used herein.

This is not the case with a group of other historical and cultural terms which are more ambiguous in meaning. The designation of all Indian ceremonies involving the exchange of goods and the display of personal crests as potlatches is not accepted by the Gitksan who have said on different occasions that they do not potlatch. The ceremonies of the Gitksan are very different from those of the Kwakiutl, for example, and the application of the same term to both confuses rather than clarifies. Potlatch will be avoided whenever possible.

Generally accepted, albeit ambiguous terms of a historical nature are equally problematic. The specific attributes which constitute the decline of native culture must be examined in each area, as each group reacted differently to the impact of the European presence. Yet the

term, decline, has become sufficiently malleable, that broad generalizations are made under its banner which are not always accurate. Similarly, the idea of a "revival," predicated on a preceding decline, is also ambiguous. Although widely accepted, it will be found to have little validity when applied to the Gitksan in its common usage. An attempt will be made here to give it a specific historical and cultural definition. As it is always used advisedly, and until such a definition is accepted, it will be placed within quotation marks.

Footnotes, Introduction

[1]Viola Garfield and Paul Wingert, *The Tsimsian Indians and Their Arts* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966), p. 4.

[2]See maps, Figures 1 and 2.

CHAPTER 1

THE FOLK MUSEUM AND EARLY DEVELOPMENTS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

The opening of the Indian museum at 'Ksan in Hazelton, British Columbia in 1970 marked a new phase in the scope of Gitksan artistic activity. It also marked the culmination of a century of museum evolution. It is the relationship between these two, established since the third decade of this century, that will form the focus of the present study. Before embarking on this examination, however, it is first necessary to understand something of the radical changes in museum development that 'Ksan represents, as these account for much of the present situation.

Both the principles on which 'Ksan operates and its physical structure incorporate a reversal in many traditional museum concepts. This can be made particularly evident by isolating three distinguishing features. Of great importance is 'Ksan's relationship to its primary subject matter: the culture, history and art of the Gitksan people of the Upper Skeena River. The museum serves to perpetuate them into the future as well as to preserve the heritage of the past.[1] 'Ksan's use of modern museum buildings, constructed in the form of ancient communal houses, and other complementary open-air exhibits including totem poles turn traditional display concepts, usually oriented towards interiors, inside out. Of equal and perhaps paramount importance is, however, the instruction of native artists in traditional forms and techniques, as

well as in modern western media, at the associated Kitanmax Northwest Coast Indian Arts School. Native craft workers and artists from the school provide much of the display material for the museum, both interior and exterior. By also serving as a distribution centre for the work produced there, some of which goes to other museums, 'Ksan inverts what were commonly held in the past as normal museum collecting practices.[2] Nor are the other arts neglected. 'Ksan provides the context for the performance of traditional dances and ceremonies which were at one point thought to be on the verge of extinction or forgotten.

The revolutionary change represented by these concepts is made evident by a brief look at past museum operation and physical form. The province of most museums with ethnographic interests during the eighteenth, nineteenth and even into the twentieth century has been the collection and sometimes the documentation of curiosities and artifacts from distant lands and exotic cultures within a single building built for display, storage and study. Such ideas have directed museum activity among the indigenous cultures of the northwest coast of North America from Captain Cook's first voyage in 1778 to the National Museum of Canada's projects during the second and third decades of this century. The collection and study of North American native culture by museums was intensified in the late 1800s and early 1900s when it was believed that native culture, and perhaps even the native population, were bordering on extinction. The prospect of acquiring and preserving the last remnants of a dying culture must have added urgency and impetus to much of this activity.

In contradistinction, 'Ksan operates as a nucleus for living Gitksan cultural traditions which form an unbroken continuity with their past on their home ground. Totem poles carved at 'Ksan are used not only as museum displays and objects "for sale," but also to validate the traditional hereditary prerogatives of individuals and groups in neighbouring Indian communities. Rather than being concentrated within a single building and dedicated only to the past, 'Ksan expands its boundaries into the immediate environment and the future. Indeed, to the extent that both the new and old poles in the neighbouring villages can be associated with 'Ksan, it can truly be said to be a "museum without walls," a "living museum."

The transformation in form and practice from the traditional ethnographic museum to 'Ksan was part of the gradual evolution of museological concepts in the past one hundred years. The preliminary expansion of these ideas occurred in northern Europe with the establishment of the "folk," and what was known as the "out-of-doors" museum in the late 1800s.[3] This genre of museum developed in parallel fashions at various locations, in each case responding to the unique aspects of the region and its specific subject matter. The application of these ideas to the indigenous cultures of the northwest coast developed in the period from 1900 to 1973 in centres from Alaska to Vancouver, and eventually culminated in 'Ksan.

In a study of museological developments both in Canada and abroad, *Beyond Four Walls*, A. Key points out that museums in the traditional sense with specialized ethnographic interest had been established in Europe since the mid-nineteenth century. He notes in particular that:

> Hamburg had its Hamburgisches Museum fur Volkerkunde in 1850 which, as its title suggests, devoted itself largely to ethnology and folk-lore. But the Germanisches National Museum at Nuremburg deserves citing as a pioneer in the historic field and as the brainchild of Hans von Aufsess who, in 1852, conceived a program calling for the collection of objects directly relating to German culture as it emerged after the decline of the Roman influence.[4]

It was in contradistinction to this "traditional" ethnographically specialized museum that the folk and open-air museum was begun. The Museum of Swedish Life, later called the Northern Museum, has generally been accepted as the classic example. Founded in 1873 by Arthur Hazelius, the Northern Museum was intended not only as a collection and research institution, but also as a cultural centre for Swedish life.[5] It was supplemented in 1891 by a tract of land on a hill in Stockholm, called Skansen, onto which whole cottages and buildings were moved in a program spanning several decades.

In a discourse on the folk museum to the Royal Society of Arts in London in 1949, I.C. Peate outlined Hazelius' contribution to the expansion of museum concepts.

> He [Hazelius] realized that it was impossible to convey a true picture of a living culture in cases under glass. . . . The exhibits form a general picture, in its own frame and in its own surroundings--the entire room with its furniture and contents, the actual house as it once stood in the Swedish scene. Hazelius's contribution to museum technique transformed the museum from a nineteenth-century curiosity shop into a home of national inspiration.[6]

It also transformed collection and display concepts. The attention of folk museums went beyond the gathering of artifacts to include historic buildings. Displays subsequently moved from cases to encompass the complete exterior setting of the museum. Interior and exterior

exhibits became complementary as the smaller objects were set in their "own setting" in buildings that were, in turn, incorporated into a co-ordinated total environment.

Peate also defined what he considered to be the ideal features of a folk museum and commented on the vagueness of the term.

> The term *folk* is unfortunate since it has acquired a meaning in English which tends to confuse the ordinary person. In simple straightforward terms it is a museum of the life and culture of the people in the community which it serves. It does not confine its attention to any section of the community; this needs to be emphasised since the term *folk* is so often associated with what is sometimes described as the "lower stratum of society." The folk museum is therefore a museum of life and culture and consists, in its most satisfactory form, of two sections: a museum block of galleries and an area of park land. The museum building houses a series of galleries in which specimens illustrating material culture are systematically exhibited. . . . The open-air section on the other hand provides what may be termed the ecological setting, where specimens are exhibited in houses, while the houses are set out in their true environment suitably planned and planted.[7]

Included within the framework of the folk museum as it developed in northern Europe and Britain was an emphasis on the production of traditional craftwork and cultural performances. These concepts, as well as the form of the museum, have been integrated into present day museum activity in British Columbia, especially at 'Ksan where carving and art programs as well as performances of traditional Gitksan dances and songs form a substantial part of the museum activity.

An important difference, however, separates the two. Folk museums provide the context for preserving craft techniques outmoded by technological advances and consequently in danger of disappearing. While quaint and part of the heritage of the past, these crafts and other ceremonies were not generally regarded as relevant to the present.

This is not the case with 'Ksan, where, as has been stated, traditional ceremonies and art forms such as totem poles maintain their social and cultural content.

The folk or open-air museum, especially in the Scandinavian countries, received a great deal of attention in both scholarly and popular publications in the first three decades of this century. George Bröchner, for example, writing for *Studio*, periodically reported on their development in Denmark, Sweden and Norway.[8] He observed that by 1912 interest in the genre was "springing up in diverse directions" such as Russia, Holland and Germany.[9] Agitation for a national folk museum, based on a growing nationalism, was particularly strong in England during the 1920s, when it was felt that much of the potential subject matter for displays was in danger of disappearing. Some problem, however, was reported in defining who the "folk" were in a class conscious society with democratic aspirations.[10]

The documentation of the evolution of the folk and open-air museums in Europe and elsewhere after 1920 is, however, not pertinent to this study. By the early 1920s, the form and concepts that were to lead to 'Ksan had already been established and were developing independently in response to the unique conditions on the northwest coast of North America, and, specifically, on the Upper Skeena River among the Gitksan.

Museum activity in the Upper Skeena had originally been part of the traditional museum approach, operating under the belief that its subject was soon to disappear.[11] Accordingly, what were presumed to be the last remnants were collected and sent to Ottawa, and other museum

centres, for preservation. In 1915, following the lead of other institutions, the Victoria Memorial Museum in Ottawa (later the National Museum, now the Museum of Man), sent Marius Barbeau on a field trip to the Port Simpson area to study coast Tsimsian social organization and to gather artifacts and photographs for the museum's collection. Barbeau trained William Beynon, a part Tsimsian from Victoria, to assist in translation and in the collection of data from native inhabitants.

Both field work and collecting in the Upper Skeena River area by members of the National Museum were suspended for a time when the museum buildings in Ottawa were taken over by the House of Commons after the Parliament Buildings fire of 1916. In the interim Barbeau continued his studies and writing in Ottawa, including an unpublished report for the Department of Indian Affairs on transactions in the potlatch.[12] A ban against this institution, which forms the cornerstone of northwest coast native culture, was passed originally in 1884, but was unworkable due to ambiguities in the wording until it was revised in 1895 and again in 1914.[13] The law was not heavily enforced between 1905 and 1915.[14] Potlatching persisted, and in some areas increased. In early 1920 (or 1921), a circular was sent from Ottawa to the various agencies demanding its cessation.[15] This occurred just as Barbeau was returning to the field to renew his collecting and documenting activities and had an important impact on the relationship between museums and native culture. Its ramifications can still be observed today and will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

Ethnographic interest in the Gitksan intensified during the 1920s. Barbeau visited the area on several occasions between 1920 and 1927.

The results of this field work, published in *Totem Poles of the Gitksan*[16] in 1929, remain a major reference. Using Hazelton as a base during certain trips, Barbeau periodically stayed with his cousin, Mrs. R.S. Sargent (née Barbeau).[17] She was the wife of a local pioneer merchant who had native contacts, and mother-in-law to Mrs. Polly Sargent, the person usually seen as most responsible for initiating, developing and establishing the museum at 'Ksan. Diamond Jenness, from the National Museum, was also present in 1924, doing research on the natives. In the fall of 1923, one of the few poles sold to museums by members of the Gitksan at this time was obtained at Kispiox for the American Museum of Natural History and sent to New York.[18] Harlan Smith, a colleague of Barbeau's, who had previously worked for the American Museum and had accompanied the Jesup expeditions of 1897-99, was also in the Hazelton area, following up Barbeau's work in the winter of 1923-24.

Between 1925 and 1929, a number of federal government departments undertook the *in situ* restoration of the totem poles in various Gitksan villages. Harlan Smith supervised the proceedings. Although still based on the idea that native culture was disappearing, the display which resulted had all the features of an open-air and folk museum. Its development will also be discussed in some detail in the following chapter.

The museum concept as it was expressed in this project was slow to gain widespread official recognition as legitimate, although it was seen as such by its progenitors. The project was deliberately omitted from an important study on Canadian museums done in 1932. Sir Henry Miers and S.F. Markham, reporting to the Carnegie Corporation of New

York on the state of museum activity in Canada, did not acknowledge the display as a proper museum. They defined museums in the traditional sense as "any building or part of building, used as a repository for the preservation of objects of art, history, science or industry which is open to the public for the study of these objects.'"[19] As a consequence, "out door exhibits such as the Skeena Valley, B.C., Totem Pole Exhibit have been excluded."[20] Although this conservative bias was based on traditional principles, the attitude illustrates current orthodox thinking on the subject and shows how far museological principles have since evolved.

Changes in display and collection concepts are not the only museological principles that have evolved since the folk and open-air museums became established and accepted. As indicated above, this form of museum also has the potential of becoming the vehicle for a radical change in the relationship between the museum and its subject matter. In the Skeena totem pole restoration project of the 1920s, this particular potential was not fully realized. Subsequently, however, over the next forty years, a complete reversal in museum perception of native culture was to take place. In this period, open-air displays including totem poles and native houses were established in Vancouver, Victoria and finally at 'Ksan. They incorporated a native arts and crafts "revival" and included traditional ceremonies such as potlatches. The concept of a "revival" of native art and culture is a departure from the "preservation of a dying culture" as a motivating museum principle.

'Ksan carries this idea one step further, by claiming to be part of the continuity, rather than the "revival" of Gitksan culture. In so

doing, it serves as a cultural and ceremonial centre for the people it represents, and incorporates native people directly into the administration and research of their own cultural heritage.

It is by these features that 'Ksan is distinguished from the similar and contemporary displays in Vancouver and Victoria. It is also differentiated by its location, that is, its immediate and proximate relationship to its subject matter, and its exclusive preoccupation with this subject: Gitksan history and culture. The cultural function and location of the museum are interrelated. It could not be a cultural centre unless it was located on a Gitksan reserve, and concerned only with Gitksan culture. Nor could it be administered by native people if it were incorporated in the context of a large institution with a broader range of interests.

L.V. Coleman, in his discussion of the development of the "field" or "trailside" museum in *The Museum in America*, offers a classification which could serve to distinguish between the Vancouver and Victoria museums and 'Ksan. He discards the term "trailside" as being too vague, but does outline the qualities of the "field" museum.

> Each is located where its subject matter belongs and is subordinated to the eventful site itself. Each is closely circumscribed in subject. . . .
>
> The principal interest of these museums . . . is that they make their exhibits recount the story they have to tell instead of letting the message rise, if it can, out of such exhibits as are usual in historical museums.[21]

While the concept of the field museum, even given Coleman's rather loose definition, cannot be used to account entirely for 'Ksan, it serves, given the lack of more precise terms, to distinguish 'Ksan from

other endeavours by virtue of its most salient feature: its direct relationship to its subject matter. The designation also establishes the termination point of this study. In the mid 1970s 'Ksan incorporated into its complex a new building, the Northwest Coast National Exhibition Centre. Although in the form of a communal house and containing the collection of Gitksan artifacts and the administration offices, it also has a large space for travelling displays originating throughout Canada. Since this latter aspect has no relationship to Gitksan culture it marks a departure from the original format and purpose of the museum and the beginning of a new phase in its evolution. As well, the Exhibition Centre did not have any discernible effect on or relationship to the art program established at 'Ksan. Most of the projects associated with the Kitanmax School had, in fact, matured by this time. Essentially 'Ksan, as it relates to Gitksan art and culture, and as the outcome of several decades of museum activity, can be said to have developed fully by 1973 when the Centre opened.

Footnotes, Chapter 1

[1]The concept of continuity contained in 'Ksan is expressed in the following traditional song lyrics and the accompanying commentary.

"Walk on, walk on, walk on,
on the breath of our grandfathers."
These words follow the wsinaax,
the songs we sing beside our dead.
The words proclaim our strong sense of
continuity, our belief in the constant
reincarnation of thought, deed and
man; our knowledge of the presence of
yesterday in today, of today in tomorrow.

'Ksan; Breath of Our Grandfathers (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1972), p. 1. A slightly different version of the second line is given in *'Ksan* (Hazelton: The 'Ksan Association, n.d.), p. 24.

[2]See, for example, "The Collecting Instinct," in Dillon Ripley, *The Sacred Grove* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1969), pp. 17-23.

[3]The term open-air will be used throughout rather than out-of-doors to designate these display concepts.

[4]A.F. Key, *Beyond Four Walls* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973), p. 49.

[5]Ian Finlay gives an interesting interpretation of its origin. "In the nineteenth century in Sweden the Romantic Revival released a deep interest in tradition, especially in dialects and folk-songs, and in 1873 this led to Hazelius founding Nordiska Museet, which expressed the pan-Scandinavian sentiment sweeping his country. . . . Less than twenty years later came the first true folk museum." Ian Finlay, *Priceless Heritage: The Future of Museums* (London: Faber and Faber, 1977), p. 160.

[6]I.C. Peate, "The Folk Museum," in *Museums in Modern Life* (London: The Royal Society of Arts, 1949), p. 58.

[7]Ibid., pp. 59-60.

[8]G. Brochner, "The Development of the Open-Air Museum in Norway," *International Studio*, December 1912, pp. 108-122; idem, "Open-Air Museums of Sweden and Denmark," *International Studio*, September 1914, pp. 213-222; idem, "Open-Air Museums for London--II," *International Studio*, April 1925, p. 88.

[9]Brochner, "Development," p. 108.

[10]A series of articles in *Nature* (London) document this discussion. See especially, July 27, 1929, p. 155; August 19, 1927, pp. 289-291; December 14, 1929, pp. 901-903; October 11, 1930, pp. 557-559.

[11]Although this belief can be found expressed in one form or another in almost every article on the subject, it is perhaps best summarized in Marius Barbeau, "Our Indians: Their Disappearance," *Queen's Quarterly*, Autumn 1931, pp. 691-707.

[12]"Mr. Barbeau has also been engaged in the preparation of an extensive study of the property rights and potlatch transactions among the natives of British Columbia, on the basis of his own manuscript Tsimshian data, Mr. Sapir's manuscript Nootka data and all other available information on the west coast Indians." Canada, Department of Mines, Geological Survey, *Summary Report of the Geological Survey, Department of Mines, for the Calendar Year, 1916*, p. 391.

[13]Canada, *Statutes*, 1884, chapter 27, section 3; 1895, chapter 35, section 6; 1914, chapter 35, section 8.

[14]F.E. LaViolette, *The Struggle for Survival*, 2d ed., enl. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), p. 80.

[15]Ibid., p. 83.

[16]Marius Barbeau, *Totem Poles of the Gitksan, Upper Skeena River, British Columbia*, Bulletin No. 61, Anthropological Series No. 12 (Ottawa: National Museum of Canada, 1929); facsimile ed., National Museum of Man, 1973.

[17]See for example, *Omineca Herald*, July 9, 1920, p. 6; June 27, 1923, p. 1; August 29, 1924, p. 6; October 4, 1939, p. 4. (Hereafter cited as OH.)

[18]Barbeau, *Totem Poles of the Gitksan*, p. 84, n. 5.

[19]H. Miers and S.F. Markham, *The Museums of Canada* (London: The Museums Association, 1932), p. v.

[20]Ibid.

[21]L. Coleman, *The Museum in America*, 3 vols. (Maryland: Waverly Press for the American Association of Museums, 1939), 1:78.

CHAPTER 2

MUSEOLOGICAL ACTIVITY AND CULTURAL INTERACTIONS, 1900-1957

By 1910, various aspects of the European folk museum were being applied to the indigenous cultures of the northwest coast of North America. The totem poles and communal houses of the Tlingit, Haida, Kwakiutl and Tsimsian groups were ideally suited to open-air display concepts. During the ensuing seventy years, these ideas evolved in various museum projects in Alaska, Vancouver, Victoria and in the Gitksan villages on the Upper Skeena River. 'Ksan can be seen as their culmination. As well as sharing common features with its antecedents, 'Ksan also expanded on them in several unique ways. 'Ksan's participation in this evolution becomes clear, however, only after a look at the development of previous museological projects and practices and their relationship to Gitksan cultural activity.

Developments in integrated display concepts which break down the barriers between the museum and its physical environment are not the only features which distinguish 'Ksan from the ethnographic museums of the mid-nineteenth century. Equally radical changes have also been noted in the relationship between the museum and its subject matter. In the context of 'Ksan, these changes are evident primarily in alterations--and even reversals--in attitudes towards the viability and place of Indian culture. The forces which created this reversal are threefold. The first can be found in the influence of the early folk museum which

provided a context for preserving disappearing craft techniques outmoded by technological advances. The second appears in a dramatic alteration in the position of the Canadian government and museums towards Indian artistic activity in general. During the 1930s and 1940s, the traditional approaches, which saw native culture as nearing extinction, were replaced by a co-ordinated attempt to "revive" the "lost" or nearly lost arts of the Indians of the northwest coast. The third factor is the persistence of Gitksan cultural and even artistic traditions to the present day. It is, then, the interrelated histories of museum development, the government sponsored "revival" and the continuity of Gitksan cultural traditions which form the foundation of 'Ksan and are the focus of this chapter.

Since Marius Barbeau's *Totem Poles of the Gitksan*, little has been published on the state of Gitksan cultural and artistic activity. As a consequence, for the period following the turn of the century, it is often compared to that of Indians in other areas. The resulting generalizations are often inaccurate as they do not take into account the unique situation of the Gitksan at that time. Nonetheless, they motivated early museological activity and still persist, in some form, today. Consequently, it is necessary to briefly outline both the attitude towards the state of native culture in general held by museums, and something of the historical situation of Gitksan culture, as the two views are often contradictory.

The more accessible native villages of the northwest coast, with their communal houses, totem poles and "quaint" inhabitants had long been tourist attractions and of interest to museums. Captain Cook is

sometimes facetiously referred to as the "first tourist" and "collector" of native culture in the area. The villages must have had the appearance of open-air, or folk museums to white visitors in the latter part of the 1800s, who were familiar with the genre.

Following the period of white settlement in British Columbia in the late 1800s, many of these sites were deserted and fell into decay as assimilation, acculturization, population depletion and migration took their toll. Artistic life in some areas either ceased or was diverted to the production of items for the tourist trade. The Haida, for example, reportedly stopped raising poles about 1885, although they continued making many items for sale to the white market.[1] The deterioration of the coastal village sites was accelerated by the effect of the humid climate on wooden construction. Visual evidence seemed to support the conclusion that native culture, if not the entire native population, was rapidly disappearing.

This generalization was based, however, on the fate of Indian communities which were most frequently in contact with white civilization. It did not hold true for the Gitksan, whose cultural and historical situation was quite different. The inland Gitksan were isolated from the pressures of white contact by geographic, economic and political factors for a period beyond that experienced by the more accessible coastal groups. The fur trade between the Gitksan and whites, up to the latter part of the nineteenth century, was conducted largely through a series of coastal chiefs who held somewhat of a monopoly over the area and prevented the Gitksan from descending down river to trade at the white posts.[2] Trading posts were not well established at Hazelton until

the 1860s. Even then, travel to the area was restricted to packhorse and native canoes until sternwheeler service on the Skeena began in the 1890s. This was a four day trip from Port Essington to Hazelton and was used mainly by prospectors. A railway line was not put through until the second decade of this century, and roads still later.

As a result, white settlement which was to prove culturally traumatic if not disastrous to native groups in other areas during the late 1800s and early 1900s, was delayed in the Upper Skeena for some time. The Gitksan themselves encouraged this trend. Staunchly maintaining that their traditional lands remained in their possession and refusing to recognize the reserve system, the people of the isolated village of Kitwancool for example actively repulsed intruders into their area.[3] They established border patrols which turned back both surveyors and settlers, sometimes at gunpoint, during the first few decades of this century.[4] A passable road was not put through to the village until the 1950s. The village of Kispiox also had a reputation for coolness to white visitors.

The Gitksan escaped the intensive missionary activity which occurred among both the Nishga, who otherwise also resisted white contact, and the coastal Tsimsian. A religious "revival" among the Nishga resulted in the burning of many totem poles in 1918 and the sale of most of the rest to Marius Barbeau, who was collecting for the National Museum and other (non-Canadian) institutions in the period immediately following.[5] The effect of William Duncan's religious community of Metlakatla in the destruction of the culture on the coast is well known.[6] The Gitksan, on the other hand, seem to have attempted a synthesis

between Christianity and traditional beliefs and practices, rather than practising one to the exclusion of the other. As shall be seen, although they experienced acculturating forces and actual suppression in various forms, the Gitksan never abandoned their traditional ceremonies or social structure.

I.

Early Museum Activity and Attitudes: The Introduction of Open Air Display Concepts to the Upper Skeena, 1900-1930

Nonetheless, the general belief that all native culture was nearing the end of its life span prompted museums, anxious to acquire and preserve what remained, to undertake "salvage" operations in the first part of this century. Wholesale totem pole restoration and removal projects, with the object of preserving tourist and cultural attractions, were also initiated. An open-air "totem walk" display in Sitka composed of poles gathered from various Tlingit and Haida sites dates from about 1895.[7]

In 1907, a Kaigani Haida village on Prince of Wales Island, known as Old Kasaan, which had been deserted about 1900, was declared a National Monument. Although a movement was initiated to preserve the decaying houses and totem poles, little was accomplished in the first two decades. Interest remained sporadic, except for some restoration work and clearing of the site in 1926.[8] This was due largely to lack of tourist access to the village. In the 1930s, however, Old Kasaan became the focus of an important project which will be examined later

in more detail. Old Kasaan's initial concept contained many of the characteristics of the folk or field museum with open-air displays. Of equal importance was the role of the tourist as a deciding factor in its development. Tourist potential, in fact, formed, and still forms, a major economic impetus for all projects and proposals for the preservation, restoration and promotion of Indian culture and art by white institutions and establishments. In contrast to 'Ksan, and in keeping with early museum concepts, Old Kasaan was predicated on the gradual demise and disappearance of native culture and traditions, and the need to preserve what remained. Thus, although Old Kasaan and 'Ksan bear more than a coincidental similarity in name, and a striking resemblance in physical format, their operational principles and their relationship to the culture they represent fall at the extreme ends of a conceptual spectrum.

Old Kasaan represented the early idea of an *in situ* preservation and restoration of a native village and its totem poles as an open air museum display. In contrast to such an approach was the proposal of R.C. Campbell-Johnston, a mining engineer who had spent some time in the northern part of the province. In 1915 he made a stirring plea in the Vancouver daily newspapers for the re-erection, in Vancouver, of a transplanted northwest coast native village, complete in every detail. His concept overcame the problem of tourist access which hindered developments at Old Kasaan.

> The suggestion is now made that Vancouver waken up to her duties and show a normal exhibition of real intelligence. A whole Indian village, complete in its primeval artistic status, should be transplanted to here. These distant homes proposed are far from the beaten track of the tourist, so to catch his

> eye must be brought to his very doors. Some row of old Indian lodges and council chambers can be erected accurately again, unchanged with their interior arrangements and elevated floors for showing icktas [sic] on the highest one around the walls, next the lower one for the sleeped mats, and the central row with fireplaces for cooking each separately the meals. . . . The massive lengths of whole trees used for upright supports to uphold the huge horizontal trunks . . . can all be numbered by an architect, and later re-keyed together again on their new site. . . . Then the long rows of immense erect totem poles can also be set up again here, carefully carved with their heraldic historical details to relate the eminence of some chief or his illustrious spouse, or to commemorate some death monument or some bloody victory. . . .
>
> All this replica of the simple grand dignity of these early native people would be an endless source of interest to us all, our children and the strangers within our gates. Tourists would throng to see it. . . . Another different village could be set up on the bare Kitsilano sand dunes, so freshly filled in, to grace that howling wilderness. . . . One or several combined of our splendid pioneers of Hastings Mill fame . . . should give willingly . . . [to] leave a lasting monument and recorded blessing to their names.[9]

Campbell-Johnston's proposal met with both approval and opposition. The concept was adopted and promoted by the Art, Historical and Scientific Association of British Columbia in the following decade. Various benefactors supplied funds for the project. Negotiations with the Vancouver Parks Board for a site in Stanley Park began in 1919. A site was chosen in 1921. In the interim, Campbell-Johnston's original concept of a transplanted Haida village, presumably Cumshaw, was altered to the reconstruction of a Kwakiutl village after several poles purchased at Alert Bay, and erected in the park, established a *mise en scène*. A canoe was also added to the site, which was now referred to as a "village" despite the lack of houses. Curio sales were also included, although the venture apparently met with little success at the time. Opposition to the project, however, came from "the Squamish

Indians, . . . [who] viewed with distrust any attempt to place over the site of one of their own villages the totems of their traditional enemies."[10] A protest also came from the Native Sons of British Columbia, a white organization. Nevertheless, the idea remained alive in a proposal that

> At least one or two Indian lodges of prehistoric character be erected in support of and complementary to the poles already there, after various obstacles in connection therewith shall have been surmounted.[11]

Although unrealized, Campbell-Johnston's proposal was highly influential in that it anticipated to a surprising degree what actually occurred in Vancouver and Victoria some decades later. Significantly, however, and like Old Kasaan, the project was based on the accepted precepts of the day; it was a dead display, signalling the disappearance of both the native population and their culture, to which Campbell-Johnston alluded in his preamble. It should also be noted that subsequent restoration activity in the Skeena area had the intention of bringing the tourists to the native villages rather than vice versa. Nonetheless, Old Kasaan and Campbell-Johnston's proposals form the primary historical precedents for 'Ksan outside of the Skeena region.

Both tourism and the anticipated demise of native culture were directly involved in the introduction of open-air museum concepts into the Gitksan villages in the Upper Skeena River valley. As has been stated, travel in this area was restricted to riverboat, native canoe and packhorse until the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway (GTPR) line from Jasper to Prince Rupert was put through the valley about 1912. The GTPR went into receivership in 1919 and by 1923 had been completely

taken over by the Canadian National Railways (CNR), a federally run crown corporation. Following the lead of the GTPR, the CNR launched an advertising campaign in eastern Canada and the United States in the early twenties to attract tourists to the Jasper-Prince Rupert route as part of what became the "Triangle Tour." In addition to the scenery, passengers were offered views of the unique totem pole villages along the Skeena River. Totem poles became, in fact, somewhat of a trademark for the route. Haida poles removed from the Queen Charlotte Islands were placed near the railroad stations at both Jasper and Prince Rupert. Although it is generally believed that the large pole at Jasper was, as Barbeau reported, moved there in 1919 by the CNR, photographic documentation indicates that it was in place as early as 1917.[12] The CNR subsequently developed a proprietary attitude towards all totem poles, and used several obtained through Barbeau and other agents as gifts to various institutions around the world. These products of native artistry also were viewed as valuable advertisements to attract tourists to British Columbia. During the following decade, the totem poles of the Skeena and the interests of the CNR were inextricably bound together.

A problem existed, however. Many of the totem poles in the Upper Skeena villages were deteriorating. There was nothing unusual in this itself, as traditionally old poles were allowed to decay and fall to be replaced by new ones as the occasion demanded. The process was interrupted, however, when the Department of Indian Affairs moved to enforce the "potlatch" ban in the early 1920s. Included in the ban were the traditional ceremonies which had to accompany the raising of a new pole,

if it were to have any significance and validity.

The enforcement of the ban had another unfortunate side effect. It identified museums in the eyes of the Indians as agents in the legal suppression of their traditional cultural activity and identity. The potlatch, or like ceremonies, now outlawed, were the ceremonial, economic, religious and social epicentre of native life. The permanent disappearance of these ceremonies would not only diminish but destroy native culture, economy, identity, and, as has been seen, artistic activity. The government's action coincided precisely with Barbeau's return to the Skeena area in the 1920s. In 1921, the ban resulted in the confiscation by Joseph Halliday, the Indian agent for the Kwawkewth agency centred at Alert Bay, of ceremonial paraphernalia used at the now famous Cranmer potlatch on Gilford Island. Much of the material not sold was distributed to museums including the National Museum in Ottawa and the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto. The association of museums with cultural suppression led to many problems in subsequent museum activity both on the Upper Skeena and elsewhere.

Among the Gitksan, the move to ban their ceremonies was met with concerted resistance. They viewed it as an unwarranted interference in their traditional rights, which forced them into an untenable position of choosing between legality and the continuity of their cultural traditions. As will be seen, the latter prevailed.

The *Omineca Herald* of New Hazelton reported the initial reaction of the natives in the area.

> An order was issued recently, signed by Indian Agent Loring, forbidding the holding of potlatches. This only to enforce an act that has long been on the books. The Indians, however, are

> very indignant that their ancient custom should be thus abolished by the white man, and the first of the week a meeting of chiefs of many tribes from various parts of the interior was held in Hazelton, to protest against the potlatch ban. . . . The Indians are to send a petition to the government protesting against the order.[13]

The protests were unsuccessful, however, and pole carving and raisings apparently ceased. With the old poles deteriorating and presumably not to be replaced, the federal government, working through the co-ordinated efforts of the CNR, the National Museum and the Department of Indian Affairs, undertook a totem pole restoration program in the Gitksan villages in the mid 1920s.

The project was actively underway in 1925. The local paper announced in that year that as a "result of an agitation by the C.N.R. tourist department, local organizations and national historic organizations," including the Queen Victoria Memorial Museum in Ottawa, and the Department of Indian Affairs, a project "to preserve in place some of the totem poles and grave houses belonging to Indians"[14] in several villages had been undertaken. Partly because it was the first project of its kind in British Columbia and partly because it was intended as a tourist attraction, the project received a fair amount of publicity, generated by those working within it. Its progress is, then, fairly well recorded.[15]

Before any work was started, approval for the project had to be solicited from the owners of the poles. Harlan Smith, in charge of the project, sent out letters to the chiefs of the Gitksan villages of Kitwanga, Kitsegucla, Kitwancool, Kispiox and Kitanmax, as well as to the Carrier village of Hagwilget and the Coast Tsimsian village of

Kitselas. The letter explained the project and requested permission to proceed. The letter was also reprinted in the Vancouver *Province*. It is lengthy but revealing in its attempt to allay any doubts about the government's good intentions.

To ALL Whom It May Concern,...

Mr. Barbeau, who was at Kispiox, Skeena Crossing, Hazelton and Hagwilget, as well as Kitwanga last year, went to Ottawa, where he lives, and told many of the good white people, members of Parliament and Dominion Government officials, about the Indians. There are a few other men who go to all parts of Canada to find out about the Indians, the way they live and the things they make, also to find out about the trees, rocks, stones, flowers, fish, animals and birds. These men return to Ottawa and teach people free of charge about these things as they are working all the time for the Dominion Government.

The men who study the Indians all come to be good friends of the Indians. For many years these men have tried to get justice and help in sickness for all the Indians. It is the very same in the United States. It is very hard work, as some white people will not believe them. The bad people who want the Indian lands, or to get his furs too cheap, or to get him drunk and rob him, do not like these men and try to make trouble for them.

At last these men have succeeded in a small way a little bit. So there is now a Dominion Government committee at Ottawa which is trying to help save the totem poles and help the Indians keep the totem poles on the places where they where [*sic*] where the Indians' children and their children's children can always see them and remember their fathers and the old customs.

These white people also want to see the poles, learn how well the Indians could carve and paint, hear the stories and know of the honor of the chiefs.

As I have worked among the Indians since 1897 (twenty-eight years), and am known by all the Bella Coola Indians, Mr. Andrew Paul and the Rev. Peter Kelly, I was sent by the Dominion Government to see if the chiefs wished me to help.

I was given money for this work and have put it in the Hazelton bank. This I am to use if I can pay the people for their labor and to buy cement, oil and such things, to try and fix the poles so they will not fall down and be rotted by the rain and weather.

First I must get permission from the chiefs. I will not touch a pole until I have permission to do so. Then I am to fix it below the ground so it will not rot. For this, cement and tar or paint will be used, but not so that it will show above the

> ground. Then I am to oil the pole like the one at Prince Rupert, so that it will not rot, and put color where it should be, but not too much color.
>
> Nothing must be done that the chiefs do not want. If anyone does wrong, come and tell me.[16]

The *Province* added the following comment:

> It will be remembered that the Indians in the district about Kitwanga and Kitwancool have shown a disposition to resent any persons going through their domains, and last year several parties were turned back from the Kitwancool Valley. Dr. Smith is endeavoring to educate these people to the value of their own artistic monuments and is seeking their co-operation in the work.[17]

Neither tourism nor the demise of native culture is directly mentioned in Smith's letter to the chiefs, although both may be inferred. Smith, and others involved in the project, were less reticent, however, in expounding on the two subjects before other audiences, as will be seen.

As was to be expected following the potlatch ban, the reaction of the native community to the government's proposal was one of bewilderment and suspicion, and co-operation and permission were not immediately forthcoming.[18] Nonetheless, through various intermediaries in the native community, permission was obtained that year for some of the poles in most of the villages and for all of them in Kitsegucla and Kispiox.[19] Significantly, by the time the project was abandoned in 1929, only the poles in Kitwanga and the deserted village of Kitselas, which were clearly visible from the CNR tracks, had actually been restored.[20]

Hazelton, the home base for field workers and project managers, experienced no pole restoration at this time, although in the fall of

1923, R.F. McNaughton, the district passenger agent for the CNR, was in the community inspecting potential tourist attractions, including the totem poles, the Indian graveyards, and several private collections of "Indian curios" notably that of Dr. Wrinch, a pioneer missionary doctor.[21] Whatever the reason, permission was denied the restoration party to repair a pole at Hazelton that had been knocked down by a truck in 1927.[22] In the same year, the restoration crew was also denied the right to work on the poles in the village of Kitsegucla. The village chiefs had even obtained legal counsel to ensure that their domain over their property would not be disturbed.[23]

In the previous year, 1926, Harlan Smith had issued a report describing the progress of the project to date.[24] Although concerned largely with technical details of how sixteen poles at Kitwanga were taken down, repaired, oiled, painted and attached to supporting backing poles set in concrete bases, the report is nevertheless revealing in other respects. In it Smith referred to the project, at that point still confined to Kitwanga, as an "Out-of-Doors Totem Pole Museum," a significant designation.[25] In addition, he gave an account of how native activity in the area was stimulated by the pole restorations and displays and the attention of tourists. One notable case was that of John Laknitz, a native of Kitwanga who was credited with much of the responsibility for overcoming hostility and suspicion to the project by the natives.[26] In 1925 he opened his house as a museum, with ancient regalia, musical instruments and other paraphernalia on display. Smith reports:

> His little museum was visited by many tourists, but was closed a year later on the death of its owner. Soon afterwards, however, his father Jim Laknitz opened his own house, a much more suitable place.[27] Its large size, its fire-place, smoke-hole, and two large ridgepoles with four carved house posts . . . are typically Indian features, although the pitch of the roof, the shakes, [etc.) . . . are modern in character. Inside are a large number of excellent old Gitskan specimens. Visitors have expressed the opinion that this building should be preserved because among all the Indian houses in this part of the country, it perhaps approaches nearest to the old aboriginal type.[28]

The Laknitz house appears, however, from photographs in the British Columbia Provincial Museum (BCPM) ethnology collection to have fallen into disuse as a museum when native co-operation waned in the thirties.[29]

The Hudson's Bay Company, in keeping with the activity at Kitwanga, added to the site by erecting a store there in 1927 which had "many of the features of an old post." Plans were apparently made to surround it with a stockade.[30] Similar plans for the white business community buildings in Hazelton were also proposed after 'Ksan got underway, in order to draw people into the townsite itself.[31]

Media coverage and extensive advertisement of the Kitwanga project and area were also undertaken at this time, a feature which would play an integral part in the later "revival." Harold McCracken, associate editor of *Field and Stream*, made movies of the project and combined it with footage on the other scenic attractions of the area. He was working for Pathé Review of New York City, in co-operation with the publicity department of the CNR.[32]

It would appear, from Smith's description of the Kitwanga site as an "out-of-doors" museum and his report of the Laknitz house and the Hudson's Bay project, that the entire village was being transformed *in situ* into a living display of past Indian art, culture and life, with

white additions. The CNR passengers, for whose benefit the project was partially undertaken, were allowed sufficient time at Kitwanga to disembark and examine the display, a practice begun even before the restoration project was started. Taken *in toto*, the Kitwanga site contains most of the salient features of a folk museum with open-air displays.

During the summers of 1927, 1928 and 1929, the restoration project continued under the direction of Smith at the deserted Tsimsian village of Kitselas. Several poles, and a stone monument, all again clearly visible from the CNR tracks, were restored. The chiefs who owned the poles, Walter Wright and Mark McKay, had signed documents releasing them for restoration. A newspaper report described them as "exceptionally well informed and intelligent men."[33] Both later became active in the cultural resurgence of the thirties.

Poles were not, however, the only object of the restoration crew. It is at Kitselas that the concept of an entire restored native village in the Upper Skeena area first appears. The National Museum's Annual Report for 1926 records that, "the two ancient village sites of Gilarhdzauks and Gitrhtsaih, at the canyon, [i.e. Kitselas] were explored and partly cleared for eventual restoration of their totem poles and large communal houses."[34] Although the latter phase of this specific proposal was not fully realized, the idea reappeared decades later in a proposal (again unrealized) for 'Ksan.

The Kitselas and Kitwanga restoration programs contain, in either realized or proposed form, many of the museum formats later utilized at 'Ksan. The similarities between them demonstrate a continuity of

museological concepts in the Skeena valley. Both projects involved totem pole restorations, tourism, native houses serving as well as containing displays, and even the addition of historically oriented white buildings.

The major difference is in their respective positions on native, particularly Gitksan, art and culture. The earlier project ostensibly was predicated upon their extinction, 'Ksan upon their "revival." As will be seen, neither term has much historical accuracy in this context. To appreciate the change in attitude and the significance of the earlier stance in light of later developments, it will be necessary to examine in some detail, however, the official attitude, as represented by the staff of the National Museum, towards native art and culture in the 1920s.

The published remarks of Marius Barbeau, Harlan Smith, and others on the staff of the National Museum, are revealing to the extent that they collectively reflect an official attitude to the native art of British Columbia, and, more specifically, to that of the Gitksan. Several common features occur throughout these statements in the period from 1920 to 1929. What appears to be an anxiety to pronounce native art and culture a thing of the past is prevalent, although contradictory data were often simultaneously presented in the same text. Another striking feature is the variety of roles in which the native art to be restored and/or preserved was cast; it was not only considered in terms of ethnographic artifacts or curios. Its use as a tourist attraction and railway advertisement has already been discussed.

Native art was also promoted as a source of motifs for commercial artists searching for distinctly Canadian designs. In addition, it was seen as a source of inspiration and a proper subject matter for Canadian artists wanting to create a true and unique national image. Consciously following a European trend from the first decade of the century, native art works were recognized as both *objets d'art* and fine art, rather than simply as "handicraft," a status it was subsequently to lose and then partially regain. Although native art was displayed alongside the newly produced "Canadian" art, both at home and abroad, its "dormant" state excluded it from active participation in the culture-making process. It could become part of the "Canadian historical heritage" but not of its present or future artistic culture.

Harlan Smith spoke throughout the 1920s on native art in general and Gitksan art in particular. In an address at the Provincial Museum in Victoria in 1923, he elaborated on the value of native art to designers of trademarks, fashions, and other commercial products, a theme he had been developing since 1917.[35] He wrote several articles on the subject and produced a museum handbook of useful images of native art for the use of designers and corporations.[36] In his talk, Smith pointed out that "Such objects . . . constitute a very real attraction to visitors . . . and in consequence had a practical monetary value to the residents of districts which possessed them."[37] These ideas were repeated at various points throughout the twenties. In his 1926 report, cited earlier, he gave yet another suggestion for the use of native art.

> Several moulds showing a mask and details of some figures of the totem-poles were brought back to Ottawa. The figures reproduced from these moulds are useful as museum specimens, as advertise-

> ments in railway offices . . . and as souvenirs to be used in the same way as animal heads.[38]

Marius Barbeau followed similar lines of thought on the subject of native art in his statements from the same period. In Ottawa in the winter of 1925, he apparently declared that "much more use might be made from a tourist point of view of totem pole villages in British Columbia, as they proved a great attraction to those who knew of them. Already some of the Western Canadian cities [particularly the tourist town of Banff] were adopting Indian Days as a means of advertisement."[39] Speaking on totem poles at the National Museum, Barbeau emphasized their importance to the railroad; "he considered them to be an economic asset to the country, in that they attract foreign tourists to patronize the railway."[40]

In Vancouver before and after his 1926 field trip to the Skeena River area, Barbeau delivered a series of lectures at the University of British Columbia on the occasion of the institution of the Department of Anthropology. He described both the condition and features of northwest coast native culture and explained the urgent necessity of immediate ethnographic studies. "In a few years, he said, the field will be closed to study, as the last traces of Indian civilization were rapidly disappearing."[41] He pursued this theme in a second lecture: "The Indian, he explained, had adopted the dress, food and habit of the whites, and they had lost all their material culture."[42] With the disappearance of native culture, the art was seen as declining into extinction. Little hope was seen for the future. "The possibility of a revival among the Indians of former talent seems out of the question.

. . . They have long since lost the national pride which makes possible great feats in the field of art. The best we can hope for now is to preserve the remnants within our borders."[43]

These newspaper reports of his remarks are confirmed in his published works. In his landmark ethnographic study of the totem poles of the Gitksan, he commented on the situation of native art and culture, placing them in the past tense.

> Totem poles were once a characteristic form of [Indian] plastic art. . . .
>
> This art now belongs to the past. Ancient customs and racial stamina are on the wane everywhere. . . . Totem poles are no longer made.[44]

He pointed out, "only one of them among the Gitksan has been cut down and disposed of to a museum, a few years ago; and this forfeiture could happen only after the total collapse of the ancient customs and memories."[45] He then noted that the owner had to repay the relatives for the initial cost of the pole.[46] The fact that only one pole was sold and compensation had to be paid, and that poles were still being raised while Barbeau was doing field work, would indicate that the Gitksan were still in possession of their traditional culture, and the poles still retained their social significance. The Gitksan had not reached the point of the Nass River natives who had been persuaded to burn their poles, and sell the rest, or of the Haida, who stopped raising them, and similarly, destroyed others. Barbeau's view on the state of Gitksan culture during the 1920s must, as a consequence of these and other irregularities between the material he presents and the conclusions he draws, be viewed critically.

On the other hand, it must be remembered that Barbeau was reflecting the general attitude of the time and was probably influenced, as were other ethnographers, by the fate of the natives in eastern and central Canada and the United States. He did a great deal to document and publicize northwest coast native art and culture; his studies and notes are still of value, even if their conclusions are out of date. Nevertheless, because of his prominence in the field, the latter serve to provide a historical context for museum activity at that time, and, as will be seen, shaped future interpretations.

Although it considered the demise of native culture to be imminent, the National Museum accorded native art the status of being "Canadian" and of "fine art." Edward Sapir, noting the trend of European "progressive" art to utilize Japanese and primitive art forms and themes, stated in 1923, in a preface to Smith's "Album of Prehistoric Canadian Art," that "primitive art is art as well as ethnographic material."[47] Various pieces of northwest coast and Gitksan art were included in art exhibitions both at home and abroad. In the 1926 annual report of the museum, it is reported that "nine of the best examples of British Columbia's native carving were lent to the National Gallery for exhibition at Paris, France, with the Wembley collection of Canadian paintings."[48] This important show was on display at the Musée du Jeu de Paume in the spring of 1927.

The Wembley show was followed by a major exhibition in Canada of northwest coast native and Canadian contemporary art. It featured, among others, the introduction of Emily Carr. It seems possible that Barbeau, who co-ordinated the exhibition, had seen her works on the

Gitksan Indians while staying with the R.S. Sargents in Hazelton.[49] This exhibition was shown in 1928 at the Art Gallery of Toronto, the Art Gallery of Montreal and the National Gallery. It was followed by others throughout the last years of the 1920s and the early 1930s, including one in London in 1929. The later ones were generally sponsored by the CNR, presumably as part of its tourist promotion campaign.

The inclusion of native art in a show of Canadian art is not to be taken as a sign that it was recognized as part of a viable, living tradition and culture. Barbeau clarified this in his remarks at the Toronto Art Gallery, and placed native art and culture again in the past, but illustrated its use as inspiration to white artists.

> They [the natives] do not believe in traditions any longer, . . . they do not indeed, believe in themselves. They no longer believe in art for its own sake, as they once did. But nevertheless, their art is the finest inspiration on the American Continent and is a heritage every lover of beauty must cherish.[50]

Douglas Leechman, also on the staff of the National Museum, spoke on both the role of native art in Canadian culture and the present state of that art. Writing in *Studio* in 1928, Leechman quoted Eric Brown, the director of the National Gallery, as saying that native art was "to take a definite place as one of the most valuable of Canada's artistic productions."[51] Leechman also accepted, however, the general view that the art had reached its final stage and had no future.

> It is greatly to be regretted that this art is rapidly dying out, and once dead it can certainly never be revived. In the old days when the influence of the white man had not made itself felt, the workmanship was of the highest, but, first the introduction of our tools, which led to quicker and, therefore, more careless production, and the adoption of our way of living by the younger generation of Indians, have had their fatal effect. Nearly all the old artists are dead and there are none to take their places.

> Efforts have been made by the National Museum of Canada to preserve the totem-poles which are left, a highly commendable move in the right direction.[52]

Thus although native art was recognized as art, and was included in the federal government's promotion of a distinctly Canadian culture, it was not included in that program for its own sake or for its perpetuation and expansion. Native art, *qua* art, especially that of the Skeena area, was seen rather as inspiration and subject for white artists who travelled west, such as Jackson, Phillips, and Holgate, or those like Carr, who came from the area. This attitude was not to change until the 1950s.

Barbeau elaborated extensively on these ideas in an article devoted to the emergence of distinctly Canadian national culture and art forms, and the role of native art in that process. His proposal followed one by Smith, who had been suggesting it as early as 1923.[53]

> After the artist Langdon Kihn [from New York] had brought back and exhibited his brilliant landscapes of totem poles and mountain crests, his decorative Indian portraits, it was easy for me to induce other painters to invade our preserves. It had become clear to all that the Skeena and West Coast were a new country for Canadian art, so far unknown, unrevealed and full of promise. . . . Gitksan and Tsimshian chiefs donned their regalia, perhaps for the last time, and courted the fame conferred by a stately portrait from an expert hand.[54]

Barbeau also noted that even native music constitutes "a wealth second to none as a starting-point for musical inspiration . . . [being used] in compositions that may initiate a new era in Canadian music."[55]

Having established the principle of native art as "inspiration," the article enlarges on the decoration of the Jasper Tea Room in the Chateau Laurier in Ottawa and its "embellishment in the Indian style."[56]

Edwin Holgate was chosen for the task, possibly at Barbeau's behest, because "he [Holgate] knew the Skeena River scenery and totem pole carvings at first hand, he could derive from them authentic themes and local color as can be adapted to architectural functions and requirements."[57] The decorations for the room included columns carved as totem poles, chilkat blanket motifs on lamp shades, masks hung on the walls, miniature totem poles and animals as lamp bases, and various other "Skeena Valley motifs."[58] The woodwork for the room was executed, however, by a Montreal firm, rather than by native craftsmen.

In a sophisticated presentation of the use of art in creating a sense of nationalism, Barbeau described the significance of the tea room and its use of native subject matter.

> The Jasper Room, with its gorgeous decorative designs, its fine red cedar boards, takes upon itself a rich meaning, a meaning that reaches out far and wide, for those who can read it. It is an eloquent symbol of our growing aspirations towards a nationhood and a culture that will be our own, our contribution to the world at large. . . . Other hotels, other large public buildings will require Canadian decoration. . . .
>
> Once we have awakened to the sense of our vitality, we will crave for the growth of a culture that will best express us in relation to our habitat. This growth will mean everything to us, will unite us all into an understanding nation, will foster love, joy and mutual esteem. It will earn recognition for us among the people abroad, since culture more than anything else creates a lasting impression among the living, and leaves a deep trace in the sands of time.[59]

Barbeau's comments represent what was, essentially, the redefinition of the social and cultural significance of native art as it pertained to the growth of Canadian culture and identity. Inherent in the redefinition, however, was the loss of the original cultural context of the art, considered moribund. It assumed the disappearance of

Gitksan culture, for example, which had endowed its art with its own cultural and social meaning. Later, of course, it was discovered that both of these contexts and definitions could co-exist, allowing native culture to reassert, or re-establish itself within the framework of Canadian culture. In fact, some twenty years later the National Museum and Barbeau, in particular, had accepted the possibility of a "revival."

II.

The Gitksan Cultural Resurgence, 1930-1952

Several factors contributed to this important reversal of position on the part of the National Museum *vis-à-vis* northwest coast native culture and art. One was the actual state of the latter, especially among the Gitksan. As has been noted earlier, historic and ethnographic evidence indicates that Gitksan culture was not as moribund as was portrayed in the twenties. On the contrary, a resurfacing of Gitksan culture occurred in the thirties and forties, independent of museum sponsorship which occurred only subsequently. This cultural resurgence had a strong influence on museological developments in the Hazelton area, including 'Ksan. It is, however, largely unrecorded, except in one neglected article[60] and in newspaper documentation from the period.

It will be remembered that the isolated location of the Gitksan villages and their specific history combined to preserve their culture intact when others were being severely disrupted in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Up to 1920, both traditional ceremonies and pole raisings continued more or less unabated in the Skeena villages. In 1921 the

"potlatch" ban was put into effect and, as has been shown previously, was thought to have marked the imminent end of native culture, even for the Gitksan. In 1929, however, Barbeau reported that twenty-five poles had been raised in the Skeena area between 1900 and 1926 and that fourteen carvers were still alive.[61] Even if only one of the poles had been raised after 1921, it would be significant. In the light of his report, then, it is difficult to agree with his assertion that the culture had experienced a "total collapse" but this is often assumed to the be case.[62]

It is true that during the twenties few poles were raised and potlatch activity, where it continued, was surreptitious. Nonetheless, feasts, small gatherings and ceremonies involving the naming of new chiefs were permitted. Indeed, the annual summer congregation of natives at the Carrier village of Hagwilget, near Hazelton, continued unabated, although according to a local paper, "they were not able to get away with much of the old time stuff."[63] During this period and into the next decade, the transformation of the potlatch and native gatherings into sports days and religious evangelical "revivals" was encouraged.

The decade following the economic collapse of 1929, witnessed substantial changes in the native situation. Three factors contributed. Of primary importance was the less than stringent enforcement of the potlatch ban in the Upper Skeena which allowed the growth of "small affairs" and underground activities into full scale, overt ceremonies. Associated with this development was a renewed interest among the natives in pole raising, both of old and new poles, and the incorpora-

tion of events of the restoration program of the twenties into their ongoing cultural life. The formation of the Native Brotherhood also served as a nucleus for the continued growth of native identity and culture among the northern tribes. People in the Skeena villages associated with it made several attempts to bring the value and continuity of native culture to the attention of the white and native population. In this endeavor they were assisted by the important economic role which the native community played throughout this period. The purchase of large quantities of winter supplies following annual migrations to the fisheries and canneries on the coast was a welcome boost to the business community, in what were otherwise hard times. This led both to a new respect for the natives and a desire to maintain their friendship.

In early 1931, native ceremonies and potlatches were reported at Kispiox and Kitwancool respectively. The former was typical of the new strategy adopted by the Gitksan for embedding traditional, and now illegal, ceremonies in acceptable events and of involving authorities, without whose endorsements the ceremonies would have been suspect, directly in them. Although incomplete in detail and reconstructed from various reports, the proceedings indicate the beginning of an overt cultural resurgence.[64] The ceremony at Kispiox, which was part of week-long "Christmas celebrations," involved the opening of a new Kispiox hall and the installation of a new chief from Kitwancool. The ceremony synthesized traditional and Christian elements. Native chiefs and other guests from the area were invited and seated in the hall according to traditional ranking, apparently on Christmas day. The

Kitwanga band gave musical selections, an acculturated feature of native ceremonies since the turn of the century. Other traditional elements also played a large part in the program. It was reported that "a number of Indians, adorned in ancient and quaint costumes, imitated the old time dances."[65] The following day saw more celebrations of a similar order, also connected with the investiture of the new chief, but with the United Church minister playing an active role in the proceedings. This may be representative of what La Violette termed the new positive attitude towards potlatching on the part of missionaries since the turn of the century. This attitude, which held that more was to be gained by respecting traditional culture, had been growing especially strong since the beginning of the thirties.[66] Speeches were made and gifts of beef, sugar and other goods were distributed. Total expenses of the installation were reported at $1,353 of which the new chief contributed $953, with the remainder coming from seven of the other chiefs present. The Kitwanga winter/Christmas ceremonial season continued with the opening of the new hall some days later. Both the Indian agent and the minister led the proceedings. Cash was distributed, speeches were given by the chiefs from the area and music was played.

Although acculturated elements were part of these ceremonies, the fact that traditional ranking of chiefs was observed indicates that the old social order prevailed. The dances were undoubtedly not imitations, as reported, but genuine. The amounts of the gifts involved, given the times, indicate an extensive period of preparation, as does the presence of chiefs from other villages. The exchange of goods, despite the legal ban, also attests to the persistence of the renewal of cultural

traditions.

Following this ceremony in Kitwanga, the occurrence of a large affair was reported in connection with the raising of a pole at Kitwancool. Although not reported in any detail, these ceremonies apparently went on for several days with no supervision, and were less "tame" or acculturated than those at Kispiox.

At the same time, shamanistic activity, at which several participants were arrested for "witchcraft," was reported in Hagwilget.[67] Such concerted cultural activity, both legitimate and otherwise, had not been noted in the area for several years, and pointed to future developments.

Sports days, a notable feature of native life since the First World War, continued and established a definite pattern occurring at various Gitksan and Carrier villages, both immediately preceding and following the annual migration of natives to the canneries on the coast for the months of June through August. Religious "revivals" also increased in popularity, although with the rise in overt potlatching, they declined in significance as an organizaing feature of native life. Sports days came to incorporate traditional costumed ceremonies, pole raisings and potlatch-related activity, and subsequently even affected the placement of poles in Hazelton, which are now situated adjacent to the sports field.[68] As native culture resurfaced, Christmas ceremonies, Easter celebrations, Hallowe'en parties, house warmings, christenings, birthdays, funerals, weddings and other events also became important openings for aspects of the traditional culture to re-emerge in an approved setting.

In the meantime, the disastrous flooding of the Skeena River in 1936 resulted in many poles being washed from their locations. Kitsegucla, Kitwanga, Kispiox and Kitanmax (i.e. Hazelton) were especially hard it. Harlan Smith, who had retired the previous year, launched an appeal in Ottawa for a new restoration program.[69] Although the attention of various officials, especially in the CNR publicity department, was aroused, little was done, except for rescuing one pole embedded in river ice in Kitwanga. This turn of events, combined with the resurgence of traditional culture, and the apparent relaxation of the ban on traditional ceremonies and exchanges, led to a renewed interest by members of the native community in re-raising the poles without outside assistance. This, in turn, seems to have stimulated interest in carving and erecting new poles as well; the first one reported appeared the following year.[70]

It is important to realize that these poles were not viewed as tourist attractions or museum restoration projects by the people who put them up, although outside observers continued to interpret them as such. Rather, the poles maintained their iconic and social significance. The raisings of both old and new poles were conducted by those with the hereditary rights to do so. The claims and prerogatives associated with the poles were validated by corresponding traditional ceremonies and exchanges.

The traditions of the past had been modified, however, both by museum activity and by the exigencies of the law. The re-erection of old poles for example, which became popular at this time, was in earlier times exceptional, although not unknown. Generally, new poles were

carved instead. This new facet of traditional activity, adopted from the restoration projects, had a double effect. Full-time carvers were no longer required to produce a continued supply of new poles (or even paraphernalia). As a consequence of this, and other factors, the quality of carving during this period did not have the opportunity to reach the heights of the previous century. The correlation of carving quality, the social significance of the new poles, and the cultural resurgence will be discussed in greater detail in the final chapter.

The re-emergence of the traditional ceremonies and cultural activities grew continually between 1936 and 1939. "Small-scale" affairs, in which traditional practices were embodied in acceptable contexts, grew into large-scale, overt and extended ceremonies. The dimensions of this activity can be measured by examining the winter season of 1938-39. A brief outline of reported events, both ceremonial and artistic, illustrates the remaining vitality of the Gitksan cultural impetus.

The major ceremonies occurred consecutively from the end of December to the end of January at the villages of Kitsegucla and Kitwanga. People from the other villages--Kitwancool, Hazelton, Glen Vowell, Kispiox and Moricetown--were invited to attend.[71] The initial phase of activity was begun during the Christmas celebrations in Kitsegucla. It included traditional music and dances in full regalia, feasting, and speeches by various chiefs. On the final day of the ceremonies in Kitsegucla a new pole, executed by Tom Campbell, a Hazelton carver, was erected by David Williams and his relatives. Although no exchanges of goods were reported, it may be assumed that this

occurred. Two other aspects of the ceremony area also of importance. Some white and Christian-oriented elements were present. This is to be expected given the statutory prohibition and must be regarded as a strategy for survival, rather than an aspect of cultural decline or assimilation. Subsequent events bear this out. Secondly, a Native Brotherhood meeting ran concurrently with the ceremonies. Although no proof of direct correlation was undertaken here, a correspondence between those involved in the Native Brotherhood, which was beginning to organize in the Upper Skeena villages at this time, and those leading the cultural resurgence, was noted.

The Kitsegucla ceremonies were followed by others in Kitwanga held in conjunction with the elevation of Robert Harris to a chief.[72] In traditional fashion, the visitors from the other villages were met at the railway station by runners "dressed in full native costumes."[73] The ceremonies, including again traditional songs, speeches, costumes, dances and feasting, continued for several days. A somewhat ingenious strategy was reportedly employed to bypass the prohibition against the distribution of goods which validated the ceremonies. "After the expenses being settled and goods placed in the hands as prizes to those with authorized Indian names, speeches were made by many well known chiefs, and people who gathered to attend his [Robert Harris'] election as chief."[74] The distribution of "prizes," usually for "the best speeches by chiefs," was often reported during other ceremonies. Expenses were given as $1,546.40, not including "those of friends and relatives."[75] On Sunday, the new chief was received and blessed in the church, continuing the practice of synthesizing traditional and Christian practices.

No pole raising was reported, however; the tomb stone was erected instead. At a similar ceremony the next fall, also held in Kitwanga, a pole was reportedly taken down, and put back up.

According to ethnographic reports, secret society ceremonies were also performed in the Upper Skeena throughout the period, although with what regularity is not known.[76] Shamanistic practices persisted as well, although reports are, again, sketchy.

It is the interpretation of these events that has caused some problems. Barbeau, for example, regarded the new poles carved during the period 1930-1950, without exception as inferior specimens and attached little importance to the attendant ceremonies. In *Totem Poles* he devoted only two brief statements and no illustrations to this period of Gitksan history:

> A few new ones [poles] of inferior quality have been carved and erected there in the past ten years. A festival for raising new poles and re-erecting old ones was held at Gitsegyukla [*sic*] in the winter of 1946, but, as the new generation is not totem-pole-minded, this may be the last effort of its kind.[77]
>
> (In the winter of 1945 some of the old poles of Gitsegyukla were transplanted from the old village flat on the riverbank to the new village on the hill, and new ones were carved and raised in the course of a modernized form of potlatch.)[78]

Barbeau's brief, but authoritative, statements have influenced many subsequent interpretations. His statements are, however, misleading. As will be seen, not all the poles carved at this time were as inferior as he implied. Furthermore, Barbeau's information on the festival in Kitsegucla in 1945 was far more extensive and documented many more traditional elements than his statements seem to indicate.[79] Other poles were also carved and erected at other villages throughout this

period, a fact he neglected to mention. In addition, the poles did retain their cultural, iconic and social significance as the "new generation" came to maturity in the decade following 1945. This study contends that the "modernized form of potlatch" was a strategy used for preserving traditional culture in the face of potential repression. Events confirm that the danger was real.

Despite Barbeau's subsequent doubts about their cultural significance, the renewed ceremonials and exchanges were soon viewed by the authorities as being of sufficient import and size to be forcibly discouraged. A particularly large and traditional ceremony held in the fall of 1939 sounded the first alarm. "The scale reached in that potlatch caused police to take action in the matter. While potlatches are illegal, small gatherings for gift making have been more or less tolerated for some time."[80] An "expensive radio," part of the goods distrubuted, was seized and an investigation by the Attorney-General's department initiated.[81] No arrests were reported.

Although no regalia was mentioned in the late 1939 investigations, a large selection of shamanistic paraphernalia was confiscated by police at the village of Kispiox in 1942.[82] Again no arrests were reported. The disposition of this material, including several rare and important items, was also not indicated. It was suggested at the time that it belonged in a museum, thereby again confirming the unfortunate coincidence between cultural repression and museum collections, which was made particularly evident by Barbeau's recent return to the area in the summer of 1939. This coincidence caused some continued distrust between the Gitksan and the white institutions that strongly affected subsequent

museum activity in the area.

Active repression of cultural activity was apparently short-lived. Although it resulted in a temporary decline both in the overt nature and the reporting of ceremonial and carving activity, it was not a deterrent. A pole raising was, in fact, reported in 1940 in Kitsegucla.[83] The practice of raising both old and new poles continued both there and in other villages throughout the forties and into the fifties.

Between the years of 1929, when the original restoration program ended, and 1952, which saw the beginning of a new government sponsored scheme, seventeen new poles are known to have been carved and eleven old ones restored and re-erected by the natives in the Upper Skeena River area.[84] Kitsegucla, which had refused permission to the first restoration crew, had by far the most new poles, with eight new poles and a carved totem figure placed throughout the village in front of owners' houses. Two new poles were erected in Hazelton, carved by Arthur McDames in 1948 and 1951. Kispiox had four new poles carved since 1925, and Kitwancool three.[85] The significance of the number of new poles and those restored is clarified when it is compared to the previous twenty-five year period, when twenty-five poles were erected. Gitksan culture, although periodically repressed, was neither dead nor dormant during the thirties, forties, and into the fifties, and had awaited only the opportunity to re-emerge and assert itself overtly after the initial stage of suppression in the twenties.

Another factor which contributed to the re-emergence of Gitksan art and culture in the thirties was the Native Brotherhood and Sisterhood (NBS). Formed in response to economic hardship among the natives

during the early thirties, it also took an active role in bringing the validity of traditional native culture to the attention of both the white and native populations. In order to increase interest in their heritage and arts, the members of the NBS sponsored a program of traditional dances, games and other aspects of native cultural life at Kitselas and Terrace in January of 1939.[86] This elaborate presentation, hosted by people from various villages, in particular Miss Madeline George of Kitwanga, Chief Mark McKay of Kitselas, Sam Kennedy (Schoom Giess), and Albert Young, bears a marked resemblance to dance programs now put on at 'Ksan. The program included a welcome dance, a chief's dance, a reception dance, a victory dance and shaman's dance (as well as demonstrations of gambling and other activities). A performance similar in intent and content and with some of the same personnel, but featuring different dances, was also presented ten years later by the NBS. Throughout the forties and fifties these kinds of programs were continued, featuring performances of traditional native dances, although performed for different purposes than those sponsored by the NBS.

The extent of all the activities outlined above must be understood for it is frequently assumed that Gitksan culture was dormant throughout this period, and was "revived" only following the formation of the art program of 'Ksan. Traditional ceremonial activity, for example, was seen as never reaching any significant level, if it was acknowledged at all.[87] Barbeau reported that the Kitsegucla poles were all re-erected in a native restoration program during a single year, presumably without the attendant ceremony or with only one collective "modernized" potlatch, and that the incidence of new poles was marginal, and artistically

insignificant.[88] Without a knowledge of the cultural background of the 1930s and 1940s, events of the following years appear incomprehensible.

In a 1952 ethnographic study Wilson Duff, of the Provincial Museum, summarized the social and cultural significance of the two previous decades to the Gitksan people.[89] The restoration program by the CNR and the National Museum modified native culture and was incorporated into the social and ceremonial system: the old tradition of erecting only new poles and allowing old ones to fall and decay was altered to incorporate the re-erecting of old poles.

> To the restoring and resetting of an old pole, the natives have transferred most of the ceremonies and customs formerly used when a new pole was raised; consequently such restorations have had to wait until a suitable occasion for celebration arose, and have involved much more expense than the mere labor and materials.[90]

The report testified that throughout this period the erection of poles, old and new, still carried strong cultural meaning within the context of Gitksan social organization. As such, poles invoked not only the phrateries, clans, houses and the outlawed, albeit continuing, traditional ceremonies, but in conjunction with these also reaffirmed hereditary rights, crests, histories, names, social prestige, property and territory. Needless to say, acculturating forces had substantially modified many other aspects of Gitksan culture and technology. According to the report, the pressure served to increase, rather than diminish the significance of the poles to the "surviving social organization."

> They serve as constant and visible symbols of the old culture which the natives are trying to preserve. More important, they provide the occasions that bring the old social organization and customs actively into play. Now as much as ever before, nothing can happen to a totem pole without a feast and ceremony.[91]

Each pole raising was a costly event, not one likely to be repeated in a person's lifetime. The natives declined to accept outside financial aid, especially white, not only because it was considered as "outside interference," but also because its acceptance would indicate a lack of pride and wealth. This situation presented a major obstacle to any further restoration program based on museum auspices, and was to have a profound effect on future museum projects in the area.

III.

The "Revival," 1948-1957

Having outlined the significant museum projects and the attitudes towards native culture and art from 1900 to 1930, and having observed, by contrast, the actual state of Gitksan culture in the following decades, an examination of the third factor which formed the foundation for 'Ksan can be undertaken. This involved the "revival" of native arts and crafts through government sponsorship, often held in conjunction with open air museum displays. While playing an important part in creating the historical and cultural background for 'Ksan, the "revival" must always be viewed within the context of the continuity of Gitksan cultural traditions and in terms of its motivations and origins. Tracing the evolution of the "revival" concept--which appears fairly malleable and occasionally changes meaning--and co-ordinating it with concurrent museological developments clarifies the precise relationship of the two to Gitksan culture and art, and ultimately to the museum of 'Ksan.

It has been noted that the "revival" concept contains a complete reversal of earlier government and museum views on the future of native arts and crafts. To account for this switch, some examination of both the motivating factors and early principles of the "revival" must be made. As with the first Skeena totem pole restoration project, these tend to be based as much on economics as altruism.

The initial motivation for the "revival" as it occurred in British Columbia can be found in its primary precedent, a U.S. government sponsored Indian arts and crafts training and marketing program in Alaska during the latter part of the 1930s. Virgil Farrell, supervisor of native arts and crafts for the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs, issued a report on the success of the project in 1938.[92] The report showed that the cash return to the natives from the project closely approached $100,000 per annum. In the next five years, this figure increased by almost five hundred percent.

It was not long before a similar program was announced in Canada based on the Alaskan model. Farrell's reports were, in fact, cited at length in a preliminary study on the marketing potential of native art on the northwest coast, prepared for the Canadian government by H. Hawthorn of the University of British Columbia a few years later.[93] Hawthorn pointed out that:

> The programme of the Alaska Native Service of the United States Bureau of Indian Affairs, working in a situation comparable to that of the Coastal and Northern sections of the Province, provides a valuable example of a development of craft production and sales that might be achieved here, with necessary adaptations. . . .[94]

Many features of the Alaskan program, incorporated in the Canadian scheme, turned up at 'Ksan. These included training centres, a central marketing service, the promotion of the work through catalogues, and the use of a distinctive trademark to establish the "authenticity" of a piece. The idea of economic enhancement, stressed in Farrell's report, was, in fact, to become the primary motivation for the Canadian "revival" of native art and craft work under government subsidization.

Similarly, the use of reconstructed, as opposed to restored or transported, native houses in open-air museum displays also appears to have originated in Alaska. As in the later "revival" in British Columbia, these Alaskan structures were erected in conjunction with totem pole restoration and carving programs. In *Monuments in Cedar*, E. Keithahn describes three locations where such precedents for later developments at 'Ksan occurred: Wrangell, Mud Bay and Old Kasaan. The buildings at each site, constructed shortly after 1939, contained complementary exhibits inside, thus adding a new dimension to museological display developments.[95]

Old Kasaan, it will be remembered, had been declared a national monument in 1906, but little attention was paid to it until the 1930s. Although its similarity in name to 'Ksan--initially known as "Old 'Ksan" --may only be coincidental, a tangible link occurs between the two projects in the person of Marius Barbeau.[96] It will be recalled that Barbeau was directly related to Mrs. R.S. Sargent of Hazelton and visited her on his early field trips to the Skeena area. On later expeditions, including one in 1947 when he travelled to Alaska, he again visited Hazelton.[97] As well as seeing his cousin, he would also have

met the wife of his cousin's son, Mrs. Margaret ("Polly") Sargent. Having moved from Calgary following her marriage to Bill Sargent in 1941, she was to play a central role in subsequent local museum, restoration and Indian art and craft promotion projects leading up to and including 'Ksan. Significantly, the initial phase of her activity in organizing and co-ordinating these projects began in 1948. That Barbeau's work and interests were mentioned in his 1947 visit is not unlikely, and one of his current interests was certainly the projects in Alaska. Barbeau appended a portion of Keithahn's text dealing with the Old Kasaan project, as well as additional photographs and information on the totem pole carving projects, to his study *Totem Poles* which appeared in 1950.[98] As will be seen, Barbeau had also been instrumental in announcing the early stages of the Canadian "revival." It seems possible then that local events at Hazelton during the late 1940s and 1950s which led to 'Ksan were initiated, at least in part, at Barbeau's suggestion and knowledgeably co-ordinated with larger government programs. This possibility will be examined in detail in subsequent chapters. In the meantime it should be noted that the concept of using reconstructed native houses as open-air museum displays with adjacent carving and totem pole restoration projects did not pass directly from Alaska to Hazelton and 'Ksan, but rather found its first stage of realization and development in Vancouver and Victoria in the 1940s.

Two talks given by Marius Barbeau in Vancouver in 1939, one before and one after his return to the field that year, disclosed the first stirrings of the "revival" concept as it pertained to the Canadian west coast.[99] Reported in the Vancouver daily newspapers, both talks

continued to reflect the attitude that native culture was moribund but now admitted the possibility of revivification. Barbeau, according to the newspaper stories, announced the instigation of a program to "restore the lost arts of the British Columbia Coast Indians."[100] "One of these objectives is that of the restoration of slate carving among the aborigines, a phase of activity in which they were very accomplished in earlier years. Suitable material had to be found, and surveys had to be carried out on a slate quarry near Skidegate. . . . The matter is now before the Indian department for action."[101] The object of turning official attention to this art and silver carving, "to which the average tourist and collector turns in acquiring souvenirs of aboriginal workmanship"[102] was "to make them [the natives] more self sustaining economically."[103] "The authorities in Ottawa are satisfied that there is a good future for Indian craftsmanship."[104]

A contradiction again arises, however, between Barbeau's initial recorded statements on the "revival" and the actual historical and cultural situation. This anomaly tends to distort subsequent assessments of the effect of the "revival" on Gitksan culture and must, therefore, be clarified. Barbeau's continued insistence that native cultural and artistic traditions had perished, which fulfil his earlier observations and predictions, is belied by events during the thirties of which he was undoubtedly aware. His major informant, the native ethnologist William Beynon, was one of the founders of the Native Brotherhood, which has been seen as one of the loci of the overt resurgence of traditional activity on the Upper Skeena in the 1930s. Beynon issued reports on this resurgence which Barbeau subsequently failed to

repeat in his published works.[105] Barbeau would also have heard of the new totem poles on the Upper Skeena and the continuation of traditional ceremonies and artistic activity on his field trip to the region in 1939. When in Prince Rupert at this time, he would have witnessed both Rufus Moody and John Marks, Haida carvers from Skidegate, creating in argillite and silver "fine specimens of native handicraft for souvenirs and gifts"[106] in a local store. Barbeau's October speech at the University of British Columbia (UBC) on the completion of his field trip, appears to have mentioned none of this cultural and artistic activity, but as quoted above, re-emphasized the need for a revival of a dying culture and lost arts. It is probably significant that Barbeau does not appear to have spoken of this need in his Prince Rupert talks.[107]

Barbeau's attitude towards the state of native culture was reflected in his choice of arts and crafts to be revived: argillite and silver work. One of the features of the "revivals" was their promotion of "tourist arts." In a study on primitive art and the acculturative process, N.H. Graburn differentiates between "acculturated arts" or those done in response to the western market, such as argillite carving, and those arts which are "traditional culturally embedded productions."[108] In the latter category are Gitksan poles raised for traditional purposes and not for sale. S. Morrison clarifies this difference in his comments on the New Zealand Maoris by dissociating "arts of great contemporary, cultural and social significance to the people themselves," from those "fine arts in the Maori tradition, generally made for sale," and "souvenir arts, always made for sale."[109] Both Barbeau and later

government sponsored "revivals" emphasized the latter two categories, even in pole production which was usually, although not always, done for sale to a white individual, corporation or museum patron.

This distinction had been recognized by the natives in Alaska who derisively viewed the new poles put up under the restoration program as "barbeque poles," "because they lacked any real significance and were required by the white man only for purposes strange to the older generation."[110]

Thus the "revival," at least in its early stages, did not tend to support that art which would reaffirm the continuity of traditional culture. As will be seen, this was, in conjunction with the beliefs on the state of native culture and art expressed by Barbeau and others, to have a curious effect on subsequent assessments of the effect of the "revival" on Gitksan culture and art following the opening of 'Ksan.

Although Barbeau first proposed the idea in 1939, the government sponsored "revival" for the promotion of northwest coast native arts and crafts did not get fully underway until after the Second World War. In the meantime, the British Columbia Indian Arts and Welfare Society was set up by the provincial government in 1940, under the aegis of the Provincial Museum in Victoria. Directed by Alice Ravenhill, the society undertook an educational program to bring native culture to the attention of school children. In addition, the society focused the public's attention on native art through conferences, publications, radio broadcasts, articles in various newspapers, and exhibitions and demonstrations of native art. Despite the fact that these experiments in media and gallery exposure, promotion and marketing were subsequently

picked up and expanded by other organizations, the society appears, in retrospect, to have been more of an interim, or at least incipient, move to encourage native art. Nor was it particularly active in the Skeena River district, but rather tended to concentrate most of its efforts on the southern sector of the province.

One important exception was its promotion of the work of a Gitksan girl, Judith Morgan, who at the 1947 annual exhibition staged by the society, was awarded a $150 scholarship to study native arts at the Provincial Museum for six weeks.[111] Judith Morgan presents an interesting case in the co-ordinated promotional and marketing experiments being conducted at the time by the society and other institutions including the Provincial Museum, UBC, and the National Museum. Morgan was trained by a white art teacher, George Sinclair, who noticed the quality of her work while instructing at the residential school at Alberni. Rather than the traditional arts of carving, Morgan did paintings of traditional objects and events in a painterly style, reminiscent of Mildred Valley-Thornton, a popular portraitist specializing in native subjects. She also worked extensively in pastel, which she continued while at the BCPM. In terms of its relationship to the traditional arts, her work was similar to that of George Clutesi, who also painted scenes of traditional life using western artistic conventions and medium. They exhibited together and shared much of the promotion. In the next four years, Morgan's work received a gratifying amount of publicity and public exposure, including articles in local newspapers and magazines, such as *Saturday Night*.[112] Her work was exhibited in the United States and major galleries in Canada, including

the Vancouver Art Gallery. This culminated in a major show at the National Museum in Ottawa in 1949, a substantial step for a nineteen year old artist having exhibited publicly for only three years.

Although not necessarily as a consequence, her style is now often seen in the work of native artists from eastern Canada. On the other hand, neither her, nor George Clutesi's work, despite the promotion they received, sold on a popular level. Their major patrons remained the government and sponsoring institutions. It was noted by a UBC professor in 1948, when the UBC Museum of Anthropology bought a collection of Clutesi's work, that "though Mr. Clutesi has exhibited paintings in all parts of the northwest, and has been acclaimed by public and critics alike, this is the first major sale of his works. . . . Mr. Clutesi is an Indian. He is expressing, in an art form foreign to his culture, the exact ideas and feelings of his people."[113]

The promotion of art forms "foreign" to native culture was, possibly as a consequence of this marketing experience, relatively short lived. Morgan disappeared from the public eye shortly after 1950. Promotion thereafter tended to concentrate on saleable arts in the traditional form. This important shift accompanied a growing trend towards "authenticity" which manifested itself in several ways, particularly in deploring the competition of cheaply made and imported copies of miniature totem poles and other objects sold to tourists as souvenirs of the province. Although the nature of the art changed, the promotion program remained fairly constant. Co-ordinated media coverage, art gallery exhibitions and museum and government sponsorship became standard methods for focusing public attention on native art and artists.

Various activities on the federal and provincial level throughout 1948 and 1949 mark the establishment of projects which were to develop into the large scale endeavors of the fifties. Although ostensibly unrelated, the overlap between them is so great that they can be regarded as part of a single co-ordinated and interlocking program extending from the level of local organization to the federal government.

In the spring of 1948, the B.C. Indian Arts and Welfare Society sponsored a conference on native Indian affairs at UBC. Although the agenda included a general program of topics for discussion, one section was devoted to native arts, their potential commercial market, and methods for arousing public interest in them. In conjunction with this was a display of native artwork and handicrafts.

One of the participants in the section on art was Ellen Neel, a Kwakiutl artist who had learned the art of carving from her grandfather, Charlie James. In contrast to Judith Morgan, Neel utilized traditional techniques, forms and medium, although she also created traditional designs using western media such as silkscreen printed ties. Her work was commercially more successful than Morgan's, despite the fact that Neel never made a great deal of money from it. In 1948, immediately following the conference, Neel was given a workshop in Stanley Park in co-operation with the Park Commission of the City of Vancouver in order to "conscientiously attempt the resuscitation of the real old native arts."[114] The Park Commission recognized the growing awareness at this time that "to tourists, Indian art is perhaps the greatest drawing card in the province."[115] In 1948, Neel carved a large totem pole which was presented by Chief William Scow, president of the Native Brotherhood,

to UBC on behalf of the native people and placed in front of Brock Hall."[116] This pole and the attendant ceremonies legitimized the right of the university to use the native designation of Thunderbird for their sports teams. It also marked the initiation of patronage for native pole carvers by white institutions and museums which led to full-scale restoration and carving projects.

The University of British Columbia was active in other areas as well. About this time Harry and Audrey Hawthorn, from the Department of Anthropology, were conducting a broad survey on "The Economic Role of Arts and Crafts." Part of this report with amendments and illustrative examples was incorporated in a 1955 study on the natives in British Columbia.[117] The latter will be cited here. The report outlined both the problems and possibilities of promoting a craft "revival" in British Columbia. Types of work were itemized, described and analyzed for their potential usage. Methods for educating the buying public were recommended, including the publication, as in Alaska, of simple but well-written books for the layperson.[118] Museum projects were also called upon to "contribute . . . to local understanding of Indians and their material culture."[119] Recommendations were made for future production and marketing based, partly, on Farrell's reports from Alaska.

Included in these latter recommendations was a proposal for the establishment of school or workshop programs in various locations to train native artists in both the traditional arts and in new developments. In these schools, "Well trained teachers, either permanent or transient, would work with students of all ages, and wherever possible

would make use of the knowledge and skill of the old people."[120] Such a format was utilized almost precisely, at 'Ksan.

The Hawthorns' first report was to prove highly influential. It was one of the background papers for the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences (1949-1951)[121] and, although not printed separately as part of the final report, is quoted and referred to extensively in the section on "Indian Arts and Crafts." Other sources of information were, of course, also available to the commission--the B.C. Indian Arts and Welfare Society brief, for example --but as a background study the Hawthorns' observations would have carried more weight.[122] Those of their observations which were included in the report, together with the conclusions reached by the commission in that section, reflect an indecision as to whether native culture was irrevocably dead or whether it was still possible to supply a valid cultural context for a "revival" of the traditional arts. It also vascillated between the promotion of the traditional arts, as exemplified by Neel, and the western medium and mode of representation, as had been the case with Judith Morgan.

Several methods were outlined in the *Report* for creating public interest in native art and for promoting its production on a wider basis than that indicated by Hawthorn.

> 11. Several suggestions have been made about the type of assistance that might be given: co-operation from the National Gallery in preserving and publicizing Indian designs; travelling exhibitions of Indian work; special instruction; and a study of marketing problems for the different kinds of products. . . . High standards of quality must be maintained. . . .
>
> 12. It has been suggested that the Indian Affairs Branch be encouraged to look after these matters, and that it be provided with the necessary resources. . . .

> 13. . . . these voluntary groups and individuals . . . seem to agree that the Indian can best be integrated into Canadian life if his fellow Canadians learn to know and understand him through his creative work. They have suggested to us that it is no act of patronizing charity to encourage a revival of the activities of those who throughout our history have maintained craftsmanship at the level of an art.[123]

The theme of "helping the natives to help themselves" recurs throughout the "revival." In 1949, at the eighth Annual Exhibition of British Columbia Arts at the Provincial Museum (sponsored by the B.C. Indian Arts and Welfare Society), the Minister of Education, W.T. Straith, echoing Barbeau's statements of ten years earlier, announced that "both the Provincial and the Federal Governments were interested in the advancement of Indian crafts, not only to preserve their culture, but also to help the natives to make a lifelihood."[124] The repeated emphasis on the economic enhancement of the native population continued to be, along with tourism, one of the essential features of the "revival"; and eventually became a primary factor in establishing both 'Ksan and its associated art program.

In the fall of 1949, UBC announced a project to restore the poles already in their collection. Mungo Martin, a Kwakiutl carver from Alert Bay, also related to Charlie James, was engaged to undertake the restoration work.[125] Mungo Martin had been carving totem poles and other objects for fifty years and was an authority on all aspects of the culture of his people. He was assisted in the work by Ellen Neel. The UBC concept was ambitious. It reportedly included a complete house, a house frontal and other displays arranged "so that they will be as nearly as possible, representative of an old time village."[126] The

project as it opened several years later was on a smaller scale than originally planned, although the village concept was still present, and later expanded. Mungo Martin, during his tenure at UBC, also carved two new poles for the university.

The totem pole restoration program at UBC, later moved to the Provincial Museum, was only one part of a much broader concept which took form and expanded in the following years. In May of 1949, Wilson Duff, who had recently joined the staff of the Provincial Museum, and H. Hawthorn followed in Barbeau's and Smith's footsteps and made a rapid tour of the native villages in the Upper Skeena.[127] They sought ethnographic informants, assessed the state of native culture and arts, and photographed the villages and poles. This action initiated a second, and much larger totem pole collection, and later *in situ* restoration program that was to continue for more than a decade and is, in fact, still in progress. The activities of the program in the Skeena area are particularly important to the museum developments which shaped 'Ksan. A few years were to elapse, however, before the restoration project was actually started. The intervening period appears to have been one of consolidation and of promotion along the guidelines suggested by the Massey commission. In 1951 sizeable loans of native art from the collection of the Provincial Museum were lent to various art galleries in Canada and the United States, including the Montreal Museum of Fine Art.[128] Three years later the Victoria Art Gallery organized a show of native art, including some pieces never before publicly exhibited, in conjunction with work by Emily Carr and Sophie Pemberton. This format echoed certain aspects of the 1927-28 "Exhibition of

Canadian West Coast Art--Native and Modern" held in Ottawa, Toronto and Montreal.[129] The Victoria show was considered to have "the most attractions for the large number of tourists expected at the centre."[130] The following year the Victoria Art Gallery exhibited a show from the Alaska Arts and Crafts Exhibit , sponsored by the B.C. Indian Arts and Welfare Society.[131] The re-admittance of native art into white art galleries was to increase as the "revival" continued, and was again to redefine the role of native art so that it could now actively participate in the creation of Canadian culture.

Other co-ordinated activities were also directed, during this period, towards the widespread promotion of native art.

In 1952 Mungo Martin moved to Victoria to begin a carving and restoration program in Thunderbird Park. That same year Duff returned to the Skeena area as "part of the totem-pole restoration program."[132] He again visited Hazelton, Kispiox, Kitsegucla, Kitwanga, and Kitwancool. "A study was made of the remaining totem-poles, . . . of their place in the present native culture, and of the problems involved in preserving them, *in situ* or elsewhere. All the poles were photographed, and negotiations were made to purchase two which could be brought to Victoria and copied. . . . A detailed report on this project was later prepared and sent to other interested authorities with the aim of promoting larger programmes of totem-pole restoration."[133]

The totem pole restoration and carving project established at Thunderbird Park was part of this province-wide program. In its initial phase, however, it was used mainly to replace the decaying collection of poles in Thunderbird Park with newly carved facsimiles so that the

originals could be indefinitely preserved indoors. It was also noted that, "By employing native carvers and having its operation in the park itself, the programme accomplished two important secondary aims; to preserve the art of totem carving and to serve as a unique tourist and educational attraction."[134]

The project was to expand the following year with the construction of a new workshop and the donation of materials from various lumber companies, who were to form a continued source of patronage. Work was continued both on replicas of old poles in the collection and newly conceived ones by Mungo Martin. He was assisted by his son David. More important, following the concept of Alaska and UBC, construction of a Kwakiutl style house in Thunderbird Park was begun after a previous painted house frontal display was demolished. The new house, also with a painted front, was based on an old one which stood at Fort Rupert and belonged to one of Mungo Martin's ancestors. The new house was complete with house posts carved with hereditary crests from Mungo Martin's family.[135] The house was officially opened in 1953 with a three-day potlatch which included many traditional ceremonies still practiced among the Kwakiutl. The event received national coverage by television and other news media. About the same time, one of Martin's new poles was raised.[136] It featured the crests from four of the Kwakiutl tribes, and was the first of its kind. It was not a "personal" pole, but rather one which asserted community unity. Such a pole was also later erected at 'Ksan. That both of them should have been carved at museums under museum auspices is important in understanding how these poles are related to traditional poles and the new "revival" of which they are

the product.

In 1954, as well, the totem pole restoration program was formalized. The University of British Columbia and the Provincial Museum, together with other interested parties, actively joined forces to form the British Columbia Totem Pole Preservation Committee.

> The staff of the Department of Anthropology and President N.A.M. MacKenzie of the University of British Columbia, as well as the Provincial Museum staff, were all concerned with the possible collection and preservation of the remaining totem poles still standing--and decaying--in deserted villages. H.R. MacMillan was determined that these should be assessed and, where possible, saved. He instigated the formation of the British Columbia Totem Pole Conservation [*sic*] Committee, chaired by Harry Hawthorn, and this was formally set up, with members of the Department of Anthropology, the Provincial Museum, and the Provincial Government, in addition to H.R. MacMillan, Walter C. Koerner, Powell River Lumber Co., B.C. Packers Ltd., and Union Steamships.[137]

The participation of the business sector is significant. Whatever the motivations may have been, it recalls the earlier statements of Campbell-Johnston and the involvement of the CNR in the first restoration project.

The aim of the joint committee was to "stimulate and co-ordinate totem pole salvage and restoration projects in British Columbia."[138] In the first years of its existence, activities were centred primarily on the collection of poles, rather than on *in situ* restorations. One of the first areas to be affected was the Queen Charlotte Islands. A five-week survey done the previous year had generated a great deal of public interest in the project through extensive newspaper, radio and lecture programs. The salvage operation undertaken in 1954 at Tanoo and Skedans also received much media attention, including radio broadcasts and interviews by Bill Reid, a CBC announcer who went along on

the voyage.[139] He was to repeat his role as media commentator later in the restoration projects. The salvaged poles were divided between the collections of the Provincial Museum and the University of British Columbia. Until 1957, the emphasis remained on collecting Haida and Kwakiutl poles. Field trips continued to receive media coverage.

In 1957, Duff returned to the Gitksan villages and began to "investigate the possibility of acquiring a small number of totem poles in their beautiful and distinctive style, . . . and tentative negotiations were opened for three poles"[140] in Kitwancool to complete the collections in Vancouver and Victoria. Difficulties arose, however. They were described in the Annual Report of the Museum the following year, as well as the way in which they were handled.

> A representative sample of Haida and Kwakiutl poles has been compiled in recent years, but, because of the reluctance on the part of the Tsimsian Indians [Gitksan] to sell their poles, the collection was conspicuously short of this style of pole, which is most distinctive and of high artistic merit. . . .
>
> Still unwilling to relinquish outright ownership of their poles, which are important symbols of family rank and the right to the use of traditional land the people of the village [of Kitwancool] acceded to the following proposal offered by the Museum. The Museum would remove three of the totem poles to Victoria, where new copies of them would be carved. The new copies would be returned to Kitwancool and re-erected on their original locations and the originals would be retained by the Museum.[141]

The returning of new poles carved by Mungo Martin and his assistants opened up a new phase in the development of the "revival" and of museum activity as it later found expression at 'Ksan. It involved recognition by the museum of the current viability of native culture and the realization that it had to act in response to and in accordance with the traditional culture of the people whom it approached.

Copies of two of the Kitwancool poles were completed by 1959, and special steel braces and concrete bases were designed and fabricated. Delivery was postponed until the spring of 1960. These were to remain among the few poles collected from the area; subsequently, the pole restoration project was taken over by a local organization. In a field trip to the area in 1960, Duff "spent several days assisting the staff of the new 'Skeena Treasure House' museum, and on June 4th participated with the director [of the Provincial Museum] in its opening ceremonies."[142] This museum, located in Hazelton, marks the official beginning of the local organization which evolved into 'Ksan.

Footnotes, Chapter 2

[1]Barbeau, *Totem Poles of the Gitksan,* pp. 25-26.

[2]Robin Fisher, *Contact and Conflict* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1977), p. 31.

[3]Wilson Duff, ed., *Histories, Territories, and Laws of the Kitwancool,* Anthropology in British Columbia Memoir No. 4 (Victoria: Provincial Museum, 1959), p. 12.

[4]Maria Tippett, *Emily Carr: A Biography* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1979), chap. 8, n. 56. Tippett notes the Kitwancool expulsion of land surveyors in 1909 and 1911. This activity continued into the twenties. See OH, August 15, 1919, p. 1; July 21, 1922, p. 1; and September 26, 1924, pp. 1-2.

[5]Barbeau, *Totem Poles of the Gitksan,* p. 1, n. 1.

[6]Fisher, pp. 119-145.

[7]Edward Keithahn, *Monuments in Cedar* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1963), pp. 113-114.

[8]Ibid., p. 115.

[9]*Vancouver Daily News Advertiser,* July 1, 1915, p. 4.

[10]H.E. Carry, "The Indian Village," *Museum Notes* (Vancouver), June 1926, p. 13.

[11]Ibid., pp. 14-15.

[12]Marius Barbeau, *Totem Poles,* 2 vols., Bulletin No. 119, Anthropological Series No. 30 (Ottawa: National Museum of Canada, 1950). "The information recorded in the files of the Canadian National Railways is that this pole . . . was secured for the Company in 1919 by Captain Nicholson, who was Manager for the Canadian National Steamship Service. The pole was erected in Jasper Park in the following year." Ibid., 2: 568. A photograph published in the *Victoria Daily Colonist,* February 17, 1918, p. 23, shows the pole already in place. The lack of snow indicates the pole was probably there as early as 1917, and was erected by the GTPR, not the CNR.

[13]OH, January 7, 1921, p. 1. La Violette, p. 83, says that Halliday received a circular letter from the Department of Indian Affairs in December 1921, regarding the increase in potlatching. December 1920 is a more probable date, considering the course of events both at Alert Bay and in Hazelton. According to La Violette, the Department's attitude was "to see that this custom was done away with entirely." Ibid.

[14]OH, May 29, 1925, p. 1.

[15]See also David Darling and Douglas Cole, "Totem Pole Restoration on the Skeena, 1925-30: An Early Exercise in Heritage Conservation," *B.C. Studies*, Autumn 1980, pp. 29-48.

[16]*Vancouver Daily Province*, June 28, 1925, mag. sec. p. 2.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Harlan Smith, "Restoration of Totem-Poles in British Columbia," in Canada, Department of Mines, National Museum of Canada, *Annual Report for 1926*, p. 81. Two Haida poles situated in Prince Rupert were also treated.

[19]Ibid., p. 82.

[20]*Prince Rupert Daily News*, February 23, 1928, p. 1. (Hereafter cited as PRDN).

[21]OH, November 2, 1923, p. 1.

[22]PRDN, May 20, 1927, p. 1.

[23]Darling and Cole, pp. 38-40.

[24]Smith, "Restoration."

[25]Ibid., p. 82.

[26]OH, August 13, 1926, p. 6.

[27]Jim Laknitz (Laranitz) also carved poles and monuments. See the Pole-of-the-Moon pole of Gurhsan, at Kitsegucla, carved about 1890-95, illustrated in Barbeau, *Totem Poles of the Gitksan*, plate xiv, Fig. 4, p. 263. See also appended Figures 3 and 28.

[28]Smith, "Restoration," p. 81. See Barbeau, *Totem Poles of the Gitksan*, plate viii, Fig. 6, p. 225.

[29]The house posts of the Laranitz house, carved by Richard Douse of Kitwancool, were still in place in 1952. See Wilson Duff, "Gitksan Totem-Poles, 1952," in Anthropology in British Columbia Memoir No. 3 (Victoria: Provincial Museum, 1952), p. 23.

[30]PRDN, May 17, 1927, p. 4.

[31]A four-stage plan for restoring Hazelton in a Barkerville style was proposed in 1975. The plans also called for the construction of a stockade, such as existed in the 1880s. *Smithers Interior News*, August 13, 1975, p. 8. (Hereafter cited as SIN.)

[32]PRDN, October 5, 1926, p. 4.

[33]*The Vancouver Province*, May 15, 1927, p. 1.

[34]National Museum, *Annual Report for 1926*, p. 7.

[35]*Victoria Daily Colonist*, September 28, 1923, p. 12.

[36]Harlan Smith, "The Use of Prehistoric Canadian Art for Commercial Design," *Science*, July 20, 1917, pp. 60-61. See also, Idem, "An Album of Prehistoric Canadian Art," Bulletin No. 37, Anthropological Series No. 8 (Ottawa: National Museum of Canada, 1923); Idem, "Distinctive Canadian Designs: How Canadian Manufacturers May Profit by Introducing Native Designs into their Products," *Industrial Canada*, September 17, 1917 (abstracted and revised in *Saturday Night*, November 24, 1917). The concept apparently originated while Smith was at the Peabody Museum, according to the *Science* article.

[37]*Colonist*, September 28, 1923, p. 12.

[38]Smith, "Restoration," p. 83.

[39]OH, February 6, 1925, p. 1.

[40]OH, March 19, 1926, p. 2.

[41]*Province*, October 27, 1926, p. 2.

[42]*Province*, October 28, 1926, p. 2.

[43]*Province*, October 22, 1926, p. 15.

[44]Barbeau, *Totem Poles of the Gitksan*, p. 1.

[45]Ibid., p. 7.

[46]Ibid., p. 7, n. 3.

[47]Smith, "An Album," p. iii.

[48]National Museum, *Annual Report for 1926*, p. 5.

[49]See Tippett, chapter 8, p. 292, n. 11. Tippett's reference to the "Islander Hotel" should probably read the "Inlander Hotel," a misspelling she makes in reference to the steamboat of the same name. It is probable that neither the "Islander" nor the "Inlander" Hotel, so named, existed at the time, as there is no mention of either in local newspapers of the period. Mrs. R.S. Sargent had bought, however, a hotel in the mid-twenties on the recommendations of CNR officials who foresaw an urgent and growing need for tourist accommodation in the area. Her hotel burned to the ground in 1932 in one of a number of fires which destroyed many of the early buildings in the community.

[50]PRDN, January 23, 1928, p. 5.

[51]Cited in Douglas Leechman, "Native Art of the West Coast," *Studio*, November 1928, p. 331.

[52]Ibid., p. 333.

[53]*Colonist*, September 28, 1923, p. 15.

[54]Marius Barbeau, "Ancient Culture Vignettes Past," *Canadian National Railways Magazine*, July 1929, p. 30.

[55]Ibid., p. 30.

[56]Ibid., p. 31.

[57]Ibid., pp. 31, 33.

[58]Illustrated in Merrill Denison, "The Complete Hotel," *Canadian National Railways Magazine*, July 1929, pp. 7-9, 42.

[59]Barbeau, "Vignettes," p. 33.

[60]Duff, "Gitksan Totem-Poles, 1952."

[61]Barbeau, *Totem Poles of the Gitksan*, see pp. 187-191, and pp. 178-185.

[62]Supra, chapter 2, n. 45.

[63]OH, July 21, 1922, p. 3.

[64]The sequence of these events has been reconstructed from five newspaper reports: OH, December 31, 1930, p. 1; January 7, 1931, p. 1; January 14, 1931, p. 1; and PRDN, January 3, 1931, p. 5; January 5, 1931, p. 2.

[65]PRDN, January 5, 1931, p. 2.

[66]La Violette, pp. 91-93.

[67]OH, January 21, 1931, p. 1.

[68]In particular, see reports on traditional ceremonies involving hereditary regalia held in conjunction with sports events in Kitwanga and Kitsegucla on Coronation Day in the spring of 1937, PRDN, May 21, 1937, p. 2; May 28, 1927, p. 5. Other reports on similar events are scattered throughout the papers for this period.

[69]*Victoria Daily Colonist*, March 5, 1937, p. 15.

[70]PRDN, December 2, 1937, p. 5. This study will not attempt to detail every pole raising or ceremony throughout this period. Rather, a representative sampling of events for which the most complete documentation was available will be given to illustrate various aspects of the resurgence of Gitksan cultural traditions.

[71]The sequence of these events was compiled from two newspaper reports; PRDN, January 7, 1939, p. 4; and OH, January 11, 1939, p. 1.

[72]PRDN, January 24, 1939, p. 4.

[73]Ibid.

[74]Ibid.

[75]Ibid.

[76]Personal communication with Marie Françoise Guedon.

[77]Marius Barbeau, *Totem Poles*, 2 vols., Bulletin No. 119, Anthropological Series No. 30 (Ottawa: National Museum of Canada, 1950), 2: 854.

[78]Ibid., p. 859.

[79]It is difficult to speculate on why Barbeau did not prepare this material for publication. It has recently been observed that, of the volumes of material Beynon sent Barbeau, "by far the most important . . . was Beynon's 4-volume (200 pages) participant observer's account of eight days of potlatches and masked dramatizations held at Kitsegukla in 1945." Marjorie Halpin, "William Beynon, Tsimsian Ethnographer," University of British Columbia, Ethnology Department (Xerox copy), p. 22. Halpin continues, "There is no comparable record of northern Northwest Coast potlatching in existence." Ibid., p. 22. Beynon's report exists in manuscript form at the Canadian Centre for Folklore Studies, National Museum of Man, Ottawa. Beynon also recorded "'The Dances Given by the Gitksan in honor of the Kitkatla'" which "describes a series of four *Haliat* rituals held at Kitwanga and Kitsegukla in 1938 at which many nax-noxs were revived and dramatized." Ibid., p. 16.

[80]SIN, December 6, 1939, p. 1.

[81]OH, November 29, 1939, p. 1.

[82]OH, May 13, 1942, p. 1.

[83]PRDN, November 7, 1940, p. 5.

[84]Duff, "Gitksan Totem-Poles, 1952," p. 21. See Figs. 5,17,20,23.

[85]Ibid., pp. 22-23.

[86]OH, January 25, 1939, "Terrace News" section, p. 3.

[87]The 'Ksan catalogue, which contains a brief cultural history of the Gitksan, incorrectly indicates that neither traditional ceremonies nor, by implication, the carving of new poles, reached any overt stage of development during this period. *'Ksan*, p. 9.

[88]Barbeau, *Totem Poles*, 2:859.

[89]Duff, "Gitksan Totem Poles, 1952."

[90]Ibid., pp. 21-22.

[91]Ibid., p. 25.

[92]Although the Farrell reports are referred to and quoted in several sources, no citation for them appeared, nor were the reports themselves available. For a brief outline of the project compiled from the annual reports of the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, 1936-1941, see Appendix 1.

[93]The Hawthorns' study for the Massey Commission was unavailable, but its essentials were included in H. Hawthorn, C. Belshaw and S. Jamieson, *The Indians of British Columbia*, 2 vols. (Vancouver: The University of British Columbia, 1955), 2:515-539.

[94]Ibid., 2:516.

[95]Keithahn, p. 117.

[96]The only other instance found of the use of the name 'Ksan, besides its reference to the river, was a 'Ksan amateur theatre group directed by Bill Sargent. OH, December 1, 1937, p. 1.

[97]*Omineca Herald and Terrace News*, July 9, 1947, p. 6.

[98]Barbeau, *Totem Poles*, 2:837-857, passim.

[99]*Vancouver News Herald*, June 30, 1939, p. 8; October 18, 1939, p. 2.

[100]*News Herald*, June 30, 1939, p. 8.

[101]*News Herald*, October 18, 1939, p. 2.

[102]*News Herald*, June 30, 1939, p. 8.

[103]*News Herald*, October 18, 1939, p. 2.

[104]*News Herald*, June 30, 1939, p. 8.

[105]Supra, chapter 2, n. 79.

[106]PRDN, July 8, 1939, p. 4; see also PRDN, July 27, 1939, p. 4. Twenty years later Barbeau devoted more attention to these carvers in *Haida Carvers in Argillite*, Bulletin No. 139, Anthropological Series No. 38 (Ottawa: National Museum of Canada, 1950). Although Marks carved in a personal style different from what is now thought of as classical Haida, other carvers of a more traditional bent were active at this time, including Louis Collison.

[107]PRDN, October 10, 1939, p. 2.

[108]Nelson Graburn, "Art and Acculturative Processes," *International Social Science Journal*, 1969, pp. 457-468.

[109]Morrison, personal communication with Graburn, 1967, cited in ibid., p. 465.

[110]Barbeau, *Totem Poles*, 2:851.

[111]Doreen Harris of the Alberni Residential School was also listed among those awarded prizes for art work at this event. She received $10. *Native Voice*, July 1947, p. 7. (Hereafter cited as NV.) Doreen Harris, the sister of the 'Ksan carver and administrator, Chief Walter Harris of Kispiox, became a carver and songwriter at 'Ksan under her married name, Doreen Jensen, some twenty years later. After moving to Vancouver, she continued her association with the museum, and her artistic activity which, unlike Morgan's earlier format, was in a traditional style. Judith Morgan was also awarded the major prize at the Annual Exhibition in 1948. NV, June 1948, p. 11.

[112]James Nesbitt, "Judith Morgan, Painter of Indian Lore, B.C.'s New Artistic Find," *Saturday Night*, September 27, 1947, p. 29.

[113]*Ominica Herald and Terrace News*, August 25, 1948, p. 4.

[114]NV, July 1948, p. 7.

[115]Ibid.

[116]A report in NV, November 1948, p. 11, indicates that this ceremony took place October 30. See also, NV, September 1949, p. 6, illustration. Audrey Hawthorn, *Kwakiutl Art* (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1979), p. 259, states that the pole was given in 1953. The report of the ceremonies and the photograph showing the pole in place

are conclusive evidence for an earlier dating. The pole now stands west of the new Student Union Building.

[117]Hawthorn, Belshaw and Jamieson, 2:515-539.

[118]See, for example, Alice Ravenhill, *A Corner Stone of Canadian Culture: An Outline of the Arts and Crafts of the Indian Tribes of British Columbia*, Occasional Papers of the British Columbia Provincial Museum No. 5 (Victoria: Provincial Museum, 1944).

[119]Hawthorn, Belshaw and Jamieson, 2:533.

[120]Ibid., 2:536.

[121]*Report of the Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences 1949-1951*, by Vincent Massey, Chairman (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1951); (popularly known as the Massey Report and cited hereafter as such).

[122]George Clutesi, from Port Alberni, also delivered a brief when the commission held a session in Victoria. NV, December 1949, p. 9.

[123]Massey Report, pp. 242-243. Item 11, in particular, precisely parallels the earlier American program, see Appendix 1.

[124]British Columbia Provincial Museum, *Annual Report 1949*, p. 7. This exhibition also contained work by Judith Morgan. The provincial government purchased five of her works. Ibid.

[125]NV, September 1949, p. 1. The date for Mungo Martin's first involvement in the scheme is given as 1950 by A. Hawthorn, *Kwakiutl Art*, p. 257.

[126]NV, September 1949, p. 1.

[127]British Columbia Provincial Museum, *Annual Report 1949*, p. B8.

[128]British Columbia Provincial Museum, *Annual Report 1951*, p. B20.

[129]NV, July 1954, p. 8.

[130]Ibid.

[131]NV, October 1955, p. 4.

[132]British Columbia Provincial Museum, *Annual Report 1952*, p. B18.

[133]Ibid., pp. B18-B19.

[134]Ibid., p. B21.

[135]British Columbia Provincial Museum, *Annual Report 1953*, pp. B21-B22.

[136]Ibid. The pole was intended to represent all the Kwakiutl tribes by showing crests of four of them; the Awaitla, Nakoaktok, Nimpkish and Kwakiutl Proper.

[137]A. Hawthorn, *Kwakiutl Art*, p. vii.

[138]British Columbia Provincial Museum, *Annual Report 1954*, p. B18.

[139]Ibid.

[140]British Columbia Provincial Museum, *Annual Report 1957*, p. C20.

[141]British Columbia Provincial Museum, *Annual Report 1958*, p. C25. Other important concessions concerning these poles which affected the course of museum activity in the area are discussed in chapter IV.

[142]British Columbia Provincial Museum, *Annual Report 1960*, pp. B20-B21.

CHAPTER 3

THE SKEENA TREASURE HOUSE

The Skeena Treasure House (STH) was, in a sense, the culmination of the museum and related activities outlined in the previous chapter; it incorporated many of the forms and operating principles of earlier projects, although influenced by local conditions. It was also the first stage of locally initiated museum activity which developed into 'Ksan. It acted then as a mediating and transitional structure and organization between past and present, between external developments and local participation.

Many of the museum's physical features were reminiscent of the CNR/National Museum restoration program and the Laknitz house in Kitwanga and the museum projects in Alaska, Vancouver and Victoria. Its creation and operating principles were modified, however, by the strong force of Gitksan culture as well as the general change in attitude towards native culture. Consequently, some aspects of its role and its relationship to native culture, especially in terms of the "revival" of native art, were unique. Although at this stage native administration of their own cultural heritage in a museum setting was yet to be realized, native input and participation formed an integral part of the operation of the STH. Potlatches, the social position of totem poles, and ownership and usage of ceremonial paraphernalia were validated within the context of the museum. Not until 'Ksan, was Gitksan cultural continuity fully acknowledged and native administration

implemented. The STH, however, was still very much a product of its time, albeit with modifications.

Closely connected with the STH was the Skeena Totem Pole Restoration Committee (STPRS), also centred in Hazelton, which took over the *in situ* restoration program from the provincial committee. Although dealt with in a separate chapter, the STPRC overlapped in principles and personnel with the STH to such an extent that the two can be regarded as a co-ordinated unit. Together they form a vital stage in the evolution of the "out-of-doors" and "field" museum in the Upper Skeena area.

Although the plans for the Skeena Treasure House, as it was realized, were not formalized until the mid-fifties, proposals for the creation of a local museum in Hazelton, motivated by a desire to retain native artifacts in the area, had been put forward as early as 1919. A curious "stone slab," unearthed by a road gang and housed in Kispiox where "the Indian with the key charges 50¢ a look," precipitated the idea.[1] Ottawa was notified of the find, and showed some interest, thereby creating a conflict.

> There is a probability that Ottawa will want to take the stone away to a museum. A protest should be entered against such action. Such relics, or a portion of them at least should be kept as a foundation for a local museum. There is now a large number of valuable Indian curios in this district and a very credible start could be made.[2]

The museum was, unfortunately, unrealized, and "Ottawa" and others did, in fact, remove much material from the area in the following years, although, as has been seen, the totem poles remained.

Despire the presence of extensive local collections, such as that of Dr. Wrinch mentioned earlier, the Laknitz houses in Kitwanga were

the first concrete step towards any sort of a museum building in the Upper Skeena area. Their lifespan, however, appeared to have been no longer than a decade, and their role as a museum marginal. New proposals for a museum of native culture at Hazelton did not publicly arise again until 1952 when the student council of the Hazelton Amalgamated School announced an "interest in starting a museum of Indian relics and handicraft."[3] A meeting was held in the local library, situated in the recently built school, to further this end and announce the completion of glassed-in cupboards to house the displays. Money for the cabinets had been raised by a boxing match held the previous February, an event which incorporated several people later involved in 'Ksan, including Bill Sargent, who judged the contest and Freddie Wale, the son of Chief Howard Wale of Hazelton, who won it.[4] Various articles were offered on loan for the display.

Although the library display can be seen as a precedent for the STH, the formation of the latter did not actively get underway until 1956. In that year, the village of Hazelton, with a population of about 400, received its charter of incorporation as a municipality from the provincial government. Mrs. Margaret (Polly) Sargent, wife of R.W. (Bill) Sargent, and manager/proprietor of the soon to be opened Inlander Hotel, was elected chairman of the village commission.[5] She held this position until 1969, the year before 'Ksan opened and used it extensively to promote the museum. Given her personal interest and background in history, a dynamic personality, and her connection to Marius Barbeau, Polly Sargent's involvement is not surprising. The Inlander, as well, played a part.

At almost the same time as the incorporation, the Hazelton Library Association, which Mrs. Sargent also helped organize in 1947-48, announced its intention of "building a memorial library museum as a means of retaining and preserving the treasures of the Indian people of this area and as a monument to the district's historic past. . . . It will add to the tourist attractions of the North as a whole and give the Hazelton district the opportunity to play its role as a focal point of North Central B.C."[6]

The statement indicates a concept of some maturity and ambition and suggests that both the initial idea and plans for its future expansion had been "in the air" for some time. Exactly when the STH project was first proposed is, however, not recorded, but the possibility exists that its conception predates the early library/museum in the local school by a number of years. It has previously been speculated that Barbeau, who visited Hazelton in 1947, might have alerted the Sargents to the value of native art, the forthcoming "revival" and the possibility of a local museum based on projects in Alaska in which he was interested, particularly Old Kasaan. Wilson Duff might also have suggested similar ideas in his 1949 and 1952 field trips, using models then being planned or constructed at UBC and the Provincial Museum. Key, in *Beyond Four Walls*, indicates an early date by stating that "a community committee [in Hazelton] in 1948 developed a realistic method for a continued use of the native skills within the tribal environment."[7] No such committee, however, has been documented, although, as has been seen, it is about that time that Mrs. Sargent first proposed a library for the region and began actively organizing for its creation. The

official 'Ksan publication also supports a date earlier than 1952. "From time to time the possibility of establishing a museum was considered, but it was not until 1950 that initial planning for such an institution [as the STH] commenced."[8] This source, too, contains some misleading information, and must be read with caution. Taken together, however, the evidence seems to point to an early start, around 1949-1951, and not just to an attempt to predate the museum. This, in turn, indicates that Barbeau and Duff could have influenced events, and that the STH was intended to be knowledgeably co-ordinated with larger programs of which the Sargents would undoubtedly have been aware. Subsequent developments, in which both the STH and 'Ksan neatly intermeshed with provincial and federal projects support the existence of such a long range plan.

In fact, the first announcement of the STH project corresponded to that of a provincial program which supplied funds for the museum's realization. The British Columbia Centennial Committee was established in 1956, although its initial planning began the previous year. The purpose was to assist financially and co-ordinate projects throughout the province to celetrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of the mainland Crown Colony of British Columbia. The centennial was designed to "stress the historical, cultural and industrial development of the province"[9] and to create a Canada-wide tourist interest in the province.[10]

The newly formed town of Hazelton applied for centennial funds for its library/museum project and was accepted. As directed by the Act, a Local Centennial Committee,[11] one of 330 in the province, was

established in Hazelton under the Library Association to administrate the project, namely the "Construction of [a] replica of [an] ancient Indian Ceremonial House to be used as [a] library and museum."[12] The Hazelton area, as an incorporated municipality, became eligible for a celebration grant of forty cents per capita. The project, as a permanent memorial with lasting value and significance to the community, approved by the Board of Directors of the British Columbia Celebrations Committee, and by meeting various specifications, qualified for a further grant of sixty cents per capita, payable on a dollar for dollar basis with money raised by the community.

The total grant was augmented by including the surrounding native population of 1,200 under the provision for Indian involvement. This resulted in a combined grant total of $1,830 and a community contribution of $4,560.24 for a total of $5,658.24.[13]

The inclusion of the native population in the centennial project had a significance beyond boosting the grant. The special provisions in the funding arrangements were indicative of the increasing recognition of the value of native culture as a tourist attraction unique to the province. The move to subsidize rather than extinguish native culture had been growing since the success of the "revival" had become visible. This new awareness was reflected in a statement by C. Harrison, mayor of Victoria, in response to a proposed expansion of Thunderbird Park in 1953. "The days when we could advertise British Columbia as the land of big timber are over. . . . Our biggest attractions are our native art and relics which are nowhere else to be found in North America.[14]

British Columbia, in fact, was being promoted as "totem land" at this time. The centennial celebrations enhanced this image through several projects. An "authentic totem pole"[15] design was incorporated in a special silver dollar minted to commemorate the event. A 100-foot "Royal Totem Pole" was carved at Thunderbird Park by Mungo Martin and assistants and sent to England, with the attendant media coverage that characterized the "revival."[16] A duplicate was placed in Vancouver. Another pole was sent to San Francisco.[17] This was only part of what became a process of placing totem poles, carved for non-traditional purposes under museum auspices or government patronage, around the province and abroad. 'Ksan was to take part in this process as well, although with some important cultural differences.

Some centennial projects, unlike the STH, were operated exclusively by natives, and broadened the movement towards native administration of projects involving their cultural heritage.[18] This process was, however, somewhat slow in getting underway in Hazelton. Despite demographic figures, native participation in the developmental stages of the STH seems to have been nominal. Reports from 1957 indicate that the executive and various committees of the Library Board, which was in charge of initiating the project, were composed entirely of members drawn from the white Hazelton community.[19] Nonetheless, the organizers were sensitive to the wishes expressed by native individuals and organizations to the extent that the latter could feel it was also their museum. The museum's formation would have been impossible without native participation and co-operation.

Initial native reaction to the project was, in light of the historical situation, understandably mixed. The co-operative attitude which existed seems to have centred in the Native Brotherhood. Chief Alfred Douse, from Kitwancool, who was subsequently active in a pole restoration program, reportedly took a leading role in promoting the Hazelton project. He is credited with giving the STH its name and expressing its underlying philosophy which testified to the continuity of Gitksan culture. "It shall not be called a museum, for we are not a dead people; let it be called the Skeena Treasure House."[20] Chief Douse was assisted in his efforts by Chief Bert Russell of Kitsegucla. Both were active in the Native Brotherhood.[21] Others in the native community also offered support. In May 1957, it was reported that "Chiefs and representatives of the Indian villages of Kitwanga, Kitwancool, Kitsegucla and Kitenmax met in Hazelton, . . . with Chief Harold Sinclair, local [i.e. district] vice-president of the Native Brotherhood and decided to support the Centennial project of a Skeena Treasure House. . . . Also supporting the project is the town of Hazelton and the Kispiox Valley."[22] Chief Sinclair had been active in 1950 and 1954 in protesting the frivolous misuse of totem poles in Vancouver and had attempted to educate the white population on their traditional value,[23] with varying degrees of success.

It is not possible to ascertain from published sources what prompted co-operation from the Native Brotherhood at this time. A common element, however, characterizes Douse's statement on the STH's philosophy, Sinclair's remarks on totem poles, the role of the NBS in programs for promoting awareness of native culture discussed in the

previous chapter and subsequent events. All testify to the continuity of traditional Gitksan cultural traditions and the necessity of alerting people to its validity. This, in turn, meant altering the operational principles of the museum from one collecting artifacts from a dead or dying culture, to one representing the vitality of living cultural traditions. In this light, the STH emerges, from the viewpoint of the NBS, as an educational institution which could instruct all who came into contact with it on native culture.

Not all members of the native community saw the STH in such a light, however. The official 'Ksan booklet indicated that some band members feared that loaning their possessions to the museum "might be the first step to relinquishing ownership of their prized hereditary regalia."[24] Opposition to white interference in general in traditional native culture was still present. At an elaborate traditional ceremony in Kitsegucla in 1956, Chief Arthur McDames expressed native distrust of official policies towards native culture. "Ottawa is trying to destroy our hereditary chiefs."[25] In an interview a decade after the opening of the STH, Mrs. Sargent referred to the resistance met by the project.

> Some of the leading Indians were dead set against it when we started our first little museum. . . . However, there was a small group which felt their culture was worthwhile keeping for the young people. So with interested white people the little "Skeena Treasure House" opened in 1958.[26]

Although these remarks are not entirely accurate (aside from predating the opening day) in that they presuppose that native culture could only survive in a museum setting and that only a few natives were

interested in its preservation, they indicate the necessity at that time of overcoming opposition and of gaining approval from the native community. This necessity, in turn, led to direct native involvement in the formation and operation of the STH, a development which became especially apparent following the creation of a new organizational framework in 1960.

Between 1956 and 1958, the initial committee involved itself with raising funds, starting construction and planning the opening of the STH. Many meetings were held in the Inlander, a process which would continue.[27] Throughout 1958, 1959 and early 1960, salmon barbecues, bingos, dances, gambling events, auctions and a food booth at the annual Kispiox rodeo supplied additional capital for the project. It was widely reported at the time of the opening that $13,000 was raised locally, but this figure seems somewhat exaggerated considering the size of the community, the finished product and actual reported income.[28]

Construction began in the summer of 1958 on a site in Hazelton on the banks of the Skeena River, in close proximity to the Sargents' centrally located Inlander Hotel. Apparently, initial plans for a fifty by eighty foot structure[29] which was to have included, according to Harold Sinclair, four house posts each representing a contributing native community, and two poles, had to be scaled down somewhat.[30] Construction also took longer than expected. The library section, although in an unfinished state, was "officially" opened by four members of the Library Board and Centennial Committee on December 31, 1958, in compliance with grant requirements that projects be completed in the centennial year.[31] Following completion of the interior, the library

was officially opened to the public in early 1959.[32] The museum itself was not opened until a year later.[33]

A new organizational framework was created during the period of construction and opening of the museum/library. The Centennial Committee was dissolved in January 1959, and a new Centennial Board was formed to take its place. The latter was composed of four members of the Library Board and also included several people of native heritage, including William Wale and Jeffery Johnson, who had played a large role in the resurgence of overt ceremonies in Kitsegucla.[34] It too was short lived.[35] By early 1960, the Centennial Board has been superseded by the Skeena Treasure House Association. This organization, as a registered association, conducted the business and affairs of the museum until 1970, when it was absorbed into 'Ksan. Its purpose, according to its constitution, was:

> To organize and to operate the building and surrounding ground known as the SKEENA TREASURE HOUSE MUSEUM. To organize and to operate a Public Museum. . . . To rent a part of the SKEENA TREASURE HOUSE to the Hazelton Public Library Association and the Corporation of the Village of Hazelton. . . . To further the interests of the SKEENA TREASURE HOUSE ASSOCIATION and to render services as deemed advisable from time to time.[36]

Special provisions were again made in the constitution and by-laws for the inclusion of native representatives on both the Board of Trustees and the executive of the association. Of the twenty-one to thirty-one trustees, three were to be from the Hazelton Library Association, while at least fifty percent of the remainder were to be chosen from the neighbouring Indian bands. The Board of Trustees, in turn, were empowered to elect a ten-member executive consisting of four officers and six

members at large. Three of the latter were to be from neighbouring bands, with one from the Library Association.[37]

The executive elected at the general meeting for the period from March 1, 1960 for one year, as reported in the local papers, reflects the constitutional provision almost to the letter.[38] The four officers, in whose handsthe running of the museum lay, were from the white community of Hazelton. Don Steele, the manager of the local Royal Bank, was elected president. Later transferred to nearby Terrace, he was to become active in the Skeena Totem Pole Restoration Society. The local bank manager of Hazelton, a position that continually changed personnel, would, in fact, always occupy a place on the executive of the STH and later of 'Ksan, although generally as treasurer. Mrs. Sargent, also active in the STPRS was elected vice-president. She would also always hold a position on the executive or as a director of the Skeena Treasure House, and was to be, of course, active in 'Ksan. Mrs. A. Bordula, wife of a local RCMP officer, was elected as secretary and Reverend Chancellor as treasurer.

Three of the six members at large were reported as native: T. Tait of Moricetown, J. Woods of Glen Vowell, and Jeffrey Johnson, a chief councillor and fisherman of Hazelton. The other three--W. Petty, Mrs. H. Compton and H. Gould--were apparently of the white Hazelton community. A board of directors consisting of three members from each of the neighbouring native villages was proposed, but its existence is not documented in either newspaper reports or available documents. The first curator, Mrs. M.A. Myros, was elected at a pre-opening dinner at the Inlander Hotel in January 1960.[39]

Although direct native involvement in the STH expanded under the guidelines of the new constitution, it remained outside of the actual administrative process. The officers of the executive, apparently all members of the white community, were empowered by the constitution to independently conduct business affairs as was seen fit. Nonetheless, native participation was now more than nominal. They were active in attending the annual meetings, voting for elected executive, fulfilling duties as members at large, acting on various committees and supplying labor for construction.[40] An important and growing trend was being established, which resulted in native people taking a leading role in the operation of 'Ksan.

Other precedents important for 'Ksan were also established during the opening ceremonies of the STH. They are, although well reported, worth re-examining for their historical, museological and cultural significance.

Indian chiefs from the neighbouring villages, attired in traditional regalia, attended as guests of honor. Members of the Skeena Treasure House Association represented the local level, and Wilson Duff and Dr. Clifford Carl represented the Provincial Museum. Mrs. Sargent was made an honorary member of the Killer Whale Clan and invested with the name We-n-dake, meaning "the big fin of the whale."[41] Native songs and dances were also incorporated into the opening ceremonies.

The event of greatest significance in terms of the state of native culture and its relationship to the new museum was the re-erection of the Git-dem-muldo pole beside the STH building. Unlike most other poles in Hazelton which were moved to the sports field after the 1936 flood,

this pole had remained in front of the owners' house. Moving and re-erecting it required not only the permission of the owners, Tommy Danes and Jessie Sterritt, and that of the Indian Affairs department, but also a ceremony to validate the occasion. Unfortunately, this aspect of the opening program, although most important, is the least well documented. The only mention in the published reports is that the raising was accompanied by "dancing, singing, drumming, band music and speeches. Each of the native villages in the area took part."[42] It is possible that Wilson Duff's unedited field notes might provide more precise information.[43]

The potlatch ceremony at the opening presents a dichotomy that was later expanded at 'Ksan. It reaffirmed the social significance of the totem pole and the continuity of traditional Gitksan culture. On the other hand, these traditional ceremonies and art forms were simultaneously incorporated into a museum display, thereby modifying the role of both. A precedent existed for this duality in Mungo Martin's potlatch at the opening of his house in Thunderbird Park, and, in fact, may again be traced back to Alaska and the opening of Chief Shake's house in Wrangell. Similarly traditional ceremonies had accompanied the raising of a pole carved by Mungo Martin, David Martin and Henry Hunt at Courtenay in 1957.[44]

In Hazelton, the insistence on the accompanying ceremonies redefined the role of the STH from that of a traditional museum collecting objects of a dead culture, to that of a storage house for paraphernalia still in active use, but on loan by its proper owners.[45] This was reaffirmed when Wilson Duff, in his speech at the opening ceremonies,

stated: "I would particularly like to impress on the donors of material for the Treasure House, that their heirlooms and treasures still belong to them and their families forever. Lending them to the Treasure House is a mode of safekeeping."[46] Lenders were issued a certificate at the ceremony giving them the right to reclaim their pieces at any time.

On another level entirely, the raising of the Git-dem-muldo pole signalled the transference of the operation of the BCTPRC to a local group operating out of Hazelton.

> After removal from its old site the Gitemuldo Pole was thoroughly cleaned of all moss and lichen and lavishly treated with Cuprinol before being erected on a concrete base in which were set two heavy 'T' girders' to which it was bound by steel rods passing around the pole. . . .
>
> This operation, which has been strikingly successful, represents the genesis of the more ambitious scheme of the Skeena Totem Preservation Committee [*sic*].[47]

This transference is important in that it extended the operation of the STH beyond the confines of its four walls and gave it aspects of a proper field museum, with open air displays.

Although the continuity of Gitksan culture and the traditional social significance of totem poles, regalia, songs, dances and ceremonies (i.e. art) were reaffirmed at the opening of the STH, the decorations of the museum building testify to the decline in "classical" Gitksan art since the turn of the century. Neither the carved corner-posts nor the painted house frontal design compare in execution and conception with the finesse of the Git-dem-muldo pole erected beside the building.

The building itself was conceived as an "Indian Ceremonial House," although with certain salient differences, and bears a certain resemblance

to the Laknitz houses. Stan Rough, who was active in forming the Skeena Totem Pole Restoration Society, gave a description published in a local paper.

> The displays are lodged in a replica of a native community house, without the fire pit in the centre, and of course, without the smoke hole in the roof. . . .
>
> It is 27 feet by 30 feet and the two large doors [*sic*] are decorated with native designs. Two carved and painted house posts are conspicuous at the front corners of the building. . . .
>
> The design of the building was researched by Bill Birmingham, who designed the Prince Rupert museum, and it was built by native craftsmen. The whole building is of cedar, the great roof beams, walls of four inch cedar planks and the inside finished off with one inch cedar planks.[48]

The two corner posts reportedly were carved by Jeffrey Johnson.[49] Although they exhibit all the points of Barbeau's definition of the "decline" of northwest coast native sculpture--shallow carving, bright paint and imperfect conception--their very existence confirms the proposition that new carvers could, and did arise following the death of the old ones and before 'Ksan began. Before a final, formal analysis of the posts is possible, then, more must be known of the circumstances surrounding their creation: the background of the carver, the time allotted[50] and the origins of the design. The carving on the two posts is remarkably similar to that of two projecting roofbeams on a house frontal display in Thunderbird Park, which was demolished to accommodate Mungo Martin's house. The drawings and notes of the architect who "researched" the design of the building, Birmingham, were unfortunately not available,[51] thus it is not possible at this point to say to what extent the Hazelton museum design, including the posts, was based on the Victoria display, to what extent it was based on Birmingham's own ideas

and to what extent it was based on something else, the carver's own ideas, for example.

The house frontal design is also of interest. Although again no extensive formal analysis can be undertaken without more background information, it contains certain features which are worth noting. It is reported to have been painted by Freddie Wale, the son of Chief Howard Wale, of Hazelton.[52] While naive by present standards, the design shows an understanding of the principles and vocabulary of "classical" northern two-dimensional design as analyzed in Bill Holm's 1965 study of northwest coast Indian art.[53] The major outlines of the design are designated by black, tapered, continuous formlines. Secondary formlines are properly placed and in red. The filler motifs include traditional ovoids, split U-shapes, salmon-trout head designs and cheek shapes. Hatching appears in tertiary spaces. The entire design is well adapted to the surrounding space. Even the circular "holes" at important formline transitions and junctures are employed in a manner that Holm would later analyze. Only in the more precise handling of the forms do difficulties arise: the ovoids are too angular, neither the eye designs nor all the fillers are "classic" and the whole lacks the tension and integrity of the "masterpieces" of the previous century. It is, in fact, the eye shapes which give the design away as "non-classical."

To the extent that neither artistic forms nor cultures are static, and that rigid adherence to the "classical" frequently leads only to the academic and the sterile, these designs must be viewed in historical perspective to gain true significance. As such they stand midway

between the "decline" and the "revival" of Gitksan art. In fact, they represent a turning point in both the form and context of Gitksan artistic production, and it was introduced to the wider marketing and tourist promotion going on elsewhere.

Taking part in the expanded market created by media attention and tourist promotion of native art, the Skeena Treasure House operated a sales counter. This was originally located in the nearby Inlander Hotel, but was moved to the museum itself some years later.[54] Various types of articles were made by members of the local Indian bands and purchased by the museum for resale. Sales figures are available and indicate a substantial and growing market.

YEARS	SALES
1961-1962	$1,300.00
1962-1963	unreported
1963-1964	$1,452.35
1964-1965	$2,012.30
1965-1966	$1,884.90[55]

Unfortunately, little documentation was available from either primary or published sources on the nature of the art work sold through the STH. Although total sales figures were available, they were not broken down into categories by medium, such as beadwork, leatherwork or carving. Photographic and newspaper sources were equally unrevealing. A complete analysis of the effect of the co-ordinated government and museum sponsored "revival" of saleable Indian arts and crafts on Gitksan artistic activity as it occurred at the STH must await access to more complete inventory lists and detailed sales figures.

The significance of the craft sales at the STH was, although modest in comparison with 'Ksan, important in the formation of museological principles expressed there. By introducing the "revival" to the area, it stimulated and encouraged the production of saleable native art. This grew into an entire industry and school at 'Ksan. The concept of providing funds to native craftspeople was also present at this point, as it was later to be at 'Ksan. It was noted that items bought in the winter provided "a welcome added source of income for the Indian people who make up these items at a time when there is less opportunity for them to find other employment from their traditional fishing."[56]

The collection displayed in the Skeena Treasure House was composed of material drawn almost exclusively from the surrounding Gitksan and Carrier villages. Although modest in size it included a number of important and unique ceremonial pieces that were even then increasingly difficult to obtain. Not everything was bought, however, especially in the beginning; as mentioned earlier, about half of the material was on loan from either the native or white communities. By 1962, the collecting policy changed somewhat, although an emphasis was still placed on soliciting loans from the native community. A public relations committee was established to bring this policy closer to the attention of the natives. With the added income from craft sales, however, the museum embarked on a program of purchasing pieces outright whenever this was possible. The money spent purchasing artifacts increased with sales.

YEARS	VALUE OF PURCHASES
1962-1963	$104.00
1963-1964	$70.00
1964-1965	$635.00 (686.22?)[57]

The following year, almost $1,000 was spent on restoration work and the construction of a replica burial house as an open-air display by members of the Lions Club. No acquisitions were reported.[58]

The desire to purchase was based on the knowledge that, with the interest generated in native art by the "revival," "a considerable amount of valuable Indian art is leaving the country by way of tourists and private collectors."[59] This concern was, of course, directed towards the older "museum quality" pieces and based on a perception of scarcity. Later, at 'Ksan, the phenomenon of native art leaving the country would be considered an achievement.

Not all the activity at this time was directed towards collecting art for the museum. As mentioned earlier, a local group closely connected with the STH was active in continuing the totem pole restoration work of the BCTPRC. The Skeena Totem Pole Restoration Society formed an integral part of the activities of the STH.

Footnotes, Chapter 3

[1]OH, August 15, 1919, p. 4.

[2]Ibid.

[3]SIN, June 26, 1952, p. 3. By this time several local collections had been dispersed. Several pieces from the Smith collection of Hazelton were, for example, acquired by Capt. Acton in the early 1930s and are now in the Rasmussen Collection at the Portland Art Museum. Erna Gunther, *Art in the Life of the Northwest Coast Indians* (Portland: Portland Art Museum, 1974).

[4]*Terrace Omineca Herald,* February 22, 1952, p. 3. (Hereafter cited as TOH.)

[5]SIN, July 12, 1956, p. 4.

[6]SIN, April 19, 1956, p. 5.

[7]Key, p. 311.

[8]*'Ksan,* p. 10.

[9]TOH, September 29, 1955, p. 1.

[10]SIN, January 10, 1957, p. 1.

[11]SIN, May 23, 1957, p. 2.

[12]*Report of the British Columbia Centennial Committee,* by Laurie Wallace, Chairman (Vancouver: Mitchell Press, 1959), p. 296.

[13]Ibid., pp. 296-297.

[14]*Colonist,* December 18, 1953, p. 19.

[15]*Report of the Centennial Committee,* p. 313.

[16]Ibid., pp. 170-176.

[17]NV, August 1957, p. 1.

[18]*Report of the Centennial Committee*, pp. 284-285.

[19]SIN, January 24, 1957, p. 3; May 23, 1957, p. 2.

[20]*'Ksan*, p. 12.

[21]NV, October 1950, p. 13.

[22]SIN, May 2, 1957, p. 4.

[23]NV, January 1950, p. 4; July 5, 1954, p. 5.

[24]*'Ksan*, p. 10.

[25]NV, October 1956, p. 3.

[26]*Province*, February 22, 1973, p. 34.

[27]See, for example, TOH, January 16, 1958, p. 5.

[28]PRDN, June 1, 1960, p. 1; SIN, June 2, 1960, p. 1; PRDN, June 7, 1960, p. 1.

[29]TOH, January 23, 1958, p. 7.

[30]NV, April 1958, p. 1. The posts were actually to be poles, presumably existing ones. The use of poles as corner posts had a precedent in Prince Rupert, where two Haida poles were placed at the corners of the old Museum of Northern British Columbia.

[31]TOH, January 8, 1959, p. 5.

[32]SIN, February 5, 1959, p. 4.

[33]Many sources, including some interviews with Mrs. Sargent, give 1958 as the opening for the library and museum. *Province*, February 22, 1973, p. 34.

[34]Jeffery Johnson had raised a new pole in 1945, according to J.W. Adams, *The Gitksan Potlatch* (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, 1973), p. 84. See Figure 5.

[35]SIN, February 5, 1959, p. 4.

[36]"Constitution of the Skeena Treasure House Association," Article 2 (filed at the Registrar of Companies, Victoria).

[37]"By-laws of the Skeena Treasure House Association," By-law 1, Board of Trustees, sec. 1; By-law 4, Executive, secs. 1-5 (filed at the Registrar of Companies, Victoria).

[38]SIN, March 3, 1960, p. 1. Some discrepancy exists between the executive of the association as it was published in March 1960, and as it appears on the Notice of Executive submitted to the Registrar of Companies. The latter, dated the 8th of February, 1960, includes Margaret H. Sargent, executive; Donald Steele, bank manager; J. Anton Strathern, lumberman; Mildred Compton, clerk; Harold Gould, engineer; Richard Latti, retired; Barbara Hobbs, housewife; and Jeffery Johnson, fisherman, all of Hazelton. Donald Steele is listed as secretary, not president. The executive listed above was to hold office until February 1961. "The Skeena Treasure House Association, Notive of Executive, to the Registrar of Companies," February 8, 1960 (filed at the Registrar of Companies, Victoria).

[39]SIN, January 14, 1960, p. 7. Mrs. Myros was followed by Mrs. George Martin. By 1965 Mrs. Mary MacKenzie had assumed these duties. She was to hold this position for several years and became active in a curatorial capacity when 'Ksan opened.

[40]PRDN, June 1, 1960, p. 1.

[41]PRDN, June 7, 1960, p. 1. This was a singular honor, for the Gitksan, unlike certain other tribes, were not given to bestowing honorary chieftainships on every visiting dignitary. As the advantages of such activity grew in proportion to greater contact with white officialdom, a separate "Happy-face" clan was created to receive these initiates into Gitksan tribal life. SIN, October 2, 1973, p. 19.

[42]PRDN, June 7, 1960, p. 5.

[43]Located at the University of British Columbia. Another possible reference to the ceremonies occurs in the notice of Chief William Wale's death; he is said to have spoken on behalf of Chief Gitl'muldoh (Tommy Danes) at the 'Ksan opening, a traditional practice.

[44]NV, May 1957, p. 1.

[45]It has been suggested that the opening of the museum may have been postponed in order to accommodate the ceremonies for the pole

raising. TOH, August 15, 1962, n.p.

[46]PRDN, June 7, 1960, p. 1. This was also included in the by-laws of the association. "The Executive shall be authorized to enter into agreements with and to furnish receipts to any exhibitor or group of exhibitors who wish to retain proof of ownership of any item or items displayed in the museum." "By-laws of the Skeena Treasure House Association," By-law 4, sec. 4.

[47]Philip Ward, "Some notes on the preservation of totem poles in British Columbia," British Columbia Provincial Museum, Conservation Department files, n.d. (Xerox copy), p. 7. (These files will hereafter be cided as BCPM Conservation Department files.) It has been reported that the pole was erected with the help of a B.C. Telephone Company crew, a winch and a truck because, although "It was originally planned to move it and erect it in the same manner as ancient times . . . the art had been forgotten." TOH, August 15, 1962, n.p. This statement must be regarded as a misconception. The poles erected in Kitsegucla and other Gitksan villages including Hazelton in the previous thirty years were raised in a traditional fashion with which Jeffery Johnson, for one, would certainly have been familiar. Infra, chapter 3, n. 34. Two factors account for the presence of the truck. The restrictions of the riverbank site, and a desire for the safety of the assembled crowd were undoubtedly primary considerations. In addition, mounting the pole on a concrete pad, rather than inserting it into a pre-dug pit, the edge of which would serve as a fulcrum, required the precision which only a truck could offer. Figure 6 illustrates the compromise between tradition and technology. For interior displays see Figure 7.

[48]TOH, August 15, 1962, n.p. See Figures 6, 7 and 16.

[49]SIN, June 9, 1960, p. 1.

[50]It was not possible to ascertain when the original proposal of using old poles as corner posts was abandoned and when it was decided to have new posts carved. It is also unclear whether Johnson had previously received any instruction from one of the local Gitksan carvers, such as Tom Campbell, who was proficient in traditional Gitksan forms, and whether Johnson was responsible for all the carving on the posts. Although the design of the upper sections appear similar to double-headed serpents found on shamans' charms, they bear no resemblance to any recorded or extant Gitksan pole. The lower inset heads, on the other hand, with their thin arched eyebrows, deeply carved area under the eyes, pyramidal cheeks, straight thin lips and aquiline nose, are in keeping with many characteristic conventions of Gitksan carving, including the face on the adjacent Git-dem-muldo pole. The discrepancy in style indicates the hand of more than one carver.

[51]Supra, note 48.

[52]SIN, June 9, 1960, p. 1. In addition, a photograph, although staged, in *'Ksan,* p. 12, shows a young man painting the design. The design itself bears a resemblance, both in general conception and detail, to the upper part of a wall plaque (or hanging) to be seen in a photograph of Mrs. Sargent at the Inlander Hotel. The use of two concave lines to form the eyelids is present in each. SIN, October 16, 1968, p. 11. A similar eyelid convention may also be found inside an ovoid painted on the side of "an old Indian beaver serving dish" held by Don Steele, illustrated in PRDN, June 1, 1960, p. 1.

[53]Bill Holm, *Northwest Coast Indian Art: An Analysis of Form* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966).

[54]SIN, March 7, 1962, p. 4. The Inlander was also the site of a fund raising "Magic Lantern" ball in early 1963, which netted about $100, after expenses.

[55]Compiled from The Skeena Treasure House Association Annual Reports, 1961-1966.

[56]SIN, March 7, 1962, p. 4.

[57]Compiled from The Skeena Treasure House Association Annual Reports, 1962-1965 (filed at the Registrar of Companies, Victoria). This correponded to a growing degree of participation by the native community. Mrs. Doreen Jensen (nèe Harris), for example, became active in the STH about 1962. By 1966, W. Wale, Mrs. J. Sterritt and C. Harris were also actively involved.

[58]Ibid. Plans for the use of a grave house as an open air display, complementing the totem pole and a dug-out canoe, had been formulated as early as 1962. Both canoe and grave house were, like the STH building and collection itself, later moved to 'Ksan.

CHAPTER 4

THE SKEENA TOTEM POLE RESTORATION SOCIETY

The history of totem pole restoration and preservation and the introduction of the concept of open air displays and field museums in the Skeena valley has been seen to date back essentially to the CNR/ National Museum project at Kitwanga and Kitselas in the 1920s. Subsequently, museological activity in this field was suspended until the Provincial Museum and the B.C. Totem Pole Restoration Committee became active in acquiring Gitksan poles from Kitwancool lacking from their own collection and that of the University of British Columbia in the mid and late fifties. The third and most comprehensive stage in the evolution of this project was undertaken by the Skeena Totem Pole Restoration Society (STPRS). The project was active primarily from 1963 to 1969, although its beginning can be traced back to the raising of the Git-dem-muldo pole, and it is apparently still active.

The relationship between the STPRS and the national, provincial and local museums is of primary importance. Although ostensibly separate organizations, the STPRS and the Skeena Treasure House overlapped so greatly in personnel, aims and activities that, for the purpose of this study, the two will be considered as interdependent. Such an approach does much to clarify later events at 'Ksan, such as the attitude taken to the production and distribution of poles and the feedback into the native community. Indeed, in an historical perspective it is the joint activities of the Skeena Treasure House and the

STPRS that form the transition between the earlier efforts of the larger museums and the establishment of 'Ksan, on both the theoretical and practical planes of museological evolution. Linking the two indicates that even the apparently modest Skeena Treasure House functioned, via the STPRS, as part of an extensive open-air and field museum by participating in the concept of an "out-of-doors totem pole museum" mentioned by Smith in 1926.[1]

The relationship between the joint efforts of the Skeena Treasure House and the STPRS and those of the Provincial Museum totem pole restoration, replacement and collection project is important as well in the development of museum concepts in British Columbia. The STPRS took over the work started by the Provincial Museum and carried on with its plans in other villages. The role of the Provincial Museum became that of an advisory body as activities were centralized in Hazelton, first in white hands, and later, after the formation of the more independent museum at 'Ksan, in those of the native community. Several differences do exist, however, between the activities of the Provincial Museum and the STPRS, especially from the point of view of collecting and the role of native culture and participation in a museum setting.

A major difference between the two projects lay in the means by which poles, and the stories attached to them, were obtained. The Provincial Museum was obliged, in the case of the Kitwancool poles, to publish a booklet which attested to the Kitwancool land claims and the persistence of their social structure.[2] This was in addition to the carving of replacement poles. Unlike earlier collecting activity, as by Barbeau, Boas and the Jesup expedition, the valued "stories" were

not relinquished upon simple payment of a fee. This extraction, by the natives, of recognition of their status testifies to the continuance and strength of Kitwancool social and cultural traditions as well as to their independence and ability to direct external influences. In some measure or another, control was exercised. The museum activity, which exerted an undoubted influence on the native villages, was in turn modified by the less than passive reception it encountered. Although the STPRS did not grant the same concessions as the Provincial Museum to further its activities it nonetheless had to work in accordance with the traditional cultural values which were still very much alive. The same can be said to hold true, although in varying degrees, for the other Gitksan villages in which restoration work was undertaken. A growing symbiotic relationship between the two cultural impulses, white and native, can be discerned in the progressive stages of museum activity in the Gitksan villages.

A third factor influencing the work and direction of the STPRS was the source of funding. Both the provincial government and several corporations were directly involved in financing the restoration project. The provincial government's support, which was the largest, must be seen in terms of its support of totem pole carving projects and the "revival" of certain aspects of Indian culture, especially concerning the use of totem poles as provincial symbols, as tourist attractions and as an economic base for the native population.

The motivations of the STPRS must, then, be seen in terms of a change in attitude towards native art that had been occurring since the late 1940s as part of the "revival." The course of its activities was

directed, however, by the force of Gitksan cultural continuity, which, following the dropping of the potlatch ban from the Indian Act in 1951, could exist without danger of legal interference.

A brief hiatus in totem pole restoration and re-erection in the Skeena villages followed the initial activities of the Provincial Museum at Kitwancool and the pole raising at the opening of the Skeena Treasure House in 1960. However, after another tour of the totem villages by Wilson Duff in August 1962, during which he noted the strength of feeling among the white community that the poles should be preserved, two more poles were removed from Kitwancool and plans were made to replace one, as before, with a copy.[3] In the meantime, Duff was finalizing plans at the museum for a full-scale restoration project involving not only the Skeena area, but other sites as well, including again the Queen Charlotte Islands and Vancouver Island. In the spring of 1962, he made several reports on this project to the Provincial Secretary's office including a site-by-site analysis cataloguing the remaining poles according to condition and value for restoration or addition to the museum collections.[4] It was proposed that some of the better and more important poles be added to the museum collection and replaced by copies, while many of the rest could be restored *in situ*. A brief cost analysis was also formulated. Duff recommended that at least half of the project be carried out with local funds, with the museum or government supplying the remainder. This memorandum provided the key for the appearance of the STPRS.

Stan Rough from Kitimat was the central figure in the initial stages of organizing what was to become the STPRS on a local level.

He too had toured the villages in 1961 and was active in raising interest among the local Chambers of Commerce for a "Totem Trails" tourist project in 1959.[5] He was also in touch with the Provincial Secretary's office and with Wilson Duff, presumably during late 1962, and requested copies of the memorandum described above.[6]

In March 1963, possibly on Duff's suggestion,[7] Rough organized a group, with members drawn from the area between Prince Rupert and Prince George, who were interested in the Skeena totem pole villages, with the purpose of conducting another survey on a more complete basis.[8] Formally, the group was not attached to any organization or museum. Of the eighteen members only Don Steele, by that time a bank manager in Terrace, had been associated with the administration of the Skeena Treasure House. Within two days, the party toured the villages of Kitsegucla, Kispiox, Kitwanga, Kitwancool and Hazelton. Sketches, photographs, diagrams and reports documented the condition and, where possible, verified the identity of the poles. In addition, several[9] hereditary chiefs and village councillors were interviewed by Stan Rough and Don Steele for their views on a restoration project. Poles were once more recorded in terms of their condition and their potential for restoration and re-erection. In all, 110 poles were catalogued with about sixty seen as suitable for preservation.[10]

Immediately following the survey, members of the survey group met with members of the Skeena Treasure House Committee at the Inlander Hotel in Hazelton.[11] Apparently the committee was aware of the group's activities: a proposal that would "go before the Skeena Treasure House Committee that it be the central organization to officially proceed with

the restoration plan" is reported as being put forward at that time.[12] Although this plan was not realized as such, it does mark the first overlap between the two organizations despite the proclaimed independence of Rough's committee. It also suggests some preparatory work on the part of the STH.

During the remainder of 1963, preliminary briefs summarizing the findings of the survey were drawn up. Several more fact-finding trips were organized throughout the year to follow up the questioning of the chiefs concerning the project and to complete documentation of the poles. Letters were sent to various corporations and museums for information and proposals on preservation and the casting of models. Apparently the latter, which echoes the activities of the National Museum in 1926, was seen as an alternative to having expensive copies carved in Victoria. Newsletters outlining the information collected were also distributed to interested parties throughout the year by Stan Rough, who remained at its head for the first period.[13] The Provincial Museum was also kept informed of the proceedings. A fifty-seven page report outlining the group's restoration proposal and the necessary background information was submitted to the provincial government together with a request for funds to carry out the project.[14]

In February of 1964, Dudley Little, MLA for the Skeena riding made an official appeal to the provincial legislature to supply funding for the project. His speech clarifies the government position not only on this particular project, but also on the sponsorship of the native art and handicraft "revival" in general.

> Here, Mr. Speaker, are two totem poles which were carved on the Queen Charlotte Islands; the art of carving argillite is rapidly disappearing and consequently the value of these totem poles is now over ten times the price they were a few years ago. The hunting jacket I had made from a moose hide that I had shot. It was tanned, fashioned and beaded by an Indian lady living on Babine Lake. Each one of the very small beads in this jacket is individually stitched. An expert on needle work says this is as fine an example of native beading as you would find anywhere. This jacket cost under $50.00. Encouraged, these Native people could be gainfully employed furthering their arts. A centre should be established where they could market their goods. Our Federal Government has made great advancement to help the Eskimos by such an effort.
>
> The one purpose in speaking of the Indians is to direct attention to totem poles. Skeena Valley is the totem pole centre of North America.
>
> There are five Indian communities in my riding where some of the most beautiful totem poles of B.C. are found. Many of these have fallen and others are leaning so badly that unless something is done immediately, these poles will be lost forever. This last year we had thousands of tourists travelling Highway 16 from other parts of Canada and the United States. All express amazement when they see these beautiful poles lying on the ground and many remark: "What is wrong with your Government?"
>
> One of the communities of which I am now speaking, had agreed that if the government will restore and erect these poles, it will not be necessary for them to go to the expense that would be needed for this ancient potlatch custom. This is the Indian Village of Kispiox.
>
> This is an offer that should be taken up immediately. If we would undertake to restore these poles in one town for each of the next five years, it would be a modest program which I am sure we could afford and would provide one of the greatest tourist attractions that this province has to offer.
>
> This brief, which is a report on totem poles in the Upper Skeena River Valley, took 2 years to prepare by a group of interested people who have become concerned about the state of these poles. . . .[15]

As a statement of the government's position, Mr. Little's speech speaks for itself. From an historical viewpoint, it continues to exemplify the concepts put forward since 1925. His elaboration of the tourist value of restoration echoes the ideas of the CNR/National Museum project as outlined by Harlan Smith. The mention of argillite carving

as a dying but valuable art dates back to Barbeau's proposal to "re-establish" it and other handicrafts as a source of income for the native population. New, however, is his recognition of dealing with the potlatch tradition.

Little's appeal to the legislature immediately struck a responsive chord. Within a matter of days, he announced that a $20,000 grant for the restoration project, as outlined in the brief, would be made available providing the amount disbursed was met on a dollar for dollar basis at the local level,[16] as had been proposed earlier by Duff. Little is also quoted as saying at this time that:

> The government has suggested a committee be set up from the Hazelton Village Council, Skeena Treasure House Association and the original committee which submitted the brief. . . .
>
> Should they organize under the Societies Act, in order to be able to accept grants from the government and individuals, the government has today offered to make available $20,000 as their portion of the restoration program.[17]

With the granting of government funds no time was lost in organizing the Skeena Totem Pole Restoration Society which would receive the money, raise the required local contribution, and administer the project. It was organized on a local level by May of 1964 and registered officially as a society by September of the same year. The scope of its proposed activities, as set down in its constitution, was rather wide and ambitious.

> To promote, sponsor, encourage, organize, direct, administer, manage, assist, finance, undertake, carry out, works, projects, programs, studies, undertakings, and activities of every kind and nature for the preservation and restoration of the totem poles, grave markers, house poles, carvings, artifacts, art, culture and legends of the Skeena.[18]

The initial membership of the society was in accord with Mr. Little's suggestion: Polly Sargent, Jack Strathern, Jack Sigalet and Terry McDermit of Hazelton, Dudley Little, Don Steele, Tom Rose and John Poucette of Terrace and Stan Rough.[19] At the first meeting, Polly Sargent became the president, sharing her duties at this time among the village council, the Skeena Treasure House, the STPRS and the Inlander Hotel.[20] Aside from housing the sales counter for the museum, the hotel also was the offical address of the Restoration Society. Don Steele became the first vice-president and Jim Sigalet, who owned a lumber firm which later was instrumental in the formation of 'Ksan, became second vice-president.[21] George Pearkes, Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia was made patron and Wilson Duff was asked to "act in an advisory capacity on the board of directors."[22] Although all levels mentioned by Little received representation, a local core group, which overlapped with the Skeena Treasure House, still occupied the primary administrative positions on the executive and board of directors of the STPRS. This would remain the case while both societies were in active existence. Both in terms of physical organization and stated objectives, then, the STPRS and the Treasure House were closely linked.

During the remainder of 1964, various committees were formed to co-ordinate and undertake the activities of the society. A conservation committee was established to continue researching methods of restoration and rot prevention. Cost analyses and work schedules were drawn up. It was initially estimated that restoration of sixty-five poles would cost a total of $42,000 with the average cost per pole being $650. This figure was subsequently raised after a more detailed cost break-

down.[23] A period of three to four years was estimated to complete the project. In August a fund-raising committee under Little began a campaign and put together a pamphlet outlining and advertising the project and appealing for aid.[24]

With the administrative, technical and financial aspects taken care of, the largest remaining problem perceived by the society was gaining permission for the restoration program from the native owners of the poles. This was complicated by two factors. One had been encountered and noted by Harlan Smith. Poles are in many instances collectively owned by family-based groups, each of member of which had to be contacted. Active resistance which had been present in the 1920s, and was also reported as playing a role even as late as the 1950s, affecting the provincial project there and the Skeena Treasure House display program, also seems to have played some role in the STPRS project. Greater care was taken, however, in respecting native traditions, which were now seen as still functioning.

The second factor, or problem, was not mentioned by Smith but grew out of his activities. This was the tradition which called for an expensive ceremony to accompany the erection, and since Smith's time, the re-erection and restoration of a pole. Neither the natives nor the society had funds to honor this tradition for the benefit of a restoration program. Polly Sargent in a 1967 interview, reported that the idea "of restoring whole villages at a time . . . [which] avoids potlatching" was discovered and implemented.[25] This approach parallels that of Smith, and was, apparently, successful.[26]

Kispiox, a native village close to Hazelton, was, as Little's speech indicated, the first whose councillors and chiefs agreed to a complete restoration of their poles. A preliminary report by Stan Rough of the March 23-24, 1963 trip stated, "At Kispiox, owners of the poles have been contacted by the chief councillor and they have agreed that if anything is done, the families involved will forego the traditional costly ceremonies."[27] The following year Polly Sargent wrote to Duff that the "Kispiox Indian Village Chiefs have given signed authority to preserve their poles as we see fit . . . this authorization has received Indian Affairs approval."[28]

Proximity to Hazelton and the influence of the Skeena Treasure House were not the only factors in this co-operative attitude at Kispiox. Historical precedence also played a part. Smith reported in 1926 that "it is understood . . . that they agreed to the restoration of all the poles at Kispiox,"[29] although none there were treated at that time. It will be recalled that permission from the other villages outside of Kitwanga had allowed for only a fraction of the poles to be restored at each. Duff's plans from the late fifties and early sixties to restore eight or nine poles at Kispiox and to replace two others with replicas as part of the overall restoration program in the Skeena Valley and elsewhere indicates the intent of the Provincial Museum.[30]

Native involvement in the project, necessary to its success, was also centred in Kispiox in the early period. Alvin Weget, Jonathon Johnson and Eli Turner, all of the village, were active on the STPRS committee and were instrumental in establishing the program there.[31] They also agreed to contact pole owners in the other villages in order

to secure their permission. Walter Harris, a chief at Kispiox, who became very active both as a carver and in the administration at 'Ksan and in future pole raisings at Kispiox, was first mentioned at this time. From this point onward, and continuing to the present, native activity at an administrative level increased. The initial core group, however, persisted and was not fully replaced until after 'Ksan was completed.

By the spring of 1965, the STPRS project at Kispiox was underway. In many ways, Kispiox served, for the STPRS, as an initial experiment in techniques that continued to improve and develop with practice and experience. Ten (possibly twelve) poles were taken down, cleaned, repaired and treated with fungicide.[32] They were re-erected and attached to concrete and steel mounts set in a concrete base. The attaching rods went around the poles, which were placed on bricks to hold them off the pad and to prevent continual exposure to water at the cut end where rot was generally the worst.[33] Most of the work was done by the natives and a training program for continued maintenance was established.[34]

The poles were also moved to a new site, above the flood line to prevent a recurrence of the devastating damage caused by the flood in 1936. Some contradictory evidence surrounds the choice of the site and the arrangement of the poles in poles in two parallel lines. Both Polly Sargent's early statement of 1964 and newspaper reports of 1965 indicated that the society had complete control. Sometime later, immediately following adverse criticism in the major dailies in early 1967 concerning the aesthetic effect,[35] Mrs. Sargent indicated that the

placement had been left up to the natives themselves.[36] She was later supported by Ward, then conservator for the Provincial Museum, who had just begun the first of a series of surveys on the project: "The positioning of the poles in regimented rows was in no way the fault of the Committee--it was forced upon them by the Indian owners of the poles, who insisted on the arrangement."[37] Whatever the case, the project appears to have had a positive effect on the community, leading to the subsequent erection of new poles at Kispiox both by individuals, families and the community as a whole.

The second project undertaken by the STPRS was at the village of Kitwancool, where some of the finest poles in the area are to be found, including the important "Hole in the Sky" or "Hole in the Ice" pole, which is reported the oldest pole in existence standing on its original site. This project, carried on during 1967 and 1968, was far more complex than that of Kispiox owing to the more fragile nature and increased age of the poles. Adverse field conditions and the additional problems in obtaining permission to restore the poles contributed to the difficulty.

Thirteen poles were taken down in 1967 and following a process similar to that at Kispiox, although with various refinements in the structure of the base and attachments, were prepared for re-erection. This time, "Except for a group of four, centred on the replicas carved by Mungo Martin, all the poles have been raised close to their original sites . . . thus preserving much of the original atmosphere and marking the line of the old village. The result is infinitely more satisfactory than the regimented lines of poles at Kitwanga and Kispiox."[38] The

poles at Kitwancool now extend in an irregular line along the terrace above the river, but facing the road instead of the river, in accordance with both conservation principles and the wishes of the natives. The Provincial Museum replicas were placed in a group immediately adjacent to the road.

Several special problems had to be dealt with at Kitwancool, aside from working in field conditions which included a lack of electricity and a short dry season. They involved the presence of four or five valuable, but unmounted or unmountable poles in deteriorating condition which could neither be removed from the reserve nor re-erected, either because of their fragile nature, or the refusal of permission by the owners. A roofed structure was built over the group in 1968 by Gordon Reid, the field worker for the STPRS, as a permanent shelter.[39] While not entirely satisfactory, it was still there ten years later.

In addition, plans for a shelter over the "Hole in the Sky/Ice" pole were also proposed by the STPRS around 1968 and drawn up by an architect in response to the Provincial Museum's wish to remove it to safekeeping in Victoria.[40] Due to practical and aesthetic considerations, however, the idea was abandoned. Instead a native style house "museum," serving both to protect the valuable and fragile pole and to serve as a safe storage and display area for the non-erectable group, was proposed.[41] While an excellent and well thought out concept, neither had been constructed by the fall of 1978, although a contemporary community house with a painted front now stands immediately behind the Mungo Martin poles next to the main road. The "Hole in the Sky/Ice" pole was instead treated with a plastic preservative and re-erected on

its original site.

By the time the STPRS took down nine poles at Kitwanga in 1969, the lowering and mounting techniques were further refined. Only one pole, the "Mountain Lion" pole which had a badly deteriorated bear figure on top, presented any technical problem. The detachable figure was eventually sent to the Provincial Museum for restoration and returned. Problems were again reported, however, concerning the placement of the poles which seem to follow the orignal regimented line established in 1925 and duplicated in the late 1930s.[42]

Further complications involving the STPRS, the National Museum, the Provincial Museum, 'Ksan and the native community were also reported in connection with the "Dog-Salmon Pole," which had been highly valued by Marius Barbeau. Inheritance problems, due to the death of the original owner, led, in a complicated series of events, to the original pole being sent to Ottawa, a fiberglass copy intended for Kitwanga being raised in 'Ksan, and a copy of the pole carved at 'Ksan being sent to Kitwanga.[43] In 1978, the new pole had not yet been raised.[44]

The Kitwanga poles appear to have been the last large-scale restoration undertaking of the STPRS. After 1969, the society was inactive, although its work is apparently not yet finished. A letter from Polly Sargent to the Registrar of Companies in 1977 indicates that over $5,000 which remained in the society's accounts would be put to use soon, as some disputes over ownership of untreated poles were being, at that time, resolved.[45]

Again, no restoration work seems to have occurred at the village of Kitsegucla. No published information was available on the reasons

but it may reasonably be assumed that the forces which had previously rejected outside interference were still present. The residents were active in re-erecting the old poles themselves and had carved and raised more new ones in the 1930-1952 period than any of the other villages.

Seen in an historical perspective, the STPRS emerges as the culmination of the totem pole restoration project begun by the CNR and the federal government in 1925 and which introduced the attitude of seeing Indian villages and totem displays as an extended open air or field museum. The Provincial Museum, active in this area in the fifties, served as the intermediary between the projects. Its attitude, as well as that of the STPRS, towards the traditions associated with the poles goes beyond that of the earliest projects, and speaks of a growing recognition that Gitksan culture was living rather than dying. In terms of collecting, after the inception of the STPRS the flow of poles into museums ceased. Restoration and related activities were directed increasingly from the local level, particularly by the STPRS in conjunction with the Skeena Treasure House. The work of the former became an integral part of the program of the latter, creating a combination which lay the groundwork for the subsequent formation of 'Ksan.

Footnotes, Chapter 4

[1]Smith, "Restoration," p. 82.

[2]Duff, *Histories, Territories and Laws.* As well Duff's pole collecting plans were reduced. In 1954 he had advocated the removal of at least six poles from five of the villages to the Provincial Museum, to be replaced by replicas carved at Thunderbird Park. Second copies were to be sent to the University of British Columbia. Although expensive, this project had the advantage of maintaining the "school for carving" as an artistic, educational and tourist attraction and of ensuring the permanent preservation of the originals indoors. It was also meant to overcome the problem posed by the reluctance of the owners to sell their poles outright. See Wilson Duff, "Proposals on Totem Pole Restoration," British Columbia Provincial Museum, Ethnology Department, STPRS file. (Hereafter referred to as STPRS file.)

[3]Wilson Duff to the Provincial Secretary, February 7, 1963, STPRS file.

[4]See especially Wilson Duff to the Provincial Secretary, Memorandum, May 22, 1962, STPRS file.

[5]TOH, October 15, 1959, p. 3.

[6]Stan Rough to Wilson Duff, n.d., STPRS file.

[7]Wilson Duff to the Provincial Secretary, 1963, STPRS file.

[8]PRDN, March 25, 1963, pp. 1, 3; TOH, March 27, 1963, pp. 1, 8.

[9]Nine interviews with village councillors or hereditary chiefs by Don Steele and Stan Rough were reported. None of the natives were named. Stan Rough, "Preliminary Report on Field Trip to Gitksan Villages on Upper Skeena River, 1963," STPRS file.

[10]Ibid. Drawings of the poles were also made by Kitimat architect Ron Baumeister. PRDN, March 26, 1963, p. 3.

[11]PRDN, March 25, 1963, pp. 1, 3.

[12]Ibid., p. 3.

[13]"Newsletters on Upper Skeena Totem Poles," Nos. 1-10, May-December 1963, STPRS file.

[14]Although mentioned in various places, the report was unavailable.

[15]SIN, February 19, 1964, pp. 1, 7.

[16]TOH, February 26, 1964, pp. 1-2; *Colonist*, February 20, 1964, p. 1.

[17]TOH, February 26, 1964, pp. 1-2.

[18]"Constitution of the Skeena Totem Pole Restoration Society," sec. A, part 2, schedule A (filed at the Registrar of Companies, Victoria).

[19]TOH, May 13, 1964, p. 8.

[20]TOH, July 8, 1964, p. 1.

[21]Ibid.

[22]Wilson Duff to Margaret Sargent, May 15, 1964, Letter 569, British Columbia Provincial Museum, Ethnology Department, Totem Poles/ General Correspondence files.

[23]Margaret Sargent to Wilson Duff, August 1-10, 1964, STPRS file.

[24]"Totem Poles, National Monuments, a Restoration Program," pamphlet, n.d., n.p, STPRS file. The designation of poles as national rather than Indian monuments is a continuation of their redefinition begun in the 1920s. A detailed financial assessment of the project in terms of sources of income and expenditures is impossible as the society never submitted annual statements to the Registrar of Companies. All original files were reported lost. M. Sargent to Registrar of Companies, March 30, 1977 (filed with Registrar of Companies, Victoria). A record of provincial disbursements is, however, available through public accounts of British Columbia: 1965-1966, $2,406; 1966-1967, Ø; 1967-1968, $2,380; 1968-1969, $1,139; 1969-1970, $2,641; 1970-1971, $4,593.

[25]*Vancouver Sun*, January 23, 1967, p. 16.

[26]See also, Philip Ward, "Some Notes."

[27]Rough, "Preliminary Report."

[28]Margaret Sargent to Wilson Duff, August 1-10, 1964.

[29]Smith, "Restoration."

[30]Duff, "Proposals on Totem Pole Restoration."

[31]SIN, December 2, 1964, p. 2.

[32]Reports on the exact number vary. Ward, "Some Notes," pp. 1, 7, indicates ten poles were restored. In SIN, June 23, 1965, pp. 7, 12, the number is given as twelve.

[33]SIN, June 23, 1967, p. 16. For a complete discussion of experiments and techniques developed during the program, see Philip Ward's unpublished reports on summer field trips to the Skeena area between 1967 and 1970, to be found in the BCPM Conservation Department files. As well as "Some Notes," already cited, they include the following: "Report of visit to the Upper Skeena," June 1968; "An Interim Report on Operation on the Upper Skeena," July 1969; "Work on the Skeena," July 1970.

[34]SIN, January 23, 1967, p. 16.

[35]*Sun*, January 12, 1967, p. 30.

[36]SIN, December 2, 1964, p. 2.

[37]Ward, "Some Notes," p. 8.

[38]Ward, "Report of 1968."

[39]Ward says of Reid: "An Industrial Arts teacher and Vice Principal of Hazelton High School, . . . a member of the Qualicum band, . . . [he has] a most sympathetic relationship with the Gitksan and his professional skills . . . are ideal qualifications." "An Interim Report, 1969," p. 6.

[40]Ward, "Report of 1968," p. 4.

[41]Ibid.

[42]For an extensive discussion of this and the technical problems associated with the restoration of the Mountain Lion pole, see Ward, "Work on the Skeena," p. 2.

[43]Ibid., pp. 2-3.

[44]Personal on-site observation.

[45]Margaret Sargent to the Registrar of Companies, March 30, 1977 (filed at the Registrat of Companies, Victoria).

CHAPTER 5

'KSAN

Proposals for the expansion of the Skeena Treasure House into the larger museum complex of 'Ksan were first publicized in 1966. The initial plans called for the transformation of the modest local museum, with its cased Gitksan exhibits and adjacent out-of-doors displays, into a "native stone age village" reminiscent of sites in Vancouver, Victoria and Alaska.[1] Once realized, the new museum, in keeping with the evolution in operational principles as well as the design concepts developed during the "revival," integrated the production and sale of Indian art work and the performance of traditional ceremonies and pole raisings into its program. The institutionalization of the art work and its production by the Kitanmax School of Art will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Despite the similarities to the exhibits and programs in Victoria and Vancouver, 'Ksan, like the Skeena Treasure House, was unique in its direct relationship with its subject matter, its exclusive focus on Gitksan culture, art and history, and in the inclusion of the native community in top-level administration of the institution. This, in conjunction with the effect created by the continuity of Gitksan cultural traditions, modified the role of the museum and its relationship to the "revival."

As with the Treasure House, partial funding for 'Ksan was channelled through provincial and federal programs, which the new museum

conveniently and knowledgeably complemented. The government and museum sponsored "revival" of native art for economic enhancement of depressed areas clearly stands as the major consideration. With the input of funding agencies and advisory bodies, the initial proposals for 'Ksan expanded both in the period preceding and following the official opening of 1970. The first stage in 'Ksan's development was completed by 1973. Subsequent expansion, when funding for the Northwest National Exhibition Centre was finalized after 1973, altered the content and context of the museum.

The Exhibition Centre placed 'Ksan beyond the parameters of the field museum. By broadening its focus to include displays outside of Gitksan culture, the museum lost the feature on which its initial uniqueness depended. The centre also had little relationship to the art program at the Kitanmax School. For this reason, and because of a lack of historical perspective on more recent events, the introduction of the Exhibition Centre will not be included in this study. Only the precedents, formative and maturing stages of the museum up until 1973 will be dealt with here.

Two museological developments in British Columbia occurred around the time of the opening of the Skeena Treasure House and can be seen as influencing and shaping early concepts of 'Ksan: a planned expansion of Thunderbird Park in Victoria and the restoration of the goldrush town of Barkerville in the Cariboo.

Almost immediately following the opening of Mungo Martin's house in Thunderbird Park a proposal appeared for enlarging the site. In late 1953, Mayor Claude Harrison of Victoria announced a plan to build an

extended native village on land adjacent to the park.[2] Plans for the project were drawn up by a local architectural firm and revealed at a Chamber of Commerce tourist trade luncheon in early 1954.[3] The proposal called for the construction of a trio of Haida style houses, although built of glass, steel and cement.[4] The houses were to be situated around a salt water pool with a sandy foreshore on which canoes would be beached. The group of buildings was promoted as a new home for the Provincial Museum which was then still located in the Parliament Buildings. It was suggested that one of the buildings be devoted to the sale of handicrafts. Although the proposal had the backing of several prominent individuals and interest groups, it was not realized. The failure may have been due to inadequacies in the design which were seen as difficult to modify in order to fulfil the broader requirements of the Provincial Museum.[5]

Despite this, many aspects of the plan turned up in subsequent projects, including those in and around Hazelton. Given the activity of the Sargents in the tourist trade and in the Chamber of Commerce, of which Mr. Sargent served as regional president for some time, and the role of that organization in the early stages of 'Ksan's development, the Victoria plan could easily have served as a model or inspiration for later proposals for 'Ksan. As will be shown, many pertinent similarities exist between the Thunderbird Park Indian village/museum proposal and the initial plans for 'Ksan, although the correspondence is not complete. That comprehensive plans for a museum such as 'Ksan, of which the Skeena Treasure House was only the first phase, could have existed as early as 1954 or shortly thereafter is borne out by the official

'Ksan booklet.

> Even prior to its [the Skeena Treasure House's] completion some supporters . . . were dreaming again, and this time not of a single building for the display of artifacts but of a complete pre-European Gitksan Village. . . . Planning of the village-to-be commenced even before the Skeena Treasure House was in full operation.[6]

The Thunderbird Park expansion concept was not alone, however, in adding impetus and ideas to the initial concept of 'Ksan.

In the period between the conception of the Skeena Treasure House and the opening of 'Ksan, another influential museological development occurred: the restoration and reconstruction of the mining town of Barkerville. The initial work was financed, as was the Skeena Treasure House, by a B.C. Centennial Project grant in 1958. Although dedicated to the period of white settlement which severely disrupted native culture, many of Barkerville's features were transposed into the native museum of 'Ksan. These included not only open-air or folk museum features, such as restored and reconstructed houses containing complementary interior displays with objects placed in an approximation of their original setting, but also period performances, the sale of foodstuffs and guided tours. Barkerville's success, both as a museum and a tourist attraction, served as an immediate source of ideas for the local promoters of the 'Ksan project. 'Ksan was, in fact, frequently referred to, in its incipient period, as an "Indian Barkerville."[7]

Promotion for the realization of 'Ksan, despite earlier preliminary preparation, did not appear until March 1966, when a sketch of the proposed museum of "Old 'Ksan" was published in a regional newspaper by the Chamber of Commerce.[8] Accompanying the sketch were requests for

support in gaining provincial government assistance to finance the project which had been submitted to the Convention of the Northwest Chambers of Commerce.[9] Both R.W. Sargent, president of the local Chamber of Commerce at this time, and Polly Sargent, as head of the town council, took leading roles in promoting the concept among the neighbouring communities of Smithers and Terrace as a boon to the regional tourist industry.[10]

Mrs. Sargent's role was, in fact, central to the formation of 'Ksan as it was to other museum activity in the area, including the Treasure House and the Restoration Society. Her position as head of the community gave her access to other elected officials and government officers on the municipal, provincial and federal levels whose support was vital to the project. These connections, and others established through her husband, seem to have led to an awareness of various programs through which funds for the projected museum could be channelled.

As in the case of the Treasure House, a source of government funds for the project's realization became available shortly after the first public announcement for its promotion. In late December 1966, the Hazelton Sawmills, owned by Jack Sigalet, was damaged by a fire in its private power generating plant.[11] The mill was closed, and over 200 workers from both the white and native communities were laid off. Although a severe blow to the community, which depended highly on this winter industry to supplement the regional income from the summer tourist trade, the mill closure added weight to arguments used in fund requests for the museum project. Government officials and ministers

were made aware of the resulting hardship to the area through letters from white and native individuals and groups. H.L. Wale, Chief Councillor of the Hazelton band and member of the Native Brotherhood, William Blackwater, Chief Councillor of the Kispiox band council, Joe Daniels, district vice-president of the Native Brotherhood, R.W. Sargent and E.L. Freer of the International Woodworkers of America outlined the situation in correspondence with various government departments.[12]

In mid February, Dudley Little, who had earlier given his support to the local pole restoration program, rose in the legislature and asked for assistance in creating a "stone age village" at Hazelton, a kind of "Indian Barkerville" to be called "Old 'Ksan."[13] He indicated that the local community, headed by Polly Sargent, was ready to contribute $30,000 towards the project. Actual government support soon followed. It was arranged under the terms of the Agricultural and Rural Development Act (ARDA), a program established in 1961 to provide joint federal and provincial funding for projects initiated by the provinces for the economic enhancement of depressed rural areas. As was suggested by Hazelton's prior willingness to contribute funds, cost sharing was a fundamental part of this agreement. With the sawmill closure, Hazelton and environs qualified as a poverty area, as calculated by a ratio based on the number of families with a gross annual income of less than $3,000.

The group affected by the closure, as has been pointed out, included a significant percentage of the native population. Fortunately the terms of the act had recently been broadened to include a higher rate of participation from native communities which lacked organized municipalities within which to raise their share of funds. A special

study done in 1968 outlined observations from two years before.

> . . . Indian communities do not have the same taxing authorities as other areas that are municipally organized and this has an effect on the extent to which Indian communities can participate in financing an ARDA project. There is a lack of capital and a credit gap which prevents people from taking part and giving initiative.[14]

The processing of the application seems to have been handled with some dispatch. Provincial approval for the project was granted within a month of Little's speech, that is, by March 1967 with federal approval following by November. Under the terms of the agreement, 'Ksan became ARDA project No. 39002.

> Within the Skeena Bulkley Rural Development Area it is proposed to have developed with Indian labor an historic Indian Village as a tourist attraction. Associated with this will be facilities for making and selling Indian handicrafts thus providing income and job opportunities for underemployed persons mainly Indians. Also related to this phase will be the development and maintenance of a campground by native Indians on Indian land in accordance with Provincial Park standards.[15]

Despite the concession to native participation and initiation, the creation of an Indian museum and tourist attraction appeared unique in ARDA's history. The program was largely devoted to water and land resource conservation, at least in British Columbia. The only similar project listed in ARDA catalogues between 1963 and 1968 was the establishment of a handicraft training project among the Métis of northern Saskatchewan in December of 1967. No other museum projects of any kind were reported. Nonetheless, it is significant that in keeping with aspects of the Alaskan programs, the subsequent "revival" of Canadian native art through government sponsorship, and according to Graburn,[16] with most types of art "revivals" of indigenous cultures in general,

the economic enhancement of a depressed area played a significant part in motivating the financing of 'Ksan.

It is probably this economic emphasis which was responsible for the inclusion of the campground which had not been part of the original proposals; the establishment of native operated campgrounds on reserve lands was a common form of assistance during the operation of ARDA. In the case of the 'Ksan project it was part of the expansion of the museum concept which occurred throughout the course of arranging funding and gaining advice from various sources. As soon as the project was accepted by ARDA additions, such as the campground, began to appear.

The plans for 'Ksan, for example, were further formalized and expanded at the annual meeting of the Skeena Treasure House in March 1967.[17] The drawing cited earlier was again published in the local papers, but other elements were now included. Going beyond the idea of a tourist attraction, plans were now announced for a "production . . . sales . . . and distribution centre for superior and genuine Indian Handicrafts [*sic*]."[18] A committee of volunteers was formed at this meeting to promote the project which by now was endorsed by the joint Chambers of Commerce of the area, the local community and the neighbouring Indian band councils. The contribution of the councils at this stage is, unfortunately, not well documented in available sources and deserves further research.

Both the inception and subsequent expansion of the concept of 'Ksan are documented in the first published proposals, a series of briefs written between about 1967 and 1969, in the course of arranging support and finalizing financial assistance for the project, and in the

final funding documents themselves. Collectively, these sources outline the changes in physical design and display, in internal organization and in the revenue producing activities of the proposed museum.[19]

The preliminary sketch first published in 1966 includes three reconstructed houses, several poles and various other objects.[20] The drawing seems, in many respects, a composite of images drawn from Barbeau's publications and other sources. The taller poles are from the area and are readily identifiable in his *Totem Poles of the Gitskan*. A fiberglass copy of the "Dog-Salmon pole" from Kitwanga, on the left, presently stands at 'Ksan. The central house frontal image appears to be based on one at Alert Bay.[21] The Kwakiutl house, however, lacks the raised central roof section. This appears to be drawn from another source--a booklet on the Tsimsian prepared by the Provincial Museum and the Provincial Archives.[22] A photograph in the booklet of a village site, actually Bella Coola, but mistakenly labelled Tsimsian, contains a painted house frontal very similar in contour to that in the sketch. The house frontal on the left in the sketch appears loosely based on a Haida example from Skidegate.[23] The house frontal pole on the right is from Kitwanga.[24] The canoe was already part of the Skeena Treasure House display. Missing from the drawing, but present at both the Treasure House and 'Ksan, are the reconstructed grave house and the museum building itself.

The briefs provide details of interior displays not illustrated in the preliminary sketch.[25] A "House of Feasts" was to show a potlatch in progress. Hudson's Bay Company, button and Chilkat blankets, simulated sacks of flour and sugar, masks, copper and carved food dishes,

house posts and a screen were to provide the setting for three costumed mannequins of chiefs. A "House of the Hunters" was to be equipped with "Scenes from Stone Age Days." These included figures of hunters, shamans, warriors, gamblers and women weaving and preparing skins. The third building was to house the workers producing handicrafts and art work. Miscellaneous other exhibits included fishtraps, food drying racks, and food storage holes. Many of these display concepts were subsequently incorporated in the new museum.

One historically important display proposal discussed at this time was neither realized nor mentioned in any of the extant briefs. It appears, however, in a 1968 report by Philip Ward, Chief Conservator for the Provincial Museum, who was advising the local personnel in museological principles and practices. Ward reported that an "'A-frame house' . . . [at Kitselas was] to serve as the model for a similar building at 'Ksan."[26]

Although not tracing 'Ksan's antecedents back as far as the 1920s, one of the briefs does provide a summary of the history of the 'Ksan proposal and its direct relationship with the Skeena Treasure House. It also contains an outline of the economic need for and viability of the museum as well as carefully worded references to existing government programs, especially the "revival" and marketing of northwest coast native art, aid to depressed rural areas, and the use of restored towns or villages as museums and tourist attractions. The following extract is representative of the early economic emphasis placed on the project.

> The idea of the 'Ksan Village evoled [*sic*] through the success of our small Indian Museum which is built to resemble an Indian communal house. During the six-year life of our

> Indian Museum we have learned that--
> (a) The Museum is not big enough to truly depict Indian life as it was in the old days;
> (b) There is a *great demand* for genuine Indian Handicraft, which the museum sells;
> (c) There is *great tourist interest* in ancient Indian lore. So much that our unadvertised little museum, five miles off the Highway, was this year able to pay all but eighteen dollars of the custodian's wages out of donations.
> (d) The demand for handicrafts and the resulting sales has made the museum completely self-supporting.
>
> When we looked for ways in which to bring more dollars to our area and diversify our one-industry economy, we naturally fell upon the idea of *expanding our successful museum into a sort of "Indian Barkerville."* It seemed self-evident that, if our tiny, unadvertised museum could sell four thousand dollars worth of good Indian Handicraft in a three month period, an Indian Barkerville could draw ten times as many people and sell at least ten times as much, that would mean at least *$40,000.00 per annum* in handicraft sales, *plus $6,000.00* in "gate receipts" or donations at the door.
>
> Knowing that the Indian Affairs Branch was interested in expanding Indian handicraft production, and believing that the Branch would be interested also in anything which would bring more dollars into the vicinity in which 2400 Indian people live, we prepared a Brief and presented the 'Ksan project to the Indian Affairs Branch. Representations were made also to the Honorable Arthur Laing.[27]

In addition to the economic arguments the proposals were supplemented with detailed cost breakdowns and estimates of the economic benefits. The professional quality of the projections and the cost-benefit analysis, and the awareness of complementary government programs would indicate that the project had, by that time, been thought out thoroughly, both in terms of obtaining government funding and in terms of actual conception and realization.

Despite the emphasis on the economic aspects predominant in the various briefs, one of them contains an interesting awareness of the potential psychological benefits to the community to be derived from

the museum complex and advances them as further argument in support of the proposal.

> All three governments will benefit in the following ways:
> (a) Save welfare dollars. . . .
> (b) Profit by establishing a first-rate tourist attraction with resulting tourist dollars.
> (c) Profit through psychological up-grading that will accrue to the Indian people who, through 'Ksan *earn* money instead of accepting social assistance (very important).
> (d) Profit through psychological up-grading that will accrue to the Indian people who will
> (a) feel proud that their ancient handicrafts are highly saleable,
> (b) feel pride in the attention given by the public to the ancient Indian way of life,
> (c) feel a sense of achievement in having successfully produced a fine handicraft.[28]

The cost-benefit projections contained in the early briefs underestimated, as it turned out, both the potential market for native art and the cultural, or "psychological" benefits to the native community. The first was due, it seems, to an incomplete awareness of the range and popularity of the native art "revival" and, the second, in part to an unawareness of the extent to which Gitksan culture had persisted. Later project outlines, which were modified by the input of the various government bodies to which the original request had been submitted, were much more specific and less diffuse in format. They also contained some additional objectives.

> (1) increased employment opportunities and so improve the local and regional economy;
> (2) record permanently the fascinating old and new history of Indian life in the Skeena-Bulkley region;
> (3) produce and sell to visitors genuine Indian handicraft work;
> (4) provide employment to the Indians in the development and maintenance of a campground constructed to the standards of British Columbia's Provincial Parks Branch.[29]

Points 1 and 3 are recognizable as direct carry-overs from the original proposals but the other two are new, although the last point had been suggested previously.[30] It was realized as a thirty-unit campground, operated by the local Gitksan band and situated adjacent to the museum complex but not thematically or inherently related to it. According to statements by Neil Sterritt, later a key figure at 'Ksan, the proposal was included at the suggestion of the funding bodies.[31] This would make sense considering the precedents within ARDA for such a move.

The second proposition is significant as it linked the museum to an ethnographic and historic study of the Gitksan. It is, however, doubtful if it was foreseen in the original briefs. Although it is not known what motivated the incorporation of ethnographic studies as part of the museum format, it had several important consequences which demonstrated the effect that the Gitksan had on the direction of subsequent museum activity. It will be recalled that the relationship between the Gitksan and white museums has not always been harmonious. This historical situation, combined with a desire to maintain their own records rather than having them stored in an institution in a distant city, plus an independent spirit, seems to have resulted in a refusal to allow ethnographers from the National Museum to operate in the area in the spring of 1978.[32] Gitksan people themselves were subsequently trained in the study of their own culture and the collection of their own "ethnographic" information. This is a complete reversal of the traditional museum relationship to its subject matter, and although outside the time frame of the study period, illustrates an important

stage in both the influence of the Gitksan on the course of museological developments and the control they exercise over their cultural heritage.

The ARDA documents contained specific details on the final financial arrangements for 'Ksan's creation. The initial estimated cost for constructing the museum complex was $220,000. A cost breakdown indicated that $100,000 of federal funds was designated for the thirty-unit campground adjacent to the museum. It was to be planned and built under the direction of the "Provincial Parks Branch using mainly local Indian labor and with the approval of Indian Band Councils, the 'Ksan Society Council and the Village of Hazelton."[33] Full responsibility for its operation and revenue from the campsite was, upon completion, to be turned over to the band council. The "Historic Indian Village" received $60,000 from the federal government and $30,000 apiece from the municipal and provincial governments, to initiate the project.[34] Additional funding from various programs such as the Neighbourhood Improvement Program (NIP) and the Local Initiatives Program (LIP) were made available subsequently.

The town of Hazelton offered, as its share of the cost, the Skeena Treasure House building and a portion of the museum's collection which was appraised and placed under the custodianship of the Provincial Museum, although it remained on permanent loan at 'Ksan. Giving part of the collection may not have been part of the initial plans, as it is reported in 'Ksan's official publication that the Hazelton municipality originally offered five building lots for the museum site, possibly as its additional share of the costs.[35] This does not seem to have been acceptable, although no documentation was found as to which of the

participating organizations or communities rejected the idea. Whatever the case, an ideal site on reserve land at the juncture of the Skeena and Buckley rivers just outside the entrance to Hazelton was secured. In late 1967 it was reported that "The Regional Indian Band Council under Chief Howard Wale--himself a carver of note--has bought back all hereditary rights to peninsula lands from native owners."[36] This land was then leased to the municipality of Hazelton under the terms of the ARDA agreement. Although it is also unclear why Hazelton was given the lease, or if the reserve land was a part of the band's financial contribution, or whether the band were reimbursed for it, a situation requiring continued co-operation from the participating parties was engendered.

The ARDA agreement was officially signed at a public ceremony in Hazelton on June 29, 1968.[37] Representatives from the various levels of government which were participating in the project took part. They included Howard Wale, Margaret Sargent, mayor of Hazelton, R.A. Faris, president of the 'Ksan Association, D.B. Turner, Deputy Minister of Recreation and Conservation, and Jeffery V. Boys, the Indian Commissioner for British Columbia. The agreement outlined the role each level of government was to play in the initial stages of 'Ksan's development.[38] The village of Hazelton, acting as the local sponsoring authority, was to be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the project and was to hold the lease for the land. The 'Ksan Association was to be the local co-ordinating agency. It, in turn, was to be guided by a 'Ksan Advisory Committee under the chairmanship of the Deputy Minister of Recreation and Conservation. The Hazelton Indian Band Council was to take responsibility for the operation of the adjacent campground,

and was to receive the net revenue from its operation. The provincial Department of Recreation and Conservation was to be responsible for implementing the project.[39]

Although initial projections called for 'Ksan's completion in 1969, and parts of the museum were operating by that period, it was not officially opened until August 1970. An extensive ceremony echoed and expanded many of the features of the Skeena Treasure House opening of ten years before. Representatives from the provincial government, including the premier, and from the Provincial Museum, the municipal government and the native communities were present at the formal inauguration.[40]

A totem pole raising again formed a central part of the ceremonies, although a new context produced significant differences between the 'Ksan pole and the Git-dem-muldo pole. The former was newly carved especially for the opening by artists working at the Kitanmax School. Its raising did not involve the validation of personal hereditary prerogatives, nor was it a memorial. Rather, in terms of its purpose and design, the new 'Ksan pole corresponded to those poles carved in Victoria and executed under museum auspices for other than specifically traditional purposes, particularly as museum displays, or as manifestations of native culture and identity in general, and later as tourist attractions or as symbols of British Columbia.

The figures chosen for the 'Ksan pole reflect the first two categories: three crests represent the Gitksan clans responsible for the founding of the museum. This directly parallels the precedent established when Mungo Martin raised a new pole at the Provincial Museum

with figures commemorating the Kwakiutl tribes. In this context, the top figure of the 'Ksan pole is interesting. A white person in top hat and coat, it was intended to represent the "white contribution" to the project, but rapidly became identified with the premier; it subsequently became known as the "Bennett pole."[41] The ensuing controversy over the relationship of white and native culture, which the figure symbolically represented, more or less abated when it was removed a few years later in order to establish an aura of authenticity for a television play filmed on the 'Ksan site featuring pre-contact life. The figure has recently been reinstated, however. 'Ksan's role in the continuity of Gitksan artistic and cultural expression as reflected in carving poles for traditional purposes will be discussed more fully in the following chapter.

Traditional dances and songs were also incorporated into the museum opening. These were regarded as personal hereditary property; tape recorders were requested to be turned off during their performance.[42]

The physical format of 'Ksan as it was realized at the time of the opening comprised five houses set in a row facing the river. A house for the Kitanmax School of Art (the Carving House of All Times) and the Northwest National Exhibition Centre were added later. The five original houses were the Frog House of the Distant Past, which presents pre-contact Gitksan life; the Wolf House of the Grandfathers, a recreation of a post-contact communal house also known as the Feast House as performances were and still are held there; the Today House of the Arts or Sales House; the Fireweed House of Treasures (formerly the Skeena

Treasure House) which housed the collection of Gitksan artifacts;[43] and an administration and storage building. Five totem poles, two canoes, the grave house and adjacent external displays complemented the houses. Excellent descriptions of the displays, interior and exterior are to be found in the official 'Ksan publication, *'Ksan.*[44]

Both carving and dance programs were, as has been pointed out, regular features of the new museum. That a new awareness of the value of Gitksan culture had developed during the "revival" was officially illustrated in 1972 when thirty-two dancers and carvers from 'Ksan travelled to Ottawa to perform in a series of shows and exhibitions. Work produced at 'Ksan was exhibited in the foyer of the National Arts Centre as well as the Royal Ontario Museum. This, again, echoed events from 1927. The display was not, however, despite several precedents and a resurgent awareness of the work as "fine art," displayed at this time in art galleries as Canadian art as was recommended by the Massey report.[45] On the other hand, neither was it treated as the product of a dying culture to be placed in a museum for safekeeping.

With the extensive media coverage of the opening, the public staging of traditional dances at the National Arts Centre, and the purchase of much art work by the National Museum, the relationship of 'Ksan and Gitksan culture to the government/museum sponsored "revival" reached a peak. In historic perspective, the "revival" provided the marketing and media context for the international promotion and recognition of the contemporary expression of Gitksan culture either in a museum-linked setting, or outside the villages which formed its traditional context. The scope of the "revival," however, tends to distort

this perspective. Two things must be kept in mind when analyzing its relationship to the contemporary state of Gitksan cultural traditions. A danger of misinterpretation arises from the inappropriateness of the term itself. It has been demonstrated that Gitksan cultural traditions were alive and active up until the time of the re-introduction of museum activity in the area in the early 1950s. They were neither then, nor subsequently, "revived" in the sense of being brought back to life, consciousness, vigor or validity, in that they were neither dead nor forgotten.

This, in turn, has tended to obscure the effect that the persistence of Gitksan cultural traditions has had on the course of the "revival" and museum activity as it developed in the Upper Skeena area. Nonetheless, it has been demonstrated to be a defining feature in the formation and operation of both the Skeena Treasure House and 'Ksan. Similarly, it also directed and defined the limits of the totem pole collection and restoration projects of both the British Columbia Totem Pole Restoration Committee and the Skeena Totem Pole Restoration Society.

The last danger lies in perceiving the "revival" as the proper and total context of contemporary native cultural traditions. While this may be true in terms of its public manifestations, Gitksan culture, in both art and other areas, persists in a more original context and meaning in the villages around 'Ksan; traditional ceremonies, singing, dancing and pole raisings go on there for traditional rather than promotional reasons.

The relationship between the "revival" and Gitksan culture, especially as expressed at 'Ksan, must thus be viewed as an interactive

rather than as a unilateral agent of change. The current relationship between the two appears to reflect this situation; it can be perhaps best described as symbiotic. Each recognizes the value of the other.

The growth of the recognition of Gitksan culture in the context of a museum and the "revival" was accompanied, throughout the period from 1967 to 1973, by the gradual assimilation of native people into the administration of the affairs of the museum. Indeed the initial project proposals anticipated a period of guidance from external agencies.

> It is expected that the Village of Hazelton through the proposed *Old 'Ksan Association* will be responsible for the maintenance and operation of the project, and the Association, being a non-profit organization, would be incorporated under the Societies Act. This Association will have assistance from the Indian Affairs Branch, the British Columbia Department of Recreation and Conservation, and from the Department of Agriculture . . . as appropriate. The Board of Trustees [of the Association] will include representations of Hazelton Village Council, the Indian Band Council, and the Indian Museum Committee.[46]

With the actual establishment of the museum and its growing independence this external oversight was eventually phased out.

On the local level, as indicated in the above quotation, a body known as the 'Ksan Association was organized to take over operations from the Skeena Treasure House. The association was formally registered as a society in May 1968.[47] Its constitution incorporated many of the objectives contained within the various proposals described previously. One section was also specifically concerned with the collection of the Skeena Treasure House and its place in the new museum. One of the stated objectives of the society was "to safeguard valuable crest possessions of the native Indian people while these possessions are

made available to the Association for display."[48]

The constitution also defined the internal and administrative organization of the museum. As is to be expected, many of the concepts of shared responsibility between native and white communities found in the Skeena Treasure House constitution were incorporated. A Board of Trustees, which had "full control and management of the business affairs of the Society" was formed.[49] It was to be composed of two representatives of the Hazelton Indian Band Council, two from the Village of Hazelton Council, at least eight from the eight Indian bands in the Hazelton area, with at least four not from the Hazelton band, the superintendent of the Babine Indian Agency, ten trustees to be elected at the annual general meeting, and chairmen of the standing committees on grounds and on museums.[50]

From among the trustees was to be appointed the executive, consisting of the usual offices of chairman, vice-chairman, etc. At least three members of the executive were to be members of the Indian bands. As outlined by the constitution,

> The duties of the Executive shall be to advise and supervise the Curator-Manager and the overall functions of the 'Ksan Association and to maintain suitable standards for Sales, Museum and camp ground area. . . .
>
> The executive shall have authority to appoint employees, outline their duties and fix their remuneration.[51]

The borrowing power, banking, and conduct of other financial business lay with the Board of Trustees although appointed members of the executive were supposed to sign bills of exchange, cheques, etc.[52]

The trend towards increased participation of native members becomes evident from examining the membership of the trustees and the

executive of the association. Some conflicts in obtained data preclude a precise analysis. The trend is, however, significant and discernible.

In 1968, the directors of the 'Ksan Association were listed as Mr. Robert Hunter, school principal, Kitsegucla; Mrs. Earle E. Simpson, merchant, Hazelton; Rev. Robert A. Faris, minister, New Hazelton; Chief Howard Wale, fisherman, Hazelton; and Mrs. R.W. Sargent, hotel manager, Hazelton.[53] Of these people, six belonged to the white community of Hazelton and the surrounding area. Only Chief Wale was of native heritage, i.e., a status or non-status native.

The following year native participation had increased substantially, to three out of seven positions, according to the association's annual report. The trend was to continue and expand. By February 1974 it was reported that a dramatic change had taken place.

> It is significant in the operation of the Association that 19 of 24 trustees are status or non-status Indians and five of nine members of the Executive Committee. All employed personnel and the 200 artists and craftsmen whose work is sold through 'Ksan sales agency are status or non-status Indians.[54]

Other than the shift from white to native participation in administration, one of the primary aspects of 'Ksan's growth after 1968 was the process by which the organization changed from being run solely on a volunteer basis through the 'Ksan Association to being managed and co-ordinated by full-time salaried employees. In the spring of 1973 a request was approved by ARDA to provide funds, on a shared basis, for a two-year period, for a project director.[55]

C.W. Weeks, at the time corresponding secretary for the 'Ksan Association, outlined the necessity for such a position, giving two

major reasons. Advertising, promotion and publicity by the 'Ksan Association, the National Museum and Arts Centre, as well as "art galleries and other cultural and artistic associations," had resulted in both an actual and potential expansion of the market for 'Ksan's artistic production. As a consequence of this growth "the volunteer service which has worked well, . . . is no longer adequate to fully satisfy requirements at the local business level, and is quite incapable of exploiting a rapidly increasing potential." In addition, the situation was exacerbated by increased attendance at 'Ksan and a growing interest in northwest coast native art in general.[56]

The project manager was apparently expected to co-ordinate an orderly development of the anticipated increase in production and marketing of arts and crafts. In so doing it would be necessary to "establish good relationships and communication with the Indian people with whom he will be working."[57] The position was filled by Neil Sterritt, a non-status native from Hazelton.

In December 1973, Sterritt and the 'Ksan Association issued a "Review and Forecast" which outlined the history and operation of the museum. Although much of the report is concerned with past, present and projected sales and with financial statements of revenue and expenditure, some interesting aspects of the organization and operation of the museum are also included.

> It is proposed that personnel for all positions shown, be placed on the 'Ksan payroll as the position is filled. . . . The Executive and the Project Director will determine salary scale. It should be recognized that in some cases it will be necessary to hire a non-Indian for the position. In this event, part of the duties of the person as employed will be to train a suitable native to assume all or part of the duties in due course.[58]

An "Organizational Chart" outlined the anticipated "need for qualified personnel as the 'Ksan operation grows over the next few years."[59]

'KSAN ASSOCIATION

Project Director

Finance	Budgets	Personnel	Growth Marketing
Directors	Operating Superintendent	Sales	Office Manager
Information	Maintenance	Clerks	Bookkeeping
Museum	Protection	Tour guides	—a/c
Dance	Receiving		—payroll
Marketing	Marking		Correspondence
	Storage		Insurance
	Crating		Cash
	Address		Tax
	Delivery		Credit
	Janitor		

Outside:— legal, accounting, insurance

As indicated earlier, 1973 also saw the introduction of a new building, the Northwest National Exhibition Centre. Although it houses a fireproof and climate-controlled room for the collection, it also contains an area for exhibitions not specifically related to Gitksan history or culture. The former feature, together with the administrative reorganization, marks the formal maturation of 'Ksan as a museum. Subsequent developments in both areas can be considered as refinements rather than as new additions. The second feature, the exhibition area, is significant in that it changed the museological status of 'Ksan; the

addition of this non-Gitksan element altered the single-culture, "field" orientation of the museum. In so doing, it marks a new phase in 'Ksan's evolution, one beyond the parameters of this study. In a sense, then, the Northwest National Exhibition Centre represents a transition: the culmination, or maturation, of one period of development and the inception of another.

It only remains to deal with one last aspect: the Kitanmax School of Art, which still forms an integral part of the museum. It is here that Gitksan artistic production found a means of expression in both a traditional and innovative manner, reaffirming the old while exploring new styles and themes.

Footnotes, Chapter 5

[1]SIN, February 22, 1967, p. 6.

[2]*Colonist*, January 25, 1954, p. 11.

[3]*Victoria Times*, January 25, 1954, p. 11.

[4]*Times*, December 19, 1953, p. 13.

[5]*Times*, January 29, 1954, p. 9.

[6]*'Ksan*, p. 13.

[7]SIN, February 22, 1967, p. 6.

[8]SIN, March 23, 1966, p. 4, see Figure 9.

[9]Ibid.

[10]TOH, November 23, 1966, p. 1.

[11]TOH, January 11, 1967, p. 1.

[12]Ibid.

[13]SIN, February 22, 1967, p. 6.

[14]William Nicholls, *Views on Rural Development in Canada*, Special Study No. 1 (Ottawa: Canadian Council on Rural Development, 1968), p. 89. The study also noted "If a province so desires, the ARDA program may be applied to Indian lands and Indian people. Greater attention is paid to the *training of Rural Development Officers, and to the development of training facilities for community leaders*" (italics in original), ibid., p. 126.

[15]ARDA Agreement 39002, "'Ksan Indian Village and Campground," British Columbia Provincial Museum, Ethnology Department, 'Ksan file. (Hereafter cited as 'Ksan file.)

[16]Lawrence Dawson, Vera-Mae Fredrickson and Nelson Graburn, *Traditions in Transition, Culture Contact and Material Change* (Berkeley: Lowrie Museum of Anthropology, 1974), pp. 13-17; see also, Graburn, "Art and Acculturative Processes," pp. 466-467.

[17]TOH, April 5, 1967, p. 11.

[18]Ibid.

[19]These reports, to be found in the 'Ksan file, are neither dated, paginated, nor signed, and appear, in some cases, to be fragmentary. Rather than attempt to distinguish them, they will be referred to collectively as Briefs, 'Ksan file.

[20]See Figure 9. I am indebted to John Viellette of the Provincial Museum for supplying this illustration.

[21]Barbeau, *Totem Poles*, 2:779.

[22]*Tsimshian*, B.C. Heritage Series, Series 1, "Our Native Peoples," Vol. 6 (Victoria: Provincial Archives and Provincial Museum, 1952). See illustration of "Tsimshian village showing painted house-fronts and fish-traps."

[23]Barbeau, *Totem Poles*, 1:139.

[24]Ibid., 2:829.

[25]Briefs, 'Ksan file.

[26]Ward, "Report of 1968," p. 10.

[27]Briefs, 'Ksan file.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Ibid.

[30]ARDA Agreement 39002.

[31]G. McKevitt, "'Ksan, A Fire Come Back to Life," *Nesika*, October 1973, p. 10.

[32]SIN, March 29, 1978, sec. B, p. 6; May 16, 1978, sec. A, p. 6.

[33]Briefs, 'Ksan file.

[34]ARDA Agreement 39002. This figure was subsequently revised upwards.

[35]*'Ksan*, p. 13.

[36]*Times*, December 21, 1967, p. 17.

[37]SIN, July 3, 1968, pp. 7, 9.

[38]"'Ksan Agreement," June 1968, 'Ksan file. This agreement duplicates an earlier "General Agreement on 'Ksan Development," approved April 1968, 'Ksan file.

[39]Ibid.

[40]PRDN, August 13, 1970, p. 1; August 17, 1970, pp. 1, 3; August 18, 1970, p. 6; SIN, August 19, 1970, p. 9.

[41]See, for example, TOH, August 12, 1970, p. 4; SIN, August 12, 1970, p. 8. Although the pole did not belong to a single individual, the crests were personal property. This, in turn, entailed the traditional exchange of gifts, and the performance of associated dances by those owning the rights to them. Chief Ernest Hyzims of Kitsegucla, wearing traditional regaliz, including a mosquito frontlet, is reported as dancing for the Frog crest. SIN, August 19, 1970, p. 8. The premier, as well as dispensing a gift of money, was obliged to dance in the ceremonies. This may account for his name being associated with the pole. It should also be noted that the pole raising was the occasion for an educational explanation of the social function of totem poles, dances, gifts and feasts as land titles, marriage registry, courts of law, etc., by Chief Mary Blackwater of Kispiox. See Fig. 12.

[42]SIN, August 19, 1970, p. 9. See Fig. 11.

[43]A list of artifacts of the 'Ksan collection is filed with the Provincial Museum, but publication of its contents is restricted.

[44]*'Ksan*, pp. 16-22. See Figs. 10, 12, 13, 14, 15 and 16.

[45]Massey Report, pp. 242-243.

[46]Brief, 'Ksan file.

[47]Notice of Registration (filed with the Registrar of Companies, Victoria).

[48]Constitution of the 'Ksan Association, sec. 2, part F (filed with the Registrar of Companies, Victoria).

[49]By-laws, sec. 4, part e (filed with the Registrar of Companies, Victoria).

[50]By-laws.

[51]By-laws, sec. 5, Executive, parts 2 and 5.

[52]By-laws, Financial.

[53]Also included were Mrs. M.A. Compton, merchant, and Mrs. W.B. Maitland, housewife, both of Hazelton. Directors of 'Ksan Association, 1968 (filed with the Registrar of Companies, Victoria).

[54]ARDA Agreement 89033, 'Ksan file.

[56]C.W. Weeks, Corresponding Secretary, 'Ksan Association, "Information Supporting an Application for a Regular ARDA Grant to Assist in the Employment of a Project Director for 'Ksan Historic Indian Village," March 1, 1973, 1973, 'Ksan file.

[57]Ibid.

[58]Neil Sterritt and the 'Ksan Association, "Review and Forecast," 1973, 'Ksan file.

[59]Ibid.

CHAPTER 6

GITKSAN ARTISTIC PRODUCTION AND THE KITANMAX NORTHWEST COAST INDIAN ART SCHOOL

Provisions for the formation of the Kitanmax Northwest Coast Indian Art School were included in the terms of the ARDA agreement which provided the financial foundation for 'Ksan.[1] Although ostensibly separate, the two institutions came to share common personnel, buildings, aims and museological and cultural significance. Both participated in the "revival" as well as in the continuity of Gitksan cultural traditions. It is this interrelationship, as expressed in the art work created by artists associated with the Kitanmax School, as either students or teachers, that will form the focus of this chapter.

In retrospect, the "revival" affected the art of the Gitksan in several ways. Some suggestion of variations in scope and context resulting from the expanded market and the museums setting have been outlined in the previous chapter. Changes of a qualitative nature are also evident. While some of these are immediately identifiable as originating in the introduction of new media of expression, others are of a more subtle nature and emerge only when viewed in historical perspective. However, it is not only changes in the state of Gitksan art itself which must be examined, but also the evolution of the critical perception of that art. As will be seen from a brief investigation of both, the two are sometimes at variance.

Totem pole carving provides an ideal focus for an historical analysis. With few exceptions, they are all available first hand to the field researcher. Unlike other objects, only a very limited number have been dispersed to museums around the world. Thanks to various restoration projects and the interest of the natives themselves, a representative percentage have survived. Those extant from before the turn of the century to 1926 have been documented, photographed, and dated in Barbeau's *Totem Poles of the Gitksan.*[2] As a result, no interpretative periodization is necessary, and for those poles which have since disappeared there exists a written and photographic record. Furthermore, the Gitksan carved and raised poles in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s as part of the resurgence of their cultural traditions. Totem poles also formed the focus of the subsequent "revival" as it was introduced into the Upper Skeena area, and provided the context for the influence which the Gitksan had on the course of related museum activity. The examination of the development of the art can thus be carried forward to the inception of the Kitanmax School.

Two general periods have usually been ascribed to Gitksan pole-carving prior to the 1930s. A "classic" period, when the art reached a peak, is seen as occurring from about 1850, the date for the earliest extant poles, to about the turn of the century. According to early sources, this was followed by a period of "decline," which saw a progressive degeneration of the art form, leading ultimately to a discontinuity in carving traditions.[3] Barbeau and his colleagues at the National Museum, who formulated the concept of the decline, based it on the introduction of western paint. "When the White man's paint became

available, it gradually invaded larger spaces on the pole, to the detriment of plastic forms."[4] Similarly, the use of stone tombstones to replace totem poles as memorials also had some effect on both the quality and quantity of poles produced.

Other reasons for a decline in totem pole carving in the 1920s may of course be offered, such as the potlatch ban. It should be recalled that several proficient carvers were still alive at this time. As well, while pole carving for traditional purposes did decline in this period, both in number and quality, thereby supporting Barbeau's premise, poles of good quality in the traditional fashion appear to have been carved and erected to replace badly deteriorating ones as museum displays at the deserted village of Kitselas.[5] Finer aspects of the art do not seem, then, to have totally disappeared at this time although severe restrictions were placed on their expression.

The artistic decline was linked to a cultural decline, which was seen at the time as preceding the eventual extinction of Gitksan traditions. Subsequently, the accepted notion of the combined declines, or even the death of these traditions, formed the basis for the proposal and promotion of a "revival." The latter has been found to have little validity when applied to the Gitksan, but the previously formed conclusions seem to have influenced subsequent observations. Barbeau, as has been seen, paid only the most cursory attention to the Gitksan pole raisings and ceremonies of the 1940s in this 1950 general study on totem poles. In support of the proposition of the decline in carving, he dismissed the poles carved since 1930 as uniformly inferior.[6] Unfortunately, he did not publish a representative selection or further

analyze their qualitative aspects although the National Museum possessed many photographs of them supplied by William Beynon. By contrast, Barbeau extensively illustrated and discussed the modern "bar-be-que" poles put up in Alaska, in keeping with his interest in reviving those arts which were either for sale or placed outside their traditional cultural context.[7] No subsequent study either illustrating or analyzing the formal aspects of these poles has yet appeared; Barbeau's statement remains the last word.

The style of the poles carved in the thirties, forties and fifties is, however, of significance both in terms of the effect of the Kitanmax School on Gitksan artistic production and of the conclusions reached on the state of Gitksan culture prior to the re-introduction of museum activity in the 1950s. If the poles can indeed be demonstrated to reflect a continued and irrevocable decline in carving traditions, then the assertions of the persistence of Gitksan cultural and artistic vitality are called into question.

Carole Kaufmann, in her 1969 dissertation, "Changes in Haida Indian Argillite Carvings, 1820 to 1910," has indicated that a diminuation in the ability of any cultural group to articulate the formal vocabulary of their traditional arts, when combined with dramatic shifts in iconic significance, can correspond to periods of cultural disruption or even discontinuity.[8] Although substantial differences occur between Kaufmann's Haida and tourist-art based model, and Gitksan pole carving, a comparison of the two groups is instructive. It has been noted that the cultural decline among the Gitksan, for example, did not correspond to that of the Haida, who abandoned many of their traditional villages

and ceased carving and raising poles in the 1880s. Similarly, the Nishga on the Nass River burned many of their poles in a religious revival about 1917/1918, and ultimately sold many of the remainder to Barbeau and other collectors. Unlike these groups, the Gitksan did not abandon pole carving, or the celebration of pole raisings with feasts and the distribution of goods, despite legal sanctions. They did not revert in their art, as did the Haida, to realistic figures with no traditional social significance, nor did they move towards representations of their shamans or taboo subjects in their art for sale. There were, as a consequence, no dramatic alterations in the iconic significance of their art as occurred in that of the Haida. The Gitksan were not economically dependent on the sale of curios to the white market, nor did they choose this form of artistic expression to the exclusion of their traditional arts, although it played some role throughout the period under study. The Gitksan, through a combination of isolation and independence, and a desire to synthesize Christianity with their own religion, kept their traditions substantially intact. Shamanistic practices, pole raisings and potlatches were documented throughout the period 1925 to 1950. In this respect it must be kept in mind that a totem pole, even if of apparent inferior quality, or utilizing a set of design motifs outside established norms, still retains its traditional, cultural and social significance if it contains crest images and is carved and raised to validate hereditary prerogatives. The iconic or symbolic function of images is as important to a cultural, historic and artistic analysis as are the formal elements. In Gitksan poles, up to the time of the introduction of the Kitanmax School and the concept

of "museum" poles, all poles retained their traditional iconic significance.[9]

Problems arise elsewhere, however, in establishing the precise nature of the carving decline and, concomitantly, its possible social significance. Despite the presence of a well documented and dated set of poles, easily placed in serialized chronology, difficulties occur in establishing the design controls necessary for a periodized componential formal analysis similar to Kaufmann's. The variants in Gitksan totem poles which occur in carving techniques, the arrangement of formal elements, the elements themselves, and the degree of realism employed are exceptionally broad in both the period 1850 to 1900 and from 1900 to 1950. As a consequence it is difficult to establish either standardized design principles or a formal vocabulary of elements by which classical Gitksan pole carving can be defined, and with which poles from the decline can be compared.

For example, neither the general compositions nor the individual figures of poles from both eras can be said to always follow "formline" structure, as it has been standardized by Bill Holm's landmark study, *Northwest Coast Indian Art*.[10] In this, Gitksan pole carving vocabulary seems different from that of the Tlingit and Haida, where three-dimensional carvings more often appear as deeply carved two-dimensional formline designs wrapped around the surface of an object.

In addition, and perhaps as a consequence, variations in the degree of realism, which formed the basis for much of Kaufmann's methodology, are especially wide in Gitksan pole carving. At the most extreme end of the scale are crest images represented by simple geometric motifs,

such as circles, chevrons, crossing diagonal lines, diamond shapes, etc. These may be either barely incised on the rounded surface of the log, or carved in higher relief.[11] They may be totally abstract, or bear some resemblance to that which they represent.[12] Such design conceptions bear little relationship to formlines, and appear both at the height of the so-called classical period, from about 1885, and on poles from the 1940s.

At the other end of the scale are those figures carved totally in the round, and modelled with a high degree of realism. Although mounted on poles, usually after being carved separately, they are perceivable as independent sculptural objects.[13] Such figures also appear in both eras. Between these extremes are those images outlined and carved in some degree of detail and in varying depths of relief. These, too, may vary in degree of realism ranging from the highly stylized and abstract, to those adhering to Holm's formline rules, and to those carved with a striking adherence to empirical sensations.[14]

The complication that arises from these variables is that any or all of them may appear at any time joined in a single pole by a single carver.[15] This, in turn, indicates that all these motifs, modes of expression, and carving techniques were accepted as part of the traditional vocabulary and crest conventions of Gitksan pole carving.

A wide breadth of carving conceptions does not in itself preclude the attribution of a decline. It does indicate, however, that depth of carving may not necessarily be as reliable an indicator of a decline as Barbeau implied. In fact, it can be seen to vary significantly during both periods. Barbeau dates one shallowly carved pole prior to 1865,

before the Hudson's Bay post was established at Hazelton, and, for that matter, even before many whites had penetrated into the region.[16] No causal connection with the purchase of western paint or stone tombstones is possible. Nor can paucity of carving be accurately used as an indicator of a decline, and hence separate the two periods. One pole, with a single figure and a long undecorated shaft, is dated by Barbeau at 1865-1875.[17] A related pole, with more elaborate decoration and well carved, dates from 1900-1905.[18] Another pole, the oldest at Kitsegucla, which has no carving at all, was erected shortly after 1871.[19] Such a precedent makes it difficult to judge a similar undecorated pole, raised in Kitsegucla in the 1920s, as conclusive evidence of a decline.[20]

Certain uniform elements do exist of course and can be used to designate an overall Tsimsian style. Kaufmann has directed our attention to eye motifs, and to some degree a generalized Tsimsian eye, and other facial configurations including cheek and mouth designs can be discerned.[21] When the entire range of Gitksan poles is examined, however, significant variations again occur within single periods, although these seem to have some relation to the type of object carved. Standard features, while useful in an analysis of general tribal styles, are themselves not definitive and must be considered, as Kaufmann indicates, together with the multiple variables listed above. This is especially true of Gitksan art style which was less uniform that that of other Tsimsian groups.

Consistency also occurs in the work of some individual artists, such as the noted and prolific carver, Haesemhli-yawn (active 1850-87).[22] His work is, however, as Barbeau points out, so exceptional that it

stands outside both the norm and the traditional, rather than establishing them. A representative analysis must include a selection from all possibilities, rather than concentrating on single aspects or masterpieces.

The extensive parameters of the technical and formal variants within the entire range of Gitksan pole carving force, at this point, a reliance on broader and possibly more subjective and impressionistic aesthetic criteria. Here too, however, problems and complications arise when the generalized concept of a decline is advanced, and the poles from the two eras compared. Although the most exceptional carver appeared in the earlier period, poorly conceived and awkwardly carved poles containing highly distorted traditional elements such as eye shapes were also executed before 1885.[23] Similarly, there are well carved poles in traditional form from the 1930s and 1940s extant in both Kitwancool and Kitsegucla. One pole, in the latter village, datable by a painted inscription to the mid-forties seems superior in conception and execution to an almost identical pole carved by Jim Larahnitz (Laknitz) and erected around 1890.[24] Another pole illustrated by Duff as "An example of the recent style of carving, Kitsegucla"[25] is elaborate, and although painted, is still obviously well carved and ingeniously embellished. Superior to some poles from the period 1865-1885, it contains many references to traditional elements and again illustrates the range of carving possibilities that exists between geometric abstraction and carving in the round. It would be as much an error in methodology to take the badly carved poles from the 1800s solely as evidence of an incipient decline, as it would be to consider any traditional qualities in poles from the 1900s, especially the 1930s and

1940s, as exceptional and to isolate them into two categories on the basis of too fine or too general distinctions.

In retrospect, when all possibilities are accounted for, the lack of definable sequential variations in either the units of design, carving technique or general aesthetic effect, makes it difficult to clearly discern a classic period or a vocabulary of traditional formal elements utilized properly before the turn of the century, followed by a period of decline, when they were more or less ignored. Any qualitative differences which may be discerned are not of the same proportion as those noted by Kaufmann in Haida argillite. Rather Gitksan pole carving style and techniques varied substantially in either period, and the entire range, or at least that from the first period, must be accepted as the traditional vocabulary of pole carving conventions if the analysis is to maintain its objectivity.

Thus, the qualitative and quantitative aspects of the more recent poles, together with their continued iconic and cultural significance, and the increase in traditional ceremonial activity, must be seen to confirm rather than contradict the observation of a cultural resurgence in the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s. This corresponded to a period when museum activity in the area was at its lowest ebb during this century.

As a consequence of new attitudes and information, the nature and extent of the "decline" in Gitksan pole carving and culture as perceived by various observers has undergone substantial revision. Nonetheless, although redefined several times, the concept supported by the idea of the "revival" persists, albeit with ever finer qualifications and reservations. Barbeau and his colleagues at the National Museum, who wrote

extensively on and formulated the concept of an artistic, cultural and racial decline, had by the late twenties declared Gitksan artistic and cultural activity moribund with no hope of revival. Barbeau subsequently altered his position in the forties, advocating the "revival" of some aspects of native art. Duff, in the early fifties, indicated that not only had the culture of the Gitksan as expressed in the poles continued, but also suggested the idea that not all the poles carved in the thirties and forties were as inferior or as insignificant as Barbeau had reported. On the other hand, although Duff included no comprehensive aesthetic analysis in his brief article, he added credence to the "decline" concept by noting a deterioration in style and what he foresaw as the imminent death of the last "active" Gitksan pole carver, Arthur McDames.[26] This prediction or inference of the inevitable demise of the carving traditions had, of course, been made twenty years earlier.

Two decades later, the conclusions reached by Barbeau were reflected in the catalogue put out by the National Museum in 1972 to promote 'Ksan's productions, wherein it notes the "comatose" state of native culture preceding 'Ksan.[27] The museum is credited with the "revival" of not only the art in terms of objects "for sale," but also of native culture as expressed in the ceremonies and pole raisings in the neighboring villages during the seventies.[28] While it is true that the "revival," in the form of the Kitanmax School, effected stylistic and contextual changes in Gitksan art, it seems historically inaccurate in the light of data presented here to claim that it was responsible for a "cultural" as well as an artistic revival, or that the former was a vehicle for the latter, at least when applied to its home ground.

Rather, the "revival" was a medium through which Gitksan art and culture was made accessible to the rest of the world through promotion of objects for sale, which the original poles had hardly ever been. Instead of the culture being revived, it was brought to public attention and given a different context. Simultaneously, by an emphasis on various marketing factors such as quality, authenticity and, to some extent, standardization of product, the art of the Gitksan took on a distinct appearance, although certain elements are still troublesome.

The native art "revival" also forms an important context for the formation of the Kitanmax School. The former was reaching its first peak when the school was first considered in 1967, having by then been transformed into a "renaissance." Public attention was focused on northwest coast native art by its inclusion at Expo 67 and by articles in magazines and newspapers across Canada. Following the trend established in the early 1950s, exhibitions of native art were held in major galleries across the continent, including the 1967 Arts of the Raven show at the Vancouver Art Gallery. As well, large corporate and government commissions for native artists were sponsored through the Provincial Museum and other bodies. Earlier, a series of twenty new poles, carved in various parts of the province, were placed as tourist attractions along the "Route of the Totems." Five of these were produced by Provincial Museum carvers. In the wake of this public promotion and exposure, there developed a commercial gallery system primarily, or even exclusively, dedicated to the sale of native art work. Simultaneously, medium-priced work, such as silk-screen prints, was being encouraged for sale through these outlets to the middle-income collector.

The Kitanmax School was directly incorporated into this program.

Funding for the establishment of what was to become the Kitanmax School appeared under a provision in the first ARDA agreement of 1967 which provided $30,000, paid entirely by the federal government, for "leadership training."[29] This figure represented about ten percent of the total estimated cost of the museum and campground facility at the 'Ksan site and is generally seen as having been initiated at the request of the federal government. An art school, as such, does not seem to have been included in the initial request for capital expenses for the project as first submitted by the community of Hazelton. It was apparently assumed locally that, given the demand for high quality products of northwest coast native design, and the use of the museum as a ready marketing outlet, production would be forthcoming without further stimulation. The ARDA agreement left less of native art production to chance.

> Related to the "'Ksan Indian Village" proposal, in order that the quality of genuine Indian handicrafts can be maintained in sufficient volume to meet anticipated demand, it is considered necessary to conduct a program of training for potential Indian artisans and for improving the handicraft skills and techniques of those who have demonstrated ability.
>
> It is the purpose to conduct classes under the best available qualified instructors for local Indians who will attend from the surrounding area within a 40 mile radius.
>
> As a start, it is planned to provide the following instruction:
>
> (a) Woodcraft--carving and painting;
> (b) Basketcraft with cedarbark and birchbark craft;
> (c) Leather work and beading.
>
> Classes will be held in Hazelton with the size of each expected to be about 20 people. It has been suggested that the most appropriate time to initiate the training program will be January-February 1968, and continue intermittently during the off-season employment periods to March 31, 1969.

Termination date for the program was given as March 31, 1970.

For various reasons a supplement was requested by the provincial Department of Recreation and Conservation, which was overseeing the project, in October of 1969. ARDA, apparently pleased with the program thus far, responded in 1970 with the extra funds and extended the termination date to March 31, 1972.

> Provision is made to keep at Hazelton, for an additional year, an instructor who has shown himself capable of working well with the people of the area and to be very competent in the art style and crafts of the Gitksan. Provision is also made for additional help, materials and classroom facilities required to fully develop the skills of a number of craftsmen who have shown remarkable talent as well as to provide for additional students to become craft producers. To date this training program has shown the existence of a number of native people exhibiting remarkable skill in carving and has produced excellent pieces of a quality acceptable to many museums in North America. . . .
>
> The additional training requested will assure sufficient well-trained craftsmen to make possible sufficient sales to maintain the 'Ksan museum and craft shop on a sound economic basis.[31]

The formative period of the training program at the Kitanmax School corresponds roughly to the time between these two ARDA agreements; it antedates the school's designation as a trade school by Canada Manpower and 'Ksan's official opening. The initial program for the school was apparently organized by the Provincial Museum, under Don Abbott[32] based, no doubt, on the museum's success in establishing an apprenticeship carving program at Thunderbird Park. A succession of instructors, both native and white, and proficient in various styles of carving offering various technical skills, taught courses during this period. Both the location and outline of the classes were less formalized than later, when the school acquired its own building at 'Ksan. Nonetheless, the early years established many of the precedents and forms which were incorporated into the later school.

The first classes commenced in January of 1968. Actual participation was limited to about thirty people of "Canadian Indian Heritage," for whom there was no charge for instruction.[33] Bill Holm instructed at the opening sessions. His 1965 study, *Northwest Coast Native Art, An Analysis of Form*,[34] had led to his recognition as a leading authority on the design principles of northwest coast native art. The school was thus not only unique in being one of the first of its kind, but also in having a textbook, i.e., Holm's study, from which to work. Holm's presence, and his text, were to have a profound influence on the work produced at the school. He returned to instruct subsequently at various crucial points.

During the first part of 1968, a program of wood carving, painting and metal engraving was established. Tony Hunt, who had worked with Mungo Martin at the Provincial Museum in Victoria, and who also was present at Expo 67, taught mask carving in a course beginning in the spring of 1968.[35] Robert Davidson, the Haida protege of Bill Reid in Vancouver, instructed during the summer, fall and winter. Reid himself had been invited to teach but was committed to other projects.[36] Although none of the initial teachers were from the area, Davidson was assisted in this work by a carver from Hagwilget, Alfred Joseph, who later became a teacher.[37]

Philip Ward, chief conservator for the Provincial Museum, visited the school in June 1968 during a tour of the region in conjunction with both the work of the Skeena Totem Pole Restoration Society and the developing museum of 'Ksan. His first-hand report pointed out the problems associated with the lack of "master" carvers, versed in

traditional "classic" Gitksan art, available to the school.

> Only one aspect of the Scheme [*sic*] gives rise to concern. Speaking to the Alaska State Council for the Arts at Anchorage last November, I warned that:
>
> ". . . (Kwakiutl artists)[*sic*] are very prone, when working in the style of another tribe or in collaboration with a carver from another tribe, to impose their own irrepressible personality on either the work or the man. . . .
> . . . Kwakiutl teachers may impose their style on their 'foreign' pupils, to the detriment of the pupil's ability to reproduce his own style."
>
> . . . In the situation which exists at 'Ksan, the danger will be extreme whatever the origins of the instructors. . . . The difficulty arises because the [non-Gitksan] teachers cannot possibly teach techniques without demonstrating their own styles, which are quite different from the traditional style of the Gitksan style, it is likely that the new generation of artists produced by 'Ksan will work naturally only in the Kwakiutl style of Tony Hunt, the Haida style of Bob Davidson, the Tlingit Haida style of Bill Holm or, more probably, a formless mixture of them all.[38]

Ward's initial apprehensions were accurate to the extent that the traditional Gitksan style did, in fact, suffer some contamination from outside influences in the early years of the school. It should be noted, however, that these tended to disappear as artists matured. Copying was subsequently replaced by experimentation which, in the hands of several artists went beyond the realm where "influence" or "traditional Gitksan style" could be distinguished. This development will be discussed later.

Prior to the opening of the carving building at the 'Ksan site, classes were held in various locations, including the Hazelton Amalgamated School and the local firehall building. It seems that instruction in the first year went on all summer, rather than just during the off-season as outlined by the ARDA agreement. By September the classes were organized into two levels: children and adults. The senior classes were

held five days a week, with instruction for junior levels on Saturdays. Materials and instructions were provided at no cost, and a gas allowance was given to those living over five miles away.[39]

The students were sufficiently advanced and enough work had accumulated for the first organized sale of products to be held in November of 1968 at the local public school.[40] Miniature totem poles, masks, boxes, copper and silver engraving, beadwork, leatherware, baskets, silkscreen prints and button blankets were offered for sale. Robert Davidson demonstrated argillite carving, and worked on a large pole, while Alfred Joseph and Fred Wale demonstrated copper engraving and wood carving.[41]

Davidson, who later became one of the most prominent native serigraphers in British Columbia, began his initial work in the medium for this show. The results were, from an aesthetic point of view, less than perfect.[42] They demonstrate, however, how the school served as a channel for expanding the range of materials and media of expression for sale. In fact, the silkscreen medium, as produced at 'Ksan, was to become increasingly important both in experimental and cultural terms in the next four years.

During his tenure at the school, which terminated in the winter of 1968/69, Davidson also helped create some of the display materials for 'Ksan.[43] These reportedly included the poles for the Feast House, one of which definitely shows his hand; the other is somewhat cursorily executed and simply conceived. Again the work is significant beyond its immediate artistic context. By producing its own open-air displays, rather than relying on collected objects, 'Ksan follows the lead of the

Provincial Museum and the University of British Columbia. In addition, the interior displays were also created by artists working at the new school. Although perhaps stemming from lack of funds and other objects to purchase, the move expanded the relationship between the museum and the school.

In 1969, courses were expanded and other teachers were brought in. Several instructors were proposed at the beginning of the year, but it seems that not all of them actually participated. Rose Carson is reported as teaching a course in design for those first entering the program.[44] Henry Hunt taught from February 25 to March 10,[45] probably mask carving. A silkscreen course was proposed for the spring but whether it was taught or not is unclear. By the fall of that year Frieda Diesing, a former student and assistant instructor, was also teaching; this practice of using as instructors those trained at the school would continue. Duane Pasco, a student of Bill Holm who had worked with Alfred Joseph in Vancouver during the summer of 1969, moved with his family from Seattle to Hazelton to become a resident teacher at the school later in the year.[46] Under his direction, several more major productions were undertaken for the museum's display; these included a totem pole and a large frog bowl now in the Feast House.

In October 1969, the Kitanmax School received financial assistance under the first disbursement of the newly established First Citizens' Fund. This fund was created by the provincial government to subsidize Indian cultural projects throughout British Columbia.[47] Of the $38,000 allotted to 'Ksan, $3,000 was set aside for the carving of two totem poles for the museum, and the training of young carvers.[48]

The year 1969 also saw the transfer of classes to a carving shed established at the nearly completed 'Ksan site. Sales were already going on at the partially opened museum. Mary McKenzie, the curator at 'Ksan at this time, reported to her financial statement that between January and September 1969 receipts for sales totalled $12,396.[49] Although part of the sales were to the Provincial Museum, the second Christmas sale of 1969 alone netted over $2,000.[50] In the years following 'Ksan's completion, when major commissions began to come in, sales volume increased dramatically. The projected sales figure for 1970, for example, was almost four times that of 1969.

Philip Ward, who returned to the field in the summer of 1969, issued a second report on carving at 'Ksan. He again commented on the teachers and on their relationship to the survival of a purely Gitksan style at 'Ksan. His earlier fears in this regard appear to have been allayed.

> The non-Indian instructors had been by far the more successful and they, alone, have risen to the challenge of learning and at the same time, teaching the Gitksan style. The work of Bill Holm and Duane Pasco was immediately impressive in this respect, and it was quite obvious that they had by far the greatest impact upon their pupils.[51]

Referring to student work, Ward also related quality to purity of style.

> The best pupils are not only very good, but . . . are the least influenced by "foreign" styles. It is most apparent that the most talented of the pupils have rapidly adopted the local style, while the less able are still flirting with the rather more spectacular styles of some of their teachers.[52]

Ward singled out two local artists in particular for their "startling development" during the first year of training. He noted that Alfred Joseph, a Hagwilget Carrier and Frieda Diesing, of Haida

descent and a cousin of Robert Davidson, but residing in the Terrace area, showed remarkable proficiency in carving, and that both had taken over instruction in various classes in the first months of operation of the new school.[53] Ward apparently attributed this to a sudden flowering of talent under expert and sensitive instruction. Both artists had, however, been active before 'Ksan opened its doors and the Kitanmax School had begun. Alfred Joseph had been carving for at least three years before joining the school as a student/instructor. Frieda Diesing was also a competent and well developed artist experienced in carving and other work, who had exhibited work of a mature nature in the area as early as 1967.[54] It is true, nonetheless, that the school was responsible for turning out artists who had little or no prior training.

During the winter of 1969/70, the courses at the school were formalized into two four-month semesters. Funding for instruction, classroom facilities and materials was supplied by the ARDA supplement quoted previously.[55] In the spring, applications were made through Mrs. Sargent to have the school accredited under the Trade School Act so financial support could be given through Canada Manpower to enrolled students. At this time as well the Centennial Museum in Vancouver became a primary outlet for goods produced at the school.[56] An insignia featuring an upright hand in native design, similar to that of a local Chamber of Commerce "Hand of History Tour" design, was chosen as the official trademark of the school.

'Ksan officially opened in the summer of 1970, the Kitanmax School a few months later. As has been mentioned, one of the highlights of the ceremony at the museum opening was the raising of the pole carved

by students at the school, which contained figures representing the contributing Gitksan clans and government assistance. It was also at this ceremony that $20,000 was officially allocated by the provincial government for the construction of a carving building to replace the shed which housed the school. The new building was ready for occupancy in November and on December 5, 1970 the Kitanmax School of Northwest Coast Indian Art officially opened.

Classes had begun shortly before the opening with twelve students registered in a six-month senior course, which was broken into two ten-week semesters. Other applicants were placed on a waiting list. Children's classes were also continued. The prospectus for the school, now licensed as a vocational school under the Trade School Act, included the principles of two-dimensional design, wood carving, jewellery making, engraving, silkscreen work and three-dimensional carving which ranged "from wooden spoons to 40-foot totem poles."[57] A more complete list later included "food trays, masks, rattles, cradles, wooden hats, ladels, paddles, canoes, grease bowls and talking sticks."[58] The courses were expanded to accommodate a new group of students in January 1971.[59] Duane Pasco taught throughout the winter term. He was joined by visiting instructors at various points during the year. Doug Cramner, a grandson of Mungo Martin and Robert Wilson,[60] taught courses in carving and design. Bill Holm, who had instructed in 1967, was again present for a brief period at this time to lecture on the principles of design and carving.

Other white instructors also supplemented the training program. In the spring of 1971, Doris Gruber, of Washington, taught a lengthy

session on Chilkat blanket weaving and Jack Leyland of Vancouver supervised a class in jewellry making.

In March 1971, the first class of graduates were given certificates at the completion of the course. They were: Abel Campbell, Art Sterritt, Walter Joseph, Alfred Joseph, Earl Muldoe, Walter Harris, Sam Wesley, Victor Mowatt, Albert Wilson, Herb Green, Leonard Duncan and Robert Stewart.[61] Several of these people, including Walter Harris, Alfred Joseph and Earl Muldoe went on as senior carvers to teach in subsequent years. They were later joined by Vernon Stephens who, by 1972, had assumed responsibility for teaching design.[62]

The graduation of the first class and the use of some of the graduates as teachers, rather than employing instructors from outside, together with the school's recognition as a trade school, mark the end of the second phase of the school's development.

In the next two years, instruction was further formalized into a two-year program with three months of courses occurring during the winter, as was prescribed by the original ARDA agreement.[63] Although the content of the courses remained much the same, the production of the graduate students increased in ambition and scope. Simultaneously sales figures rose dramatically. This was due to a great extent to public, corporate and governmental response to a program of promotion undertaken by ARDA and other agencies. It was also a response to the undeniable quality of the work being produced.

By 1972, two programs had been conceived for promoting the art work produced at the Kitanmax School. One set of projects was an extension of the previous ARDA agreements, the other was incorporated

as part of the tour of 'Ksan dancers and artists to eastern Canada. The introduction of these programs, aside from their cultural and museological significance, opened a new phase in the development and recognition of the school. They form part of the beginning of its mature period, when the art work was beginning to play a larger role in Canadian culture in general and Gitksan culture in particular.

In August 1971, a "'Ksan Publicity Project" was initiated which included both the promotion of the school and the museum itself. It was officially incorporated under ARDA agreement No. 89013, and received provincial government approval later in the year. The general intent of all these endeavors was to maximize the economic effects of the first two ARDA programs.

> The purpose of this project is to give publicity coverage to the 'Ksan project as a joint program under ARDA on a continent-wide basis in order to get the maximum benefit to the local economy from expenditures already made. These benefits will accrue from increased interest and visits to the area of people from outside points and from the sale of art pieces through mail-order channels.[64]

The publicity project proposed the use of ARDA funds from the two senior government levels to produce a film, a catalogue, a feature article which was to appear in a leading magazine, publicity leaflets, highway signs and "contingencies." Of these, the first three are of importance here.

The catalogue was allotted $3,500 of the total shared expenditure of $16,600. Its general scope and purpose were outlined in detail.

> This production is designed to promote the sale of art pieces produced as a result of the ARDA 'Ksan Training Project. The foreword of this catalogue will explain the purpose of the ARDA program in the revival of the production of Northwest Coast Indian Art, and will show how this program has benefitted the

> Indian people in many ways. This catalogue will be distributed to a selected group of art dealers, museums and outlets for top quality art both nationally and internationally. This catalogue will also be available to architects all over North America using cultural motifs in interior decoration. Any charge for these catalogues will be on a non-profit basis.[65]

To publicize 'Ksan throughout North America, $2,500 was designated to obtain a feature article in a leading magazine.

> The Department of Travel Industry is prepared to arrange for visits of one or two writers who write feature articles for magazines with continent-wide circulation (such as *Time Magazine*). The feature writers would be chosen on the basis of past experience with their writing ability. Anthropologists and ethnologists of the Provincial Museum as well as staff members at 'Ksan are prepared to assist with information necessary to get the greatest value from a feature article.[66]

The largest portion of the grant, $7,250, was meant for the film. It was to be produced by the staff of the Department of Travel Industry and released "through normal Travel Industry channels." Designed "to attract the travelling public," it was "expected to encourage potential tourists from the Pacific coast area to visit the 'Ksan project."[67]

The film was available late in 1973. In colour and twenty-seven minutes long, it outlined the legend of the fall from Temlehan and the efforts which had led to 'Ksan. It was narrated by Doreen Jensen, directed by Bill Round, and contained animated passages designed by Vernon Stephens.[68] It won a variety of awards in the month following its release. In the course of the next few years other film and television features were produced, focusing on various aspects of the museum.

The catalogue did not appear until 1974. It was published by the 'Ksan Association with assistance from *Beautiful British Columbia*.[69]

The narrative foreword, outlining the history of the Gitksan, the various museum projects and 'Ksan itself, was written by Clifford Weeks. At her own request, the activities of Mrs. Sargent were omitted. There are some other omissions in the text as well, which have been noted previously. A two-page illustrated guide to 'Ksan products, together with ordering information, completes the publication.

In 1972, the ARDA program for focusing public attention on 'Ksan was supplemented by a major exhibition in Ottawa of work from the Kitanmax School. The show coincided with the 'Ksan Dancers' performances, and was also held in the National Arts Centre. The exhibition was arranged by the National Museum, which published a catalogue to accompany it, entitled, like the dance show, *'Ksan, Breath of Our Grandfathers.*[70] In museological terms, the inclusion of contemporary Gitksan material in Canada's national cultural centre marked another stage in the alteration of museum attitudes towards the cultural status of Gitksan art. The National Museum, instead of collecting only objects from a past culture for preservation, had become involved in promoting and assisting in the distribution of works produced by a currently functioning cultural tradition. While cognizant of the value of these new works, however, it perceived their historical significance in the context of the "revival" and of previously held beliefs concerning the state of native culture. The introduction to the catalogue, for example, states:

> The astonishing fact, however, is that this ancient tradition came precariously close to extinction, and may not yet be beyond danger. The master carvers of the Gitksan had died off without heirs, and only the very old could remember many of the dances and songs. Totems originally carved for special festivities in

> the villages were slowly decaying, with no new ones to take their place as had been the custom for countless generations. That the culture was in a coma and not dead is, I believe, demonstrated by the rapidity with which breath came back to the art tradition.[71]

In contrast to this interpretation, statements by Gitksan spokesmen immediately following the National Arts Centre show insisted that Gitksan "cultural attributes never died and the 'Ksan Association is merely providing the facilities and incentive for their greater development and perpetuation."[72] Although both views state that Gitksan culture had not died, their opinions of its actual condition are at variance. A charge of bias could perhaps be laid against the Gitksan assertions, but the historical evidence which has been presented here tends to support them.

In artistic terms, the catalogue, both as it reflected the show and in its own right, is an important document. The illustrations cover the work of nine members of the first graduating class, excluding only Albert Wilson and Robert Stewart. Leonard Duncan is listed in the biographic notes on some of the artists as having started carving at 'Ksan in 1972, although he was reportedly also a part of the 1971 graduating group. In addition, the catalogue contains work by other important 'Ksan artists who developed either before or after the first graduating class. These include Frieda Diesing, Murphy Green, Doreen Jensen, Ken Mowatt, Ron Sebastion, Murphy Stanley, Vernon Stephens and Victor Wesley. The catalogue points out that Murphy Stanley began carving in 1964; this was well before the school was founded or even proposed. Illustrations also include work by Pearl Trembly, Hazel Brown, Louise Joseph, Lottie Muldoe and Irene Bratten.

In keeping with the large number of artists, the catalogue covers a wide range of material including regalia, masks and household articles. Although this work was produced by artists of varying maturity and experience, much of it has a homogeneous quality indicative of students working in close proximity to each other under a common set of teachers. As with most student work, distinctive stylistic traits had not yet formed, and some of the pieces are clearly of a derivative nature. A formal analysis of any of the objects, therefore, or of their relationship to one another, would only show undefined tendencies and hence be of limited value, at least in the context of this study.[72a]

The illustrations in the catalogue also represent, as had those in the ARDA catalogue, a selection of objects for sale. Indeed its format conforms to one of the primary characteristics of the "revival": the expansion of the market of northwest coast native art under controlled conditions to an international level by media promotion and the co-operation of both the commercial and public gallery system. This promotion has been seen historically to be accompanied by large-scale commissions by both government departments and major corporations. Such was again the case in 1972. Works from the National Arts Centre show were purchased that year by the National Museum for a total sum of $12,000.

Also in 1972, the Royal Bank began negotiations for a major commission by 'Ksan to decorate the mezzanine floor of their new building in Vancouver. It was reported to be the largest single work of its kind, costing $33,500.[73] The Royal Bank pamphlet explaining the mural lists five graduates who worked on the project for three months: Chief

Walter Harris, Chief Alfred Joseph, Earl Muldoe, Ken Mowatt and Art Sterritt.[74] Stylistic and other evidence indicates that Vernon Stephen's name should also have been included. He participated in the official unveiling in July 1973,[75] and is listed in the 1972 'Ksan catalogue as "now working on the Royal Bank mural in Vancouver."[76]

Aside from the marketing success which the commission represented and the mural's value as an advertisement for 'Ksan, the mural itself is artistically significant. The design lends itself more readily to a formal analysis than do the disparate, albeit stylistically homogeneous, objects displayed in the National Museum catalogue. Although the mural is still representative of a formative period of artistic expression, it contains in incipient form many features developed more fully in later works.

The mural, about 120 feet by 8 feet, is composed of nine cedar panels. The three larger central panels illustrate incidents in the myth of Weget, a culture hero of the Gitksan. Six smaller flanking panels contain other figures associated with Weget. All of the panels are carved in shallow relief and painted in traditional colors: red, blue-green and black. The six side panels, although less complex in conception than the three central images, most clearly illustrate the contrasting approaches to the vocabulary, grammar and design principles of the traditional "northern style" that were developing at the school. It is, however, the range and potential within the variations that are essential here, rather than personal attributions for each section of the collective work.

Bill Holm's 1965 study, *Northwest Coast Indian Art, An Analysis of Form*,[77] must supply the framework for any critical or historical analysis of the mural. Holm's book is important for several reasons. Although new areas have been explored since its publications, particularly that of tribal variations which Holm's general study omits, it is the most comprehensive study to date of northwest coast native art forms and as such influences and shapes contemporary interpretations and thought on the subject. More immediately, both Holm and his pupil, Duane Pasco, taught at the school, so his influence there is very strong.

Although flexible, the established conventions of traditional northwest coast art forms were, as Holm described, conservative. Nonetheless, a desire to master the rules and an impulse to work outside their boundaries seems to have arisen in some of the artists at 'Ksan. The six side panels of the Royal Bank mural reflect these two tendencies.

The three panels depicting the Owl, Human and Bear images are in keeping with Holm's description of the principles of "composition, design organization . . . [and] form"[78] that establish "the conventions of classic Northern work of the mid-nineteenth century"[79] particularly as applied to two-dimensional graphic and shallow relief work. These panels are, in many ways, almost academic illustrations of the principles outlined in Holm's text.

This is most noticeable in the handling of the formline which Holm considers "the fundamental element of the art"[80] and which divides the side panels into two distinct groups. The formlines of the Owl, Human and Bear panels can be said to "merge and divide to make a continuous

flowing grid over the whole decorated area, establishing the principles of the design."[81] They are continuous, connected, curvilinear and of "constantly varying width."[82] "Formline junctures" are smoothly effected by either diminishing one into the other, or, in the so-called "swelling junctures," by the use of traditional transitional devices such as T-shapes or crescents to relieve the thickening.

Secondary and tertiary units and complexes are handled with equal respect for the established precepts. Ovoids, which are the "most characteristic single design unit, . . . used as eyes, joints and various space fillers"[83] and the equally characteristic U-shape and split-U's are employed in the conventional manner as described by Holm. Tertiary split-U's, cheek designs, and hand/foot/claw designs operate similarly. Somewhat unusual is the construction of the Owl's beak which appears as two inverted and joined textbook cheek designs transposed from the lower corners of the head to the centre and placed so that the tapering sides, tangential to the solid U-shapes, protrude down through the mouth.[84] The result, which supplies a double "punning" image that is at once a single frontal and two side views, is satisfying. Aside from this feature, there is nothing innovative about the application of the individual design principles in the Owl, Bear and Human panels, although all are handled with competence.

The relationship of the elements across the three panels speaks of equal consideration. A successful attempt to create variation within a unifying conception is evident. Each image is frontal. The individual elements are, however, different. The central body section fillers on each are different, including a set of inscribed circles, an abstract

filler design and a stylized human face. Each figure has four limbs, yet the wing tips of the Owl point downwards, the hands of the human extend upwards and the paws/claws of the Bear turn in. The interaction of variations, which extend beyond those mentioned here, create a complex compositional interplay. Yet each of the compositions is based on a common conception. They are all clearly examples of "expansive designs," that is, the images are "distorted, split, or rearranged to fit into a given space, but the identity of the essential body parts is apparent and to some extent their anatomical relationship to one another is maintained."[85] These features have all been characterized as traditional or conventional.

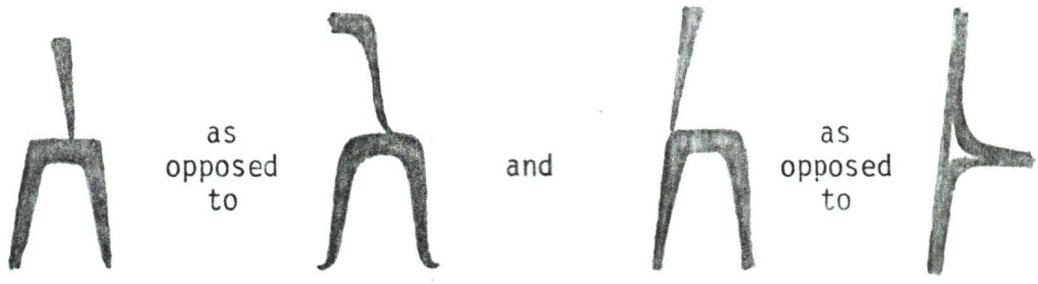
In addition, the overall designs of the Owl, Bear and Human panels have a "movement" which conforms to traditional practice, described by Holm as a

> . . . sensitive arrangement of related forms . . . bound together with a network of subtley varied line, meandering purposefully over the surface, merging, dividing, and curving up to every corner of the design. If it were not for the relief of hatched areas and near angularity in the corners of the forms, the fluidity of this art could be burdensome, but the sensitive artist recognized and controlled this flow. The movement of the design is entirely self-contained. It may carry to the very edge of the decorated area, but always returns at the last instant, never tempting the viewer to leave the little universe of the design.[86]

The Frog, Wolf and Killer Whale panels are also conventional to the extent that the designs are "expansive." Because they are in profile rather than frontal, however, there is no bilateral symmetry along the vertical axis as an organizing principle, making a comparison with the other panels more complex. Indeed the differences in concep-

tion and construction which separate the two sets of panels go well beyond the contrast between profile and frontal views. The dynamics of the compositions of the Frog, Wolf and Killer Whale panels, despite the traditional vocabulary of the design units, can be described as unconventional, especially in terms of Holm's observations.

Since the "vocabulary" is more or less identical in each, differences in conception and execution must be accounted for by radical changes in the "grammar," that is, the specific shape of the design units and their immediate relationships with each other. Contrasts in construction between the two sets appear in the treatment of the formline, especially in the junctures and transitions between elements and complexes. The primary formlines of the Frog, Wolf and Killer Whale panels are traditional in that they are all continuous. Rather than being curvilinear, however, they are angular in contour and direction. The formlines defining the shape and outline of the Frog's body are, for example, triangular or trapezoidal rather than parabolic, as are the resulting secondary and tertiary elements. The absence of curves is carried to the formline junctures in which pointed ends of U-shapes, and related forms, rest directly on other elements, rather than having the transition softened by a curve, a T-shape or a crescent.



The emphasis on vertices, points and straight lines negates the impression of a fluid and meandering grid, as described by Holm. Similarly, the elements of the more complex Killer Whale are all placed at severe right angles to each other, with many of the formline junctures again being ffected by bringing one to a point and resting in on another. The use of unrelieved angles, as opposed to curves, which dominate the composition, creates a "hard edge" grid rather than a continuous movement.

The use of "unrelieved right angle junctures" is not, in itself, unique. Holm found them in his study of old pieces.[87] Neither is it "untraditional" to bring a formline to a point and rest it on another. Indeed, a certain tautness of line and angularity characterize many of the historical pieces from the Skeena area. Furthermore, Gitksan artistic production has historically included some unusual pieces that "stylistically have . . . nothing in common with Northwest Coast art."[88] What is exceptional and experimental, however, is the constant emphasis on angularity as a design characteristic to the extent that it alone creates visual unity between the three panels.

The unique approach to the formline, the relationship between the units, and the overall composition indicate that an experimental and innovative attitude existed at the school and probably arose in Vernon Stephens' design classes. He has, in fact, been referred to as "iconoclastic" in his treatment of traditional motifs.[89] Neither the mastery of the traditional forms nor the desire to work outside their boundaries had, however, reached its fullest development by the end of 1973. For this reason, a formal analysis of the three major panels, in which both

approaches are combined but not yet fully resolved, would be of limited artistic value. Nevertheless, the panels do represent an important transitional phase. In them and other work of the period is to be found an experimentation with tradition and innovation which subsequently found unique forms of expression. In historical perspective, what is important is the range and potential of these experiments. In the hands of artists like Roy Vickers, Ron Sebastion and Vernon Stephens, western conventions were applied to the graphic art, such as overlapping for illusion of depth, "realistically" delineated contours containing traditional elements and, ultimately, even perspective and foreshortening. Chiaroscuro modelling and painterly expressionistic handling of the medium, as in the work of Judith Morgan in the 1940s, has, however, not reappeared.

The Royal Bank mural, although the largest, was not the only commission of 'Ksan. In 1971, Alfred Joseph was chosen by the provincial government Central Projects Commission as one of twelve carvers to create poles to celebrate British Columbia's entry into Confederation. These poles, which appear related in function to the "Totemland" concept in which poles were used as symbols of British Columbia, were to be sent to Ottawa, the provincial capitals, and the two capitals of the Northwest Territories.[90]

All this work, which was produced as part of the marketing context of the "revival," as was that sold to the general public, does not, although the most visible, constitute all of the output of the Kitanmax School. A second category of work also exists: that produced directly for Gitksan patrons to validate traditional hereditary prerogatives,

and ultimately, the continuity of Gitksan social structure and culture.

In this context there is an overlap which must be distinguished. Masks, regalia, totem poles and other objects are created for both purposes, yet each case is distinct in terms of the social and cultural significance. It is evident, for example, that a totem pole produced for the Vancouver International Airport, or as an extension of the "Totemland" concept, and used to greet tourists to the province, has a radically different meaning and context from one created and raised in Kispiox to validate the position of a hereditary chief. Indeed, if the former were produced to the exclusion of the latter, claims for the demise or comatose state of Gitksan culture would be true, despite the fact that the "artistic traditions" would, following the "revival," appear to be flourishing. Thus, it is essential to realize that the two types, although similar, formally and iconically and identical in provenance, participate in two overlapping but distinct historical and socio-cultural contexts which define their meaning. The former must be viewed in terms of the promotion of traditional forms of northwest coast art, including (and perhaps especially) totem poles, as tourist attractions and objects for sale to the expanded market created by the "revival." The latter is part of the historical continuation of Gitksan culture and traditions. The former has an external impetus and may disappear when the demand is filled and promotion phased out; the latter has an internal dynamic and can continue without an outside market, but only if the traditions are continually validated and kept alive. Although the two are interrelated, however, they are not necessarily interdependent.

The models of Graburn and Morrison, cited earlier, distinguish between these two kinds of artistic activity, but they must be used with caution as overlaps and grey areas occur.[91] For example, neither Graburn nor Morrison account for the possibility that native culture could be capable of assimilating western art forms into traditional ceremonies, as has been the case with silkscreen prints. Introduced at the 1968 'Ksan Christmas sale, they are now distributed at some Gitksan feasts and pole raisings. Nor are their classifications viewed as essential or even functional by the artists themselves; they are imposed from without and are, by nature, somewhat arbitrary. Nonetheless, they do provide a basic framework for analysis, and serve to point to the unique situation at 'Ksan.

Graburn notes of the increasing world-wide sale of "primitive art" that "it is becoming increasingly apparent that a majority of these so-called 'primitive' arts are no longer, either in form or function, the traditionally culturally embedded productions of these . . . societies."[92] In contradistinction to Graburn's general observation, the totem poles, masks, regalia, dances, songs, histories, etc. of the Gitksan, when used in the traditional context, are distinct from the acculturated arts adopted in response to the dictates of the market. Graburn and Morrison's models, which separate objects made for sale and created in response to market demand in either traditional, acculturated or souvenir form, from "arts of great contemporary cultural and social significance to the people themselves,"[93] also illustrate the dynamic relationship between the two categories that exist at 'Ksan.

Distinguishing between objects made in traditional forms for sale and those which retain their traditional meaning by their contemporary social function, permits an evaluation of the interaction between the artists trained at the Kitanmax School and the continuing cultural activity in the neighbouring villages. In museological terms, it is precisely this feedback which completes, in the Skeena area, the reversal of traditional nineteenth century concepts of museum activity.

Four poles were carved by the artists from the school between 1969 and 1973 either for their own use or commissioned by another group in the area. The first of this set was the Dog-Salmon pole, carved in 1969, which has been described earlier.[94] Three others were erected in the village of Kispiox between 1971 and the fall of 1973.

In September 1971, Chief Walter Harris erected a pole in Kispiox. The pole, like the Dog-Salmon pole, was based on an earlier one which had once stood in the village.[95] Silkscreen prints, featuring the Killer Whale and Fireweed crests and designed by Harris, were distributed at the celebrations accompanying the pole raising.

Two months later, in December, a second pole was raised at Kispiox by Peter Muldoe, Moses Morrison and Alvin Weget. This pole, called the Gitludahl pole, was carved with figures from two earlier Gitludahl poles: the White Owl pole and the Grizzly-Bear of the Sun pole.[96] The synthesis of these figures was strikingly successful, especially considering the variation in style between the two originals. The first was done, according to Barbeau, in the Nass River style, around 1855, the second, by a Kispiox carver, James Green, and erected in 1895. The new pole is harmonious and well conceived. Only subtle variations

distinguish the figures on the old poles from those adopted for the new one. The extension of the beak on the upper Owl appears less pronounced on the more recent pole, and the head of the Bear is less massive. The uniqueness of the new pole lies in the composition and integration of the figures. The Bear is situated between the Owl's ears, creating an easy transition between the figures. The quartet of small figures has been placed over the Bear, rather than under it, as before. This avoids a top heavy composition which would have been emphasized both by the inversion of the log, which places the wider butt end at the top, rather than the base, and by the group of small Fern People at the bottom. The newer arrangement of figures also avoids another, more facile, symmetrical arrangement which would too easily have rotated around the disc of the central Bear. The massive figures required some confidence of carving and composition and the success of the end result indicates a coming to terms with the antecedents.

The ceremonies accompanying the raising, at which several names were given, were recorded by the Raven Society on videotape.[97] Special paraphernalia was created for the ceremony by those involved.

A Fireweed crest pole was raised in November 1973, by Stanley Wilson, Emily Lanz, Wilfred Gawa, Leonard Gawa, Brenda Stewart, Mary Johnson, Martha Blackwater and Harriet Gawa.[98] As with the previous pole, the erection was recorded on videotape. The film, produced by the UBC Faculty of Education, also documents aspects of the carving process and the ceremonies accompanying the raising.[99]

The pole, carved at 'Ksan, contains four figures: a Mythological Ancestress portrayed as a woman crying, a Killer Whale, a Man-Bear

figure and a Single-Horned Mountain Goat. The conception of the figures, the spatial relationships and the surface embellishments of the pole, although not perfect in every detail, are more adventurous and experimental than in the previous two.

The tears of the lowest figure--the Ancestress--form a rivulet flowing from the eyes to the arms below, crossing over the space formed by the indentation separating the head from the body. This unusual manner of emphasizing depth contrasts with the subtle relief work decorating the lower part of the figure. The design of this section, whether intentional or not, forms another, more abstract face, echoing the formal arrangement of the one above it. The Killer Whale, although simultaneously more massive and sparsely decorated than the Ancestress, is given an added spatial and sculptural dimension through a projecting dorsal fin which extends outwards about three feet midway up the pole. The Man-Bear figure, placed between the flukes of the whale's tail, has two profile bears' heads flanking the central frontal human face. While less massive than the Killer Whale and carved in low relief, the Man-Bear figure gains interest from an abalone amulet and necklace, inlaid directly onto the surface of the pole. The amulet itself consists of an entire abalone shell. The figure's human eyes are also of abalone. The mildly iridescent surface of the pale shells glows in contrast to the dark stain of the pole, an effect that will become more subtle as the pole ages and lightens in color. As surface decoration, this unusual treatment is more effective than low relief carving, which is not as discernible at that height. The Mountain Goat surmounting the pole is carved almost in the round, again contrasting directly with the

figure below it. The Goat's head, which appears almost in a mask-like form, has a carved horn set in its forehead. Overall, the pole exhibits a remarkable ingenuity and originality in conception.

The three poles raised in Kispiox for traditional purposes, taken together with those carved for museum display or for sale (although not described here) illustrate a narrowing of the traditional vocabulary that is in contrast to the poles carved before the turn of the century. None of the recent poles, for example, contain the geometric motifs found in poles from the 1800s to the 1940s. This may be accounted for by the impact of a traditional medium encountering a new context, which, in turn, produces a heightened conservativism of design. A secondary factor can also be seen in the influence of the teachers and the presence of a textbook; Holm's study does not account for such motifs in carving, nor were they popular among other tribes. Another possible factor lies in what Graburn sees as the trend towards standardization that results from the contact of the traditional medium with a commercial context.[100] It is unlikely, however, that in this case the pressure of the market will lead to a degeneration from the "commercial arts to souvenir art"[101] in the carving of totem poles, given their monumentality, the drive to experimentation, and the continued emphasis on quality.

The poles examined here, on the other hand, do show progressive stages in a drive towards independent and personal expression in a traditional context and medium, and a desire to stretch and redefine the limits of the art form through experimentation in formal and technical problems.

The raising of poles carved by people trained at 'Ksan (and independently) also subsequently occurred in other villages, albeit outside the time frame of the present study. Poles were raised in Kitsegucla in 1976 and in Moricetown, in both 1972 and 1978.[102] Two additional poles were also raised in Kispiox in 1978.[103]

It is in this context that 'Ksan's departure from the traditional role of the ethnological museum becomes most evident. Instead of being based on the collection and preservation of material from a culture perceived as moribund, 'Ksan and the Kitanmax School are extending the context of Gitksan cultural activity by producing and distributing art and cultural events both for sale and for traditional purposes. The school and museum are also active in creating new artistic styles and traditions by adding new media to the repertoire of traditional Gitksan art. They not only continue and reaffirm past traditions, but also incorporate innovations without which stagnation would result. In so doing, they contribute to the growth and development of museological activity and its relationship with its subject matter, as well as adding new contexts to their art and culture.

Footnotes, Chapter 6

[1]ARDA Agreement 39001, "Leadership Training: Old 'Ksan Rural Development," 1967, 'Ksan file.

[2]Barbeau, *Totem Poles of the Gitksan.* Although the quality of the illustrations is not high, they serve as a valuable reference resource and will be used herein. For those interested in pursuing this further, superior copies may be obtained through either the Provincial Museum or the Museum of Man.

[3]Dates for the projected classic or golden period vary, especially concerning its inception and its highest point of expression. The bracket dates of 1850-1900 are, however, generally accepted within a decade on either side.

[4]Barbeau, *Totem Poles of the Gitksan,* p. 14.

[5]Louis Allaire, George MacDonald and Richard Inglis, "Gitlaxdzawk: Ethnohistory and Archaeology," in MacDonald and Inglis, eds., *Skeena River Prehistory,* National Museum of Canada Series, Mercury Series, Archaeological Survey of Canada, Paper No. 87 (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1979), Plates 16 and 17, p. 86.

[6]Barbeau, *Totem Poles,* 2:854.

[7]Ibid., 2:789-801; 837-859.

[8]Carole Kaufmann, "Changes in Haida Indian Argillite Carvings, 1820 to 1910" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of California, 1962).

[9]Duff, "Gitksan Totem-Poles, 1952."

[10]Bill Holm, *An Analysis.*

[11]See Pole-of 'Neegyamks, Kispiox, c. 1880-1895, Plate XIV, Fig. 1; Owl pole, Kispiox, 1875-1880, Plate XVI, Fig. 3; Sun-dogs pole, Kispiox, c. 1895-1905, Plate XVI, Fig. 4; Ladder-in-steps pole, Kitsegucla, c. 1885, Plate XXI, Fig. 1; pole at Kisgegas, n.d., Plate XXIX, Fig. 6; all in Barbeau, *Totem Poles of the Gitksan.*

[12]See especially, the Mountain-fern crest, with roots and tendrils, on Owl pole, Plate XVI, Fig. 4, ibid.

[13]See the Raven-soaring pole, Kitwancool, n.d., Plate IV, Fig. 1; the lowest crest figure, a frog represented transversally, is not on the restored pole; Drifted-aside pole, c. 1905-1910, Kitwancool, Plate IV, Fig. 5; Attached-within pole, Kispiox, c. 1885, Plate VI, Fig. 1; Real-kingfisher pole, c. 1865, Kitwancool, Plate XII, Fig. 3; Pole of Kuksdedalreh, at Kitsegucla, c. 1880-1885, Plate XVII, Fig. 5; Were-meet-the-moving-blackfish pole, Kitsegucla, c. 1895, Plate XIX, Fig. 1; and the Mountain-lion pole, Kitwanga, c. 1865, Plate XXVII, Fig. 1, ibid. This was repeated on more modern poles: see Figure 17. In describing Gitksan pole carvings, Holm neglects this characteristic trait, saying that "Tsimshain artists tended to compose their subjects within the half-cylindrical limit of the split log, without excessively deep carving or the addition of projecting parts. In this, the Tsimsian and their Haida contemporaries differed from the artists of the Kwakiutl, who felt perfectly free to cut deeply or even through the log and to add projecting beaks, wings or arms to achieve their sculptural ends." Bill Holm, "Heraldic Carving Styles of the Northwest Coast," in *American Indian Art: Form and Tradition*, Walker Art Centre, Indian Art Association and the Minniapolis Institute of Arts (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co., 1972), p. 82. While Holm's observation holds true for the Nishga, it does not take into account the rich conceptions and embellishments that characterize and distinguish Gitksan carving. This points out the problems of applying the practices of one group to entire cultural areas, and conversely, the necessity of specific art historical analysis.

[14]Almost all poles have relief carving but for extremes of realism, abstraction, and depth of carving see, Dog-salmon pole, Kitwanga, c. 1870, Plate XXIX, Fig. 1; the Bear's-den pole, Kitwanga, c. 1880, Plate XXVIII, Fig. 2; Place-of-climbing, Hazelton, c. 1892-1895, Plate XXVI, Fig. 1; Pole of Kuksdedalreh, Kitsegucla, c. 1880-1885, Plate XVII, Fig. 5; Ribs-of-the-frogs, Kitwancool, c. 1884, Plate III, Fig. 3; Eagle-person pole, Kitwancool, c. 1875-1885, Plate III, Fig. 2; Super-natural-frog pole, Kitwanga, c. 1855-1865, Plate VII, Fig. 1, and Hang-frogs pole, Kitwanga, c. 1888, Plate VI, Fig. 3, all in Barbeau, *Totem Poles of the Gitksan*. The interplay between relief and depth and between realism and stylistic conventions found in Gitksan carving traditions later found expression in the graphic work of a number of artists working at 'Ksan.

[15]Compare, for example, Ladder-in-steps pole, Plate XXI, Fig. 1, ibid. with a pole carved at Kitsegucla in the 1940s, Fig. 20. See also, Fig. 23.

[16]See People-of-the-smoke-hole, Kitwancool, c. 1860, Plate IX, Fig. 5, and Plate X, Fig. 10, ibid. As has also been seen, depth of carving may vary substantially on individual poles.

[17]See Small-hat pole, Kispiox, Plate XXI, Fig. 3; other examples exist, see Half-way-out pole, Kispiox, c. 1855-1875, Plate VI, Fig. 2, ibid.

[18]See Garment-of-eagle-people, Kispiox, Plate XXI, Fig. 4, ibid. The projecting bear is no longer on the restored pole.

[19]See Single-fireweed pole, Kitsegucla, Plate XVIII, Fig. 3, ibid.

[20]Not illustrated, ibid., but discussed, see p. 191. This, too, was a Single-fireweed pole, raised by descendants of those who erected the first pole. It must thus be considered within traditional totem pole conventions and crest displays.

[21]"Chronological Distribution of Anthropomorphic Eye Types," Figs. 3-7, in Kaufmann, p. 94. Holm was also to explore similar conceptions in heraldic carving, p. 81, in which he defined as Tsimsian facial characteristics. As has been seen, however, such attributions, although valuable, must be used with caution.

[22]For a list of poles by this carver, see Barbeau, *Totem Poles of the Gitksan,* p. 178.

[23]Decayed-corpse pole, Kitsegucla, c. 1885, Plate XVIII, Fig. 4; Pole of Kuksdedalreh, Kitsegucla, c. 1880-1885, Plate XVII, Fig. 5, ibid. See also, Figures 26 and 27.

[24]Pole-of-the-moon pole, Kitsegucla, Plate XIV, Fig. 2, ibid. See also appended Figs. 23, 24, 25 and 28.

[25]Duff, "Gitksan Totem-Poles, 1952," Plate 3B, p. 30. Duff's illustration, on which he seems to base a judgement about the decline of modern carving, is a detail of one figure on the pole. It omits the rich conceptions found on the remainder as seen in Figure 21 . The latter indicate that Gitksan carvers had lost none of the impulse to play with extremes of abstraction or depth of carving.

[26]Ibid., pp. 21-22. He was later to cite his own article as an academic reference to the decline. Wilson Duff, *The Indian History of British Columbia: Vol. 1. The Impact of the White Man,* Anthropology in British Columbia Memoir No. 5 (Victoria: Provincial Museum, 1964), p. 84. This work, in turn, is sometimes cited as authoritative, although the original article has been largely ignored.

[27]*'Ksan, Breath of our Grandfathers,* p. 9.

[28]See also, Joan Vastokas, "Bill Reid and the Native Renaissance," in *Stones, Bones and Skin: Ritual and Shamanistic Art* (Toronto: The Society for Art Publications, 1977), pp. 158-160. Vastokas uses the cultural history of the Haida as a model for the entire northwest coast, and includes the Gitksan and the artists of 'Ksan in this continuum.

[29]ARDA Agreement 39001, "Leadership Training: Old 'Ksan Rural Development," 1967, 'Ksan file.

[30]Ibid.

[31]ARDA Agreement 39001 (supplement), "Leadership Training: 'Ksan Rural Development," 1970, 'Ksan file.

[32]BCPM, *Annual Report, 1967,* pp. HH15-16.

[33]SIN, January 10, 1968, p. 9.

[34]Holm, *An Analysis.*

[35]SIN, February 28, 1968, p. 9.

[36]Reid had been awarded a senior artist's award from the Canada Council to spend 1968 at the Central School of Design in London, England. On his return he worked in Montreal for three years rather than returning to the west coast. Vastokas, p. 164.

[37]SIN, July 31, 1968, p. 5. It seems that the noted Tsimsian pole carver, William Jeffries, who had been active carving copies of the Haida poles in Prince Rupert since 1963, never instructed at the Kitanmax School. No reason for this has been found.

[38]Ward, "Report of visit, 1968," pp. 7-8.

[39]SIN, August 28, 1968, p. 3.

[40]SIN, November 6, 1968, p. 13.

[41]SIN, December 11, 1968, p. 21.

[42]Hilary Stewart, *Robert Davidson, Haida Printmaker* (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, c. 1979), p. 21 and Fig. 1, p. 38. The image was copied from a button blanket in the collection at 'Ksan. See Fig. 15.

[43]SIN, November 6, 1968, p. 3.

[44]SIN, February 5, 1969, p. 11. Rose Carson and Doreen Jensen exhibited ink designs at the previous Christmas sale. Otherwise her work is unknown.

[45]SIN, March 19, 1969, p. 17.

[46]SIN, September 17, 1969, p. 6. Duane Pasco remained at the school for eighteen months, leaving in December 1970.

[47]SIN, October 22, 1969, p. 24. See also, "First Citizens' Fund in British Columbia" (Victoria: First Citizens' Advisory Committee [1970]), and "First Citizens' Fund" (Victoria: n.p., 1970).

[48]TOH, October 15, 1969, p. 1.

[49]SIN, October 15, 1969, p. 16. This amount comes remarkably close to the $12,000 figure projected the previous year for this period.

[50]SIN, March 19, 1969, p. 17.

[51]Ward, "An Interim Report, 1969," p. 2. It should be noted that the force of tradition, the immediate records of Gitksan carving embodied in the totem poles of the area and the examples in the collection at the museum also must be seen as highly influential.

[52]Ibid.

[53]Ibid., p. 3.

[54]TOH, April 12, 1967, p. 9.

[55]ARDA Agreement 39001 (supplement).

[56]SIN, April 15, 1970, p. 10.

[57]PRDN, November 27, 1970, p. 3.

[58]*Sun*, December 2, 1970, p. 47.

[59]SIN, January 20, 1971, p. 5.

[60]SIN, December 16, 1970, p. 1.

[61]SIN, April 7, 1971, p. 5. Earl Muldon's surname is also frequently spelt Muldoe. Both seem acceptable.

[62]*Nesika*, October 1973, pp. 10, 12. Vernon Stephens is first mentioned as a participant in the Christmas sale of 1969.

[63]*Nesika*, November 1974, p. 8.

[64]ARDA Agreement 89013, "'Ksan Publicity Project," 1971, 'Ksan file.

[65]"'Ksan Publicity Project," August 1971, 'Ksan file.

[66]Ibid.

[67]Ibid.

[68]SIN, November 1973, p. 13; December 22, 1973, p. 11.

[69]*'Ksan.*

[70]*'Ksan, Breath of our Grandfathers.*

[71]Ibid., p. 9.

[72]SIN, November 22, 1972, p. 8.

[72a]Compare, for example, Figs. 29 and 30.

[73]SIN, March 1, 1972, p. 6.

[74]"The 'Ksan Mural" (Vancouver: The Royal Bank of Canada [1972]).

[75]SIN, July 4, 1973, p. 6.

[76]*'Ksan, Breath of our Grandfathers*, p. 19, See Figs. 31 and 32.

[77]Holm, *An Analysis.*

[78]Ibid., p. 8, see Fig. 31.

[79]Ibid., p. 3.

[80]Ibid., p. 33.

[81]Ibid., p. 19.

[82]Ibid., p. 35.

[83]Ibid., p. 37.

[84]Ibid., cheek designs, Fig. 42, p. 53, upper left.

[85]Ibid., p. 12. Holm says "animals," but the principle can be equally applied to humans.

[86]Ibid., pp. 83-84.

[87]Ibid., p. 61. See also ibid., Fig. 49, p. 60.

[88]Robert Inverarity, *Art of the Northwest Coast Indians* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1950), n.p., Fig. 64.

[89]Peter Macnair, "Inheritance and Innovation, Northwest Coast Artists Today," in *Stones, Bones and Skin: Ritual and Shamanistic Art* (Toronto: The Society for Art Publications, 1977), p. 153.

[90]NV, April 1971, p. 3; June 1971, p. 1.

[91]Graburn, "Art and Acculturative Processes."

[92]Ibid., p. 457.

[93]Ibid., p. 465.

[94]Supra, p. 119. See also Fig. 16.

[95]See the Leading-in pole, Plate XIX, Fig. 2, Barbeau, *Totem Poles of the Gitksan.* See also appended figure 33.

[96]See Plate XIV, Fig. 5, p. 273 and Plate XV, Fig. 3, p. 239, ibid. See also appended figure 34.

[97]NV, December 1971, p. 3. The Raven (Radio and Visual Education Network) Society had been established the previous year to provide an official communications network for native people in British Columbia and to record cultural events for permanent storage. See NV, December 1970, pp. 2, 8, and February 1971, p. 2.

[98]SIN, November 14, 1973, p. 21. No illustration was available.

[99]"Raising the Gilhast Pole" (Burnaby: B.C. Provincial Education Media Centre, 1974).

[100]Graburn, "Art and Acculturative Processes," pp. 460-461. See also Dawson, Fredrickson and Graburn, pp. 23-24.

[101]Ibid., p. 465.

[102]SIN, November 19, 1976, sec. 2, p. 1.

[103]SIN, October 4, 1978, sec. A, p. 3.

CONCLUSION

The course of museum activity in British Columbia as it pertained to the native population, particularly the Gitksan, has been shown to demonstrate a unique and continuous evolution of concepts and practices from the first few decades of this century to the formation of 'Ksan and the Kitanmax School. Some early ideas and features persisted mostly unchanged, others underwent substantial alteration over the course of the period. The latter is especially true of the relationship between museums and native culture.

Early museum activity on the Upper Skeena River was based on the axiom that native culture, if not the entire native population, was on the verge of extinction. Concomitantly, the production of native art was seen as declining and ultimately ceasing altogether. It was considered a non-renewable resource, deprived of its cultural foundation, remaining only to be collected for permanent preservation in museums around the world. Although part of Canada's heritage from the past and an inspiration for artists, both fine and commercial, Indian art was seen as unable to participate in its original context in the culture making process. The Department of Indian Affairs' attempt to enforce effectively the potlatch ban in the early 1920s seemed to ensure the inevitability of these propositions and predictions. These attitudes were eventually reversed, however, as conditions and perceptions changed.

Other features from the early period remained constant and reappeared several years later. They were mostly associated with the

joint efforts of the Indian Affairs Department, the CNR and the National Museum in the 1920s to stabilize the still existing totem poles on the Upper Skeena River as open-air museum displays for tourists travelling by rail. The project was only partially successful, although most poles at Kitwanga were treated and enhanced with other, complementary displays, including house interiors. Resistance at Kitsegucla, stemming directly from the potlatch ban, kept it from completion.[1] Subsequent work at Kitselas added the idea of using restored native houses as displays. Each of these aspects, including native resistance, reappeared in one form or another, under different circumstances, and were incorporated into museum projects leading directly to and including 'Ksan. The course of museum development was, however, interrupted by the Depression and further delayed by World War II.

While museum and tourist activity in the Upper Skeena during the thirties was at its lowest ebb since 1920, native culture in the area was far from dormant. It was at this time that the Gitksan experienced a cultural resurgence. Several factors contributed to this phenomenon. Their unique cultural history, combined with geographic isolation, independence and political acumen, had previously saved them from the irreversible cultural disruptions experienced elsewhere as a result of white settlement. During the thirties, in what were for others hard times, the Gitksan fared well through the steady seasonal activities of fishing, working in the coastal canneries, trapping and individual industry. The formation of the Native Brotherhood added an organizational framework which enhanced their position. Simultaneously, an apparent relaxation of the potlatch ban accompanied better strategies

for gaining official involvement in and approval for traditional ceremonies. These were underground, it would seem, for less than a decade following the ban's enforcement before resurfacing and increasing in scope. Interference and repression, although present, were sporadic and largely ineffectual. The Gitksan possessed the means, the opportunities and the desire to retain their cultural traditions throughout the thirties, forties and fifties. As a consequence, both new poles and old ones were raised in the Gitksan villages. The latter indicated that the Gitksan had accommodated the restoration program into their continued traditional life. The pole raisings were accompanied by the performance of traditional dances and songs, and the exchange of goods. Similar ceremonies were also held on other occasions. Historic evidence indicates that these were of a far greater extent than the two or three ethnographically recorded occurrences which, lacking a wider context, were seen as important but exceptional.

The totem poles of the Gitksan, a factor in the resurgence, lost none of their iconic or social significance. On the other hand, those carved during this period cannot be said to have reached the aesthetic appeal of the most exceptional of the previous century. This is probably due to the practice of re-raising old poles rather than a loss of carving traditions or a decline in formal sensibility. The carving traditions could not be forgotten as they were recorded on the poles in the area. It has been seen that carvers of this period, such as Tom Campbell, surpassed the quality of many poles carved during the so-called "golden" or "classic" period. The accepted notion of the cultural and artistic decline prior to the return of museum activity to the area must

therefore be revised. The continuity of Gitksan culture was, in fact, highly influential in later museum development and deserves further research and study.

The second primary factor influencing 'Ksan's inception and growth is related to the shift in attitude towards native culture, embodied in the "revival" of northwest coast Indian art. First announced prior to World War II, it did not become fully operational and reach the Upper Skeena until the early 1950s. The example and financial success of the Alaska project, part of an overall American Indian arts and crafts promotional program, was undoubtedly an important influence. Although economic considerations provided the "revival" with impetus, a remarkable reversal in attitude by the Department of Indian Affairs, the National Museum and associated agencies was exhibited in regards to the current value and future potential of Indian art.

The initial phase of the "revival" laid the foundation for later developments at 'Ksan. It involved the co-ordinated participation of the provincial and federal governments and museums, the University of British Columbia, and private corporations in several key projects. These were largely devoted to the promotion, production and marketing of contemporary Indian art in both traditional and innovative forms, under controlled conditions. The media, private and public art galleries, and museums furthered this end with competitions, exhibitions and publications to educate and inform the buying public. The emphasis was on arts for sale, to government agencies, museums, corporations and collectors outside the native communities, rather than culturally embedded arts. Although the former aspect of the "revival" appeared at

'Ksan, the latter was not always excluded.

Also significant for 'Ksan was the use of open-air museum displays involving reconstructed native houses and totem poles, reminiscent of the 1920s project. These appeared in Vancouver and Victoria in the late forties and early fifties as part of the "revival" and the promotion of native art as tourist attraction. Equally important to the Kitanmax School were the totem pole carving projects and training programs established at Thunderbird Park. Both concepts were later expanded in Hazelton.

The "revival" reached the Upper Skeena in the wake of the second totem pole restoration project, undertaken jointly by the Provincial Museum, the University of British Columbia and private corporations. Its initial purpose was the acquisition of Gitksan poles lacking in the museum collections. As before, native response was less than passive; the poles were still valued by their owners for their traditional cultural significance. The Gitksan were now, however, prepared to exert some control over the program and gain some benefits and recognition of their cultural situation, features missing from the first restoration program. The request by the Kitwancool for replacement poles and for the publication of a tract testifying to the validity of their land claims and social organization is indicative of the extent of their influence on museum development in the area.

The joint activities of the Skeena Treasure House and the Skeena Totem Pole Restoration Society marked the next phase of museum activity on the Upper Skeena. One individual, Mrs. Margaret (Polly) Sargent, was the central figure in these overlapping organizations. Her relationship

to Marius Barbeau, her political position and community activities, and her business interests made her the ideal agent for representing and co-ordinating larger government programs with projects on a local level. She was rewarded for the success of her efforts with the Order of Canada in 1972. The Sargents were responsible for introducing the museum project and obtaining support for it, possibly as early as the late forties and early fifties, following Barbeau's and Duff's field trips. The Skeena Treasure House did not get off the ground, however, until it was co-ordinated with the British Columbia centennial celebrations in the mid-fifties. Mrs. Sargent directed the project.

Although modest in scale, the Skeena Treasure House was essential to 'Ksan in that it introduced many of the features of the "revival" into the area. These included the incorporation of traditional ceremonies such as pole raisings, accompanied by costumed dances and songs, into a museum setting. It integrated a reconstructed version of a communal house, enhanced by a painted frontal, with totem poles and other complementary open-air exhibits. It also initiated the promotion and creation of Gitksan arts and crafts for sale. As well, and perhaps most important in terms of 'Ksan's realization, the Skeena Treasure House reduced Gitksan resistance to museum projects. In fact, the success of the museum was predicated on their support, which had a twofold impact. The Gitksan were involved directly in the administration of their cultural traditions and heritage in a museum context. In addition, at Indian insistence, the Treasure House did not function as a traditional museum preserving artifacts from a dead culture, but rather became a storage place for objects from a living culture.

Although it had its base in white society and the "revival," its contributions to 'Ksan and museological development in general were the modifications brought about by the strength and input of Gitksan cultural traditions.

Like the Skeena Treasure House, which it incorporated, 'Ksan's creation depended on the co-ordination of a local project with larger government programs. Again, Mrs. Sargent was central to the museum's promotion, financing and early administration. Shortly after the appearance of the initial proposals, funding was arranged through ARDA in a three-level cost sharing program for depressed rural areas. The project appears to have been a joint product of the white and native communities and once more involved the participation of both. Initially the former component was predominant as before, but this time the latter eventually gained ascendency.

As 'Ksan developed between 1966 and its opening in 1970, it increased substantially in scope, due to input from the funding agencies. This is, it would seem, a measure of its success in complementing established goals held by the federal and provincial participants. Both 'Ksan's physical form and its programs, such as the incorporation of traditional ceremonies into a museum context, had precedents, as had the Skeena Treasure House, in earlier projects in Vancouver and Victoria. 'Ksan was to surpass these, however, in several respects and maintain a unique identity. It was, as originally constituted, devoted almost exclusively to the history and culture of one group, the Gitksan. It was situated in immediate geographic proximity to its subject matter and was, moreover, built on Gitksan land. The Gitksan themselves were

able to partake directly in its functioning and to take over an increased share of administration and control. The project included a campground complex run by the Gitksan which gave them additional benefits from the resultant tourist trade. It also provided an organized art training program for the production and perpetuation of Gitksan art.

This program was institutionalized in the Kitanmax School, also an ARDA creation and directly connected with the "revival." Much of the display material for 'Ksan as well as its saleable art was provided by the school. In its early period, the school employed as teachers both carvers working in Vancouver and Victoria, and local artists. Later, those trained at the school occupied all the teaching positions.

The work produced has been seen to have occupied several categories outlined by Morisson and Graburn. New media were introduced. Traditional forms used previously only on ceremonial occasions were now made for sale. Beyond that, however, and beyond the "revival," the continuing Gitksan traditions demanded new poles and paraphernalia for contemporary validations of personal hereditary prerogatives. This may be seen as both 'Ksan's and the Gitksan's most valuable contribution to the course of museum development.

The relationship of these ceremonies and poles to the Kitanmax School and 'Ksan is not always clearly understood. Various misconceptions about Gitksan cultural and artistic history have led to a distortion in some contemporary perceptions of the precise nature of the relationship. It has been indicated in the foregoing analysis that several important parameter dates established in the past are inaccurate in terms of the Gitksan. For example, the decline of native culture

resulting from the termination of the fur trade and the aggressive and persistent encroachment of white settlers is dated by Robin Fisher as beginning in 1850.[2] At this time, however, the isolated Gitksan had yet to see white people, beyond the exceptionally diligent explorer. White settlement in the unhospitable and unarable Upper Skeena region does not seem to have grown to any extent until the 1890s and early 1900s. Even then, it was successfully discouraged by the Kitwancool into the 1920s. In turn, white culture became less aggressive with the loss of its economic vitality in the late 1920s and the 1930s.

A second parameter date for the decline of Indian culture is usually given as 1894, the year the potlatch ban was first revised to make it effective. No evidence of any attempt to systematically enforce it among the Gitksan seems to exist, prior to 1921, almost thirty years later. This constitutes a substantial period given that the time under examination is less than a century. Thus, both parameter dates for the beginning of the decline, as generally accepted, appear to be several decades too early when applied to the Gitksan. Consequently, the period during which Gitksan cultural traditions are seen to be in decline, comatose or dead, has been somewhat exaggerated.

Similarly, the "revival" or these traditions has also been misinterpreted. As the dates of the decline of Gitksan culture were pushed back, so the dates for its resurgence have been brought forward. It has been supposed that the "revival" only post-dated the omission of the potlatch ban from the Indian Act in 1951, and that Gitksan cultural expression was silent or surreptitious during the period the ban was in force. Fisher, for example, places the resurgence of Indian identity

and cultural expression around mid-century.[3] Such a generalization exaggerates, however, the effect of repressive legislation on Gitksan traditions and diminishes the latter's persistence and vitality. Although Fisher's observation is not invalid, the Gitksan must again be viewed as an exceptional case. The resurgence of their traditions dates from shortly after their repression, which lasted for little more than ten years rather than fifty-seven or longer. As with the once commonly accepted concept of the European "Dark Ages," the more the Gitksan cultural decline is examined, the less it seems to have actually existed, and the more it seems a product of lack of information. This situation, in turn, accounts for recent ethnographic observations that there is still much work to be done among the Gitksan.

The revision of the parameter dates, as well as the reassessment of the extent of the decline and the start of the resurgence affect present interpretations of past and present Gitksan artistic activity. The generally accepted idea of a continuous decline following the turn of the century has been contradicted by the quality and quantity of new poles carved and erected in the 1930s and 1940s. These, like the resurgence which produced them, have also been undervalued through lack of examination and the application of broad generalizations. It is, for example, inaccurate to refer to them uniformly as facsimiles, or as being of inferior quality simply because they were assumed to have been produced in a period of decline. They were, rather, an expression of a resurgence and assume new significance when seen in this light.

It is only with the foregoing in mind that an accurate assessment of the relationship between subsequent museum activity and Gitksan

cultural traditions can be formulated. It has been demonstrated that not only did the Gitksan retain possession of their cultural traditions up to the reintroduction of museum activity in the area in the 1950s, but that this continuity had a strong effect on the course of that development. As the Gitksan gained a portion of control over museum projects, their input defined many pertinent aspects. It thus diminishes the Gitksan contribution to museum developments to assume that they were solely the subjects of external forces. It is also incorrect to state that the museum and the government-sponsored art programs were responsible for the "revival" of native culture, in the sense of bringing it back to life in contemporary traditional expressions. Rather the "revival," properly defined, broadened the context and scope of Gitksan cultural expression and brought it to the attention of a larger audience. The art which is being produced at 'Ksan has certainly been affected by the "revival," directly and indirectly, but it owes as much to the persistence of the artistic and cultural traditions on which it is based. Indeed, without this continued iconic significance, the art of the Gitksan produced at 'Ksan would be without the rich texture of meaning and significance that it now possesses. Any analysis of this art and its relationship both to 'Ksan and to its cultural heritage must take both factors into account. As well, 'Ksan itself must be viewed in the light of these two factors as well as its historical precedents in order to be properly understood.

Footnotes, Conclusion

[1]It has been argued by Darling and Cole, pp. 38-40, that the resistance was possibly due to many factors including personality conflicts, traditional animosity, and the presence of Tom Campbell, of Hazelton, who was seen by white officials as somewhat of a trouble-maker. Oddly, the potlatch ban, as such, is not mentioned, although the other factors are noted as being possibly insufficient evidence for the resistance. Barbeau, however, reported earlier that the chiefs of Kitsegucla would not allow poles to be re-erected without a potlatch and unless the government altered its attitude towards this institution. Barbeau, *Totem Poles*, 2:859. Tom Campbell was, it will be recalled, a carver of some ability and knowledgeable in traditional carving techniques and vocabulary. He was instrumental in carving new poles in the 1930s and 1940s.

[2]Fisher, pp. 210-211.

[3]Ibid., p. 211.

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APPENDIX I

EXTRACTS FROM ANNUAL REPORTS of the U.S. Secretary of the Interior, 1936-1941, regarding the activities of the Indian Arts and Crafts Board, and the promotion and marketing of contemporary Indian Art.

An Indian Arts and Crafts Board was established in 1936 with powers "(1) to undertake market research . . . ; (2) to engage in technical research looking toward improvement of Indian products; (3) to engage in experimentation directly or through selected agencies; (4) to correlate and encourage the various governmental and private agencies engaged in similar activities; . . . (7) to create Government trade marks of genuineness and quality for Indian products, and to establish standards for the use thereof . . ." (1936, p. 165). Standardization of both product and marketing techniques emerged as primary concerns. The board's policy, as stated in 1936 following "six months of extensive study in the field covering both production and marketing conditions" was to "make raw materials available; to stimulate quality production and to help in the organization of craftsmen groups; to supply craftsmen of tribes having traditional handicrafts with all available information on techniques formerly used by their tribes and to acquaint them with the exigencies of the current market. . . . Stimulation and actual cooperation in the organization of exhibits of Indian arts and crafts, stimulation of publication in Indian arts and crafts and establishment of an education service for sales forces of stores carrying Indian crafts goods" (1937, pp. 224-225) were also proposed. In keeping with

these guidelines, exhibitions at the Paris World's Fair in 1936 and the San Francisco World's Fair in 1939 were prepared. The latter, organized through "world's fair authorities and interested private groups in San Francisco" was to be "more comprehensive than any ever held" (1937, p. 226). Efforts were made "in Alaska to improve the quality of wood carving . . . which [had] . . . deteriorated in the face of Japanese competition" (1937, p. 231). Alaskan work was a feature exhibit of the San Francisco show.

By 1939, the program "to promote the economic welfare of the Indians through the development of their arts and crafts and the expansion of the market for the products of their craftsmanship" (1939, p. 45) had developed to its first phase of maturity. Various booklets were published or planned. It was to culminate in 1941 in a large show at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, held from January 21 to April 27. "The exhibit was a cross section of the artistic achievement of the Indians of the United States during the last 15,000 years. It was divided into three sections--prehistoric, historic and modern. . . . *Indian Arts of the United States,* a book sponsored by the Board, was issued by the Museum of Modern Art" (1941, p. 436). This book was to be the first of many for similar shows held at other galleries in the decades to come.

ILLUSTRATIONS

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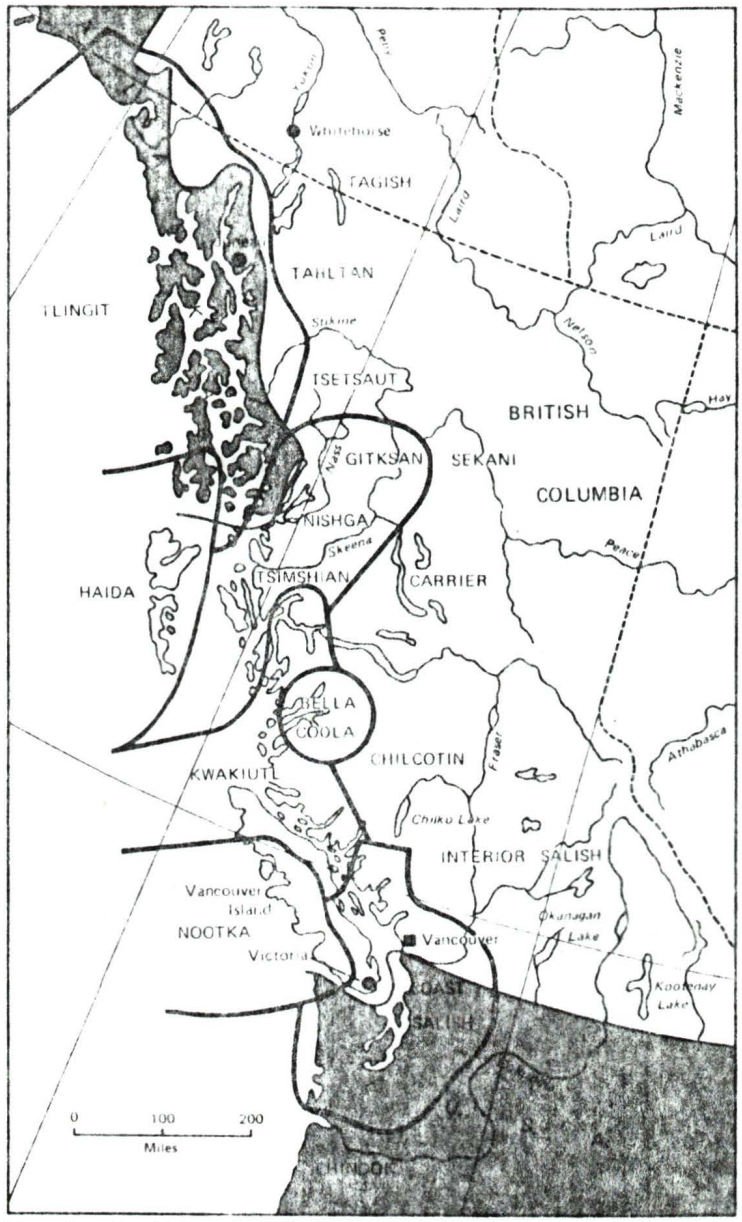
*Numbers preceded by PN refer to photographs in the BCPM Ethnology Department collection. Numbers preceded by P refer to the collection of John Veillette, from 1972-1973. All citations for illustrations drawn from published sources are included in captions.

		Unpublished photograph credits
16.	The Fireweed House of Treasures, formerly the Skeena Treasure House, and the fiberglass replica of the Dog-Salmon pole at Kispiox	Ron Kirkaldy & Ann Kirkaldy
17.	Pole at Kitsegucla	PN8274
18.	Detail of pole in Figure 17	P72003-36(2)
19.	Detail of pole in Figure 17	P73075-10
20.	Pole at Kitsegucla, Wilson Duff photo, 1952?	PN6931-B
21.	Detail of pole in Figure 20	P72004-12
22.	Detail of pole in Figure 20, Wilson Duff photo, 1952	PN7160
23.	Pole at Kitsegucla, Wilson Duff photo, 1952?	PN7121
24.	Detail of pole in Figure 23	PN8267
25.	Detail of pole in Figure 23	P72004-17
26.	Pole at Kitsegucla	PN3858
27.	Pole at Kitsegucla, G.T. Emmons photo, 1910	PN4095
28.	Pole at Kitsegucla	PN6713
29.	Raven mask, by Art Sterritt, circa 1971	
30.	Frog, Human, Eagle and copper mask, by Art Sterritt, circa 1977	
31.	Royal Bank mural, Vancouver, six side panel designs	
32.	Royal Bank mural, Vancouver, three central panels	
33.	Totem pole, Kispiox	PN12974-36
34.	Totem pole, Kispiox	PN12974-35



Map showing Northwest Coast Indian tribal boundaries.
xii

Figure 1. Northwest Coast Indian Tribal Boundaries, from Adams, The Gitksan Potlatch, p. xii.

Figure 2. Upper Skeena villages, adapted from 'Ksan; Breath of our Grandfathers, p. 8.

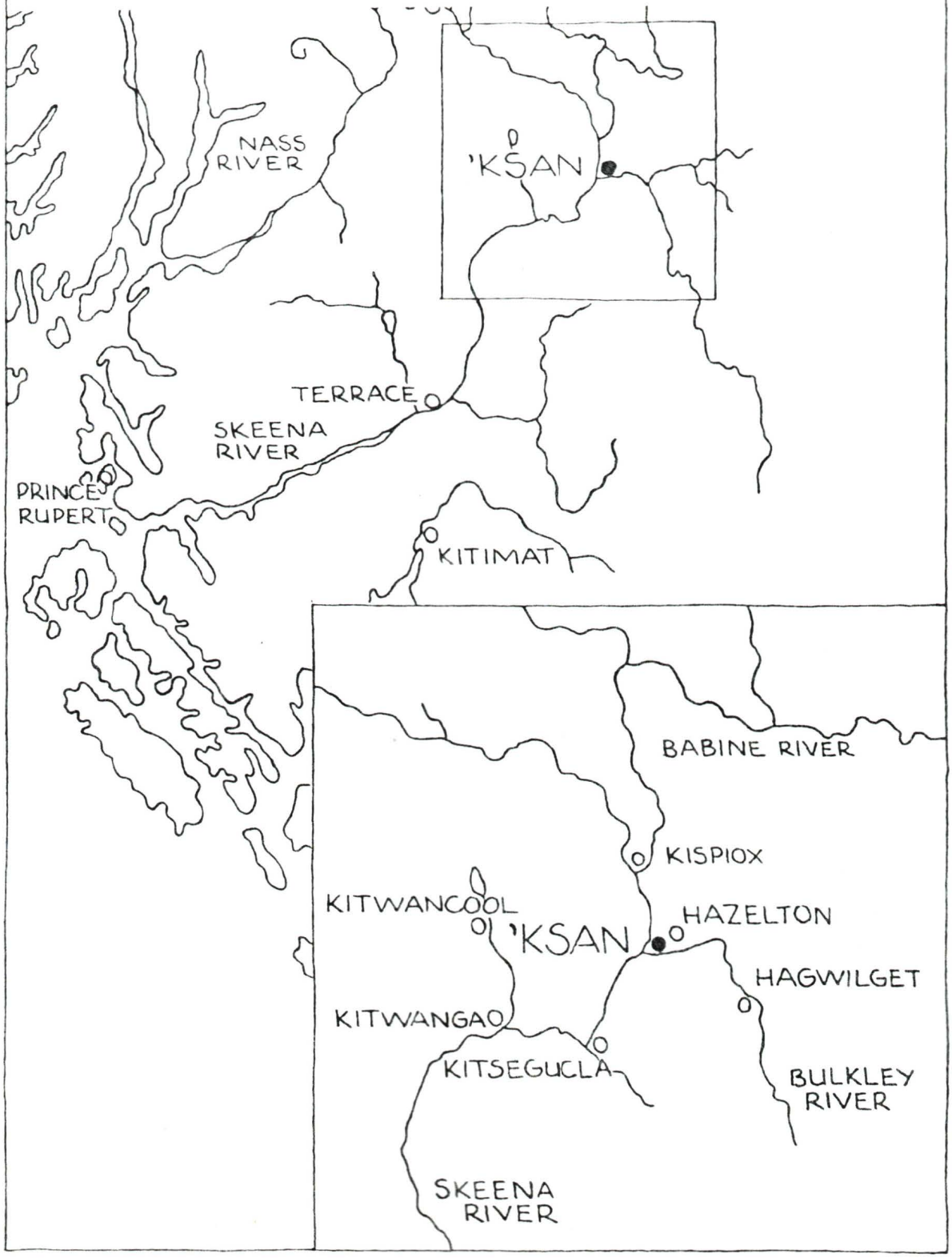


Figure 3. "Chief Laknitz, Gitwangak," (Kitwanga).

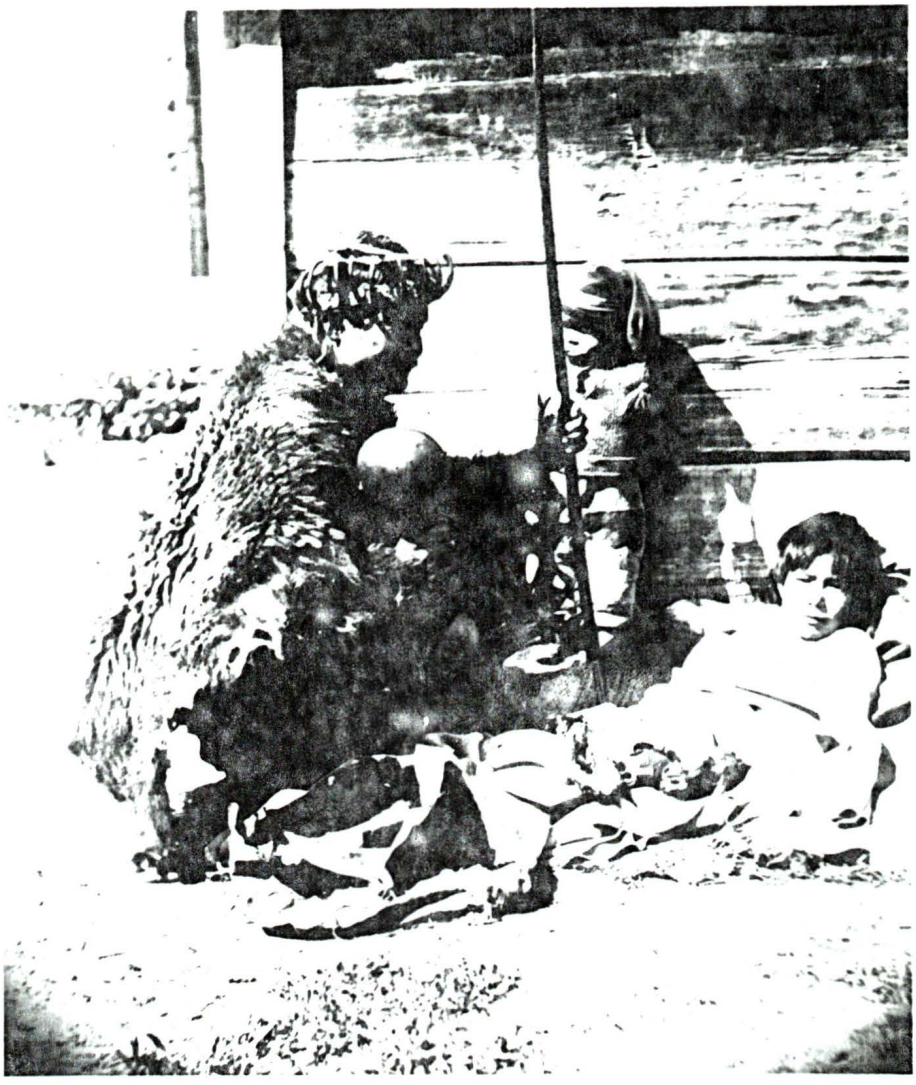


Figure 4. Shaman working over sick boy, Kitwanga. Paraphernalia matching in description much of that illustrated here was confiscated by police in Kispiox, 1942.

Courtesy National Museum of Man, National Museums of Canada

Native snapshot of Gitsegyukla chief, Jeffrey Johnson, and family at the raising of his pole, 1945. Photographed by William Beynon.

Figure 5. John Adams, The Gitksan Potlatch, p. 84.

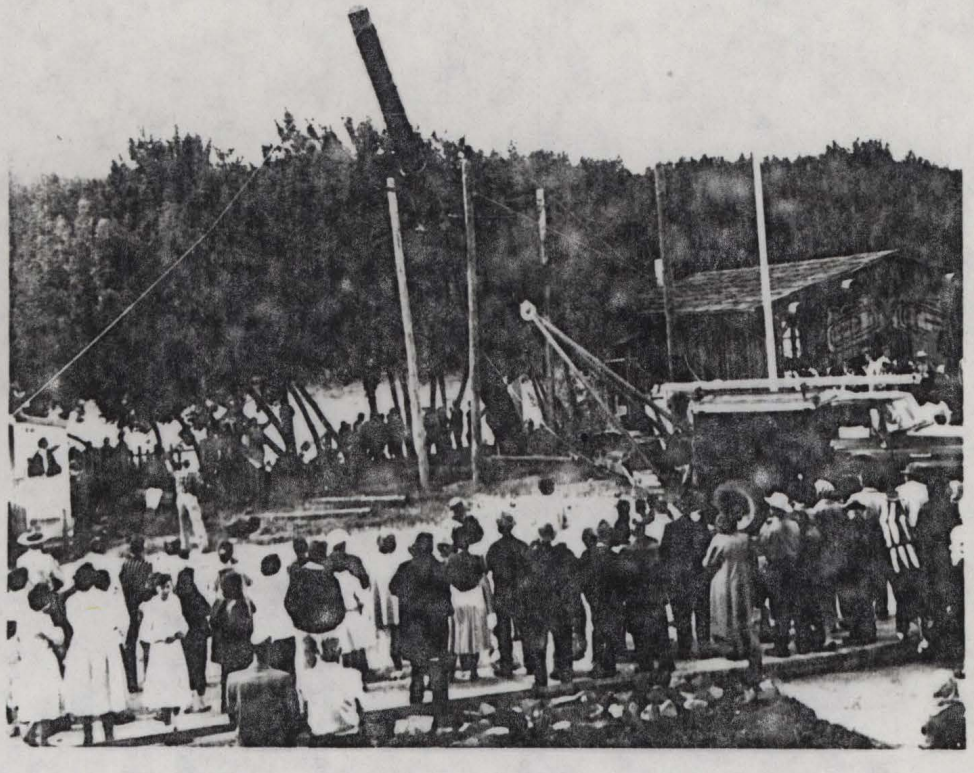


Figure 6. Raising of the Git-dem-muldo pole at the opening of the Skeena Treasure House, 1960.

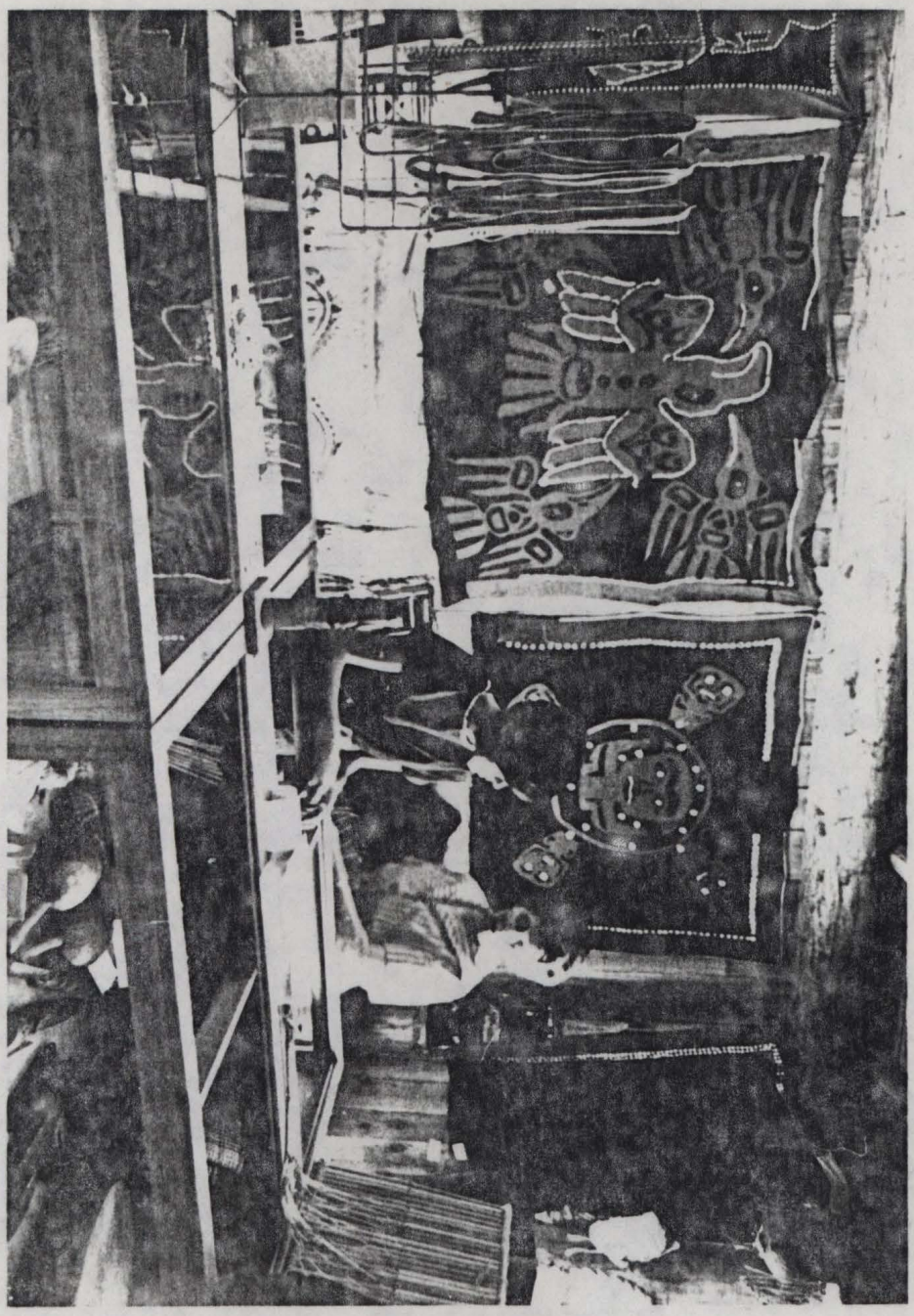


Figure 7. Interior of the Skeena Treasure House, with Mrs. Polly Sargent and unidentified person.

Figure 8. The group of four poles carved at the Provincial Museum to replace those removed from the village of Kitwancool; 'Ksan, p. 25.

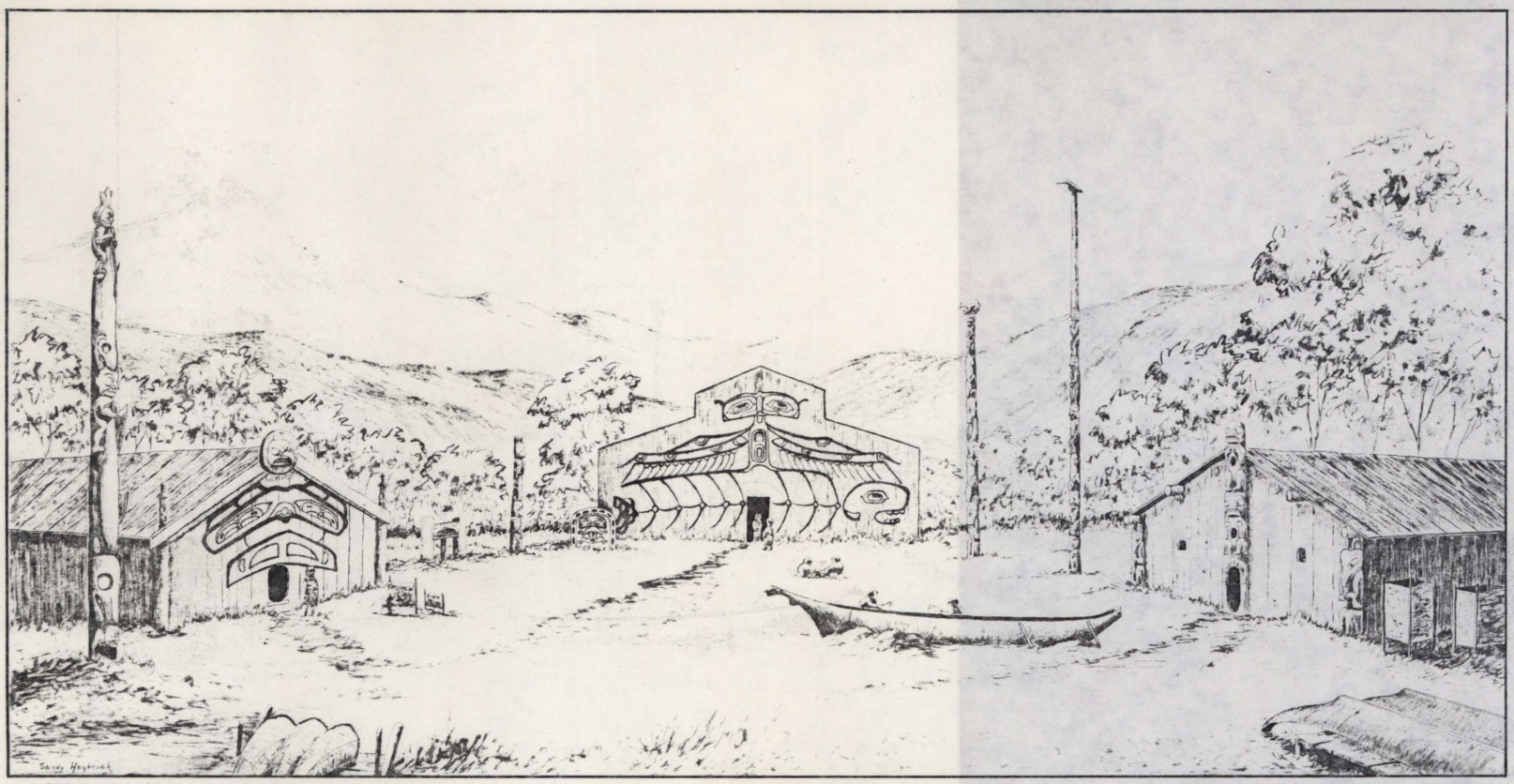


Figure 9. Proposal for Old 'Ksan. This illustration was also published in local newspapers.

Figure 10. 'Ksan Village, as it appeared about 1970/1971; "Tall Ships Sail the Pacific," (Victoria: Beautiful British Columbia, n.d.), p. 30.

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Figure 11. Indian dances at the opening ceremonies of 'Ksan; Robbin Frazer, "Indian Culture, A Twentieth Century Renaissance," Performing Arts in Canada, Summer, 1972, p. 9.

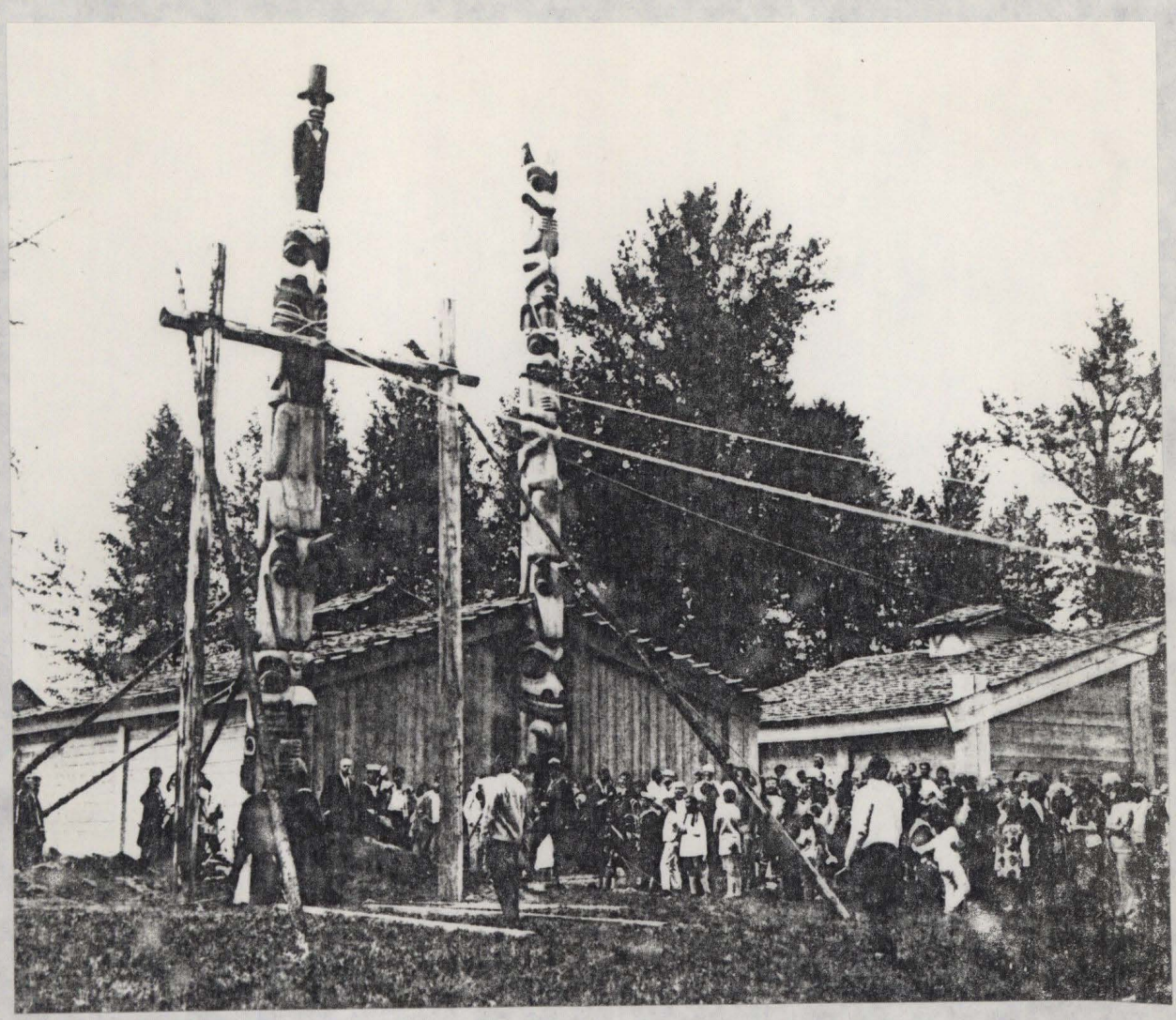


Figure 12. The raising of the new pole at the official opening of 'Ksan; 'Ksan, p. 20.

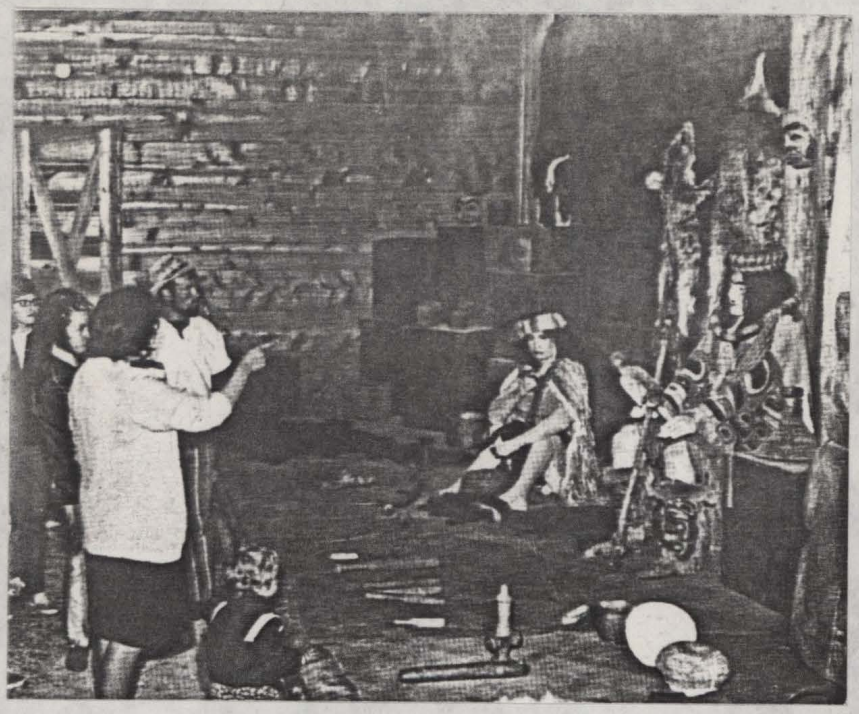


Figure 13. Interior views of the Frog House, 'Ksan; 'Ksan, p. 18.

Figure 14. Interior view of the Wolf House, 'Ksan; 'Ksan, p. 18.

Figure 15. Interior view of the Treasure House, 'Ksan. The material on display here is now in cased displays in the Northwest Coast National Exhibition Centre; 'Ksan, p. 18.

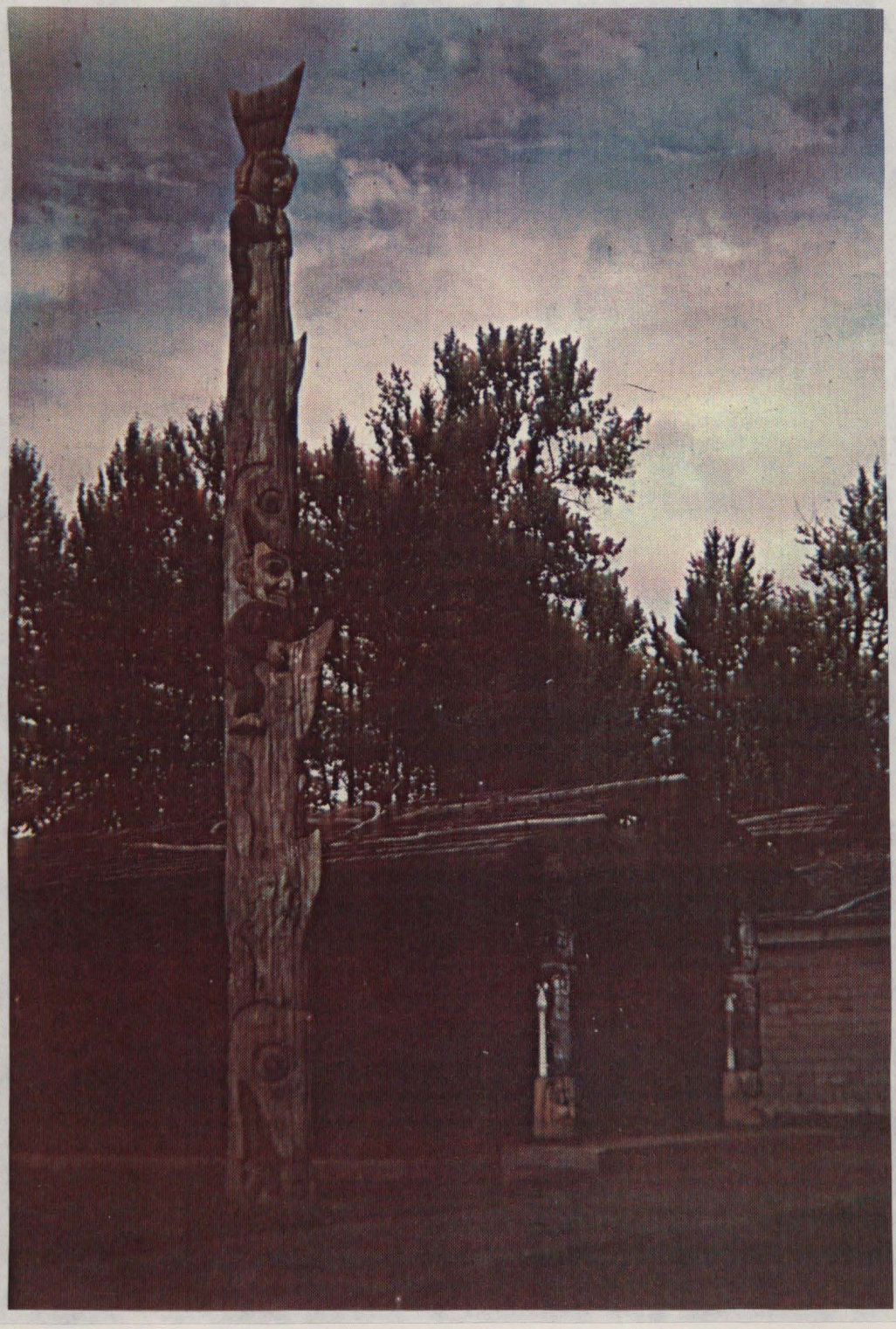


Figure 16. The Old Skeena Treasure House, now the Fireweed House of Treasures, and the fiberglass replica of the Dog-Salmon pole of Kitwanga.

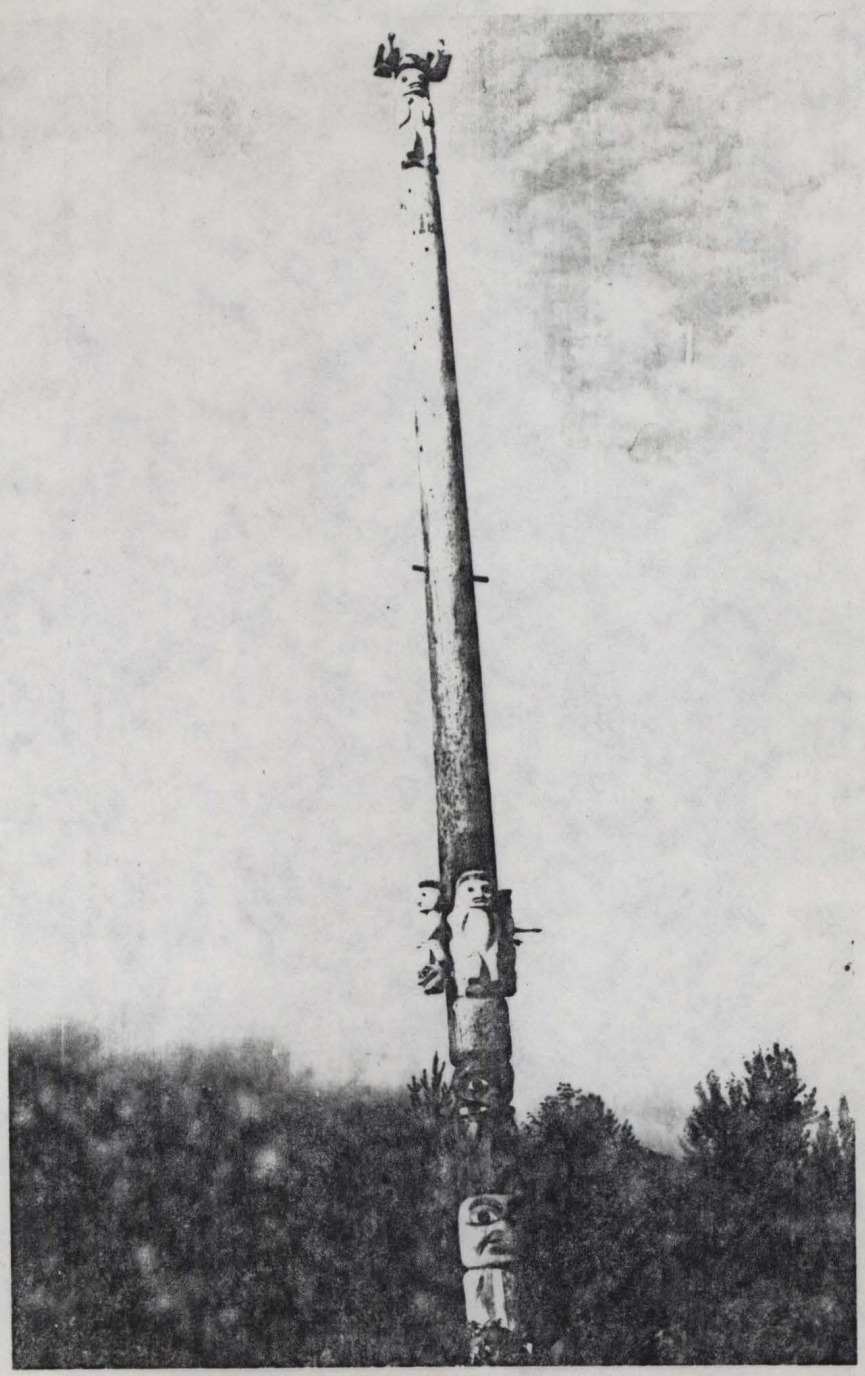


Figure 17. Pole at Kitsegucla, c. 1937-1945, possibly by Tom Campbell. The interplay between relief and attached figures carved in the round is evident in the details shown in figures 18 and 19.

Figure 18. Detail of pole in figure 17. The attached image with outstretched arms on the right is missing.

Figure 19. Detail of mid-section of pole in figure 17. Note the pegs used for attaching the separately carved figure on the left.

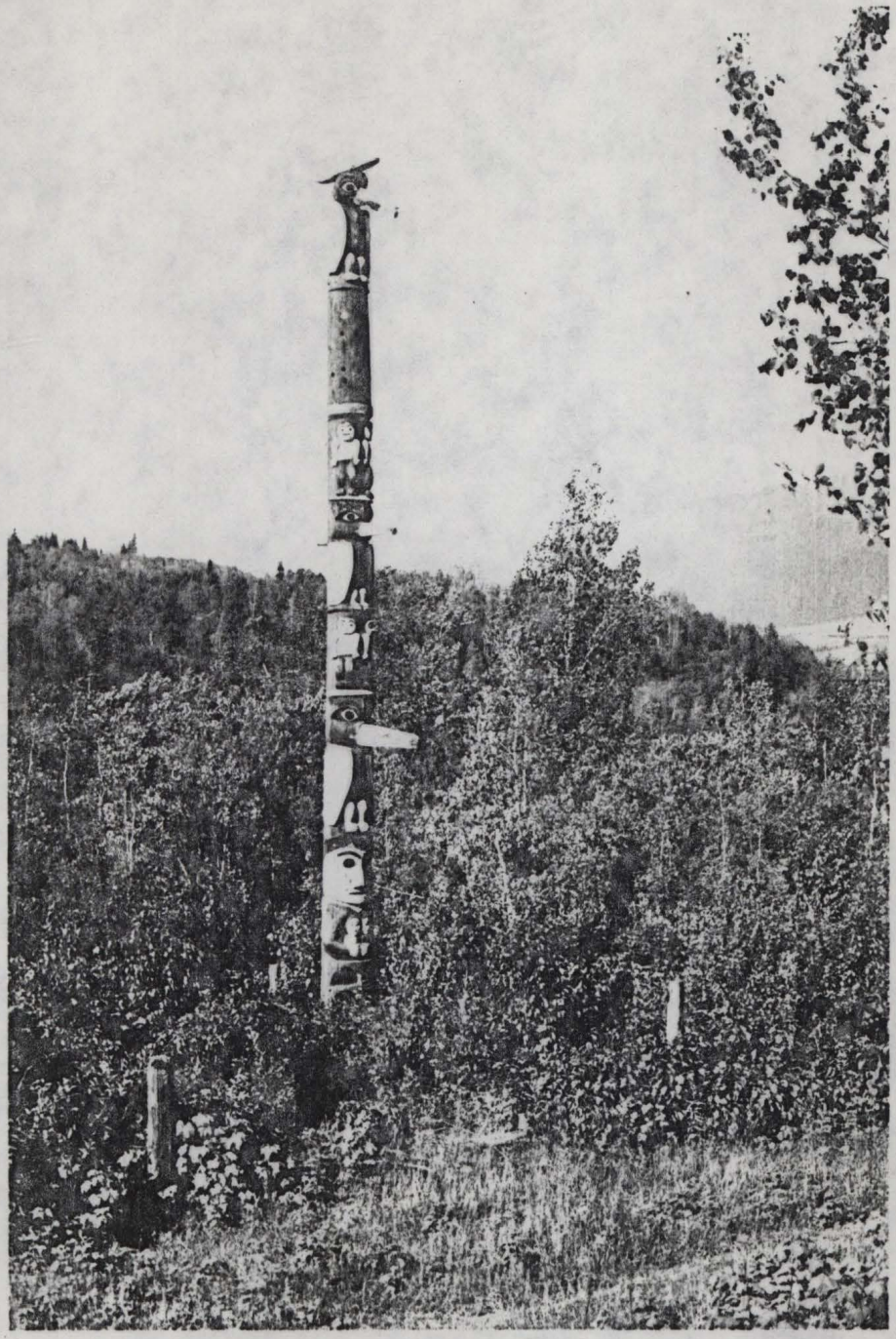


Figure 20. Pole at Kitsegucla, c. 1937-1945.
See also figures 21 and 22.

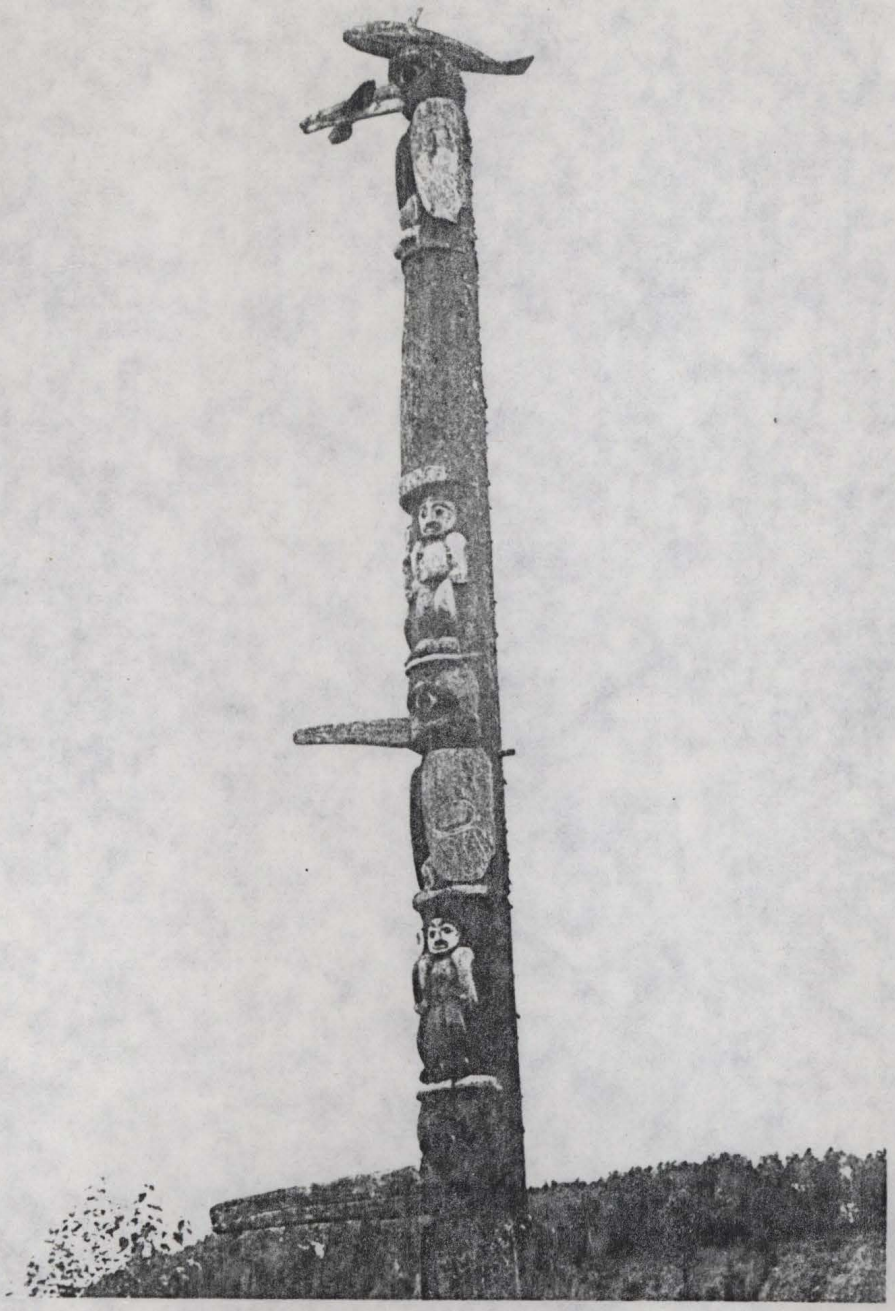


Figure 21. Detail of pole in figure 20, top section. Note the attached blackfish and beaks.

Figure 22. Detail of pole in figure 20, lower section. Note the geometric motifs at the base and the details on the wings and beak.

Figure 23. Pole at Kitsegucla, "In memory of Chief Cookson," carved by Tom Campbell, 1944. See also figures 24 and 25. Compare with figure 28.

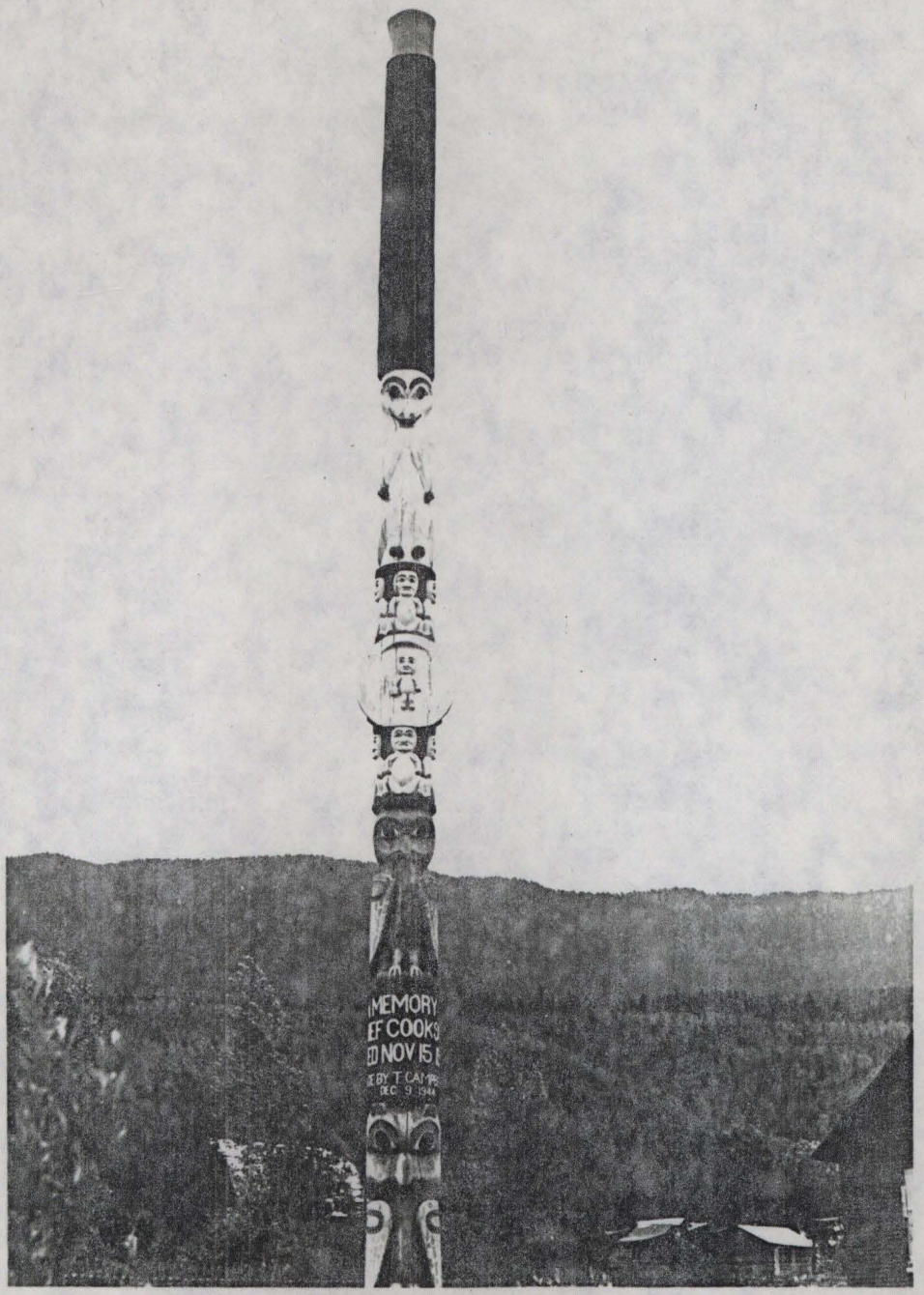


Figure 24. Detail of pole in figure 23, top section.

Figure 25. Detail of pole in figure 23 showing inscription on mid-section.

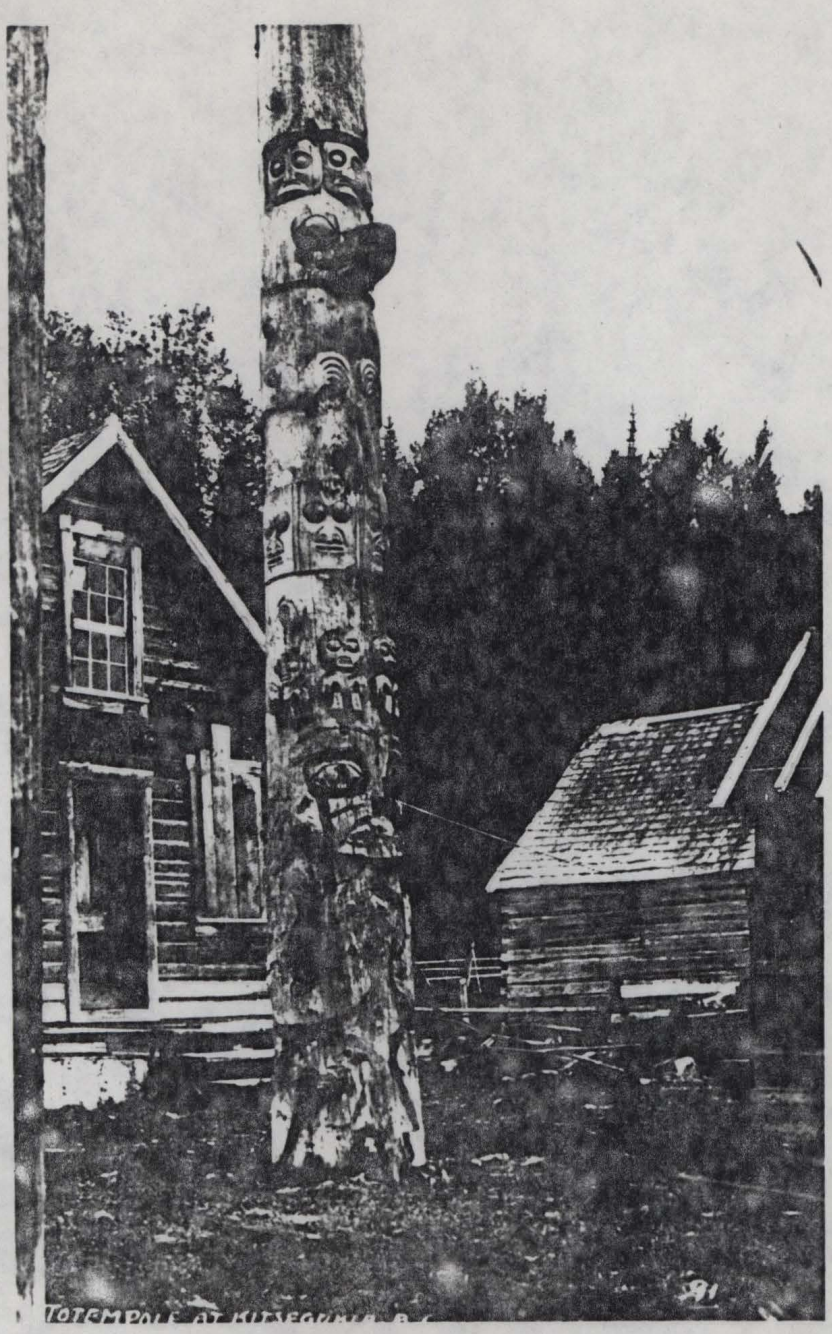


Figure 26. Decayed-corpse pole, Kitsegucla, c. 1885. The rectangular eye orbs and flat cheeks are not variables of the Tsimsian style outlined by Holm. Note also the shallow and awkward carving.

Figure 27. Pole of Kuksdedalreh, Kitsegucla, c. 1880-1885. The grouse and her brood are carved with a striking degree of realism, while the figures both above and below are highly stylized.

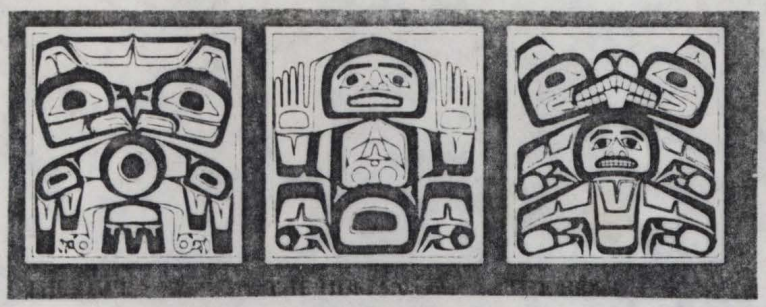
Figure 28. Pole of-the-moon, Kitsegucla, c. 1890-1895. Compare with figures 23, 24 and 25, especially the carving and composition of the lower bird in each.

Figure 29. Raven mask by Art Sterritt, circa 1971; 'Ksan, Breath of Our Grandfathers, p. 99. Compare with figure 30.

Photo by Rudi Haas

"Mask – Frog, Human, Eagle and Copper"
Art Sterritt, Gitksan; birchwood, hair.

Figure 30. Mask by Art Sterritt, circa 1977; The Native Perspective, vol. 3, no. 2, 1978, p. 63.



The Owl The Human The Bear

The Frog The Wolf The Killer Whale

Figure 31. The six side panels of the Royal Bank mural, Vancouver. Although lacking the colouring and relief carving of the monumental panels, these simplified drawings accurately portray the design characteristics of the originals.

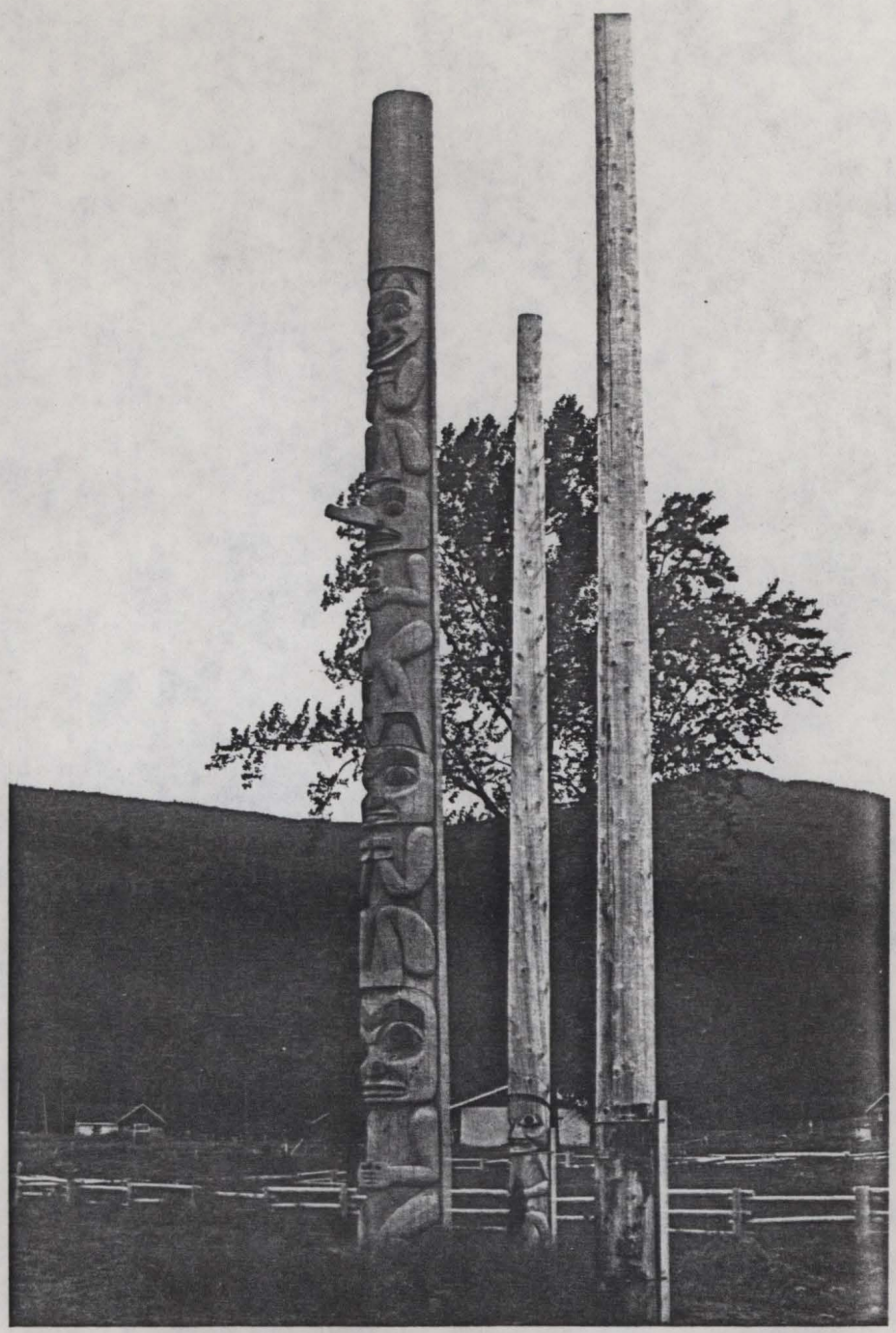


Figure 33. Chief Walter Harris' new pole, Kispiox, 1971.

Figure 34. The new Gitludahl pole, Kispiox, 1972.

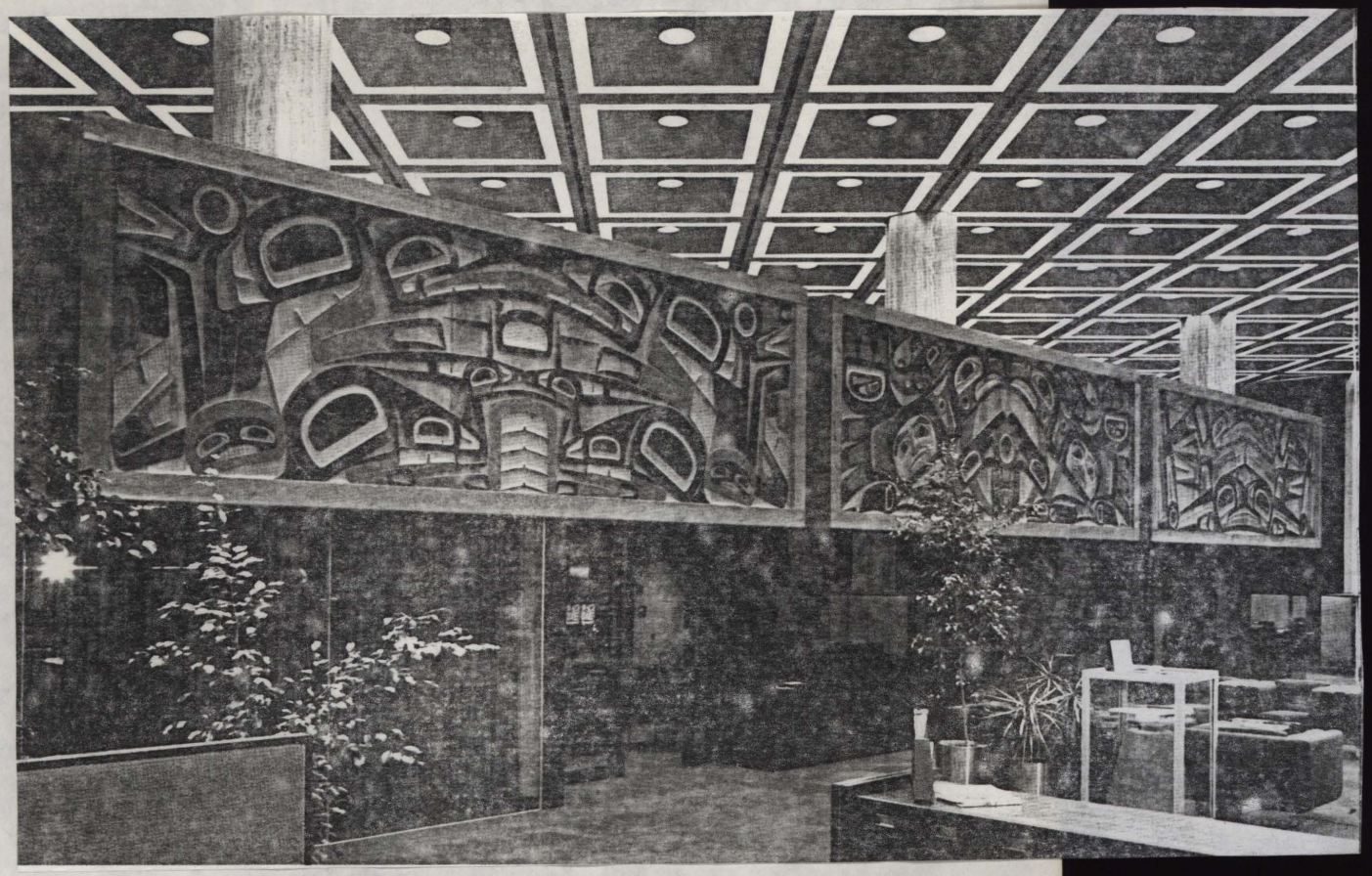


Figure 32. The three central panels of the Royal Centre Mural, Vancouver; 'Ksan, p. 28.

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APRIL 24, 1981

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