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The Art of Northwest Coast Tourist Basketry: 1890 - 1910

by

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MASTER OF ARTS

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We accept this thesis as conforming
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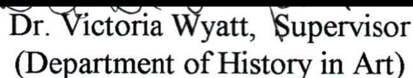

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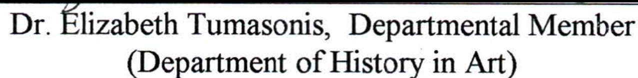

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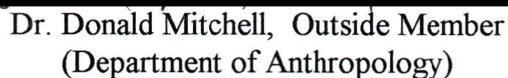

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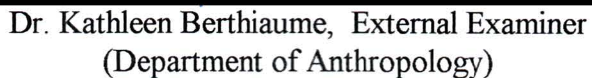

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the changes in the art of Northwest Coast basketry from 1890 to 1910 and demonstrates how this was part of a complex interaction of cultures. After an introduction to traditional basketry by linguistic family, the response to the new market by the Wakashan (Northern and Southern Wakashan) and Northern (Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian) groups are examined.

The primary source used in this study is Joan Megan Jones's Northwest Coast Basketry and Culture Change, a statistical analysis of Northwest Coast museum baskets dated between 1880 and 1939. Jones's data was largely unanalyzed and, although there were some limitations, many trends were visible. Historic photographs from many sources support and supplement Jones's data. Historic brochures, pamphlets and magazines create context and help explain some trends. Primary and secondary art historical and anthropological texts and baskets were also used.

Traditional Wakashan basketry was primarily plaited in cedar bark and did not appeal to standard Euro-North American aesthetics. In an attempt to meet new market demands, the Wakashan were great experimenters in shape, weave and decoration. However, the twined and frequently decorated basketry of the Northern group showed relatively little change from traditional traits because their basketry fit Western ideas concerning the craftsmanship of aboriginal art.

There were general basketry developments that occurred throughout most of the Northwest Coast. After 1900, shapes moved away from Victorian inspired forms

towards an Arts and Crafts simplicity. Decreasing basket size served both the weaver and consumer and was accompanied by a finer weave gauge. As utilitarian basketry traits were superseded by aesthetic concerns, decoration became more prolific and less traditional.

The Arts and Crafts movement marked the first time significant inspiration flowed back into Western culture from aboriginal North America, while Euro-North American aesthetics and ideas about indigenous peoples were clearly reflected in the art of those peoples themselves.

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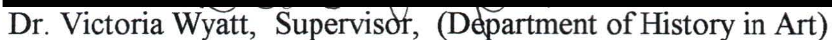

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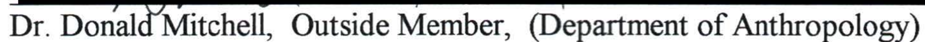

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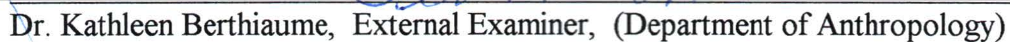

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Title Page.......... i
Abstract.......... ii
Table of Contents.......... iv
List of Figures.......... v
Acknowledgements.......... vi
Dedication.......... vii

Chapter 1 - Introduction.......... 1

Chapter 2 - Traditional Northwest Coast Basketry......... 10
Traditional Northwest Coast Basketry
by Linguistic Family.......... 20
Southern Wakashan.......... 27
Northern Wakashan.......... 35
Tlingit.......... 41
Haida.......... 49
Tsimshian.......... 52
Chapter Conclusion.......... 57

Chapter 3 - Basketry and the Tourist Trade.......... 59
Northwest Coast Basketry and Culture Change... 73
The Wakashan Group.......... 76
The Northern Group.......... 89
Chapter 4 - Conclusion.......... 98

Illustrations.......... 101

Bibliography.......... 137

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1 - Plain Plaiting or Checkerwork
Figure 2 - Twilling
Figure 3 - Plain Twining
Figure 4 - Wrapped Twining
Figure 5 - False Embroidery
Figure 6 - Overlay
Figure 7 - Southern Wakashan Burden Basket
Figure 8 - Northern Wakashan Hat
Figure 9 - Southern Wakashan Rain Hat
Figure 10 - Southern Wakashan Black Rim Hat
Figure 11 - Southern Wakashan Whaling or Maquinna Hat
Figure 12 - Northern Wakashan Eulachon Strainer
Figure 13 - Northern Wakashan Cedar Bark Plaited Basket
Figure 14 - Haida Hat with Skils
Figure 15 - Northern Wakashan Plaited Hat Cover
Figure 16 - Tlingit Cylindrical Basket
Figure 17 - Tlingit Rattle-Top Basket
Figure 18 - Haida Cylindrical Basket
Figure 19 - Haida Spoon Basket
Figure 20 - Haida Hat with (attr.) Charles Edenshaw Painting
Figure 21 - Tsimshian Twined Bag
Figure 22 - Tsimshian Diagonally Plaited Bag
Figure 23 - Tsimshian Maple Bark Folded Bag
Figure 24 - Tsimshian Cylindrical Basket
Figure 25 - Southern Wakashan Tourist Hats
Figure 26 - Tlingit Tourist Hat
Figure 27 - Southern Wakashan Basketry Covered Objects
Figure 28 - Northern Wakashan Open-Twined Tourist Basket
Figure 29 - Southern Wakashan Flat-Top lidded Trinket Basket
Figure 30 - Southern Wakashan Knob-Top lidded Trinket Baskets
Figure 31 - Southern Wakashan Double Trinket Basket
Figure 32 - Southern Wakashan Raised-Rounded lidded Trinket Basket
Figure 33 - Southern Wakashan Pattern Baskets
Figure 34 - Tlingit Flaring Cylinder
Figure 35 - Tlingit Basket in Shape of Trade Pot
Figure 36 - Tsimshian Basket in Shape of Butter Dish
Figure 37 - Tsimshian Trinket Basket
Figure 38 - Haida Miniature Baskets or Cups
Figure 39 - Tlingit Miniature Flaring Cylinder

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents,

who gave me the want, will, and means to pursue this goal.

This one's for you, Mom and Dad.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Following contact with Europeans and North Americans of European descent (Euro-North Americans), there were many changes in the lives and art of aboriginal North Americans. The aim of this thesis is to discuss changes that occurred in the art of Northwest Coast twined basketry in the years surrounding 1900 and to demonstrate how this process was part of a complex interaction of cultures.

This introductory chapter includes a brief history of tourist basketry on the Northwest Coast, reasons for the treatment of tourist basketry as an art historical subject, and a discussion of the methodology used in this thesis and how it relates to the New Art History. Chapter Two presents traditional basketry of the Northwest Coast and describes the various techniques used by the different linguistic families. Chapter Three discusses late nineteenth century Euro-North American aesthetics and Northwest Coast tourist basketry as statistically represented in Joan Megan Jones' Northwest Coast Basketry and Culture Change.[1] Historic photographs and turn of the century magazines, brochures and pamphlets and the objects themselves help to establish the context, provide support for and supplement the findings. The final chapter is a summation of findings.

The art of basketry has been ignored in some standard art historical texts. For example, the commonly used introductory text Gardner's Art Through the Ages (ninth edition), does not mention basketry in its chapter on "The Native Arts of the Americas, Africa,

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[1] Joan Megan Jones, Northwest Coast Basketry and Culture Change Report No. 1, The Thomas Burke Memorial Washington State Museum, (Seattle, 1968).

and the South Pacific".[2] Traditional basketry (basketry produced for indigenous use or based on such types) has, however, been discussed as art in some more specialised writings such as Franz Boas' 1927 book Primitive Art.[3] Boas begins with a discussion of traditional California basketry and lauds California women and their art when he writes:

> The beauty of form, the evenness of texture are well known and highly prized by collectors. At the same time the baskets are elaborately decorated.... Basketmaking is an occupation of women and thus it happens that among the California Indian only women are creative artists."[4]

Unfortunately, not everyone's views were so enlightened. Otis Mason, a basketry scholar at the turn of the century, wrote:

> Too much must not be expected of the savage woman in her art work. She did not sit down deliberately to compose form, a pattern, or a song.... No more should be expected of her than that she should be seized with pleasure in the presence of these..., the forms and colours and movements and sounds of Nature..., and desire to imitate them.[5]

Mason did not endow these women with aesthetic or symbolic sensitivities. Moreover, most writers, including Boas, were primarily interested in traditional forms rather than items influenced by or produced for Euro-North Americans.[6]

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[2] de la Croix, Horst, Richard Tansey and Diane Kirkpatrick (ed.'s), Gardner's Art Through the Ages, ninth edition, (New York, 1991), pp. 498 - 549.

[3] (New York, 1955).

[4] Ibid., pp. 17 - 18.

[5] Woman's Share in Primitive Culture, (London, 1895), p. 162.

[6] Ira Jacknis, "Franz Boas and Photography," Studies in Visual Communications vol. 10 no. 1, p. 47.

Prior to contact, a flourishing trade existed between indigenous groups on the Northwest Coast and inland and traded goods probably included basketry. In 1741 Russian explorers reached Southeast Alaska. Spurred by this expansion, European maritime explorers investigated the Coast in the 1770's. On the first day of contact, the Haida commenced trading items which included basketry.[7]

In the period immediately following contact, Euro-North American traders were primarily interested in furs, but some traders also had an interest in collecting "artificial curiosities"[8] or curios. The motivation for collecting aboriginal material culture varied. Many Euro-North Americans traded for souvenirs. Some early explorers and traders amassed collections of aboriginal creations for personal enjoyment while others looked to profit upon returning home. Large collections were established by serious collectors. Works were also donated to European and North American institutions.[9]

As a result of the decline of the maritime fur trade, an increase in Euro-North American settlement, the rapid decline of the aboriginal population and the requirements of a wage economy, a burgeoning of Northwest Coast art produced for sale occurred. Tourist basketry provided an income for Northwest Coast women who otherwise had little or no means of procuring funds.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, easterners began touring the West. At first, they travelled by train to San Francisco and then cruised north by steamer as far as

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[7] Douglas Cole, Captured Heritage: The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts, (Vancouver, 1985), p. 1.

[8] Ibid., p. 2.

[9] Ibid., p. 1-2.

south-east Alaska.[10] After the completion of the Northern Pacific Railway in 1884 tourists travelled to Portland, Oregon and Tacoma, Washington to commence their northern steamship adventure. It is apparent from the travel literature that these tourists were interested not only in the land and indigenous people, but also local artworks.[11] Many visitors returned home with aboriginal "curios" to add to the mementos which filled their homes. The era of the tourist trade peaked in the late 1890's and early twentieth century.

There were numerous ways to purchase tourist basketry. Many towns had curio stores in which baskets, blankets, masks, miniatures and many other objects produced by Northwest Coast peoples could be purchased. In addition, aboriginal people approached the collector, displayed and sold their wares on busy streets and went door to door.[12] Museums purchased original artworks and commissioned replicas of others. Museum collectors also purchased works from a variety of Caucasian sources. For example, the Smithsonian Institution's Northwest Coast collector, James G. Swan, purchased art from missionaries and agents who came from towns he did not visit.[13]

The ever-increasing numbers of tourists reduced the availability of traditional items for museum purchase. By 1884, Swan reported that, due to tourism, prices had inflated by 200

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[10] Ibid., p. 95.

[11] Lloyd MacDowell, Alaska Indian Basketry, (Seattle, 1904), p. 1.

[12] Cole, Captured Heritage, p. 44. For Example, just before he left Skedans, James G. Swan was brought items for sale, of which he bought a lot.

[13] Ibid., pp. 40 & 44.

to 300 percent in one year.[14] While people were scrambling to acquire a token of aboriginal culture, the culture itself was undergoing a dramatic change due to forced acculturation.[15]

The complex process of integration into Euro-North American society is reflected in Northwest Coast basketry. Much Northwest Coast tourist basketry (of the post-contact period) differed from traditional types. Changes were made in shapes, uses, weaves, dyes and decoration.[16] The artists were exposed to many new ideas due to the meeting of the two cultures. Some innovations were tested on the new market and successful adaptations were probably quickly exploited, but others may have been experimentations for the enjoyment of the artist. Although utilitarian objects were still created, they were not intended for the rigors of everyday aboriginal life and showed a greater focus on aesthetics.

Many scholars spurn tourist art, such as some art that was produced on the Northwest Coast in the years around 1900. John Gogol, in a 1984 article in American Indian Basketry Magazine, remarked,

> The denigration of Native American Art began with
> earliest settlement of North America....
> [Furthermore,] the new aesthetics accompanied by
> the dubious moral values of the Victorians led to
> the production of trivia in mass quantities:
> ...basketry thimbles, basketry coasters,
> basketry matchboxes, basketry wall pouches...,
> and a thousand other testimonials to the glories
> of the `civilizing' experience of English language
> education![17]

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[14] Ibid., pp. 39 & 44.

[15] Margaret Blackman, Window on the Past: The Photographic Ethnohistory of the Northern and Kaigani Haida (Ottawa, 1981), p. 20.

[16] See Chapter Three.

[17] J. M. Gogol, "American Indian Art: Values and Aesthetics," American Indian Basketry Magazine 16 (Dec., 1984) pp. 23 - 5.

Gogol refers to tourist basketry as a "trivialization of traditional Native American art."[18] Some earlier writers shared his sentiment. In an article titled "The Indian Woman as a Craftsman," Constance G. du Bois commented, "All early art forms, being true, please the intelligence. All primitive art is debased, not elevated, by contact wtih civilization."[19] It should be remembered, however, that Northwest Coast basket makers were working within an aesthetic system that was neither traditional nor Euro-North American and the changes in their culture demanded new artistic forms.

Tourist art has long been treated as non-art. The Western world has been dominated by the idea that male art forms are all-important and the belief that only unadulterated aboriginal art is oriented towards spirituality and is therefore art.[20] The belief that the change from traditional to tourist basketry resulted in a debased form ignores the fact that traditional aboriginal societies experienced ongoing change.

The New Art History[21] offers reasons for the inclusion in art history of many forms that have been discriminated against, such as tourist basketry.[22] As Ruth Phillips remarks,

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[18] Ibid., p. 25.

[19] The Craftsman vol. 6 no. 4, (July, 1904), pp. 391 - 92.

[20] Ruth B. Phillips, "What is Huron Art?: Native American Art and the New Art History," The Canadian Journal of Native Studies Vol. IX, No. 2, 1989, p. 170.

[21] See: A. L. Rees and Frances Borzello Ed.'s, The New Art History, London, 1986. The New Art History, first discussed as such in 1982, began in England as a new approach to European art history but has since been employed throughout the discipline. It includes topics found in traditional art history, such as style or date, but applies new methodologies to discuss a larger body of objects (not just painting, sculpture and architecture) in a greater social context while breaking down old notions, such as "genius" and the term "art" itself. Major practitioners include Griselda Pollock, Timothy J. Clark and in America, Svetlana Alpers.

[22] Although literature on tourist art exists, relatively little deals with the specific topic of Northwest Coast tourist basketry. For general and specialised discussions of tourist art see: Nelson H. H. Graburn Ed., Ethnic and Tourist Arts: Cultural Expressions from the Fourth World (Berkley, 1976); Nelson H. H. Graburn, "The Evolution of Tourist Arts," Annals of Tourism Research vol. 2 no. 3 (1984), pp. 393 - 420; Michael Greenhalgh, Art in Society (London, 1978); C. Sheehan, Pipes that Won't Smoke; Coal that Won't Burn:

> ...serious problems have emerged from the attempt to apply methodologies originally developed to analyze objects in the Great Tradition [of Western art], a body of art produced by patriarchal, class-structured, literate European societies,[23] to the art of aboriginal societies.

Complete chronologies do not exist for the art of Native North America and we know the names and styles of only a few artists. As well, historical verification can be impossible or misleading when examining non-literate societies. Because the New Art History attempts a non-stratified approach, many more objects, such as tourist basketry, can be inserted into the art discourse. An interdisciplinary approach enables greater contact between the complementary fields of art history and anthropology and facilitates the creation of larger social contexts.[24]

The New Art History is incorporated into this thesis in many ways. Tourist basketry, which is frequently ignored, is treated as art and is discussed as an aesthetic subject with its own traditions. The thesis draws upon varied sources; primary and secondary art historical and anthropological texts, travel and sales brochures and magazines from the years around 1900, historic photographs and the objects themselves are used.

One of the most important resources was Jones' primary research.[25] She examined Northwest Coast basketry collections in the Thomas Burke Memorial Washington State Museum, Seattle and the Field Museum of Natural History, Chicago, and there was much to

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Haida Sculpture in Argillite (Calgary, 1981); and V. Smith Ed., Hosts and Guests: The Anthropology of Tourism second edition (Philadelphia, 1989).

[23] Ibid., p. 164.

[24] Ibid., p. 168 - 69.

[25] Jones, Northwest Coast Basketry.

be gained from her data. Museums acquired traditional and tourist art from local residents and visitors, such as travellers, merchants, scientists and specialists working on the Coast.[26] Often a large collection was gathered by a single individual hired by the museum. Depending on the museum's agenda and source of acquisitions, a single museum might not faithfully reflect the full range of basketry being produced at the end of the nineteenth century. The use of museums from two different regions helps balance possible regional collection preferences as well as any personal tastes of a single collector reflected in a single museum's collection. It is helpful to examine other sources, as well.

Historic photographs are an excellent source for the study of non-literate societies. Flaws in sources make the creation of art historical chronologies difficult. For example, in museum catalogues of Northwest Coast basketry, the collection date, not the date of manufacture (which is frequently unknown), is cited. Baskets may have existed long before the collection date. The use of historic photographs can solve some problems inherent in other sources. If a photograph illustrates the creation of a basket, the scholar can assume that basketry type was being produced at the time the photograph was taken and photographs are often dated. Some historic photographs can support or refute written assertions or add new information.

This thesis uses Northwest Coast historic photographs from a variety of sources in order to reveal general themes and glean detailed information. These photographs provide much information concerning aboriginal life and art in the years around 1900. Euro-North American beliefs about Northwest Coast basketry and aboriginal women are also revealed.

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[26] Cole, Captured Heritage, p. 51.

Brochures and magazines demonstrate the popularity of Northwest Coast basketry, in the years surrounding 1900.[27] The brochures display the types of baskets available and the methods of their sale. Magazines like the English Studio and American The Craftsman demonstrate the Arts and Crafts shift away from Victorian aesthetics and a corresponding interest in Native American basketry. The interest in basketry is much greater in the American publication, which reflects the Arts and Crafts encouragement of "...a style that is a frank expression of locality and the material at hand.... [emphasising] local traditions...,"[28] in the words of Franklin Hunt.

It is hoped that the combination of these varied primary and secondary sources will lessen the limitations of any one source and allow the reader to see the trends in Northwest Coast tourist basketry at the end of the nineteenth century.

The following chapters demonstrate the complex nature of the development of tourist basketry. Information derived from a variety of sources indicates the influence of traditional aboriginal material and non-material culture and Victorian and Arts and Crafts aesthetics upon the basketry of the Northwest Coast from 1890 to 1910.

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[27] MacDowell, Alaska Indian Basketry & Frohman Trading Co., Alaska, California and Northern Indian Baskets and Curios, (Portland, Oregon, 1902).

[28] "The Country Home and Its Style," The Craftsman Vol. 3 No. 5 (Feb., 1903) p. 283.

CHAPTER TWO

TRADITIONAL NORTHWEST COAST BASKETRY

Basketry exists in most parts of the world, with some of the finest examples crafted by the Northwest Coast First Nations.[1] Through the archaeological record, we can be certain basketry has been in use in the Northwest Coast region since at least the Locarno Beach period (1500 - 500 B.C.) of the Strait of Georgia area. Excavations at water saturated archaeological sites (wet sites) have revealed that basketry was of great importance and variety during the Locarno Beach and subsequent periods.[2] From historical illustrations, comments in historical journals and ethnological samples retrieved by explorers, it is obvious basketry played an important role in the life of the Northwest Coast peoples at the time of first contact with Europeans in the late eighteenth century. In order to discuss tourist basketry produced late in the following century, we must first examine Northwest Coast basketry as it was at the time of contact. The discussion will include those peoples who inhabit the Pacific coast of North America from the northeastern tip of the Olympic peninsula north to Yakutat Bay.

The coast has many protective inlets and bays and is dotted with large and small islands. Thick, varied vegetation grows to the water's edge and the ocean and rivers are full of life. Mountains rise from the water to heights of over a thousand meters and are cut by large rivers running to the Pacific Ocean. This rugged, rich landscape was created in the last ice age, but it is unclear when the aboriginal people first arrived. The land may have been free of ice by 10,000 B.C.. It is known that human beings had moved onto the land from the north

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[1] Allan Lobb, Indian Baskets of the Northwest Coast, (Portland, Oregon, 1978) p.7.

[2] J. M. Gogol, "Nootka/Makah Fancy Twined Baskets," American Indian Basketry Magazine, vol. 1 no.4, (Portland, Oregon, 1980) p.4.

and the south by 7,000 B.C.. The abundance of flora and fauna provided a rich base for human occupation.

Northwest Coast peoples may be divided according to linguistic stocks which probably in part reflect various migrations onto the Coast.[3] These linguistic groupings can be identified geographically, but the distinction is based upon shared language traits. Although the classification that results in these linguistic divisions was formulated by Euro-North American anthropologists and linguists, the divisions are relevant for broad cultural discussion. Many basketry traits are shared within a linguistic family.

At no useful level of analysis is the Northwest Coast a single area culturally or ecologically. Linguistic divisions enable broad discussion of Northwest Coast cultural similarities and differences, material and non-material. For brevity, broad linguistic groupings which reflect basketry types have been chosen: Coast Salish, Southern Wakashan, Northern Wakashan, Tsimshian, Tlingit and Haida,[4] although sub-areas will also be mentioned. This discussion of basketry encompasses Philip Drucker's Northern and Wakashan Coastal divisions, but does not include the Coast Salish-Chinook and Northwest California groups.[5]

The Coast Salish people live on southern Vancouver Island and the opposing mainland. They are the only Northwest Coast group to practice coiled or sewn basketry, as opposed to the twined basketry of the other Coast peoples. Coiling is created by a continuous spiralling foundation, or coil. Each horizontal layer is sewn to the preceding layer.[6] Coiled basketry

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[3] Philip Drucker, Cultures of the North Pacific Coast, (San Francisco, 1965) p. 108.

[4] For a detailed discussion of linguistic divisions see: Ibid., pp. 103 - 109

[5] For a discussion of subdivisions of areal culture see: Ibid., pp. 112 - 113.

[6] Sarah Peabody Turnbaugh and William A. Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, (West Chester, Pennsylvania, 1986), p. 248.

was probably a comparably recent introduction to the Northwest Coast, from the Great Basin.[7] In their southern, sheltered location, the Coast Salish experienced intense exposure to European settlers. Much of their land was developed into urban areas such as Victoria and Vancouver or farming areas such as the Fraser Delta.

Joan Megan Jones's study Northwest Coast Basketry and Culture Change[8] did not include Coast Salish living in Canada but the baskets accessible for this study were primarily Canadian and it should be noted that there are basketry differences within this linguistic stock. Because of the early contact experience, a study with earlier dates encompasing all Coast Salish groups would benefit acculturated basketry scholarship. From available data, it appears that Coast Salish basketry was not strongly affected by Victorian aesthetics and developed slightly differently than Northwest Coast twined basketry and that of other regions. Some of the conclusions concerning twined tourist basketry and the contact experience can be applied to the Coast Salish, such as the increasing production of smaller baskets during the tourist study period, but the coiled basketry of the Salish has been omitted from further discussion for the above mentioned reasons.

The Southern Wakashan are the most southerly linguistic family, composed of the Nuu-chah-nulth on the northern and central west coast of Vancouver Island and the Makah on the western Olympic peninsula of Washington state. Previously referred to as the Nootka, a

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[7] Carolyn J. Marr, "Basketry Regions of Washington State," American Indian Art Magazine No. 16, Vol. 2, p. 42.

[8] Joan Megan Jones, Northwest Coast Basketry and Culture Change Report No. 1, The Thomas Burke Memorial Washington State Museum, (Seattle, 1968).

misnomer from first contact with Europeans, the Southern Wakashan on Vancouver Island call themselves the Nuu-chah-nulth, or they can be called the West Coast people.

The Northern Wakashan language group is composed of many subdivisions. The Kwakwaka'wakw (previously Southern Kwakiutl) live on the northern coasts of Vancouver island and the opposing coastal mainland. The Oweekeno live at Rivers Inlet. The Haisla live along the Douglas Channel and Gardner Canal, south of the Skeena river. Drucker included the Haisla with the Northern group, but noted they are borderline.[9] Because Haisla basketry resembles Northern Wakashan types, here they have been included in this subdivision. In the region of Bella Bella, south of the Haisla, are the Heiltsuk (previously referred to as Bella Bella). North along the Coast are the Xaixais. The Nuxalk (previously Bella Coola), are located on the mainland, between the Oweekeno and the Heiltsuk. Although the Nuxalk are of Salishan linguistic stock, they are isolated from other Salishan speakers; their non-material and material cultures resemble that of the neighbouring Wakashan groups and will be included in the discussion of the Northern Wakashan. The two Wakashan groups have similar basketry which is distinct from more northerly groups. When discussed as a southern unit, the Northern and Southern Wakashan will be referred to as the Wakashan group.

The Tsimshian, Tlingit and Haida comprise the Northern Coastal group. The Tsimshian linguistic stock is composed of the Nishga, living on the Nass River, the Gitksan who live inland around the Skeena River and the Coast Tsimshian who inhabit the lower Skeena River region and coastal islands to the south. In the far north, the Tlingit live in southeast Alaska and a small portion of northern British Columbia. The southern tip of

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[9] Drucker, Cultures, p. 112.

southeast Alaska is home to the Kaigani Haida and Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands) is the abode of the remaining Haida.

Although each linguistic family has strong distinguishing cultural characteristics, bonds resulting in part from proximity in a shared environment allow discussion of a pan-Northwest Coast culture. Although such discussion obscures many differences, it provides an introduction for a more detailed investigation.

The Northwest Coast was one of the most densely populated areas in precontact North America because its resources were relatively predictable, plentiful and diverse. The cultures that arose resembled those with agriculture in the Americas. They had semi-permanent villages, social stratification and monumental art. Northwest Coast individuals associated themselves first with their village, an independent territorial, social, economic and political unit, and their kin group.[10] Extended families lived together in large plank houses. Birth dictated many social obligations. Clans existed amongst the Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian and Haisla.

According to Drucker:

> The basic social unit of North Pacific Coast civilization was a group of people defined according to a recognized principle of kinship and associated with geographical locality; the guiding themes of social organization were hereditary transmission of status and privilege, with stress on material wealth. The autonomous local kin group was organized by matrilineal [north], patrilineal [south], or bilateral [central] reckoning of descent.[11]

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[10] Drucker, Cultures, p. 46.

[11] Ibid., p. 46.

Throughout the Coast, marriages occurred between people of similar rank. Local kin groups were often politically autonomous, owned land and its bounty, as well as material and intangible wealth such as family history, dances, songs and objects.[12] Many of these rights were also used as family crests, which were the subject of much Northwest Coast art.

Northwest Coast carving and painting are widely recognised. Style can often be identified by linguistic family, although similarities abound. The Northern Formline style, practised by the northern groups, is a fluid, linear art.[13] It is not concerned with realism as seen from the perspective of a specific individual viewer. Rather, it conceptualizes beings and space. The Northern Wakashan practise an art style which deviates slightly from the rules of the northern Coast. The Southern Wakashan evidence a greater freedom in the relationship of the design itself and the background field. Although similar to Northern Formline, the two-dimensional art style of the Southern Wakashan does not follow the same rules or interrelationships and has a greater latitude for realism and individual choice.

In comparison to Northwest Coast painting and sculpture, arts produced by men, the art of Northwest Coast women has received little recognition. Northwest Coast women practise the arts of weaving blankets and basketry. All Northwest Coast women during the pre- and early contact periods learned basketry in childhood and became proficient in creating works for the home. A few women specialised in the art and were not required to take part in the daily household tasks, but focused their attention on their art.[14] Within their own culture,

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[12] Ibid., p. 47.

[13] Bill Holm, Northwest Coast Indian Art: An Analysis of Form, (Vancouver, B.C., 1965).

[14] Hilary Stewart, Cedar: Tree of the Life to the Northwest Coast Indians, (Vancouver, 1984), p. 128.

it was possible for women to gain great praise and prestige and particularly fine works or fragments were saved as heirlooms.[15] Most basketry, however, garnered little attention and did not serve as prestige items.

When objects were collaborated upon by women and men, such as some blankets and baskets, they were often much admired and of high prestige. For example, the designs for the prestigious Chilkat blankets, believed by some to be crest designs, were created by men and woven by women.[16] As well, hats were woven by women, but the crest designs were painted onto them by men. In the north, prestige basketry items were typically works of gender collaboration. Amongst the Southern Wakashan, however, prestige basketry items were often created solely by women. Women did decorate basketry with weaving, but the significance of many of these designs is not fully known.

Through the archaeological record, historical documents and ethnographical collections, it is apparent that villages contained objects of foreign manufacture. The archaeological record has revealed basketry types produced by different linguistic families contemporaneously existing in a single Northwest Coast village.[17] As well, Euro-North Americans collected basketry of foreign manufacture from villages. The existence of foreign basketry suggests that baskets were trade items, products of inter-tribal marriages and possibly gained through slavery or war.

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[15] Carolyn J. Marr, "Continuity and Change in the Basketry of Western Washington," in The Art of Native American Basketry: A Living Legacy, Ed. Frank W. Porter III, (New York, 1990), p. 267.

[16] Emmons, The Chilkat Blanket Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History vol. 3 no. 4 (New York, 1907).

[17] Dale R. Croes, Basketry From the Ozette Village Archaeological Site: A Technological, Functional and Comparative Study, Washington State University PhD. Dissertation, Department of Anthropology, 1977. For example, a Fraser River basket was recovered from the Ozette site on the northern Olympic peninsula supporting an early date for basketry trade, as early as 500 years ago.

Trade proliferated on the Pacific coast and inland. According to Gilbert Malcolm Sproat's 1868 eyewitness account, Nuu-chah-nulth villages specialised in particular trade goods.[18] This specialization, or trade monopoly, existed throughout the Coast and extended into some basketry types. Basketry was an important trade item through which women were integral to the economy. Although women's traditional role in trade is unclear, in some linguistic groups women may have ultimately approved or vetoed the business dealings of their husbands. This powerful role may have resulted from or been augmented by female individual ownership of property outside the marriage.[19] While women produced and were the consumers of some trade objects, they may also have controlled parts of trade itself. Foreign basketry may also have entered villages through intermarriage.

Intermarriage amongst the various linguistic families, in cases of patrilocal residence (where the bride moved into her husband's home), infused villages with foreign women and new basketry traditions. In order to marry someone of similar or greater rank it may have been necessary for those of higher ranks to marry someone from a distant village. It is probable that some women brought basketry and traditions to their new homes. In extended family households, women collaborated on many tasks. Through contact with local women, some brides adopted the basketry of their new residence.[20] In the case of divorce, women returned

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[18] Sproat, The Nootka: Scenes and Studies of Savage Life, Ed. Charles Lillard, (Victoria, 1987), p. 18.

[19] Margaret B. Blackman, "The Changing Status of Haida Women: An Ethno-historical and Life History Approach," The World is as Sharp as a Knife: An Anthology in Honour of Wilson Duff, Ed. Donald N. Abbott, (Victoria, B.C., 1981), p. 69.

[20] For example, as noted in Andrea Laforet, "Tsimshian Basketry," The Tsimshian; Images of the Past: Views for the Present (Vancouver, 1984), p.216. While collecting Tsimshian basketry at Port Simpson, Marius Barbeau gathered three Tsimshian style baskets from a Haida woman. He also noted one basket was manufactured by a child whose mother may have been Haida.

to their native village, possibly with new basketry technology. Basketry skill was recognised as an admirable trait[21] and enabled women to gain recognition and prestige as individuals.[22]

Potlatching may also have enabled basket artists to gain prestige and spread basketry ideas throughout the Northwest Coast. The form and function of potlatching varied on the Coast. The potlatch is a ceremony which marked events such as marriage or the assumption of a hereditary rank. It involved feasting, songs, dances, displays of wealth and great orations. The host required wealth with which to recompense the guests for witnessing the event. The host could gain prestige for giving a great potlatch. Potlatching redistributed tangible and intangible wealth, recorded events and transmitted cultural history to the younger generation. As well, it was a vehicle to higher status.

Some potlatches involved guests from great distances who returned home with gifts, which included basketry. According to Hilary Stewart, "Well-made baskets had value as trade items and exceptionally fine ones were presented to high-ranking women as potlatch gifts, a great honour for the basket's maker."[23] And, as Carolyn Marr notes, "At potlatches, where items were given away to invited guests, baskets were rated among the most highly valued gifts."[24] As well, guests took home food wrapped in matting. Guests were also exposed to basketry utilised during the feasting, such as food mats and long feast mats and baskets for food.[25] As an individual example, the massive, finely woven Tlingit basket, known as the

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[21] MacDowell, Alaska Indian Basketry, (Seattle, 1904), p. 11.

[22] Stewart, Cedar, p. 135.

[23] Ibid..

[24] Marr, "Continuity and Change," p. 267.

[25] Stewart, Cedar, p. 139.

Mother Basket, was displayed and used at potlatches[26] and was important as a crest object, as it was an object from a family story. The use, display and giving of basketry at potlatches may have spread new forms, weaves, decoration and uses and infused villages with basketry of foreign manufacture. Basketry could also play a ceremonial role at other occasions.

Ceremonial roles for basketry varied but were usually utilitarian. Baskets were filled with eagle-down which was sprinkled on headdresses at welcome ceremonies as a symbol of friendship and peace.[27] Shamans worked in the spiritual realm and cured the sick, influenced the weather and foretold the future and understood the past.[28] Their tools, such as raven rattles, were stored in basketry bags. Shamans might even wear basketry hats.[29] Basketry clan hats were often displayed at ceremonials. Some clan hats had skils, woven cylinders on top of the hats, which may have indicated the high status of the wearer or the number of potlatches at which the hat had been displayed. The display of basketry at ceremonies may have been an occasion for women to view other's work and acquire new techniques, forms and decoration.

Some basketry may have been brought to a conquering village as booty, along with slaves. Slaves taken from other linguistic families may have brought different basketry styles with them. Like the potlatch, war may have brought new ideas into a village as well as basketry from other linguistic families. The many forms of contact between Northwest Coast

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[26] Frances Paul, Spruce Root Basketry of the Alaska Tlingit, (Lawrence, Kansas, 1944), pp. 69-71. Paul discusses the use and origin story of the Mother Basket.

[27] Stewart, Cedar, p. 135.

[28] Ronald Johnson, The Art of the Shaman, (Iowa City, Iowa, 1973), p. 5.

[29] G. T. Emmons, The Basketry of the Tlingit Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History vol. 3 no. 2, (New York, 1903), p. 257.

villages resulted in the sharing and trading of traditions and thus there were many similarities in basketry traits, but there were also individualizing features between and within the linguistic families.

TRADITIONAL NORTHWEST COAST BASKETRY BY LINGUISTIC FAMILY

The provenance of a Northwest Coast basket can be identified by materials, weave, form, intended use and decoration. Each linguistic family had a different style that was based upon available materials, technique, use and ornamentation. In some instances, subdivisions within the language group can also be identified. Basketry traits were influenced or determined by the environment, projected function, tradition and aesthetics, and cross cultural influences.[30]

Basket making technology is incredibly varied. There are many possibilities in the choice of materials, weaves, forms, uses and decorations, but choices are often limited by environment and tradition.[31] The material was determined by local availability, although some indigenous peoples traded for materials. On the Northwest Coast, red cedar trees proliferate south of Baranof Island, Alaska.[32] Cedar bark was abundant and easy to use; it is not surprising that was used extensively in the southern regions, while in the north, spruce root was of prime importance.

Where cedar bark existed, it was gathered around June, depending upon the latitude. Usually western red cedar trees (*Thuja plicata*) were exploited and infrequently yellow cedar

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[30] Bill Holm, Spirit and Ancestor: A Century of Northwest Coast Indian Art at the Burke Museum, (University of Washington Press, 1987) p. 44.

[31] Weber, "Tsimshian Twined Basketry," p. 26.

[32] Stewart, Cedar, p. 22.

(*Chamaecyparis nootkatensis*) was used. The men helped the women take one strip of bark from the north side of the tree. The strip of bark was approximately five to ten inches wide and twenty to seventy feet long. Upon stripping the bark from the tree the brittle outer layer was removed. The soft inner bark, which was used in basketry, was bundled and dried for later use.[33] Cedar bark was dampened before it was woven. The best bark was obtained at high altitudes from cedar trees twelve to twenty inches in diameter, straight and with no low branches.[34]

Red cedar trees supplied not only bark, but also cedar withes for use in basketry. These flexible, slender twigs were gathered, quartered and stored until they were moistened for weaving. They might be used alone for large rough baskets. On smaller baskets, the cedar withes provided the supporting members of the baskets.[35]

Spruce roots (*Picea sitchensis*) were utilised throughout the Coast, particularly in the north. Straight, thin roots were unearthed with a special digging stick. They were coiled, tied in the middle and taken home. Amongst the Northern Wakashan, the root was immediately divided into lengths of three hands. The bark was removed with the help of fire. The roots were quartered and coiled until used. This coarse material formed warps. Finely split spruce root was used as twining wefts.[36]

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[33] Harry Dyler, "Mabel Taylor - West Coast Basket Weaver" American Indian Basketry Magazine vol. 1 no. 4, p. 13.

[34] Kathy Johannesson, "Making Cedar Bark Mats," American Indian Basketry Magazine vol. 4 no. 3, p. 14.

[35] Franz Boas, The Jesup North Pacific Expedition - The Kwakiutl of Vancouver Island, Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History Vol. V Part II, (New York, 1909), pp. 376 - 377.

[36] Ibid., p. 377.

In the fall, the Northern and Southern Wakashan gathered bunches of cattail leaves (*Typha lattifolia*). The lower leaf edge was trimmed and the leaves were cut to equal lengths and left to dry in the sun. They were later dampened for weaving.[37] According to Kathy Johannesson, "Cattail mats are softer, lighter, more insulating, and more water-resistant than cedar bark mats."[38] The edges were often reinforced with grasses. These mats made good temporary shelters and rain gear.

The grasses were picked in June or early July. Once swamp grass (possibly *Najadaceae* spp.) was picked, each blade was split vertically in half and run between the forefinger and thumb. This made it flat and pliable. The grass was then bundled and hung to dry and bleach in the sun. Swamp grass varies in colour from white to green. Rare three corner grass (botanical name unknown) was found in salt water flats of protected bays. Three corner grass was not split. The fineness of three corner grass baskets was determined by the width of the grass blade itself.[39] Bear grass (*Xerophyllum tenax*) grew on the Olympic peninsula and other Northwest Coast areas, but was scarce on Vancouver Island. It was traded by the Makah to the islanders and can be identified by its shiny surface which yellows with time.[40]

Materials and tradition determined the choice of weave. The simplest weave, checkerwork, existed throughout the Coast and was likely developed after the Northwest

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[37] Kathy Johannesson, "Making Cattail Mats," American Indian Basketry Magazine vol. 4 no. 3, pp. 18 - 19.

[38] Ibid., p. 18.

[39] Dyler, "Mabel Taylor," p. 13.

[40] Johannesson, "Making Cedar Bark Mats," p. 13.

Coast peoples had moved into the area and were able to exploit the ready supply of cedar bark[41] and rushes in the south. More complex weaves are closely associated with particular linguistic families. It is likely that the complex weaves were brought to the Coast with the series of migrations believed to have populated the area.[42] Different cultural origins, as evidenced by the linguistic families, can account for the variety of weaves, while the many similarities between the groups are based on years of contact and local developments.

Plain plaiting, also known as checkerwork, is made from cedar bark throughout most of the Coast, particularly for matting.[43] Checkerwork employs warp (vertical elements) and weft (horizontal elements also referred to as woof) of the same material and dimension. The weft strand alternates over and under the warps. In checkerwork, it is impossible to tell the warp from the weft and the product looks like a checkerboard (fig. 1). Twilled work is a variation of checkerwork in which the weft is passed over and under two or more warps (fig. 2). By varying the number of warps which are passed over and under, geometric designs are created. Further ornamentation is obtained by dyeing or changing the width of the wefts.

According to William A. and Sarah Peabody Turnbaugh:

> Twining is a technique that interweaves two or more flexible weft elements between vertical warp elements.... This technique can be identified by a diaper of vertical or diagonal ribbed corrugations of the weft rows or courses, as well as by the crossing of the weft strands in between warp elements.[44]

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[41] Weber, "Tsimshian Twined Basketry," p. 26.

[42] Ibid., p. 26.

[43] Allan Lobb, Indian Baskets of the Pacific Northwest and Alaska (Portland, Oregon, 1990) p. 9.

[44] Turnbaugh and Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, p. 75.

There is a pitch to twined wefts which can be identified as S or Z slants dependant upon the direction of the weaving process. On the Coast the hand orientation of the weaver is unimportant, so the pitch is determined by weaving technique.[45] Pitch and other twining variations can help ascertain provenance.

Plain twining has two weft elements which cross between each warp or pair of warps. The front weft twists behind and intersects the rear weft between the warps, as the back weft moves forward (fig. 3). Plain twining looks vertically ribbed and the wefts are usually tight together, known as closed weaving. Closed twining can be water tight. Diagonal twining is a variation of plain twining. The two weft elements cross between two or more warp elements, staggering their warp groupings. The result is a diagonal or zigzag corrugation. Diagonal twining can be closed or open.

In open twining the wefts are widely spaced.[46] The warps can be easily manipulated. Northwest Coast open twining uses vertical or diagonal warps. Open weave twining was excellent for the drainage of molluscs, fish, sea weed and other sea life, and for enhancing air circulation during storage. In a damp climate, it delayed infestation and mould.[47] Open twined baskets can also be wrap-twined.

Wrap-twining has three structural elements: a rigid warp, a rigid weft and a pliable weft. The rigid warps and wefts are placed at right angles to each other and each intersection is twined with the pliable weft (fig. 4). The interior of a tightly woven, wrap-twined basket

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[45] Ronald Weber, "Tlingit Basketry, 1750 - 1950," The Art of Native American Basketry: A Living Legacy, Ed. Frank W. Porter III, (New York, 1990), p. 303.

[46] Turnbaugh and Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, p. 75.

[47] Marr, "Basketry Regions," p. 43.

looks as if it has been coiled (sewing around a bundle in a spiral from the base) while the exterior appears covered in slanted diamonds formed in straight, diagonal rows. Three-strand twining is often used for decorative purposes but is also a strengthening device.[48]

False embroidery is a decorative, strengthening technique used on plain twining. Many designs are executed in false embroidery because it can introduce colour and texture into the basket.[49] On the Coast, false embroidery is usually administered using a grass stem which is twisted around the outer layer of the wefts and does not show on the inside of the basket. False embroidery slants in the opposite direction to the weave (fig. 5).

Overlay resembles false embroidery but follows the pitch of the rest of the weaving. As in false embroidery, an extra weft strand is added to the weaving process. The overlay material is placed over a weft and follows it through the weaving process (fig. 6). When the overlay appears only on the exterior, it is called half twist overlay. When the overlay appears on the interior and exterior it is referred to as full twist overlay. Overlay slant follows the main wefts because it follows the wefts through their course.[50] On the Coast, overlay and false embroidery were usually executed in coloured grasses and, along with skip stitch, were the basis of twined basket decoration.

The colours for decoration came from a variety of sources. The material was left natural or soaked in a solution to obtain the desired colour. Grasses were rubbed on abalone shells which brightened their tone. Dried, undyed grasses might yield colours from white

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[48] Turnbaugh and Turbaugh, Indian Baskets, p.79.

[49] Ibid., p. 249.

[50] Ibid., p. 250.

through yellow and green. Young alder bark (*Alnus rubra*) was chewed, mixed with urine and heated. Cedar bark was soaked in the resulting dye. The longer it was soaked and the quicker it dried the darker the colour, which ranged from red to black. A striped effect was obtained by tie-dying the cedar bark.[52] Black was also obtained from sulphur spring mud, mud with hemlock bark (*Tsuga spp.*) and saltwater or boiled iron scrapings. To create red, alder bark was steeped in urine in an alder bark bowl and boiled nettle stems and leaves (*Urtica dioica*) steeped in urine and sea-urchin juice. Boiling hemlock bark with oxidated copper produced blue-green.[53] Spruce roots dyed in urine also gained a light-green colour, although it was relatively impermanent.[54] A yellow dye was produced by boiling wolf moss (*Letharia vulpina*).[55] A blackish purple was obtained from maidenhair fern (*Adiantum pedatum*). Paints also came from many different sources. The pigments were mixed with one-third its amount of salmon roe, as a binder.[56]

Perhaps the most individual basketry trait on the Coast was decoration. Undoubtedly, some decoration was simply an aesthetic consideration, but much appears to have extended beyond ornamentation and presumably had symbolic meaning. For example, Tlingit abstract designs refer to flora, fauna and material and non-material culture. Few iconographic studies of Northwest Coast basketry exist, and more would benefit the field immensely.[57] Basketry

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[52] Boas, The Kwakiutl, pp. 402 - 405.

[53] Turnbaugh and Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, p. 153.

[54] Boas, The Kwakiutl, p. 203 - 205.

[55] Turnbaugh and Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, p. 153.

[56] Boas, The Kwakiutl, pp. 203 - 205.

[57] In Spruce Root Basketry, Paul includes an iconographic study of Tlingit basketry, largely based upon Emmons work.

decoration can also be related to sub-groups within the linguistic family, such as secret societies or clans, and contains symbolism related to these sub-groups.

Basket shape was determined by intended use and tradition. Some forms were created by more than one linguistic family because of common uses, materials and weaves. Different cultural origins, relative isolation, innovations and different uses resulted in distinct forms particular to a linguistic group. For the purposes of this discussion, basketry shapes will include vessels and containers woven or sewn from textile materials as well as matting and hats. Hats are included to illustrate linguistic family differences.

Ropes, clothing and other forms created from textile materials which were not altered by the contact experience, but were simply dropped from production, will not be discussed. By 1875, cedar bark clothing and other objects of native manufacture had largely been replaced in the aboriginal economy by Euro-North American products.[58] Basketry hats, however, were still worn in many locations.[59] Most of the forms chosen for discussion continued to be produced or used at the height of the tourist trade, around the turn of the century.

The following analysis of Northwest Coast basketry proceeds by linguistic family.

Southern Wakashan

The Southern Wakashan (Nuu-chah-nulth and Makah), the most southerly of the linguistic groups studied, are situated on western Vancouver Island and the northern tip of the Olympic peninsula. The materials used in Southern Wakashan basketry are red cedar bark,

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[58] Stewart, Cedar, p. 148.

[59] Devine, "Spruce Root Hats of the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimsian," American Indian Basketry Magazine vol. 2 no. 2, p. 21.

swamp grass, three corner grass[60], bear grass, rushes and spruce root.[61] Cedar bark was the primary material.[62] Cedar and spruce roots and limbs were also important. Although bear grass was difficult to procure and work, it was used by the Makah and was occasionally traded to the Islanders.

The Southern Wakashan practised twining and plaiting. The Nuu-chah-nulth possessed coiled baskets, but they were probably traded in from the Fraser River area[63] and more southerly Salish.[64] Salish coiled basketry is durable and may have been used for purposes requiring sturdier construction than twining or plaiting permitted.

The Southern Wakashan wove plaited and twined baskets from the bottom up. Cedar bark checkerwork formed boxes, specialised baskets for holding whaling and hunting equipment, clothing, mats and wallets. A wallet is a small to medium sized flexible basket or bag used to carry gathered resources.[65] Some wallets and mats were checkerworked cattail.

Cedar bark mats were probably the most widely used basketry form on the Northwest Coast. They could be made into a variety of shapes, served numerous functions and were relatively easy to create.[66] Mats played an important role in Northwest Coast life. They served as place mats, cushions and beds; they covered floors, were hung on walls and over

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[60] Dyler, "Mabel Taylor," p. 13.

[61] Lobb, Indian Baskets of the Pacific Northwest and Alaska, pp.42-43.

[62] John M. Gogol, "The Twined Basketry of Western Washington and Vancouver Island," American Indian Basketry Magazine vol. 1 no. 3, p.5.

[63] Carolyn Marr, "Basketry Regions," p. 42.

[64] Gogol, "Twined Basketry," p. 4.

[65] Turnbaugh and Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, p. 252.

[66] Stewart, Cedar, pp. 136 - 41.

doors as insulation, divided large plank houses, formed cradles, protected canoe cargo and, based on the model of Euro-North American ships, were used as sails. Mats lined cradles and shrouded the dead. Amongst the Northern and Southern Wakashan, mats formed the walls and ceilings of temporary dwellings.

Cedar bark mats varied slightly on the Coast. The Southern Wakashan laid processed cedar bark strips of equal width (from 5mm to 20 mm)[67] parallel on the ground. The strips were often plain twined across the centre, which remains on many old mats. In this technique the plaiting was worked out from the centre.[68] The other technique used by the Southern Wakashan involved a strip of wood, on which the weaver knelt, placed over an end of the warps. The weaver plaited from this end. The warps did not need to be of equal length, because they could be added to during weaving. When the weft reached the edge, it was usually wrapped around the final warp twice and back in the other direction. This formed strong edges which were unlikely to separate.[69] Modifications involved varying the intervals that warps and wefts passed over and under each other, or twilling and also the addition of black and infrequently red dyed warps and wefts. Some mats were painted.

For three-dimensional forms, a wooden mould was often employed by the Southern Wakashan. It ensured a tightly woven basket in the desired shape. For awkward shapes, moulds were made in collapsible segments, which enabled them to be removed from a thin neck. Moulds were passed from mother to daughter, which helps explain the continuity of

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[67] Ibid., p. 136.

[68] Johannesson, Making Cedar Bark Mats, p. 15.

[69] Stewart, Cedar, p. 138.

form, as well as the variety of shapes. Husbands created new moulds to specifications.[70] Moulds were used for plaited and twined Southern Wakashan baskets. Southern Wakashan twined warps were usually cedar bark with cedar or spruce root plain twined wefts. Typically, decoration was executed in plain twining; the wefts were replaced by coloured strands. Twining was used on diverse basket types. Open-twined, cedar splint burden baskets were used for gathering molluscs and berries.[71] Large burden baskets had tump lines, which are long cedar bark diagonal plaited straps attached to a carrying basket like a handle (fig. 7). The basket is carried on the back with the tump line passing over the forehead or chest. If a basket was very large, two tump lines might be employed, one passing over the chest and one over the forehead.

Burden baskets were wedge or rectangular shaped baskets with rounded corners. Three double warps formed the base and separated at the upwards turn. An x-stitch connected splints with the warps. Splint warps were also x-stitched to the final weft. Roots usually formed the wrap twined wefts of the body.[72] Many burden baskets required drainage and ventilation and were woven in an open twined weave, also known as bird cage or fish trap weaving. Berries required a relatively tightly woven basket. Many of these large baskets were used for gathering, carrying (with the help of the tump line) and storing.

The Southern Wakashan used bent wood boxes, not baskets, as water containers,[73] but baskets were used in cooking. Cooking baskets were so tightly twined they were

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[70] Gogol, "Nootka/Makah," p. 8.

[71] Johannesson, "Making Openwork Burden Baskets," American Indian Basketry Magazine vol. 4 no. 3, p. 6.

[72] Ibid., p. 6 - 9.

[73] Ibid., p. 5.

impermeable. Water and hot stones were placed in the basket with the foodstuffs. The hot stones were replaced until the water boiled or the food was cooked.

It would appear that trinket baskets were created in the early or pre-contact era. Slightly modified, these became a popular tourist trade item. According to Kathy Johannesson, "...a main use for the trinket basket in pre-contact days, was to keep mussel-shell filings in, which they [women] used in lubricating the thigh for spinning nettle fibre."[74] Although no other references to pre-contact trinket baskets have been found, they were probably plain twined in cedar bark and roots and possibly decorated with geometric designs.

Twined hats were worn throughout the Northwest Coast and were indispensable in the temperate rainforest. Hats have existed on the Coast for at least 2,500 years and were important in everyday and ceremonial use.[75] Many hats were decorated in the weaving process or were later painted. The parts of the hat are top, crown and brim. Two types of hats were in common use on the Northwest Coast and can be divided into northern and southern types. The Tlingit, Haida, Tsimshian and Northern Wakashan wore twined spruce root hats, in a truncated cone form (fig. 8). The Southern Wakashan infrequently wore this variety of spruce root hat, which was probably traded to them. More typically southern was a cedar bark and spruce root bowl-shaped hat (fig. 9). They were less angular than northern hats, often without a clearly defined top, and were woven in two layers.[76]

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[74] Ibid., endnote 5, p. 11.

[75] Sue E. Devine, "Nootka Basketry Hats - Two Special Types," American Indian Basketry Magazine, vol. I no. 3, p. 26.

[76] Sue E. Devube, "Kwakiutl Spruce Root Hats," American Indian Basketry Magazine vol. 1 no. 4, p. 24.

As well as sheltering the wearer from the elements, hats indicated the social status of the wearer. Amongst the Southern Wakashan, twined cedar bark bowl shaped and truncated cone shape cedar bark hats were worn by commoners. It is probable many of these hats were left undecorated, although some may have been painted with designs or woven with geometric decoration.[76] Dale Croes, who examined the basketry materials from Ozette, a Makah wet site for which dates are approximately AD 1500 - 1700, concluded: "Cedar bark, flat-top conical hats... can be distinguished best in terms of their social function, their form being indicative of commoner status."[77] Because there are no references to or images or women wearing high status hats, only functional commoner hats, it appears hats reflected male social stratification in the pre- and post-contact eras.

The Black Rim hat was bowl shaped, but probably identified a high status Nuu-chah-nulth man (fig. 10). The existence of these hats was not recorded by Euro-North Americans until the mid-nineteenth century by the travelling Canadian artist Paul Kane. They are believed to have been made for only a short period of time, in the second half of the nineteenth century.[78] Unlike most other Southern Wakashan hats, which are made of grass and/or cedar bark, the Black Rim hat was constructed from spruce root. The use of spruce root and the formline-type decoration on these hats may be evidence of a link with northern basketry.

Black rim hats were typically woven in diagonal twining, with three strand twining on the top. The brim of the hat was covered in a broad band of black paint, covering

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[76] Devine, "Nootka Hats," p. 26.

[77] Croes, Basketry from Ozette, p. 417.

[78] Devine, "Nootka Hats," pp. 29 - 31.

approximately two-thirds of the hat. Black and red, blue, red and black, and blue and red were the most common colour combinations used on the crown of the hats. The hat's crown was painted in symmetrical designs reminiscent of the Northern Formline style. The coloured form line evidences a freer tradition than among the northern groups, but is typical of Southern Wakashan painted designs. Unfortunately, the designs on the Black Rim hats are indecipherable today.[80] Although the function of these hats is unclear, it is probable that Nuu-chah-nulth Black Rim hats are related to northern painted crest hats, which were also woven in spruce root.

The Southern Wakashan had another hat type peculiar to them, which also signified a noble man. The Whaling or Maquinna hat was a sign of high rank (fig. 11). Captain James Cook, the first European to explore the West Coast of Vancouver Island, noted of the Nuu-chah-nulth:

> Their head is covered with a cap, of the figure of a truncated cone, or like a flower pot, made of fine matting, having the top frequently ornamented with a round or pointed knob, or bunch of leathern tassels, and there is a string under the chin to prevent it blowing off.[81]

These water tight, onion domed hats had cedar bark warps and spruce root and/or bear grass wefts, and were lined with twined or plaited cedar bark.[82] They were woven around a mould. The hats bore designs of geometric thunderbirds with whales or whaling scenes with hunters in boats harpooning their prey which was executed in black or dark brown overlay. As well, the

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[80] Devine, "Nootka Basketry Hats," p. 30 - 31.

[81] Ibid., p. 26.

[82] Ibid., p. 28.

dome and rim were decorated in geometric designs. It is probable these hats were woven by the most gifted weavers who were specialists.[83]

Whaling hats are generally believed to have been prestige items. It is likely they were solely the prerogative of male leaders or of men of the higher ranks. According to J. R. Jewitt, who was held captive by the Nuu-chah-nulth in the early nineteenth century, hats with whale designs were worn only by chiefs.[84] As has been suggested for the Black Rim hats, in the south, spruce root hats were associated with high ranking individuals. Maquinna hats likely symbolized whale hunting, seen in most of the designs, which was practised by those of elevated rank. This is supported by the discovery of this hat type in the Ozette site together with whaling equipment. It is possible that other designs such as the whale and thunderbirds marked a noble man, but not a chief.[85]

Whaling hats are the only known pre-contact Northwest Coast woven works which were executed entirely by women using figural forms and indicative of high status. Although some Tlingit women experimented with zoomorphic designs during the twentieth century,[86] the twined figural decoration of Southern Wakashan weaving may be considered unique on the Northwest Coast.

Designs were probably inherited. In the historic period, the weaver's designs were commonly recorded on a work basket, later on hopsacking and in notebooks.[87] According to

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[83] Croes, Basketry from Ozette, p. 427.

[84] Devine, "Nootka Hats," p. 28.

[85] Croes, Basketry from Ozette, p. 422.

[86] Weber, "Tlingit Basketry," p. 312.

[87] Dyler, "Mabel Taylor," p. 13.

Harry Dyler: "many of the weavers have inherited or otherwise acquired traditional designs.... Many designs and patterns used to have meanings to them but these have been forgotten by the majority of the weavers."[88] Commonly used traditional designs include canoes, whaling scenes, sea serpents, lightning snakes and thunderbirds and they relate to the stories and prestigious activities of the Southern Wakashan. Geometric designs were also used. Makah baskets were more likely to have angular and geometric decoration but it is unclear whether this had a symbolic interpretation or was solely aesthetic. It is the use of figural imagery which distinguishes Southern Wakashan basketry from that of other groups.

Northern Wakashan

The Northern Wakashan live along the middle coast of the British Columbia mainland and on northeastern Vancouver Island. Due to basketry style, the Nuxalk (of Salish linguistic stock) are included in this discussion. The Northern Wakashan did not have a highly distinctive basketry style. Using spruce root and cedar bark and withes, they created open and closed plain twined and open wrap-twined baskets (fig. 12).[89] Open twined cedar bark bags were used for holding molluscs and fern and clover roots. They commonly used plaited cedar bark in a square or diagonal weave, often with twilling. The weave of Northern Wakashan coarsely plaited baskets and mats runs parallel to the borders (fig. 12).[90] These are made out of thick cedar bark. The weave of the finest plaited baskets, belts and straps runs diagonally to the

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[88] Ibid., p. 14.

[89] Turnbaugh and Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, p. 152.

[90] Boas, The Kwakiutl, pp. 382 - 83.

edges. According to Franz Boas, "The finest baskets of the Kwakiutl are made of twilled weaving in cedar bark."[91]

Besides mats, plaiting was used for baby carriers, pillow bags, tent walls, canoe covers, bags for gathering food, lids for steaming food, salmon cutting boards, wallets to hold spoons, sacks for dried salmon and herring roe, and boxes. The Northern Wakashan hung strips of cedar bark over a batten onto which they were twined. They were divided into thinner filaments which formed the warps. In plain plaiting, the wefts were worked in from left to right and plaited in at the ends. The mat was finished by turning and twining in the warps. In diagonal plaiting, the strands hanging off the batten alternated forming the warp and weft. When the edge of the mat was reached, the weaving element turned at a right angle and became the opposite weaving element. These techniques were modified for three-dimensional forms.[92]

For fine twilled cedar bark baskets, various techniques were employed. Most container bottoms were created with thick checkerwork. The edges of the basket were twined and the cedar bark strips divided into three strands each. Plaiting started at the base, placing two warps under and one over. In the first row, the central strand of the three divided strands was kept over the weft. This 1:2 twilling was used in mats, such as bedding. A 2:2 twilled mat, which looks like a herringbone pattern, was used as a sitting mat. It also formed pillow covers and sacks for salmon and herring roe. Baskets created in this technique were usually tall and narrow.[93] They were used like boxes but were lighter and more flexible, making them

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[91] Ibid., p. 389.

[92] Turbaugh and Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, pp. 152 - 53.

[93] Boas, The Kwakiutl, p. 389.

excellent for canoe travel. Food mats, canoe covers, food steamer covers, salmon cutting mats, tent sides and bags were formed from open twined thick cedar bark warps with thin wefts.

Spoon baskets were different from other Northern Wakashan baskets. Made from cedar bark, these baskets were wide and tall, but almost flat. The base and lowest portion of the basket were cedar bark checkerwork. A series of openwork patterns were created by omitting wefts and alternately angling the warps right and left. At least two wefts were reinserted and the warps resumed their vertical position. Openwork and checkerwork regularly alternated, which is known as in between weave. The open weave allowed water to drain and air to circulate. If few wefts were used, the weaving is very open. Because a number of baskets showed the same number of stitches, Boas believed this was a strict tradition.[94] Perhaps these baskets were for special spoons.

Like the Southern Wakashan, the Northern Wakashan also made openwork burden baskets in wrap-twined spruce or cedar root. These baskets were four-sided with angular corners and tump lines of diagonal cedar plaiting. The twined rows alternated pitch, which was often alternately grouped, two to five turning left, then right. A reinforced midrib with twilling[95] and a rounded bottom distinguishes many Northern Wakashan burden baskets from the Southern Wakashan variety.[96] The Northern Wakashan wove their baskets upside down

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[94] Ibid., pp. 390 - 391.

[95] Johannesson, "Making Openwork Burden Baskets," p. 9.

[96] Boas, The Kwakiutl, p. 450.

on a stake.[97] According to Boas, "Transportation of goods by land is done entirely by means of carrying baskets."[98]

Spruce root hats have been collected from the Northern Wakashan. Franz Boas believed rough cedar bark hats were produced and worn by women for protection from the elements,[99] although Edward Curtis observed that both men and women wore these hats.[100] These cedar bark hats probably correspond in form and meaning to the Southern Wakashan commoner's hat. Boas states:

> All the old hats were made of coarse cedar-bark,
> but in later times spruce-root hats of the same
> kind as those used by the Haida and Tlingit came
> into use. In former times only few and large hats
> of this kind were found among the tribe, and these
> were worn by chiefs.[101]

According to Curtis, the Northern Wakashan adopted the northern hat style around 1860.[102] It is likely the Northern Wakashan traded for the highly valued spruce root hats from the northern groups, prior to 1860. It is possible the establishment of a Hudson's Bay Post at Fort Rupert in 1849 increased the prosperity of the area which permitted the purchase or production of more spruce root hats. After this time, the Northern Wakashan may have traded with the

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[97] Ibid., p. 386.

[98] Ibid., p. 450.

[99] Ibid., p. 452.

[100] Devine, "Kwakiutl Hats," p. 24.

[101] Boas, The Kwakiutl, pp. 452 - 454.

[102] Devine, "Kwakiutl Hats," p. 24.

northern groups for undecorated hats and painted them and/or they may have begun manufacturing their own hats.[103]

The spruce root hats were truncated, concave cones executed in twined spruce root (fig. 8). On the northern Northwest Coast, they traditionally designated a high status individual. Aldona Jonaitis notes of information learned by G. T. Emmons, "...the most valued artwork a chief could wear was the conical [basketry] hat depicting a crest animal."[104]

The Tlingit believed the crest hat with skils originated amongst the Tsimshian (fig. 14).[105] Skils were created around moulds of partially decayed hollow cedar forms. Unlike Southern Wakashan moulds, these light forms were often left inside the woven form. Ermine skins were occasionally added to the top of the skils, increasing the hat's value. Most skils were painted blue, as were the brims of the hats they adorned. Skils could be left natural or painted in other colours such as "...black, red, red and blue, [and] blue-green...," according to Sue Devine.[106] Conical hats with or without skils were so valuable they often had plaited cedar bark covers, for storage (fig. 15).

Sue Devine believes there are some characteristics which, when coexistent, suggest Northern Wakashan origins for some spruce root hats. These are: "The use of two and three strand twining on the top of the hat; a zigzag pattern on the brim, and the presence of dark green paint,"[107] in addition to the more customary red and black. Blue was sparingly used

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[103] Ibid., p. 26.

[104] Aldona Jonaitis, From the Land of the Totem Poles: The Northwest Coast Indian Art Collection at the American Museum of Natural History, (New York, 1988), p. 91.

[105] Emmons, Basketry of the Tlingit, p. 256.

[106] Devine, "Spruce Root Hats," p. 23.

[107] Ibid., p. 24.

amongst the Northern Wakashan. These hats were left in natural root colour and painted with designs.

According to Devine, the tops of Northern Wakashan hats were painted with "floral and pinwheel shapes, crosses, four pointed stars and concentric circles."[108] The brim of Northern Wakashan hats were painted in an interpretation of northern formline distinguished by its use of concentric circles. Northern Wakashan art used the forms of the Northern Formline style, but in a more naturalistic manner.[109]

The majority of Northern Wakashan spruce root hat brim designs appear to depict variations of sea monsters, but are difficult to identify. Because of the frequency of the sea monster design, it has been suggested that these hats did not designate clans[110] which only existed amongst the Haisla Northern Wakashan. Some representations on the Coast, such as those on Chilkat blankets, are difficult or impossible to decipher. There are many possible reasons for an indecipherable Northwest Coast design, which include: a lack of understanding of the Formline style; the creation of a purposefully ambiguous image to permit trade to more than one group; the creation of a purely decorative pattern; or, the design has a significance of which we are unaware. Because these hats functioned in Northern Wakashan ceremonial life, it is probable the decoration had a symbolic purpose, as seen on the rest of the Northwest Coast.

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[108] Ibid., pp. 24 - 25.

[109] Ibid..

[110] Ibid., p. 25 - 26.

Decoration of most Northern Wakashan baskets tends to be simple. Usually, twilling involves black, mud dyed cedar bark combined with natural cedar bark, although the designs are not as complex as those of the Southern Wakashan.[111] According to William and Sarah Peabody Turnbaugh, "mats... may be painted with red, black, brown naturalistic or stylized motifs (killerwhale etc.)."[112] The subjects were probably taken from the belief system and were significant to the members of the society.

The basketry of the Nuxalk and Northern Wakashan are similar in all but a few details. Nuxalk basketry distinguishes itself from Northern Wakashan basketry by the use of warp elements made of whale sinew or dried kelp (*Macrocystis* spp. or *Nereocystis* spp.) or seaweed thread with wefts of cedar root.[113] It is primarily plain plaited with geometric decorations in black and light cedar.

Tlingit

The Tlingit live along the Alaska panhandle and Alexander Archipelago and are the most northern of the Northwest Coast peoples. Although early explorers expressed their admiration of Tlingit basketry, few examples from before 1800 survive.[114] Most information on Tlingit basketry derives from George T. Emmon's 1903 work, The Basketry of the Tlingit.[115]

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[111] Boas, The Kwakiutl, p. 395.

[112] Turnbaugh and Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, p. 153.

[113] Ibid., p. 152.

[114] Weber, "Tlingit Basketry," p. 308.

[115] Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History, vol. 3, no. 2, (New York, 1903).

Tlingit baskets were woven from the bottom up and the weave slants to the left. Some artists employed a range of weaving styles within one basket. According to the Turnbaughs, Tlingit weaves are "...closed diagonal twining, open and closed plain twining, open weave with crossed warp, three-strand twining, alternating plaiting and plain twining..." and checkerweave.[116] The bottom of Tlingit baskets are naturally coloured and often alternate rows of checkerwork and twining, known as in-between weave, but this may have been a post-contact development in an attempt to save material and time in baskets made for sale.[117] The thin walls were tightly woven with colours added in false embroidery, although not as elaborately as in later times. The Chilkat Tlingit, a northern subdivision of the linguistic family, did not use colour for decoration, but created designs from structural manipulation.[118]

Tlingit baskets were twined in young Sitka spruce roots and a few were plaited in cedar bark. The northern Tlingit have been widely recognised by scholars as the most prolific and skilled weavers of twined, spruce root basketry.[119] Spruce roots were dug, split and occasionally dyed. John Gogol tells us that, "spruce root when new is one of the strongest, most pliable and resilient materials in nature."[120] Spruce root is so flexible some Tlingit baskets were folded when not in use, but the roots become very brittle with age. Cedar bark was available only to the southern Tlingit. The plaited cedar bark baskets were similar in form

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[116] Turnbaugh and Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, p. 153.

[117] Weber, Tlingit Basketry, p. 311.

[118] Emmons, Basketry of the Tlingit, p. 258.

[119] John M. Gogol, "Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut Basketry of Alaska," American Indian Basketry Magazine," vol. 1 no. 6, p. 5.

[120] Ibid., p. 6.

and function to southern products. Tlingit mats were plaited on the ground.[121] Grass stems, including manna grass (*Panicularia nervata*), bluejoint grass (*Calamagrostis langsdorfii*), hair grass (*Deschampsia caespitosa),* nodding woodreed (*Cinna latifolia*), Alaska brome grass (*Bromus sitchensis*), wild rye grass (*Elymus mollis*) and maidenhair fern (*Adiantum pedatum*) were used in false embroidery.[122]

Tlingit baskets were used for a variety of purposes. Early examples were large finely woven cooking and storage baskets.[123] Traditional basketry forms included hats, baby carriers, drinking cups, fish oil cups, food dishes and mats, trays, shrouds, trunks for the home and travel, flat spoon baskets, elliptical bags for valuable objects and shaman's double baskets (which were used to hold bird down and charms for use in rituals), strainers, work baskets and lidded baskets.[124] Collapsible cylindrical baskets of varying sizes were used to gather berries, molluscs and roots (fig. 16). Rattle-top baskets were cylindrical baskets of varying size with hollow chambered lids into which were placed loose pebbles, which were sometimes the gizzard stones of a grouse[125] (fig. 17). Although the function of these pebbles is unclear, they may have acted as an alarm or may have been added for the delight of the owner. The source of the pebbles suggests an unkown symbolic significance. As Gogol remarks,

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[121] Laforet, "Tsimshian Basketry," p. 238.

[122] Emmons Basketry of the Tlingit, p. 236.

[123] Gogol, "Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut Basketry of Alaska," p. 5.

[124] Emmons, Tlingit Basketry, pp. 250 - 56.

[125] Turnbaugh and Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, p. 153.

"...baskets played a significant role in every aspect of Tlingit life, where their utilitarian aspect mixed with the ceremonial and religious."[126]

Spruce root hats played an important role in Tlingit society. According to Emmons, there were four types of hats worn by the Tlingit.[127] A common concave, conical work hat was worn daily by men and women. These were woven from rough, split roots and sealed with a thick layer of paint and a high ranking person would have the entire hat painted in a clan motif. These relate to the common work hats seen amongst the Southern group. On special occasions, the wealthy wore finely woven, shallow spruce root hats, as discussed in the Northern Wakashan section. These were larger than the work hat and elaborately painted with crest designs in black, red, blue and, infrequently white. Tlingit crest hats with skils were the finest and most valued hats on the Northwest Coast. The fourth hat type is very unusual. The woven shaman's hat is the same form as other Tlingit shaman's hats produced in other materials. It is a horizontal band of basketry that rises in the front and is sewn together over the crown.

Excluding the Tlingit shaman's hat, all northern spruce root hats (Northern Wakashan, Tsimshian, Haida and Tlingit) were twined in a truncated cone form. Divisions between crown, brim and top were emphasized by weave variations or a row of braiding. The top and crown were woven in two or three strand twining, the crown was plain twined, but a skip stitch was used to create patterns. If the hats were painted, the location of the animal or mythical creature varied, but was always on the brim. They were decorated on the top and

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[126] Gogol, "Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut Basketry," p. 5.

[127] Emmons, Tlingit Basketry, pp. 256 - 57.

crown in natural paint of red, black and blue, light green, orange, brown and white. Designs were painted on the top of the hats which may have been an artist's signature. Twelve out of sixteen hat designs attributed to the Haida artist Charles Edenshaw share the same top motif.[128]

The fourth hat type described by Emmons identified the shaman, a person outside of the regular ranking system. The Tlingit shaman's basketry headdress was similar to some other Tlingit shamanic headdresses in form, a broad basketry band which was higher at the front, joined over the top and surmounted by a wolf or fox tail, possibly with a mountain goat mane.[129] The entire exterior of these hats was covered in false embroidery. "Shaman's Hat Pattern" design was used on many of these hats, as we know from Emmons, who recorded many Tlingit basketry patterns and forms. As well, animal designs appear on most hat sides. The use of such figural imagery is rare in Tlingit basketry.[130] Some of these designs were executed in porcupine quills and provide evidence of a link to the Athabascan people of the interior, who were in close contact with the Tlingit in trade and social affairs. The use of quillwork likely comes from them and may be evidence as to the origin of some basketry designs.[131]

Only some basketry hats were painted by men. Other basketry objects were decorated during the weaving process but some works, such as oil strainers and water buckets, were not

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[128] Devine, "Spruce Root Hats," p. 22 - 23.

[129] Emmons, Basketry of the Tlingit, Pate XVI.

[130] Devine, "Spruce Root Basketry," p. 24.

[131] Emmons, Basketry of the Tlingit, p. 261.

decorated.[132] Patterns were twilled into plaited basketry in black, purple and green dyed cedar bark,[133] in the southern Tlingit region where cedar bark was available. The Chilkat Tlingit manipulated twined wefts into geoemtric designs without colour but all the other Tlingit created geometric motifs in false embroidered dyed spruce root and grasses.

Most Tlingit woven basketry decoration differs from other Tlingit visual forms. Although the northern formline style practised by men in carving and painting is curvilinear, woven basketry decoration is rectilinear. This does not result solely from the limitations of the medium because there are Tlingit baskets with curvilinear northern formline woven patterns. Tlingit woven decoration complement the basketry form. For example, cylindrical baskets are encircled by horizontal bands of decoration, usually three, which complements the form (fig. 15). Although no motif is used exclusively on one shape, certain designs which flatter particular forms will frequently appear together.[134] Through trade and intermarriage, Tlingit women were likely influenced by the angular forms of Athabaskan quill work, also a female art form. Ronald Weber remarks: "False-embroidery decoration found on most Tlingit baskets was surely adapted at a late time [by 1750] from Interior Athapaskan quillwork that has many of the same design motifs."[135]

In discussing the meaning of Tlingit woven decoration, Emmons comments: "The designs are used by the weaver on account of their decorative value alone; while in the painting and carving of the Tlingit, where realistic form prevail, the totemic significance of the

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[132] Paul, Spruce Root Basketry, p. 44.

[133] Turnbaugh and Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, p. 153.

[134] Emmons, Basketry of the Tlingit, p. 259 - 62.

[135] Weber, "Tlingit Basketry," p. 299.

design is all-important."[136] Typical of his gender in his era, Emmons dismissed the idea that women created well crafted objects which transmitted cultural information. However, it is obvious when reading Emmons' descriptions of the designs that they did have specific associations with animals, material and non-material culture and the environment.

The environment was frequently the subject of Tlingit twined designs. Stylised patterns have names which refer to their appearance, such as "Wave", "Otter Tracks", or "Head of Salmon Berry". There are also patterns which refer to the material culture of the Tlingit. "The Labret" symbolizes the lip plug of the same name, worn by upper class Tlingit women. Other patterns, such as "The War Club", "The Garter Pattern", "Tattoo", "Checker Board Design" (a game possibly separately invented by the Tlingit) and "The Tooth of the Large Tropical Shark" (traded from the south and used as ear ornaments) also refer to their material culture. The "Blanket Border Patterns" (resembling Greek key designs taken from trade blankets) and "The Cross" (which scholars credit to the Russian Orthodox Church), although quite old, may be designs produced as a result of contact.[137]

I believe some of the names of basket designs have spiritual associations. "The Track of the Land Otter" refers to that animal, thought to have special powers because of its ability to traverse the two realms of land and water (the third and final realm was the sky).[138] According to Ronald Johnson, "It was thought the spirits of these animals could solve problems in other realms or transport the shaman to the source of the conflict."[139] "The

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[136] Emmons, Basketry of the Tlingit, p. 231.

[137] Ibid., pp. 263 - 77.

[138] Johnson, The Art of the Shaman, p. 8.

[139] Ibid., p. 8.

Shaman's Hat Pattern" likely had a similar meaning. The step-like pattern which represents mountains descending to the sea[140] possibly represents the shaman's ability to travel between the realms of sky, earth and sea. A Chilkat blanket material shaman hat, in the same form as the basketry hats, was executed in a land otter design.[141] It would appear that both designs were symbolically linked to the shaman and his or her (some shamans were women) ability to traverse boundaries.

There are few examples of woven Tlingit figural patterns. Some pre-contact or early contact baskets may have had zoomorphic decoration, but it appears to be rare. According to Ronald Weber, "...false embroidery crest designs and designs adapted from Chilkat blankets do not occur until late in [the tourist] period...,"[142] between 1880 and 1910. Emmons collected a basket which depicts a northern formline raven carrying a spring salmon, copied from a house front.[143] It is unclear whether this type of copying and use of realistic design occurred during the early contact period, but does show an ability to create images using the curvilinear formline style in a basketry crest design. The individual nature of much shamanic art may make the use of figural imagery in Emmons' set of shaman's hats unique. The use of figural imagery is rare in early Tlingit basketry.

It is possible that basketry designs were originally concrete representations of immaterial wealth or power, such as shamanic power or stories and names, which were owned by particular families. The appearance of ancestral beings to which only certain families

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[140] Emmons, Basketry of the Tlingit, p. 274.

[141] Jonaitis, In the Land of the Totem Poles, plate 37.

[142] Weber, "Tlingit Basketry," p. 312.

[143] Paul, Spruce Root Basketry, Plate XXXVI.

had display rights supports this proposition. "The Mouth-track of the Woodworm" may relate to a Tlingit legend[144] and the subsequent crest display of the head of the woodworm as a crest. It is not known whether people outside of the Ganaktady family, to whom the woodworm crest belonged, used the woodworm design. Crests, as executed by men, were usually realistic designs, while forms represented by women were abstracted and probably could be used by all tribal members.

The abstraction and use of crest designs and other symbols may have resulted from daily artistic interaction. Amongst the Tlingit, men executed realistic designs which asserted their rank in the community. When women created status oriented objects, they copied plans made by men. Only on rare occasions and under exceptional circumstances did women create realistic motifs of their own design. It is likely significant meaning can be found for many abstract basketry designs, as illustrated in the few examples above.

Haida

The Haida live in Haida Gwaii (Dall, Prince of Wales and Queen Charlotte Islands and a small portion of the adjacent mainland). Their basketry is similar to that of their northern neighbours, the Tlingit. The Haida plaited cedar bark as on the rest of the Coast, but Haida baskets are primarily plain twined spruce.[145] Woven upside down, their weave slants to the left, opposite to that of the Tlingit, which are woven warps up. Traditional Haida baskets do not employ false embroidery,[146] but are similar in size and form to Tlingit baskets. It is in the

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[144] Paul, Spruce Root Basketry, pp. 46 - 49.

[145] Lobb, Indian Baskets of the Pacific, p. 35.

[146] Weber, "Tlingit Basketry," p. 303.

decoration, which transfers cultural information, that Haida baskets differ.[147] Because Haida basketry was simply decorated, it was not extensively collected early in the contact era and there is little information on early contact Haida basketry.[148]

The classic Haida basket is cylindrical and often watertight.[149] Although at first glance it appears similar to Tlingit basketry, the stitch pitch and sparse decoration identify these baskets as Haida. The bottom was executed in plain twining and a row of three strand twining marked the division between base and side. The sides of the baskets were manufactured with the basket hanging warps down, on a stake surmounted by a cicular board.[150] The upper band was decorated with skip stitch geometric patterns or plain coloured three-strand twining. Some baskets have broad bands of dark spruce root, which were substituted for the plain wefts (fig. 18). The Haida also manufactured open and closed twined wallets[151] (fig. 19) and square based baskets with twined handles.[152] The top courses were often finished in closed twining.

The Haida also made use of cedar bark mats, which they wove on frames. Although stiffer and coarser than southern varieties, the Haida created intricate designs, including concentric squares.[153] Some mats were even painted. Haida mats functioned in the same way as other mats on the Northwest Coast, including house mats of differing sorts. Plaited cedar

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[147] Otis T. Mason, Aboriginal Indian Basketry: Studies in a Textile Art Without Machinery Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution (Washington D.C., 1902), p. 414.

[148] Lobb, Indian Baskets of the Pacific, p. 35.

[149] Ibid..

[150] Mason, Aboriginal Indian Basketry, p. 416.

[151] Turnbaugh and Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, p. 152.

[152] Mason, Aboriginal Indian Basketry, p. 415.

[153] Stewart, Cedar, p. 136.

bark was also used to create square checkerwork baskets[154] and long and narrow twill plaited bags.[155] Plaited cedar bark was probably also used to store equipment for whaling, fishing and hunting, amongst other things.

Haida hats were famous amongst Euro-North Americans (fig. 20). They became synonomous for the crest hats produced throughout the northern Northwest Coast.[156] According to Devine, "they ranked so high in public opinion that it is not unusual to find all types of woven hats in a museum collection indentified as Haida regardless of true provenance."[157] This misconception may have partially resulted from the fact that the Haida wore basketry hats throughout the nineteenth century, longer than any other group.[158] As well, by the late nineteenth century some Tlingit were purchasing their hats from the Haida.[159] Weave pitch is sometimes the only distinction between Haida and Tlingit hats. Even the painted decoration is difficult to distinguish from group to group.

Andrea Laforet notes some distinguishing characteristics of Haida hats, including Z-twining, three-ply Z twining on top and crown, radiating warps on top, geometric twilled design on two-ply background, and the use of braiding to finish the rim.[160]

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[154] Ibid., p. 132.

[155] Turnbaugh and Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, p. 152.

[156] Frohman Trading Co., Alaska, California and Northern Indian Baskets and Curios Wholesale and Retail, (Portland, Oregon, 1902), p. 12.

[157] Devine, "Spruce Root Hats," p. 20.

[158] Ibid., p. 21.

[159] Emmons, Basketry of the Tlingit, p. 257.

[160] Laforet, "Tsimshian Basketry," p. 244.

Haida woven pattern is simple. Weft manipulation yields woven patterns which, according to Genevieve Baird, "...form the basis of all the ornamentation.".[161] Baskets have broad horizontal brown bands on the interior and exterior. The plan of Haida decoration is similar to the Tlingit, but does not have complicated false embroidered motifs. The top portion of the cylinder was tightly woven and occasionally painted.[162]

Tsimshian

The Tsimshian live along the coast and its islands and inland on the Skeena and Nass rivers. Andrea Laforet notes, "In his unpublished manuscript on the Gitksan, Emmons attributed to basketry an economic importance next to that of gathering food, making clothing, and building houses."[163] Unfortunately, few early Tsimshian baskets survive due to late contact and rapid acculturation. The study of Tsimshian basketry is further complicated because previous research is minimal. The only documented collection of Tsimshian basketry was made in 1915, by the anthropologist Marius Barbeau.[164] Little information pertaining to basketry has been gathered from the Lachane wet site.[165]

Western red cedar bark is the most commonly used Tsimshian material. It was used in plaiting. The bark of maple (*Acer glabrum* or *Acer macrophyllum*) and birch (*Betula papifera marsh*) were also used by the Tsimshian upriver. All Tsimshian groups sparingly used spruce root for twining and plaiting.

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[161] Genevieve Baird, Northwest Indian Basketry, (Seattle, 1976), p. 4.

[162] Lobb, Indian Baskets of the Pacific, p. 35.

[163] Laforet, "Tsimshian Basketry," p. 234.

[164] Ibid., p. 215.

[165] Weber, "Tsimshian Twined Basketry," p. 29.

Tsimshian basketry is primarily plain plaited and twilled in cedar bark and infrequently maple. The use of twined spruce root is rare in traditional works (fig. 21). The weave pitch frequently alters from course to course, but they are woven upright and generally slant to the right.[166] There are some examples of open plaiting with crossed warp elements.[167] On the coast plaiting predominated. Upriver, plaiting and twining were equally practised.[168] The increase of twining was likely due to the river environment and the heavy fishing activity.

Examples of Tsimshian checkerwork include berry baskets, rectangular transport containers, bags, mats, boat sails, and shrouds. The most common form is the tall, flexible cedar bark container (fig. 22). Upriver, maple was also used (fig. 23). Tsimshian containers were woven in simple checkerwork or diagonal plaiting and had cornered bases and rounded rims. Function determined size.[169]

Smaller containers were hung around the neck while berry picking (fig. 24). As on the rest of the Coast, they were emptied into larger containers at regular intervals. The largest containers were used for transporting the berries as well as other goods. One variety of container was probably used to transport furs. The containers had a very flexible weave and upriver baskets were often folded when not in use.[170]

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[166] Weber, "Tlingit Basketry," p. 303.

[167] Turnbaugh and Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, p. 153.

[168] Laforet, "Tsimshian Basketry," p. 218.

[169] Ibid., pp. 231 - 39.

[170] Ibid., p. 231.

Two Tsimshian containers studied by Andrea Laforet had double bottoms. In between the two layers were light pebbles or seeds.[171] These two baskets appear to have functioned as rattles and containers and may have been related to Tlingit rattle top baskets. Laforet believes the Tsimshian rattle containers may have been children's toys.[172] It is also possible the berry rattle baskets were designed to warn the owner of intrusion into her goods or they have may been of spiritiual importance, but the significance of these works are, as yet unkown. The Tsimshian wove toys. A Tsimshian girl was first taught to plait a cedar bark spiral out of a single strand.[173] While it is possible the rattle containers were woven as toys, the time investment seems great except for very high ranked families.

The Tsimshian plaited their mats on the ground, as did the Tlingit and Southern Wakashan. The function of these mats included sleeping mats, shrouds, meal cloths and sails. They were made from cedar bark except upriver where maple bark was occasionally employed. Sleeping mats were thick while meal cloths were finely woven and pliable. Plaited food dish covers were created by the Tsimshian, although few are known. Food dish covers were placed over rectangular, wooden food dishes. Although the cover bulged slightly at the side, the dish and cover worked like our shoe boxes. Tsimshian cradles were plaited with straight bases and sides. The infant's head was placed at an open end and a cord held the sides together. Old matting was folded in half and sewn on two sides to make containers. It is likely

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[171] Ibid..

[172] Ibid., p. 236.

[173] Ibid., p. 239.

these bags were not used to store valuable objects. One bag was recorded as storing templates for painted designs.[174] Perhaps the bags made from old matting functioned as work bags.

Upriver, flapped, rectangular pouches were plaited. The function of these pouches varied. One pouch was created to carry eagle down, which was important in Northwest Coast ceremonial life. Another pouch was reported to carry shaman's rattles. It is probably significant that the same basic form was chosen for the storage of important ceremonial apparatus. It would appear these bags were used for the storage of religious instruments.[175] Without collection data on other Tsimshian pouches, it is impossible to determine their significance for certain.

Open-meshed cedar splint baskets were used in the Nass river eulachon fishery. The eulachon fishery was one of the most important economic activities on the Coast. Eulachon, also known as Candle fish, have such a high oil content that the fish is fabled to burn like a candle. This oil was highly prized as a condiment. Eulachon baskets were made and used by other groups who visited the area for the eulachon runs, including the Coast Tsimshian, Haida and Northern Wakashan (fig. 12). Woven in cedar splints, eulachon baskets were shaped like containers but were inflexible. The interstices were relatively large due to material and function. The Oolachan fishery also required oil straining baskets.[176]

The Tsimshian made a very limited use of twining, but it does add extra support to some plaited basketry. Twined spruce root was used on hats, skils, and for upriver cylindrical

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[174] Ibid., pp. 238 - 39.

[175] Ibid., p. 239.

[176] Ibid., pp. 236 - 38.

containers which were probably derived from Tlingit containers. The Gitksan baskets resemble Haida baskets, but can be quickly identified by geometric overlay and the weave pitch. Tsimshian baskets can be distinguished from Tlingit baskets by the rectangular start of their weaving.[176]

There is debate about the origins of Tsimshian twined spruce root hats. Scholars believe Tsimshian women wove spruce root hats of inferior quality to the Tlingit and Haida and for ceremonial hats, the Tsimshian purchased hats from these northern neighbours.[177] The Tlingit believe that the clan hat with skils was an invention of the Tsimshian. It is very difficult to ascertain the provenance of a Tsimshian hat. Few museum hats are labelled as Tsimshian, which is surprising considering their crest importance. Although there are no specific references to the Tsimshian having made their own spruce root hats, Laforet believes it is unlikely they bought all their hats from the Haida.[178] An examination of history, painted decoration and weaving techniques might help in future Tsimshian identification.

Tsimshian plaited baskets were decorated with warps and wefts of black or natural colours in different widths. Geometric designs were created. Occasionally blue and red trade beads were added as decoration.[179] Twined decoration included geometric overlay and skip stitch.[180]

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[176] Ibid., pp. 241 - 42.

[177] Devine, "Spruce Root Hats," p. 22.

[178] Ibid., pp. 244 - 46.

[179] Turnbaugh and Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, p. 153.

[180] Weber, "Tsimshian Twined Basketry," pp. 28 - 29.

CHAPTER CONCLUSION

It would appear that many differences in basketry reflect broader Northwest Coast cultural variations. For example, just as the culture and male art of the Southern Wakashan are easily distinguished from the northern groups, so too is Southern Wakashan basketry, particularly hats. Whaling hats are the only known prestige item on the Northwest Coast produced exclusively by women, without gender collaboration. As well, the figural designs on these hats were not prescribed by male artists, as in Chilkat blankets. Northern hats, which were allocated important ceremonial roles, were painted by men.

Traditional basketry of the Northwest Coast peoples had many similarities and differences in materials, weaves, forms, functions and patterns. Plaited cedar bark matting and openwork twined burden baskets were used throughout the Northwest Coast. Cylindrical twined baskets were common to the northern groups and plaiting was most significant amongst the southern peoples.

Decoration can be the most distinctive basketry trait. The woven decoration of some basketry is entirely an aesthetic consideration, but other designs probably conveyed important cultural information. The designs of the Tlingit and Southern Wakashan are the most likely to attract iconographical interest, because they appear in the historic record and obviously relate to the natural and cultural environment. It is interesting to note that while men primarily created figural designs, most women's art was abstracted or entirely geometric. Basketry designs were influenced by the material of which the basket was made but the abstraction of

motifs may have permitted all community members access to those designs, although some have originated as the prerogative of one family.

Although there is not a single cultural complex on the Northwest Coast, the many inter-cultural ties are reflected in the traditional basketry. Great changes occurred with the arrival of Euro-North Americans. Their interest in gathering Northwest Coast material culture for study or as curios greatly affected the artwork produced by Northwest Coast women. The Northwest Coast peoples had traded with foreign groups for a long time and were capable bargainers. Each linguistic family had a slightly different contact experience. The traditional culture and contact response seen in basketry varies amongst the groups and their villages. We will see that the collecting craze which descended upon the Northwest Coast at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries had a profound effect on basketry.

CHAPTER THREE

NORTHWEST COAST TOURIST BASKETRY

Changes within a society often bring about changes in its material culture. The years surrounding 1900 were a period of rapid acculturation for the aboriginal people of the Northwest Coast. Euro-North American settlement on the coast and a flourishing tourist trade brought the indigenous people into ever-increasing contact with Euro-North Americans. The profound changes experienced by the indigenous women of the Northwest Coast during this time are reflected in alterations to the shape, decoration and weave of their basketry.

Contact profoundly altered the lives of Northwest Coast aboriginal women.[1] By 1900, many no longer lived in the traditional large, extended family dwellings, in which help was readily available, but rather in a North American style "nuclear family" structures. Repetitive daily patterns largely replaced the yearly cycle of coastal life. Euro-North American law and church encouraged the adoption of patrilineal inheritance patterns amongst those whose traditional ways were matrilineal or ambilineal and many traditional aboriginal women's rights were not recognised in Euro-North American law. Northwest Coast women entered the new economy through cannery work, domestic labour and the sale of artworks.

By the end of the nineteenth century, large numbers of indigenous men and women had entered the work force but Victorian ideas of Caucasian racial superiority often tainted official and non-official policy toward them. Some Euro-North Americans favoured their

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[1] There are few sources on the lives of native women. See: Margaret Blackman, "The Changing Status of Haida Women: An Ethnohistorical and Life History Approach," in The World is as Sharp as a Knife: An Anthology in Honour of Wilson Duff, ed. Donald Abbott (Victoria, B.C., 1981), pp. 65 - 77 and Margaret Blackman, During My Time: Florence Edenshaw Davidson, A Haida Woman (re. ed.), (Seattle, 1992).

assimilation, even when they felt that the aboriginal people could not function at the Caucasian intellectual level. In 1908, C. H. Forbes-Lindsay wrote:

> When we consider the conditions under which the Indian is suddenly launched out into a state of self-supporting citizenship and set in competition with the strenuous white man, the future would seem to be fraught with sinister promise for the redskin.[2]

Indian Schools were established which taught gender-specific trades, such as carpentry, needle work and indigenous basketry. Forbes-Lindsay went on to say:

> What of the Indian arts and native products? It must be confessed that in their original forms they are destined to disappear. There is a small demand for the blankets, pottery, baskets and beadwork of the tepees at the necessarily high prices of the genuine articles. In forms that should combine utility with art these products might enjoy a more extensive market, and the Indian Commissioner is trying to induce the Indians to fashion waste paper baskets, letter holders, and other useful articles with the same designs and material as they now use on their ollas [baskets].... Children who display any special talent for the native handicrafts are afforded every facility for developing it. In the manual schools it is required that native art shall be applied wherever possible. He will necessarily gradually become merged in the population of the West....[3]

Others believed that aboriginal North Americans would simply vanish as the result of competition with the other races now on the continent. Frederick Monsen commented in a 1907 The Craftsman article,

[2] "The North American Indian as a Labourer: His Value as a Worker and a Citizen," The Craftsman Vol. 14, No. 2 (May 1908), p. 146.

[3] Ibid., p. 157.

> These Pueblo Indians are now but the remnant of a fast vanishing race, one of the many magnificent aboriginal races that have decayed so swiftly under the death-giving touch of the white man's civilization.... the chances now are that the paternal care of the Government will educate and civilize them to swift and final doom.[4]

Both Monsen's and Forbes-Lindsay's views were shrouded in romantic visions of a dying culture. As we now know, however, the aboriginal people of North America did not die out, but their cultures were nonetheless severely altered by the attitudes and circumstances of Victorian society.

By the middle of the nineteenth century Victorian society dominated North America in the form of both a social and an aesthetic movement. The Victorian aesthetic emphasized ornate, complex design and ornament as a symbol of wealth and luxury.[5] Victorian life centred on the lavishly decorated home that served as shelter from the capitalist world. Victorians filled their homes with mementos of their lives along with curiosities collected on trips abroad.[6]

As a result of Victorian travel, many indigenous tourist trades developed. Tourists travelled to foreign locations for `exotic' experiences, including encounters with aboriginal peoples. The tourists, however, still maintained a strong belief in their own inherent

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[4] "The Destruction of Our Indians: What Civilization is Doing to Extinguish an Ancient and Highly Intelligent Race by Taking Away Its Arts, Industries and Religion," The Craftsman Vol. 11, No. 6 (March, 1907), p. 683.

[5] Bernard Denvir, The Late Victorians: Art, Design and Society, 1852 - 1910, (London, 1986) p. 15.

[6] J. M. Gogol, "Nootka/Makah Twined Fancy Baskets," American Indian Basketry Magazine, Vol. 1 No. 4, p. 5.

superiority as illustrated in an article titled "The Moral Effect of the Tourist Upon the Native: The Danger of Adaptation Without Assimilation," in which Katharine Metcalf Roof wrote:

> The pursuit of the picturesque! What a self-conscious pursuit it is becoming! Romance-seeking travelers recommend places to each other as `undiscovered by the tourist,' and in their subsequent descriptions the somewhat overworked terms `atmosphere' and `local color' inevitably figure.... There is a... reflection that must occur to the thoughtful tourist and that is the gravity of the moral effect upon the simpler people of remote psychology and inferior intelligence at suddenly finding themselves of interest to the traveller.[7]

Many indigenous people were quick to adapt their artforms to meet the demands of the visitors and newcomers. The business of trading was not new to most aboriginal groups, such as those on the Northwest Coast, because they had been trading extensively with each other prior to and with Euro-North Americans upon contact. Although the development of tourist art was once seen as a degradation of pure and static traditional aboriginal art, it should more properly be regarded as the continuation of a long process of artistic development within the aboriginal communities.

Although many Euro-North Americans had gathered Native American works of art from the time of contact, the intensive acquisition of aboriginal art works began with anthropological collecting. By about 1880, fearing that Native Americans were a `vanishing race', anthropologists sought to capture vignettes of pre-contact life as a glimpse into the `primitive' past. The museum age lasted from approximately 1875 to the Great Depression,

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[7] The Craftsman Vol. 11, No. 5, pp. 671 - 673.

but was at its peak in the 1880's and 90's.[8] Large institutions, such as the Smithsonian Institution, gave anthropologists large budgets to acquire authentic, traditional works untouched by Euro-North American influence. Reproductions were also commissioned.

It is now clear some of the objects bought under the guise of authenticity were, in actuality, new inventions. For example, at the turn of the century the California Washoe weaver Louisa Keyser, also known as Dat So La Lee, created a new basketry form known as a *degikup*.[9] It was marketed by Amy Cohn, a basket dealer and Louisa's patron and promoter, as a traditional basketry type used in mortuaries. The geometric designs invented by Keyser were also assigned an aboriginal meaning by Cohn. These new designs were discussed as traditional types by Otis T. Mason, curator of ethnology at the Smithsonian.[10]

Although pre-contact Washoe basketry was coarsely woven, *degikups* and other tourist forms were tightly woven, and this affirmed romantic visions concerning the high quality of craftsmanship of pre-contact art. The new form was simple and looked utilitarian, which encouraged the concept of a traditional provenance. As well, geometric ornamentation was seen as an indicator of traditional design. Mason believed that, in order to interpret traditional ornamentation, a `folklorist' was required who would examine "...the pictography, the totemism, the lore and mythology of ornamentation...."[11] The new form, fine-weave

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[8] Douglas Cole, Captured Heritage: The Scramble for Northwest Coast Artifacts, (Vancouver, 1985), pp. 286 - 87.

[9] Marvin Cohodas, "Louisa Keyser and the Cohns: Mythmaking and Basket Making in the American West," in The Early Years of Native American Art History: The Politics of Scholarship and Collecting, ed. Janet Catherine Berlo, (Vancouver, 1992), p. 92.

[10] Otis T. Mason, Aboriginal American Basketry: Studies in a Textile Art Without Machinery Annual Report of the Smithsonian Institution 1902, (Washington, D.C., 1904), p. 332.

[11] Ibid., p. 279.

gauge and geometric designs were skilfully executed and, with their invented meanings, were believed to be ancient.

The interest of scholars in traditional native American basketry quickly spread to the general population and authenticity was prized by the average buyer as well as by the anthropologist. An Indian Arts Company advertisement flyer from the early twentieth century assured the purchaser: "We give a written guarantee that every article coming from us is of absolutely **genuine Indian make**."[12] Laypeople wanting traditional works were, understandably, often not as discriminating as the anthropologists. Provenance was important to the general public, but `authenticity' in terms of traditional types was not considered to be crucial. Many laypeople purchased baskets that had been influenced by Victorian aesthetics, particularly before 1900. After 1900, the Arts and Crafts movement began to influence native basketry design.[13]

The Arts and Crafts movement began in England in the middle of the nineteenth century as an anti-establishment aesthetic movement.[14] Reacting against Victorian aesthetic elitism and machine-manufactured ornate furniture, the movement sought a new integrity of materials and design. It espoused good design and skill in hand-made production, in the manner of medieval craftsmen. As well, it sought the availability of skilfully produced objects for all levels of society, most particularly the newly affluent middle class. Arts and Crafts

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[12] Emphasis not mine. Early 1900's advertisement flyer for the Indian Arts Company of Gallup, New Mexico. As reproduced in John M. Gogol, "1900 - 1910, The Golden Decade of Collecting Indian Basketry," American Indian Basketry Magazine vol. 5 no. 1 (1985), p. 15.

[13] Isabelle Anscombe, Arts and Crafts Style, (Oxford, 1991) is a good introductory text to the Arts and Crafts movement.

[14] Denvir, The Late Victorians, p. 17.

ideology first appeared in North America in the 1890's, initially amongst wealthy women and professional artists.[15] The new century saw its acceptance by the middle class.

The Arts and Crafts movement had a profound effect on the collection of North American indigenous art. Although the New World had a craftsman tradition, North America of the late nineteenth century was largely a product of modern mechanisation as represented by its burgeoning railways and factories. Romantic images of the `vanishing race' provided one of the pre-`Modern' models of skilled workmanship, with an integrity of materials and a seemingly ancient aesthetic. Basketry, according to George Wharton James, in 1901, "...is a primitive art.... It was highly developed, and, indeed, was then [prior to contact] in its days of glory - a glory never since surpassed and seldom equalled."[16]

Although basketry and Native American issues were rarely mentioned in British publications such as the Arts and Crafts magazine Studio, they were extensively covered in its American counterpart The Craftsman. Indeed, the first years of the new century marked an increasing coverage of basketry in the North American press,[17] illustrating its Arts and Crafts popularity.

Following Victorian ideas of "women's work", female Arts and Crafts devotees looked to pre-industrial female art forms to pursue and collect.[18] These middle and upper-class women were aware of the works of William Morris and John Ruskin in England. Ruskin

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[15] Eileen Boris, Art and Labour: Ruskin, Morris and the Craftsman Ideal in America, (Philadelphia, 1986) p. xiv.

[16] George Wharton James, "Basket Makers," Sunset Vol. 8 No. 1, (San Francisco, 1901), n.p.. As reproduced in Gogol, "The Golden Decade," p. 13.

[17] Ibid., p. 16.

[18] Boris, Art and Labour, p. 122.

believed that the production of hand-woven objects, in particular textiles, would provide workers with happiness and morality, as opposed to the misery and degradation resulting from factory work.[19] The availability of well-crafted handmade objects would also elevate aesthetic discernment and, in turn, the morality of society.

It is clear from the extensive articles written in magazines around the turn of the century that aboriginal basketry had an effect on the aesthetics of Euro-North America. Middle- and upper-class women, for example, joined clubs and societies and produced basketry based on aboriginal types. As Irene Sargent noted:

> To imitate the basketry of North American Indians has recently become the ambition of public school children and the passing of fancy club-women. But while both of these classes have thus satisfied the natural desire to create something; while they have closely copied shape, stitches and design, they have too often failed to seize the meaning of the originals....[20]

Euro-North American women, garbed in aboriginal costume, were sometimes photographed making basketry. In one such photograph, a woman appears actively working on a basket, while in another a woman holds an unfinished basket at her side with her unoccupied hand held at her brow, as if shading out the sun so that she may look off into the distance.[21] These images, both apparently taken in a photographer's studio, reflect a romanticization of the Native American female and capture early twentieth century ideals concerning pre-industrial life.

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[19] Ibid., p. 122.

[20] Irene Sargent, "Indian Basketry: Its Structure and Decoration," The Craftsman vol. 7 no. 3, p. 321.

[21] John Gogol, "American Indian Art: Values and Aesthetics," American Indian Basketry Magazine 16, p. 29.

Basketry collecting was primarily a female activity and basket-making was an art produced by women largely for women. As Eileen Boris notes: "In the eyes of the craft promoters, the baskets... produced by women from `folk' or `primitive' societies became symbols of the self-expression possible within the family economy. As such, they suggested an alternative to the factory system for women forced to enter wage labour."[22] Aboriginal women frequently sold their own works and, unusual in a financial world dominated by men, there were often female Euro-North American dealers such as Amy Cohn. Female dealers were well respected in both the community and the academic world.[23] Perhaps they were successful because basketry was intrinsically linked to women as creators and purchasers. There were limitations, however, on their ability to financially compete with men. Female collectors lost auction works to male dealers,[24] and, as in the case of Louisa Keyser's patron Amy Cohn, success sometimes required that the husband take over the marketing business, at least in name.[25]

The beginning of the twentieth century marked the first time that average North Americans could purchase their own homes. They were also now wealthy enough to assemble collections, previously an upper-class prerogative.[26] In a 1904 Alaska Steamship Company brochure, tourists were encouraged to buy basketry because, "No home is complete now-a-

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[22] Boris, Art and Labor, p. 122.

[23] Amy Cohn advised Otis T. Mason of the Smithsonian.

[24] "Auction of Indian Baskets: Portland Man Outbids the Women Who Wanted the Curios," Seattle Post-Intelligencer, January 21, 1900. As reproduced in Gogol, "The Golden Decade," p. 28.

[25] Cohodas, "Louisa Keyser," pp. 98 - 99.

[26] Gogol, "The Golden Decade," p. 24.

days without a neat and artistically arranged Indian basket corner."[27] And, in 1903 an advertisement in Country Life in America proclaimed, "The splendid effects produced by the use of Indian baskets in country homes is just beginning to be realized."[28] The use and integrity of natural materials helped create a demand for aboriginal art works for Arts and Crafts homes. Middle-class women, who were still producing fine needle works, understood the skill involved in the creation of North American basketry and it is not surprising that they turned to native American women for decorative works.

Romantic images of Indian braves and princesses were popularized in novels and wild-west shows, but these images of an idyllic, pre-contact life were difficult to relate to many of the aboriginal people encountered in and around Euro-North American settlements.[29] Contemporary aboriginal men and women were seen as having been debased by contact with Western culture,[30] and native art forms, such as basketry, were viewed as evidence of a nobler past and were promoted as such.[31] In 1902, Mason commented:

> No doubt a part of this admiration [for basketry]
> springs from associations of ideas such as age,
> rareness, the seeming disparity between the maker
> and the art, and, maybe, pride of ownership.[32]

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[27] Lloyd MacDowell, Alaska Indian Basketry, (Seattle, 1904) p. 1.

[28] As reproduced in Gogol, "The Golden Decade," p. 14.

[29] Mason, Aboriginal Indian Basketry, p. 300.

[30] Gogol, "The Golden Decade," p. 14.

[31] Cohodas, "Louisa Keyser," p. 113.

[32] Mason, Aboriginal Indian Basketry, p. 300.

Both North Americans and Europeans discussed the high aesthetic and craft value of North American aboriginal basketry. In a 1903 issue of the English Arts and Crafts magazine Studio, there appeared "A Letter to the Editor on the Subject of American Indian Basket-Work".[33] Signed "Traveller", the author had apparently visited North America. The "Traveller" valued North American basketry as the first woman's art and for its skilful execution, symbolism and decorative value. Referring the symbolism of North American basketry, "Traveller" remarked, "My only object is to draw attention to what appears to me to be a fascinating study, intimately connected with the beginning of art...."[34] Mason wrote in 1894, "...aboriginal woman's basketry excites the admiration of all lovers of fine work. It is difficult to say which receives the most praise - the forms, the colouring, the patterns, or the delicacy of manipulation."[35] The Arts and Crafts movement also expressed admiration for aboriginal basketry because of its refined pre-industrial technique and its aesthetic quality. The "Traveller" was not alone in exploring North America.

With the extension of the railway system, Easterners from crowded cities like Chicago and New York were able to vacation in the `wilds' of the West. From 1887 onwards, eastern train travellers arriving in Seattle or Portland could take a steamship north up the Inside Passage.[36] The scenery and the indigenous people were equally important attractions. By

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[33] "Letter to the Editor on the Subject of American Indian Basket-Work," Studio: An Illustrated Magazine of the Applied and Fine Arts No. 124 (July 1903), pp. 144 - 146.

[34] Ibid., pp. 145 - 146.

[35] Otis T. Mason, Woman's Share in Primitive Culture, (London, 1894), p. 44.

[36] Victoria Wyatt, Images from the Inside Passage: An Alaskan Portrait by Winter and Pond, (Seattle, 1989), p. 37.

1904, the Alaska Steamship Company was operating twenty-one steamers, seventeen toured Puget Sound and four made the journey from Seattle to Alaska with both American and Canadian stops.[37]

Businesses like the Alaska Steamship Company encouraged tourists to visit the Northwest Coast through pamphlets such as Alaska Indian Basketry (1904), which stated that the exotic experience of an Alaska Steamship tour would enable one to "...wander about in the quaint Indian villages which still have the primitive charm; stop now and then to gaze upon the venerable totem poles or poke your way into countless huts and igloos in search of the rare and curious relics."[38] Baskets could be purchased on the ships from "...Indians [who] came out to the steamer in their canoes to display their wares...,"[39] on the shore from Native Americans waiting along the docks and streets, and from Caucasian operated stores. It is clear from photographs that Northwest Coast women actively sought out their clientele,[40] sitting and displaying their wares in high traffic areas, but it is unclear whether they solicited sales. In an oral history of Victoria, one elderly resident recalled that:

> I remember seeing the old klootchmen - the squaws,
> you know the Indian squaws, walking up and down
> Government Street with a bag on their backs
> selling clams and sitting on street corners. Oh,

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[37] MacDowell, Alaska Indian Basketry, p. 2.

[38] Ibid., p. 1.

[39] Ibid., p. 3.

[40] See: Gogol, "Indian, Eskimo, and Aleut Basketry of Alaska," American Indian Basketry Magazine 6, p. 4. A LaRoche photograph of squatting Tlingit women selling baskets at Sitka, Alaska. Blurred figures passing by the seated women are probably buyers. Undated; and Gogol, "The Twined Basketry of Western Washington and Vancouver Island," American Indian Basketry Magazine Vol. 1, No. 3, p. 7. A Makah family selling baskets on a Seattle street corner. University of Washington Library. Unattributed. No date.

> there were lots of them around there. They used
> to make terrible sounds, noise - shouting and
> screaming and all that sort of thing.[41]

It is not known whether the "shouting and screaming" were attempts to solicit sales, however.

Some weavers sold their baskets door to door, as Emily Carr recounts in Klee Wyck.

> Sophie knocked gently on my Vancouver Studio door.
> "Baskets. I got baskets."
> They were beautiful, made by her own people,
> West Coast Indians....
> "I have no money for baskets."
> "Money no matter," said Sophie. "Old clo',
> `waum' skirt-good fo' basket."[42]

It was even possible to buy baskets through the mail.[43]

The Alaska Steamship Company admitted that Northwest Coast baskets could be purchased in Seattle or

> ...any Eastern city, but baskets thus obtained
> lack the value of those bought from the old Indian
> woman, in the far off wilds of Alaska.... Never
> will you forget that Indian village, with its
> totem poles and dried fish; its smoky huts and
> dirty children; its stolid "citizens" and numerous
> dogs; and the terrible time you had reaching an
> understanding with the Indian sales lady,
> and your unsuccessful effort to get a basket
> or mat at less than the marked price.[44]

In 1899, Harper's Bazaar published a basketry article titled "Last Industry of a Dying Race".[45]

Beyond its souvenir value, the Indian basket represented an entire population and all of the

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[41] Derek Reimer (ed.), A Victorian Tapestry: Impressions of Life in Victoria, 1880 - 1914 Sound Heritage vol. 7, no. 3 (Victoria, B.C., 1978), p. 23.

[42] Emily Carr, Klee Wyck, (London, 1941), p. 33.

[43] Gogol, "The Golden Decade," p. 20.

[44] MacDowell, Alaska Indian Basketry, p. 14.

associated romantic images of the `vanishing race'. Aboriginal women, through their basketry, were perceived to be maintaining the traditions of native society in the same way that Victorian women were thought to be responsible for maintaining `civilized' society.

Baskets frequently serve as a metaphor for aboriginal women in historic photographs. Basketry and traditional costumes are their principle attributes. Rarely were aboriginal men photographed with baskets. In the few exceptions, they are portrayed with ceremonial items such as hats. Women, however, were often shown creating, selling and posing with baskets. This device of having women pose with baskets and men with ceremonial items defined gender differences along Victorian terms and underlined the `Indianness' of the subjects.

As more and more basketry was produced for the tourist trade, the baskets began to lose their utilitarian aspects and there was greater emphasis on aesthetics. James Swan, in recording the transformation of Makah society from the 1850's to the 1860's, wrote:

> Within a few years past they [the Makah] have taken
> a fancy to cover with basket work any bottles or
> vials they can obtain, and, as they do this sort
> of work very well, they find ready sale for it
> among the seekers after Indian curiosities."[46]

The `Indianness' of a work was determined by the medium but the form and decoration were often altered to suit Caucasian tastes.

Although their reasons for making basketry changed, Northwest Coast women retained a pride in their work. This is evidenced in the basketry produced at the advent of the

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[45] Gogol, "The Golden Decade," p. 14.

[46] James G. Swan, "The Indians of Cape Flattery, At the Entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Washington Territory," Smithsonian Contributions to Knowledge (1870), p. 46. As cited in Gogol, "Nootka/Makah Fancy Baskets," p. 5.

twentieth century which is both well-made and aesthetically pleasing. According to Lloyd MacDowell, of the Alaska Steamship Company, in 1904 "If the basket they [aboriginal Alaskan Women] offer for sale is an inferior one they will always show it in a shame-faced attitude."[47]

The development of Northwest Coast tourist basketry occurred at different rates and ways in different locations. It is probable that the process was most rapid in areas with high, permanent, Euro-North American populations, such as Victoria, or locations where there were large numbers of tourists, such as the steam boat stop at Juneau, Alaska. However, areas away from settlements and tourist routes also produced tourist art and sent it to tourist spots for sale.[48] It is probable that experimentation was less intense in areas lacking frequent contact.

History has been largely written by male scholars, who have tended to neglect the importance of female weavers, collectors and dealers. It seems likely that basketry as an artform has not been accorded greater attention and esteem because of the gender of its producers.

NORTHWEST COAST BASKETRY AND CULTURE CHANGE

Many of the generalizations about changes in basketry in the following section are derived from primary research by Joan Megan Jones, described in a 1968 report for The Thomas Burke Memorial Washington State Museum.[49] Following essentially the same format

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[47] MacDowell, Alaska Indian Basketry, p. 11.

[48] Wyatt, Images, p. 39.

[49] Northwest Coast Basketry and Culture Change Research Report No. 1, (Seattle).

as that of her Anthropology Masters Thesis, the report is a study of Northwest Coast basket attributes through time. The purpose of the report was to identify Northwest Coast basketry types, which are recognised by recurring combinations of "...form or shape, styles and techniques of decoration and techniques of weaving basket bottom, body, and rim."[50] Using museum baskets of known dates, Jones charted basket modes and types through ten year spans of time. She obtained her information by examining dated baskets from the Thomas Burke Memorial Museum in Seattle and the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago.

There are some limitations to her study. It is not stated, for example, how the baskets came into the two collections. It seems probable many were actively collected while others were donated. The preferences of a single collector might cause her data to be skewed. Additionally, Jones used collection dates rather than dates of manufacture and this may have blurred some of her time divisions.[51] Jones confined her definition of basketry to "containers" woven of roots, stems, grass or bark.[52] Her analysis ignores hats, mats and clothing, although these were being produced during the last decades of the nineteenth century and would have found their way into museum collections. It is clear from historic photographs that basketry hats were being sold to tourists[53] and Euro-North American inspired hats were also

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[50] Ibid., p. 2.

[51] Ronald L. Weber, "Tlingit Basketry, 1750 - 1950," The Art of Native American Basketry: A Living Legacy, Ed. Frank W. Porter III, (New York, 1990), p. 301.

[52] Jones, Northwest Coast Basketry, p. 2.

[53] John Gogol, "The Twined Basketry of Western Washington and Vancouver Island," American Indian Basketry Magazine Vol. 1 No. 3, p. 7. A Makah grandmother, mother and son were photographed selling baskets on a Seattle street corner around the turn of the century. Included in their display are two seemingly new basketry hats, probably made out of cedar bark. Photo from the University of Washington library. No date. No photographer.

created (fig.'s 25 & 26). Additionally, she did not consider medium as a basketry trait. Medium would have reflected the variety of traditions within her groups, as well as differences between traditional and tourist trade media. Whether the dyes were aniline or natural would have been useful information. Following the introduction of aniline dyes in the late 1860's, many baskets were produced with bright colours.[54] Perhaps Jones did not consider these art historical questions important or, for the sake of brevity, had to exclude them.

Jones divided the Northwest Coast into three groups: Coast Salish, Wakashan and Northern. As previously explained, Salish data will not be discussed. Jones's Wakashan group includes the Southern and Northern Wakashan linguistic families, as well as the Quinault and Quileute, two Washington State groups directly south of the Makah, not included in previous discussion. The Quinault and Quileute practised some twined basketry similar to their Wakashan neighbours and their contact experience was somewhat similar. The Quinault are of Salish linguistic stock. Located between the Makah and Quinault are the Quileute, of a separate linguistic heritage. Jones's Northern group encompasses the Tsimshian, Haida and Tlingit. These vast divisions served to confuse some of the data because the number of baskets represented from each language group was not consistent. The abrupt changes which appear on some of Jones's graphs probably did not occur in the lives of the weavers but, rather, were gradual processes not reflected in her two collections. A larger study might have provided data specific to each linguistic family or contact experience, but the generalizations to be deduced from Jones's information are valid. The limitations outlined are minor drawbacks. Jones's

[54] Sarah Peabody Turnbaugh and William R. Turnbaugh, Indian Baskets, (West Chester, Pennsylvania, 1986), p. 152.

study was innovative and includes a mass of unanalyzed data which can be supplemented by other sources.

Jones examined the weaving techniques of the base, side and rims of baskets through ten year spans. A stitch gauge of fine, medium or coarse was measured on the sides. Fine twined weaving was measured as ten or more stitches per inch, medium as six to nine stitches per inch and coarse as three to five stitches per inch. The gauge of fine plaiting was seven or more stitches per inch, medium as four to six stitches per inch and coarse as one to three stitches per inch.[55] Basket shape, size and cover types, as well as decoration style and technique were also analyzed. The data starts in 1890 for the Wakashan and 1880 for the Northern Group. For the purpose of this thesis, Jones's data was analyzed only up to 1909 although it continued until 1939. However, some gradual trends beyond 1909 were noted and are included in discussion which follows. The following sections will discuss the development of basketry, beginning with the Wakashan, and provide art historical explanations for any specific changes noted.

The Wakashan Group

Traditionally, most Wakashan baskets were plaited from cedar bark with an infrequent use of spruce root or grass twining. The twined grass baskets associated with the Wakashans were first created during the middle of the nineteenth century, as an innovation for the tourist trade and were probably adopted from southern neighbours. There were experimentations in shape, size and design. The Wakashan covered bottles, frames, glass floats, antlers, lamp

[55] Jones, Northwest Coast Basketry, p. 8.

bases,[56] canes, and shells[57] with basketry (fig. 27). The photographic record shows that this phenomenon occurred in other twining regions as well, such as in North-western California.[58] The existence of similar experimentation across western North America suggests that these adaptations were stimulated by Euro-North American contact. The most apparent turn of the century basketry adaptations are seen in basketry shape.

Shape is perhaps the most obvious basketry trait and was traditionally determined by function; however, it assumed a primarily aesthetic role when basketry began to be produced for sale. Alterations in the shape of tourist baskets were often made for market purposes, whether to increase the speed of manufacture or to please a foreign aesthetic. It is likely that some adaptations were experiments conducted for the weaver's own delight. Adaptations of shape most often reflect Victorian, and later Arts and Crafts, aesthetics.

The Wakashan Group in Jones's study contained the greatest variety of shapes. Jones hypothesized that this might be due to a greater adaptability on the part of the Southern Group.[59] She suggested that they might have "...a higher incidence of experimentation and individual creativity."[60] Although this might be true, the existence of a basketry shoe and an hourglass from the Northern Group also suggests great inventiveness, creativity and

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[56] Harry Dyler, "Mabel Taylor - West Coast Basket Weaver," American Indian Basketry Magazine 4, p. 13.

[57] John M. Gogol, "The Twined Basketry of Western Washington and Vancouver Island," American Indian Basketry Magazine Vol. 1 No. 3, p. 6.

[58] Photograph of Karok (Northwestern California) fancy baskets and basketry covered jug, no date. As reproduced in Margot Blum Schevill, "Lila Morris O'Neale: Ethnoaesthetics and the Yurok-Karok Basket Weavers of Northwestern California," The Early Years of Native American Art History, fig. 29.

[59] Jones, Northwest Coast Basketry, p. 56.

[60] Ibid..

adaptability. The existence of at least one mould for each Southern Wakashan weaver likely resulted in a wide variety of basketry shapes, as well as the continued repetition of specific forms.

The `onion dome' of traditional Southern Wakashan whaling hats (fig. 11) was created around a collapsible mould, but it is not known whether moulds were used in pre-contact times for other types of basketry. Moulds for other types of basketry were used in post-contact times, which made for quicker production time and greater consistency of shape. Straight-sided Wakashan tourist basketry was created around a wooden mould that was made by the weaver's husband and passed down for generations.[61] In discussing mid-nineteenth century changes in Nuu-chah-nulth basketry, Harry Dyler wrote: "Weavers soon had a vast array of wooden forms [moulds], round, oval and rectangular, all in varying sizes from as small as a thimble to the large rectangular shopping bags."[62] It is possible, as Jones suggests, that the Wakashan borrowed and adapted more frequently from both aboriginal and non-aboriginal people than the Northern Group, but the use of moulds may have made this easier.

The large variation of basket shapes amongst the Wakashan may have been exaggerated by Jones's inclusion of the Quinault and Quileute. Only some Quinault and Quileute wove in the manner of the Southern Wakashan.[63] "Quinault baskets are quite distinctive,"[64] according to J. M. Gogol, and remained relatively traditional in form and

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[61] Gogol, "Nootka/Makah," p. 8.

[62] Dyler, "Mabel Taylor," p. 13.

[63] Carolyn J. Marr, "Basketry Regions of Washington State," American Indian Art Magazine, No. 16, Vol. 2, p. 44.

[64] Gogol, "Twined Basketry," p. 7.

decoration.[65] The Wakashan contact experience varied greatly, with earlier and more intense contact for the Southern Wakashan, Quinault and Quileute. There may have been a retention of traditional forms amongst those Wakashan who were removed from Western society (particularly the Northern Wakashan) and greater experimentation by those in early and close contact with Euro-North Americans, such as the Makah. Only one early Northern Wakashan basket in the Royal British Columbia Museum was a tourist type and it retained many traditional aspects (fig. 28). Certainly, Euro-North American aesthetics had an identifiable effect on the development of Wakashan basket shape.

Although many traditional Wakashan shapes were still being produced in the 1890 to 1899 period, tourist-style basketry was quite popular. Traditional basketry was being collected primarily by museums looking to save samples of the material culture of the `vanishing race'. The most popular Wakashan tourist form was the trinket basket (fig. 29). These are small, often round-lidded baskets, which are also called "fancy" baskets, "treasure" baskets and, perhaps most suitably, "tourist" baskets. John Gogol believes the Makah probably adopted this form by the 1850's from their southern Puget Sound neighbours, who, with earlier and greater contact, were already selling baskets of this sort.[66] However, the Southern Wakashan may have produced these baskets in the pre- or early contact era.[67]

The rectangular basket was the most common form in the 1890's collections examined by Jones.[68] There is no mention of the rectangular shopping bag basket in her list of Wakashan

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[65] Gogol, "Nootka/Makah," p. 7.

[66] Ibid..

[67] Kathy Johannesson, "Making Openwork Burden Baskets," American Indian Basketry Magazine vol. 4 no. 3, endnote 5, p. 11.

[68] Jones, Northwest Coast Basketry, fig. 25.

basketry types and it may not have been gathered for museum collections because it was not considered to be a traditional basket type. Shopping bag baskets are rectangular, with two handles, hence the name. Shopping bag baskets of unknown manufacture were available in Oregon in 1904.[69]

In the 1890's, Wakashan bowls and flat bags were popular and some traditional forms, such as straight-sided cylinders and sloping clam baskets, continued to be produced.[70] In addition, elaborate shapes, such as urns, were produced and were probably adaptations to Victorian tastes for the ornate. It is clear that in the last decade of the nineteenth century, there still remained a market for utilitarian basketry as well as for the Victorian-style baskets produced for the tourist trade.

Wakashan covered baskets continually grew in popularity. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, covered baskets comprised less than fifteen percent (six baskets were lidded out of forty-four) of the museums' collections[71] and half of these baskets were trinket baskets.[72] With the turn of the century, however, Jones's data shows a shift almost entirely to the production of tourist basketry, such as the trinket basket.

The turn of the century saw the rise in popularity of the lidded trinket basket, with over one-third of the sixty-two pieces being of that type.[73] Because the Northern Wakashan

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[69] Letter from Klamath Falls Indian basket dealer, Mrs. Frances Boyd, to Dr. Annie Russell, Indian Basket Collector from Seattle, Washington. Written in 1904. As reproduced in Gogol, "The Golden Decade," p. 24.

[70] Jones, Northwest Coast Basketry, fig. 25.

[71] Ibid., fig. 31.

[72] Ibid., fig. 25.

[73] Ibid., fig.'s 25 & 31.

appear to have produced few early tourist baskets, it possible the exclusion of the Northern Wakashan would have placed the trinket basket in even greater prominence.

There were three basic lid forms used by the Wakashan and the changes in lid shape reflects the change from a Victorian to an Arts and Crafts aesthetic. Throughout the entire period of Jones's study, the most common and easily manufactured lid was flat topped (fig. 29). In the two decades surrounding the turn of the century, flat top lids comprised over two-thirds of the covers. The remaining third of the small 1890's sample was made up of knob tops.[74] These are small, raised knobs on flat tops and were probably created to appeal to a Victorian taste for elaborate forms. Variations on the knob top were also created, such as knobs on platforms (fig. 30) and second baskets with lids replacing the knob. Knob tops also appear in historic photographs of contemporary basketry from other, non-Northwest Coast aboriginal groups.[75]

Between 1900 and 1909, a new lid type was introduced and became equal in popularity to the raised knob.[76] This raised rounded lid arcs from the rim to a high point in the centre of the lid (fig. 32). It is easier to weave than a knob top, yet it maintains an interesting, if less complicated, profile. The emergence of the raised, rounded lid marks a move away from Victorian influences. The more simple Arts and Crafts aesthetic, which emphasized the integrity of materials and design, began to influence aboriginal basketry around this time.

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[74] Ibid., fig. 32.

[75] A picture with no date, of Karok (Northwestern California) "Fancy Baskets" with traditional designs and innovative shapes, including knob tops, appears in Scheville, "Lila Morris O'Neale," fig. 29.

[76] Jones, Northwest Coast Basketry, fig. 32.

Unusual Victorian inspired shapes, such as the previously mentioned urn, continued to be produced in the new century, although the data from Jones's study does not show this. A photograph from Kalaloch, taken in 1901, shows the recently produced baskets of some Quileute weavers, and includes two large urns.[77] Historic photographs indicate that elaborate forms continued to be produced in the new century, but they were probably undertaken by women who already possessed the required moulds. It is improbable that new complicated moulds were made because the demand for Arts and Crafts simplicity undermined the need for them.

Rectangular baskets were produced for many decades and, although Jones does not specify the type of rectangular baskets being produced, it is likely that some were lidded and/or shopping bag baskets. Although the dates of the study make it difficult to detect early trends, the decreasing popularity of the bowl and flat bag[78] were probably continuing an earlier trend toward reduced production, along with a decrease in production of other traditional forms.

Wakashan basket size decreased during the study period. Utilitarian basketry was determined by its intended use. It is likely, however, that many of the travellers to the Northwest Coast were looking for smaller mementos of their trip they could be easily transported. Although the most difficult weaving process is starting the basket, small baskets

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[77] "Quileute weavers selling their baskets at Kalaloch, August, 1901. Photo courtesy of Burt Kellogg". As illustrated in Nile Thompson, Carolyn J. Marr and Janda Volkmer, "Twined Basketry of the Twana, Chehalis and Quinault," American Indian Basketry Magazine 3, p. 19.

[78] Jones, Northwest Coast Basketry, fig. 25.

consume less time and material than medium or large baskets and thus would have been favoured by their makers.

Jones defines basketry size as large (a diameter, width or depth larger than twelve inches), medium (having a diameter, width and depth between six and twelve inches) and small (a diameter, width or depth of less than six inches).[79] By the last decade of the nineteenth century, only twenty percent (nine out of forty-four baskets) of the Wakashan baskets in these collections were large. Medium and small baskets almost equally made up the rest of the collection. After the turn of the century, the production of large and medium sized baskets fell and sixty percent of the collection was comprised of small baskets.[80] The reduction in basket size served both the buyer and the weaver.

Weaving in the Wakashan group also moved away from traditional types and was adapted to the tourist market. Checker and plain twining variations were typical of earlier utilitarian basketry but closed wrapped twining did not exist in traditional Wakashan basketry. It is likely that upon seeing the early commercial success of closed wrapped twining among the Chinook and Sahaptin people, south and east of the Makah, the Wakashan adopted the technique.[81] Because of the high level of exchange amongst the Wakashans, the innovation would have spread rapidly. Introduced in the middle of the nineteenth century, wrapped twining already accounted for thirty-nine percent of Jones's baskets during the 1890's. This

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[79] Ibid., pp. 8 - 9.

[80] Ibid., fig. 29.

[81] Gogol, "Nootka/Makah," pp. 6 - 7.

figure increased to fifty-six percent in the next decade and continued to rise thereafter. The practise of plain twining and other weaves generally decreased in popularity.[82]

There were a variety of bottom/starting techniques used in the early sample,[83] probably relating to the numerous basketry functions, but fewer were used in later years. The weavers attempted to create works which were frugal in time and material consumption and that were also aesthetically pleasing. A checker and twined start was most frequently employed, with wrap and checker comprising some of the remaining bottoms, throughout the study. The use of checker and twining on bottoms increased in use, as did plain twining, with other techniques fading. With increasing virtuosity and the use of wrapped twining on the sides, the variety of starts decreased. Wrapped twined sides were easily started with checker and twined bases and their increase in production correlate highly.

The number of variations in rim construction decreased through time,[84] likely due to the specialisation of forms and weave. Turned in warps were consistently the most popular technique, with other techniques equally distributed. By the first decade of the twentieth century, wrapped rims made up approximately twenty percent of the rims, which corresponds with an increase in the use of wrapped twining on the basket bodies.

Some traditional baskets were made in a very fine weave, such as cooking baskets which needed to be water tight. Conversely, there were many baskets that did not require tight weaving; clam baskets, for example (fig. 7). Turn of the century weavers were probably

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[82] Jones, Northwest Coast Basketry, fig. 26.

[83] Ibid., fig. 27.

[84] Ibid., fig. 28.

capable of varying their weave gauge dramatically, but because there was little market for large, utilitarian baskets, these highly skilled weavers produced few coarsely woven baskets. This is confirmed in historic photographs where, for example, Washoe basketry shown is of the finely woven type demanded by the North American market.[85] Romantic visions of pre-industrial life and Arts and Crafts skills may also have influenced this development. Additionally, decreased basket size and the new intricate patterns also required a fine weave.

At the end of the nineteenth century, medium gauge weaving made up approximately fifty percent of the Wakashan baskets, a position maintained throughout the study. The amount of coarse weaving decreased and was replaced with fine weave,[86] corresponding with decreased basket size.

Traditional Wakashan basketry was frequently twilled or left undecorated. Twined decoration might have representational motifs and/or geometric designs. Geometric decorations were often easier for the weaver to produce and collectors probably believed these designs represented traditional motifs.[87] In 1894, Otis T. Mason remarked: "...the ornamentation of stuffs [aboriginal textiles and basketry] must of necessity be a matter of counting spaces. It is geometrical."[88] Baskets with geometric decoration also probably appealed to followers of the Arts and Crafts movement and those who sought `primitive' art.

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[85] By the 1890's, Washoe curio weaving had become much finer with more complex patterns. Cohodas, "Louisa Keyser," p. 104.

[86] Jones, <u>Northwest Coast Basketry</u>, fig. 30.

[87] Designs created by the Washoe weaver Louisa Keyser, popularly known as Dat So La Lee, were provided an iconography by her promoter, C. Amy Cohn. Writers on basketry, such George James Wharton and Otis T. Mason, accepted Cohn's fabrications. Cohodas, "Louisa Keyser," p. 91.

[88] Mason, <u>Woman's Share</u>, p. 170.

According to Marvin Cohodas, beyond the rejection of industrialised life and its mass produced objects, "Native American basketry also exemplified a second tenet of the Arts and Crafts style: ornamentation must be true to the material and form of the object, so that aesthetic and utilitarian components exist in perfect balance."[89] Northwest Coast basketry with banded geometric decoration, which emphasized and flattered shape, exemplified the Arts and Crafts ideal of integrating materials, design and decoration.

The Nuu-chah-nulth used traditional designs and were also quick to experiment.[90] Traditional Wakashan woven representational motifs were found on Southern Wakashan whaling hats (fig. 11). Woven into the hats were depictions of whales, harpooning whalers in canoes, and thunderbirds. Tourist basketry also used these and other traditional motifs. In an historic photograph from 1900, a traditional Nuu-chah-nulth wolf motif was woven onto a basket.[91] It was probably taken from designs carved and painted by men. Traditional motifs were also adapted for the new market. For example, a basket in the collection of the Royal British Columbia Museum depicts a steamship pulling a whale, making the whaling scene current.[92]

As well as traditional motifs, such as lightning snakes, representational designs were also adopted from Caucasian signs, books and magazines. Once utilised, many of the designs became standard because of the pattern or work basket (fig. 33). The pattern basket was used

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[89] Cohodas, "Louisa Keyser," p. 90.

[90] Gogol, "Nootka/Makah," p.7.

[91] Makah baskets photographed at Neah Bay by P. Wischmeyer, ca. 1900. Photo courtesy of Burt Kellog. Ibid..

[92] Victoria Wyatt, pers. comm., Dec. 1993.

to remind the weaver of designs and served as a stitch counter, insuring correct proportions.[93] The pattern basket may have been invented for the tourist trade because prior to this time there was little need to record a variety of patterns. According to Gogol, incorporated designs included: "...seals, seagulls, ducks, fish, and otters, plus peacocks, robins, butterflies, dragons, roses, and sailing ships...."[94] A photograph from around 1900 shows a trinket basket with `flowers in pots' motifs.[95] An historic photograph of Makah baskets collected early in the century, shows the use of the American flag.[96] It is unclear which designs were adopted first, but a further investigation of historic photographs would probably uncover a multitude of Euro-North American inspired motifs.

The interests of the numerous weavers and the demands of the Caucasian market account for the wide variety of motifs. The weavers were, undoubtedly, interested in the new urban environments where they found a plethora of new subjects for their designs. On the other hand, most tourists did not appreciate or understand the complex styles existent on the Coast.[97] Many of the middle-class tourists preferred representational designs, to which they could relate.

Although traditional Wakashan basketry was frequently undecorated, by 1900 two-thirds of the Wakashan baskets in Jones's study were decorated entirely in geometric, non-representational designs. Only seven percent of the work from the century's first decades

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[93] Gogol, "Nootka/Makah," pp. 6 - 7.

[94] Ibid., p. 6.

[95] Gogol includes a photograph of a trinket basket with flowers-in-pots motif, circa. 1900, Ibid., p. 5.

[96] Gogol, "Twined Basketry," p. 8.

[97] Wyatt, Images, p. 39.

contained realistic motifs.[98] The collections studied by Jones were from American museums and may have contained a disproportionately large number of Makah baskets (from the United States), whose decoration tended towards the geometric. It is also possible that the collections are not entirely representative of basketry production at this time, and that a broader range of data would have shown different trends. Certainly, the use of representational designs increased rapidly in the following years.

The trend towards realism is reflected in the organization of the decoration. Horizontal decoration, which complements the shape of the basket by orienting the encircling patterns parallel to the base, was the most frequent positioning of designs. From 1890 to 1899, horizontal bands of decoration made up ninety percent of the spatial positioning of design elements on twenty-nine decorated baskets. This decreased to seventy-seven percent of forty-four baskets in the following decade.[99] New motifs such as flowers were arranged in medallion-type designs, rather than horizontal bands, and there was a movement away from decoration flattering the form of the basket to the existence of decoration for its own sake, a characteristic of many Euro-North American designs (fig. 25). Euro-North American influence may have reduced the integration of traditional basketry traits that produced a unified work.

Both traditional and tourist Wakashan decoration depended on colour contrast, rather than variations in weave. Although there was a slight increase in the use of structural decoration during 1890 - 1910, it always accompanied colour contrast. Approximately ninety percent of the coloured decoration was accomplished through the use of a different coloured

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[98] Jones, Northwest Coast Basketry, fig. 34.

[99] Ibid., fig. 36.

strand replacing the weft. Overlay, carrying a coloured strand along behind the regular twining which is then turned around to reveal the colour, was of minor but increasing importance and false embroidery was not used until the 1930's.[100] False embroidery uses three weft strands, with two natural coloured strands and an one coloured. The coloured strand remains on the exterior of the basket where it is caught in each of the twines. The coloured pattern is seen only on the outside of the basket and its stitches slant opposite to those of the main body. This technique is difficult and was not used in pre-contact Wakashan works but was widely used by weavers of the Northern group.

Traditional basketry was still produced after the turn of the century. By 1910, however, the fever of the museum age was dissipating and the collecting of traditional aboriginal art works declined. Throughout the twentieth century, tourist basketry was of prime importance and traditional Wakashan types were replaced by the tourist baskets, in particular the wrapped-twined trinket basket with geometric, non-representational or realistic decoration. Wrapped-twined rectangular baskets and bowls with geometric decoration also appear to have been important to the tourist trade.

The Northern Group

The Tsimshian, Haida and Tlingit had their own distinctive basketry traditions, but they were more like each other than they were like the Wakashan group. They had some different uses for traditional basketry which accounts for some of the variations in shape, weave and decoration. As well, spruce root, not cedar bark, predominated, except among

[100] Ibid., fig. 37.

the Tsimshian. The geometric decorating traditions in the north were also very different from southern designs, except in the simplest of checker plaited decoration.

Jones's data for this Northern group extends back by one decade, into the 1880's but, unfortunately, there are only five baskets representing this decade. While this small sample can reveal some early basketry attributes, a lack of variety is to be expected. Jones does not state whether these baskets were from one museum or were collected by a single individual, and so a museum's or collector's preference might be reflected.

The shape of Northern group baskets was less varied than those produced by the Wakashan group. Some traditional Northern shapes remained popular with tourists and the division between their traditional and tourist types was not as clear as that amongst the Wakashan. The 1880's Northern sample of five baskets reveals utilitarian types: three straight-sided cylinders (fig. 16) and two women's work baskets (fig. 17).[101] These may have been created for traditional use or for sale. The traditional straight sided cylinder was used particularly in berry picking. The women's work baskets were shallow, lidded baskets six to twelve inches in diameter[102] and were larger than trinket baskets. This collection of utilitarian baskets may partially reflect a museum's agenda for capturing the past but it is difficult to say with such a small sample. The popularity of both basketry shapes continues through the turn of the century and is supported by historic photographs.[103] The straight-sided cylindrical basket

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[101] Ibid., fig. 51.

[102] Ibid., p. 10.

[103] "A collection of Tlingit baskets photographed at the turn of the century. Photo courtesy of Historical Photography Collection, University of Washington Libraries". As illustrated in Gogol, "Indian, Eskimo and Aleut Basketry," p. 9.

reigned supreme in the following two decades and the women's work basket almost disappeared. The small appearance of small numbers of flaring cylinder and square baskets in the 1890's foreshadows their later popularity with tourists.

The large sample of 1890's baskets shows the wide variety of basket shapes that were probably produced in previous decades. Perhaps the most interesting of these baskets are the tobacco and shot pouches. These are two small, cylindrical baskets, one slightly wider than the other. The wider slips over the other as a cover. The tobacco pouch is not entirely enclosed by its cover, unlike the shot pouch. The tobacco pouch may have existed prior to contact, but the shot pouch was an adaptation for post-contact native needs. The production of these two forms appears to cease after 1899,[104] probably due to a lack of demand from indigenous people.

The data for the first decade of the new century reflects a lessening need for utilitarian baskets. Straight-sided cylinder baskets showed a decrease in popularity while the flaring cylinder rose in production. The flaring cylinder baskets were produced for the tourist trade (fig. 34). Their flaring walls made the baskets appear larger and they may have sold for a higher price than straight-sided baskets of the same size. Square baskets assumed a role of importance. In Jones's data, fanciful forms, such as copies of shoes or hourglasses, were found only in the decade 1900 to 1910, except for one later example of a copied tea set.[105] Copying Euro-North American shapes was not uncommon and other shapes included iron cauldrons, communion vessels, European hats[106] (fig. 26) and table ware (fig. 36).

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[104] Jones, Northwest Coast Basketry, fig. 51.

[105] Ibid..

[106] Wyatt, Images, p. 39.

Early Northern baskets had traditional lid types, but later baskets were covered by a variety of lids. The earliest Northern covered baskets had recessed knob tops with a rattle,[107] a traditional basketry type (fig. 17). In the sample of baskets from the two decades around 1900, covered baskets accounted for approximately ten percent of the total.[108] The 1890's sample of basket lids might lead to the conclusion that there was a decrease in the importance of recessed-knob rattle lids since flat tops comprised over half of the thirteen lids.[109] This occurs, however, because the 1890's collection includes two tobacco and six shot pouches in a collection of one-hundred and five baskets.[110] Seven of the eight pouch covers were probably flat and one was raised and rounded. The remaining covered baskets were three women's work baskets and two covered trinket baskets. It is probable that one of the trinket baskets was covered with a recessed knob top and the others with recessed knob rattle tops. In the 1890's, rattle lids continued to be used on women's work baskets but also covered the smaller trinket baskets. The decreased size was popular amongst tourists and the rattle may have added charm.

Of the eighty-five baskets representing the decade 1900 to 1910, four were women's work baskets and three were covered trinket baskets.[111] Two of these baskets were covered with rattle tops which may have belonged to the women's work baskets. Of the remaining covers, two were raised knobs, one was a recessed knob without a rattle, one was raised and

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[107] Jones, Northwest Coast Basketry, fig. 58.

[108] Ibid., fig. 57.

[109] Ibid., fig. 58.

[110] Ibid., fig. 51.

[111] Ibid..

rounded and the final was a flat top.[112] The northern basketry types defined by Jones shows that not all work baskets had recessed knobs with rattles, some were also lidded by raised knob covers.[113] Flat or raised and rounded lids were used for trinket baskets (fig. 37). Their small size probably led to a simplification of cover types. As already seen, there was less experimentation with basket shape amongst the Northern group, but the reduction of basket size did lead to some experimentation.

As seen amongst the Wakashan, large baskets were rare, medium sized baskets were popular and there was an increasing interest in small baskets during the twentieth century. Two of three early cylindrical baskets were large and the third, along with women's work baskets, were medium size.[114] By the end of the first decade of this century, large baskets were rarely produced. Medium baskets made up almost two-thirds of the collection and small baskets the remaining third (fig. 38). It is likely that the popular cylindrical basket was medium in size. The trend toward decreasing basket size continued in later years.

Decreasing basket size resulted in finer gauged weaves, which appealed to tourists (fig. 39). The large and medium sized baskets of the earliest sample were executed in medium gauge weave.[115] The following two decades show a reduced use of medium weave. Approximately half the sample consists of fine weaving. An anomaly in the data appeared at the start of the new century data, when an unusual one-fifth of the eighty-five baskets were

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[112] Ibid., fig. 58.

[113] Ibid., p. 52.

[114] Ibid., fig. 55.

[115] Ibid., fig. 56.

coarsely woven. This anomaly is probably the result of the high use of open twining in this decade, which was used for material conservation and decoration.

Weave techniques were also influenced by the tourist trade and some adaptations were made to conserve time and material while creating an interesting weave. It is probable that a decrease in the number of weavers and their increasing specialisation resulted in simplified construction techniques and basket shapes. The great variety of weaves seen in the Northern group may reflect the group's cultural make-up or may be evidence of experimentation. The earliest sample, containing five baskets, are plain twined bodies with like base or an alternating twined and checker base, called in-between weave.[116] This lack of variety is to be expected in such a small sample.

The use of in-between weave may have been an economical adaptation for the tourist market. According to Genevieve Baird: "To conserve material and to speed up the weaving process, Tlingits frequently constructed bases and rims of commercial baskets in alternating rows of plain twining and checker weaves; utilitarian baskets were completely twined...."[117]

The 1890's collection of one-hundred and five baskets shows a great variety of construction techniques, but plain twining accounts for over half of the body construction. The remaining baskets were manufactured using various methods including: alternate twined and checker-weave; an alternation between plain twined and checker-weave; checker-weave; and several other minor methods. The Tsimshian, in particular, employed alternating weaves on the body.

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[116] Ibid., fig. 53.

[117] Genevieve Baird, Northwest Indian Basketry, (Seattle, 1976), p. 4.

Plain twining or alternate twined and checker-weave base construction continued to be important techniques in the twentieth century.[118] Checkerwork and open twined weaving represent a small but significant percentage of the remaining bases. Both gain importance in the following decade, 1900 to 1910. Checker and in-between weave show decreasing use in these years, with the use of a wide variety of base types which may have resulted from the creation of new experimental shapes. In the following years a simplifying trend, also seen amongst the Wakashan, is visible in base, body and rim construction.

The development of bases is reflected in rim development. Certainly, amongst the Tsimshian, Tlingit and Haida there were a variety of traditional rim construction techniques. The variety of finishes may reflect experimentation in technique as well as form. These techniques were eventually (by 1939) reduced to four methods: cut off; doubled back; braided; and alternate twined and checker. The reduction of basket size and weaving specialisation may have led to a simplification of rim techniques, as well. The early samples are turned in or cut off. Baird comments: "Warp strands are cut off flush with the last row of twining on commercial baskets. To strengthen the rims on utilitarian baskets, the Tlingits painstakingly doubled back the warps and held them in place with a final row of twining."[119] The larger selection in 1890 to 1899 shows a larger number of techniques. The decreasing percentages of turned in and cut off finishes were offset primarily by braid, which may be from Tsimshian baskets. These three main methods of finishing a basket remained popular but were joined by in-between weave, an economical technique for tourist basketry.[120]

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[118] Jones, Northwest Coast Basketry, fig. 52.

[119] Baird, Northwest Indian Basketry, p. 4.

[120] Jones, Northwest Coast Basketry, fig. 54.

Many Northern traditional baskets were decorated. Adaptations to the tourist trade are seen in Northern decoration and its increased use. False embroidery was a traditional decoration technique which also added extra strength. The five baskets from the 1880's were false embroidered in horizontal bands using colour contrast. One basket also used the different coloured strand technique,[121] where a coloured weft replaces a plain one. The later, larger samples reveal types which would have remained undecorated, such as baskets with in-between weave or clam baskets. Alternating weave, which was popular particularly amongst the Tsimshian, probably accounts for part of the one-third of 1890's baskets which were undecorated. As well, checker weave, open wrap and crossed warp weave account for the high number of undecorated baskets.

Only one basket from the 1890's has realistic woven decoration. Very uncommon in Northern weaving, the design might be traditional or Caucasian inspired. According to Ronald Weber, the Tlingit wove "zoomorphic designs... into shaman's hats and a few large baskets [in the pre- or early contact period]... but false embroidery crest designs and designs adapted from Chilkat blankets do not occur... before 1905, but their first appearance may have been as late as 1920."[122] The remaining baskets are primarily decorated in false embroidered colour contrast in horizontal bands. The coloured strand technique and false embroidery combined with different coloured strands were also popular. Different coloured strands may have been used on plaited baskets, like those from the Tsimshian. Eleven percent of the baskets (totalling ten baskets) used only variations in weaving for decoration.[123] These baskets may have been

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[121] Ibid., fig.'s 59 - 62.

[122] Weber, "Tlingit Basketry," p. 312.

[123] Jones, Northwest Coast Basketry, fig.'s 59 - 62.

produced by the Chilkat Tlingit who only decorate with structural variation to produce monochromatic, geometric designs.

The decade 1900 to 1909 shows an increase in decoration with over eighty percent of the baskets decorated in geometric designs, primarily horizontally oriented. A combination of false embroidery and different coloured strands superseded false embroidery in primary importance. It is likely that this occurred because the coloured strand method is a simpler decorating technique and uses less material than false embroidery. Because tourist baskets did not require the firm structure of utilitarian basketry, false embroidery was no longer a utilitarian asset.

Baskets recorded as undecorated may have been impossible to decorate because of weave. Of the sixteen undecorated baskets from the decade 1900 to 1910, eight were open twined, one was crossed warp and two were open checkerwork and the remainder unknown.[124] By the turn of the century, museums had cleared the Coast of most traditional basketry. Sales were made primarily to tourists and weavers were careful to create works which would appeal to the tourist's tastes. It is probable that collectors found it difficult to find undecorated baskets. It can be assumed that decorated baskets were highly esteemed by both tourists and museum collectors.

The individuality of Tlingit, Haida and Tsimshian traditional basketry was reflected in the wide variety of weaves found in the Northern group. The early twentieth century was a period of increasing simplification of Northern basketry traits, as was also seen amongst the

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[124] Ibid., fig. 53.

CHAPTER FOUR

CONCLUSION

The aim of this thesis is to discuss changes that occurred in the art of Northwest Coast basketry in the years surrounding 1900 and to demonstrate how this was part of a complex interaction of cultures. The peoples of the Northwest Coast were quick to adapt their artforms to meet the demands of tourists and settlers but the Wakashan and Northern groups responded to the tourist trade in similar and dissimilar ways.

Traditional Wakashan basketry was primarily plaited out of cedar bark and lacked a strong decorative twined tradition. In response to demands for finely woven, decorative baskets, the Wakashan adopted the wrapped twining of more southerly groups who were already successfully marketing that type of basketry. The technique was popular by the 1890's amongst the Wakashan. Because the Wakashan were not working in a local technique, they were enthusiastic experimenters in shape and decoration.

In the 1890's, the height of the museum age, the Wakashan were still creating traditional basketry types, such as clam baskets. As well, they were creating Victorian inspired tourist basketry, such as basketry urns. The most popular form was the trinket basket with the knob-topped lid, which reflected Victorian tastes for the ornate.

By the twentieth century, tourist basketry was of prime importance and traditional types were rarely produced. The influence of a new Euro-North American aesthetic can be seen. The raised-rounded trinket basket lid reflects the Arts and Crafts desire for the integrity of materials in pre-industrial types and its rejection of the elaborate shapes of the Victorian era.

It is evident by this date that basket shapes and weaves were becoming more uniform as weavers specialized and successful adaptations were made to the market.

The creation of smaller baskets was a benefit to the producer and buyer. Small baskets consumed less time and material and were easier for the consumer to transport and subsequently display. Decreased basket size entailed a finer weave, which complied with Arts and Crafts beliefs about the craftsmanship of pre-industrial societies. Non-representational, geometric designs were believed by Euro-North Americans to be traditional and were probably sought after by Arts and Crafts devotees. Other tourists may not have appreciated the geometric designs and desired motifs which they could recognise. The Wakashan took some inspiration from Euro-North American motifs. Aesthetics superseded the traditional concern for utility.

Unlike the Wakashan, the Northern group was able to maintain their traditional decorated basketry style. Traditional Northern baskets were usually twined spruce root and were often cylindrical and decorated. Because the Northern group developed traditional types into tourist forms, the changes were more subtle than amongst the Wakashan who had created their own tourist tradition.

Some traditional Northern shapes remained popular with tourists, in particular the cylinder. As well, a non-utilitarian flaring cylinder shape developed. In the twentieth century, utilitarian types show a decrease in production and tourist types, such as the flaring cylinder, became important. Fanciful formal experimentations were also represented in this decade.

There was an increasing interest in small baskets in the twentieth century and, as seen amongst the Wakashan, weave gauge decreased along with basket size. Weaves, such as in-

between weave, were frequently used on the base and rim, probably because they conserved material.

The Northern group used more varieties of weave, but this reflects the cultural make-up of the group. As well, Northern weavers may have experimented with traditional weaves that would conserve material but appear decorative, such as open-twining.

Northern decoration remained almost exclusively geometric and non-representational. Tourist decoration was based upon traditional Northern designs, but there was an increase in the use of decoration which reflects tourist concerns.

Northwest Coast basket weavers adapted their art to changing Euro-North American aesthetics. There was a trend to smaller, more finely woven baskets with increasing decoration. The utilitarian nature of Northwest Coast basketry was replaced by aesthetic concerns, such as the increased use of decoration and the creation of non-functional forms. Adaptations shared by both the Wakashan and Northern groups were the result of contact between the two groups and a common market.

Finally, it is clear that Northwest Coast women quickly adapted their basketry to aesthetic changes in Euro-North American society. The development from a Victorian to an Arts and Crafts aesthetic is clearly represented. In the Arts and Crafts movement the influence flowed back to the Euro-North Americans. For example, Arts and Crafts followers created basketry based on what were believed to be traditional indigenous types. The complex interaction of aboriginal and Euro-North American cultures is reflected in turn of the century Northwest Coast basketry.

Figure 1 -
Plain plaiting or Checkerwork

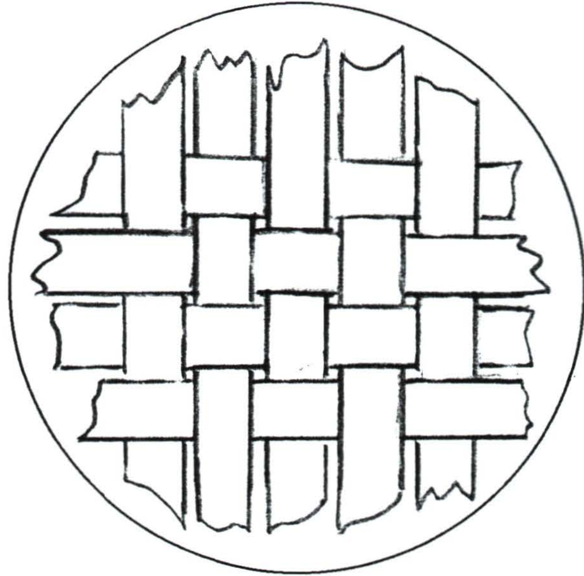

Figure 2 -
Twilling

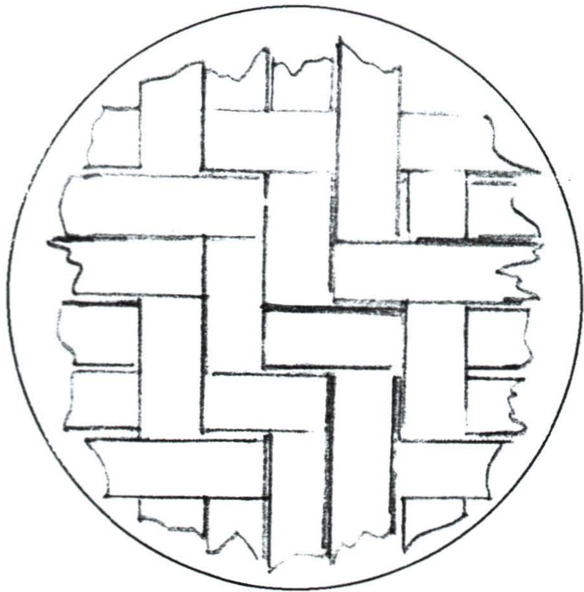

Figure 3 -
Plain Twining

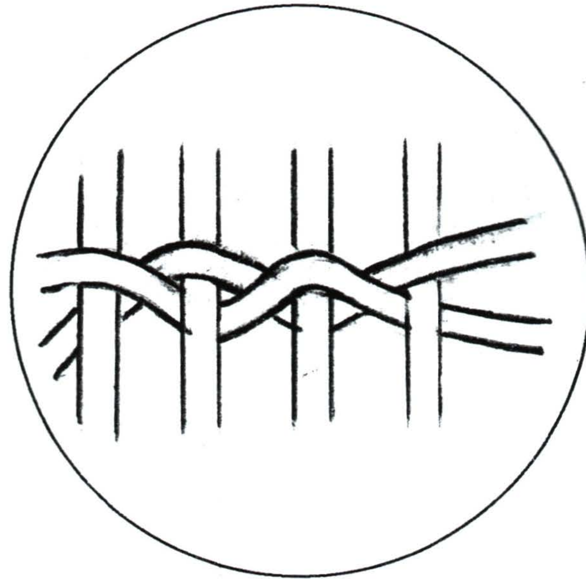

Figure 4 -
Wrapped twining

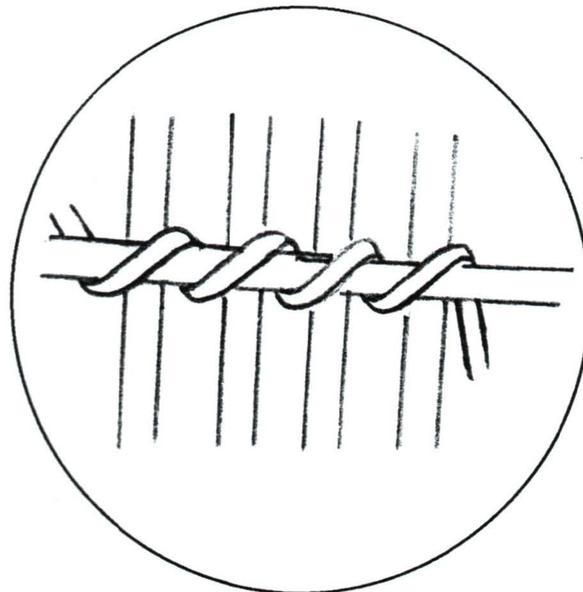

Figure 5 - Overlay

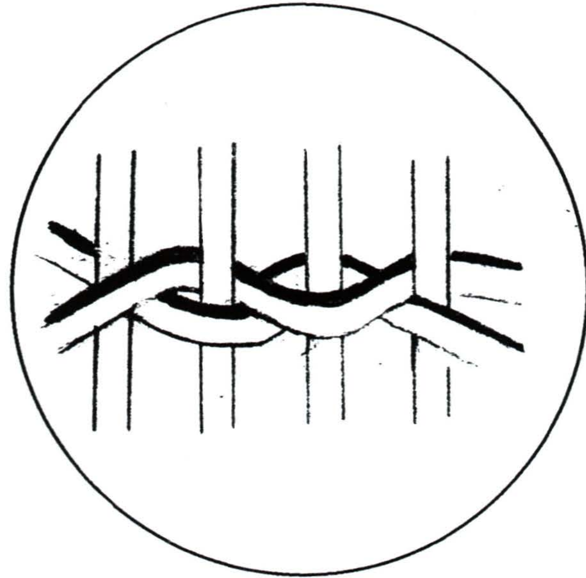

Figure 6 -
False Embroidery

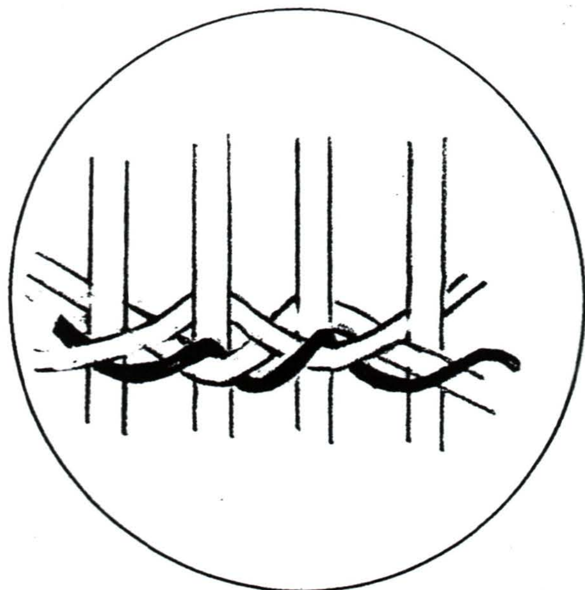

Figure 7 - Southern Wakashan burden basket.
Open twined clam basket woven in split roots or withes with tump line of brown commercial twine, black and grey cloth strips and purple wool.
Probably pre-1900 from Sarita River, Opitsit, British Columbia.
Artist unknown.
Royal British Columbia Museum (RBCM) cat. no. 18322

Figure 8 - Northern Wakashan spruce root truncated-conical hat.
Twined with a skip stich patterned brim.
Killer whale crest painted in red, green and black.
17.8cm x 44.5cm
No artist or date.
RBCM cat. no. 4346

Figure 9 - Southern Wakashan bowl-shaped spruce root rain hat.
No decoration.
Partially lined with twined cedar bark.
Collected ca. 1852. From collection of Dr W. F. and John Tolmie.
Artist unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 4185

Figure 10 - Southern Wakashan black rim hat.
Very unusual Nuu-chah-nulth hat type. May have been the prerogative of high ranking individuals.
Finely woven crown with red and black painted design.
Coarsely woven brim painted black.
Said to have been collected in Tsimshian region.
Artist and date unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 10186

Figure 11 - Southern Wakashan whaling or Maquinna hat.
Grass on cedar bark warps. Whaling scene and mountain range rim designs woven in mud and oregon grape dyed grass.
Probably a chief's hat type.
Commissioned by Dr. C. F. Newcombe, Clayoquot, 1910.
Artist - Ellen Curley
30.5cm x 34.3cm
RBCM cat. no. 9736

Figure 12 - Northern Wakashan eulachon oil strainer.
Nuxalk (Salishan) bag of coarse, open twined split roots and twigs.
Hung on a stake.
58.42cm x 38.1cm
Bought for $2.00, by Dr. C. F. Newcombe, Bella Coola, 1913.
RBCM cat. no. 2338

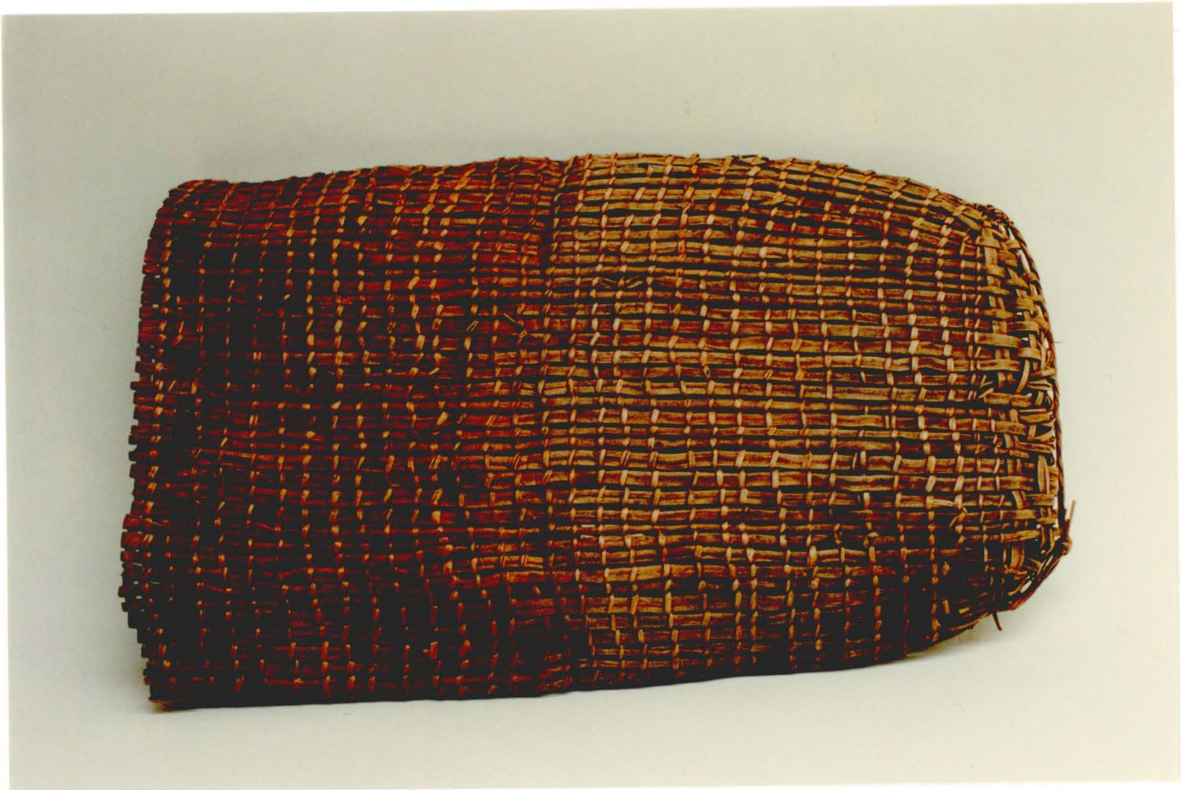

Figure 13 - Northern Wakashan cedar bark plaited basket.
Square base and round mouth with light brown, dark brown and black twilled decoration.
19cm x 23cm
Collected approx. 1910, Kitimat, British Columbia.
Artist unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 13141

Figure 14 - Haida ceremonial spruce root hat with skils.
Black and red painted design, motif unknown, remaining portion of hat painted green.
Very finely woven.
Four skils (7.6cm diameter) with weasel skins at pinnacle.
Hat 25.4cm diameter.
From Jelliman collection, approximately 1870 - 1905, from Massett.
Artist unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 10640

Figure 15 - Northern Wakashan cedar bark plaited hat cover.
Protected finely woven hats, such as fig. 8
Collected by C. F. Newcombe, Alert Bay, 1914
48.26cm x 22.86cm
Artist unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 1958

Figure 16 - Tlingit straight-sided cylindrical, spruce root basket.
Type of basket used for gathering berries.
False embroidered with natural and dyed grasses in red, black, brown, green and purple geometric decoration. The outer false embroidered bands are "wave pattern" and the middle band is a variation of "tying pattern".
19cm x 21.5cm
No artist or date.
RBCM cat. no. 13055

Figure 17 - Tlingit spruce root women's work basket with rattle-top lid.
Lid design is false embroidered "fern pattern" and the side pattern is alternating "cross" (red) and "war pick" (natural) patterns.
No artist or date.
RBCM cat. no. 10716

Figure 18 - Haida spruce root cylindrical storage basket.
Large cylindrical basket with five black bands and skip stitch patterned rim.
30.48cm x 29.5cm
Collected by Dr. C. F. Newcombe, Skidegate, Alaska, 1897.
Artist unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 309

Figure 19 - Haida open-twined, spruce root spoon basket.
A diagonally wrapped twined spruce root and splint cylindrical basket with plaited base.
Collected by Dr. C. F. Newcombe, Massett, Alaska, 1911.
RBCM cat. no. 9836

Figure 20 - Haida spruce root clan hat.
Black and red painted Eagle crest attributed to Charles Edenshaw.
Beautifully woven skip stitch on brim.
17.8cm x 45.7cm
Artist and date unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 10729

Figure 21 - Tsimshian twined spruce root soft bag.
The darkening of this old basket may have occurred through the storage of eulachon oil or through museum conservation attempts.
No decoration. Leather handles.
25.4cm x 30.5cm
No artist or date.
RBCM cat. no. 2898

Figure 22 - Tsimshian diagonally plaited cedar bark bag.
Black zigzag pattern represents the marks on a salmon when the skin is removed.
Purchased by Dr C. F. Newcombe at Glen Vowell, 1913, for $3.00.
No artist or date.
RBCM cat. no. 1681

Figure 23 - Tsimshian plaited maple bark bag, folded.
Dyed black maple bark design is `wall frame of old house'.
Probably collected by W. A. Newcombe (C. F. Newcombe's father) in 1905, Lakalsap, Greenville, 1911.
61cm x 58.4cm
Artist unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 1682

Figure 24 - Tsimshian checkerwork cedar bark cylindrical basket.
The heavily strengthened rim is typical of Tsimshian baskets.
Three bands of black and natural checkerboard decoration.
Stained bottom may indicate traditional use.
17.8cm x 20.3cm x 17.8cm
No artist or date.
RBCM cat. no. 9462

Figure 25 - Southern Wakashan European style hats
(Left) Southern Wakashan European style man's hat.
Finely wrapped twined of grass on cedar bark.
Euro-North American inspired designs on crown are a horned lizard in blue, a griffin in red and yellow (not visible), a bird in red and yellow on the back of a green serpent and a dog or seal-like animal in blue and orange. The same colours are used in the matching hat and brim bands.
14.6cm x 27.3cm x 33.1 mm
Artist and date unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 10186
(Right) Southern Wakashan European style man's hat.
Finely wrapped twined of grass on cedar bark.
Euro-North American inspired designs are two eared serpents - one green, the other red.
Matching decorative hat and brim bands.
Artist and date unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 18694

Figure 26 - Tlingit European style spruce root hat.
Wide brimmed hat with shaman's hat pattern hat band in yellow false embroidered grass.
16cm x 37cm
Artist and date unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 13058

Figure 27 - Southern Wakashan basketry covered objects.
(left) Wrapped twined covered bottle.
Cedar bark warp and grass weft wrapped twined covered bottle with geometric decoration out of traditionally dyed grass.
No artist or date.
RBCM cat. no. 4218
(centre) Wrapped twined grass covered pressed glass, kerosine table lamp.
Purple, green, red, orange, and yellow banded decoration. Euro-North American inspired designs: purple dragons (faded to green) and red and green ducks.
19.7cm x 12.0cm
No artist or date
RBCM cat. no. 18762
(right) Basketry covered creamer.
Squat porcelain cream jug with wrapped twined basketry covering.
Traditional and Euro-North American inspired decoration consists of banded borders, purple whale, blue flying bird, green serpent, purple canoe (2 occupants), red whale and purple bald eagle.
12.cm x 9.7cm x 10.7cm
No artist or date
RBCM cat. no. 18757

Figure 28 - Northern Wakashan open-twined tourist basket.
Dyed wefts used for decoration.
Handle not very functional.
Artist and date unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 11418

Figure 29 - Southern Wakashan finely woven flat top trinket basket.
Geometric banded decoration.
9.5cm x 12.7cm
Collected between 1901 and 1915, Rivers Inlet.
Artist unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 10998

Figure 30 - Southern Wakashan twined trinket baskets with knob top lids. Possibly the same artist.
(left) Small trinket basket with a lid with a small platform for a knob top. Unusually elaborate lid.
Geometric banded decoration.
6.35cm x 9.5cm
Collected between 1901 and 1915, Rivers Inlet, British Columbia.
Artist unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 10995
(right) Large trinket basket with unusual knob top lid.
Geometric banded decoration. Band on basket side is reminiscent of a wolf motif.
9.5cm x 16.5cm
Collected between 1901 and 1915, Rivers Inlet, British Columbia.
Artist unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 11055

Figure 31 - Southern Wakashan double trinket basket.
Cedar bark and grass wrapped twined basket with knob lid, which is itself another, much smaller basket with lid.
Blue and yellow banded decoration on side and lid of main basket, thin bands on small basket.
Bought at Clayoquot, 1908.
Artist unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 18604a-c

Figure 32 - Southern Wakashan trinket basket with raised-rounded lid.
Cedar bark warp wrapped twined with bear grass. Lid fits into basket, as seen by the cedar bark showing between the basket and lid.
Geometric banded decoration on side and swirl pattern on lid which is similar to the Tlingit "fern pattern".
Collected 1892 to 1901.
Artist unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 16814a, b

Figure 33 - Southern Wakashan pattern baskets.
(left) Grass and rush wrapped twined open basket with slightly flaring sides and dense decoration, which includes: birds, sea animals, fish, canoes, sea serpents. Shows the entire repertoire of the weaver.
Collected in 1947, at Massett.
Artist and Date unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 18900
(right) Grass and rush wrapped twined flaring cylinder pattern basket. Designs include: whaling canoes, fish, animals, birds and supernatural creatures.
11.cm x 18.5cm
Date unknown.
Artist - Dora Frank
RBCM cat. no. 18843

Figure 34 - Tlingit flared cylinder, spruce root basket.
Large basket false embroidered in "shaman's hat pattern" bands of decoration. "Garter pattern" and "cross pattern" alternate in the lowest third of the basket.
From Finlayson collection, purchased by Dr. C. F. Newcombe in 1929.
21.6cm x 27.94cm
RBCM cat. no. 9491

Figure 35 - Tlingit (attr.) trade pot shaped, spruce root basket.
Globular basket with legs, false embroidered fern root "shaman's hat pattern" design and open wrapped twining.
No artist or date.
RBCM cat. no. 17200

Figure 36 - Tsimshian (attr.) twined butter dish of cedar bark and sedge.
Coarsely woven with alternating weave pitch. The weft is of natural sedge and red dyed cedar bark.
Collected between 1914 and 1932
Artist unknown.
RBCM cat. no. 17691a, b

Figure 37 - Tsimshian cedar bark and sedge trinket basket.
Alternating rows of materials and twine pitch.
Small plaited loop on flat lid.
8.7cm x 11.0cm
No artist or date.
RBCM cat. no. 154417a, b

Figure 38 - Two Haida spruce root miniature baskets or cups.
Two small baskets in the form of a storage basket or a cup.
Decorated with three blue bands and a skip stitch rim.
Very fine weave.
These two baskets appear to be a miniaturization of traditional Haida cylindrical baskets (fig. 18).
Collected by Rev. Miller at Skidegate, Alaska, 1914.
6.35cm x 7.6cm
Artist unknown.
RBCM cat. no.'s 10020 & 10021

Figure 39 - Tlingit miniature flaring cylinder, spruce root basket.
Very small and finely woven basket decorated with false embroidered designs in fern root and grass as well as skip stitch patterns along the base and rim. The outer false embroidered bands are "blanket-border pattern" and the middle band is a simplified "butterfly" pattern.
A further shrinking of size and weave gauge of a tourist form (fig. 34).
No artist or date.
RBCM cat. no. 18686

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