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THE THUNDERBIRD AND UNDERWATER PANTHER
IN THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE GREAT LAKES
INDIANS: SYMBOLS OF POWER

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THE THUNDERBIRD AND UNDERWATER PANTHER IN THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE GREAT LAKES INDIANS: SYMBOLS OF POWER

By

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ABSTRACT

THE THUNDERBIRD AND UNDERWATER PANTHER
IN THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF THE GREAT LAKES INDIANS:
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Symbols/images of the thunderbird and the underwater panther within the material culture of the Ojibwa, Ottawa, and Potawatomi were investigated from pre-contact to contemporary times to determine possible changes in form and meaning. Additionally the human ecological concept of part and whole was explored in relation to these images.

A search of primary documents, artifactual and photographic sources, and interviews with Anishnabeg artists and elders yielded information that was analyzed for changes over time and related to concurrent cultural influences. The study concludes that these two images have been expressed in a variety of material culture and yet remain a traditional cultural expression. Certain elements of each image remain uniform over time, although the medium employed may somewhat change its form. Meanings about these symbols are varied, yet a generally consistent view about the nature of each remains. Part and whole analysis reveals a continuing Anishnabeg world view that all life, at all levels, is connected in one unified totality.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> Things can have meanings that may transform the very world in which we live. But things by themselves alone cannot help us; only in the way we relate to them is their symbolic energy released.
> (Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton, 1981, p. 247)

Native American cultures have a wealth of varied traditions as evidenced in part by their material culture. Each culture has not only a distinct lifestyle, but identifiable and uniquely individual artifacts, which can distinguish one group from another throughout the United States. When one familiar with Native Americans of the Southwest sees a kachina doll, for example, it is immediately associated with the Hopi. Yet, the kachina is more than a doll: It symbolizes a spirit or a certain attribute of a spirit. Therefore, it is imbued with very specific meaning. Similarly, Navajo rugs and their striking geometric designs are also distinct. The designs of Navajo rugs are representations or symbols of meanings, known to the maker, the local community, and to its culture as a whole.

What do the symbols mean? How does the symbol express meaning? What role does it play within a culture? In his discussion of symbol and meaning in art, David Penney (1992) says:

> Content, or meaning, stems from the communicative capacity of art as a symbolic system. Art, like language, functions as a tool of thought

> and a system for its expression. Artistic expressions objectify the subjective experience so that it becomes cultural, and can be shared within the social network. The analysis of art as a symbolic system deals with the notion of 'meaning.' (pg. 26)

The object itself, beyond its artistic function, carries many layers of meaning. Each object may be thought of as a total entity to its viewer. Yet the object and its symbolic meaning are only a part of a larger symbolic system. This larger system embodies a person's (or a culture's) world view. Symbols, as used within these systems, may be considered communicators, connectors, or links, between the various parts.

This study investigates the ways in which the symbol, as associated with artifacts, "objectif[ies] the subjective experience." Specifically, it examines types of meanings or symbolic systems that an object may embody, and the ways in which they are expressed. Two images used by three Great Lakes Indian tribes are examined across time, into the present, through artifactual analysis, as well as through interviews with individuals from the tribes. The human ecological concept of part and whole relationships helps to organize the analysis.

Two images chosen for study are the thunderbird and the underwater panther, symbols long associated with the Great Lakes Indians. As a part of a symbolic system or world view, these images appear to represent a wealth of various spiritual and social meanings. They are found not only in natural settings, but are incorporated into items such as apparel and accessories, into other items used in ceremonies and rituals, as well as those for household and military purposes.

Encountering the striking images of the thunderbird and underwater panther in art books, as well as archaeological and ethnographic sources, one becomes intrigued with what they might mean and what they represent to

those within their culture. As this viewer was entranced, surely they must have entranced other observers, and must have symbolized the maker's sources of inspiration on more than one level. So I began to search further. Many examples that I found seemed to direct me toward their use within a spiritual context. I was particularly interested in seeking out their use in apparel and textiles. I was additionally drawn to the idea of how material culture relates to holism and human ecological concepts, as well as spiritual considerations.

As I searched for information on these motifs I found that few studies have dealt with Native American symbols, particularly as related to dress in the Great Lakes region. Of those researching Great Lakes Indian dress, Beverly Gordon (1992) has examined the bandolier bag as a cultural symbol. Rachael Pannabaker (1990) has studied Indian ribbonwork, linking anthropological and historical research to clothing and textiles. Feather and Sibley (1979) examined three groups of clothing items to explore European influence on native clothing; they suggest that the study of Native American apparel and their motifs are "overlooked pages of North American clothing history" (p.73). Ulrich (1991) further speaks of the neglect of the general historian in seriously considering clothing and household textiles as significant in research, especially when explored as cultural symbols.

Other closely related fields of researchers also have addressed the subject. There is ethnographic information about these symbols from sources such as Carrie Lyford's Ojibway Crafts, published in 1943, and W. J. Hoffman's (1886) "Midewiwin of the Ojibwa." Hoffman, writing in the late nineteenth century, has provided details based on his research of the Ojibwa Midewiwin Society in the 1880s. Additionally, at the turn of the century, some

anthropological research by Chamberlain (1890) and Jones (1905) add to our understanding.

The images under study have been documented within specific artifact types such as woven bags, birchbark scrolls, prehistoric discs, and effigy mounds by other scholars. Archaeologist Charles Cleland (1985) (and earlier with Richard Clute and Robert Haltiner in 1984) presents an in-depth analysis of the only dated pre-European contact artifacts found in Michigan containing these images. Art historians such as Penney (1989, 1992), Phillips (1985, 1989), Wilson (1982), and Brasser (1976) have analyzed the thunderbird and underwater panther on historic textiles and other material culture, depicting them as primarily representing opposing forces constantly at war with each other.

The main problem with these studies is that they have not looked into the present day material culture to investigate the presence of these images. The documentation of these images, and their change over time, as well as the recording of possible past and present meanings to the peoples of the tribes, primarily, of the Three Fires of Michigan--the Ottawa, Ojibwa, and the Potawatomi--is an important endeavor, especially as it is hoped that the process and the results will provide the opportunity for greater understanding among cultures.

In summary, this study is an investigation of the Great Lakes Indian motifs of the thunderbird and underwater panther, linking contemporary images with those of pre-contact times. An integral aspect of this study is to uncover the viewpoint of the Native American, through interviews, regarding these images. An additional aim of the study is an exploration of the human ecological concept of part and whole relationships.

CHAPTER 2

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND METHODOLOGY

Statement of the Problem

My interest in material culture (especially apparel and textiles), anthropology, and Native American cultures led to a study of the Great Lakes Indian tribes through various literary sources. During this study, I became aware of two images--the thunderbird and the underwater panther--which seemed to be important to these peoples from very early times. They were evident in various pre-contact and historic artifacts.

Through the centuries, these images have appeared not only in artifacts, but are found in the Native American folklore of the Great Lakes region. Multiple meanings are imbedded within the stories and these images. They are, I believe, important as indicators of social and cultural attitudes and values; yet my review of the literature (which is integrated throughout because of the artifact model chosen) has not uncovered an analysis of these two images over time. The documentation of these images as they are used today is vitally important in preserving present social and spiritual beliefs, as well as lending a perspective on attitudes about the past. For these reasons, I wished to explore the symbols of the thunderbird and the underwater panther in the past and present material culture of the Michigan Great Lakes tribes known as the Three Fires.

The sample of artifacts selected represents the period primarily from post-European contact in the late eighteenth century to the present day, with the objective of determining the changes in and possible meanings of these symbols. The motifs as found in artifacts of the Ojibwa, Ottawa, and Potowatomi were documented, with research being concentrated in Michigan. Some artifacts of these tribes from those areas surrounding the perimeters of the Great Lakes are also included, as well as a few objects of the Menomini of Wisconsin (for comparative purposes), as there was a tremendous amount of movement around the Great Lakes by these groups, particularly during the period directly following European contact and earlier.

Objectives

The objectives of this study were:

1. to examine and document the material culture of the Great Lakes Indians (the Ojibwa, Ottawa, and Potawatomi) which contain images of the thunderbird and underwater panther.
2. to determine when changes in form and function of these images occurred.
3. to analyze these changes in relation to cultural influences.
4. to explore the human ecological concept of part and whole relationships as related to the Great Lakes Indians' use of these images in their material culture.

Some questions for consideration are:

- What are the possible meanings of the symbols of the thunderbird and underwater panther in the past cultural context of these societies?
- Are these meanings consistent over time?
- What types of artifacts contained these images, and what role did the artifact have in conveying meaning?
- From the time of contact with Europeans, do we have evidence of changes in the images due to acculturation? Because of the social upheaval and disruption of the Native American's way of life with the arrival of European peoples, were symbols/images lost? Did the images of the thunderbird and underwater panther fall into disuse when a new world view was presented to these indigenous peoples based on different values and religious outlooks held by Euro-Americans?
- What are the meanings of these symbols today?

The following strategies were developed to seek answers to these questions:

- A review of previously published research and an examination of stories and myths was conducted.
- Ethnographic and anthropological sources were consulted to determine possible usages of these symbols over time. Interviews with people of Ojibwa, Ottawa, and Potawatomi heritage were carried out to elicit information about meaning. Comparisons were then made with the written sources.
- An examination of artifacts and photographs of artifacts was conducted, with the assistance of an artifact analysis data form.

• Data from the artifact form and details of the photographs taken of objects were examined for changes due to acculturation, as was the data collected through individual interviews.

• Through interviews, the meanings of these symbols today were explored, as well as knowledge of past meanings.

Research Methods

This study is multidisciplinary, using perspectives from human ecology, ethnography, history, art history, anthropology and archaeology, as well as religion and folklore. This approach has led to a more complete picture of the lives and culture of the Great Lakes Indians and their use of the thunderbird and underwater panther as symbols.

A major consideration in examining these two images was to determine their possible meaning over time. To accomplish this, I employed an overriding theoretical concept, the human ecological construct of part and whole relationships. Artifact analysis within this construct was important because it provided a way to go beyond description to an interpretation of the meaning of the objects. As Schlereth (1982) emphasizes, "the crucial task . . . for contemporary material culturalists . . . [is] to expand the emphasis of the discipline from the description of artifacts to the interpretation of them" (p. 33). With this in mind, a framework for artifact analysis, coupled within a multidisciplinary approach, provided the basis for analysis and interpretation.

Data from Written Sources

Historical information was gathered through a range of primary and secondary sources, including histories and journals, as well as ethnographic, anthropological, and art historical studies located in various libraries at Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan (including the Main Library, Special Collections in the Main Library, and the Human Ecology Reference Library), and the State Library of Michigan, Lansing, Michigan. Some references were obtained through the University Library's Interlibrary Loan Division. References chosen were based on sources located by subject matter in the library on-line index, as well as those mentioned in scholarly bibliographies, and from references located in journal indexes.

At the outset of the study, it became apparent that myths and stories would provide information about the thunderbird and underwater panther. Therefore, as the literature was reviewed, examples of stories and myths were sought in order to explore a wide range of sources for meanings attributed to these symbols. Often stories were located in histories and ethnographic sources. Stories also were sought from those interviewed. The collection of stories and myths does not represent an exhaustive search, but was used to help provide information for this study.

Data through Artifact Study

In order to determine the range of types of material culture containing the two images, a survey of artifacts was conducted. A letter was sent to museums/collections in Michigan which were thought to have Native American artifacts, based on information in The Official Museum Directory

1990. In addition, thesis committee members offered useful information. The letter included a questionnaire and a self-addressed return envelope (see Appendix A for a sample letter and copy of the questionnaire). A postcard was sent five weeks later to those museums which had not returned the questionnaire, followed a week later by a phone call if no further information had been received. Of the 32 collections contacted, 11 indicated that they had possible objects bearing these images. Arrangements were made to visit and document relevant artifacts at each one. Additionally, a state and provincial park and the Nokomis Learning Center were visited. See Table 1 for a listing of museums visited. It was not always possible to see or examine the entire collection, due to administrative constraints, items on display, or artifacts which were in storage. Those examined were documented on the artifact form (see Appendix A, Artifact Study Worksheet), photographed, and historical data requested, if available. It was hoped that the study would uncover a greater number of previously unpublished objects with these images.

Table 1. Museums, Collections, and Sites Visited

Name of Museum, Institution, or Collection	- Address
Cranbrook Institute of Science	Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
Central Michigan University	Mt. Pleasant, Michigan
Charlton Park Museum	Hastings, Michigan
Detroit Institute of Arts	Detroit, Michigan
Jesse Besser Museum	Alpena, Michigan
Lake Superior Provincial Park	Wawa, Ontario, Canada
Michigan Department of State, Michigan Historical Center, Office of the State Archaeologist	Lansing, Michigan
Michigan Historical Museum	Lansing, Michigan
Michigan State Archives	Lansing, Michigan
Michigan State University Museum	East Lansing, Michigan
Nokomis Learning Center	Okemos, Michigan
Public Museum of Grand Rapids	Grand Rapids, Michigan
Sanilac Petroglyphs State Park (Micigan Historical Museum)	Sanilac, Michigan

Table 1 (cont'd).

University of Michigan, Museum of Anthropology — Ann Arbor, Michigan

To provide a larger sample for data collection, images of published artifacts also were examined and documented. These included sources published by Brasser (1976), Penney (1989, 1991, 1992), Phillips (1984), Wilson (1982), and others. The sample examined, from both museum and published sources--165 artifacts--encompasses a wide range of material culture from the past to present day, including seven pre-contact artifact types and nine that are indicative of commercially produced objects today. Due to the nature of artifact collection, as well as the period of time covered, obtaining a truly representative sample of all artifacts produced by these tribes was not possible. This sample represents what was available to the researcher.

In the tables below, Table 2 presents the location and published sources of the artifacts in the sample, while Table 3 lists the artifacts examined.

Table 2. Location of Artifacts and Published Sources Examined

Abbreviation	Name	Address
AMNH	American Museum of Natural History	New York City, NY
CIS	Cranbrook Institute of Science	Bloomfield Hills, MI
CMU	Central Michigan University	Mt. Pleasant, MI
CPM	Charlton Park Museum	Hastings, MI
DIA	Detroit Institute of Arts	Detroit, MI
FIA	Flint Institute of Arts	Flint, MI
FMNH	Field Museum of Natural History	Chicago, IL
HFW	Historic Fort Wayne	Detroit, MI
HSHC	Harbor Springs Historical Commission	Harbor Springs, MI
JBM	Jesse Besser Museum	Alpena, MI
MG	Collection of Marie Gile	Lansing, MI
LM	Liverpool Museum	Liverpool,England
LSPP	Lake Superior Provincial Park	Wawa, Ontario, Canada
McC	McCord Museum	Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Table 2 (cont'd).

MDS	Michigan Department of State, Michigan Historical Center, Office of the State Archaeologist	Lansing, Michigan
MGR	Public Museum of Grand Rapids	Grand Rapids, MI
MHM	Michigan Historical Museum	Lansing, MI
MSA	Michigan State Archives	Lansing, MI
MSUM	Michigan State University Museum	East Lansing, MI
NLC	Nokomis Learning Center	Okemos, MI
NMAI	National Museum of the American Indian	New York City, NY
NMI	National Museum of Ireland	Dublin, Ireland
NMM	National Museum of Man	Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
RMP	Collection of Richard & Marion Pohrt	
ROM	Royal Ontario Museum	Toronto, Ontario, Canada
SD	Collection of Selwyn Dewdney	
SHSW	State Historical Society of Wisconsin	Madison, WI
SPSP	Sanilac Petroglyphs State Park	Sanilac, MI

Published Sources

AGLI	Flint Institute of Arts, Art of the Great Lakes Indians
BTO	Harbor Springs Historical Commission, Beadwork & Textiles of the Ottawa
MO	Hoffman, Midewiwin of the Ojibwa. U. S. Bureau of Ethnology Seventh Annual Report 1885-1886
NAI	Fleming & Luskey, North American Indians in Early Photographs
SC	Coe, Sacred Circles
SLCBM	Skinner, Social Life and Ceremonial Bundles of the Menomini Indians. Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History 13

Table 3. Listing of Artifacts Examined by Type

Artifact	Catalogue No.	Date	Musuem/Source
Tribe/Region/Artist			
Clothing & Accessories			
1. Bag, bandolier, beaded Chippewa	1954.1544	c. 1830	SHSW
2. Bag, bandolier, beaded Ottawa or Chippewa	1988.28	1830-50	DIA
3. Bag, bandolier, beaded Ottawa or Ojibwa	133	19th century (1840s?)	SC
4. Bag, bandolier, beaded Chippewa	120186	c. 1850	MGR

Table 3 (cont'd).

5. Bag, bandolier, beaded Chippewa	81.78	c. 1850	DIA
6. Bag, bandolier, beaded Chippewa	3026	1860	Private
7. Bag, bandolier, beaded Chippewa	15300	1880	FMNH
8. Bag, bandolier, beaded Potawatomi	117089	c. 1880	MGR
9. Bag, bandolier, beaded Chippewa	81.297	c. 1885	DIA
10. Bag, bandolier, beaded Chippewa	228	c. 1890	AGLI
11. Bag, bandolier, beaded Potawatomi	81.467	c. 1890	DIA
12. Bag, bandolier, beaded Great Lakes	90.77.35	pre-1900	MHM
13. Belt, bark, quill-wrapped Western Gr. Lakes	1902.348	coll. 1800-09	NMI
14. Belt, beaded Ojibwa-type	H82.268	early 1900s?	CMU
15. Choker, man's, beaded with incised shell gorget Potawatomi	23/9335	c. 1900?	NMAI
16. Earrings, beaded Ojibwa		1992	MG
17. Garter, wool & beads Ottawa	81.63	1820-40	DIA
18. Garter, wool & beads Chippewa	81.281 a & b	1830-50	DIA
19. Garter, yarn, beaded Chippewa?	238	c. 1835	AGLI
20. Garter, yarn, beaded Chippewa?	240	c. 1835	AGLI
21. Garter, wool & beads Potawatomi	81.312	c. 1850	DIA
22. Garter, yarn & beads Chippewa	251	c. 1850	AGLI
23. Headband, man's beaded Ottawa		c. 1970	Private
24. Headband, beaded Potawatomi?		c. 1940-60	CPM
25. Moccasins Potawatomi-type		late 1700s	LM
26. Moccasins Ojibwa?	1902.345	c. 1800-09	NMI
27. Moccasins Chippewa-type	7435	late 1800s	MHM
28. Necklace, medallion, bead Ojibwa		c. 1980	Private
29. Necklace, bead Ojibwa		c. 1980	Private

Table 3 (cont'd).

30. Necklace, medallion, bead Ojibwa	6695.8.2	1987	MSUM
31. Necklace, medallion, bead Ojibwa	6695.8.1	1987	MSUM
32. Pin, watercolor Ojibwa, A Hubbard		1994	MG
33. Pin, watercolor Ojibwa, A. Hubbard		1994	MG
34. Pouch, skin, black dyed, quilled, Ottawa	III-M-1	pre-1800	NMM
35. Pouch, skin, black dyed, quilled, Ottawa	III-M-2	late 1700s	NMM
36. Pouch, skin, black dyed, quilled, Ottawa type	III-M-3	c. 1780	NMM
37. Pouch, skin, black dyed E. Great Lakes/Ottawa?	III-G-841	c. 1780	NMM
38. Pouch, skin, black dyed quilled, Ottawa	3690	c. 1780	CIS
39. Pouch, skin, black dyed quilled, Ottawa	81.487	c. 1780	DIA
40. Pouch, skin, black dyed E. Ojibwa type	III-G-828	c. 1780	NMM
41. Pouch, wool, linen cloth Ojibwa	M740	early 1800s	McC
42. Pouch, tanned, black-dyed qullled, E. Great Lakes	III-M-6	c.1800	NMM
43. Pouch,deerskin,black-dyed qullled, Ottawa-Ojibwa type	1902.326	coll. 1800-09	NMI
44. Pouch, skin, black dyed quilled, Ottawa/Ojibwa	III-G-829	1800	NMM
45. Purse, coin, beaded Ottawa and Chippewa, V. High		1994	MG
46. Robe, quilled deerskin, Mide', Mackinac, MI Ojibwa/Ottawa?	14/3269	poss. 1816	NMAI
47. Sash, yarn, beaded Ottawa	81.65	c. 1800-30	DIA
48. Sash, beaded Great Lakes	81.132	1820-40	DIA
49. Sash, yarn, beaded Chippewa	66.14.44	c. 1840	HFW
50. Sash, beaded Chippewa	180	c. 1890	Private
51. Sash, beaded Ojibwa	123112	early 1900s	MGR
52. Waistband, beaded Ojibwa?	H82.270	early 1900s?	CMU
53. Wristband, beaded Chippewa		c. 1990	Private

Table 3 (Con't).

Textiles

54. Bag, woven fiber panel Central Great Lakes	1902.327	collected 1800-09	NMI
55. Bag, nettlestalk fiber Central Great Lakes	1902.328	collected 1800-09	NMI
56. Bag, woven fiber panel Central Great Lakes	1902.329	collected 1800-09	NMI
57. Bag, panel, twined Ottawa	51	c. 1851	BIO
58. Bag, twined fiber Menomini	16/9124	post 1850?	AMNH
59. Bag, twined fiber Menomini	Neg.#38269 & #38270	post 1850?	AMNH
60. Bag, twined fiber Menomini	Neg.#34086 & #34085	post 1850?	AMNH
61. Bag, twined fiber Menomini	Neg. #38479 & #38480	post 1850?	AMNH
62. Bag, panel, nettle & wool Ottawa	81.39	c. 1860	DIA
63. Bag, panel/wool Chippewa	81.285	1860	DIA
64. Bag, cotton panel Ojibwa	81.37	c. 1870	DIA
65. Bag, panel, nettle & wool Potawatomi	81.102	c. 1870	DIA
66. Bag, beaded Ottawa	81.282	c. 1870	DIA
67. Bag, banded, wool Ojibwa	81.184	c. 1885	DIA
68. Bag, panel, wool Potawatomi	81.372	c. 1890	DIA
69. Bag, banded cotton/wool Chippewa	81.666	c. 1890	DIA
70. Bag, storage, cotton Ojibwa	141	c. 1900	SC
71. Bag, beaded Potawatomi	3071	early 1900s (?)	CIS
72. Bag, medicine, yarn Potawatomi?	1234	early 1900s (?)	CIS
73. Mat, rush, woven Ottawa	54	c. 1851	BIO
74. Panel, netted quillwork Ojibwa	HD 16387	early 1800s	ROM
75. Panel, beadwork Ottawa		mid-1900s?	Private
76. Quilt, cotton Ojibwa, A. Fox	6653.1	1987	MSUM
77. Quilt, cotton Ojibwa, R. Corbiere	7104.1	1990	MSUM

Table 3 (cont'd).

78. Quilt, cotton Ojibwa/Ottawa, Trudeau/Enosse		c. 1990	MSUM
79. Quilt, cotton Ojibwa, A. Fox		pre-1994	Private
80. Quilt motif, A. Fox, based on Ojibwa design from Agawa Rock		1994	Private
Other Household Items			
81. Box, birchbark, quilled Saginaw, MI? Ojibwa?	ZE69.12 a/b	c. 1930-50	CMU
82-83. Needles,buffalo rib Potawatomi	81.380.1-3	c. 1860	DIA
84. Cradleboard panel Ojibwa-type	III-G-848	1700s	NMM
85. Cradleboard Great Lakes		possibly 1900	MSUM
86. Cradleboard Ottawa, Petoskey, MI	1320(R)/ 1136(Y)	c. 1924	MHM
Travel Related Items			
87. Snowshoes, wood, sinew Ojibwa	3784	c. 1870	CIS
[Postcard #150 of White Wolf & son canoeing Chippewa]		c. 1957	MSA
Ceremonial Objects			
88. Bag/pouch, skin & beaded Ottawa	7531.1	c. 1992	MSUM
89. Cloth, Mide' ceremonial Ojibwa	III-G-12a	Pre-1912	NMM
90. Dance wand, minature Potawatomi	155730	1800-60	FMNH
91. Drum, wood, deerskin Chippewa or Potawatomi		c. 1840	RMP
92. Drum, wood, skin Potawatomi?		c. 1940-60	CPM
93. Pipe bowl, pewter Ottawa	81.262	c. 1800	DIA
94. Pipe stem, wood, quills Chippewa	81.752	1840-60	DIA
95. Scroll, birchbark, Mide Ojibwa	Plate 17	c. 1893	MO
96. Wooden Mide' board Ojibwa	159	c. 1860-80	SC

Table 3 (cont'd).

Art Objects

97. Cutout, birchbark, Thunderbird Ojibwa	1994	MG
98. Painting, "Thunderbird" Ojibwa, N. Morrisseau	c. 1960	Private
99. Painting, "Misshipeshu" Ojibwa, N. Morrisseau	c. 1960	Private
100. Painting, "Misshipeshu" Ojibwa, N. Morrisseau	c. 1970	SD
101. Painting, acrylic "Mishi Mishoo" Ojibwa, D. Dutcher	1988	JBM
102. Painting, acrylic "Gitche Gumme - Underwater Panther," Ojibwa, P. Migwans	1988	JBM
103. Painting, acrylic "Lake Superior Serpent #2," Ojibwa, P. Migwans	1988	JBM
104. Painting, watercolor "Lady Transforming into Thunderbird," Ojibwa, A. Hubbard	1988	JBM
105. Painting, watercolor "Teasing" Ojibwa, A. Hubbard	1988	JBM
106. Painting, watercolor, "Woman & Dog" Ojibwa, A. Hubbard	1988	Private
107. Painting, watercolor Ojibwa, A. Hubbard	c. 1988	Private
108. Painting, watercolor "Floral Design" Ojibwa, Dockstader	c.1990	Private
109. Painting, acrylic Ojibwa, J. Fiddler	c. 1990	NLC
110. Painting, acrylic Ojibwa, A. Hubbard	1990	Private
111. Painting, watercolor "Balance of Power," Ojibwa	c. 1990	Private
112. Painting, watercolor "Look Before You Leap," Ojibwa	1990	Private
113. Painting, watercolor, ink Ojibwa, A. Hubbard	1991	Private
114. Painting, watercolor "Finding a Time for Myself," Ojibwa	1992	Private
115. Painting, acrylic Ojibwa, P. Migwans	1994	Private
116. Painting, pen & ink Ojibwa	c. 1994	MG
117. Painting, acrylic Ojibwa, P. Migwans	1994	MG
118. Painting, acrylic, Ojibwa, P. Migwans	1994	MG
119. Quillbox, birchbark & quills 7232.1 Ottawa, B. Parkey	c.1990	MSUM
120. Quillbox, birchbark & quills Ottawa, Y. Keshick	1994	MG

Table 3 (cont'd).

121. Quillbox, birchbark & quills Ottawa, D. Naganashe		1988	Private
122. Pottery, bowl Chippewa	ZE77.1.7	c. 1970	CMU
123. Sculpture, marble, D. Cristy Chippewa		c. 1994	Private

Weapons and Related Items

124. (a)Covering for war bundle skin, painted, Menomini	Fig. 11-14 & 16	pre-1913	SLCBM
125. Club, wooden gunstock Ojibwa?	III-G-834	1800	NMM
126. Club, wooden E.Great Lakes	1902.352	collected 1800-09	NMI
127. Club, wooden E.Great Lakes	HD 5820	early 1800s	ROM
128. Club, wooden	15891	early 1800s	McC
129. Club, wooden Great Lakes	III-X-235	pre-1840	NMM
130. Club/Gunstock, wood, iron Chippewa		c. 1840	Private
131. Club, wood; red pigment Ojibwa C. Great Lakes	1880.1894	pre-1880	NMI
132-34. Rattles (3) from war bundle, wood with deer hoofs Menomini	Fig. 21	pre-1913	SLCBM
135. Rattle, wood, deer hoofs Potawatomi	16/2618	pre-1928	NMAI

Photographs/Postcard

136. Photo, Peter Jones	Fig. 1.1	8/4/1845	NAI
137. Photo, Shoppenagon, wife, and child, Chippewa	Neg.#00747	c. 1850	MSA
138. Photo, Chief Shoppenagon Chippewa	File #2	c. 1850	MSA
139. Photo, Indian woman Potawatomi	(C.2.2)/ 201260(4716)	1897	MGR
140. Photo, Indian man/woman Potawatomi	(C1.2)/ 135287(4716)	1897	MGR
141. Photo, Indian woman/donor? Potawatomi	(C.1.2)/135287(4716)	1897	MGR
142. Photo, 3 men & 2 children Potawatomi?		c. 1940-60	CPM
143. Photo, three men Potawatomi?		c. 1940-60	CPM
144. Photo, Suzie Shagonaby Ottawa		1950s?	MSA

Table 3 (cont'd).

145. Photo, Indian Princess Ottawa	Folder 6	1951	MSA
146. Photo, Chief Yellow Thunder/Ottawa	Neg.#5651890	1956	MSA
147. Photo, Indian man "Woodworking" Potawatomi? from Hannaville Res, MI		c.1959	MSA
148. Photo, Elbinger, pow-wow regalia, D. Teeple, Ojibwa		1993	MSUM
149. Photo, Elbinger, pow-wow regalia, G. Martin, Ojibwa		1993	MSUM
150. Postcard, White Wolf & son canoeing Chippewa		c. 1957	MSA

Rock Art, Shale Discs

151. Disc, shale Alpena, MI	Hampshire 1-32	c. 1350-1400	JBM
152. Disc, shale Alpena, MI	Hampshire 1-45	c. 1350-1400	JBM
153. Disc, shale Alpena, MI	Hampshire 1-38	c. 1350-1400	JBM
154. Bannerstone, stone Branch Co., MI	3834(Y)/ 5369(R)	Collected 1876-1902	MDS
155. Pendant, shell Allegan Co?, MI	OE2002.21.35	Date unknown	MSUM
156. Petroglyphs Sanilac Co., MI	Sanilac Petroglyphs		SPSP
157. Pictographs Ontario, Canada	Agawa Rock		LSPP

Present Day Commercial Uses of Images

158. Bag, plastic & paper sales tag Ontario, Canada (Agawa Rock region)		1994	MG
159. Banner, museum		c. 1990	MSUM
160. Brochure, museum		c. 1990	MSUM
161. Bracelet, copper Kewenau Pennisula, Michigan		1992	MG
162. Business card, paper		1992	MG
163. Earrings, copper, clip		c. 1970	MG
164. Moccasins, beaded Made by Quilmox	H82.281 a,b	pre-1982	CMU
165. Moccasins, beaded Made by Minnetonka		1993	MG

Data Collected through Interviews

Since the modern day meaning of these images within the three tribes was important, interviews were sought with various Great Lakes Indian artists, tribal elders, and tribal leaders throughout Michigan. Approval for oral research was sought from the University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, and once received, prospective participants were contacted. This list was compiled based on various artists whose work I had seen while visiting museums, a few whom I had met through the MSU Museum's Folk Life Festival and at pow wows, and others recommended by museum curators and faculty. All those contacted were willing and agreeable to participate in the study (see Appendix A for Interviewee Consent Form).

Of this group, five were women and four were men. Their occupations varied from that of school administrator to homemaker and artist, including those with responsibilities within the tribes such as elder or cultural positions. Their ages ranged from thirty to eighty-two, and they were of varying socio-economic backgrounds. My objective was to talk with at least one member of each of the three tribes, and this was accomplished. Many interviewed had ancestors from two of the tribes, and one had ancestors from all three tribes (a true person of the Three Fires). Refer to Table 4 for a listing of interviewees.

Although the interviews were to focus on the main topic (see Interview Collection Form, Appendix A), they were open-ended and thus, not only more diverse in content, but more in-depth as a result. Interviews were reserved until the end of the study so that themes and questions derived from the artifacts and stories could be cross-checked.

Table 4. Interviewees Consulted in the Study

Name or Pseudonym[1]	Age	Sex	Occupation/Position	Tribe
Mark Crampton	30	M	Local Indian Center Education director; Cultural Vice-Chair of Saginaw Chippewa Tribal Council	Odawa and Chippewa
Alice Fox	80	F	Artist; homemaker	Ojibwa and Ottawa
Anny Hubbard	39	F	Artist; Substance abuse counselor	Nishnawbe (Anishnabe)
Yvonne Walker Keshick	47	F	Artist; Odawa tribal elder	Odawa and Ojibwa
Mary (Pseudonym)	52	F	Volunteer leader in local Indian organization; other tribal positions	Odawa, Potawatomi and Ojibwa
Peter Migwans	57	M	Artist; storyteller; retired steel worker; community elder	Ojibway and Odawa
Jay Oliver	82	M	Accountant; hospital technician (nurse); Ottawa tribal elder	Ottawa
Barbara Tazelaar	50	F	Artist; writer; art gallery assistant manager	Sault Tribe of Chippewa
Ted (Pseudonym)	47	M	School administrator; tribal elder; chairman of state-wide Indian organization; parent and grandparent	Potawatomi

[1]Although the consent form states that the person interviewed will be unnamed, some interviewees wished to be named. Accordingly, their true names are used. Their occupations, positions, and tribes are self-identified.

Once the interviews were completed, the tapes of these conversations were transcribed. The data were then analyzed by coding each transcription for themes, and were reviewed a number of different times for additional information. The following is a listing of major themes from the interviews:

- color associations
- complexity of meanings
- communication
- cyclical nature
- Euro-American view of images
- holism and balance
- images in opposition
- interconnection
- loss of culture
- oppression
- positive and negative forces
- power
- practices associated with images
- purpose of images in art
- relationship to geographic and natural environment
- relationship to tourism
- revitalization of native traditions
- role within society
- spiritual nature (or use)

Analytical Model for Artifact Study

In recent years, various models and methodologies have been proposed for the study of historical material culture by Fleming (1982), Gordon (1987), Prown (1982), Severa and Horswill (1989), and Zimmerman (1981). Of these models, Fleming's has received the most attention. In his model, the object is: (1) identified, (2) authenticated, (3) researched for its history, (4) physically described based on materials, construction, design, and dimensions, and finally (5) evaluated for aesthetic quality, workmanship, and comparison to objects of its kind. The relationship of the object to its culture is then examined to reveal aspects of the object through various functions (physical, aesthetic, social, and psychological). An important element in Fleming's model is the interpretation

of the significance of the object to the current culture, drawing parallels between the object and the value system.

During 1983-84, Stuart Smith's graduate history class at the University of New Brunswick studied Fleming's model and found that it was too complex and "attempted to synthesize too much information from several sources too early in the investigation procedure" (Smith, 1985, p. 31). In searching for a workable methodology, Smith's class developed a "cleaner, basic model," incorporating some aspects of Fleming's model. One of the main objectives of the group was to encourage the analysis of the properties of the artifact itself without any preconceived ideas, by visually examining the object more closely for observable data before using any data external to the object. This is different from Fleming's approach in such a study. The revised model which the class developed (which I will call the Smith model), involves four successive operations in which the properties of the artifact are analyzed in terms of its material, construction, provenance (region of origin and history), function and value.

In the first step of Smith's model, the researcher observes and documents data about the five properties of an artifact through sensory contact with the object. Step two, or Comparative Data, involves the investigation of similar artifacts to test differences and similarities of like kinds. Once these observations have been made, the researcher continues with step three, or Supplementary Data, whereby s/he studies written sources for additional information. All data are then synthesized in step Four, Conclusions.

The method of artifact analysis which I used in this study was based on Smith's model. However, I have modified the final step of the Smith model to

include the two final operations from Fleming's model. The revised model now incorporates Fleming's "cultural analysis" and "interpretation" as the final two steps of the artifact study, rather than just one final phase. The modified model, to be used in this study, is shown below [Fig. 1(a)].

A simplified model was desired for the initial steps in the study, as I wished to allow the object to "reveal itself" without the influence of information such as its history and authentication (a part of Fleming's analysis). One of the primary objectives was to discover aspects about the artifact and its symbolism which would provide evidence toward a cultural and interpretive analysis of classes of objects and images over time. This revised model provides a systematic order to the process of data collection, analysis and interpretation. Its concise and yet adaptable categories for investigation lend themselves well to the collection of data and to the observance of part-whole relationships within the objects being studied.

In addition to this model guiding my methodology, the role of an object within a functional field as described by Henry Glassie (1973) greatly affected my thinking. Glassie, in discussing costume, considers the object as serving many functions, which operate between the person and his/her culture or world. Glassie's conceptualization or framework for analysis is an individual-centered one. In his diagram [Fig. 1(b)] , the object (pictured as a square) operates between one individual and another. Straight "manifesting" lines show the status of a relationship within a category, while curved "mediational" lines establish the nature of relations between categories. As Glassie says, ". . . [T]he object lies between different human beings, in which the costume is employed as a sign during social interaction" (p. 337). Additionally, and particularly relevant to this study, is Glassie's discussion of costume (object), as a mediator between nature and culture--as well as its magical functions--

Question Categories

Analysis Procedure	Material	Construction	Function	Provenance	Value
Step 1 Observable Data					
Step 2 Comparative Data					
Step 3 Supplementary Data					
Step 4 Cultural Analysis Conclusions					
Step 5 Interpretive Conclusions					

Fig. 1(a). Diagram of the revised Smith artifact study model.

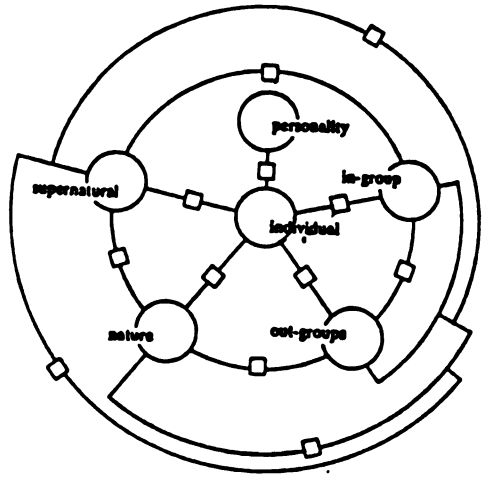

Fig. 1(b). Glassie's "Individual-Centered" diagram. Note. From "Structure and Function, Folklore and the Artifact," by H. Glassie, 1973, Semitoica, 7 (4), p. 336. Copyright 1973 by Mouton de Gruyter, a division of Walter de Gruyter & Co., Publishers. Reprinted with permission.

relating man to the supernatural. The functional diagram proposed by Glassie may also be subdivided into individual sections to address various roles of an object. With these concepts in mind, the analysis of objects could begin.

Human Ecological Construct: Part - Whole Relationships

The human ecological concept of parts and wholes has been described by Gerald Young as stemming from "an ancient dialectic," for humans have always been "intrigued by how things fit" (1989, p. 33). One may ask how parts are formed into wholes. And vice versa, how does a whole come about out of its component parts? William Abler (1992), in his doctoral dissertation, explored part and whole relationships within human ecological theory; he describes this concept as contained within the word *holon*, following Koestler, who

coined this word and the concept of holism. *Holon* is a blending of the Greek *holos*, for whole, and *on*, for part or particle. As Abler says, "All phenomena are seen to operate simultaneously as both part of a larger whole and a whole unto itself. Further, the whole is contained within each component part" (1992, p. 27).

The ideas of simultaneous operation and parts and wholes have also been touched upon by material culturalists and artists. Henry Glassie, in analyzing the functions of folk costume, says that "the artifact can be read as exhibiting aspects of different systems [wholes/parts]" (1973, p. 326). Costume and all man-made objects serve "simultaneously multi-functional" purposes, for "things not only do perform at once in many ways, they should" (p. 339). For example, a Native American, by wearing a bag with the thunderbird image, could experience spiritual and social connections within the context of his/her culture, and likely experience many other connections, through the wearing of this bag. Simultaneously, a non-Native American could be experiencing another part, or whole, by connecting with this culture through an appreciation of the artistic image on the bag. An analysis of an object in Chapter 5 will further demonstrate part-whole relationships.

Artist Paul Klee highlights another consideration--the transforming aspect--of part and whole relationships, which one may call "the sum greater than its parts." Klee speaks of the artist and his transformation of nature into new meaning:

> It is not easy to arrive at a conception of a whole which is constructed from parts belonging to different dimensions. . . not only nature, but also art, her transformed image, is such a whole (1954, p. 15).

The concept of parts and wholes is integral in helping to understand the relationship of the thunderbird and the underwater panther images as symbols of meaning within the Great Lakes Indian cultures.

Part-Whole Analysis Outline

To assist in the analysis of part and whole relationships of the artifacts studied, the following outline was designed as a guide. Using this outline the investigator:

1. Looks at the object for an overall sense of lines and symbols employed
2. Begins assessing the relationship of the smallest part of the major motif to the motif itself; compares each part to the whole and to other parts
3. Compares the major motif to any other motif
4. Compares the spatial arrangement of the major motif to other spatial arrangements
5. Considers numbers (of motifs, etc.)
6. Considers color
7. Considers repetition of line as reinforcement of an idea in the major motif
8. Considers motif(s) on the opposite side of the artifact, or other major area, and the significance to the whole of the artifact
9. Considers the material(s) employed and its significance within the whole structure of the object or the ecosystem it represents
10. Considers the entire artifact (and the symbol(s) employed) within its cultural world view

Following is an example of the questions raised using the outline above in an examination of Pouch #34 (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2. Ottawa quilled skin pouch, #NMMIII-M-1. Note. From "Bo'jou, Neejee!" Profiles of Canadian Indian Art, by T. J. Brasser, 1976, p. 97. Copyright 1976 by the Canadian Museum of Civilization. Reprinted with permission.

1. Get an **overall sense** of the elements of the bag. This is a pouch with four panther images, outlined in twined quillwork, with major lines and spaces internal and external to their bodies.

2. Begin with the **smallest area** of analysis--the parts of the smallest whole

a. What does the internal line of lower right and left designate?

1) Is the solid line through the center of the body a heartline?

2) Does the single wavy line above, which repeats the major line at the top of the pouch and the line above the upper pair, suggest water?

3) Relationship of this part to the solid thicker internal line?

4) Both lines to the internal part of the underwater panther?

5) Both lines to the entire underwater panther?

b. Significance of "horns" as part of the underwater panther?

c. Significance of the line outlining the body, seemingly flowing into the "horns"?

d. Is there meaning related to the tail length and its being beneath the underwater panther?

3. **Compare major motif** to any other motifs: Two pairs of underwater panther motifs

a. Two lower panthers form a pair

1) Do they have the same internal aspects?

2) Are they males or females? Is sex signified?

3) Does the pair represent the front and back of one panther?

3) Are they joined by tails (parts) into a pair to represent oneness (the whole) of friendship, unity of family, clan, tribe, society (social, religious, other)?

b. Upper pair--similar but different from the lower pair

1) Internal "parts" are different; does this suggest difference in power or nature of the upper to the lower pair?

2) The repeat design around the inner perimeter of the pouch is similar to the internal structure of this pair; is this an intentional parallelism?

3) Tails appear joined, but the "join" is more dramatic and powerful--it appears knotted or wrapped; is it suggesting a stronger bond?

4) "Horns" seem to be piercing the wavy line above. Does the wavy line represent water, and are the "horns" pushing the bounds or limits of the "lower world" into the "upper world"?

c. What is the significance of the two solid lines above the upper pair of panthers?

4. **Spatial arrangement** of panther motifs to other spatial arrangements:

a. There are two (2) pairs of three (3) horizontal lines. Are they earth lines and sky (vault?) lines? (could also be discussed under item #4)

b. Are pairs portrayed to represent a pair of males or a pair of females, or two different male/female pairs, each different or indicated by internal attributes and tail joinings, yet of equal stature because of relative size, again re-emphasizing the importance of social equality of all?

5. **Consider numbers:** four (4) used, part of sacredness of world view?

6. Is there significance in the use of **color:** red, yellow, blue, white, orange?

7. **Repetition of line:** Is there significance in the use of the wavy line above the horns of the top pair?

a. Is the outline at the very top of the bag used to further reinforce the suggestion of the power of the underworld?

b. Is the twined line surrounding the inner perimeter of the bag, as well as the internal feature of the top pair (an artistic device composed of two

wavy lines), designed to suggest the "double power" of the panther of the underworld?

8. **Consider motifs on opposite side of object:** there are no images on the reverse of the bag. Is this due to the function of the pouch?

9. What is the significance of the **use of** natural **materials:** skin bag, dyed black (with bark or other natural medium?), decorated with quills from the porcupine, and sewn with sinew? Does use of natural materials connect the maker and user more intimately with his/her surrounding world?

10. **Consider the entire object:** What does the use of natural materials in the making of the object, the images employed on the object, and the purpose of the bag, tell us about the world view of the maker/user?

The answers to these questions were sought through supplementary written sources and interviews with Great Lakes Indians.

When the analysis of data from the written materials and artifacts was completed, aspects and themes about the two images were sought and integrated. Further clarifications were then sought through the interviews. Lastly, analyses related to part and whole relationships were performed using the above process. It was necessary to return to the data sources many times, re-examining various artifacts and themes, as well as seeking new insights. Gradually larger patterns evolved as time and reflection lent additional light to the answers I sought about the thunderbird and the underwater panther.

The following two chapters will discuss the world view of the Great Lakes Indians, and the images of the thunderbird and underwater panther, as they appear within their material culture.

CHAPTER 3

THE GREAT LAKES INDIANS

> "The earth does not belong to man; man belongs to the earth. This we know. All things are connected like the blood which unites one family. All things are connected." - Chief Seattle
>
> (Brower, 1990, p. 6)

The information in the following sections about the underwater panther and the thunderbird is based primarily on data which have been collected in the fields of art history, anthropology, archaeology, and folklore, as well as from the interviews. Information obtained from the interviews is combined with written primary and secondary sources in order to integrate ideas and concepts. Interviewees who wished to remain anonymous were given fictitious names, and true names are used for the other interviewees. Written primary sources used are personal histories from the early nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as well as ethnographic sources that have provided additional data. Secondary sources about lifestyles of various tribes and details about specific artifacts within specific time frames (by archaeologists, anthropologists, and art historians) have provided pertinent information.

Early History and Culture

The predominant tribes at the time of European contact in the seventeenth century who were located north and south of the Upper Great

Lakes were those of the Algonquian language family: the Ojibwa (or Ojibway, sometimes commonly known as Chippewa), the Ottawa (or Odawa), and the Potawatomi. West and southwest of Lake Superior were the Siouian speaking tribes; and Iroquoian speakers lived to the east of this region [see map, Fig. 3]. These Woodland cultures were joined by bonds of customs, kin and dialect.

Generally, the Woodland culture evolved from early Archaic peoples (about 8000-6000 B.C.) who were located throughout the Eastern half of North America. The peoples of this early culture practiced agriculture, created pottery, and had an extensive ceremonial system. They produced elaborate grave goods and often buried their dead in low earthen mounds. Early Archaic peoples may have lived in the Upper Great Lakes regions, as archaeologists have found projectile points, most likely part of a cremation ceremony, in Marquette County, Michigan, dating from 7500-7000 B. C. (Cleland, 1992).

The Great Lakes Woodland Indians began their migration to the Great Lakes region from the northeastern part of the United States and from southeastern Canada probably by 900 B.C. (Swauger, 1984). By the time of European contact in the early seventeenth century, these Algonquian tribes had migrated well into the Great Lakes area. They called themselves Anishnabeg or Anishnabek (Anishnabe, singular), meaning the "true" or "real" people, to indicate their descent through mythological origins, and to differentiate themselves from others (Cleland, 1992; McClurken, 1991). As the Anishnabeg had moved westward, they had come in contact with the Sioux and remained friendly with them. Later, however, they began competing for hunting territory, in part, because of the fur trade. This led to war between them, and by 1770, they had driven the Sioux into the plains. Eventually the territory of these Algonquian-speaking peoples extended throughout the Great Lakes (Whiteford, 1991).

Fig. 3. Map of Great Lakes region about 1800, noting tribal locations.

The Anishnabeg's way of life depended on the subsistence activities of hunting, fishing, food-gathering, and some limited agricultural activities, depending upon their location. Generally, the Anishnabeg living in the northern forest regions were hunters and fishermen, while those living further south depended substantially on farming, raising corn, beans, and squash. The men were responsible for the construction of dwellings, longhouses, canoes and toboggans, and for clearing the land for agriculture. They also practiced stone and wood carving. Women's tasks included the planting and harvesting of crops, all household tasks, and child raising. In addition, women produced all clothing, wove and embroidered, prepared animal skins, and made items from birchbark (King, 1982). Life was a series of seasonal rounds made between a summer home, where fishing or cultivating activities were carried on in a communal atmosphere, and a winter hunting camp, where life centered around the social unit of the family. Due to this system of constant movement and dispersal, the Anishnabeg had a rather loose and informal political system. Their social system was one based on egalitarian ethics of sharing, generosity and mutual respect which extended to the world of animals and nature.

Life after Contact with European Cultures

The first contact with European cultures came with Jesuit missionaries and couriers-de-bois, fur trappers and traders who often lived with the Anishnabeg, in the late seventeenth century (White, 1992). The Anishnabeg were eager to trade with the white newcomers, bringing furs for new goods. It was a reciprocal arrangement. Missionary priests established missions to teach the Anishnabeg methods of agriculture as well as to introduce the

Christian religion. Missions were begun in various places throughout the upper peninsula and lower region of Michigan. French priests ministered in Middle Village, for example, until the mission was closed in 1765 (McClurken, 1991).

With the conclusion of the French and Indian War in 1760, the English replaced the French traders and took over their forts, the major ones being at Detroit and Mackinac. More settlers began arriving in the area in the early 1800s, after the Revolutionary War. Even though an ordinance was signed by the new United States government in 1785 to protect the Anishnabeg lands from squatters and trespassers, it was ineffectual. It also allowed the government to participate in future treaties for lands. Through constant ceding of lands under territorial governors, the Anishnabeg were forced into smaller and smaller lands for their livelihood (Clifton, 1986; Cornell, 1986; McClurken, 1986).

Simultaneous with President Andrew Jackson's Indian Removal Policy of May, 1830 was Michigan's move toward statehood. Just prior to statehood in 1837, another treaty, the Treaty at Washington of 1836, was essentially designed for removal. As pointed out by Cornell (1986), "Article Eight clearly states that the Anishnabeg were expected to move 'southwest of the Missouri River'" (p. 96). Anishnabeg tribes living in the lower regions of Michigan were virtually driven out, many fleeing to Canada for refuge. Describing the experience for the Ottawa, McClurken (1991) says:

> Compared to the Grand River Odawa in southern Michigan, who were being overrun by American settlers that threatened their very lives, the Odawa mission at Harbor Springs worked to create a secure life . . . (p. 19)

And in 1837, many Potawatomi were forcibly transported by the U. S. military to the distant lands of Kansas and areas west of the Mississippi.

In the 1880s, the U. S. government wished to acculturate quickly those Anishnabeg remaining in Michigan through education, and thus began the boarding school experience. The Mount Pleasant Indian School in Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, opened in 1893. Its purpose was to teach Indian children "new occupations that prepared them for the American work force" (McClurken, 1991, p. 35). Many Indian ways were suppressed, particularly language and clothing. Children were sent, typically at age six or seven, to board and be educated in a somewhat military system, returning home usually in the summer.

The nineteenth century was a time of continuing struggle over land and place in society for the Anishnabeg. By the 1860s only the Isabella reservation at Mt. Pleasant remained. With their land and means of livelihood gone, the Anishnabeg adopted the white society's ways of living by working in the lumbering industry, or various seasonal and factory jobs. By the turn of the century, their communities were poor; and with the hard times of the 1930s, the Indian school at Mt. Pleasant was closed. It wasn't until the passage of Title IV, the Indian Education Act of 1972, that hope revived, through education, for the native peoples.

World View of the Great Lakes Indian

The Anishnabeg are deeply spiritual. This spirituality differs from that of other Native American groups, for it is more individual, rather than being formal or ritualistic (Cleland, 1992). The traditional Anishnabeg's sense of connectedness to the world around him or her is sought through individual

quests for a personal guardian. Through this quest and acquisition of a guardian, one gains possession of personal power in order to achieve happiness and success in life.

To understand the Anishnabeg's idea of one's place in the world--one's connectedness and interrelationship with a world where everything has a spirit or soul--one must understand the conception of animals, plants, power, and the supernatural, all a part of this world view.

Before beginning a discussion of the world view of the Anishnabeg, it is perhaps best to define this cultural concept as used in this thesis. Anthropologist A. Irving Hallowell (1955), in his seminal work on the Ojibwa and their world view, speaks of cultures as "elaborate systems of meaning" which help the individual, through objectifying processes, to understand one's role in society in relationship to one's fellow human and one's "articulated universe" (p. 76). In defining world view, Hallowell quotes Redfield:

> It is the picture . . . the members of a society have of the properties and characters upon their stage of action. While 'national character' refers to the way these people look to the outsider looking in on them, 'world view' refers to the way the world looks to that people, looking out. Of all that is connoted by 'culture,' 'world view' attends especially to the way a man, in a particular society, sees himself in relation to all else. It is the properties of existence as distinguished from and related to the self. It is, in short, a man's idea of the universe. It is that organization of ideas which answers to a man the questions: Where am I? Among whom do I move? What are my relations to things? (Hallowell, 1955, p. 76, quoting R. Redfield from Preceedings of the American Philosophical Association XCVI1952, p. 30).

Overholt and Callicott, in defining world view from a philosophical perspective, state that it "may be understood as a set of conceptual presuppositions, both conscious and unconscious, articulate and inarticulate, shared by members of a culture" (1982, p. 1).

I am in agreement with Hallowell and Redfield's concept of world view--that we must consider the self-image and interpretation of that image within the realm of an individual's experiences. Also, this image cannot be separated from the concept of self embraced by that individual's society. Important, too, is "relations to things," as Redfield stated, and as expressed by Hallowell. The particular world view of the Anishnabeg is greatly influenced by strong social webs of kinship and spiritual webs connecting them to *Nokomis* (Grandmother Earth) and all her creatures. There are also strong webs that link the Anishnabeg to a world non-Indians would call 'the supernatural.' Strong and vital spiritual relationships may be held with beings or "persons," which transcend those maintained with humans. As explained by Hollowell (1960) in his discussion of Ojibwa world view, "the nature of 'persons' is the focal point of Ojibwa ontology and the key to the psychological unity and dynamics of their world outlook" (p.43).

Spiritual and Social Relationships

In the traditional Anishnabeg world view, living and dead human beings may assume the form of animals. Hallowell says that "metamorphosis to the Ojibwa mind is an earmark of 'power'" (1960, p. 39). Humans can only acquire their increased power through the help of "other-than-human persons" (p. 39). Dreams/visions are of extreme importance for it is through them that one encounters, by "seeing" or "hearing," the other-than-human "grandfathers," or "dream visitors," *pawaganak,* who possess great power. These "persons," "grandfathers," *pawaganak* or *atiso'kanak*, are dynamic within their universe. Jay Oliver, an Ottawa tribal elder and interviewee, said

that *pawagan* means "peace pipe." The inference is that one seeks these special beings or powers through the smoking of the pipe, the smoke being the visual and sensory prayer sent when seeking connection to this spiritual world. The meaning of *manitou* may also be considered synonymous with these persons of other-than-human class (Hallowell, 1960).

"The central goal of life for the Ojibwa is expressed by the term *pimadaziwin*, life in the fullest sense, life in the sense of longevity, health and freedom from misfortune" (Hallowell, 1960, p. 45). To achieve *pimadaziwin*, one must maintain approved standards of personal and social conduct in order to receive power, or a "blessing," from the "grandfathers." And because the "grandfathers" share their powers with humans, one must share with others (p. 47). Relationships must be reciprocal. This is a central moral value and outlook.

The transformation capacity of beings is another important concept. Transformation and power are given evidence in Anishnabeg myths and dreams. All animate beings have a similar structure, says Hallowell, with an inner vital part that is enduring and an outward form which can change. Indian artist Anny Hubbard, an interviewee, speaks to this concept of transformation, for she continually dreamed of being changed into the thunderbird:

> I had a recurring dream about transforming--about watching someone transform into a thunderbird--and it's really spooky. Not spooky, but powerful! That's the word I want. Powerful!

Another part of this world view is the idea of cooperation and coexistence, as explained by Underhill and Cleland. As Underhill says:

> For the old-time Indian, the world did not consist of inanimate materials to be used and of animals to be butchered and eaten. It was alive, and everything in it could help or harm him . . . The questions immediately asked about . . ."nature persons" are: Were they all alive and powerful in their own right? Were only some of them powerful? Or was the power from some indwelling spirit which might come and go? . . . There is no clear and simple answer. . . For the average Indian layman, it was enough to know that the "nature persons" were all around him and that he must follow the rules for gaining their cooperation. (1972, pp. 40-41)

Thus, the Anishnabeg's participation in life with animals (and all of Mother Earth) is one of maintaining coexistence, for:

> . . . animals have always been central to the process by which men form an image of themselves . . . [They] figure prominently in totemic discourse not because they are good to eat but because they are good to think with. This is certainly true in the case of the Anishnabeg, where the conceptual distinction between human and nonhuman and between natural and supernatural realms of experience does not follow the strict Cartesian dichotomy of Western thought. (Cleland, 1992, p. 66)

In Anishnabeg thought, the totem and clan are important concepts. Totemic descent is more than the linking of humans to animals, for humans are often transformed from animals. For example, members of the Fish clan are descendents of a sunfish that had been transformed into a human body (Cleland, 1992, p. 66). The relationship may be thought of as a symbolic one, and it often represents a connection to power through spirits. Bierhorst (1985), in discussing clan origins, says: "An Osage man once remarked, 'We do not believe that our ancestors were really animals, birds, and so forth as told in the traditions. These things are only *wawikuskaye* [symbols] of something higher" (pg. 231).

In this world of cooperation and coexistence, survival depended upon the process of not only interacting with one's fellow human, but communicating and living "with" animals and plants. It even involved the taking of their lives for that survival. This disrupted the order of creation and

the mystical forces controlling human and non-human relationships. Therefore, rituals were performed to placate the spirits and certain taboos were observed. In this way, a sacred balance was kept which was a "reciprocal exchange and cooperation" between the human and non-human world. To explain this cooperation, Cleland says "it is important to understand that people are not the takers but that animals and plants are the givers. It is not the hunter's skill with a bow that brings down the deer, but the deer's willingness to give its body to the hunter" (1992, p. 67). This belief also incorporates the aspect of the hunter's connectedness to the animal through power: At times the hunter has the power over an animal's spirit, whereas at other times the reverse is true.

The Concept of Power

Power, or "strong medicine," is an important part of the Anishnabeg world view. Power provides the means by which one may begin to control the unknown world, and help determine one's actions within the natural world. One may attain power through rituals and rites. The vision quest, described in the next section, is a primary means for acquiring personal power and the protection of a *manitou* for life. These spirits are the sources of power. Songs, objects such as charms, amulets, or medicine bundles, and sacred places all contain varying degrees of power.

As expressed by Cleland, one supreme spirit, called *kitchimanitou,* is considered to be the prime mover of the universe, but he is not all powerful. He created the world, but he allows the lesser spirits to control it. Some powers, although supernatural, inhabit the natural world in human form such as the folk hero, Nanabojo; others are in the form of animals (such as the

thunderbird and underwater panther). Each is often associated with particular places of power (1992, p. 68). Mark Crampton, an Ottawa and Chippewa interviewee, has called the supreme being "Father Sky," with the thunderbird acting as his messenger, and the land as being "Mother Earth." He describes the relationship as follows:

> . . . the highest power resides in the sky. It's sort of like a universal, around the globe, type of idea . . . Every Christian believes the Heavenly Father resides, of course, within the Heavens. Your soul [goes] to the Heaven upon death. Your spirit, your spiritual life, is not here on the material earth. It is above. In some instances, it's below. The tribes here in the Great Lakes recognize that the highest power resided above. Its common reference is Father Sky.

Additionally, it seems to me that the essence of the power is that it is shared. This concept appears to be an integral part of the Anishnabeg's social structure. Anishnabeg are taught that one shares what one has with others--food, clothing, whatever it might be. This moral code undoubtedly has been passed down from very early times. If a family was not fortunate in the hunt or in a good harvest, others who were successful shared in order to assure the continuance of the family, clan, or tribe.

The Vision Quest

Great importance is placed in visions and dreams. Visions and dreams confer a personal guardian spirit, one who will be a guide for life. The quest for a personal spiritual guardian is of paramount significance, as this spirit or being provides one with its blessings and inherent power in all endeavors in life. At puberty one would go out to a lonely place, fast for about ten days, and hope for a vision. This vision or dream would later be analyzed by a shaman

for its content and for the extent of its power. Spiritual powers or *manitous* were generally of the animal world, with thunderbirds and upper world spirits usually considered as beneficent while lower world spirits, such as the underwater panther, were often viewed in a negative light (Collins, 1991). To dream was the very substance of life itself. As expressed by Dewdney,

> all-pervasive in the oral tradition of the Midewewin lie the concept of the manito world and the central role of the dream . . . It became more and more obvious to me that the word *manito* cannot be translated into English. Renderings such as 'spirit' or even 'god' reduce seriously the combination of substance, power and reality that the native word can express, for in the manito world, accessible only through the doorway of the dreams, were vested all the powers that determined whether the hunter and his family would survive or perish. To enter this world was to step *into*, not out of, the *real* world.
>
> To dream, therefore, was man's most meaningful experience . . . where he fasted until he achieved the dream state that would reveal to him the manito who would be available for life to help him meet the crises of survival (1975, p. 37).

Interviews with Ted, a Potawatomi tribal elder and school administrator, and Peter Migwans, an Ojibwa artist and community elder, also provided information related to this. As Ted says, it is important to be a traveller through dreams, to bring back spiritual communications to pass on to the future generations of the tribe:

> The leader . . . must be worthy . . . and has learned to travel through dreams to bring back the messages from the Great Mystery.
>
> Part of the beauty of the spiritual path is that it's to acknowledge that it's an individual path. It's not going to be that maybe you're going to be sat down and taught and be entertained. You grow up, and you learn and you dream . . . and what comes to mind is the former teachings. Those were all important.

To Peter, a dream also is given in order to understand something and to act accordingly:

> Because you're asked so many questions, or because you're asked so many things, doesn't necessarily mean all. When somebody gives me tobacco to interpret their dream or something, they'll give me tobacco, and I'll say, "O.K. What took place in your dream?" and I'll hold that tobacco, and my first - my first - thought that comes into my mind, instantly, is my Creator, because I want to help this person who is troubled by a dream. It's not me. It's not going to me. I don't want to be one of those trash magazine dream interpreters. I go to my Creator. Here's what I think. And so the person tells me their dream, and I'll say, "O. K. I'll think on that." And then, maybe the next time we see each other--or if it's very important, maybe it's next week or something. But I can't say, "Oh, I've got the gift of figuring out your dream." I can't say that. I've got to think about that. I've got to listen to that person. I've got to see and hear the body language, you know. I've got to listen to the voice. I've got to see if it's bothering him in here [pointing to the heart area] or in here [pointing to the head area], the head or the inside, and then I've got to figure out what his dream is all about. I think about that, and I pray on that, and then I say to myself, "Why is this happening?" So I'll either tell him, or don't get into this, or maybe stay away from this, because if it's a dream, it's not going to necessarily happen. If it's a dream, it's to understand something and you act accordingly, and you're O.K. . . . A dream's not a dome light. It's a future.

The Midewiwin Society

Another aspect of power--that of healing rites--is offered by Johnson (1982), Densmore (1979), Dewdney (1975), Cleland (1992), and McClurken (1991) in their discussions about the mystic rites of the Midewiwin, or Grand Medicine Society. The society was formed in the seventeenth century[2] to help cure the sick as well as to encapsulate their religious beliefs. There were four orders or levels of membership. At each level, the practitioner gained successively in medicinal and herbal knowledge and power. Medicine bundles which held special powers were used in initiation rites. Within these bundles were shells called *megis* that held the magic power with which to infuse the

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[2]There is a controversy about the date of formation of the Midewiwin Society. Cornell states, and others infer, that Anishnabeg elders believe the Midewiwin has always been a part of the people's lives (1986, p. 87) yet other scholars contend the society was formed after contact with European cultures.

initiate. Thus, with the *megis*, the initiate could be "shot" (transformed) with power.

Significant spirits within the *manitou* world associated with Mide' rites, in addition to the panther and the thunderbird, are the bear, the turtle, the wolverine, the fox, and the wolf, who may stand before a door or occupy spaces in the interior of the Mide' lodge. The otter is intimately tied with these rites, as it has been given the sacred rattle, drum and tobacco, and trained in the mysteries of the Mide' by Nanabush, the Great Rabbit and folk hero, who is considered an intercessor or mediator to the Great Spirit. Nanabush gave immortality to the otter by infusing it with the power of life through the sacred *megis* (Hoffman, 1885-86). In addition to the otterskin bag and *megis*, various other items were used in the ceremony, such as birchbark scrolls containing pictographs as memory aids. Bandolier bags, or as Hoffman called them, "dancing bags," were indicative of Mide' rank. These were worn slung over the hips on crossed shoulder straps, or straps alone were worn (Dewdney, 1975). (Refer to artifacts numbered 1 through 12 beginning on page 12, which will hereafter be designated within brackets.)

The Society was considered important in controlling the unknown powers and forces of the natural world. As John Warner suggests :

> Power was an important concept . . . since one had to possess at least minimal amounts of it in order to carry on existence and survive. Shamans with power of good and evil were an important feature of life, and their existence could not be ignored by anyone. The Midewiwin Society served as an institutional force whereby members could hope to obtain some power for themselves in order to have security and protection from the malevolent spirits of the universe" (1975, p. 136).

Cleland, Densmore, and McClurken discuss the importance of the Society in perpetuating knowledge and skill related to herbal curing, as well as helping to bring about cures with their rites.

Dewdney's documention and analysis of birchbark scrolls, as used by members of the Grand Medicine Society, help in understanding their mythic and religious symbolism. Representations of the circle, the Path of Life, and the thunderbird and the underwater panther, among others, are analyzed in depth as related to the Mide' ceremony. The following is an example of Dewdney's observations:

> I prefer to consider both the Thunder Birds and the monster snakes as part of the behavioral environment of these Indians . . . Both are 'real' in the sense that they have actual effects upon behavior. In the broader Ojibway context there was a tendency, never explicit, to distinguish between manitos referred to in the plural--as in Thunderbirds--and the same manito as a singular entity--as in *the* Thunderbird. In this sense *the* Thunderbird symbolizes all threats to man from the sky, especially lightning, and may be grouped with the Great Lynx (or Lion) Misshipeshu, associated with death by drowning" (1975, p. 39).

In describing the origin of the Midewiwin through myth, Basil Johnson provides us with an insight into the power associated with the thunderbird and spirits such as the underwater panther. He relates a tale of the Spirit of the Underworld who teaches the Anishnabeg the ritual to ward off sickness and death by teaching them chants and giving them medicines:

> From now on, the six messengers were to teach their sisters and brothers . . . But before sending the messengers forth into the four corners of the world, Makataeshigun assured them that with the protection of the Thunderbirds and the faith of the Anishnabeg, the medicine would endure (1982, p. 98).

Within the spiritual realm, the shaman had various powers. The medicine man, as shaman/healer, had great influence over the powers of the supernatural due to his special associations. Cleland sets forth the three levels of shamans recognized by the Anishnabeg in the nineteenth century: *Jessakkid, Wabeno,* and *Mashkikikewinnini. Jessakikid* was a seer and prophet whose power was bestowed by the thunderbird. *Wabeno* represented

the spiritual specialist who had obtained his power from a dream vision. He was skilled in divination, magic and spells related to hunting, gaming and love matters. Lastly, the *mashkikikewinnini,* meaning medicine man, was a specialist (often a woman) who had detailed knowledge of the mysteries of plants, roots, berries and herbs (1992, p. 69).

Dewdney, in tracing the origins of the Midewiwin, discusses the socializing force of the shaman. In considering the how, where, when and why of the society's origin, Dewdney suggests that we must look to the region west of Sault Ste. Marie on Lake Superior in the eighteenth century for all four answers. He feels that at the time of the Mide's inception, shamanism had been "exclusively visionary, amoral, and in the hands of individuals without any effective pressure to exercise social responsibility," but "the developing communities needed a unifying cult in which the shamans banded together to nurture positive, health-giving values, and eliminate the kinds of vindictive sorcery that created community suspicion and fears" (1975, p. 170).

Art historian Pasztory (1982), in defining shamanism, points out that hunting and part-time agricultural societies such as the Great Lakes Indians differ from those of the Pueblo, an agricultural society, since they practice individual shaminism, where the rattle and drum and curing rituals are important. The Mide' society's ritual of death and rebirth emphasizes dramatization, and is an external articulation of the individual experience. In her discussion, Pasztory echoes Cleland's statement that the experience is more individual than communal, as in other cultures. In describing the Mide' society, she says:

> The Mide Lodge represents the cosmos, with posts topped by birds that represent the cosmic tree erected in the center. . . The society also owns birch bark scrolls on which the origins of the society are depicted. One of these scrolls represents the Mide lodges of the four grades as replicas

of the original Mide lodge in the sky. The society was given to the Ojibwa by a deity, who is represented on the scroll as an individual shaman with power rays surrounding his head and a drum in his hands." (p. 22) [see Fig. 4]

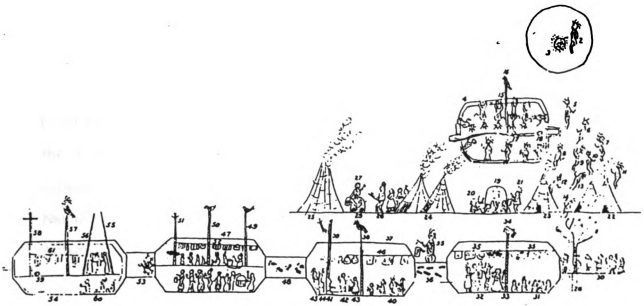


Fig. 4. A Mide' birchbark scroll; Pl. VIII, as illustrated by Hoffman (1885-86).

Anishnabeg World View Conceptions

This section includes a discussion of the belief system of the Anishnabeg, providing an overview of their conceptualization of spiritual relationships. It begins with the traditional beliefs held by the peoples of the Three Fires, and concludes with those held by the Menomini.

The Three Fires

It is said the powers of *manitous* can be used for good or bad purposes. But this world view, belief system, or "perception of reality," is not a simplistic one; spirits are not either good or bad, black or white. They are a part of the oneness or wholeness of the cosmos, and this seeming dichotomy is an integral part of the Anishnabeg belief system.

From early times, an understanding of this world was revealed to the Great Lakes Indian through the oral tradition of myths. From childhood on, the structure of the universe, the *manitous*, and their spheres of power was explained through stories and mythic episodes, which recount the tales of Nanabojo and his part in forming the world's features. Myths helped the Anishnabeg interpret and control the forces within their world.

Through oral traditions, the Great Lakes Indian understands the structure of his or her world. It is a composite of Mother Earth--an island floating on a sea of water, with a heaven beyond the dome of sky ruled by thunderbirds, and an underworld which was inhabited by powerful *manitous*, the most powerful being the underwater panther. This cosmos has been variously described as "constructed like a layer cake covered by a dome" (Cleland, 1992, p. 70), "three parallel worlds" (Phillips, 198, p. 23), a world composed of earth, a "Sky World" and an "Underwater World" (Brasser, 1976, p. 24), and "the circle of life" (McClurken, 1991, p. 14) [see Fig. 5].

Phillips pictures this cosmos as earth-centered, with the underworld below the great lake dominated by *manitous* who controlled the plants, animals and fish. The underwater panther is the most powerful of these spirits, and is in constant warfare with the thunderbirds who inhabit the realm of the upper world, the area above the earth which arches like a huge dome of sky

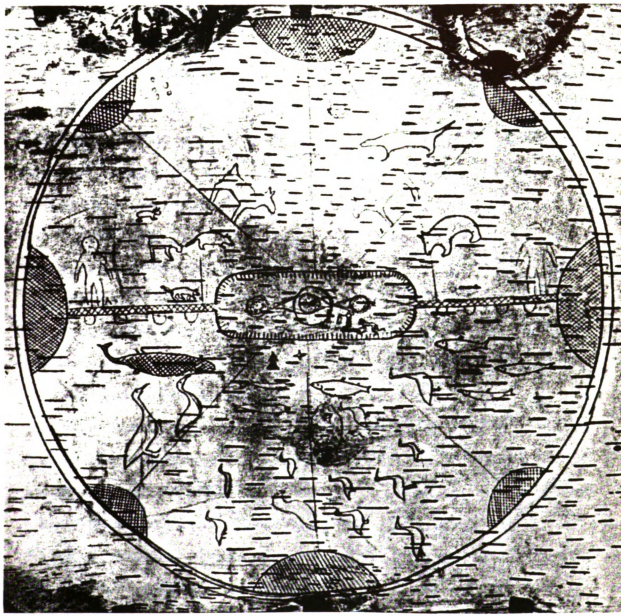


Fig. 5 . Circular world view of the universe ("circle of life") sketched on birchbark, with Midewiwin lodge in central portion. From the Collections of the Public Museum of Grand Rapids. Reprinted with permission.

(1985, pp. 23-24). Both Cleland and Brasser divide the upper and lower worlds into layers. Brasser includes the Plains Indians in his discussion and states that there are four superimposed layers, inhabited by *manitous* whose powers increase with their distance from earth. A cosmic Sacred Tree, a virtual *axis mundi*, is rooted in the lower world and reaches into the upper world (Brasser, 1976, p. 24). Cleland describes all the powers beneath the surface of the earth's waters as *mishikinebik*, which includes the underwater panther known as *michipishiew* (or as *misshipeshu* and many other variations of spelling). The air above the earth was inhabited not only by birds, but the mighty thunderers, known as the thunderbird or *animiki* (1992, pp. 70-71). Two female interviewees called these "nimkis," referring to thunderclouds. Also important and powerful were the spirits of the cardinal directions and the four winds of the north, south, east, and west that control the cycle of the seasons. These were located in the upper world, along with the stars, and the sun and moon (who ordered the day and night), and the cycle of the months.

McClurken, describing the beliefs of the Ottawa, discusses the importance of the number four to the Great Lakes Indians: their world has four cardinal directions, four winds, and four stages of life (infancy, childhood, adulthood, and old age). This number is also reflected in their world view: there are four levels of the world (underwater, the land, the sky, and the region beyond the sky), all linked in the circle of life. McClurken states that the "circle boundary," or circle motif, was commonly found on their clothing and art throughout the 1700s and 1800s (1991, pp. 14-15).

As with the Ojibwa and Ottawa, the Potawatomi believed in a dual division in their world, somewhat paralleling their spiritual beliefs. It aligned the total population, female and male, young and old, on two sides, based on their birth order. "The first, third, and fifth born were assigned to the 'senior

side', *wsk es*, and the second, fourth, and sixth born to the 'junior side', *kisk o*" (Clifton, 1978, p. 733). This was a socializing mechanism, primarily used in organizing teams for games, and for some rituals.

Clifton points to the importance of the supernatural in the lives of the Potawatomi, suggesting that each clan's "corporate property" before contact may have been the sacred bundle, or *pickos'an*, (1978, p. 730). Each sacred bundle had an origin myth associated with it, telling how a certain individual received the bundle and its powers, usually through a vision quest or dream. The bundles contained powerful mementos and fetishes, for the Potawatomi believed that the clans and bundles had been given by a sacred guardian in a consecrated relationship. These sacred bundles today embody the same spiritual power.

Wilbert (1973) considers this type of view of life as being a part of the participatory universe, or a view with an anthropocentric outlook. Although Wilbert is describing the Warao Indians of Venezuela, this concept aptly fits the world view of the Great Lakes Indian: Man conceives of himself as living in the center of a "terrestrial disk and at the foot of the world axis that connects the earth with the zenith and the cosmic vault." His life is one of interdependency or mutuality that exists between himself and the supernatural world (1973, p. 163, including footnote 1).

The Menomini

Although the Menomini are not one of the Three Fire tribes of the Great Lakes, they are a neighboring tribe of nearby Wisconsin. A summary of their history and world view is given as a point of comparison, to note similarities and dissimilarities of beliefs and practices, since historically they had lived

with the Ojibwa, Ottawa, and Potawatomi. Their material culture is also a rich source for the thunderbird and underwater panther images.

The Menomini peoples, historically located in the Green Bay region of Wisconsin and the surrounding waters of Lake Michigan and Lake Superior, represent a Great Lakes Indian culture outside the predominant region of the Three Fires of Michigan. Their lifestyle was similar in that they lived, for example, in a band system during the fur-trading era. As with the Three Fires, the requirement to live on a reservation changed their means of subsistence and livelihood to one of a sedentary nature. Their culture and lifeways, too, began to change, and the band system disintegrated.

Their material culture of the pre-contact period was similar to that of the people of the Three Fires. With the exception of hunting, fishing, and religious/sacred objects, the women made or prepared virtually all items. Skinner (1921) points out their well developed geometric art, and the use of the highly conventionalized figures in their art work, such as the designs on medicine pouches; however, around 1830, a new phase in their art began. As with all the Woodland cultures, commercial cloth and beads replaced animal skins and quills. Their artwork became very elaborate, with floral motifs becoming dominant. As well, new colors and dyes replaced traditional ones.

In their world view, the Menomini give extreme importance to the dream, ceremonial organizations, myths, and stories. The dream/vision is the means for securing power. The vision quest, or puberty fast, provides the means for attainment of a personal guardian. According to the Spindlers (1971, 1978), the significant ceremonial groups are those associated with medicine people and spiritual groups. These are the early Thunder or *wa'panows*, and the Buffalo Dance or *ce sahkows* ("shaking tent") cults. The earliest post-European contact group, according to the Spindlers, is the

Medicine Lodge Society, or *mete'wen*, "probably of Chippewa origin" (1978). Myths and stories, as well, relate and instill cultural values and ethics.

The world view of the Menomini is similar in many ways to that of the peoples of the Three Fires. Their religious/spiritual conception of the world were first documented by the early Jesuit missionaries and fur traders of the late seventeenth century, who give accounts of beliefs which are like those described by Hoffman (1890) and Skinner (1921). It is a very complex cosmology, envisioned as a world that is divided into three layers. The earth, one layer, is a floating island in a vast sea, and divides the universe into an upper and lower realm, each comprised of four tiered layers. Within each layer are beings, whose powers increase with their distance from Mother Earth. Residing over all is a Great Spirit, the sun (Skinner, 1921, p. 29). In descending order, beginning with the highest tier, one finds the Thunderbirds and the Morning Star, the golden or war eagles and the white swan, and other species of birds, headed by the bald eagle. Below the earth is the Horned Hairy Serpent, the 'great serpent,' who inhabits lakes and streams. The White Deer is below, and then the Great Underground Panther. The most remote is the Great White Bear "with a copper tail," the traditional ancestor of the Menomini tribe, and "the main power for evil" (Spindler, 1978, p. 711).

As with the cultures of the Ojibway, Ottawa, and Potawatomi, the Menomini world view is one of a world peopled with humans and animals, with no separation between. In their material culture, the thunderbird and underwater panther are found in pictographs on ritual birchbark or animal skins. These were often used as wrappings for various sacred bundles, which transported objects such as venerated medicines and "thunder eggs." Inside the wrappings, woven "bundles" or bags often held depictions of the

thunderbird and/or the panther. Also, inscribed birchbark scrolls were used in their ceremonial rites, as well as by storytellers.

In conclusion, there is great similarity in early Menomini material culture, lifestyles, and beliefs, to that of the peoples of the Three Fires. Their traditional spiritual world is complex, with different beings of varying powers. The Menomini experienced cultural changes due to contact with Europeans paralleling those of the Ojibwa, Ottawa, and Potawatomi.

CHAPTER 4

THE THUNDERBIRD AND UNDERWATER PANTHER

Information in this chapter is based on interviews, as well as primary and secondary written materials.

Cosmological Place of the Thunderbird and the Underwater Panther

The thunderbird and the underwater panther are a part of a circle of totality which embodies the Anishnabeg's world view.

> That's what we go by - in a circle. We hold council in a circle, we do circles--healing circles, talking circles. There's so many of them. We believe in the circle of life. (Peter)

In this totality, the thunderbird resides in the high space above earth, while the underwater panther resides below the waters--whether they be the waters of the Great Lakes or other bodies of water (Cleland, 1992, p. 71). According to interviewee Ted, the panther may reside in "any body of water."

The powers and attributes of the thunderbird and underwater panther are communicated to succeeding generations by the Great Lakes Indian through stories, tales, and myths. These beings are found in many mythic contexts. They are tied to rites and rituals in societies such as the Midewiwin. Not only are they important in dreams and visions (particularly the thunderbird), but are connected with the creation myths (Dewdney, 1975).

They are actors in stories which Christians may equate with those from the Bible, such as the flood, and Jonah and the whale. Primarily they are actors in a seemingly age-old antagonism between the "heavenly" spheres and those of the aquatic/subterranean spheres. In myth, thunderbirds personify light and the underwater panther is representative of darkness. These spirits or forces are in constant conflict with each other. As actors in other events, they are at times symbolic of ambiguities, of dichotomies, and of oppositions. The thunderbird is portrayed in both positive and negative association with the terrestrial and subterranean worlds, and in generally positive relations with humans, whereas the underwater panther is most often shown as a threat or danger to man.

Danger associated with the underwater panther is evident in the following story related by a prominent Ojibwa, William Warren, in 1885. Here the panther appears intimately connected with death, for, as a great serpent, it is an obstacle for the soul to overcome on its journey on the Road of Souls. Warren provides for us a view of the Ojibwa's concept of death and fear of *mishipishiew*:

> The Ojibway believes his home after death to lie westward . . . The soul . . . stand[s] immediately after the death of the body, on a deep beaten path, which leads westward; the first object he comes to in following this path, is the great Oda-e-min . . . strawberry, which stands on the roadside like a huge rock, and from which he takes a handful and eats on his way. He travels on till he reaches a deep, rapid stream of water, over which lies the much dreaded Ko-go-gaup-o-gun or rolling and sinking bridge; once safely over this as the traveller looks back it assumes the shape of a great serpent swimming, twisting and untwisting its folds across the stream. After camping out for four nights, and traveling each day through a prairie country, the soul arrives in the land of spirits, where he finds his relatives accumulated since mankind was first created; all is rejoicing, singing and dancing. (reprint 1984, p. 73)

One finds many explicit stories, adventures, and descriptions in myths and in folktales about these powerful spirits. The thunderbird is portrayed as the Thunderer, who beats upon his drum and brings rain to nourish all, who destroys evil, who rules over the Mide' lodge, and is wise in council. The underwater panther is variously represented as an obstacle with hidden power in the form of a rolling or sinking bridge (as Warren describes above), or as a quaking log (Ritzenthaler, 1972, p. 42), or a stump. The panther, however, does transport humans across rivers and lakes upon the receipt of gifts of tobacco [see Appendix B for additional insight about these beings through stories].

The underwater panther continues to appear in contemporary literature. Its presence, within modern context, is alluded to by Ojibwa writer Louise Erdrich (1989) in her story Tracks. The tale of Nanapush (Nanabush), the Anishnabeg cultural hero, and other folk characters, is retold and reinterpreted in a contemporary setting. In this story, the spirit in the lake is, and remains, a powerful force.

These beings are associated with games, too. The thunderbird is the patron of the Indian game lacrosse. Hoffman, for example, makes this association based on a legend about the origin of the game. According to the legend, Manabush (Nanabojo), the folk hero of the Menomini, initiated the game and invited the Thunderers to join him in destroying the evil underground *manitous*, who were instrumental in the death of his brother, the Wolf (1890, pp. 249-251). Stan Cuthand who observed a game in the 1940s in Lac la Ronge, Minnesota, also expressed the fearsomeness of the panther:

> Before I went north, I had never heard of the Crazy Woman. Nor was I familiar with the Great Lynx. But in Stanley Mission, on the Churchill River...children used to play a game called Misipisiw. It was a tag type game in which the child who was the Great Lynx would throw the other kids into the water. To them the word meant 'to be feared." (Brown & Brightman, 1988, p. 193)

The thunderbird, like the underwater panther, has been re-interpreted in the context of Christian religion, as related by Cuthland in this story from the same area/period:

> Once I was visiting Chief Nehemiah Charles during a thunder storm. Although it was hot and muggy, he refused to have the door open because he was concerned about Thunderbirds. When I suggested that they were only mythical beings, he said he could prove they existed because they were referred to in the Bible. He found a section of the scripture which said in English, 'and the thunder shall come'; in syllabics it read 'and the thunderbird shall come.' (Brown & Brightman, 1988, p. 193)

As evidenced in the oral traditions, and as we shall see in the material culture, these beings essentially occupy parts, or poles, which are opposite within the whole cosmology.

Aspects and Characteristics of the Thunderbird and the Underwater Panther

The thunderbird, resembling the eagle or falcon, has been described by McClurken (1991) as "the most ancient and powerful of beings" (p. 14). Cleland, Dewdney, Penney and Phillips variously characterize this spirit as incorporating the essence of power: when it flashes its eyes it causes lightning, or it is hurled from its talons; thunder is created by its flapping wings; and great storms in the heavens are caused by its casting of thunderbolts at the underworld manitos. Thunder and lightning are most frequently associated with the thunderbird and its power.

Thunder is characterized by motifs such as "jagged zigzag lines which represent the thunder and lightning they generate" (Phillips, 1984, p. 25), and hourglass symbols which suggest the thunderbirds' chests and tails. Black also

symbolizes thunderbirds, representing the dark clouds in which they travel, usually in pairs. One may invoke these spirits in prayer by shaking a rattle, causing a sound that evokes thunder (Brasser, 1976, p. 26; Ojibwa interviewees and artists, Alice Fox and Barbara Tazelaar) [see Fig. 6(a)].

Positive attributes that are associated with the thunderbird are its connections with the blessings of rain, fertility, and warmth. The thunderbird is not worshiped in the winter, for it lives in the south during the cold months, bringing warmth in the spring when it returns north. Hoffman refers to the thunderbirds who arrive in the spring as "they who revivify the earth" (1885-86, p. 275).

The thunderbird is also associated with the creation myth. According to a tale told to Dewdney by Red Sky, a southern Ojibway Indian, the thunderbird created the big storm that caused a flood (at God's command) similar to that recorded in the Bible. Dewdney felt this association is most likely due to post-European religious contact (1975, p. 30).

Christian Feest (1986) discusses the universality of the thunderbird in association with prowess in war, as does Ted Brasser (1976), who relates the image and idea to the symbol of male aggression. Brasser, however, also stresses the opposite view of the thunderbird as representing the symbol of peace and friendship, as evidenced in smoking the peace pipe.

The importance and power of the thunderbird within the belief system of the Anishnabeg are evident in many legends and creation myths, as well as in ritual. Its placement in the heavens, close to the Great Manitou, attests to the hierarchy in which the thunderbird is placed. In some myths, it is associated with the sun, another important *manitou* (Phillips, 1984, p. 24). The thunderbird, in addition, had the power to see into the future. Hoffman, in describing its image on a Mide' birchbark, characterizes the image having

"waving lines extending forward from the eyes, denoting powers of peering into futurity" (1885-86, p. 288). The receiver of this *manitou*'s power through a vision quest or a dream was considered blessed and fortunate because of the attributes ascribed to the thunderbird. Also, the power of seers and prophets was bestowed by these *animiki*, and accordingly they were regarded with both respect and fear (Cleland, 1992, p. 69 and p. 71).

Radin was told of special ceremonies and objects associated with the thunderbird, and also the panther:

> [The] *tcingabasin stone* (Thunder Rite) . . . is a peculiarly-shaped stone which is worshiped by the Indians. A red ribbon is tied around it, tobacco placed on top of it and the stone then turned toward the west. After this has been done the Thunder spirits are called and the Indians begin to dance around the stone for a while. . . .
>
> Every year people had to give a feast in honor of the animal who had blessed them. At this feast they dance and tobacco and whatever are offered: If it is the water-spirit, they pour whiskey into the river, lake, etc. For other spirits except the Thunderbird, they sprinkle whiskey in the fire. For the Thunderbird they tie tobacco, in ribbons, around the sacred stones. (1926 field notes)

The underwater panther, referred to in some sources as the water spirit or water monster, is an image or symbol of great significance, too. Most authors point to the dichotomy between the birds of the sky and underwater animals. Many attempt to make a distinction between evil snakes, panthers, and fish, yet I propose that these beings all essentially express some of the essence of the panther--of the world below, with its mystery and sense of the subconscious, the unknown. Barnouw (1977) implies such an interconnection when discussing the feud which existed between these creatures, "especially between thunderbirds and snakes, although thunderbirds were also enemies of underwater panthers, lions, or lynxes, termed *micipijin*, which were said to

be made partly of copper" (p. 133). James Howard (1960) also concludes that "in many Algonquian-speaking groups the concept of the Horned Serpent tends to blend with that of the Underwater Panther" (p. 217).

Differing from the thunderbird, the description of the underwater panther generally found is one of a fabulous composite image [Fig. 6(b), lower picture]. French missionary Allouez, in 1666, tells of the Ottawas conception:

> They hold in very special veneration a certain fabulous animal which they have never seen except in dreams, and which they call Missibizi, acknowledging it to be a great genius, and offering it sacrifices in order to obtain good sturgeon-fishing. (Thwaites, 1959, 50, p. 289)

This spirit is portrayed as being of an enormous size with a long dragon-like tail, a powerful feline body, with brassy, coppery scales (or short yellow fur), four legs and a head with sharp teeth and horns. The underwater panther, or *michipishiew*, is variously described as a "giant horned snake or monster" (Penney, 1989, p. 11), as cat-like, a lion or a lynx (Phillips, Cleland, Dewdney, & Barnouw). Barnouw says that the concept of the *mishipishiew* as a panther, lion or lynx "may refer to pumas or cougars (which can swim), found in the Great Lakes region until fifty or more years ago" (1977, p. 133). Phillips alludes to such an association in describing its image as "perhaps based on the lynx's tufted ears" (1989, p. 58).

The tail and horns are *mishipishiew* 's centers of power, as pointed out by Barnouw (1977), and by Ewers (1981) who describes the "water monsters" within Plain's Indian art. Coe adds that "horns always indicate the supernatural state" (1977, p. 73). Feest goes so far as to say that "these beings wear pairs of horns or antlers and it is generally assumed that they are the source of power for sorcerers and witches" (1986, p. 10). Pasztory (1985), discussing North American Indian art and shaminism, says that animals of

Fig. 6(a). Cradleboard decoration with thunderbirds. Note. From "Bo'jou, Neejeel" Profiles of Canadian Indian Art, by T. J. Brasser, 1976, p. 93, #NMMIII-G-848. Copyright 1976 by the Canadian Museum of Civilization. Reprinted with permission.

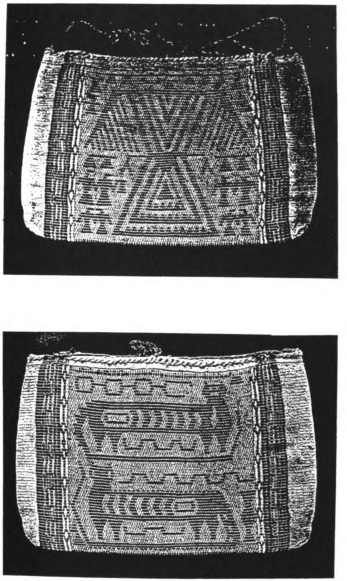


Fig. 6(b). Potawatomi twined panel bag. The Detroit Institute of Arts, #81.372. Reprinted with permission.

religious power possess abilities that humans don't have, and they are often represented as "composite," a further indication of their magic powers.

Thus, one may discern the many guises of the underwater panther. This spirit is known variously by different tribes. Among the Winnebago, the panther is described as having a copper tail. The Saulteaux call him a Horned Water Snake. To the Chippewa, or Ojibwa, the Ottawa, and Potawatomi, it is a panther or lynx, and the Menomini also think of this spirit as a great fish.

Mishipishiew is associated with water and the underworld, for it lives "beneath waters of lakes and rivers" (Penney, 1989, p. 11) . Violent storms and disturbances on water, creating whirlpools, are caused by the swirling or lashing of its long tail. Yet despite the panther's association with danger and death, the whirlpool is also the channel or path to the panther's presence (Phillips, 1989), as are other openings in the earth. Cleland reports that these creatures

> . . . occasionally made their appearance by emerging on the surface of the Great Lakes or through 'faults' between the surface and the underworld such as caves, crevices, or whirlpools. It is said they could travel by means of underground rivers to appear in certain inland lakes (1992, p. 71).

Lyford (1982) discusses and labels the panther designs from Ojibwa bags and birchbark as "underground panthers," attesting to these associations.

Missionary Rasles, writing in 1666, describes methods of sacrifice in order to appease the panther:

> They call the *Manitou* of the water and fishes *Michibichi;* and they offer him a somewhat similar sacrifice when they go to fish, or undertake a voyage. This sacrifice consists of throwing into the water tobacco, provisions, and kettles; and in asking him that the water of the river may flow slowly, that the rocks may not break their canoes, and that he will grant them an abundant catch. (Thwaites, 67, pp. 159-161)

Not only water, but fire, is associated with *mishipishiew*. Feest claims that "whereas the Thunderers are, of course, in charge of rain, the underworld beings are often seen as being in charge of fire" (1986, p. 10). However, Hoffman, writing in 1890, states that the Menomini of Wisconsin associate the thunderbird with fire-making (pp. 244-45). (Perhaps they make this connection and thus link the phenomenon with the thunderbird because of fires caused by lightning.) *Mishipishiew* is also said to fear thunder because of its association with its arch-enemy, the thunderbird. An Ottawa told Radin in the early 1900s that a certain bird is always seen together with the water-spirit [underwater panther]. The bird protects the panther against the thunderbird, telling it when there are clouds about (1926 field notes).

But it must be noted that some writers indicate the "good" as well as "evil" nature of the underwater panther. Curative powers are associated with the panther: copper, treasured as healing amulets, are believed to come from the horns and scales of its body; and medicinal plants are believed to be nourished from below by this being. Brasser claims there is a relationship to the "female aspect, herbal knowledge and witchcraft" (1976, p. 25). Coe and Densmore (1929) discuss *mishipishiew* 's curative powers of healing and association to medicine, as does Phillips, who says that they "could bestow good things on human beings; they controlled the healing medicines that grew in the earth and enriched people who were able to steal pieces of copper from their horns and tails" (1984, p. 24). As Phillips suggests, the possession of copper generally implied a blessing from this underground spirit, and anyone who had such a treasure was a "wealthy" person indeed. *Mishipishiew* may further be viewed as protective, transporting innocent people across streams

away from danger, while "malevolent people are drowned" (Barnouw, 1977, p. 136).

With these general understandings about the thunderbird and underwater panther, how are their aspects and the roles they play symbolized for the Anishnabeg? What is a symbol, and how does it function within material culture?

Images as Symbols

It is important to understand how the concept of symbol will be used in this study. Webster's Third International Dictionary (1981) defines symbol as "something that stands for or suggests something else by reason of relationship, association, convention, or accidental but not intentional resemblance; especially, a visible sign of something . . . that is invisible" (p. 2316). All of this definition is pertinent to the discussion of symbol, particularly the last phrase. And the following ideas will illuminate and expand the meaning.

Turner (1977) describes symbols as "multivocalic or polysemic," meaning that one symbol may stand for many things. He further adds that by their nature, symbols have the ability to unify and condense a wide range of disparate ideas and relationships into one. In his study of Ndembu rituals, Turner classifies symbols as dominant or contingent, roles also assumed by these Anishnabeg symbols. Dominant symbols are those which are primary in one situation, and may be secondary in another (1975, p. 162). *Mudyi*, the milk tree, for example, is a dominant symbol for Ndembu puberty initiation rites. This tree gives forth a white secretion which has become associated with milk and the nurturing role of women. Contingency, for Turner, is an "attribute of a more prominent symbol," or is subsidiary to a greater connotation (1975, p.

202). Color may be a characteristic of a contingent symbol. In Ndembu rites, whiteness, in a different role, is contingent when it symbolizes the authority of the elders. Or the whiteness of Moby Dick, for example, is "subsidiary to his murderousness" (Turner, 1975, p. 202). Turner also says of symbols in ritual context:

> For the Ndembu the ritual symbol is not a mere system of referents but a source of power--dangerous if misused but capable of domestication. Harnessed, it may be used to bring blessing, avert catastrophe, reconcile the moody dead with the living and the angry living with one another. (1962, p. 78)

The idea of symbols as sources or carriers of power, creating a bridge to the spiritual and mystical, echoes in Ted's thoughts about Anishnabeg symbols:

> You have to take a leap of faith in some of these things . . . Several things, like shooting a person with an otter skin bag, sounds pretty weird, a "tell-me-about-it" sort of thing. But it injects powers, and that is what I mean by having to take things on faith.

Symbols also may be conscious and unconscious carriers of power. The otter skin bag performs both roles. It is the embodiment of the otter and the *megis* held inside (and their roles within the rite) conceived of consciously. Also, the bag unconsciously transports the participant into a spiritual state of expectation before the action begins. Dress, too, is powerful in performing these roles. As Marilyn Horn states, "symbolism in dress is often unconscious, but a symbol used consciously can be more powerful" (1981, p. 310).

Some scholars acknowledge the symbol as an indicator of social values. In her examination of nineteenth century New England frocks, Wright says the frock, functionally, resembles a woman's apron, for it protects workday clothes; however, it connotes more than practicality. It "carried an emotional or symbolic . . . meaning" (Wright, 1991, p. 25). The frock symbolizes "sturdy

Yankee farmer values." Calvin Coolidge used this connotation to advantage during his campaign by being photographed wearing his grandfather's frock (Wright, 1991, p. 25).

Symbol is this and much more. It is also a connector. For example, Gordon (1987), in her analysis of a whimsey, a beaded novelty item, considers this object to be the symbol of interaction between persons of the Tuscarora Indian culture and the white tourist culture. The whimsey is the focal point of cultural contact between two different groups. She examines it in relation to its own significance and contextual meaning given by the maker, as well as its meaning to the user/purchaser from another culture. Glassie (1973), too, speaks of the object as functioning like a connector. The object is the link between the person at the center and various contexts [refer to Fig. 1(b)]. The object symbolizes the "dynamic" possibilities of the artifact studied within the model, for it can be conceptualized as "dually complementary" and "simultaneously multifunctional" (p. 335). Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halten, in discussing the etymology of symbol, equate it to a coupler:

> In ancient Greek, sym-ballein meant to "throw together," or to "join." The phrase came to designate a coin that two friends break in half, each with the hope of reuniting. When the two friends would meet again, the joining of the two half coins signified the relationship between the two persons, so the separation of the coin served the larger purpose of unity. Thus symbol originally meant that which brings people together. It is significant that the opposite of sym-ballein is dia-ballein, to "throw apart," or "separate," which is the root of our word for "diabolic," the essence of evil. (1981, p. 40)

Buttimer (1985) speaks of contextual meaning in relation to cosmology and place, stating that there is a necessity to investigate these important aspects of a culture: "Symbols per se are obviously not adequate to facilitate mutual understanding . . . [and] cannot be interpreted correctly until placed in

the context of a civilization's physical milieu and cosmology" (p.261).

Mackenzie (1926), writing earlier than Buttimer, spoke of place and warned that it is incorrect to assume that symbols found in one part of the world have the same significance as in another. Welters and Kuhn (1993), investigating clothing as symbols of cultural meaning, studied symbols of the ancient goddess Mara of Latvia. They discovered that the zigzag motif is associated with the goddess. It is interesting that this motif is also associated with the thunderbird and underwater panther.

Some of the symbols that Mackenzie presents and discusses may perhaps be thought of as archetypal, in that they seem to carry a basic meaning or connotation across cultures. For example, the spiral would be considered an archetypal symbol. In Chinese culture, the whirlwind or whirlpool (a form of spiral), is the carrier of gods, the lifegiver, and is a symbol associated with dragons. Asian societies conceive of the dragon as giving birth to the new year, and as the bringer of fertility and nourishing rains. The dragon was known as a "thunderer." The spiral was also closely associated with the wind god, for "as a 'life-giver,' [the spiral] was thus a symbol of the thunder-god, as well as of the whirlwind god. Both in China and Japan . . . the spiral was at once the 'thunder roll' and the 'dragon-roll'" (Mackenzie, 1926, p. 68). Thus, the whirlpool or spiral can be interpreted as the embryo, the beginning/manifestation of the source of natural energy, the source of life, of magic, of the Great Mystery.

Though there are images which may possess a "generic" meaning, it may be impossible to know the precise meaning. Peter, for example, says:

> They've probably got symbology here, if they tell you [looking at an image on an object]. It all depends on the person. Then if we go the other route, then we could say this is what this guy was trying to say,

> and I don't think, myself, [that] we . . . have a right to interpret somebody's "whatever-it-was," unless it is quite understandable there. . . . Assumption is a very scary type of thing because we assume what the person meant . . .
>
> We had a girl by here. She was going down the line, but she told us to meet her at the bus stop because she had a twenty minute break there, so we went . . . And in that twenty minutes we talked and my son came in, and he wanted to talk to her too, or so I assumed. O.K. And before we left--that terminal was full of people that drink--a bar, it's a bar setting, and I don't drink, and my wife doesn't drink. And as I'm getting up, I say to my wife, "Let's get out of here. These young people have a lot to talk about and I don't feel comfortable here." So we left. A couple of weeks down the line, we get a letter from this girl. . . . She said, "I'm very sorry, but we were so tired, getting off that bus and having coffee. But we're so sorry that we made you uncomfortable." That's what she told us. Thank God that she wrote that letter, so I immediately got on the phone and phoned her up and said, "You had that all wrong. It wasn't you that made us uncomfortable. It was the people there, the setting, the drinking people there. That's why I wanted to get out of there. Not you! We were so glad to see you. We should have stayed there longer, but we realized that you wanted to talk to my son." But when I was getting up and said to my wife, "Let's get out of here; I don't feel too comfortable here," she took that to mean that she was making us uncomfortable. The assumptions are, you know, sensitive. It's pretty difficult sometimes to explain yourself lots of times--why you do this, why this, why that. That's just a story to tell you about assumptions.

Meanings may also evolve from a created object, becoming an unexpressed message that the artist and craftsperson had not intended or realized was being expressed. Some deep seated statement of the culture from which one comes may surface during the process of creation, and is seen later by the observer. For example, Peter stated that, before he begins to paint, he prays to his creator and asks his creator to "put into me the memories." In thinking of symbols, do "memories" painted/created convey more than initially intended or realized?

Another important aspect of symbol is its transformative and psychic power. Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton, in discussing Jung's distinctions between a sign (a relatively known thing) and a symbol (the meaning of which is relatively unknown), point out these features:

> A symbol is charged with psychic energy and transformative power precisely because much of its meaning is unknown or unconscious.

> Jung believed that unconscious drives included not only needs for physiological satisfaction but also powerful desires for personal development and spiritual union with the social and physical environment. These strivings are expressed by the archetypal symbols of the collective unconscious, like the rising sun or the swelling sea. (1981, p. 24)

In conclusion, there are many aspects to symbols. Those which are most relevant to this study are: symbols have the ability to unify and condense a wide range of disparate ideas and relationships; they are conscious and unconscious carriers of power; and they possess psychic energy and transformative powers. They may play the role of dominance and contingency.

The Thunderbird and the Underwater Panther as Symbols

The function of an artifact helps provide clues to an understanding of the meaning of these symbols. One artifact in which the images frequently appear is the skin bag (1780-1830). Various suggestions have been given for the uses of the early quilled and dyed skin pouches which displayed these two motifs. Penney feels that it is difficult to determine what these bags were to hold, positing that they look much like medicine bags, and concludes that "the sacred designs applied to the exterior . . . may allude to sacred materials . . . kept inside" (1992, p. 69). Brasser, however, states that these bags were ritual paraphernalia used by a short-lived organization in the mid-eighteenth century probably called the Black Dance. This ritual group was "concerned with hunting and war, reflecting the fur trade and colonial wars." Its members were not like the Midewiwin society which focused on curing the sick and preserving tribal culture, but rather represented two groups in ritual

opposition to each other, as the decorations of their pouches were of either the thunderbird or of the underwater panther (1976, pp. 27-28).

The use of these early skin bags, with the sacred designs embroidered in porcupine quills, are most likely sacred medicine bags such as were used in the Midewiwin society and carried by individuals. They would have contained herbs, as well as other special charms, all powerful. Densmore (1929) said:

> [Charms] were of two classes . . . that comprised several units or materials and . . . [those] consisting only of herbs. . . In both classes there entered the belief that the supreme test of the power of a substance was its ability to act independently of its material presence. Thus an herb applied externally might cure the bite of a reptile, but it was considered evidence of great power if an herb carried in a packet could protect a man so effectively that he would not be bitten by the reptile. The old-time Chippewa appear to have believed that matter has two sorts of properties--one tangible and the other intangible. (p. 107)

Father Baraga, writing in L'Anse, Michigan in 1847, relates the strong bond between a medicine bag and its owner: "Their medicine bag or sack is, in their opinion, their greatest treasury. I saw Indians whose lodges burned down during their stay in the fields, who regretted much more the burning of their medicine bags, than the loss of all their property" (p. 39). Warren also noted that the medicine bag was "seldom ever allowed a place in the common wigwam, but is generally left hanging in the open air on a tree . . . The contents are never displayed without much ceremony" (1885, p. 68).

One interviewee related hearing of a collection of three small Ottawa medicine bags that were used by a woman healer in the early nineteenth century (perhaps a Mide' practitioner) which had the underwater panther portrayed in quillwork. Each bag was successively smaller, one inside the other, containing different herbs for use during the birthing process, the use depending upon the severity of the situation. Anny's comments relate to this

aspect; she spoke of the panther "represent[ing] trickiness in the water," and "healing from the earth." Correlating this to the medicine bags noted, the underwater panther, a power related to water (birthing) and to earth (since it nourishes/controls medicinal herbs [Phillips, 1984, p. 24]), assists through the healing power of herbs in this mysterious, "tricky" process. Its power or "spirit" dwells in the image, thus in the bag, and thus within the herbs.

Coe discusses the use of shoulder strap, or bandolier, bags and their social importance: "[These bags] were carried as prestige objects, as many as twelve (but usually one or two) being worn at one time. They were sported at meetings and on ceremonial occasions" (1977, p. 77). Gordon adds that they were also for display:

> The small functional carrier, whether slung on a shoulder strap or suspended from the waist, had been part of the original cultural role, and it became less and less necessary. Gradually, a larger, heavier and more flamboyant form, used for purposes of display rather than transport, took its place. (1992, p. 72)

It is important to understand the belief regarding symbols and their powers as used in medicine bags for their potential meaning as related to all other material culture. Densmore points out this connection as it relates to dreams/symbols:

> . . . by possessing some representation of a dream subject one could at any time secure its protection, guidance and assistance. There seems to be inherent in the mind of the Indian a belief that the essence of an individual or of a "spirit" dwells in its picture or other representation. (1929, p. 79)

Power becomes inherent in the object through the symbol, and is transferred to the user, as suggested by Glassie and Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton. The presence of the thunderbird and panther on artifacts, carried or worn, not only connect the user to these sacred beings, but give

power and protection. Dream symbols also can be connected to the wearer/user through an artifact. Densmore (1929) describes dream symbols, given to the dreamer or vision questor by the guardian spirit, as being private:

> Dream symbols were often painted on a man's blanket or on the covering that hung before his wigwam door . . . All who saw it were aware that the man had dreamed of a rainbow, the thunder bird, the lightning, and the earth (the latter indicated by the circle); yet the relation of these to one another and to the dreamer remained a secret known only to himself and those to whom he revealed it. (p. 82)

Penney suggests that by incorporating these symbols into clothing and other artifacts as made by women, the spiritual power becomes "generalized" rather than "specific" or "secret" (1989, p. 11). The symbols are indications of spiritual strength and sometimes suggest the social importance of the person connected with the object. Protection, also, is implied. Items like baby carriers were carved with dream symbols, or had items attached to them for the protection of the baby. Two cradleboards examined [#86 & 87] incorporate stylized geometric forms of the thunderbird.

Contemporary Interpretations of the Thunderbird and the Underwater Panther

Many contemporary themes emerged during the interviews. The thunderbird is described as an angel, a holy ghost, a holy spirit, a special power, one who brings blessings, and a protector. The underwater panther, too, inspires great veneration and respect, but is considered in more dualistic terms--as a servant to the Anishnabeg, as the representation of physical and "earthy" aspects of life, as "tricky," as the "King of Beasts," as a symbol for future generations, and as a fearsome power. In describing the cosmological

place of the thunderbird and underwater panther, Mark says he thinks of these beings as symbols for different worlds. The thunderbird symbolizes the spiritual, while the panther is the connection to the physical world:

> The tribes here in the Great Lakes recognize that the highest power resided above. It's common reference is Father Sky. It's always known, because the people lived near the water. They had a real draw for what took place there. A lot of food is scattered at or near the water for the fish, wild rice, underwater animals. Some of those animals were very illusive and little understood, to say in scientific terms. Such crafty animals as that--the otters, the weasels, martens, ermines--they all live near the water, very powerful types of animals.

The idea of the significance of environment, the sense of place, and the "real draw," reverberates too in statements that Peter makes:

> This is why I've got good respect for this guy [the underwater panther]. I know what he's done, but. . . he does that today. I see that--the rainbow; I see the salmon, and all these other things come up rivers. And whitefish come up rivers. The suckers come up rivers at a certain time of year. He sends them there for the people to eat. So the people can salt. So the people can dry, or whatever. This is the guy that does that. He controls the Great Lakes.
>
> Well, he's [underwater panther] . . . in storytelling--he has his people so well trained now that they know by him saying if his headquarters is in Lake Superior, then his work all goes through the Great Lakes--what the fish are to do. So the fish know what to do because of this guy! If they don't, then they have to deal with this guy. Because he's called the King of Beasts. . . . and he's a water spirit, and he's the water panther, and he's all that! And he communicates with man.

The <u>thunderbird</u> is described variously as:

- powerful, controlling the upper regions of the world:

> . . . power, like the thunderbirds, or even the eagles--the highest form. The thunderbirds and the eagles are our highest form of belief. They control the skies and see everything that is going on below, and they still won't make judgements until they confer with the native Nishnabe [Anishnabeg] people. (As told by Peter)

- a wise leader, representing wisdom of the elders:

Alice told a story about the thunderbirds [see Appendix B (a)], as did Peter, each representing a different aspect of their leadership.

- protective:

In describing a painting entitled "The Lovers," (in which a Nishnabe man is wearing a headdress that resembles the eagle/thunderbird, which leans out and virtually covers the head of the woman standing next to him), Peter says this is an act of protectiveness [see Fig. 7].

"I wanted to show this one kind of like protecting the panther," Yvonne Keshick, Odawa/Ojibwa artist and interviewee stated, describing a quillbox she had made incorporating images of both the thunderbird and underwater panther [see Fig. 8(a)].

"The thunderbird hovers over and protects all. When he sees evil, he strikes with lightning," related Jay.

- as a messenger, an angel:

The thunderbird is often thought of as the equivalent of the Christian idea of an angel, one who delivers messages, and is a guardian spirit. As described by Yvonne:

> [As a child] I hadn't really heard a whole lot about the thunderbird. He was the symbol for the eagle. The eagle could fly the highest toward the heavens. All the prayers were carried up with eagles towards the heavens, and the little birds that came along, like chickadees and sparrows, they would deliver the afterthoughts, or P.S.s, or the "by-the-way"s. They would fly those messages up and the smoke helped lift the prayers up from sweet grass and tobacco--helped lift them up to the heavens.

- an embodiment of or bringer of "blessings":

Jay, of the eagle clan, tells a story of his visit to his brother's gravesite. While he was there, a huge eagle came out of the woods and swooped around him, somewhat frightening him. In telling his story later to a member of his

Fig. 7. "The Lovers," acrylic painting by Peter Migwans; author's collection.

Fig. 8(a). Birchbark box quilled in natural porcupine quills by Yvonne Walker Keshick; 1994; author's collection.

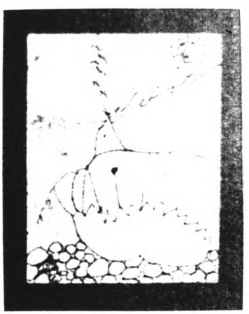


Fig. 8(b). Watercolor and ink painting of a thunderbird hatching, by Anny Hubbard; c. 1994; author's collection.

tribe, he was told that this was "a blessing." This "blessing" implies not only love and spiritual connection, but power, too. Hallowell mentions this:

> The other-than-human grandfathers are sources of power to human beings through the "blessings" they bestow, i.e., a sharing of their power which enhances the "power" of human beings. (1960, p. 22)

The young thunderbird is humorously thought of as having uncontrolled energy, causing terrible spring storms with flashing lightning and loud thunder [note Alice's story, Appendix B(a); Anny's painting Fig. 8(b)]. As thunderbirds grow older, they gain more control, through the wisdom of experience. Humans also "learn how to behave" from lessons and stories of the elders. Anny said:

> There's places where those baby thunderbirds hatch up on the north shore of Lake Superior. That's why summer thunderstorms are so wild and crazy, and that is because the baby thunderbirds don't know how to control their energy yet, so you get all these forest fires because they zap them, and they don't know how to control it. And they go south in the winter, and when they come back in the spring, they're more sedate and know how to behave.

The underwater panther is viewed as:

- an enigma, a paradox:

> [The pair of panthers] is a symbol for us, teaching our younger children about the panther, even though we don't really understand it, telling them about it, and so that they will be familiar with it or have some ideas on hearing about it. (as related by Yvonne)

> [I see the underwater panther as] positive, or a paradox, type of deal. We're dealing with a bad, bad, bad whatever it is. And after [the] trial, [and] everything else, it becomes positive. So, to me today, any man or woman can turn their life around. (as related by Peter)

> The underwater panther is something that's in our world, even though we don't understand what it is . . . Ottawas live in two worlds. We live in our world and "down-in-that-society" world. So it's [the panther] in our world. So the white interior on this box top [describing the quillbox she had made; see Fig. 8(a)] is a symbol, like, for our world--the panther's world. (as told by Yvonne)

Barbara also expressed the idea of living in two worlds, but said it is very hard to do, for there are so many misconceptions about Native Americans today.

- dangerous, and deserving respect

"They teach us not to be foolish in the water, and they teach us to respect them." (Ted)

"This is why I've got good respect for this guy." (Peter)

- a servant for the people, a provider for the people:

> He's the down-below thing [see Fig. 9 (a) & (b)] . . . As far as legends go, he communicates with man. . . . He knows now he cannot devour a man, so now he's a servant for the Nishnabe, a Nishnabe servant. The legends go that this guy's the only guy for that, but there's other guys. There's other guys in Indian legends that come to mind. But this guy is very important for fish, fish environment. (as told by Peter)

In a tale told to Paul Radin in the early 1900s, the underwater panther is the provider of the sacred and desired metal, copper. The story also tells of its regenerative and renewing forces [see Chapter 5].

- a feminine, feline-like energy, as described by Anny:

> [Anny, describing a painting of two panthers] Bizhou against the moon--you know how cat's fur stands up. That's kind of what that's about. And there's the moon, and the water, which to me is very feminine, very female.

There is, additionally, a sense of relationship between these beings and place. Jay's story of the eagle arriving at the gravesite suggests connections to place and sacredness. Others have told me of the arrival of eagles at particularly special or sacred times. Relationship to place is alluded to by Peter in his discussion of the underwater panther and its intimate association with Lake Superior. Yvonne also tells of its association to Wycamp Lake, locally and tribally known as Spirit Lake, home of the panther:

Fig. 9(a). Acrylic painting, "Lake Superior Serpent #2," by Peter Migwans. Photograph by the author; from the Collections of the Jesse Besser Museum.

Fig. 9(b). Acrylic painting, "Gitche Gumme Underwater Panther," by Peter Migwans. Photograph by the author; from the Collections of the Jesse Besser Museum.

> It's a very small lake, pretty shallow. It's got . . . standing birch, and lots of wildlife around there. It's a campsite--a wilderness campsite -- outhouses and pump. Other than that, it is woods. . . . [The committee leader] went out there with a group to consider [the location] for an elders council. Went out there, stood there and looked around, laughing and talking, but they all felt kind of funny. The hairs stood up on his [the leader's]neck . . . He was talking in a loud voice and told them that this is Spirit Lake and that this is the home of the underwater panther. He said, "I don't think we belong here. We'd better get out of here." They put tobacco down [and] said they weren't welcome there at that time. The second time back they didn't feel that way. Everything was O.K.

Spatial placement/arrangement is suggested in stories, too. In Alice's story [Appendix B(a)] of Nanabush travelling with the thunderbirds, there is a sense of the horizontal flight plane, as well as the sensation of movement, of these beings flying from west to east. They are grouped in an arrangement of three, from oldest to youngest, perhaps suggesting a social order. As the reader will see, artifacts, too, reflect these spatial conceptions.

When one considers the sacredness of relationships, not all parts of the natural world holds this quality. When I asked Peter if a connection or affiliation exists between the thunderbird and the eagle, the answer was yes, but he also added that not all things are sacred:

> Yes, the thunderbird symbol, the eagle, is the highest form, more or less, . . . another one of the gifts of the Creator to be able to look at. . . . We never pray at anything. We normally pray to the Creator. All the other ones are symbols, like the white man uses the cup, chalice . . . as a reminder. So all these other things--our sweetgrass, our sage, our cedar, our tobacco--is used in that same respect. It becomes <u>sacred</u> when we say it's sacred.

In most instances, particularly in ritual or ceremonial objects, the use of the symbol is a visual means of communication, representing only one aspect of experiencing these spiritual beings. All the senses, in rituals, are

employed: one dances, sings, uses instruments, burns tobacco or other sacred plants, as well. A visual symbol is only a part of the totality of experience.

And finally, one can go beyond the symbol by articulating the name of the spiritual being. Smith (1991) calls this "conjuring" the spirit, for the name partakes of the essence of that which it names. He also refers to Paul Tillich's concept of the "participatory" nature of the symbol (footnote 4, p. 20). In this instance, one may say that the person involved is "transformed" into the essence of the spiritual being, an idea that was expressed many times and in many ways by those interviewed. As interviewee Mary expressed it,

> Some words you don't just throw around. I've been told that in ceremonies . . . Another thing I was told was you don't say the names of several guides or sacred things--and they can be objects--or, like "grandpa". . . [Y]ou don't say those words out loud unless you know what you're doing, what you're talking about and can have established a relationship with them.

In conclusion, two overriding themes appeared. First, the thunderbird and the underwater panther are participants involved in helping create a balance and a connection to all life in the universe. Both of these spiritual beings are felt to be powerful forces which require respect. Part of this respect is the unwritten law of not telling stories in the summertime, because sacred beings' "ears may hear." Therefore stories are told in the wintertime "when the snows blow," for there is more time for storytelling, which Anny thinks lends a "practical aspect." Both of these beings are integral to the Anishnabeg concept of the circle of life. The thunderbird and underwater panther are major "personages" who are vital in creating a balance. They each are a part in creating a unification of separate yet interrelated worlds.

Secondly, there is an overwhelming sense that many traditions have been lost, which resulted from dominance by European cultures and the

necessity to acculturate to a white society's expectations. Anny said it was caused by "Inquisition-minded Europeans", and Ted related this viewpoint:

> I didn't really have that kind of instruction [in spiritual practices]. My great-grandfather could have done that, but they had been going through life in the '30s and '40s as pretty oppressed people, and they wanted their kids, just like any immigrant family, to be American and be able to flourish in that society. They avoided being discriminated against. It was so much more clearly stated or pervasive at that time. I think they succeeded. Of course, as I returned to spiritual ways, I did not understand. It's really sad we do not have a language, and really sad we did not know the traditional teachings. And then, being an older person, I recognize that those people did get pretty much what they were looking for because my generation of folk obviously can still find and practice the old ways. I would have liked the balance to be a little different. I would like to have had more traditional teachings, like the old days.

Mary explained that the Anishnabeg are now trying to revitalize and recover their traditions:

> [There are] a lot of people who feel [the need] . . . to keep themselves in balance, people who live in the cities and have a lot of contact with foreign culture. They have to, we have to, revitalize ourselves more frequently. We have people who . . . are able to keep their thoughts in day to day living more "Indian." They don't need their cleansing or renewal as often as other people. So it's very common, throughout the Great Lakes area, for there to be at least four days a year, or sets of four days a year, when we will come together in an isolated setting, where there are no telephones, no TVs, no MTVs; and they can renew themselves and strengthen themselves.

The Thunderbird and the Underwater Panther As Found in Material Culture

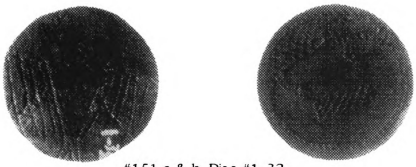
This section includes a discussion of the artifacts from the sample placed within six general eras, or time periods. It concludes with a specific discussion related to the bags and pouches.

Pre-contact Period - Before 1630s

An examination of pre-contact artifacts which contained the thunderbird and underwater panther images helped to determine what forms were being used in Michigan before the influence of European cultures. All objects examined from this period were either of stone or shell. I examined twenty-two of a larger collection of delicate shale discs (averaging 2-3 cm in width and 1 mm thick) from the Late Woodland period (A.D. 1300 to 1450) excavated from four sites near the mouth of Thunder Bay in Alpena, Michigan, now located in the Jesse Besser Museum [see Fig. 10]. They are important finds, as they represent the first evidence of such symbols in prehistoric Michigan. The stylistic designs of the images indicate that there are variations by individual makers, but also reveal a common mythology and a common stylistic tradition (Cleland, Clute and Haltiner, 1984; Cleland, 1985). Representations of the panther include these consistent elements--a long tail, horns on the head, clawed feet, and plates, usually triangular, down the back. As described by the archaeologists, the thunderbird displays "the use of a transverse line to indicate the top edge of the wing or the vault of the sky, the body and tail [are] represented by an 'X' form, and the wings [are] indicated by the use of in-sloping or out-sloping lines" (Cleland, et al., 1984, p. 240).

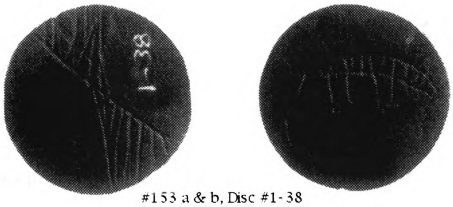
Both images can be found on a single disc, being placed one on either side. Their uses in these early days seem to indicate a consistency over time:

> Discs were sometimes drilled, apparently to be worn suspended about the neck, but both undrilled as well as drilled specimens exhibit use-wear indicating that they were not only worn but also carried in pouches. It is therefore assumed that they represent charms or amulets; such devices, of course, had wide precedence among the Ojibwa in other forms. (Cleland, 1985, p. 132)



#151 a & b, Disc #1-32

#152 a & b, Disc #1-45



#153 a & b, Disc #1-38

Fig. 10. Shale discs from sites near Thunder Bay, Alpena, Michigan from the Late Woodland period (A.D. 1300-1450). The image shown in left column represents the thunderbird side of each disc, while the image in the right column represents the underwater panther side. Photographs courtesy of Jesse Besser Museum.

There is a striking resemblance between the incised designs of these two motifs on these discs and the motifs of the period after contact and in modern times. Compare discs #151 and 152 with the bags from the early 1800s [Fig. 11 & 12].

Small but powerful images in petroglyphs, which are carvings in rocks, are found at Sanilac, Michigan. And more massive images are found in pictographs, paintings on rock, located along the shores of Lake Superior, as at Agawa Rock, for example. Here the immense panther Mishipishiew is painted in red, and remains much as it did in 1837 [Fig. 13] when it was described to Schoolcraft by Shingwaukonce (Conway, 1993, p. 111). Pictographs such as these have inspired two of the interviewees. Alice uses the thunderbird design in quilting; Anny will never forget their beauty on seeing them as a child, and models her painted thunderbirds after them.

The colors red and black appear often. Ojibwa Dan Pine, assisting Conway in his study of pictographs, explained the contingent symbolism of color. In Conway's words:

> He spoke about the prevailing use of red colors for spiritual purposes -- whether as paint on rock art sites, dyes for special clothes, or naturally red stone ceremonial pipes. . . [He] also revealed that the paint used to adorn rocks is a metaphor, imitating the colors nature provides to animals. The underlying idea tells us that an animal's markings provide power, just as a rock's paintings acknowledge and enhance its spiritual power. (1993, p. 42)

Both Cleland and Swauger speak of the strong association in iconography between rock art and the designs on *Mide'* birchbark scrolls (memory aids used in the Grand Medicine Society ceremonies) evident in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, many documented by Hoffman (1885-86) and later Dewdney (1975). Swauger studied the Ohio petroglyphs and hypothesizes that there is a common basis of spiritual concepts:

> . . . [the] association between those who carved the Ohio petroglyphs and Ojibwa is remote in time and space. I suggest that the artists of the Ohio petroglyph sites did not share the *mide* concept with Ojibwa but did share an older set of spiritual concepts and a set of symbols to express them with Ojibwa and other historic tribes that have the *mide* concept: Fox, Pottawatomie, Sauk, Menominee, and Winnebago (Trowbridge, 1939, p. 36, as quoted by Swauger, 1984, p. 270).

Thus, it seems likely that from very early times, there was a common spiritual belief related to the thunderbird and underwater panther, as well as a common stylistic tradition as evidenced in these images.

Fig. 11. Black-dyed skin pouch with quillwork, c. 1800, #NMMIII-G-829. Note. From "Bo'jou, Neejee!" Profiles of Canadian Indian Art, by T. J. Brasser, 1976, p. 110. Copyright 1976 by the Canadian Museum of Civilization. Reprinted with permission.

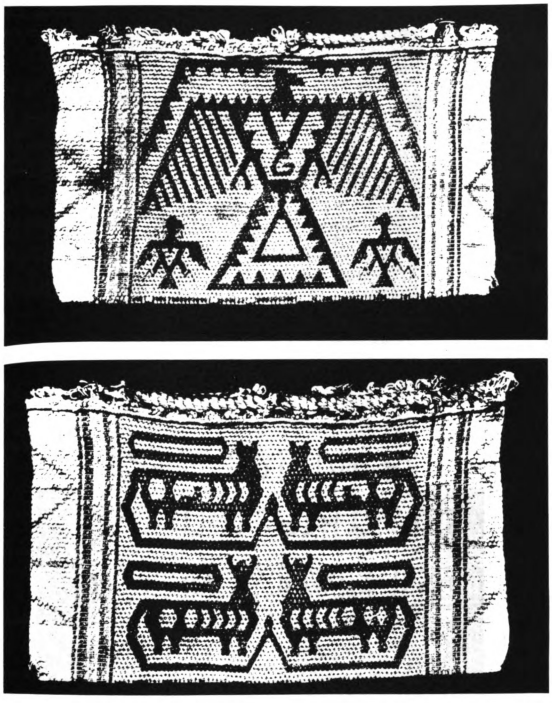


Fig. 12. Ojibwa cotton woven bag, c. 1870. From the Collections of the Detroit Institute of Arts, #81.37. Reprinted with permission.

Fig. 13. Two views of the pictograph of Mishipishiew, photographed at Agawa Rock, Ontario, Canada; by the author, September, 1994.

The Period following Contact with European Cultures

The representations of the underwater panther and thunderbird are carried from pre-contact times into the material culture of more recent times, as seen particularly in textiles and dress. Refer to the table below, divided into generally recognized time periods by historians, which provides a sense of the number of objects within particular time frames[3]:

Table 5. Analysis of Artifacts across Time Periods

Time Period	Number of Objects Analyzed[4]
1780 to 1829	29
1830 to 1879	37
1880 to 1929	27
1930 to 1969	14
1970 to Present	43

Objects from the Period 1780 to 1829

The objects (or photographs of them) examined during this period were primarily articles of clothing, including eleven bags or pouches made from animal skin, dyed black, and embroidered in quills on one side with the motifs of thunderbirds and panthers; a Mide' skin robe; a quill wrapped bark belt;

---

[3] People of the Three Fires: The Ottawa, Potawatomi and Ojibway of Michigan (Grand Rapids Inter-Tribal Council, Editor, 1986) was used as a model for these times periods.

[4] The total ojbects analyzed in the designated time periods (150) excludes the pre-contact artifacts (#151-157) and those contemporary items made commercially (#158-165).

three garters and sashes; two pair of moccasins; three woven fiber bags; two cradleboard panels; a pewter pipe bowl; and five wooden artifacts (four war clubs and one miniature dance wand).

The predominant look of the images from this period is a very naturalistic and bold presentation of the images as well as the strong use of line, both curvilinear and rectilinear. Refer to artifacts 34-44 and Fig. 11 and 12 for examples of pouches. Notice the repeated use of three rows of plaited quills, worked generally in colors dyed from surrounding natural products. Synthetic dyes were not yet available. The use of three rows reinforces the world view of three regions of existence--the sky world, the world where Anishnabeg, plants and animals live, and the world below. Four colors signify the four sacred directions. Also notice the strong similarity of the central motifs to those found etched in Mide' scrolls [Fig. 4] , not only indicating the power of these beings within the Midewiwin healing society and in association with the domain of war, but the continuity of use from one art form to another within the same time period. The stunning Mide' robe [Fig. 14] has two underwater panthers in the central circle, surrounded by a circle and then a square, both containing the hourglass form of the thunderbird. The final rectangle, incorporating designs associated with the thunderbird, is surrounded by twenty-eight human forms, most likely the practitioners in this Mide' society.

Many of the artifacts contain images which assume the role of a dominant symbol, as in the pouches, but the "dominance" varies, depending upon the situation. For example, on the war club, neither the thunderbird nor the panther is shown as the dominant spirit. Each is a participant, or as found in examples of Mide' scrolls collected later, one among many. However, in the Mide' robe, the panthers, rather than thunderbird, are dominant.

Fig. 14. Quilled deerskin Mide' robe. Photograph courtesy of the National Museum of the American Indian, Smithsonian Institution, #s2817. Reprinted with permission.

Objects from the Period 1830 to 1879

This period, which includes Michigan's statehood beginning in 1837, contains none of the beautiful black-dyed skin bags with quillwork iconography of the earlier period. A photograph taken in England in 1845 was located, which depicts such a bag being worn. In this period, women used materials more readily available to them through trade, such as commercially woven wool and cotton fabrics, as well as an abundance of man-made beads. Thus, quillwork lessened, as did the use of animal skins.

As in the prior period, many of the objects are apparel or household items: eight beaded bandolier bags; six garters and sashes; nine natural fiber, wool or cotton woven bags; a beaded bag; a rush mat; and two buffalo rib needles (and their case) for weaving. There is a pair of snowshoes, a drum, a wooden pipe stem, a wooden Mide' board, and three wooden clubs. Additionally, there are three different photographs [#136-138] from this period: one, from 1845, is the earliest known photograph of an American Indian (Fleming & Luskey, 1992); the two others from the mid-nineteenth century depict Chief Shoppenagon, a Chippewa from central Michigan, in dress. One of these photographs [Fig. 15(a)] shows him wearing his beaded garters [Fig. 15(b)].

During this period more items present the images of the thunderbird and panther in geometric form, rather than in more natural renderings, as in the prior period. Beads are used for embellishment rather than quills to partially decorate the object, or to embellish the entire artifact, particularly the straps. Tobacco tins are used for decorative purposes. This is another result of contact with European cultures, replacing more natural objects such as shells, bones and animal hoofs. All finger woven bags and the mat examined had panels, or vertical borders, to define the design between. Three

Fig. 15(a). Chief Shoppenagon, wife, and child; courtesy of Michigan State Archives, neg. #00747. Reprinted with permission.

Fig. 15(b). Beaded garter belonging to Chief Shoppenagon, #22.

of the ten bags have geometric designs.

This is the period in which the Indian Removal Act was passed, resulting in the expulsion of many tribes to the plains region and the flight of others into Canada. In order to acculturate themselves to the dominant culture, those that remained curtailed teaching their heritage and traditions to the younger generations. This suppression of their culture was expressed to me by many with whom I talked.

The thunderbird and panther are often disguised as geometric rather than representational forms, as noted by Phillips (1989) and Penney (1991). Motifs used to symbolize the thunderbird were a jagged or zigzag line suggesting lightning, an hourglass form suggesting the chest and tail, as well as a diamond to reference the breast or heart, in addition to many other abbreviated forms [#22, 55, 66; also see Lyford's sketches, Fig. 16]. Motifs primarily associated with the underwater panther are its horns, tail, and cat-like body. These have been translated into geometric form through the use of concentric circles and concentric polygonal shapes [#54 from the prior period], as well as zigzag, wavy, serpentine, or castellated lines that represent turbulent waters [#63, 66, 82-83, 129, Fig. 6b; see Phillips, 1989; Penney, 1992]. Notice the use of the V forms to designate the thunderbird in the pouch portion of the Chippewa bandolier bag [#4, Fig. 17] from the 1850s, subtly repeated in the design of the strap, which are similar to designs given by Lyford [Fig. 18]. The diamond form, also representing the thunderbird in bag and strap, as well as the imagery for lightning, are used. In addition, the double diamond form and the zigzag form could be indicative of the underwater panther (Phillips, 1989). Anny elaborates on this:

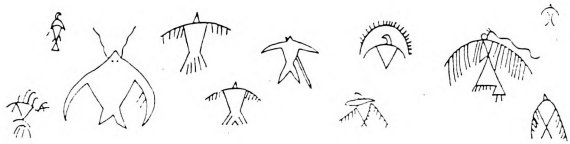


Fig. 16. Lyford's illustrations of thunderbird images found on birchbark scrolls; Plate 84.

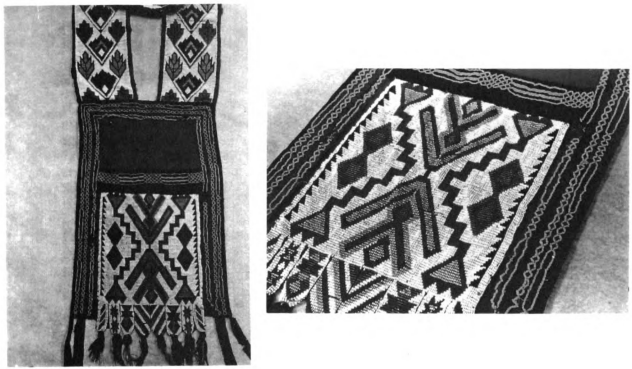


Fig. 17. Beaded bandolier bag; photographs by the author; from the Collections of the Public Museum of Grand Rapids, #120186.

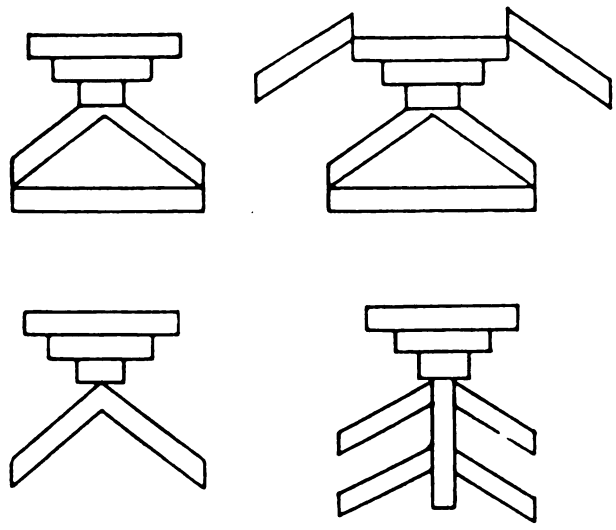


Fig. 18. Illustrations of "very old thunderbird design" by Lyford, writing in 1943; Plate 99.

> [Discussing a floral design on bag #4] They hid things in the designs . . . If you look at it, it's kind of like the thunderbirds travelling down. The leaves are the wings and that flower is the body. . . . There [are] echoes of it [the thunderbird].
>
> [Describing a newspaper article she had read about a Jewish community in Portugal which had secretly kept their traditions alive for five hundred years] It talked about how they did ritual but in a "covered-up way." And there were a lot of native people who did very traditional things, but kept it covered up. . . . Like . . . feasts on All Saints' Day. Now, around the time of All Saints' Day, is when traditionally you would have had a Ghost Feast, to feed all those ancestors. . . . And they do this under the guise of All Saints' Day in Catholic homes, back when. Now they do this openly . . . but it was really undercover for years and years and years. It wasn't until my generation that things could be done openly.
>
> [talking about bag #55, which was collected about 1800-1809] Look at that Bizhou [underwater panther] there. You almost have the thunderbird obliterating him, and that's pretty significant because that's what was happening at that time. Those missionaries were here, and they were talking him down, you know, saying he was bad, so he was going under . . . Notice how big he [the thunderbird] is, and all those power lines that are inside of him. You know, it's like he is getting bigger and this other [the underwater panther] is being diminished. And that's kind of the way people talked about him and thought about him, from what I've learned.

Stylized designs were employed after increased contact with European cultures, perhaps to disguise the representations of the thunderbird and

underwater panther, since missionaries, particularly, considered the images "heathen." Stylized designs were incorporated not only into medicine and bandolier bags, but moccasins and headbands, for example. Sashes and garters, which were worn about the waist, leg or head (Gringhuis, 1972, p. 7) are other predominant examples. Some contained realistic images [#20, 22] while many were geometric [#17, 21, 50, Fig. 19]. The photograph of Chief Shoppenagon illustrates their use. Notice the realistic thunderbird on his headband and the geometric image on his garters [Fig. 15(a) & (b)].

Of the ten finger woven fiber bags examined [#57-66], four were Menomini. Five of the remaining six were geometric expressions of the thunderbird and underwater panther. According to Lyford [Fig. 20] and

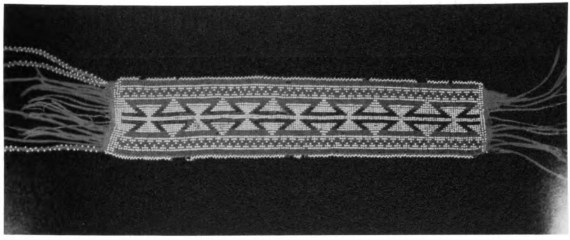


Fig. 19. Potawatomi beaded garter, #21. Note. From The Art of the American Indian Frontier, by D. W. Penney, 1992, p. 83. Copyright 1992 by the Detroit Institute of Arts. Reprinted with permission.

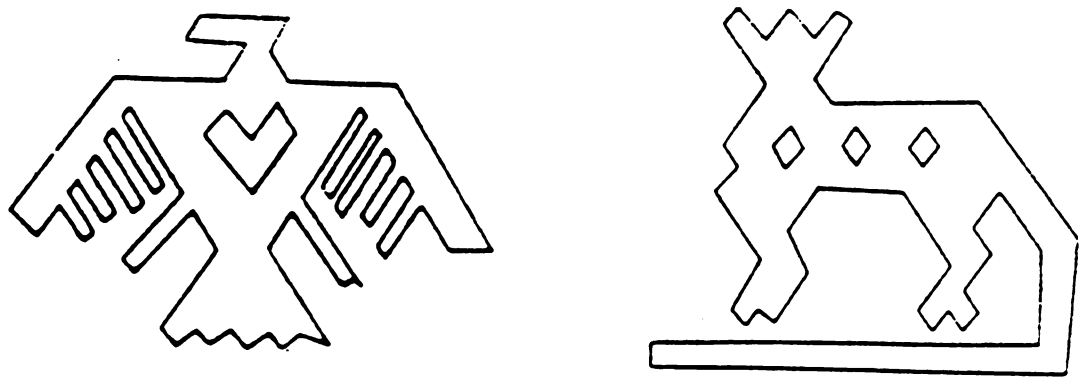


Fig. 20. Lyford's examples of thunderbird and panther images found on nettle fiber bags; Plate 84.

Densmore (1982, p. 83 & 1929, p. 158, respectively), realistic forms of the thunderbird and panther images are characteristicly woven into old nettle fiber bags. One Ottawa woven rush mat [#73], dated 1851, contains rows of representational thunderbirds. Ritzenthaler (1983) and Conn (1979) state they were used as wrappers for war bundles, interior home decorations, and also as floor coverings on important occasions.

Objects from the Period 1880 to 1929

For this period twenty-seven objects were examined: four bandolier bags; two beaded and three fiber bags; three sashes or waistbands, a pair of moccasins, a choker necklace with incised shell, and a headband, all beaded; two cloths, one a painted skin and the other a yarn embroidered cotton; a

birchbark scroll; six wooden items, including two cradleboards and four rattles; and three photographs.

A number of items from this period were undated, but were categorized within a broader range of dates. A few may belong to an earlier period. Particularly noticable during this time was the extensive use of beading and geometric imagery. Those that employed more naturalistic images were the wooden rattles, a panel bag [#68], and three banded bags [#70-72]. Those that did have natural forms generally portrayed the thunderbird, often used with another form such as a flower. Agnes Tipkey's leather waistband and headband are examples [Fig. 21]. They are embellished with beads and the images of the thunderbird and red flowers.[5]

By the turn of the century, heavily beaded bandolier bags, with their wide straps, had reached their height [#8-11]. Their use is described by Hoffman (1885-86) in reference to an initiate joining the Mide' Society. The person dressed in his best clothing and "such articles of beaded ornaments as he possesses" (p. 207). The initiate's instructor as well as the Mide' priests dressed in their finest clothing, each wearing "one or two beaded dancing bags at his side, secured by a band of beaded cloth crossing the opposite shoulder" (Hoffman, 1885-86, p. 207). Notice the typical asymmetric design of the thunderbird on the left and human on the right portion of the strap of a Potawatomi bag [Fig. 22(a)], most likely a "dancing bag," photographed in 1897 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Is it purposely worn by the man with the thunderbirds most prominent [Fig. 22(b)], in contrast to how the Native

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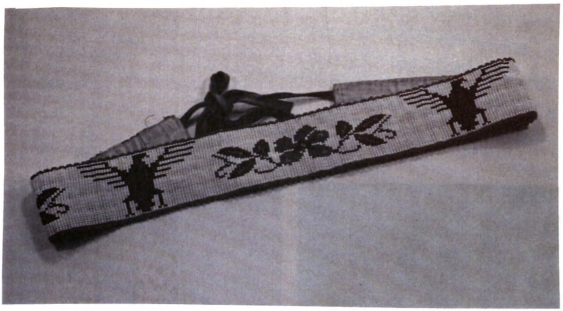
[5]Agnes Tipkey, who performed with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show in the early 1900s, was recruited from her home in Michigan at the age of sixteen, and eventually performed around the world.

American woman wears it in her portrait with another woman, the possible purchaser of this bag [Fig. 22(c)]?

In reference to Hoffman's observation about Mide' "dancing bags," he also commented on the Ojibwa's attitude toward the importance of clothing. For example, in dance, whether it be social or ceremonial, Hoffman said that the Ojibwa vie with each other to see who has the most costly or "most gaudy dress obtainable." He compared them to other tribes such as the Dakotan who frequently appear without much clothing other than a breechcloth, moccasins, armlets, and other ornaments. He says that, to the Ojibwa, "this disregard of dress appears . . . as a sacrilegious digression from the ancient usages, and it frequently excites severe comment" (1885-86, pp. 298-299).

During this time, ethnographic research was being done by Hoffman (1885-86, 1890), Skinner (1913), Densmore (1929), and others. They were documenting and collecting examples of native material culture because of their concern about the effects of acculturation. This is the period of the boarding school experience and of confinement to the reservation, when the Anishnabeg's way of life was changing. In the artifacts examined, one notices the presence of thunderbird images, but the underwater panther image is less evident, perhaps because the Euro-American culture considered this being malevolent. Mary, for example, talks about her people's experience during the Indian Removal period and later:

> [There was] the strength of the different societies [and] a lot . . . went underground. And people didn't know who belonged to what, because if . . . the wrong people knew, they would tell in order to get different favors from the powers that be. And people would get sent away, or come up missing. A lot of people, to escape that, went into Canada. A lot to the Georgian Bay east shore. There are different pockets of Odawa that came from around Traverse City area, Potawatomis that came from Wisconsin and southern Michigan, [who] went that way to get away from the soldiers and the encroachment of the white people--the U.S. government, basically.



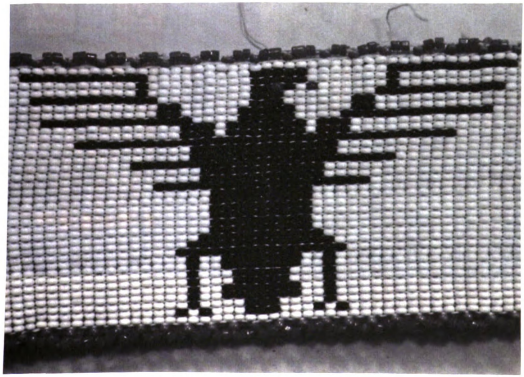


Fig. 21(a & b). Agnes Tipkey's waistband and enlargement of the thunderbird image. Photographs by the author; from the Collections of Central Michigan University Museum.

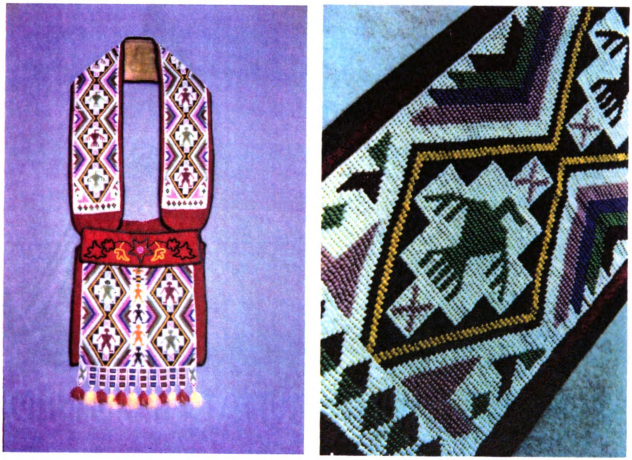


Fig. 22(a). Potawatomi beaded bandolier bag and detail of the thunderbird. Photographs by the author; from the Collections of the Public Museum of Grand Rapids, #117089.

Fig. 22(b).

Fig. 22(c).

Figs. 22(b & c). Photographs taken in Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1897 showing a Potawatomi bandolier bag being worn. Photocopies courtesy of Public Museum of Grand Rapids, #135287 and #135287 c.1.1 [of bag #117089]. Reprinted with permission.

Objects from the Period 1930 to 1969

There was a dearth of actual objects located from this period. Of the fourteen examined, six were photographs and one was a postcard, primarily depicting Great Lakes Indians involved in tourist related activities. Other objects were most likely made for tourist purchases, such as a beaded belt and a quillbox; or used in tourist entertainment, such as a drum and a beaded headband. One, however, is a finger woven bag, another is an incomplete beadwork panel, and two are paintings by an Ojibwa artist.

Many images are not consistent with those evident from pre-contact and early historic periods. Only the thunderbird is used as a symbol (except for the two paintings of the panther late in this period), and often it seems to be an image imported from elsewhere. Objects with the image of the thunderbird were likely produced for the tourist market, as arts and crafts were often an essential means of support during the Great Depression. A number of Anishnabeg families, for example, participated in the Works Project Administration (WPA), where these native talents were encouraged (McClurken, 1991).

Some images resemble those seen in the Southwest or those produced by the Chinese. (Notice, in Fig. 23, the Southwest influence of "stepped" wings and a body that lacks the hourglass form of a traditional thunderbird image of the Great Lakes region). This period included depression times and post-World War II, when it was "not popular" and "hard to be an Indian." Barbara said that Anishnabeg during this period would rarely be seen in Indian clothing, because they didn't want to be labeled as Indians. During her childhood in the 1940s and 1950s, she remembers that each item of Indian clothing had a thunderbird on it, but these articles were made only for tourists. She describes

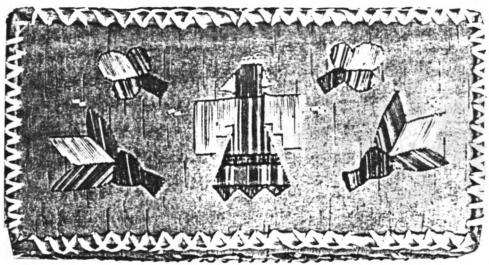


Fig. 23. Quilled birchbark box (top showing) with thunderbird and flowers. Photograph by the author; from the Collections of Central Michigan University Museum.

the image of the thunderbird made for tourists: "The Chinese make it too precise and rounded to fit the circle. The Ojibwa thunderbirds are more squared off, with wings straight across" [see Fig. 24(a)]. Compare the modern example from China [Fig. 24(b)] with the thunderbird images in a late 1800s fiber bag [Fig. 6(b), upper photograph], or with those from a 1990 Ojibwa quilt [Fig. 25]. Beadmaker Lewis Pontiac (Red Cloud) from Mt. Pleasant, Michigan tells how he learned to make beaded items in 1968 by taking apart one made in China (undated, pg. 1). His beaded medallion necklaces, however, are "squared off, with wings straight across" [#29, Fig. 26(a)].

Notice the geometric beaded sash [#51, Fig. 26(b)] from the prior period. It is dated "early 1900s," but could be from this time period. It has "hidden" images of the thunderbird and panther. One can find the "X", diamond (heart), and hourglass forms of the thunderbird and a checkmark-type form and triangle suggestive of the underwater panther's face and horns,

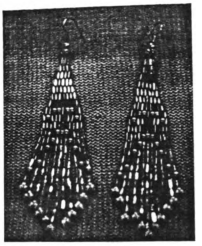


Fig. 24(a). Beaded thunderbird earrings by Barbara Tazelaar; 1992; photograph by the author; author's collection.

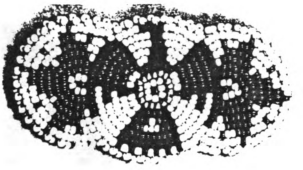


Fig. 24(b). A 1990s Chinese barrette; photograph by the author; author's collection.

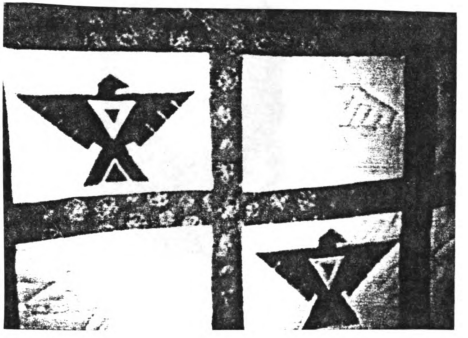


Fig. 25. Portion of a quilt by Alice Fox, 1990; photograph courtesy of A. Fox.

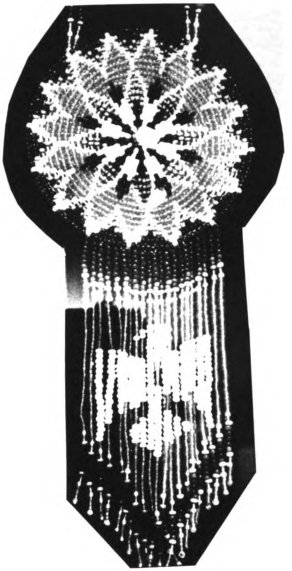


Fig. 26(a). Beaded medallion necklace by Lewis Pontiac; photograph by the author.

Fig. 26(b). Beaded Ojibwa sash. Photograph by the author; from the Collections of the Public Museum of Grand Rapids, #123112.

as remarked by Anny. Mary spoke of these "hidden" images as she talked about the Depression years on the reservation, and how families tried to carry on traditions:

> There were lots of things that they wove, but it was kind of like hidden, or only put into things that only the family was going to use, because of getting back to the PSS [head of social services] with it. If she didn't view you as a good, clean, Christian-seeking Indian, you didn't get help. Even though you may be just as needy and just as worthy as the person who was looking like they were trying to be a Christian--a good-working, assimilating person--if you were thought to be pagan or too Indian, you didn't get help. So that reinforced that notion that we needed to give up our ways and just look like, talk like, act like white people.

This period was a time of lost skills. Some ash baskets were being made, as well as items of birchbark with some quilling and sweetgrass, made to sell to tourists and shops, but for very little pay and consequently with a lower standard of craftsmanship. Barbara, Mary, and Alice, as well as others, remember these items being sold for twenty-five cents, typically. Anishnabeg who wore Indian clothing were usually participating in tourist-related activities and posing for photographs. Some, however, were worn for

celebratory occasions such as pageants, pow-wows, or contests such as shown in the 1951 Harbor Springs Indian Princess photograph[#145, Fig. 27].

A new trend, along with a revival of traditions, was occurring during the end of this period. This is evidenced by the paintings from this period by Ojibwa artist Norval Morrisseau. These paintings portray the thunderbird and Misshipeshu in strong imagery, with the use of traditional stylizations such as the sloping wings and side view of the head of the thunderbird, and horns, tail and spines of the panther. With his art, we begin to see a re-interpretation of internal parts and seemingly more use of power lines (forms of energy expression) [#98-99, Fig. 28(a) & (b)].

Contemporary Images from 1970 to Present

Of the forty-three artifacts examined from the contemporary period, most are paintings and art related items from the late 1980s to 1994. These include nineteen paintings, a pottery bowl, and a sculpture, as well as three quillboxes, a ceremonial skin pouch, one framed birchbark cutout, four quilts, and a quilt design. Twelve of the items, however, are clothing accessory pieces, generally beaded, or those pertaining to pow-wow regalia: a pair of earrings, two painted pins, four necklaces, a coin purse, a wristband, a headband, and two photographs which portray pow wow traditional dancers.

Most of the images are traditional renderings of older symbols, fashioned with individuality by the maker. Compare the underwater panthers on the 1994 Ottawa quillbox [#120, Fig. 8(a)] with the Ottawa quilled pouch from the 1780s [#38, Fig. 29]. This is particularly true of the paintings, most of which are the interpretations by the artist to express the essence of the spiritual being portrayed [#100-118]. Once again the panther has surfaced and

Fig. 27. Photograph of an Ottawa Indian Princess taken at Harbor Springs, Michigan in 1951, #145. Photocopy courtesy of Michigan State Archives. Reprinted with permission.

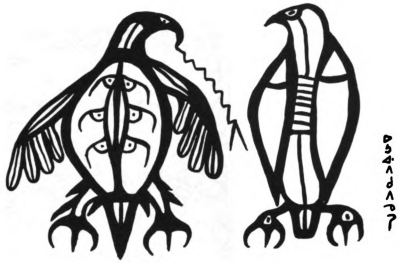


Fig. 28(a). Painting entitled "Thunderbird" by Norval Morrisseau. Note. From The Legends of My People the Great Ojibway, by N. Morrisseau, 1965, p. 79. Copyright 1965 by McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited. Reprinted with permission.

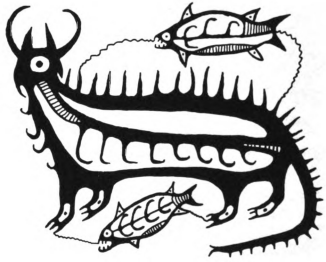


Fig. 28(b). Painting entitled "Misshipeshu" by Norval Morrisseau. Note. From The Legends of My People the Great Ojibway, by N. Morrisseau, 1965, p. 99. Copyright 1965 by McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited. Reprinted with permission.

Fig. 29. Ottawa pouch from the 1780s. Photograph courtesy of Cranbrook Institute of Arts, #3690. Reprinted with permission.

Fig. 30. "Mishi Mishoo" by David Dutcher. Photograph by the author. From the Collections of the Jesse Besser Museum.

is displayed alone or in combination with the thunderbird, as shown in contemporary artwork [see Fig. 9, 30-32]. Also notice that some beadwork today is very reflective of examples from early 1900. Compare the similarity of style of the thunderbird in the 1994 beaded leather coin purse [Fig. 33, Side One] with those on the headband and waistband from the early 1900s [Fig. 21] belonging to Princess Agnes Tipkey, who performed with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show.

Today, the pow-wow also provides the opportunity for the display of these symbols. As in the past, communications are renewed at various times of the year in rituals, festivals, and celebrations. The intent is to provide opportunities for renewals on many levels and in many ways: for spiritual renewal, the renewal of friendships and extended family gatherings, for an opportunity to honor elders and war veterans, and to celebrate the renewal of the cyclical seasons. It also provids the opportunity to display talents and skills in making regalia and related dress, for performers as well as other participants and spectators. On these occasions, one may find many examples of Anishnabeg images and symbols, as shown on apparel [Fig. 34, #148, 149]. They are also found in popular culture items such as t-shirts and caps.

To conclude, the images through time have changed, yet remain similar. Very early discs, pictographs, and petroglyphs are natural or representational. These natural forms continue into the period of early contact, as evidenced by the quillwork done on textiles such as the skin Mide' robe and skin bags. During the continuing periods of contact with European societies and the resulting cultural changes, the symbols of the thunderbird and underwater panther were concealed at times within geometric forms. Because of its more beneficent connotation, the thunderbird has remained visually

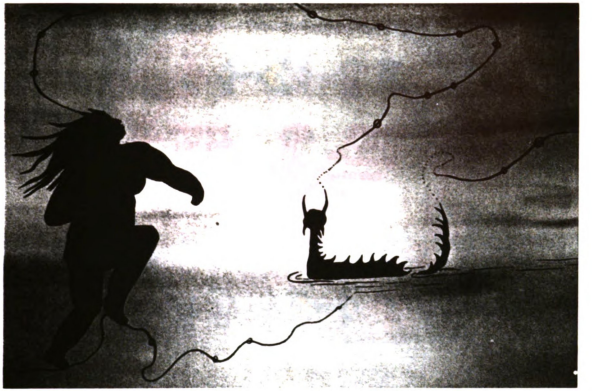
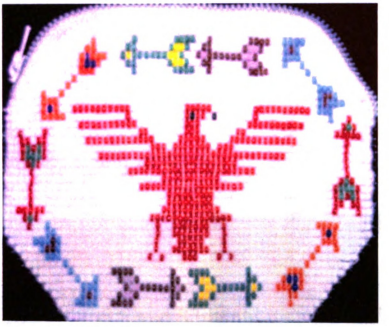


Fig. 31. "Look Before You Leap" by Anny Hubbard; photograph courtesy of the artist.

Fig. 32. "Misshipeshu" by N. Morrisseau, c. 1970. Note. From Sacred Scrolls of the Southern Ojibway, by S. Dewdney, 1975. Copyright 1975 by Selwyn Dewdney. Reprinted with permission.



Side One

Side Two

Fig. 33. Beaded coin purse by Veronica High. Photographs by the author; author's collection.

Fig. 34. Pow-Wow dancers in regalia. Photographs by Doug Elbinger; courtesy of Michigan State University Museum, Folk Arts Archives.

more evident through times when many traditions and beliefs were lost. Today, however, with the revitalization of Native American cultures, both images are once again becoming visually evident in representational forms, particularly in art and artistic expressions, as well as popular and commercial material culture. Although each image is not stylistically identical, each bears a common stylistic heritage, as did the discs in pre-contact time.

A Detailed Analysis Using the Revised Smith Model

The following section provides a detailed analysis of the findings about the form and style of the images as found in bags and pouches in this study from approximately 1780 to the present, to illustrate the application of the revised Smith artifact study model. Due to the diversity of the objects in the total sample, only the bags and pouches will be discussed in greater detail since they represent a significant number of the total artifacts examined. Of the total group of forty-five bags and pouches, four were Menomini fingerwoven bags, all with representational thunderbirds on one side and underwater panthers on the reverse side in various configurations.

Forty-five bags/pouches were examined (including one photograph of an Ojibwa man wearing a bag, [#136]). For those objects that were examined from a photograph, information provided by the author or source of publication was relied upon. Where no information was provided, details were noted and a comparison was made to another similar artifact, after consulting sources, for a possible determination about characteristics of the bag [#136].

Step One of the revised Smith model involved the analysis of the observable data or properties of each individual bag: its materials, construction, function, provenance, and value. Once this step had been

completed, Step Two, the comparison of the bags/pouches, was made, as noted below. Included in this discussion is information from Step Three, data from supplementary sources.

Materials and Construction

Of the forty-five bags/pouches examined, most of those from the early periods were made from materials readily available in the Great Lakes area. Later bags are made, in part, from materials acquired through contact with European cultures. Twelve are made from skin, three are made from the vegetal fiber nettlestalk, two from nettlestalk and wool, two from cotton, fifteen of the animal fiber wool (of which eight are lined with cotton muslin), two of wool and linen, one described as silk and velvet, and one which employs skin thongs to create a netted panel of quillwork that has a wool and linen lining [#41]. Seven of the bags are described as twined fiber or natural fiber, with indications that they are made of nettlestalk, buffalo hair or wool.

The images of the thunderbird and underwater panther are constructed/depicted primarily in two distinct ways: as an applied embellishment, or type of embroidery, on a blackened background (e.g., quillwork on dyed skin); or as an incorporation within the surface materials of the bag. This is accomplished by fingerweaving a dark design within a light or natural colored background, or by beading dark colors within light colors or light colors within dark, to create contrast. In a few instances, a panel is made and then attached over the base material: a netted panel of porcupine quillwork done on leather thongs, or loomwoven beadwork on cotton thread. A modern example (a beaded tobacco skin pouch, #88) applies the beads directly to the skin bag by means of the lazy stitch, a method

whereby five or more beads are strung on the thread before entering the base material (skin), rather than being attached to the base material between every bead.

Those bags/pouches that are "embroidered" with porcupine quillwork employ, primarily, three different techniques or methods of application: one-quill edging, simple line, and zigzag banding. These methods are often all used within one artifact [#34-40, 42-44]. Robin Odle (1973), discussing quillwork in Art of the Great Lakes Indians, provides a detailed description of these techniques (and others), supplemented with excellent diagrams. She additionally comments that although the thunderbird and underwater panther motifs are found in areas other than the Great Lakes, they are "nevertheless unique in that only within these general limits [Great Lakes region] were they depicted in porcupine quillwork" (p. xxxvii). The remaining bags/pouches, which are fingerwoven or woven on a beadloom, incorporate these designs directly within the fabric of the bag as a part of the weaving process, with the exception of #41, to be discussed below.

The materials used to create the images are variously dyed porcupine quills, dyed animal hair, dyed wool or cotton, and beads. Supplementary materials are used as additional embellishment, and in the construction of the bags, such as silk material or grosgrain ribbon, velvet, metal cones, leather thongs, beads and quills, and a zipper.

There are three basic types of bags/pouches incorporating the thunderbird and underwater panther motifs within this sample: black-dyed skin with quillwork designs (twelve examples); fingerwoven (seventeen examples); and entirely or partially beaded (sixteen examples). This group can also be divided into thirty representational (or realistic) images of these two beings, and fifteen that are geometric or non-realistic motifs [#1, 2, 4-6, 10-12,

36, 37, 57, 63, 65, 67, 69]. Phillips (1989) describes geometric motifs as "represent[ing] emanations of power." Of the total sample [165 objects], twenty-seven depict geometric images, with this grouping of artifacts including the largest number [15].

In considering the presentation of these images and the relationship of this presentation to the materials employed in creating the design, I found that the realistic image appears most natural when done in quillwork on skin bags. As porcupine quills are flexible and vary in size from large to very delicate (depending on the area of the pelt from which they were taken, and the preference of the quillworker), very fine curvilinear designs could be created, especially when the simple line is employed. Examples are found in the outlines and internal lines of the underwater panther [#34, 38-39, 42] and the power lines extending down or out from the wings of the thunderbird [#43-44].

In contrast to these fine lines, bold lines (and thus bold forms) were created by the use of the zigzag band of quillwork. A double line or band on the thunderbird in bag #35 is used ; and a single zigzag band creates the striking outline and solid internal line (alimentary tract?) of each of the lower pair of underwater panthers [#34] and of the thunderbirds [#40, 44]. Lyford (1982) provides a good discussion of how these solid bands of quillwork were created on skin bags:

> When a quill embroidery pattern was to be worked out on skin, stitches were taken with threads of sinew around which the quills were folded to fasten them to the skin. The sinew was secured from the tendon that runs down the back of a deer or other large animal. . . . These threads of sinew had considerable strength. Old pieces of quill work that have been sewed with sinew have kept in good condition through the years. (p. 122)

All quillwork examined present images that are designed by outline, often with repeated rows to add form to the body. The outline form also depicts

internal elements, such as the "heartline" and the internal chest definition of the thunderbird, and the various internal elements of the panther. One bag, however, is different from the rest [#41]. It is from the early 1800s, and the thunderbird's image is fashioned in solid quillwork in the netted (or wrapping) technique on leather thongs. Odle (1973), who calls this technique "web-work" or "net-work," describes the process: "A series of fine leather strips is bound together in pairs . . . to obtain a net-like effect. . . . [T]wo strips are bound together by a single quill, the ends secured by tucking them under the first and last turns of the quill" (p. xxxii). These techniques could perhaps be considered precursors of beadwork strung on sinew, and finally on thread in later periods.

The representational or realistic images made in fingerwoven and twined bags, however, are not as curvilinear as those done on the skin bags; rather, they appear angular or more geometric looking as a result of the material used. Fingerweaving produces diagonal and straight lines; thus weaving a curved design is a difficult process. However, some degree of control is possible, for the smaller the diameter of the fiber used, the finer the features that may be created by the maker.

As with quillwork designs, many fingerwoven images appear in outline form [#55-56, 58-62, 64, 68]. Some areas of the image, however, are filled in, such as the thunderbird's head, and the underwater panther's head, chest and legs. In other images, the entire body of the panther, for example, (except spaces for internal ribs and organs) is filled in with dyed fibers. Most of the thunderbird images are in outline form, but a few are presented in solid form [#70-72, 59].

Because of the nature of weaving and the angularity of line produced, geometric or non-realistic images are often the result. Five of the

fingerwoven bags contain bold and dramatic geometric images: three in panel bags [#57, 63, 65] and two in banded bags [#67, 69]. There are also two geometrically designed images in quillwork on the skin pouches from the late 18th century [#36-37].

In the beadwork bags, realistic forms (all thunderbirds) are used in eight (possibly nine); the remaining seven are geometrically depicted. Each realistic thunderbird image is in solid (not outline) form; the wings, however, have a sense of a linear or outline form [#3, 7-9, 45, 66, 71, 88; possibly 136]. Fine image details have been achieved in most of the beadwork because of the small size of beads used, as well as the variety of colors that were employed (and were available in the mid- to late 1800s). Lyford (1982) mentions 1860 as the approximate date for the availability of beads in great quantity, which this study also confirms. She also states that "after the introduction of glass beads, the art of quill embroidery work gradually declined and it has been little practiced in recent years [about 1943]" (p. 121).

Of these beaded realistic forms, one [#3] is very unusual in two respects. First, there are three heads in profile shown on the thunderbird. All other motifs of the thunderbird examined display one head in profile only. Does this suggest that the maker (dreamer/vision questor?) equated three distinct powers with the thunderbird, each head representing a power? Secondly, the exhibition curator of Sacred Circles describes a part of the design as "bleached--a rare and unexplained technique for the period [19th century]" (Coe, 1977, p. 94). This beaded fingerwoven bag contains not only the representational image of the thunderbird on the pouch portion, but its sash or strap depicts a zigzag line, which is a geometric symbol associated with the thunderbird. Three other bags also employ this technique, of those bags with remaining straps [#7-9].

Also, the photograph of Reverend Peter Jones wearing a bag [#136; Fig. 35] has been included in the beaded bag grouping because of the similarity of design of the thunderbird on his bag to that of another beaded wool bandolier bag [#3]. Both images appear to have been created in a like manner: head facing in silhouette form to the right; an hourglass or X body form; wings spread out with a slightly downward slope, with feathers resembling power lines descending from each; and legs or talons near the mid section of the body. The forms of both bodies are somewhat (but not completely) filled in, and are not designed in a simple outline or repeated outline method. Since the thunderbird of # 3 is beaded, # 136 may also have been created in this manner.

When considering the size of each image or groupings of images on each bag, those from the early periods (1780-1870) and the two from the comtemporary period (1970-present) are very large and encompass much of the surface of the bag. There is one exception in time: a Potawatomi panel bag [#68] from 1890. Images on the panel bags of the early periods are included on both sides of the bag, taking between 80-85% of each surface (including the panel "framing device"). In contrast, the skin bags are designed on only one surface, but the space taken by the main image and associated forms comprise about 75-85% of the surface of the bag. The remainder of the space is devoted to the zigzag band designs in many colors, usually of three rows. Additional non-realistic symbols (asymmetrically arranged, a common technique in Anishnabeg dress) are incorporated on the strap to further reinforce or complement the main motif.

The realistic images from the period 1880-1930, particularly on the shoulder (or bandolier) bags, are quite small in comparison to those of earlier times. Also, they are not boldly placed in the main portion of the bag, but are placed in vertical rows on tabs hanging below the edge of the bag [#9], or are

Fig. 35. Photograph of Ojibwa Rev. Peter Jones taken in England on Aug. 4, 1845. Note. From The North American Indians in Early Photographs, by P. R. Fleming and J. Luskey, 1986, p. 15. Copyright 1986 by Barnes & Noble Books. Reprinted with permission.

a part of the design on the strap [#7-8]. The heavily beaded bandolier bags of this period, with wide beaded shoulder straps, predominantly show the geometric, or non-realistic, image of the thunderbird, in the linear or more solid hourglass form, designed and embellished in a variety of colors on a white ground. These are shown either by one bold design or multiple designs on the bag, or in profuse and asymmetric numbers on the strap.

In considering the number of images on a bag/pouch, usage varies, but the majority of bags (19) depict one major image. Four bags display two similar images together on one side [#44, 60, 62, 68]: two woven bags with thunderbirds, with one above the other; a fingerwoven Menomini bag, with two thunderbirds, one above the other; and a quilled skin bag with two thunderbirds, side by side. One bag has one joined pair of images, and there are two each of others with two, three, and four joined pairs. Eight bags present rows of thunderbirds joined wing tip to wing tip, while seven set forth vertical or horizontal rows of unjoined images. From these variations in presentation, we sense not only the power of the individual image, but also power in numbers.

There is an equal distribution of bags which are either one- or two-sided, for purposes of displaying these images. All seven of the two-sided bags which portray joined pairs of panthers have one major image on the reverse side, usually the thunderbird. Additionally, the beaded bandolier bags place an equal weight or emphasis on the bag and the strap for presentation of these images, mostly in geometric form.

The placement of images, too, is a significant factor to consider. All the fingerwoven bags examined are panel bags, except for three banded bags [#67, 69-70]. These bags divide each side into three horizontal spaces by the means of solid or checkered woven bands. Images or geometric depictions are in

rows within each of these three bands, as if suggesting three levels of being or three worlds within one. In contrast, the panel bags incorporate a vertical row or rows of linear color (sometimes with geometric designs embodied within) to set off the thunderbird and underwater panther images, as if they are being framed like a picture. The same end is achieved in the quilled skin bags through the use of zigzag bands. These are usually in three horizontally joined rows above the image, and in one instance also below [#44]. Additional methods are used to "frame" each image, such as other forms of quillwork to border three or four sides of the image: twined single line quillwork forms, zigzag band, and even fine beads to outline the bag. In one blackened skin bag [#42] the panther has a rectangular band framing it, which is surrounded by a crenellated form, and finally a bordering rectangular form, all in the quilled zigzag band technique. The fingerwoven panel bags, too, employ additional "frames" to further highlight the image within. The two thunderbirds shown in bag # 60, in addition to the vertical panels, are enclosed within a hexagon form (with double diamond forms embedded within), and are futher given prominence by means of separating lines within this second "frame." Thus, placement within a frame or frames enhance, as well as portray, the power of each image.

Colors also add to the beauty and sacredness of the images. Striking images are created in woven textile bags by the use of black or dark brown dyed fibers woven into a natural or light ground fiber. Vertical panels employ reds, yellow, and black, predominantly. Early bags would have used natural dyes to create these colors. Lyford (1982), Densmore (1929), and Odle (1973) provide detailed descriptions and charts of natural plants and vegetation used in the preparation of natural dyes by the Great Lakes Indians. Quillwork on dyed skin bags also primarily use the colors of red, white, blue, and yellow on a

ground of black (associated with the sacred directions). Some quillwork colors are described in photographs as green and orange. If one of the purposes of the maker was to express sacredness through the use of color, perhaps the orange and green are dye variations or color change from originally intended colors of red, yellow, and blue. In beadwork, there is a wide variety of color, perhaps evident for two reasons: availability of colors in the wide variety of beads to the weaver, as documented by Lyford above, or the use of many colors to provide a lively, artful, and ornamental image, perhaps with less importance given to sacred meaning.

Function

The function or purpose of a bag is not always known. While visually examining a bag, one is often struck with the beauty of the image, and is drawn to examine it in more detail. Power and sacredness are suggested in the quality and depiction of the image, through its fine crafting, and also its stance and the surrounding embellishments which add to its prominence or importance. Straps provide clues that the bag was worn or carried. Pockets and linings suggest that objects may have been carried within. Some have no pockets, but have straps, and so suggest that they were worn for social purposes, perhaps as a status object. Size also suggests whether small or large items could be carried within.

Often, the recorded history of a bag found in collections does not provide a clue to its purpose; however, much information has been collected by ethnographers at the beginning of this century which provide details not only about the construction of bags, but also their use. Lyford and Densmore, as well as Skinner, are particularly helpful. According to them, the twined

bags, approximately 20 inches square (Densmore, 1929, p. 158), performed the utilitarian functions of storage for grains and clothing, and often served as containers for sacred bundles and medicines. Black-dyed pouches, and later bandolier bags, were used to carry not only sacred items, but were often worn in ceremonies, such as those of the Midewiwin. In this context, its use was sacred and social.

The two contemporary bags [#45, 88] were purchased primarily as art objects, although both the coin purse and the beaded tobacco pouch may be used in a spiritual and also a utilitarian manner: to hold coins or other small and perhaps sacred objects, and to carry tobacco. Another conclusion can be drawn from the quillwork design being applied only on one side of the skin pouches: as most of these bags have/had a carrying strap, they were "embroidered" only on one side in order to keep the quills from being rubbed through contact with the body or clothing.

Provenance

Research is often hampered when the dates and provenance of artifacts are not known. For these objects, the provenance, or history of the bags' manufacture and location, are at times pinpointed in catalogue records to a specific location in Michigan. A few in the sample are from Wisconsin, but many are designated with a general location such as Central Great Lakes, or Eastern Great Lakes. Generally, the object is dated within a ten or twenty year period, but a few have more precise documentation, such as the specifically dated photograph of Reverend Peter Jones, taken in England on August 4, 1845, when wearing the pouch with the thunderbird [#136]. In contrast, a few are designated only with a time frame within a particular century. For example,

the bandolier bag described by Coe (1977) as Ottawa or Ojibwa has been given the date of the 19th century [#3]. After completing Steps 2 and 3 of the analysis, I placed this bag within the period of 1830 to 1880, because of its similarity to Peter Jones' bag from 1845. An additional note should be made: no bags with the images of the thunderbird and underwater panther are found in the sample from the time period of 1930 to 1970.

The part of the analysis at each step leading to Value, and also Steps Four and Five, Cultural Analysis and Interpretive Conclusions, have been addressed minimally here, but were given much greater treatment earlier in this chapter. They also will be discussed in depth in Chapter 5.

In conclusion, the use of the revised Smith artifact model assisted in the study and assessment of the images used in these objects. By systematically observing the materials and construction methods employed, considering the provenance of each, as well as thinking through the functional use and value of each artifact, patterns of consistency emerged in the individual and comparative steps of this process. Written documentation by scholars and information from interviewees confirmed or clarified assumptions made, and helped answer questions that arose in the first two steps. This data (from Step Three) was then helpful in continuing to Steps Four and Five, where analyses regarding the Anishnabeg cultures were made, and interpretative conclusions were formed. I concluded that they these bags/pouches are a good object to study to provide information about their cultures. Additionally, the publication of so many bags/pouches suggests the significance of these artifacts within these tribes.

CHAPTER 5

PART AND WHOLE RELATIONSHIPS

What is meant by part and whole relationships? In considering the images of the thunderbird and the underwater panther, could they be thought of as forming and expressing part and whole relationships as introduced in Chapter 2?

Exploring the Concept

The relationships of part and whole will be discussed on three levels, proceeding from the concrete to the abstract: 1) in terms of the material relation of part to whole in a designed form; 2) in terms of components and processes of a system; and 3) in terms of a world view.

Marilyn DeLong (1987) provided a reference for considering spatial relationships in The Way We Look: A Framework for Visual Analysis of Dress, which assisted my thinking about the material relation of parts and whole. She presents and analyzes visual parts in dress, and defines how parts function in relation to the whole.

DeLong points out four organizing factors and many part modifiers. The four organizing factors (similarity, closure, proximity, and continuation) interact in the process of creating a whole. Modifiers influence visual interaction, as, for example, number, size, or position of parts in space. The first Gestalt organizing factor, similarity, according to DeLong, "is the most

inclusive organizing factor" (p.98). An Anishnabeg example is the craftsperson's repeated use of like images of the thunderbird or underwater panther within an object. The repetition of identical, or similar, images, as in the woven mat from 1851 [#73; Fig. 36(a)] and the contemporary quilt from the 1990s [Fig. 36(b)] convey the sense of power in numbers to the viewer. The repeated use of the diamond within each thunderbird chest is an additional organizing factor, suggesting added depth of power. Also, as DeLong points out, parts that are dissimilar separate from the whole. For example, the use of one large image centered within groupings of smaller images separates. As in the early quilled skin pouches and often in modern paintings, the superior power of the larger dissimilar image is suggested.

Closure is the visual process by which the viewer fills in spaces to arrive at a complete whole. This is evident in the beaded coin purse [Fig. 33]: a circular effect is created by the use of arrows surrounding the thunderbird and our eyes fill in the blank spaces. The factor of proximity (perceptually grouping because of close spatial placement) also functions within the whole, organizing parts into a group, as seen in Fig. 6(b). Notice that the polygon form within each panther and those joined above the top panther's body tend to draw toward each other, suggesting completeness as a unit or whole. Lastly, the organizing factor of continuation, or "parts arranged in a straight or curvilinear path," is significant (DeLong, 1987, p. 101). This factor is another strong visual organizer, as evidenced in many of the artifacts. Thunderbirds and underwater panthers are seen in rows, as well as groupings of colors, and groupings of lines above and below them. Lines of "communications" create framing devices on panel bags, and are drawn in curvilinear, flowing lines in modern paintings [Fig. 31].

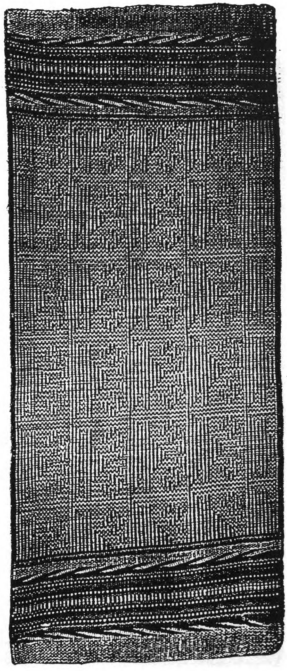


Fig. 36(a). Ottawa rush mat, with thunderbirds. Note. From Beadwork & Textiles of the Ottawa, by Harbor Springs Historical Commission, 1984, p. 32.

Fig. 36(b). Quilt with thunderbirds by Alice Fox, 1987. Photograph courtesy of Michigan State University Museum, Folk Arts Archives.

Important, too, as pointed out by DeLong, is the interaction of factors, the "process of combining and relating" visual parts. To extend this concept, communication is a vital form of interaction for the Anishnabeg, and is a strong component in many of the objects examined. When shown a photograph of the 1840s' drum [Fig. 37], Peter described the figures and the dashes moving outward from their heads as "quite a gathering . . . [with] a lot of words being said." A similar type of communication, or interaction, seems to be occurring in old as well as modern objects. A late eighteenth century pouch [Fig. 11(a)] seemingly exhibits "speech," or a communicating energy, flowing from the thunderbird's head in the form of a wavy line. Much interaction is readily noted in contemporary paintings too. In Fig. 30, Misshipeshu [the underwater panther] is communicating with the fish, "sending them . . . for the people to eat," as Peter said. There is also interaction shown in the Mide' robe [Fig. 14] through the joining of hands of the human figures. One senses the energy flow (or energy network) here, as well as in other artifacts, such as those with natural forms, and most of the contemporary paintings.

Relationships of part and whole are considered on another, or second level, the processes of a system. Interaction is a visual process in material objects (possibly creating a symbolic connection, as noted above), but it is also a systems process concept. Interaction is integral in human ecology theory. Margaret Bubolz, Suzanne Sontag, and Gerald Young address this concept, as well as that of part and whole relationships. Young says:

> Interaction creates new levels and establishes contact between levels; when contact has been made between two entities they enter into a new, a different relationship; a new connected system at a higher level is formed. A larger, more complex whole is created, a whole that itself must then be considered for more complete understanding. (1989, p. 27)

Fig. 37. Drum of wood and deerskin, c. 1840. Note. From The Art of the American Indian Frontier, by D. W. Penney, 1992, p. 252, Fig. 181. Copyright 1992 by the Detroit Institute of Arts. Reprinted with permission.

Fig. 38. Ottawa skin pouch, #NMMIII-M-2. Note. From "Bo'jou, Neejee!" Profiles of Canadian Indian Art, by T. J. Brasser, 1976, p. 96. Copyright 1976 by the Canadian Museum of Civilization. Reprinted with permission.

Young also suggests that in human ecology studies, the "arrow" [my term] of investigation (indicating reciprocal interaction) should move in both directions to complete and unify the whole; that is, the researcher should consider the arrow going not only from human to environmental components, but also from the environment and all organisms that impact on humans (Young, 1994, p. 316). The conceptual force of the word interaction is realized in its etymology: "inter" in Latin means among, between; futher back, from the Sanscrit word "antar," it means within. When combined with the word "act," deriving from the Latin verb meaning to do, there is the sense of reciprocal and mutual action between and among all elements and beings.

Bubolz and Sontag, in their development of a holistic human ecology theory, focus on process. The family, as an energy transformation (or process) system, in interaction with its environment, constitutes the family ecosystem. This ecosystem is comprised of three levels of organization or environments, each embedded in the other: natural physical-biological, social-cultural, and human-built. Organisms of all kinds and nature are a vital aspect to this system, interacting with each other and the various environments, thus creating an ecosystem. To me, this holistic ecosystem embodies Young's "inclusiveness" (the role of human ecology to be inclusive) of "parts *and* wholes," (1994, p. 317) for I see the arrows representing interaction in Bubolz and Sontag's ecosystem moving in *all* directions, as if they were vibrating strands of a web, or energy forces, or "lines of communication," as the Anishnabeg would say.

Interdependence, a type of interaction in which ecosystem components are mutually dependent on one another, is another aspect integral to the systems concept in human ecology (Bubolz & Sontag, 1993), as well as in native

beliefs. At its core, again, is the idea of relationships. As with interaction, the "inter" of interdependence affirms the dependence of parts and wholes on each other through relationships, through actions, exchange of resources, communications, and ties "between" and "within."

The thunderbird and panther are expressed within the material form of the human-built environment, and their meanings are internalized and externalized simultaneously into and through the social-cultural level. The essence of their beings derive from the natural physical-biological environment. The thunderbird and underwater panther are often worshipped and paid respect in a natural setting, their images being made of and on natural objects (for example, porcupine quills create an image on a black-dyed animal skin [Fig. 2, 11(b), 29, & 38], the dye made from a nut shell or tree bark). These spiritual beings permeate the natural world, from time immemorial. Although they form parts and wholes in each sphere of organization, they are embedded within and throughout all the environments. They are the embodiment of the idea of interaction, interdependence, and holism.

Other voices speak to the issue of holism and part and whole relationships. The anthropological theory of holism articulated by Kroeber has also been adopted and espoused by home economist Marjorie East, who felt that we must seek the whole or holism:

> The 'holistic principle' . . . stated by Dr. Kroeber . . . cannot be ignored. From whatever angle the nature of the human animal is approached, there is no denying that man's economic behavior, religious institutions, and other aspects of culture are deeply influenced by his psycho-biological characteristics. Similarly, man's body as a physical system is affected by his religion, his occupation, his family, and other social and cultural facts. (1973, pp. 25-26)

Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton (1981), in The Meaning of Things, sum up the role of the object (at the first level) and its relationship (at the second level) within these interactive spheres, when they say:

> Objects . . . serve to express dynamic processes within people, among people, and between people and the total environment. These processes might lead to either a more and more specific differentiation or increasing integration. (p. 43)

Additionally, their discussion of objects and their ability to "express dynamic processes" leads to a third level, the cosmic:

> Through time and space humans have used objects to express, or to explore, some of the purposes that animate their own individual lives, as well as those that bound them to or divided them from each other. These two dynamic centers, the personal and the social, are related . . . to a third center of purposes, . . . the *cosmic* level.
>
> In traditional societies this cosmic level includes the great natural phenomena that control the rhythm of life: the sun, the moon, the stars; water and fire; wind and earth. Every society has to make a believable connection between its own purpose and those that make the world go round. (1981, p. 38)

Csikszentmihalyi and Rochberg-Halton's addition of the third "center of purpose," the cosmic, brings us to the idea of a world view. In discussing this perspective, Young (1994) professes that the philosophy or world view known as human ecology is a "hydra-headed creation," but that it is also like the compass, with its thirty-two directions, "or ways to go" (p. 312). Human ecology seeks to be inclusive, to form linkages, to connect, unify, integrate--the human to its environment, and vice versa. This type of thinking (and being) has long been a vital force for Native Americans, for they seek to live their lives through an intimate connection to the land and to others on this earth (including the winged and four-leggeds, as the Anishnabeg would say). In relating human ecology's concept of reciprocal interaction to the Great Lakes Indians, there seems to be a strong force which unites and bonds all levels of relationships and environments, including the physical, spiritual and emotional. The thunderbird and panther express these environments: one represents unknown but seemingly beneficent forces within the air, on one hand, bringing the nourishing rains, and on the other, thunder storms

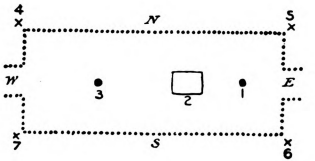
and lightning; the other, the panther, represents the unknown forces of water, a significant feature of the Great Lakes region. These energies were and still are fearsome, representing unknown dangers. Anishnabeg peoples of the past who depended so much on the water for their means of transportation, and often, food, were greatly affected by these forces.

In thinking of environments, I am reminded of another image, the house, as employed by human ecologist Carpenter. Carpenter's house represents the idea of human ecology and its purpose. In this role, the house becomes a symbol of many meanings, many layers, many connections. It is the separator and connector, relating inner and outer reality, which also extends to our relationship to our environment (1990, p. 60). As Carpenter so aptly writes,

> The logic of the house extends to the human body and its physical context in nature. These are also our homes. The body relates **inside** consciousness to **outside** matter. (p. 65)

Carpenter's house becomes the metaphor for how things relate to each other. One might compare this house to the Anishnabeg's Midewiwin lodge (the *Midewigan*), which is a "house" built for Mide' initiation rites [see Fig. 39]. This lodge, or house, becomes the entire universe for the initiate and practitioners. Within is erected the sacred cedar pole, the *axis mundi.* There is also, within, a circumscribed path to represent the path of life. Animals, or spirits, benevolent and malevolent, symbolizing those from upper and lower worlds, are within and without the doors (Hoffman, 1885-86).

Similarly, in relating the metaphor of house to this study of parts and wholes, its ability to connect one with many meanings, many layers, and many associations can be compared to those of parts and wholes. Just as the house



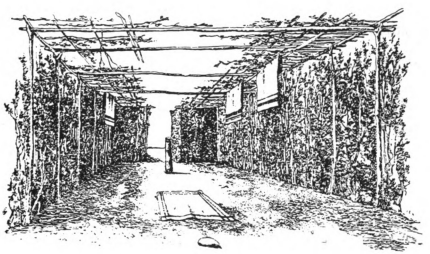


Fig. 39(a & b). Diagram and illustration of Midewigan of the first degree. At top (a), number 3 denotes the sacred cedar post; at bottom (b), the interior of this structure is shown; from Hoffman (1885-86).

connects and separates, so too do parts and wholes. Carpenter says that "like clothing, architecture separates . . . Myth and art are the only languages that reach across" (p. 66). The art (and related myth) of the image/symbol of an object connects one to the thunderbird and the panther in various ways and at various levels. The image is like the walls, roof, doors, and windows of the house, the connection between the inner and the outer; the self and other; earthly and spiritual.

In summation, the idea of parts and wholes is a dynamic means for considering relationships in this study. It is a vital part of the human ecological perspective, which is interactive, process-oriented, and inclusive.

Exloring the Evidence

Guided by the outline designed for the part-whole analysis of an artifact, and with information collected on the artifact data collection form and from interviewees, I was able to begin exploring ways in which parts and whole relationships were evident within the sample of artifacts collected. Grouping objects into sets and subsets facilitated comparison. See Table 5.

Table 6. Sets and Subsets Used to Compare Images

1. Objects exhibiting one side (pouches, bandolier bags, garters, headbands, paintings, and photographs, for example)

   - thunderbird(s) only
   - underwater panther(s) only
   - both thunderbird(s) and underwater panther(s)
   - thunderbird(s) and other image(s)
   - underwater panther(s) and other image(s)

2. Objects exhibiting two sides (woven bags, cradleboards, and shale discs, for example)

- thunderbird(s) on both sides
- underwater panther(s) on both sides
- thunderbird(s) and panther(s) together on side 1 and side 2
- thunderbird(s) on side 1; panther(s) on side 2
- thunderbird(s) on side 1; other image(s) on side 2
- underwater panther(s) on side 1; other image(s) on side 2
- thunderbird(s) and underwater panther(s) in many forms, one on each side
- thunderbird(s) and underwater panther(s) in many forms, used together on both sides

3. Objects exhibiting many sides (moccasins, drums, pipe stem and bowl, quillboxes, pottery, and sculpture, for example)

- one thunderbird
- one underwater panther
- thunderbird(s) and underwater panther(s) together
- thunderbird(s) and other image(s) together
- thunderbird(s) in many forms

Spatial presentations were also important to consider those that were horizontal; vertical; images in a pair; images in groupings of pairs; repetition of many individual images and forms; and joined images, such as joined hands or tails and joined portions of hourglass forms.

Most of the artifacts analyzed were objects exhibiting one side, with a large portion being clothing accessories (such as pouches and garters) and related items, and art objects such as paintings. In considering the subsets, one is presented often with the image or images of only one or the other of these beings (thunderbird or panther), suggesting the distinct power of the particular spirit portrayed. It is especially noticable in dress. Note the black-dyed pouch with the thunderbird that Reverend Peter Jones is wearing, as shown in the photograph [Fig. 35]. Even though he converted to Christianity, his heritage is strongly evident in his dress. This bag, as well as his headdress, refer to his given name, *Kahkewaquonaby*, which he elaborates on in his posthumously published book:

> Many . . . names are taken from the thunder gods, who . . . exist in the shape of large eagles. My name . . . belongs to this class, and signifies "Sacred Feathers." . . . These feathers plucked from the eagle represent the plumes of the supposed Thunder god, by which it flies from one end of the heavens to the other. When my name was given me, a bunch of eagles' feathers was prepared for the occasion. It was considered sacred, as it represented the speed of the thunder and the eagle. At the same time I received a war-club, to which they tied a little bunch of dried deers' hoofs, denoting the power with which I should be invested by the Thunder to become a brave and mighty warrior; and a little canoe, to show that I should have success in crossing the waters. (1861, p. 160)

The remaining objects exhibiting one side display both the thunderbird and underwater panther together, each a part within the whole. On occasion, two objects together will represent a whole. There is a set of needles of buffalo rib used in weaving mats [#82- 83] held together in a wooden case. Each one has a different spirit represented: one has wavy lines along its edge to denote the panther, while the other has incised tail feathers at the end to signify the thunderbird. Yet held in their case, together, as sacred objects are held in the pouch or Mide' bag, they, as parts, suggest the creation of a whole within the world of their wooden case.

Objects exhibiting two sides--primarily woven bags and the shale discs--included almost half with the thunderbird image on one side and the panther on the other side in naturalistic form. As expressed by Phillips, each side represents its power of the upper or under world, with the world of man between, represented by the objects held inside the bag (1989). The other largest part of the sample displays the panther and thunderbird together on one side (sometimes both sides) of an object, at times combining realistic and geometric representations together. Four objects have the thunderbird on one side and another image on the other side; one has geometric images of the thunderbird and underwater panther together on each side; and lastly, one

bag has a combination of naturalistic and geometric images of the panther on both sides of the bag.

Fifteen objects display more than one or two sides. Seven have either a single thunderbird or single underwater panther. Three represent the thunderbird in many forms, one of which is a piece of pottery. It has four types of images to represent the thunderbird: two styles in natural form of the entire image, feathers that stand for this being, and rain clouds (symbolizing its gift of rain to Mother Earth and and her inhabitants). Three objects display the thunderbird and another image. A modern example is a sculpture depicting the eagle on one side and an Indian on the other. They are joined, inseparably, one to the other, yet each is a part in this world, and in another. The last two in this category are of the thunderbird and underwater panther together, as portrayed on a modern quillbox [#120, Fig. 8(a)] and on a canoe.

In reviewing the artifacts according to spatial presentations, DeLong's discussion of Gestalt organizing factors and part modifiers assisted my analysis. The images are at times organized in horizontal layers, thus alluding to the cosmological layering of upper and lower worlds with Mother Earth between. Verticality is especially employed in finger woven bags and the mat, as if providing a picture frame within which to present these powerful beings. Many images are in pairs, always facing each other *afronte'*. When shown in layers of pairs, generally each pair is slightly different from the pair above or below (this is true for individuals, one above the other), seeming to denote different powers in different divisions of a particular space. As will be discussed in relationship to a quilt, there are a number of artifacts that repeat the same image in equal spacing and placement throughout, suggesting power in numbers or even, as DeLong says, "numerical dazzle" (1987, p. 103).

The last subset considered is those images that are joined, such as the humans in the skin Mide' robe [Fig. 14] ; and objects with rows of thunderbirds and humans with joined hands [#16, 64]; and those with rows of joined inverted triangle bases that are assembled on garters and bags opposite each other, creating a space between [#18, 55, Fig. 19]. They are parts that form a new whole, and as Mark says, the space between is to allow for the continuous flow of energy, power.

In conclusion, in the presentations of the thunderbird and underwater panther within the artifacts (excluding those of the Menomini), almost a third were of these two spiritual beings together. More than half, however, were of the thunderbird only, and the remaining were of the underwater panther without the thunderbird. One must conclude that the thunderbird, in its more beneficent role, is envisioned by the maker/user as forming a larger part of the whole, or of the needed power of the good (the thunderbird) over evil (the panther). Yet both images are created in presence together a third of the time, a significant number, suggesting the relationship that both are required in order to form the whole.

Exploring Part and Whole Relationships through Analysis of Artifacts and Stories

An Overview about Layers of Meaning

Before beginning an interpretation of an artifact using the perspective of part and whole relationships, ways of thinking about meaning should be briefly discussed. There appears to be is a tremendous amount of symbolism associated with most of the artifacts examined, from prehistoric objects to

those of modern times. Many of the informants with whom I talked intimated that an artifact has multiple layers of meaning. Is it possible to know what these meanings might be?

It seems that many meanings were purposefully hidden by the maker, such as those images on articles that were made as a result of a vision quest. Here the vision seeker wanted the artifact to remind him or her, only, of the precise nature of the vision, as an encapsulization of the spiritual visitation and dream given. The symbol represented the bodily presentation of that power given to the vision seeker alone. Thus, whenever the dreamer held or beheld the object, the inherent power was transferred to him or her.

Symbols also went through a series of abstractions, as suggested by Dewdney in his discussion of Mide' scrolls. "Symbol conversion" occurred over a period of time in the passing on and copying of these scrolls from master to student. Additionally, the Mide' master might employ various techniques to hide symbols, "should the secrecy of his information be uppermost in his mind . . . or to the ultimate device for misleading the uninitiated: substitution of the significant form by another completely irrelevant one" (1975, p. 18).

Images and their meanings were also hidden by the Anishnabeg during times of oppression, as noted in Mary's comments and those of others interviewed. In many cases the Anishnabeg were forbidden, often by law, to practice their beliefs, so images were incorporated within symbols acceptable to the dominant culture. For example, the red equal-sided cross symbolic of the fourth degree of the Midewiwin Society was converted to the Christian cross (Hoffman, 1885-86, McClurken, 1991). My findings concur with Ruth Phillips (1989), who notes that a distinct shift occurred in the Great Lakes region during the nineteenth century, from a style that had portrayed very clear

representational images of the thunderbird and underwater panther to one that took on "esoteric abstract patterning." As Phillips says, "It seems highly unlikely that the expressive meaning of Great Lakes Indian art could have changed so totally and so suddenly under the stimulus of new materials and stylistic approaches when we know that traditional religious ideas and cosmology were still retained" (p. 67).

There also might be other reasons for hidden images, such as actions that may have been subversive. Penney (1991) provides this perspective about hidden images:

> In the Great Lakes region, development of floral style as an expression of Indian ethnicity can be interpreted as a subversion of mission-taught embroidery, which was considered one of the domestic arts of civilization. As a cultural strategy, the reconfiguration of floral embroidery on the dress breech clout, for example, resembles *detournement* as conceived by the situationists, an international group of avant garde artists and social critics active between 1957 and 1968. *Detournement* refers to the deflection of institutional symbols of authority and power back upon themselves by means of extracting them from their habitual associations and "reassigning them to entirely new purposes." The term as originally conceived describes a strategy of social action . . . but the concept is pertinent to historical analysis of semiotic contention over the meanings of symbols. (p. 71)

The beaded waistband or sash #51 [Fig. 26(b)] appears to have hidden images of the thunderbird and the panther. Could these types of artifacts have been made and worn, for example, by students "under the nose" of the dominant white culture while at the boarding school? Obviously they were made by families living on the reservations, as Mary stated.

Despite the fact that many meanings have been purposefully hidden from the viewer, many were not. Such images were used as symbols of the very spiritual nature and power of the possessor of the artifact. The person who carried or wore such a potent object may have been a chief, a Mide' priest, or a wabeno, for example. Not only was spiritual power suggested to the

viewer, through the incorporation of a symbol such as the thunderbird or panther, but social and political status as well.

Many general ideas and beliefs were held by each of the tribes about the underwater panther and thunderbird, as discussed in Chapters 3 and 4. What do they tell us about the way Anishnabeg view their relationship to their world, their fellow beings and beings in the unknown worlds? One way of beginning to look at their beliefs and ideas about the known and unknown regions of life is to use a part-whole construct within the ecological framework (Young, 1989; Abler, 1992). When considering the Anishnabeg's world, we think of all aspects of this world--not only the physical, but the cognitive state, the spiritual, spatial, social, and material world. Traditional Native Americans separate things into three worlds: the upper, the lower, and the earthly, and yet, are able to synthesize the vast differences of these worlds into one cohesive entity in thought and being.

The images and ideas about the thunderbird and panther represent a dichotomy which is synthesized into a harmonious whole. In a sense, this harmonious whole is somewhat like the completeness of yin and yang, which the Chinese envision as two "primordial forces" that govern the universe, symbolizing harmony (Rossbach, 1983). Although they are opposites, yin being dark, passive, and female, and yang being light, active, and male, they are complementary opposites. One is necessary for the existence of the other, for without darkness, there would be no light, and without death, no life. The positive and negative forces of yin and yang act as magnets, pulling each other into an "endless sphere" or circle, which is continually interacting, seeking balance. Rossbach quotes Lin Yun, who explains the process of Tao, a Chinese philosophy and religious concept based on yin and yang:

> Yin and yang merge together into one--constantly creating Tao, the universal situation. The moon (yin) comes out and as it recedes, the sun (yang) rises, then sets equaling one day, and this moon-sun interplay goes on naturally, creating the Tao of heaven and earth. (1983, p. 20)

Also important in this concept is the idea that yin is not totally yin, nor yang totally yang. As noted in the drawing of this symbol [Fig. 40], dark yin has a portion of yang, represented by the white dot, and vice versa. Each is a part of the other, a part of the whole.

To relate this to the Anishnabeg symbols, the underwater panther is feline-like and has the attributes of a feline--nocturnal and with fangs to devour prey, as well as being independent and knowing, like the cat worshiped by the ancient Egyptians. This panther evokes the dark side of the whole--the part relating to the subconscious, the 'great unknown,' the womb, the waters of life, and regeneration. Anny says that *mishipishiew* is mischievous and powerful "like a cat":

> When powerful things are mischievous, it can be really disasterous to people, or you can take that mischievousness and turn it around. Those Thunderbirds are real big and real powerful and they are in charge of the sky. Those Bizhous [underwater panthers] are more like water and earth, and there's this tension between them all the time . . . they fight. There's places where you can see where they've fought around The Lake, but those are that tension between the thunderbird and that Bizhou.

The thunderbird, in contrast, is the embodiment of light, air, the heavens, angel of the skyworld who carries messages to and from the Great Mystery, who is the personification of strength and power for all good, whether in daily life or war, and is the one who strikes at evil where ever it is found. Its power and energy is found in the thunderclouds and brilliant lightning.

Fig. 40. Yin yang symbol (also referred to as Tai Chi).

Two examples demonstrate the synthesizing nature found in part and whole relationships. The first is an artifact, a fiber bag; the second is a story.

Analysis of an Artifact

In analyzing a finger woven fiber bag ca. 1850 [Fig. 41], I assessed the bag on a number of different levels. First, the purpose of the bag is to hold the sacred medicine bundle carried by a spiritual person such as a Mide' priest or practitioner, or possibly the medicine bundle and bag carried the sacred objects for the whole clan or tribe (Spindler & Spindler, 1971). Thus, the significance of the bag is that it holds a whole sacred world of spiritual power. It is therefore a whole. Yet the fiber bag is a part of that spirituality and sacredness by virtue of holding sacred items. It is a layer of importance. It is the outer layer, yet not the "final word," so to speak. It gives power to the

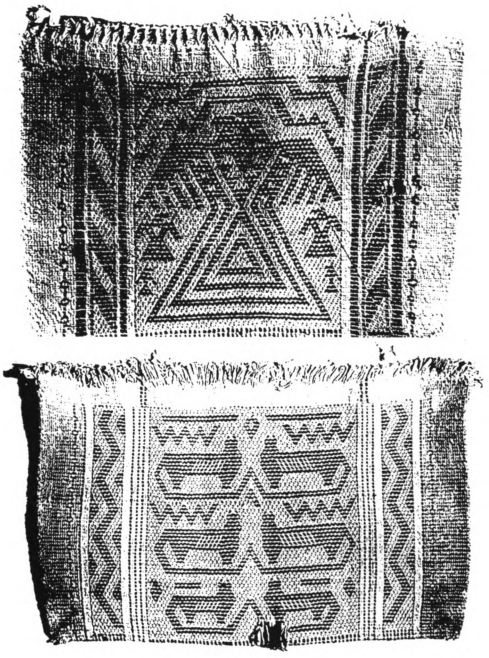


Fig. 41. Twined fiber panel bag. Photocopies courtesy of Department of Library Services, American Museum of Natural History, from neg. # 38270 & 29395. Reprinted with permission.

layers and objects within, and vice versa. The bag functions as a part and a whole.

Second, the bag can be viewed from both sides, or from one side. In each instance, it portrays a totality of experience. If one views the side with the large thunderbird, both upper and lower spiritual worlds are expressed. The power of the thunderbird emanates from its place in the upperworld just below the vault of heaven (the repeated arched lines above its head) [compare to the early discs, Fig. 10], its strong hourglass form, reemphasized by the repeated Vs and triangles within the tail and breast, as well as by the power lines flowing toward earth from its wings (Brasser, 1976; Cleland, 1985; Penney, 1992; Phillips, 1989; Wilson, 1982). There are two pair of successively smaller thunderbirds below the large one, which seem suggestive of additional layers of power or cosmic levels, or of future generations of thunderbirds and Anishnabeg (as stated by interviewees Ted and Yvonne), or of the role of thunderbirds as messengers (as related by Yvonne). The full power of this being is evident in this panel. Yet it is balanced by the positive vertical bands and lines on either side. Within the bands are large diagonal lines which possibly repeat and thus evoke an association with the diagonal "ribs" or skeletal parts of the panther on the reverse side of this bag (Wilson, 1982, p. 431). Conversely, or simultaneoulsy, they may reinforce the supernatural power of the thunderbird, repeating the power lines flowing from its wings. Also, on the far side of the panel are vertical lines joined to circles, the symbol for lines of communication--between all worlds, as explained by Mark, Peter, Anny, and others.

On the reverse side are three pair of underwater panthers, located below the surface of the lower world, as depicted by two bars at the top of the bag. (Wilson refers to Mallery, writing in 1893, who documented an Ojibwa

song chart which showed a feline with a bar across its neck, representing the water's surface, and thus, the rising of the panther (1982, p. 433); also see the panther with bar shown by Lyford [Fig. 42].) Each pair is slightly different from the pair located above, possibly suggesting different powers or levels of powers. The tails of each pair are joined, possibly symbolizing additional power, unity of mind and spirit, the importance of sharing, communal friendship, spousal union, and other ideas of wholeness and unity. The chests on the two upper pairs suggest the double or joined diamond form often seen associated with the panther, and seen in joined tails [for example, Fig. 11(b), bottom]. There are also three diamonds, two positive and one negative. These seem to indicate parts of that double diamond symbol, or reinforce the presence of the thunderbird which is also represented by a single diamond, an analog for its chest or heart. Above the panthers are joined Vs, which are possibly symbols of the V of the thunderbird, the panthers' horns, joined tails, or waves. Below the tails of the top pair is an inverted V form, possibly an abbreviated form for joined tails, or the inverted chest, "ribs," of the thunderbird (Wilson, 1982, p. 431). Note the diagonal "ribs" of the panther, attesting to its supernatural power. In addition, we do not see the "face" of the panther, as this would perhaps be too powerful, as suggested by Peter in our interview. All are parts of the whole depending upon the intent of the maker or the association understood by the viewer.

Again, the vertical panel lines, this time suggesting the negative image, underworld, and world of the panther, highlight the zigzag line of lightning, the symbol of the thunders. Conversely, the zigzag line could be the panther's symbol for water. Lastly, the vertical panel lines near the underwater panthers are light in comparison to their dark bodies, in opposition to the solid

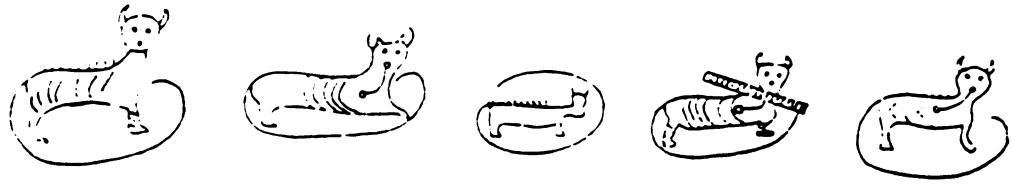


Fig. 42. Lyford's examples of panther images etched on birchbark; Plate 84; 1982.

dark lines close to the lighter or "airy" thunderbirds. Thus, power is balanced, synthesized.

Each panel is a whole, and each part of the panel suggests a whole--the world of each of these beings--and yet each is only a part of the whole bag, which in turn is only a part of the total complex of the medicine bundle, which is part of the everyday life of a Mide' priest. Thus we see the multiplicity of meanings which may be synthesized within one artifact.

Analysis of a Story

The underwater panther is generally thought of as a fearsome being with the power to create harm or evil or death. Its energy is feared and felt as being something unknown, equated with the powers of earth and water, and perhaps even the mystery of birth. It is also feline, with powerful tail and

claws--the dragon, the serpent. The image of all these various aspects are parts of the composite underwater panther in its wholeness. And as there is beauty in ugliness, there is also beauty in the panther whose being is rounded out to create a complete portrait--a whole. The underwater panther personifies regeneration, too. It is suggested in the bag just described, by the paired couples, and repetition of rows, but is also retold in the oral traditions of the Anishnabeg.

In 1926, an Ottawa referred to by Paul Radin as J Sh, told to him this story of the *makiwina*, a medicine man, and the water spirit (underwater panther):

> Copper can only be obtained by certain Indians by their priests who have the spirit power of calling up the water-spirit. Such a man is called *makiwina*. This is what he does:
>
> Two Indian mats are put near the place where the water spirit *(micipenabik)* is supposed to come ashore. Two virgins are placed, head to head, on these mats. Then the water-spirit comes out of the water and cuts off the heads of these girls. After this the *makiwina* addresses the water-spirit saying, "We want copper from your horns." The water-spirit then allows him to cut as large a part of his horns as his offering entitled him to. The *makiwina* takes a knife and tries to cut the horn. Only at the place that is supposed to indicate how much the water-spirit wishes to give of his horn, can the horn be cut. At that particular place the horn cuts as easily as butter.
>
> The part of the horn cut off is very hot and soft and is thrown on the sand and allowed to cool off. When it has cooled it is copper.
>
> When the *makiwina* is finished he spears the water-spirit in the side and takes a small amount of the blood which he places in a bottle made of horn.
>
> The girls who have been sacrificed have their heads placed on their trunk [neck]. Then some of the water-spirit's blood is smeared around their neck and they are restored to life. (Radin, 1926 field notes)

There are many possible layers of meaning operating in this story. First, in thinking of the panther, one is told of the power of its horns and the scales of its body, for they are the source of copper, precious to the Anishnabeg. On another level, the listener is aware of the total power contained within the entity of the underwater panther, for its blood has the

power to restore life. Additionally, one recognizes the power of the *makiwina*, who has not only the ability to call the panther, but to know precisely how to "mine" the copper from its horns. One is further amazed at the *makiwina*'s ability to control the panther again in order to take its blood, and he "intercedes" for the panther in restoring the lives of the maidens with its blood. Beyond the details of the story, we sense the strong tie between all the forces of life, between the Anishnabeg and the natural world below, above, and about them, as evidenced in the use of the bottle made of horn, and the copper from the earth (through the panther).

This tale portrays the interconnectedness, and the give and take between the world of humans and spiritual beings, the interplay of yin and yang. The underwater panther willingly gives its sacred copper to man in return for human sacrifice, and yet at the same time, the panther offers its precious blood to man to restore life to the maidens. The panther gives of itself completely for man's benefit. This story presents an aspect of the panther that is a part of its totality, and a part of the Anishnabeg world view at the time it was told to Radin. In addition, the mining of copper, with the overtones of its secretiveness and its preciousness to these peoples then, are a part of this totality, too.

Analysis of Contemporary Images

As well as storytellers and those who created artifacts in the past, today's Great Lakes Indian artists are exploring and presenting these powerful beings as they perceive them. Morrisseau and Dutcher have painted underwater panthers that are strong, bold, menacing-looking, and bristling [Fig. 30 & 32]. Their power is magnified by multiple "power lines" bursting forth from their

bodies. Peter Migwans' panther is at times white - perhaps the embodiment of evil like the white whale Moby Dick - and at times it is black, but always with its face away from the viewer, because who can paint total "ugliness" (as expressed by Peter)? Peter explains that because of the evil which it has done, the panther is now the servant of the Anishnabe people, bringing them the fish and sustenance of life. The panther, in one painting [see Fig. 9(a)], is depicted being lassoed (by a sinuous rope to discharge its "servant" role) by an Anishnabe wearing a thunderbird headdress. The thunderbird, in its role, assists the Anishnabe by protecting, giving wise counsel, and "striking at evil when it sees it" (as declared by Jay). Although the panther carried out wicked deeds, and a terrible fight ensued between the underwater panther and the thunderbirds, "seven miles of beautiful beach" are the result (as stated by Peter). All is not black and white, good and evil; one is a part of the other.

To add further to the meaning of the color white as used for the panther, Morrisseau says:

> This huge cat is believed by the Ojibway to be white in colour, with horns, and very powerful. It is believed to live in the water but why a cat lives in the water, or where it lived, is not known. There is another big demigod of the same cat family who was considered very evil, but was a spirit. If anyone dreamed of this big water demi-god at the time of fasting it was believed to bring misfortune, not to the dreamer but to his children. . . . This big water god, or spirit, knew both good and evil. It all depended on what kind of nature an Indian had. If he were good then he would have the power to do good. If he were bad then he was given power to do bad. But the true water god, the white one in colour, always brought good luck to all who respected him. (1965, p. 27)

As the color white is here associated with the underwater panther, black is a contingent symbol for the thunderbird to many Anishnabeg. Barbara, however, associates the colors of orange, yellow and red with the thunderbird, expressing its nature as "fiery," the highest expression for God. The colors "blue and purple would be too cool."

Artist Anny Hubbard's thunderbirds are the blackness of the thunder clouds and also the gold and silver of the energy of lightning. Her paintings of the thunderbird and panther project a playfulness, and yet a sense of awe and respect [Fig. 31]. Her images are frequently associated with the feminine (note "Woman Transforming into a Thunderbird," Fig. 43), and women are often in the water with the panther. There are undercurrents of tension in the upper and lower worlds, yet there is a tenuous balance in each picture involving both beings. As with most of these artists, there are lines of communication flowing between all the worlds, represented by lines that have elliptical or egg-shaped forms on them.

Yvonne Keshick's quillwork represents a connectedness to the totality of Anishnabeg thought. She uses only the natural elements of her world, the inner bark of the birch, the vanilla-scented sweetgrass, and the natural quills, undyed, of "brother" *gauk*, the porcupine. The artwork she prefers to portray are the animals, birds, and plants, plus the symbols, of the Anishnabeg world. Yvonne's quillbox top [Fig. 8(a)], with the thunderbird and panthers within the circle of the box, includes parts and wholes, as explained by the artist:

> I drew a circle [describing her design process] and put an eagle in. The eagle [representing the thunderbird] . . . [has] its wings folded around for our world, and the underwater panther is something that's in <u>our</u> world, even though we don't understand what it is. . . . Ottawas live in two worlds. We live in our world and "down-in-that-society" world. So, it's in our world. So the white interior on this box top is a symbol, like, for our world, the panthers' world. [It] can't "make" [give birth to] more panthers with only one, so they have to be a pair. One is larger than the other, too, and so I made a pair, a couple, so there could be more. And in making the pair, so there would be offspring, it's a symbol for us, teaching our younger children about the panther, even though we don't really understand it, telling them about it, and so that they will be familiar with it, or have some ideas on hearing about it. But it's important, I think.
>
> The eagle is out of respect, you know, for the respect that the <u>people</u> have for the eagle. The feelings--everybody thinks of the eagle as being strong, the most strong, powerful bird, and I wanted to show

this one kind of like protecting the panther, and because of the carried prayers.

Fig. 43. "Lady Transforming into a Thunderbird," by Anny Hubbard; photograph by the author; from the Collections of the Jesse Besser Museum.

Results of Analysis

The thunderbird and the underwater panther are each a part of the whole. The Anishnabeg world view is one in which there is a community of believers and a community of spiritual beings, as I envision it. This thought stems from looking at the early Mide' robe [Fig. 14] with its symbolism of the panthers in the center, and layers of other symbols extending outward, including two sets of the sacred number four, until one arrives at the humans, with hands joined, surrounding, and yet a part of, this "community."

In looking, for example, at subsets of artifacts that have rows of thunderbirds or panthers, or large groupings of them, one is impressed with the suggestion that there may be one master Thunderbird or Underwater Panther, but there are many thunderbirds and underwater panther powers in

the universe. As portrayed by Alice Fox's quilts [Fig. 25 & 36(b)], where there are rows of thunderbirds, one is struck with the comparison of these to her story about the cultural hero, Nanabush, who joins the flock of thunderbirds flying east, and his experience with them [see Alice Fox's story in Appendix B (a)]. There is the implication that we are all a part of the whole, a part of the community. Humans are only one of many beings, animal, vegetable, mineral, or spiritual. We are part of the whole. We must therefore share and co-operate within this whole. That is the power behind the persistence of these symbols, and the power in the beliefs and traditions of these cultures.

In summary, artifacts, as well as stories and myth, provide a wealth of meaning, which can be investigated through the construct of part and whole relationships. By analyzing sets and subsets through the incorporation of data provided by primary sources, as well as secondary sources, one can begin to "consider the multiplicity of meanings" operating, and begin to appreciate the richness of symbolic meaning. In a plea to fellow human ecologists and academics about the proper training of future human ecologists, Young succinctly sums up my viewpoint when he declares that students must be taught "a different 'mind set' or world-view: a shift from 'parts' to dialectic consideration of parts *and* wholes . . ." (1994, p. 317). One must consider all.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This chaper includes a summary as well as a discussion of the conclusions and implications of the study. The thesis closes with a list of recommendations for further study.

Summary of the Study

The study of the thunderbird and underwater panther, symbols used by the Great Lakes Indians of Michigan, evolved from the realization that these images had not been studied over time, particularly with relation to their use and meaning within contemporary cultures. This study was undertaken to document and examine artifacts that incorporated these images, as well as to determine changes in form and meaning, if any, as well as to relate them to cultural influences. In addition, the study explored the human ecological concept of part and whole in relation to these images.

The Ojibwa, Ottawa, and Potawatomi were prominent tribes in Michigan at the time of European contact in the seventeenth century. They called themselves Anishnabeg, and were joined through bonds of customs, dialect and kinship. Their subsistence activities were tied to the environment, with hunting and fishing predominating in the northern areas, while farming of corn, squash, and beans was a way of life further south. With the arrival of Europeans, their lives changed significantly. Missionaries sought religious

conversions; and the constant change of politics of the region, as well as nations, affected their lives. Much of their land gradually lost, as well as many of their customs and traditions.

Objective 1: The first objective was to examine and document the material culture of the Great Lakes Indians (the Ojibwa, Ottawa, and Potawatomi) which contain images of the thunderbird and underwater panther.

Data for the study were gathered through primary and secondary written sources, as well as through the examination of artifacts located in museums and private collections. Additionally, members of these three tribes were interviewed for information relating to these images.

An artifact data collection form was designed based on a model developed by Fleming and another by Smith. An outline was designed to assist in the analysis of part and whole relationships, a portion of which was incorporated into the artifact data collection form. I developed the artifact form from the object catalogue forms used in the Historic Collection of the Department of Human Environment and Design in the College of Human Ecology and the Michigan State University Museum, incorporating details for analysis from these sources as well as from Fig. 1. The use of the artifact form was very helpful in the final analysis of the artifacts. During the documentation visit, it was at times cumbersome to try to record all information observed about the object. At times, only a few notes were made regarding parts and whole relationships during the visit; however, more in-depth analysis was completed later. During the study, the Munsell color system was used, but it became unmanageable due to the extensive use of colors in some items; instead, I looked for dominant colors and "patterns" of color use.

The artifacts were organized through time by category: clothing and accessories, textiles, other household items, ceremonial objects, art, weaponry, photographs or postcards, and travel related artifacts. Artifacts were organized within five time periods for analysis to determine changes in form and usage, if any, and influences related to these. Additionally, a special detailed analysis of bags and pouches was completed, demonstrating the usage of the artifact study form.

After the analysis of artifacts, the objects were organized into other groupings of sets and subsets for analysis of part and whole relationships. Data from all the various sources of the study were incorporated into the analysis.

Objective 2: The second objective was to determine when changes in form and function of these images occurred.

The study revealed that the forms of the images remained consistent over time. In comparing contemporary forms with those found on the shale discs and rocks from the pre-contact period, stylistic attributes remain the same or similar. Variations occur with each artist, but the style of the thunderbird and underwater panther on contemporary forms contain the same elements as the early forms. Variations occur by artist through personal re-interpretation of the form that are divergent from the traditional form. Variation in form represents integration through acculturation into a new form more representative of modern society.

Throughout all time periods, the thunderbird was represented in a realistic form, although the number was limited after the Indian Removal Act of 1830, until the 1970s. There is no evidence of the underwater panther in realistic form in the material culture examined during the time period of 1930-1969, except the two paintings by Ojibwa artist Morrisseau toward the end of

this period. This observation suggests a gradual visual disappearance within the material culture of this symbol due to its connotation as malevolent by non-Indians. Also suggested is the loss of meaning of these symbols over time, when traditions were cut off or curtailed. However, with the renewal and revival of tribal traditions, these images are becoming more prevalent and the underwater panther is reappearing.

Objective 3: The third objective was to analyze changes in the form and function of images in relation to cultural influences.

A study of the artifacts revealed that clear representational images were made during the pre- and early-contact periods. Contact with peoples from European cultures resulted in a lessening of representational images and greater use of geometric figures. This is perhaps the result of the white culture's viewing the thunderbird and underwater panther, and other native beliefs, in a negative way. Missionaries wished to convert Anishnabeg to Christianity and replace their images and symbols with Christian ones. Peter Jones (1861), for example, a Missasauga Indian minister who had converted to Christianity, writing in the 1850s, implies that native beliefs were considered pagan.

The use of geometric styles by the Anishnabeg, particularly during the period beginning with the reservation system, seems to suggest that these symbols were being purposefully hidden. This was the result of cultural persecution, through loss of homeland, values, and traditions. Also, as suggested by Penney (1991), the incorporation of images within geometric styles and floral patterns was an expression of *detournement,* a kind of rebellion against learning embroidery work under the boarding school system, as well as a rebellion against all other treatment that can be imposed by one culture upon another.

Also evident is the change in material culture itself. Very early images that remain have been incised or painted on objects such as stone. Other remaining objects from the early periods after contact (1780-1830) have used or incorporated these images on natural artifacts such as skin and other animal parts, wood, stone, and vegetal fibers (woven mats and fingerwoven bags, for example). These objects soon changed to include man-made materials such as manufactured cloth, beads, thread, silver, and tin. Over time, black-dyed skin pouches changed to cloth bandolier bags; and mats made from vegetal fibers and blankets made of furs evolved into quilts made from cloth. The form of the images was changed somewhat due to the change from natural materials such as porcupine quills and moosehair to the use of beads. The use of these new materials in preference to the old suggest a greater ease in use by the maker of the object, as well as trade occurring for these items.

Viewpoints and related meanings about the thunderbird and underwater panther, and associated symbols, were compared using the data collected in the interviews. These were used to develop major themes and findings within contemporary Anishnabeg thought. The use of interviews as a means for gathering data provided consistent information about the loss of tribal knowledge, as well as some loss of meaning about these two images, due to the curtailed teaching of heritage and traditions to the younger generations by the older generation. Stories and myths were also collected through written sources and interviews to add to the data.

Conclusions about the meanings of these symbols is that they are varied and wide. The thunderbird is generally viewed as being benevolent, while the panther is considered malevolent. For meanings related to those symbols of the pre-contact period, one can only surmise. Post-contact meanings can be determined in part through ethnographic sources and a few writings by the

Anishnabeg themselves during the nineteenth century. There seems to be a significant loss of meaning from the post-ethnographic period of approximately the 1930s to the 1970s, when traditions were not passed from one generation to the next, except in limited degrees. Within the contemporary period, however, meanings are being rediscovered. Those that were passed on through traditional means are resurfacing, and new meanings are sought and developed to bridge the past with the present.

Objective 4: The last objective was to explore the human ecological concept of part and whole relationships as related to the Great Lakes Indians' use of these images in their material culture.

The exploration of part and whole relationships through the literature of human ecologists and textile scholars led me to the development of an analysis on three levels, proceeding from the concrete to the abstract. At the first level, the material object or designed form is investigated for relations of parts to whole; then, the relationships are analyzed in terms of components and processes of a system; and finally, they are considered in terms of a world view. One level, many levels, or all, may be considered for study.

Findings related to the relationship of part and whole in the study revealed that a continuing world view has been carried forward from generation to generation. It is based in the belief that all connections to all life (human, animal, plants, earth, other-than-human) are important; and that the beliefs are passed down to provide a vision to those following in the future.

An additional finding resulting from the use of the outline designed for the study of part and whole relationships was its adaptability to the study of symbols. It provides a clear methodology for inquiry into relationships, leading to discovery of multiple levels of meaning. As such, it can add to the

body of knowledge related to part and whole relationships that is being investigated within the human ecological paradigm.

Lastly, the study revealed that the examination of symbols and relationships of part and whole are significant to:

- all humans, as a means of exploration of relationships within one's culture and those of others
- provide a way of sharing attitudes and insights about ways of living
- promote diversity while acknowledging similarity of human experience
- the realization that symbols are nonverbal communicators that connect peoples and people to their environment.

Recommendations for Future Studies

Throughout this study, many more questions were raised, perhaps, than were answered. Some areas that need further exploration are:

- the study of the additional geometric designs found in Great Lakes Indian material culture and their relationship to these two images and/or their cultures.
- a comparative study of the meaning of imagery to men (who receive dream/vision) to those of women, who are the makers of the image; the meaning to men who both dream and make images; the meaning to women who both dream and make images. It is interesting to conjecture as to women's role in the control of the image/symbol, or the types of images made, since women made the textiles. As Dorothy Burnham comments about design motifs on painted caribou-skin coats which she studied:

> Less than half of these [designs] might be considered of significance worthy of a hunter's dream. When the decoration of the coats is carefully analysed it seems likely that one or perhaps two main motifs were dictated by the man, while the rest was left up to the woman. (1992, p. 2)

- a study of other images/symbols of the Great Lakes Indians such as the cross, circle, and animals (the deer and the bear, for example).
- a study of images worn on pow-wow regalia by participants, as well as those images found on other material culture artifacts at pow-wows.
- a contemporary cross-cultural comparison of the thunderbird and underwater panther, within various tribes across the United States.
- a comparison of symbols associated with the thunderbird and the underwater panther to those of other cultures around the world.

Epilogue

A major impact of the study was the process of interviewing Great Lakes Indians, which led to a greater understanding, as well as a deeper response to spirituality. Meeting and talking with Anishnabeg elders, leaders, administrators, and artists was fulfilling and rewarding. They were sincere in wanting to help me understand their culture, and in describing their viewpoints and experiences. Unforgettable memories will remain of each talk, of a trip to the sacred Agawa Rock, and the sharing of sacred experiences. There is the realization that I have only begun to understand the thunderbird and underwater panther as beings which are a part of the Anishnabeg culture.

Larger issues continue to come to my mind: the importance of each person, family, group, tribe, culture as being a separate, distinct part or entity, yet being a part of the whole of humanity, which in turn is only a part of the whole of existence here on earth.

Rethinking the worth and meaning of a study to the investigator, I have one constant thought that pervades all others as to the meaning of this endeavor to me personally: I have been transformed. From my initial acquaintance with the subject matter in an introductory archaeology class, to my first glimpse of the thunderbird and underwater panther on a Great Lakes Indian woven bag, I have been enthralled. Little did I know the extent of time I would be involved in visiting museums and collections to discover if there were any more artifacts to be found. And each time I came face to face with one, I was enchanted all over again. But most enjoyable, most illuminating, most transforming, for me, was my interactions with the peoples of the Three

Fires. My memories will never leave me. And the very spiritual places I visited will forever have a strong draw, calling me to return. I am no longer the same person who started out on this journey. I suspect that this type of change in the researcher is an integral part of the process, for as human ecologist Gerald Young has said, "Human ecology is transcendental . . . [and it] acknowledges the mystical or spiritual" (1991, pp. 14, 19).

GLOSSARY

animiki - thunder beings

atiso'kanak - spiritual beings, "grandfathers," who are major characters in myths and sacred stories

jessakkid - a seer or prophet whose power was bestowed by the thunderbird

kitchimanitou - the great spirit, the highest power, the Great Mystery

manitou - spiritual beings or powers

mashkikikewinnini - medicine man, a specialist (often a woman) with detailed knowledge of plants and herbs

megis, migis - sacred shell, small and white, used in the Midewiwin ceremony to "shoot" the initiate and infuse him or her with power and immortality

michipishiew (misshipeshu, bizhou, micipijin, mishi-peshu) - various names for the underwater panther

midewigan - ceremonial lodge of the Midewiwin

midewiwin - The Grand Medicine Society, devoted to perpetuating knowledge and skill related to herbal healing, and the continuation of teachings in spiritual life

pawagan - means "peace pipe"

pawaganak - spiritual beings who possess great powers, sought through dreams or a vision quest

pickos'an - Potawatomi name for a sacred bundle which holds sacred objects

pimadaziwin - the central goal in life, to live it to the fullest, seeking longevity, health, and freedom from misfortune

pinji'gusan - the Mide' sack, usually of otter skin, which held the *megis*

shaman - a spiritual leader or practitioner who mediates between humans and the supernatural, often through a vision or trance

wabeno - "men of the dawn" or "eastern men;" a spiritual specialist who obtained power from a dream vision

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

(a) Letter to Museums and Collections

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
MUSEUM

Date

Director/Curator
Dearborn Historical Museum
915 Brady St.
Dearborn, MI 48124

Dear Director/Curator:

In cooperation with Michigan State University Museum and the Department of Human Environment and Design, I am enclosing a questionnaire requesting information about your collection. This information is for a thesis project concerning the material culture of the Great Lakes Indians. I am a graduate student at Michigan State University and am investigating clothing, textiles and other artifacts of the Great Lakes Indians which incorporate symbols known as the Thunderbird and Underwater Panther.

For the past two years I have been working with the historic collections in the Department of Human Environment and Design, and am currently working on a collaborative project with Michigan State University Museum. My responsibilities include accessioning, cataloguing, exhibiting, conserving and storing costume, textiles and other historic objects. My experience in working with historic collections has made me aware of the importance of not only the care and preservation of these objects, but the importance in understanding the particular history of an artifact in relating its meaning to its culture. Because of my interest in history, material culture, and the culture of the Great Lakes Indians, I am studying iconography in their material culture, and its meaning and relationship to their world view.

As I am investigating the Thunderbird and Underwater Panther, I have included a few photocopies of representational images which may be of help. I would appreciate your filling out the questionnaire and returning it to me in the enclosed, self-addressed stamped envelope by date.

Thank you in advance for your help and cooperation in this project.

Sincerely,

(Mrs.) Marie A. Gile

East Lansing, Michigan USA 48824-1045 (517) 355-2370 FAX (517) 336-2946

(b) Survey Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE

ARTIFACTS WITH COMPLETE OR PARTIAL IMAGES (SYMBOLS) OF THE THUNDERBIRD AND/OR THE UNDERWATER PANTHER

Your Institution:_____

Your Name and Title:_____

Address:_____

Phone/Fax No.:_____Date:_____

1. Does your collection contain any artifacts that are designated as American Indian or Native American that contain possible images of the Thunderbird or Underwater Panther?

Yes_____ No_____

Can you determine the origin of most of the pieces?

Yes_____ No_____

2. Does your collection have any artifacts specified from the Great Lakes area that incorporate the image (or possible image) of the Thunderbird (a birdlike image) and/or the Underwater Panther (cat, fish, or snake image)?

Yes_____ No_____

3. If yes, the approximate number of artifacts that you have:

Textile (for example: mat, wall hanging) _____

Clothing_____

Other_____

Survey Questionnaire (cont'd).

4. If the above answers are not known, may I visit your collection to search your card catalogue and storage area for Great Lakes Indian artifacts with these images?

Yes_____ No_____

5. May I examine and photograph your collection's examples?

Yes_____ No_____

6. What procedure would you like me to use to schedule an appointment?_____

_____

_____

7. Do you have any suggestions for individuals in your area whom I may contact who might have additional information, such as private collectors of Native American objects? Please include their names and addresses.

_____

_____

_____

Thank you again for your time and interest in answering these questions, and in assisting me in my study. Please return this questionnaire by **date** in the enclosed envelope.

Marie A. Gile

Michigan State University Museum

East Lansing, MI 48824-1045

Phone: (517) 355-2370; FAX (517) 336-2846

(c) Artifact Study Worksheet

Checklist:

Type of Artifact_____ Date_____

Museum/Collection_____ Cat. No._____

Contact person_____ Phone/Fax_____

Dimensions:

Object_____

Major motif_____

Secondary motifs_____
Other motifs_____
Border(s)_____

Materials:

Outer_____Inner_____
Other_____ Motif (if different from basic material)_____
Trim (added details)_____

Color(s): Mjr. motif_____ Secondary motifs_____
Other motifs_____ Borders_____
Background_____ Other_____

Motif (side one):

Style: Realistic_____ Geometric_____ Other_____
Details: Head_____ Tail_____
Body (Outer)_____ (Inner)_____
Other features_____

Motif (side two/other):

Style: Realistic_____ Geometric_____ Other_____
Details: Head_____ Tail_____
Body (Outer)_____ (Inner)_____
Other features_____

Construction:
Method of seaming_____ Type of thread_____

Artifact Study Worksheet (cont'd).

Finishing/Edges:_____Motif application_____

Workmanship_____Signs of Wear_____

History:
Place of Origin:_____Date of Origin_____

Maker:_____Purchaser/Collector_____

Part/Whole:
1. Smallest whole element:_____
2. Relationship to the next largest whole_____
3. (Ditto)_____
4. (Ditto)_____
5. (Ditto)_____
6. (Ditto)_____
7. (Ditto)_____
8. (Ditto)_____
(continue on separate sheet if needed)
Relationship of pair(s)_____
Relationship of mjr motif to other motifs_____
Spatial arrangement of mjr lines_____
Rel'nship of top to middle to bottom_____
Rel'nship of side 1 to other side(s)_____
_____
Rel'nship of materials to environment_____
Rel'nship of artifact to worldview_____

Other Part/Whole Observations (extent of use of thunderbird/underwater panther on artifact, etc.):

_____

_____

_____

Add'l observations: _____

_____

_____

_____

References:_____

_____

_____

(d) Interview Collection Form

Name and age (or birthdate)

Tribal affiliation or ethnic background

Number of years lived at present residence

Information known about the images of the Thunderbird and Underwater Panther (photographs of examples of some objects incorporating them available to show)

First awareness of the images

Usage and meaning of these images in:

- Parents home as a child and/or today
- Own home
- Home of friends as a child and/or today
- Other situations

Items made within the home using these images/symbols

Personal meaning of the images to interviewee

Objects or items of clothing with these images owned by interviewee, and how they are used

Stories or tales about the Thunderbird and/or the Underwater Panther

Others who could tell me more about these images/symbols

(e) Interviewee Consent Form

CONSENT FORM RELATING TO THE STUDY OF
THE THUNDERBIRD AND UNDERWATER PANTHER
IN THE AMERICAN INDIAN CULTURES
OF THE GREAT LAKES

I hereby authorize Marie A. Gile to record on tape, in photograph(s), or otherwise any information that I may provide that relates to the Thunderbird or Underwater Panther as a part of the culture of the American Indians of the Great Lakes region in story or otherwise. I also give her permission to publish quotations or summaries of quotations, without my being named, from the above information in her Master's thesis being written through the Department of Human Environment and Design, College of Human Ecology, Michigan State University at East Lansing, Michigan. In addition, I understand that the information may be used in future journals, newspaper articles, or in educational materials.

The tape or tapes and the accompanying transcript are the result of one or more recorded, voluntary interviews with me. Any reader should bear in mind that the transcript being read is of my spoken, not my written, word and that the tape, not the transcript, is the primary document.

I understand that my answers will be kept strictly confidential and used only for the purposes described above and that I have the right to withdraw from this project at any time. I also understand that my participation will involve one, or possibly two, meetings of approximately thirty minutes to an hour. I reserve the right to review the transcript of this conversation before future use. Yes___ No___ I agree that the tape(s), transcript, and/or photograph(s) may be released to the Michigan State University Museum's Traditional Arts Archives. Yes___ No___

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Understood and agreed to:

Interviewer: _____ Date: _____

Accession Number: _____

APPENDIX B

SELECTED STORIES, FOLKTALES AND MYTHS

(a)

Nanabush and his grandma, they lived together, and they were very happy. The grandmother took care of her grandson and taught him about life--everything that she knew. And one day the grandmother said, "The thunderbirds are coming to visit us. They're on their way east and they're stopping by here. So Nanabush, just a teenager, he was so happy to think that they were going to have visitors. So when the thunderbirds arrived, they heard a rumble like the thunder. And they arrived with all their feathers. And they had drums.

Nanabush said, "You're going east? I'd like to go with you. Take me."

The older thunderbird said, "Oh, I don't think you can follow the rules. I don't think it would be a good idea." So finally some other thunderbird said, "Oh, yes, I think he'll listen. I think he's a good boy. He'll listen." Then finally the leader said, "O.K. You follow the rules. If you don't, you're going to come tumbling out of the sky."

And Nanabush was frightened. "I'll follow the rules carefully."

"And the thunderbird ahead of you--where he steps, that's where you step."

And they also gave him the drum. And they said, "When you hear drumming, and the ones around you are drumming, you go easy on your drum, because if you go too loud, you'll scare the peoples down below on the earth."

And they left, and he hugged his grandma bye-bye. And she said, "Be good. Listen. Do what you're told." And away they went. Sure enough, he -- the big thunderbird, the older ones first, and then the second group, and then he was in the third group - the younger ones. And later he heard the first group, the older ones, they were drumming. And then the second group were drumming, and then the younger ones. And he followed the rules. Finally again, they were drumming again. Same thing. Finally the third time, the older ones were going louder, and the middle ones - they too were going louder, and the younger ones were going louder, and they were just having a grand time. And he was. He didn't care. He forgot about he is not supposed to drum loud. They had told him, "Drum easy, don't scare the people down below." And he was drumming and drumming away with all his might and the people down below were so frightened. Oh, they were so scared. And all of a sudden, looking up at the sky, they saw something coming out of the sky. It was coming down. The thing fell into the marsh. So they all gathered. "Let's go see what that thing [was that] fell in the marsh." They went over there and out of the mud came Nanabush. His eyes were blinking, and he was just full of mud, mud - his eyes were just full of mud. And the people said, "Oh, we might have known. We should have known it was Nanabush. We know the way he is." I guess when he was out with his friends, he was really terrible. [6]

6. Story as told to author by Alice Fox in Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, September 7, 1994.

(b)

Well, this guy, at one time, he was an enemy of the native people, and he went into villages and devoured some people. So the people got together and said "We've got to do something." So they made council and they said "Well, this has got to be dealt with." So they had a meeting and they got the thunderbirds at that time to convene and sit in on the meeting. So they told them what this guy was doing, this panther, or Mishmishshu, or how they say it in so many words, or dialects. And they told the thunderbirds. And the thunderbirds said, "Well, O.K., we'll have to observe what he is doing."

And so it came again that he emerged again from the waters--and this was in Georgian Bay! So he went in and got a couple of human beings there, the Nishnabe. And then the thunderbirds saw that, and then came to the next council and said, "Yes, we know what he has done. We know that he has to be terminated, or dealt with."

And so, they made a pact there (or something), that when this guy strikes again--that they will come from the water--that they were going to deal with him. So, he did come out again, and the thunderbirds were all ready for him; and they started a fight which lasted seven days, mind you! Seven days! And that's why today, in Georgian Bay--(There were all rocks all around that bay before the fight.)--after the fight, we have a beach there now called Wausaga Beach. It's all seven miles of sand. That's where the fight took place. It was rocky before. It was all rocks. There was no sand. After that fight took place, there was seven miles of beautiful beach. And that's why we have that beach there today because of that fight between these--the thunderbirds. And so this beast here got defeated. And they said--(They were going to kill him.)--

but they said, "No, we'd better not," because they didn't believe in killing, so, even though this guy did that; they still didn't do it. They still didn't kill him.

They told him instead, "You're going to go back. Your sentence is, you're going to go back into the lake. You'll be taking care of the Great Lakes, especially Lake Superior, and especially Georgian Bay, and Lake Michigan, Lake Huron. You'll be all over. You'll be busy the rest of your eternity. You'll feed these people you demolished. You'll go all through the villages all around the Great Lakes and you'll control the fish. You'll bring them the fish. You'll send the fish up in the fall to feed the people. You know, you'll do all that. And you'll send them the whitefish up in the spring to feed them again. And you'll do all that. And you'll control the waters--that they don't go over and they don't go under--that they will always remain stable. Like going in the whirlwinds or whatever, you'll never raise a ruckus, and you'll keep the Great Lakes always at an even keel. (This sentence was a long sentence!) And later on you might--you <u>might</u> (they told him)--you might get respect, because of the deeds you have done. And the bad deeds you have done will maybe, later on in eternity, will be forgotten because of the good deeds you have been charged with to do."

This is why I've got good respect for this guy. I know what he's done, but he does that today. I see that--the rainbow. I see the salmon, and all these other things come up rivers. And whitefish come up rivers. The suckers come up rivers at a certain time of year. He sends them there for the people to eat. So the people can salt. So the people can dry, or whatever. This is the guy that does that. He controls the Great Lakes.[7]

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[7]Story as told to author by Peter Migwans in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada, September 8, 1994.

(c)

A man and his wife lived in a wigwam way out in the woods. She was expecting a child. He went out hunting and when he came back a few days later he found part of the wigwam torn down and hairs and pieces of buckskin dress lying on the ground. And he saw great big man tracks. Then he knew his wife was eaten up.

He went out again hunting and when he came back he saw little wee tracks all around by the ashes of his fire, baby feet. Another time when he came back he saw a little wee baby standing under the bunk, and he tried to catch him but he couldn't. He grabbed again, and spoiled him as soon as he touched him, and tamed him down. Then he saw another one and grabbed him too. He tried to feed them with what he ate, meat stuff, but they would only eat broth. They could talk like big people, though.

This man didn't know what to do with the babies. Next time he was going hunting, they said, "You must make us each a bow and arrow so we can hunt with you." He thought they just wanted to play with him inside the wigwam, so he made them some little bows and arrows. When he came home he found them standing on the edge of the hearth, and saw little sticks stuck in the ground with snakes' hearts on them. "Where did you get those hearts?" he asked them.

"Oh, we went down to the big pond and found the snakes there and killed them and took their hearts out."

He said, "You must never go down to the big pond or you'll get killed."

And they said, "Oh, no, nothing can kill us." That made him a little scared.

The next time he came back he found them playing around a big heart on the ground by the edge of the ashes. He asked them where they got the heart. "Oh, we went way down a piece, looking for the one who killed our mother, and we went and got his heart."

"How did you do that?"

"When we went looking for him, a Windigo must have smelled us. He caught us and took us to the big wigwam where all the Windigoes lived. They threw us in a kettle to make soup out of us, and then went to sleep, waiting for it to get done. When the water was nearly boiling we took our bows and arrows and shot all the Windigoes. Every time we shot a Windigo the arrow bounced back from his body, and we shot it at another. When they were all dead we cut out the heart of the one that killed our mother and brought it back."

The man was kind of scared, looking at that big heart and the little babies, and thinking how they ate snakes and blood, like weasels. So he asked some other Indians to get rid of them or to kill them. But the babies knew what their father was doing, and they shot through the chimney hole in the top of the wigwam when the Indians started coming, and they killed them all, except one to tell the story, I guess. Every time they shot the arrow, it came back.

Then they asked their dad why he told the other Indians to come and kill his little boys. He said, "You're getting too dangerous."

They said, "Well, you'll have to go now. Our mother was killed but we're not going ever to die." (All the guts that the Windigo cleaned out of that woman and threw under the bunk had the babies.) "You're going to hide in the brush, and just come out once in a while looking for something to eat, and then you'll hide again." So their dad flies out like a bluejay. And it's true, you don't hardly ever see a bluejay flying in the open; they're always flitting around the brush.

Before he flew out, the little boys told their father, "You'll hear from us one of these days. We'll be up in the sky, and when you see the lightning streaks, that'll be us." Then the little boys turned around, and they had nice little blue wings on, and they flew up into the sky. The Thunders that you hear are those two little fellows. You never hear of Thunders striking Indians, but they strike white people's homes. There was a man working at the mill in Garden, and he swore at the Thunders, and they struck him. He was just like a rag, no bones at all. Old man Feathers told me that.

I get scared when it thunders. Best thing to do is burn tobacco and say, "That's for you, granddad." They'll protect you. My grandmother told me never to mention the Thunders or say any sassy word at them when you hear them.

I've seen pictures of those little Cupids, with their little bows and arrows and little wings. I bought one. Grandma wouldn't tell me a lie--I don't think--but that's how I know her story is true. How did white folks know about the Cupids to make those pictures?[8]

(d)

Once a number of Indians were walking along the shore of a lake with a girl who was very poor and sick. The others said, 'She can't stand the journey, let us give her to the water-spirit. So the girl undressed herself and sat close by the shore. Then the man who had the power to call the water-spirit called him. When the water-spirit came, all that one could see was water flying in all

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[8]A story told to R. Dorson by Mrs. Joseph Feathers. Note. From Bloodstoppers and Bearwalkers: Folk Traditions of the Upper Peninsula, (pp. 54-56) by R. M. Dorson, 1952, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Copyright 1952 by Harvard University Press. Reprinted with permission.

directions. Soon the girl disappeared. Then the wakima took his knife and sliced down the horn of the water-spirit. The knife would only go as far as the water-spirit would allow. Then it would turn and you could cut off the portion of the horn granted. You could make whatever you wanted of it--copper implements, medicines, etc.--the scales of the water-spirit could also be scratched off and medicine made of them.

Finally, when the water-spirit returned to the water the girl was seen lying unconscious. With the scales of the water-spirit she was restored to consciousness and to health.[9]

(e)

Legend of the Motchi Manitou

The Indians of L'Arbre Croche were firm believers in manitous, or spirits. All the good things they attributed to the Gitchi Manitou (Great Spirit); and the bad things to the Motchi Manitous (Bad Spirits), there being very many of the latter.

The Motchi Manitou, most dreaded in these parts, inhabited the waters of Little Traverse Bay, and many frightful stories have been related regarding this monster. Often when great storms raged at sea, sacrifices were made to him to appease his anger, for the Indians imagined he was the one that caused the disturbance. A dog would be killed and thrown into the lake, with the

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[9]As told to Paul Radin in the summer of 1926 by J. Cloud, in Elk Rapids, MI; from unpublished notes, American Philosophical Society.

words, 'Here is something for you, O Manitou; now be still and stop troubling the water.'

According to the legend, this manitou was once a human being like all the other inhabitants of the village; in fact, he was the son of a great hunter named Ma-gee-we-non, and was his father's joy and pride. With the greatest delight the old warrior spent most of his time teaching his boy to shoot the arrow and throw the spear, and making him acquainted with all the knowledge necessary for an Indian brave's education. But in spite of all that was done to make the young man a great chief, he early evinced traits of a diabolical character. Although an adept in the use of his weapons, it became apparent that he was possessed of an evil spirit. He grew to large and ungainly proportions and became in truth a human monstrosity. He delighted in torturing people and did all sorts of things to annoy those about him. One day, highly incensed over his ill luck at fishing, he sought the feeding grounds of a dreaded sea-serpent, which he captured and turned loose in the village, where the enraged reptile killed many of the inhabitants and committed all sorts of depredations.

At this period the tribe was ruled over by a remarkable chieftain who was said to possess supernatural powers. The Great Spirit had blessed him with an extremely beautiful daughter whose hand was sought by all the young braves of the surrounding country, among whom was Neoma, considered the best warrior and hunter in the tribe.

Wa-wass-ko-na (flower), the chief's daughter, returned the young man's affections, but Neoma had a rival in the powerful Motchi Manitou, and strange to say, the chief wished his daughter to marry the latter, hoping thereby to gain more power and influence and become greater than any of his predecessors.

Neoma asked the chief for his daughter's hand, but was, of course, rejected, and Wa-wass-ko-na was imprisoned in a separate wigwam, with guards placed at the entrance, so that the lovers might not elope. But 'love laughs at locksmiths,' and one dark night Neoma stole into his sweetheart's prison, first drugging the guards with a potion he had obtained from an old woman who resided in the outskirts of the village. Wa-wass-ko-na was only too glad to regain her freedom and join her faithful lover. They hastily embarked in a canoe which Neoma had provided for the occasion, and fled to an island far out in Lake Michigan (Manitou Island), where they landed, pitched their tent, and for a time lived happily together.

But Motchi Manitou soon learned their whereabouts, and one day when Neoma was away in quest of game, hied himself to his wigwam and abducted his bride, whom he carried to his abode--a desolate cave near the shore--where he imprisoned her.

Neoma returned home, and missing his wife, spent many weary hours of anguish, but at last surmised the cause of her disappearance. He immediately started in pursuit of Motchi Manitou, but arrived at the latter's rendezvous too late to rescue Wa-wass-ko-na and was only met by the jeers and mocking laughter of the Motchi Manitou. With a heavy heart he lingered about the prison, contriving many plans by which he might rescue his wife, but failed in all his attempts.

Meanwhile Wa-wass-ko-na became heart-broken and despondent and shed many tears. She rapidly failed in health until she was only a mere skeleton of her former self, and in a short time she crossed 'the dark river of death.'

Neoma was overwhelmed with grief, and disheartened, and he climbed 'the crooked tree,' which was not far from the Motchi Manitou's cave, and with

a weird, plaintive death-song threw himself to the beach, striking in the water of Lake Michigan, which caught up the sad air and have ever murmured the lament of the departed warrior.

At last the great chieftain, Neoma's father, passed away and the people saw that in order to insure their safety, they must destroy the Motchi Manitou. A great council was held and it was decided that all the warriors should turn out en masse, to get him, dead or alive. But to no avail. He seemed to possess a charmed life. He never could be seen, but each morning the inhabitants of L'Arbre Croche would awaken to find new mischief or depredations.

Finally, after many days of searching, he was discovered, nestled among the sand dunes on the shore, fast asleep. Without losing any time the bravest of the people crept up cautiously and deftly bound him with basswood bark, so that when he awoke he was helpless. His captors then placed him in a canoe and, taking him far out into the bay, tied huge stones to his neck and threw him overboard. As he reached the water, by his exertions to get loose, he caused such a sea that the canoe was upset and all its occupants drowned.

Even to the present day, when great tempests rage on Lake Michigan, the older Indians say: 'It's Motchi Manitou trying to get out of the water.'[10]

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[10]Note. From The Crooked Tree: Indian Legends of Northern Michigan (pp. 79-82), by J. C. Wright, 1917, Harbor Springs, MI: Matthew A. Erwin, Publisher.

(f)

Gaw-be-naw, the First Man

The first among the Indians of L'Arbre Croche in story and tradition was Gaw-be-naw. He was said to be the first man created by the Gitchi Manitou (Great Spirit). He ruled over the land and the sea; named all the animals; taught the people how to plant and make gardens; how to hunt and fish; how to build wigwams and canoes; how to count; how to make clothing from the skins of wild animals; and many, many other things. He was a prophet, philosopher, seer and natural born leader.

The snowshoe, bow and arrow, stone tomahawk, pe-no-gawn, 'warm winter house,' and all such devices and inventions were said to have been introduced by Gaw-be-naw. Volumes could be written of his genius and prowess. No task was too difficult for him to accomplish, no obstacle too great for this wonderful man to overcome. He was greatly beloved by the Great Spirit, who favored him in all things.

Gaw-be-naw lived for a great many years--how long nobody knows. During the early part of his reign all the people were happy; there were no wars, no dissensions--no trouble of any kind. As he grew old and approached the end of his career, however, a great drouth and famine spread over the earth. This was sent as a punishment to Gaw-be-naw, who foolishly thinking of himself all powerful in his advanced years, tried to make the crops grow without consulting the Great Spirit. In vain Gaw-be-naw fasted and prayed for rain, so that the people would not die of starvation. No rain came, and at last Gaw-be-naw said he would journey to the realm of the Great Spirit and intercede for the people in person.

He traveled many, many days, and at last came to the dwelling place of the Ruler of Creation, who said: 'Gaw-be-naw, my child, you have been very disobedient. I have made you ruler over the land and sea; but I alone have power over the sun and moon, to make the crops grow and the trees to bear fruit. But though you have displeased me I will have compassion on my people. Hereafter Ah-nim-o-kee will sit at my side and when rain is needed he will beat upon his drum. When he pounds with his drumstick, thunder will roll over the earth; when he opens his eyes, lightning will flash; and the people will rejoice, for it will be a sign that I will send water to moisten the ground so that grain will grow in abundance and famine will no longer occur.'

So, away past the rivers and mountains, far, far beyond the seas--much farther than man has since traveled, sits an old warrior with his back toward the earth, Ah-nin-o-kee, the Thunderer, who at a signal from the Great Spirit beats upon his drum and flashes his eyes, and thus brings the rain to revive and nourish vegetation.[11]

(g)

This is a story related about Wapeka, a Woodland Potawatomi (The Woodland Potawatomi lived in the neighborhood of Milwaukee and northward in Wisconsin.):

A young boy fasted for six days, when a special thunderbird of the "kind who goes alone ahead of the others" saw him and had pity on him. "If I give him my sacred staff (a crooked stick, shorter, but otherwise not unlike a Plains

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[11]Note. From The Crooked Tree: Indian Legends of Northern Michigan (pp. 26-28), by J. C. Wright, 1917, Harbor Springs, MI: Matthew A. Erwin, Publisher.

officer's standard in shape, carried by war leaders among the Potawatomi) he may sacrifice tobacco in my behalf. Besides, his prayers to me to ward off misfortune would be granted."

So the bird chose to show his staff to the dreamer in his sleep, promising to add to it the gift of old, old, age, the power of curing himself and his family of all afflictions, and that when he was older he should go to war and lead a band of warriors without loss. He was instructed to sacrifice tobacco and food to the staff from time to time. He was ordered not to throw it in the fire for the fire alone would benefit. It must be laid on the ground outside the lodge.[12]

(h)

This is a story connected with a thunder staff obtained with a bow and arrows from the Potawatomi:

Old Sakahnos when a young boy fasted to see if he could gain any favor from the great powers. At length, the "day sun" took pity on the lad and appeared to him in a dream several times. The lad continued to fast making it twofold since he received a staff and a bow and arrows. In connection with the sun a thunderbird assisted as it wanted to help and receive sacrifices of tobacco in return. The thunderbird told him: "Make a crooked staff with my head carved on it, so that everything will assist you to have power. I shall be

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[12]A vision quest dream/story from Social Life and Ceremonial Bundles of the Menomini Indians. Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History 13 (p. 49) by A. Skinner, 1913, New York: American Museum of Natural History.

with you every time you grasp or carry this sacred staff. You shall be helped out of your difficulties and I shall aid you provided you carry out the sacred part I have shown you. Anything will be easy for you to do. When you want to make a sacrifice in our behalf just take down the bow and arrows and carry them outside your door and at a very short distance away the game will be offered to you. You shall sacrifice to each at separate times. Take care of these holy implements and never exhibit them until before a sacrifice."[13]

(i)

Kitci Cawano, the great south, who died aged ninety-two, in his young boyhood when he was clean, free from impurities of all kinds, fasted till at the end of six days a special thunderbird showed itself in human shape and invited him to go along with it. When the dreamer's shade was taken along he saw an old, very gray-headed homely man, wearing a strip of feathers under each arm and down on one leg also. He then showed the dreamer this extraordinary tiny war club and told him to make one, trimmed with deer claws in order to make a rattling sound representing the sacred power belonging to the bird. This was given him to use when praying for his wants and to aid in warding off afflictions, troubles, and diseases, and to reach long life. The thunderbird showed the dreamer some little seeds which were his tobacco. He gave him some and told him to plant them down here on earth to raise thunder tobacco and when it grew to narrow striped leaves to dry it for use when making his

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[13]A vision quest dream/story from Social Life and Ceremonial Bundles of the Menomini Indians. Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History 13 (p. 50) by A. Skinner, 1913, New York: American Museum of Natural History.

sacrifice of game. This tobacco was to be consumed by the guests, or the dreamer could do it alone. There were words and a song to call the power of this bird to give what was asked of him, and as soon as the war club was shaken with the sound of the deer hoof rattles and the sacred tobacco was consumed by the dreamer, the thunderbird heard it and came with his promised relief. Rain fell right off from the west.[14]

(j)

Eight men who were thunder beings, appeared to a sacred dreamer. They were led by a chief dressed in dark blue or black who approached the dreamer and gave him a little lacrosse bat, a full sized ball covered with woodchuck skin and ornamented with bone beads and feathers, a tiny bow and arrows, and a round stone thought to be 'thunderbolt.' All these articles were painted black except the last, which was plain. The thunderer gave them to the dreamer with these words.

'Grandson, I give these to you. Whenever you go to war, carry them with you and you will never be hurt.'

And so it turned out, for the original owner went through the Black Hawk war of 1832 and returned without scathe. Just before he set out he had the lacrosse game played to delight his patrons. Every year it was his custom to observe the spring and fall feasts in honor of the thunderers. At these feasts a whole deer or bear was prepared and eaten before the open bundle. At

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[14]A vision quest dream/story from Social Life and Ceremonial Bundles of the Menomini Indians. Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History 13 (p. 50) by A. Skinner, 1913, New York: American Museum of Natural History.

this time the following song was used repeatedly: 'I know you will be heard roaring, you thunderers!'[15]

(k)

Now the cause of the great flood was this: The god of the deep was exceedingly jealous about Ne-naw-bo-zhoo's hunting dog (the great black wolf) and therefore, he killed it and made a feast with it and invited many guests, which were represented as sea-serpents, water-tigers, and every kind of monster of the deep, and they had a great feast. When Ne-naw-bo-zhoo found out what had become of his hunting dog, he was furiously enraged, and determined to kill this god of the deep.

There was a certain place where he was accustomed to come on the shore with his hosts, particularly on very fine days, to sun themselves and enjoy the pleasure of being on a dry land. Ne-naw-bo-zhoo knew this lovely spot very well. So right away he strung his bow and trimmed his arrows nicely, and went there to watch, transforming himself into a black stump, near where these water gods usually lay down to enjoy themselves. And therefore, one very find day the sea-serpents and water-tigers were very anxious to come on shore as usual and asked their master to accompany them, but he replied: "I fear the great Ne-naw-bo-zhoo might be lurking about there, and he will kill me because I have killed and eaten up his black wolf."

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[15]A Menomini story about a sacred lacrosse and war charm for a war bundle from Social Life and Ceremonial Bundles of the Menomini Indians. Anthropological Papers of the American Museum of Natural History 13 (p. 125) by A. Skinner, 1913, New York: American Museum of Natural History.

But he at last told them to go on shore and examine the place and report if it was all clear; but they found nothing unusual about the place except the old black stump, which they never before observed to be there. Therefore, they went back to their master and reported that nothing was there to be afraid of except the old black stump which they never noticed before. "Go again," said their master "and closely examine the stump; peradventure, it was he transfigured into the shape of the stump." So again they came ashore and one of the water-tigers climbed upon it, inserting his long, sharp claws as he went up, but he saw nothing strange. So, also the sea-serpent went up to it and coiled himself around the stump so tight that Ne-naw-bo-zhoo nearly screamed with pain. At last the serpent uncoiled himself and they went back to their master and reported to him that it was nothing but an old stump. So the god of the sea concluded to come ashore with all his hosts, slowly and cautiously looking in every direction as he was still afraid that Ne-naw-bo-zhoo might be lurking around there and watching. Soon they were dozing upon the hot sand of the beach, then Ne-naw-bo-zhoo unmasked himself and fixed one of his best arrows into his bow and shot the god of the deep right through the heart. Then all the host started to pursue the slayer of their master. Ne-naw-boo-zhoo fled for his life; but he was pursued by the host with mountains of water. He ran all over the earth, still pursued with the mountains of water. So when he could not find any more dry land to run to, he commanded a great canoe to be formed in which he and the animals who were fleeing before the water, were saved. After they floated, Ne-naw-bo-zhoo wondered very much how deep was the water. Therefore, he ordered one of the beavers to go down to the bottom of the deep and bring up some earth if he could, as evidence that he did go to the bottom. So the beaver obeyed, and he went down, but the water was so deep the beaver died before he reached the bottom, and therefore, he came up

floating as a dead beaver. Ne-naw-bo-zhoo drew him up into his canoe and resuscitated the beaver by blowing into his nostrils.

So he waited a little while longer, and afterwards he ordered the muskrat to go down; but the muskrat did not like the idea, for he had seen the beaver coming up lifeless. So he had to flatter him a little in order to induce him to go down, by telling him, "Now, muskrat, I know that thou art one of the best divers of all the animal creation; will you please go down and ascertain the depth of the water, and bring up some earth in your little paws, if you can, with which I shall try to make another world? Now go my little brother,"-the legend says that he called all animal creation his little brothers,-"for we cannot always live on the waters." At last the muskrat obeyed. He went down, and descended clear to the bottom of the water, and grabbed the earth and returned. But the water was yet so deep that before he reached the surface of the water, he expired.

As Ne-naw-bo-zhoo drew him up into his great canoe to resuscitate him, he observed the muskrat still grasping something in his little paws, and behold, it was a piece of earth. Then Ne-naw-bo-zhoo knew that the muskrat went clear to the bottom of the deep. He took this piece of earth and fixed it into a small parcel; which he fastened to the neck of the raven which was with him. Now, with this parcel, Ne-naw-bo-zhoo told the raven to fly to and fro over the face of the waters; then the waters began to recede very fast, and soon the earth came back to its natural shape, just as it was before.[16]

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[16]From History of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians of Michigan (pp. 75-77) by A. J. Blackbird, 1887, Ypsilanti, MI: Yspilantian Job Printing House, reprinted by Little Traverse Regional Historical Society, Inc.

(1)

Another thunder tradition says:--"That a party of Indians were once travelling on an extensive plain, when they came upon two young thunders lying in their nest in their downy feathers, the old thunders being absent at the time. Some of the party took their arrows, and with the point touched the eyes of the young thunders. The moment they did so their arrows were shivered to pieces, as if a young thunder arrow had struck them. One of the party, more wise than his companions, entreated them not to meddle with them, warning them that if they did they would pay dearly for their folly. The foolish young men would not listen, but continued to teaze [tease] and finally killed them. As soon as they had done this a black cloud appeared, advancing towards them with great fury. Presently the thunder began to roar and send forth volumes of its fiery indignation. It was too evident that the old thunders were enraged on account of the destruction of their young--soon, with a tremendous crash, the arrows of the mighty thunder-god fell on the foolish men and destroyed them, but the wise and good Indian escaped unhurt.[17]

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[17]From History of the Ojebway Indians; with Especial Reference to their Conversion to Christianity (pp. 86-87) by P. Jones, 1861, London: A. W. Bennett.

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