The Art of Colonialism: Inventing Canadian Identity through Inuit Soapstone Carving

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Abstract

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The Canadian colonial plan to promote sovereignty in the Arctic region from the 1950's onwards, using co-operatives and the soapstone carving industry as a vehicle are examined along with the government and cultural brokers involved. The co-operatives, state run organizations presented as self-owned operations for the Inuit and the ways in which they were used to organize and portray an image of the "happy go lucky" Inuit are analyzed. The co-operatives and the soapstone carving industry was a formal introduction to capitalism and I examine how the Inuit have reacted to colonization through artistic expression, how they have expressed cultural resilience while under colonial control and how they have incorporated capitalism as a means of preserving traditional practices.

Dedication

In memory of my brother Bill Mahood October 21, 1956 to June 1, 2001

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations

List of Acronyms

IAF	Inuit Art Foundation
IAQ	Inuit Art Quarterly
FCNQ	La fédération des coopératives du Nouveau-Québec
HBC	Hudson's Bay Company
JBNQA	James Bay Northern Quebec Agreement
DIAND	Department of Indian and Northern Development
MMFA	Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
POV	Puvirnituq
NWT	North West Territories
WAG	Winnipeg Art Gallery
CMC	Canadian Museum of Civilization
ICC	Inuit Circumpolar Conference
ITC	Inuit Tapirisat of Canada
KRG	Kativik Regional Government
OMI	Oblates of Mary Immaculate

Introduction

The topic I chose for my research is how the development of the Inuit art industry that began formally in the 1950's became a vehicle for a much larger colonial plan on the part of the Canadian and Quebec governments for claiming sovereignty in the Arctic and ownership of natural resources. Putting co-operatives in place, that appeared on the surface to give equal ownership and equal decision making powers to the Inuit in developing the art industry with government support, was also a way of making concessions with the Inuit in making them believe they had real ownership in the co-operatives, when in fact their powers and voice in decision making capacities were and remain today limited. They do not have equal ownership of the co-operatives, they never did and the co-operatives are really state run businesses with the FCNQ being a monopoly in Nunavik. There is very little competition from other businesses to supply goods to the north and within the art industry itself. I focus on ways in which Inuit art, as the only valuable commodity produced, has been transformed into emblems for Canadian identity. It has become a means for Inuit to preserve traditional practices in stone, express resistance to colonial domination and demonstrate their resilience under circumstances where the plan was to either assimilate or eradicate the Inuit population.

I discuss the cultural brokers involved in the process who encouraged Inuit to begin producing carvings for the market place. The work produced by Inuit artists remained a heavily controlled market which dictates what artists were allowed to produce. What was demanded was a depiction of a "happy go lucky" Inuit living in a pristine, romanticized, unchanging environment. I demonstrate through interviews and images created by Inuit artists, their responses and resistance to colonial control.

Although I began with a focus on Nunavik Quebec as the place where the Inuit art industry began, the overall theme of colonial domination is in all Inuit territory in the Canadian Arctic. I discuss the problems in Nunavik where it was once as thriving art center that is now producing very little for the market. Cape Dorset in Nunavut has become the art capital of the Arctic today.

There are three major themes I discuss in analyzing the development of the Inuit art industry. Expert knowledge is a theme throughout my thesis as most of the individuals I interviewed were non-Inuit experts in this field, with many of them playing a role in the shaping and developing of the market for many years into a category of fine art today. The problem with expert intervention in this particular development I describe is the concern and question about

> whether scholars have ceased to work well as public interlocutors, when local options are precluded by institutional powers and also whereby institutions dangle the hopes for some sort of autonomy. Another danger of having local elite as interlocutors for national expertise is the risk of having these leaders endorse forms of knowledge that are biased or wrong when put in local practice and context (Tsiang 2005:265).

In the case of the Inuit the "carrot being dangled over the donkey's head" was the hope of complete ownership and control of co-operatives which they still do not have today. Expert knowledge also refers to the ways in which the Arctic region was organized as part of a larger plan in establishing sovereignty in the North. I discuss the many agents, experts and government agency involved who helped to organize and control the Inuit art industry and how the Inuit art market coincided with a need to establish Canadian sovereignty on the international scene after World War II. Through non-Inuit intervention Inuit society was transformed from a nomadic society into one that inhabited town

centers constructed for political and economic purposes by the Quebec and Canadian governments.

The market economy and wage employment is another major theme as the formal introduction of capitalism in Inuit society through co-operatives, that on the surface appear to be owned and operated by Inuit people, developed the local economy within Inuit society. The institutions created were called co-operatives but were in fact not, as profits were not shared, there were and are no dividends paid to the Inuit and all profits get reinvested back into the co-operatives.

> Cooperatives made explicit the process begun upon contact with earlier agents, that of undermining but also reinforcing the indigenous mode of production. Capitalizing on traditional activities and values were a form of enmeshing Inuit society in a wage economy, while at the same time enabling them to retain roots in the past through the promotion of principles of egalitarianism and the buttressing of non capitalist practices (Mitchell 1996:154).

I will explain briefly the informal trade Inuit society experienced since the seventeenth century, prior to the introduction of the co-operatives as formalized institutions for exporting soapstone carvings to the southern and world market, with a brief historical overview of events. The industry began during a period of profound rapid change and criticism was expressed for how it exploited Inuit society, whereby Al Purdy wrote a poem addressing this, “The Sculptors”. Mordecai Richler wrote a book of satirical fiction, *The Incomparable Atuk*, in 1964, where he was commenting on the human condition during the Cold War period. The protagonist was an Inuk named Atuk, who got caught up in capitalist greed and brought people from his village in the Arctic, to

Toronto and locked them in a basement where they mass produced carvings for the market and were made to believe that money was worthless paper.

The notion of culture is a theme in my thesis and therefore a definition of what it means is needed. Culture is described as a self consciousness, value to be lived and defended that has broken out around the Third and Fourth Worlds. Cultural practices and identity have been changed and altered by western expansion, in some cases so long ago, that notions of cultural authenticity can no longer be debated by scholars (Sahlins 1999:10-11). In the case of the Inuit as they experienced rapid change, displacement and formal introduction to capitalism, cultural authenticity and practices changed drastically. I discuss emblems and icons chosen by non-Inuit that portrayed Inuit society as comprised of happy-go-lucky, nomadic hunters, untouched by modernity, for geopolitical interests in promoting sovereignty within Canada and internationally. I demonstrate through interviews and carvings chosen by artists how they use sculpting as a means of preserving and rejuvenating traditional practices. The controversial contemporary situation with the art industry in Nunavik, which means "a very big place where people live" (Mitchell 1996:417), is analyzed, as Nunavik was once part of a thriving art industry and today there remain very few talented and skilled artists, with many opinions, criticisms and blaming for the situation that has evolved.

I examine specific ways in which Inuit artists resisted the pressures to produce work for market demand through carvings of a humorous nature depicting cheeky sexual images and other themes that were perceived as unacceptable in non-Inuit western society. Although I do emphasize how this resistance was influenced and in some instances staged by non-Inuit cultural brokers. Sexual practices and mythological beliefs,

strongly discouraged by missionaries and other non-Inuit people, forced Inuit society to take these practices underground.

The questions I focused on throughout the research were: What are the perceptions of Inuit society today held by non-Inuit people and Inuit society itself as it is expressed in carvings, as a result of silencing of the past and intense intervention by Euro Canadians in the 1950's.What role did the reinvention of Inuit objects play in promoting Canadian sovereignty? How were Inuit artists part of this process and how did they use this opportunity to revive their cultural identity while showing resistance to the strong influences imposed on them? I examine the role of a young emerging artist in examining whether he remains constricted by market demands or whether he is free to produce work independent of these demands.

I decided to focus initially on the development of Inuit art through the co-operatives in Nunavik, Quebec, as this is where the art industry began in the 1950's, specifically in Puvirnituq where erotic, sexual, fantasy and humorous carving was encouraged by two individuals, one of whom had a tremendous influence on the style of work produced in this region from the 1950's onwards. I explain in an upcoming chapter how the art market in Nunavut has developed somewhat differently than that of Nunavik. From the 1950's onwards it posed direct competition and today Cape Dorset in Nunavut is known as the Inuit art capital of Canada. It remains a thriving multi-million dollar industry, where artists are producing works that address contemporary issues involving transformation, social change and the impact of colonialism on Inuit society. I refer to specific artists and the work they are producing today in response to their colonial

experiences. In contrast Nunavik has not produced any substantial work by artists since the late 1980's and there are presently only two successful artists from that region.

One assumption I made early on was that because Inuit carvers were now working within a co-operative structure where they supposedly owned and controlled the means of production, they were free to produce whatever they wanted as artists and not necessarily what the market demanded. This was entirely inaccurate as my research later showed and my main argument now is that the Inuit were never in control of the co-operatives, are still for the most part not in control of them today and are influenced by market demands for carvings that continue to perpetuate notions and ideas of Inuit society that are not in keeping with the reality of their society today. Change is slowly taking place according to Inuit artists I discuss who have taken a different route, bypassing the co-operatives. They are in control of their work and how it is produced, to an extent, but market demands remain a heavy influence along with other problems that have been created as a result of the invention of soapstone carving. My thesis became an ethnography of cultural brokers as I followed the flow of carvings from one stage of the process to another, without viewing the carving from its inception.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for my research is based on colonialism and how Inuit have reacted to it. Theorists I refer to Thomas McEvilley (1992), Robert J.C. Young (2001), Adam Kuper (2005), Albert Memmi (1979), Aimé Césaire (1972) Frantz Fanon (1963) and include Tsiang's (2005) discussion of expert knowledge, Hobsbawm's and Ranger's (1983) discussion of the reinvention of tradition as part of nation state building and as a link to ancient past practices that served to rejuvenate or perpetuate certain

perceptions of cultural identity will be used to show a contrasting argument to Sahlins' theory of tradition and culture (1999) along with Linnekin and Handler (1984). Trouillot's (1995) theory on the power of narrative in writing and how the past gets silenced through the writing of history will be discussed in the historical background chapter and will remain a theme throughout the thesis. I will discuss Vorano's (2008) views of specific humorous and erotic carvings that in his opinion served to silence male sexuality at a crucial time during the 1950's when Arctic claims were being made in what was then a male dominated area. Mitchell's (1996) theory on capitalism and socialism within Inuit society as it was introduced as part of an overall scheme and plan for nation building through the development of the Inuit art industry will be discussed along with Graburn's (1976, 2004) discussion of the Inuit art industry. I include the views of various experts in the Inuit art industry throughout the thesis along with the views of Inuit artists and non artists. Most of these other views were taken from interviews in the Inuit Art Quarterly.

Sources of Information

My research was multi-sited and took place in Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Kingston, Calgary and Winnipeg. I relied on information gathered from non-Inuit experts for the most part. Because the industry was constructed by non-Inuit for particular purposes, those with expertise on this topic are for the most part non Inuit. I did not go to Nunavik as part of my fieldwork as funding did not permit this, but most of the experts interviewed had been to the region and the two Inuit people I interviewed were originally from Nunavik and spend a lot of time commuting back and forth to the region. The sources of information I used for the research included interviews with many experts in

the field of Inuit art, ranging from two of the leading Inuit art curators in Canada to an independent Inuit art dealer and gallery owners. I interviewed three Inuit art collectors, non-Inuit artists, an Inuit person who is not an artist and an Inuit artist, all with the intention of gathering information and perspectives from different people involved in the industry or directly affected by it.

Confidentiality

Because most of the interviews were tape recorded and before each interview there was the understanding and consent of interviewees to using the information gathered for my research, I often got the impression throughout the interviewing process that interviewees were choosing their words carefully with the realization that they might be quoted. In a couple of instances information flowed more freely once the recorder was turned off. For the most part the interviewing process seemed to proceed more freely once the interview was underway and the tape recorder was forgotten. In terms of confidentiality I have decided to use actual names in some parts of my discussion but not in others, particularly in the area of the state of the art industry in Nunavik today, where particular people were blamed for the situation. At these points in the discussion the names of those individuals will remain anonymous.

Challenges in the Fieldwork Process

The biggest challenge I encountered in the field research experience was the difficulty in finding Inuit people to interview. I had not anticipated this challenge when I began the research and believed it would be easy to locate urban Inuit artists and Inuit people who would be more than happy to be interviewed. This was not the case. I soon

realized most urban Inuit artists are well known nationally and internationally and are often sought after for interviews and as a result they are not keen or enthusiastic about being interviewed again. To address this problem I relied on past interviews from the *Inuit Art Quarterly* for information and quotes by a few artists. As well with changes in the Department of Indian and Northern Development (DIAND), which I will discuss in greater detail in another section of the thesis, there is now a policy in place to protect any information relating to Inuit artists and this made it difficult to find and approach urban Inuit. Because the art industry is a western notion as mentioned and because most experts who write about Inuit art are non-Inuit scholars, this paper for the most part is written from a non Inuit perspective with only a few Inuit opinions and perspectives. It was the most valid approach as the Inuit art industry is a capitalist construct introduced and developed by non-Inuit experts as part of a larger colonial plan for Canadian sovereignty. I was able to get the perspective from those involved directly.

Another challenge I encountered in doing my field research was the nagging feeling of intimidation I had as I interviewed these experts. Part of this feeling of intimidation came from my experience of crossing over into another discipline, art history, of which I had very little knowledge. During the interviewing process I was often asked about specific art history topics and I often had to explain how I was examining Inuit art from an anthropological perspective and did not have expertise in the area of Art History. At other times I had to remind myself that I was studying from an anthropological perspective as I often got so involved and interested in the art history aspect, a particular artist and their work, whereby I had to stop and ask myself how this could be related to anthropological theory. I found myself in situations often where I was

looking at images of carvings or the actual pieces and simply appreciating them for their aesthetic qualities alone, without considering the colonial influences involved. It seemed like a way of justifying or minimizing the colonial atrocities.

The intimidation I felt also came from the interviewing process itself which tended to be very formal with the experts having limited time for interviews and at one time having one individual rely on their assistant to escort me to the door after the interview. I dealt with these feelings by constantly reminding myself that it was part of a learning experience for me and I could not possibly be expected to have in-depth knowledge of art history. I emphasized this during my interviews and continued to remind the experts that my analysis and research was from an anthropological perspective where I was looking at specific phenomena and how they were expressed in Inuit art with explanations of the themes I was examining. Art history also tends to conjure up the ideas and notions of a rather high brow, elitist discipline and I was very self conscious about this while doing my fieldwork and whenever I discussed my research with those who inquired as there was an assumption that I was part of this perceived elitist art world.

Motivation for Choosing this Topic

I decided to study Inuit society as I have maintained a strong interest in this indigenous group in Arctic Quebec which has managed to thrive in the harshest of conditions while experiencing resurgence in their culture through peaceful means. Inuit society has regained many rights, particularly in land settlements and reclaiming their own regional territory in Quebec, however I continue to question whether this was a necessary maneuver on the part of the Quebec and Canadian governments to appease the Inuit people of Quebec, as they needed access to electricity, minerals and natural

resources that are on Inuit land, as well as an ongoing plan to contain this nomadic society within fixed boundaries.

One of my interviewees pointed out how the Inuit have been "the most studied indigenous society in the world" and have fascinated scholars from many disciplines. My decision to focus on the art industry was motivated by my desire to examine Inuit society from a "positive" perspective. I did not want to focus on social problems that in my opinion have been dwelt on for far too long. It seemed to me that the mere mention of Inuit society evokes negative perceptions from people in general. Although I wanted to present the resilience of Inuit society and to present the important role Inuit society plays in Canadian society through the production of their art and to enjoy and share the sculpting as an art form in itself regardless of other implications and motivations that were involved in getting the Inuit art industry started, I soon realized how this was impossible.

As I describe in this work, the history of Inuit society and their present-day situation can be relayed through the development of the art industry as it had a direct impact on the social and economic positions of Inuit artists and the community at large. The Inuit art industry was used as a larger colonial plan on the part of the federal and provincial governments, through the co-operative movements, to contain, silence and control Inuit society. In spite of the challenges the Inuit face, their work remains a powerful bargaining tool for them as it has become entrenched in and deemed to be an important emblem for Canadian identity.

Chapter 1

Methodology

Theoretical Framework in Methodology

My research was multi-sited with an interdisciplinary approach which incorporated both Art History and Anthropology. In Anthropology it is increasingly common to do research from an interdisciplinary approach as aspects of cultural identity can be found in most other professional disciplines. Having no previous knowledge of art history this became a learning experience for me. Trying to stay within one's own discipline becomes difficult and can in my opinion stifle the learning process. Using an interdisciplinary approach gave me more information and insight into the Inuit art industry that I would not otherwise have gained if I did not cross over into another discipline in the research process. This relates to the notion of the emergent properties of a system where the whole system yields something more than its parts. It is not about looking for separate specialists to contribute separate inputs, to contribute individual sections to give a pastiche collage, but for them to synergize their contributions, to combine their styles, to produce an entirely new vision which none of them could achieve working alone (Sillitoe 2004:9). As art is often seen as a reflection or commentary on the dynamics of daily life in any given society, there was some overlap between theories in the two disciplines that added more depth to the understanding in my fieldwork experience.

My fieldwork was multi-sited as I followed the artwork as it passed on through various people and organizations involved in the development of the Inuit art industry, form the artist themselves, on to galleries, museums and wholesalers and on to the homes of private collectors. I was following the "thing", tracing the circulation of the commodity (soapstone carving), in an open ended spirit of tracing the object in and

through context, with an explicit logic of association or connection among the sites that helped to define the argument for my thesis (Marcus 1995:105,107). I did not however, see the object from its inception but traced the carvings from the co-operatives to wholesalers and on to galleries, museums, private collectors and independent buyers. This approach is more common now and has emerged in the study of art as the objects travel to various locations and in this particular context it began with the artists and the co-operatives and moved on to many sites.

Approach to Research

The approach I used for collecting data in the field included formal and informal interviews with an Inuit artist, one Inuit person from Nunavik who was not an artist but whose perspective and lived experiences as an urban Inuit were most valuable. Others interviewed included museum curators, gallery owners, a private dealer, a manager from a wholesaler, the manager of the Inuit Art Foundation and others who were pertinent to the process. As well I relied heavily on past interviews from *Inuit Art Quarterly* with Inuit artists in gathering information to incorporate into my thesis. I also conducted one e-mail interview and arranged a telephone interview with a representative from the Northwest Company, the former Hudson's Bay Company, but the interview did not take place due to scheduling problems. The representative has since retired.

The interviews tended to last about one hour in length and with certain participants I revisited to gather more information, to ask more questions or simply to clarify a situation. Most interviews were tape recorded except for a couple of times when the recorder did not function and during the interview with the Inuit participant, as I decided it was not appropriate to use the recorder as they complained about Inuit people

being over-studied. On one occasion a participant preferred that I take notes. All of my interviews were transcribed and coded. The interviews initially were general and structured around gathering information about how museums functioned in terms of acquiring, exhibiting Inuit art, Inuit input in the process, if any, and defining Inuit souvenir art. I began my research knowing very little about the process and this basic understanding was necessary to proceed further. As I gained more understanding and information my interviews became more specific in terms of gathering information on Nunavik artists, specific individuals who influenced the art market, and on the role of the co-operatives in Nunavik from the 1950's onwards with discussion of the lack of production in Nunavik today. This was a recurring theme and topic with my participants. In the process of interviewing I was given suggestions by participants on specific experts to contact, readings and literature pertaining to my topic with all of this leading to more focused interviews with various participants. Along with the recorded interviews, I took field notes of my observations but for the most part the bulk of the information was in the interview itself.

Observation was another approach I used in the research process. I did not participate per se as this was not possible but my observations were in some museums, in galleries, private collections, windows of gift shops in Old Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston, Calgary and Winnipeg and with an Inuit artist's work, I was able to corroborate my research argument that Inuit carving continues to be produced for a market that is driven by demand from a Western audience. Not only is it driven by market demand the work also continues to perpetuate certain perceptions of the Inuit as "happy-go-lucky". Through my observations I was able to gather information about the lack of Nunavik

artwork in most places I visited. Based on the interviews, my observations and the literature I began focusing specifically on Nunavik artists and the challenges they face today. I visited the Art Gallery of Ontario in Toronto to see an Inuit art exhibit and I attended a First Nations Festival in Montreal where the young emerging artist, Alec Lawson Tuckatuck, was demonstrating and promoting his carving. I also attended his vernissage at the Canadian Guild of Crafts where he was presenting and promoting his work.

Another approach I used was archival material from the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the Canadian Guild of Crafts and Avataq Cultural Institute, where I spent many hours gathering historical data on the development of the industry and the many players involved in Inuit art.

The Participants in My Fieldwork

I have divided this section into the following categories of participants. For the most part the participants in my research are individuals who have many years of experience in working in the Inuit art industry and in the development, preservation of Inuit art and promotion of Inuit artists. I will explain the role of the various organizations in subsequent chapters. This includes the Canadian Guild of Crafts, the Department of Indian and Northern Development, the Inuit Art Foundation, la Fédération des coopératives du Nouveau-Québec, several museums, and the *Inuit Art Quarterly*, on which I relied on previous interviews from Inuit artists.

Category of Experts Including Museum Curators, Inuit Cultural Organizations, Department of Indian and Northern Development (DIAND)

I began my fieldwork at the Canadian Guild of Crafts, which functions today as part museum and part gallery. This is where the Inuit art industry began and it made sense to start my fieldwork here. I interviewed Diana Perera who has worked for approximately thirty years as a manager and buyer for the guild. I went on to interview Guislaine Lemay, Curator of Material Culture at the McCord Museum in Montreal; Jacques Des Rochers, Curator of Canadian Art at the Museum of Fine Art in Montreal; Alicia Boutilier, Curator of Canadian Historical Art at Agnes Etherington Museum in Kingston Ontario; Travis Tutley and Aimee Benoit, collection technicians at the Glenbow Museum in Calgary Alberta; Norman Vorano, Curator of Inuit Art at the Canadian Museum of Civilization; and, Darlene Wight, Curator of Inuit Art at the Winnipeg Art Gallery.

While visiting Wight in her office in the basement of the museum, I was literally surrounded by four thousand Inuit carvings on shelves. I faced a shelf of carvings from Salluit, Nunavik, and according to Wight, Salluit artists produced spectacular carvings in the 1950's from this region, but production stopped completely by 1960. Wight attributes the lack of success to the stone itself that was pale grey, resembling concrete and not aesthetically pleasing, the remoteness of this region and the difficulties in transporting the carvings to the southern market and James Houston's dislike for the style of the work and the stone, although he did buy a few pieces for the guild that sat on shelves and did not sell very well. Darlene explained how today, work from this region is highly valued and sells for significant sums as the sculptures that emerged are now viewed as somewhat authentic visual expressions. It was deemed to be somewhat more authentic than work

from other regions as there was relatively little outside influence on production, other than that of the preferred tastes of the Hudson's Bay post manager, the missionaries and a few traders.

Barbara is a friend and student in the anthropology department here at Concordia. In the process of doing my fieldwork I was pleased to discover that ancestors of Barbara Papigatuk's husband were talented, skilled and well known carvers in their village, Salluit. Barbara was pleasantly surprised to learn about this information. She expressed appreciation for the importance colonizers placed on documentation. Some of the carvings done by Papigatuk are at Avataq, in their permanent collection, which is unfortunately in storage today.

I interviewed Louis Gagnon, curator at the Avataq Cultural Institute in Westmount Quebec, Claire Porteous-Safford, manager at the Inuit Art Foundation in Ottawa and Richard Murdoch, Nunavik Art Specialist and General Manager of the FCNQ. Murdoch's father Peter began the first co-operative in Povurnituq, Nunavik in the early 1950's along with Father André Steinmann, who I will discuss in a subsequent chapter. Richard Murdoch and his brother Bernard have carried on the business since Peter retired. I visited the DIAND in Gatineau Quebec and interviewed Mary Foley to gather information about the role of the DIAND in the Inuit art industry today.

Gallery Owners/ Independent Dealer

I interviewed the owner of Elca London gallery in Old Montreal, Mark London, whose family has been in the business since around 1965; the owner of West End Gallery in Westmount, Quebec, Mark Millman, whose family has been involved in Inuit art since 1940 and previously owned Dominion Gallery in Montreal; the co-owner of Le Chariot

Gallery in Old Montreal, Selim Namour; and an independent art dealer in Montreal, John Bohm. As well as visiting these galleries I also strolled around Old Montreal, Ottawa, Kingston, Calgary, Winnipeg and a couple of airport souvenir shops to see what sort of Inuit carvings were on display.

Inuit Artist, non-Inuit Artists, an Inuk from Nunavik now living in Montreal

I was fortunate to find Alec Lawson Tuckatuck, an Inuit artist from Kuujjuaraapik, Nunavik, now residing in Dorval, Quebec. As mentioned previously, one of the challenges throughout my fieldwork was in finding an Inuit artist to interview. Diana Perera from the Canadian Guild of Crafts introduced me to Alec. I attended Alec's vernissage at the Canadian Guild of Crafts and the First Nations Festival where he was demonstrating his art. Our last interview was done through email as he was travelling and attending an arts festival in the north where he received an award for his achievements as a young emerging Inuit artist. I used excerpts from Inuit Art Quarterly with interviews with Mattiusi Iyaituk, an Inuit artist from Inukjuak, Nunavik and a present board member of the Inuit Art Foundation. I had an informal interview with Arnaqu, an urban Inuk who travels back to Nunavik on a regular basis to visit family. He is not an artist but had some valuable information and perspectives on what he refers to as "The Inuit Industry". Sharon Sutherland, a non-Inuit artist and art teacher who worked in Nunavut for six years teaching art and painting arctic scenes, participated in an interview and shared her experiences and views on the Inuit art industry.

Collectors of Inuit Art

I interviewed three local Inuit art collectors. One of them, Lenora Mendelman, has also been an artist for twenty years. She had a much bigger collection of Inuit carvings but eventually sold most of her collection and gave some pieces to her children. I saw the remaining three she has. Andrew Chodas is an art collector, whose family has been involved in Inuit art for two generations and he has an extensive collection. James Little has a small collection of six pieces he inherited from his mother. The pieces were collected in the Arctic by his father, who worked there many years ago as an inspector of weather stations. With the exception of one piece, the others were signed with only a disc number (the disc numbers I discuss in the historical background section) and I relied on Darlene Wight at the Winnipeg Art Gallery who loaned me the catalogue of disc numbers and corresponding Inuit names to find the artists who made the carvings he owned.

For the most part the interviewing process went well and I always left with many more questions in mind, new ideas to think about with the information I gathered and an appreciation for the people who worked in various capacities with Inuit art. They were devoted people who had been involved for many years in working with the Inuit, and as mentioned, with a few participants and a collector, it involved more than one generation of their families. I had a couple of experiences where the participants were rather pretentious and did not appear to be motivated to spend much time with me, one sitting with his back to me for the most part of the interview, the other ignoring me completely upon realizing I was not in their gallery to buy anything.

The fieldwork experience allowed me access to Inuit art work that I would not normally have had the opportunity to see. Most Inuit art collections are not on public

display and are in storage in museum vaults, which I had access to during some of my interviews. I was surrounded by hundreds and once, thousands of Inuit carvings. I also had the added advantage and privilege of being able to discuss the work with a group of committed participants who were able to offer valuable information for my research.

Chapter 2

Shaping of the "Happy-Go-Lucky Inuit" through the Soapstone Carving Industry

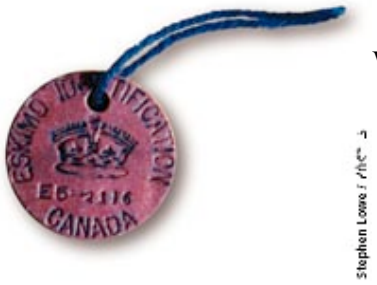
Federal Government Involvement and the Inuit Disc Numbers

In this chapter I provide a brief history of the development of the Inuit art industry through the co-operatives in Nunavik and the Fédération des coopératives du Nouveau-Québec (FCNQ) in Baie D'Urfé, Quebec, that manages them. I explain briefly the role of the Canadian Guild of Crafts and DIAND in the development of the industry. I discuss events that took place simultaneously, including the collapse of the fox fur trade that caused a crisis among the Inuit population and the rapid change that took place at the time in the Arctic, the increased interest in the federal and later the provincial governments in Nunavik and the introduction of soapstone carving industry. I discuss the debates about the influences of James Houston and Father André Steinmann on Inuit art. Historical background information, relying for the most part on information from Marybelle Mitchell's *From Talking Chiefs to a Native Corporate Elite: The Birth of Class and Nationalism among Canadian Inuit* (1996) is provided.

Prior to the 1950's the Quebec provincial government took little interest in the northern territory of the province of Quebec, now known as Nouveau Québec or Nunavik. This geographic area, which constitutes a large portion of the province (300,000 sq miles), had an Inuit population of 3,000 in 1960. Today the Inuit population of Nunavik is slightly over 10,000 (Co-operatives Secretariat 2006:4). Until the 1960's Quebec's only involvement in the northern part of the province had been in scientific research; the federal government provided health care, education, policing and resource development services that in other parts of Canada were provincial responsibilities (Mitchell 1996:204).

In the early 1940's the Canadian government assigned all Inuit a four-digit number, which was written on a thin round fiber disc, designed to be worn around the neck, but often was pinned to clothing. The disc list as it was called, was a convenient way for the Canadian government to organize Inuit into kinship groups as it was customary for Inuit people to have more than one name with no surname, difficult for government officials to record and pronounce. Roberts (Mitchell 1996) explained how the list was updated in 1945 with the addition of a district designation to simplify for the government, the distribution of Family Allowance payments to Inuit families. The disc identity numbers began with either an E representing the eastern Arctic or W for the western Arctic, followed by serial numbers to identify each Inuit person by region and individually (1996:112-113).

In 1968 Abe Okpik began *Project Surname* and from 1968 to 1971 toured Nunavik and Nunavut recording the preferred name of each person at which time the government of Canada abolished the discs. He was later given the Order of Canada in part because of his work on Project Surname (Alia 2007:69-71). This was an irony in itself as he was given the award by the Canadian government for undoing this discriminatory practice that the Canadian government had initiated to begin with.

Nunavut 99 

What's In a Name

Many artists used the numbers to identify themselves in place of a signature. Many Inuit did not object to the numbers and strongly identified themselves with their numbers. Many expressed their resistance when changes were made to Inuit names. The disc numbers was discontinued and became confidential information after 1971. Many artists who had signed their work using their disc number were left unrecognized and unidentified with the carvings they produced. My discussants explain how DIAND no longer wanted to be involved in artist disc numbers and biographies. DIAND has slowly been taking on fewer responsibilities with Inuit art, which indicates some form of decolonization, a way of distancing themselves from criticism and controversy over government control of the Inuit art industry.

In the last twenty years they have donated a large portion of their collection of Inuit art to non profit organizations including Avataq. Their collection is housed at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Ottawa. DIAND has delegated responsibilities for documentation and artists' biographies to the Inuit Art Foundation (IAF) and donated materials from their archives to the IAF. Today they promote artists by buying their work, loaning pieces for exhibitions and research and marketing. This could be viewed an example of decolonization process as DIAND is eager to distance themselves from the controversy and criticism about the industry. However they still have involvement on other levels with Inuit involving land claims and rights to natural resources.

Early Trading/Rapid Changes

The trading that took place since the seventeenth century until the 1950's was based on informal exchange of commodities with no monetary value involved. Inuit produced carvings as requested by traders in exchange for wares they wanted and needed,

which included rifles, munitions, tobacco and dry foods and coffee. Changes in means of production had become extensive and almost all Inuit had manufactured goods by this time and a growing dependency developed. The Hudson's Bay Company had been in the Arctic since 1821, after merging with the North West Company where they had a monopoly (Mitchell 1996:52-53). Their trading practices were somewhat sporadic and there was no competition for the Inuit who appreciated the goods they received in trade that enhanced their lifestyles.

In the early 1950's the Inuit began to experience much more rapid change and transformation in all Arctic regions: relocation from nomadic hunting grounds to town centers in the high Arctic, increased presence of federal and provincial governments and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the building of the Distant Early Warning (DEW) line and the introduction of formal education and basic health services. Almost half of the Inuit population was sent south for treatment for tuberculosis, to cities including Quebec City, Hamilton, Ontario, and Edmonton, Alberta. The average stay was 22 months. There was a more rapid change in the local economy as Inuit were relocated to town centers including Frobisher Bay, Resolute Bay, Grise Fiord on Ellesmere Island and Fort Chimo, and entered the formal wage economy. In a letter written to Mr. Sivertz, Department of Northern Affairs on January 15, 1963, Diamond Jenness referred to this as the "Great Leap Forward in Eskimo Administration when for the first time the government assumed the responsibility for both education and health in the NWT (and Quebec) and began the planning of government schools and nursing stations throughout the Arctic" (Museum of Civilization Archives).

This increased attention in the Arctic after World War II during the Cold War where there were real or perceived threats of Russian invasion, prompted the Canadian government to seek sovereignty in the North (Purdich 1992:45-46). A crisis in the collapse of the fox fur trade in the early 1950's, a trade that was developed by and for the North American and world market, left most of the Inuit population starving to death.

> It was an economic crisis that shook the entire Arctic when the boom of the fur trade began to collapse. Several winters of severe weather forced changes in traditional migration patterns and the land, already overhunted by Inuit using snowmobiles and rifles, could no longer support the local groups and starvation was common (Neill et al 1970:10).

Introduction of Soapstone Carving

At the time of the fur trade collapse in the early 1950's, and increased interest in developing Canadian sovereignty in the Arctic, soapstone carving was also introduced to the Inuit, by James Houston. He was a Toronto artist who was working for the Canadian Guild of Crafts at that time. It was introduced initially as a means of reducing welfare payments and creating a commodity for export to the south and to the world market. Later there was increased interest on the part of the Canadian government to use soapstone carvings as a way of promoting Canadian identity. The introduction of soapstone coincided with a time in Canadian history during the Cold War period, when Canada was anxious to establish itself on the world scene as a major power. The Arctic was of particular interest due to the geographic location and proximity to the Soviet Union. Also at this time other than specific items requested here and there from the Inuit as gifts for travelers to the Arctic there were many cheap Japanese-made souvenirs in the region. The Canadian government wanted to change this and when soapstone carving was introduced it was ideal as a representation of Canada and the Arctic region. It was

important to have an iconic, emblematic representation of Canada as a strong sovereign country during this period and the soapstone carving industry was timely.

Carving was not new to the Inuit as they had been carving for thousands of years, using mostly whale bone and ivory to make implements for every day use, including toys for children, hunting tools and small ivory amulets worn on their clothing for religious purposes. Soapstone was a non-renewable resource that was introduced to Inuit carvers for export of sculptures to the Canadian Guild of Crafts in Montreal in the early 1950's and shortly after with DIAND taking on an active role in promoting and controlling the Inuit art market. As explained by Diana Perera, who has worked at the Canadian Guild of Crafts for approximately 30 years, it is a non-profit organization, created by a group of Montreal women, in existence since 1906 in Montreal, with a mandate to preserve, promote and distribute Inuit and Native art. The Guild began as a philanthropic organization concerned with helping artists and artisans and providing a market for their work while encouraging and stimulating Canadian crafts throughout Canada.

Federal Government/Makivik/FCNQ Involvement in Nunavik

Puvirnituq Co-operative Store, 1963, Photographer Eugene Kedl, (Murdoch & Tulugak 2007:37)

Puvirnituq, often abbreviated as POV, is translated as "smell of food," i.e. meat that has been put away for a long time. One explanation is that since so many belugas used to be taken and butchered there, the place, in time, began to reek of them (Nungak, Arima 1988:13). Beaulieu explained how involvement of the Quebec government in the Puvirnituq co-operative coincided with the Quiet Revolution in Quebec with Premier Jean Lesage's 1962 announcement that Quebec planned to take over what were then federal responsibilities in Inuit regions or Nouveau Québec. Lesage who had been Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development for the federal government, directed René Lévesque, then provincial Minister of Natural Resources with the Liberal party, to take an active role in the Arctic Quebec co-operative movement and close links were forged with the Puvirnituq co-operative (Mitchell 1996:204-206).

Puvirnituq led the organization of the co-operative movement in Nunavik as it was the most adept co-operative and was originally the Sculptor's Society created by Father André Steinman and a group of sculptors between 1955 and 1957 (Mitchell

1996:198-199). The Sculptor's Society was formed with the intention of creating competition with the Hudson's Bay Company and to keep capital and control in the hands of the Inuit. It was modeled after the Caisse Populaire DesJardins Cooperative Bank that had a branch in Puvirnituq made from wood in the shape of an igloo. The Caisse Populaire helped the co-operative to get started by lending them money. A transformation took place through the development of the co-operatives that eventually took over control of the Inuit art market and broke the Hudson's Bay Company monopoly in northern Canada. The FCNQ, which controlled the co-operatives, operated as an underground government for many years in Nouveau Quebéc and still controls the Nunavik art market today (Graburn 2004: 156).

Maintaining co-operation with the Inuit had economic advantages as they were viewed by the provincial government, as Gourdeau explained (Mitchell 1996) as "an ideal group to develop natural resources in Nouveau Quebéc. The Inuit knew the land well, were able to survive in the harsh climate and had already started to be organized as a small group with the Puvirnituq Sculptor's Society. Puvirnituq Sculptor's Society would serve as a model for all Inuit villages of what co-operation could accomplish" (1996:205-206)**.** The transfer of responsibilities, without dialogue with the Inuit, was not an easy adjustment. The federal government held on for several more years while the Inuit made their reluctance to be administered by the province clear. D'Anglure (Mitchell 1996) explained how the Inuit distrusted Quebec: they trusted the federal government, they were afraid of losing their benefits and jobs, and they were afraid of the idea of separation from the rest of Canada and being forced to speak French. They viewed it as a French Catholic conspiracy, and Quebec's intervention in the co-operative movement

succeeded in creating divisions among Inuit both locally and nationally (1996:207). The federal/provincial split taking place in southern Canada was transported to Nouveau Quebéc. By 1967 there were co-operatives in fourteen villages in Nouveau Quebéc and the FCNQ was formed under the management of Peter Murdoch, with the head office being in Montreal, close to the southern market for wholesale distribution of carvings (Mitchell 1996:207-210). Mitchell maintains that

> the cooperative was the economic development vehicle selected for Northern development as the cooperative would allow Inuit and the state to keep a foot in both worlds. Capitalizing on traditional activities and values, co-operatives were a form of accommodating Canadian ambivalence by both modernizing Inuit and enmeshing them in a wage economy, while at the same time enabling them to retain roots in the past through the promotion of principles of egalitarianism and the buttressing of non capitalist practices (1996: 154)

The struggles between the FCNQ and both federal and provincial government persisted. Murdoch was in a strategic position as he was fluent in Inuktitut and organized the Inuit to get involved in political struggles with both governments. Murdoch, being fluent in Inuktitut, had the ability to organize the Inuit to play governments off one and other well. The FCNQ dominated Arctic Quebec, operating as an underground government. Carving inventories at FCNQ's distribution center were used to finance the purchase of supplies for northern co-operative retail stores. Until the establishment of Makivik, the organization put in place after the signing of the James Bay Quebec Agreement in 1976 to administer and invest funds received from the settlement, the FCNQ dominated the region. According to Mitchell the co-operatives were the only organized voice of the Inuit until the late 1970's but they were never treated as spokespeople for Inuit by the federal government (1996:212-213).

They were presented as token bodies at best and when a plan was put in place by the FCNQ to form a coalition of community councils to lobby the Quebec government for regional government status in Arctic Quebec, the Inuit were unable to make a collective decision. They remained undecided about the support by the federal government to set up their own Inuit association or to continue lobbying for provincial regional government with the support and involvement of the FCNQ. As Mitchell explained it was a decisive moment for the co-operatives and the Inuit failed to legitimate power when they procrastinated. Land and energy concerns were forcing the issue and the Inuit could not conceive of themselves as being independent and self-sufficient. They lacked security that comes from experience and economic stability (Mitchell 1996:216). The Inuit missed an opportunity to establish themselves politically. Years later they formed political organizations independent of the FCNQ. But this deciding moment that Mitchell refers to was crucial, as it was a missed opportunity for Inuit to be self administered with their own form of regional government.

FCNQ sales as of 2005 were $72.25 million with a gross $6 million in profits that were reinvested into the co-operatives. The FCNQ sells merchandise, petroleum products (gas and oil), construction materials and art work. With the exception of the art work all merchandise sold at the FCNQ is for consumption by those living in Nunavik only. They also own some subsidiaries to deliver services including Arctic Adventures tourism, Nunavik Co-operative Hotel, and Ilagi Internet Services. Although the sales in art were a driving force when the co-operatives began, and carving sales initially funded the rest of the operations, it peaked in the late 1980's at almost $3 million and has been declining

since that time while only making up 0.9 percent of shares in the FCNQ business sector as of 2005 (Co-operatives Secretariat 2006:8).

Richard Murdoch and his brother Bernard took over control of the FCNQ from their father, Peter, who was involved in working with the Inuit since the 1940's and later helped to establish and become general manager of the FCNQ in 1967. Peter Murdoch retired in 2007. The family has a long history of committed involvement in the start up and development of the co-operatives and the FCNQ for two generations. Murdoch explained how,

> The Inuit felt they were losing control of their lives and were searching for new meaning with the rapid changes taking place in their communities. There was some uncertainty around whether this would be in the best interest of the Inuit pertaining to their culture. However the cooperatives provided the only way to regain control over their future and to keep profits in the community. The cooperative provided a way to regain control over their future. The coop provided the only available means of accomplishing this (Murdoch & Tulugak 2007:188).

Makivik/Inuit Art Foundation

There is approximately $91 million in the Makivik fund from the signing of the JBNQA in 1976. I contacted Makivik for an interview and was told to "read our website, there is no need for an interview, all the information is there". I consulted their website and relied on Murdoch and other discussants for basic information about the organization. Makivik is responsible for economic, social, resource and political development in Nunavik. They provide financial assistance for artist workshops and professional development. They are also responsible for environmental research and infrastructure investment. They own First Air, Air Inuit, Nunavik Creations Clothing. Nunavik Furs, Halutik Enterprises, which provides fuel to Kuujjuak and heavy machinery

rentals, and Nunavik Bioscience Incorporated, created in 2005 to create small businesses in the region. The objective is to create economically sustainable projects using locally existing resources including shrimp, seaweed and medicinal plants for export. Makivik also has a scholarship fund for post-secondary education. The board of directors are Inuit (Makivik). With the creation of Makivik more divides and conflicts arose among the Inuit themselves and of course between Makivik and the FCNQ.

The Inuit Art Foundation (IAF), founded in 1987, is a space in Ottawa, which provides professional development, assistance in grant writing, training, workshops and support to artists both in urban settings and in all parts of the Canadian Arctic. They provide grants to artists to cover the costs of quarrying and buying stone and space at the IAF for artists to meet from across Canada to share ideas and network with one and other. They help artists apply for grants and funding. They continually strive to help with the isolation artists in northern communities experience. They have an Inuit college that they refer to as a "college without walls" where they provide training in the business and marketing aspects of Inuit art. From its inception the goal of the IAF has been to eventually hand over complete control to the Inuit artists.

The board of directors is comprised of Inuit artists from across Canada. The IAF also publishes the *Inuit Art Quarterly* magazine that began publication with a staff of one (Marybelle Mitchell) in 1986. The IAF works closely with DIAND in taking on many of the roles and responsibilities that were previously assumed by DIAND. This includes a database of Inuit artist biographies, www.InuitArtAlive.com, launched in 2009, an extensive archive of material donated by DIAND, including slides and research documents and promotion of artists in ways that DIAND had previously done.

In an interview with Claire Porteous Safford, manager of the IAF, she explained how Makivik has spent a lot of time in the last couple of years doing artist workshops. They try to give the artists training and bring them together for various events in the North as this is important for professional development. They try to focus artist production around big events like their arts and crafts festival and other events where there is an audience for their work.

Colonial Influences that Silenced Inuit History and Shaped the Reputation of Puvirnituq

> What is important in determining how history is written and the various agents and voices involved is the differential exercise of power that makes some narratives possible while silencing others. Silence enters the process of historical production at four critical times – at the time of fact creation, the time of fact assembly in archives, the time of fact retrieval through narratives, and the time of retrospective significance that involves the making of history in the final stages. These moments are conceptual tools, second level abstractions of processes that feed on each other. They help us to understand why not all silences are equal. Any historical narrative has a particular set of silences and the means of deconstructing the silences will vary accordingly (Trouillot 1995:25- 26).

Silencing the Inuit took place through the restrictions on the work they were allowed to produce and the image that portrayed and shaped them as a primitive, romanticized group of "happy-go-lucky Inuit". Silencing also took place in writing about the history of Inuit soapstone carving as certain individuals were given more attention than others and in the following discussion I raise questions about why this took place.

James Houston's Involvement

Houston is well known as the most influential person in commercializing Inuit soapstone carvings and for introducing printmaking to Inuit artists. He visited Inukjuak,

then Port Harrison, on the east coast of Hudson's Bay in Quebec for the first time in 1949 and Puvirnituq. He arranged to have carvings shipped back to Montreal for exhibition and sale. The carvings sold out in only three days and the soapstone art industry was off to a fast start. Initially the Canadian government showed little interest in this venture. However when government officials noticed that relief payments to Inuit were drastically reduced with the sales of carvings, they became increasingly involved in and concerned about Inuit art.

Houston wrote an instructional manual/ guide titled Sunuyuksuk in 1951, after one of his visits to the Arctic, with illustrations of woman and child scenes, bears, Inuit families, cribbage boards made from bone, bracelets, caribou, West Coast totem poles, Inuit fishing scenes, hunters and basketry. He began instructing Inuit carvers about very specific styles of work he wanted for export to the southern and world market.

James Houston's instructional manual and the role he played in the development of the art industry are much debated. My discussants claim that Houston was responsible for developing Inuit carving into a category of fine art that it is today. He is held in high regard in the art history discipline. My participants' views for the most part were that the booklet had little impact, Inuit artists were too talented and intelligent to be persuaded by the manual and it did not pertain entirely to Inuit art, Houston and his wife Alma were devoted to Inuit art for over 40 years and cared deeply about the artists, Houston is responsible for the magnificent prints coming from Cape Dorset today and, Houston was the catalyst for starting and building the Inuit art industry of today. Houston, along with Terry Ryan, manager of the Cape Dorset co-operative, remained involved and helped develop the fine work that comes from that region today.

Gagnon, Curator at the Avataq Cultural Institute, thinks it is important to look carefully at what was done by James Houston because,

> he was the guy who was looking at what could be produced in the north and how the market would react. He was giving his input and even if he was saying "don't make replicas" or "don't do something too modern" "don't carve wooden pieces" the Inuit for the most part did their own thing. In a naïve way Houston tried to show the Inuit what would be the best type of production for the market that the public down south would be reacting well to. He thought there would be a good reception to those pieces and the market would respond well. The Inuit were bright enough to know they could make their own things. Some of them were influenced but they were creative and we discovered they were brighter than we were expecting. The people down South were looking at the Inuit as primitive in negative terms, as people who were not good with technology, not very bright people and their creativity surprised people.

Diana Perera at the Canadian Guild of Crafts explained,

> Art became commerce when Houston went to the north to develop it in the late 1940's and early 1950's. Art as a commodity, invention and experiment that led to the Inuit art market as we know it today, began at this time. It changed into what we know as art when trade began and with this came the secularization of art, styles, subject matter and today the scale that changed drastically. The creative processes were Inuit but the requests were European. The early Houston era served as an impetus to start art work that morphed into descriptive art forms Inuit had the skills as artists an economic need to promote and the guild provided the opportunity.

Travis Tutley, Collections Technician at the Glenbow Museum in Calgary, believes that

> a lot of the carvings were not produced before it was suggested to the culture to do so. So a lot of the work is not the old traditions because they were shown how to carve with soapstone. It is a huge grey area this topic but it all has artistic merit. A lot of the stone carvings are not expressive, the very typical ones we see. The people were not expressing themselves or gesticulating. The seed was planted for the Inuit to produce and sell and it became a

> cottage industry or art industry and eventually developed a language of its own and became a full fledged art form.

Norman Vorano, Curator of Inuit Art at the Museum of Civilization, explained:

> Some people see the term industry as one that diminishes the art that is produced in the North. For everyone who has been around the art world they will know that is part of commerce, part of an economy and to that end you can use the word industry along side of it. The origins for the formal marketing structure for Inuit art of course began in the late 1940's largely because of James Houston going up in the North and purposefully cultivating the production of art and simultaneously cultivating the sale and distribution of art in the South. He did this with the support of the Canadian Guild of Crafts. The creation of a market for Inuit art was something that was purposely done in the late 1940's and early 1950's. The government had looked in to this even before Houston was working with the Inuit. So it is an important part of the economy and it is has been for 60 years. In the 1950s the market was given a place in the art world per se. It was through the cultural brokering of Houston who knew a little about the art world and knew a little about the Inuit world and he was successful in being able to broker that transition between the two.

Darlene Wight, Curator of Inuit Art at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, believes

> it is a form of acculturation, it was encouraged by the government, by the coop and it was certainly a new art form.

In the manual, Houston encouraged Inuit sculptors to carve what were referred to as traditional Arctic scenes, typically those of hunters, seals, walruses, mother and child scenes and bears. In a Private Guide for the Hudson's Bay Company Manager, written by Houston in 1953, Houston explained what was expected:

> Carvings of people, walrus, bears, seals, caribou, birds, fish, otter, muskoxen, dogs, fox, igloos, kayaks and lamps are the most popular items in the order given. Pieces that are complicated such as dog teams, kayaks and igloos with many detached parts are not as popular (and are very difficult to handle by shop staffs). Whereas the single piece (such as bear or man) of good size and well carved is our most popular item. Work which is undesirable are – seal buckets, fish skin bags, beaded sealskin slippers, rabbit

> skin hats, bow guns, articles with wood or other materials foreign to the Arctic. Canada has an art form of which it may well be proud. Its future success lies not in a great quantity of carvings, or teaching on our part, but in our recognition of this special art and our encouragement **(**1953: 3, 4, 10).

Houston received heavy criticism for his direct intervention and influence on Inuit sculptors that are partly responsible for the kinds of carvings that are now strongly associated with Inuit art and Inuit culture. In an article written to the *Montreal Star* on December 4, 1965, G.R. Lowther, who was then an Assistant Professor of Archaeology at the University of Montreal, stated:

> Houston himself and the various official institutions of the government and the Canadian Guild have repeatedly stated or implied that no attempt had been made to influence the native expression of the Eskimo in this art. In fact, it is implied that a conscious attempt has been made to preserve traditional values. Such statements are quite absurd as one has to simply look at the guide/manual written by Houston in 1951 where Houston wrote in the introduction that he hoped that these illustrations will suggest to them (the Inuit) some of their objects which are useful and acceptable to the white man. (He made reference to the illustrations including of all things, a miniature totem pole). Houston introduced soap stone carving as a form of art. Implying that a carving should be looked at from a particular angle, one that is essentially a Western one. What a pity it was that so much nonsense is talked about Eskimo art at both official and critical levels. As Eskimo art is discussed as a traditional one with roots in the prehistoric past, and the modern carvings as being more recent phases of the continuum with the past, it is of course none of these things. Eskimo art as it is now practiced is a completely modern development, dating almost entirely from the late 1940's on. Moreover, not only is it strongly influenced by Euro-American aesthetic ideas, it owes its existence to the initiatives of whites (Lowther 1965).

He went on to explain how modern Inuit art is quite authentic in that it is made by Inuit. The Inuit do have a different ideology or psyche than ours and undoubtedly that

ideology has some expression in their art. But that art is one expressing a society in flux, strongly influenced by the foreign culture–our own–which is bearing upon it. "When it is so attractive in its own right it is unfortunate that such ridiculous statements are made about it. It has no connection with the prehistoric traditional art of the Arctic, but it is a very attractive form of contemporary art" (Lowther1965).

In a letter to the editor of the *Montreal Star* on December 11, 1965, Alice Lighthall, Chairman of the Canadian Guild of Crafts at the time, responded to Lowther's article:

> No one can dispute the fact that the predominance of soapstone is a modern development. Lighthall maintained that Houston was an inspiration to the Inuit to do more of their old art than they have done in years. Lighthall explained that no one claims that the great resurgence of carving among the Inuit people is unchanged since antiquity. It is the literature of a remote people, who have at last found a means of communication with the outside world through their remarkable gift of visual representation. When Houston was commissioned by the government to prepare the pamphlet to introduce to the Eskimo communities, it was illustrated entirely by things made by Eskimos themselves, with the challenge – Can you do as well? (Lighthall, 1965)

Heather Igloliorte, an Inuit artist/ curator and student at Carleton University in the Department of Art History, maintained, in an article published in the *Inuit Art Quarterly* that,

> the poor reception of acculturated objects, such as those promoted in the Sunuyuksuk (Houston's manual/pamphlet) fueled a shift from handicraft production to fine arts, away from direct instruction (by kin or community members who were carvers) to an emphasis on quality of workmanship and development of individual style. Although it was well intended, the pamphlet's heavy handed approach backfired – Inuit created an abundance of work suggested in the booklet with the results being – numerous examples of the same object, uninspired workmanship. The pamphlet did not turn out to be the first in a series, it was

> withdrawn from circulation shortly after its production, and recalled completely in 1958 (Igloliorte 2006:34).

Marybelle Mitchell, director of the Inuit Art Foundation and founder of the Inuit Art Quarterly, gives the following opinion about contemporary art and its connection to prehistoric art of the Arctic:

> The idea that there is no continuity between old and new art forms is as erroneous as the idea that there is no continuity between old and new cultural practices. Media, subject, techniques, the form of expression, the motivation behind it and the meaning it has for the maker may change but the history is continuous and particular. As different as it is from what went on before, what we now call contemporary Inuit art is part of a long history of production. The form of expression changed upon contact when Inuit started to produce souvenirs specifically for trade. What the state did in the middle of this century was to organize and expand what had been intermittent into a more or less stable and secure trading relationship between Inuit and outsiders (1997a:5).

There was intense intervention on the part of Houston, the Canadian Guild of Crafts, DIAND and HBC, which was responsible for shipping the carvings to the Guild, the only Arctic store at that time. What evolved was a mass production of carvings by Inuit that presented a certain perception of Inuit society that was not in keeping with reality, a perception that persists today that is perpetuated through Inuit carvings and the market demand for particular romanticized scenes of Arctic life. Michael Neill, an Inuit art historian explained how

> The North of the Canadian imagination is an idealized one. It is not a land undergoing resource development or a tubercular population dealing with alcohol and technological changes that stirs Canadians. Instead they are responding to an imagined North of shimmering wastes populated by beautiful animals, heroic hunters and native madonnas and this image is reinforced by the art (1970: 17)

Jacques DesRocher, Curator of Canadian Art at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts explained that although the Inuit began with this booklet from the Guild and Houston, their styles and representations quickly changed and moved away from what was being asked. Some of the illustrations from Houston's guide are of Northwest coast Indian art. But he also said some of the older carvings by Inuit have resemblances to the illustrations.

Other views of Inuit art produced around this time, indirectly relating to the Sunuyuksuk, were expressed. Edmund Carpenter maintained, "the word Inuit cannot legitimately be applied to this modern stone, as its roots are western and so is its audience" (1973:107). Mitchell disagrees with Carpenter and states that it is not possible to say that what Inuit do is not Inuit, since this statement relies on the highly ethnocentric supposition that Inuit have resigned themselves to yielding to domination by Western culture. She argues that changes in social science theory and the collaboration of anthropology and art history have resulted in the abdication of this kind of evolutionary theory. There is a now a new found recognition of cultural diversity which has been slow to permeate the Inuit art field (1997a:5).

Graburn commented not directly relating to the Sunuyuksuk guide, but more in a general statement that,

> devastating transformations took place within the art. The artist increasingly spoke only to the consumer and removed any element of style that would appear to be contradictory, confusing or offensive to the buyer and in the process the artists found themselves in a danger of surrendering control of their product and when this happens the artist becomes subject to Western aesthetic whims and our concept of authentic ethnic identity gets manufactured and distributed instead of theirs (1976:32).

The Sunuyuksuk manual that had been intended for publication in a series was taken out of circulation by the Canadian Guild of Crafts in 1958 and is now buried in the archives of the Canadian Guild of Crafts with instructions written across the manual to discontinue its circulation. Houston left Quebec and settled in Cape Dorset with his wife Alma in 1953, and was the permanent advisor and Northern Service Officer for the Federal Government in Cape Dorset (Graburn 2000:18). Houston spent a year in Japan learning print making and introduced it to the Cape Dorset co-operative that from 1958 onwards became a direct rival and competitor of the Puvirnituq co operative.

Father André Steinmann, Trusted Advocate/Influential Individual/The Devil (1912-1991)

Louis Gagnon is the Curator at Avataq Cultural Institute in Westmount Quebec. Avataq was created in 1980 as a cultural center with the mandate to protect and preserve the Inuit culture of Nunavik. Avataq has an archive with photographs and documents from Nunavik and an archaeological division. They have a permanent collection of Inuit carvings totaling 1300 pieces. Many of them were donated in the 1990s by DIAND. Avataq is attempting to stimulate art production in Nunavik today through professional training and workshops for artists. In our interview Gagnon stated that,

> to understand what took place in the 1950's in Nunavik you should also read about Father Steinmann. It is a must in understanding that period. Steinmann was involved in both the social and economic development. Steinmann worked independently in taking on a big role in helping develop Inuit art while encouraging artistic freedom with the artists. He was a strong advocate for Inuit artists and believed in their abilities and promoted them.

There is not much information or written documentation about Steinmann who had a major role in developing art in Puvirnituq, by promoting and advocating for Inuit at a time when they were under pressure to produce for a southern market. He encouraged Inuit artists to be free in their work and not cater to market demands. He read about the Inuit as a boy and later decided the only way to work with them would be as a missionary with the Oblate of Mary Immaculate religious order (O.M.I).

Steinmann spent about 40 years in the North. He established the Catholic mission in Puvirnituq in 1956 (Graburn 2000:15). He encouraged the Inuit to start their own self-run operation selling carvings. Steinmann along with Charlie Sheeguapik and Aisa Qupirqualuk, highly skilled carvers, started the Sculptors' Society in 1959, gathering ten of the highly skilled carvers in the region, that later became the first Inuit co-operative in the Arctic. Steinmann worked long hours helping the Inuit to price their carvings and learn the details of the art industry including packaging costs, transportation, wholesale and retail markups and the dangers of oversupply in various categories and sizes. Steinmann did not make one convert during his stay in the Arctic as he did not think it was his responsibility since the Anglican Church was well established in the region when he arrived.

Nelson Graburn, an anthropologist whose work focused on Inuit art and who spent time in Puvirnituq from 1959 to 1967 doing research on the Inuit art industry, is of the opinion that Steinmann encouraged fine workmanship and portrayal of eroticism and mythology in response to prudish taboos imposed by the Anglican Church. Steinmann used his connections in the business world to strengthen the co-operative particularly through association with the Caisse Populaire Desjardins (where he worked as the

manager for a while) which lent the co-operative money for inventory. Steinmann and his Inuit spokesmen spread the motto, "the Inuit by their own efforts succeed". Graburn, who knew Steinmann personally from his visits to Puvirnituq concluded that "Steinmann had a greater effect on the art of Puvirnituq than any other outsider or perhaps insider. He symbolically converted the Inuit away from Protestantism to his own brand of earthy French sensual romanticism" (2000:14-25). Steinmann wanted the Inuit to have their own store so they would not be reliant on the Hudson's Bay Company alone. Steinmann's mission was turned into a gathering place for Inuit to hold meetings, socialize, play games and watch movies on Friday nights.

In a feature article in *MacLean's Magazine* from August 1969, titled "Steinmann of the North" by Rev. James Fleck from the archives of the Canadian Guild of Crafts, Fleck described how "along with his flamboyant personality, his ability to speak Inuktitut fluently and knowledge of Inuit lore and psychology, zeal and business acumen, he simultaneously translated and communicated with the Inuit and through this it was felt that bits of his personal philosophy were conveyed to the Inuit" (Fleck 1969:40). Steinmann encouraged Inuit artists to carve their myths and legends in stone. The artists' oral descriptions and photographs of the myths and legends were later published in a book Inuit Stories by Zebedee Nungak and Eugene Arima.

Steinmann received an honorary doctorate in Theology from McGill University in 1978 in appreciation of his contribution in the field of education and of his work as a pioneer in the co-operative movement. In 1991 France named him a Knight of the National Order of Merit. In 1991 he received the medal of the Order of Canada (Rousselière 1992:10).

Pricing Sculptures, Left to Right Livai Qumaluk, Tamusie Tulugak, Father André Steinmann, Charlie Sivuaraapik, Alashuak Nutaraluk. Unidentified artist, Photographer Eugene Kedl, (Murdoch & Tulugak 2007:.30)

I was initially surprised to learn in discussions with some of my participants who have been involved in the Inuit art industry for many years, they had never heard of Father André Steinmann. George Swinton (1917-2002) was one of the leading authorities on Inuit art, an artist himself and a Professor at the University of Manitoba's School of

Fine Arts for many years. He donated his collection of Inuit art to the Winnipeg Art Gallery, one of the largest collections of Inuit art that exists. I contacted Waddington McLean and Company and although they did not respond to me directly, they posted information on their website in relation to my inquiries. On their website, Swinton described the style of art coming out of Puvirnituq in the 1950's as "an identifiable style in the community that showed diversity and was typically untypical with comparisons to twentieth century European art" (Waddington McLean and Company House 2010). But he does not mention Steinmann's name directly. Waddington McLean describes the importance of Puvirnituq as follows:

> The POV region of the 1950s produced a bold realistic style—which has become the dominant characteristic of the entire area. The sculpture is described as bold, confident, masculine. Predominantly male, POV sculptors often depict hunters—both human and animal, mythological subject matter and personal narratives and dreams. There is a gritty realism in some of the POV works; subject matter that is in direct contradiction to the simplistic naïve view of Inuit and their art. POV art ranges from the elegant to the course—with scenes of violence, bodily functions, and eroticism (Waddington McLean and Company 2010).

Norman Vorano, Curator of Contemporary Inuit Art at the Canadian Museum of Civilization (CMC), described how Steinmann "encouraged artists to portray traditional Inuit mythology, including those involving sex, nudity and scatological humour" (2008:139). However, Vorano placed more emphasis on the influence of Nelson Graburn and the impact of the competition he held in 1967 as the impetus for the style of art that was produced in Puvirnituq.

Darlene Wight, Curator of Inuit Art at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, thinks Steinmann was a "scamp, who liked women, was high spirited and got into lots of trouble

and was most likely a very interesting person". She thinks it is hard to imagine why, with his interest in art, he did not bring books to the Arctic about French Impressionist art. She believes Steinmann had an influence from the early 1950's until he retired in the late 1970's, on work that was produced from Puvirnituq. He encouraged the Inuit to thumb their nose at the Anglican Church and that is why these pieces came from the 1950's and 1960's. Steinmann had been in the region approximately 15 years before Graburn decided to stage the competition. Erotic, mythological and humorous expressions in carvings had been taking place under Steinmann's influence for some time, based on the works produced from Puvirnituq and the reputation it developed for producing what Waddington's describes as "scenes of violence, bodily functions, and eroticism" (Waddington McLean and Company 2010).

I agree with Wight and Reverend Fleck who think Steinmann had an influence on Inuit artists with his passion for art, his fluency in Inuktitut, his own aversion towards the Anglican Church and his trusted position within the Inuit community in developing the Sculptors' Society. Although as mentioned previously the Inuit had a general mistrust of a French Catholic conspiracy, Steinmann was accepted, given his unusual character, lack of interest in converting the Inuit to the Catholic religion and his ability to identify with and advocate for Inuit interests. Steinmann had his own extensive collection of Inuit art and I believe he influenced what sort of work he wanted for his collection. Two museum curators explained in our interviews how donations made to museums usually reflect the collector's preferred tastes and style. At this point in time the collection cannot be found.

I did see a photographed image of two carvings before starting my research and my immediate reaction was how I believed the carvings had been instigated, in good

humour, as a form of resistance, by Steinmann. The photographs were of a carving of a boy with his pants at his ankles, peeing in Steinmann's washroom. Another image was of a man holding a hymn book, singing *Silent Night*.

In terms of the silencing of Inuit past, Father Andre Steinmann's influences for the most part go unmentioned, in spite of his contributions as an advocate for Inuit artists and the influences he had in Puvirnituq. Puvirnituq, as the first region to establish the Sculptors Society is also recognized for the unusual carvings that came out of the region during the time Steinmann had his mission there. I thought perhaps the reluctance or tendency to overlook or downplay his influence, in part, may have been in relation to the reputation of the Catholic church today with reported sexual abuses by priests and Steinmann's propensity towards encouraging sexual expression among the Inuit.

I contacted the O.M.I. to inquire about Steinmann's collection of erotic carvings. They initially responded in explaining how they would try to find out if in fact the collection was in their possession. If they did have the collection I pondered, is this a good time for them to be sharing this with the public in view of the sexual abuse scandals involving the Catholic Church today? There could not be a worse time to be making such a request on my part. Keeping these thoughts in mind and the lack of documentation about Steinmann, I visited one of the institutions where I had done an interview to look for information about him and to ask if anyone could identify by name the artists shown in the photograph above with Steinmann. There was by chance an Inuit woman there who offered to identify the artists in the photograph. When she saw Steinmann she referred to him as "the devil". When I asked her to elaborate on this she alleged that Steinmann was involved in a sexual abuse scandal with three of her classmates. I did not pursue this

further. Could this be a plausible explanation for why Steinmann's artistic influences were not directly mentioned or given attention?

Graburn's Competition in 1967 and the Debate About Its Impact

In 1967 Nelson Graburn and Pat Furneaux, an administrator with DIAND, held a competition in Puvirnituq. Graburn decided to have the competition as part of his ongoing research on Inuit art since the late 1950's and because "Inuit artists complained they were bored with doing the same old figurines of the market demands" (Graburn 2000:25) Inuit artists were encouraged with cash prizes to carve whatever they wanted and not to adhere to market demands and expectations. About sixty carvings came out of the competition with only about twenty five left for the final day of judging. The others were bought by non-Inuit people who were in the region at the time and the pieces disappeared.

The remaining carvings were debated within art circles when they were sent to the south for exhibition. They were deemed to be so different from other Inuit carvings and were labeled as "weirdo art" by art critics and experts. A decision was made by committee members for the exhibition *Sculpture of the Inuit – Masters of the Canadian Arctic*, to reject the carvings from the exhibition. The exhibit was intended to be the first definitive showing of what is today recognized as the best three-dimensional art produced in the Canadian Arctic during the past 2,800 years (Swinton 1972:6). Swinton described the competition as,

> a deliberate experiment, neither more nor less than inevitable and symptomatic details of the contemporary acculturation mosaic of the Canadian Arctic. The carvings that came out of this competition are not isolated stylistic freaks, but are part of old oral and visual traditions not only common to Puvirnituq and the

> Canadian Arctic, but to the entire Arctic region from Siberia to Greenland (1972:6).

Vorano maintains the competition influenced other artists to begin experimenting with new expressions. Thomassie Kudlak began producing carvings in the 1970's that involved social commentary on Inuit daily life. The carving *Man Looking Through Telescope* by Thomassie Kudlak, produced in 1976, evoked what Vorano described as a double entendre as Kudlak says it is a man looking for a wife through a telescope and getting frigid either because he is cold or because he cannot find a wife. Vorano maintains that through the work of artists such as Angutigurk and Qinuajua and the "cultural brokerage" of Graburn, Swinton and their contemporaries, the Inuit art market was "beginning to thaw" (2008:141-142). What he meant by this was the contributions of these early artists helped the public to begin to accept Inuit art that was deemed to be more controversial and not like the typical carvings produced for the market of bears, hunters and women and child scenes.

Vorano concludes that "as a result of this competition artists are rejecting the colonial structures of representation and how his discussion is very much a preliminary discussion intended to encourage ongoing discussions about aboriginal art, eroticism and the market place and audience expectations. Vorano emphasizes how contemporary Inuit art opens the door for examination of more inclusive political liberation as well" (2008:144,146). In our interview Vorano discussed how art coming out of that period and produced for Graburn's competition was dispersed for the most part to private individuals. They weren't really marketed as they were sold directly to individuals in the community before judging was completed. Collectors usually keep their pieces for approximately 30 years before deciding to donate them to museums. Vorano hopes the

pieces from the competition and other pieces produced around that time will become available for the public to admire and view someday soon.

Darlene Wight maintains that Graburn chose the right place to hold the competition because Steinmann had in fact been doing this long before he arrived. She says "just look at who was there during that period Europeans and you will see similarities in the work produced and in European art".

One of my discussants believes the Inuit were influenced in what they produced and described how Inuit homes were poorly insulated from the cold. To better insulate from the cold they used the *Week End* magazine stuck to the walls to keep out the drafts. They obviously saw images and were influenced by them. But my discussant's reaction to the competition and to Inuit erotic art in general was this:

> if you went back you might find that traditionally they never really did that. I mean given the opportunity to do something creative and somebody says you can do whatever you want, there may have been a group that picked that theme but traditionally you never saw anything like that. Really this was one person's fantasy it was not a reflection of the culture. It's a modern sensibility on an old culture and I don't think you will find a history of erotic art in Inuit culture.

I agree with Swinton, who maintains the competition was a deliberate experiment. It was a staged form of resistance to the confines of artistic expression in the art industry that was developed in Puvirnituq for the market place, with heavy influences by non-Inuit. I do think the resistance to what was taking place was well underway before 1967. However there is still debate about whether artists were influenced by Graburn's competition. A comment from a participant was that the competition broke the silencing of Inuit, allowing them freedom to carve whatever they wanted. As Swinton pointed out

this style of carving was seen in all parts of the Arctic from Siberia to Greenland and was a reflection of the acculturation process that was taking place with Inuit artists.

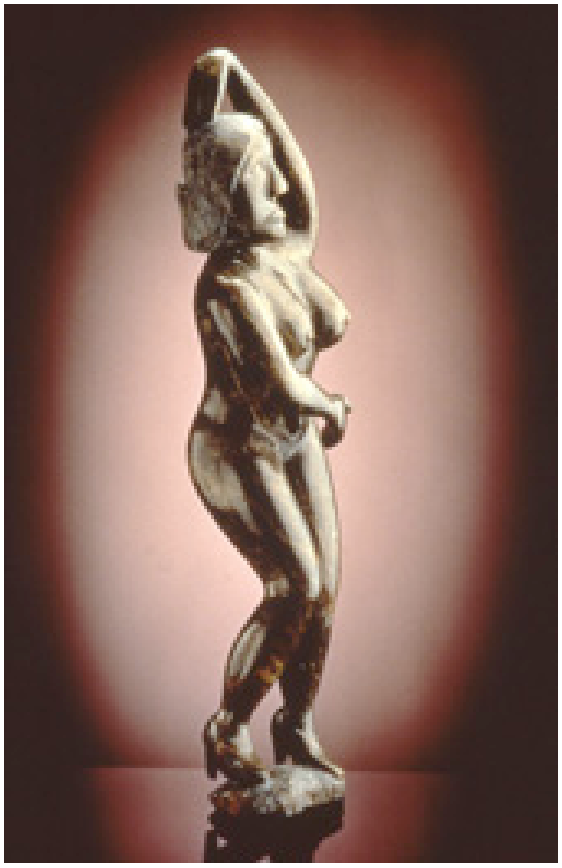
Vorano focuses on Inuit men and erotic art in his writing but discusses how the image of the "happy-go-lucky Inuit" and "the denial of coevalness between Qallunaat and Inuit in matters of sexual maturation is tantamount to a denial of Inuit male agency, including political agency, at a time during the decades when the Arctic was thought to lie waiting to be conquered by European men" (2008:136). Silencing of sexuality and portraying the Inuit as "happy-go-lucky" and passive individuals, was yet another way of silencing and keeping them in place while the colonizers took control.

Puvirnituq is an important region in the history of Inuit as this is where the Inuit art market began. The region is famous for this style of art produced in the 1950's onwards and the debate continues about the influences it had on art production in other parts of the Arctic. Puvirnituq and the unique style of work that was produced there were most certainly influenced by Steinmann during the 40 years he remained there. Although the focus of my thesis is not specifically related to eroticism, fantasy, sexuality or nudity in carving, Vorano mentioned and I agree these are areas that need further research. Gender roles could be further examined as women played a role in the carving industry as they sanded, polished and put the finishing on the carvings (usually black shoe polish). During the short-lived production phase of carvings in Suglak in the 1950's the majority of sculptors were in fact women (Neil et al 1970:22, 26).

Although the Inuit art market was male dominated in the 1950's and onwards, today one of the few artists who carves nudes is a woman Inuit artist, Ovilu Tunillie, who explains that

back in the 1980s, I was asking myself, “How will I make art?” It didn’t make sense to me to carve scenes of traditional life because I was not there so I began to carve from my own experiences – both happy and sad (Gustavison 1999:68).

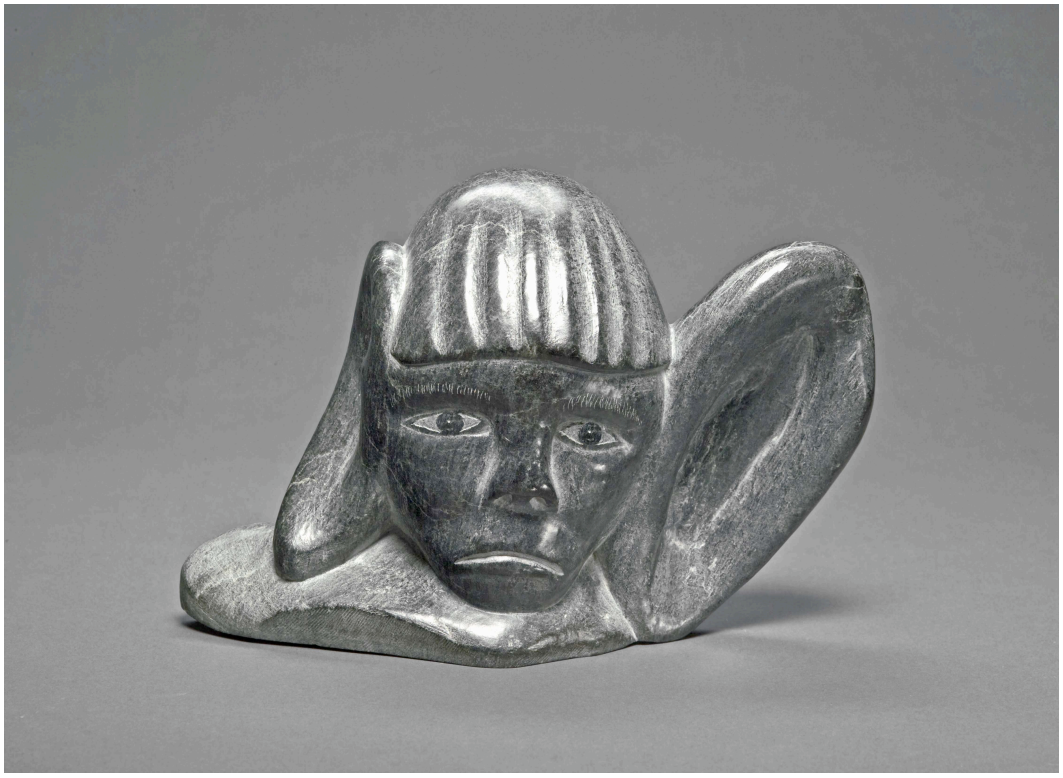
She is one of the few Inuit artists to depict nudity, Marybelle Mitchell says. “[It] is unselfconscious and, apparently, without ulterior motive. (1994:3). Tunnillie is considered to be the first Inuit artist to deliberately portray herself as the subject in her carvings. Jean Blodgett says, “Earlier artists did occasionally portray themselves, but none to the degree that Ovilu has: she has shown herself in various poses in a number of autobiographical situations, revealing her memory and emotions” (Mitchell 2007:13). (This particular carving Woman in High Heels is not autobiographical).



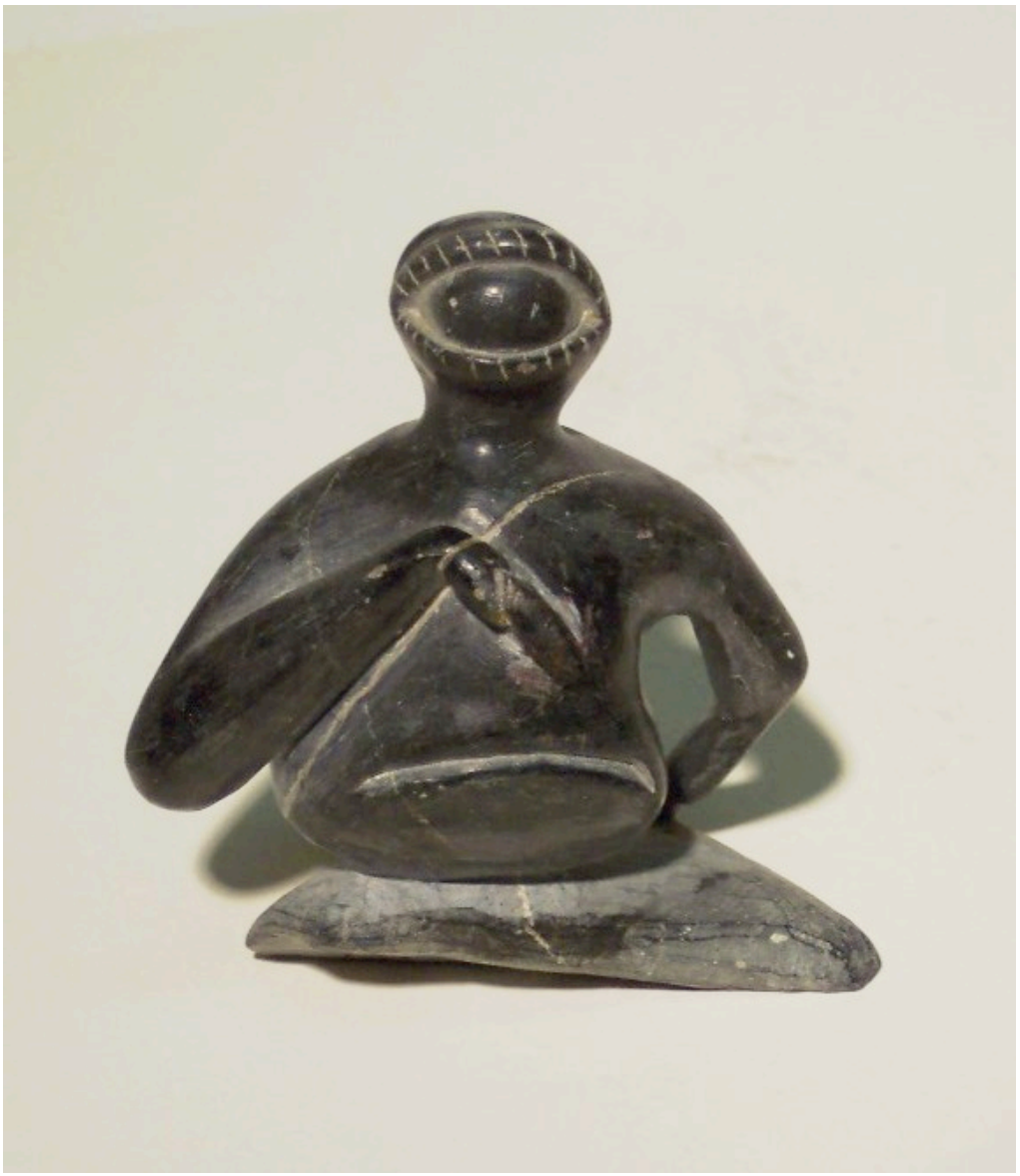
Woman on High Heels, 1987, Ovilu Tunnillie, Cape Dorset, Dark Green Stone
Photographer Harry Foster © Courtesy of Inuit Art Foundation

Tunnillee explains in this carving,

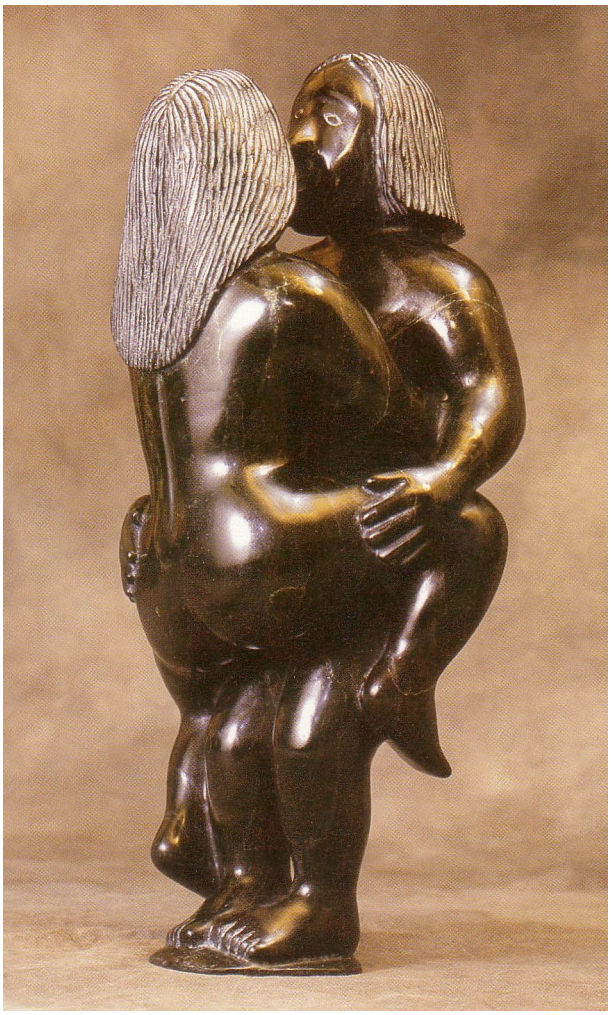
I usually do also some subject matters that are peculiar to me that I have seen before, that I don't see every day. And this is a true white woman, that is why she is wearing high heeled shoes. Inuit women hardly ever wear high heeled shoes. I was in Montreal sometimes in the 1970's. While there, I used to watch t.v. and saw nude women with high heels. They show those on t.v. I like the end result very much of that piece (Leroux et al 1996:234).



Spirit Head with One Large Ear, 1975, Tukalak,Qumaluk, Puvirnituq, Soapstone, © Courtesy of Winnipeg Art Gallery Photographer Ernest Mayer

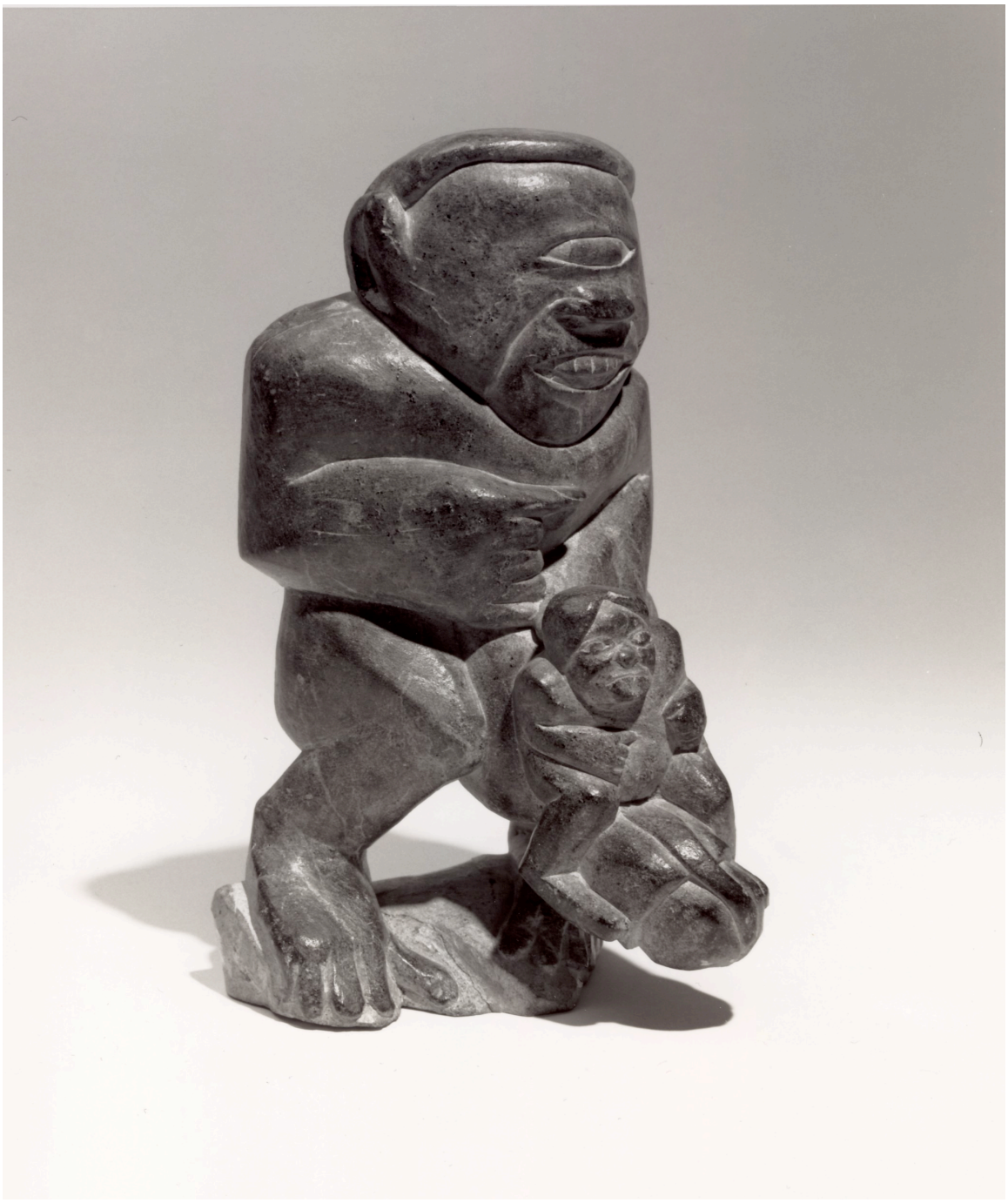


Fantasy Creature, 1968, Qinuajua Eli, Sallualu, Puvirnituq, Soapstone
© Courtesy of Winnipeg Art Gallery Photographer Ernest Mayer

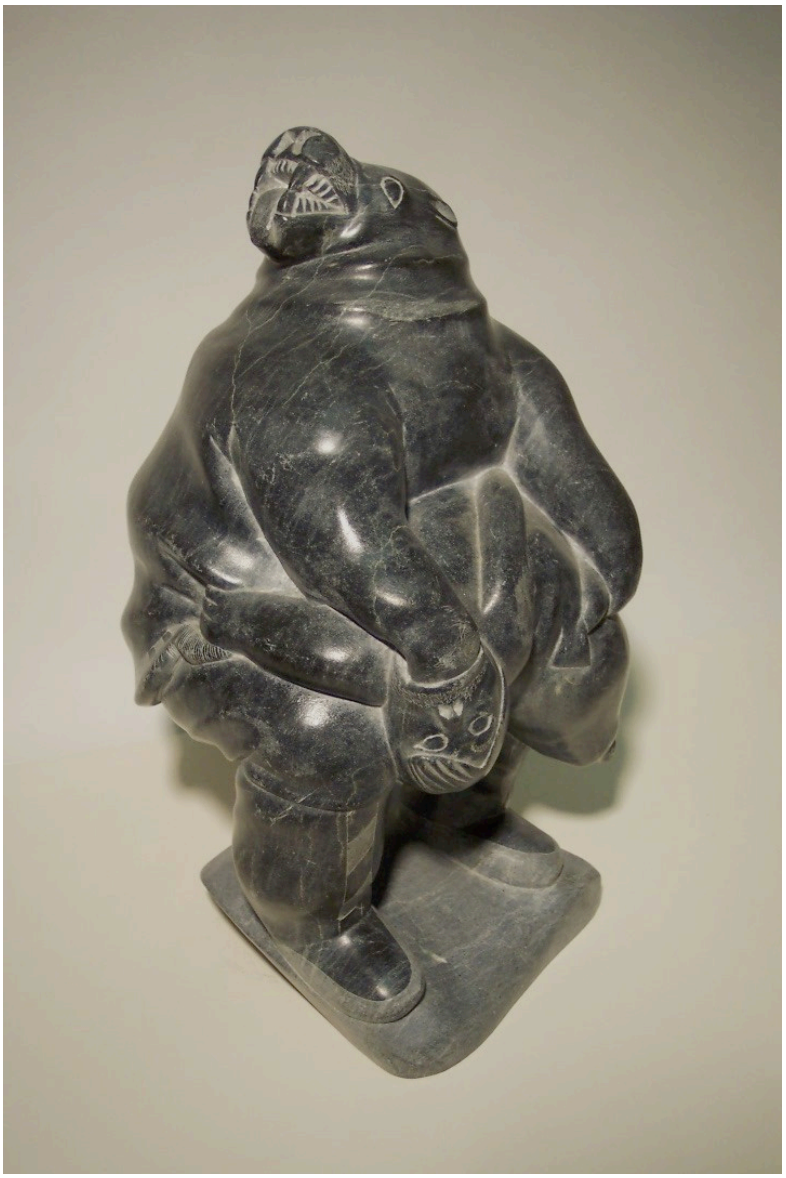


Deep Kiss, Taqialuk Nuna, 1996, Cape Dorset, Serpentine,
Photographer Lawrence Cook, (Ace& Papaatsie 1997:49)

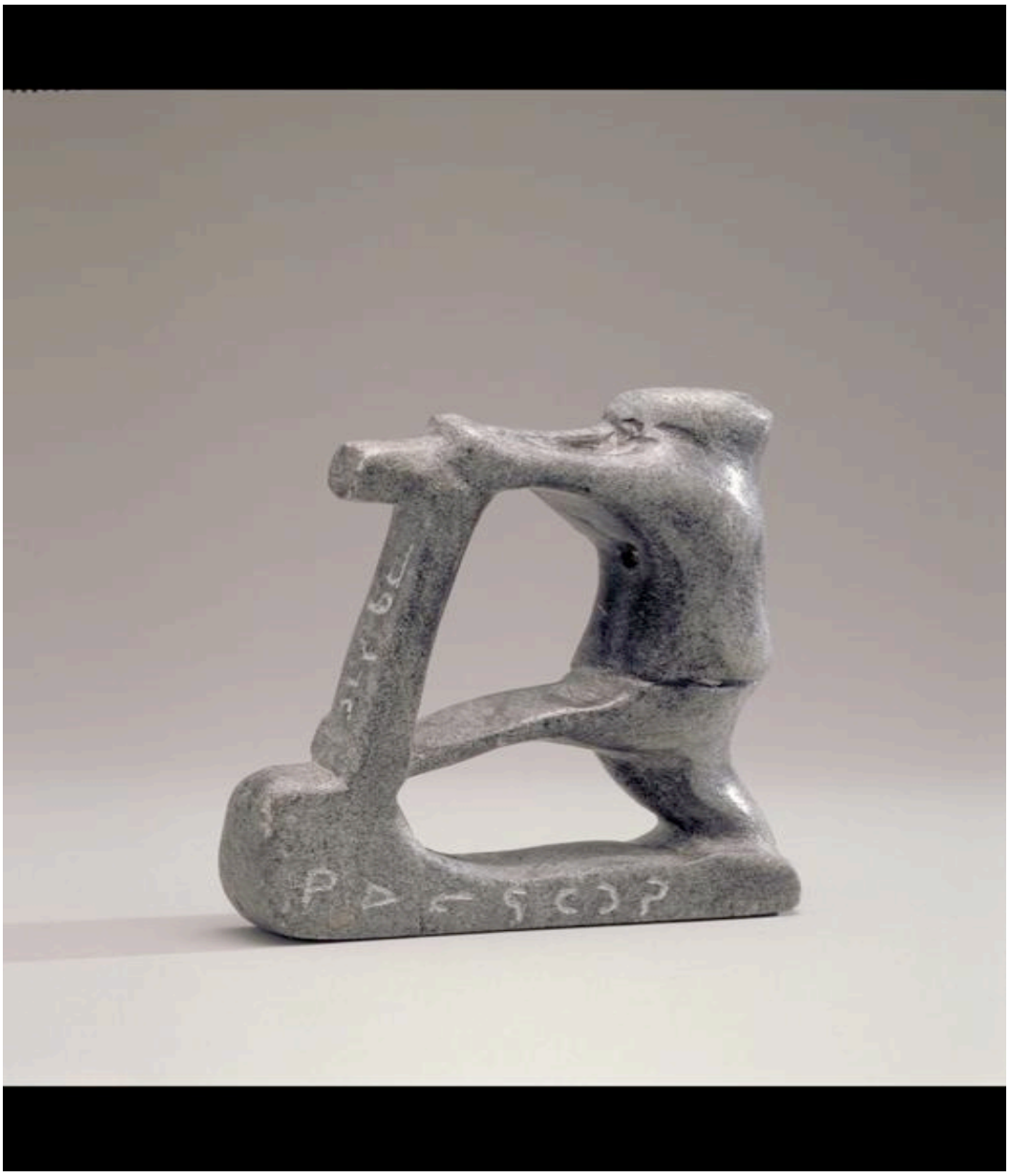
Crouching Male Spirit, Peter Iqalluq Angutigirk, 1968, Puvirnituq, Soapstone Carving from Graburn's Competition



One Eyed Giant With Woman on Penis, 1967, Eli Sallualu Qinuajua, Puvirnituq, Soapstone
Carving from Graburn's Competition
© Courtesy of Winnipeg Art Gallery Photographer Ernest Mayer

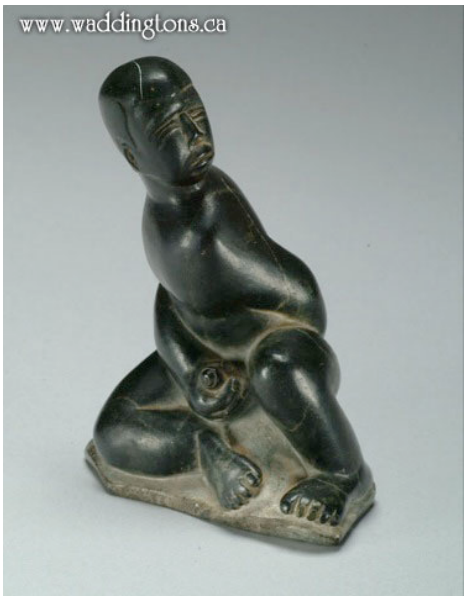


Bear Battling Seal Shaman, 1961, Peter Nauja Angiju, Puvirnituq, Soapstone
© Courtesy of Winnipeg Art Gallery Photographer Ernest Mayer



Man With Telescope, 1976, Thomassie Kudluk, Kangirsuk, Nunavik, Soapstone, Photographer Unknown

Woman in Bathing Suit, 1990, Johnny Pilurtuut, Kangiqsujuaq, Soapstone
Photographer Richard Murdoch, (Saucier 1998:79)



Anonymous, 2009, Puvirnituq, Soapstone, Photographer Unknown
© Courtesy of Waddington McLean and Company

Naked Boy Peeing in Steinmann's Mission Toilet, c. 1967, Juaniapik, Puvirnituq, Soapstone, Photographer Nelson Graburn, (Graburn 2000:18)

Naked Man Singing Carol “Silent Night”, c.1967, Eli Sallualuk Qirnuajua, Puvirnituq, Soapstone Photographer Nelson Graburn, (Graburn 2000:21)

Chapter 3

Success and Failure of the Colonial Project

Discussion of Nunavut and the Success of the Art Market in this Region as Opposed to Nunavik

Although the art industry began in Nunavik with the rich history that followed, there has been little work of significance produced since the 1980's. Nunavik's art production today is inferior to work produced in Nunavut. As my participants explain and successful artists illustrate, with images, the Nunavut art industry is thriving today. Artists from that region, especially Cape Dorset, are producing work that represents Inuit in modern society. It is impossible to separate artistic work by constructed regions in the Arctic as I address my research question regarding what artists are producing today. Most participants in my research were anxious to discuss the problem with Nunavik art production. The following is an explanation of why there has been success in one area and not another. I mention this here as the art market in Nunavik is facing serious problems with production while Nunavut thrives today and an explanation for their success is in essential in understanding how Nunavut thrives while in Nunavik there has been no substantial work produced since the 1980's with the exception of Tuckatuck and Iyaituk.

Mark London from Elca London Gallery in Old Montreal explained his views on why this happened. Mark's family has been involved in the Inuit art industry since the mid-1960's. London explained the many factors that are attributed to the success in Nunavut, especially Cape Dorset. Cape Dorset took a different route because they decided many years ago to be a privately owned co-operative. In this privately-owned co-operative, members produce art and not other commodities such as food, petroleum, construction materials, tourism and other merchandise for everyday living. Because they

focus only on art, the Cape Dorset co-operative does maintain greater control of what they produce.

Another strategy of the Cape Dorset co operative, was the decision to promote and pay artists according to the quality of the work they produced and not continue the same policy as the FCNQ where every artist is paid equally regardless of the work they produce. The Cape Dorset Co-operative pays according to the retail value of each piece. If an artist brings in a piece that is worth two thousand dollars, he or she will receive that amount. This way the artist is paid up front for a price that is close to the retail value of the work and not a small percentage equal to that received by every other artist who produced work. A higher quality of work was rewarded, improving the standard and quality overall. According to London,

> there is a sliding scale in Cape Dorset and the bigger the artist, the more important the artist is, the more money he or she gets for their work because it's supply and demand, they have to pay top dollar. Arctic Quebec hit the ground running and started to slow down ever since. As opposed to Cape Dorset that also hit the ground running but every time they slowed down they were encouraged to go faster.

Inuit artists are encouraged and the marketing and branding of art remains for the most part among non-Inuit people involved in the industry. Cape Dorset has been successful as it continues to be a multi-million dollar industry with the top artists making up to $250,000 a year because their talent and skill is nurtured and rewarded. According to London the success is partly due as well to the intense involvement of Terry Ryan, who was at the Cape Dorset Co-operative as general manager from the beginning in the late 1950's until he retired in the early 1990's. He devoted many years in developing shrewd marketing strategies that were much more aggressive and sophisticated than that

of the FCNQ. Strategies included giving a title and explanation of the work produced in English and in Inuktitut and marketing the work as a brand from Cape Dorset.

There was an explosion of talent around the time he arrived and Ryan happened to be in the right place at the right time, to nurture this talent. Also James and Alma Houston left Quebec and settled in Cape Dorset in the late 1950's where they remained for about 40 years. James Houston introduced print making to the co-operative. He spent a year in Japan learning print making that he later introduced and taught to Inuit artists. Print making in Nunavik was also practiced until the late 1980's, using different techniques than that of Houston but was discontinued when prints were not selling and the cost of the operation was too high. In Cape Dorset print making remains very profitable today, with popular contemporary artists including Tim Pitsiulak, Suvinai Ashoona and Annie Pootoogook depicting modern life in the Arctic. Diana Perera commented on this: "Not to generalize, but prints from Nunavut, depicting modernity, seem to appeal more to the younger generation and to those who are more knowledgeable about Inuit art".

Other factors that contribute to the success of the industry in Cape Dorset include the stone itself. Cape Dorset and Nunavut in general has very colourful stone that is aesthetically pleasing in comparison to Nunavik's black soapstone. London explained,

> there is to a certain extent the fact that the stone on the south coast of Baffin Island is more attractive and seductive than the stone found on the west coast or the east coast of Hudson's Bay. Having said that one could have a fancy stone and produce an ugly sculpture so the talent has to be there and nurtured and this is what the Cape Dorset co op does so effectively – nurture and encourage talented artists.

In the past workshops and lessons were provided by non-Inuit experts and in recent years by a few Inuit artists, as a way of nurturing and supporting talented artists. London said that buyers are attracted by the appeal of the notion of buying from Nunavut, as it is perceived as the "primitive north". He explains how

> maybe someone who is intrigued with the notion of buying from Nunavut territory□that has been successful in branding. But the nice pieces also happen to be coming from Nunavut. You wouldn't believe the amount of crap that comes out of Nunavut too.

What London meant by "the amount of crap coming out of Nunavut" was that with the exception of Cape Dorset Co-operative which is privately owned and operated, the co-operatives in Nunavut face similar problems as those in Nunavik. Manasie Akpaliapik in Mitchell explained: "What is happening in small communities is that merchants have too much control. Lots of times the co-op managers might not know about art at all. They might be good at paperwork and managing but a lot of times they tell people what to carve: We need 10 polar bears" (1996:396). Most successful artists in Nunavut are bypassing the co-operatives and selling directly to dealers in the south. Claire Porteous Safford at the Inuit Art Foundation explained how

> payment methods tend to be the same in Nunavut with the exception of Cape Dorset. They often will accept pretty much anything that is carved by almost any artist. There is a certain difficulty because the co-ops exist in the communities, the people who are buying for the co-ops know these people and they live with these people. So when someone comes in and they don't buy their work, they are in a very difficult position. The buyers are not necessarily artists or know anything about art, because the co-ops handle a lot of different facets of activities. Dorset is very special. It has a long history of different people helping to direct and give the artists good direction and advice on what the market is wanting. They have gone through years of organizing and structuring their co-op (with non-Inuit direction). Cape Dorset and

> Nunavut in general has a wider market and more international appeal. Cape Dorset is called the artistic capital of Canada because it has more artists per capita than anywhere else in Canada. Geographically, being set apart from Nunavut, Nunavik has a smaller group of artists who exist to produce the work and it's not easy to inspire each other to keep up the good work.

London did emphasize how in the early days work coming out of Nunavik was far superior to that of Nunavut. Pieces that sell the most in Elca London Gallery today are pieces from Nunavik, but from the early 1950's. The fine detail and inlay design are far superior to a lot of work that is produced elsewhere in the Arctic today. London does not have the answers to the large question of how to stimulate the art industry in Nunavik, but he hopes to see fine work coming from the region again, by a number of emerging young artists.

Nunavik Art Industry Today

When I started my research I was not aware of the controversy about the lack of development in Nunavik today. In the process of interviewing I asked my discussants if artists in Nunavik were free to produce whatever they want today, not based on market demands. This question triggered reactions in the form of critiques, blaming and expressions of concern for the lack of talented young artists emerging from the region and lack of quality work being produced in Nunavik today. There has been little produced in the region since the late 1980's, and there does not appear to be third generation of artists in Nunavik. As my discussants were eager to discuss this topic, I pursued it and gathered various opinions.

The Inuit art industry was a non-Inuit concept that was constructed using a Western model of art. As Perera and other discussants pointed out, the word "art" does

not exist in the Inuktitut vocabulary as art production, collection and preservation were not historically Inuit. As most of the criticism for lack of quality and lack of art production in Nunavik was directed at the FCNQ, I will begin the discussion here in giving Murdoch's views of why the industry has been less successful in Quebec. With some other participants I will not mention names if their criticism is directed at the FCNQ and Murdoch family directly in order to avoid further controversy, but I will present their opinions and critiques. With other participants whose comments are more general statements I will mention them by name. I decided to present the information in this way to avoid conflicts or controversy, as the Inuit art industry with the experts, dealers and collectors, tends to be a small community.

When I interviewed Richard Murdoch and discussed the problems with the art sector of the FCNQ, he described why he thought the industry was failing. The co-operatives were chosen as a model for implementation as Murdoch explained it most closely resembled the Inuit as a cultural group that worked closely together, sharing resources in a somewhat egalitarian manner. Murdoch explained how the Hudson's Bay Company had been in Puvirnituq since about 1927. But the Inuit needed an alternative, as the HBC provided no competition, profits went directly south and not back into the hands of the Inuit in the villages, and the HBC had not always been fair in their dealings with the Inuit, especially during the crisis in the early 1950's when the fur trade collapsed and the Inuit were starving to death.

It started out as a very successful art business, providing income for Inuit families, taking the burden away from reliance on social assistance handouts. The situation is somewhat reversed today and the FCNQ funds the sales of art where it

actually costs them money to keep it going , instead of the way it used to be when the art work funded the operations of the FCNQ. When I asked Murdoch why they continue to be involved in art production from Nunavik he explained how art production is "part of our soul and important, so we keep producing, we keep buying and we keep encouraging the artists because it is the only export they have". He is not sure how long they will be able to continue this. The FCNQ encourages artists to continue producing work that is story-based, with descriptions of an older way of life on the land that may include depictions of legends from the past along with a style referred to as realism. Realism as Murdoch and other discussants described it is a style of art depicting scenes of everyday life involving carvings of seals, bears, mother and child scenes, caribou, dog sleds and hunters. This is what Perera referred to as the tried and true. Murdoch explained how in encouraging this style, carvers are still free to produce whatever they want.

He described how buyers want the stone to be local to a particular village when they are buying so although he does not discourage other materials they prefer the soapstone from the region. The stone is dull and black and needs to be polished to bring out the shine, unlike the stone found in Nunavut which has more aesthetic appeal with many bright colours and is much easier to sell to a retailer. Murdoch thinks it would be ideal if there was an artist's personal history that went along with the carving so the buyer would have more detailed information about the carver. Artists who send their work to the FCNQ are now including handwritten notes attached to their pieces, describing the carving and putting it into context.

Murdoch maintains that unfortunately the younger generation is just not there as carving is a lot of work with no guarantees their work will sell. They get paid between 37

and 50 percent of the retail value of the work and the hours spent quarrying stone, carving outside in severe conditions and devotion to producing carvings are not financially rewarding. In the past every artist could and would sell their work. It had this mystique about it.

In Murdoch's opinion Inuit are not being encouraged anymore because they get paid regardless of whether they work or not. The FCNQ is competing with welfare payments and hunter assistance and other programs sponsored by Makivik. The hunter assistance program from Makivik, according to Murdoch, is a program whereby hunters get paid a certain amount of money on a regular basis to compensate for times when the hunting is not as good. As a result, Murdoch claims it has caused Inuit to be less motivated to carve at all. If the Inuit can get paid well for driving a truck in the community, they don't see the need to carve anymore. Murdoch sees this as a problem as carving is a unique skill for Inuit and gives them a place where they can "really shine" and produce fine works of art unlike anywhere else. Murdoch made passing note of past rivalries with Makivik and claims they are working better now in co-operating with each other. The past rivalries began with the establishment of Makivik, as it was seen as a direct threat to the FCNQ, which until that time, had control over the economy and decision making in Nunavik.

Employees at the co-operatives in the north are Inuit and the FCNQ continually tries to have direct Inuit involvement at every level. Today the general manager of the FCNQ is Inuit. Murdoch described the problems posed in trying to train Inuit people to work at the FCNQ and take control of the operations. As Inuit are trained to work in different capacities at the FCNQ, they usually leave and go back to their villages during

hunting season and there is a high turnover of staff. Although they provide intensive training, Murdoch says it does not last – "They prefer to be hunting, it is still in their blood." It becomes like seasonal work when the FCNQ needs employees full time. There are not many carvers left in Nunavik. Whereas about twenty five years ago there were 125 carvers, there are now about 20, who do not carve on a full time basis. Some of them only carve every couple of years.

The only urban Inuit carvers that Murdoch is aware of are Alec Lawson Tuckatuck from Kuujjuaraapik and Mattiusi Iyaituk from Ivujivik. Although Iyaituk spends a lot of time commuting to and from Ivujivik, he also travels internationally and spends a lot of time in Ottawa, where he is president of the Inuit Art Foundation. Murdoch mentioned housing and how Inuit rent from the community, not an individual landlord, so they are not responsible for paying a lot of money in rent and only pay nominal fees. The rest of their money goes on expenses for food and other necessities that are very expensive in the North due to the cost of transporting it there. Because of this factor, as co-operatives sell commodities, the FCNQ is getting bigger and co-operatives are doing well in every area except sales in carvings. In spite of the problems, Murdoch and the FCNQ have no immediate plans to give up or hand over the art production to any other organization as they see it as the foundation for their existence, and they are committed to the artists and buying the work they produce on an egalitarian basis.

Murdoch and the FCNQ have been criticized for many years for their policy that involves accepting work from all carvers, regardless of their skills and talents and rewarding them with the payment system they have in place, where the artist receives a percentage of the overall price at the co-operative. This ideology was challenged in 1970

in the Battle of the Cartonnages. Cartonnages were forms filled out and attached to each carving that stayed with the piece until it was sold at the FCNQ. The battle involved a small group of powerful people in the Quebec art world, the Quebec government and a financial institution in Quebec that could not be named as per the legal agreement reached, however it was the financial institution that helped the co-operatives at the beginning of the movement in Quebec.

This small group of people headed by a member of the executive committee of the FCNQ put aside higher quality carvings that were on display at the FCNQ and arranged to have them priced and shipped to high-end galleries and museums in the South, to promote a category of fine art. A court order was obtained during the dispute, to keep the carvings locked up until a ruling from the court was made about the legalities of these actions. The FCNQ wanted their policy to remain in place whereby carving buyers could buy some of the more exceptional carvings providing they also purchased lots of the smaller, lower quality carvings, to give all carvers equal opportunities. The FCNQ hired Claude-Armand Sheppard, a civil rights lawyer who also represented Dr. Henry Morgentaler. The case was settled out of court, within hours of the hearing, with the FCNQ keeping their buying policy, which remains in place today. The battle was a cultural and political struggle about who should control and be accountable for shaping the social and economic future of the Inuit in Nunavik (Murdoch & Tulugak 2008: 88-96). At the same time Inuit artists and Inuit members of the co-operatives believed they would have equal ownership and an equal voice in decision making. This never happened and the FCNQ, that originally challenged the HBC, had become and remains the monopoly in Nunavik that ships goods and commodities to Nunavik for sale, with no

competition and the art division of the co-operatives has no competition. The FCNQ is really a state run business that has become a monopoly.

Another discussant sees the problem with Nunavik art in the quality that does not exist anymore:

> I go out to the FCNQ sometimes for the afternoon, spend two or three hours going through all the pieces and the last time we only picked three or four pieces, literally, that were well done, well carved. The problem with the co op is they pay 25 percent of the retail price to the artist. They take the other 25 percent and there is a 50 percent mark up and they look after all the marketing in return for their 25 percent (shipping, marketing, every other aspect of selling the piece). They determine the retail value and pay 25 percent of that. So any artist who is good and gets any sort of fame will bypass the co op. The better artists do not operate through the co-op. Would you? I swear what is happening is they work with very young carvers in their teens and it's sort of like an industry where they knock out twenty pieces very similar and it's more of commerce as opposed to an art. The majority of my buyers today want more polished, stylized work that is done in Cape Dorset. The American buying market drives more than anything in terms of Inuit art today. Quebec is devoid, it's not the culture, and it's just that Inuit art has never grown in Quebec. The talent is there, the problem is the co-op system.

They went on to say the more you can self-promote the better. It increases demand and with the co-operative there is a tremendous difference in remuneration. Also the sad reality as a part of the function of alcoholism, tourists could easily go to the North and buy a piece directly from an artist for $25 from an artist who wants to earn quick money. This problem is one that members of the non-Inuit art industry are trying to discourage, as a means of protecting Inuit fine art and the value of the work.

The co-operatives were a good idea in Nunavik, with art as a component, but the main business of the co-operatives and FCNQ in Nunavik today is providing commodities and services. The FCNQ does all the buying for the northern communities

with little input from anyone else except of course the co-operative where it is shipped after purchase and the work is not the most sophisticated. My participant commented on the stone itself and mentioned that stone is exported all the time to the North, especially Brazilian soapstone. They know someone personally who has a business that involves shipping Brazilian soapstone, especially to Nunavut, not Quebec.

Another discussant expressed frustration with how the FCNQ and Nunavik co-operatives continue to operate with a socialist mentality that does not work well in a capitalist world. It does not promote individual talent, does not promote the young people with talent in the region whose skills are not being challenged enough through the co-operatives. The payment method does not work either as it is equal pay for everyone, regardless, and sometimes if extra money is made on a piece the artist may have to wait up to a year to be compensated. There just isn't any incentive and young emerging artists are discouraged.

They need more access to the internet to promote their work and to a more specialized, aggressive marketing system. Overall, agents involved in buying think the quality of the work from Quebec is poor and the stone is not as attractive or as appealing as that in Nunavut. They explained how with the founding of Makivik, commerce changed in Nunavik and all financial aid is overseen by Makivik. They suggest that perhaps there is too much financial aid that does not promote enough incentive for young or any artists in Quebec. Having said all that they still believe the co-operatives are important. It is a socialist system, a different form of governing than capitalism that is necessary to maintain Inuit ownership and a form of resistance for the Inuit. But in the art production, changes need to be made or young artists will not progress. Ideally there

needs to be more of a North/South connection where artists can move freely between the two places.

Jenness discussed this need as he suggested the only way for Inuit to attain a better lifestyle would be to support more mobility between the North and the South where the Inuit would have more access to resources and opportunities for advancement. He suggested that every year as relief payments grow heavier and the morale of the Inuit sinks lower, there is a responsibility on the part of Canadians to appreciate their experiences and talents and to open a place for the Inuit in our civilized world.

He recognized the difficulties they would encounter where they don't speak English in urban areas of Canada and have few supports available to them, unlike other migrants who came from Europe or China who found other people from their country of origin who help and support them in settling and employment. He questioned whether this was not a better option for the Inuit to struggle and work for a better life in the industrialized South "than rot in idleness in the Far North, maintained on government doles" (Jenness 1970:24-25).

In discussions with Mitchell, Inuit artists pointed out that there was no support network to help artists get the equipment, information or advice they need. This left the artists feeling stranded, a feeling that is intensified among artists living in the Arctic, with few and at times no resources at all. The artists expressed a need for access to books, photos, slides and other visual materials. All the artists Mitchell spoke with agreed there was a need for technical training but they did not want people telling them what to make or how to make it (1997a:8).

A participant in my research talked about the vulnerability of Inuit artists when they come to urban centers as they are exposed to alcohol and other distractions that are not necessarily good for them. They referred to the tendency to sell a carving for "bingo money," or quick cash for far less than the piece is worth in a gallery or at an auction. This concern was raised by more than one discussant as it is seen as a major threat to the fine art industry for the artists themselves and for how it depreciates the value of the fine art. One of the Inuit art collectors I interviewed acquired one of his pieces this way from a well-known Inuit artist, for a fraction of the price he would have paid in a gallery or through a dealer.

It was pointed out by another interviewee, how resources are available in the South to an extent, however family support is available in the North and to move south an Inuit artist would have to be able to support themselves with what they made as an artist. Not many people can do that. In the South there are language barriers that have an impact on education. If something goes wrong they need to have a supplementary income to deal with the job market in the South. In the North there is the co-operative and depending on circumstances, in the North at least one has a home. Trying to make a living in the South would be very difficult for most artists.

The following are opinions by other participants on why the Nunavik art market is failing to produce quality work and skilled artists.

> The FCNQ operates more like a "social security business than anything else. In Nunavut they were not working like that, they focused on a star system" (Meaning Cape Dorset in particular) where they reward the more talented artists. In Nunavik they don't work like that and that is one of the reasons they are not following the same scale for development. Because of Terry Ryan who was in Cape Dorset for years and responsible for the marketing of art, the industry there developed differently. As well James Houston

> spent many years in Cape Dorset helping to develop the art industry with a focus on printmaking. They were trying to get the best and they did a great job because they supported the creation of really major artists by doing that. At the FCNQ they mainly support the social group of artists, so you don't have to be defined as an artist. All you have to do is go to the co-op with your piece and they will buy it.
>
> The FCNQ unlike Cape Dorset sells everything and art is just one of their departments. They are really providing the social and economic development and it is based on the concept that was developed by Father Steinmann of the co-op. Everyone is able to make carvings and it is a totally different perspective. We (the discussant and Murdoch from the FCNQ) should talk about this, something has to be done. Some variations have to be corrected to support the artists better because it is despairing to see the youth making carvings and selling them on the street for five or ten dollars. You will find pure beauty for almost nothing and in this way you are supporting poverty not the artist. The art industry in Nunavik needs to be restructured and internet access and facilities for artists to work are needed.

A critique was given in our discussion in terms of how Quebec is still not viewed as the Far North or Inuit territory by the rest of the world and buyers prefer Cape Dorset or anywhere in Nunavut and view the work from there as more desirable and seen as more authentically Inuit. There is a movement at the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts towards having more representation from Nunavik and in 2011 the MMFA will open the Canadian pavilion devoted entirely to indigenous Canadian art. The aim is to promote the identity and place of Inuit in Canadian society with the opening of the new pavilion and to have the input and collaboration from Inuit artists in the process. The MMFA is also trying to promote artists from Quebec, in placing emphasis on the artists from the region and in portraying work from Quebec as being as authentic as that from Nunavut.

A critique by a discussant was that,

> It isn't just about money. It is more complex than that. It often has to do with the person on the ground in the community who will encourage good work or not, who will pay the money necessary to make it worth their while. The buyer is really important and when I met with buyers in Nunavik, well they just didn't seem very knowledgeable about art or that interested. So that is crucial. It is a big problem for the buyer at the co-op to not show favoritism (to a relative or community member). I don't think the co-op itself can take blame for the lack of really good stuff. It has been over twenty years since anybody has done anything interesting in Nunavik. There are very few artists left and they just lost one their best of the second generation. There is no third generation that I am aware of. The co-ops in Quebec are strong today but not with art.

One discussant admits that his knowledge of Nunavik is limited, although he goes at least twice a year to the Arctic region in Nunavut. He visited Nunavik once about 20 years ago and was busy buying directly from artists when the co- operative manager approached him and told him to stop as it was ruining business for the co- operatives. He explained,

> it was a hostile reception I received and have not been back to Nunavik since. It is too bad because the carvers liked having more than one person to buy from and I was offering better prices than the co-op. They do see the importance of supporting the co-op and keeping the profits within the structure but explained these problems that also occur in the process for the artist.

Thomassie Kudlak, an Inuit artist from Nunavik who died in 1989, explained

> although we are now able to do many things through co-operative that we were not able to do before, I don't think we will survive. This is because we have lost our enthusiasm, particularly in producing things like sculpture that brought progress to our co-operatives. Now we just ask people to buy things at the co-op store as if they will make us progress. People are using the co-op as a store only and they no longer produce sculpture or have other activities that bring income to the people and this does not strengthen our future. We welcome the convenience of the co-op but don't think about ways to strengthen it and ensure its survival (Murdoch & Tulugak 2008:109-110).

Claire Porteous Safford explained how one of the main problems for artist today, especially in Nunavik, is getting stone:

> The stone is not that accessible and it's very difficult and dangerous to go out and get stone. In northern Quebec in particular, they have never had the best stone so you don't get the beautiful colours of green or blue, those stones that have become recognizable as Inuit art. It is essentially the same family– serpentine–but because of where it is developed, the minerals in the soil change the colour of the stone. So that is a real difficulty right off the top for the artist to surmount in Nunavik where the stone is dark.

Iyaituk's views of the lack of production in Nunavik are:

> Carving takes all kinds of knowledge; knowledge of the land so that you can find your way to the quarry site, and when you get there, knowledge of the site so that you will know where to dig in the snow. And, of course, it takes knowledge to get the stone out of the ground. It also takes money to buy quarrying tools and gas and grub to get there. These are the things that have to happen before you can even think of making art in Nunavik (Mitchell 1998:3).

Iyaituk attributes the lack of art production in Nunavik to

> the fact that young people are not taking up carving as an occupation because of the difficulties they have amassing enough capital - for equipment and expenses - to get to the quarry sites for stone and because they do not have the knowledge to travel on the land. Stepping back from immediate concerns and priorities, it just may be that carving is no longer as central to the rhythm of Inuit life as it was in the not-so-distant past when there were few other options than to hunt or carve, the latter encouraged by various agencies - the missions, trading posts, governments and co-ops - as a way for Inuit to support themselves. It is no longer the case that whole villages are supported through the proceeds of carving. Although jobs remain scarce, Inuit now have more choices, a change that can only be welcomed. Not only does it relieve the pressure on people to take up an occupation for which they have little interest or talent, but it also opens the way for those who do (Mitchell 1998:16).

While conducting my research I did observe at the FCNQ how the quality, presentation and aesthetics were inferior in quality to those of the other galleries I visited. Richard Murdoch showed me several carvings where the artist tried to correct obvious errors in the work. In spite of this Murdoch sees the importance of continuing with the art division. Murdoch views this as accepting almost all work that is taken to the co-operatives by any artist who tries his or her best. The FCNQ has no plans to give up the art division. He views this as an important part of the operation in spite of the loss in profits and skilled carvers.

Chapter 4

Icons and Emblems

In spite of the problems described with production in Nunavik I present the work of two contemporary Nunavik artists and the icons and emblems they have chosen to preserve and rejuvenate traditional practices and bring awareness to existing concerns and threats to traditional practices as a result of global warming. I focus on information gathered from my discussants on specific icons and emblems and how their meaning has been transformed to promote Canadian identity by non- Inuit as well.

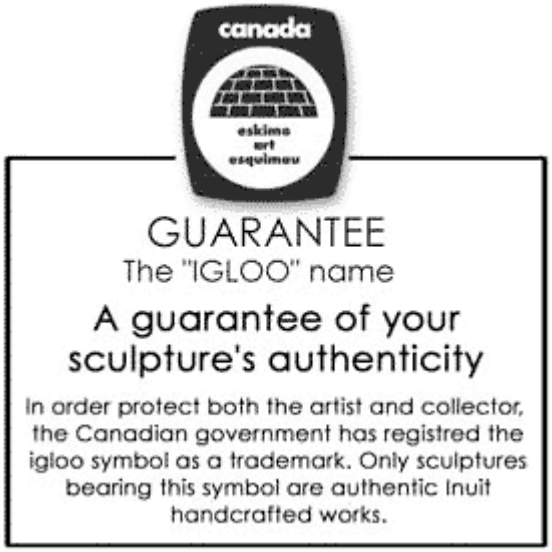
The Canadian government initially thought of Inuit carving as a potential substitute for welfare. However they began moving towards looking at Inuit carving as an art form that represented Canada as a generous, tasteful, paternalistic modern territorial power. Examples of this substitute from welfare to looking at Inuit art as a guarded art form representing Canada is evident in a letter to Mr. Waldo Monteith, Federal Minister of Health and Welfare, on January 30, 1958 by Mr. Durford, President of the Canadian Guild of Crafts, regarding carvings being produced in the Occupational Therapy Department by Inuit patients at the Hamilton Mountain Sanatorium, where they were being treated for tuberculosis. Monteith discussed concerns about Inuit art and how it was perceived as an art form that needed to be protected not only by the Guild but also by the Canadian government. The letter was a discussion of the Guild's concern around the flood of Inuit carvings now proceeding from the Occupational Therapy Department of the Hamilton Mountain Sanatorium and how the carvings were being made in commercial quantities and sold to department stores throughout the country for very low prices. Monteith reminded the federal government of the role of the guild as they worked in

cooperation with DIAND and the HBC for the past 10 years in building a solid foundation for this output by insisting that:

> Every piece should be an individual work of art and by carefully selecting only sales outlets of the highest quality, such as art dealers who would be able to give them exclusive exhibition display and by avoiding department stores where they would be mixed with all sorts of other merchandise and sold on a quantity basis. The great demand for them has been built on our discriminating selection, arrangements of special exhibitions both here and abroad with accompanying lectures and emphasis on the rarity of the pieces. The guild, the national museums, the Department of Northern Affairs and that of External Affairs have all made special collections to use for these purposes as the carvings have arrived from the north each autumn. It is this carefully guarded reputation that is now being jeopardized by the mass-production methods of the Hamilton Sanatorium. We do not suggest that the patients be entirely prevented from carving, if they are able to do it, but we do urgently request that their active production be kept up to a very high standard and within the bounds of what may be sold privately to friends at the hospital and not used to flood the market so debasing the art that pubic demand for it all fall (Durford 1958 Archives of Canadian Guild of Crafts).

Another example is given in an article from *Inuit Art Quarterly* on the paternalistic role of the federal government in trying to maintain the standards and control they had set with Inuit art as an art form.

> The Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources brought some pieces from the National Gallery of Canada to the Hamilton Mountain Sanatorium, as an attempt to bring some of their own culture to the people. However as the department was always so anxious to maintain the quality of Inuit art, it can be surmised that the real objective was to inspire the patients by showing them the examples of sculpture deemed to have passed the test of quality (Gustavison 2008:15).



Inuit Art of Canada

When the Inuit art market was developed there were many pieces flooding the market that were not made by Inuit artists and were deemed to be inauthentic works. DIAND developed an Authentic Inuit Art Tag, shown above, that is attached to every carving to protect the artists and as a symbol the work was authentically Inuit. It was also a means for DIAND to maintain control of the market. As production and sales of Inuit carvings at the Hamilton Mountain Sanatorium increased at a rate that began to alarm the DIAND, Gustavison explained that

> because the designated treatment center for Eastern Arctic the Mountain Sanatorium in Hamilton received 1,274 Inuit children and adults in the decade 1953-63. As the records prior to 1953 do not identify patients as Inuit the actual total must have been higher. At the height of the epidemic in 1956 there were 319 Inuit patients in the sanatorium. It is staggering to realize that the Inuit patients in Hamilton constituted the largest Inuit settlement in all of Canada.
>
> This coincided with the beginning of the Inuit sculpting on the national scene through the Canadian Handicraft Guild of Montreal. Where the Inuk artist was living was an important criterion determining who could use the official igloo tag of authenticity that was initiated in the 1950's as a means of deterring cheap

> imitations. Because Inuit in the sanatorium did not meet the definition of Inuit living in the Arctic, their carvings could not have the tag and by 1961 the federal government resolved this dilemma by creating a special tag for items made by Inuit while in southern hospitals (2008:12, 15).

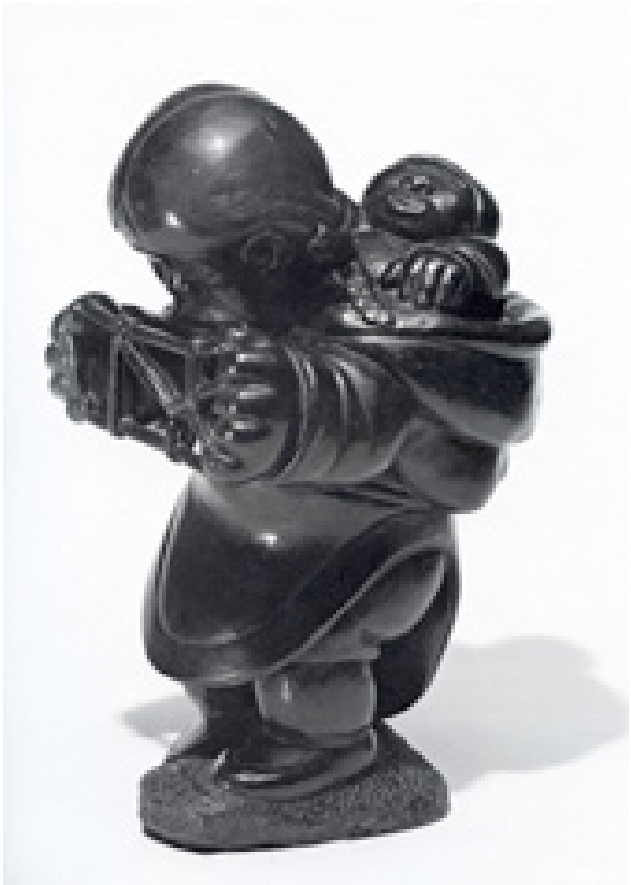
In an article from the Financial Post on July 2, 1977, *The Frail Art of the Inuit, Caught in the Split Reality of Culture and Economics* (Archives of Canadian Guild of Crafts) George Swinton responded to the implementing of the Authentic Inuit Art Tag in the 1950's as follows:

> It became difficult, if not impossible to say suddenly one piece was art and the other was not. Did not the label unequivocally proclaim all to be genuine and art? The label accurately describes the product for what it is – "Eskimo Art" and the term has become even more ambiguous and no longer makes a qualitative statement as it once did and today's Eskimo art simply eludes the definite and convenient tag that normally comes with a well defined price. How does one consume or get around this dilemma? There are no clear answers. The fortunate buyers are those who honestly confess they know nothing about art, but they do know what they like.

I present this information relating to the sanatorium and the Authentic Inuit Art Tag to demonstrate how it appeared as though the DIAND and other agents were more concerned with maintaining control of the Inuit art market than they were with the well being of the Inuit patients who were not only ill but also suffering from severe culture shock as they were abruptly uprooted and sent to the South for treatment.

Keeping all of this information in mind, I arranged interviews at several galleries, museums and the FCNQ and visited gift shops in Montreal, Kingston, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg and Calgary. I went to airport duty free shops and to the homes of three private collectors to observe and gather information. I observed for the most part carvings of hunters, mother and child scenes, seals, owls and other wildlife representing the Arctic

region. Along with these carvings in every gallery I visited, there were large dancing polar bears on display in glass cabinets and in the windows of the shops, along with Inukshuks in various sizes. I observed carvings depicting ancient myths and shamans and other abstract pieces. The abstract work tended to be more in galleries and museums and in one private collection I viewed, than in airport souvenir shops. The two images below are examples of the many carvings I observed in my visits to the various places mentioned.



Mother and Child Playing String Game, 1956-60,
Johnny Inukpuk, Inukjuak, Soapstone, Photographer Ernest Mayer,
© Courtesy of Inuit Art Foundation

Seal Hunter, circa 1955, Isa Oomayoualook, Inukjuak, Steatite, ivory, sinew, Photographer Paul Dionne
© Courtesy of Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

The Transformation of the Inukshuk

In my interviews during the summer of 2009 the Inukshuk was often mentioned as it had become an emblem for the approaching 2010 Winter Olympic Games. The word Inukshuk, according to my discussants means likeness of man or likeness of a person. They were built thousands of years ago in the Arctic region. They were not initially built

in the shape of a person with arms and legs but were often a pile of stones, strategically placed, with specific meanings. The shape evolved over time and took on many forms we see today. They were built in pre-contact times to mark good hunting grounds, as a marker while Inuit travelled to give them direction, as a place to store foods and, as I learned from looking at old photographs in the archives at Avataq Cultural Institute, they were also used as places where women could breast feed their infants. They were not viewed as pieces of art and had a functional use. The word art does not exist in Inuktitut and referring to the Inukshuk as art challenges the term art.

Inukshuk, 1990-1992, Jusipi Nalukturuk, 20th Century Stone, Photographer Gail Mahood, McCord Museum Montreal

Female Inukshuk, 1999-2000, Mattiusi Iyaituk, Akulivik, Steatite, Photographer Kenji Najai, © Courtesy of Inuit Art Foundation

The first official interview in my fieldwork was at the Canadian Guild of Crafts in Montreal. I chose to start there as this is the institution where the Inuit art industry began. The Canadian Guild of Crafts in Montreal has been functioning as a non-profit organization since 1906. Its mandate is to conserve and promote Inuit and other Native arts and crafts in Canada. The Guild was initially an organization operated by a small group of women who were interested in Inuit and Native handicrafts and carvings. It gradually expanded and today it is a gallery that sells Inuit carvings, prints and other Native art and promotes artists by giving them exhibition space. The second floor is reserved for the Guild's permanent collection of carvings that are on display for the

public. There is also an archive where I spent time gathering historical information on the development of the carving industry through the Guild.

I interviewed Diana Perera who has worked at the Guild for thirty years as a buyer and employee of the institution and is acutely aware of buyers' tastes. Perera preferred our interview not to be recorded and that I take notes instead. I have taken excerpts from our interview where Perera described certain Inuit carvings that serve to promote Canadian identity and have become iconic and emblematic of Canada. Perera explained that when she goes on buying trips to the North or to the wholesalers in Montreal or Toronto she always buys a certain amount of what she referred to as the "tried and true," meaning carvings that depict a romanticized view of life in the Arctic. These include images of hunters, mother and child scenes, polar bears and other arctic animals. This was in keeping with my own observations and with images above that I provide as examples of what Pererra was describing.

Perera explained how foreigners and local people who come to the gallery want to take home something that is genuinely Canadian and the "tried and true" carvings appeal to the buyers' desire for carvings that are in keeping with the notion and ideas of a primitive nomadic culture that is now associated with being quintessentially Canadian. She also buys more contemporary pieces and tries to focus on young emerging artists as she explained how just having the "tried and true" in the gallery is too stagnant and does not express transition and change.

Requests often come for corporate gifts as well to give out-of- town clients and business associates and the Inukshuk is one of the most popular carvings requested. In her opinion the reason for this is the Inukshuk is a piece that is easily understood and can

be explained to others and she went on to explain how the Inukshuk has taken on meaning that can be associated with a particular profession. An example she used is the frequent requests from law firms for Inukshuks as the meaning of the word "likeness of man" has certain appeal to them. It has come to represent direction, a pathway, a place of power and a welcome for travelers. Perera explained how these meanings tie in with professional values and ethics and particular messages that corporations want to convey to their associates when giving them the Inukshuk as a corporate gift. Perera recognized how the Inukshuk has lost its meaning from pre-contact times and has been transformed into something that is now associated with being Canadian. The Inukshuk was used by the Inuit in pre-contact times as a land mark for guiding nomadic travelers, as a marker for caches of food, as a place to stop and rest where women could breast feed their infants and they had religious meanings that are not in keeping with the transformed understanding of the Inukshuk as being representative of something that is Canadian with little reference to its meaning for the Inuit.

This transformation took place gradually as corporations wanted to present gifts that were deemed to be representative of Canadian-ness. The Inukshuk was chosen as it is seen in so many places in Canada in different settings that over time it was disassociated with being Inuit. Inukshuk business card holders, chocolate Inukshuks, Inukshuk garden and lawn decorations and the Inukshuk chosen as the 2010 Olympic symbol and on the Olympic flag, have all influenced the way in which this Inuit symbol has been transformed and lost its original meaning. Foreigners visiting Canada see so many Inukshuks in airports, tourist shops and galleries that they have come to associate it with being Canadian not Inuit.

Perera raised an important point in asking "Is this a bad thing for Inuit as they benefit as well from being identified not only as Inuit but as being Canadian on both the national and international scene?" Perrera thinks there could not be a better place than Canada to be strongly identified with. This identity helps promote Inuit art in a positive way, in her opinion.

In addressing this question I will begin by clarifying the role of the Inuit in the carving industry, particularly in producing the Inukshuk in mass quantities. This needs to be addressed as the Inuit are involved today in producing Inukshuks on a large scale to meet market demands. Norman Vorano, Curator of Contemporary Inuit Art at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, Quebec, gave his explanation of Inuit involvement in the carving industry and how it benefits them:

> Although the market is something that the non Inuit have a very big stake in, a big hand in defining the market and especially Inuit art, to some degree a lot of Inuit artists are willing collaborators. They are willing collaborators in creating the categories of authenticity and tradition that have given shape to the market place. They are willing collaborators because they benefit in terms of income that they get. They don't want to be limited by the fact they happen to be Inuit and in many ways do not object to the Canadian-ness that is attached to Inukshuk production as they are concerned about making sales.

As mentioned earlier on, the Inuit had been involved in informal trade for centuries. It was no accident that the concept of Canadian sovereignty in the North was developed during the same period as Inuit art. It happened as the fox fur trade collapsed, leaving Inuit starving to death, around the time the Canadian government was seeking sovereignty in the North with perceived threat during the Cold War of invasion from Russia. Inuit art was viewed initially as a means of eliminating welfare payments to the

Inuit but it quickly took on new meaning when the DIAND realized how Inuit art could be used to promote Canada on the international scene. According to Graburn the soapstone carving industry appeared at the right time and became a central feature of Canadian identity (Mitchell 1996:174). Inuit carvings were given as gifts to foreign dignitaries and collections began to appear in the House of Commons, in head offices of banks and businesses in Canada. Suddenly Inuit art was valued in more ways than one. In my opinion it gave Inuit a certain amount of power, as soapstone carvings took on an important role in Canadian identity. Sculpture was and remains today, the only item for exported by the Inuit. Through the examples I provide from the discussants in my fieldwork, I demonstrate how production of Inuit carvings became part of Canadian identity.

Inuit cooperated with the carving program because it provided them with an alternative to other dependency and it conveniently fit into their customary lifestyle and they could carve according to their own agendas. Through obtaining raw materials by division of labour they were not challenged to learn new skills or languages to complete their work (Mitchell 1996:279-280). Shouldice (Mitchell 1996) explained how "carving was also a profession for older monolingual Inuit who would not have otherwise adapted to the wage economy" (1996:281-282). Although Inuit have been identified as willing collaborators in this process, given their circumstances at the beginning of the industry, living in a harsh climate, struggling to survive and faced with starvation, I believe they had little choice but to become willing collaborators. There may be more options today for Inuit as there are other ways to make a living. I would argue because more options and choices are available today only those who identify themselves as artists are involved

in the industry, unlike in the 1950's when many Inuit took up carving as the only alternative to starvation, regardless of their skills, when the white fox fur trade collapsed.

Carving as a means of negotiation of material culture is also a mediation of very convoluted desires and agencies, a hybrid collaboration of numerous agents as it provides a means of claiming and enforcing identity (Myers 2004:204). Townsend-Gault (Myers 2004) points out how chosen icons and emblems take on a Canadian identity. The hybrid collaborators of numerous agents refers to the many organizations and individuals involved in the Inuit art market from the 1950's onwards. This can give the impression to the public in "not yet post-colonial relations" that relations between the Inuit and Canadian government appear to be more harmonious when "in fact the visuals deflect attention from, or mask, serious conflicts that are ongoing" (2004:205). At the Global Encounters Initiative Conference on March 6, 2010 at the University of British Columbia, Gerald Taiaiake Alfred explained how the Inukshuk gives the impression of Canadian peace with indigenous peoples, acceptance of indigenous peoples, equality in land claims and rights. This is not true in his opinion and the Inukshuk is an example of tokenism (Alfred 2010). In a subsequent chapter, Arnaqu, an urban Inuit who is not an artist, will give his perspectives on what is taking place with the Inuit today and it is certainly not a perspective of harmony with the Canadian government. Although the Inuit of Nunavik have appeared to resolve land claims disputes, claims to natural resources and have negotiated certain regional powers, conflicts remain with mining companies in Nunavik regarding ownership of natural resources.

There are ongoing concerns about substandard health care, housing, education and the ongoing paternalistic and controlling attitude towards the Inuit by the Canadian

government that Arnaqu describes well. It is important for the Canadian government to have an appearance of harmony as claims to land in the Arctic seabed with Canada, the United States, Russia, Norway and Denmark/Greenland are being disputed. Living harmoniously with the indigenous people is contingent on making claims to that region, rich in natural resources.

Guislaine Lemay, Curator of Material Culture at the McCord Museum in Montreal, raised an important issue as she explained how the organizers of the 2010 Olympic Winter Games used the Inukshuk as a representation of Canada. There was much criticism for this from Inuit and from Northwest Coast Indians. Criticism as the Inukshuk was chosen as a symbol of Canada for the Olympics with no representation of art from Northwest Coast region where the games were held. There was also much criticism and protest from the Inuit as the Inukshuk was appropriated for use in the 2010 Winter Olympic Games without their permission. The Inuit had no legal recourse as there is no copyright law on the Inukshuk.

In the Vancouver Observer on March 8, 2010, Kathie Wallace wrote an article titled *International Women's Day; We Hold up Half the Sky* reporting the discussion by the International Council of 13 Indigenous Grandmothers, a worldwide healing network using traditional methods to move the world into healing. Maori elder, Hinewirangi Morgan, created the meme "elegant racism" to describe the more subtle and sophisticated form of racism evident in today's world and at the Olympics:

> Misappropriation of the Inukshuk figure as a symbol of the Olympics is another example of elegant racism. No acknowledgement was made at the Olympics that the Inukshuk is a venerated object of the Inuit peoples of Canada. No permission was asked of the Inuit for use of this symbol at the Olympics, nothing was shared about its meaning and no monetary

> recompense was made to them for using the Inukshuk at the Olympics. This is called cultural misappropriation.

In a CBC news report, *Vancouver Olympic Emblem Comes under Fire* on April 27, 2005, the growing controversy among native leaders over the choice of the emblem for the 2010 Olympic Games was expressed. Peter Irniq, a former Nunavut commissioner explained how the Inukshuk has a meaning and a reason why it was built in certain locations and building the figures should not be taken lightly.

> Inuit never built Inukshuk with head, legs and arms. I have seen Inukshuk built more recently, 100 years maybe, by non-Inuit with legs and arms. These are not called Inukshuk. They are called inunguat –imitation of man, imitation of a person. The Olympic committee should have consulted with Inuit elders before they chose the design.

Grand Chief Edward John of the First Nations Summit said some native leaders were so upset with the logo they were prepared to walk out of the unveiling ceremony.

In Lemay's opinion it has lost its perspective as an art expression and is generalized as Canadian, not Inuit. Lemay thinks the Inukshuk, having many meanings in its ancient form, has been pushed into other forms to make it sell on the market, including into the shape of business cardholders, pendants and garden decorations.

Michael Millman, owner of the West End Gallery in Westmount, Quebec, explained how his family has been involved in the Inuit art industry since the 1940's when his grandmother owned Dominion Gallery on Sherbrooke Street in Montreal:

> I sell a lot of gifts and that is still one of the nice things about Inuit art, it is uniquely Canadian and nobody else really produces the style of work that our Inuit do. Some buyers are in search of something primitive, they ask specifically for this. In terms of Inukshuks sales have increased with the Olympic Winter Games approaching.

Norman Vorano, had another view of Inukshuk sales:

> For some artists in the north it is seen as a job and they fit in a niche in the market place. And that's not to say it has less cultural value. It is still important because it gives income to the younger artists who do carving. It gives them an opportunity to learn their craft, it gives them an opportunity to engage with their elders about things like culture and tradition in art. For some it would be a stepping stone so they could move up and be like the famous, well known artists. But for some others, they just want to make Inukshuks and know it is simply catering to a market demand, especially with the 2010 Olympic Games coming up soon.

Richard Murdoch is the director of FCNQ in Baie D'Urfe, Quebec (Federation des Cooperatives du Nouveau Quebec), the wholesale distribution center for the co-operatives in Nunavik and he explained how he was invited to produce the Inukshuks but,

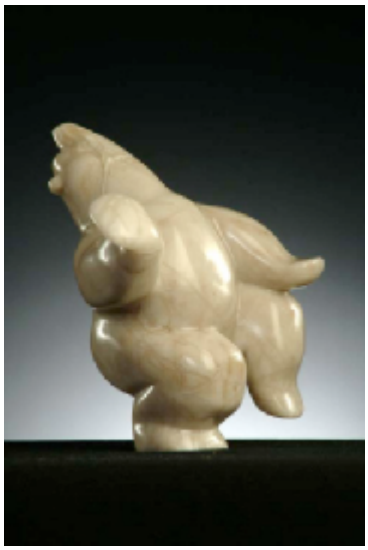
> we don't find it to be a good idea. An Inukshuk is a craft, there is no way of making art of an Inukshuk. Anyone can make that and it was our feeling it was the wrong direction. It doesn't really represent an Inuit carving. We see them made out of glass, peuter, metal. They're everywhere and I don't really find it to be a great piece of art. If we started making them the artist would get paid about twenty dollars and it is a lot of work for very little return and you're not going to build your reputation that way. So we will have this big event (2010 Olympic Games) and they will be producing in the north and for years after they will still be coming down from the co-ops in the north. It's not a good idea.

Although Murdoch maintained the FCNQ did not want to go in that direction of encouraging artists to produce only one subject, I observed many carvings in his showroom depicting what Diana Perrera referred to as the "tried and true" including a couple of dancing bears, mother and child scenes, hunters and other arctic animals.

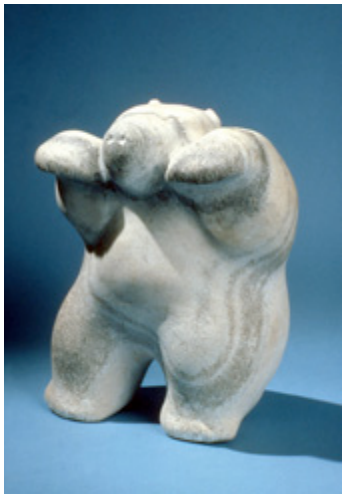
In discussions with my participants it was explained how importance is placed on the polar bear as it represents an animal that is associated with environmental concerns

with a risk of polar bears drowning and becoming extinct as ice bergs melt. According to Millman the polar bear also represents survival and a successful hunt for Inuit and many Inuit myths and legends involve the polar bear. With increased awareness of the Arctic, comes an increased interest in the polar bear and requests for the omnipresent dancing Polar bear. The polar bear skin was used to make garments by Inuit and it was also sold on the international market but this practice has diminished. The polar bear is an icon of Arctic Canada, like a poster child for climate change, as a beautiful animal that is now often photographed while on eco tours to see polar bears. Everyone wants a dancing bear, which is not exactly a traditional theme. Millman does not think it is traditional; it is where the market has gone. The carvers are not isolated, but the culture has changed since the 1950's. Also on a more practical level, with advanced power tools used for carving today Inuit artists are able to produce bears that are no longer stationary, but are more active as the dancing bear continues to be in demand. In using power tools artists are able to carve large pieces of stone and make the bear perfectly balanced on one or two legs. Millman explained that this along with the general trend and increased interest in action figures and Inuit sense of humour may account for the iconic dancing bear that is in every major gallery I visited while doing my research.

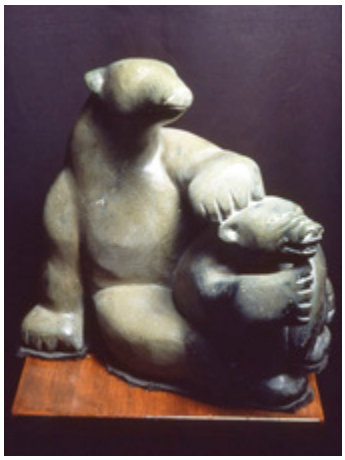
> Thirty years ago it was very rare to find a dancing bear. You would see bears, not dancing bears but more stationary bears. Up until about twenty years ago they were pretty much using hand tools to carve bears and to carve the dancing bear it had to be perfectly balanced. But these are big pieces to carve by hand and they generally worked in smaller dimensions. Today power tools are used and it makes it easier to work with big pieces. A lot of younger people who come into the gallery want to see action oriented pieces and the younger generation of artists has grown up with video games, things like that, a different feel entirely.



Dancing Bear, 2009, Alec Lawson Tuckatuck, Dorval, Alabaster, Photographer Stephen Gregg, © Courtesy of by Alec Lawson Tuckatuck



Bear, 1975, Pauta Saila, Baffin Island, White Stone, Photographer Unknown, © Courtesy of Inuit Art Foundation


Mother and Child Bear,1976, Kiugak Ashoona, Baffin Island, Green Stone, Photographer Unknown, © Courtesy of Inuit Art Foundation

Murdoch explained "not to denigrate but it is sheer volume sometimes. You have a good carver who is just doing the bear when he could be doing something else a bit more interesting. But there is the reality too that their buyers are asking for them".

John Bohm, an independent Inuit art dealer in Montreal, explained how he knew Pauta Saila, a very famous artist from Nunavut,

> who died a few months ago, and was famous for his dancing bears. He made one of the first ones and everyone was crazy about them. In the last fifteen to twenty years of his life I don't think he produced anything but the bears. And his son, who also died recently, produced loons and was famous for these. People were paying big money for the bears. Artists intentionally produce certain carvings that are emblematic or iconic pieces that are representative of Canada, the far north and something primitive and Inuit.

John Bohm has the work of one artist who produces only owls. They are selling quickly in his gallery. The artist is a very talented person, but that is what sells and he needs the money, so he makes them. Bohm had shelves of carvings organized by the artist and themes of what the artist produces. I saw shelves with many owls, loons,

mother and child scenes, polar bears and a few Inukshuks. Louis Gagnon mentioned Pauta as well and explained how "Pauta Saila can sell because of his name alone. Whereas another less known artist may not sell as much but is making more of a contribution to the Inuit image than Pauta Saila in some ways. This is how the market has developed".

Mary Foley, an archivist with the Department of Indian and Northern Development in Gatineau, Quebec explained how DIAND has a permanent collection that is housed at the CMC and they do loan large pieces to corporate offices. She explained how major banks including the Toronto Dominion Bank have their own Inuit collections and corporations in Canada will often have Inuit soapstone carvings in their offices on loan from DIAND or sometimes it might be a piece that is bought. Foley explained that it is a way of promoting Inuit art and promoting Canada on the international business and political scene, the scene of unresolved conflicts and claims by the Inuit.

Claire Porteous Safford is the manager of the Inuit Art Foundation in Ottawa. The Inuit Art Foundation was established in 1985 as a resource space to promote Inuit artists, to provide training and professional workshops for Inuit artists both in urban centers and for those artists wanting to come from the north. Claire referred to the IAF as a college without walls as workshop and teaching take place in various settings, not only the IAF. They have taken on responsibilities from DIAND and are now building biographies of Inuit arts and launched their website Inuit Art Alive (www.inuitartalive.ca) where they are building a data base of Inuit artist biographies. As I have mentioned in another section DIAND is gradually distancing themselves from the Inuit art market and this is an

example of one area they no longer want to be involved in. It ties in with the Inuit disc numbers that were introduced in the 1940's that eventually caused many problems for artists, buyers and collectors in finding and recording the artists' family names.

Porteous Safford explained how the Inuit art market has steam rolled ahead today and is now known as something that is,

> quintessentially Canadian, especially in the gift market. It is a sought after gift for things like weddings, graduations, and corporate gifts. Anybody needs to be informed of what is happening in the market, what people will buy and what they are looking for. There has to be a connection through marketing to know what the south is demanding and what artists in the north should be producing. Otherwise no one is going to buy it, what is the point in making it?

During my interview with Porteous Safford a buyer came into the gift shop, picked up an Inuit carving and asked, "Is this real? Is this from Canada?" The buyer went on to explain how she wanted a gift that was representative of Canada and the Arctic and a carving that was made by a real Inuit. The timing was good as Porteous Safford was explaining to me what buyers ask and look for in their shop and the customer arrived during this conversation.

Darlene Wight, Curator of Inuit Art at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, had another view on production of work that becomes iconic and emblematic. She thinks that producing polar bear and mother and child shows is not the way to present Inuit art. There needs to be more focus on the artist and not on the theme. Darlene Wight has been promoting solo exhibits by Inuit artists for several years at the Winnipeg Art Gallery and has been instrumental in helping artists launch their careers in Canada and internationally. It includes more recent work that is done as a form of healing as artists

address the impact of colonialism including the residential school systems, suicides, alcoholism and other social problems.

Controversy about Conservation of the Polar Bear/Polar Bear as an Icon for Global Warming/ Loss of Traditional Practices/Preserving Tradition in Stone

Growing public concern for and controversy over the hunting of polar bears has been ongoing since the signing of the 1973 International Agreement on Conservation of Polar Bears and their Habitat. The five polar nations including Canada, Greenland, Norway, the United States and Russia, worked together to protect polar bear habitat, feeding grounds, migratory routes, ban hunting of bears from aircraft and large motorized boats, conduct and coordinate management and research efforts and exchange research results and data. The agreement allows local people (Inuit) to hunt a quota of bears every year as per traditional practice (SeaWorld/Busch Gardens 2002).

With accelerated social changes and rapidly warming climate, conserving polar bears has become a complex and sometimes volatile issue with social, political and ecological dimensions spanning a range of institutional scales, with multiple competing perspectives in decision making. The Inuit rely on the polar bear for subsistence needs and their historical identity as wildlife users. With the settling of land claims over the past three decades the distribution of power in wildlife management systems has become an increasing area of conflict (Clark et al 2010:124). Inuit hunters maintain the polar bear population is increasing and polar bears can be seen in communities on a regular basis whereas in earlier times they lived on icebergs and stayed in areas where they could hunt and eat seals. Inuit community members are reporting there is more damage caused by polar bears today than fifteen years ago, but there is little consensus on why this is

happening. Some Inuit suggest the bears are in poor condition and are seeking food near humans. Scientists believe the population may not be in an over harvest situation but might in fact be stable in population despite increased hunting quotas. There is currently insufficient scientific and Inuit knowledge to resolve the paradox (Dowsley 2007:69 71). Inuit have been hunting polar bears for centuries and have built up a rich knowledge about their habitat and behaviour. This knowledge is expressed in the oral history, Inuktitut vocabulary and cultural traditions. The oral tradition is dependent on the continuation of the polar bear hunt and travel associated with it. Polar bear meat must be shared and eaten for its cultural and social significance to continue.

At the Gjoa Haven Trappers and Hunters Organization (2004) the following concerns were raised around polar bear hunting: the specialized vocabulary and concepts associated with subsistence activities are being lost. Another concern is the loss of income with quotas on trophy hunting for polar bears that average $20,000 per bear for Inuit hunters. Sport or trophy hunting largely from tourists from the United States brings a lot of economic benefit to the individual hunter and to the community. As each hunter is allowed a certain quota of polar bears they use a percentage of them for trophy hunting and polar bears have become a high profile species where there are ongoing negotiations over quotas (Red Deer Press 2010). These ongoing negotiations and disputes could explain the increased interest in polar bears in the past twenty years. With an increase in demand for polar bear carvings and ongoing negotiations between Inuit hunters and members of the scientific community, the polar bear is a controversial topic.

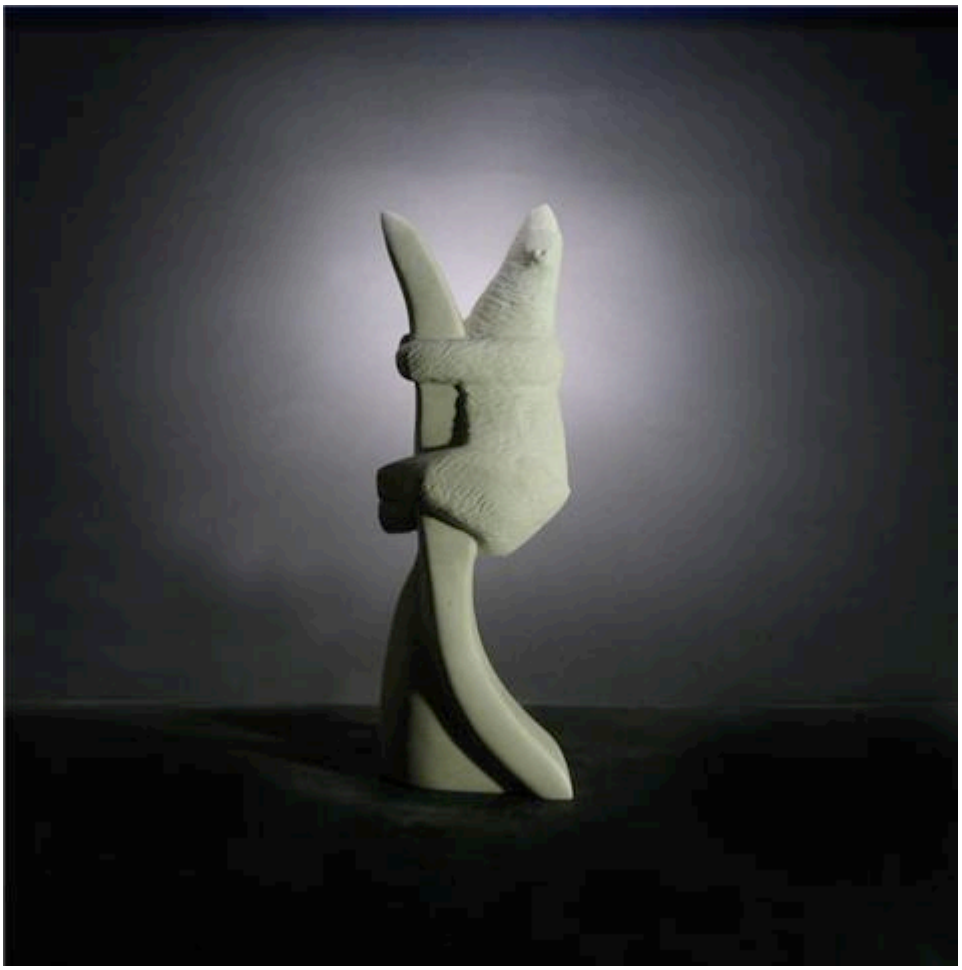
Alec Lawson Tuckatuck is a young emerging artist from Kuujjuaraapik, Nunavik who now lives in Dorval, Quebec. Although he holds a Bachelor's degree in Physical

Education from the University of New Brunswick, he is much happier working as an artist. He is unique as he is one of the only Inuit artists from Nunavik who does not work through the co-operatives and promotes himself. He does his own business plans, he designed his own website, www.InuitStoneCarving.com and works independently using a variety of materials. These include musk-ox hair and horns, caribou antlers, quartz, limestone and granite. In the summer of 2008 and 2009 Alec won awards for artistic excellence and the artist's choice award for sculptors at the Great Northern Arts Festival. Tuckatuck was also invited to attend the 2010 Olympic Games where he demonstrated his carving skills. I interviewed Tuckatuck twice and also attended a First Nations Festival in Montreal, where he was demonstrating his carving skills and promoting his work. Tuckatuck explained how young people are losing traditional skills and are consumed with television and electronics today. Tuckatuck wants to preserve his tradition in stone as he is concerned it is slowly being lost. He places much importance on pieces that reflect his history and culture as it was told to him by his ancestors and as he remembers it. This includes ancient myths and stories and the role of shamans. "These are considered living traditions, ones that are able to traverse history. As they are suitably reinvented to suit the occasion this is best understood as a sign if indigenous vitality rather than decadence" (Sahlins 1999:409). Alec maintains he is certainly driven by market demands while trying to develop his own style as he needs to sell the pieces he makes to earn a living, while placing much importance on traditional practices as he views them today.

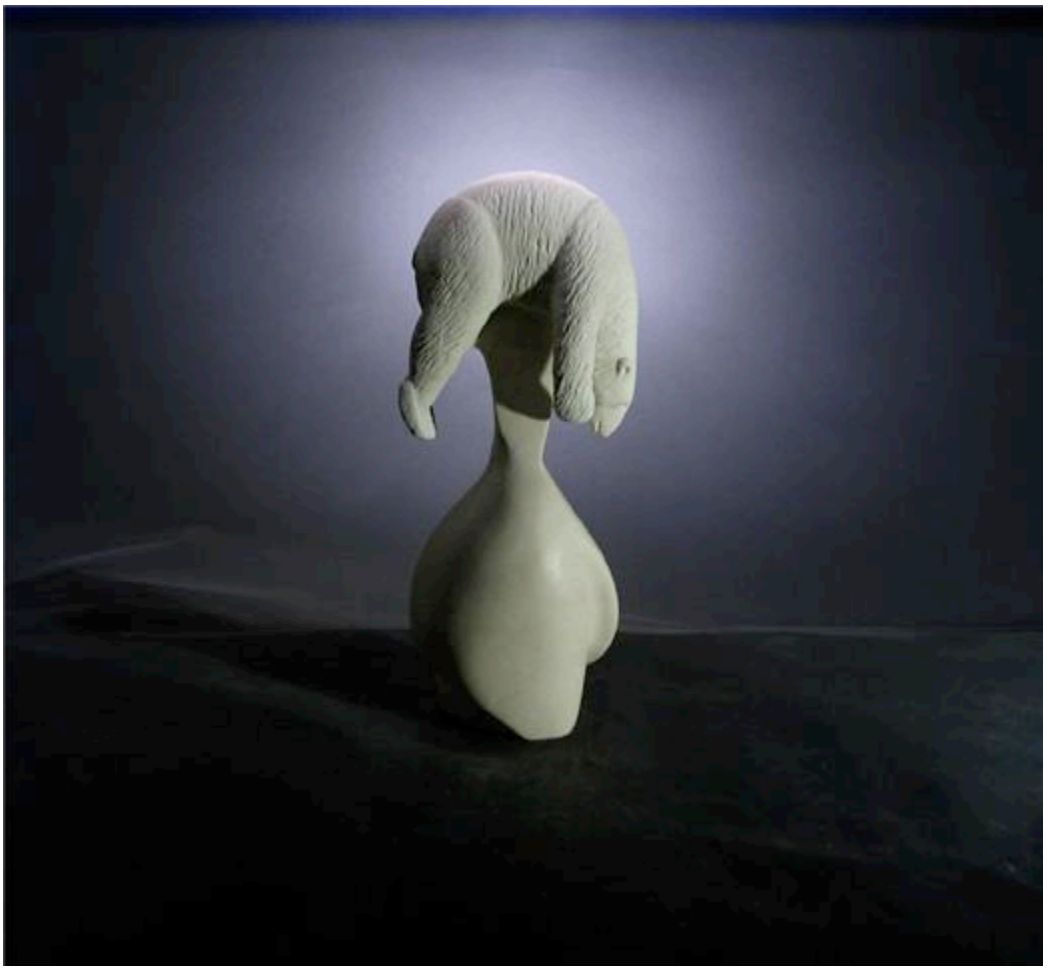
Tuckatuck had an exhibit at the Canadian Guild of Crafts I visited and the theme was global warming, where he had several carvings of polar bears made from limestone.

One carving depicted a polar bear hanging on to a very thin piece of ice sticking up out of the water titled *Tip of the Iceberg*, another with a polar bear lying on the tip of the iceberg in a state of collapse titled *Complete Exhaustion*. Tuckatuck hopes to bring attention to the serious problems with climate change in the north through his work. Tuckatuck sees the problem first hand whenever he visits Nunavik and how Inuit who rely on hunting for survival are affected by weather pattern changes. Migration patterns of animals become more unpredictable as migration patterns change, and the polar bears are threatened as the icebergs for them to rest on are slowly disappearing. Tuckatuck maintains the change in climate is very rapid and frightening. There is now a need for air conditioners in Nunavik as they are experiencing warm, humid summers, unlike anything that has been experienced before.

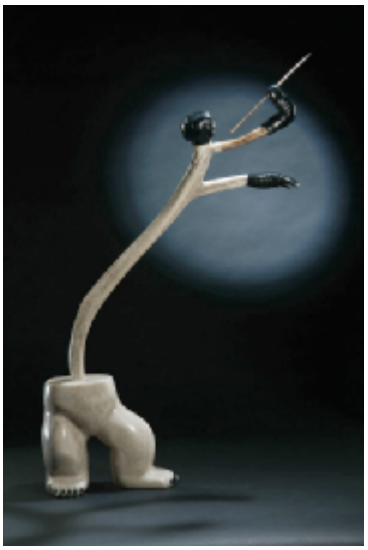
The carving of shamans was discouraged by the Anglican Church and missionaries and in turn buyers were not interested in receiving these kinds of sculptures until more recently when contemporary artists returned to their desires for self-understanding and awareness "They sought the rich metaphor of aboriginal teachers, wisdom of native folk and isolated artists who have worked beyond the mainstream" (Fraser 1970:49-50). Tuckatuck has chosen shamans, polar bears and themes based on stories and legends as they were told to him by his ancestors in his work that for him is iconic.



Tip of the Iceberg, 2009, Alec Lawson Tuckatuck, Kuujjuaraapik , Limestone, Photographer Alec Lawson Tuckatuck, © Courtesy of Alec Lawson Tuckatuck



Complete Exhaustion, 2009, Alec Lawson Tuckatuck, Kuujjuaraapik , Limestone, Photographer Alec Lawson Tuckatuck, © Courtesy of Alec Lawson Tuckatuck



Shaman in Transition, 2009, Alec Lawson Tuckatuck, Kuujjuaraapik , Chlorite (black soapstone), Caribou Antler, Alabaster, Photographer Stephen Gregg, © Courtesy of Alec Lawson Tuckatuck

Reviving Old Practices/Traditions in Inuit Art

Mattiusi Iyaituk is an Inuit carver from Akulivik, Quebec. I did not interview him directly but relied on previous interviews from the *Inuit Art Quarterly*, information from the Inuit Art Alive website and information from a few of my participants on his work. Mattiusi sold his first carving at the age of fourteen and got two dollars for the piece. Today he is a world famous artist, president of the Inuit Art Foundation and does solo exhibits internationally. Mattiusi completed a large installation piece in collaboration with Quebec artist Daniel Couvreur for a vocational school atrium in Nunavik. Part of the installation piece is made from marble brought to the Arctic from the same quarry that supplied Michelangelo. Mattiusi is influenced by and has always admired the work of Henry Moore, who is famous for his large installation pieces, according to Vorano.

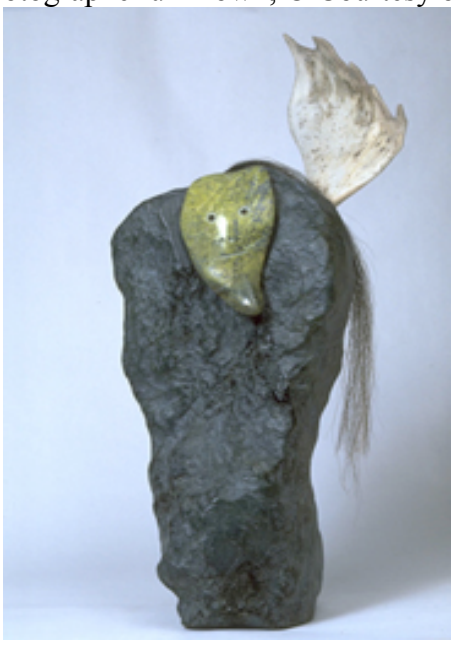
He uses a variety of materials in his work today, including river stones, moose antlers, walrus ivory and caribou antlers. He began his career years ago doing what

Perrera referred to as the tried and true and these pieces are considered to be the sort of Inuit iconography along with his more recent work. “His abstract works were discovered by accident.

> I started doing abstract forms in 1979. One day, I was doing a sculpture of a man, but I didn’t like it. So I just made shapes on one side. Since then, I have been doing sculptures using abstract forms. When you look at my sculpture, you don’t understand all of it. That way, you have the freedom to dream. Everyone has their own opinions about art, so I just give titles to each piece and leave the rest for dreams (Depper:4-5 1996).

According to Murdoch, Mattiusi is responsible for reviving an ancient carving practice with inlay faces, a practice that lay dormant for years. When the Inuit art industry began in the 1950’s this practice was discouraged as buyers often complained when the inlay face fell off the carvings. Mattiusi often carves based on his personal experiences and past memories, while also relaying legends. In Murdoch’s opinion this is part of the appeal of his work. Mattiuisi’s imagination is “way out there”. Gagnon described how Mattiusi got inspired to start making inlay pieces again after he heard an interview on the radio with Peter Murdoch, Richard’s father, who is now retired from the FCNQ. Peter Murdoch was discussing how impressive the inlay pieces were in terms of creativity and how no one really knows where this practice started. Mattiusi pushes the limits of creativity while his work remains very Inuit. Jacques DesRochers, Curator of Canadian Art, at the Montreal Museum of Fine Art explained how Mattiusi has evolved from doing traditional pieces to abstract contemporary work that focuses on legends and shamanism. He provides context, titles and is well articulated, and this is part of the reason for his success. Bohm mentioned how he knew Mattiusi well because he buys from him often and how Mattiusi has exhibited his work in Japan and Switzerland.

My Grandfather Waking Up,1980, Mattiusi Iyaituk, Akulivik, Steatite, Caribou Antler, photographer unknown, © Courtesy of Canadian Museum of Civilization



New Wing for the Shaman, 2000, Mattiusi Iyaituk, Akulivik, Stone, Caribou Antler, Muskox Hair, Ink, Photographer Heiko Wittenborn, © Courtesy of Avataq Cultural Institute

Porteous Safford mentioned how one of the board members at the IAF stated "I have gone from living in an igloo to having my own website in only fifty years," (Although she did not mention a name, we were discussing Iyaituk at the time and I got

the impression she was quoting him). In the contemporary world of constant change and innovation, Inuit seek to maintain some part of their lives as unchanging and constant. They seek both change and continuity. It is an attempt on the part of the Inuit to structure at least some part of social life within it as unchanging and invariant.

Traditions and rituals that are made to be directly related to the past most often occur when a society is undergoing rapid change, a rapid change that in turn weakens and destroys important social patterns to which old traditions hold meaning. When this occurs new traditions are transplanted or fused on old ones by borrowing from old official rituals and symbols that were specifically used as strong, engaging social practices. "Reinvented traditions or emblems in the Canadian identity context are highly relevant to recent historical innovation, the nation state, national symbols and histories, which all rest on social engineering" (Hobsbawm, Ranger 1983:4,5,12,13). I demonstrate this in the examples chosen as icons and emblems by Tuckatuck and Iyaituk to represent change and reviving of old styles. In using examples from my discussants, I have demonstrated as well how non-Inuit transform Inuit icons and emblems into representations of corporate values and to promote Canadian identity on the international stage. Emphasis is placed on the importance of the polar bear hunt in preserving traditional practices and controversy around the hunt. Inuit artists choose specific icons and emblems as a way of preserving and reviving traditions and bringing awareness to the controversy around the polar bear hunt while fulfilling popular market demands for the polar bear. Given enough time Inuit artists will find a way to transform an already transformed Inukshuk into a chosen traditional practice that is more representative of their history.

Chapter 5

Responses to Colonialism

There are many responses to colonialism addressing the impact these forces continue to have on Inuit society today. Artists express their reactions to the colonial atrocities they experienced and explain how carving these experiences in stone is a form of healing for them, as well as addressing the ongoing problems with multinational corporations, mining companies and state involvement that does not allow the Inuit to have an equal voice in decision making or ownership of any kind in natural resources in the Arctic. It is not only the Inuit artists who express their frustrations. I present in this chapter the views of several individuals about the ongoing colonial project and their reactions to it.

Arnaqu, an Inuk who is not an Artist

Arnaqu is an Inuit from Nunavik, now residing in Montreal. He is not an artist but has strong opinions about how he sees the situation in the North and most of his opinions and views were not mentioned by the non-Inuit participants in my fieldwork with the exception of one non Inuit-artist, Sharon Sutherland, who worked in the Arctic as a teacher for six years.

Arnaqu was concerned about his identity being revealed as he works for one of the organizations he criticized in our interview. I met with Arnaqu, away from the office, where we had an informal discussion around how he sees development in Nunavik. I felt somewhat intimidated during this interview and did not take notes or dare to ask if I could tape record it. Being conscious of how "the Inuit have been the most studied group of people in the world" according to participants in my research, I thought taking out a

tape recorder and pen and notepad would be setting up a scene where he may react and think I was just another curious white person wanting to document and study him. This thought did occur to me several times as I asked how I was different from any other person studying the Inuit. I dealt with the situation by trying my best to put him at ease and not be intrusive with taping and writing as he spoke. He did mention a couple of times how information gathered from him may not be of much help to me because he is not an artist. This did not prove to the case as he spoke passionately, giving descriptions of his personal experience with what he considers being the ongoing colonial experience and "Inuit industry" in Nunavik.

Arnaqu explained how every organization including Makivik, Avataq and other organizations that appears to be managed and operated by the Inuit, are not. They are more like state-run institutions. The co-operatives were never owned by the Inuit as they have not been paid dividends, do not share in the profits and all the profits get re-invested back into the co-operatives. He sees them as bureaucracies run by white people who comprise a top-heavy administration with few Inuit in positions of power or influence. In most of these organizations the board of directors is Inuit, but in the day-to-day operations, non Inuit are the decision makers. There are several reasons for this he explained. The Inuit do not have the necessary skills, education to fill these positions. The average Inuk does not care as they are too busy focusing on immediate needs such as adequate housing, feeding themselves and simply trying to survive in what they consider substandard living conditions. Arnaqu is frustrated with the image portrayed of the passive Inuit but feels that they live up to this image as they do not take any action and do not care on many levels about what is happening to them.

Arnaqu described, based on personal experience, how when he worked for Inuit organizations in the past, they tended to hire only those Inuit who would not "shake the status quo," only those who would agree with policies put in place by white people within the organization. They want "yes" people, not someone who will cause friction". He described how this is evident in their hiring process where inappropriate questions are asked in interviews where the white administration wants to know about any involvement the Inuit candidate may have on a political level in the community. If their views are deemed to be too controversial or not in keeping with the organization's ideology and perspectives, the Inuit candidate will not get hired.

In his opinion the bureaucracies mentioned are looking for individuals who will work well and co-operatively with them as the non-Inuit administrators think they are the experts in knowing what is best for the Inuit. The few Inuit who do get involved at a political level in organizations lose touch with the needs of everyday Inuit and tend to cater to the white decisions that are made as they are forced to in order to keep their jobs. He referred to the FCNQ as the "FCNQ kingdom", claiming the Murdoch family and associates control the co-operatives and are still very much an informal government in the North.

Arnaqu believes that colonialism and racism continue to have a strong presence in the North today and it will continue this way until Inuit people become less passive and begin to take control of their own lives. This would involve less dependence on government subsidies and handouts and fighting corporations that have strong interests in the region, with mining companies being the biggest threat today. Mining companies are not respecting agreements and continue to encroach on land that is not designated for

them to mine. Arnaqu described how mining companies that signed agreements with the Inuit do not always respect the terms of the agreement. They encroach on land and in one instance the mining operations were so close they were literally in the back yard of some Inuit families. The mining companies pay royalties to the Inuit as compensation for this but giving large sums of money periodically does not work well. Arnaqu described how in 2008 a major mining company paid each Inuit a lump sum as per the agreement. The result was a season of drunkenness, accidents, and bootleggers coming from the South selling alcohol, as they knew the royalty checks were being distributed. Arnaqu described the situation as disheartening and alarming and he does not want to relive the experience again.

The white southerners who go to the north for their own financial gain, employed in many capacities including teachers, nurses, doctors and administrators are often seasonal workers who return to the South for the summer. They are provided with housing that is considered elaborate by Inuit standards and when they leave for the season they board up their dwellings while Inuit continue to struggle with housing shortages and substandard over crowded living conditions. White southerners get involved in intimate relationships or marriages with mostly Inuit women. If they have children with Inuit partners, in most cases they leave when it is time for the children to attend school as the white southerners insist on having the best education for their children and not focusing on how to bring quality education to the North. Arnaqu has witnessed first hand how some white southerners abuse their power in their professional relationships with Inuit and pointed out how this would not be tolerated in the south. Criminal charges would be pursued but because they can do it in the North without being challenged it persists.

Arnaqu expressed anger and frustration with the Inuit community for not being strong enough to say "We don't want the whites here; we can teach the children ourselves and take on some these jobs ourselves." He explained how Nunavik, with a population of approximately 11,000 Inuit, employs thousands of white people to "babysit" the Inuit. Arnaqu holds little hope of seeing Inuit assuming control of their own destiny during his lifespan.

Although Arnaqu sees a need for Inuit to stay in the North to preserve their culture and continue to negotiate claims and occupy their homeland, he also points out how they cannot advance with the necessary resources being in the South. Arnaqu longs for his village and at times feels so homesick and saddened by conditions in the North. Yet he will not move back there as the shortage of necessities including adequate housing, education and affordable living will keep him in the South.

The Inuit Industry as Viewed by Sharon Sutherland: non-Inuit Artist who taught in Iqaluit, Nunavut, for Six Years

Sharon Sutherland is a non-Inuit artist who worked in Iqaluit, Nunavut for six years until 2000, doing contract work through McGill University. It involved teaching at the Arctic Art College in Iqaluit, Nunavut. Initially she accepted a short term contract and ended up staying six years. She taught everything from English language, grammar, reading and printmaking to methods of organizing art exhibitions as part of market strategies. She described what she called "colonialism in progress" and acknowledged how she was a part of this Inuit industry. Sharon's motivation for going to the Arctic involved a strong desire to visit the region and paint Arctic scenes, and monetary motivation as she had an opportunity to make a good salary to pay off student loans and

to have nice accommodation and travel expenses paid. Sharon painted Arctic scenes and sold them as greeting cards to tourists who visited the Arctic. She has her own website Arctic Rose Gallery, where she sells her Arctic scene cards as well.

Sharon found herself in a position where she was teaching Inuit students about famous Inuit artists and their accomplishments. In her opinion the Inuit did not care if the artists were famous in the South or internationally. They placed more emphasis and importance on who the individual was in relation to kinship within the community. There were many challenges Sharon faced and described in her experiences during the six years she was in the North.

Lack of motivation or interest on the part of her art students to develop and market their work was a challenge. The students were not interested in this and place more emphasis on the land, hunting and fishing and carving when there is time or money is needed. In Sharon's opinion her students did not fit in to a structured setting where time, punctuality and long term goals were emphasized. The artists rely on and trust the co-operatives to buy their work as these institutions have been in place for a long time. Artists will also sell their work to local tourists and independent dealers and bypass the co-operatives, but never sell to each other as they have no use for the work they produce. As some artists make more money in the North, class structures have been introduced, with the wealthier Inuit owning more modern machinery and equipment. The poor Inuit continue to struggle to make a living everyday and that is where a lot of their energy is placed.

Sharon thinks the "art industry" is a western concept and very few Inuit artists place importance on it. There tends to be pressure on the Inuit when they attempt to get a

western education as they are seen as being somewhat of an outcast as they take on "white southern ways" and may not be trustworthy anymore. In order to attend the Arctic college students must leave their families and villages for long periods of time and are no longer part of everyday life in their communities. Artists who have been successful tend to live in the South and have been able to integrate into the southern capitalist structures. They are in tune with what the market wants and they produce accordingly. The famous artists can sell work based on their name alone too. There are only a handful of successful highly skilled carvers and they tend to be from Nunavut, not Nunavik. Sharon thinks the work produced in Nunavik is stagnant and continues to depict what she described as traditional pieces involving animals, women, hunters and children. The work from Nunavik is not as sophisticated in detail and expression as that in Nunavut nor is the stone as nice.

Sharon sees this whole process in broader terms, as trying to merge two cultures together that have fundamentally different values, concepts and ideology. Inuit do not live by a watch. They sleep, hunt and fish when they want or when it is the appropriate season and are not interested in the nine to five sort of lifestyle that white people have. Success is scary for them as it brings change that includes weaker family ties, more travelling and a structured way of life they are not accustomed to. Inuit art students are often not willing to commit to a three-year program to obtain a diploma.

The art college in Iqaluit and other organizations in the Arctic tend to have Inuit representation on the board of directors but in the day-to-day operations white southerners are the decision makers. Inuit who do get hired tend to work in menial jobs. Sharon concluded that the art industry and the "Inuit industry" of the North is a white

paternalistic structure but she does not know what the alternative is. There was hope at one time for Inuit to take on responsibilities in these facilities, but the mining companies have brought in their own people to work and Inuit are given menial jobs there as well.

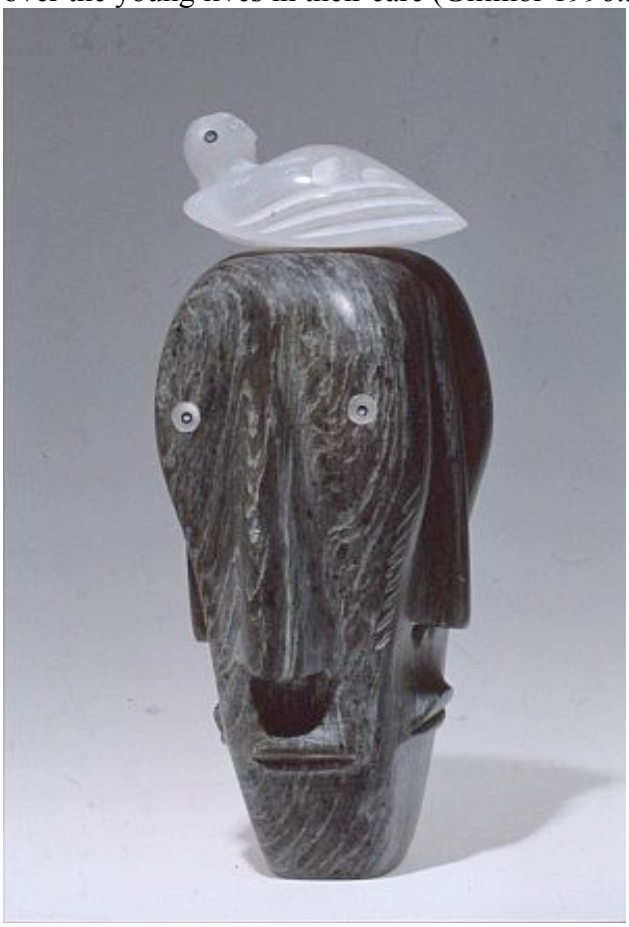
Art as a Form of Healing From Traumatic Colonial Experiences

Diana Perera described how Inuit artists are using carving today as a way of healing from traumatic past experiences that were a result of the overall colonial experience. This involved, in her opinion, displacement, discrimination, the residential school system and forced sedentary lifestyles. She explained how artists take risks in producing these kinds of carvings as they are not always well received by non-Inuit and within the Inuit community itself.

David Ruben Piqtoukun is a prominent artist originally from Nunavut, who uses his art as a form of healing as he describes and documents in his artwork events that took place from his childhood memories. He lives on Lake Simcoe, outside of Toronto. Ruben says that carving provides him with a means to recuperating from childhood emotional trauma including his experiences with the residential schools, physical abuse and sexual abuse, and it helps him regain his cultural identity. He produces images of suffering and transformation in his work that includes sixty pieces dealing with his childhood pain (Gunderson 2007:30-31). As a young child David Ruben Piqtoukun lived in camps along the Arctic coast. At the age of five, he was sent to a residential school run by the Roman Catholic Church. Of this work he says:

> The four faces pointing in four directions represent the all-seeing nuns. They attempted to watch over and control the Inuit children in their school, even to control their inner lives. But the nuns could not see everything. They were blind to the own spirit hovering directly above them. The carved grey Brazilian soapstone

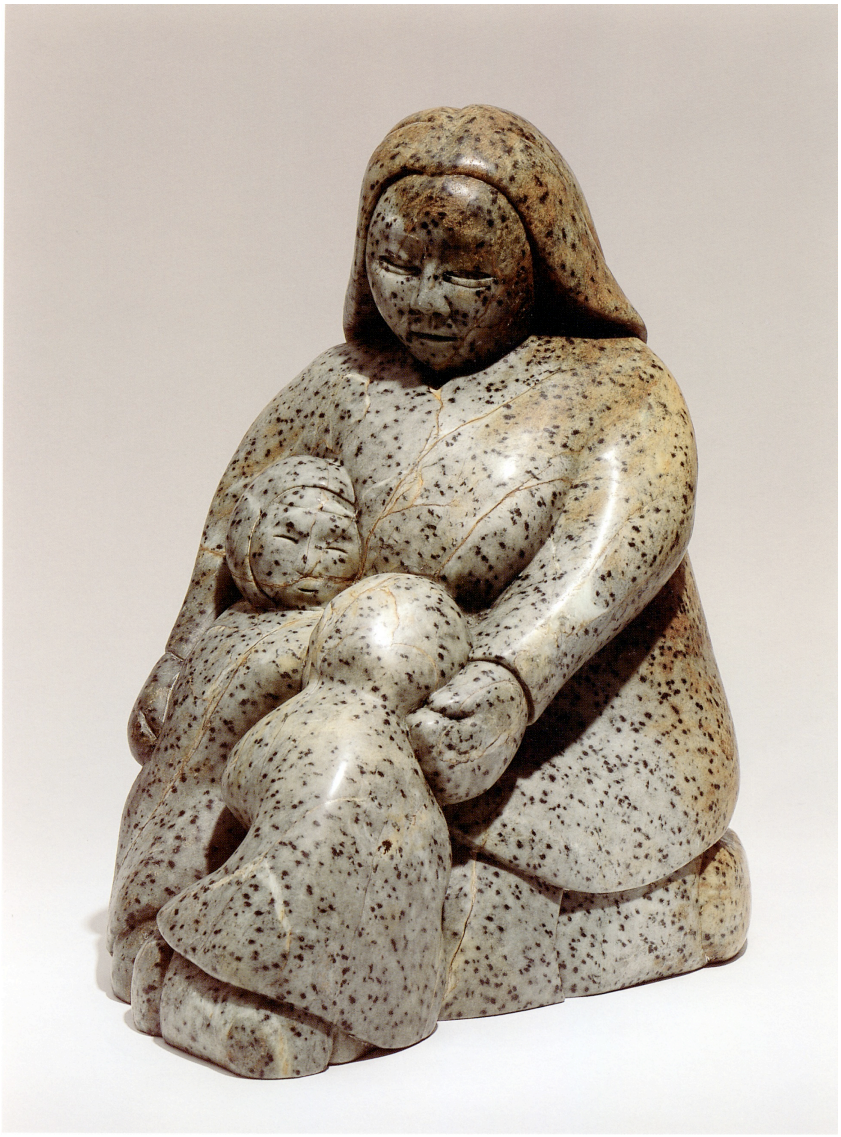
> describes the nuns. In contrast, the owl spirit is fashioned from glowing, translucent Italian alabaster. The piece reflects a fascinating mixture of rebellion and pity for those who had control over the young lives in their care (Gillmor 1996:32).



The Ever-Present Nuns, 1995, David Ruben Piqtoukun, Paulatuk, Brazilian Soapstone, Italian Crystal, Alabaster, African Wonderstone, Arizona Pipestone, Photographer Ernest Mayer © Courtesy of Winnipeg Art Gallery

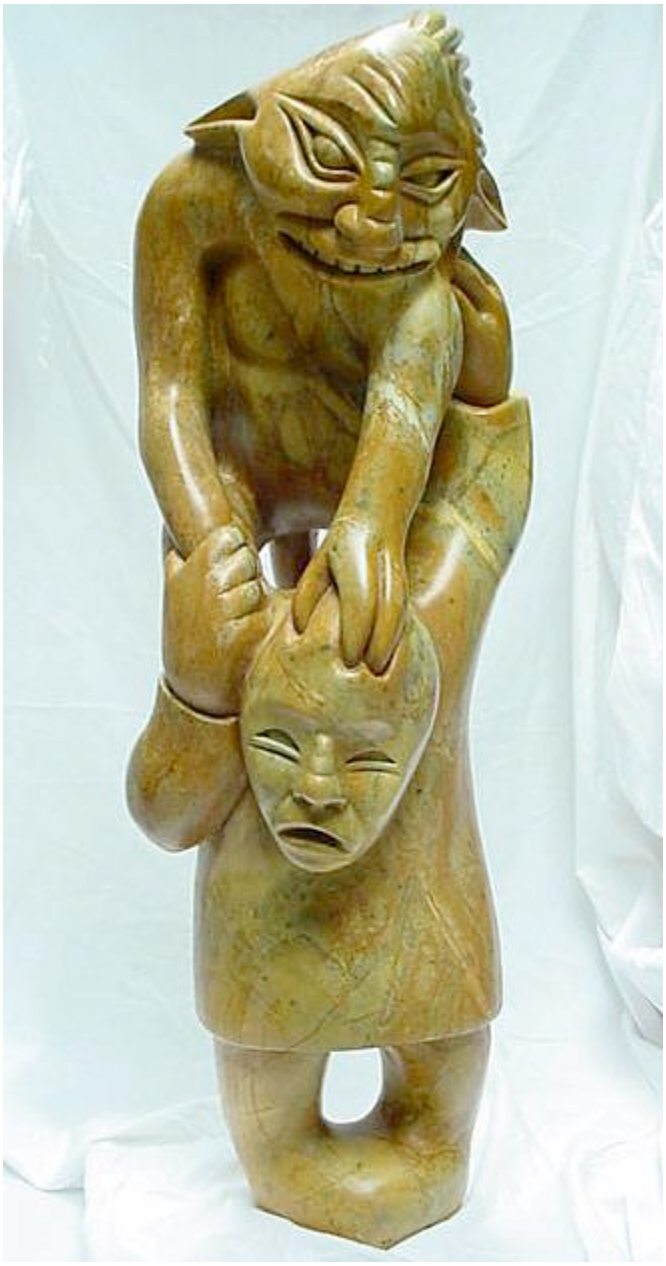
David Ruben Piqtoukun's brother, Abraham Anghik Ruben, produced a carving titled *The Last Goodbye* in 2001. Anghik Ruben lives on Salt Spring Island in British Columbia today. He described how his "inner clarity faded" when at the age of eight he was forced to leave his family and the nomadic life he had known to attend a Catholic residential school. This began a dark period of personal and cultural upheaval that he refers to as "my incarceration where I was to become a member of a whole culture turned

upside down". Abraham remained in the residential schools for eleven years during which time he lost his culture, his connections with his community, his ability to speak Inuktitut and his sense of self. *The Last Goodbye* was shown in a solo exhibition in 2001 at the Winnipeg Art Gallery. An autobiographical work, it depicts Abraham's mother, Bertha Ruben, holding two of his siblings David, five and Martha six, prior to their departure for residential schools: "It stirs deep emotion, the universal well of grief parents and children experience when they are torn apart" (Gunderson 2005:20-21).



The Last Goodbye, 2001, Abraham Anghik Ruben, Paulatuk, Brazilian Soapstone, Photographer Ernest Mayer, © Courtesy of Winnipeg Art Gallery

Abraham Anghik Ruben also produced a carving titled *Wresting with my Demons* that represents his struggles with the impact of his years in residential schools and twenty years of alcoholism (Gunderson 2005:20).



Wrestling with my Demons, 2001, Abraham Anghik Ruben, Paulatuk, Brazilian Soapstone, Photographer Ernest Mayer, © Courtesy of Winnipeg Art Gallery

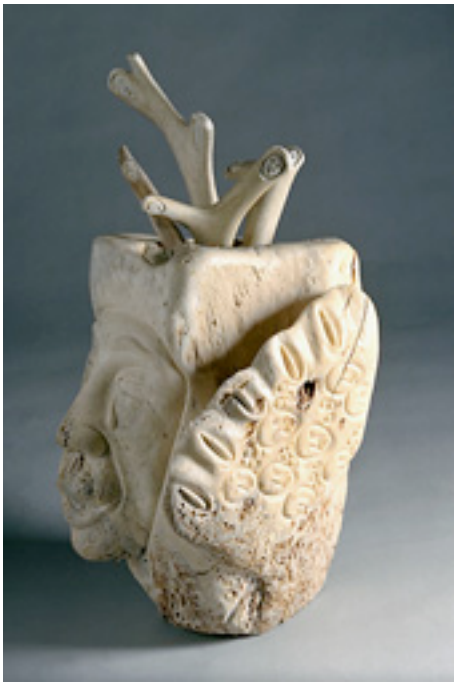
Guislaine Lemay, Curator of Material Culture at the McCord Museum in Montreal, explained in our interview how artists are expressing community suffering in their carving today. The carvings based on memories address alcoholism, suicide and drowning, which occurs frequently as travel on boats is common. Lemay pointed out how

this work is received with mixed reactions from the Inuit community. Some Inuit artists and the members of the community at large do not always like this new form of carving and find it disturbing, embarrassing and shameful. They do not want the world to know about the problems they face in their communities and for these reasons the work is not always well received. Lemay suggested I look at the work of Manasie Akpalaipak. I contacted the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec in Quebec City, where some of his work was donated by Raymond Brosseau, who had an extensive Inuit art collection and his own museum. When it closed in recent years Brosseau donated all of his work to the Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec.

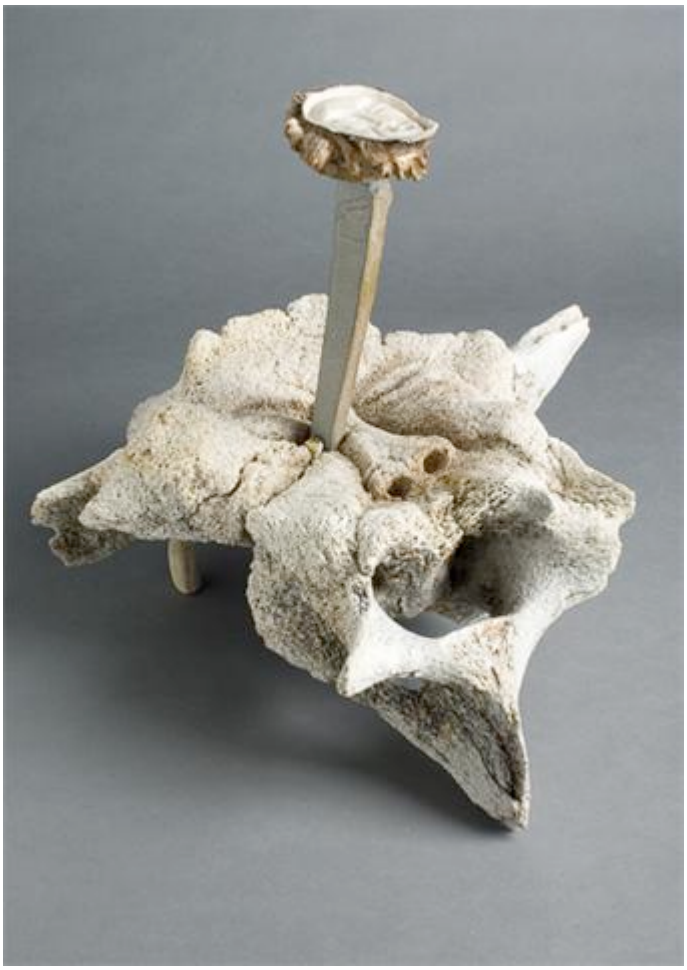
Manasie lives in Toronto today but works in a cottage in Hull to avoid city distractions. City distractions refer to the temptations in the city to drink. Manasie explained the carving of the man's head with the bottle coming out of it:

> I guess it's part of me and part of the culture. I lost quite a few cousins with alcohol and suicide. You hear these stories from each community. It always has something to do with alcohol abuse. I was going through that. I'm still fighting it myself. That particular piece is a hangover kind of thing: you're fed up; you have this bottle in your head; it's controlling you. I felt it is not just me but for a lot of Inuit people who are caught in this situation. This was especially true when I lived in Montreal as friends would come down and all they wanted to do was drink, drink, drink. After a while you get the impression all the Inuit people are doing that (Ayre 1993:40).

Untitled, 1991, Manasie Akpalaipak, Ikpaiqjuk, Brazilian Soap Stone, Whale Bone, Photographer Unknown, © Courtesy of Inuit Art Foundation



Remembrance of a Shipwreck, 1994, Manasie Akpaliapik, Ikpaiqjuk, Whale Bone, Caribou Antler, Photographer Paul Dionne, © Courtesy of Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec



Suicide, 1995, Manasie Akpaliapik, Ikpaiqjuk Whalebone, argillite, caribou antler, Photographer Paul Dionne, © Courtesy of Musée national des beaux-arts du Québec

In a presentation at Concordia University in April 2008, Ward Churchill responded to a question about the alcoholism that is destroying indigenous communities today. He said it is a direct result of colonialism, along with the high rate of suicide. He explained how anyone who lived through the experiences of the residential school system, which he considers genocide, has emotional and psychological problems today as a result of the trauma. In the period of colonization when it is not contested by armed resistance, when the sum total of harmful nervous stimuli overstep a certain threshold, the

defensive attitudes of the natives give way and they then find themselves crowding the mental hospitals. They are labeled with psychiatric terms of psychoses and disorders. There is thus during this calm period of successful colonization a regular and important mental pathology which is the direct product of oppression (Fanon 1963:204).

Mattiusi Iyaituk produced a carving titled *We Used to Sell Skins to the Store*s in 1999. I do not have an explanation from Iyaituk about this carving. My interpretation is that he is making a statement about the exploitation and collapse of the fur trade and how it left the Inuit in a state of crisis where they were starving and stores would no longer buy from them. Rita Novalinga, the General Manager of the FCNQ, explained how "my father witnessed some of his cousins starving to death while the HBC warehouses were full of flour that could have been used to preserve our lives, I cannot accept that this is the way it was meant to be" (Murdoch & Tulugak 2007:282). The introduction of the soapstone carving industry was a means of addressing the crisis that followed when the fur trade collapsed.

We Used to Sell Skins to the Stores, 1999, Mattiusi Iyaituk, Akulivik, Limestone, Marble, Photographer Kenji Nagai, © Courtesy of Inuit Art Foundation

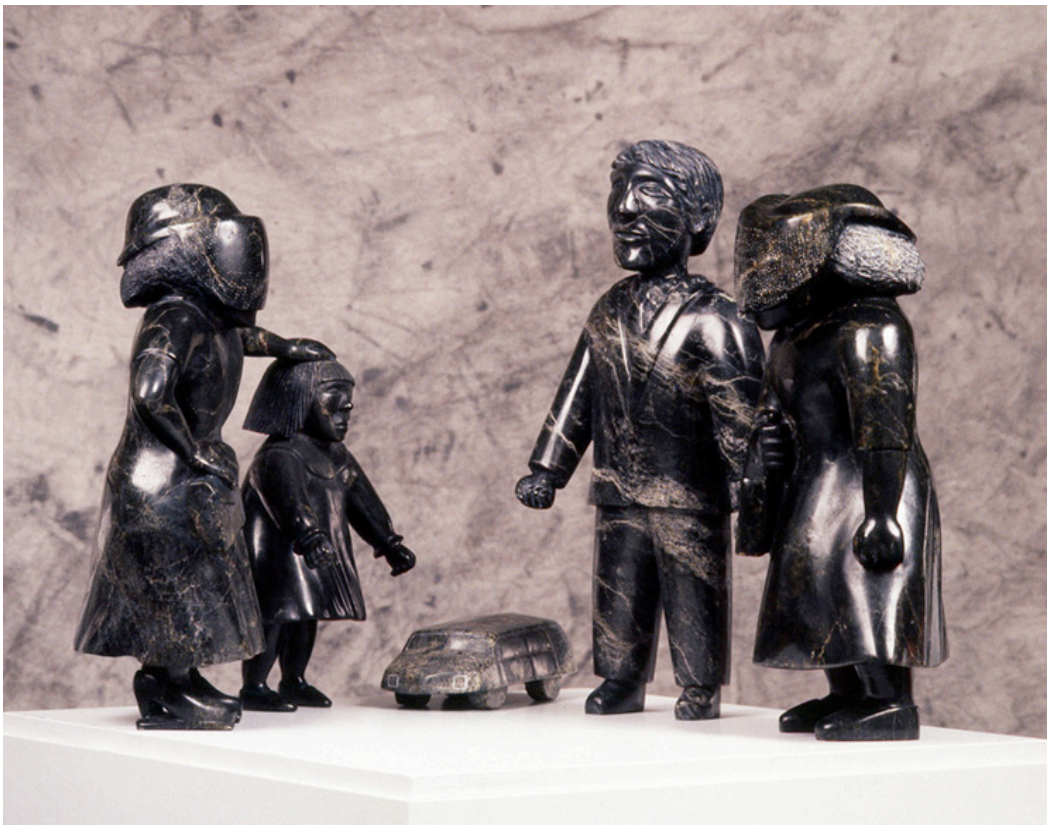
Diamond Jenness, an anthropologist who wrote his Arctic diary from 1913 to 1916 made the following observation many years later when he returned to the Arctic for a visit:

> To outward appearances the Inuit were healthy still, although hundreds of them had been hospitalized with tuberculosis during the last fifteen years. Inwardly they had changed greatly. Gone was the sturdy, bearing and proud assurance of former years. They seemed distrustful and listless; instead of looking straight into my face they watched me from the corners of their eyes. They were sick in their souls, sick with the malady we have seen in Europeans who were uprooted from their homes and their work during and after the recent world war and herded into makeshift refugee camps, where months sometimes years of humiliating dependence on strangers for their daily bread gradually undermined their morale and sapped their energy and courage. Fortunately they have not changed entirely. They have not lost the most characteristic

> trait of their ancestors, the superior sensitive funny bone. Their faces light up at trivial jokes and glow with the old time animation (Jenness 1970:21-22) Jenness predicted that the Inuit would vanish as a race as a result of dependency and acculturation.

Ovilu Tunnillie (Leroux et al 1996) carves from her autobiographical experiences of being taken to a sanatorium as a young child from 1957-59:

> While I was away, I was taken by automobile to see these two women from the hospital where I stayed. A woman and a man who were social workers accompanied me on this trip, to where, I don't know. Maybe it was during the month of August. When I saw these two, I really noticed the way they were dressed and their faces were hidden. Well, I could see them but they were unrecognizable as they wore hats that had lace pulled down in front of their faces and they each had purses. I really looked at how they were dressed and having seen them like this has been the most memorable for me. I have not met any white person such as these two yet. I wonder sometimes if they were ashamed of their faces because I've never seen that before. The hospital where I stayed was in Ninga, somewhere near Manitoba. It was after we moved out of the hospital that we went to see these two veiled women. So this has been the most memorable part of my life while I was away there. And I returned to Cape Dorset in the month of May (1996:239).



The Group, 1991, Ovilu Tunnillie, Cape Dorset, Serpentine, Photographer Robert Kenziere, © Courtesy of Inuit Art Foundation

The consequences of the cultural shock and psychological damage inflicted by the the West on Inuit resulted in the despondency theory that was popular in the mid-twentieth century (Sahlins 1999:3). It is a logical precursor to dependency theory that Jenness claimed the Inuit would disappear as a race, as did Kroeber (Sahlins 1999) manifest before him in explaining,

> with primitive tribes, the shock of culture contact is often sudden and severe. Their hunting lands may be taken away, their immemorial customs are suppressed and despondency settles in. Under the blocking out of old established ideals and prestiges, without provision for new values and opportunities to take their place, the resulting universal hopelessness will weigh doubly heavy because it reaffirms the inescapable frustration in personal life (1999:3).

But as it turned out victims of colonialism began to take control of their own modern history.

The self-awareness of culture that has emerged in the Third and Fourth worlds in the past few decades has resulted in focusing on values that are practiced in every day living, values in daily living that are deemed in need of defending for fear of losing their existence entirely (Sahlins 1999:3). According to Turner, (Sahlins 1999) this does not mean a simple nostalgic desire for igloos or some such "fetishizing repositories of a pristine identity" (1999:10). Turner maintains that trying to hold people as hostages to their histories would in fact deprive them of history. What this signifies is the demand of peoples for their "own space within the world cultural order". It does not mean a rejection or refusal of commodities and relations in the world order but rather an "indigenization of modernity" (1999:10).

The carvings I show here are done by well established artists who have attained certain freedom to carve whatever they want without worrying about market demands. Their work will sell based on their names alone. This however is not the case with all other artists who continue to produce based on market demands. I doubt if any work produced by a less-accomplished artist on any of the topics illustrated here would be received favorably by the average buyer and this is where education and awareness can play an important role in addressing the resistance of buyers to accept Inuit as part of modern society and to address colonial influences. The carvings I refer to above would not be found in a gallery or store. They are in a few major museums or in private collections.

Arnaqu mentioned how he feels somewhat ashamed and embarrassed about the social problems in his community today. He feels conflicted as on the one hand there is a need to address the problems and look for solutions, while on the other hand at times he

would like to ignore them as he feels embarrassed and ashamed about the conditions and problems in the North. He also feels shame and embarrassment around the ways some Inuit struggle with alcoholism and violence in urban settings. There is frustration expressed by non-Inuit involved in the socially constructed Inuit art industry around why the Inuit have not shown a more keen interest in or integrated the concepts involved in being successful participants in the capitalist functioning of the Inuit art market.

Artistic Expression of Mining Disputes/Domination

The following explanations from Inuit artists about their experiences with non-Inuit domination, frustrations around not being heard and with mining disputes are further examples of what Arnaqu described as they relate to Inuit art. Inuit artists across the Canadian Arctic express similar views to those of Arnaqu. The situation he describes is not unique to Nunavik.

Leah Inutiq was dismissed from her position as curator at a museum in Iqaluit, Nunavut as there were disputes in the white-dominated institution. Among other things, she held workshops with children of varying ancestors where Inuit terms for all of the body parts were used in relaying Inuit stories and legends (Mitchell 1997b:6). Inutiq explained in an interview with Mitchell in 1990 how:

> Inuit are very silent people, but it is time to say and do something. She referred to the relationship between the Inuit and white people as "an unnecessary state of cold war, where Inuit have trouble because some haven't realized how aggressive white people are, not to be insulting, but that's your lifestyle. When there are tough decisions to be made, Inuit are reluctant to participate. I wish I could be as aggressive as the White people" (Mitchell 1997b:5-6).

Several Inuit acknowledged how their customary reticence causes them to be misunderstood and disregarded. Charlie Kogvik explained how

> when we come up against something we don't agree with our way has always been to walk away. We have to stay and let them, the people we disagree with, get in our shoes (Mitchell 1997b:5).

Abraham Anghik expressed his views with Mitchell in an interview in 1991. For Anghik Inuit art is political, but in a positive way. Rather than focusing on what's wrong, he said

> Inuit tend to focus on an idealized past, making the statement over and over again that this is the way things should be. Inuit in general value balance and harmony with nature and one's fellow beings too highly to go on the attack (Mitchell 1997b:7).

In a symposium on Inuit art held in 1992, Elder Iyola Ingwatsiak of Cape Dorset explained

> I enjoyed being there but the problem was that we sat there like pieces of art in a showcase display. The non-Inuit at the conference spoke as much as they pleased about their own lives and how they lived like Inuit. But they never gave us a chance to speak or asked us questions about our work. The white people's domination as usual. They think they are the experts and know everything about Inuit. This goes on all the time. I myself felt that the white people should be asking us Inuit what we think rather than encouraging the non-Inuit to talk about their childhood in our homeland. (This was in reference to John Houston, James Houston's son being asked by a collector to describe his experiences growing up in Cape Dorset (Mitchell 1997b:5).

Gilbert Hay who is from Labrador Quebec, explained that Inuit art is described as "memory art," because of the focus on apolitical aspects of an ancient way of life:

> You ask why Inuit artists are producing "memory art." It's because of fear. Look at us today. For the last 150 or 200 years our culture has been sabotaged by you guys, your values. I'm wearing your

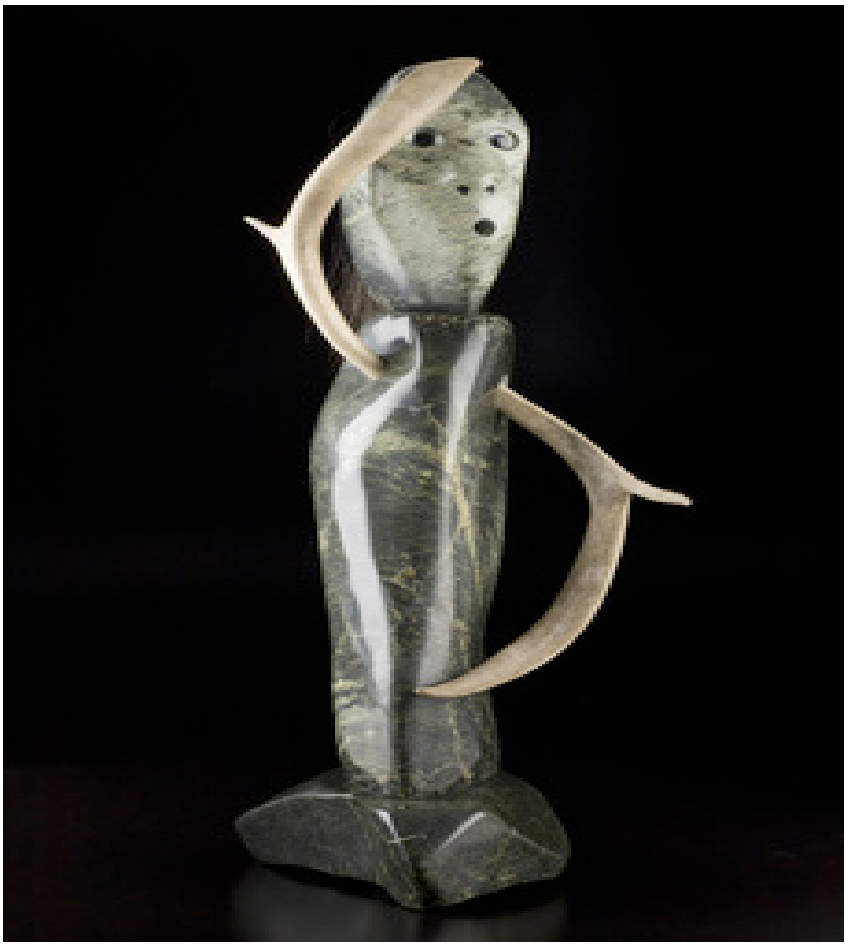
clothing. Any culture tries to hold onto what it's losing. We were and still are trying to document our own history. Many times our works are about our legends, and events such as mass starvation. The only way we are able to hold onto many of our cultural values is by reducing art to forms related to and centered around that culture. Right now at the stage we're at, everybody is producing art. But we can only produce a certain type of art-the so called accepted art. It's the safest place to be. You don't often see Inuit venturing to make art that's an expression of what's going on today because it's dangerous dangerous in the sense that abstract art can get carried away (Mitchell 1997b:6).

Discussion of Mining, 1996, Gilbert Hay, Nain, Soapstone, Photographer Ray Fennelly, © Courtesy of Inuit Art Foundation

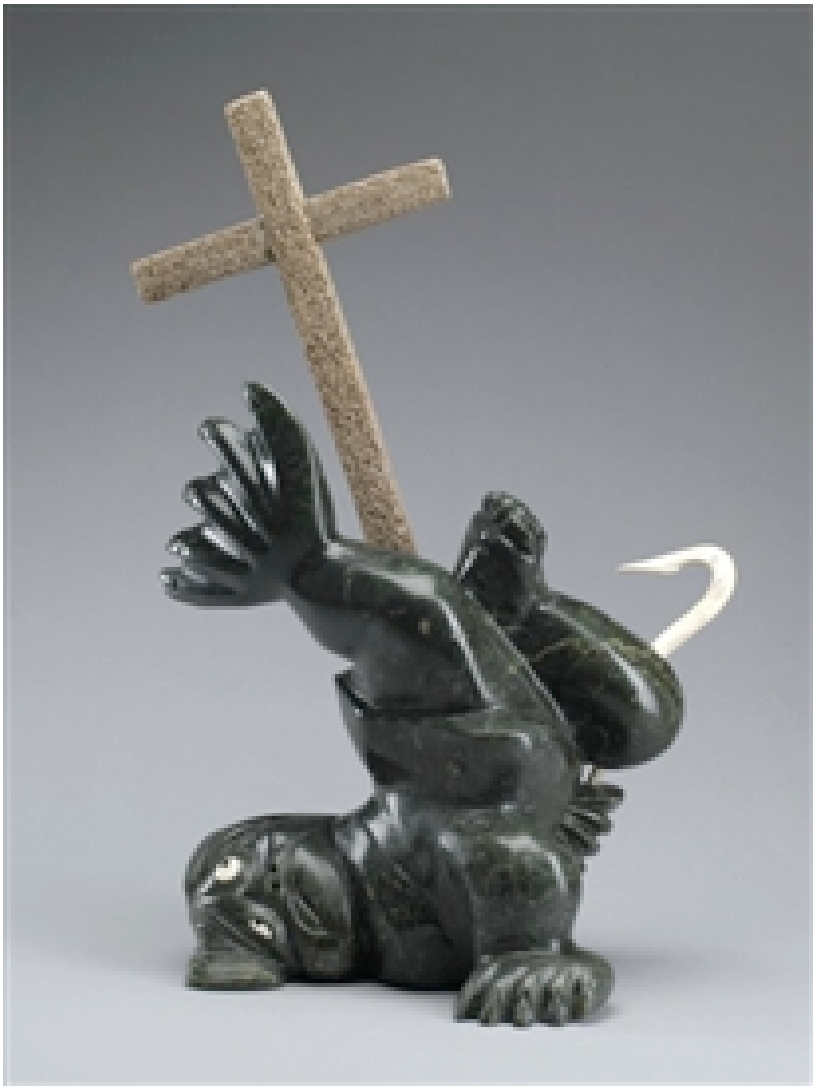
Natural Gas, 1991, Gilbert Hay, Nain, Steatite, Sodalite, Jade, Photographer Unknown
© Courtesy of Inuit Art Foundation

Gilbert Hay explained how this carving represents how the Inuit of Labrador feel about offshore drilling for natural gas:

> The upside-down man represents the Inuit and how they feel towards the environment and his hand holding the egg represents the uneven hold the Inuit have on the environment, land and sea. The white maple leaf represents white Canada, and the coloured hearts represent the multinationals involved in the "so right movement". They take heart in it being so right. The sodalite bear represents the sea and ice, and the bear itself the Inuit love of the environment. The use of Canadian jade conveys the idea that one feels foreign within one's own country. The lamp represents life and our hopeless feeling. Pop goes the world. The stone was cut to suit the idea. (Mitchell 1997b:8).



European Sees Inuit for First Time, 2005, Mattiusi Iyaituk, Akulivik, Serpentine, Caribou Antler, Muskox Hair, Coloured Glass, Photographer Kenji Nagai, © Courtesy of Spirit Wrestler Gallery



Bad Sprits, 1990, Charlie Ugyuk, Boothia Peninsula, Blackstone, Whalebone, Antler, Ivory Photographer Michael Neil (Seidelman &Turner 1993:199)

Ugyuk, (d. October 1990) explained this carving:

> Christianity was forced on us, according to the artist, and the angakoqs came to be seen as devils. The Inuit were criticized and condemned for beliefs that were part of the traditional culture and religion (Seidelman &Turner 1993:199).

Desire for Primitive Inuit Carvings/Pressures from Dealers, Buyers, Galleries for Work Depicting the Inuit as Unchanged by Modernity

Although Inuit artists are taking risks in producing work that expresses their experiences with ongoing colonial domination, there remain underlying forces that they confront in trying to move beyond the notions of the "happy go lucky Inuit". In 1990-91 the *Inuit Art Quarterly* received back 99 out of 149 surveys sent to art dealers in Canada and the United States. They recognize the results are not necessarily conclusive but they do reveal interesting trends. One is that the United States is the fastest growing segment of the Inuit art market (Mitchell 1990-1991:44). In terms of what is in demand and what is selling in Canada and the United States there is a demand for "authentic" Inuit work that is thought to represent local traditions.

An unfortunate observation in the survey for Inuit artists who explore new media, techniques and subject matter is the regard most dealers appeared to place on "authentic" work. This did not mean "real art" made by "real Inuit" but rather a reflection of more of the romanticized reality (Mitchell 1990-1991:50). This would include carvings of seal hunters and other tried and true carvings Perera discussed earlier. The findings showed that today more galleries are offering more or only primitive Inuit art. The survey indicated an inconsistency in the achievements noted in the major galleries of presenting Inuit art as the work of individuals rather than an inclusive or regional art form. The most successful of the acculturated artists from among the Inuit have consciously maintained an identifiable "Inuit-ness" in their work, for cultural as much as economic reasons (Mitchell 1990-1991:50) Mitchell explains how a number of Inuit express their desire to make art that is meaningful to them and to have a more of a say through consultation and collaboration in how their art is displayed in public institutions. Several dealers stressed

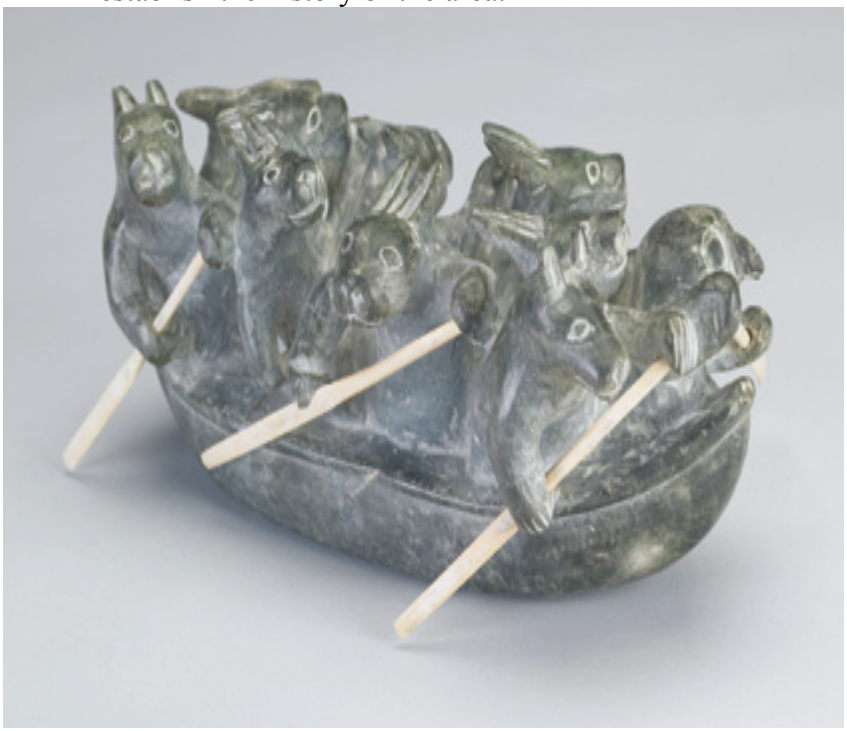
the imperative to educate potential buyers about Inuit art as there is concern around promoting a new generation of Inuit artists. The Canadian government, the co-operatives and galleries should be playing a more exertive role in educating the public about Inuit art (Mitchell 1990-1991:47). This is a theme that occurs throughout my thesis as discussants mention the longing on the part of buyers for something "primitive" and "depicting an ancient way of life".

The following is an example of what is considered the longing for something primitive, depicting an ancient way of life. On April 24, 2006 a CBC news article titled *Record Price for Inuit Sculpture* described a carving by famed Nunavik artist, Joe Talirunili (1893-1976), titled *The Migration* (1965). It sold at Waddington's Auction House for a record $278,000, the highest price recorded for an Inuit carving. It sold for more than four times the pre-sale price set by Waddington's to an unidentified telephone bidder. *The Migration* sat on a vendor's coffee table for 40 years before it was sent to auction. In his childhood Talirunili travelled by umiak (boat) with the other members of his camp as they moved from one site to another in search of new hunting grounds when food ran out and the community faced starvation. The journey could be quite dangerous. On one of those trips, the boat was destroyed and about 40 people, all of whom he had grown up with, drowned. The event made a deep impression on the artist. He told the story many times in sculptures, drawings and prints (Canadian Museum of Civilization 1999).

Although Talirunili had produced between 25 and 30 depictions of *The Migration* this particular one was different from the others. In my discussion with Richard Murdoch

from the FCNQ, who knew Talirunili well, he explained how this piece was different from the others and why it had appeal:

> The one that got two hundred and seventy eight thousand, everyone was in spirit form which is very rare. So that's why it was so expensive. It is kind of prehistoric. His carvings had a really primitive power to it and he also lived a lot of those experiences, like the boat. He was a small child at the time and it was his mother telling people where to go. His mother was responsible for saying we will go over there to find a new hunting area. In the old days we sold them for two hundred dollars. In his day he was not considered a good carver. But he really did try, he made so many interesting carvings of the past. He really did establish the history of the area.



The Migration, 1965, Joe Talirunili, ***Qugaaluk River camp***, Grey Soapstone, Wood, Photographer Unknown, © Courtesy of Waddington Mclean & Company

Resistance to change is explained in the literature as when we change it's called progress, but when the Inuit do, notably when they adopt some of our progressive things, it's a kind of adulteration, a loss of their culture (Sahlins 1999:2). Hobsbawm disputes this claim in stating that with unprecedented change and ideological movement historical

continuity was invented by creating an ancient past beyond historical continuity with creation of entirely new symbols and devices with a general hostility towards customary practices, reminiscent of a dark past (1983:7-8). Inuit artists have their own explanations for changes in traditional practices where change from a pre-contact period is viewed by non-Inuit as undesirable and not acceptable. This is a frustration that artists face in their daily work. In an unpublished letter from 1995 artist Simata Pitsiuluk wrote:

> Everything in this world we live in is evolving. A number of people say that since the Inuit are using electric tools, their art is losing its tradition. I use electric tools to remove a lot of stone, but electric tools have to be piloted by the artist's brain and hands. The hand tools have to be used to finish a sculpture, to do sanding and detailing. You cannot tell the electric tools to work on their own. It's very hard to swallow when someone tells me or other Inuit artists that we should not use modern tools. I wouldn't tell people in the South to go back to using horses for travel rather than cars, or farmers to use hand ploughs instead of tractors. We feel hurt and insulted when someone tells us what we should do or use, or what not to use. Inuit art needs to evolve, just like non Native art. I feel it's wrong for someone to say stop the clock….that's what our critics are telling us to do, stop growing (Mitchell 1997a:8-9).

Mitchell explains how even though dealers typically do not have direct contact with Inuit artists, retail art dealers are also in a position to exercise influence over the artists whose work they handle. Many art dealers concede that they are more interested in promoting the culture, meaning as it existed and was known in the 1950's, than in promoting artistic growth. Apprehensive about work that is experimental, they confirm a preference for sculpture depicting legends and aspects of the 1950's way of life. Mitchell also explained how the public who buy Inuit art tend not to be knowledgeable about or buy other kinds of art. The typical consumer of Inuit art is motivated by an interest in the

culture, but not as it is depicted today. This again relates to the strong resistance on the part of buyers to acknowledge how Inuit have changed and incorporated modern technology into their everyday lives. What is not realized by many buyers is the fact that Inuit rely on modern technology to produce carvings as they must quarry the stone needed for their work (1997a:10). There is criticism of the use of power tools and the artists are puzzled because as Mattiusi Iyaituk in Mitchell explained, "We started off with tools that were not our tools, moreover it seems everyone else in the world is allowed to find an easier way to create something, but not the Inuit (1997a:8).

Many artists, according to Mitchell, point out that far from being traditional, or indigenous to their culture, the tools they use were introduced by outsiders in the mid-twentieth century and it was only then that stone became a preferred medium over ivory, walrus tusk or even driftwood, which was available in some areas. The North/South artist dialogue is obscured by language and geography but Mitchell maintains the more serious obstacles are the promotional mythology in which Inuit art is packaged and the "deeply entrenched paternalism" that she considers to be "the inverse of, but just as damaging as racism" (1997a:13). Graburn maintains that "dealers, collectors and critics have tended to cling to romantic mythology of the distant untouched primitive "Inuit" and the public subscribes to this ethnocentric deception because it allows us to believe that it is "we Westerners who are making progress" and the "Inuit remain in a state of purity, providing a reference by which to measure our progress or failures, depending on our ideology" (Mitchell 1997a:14). Two of the three Inuit art collectors, James Little and Lenora Mendelman, who I interviewed for my thesis, explained the appeal for them in Inuit art was because of it being so "primitive".

Role of Museums

I will discuss briefly how museums often perpetuate the romanticized primitive depictions of the Inuit. Ruth Phillips, art historian at Carleton University, describes a central contradiction that runs through all standard museum representations of indigenous art and culture. This contradiction is directly related to unresolved conflicts between the romanticized, the notion of modern and primitive and an ongoing discomfort with the logical consequences of commodification (Phillips 2006:432). As the colonial era comes to a close (it has not with the Inuit) indigenous people are becoming increasingly more active in museum representation and their communities are becoming more representational of modernity and viewed less as a remote past (Phillips 2006:448). Accepting indigenous art on its own terms means valuing them as objects which produce a new reality that successfully challenges the new and different. In this way museum objects of "others" will be valued for innovative qualities and their ability to be both old and new at the same time (Phillips 2006:449). Other than the CMC, the MMFA and the WAG, other museums I visited and curators I spoke with explained how difficult it is to challenge the new and different art forms today, as there is no budget for new acquisitions of Inuit art. The CMC and the WAG have budgets for new acquisitions and are involved in promoting solo exhibitions of artists and in actively collaborating and consulting with Inuit artists who do exhibitions. The MMFA will be opening the Canadian Pavillion in 2011, which will be entirely devoted to Inuit and First Nations art.

There have been no new acquisitions since the 1970's at the Agnes Etherington Museum in Kingston, Ontario, the Glenbow Museum in Calgary, Alberta and the McCord Museum in Montreal. The permanent collections they have remain in storage

and are rarely exhibited. The Glenbow Museum continues to have two separate departments for art – Inuit ethnology and fine art. Aimeé Benoit, Collection Technician, explained how the acquisition committee that decides on accepting new donations is comprised of business people and academics with very little indigenous input or involvement. There is fundraising for the museum, however Inuit and other indigenous groups are not interested in raising funds for the organization.

Alicia Boutilier, Curator of Canadian Historical Art, at the Agnes Etherington Museum explained how the external acquisition committee who decides what the museum will accept for donations consists of an art history professor and various people in the community who has an interest in art with no indigenous representation. Guislaine Lemay, Curator of Material Culture at the McCord Museum in Montreal, explained how the permanent collection reflects the particular bias or taste of the donor's collection. Boutillier and Benoit reiterated this dynamic. Permanent collections are heavily influenced by the collector's taste and the museum in turn presents this work. There is little in the way of innovation and experimentation with Inuit work. The collections for the most part represent what Perera described as the tried and true and contrary to what Phillips maintains, there is little movement in challenging the new and different Inuit art forms. It appears that this is taking place at only a few of the major museums in Canada, including the ones I mentioned above.

Mitchell posits that "based on commentary published over the last ten years in *Inuit Art Quarterly* (the only publication for Inuit artists), art making has significance as Inuit are bringing their history and expressing their perceptions, values, talents, priorities and aspirations through carving. They are constructing their own definitions of what it

means to be an artist as they incorporate Western art practice while at the same time challenging it. They are putting stories into stone, interpreting certain aspects of their culture, expressing truths about Inuit life; and showing history from their own perspective" (1997a:7). The Inuit have adapted modern technology to suit their needs for survival and in turn to facilitate the practice of traditional practices. Inuit artists use power tools in carving and the images they portray are a form of social commentary and powerful statements about their resilience and survival. But as the survey from IAQ demonstrates and in my own observations in the various galleries and institutions I visited, the demand for "primitive and romanticized depictions of Arctic life" still prevails. Mitchell maintains that the lack of support for new work is a factor in the misapprehension that Inuit art is exhausted. Exhibitions full of banal work, the work which everyone thinks of as "Inuit art", sustain ideas of a doomed art (1997a:10).

Chapter 6

Colonial Theorists/Colonial Forces/Inuit Empowerment

The Inuit art industry as a politically engineered vehicle by the Canadian government, where an industry was built by non-Inuit to silence history and control and alter Inuit identity, was part of a larger colonial plan with the ultimate goal of attaining access to and ownership of natural resources in the North, while establishing Canadian sovereignty both within Canada and internationally. However an unintended consequence of this plan was Inuit resistance and resurgence in the process making the colonial plan all the more difficult. A specific unintended consequence was how icons and emblems chosen by non-Inuit colonizers as representative of Canada had the effect as I hypothesize, of bringing more attention and awareness to Inuit presence and their rights as indigenous people. This in turn made it more difficult for the Canadian government to go forward with their colonial plan as Inuit continue to resist and question who the real owners are of natural resources and land.

Colonialism has been examined by theorists as early as the 1950's. I will refer to these theories in analyzing the Inuit situation today. Although some characteristics have changed many remain the same. Many of the dynamics of power and ownership in colonialism that were debated in the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's persist today, as articulated by Gilbert Hay, Leah Inutiq, Elder Iyola Ingwatsaik, David Ruben Piqtoukun, Abraham Anghik Ruben, Ovilu Tunnilee, Manasie Akaplaipik ,Mattiusi Iyaituk, Arnaqu, and Sharon Sutherland.

Similar to the way Arnaqu, Sutherland and Inuit artists described their depiction of the Inuit situation today, Albert Memmi provided a description of a colony as a place where a colonizer can earn more, spend less and have guaranteed employment and rapid

career advancement; a place where taxes are lower for colonizers; where the industrial raw materials and cheap labour can be found (Memmi 1965:4). Although urban Inuit artists have access to a variety of materials and stone for carving, for the most part the artists in the North continue to rely on soapstone, a depleting raw material that has become increasingly costly and dangerous to quarry. Other stones are imported, mostly Brazilian soapstone, but it is noted how this stone is much more difficult to work with and buyers and artists often complain that because the stone is so soft it scratches easily. Over time as the supply of soapstone is depleted and quarrying becomes more costly and dangerous there will be fewer raw materials for carving. What appears to be cheap labour is now becoming more costly in terms of time, money and risks involved in quarrying the stone. Soapstone was traditionally used for making lamps and was viewed by the Inuit as a precious raw material for that purpose only. It was not meant to be used as a material in mass production of carvings. The colony in relation to the Inuit is no longer a place where cheap labour industrial raw materials can easily be found.

On the one hand the colonizer believes before they arrived nothing else happened to the people being colonized. At least nothing in particular that deserves to be preserved by the collective conscious or celebrated, nothing significant. The colonized existed in a big void because they were perceived as primitive, uncultured and illiterate. Bourgeois and scholars only listened to their own language (Memmi 1965:104,109). But the colonizers in the North focused instead on ways in which expressions of collective consciousness could be silenced, controlled, and reshaped in ways that would help the state to stake out claims of ownership and sovereignty, at the expense of Inuit tradition. The colonizers in Arctic Canada acknowledged that work was being created before they

arrived but it was work that was not in keeping with the missionaries' plan to convert the Inuit as it was based on religious practices that were in contradiction to Christian beliefs and were deemed to be uncivilized. Inuit mythology and religious beliefs were looked upon as problematic as they did not fit with the colonial plans. The Inuit religious belief system with shamanic practices and mythological beliefs needed to be eradicated as it put plans for colonial ownership and control at risk. Memmi's claim about colonizers beliefs is not entirely in keeping with the beliefs of the colonizers in Arctic Canada.

The appearance of erotic, sexual, mythological and fantasy creatures that appeared in Inuit art stirred debated as either the result of a staged competition or Steinmann's and other outside influences. It implied that the Inuit had not been creating these works before the arrival of colonizers. The assumption of a void and lack of collective consciousness as Memmi described was challenged by advocates for Inuit artists who encouraged them to produce carvings that were free of market demand. It encouraged the creative imagination and ideology that was already there long pre-contact times. This supports Sahlins' theory that traditions and culture were present in pre-contact times. Traditions became strategically adaptable to pragmatic situations, misrepresentations of particular interests, as they were heavily influenced by capitalism and manipulated by the state and colonial control. However indigenous resistance to these forces continues to be demonstrated and expressed (Sahlins 1999:403-404). The findings in my research support Sahlins' theory as well as demonstrating ways in which the Inuit express resistance to colonial forces while at the same time incorporating capitalism into their own modes of reproduction.

Colonization shows only contempt for natives in the process of conquering, as the colonized become dehumanized. Natural, harmonious and viable economies adapted to indigenous needs get disrupted. This disruption occurs in the process of looting products and raw materials, as this is their primary motive for being there (Césaire 1972: 19-20). Only the West, which invented science, knows how to think and do as anything beyond Western boundaries is considered to be primitive and illogical. This model of faulty thinking and logic ignores other civilizations including the Egyptians who invented arithmetic and geometry; the Assyrians who discovered astronomy and the Arabs who created chemistry. Colonization that has its origins in bourgeois Europe, destroyed and undermined civilizations, countries and nationalities as it demolished roots of diversity (Cesaire 1972:51-54). Outright contempt was shown for Inuit at times while for the most part it was more of a subtle practice whereby the Inuit were made to believe they would have equal control and ownership of co-operatives providing they worked in a collaborative way with the colonizers. Inuit artists and the communities at large are struggling today to regain their civilization, in a transformed way, based on memories and stories as they were told to them. They express through art their memories of traditional practices and the healing process that is taking place as a result of colonization.

Colonization claims the existence of tribes and in turn reinforces and separates them. Colonization encourages chieftaincies. It extracts national resources, exports them for the need of the mother country and in the process allows part of the colony to become relatively wealthy, while the rest of the country remains in a state of underdevelopment and poverty that is usually exacerbated by colonialism (Fanon 1963: 63-74 129). What

was described by some of the participants in my research is the state of poverty that most Inuit live in today. Not only did colonization create poverty for the Inuit, it left them in an underdeveloped state where they have sunken deeper today. There are of course a few Inuit artists who are relatively wealthy by Western standards but they are few.

As Inuit expressed through carving, there remains today a need for the redistribution and ownership of wealth. While insisting on keeping their own particular values, methods and styles that do include incorporation and harnessing of capitalist practices to suit their own needs, Inuit artists continue to identify and challenge as their enemies the cartels and monopolies that are not willing to share in the redistribution of ownership and wealth (Fanon 1963:73-74, 77-78). This is the underlying and most crucial dilemma that must be addressed for the Inuit to be able to move away from the colonial powers that persist today. Fanon described a colonial situation in the context of war and the vocabulary he uses to express colonial domination is in this context. He describes how in the colonialist context there is no forthright behaviour and the colonizer or settler never ceases to be the enemy that must be abolished (Fanon 1963:40-41). Inuit artists are aware of their enemies and some are more at ease in expressing their views than others. Although they are aware of the risks they take in doing so. Government agencies and multinational corporations who broker deals with the Inuit around natural resources are identified by Hay, as the enemy. They offer token royalties to Inuit and give no ownership of the natural resources that are extracted. There is no ownership for the Inuit through agreements signed and Hay demonstrates how this poses a threat to indigenous practices through his carving *Natural Gas* (1991).

In the aspiration of entering the international art discourse, Inuit artists were forced to silence their inherited identity and assume an ostensive, collective one, but that prevalent identity was simply a representation of another cultural group that for a time had the upper hand. In the art world this meant a form colonial domination whereby by non-Western cultures would assimilate their expression of traditional practices to Western sameness. By imposing universal voices cultural distinctness was ignored (McEvilley 1992:11). Cultural differences were silenced as I have described through examples throughout my thesis. This is an accurate description of the development of the Inuit art industry in the 1950's, with the instructional manual designed by James Houston and the Canadian Guild of Craft in collaboration with the DIAND and the HBC, which caused much debate, contradictory opinions and criticism about its impact on art production. It was not just the manual but the many individuals and agencies involved who were giving direct instructions to Inuit artists about market demands. The Inuit in turn, out of necessity for survival, quickly complied with these directives.

Art as social commentary is required in the ongoing process, as with anthropological dialogue, to question and analyze the very culture it constructs. Art is not meant to cover up cultural weakness with a disguise of pleasing artistic tastes (McEvilley 1992: 12). But what happened with Inuit art at a time of intense social ferment, art served to disguise, misrepresent and silence their potential for change. This continues to occur as the Inuit struggle against notions of racist primitivism with its pleasing aesthetics that portray the "happy-go-lucky" Inuit. This serves to present the Inuit as not being competent or capable of being included in a meaningful way in ownership of natural resources. Inuit are given token royalty payments from mining companies and continue to

have no ownership of any natural resource or institution in the Arctic. Although this is the only way for Inuit to get beyond colonial control there is reluctance on the part of those controlling the art industry and the multinational corporations to consider handing over ownership and control. The institutions and cultural brokers involved in the art industry claim they want to give ownership to the Inuit while at the same time explaining how the Inuit are not ready to accept the responsibility. The Inuit are not ready to accept responsibility on their terms and there is much anxiety and fear around what exactly the Inuit will do with the art industry if it is in their control.

The Power of Narrative in Shaping History

Historical narratives can be written from various perspectives and through writing and sculpting in this case of the Inuit comes the power to silence aspects of history, reshape them or rewrite them to include or exclude events and individuals who may be of significance in shaping history. It is of interest to note when examining power that the German origins of the word "craft" means power (Edenics.net 2009 2010).

> Power does not necessarily enter the story once and for all but comes at different times in the narrative and from different angles It can precede the narrative as it contributes to the creating and interpretation as it begins at the source. Power in narrative begins with the creation of facts and sources as facts are deemed to be never meaningless. They become facts because they matter, although facts are not created equally and they always trace in a parallel manner the creation of silences. As silences in any history become inherent with any event having some components left out and others recorded, whatever becomes fact does so with its own inherent absences (Trouillot 1995:28-29, 49).

Although Steinmann in my opinion had the greatest influence on encouraging and advocating for artists in Nunavik, I question why he was not recognized more for his

contributions and influences by art historians, anthropologists, Waddington's Auction House and some of my participants. I mentioned allegations about Steinmann around the abuse of his role as a trusted advocate, by an Inuit woman, whose extemporaneous reaction to a photograph of him, prompted me to question whether his role was being silenced because of this. In Steinmann's obituary it was mentioned that a month prior to his death in 1991 he offered his suffering in reparation for a scandal that had hit the Canadian Church. No specific details were given and this could have been in reference to many scandals involving the Catholic Church. The obituary described how Steinmann spent the last 10 years of his life at the Notre Dame du Cap Sanctuary in Schefferville, Quebec working "under the Mary's watchful eye" (Rousselière 1992:10). In this instance, Molly, who was not a participant in my research and did not know why I was asking about the photograph of Steinmann, other than to identify the carvers, I question why she would make such a claim. For what purpose? Her startled reaction to the photograph remains fresh in my memory and my immediate reaction upon hearing this was to remove the entire section I wrote on Steinmann and simply refer to him in passing as one who helped to develop the Inuit art industry.

Although these allegations would need to be further pursued, I include Molly's claim while it as part of the narrative in the history of development of the Inuit art industry. If artists are producing work as part of the healing process from colonial atrocities, and if art historians and anthropologists acknowledge these traumatic effects through carving, there has to be willingness to discuss abuses and Inuit narrative in this process is imperative.

Ownership of Natural Resources/ Inuit Attempts to Politically Organize Themselves

Fanon (1963) explained how the process and stages of decolonizing do not take place chronologically. Today all former colonies remain in a double position – those colonies who have been freed from colonial rule or those still not completely free of colonial domination (Young 2001:20). This explains why the Inuit appear to remain colonized in some areas, while in others they appear to be moving forward with their own political institutions and forms of governing. With little work on clarification leaders of political parties complacently enter into compromises with colonists, compromises that are not clearly defined. Whatever the Inuit may gain through political struggle is not the result of good will on the part of the colonizers. Put simply, it shows that the colonizers, under pressure and scrutiny from the Inuit and other advocates, cannot put off granting concessions any longer, but "Colonizers do not give things away for nothing" (Fanon 1963:113). Although Inuit have been granted concessions it was not without making concessions and signing away rights to natural resources and land. The formation of Makivik and in signing the JBNQA, at least three Nunavik communities were not in agreement with the JBNQA. The agreement is being re-examined today and questions are being raised about what exactly the Inuit received in terms of ownership with this agreement. Inuit have formed the Kativik Regional Government which is not yet self-governing, the Kativik Regional School Board, which has no post secondary educational facilities, and Nunavik Regional Health and Social Services Board, which coordinates and relies on services from the South.

On a larger scale the Inuit Circumpolar Conference and Inuit Tapirisat of Canada are pan-Inuit organizations that oversee all Inuit in the Arctic, joining Alaska, Greenland

and Russia. But the federal government, provincial government and Inuit jointly manage these organizations with the Inuit receiving royalties from resource development, with no hope in the immediate future for ownership of resources, as Memmi described. Cultural differences thrown out by homogenizing forces of world capitalism present themselves in the form of Inuit counterculture, subversion of the dominant discourse or by some sort of indigenous political defiance (Sahlins 1999:5). Forms of resistance are with the creation of Avataq Cultural Institute, the renaming of Arctic villages back to indigenous names, and in replacing disc numbers with Inuit names (Mitchell 1996:413 417-418). Formal Inuit organizations and reclaiming of indigenous names are peaceful means in which the Inuit have shown resistance to dominant forces The Inuit are still far from being self-governing and autonomous and what they have managed to establish was not given way for nothing as Fanon stated.

Primitivism as a Driving Force against Inuit Artistic Expression/ Theoretical Concepts

The theme that runs throughout my thesis is one of primitivism with Inuit art production. This need and desire for primitive art is a driving force behind the Inuit art industry. This was explained in the IAQ survey I discussed where 99 participants responded in demonstrating a trend for a continued demand for primitive Inuit art. Although the IAQ recognized how this study was in itself not conclusive, it was in keeping with my observations and in discussions with two out of three collectors I interviewed. Dealers, buyers and galleries continue to cater to and support this demand by the market that is growing more rapidly in the United States.

> The portrayal of primitive society in reinvented forms was initially viewed as a subject for lawyers, where societies based on kin relations were replaced by territory based

> societies that exist today. It was a transition from blood to soil, from status to contact and was one of the greatest revolutions in human history. With Darwinian theory in the mid nineteenth century all discourse of law and human origins focused on debates of primitive society. Anthropologists quickly worked out the notions of primitive society, with distinct components, and in great detail preserved in language by these new specialists This is the prototype primitive society that persisted for over 100 years (Kuper 2005:3-5).

This paradigm persists today, in spite of being erroneous and fundamentally precarious as there was no way of knowing what a primitive society was. The term primitive society implies some historical point of reference however human societies cannot be traced back to any individual point of origin. There is no way of re-constructing prehistoric social forms as there are no remnants of social organizations (Kuper 2005:7).

The archetype of primitive society that persists today as an inaccurate and fundamentally unsound notion is one that Inuit artists struggle against and for the most part do not challenge. My discussion with Murdoch and other participants, the critique by my participants of the FCNQ, comments made by two out the three collectors I interviewed, my observations in many galleries and gift shops, the record-breaking price for *The Migration* by Talirunili at Waddington's Auction House, results from the IAQ survey and intense intervention on the part of the individuals and organizations who started the industry, demonstrate the continued desire and demand for work that portrays the Inuit as primitive and pristine.

Anthropologists have always been tempted to treat some indigenous groups as substitutes for Stone Age societies, with hunter-gatherer societies being viewed as the

proximate to the Stone Age for Victorian anthropologists. All other hunter-gatherer groups got lumped together based on the premise that they all practiced the household mode of production, a simple domestic economy" (Kuper 2005:7). There were in fact never any pristine hunter gatherers surviving with the Upper Palaeolithic institutions intact. Hunter-gatherers lived adjacent to neighboring pastoralists and agriculturalists. Archaeological evidence cannot establish whether they organized into family groups, practiced monogamy or polygamy or divided their labour based on gender and hierarchy. (Kuper 2005:9-10). In the case of the Inuit they may not have lived along side pastoralists or agriculturalists but were subject to rapid changes and a sedentary lifestyle forced on them. Since the seventeenth century they have been in contact with European societies and have taken on and integrated modernity into their present lifestyle.

The myth that was manipulated by anthropologists for at least 100 years and directly contradicted by ethnographic evidence by leading scholars in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century served a historical political objective. This included debates about slavery and in the case of the Inuit, the myth of primitivism helped in imposing control and perpetuating racism. It raised the question about human beings having a common origin or whether races were divergent species. Primitivism became the converse of modernity in emerging capitalist societies, with modernity being defined as the age of private property, monogamous practices and territorial states. What followed was a way of thinking of primitive societies as ordered by blood ties, sexual promiscuity, socialism and with irrational superstitions (Kuper 2005:10-14). Although demands are being made for primitive carvings by Inuit who remain dependent upon institutions they

have no commitment to, I have demonstrated how they have transformed into their own version of modern society that is far removed from the myth of primitivism.

This contradiction between myth and reality is one that Inuit artists struggle with constantly, but in order to serve market demands they continue to produce an image that does not exist. Primitivism as an invented product of colonialism is an obstacle in the way for Inuit artists as it perpetuates racism and notions of the "other". However as the demand for primitivism persists, Inuit artists are more than willing to produce work that fills the need, while finding ways to continue to maintain their own indigenous practices. The Inuit are aware of the desire and need for the portrayal of the primitive Inuit and if a dealer or buyer wants 10 bears or Inukshuks, the artists will gladly comply as it fulfills their need to survive within the capitalist system.

In response to Memmi's theory (1979) on dependence where he discusses the complex reciprocal relationship between the dependent and provider where the dependent takes on a comfortable role and in turn will be content with being dependent, Sahlins focuses on how in spite of dependency being real it is not the internal organization of the Inuit. Loss of traditional skills makes dependency all the more critical. However the real problem is not the contradiction between the capitalist economy and a traditional way of life which Inuit have managed to adapt and use to their advantage. The real problem is when the Inuit can no longer find enough capital to support their traditional way of life. Langdon (Sahlins 1999) maintains the amount of income from government transfer funds and commercial trade devoted to subsidizing indigenous means of production clearly shows how the internal economy incorporates external forces. The greater a family's or an individual's success in the market economy, allows them more time to devote to

indigenous practices (1999:17). It was mentioned in discussion with my participants how northern communities benefit from the capitalist successes of Inuit artists. The wealth is distributed and shared with kin and other members of the community. Although Piqtoukun, Anghik and Tuckatuck live in the South, they have the means to be mobile and travel to and from the north to continue to traditional practices and way of life when they are not promoting their art. Extended family and kin benefit from their success as well. This relates to Jenness' discussion around the need for mobility between the North and South, as this allows Inuit to take advantage of resources in the south while maintaining close links to traditional practices in the north.

Emblems/ Icons/How They Serve to Empower Inuit

Inuit have been involved for hundreds of years in the powerful economic and political forces of world capitalist domination. "One would think it was enough to destroy them at least culturally however the Inuit are still there and are still Inuit" (Sahlins 1999:7). More specifically with Inuit artists I referred to a couple of examples of icons and emblems chosen by Tuctatuck and Iyaituk to revive and preserve past practices. Handler and Linnekin maintain that tradition is a discerning process where only certain items associated with a customary pre-industrial village life are chosen to emblematize traditional national culture. Other facets of the past are ignored or forgotten. "Traditions are created out of the conceptual needs of the present and tradition becomes symbolically reinvented in an ongoing present" (1984:280). Linnekin and Handler are not clear about who does the reinventing or according to whose norms these reinventions are made. This is "a rhetorical shift in politics that has caused certain amnesia in anthropologists and loss of ethnographic memories if we are to assume that all tradition is simply a selective

process of symbolic reinvention" (Sahlins 1999:403). Inuit artists do not believe their traditions are symbolically reinvented but rather they focus on traditional practices as they are passed on through generations in oral history and narratives.

Tuckatuck has chosen for himself a specific icon, one that is of major concern and politically charged. He also mentioned how he uses carving as a means of preserving his traditional past in stone, a past that he fears is being lost forever, a past that was passed on to him by directly by his father and indirectly through ancestors. As I present the theoretical framework for the icons and emblems chosen by Tuckatuck and Iyaituk I cannot help but wonder if any theory matters to them and if they question why we (non-Inuit) have the need to theorize about it at all. Tuckatuck's concerns are real to him and his motivation for preserving traditions passed on by his ancestors are important to him, regardless of what theory is applied to the process. Iyaituk is attempting to revive old traditions in a new form that were lost in the process of colonization and development of the Inuit art industry. As Iyaituk explained, the inlay face was discouraged in carving as it was not practical for the market and his intention is to bring back this style of work, revive old practices and in his own way preserve his traditional practices.

The polar bear in the form of a dancing bear can be viewed as an icon that promotes a sense of Canadian identity, as it remains in demand by non-Inuit buyers. But underlying this emblem are ongoing struggles and conflicts between Inuit traditional practices and Western science that is challenged by the Inuit. This icon that is chosen by non-Inuit also serves a purpose for Inuit in bringing attention to the complexities of the polar bear hunt and the loss of traditional practices in the process, including language and social practices involved in the hunt. Carving the bear in a dancing pose is a clever and

humorous way the Inuit have chosen to serve market needs and express their ongoing concerns.

The Inukshuk has been appropriated by non-Inuit for their own purposes in promoting Canadian identity on the international scene, and is seen as a form of tokenism and racism as it has become embedded in Canadian identity however, "when a culture's visual tradition are exported, it represents a kind of ambassador and visual borrowings and mergings constitute a kind of foreign policy. The intermingling of different cultures' image banks as part of the post-colonial project is a sign of a deeper interpretation of their identities" McEvilley 1992:130). This icon and other Inuit art that is used to promote Canadian identity to multinationals and government agencies has done so with such success that in turn the Canadian government can no longer make claims to any land or natural resources in the Arctic, without pressure on them to involve the Inuit in decision making processes. The icons are viewed as quintessentially Canadian as are the Inuit.

In answer to Perera's question (Is this really such a bad thing?), I think it is not. In the process of appropriating Inuit objects the Canadian government has placed themselves in a position where they are forced to include Inuit in decision making about Arctic claims to land, resources and ownership. Inuit involvement in the process will be part of the criteria for these important claims. "As it became the business of specialists to discover and invent national culture, tradition and heritage for the public", the success of embedding Inuit objects and art as icons and emblems of Canada has placed the Inuit in a position of power (Handler, Linnekin 1984:279). I am not at this point dismissing or minimizing Memmi, Césaire or Fanon as I referred to their theories on colonialism. Colonial circumstances were different for each of these theorists however the devastating

impact remains the same as described throughout my thesis. Without a focus on cultural resilience and resistance to colonialism and Inuit strength and ability to find ways to work colonial influences to their advantage, which the Inuit have demonstrated time and again, it would be tantamount to concluding the Inuit will be dominated forever. It is clear that Inuit came to believe that the source of their power resided in their art, the only economic base upon which they could build. It is something they do that no one else does and the only thing they produce that has any market value to the outside world (Mitchell 1996:178). Inuit art is equated with power and Canada needs the Inuit and their art to continue to promote themselves and their image internationally. While the Canadian government borrowed and appropriated Inuit icons and emblems and attempted to silence the identity of Inuit, the end result was heightened awareness of Inuit with recognition, inclusion and consultation as part of any plans that involve the Arctic. This irony was not part of the plan of the Canadian government and multinationals who ultimately wanted to take ownership of and extract natural resources in the Arctic and claim ownership of land without consultation with the Inuit.

An example of how Inuit have been intricately identified with Canada, the Arctic and how it serves to empower them is a significant ruling by the Nunavut government described in the Globe and Mail on August 9, 2010 in an article titled "Court Puts a Halt to Arctic Tests over Inuit Fears of Impact of Sea Life". The article describes how a ruling by the Nunavut court was a stunning setback for the Arctic Seismic Experiment backed by Natural Resources Canada. It ordered the halt of Arctic seismic testing over the Eastern Arctic for fear of the impact and danger to sea life. It was described as a significant ruling that protects more than wildlife and food sources. It protects Inuit

cultural heritage in the Eastern Arctic. It serves as a reminder to scientists to respect local inhabitants. It also alleviated fears on the part of the Inuit around seismic testing as it could uncover oil or gas deposits that would usher in more Arctic industrialization (Vanderklippe 2010). This demonstrates how Inuit are perceived as the Arctic indigenous group that has an important role to play in development.

Nunavik Co-operatives/Analysis

> Wherever there are colonizers and colonized there exists force, brutality, cruelty, sadism, conflict the hasty manufacture of a few thousand subordinate jobs, artisans, office clerks, and interpreters necessary to ensure the smooth operation of business. This involves millions of people in whom fear has been cunningly instilled, who have, through colonial teaching, internalized an inferiority complex where the expectation is for them to tremble, kneel, despair and behave like lackeys (Césaire 1972:21-22).

This is the fear that Gilbert Hay addresses when he explains why for the most part he continues to carve for market demand. He is taking risk with his carvings that make political statements about mining disputes, criticizing multi-national corporations and government agencies that have ownership of the natural resources and which hand out royalty cheques as a form of tokenism to the Inuit. He is uncertain what consequences these risks may bring and he has fear. The Inuit do not want to be told what to do as they continue to fight against the many forces of colonialism that persist. Yet the cultural brokers and state agency involved in building and maintaining the industry believe the Inuit are not capable of managing the industry entirely on their own just yet. The risk of losing control over the industry and this precious art form and accepting art on Inuit terms rather than on the western construction is the underlying fear not only for those

involved in building the industry but for those who appreciate Inuit art as we know it. The larger threat and underlying fear on the part of the multinational corporations and Canadian government is one of having to give back the natural resources to their rightful owners, the Inuit, who will in turn decide how they want to re-distribute wealth and power. This is where the challenges remain for Inuit and their advocates.

Arnaqu gave an accurate description of the despair that follows when royalty cheques are given as a way of appeasing Inuit, who should have ownership of natural resources. Arnaqu and Sutherland describe the functionaries necessary in keeping the "Inuit industry" alive or as Arnaqu mentioned the thousands of non Inuit functionaries involved to "babysit" the small population of the Inuit.

Colonialism in all its forms had similar destructive consequences as indigenous economies were transformed into capitalist practices that ultimately disrupted traditional modes of production. Césaire suggests that,

> one has only to glance at the facts to realize that nowhere has metropolitan capitalism given birth to an indigenous capitalism. And if an indigenous capitalism has not arisen in any colonized country (not referring to the capitalism of the colonists themselves, which is directly linked to metropolitan capitalism), the reasons must not be sought in the laziness of the Inuit, but in the very nature and logic of colonial capitalism (1956:135).

The logic of colonial capitalism is not in keeping with that of Inuit perceptions of capitalism as they have adapted it to their needs What is meant by indigenous capitalism is one that is completely owned and operated with indigenous people as the decision makers and owners of capital. This is a plausible explanation for the Inuit lack of commitment to the co-operative. It could also explain the frustrations Arnaqu described with Inuit who appear to lack motivation in getting involved in capitalist projects in the

Arctic. The Inuit have no ownership in capitalism in the North. It is once the only alternative at a time when the population was faced with starvation.

The co-operative, thought to be an institution closely resembling Inuit traditional life was in fact not because we have no way of knowing exactly what traditional Inuit life was before the Europeans arrived. The Inuit have no ownership and have relied on the co-operative to provide necessary manufactured goods. The co-operative perpetuated dependency as artists increasingly rely on manufactured machinery to quarry stone. As Claire Porteous-Safford pointed out in our interview, quarrying is dangerous and labour intensive, involving a natural resource that is becoming increasingly scarce. It was a natural resource that was used sparingly for making lamps before the introduction of the soapstone carving industry.

In a study commissioned by Agricultural and Agri Food Canada's Co-operative Secretariat for the FCNQ in 2006 it was reported that the birth rate in Nunavik was twice as high as Quebec as a whole with 60 percent of the population being under the age of 25 as reported by Statistics Canada in 2001. The economy was largely dependent on funds from Makivik, cash royalties from mining companies with the provincial and federal government as chief employers along with dependence on transfer payments. Unemployment was 14.4 percent compared to 8.2 percent for Quebec as a whole. Life expectancy was 10 years lower than the national average due to remoteness from health centers, tobacco and alcohol use, high rate of suicide and over crowded living situations due housing shortages. The average wage was lower but the cost of living is highest in the province.

Decline in sense of belonging and co-operative solidarity is increasingly evident, especially among the youth who were not part of the organizing process of the co-operatives and were not there when there was a real need for the co-operatives. The study concludes that co-operative is not the outcome of a natural process relating to indigenous traditional practices. It was a politically engineered project that did not fit with indigenous practices or traditions. The co-operative is not especially suited to traditional Inuit culture however Inuit are accustomed to co-operating to survive in harsh climates. The co operative is a flexible consumer credit source, helping those in trouble, lending money. But there are conflicts between cultural values and business models that are not always incorporated. When there is a clash of values ideally the management practices try to give priority to the culture. An example of this is when the co-operative is looking for a new manager they may choose a less qualified applicant who is given a chance to develop his or her abilities.

Conflicts and problems arise from this, particularly in the art department with the criticisms that the buyers in the North are not art experts and buy everything that is brought into the co-operative regardless of the quality. This philosophy does not emphasize individual success but focuses more on the welfare of the group. About 80 percent of the adult population in Nunavik has worked for the co-operative at some point. There are higher prices in the North, cost of transportation and importing because of the remoteness of the region and unpredictable weather. This is a permanent challenge (or maybe not as global warming continues).

There is not enough property owned by the Inuit or the co-operatives and this leads to problems with bank financing. The assets have no tangible market value. The

land is owned by the Quebec and federal government and cannot be included as an asset. Higher prices in the North involve higher goods and sales tax and Quebec sales tax. The co-operatives want tax relief as the average incomes are not proportionately higher. This is what has taken place with the co-operatives as a result of colonization as it is explained in practical terms in the study by Agricultural and Agri Food Canada's Co-operative Secretariat (2006:1-14).

The problem of lack of ownership mentioned here supports my earlier claim that the co-operatives were in fact not in the true sense of the meaning co-operatives, as the Inuit do not share in ownership. They are state run institutions in the guise of co-operatives, as part of the colonial plan to make Inuit believe they were owners and decision makers in the co-operative movement. The FCNQ has become the monopoly that replaced the HBC in the Arctic with little competition.

The complex problem of lack of art production in Nunavik can be explained to an extent by the findings of this study and as explained by Iyaituk and participants in my research. Although the experts involved in building and maintaining the industry do not have answers to this complex problem. Had The Battle of the Cartonnages not taken place the Inuit art market in Nunavik would possibly have take on a different form that fostered competition in what was really a capitalist setting in the guise of co-operatives. The outcome of the battle did not achieve what it was meant to in giving members real ownership. Dependency on the co-operatives that has developed may change with the younger generation who do not place the same importance on the co-operative as they were not there when there was a real need for an alternative to the nomadic way of life that was rapidly altered. Tuckatuck who bypasses the co-operative entirely serves as a

role model for other young artists from Nunavik. Money alone will not fix the problem and will not create talent and skills if they do not exist. It could be that artistic talent is now centered in Cape Dorset and Nunavut. With 60 percent of the population being under the age of 25 it is likely that there will be a young enterprising Inuit who will develop an alternative to the co-operative that will be a design based on an Inuit form of indigenous capitalism, with ownership in the hands of the Inuit. It may be an alternative which breaks the monopoly that exists today.

Conclusion

McEvilley emphasizes how whitening of the world was not meant to be. But what has taken place is the claim of white Westerners to measure all that is not white against a Western standard with the purpose of assimilating any differences or having them measure up to Western standards. There is no one cultural form that can be a measure for what is acceptable or correct. Now is the time for artists to make a deliberate space in history for their work in how they reflect on it and in how they decide what model of history relates best to their work. There is no longer only one history that is deemed acceptable. If Inuit artists do not place their work in history they will risk having it remain in boundless duration with no historical connections (1992:132,134-136) Inuit artists are gradually taking risks, making political statements in their work and in many ways consider themselves to be artists who happen to be Inuit as they present their work internationally.

As Mitchell pointed out although thinking of Inuit as "the other" has been disparaged among academics it is slow to permeate the Inuit art world. This is due in part because so little academic work has focused on Inuit and their art and partly because

most of the discourse has been produced by non-academics who are interested in sponsoring and selling, not in analyzing. For this reason Inuit art remains a peripheral topic in art history and in anthropology (IAQ Spring 2007:14). Inuit art needs to be discussed as it is the foundation for expression of traditional practices and provides social commentary. Inuit artists may develop their own industry, unlike the Western model in place that they remain uncommitted to, other than to serve their needs. The work produced from their industry may be unlike ours, one that may not be aesthetically pleasing to us. Work may be produced that continues to force us to acknowledge Inuit reactions to colonization. We may find the work offensive as the Inuit take the opportunity to produce work that depicts the non Inuit in ways that are not favorable to us. The only means of de-colonization is through re-distribution of wealth and ownership for the Inuit. Discussion of the present situation in the North is a way of heightening awareness of the challenges for Inuit.

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