

Representing North:  
Inuit identity and the paradox of culture,  
communications and self-determination

by

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We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard



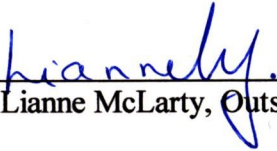
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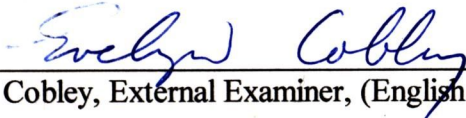
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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the relationship of identity, cultural production, communications and self-determination to reveal the complexities of Inuit-Canadian relations. By studying the politics of naturalization and cultural production in the work of feminist theorists, the Frankfurt School and writers such as Michael Shapiro, it is shown that the process of Canadian state domination of the Inuit is related to symbolic control. Specifically, Inuit art and the mass media are sites where we can observe the often-paradoxical relations of domination and resistance in which the Inuit people are involved.

Despite the fact that the production of Inuit art and mass media is primarily a colonialist enterprise, there is nonetheless room for resistance and/or authentic artistic expression within the framework offered by this activity.

Examiners:



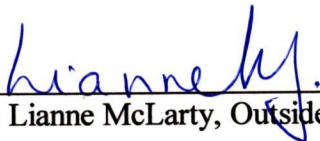
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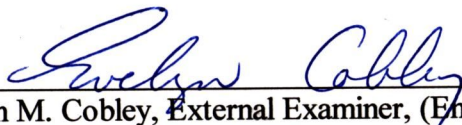
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*Angela Heck*  
*May 25, 2000*

## Representing North: Inuit identity and the paradox of culture, communications and self-determination

In his book Time Passages, George Lipsitz wrote: "Politics and culture maintain a paradoxical relationship in which only effective political action can win breathing room for a new culture, but only a revolution in culture can make people capable of political action."<sup>1</sup> It is this paradox, as expressed in the culture and communications of the Canadian North that is explored in these pages.

What is 'North'?

For anyone from the 'south', the 'north' is synonymous with an area above the tree line where a harsh climate limits accessibility and communications. Conversely, for northerners, 'south' is any location below the tree line, usually a city, but also a term with a strong ideological association with western European thought and institutions. But is it really that simple? What are the implications of identifying and representing the North within the arena of global politics? How is the expression of a northern culture conveyed? And why is it even important to discuss this in a Canadian context?<sup>2</sup>

What follows shows how the existence of Inuit art and the mass media function in a paradoxical fashion, at once negating Inuit identity, yet providing a means to reaffirm it as well. This thesis is not intended as an aesthetic critique of the art form. Rather, by reviewing the processes of cultural production and the means of communicating this

culture, these elements are examined against the political backdrop of the Inuit situation particularly their struggles to regain their cultural identity and right to self-determination.

As with many Aboriginal groups in North America who have been subject to the colonial legacy of cultural decline, the social disruption felt by the Inuit of Canada's north is no exception. A systemic process of assimilation has resulted in suicide rates up to seven times that of the national average, the gradual demise of traditional languages, and the general move towards the values and beliefs that inform North American popular culture. The Inuit traditional way of life effectively ended in the 1950s, threatening, within a very short time, the cultural survival of the Inuit.

Yet despite the influx of southern influences and interests, Inuit culture has found a way to exist and re-affirm itself through various means, especially through artistic expression and communications media. Through the assertion of their cultural identity by means of symbolic control, the Inuit struggle for self-determination is being played out against the Canadian nation-state.

The work of feminist theorists and writers such as Michael Shapiro, Theodor Adorno, Max Horkheimer and other cultural theorists, will be used as the theoretical foundation for the examination of Inuit-Canadian relations. Recognizing that these Western ideologies will be applied to an Aboriginal context, their writings are valued for the framework they provide for thinking about the politics of naturalization, the politics of domination through cultural production and the potential that is recognized for resistance to dominant ideologies. It is therefore these paradigms will be applied to the examination of the Inuit situation as it exists within Canada.

It has been established elsewhere that the Canadian state has acted as a colonial power vis à vis its domination of the Canadian North and the Inuit peoples of the region through its maintenance of symbolic control of the processes that affirm cultural identity. In its own struggle to determine a Canadian cultural identity, however, the nation state has appropriated the cultural symbols of the very thing it has hoped to more fully assimilate.

The cultural identity of the Inuit in Canada's Arctic, both traditional and contemporary, has found expression through the production of cultural artifacts, which are collectively known as Inuit art. Inuit art has established itself as an historical record and anchor for the Inuit sense of self, as well as a cultural commodity. While there exists an economic impetus behind the production of art, its creation has resulted in a reaffirmation of Inuit identity. It is important to stress that no such art form existed as a typical and traditional activity until it found a southern audience in the late 1940s. That Inuit art is recognized both in Canada and abroad as a uniquely 'Canadian' art form betrays the false oppositions between modernity and tradition, culture and development.

The work of Susanne Dybbroe as outlined in her paper concerning questions of identity and issues of self-determination, is also influential in this thesis. Her work is applied in the context of the tension between oral and written narrative traditions and in the investigation of traditional Inuit art forms as a means of cultural transmission or as commodity. Dybbroe concludes:

"...the maintenance of cultural identity is a process related to symbolic control. The demands of self-determination in the Arctic and the affirmation of cultural rights mark a clash with Western domination, which in the post-war era has extended to all levels of Inuit and Greenlandic society and culture. Not only of an economic

and political nature, this domination, as in other parts of the world, makes itself also felt in the very fabric of culture: people's perception of self, of the world, their power to think alternatives. The hegemonic process, whereby this has been effected, is part of lived experience in the Arctic today. For instance, the establishing control on Arctic resources and the way these are utilized through world-wide campaigns to muster public opinion; the false opposition between tradition and modernity, between culture and development... The integration of Arctic peoples into nation states and their subsequent subordination under state apparatuses and state interests... have served to establish this domination, which the Arctic peoples are just now struggling to come to terms with, by coming to terms with their own traditions. Part of this political process is a struggle for the right to a modern, 'authentic', because self-defined, cultural identity.<sup>3</sup>

Undertaking such a study is also to admit to its limitations and assumptions. It is important to be aware of totalizing arguments and to recognize the narrow scope of understanding such a paper can address in regard to the questions it raises. The results of such an investigation are inherently inconclusive, yet they can begin to reveal aspects of relationships which can act as building blocks in the process of discovery.

One way of approaching this study is to examine the processes that naturalize a particular ideology. This is an approach taken by Shapiro who also notes that "To analyze how things in the world take on meanings, it is necessary to analyze the structure of our imaginative processes."<sup>4</sup>

Like Shapiro, Thomas McEvilley takes up the work of Adorno and Horkheimer and various feminist theorists in emphasizing the importance of the politics of naturalization— that it is necessary to discuss the naturalization process, rather than simply accepting something as natural. This step is taken in the context of this paper by showing

how the “tradition” of Inuit art (which is the creation of a relatively recent time and political environment) and Canadian sovereignty in the north has been naturalized. By understanding the process, the political implications of Western claims of universal hegemony, are also exposed. As McEvilley argues: “During the Modernist period, Western anthropologists, despite admirable attempts at objectivity, tended to represent the rest of the world through Western conventions, as if the latter were normative, natural or given. Western culture, taking its paradigm from its sciences, was to be the universal Self: non-Western culture was to be entirely Other.”<sup>5</sup>

The nature of the questions posed in this paper, particularly as they relate to cultural identity, have been dealt with in various degrees and detail by other writers. This being said however, the investigation of the Inuit situation in context of prevailing political theories, has rarely been addressed. Very little work has been done addressing the processes of cultural appropriation of the Inuit, the land, traditions, stories and production of cultural artifacts by the Canadian state, or of the ways in which the Inuit have managed to keep their culture alive despite the odds. This is perhaps a testament to the pragmatic worldview held by the Inuit—one shaped by a harsh climate and governed by strict rules for survival. It should also be noted that while pointing out the pitfalls of investigating an Aboriginal situation by utilizing Euro-centric philosophical traditions, I do exactly what I caution against, impose a Western ideology on a people who are not necessarily permitted their own voice in the matter. I have however included some Inuit voices as much as possible to illustrate arguments concerning Inuit art (in chapter three) and to comment on the implications of the establishment of Nunavut. Any further investigation of the issues

raised herein must be cognizant of the need to provide the opportunity for an Inuit voice, lest the ills visited on them as a people continue in perpetuity. That being said, however, is not to imply that the Inuit remain passive in these processes. It is assumed in this thesis that the Inuit desire and actively work towards survival as a cultural group and the right to self-determination. But why is it important for a cultural group to maintain their unique identity? Is the process of assimilation necessarily a 'bad thing'?

In the system of cultural assimilation in which the Canadian state has engaged, it can be argued that the values expressed are part of a shared value-system held by virtually all peoples; in theory/in their rhetoric, if not in practise. (Who will actually admit to not valuing human life?) Yet, as Hannah Arendt noted: "For though the common world is the common meeting ground of all, those who are present have different locations in it, and the location of one can no more coincide with the location of another than the location of two objects. Being seen and being heard by others derive their significance from the fact that everybody sees and hears from a different position. This is the meaning of public life..."<sup>6</sup>

The Canadian state and church has a tendency to believe that theirs is the 'right' action and in the interest of the people who are being acted upon, and would not necessarily see their actions, legislation or teaching as self-interested. However, the resulting lack of cultural moorings, the need to understand one's history and disproportionately high suicide rates amongst Inuit youth all speak to the importance of maintaining a strong sense of identity, and the consequences of enforced education systems or legislation which does not take into account traditional values. The Dene

declaration (Appendix A) also speaks to the link between cultural identity and self-determination.

As for the question as to why Aboriginal people do not eagerly assimilate into Western ways: “Would Christians ask for Algonquin approval before declaring the Holy Land, the Holy Land?...Would we tear down the Wailing Wall to build a golf course?”<sup>7</sup>

In looking at the means to combat the cultural decline of the Inuit, it is important to note that the institutionalized process of assimilation is not necessarily a preconceived and systematic process, per se—it is not a group of Euro-centric North Americans sitting around the table with the agenda heading ‘cultural genocide of the Inuit’. Rather Inuit colonial experience and assimilation finds its systematic expression in the individualistic, patriarchal, capitalist ideologies that dominates Euro-centric North American discourse. The Canadian government has created the systemic processes which promote cultural assimilation and as a result, Canada has acted as the primary colonial power in what is now deemed the Canadian North.

In this process however, Canada has also given the Inuit the tools to fight their complete assimilation into mainstream North American culture. It is the same government that has set up the systems which foster Inuit art which in turn allows it to flourish as an internationally respected art form. The government appreciates Inuit art for both its cultural value as imparting a sense of ‘Canada’, as well as for its economic impact.

In what follows, many of the arguments made concerning the Inuit can be applied to the Aboriginal experience in North America generally. As such, the term Aboriginal

will be used interchangeably to indicate Aboriginal experience as a whole, inclusive of the Inuit peoples. Specific experiences of the Inuit will be recognized as such.

Still, the Inuit have a culture and identity that is distinct, particularly from the Western values that have permeated and radically altered the traditional Inuit life in a very short order. It is therefore important to ask what are the means by which a cultural identity is produced and why is it important?

Hegemony is secured through ideas, institutions and material capabilities. The importance of this to the maintenance of a nation state as sovereign (itself a naturalized, modernist conception) is shown by Griffiths when he writes: "Those who conceive of Canadian culture primarily in terms of cultural industries and employment potential will be asked to think again. Canadians will instead be invited to regard culture and communications as utterly fundamental in securing their country against internal as well as external threats to its well-being and cohesion."<sup>8</sup>

In order to guard against this, and find sites of resistance to the dominant ideologies, it is imperative to expose the underlying processes that naturalize and thereby empower particular ideologies. By exposing the underbelly of the beast called domination, one diminishes the risk of reproducing the exclusionary strategies that are embodied in it.<sup>9</sup> The challenge becomes "...how to relinquish the obsession with a fixed identity opposed to all Others without abandoning whatever identity is needed, first to perceive and then to end very real and institutionalized forms of oppression."<sup>10</sup>

Approaching the questions raised by the relationship of identity, culture, communication and self-determination as it affects the Inuit of Canada's northern region

involves a review of some critical areas of existing theory. By examining the work of a variety of feminist theorists, the Frankfurt School, and writers such as Michael Shapiro, it is possible to frame the process of domination as it is internalized through the control of cultural products and to assert that cultural identity is related to symbolic control, not just a part of economic and political domination.

Shapiro construes the problem of ideology as a form of naturalizing what is actually human practice. He argues that it does so within a linguistic framework in general and as a problem of writing in particular.<sup>11</sup> Yet is it possible to impose his critique of representational practices as literary to the visual arts? How does, in this case, the act of carving for an Inuit artist expose the processes of colonialism? Shapiro also writes that the prevailing language mystifies practices, however, to be intelligible, a statement “must contain whatever mystifications are institutionalized in the realities that societies construct and administer.”<sup>12</sup>

There is a paradox that emerges from this investigation—while Canada has acted as a colonial power through the maintenance of symbolic control and of the processes that affirm cultural identity, it has also provided the tools that could allow the Inuit to reassert their identity. In other words, while the Canadian nation state requires sovereignty of the north which includes dominion over the Aboriginal peoples which inhabit the region to reaffirm its status within the modern global political system, some of the tools needed to assert itself on the international stage, such as a distinct cultural presence, also require the Inuit to maintain their traditional sense of Self. This walks a fine line between encouraging

'nationalistic' feelings that may prove contrary to state interests, and at the same time requiring a strong sense of Inuit tradition to feed Canada's own national interest.

Another paradox concerns the economic viability of Inuit art and its sense of place in the art world where it is seen as a legitimate form of artistic expression devoid of the taint of commercialism. Is it possible, or even desirable, to reconcile the fact that Inuit art boomed as a means to economic survival once the traditional ways of life were gone, while it is through the process of creating art that traditional values and crafts have been communicated to a world audience. These values are important in understanding why the Inuit do not resist the colonial influence as strongly as do other Aboriginal groups. It is also important to expose these values as a means to reassert Inuit identity since identity cannot be studied independently from the values of which inform behaviour.

The Inuit way of being, that is a way of conceptualizing the man-universe relationship, including social relationships and the relations to other living creatures forming an integral part of the self. This knowledge leads a shadowy existence today but may be recaptured as a source for modern Inuit, demonstrating a way of overcoming the false dichotomy of traditional and modern, which denies the Inuit their culture. This way of creatively getting to 'know' one's past means coming to terms with one's own cultural roots, instead of having to rely on the images created by foreigners.<sup>13</sup>

The pursuit of self-determination for the Inuit, by reasserting their identity through the processes of communication media and the production of art is a dynamic, not static event. Tradition, is not something that exists in the past alone, rather it informs the present situation and paves the way for thinking of the future. If tradition simply means that which is transmitted, it is constituted in everything a community remembers and values of the

past. “This memory does not just come naturally....but is forged in social context and continually reworked. In the discourse of critical cultural theory this understanding is the object of ongoing struggle for recognition and control.”<sup>14</sup>

So, wherein lies the path to liberation? Is it through assimilation, violent revolution, separation or pragmatic accommodation?<sup>15</sup> In the case of the Inuit, in light of their worldview and cultural principles, pragmatic accommodation would seem the obvious choice.

What can we, perhaps somewhat simplistically, say informs the Inuit worldview? It is generally recognized as pragmatic and one that privileges survival simply by virtue of the harsh climate and environment of the north.

The following elements or principles are central to the Inuit:

- 1) The principle of communality: everybody must contribute their part
- 2) The life principle: life is hard and may be sacrificed for life to go on
- 3) Every being contains its whole ancestry
- 4) Each form contains multitudes, no form is stable.<sup>16</sup>

This has several implications for lived experience. As Carpenter says: “I cannot imagine a concept more alien to Western thought, where conventional thinking insists that each identity occupies its own form and loses identity if that form changes.”<sup>17</sup>

Traditional values also teach not to speak out knowledgeably in front of elders.<sup>18</sup> Therefore it understandable why Inuit reserved their questions of the colonial powers who spoke knowledgeably about their capacity to produce art, of religion, of justice systems, and other colonial impositions. Traditionally, the role of women in Inuit culture, as those who provide nourishment and stability and transmit the wisdom of culture, has also been

highly valued.<sup>19</sup> It is through their role that a sense of community can begin to be formed. Shared memories, traditions, give participants a sense of meaning, of being part of a greater whole, and sets out a common ground from which to build a more extensive relationship.<sup>20</sup>

Guy Debord noted in Comments on the Society of the Spectacle: “When the spectacle stops talking about something for three days, it is as if it did not exist.”<sup>21</sup> Communicating this experience becomes a political act with implications for political action. If we subscribe to Hegel’s belief that without historical records there can be no political development or power then the process of documentation is paramount. However the question then remains one of what constitutes a valid historical record—an oral tradition, a visual representation? And who determines the validity of these records? History favours the dominant powers in its answers to these questions, but by asking them, also exposes some pathways to resistance. Shapiro quotes Adorno<sup>22</sup> by writing “...the unideological thought is that which does not permit itself to be reduced to ‘operational terms’ and instead strives solely to help the things themselves to that articulation to which they are otherwise cut off by the prevailing language.”<sup>23</sup> For Adorno, the thing has to be understood as something reflecting the social totality of which it is a part. “To understand the thing unideologically is to recover the historically developing way of life it reflects.”<sup>24</sup>

Art, in the context of this thesis, is dealt with not only for its economic impact, but also for its representational character. The production of cultural artifacts, while at once economically motivated and serving the interests of the dominant power (as in Adorno and

Horkheimer's analysis), also play a central role in the struggle for positive identity and self-determination. "It is the intervention in cultural politics, an on-going struggle over meaning, power and subjectivity."<sup>25</sup> As such, the creation of art is an exercise in the politics of representation, it is a means for the Inuit peoples to re-appropriate their past, understand their present and work toward the future. Ironically, it is the fate of Canada, as a nation searching for its own distinct national identity, to appropriate the image of the Other, to be a part of the Self.

What follows is a review of the theoretical underpinnings which are used to investigate the issues surrounding Inuit identity and self-determination as they are expressed in the creation of Inuit art and through communications media. By reviewing existing theoretical frameworks (chapter one) well as exposing the specific processes that inform the production and creation of the mass media (chapter two) and Inuit art (chapter three), the complex relationship between Canada and the Inuit people is revealed.

## 1. Identity, Community and Politics

Why is it important for people to maintain their identity? How is identity manifest, represented? How is identity used politically? What are the means by which a cultural identity is produced? And how is identity communicated which allows it to play a part in maintaining or destroying traditions and culture?

When examining the ideas of identity, community and politics through the lenses of various authors, it becomes overwhelmingly clear that the terms are inextricably interwoven and it is often difficult to determine where one begins and the other ends, if such a boundary is even possible or desirable. To borrow a quotation from Chandra Telpade Mohanty “With such a broad canvas, racial, sexual, national, economic, and cultural borders are difficult to demarcate, shaped politically as they are in individual and collective practice.”<sup>26</sup> Yet the concepts which accompany the above terms must be addressed if one is to move from theory into practice since the very idea of who one is colours perception and informs political consciousness on a variety of levels.

Theory cannot and does not exist in a vacuum. With the rapid transformation (within 50 years) from traditional to contemporary Inuit life, the effects of identity, community and politics are a part of daily experience. What are the cultural moorings for this group and how are they affected when the foundations of their culture shift and change? As one writer notes: “The concept of identity is reminiscent of other broad categories of identification, which in the service of theory help us make sense of what is going on in “real life”.”<sup>27</sup>

The every-day effects of identity speak to its importance. Identity is often manifest in stereotypes and manufactured identities, yet identity is also where memory resides, in this sense how we see things also has implications for how we know things.

The very close connection between sight and knowledge immediately becomes apparent when we realise that fields of vision and perceptual capacity are limited if certain things are not talked about, are not allowed to be talked about. Speech taboos become prohibitions on perception. And conversely, whatever is linguistically expressed acquire a new impact, a special quality, a kind of super-reality.<sup>28</sup>

The concept of identity can take on many forms. Obviously it is not possible to engage in a thorough examination of identity within the confines of this thesis, nor is it necessarily possible on a universal scale, yet it is necessary to address this issue in order to begin to understand one's place and the potential for change. In this sense we are taking on the project of exposing the process and function of identity in the manner of critical inquiry espoused by Shapiro and others.

So what are some of the form identity may take? Identity may be defined by others, it may be defined by oneself, it may be relational (as someone's daughter/ wife/mother) and it may be all of the above, or none. It is clear that there is no one thing that can be called 'identity'. So, where does this leave us?

Various writers offer varying perspectives of identity. Chandra Telpade Mohanty challenges the notion that biological location, specifically in terms of race or sex, are sufficient to assume a politicized oppositional identity. Patricia Hill-Collins<sup>29</sup> affirms the place of experience, garnered partially as a result of skin colour or gender, in political

action. Hill-Collins' emphasis on personal identity thus focuses on difference and offers a pluralistic approach to political consciousness, rather than Mohanty's emphasis on similarity to find a common context of struggle by means of collective agency.

Biology, whether in terms of sex or race, however is not the only site for identity. One's location in relation to a struggle can also inform how one is seen or sees the self.

Identity can also be politically and culturally inscribed. Legislation (i.e. regarding who is considered a citizen) based on the legislator's perception of various classes and cultures and of sex can also be a part of identity. This kind of identity is systemically formulated and can be imposed upon a group (for instance, national identity), or it can be withheld. It is here that the political significance and importance of 'identity' is apparent.

Mohanty outlines the legislation of identity (whether as an individual or community) in citing various acts of political legislation, which serve racist and sexist ideologies, such as US prostitution laws that formed part of the criteria for an Asian woman's entry into the country and were anchored in the lawmaker's perceptions of Asian women's morality. Mohanty also offers the example of South Africa where "Chinese people have the same status as Asians (or 'coloreds'), while Japanese are referred to as 'honorary whites'."<sup>30</sup>

In the case of Canada's Inuit, their identification as Aboriginal peoples in the late 1930s by the Canadian state brought with it a set of policies and legislation that violated their traditional lifestyle and set into motion an almost complete cultural decline. Through the processes of determining identity, a complete and radical shift in lifestyle occurred.

In the late '40s, most Inuit still lived in small family camps, used dogsleds for travel, lived in igloos during the winter, and divided their time between trapping white fox and hunting.

In 1939 a ruling by the Supreme Court had accorded Inuit the same rights to health, welfare and education as Canadian Indians. In 1947 family allowance cheques began to be issued, administered by the Hudson's Bay Company or the RCMP, followed by old-age pensions in 1948. During the 1950s, annual visits by a government ship administered medical surveys and tests for tuberculosis. In 1956 a program of low-cost housing was introduced. In 1955 a selection of children were sent to Chesterfield Inlet to be taught by the Grey Nuns until in 1959, federal day schools were built across the North. By 1970 the process of giving up a nomadic lifestyle and moving into permanent settlements was completed.<sup>31</sup>

With the rapid shift in lifestyle it is not difficult to see how Inuit identity would be called into question. The erasure of identity, through the teachings of the Church and State, left many Inuit uncertain as to their own traditions, status, and rights. For example, the law, as institutionalized by the nation-state was a foreign concept for Inuit. Under it, the status of Inuit was unclear. While the government told them (post-WW II) that they were Canadian citizens, Inuit could not vote in elections until 1962.

Omission and erasure of identity is also a consideration when looking at the issue of identity. Dale Spender and Berenice Carroll address the issue of erasure of women's history and the subsequent lack of a female genealogy. These authors note that the fact men have been viewed as the only 'thinkers' or 'producers' of history is not unintentional. Spender quotes Dorothy Smith when she points out women "have never controlled the material or social means to the making of a tradition among themselves or to acting as

equals in the ongoing discourse of intellectuals...The universe of idea, images and themes- the symbolic modes which are the general currency of thought-have either been produced by men or controlled by them."<sup>32</sup> In the same way, the Canadian state controlled the material means for the Inuit to survive and express themselves. Thus a lack of identity, and therefore a lack of support or affirmation, is an effective and fundamental tool of oppression, of women, or of cultures. Paradoxically, however, the Inuit have proven to be very adept at using the tools of expression wielded by the state to reclaim their own cultural identity, albeit in a slow and compromised manner.

## COMMUNITY

Community is intrinsically linked to the idea of identity and tends to include the identity of individuals, yet communities may take on an identity, which may be only a glimmer of the many individual identities within it.<sup>33</sup> A community may be seen as a source of strength, or as a source of separation. It may also embody the contradictions between these two. Paula Gunn Allen examines this interplay in "Deep Purple." The main character, Leela, searches for a community and becomes a member of a lesbian feminist organization. Yet she finds that it can be a source of strength and of severance as she encounters the multiple contexts of oppression and the contradictions of race and sexual orientation in being a Native lesbian in a white lesbian's world.<sup>34</sup>

When thinking of a community however, it is the potential for alliances that are at the fore. In Mohanty's argument, 'collective agency', 'imagined communities' and the potential for ~~action~~ within these formulations, emphasizes the potential strength of

community action. Mohanty finds that “women of all colors (including white women) can align themselves with and participate in these imagined communities.”<sup>35</sup> This kind of community is self-defined and offers some unifying threads which weave it together, those being “the political threads of opposition to forms of domination that are not only pervasive but also systemic.”<sup>36</sup>

Yet, if a community is brought together under established political practice, for instance, through legislation, (as Mohanty argues) or through opposition to legislation its potential force for enacting social change is diminished (reactive vs. proactive action). In Sexual Difference, the Milan Women's Bookstore Collective argues that uniting in an issue which caters to the law (i.e. abortion) is forced and not useful since it uses the structures of the fathers. In the same manner, it is not effective for Inuit to concede to European-inspired policy, to utilize existing Canadian legislation in an effort to realize self-determination. Rather, an Inuit-styled solution must be effected.

One agency that was established, in 1977, to address the need for an Inuit voice, was the Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC). This pan-Arctic organization was established in order to unite Inuit in various national communities (i.e. Canada, Greenland, United States) in order to take action against the outside world. The stimulus for the formation of the group was felt throughout the 1960s as various nation-states pushed northward in search of resources such as oil and gas. In this pursuit “...exploration leases were handed out by southern governments without consulting the Inuit”<sup>37</sup> with little concern for the potential damaging effects on the environment and resources of the North. It is little wonder, that a group whose close association with the

land as a source for food, would be spurred into action as their very survival was threatened. It is interesting to note that it is only fairly recently, in the late 80s, that the ICC has developed from stressing cultural specificity and indigenous rights, to becoming a clear and respected voice for Inuit participation in the world.<sup>38</sup>

Its importance as an organization may be very much because of its symbolic value for the Inuit. Through the ICC, the Inuit have formed ties across the Arctic that are symbolic rather than traditional, since distance often precluded Inuit from traveling from one group to the next across the vast territory of the North. Still, in the modern era, the ICC draws its strength from the symbolic realm through Inuit traditions that bind the various communities together, and from its political work in the modern day context of a Euro-centric nation state system.

Understanding 'community' therefore also involves understanding how it is developed. Based on Dale Spender's argument, it becomes evident that there is a need for a temporal<sup>39</sup> as well as a physical community, for communities who share a collective identity to converse through the ages. This kind of genealogy is essential if one is to sustain the effort to overcome oppression. To hear about the struggles of others is to understand the context of current struggles. By keeping a culture and history alive through an active engagement in that culture, is to understand what 'we' are and how we are in the world.

Given an Inuit tendency towards pragmatic adaptation, Dybbroe points out that critics have argued that the means for Inuit to reaffirm their identity is within the confines of modernity, by arguing for a notion of principle "... by which to overcome the

opposition between past and present that under present conditions of Western domination leaves no alternative but to follow suit with respect to westernized modernization strategies, to find one's place in a universe governed by Western values."<sup>40</sup>

The concept of community is also useful in addressing specific issues of oppression. It is insupportable however when one form of analyses seeks to universalize it's own strategies and offer it up as *the* way to social change. A privileged position provides an author with blinders to multiple contexts of oppression while she persists in showing her way to equality (as if it were the only goal) as the only path. Recognizing these limitations, in effect 'de-naturalizing' our perspectives, is a start to being able to overcome them.

Shapiro addresses the need to expose the processes that naturalize and universalize ideologies and thus investigate situations in the context that they exist. He notes "...when we speak of such former ages, our style of discourse differs from that of the age's contemporary believers in these identities and models of agency."<sup>41</sup> This is to say that where we are in time and space inform our views. Therefore it is important to look at the process that naturalizes an ideology rather than simply accepting something as natural. "Who and what we are as citizens can be seen as a production or imposition rather than as an expression of a perennial essence when placed in historical perspective."<sup>42</sup>

So why is the study of identity a political endeavour?

"Meaning is always political. It is located in the social networks of power knowledge relations which give society its current form."<sup>43</sup> Foucault notes in the History of Sexuality that the act of identifying as a community, a 'population', is a practice, not

just a description, or as Shapiro notes “a way of treating collectivities which is connected to modernity’s commitments to how collective and individual compartments are to be organized and regulated.”<sup>44</sup> Therefore, identification as a group has very real organizational and legislative implications. “Having an identity means that you can act on your surroundings...If the social relations in which individuals and groups engage are not meaningful in this sense, because people lack political, cultural, institutional, linguistic and educational control, the result may be a negative identity.”<sup>45</sup> Specifically, this view can account for the real life legacies of addiction and suicide that plague most northern communities.

In another example—addressed at the level of the socio-symbolic or the strictly legislative form of politics, the issue of who has a voice cries out to be examined. For instance, who in a perceived community, can speak for that segment of the population? Can the Canadian government speak for the Inuit's best interest or is there a collective voice for Inuit concerns? Cummins and Whiteduck point out that a sense of identity and the values that result, become political when they impact on areas such as land claims. “...when Native religion states that a Native burial ground should take precedence over a golf course or a provincial park...the matter is no longer simply religious; it is political and economic as well.”<sup>46</sup>

The theory espoused by the Milan Women's Bookstore collective is useful as an interpretive framework in that it examines power through language and cultural practice and finds “It often happens that language imposes on us the domination of others’ experiences and judgments in many areas.”<sup>47</sup> Mohanty points out the political construction

of identities through legislation. Dale Spender and Paula Gunn Allen address the politics of memory and who is remembered. Throughout the analyses which inform this essay, strategies of how to displace or lay bare the center—which is typically (though not exclusively) the European, patriarchal, heterosexual site of oppression—and analyses of the various sites of oppression (in terms of race or sex or compulsory heterosexuality) are undertaken in order to find possible sites of resistance and thus effect social change.

When does 'identity' happen? According to Glissant, "Identity will be achieved when communities attempt to legitimate their right to possession of a territory through myth or the revealed word. Such an assertion can predate its actual accomplishment by quite some time."<sup>48</sup> The role of Inuit art and communications, in this way, is significant in that it reaffirms identity. Actual land claims, however, are not possible for the Inuit in light of the modern era of nationhood as is evident in the terms and conditions surrounding the creation of Nunavut. In terms of Inuit thought also, the concept of owning land seems a bit bizarre, and yet the necessity of negotiating land use is a necessity for the Inuit to continue the process of keeping their culture alive.

So whose identity is it anyway? The idea of 'North' and 'South' has been addressed in the introductory paragraphs to this thesis. It is only appropriate, and necessary that we ask, "What is Canada?"

The imaginary Canada is all peaceful, all orderly, all British freedom and justice, all scenery and royalty, all comfortable and quiet, all Mounties and mountains, and a fine upstanding member of the United Nations, an independent country much admired for its cooperation in peacekeeping around the world. As far as most

foreigners are concerned, the biggest problem in Canada is the weather.<sup>49</sup>

Canada is also a player on the international political stage, a recognized nation-state in the most widely accepted views and operations of international relations which holds to the notion (amongst others) that nation-states have the right to self-determination (in theory if not always in practice), yet this system of international relations does little to recognize questions of self-determination within a proscribed states' borders. In a specifically Canadian context, the questions of self-determination by indigenous peoples, as a result of the colonization of Canada, is at stake.

Canada is a fragmented nation, with Quebec, Aboriginal issues and regionalism challenging the sovereignty of the state. Within this context, Canada, as governed by Ottawa, endeavours to project a coherent international identity in the global political arena. This is done in a variety of ways for example by using a system of symbols deemed to be representative of a unique Canadian culture, such as Inuit artworks. The construct of a nation state, which has been naturalized throughout modernity, is not questioned by the perpetrators of statehood, yet, as Geertz argues, this process of naturalization must be laid bare if we are to understand how powers exude control and impose their will.

Power, defined as the capacity to make decisions by which others are bound, with coercion its expression, violence its foundation, and domination its aim, is the rock to which, heir despite itself to the sixteenth century, most of modern political theory clings—the great simple that remains through all sophistications and to which all reasonings, whether of justice, liberty, virtue, or order, must eventually return. This cycle of terms, and related ones like control, command, strength, and subjection, defines the political as a domain of social action. Politics, finally, is about mastery...

This view is hardly wrong, even for places where the horses are docile. But, as the evocations of Kipling suggests, it is a view, and, like all views, it is partial and grows out of a specific tradition of interpretation of historical experience. It is not given in the sheer nature of things (whatever that may be), a brute fact brutally apprehended, but is an extended, socially constructed gloss, a collective representation. Other traditions of interpretation, usually less self-conscious, produce other glosses, different representations.<sup>50</sup>

Using Geertz's argument, another tradition of interpretation which produces another 'gloss' can be found through the production of cultural artifacts and communication systems which reaffirm a particular socially constructed history.

It is through understanding how a thing is represented, that this process can be exposed. Adorno and Horkheimer offer up some possibilities (which will be examined later), as does Shapiro in his writing about visual representational practises.

"...[P]hotography plays a politically radical role when it opens up forms of questions about power and authority which are closed or silenced within the most frequently circulated and authoritative discursive practises."<sup>51</sup> On the question of visual representation, Shapiro also calls on Walter Benjamin's observations when he notes: "To shatter a traditional viewing practice and hold up for scrutiny what usually goes unnoticed has a tendency, according to Benjamin, to enhance one's political sensibilities."<sup>52</sup> It is an important investigation in the Inuit context since as Dybbroe argues, the maintenance of cultural identity is a process relating to symbolic control.<sup>53</sup>

By looking at the processes at work in the mass media and in the production of Inuit art, it is possible to examine how the Inuit of the North can maintain their cultural

identity, while existing in the realities of the modern world. Indeed, it is a paradoxical, yet symbiotic relationship that exists between the Inuit and the Canadian state.

Television was invented in 1923 and, in a relatively short time, the first broadcast took place in 1939, heralding a communications revolution that significantly impacted on the prevailing culture. “As many observers have pointed out, these changes reverberated throughout various counter-culture and avant-garde spheres in the early part of the twentieth century, including art, poetry, and popular music.”<sup>54</sup>

It is in this context that the political theory of the Frankfurt School and critique of Adorno and Horkheimer concerning cultural production took form. Their work, although written as a European narrative, can be used to frame the situation of the Inuit in relation to their control over a means to produce the artifacts that in turn represent their cultural identity—as well as to examine the hegemonic processes at work in cultural production. Adorno and Horkheimer frame these kinds of questions in terms of class structures, leaving oppressions based on race and sex outside of their critique, however, their analyses of the processes of cultural commodification is useful in examining the state of Inuit sculpture as a traditional form of cultural expression or as a commodified product used to represent a uniquely Canadian presence in a global arena.

In examining the role of the cultural industry as a part of Adorno and Horkheimer’s critical project, their debt to Marx is clear. But what for them started as an examination of the economic interests at work in the cultural sphere, can also be examined as an analysis of the modes of domination that are at work in society. It may be because of the deeply rooted character of this domination that Adorno and Horkheimer are

pessimistic about the potential for change, yet their argument suggests some sites of resistance are possible. For this possibility, it is a useful theoretical framework in trying to understand the paradox of Inuit art which is at once motivated by economics, yet through this economic impetus, also reaffirms the cultural identity of the Inuit people.

Adorno and Horkheimer's roots are in Marxism in terms of the conceptual tools that it provides for a critical analysis of consciousness, (i.e. consciousness as false consciousness or as alienated). Marx's writings are valued because he viewed the conflicts involved in capitalism through their effects on the consciousness of those who participate in it. An analysis of this scope however remains fragmented and necessarily unresolved.

In the same way that Marx suggests capitalism is a whole process of manipulation with a look at how the proletariat internalize its processes, Adorno and Horkheimer note that contemporary mass culture can not use the manipulated consciousness of the people as the ultimate data of critical analysis, what had to be understood were the deeper trends which benefited from the manipulation.<sup>55</sup> In the case of the Inuit and the Canadian state, it is safe to say that Canada benefits from the manipulation of the Inuit identity. It is in the nation-state's best interest (for reasons that will be discussed in the next chapter) that the Inuit project an image of their own while subscribing to the prevailing European world-view.

By focusing on the mode by which ideas and beliefs are transmitted by popular culture and responding to the question of the control of leisure-time, Adorno and Horkheimer reflect the conditions that made a theory of culture and cultural forms imperative. Adorno and Horkheimer, by articulating their analysis, were responding to the

emerging mass media/entertainment industry and the blatant cultural manipulation of the Nazis in an attempt to find a site of resistance to the prevailing capitalist hegemony.

Yet for Adorno and Horkheimer, simply taking a Marxist approach to the problem is not adequate. "They do not appropriate Marxism as a closed theory of orthodox truth but believe that as concrete social reality changes Marxist theory must become self-reflexive."<sup>56</sup> Where Marx was concerned with issues such as workdays up to 18 hours long, the changing social reality left room for so called leisure-time. It is this development that Adorno and Horkheimer address in their examination of entertainment and the culture industry that provides for the management of this time.

This point is particularly interesting when superimposed on the life of the Inuit. For a traditionally nomadic culture that relied on the land for sustenance the modern-day shift to a sedentary lifestyle has proven traumatic. One means of filling the void, temporally and economically, as proposed by the Canadian government in the late 1940s, was to engage in artistic initiatives, particularly carving and eventually printmaking.<sup>57</sup>

Orthodox Marxism relegates culture to the superstructure of society, and derives an analysis of the form and content of the superstructure from the base, yet this view is inadequate for Adorno and Horkheimer since it denies the specificity of various spheres in everyday life.<sup>58</sup> In dealing with the realm of what is termed the cultural industry, Adorno and Horkheimer attempt to analyze a specific sphere through an interdisciplinary approach, while at the same time acknowledging that any sphere is intrinsically linked to the social totality in which it is situated. This approach, by trying to assimilate these various spheres remains somewhat fragmented and incomplete mirroring the nature of

contemporary society. Products of “intellectual, artistic culture could be regarded as neither simply the reflection of specific class interests nor the output of a wholly autonomous sphere.”<sup>59</sup> Classical political economy is no longer the sole explanatory factor, albeit a major one, on which Adorno and Horkheimer hinge their analysis.

Their debt to Marx is acknowledged throughout, starting with their premise that “[a]musement under late capitalism is the prolongation of work.”<sup>60</sup> For Adorno and Horkheimer; however, this explanation is too simplistic. Culture cannot be analyzed in isolation from its place in the social totality. “The contrast between the social and private is blurred when mere waiting becomes a calling and when work is nothing but waiting for work.”<sup>61</sup> The class implications of their cultural theory are evident, but the possibility of transcendence also arises out of their critique.

Can, for example, Inuit sculpture be used as a means to reassert Inuit cultural sovereignty keeping in mind the idea that art explores new ways of communicating, reviving and preserving traditional cultural knowledge, as well as expressing pertinent contemporary issues? Or has it simply become a commodity? (This will be discussed in greater detail in chapter three)

Marxism can be viewed as reductionist in that it reduces the cultural sphere to the economic interests it serves. In this regard, Adorno and Horkheimer are in partial agreement with Marx, yet at the same time acknowledge the capacity for art to transcend class distinctions.<sup>62</sup> Herein lies the potential for resistance within the cultural sphere. The distinctions between ‘genuine’ art (in a traditional sense) and the culture industry must be discussed in this context.

Marx, in his emphasis on political economy did not specifically address the transcendent character of 'genuine' art, while his capacity to integrate the notion of culture industry is evident. Where 'genuine' art transcends the influence of political economy, the opposite is true of the culture industry. "[E]ach of them [the entertainment manufacturers] is a model of the huge economic machinery which has always sustained the masses, whether at work or at leisure-which is akin to work."<sup>63</sup>

Despite framing the issue in economic terms, Adorno and Horkheimer transform their analysis of contemporary society into a critique of domination, which also serves the interests involved in economic exploitation.<sup>64</sup> That this is so may be linked to the nature of culture and artistic expression itself, which has communicative potential.

Held notes that the Frankfurt School notion of culture is underdeveloped, therefore it cannot be viewed as wielding inexorable explanatory powers.<sup>65</sup> But this is not surprising. Horkheimer's question "...what is that hidden faculty in every individual to which art appeals?"<sup>66</sup> is akin to "what is the meaning of life?" Adorno acknowledged no possibility of reconciliation between complex and opposing forces within an entity. "The aesthetic may contain a moment of transcendence or it may be integrated into existing conditions of domination."<sup>67</sup> Mitchell adopts the same line of criticism when she notes that "... the process of transformation involves both accommodation and resistance."<sup>68</sup>

This is abundantly clear in the case of Inuit art that serves as an airport souvenir and a legitimate art form that transcends the conditions of its creation and challenges the very structures which allow it to exist. However, Inuit art, in either of these functions, still seem to satisfy a noticeably contemporary quest for truth, authenticity and spirituality that

is deemed to resonate in traditional cultures.<sup>69</sup> Given the temporal proximity of contemporary Inuit to their traditional lifestyle (a lifestyle that is still within the memories of many elders in the community), this art form seems to fulfill the conditions of this aesthetic quest. While the answer may not be clear, the process of examination yields up evidence of how art serves various ends.

That art can be subversive, or bend to the status quo is known, as are various techniques that serve these ends. Art is subversive because it calls into question the perceived unity of concept/object, idea/material world.<sup>70</sup> In the same manner, unifying these elements, such as may be found in the existing system of the Inuit art cooperative movement, may serve the status quo.

In examining the role of art, the character of the individual must be addressed. What role does individuality play in determining the effect of particular art forms and how can individual consciousness be shaped? Within the capitalist system with its fully formed proletariat, "...man has lost himself..." and as such, "[the proletariat] cannot liberate itself without destroying its own living conditions."<sup>71</sup> This begs the question: Does Inuit art transcend its economic function (as a curio, an object of souvenirs), or is it even desirable that it be understood for its aesthetic value in the Western art tradition?

If, according to Marx, individuality has been subverted within a capitalist system, Adorno and Horkheimer argue for a similar unity by noting that "...culture now impresses the same stamp on everything."<sup>72</sup> This unity however is by no means a positive one. As Mills argues, "In modern society human beings are yoked together in an industrial rhythm yet cannot speak to one another...each one is exactly like all the others and all are

rendered impotent.”<sup>73</sup> In terms of the cultural analysis which is attempted, this same impotence is recognized in the cultural industry where “... art is no longer communicative.”<sup>74</sup>

The individual can also be viewed through the filter of ‘genuine’ art or in the culture industry.

That factor in a work of art which enables it to transcend reality certainly cannot be detached from style; but it does not consist of the harmony actually realized, of any doubtful unity of form and content, within and without, of individual and society; it is to be found in those features in which discrepancy appears: in the necessary failure of the passionate striving for identity. Instead of exposing itself to this failure in which the style of the great work of art has always achieved self-negation, the inferior work has always relied on its similarity with others-on a surrogate identity.<sup>75</sup>

Where “...the great artists have retained a mistrust of style,”<sup>76</sup> popular culture performers rely on an industry-made ‘look’ and style to fit into the cultural mould, “personality scarcely signifies anything more than shining white teeth and freedom from body odour and emotions.”<sup>77</sup> These performers have denied their individuality, subscribing instead to the status quo. It is interesting to note that individuality has also been repressed in the making of much of the Inuit art projects, particularly those destined for airport souvenir shops. This lack of artistic identity, which flies in the face of western art traditions, also leads to the idea that Inuit art is simply about the past and animals.<sup>78</sup> In this sense, Inuit, as with other North American participants in the culture industry “...belong to the industry long before it displays them; otherwise they would not be so eager to fit in.”<sup>79</sup> Yet due to the participatory character of the culture industry, it appeals to a variety of

classes by providing an equality of opportunity for escape from the mundane realities of everyday life. This escape however becomes more significant for some classes than for others, as some escape the drudgery of the unemployment line, while others attend premiere screenings and gala events.

With regard to great art, examples of which Horkheimer identifies as Joyce's or Picasso's: "The consciousness behind them is rather one cut off from society as it is, and forced into queer, discordant forms. These inhospitable works of art, by remaining loyal to the individual as against the infamy of existence, thus retain the true content of previous great works of art..."<sup>80</sup> Herein lies the emancipatory potential of art, yet neither Horkheimer nor Adorno are optimistic about the possibility for resistance because of the constant assimilation of the individual into the dominant unity.

In the Inuit context, this is exemplified by the resistance that is felt to Inuit artists who carve objects that speak of the political realities and ugliness of life in the North. The challenges brought forward by alcohol, suicide and unemployment do not sell well in southern art markets and are actively discouraged, yet on the occasion that such art is created and accepted (however minimally) the transcendent power of the piece is realized as in, for example *Woman Passed Out* by Inuit artist, Ovilu Tunnillie.<sup>81</sup> The mere fact that the piece depicts what it does is a political statement, despite the artist's protestations that the piece is not meant to be a political commentary. As such, the form does the very thing it protests, and thus functions as an active critique of the social realities of Inuit daily life and the structures that allow it. It is, what Shapiro calls, a "...spillover effect in the imaginative process."<sup>82</sup>

That "human beings are free to recognize themselves in works of art in so far as they have not succumbed to the general leveling"<sup>83</sup> may signal the potential for art to transcend class interests, it also has the potential to be subverted to these interests. Adorno and Horkheimer assert that "The ruthless unity in the culture industry is evidence of what will happen in politics"<sup>84</sup> The question becomes how are individuals 'leveled' to serve the interests of the dominant powers? The mechanization and reproductive techniques available to the culture industry serve this need well by 'hammer[ing] into every brain...that continuous friction, the breaking down of all individual resistance, is the condition of life in this society."<sup>85</sup>

The dominant powers' use of technical means to reproduce the status quo fits in with the economic, political and cultural goals of domination. This totality is served when "...mechanization has such power over a man's leisure and happiness, and so profoundly determines the manufacture of amusement goods, that his experiences are inevitably afterimages of the work process itself."<sup>86</sup>

That the culture industry strives for perfect reproduction, even of the individual, is evident in any movie that seeks a flawless reproduction of the outside world. But to what end? Adorno and Horkheimer assert that "The more intensely and flawlessly his techniques duplicate empirical objects, the easier it is today for the illusion to prevail that the outside world is the straightforward continuation of that presented on the screen."<sup>87</sup>

What makes art resistant is its capacity to sustain the discrepancy between its image of reality and actuality.<sup>88</sup> In the culture industry, there is no such discrepancy. Everything strives to project reality as perfectly as possible.

For example, in March 1993, Tri-Star, a film production company from the United States attempted to shoot a film on location in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. The film script called for the action to take place in a Montana town, which, after scouting several locations in North America, the company decided that a certain site in Winnipeg would come closest to replicating the ideal Montana town. Even with this location (despite the obvious fact that it wasn't in Montana) there was a significant problem which would defeat the search for an 'authentic' Montana look. Tri-Star thought that the trees at the location would not be 'real', and offered the city of Winnipeg \$1,000,000 to remove the 48 or so trees from the area. By a vote of 8-7, the City Council decided against the removal of the trees, which caused Tri-Star to remove its offer to shoot the film in Winnipeg and thus, millions of dollars which would have poured into the city's coffers as a result, vanished. Protests over the city's decision rang loud and clear, especially from offices such as the provincial and federally funded Cultural Industry Development Office.

This incident reveals that Adorno and Horkheimer's theory about the culture industry is not far removed from practice. When a popular film company decides to shoot a film in a country which is supposed to be more 'real' (with a few alterations) than the actual location it is trying to evoke, the capital motives are clear. Why not shoot the film in Montana? Because the cost of absolute perfection is too high, but a reasonable falsification, in a country with a favourable exchange rate, supports the industry and the ideology which informs it in a much more beneficial manner.

That the forms of domination also tend to be economic forces is not incidental, since a premise of Adorno and Horkheimer's analysis is that the cultural industry serves

the status quo. Yet the question remains whether the means by which these interests are conveyed would serve the prevailing ideology regardless of its nature since the culture industry and 'genuine' art are communicative forms. This paradox is addressed in the following passage from Adorno: "In its attempts to manipulate the masses the ideology of the culture industry itself becomes as internally antagonistic as the very society which it aims to control. The ideology of the culture industry contains the antidote to its own lie."<sup>89</sup>

At what point is the irrationality of the culture industry exposed? The internal logic of capitalism, which rests on the promise of wealth or at least sustenance, does not allow for this kind of exposure. In Adorno and Horkheimer's formulation, the culture industry similarly cheats on its promises "...the promise, which is actually all the spectacle consists of is illusory; all it actually confirms is that the real point will never be reached."<sup>90</sup> Their pessimism is clear.

Adorno and Horkheimer are extremely critical of the potential for resistance to the dominance of the capitalist system, especially through the mechanisms which culture provides. Can, in the thinking of the Frankfurt School (for whom the term cultural industry "was formulated specifically to underline the contradiction between the idea of culture and industrial production."<sup>91</sup>) the paradox between the cultural production of Inuit artifacts and the survival of the culture, be resolved?

Marx's shadow is evident throughout their analysis. For instance, it is argued that Marx's analysis of commodity fetishism achieves much the same as the Adorno and Horkheimer's analysis of cultural industry. The simplicity of Marx's analysis allows for an

examination for the cultural sphere by “establishing a dichotomy between appearance and concealed reality (without the former necessarily being false) which can be taken up in the analysis of ideology.”<sup>92</sup>

Where then are the differences? It can be said that by expanding Marx's analysis, Adorno and Horkheimer show that domination in contemporary society is manifest in the reduction of all activities, not only work but also those which bracket the work day, into depersonalized and instrumental forms.<sup>93</sup> It is the specificity of this analysis that lends itself to discovering specific sites of resistance.

The mystification of the process, for Marx in economic terms, for Adorno and Horkheimer within an aesthetic framework can be uncovered. For Shapiro, this is essential. However, even dissent is allowed in the dominant system. "Even when the public does rebel against the pleasure industry, all it can muster is that feeble resistance which that very industry has inculcated in it."<sup>94</sup> Yet it cannot be denied that all the elements of the culture industry existed prior to the establishment of the industry. Therefore, it seems plausible that a reorganization of these elements may lead to the disorganization of the cultural industries.

Despite the seeming integration of dissent into the dominant system, full-fledged resistance that undermines the dominant powers however, is harder to discern in Adorno and Horkheimer's analysis than in the revolutionary program Marx had outlined. As the individual is united into the process that dominates the individual, “the corresponding loss of critical insight destroys autonomous subjectivity and therefore the revolutionary potential of those who are to achieve liberation through the transformation of nature.”<sup>95</sup>

For Adorno and Horkheimer, there is little faith in the potential of the proletariat to overcome their subjugation to dominant powers. "The triumph of advertising in the culture industry is that consumers feel compelled to buy and use its products even though they see through them."<sup>96</sup>

While art may have emancipatory potential, the perfection with which the economic powers manipulate the masses ensures the domination of the culture industry as the means for perpetuating the status quo. "The idea of 'fully exploiting' available technical resources and the facilities for aesthetic mass consumption is part of the economic system which refuses to exploit resources to abolish hunger."<sup>97</sup> In this manner, the paradox of the Inuit struggle for identity and self-determination, pursued in a characteristically pragmatic way through the artistic and technological means available to them, can be brought to light.

The need to conform is often informed by the very issue of survival. "Once his particular brand of deviation from the norm has been noted by the industry, he belongs to it as does the land-reformer to capitalism. Realistic dissidence is the trademark of anyone who has a new idea in business."<sup>98</sup> In light of this, Inuit art as an economic force and as a characteristic response of the people is easily comprehended.

On a small note of optimism, Adorno and Horkheimer acknowledge that it has become increasingly difficult to keep people in this subservient state. As the same stories and clichés are repeated on television and the same tune is played on the radio, it is easy to conceive of a general disillusionment in society. "The rate at which they are reduced to stupidity must not fall behind the rate at which their intelligence is increasing."<sup>99</sup>

Still, by identifying a specific sphere of domination, the cultural sphere, their analysis may open up avenues for resistance. Modern art that resists assimilation; Inuit art that tackles tough questions of Northern life; and works that shock and provoke or reproduce the abyss between the individual and environment can be cited in this regard. Yet the overwhelming argument which Adorno and Horkheimer provide pessimistically notes that the “basis on which technology acquires power over society is the power of those whose economic hold over society is greatest.”<sup>100</sup>

It is a pessimism that is shared by other critics in the art world. “As long as the terms of reference are in the hands of the dominant society (as represented by our large institutions), the status quo will resist challenge: from the media, academics and artists.”<sup>101</sup>

While the technological means of mass reproduction may lie in the hands of the status quo, the use of technology could also be cited as a means to provoke change.<sup>102</sup> With the increasing use of personal communications devices, such as the fax and especially computer networks, it is possible to disseminate personal information on a much greater scale, which is, (as of yet) unlimited and unregulated.

Yet Adorno and Horkheimer see little hope to break out of the cycle of domination. Within their analysis, revolutionary potential is dimmed; an analysis which can be used to account for Inuit pragmatism in response to the pressures of adaptation to modernity. “The development of capitalism with its eclipse of liberalism integrates the working class into mass society. The proletariat is no longer the 'subject-object' of history whose interest is universal emancipation. The emergence of the authoritarian mass society creates a closed, one-dimensional, administered society.”<sup>103</sup> With the total subjugation of

mass consciousness to the machinations of the dominant powers via the culture industry, the view that the proletariat is the source of liberation is called into question. Their analysis may be seen as a lament for the missed possibility of revolutionary change.<sup>104</sup>

Horkheimer and Adorno sound a pessimistic note, though their total despair is not evident. In advocating a voice for 'genuine' art as a source of intangible communicative power, some hope is found.

One day we may learn that in the depths of their hearts, the masses, even in fascist countries, secretly knew the truth and disbelieved the lie, like catatonic patients who make known only at the end of their trance that nothing has escaped them. Therefore it may not be entirely senseless to continue speaking a language that is not easily understood.<sup>105</sup>

This language is not (for Horkheimer and Adorno) strictly the language of political economy. While this may be useful in determining the nature of the dominant powers and the means by which their power is manifest, Adorno and Horkheimer argue that it does not fully explain the transmission of the prevailing ideology and the penetration of the market into the various spheres of life. Despite Adorno and Horkheimer's reliance on Marx's conceptual tools, they have expanded the critical project to provide specific analysis of the dominant ideology and helped identify specific sites of resistance within it. The struggle remains, as do the fundamental contradictions in society that elude any totally integrated and wholly explanatory power. Through their critique, the tools to examine the paradox of Inuit art as economically necessary and culturally subversive are available.

## 2. Communicating Identity, The Inuit and media in Canada

The importance of communication is pivotal to understanding how identity is conveyed since it is our ‘myths’—the stories that we create and re-create—that allow us to understand what we are and how we are in the world. By investigating the process of communication, whether through an oral tradition, a visual medium, or in the context of modern mass media, we can begin to see how identity can be simultaneously enforced or destroyed.

The history of Aboriginal cultural decline is not new. But one of the means to combat the potential extermination of Inuit culture is. As a result of advances in technology, coupled with the recognition of its political utility, the mass media may provide a means of salvaging a threatened culture. Advocacy groups seeking to preserve and promote Inuit culture are calling for the existence of Aboriginal media as part of their bid for self-determination. It is ironic that the forces, which have necessitated their unity, may also be the same forces that have given them the tools to resist assimilation. This paradox is mirrored in the utility of the mass media where, as is noted in the Therrien Committee on Extension of Service to Northern and Remote Communities “...television is at once the most damaging threat to native objectives and the most potentially feasible means of achieving them.”<sup>106</sup>

One could argue then that communications technologies are implicated in all spheres of human interaction—from production to security to knowledge and culture, and that “changes in modes of communication have significant implications for the evolution

and character of society and politics at a world level.”<sup>107</sup> Take for example the proliferation of ideology enabled by communication media worldwide—the use of tape recorders during the Iranian revolution, USSR and samizdat (the underground press), global e-mail and even US action movies. Yet despite this impact on society it seems that studies of transformations of the system are rare.<sup>108</sup>

Whether it is a look at the shift from oral traditions (found in Inuit culture) to the creation of the Internet, it becomes apparent that a change in the means by which a culture is communicated has significant effect on its ability to survive. The role of the media in the interpretation and creation of what is deemed ‘reality’ is unquestionably relevant to the issue of cultural preservation. It is important to remember that the media is a device, a tool in the service of those who use it, and as such carries with it the bias and goals of those who wield it.

There may be a tendency to dismiss the media and its power to transmit meaning as pure illusion, a fantasyland of obtuse sitcoms and ‘talking heads’ news anchors. While this argument could be made to undermine the credibility and thus the influence of the media, Thompson reminds us that “The symbolic forms through which we express ourselves and understand others do not constitute some ethereal other world which stands opposed to what is real: rather, they are partially constitutive of what, in our societies, ‘is real’.”<sup>109</sup> As such, reality, and thus culture are conveyed and created through the communication process itself.<sup>110</sup> Various authors support that this is so in a variety of contexts that concern the media. For instance Edward Said described Orientalism as “the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage—and even

produce—the Orient politically...ideologically, imaginatively” through a network of writing about, describing and ruling.<sup>111</sup>

While this topic has been dealt with in other literature, it is important to review how communication serves dominant ideology. People such as the Inuit have throughout history been silenced, that is, denied access to expression—words and images—that are not endorsed by the dominant (status quo) thought and action. But what is the mechanism of this silence? It bears mentioning that there are several strategies employed to imposed this silence. Oppressed groups are routinely denied access to the means and materials of expression, either systematically or systemically (i.e. by denying literacy education). Work that is created may also be ‘disappeared’ (i.e. allowed to go out of print by publishers, denied funding).<sup>112</sup> MacKinnon argues that social inequality is not only denied by withholding access to the means of expression, but also “substantially created and enforced—that is done-through words and images.”<sup>113</sup>

In the Canadian context, this systematic discipline takes on a silencing role by appropriating the voice of the Aboriginal people. “Self-determination and sovereignty include human, political land, religious, artistic and moral rights. Taking ownership of these stories involves a claim to Aboriginal title over images, culture and stories.”<sup>114</sup> For indigenous people, the agents of silence have been the church, the state and the education system.<sup>115</sup>

The fact that the state is interested in the role of the media is not to be overlooked. The domestic role of the media, as a means to influence public opinion, or as a legitimating factor, are also important roles to investigate since these factors are capable of influencing

a regime in how it conducts its affairs and maintains its influence over the populace. The fact that these are important questions is evident in the emphasis various governments have given to the media.<sup>116</sup>

What becomes evident from these sources is the very real impact the media has on identity and how it can influence the course of events. As such, it is of concern for the state and the Inuit as a means of achieving self-determination and cultural survival.

David MacDonald's comments reflect the interests that are represented in the Canadian media and raise the issue of media control. In the paper "Choice and Justice in Canadian Television" the former Secretary of State and Minister of Communications notes that "Freedom of expression...has become a cloak for vested interests, not only economic, but equally of race, sex, and status. Most existing capacity, and new capacity, is controlled by the same narrow sub-cultures."<sup>117</sup> Following from this "economic and cultural control are becoming indistinguishable."<sup>118</sup> The political utility of the media is assured from both sides of this political equation.

The conflict between the traditional oral culture of the Inuit and the highly documented cultural devices of the European settlers is also relevant and can be addressed in the contemporary context as a question of access to the media. The quantitative question, such as how many Inuit wield the creative power in the media must also be seen in its qualitative aspects. The question of who is speaking for the Inuit becomes just as important as what is said.<sup>119</sup> A biased report on Inuit concerns may be just as damaging as no representation at all. Edmund Carpenter illustrates this notion by exposing the view

that “We [sic] use media to destroy cultures, but first we use media to create a false record of what we are about to destroy.”<sup>120</sup>

Rita Cadieux, in addressing a CRTC seminar on the question of balance in broadcasting noted that the problem of balance had two characteristics. First, she noted that some minority groups are both stereotyped and underrepresented in broadcast media.<sup>121</sup> That stereotyping is detrimental to minority issues is seen in Ward Churchill's explanation of the issue. “The stereotypes assume a documented ‘authenticity’ in the public consciousness...For stereotyped and stereotyper alike, it becomes dehumanizing and a tool to justify murder under the guise of aesthetic freedom...”<sup>122</sup> From another point of view, “It is vital for the international public to understand that we Inuit artists will overcome the old-fashioned perceptions that writers who have never set foot on the tundra have created.”<sup>123</sup>

A second type of imbalance, according to Cadieux, dealt with the nature of the coverage received such as occurs when the broadcast media present a biased version of reality. In order to address the problem, Cadieux recommended an integrative approach by hiring minorities in the broadcasting industry in order to achieve a balance that is not imposed from without but originates from within the industry.<sup>124</sup> This is one of the approaches currently advocated by those concerned with issues of Aboriginal representation in and access to the media.

It has been shown that the media is an effective tool for the promotion of ideology as in Elaine Scarry's work:

Television is our national theatre; and the periodic commercial interruptions are like rhythmic recitations of the pledge of allegiance, affirming (in their succinct, thirty-second dramas of transformation) a political ideology whose central provision is the power of alteration...Having, in its very name, assimilated one of the large facts of nature, Tide now becomes, with equal ease, an emblem of the polis itself. Because it can change dirty clothes into clean clothes, it is a legitimate vehicle for the ideology of transformation; it is a palpable, purchasable fragment of citizenship.<sup>125</sup>

This brings up the question: Who is interpreting Inuit culture? Is it the Inuit themselves, or another group? In the colonial history of the Arctic, the Inuit perspective has usually been voiced by a group of 'experts'.

Much of the colonialist existence of the past few hundred years has silenced Native voices. The stories which we would have liked to tell were largely appropriated and re-told by non-Aboriginal 'experts' in such fields as anthropology, art and history and especially in the political realm. Not surprisingly, the appropriated stories distort the realities of our histories, cultures and traditions. Underlying this paternalistic and damaging practice is the supposition that these 'experts' have the right to re-tell these stories because of their superior status within the cultural and political constructs of our society.<sup>126</sup>

That the victors (the dominant power) write history is a notion that is familiar and covered extensively in other literature. The victors' justifications for doing so are part of the same ideological foundation that provides justification for territorial claims and sovereignty. The rationale for claims of sovereignty takes many forms. For instance, the Institute of International Law at a meeting in Lausanne France in 1988, while deploring and condemning wars of extermination against tribal peoples, declared that "...the legal transfer of sovereignty could be carried out by the mere extension of governmental control

over a region.”<sup>127</sup> The echoes of Canadian governmental policy in the Arctic are not difficult to hear. Even in contemporary publications, the issue of Canadian sovereignty is inalienable from the governmental perspective. “Canada and Canada alone, has the power to make laws and rules which govern Canadian territory: This means asserting territorial rights, including Arctic waters.”<sup>128</sup> While other justifications for sovereignty are also maintained, suffice it to say that the justifications for taking over land lie in European claims and beliefs (including the theological justification that non-Christians must necessarily be uncivilized and therefore have few or no rights) and have little to do with the actual traditions and beliefs of the Native populations which they encountered in ‘the new land’. To call into question what constitutes a claim to territory calls into question the entire European foray into North America.<sup>129</sup>

At this juncture, given the preceding argument and its relation to the question of communications, it may be reasonable to assume that Europeans may feel justified in fabricating aspects of their own socio-cultural existence. However, “...the unilaterally extended proposition that Europeans are entitled to fabricate not only their own reality but also those of other cultures seems arrogant in the extreme.”<sup>130</sup> Yet as we’ll see in the next chapter, this is exactly what happened through the development of an Inuit art industry.

While the issue of sovereignty remains crucial, not all appropriation of Native culture to fulfill the needs of the colonizing power serve territorial needs. The process of assimilation is also an extension of the dominant ideology. For instance, it has been argued that the contemporary appropriation of Aboriginal culture in general, inclusive of Inuit traditions, is a means of fulfilling the Euro-centric need for the exotic as well as a

means of satisfying the dominant capitalist ideology that requires constant expansion and commodities. "This process of white dabbling in American Indian spirituality becomes a commodity in the euroamerican market place, to be bought and sold alongside other 'New Age' items."<sup>131</sup> Loretta Todd argues that the legacy of colonialism in the area of cultural representation can be juxtaposed with that of colonial desires for sovereignty.

Just as the early missionaries were arms of the state working on our redemption so that the wealth of our souls-and our lands-could be offered up to the church and state, so the cultural missionaries are seeking our aesthetic souls...we serve their needs for the exotic or the naive. <sup>132</sup>

It has been established that those who control the voice of a culture also control its identity. To this end, the use of the media as a tool of ideology is extremely important. Specifically then, what is the Inuit experience that would lead to the necessity for Inuit access to the means of media production? How is it that a group of nomadic peoples have united to demand control of their own culture and decry attempts at assimilation? And, what is the Canadian response to these demands? The answers lie in the colonial experience of the Inuit.

Compared with the colonial experiences of other North American Aboriginal peoples, the colonial history of the Inuit is a fairly recent one. This is due in no small part to the climactic and environmental conditions under which they live, the remoteness of the Arctic and its relative inaccessibility. Whereas some Aboriginal groups were exposed to Europeans with Jacques Cartier's bid for North America in 1534, it was not until the search for the Northwest Passage and the establishment of the whaling industry in the mid-1800s that the Inuit were exposed to more significant European influence. Then, as in

1534, European and by extension North American bids for territory ignored the claims of the Inuit who had occupied the land for millennia.<sup>133</sup>

For many, land is "...a fundamental component of identity as a people and a faith,"<sup>134</sup> for example, the significance of Israel for Jews. Land is also extremely significant in an Aboriginal world-view. A concept of individual land ownership such as that found in Euro-centric thought does not enter into an Aboriginal concept of land.<sup>135</sup> Traditionally, the Inuit relied heavily on the land. Large tracts of it were needed to support even a few people. The Inuit were nomads traveling in small family units in order to cope with the harsh realities of the Arctic environment.<sup>136</sup>

While the whaling ships provided some contact with the Inuit, it is with the fur trade and the establishment of trading posts in the North that contact with Europeans became regular. As part of the 1821 amalgamation, the Hudson Bay Company was given sole right of trading with the Natives over the whole continent north of the 49th parallel and east of the Rocky Mountains.<sup>137</sup> It is the fur trade that played a large part in opening up the Arctic. The HBC, which by mid-1800s had established a presence throughout the Arctic, surrendered its lands to the Crown, which in turn transferred them to Canada in 1870. Before 1900, the government was unwilling to assume the responsibility of exercising sovereignty over the North.<sup>138</sup>

With contact and the opening of a system of trading posts, it was now possible for the Inuit to obtain goods without the necessity of hunting everyday. Inuit began to congregate around trading posts, eventually giving up traditional nomadic lifestyle.

Not far behind the fur traders were the missionaries who began entering the Arctic with a bid to ‘civilize the savages’; a pattern that was already firmly established in the colonial antics of the Europeans for several centuries. The missionaries established a school system, signaling the death knoll for traditional Inuit ideology.

Since schooling was brought to non-Europeans as a part of empire...it was integrated into an effort to bring indigenous people into imperial/colonial structures...After all, did not the European teacher and the school built on the European capitalist model transmit European values and norms and being to transform traditional societies into ‘modern’ ones...(?)<sup>139</sup>

With the school system, which forced many Inuit to congregate for many months, Inuit spiritual equilibrium was shaken. Not only were children taken away from their parents and traditional customs replaced with white educators and foreign customs, increased contact with the ‘Southerners’ and other Inuit and an unfamiliar diet contributed to many medical problems. Medical services were therefore essential—services that were provided by the missionaries.<sup>140</sup> These actions alone lend credence to the claim that the colonizers perpetrated cultural genocide on the Inuit population.

Churches were the major force in health and education until 1945 after which the Canadian government became the all-pervasive force in the Arctic. Prior to this, the only state institution evident in the Arctic was the presence of the Northwest Mounted Police (later the RCMP) who had established a series of stations in the North beginning in 1903 in a bid to secure Canadian sovereignty claims in the area.<sup>141</sup>

It is this issue of sovereignty which is the most useful in explaining the extent and need for Canadian governmental intervention in the Arctic since “...the most commonly

accepted evidence of the existence of a nation's sovereignty over a territory is the effective administration of that territory, particularly the administration of law in it."<sup>142</sup> Whaling expeditions and the Hudson Bay Company had established a presence in the area prior to Canadian state interest in the region, yet these activities had to do with economic interests, not with territorial sovereignty. It is with the issue of sovereignty that the Canadian government became interested in maintaining a noticeable presence in the area. The means to this end lay largely with the establishment of the Mounted Police.

The law was imposed on a people whose society had been built on a completely practical approach to life on the land and the realities of living in this harsh environment had led to the adoption of attitudes necessary to ensure a harmonious life.<sup>143</sup> This Inuit world-view therefore can explain the almost complete lack of resistance to the traders, missionaries or government, even when their intrusion fundamentally altered the structure of Inuit life and culture. It was not only the reputation of the HBC for their responsibility towards the Inuit that can account for the lack of resistance. In a land where relying on others becomes a necessity, it is easy to see that their assumption of human nature was inherently good, a direct conflict with the 'original sin' assumptions of their euroamerican colonizers.

Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic has only been secured within the last fifty years, (oddly coincident with the beginning of the Inuit Art industry!) with claims from other nation states being a greater concern to the government than claims from within its own borders.<sup>144</sup> This is particularly evident in the activity that followed the Second World War and the onset of the Cold War. The establishment of the DEW line (with the USA), the

concern over the possibility of Soviet attack using long-range bombers, and a Soviet submarine threat in Arctic waters were contributing factors to the increase in Canadian governmental attention to the Arctic.<sup>145</sup> Similarly, it would not be out of the question to find that the question of Canadian security, and the implementation of the DEW line, had fuelled communications innovations and policy. “During the height of the Cold War, the military remained the primary driving force behind the most significant developments in electronic computing and communications.”<sup>146</sup>

For Canada, the drive to establish sovereignty in the area is at the heart of its treatment of the Inuit. As Griffith notes, in order for Canada to defend its sovereignty, “...the Canadian government must be able to demonstrate effective occupancy of this vast country by having some ability to respond to events anywhere on land, in the air, and out to 200 miles offshore on three oceans.”<sup>147</sup> He goes on to argue that “among Canada's Arctic Aboriginal peoples, however, the appeal of national sovereignty is less impressive, given the High Arctic exiles’ experience as pawns in the defense of sovereignty against the United States after 1952.”<sup>148</sup>

The 1950s saw government activity to resettle many Inuit. For example, Grise Fiord was founded on Ellesmere Island to relocate Inuit from Port Harrison in Northern Quebec. Although the official reason given for the moves were to relocate the Inuit to better hunting grounds, it may be easier to see the moves in light of the Canadian desire to firmly establish sovereignty in the Arctic.<sup>149</sup> The parallels between this case and the much-publicized case of Davis Inlet (which was resettled for similar reasons) are striking in their tragic echoes of governmental resettlement schemes and the subsequent institutionalized

tragedies. The hunting argument becomes ridiculous when one considers the source. A government, which has no experience in the Inuit tradition, telling the Inuit who have been engaging in this activity for many centuries where the best hunting can be found is ludicrous. However, given that governmental welfare and other social assistance were available to everyone,<sup>150</sup> it could be suggested that hunting and fishing became a much less attractive means of livelihood.

The concept of democracy was also a foreign one for the Inuit. In a society which could be identified as perhaps the only truly anarchical structure which has existed, the liberal democratic tradition is not known, nor is it necessarily the most practical. As a result of this lack of understanding, the Inuit were unaware of the process of elections. As no one bothered to explain that democracy involved the general population, the Inuit did not realize immediately that it was they themselves who should be running for office. Not only was the concept of democracy foreign, but the very means which could be used to convey this concept were of no use. The simple fact is that many Inuit didn't understand the political speeches and promises of governmental hopefuls largely because they had little knowledge of the English language. Not that this mattered much since it is only recently that the Inuit have been able to vote. Although the Inuit were considered Canadian citizens, it was not until the late 1960s that the Inuit were granted the right to vote in any elections, a right that is supposed to accompany citizenship. "Canada was concerned about which bureaucrats would speak for the Inuit, federal or provincial. The idea of letting the Inuit speak for themselves never occurred to many of those in authority."<sup>151</sup>

Inuit society was transformed at a far more rapid rate than perhaps any other Aboriginal group. The process, sometimes taking less than a generation, resulted in great culture shock and a complete disruption of the traditional ways of life. It is therefore easy to understand how it is unlikely for someone who lived a nomadic lifestyle yesterday to be familiar and comfortable with conventions that would allow them to make an informed decision on election day.

1970 saw the event of the Coppermine Conference that provided the impetus to establish Inuit Tapirisat of Canada in February, 1971. ITC has become an organized Inuit voice. When ITC asks for freedom it is "Freedom from the clutches of government programs that have helped erode their culture to the point where it is seriously threatened with extinction."<sup>152</sup> The ITC, which was formed to address the concerns of the Inuit, characterized by the conditions and experiences of the Inuit since the time of initial contact with the Europeans, has put the issue of self-determination and cultural survival squarely on the agenda.

The term 'cultural genocide' is used in describing the fate of traditional Inuit culture. There is sufficient rationale for this usage. When examining the history of the Inuit with regard to their contact with Europeans and—with the establishment of the nation—Canadians, it is easy to see how the definition of genocide can be applied to their situation. As quoted in Churchill, Russell Means says, "If our culture is dissolved, Indian people as such will cease to exist. By definition, the causing of any culture to cease to exist is an act of genocide. That's a matter of international law; look it up in the 1948 Genocide Convention."<sup>153</sup>

Article 2 of the Convention for the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 1948 states:

In the present convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group as such:

- a) Killing members of the group;
- b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- d) Imposing measures intended to prevent birth within the group;
- e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group;

One need only consider the effects of residential schools, the psychological distress of rapid cultural transformation, and the devastating effects of disease, all of which were introduced by the colonial powers, to realize that the term genocide is not an exaggeration of the Aboriginal situation.<sup>154</sup>

In the context of cultural survival, it is evident that expression, oral, written and visual, is a powerful political and practical concern. “Language does not only represent a permanently used instrument of immediate communication. It is also the medium which contains our subjectivity, our identity: our discourse shapes our history.”<sup>155</sup> Suleiman echoes this view saying that language “has implications both for politics—that is, for the relations of power and control that govern a society—and for literature, or the production of verbal constructs that in some ways reflect and in some ways help to create those relations.”<sup>156</sup>

Empirical support for the notion that the Inuit feel their culture is threatened can be found by looking at the statistical evidence concerning languages. In the 1981 census,

Inuktitut (the language of the Inuit) was the second largest Aboriginal language group, reported as the mother tongue of 73.9 per cent of the Inuit. However, the overall trend in Aboriginal languages showed that many Aboriginal language groups are perilously close to disappearing as living languages. The majority of Aboriginal people (62.4 per cent) reported English as their mother tongue, while 28.7 per cent reported an Aboriginal language. Inuktitut is no exception to this trend.

By examining the average age of the population reporting these mother tongues there are indications that it is primarily the older members of the relevant populations who first learned and still understand their Aboriginal languages. For example, the average age of the total Aboriginal population is 23 while the average age of the population reporting Tlingit (with 125 speakers) is 47. In this area however, the one exception is Inuktitut where the average age is 23. "Again, however, there is evidence of erosion since the 6,150 Inuit who reported English as their mother tongue had an average age of 18."<sup>157</sup>

The geographic remoteness of the northern communities may be significant in this regard but this raises the question: Is this similarly high proportion reporting Aboriginal mother tongues in Quebec due to geographic remoteness, due to a similar cultural isolation from the larger francophone community, or due to an environment conducive to the maintenance of minority languages or perhaps some other reason?<sup>158</sup>

For the larger language families such as Inuktitut, it is interesting that the populations who have retained their Aboriginal mother tongue as the language most often spoken at home have a younger average age than those who have switched to English.

On the basis of these data, however, it is difficult to determine whether this is due to a concerted revival of native culture on the part of younger generations or whether it represents a loss of native culture on the part of older generations who may have left native settlements for educational or employment opportunities.<sup>159</sup>

The process of assimilation into North American culture is evident in that it is the English language that is gaining ground as Aboriginal languages decline. "While Inuktitut with its relative geographic isolation and the Algonkian languages with their broad base are relatively healthy with respect to continued usage it is also evident that virtually all Aboriginal language families are giving ground to English."<sup>160</sup>

How then are the interests of the Inuit and those of the Canadian government served by promoting access to the mass media, especially television, in the Arctic? The Canadian government may see granting Inuit media access as an important concession to maintaining sovereignty in the area or promoting technological advances, whereas the Inuit see Inuit media access as a crucial factor to promote and maintain their culture and heritage. For instance, the Therrien Committee acknowledged a strongly worded argument put forward [by Inuit Tapirisat of Canada] in favour of the creation of an Inuit broadcasting system in that it would provide stable and rewarding employment, and provide a much needed boost to the economic base of Inuit society at large.<sup>161</sup> As economic growth is a concern of the Canadian government as well, this seems to reinforce the mutually beneficial aspects of promoting Inuit broadcasting. While both the government and Inuit views seem to be mutually beneficial for the time being, what may become an issue is if the Inuit gain enough control of their media in their bid for self-determination to undermine the Canadian governmental influence in the area.

For the Inuit, the necessity for control of their media lies in the characteristics of culture itself. "Because culture is not your skin colour or your blood type, but a tradition communicated to you, the central place of communications in cultural maintenance or destruction makes this matter of introduced media of critical importance..."<sup>162</sup>

In recent years, the Inuit have made significant gains towards self-determination. Increasingly they are exerting influence and control of matters such as education, child welfare, and health care. "One of the few remaining areas where native people have yet to gain a significant degree of influence and control is in the field of communications."<sup>163</sup>

It must be emphasized that the Inuit are not a special minority group in the Canadian sense that they have been willingly assimilated (as have immigrants) into the patchwork quilt of ethnic multiplicity that is characteristic of Canada. Rather, the Inuit are indigenous to Canada. Canada is their homeland and Inuit traditions and culture are firmly rooted in this country. "Unlike immigrants, Aboriginal Canadians have no other homeland in which to protect and enhance their languages, cultures and traditions."<sup>164</sup> For this reason, it is crucial that the Inuit take control of their media or risk losing a foundation of their culture.

This foundation is seen as a means to reassert themselves since the Inuit have come to be regarded as second-class citizens on their own land. That media plays a role in this perception is reflected in the Therrien Committee report which considers no access to television a 'hardship'.<sup>165</sup> The Inuit Circumpolar Conference (ICC) report of 1992 recognizes "...it is important to note that the collective and individual right to communicate is increasingly viewed as a new emerging human right."<sup>166</sup> In their

presentation to the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy, the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation emphasized that:

Inuit regard the retention of their language, Inuktitut, as critical to their survival as distinct people...In surrendering its language, a society surrenders its capacity to plan for and control its own development. To be masters in their own homeland, Inuit must not surrender their right to communicate in Inuktitut.<sup>167</sup>

Increasingly it is acknowledged that communications is a basic human right. For a people that have been denied their right to self-determination, have seen the erosion of their traditions and families dissolved, this right to control the means of their communication becomes crucial.

The importance of Inuit control in the area of communications is reinforced when one considers the political and psychological impact of the media.

Communications can serve as a powerful instrument bringing about either positive or negative social change. For example serious imbalances in programming may exist that could adversely affect Inuit cultural development and identity and promote assimilation. In order to maximize the beneficial aspects of communications, the potential impacts of such programming on Inuit should be properly evaluated and effectively controlled [by the Inuit]<sup>168</sup>

What becomes overwhelmingly clear is the native interest in media lies at the very root of their cultural survival. If they allow another voice to speak for them and dictate the policies that would completely appropriate their right to communicate, it would signal the death knell for their traditions and history as a peoples.

On the surface the government's interests in promoting native media seem to mirror those of the Inuit themselves. However, while governmental policies may serve the

interests of the Inuit, the motivations which underline broadcast policy in Canada, are quite different from Inuit objectives.

In the contemporary context, the issue of who controls the media from the Canadian government view, exemplifies this colonial attitude. Michaels states the problem succinctly.

To the extent that exotic media producers dominate the discourse of Aboriginality for the public, they will write the Aboriginal history. To the extent that Aboriginal 'experts' (politically or academically authorised) do so, they write that history. The competition seems mostly between these two non-local classes, and what has proved remarkable is the State's interest in all this;<sup>169</sup>

What Michaels finds remarkable however, is not surprising given the points about the political utility of the media made earlier. The paradox exists in the fact that the state is just as likely to find a means to pursue its own goals within the question of media access and in the process, satisfy some of the needs of the Inuit as well.

This is evident in the Broadcasting and Canada's Aboriginal Peoples report to the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy wherein it notes that special provisions for Aboriginal broadcasting can be rationalized on a needs-basis within the broader framework of Canadian social and economic policy.<sup>170</sup>

Federal assistance to Aboriginal broadcasters makes a significant contribution to the northern native economy, especially in some of the poorest regions of the country like Labrador. There, where unemployment rates are consistently around 75 per cent; where the average annual income is less than \$8,000; and where a barrel of heating oil costs \$100 and lasts only four or five days in poorly insulated houses, a federal program assisting Inuit broadcasters has resulted in at least 20 new jobs, and likely as many jobs in indirect employment areas, such as transportation and housing.<sup>171</sup>

What is not recognized in the preceding statement are the policies which underlie these deplorable conditions. While assistance to broadcasting may bring about the betterment of a few of the Inuit which may be directly affected, the overall policies and ideology which in the first place allowed the situation to arise; and secondly, prompted a galvanized Inuit response, are not at all challenged.

In another example, the Report of the Task Force on Broadcasting notes:

...entrenching native-language services in the Broadcasting Act would be consistent with Aboriginal rights principles and with the pluralistic philosophy that encourages the expression of Aboriginal identity. Native languages embody a part of the special cultural heritage of Canada to be protected and strengthened.<sup>172</sup>

Presumably it would be Canada that would be actively engaged in protecting Native languages, a move that again reflects the colonial impulse and, if taken to another dimension the notion of a 'protectorate' begins to emerge. The theory behind the protectorate, implies protection of a state to foster social, political and economic development to the point where political independence is feasible,<sup>173</sup> the practise often means annexation. While this may be taking the issue too far in this particular context, the colonial undertones of this notion persist in the Arctic situation. On the whole however, it would not be fair to insinuate that nothing has been done in the past to address these issues. And as mentioned, the tangible policies of a government, may serve both their own and Inuit needs. As the Therrien report acknowledges, in the media realm the CBC and the NFB have made commendable efforts to address the needs of the native peoples "...but the aspirations of the native peoples to engage themselves directly in broadcasting are very

far from being fulfilled.”<sup>174</sup> Indeed, the CBC Northern Service is the only broadcaster producing significant amounts of native-language or native-oriented programming from a largely native perspective.<sup>175</sup> It must be acknowledged, however, that this too is changing. With the creation of the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network in 1999, the CBC’s role as the sole supplier of Aboriginal content, is being augmented and challenged to a greater degree than ever before.

The National Film Board of Canada is also in a position to address the issues of native media access and representation. The NFB has been active in the North for many years and made important contributions to the promotion and preservation of Inuit culture. In 1980, the NFB catalogue included 99 films about native Canadians, representing more than 6.5 per cent of the English titles and five per cent of the French titles available. Services have been provided to several native communications societies. As well, training courses and workshops have been conducted in the North, and assistance given in the development of training courses by the Inuit themselves.<sup>176</sup> The NFB was established to served as a kind of ‘psychic buffer’ against the dominant cultural and communications forces of North America which hail from the US. Its mandate is quite open: to interpret Canada to Canadians and the world. As such, the NFB can in keeping with its mandate, “...not only produce and distribute films, but have opinions.”<sup>177</sup> To a lesser degree, the same argument concerning the interests of Canadian cultural sovereignty can be made here as they pertain to the challenge of territorial sovereignty from foreign sources.

The agenda of the CBC and the NFB as 'arms-length' institutions from the federal government do not appear insidious, while they do raise the question of who is speaking for the Inuit. They too, as the government from which they receive the bulk of their funding, cannot help but be informed by the same ideology that allowed the colonization of the Arctic in the first place.

The Canadian interest in satellite technology also enters into the issue concerning Northern media and can be seen as a part of the greater governmental goal of sovereignty, as well as promotion of Canadian technology. On the whole however, the Canadian policy with regard to satellites has neglected the needs of Northern residents in developing its communication satellite policy.

In 1974, the federal government approved the CBC's Accelerated Coverage Plan to introduce satellite technology into the Arctic. This plan however, made no provisions for local or regional programming. In fact, the use of satellites in the North, simply by the nature of the technology involved, is much more suited to mass appeal entertainment, the likes of which is most likely to be produced south of the 63rd parallel. The Inuit reaction to the ACP was expressed by one Innu who said, "The introduction of television has meant the last refuge of Inuit culture, the home, has been invaded by an outside culture."<sup>178</sup> In response to the ACP, groups such as Inuit Tapirisat and the Northern Quebec Inuit Association mounted lobbies for native programming services.

The use of satellite technology to develop Northern broadcasting is still an issue. With the Therrien Committee of 1980, the question of using satellite technology to serve the North was once again raised.<sup>179</sup> What was also raised in this report was the

acknowledgment that programming to address the needs of the Native population had been inadequate. With regard to demography and language, the report notes that providing programming in the two official languages has not been adequate, but there are other cases which have received even less attention.

In worse case are the native people of Canada. The problems of the Inuit have been put to us forcefully and lucidly at our public meetings; even they cannot be treated integrally for they use two distinct dialects of their common language in the western and eastern Arctic respectively. The Indian people of Canada are more widely dispersed throughout the country and use many different languages and dialects' it is thus the more difficult to identify and satisfy their broadcasting needs.<sup>180</sup>

Canada is recognized as a leader in the realm of communications satellite technology and as such is more interested in finding a market for its satellites than in promoting the cultural/linguistic interests of the Inuit that could in turn be a threat to internal security. On one level, however, as will be seen in the next chapter, the Canadian government requires the Inuit to concede to the primacy of the nation-state, while on the other requires the Inuit to maintain a distinct identity that can be marketed outside of Canada's borders.

What lends credence to the question of State priorities with regard to satellite technology vs. Inuit concerns is the example of the Anik C communications satellite, designed in the late 70s. This satellite was viewed as potentially addressing the communications needs of the North, however, it was shown that its range does not extend beyond the 63rd parallel, leaving the greater part of the Canadian North uncovered. Because of its range, it is of little use in providing northern broadcasting service. The

company responsible for this technology is Canadian Satellite System that is owned and operated by Telesat Canada, which in turn is owned 50 per cent federal government, and 50 per cent principal telecommunications carriers (largely the telephone companies). Telesat is regulated as a telecommunications carrier by the CRTC and is required to provide service without discrimination and at fair and equitable rates for similar classes of service.<sup>181</sup> Surprisingly, this particular satellite was designed without consulting the CBC, which is the largest single user of Canadian satellites.<sup>182</sup>

While the Therrien Committee acknowledged the drive to develop satellite technology to address the issues of Native media, it was also acknowledged that this issue might be better addressed in other ways.

The statement that satellite services now represent the most practical way to extend broadcasting services, both radio and television, to communities not reached by the ACP is not altogether true, for there are still underserved areas that lack adequate services which could be provided terrestrially, given the necessary funds. Nonetheless, satellites are so fundamentally necessary to the extension of services that we proceed next to examine their capabilities and limitations.<sup>183</sup>

Still, the first unanimous conclusion of the Therrien report was that "immediate action must be taken to meet the needs of the many Canadians who believe that, as regards broadcasting, they are being treated as second-class citizens."<sup>184</sup> This has been heeded and indicates that progress may be made towards increased and sufficient access to give the Inuit peoples a voice.

In subsequent years, satellite technology has proven to be a greater resource for transmitting Inuit culture than it may have at first seemed. Richard Stursberg, President

and CEO of Cancom (Canadian Satellite Communications Inc.), writes that “[f]or their part, Aboriginal broadcasters make it possible to preserve and disseminate rich oral tradition in the language of their people much as the Inuit artists carve their way of life so beautifully in stone.”<sup>185</sup> Cancom has been involved in Arctic broadcasting since 1981, and with the September 1, 1999 acquisition of Star Choice, is the first Canadian company to provide broadcast services direct to the home.

For the Inuit there is no going back to the traditional life however, their experience must be vindicated within the framework that is now available to them. In this sense progress has been made as the establishment of the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation suggests. At this time, the goals of the State and the aspirations of the Inuit may seem to embody mutually reinforcing means, yet they may culminate in very different ends. The greater question is not necessarily one of where the Inuit fit into the Canadian framework as much as how the Inuit will reassert their right to self-determination. Increasing Inuit media access will serve the need for the Inuit to regain their voice, while at the same time serve the economic and sovereignty goals of the state. What that voice will say, however, remains to be seen.

### 3. Re: producing culture Inuit art as tradition or commodity

*“When I was growing up, I had no understanding of art because I have never been able to set a special category for art. My only understanding of art is this: art is life. With art, our life is shaped by looking for ways to make living easier.”*

*Ann Meekitjuk Hanson<sup>186</sup>*

*“... you have asked many questions. Now if I may, I have something to ask you, and I will ask you only one question. What type of carving do people in the south want to buy?”*

*Romeo Eekerkik, Arviat<sup>187</sup>*

One may argue that—with Prime Minister Jean Chretien's defense of 22 Sussex Drive against an intruder, by wielding an Inuit carving—Inuit sculpture is vital to Canadian security. While this is to a degree true, it is the uses of this form of representation within the context of the Canadian-Inuit relations that is of interest here.

Inuit existence has always been about adaptation and survival factors must be taken into account when discussing the emergence of the Inuit art industry. To understand the structure of the industry, it is also necessary to understand the concepts of North and South.

‘North’ and ‘South’ cannot simply be understood in terms of geography. While ‘North’ may be considered an area above the tree line—an area characterized by a harsh climate which hampers accessibility and communications—the very idea of ‘North’ and ‘South’ must be understood not only as locations, but also as ideologies.

‘South’, for northerners, has a strong connection to western European thought, its establishments and ideology. “The art industry, comprising galleries, dealers, museum curators, writers and buyers, is a distinct institution with western European roots and terms such as “southern market” or “southern buyer” refer to this implicit power structure.”<sup>188</sup> North, therefore, embodies within it an implicitly Aboriginal worldview characterized by the Inuit who, as pointed out in a previous chapter, have been colonized by the Canadian state.

The Inuit of Canada’s north first came to the attention of the federal government in the 40s, when, through the systematic depletion of hunting stocks, Inuit were faced with large-scale starvation.<sup>189</sup> The period that followed was marked by sudden and traumatic change in the Inuit lifestyle. Within the span of only two generations, the traditional nomadic culture of the Inuit became settled, and art replaced white-fox pelts as a means of economic survival.

Here was a group of people displaced and dispossessed, out of their element, trapped in a small community with other Inuit groups with whom they had never before had the occasion or desire to associate. They had lost control of their lives. The powerful trio of the RCMP, the church and the Hudson’s Bay Company made all the vital decisions for them. Next in line was the Northern Services Officer from the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development who represented the awesome power of the federal government.<sup>190</sup>

But now did this transition occur and why is it important in the context of contemporary Inuit identity?<sup>191</sup>

1999 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first sale ever made by an Inuit artist to begin what would turn into a multi-million dollar industry. This may be a surprise to some,

given the emphasis on the ‘traditional’ and ‘primitive’ characteristics of the work that define this genre. Yet the artistic history of the Inuit covers a mere five decades, with the practice of large-scale production of art beginning with the first commercial transaction of art for money facilitated by James Houston in 1948. Since then, the history of Inuit art is at once paradoxical and pragmatic. The form and function of Inuit carving, while traditional, finds itself as an expression of a thoroughly modern cultural industry.

While historically the Inuit were known to carve items such as amulets used for rituals (burials, to bond a relationship, for good luck), this tradition was not nearly on the scale to which it has since been exploited. It is only with the arrival of James Houston in the North in 1948 (himself an artist who traveled to Canada’s Arctic to pursue his own work), that the industry was born. As Minnie Aodla Freeman says, “It was only when qallunaat<sup>192</sup> saw this traditional art that it became ‘art’.”<sup>193</sup>

That sculpture was not a long-standing traditional form as it is currently perceived to be, is not surprising. Given the nomadic lifestyle of the traditional Inuit, the climate and terrain of the land (where vast stretches of land were required to provide for only a few people), it is unlikely that heavy pieces of soapstone to be used for artistic pursuits would be deemed essential enough to take up space on the family dogsled. It is therefore important to look at the institutions that facilitated the myth of an ‘authentic’ Inuit art form and the subsequent effect of their involvement.

***“The first exhibition of Eskimo Art took place in Montreal at the Canadian Handicrafts Guild in 1949. The exhibition was sold out in three days.”<sup>194</sup>***

The preceding news item has been reprinted innumerable times and bears witness to the beginning of the Inuit Art industry in Canada.<sup>195</sup> The Canadian Handicrafts Guild, founded in 1906, was formed to encourage Canadian handicrafts and art industries and to prevent the extinction or deterioration of such handicrafts. It also undertook to encourage home industries by making the production of handicrafts ‘profitable and honorable’; to aid people skilled in such crafts and industries by providing markets for their products; and to educate the public as to the value of such arts, industries and crafts.<sup>196</sup> Given that mandate, it is little wonder that the development of the Inuit Art industry began under the organization’s tutelage.

James Houston was appointed the Canadian Handicrafts Guild’s arctic representative in November 1949. It was through his collection of artifacts for Canada’s Inuit that the Montreal sale, which introduced Inuit art to the south, occurred on November 21, 1949. In the beginning, Inuit art was almost completely and unquestionably controlled by James Houston who, through his lobbying efforts, involved the federal government, the craft guild and the Hudson’s Bay Company. Yet his ideas could not have flourished if the Inuit, as well as the government and various institutions,<sup>197</sup> had not seen merit in the idea. The motivations for Inuit and government involvement in the creation of the industry are varied and complex—at once paradoxical and practical.

Hegemony is secured through ideas, institutions and material capabilities. “It represents a constraint of the imagination mediated through lived experience and the institutional distribution of power and dominance.”<sup>198</sup> In the Inuit artistic community, ‘tradition’ has been manufactured by a southern audience within a European ideology.

This serves two functions, it provides Inuit with a means to perpetuate traditional stories, while also serves state interest in keeping Inuit, Inuit for the purposes of recognition on a world scale. The effect of the manipulation of an art form by the south has had an effect that is very much a part of colonial heritage. Through a prolonged period of staging culture, a public image of a colonized culture as being of equal value to the imposed culture, has been secured.<sup>199</sup>

This process allows southern audiences to reaffirm and perpetuate their own myths and beliefs about Inuit people and thereby maintains the exclusivity of Inuit art as something out of the mainstream and typically 'Canadian' while at the same time providing a site of resistance that can promote Inuit identity and self-determination.

It has already been noted that the Inuit art industry is barely 50 years old, despite its appeal and currency being its 'traditional' form. Inuit art is characterized by its materials and methods, as well as its subject matter. "There has been a 'decree' saying that for Inuit art to be 'authentic' it must be made with Northern materials and not use power tools."<sup>200</sup> It is also, as Hessel writes: "...more or less a contemporary art form and not a 'traditional' one, and since it is created almost purely for the consumption of the culture that studies it."<sup>201</sup> While Inuit art is manufactured for the south, it also represents the close bond the Inuit have with nature; all of its subjects relate to the land and its people.<sup>202</sup> The complexity of Inuit art may lie in the fact that it is found in airport souvenir shops as well as art galleries. It is also not a single body of work.

There exists a notion that only objects with clear links to the past can be considered Inuit art. Ask most people on the street and they will think that Inuit art has a

long, perhaps thousands of years long, tradition. This is unlikely, given the nomadic culture of the Inuit. Other priorities would take precedence to ensure survival, not soapstone. Yet soapstone continues to be the material most readily associated with Inuit art. "Soapstone sculpture, cool to the touch, often highly polished and associated with an image of a hostile North, came to define Inuit art."<sup>203</sup> Once the Inuit moved into settlements, the availability of soapstone, whalebone and ivory ensured that sculpture became the first art form to be developed among Inuit. The subject matter of these sculptures reinforced Inuit traditional values, with scenes of the hunt and illustrations of myths and legends being favoured over depictions of modern life in the North.<sup>204</sup>

When I worked for the Nunavik co-ops in the 1970s, I was advised by a self-styled art critic not 'to let' Inukjuak artist portray shacks and electric powerlines in their prints because 'that was not Inuit'. What he meant of course was that this imagery did not sit well with what people in the South were conditioned to think of as Inuit art.<sup>205</sup>

What is at odds here is the complex interactions and co-existence of the tensions between tradition and modernity. How can a group of people be influenced by changes in their environment (i.e. influenced by Southern schools, television) and still be held to 'traditional' work? Is art not a reflection of the time in which it exists, and the context of the lived reality of the artist who produces the work? To answer these questions it is necessary to expose the contradictions inherent in the Inuit art industry in order to grasp the political implications for Inuit self-determination and the maintenance of cultural identity and symbolic control.

Why is it that "... the enthusiasm the South has for what is new and different is frequently not extended to Inuit art. Rather it is generally those things that the South perceives to be 'traditionally' or 'authentically' Inuit that are valued."<sup>206</sup> The result of this categorization of Inuit art, without recognizing why it is so categorized tends to limit its potential for change in a contemporary setting.

For example, the economic function of the Inuit art industry does not easily allow it to transcend the antiquated and naturalized processes that subscribe to an outdated anthropological view of the Inuit, and indeed all Aboriginal people, as 'primitive'. "These terms [authentic, traditional, primitive] have conveniently situated Indian artists into a stereotype that treats their art as something static and or peripheral, or even worse, dismisses their art as 'unauthentic' for any noticeable signs of modernity."<sup>207</sup> This process sustains the status quo, yet also feeds the paradox that is inherent in the industry.

Most of the work mirrors the lived experience of the individual carving it. It is largely based in nature and is not perceived as being overtly political.<sup>208</sup> Yet, the conditions of life in the North, such as alcohol abuse and suicide, are overtly political. It has been noted that "Contemporary Indian and Inuit art are very different from each other, both in the media used by artists and in the degree of political content."<sup>209</sup> Inuit art is not known for its political content, however, its very existence can still be a political act. "Inuit learned very early that images of the indigenous culture were the most commercially successful. The more the Arctic was transformed by 20<sup>th</sup> century advancements, the more the consumer expected to see 'primitive' images chronicling past activities that were in danger of disappearing."<sup>210</sup>

Inuit art is ‘popular’ art in that it is widely accepted. People can relate to its simplicity, it has few pretensions.<sup>211</sup> Inuit artists do not enjoy the same status as their southern counterparts. They lack pretension. Inuit art is not usually self-referential. By the same token, the artist as an entity, as is often the case with artists in the South, is not what is valued by Southern art consumers when it comes to Inuit art. It is the very ‘natural’, and not contemporary work that is most valued. While art in the south is often valued for its expressions of the artist’s angst or commentary about the social realms and the like, Inuit art, perhaps paradoxically, has been valued for its non-political nature and therefore, its commercial appeal to a less complicated and more ‘natural’ way of being.<sup>212</sup> That Inuit art is not part of the mainstream southern art culture is verified in that only the Winnipeg Art Gallery and the Canadian Museum of Civilization have separate curators for Inuit art, and have recognized the importance of this art form since the 60s.<sup>213</sup>

When politics are in evidence, such as discussions about the harsher realities of Inuit life, Inuit art does not thrive. “This kind of talk [about starvation by Inuit elders in the art community] does not go down well in the South where—perhaps reacting to rampant commercialism—people feel uneasy about art made to sell.”<sup>214</sup>

Yet, Inuit art is art made to sell.

The development of the Inuit Art industry was controlled and established by this southern system which was responsible for marketing strategies and progress evaluations during its formative years in the 1950s and 1960s. To succeed in the system, Inuit artists quickly adapted their work to conform to the tastes of the southern buyers, who in turn guaranteed the sale of their work.<sup>215</sup>

By the late 50s, the Inuit art industry came under the jurisdiction of the Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources. In typical government fashion, it was a highly structured and hierarchical bureaucracy. In March 1963, the Industrial Division received funding through Treasury Board to hire contract employees to organize arts and crafts programs in northern areas in need of economic development. Inuit art was the specific responsibility of the Industrial Division, which treated the production of arts and crafts as an income-generating activity. “This perspective tended to overshadow other aspects of art production such as the aesthetic value and quality of the workmanship as well as the potential of the artists to develop artistically.”<sup>216</sup>

Yet Inuit art is also art for art’s sake, one that can by its mere existence, as Adorno and Horkheimer would argue, reinvigorate the Inuit identity and move towards reclaiming traditional values. While art critic Edmund Carpenter wrote “Can the word ‘Eskimo’ legitimately be applied to this modern stone art? I think not. Its roots are Western; so is its audience.”<sup>217</sup> Contemporary art shows, such as the show *Transitions*, have moved away from the mere commercial aspects of Inuit carving, and, largely through the eyes of younger Aboriginal artists who have been influenced by the first-generation of Inuit artists, tend to explore “issues relating to cultural tenacity, cultural critique, identity, gender and colonization.”<sup>218</sup>

It is therefore in the interest of cultural consumerism that these elements of Inuit culture be preserved. And while the influence of modernity and the need for Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic (and the transmission of Euro-centric values) cannot be denied, the paradox exists that the Canadian state needs the Inuit to remain Inuit. Their lifestyles

and art (or non-western art) may no longer be considered 'primitive', yet words such as 'authentic' and 'traditional' have become an easy substitute.<sup>219</sup>

So what lies at the heart of the Canadian state's involvement in the creation of an Inuit art industry? Inuit carvings, according to critics such as Nelson Graburn, have received promotion and exposure far out of proportion to their demographic presence in Canada. Inuit art has been exhibited in galleries and Canadian pavilions in World Expos, is a favoured gift exchanged between heads of state,<sup>220</sup> and has received a fairly substantial economic subsidy to allow Inuit artists to continue to create works. As Graburn writes: "We often hear that support and promotion of these arts had an economic foundation in that it relieved the state of welfare expenditures for a minority population whose main means of earning a livelihood, fox trapping, had eroded after World War II."<sup>221</sup>

However, this may seem too simplistic an answer. The function of Inuit art, vis à vis the Canadian state, fulfills a much greater role—it allows Canada to claim a cultural product as distinctly its own as one aspect of carving out a national identity. It is an important part of any national identity for a nation to find something to differentiate itself from its neighbours and, in the case of Canada, to distance itself from its colonial heritage and the traditions of Britain. As John Ralston Saul has noted, "culture is the face of Canada abroad." It is also how the nation views itself. Canada, as an immigrant nation shares many of the characteristics of its southern neighbour, the United States. A distinct culture, however, within Canada's national boundaries and conveyed through its cultural symbols, is that of the Inuit of Canada's North. "Contemporary Inuit art...has been officially and unofficially embraced as a shining example of Canadian culture both at home

and on the world stage.”<sup>222</sup> It is recognized globally as a cultural product that distinguishes Canadian culture from American culture.

So while the largely commercial and economic impetus for the creation of the Inuit art industry have also lead to it being criticized as being a giant government welfare project, <sup>223</sup> it is a view that, from the Canadian government’s perspective, is highly unpopular. As George Swinton has noted: The connection between arts and crafts programs and ‘welfare programs’ was “not conducive toward maintaining high standards and a healthy art production.” <sup>224</sup>

As outlined in the previous chapter, the post-war years and the subsequent Cold War, required Canada to stake a claim for itself in the north in order to maintain dominion over the area. With US ships navigating Arctic waters without permission (i.e. the 1968 passage of the US oil tanker, Manhattan), the USSR encroaching on the Arctic and the establishment of the DEW-line, a Canadian presence in the north was imperative.

In a colonial and past-colonial situation, the discussion concerning “whose” or “how” tradition is either radically and explicitly there....or is only implicitly there, as in the case of the Arctic during the first decades after WWII. In this period, the stated goal was modernization, and the survival of Inuit culture was not on the agenda. An important reason for this was of course the established chronology of development from traditional/non-European to modern/European. Another reason was that the Inuit did not generally have a voice in these matters.<sup>225</sup>

So the impetus for the Canadian state to become involved in the Inuit art industry, was multi-dimensional and paradoxical. In order for Canada to assert its nationhood in the north, it had to establish itself as the dominant power in the region. Yet in order to do so,

it had to appropriate the traditions of the Inuit and make them Canadian. “In a decade, Houston’s venture had transformed the Eskimo’s economic situation from one of near starvation to a thriving, multimillion-dollar enterprise. Eskimo soapstone carving and later printmaking, were to become the largest and most reliable source of earned income in the North. Moreover, these art forms eventually became symbols of Canadian identity worldwide.”<sup>226</sup>

It is perhaps telling that the government showed a greater interest in the artistic activities of the Inuit than did the art galleries of the south, who began to take interest in the art in the 1960s. According to Graburn, “Inuit sculpture made its initial impact outside of the mainstream realm of Canadian arts and sculpture—in the world of bureaucrats, handicrafts, souvenirs and national gift tokens.”<sup>227</sup>

That the Canadian government took an active interest in the development of an Inuit art industry is well documented<sup>228</sup> going so far as to encourage James Houston’s distribution of a virtual ‘how to and what to carve’ booklet in the early days of what was to become the Inuit art industry. The Canadian government played “... a complex role as one of the institutions that “conspired to encourage, discourage, and alter the work of Inuit artists.”<sup>229</sup> For example, an exhibition of the Rankin Inlet Ceramics Project,<sup>230</sup> itself created by government forces since ceramics was not a part of Inuit knowledge, was curated in March 1967 in Toronto to gauge the public response to Inuit-created art in this medium.

As was the practice at the time, the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development called upon a high profile volunteer association, the Junior League of Toronto, to organize [the

event]... DIAND officials selected the work for the show and wrote the promotional material. Arthur Laing, then minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, gave the opening-night address.<sup>231</sup>

Another example of government involvement with Inuit art comes in a letter from the Department of Resources and Development to the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, November 1953:

After considering carefully the increasing requirements in the Arctic, we have come to the conclusion that the organization of this department must be altered so that more complete and effective direction can be given to projects aimed at improving the economy and well-being of the Eskimo population. Arrangements are, therefore, underway to increase the scope of the Arctic Services Section of the Northern Administration and Lands Branch ... The development of the handicrafts industry is one of the several projects we have in mind, all of which must be carried forward together and in a closely interrelated way ... I think it is apparent that there will be opportunity in this expanded program [for us] to touch the handicrafts industry at several points and we hope to assert a considerable degree of influence upon it.<sup>232</sup>

While the Canadian government extends its influence to and actively sustains the Inuit art industry, the potential for Inuit self-determination and the survival of an Inuit identity may seem dim. By naturalizing the industry, the Canadian state has effectively appropriated the Inuit identity in an act of cultural colonialism. It is therefore necessary to expose this process in order to seek some points of resistance which, if the function of art is to transcend its economic imperative, may be possible.

If it is true, as Geertz says, that “[a] country’s politics reflects the design of its culture,”<sup>233</sup> some insight into potential resistance to the status quo by the Inuit is possible. By exposing the ideology that created the Inuit art industry as something other than a

‘natural’ creation, as something that is allowed to function because, in this case, a pragmatic Inuit world has allowed it to function as natural, also allows the potential for Inuit self-determination to be realized.

Clifford Geertz’s work outlines the overcoming of delusion in our political understanding. He points out that it is necessary to see that the political system that we ascribe to is structured out of our own making, not due to some kind of ‘divine right’ as was thought of monarchies, and in terms of Geertz’s research, in the Balinese court. “We look so hard for direct relationships of power that ‘we see little else’.”<sup>234</sup> In the case of the Inuit, a world view that privileges survival has allowed them to accept the notion of the nation-state (a concept which has been naturalized throughout modernity) where previously, in their nomadic culture, no such concept existed. “Prior to moving into trading posts established by fur traders, police and missionaries, Inuit thought of the land as being like the air – there for all to use. Nutaraq Kooneeloosie spoke for many when he said in 1977: ‘We the Inuit were born on this land and we have grown up here...It amazes us to learn that it belongs to the government’.”<sup>235</sup>

Shapiro notes that: “Modern states refer to traditions, to consensus, or, in cases where extraordinary or temporary patterns are installed, to crises. In each case, the referent is treated as something not to be problematized or treated as controversial.”<sup>236</sup> Here he speaks of the legitimization processes, for example the justification of power as exercised by a centralized state, a power that has been used effectively to allow the cultural appropriation of Inuit traditions by the Canadian state.

So who or what influenced the Inuit to take on the industry? And what influences Inuit art? (The question of influence is an awkward topic, according to Neale, since Inuit art is affected by market forces, the introduction of new media, tastes of co-op managers and suggestions from advisors and specialists). It has been established that the Canadian government is involved for its own reasons—to establish sovereignty in the north, and to establish its own cultural identity on a global scale. But why do the Inuit carve? The answer could be simply a case of economics. But is there more to it?

***IT IS GOOD TO CARVE WHEN YOU NO LONGER HUNT***

***I am John Arnulukjuak of Arviat. I am not originally from Arviat—I was born near Baker Lake at a place called Nausamik. I was born in the winter. We used to eat seal meat and bearded seals in the spring. Inuit used to use seal fat as fuel for their qullips. Back then, we did not have Qallunaaq heating lamps. We would use sealskin to make kamiks. In the spring when the ice broke up, we would move our camp and wait for the ship called Nascopie to arrive. It was a very exciting time when the ship arrived. When I was a child, I had a big boat. We used to go out hunting for food between Arviat and Kuugjuaq. We used to do our shopping in Kuugjuaq and live in Arviat in the winter and spring. I enjoyed that life. I would like to say that carving is good. It gives you something to do, you can get money for it and it is fun. It is also good to carve when you no longer hunt.***

***John Arnulukjuak, Arviat<sup>237</sup>***

Jobs in the North remain scarce. The production of art provides new opportunities in the light of the disintegration of a traditional way of life. Primarily, there exists an economic impetus for sculpture, yet in this backdrop, a noted art form has emerged.

Making art was a way to survive emotionally as well as financially. It is a way of regaining control.<sup>238</sup>

But does 'making money' mean the same thing to the Inuit as it does in the consumerist, capitalist South? Is it a simple case of crass commercialism as it may be in the southern landscape of designer jeans and shopping malls? No. It is more about the ability to provide for themselves and their dependents, whether it is through hunting or carving. "Inuit artists find other satisfactions in making art but it seems quite clear that, for most, its primary value is that it enable them to provide."<sup>239</sup>

Given the daily realities of Inuit communities, which are quite small and scattered across great distances, most Inuit artists work in isolation from each other, "unaware of major artistic trends and developments around the world." What they are aware of, however, is that they work in the face of a deteriorating environment and disappearing culture and customs.

It is in this light that Inuit art can be seen for its potential for resisting the colonial influence of the Canadian state and as a means of reaffirming Inuit identity. Inuit art can be seen as a means of transmitting traditional beliefs, spirituality, values and cultural change despite its relatively new status as a large-scale cultural and commercial activity.

While it is essentially a manufactured commodity, it also manages to maintain its cultural integrity. Despite the prevalence of 'bingo pieces' (quick carvings for cash), the act of creating 'art' also preserves traditional myths and practice. Much of tradition has been preserved in this economic act. As Hessel notes, "Inuit have invented a new kind of art, one made for export but culturally relevant and truly communicative."<sup>240</sup>

Ironically, however, most art heads south and is never seen by Inuit youth, except as it is created. The actual presentation of art to southern audiences does not involve the artists in its promotion and interpretation as it would for most southern artists.<sup>241</sup> Part of this can be attributed to the oral nature of the culture where self-expression is subordinate to the needs of the community.<sup>242</sup> Yet for southern audiences, Inuit art, both contemporary and traditional, is rarely displayed/exhibited, without reference to Inuit culture. This is a departure from Western art shows which do not situate an artist as an urban New Yorker with roots in Ohio who used to see combines on the fields only as a child....or a French painter who hung out in café society and drank lattes in Italy and how that influenced him. Inuit exhibitions usually reference traditional lifestyles and artist influences in this regard.

That Inuit have been influenced by mass communication and their life experiences cannot be denied. "They are all aware that Inuit society is increasingly vulnerable to outside cultural influences. The arrival of mass communication has thrown their traditional society into a state of upheaval, and, as a result, the perception, tastes and behaviour of the inhabitants of the North are changing rapidly. The artists mirror these changes in their work, but they are also concerned to capture the past and preserve what they remember and what they have experienced."<sup>243</sup>

For Canada to maintain its national identity as expressed through Inuit art as a cultural product, Inuit identity as a traditional entity must be maintained, yet subverted—to be representative of Canada.<sup>244</sup> In turn, the quality of Inuit art must also be maintained in order to justify it as an adequate representation of Canadian culture. At the same time,

through the creation of art, "... the artists are holding together the very foundations of their culture through their art."<sup>245</sup> Since the myth holds that it is an ancient 'traditional' art form, there is already a way to explore resistance to the loss of Inuit identity "... in the lost heritage, which may not be impossible to retrieve after all, not as lived experience, but as principle. Not the past for its own sake but for the sake of knowing who they were made them what they are."<sup>246</sup>

This takes on thoroughly modern applications that serve to revitalize the Inuit identity in a contemporary context. In her own words, artist Ann Meekitjuk Hanson says:

Whether through storytelling, carvings, songs, prints, music or writing, it is art that shapes our life to make it bearable, joyful, memorable, profitable or just plain worth living. Also, while art has enriched many people monetarily, it also enhances our language. Through carvings, some of the old Inuktitut terms have stayed alive.<sup>247</sup>

For example, the word for printmaking – titirtugait – is thought to have been invented in the 1950s when someone tried to translate the word stencil, or it may be a word that had died – perhaps describing a picture on skins and tusks --and was revived. "The significant thing is that all Inuit know what it means today."<sup>248</sup> Hanson goes on to note the importance of teaching the craft to Inuit youth in order that they can keep the knowledge of traditional life alive. "If we teach what is useful to our lives and environment, we are more capable of standing on our own."<sup>249</sup>

Change is in the wind, which will only serve to strengthen Inuit culture. After 50 years, the Inuit art industry is starting to question the theoretical underpinnings of western aesthetics as the only model for discussing this art form. Critical reviews of the southern

institutions that support the industry are also underway.<sup>250</sup> Ironic re/writings of art are taking place in the work of Inuit artists like Mary Okheena and Andrew Karpik who are using Western artistic conventions to challenge perceptions of what Inuit art should be.<sup>251</sup> They serve to "... represent cultural traditions in dynamic interaction within a global process of dynamic change."<sup>252</sup>

The artists themselves are calling for acceptance of a wider range of artistic expression, the freedom to experiment with different media and the opportunity to acquire new skills, and artist's voices are being heard in the pages of scholarly journals.<sup>253</sup> The superiority of Western thought is being challenged in a growing number of critical debates, in art, in anthropology, in history and in politics. However, as Mitchell writes, "... while recognition of diversity has largely taken the place of academic theory supporting a politics of domination, this slowly being reflected in popular culture productions."<sup>254</sup>

For many Inuit artists, who carve for economic and cultural reasons, they would make few distinctions about their art and may be surprised at the squabbles undertaken on their behalf.<sup>255</sup> While critics now see, that with the growing body of theoretical work in the area of Inuit art, and changes in theory in other disciplines, coupled with an increasingly southern-influenced North, the Inuit art industry must embrace innovation if it is to survive and prosper as an art and economic form. Or as McEvelley so beautifully points out: "Criticism, once enchanted by the beauty of the rose, must now also attend to the worm."<sup>256</sup>

## Conclusion

*“We are confident we can build an economy that will restore the dignity and self-respect so many of our people have lost during a well-intentioned but misguided colonial era.”<sup>257</sup>*

*Jose Kusgak*

For the Inuit of Canada’s north, the false opposition between tradition and modernity, culture and development (all of which are contained in the same moment) allow culture and communications to become sites of political negotiation. While the hegemonic process of colonialism is a part of Inuit lived experience, these same processes, when laid bare do offer some potential for resistance.

Inuit art, despite the evidence, is promoted as an extension of the ‘traditional’ lifestyle. The result of this is that it (art) becomes representative of a traditional Inuit culture that is no longer part of lived experience but nonetheless contributes to the Inuit sense of Self as a cultural group. Representation is subjective. “All conventions of representation are acculturated and relative: what a certain culture regards as representation is, for that culture, representation.”<sup>258</sup> Therefore, while art and broadcasting may not be part of Inuit traditional lifestyles, they function to reaffirm a sense of identity which mingles with questions of self-determination. The function of cultural products and communication as representative tools becomes more relevant than the need to relive ‘tradition’ (which included starvation). By using these tools, by reinvigorating a sense of Inuit identity, a step has been taken to alleviate the despair that is accompanied by massive

social problems within Inuit communities that have come about due to the colonial experience. By restoring dignity, an essential element needed for humanity to flourish (according to Jordan and Wheeler) pride and purpose can be restored. “The real success, however, can be seen in the renewed sense of purpose the [art] project brought to the community and how it gave many residents an opportunity to be productive again.”<sup>259</sup>

Self-determination in the context of nation-statehood may be problematic as in the case of hunting and the fur industry. “If they go against the grain of mainstream Euro-American public opinion, these Aboriginal claims are considered demands of privileges, not rights. The question of meaning, who controls the imposition of meaning on a global scale, is central to matters of cultural survival on a local scale.”<sup>260</sup> Using a feminist argument, the master’s tools must be used against the master.<sup>261</sup> In the same way that media has been used to promote state interests, this same media can also be turned against it and used to speak with an Inuit voice. And while the Inuit may not engage in the now controversial activities of hunting and trapping—which had been crucial to their survival in a traditional lifestyle—to the same degree as they did, art production is sanctioned by the Canadian state (which, in this case controls the global agenda) and is therefore a means to the survival of Inuit culture.

This relationship, as has been pointed out, is not without paradox. Inuit art is one means that is used to give 'Canada' an identity that is unique in the global community yet for the appropriation of these cultural icons to be effective, the Canadian state requires the Inuit to maintain a self of their culture at the risk of fanning the flames of nationalistic sentiment.

Still, the present and future of the Inuit, lies in the results of pragmatic concession to current lived realities embodied in their subserviance to a dominant power. As Mary Simon, Canada's ambassador for Circumpolar Affairs, explained: "Unlike Aboriginal peoples in almost every other part of North America...we were not demographically overwhelmed. For obvious reasons of climate and ecology, the Arctic was not 'homesteaded'."<sup>262</sup>

The assimilation of Inuit peoples into nation-states has served to establish colonial domination, though not without a continuing political struggle for the right to self-determination. One of the expressions of this political struggle is the establishment of Nunavut, Canada's third territory.

***Thoughts on the Birth of Nunavut<sup>263</sup>***

***I feel that carvers have not received much attention from the people planning the Nunavut government. The Nunavut government has not set money aside for artists.***

***Okpik Piseolak, artist and vice-president,  
Inuit Art Foundation, Cape Dorset.***

***It seemed like for a long time we just stood idly by. We are going to have to stand on our own two feet and do things for ourselves.***

***Theresie Tungilik, artist and arts administrator, Rankin Inlet***

***When Nunavut arrives, printmakers and carvers need to make sure that their art survives. There are some who rely on their ability as artists to survive...I would also encourage people to keep producing art. It is part of Inuit culture.***

***Kenojuak Ashevak, artist, Cape Dorset***

***We expect things will change. We have always lived under governments that are not from here. We will try to govern according to traditional Inuit ways. Life for Inuit is difficult because we have so little control over our lives – it shows in the way we live now.***

***John Amagoalik, politician, Iqaluit***

***What do I think about making art? I think art is something that we have to teach our children so that it won't be forgotten. My hope for the future is for our children and our children's children to have the knowledge to produce Inuit art in Nunavut and be good at it... Carving has helped my family a lot financially.***

***Philippa Aggark, artist, Chesterfield Inlet***

Nunavut, which comprises one-fifth of the Canadian land mass, was inaugurated in April 1999. Of the members of the new legislative assembly, where the official language is Inuktitut, some were born in igloos and received the right to vote only in 1962. Fifteen of 19 MLAs in the new Nunavut legislature are Inuit. Most of the 28 communities in Nunavut are not linked by roads and have populations of less than 1,000 people.

Amongst the challenges the new government faces, is the creation of jobs where at this time 46 per cent of households rely on the production of art and handicraft for cash and 59 per cent obtain their food by hunting and fishing.<sup>264</sup> It is the same challenge that any government in the region has faced since the demise of the Inuit traditional lifestyle and the arrival of modernity. "The new territory must also deal with high unemployment,<sup>265</sup> low education levels, low average incomes, the shortage of adequate housing, the highest suicide rate in the country, the extreme poverty and the high cost of delivering public services in the Arctic."<sup>266</sup>

It has been greeted by some Inuit as the birth of a homeland for the people of Canada's north, while it has also been criticized as giving away the last vestiges of hope for a truly Inuit right to self-determination.

While the scope of this thesis does not speculate on the fate of Inuit art with the creation of Nunavut, it is interesting to note that recent developments have seen the promotion of Nunavut art at celebrations such as those marking the creation of the new territory, the setting up of community art centres and the formation of a marketing association of art wholesalers and dealers. The Nunavut Arts and Crafts Association (NACA) was also recently formed in October 1999—their first order of business—selecting art for Nunavut's new legislative assembly building in Iqaluit.

The creation of Nunavut was the result of a 23-year negotiation process to settle a land claim with the Inuit in the eastern portion of Canada's Arctic. Since 1967, Inuit concentrated in the eastern and central portions of the Canadian Arctic have been administered by the Government of the Northwest Territories, a vast territory with its headquarters in Yellowknife. This was seen as an improvement over an Ottawa-based administration. Still, as one critic said, it was like "living in Montreal and having your capital in Regina. It [was] the equivalent of the premier of Alberta...deciding language policy for the people of Quebec."<sup>267</sup>

Still, resolution of the Nunavut land claim had been stalled for six years by the Inuit demand for the creation of a political territory. The stalemate occurred because of the federal government's refusal to link the land-claims process to political self-

determination. The process resumed only when the Inuit agreed to the federal stipulation that division of the territories would be considered only after the claim was settled.

Although federal policy at the turn of the millennium favours self-governing status for Canadian Aboriginal populations, its linkage to the land claims process – and, by implication, industrial development – was made explicit in the Nunavut agreement; Canada facilitated land claim settlements with Inuit to pave the way for exploitation of the reputedly resource-rich Arctic, long considered a storehouse of untold wealth.<sup>268</sup>

Even now, with the establishment of Nunavut, the Inuit are perhaps further away from self-determination than ever. The Inuit have found recognition for their lifestyle, but in practice, have ultimately lost any legislative claim to their rights on the land.

Proponents of the deal note that a vast territory was being given to the Inuit, while others argued that the Inuit were really giving away 80 per cent of the land they held before colonialism.

In Canada today, no land claims settlement with Aboriginal groups allows for the unconditional disposition of land. In the Inuit case, government involvement (which ensures only a minimal claim of self-determination) goes so far as to provide that the minister of Indian Affairs serves as arbitrator in case of a dispute between Inuit and outside interests. “In other words, beneficiaries of land claim agreements have conditional use of and access to the land. In return, Inuit relinquish for all time their Aboriginal title to land, water and offshore areas.”<sup>269</sup> Essentially, the Inuit now are free to do as they please as long as the Canadian government, taking the role of benevolent dictator, agrees. In return for extinguishing Aboriginal title, Inuit received certain rights and benefits, including:

- 1) control over approximately 136,000 square miles (with mineral rights on 14,000)
- 2) the right to harvest wildlife
- 3) the establishment of three national parks
- 4) equal membership with the bureaucracy on wildlife and other management boards
- 5) \$1.4 billion in federal transfers payable over 14 years
- 6) a share of government royalties from oil, gas and mineral development on Crown lands
- 7) \$13 million to establish a Training Trust Fund.<sup>270</sup>

Former NWT government leader Dennis Patterson observed that, “if the Inuit reject their [land] claim in the NWT, the Government of Canada and exploration companies will continue to act as if the land is theirs to develop, without any involvement of Inuit.”<sup>271</sup>

The concessions that allowed for the creation of Nunavut, may be attributed to the pragmatic Inuit worldview perhaps best expressed by James Eetoolook in a 1999 letter to the editor of Nunatsiaq News. Eetoolook wrote: “We have not been conquered by war, but the world is changing and we must change with it if we are to survive. Conquest can take many forms and we cannot ignore the presence and influence of the outside world. If we do we will be completely overwhelmed.”<sup>272</sup>

Dybbroe has observed that overall, the Inuit are quite content to live within their respective national boundaries, yet want to foster a strong Inuit consciousness, to develop “Not a new country, but a new consciousness.”<sup>273</sup> This is supported also by the Inuit Circumpolar Conference’s aim to promote sustainable and equitable development based on Inuit cultural priorities. If they succeed, perhaps through the tools afforded them by strong cultural products and effective communication, they will transcend modernity’s

reliance on a nation state and move towards a post-modern conception of political organization.

By understanding the processes which will produce this consciousness, the route to achieving it will be exposed or in Shapiro's words: "This way of speaking, of referring not to things but to how they have been made, has a demystifying effect on our current self-understanding."<sup>274</sup>

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> George Lipsitz, Time Passages (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1990) 16.
- <sup>2</sup> Stacey Neale, "Rankin Inlet Ceramics: A Study in Development and Influence," Inuit Art Quarterly, 14.1, (1999): 6.
- <sup>3</sup> Susanne Dybbroe, "Questions of identity and issues of self-determination," Inuit Studies, 20. 2 (1996):50.
- <sup>4</sup> Michael J. Shapiro, The Politics of Representation (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988) 7.
- <sup>5</sup> Thomas McEvelley, Arts and Otherness: Crisis in Cultural Identity (Kingston, NY: Documentext/McPherson, 1992), 10-11.
- <sup>6</sup> Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958) 57.
- <sup>7</sup> Bryan Cummins, Kirby Whiteduck, "Towards a Model for the Identification and Recognition of Sacred Sites," Sacred Lands eds. Rick Riewe, Jill Oakes, et.al. (Occasional Paper #43, Canadian Circumpolar Institute, University of Alberta, 1998) 11-12.
- <sup>8</sup> Franklyn Griffiths, Strong and Free: Canada and the New Sovereignty (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing, 1996).
- <sup>9</sup> See also Andreas Huyssen, "The Return of Diogenes as Postmodern Intellectual," Critique of Cynical Reason, by Peter Soterdijk, trans. Michael Eldred (Minneapolis, University of Minneapolis Press, 1987).
- <sup>10</sup> Huyssen, 1987, xxiv.
- <sup>11</sup> Shapiro, 1988, 5.
- <sup>12</sup> Shapiro, 1988, 6.
- <sup>13</sup> Dybbroe, 1996, 40.
- <sup>14</sup> Dybbroe, 1996, 43. See also: Raymond Williams, Marxism and Literature (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977); Pierre Bourdieu, Outline of a theory of practice (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977); Stuart Hall, "Culture, the media and the 'ideological effect'," Mass Communication and Society eds. James Curran et.al. (London: Edward Arnold, 1977).
- <sup>15</sup> See also: Glenn Jordan, Chris Weedon, Cultural Politics: Class, Gender, Race and the Postmodern World (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996) 525.
- <sup>16</sup> Dybbroe, 1996, 49.
- <sup>17</sup> Edmund Carpenter, "Sedna's challenge," Dialectical Anthropology 7 (1982): 85.
- <sup>18</sup> Minnie Aodla Freeman, Introduction, Inuit Women Artists eds. Odette Leroux, et.al. (Vancouver, BC: Douglas and McIntyre, 1996) 16.
- <sup>19</sup> Marion E. Jackson, "The Voices of Inuit Women," Inuit Women Artists eds. Odette Leroux, et. al. (Vancouver, BC: Douglas and McIntyre, 1996) 39.
- <sup>20</sup> See also: Gerald Friesen, "Hockey and Prairie Cultural History," River Road (Winnipeg, Manitoba: University of Manitoba Press, 1996), 218-219.
- <sup>21</sup> Friesen, 1996.
- <sup>22</sup> Max Horkeimer, Theodor Adorno, "Cultural Criticism and Society," Prisms, trans. Samuel and Shierry Weber (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1981) 29.
- <sup>23</sup> Shapiro, 1988, 6.
- <sup>24</sup> Shapiro, 1988, 6.
- <sup>25</sup> Jordan and Weedon, 1996, 498.
- <sup>26</sup> Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Cartographies of Struggle," Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism eds. Chandra Talpade Mohanty, Ann Russo, Lourdes Torres (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991) 5.
- <sup>27</sup> Dybbroe, 1996, 40.

- <sup>28</sup> Gisela Breitling, "Speech, Silence and the Discourse of Art. On Conventions of Speech and Feminine Consciousness," Feminist Aesthetics, ed. Gisela Ecker, trans. Harriet Anderson (London: The Women's Press, 1985) 168-69.
- <sup>29</sup> Hill Collins, Patricia Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment (New York: Routledge, 1991).
- <sup>30</sup> Mohanty, 1991, 26.
- <sup>31</sup> Maria Von Finckenstein, Celebrating Inuit Art, 1949-1970 (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1999) 11.
- <sup>32</sup> Dale Spender, Women of Ideas (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982) 9.
- <sup>33</sup> See also Dybbroe, 1996.
- <sup>34</sup> Paula Gunn Allen, "Deep Purple," Spider Woman's Granddaughters. (London : Women's Press, 1989).
- <sup>35</sup> Mohanty, 1991, 4.
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid., 4.
- <sup>37</sup> Dybbroe, 1996, 44.
- <sup>38</sup> Dybbroe, 1996, 45.
- <sup>39</sup> The issue of temporality is significant in discussing Inuit art, both in terms of representation, as well as the myth of tradition in this art form. (*See Chapter three*)
- <sup>40</sup> Dybbroe, 1996, 40.
- <sup>41</sup> Shapiro, 1988, 4.
- <sup>42</sup> Shapiro, 1988, 5.
- <sup>43</sup> Chris Weedon, Feminist Practice & Poststructuralist Theory. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd., second edition, 1997) 134.
- <sup>44</sup> Shapiro, 1988, 10.
- <sup>45</sup> Dybbroe, 1996, 42.
- <sup>46</sup> Cummins, Whiteduck, 1998.
- <sup>47</sup> Milan Women's Bookstore Collective, Sexual Difference (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990) 28.
- <sup>48</sup> Édouard Glissant, Poetics of Relation, trans. Wetsy Wing (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1997) 13.
- <sup>49</sup> Tony Wilden, The Imaginary Canadian (Vancouver: Pulp Press, 1980) 9.
- <sup>50</sup> Clifford Geertz, Negara (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980) 134-135.
- <sup>51</sup> Shapiro, 1988, 130.
- <sup>52</sup> Shapiro, 1988, 127.
- <sup>53</sup> Dybbroe, 1996, 53.
- <sup>54</sup> Ronald J. Diebert, Parchment, Printing and Hypermedia (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997) 118.
- <sup>55</sup> Martin Jay, Adorno (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1984) 119.
- <sup>56</sup> Patricia Jagentowicz Mills, Women, Nature and Psyche (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987) 86.
- <sup>57</sup> Printmaking was only a viable option for the Inuit with the introduction of paper. An oral culture in a climate without trees made paper virtually unthinkable, and therefore printmaking, impossible. It is a commonly held belief that drawing is a traditional art form in Inuit society. However, beyond a few doodles on the igloo walls, it is unlikely that this is true.
- <sup>58</sup> See: David Held, Introduction to Critical Theory (Berkeley & L.A., University of California Press, 1980) 79; Mills, 1987, 86.
- <sup>59</sup> Held, 1980, 80.
- <sup>60</sup> Max Horkheimer, Theodor W. Adorno. Dialectic of Enlightenment, trans. John Cumming (New York: Continuum Publishing Co., 1988) 137.
- <sup>61</sup> Max Horkheimer, "Art and Mass Culture," Critical Theory, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972) 276.

- <sup>62</sup> Held, 1980, 81-82.
- <sup>63</sup> Horkheimer, Adorno, 1988, 127.
- <sup>64</sup> Mills, 1987, 87.
- <sup>65</sup> Held, 1980, 80.
- <sup>66</sup> Horkheimer, 1972, 274.
- <sup>67</sup> Held, 1980, 81.
- <sup>68</sup> Marybelle Mitchell, "Constructing Cultural Forms of Their Own Choosing," Inuit Art Quarterly (Winter 1998) 3.
- <sup>69</sup> See Nelson Graburn, "Inuit Art and Canadian Nationalism," Inuit Art Quarterly (Fall 1986).
- <sup>70</sup> Held, 1980, 82.
- <sup>71</sup> Karl Marx, "Alienation and Social Classes," The Marx-Engels Reader, ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1978) 134.
- <sup>72</sup> Horkheimer, Adorno, 1988, 120.
- <sup>73</sup> Mills, 1987, 91.
- <sup>74</sup> Horkheimer, 1972, 278.
- <sup>75</sup> Horkheimer, Adorno, 1988, 131.
- <sup>76</sup> Horkheimer, Adorno, 1988, 130.
- <sup>77</sup> Horkheimer, Adorno, 1988, 167.
- <sup>78</sup> Barry Ace, July Papatsie, Transitions: Contemporary Indian and Inuit Art (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1997) 4.
- <sup>79</sup> Horkheimer, Adorno, 1988, 122.
- <sup>80</sup> Horkheimer, 1972, 278.
- <sup>81</sup> Odette Leroux, Marion E. Jackson, et.al., eds. Inuit Women Artists. (Vancouver, BC: Douglas and McIntyre, 1996) 235.
- <sup>82</sup> Shapiro, 1988, 126.
- <sup>83</sup> Horkheimer, 1972, 273.
- <sup>84</sup> Horkheimer, Adorno, 1988, 123.
- <sup>85</sup> Horkheimer, Adorno, 1988, 138.
- <sup>86</sup> Horkheimer, Adorno, 1988, 137.
- <sup>87</sup> Horkheimer, Adorno, 1988, 126.
- <sup>88</sup> Held, 1980, 82.
- <sup>89</sup> Theodor W. Adorno, "Transparencies on Film," New German Critique, 24-25 (1981-82): 202.
- <sup>90</sup> Horkheimer, Adorno, 1988, 139.
- <sup>91</sup> Kevin Dowler, "The Cultural Industries Policy Apparatus," The Cultural Industries in Canada: Problems, Policies, and Prospects, Ed. Michael Dorland (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, Publishers, 1996) 343.
- <sup>92</sup> Tom Bottomore, ed, A Dictionary of Marxist Thought (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983) 87.
- <sup>93</sup> Mills, 1987, 88.
- <sup>94</sup> Horkheimer, Adorno, 1988, 145.
- <sup>95</sup> Mills, 1987, 89.
- <sup>96</sup> Horkheimer, Adorno, 1988, 167.
- <sup>97</sup> Horkheimer, Adorno, 1988, 139.
- <sup>98</sup> Horkheimer, Adorno, 1988, 132.
- <sup>99</sup> Horkheimer, Adorno, 1988, 145.
- <sup>100</sup> Horkheimer, Adorno, 1988, 121.
- <sup>101</sup> Marybelle Mitchell, "Keeping Things in Perspective," Inuit Art Quarterly 14.3 (Fall 1999) 4.
- <sup>102</sup> See chapter three.
- <sup>103</sup> Mills, 1987, 89.

<sup>104</sup> Mills, 1987, 93.

<sup>105</sup> Horkheimer, 1972, 290.

<sup>106</sup> Réal Therrien, The 1980s: A Decade of Diversity, Broadcasting, Satellites and Pay-TV. Report of the Committee on Extension of Service to Northern and Remote Communities (Ottawa: Canadian Radio-Television & Telecommunications Commission, July 1980) 21.

<sup>107</sup> Diebert, 1997, 2.

<sup>108</sup> Diebert, 1997, 2.

<sup>109</sup> John B. Thompson, Ideology and Modern Culture (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990) 10.

<sup>110</sup> Eric Michaels, "Aboriginal Content: Who's Got It-Who Needs It?" The Media Reader, eds. Manuel Alvarado and John O. Thompson (Great Britain: BFI Publishing, 1990, 111-131) 128.

<sup>111</sup> See Edward W Said, Orientalism (New York: Vintage Books, 1979) 3; and Loretta Todd, "What More Do They Want?" Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives, E Gerald McMaster & Lee-Ann Martin. (Vancouver/Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1992) 77.

<sup>112</sup> See Jeanette Winterson, Erotica: Women's Writing from Sappho to Margaret Atwood ed. Margaret Reynolds, forward by Jeanette Winterson (New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1990).

<sup>113</sup> Catharine MacKinnon, Only Words (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press 1993) 13.

<sup>114</sup> Gerald McMaster, Lee-Ann Martin. Indigena: Contemporary Native Perspectives (Vancouver/Toronto: Douglas & McIntyre, 1992) 17.

<sup>115</sup> Todd, 1992, 77.

<sup>116</sup> William A Dorman, Ehsan Omeed, "Reporting Iran the Shah's Way," Columbia Journalism Review (January-February 1979) 27.

<sup>117</sup> Balance in Broadcasting (Hull, Quebec. Canadian Radio-Television & Commission, 1981) 13.

<sup>118</sup> Balance in Broadcasting, 1981, 15.

<sup>119</sup> The oral nature of their culture does not lend itself to the 'verification' of the tradition, at least in the European sense which requires documentation as empirical 'proof'. "In a 1884 essay published in Atlantic Monthly, writer Charles Leland asserted that "...there is no proof of the existence among our [sic] Indians of a belief in a Great Spirit or in an infinite God before the coming of the whites." Ward Churchill, Fantasies of the Master Race: Literature, Cinema and the Colonization of American Indians. Ed. M. Annette Jaimes. Monroe (Maine: Common Courage Press, 1992) 27. That the Inuit history is any less 'true' than any other culture because of its oral nature is plainly absurd.

<sup>120</sup> Michaels, 1990, 126.

<sup>121</sup> Balance in Broadcasting, 1981, 3.

<sup>122</sup> Churchill, 1992, 1.

<sup>123</sup> Ace, 1997, 4.

<sup>124</sup> Balance in Broadcasting, 1981, 3.

<sup>125</sup> Elaine Scarry, Resisting Representation (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994) 16-17.

<sup>126</sup> McMaster & Martin, 1992, 17.

<sup>127</sup> John H. Bodley, Victims of Progress (Mountain View, CA: Mayfield Publishing Co., 1982) 65.

<sup>128</sup> Canadian Institute for Peace and Security, "Sovereignty: Canada and the Arctic". Factsheet 8, (March 1989).

<sup>129</sup> For a comprehensive explication of the foundations of European claims to North American territory see William R. Morrison's Under the Flag: Canadian Sovereignty and the Native People in Northern Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1984.

If one were to pursue this argument, the use of the term "North America" becomes problematic. However, for the sake of comprehension, 'North America' is used in its territorial sense as is commonly understood in its Eurocentric historical context.

<sup>130</sup> Churchill, 1992, 26.

<sup>131</sup> Churchill, 1992, 4.

<sup>132</sup> Todd, 1992, 72.

<sup>133</sup> Desmond Morton, A Short History of Canada (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers Ltd., 1983) 16.

<sup>134</sup> Cummins, Whiteduck, 1998, 7.

<sup>135</sup> For greater explanations on the Aboriginal concept of land see Sacred Lands, eds. Rick Riewe, et. al., 1998.

<sup>136</sup> A popular rationale for the extension of sovereignty over the Native peoples can be found in the concept of *terra nullius* or no man's land. This concept did not mean that the land was uninhabited, since millions of Aboriginal peoples could be found throughout North America. Rather, according to European perceptions, the land was no man's land in that it was not being put to good use since the Native inhabitants were nomads and therefore "Not making proper use of the land as God had intended it to be used." Found in Morrison, 1984, 21.

<sup>137</sup> Morrison, 1984, 32.

<sup>138</sup> Morrison, 1984, 33-34.

<sup>139</sup> Martin Carnoy, Education as Cultural Imperialism (David MacKay and Co., 1974) 16.

<sup>140</sup> Ipellie, 1992, 50.

<sup>141</sup> Morrison, 1984, vi.

<sup>142</sup> Morrison, 1984, vi.

<sup>143</sup> Ipellie, 1992, 45.

<sup>144</sup> Morrison, 1984, 31.

<sup>145</sup> CIPS Factsheet #8, 1989.

<sup>146</sup> Diebert, 1997, 121.

<sup>147</sup> Griffiths, 1996, 28-29.

<sup>148</sup> Griffiths, 1996, 19.

<sup>149</sup> Ipellie, 1992, 48.

<sup>150</sup> Bodley argues that in cases where tribal peoples were greatly outnumbered by invading populations, such as in North America, the colonial administration of natives tend to take on the form of a welfare operation. "After their traditional cultural autonomy had been destroyed by conquest, or in some cases by treaty, these peoples were treated merely as incompetent and impoverished citizens to be sheltered in special institutions and by special legislation." (Bodley, 1982, 78)

<sup>151</sup> Ipellie, 1992, 47.

<sup>152</sup> Ipellie, 1992, 54.

<sup>153</sup> Churchill, 1992, 1.

<sup>154</sup> In a similar vein, the argument that genocide is a part of Aboriginal experience is applied to Australian Aboriginal experience in Glenn, Jordan, Chris Weedon, "Racism, Culture and Subjectivity: Australian Aboriginal Writing," Cultural Politics: Class, Gender, Race and the Postmodern World (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1996). Weedon and Jordan argue that power does not simply depend upon physical domination but also on a system of beliefs and values that help to legitimate oppression.

<sup>155</sup> Breitling, 1985, 163.

<sup>156</sup> Susan Rubin Suleiman, "(Re)writing the body: The politics and poetics of female eroticism," The Female Body in Western Culture, Contemporary Perspectives ed. Susan Rubin Suleiman (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985) 7.

<sup>157</sup> Census of Canada, 1981, 4.

<sup>158</sup> Census, 1981, 5.

<sup>159</sup> Census, 1981, 14.

<sup>160</sup> Census, 1981, 19.

<sup>161</sup> Therrien, 1980, 23.

<sup>162</sup> Michaels, 1990, 130.

<sup>163</sup> J. Mark Stiles, Broadcasting and Canada's Aboriginal Peoples. Prepared for the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy (Ottawa, November 1985) 8.

<sup>164</sup> Stiles, 1985, 8.

<sup>165</sup> Therrien, 1980, 1.

<sup>166</sup> Principles and Elements for a Comprehensive Arctic Policy, Inuit Circumpolar Conference, July 1992. (Montreal: Centre for Northern Studies and Research, 1992) 107

<sup>167</sup> Stiles, 1985, 9.

<sup>168</sup> Principles and Elements for a Comprehensive Arctic Policy, 1992, 106.

<sup>169</sup> Michaels, 1990, 128.

<sup>170</sup> Stiles, 1985, 11.

<sup>171</sup> Stiles, 1985, 11.

<sup>172</sup> Report of the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy, Gerald Lewis Caplan & Florian Sauvageau, Co-Chairs (Ottawa, 1986) 519.

<sup>173</sup> Roger Scruton, A Dictionary of Political Thought (London: Pan Books, 1982) 384.

<sup>174</sup> Therrien, 1980, 21.

<sup>175</sup> Report of the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy 1986, 516.

<sup>176</sup> Therrien, 1980, 21.

<sup>177</sup> Kirwan Cox, The National Film Board and Television. A Report prepared for the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy, (Rigaud, 1986) 2.

<sup>178</sup> Report of the Task Force on Broadcasting Policy, 1986, 515.

<sup>179</sup> "The Committee has been helped in its consideration of the uses of satellites by the objectives and guidelines for satellite broadcasting services approved by a consensus of federal and provincial communications ministers." (Therrien, 1980, 6) An excerpt from a letter from David MacDonald, then Minister of Communications, suggests that questions of Canadian sovereignty played a stronger role in the Canadian governmental agenda than the desire to address the concerns of the Inuit population.

Also:

Excerpt from 22 Nov. 1979 letter from David MacDonald (Minister of Communications) to Mr. Charles Dalfen, Acting Chair CRTC)

"Moreover, the rapid proliferation of satellite television services in the United States, and their technical availability in Canada, has prompted numerous requests from the public and industry for permission to receive these foreign signals. As you know, the instances of unauthorized reception of US satellite signals in Canada are rapidly increasing in number. I am very concerned about this growing problem particularly as it impacts significantly on the development of Canadian satellite television services and the domestic broadcasting system in general. Although there is an increasing demand for American satellite signals, a strong interest has also been expressed by various parties in Canada to use the domestic satellite system to distribute broadcast signals throughout the country." (Therrien, 1980, 84)

<sup>180</sup> Therrien, 1980, 4.

<sup>181</sup> Therrien, 1980, 6.

<sup>182</sup> Therrien, 1980, 7.

<sup>183</sup> Therrien, 1980, 5.

<sup>184</sup> Therrien, 1980, 1.

<sup>185</sup> Maria Von Finckenstein, Celebrating Inuit Art, 1949-1970. (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1999) preface

<sup>186</sup> Ann Meekitjuk Hanson, "Good Memories," Inuit Women Artists, ed. Odette Leroux, et. al.

(Vancouver, BC: Douglas and McIntyre, 1996) 241.

<sup>187</sup> Ingo Hessel, Inuit Art (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1998) 188.

<sup>188</sup> Stacey, Neale, "Rankin Inlet Ceramics: A Study in Development and Influence," Inuit Art Quarterly 14.1 (1999): 6.

<sup>189</sup> See: Marybelle Mitchell, editorial, Inuit Art Quarterly 14:1 (1999): 3.

<sup>190</sup> Von Finckenstein, 1999, 12.

<sup>191</sup> For a look at how artistic endeavours were introduced to the Inuit, see Neale, 1999 for a look at the Rankin Inlet Ceramics Project. In it she notes that "This project is often referred to as an experiment – an apt description, since the artists were encouraged to try the medium without any real knowledge of its

origins, functions, physical properties or artistic potential.” (Neale, 1999, 9) When it came to evaluating the project, Neale notes that the ‘artists were pulled in a variety of directions by bureaucrats, advisors and critics who held strong convictions about the direction the project should take, though few of them had visited Rankin Inlet for more than a day or two and their knowledge of art was limited.” (Neale, 1999, 10)  
<sup>192</sup> Qallunaat does not strictly mean ‘white people’. It could mean either ‘people with beautiful eyebrows’ or ‘people with beautiful manufactured material’, but the symbol, the meaning is evident to refer to the ‘southerners’ (Freeman, 1996, 16)

<sup>193</sup> Freeman, 1996, 16.

<sup>194</sup> Virginia Watt, “The Beginning,” Inuit Art Quarterly 14. 3 (1999): 6.

<sup>195</sup> See also Mitchell, 1999, 4.

<sup>196</sup> Watt, 1999, 6.

<sup>197</sup> See also Neale, 1999

<sup>198</sup> Dybbroe, 1996, 43.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>200</sup> Ace, 1997, 4.

<sup>201</sup> Hessel, 1998, 187.

<sup>202</sup> Leroux, 1996, 33.

<sup>203</sup> Stacey Neale, “The Rankin Inlet Ceramics Project: The Quest for Authenticity,” Inuit Art Quarterly, 14.2 (1999): 13.

“Stone—the most common of all the materials used by Inuit artists—is of critical importance to the communities in northern Canada. Its importance is so central to the well-being of northerners and to their economy that the Nunavut Land Claim Agreement signed in 1993 enshrined the right of every Inuk “to remove 50 cubic yards per year of carving stone from Crown lands without a permit.” A right that may be “exercised on Crown lands that are subject to other interests” (Canada 1993, 150).” Quoted in, Susan Gustavison, “Northern Rock: Contemporary Inuit Stone Sculpture,” Inuit Art Quarterly 14.2 (1999): 32 . Carvers are also quarriers, often working in unsafe conditions to cut the stone used in carving. Many deaths have been attributed to these conditions. (Specific details of deaths can be found in the Marybelle Mitchell, editorial, Inuit Art Quarterly. 14.1 (1999): 3.

<sup>204</sup> Neale, 1999, 8.

<sup>205</sup> Marybelle Mitchell, “Constructing Cultural Forms of Their Own Choosing,” Inuit Art Quarterly 13.4 (1998): 2.

<sup>206</sup> Mitchell, 1998, 3.

<sup>207</sup> Ace, 1997, 8.

<sup>208</sup> See Leroux 1996; Hessel, 1998, 186.

<sup>209</sup> Ace, 1997, p 3.

<sup>210</sup> Neale, “Authenticity,” 1999, 10.

<sup>211</sup> “... the appeal of Inuit art derives from several factors, among them the favorable image of the Inuit during the past century...the titillation of something new and different (given the emphasis we place on innovation), its lack of competition with mainstream art, and mostly, perhaps, that these arts are the products of “natural” Canadians, supremely adept at the creation of material things and adaptive in their ecological relationships.” (Graburn, 1986, 7)

<sup>212</sup> Although ceramics were introduced to the North in the 1960s, and cannot be considered to be a part of Inuit tradition, this apparently had no impact on the desire to promote, for Southern audiences, an ‘authentic’ Inuit art form. “The rough quality of the unglazed pieces and the use of northern imagery as a decorative feature helped define Rankin Inlet ceramics as a genuine form of Inuit expression... Ironically, the unsophisticated nature of the unglazed pieces gave the impression of authenticity that its southern supporters so desperately wanted to promote, yet failed to capitalize on.” (Neale, “Authenticity,” 1999, 7)

<sup>213</sup> Hessel, 1998, 186.

<sup>214</sup> Marybelle Mitchell, Inuit Art Quarterly Spring (1999): 3. See also Inuit Art Quarterly 13. 4 (1988) 2.

<sup>215</sup> Neale, 1999, 6; See also Nelson Graburn, "Some Problems in the Understanding of Contemporary Inuit Art," Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology 4.3 (1975) 66; Hessel, 1998.

<sup>216</sup> Neale, 1999, 7.

<sup>217</sup> Hessel, 1998, 187.

<sup>218</sup> Ace, 1997, 7.

<sup>219</sup> Mitchell, 1998, 3.

<sup>220</sup> In fact, Queen Elizabeth II was sent a Cape Dorset sculpture for her coronation.

<sup>221</sup> Graburn, 1986, 5.

<sup>222</sup> Hessel, 1998, 186.

<sup>223</sup> See Graburn, 1986.

<sup>224</sup> George Swinton, Report-Arts and Craft Activities (1968) 2.

<sup>225</sup> Dybbroe, 1996, 43.

<sup>226</sup> Graburn, 1986, 6.

<sup>227</sup> Graburn, 1986, 6.

<sup>228</sup> Even art gallery involvement in Inuit art, particularly with the advent of printmaking as an artistic activity, still involved the government. The federally supported National Museum of Man in Ottawa has bought every print series produced, and the Canadian Eskimo Arts Council was formed in 1961 to approve the annual printmaking editions and to foment publicity, arrange exhibits and channel money into Inuit art venture. (Graburn, 1986, 6)

<sup>229</sup> Neale, 1999, 6.

<sup>230</sup> Although ceramics were introduced to the North in the 1960s, and cannot be considered to be a part of Inuit tradition, this apparently had no impact on the desire to promote, for Southern audiences, an 'authentic' Inuit art form. "The rough quality of the unglazed pieces and the use of northern imagery as a decorative feature helped define Rankin Inlet ceramics as a genuine form of Inuit expression... Ironically, the unsophisticated nature of the unglazed pieces gave the impression of authenticity that its southern supporters so desperately wanted to promote, yet failed to capitalize on." (Neale, "Authenticity," 1999, 7)

<sup>231</sup> Neale, "Authenticity," 1999, 6.

<sup>232</sup> Watt, 1999, 16.

A letter from H.L. Keenleyside, Deputy Minister of Mines and Resources, to Mrs. Currie, President of the Canadian Handicrafts Guild, November 17, 1949:

We have been very much interested in the efforts of your guild to encourage the development of a handicraft industry amongst the Eskimos at Port Harrison last summer... The Eskimo economy has, in the past, been based largely upon the white fox fur trade. The white fox is subject to cyclic scarcity and wide fluctuations in price depending on world fur markets. We are anxious to introduce new industries at suitable points to improve the Eskimo economy and the proven ability of the Natives in producing characteristic handicraft articles holds promise for developing a small industry in this field if the Eskimo production can be properly organized and outlets to suitable markets provided." (Watt, 1999, 13)

<sup>233</sup> Shapiro, 1988, 17.

<sup>234</sup> Shapiro, 1988, 16.

<sup>235</sup> Marybelle Mitchell, Pat Tobin, "Nunavut: The Newest Member of Confederation," Inuit Art Quarterly 14.2 (1999) 18.

<sup>236</sup> Shapiro, 1988, 26-27.

<sup>237</sup> Inuit Art Quarterly, 14.2 (1999).

<sup>238</sup> See Jackson, 1996.

<sup>239</sup> Marybelle Mitchell, Inuit Art Quarterly 14.1 (1999): 3.

<sup>240</sup> Hessel, 1998, 185.

<sup>241</sup> Mitchell, Fall 1999, 2

<sup>242</sup> See Jackson, 1996.

<sup>243</sup> Leroux, 1996, 20

<sup>244</sup> This is illustrated in feelings surrounding the newly created territory of Nunavut. Perceived as a homeland, discussions about it tended to be quite nationalistic in tone. Mitchell and Tobin rightly point out that: "The federal state is of course bound to oppose nationalistic claims from minority groups, whether in Nunavut, Quebec, or elsewhere. (Mitchell & Tobin, 1999, 21)

<sup>245</sup> Freeman, 1996, 16-17.

<sup>246</sup> Dybbroe, 1996, 40.

<sup>247</sup> Hanson, 1996, 243.

<sup>248</sup> Freeman, 1996, 16.

<sup>249</sup> Hanson, 1996, 245.

<sup>250</sup> Neale, 1999, 5.

<sup>251</sup> See Inuit Art Quarterly 13.4, 1998.

This strategy can be found in feminist "If 'everything is in the commentary', then an integral part of the new 'feminine' poetics is to reappropriate, by means of ironic re-readings and rewritings, the dominant cultural productions of the past." (Suleiman, 1985, 18). Resistance is therefore enacted by re/appropriating the same forms which have been used to pursue agendas against a particular group.

<sup>252</sup> Dybbroe, 1996, 48.

<sup>253</sup> Neale, 1999, 5.

<sup>254</sup> Mitchell, 1998, 3.

<sup>255</sup> See Hessel, 1998, 187.

<sup>256</sup> McEvelley, 1992, 12.

<sup>257</sup> Mitchell & Tobin, 1999, 22.

<sup>258</sup> McEvelley, 1992, 49.

<sup>259</sup> Neale, 1999, 16.

<sup>260</sup> Dybbroe, 1996, 48.

<sup>261</sup> Audre, Lorde, "Age Race, Class & Sex: Women Redefining Difference," Sister Outsider (Trumansburg, NY: The Crossing Press, 1984).

<sup>262</sup> Nunavut Implementation Commission Footprints in New Snow (Iqaluit, 1995) 5.

<sup>263</sup> Inuit Art Quarterly, 14.2.

<sup>264</sup> Inuit Art Quarterly, 14.2.

<sup>265</sup> According to Statistics Canada, in 1992 the unemployment rate of Aboriginals is 32 per cent, compared to two per cent for non-Inuit in the territory.

<sup>266</sup> Mitchell & Tobin, 1999, 22

<sup>267</sup> Mitchell & Tobin, 1999, 19

<sup>268</sup> Mitchell & Tobin, 1999, 19.

<sup>269</sup> Mitchell & Tobin, 1999, 20.

<sup>270</sup> Mitchell & Tobin, 1999, 20.

<sup>271</sup> Mitchell & Tobin, 1999, 21.

<sup>272</sup> Mitchell & Tobin, 1999, 23.

<sup>273</sup> Dybbroe, 1996, 46.

<sup>274</sup> Shapiro, 1988, 4.

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## APPENDIX A

The Dene Declaration<sup>1</sup>

We the Dene of the [North West Territories] insist on the right to be regarded by ourselves and the world as a nation.

Our struggle is for the recognition of the Dene Nation by the Government and people of Canada and the peoples and governments of the world.

As once Europe was the exclusive homeland of the European peoples, Africa the exclusive homeland of the African peoples, the New World, North and South America, was the exclusive homeland of Aboriginal peoples of the New World, the Amerindian and Inuit.

The New World like other parts of the world has suffered the experience of colonialism and imperialism. Other peoples have occupied the land—often with force—and foreign governments have imposed themselves on our people. Ancient civilizations and ways of life have been destroyed.

Colonialism and imperialism is now dead or dying. Recent years have witnessed the birth of new nations or rebirth of old nations out of the ashes of colonialism.

As Europe is the place where you will find European countries with European governments for European peoples, now also you will find in Africa and Asia the existence of African and Asian countries with African and Asian governments for the African and Asian peoples.

The African and Asian peoples—the peoples of the Third World—have fought for and won the right to self-determination, the right to recognition as distinct peoples and the recognition of themselves as nations.

But in the New World the native peoples have not fared so well. Even in countries in South American where Native peoples are the vast majority of the population there is not one country which has an Amerindian government for the Amerindian peoples.

Nowhere in the New World have the Native peoples won the right to self-determination and the right to be recognition by the world as a distinct people and as Nations.

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<sup>1</sup>Tony Wilden, The Imaginary Canadian (Vancouver: Pulp Press, 1980) 58-59.

While the Native people of Canada are a minority in their homeland, the Native people of the [North West Territories], the Dene and the Inuit, are a majority of the population of the NWT.

The Dene find themselves as part of a country. That country is Canada. But the government of Canada is not the government of the Dene. The government of the NWT is not the government of the Dene. These governments were not the choice of the Dene, these were imposed upon the Dene.

What we the Dene are struggling for is the recognition of the Dene Nation by the governments and peoples of the world.

And while there are realities we are forced to submit to, such as the existence of a country called Canada, we insist on the right to self-determination as a distinct people and the recognition of the Dene Nation.

We the Dene are part of the Fourth World. And as the peoples and Nations of the world have come to recognize the existence and rights of those peoples who make up the Third World the day must come and will come when the nations of the Fourth World will come to be recognized and respected. The challenge to the Dene and the world is to find the way for the recognition of the Dene Nation.

Our plea to the world is to help us in our struggle to find a place in the world community where we can exercise our right to self-determination as a distinct people and as a nation.

What we seek then is independence and self-determination within the country of Canada. This is what we mean when we call for a just land settlement for the Dene Nation.

## APPENDIX B

## Demography (1981 Census of Canada)

population of Canada: 24, 083, 496

population\* of Inuit Aboriginal peoples

in Canada:	25 390	491 460
Newfoundland:	1 850	4 430
PEI:	30	625
Nova Scotia:	130	7 795
New Brunswick:	5	5 515
Quebec:	4 875	52 395
Ontario:	1 095	110 060
Manitoba:	230	66 280
Saskatchewan:	145	59 200
Alberta:	510	72 050
BC:	515	8 645
Yukon:	95	4 045
NWT:	15 910	26 430
% of Canadian population	.11	2.04%

Number of people claiming these aboriginal language families as mother tongue

Inuktitut	18 770
Algonkian	99 210
Tlingit	125

\* +/- 5 people

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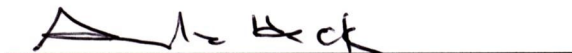
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Inuit identity and the paradox of culture, communications and self-determination

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