

ART AND IDENTITY

Teacher Preparation

The material objects produced by cultural groups — tools, toys, cookware, weapons, clothing, etc. — provide anthropologists, folklorists, historians, and archeologists with visual information that serves as clues to the practices and beliefs that give each culture its identity. Just as a T-shirt — whether it communicates a political message, announces allegiance to a sports team, or displays a designer logo — links the wearer with a particular group, a basket, a clay pot, or a woven belt can tell the story of the culture from which it comes. Its function, design, and materials reveal where, how, why, and when the object was created and used. When such an object is decorated with symbols of religious belief, family relationships, or important events, it also tells us about the traditions and values of the group. An object fashioned by hand also tells us about the imagination and skill of its maker.

Traditionally, members of subsistence cultures produced not only the food that served their nutritional needs, but also made the tools and containers necessary for processing, storing, and serving that food. They produced the plant and animal fibers that were woven into cloth, and sewed the clothing they needed for daily and ceremonial wear. Considerable time was devoted to making these items, and considerable effort was made to teach craft skills. Even though most hand-crafted objects had a practical use in meeting the rigorous demands of daily life, making such objects also created opportunities to beautify the world and to honor the providing earth by embellishing objects

with symbols of the natural world. It seems that humans have as much need for beauty as they do for food, as much need to stretch the imagination as to exercise the body. Therefore, making a serving ladle from a piece of wood is a practical activity resulting in a useful tool. Decorating its handle with delicate carving is an act that satisfies the creative urge of the maker, and brings aesthetic pleasure to those who use it.

Examining the crafts of indigenous groups such as Hopi, Andean, and Southeast Alaskan Natives gives students the opportunity to consider how traditional knowledge of the natural world is used to create useful and beautiful objects. Students will learn to "read" the clues provided by materials, designs, and decorations to come to reasonable conclusions about the values shared by these cultures. These observations can be added to the concept map suggested on p. 10.

Focus Questions

How are craft skills and knowledge of natural resources gained and shared?

What are the aesthetic and practical functions of crafts in subsistence cultures?

How are Native American relationships with the land manifested in the design and construction of crafts?

Suggested Activity

If possible, take your class to visit a history museum for a presentation on how historians, anthropologists, etc., use objects to learn about cultures. If a field trip is not possible, check to see if your state historical society or the museum of your choice offers educational kits for loan or rental. Many such kits contain objects which students can hold and touch, along with activities designed for various grade levels.

Suggested Activity

Ask students to bring an object from home that is meaningful. The object could be something handcrafted by a family member, a keepsake, a souvenir. Explain to students that the purpose of this activity is to closely examine an object to determine what information it reveals about the culture from which it comes. It might be helpful to compare this observation to the interview process used to get information about another person. The following list of questions can be enhanced with student-generated questions:

How was the object made?

By machine or by hand?

Who made it?

What skill or training was required?

What is it made of?

Who used it?

Was the user male? female? a child? an adult?

To whom does it belong? to one person or a group?

What is it used for now?

Was it ever used for some other purpose?

How old is it?

How do you know?

Are there other objects just like this one?

How do you know?

Are there any symbols, colors, or designs on the object that give it special meaning?

Is the object connected in some way to a special person or event?

Once students have written answers to these questions, they can work in small groups to review their information and help each other come to conclusions about the object and the culture that made it. Then, ask each student to write a description of his or her object to accompany a museum display.

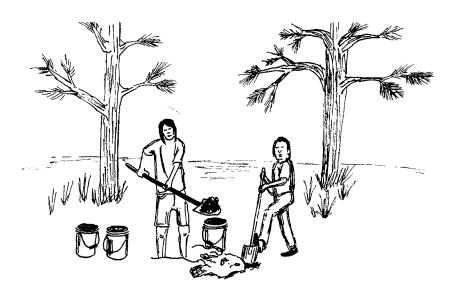
HODI POTTERY

Hopi women have made pots, utensils, and ceremonial objects from clay gathered from the earth surrounding their villages since at least the 13th century (see Figure 30). Most of the ceramics they made were for domestic use — stew bowls, serving bowls, jars, and bottles. Some pieces were made specifically for barter. A potter might trade her wares for baskets or offer them in payment to the medicine man.

Pieces might be offered as gifts. These activities continue today. For instance, Lucille Namoki, a potter living in Kykotsmovi, Arizona, made a set of bowls which were used to pay for her daughter's wedding clothes.

Figure 30

Hopi potters use materials gathered from the land to make their famous pottery.



With the establishment of trading posts in the 1800s, pottery became a kind of currency that could be traded for goods brought to the Southwest by Anglo traders. At that time, potters began making ceramics that appealed to the traders and their white customers, for whom collecting of Native American arts had become fashionable. Later, when the construction of railroads brought white tourists to Native American lands in the southwestern United States, demand for Native pottery increased, and many potters began devoting a significant amount of their time to producing ceramics specifically for tourists. Thus, pottery making became an avenue toward Hopi participation in the cash economy. It continues to be a significant source of income for many Hopi today. Other Hopi potters viewed any activity that led to economic dependence on Anglos as detrimental to Hopi culture. These traditionalists continue to make pottery primarily for their own use. Over the past twenty years, Hopi men have joined women in the production of pottery for sale to tourists and art collectors.

Whether pottery is made for home use, for trade, or for sale, the process of creating it connects the maker with the natural and spiritual elements of the Hopi world. From finding sources of clay through firing the completed ceramic form, the potter is immersed in the materials of the northern Arizona landscape and the visual symbols of agriculture and ritual life. Ancient knowledge of the land and generational teaching of the potter's art come together in a personal ritual full of cultural meaning. Jake Koope, a 24-year-old potter from First Mesa, explains that pottery making is a process in which the mind, the heart, and nature are intertwined. If at any point this balance is disturbed, the pottery will fail.

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Gathering Clay

All of the potter's tools and materials are taken from the earth. The process begins by gathering clay from deposits below the mesas. Most

Figure 31

Potters follow a series of careful steps to create containers and utensils for home and ritual use.



pottery is made during the summer and fall, so large supplies of clay are gathered in the spring. Potters who will make many pieces to sell to dealers and tourists enlist the aid of family members to dig the clay and load it onto the bed of the family truck. Bertha Kinale from the village of Walpi on First Mesa joins her husband on his early morning walks to their corn fields below the mesa. While he hoes the fields, she gathers the clay she needs for several days of pottery making.

Hopi potters use two types of clay to form pots and other vessels. Pottery made from yellow clay becomes red after firing. Pottery made from gray clay has a "bleached" appearance after firing. Kaolin, a very fine clay gathered from Oraibi Wash, is used to make a white pigment for ceramic glaze. A potter determines whether the clay is of good quality by tasting it frequently during gathering. Good clay has a slightly sweet taste; bad clay tastes salty and acidic. Sticks, stones, and other foreign objects are removed from the clay as it is gathered.

Once the potter has the new supply of clay at home, she uses a hatchet to break up the lumps. Smaller foreign objects and impurities are removed. The clay is placed in a large container, covered with water, and left to soak for a day or so. As the clay soaks, leaves and roots rise to the surface and are discarded with the water. This process is repeated five or more times over a period of ten days to a month. Once the clay appears to be free of organic impurities, it is poured through cheesecloth to remove small pebbles and grit. When the clay is left in a cool, shady area for 12-24 hours, it develops a rubbery consistency and is ready to use.

Forming Shapes

Hopi potters do not use wheels to "throw" the clay into a symmetrical shape. To form a small bowl the potter begins by kneading a lump of clay to remove trapped air, occasionally adding small amounts of water if the clay seems dry. Then the clay is molded in the palm of the hand, pressed, and smoothed outward until the desired size and shape are achieved. One potter uses her bent elbow as a form for small bowls. Larger pieces are made by stacking coils of clay onto a formed base. As each coil is added, it is smoothed into the one below. A dried gourd shell is used to smooth and shape the interior and the exterior of the pot. A final coil is added to create a rim.

The weather and the potter's judgment determine how long the pot will be left to dry. Pots that dry too quickly in the arid Arizona climate may crack. Hopi potters who came to the 1991 Festival of American Folklife to demonstrate their craft could only approximate the process in the humidity of a Washington, D.C., summer. Pottery made at the Festival was dried in an electric kiln borrowed from a local potters' workshop.

When the pot is dry, it is scraped if necessary to create a uniform thickness. Then the entire surface of the piece is smoothed using a rounded piece of sandstone or sandpaper. Some potters "slip" or coat

Figure 32

Tessa Taylor uses sandpaper and a polishing stone to smooth a small pot. Her teacher is Lucille Namoki, her grandmother. Photo by Donelle Blubaugh.



the smoothed pot with kaolin.

The next step is to polish the pot with a small, smooth, riverbed stone. Some potters use commercially polished stones. The pot is rubbed with the stone, one small section at a time, until the entire surface is burnished (see Figure 32).

Decorating

Most of the pottery made for home use or local barter is not decorated. Pieces intended as gifts or those to be sold are usually decorated with paint. A few potters add decoration by manipulating the clay to create textured or appliquéd designs.

The black paint that lines most decorated pots is made from a green, leafy plant the Hopi call "wild spinach." Plants are collected in the spring — sometimes by the pick-up truck load. Leaves are boiled and eaten like spinach or chard. The cooking liquid and plant stalks are boiled until the liquid is reduced to a syrup. The solids are removed, and small amounts of the liquid are placed on corn husks to dry. This "wild spinach concentrate" becomes very hard as it dries. To make paint, the potter dissolves a piece of the hardened substance in a small container with water. When the potter is ready to decorate her pots, she pours a small amount of the greenish-black liquid onto her stone palette and mixes into it a bit of hematite cement that improves the paint's consistency and helps it adhere to the pottery.

The paint is applied using brushes of varying widths made from spikes from the center section of yucca plants (see Figure 33). To make a brush, a spike is cut on both ends to a length of about 3 1/2 inches. One end is chewed until it is frayed. Then fiber strands are removed until a brush of the desired width remains. The thinnest lines are painted with a single yucca fiber. The potter keeps her brushes flexible and moist by sucking on them at intervals during the painting process, much like an oboist prepares a reed for playing.

The black painted outlines that form the pot's basic design may be

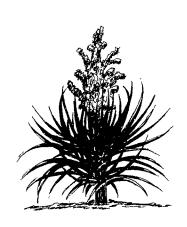


Figure 33

The yucca plant provides fibers to make tiny brushes for painting pottery designs.

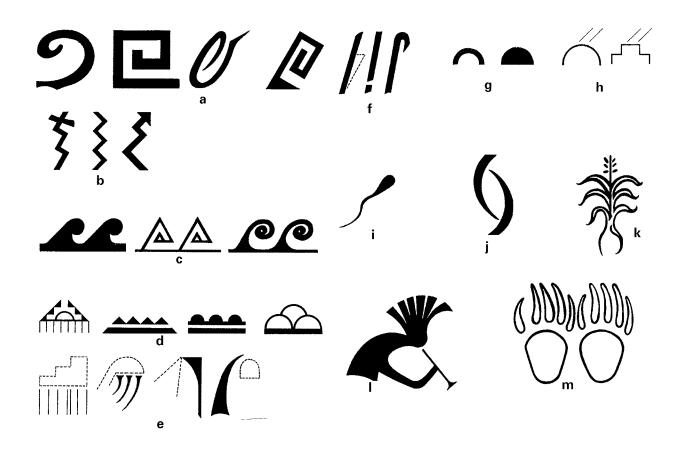


Figure 34

Designs commonly used to decorate Hopi pottery are emblems of the natural world and spiritual beliefs. applied freehand or with the use of a paper pattern. The outlines may be filled in with black paint or with red or white clay paints. A match stick dipped in paint will create a stippled effect.

Hopi pottery, like silver overlay jewelry, baskets, Kachina dolls, and other craft objects, is decorated with motifs representing objects, places, and events of the Hopi spiritual and natural worlds. Kachina figures and clan emblems are common. But the motifs most frequently used relate to those elements that also preoccupy Hopi farmers — water, sun, and corn. Some of the motifs commonly used to decorate Hopi pottery are shown in Figure 34. In Figure 35, a Hopi potter paints with a yucca-stem brush.



Ask students to guess what objects or events are represented by the motifs shown in Figure 34. Students could work together in small groups, using shared knowledge about Hopi culture and land to support their guesses. While students won't be able to name the specific

Figure 35

To paint narrow lines, Lucille Namoke uses a tiny yucca stem dipped in paint made from wild spinach leaves. Photo by Donelle Blubaugh.



identities of figures from the Hopi spirit world, they can guess the roles represented.

Key: a. whirlwinds to bring rain clouds, b. lightning, c. water waves, d. rain clouds, e. rain, f. prayer sticks, g. altar, h. kiva, i. tadpole, j. friendship or brotherhood, k. corn, l. flute priest, m. bear paws.

Firing

Firing — the process of exposing pottery to intense heat to remove moisture and strengthen the clay — gives the potter her most anxious moments. Much can go wrong during firing, and the potter won't know if she has successfully balanced all the natural and spiritual ingredients until the pot is removed from the fire and cooled.

Traditional firing methods involve several steps, all of them difficult to control. Sheep dung provides the fuel for the high heat (940 degrees Celsius) necessary to make strong pottery. The dung kiln is built on a flat section of rock near the potter's house. A small fire of grass and twigs is built within a rock circle. Then chips of bark-like dried dung are added. Large pottery shards are placed over the fire to make a grate. The potter may fire one large piece or several smaller pieces at a time. Once the pots are carefully arranged on the grate, they may be surrounded with additional shards. This mound is then

completely covered with sheep dung.

The pottery is left in the fire for about three hours. Then the layers of shard and dung are slowly removed. Once the pottery is completely exposed and begins to cool, the yellow clay slowly transforms to deep orange-red. When the pot is cool enough to handle, the potter inspects it for cracks and other flaws. Only then is the potter certain that each step, from gathering clay through firing, has been done correctly.

Today electric kilns are used for firing as often as this traditional method. The dung-fired oven has the advantage of being inexpensive and in keeping with reciprocal exchange between the potter and the earth.

Finishing

If the pottery will be used in a Hopi household, it is coated with sap from *piñon* trees while it is still warm to make it watertight. Bowls are rubbed with sheep fat or commercially prepared lard and then reheated overnight to seal the clay. Some potters use commercial glazes, but these must be fired at very high temperatures in electric kilns.

Just as a Hopi farmer invests cultural meaning in the daily care of his crops, the potter's labor is also a manifestation of the Hopi respect for and dependence on the natural world. In her efforts to form the earth's elements into useful and beautiful objects, the Hopi potter is connected to the artistic and spiritual traditions of her people, the literal substance of the earth, and her own imagination.

Arrange to visit a local potter's studio for a demonstration of the pottery-making process.

OR

Compare traditional Hopi methods with those of other cultures, making note of how environmental characteristics influence methods and materials.





Explore ways that culturally specific symbols are incorporated into the crafts of other cultures. Ukrainian Easter eggs and Pennsylvania Dutch hex signs are two examples.



Perhaps a local potter or art teacher can visit your class over a period of time to help you make your own pots. Decorate your creations with symbols related to your cultural or ethnic background.

ANDEAN WEAVING

For thousands of years weaving has been a significant part of Andean life. The cloth produced from alpaca, llama, vicuña (all animals native to the Americas), and sheep fibers provide the people of this high, chilly region with versatile, warm clothing (see Figure 36). Textiles serve important social and economic functions as well as practical ones. Before the Spanish Conquest, weavings were the most highly prized possessions in the Andean world, traded regularly along the routes established by the Tiwanakan and Incan civilizations.

Figure 36

Andean weavers make warm, versatile clothing from llama fibers. Photo courtesy Smithsonian Institution.



Warehouses filled with fine textiles were among the treasures Spanish conquistadors found in Urubamba, the sacred valley of the Incas.

Social and political status was indicated by materials and designs.

Special textiles were made for social and religious ceremonies. The art of weaving was so highly regarded by the Incas that a textile deity,

Aksu Mama, received sacrifices in yearly ceremonies.

Archeologists, anthropologists, and historians have learned much about the social and political history of Andean culture by examining the methods and designs of textiles and clothing. Virtually every technique known to modern weavers was known by weavers 3,000 years before the Incas conquered the region. Designs common to textiles found in the ruins of the pre-Incan civilization of Tiwanaku were incorporated into Incan designs. The vibrant colors of contemporary Andean textiles stem from dyeing techniques perfected by the Incas. Modern styles incorporate spiritual symbols of the ancient Aymara, the Incas, and the Spanish.

While the Spanish Conquest destroyed the complex economic and social order of the pre-Columbian world, weaving remains, along with agriculture and herding, at the center of economic and social activity. Nearly every event in Andean life is accompanied by a weaving-related activity. Among the Aymara of the Bolivian *altiplano*, children are given responsibility for herding when they are as young as three. This passage into active participation in the economic life of the *ayllu*—the group of people living in the same territory—is marked by giving the child his or her first haircut and presentation of his or her first set of adult clothes. Girls, who learn to weave when they are six or seven years old, weave headbands and belts to attract young men. A young man proposes marriage by weaving a special belt for the young woman he wishes to marry. His proposal is accepted if he receives a *chu'spa*, a small woven bag used to carry coca leaves. The dead are buried with the weavings that clothed them in life.

TIME OUT

How is clothing used to mark special events in your culture?

Just as Andean agricultural practices and products vary from region to region, the materials and designs of textiles vary according to the location and traditions of the cultural groups that produce them.

Therefore, textile designs and clothing styles are important indicators of cultural identity. For example, the woven overskirts, or *axsus*, worn by women from the Jalq'a region feature brilliantly colored creatures from fantasy and myth, randomly arranged on dark backgrounds.

Those made and worn by the Tarabuco feature tiny, symmetrical designs depicting events and objects of everyday life (see Figure 37).

But whether weavers are Peruvians from the Lake Titicaca island of Taquile or Jalq'a from Bolivia's southern border region, they share a tradition that relies on ancient knowledge and indigenous materials to produce clothing and ceremonial textiles that reflect close ties to the natural world. Just as the painted symbols that decorate Hopi pottery communicate respect for and dependence on plants, rain, and Hopi deities, Andean textiles incorporate designs that illustrate details of the region's physical and spiritual existence.

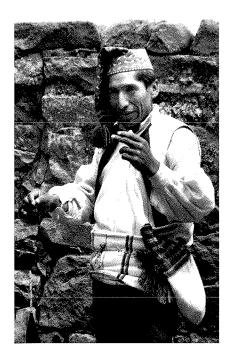
The Fibers

The native *camelidae* — the alpaca and the llama — of the Andes provide weavers with an abundant supply of wool. Alpaca wool is highly prized for its lightweight warmth and silkiness. Llama wool is heavy and durable. The vicuña, another native *camelid*, is an endangered species whose luxurious wool was once reserved for use by Inca royalty. Sheep were introduced into the Andes by the Spanish, and today most Andean textiles are woven from sheep wool. Today, synthetic fibers such as acrylic, orlon, and rayon are widely available. Using these fibers saves Andean weavers time and money, but such fibers are not as durable as natural ones, and in areas where synthetics are used frequently, traditional knowledge and skill have been lost.



Figure 37

(Top) Textile designs are important symbols of cultural identity in the Andes. On the left, a woman from the Tarabuco region of Bolivia wears an overskirt depicting events and objects of daily life. (Top right) The weaving produced by the Jalq'a features creatures from fantasy and myth. Photos by Jym Wilson.





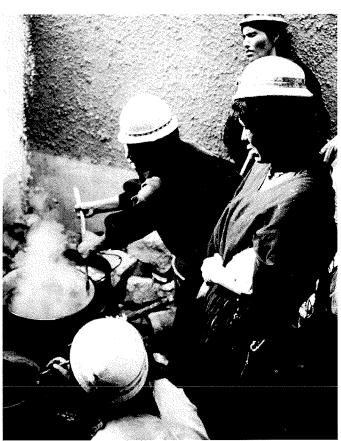


Figure 38

(Left) A weaver from the island of Taquile in Lake Titicaca uses a drop spindle. Photo by Olivia Cadaval, courtesy Smithsonian Institution.

Figure 39

(Above) Juliana Rodriguez, a Jalq'a weaver, prepares dye for coloring sheep's wool. Photo courtesy ASUR.

In ancient times, fibers were twisted by hand to make thread and yarn. Use of the drop spindle (see Figure 38) adds speed, but this type of spinning is still a time-consuming process. The drop spindle is still widely used in rural areas. On the island of Taquile in Peru, men carry their drop spindles constantly, spinning as they walk to and from the fields or chat with companions.

Making Thread

The Spanish introduced the spinning wheel, which was more readily adopted in areas where textile production dominated agriculture as an economic activity. Where agriculture is the dominant activity, weaving is postponed during the busy months of planting and harvesting. Drop spindles and back-strap looms are easily transported to grazing land, where women spin and weave while watching over sheep and alpaca herds.

Today in the Jalq'a and Tarabuco regions of Bolivia, weavers involved in a project designed to revitalize weaving traditions and create locally controlled sources of income also use spinning machines powered by electric motors. These machines can generate about 600 grams of wool thread per day compared to the 100 grams that can be made by hand.

Creating Color

Many Andean textiles take advantage of the range of alpaca, llama, and sheep coat colors. Pure white, pale tan, dark brown, gray, and jet black wool are used without dyeing. The Andean people are fond of vibrant colors, however, and dyeing provides colorful threads that are visually pleasing and symbolically important. Early weavings show that the ancient Peruvians used a wide range of colors. Much of the knowledge used by these weavers is now lost, but dyeing techniques used by the Incas do survive (see Figure 39, page 83). Quechua, the language of the Incas and one of the official languages of modern Peru, contains detailed terminology related to dyeing processes.

Achieving the vibrant reds, blues, greens, pinks, and yellows of traditional textiles requires extensive knowledge of Andean plant life. The plants used vary according to region. Several hundred different plants are used to make dye throughout the Andes. Leaves, fruits, seeds, lichen, tree bark, and roots are used. Almost any plant can be used to add color to cloth, including potatoes, corn, walnuts, and berries.

The cochineal, an insect that lives on the leaves of the nopal cactus, is the source of pink, red, and black colors.

Mordants are substances added to the dye bath to fix the colors to prevent fading. Mordants include alum, human urine, salt, ash, and lime juice.

Below (Figure 40) is a table showing a few of the natural dyes used to color the hand-spun wool before it is woven into cloth.

Figure 40

DYE SOURCE		PART USED	COLOR
Native Name	English Name		
Aliso	Alder	Leaves	Yellow/green
Antaco		Roots	Green
Ayrampu	Barberry	Fruit	Blue
Cáscara de Cebolla	Onion	Skin	Yellow
Chapi	Bedstraw		Red/brown
Cochinilla	Cochineal		Pink/red/black
Eucalipto	Eucalyptus	Leaves	Gold/brown
Hierba Santa		Fruit	Blue
Liquenes	Lichen	Plant	Yellow/brown
Pachamarca	Marigold	Leaves	Orange
Salvia	Sage	Leaves	Yellow

Adapted from M.S. Fini, The Weavers of Ancient Peru (1985).

You can make natural dyes to color clothing or eggs or to use as paint from plant materials easily gathered from your garden or kitchen. Here

are some of the colors you can make:

Color	Material
Yellow	Goldenrod, sassafras flower, pomegranate rinds, onion
	skins, willow tree leaves, marigolds, orange peels
Red	Cherries, birch bark (gathered from the ground)
Rose	Willow bark (gathered from the ground)

Color

Material

Purple

Blackberries, elderberries

Blue

Red cabbage leaves, sunflower seeds

Green

Carrot tops, grass clippings, spinach, moss

Tan

Walnut shells, tea leaves, instant coffee

To make dyes from any of these natural materials:

• Cut or tear the plant materials into small pieces and place in a large pot.

- Add enough water to cover the material.
- Bring this to a boil. Boil for 5-20 minutes, depending on the color intensity you want.
- Cut the top off a plastic jug. Strain the plant/water mixture into the jug through a piece of cheesecloth.
- Add a tablespoon of vinegar to the mixture. The vinegar acts as a mordant, or fixative, to make the color last.
- Reheat the dye bath in a large saucepan.
- Check the color of your dye by dipping cotton fabric, yarn, or paper into it.
- When you've made a color you like, simmer the material you are dyeing in the dye bath until it achieves the color intensity you desire. Stir or turn it often to be sure the color covers evenly.
- Remove the material from the dye bath and rinse it in fresh water until the rinse water becomes clear. Spread the material out and let it dry.

If you are unable to gather natural plant materials for your dyes, purchase frozen or canned berries or vegetables to create the dye. Add 2 teaspoons of vinegar to the liquid from a can of beets. Thaw frozen berries and press out the juice.

Experiment with other plants to find out what colors can be made. Your dye can also be used like watercolor paints.

Adapted from Laurie M. Carlson, EcoArt! Earth-Friendly Art & Craft Experiences for 3- to 9-Year-Olds (1993).

Aniline, or chemical, dyes were introduced by Europeans late in the 19th century. Unlike natural dyes, aniline dyes are consistently available and require little preparation. They are cheap in relation to the human labor required to gather and process the ingredients for natural dyes. Consequently, many weavers welcomed this innovation and

Figure 41

(Top) A young woman from Taquile uses a horizontal loom to make a belt. (Bottom) Yardage and tapestries are made on large vertical looms. Photos by Elayne Zorn, courtesy Smithsonian Institution.





adopted aniline dyes to the exclusion of natural ones. As a result, in some areas only the oldest women remember how to make dyes from plants and insects. In recent years, demand for naturally dyed textiles has increased along with the demand for Andean textiles in American and European markets. Programs such as the one sponsored by ASUR (Antropólogos del Sur Andino, or Anthropologists of the Southern Andes) help Jalq'a and Tarabuco weavers revive traditional techniques and encourage economic independence through use of indigenous knowledge.

Weaving

As in pre-Columbian times, back-strap looms and horizontal looms are the tools most widely used for weaving thread into cloth. Both are portable. The horizontal loom (see Figure 41 top) is made from four stakes driven into the ground which anchor two parallel bars. The warp, or vertical, threads are stretched between these two bars. The size of the loom is determined by the distance between the four stakes.

Back-strap looms are used for smaller pieces. One end of the loom is attached to a tree or post, the other is attached to a strap belted around the weaver's lower back. The weaver tightens or loosens the weave by moving backward or forward. Because the width of the loom is limited, narrow headbands and belts are usually made on back-strap looms.

Generally, women make the colorfully decorated accessories mentioned above, while men are the primary weavers of the plain, black yardage used for shirts, skirts, and trousers. They use treadle looms (see Figure 41 bottom) introduced by the Europeans which can accommodate larger fabrics. Vertical looms are also used for large textiles such as tapestries.

Designs and Symbols

Before the Spanish Conquest, no writing systems existed in the central Andes. Instead, visual symbols called pictographs (pictures which rep-

Figure 42

Symbols of stages in the agricultural cycle on the island of Taquile decorate this chumpi. Photo by Jym Wilson.



resent an idea or thing) were used to communicate information. For example, stones were carved with figures thought to have magical properties. These figures were related to the constellations and may have been used to make astronomical predictions. Visual symbols were common in the designs that decorated clothing and ritual textiles. Today's weavers draw upon these ancient symbols and incorporate new ones.

The symbols that decorate Andean clothing represent the things that are of importance to the community. Plant and animal motifs, religious and mythical figures, and representations of the physical and social environment abound on *ponchos, mantas* (shawls), and *chumpis* (belts).

Chumpis provide a good example of the significance of clothing in the social and spiritual lives of the Andean people. These wide, closely woven belts have a decorative function, carry important visual symbols, and function themselves as symbols.

Women give birth lying on a *chumpi*, and the baby is wrapped in a special, soft *chumpi* called a *walt'ana* to ensure healthy growth. Sometimes *chumpis* are placed on sacred mountaintops, their distinctive designs intended as messages for the gods. At wedding festivals the groom might use a *chumpi* to "lasso" the bride. In some areas, such as the Lake Titicaca island of Taquile, specific woven patterns and motifs identify the wearer as coming from a particular community.

One type of *chumpi* called a calendar or agricultural belt is unique to Taquile Island. The symbols woven into these belts represent stages

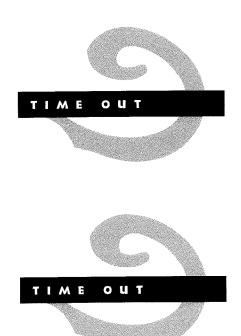
in the island's agricultural cycle and illustrate the island's environment and the supernatural forces that shape island life. Like the *Farmers'* Almanac consulted by many American farmers and gardeners, the belt serves as a reminder or schedule of agricultural activity. It also communicates seasonal signs or omens used to forecast weather and determine planting patterns (see Figure 42).

The calendar is divided into twelve sections, each bearing a symbol associated with the agricultural or ritual activity of a specific time period. Common symbols and interpretations are shown in Figure 43.

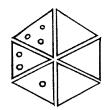
Consult a Farmers' Almanac or another source of weather and agricultural lore. You will find information about the signs — weather patterns, astronomical information, and animal behavior — that some farmers use to guide their decisions about planting and harvesting. Create a series of pictographs representing these signs and stages in the agricultural cycle specific to the area in which you live. Design your own agricultural belt using these symbols.

Perhaps a member of your family enjoys a textile craft such as quilting or embroidery. Explore how these activities incorporate family or cultural symbols.

By decorating their clothing and other textiles with cultural symbols of agricultural and ritual life, Andean weavers provide an important record of the events and beliefs that give each culture its unique identity. When young girls learn to weave at the age of six or seven, they also learn the meaning of the pictographs and colors worn by the members of their families and communities. In many Andean communities, economic and political upheaval have interrupted the traditional



From The Weavers of Ancient Peru by M.S. Fini (London: Tumi, 1985).



Musok Huata Kallary- 'The new month'

This period relates to the rotation of crops and is represented by a hexagram of six suyos, the six regions which historically divide Taquile. Three of these suyos are identified with dots which indicate that these will be ploughed to produce oca, potatoes and grain. The other sections . . . remain fallow.



Ttecay Guella- 'The month of flowers'

This period is represented by a section of ploughed 'suyo', *chakmay*, a small bird, *Chinuaco* and a *Rosas altar*. The chakmay represents the readiness of the soil for cultivation. The rosas altar probably refers to the festival of the 'Virgin of Candelara'. The crying of the 'chinuaco' means a cold year ahead.



Huata Yupaska Quilla

The tenth period is represented by the *Chaska*, a bright star with four smaller stars in its centre. It refers to the bright constellation seen in the north. To the left of this star symbol is a symbol that represents land which is ploughed, and the dotted symbols refer to the suyos to be cultivated.



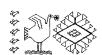
Paramanta Huakay Seloman

The symbol of the 11th period *mayo altar*, represented the festival of All Saints. If however the rainy season has not yet begun, sacrifices are made by going to the highest hill in the name of Pachamama. The symbol in the centre of the design is thought to represent mother earth.



Huata Tucuska Japperay Quilla- 'The month of hunger'

The last period is represented by a large bird with her off-spring in front and behind. If off-spring are observed following her and crying this forebodes hunger, because it is interpreted as the need to rear the stock before the next harvest can be gathered. If all the birds are observed in front of the mother bird, good fortune will follow.



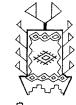
Jappman Pahuana Quilla

The third period is represented by a large bird with her off-spring. A large number of off-spring indicates a fruitful year ahead, and a small number a poor harvest. It is further believed that if the off-spring walk ahead of the mother, an early harvest is to be expected and if they walk behind, the harvest will be late.



Chacra Athapey Quilla- 'The month of reaping the fruits of labour'

The forth period is represented by three plants in flower: the potato, the oca and, possibly, the broad bean. If during this period the plants are in flower then an early frost is forecast. Hailstorms are predicted by the flights of birds and their behaviour patterns. If birds are seen sitting on the flowers and looking downwards towards the earth then a bad harvest and hunger is predicted.



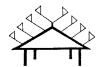
Hatun Cusecuy Huakaicha Quilla- 'The month of paying Pachamama, the mother earth'

The fifth period is represented by a symbol similar to that of the second period. A 'rosas altar' represents the festival of 3rd May, 'Fiesta del Cruz'. All marriages take place on this date. The festival celebrating the birth of Taquile also takes place in this period.



Cuska Huata Cusecuy- 'The half year'

The sixth period is represented by a house or *wasi* which may represent the end of the harvest with stacks of produce in the house. The sign *chuño* on the right, may represent the Inca festival of 'inti Raymi', held on 24th June. It is in this period that *chuño*, the dried potatoes, are prepared.



Jallpa Tejray Quilla

This period is represented by *altar wasi*, which is similar to the 2nd and 5th periods. From observations, the 'altar' sign always represents some sort of festival and in this case probably represents the festival of Santiago of Taquile. All agricultural activities have ended and fishing and weaving begin.



Huata Jhahuana Quilla- 'The month to think of the whole year'

This month is represented by the *soche* fish. Here the fishes' behaviour would be used to forecast the coming year. If the eggs of the 'soche' are found in shallow waters, a dry year is expected. If they appear in deep water then much rain is expected.



Sumak Ijuata- Better year'

The ninth period is represented by six 'suyos', as is the first period. The previous period of the fish symbol plays an important role in the ploughing pattern of the 'suyos' during the coming year. If the fish laid eggs in shallow water, then rotation of the crops follows the last year's pattern, if not the crop rotation is changed and other crops are seeded.

art of weaving. Where sheep and alpaca herds have been sold because of drought and economic hardship, and where aniline dyes and synthetic yarns have replaced natural dyes and fibers, centuries of knowledge, history, and lore are threatened. Taquile and Jalq'a weavers who attended the 1991 Festival of American Folklife demonstrated how development programs designed to revitalize weaving traditions can strengthen cultural pride and economic security. Read the following articles to learn how such projects help preserve indigenous knowledge.

ETHNO-DEVELOPMENT IN TAQUILE

KEVIN HEALY

Peru's Taquile Island, 13,000 feet above sea level, is set against the spectacular mountain scenery of the Lake Titicaca basin. Quechua-speaking Taquileños farm steep, eroded hillsides and catch fresh trout, pejerrey and catfish for their island economy. Some islanders are master boatbuilders for the Aymara and Quechua communities on the Peruvian side of Lake Titicaca.

Taquile's geography and vibrant folk culture attract rugged tourists from around the globe. Over the past 15 years, the island's 1,200 residents have developed a model for Native American community control of tourism, frequently a source of cultural distortions in societies the world over. In Taquile, islander control of tourism has helped them maintain a strong sense of cultural integrity while adding economically to their community. Their local enterprise includes motorboat transportation, housing, restaurants, handicraft stores, a local museum and tour guide services. By working through local families and organizations, islanders maintain a scale of tourist activity consistent with a people-to-people approach and invite visitors to appreciate their local life and cultural values. The workings of this system have ensured an equitable distribution of the economic benefits and dynamic practices of peasant self-management.

Taquileños' everyday attire attests to their weaving tradition.

Combining dominant Inca reds, Andean geometric symbols and other fanciful designs, they are among the best weavers in Peru. As a cottage industry weaving provides economic benefits to everyone on the island. On ground looms women weave woolen belts, bags and ponchos of all sizes, while on treadle looms men weave cloth for peasant shirts. Men also knit vests and stocking caps.

Through their ethno-development strategy of tourism and textiles under Andean community control, Taquile has changed from one of the poorest Lake Titicaca communities to become one of its better-off during the past 20 years. Outside support for Taquile has come from the Inter-American Foundation, a Congressionally supported aid agency, which supports alternative community empowerment projects for socio-economic change.

Kevin Healy was a Peace Corps volunteer on Taquile Island in the late 1960s. He subsequently wrote a book about rural development in Bolivia and since 1978, as a grant officer with the Inter-American Foundation, has been funding alternative socio-economic development projects in the Andes, especially in Bolivia. He has degrees from Notre Dame, Georgetown, and Cornell.

ETHNO-DEVELOPMENT AMONG THE JALQ'A

KEVIN HEALY

The Jalq'a are an Andean ethnic group scattered among 30 communities in the remote, rugged mountainous area in the Chuquisaca region of south-central Bolivia. Families eke out a living from farming and pasturing and earn supplementary income from low-paying work in the city. Since 1986, this subsistence economy has changed for a growing number of female weavers (now reaching 380) and their families. Together with a Bolivian organization, Antropólogos del Sur Andino (ASUR), and support from the Inter-American Foundation, the Jalq'a's community organizations have begun a revival of a unique textile tradition. The animal motifs are singular among the weaving traditions of thousands of Andean communities: their *ajsus* or women's overskirts depict a dreamlike world of stylized creatures (condors, monkeys, foxes, lions, bats and cows) in reversible images.

In the past, outside commercial pressures eroded handicraft standards, and foreign dealers bought up the remaining fine textiles in the Jalq'a communities. In addition, drought damaged pasture lands, causing a drastic drop in the wool supply.

The weaving revival began as an economic development strategy to reverse the decline in their folk art and to increase cultural self-esteem among the population, creating a base for social change. Weavers together with ASUR have now organized weaving workshops, pur-

chased raw material, acquired dyes, opened a store in the city of Sucre and held exhibits in museums to promote their work throughout Bolivia. As a result, the market demand in Bolivia for their *ajsus* has grown rapidly. The Jalq'a have learned bookkeeping and administrative skills for their burgeoning enterprise through ASUR's multi-cultural community education program. Organizational and business knowhow are essential to their ambitious future programs, as are recovery of weaving skills and the maintenance of a strong sense of ethnic identity.

Their weaving revival incorporates an innovative method of using color photographs of Jalq'a pieces obtained from private collections. Jalq'a families use the photographs as guides to recover their rich repertoire of cultural motifs, as they weave for the new community enterprise together in their outdoor patios. They have been successfully creating weavings for sale from these traditional models and drawing inspiration from them for new pictorial compositions.

CEDAR: TREE OF LIFE

In a small clearing in the forest, a young woman is in labour. Two women companions urge her to pull hard on the cedar bark rope tied to a nearby tree. The baby, born onto a newly made cedar bark mat, cries its arrival into the Northwest Coast world. Its cradle of firmly woven cedar root, with a mattress and covering of soft-shredded cedar bark, is ready. . . .

Wearing a cedar bark hat, cape and skirt to protect her from the rain and the cold, the baby's grandmother digs into the pebble sand of the beach at low tide to collect clams. She loads them into a basket of cedar withe and root, adjusts the broad cedar bark tumpline across her forehead and returns home along the beach.

The embers in the centre of the big cedar plank house leap into flame as the clam gatherer's niece adds more wood. Smoke billows past the cedar rack above, where small split fish are hung to cure. It curls its way past the great cedar beams and rises out through the opening between the long cedar roof planks. The young girl takes redhot rocks from the fire with long tongs, dips them into a small cedar box of water to rinse off the ashes, then places the rocks into a cedar wood cooking box to boil water for the clams her aunt has gathered. Outside the house stands a tall, carved cedar memorial pole, bearing the prestigious crests of her family lineage. It had been raised with long, strong cedar withe ropes and validated with great ceremony. The house chief and noblemen had taken out their ceremonial regalia from large storage chests of cedar wood, dancers had worn cedar wood masks adorned with cascades of soft-shredded cedar bark and performed in front of screens made of cedar planks. Guests had been served quantities of food from huge cedar wood bowls and dishes, wiping their hands clean on soft-shredded cedar bark. . . .

Throughout her life the newborn baby girl, born before the coming of sailing ships from far-off lands, would rely on the magnificent cedar as an integral part of her life on the Northwest Coast. The child would grow up to respect the cedar tree above all others, believing in its spirit and power. She would refer to the cedar's supernatural spirit as "Long Life Maker" and "Rich Woman Maker," because it provided the necessities for a comfortable and full life.

Her people would travel by canoe on long trading journeys to bring back foods, raw materials and various goods not otherwise available. A large canoe would carry her entire family out to their summer village on the outer coast to fish for salmon and gather other resources that would see them through the winter. Without the nets, traps, weirs and harpoons, all made of cedar, to harvest the salmon, and the large cedar wood boxes in which to store foods for the long winter, her family would have found it difficult to survive. Practical clothing on the raincoast also came from the cedar, as did large structures to house and shelter extended families from the storms of winter and rains of spring. When people died, their remains were wrapped in cedar bark mats, put in cedar burial boxes and sometimes lashed to the branches of a cedar tree. From birth to death, the wood, bark, roots, withes and leaves of the mystical, powerful cedar tree provided generously for the needs of the peoples of the Northwest Coast materially, ceremonially and medicinally (Stewart 1984).

The passage excerpted above describes more than thirty ways cedar was used by Northwest Coast Natives before European contact in the 18th century. Since that time, motorized fishing boats and ferries have been used more often than canoes. Blue jeans and T-shirts have replaced cedar-bark wraps. But the cedar tree retains its central position as one of the most powerful and versatile economic, spiritual, and artistic resources in Northwest Coast Native life.

Figure 44

Cedar trees thrive in the moist, mild climate of the islands of Southeast Alaska, providing materials used in virtually every aspect of Native life.

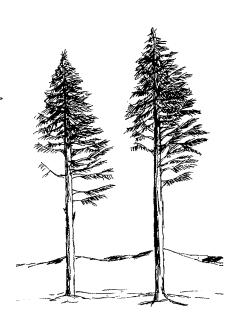




Figure 45 (Top right)

Showing respect for what nature provides is an integral part of life for Southeast Alaskan Natives. Holly Churchill, a Haida weaver, greets a cedar tree before stripping a piece of bark she will use to make a basket. Photo by Winona Wallace.

Figure 46

Totem poles are carved with symbols of clan history which communicate and preserve cultural identity. Photo courtesy Smithsonian Institution.



Red and yellow cedar trees (see Figure 44), along with other conifers, thrive in the moist, mild climate of the Southeast Alaskan islands. On the Queen Charlotte Islands, red cedars nearly 1,000 years old reach heights of 230 feet. One giant tree is 14 feet in diameter. Yellow cedars grow to heights of more than 145 feet.

Archeologists estimate that people of the region have used cedar planks, tools, and baskets for at least 4,000 years.

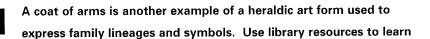
This vigor is matched by the cedar's tremendous versatility. Cedar branches and withes (long, slender twigs) are strong and flexible enough to make rope and burden baskets. The inner bark can be processed in a number of ways to make clothing, bedding, and baskets. The light, rot-resistant wood of the red cedar can be easily split to make planks for housing and boxes for storage. Softer than red cedar and less likely to split, yellow cedar is favored for carving smaller objects such as fishing hooks and floats.

In addition to these practical uses for cedar, the tree is the most commonly used medium for Southeast Alaskan decorative and ceremonial arts (see Figure 45). Elaborately carved spoons and bowls enhance ceremonial feasts. Dancers wearing carved masks move to the

sound of drums made with rawhide stretched over yellow cedar frames. Southeast Alaskan Natives surround themselves with art. Carved and painted boxes, doorways, and murals; carved figurines, rattles, and masks; painted drums; woven and appliquéd ceremonial regalia; delicately dyed and woven baskets — all bear the abstract designs evoking the characteristics of the plants, animals, and spirits of the temperate rainforest and the vivid red, black, and blue-green colors associated with the art of this region.

Of all the practical, decorative, or ceremonial objects made with cedar, perhaps none are more awe-inspiring than the totem poles which tower dramatically in parks and other public spaces in Southeast Alaskan communities such as Ketchikan. These poles — some over 80 feet tall — preserve the upward sweep of the stately cedar in its natural form and stand in testimony to the carver's skill and his role in preserving the heritage of his people (see Figure 46).

Totem poles are not objects of worship; their carved figures do not represent gods. Their function is heraldic, meaning that they communicate family lineages, legends, and histories. For the people of Southeast Alaska, a person's family heritage is one of the most important sources of pride and identity. Poles carved with symbols of clan identity, or crests, were traditionally placed at the entrance to a house, signaling family ownership and history. Most crests are animal figures representing the legendary ancestors of the family or clan. In his book *The Tlingit* (1991), Wallace M. Olson explains that "each clan had its own legend of how it originated and why it had a right to use a certain design or crest. For instance, one clan owns the story of the creation of the killerwhale, and through it, has a right to use the killerwhale as its crest."





about coats of arms. In what ways are they similar to or different from totem poles?



Animal figures are frequently used as school or sports team symbols. Explore the history of the adoption of your school's mascot. Does the mascot symbolize particular traits that are valued in your school?



Design a coat of arms or crest to represent a group that is important to you — your family, your friends, or your sports team. Be ready to tell your class about the symbols used in your design.

Story poles are carved with figures representing characters from stories handed down from generation to generation. These stories might explain how natural objects came to be, like the story of how Raven brought daylight to the people. They might express beliefs about right and wrong, like the story of the boy who brought hunger to his people because he did not show proper respect for the salmon.

Some totem poles are also carved as memorials upon the death of important clan members. These poles are carved with clan crests as well as symbols related to events in the deceased person's life. When a clan leader dies, it is the responsibility of the person who inherits his rank and privileges to see that a pole is carved and raised with an appropriate ceremony. Traditionally, the Tlingit cremated their dead and placed the remains in a hollowed-out portion of the pole. Haida mortuary poles held the remains of the deceased in boxes placed in cavities at the tops of the poles.

Poles may also be carved to honor the achievements of a living person. A pole recently raised in the Tsimshian community of Metlakatla is both a memorial to the carver's grandfather and a symbol of cultural unity among the four Tsimshian clans (see Figure 47).

Today, as in earlier times, most poles are carved by a master carv-

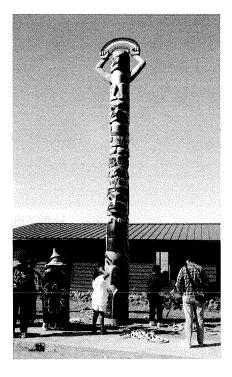


Figure 47

This pole, carved by David Boxley, was raised in the Tsimshian community of Metlakatla to honor the carver's grandfather and to represent unity among the four Tsimshian clans. Photo by Donelle Blubaugh.

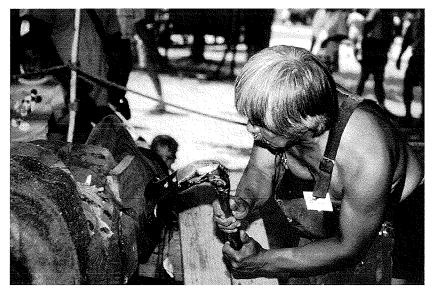
Figure 48

Enormous cedar logs such as these are carved to make totem poles. Photo by Donelle Blubaugh.



Figure 49

Nathan Jackson demonstrates totem carving techniques during the 1991 Festival of American Folklife. Photo courtesy Smithsonian Institution.



er commissioned on the basis of his carving skill and knowledge of traditional forms. Carvers must also have a detailed understanding of family histories and legends. As Dempsey Bob, a Canadian carver, explained in a 1989 interview, "To become a carver you have to know about your history, your oral history; you have to know nature, you have to know animals, you have to know wood, you have to know tools. . . . It's endless, the things you have to learn and it's a whole life learning process . . ." (Tongass Historical Museum 1993).

The process of creating a totem pole begins with the selection of a

cedar tree of appropriate height and diameter. Finding just the right tree might take days of hiking through spruce and cedar forests. Once a tree of the right size and shape is found, it is examined closely to make sure it doesn't have too many knots. If the crown of the tree is dead, the tree is probably dead on the inside and can't be used. The carver determines the quality of the wood by boring a hole in the tree that allows him to view the "heart" of the tree.

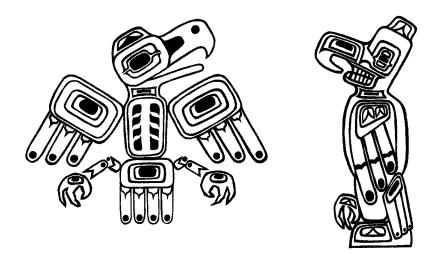
Once the selected tree is cut down, it is transported to the carver's work area. In the past, this involved enlisting teams of men to pull the log along skids from the forest to the water, where canoes were waiting to tow it to the village. Depending on the size of the log, it could take as many as 200 men twenty-four hours to get the job done. Of course, once the log was towed to the village, the skidding process was repeated to get it to the carving site. Today, carvers purchase logs (see Figure 48) from commercial logging companies, and massive machinery has replaced manual labor. Price depends on the height, diameter, and quality of the tree. The estimated cost of a log 30 feet tall and 28 inches in diameter is \$1,200.

At the carving site, the log is placed on a block of wood and the bark is removed. Then the sapwood, the layer of new wood just beneath the bark, is removed with an adze. By this time the carver and the person who commissioned the pole have discussed the crests or legends that will be depicted on the pole. The carver will execute the design as he sees fit, but within the guidelines of traditional content and form. Depending on the size of the pole and the type of design, the carving may take several months.

Designs are drawn freehand with charcoal directly on the pole. Some carvers also draw designs on tracing paper which are later transferred to the wood. Rough figures are cut with a chain saw or an adze. With knives and chisels the carver refines the larger shapes and adds delicate detail (see Figure 49). Throughout the process, the carv-

Figure 50

Totemic designs represent animals, supernatural beings, and natural objects.



er keeps the wood damp by pouring water over it and placing wet cloths over freshly carved areas. Projections such as wings, fins, beaks, or tails are attached using a mortise and tenon joint.

Typically, the entire surface of the pole is carved. The figures appear to support each other as the viewer's eye moves up or down the pole. Many of the figures are distorted to make the design fit the available space and to make all the details of each figure visible on one side of the pole. The head, with exaggerated eyes, brows, and mouth, is usually the dominant feature, while the torso may be shortened or omitted.

Although Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian carvings differ in subtle ways, they share common designs and motifs. While the specific stories behind the carved forms of a totem pole may be known only to members of a particular clan, the features of the carved animals, supernatural beings, and natural objects have become standardized over time, making these forms easily recognized symbols of cultural identity even when they are extremely distorted. For example, the raven, hawk, and eagle are recognized by the design of their beaks. The raven's beak is straight, the eagle's is curved, and the hawk's beak curves down and inward until it reaches the mouth or chin. Other devices provide a kind of visual dictionary. The ears of an animal figure are placed on top of the head, for example, while those of a



human figure are placed on each side. A beaver is always represented by long incisor teeth and a cross-hatched tail. A few totem design figures are shown in Figure 50.

Can you identify the animals represented in Figure 50? Remember, look for a detail that is a distinguishing characteristic of a particular animal. How do these designs compare to those used by Hopi potters and Andean weavers?

In addition to these symbols, Southeast Alaskan artists use a special set of shapes to form decorative patterns in carving, painting, appliqué, and weaving. A curved rectangle called an ovoid (see Figure 51) is the most recognizable pattern. This shape is used for eyes, mouths, ears, and joints.

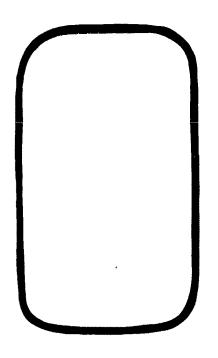
Once the carver has completed his designs, he will decide whether to use paint to emphasize some of the features of the totem pole. The colors most often used are black, red, and blue-green. Traditionally these colors were made from natural ingredients. Black was made from charcoal or graphite. Red was made from ocher or iron oxide. Blue-green was made from copper oxide. These substances were

Figure 51

The ovoid is a shape commonly used to make decorative patterns.

Figure 52

A pole-raising involves the entire community. Photo by Donelle Blubaugh.



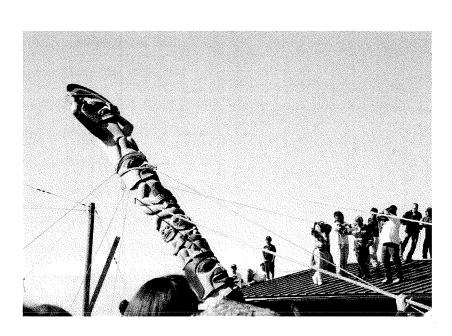
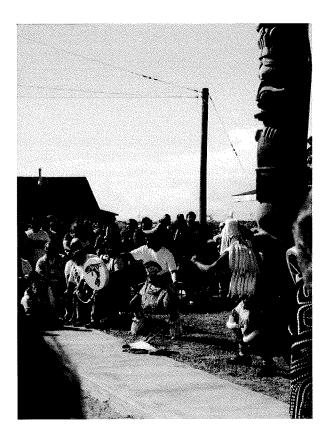


Figure 53

Tsimshian carver David Boxley dances after the pole he carved as a memorial to his grandfather is raised in Metlakatla. Photo by Donelle Blubaugh.



mixed with a binder made from salmon eggs chewed, spit into a container, and then applied to accent carved features such as eyes, brows, and mouths. Today, commercial paints are used almost exclusively.

Other decorations may be applied as well, although they are seen more often on ceremonial hats and masks than on totem poles. Inlaid rounds of abalone shell may be used for eyes. Copper, feathers, and cedar bark are sometimes used.

No protective sealant is applied to the pole. Cedar wood contains oils that act as natural preservatives, but totem poles are not intended to last forever. Few existing poles are more than 100 years old. Traditionally, totem poles are allowed to deteriorate and fall, their remains rotting away quickly in the damp Southeast Alaskan climate. Because the totem pole carver works within a strict set of artistic and cultural guidelines, a new pole carved for a new occasion represents both the past and the present.

A finished pole is erected with great public ceremony. One of the

primary principles of Southeast Alaskan Native life is that all important events must be publicly witnessed. In this way, historical accounts are validated, social status is acknowledged, and debts are paid. A pole raising is a community event honoring the life of the person memorialized by the pole or acknowledging the rights and responsibilities of the clan it represents.

Before the celebration, or potlatch, begins, the completed pole must be brought to the site where it will be raised. Although labor-saving machinery could be used to transport the huge sculpture, new poles are ceremoniously carried to the site on the shoulders of the men of the community. Figure 52 illustrates the cooperative labor required to raise a pole to its full height. Onlookers watch silently as the designated director of the operation instructs the teams manning the ropes and guiding the pole to its vertical position. All eyes follow the pole's ascent. Breaths are held in anticipation until the ropes are released and the upright pole is fully visible against the sky.

Once the pole is in place, drummers and singers in full ceremonial regalia accompany the carver as he dances around his creation, his carving tools hung around his waist (see Figure 53). Skilled orators recite family legends represented by clan crests or recall the achievements of a memorialized leader. The clan who commissioned the pole will honor guests invited to witness the event by serving an elaborate feast and distributing gifts.

Traditionally, young carvers learned their craft through apprenticeships with recognized master carvers. Uncles were responsible for their nephews' upbringing, and young men were frequently apprenticed to their uncles to learn carving. Learning to carve involved making and caring for tools, copying the master's designs, and later creating original objects under the uncle's watchful eye. Apprentices learned the family legends and histories and the symbol systems that represented them.

The arrival of missionaries, government agencies, commercial fish-

eries, and logging interests in Southeast Alaska has disrupted nearly every aspect of Native life in the region, including the transmission of traditional arts such as carving. By the end of the 19th century, many Native villages were decimated by diseases imported by white settlers and explorers. Traditional Native life was interrupted as outsiders banned traditional ceremonies and seized land. The totem poles raised to honor Native life and history were sold or confiscated. Family units were splintered when children were forced to attend distant boarding schools away from the traditional influence of clan elders. Subsistence activity is now limited by federal law, forcing Native participation in the cash economy. Cedar forests, once the life-sustaining sanctuary of Southeast Alaska's First People, have become the property of the United States Government and commercial logging companies. In spite of these intrusions, Native artists, storytellers, fishermen, hunters, and other practitioners of traditional culture continue their work and share their knowledge in communities throughout Southeast Alaska.

Over the past twenty years, as Native Alaskans have fought for the right to use the land that was originally theirs, interest in traditional art forms has increased. Many adult Tlingit, Tsimshian, and Haida Natives who did not have the opportunity to learn from their families are turning to organizations such as the Totem Heritage Center in Ketchikan and the Sealaska Foundation in Sitka for training in basketmaking, carving, drum making, and weaving. In courses taught by traditional artists and elders, many students are discovering unique talents as well as uncovering special connections to their ancestors and the environment.

Diane Douglas-Willard, a Haida basket maker, tells how she learned of an aunt's basket-making skill only after an instructor at the Totem Heritage Center remarked that someone in her family must have been a talented basket maker. This led Diane to research the origins of some baskets that her family owned. She discovered that the

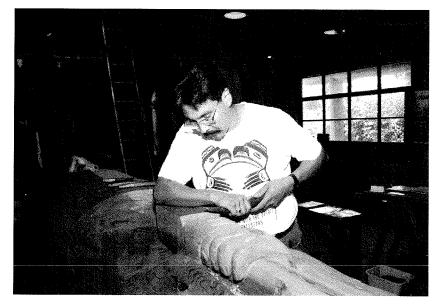
Figure 54

Diane Douglas-Willard discovered a talent for weaving baskets and a spiritual link to her aunt in basket-weaving classes at the Totem Heritage Center in Ketchikan. Photo courtesy Smithsonian Institution.



Figure 55

Lee Wallace, whose ancestors were Haida and Tlingit, traces his carving heritage back 200 years. Photo by Donelle Blubaugh.



intricate old baskets she had paid little attention to as a child were the work of her relative. Although Diane did not learn her art from her aunt, she thinks of herself as an heir to this traditional skill. Now Diane passes her knowledge on to her children, who participate in the gathering and preparation of the cedar bark from which Diane makes



Naatslanei was a great hunter and respected in his village

Noatslanei liked to hunt and fish with his three brothers in law.

The three brothers were jealous of Naatslanei and left him an a reef at low tide to drown when the tide covered the reef.

The youngest brother did'nt want to leave him, but he couldn't help. A loon appeared and took Naatslanei to a secret world inside the reef.

Here were people like him who put him in a bubble and he drifted to shore.

Naatslanei's wife was contacted and told to bring his tools to him secretly.

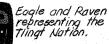
He carved a mean looking monster which he called "Keet".

The first one did not swim - but after carving the second one of yellow cedar, it began to swim.

"I have created you to avenge a wrong doing. Three men will be in a canoe. Dispose of the two bad ones but don't harm the youngest."

The killerwhale eliminated the two brothers and swam the youngest back to shore.

Naatslanei then ordered the killer whale to never harm man again and let Keergo.



Woman - represent ing a matrilinial society

The maternal uncle is responsible for the training of his nepheus.

Ixt' (medicine man) foretelle the future and can call upon powerful spirits to heal sickness.

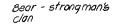
Kooshdaa <u>K</u>aa (landotter)

Owl woman while harvesting
herring one day
near Sitka her
family mistreated her. She
went into the
woods and became an owl.

Loo ka n'aa, the demon, moved like the Wind and awoke from trances in, strange places.

Tux guas', a wildman, wanders in the woods with an ade, when you see his spiral cuts in a tree and fast - you will become wealthy.

Lá noa xee do kw (Auke woman) a woman and baby survived an attack on the village.



A nuge sealion killed a hunter of the village.

The uncles, seeking revenge, met to organize a plan. All the perheuse went into training to averge the dead hunter. In the winter the young men would bathe in the salt water and be whipped with branches to keep the blood circulating. One nephew, who did not train with the others and was thought to be lazy, liked to sleep close to the fire. His skin became dark and he was named Duk toot! He trained secretly at night and when the play of the contest came he was ready. The young boys would attempt to kill the seallon barehanded. Duk t'oot! had to beg to go because eveyone made fun of him,

After all of the young men had failed to kill the large Sealion Duk toot! grabbed the sealion and ripped it in half on the reef.

Figure 56 (Left)

TIME

Illustration courtesy Goldbelt Corporation, Juneau, Alaska.

her baskets (see Figure 54).

Lee Wallace, a carver who lives and works in the Native village of Saxman near Ketchikan, traces his carving heritage back 200 years. Lee left a career in electronics to work with Nathan Jackson, a master carver who participated in the 1991 Festival of American Folklife. As Lee carves the last of six totem poles commissioned by a Ketchikan hotel (see Figure 55), he thinks constantly of his heritage, the remarkable cedar pole that will eventually tell part of his family history, and the future of the natural world celebrated in his art. Lee sees himself as both the bearer of cultural tradition and an artist "doing what my grandfather and great-grandfather did, which is carving cedar." He worries as continuous clear-cutting of ancient forests makes it difficult and expensive to get the strong, solid cedar required for totem poles. As a father who tries to interest his children in the traditional arts of his people, he hopes "more generations of this family will carry it on. My children are young and their futures are uncertain. Maybe they'll become artists. Maybe they'll use different mediums." He is considering carving a pole to express those feelings.

Figure 56 demonstrates how totem poles relate to clan histories, legends, and beliefs. Notice that the poles are not "read" like a book; the carved symbols serve as visual reminders of detailed stories fully known only by clan members. Find a Southeast Alaskan Native legend you like from one of the anthologies listed on page 136 or from a source recommended by your teacher or librarian. Design a totem pole with figures representing characters or events for the story. Use your pole to help you remember the story as you tell it to your class.



Design a totem pole that honors a special person or event in your life. Write a speech, poem, or song celebrating that person or event. Dedicate your totem pole by reciting your speech for your class.

Suggested Resources

General

All Roads Are Good: Native Voices on Life and Culture and Creation's Journey: Native American Identity and Belief (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press/National Museum of the American Indian, 1994) are two books which accompany exhibitions at the National Museum of the American Indian. Each book contains color reproductions of Native American arts and crafts and the commentary of Native Americans on the cultural significance of objects included in the exhibition.

Dover Publications, Inc., produces a number of inexpensive booklets containing designs from many Native American cultures that are useful for student art projects. Consult your bookseller.

Hopi Pottery

Designs and Factions: Politics, Religion, and Ceramics on the Hopi Third Mesa by Lydia Wycoff (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1985). This study examines the historical, environmental, and cultural forces that contribute to the techniques and motifs used by Third Mesa potters.

Andean Weaving

The Weavers of Ancient Peru by M.S. Fini (London: Tumi, 1985). This introduction to Peruvian textile arts provides excellent photographs and illustrations of the weavers' work.

Southeast Alaskan Cedar Carving

Box of Treasures. Chuck Olin, director. U'Mista Cultural Center, producer, 1983. This 28-minute video tells of the return of Kwakiutl potlatch treasures seized by the Canadian government in 1921. Distributed by Documentary Educational Resources.

Cedar: Tree of Life to the Northwest Coast Indians by Hilary Stewart (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1984). Stewart describes the amazing role of cedar in the lives of Northwest Coast Natives. Her photographs and detailed drawings illustrate the use of cedar as raw material for shelter, clothing, transportation, art, and ceremonial objects. Her focus on diverse uses of a single resource is excellent for helping students understand the concept of subsistence.

Keet Shagoon, the Origin of the Killer Whale. Naa Kahidi Theater, producer, 1988. This 28-minute video tells the story of Naatsilanei, who carves a killer whale to seek revenge against his brother-in-law. Four Tlingit performers costumed in traditional regalia enact the story. Available from Sealaska Heritage Foundation, One Sealaska Plaza, Suite 201, Juneau, Alaska 99801 (Tel. 907-463-4844).