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100 Years of Yakima Indian Nation Art

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100 YEARS OF YAKIMA INDIAN NATION ART

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by

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The curatorial process was examined in the preparation for a Washington State Centennial exhibition of Yakima Indian Nation art and Western Columbia Plateau material culture. Interviews with artists, local historians and collectors plus a review of literature gave contemporary and historical perspectives on the arts and crafts of the Columbia Plateau. An exhibition plan and museum education slide-text program are included in the study.

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INTRODUCTION

During my tenure as Associate Director of Larson Museum and Gallery at Yakima Valley Community College I developed an interest in local Native American art. I had the opportunity to meet and work with the staff at the Yakima Nation Cultural and Heritage Center in Toppenish, Washington. After conceiving of an idea for an exhibition celebrating the material culture of the Yakimas, I contacted Vivian Adams, director of the Yakima Nation Museum. In June of 1984, Ms. Adams responded affirmatively to my suggestion that we collaborate on such an exhibition for the Washington State Centennial in 1988. Tribal traditionalist and curator Agnes Tule also agreed to work on the project. We stayed in contact through the next year, meeting and sharing ideas about the artists and artifacts to be included. In the meantime I received permission to write a Master's Thesis on the curatorial process involved with planning the exhibition. By Spring of 1985 everyone involved with the project had a clear picture of what needed to be done to curate the exhibition, and we began the process in earnest.

What followed were many months of meetings and interviews with Indian artists, dancers, and local historians. The background knowledge required to organize the exhibition around a storyline was synthesized in two individualized study courses at Central Washington University on the History and Culture of Sahaptin Speakers, with Dr. Clayton Denman, and on the Evolution of Arts and Crafts in the Yakima Nation, with Quentin Fitzgerald. Several non-Indian individuals, most

notably Roger Ernesti and Mary Schlick, served as volunteer consultants on the project. University instructors John Agars and Dr. John Ressler supplied the technical expertise necessary to produce maps and documentary material for the exhibition. Dr. Anne Denman assisted with organizing the thesis and the Museology sections of my coursework. Slides were taken of objects created by the Indian artists and craftsmen to be used as illustrations of the type of artifacts to be displayed in the exhibition. Most of the participating artists are preparing special museum pieces to be displayed in the exhibition.

Our shared goals are to submit this exhibit plan to various businesses, corporations, foundations and government agencies and obtain a grant to cover the costs of a catalogue, purchasing some of the artworks for the permanent museum collection, building exhibit props and furnishings, and traveling the exhibition through Exhibit Touring Services, Evergreen State College, Olympia, Washington. Through this exhibition we hope to foster greater understanding of Yakima Nation Art and its accompanying cultural traditions.

In the Fall of 1985 we changed the name of the proposed traveling exhibition to Western Columbia Plateau Indian Art for two reasons. First, the material culture from which these arts and crafts are derived extends beyond today's Yakima Reservation boundaries, and into their traditional aboriginal territory on the Western Columbia Plateau. Secondly, we wanted to avoid any ethnic exclusivity that might be inferred on the part of any corporation or government agency who wished to sponsor the exhibition. Grant writer George Finch advised the Yakima Nation Museum curating committee to make this change, and we concurred.

It is difficult to gather data about current reservation artists. Many are suspicious of whites, and are wary of white exploitation. Many beadworkers, who have designed costumes for 40 years or more, think of their work as gift items and would never consider exhibiting or selling it. Yakimas do not "commercialize" their culture like some of the Southwest tribes. Communication is difficult with some of the traditional artists because they prefer to speak their native language, so the interviewer must use an interpreter. Little has been written about Plateau arts and crafts. Perhaps for these reasons many artists find it hard to talk about what they do.

Good quality art work can still be found at the Yakima Nation Cultural Center gift shop and at other Indian stores and trading posts in the lower Yakima Valley. The best places to study Plateau material culture are at the Yakima Nation Museum, the pow-wows and ceremonials (if you are invited). Local historians, tribal traditionalists, and collectors are willing to share data about Yakima Nation arts and crafts. I have found the Yakimas involved with this project to be most cooperative. The Yakima Nation Museum staff has spent many hours talking to me, setting up interviews, providing information from their library, and sharing their collections.

The plan of the thesis is to show the continuity between past and present Yakima arts and crafts. The research contained in the thesis will be a source of information about Yakima culture that is not readily available to non-Indians. Since all the traditional crafts served an historic utilitarian function, information on the history and culture of the people who later became part of the Yakima tribe is included.

The information presented in the thesis and the Centennial exhibition will assist Yakima Indian artists in establishing an identity within their own culture.

Co-operation between the director, curators and participants is essential for planning an ethnographic exhibition. This exhibition, and the educational material which accompanies it, is the result of the efforts of myself, Yakima Nation Museum Director Vivian Adams, Curator Agnes Tule, and my graduate study committee - John Agars, Anne Denman, and John Ressler.

Chapter 1

THE YAKIMA NATION MUSEUM

The Yakima Nation Museum, located on Highway 97 in Toppenish, Washington, tells the story of the Yakima Indian People by the Yakimas themselves, through dioramas and exhibits. The Museum is open year-round, seven days a week, except January and February. Spilyay (Coyote), the teacher of the Yakimas from out of their legendary past, is the visitor's guide. Through a blend of dramatic visual experiences and explanatory wall poetry from an oral tradition, the visitor is taken from time immemorial, through the world of ancestors, and up to the present. The visitor is invited to experience the Challenge of Spilyay. The purpose of the museum is to "show the close relationship of the Yakima people to the land and nature and to present this to the public so they may know and understand us better, with these techniques and underlying philosophies preserved and recorded to pass on to our young and future generations of Yakimas" (Jim, 1985:31).

A permanent collection of Native American art was bequested to the Yakima tribe in 1967 by Nippo Strongheart. Mr. Strongheart, an honorary Yakima, was an avid collector and Hollywood movie actor. The Strongheart collection formed the basis for the museum. A few Yakima artifacts have been added. The museum staff seeks to expand the collection, especially with Western Plateau artifacts, in order to offer a more complete interpretive exhibition to the tribal members and the general public. The museum provides both an informal learning environment for visitors, and a formal learning environment for students

and groups through guided tours. Programming objectives are established to invite curiosity, to instruct, and to entertain general audiences.

The goal of the Yakima Nation Museum staff and guest curator Jean Hauge is to open an exhibition of Western Columbia Plateau Indian art during the Washington State Centennial in 1988-89. The purpose of the exhibition is to:

-foster greater understanding of Yakima Indian Nation art and its accompanying cultural traditions.

-define the historical context of the art work.

-identify those artists who have developed a contemporary style within their own cultural heritage.

-compare and contrast with the permanent museum collection of Native American artifacts.

-arouse interest and stimulate enjoyment in Western Columbia Plateau art.

-present new research.

-display a group of objects that otherwise may not be shown.

-foster understanding between cultures.

-encourage traditional artists and craftsmen.

-stimulate a sense of pride in the community and culture.

-attract new categories of visitors.

-help achieve a higher profile in the community and in the state.

-spread new and little known information about Plateau art.

The Centennial exhibition will show how traditional Yakima arts and crafts reflect their material culture. Pieces will be selected for their integrity and their cultural significance. Both the utilitarian

crafts of the past and contemporary arts will be displayed. Ten documentary panels, with information on the culture, designs, and art/craft media, will illustrate the evolution of Yakima Nation crafts, which always served a utilitarian purpose, into modern art, which has a more aesthetic purpose.

Chapter 2

HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES

In 1989 Washington State will celebrate its Centennial. In order to curate an exhibition of Yakima Indian Nation art for this event, it is necessary to identify the art forms related to the Western Plateau culture of upper Columbian Sahaptin-speaking bands, who later became known as the Yakima Indian Nation. To understand the purpose of these art styles and designs, one must first look at historical events.

Little is known of Sahaptin arts and crafts before white contact. After Lewis and Clark explored the Columbia River in 1805-06 various ethnographers, travelers, trappers, government workers and railroad surveyors began to record their observations about the native cultures.

Yakima Nation art and crafts are a blend of Plateau and Plains Indian styles, with materials and designs from tribes and bands living on both the upper and lower Columbia River. The process of both intertribal and white acculturation has allowed the Yakima people to continue to produce their traditional art forms and also to create new, contemporary designs.

History and Culture of Aboriginal Sahaptin Speakers

The Setting. The aboriginal country of the Yakima people was located along the western border of the Columbia Plateau in the lee of the Cascades. The land slopes eastward, and the country is broken by the Yakima folds - long, narrow ridges extending into sagebrush

plains. North is the Wenatchee range; to the east, the Columbia River and Saddle Mountains; to the west, the Cascades, and to the south the Simcoe Mountains, Horse Heaven Hills, and the Columbia River. The climate is semi-arid, with warm to hot summers and colder winters. Chinook winds blow summer and winter.

Ancient Indian bands consisted of many diverse but culturally related Sahaptin speakers, who ranged over a considerable territory in a semi-nomadic lifestyle. The ancestors of the Yakimas lived along the Yakima River and its tributaries. These bands were not a political entity known as the Yakima tribe until after the Treaty of 1855.

Early cultures depended upon hunting, fishing for salmon and other species of fish, and gathering wild plant foods, chiefly camas roots and berries. Families would leave their winter lodges in the early spring of each year, to follow an annual cycle of root gathering in the higher elevations, fishing for spring Chinook, huckleberry picking, hunting wild game, and finally, fishing at the Dalles, Celilo Falls, Wenatshapam, Priest Rapids, Prosser Falls, Umatilla Rapids, Kettle Falls or the Klickitat in late Fall.

Before acquiring horses the people used dog teams and sleds. They usually carried food and camp equipment on their backs (Splawn, 1917:441). The introduction of the horse precipitated a change in the Yakima's subsistence and social activities. Intertribal relations were expanded and new art forms developed. Yakima participation in buffalo hunting on the Plains east of the Rocky Mountains is recounted by Gibbs (1854:92). Warfare and hunting with other Plains tribes promoted the borrowing of items from Plains material culture, including new clothing styles, skin teepees, and war bonnets (Schuster, 1975b: 19). The

Yakimas were successful horse breeders, and this gave them a new wealth with which to acquire other items through trade.

Dwellings. Ancient winter lodging for the Yakima bands were semi-subterranean earth lodges, covered over with mats, brush and dirt, with a smoke hole left in the top, with space for a ladder. Prehistoric circular mat lodges have been found in Nez Perce country, and are believed to be the prototype for the historic tule mat lodges and longhouses used by the Yakimas (Schuster, 1975b:11). Summer shelter was often a portable, mat covered, conical lodge, easily carried on horseback. On short trips a mat lean-to or temporary brush shelter was used, made of laced poles and a brush roof.

Sweat lodges are another type of structure used for short periods of time for "purifying" oneself, for curing disease, or for bathing. A common size might be 14 feet in diameter and 7 feet high. Sometimes these were just a hole dug in the ground on a stream bank; but often they were built above ground. A sweat house was dome-shaped, made of willow branches covered with grasses and earth, with a small aperture for a door. The door was closed with a grass mat. Stones were heated in the center, or thrown in. The bather chanted and sang until sweaty; then he came out and jumped in the water. Some sweat house ceremonies required the bather to follow this procedure five days in a row.

Annual food quest cycle. Economic pursuits of the Yakima people were closely tied to the natural wild life cycle. Subsistence resources were shared with other bands. It was women's role to procure wild plant staples, prepare meat and fish for storage, produce clothing,

shelter, and household paraphernalia. Men fished and hunted, often using long narrow dugout canoes or snowshoes for transportation. Salmon runs were predictable. The abundance of food resources often attracted large gatherings of people. The horse increased mobility and efficiency of subsistence activities.

Some time in February or March, as soon as the snows melted, women would gather celery stalks (xa-siya), and hold a root feast or "first foods rite." When the spring Chinook salmon reached the interior in March or April, the people held a "first salmon rite" feast. Families dispersed after the spring salmon run to dig roots. In April and May families moved about, women collecting plant food, and the men hunting and catching horses. Root plants grew all over the lower elevations. The women used 2' to 3' digging sticks made of elk horn or hard wood; later the digging tools were made of iron by blacksmiths. Bitteroot (pe-oc-ca) had multiroots twisted like small, interlaced fingers. After being dried it was boiled, making a stringy, watery food that was sweetened before it was eaten. There were many varieties of the camas, a scaly bulb ranging in size from a marble to a walnut. Camas was baked while fresh in a pit for two or three days, or dried and ground in a mortar and the meal made into cakes. Other food bulbs were steamed a shorter time in a pit. Additional gathered foods were sawitk (Indian carrots), sapk'tit (breadroot) and wa-pa-to (wild sweet potato). Bands gathered at Kam-mi-hi-tash camas grounds in June along the "Eel Trail" in the Simcoe Mountains. Another popular site was in the upper Yakima-Kittitas area between the Yakima River and the Columbia.

The second salmon run arrived in late June, and families again would disperse to the fisheries. The Yakimas had reciprocal rights to

fish at Wenatshapam and other sites.

In July the people moved to higher elevations. Men hunted game and pastured their horses. They often traded with other Indians by going over Naches Pass (Gibbs, 1854:408). They purchased dried clams and hiaqua (dentalium shell money) from the Nisqually, and sold horses to them. Occasionally the Yakimas would go on hunting parties with the Nez Perce and Flatheads across the Rocky Mountains, looking primarily for buffalo (Splawn, 1917:406).

Language. The Yakima are a Sahaptin tribe, formerly living on both sides of the Columbia and on the northerly branches of the Yakima and the Wenatchi (Boas, 1919-24: 983). They were part of the culture area designated as the middle Columbia area of the Plateau, which contains three major linguistic stocks: (1) Salish (2) Chinook--spoken by people living near the Dalles and Celilo Falls eastward along the Columbia, including Wishram and Wasco, and (3) Sahaptin--divided by the Sahaptin on the West and the Nez Perce on the eastern side of the Columbia. Sahaptin was spoken by widely scattered bands in Oregon and south central Washington. Two dialectic clusters divide the northeast speakers and the northwest speakers. The Yakima were the northwest Sahaptin bands, which included those residing in the upper Yakima or Kittitas, Rock Creek and Fallbridge, Wanapum, Klickitat, upper Cowlitz and the Meshal on the upper Nisqually River (Schuster, 1975b: 21-22). Chinook speaking bands had early white trading contacts, especially in the Astoria area. Both white fur traders and Columbia River bands adopted the Chinook jargon to use at trade gatherings during the 19th Century. Between 1860 and 1865 most of the Chinook speaking Wishram

moved to the Yakima Reservation and intermarried. It is difficult to identify the Yakima bands by their own Sahaptin language. Without a written language, and considering the extensive communication and affinal relationships they had with both Chinook and Salish speakers, a common language is not a distinguishing feature of the modern Yakima tribe.

Bands and villages. Close relationships between all Plateau bands were maintained through intermarriage, visiting, shared hunting, fishing and root digging grounds, and trade. With the social blending of peoples came also the blending of artistic styles. Several tribes and bands were politically affiliated with the Yakima people after the Treaty of 1855. Prior to the Treaty, these bands were linked to the Yakima through intermarriage, language, customs, subsistence resource sharing, and trade. These bands are part of the Yakima Nation today. Their main village sites and locations were Palouse-pums (Palouse River --Columbia River area), Pisquose (Wenatchi), Wenatshapam (fishery), Klikatat (Yakima and Klickitat Rivers), Klinquit (?), Kow-was-say-ee (opposite the mouth of the Umatilla River), Li-ay-was (?), Skin-pah (on the Columbia from the Dalles to about 75 miles above), Wish-ham (Wishram), Shyiks (?), Oche-chotes (small Columbia River band living opposite the mouth of the Deschutes River), Kah-milt-pah (the Rock Creek band), and Se-ap-cat (from the Columbia River below the mouth of the Wenatchi River) (Ray, 1936b). Not all of these bands elected to settle on the Yakima Reservation, and some of the bands have never been identified at all. Although their lands were ceded, the Wanapum, the Sinkiuse, the Umatilla and the Wayampam were not included as treaty

signers. Most, but not all Klickitat, Wishram and Skin-pah have moved onto the reservation. One of the most significant provisions in the Treaty for those moving onto the Reservation was to retain "the right of taking fish at all usual and accustomed places."

Interband gatherings and trade. Euro-American trade goods filtered onto the Plateau across mountain ranges from the East and the Pacific Coast, and up the Columbia River, long before actual firsthand contact with the Euro-American fur traders. Cattle and domestic crops were also introduced several decades before settlers moved into the Yakima Valley. George Gibbs (1853:92) noted in his records for the McClellan party that Chief Kamiakin had traded horses for cattle from the Hudson's Bay Company trading post at Fort Vancouver as early as 1840. Gibbs also recorded the Yakimas had gardens and irrigation ditches in 1853 (Schuster, 1975b:20-21).

The yearly economic cycle regulated a round of seasonal intergroup activities as people gathered at major subsistence sites. Trading centers developed at fishing areas and at camas grounds became the centers for intergroup ceremonials, feasting, councils, alliances, competitive sports, horse racing, gambling, marriage arrangements, and visiting (Schuster, 1975b:88).

The Yakimas took part, mostly in late summer and fall, in the fisheries at the Dalles and Celilo Falls; and traded with the Wyams, Skin-pah, Wasco, and Wishrams. Traded articles included deer and buffalo meat, pemmican, slaves and horses (Relander, 1955:43-45). At the confluence of the Snake and Columbia, the Yakimas held trade fairs with the Umatilla, Nez Perce, Walla Walla, Cayuse and other

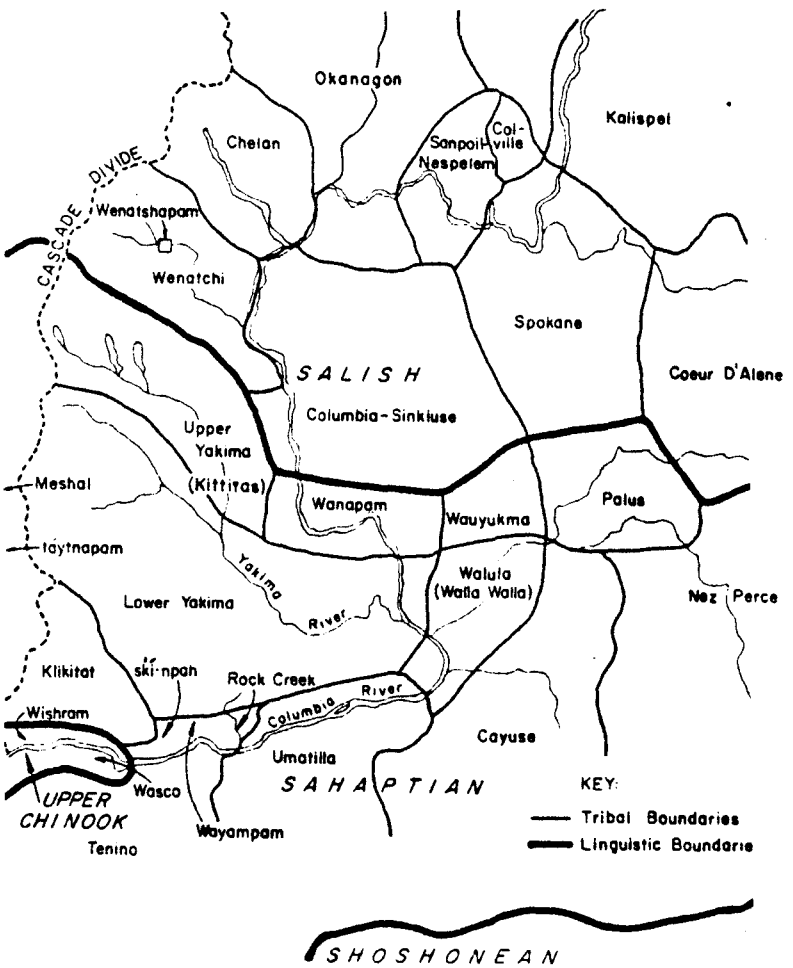

Figure 1

Map 2. Distribution of tribal groups and major linguistic boundaries, middle Columbia area of the Plateau, late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries. Map by the author after Jacobs, Maining, and Ray (Daugherty, 1973:17).

Sahaptin speakers (Schuster, 1975b:96).

Yakima people were passionately fond of gambling. They would often wager everything on a horse race. Iteh-le-cum, or "bone game," was an ancient form of gambling competition between bands. Two opposing groups would sit facing each other, with a row of sticks to be beaten upon by Indian players holding a stick in each hand. Bone game sticks were often gaily painted and handed down from one generation to the next. Through winning and losing at gambling certain wagered art and craft items might change hands.

The Yakima were tied by a network of affinal alliances through intermarriage with Wenatchi, Wishram, Ski-n, Klickitat, Walla Walla, Umatilla, Wayam-Tenino, Nez Perce, Palus, Spokane, Wanapum, Colombia, and Coastal Salish such as Snoqualmie (Schuster, 1975b:97-99). Ceremonial "giveaways" were an integral part of the kinship ties between in-laws, and within the immediate family. These "giveaways" were an exchange of goods for such events as receiving an ancestral name, first products or first dancing, death rites, and commemorative feasts. Exchanges or trades took place between affinal groups when a marriage was validated, the birth of a child was celebrated, a person was placed in mourning or removed from mourning. Often items exchanged or given included artwork, such as dance costumes, beaded bags, baskets, parfleches or robes. Sometimes a particular piece, such as a root bag, was woven especially for a child for her "first products" feast. Or, a widow might "give away" everything belonging to her late husband, including beaded clothing, war shields, robes, pipes, etc. In this manner many handcrafted items were diffused throughout the entire Plateau area. Artwork associated with a special event became more

valuable to the owner.

Warfare was a major method of acquiring artifacts among the Plains tribes. Among the Yakimas, however, military alliances were of a shifting nature, and appear to have involved local bands rather than large tribal groups. During the 18th Century war with the Yakima consisted of fighting between small parties engaged in horse stealing (Schuster, 1975b:98-99). The spoils of war often included shields, buckskin clothing, war bonnets, lances, war clubs, horse trappings and other artwork and hand-crafted items that may have originated in the enemy's own tribe, or another tribe many miles distant. A Yakima woman might choose to decorate a war club captured in a raid with beadwork and feathers, which might, in turn, be lost in warfare with yet another tribe.

Thus, from the earliest times, the Yakima people had ample opportunity through trade, warfare, intermarriage, giveaways, and intertribal gatherings, to acquire not only materials for the various handicrafts but also items made by other Native Americans residing great distances away.

Not only were artworks themselves exchanged, but design ideas and techniques. For instance, at a pow-wow one individual might ask another for permission to use a design. Permission was nearly always given because "borrowing" ideas and techniques was an acceptable way of developing your own style. This is one reason, as will subsequently become clearer, why it is often impossible to distinguish artwork between tribes, unless you know the person who actually created the piece (Ernesti, 1986).

Religion. Precontact Yakima religion was largely uncodified and relatively unstructured. The guardian spirit complex and the Washat, the traditional Indian religion of the longhouse, are perceived as indigenous by Yakimas today (Schuster, 1975b:148). Two other nativistic religions, the Feather Cult and the Shakers, both having to do with curing, made their appearances at the end of the 19th Century. Catholic, Methodist, and Presbyterian missionaries also were active in the area during that century.

The ancient Indian religion was a belief in supernatural phenomena of three kinds: (1) supernatural beliefs, (2) sacred places and (3) guardian spirit complex. (Schuster, 1975b:149). Everything, both animate and inanimate, had spirit powers. The spirit conferred the power. For example, some persons possessed powers to bring rain, to read character, to prophesy, to find lost objects, to assist in childbirth, to hunt successfully, to win at gambling, to be a salmon chief, to cure illness, etc.

Tax was supernatural power acquired by means of a vision quest. A child was instructed to go to a remote "sacred" place at night, alone, with a token. He usually stayed just overnight, but he could stay longer. There he might have an experience with an animal or something else that would confer power upon him. At vision time, the spirit conveys a song, wanpsa, which later could be sung at a "winter sing" or "medicine dance" (where people got together to validate their guardian spirit powers). The spirit may also give instructions on a dance, totem, taboos, dress, face painting, and how to use the power. This power would manifest itself later in life (Schuster, 1975b:115).

Spirit power could cause illness if not properly expressed. An

Indian medicine man was needed to "bring out" powers; otherwise a person could suffer from "spirit sickness." The nature of the power one had was revealed in his skills and abilities. The Indians believed individual accomplishment was due to their tutelary spirit help (Schuster, 1975b:116-117).

"Coyote" stories were the creation myths. Most supernatural beliefs were explained in mythology and legend. Gibbs, in 1853, while among the Klickitat, reports the Indians having a complex mythology with . . . "tales of figures with supernatural powers . . . Elip Tilicum, the "first people" of giant stature, who figure prominently in the tales . . . tales associated with landmarks . . . tales of constellations too . . . tales of Ta-la-pus, 'Prairie Wolf'. . . tales of Mount St. Helens, which erupted in 1842. . . . The Indians don't go there. . . . They have no conception of a Supreme Being" (U.S. War Dept., 1854:406). Ancient believers accepted the existence of cis, ghosts, who may try to communicate with people; or Stick Indians - a wild tribe of dwarves who inhabit the snowy mountains, who can become invisible and steal without detection (Schuster, 1975b:155 and U.S. War Dept., 1854:406).

Ancient rites, such as the "first foods" or "salmon feasts," manifest themselves in the Washat religion. Salmon was a token of love from the Divinity, a sacred food, second only to the life-giving waters (Relander, 1955:42). Splawn (1917:354) reports a "salmon dance" inside a lodge with the door on the East, three flags on the roof showing the sacred colors blue, white and yellow at Pa-ho-ta-cute. In this account Splawn tells about Ko-ti-ah-an, son of Show-a-way, who was a Washat priest at Union Gap, and who practiced a religion similar to Smohalla's at Priest Rapids. Ko-ti-ah-an preached . . ."At the beginning of the

world all was water with the Great Spirit dwelling above it. The Great Spirit threw up mud to make the land." Ko-ti-ah-an preached it was all right for the people to practice limited agriculture and to remain near their old villages. This was in contrast to a statement made by the Wanapum Smohalla, who is the accepted original prophet of the Washat or "Dreamer" religion:

> You ask me to plough the ground? Shall I take a knife and tear my mother's bosom? Then when I die, she will not take me to her bosom to rest. You ask me to dig for stone? Shall I dig under her skin for her bones? You ask me to cut grass, and make hay and sell it and be rich like white man, but how dare I cut off my Mother's hair?" (Relander, 1962:139).

The longhouse where Smohalla held the first Washat, or Sunday Dance, was at Priest Rapids. Smohalla had cried himself to death; then he was sent back to talk to the people. The message found its way upstream to Moses and his people, and to Homli's band downstream. It spread westerly through the Moxee Valley to the Yakima Nation, and over to the Kittitas Valley (Relander, 1962:80).

The Washat ceremonial dance proceeds as follows:

> . . . the worshippers arrange themselves in two lines . . .men and boys standing by one wall, women and girls along the other, all facing towards the center. . . . All are dressed in the best of their ancient costumes of beaded buckskin and shell ornaments, with their faces painted white, yellow and red. At the West end . . . facing the door, sits the high priest with the interpreter just behind him. On his left sit three drummers with their pum-pums before them. The high priest carries a large bell in one hand and a small bell in the other. Dishes of freshly cooked salmon and jars of water, together with other foods, are in front of those ready to partake. After a preliminary ceremony . . . a litany . . . the high priest gives the command, "Take water" . . . each one takes a sip. At the words, "Now eat," they all begin to chew. . . . At last . . . "Now help yourselves". . . the remains are cleared away and the dance begins. . . . At a signal . . . they begin to move their right hands backward and forward like fans in front of their hearts . . . balancing alternately upon their heels and toes. . . . Ritual songs and chants are kept up . . . Between songs, anyone who wishes to speak may step out into the open space . . . the interpreter comes forward . . . the

> speaker then tells his story . . . usually a trance vision of the spirit world . . . the interpreter repeats it . . . at the end of the recital . . . the priest gives the signal with the bell, when all raise their right hand with "Ah, yes" or Aaa-ii. After this the company files out . . . while the high priest stands and rings the bell. (Splawn, 1917:355-356).

Sunday has been observed as a holiday among the Indians ever since the Hudson's Bay Company and the missionaries came among the tribes a century ago. It has taken the place of many of their ceremonial dances. Among their periodical observations were the lament for the dead, the salmon dance, and the berry dance (Splawn, 1917:355).

A comparatively few Indian people accepted the latter day religion born along Puget Sound, the Shaker or healing religion, which was neither strictly Indian nor purely Protestant. The Shakers were healers; and they cut their hair, wore white men's clothes, and used crosses, candles, bells, and an altar during services. A wooden building with an oblong floor, around which benches are placed, is the scene of worship. The old medicine doctor rituals are employed in curing. The Indians assemble around a patient, gradually working the sin to the extremities. Then they imprison the evil in their cupped hands and throw it away. Shakers do not observe the first foods feast, the underlying precept of the old Indian religion. John Slocum, a Squaxin at Skookum Bay, was the originator of the faith. He died and returned to Earth to preach. Practitioners feel their religion so intensely they sometimes start to "shake"--hence the name (Relander, 1962:157, 163-64).

The father of the Feather Cult, or Waptasi, was Titcamnashat (Earth Thunderer), a name he acquired because of his ability to summon thunderstorms, and also known as Jake Hunt, a Klickitat. The Earth Thunderer was a shaman. Singing the vision songs the Feather Cult

dancers, or Spinners, dance and eat the foods the Indians traditionally have subsisted on. Liquor was banned to the members. The power of the Spinner was in his finger. He moved his finger over the patient's body, located the pain, and then lifted it out and released it. At times the Spinners, singing and dancing around the patient, brushed away the illness with their eagle feathers (Relander, 1962:1567-157).

A seven day week, with Sunday services at which the men and women are separated, is common to each of the three faiths--Feather Cult, Washat, and Shaker. Seven and three are mystic numbers, and all believe in heaven and hell. All believe in public confession, and the ceremony is concluded at each of the three types of services by circling the longhouse or church. Hand bells are used by the Washat and Spinner leader only; but by all participants of the Shaker religion, where anyone may preach. Curing is basic to the Shakers and Spinners, but healing is left to the medicine men by the Waptani. Feathers are worn as talismen by the Washat dancers and the Spinners and have power to those people; but feathers play no part in Shaker belief, which also ignores the hand drums used by the other faiths (Relander, 1962:161). All the Yakimas believe in haw-lu-k, which can only be described as a state of "being," like your breath, or your own spirit (Schuster, 1975b:159). The Washat incorporates some of the oldest rituals, such as the first foods feasts, funeral rites, and memory feasts; but adds Sunday dance, namings and wedding rites.

The Catholic or Protestant faiths were entirely or partially accepted by two-thirds of the Northwest tribes. Only the followers of the Washat and Spinning religion kept their hair long, and their hearts attuned to the drum throb of life (Relander, 1962:147).

The Treaty of 1855 and the impact of historic events. Creation of the reservation through the Treaty of 1855 brought together 14 tribes and bands, with different linguistic stocks and dialects, compelling the Indians to adopt economic pursuits and value systems alien to their traditions (Schuster, 1975b:27). Slowly the traditional art forms, such as basketry, weaving, and buckskin clothing, began to give way under the new pressures of adapting to reservation life and poverty.

Public pressure for private ownership of land, including reservations, culminated with passage of the General Allotment Act of 1887. The unallotted portion of the reservation was opened to Whites. Major arguments arose among the Yakima Indians themselves over the issues of enforced allotments, sale of reservation land to Whites, and opening of the reservation. Many Indian problems, such as prostitution, venereal disease, drunkenness, and poverty appeared to be directly associated with proximity to White towns or trading centers (Schuster, 1975b:67-68). Despite all of these problems, Yakima Indian artists continued to produce the traditional arts and crafts, especially beadwork and basketry.

The turbulent postallotment period was also marked by political and legal battles over rights to water for irrigation projects and fishing rights. Dams were being constructed at traditional fishing sites. Many Indians found themselves in the position of having to sell portions of their land to purchase irrigation water from the new canals being constructed. McWhorter (1913:153-55) presented the best and most well-documented summary of what he termed "the crime against the Yakimas." McWhorter wrote that by 1913 practically all of the agriculturally productive land on the reservation was occupied by

Whites, either through leases or through sale of allotments. Indian people were principally picking crops, freighting or working at other kinds of day labor (Schuster, 1975b:70).

Homer Barnett's (1969) manuscript on the Yakima Indians in 1942 is a study of social adjustments, factionalism between "longhair" conservatives and "shorthair" progressives, education, economic conditions and anti-White sentiments that he found being expressed on the reservation at that time. Many Indian people did not speak English before World War II. In the early part of the 20th Century, up to about 1970, many Yakima artifacts were sold to private collectors, probably out of necessity.

The following chapters show how art forms from a people who were comparatively isolated for thousands of years evolved and changed with time and contact with other people, both Indian and White. Other things beside historic events, especially relationships between Plateau bands and other peoples, affected the designs and artistic creations of the Yakima people.

Evolution of Yakima Nation Arts and Crafts

Prehistoric art. Archaeological evidence reveals that native Americans have lived in the Columbia Plateau for over twelve thousand years (Schuster, 1975b:8). The Plateau was part of the Old Cordelleran Culture, characterized by lanceolate projectile points of the Cascade type.

Various implements have been found at ancient sites such as Skwa-ni-na (whirlpool) on the west side of the Yakima River below the entrance of Wenas Creek, and at Tampico, along the Ahtanum Ridge.

Implements found include chipped stone projectile points, digging stick handles, net sinkers and grooved sinkers, pestles (some with carved animal head tops) and arrow-shaft smoothers. Also found were a figure carved in antlers with a feather headdress, painted face and fringed apron around the loins, and a tubular form of pipe, petroglyphs and pictographs, engraved dentalium shells, rock-slide sepulchers, and stone clubs with carved handles (H. Smith, 1910:8-11).

Artifacts found at burial sites give further clues to early art forms. Alexander Ross, of the North West Fur Company, in 1811 commented that graves were marked by upright sticks and decorated with European trade goods. Artifacts represented personal possessions and varied greatly. Dentalium shells and shell beads from the coast, coiled baskets, stitched rush mats, gaming bones, wooden bows, dog bones and shell ornaments are examples of grave goods found.

Petroglyphs and pictographs of various ages exist on rock faces in many places throughout the Plateau area. Petroglyphs are not "pecked," but incised or abraided by rubbing sharp stones back and forth, creating linear outlines (Schneider, 1972:24). Anthropologists surveying a petroglyph site across from the Dalles on the Columbia River in 1924 found the objects depicted fell roughly into four classes. The first class includes human figures, such as two human figures with head decorations. This could be a depiction of the sun, war bonnet, or headdress (Strong and Schenk, 1925:79). The second class includes all the animal forms. There are at least eight species of animal forms including the mountain sheep, the elk, the mountain goat, the deer, the horse, the wolf or coyote, the buffalo, and the rattlesnake. The horse is rarely represented. The third category is called "water animals" by

the local Wishram Indians. Some figures resemble turtles, but most seem to represent an ancient mythology. The interpretation of these designs can be only subjective, since little is known about what they are. The last category is that of conventional designs, such as the curvilinear diamond, the star and comet-like figure, and crescent moon shapes. Wishram Indians say these figures represented the "spirit" of the artist, and that they were made by "old, old people" (Strong and Schenk, 1925:83-86).

While reading from early accounts of the legends of Plateau people, an elaborate mythology involving "animal people" and a kind of astrology emerges. Also, there was a widespread belief in tax or spirit-powers held by animals, places, or even hand-carved objects. The Wanapums definitely associated these rock carvings with their ancient ceremonials and religious beliefs, as is documented by Relander. I see these petroglyph designs as simply representations of early mythological "animal people" or ceremonials such as the first foods feast. A petroglyph now at Wanapum Dam seems to be a representation of a first salmon rite, where two men in ceremonial headdresses are carrying a salmon to a baking rack.

Pictographs, or painted surfaces, appear on many rock faces in the Plateau area, often near petroglyphs. These are probably of more ancient origin than the petroglyphs (Strong and Schenk, 1925:86). A pictograph of a buffalo, painted in dull, rusty red, appears near the petroglyphs at the Dalles. Faces painted in red, black and white with the "headdress" and large circular eyes appear on the cliffs near the Naches River in Yakima. Also, geometric symbols, variations of a circle or Sun disk motif with radiating lines are rubbed into the rock. Local

Indian legend says these were "paintings done by a small boy." Unfortunately, due to vandalism and weathering, these pictographs are rapidly losing their clarity. The meanings of the paintings have been lost.

Flaked tools, also known as "arrowheads," should be included in a study of early art forms. These are properly called "points," since only those with a notched base indicate their being attached to a shaft. Native Americans made several types of points. Bird points were tiny, less than one inch long. Arrow points were thin, lightweight and less than two inches long. Spear tips were larger and heavier. Knives were large points, and drills were very long, slim points. Scrapers and axes were flaked from stone, a process by which the craftsman strikes blows directly on an object with a hammerstone. Sometimes a baton or billet of wood or antler bone was used in percussion flaking to make a scraper.

To make notches in a point, or achieve better symmetry, Indians used the technique of pressure flaking. The stone was compressed and the flake dislodged with a shearing action. Tools were made of weathered deer antler hafted to a 6" - 8" shaft with a tine at the end made of antler tip, steel nail, or a bone splinter. Indians used a palm pad of heavy deer hide or buckskin for protection for the hand which gripped the blank (Schneider, 1972:30-42). Indian "chip sites" dot the banks of the Columbia. There was a great deal of intertribal trading, especially with flint (chert) and obsidian. Native stone such as agate, basalt, and petrified wood was not as valuable as chalcedony, quartz or onyx, although all could be used for flaking points.

Hammerstones were always made from a hard material, such as

basalt or quartzite, and were about two inches in diameter, easy to grasp, usually nicely rounded, with pointed edges.

The earliest traditional art forms and designs for the Yakima people were the petroglyphs and pictographs, and stone age tools, such as slab mortars and pestles and stone points. Ornamental materials, such as engraved dentalium shells and shell ornaments, were part of early clothing styles. Coiled basketry, stitched mats and bone and wood carving were indigenous to early populations. Some of these early craft works are still part of Yakima culture.

Basketry. Extensive trade was carried on by populations of the Columbia River Valley, the Plateau and Northern Plains in late prehistoric and early historic times. Coiled and twined basketry was indigenous to the Yakima and related Plateau peoples, such as the Thompson Indians in the Fraser River area.

Most Western Washington tribes made coiled and imbricated basketry. Early Sahaptin tribes who did were the Wanukt, Taitnapam, and Klickitat. Basket making probably originated with the Salish speakers residing in the Cascade region. Other tribes acquired the technique from the Salish or traded for baskets. Aboriginal Yakimas did not make many; and those made by the Klickitat are considered to be coarser than other tribes (Boas, 1919-24:133-137).

The Klickitat learned basketry from the Cowlitz and Nisqually when they moved into the region. At first all coiled ware was made from cedar roots. Early designs were burden baskets, slightly rounder and less flaring than the Thompson, storage baskets, oblong receptacles with rounded corners, and kettles, always in cylindrical shapes. After acquiring horses, the Klickitat made circular kettles with a small

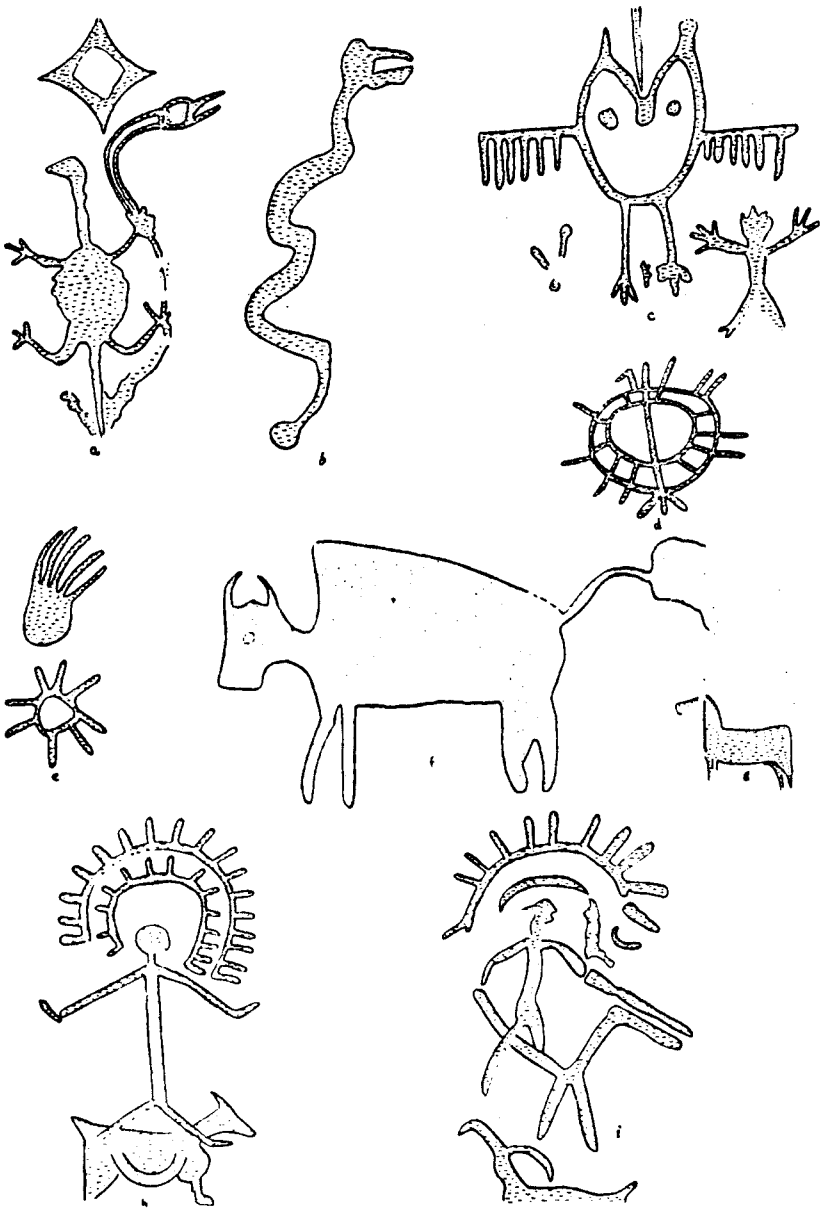

Figure 2

Drawings of petroglyphs on the Columbia River near the Dalles, Spedis, Washington (Not drawn to scale) a. "Water animal," length from top of head to end of tail, 21 inches; b. Rattlesnake; c. "Water animal," from tip to tip of wings, 22 inches; d. Conventional design or possibly a "water animal;" e. Conventional designs, star and comet; f. Buffalo, the only pictograph in the canyon; g. Horse; h. Man with head-dress drawn partly over an older figure of a goat. Man's legs are definitely cut through goat design; i. Man with head-dress on horseback (Strong, 1925:78).

Figure 3

Drawings of petroglyphs on the Columbia River near the Dalles, Spedis, Washington. (All are drawn to same scale) a, b, c, d. Mountain goats, width of body of a is 3 1/2 inches; e-m, inc. Mountain sheep; n, o, p. Elk; q, r, s. Deer (Strong, 1925:81).

bottom, which was better adapted to packing (Boas, 1919-24:137-138). Modern "berry baskets" are high, narrow, inverted truncated cones.

Other basketry techniques developed by the Klickitat were plain or twilled twine baskets, plaited baskets and wickerwork. Materials were split cedar twigs, cedar bark strips, slats of vine maple, spruce root, basket grass, young shoots and leaves of bullrushes. Temporary receptacles of rough construction fashioned from a single piece of bark, called a "cedar-bark basket," were used by many Columbia Plateau tribes.

Warner Jim, an enrolled Yakima, is one of the few Columbia River Indians still making the berry baskets from a single piece of cedar bark. Scars on ancient cedars in the Gifford Pinchot National Forest show that native people have been making bark baskets for many years. Mary Schlick gives a detailed account by Warner Jim of how his Rock Creek grandmother first introduced him to basket making in "Cedar Bark Baskets" (Schlick, 1984:26-28). Warner Jim's tools are a knife for prying up bark, and a small ax, needle and strong thread, and a "gun" (a bow made from a branch) to mark the basket's base. The bark baskets cost between $40 - $100 at the Yakima Nation Cultural Center giftshop.

Both Yakima and Klickitat basket makers used a technique called imbrication to decorate their coiled ware. The coiled foundation is in cedar or spruce, while the sewing is done with the outer and tough portion of the root. The stitches pass over the upper bundle of splints and are locked with those underneath. The imbrication is added to the outside of the basket. The method of adding this ornamentation in strips of cherry bark, cedar bark, and bear grass stems dyed with the Oregon grape, is unique to the Klickitat basket. The strip of colored bark or grass is laid down and caught under a passing stitch. Before

another stitch is taken this one is bent forward to cover the last stitch, then doubled on itself so as to be underneath the next stitch, so that the sewing is concealed (Mason, 1904:19-27).

In all coiled basketry the only implement used originally was a bone awl. The point, being a little rounded, could penetrate beneath the stitches of the coil underneath and not force itself through them. The iron awl, being hard and sharp, breaks the texture and leaves a rough surface (Mason, 1904:19).

Natural dyes for the imbricated coiled ware were originally made from cedar bark dyed red with alder; yellow with the Oregon grape root; and black by burying it in the mud. Grass was used as its natural white color or dyed the same way as the cedar bark. Sometimes the black bark of sedge growing along streams was used.

All Cascade peoples made loopwork and plain basket rims. The Klickitat were fond of using a false braid rim. In loopwork, the coil is stitched only where it touches the side walls to make a loop. Coil work lids were a late development. Early lids were merely pieces of bark or mats larger than the mouth of the basket (Boas, 1919-24:141-181).

Early basketmakers employed digging sticks and pry bars for uncovering and loosening the roots. This was supplanted by shovels and picks. Former bark cleaning tools were bone knives, stones and fine-edged arrowheads or spear points (Boas, 1919-24:141). Now a sharp steel knife, with the bark laid flat on a table, is used to cut it into splints.

Each basket form suited its purpose. The large burden baskets were for carrying dry goods on the back with tump lines going around the forehead. Round baskets were created for use as basins, pails, bowls,

and kettles. Contemporary Klickitat basketmaker Nettie Kuneki said the way to know whether your basket is tight enough to hold water or not is to dip it in the river and see if it leaks! Nut and pot-shaped baskets were for storing small things. Storage baskets were first noted by Lewis and Clark on the Columbia in 1805, when they observed native women packing nearly 100 pounds of pulverized salmon into a large basket lined with fish skins.

Credit for teaching the traditional art of basketmaking to the Yakima people is given to Coyote, the mythic hero and trickster. This legend and an excellent account of Klickitat basketry can be found in The Heritage of Klickitat Basketry by Nettie Kuneki (1982).

Klickitat and Yakima used geometrical designs on their baskets. The pattern generally covered the whole field, arranged in horizontal, diagonal, or perpendicular bands. Although zigzag patterns were most common, the designs on the Klickitat baskets varied with the weaver. Nettie Kuneki said zigzags remind her of mountain peaks, and that is why she chooses to use this pattern in her baskets.

There was rarely more than one pattern on the same basket. Wishram and Wasco used realistic animal figures with names such as "people," "dog," "horse," "salmon," "butterfly," "head," and "face." Popular Klickitat designs were "arrowhead," "leg" and "eye." Other design motifs commonly employed by Yakima and Klickitat were "net," "bullsnake," "foot," "gill," "spiral," "fingernail," "cloud," "splice," "bar," "line," "tooth," "people," "butterfly," "false foot," "imprint of stroke," "scratch," "narrow feathers" and "quail." Illustrations of these designs can be found in Boas (1919-24).

Learning to recognize the different designs and materials used on

Klickitat basketry contributes to our appreciation of this ancient art form. Nettie Kuneki says an experienced weaver can make a small basket in about a week. It takes a month to make the gallon size; and that is after the weaver has tramped through the woods, looking for the long roots of the western red cedar; and gathered, peeled and split the roots, and bundled them up and carried them home (Schlick, 1981).

Today Indian women like Nettie Kuneki still make woven baskets and bags. A small, coiled Klickitat basket, with an imbricated design, costs about $35. The gallon size costs from $200 to $400. A five gallon basket would cost about $2,000. There are few women left who have the skill and the patience to continue making traditional baskets. An attempt was made in 1975 to teach basketry at the Mid-Columbia Center in Bingen through Clark College. After four years of this Indian Culture program many of the participants mastered bead and featherwork, but only three are now basketmakers, and one of them is Nettie Kuneki (Schlick, 1981).

Weaving. Indian women living near the Yakima and Columbia Rivers had unique problems to solve: how to protect and transport family belongings during seasonal moves to the river, to the root digging fields, to the mountains for berries, and back to the winter camps. They needed containers to keep dried roots and other foods from dust, to carry small personal objects, clothing and jewelry. These bags needed to be flexible and to take up little space when not in use (Schlick, 1980:12-13).

The twined weaving of the Columbia Plateau Indians is an indigenous art form that includes flat "Nez Perce" bags and "Sally bags," which had rounded bottoms, and "root bags." Different sizes

were created for different purposes. A small root bag might be made for a child or for smaller size roots. The basic weaving techniques--twining and false embroidery--were skillfully used by women in Sahaptin-speaking groups as well as Wishram, Wasco, and interior Salish, long before the arrival of Lewis and Clark. The bags were made for gifts or for the weaver's own use (Schlick, 1980:12-13).

Various fibers were spun by ancestors of present day Yakimas. Indian hemp, Apocynum cannabinum, produces soft lustrous fibers that can be spun into long twine. Other fibers such as the inner bark of the willow, the bark of antelope brush, and sagebrush were used, but hemp was the favorite. To decorate the bag and make it dust proof, the weaver added an outside layer as she worked called "false embroidery." (Schlick, 1981:13). Great effort went into gathering, curing, and spinning the hemp. Ryegrass, bulrush (tule), willow bark, or bear grass was similarly treated for the false embroidery. Bear grass was often traded at the Dalles.

The older bags were all hemp with only the designs in grass in their natural colors of green, yellow, and white. Later they used corn husks for false embroidery. Indian corn was prized for its strong, soft interior husks. Yarn unraveled from blankets or trader's cloth was sometimes used in early decorative designs. When it became available, commercial cotton hop twine replaced handspun hemp. Some bags were constructed entirely of cotton twine with a cornhusk false embroidery covering. In the 1880's worsted wool yarn provided the decorative element, replacing dyed cornhusk. By 1900 Plateau weavers were using a variety of materials. Although red was the most popular color, all hues were used on later bags for decoration (Schlick, 1981:18-20).

Tradition seems to be the only limiting factor in the designs on woven bags. Geometric designs predominate, especially in a symmetrical arrangement. In some bags, the forms were coordinated into one design, such as a large central motif with smaller motifs in the corners. Weavers often repeated horizontal rows and vertical columns, or they arranged three design areas vertically. The artist did not always create the same design on the two sides of the bag. There was some agreement among native artists interviewed by Mary Schlick that Nez Perce designs were bolder, often with black outlines; that Cayuse were well designed, bright and innovative; and Yakima simpler, dignified, and primarily geometric (Schlick, 1981:16-20).

Other types of woven art were created by Plateau people. The interior Salish, Yakima and Nez Perce made a flat, twined wallet out of Indian hemp ornamented with yellow, green and white tules. Fez-shaped woven caps, called "basketry hats," were originally made by Klickitat and Nez Perce. They were traded and worn by women of all the surrounding tribes. These hats were woven of Indian hemp twine and ornamented with elk grass in the same designs and colors as the Klickitat baskets. Both Klickitat and Yakima people used stitched tule mats for lodge floors, interior walls, and lodge coverings. Tule mats were not decorated because they were thought of as functional pieces (Boas, 1919-24:354-355). Occasionally women wove tule into bags and baskets (Tule, 1985).

The oldest woven blankets were made of goat hair by the Klickitat and Salish. The threads were spun on spindles resembling those of coast Indians. Dog's hair was never used by the Klickitat, but strips of rabbit skin, deer, fawn and beaver made excellent blankets. Skin

blankets were oldest, then goat hair blankets. Klickitat people used square looms and sold their blankets to the Yakima, Walla Walla and other Eastern Plateau tribes. Griswold stated the Flatheads traded with the Salish, Shoshoni, Crow, and Nez Perce; procuring basketry bags, camas and bitterroot; and furnishing buffalo hides and skins (Griswold, 1954:119).

The number of weavers of twined bags has declined steadily since the beginning of the 20th Century. However, in a 1934 Bureau of Indian Affairs survey there were cornhusk bag makers listed for the Umatilla, Yakima, and Nez Perce reservations. Today few artists are creating the twined bags, and most of those are using all commercial materials. Their false embroidery does not always cover the entire bag, and is confined to the decorative elements (Schlick, 1981).

Often this twined artwork is passed from one family to another through memorials, weddings and other trades. It is not often offered for sale to non-Indians. A few basketry hats and twined bags are still being made by Yakima artists Helen and Lena Jim and other members of their family. The prices of this artwork range from $50 to $400, with the hats being the most expensive. Considering the antiquity of the tradition behind these beautiful twined bags, and the skill and patience of the weaver, this artwork is well worth collecting.

Clothing construction. Plateau people and native Americans from all tribes have always "worn their art." Indian costumes today range from the traditional buckskin shirts and dresses worn at pow-wows to the contemporary, symbolic motifs on current styles created by Indian fashion designers.

Little evidence exists of clothing styles among the Yakimas during that early period of aboriginal isolation before B.C. 7,000 (Daugherty, 1973:9). Agnes Tule, at the Yakima Nation Cultural Center, informs me that early peoples wore clothing made from woven sagebrush, spruce, cedar bark or Indian hemp. Clothing materials used by earlier people depended upon temporary living sites. Low, flat land provided sagebrush bark. Forest areas provided cedar and spruce. Men wore a breechclout, sandals, and a fur robe or cape. Women wore a short woven skirt and a short cape, and woven sandals. Boas (1919-24:357) mentions goat hair blankets decorated with geometric spirals and zigzags. Tanned buckskin clothing may not have been worn until Yakima peoples had contact with Plains tribes after the time of the horse.

By early historic times, the Yakimas carried on extensive trade with other Indian peoples in the Columbia River Valley, the Plateau and the Northern Plains. This was further stimulated by white manufactured goods from British Canada, the Spanish Southwest, and trading vessels off the Northwest coast. The Columbia Basin always had a well-developed system of waterways, which were accessed by many tribes.

By 1800 two great trading centers existed, one at the Dalles, and one on the Missouri River. Sea shells and other coastal items were passed from the Nez Perce to the Crow and onto the Missouri River tribes. Likewise, European goods flowed from the Missouri River area to the Dalles. The Klamath and Modoc made slave-trading trips to the Dalles via the Deschutes River, bringing with them Monterey Bay shells. For at least the last 250 years the Yakimas have had access to the clothing styles of many other tribes.

A.J. Splawn (1917:40) described the dress of the warrior

Qual-chan in 1855, including the war trappings on his horse, alleged to have been a gift from the Nez Perce. Qual-chan was wearing a buckskin shirt decorated with elk's teeth, beaded buckskin "leggins" and moccasins; carrying a tomahawk, pipe, a long knife, rifle and pistol, and topped by an eagle feather war bonnet. The horse was decorated with beaded buckskin ornaments and eagle feathers. Tribal traditionalist Agnes Tule said the early buckskin clothing was only painted; the beadwork and quills came later.

Lewis and Clark, in 1805, found women wearing a buckskin breechclout with a small skin robe. Later researcher Albert Lewis reported on an early exploration of the Willamette a few years after the Lewis and Clark expedition: "Clothing styles were influenced by Interior styles arriving at the Dalles. On the Columbia the woman's cedar-bark petticoat was replaced by the buckskin breech-clout of the Interior. They were also wearing shirts, 'leggins,' and buckskin dresses. . . . Hair was braided and twined with thongs of skin into two queues, similar to Interior styles" (Lewis, 1964:167). Lewis further described the men as wearing buckskin shirts, "leggins" and moccasins, with skin robes of twined strips of rabbit and other furs. Women wore a longer shirt of dressed buckskin, leggins and moccasins extensively ornamented with fringes, beads and quills. Other ornaments worn were bear claws, elk teeth, feathers (especially eagle feathers) and marine shells. Some women wore a wrapped, twined woven basket hat (Lewis, 1964:186-89).

Tanning buckskin for clothing is a complicated, time consuming process which probably was not practiced by the Yakimas in early times, possibly before 0-B.C./A.D. (Daugherty, 1973:3,47). "Indian tanned"

buckskin is far superior to commercially tanned buckskin because it is softer and can be pierced easily with a needle. Tanning buckskin was usually women's work. The process involves fleshing, de-hairing, braining (soaking the skin in a brain mush of deer, beaver or rabbit), stretching and smoking. One tanned deerskin equals roughly six square feet. "Leggins" require one skin per leg. A dress required two large skins sewn together, with the forelegs used for sleeves. One skin would make two to three pairs of moccasins (Schneider, 1972).

By 1910 there were accounts of traditional dress with additional ornamentation, similar to that worn by Plains tribes. H.I. Smith (1910:101) described the articles of dress in the Longhouse at Union Gap as . . . "garments ornamented with shells, elk's teeth, feathers and furs . . . people wearing headbands, armlets, bracelets, belts, necklaces, and rings of metal, embroidered buckskins, marked with symbolic decoration." Click Relander (1962:79-81) found . . ."Women wearing moccasins, basket hats and shell and porcupine quill-covered deerskin dresses" in the early Wanapum longhouse of Smohalla, a Washat prophet. He also mentioned Smohalla as having . . ."strips of otter fur . . . worn only by leaders . . . interwoven in his sparse braids."

Late in the 19th Century cloth "wing dresses" for women became popular, and are still worn today. Later, "ribbon shirts" for men made their appearance. The Yakima Nation Museum staff maintains these styles originated after Indian people began to purchase trade cloth, ribbons, and thread from the Astoria fur trading company. A wing dress is stitched at the shoulders and sides, with the sleeves left open. It is not uncommon on the reservation to see Yakima women, especially elders and young girls, wearing wing dresses, shawls, moccasins, and a

handkerchief or beaded hair ornaments. Another informant tells me this style of dress has replaced the buckskin dresses originally worn at the Washat ceremonials in the longhouse. Frequently women sew the traditional shell ornaments or elk's teeth onto these wing dresses. A type of moccasin with the legging sewn onto it as one piece is becoming popular. "Ribbon" shirts are simply yoked western style shirts with ribbon embroidery attached around the sleeves and across the yoke. Silver studded and beaded belts, buckles and twined horsehair belts and headbands are worn with these more modern (c. 1970) Yakima costumes.

In 1780 the Hudson's Bay Company introduced the wool "point blanket" as a trade item. These blankets largely replaced the fur robes. Indian people purchased the blankets and made them into "capotes." The body of a capote is one piece, with separate pieces for the hood and sleeves. The hood was fringed and had a tassel hanging from the tip in back. The "points" on the blanket were the black lines, ranging from one point to four points. A three point blanket weighed three pounds, and was of better quality than a two point blanket. Although the old style blankets are no longer manufactured, these capotes are still sold at reservation gift shops, including the one at the Yakima Nation Cultural Center (McCracken: 98).

The best place to observe current Yakima Indian costumes is at the Tiin-ow-wit pow-wow held in White Swan, or the dance performances by private dance groups, such as the Satus Dancers or the White Swan Weaseltail Club. Adults teach traditional dancing to children at the Weaseltail Club and through the reservation Headstart programs. Representatives from sixty Indian tribes gather to participate in the annual Tiin-ow-wit International Pow-wow and annual All-Indian

Championship Rodeo. Don and Hazel Umtuch started the annual celebration in 1974. It always has been held at White Swan at the ancient ceremonial encampment grounds where people would gather. The annual rodeo and pow-wow commemorate the treaty signed at Walla Walla June 9, 1885, between the U.S. government and the fourteen confederated tribes and bands of Indians comprising the Yakima Nation (Ide, 1986:4).

There are two styles of dress exhibited at the war dances at the Tiin-ow-wit pow-wow and others: Traditional and Fancy Dance. A man's traditional costume might include a single feather bustle, animal headdress or porcupine hair roach, bone breastplate (hair-pipe), cape, breechclout, beaded buckskin shirt or vest, "leggins" and moccasins. The oldest feather bustles were made of the feathers of carrion eaters that gathered at battle sites. Tribal chiefs who are veterans are the only ones entitled to wear war bonnets. It is not unusual for a dancer to be wearing a mix of styles from different tribes. A woman's traditional costume could include a beaded buckskin dress (preferably white), beaded "side purse," moccasins and "leggins," beaded and feather hair ornaments, ear pendants and bracelets, breastplate, and an eagle or hawk feather fan.

Fancy dance costumes originated in the 1960's when dances at pow-wows became more structured and prize money was awarded. A man's fancy dance costume might consist of a ribbon shirt, double-bustle of brightly colored rooster hackles, yarn and turkey feathers, a neck scarf to hold up the bustle, beaded front straps, fur "leggins" and ankle bells, beaded headband, belt and wrist gauntlets, and a porcupine roach. Fancy dance costumes are more colorful, noisy and showy. Dress for the women's fancy dance might include an embroidered or decorated

wing dress, beaded belt, bracelets, ear pendants, necklaces and fur braid wraps, beaded moccasins and leggins, silver jewelry and an embroidered shawl. War dance costumes are sometimes traded or sold. Costume makers freely borrow design ideas from each other.

A new style of Indian dress has been developed by Vivian Peters, incorporating traditional geometric motifs and contemporary abstract designs of Yakima cultural symbols. Ms. Peters designs current fashions using modern materials, adapting them to a style uniquely Indian. For example, Ms. Peters created a nylon jogging suit with an embroidered symbolic design on the jacket back, selecting colors reminiscent of beadwork design. Embroidered designs represent feathers, salmon, beadwork and other cultural motifs in her fashions. She also embroiders shawls, always popular at tribal and intertribal gatherings. In 1985 Ms. Peters presented an "Indian Fashion Show" at Yakima Valley Community College.

In many ways Yakima Indian clothing styles mirror the "Oklahoma Style" characterized by Norman Feder. The Oklahoma style reflects a pan-Indianism that developed after many tribes were placed together on the same reservation, which resulted in the borrowing and blending of styles. Feder (1965:45,57) reminds us that . . ."Even in precontact time, Indians were continually striving for new materials and techniques, particularly for producing clothing and ornaments which would be more showy. . . . As new forms develop the older forms disappear."

Leathercraft and woodcraft. Craft items made from rawhide, wood, bone, or antler were usually more functional than decorative. Cradles, horse-trappings, saddles, bows, skin teepees, household utensils,

parfleches, war clubs, drums, skin wallets, awls and other tools were often decorated by Indian people. Some items, such as cradles, household tools, skin wallets, bows, drums and war clubs were developed within the Yakima culture itself. Parfleches, horse-trappings, saddles, skin teepees, buffalo robes and other items associated with the horse culture were probably introduced from the Plains and Great Basin tribes.

Rawhide from buffalo, deer and elk served many purposes in historic Indian culture. It was used as a cover for clubs, moccasin soles, saddles, parfleches, shields, drum heads and wallets. Craftsmen either used a fresh hide or soaked a dry hide in preparation. A fresh hide would have to be rinsed to remove the hair and blood; wrung out; fleshed (all the fatty tissue scraped off with a stone, bone or steel scraper), sheared; dried slowly two or three days; sanded with a block of sandstone; and cured with urine. The hide could be stretched, or cut into "babiche" (laces). Babiche was used for lacing handles to tools, and on pack frames, sleds, horse harness and snowshoes (Schneider, 1972:47-62).

Parfleches were rectangular rawhide pieces that had two end flaps and a flap top and bottom which folded over and tied. Yakima and Klickitat sometimes painted them with earth colors, using geometric designs. The pigment was mixed with water and glue, picked up with a porous bone "brush," and rubbed into the rawhide (Schneider, 1972:63). The Yakima made a few of these buffalo and cowhide "Indian suitcases," but most were actively traded from the Plains tribes (Boas, 1919-24:357).

War shields were another Plains item introduced to the Plateau. A three-eighths inch thick piece of hide taken from the hump of the

shoulder of a mature buffalo was the most desirable. The shields were dried in a depression in the ground to create a dish-shape. Often covered with a layer of buckskin, the piece was laced together on the concave side, forming handles. The owner painted the cover, using personal symbols of power which he had received during his vision quest.

Drum heads are of two types in the Yakima culture. The Plains type hand drum usually only has one head laced across the back of a hoop of split green wood. Sometimes designs are painted on these hand drums. The large tribal ground drums are rarely painted, and are used only for tribal gatherings and pow-wows. Five to seven drummers sit around the large floor drum, pounding and singing in unison. Relander (1962:84) recounted the meaning of the drum to the Washat dancers at Priest Rapids:

> Smohala held up a hand drum. On it were painted the sun, moon, and a seven-pointed star. 'This, he told the people, is kookoolots (drum). It is the shape of our Mother, the Earth . . . the drum is life. It is the sound of life within you. It is the sound of life in the world. When the world ends, the drumbeat will sound just once for you like it sounded for me. It will sound bad or good; and you can answer only one way. . . .'

Rawhide and woodcarving were used by craftsmen to make tools, utensils, weapons and war clubs. War club handles were attached with a band of heavy rawhide. Sometimes a "berry masher" had a rawhide covered head and handle for pounding salmon and pemmican. Lewis and Clark found wooden clubs with carved handles. Bows were made of wood or horn backed with sinew. Imaginary or mythical beings were often carved on the handles of bowls and spoons. Carved stone hammers, elk horn wedges and chisels have been found in the Plateau region. Some of the handles were carved to represent animal forms; some had a human face; and some handles had incised geometric designs of concentric circles, rectangles,

zigzag lines, and rows of triangles (Lewis, 1964:168,173,186,189).

Exactly when cradleboards came into use is unknown. The Plains style cradle is made from a bent willow frame in a long, narrow inverted U-shape with notched ends. Yakima cradleboards were not as rigid as some Plains styles. They had a decorated face guard and a triangular flap tied over the lacing. Yakima and Nez Perce cradles do not have the notched ends. Trinkets to amuse the baby, such as cowrie shells, elk teeth, carved dewclaws (deer hoof), beaded pendants, brass cartridge casings, coins, thimbles, and other items were suspended from the face-guard. The top, unlike the rounded top of the Nez Perce cradleboard, had an extended part similar to the shape of an arrowhead. The top of the board had a looped strap to go around the mother's head (Tule, 1986). Several reservation craftswomen today make cradleboards, using cloth and leather, frequently brightly beading the faceguard.

A few years after Lewis and Clark the buffalo skin lodge was replacing the mat lodge for Yakima housing. Between 1871 and 1883 white buffalo hunters nearly wiped out the buffalo. In the latter part of the 19th Century B.I.A. agent "Father Wilber" ordered a sawmill built near Fort Simcoe to provide lumber for Indian housing. From this point on Yakima people tended to live in wood homes. A few Columbia River people, such as the Wanapum, still chose to live in tule mat lodges. Many people acquired canvas teepees for summer encampments after the turn of the century. It was part of Plains culture to decorate a teepee with pictographic writing of the family's historic events or "coup." Ernesti (1986) said Yakimas used decoration, but very seldom used pictographic writing when painting their teepees.

The Crow Indians were probably the first to develop elaborate

horse trappings. Crow-style saddles, cruppers and bridles were adopted by the Yakima and many other tribes. Both men and women used ornamented cruppers and breast collars (martingales). These items, used on horses and pack animals to hold the saddle in position and prevent loads from shifting, were both decorative and functional. Early horse trappings were made of painted, narrow bands of rawhide decorated with geometric designs. Later these were wide, beaded bands of buckskin and trade cloth. The Crow also trimmed the regalia with trade cloth, fringe and pewter spoon danglers. Neck decorations, beaded on a trade cloth background, developed during the Reservation Period.

A woman's saddle had a high pommel and cantle, needed for lashing household goods to it. Stirrups were made of bent cottonwood and covered with rawhide. Originally made of buffalo rawhide, Indian show saddles today are often covered with fringed white buckskin.

Men used a pad saddle made from two pieces of soft-tanned animal skin stuffed with buffalo hair. Or, they rode on a low, forked saddle made from rawhide stretched over an elk horn frame. In the late 19th Century saddle blankets often had beaded borders. Today horse regalia is still made by Indian craftsmen for parades and pow-wows, but it is difficult to locate. Yakima Indian craftsman Patrick Miltenberger possesses horse trappings, and he still makes them himself.

The horse culture is responsible for most of the leathercraft produced by Yakima people after the 18th Century. Parfleches, painted shields, painted skin teepees, buffalo robes, carved stone pipes, feather bonnets, metalwork, ribbon applique, carved wooden bowls, carved war clubs, yarn bags and belts, quillwork, and beadwork were all art forms the Yakima had in common with Plains area tribes. Drums, elk

antler spoons and basketry were all indigenous to the Plateau area.

Ornamentation. Shell ornaments, quillwork, featherwork, and beadwork were used by Yakima people to decorate themselves, their clothing, horses, weapons, and handcrafted items. Porcupine quilling was probably learned from Northern California tribes. Shell ornaments came up the Columbia through Chinook middlemen, and over mountain passes. Beadwork started on the Plains and spread rapidly through trade with other tribes and white fur traders.

Chinook tribes living on the lower Columbia have been the traders and middlemen between Northwest Coast tribes and those of the Interior since Prehistoric times. The Chinook imported furs, robes, dresses, skins, pounded salmon, dried meat, berries, mountain goat wool, wappato and camas roots, "chappelel bread," beargrass, spruce roots and wild hemp from the Interior tribes at the Dalles. The Chinook ranged from Point Grenville (Makah region) to Southern Oregon on their trading expeditions. Vermillion and cinnabar came from the Southern Oregon tribes. On return trips to the Dalles, Chinook would bring dentalia shell money, shell ornaments of haliotis and olivella, canoes, seacoast furs (otter), slaves, eulachon or candlefish, dried seal meat, dried sturgeon, cured shell fish such as crabs, shrimp, oysters and clams, whale blubber, and basketry hats (Griswold, 1954:9).

The Nootka, on Vancouver Island, produced all the dentalia shells, dredging them up from 25 feet of water with a barbed scraper attached to a long pole. These, along with abalone and sea snail shells, and native copper imported form the Copper River in Alaska, were bartered to the Makah, who in turn bartered with the Chinooks. By 1806 white traders were also bartering for dentalia with the Nootka

(Griswold, 1954:15).

Dentalia shells (Dentalium pretiosum) are fang shaped, pure white, tubular and slightly curved, and naturally perforated from end to end. They can be anywhere from one-fourth inch to four inches long, with the longer shells being the most valuable. Also called haiqua in Chinook jargon, tusk-shell, money tooth shell and Iroquois, these shells were the earliest known medium of exchange and ornamentation among Plateau Indians (Griswold, 1954:11-21).

Haliotis (Haliotis cracherodii, H. rufescens and H. splendins) also known as abalone or mother-of-pearl, was worn in the nose, ears, hair and on clothing. Most came from Vancouver Island or from Monterey Bay in California through Spanish coastal traders (Griswold, 1954:21-22).

After white contact, beads, trinkets, clothing, blankets, knives and other European goods were traded at the Dalles area. Thousands of Indians assembled at the Dalles each spring for trading, visiting, gambling, and feasting; and they still do. The fish ran until September. Early Sahaptins were carriers of Plains commodities, especially those from the Crow and Blackfeet.

Yakima horses were the major trade items for tanned and ornamented buffalo robes, feather bonnets, catlinite and catlinite pipes, obsidian, buffalo horn and buffalo bone beads, paint, stone implements, buckskin clothes and horse equipment. European goods, such as blue and white beads, copper and brass trinkets, knives, hatchets and metal arrowheads were carried westward by the Crow from Missouri River villages (Griswold, 1954:41-42).

By the time of Lewis and Clark Columbia river tribes had annual trade fairs featuring intertribal dancing, gambling, horse racing and

ceremonies at Okanogan Falls, Kettle Falls, the Yakima Valley, the Klickitat Valley and at the junction of the Snake and Columbia Rivers. Umatilla, Yakima, Nez Perce, Walla Walla and many others participated in these trade fairs (Griswold, 1954:45). Lewis and Clark reported that . . . "Nez Perce men also wore dentalia, beads, pieces of haliotis shell, and other articles of great value on a strip of otterskin which was suspended from the neck and hung down over the front of the body, the tail of the animal reaching to the knees" (Thwaites, 1905:30).

Elk teeth and bear claw collars still appear on Yakima Indian dress. These were wealth goods in early use among both Plains and Plateau tribes. Generally only the two tusks (milk teeth or rudimentary canines) of elk were used. During the 19th Century one could trade 100 elk teeth for one horse. Some Crow women's dresses had 300 elk teeth attached to them. The tusks were used to trim the garments of women and children, being attached in horizontal rows across the front and back of dress shirts (Griswold, 1954:80-82).

Many Plains tribes regarded the bear as a sacred animal. A.J. Splawn commented on how a Yakima shaman would always appear wearing a coyote headcap and bear claw collar (McCracken,1974:119). Today bear claw collars can still be purchased from reservation gift shops. Women still wear Crow style trade cloth dresses trimmed with both real and imitation elk teeth on special occasions.

Another shell ornament frequently seen today in Indian costumes is the cowrie. Cowries are small marine animals with glossy shells found in tropical waters. One species comes from California and four others come from Florida. Historically the Yakima obtained them from Plains tribes who acquired them through intertribal trade over long

distances (McCracken,1974:110). After World War II veterans brought back cowries from the South Pacific.

Quillwork predates white traders. Quilled buckskin clothing and bags came from Plains tribes as well as California tribes. The tools needed for quillwork are a bone marker, a bone, thorn or steel awl, thread, tweezers, scissors and pouches for storage. Men hunt the porcupines in the cooler months and help pluck the quills. Quills are then sorted and sized, simmered in dye, and rinsed, split and flattened. The older pieces are more subtle in color now even though they were vivid originally. Most designs were in symmetrical pattern arrangements. To embroider with quills, the craftswoman must keep the quills in her mouth or in warm water. Then she punches a hole and inserts the quill; then she punches another hole and inserts the tip; finally she bends the ends under and trims them to one-eighth inch. To finish, she makes a liner for the moccasin or other piece. The Yakimas never did much quillwork, preferring to work with beads instead. However, reservation artists today still use quillwork in conjunction with beadwork for moccasins, pendants, necklaces, earrings and other articles (Schneider, 1972:210-214).

Extensive beadwork was done in historic times among the Yakima, and beadwork continues to be done today. Beaded clothing can be heavy, so it is usually used only for special occasions. Beading is women's work. In 1540 beads were traded by the Spanish to the Shoshoni. By 1750 beads could be obtained from Dutch, English and French traders bringing glass beads made in Venice, Bohemia and France. Made in long, thin tubes; cut into small sections; then polished and rounded in a mixture of sand and wood ashes, the beads were packaged in casks, boxes

or barrels. Then they were strung on "hanks" to be sold to the Indians. By 1800 beads had reached the Plains, where they became a medium of exchange.

Beads come in several sizes. The favorites were the small, opaque white and colored, spherical glass beads. The first beads offered were Pony beads, which were about one eighth-inch in diameter with a large hole for sewing with sinew, used from 1800 to 1850. Then smaller seed beads were available. Glass seed beads came in various sizes (10-13) and are available in transparent, white or opaque colors. The earliest opaque seed bead colors were white and medium blue. Lewis and Clark commented in 1806 . . . "The natives are extravagantly fond of the most common cheap blue and white beads . . . these beads constitute the principal circulating medium with all the Indian tribes on this river" (Thwaites, 1905:277). Tiny petite beads (size 16) are seldom used, and can be found only in fine collections. Cut beads, which were metal or glass angular, faceted beads, were introduced to the Plains area about 1885. Crow beads, a large bead over one-fourth inch in diameter, were used on necklace strings or for accents. Crow beads were not used for weaving or stitching on buckskin (Griswold, 1954:139-42).

At first beadworkers would have had to use a bone or thorn awl and sinew. Later steel awls were made from sharpened nails and other iron items. Then silk thread was used; then twisted nylon coated with beeswax. Now beadworkers often use two pound test monofilament and no needle at all.

Bands, belts, and other rectangular pieces are created on a loom. Basically the warp threads are stretched on a frame, while another thread, the weft carrying the beads, is woven in from side to

side (Griswold, 1954:143). Elsie Selam makes a loom out of a two-by-four board with notched edges. For the front straps of Lindsay Selam's fancy dance costume, Elsie beaded the inner designs first on canvas and buckskin. Then she added the white outlines, then completed the inside. The blue background was beaded last.

Early designs were simple narrow borders, blocks, bands and rectangles. More complex geometric patterns developed during the Reservation Period. Beadwork designs are artistic, not usually symbolic, and are copied from tribe to tribe. The meanings of colors, if there are any, differ from tribe to tribe. It is difficult to distinguish between Crow, Yakima, and Nez Perce. Both Nez Perce and Yakima use pictorial designs of horses, eagles or Indian people, as well as floral designs associated with Eastern Woodlands tribes.

The most common beadwork techniques employed are the lazy stitch or overlay. For the lazy stitch an awl or needle is needed to pierce the hide. Then beads are strung in short, parallel rows. The beads do not lie flat because the stitch does not go entirely through the leather. The lazy stitch does not work with curvilinear designs. Overlay, often referred to as "flat beadwork," requires two needles and thread, one to string the beads and the other to tack them down. Fewer beads are strung at one time, and the stitches are closer together, producing a smoother effect. The beadworker can use the overlay stitch with both geometric and curvilinear forms (McCracken,1974:131). Detailed, illustrated information on additional beadwork techniques and looms can be found in Schneider (1972).

Beadworking materials are readily available today at reservation gift shops. The number of beadwork trinkets on display is staggering.

Necklaces, medallions, pendants, strings, earrings, hair pieces, combs, lighters, wallets, belt buckles, headbands, barrettes, bracelets, moccasins, and side purses are but a few articles available for sale. The most valuable beadwork items are a woman's buckskin dress and side purse, also called a "friendship bag." These are usually gift items, or they are made for personal costumes. A few are made for sale. Some beaded dresses were started four generations ago, with each of the recipient's daughters adding ornamentation. The side purses are a rectangular beaded buckskin bag with a strap. Usually the beadwork only covers one side. A woman might carry several at the same time at a pow-wow. A beaded bag costs $250 and up; while a dress would be $400 and up. Beaded moccasins, both the two piece Plains style with a hard sole and the soft Crow style with the top folded back, cost between $45 and $150.

Featherwork is both a very ancient craft and a modern one. Feather war bonnets are one of the most famous examples of this art. On the Plains each eagle feather represented the owner's deeds in battle. A warrior had to earn the right to wear a war bonnet. Yakima people traded for war bonnets, acquired a few in warfare, and made a few of their own. Many men participating in today's pow-wows create war dance bustles. Yakima craftsman Bryson Neaman sells his war dance bustles for $525 and up. Nearly all men and women traditional dancers carry an eagle or hawk feather fan. A woman wearing one feather at a pow-wow indicates she is single; wearing two feathers means she is married. (Ernesti, 1986). In the Feather Cult religion, practiced by some Columbia River tribes, feathers have significance in curing rites. One of the most interesting accounts about feathers comes from Relander

(1962:85) when the Priest Rapids prophet "Smohala told the people what the feathers meant" in the Washat religion:

> You are flying up, rising through the Earth. You must have the feathers when death comes or you cannot rise through the Earth after the world turns over. . . . The eagle feathers are for the women, the white swan feathers are for the men.

Chapter 3

CONTEMPORARY YAKIMA NATION ARTS AND CRAFTS

Plateau Indian artists today practice the traditional crafts of the past and create new designs with modern techniques and materials. A characteristic of Indian art is the relationship between its purpose, design and cultural mysticism. It is difficult to gather data about Plateau Indian art forms because so little is written about them. However, through review of available literature, personal interviews and observations of Indian cultural activities it is possible to study Plateau Indian arts and crafts.

There is Yakima Indian artwork available today that has cultural significance. Jewelry carved of elk horn and bone, made into pendants, is created by Yakima artist Reynaldo "Chico" Matta. Matta strings scrimshawed figures of salmon, eagle and feathers on rawhide strings, with beadwork and bone beads also added on the string. Yakima artist Steve Gunnyon, trained at the Institute of American Indian Art, creates gold, silver and turquoise jewelry. Some of Gunnyon's designs reflect Plateau cultural traditions by representing such things as war dance bustles and feathers. Mother-of-pearl and Ellensburg blues, traditional regional materials, are often incorporated into the designs. Other contemporary Yakima Indian artists are listed in the slide text (Appendix B). Yet many still work in the old traditional styles. Others, such as painter and sculptor Leo Adams, have achieved international recognition for a style of art that blends international

trends (Oriental) with designs and materials that are uniquely Indian.

For example, Adams once created three ball-shaped, fetish-like sculptures out of found objects from the reservation. Narrow strips of rags were interwoven with twigs and grass into a kind of bird's nest. The pieces blended the simplicity and rhythm of Oriental styles with weaving techniques from Plateau culture.

Relationship between Purpose, Design and Mysticism

At one time, some Plateau designs were sacred, that is they had some sort of religious or symbolic purpose. Splawn (1917) described the Plateau shaman as wearing a coyote headdress during his curing rites. Agnes Tule (1986) says the coyote headcaps are worn now by anyone at the pow-wows. Petroglyphs at Priest Rapids were related to astrological dieties, such as Anh (Sun-man), and were located on an island that was the site of many vision quests (Relander, 1962). Now these petroglyphs have been removed to a site near Priest Rapids Dam, and they have lost their original purpose. There are still hand-carved objects, primarily used by medicine men, herb women and other healers, which are sacred, and never would be displayed in a museum. Even tule mats, after they are made, are supposed to be used only for the purpose for which they were created. However, one person may ask the tule maker for permission to use the mats for a different purpose. Ted Palmanteer, a Colville whose great-great grandfather was Chief Kamiakin, stated, "Traditional Indian Art was always symbolic in nature. Now most of that symbolism has been lost because it isn't handed down from generation to generation anymore. Most contemporary works are created just to be art" (Gargas, 1985:6D).

Post-war changes

Much has happened to Yakima Indian arts and crafts in the 20th Century. Ernesti (1986) says Indian artists are not sticking to tribal idioms. "Pan-Indian" designs are replacing the old tribal styles. Ernesti and Tule (1985) both say it is getting hard to recognize the different tribal costumes. The old style buckskin shirts were loose, barely tacked together at the sides. Now the dancers wear more fitted shirts. In the last 30 years there has been a lessening of usage of buckskin shirts, except for burials. Roger Ernesti, who has been involved with the Yakimas since 1931, says in 1959 there were still some of the old things left. Older costumes had face fringe and feathers around the face. By 1960 there was a lot of copying going on amongst the dancers.

The Indian Arts and Crafts Board, established during the Roosevelt Administration, displayed Indian artifacts from all over North America at the 1939 World's Fair in San Francisco. This organization drew attention to and helped popularize Indian art styles in the 20th Century. The automobile, like the horse earlier, increased mobility for Indian dancers. Now costumes are often made up of different designs and colors from a variety of tribes. Floral beadwork is in vogue today among Plateau beadworkers. Floral designs, common to Eastern tribes, became popular among the Yakimas after World War I (Ernesti, 1986).

World War II had a profound effect on the Yakimas. A Tribal chief today must be a veteran, as well as a head man, to wear a war bonnet at a pow-wow or ceremonial. The "two trail" bonnet, which has a double row of feathers reaching to the floor, is used on ceremonial occasions. A riding bonnet is made shorter, without long trailing

feathers (Ernesti, 1986).

Most Yakimas still spoke their native language until the 1940's and 1950's. Indian men who served in World War II returned with more experience with the English language and white men's culture. A. Tule (1986) estimates about forty percent of Yakimas can still speak Sahaptin. Early in the 1960's persons involved with the Johnson O'Malley program attempted to record the language, but the material has been lost. Plateau people still use their native language and an interpreter at their ceremonials. The Sahaptin language is part of the curriculum at the Smartlowit Tribal School.

Modern Yakima artists, such as Leo Adams, Ted Palmanteer and Steve Gunnyon have all studied art techniques off the reservation. Leo Adams received art training at the Sorbonne, and his painting, sculpture, and interior design work reflect a sophistication that goes beyond traditional Indian crafts. Palmanteer and Gunnyon studied art at the Institute of American Indian Art in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Gunnyon works primarily with Plains designs in his jewelry. Palmanteer paints in both the flat, decorative, outline style of the I.A.I.A., and in a contemporary, expressionistic style.

"Burnt out from commercial fishing, exhausted by the politics of his activism on behalf of Native Americans, Steve Gunnyon began dabbling more than ten years ago in making jewelry. 'Real simple things, rings, Navajo-style trinkets,' he says at his Wapato studio. 'We'd make up a bunch of stuff, go door to door. I hit the pow-wow circuit for a couple of years.' Now Gunnyon's work can be found in over two dozen galleries from coast to coast--Palm Springs, Santa Fe, Vail, Houston, New York and Seattle" (Menzies, 1985:1B).

Gunnyon works with gold, silver, lapis lazuli, turquoise and coral to fashion his jewelry, while using bronze and other metals to render his larger shield sculptures. His trademark, now copyrighted, is a silver eagle feather--a motif that is used in his earrings and shields. Gunnyon was one of thirty-five artists invited by the American Indian Foundation to show their work at the prestigious Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. in November, 1985 (Menzies, 1985:1B).

Eagle feathers have religious significance in Plateau culture. However, Gunnyon's designs primarily incorporate Plains motifs, such as the four directions, warrior society symbols, arrows, hands, and tracks. Gunnyon's heritage is Yakima/Chippewa. Visitors at the Yakima Nation Museum can see Gunnyon's large, hand carved wooden relief map of the Northwest. It hangs on the wall near the museum entry.

Reynaldo "Chico" Matta began making deer horn pipes in 1971 by observing others. Gaining ideas from books, nature and other artwork, Matta began to experiment with jewelry, sculpture, and scrimshaw. He makes bone awls, elk horn spoons and other ancient Plateau tools. Occasionally Matta uses Eskimo or Northwest Coast designs, but usually his designs depict animals, baskets, and scenes familiar to Plateau peoples. Matta has a profound respect for the animals he carves, and has not gone hunting for 17 years (Matta, 1986).

Contemporary Indian artists are exposed to designs and ideas from many sources. They no longer feel compelled to stay with their own tribal idioms. Many modern Yakima artists have studied art techniques off the reservation. The Institute of American Indian Art in Santa Fe, New Mexico has been the first choice of many Plateau artists seeking an art education.

The mass "commercialization" of Indian art, seen especially in the Southwestern United States, has not occurred in the Yakima area. Commercialization has its advantages and disadvantages. Individual artists do benefit from the high prices and large numbers of buyers that congregate to commercial centers. However, they also end up competing with cheap imitations of "Indian art," such as beaded belts from Taiwan and "Navajo rugs" made in Mexican factories.

Most of the Plateau Indian crafts on display at Yakima reservation gift shops are still handmade originals; and prices have not escalated to the levels seen in the Southwest. However, "Indian kitsch" (a term invented by I.A.I.A. art instructor Fritz Scholder) is sold in fruitstands along Highway 97 in Toppenish.

I believe most Yakima artists would like to sell more art in Yakima. Many local artist must take their work to larger cities in order to financially benefit. The Centennial Exhibition planned for the Yakima Nation Museum in 1988 will attract more buyers to this area. Museum visitors will gain new knowledge and appreciation of Plateau arts and crafts.

Chapter 4

CONCLUSION

Yakima Indian artists and craftsmen developed their skills through a history of aboriginal isolation to enforced Euro-American acculturation. Little documentation of art forms and designs was available until after the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1805-06. Through descriptions of early fur traders, ethnographers, and later researchers, we can piece together an evolution of artistic expression from traditional forms to contemporary designs and materials.

Indigenous art forms, such as imbricated coiled and twined basketry, skin robes, and bone carving were overlaid by crafts associated with Plains horse culture. Horse-trappings, buckskin clothing, teepees, parfleches, hand drums and war bonnets became part of the Plateau culture. The introduction of Euro-American trade goods, such as beads, hair-pipe, point blankets, trade cloth and metal resulted in another shift in artistic expression. Trading patterns with lower Columbia Chinook allowed Yakima artists access to Northwest Coast shells and otter skins. The result was a blending of styles with new designs and materials.

Today Yakima Indian artists have access to art concepts and designs from many other cultures. Some Indian craftsmen still prefer to create the coiled basketry and other traditional arts. Many have attended schools off the reservation, and have been influenced by other contemporary artists and styles. The Yakima Nation Museum is one place

where Plateau material culture is both preserved and studied. The Cultural Center Gift Shop is one reservation outlet for contemporary Plateau arts and crafts. Norman Feder's comments about native Americans mirrors what I feel is still true:

> American Indians are gradually being assimilated into American society . . . At this point we can look into the future and foresee the final stage of this process: almost complete acculturation will have taken place, resulting, of course, in the complete disappearance of the native arts (Feder, 1965:21).

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Appendix A

THE EXHIBITION PLAN

Exhibit Proposal

Develop a multi-media exhibition, to open at the Yakima Nation Museum during the Washington State Centennial, of the best examples of Western Columbia Plateau Indian art and crafts. The exhibition will consist of examples of both historical and contemporary artwork, and illustrated documentary panels.

Intent

To provide the museum visitor with a positive aesthetic experience, and to instruct and acquaint the visitor with Yakima art and culture.

Theme

Material culture of Western Columbia Plateau Indian art, and its accompanying cultural traditions.

Storyline

1. Title Panel
2. The Setting. Photographs, relief map, artifacts.
3. Patterns of Trade. Information about trade sites, warfare, intermarriage and migration. Examples of trade items and artifacts.
4. Prehistoric Art. Examples.
5. Basketry. Examples. Relationship to culture.
6. Weaving. Examples. Relationship to culture.
7. Clothing Construction. Examples, history, culture.

8. Leathercraft and Woodcraft. Objects, horse regalia, relationship to culture.

9. Ornamentation. Artwork, artifacts, beadwork, relationship to culture.

10. Contemporary Art. Paintings, drawings, jewelry, ceramics.

Physical Setting and Facilities

Exhibition. Western Columbia Plateau Indian Art.

Exhibit Area Title. Same. Title panel with Yakima Nation logo.

Square footage. 2,000 square feet.

Display technique. Artifacts organized around "chapter headings" on documentary panels.

Relief map of aboriginal villages.

Ten illustrated documentary panels with typeset chapter headings and historical and cultural information.

Labels for each object.

Mounted Indian stories and poems where appropriate.

Catalogue.

Photographs.

Intended ambiance. Bright, easy viewing. Individual artifacts and objects highlighted.

Light level. 100 watt floods on objects and panels. Fluorescent lighting inside cases. Low overhead "house" lights.

Audio. Self-activated slide-tape.

Visitor. Random access, continuous flow controlled by numbered panels in historical sequence.

Viewing time one to two hours.

Involvement by passive observation, self-activated slide tape and

tours.

Utilities. Track light system.

Restrooms.

Gift shop phone.

Cultural Center Restaurant.

Drinking fountain.

Library.

Materials. Materials, mechanicals for offset lithography.

Photographs from collection.

Display pedestals with locking acrylic tops.

Hammers, nails, carpenter's aprons for installation.

Steel measuring tape, string.

Framing materials, aluminum sections, plexiglas, foam core for panels.

Plywood and glue to mount relief maps.

Matboard for labels, poems, stories, other typeset material.

Linen fabric and velvet for background for jewelry, artifacts.

Photo-mount.

Wire, monofilament line.

Dowels and batting and framing lumber to mount clothing.

Security. Electronic burglar alarms with television monitoring system.

Guard.

Floor plan and layout. To be determined.

Table 1

Artifact List

Object.	Source
Klickitat basketry	Museum collection
	Nettie Kuneki
	Sally Buck
Cedar bark baskets	Warner Jim
Wishram basketry	Mary Schlick?
Decorated hand drums	Museum collection
Decorated bows, arrows, war clubs	
Paddles and utensils	Museum collection
Cradleboards	Louise Billy
Bone needles and awls	Museum collection
Wooden bowls	
Buckskin shirts, dresses, moccasins	Elsie Selam?
Sagebrush thongs, capes, leggins	Agnes Tule, reproductions
War dance costumes	Linday Selam family?
	Delford Neaman?
	Patrick Miltenberger?
Ribbon dresses and shirts, shawls, veils	Vivian Peters
Wing dresses	Museum gift shop
	Elsie Pistolhead?
Beadwork (purses, dresses, leggins,	Esther Goodluck?
moccasins, belts, buckles, bracelets,	Mabel George?
medallions, side purses, misc.	Leona Shippentower
	Lena Barney
Mountain goat hair blanket	Roger Ernesti

Table 1 (continued)

Horse regalia	Patrick Miltenberger?
Tule cradleboards, rafts	
Root bags	Elsie Louis
	Esther Goodluck
	Georgianna Frank
	Elsie Zack
Woven horsehair belts	Kennedy Charlie, Jr.
Basketry hats	Helen and Lena Jim
Cornhusk bags	Karen Umtuch
	Museum collection
Dentalium necklaces	
Bone necklaces	Reynaldo Matta
Elk's teeth necklaces	
Bear claw necklaces	Gift shop
Bone carving	Reynaldo Matta
Silver, stone jewelry	Steve Gunnyon
	Jim Tomeo
	Reynaldo Matta
Stories, drawings	Larry George
Paintings, assemblages	Leo Adams
Painting, sculpture	Ted Palmanteer
Drawing, painting	Nathan Olney
Sculpture	Alan Maldonado
Ceramic masks	Lillian Pitt
Wing dresses	Theresa Eagle
Pipestone pipes	Lindsey Maldonado

Table 2

Exhibition Budget

Item	Amount
Security Guard (6 months)	$ 8,000
Acquisitions	18,000
Props, furnishings	400
Framing	800
Office Supplies	100
Announcements	400
Catalogue	2,500
Staff travel	1,200
Photography and supplies	500
Relief maps	80
Insurance	375
Postage	100
Labels	200
Staff salaries	9,000
Building maintenance	5,345
TOTAL PROJECTED EXPENSES	$47,000
Admissions	$12,000
Grant	12,500
Matching Funds (to be determined)	12,500
Tribe (guard)	8,000
Catalogue sales	2,000
TOTAL PROJECTED INCOME	$47,000

Appendix B

SLIDE TEXT

The slide text includes examples of Western Columbia Plateau material culture from various sources. The selection, made by Jean Hauge and Yakima Nation Museum Director Vivian Adams, is based on objects which represent Yakima Nation designs and styles. These types of art work and artifacts will be displayed in the exhibition 100 Years of Yakima Indian Nation Art, to be held during the Washington State Centennial 1988-89.

1. Leo Adams. Painting, "Reservation Landscape"; educated at the Sorbonne, artist, sculptor, interior decorator (1985).
2. Leo Adams. Painting, "Objects in a Landscape"; acrylic (1984).
3. Reynaldo Matta. "Spirit Dancers"; view of Celilo Falls carved in base. Spirit dancers wearing bear claw necklace (1985).
4. Reynaldo Matta. "Spirit Dancers"; Klickitat basket on fossilized walrus ivory base. Basket is fossilized mastodon bone. Spirit bear is white; carved bear is trained by Indians to hunt for them (1985).
5. Maryhill collection. Columbia River carved wooden bowls.
6. Maryhill collection. Plateau cornhusk bag.
7. Maryhill collection. Columbia River stone face masks.
8. Lillian Pitt. "Water Devil, a Warning Spirit"; ceramic (1985).
9. Lillian Pitt. "Copperwoman"; raku, 18"x12"x4" (1985).
10. Lillian Pitt. "Stick Indian"; raku, 18"x12"x5," invisible dwarf

living in the snowy mountains who can steal without being detected (1985).

11. Warner Jim. Cedar bark baskets, made in one strip, scored, bent and laced (1985).

12. Private collection. Mountain goat hair blanket with trade cloth and calico strips woven through.

13. Private collection. Mountain goat hair blanket, probably from Puget Sound (Salish) area. People did not use much dog hair because cutting the hair off of the dog with a shell knife made the dogs bad tempered (Ernesti, 1986).

14. Private collection. Horse regalia. Bone and horsehair quirt, painted.

15. Private collection. Blanket strip, beaded on buckskin, medallion design.

16. Private collection. Beaded martingale, on buckskin with brass bells.

17. Private collection. Beaded saddle-drape tim-u-na-nee on trade cloth.

18. Private collection. Beaded martingale on buckskin.

19. Private collection. White buckskin beaded, fringed saddle-drape, worn in front of the saddle.

20. Private collection. Painted parfleche, long fringe, trade cloth trim.

21. Private collection. Floral beaded blanket drape on tradecloth; newer style.

22. Yakima Nation collection. Tule mats.

23. Yakima Nation collection. Tule artifact with same woven pattern

as modern mat.

24. Yakima Nation collection. Large Klickitat baskets; left, quail design; right, mountain design, four times around.

25. Yakima Nation collection. Stone artifacts--sinker, mortar, pestle, arrowpoint, and hammer head.

26. Yakima Nation collection. Plateau hand drum, painted, with the hide on one side.

27. Yakima Nation collection. Large storage basket, of the type lined with salmon skins, used for storing fish powder.

28. Yakima Nation collection. Woven horsehair bridle.

29. Yakima Nation collection. Three styles of woven tules.

30. Kennedy Charlie. Woven horsehair hatbands, watchbands (1986).

31. Helen Jim. Basket hat, quail motif. Bells and beadwork identifies maker and hat. Three peaks coming around the hat. Hemp, yarn and yellow string (1985-86).

32. Helen Jim. Basket hats (1985).

33. Helen Jim. Woven purse, hats and grass bag in progress. Geometric design, false embroidery; made taller than wider (1985-86).

34. Lena Jim. Left to right. Bell bag, yarn and buckskin; beaded necklace; beaded medallion; root bag; basket hat in progress, hemp and raffia (1985-86).

35. Tiin-ow-wit pow-wow. Plateau porcupine roach hair pieces on male traditional dancers; feather bustles of traditional dancers usually made with feathers of birds of prey - crow, raven, magpie, hawk, owl, buzzard; plumes or "horns" on bustles are eagle or hawk feathers (Ernesti, 1986).

36. Tiin-ow-wit pow-wow. Dancer wearing coyote headcap that used to be worn by shamen (1985).

37. Tiin-ow-wit pow-wow. Girl's shawl dance (1985).

38. Tiin-ow-wit pow-wow. Drummers; young boy's fancy dance costume on right (1985).

39. Tiin-ow-wit pow-wow. Flat beaded (overlay stitch) traditional women's dance costume, with matching floral design headband, purse, dress, and braid wraps (1985).

40. Weaseltail Club. Children in dance costumes waiting to dance (1985).

41. Weaseltail Club. Ester Spedis wearing cloth ribbon shirt and her granddaughter wearing a wing dress (1985).

42. Weaseltail Club. Intertribal dance, youth costumes (1985).

43. Yakima Nation Gift Shop. Plateau cradleboard; beaded face guard with dangling ornamentation (1985).

44. Elsie Thomas. Klickitat basket, deer figure (1985).

45. Elsie Thomas. Klickitat basket, quail figure (left). Loopwork rim also referred to as "ears." Nettie Kuneki learned basketry by observing Elsie Thomas (1985).

46. Nettie Kuneki. Klickitat baskets, mountain and man design. Small, one gallon size has 3 peaks; large five gallon size has 5 peaks (1985).

47. Ted Palmanteer. Painting of a woman, from work done at I.A.I.A., Sante Fe; flat, decorative style using modular acrylic colors (1977).

48. Ted Palmanteer. Parfleche painting. Abstract expressionism (1978).

49. Ted Palmanteer. Shield painting. Abstract expressionism (1978).

50. Vivian Peters. Indian fashion designer wearing her own original designs (1985).

51. Vivian Peters. Turquoise and feather design dress (1985).

52. Vivian Peters. Shirt and jacket designs (1985).

53. Steve Gunnyon. Yakima/Chippewa. Coral "Cheyenne Lance;" buffalo skull symbolizes societies; piece can be pendant or sculpture; tracks mean abundance; arrow means a strong heart; black hand symbolizes the spirit of man; coral is the blood of the people; and the feathers are the artist's trademark (1986).

54. Steve Gunnyon. Belt buckle, unfinished landscape. Brown is the Earth; ivory is the mountains; and turquoise is a lake (1986).

55. Steve Gunnyon. "Society Staff;" jewelry; hooked staff represents warrior society; sun represents the Plains sun worshippers; circles represent the four directions; thunder, lightning and buffalo symbolic of the Plains (1986).